MAKING AND EXHIBITING MODERNISM:

GUSTAVE CAILLEBOTTE IN PARIS, NEW YORK, AND BRUSSELS

by

Galina Olmsted

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Art History

Fall 2019

MAKING AND EXHIBITING MODERNISM:

GUSTAVE CAILLEBOTTE IN PARIS, NEW YORK, AND BRUSSELS

by

Galina Olmsted

Approved: _____

Sandy Isenstadt, Ph.D.
Chair of the Department of Art History

Approved: _____

John Pelesko, Ph.D.
Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences

Approved: _____

Douglas J. Doren, Ph.D.
Interim Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education and
Dean of the Graduate College

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____

Margaret Werth, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of dissertation

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____

H. Perry Chapman, Ph.D.
Member of dissertation committee

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____

Mary Morton, Ph.D.
Member of dissertation committee

I certify that I have read this dissertation and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Signed: _____

Jennifer Thompson, Ph.D.
Member of dissertation committee

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

At the outset of a dissertation that studies the cooperative enterprise of exhibition-making, it is fitting to reflect on the institutions, mentors, colleagues, and friends who supported my work. My advisor, Margaret Werth, has been invested in my research from the beginning and our work together has complicated and enriched my thinking about French painting. Her thoughtful feedback on this project made my writing clearer and my arguments sharper. I am grateful to my dissertation committee members – Perry Chapman, Mary Morton, and Jennifer Thompson – whose questions and insights helped shape my thinking about Caillebotte's life and work. I was fortunate to receive the support and encouragement of the Art History faculty at the University of Delaware throughout my tenure as a graduate student. I am grateful to Linda Magner for her kindness and for her help clearing administrative hurdles. I was happy to share the triumphs and challenges of graduate school with my friends, especially Caitlin Hutchinson, Kristina Gray, Margarita Karasoulas, Craig Lee, Michele Frederick, and Liz Simmons. I am very grateful to my fellow dix-neuvièmistes Jordan Hill, Danielle Canter, and Genevieve Westerby.

I am lucky to have the continued support of my earliest mentors in the field, Al Acres and Andrea Rager. My work as an art historian is inextricably linked to my work in museums and I have been fortunate to work with generous, brilliant curators

every step of the way. Among them, I am especially grateful to Heather Lemonedes Brown, Jane Glaubinger, Bill Robinson, Mary Morton, Kimberly Jones, Yuriko Jackall, Katie Hanson, Frederick Ilchman, Martha Lucy, Amanda Zehnder, and Ashley Rye-Kopec. My ideas about Caillebotte's paintings were made better by conversations with George Shackelford, Holly Clayson, Scott Allan, Emily Beeny, and Emily Talbot. I am grateful for their enthusiastic support of this project. Two of my earliest museum colleagues, Jill Vaum and Caroline Shields, became friends who helped me navigate the road from coursework to dissertation, from first internship to first job. Holly Witchey encouraged me to pursue a career in museums and she has been a wonderful mentor and friend. I am grateful for the kindness and encouragement of my colleagues at the Eskenazi Museum of Art.

My work on this dissertation was made possible by the generosity of its funders. I am grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Department of Art History for the support and opportunities afforded to me through the Curatorial Track PhD program. The Office of Graduate and Professional Education at the University of Delaware awarded me grants and fellowships that allowed me to reconstruct Caillebotte's exhibition practice in Paris, New York, and Brussels. A Library Research Grant from the Getty Research Institute enabled me to spend two weeks with the Kirk Varnedoe papers, an experience that forever changed the way that I think about Caillebotte's art. The Center for Material Culture Studies supported my research and my professional development with a DELPHI Summer Research Fellowship and a Graduate Research Travel Award. With the support of those grants, I

was able to see every painting by Caillebotte held in a public collection in the United States.

As a graduate student, I participated in seminars and study days at the Morgan Drawing Institute that pushed my understanding of French art in new directions. The Education departments at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Barnes Foundation invited me to teach in their galleries and I am grateful for those experiences. My time as a graduate assistant at the University of Delaware Museums furthered my curatorial education and gratitude is owed to Janis Tomlinson for that opportunity. In 2018, I participated in the CCL/Mellon Foundation Seminar in Curatorial Practice and I am grateful to both the Center for Curatorial Leadership and to my cohort of like-minded graduate students for their continued encouragement. In this dissertation's appendix, I list the museums that I visited over the course of my research. I am grateful to the curators, conservators, and other staff members at those institutions who shared their ideas, research files, and collections with me. The completion of the dissertation was only possible with the help of Interlibrary Loan and Distance Learning at the University of Delaware and I am grateful for the tireless work of those librarians.

I was lucky to share the travel, laughter, and joy that went into this project with Becca Cleeton, Sarah Schneider, Hannah Moran, Sierra Hawthorne, Amanda Pollack, and Christine Radigan. I am especially grateful to Anne Trenholme, who helped me parse the nineteenth-century whos and thems. I am thankful for the Betzels – Ed, Diane, Adam, Alex, and Mark – who welcomed me into their family with unmatched kindness. My sister-in-law Anna Gallagher lifted my spirits through the final phases of

graduate school. I am exceptionally grateful to my brother John A. Olmsted, whose advice and jokes made writing a dissertation fun. From my parents, John C. Olmsted and Olga Markof-Belaeff, I learned to value reading, writing, and the experience of looking closely at an original work of art. They maintained their confidence in me when I had doubts and their encouragement sustained my work through every high and low point. I am more grateful to them than I can explain.

And thank you, Rick Betzel, for our impossibly happy life together.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the career-long exhibition strategy of the French Impressionist painter Gustave Caillebotte (1848-1894). Between 1876 and 1888, Caillebotte showed works at eight group exhibitions: five with the Impressionists, two organized by the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel in New York and Paris, and one mounted by Les XX, the premier avant-garde artists' group in late nineteenth-century Brussels. His role at these exhibitions ranged from primary organizer to invited participant, but at each, Caillebotte exhibited works that he had painted and selected within the context of an evolving and responsive exhibition strategy.

In this dissertation, I argue that Caillebotte's eight lifetime group exhibitions constitute a secondary form of artistic practice that complemented and informed his work in the studio. Proceeding chronologically, the chapters that comprise this dissertation consider each of these eight exhibitions individually. Throughout, I approach Caillebotte's work as an artist and as an exhibition organizer as intertwined and mutually influential. I locate the visual expression of Caillebotte's ambitions as an exhibition organizer in the works that he chose to exhibit and hold back over the course of his twenty-year career. I identify trends in the critical responses to his paintings at these exhibitions and I argue that the artist adjusted his work in the studio so that it would better align with the expectations of his public audiences. By recovering the reactive, synergistic relationship between Caillebotte's studio and extra-studio modes of artistic practice, this study evaluates both in greater depth than has been previously understood.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Making Art and Exhibitions

In 1876, Gustave Caillebotte [1848 – 1894] made his debut at the second Impressionist exhibition. His painting of shirtless workers scraping the floor of a newly renovated apartment in the heart of Haussmann's Paris (1875, fig. 1) was touted as an inaugural masterpiece and admired as one of the most accomplished works on view. Buoyed by this early success with the Impressionists, he quickly fashioned himself as their principal organizer and investor. By 1879, critics at the fourth Impressionist exhibition recognized his leadership role; one remarked that Caillebotte's efforts and resources were enough to guarantee the group's independence in perpetuity.[1] A half-generation their junior, Caillebotte had taken control of the Impressionist group and their exhibitions had become the cornerstone of his artistic practice.

All translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

[1] "[...] il y a là de quoi assurer à tout jamais l'indépendance." Bertall, "Exposition des indépendants: Ex-Impressionnistes, demain intentionnistes," *L'Artiste*, (June 1, 1879), 396-398. This review is cited in Ruth Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874-1886, Documentation* (San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1996), vol. I: Reviews, 212-213. The scholarly contribution of Ruth Berson's collation and publication of the contemporary Impressionist criticism cannot be overstated.

Between 1876 and 1888, he showed works at eight exhibitions: five with the Impressionists, two organized by the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel in New York and Paris, and one mounted by Les XX, the premier avant-garde artists' group in late nineteenth-century Brussels. His role in the organization of these exhibitions ranged from visible director of the group's interests to invited participant, but at each Caillebotte exhibited works that he had painted and selected within the context of an evolving and responsive exhibition strategy. In this dissertation, I argue that these eight group exhibitions constituted a secondary form of artistic practice that complemented and informed Caillebotte's work in the studio. By examining his art- and exhibition-making as intertwined and mutually-influential, this project recovers Caillebotte's role as an important catalyst for new developments in the production and exhibition of modern French painting.

This dissertation comprises an introduction and three chapters, which follow the development and evolution of Caillebotte's exhibition strategy chronologically from his first independent group exhibition in the spring of 1876 to his final exhibition with Durand-Ruel in Paris in the early summer of 1888. Each venture represented a shift in Caillebotte's thinking about the public exhibition of his work and his place within the Impressionist group and the broader French avant-garde. Throughout, I evaluate Caillebotte's correspondence, contemporary and near-contemporary accounts of the organization of these exhibitions, and the paintings themselves as an evidentiary record of the artist's thinking about group exhibitions. The critical reception of these eight exhibitions emerges as a crucial source, both for understanding the installation at each venue and as a context for Caillebotte's evolving strategy. He was a polymath who divided his time between painting, yachting, gardening, stamp collecting, and

local politics and this study further recovers his identity as a voracious reader who regularly consumed contemporary art criticism and often redirected his own work in the studio so that it would be better aligned with the expectations of his critics.[2]

Alongside my close study of the contemporary conversation taking place around the organization of these eight lifetime exhibitions, Caillebotte's paintings are crucial to the arguments that follow in this dissertation. There is no substantive repository of his works in the United States or abroad and this has proved an obstacle to scholarship, as there is no place for art historians to study his work in depth.[3] The *catalogue raisonné* of Caillebotte's oil paintings and pastels is now twenty-five years out of date and over two-thirds of his works are still held in private collections, making it difficult to locate works that have changed hands in recent years. Studying both exhibited and un-exhibited paintings is essential for understanding Caillebotte's working practice as it relates to his activities outside the studio and this dissertation relies on my in-person examination of nearly two hundred of his paintings over a period of three years.

The significance of this project extends beyond its contributions to the scholarship on Caillebotte's life and work. In addition to its in-depth evaluation of Caillebotte's lifetime exhibition practice, this project reframes the Impressionist exhibitions with a focus on how his influence shaped each of the five exhibitions in

---

[2] Samuel Raybone's *Gustave Caillebotte as Worker, Collector, Painter* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, forthcoming 2019), "the first comprehensive account of Caillebotte's manifold activities," details the artist's diverse interests.

[3] The Musée d'Orsay has twelve works by Caillebotte in their collection, compared to dozens by each of Caillebotte's Impressionist colleagues. No American museum has more than two and most have either one painting or none.

which he participated. The catalogue accompanying the 1986 exhibition *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886* and the subsequent documentation volume published in 1996 have proved invaluable resources for scholars of the Impressionist movement but the logistics of the exhibitions have not been systematically reconsidered in over twenty years. This dissertation revisits the history of the exhibitions and considers the evolution of their administrative oversight between 1876 and 1886. Ultimately, this project provides a revised understanding of the history of Impressionism from the mid-1870s through the late 1880s and recovers the significance of Caillebotte's leadership to the early success of the movement.

In addition to bridging the gap between studies of Caillebotte's *œuvre* and broader studies of Impressionism, this project opens new avenues of inquiry into the artist's dual roles as painter and exhibitor. While Caillebotte's activities as collector and exhibition organizer predate our modern understanding of the role of "curator," I argue that his coupled interests in collecting and exhibiting constituted a proto-curatorial identity that informed his painting practice. As such, this dissertation is aligned with an influx of critical writing regarding curatorial practice and a relatively new field of scholarship devoted to the history, philosophy, and methodology of exhibition practice.[4] The dual role of the artist as producer and curator has been the

---

[4] See, for example, Paul O'Neill, "Curating as a Medium of Artistic Practice," in *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Culture(s).* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012, pp. 87-129; John Roberts, "The Curator as Producer: Aesthetic Reason, Nonaesthetic Reason, and Infinite Ideation," *Manifesta Journal*, no. 10 (2009/2010): 51-57; and Anton Vidokle, "Art Without Artists?" *e-flux journal* #16 (May 2010) http://www.e-flux.com/journal/art-without-artists/. See also Alison Green, *When Artists Curate: Contemporary Art and the Exhibition as Medium* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2018).

subject of significant scholarly debate in recent years and that framing informs my consideration of Caillebotte's complex and multivalent role in the emergence of French modernism.

The sections that follow discuss my use of the term "exhibition organizer" as it relates to independent group ventures in the 1870s and 1880s, the Caillebotte family history, and Caillebotte's bequest to the French state at his death in 1894, which quickly overshadowed his work as a painter and exhibition organizer. These introductory sections provide a basis for understanding Caillebotte's role at his eight lifetime exhibitions, contextualize his quick ascension to a leadership position within the Impressionist group, and underscore the significance of recovering these histories. The final sections of this introduction present chapter summaries, a literature review, and an overview of the methods employed in the dissertation that follows.

Organizing Independent Exhibitions

The idea for an independent exhibition that would take place outside the auspices of the State-sponsored Salon first took hold in the spring of 1867, when a group of artists that included Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley, and Frédéric Bazille found themselves at the center of debates about the Salon's policies. As I argue in Chapter Two of this dissertation, the first Impressionist exhibition, held in 1874, was nearly identical in its motivations, structure, and administration to the unrealized exhibition first proposed seven years earlier. The organization of the 1874 exhibition began with the establishment of the Société anonyme on December 27, 1873, and its administration was overseen by artists appointed to roles such as treasurer and provisional administrators. Artists also served on sub-administrative bodies including, for example, "la conseil provisoire de

surveillance."[5] When the group established the principles of their association, their primary concerns were for inclusion and a democratic installation of works in the galleries, and so the organizational responsibilities were decentralized and divided among the participating artists.

By the opening of the second Impressionist exhibition in the spring of 1876, the Société anonyme had been dissolved and the group's organization had come under the control of Edgar Degas and Renoir.[6] In the years ahead, the organization of these independent group exhibitions would take many forms and would be overseen by competing actors. Caillebotte would find himself at the center of efforts to organize the 1877, 1879, 1880, and 1882 exhibitions, but tensions with Degas and between the broader group of artists and Durand-Ruel would come to a head in the early to mid-1880s. Caillebotte would retain little control over the installation of his work at his final three lifetime exhibitions with Durand-Ruel and with Les XX. In the chapters that follow, I define the arc of Caillebotte's participation in these exhibitions alongside the rise and collapse of his leadership role within the Impressionist group.

Given the extent to which Caillebotte's involvement varied over the years, it is crucial to identify the activities and factors that comprise the term "exhibition organizer" as I use it throughout this dissertation. At various moments in the twelve years that Caillebotte spent participating in independent group exhibitions, he

---

[5] These roles are described in greater detail in Chapter 2, 35 boulevard des Capucines: Structure and Reception.

[6] The minutes of the general assembly meeting held on December 17, 1874 where the decision was made to dissolve their association are published in the French edition: John Rewald, *Histoire de l'Impressionnisme* II (Paris: Michel Albin, 1955), 262-63.

undertook the following responsibilities: he selected and secured exhibition spaces, he recruited artists and championed group unity at moments when other ventures seemed more attractive, he advised artists as they selected works for the exhibitions, he coordinated logistics for the participating artists by correspondence and through in-person meetings, he purchased works from his Impressionist colleagues and then loaned those works to exhibitions to ensure cohesive and representative checklists, he negotiated with dealers and other collectors to ensure their participation as lenders, he encouraged at least one artist to pursue a particular subject in preparation for an exhibition, he secured transportation and framing for works prior to installation, he planned installations that promoted favorable comparisons and minimized unfavorable ones, he took up some of the manual labor involved in installing works within the gallery, he managed the critical reception of the exhibitions, and he oversaw the bookkeeping and distribution of profits after the exhibitions' close.

All the while, Caillebotte was at work in the studio, producing paintings that shaped and responded to his evolving responsibilities and the changing nature of the independent exhibitions. But what did it mean for a participating artist to organize a group exhibition? The interpersonal conflicts that emerged around the organization of the 1880, 1881, and 1882 exhibitions – described in detail in the third chapter of this dissertation – make it clear that such ventures benefitted from the centralization of curatorial authority in a single organizer or a small group. The 1874 exhibition was developed around this concept and the establishment of the Société anonyme reflected this understanding that fair inclusion and installation policies depended on there being a clear administrative structure.

The artists abandoned their organizational framework after the dissolution of the group in late 1874 and the subsequent exhibitions depended on the consolidation of power to key individuals. The logistics of planning and installing a multi-artist exhibition in a timeframe of just a few months or even weeks were too complex to divide evenly among as many as eighteen participating artists. Naturally, the elevation of one or two artists to a position of organizational authority privileged their work and that of their camp within the broader Impressionist group. For example, in Chapter Three, I detail how Degas's efforts to organize the 1881 exhibition and to recruit artists like Jean-François Raffaëlli and Federico Zandomeneghi alienated Caillebotte, Monet, Renoir and others, leading to their abstention from that sixth Impressionist exhibition. These tensions are inherent to the organization of independent group exhibitions and throughout this dissertation, I consider how Caillebotte's evolving role as an exhibition organizer impacted the other artists, the overall presentation of an Impressionist group identity, and the critical reception of their exhibitions. In Chapter Four, I look to Caillebotte's final lifetime exhibitions to determine how the stakes changed for an artist invited to participate in group exhibitions by a dealer like Durand-Ruel or by an artists' group like Les XX, with which he had no long-term affiliation.

The organizational logistics analyzed in this dissertation represent a far greater range of responsibilities than was understood or acknowledged by critics who attended the independent group exhibitions. In 1874, the critics kept the work of organizing the first Impressionist exhibition at arm's length, using passive language to establish a context for their discussion of the work on view. Writing for *L'Indépendance belge*, Ariste was one of several who wrote in the first person: "We saw, by these

impressionalistes [sic]..."[7] Castagnary relied on the verbs *être* and *avoir* to characterize the artists and, by proxy, their work, writing that "M. Pissarro, he was understated and strong," while Renoir "has audacity."[8] Other critics used verbs like *faire*, *peindre*, and *dessiner* to describe the making of the works of art on view, treating their grouping and installation in the galleries as accidental.[9] As the Impressionist exhibitions progressed, the critical vocabulary used to describe their organization became more active and complex. By 1879, verbs like *donner*, *exposer*, *envoyer*, *offrir*, *grouper*, *choisir*, *présenter*, *montrer*, and *poser* had become common ways of illustrating the role of the artist in selecting works to be exhibited.[10] By 1880, metaphorical, reflexive verb structures that centered the work of art as the subject – ie. *se conduire*, *se promener*, *se annoncer* – had entered the critical lexicon, further complicating the public's understanding of the exhibitions' origins and organization. As I argue in the second and third chapters of this dissertation, the proliferation of language that refers to the active work of organizing an exhibition tracks with the

---

[7] "Nous avons vu, de ces *impressionalistes*…" Ariste, "Salon de 1874 à Paris," *L'Indépendance belge* (June 13, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:9.

[8] In his review for *Le Siècle*, Castagnary wrote, "M. Pissarro, lui, est sobre et fort. […] M. Monet a des emportements de main qui font merveille. […] M. Renoir a l'audace. […] Mlle Berthe Morisot enfin a de l'esprit jusqu'au bout des ongles, surtout au bout des ongles. […]" *Le Siècle* (April 29, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:15-173.

[9] For example: "Si M. Renoir n'a peint qu'une danseuse, M. Degas en a introduit tout un sérail à l'Exposition…" Marc de Montifaud, "Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *L'Artiste* (May 1, 1874), 307-313, as cited in Berson 1996, I:28-31.

[10] These active verb structures had been employed by some writers, like Leon de Lora, as early as 1874 but they became more common in response to subsequent exhibitions. See de Lora, "Petites Nouvelles artistiques: Exposition libre des peintres," *Le Gaulois* (April 18, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:26-28.

broader critical understanding of the effort and strategy that went into mounting these group shows.

In the early 1880s, as the group's composition was in flux and critics began to speculate about their future, a new interest in the logistics behind the organization of the exhibitions emerged. However, as I detail in Chapter Three of this dissertation, this critical interest was centered on the personalities and conflict, not on the artistic strategy inherent to the organization of independent group exhibitions. Throughout this dissertation, I pay close attention to the vocabulary and syntax used by critics to describe the installation of works in the galleries and their understanding of how those installations came to be. By evaluating the contemporary critical response to both the works on view and the exhibitions as a secondary form of artistic output, we can better understand the mutually influential relationship between Caillebotte's work in the studio and as an exhibition organizer.

La famille Caillebotte

Caillebotte's quick rise to a position of leadership within the Impressionist group is detailed in Chapter Two of this dissertation, but it is essential to first establish the context for his material and organizational investment in group exhibitions between 1876 and 1882, as well as his participation in later exhibitions held in New York, Brussels, and Paris in 1886 and 1888. Caillebotte was born in 1848 to Martial Caillebotte and Céleste Daufresne of 152 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis in Paris's tenth arrondissement. They would have two more sons, René and Martial, in 1851 and 1853. Martial Caillebotte Sr. was an entrepreneur whose primary business consisted of

manufacturing beds and blankets for French military contracts.[11] In 1866, the family acquired a lot in the eighth arrondissement on the corner of the rue de Miromesnil and the rue de Lisbonne where they built a family home. Within the next few years, Martial Caillebotte Sr. became a *propriétaire*, the owner of revenue-generating buildings along the new rue des Deux-Gares and the rue d'Alsace.[12] His son, Gustave, undertook studies towards a diploma in law and was licensed in 1870. Rather than practicing law, he began to study in the studio of the painter Léon Bonnat in preparation for the entry exam for the École des Beaux-Arts, which he passed in 1873. Martial Caillebotte Sr. died in December 1874 at the age of seventy-five and his estate was valued at over two million francs.[13] Just months after his father's death, Gustave Caillebotte submitted his first major painting, *The Floor Scrapers*, to the Salon jury. When it was rejected, the twenty-six year old artist withdrew the picture from further consideration. He would not submit another painting to the Salon, choosing instead to dedicate his artistic career to his participation in and organization of independent group exhibitions.

While it is tempting to imagine Caillebotte as a renegade who abandoned a career in law to pursue a bohemian life as a painter, his parents were materially invested in his success as an artist, and he maintained a social circle that reflected his bourgeois upbringing long after his affiliation with the Impressionist group. In his

---

[11] Anne Distel ed., *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 311.

[12] Archives de Paris, Land Registry D1P4, as cited in Distel ed. 1994, 311.

[13] Distel ed. 1994, 312.

analysis of the estate documents drawn up in December 1874, Michael Marrinan determined that Caillebotte's father had invested 36,000 francs in the construction of an *atelier* for his son at the family home, which was completed by May 1875.[14] After his father's death, Gustave began to draw monthly income against his expected share of the estate, which was not distributed to the three living Caillebotte sons until after Daufresne's death in 1878.[15] A lifelong bachelor, he lived comfortably with no professional obligations outside of the home and no dependents to support, generating his own income through business and real estate investments in the 1870s and 1880s.

Caillebotte's considerable wealth and established social standing made it possible for him to quickly assume leadership responsibilities within the Impressionist group. He fostered relationships with Monet and Pissarro by purchasing their work and extending cash advances. This support was offered out of personal loyalty and friendship, but also out of a desire to see their work exhibited alongside his own at the independent group exhibitions. He was able to pay for exhibition venues and to absorb the losses of unprofitable group exhibitions without compromising his own financial stability. It is no coincidence that the three primary organizers of the Impressionist exhibitions – Degas, Caillebotte, and Durand-Ruel – had their secure financial standing in common. In the chapters that follow, I detail the transfer of organizational authority from Durand-Ruel to Caillebotte, to Degas, back to Caillebotte, and

---

[14] Michael Marrinan, *Gustave Caillebotte. Painting the Paris of Naturalism, 1872-1887* (Los Angeles: Getty Trust Publications, 2017), 59-60. See further discussion of this studio space in Chapter Two, 11 rue Le Peletier, 1876: Caillebotte before 1876.

[15] Celeste Daufresne and Martial Caillebotte Sr.'s middle son, René, died suddenly in 1876 at the age of twenty-five. Gustave had a half-brother, Alfred, who was born to Martial Caillebotte Sr. and Adèle Zoé Boissière in 1834.

eventually back to Durand-Ruel. These changes parallel disruptions in the financial markets that affected each man differently. Art historians have long understood that Caillebotte's considerable personal wealth allowed him to amass the collection that would become the foundation of the French national collection of Impressionist paintings and in this dissertation I explore how his financial circumstances and those of his colleagues helped to shape the organizational strategy at each of the independent exhibitions in which he participated.

The Caillebotte Bequest

The history of Caillebotte's posthumous reception begins with his bequest of over sixty Impressionist paintings to the French state. Although Caillebotte's collection would grow through the 1880s and into the 1890s, he first drafted his will with its stipulations for the exhibition of his collection of paintings in 1876, the same year that he began to exhibit with the Impressionist group. After the sudden death of his younger brother René, he drafted the will that gave to the State "all the paintings I own; only as I want this gift to be accepted, and accepted in such a way that the paintings go neither into an attic nor to a provincial museum but to the Luxembourg and later to the Louvre."[16] From the very outset of his artistic career, Caillebotte understood the power of exhibition and display and he went so far as to direct the French state in such matters. His commitment to the state-sponsored acquisition and

---

[16] "Je donne à l'État les tableaux que je possède, seulement, comme je veux que ce don soit accepté et le soit de telle façon que ces tableaux n'aillent ni dans un grenier ni dans un musée de province mais bien au Luxembourg et plus tard au Louvre," as published in Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), 220.

installation of Impressionist paintings was tempered by his understanding of the challenges such a gift would pose; the will continued: "… it is necessary that a certain time go by before the execution of this clause, until the public may, I don't say understand, but admit this [style of] painting. This time could be twenty years or more…".[17] Caillebotte was deeply invested in the future of Impressionist pictures as early as 1876 and he understood that there would be logistical and ideological challenges ahead. This dissertation presents a sustained analysis of Caillebotte's paintings in the context of this career-long interest in future acquisitions and installations of Impressionist painting.

Throughout his eight-year exhibition history with the Impressionist group, Caillebotte never lost sight of the contrast between their exhibitions and the oft-concurrent Salon taking place at Grand Palais des Champs-Elysées. He would not resubmit work to the Salon after the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* in 1875, but he did not see the independent group exhibitions as a complete departure from the State-sponsored system. Instead, they were a response to the existing system, and they represented an alternative path to the French state's eventual acceptance of works by the members of the core Impressionist group. He invited comparisons between the works on view at State-sponsored exhibitions and those installed in the independent group exhibitions, allotting funds in the initial draft of his will for the organization of an 1878 exhibition that would coincide with the Exposition Universelle. Although that exhibition would not occur, the opening of the Exposition on May 1, 1878, only

---

[17] "… il est nécessaire qu'il s'écoule un certain temps avant l'exécution de cette clause jusqu'à ce que le public, je ne dis pas comprenne, mais admette cette peinture. Ce temps peut être de vingt ans ou plus…" Varnedoe 1987, 220.

amplified Caillebotte's enthusiasm for a concurrent independent exhibition.[18] He negotiated to keep the Impressionist group together in the late 1870s and early 1880s, but when core members chose the Salon instead, he nonetheless advocated for their work as belonging to a school. In one instance, he responded directly to a critic to admonish him for not mentioning artists who chose to send works to the Salon in 1879 rather than to participate in the fourth Impressionist exhibition.[19]

The controversy that Caillebotte expected would follow the announcement of his bequest came to pass in the spring of 1894. Just weeks after the forty-five-year-old artist's death, Renoir assumed his responsibilities as executor of his estate and informed Henry Roujon, the Directeur des Beaux-Arts, of the bequest.[20] Léonce Bénédite, an administrator at the Musée du Luxembourg, worked behind the scenes to convince a committee from the Musées nationaux to accept the bequest, but no commitment was made for the installation of the collection in Musée du Luxembourg.

---

[18] "J'ai vu Caillebotte ce matin. Il est enflammé de l'idée d'une exposition car sa visite à l'Universelle l'a persuadé que la nôtre ne pouvait que gagner à la comparaison. Je crois que jamais le moment n'a été plus propice, car il est honteux de ne pas voir un seul maître bien représenté." Letter from Pissarro to Murer, as published in Janine Bailly-Herzberg ed. *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro. 1899-1903* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980), no. 60, 115-116.

[19] "Monsieur, Je tiendrai à vous remercier de votre article de ce matin. D'autant plus que vous êtes le seul cette année qui nous ayez défendus et vous l'avez fait très carrément [...] G. Caillebotte. P.S. Je regrette bien que vous ayez oublié Miss Cassatt et un mot pour les absents de cette année: Cézanne, Renoir, Sisley, Mademoiselle Morisot. Merci tout de même." Letter from Caillebotte to Jules Poignard, April 17, 1879, as published in Marie Berhaut, *Caillebotte: Catalogue raisonné des peintures et pastel* (Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 1994), letter no. 18, 275.

[20] The details of the State's acceptance of the bequest have been thoroughly research and described by Pierre Vaisse, *Deux façons d'écrire l'histoire: le legs Caillebotte* (Paris: Institut national d'histoire de l'art et éditions Ophrys, 2014), 21-33.

Renoir and Martial Caillebotte raised their objections to this violation of the terms of the bequest and the conflict became a public matter, discussed in the press for months.[21] In February 1895, a year after Caillebotte's death, a notarized agreement was signed by the executors of Caillebotte's estate and the administration of the Musées nationaux and in 1897, twenty-one years after Caillebotte's first exhibition with the Impressionist group, the Caillebotte gallery opened at the Musée du Luxembourg.[22] It was the first time that Impressionist paintings went on view in a French museum.

While bequests by private collectors to the French state were not uncommon in the late nineteenth century, they nearly always consisted of Old Master paintings or other art objects that had achieved general acceptance by the public and by museum administrators. Caillebotte's gift of contemporary art had an important precedent in the bequest of Alfred Bruyas, whose collection of work by Gustave Courbet and Eugène Delacroix was given to his hometown of Montpellier at his death in 1868.[23] The 1894 Caillebotte bequest was more unusual, still, in its clear directive with regards to the collection's installation in the Musée du Luxembourg. Caillebotte's role

---

[21] See, for example, G. L. [Gaston Lesaulx], "Pour le Luxembourg," *Le Mémorial artistique*, (March 24, 1894); "La collection Caillebotte au Luxembourg," *Répertoire des ventes publiques cataloguées de livres, autographes, vignettes, estampes et tableaux* vol, I, no. 8 (April 3 1894), 120-121; and "Échos du matin," *Le Matin*, no. 3687 (April 4, 1894), 2.

[22] "Procès verbal de la réunion du 17 janvier 1895," Archives du Louvre, P8, dossier Caillebotte, as published in Vaisse 2014, 115-118.

[23] See Sarah Lees ed., *Bonjour Monsieur Courbet! The Bruyas Collection from the Musée Fabre, Montpellier* (Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2004).

as a collector of works by his colleagues forms a crucial bridge between his work as an artist and as an exhibition organizer. In this dissertation, I argue that Caillebotte purchased works with an intense interest in their future display. Recent studies such as Pierre Vaisse's *Deux façons d'écrire l'histoire: le legs Caillebotte* (2014) and Michael Marrinan's *Gustave Caillebotte: Painting the Paris of Naturalism, 1872 – 1887* (2016) recover the history of Caillebotte's collection in the context of his own studio practice. Throughout this dissertation, I integrate those instances where Caillebotte purchased works by his fellow Impressionists into the broader narrative of both his studio and extra-studio activities as a painter and exhibition organizer. I am less concerned with the artistic relationships between the paintings Caillebotte purchased and his own work – relationships compellingly described by Marrinan and other art historians – and am instead interested in how his acquisitions aligned with his exhibition strategies. As I argue in Chapters Two and Three, Caillebotte often purchased works with the intention of lending them to exhibitions that he then organized. The Caillebotte bequest developed around his commitment to their eventual installation within the official art institutes of Paris and the group exhibitions that he helped organize are, therefore, at the center of one the earliest and most significant collections of Impressionist painting.

Chapter Summaries

Chapter Two of this dissertation begins with a reconsideration of the origins, structure, and reception of the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874 to establish a context for exhibition-making outside of the Salon in the 1870s. Of Caillebotte's eight lifetime exhibitions, this chapter is concerned with two: the 1876 and 1877 Impressionist exhibitions. I argue that the Salon's refusal of Caillebotte's first major

work in the spring of 1875 severed him from the academic system entirely and drove him to participate in the independent exhibitions that would shape his work for the next decade. An evaluation of Caillebotte's debut at the 1876 exhibition links his strategy for selecting paintings to the critical success of Monet and Degas at the 1874 exhibition, successes that Caillebotte sought to recreate. In my analysis of the contemporary critical reception of his debut, I identify three recurring themes: that his treatment of perspective was flawed, that his work was incongruent with that of the broader Impressionist group, and that his work was derivative of Degas's. In the months that followed, Caillebotte undertook a series of large-scale, highly finished compositions that responded directly to these criticisms. He took a leadership role in the organization of 1877 exhibition, taking control of its checklist and installation in order to create the best possible context for the ambitious group of paintings that he produced between May 1876 and April 1877.

Proceeding chronologically, Chapter Three evaluates Caillebotte's approach to art- and exhibition-making at the 1879, 1880, and 1882 exhibitions. The chapter begins with an analysis of the critical response to the 1877 exhibition, the first at which Caillebotte wielded organizational influence. His ambitious paintings of the modern city were at the center of critical debates about the nature of Impressionism and critics were cognizant of the role he played in organizing the exhibition. At the 1879 exhibition, he shared logistical responsibilities with Degas and showed the largest group of works at any one exhibition in his lifetime. He exhibited several dozen landscapes and scenes of suburban leisure, and I argue that he added nearly half of those works after the exhibition's opening in response to early reviews. The exhibition was a critical failure for Caillebotte, with writers criticizing both his

paintings and his efforts as one of the exhibition's primary organizers. The critic Louis Edmond Duranty urged the artist to abandon landscape painting and Caillebotte's took his advice to heart in 1880, deliberately producing and selecting paintings to appeal to critics who had been uninterested in what they believed to be second-rate attempts at *plein air* painting. His artistic practice shifted back towards the kinds of pictures he had exhibited in 1876 and 1877 as he struggled to recapture some of the success of those earlier exhibitions. Logistically, he and Degas negotiated to keep the Impressionist group together in the early 1880s but the interpersonal conflict between the two artists came to a breaking point in 1881 over their divergent views about the composition of the Impressionist group. Caillebotte abstained from the 1881 exhibition and the final section of this chapter evaluates his last independent exhibition with the group, held in the spring of 1882. With Degas out of the way, Caillebotte reclaimed his position as primary organizer and for the first time, critics responded to the installation of works in the galleries as though it represented an artistic practice in its own right.

In Chapter Four, I analyze Caillebotte's motivations and strategy at his three final lifetime exhibitions: the 1886 exhibition organized by Durand-Ruel in New York City, the 1888 exhibition of Les XX in Brussels, and Durand-Ruel's 1888 exhibition in Paris. The chapter begins by establishing the context for Caillebotte's participation in exhibitions organized by Durand-Ruel and evaluate the transfer of logistical oversight from Caillebotte back to the dealer in the early 1880s. I argue that his decision to participate in the New York exhibition was motivated by a nostalgia for the success of earlier independent exhibitions and by his loyalty to Monet, Renoir, and Sisley, who were obligated to participate in this American venture. In my discussion

of the exhibition with Les XX, I present correspondence that has yet to be published as part of the Caillebotte scholarship to determine his strategy for selecting works to send to Brussels and I parse the circumstances of the removal of a large-scale male nude from the main gallery space. Through a reading of contemporary criticism that has not yet been linked to Caillebotte's *Man at his Bath* (1882, fig. 2), it is clear that the painting was pulled from the exhibition because it was perceived as an image of a sexualized male body, with one writer suggesting that the artist was engaged in sexual activity with his model. Finally, this chapter considers Caillebotte's eighth and final lifetime exhibition, organized by Durand-Ruel in Paris. I argue that Caillebotte chose to participate because he thought the exhibition would provide a public venue for *Man at his Bath*. Just as his first exhibition in the spring of 1876 had served as a venue for the debut of *The Floor Scrapers* after its rejection by the Salon jury in 1875, the exhibition of *Man at his Bath* in Paris in 1888 presented an opportunity for vindication after the removal of the picture from the main gallery space at the exhibition of Les XX earlier that spring. The final section of this chapter considers why Durand-Ruel pulled the painting from the exhibition before its opening and evaluates the contemporary critical reception of Caillebotte's work at this late stage.

My concluding remarks at the close of the dissertation reflect on the contemporary reception of Caillebotte's posthumous retrospective, organized at the Galerie Durand-Ruel in June 1894, and the consequences for early Impressionist scholarship. The one hundred and twenty works on view were lent from Caillebotte's family and from close friends, with the exception of *The Floor Scrapers*, which was

listed in the exhibition catalogue as belonging to the Musée du Luxembourg.[24] At Renoir's suggestion, the painting was added to the Caillebotte bequest and nearly twenty years after the Salon jury's rejection of the painting, it entered the collection of the French State.

Literature Review

The first attempt to take stock of Caillebotte's contributions to Impressionism came at the occasion of his death in 1894. The news that Caillebotte had left a bequest of sixty Impressionist pictures to the French state overshadowed the memorial retrospective of his work that was held at Durand-Ruel's gallery in Paris. As I detail in my concluding remarks, his posthumous reputation as a collector and supporter of Impressionism first and an amateur painter second was the dominant narrative through the mid-twentieth century. Collectors and scholars familiar with Impressionism's early reception history might have known of Caillebotte, but his works had largely disappeared from public view. He was briefly reintroduced to American audiences in John Rewald's *History of Impressionism* (1946), the first such book available in the United States, but in keeping with parallel scholarship in France, Rewald focused on Caillebotte's role as a collector and patron of his co-exhibitors.

At mid-century, the French dealer Daniel Wildenstein began to cultivate a market for Caillebotte pictures with monographic exhibitions in Paris (1951), London (1966), and New York (1968) and a *catalogue raisonné* by the French curator Marie

---

[24] Durand-Ruel et fils, *Exposition rétrospective d'œuvres de G. Caillebotte* (Paris: Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1894).

Berhaut.[25] Wildenstein's market strategy targeted American collectors in the Midwest and South who wanted Impressionist pictures at more affordable prices. Accordingly, these early monographic exhibitions focused on river scenes and other Impressionist subjects, leaving Caillebotte's more challenging paintings to fall by the wayside. It was not until the mid-1970s that his full *œuvre* was resurrected by Kirk Varnedoe's monographic show *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition* (1976), at the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston and the Brooklyn Museum. Varnedoe's collaboration with photography curator Peter Galassi carved out a space for Caillebotte between academicism and Impressionism and suggested that his work was influenced by the optical distortions of photography.

By 1986, the significance of Caillebotte's artistic contributions to Impressionism could not be overlooked. *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886* at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco was enormously popular and included fifteen of Caillebotte's best paintings. In 1994, curators at the Musée d'Orsay and the Art Institute of Chicago partnered to commemorate the centenary of the artist's death with a major monographic exhibition that also traveled to the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Royal Academy of Arts, London, under the title *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*. In an essay for the catalogue, Varnedoe describes Caillebotte as an "indispensable asset" for the management and marketing of Impressionism, acknowledging for the first time the

---

[25] This early American reception history is detailed in Caroline Shields' essay "Caillebotte's Posthumous Reputation, 1894 – 1994," in Mary Morton and George Shackelford, eds. *Gustave Caillebotte: The Painter's Eye* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 214-250.

scope of the logistical influence Caillebotte had over the group exhibitions.[26] With this assembly of eighty-nine of Caillebotte's best pictures traveling to Paris, Chicago, Los Angeles, and London, scholars were finally able to make sense of Caillebotte's career as a whole. Given this new access to a fuller record of his artistic output, Caillebotte scholarship in the 1990s and early 2000s was influenced by corresponding trends in Impressionist scholarship; social historical accounts, biographical interpretations, and an interest in the relationship between Impressionist painting and photography flourished.

Subsequent publications such as Norma Broude's edited volume *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionist Paris* (2002) examined Caillebotte's pictures from a wide range of interpretative angles. While these interpretations brought Caillebotte into the twenty-first century and considered his work in the same contexts as those of his Impressionist colleagues, they relied on the scholarship advanced by the monographic exhibition catalogues of 1976 and 1994. The 2010s saw a resurgence of international monographic exhibitions mounted in Bremen, Copenhagen, Madrid, Munich, and Tokyo. These exhibitions included new interpretations that juxtaposed Caillebotte's painting alongside photographs by his brother Martial (*Gustave Caillebotte: An Impressionist and Photography*, 2013) and that considered just one subset of his artistic practice (*Caillebotte à Yerres, au temps de l'impressionnisme*, 2014). In 2015, the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Kimbell Art Museum organized *Gustave Caillebotte: The Painter's Eye*, the first major U.S. retrospective of the artist's work since 1994. This exhibition was organized

---

[26] Kirk Varnedoe, "Odd Man In," in Distel ed. 1994, 13-16.

around thematic and chronological groupings, not unlike the Houston and Chicago exhibitions of 1976 and 1994.

While catalogue essays have addressed Caillebotte's critical reception at the Impressionist exhibitions and the legacy of his bequest, no study has systematically analyzed the interplay between Caillebotte's roles as artist, collector, and exhibition organizer.[27] In addition to its monographic focus on Caillebotte's broad artistic practice, this project engages with existing studies of nineteenth-century exhibition practice, criticism, and the art market. My investigation of Caillebotte's relationship with Durand-Ruel is aligned with an influx of new scholarship prompted by *Discovering the Impressionists: Paul Durand-Ruel and the New Painting* (2015). Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, and Paul Cézanne's participation in exhibitions with Les XX in 1889 and 1890 has been studied in some depth and provides a useful model for considering Caillebotte's relationship with the exhibition organizers in 1888.[28] Studies as varied as Carol Armstrong's *Manet/Manette* (2002) and the 2006 exhibition catalogue *Cézanne to Picasso: Ambroise Vollard, Patron of the Avant-Garde* offer further models for the contextualization of art objects within the conditions of their production, display, and commercial sale.

To date, the existing scholarship on Caillebotte has tended to focus on either his bequest as a part of early Impressionist reception history or his painting practice on

---

[27] Most recently, Mary Morton's essay "Caillebotte in Contemporary Criticism," in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, pp. 57-70.

[28] See, for example, the introduction to Daniel Wildenstein, *Gauguin – A Savage in the Making: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings (1873–1888)*, (Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 2002).

its own terms. More recent studies, such as Elizabeth Benjamin's doctoral dissertation *Caillebotte's Things: People and Possessions Entangled* (2015), have focused on small subsets of Caillebotte's *œuvre,* while Michael Marrinan's important monograph, *Gustave Caillebotte: Painting the Paris of Naturalism, 1872-1887* (2017), takes a more integrative view of the artist's life and work. The forthcoming *Gustave Caillebotte as Worker, Collector, Painter* (2019) by Samuel Raybone evaluates Caillebotte's art in the context of his extra-studio activities as a postage stamp collector; yacht designer, builder, and racer; orchid cultivator; gardener; and power broker in local politics outside the city center. Outside of these recent monographs, the scholarship on Caillebotte's life and work has been driven by the organization of exhibitions, and the literature has been centered on broad interpretations of his work grouped thematically (landscape, cityscape, portraiture, and still life) and chronologically (before, during and after his affiliation with the Impressionist group). Through its engagement with existing exhibition catalogues, monographic studies, and cultural histories, this project is the first to consider Caillebotte's activities as a collector and exhibition organizer as components of a broader artistic strategy.

Methodology

As a chronological study of Caillebotte's eight lifetime exhibitions, this dissertation aims to provide a comprehensive study of the evolution of his exhibition practice and strategy between 1876 and 1888. In addition to being studied in depth, each exhibition is contextualized through an examination of contemporary correspondence and concurrent exhibitions being held in Paris. I begin each section by evaluating the circumstances of the exhibition's organization, identifying the works listed in the catalogue, parsing contemporary criticism to reconstruct the installation of

works in the gallery, and, finally, analyzing the full body of criticism written in response to the exhibition as a means for understanding its reception and relative success. Those critical responses then become the basis for understanding how Caillebotte adjusted his strategy at subsequent exhibitions. As I outline in the first section of this introduction, the primary sources that underpin the arguments presented in this dissertation are the paintings and works on paper that Caillebotte made between 1875 and 1888 and the critics' responses to his work at each of his eight lifetime exhibitions.

When we approach his paintings as artifacts of a complex, evolving exhibition strategy, we can begin to account for their unevenness and peculiarity as compared to works by his Impressionist colleagues. As such, this dissertation offers a fuller picture of Caillebotte's *œuvre* and not just of the paintings he exhibited in his lifetime. My examination of both exhibited and unexhibited works by Caillebotte is a first entry point for understanding the intersection of his studio and extra-studio practice. I looked for changes that he made to the compositions, such as the adjustment of the sitter's head in *Woman Seated on a Red-Flowered Sofa* (1882, fig. 3) to create a more complex, unsettling composition that matches the seriousness of her averted gaze and rigid posture. I also looked to the comparative degrees of finish between works made concurrently to better understand the artist's working process and how he manipulated surface finish to create cohesion or disjunction between his works and those of his fellow Impressionists at various moments in his career.[29]

---

[29] See the comparison of Monet and Caillebotte's work in Chapter 3, 28 avenue de l'Opéra, 1879: Caillebotte's Strategy at the Fourth Impressionist Exhibition.

When considering large canvases like *The Floor Scrapers*, I examined his plans for the composition at various stages, including small charcoal sketches, detailed pencil drawings, oil studies, the finished canvas, and its variants. Over the course of my research, signatures and dates emerged as crucial pieces of evidence for Caillebotte's evolving exhibition strategy. In Chapter Two, I identify his early-career pattern of signing and dating only those works that he planned to exhibit at future Impressionist exhibitions. Many of those paintings were not exhibited in his lifetime, perhaps pulled from exhibition checklists as he became cognizant of the works that his co-exhibitors planned to show. By comparing the full body of works that he thought worthy of exhibition against the paintings and pastel drawings that actually went on public view during his lifetime, we can better understand his decision-making at various stages in the organization of these independent group exhibitions. My in-person examination of Caillebotte's paintings and works on paper also allowed me to compare works that feature similar subjects and to better match extant works to exhibition catalogue titles. Throughout this dissertation, I propose new identifications for works, updating the important scholarship undertaken by Ruth Berson in her *Documentation* addendum to *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874 – 1886* and by other art historians.

Over two hundred articles that mention Caillebotte by name were published between 1876 and 1888 and this contemporary criticism constitutes the second corpus of primary source material analyzed in this dissertation. In the chapters that follow, I argue that Caillebotte's inability to exhibit a cohesive body of work over the course of his career is directly linked to his vexed relationship with contemporary critics who could not or would not arrive at any one set of ideas about his paintings. By the mid-

1880s, his colleagues such as Monet, Renoir, and Degas had developed reputations as painters of recurring subjects or of recognizable styles, while the critical attention paid to Caillebotte was uneven, unfocused, and at times equally focused on his personal life as a wealthy bachelor and *propriétaire*. For decades, scholars have recognized that the Impressionist painters read the critical reception of their work with interest, but Caillebotte's tendency to adjust his work to meet their ever-changing expectations shaped his career and the character of his work in ways that have yet to be explored. In the dissertation that follows, I parse the contemporary critical reception of his eight lifetime exhibitions to identify patterns in the critics' interpretation of Caillebotte's work. By tracking the responses of writers over several years, I distinguish between those who identified an evolution in Caillebotte's work between 1876 and 1888 and those whose critiques were primarily aimed at filling column inches.

Despite the success of the independent group exhibitions, many of Caillebotte's peers kept their sights on the Salon, submitting and resubmitting paintings in an attempt to secure the visibility required to make a career as a professional artist in Paris in the 1870s and 1880s. Caillebotte had no financial need to sell his work and no need, therefore, to cultivate a market for his pictures. Instead, he was ideologically, materially, and singularly committed to the organization of independent group exhibition. Art historians have considered Caillebotte's logistical oversight within the Impressionist group in broad strokes, but we have not yet accounted for the mutually influential relationship between his work as an artist and as an exhibition organizer. By recovering the reactive, synergistic relationship between Caillebotte's studio and extra-studio modes of artistic practice, the dissertation that follows evaluates both in greater depth.

Chapter 2

CAILLEBOTTE AND THE IMPRESSIONISTS, BEFORE 1879

This chapter argues that from the outset of Caillebotte's affiliation with the Impressionist group, his activities as an exhibition organizer shaped and were shaped by his innovative painting practice. Rather than adapting his art to fit an existing exhibition format, he developed a multivalent artistic practice as a painter and exhibition organizer. This chapter considers the artistic context that allowed for Caillebotte's rapid ascension to a position of ideological and logistical leadership and details the earliest expressions of his ambitions and curatorial savvy at the Impressionist exhibitions of 1876 and 1877.

The sections of this chapter are organized by the addresses of the first three Impressionist exhibitions: 35 boulevard des Capucines, 11 rue Le Peletier, and 6 rue Le Peletier. By naming these specific locations, I aim to emphasize the physical spaces of the exhibitions, spaces that were deliberately selected, furnished, and filled with art. These spaces were significant, given artists' frustrations with the miserable viewing conditions at the Salon in the 1860s and early 1870s. For the artists discussed in this chapter, the organization of independent exhibitions did not simply create a system for consistent and fair acceptance at a venue where their work would go on view, but created a space for their work to be seen. For Caillebotte, in particular, the organization of independent exhibitions was not just the seeking and finding of an alternative to the traditional Salon system, but an opportunity to create a new space and a new system for artistic and commercial recognition.

This chapter begins with analysis of the early efforts to stage an independent exhibition in 1867 and argues that the artists who would become members of the core Impressionist group – among them Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, and Cézanne – were primary actors in the debates and protests that began that spring. After a brief historical overview of the years following the earliest attempts to organize an independent exhibition, I argue that the first Impressionist exhibition of 1874 was nearly identical in its motivations, structure, and administration to the unrealized exhibition planned in 1867. This section then considers the structure and reception of the first independent exhibition and the extent to which it can be understood as a critical and commercial success, as evaluated in comparison to the goals and expectations of the participants. It concludes with a consideration of the market forces that guided the organization of the second Impressionist exhibition in the spring of 1876.

The second Impressionist exhibition is introduced comparatively and its structure and strategy are evaluated as a response to the successes and failures of the 1874 exhibition. This second section turns to Caillebotte's activities in the years leading up to his debut with the Impressionist group in 1876. I argue that the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* by the Salon jury in 1875 was a watershed moment in the history of Impressionism, one that severed Caillebotte from the academic system in which he had trained and drove him to invest in the independent exhibitions that would shape his work for the next decade.[30] I evaluate Caillebotte's debut at the 1876

[30] The existing literature identifies the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* as the catalyst for Caillebotte's participation in the 1876 exhibition but my argument goes further by linking its rejection to Caillebotte's career-long investment in Impressionist exhibitions and his fellow exhibitors.

exhibition and argue that his strategy hinged on his frustration with the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* by the Salon jury and on his desire to recreate the critical success of complex interior scenes exhibited by Monet and Degas in 1874. Finally, I consider the published responses to his work and highlight three criticisms that formed the basis for Caillebotte's work as a painter and exhibition organizer in the months between the close of the second Impressionist exhibition and the opening of the third: that his treatment of perspective was flawed and unconvincing, that his affiliation with the Impressionist group was ill-advised and would be temporary, and that he was a follower or imitator of Degas.

The third and final section of this chapter examines the third Impressionist exhibition and Caillebotte's earliest efforts as an exhibition organizer. Beginning with the plans for an exhibition made at a dinner hosted by Caillebotte in July 1876, this section details the organization of the 1877 exhibition and the diplomatic skill with which Caillebotte wrangled his group of participants. A testament drafted by Caillebotte in November 1876 emerges as a critical source, the first written affirmation of his commitment to the Impressionist group and one that offers insight into his understanding of the power of exhibition and display. I argue that his work was guided by the three criticisms detailed in the previous section and I describe how Caillebotte met with participating artists, lent works from his personal collection, and oversaw the installation of the exhibition in order to create the best possible context for the ambitious group of pictures he produced between May 1875 and April 1876, a group that includes *The Pont de l'Europe* (1876, fig. 4) and *Paris Street, Rainy Day* (1877, fig. 5). Central to my argument is the ensemble of paintings of the Gare Saint-Lazare that Caillebotte encouraged Monet to paint in the months leading up to the third

Impressionist exhibition as a complement to his own pictures of the city. In 1877, Caillebotte designed an exhibition that showcased the most successful paintings of his career and he secured his position, for a time, as the most talented and promising painter of the group.

35 boulevard des Capucines, 1874

Origins of the First Independent Exhibition

The first exhibition of the Société anonyme, held in May 1874 at the former studio of the photographer Nadar on the boulevard des Capucines, was the realization of efforts made over the better part of a decade. Frustrated with the decisions and policies of the arts administration in the late 1860s, a younger generation of artists voiced their dissatisfaction with the status quo and took action against it. At the center of their grievances was the perceived inconsistency of the jury system, which accepted artists one year and rejected them the next, putting seemingly arbitrary limits on their ability to show and sell their work. In 1867, these tensions came to a head when Bazille, Cézanne, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley all had their works rejected from the Salon. Of this group, all but Cézanne had had works accepted in previous years.[31]

---

[31] Jane Mayo Roos, *Early Impressionism and the French State* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 84. The rejection of Monet's pictures from both the Salon and the Exposition was particularly surprising to this group of artists. Bazille had written to his mother in late February to describe the excellent work Monet was doing in early 1867: “Monet m'est tombé du ciel avec une collection de toiles magnifiques qui vont avoir le plus grand succès à l'Exposition.” Didier Vatuone ed., *Frédéric Bazille: Correspondance* (Montpellier: Les Presses du Languedoc, 1992), no. 88, 135.

When the jury's decisions were announced in March 1867, Bazille drafted a formal petition addressed to Émilien de Nieuwerkerke, the Superintendent of Fine Arts, asking that the state sponsor a Salon des refusés, where the rejected works would be put on view.[32] The idea of an independent exhibition that would counter the judgments made by the capricious Salon jury coincided with an influx of art exhibitions in Paris. In the spring of 1867, the city was hosting its first Exposition Universelle since 1855 along with the annual Salon. Visitors to the French capital would have seen those two major exhibitions, as well as the monographic exhibitions by Édouard Manet and Gustave Courbet in pavilions built near the Champs de Mars and a retrospective of work by J.A.D. Ingres at the École des Beaux-Arts.[33] In their histories of the Salon in the late 1860s, Albert Boime and Paul Tucker have argued that the younger generation of artists was buoyed by this wave of exhibition activity in Paris and hoped to mount their own show as a means for gaining notice in the art world.[34]

Over one hundred artists signed the petition addressed to Nieuwerkerke asking for a state-sponsored exhibition of rejected works. Dated March 30, the petition included the signatures of artists rejected from the Salon that year and a second list of

---

[32] From a letter by Bazille to his mother, dated April 1867: "On signe en ce moment une pétition pour demander une Exposition des refusés, cette pétition est appuyée par tous les peintres de Paris qui ont quelque valeur." Vatuone 1992, no. 91, 137. The petition text is quoted in full in Roos 1996, n. 51, 248.

[33] Roos 1996, 76-77 and 80-82.

[34] Paul Tucker, "The First Impressionist Exhibition in Context," in Moffett ed. 1986, 93-113; and Albert Boime, "The Salon des Refusés and the Evolution of Modern Art," *Art Quarterly* 32 (Winter 1969): 411-426.

signatures by those who had works accepted at the Salon but who supported a Salon des refusés nonetheless.[35] Absent a meaningful response from the administration, a smaller group of twenty-five artists drafted a second, stronger statement in mid-April, signed by Bazille, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and twenty-one others. Their demands included restructuring the administration to ensure that "a special Exhibition of rejected works would be permanently guaranteed to artists who believe themselves unfairly judged and who, having the courage of their convictions, want to refer the matter to public opinion […]".[36] With this second petition, the group asked that their works be put on view that year in a revival of the Salon des refusés of 1863 and they sought an annual counter-exhibition as a solution to perceived injustices within the Salon system.

After delivering their statement to the administration, the group met and elected three representatives to request an audience with the administration.[37] On April 17, Nieuwerkerke met with Frédéric Grosclaude, Alfred Chataud, and Honoré Pinel, but he would not agree to a Salon des refusés. According to an item published in *Le Temps* on April 20, he had directed the Salon jury to be more exacting in their decisions that year and worried that his endorsement of a counter-exhibition where the

---

[35] Petition dated March 30, 1867, Archives du Louvre. Dossier X. Salon de 1867. As cited in Roos 1996, p. 248 n. 51.

[36] "[U]ne Exposition spéciale des œuvres rejetées devrait être garantie d'une façon permanente aux artistes qui se croyant mal jugés et possédant le courage de leur opinion voudraient référer au sentiment public [...]" Archives du Louvre. Dossier X. Salon de 1867. As cited in Roos 1996, p. 248 n. 53.

[37] Letter from Grosclaude to Nieuwerkerke on April 9, 1867. Archives du Louvre. Dossier X. Salon de 1867. As cited in Roos 1996, p. 248, n. 54.

rejected works would be put on view would undermine his authority as administrator.[38] Unwilling to sanction a counter-exhibition of any kind just weeks into the Exposition Universelle, Nieuwerkerke instead promised to change the regulations for the Salon of 1868 and to widen the jury electorate to include all previous Salon exhibitors.[39]

Although encouraging, these promises for the future of the Salon did nothing to rectify the unfair treatment the group believed they had suffered in 1867 and they continued their efforts to organize a counter-exhibition that would be open to the public during the Exposition Universelle. Led by Bazille, Monet, Pissarro, and Renoir, these efforts to organize a group exhibition outside the auspices of the Salon system were short-lived. In May 1867, Bazille wrote to his parents with the news that their plans had failed: “I wrote to you in one of my earlier letters about the plans of several

---

[38] “Les délégués des artistes dont les ouvrages n'ont pas été admis au Salon avaient, vous le savez, sollicité une audience de M. le surintendant. Ils ont été reçus avant-hier. M. le comte de Nieuwerkerke n'a pas cru devoir accorder la contre-exposition qui lui était demandée. 'Soyez très sévères,' avait-il dit aux jurés; blâmer indirectement au sévérité qu'il avait recommandée ne lui était pas possible.” “Chronique,” *Le Temps* (April 20, 1867), p. 2. The meeting is described as having taken place "avant-hier" in copy written the day before publication, which leads Roos to date the meeting to April 17 in her interpretation. See Roos 1996, 248, n. 56.

[39] From a blind item that ran in *Le Temps* (April 20, 1867) p. 2: “Seulement, hier au soir, en vous promenant sur le boulevard, vous auriez pu entendre plus d'une fois les phrases suivantes, échangées entre gens qui s'abordaient:

– Eh bien! vous savez?
– Quoi?
– Le jury de réception...
– Que lui est-il arrivé?
– Il ne sera plus nommé par les médaillés seulement.
– Vraiment? ... Le suffrage universel?
– A peu près. Il suffira pour concourir à l'élection, d'avoir exposé une fois.”

young artists to have our own exhibition. With each of us pledging as much as possible, we have been able to raise 2,500 francs, which is not enough. Therefore, we must abandon our desired project."[40] Only Monet exhibited his work that spring, showing *Boats in the Port of Honfleur* (1866, fig. 6) and *Women in the Garden* (1866, fig. 7) at Louis Latouche's shop on the rue Saint-Augustin.[41]

Two defining features of these efforts to organize an independent group exhibition in 1867 should be stressed. As Jane Mayo Roos notes in her analysis of the first petition sent to Nieuwerkerke and his administration in 1867, the signatures of Bazille, Monet, Pissarro, and Renoir appear just below the text of the petitions demanding a Salon des réfuses. The second petition, which more forcefully argued for annual "expositions of appeal an indispensable safeguard against the fallibility of the judgements of the jury" is written in Bazille's hand and has those same names just below the text.[42] The artists who would become known as the Impressionists in the mid-1870s were not merely supporters of the 1867 protests, but primary actors in the challenge raised against the Salon's policies. Second, the efforts to organize an exhibition of works rejected by the Salon jury that year failed primarily because the young artists were not able to secure the necessary funds. When their ambitious plan

---

[40] "Je t'ai parlé dans une de mes dernières lettres du projet de quelques jeunes gens de faire une exposition à part. En nous saignant autant que possible, nous sommes arrivés à réunir une somme de 2.500 francs, qui n'est pas suffisante. Nous sommes donc forcés de renoncer à ce que nous voulions faire." Vatuone ed. 1992, n. 93, 140.

[41] See the annotations by Claudie Judrin to Gustave Geffroy, *Claude Monet: Sa vie, son œuvre* (Paris: Éditions Macula: 1980 [1924]), n. 7, p. 468.

[42] "Expositions d'appel comme une sauvegarde indispensable contre la faillibilité des arrêts du jury," Archives du Louvre. Dossier X. Salon de 1867. As cited in Roos 1996, p. 248 n. 53.

for an independent exhibition was first realized in 1874, it was because the group was able to secure the funding necessary to rent the space and promote their venture.

Despite the eventual failure of their efforts to organize a counter-exhibition, the artists' plans were well-developed. In April 1867, before the meeting with Nieuwerkerke, Bazille wrote to his mother about the rejection of his pictures:

> In any case, the unpleasantness I have experienced this year will not be repeated, because I will never send anything again to the [Salon] jury. It is really too ridiculous for an intelligent person to subject himself to administrative caprice, particularly if medals and prizes hold absolutely no interest.[43]

He describes the logistics the group had planned for an annual counter-exhibition:

> What I've described to you, a dozen talented young artists think the way I do. We have therefore resolved to rent a large studio every year where we will show our works, as many as we would like. We will invite the painters that we like to send us canvases. [Gustave] Courbet, [Camille] Corot, [Narcisse Virgilio] Díaz, [Charles-François] Daubigny and many others that you might not know have promised to send us paintings and they approve of our idea. With this group and Monet, who is the best among us, we are sure to succeed. You will see that they will be talking about us.[44]

---

[43] "Dans tous les cas, le désagrément que m'arrive cette année ne se renouvellera pas, car je n'enverrai plus rien devant le Jury. Il est trop ridicule, quand on sait n'être pas une bête, de s'exposer à ces caprices d'administration, surtout quand on ne tient aucunement aux médailles et aux distributions de prix." Vatuone ed. 1992, no. 91, 137. The two paintings by Bazille rejected by the jury were *Réunion de famille* (1866-67, fig. 8) and *Portrait of Edmond Maître* (1866, fig. 9). The latter is an earlier variant of the 1869 portrait in the Mellon Collection at the National Gallery of Art, Washington. "Appendix II – Chronology" from Dianne W. Pitman, *Bazille: Purity, Pose, and Painting in the 1860s* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 218.

[44] "Ce que je vous dis là, une douzaine de jeunes gens de talent le pensent comme moi. Nous avons donc résolu de louer chaque année un grand atelier où nous exposerons nos œuvres en aussi grand nombre que nous le voudrons. Nous inviterons les peintres qui nous plaisent à nous envoyer des tableaux. Courbet, Corot, Diaz,

Bazille would never see this exhibition realized. Shortly after the outbreak of the Franco Prussian War in July 1870, Bazille enlisted in a Zouave unit of the French Army. He was killed at the battle of Beaune-la-Rolande on November 28, 1870.[45]

The project imagined by Bazille and his group in the spring of 1867 eschewed administrative structure and jury selection in favor of an exhibition limited only by the size of the space and the number of artists who wished to participate. When he wrote to his mother to describe these plans, the group had not received a final decision about the Salon des refusés but they were planning an exhibition of their own regardless of the administration's decision: “If, by chance, an Exposition des refusés is approved, we will do nothing this year and our group will begin planning again next year.”[46] The petitions of 1867 were part of an effort to secure a Salon des refusés like the one held in 1863 – the "experiment" that Nieuwerkerke did not want repeated – but the group did not limit themselves to a single exhibition that would right the injustices of the 1867 Salon.[47] Instead, and regardless of the state's decision, the group planned to

---

Daubigny et beaucoup d'autres que vous ne connaissez peut-être pas, nous ont promis d'envoyer des tableaux, et approuvent beaucoup de notre idée. Avec ces gens-là et Monet, qui est le plus fort qu'eux tous, nous sommes sûrs de réussir. Vous verrez qu'on parlera de nous.” Vatuone 1992, no. 91, 137.

[45] The most recent and comprehensive chronology of Bazille’s life is Philippe Mariot, “Chronology,” in Michel Hilaire ed., *Frédéric Bazille (1841-1870) and the Birth of Impressionism* (Paris: Flammarion, 2016), 281-286.

[46] "Si par hasard l'Exposition des refusés était accordée nous ne ferions rien cette année, et notre cercle ne commencerait que l'année prochaine." Vatuone 1992, no. 91, 137.

[47] Per correspondence in the Archives du Louvre X: Salon de 1867: Artistes refusés: demandes pour une exposition, as translated and cited in Patricia Mainardi, *Art and Politics of the Second Empire: The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987), n. 8, 216: "I ought to warn you that if you

organize the first independent series of group exhibitions since the Salons of the Académie de Saint-Luc, which had been dissolved in 1774.[48]

The rules were changed in November 1867 so that any artist whose work had been exhibited in previous years was eligible to vote for the Salon jury.[49] The announcement of the new *règlement* was published in *Le Moniteur universel* one week after the close of the Exposition Universelle and it specified that: "[o]nly those artists who satisfy one of the conditions described in article 22 or those who had one or more works accepted at previous exhibitions, that of 1848 excepted, have the right to participate in the election [of the Salon jury]."[50] This mention of the Salon of 1848 is significant, as it was the first and only fully democratized Salon, where the jury system was abolished and all submitted works were accepted. The exclusion of artists

---

are trying to obtain an exposition of the rejected paintings you will not succeed; it has been decided that the experiment was tried several years ago and will not be repeated."

[48] For a history of those salons, see: Ángela Julibert Jiménez, "Les salons de l'Académie de Saint-Luc de Paris," *Revista de historia da arte e arqueología* (2005), 49-64.

[49] Prior to the rule change, Courbet was the only franchised supporter of counter-exhibitions, having been awarded the second-class gold medal in 1849 for *After Dinner at Ornans* (1848-49, fig. 10).

[50] "Auront seuls le droit de prendre part à l'élection [du jury] les artistes déposants remplissant l'une des conditions énoncées à l'article 22, ou ayant eu un ou plusieurs ouvrages admis à l'une des précédentes expositions, celle de 1848 exceptée," as published in, "Ministère de la Maison de l'Empereur et des Beaux-Arts, Surintendance des Beaux-Arts, Exposition publique des ouvrages des artistes vivant pour l'année 1868, Réglement," *Le Moniteur universelle* (November 8, 1867), no. 312, 1388, art. 13. In Article 22, "Seront reçus sans examen les ouvrages des artistes membres de l'Institute ou décorés de la Légion d'honneur pour leurs œuvres, ou ayant obtenu soit une médaille aux précédentes expositions, soit le grand prix de Rome."

who exhibited that year would have had little effect on the jury election in 1868 as there were very few artists who had exhibited in 1848 but not before or since. That Nieuwerkerke's administration qualified the expansion of the jury electorate to exclude the 1848 exhibitors signaled that despite their acquiescence to the demands of the younger generation of artists, they had no plans to further democratize the Salon.

Unable to secure the funds necessary to mount their independent exhibition in 1867, the young group of artists submitted paintings to the Salon in 1868 under the new rules.[51] Bazille was perhaps the most reluctant among them, writing to his parents in May 1867: "We must return to the fold of the administration that has not fed us, and that denies us."[52] Despite their failure to secure a Salon des refusés and the resentments that lingered, the compromises made by the administration in the wake of the protests of 1867 were validated by an eighty-two percent acceptance rate the following year.[53] The Salon of 1868 was the largest in twenty years and would be the most successful state-sponsored exhibition of paintings by the younger generation; Pissarro and Bazille each exhibited two pictures while Degas, Morisot, Monet, and

---

[51] Tucker in Moffett ed. 1986, 96.

[52] "Il faut rentrer dans le giron de l'administration dont nous n'avons pas sucé le lait, et qui nous renie." Vatuone 1992, no. 93, 140.

[53] According to a note from Frédéric Buon, Chennevièr's assistant in the administration of fine arts, 5,100 works were submitted in 1868. This note is now in the Archives Nationales F21 531, as cited in Roos 1996, n. 15, 251. There were 4,283 works on view in 1868. See: Base de données "Salons et expositions de groupes 1673-1914," salons.musee-orsay.fr, a project by the Musée d'Orsay and by l'Institut national d'histoire de l'art supported by the Ministère de la Culture et de la communication.

Renoir exhibited one apiece.[54] Reinvigorated by the jury's approval of their work, Bazille and his colleagues put their plans for an independent exhibition on hold and sent a new batch of paintings to the 1869 Salon, where they were met with widespread rejections. Bazille, Pissarro, and Renoir each had one painting accepted while the works submitted by Cézanne, Monet, and Sisley were excluded.[55]

This unevenness in the Salon jury's judgments from one year to the next was at the heart of the group's frustrations, as it disrupted the momentum necessary to gain footing in the Parisian art market. While Bazille could weather a disappointing year at the Salon, for Monet and others, the rejection of their works had practical consequences and their fight for a counter-exhibition stemmed from dire financial circumstances.[56] The Salon of 1869 would be the last organized by Nieuwerkerke and his administration and as the country was thrown into rapid political deterioration, war, and socialist revolution, the plans for a counter-exhibition were put on hold until

---

[54] Base de données: Salon de 1868. Of the artists that led the 1867 protests, only Cézanne was excluded from the Salon of 1868. It was the last time that Bazille, Degas, Morisot, Monet, Pissarro, and Renoir would all exhibit their works together. Despite the acceptance of these works by the Salon jury, paintings by Renoir, Bazille, and Monet were hung in the back room, which the artists' referred to as "le dépotoir," or garbage dump. Castagnary described installation in the back room as a humiliation: "Soyez certain cependant que cette humiliation ne l'abattra pas, mais au contraire qu'il persistera." Jules-Antoine Castagnary, *Salons, 1857-1870* (Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1892), vol. I, 313.

[55] See Base de données, Salon de 1869.

[56] As Monet wrote to Bazille about the sale of two pictures in the spring of 1867: "Vous savez qu'avant de quitter Paris j'ai vendu une petite marine à Cadart, et une de mes vues de Paris à Latouche. Cela m'a fait grand bien et grand plaisir, parce que j'ai pu venir en aide à cette pauvre Camille." Daniel Wildenstein ed., *Monet: Biographie et catalogue raisonné* (Paris: La Bibliothèque des arts, 1974-1991), I:424. Camille was due to give birth to Monet's son in August.

1874. When the signatories to the 1867 petitions regrouped in the winter of 1873 and began to plan their first exhibition, it was in many ways a realization of the independent exhibition that Bazille and his peers had imagined in 1867.

Paul Tucker's essay "The First Impressionist Exhibition in Context" builds on the scholarship of John Rewald, Albert Boime, and others to analyze the relationship between the political and economic climate of Paris – drastically changed in those seven years – and the structure and aims of the first Impressionist exhibition.[57] Their work establishes important historical context for the exhibition but does not go far enough in linking the proposed counter-exhibitions of the late 1860s and the eventual mounting of an independent exhibition in 1874. Bazille had written to his mother in 1867: "I assure you I am being very reasonable, we are certainly in the right, it is nothing less than a student revolt."[58] In seven years, their circumstances had radically changed. Bazille, author and first signatory to the 1867 petitions, was dead and the 1874 exhibition no longer possessed the youthful pretext of a student revolt. The average age of the thirty exhibitors was forty-one and theirs was the generation that had endured the Franco-Prussian War, siege of Paris, and Paris Commune, events comprising some of the most traumatic years in modern French history.[59] Despite this turmoil, the exhibition organized that spring by his friends and fellow artists was

---

[57] See Tucker in Moffett ed. 1986, 93-113.

[58] "Je vous assure que je suis fort raisonnable, nous avons certainement raison, ce n'est rien moins qu'une révolte de collégiens." Vatuone 1992, no. 91, 137.

[59] This average does not include Léopold Robert, an artist whose identity has not been recovered and whose dates are unknown.

nearly identical in its motivation, structure, and administration to the one he had proposed in 1867.

Structure and Reception

The Société anonyme was founded on December 27, 1873 in response to artists' frustrations with decisions made by the Salon jury, particularly as the Ministry of Fine Arts continued to tighten admission requirements in the early 1870s. Of the sixteen founding members of the Société anonyme, six had works accepted in the Salon of 1872, while only two were successful in 1873.[60] When the group established the principles of their association, their primary concerns were for inclusion and a democratic installation, with hanging positions determined by lot. In their founding manifesto, published in *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité* on January 17, 1874, they set out their objectives: "1st the organization of independent exhibitions, without

---

[60] The sixteen founding members are counted as: the core group of Monet, Pissarro, Degas, Renoir, Sisley, and Berthe Morisot; Edouard Béliard, a friend of Pissarro; François-Nicolas-Augustin Feyen-Perrin; the landscape painter Armand Guillaumin; Ludovic-Napoléon Lepic, a student of Gleyre and Cabanel; the landscape painter Jean-Baptiste Léopold Levert; Louis Mettling; Alfred Meyer, an enamelist; Auguste de Molins; Auguste Ottin, a sculptor; and the industrialist turned amateur painter, Stansilas-Henri Rouart. Of these sixteen, Feyen-Perrin and Mettling were the only artists who did exhibit works with the group in 1874, although both served on the association's administration committee. The Salon of 1872 included the following works by members of this group: Lepic, cat. no 1006, *Un philosophie sans le savoir*, cat. no. 1007, *Filets étendus* – aquarelle; Meyer, cat. no. 1102 *Étienne Marcel*, cat. no., 1103 *Doua Maria Pachecho*; Mettling, cat. no. 1097, *Portrait de M.*, cat. no. 1098, *Portrait de M.*; Molins, cat. no. 1124, *Chiens en défaut, automne*; Morisot, cat. no. 1142, *Portrait de Mlle. E. P. – pastel*; Rouart, cat no. 1342, *Officiers de cannonier volontaires*, cat. no. 1343, *Chaumine*. In 1873, only Lepic and Morisot were successful: the former exhibited cat. no. 942, *Tentation*; and the latter, cat. no. 1090, *Blanche – pastel.* See Base de données: Salon de 1872.

jury or honorary awards, where each member can exhibit their works; 2nd the sale of those works; 3rd the publication, as soon as possible, of a journal dedicated to the arts."[61] While the charter does not set out a schedule for their group exhibitions, the terms were fixed for a period of ten years and promised recurrent exhibitions, in keeping with the annual independent exhibitions first proposed by Bazille in 1867.[62]

These articles of association included a surprising degree of financial and administrative detail: affiliation was open to any artist who contributed sixty francs per year and ten percent of all sales would go to the association's operating budget. Oversight and fiduciary roles were assigned, with Auguste Ottin serving as the society's first treasurer and Pissarro, Mettling, Rouart, Feyen-Perrin, Meyer, de Molins, and Monet serving as provisional administrators. A sub-administrative group: "la conseil provisoire de surveillance," assigned further supervisory responsibilities to Béliard, Léon Ottin (son of Auguste Ottin), and Renoir.[63] While there was a provision requiring members to pay an additional sixty francs for every pair of works exhibited beyond the first two covered by their membership fee, this rule was ignored – no member paid more than sixty francs and only Émilien Mulot-Durivage limited himself

---

[61] "1º l'organisation d'expositions libres, sans jury ni récompenses honorifiques, où chacun des associés pourra exposer ses œuvres ; 2º la vente desdites œuvres ; 3º la publication, le plus tôt possible, d'un journal exclusivement relatif aux arts," in "Société anonyme coopérative d'artistes-peintres, sculpteurs, etc. à Paris," *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité: supplément à la Gazette des beaux-arts* (January 17, 1874), 19.

[62] As described in a letter to his mother, dated April 1867 and published in Vatuone 1992, no. 91, 137.

[63] "Société anonyme coopérative d'artistes-peintres, sculpteurs, etc. à Paris," 19.

to two works at the first exhibition.[64] While Bazille did not anticipate the financial and administrative structure of the first truly independent group exhibition, his goals in 1867 and those of the Société anonyme were similarly rooted in the perceived injustices of the Salon system, which limited artists' ability to show and sell their work through seemingly arbitrary judgments with no meaningful mechanism for appeal.

Bazille had proposed that the exhibitions would take place in a studio, that there would be no limit to the number of exhibited works except those imposed by the physical space of the galleries, and that all interested artists would be included. In 1874, the group of artists at the first exhibition honored those plans. They opened their exhibition on April 15th at the former studios of the photographer Gaspard-Félix Tournachon, better known by his pseudonym Nadar. The venue was chosen for its ample space and light and for its prime location on the boulevard des Capucines, a site of high foot traffic, commercial activity, and tourism. The group had been galvanized by the flurry of exhibitions that first began in 1867 and in 1874, their exhibition opened alongside at least five others in the city that spring.[65] In total, thirty exhibitors

---

[64] That no one paid more than the sixty-franc membership fee is known from detailed records kept by Pissarro and discovered by John Rewald among Pissarro's papers. See the later edition of Rewald's Impressionist history: John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, Rev. ed. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1973), 334.

[65] "Ce n'est plus une exposition, c'est six expositions que Paris va offrir à la curiosité publique. Déjà les unes sont ouvertes et les autres se préparent, Comptons-les – la Société coopérative, au boulevard des Capucines; – les *Amis des arts*, chez Durand-Ruel; – *l'Oeuvre de Prudhon* et *l'Oeuvre* de Chintreuil, à l'École des beaux-arts; – les *Alsaciens Lorrains*, au Corps-Législatif; – enfin le *Salon* de l'année, dans son local habituel du Palais de l'Industrie." Jules-Antoine Castagnary, "Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *Le Siècle* (April 29, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:15-16.

showed over 150 works in a variety of media, including oil paintings, watercolors, etchings, pastels, and lithographs.[66] While artists with ties to the founding group did refuse to participate – among them, Édouard Manet and Henri Fantin-Latour, who maintained that professional recognition should be sought and won within the administrative structure of the state-sanctioned Salon – there is no evidence that any artist who wished to participate was turned away.

Histories of Impressionism have described the first exhibition as a critical failure, citing the invective review by Louis Leroy in which the term "impressionniste" was first used and another oft-cited review by a critic for *La Patrie*, who wrote: "At the first group of sketches (I should write debaucheries [a play on *ébauches,* sketches, and *débauches*], we raise our shoulders; at the second, we burst out laughing; by the end, we have made ourselves angry."[67] A survey of the reviews and notices published during the exhibition's four-week run reveals a more generous

---

[66] The works included in the exhibition have been identified in Berson 1996, II:3-13.

[67] Louis Leroy, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Charivari* (April 25, 1874), 79-80; and "Aux premières ébauches (c'est débauches que je devrais écrire), on hausse les épaules; aux seconds, on éclate de rire; aux dernières, on finit par se fâcher," from A.L.T., "Chronique," *La Patrie* (April 21, 1874), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:25-26 and I:41. The notion that the first Impressionist exhibition was a critical failure took root in early histories, notably Rewald's 1946 volume, *The History of Impressionism*, wherein he quotes the Leroy review at some length. In the revised and expanded 1961 edition, he writes: "From the beginning the exhibition seems to have been well-attended, but the public went there mainly to laugh. Someone invented a joke to the effect that these painters' method consisted in loading a pistol with several tubes of paint and firing it at a canvas, then finishing off the work with a signature. The critics were either extremely harsh in their comments or simply refused to consider the show seriously." John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* Rev. ed. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961), 317-18.

reception.[68] Of the fifty-two press items since recovered by art historians, thirteen were neutral notices of the exhibition's opening and thirty-eight were editorial pieces written by visitors to the exhibition; the sole outlier, Hadol's illustration for *L'Eclipse* (1874, fig. 11), was accompanied by a good-humored caption.[69] Of the thirty-eight reviews, only eleven were partially or wholly negative in their assessment of the work on view and twenty-seven were neutral or positive in their view of the artists' efforts to organize an exhibition outside of the Salon system. Even skeptics of the work on view noted that the venture provided a welcome outlet for artists in Paris to exhibit and sell their work. Although critical of paintings he perceived as unfinished and technically inadequate, Emile Cardon wrote that: "There is here a new avenue open to those who believe that in order for art to advance, there needs to be a greater amount of freedom than that granted by the administration," while Philippe Burty, a friend of several of the participating artists and supporter of their efforts, looked ahead to future exhibitions: "It is a first attempt. We hope that it will be crowned a success, and that a second exhibition will be organized for next fall."[70]

---

[68] Of these fifty-two notices, fifty were published in French newspapers while two appeared in publications abroad: Philippe Burty, "The Paris Exhibitions: *Les Impressionnistes*" *The Academy* [London] (May 30, 1874), 616, as cited in Berson 1996, I:9-10; and Giuseppe de Nittis, "Corrispondenze: Londra," *Il Giornale artistico* [Florence] (July 1, 1874, dated 10 June), 25-26, as cited in Berson 1996, I:31-32.

[69] "Boulevard des Capucines – Plus que ça de chic; voilà une exposition qui se met bien!", from Hadol, "La semaine comique, par Hadol," *L'Eclipse* (April 26, 1874), as cited in Berson 1996, I:43.

[70] "Il y a là évidemment une voie nouvelle ouverte à ceux qui pensent que l'art pour se développer, a besoin d'une somme de liberté plus grande que celle qui lui est octroyée par l'administration," Emile Cardon, "Avant le Salon," *La Presse* (April 28, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:12-14; and "C'est un essai. Nous souhaitons qu'il soit couronné d'un franc succès, et qu'une seconde exposition s'organise à l'automne

Success of the First Exhibition

In their founding charter, the group set out a rubric against which the success of their exhibitions could be measured. Their goals were to exhibit their work without the interference of a jury or distraction of awards and to sell that work to the general public.[71] By the first measure, their exhibition was a success. Two hundred visitors came to the exhibition's opening and one hundred each day thereafter, attendance driven by the low price of admission and long opening hours.[72] Press coverage of the exhibition was expansive and most reviews were at least partially positive, although exhibitors exaggerated the negative press coverage and then purported not to care. In a letter to Théodore Duret, Pissarro wrote in early May: "Our exhibition is going well, it is a success. The critics are devouring us and accusing us of not studying. I am returning to my work, that is better than reading [the critics]; we learn nothing from them."[73]

---

prochain," Philippe Burty, "Chronique du jour," *La République française*, (April 16, 1874), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:36.

[71] Their third objective – "la publication, le plus tôt possible, d'un journal exclusivement relatif aux arts" – would not come to pass until 1877.

[72] These attendance figures are known from Pissarro's records, as first published by Rewald in 1946 and repeated in subsequent editions. The price of admission was one franc and the exhibition was open from 10h to 18h, then reopened from 20h to 22h. See Rewald 1961, 316.

[73] "Notre exposition va bien, c'est un succès. La critique nous abîme et nous accuse de ne pas étudier. Je retourne à mes études, cela vaut mieux que de lire; on n'apprend rien avec eux." Letter from Pissarro to Duret dated May 5, 1874, as published in Rewald 1961, 331.

At the height of the artists' protests in 1867, Bazille wrote to his mother about the plans for a counter-exhibition: "You will see that they will be talking about us."[74] By this measure, the organizers of the 1874 exhibition had successfully fulfilled Bazille's wish, gaining attention and notoriety for an exhibition that closely matched their ambitions in the late 1860s.[75] What had lessened in the intervening years, however, was the artists' impulse to frame their project as a counter-exhibition, or an independently-organized Salon des refusés. Instead, the organizers in 1874 went to lengths to ensure that their exhibition would not be misconstrued as reactive. By John Rewald's account, based on Pissarro's personal papers and correspondence, Degas expressed concerns that the exhibition would be seen as a "manifestation de refusés," and insisted that it open before the Salon jury's decisions were announced, so that it would not be characterized as a Salon des refusés in the press.[76] While some reviewers did mention that the exhibition had been organized *hors Salon*, most praised the exhibition as a new outlet for artists.

The 1867 efforts to organize an independent exhibition had failed because the artists were unable to raise the necessary funds. By 1874, they had a solution and were confident that their financial model was adequately backed by market interest in their art. Their co-operative association required its members to invest a modest

---

[74] "Vous verrez qu'on parlera de nous," from a letter by Bazille to his mother, dated April 1867 and published in Vatuone 1992, no. 91, 137.

[75] Renoir would honor Bazille's contributions to the formation of the Impressionist group and the organization of the independent exhibitions in 1876, exhibiting a portrait of his friend under the title *Frédéric Bazille, peintre tué à Beaune-la-Rolande* (1867, fig. 12) as a belated homage. The painting was lent to the exhibition by Manet.

[76] Rewald 1961, 312.

membership fee and commission on sold works back into the organization of future exhibitions. While the group successfully collected membership dues from all thirty participants and from members of the association who chose not to participate in the exhibition, their profits in 1874 amounted to less than one thousand francs at the exhibition's close on May 15.[77] They had earned 360 francs in commission, ten percent of 3,600 francs in total sales.[78] The remaining profit came from entrance fees and catalogue sales, but the majority of exhibitors did not make enough to cover their membership dues for the subsequent year and those modest profits were short-lived.[79] At the general assembly called by Renoir on December 17, the members learned that after paying all external debts, the liabilities owed by the group totaled nearly 3,500 francs. Liquidation of the association was proposed and unanimously approved; the Société anonyme had lasted ten days short of a year.[80]

---

[77] These figures are reported in the financial statement prepared for members by the group's treasurer, Auguste Ottin. The dues-paying members who did not exhibit works in the 1874 exhibition were: Joseph Beaume, Louis Mettling, Paul Grandhomme, and Auguste Feyen-Perrin. The only exhibitor who had not paid his membership fee by the exhibition's opening was Félix Bracquemond. See Rewald 1961, 334.

[78] See Rewald 1961, 334. Sisley had achieved 1,000 francs in sales, Monet 200 francs, Renoir 180 francs, and Pissarro 130 francs; the remaining balance of 2,090 francs came from sales made by other exhibitors. Notably, Boudin, Degas, and Morisot did not make any sales.

[79] See Rewald 1961, 334. The total expenses for the exhibition, including rent, posters advertising its opening, insurance, and wages, amounted to 9,272.20 francs, while the entrance fees, sale of catalogues, commission on works, and membership dues amounted to 10,221.40 francs.

[80] Rewald 1961, 336. The minutes of the general assembly held December 17, 1874 are published in the French edition: Rewald 1955, II: 262-63. Rewald mistakenly dates the meeting to December 10 in the 1973 edition of his book but the correct date is December 17.

It was not their objective, necessarily, to net a large profit from their first independent exhibition, but to develop a reputation for themselves that would improve the market for their works. While they offered a ten percent discount on works at the exhibition, they set high prices, asking over 1000 francs apiece for Pissarro's *Orchard in Bloom, Louvecinnes* (1872, fig. 13) and Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* (1872, fig. 14).[81] Neither painting sold during the exhibition's four-week run, but those prices should be interpreted as a claim for status and validity at a group exhibition organized outside the auspices of the state system. The financial model that had made the 1874 exhibition possible quickly collapsed and it would be some time before the core Impressionist group gained sustainable traction in the art market. Their venture had been, as Burty called it, *un essai*, an experiment and a first attempt.

The Salon and the Market in 1875

As Hollis Clayton convincingly argues in her essay about the 1876 exhibition, the artists that would become known as the core of the Impressionist group "did not seek independence as a permanent status," but instead sought to forge a group identity that would serve their short-term commercial interests and that would help them gain the visibility necessary to ensure consistent acceptance at future Salons.[82] By the spring of 1875, the near-universal suffrage reform that had been won in 1867 was undermined by a new system for the election of the Salon jury. Philippe de Chennevières, who had been appointed Director of Fine Arts in 1873, introduced a system of voting that was restricted to artists who had won awards in previous years.

---

[81] Tucker in Moffett ed. 1986, 106.

[82] Hollis Clayson, "A Failed Attempt," in Moffett ed. 1986, 143-159, 143.

They would elect 114 candidates, from which thirty-eight jurors would be appointed through the drawing of lots.[83] This emphasis on awards and the introduction of chance infuriated artists and jurors alike, dashing hopes for a state-sponsored system wherein an artist's reputation could be built through the consistent exhibition of their work.[84]

At the Salon of 1875, nine of the thirty original 1874 exhibitors showed works.[85] Not coincidentally, the artists that chose to withhold their work from the jury that year were those who had a relationship with the dealer Paul Durand-Ruel. He had first met Monet and Pissarro in London in 1870 and began buying their pictures, beginning with Monet's *Breakwater at Trouville, Low Tide* (1870, fig. 15).[86] There

---

[83] These reforms are described in Roos 1996, 221-22. The policies instituted by Chennevières and the scandal that followed were first detailed in Roos, "Aristocracy in the Arts: Philippe de Chenneviéres and the Salons of the Mid 1870s," *Art Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 1: Nineteenth-Century French Art Institutions (Spring 1989), pp. 53-62.

[84] In March 1875, six artists who had served as jurors in 1874 signed a letter addressed to Chennevières in which they voiced their disapproval of the new policies and stated their refusal to serve as candidates for the jury. The letter was published in *Le Chronique des arts*, no. 11 (March 13, 1875), 89-90 and the subsequent controversy is described in Roos 1996, 221.

[85] The works by 1874 exhibitors on view at the Salon of 1875: Astruc, cat. no. 2028 *Les balcons roses – Espagne*; *Attendu*, cat. no., 46 *Salade mayonnaise*, cat. no. 47 *Lapin de garenne*; Boudin, cat. no. 266 *Le port de Bordeaux*, cat. no. 267 *Le port de Bordeaux vu du quai*; Colin, cat. no. 481 *Le malin de la fête d'Unique (Basses Pyrénées) – le jeu de paume*, cat. no. 482 *Marie Arimchola, paysanne basque*; Lepic, cat. no. 1345 *Pêche de nuit au chien de mer*, cat. no. 1346 *Bateau boulonais*; Lepine, cat. no. 1347 *Un lavoir aux environs de Caen*; Meyer, cat. no. 2560 *Le Candottiere, d'après Antonello de Messine*; De Nittis, cat. no 1544 *Place de la Concorde*, cat. no. 1545 *À Bougival (Seine-et-Oise)*; Ottin *fils*, cat. no. 1570 *La butte Montmartre, le matin*. Base de données: Salon de 1875.

[86] John House, "New Material on Monet and Pissarro in London in 1870–71," *Burlington Magazine*, vol. cxx, no. 907 (October 1978), 636-41.

are no London stock books in the Durand-Ruel archives and these transactions are known only through post-dated notations, but the professional relationship between Durand-Ruel and Monet's circle developed quickly enough that the dealer spent 9,000 francs acquiring pictures by Monet in 1872 and 19,000 francs in 1873.[87] Pissarro, Sisley, Degas, and Renoir received more modest support from Durand-Ruel, but the commercial investment that the dealer made in these artists had created a degree of market confidence that bolstered their ambitions for the independent exhibition of 1874.[88]

In the spring of 1875, just before the opening of the Salon, Monet, Morisot, Renoir, and Sisley mounted an auction of their works at the Hôtel Drouot. They were able to sell just a fraction of the seventy-three works offered and at very low prices.[89] Durand-Ruel, who assisted in organizing the auction, purchased four works by Monet, two by Renoir, and twelve by Sisley, paying an average of just 170 francs per picture.[90] This figure represents a fifteen percent decrease from the prices paid by Durand-Ruel for paintings by Renoir and Sisley in 1871 and a forty-five percent

---

[87] The sums that Durand-Ruel spent on Monet's pictures in 1872 and 1873 are first described in Wildenstein ed. 1974-199, I:63.

[88] That Pissarro, Sisley, Degas, and Renoir received continuous yet modest support from Durand-Ruel in the early 1870s is known through John Zarobell's essay, "Durand-Ruel and the Market for Modern Art, from 1870 to 1873," pp. 76-98 in Sylvie Patry ed., *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market* (London: National Gallery, 2015). See in particular pp. 86-96.

[89] Rewald 1961, 351 and 354. The auction was held on March 25, 1875.

[90] Isabelle Gaëtan and Monique Nonne, "Chronology (1869-1905)," 203-31 in Patry 2015, 214. The Durand-Ruel archives are cited for this average: [AP, D46E 3 65]. Gaëtan and Nonne's research corrects the oft-cited figure of 100 francs per picture.

decrease from the prices he was willing to pay Monet in 1870 and 1871.[91] Following the auction, the dealer stopped buying their pictures almost entirely and would not resume until 1880.[92] These financial setbacks made it impossible to invest the necessary capital for the organization of a second group exhibition later in the spring of 1875, but the tightening of the private market and the increasingly rigid standards of the Salon made it unlikely that the group would be able to show or sell their work at any other venue. With few other options at hand, the group bided their time and on March 30, 1876, the second Impressionist exhibition opened in three rooms of the centrally-located Durand-Ruel galleries at 11, rue Le Peletier.

11 rue Le Peletier, 1876

Changes in Structure and Strategy

Plainly titled "La deuxième exposition de peinture par MM. [...]," the second exhibition featured 252 works by nineteen exhibitors. The space was subleased to the group by Durand-Ruel, whose business had been headquartered at 11 rue Le Peletier since July 1869. The building comprised a storeroom in the basement, additional storage and two small rooms on the ground floor, and three larger gallery spaces on the first floor, where the exhibition was held.[93] While the installation in 1874 had

---

[91] These percentages were calculated by comparing the 170 franc average cited by Gaëtan and Nonne to the average sale price for Monet [312.5 francs] and Renoir and Sisley [200 francs] in prior years also cited in their research.

[92] See Gaëtan and Nonne in Patry ed. 2015, 214. The fluctuations in Durand-Ruel's support of Monet, Pissarro, and other members of the Impressionist group in the 1870s and 1880s is thoroughly detailed in Chapter 4 of this dissertation.

[93] Gaëtan and Nonne in Patry ed. 2015, 209. There were also three office spaces on the first floor.

mixed entries regardless of artist, medium or subject, the works on view in 1876 were grouped by artist and sub-grouped by medium. Fewer than half of the exhibited works were by core members of the Impressionist group, which at this point included Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley. The installation was ordered so that visitors would encounter conventional works in the first gallery space and the more challenging work in the subsequent two.[94] While the group abandoned the unconventional evening hours of the first exhibition, they further discounted the price of admission to fifty centimes.[95] Notices were placed in major newspapers and the façade of the building was plastered with flags and posters aimed at bringing in foot traffic.[96]

The 1874 exhibitors had in common an interest in opportunities to show and sell their works outside the state-sponsored system. Degas had argued that the inclusion of artists with reputations at the Salon would bolster the group's credibility

---

[94] In 1876, Degas exhibited twenty-four works, Monet eighteen, Morisot seventeen, Pissarro twelve, Renoir fifteen, and Sisley seven. The first gallery space included Millet's ten watercolors, Desboutin's six drypoint etchings, and several works on paper by Legros. The second exhibition space featured paintings by Renoir and Sisley, while the more challenging work by Degas hung in the third room. This installation is known through analysis of the criticism, in particular the reviews by Burty for *The Academy* and *La République Française*, see Berson 1996, I:9-11 and 36-38. Clayson's essay for *The New Painting* catalogue was the first to reconstruct the installation of the 1876 exhibition through the criticism, see Clayson in Moffett ed. 1986, 143-159.

[95] Rewald 1961, 366.

[96] See the notices published in *Moniteur des arts*, *Le Moniteur de la Monde*, *Le Figaro*, *Le Rappel*, *Le Tintamarre*, *La Petite Presse*, and *Le Temps*, as cited in Berson 1996, I:53, 86, 98-99, 101-102, 110. See also: "Le passant inoffensive, attire par les drapeaux qui décorent la façade […]," in Albert Wolff, "La Calendrier parisien," *Le Figaro* (April 3, 1876), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:110.

and attract visitors. In 1876, the number of exhibitors had contracted significantly and although the group still shied away from characterizing their exhibition as that of the "impressionnistes" or "intransigeants," terms used in 1874, the exhibition at 11, rue Le Peletier was still perceived as a renegade effort. A number of Degas's recruits defected from the group in 1876 – including Lépine and de Nittis – but six newcomers made their debut with the Impressionist group in the spring of 1876: Gustave Caillebotte, a young painter tied to the group through mutual acquaintances; the painter and printmaker Marcellin Desboutin; François, a pseudonym used by an unidentified artist; the London-based realist Alphonse Legros; Jean-Baptiste Millet, brother of the better-known Jean-François; and Charles Tillot, a new recruit and friend of Degas. Of these first-time exhibitors, none had a greater impact on the 1876 exhibition or those that would follow than Caillebotte.

Caillebotte before 1876

In order to understand Caillebotte's decision to affiliate with the Impressionist group in 1876, it is essential to parse the circumstances that set him apart from his future colleagues and co-exhibitors. Absent an extant body of correspondence or personal papers, what is known of Caillebotte's life before 1876 has been pieced together by art historians working from secondhand accounts and in city archives. Michael Marrinan's biographical interpretation of Caillebotte's early work has nuanced our understanding of his financial circumstances following the death of his father, Martial Caillebotte, in 1874.[97] By Marrinan's account, the division of the family estate and its assets was postponed until the death of the artist's mother in

[97] See Marrinan 2017, 65-68.

1878, but the four Caillebotte sons were each able to draw living credits against their expected shares.[98] Mme. Caillebotte paid 16,000 francs per year for her use of the house at 77 rue de Miromesnil, rental income that was divided equally between Alfred, Gustave, Martial *fils*, and, until his death in 1876, René. Gustave and Martial would not achieve complete financial independence until the full distribution of the family estate in 1878, but the brothers lived comfortably in the intervening years.[99] While his eventual collaborators Monet and Pissarro were purchasing the materials they needed on credit, Caillebotte had his own studio at the family house on the rue de Miromesnil, no professional obligations outside of the home, and no dependents to support.[100]

By early 1876, he was painting full-time, having completed several years of study in the academic studio of the well-respected portraitist Léon Bonnat and having passed the entrance examination for the École des Beaux-Arts.[101] Twenty-seven years

---

[98] Gustave had a half-brother, Alfred, who was born to Martial Caillebotte Sr. and Adèle Zoé Boissière in 1834.

[99] Marrinan 2017, 66.

[100] "Inventaire CAILLEBOTTE après le décès de M. Martial," ANMC, Étude LVIII, répertoire 26, no. 253, 5 May 1875, as cited in Marrinan 2017, 82, n. 4.

[101] Although he was licensed to practice law by 1870, Caillebotte is listed as "artiste peintre" in the documents related to his father's death on December 24, 1874. See Marrinan 2017, 21. That he passed his entry examination for the École des Beaux-Arts under Bonnat's sponsorship in February 1873 is known through a document in the Archives Nationales, AJ 52 254, no. 2202, as cited in Anne Distel ed., *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1994), 312. In a document dated March 18, 1873 [Archives Nationales, AJ 52 77], he is ranked forty-second of eighty students vying for placement in Adolphe Yvon's painting class. There is no other mention of Caillebotte in the school's archives, leading Distel and others to conclude that he spent limited time there.

old and unburdened by any financial pressure to sell his work, Caillebotte had a half-dozen finished canvases ready for submission to the Salon in the spring of 1876.[102] Instead, he chose to align himself with what would become the core Impressionist group, taking the first step toward his prominent role as one of the movement's most dedicated benefactors and organizers. But to what end? Why did the opportunity to exhibit his work alongside paintings that looked nothing like his, produced by artists ten and fifteen years his senior, appeal to a young painter at the beginning of his career? And what about the exhibition at 11 rue le Peletier convinced him to strengthen his ties with the group in the months ahead? By tracing Caillebotte's artistic allegiances and activities in the early 1870s, we can begin to answer these questions.

Caillebotte's link to the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874 was his friendship with de Nittis, who exhibited five works that spring. The two became friends when Caillebotte was still a student at the Atelier-Bonnat and in 1872 Caillebotte traveled to Naples to attend the christening of Jacques de Nittis, his godson.[103] De Nittis had been invited to participate in the "première exposition" by Degas, who was well-connected within the group of young Italian artists working in Paris in the early 1870s, a group that included Giovanni Boldini, Telemaco Signorini, and Federico Zandomeneghi.[104] De Nittis exhibited four landscapes and a smaller

---

[102] He would turn twenty-eight in August 1876. The canvases he had ready for submission to the Salon were those that he instead chose to exhibit at the second Impressionist exhibition, see Berson 1996, II: 33-34.

[103] Marie Berhaut, *Gustave Caillebotte: catalogue raisonné des peintures et pastels* (Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 1994), 5. Jacques was Giuseppe de Nittis' son.

[104] The most recent account of De Nittis's life, work, and brief affiliation with the Impressionist group is Emanuela Angiuli and Fernando Mazzocca eds., *De Nittis* (Venice: Marsilio, 2013); see also: Renato Miracco ed., *De Nittis, Impressionista*

work titled *Étude de femme* (ca. 1874, unidentified), paintings the critics described as some of the most accomplished in the exhibition.[105] Despite – or perhaps, because of – this critical success, de Nittis chose not to participate in future independent exhibitions. In the final decade of his career, he preferred more traditional exhibition venues and his showing of twelve paintings at the 1878 Exposition Universelle earned him a gold medal in the same year that he was awarded the Légion d'honneur.[106]

While there is no single document confirming that Caillebotte visited the first exhibition in 1874, it is implausible that he would have missed the opportunity to see works on view by his close friend de Nittis and by his neighbor, Rouart, who lived just around the corner at 34 rue de Lisbonne and with whom Caillebotte shared mutual acquaintances.[107] Caillebotte also knew Desboutin, who did not exhibit with the

---

italiano (Rome: Chiostro del Bramante, 2004). Degas would later insist on including Zandomeneghi in the 1880 exhibition, leading to the dissolution of his friendship with Caillebotte. This conflict is thoroughly detailed in Chapter 3, 10 rue des Pyramides, 1880: Plans for a Fifth Exhibition.

[105] For example, Léon de Lora writing for *Le Gaulois* (April 18, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:26-27 "Parmi les plus excellents paysages, nous citerons [...] les *Vues d'Italie*, de M. de Nittis,"; and Le Père siffleur, for *Le Sifflet* (April 26, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:38, "*Le Déjèuner*, de Monnet [sic]; *l'Avant-Scène*, de Renoir; *le Clocher*, de Jouy [sic]; *le Comte*, de Boudin; *Un paysage près Blois*, de Nillis [sic]; *les Barques à plomb*, de Mulot-Durivage, sont des tableaux vraiment remarquables."

[106] See Miracco 2004, 19. De Nittis died suddenly of a stroke in 1884, at the age of thirty-eight.

[107] See "Chronology," in Distel ed. 1994, 312: "1874, 15 April – 15 May: Gustave Caillebotte does not take part in the first Impressionist exhibition. But it is likely that he already knows, among the exhibitors, Henri Rouart, a neighbor (at 34 rue de Lisbonne), whose family background is comparable to his own, and with whom he has friends in common […]"

group in 1874 but whose large circle of friends included Degas, Manet, Émile Zola, Edmond Duranty, and Edmond de Goncourt.[108] The timeline of when Caillebotte met the members of the core Impressionist group is unclear and it is possible that he had met Degas by April 1874, as the two men had friendships with Rouart and Desboutin in common.[109] That Caillebotte was initially introduced to the Impressionist group by Degas is a tempting possibility suggested by a letter Pissarro wrote to Caillebotte in 1881, "[…] remember that he [Degas] brought us Mlle. Cassatt, Forain, and *you*," but it is difficult to discern whether Pissarro meant that Degas introduced Caillebotte to members of the Impressionist group early on or that Degas encouraged Caillebotte to participate in the 1876 exhibition.[110]

In 1872 and 1873, Caillebotte had been working in a small, fourth-floor studio space in the family home and in rented or borrowed studios, painting dimly lit interior spaces such as those of *Interior of a Studio with Stove* (ca. 1872, fig. 16) and *The*

---

[108] For a biographical sketch and overview of Desboutin's social circles in the 1870s, see: Janine Bailly-Herzberg, "Marcellin Desboutin and his World," *Apollo* 92 (1972), 496-500.

[109] Degas was also a close friend of Bonnat – the two had met at school in Louis-le-Grand and reunited in Rome between 1858 and 1861, when Bonnat was on fellowship at the Académie de France. It is unlikely, however, that Caillebotte would have socialized with his teacher's friends, particularly as Degas and Bonnat were fourteen and fifteen years his senior, respectively. See Robert Gordon ed., *Degas* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988), 102-103.

[110] "[…] rappelez-vous qu'il [Degas] nous a amené Mlle. Cassatt, Forain, et *vous*," from a letter written by Pissarro to Caillebotte, dated January 27, 1881, and published in Berhaut 1994, no. 23, 246. Absent further evidence, the latter suggestion seems more likely.

Painter Morot in his Studio (ca. 1873-1874, fig. 17).[111] By late 1873, he had brightened his palette and was crafting more complex compositions, such as his *Woman at a Dressing Table* (1873, fig. 18). Apparently, Caillebotte saw none of these works as worthy of submission to the Salon, waiting until 1875 to submit his first painting. It is unusual that Caillebotte waited to submit a picture to the Salon; his friend and contemporary de Nittis had had his first submission accepted in 1874 and Aimé Morot, the subject of Caillebotte's studio portrait, had gained attention for his first major canvas, *Super Flumina Babylonis* (1873, fig. 19), which won the Grand Prix de Rome in 1873.[112] That Caillebotte chose to wait reveals his ambition to be taken seriously as a professional artist and the effort he must have invested in that first submission.

The Floor Scrapers

In his analysis of the estate documents drawn up in December 1874, Marrinan found that Caillebotte's father had invested 36,000 francs in the construction of an

---

[111] That these two paintings were painted outside of the Caillebotte family home is a point argued by Marrinan, who notes that the small space on the fourth floor that Caillebotte had been using as a temporary studio at 77 rue de Miromesnil was centrally heated and would not have had a freestanding stove. The fourth-floor studio space is described in "Cahier des charges pour la vente d'un hôtel sis à Paris appartenant à MM. Caillebotte," ANMC, Étude XXV, répertoire 18, no. III, 3 February 1879, as cited in Marrinan 2017, 26.

[112] For de Nittis's Salon submission, see: Erich Steingräber and Giuliano Matteucci eds., *The Macchiaoli: Tuscan Painters of the Sunlight* (London: Stair Sainty Matthiesen Gallery, 1984), 111. There has yet to be a modern monograph on the work of Aimé Morot; the details of his Prix de Rome painting, *Super Flumina Babylonis*, are known from E. Benezit, *Dictionnaire critique et documentaire des peintres, sculpteurs, dessinateurs et graveurs* (Paris: Librairie Grund, 1976) VII:553.

atelier for his son at the family home, which was completed by May 1875.[113] The timing of this construction underpins Marrinan's argument that the labor at the center of *The Floor Scrapers* is that of workers hired to finish the new wood floor in Caillebotte's two-story studio at 77 rue de Miromesnil. While its French title, *Raboteurs de parquet*, has been translated to *The Floor Scrapers*, or, more accurately, *The Floor Planers*, Varnedoe was the first to identify the work of these three men as installing a new floor rather than refinishing an existing one.[114] Marrinan's research puts to rest the question of whether the laborers are finishing the surface of the floor or installing a new one – simply put, they are doing both.[115]

In the spring of 1875, after an intense period of work, Caillebotte submitted *The Floor Scrapers* to the Salon jury. When it was refused, he withdrew the painting from the second round of review and selection. He would not submit another picture to the Salon in the spring of 1876, or ever. Caillebotte's response to the rejection of his submission by the jury in April 1875 is known through correspondence between his friends Desboutin and de Nittis. In a letter dated April 13, 1875, Desboutin wrote to de Nittis that while in Paris, he saw "Caillebotte – painter – quite distressed over the

---

[113] Marrinan 2017, 59-60. This sum of 36,000 was paid out of Caillebotte Sr.'s total estate, which was valued at two million francs at his death.

[114] Kirk Varnedoe ed., *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition* (Houston, TX: The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), 83-85.

[115] That this was an image of "raboteurs" was unclear to critics at the time, who also called this painting: "Rabotteurs [sic] de parquets", "Gratteurs de parquet", "Des racleurs de parquet", and "Parqueteurs à l'ouvrage." Varnedoe describes the labor in the Orsay painting as "familiar in connection with a new building where humidity trapped during construction has caused the floorboards to buckle upwards along their edges." Varnedoe 1976, 84.

refusal of his picture by the Salon jury."[116] In a letter to his wife, Léontine, de Nittis wrote that he had received the news of Caillebotte's rejection from Desboutin. About an upcoming dinner he insisted: "Invite Caillebotte Gustave [sic], and let him learn well a lesson from the situation: that he should make art without giving a damn about the jury, because the future is ours."[117] These letters affirm the emotional investment the young artist had made in his first submission and the dejection he must have felt when it was refused. They also reveal that as early as April 1875, Caillebotte was being encouraged by his artist friends to join their efforts to mount independent group exhibitions.

Curiously, no surviving document or letter records which painting Caillebotte sent to the Salon in the spring of 1875. Of the twenty-seven reviews that describe Caillebotte's work at 1876 exhibition, two mention the Salon of 1875. Burty, writing for the London periodical *The Academy*, admired Caillebotte's debut at 11 rue Le Peletier, but wrote that his paintings would not have been a good fit for the Salon galleries in the Palais des Champs-Elysées: "[t]hese pictures would create a scandal in an official Salon amid the false and sinewless figures of the school, and we applaud the juries for their wisdom in keeping them out."[118] In his review for *Le Rappel*,

---

[116] "De tous ceux qui je voyais chez vous je n'ai guère eu occasion de revoir que le Caillebotte – peintre – bien triste du refus de son tableau par le jury du Salon," Desboutin to de Nittis dated April 13, 1875, as published in Mary Pittaluga and Enrico Piceni, *De Nittis* (Milan: Bramante, 1963), 353-354.

[117] "Invite Caillebotte Gustave et qu'il tire de la circonstance une vraie leçon, qu'il fasse de l'art en se fichant du jury car l'avenir est à nous." Giuseppe de Nittis to Léontine de Nittis, undated letter, as published in Pittaluga and Piceni 1963, 283-84.

[118] Philippe Burty, "Fine Art: The Exhibition of the 'Intransigeants,' *The Academy* (April 15, 1876), as cited in Berson 1996, I:64-66.

Emile Petitdidier writes unambiguously about Caillebotte's rejection from the Salon under the penname Emile Blémont: "M. Caillebotte was not admitted by the jury last year with one of the paintings that he now shows us. A very bad decision by MM. the official jurors!"[119] Petitdidier either does not know or chooses not to name the rejected picture, but of the eight paintings listed in the 1876 exhibition catalogue, five have been identified and of those five, all but one are signed and dated 1876.[120] Only *The Floor Scrapers*, now in the collection of Musée d'Orsay, is signed and dated 1875.[121]

When the Musée d'Orsay painting was shown in 1876, it was listed in the catalogue with the title *Raboteurs de parquets*.[122] It was one of two canvases

---

[119] "M. Caillebotte n'a pas été admis l'an dernier au jury avec un des tableaux qu'il nous montre. Un très mauvais point à MM. les jurés officiels!" from Emile Blémont, "Les Impressionnistes," *Le Rappel* (April 9, 1876), 2-3 and partially reprinted in *Le Moniteur universel* (April 11, 1876), as cited in Berson 1996: I:62-64.

[120] Marie Berhaut's catalogue raisonné mistakenly lists the signature on *Young Man at his Window* (1876, fig. 20) as: "G. Caillebotte 1875," but in the painting's lower left corner, the artist inscribed: G. Caillebotte 1876.

[121] While it is possible that the rejected picture is one of the three unidentified paintings from the 1876 catalogue – two are titled *Jardin* and the third, *Aprés déjeuner* – it is unlikely. It was common practice for artists to list first those thought to be his or her best works in the exhibition catalogue. Degas, for example, lists *A Cotton Office in New Orleans* (1873, fig. 21) first in 1876, while Morisot lists *Au Bal* (1875, fig. 22) first below her name. Monet chooses to list five landscape paintings first that year, which corresponds to his anxieties about the salability of his work in the mid-1870s. Given Caillebotte's reaction to jury's decision in 1875, it seems likely that he would want the rejected picture listed first or second in the 1876 catalogue.

[122] *Catalogue de la 2e Exposition de peinture, par MM. Béliard, Legros, Pissaro... Renoir... Sisley, Degas, Monet (Claude)... Morisot (Berthe) [etc]... 11, rue Le Peletier... avril 1876*, (Paris: Alcan-Lévy, 1876). There is a copy of the catalogue housed at the Bibliothèque nationale de France, Département de la Réserve des livres

exhibited with that title; the variant is more square in its overall composition and roughly three-quarters its size, depicting a similar subject but an altogether different view (1875, fig. 23). The Orsay version is signed and dated in the lower right corner: "G. Caillebotte 1875," whereas the private collection variant is signed in the lower left corner: "G. Caillebotte 1876." These inscriptions have led scholars to conclude that the Orsay painting was made in early 1875 and submitted to the Salon jury by March, whereas the smaller variant was painted one year later from drawings made at the same time as the Orsay painting.[123] This conclusion depends on a misunderstanding of how Caillebotte signed and dated his pictures and the chronology of his reprisal of the *Floor Scrapers* subject should be clarified.

Both paintings show laborers installing a hardwood floor and although the Orsay version gives a clearer view of the labor at hand, both show the same tools. In the private collection picture, the man kneeling at right holds a *rabot*, a two-handled plane used to remove the surface of a hardwood floor.[124] He pushes the *rabot* across

---

rares, RES P-V-646, and digitized in 2011: http://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb33899194n.

[123] Marrinan repeats this argument, which has persisted in the literature since the first edition of Berhaut's catalogue raisonné, published in 1978 [cat. no. 29]. See Marrinan 2017, 62.

[124] Varnedoe was the first to precisely identify the tools being used in the Orsay picture: "The dark shining surface of the floor does not owe to old wax being removed, but to the water with which the scrapers initially soaked the bare floor to prevent splintering of the wood. The 'stripes' in the floor are dry wood exposed by the first step in the process, the passage of a heavy-duty two-handled plane, the *rabot*, over the buckled edges of the planks […] The broad light area at lower left is the result of the second step, the overall scraping with a smaller, finer blade, the *racloir* […]The knife-like tool intruding from the lower left edge of the picture is (like the similar blade reached for by the leftmost man) a file, used every few strokes to keep the blade of the *racloir* at peak sharpness." Varnedoe 1976, 84.

the wood planks in a gesture nearly identical to that of the right-most figure in the Orsay painting. The tool being sharpened by the seated laborer in the private collection painting is a *racloir,* a smaller, finer blade that is pulled across the surface of the floor after the first pass with the *rabot*. A *racloir* is being used by the center laborer in the Orsay painting and another is held in the hand of the left-most laborer, who reaches with his right hand for a file, used every few pulls to keep the blade of the *racloir* sharp. Another file is balanced precariously at the bottom left edge of the Orsay painting, the same tool depicted just to the left of the kneeling worker in the private collection picture.

While the labor is the same in both canvases, the workers and the spaces they occupy are not. Both offer insiders' views, quite literally, but the private collection picture is of a room with dull, white and sandstone walls and a red chair rail, as opposed to the gleaming, opulent white walls with gold trim in the larger Orsay version. The two rooms are further differentiated by the windows: the private collection picture shows a simple wrought-iron balcony railing whereas the window in the Orsay picture features more ornate metalwork.[125] The studio built for Caillebotte in the family home was two-stories and these two pictures show the work of finishing the floor in two separate spaces.[126] According to a document detailing the final distribution of Martial Caillebotte's estate, the studio was completed by May 1875.

---

[125] A preparatory charcoal drawing of the balcony railing from the Orsay picture is now in a private collection: *Study of a Balcony Railing Viewed through a Window* (1875, fig. 24).

[126] Marrinan identifies the space of the private collection picture as "the lower room just above the concierge that overlooks the rue de Lisbonne (the building visible through the window still exists)." Marrinan 2017, 62.

Since the two paintings show the finishing of floors in the two spaces of that studio, the simplest conclusion is that both were painted in 1875.[127] That there are preparatory drawings for the private collection picture does not necessarily mean that the subject was reprised in 1876 on the basis of those drawings; Caillebotte made drawings and oil sketches for a number of his major canvases in the mid-1870s and that preparatory work was coincident with his work on the finished paintings.[128] The 1876 inscription on the private collection picture that has complicated the chronology of these canvases can be explained by Caillebotte's practice of occasionally inscribing paintings with the first date of exhibition and not necessarily of production.

The Orsay version of *The Floor Scrapers* is the only major canvas dated 1875 and so it must be the painting that was rejected by the Salon that spring. The private collection variant was produced the same year, but it was signed and dated 1876, when Caillebotte was planning his submissions for the exhibition at 11 rue Le Peletier. Having clarified that the two pictures show the same phase of construction at the Caillebotte family home and were painted at the same time, we can reassess the order of their production. That the Orsay painting is more complex in its treatment of light and space suggests that it was painted after its smaller, simpler variant by an artist eager to submit the best possible picture to the Salon jury. A technical study of the Orsay painting undertaken in the early 1990s describes the prominent cracking across

---

[127] See Marrinan 2017, 59-60.

[128] For example, *Study for the Floor-Scrapers: Hands and Man Kneeling* (1875, fig. 25) a pencil drawing now in the collection of the Musée Pissarro, Pontoise and *Study for Paris Street, Rainy Day* (1877, fig. 26), a graphite and charcoal drawing now at the Art Institute of Chicago.

the surface of the picture as evidence that the canvas has been painted quickly, with new layers of paint applied before the underlying layers had time to properly dry.[129] This rushed application of paint might be the result of Caillebotte's efforts to complete the more ambitious canvas in time for its submission to the jury in March.

A final piece of evidence that suggests that the Orsay version was painted after the smaller variant is the catalogue printed to accompany the 1876 exhibition. The catalogue does not distinguish between the two pictures, which are listed as no. 17 and no. 18, both with the title "Raboteurs de parquet." While scholars have arbitrarily assigned no. 17 to the version in the Musée d'Orsay and no. 18 to the private collection painting, the critic Bertall wrote in his review for *Paris-Journal* and *Le Soir*: "he [Caillebotte] shows that he has a certain talent, witness the little [*petit*] floor scraper, sitting in the back of his painting no. 27."[130] In the catalogue, no. 27 is a landscape by Félix-Adolphe Cals, but perhaps Bertall meant no. 17, misstating the catalogue number by a single digit. He describes a seated figure and since the word "petit" in this context can mean both small and young, the private collection picture, with its young laborer filing the *racloir*, seems the right candidate for the painting Bertall describes as the first listed under Caillebotte's name in the exhibition catalogue. While art historians have assumed that the more ambitious painting was

---

[129] This study was undertaken by Myriam Eveno, Jean Paul Rioux, and Maurice Solier, with the assistance of Anne Roquebert and the support of the Research Laboratory of the Musées de France. Its findings have not been published but are summarized in Distel ed. 1994, cat. no. 3, 38-39.

[130] "[...] il [Caillebotte] pourra montrer qu'il a un certain talent, témoin le petit racleur de parquet, assis au fond de son tableau no. 27," in Bertall, "Exposition des impressionnalistes, rue Lepeletier," *Paris-Journal* (April 15, 1876), 1-2 and *Le Soir* (April 15, 1876), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:55-57.

listed first in the catalogue, Bertall's review suggests the smaller painting was first and that the Orsay picture was listed second and might, therefore, be the later variant.

It is also possible that the two pictures were painted concurrently, or that one was painted and then reworked at a later date, but finally, the order of these pictures matters less than the fact that both were painted in 1875, before Caillebotte decided to participate in group exhibitions outside the Salon. Caillebotte's misunderstood practice of dating pictures only when they were ready for exhibition has complicated the chronology of his early work in the existing literature. Clarifying the chronology of Caillebotte's artistic production in the mid-1870s is crucial for understanding his motivations for affiliating with the Impressionist group so early in his career and for assuming a leadership position in the group within months of his first exhibition with them. Given the events that follow, the rejection of the Musée d'Orsay's painting by the Salon jury in 1875 permanently severed Caillebotte from the academic system in which he had trained and drove him to invest, financially and professionally, in the artists' collective that would shape his work for the next decade.

"Il sait bien que c'est ainsi qu'il se fera un nom": Caillebotte's Debut

Caillebotte's decision to affiliate with the Impressionist group in the spring of 1876 is known through a series of letters written between its members, although no written response from Caillebotte has been recovered. It is known from a letter written by de Nittis to his wife that Caillebotte was being recruited for the independent exhibitions as early as 1875, and in the fall and winter of that year, he continued to

socialize with artists from the 1874 exhibition.[131] In February 1876, Renoir and Rouart wrote to Caillebotte:

> We thought it would be good to repeat the group effort to organize a private exhibition and to this end, we have reached an agreement with M. Durand-Ruel, who is renting us two rooms, including the largest one. We would be very happy to see you associated with us in this new undertaking. [...] Cost: 120 francs per exhibitor, payable before February 25 at the premises of M. Durand-Ruel. Opening on March 20. Length: one month. Maximum number of works: five. Please respond promptly to one of us if you are with us.[132]

It is not entirely clear who the principal organizers were for this second independent exhibition. The Société anonyme had been dissolved by early 1875, but Renoir, its first and only president, drafted the invitation to Caillebotte and seems to have had a

---

[131] See, as previously cited, the undated letter from Giuseppe de Nittis to Léontine de Nittis, published in Pittaluga and Piceni 1963, 283-84.

[132] "Paris, 5 février 1876, Monsieur Caillebotte, Nous avons pensé qu'il serait bon de renouveler l'essai tenté en commun d'une exposition particulière, à cet effet nous nous sommes entendus avec M. Durand-Ruel qui nous loue deux salles dont la plus grande. Nous serions très heureux de vous voir vous associer à nous dans cette nouvelle tentative. Vos biens dévoués.

Renoir, H. Rouart

Frais: 120 francs par exposant, payables jusqu'au 25 février chez M. Durand-Ruel. Ouverture le 20 mars prochain. Durée: un mois. Nombre d'œuvres admises: cinq. Pour les renseignements complémentaires s'adresser chez Durand-Ruel. Prière de répondre de suite à l'un de nous si vous êtes des nôtres."

Letter from Renoir and Rouart to Caillebotte, February 5, 1876. The letter is in a private collection in Paris and is published in Berhaut 1994, no. 1, 273. The number of allowed works had grown by the exhibition's opening, perhaps because Durand-Ruel agreed to lease the third room on the first floor of his gallery space. When the exhibition opened on March 30 [note: not the 20th, as the invitation specified] no artist had limited themselves to just five works.

role in the organization of the 1876 exhibition. Rouart was a provisional administrator in the Société anonyme and was Caillebotte's neighbor, which is perhaps why he was the second signatory to the February letter. By the spring of 1876, Degas seemed to be the artist most responsible for the logistics of the exhibition, as is made clear by his letter to Berthe Morisot arranging the delivery of her works to Durand-Ruel's galleries.[133] The letter invites Morisot to the exhibition space "to take care of the placing" of her pictures, indicating that each artist was responsible for arranging his or her own works in the days leading up to the exhibition. Presumably, Caillebotte was invited to do the same when he accepted Renoir and Rouart's invitation in early February. By the end of the month, he had made tangible his investment in the core group of Impressionist artists, purchasing three works by Monet for his personal collection.[134]

---

[133] Morisot's correspondence was first compiled and edited by her grandson in 1957: Denis Rouart, *The Correspondence of Berthe Morisot* (New York: George Wittenborn Inc., 1957). He mistakenly dates this letter to April 1874, although it describes the opening of "the second exhibition of the Impressionists" on a Thursday, the 30th, and can therefore only refer to the 1876 exhibition. The volume's problematic chronology is described and mediated in the introduction for the most recently revised edition, Kathleen Adler and Tamar Garb, "Introduction," pp. 1-12, in Adler and Garb eds., *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence with her Family and Friends* (London: Camden Press, 1987). The letter from Degas reads: "Dear Madam, I do not know whether you have been notified that this is the moment for sending your pictures. The opening will be Thursday morning, the 30th of this month. It is therefore necessary that you send in your work on Monday or Tuesday, and that you come if possible to take care of the placing. We are planning to hang the works of each painter in a group together, separating them from any others as much as possible. I beg of you, do come to direct this." Adler and Garb eds. 1987, 110.

[134] See Distel ed. 1994, 312. "23–24 and 26 February 1876: Monet enters the following sales into his account book: 'M. Caillebotte / *Figures en plein air* 200F / M. Caillebotte peintre *Les Dahlias* 600F / *Pochade Argenteuil* 200F," (Musée Marmottan, Paris, MM5160 [1] fol. 10)."

The Floor Scrapers and its variant were two of the eight paintings that Caillebotte exhibited in 1876. Of the remaining six, three have been identified: *Young Man Playing a Piano* (1876, fig. 27), now at the Bridgestone Museum of Art in Tokyo; *Young Man at his Window* now in a private collection in Dallas, Texas; and *Luncheon* (1876, fig. 28), also in a private collection. The remaining three have not been identified but were listed in the exhibition catalogue: two under the title *Jardin*, and a third, *Après déjeuner*. The latter is presumably the interior scene that received brief mention in Georges Rivière's review of the 1876 exhibition, quoted in *L'Artiste* that May: "The boater kneeling near a table is his best painting."[135] No work by Caillebotte matching that description has since been identified and it is believed lost. Of the extant works thought to have been painted by Caillebotte before 1877, *Le Parc de la propriété Caillebotte à Yerres* (1876, fig. 29) and either *Coin d'un parc, Yerres* (ca. 1876, fig. 30) or *Le Jardin à Yerres* (ca. 1876, fig. 31) seem the best candidates for the two *Jardin* pictures listed in the catalogue. However, none of the twenty-seven reviews that describe Caillebotte's work mention a garden or outdoor scene, so it is possible that the two canvases were pulled from the exhibition after the catalogue was finalized.[136]

---

[135] "Le *Canotier* à demi couché près d'une table, est son meilleur tableau." George Rivière, "Les Intransigeants de la peinture," *L'Esprit moderne* (April 13, 1876) has been lost but it is reprinted in Pierre Dax, "Chronique," *L'Artiste* (May 1, 1876), 347-349, as cited in Berson 1996, I:70.

[136] Each of the other paintings exhibited in 1876 is mentioned or described in the contemporary criticism. But in his review for *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité*, dated April 1, 1876, A. de L. wrote: "De son exposition très-nombreuse, nous retiendrons quatre toiles [...] and concluded with: "Le Catalogue n'étant pas fait au moment où nous écrivons; nous ne garantissons pas l'exactitude des désignations." See Berson 1996, I:87-88.

The eight canvases printed in the exhibition catalogue were selected from the twenty-nine finished oil paintings Caillebotte had in his studio reserve in early 1876.[137] The range of paintings that Caillebotte had to choose from included four still-lifes, nine interior scenes, eleven landscapes or outdoor scenes, and three portraits. Given what we know about the works that Caillebotte had ready for exhibition in the spring of 1876 and given his familiarity with the successes and failures of the 1874 exhibition, we can begin to understand his strategy as having two primary motivations: his frustration with the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* at the Salon of 1875 and his desire to recreate the critical success of compositionally complex interior scenes exhibited by Degas and Monet in the 1874 exhibition.

That Caillebotte was frustrated by the rejection of his picture by the Salon jury in 1875 is known through correspondence between his friends de Nittis and Desboutin,

---

[137] The other identified oil paintings completed by early 1876 include three interior scenes: *Après déjeuner* [no. 2], *Femme à sa toilette* [no. 9], *Interieur d'atelier au poêle* [no. 10]; eleven landscapes or outdoor scenes: *Femme assise sous un arbre* [no. 4], *Une route à Naples* [no. 6], *Bord de canal, près de Naples* [no. 7], *Chevaux à l'écurie* [no. 18], *L'Yerres, effet de pluie* [no. 21], *Lavoir au bord de l'Yerres* [no. 22], *Prarie à Yerres* [no. 24], *Parc de la propriété Caillebotte à Yerres* [no. 25] , *Remise de barques près de Port-Marly* [no. 28], *La Seine à Port-Marly* [no. 29], *La machine de Marly* [no. 30]; four still lifes: *Nature morte: Pichet, pommes, et raisin* [no. 12], *Canard d'Inde* [no. 13], *Nature morte: Fruits, pot, et pipe* [no. 14], *Nature morte: Panier des fruits et vase de fleurs* [no. 15]; and two portraits: *Portrait de Bérenger* [no. 16], *Le peintre Morot dans son atelier* [no. 17]. This list does not include *Déjeuner de canotiers au bord de Yerres* [no. 1] or *Femme nue étendue sur un divan* [no. 8], paintings that Marie Berhaut believed to be autograph works by Caillebotte but that seem very unlike his other paintings from the early 1870s or any other period. These paintings have not been publicly exhibited as autograph works by Caillebotte since the 1970s. This list also does not include *Lilas dans un vase blanc* [no. 11], which is likely a student picture, signed "Gustave Caillebotte" and not the "G. Caillebotte," signature the artist adopted after leaving the Atelier-Bonnat. The catalogue numbers listed here are those given in Berhaut 1994.

which characterize the artist as "quite distressed over the refusal of his picture by the Salon jury."[138] As is detailed in Marrinan's account of the painting's production in early 1875 and in my own account of the relationship between *The Floor Scrapers* and its contemporaneous variant, Caillebotte invested a great deal of time, effort, and ego in this first Salon submission.[139] He had withheld accomplished works such as *Woman at a Dressing Table* from previous Salons, choosing to wait while his friends and contemporaries submitted paintings in 1873 and 1874.[140]

The known preparatory drawings and oil sketches for the Orsay version of *The Floor Scrapers* reveal that every aspect of the composition – its tilted perspective, its gleaming surfaces and decorative accents, its attention to the hands and gestures of the laborers, their distinctive musculature – was carefully developed. Although the final canvas was finished quickly, it was the product of many months of concentrated effort and was painted with very few changes or adjustments. Having no financial necessity to sell his work, it is easy to understand the oversized importance Caillebotte would have placed on the prestige and professional legitimacy that would have come with acceptance of his work by members of the jury. While Bazille claimed to have no interest in recognition or awards a decade earlier, Caillebotte seems to have been, by comparison, very invested in his submission and sufficiently distraught by its rejection so as to never again seek the approval of the jury. When Caillebotte's letter of

---

[138] See, as previously cited, the letter from Desboutin to de Nittis dated 13 April 1875, published in Pittaluga and Piceni 1963, 353.

[139] Marrinan 2017, 60-62.

[140] See fn. 109.

invitation arrived in February 1876, the opportunity to exhibit *The Floor Scrapers* and its variant alongside works by artists Caillebotte had befriended in the year since his Salon rejection must have appealed to a young man seeking vindication outside the state-sponsored system.

Caillebotte could not have foreseen the rejection of his picture by the Salon jury when he first made contact with members of what would become the Impressionist group, but we know that he was acutely aware of the efforts to organize a sustained series of independent exhibitions in the early 1870s and of the relative success of the first attempt. His decision to exhibit with the Impressionist group in 1876 was motivated by the opportunity to show *The Floor Scrapers*, by his admiration for members of the group, whose work he had begun to finance and collect before the opening of the 1876 exhibition, and by his desire to recreate the critical success and attention garnered by certain pictures at the 1874 exhibition, successes he would have remembered from his own visit to the exhibition and from the reviews that ran in a wide range of popular and specialized publications.[141] His financial standing would only improve through the 1870s and into the 1880s, and while Monet and others exhibited works with an eye towards their marketability, Caillebotte was able to direct his attention toward other indicators of professional legitimacy and prestige.

Caillebotte's attendance at the first independent exhibition of 1874 is presumed on the basis of his friendships with affiliated artists, including de Nittis, Rouart, and

---

[141] The following entries are noted in Monet's account book, dated February 23-24 and 26: "M. Caillebotte / *Figures en plein air* 200 F/ M. Caillebotte peintre / *Les Dahlias* 600 F/ *Pochade Argenteuil* 200 F," Musée Marmottan, Paris, MM 5160 [1] fol. 10, as cited in Distel ed. 1994, 312.

Desboutin. His ties to Parisian intellectual life are known through his social circle, which grew to include academics and literary figures such as Henri Cordier and Edmond Duranty, through his attendance at the weekly dinners hosted by de Nittis and his wife in the early 1870s, where artists gathered to discuss literature and culture, and through contemporary and near-contemporary accounts.[142] In his early biography of Monet, Gustave Geffroy wrote about the monthly Impressionist dinners:

> Discussions were sometimes quite heated, especially between Renoir and Caillebotte [...] The debates included not only opinions about art and painting, but on all topics of literature, politics, philosophy, which appealed to Caillebotte's enthusiasm, as a great reader of books, journals and newspapers. Renoir kept up by buying an encyclopedia where he found arguments to "stump Caillebotte."[143]

As a well-read, intellectually curious artist at the beginning of his career, we can presume that Caillebotte was intrigued by the efforts being made by his friends to organize an independent exhibition and that he would have followed the press

---

[142] See, for example, Caillebotte's *Portrait of Henri Cordier* (1883, fig. 32). Cordier was a professor at both the École des Langues orientales and at the École des Sciences politiques, and the leading French Sinologist of his generation. See evidence of Caillebotte's attendance at the de Nittis dinners in the previously cited, undated letter [spring 1875] from Giuseppe de Nittis to Léontine de Nittis, as published in Pittaluga and Piceni 1963, 283-84.

[143] "Les discussions étaient parfois montées de ton, surtout entre Renoir et Caillebotte […] Le débat comportait non seulement des opinions sur l'art et la peinture, mais sur tous les sujets de littérature, de politique, de philosophie, vers lesquels s'élançait la bonne foi de Caillebotte, grand liseur de livres, des revues et de journaux. Renoir s'était mis au courant de tout en achetant un dictionnaire encyclopédique où il trouvait des arguments pour 'coller Caillebotte,'" from "Le diner des impressionnistes," in Gustave Geffroy, *Claude Monet* (Paris: Les Éditions G. Crès & C^{ie}, 1922), 155. The attention that Caillebotte paid to art criticism would only grow in the years ahead. In 1879, he wrote to Monet about the reviews of the fourth independent exhibition: "La presse je ne vous en parle pas, je suppose que vous recevez exactement tous mes journaux. Vous devez en avoir une trentaine." Berhaut 1994, no, 19, 275.

coverage of its opening with interest. Given what is known about the works that Caillebotte had ready for exhibition in the spring of 1876, we can compare the works that he chose to exhibit from this studio reserve to the works on view at the 1874 exhibition that he almost certainly attended and the reviews of the exhibition that he almost certainly read.

Of the thirty-eight editorial pieces written about the 1874 exhibition, a majority are focused on the fifty works exhibited by the seven artists who would become the core members of the Impressionist group: Cézanne, Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley. Monet's work was mentioned in seventeen reviews, Renoir's in sixteen, and Degas's in fourteen, while Astruc, Bracquemond and Guillaumin's work was mentioned in four, three, and two reviews, respectively. In total, the seven artists most often cited in the criticism were mentioned more than twelve times on average, while the other twenty artists were mentioned just under seven times each on average.[144] Of those fifty works by seven artists, a majority were landscapes; Pissarro and Sisley exhibited only landscapes while Monet and Morisot exhibited mostly landscapes. Theirs were the loosely painted pictures that prompted Castagnary to

---

[144] These averages were calculated by comparing the total number of mentions per artists. The work of Astruc, Boudin, Bracquemond, Brandon, Bureau, Cals, Colin, Debras, Guillaumin, Latouche, Lepic, Lépine, Levert, Comtesse de Luchaire, Molins, Mulot-Durivage, de Nittis, Ottin, Ottin *fils*, and Rouart was mentioned 139 times, total, in thirty-eight editorial reviews of the exhibition. The work of Cézanne, Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley was mentioned eighty-seven times in the same thirty-eight reviews, and was described at greater length. See Appendix A. The estimate of nearly seven mentions per artist for the non-core group is generous, as Rouart distorts the figure with his above-average nine mentions and the four mentions of Bureau's work include two reviewers who mistakenly attribute works to him.

write: "They are *impressionists* in the sense that they do not render the landscape, but the sensation produced by the landscape."[145]

Despite the critical attention garnered by these paintings in 1874, Caillebotte chose not to exhibit any landscapes in 1876. He had completed a number of accomplished landscape paintings by the spring of 1876 and like the landscapes exhibited by Pissarro, Sisley, Monet, and Morisot in 1874, Caillebotte's paintings were made *en plein air*, primarily at his family's estate in Yerres or in Naples, where he traveled with de Nittis at least two times before 1876. While he shared their interest in painting directly from nature, the high degree of finish, structured vision, and slightly off-center vanishing points of paintings like *A Road Near Naples* (1876, fig. 33) set Caillebotte's landscapes apart from those by his new colleagues in the mid 1870s. He would adapt his approach to landscape painting in the late 1870s and early 1880s to better complement the work of his co-exhibitors, but the landscapes Caillebotte had produced by 1876 were incompatible with the early critical understanding of Impressionist landscape painting. This first exhibition offered Caillebotte an opportunity to debut his work to public audiences and he selected works that would garner the attention he had been denied at the Salon of 1875, but he did not exhibit paintings incongruous with the nascent Impressionist landscape tradition.

Instead, Caillebotte chose to exhibit works that were formally and stylistically aligned with the interior scenes exhibited by Monet and Degas in 1874. No single

---

[145] "Ils sont impressionnistes en ce sens qu'ils rendent non le paysage, mais la sensation produite par le paysage." Jules-Antoine Castagnary, "Exposition du boulevard des Capucines: Les Impressionnistes," *Le Siècle* (April 29, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:15-17.

work of art received more critical attention at the 1874 exhibition than Monet's *Luncheon* (1868, fig. 34), which had been rejected by the Salon in 1869 and kept in Monet's studio until the first independent exhibition presented an opportunity for its vindication.[146] The critics' responses were mixed. Ernest Chesneau wrote for *Paris-Journal* that light streaming into an apartment had never been rendered with such force of illusion, while Philippe Burty's review for the London-based periodical *The Academy* described "a lamentable want of finish."[147] In his review for *Le Petit Journal*, Édouard Drumont praised the vivid realism of Monet's painting as approaching that of photography: "*Déjeuner*, by M. Monet, vigorously and boldly painted, is the faithful reproduction of a scene from real life; it is a photograph with color, movement, and light."[148] This comparison to photography and description of Monet's interior scene, of its broad, tilted foreground, its shallow interior space and its dramatic interplay of light and dark, prefigured the criticism that *The Floor Scrapers* would receive from Zola and others in 1876.

---

[146] Monet's *Déjeuner*, now in the collection of the Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie, is mentioned in thirteen reviews published in April and May 1874, more than any other work of art on view at the first independent exhibition. See Berson 1996, II: no. I-103, 10.

[147] "Jamais, par exemple, la lumière du jour du Nord dans nos appartements n'a été rendue avec la puissance d'illusion que contient la toile de M. Manet [sic] intitulée: *Le Déjeuner*." Ernest Chesneau, "A côté du Salon: II. Le Plein Air: Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *Paris-Journal* (May 7, 1874), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:17; and "M. Monet has, however, condescended to paint a figure-piece, a *déjeûner* with figures life-size, remarkably energetic in tone and effect, but betraying a lamentable want of finish." Philippe Burty, "The Paris Exhibitions: *Les Impressionnistes*," *The Academy* (May 30, 1874), 616, as cited in Berson 1996, I:9.

[148] "Le *Déjeuner* de M. Monet, vigoureusement et largement peint, est la reproduction fidèle d'une scène de la vie réelle; c'est une photographie avec la couleur, le mouvement et la lumière," Drumont 1874, as cited in Berson 1996, I:20.

In his *Luncheon*, Caillebotte reprises Monet's empty chair by setting a place for himself at the table, with a half-seen dinner plate looming at the very bottom of the canvas, nearly flush with the picture plane. A knife, similar to the blade used to sharpen a *racloir,* balances precariously at the bottom edge of the picture in a compositional device that recalls the Orsay version of *The Floor Scrapers*. Monet and Caillebotte's bourgeois interiors are both backlit, but Monet's picture is characterized by its fairly shallow space, with the tilted floor, table and chairs filling the first half of its depth and the four figures pressed to the background. The space of Caillebotte's *Luncheon*, by comparison, is filled by the gleaming arc of the table and its patterning of doubled and reflected silverware and crystal; one critic would remark that the table must be twelve meters long.[149] The figures seated around Caillebotte's table – his elderly mother and her loyal servant, his unmarried brother who cuts into his meal, oblivious to those around him – point to the social and economic differences between Monet and Caillebotte. The older artist was a father and head of the bourgeois household pictured in his *Luncheon*, responsible for providing for both the mother and the child in his painting. Caillebotte was one of three bachelor sons in an *haut bourgeois* family and he had the social and financial freedom to invest in the Impressionist exhibitions and his fellow artists. The overall composition of Monet's *Luncheon* is far brighter and more convivial than Caillebotte's, but Caillebotte's decision to exhibit such a similar subject speaks to his admiration of Monet,

---

[149] "Qu'on se figure le dessus d'un guéridon rond dans la nature, mais démesurément allongé par suite d'une perspective si mal entendue, que la table semble avoir au moins douze mètres de long," Emile Porcheron, "Promenades d'un flâneur: Les Impressionnistes," *Le Soleil* (April 4, 1876), 2-3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:102-103.

prefiguring the crucial financial support Caillebotte would provide in the years ahead, and to his desire to exhibit paintings that would capture the attention of critics, just as Monet's picture had done in 1874.

The reception of Degas's ten paintings and drawings at the 1874 exhibition was quite positive, with critics for *La Patriote français* and *L'Artiste* writing admiringly about his work. For Etienne Carjat, *The Dancing Class* (ca. 1870, fig. 35) and another ballet picture, unidentified in Degas's *œuvre*, were "delectable pieces," while the dancers in *The Ballet Rehearsal on Stage* (1874, fig. 36) were "finely observed and spiritually rendered."[150] Degas's pictures garnered a great deal of attention at the first independent exhibition and his precisionist style and attention to drawing was admired by a number of critics who wrote at length about his ballet pictures and their individualized dancers. As a visitor to the exhibition in 1874, Caillebotte must have taken note of the carefully observed works by Degas, of his attention to gesture, the "vue d'oiseau" perspective employed in a painting like *The Ballet Rehearsal on Stage* and the broad, tilted foreground and detailed treatment of the piano in *The Dancing Class*. The thoughtful treatment of the young dancer who stands at the far left of *The Ballet Rehearsal on Stage*, with her hands folded carefully behind her back and her face turned down and to her left, must have appealed to Caillebotte, who had completed his *Woman at a Dressing Table* in 1873, painted with

---

[150] *L'Examen de danse au théâtre*, as it is listed in the exhibition catalogue, has not been identified. See Berson 1996, II:7, no. I-54. "*L'Examen de danse au théâtre* et *Classe de danse* sont des morceaux de gourmet […] *La Répétition de ballet sur la scène*, nous montre différents groups de danseuses cambrées, déhanchées, s'étirant dans des attitudes variées finement observes et spirituellement rendues.*"* Etienne Carjat, "L'Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *La Patriote français* (April 27, 1874), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:14-15.

the same careful attention to the gesture of a young woman reaching her back, her shoulder turning her head down and to one side.

One of the most striking critical responses to Degas's work appeared in *L'Artiste*, where Marc de Montifaud describes a pastel, *The Laundress* (1869, fig. 37): "This vigorous work of character painting, very consistent and very assured of its facture, must be ranked among the best works of the exhibition. The gesture of this ironer is of a certain precision and full of pride."[151] Degas's pastel drawing of a laundress was widely admired by critics writing for a range of Parisian and international publications. In *Il Giornale artistico*, De Nittis wrote that the "*blanchisseuses* are so observant in the movements of their work that the craft is completely rendered," a view likely shared by his close friend Caillebotte.[152] By choosing not to exhibit landscapes at the 1876 exhibition, Caillebotte was fashioning himself as a young artist more closely aligned to Degas than to Sisley or Pissarro. He must have felt emboldened to exhibit his painting of laborers on the heels of the positive reception of Degas's pictures in 1874.[153] The success of Degas's laundress

---

[151] "La *Blanchisseuse* nous offre encore l'expression d'une figure largement traitée. Ce vigoureux essai de peinture à caractère, très-consistante et très-accusée de facture, doit être range parmi les œuvres capitales de l'Exposition. Le geste de cette repasseuse est d'une précision et d'un tour pleins de fierté." Marc de Montifaud, "Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *L'Artiste* (May 1, 874), 307-313, as cited in Berson 1996, I:28-31.

[152] "I suoi disegni sono di un gesto meraviglioso come osservazione di verità; le sue *blanchisseuses* sono talmente osservante nei movimenti del loro lavoro che il mestiere è completamente reso," Giuseppe de Nittis, "Corrispondenze: Londra" *Il Giornale artistico* (July 1, 1874), 25-26, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 31-32.

[153] As Marrinan notes in his account of this period, the theme of labor was circulating among the group of artists that met at the Café Guerbois in 1875: Caillebotte was painting his floor scrapers just as Degas was painting laundresses, Zola was writing

and ballet pictures and the critical attention paid to his careful treatment of gesture would have encouraged Caillebotte to exhibit paintings that would elicit a similar reaction at his debut with the group in 1876.

Caillebotte's Reception in 1876

As he had hoped, the response to Caillebotte's debut at 11 rue Le Peletier was overwhelmingly positive. Of the twenty-seven reviews that describe Caillebotte's work in 1876, twenty spoke highly of his work and of his potential. With few exceptions, the negative reviews were quite mild; the critic writing for *La Liberté* described his work as "curious," while Emile Porcheron took a wholly negative view of the venture, but admitted that Caillebotte's paintings were "the least bad in the exhibition."[154] The positive responses to his work highlight the "striking modernity," of his compositions and no fewer than five reviewers describe him as the most accomplished of the group, as "*primus inter pares.*"[155] During the exhibition's four-

---

L'assommoir, a novel about poverty among working-class Parisians, and Duranty, too, was writing a novella about workers. See Marrinan 2017, 32.

[154] "Tout à côté, un curieux tableau de M. Caillebotte représentant les racleurs de parquets. Il y a là des effets de muscles très-curieux." "Nos informations: L'École de Batignolles," *La Liberté* (April 3, 1876), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:90; "Dans la deuxième salle, arrêtons-nous devant les toiles de M. Caillebotte, les moins mauvaises de l'exposition." Porcheron 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:102-103.

[155] "M. Caillebotte est un nouveau venu qui sera le bien venu. Son *Jeune homme à la fenêtre,* son *Jeune homme jouant du piano*, ses *Raboteurs de parquet* sont d'une modernité frappante, et contiennent des parties fermement modelées." Emile Blémont, "Les Impressionnistes," *Le Rappel* (April 9, 1874), 2-3, and partially reprinted in *Le Moniteur universel* (April 11, 1876), as cited in Berson 1996, I:62-64; and "[...] et les tout à fait remarquables *Rabotteurs de parquets* de M. Caillebotte *primus inter pares*." "L'Exposition des intransigeants," *L'Audience* (April 9, 1876), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:53-54.

week run, Caillebotte saw the poor treatment of *The Floor Scrapers* by the Salon jury replaced by praise from critics writing for diverse publications, including the conservative *La Revue politique et littéraire*, the center-right journal *Le Soleil*, the Republican periodical *Le Rappel*, and *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité*, which Burty described as "the organ of the purest academical doctrines."[156] That Caillebotte's work was admired by art critics and journalists representing a wide range of ideological views speaks to its reception as simultaneously forward-looking and grounded in the art of the past.

This view of his art as belonging to both the past and the future is a hallmark of the critical reception of Caillebotte's pictures at the 1876 exhibition. Burty looks back to the fourteenth-century, writing, "his pictures are original in their composition, but, more than that, so energetic as to drawing that they resemble early Florentines," while Marius Chaumelin saw parallels to seventeenth-century Dutch painting: "These last two paintings [*Young Man at his Window* and *Young Man Playing the Piano*] recall Van der Meer, of Delft, and Pieter de Hooch, who Rembrandt taught to stop the sun."[157] In addition to these resonances with the art of the past, critics recognized the

---

[156] "This present attempt has been much better received by the public than the first, and this is not merely the impression of one, who as I do, personally sympathizes with the feelings of these artists as a body, but that of a paper also which is the organ of the purest academical doctrines, *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité*, a weekly fly-leaf of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*." "Fine Art: The Exhibition of the 'Intransigeants'" *The Academy* (April 15, 1876), 363-364, as cited in Berson 1996, I:64-67.

[157] Burty 1876, as cited in Berson 199, I:64-67; "Ces deux derniers tableaux m'ont rappelé Van der Meer, de Delft, et Pieter de Hooch, à qui Rembrandt avait enseigné l'art d'arrêter le soleil." Marius Chaumelin, "Actualités: L'Exposition des intransigeants," *La Gazette des étrangers* (April 8, 1876), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:67-68.

enormous promise of Caillebotte's vision for the future of French painting. Chaumelin's view of Caillebotte as "one of the most original painters who has come to light in several years," was shared by Charles Bigot, by a reviewer for *Moniteur des arts* who goes by the initials E.F., and by Bertall, who wrote that "[Caillebotte] knows well that this [the exhibition of 1876] will be how he makes a name for himself."[158]

Despite this early success and the greater number of positive reviews, Caillebotte became fixated on three observations about his work that were repeated by critics writing for diverse publications. First, that his treatment of perspective was flawed and unconvincing. The critics who wrote negatively about Caillebotte's work shared concerns about his treatment of space and perspective, particularly in *Young Man Playing the Piano*. In his review for *Le Constitutionnel*, Louis Enault characterized Caillebotte as a talented painter and admired the perspective of *The Floor Scrapers* as having been "studied by an eye that sees correctly," but he was unconvinced by the perspectival systems of Caillebotte's portrait of his brother Martial playing the piano. He wrote:

---

[158] "M. Caillebotte est un des peintres les plus originaux qui se soient révélés depuis quelques années," Chaumelin 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:67-68; "Il ne tiendrait qu'à M. Caillebotte de se faire parmi nos artistes une place honorable." Charles Bigot, "Causerie artistique: L'Exposition des 'intransigeants,'" *La revue politique et littéraire* (April 8, 1876), 349-352, as cited in Berson 1996, I:59-62; "" E.F., "Le Groupe d'artistes de la rue Le Peletier," *Moniteur des arts* (April 21, 1876), 1-2), as cited in Berson 1996, I:83-84; and "Dans son *Déjeuner*, ses *Gratteurs de parquet* et son *Jeune Pianiste*, l'intention est évidente ; il sait bien que c'est ainsi qu'il se fera un nom, et alors il pourra nous montrer qu'il a un certain talent, témoin le petit racleur de parquet, assis au fond de son tableau." Bertall, "Les Impressionnalistes," *Les Beaux-Arts* (1876), 44-45, variant of *Paris-Journal* (April 15, 1876), 1-2, and *Le Soir* (April 15, 1876), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:57-59.

> The young man playing the piano inspires real fear. This pupil of Marmontel is sitting in front of a magnificent, grand Erard, but, either this beautiful piece of furniture in rosewood is not sufficiently secured, or that the laws of perspective to which, I am anxious to say it, Mr. Caillebotte is shown ordinarily more faithful, have not been so strictly observed, that the musical instrument threatens to become an instrument of torture; it is feared every moment to see it fall on this good young man, who will be assuredly crushed. He shouldn't scare people like this![159]

Enault's critique of Caillebotte's treatment of perspective was shared by Alfred de Lostalot, who saw Caillebotte's "peculiarities of perspective" as the barrier to his entry into more traditional exhibition venues.[160] The accusations of "strange," "bizarre," and "defective" perspectives by critics writing for major publications discounted the work that went into crafting these compositions. Preparatory drawings made before 1876 for major works such as *The Floor Scrapers*, *Luncheon*, and *Young Man Playing the Piano* include loose, spontaneous chalk sketches of figures, through which Caillebotte worked out gesture and the positioning of a figure within their settings, as well as intricate pencil drawings of architectural space. *The Preparatory Study of a*

---

[159] "Le jeune homme jouant du piano m'inspire des craintes sérieuses. Cet élève de Marmontel est assis devant un magnifique Erard de grandes dimensions, mais, soit que ce beau meuble en palissandre ne soit pas suffisamment calé, soit que les lois de la perspective auxquelles j'ai hâte de le dire, M. Caillebotte se montre ordinairement plus fidèle, n'aient pas été aussi strictement observées, l'instrument de musique menace de devenir un instrument de torture ; on craint à chaque instant de le voir tomber sur ce bon jeune homme, qui va être infailliblement écrasé. Il ne faut pas faire aux gens de ces peurs-là !" Louis Enault, "Mouvement artistique: L'Exposition des intransigeants dans la galerie de Durand-Ruelle [sic]," *Le Constitutionnel* (April 10, 1876), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:81-83.

[160] "... une certaine étrangeté d'aspect, due aux bizarreries de perspective..." A. de L. 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:87-88.

Piano: Study for 'Jeune homme au piano' (1876, fig. 38) makes clear the attention Caillebotte paid not only to the framing of a composition but to the distortions of perspective on its furnishings. Martial's piano was not insufficiently secured to its surroundings, as Enault complained, but intensely observed so as to capture its dimensions and surfaces from the picture's high viewpoint. The peculiarity observed by Enault and others was not the result of Caillebotte's inattention to the laws of perspective but of his intense study of them. Nonetheless, Caillebotte took these judgments to heart and in mid-1876, he began to make careful perspective drawings with a straight-edge in preparation for the large suite of pictures he was preparing for exhibition in 1877.

Lostalot wrote that Caillebotte's "intransigeance" consisted only of his bizarre treatment of perspectival space, but that "as a painter and a draftsman, he returns shamelessly to the ranks of the conservatives of the good school, that of knowledge, where he will certainly receive the best welcome."[161] The second observation that troubled Caillebotte was this prediction that his affiliation with the Impressionist group would be temporary, given the inherent dissonance between their work and his own. This notion that Caillebotte's affiliation with the *intransigeants* was provisional and that he would soon return to the academic system in which he had trained was a common theme in both positive and negative descriptions of Caillebotte's work at the

---

[161] "Toute l'intransigeance de M. Caillebotte consiste à voir les scènes qu'il représente sous une perspective bizarre; comme peintre et comme dessinateur, il rentre sans vergogne dans les rangs des conservateurs de la bonne école, celle du savoir, où il recevra certainement le meilleur accueil. " Alfred de Lostalot, "L'Exposition de la rue Le Peletier," *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* (April 1, 1876), 119-120, as cited in Berson 1996, I:86-87.

1876 exhibition. One critic for the *Gazette de France* wrote admiringly of Caillebotte's ability to approach his fantastical compositions with "a certain science."[162] He speculated that Caillebotte's decision to exhibit with the group was an impulsive decision, and predicted, "one day, the group of real artists will slaughter the fat calf to celebrate the return of this prodigal son."[163]

Despite Chaumelin and Bigot's praise for Caillebotte's originality, a number of critics contextualized his work alongside that of his co-exhibitors. The artist to whom Caillebotte was most often compared in 1876 was Degas, with both Jules Claretie and Rivière writing that Caillebotte was a follower or student of Degas.[164] This comparison to Degas was the third observation that would preoccupy Caillebotte in the months ahead. While Arthur Baignères wrote that Caillebotte's work lagged behind that of Degas, the reviewer for *Moniteur des arts* disagreed:

> The *Portraits dans un bureau*, in New Orleans, by M. Degas, presents well-observed types, but the other works by the artist are, in general, vulgar in their sentiment and their execution. His *Blanchisseuses* return to some degree to the theme of the *Rabotteurs* [sic], of which we have

---

[162] "Caillebotte… met une certain science au service de sa fantaisie." Simon Boubée, "Beaux-Arts: Exposition des impressionnistes, chez Durand-Ruel," Gazette de France (April 5, 1876), 5, as cited in Berson 1996, I:64.

[163] "Il est entré dans le camp des révoltés par suite d'une sorte de coup de tête; un jour, le camp des vrais artistes tuera le veau gras pour fêter le retour de cet enfant prodigue." Boubée 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:64.

[164] "Le chef de ce groupe est un homme d'un talent absolu, M. Degas, qui, escorté de MM. Renoir, Caillebotte, Marcellin Desboutin, etc., marque par un sentiment vigoureux de la réalité et de la vie moderne." Jules Claretie, "Le Mouvement parisien: L'Exposition des intransigeants: M. Degas et ses amis," *L'Indépendance belge* (April 2, 1876), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:69-70; and "M. Caillebotte est l'élève de M. Degas." Rivière 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:70-71.

> just spoken, but the comparison turns to the advantage of M. Caillebotte.[165]

The rivalry imagined by critics hinges on the images of labor exhibited by Caillebotte and Degas in 1876. While Caillebotte likely chose his submission on the basis of the critical attention and praise Degas garnered for his complex interior scenes in 1874, critics did not notice a shared interest in cropped figures or tilted perspectives. Instead, *The Floor Scrapers* and *Laundresses* were considered of the same cloth because of their vulgar subjects, half-nude men scraping the floor of an apartment in one and women pressing freshly laundered shirts in the other. By exhibiting a painting of labor, Caillebotte situated himself among the Realists, although Chaumelin was one of the few critics to use the term "realist" in his description of Caillebotte's work, "in his *Rabotteurs* [sic] *de parquet,* M. Caillebotte proclaims himself a realist as raw, but more spiritual than Courbet, as violent, but more precise than Manet."[166]

This presumed rivalry between Caillebotte and Degas would come to fruition in the early 1880s, when disagreements about style and the direction of the Impressionist venture severed their personal and professional relationship, but in 1876 the two were new colleagues and collaborators, linked by mutual acquaintances and a shared investment in the ideological project of the independent exhibitions. Caillebotte admired the older artist and would go on to acquire eight pastels and pastelized prints

---

[165] "Les *Portraits dans un bureau*, à la Nouvelle-Orléans, par M. Degas, présentent des types bien observés, mais les autres tableaux de l'artiste sont en général vulgaires de sentiment et d'exécution. Ses *Blanchisseuses* rentrent un peu dans la même donnée que les *Rabotteurs*, dont nous venons de parler, mais la comparaison tournerait à l'avantage de M. Caillebotte." E.F. 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:84.

[166] "Dans ses *Rabotteurs de parquet*, M. Caillebotte s'annonce comme un réaliste aussi cru, mais bien autrement spirituel que Courbet, aussi violent, mais bien autrement précis que Manet." Chaumelin 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:68-69.

by Degas for his personal collection before 1879. Being positioned as rivals by critics must have come as a surprise to them both, particularly as in the late 1870s Caillebotte began to turn away from Realist subjects and towards an artistic practice that more closely echoed that of Monet. Nonetheless, Caillebotte's internalization of these criticisms about his treatment of perspective, the dissonance of his work as compared to that of his co-exhibitors, and the relationship between his compositions and those by Degas would shape his work as a painter and exhibition organizer in the months ahead.

6 rue Le Peletier, 1877

In the weeks after the second independent exhibition closed on April 30, 1876, Caillebotte strengthened his financial ties to the Impressionist group through advances paid to Monet, over eight hundred francs in total between July and August of that year.[167] On November 1, the artist's younger brother René, the subject of *Young Man at his Window*, died unexpectedly at the age of twenty-six.[168] Two days later, Caillebotte drafted his first will, which is wholly concerned with the continuation of the independent exhibitions and the bequest of his collection of paintings to the French state. He wrote:

> I would like that there be taken from my estate the sum necessary to hold, in 1878, in the best possible conditions, an exhibition of painters known as intransigents or impressionists. It is rather difficult to evaluate this sum today; it could go up to thirty or forty thousand

---

[167] He also encouraged his brother René and his friend de Nittis to purchase a total of five paintings by Monet. See Distel ed. 1994, 312, which cites Monet's account book, fol. 11v.

[168] Distel ed. 1994, 312.

> francs, maybe more [...] I give to the State the pictures I own; only as I want this gift to be accepted, and accepted in such a way that the pictures go neither into storage nor to a provincial museum, but to the Luxembourg and eventually to the Louvre.[169]

His formal affiliation with the members of the group, who he names as "Degas, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Cézanne, Sisley, and Morisot," without excluding others, is just months old at this point, but Caillebotte's primary concern is for the continuation of their independent exhibitions and the eventual exhibition of their art in state-sponsored institutions. From the very outset of his artistic career, Caillebotte understood the power of exhibition and display and he went so far as to direct the French state in such matters. By January 1877, he would put into motion his plans for a third exhibition, to be held in an apartment he selected, showcasing works by artists that he recruited, that were framed and arranged in an installation of his own design.

"Je compte absolument sur vous": Origins of the Third Exhibition

At a dinner celebrating the close of the 1876 exhibition, a disagreement between Monet and Lepic about Cézanne's participation in future exhibitions boiled over into argument. Cézanne laid out the conflict in a letter to his parents on September 9: "I was hotly defended by Monet at a reunion dinner after the exhibition,

---

[169] "Je désire qu'il soit pris sur ma succession la somme nécessaire pour faire en 1878, dans les meilleurs conditions possible, l'exposition des peintres dits intransigeants ou impressionnistes. Il m'est assez difficile d'évaluer aujourd'hui cette somme; elle peut s'élever à 30, 40 mille francs ou même plus [...] Je donne à l'État les tableaux que je possède, seulement, comme je veux que ce don soit accepté et le soit de telle façon que ces tableaux n'aillent ni dans un grenier ni dans un musée de province, mais bien au Luxembourg et plus tard au Louvre [...]" "Appendix B – Caillebotte's Will," in Berhaut 1994, 281.

when a certain Lepic spoke out against my joining."[170] The conflict Cézanne described escalated over dinner, forcing the artists to take sides. In a letter to Léontine de Nittis on April 20, 1876, just after the dinner, Desboutin wrote:

> Concerning the intransigeants and what you tell me about Lep.[ic] in your kind letter, I should add that my personal feeling (I, who witnessed this little scene) is that Ctte [Caillebotte] had absolutely no intention of being anything other than the most refined he could possibly be […] and he would no doubt be as much surprised as hurt if he knew that you were capable of interpreting otherwise this outburst or wisecrack [...].[171]

The fallout of the dinner was serious enough that Lepic withdrew from the independent exhibitions completely. What Desboutin's letter proves is that Caillebotte was actively involved in debates about the future direction of the independent exhibitions as early April 1876. Although his comments were, apparently, misunderstood when they were relayed to Léontine de Nittis, Caillebotte was not a passive observer of the transformation taking place at the center of the group of independent exhibitors and in the months ahead, he would take an even more active role in efforts to mend fences between the rivalry mounting between Degas, whose views were shared by Lepic, and Monet, who fought for Cézanne's inclusion in subsequent exhibitions.

---

[170] Letter from Cézanne to his parents, September 9, 1876, as translated and cited in Alex Danchev ed., *The Letters of Paul Cézanne* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013), 161-162.

[171] "A propos des intransigeants et de ce que vous me dites de Lep. Dans votre chère lettre je fois ajouter que ma conviction intime (à moi, témoin de cette petite scène) que le dit C^{tte} n'avait nullement l'intention d'être autre chose que le plus régence qu'il lui soit possible de l'être… et serais sans doute aussi surpris que navre s'il savait que vous ayez pu interpréter autrement cette sortie ou boutade…" Pittaluga and Piceni 1963, 357-358.

The first mention of the 1877 exhibition can be traced to an undated letter by Caillebotte to Pissarro, inviting him to a dinner: "I am returning from London and would like to discuss certain matters with you concerning a possible exhibition. Degas, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, and Manet will be there. I count absolutely on you."[172] Richard Brettell and others have dated this letter to January or February 1877, but as Marrinan convincingly argues in his account of Caillebotte's activities in 1876, the letter must have preceded Caillebotte's first will, dated November 3, 1876.[173] The letter to Pissarro describes Manet's attendance at a dinner where plans for the next independent exhibition would be made, but by November, Manet must have decided not to participate in future exhibitions, as he was not named by Caillebotte as a potential exhibitor in his will.[174] The dinner must have taken place before Caillebotte drafted the will, and Marrinan determines that July 10th was the only date between April and November when all six guests would have been in Paris. This earlier date would have been too early to make logistical arrangements for the exhibition that would open in April 1877, but attendees at the July dinner did decide that Cézanne

---

[172] "Voudriez-vous venir lundi prochain dîner à la maison? Je viens de Londres et voudrais vous dire certaines choses relativement à une exposition possible. Vous vous trouvez chez moi avec Degas, Monet, Renoir, Sisley et Manet. Je compte absolument sur vous." Archives Pissarro, letter sold at Hôtel Drouot, Paris, November 21, 1975, lot no. 8. As cited in Berhaut 1978, 243.

[173] See Richard Brettell, "The 'First' Exhibition of Impressionist Painters," pp. 189-202 in Moffett ed. 1986. Marrinan's revised chronology is argued in Marrinan 2017, 134-137.

[174] See Varnedoe 1976, 220. It is improbable that Caillebotte would not have mentioned Manet as a potential exhibitor in future exhibitions had Manet's role in future exhibitions remained unclear.

would be included in future exhibitions, while Manet decided that he would not participate.

Designing the Third Exhibition

In April 1877, the group opened their first exhibition under the direction of Caillebotte.[175] The details of the exhibition's logistics and installation are known through the account of Rivière, a journalist and friend of Renoir's who wrote a two-part review of the exhibition in *L'Impressionniste*, a magazine that emerged as a semi-official exhibition publication and ran in four editions on April 6, 14, 21, and 28, 1877.[176] Unable to secure Durand-Ruel's gallery space that spring, Caillebotte rented a large apartment on the second floor of a building at 6 rue le Peletier, near the corner of boulevard Haussmann and just across the street from where the second independent exhibition had been held the previous spring.[177] The entrance to the building opened onto the *grands boulevards*, and the second-floor rooms had views of both the boulevard Haussmann and the boulevard des Italiens. According to Rivière, the installation of 241 works spanned all five rooms of the apartment. The first room included paintings by Renoir, Monet, and Caillebotte – probably his smaller paintings,

---

[175] Caillebotte's organization of the 1877 exhibited is described by George Shackelford in his essay, "Man in the Middle," in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 39-55. My interest in Caillebotte's lifetime exhibition strategy was sparked by Shackelford's analysis of Caillebotte's role at the 1877 exhibition.

[176] Both reviews were titled "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," and are cited in Berson 1996, I:179-184.

[177] As Jules Robert described it, "un immense appartement préparé *ad hoc*, rue Lepeletier, en face de la maison Durand-Ruel," in "La Journée: Echos et nouvelles," *Paris-Journal* (April 7, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:187.

such as *Portrait of Madame Martial Caillebotte* (1877, fig. 39) and *Portraits in an Interior* (1877, fig. 40). The second room was dedicated to additional works by Monet, including his *Dindons* (1877, fig. 41), and to smaller canvases by Renoir.[178] A group of landscapes in the second room included examples by Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, Guillaumin, Cordey, and Lamy.[179] The third, central room was anchored by Renoir's *Bal at the Moulin de la Galette* (1876, fig. 45) and by more landscapes by Pissarro and Cézanne.[180] Critics in attendance described the fourth room in greatest detail; there, they saw Monet's Gare Saint-Lazare paintings hung alongside Caillebotte's *Paris Street, Rainy Day* and *The Pont de l'Europe*.[181]

In the weeks leading up to the exhibition's opening, Caillebotte met individually with participating artists to plan their submissions and he chaired the installation committee that oversaw the works' arrangement. He further shaped the list of exhibited works by lending from his own collection and by encouraging others to do the same. In total, one third of the works on view were lent by collectors, including

---

[178] The group of smaller works by Renoir in the second room included his *Portrait of M. Sisley* (1877, fig. 42).

[179] Among the landscapes in the second room were Pissarro, *The Garden of Les Mathurins at Pontoise* (1876, fig. 43) and Sisley, *View of Marly-le-Roi from Coeur Volant* (1876, fig. 44).

[180] This group of landscapes in the third room included Cézanne's *Rochers* (ca. 1867-70, fig. 46) and Pissarro's *La Moisson à Montfoucault* (1876, fig. 47)

[181] The Gare Saint-Lazare paintings Monet exhibited in 1877 were: *Arrival of the Normany Train, Gare Saint-Lazare* (1877, fig. 48); *The Gare Saint-Lazare, Arrival of a Train* (1877, fig. 49); *The Gare Saint-Lazare* (1877, fig. 50); *Pont de l'Europe, Gare Saint-Lazare* (1877, fig. 51); and *Gare Saint-Lazare: View Towards the Normandy Line, with Track Signals* (1877, fig. 52).

eight works belonging to Caillebotte: three pastelized monotypes by Degas, three paintings by Pissarro, Monet's *Corner of an Apartment* (1875, fig. 53), and Renoir's *The Swing* (1876, fig. 54). In the spring of 1876, Caillebotte had begun to purchase works by his colleagues, both as a reflection of his own aesthetic interests and, in the case of Pissarro and Monet, as an effort to alleviate financial hardship.[182] By lending prints and paintings to the 1877 exhibition, Caillebotte was able to exert additional influence over the final group of works on view. Of the works by Degas in his collection, he lent *Women on a Café Terrace* (1877, fig. 55), *Woman Leaving her Bath* (1876-77, fig. 56), and *The Chorus* (1877, fig. 57), ensuring that the exhibition would include one of each of Degas's preferred subjects in the mid-1870s – a city scene, a woman at her bath, and an image from the theater. The three Pissarro paintings he lent balanced the landscapes by Cézanne on view in the third gallery. Monet's *Corner of an Apartment* and Renoir's *The Swing* stood apart as recent masterpieces by each artist, certainly among the canvases Caillebotte had in mind when he insisted that his personal collection be displayed in the Musée Luxembourg at his death and, eventually, in the Louvre. By lending from his own collection, Caillebotte was able to fill gaps and to achieve an ideal balance of subjects, media, formats, and sizes.

The exhibition that opened to the public in April 1877 was more focused and balanced than the independent exhibitions that had preceded it. The works on view

---

[182] In January 1877, Caillebotte wrote to Pissarro about a loan: "Surtout je vous en prie ne m'accusez pas de mauvaise volonté; j'espère que vous me connaissez assez pour savoir que je n'en ai aucune. Je ne peux vraiment pas." Letter dated January 24, 1877, as cited in Berhaut 1994, 273, no. 3. Weeks earlier, Caillebotte leased an apartment for Monet at 17 rue Moncey, stretching his resources thin; Distel ed. 1994, 313.

ranged from Salon-scale oil paintings to small watercolors, and the subjects represented city, country, and suburbs in near-equal numbers. Visitors would have been able to compare artists working on similar subjects – portraits by Monet and Caillebotte in the first room, landscapes by Pissarro and Cézanne in the third – and the exhibition's installation in an apartment and not in a commercial space would have allowed those visitors to consider how the works could be hung in their own homes. The cohesion of the exhibited works was the product of Caillebotte's encouragement and intervention; in the weeks leading up to the exhibition's opening he met individually with Degas, Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro to plan their submissions. The result was the most successful Impressionist exhibition to date. Over and over, contemporary reviewers praised the cohesion of the exhibited works and the balance of their installation. The success achieved as a result of Caillebotte's efforts to direct the list of exhibited works was reinforced by the time and money invested in its promotion. Its opening was framed as a social event and critics writing for diverse publications received formal invitations to an advance viewing of the exhibition.[183] Throughout the city, banners and posters advertised the exhibition and succeeded in driving the heavy foot traffic along the boulevard Haussmann indoors.

While the first independent exhibition had been characterized by its economic cooperative structure and the second by its grouping of works by artist, the exhibition of 1877 was marked by a new investment in a collective identity. As the exhibition's

---

[183] "Messieurs les peintres Impressionnistes vous prient de leur faire l'honneur de visiter leur exposition, le mercredi 4 avril, veille de l'ouverture. 6 rue Le Peletier, de 2 h. à 6 heures," as reported in Thomas Grimm, "Les Impressionnistes," *Le Petit Journal* (April 7, 1877), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:151-153.

primary organizer, Caillebotte went to great length to secure representative works in a range of subjects from each exhibitor, taking on a tripartite role as exhibition organizer, lender, and participant. Caillebotte's new leadership position was motivated by his investment in the continued exhibitions, which he articulated as early as the summer of 1876, with the dinner party hosted at his home, and which he put into writing in his first will in November of that same year. The success of the 1877 exhibition brings us to the question that underpins our interest in Caillebotte's mutually influential forms of artistic practice: how did the exhibition's organization and design serve his ambitions as a painter?

Strategy at the Third Exhibition

As Caillebotte met with individual exhibitors in the months leading up to the exhibition's opening, he must have become increasingly aware of how his planned submissions would fit in the broader context of the exhibition. In the end, he chose to exhibit six paintings in 1877: *Paris Street, Rainy Day* (1877, fig. 5), *The Pont de l'Europe* (1876, fig. 4), *Portraits in the Countryside* (1876, fig. 58), *Portrait of Madame Martial Caillebotte* (1877, fig. 39)*, Portraits in an Interior* (1877, fig. 40), and *The House Painters* (1877, fig. 59). Given what we know about the success of Caillebotte's debut in 1876 and the works he had ready for exhibition by April 1877, we can begin to understand his strategy at the third independent exhibition as having been shaped by the nuanced praise his works received in 1876 and by three critiques that had been repeated that spring: that his treatment of perspective was unconvincing, that his affiliation with the Impressionist group would be temporary, and that his work was derivative of Degas's.

In the eleven months between the close of the 1876 exhibition and the opening of the 1877 exhibition, Caillebotte kept busy. He bought works by his co-exhibitors, oversaw debates about the group's direction in the months ahead, completed a four-week period of military service, and, along with his brother Martial, began to race boats competitively and to assemble what would become one of the largest and most comprehensive stamp collections of the nineteenth century.[184] All the while, he continued to paint, producing several of the most ambitious and inventive canvases of his twenty-year career. In order to understand the impact of the group of pictures Caillebotte chose to exhibit in 1877, we must first establish the chronology for their production.

Caillebotte signed and dated all six of the paintings exhibited in 1877. Two – *Portraits in the Countryside* and *The Pont de l'Europe* – are dated 1876, while the remaining four are dated 1877. The *Portrait of Madame Martial Caillebotte* and *Portraits in an Interior* belong to a group of portraits produced by Caillebotte between 1876 and 1877, likely painted coincident with the large-scale city paintings that must have occupied most of his time. In 1877, Caillebotte signed and dated a third interior portrait of a woman knitting – *Madame Boissière Knitting* (1877, fig. 60) – but it was not exhibited until 1879. This supports the theory that Caillebotte had considered exhibiting the work in 1877 and that he kept a small studio reserve of smaller canvases that he pulled works from in preparation for each of the subsequent group exhibitions.

---

[184] See Distel ed. 1994, 312. See also: *The Philatelic Record* (December 1890), vol. XII, no. 144, 203-204. For further discussion of Caillebotte's stamp collecting, see the chapter titled "Caillebotte's Philatelic Impressionism," in the forthcoming volume: Samuel Raybone, *Gustave Caillebotte as Worker, Collector, Painter* (London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, 2019).

While the portraits are modest in their size and loosely painted, each of the other four canvases measures more than a meter across and each is highly finished, the product of many rounds of preparatory drawings, oil sketches, and adjustments made to the final version of the painting.[185] On the basis of its subject and setting, *Portraits in the Countryside* can be dated to July and August 1876, when Caillebotte spent part of his summer at his family's estate in Yerres. It shares its tipped-up ground plane and deep recession of space with the city paintings made in the fall and winter, but its brighter palette and sunlit atmosphere make clear that it is a summer picture, made outside of the city center. The other five paintings were made in Paris and one, *The Pont de l'Europe*, is unusual in that Caillebotte specifies the city of its completion in his inscription "Paris 1876," at bottom right.

The paintings he made between 1875 and 1876 –*The Floor Scrapers*, *Young Man at his Window*, *Young Man at a Piano*, and *The Luncheon* – render the shared spaces of the familial home at 77 rue de Miromesnil, while the three city paintings exhibited in 1877 offer views of the surrounding neighborhood. Art historians have argued that the order of Caillebotte's three city paintings from 1876 and 1877 begins with *The Pont de l'Europe* and ends with *Paris Street, Rainy Day*, but it seems more likely that Caillebotte began with *The House Painters* before turning to *The Pont de l'Europe* and *Paris Street*, in that order. *The House Painters* reprises the theme of laborers that had earned him praise in 1876 and while it features a raking perspective and a left-of-center vanishing point, it is less perspectivally and architecturally

---

[185] Berhaut published both preparatory drawings and oil sketches for *Paris Street, Rainy Day*, *The Pont de l'Europe*, and *The House Painters* in her 1994 catalogue raisonné. See, for example, nos. 43-48, 52, 52A-C, 54-56, and 55A-D.

complex than the other two city paintings. It is also the smallest of the three –*The Pont de l'Europe* is twice its size and *Paris Street* is five and a half times its size, in terms of total surface area.[186] It seems most likely that Caillebotte would have worked his way up to a canvas the size of *Paris Street*.

In this order, the three paintings create a geographical progression that begins in Caillebotte's studio at the family home on the rue de Miromesnil. The façade pictured in *The House Painters* is that of 16 rue de Lisbonne, a sliver of which is visible in *Young Man at his Window*, from 1876.[187] The vantage point of *The Pont de l'Europe* is under a kilometer west from the block pictured in *The House Painters*, walking along the rue de la Bienfaisance, and then walking straight into Caillebotte's painting of the rue de Vienne leads directly to the intersection of the rues Saint-Pétersbourg, Moscou, Turin, Bucarest, and Clapeyron pictured in *Paris Street*. Although Marrinan argues for the order that begins with *The Pont de l'Europe* and ends with *Paris Street*, he notes that the locales of those two pictures are found along the most direct route between Caillebotte's home to the Café Guerbois on the avenue Clichy.[188] By locating *The House Painters* as the first site along this route, we can reorder the production of these pictures to better correspond with this regular walk the artist would have made between his home and the café where he regularly convened

---

[186] Based on the following measurements: *The House Painters*: 89 x 116 cm, or 10,324 cm^2; *The Pont de l'Europe*: 125 x 180 cm, or 22,500 cm^2; and *Paris Street, Rainy Day*: 212 x 276 cm, or 58,512 cm^2. He had produced paintings on this scale prior to 1877 – *The Floor Scrapers* measures 102 x 146 cm.

[187] Philippe Bousquet, "Peintres en batîment," *Interprétations* (April 25, 2011). Published online: https://artifexinopere.com/?p=844.

[188] Marrinan 2017, 112.

with members of the Impressionist group. This reordering of the pictures corresponds with a logical progression in their scale, finish, and compositional complexity.

The three large city paintings that Caillebotte exhibited in 1877 were the most ambitious pictures he had completed to date. All three are framed perspectivally off-center to the left, are bordered by architectural structures on the right, and offer a tipped-up view of the ground plane wherein the space of the picture moves from an open foreground to a deep recession of space. With these paintings, Caillebotte responded to what critics described as an unintegrated or defective spatial perspectives in his earlier work, but his new, corrected compositions remain strange in their own way. Despite a family legend recounting that Caillebotte painted *The Pont de l'Europe* in an enclosed carriage, each of the three city paintings was made in the studio with the aid of oil sketches, charcoal drawings of individual figures and architectural motifs, and complex perspectival drawings made with a straight-edge.[189] The architectural structures that border the plummeting boulevards appear stitched together as a consequence of Caillebotte's working method, creating an ordered but nonetheless uneasy spatial perspective.

---

[189] The notion that Caillebotte painted *The Pont de l'Europe* in a custom-built enclosed carriage is first published by Marie Berhaut in 1951, based on the recollections of living descendants of Caillebotte's brother, Martial: "il fit construire un omnibus afin de pouvoir peindre par tous les temps," in "La Vie et l'œuvre de Gustave Caillebotte," Marie Berhaut, *Gustave Caillebotte (1848-1894). Galerie Beaux-Arts ... au Profit du Musée de Rennes, 25 mai-25 juillet 1951* (Paris: Wildenstein, 1951), n.p. See the architectural and perspectival studies published as D-8 through 10 in Varnedoe 1976, 186. It is possible that Caillebotte made preparatory sketches and oil studies in an enclosed carriage before painting the final canvas in the studio.

That the canvases are larger from one to the next as we follow Caillebotte on the route from his home to the epicenter of Impressionist social life shows the quick progress he was making with large-scale painting at this early moment in his career. In *The House Painters*, the curb of the sidewalk – on which we, the viewer, are walking – extends without interruption to the distant horizon. Our view of the painters and their ladders is angled, as though we have stepped to the side to pass them. By cropping the primary figure at his thighs, Caillebotte has amplified the immersive effect – looking straight into the painting, the viewer is invited to step into the picture. The next painting in the series, *The Pont de l'Europe*, situates us slightly lower than in *The House Painters*. The enveloping effect that this creates is made especially clear when we compare the two paintings. In *The House Painters,* our view of the midground is positioned slightly above eye-level relative to the angle of the ground plane. In *The Pont de l'Europe*, the lower position of the viewer relative to the figures at midground heightens the immersive quality of the composition. As Marrinan has argued in his analysis of *The Pont de l'Europe*, the dog signals that Caillebotte did not presume a stationary point of view but instead designed the picture to address a viewer in motion, one who is poised to cross the threshold of the frame..[190]

In *Paris* Street, the final painting from this 1877 group, Caillebotte combines the techniques he had perfected with *The House Painters* and *The Pont de l'Europe*, and he amplifies their effects by rendering the composition in near-life-size. Executed on a commercially primed, non-standard size canvas, the painting measures nearly seven feet tall and ten feet across. The scale of the setting is exaggerated by

---

[190] Marrinan 2017, 98.

adjustments Caillebotte made to its structure. A preparatory sketch (fig. 26) reveals that he removed two tall streetlamps to create the clearing necessary for a continuous stretch of paving stones from the foreground to the horizon line. As he had done with *The House Painters*, he places the viewer on the left side of the sidewalk, sidestepping to make way for the couple walking arm-in-arm. He crops those two figures just below the knees, as he had done with the house painter, to create the impression that the viewer is in motion, looking straight ahead. The figure on the right is more drastically cropped above the knees in the final canvas as compared to a preparatory oil sketch. Like the dog in *The Pont de l'Europe*, this right-most figure sets the viewer in motion, stepping into the space of the painting.

In their obsessive consideration of perspective and the viewer's experience of the space of the picture, these ambitious paintings respond to Caillebotte's critics in 1876, who described the "strange," "bizarre," and "defective" perspectives of *Young Man Playing the Piano* and *The Luncheon*. Caillebotte undertook this work at the easel in response to those critiques and to prove his skill in creating perspectivally complex compositions. The accomplishment and ambition of this group of paintings was reinforced by an installation that answered another critique that had troubled the artist at his debut: the prediction that his affiliation with the Impressionist group would be short-lived. In the 1876 exhibition, the grouping of works by artist invited visitors to consider the participants individually, which drew attention to the difference between Caillebotte's art and that of his co-exhibitors. Caillebotte was unwilling to compromise on his own artistic ambitions in order to better align himself with a group aesthetic, so he instead worked strategically to secure a diverse body of work from his colleagues. He orchestrated a quasi-thematic installation, which softened the perceived

differences between his paintings and those of his co-exhibitors. His portraits were integrated with similar canvases by Renoir and Monet in the first exhibition space, while his ambitious city paintings were grouped in the fourth gallery, alongside Monet's paintings of the Saint-Lazare train station.

The pairing of Caillebotte's *The Pont de l'Europe* with Monet's views of the same rail yard represents another form of influence that Caillebotte exerted over the organization of 1877 exhibition. *The Pont de l'Europe*, now in a collection in Geneva, can be dated to the fall of 1876 on the basis of its inscription and its thematic relationship to the series of paintings by Monet painted between January and April 1877.[191] Caillebotte must have met Monet before the opening of the 1876 exhibition,

---

[191] The link between Caillebotte's picture and the seven views of the Gare Saint-Lazare exhibited by Monet at the 1877 Impressionist exhibition was first explored by Robert Herbert in his 1988 book *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society*. His description of the dialogue across the railyard orchestrated by Caillebotte's painting and Monet's ensemble of views of the train station is expanded by Marrinan, who argues that the installation of these eight paintings together in the fourth gallery of the apartment at 6 rue le Peletier was not simply a grouping of coincidentally painted pictures, but the final product of a months-long project coordinated by the two artists. Where Marrinan's argument falters, however, is in his claim that the two artists were responding jointly to Edmund Duranty's *The New Painting* and its call for "a vast series about society, people, priests, soldiers, workers, and merchants. In such a series characters would differ in their individual roles, yet be linked by those scenes common to all, especially those scenes that happen *frequently* and thus accurately express the everyday life of a country – marriages, baptisms, successions, celebrations, and family scenes." (Duranty [1876] in Moffett ed. 1986, 45) Marrinan argues, "Duranty's list of everyday occurrences certainly embraces the comings and goings of passenger trains and the daily habit of walking a dog," which represents, in my view, an imperfect interpretation of Duranty's call for paintings that depict the significant milestones in an individual's life, milestones that are made ordinary because they are common to all and not because they are the everyday activities of an individual. Caillebotte and Monet may very well have been thinking and talking about Duranty's essay, but the claim that their collaborative project responds directly to it presumes a

as Monet's account book lists the sale of three paintings to Caillebotte in late February 1876.[192] In July, Monet arrived at the estate of Ernest Hoschedé, an art collector who had commissioned him to paint four decorative panels for the dining room. Hoschedé had built a studio space for Monet to use from July through December that year and he encouraged the artist to paint at a small fishing cabin he owned a few kilometers away, directly across the Yerres River from the Caillebotte family property. Monet and Caillebotte became better acquainted during Monet's stay at the Hoschedé property and when the artist returned to Paris in January 1877, Caillebotte secured an apartment for him at 17 rue Moncey.[193] From his return to Paris until the opening of the third Impressionist exhibition in April, Monet worked exclusively on a group of paintings depicting views of the Saint-Lazare train station, just a few blocks from his new apartment on the rue Moncey.

Did Caillebotte encourage Monet to paint the Saint-Lazare train station between January and April 1877? Monet's ensemble of paintings represents a shift in subject matter for the artist; as Paul Tucker noted in his description of the paintings, "nothing could be further from the delights of Montgeron or the beauties of his own garden at Argenteuil than this busy, steaming station."[194] Monet had painted a train station once before, *The Gare d'Argenteuil* (1872, fig. 61), and his new apartment near

---

slavish interest in Duranty's criticism that is otherwise unsupported by Monet and Caillebotte's work in the 1870s. See Marrinan 2017, 101.

[192] See fn. 131.

[193] Wildenstein 1974-1991, I:83.

[194] Paul Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Art* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 92.

the Gare Saint-Lazare presented an opportunity to revisit this set of compositional interests after a summer and fall spent painting views of the Hoschedé château and its gardens. It was also an opportunity to affirm his relationship with Caillebotte. Despite those recent commissions by Hoschedé, the collapse of Durand-Ruel's support in 1875 left Monet in dire straits as sales lagged. These conditions elevated Caillebotte's significance as a patron for the older artist.[195]

For Caillebotte, the advantage to the synergetic venture between the two painters is clear: by encouraging Monet to paint views of the Gare Saint-Lazare, Caillebotte created a context for his *Pont de l'Europe* that reaffirmed his belonging to the Impressionist group despite the disparate degrees of finish in his work as compared to those by Monet. Caillebotte must have had this installation of pictures in mind when he first introduced Monet to the subject and by pairing his city paintings with those by Monet in the fourth gallery, he made his position in the group unmistakable and unassailable. Caillebotte's eagerness to see his work exhibited alongside Monet's is further evidence of their friendship and of the collegiality of their working relationship. Eventually, Caillebotte would acquire three of Monet's Gare Saint-Lazare paintings for his own collection, making permanent the collaboration that drove the installation of the fourth gallery at the 1877 exhibition.[196]

---

[195] That Caillebotte was wholly responsible for Monet's rent seems the clearest evidence of this new phase in their patron-artist relationship. For more details about Monet's financial situation in 1876-77, see Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet, or, the Triumph of Impressionism*. Translated by Chris Miller and Peter Snowdon. (Cologne: Taschen, 2014), vol. I, 118-125.

[196] The first of these three is *La gare Saint-Lazare*, 1877, now in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay [RF 2775]; the other were also given to the French state at Caillebotte's death in 1894, but were rejected in 1896: *Gare Saint-Lazare: The Normandy Line Viewed from Beneath the Pont de l'Europe*, 1877, now in a private

Not coincidentally, the most striking painting belonging to this parallel series by Caillebotte and Monet – the former's *On the Pont de l'Europe*, now at the Kimbell Art Museum (1877, fig. 62) – was not included in the 1877 exhibition and would not go on public view until 1951.[197] Caillebotte's decision to withhold this canvas from the 1877 exhibition underscores that his project with Monet was both a statement of belonging to the group and, crucially, a technical response to critics. Perspectival drawings made with a straight-edge reveal that the Geneva picture was carefully constructed, as its success hinged on a convincing recession of space. Its variant is comparatively shallow in its consideration of space and its train tracks run vertically, nearly flush with the plane of the picture. Rather than picturing a plunging view of a long boulevard, the Kimbell painting adopts the geometric structure of the bridge, divided vertically into two arched bays and divided again by cross-bracing struts that run diagonally. The structure of the painting corresponds directly to that of the bridge, so that the focus is on its engineering details – its mass-produced girders, parapets, and rivets, all rendered in cool, near-monochromatic tones. The overall effect is strikingly modern but rendered through a denial of plunging perspectival depth. Caillebotte wanted to showcase the labor that went into the construction of complex perspectival space in *The House Painters*, *The Pont de l'Europe*, and *Paris Street, Rainy Day* and in 1877, *On the Pont de l'Europe* did not fit his broader exhibition strategy.

---

collection; and *Gare Saint-Lazare: View Towards the Normandy Line, with Track Signals*, Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hanover.

[197] Berhaut 1951, cat. 10. In his essay "Man in the Middle," George Shackelford writes about the cloud of steam that rises between the quais in the distance: "It has dimension; it is different from anything surrounding it; and it must surely be inspired by Caillebotte's experience of Monet's view of Paris, that is, Monet's view of *his* Paris." "Man in the Middle," in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 39-55, 49.

The decision to withhold the Kimbell picture might also be linked to Caillebotte's concerns about the painting being perceived as derivative of Degas's work in its reliance on a dramatically cropped figure. Although Degas's *Place de la Concorde* (ca. 1875-76, fig. 63) was not exhibited in the artist's lifetime, Caillebotte might have seen the painting in Degas's studio as the two were becoming closer as friends and colleagues in the months between the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions. Determined to distance himself from comparison to Degas, perhaps Caillebotte knew that critics would have recognized the cropped figure that steps out of frame at left in *On the Pont de l'Europe* as a stock figure from Degas's *œuvre*.[198] Despite Caillebotte's unwillingness to exhibit his picture, he must have shown it to colleagues in the studio – that top-hatted figure who steps purposefully out of the canvas is unmistakably reprised by Degas in his *Portraits at the Stock Exchange* from ca. 1878-1879 (fig. 67).

In 1877, Caillebotte shaped the group of exhibited works by advising artists individually and by loaning works from his own collection, but also by securing an apartment for Monet and encouraging him to produce works that created a context for his own views of the city. In their installation, Caillebotte fostered a thematic link between his city paintings and Monet's ensemble of pictures, thereby inviting comparison between the two artists. That comparison was balanced by the pairing of Caillebotte's smaller portraits with those by Renoir and Monet in the first gallery so that at each encounter with Caillebotte's work, visitors would also see paintings by

---

[198] From Degas's work in the early 1870s, see, for example, the figures that appear cropped, bisected or partially out of frame in *The Orchestra at the Opéra* (ca. 1870, fig. 64), *Orchestra Musicians* (1872, fig. 65), and *The Dance Class* (1874, fig. 66).

artists whose work epitomized early critical notions of Impressionism in the mid-1870s. This contextualization of Caillebotte's art alongside works by Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and others presented a response to another critique that had emerged in 1876: the unfavorable comparison of Caillebotte's work to that of Degas, a more established artist. While Caillebotte welcomed comparisons to Monet and others, comparisons that affirmed his belonging to the Impressionist group, the critical impulse to align Caillebotte's work with that of Degas undermined the younger artist's position by framing the peculiarities of Caillebotte's paintings as a result of his efforts to imitate Degas. Caillebotte's eagerness to be compared to Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro but not to Degas also suggests conflict between the two men from the very outset of their professional relationship; in 1879, Caillebotte would describe Degas as "very aggravating."[199] By segregating Degas' works in a fifth gallery at the 1877 exhibition, Caillebotte appealed to the older artist's ego, ensuring a smooth transition of leadership as he began to assume new logistical and ideological responsibilities and he distanced himself, quite literally, from speculation about the relationship between Degas's work and his own.

In the end, Caillebotte was able to have it all. He advised artists as they selected works to include in the 1877 exhibition, he loaned works from his own collection to ensure a cohesive checklist, he encouraged at least one artist to pursue a particular subject, and he oversaw an installation that promoted favorable comparisons and minimized unfavorable ones. These layered, strategic efforts complemented his

---

[199] "Pas besoin de vous faire remarquer quelques insanités [...] Il est bien embêtant, mais il faut avouer qu'il a bien du talent." Caillebotte to Monet, April 10, 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 17.

work in the studio, where he was producing highly finished, large-scale, perspectival compositions that responded to critiques about his treatment of perspective in 1876. In the will he had drafted the previous year, Caillebotte described his ambitions for "an exhibition of painters known as intransigents or impressionists," and in 1877, that exhibition opened as one that offered the best possible context for the most ambitious canvases Caillebotte had produced to date. In the years ahead, his dual practice as an artist and exhibition organizer would falter, but in 1877, he was able to balance his innovative work within and beyond the studio.

Chapter 3

CAILLEBOTTE AND THE IMPRESSIONISTS: 1879, 1880, AND 1882

The Impressionist exhibition of 1877 had been, by nearly all accounts, a triumphant success. Caillebotte's efforts to create the best possible context for his ambitious group of pictures was achieved through a multilateral exhibition strategy that included individual meetings with participating artists and loans of works from his own collection. He invested time and money into his relationship with Monet, encouraging him to paint and exhibit paintings that created a context for his own views of the city. In 1877, he achieved his ambition to organize the best possible exhibition of Impressionist art, but what about Caillebotte's ambitions as an artist? How were his paintings received and understood by critics who saw the exhibition at 6 rue le Peletier? And how did Caillebotte respond to their remarks in the months between the 1877 and 1879 exhibitions? These questions are at the heart of our understanding of Caillebotte's affiliation with the Impressionist group after 1877.

This chapter considers the evolution of Caillebotte's strategy at his final three exhibitions with the Impressionist group, organized in 1879, 1880, and 1882. As in Chapter Two, the sections of this chapter are organized by the address of the three exhibitions: 28 avenue de l'Opéra, 10 rue des Pyramides, and 251 rue Saint-Honoré. The chapter begins with an analysis of the critical response to the 1877 exhibition, the first where Caillebotte wielded influence over the structure and organization of an exhibition. Caillebotte's ambitious city paintings were at the center of critical debates about the nature of Impressionism and his efforts as an organizer received positive

attention from critics. The first section then considers the failed plans for an 1878 exhibition, plans that nonetheless reveal Caillebotte's deepening commitment to the Impressionist group and his enthusiasm for collaboration with his co-exhibitors.

The organization of the fourth exhibition, spearheaded by Degas and Caillebotte in the spring of 1879, was characterized by ongoing debates about the composition of the group. In 1879, Caillebotte would show the largest group of works at any one exhibition in his lifetime and I argue that nearly half of those works were added *hors catalogue* after the exhibition's opening and in response to its early reviews. His reception that spring was the worst of any exhibition to date and included some of the most scathing reviews of his career. Through a close reading of the criticism in the context of his expanded checklist, I argue that critics were cognizant of Caillebotte's exhibition strategy for the first time in his career and they deemed it a failure.

The second section of this chapter examines the plans for a fifth Impressionist exhibition in 1880, which came together as Caillebotte was still reeling from the failures of 1879. I argue that he took most seriously Duranty's advice to abandon landscape painting and that the group of works he exhibited in 1880 was one selected to appeal to those critics who were losing interest in what they believed to be second-rate attempts at *plein air* painting. He readjusted his strategy toward an artistic vision more closely aligned with his success at the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions, showing what I describe as an autobiographical group of paintings that reflected his social circle in both Paris and the surrounding suburbs. The character and composition of the Impressionist group had changed by 1880 and Caillebotte's practice as an artist

shifted, too, back to the kinds of inventive, peculiar compositions with which he had made his debut in 1876.

Logistically, Degas and Caillebotte struggled to keep the group together in the early 1880s, as Renoir, Monet, Sisley, and others chose to instead send works to the Salon. They were replaced by painters from Degas's circle, including Forain, Zandomeneghi, and Rafaëlli and the interpersonal conflict between Degas and Caillebotte reached a breaking point. At the heart of the crisis were their divergent views about the Impressionist group's identity and Caillebotte would abstain from the 1881 exhibition, refusing to participate in any future independent exhibition that included the older artist. In the final section of this chapter, I evaluate Caillebotte's final independent exhibition with the group, held in the spring of 1882. Organized by Pissarro and Caillebotte, the exhibition included works by Paul Gauguin, Monet, Morisot, Renoir, and Sisley but not by Degas, Rouart, or Cassatt. For the first time, critics responded to the installation of works in the galleries as though it represented an artistic practice in its own right and they recognized Caillebotte as the exhibition's primary organizer. The selection of works for the exhibition was influenced by the dealer Durand-Ruel, who ensured the participation of Monet and Renoir by lending their works from his own stock. I argue that Caillebotte was less responsive to the criticism than he had been in previous years, that his efforts were motivated by a desire to reconvene the core group, and that his exhibited works represented the variety and range of his studio practice in the early 1880s.

28 avenue de l'Opéra, 1879

Critical Reception in 1877

In 1876, the critical response to Caillebotte's first exhibition with the Impressionist group had been overwhelmingly positive. Of the twenty-seven reviews that mentioned Caillebotte by name, only seven took a negative view of his work and even the most disparaging critics at the second Impressionist exhibition took a mild view of Caillebotte's debut.[200] In 1877, Caillebotte's pictures were again met with a largely positive response. Of the thirty-three reviews that engaged with his work, twenty were positive, seven were mixed in their response, and only six were wholly negative in their assessment of Caillebotte's talents.[201] Of those twenty positive reviews, five mentioned Caillebotte's memorable debut the previous year and no fewer than six critics described him as one of the most talented members of the Impressionist group, "still the master of the school."[202] Caillebotte remained popular

---

[200] See complete discussion of the critical response to Caillebotte's debut in Chapter 2, 11 rue Le Peletier, 1876: Caillebotte's Reception in 1876.

[201] Two additional reviews that mention Caillebotte by name – G. Rivière, "L'exposition des impressionistes," *L'Impressionniste* (April 6, 1877), 2-6, as cited in Berson 1996, I:179-181, and "Nouvelles du jour," *Le Siècle* (April 19, 1877), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:191 – were neutral, listing Caillebotte as a participating artist without description of his work.

[202] The five reviews that mention Caillebotte's debut in 1876 are: Ph. B. [Burty], "Exposition des impressionnistes," *La République française* (April 25, 1877), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:123-125; Bertall, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Paris-Journal* (April 9, 1877), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:131-132; Ernest Fillonneau, "Les Impressionnistes," *Moniteur des arts* (April 20, 1877), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:145-146; Paul Mantz, "L'Exposition des peintres impressionistes," *Les Temps* (April 22, 1877), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:166-168; and Georges Rivière, "Les Intransigeants et les impressionnistes: Souvenirs du salon libre de 1877," *L'Artiste*

among critics who otherwise maligned the Impressionist project, with one critic for the *Gazette des lettres, des sciences et des arts* writing: "Of the entire exhibition, we want to remember only the name of M. Caillebotte."[203] There were many fewer reviews that criticized the Impressionist group as a whole than there had been in previous years, but Caillebotte remained a favorite artist for those who did write critically about the efforts to organize independent exhibitions. In his review for *Le Français*, Bernadille insists that *Paris Street, Rainy Day* was the "masterpiece of the exhibition," writing: "[Caillebotte] knows how to paint well enough that we advise him to leave the Impressionist group, and soon."[204]

As I argue in the previous chapter, the evaluations of Caillebotte's work as incongruent with that of the broader Impressionist group had troubled the artist in 1876. As the plans for the 1877 exhibition began to come together, he pushed for a quasi-thematic installation that would soften the perceived difference between his work and that of his co-exhibitors. While critics writing for *La République française*

(November 1, 1877), as cited in Berson 1996, I:185-187. Le Sémaphore de Marseille [Emile Zola], "Notes parisiennes: Une Exposition: Les Peintres impressionnistes," (April 19, 1877), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:190-191.

[203] "De toute cette exhibition, nous ne voulons retenir que le nom de M. Caillebotte. L'exposition des impressionnistes aura du moins service à quelque chose si elle doit mettre en lumière un artiste que nous croyons consciencieux [...],"A. Descubes, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Gazette des lettres, des sciences et des arts* vol. 1, no. 12 (April 20, 1877), 185-188, as cited in Berson 1996, I:143-144.

[204] "[Caillebotte] sait suffisamment peindre pour que nous lui conseillions de quitter prochainement les impressionnistes [...] Sa *Rue de Paris en temps de pluie* est la *masterpiece* de l'exposition." Bernadille, "Chronique parisienne: L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Français* (April 13, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:129-131.

and *La Petite République* continued to question his belonging to the group, writing that he was an Impressionist in "name only," many others adapted their critical notions of *impressionnisme* to include Caillebotte's ambitious group of city paintings.[205] This expansion of the critical understanding of the Impressionist project between 1876 and 1877 was characterized by a shift away from observations about finish and subject matter and toward criticism centered on subjectivity and on varied scenes painted from life. In his review for *Le Radical*, Lepelletier described *Paris Street, Rainy Day* as an impressionist *tableau*, "[t]he impression of rain sought by the artist is obtained," while Gaston Vassy recognized the male figure in *The Pont de l'Europe* as a self-portrait of the artist and remarked, "you [Caillebotte] must have had happy *impressions* that day!"[206] Writing for *L'Homme libre*, Jacques characterized Caillebotte's city paintings as part of a larger Impressionist project. He wrote:

> So, four impressionists gave themselves the task of reproducing Paris. M. Caillebotte chose the street; M. Renoir, the dance; M. Degas, the theater and the café-concert; Mme. Berthe Morisot, the boudoir. Other than that, a few excursions to the country, naturally, but always translated by the brushes of Parisians.[207]

---

[205] "M. Caillebotte n'est impressionniste que de nom," "Exposition des impressionnistes: 6, rue le Peletier; 6" *La Petite republique française* (April 10, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:175-176.

[206] "L'impression de pluie cherchée par l'artiste est obtenue," E. Lepelletier, "Les Impressionnistes," *Le Radical* (April 8, 1877), 2-3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:138-139.

[207] "Donc quatre impressionnistes se sont donné la mission de reproduire Paris. M. Caillebotte a choisi la rue; M. Renoir, le bal; M. Degas, le théâtre et le café-concert; Mme. Berthe Morisot, le boudoir. Outre cela, quelques excursions à la campagne, naturellement, mais traduites toujours par des pinceaux des Parisiens." Jacques, "Menus propos: Exposition impressionniste," *L'Homme libre* (April 12, 1877), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:156-158.

Whereas the landscape painters had been described as the true *impressionnistes* of the group in 1876 and this characterization continued in 1877, the critical understanding of Impressionism did evolve to include diverse views of the city – what Paul Mantz called paintings of the "Parisian landscape."[208]

Not coincidentally, this expanded view of what constituted Impressionist painting emerged during the first group exhibition at which the artists adopted the name for themselves, prompting Rivière to publish the short-lived *L'Impressionniste*, which ran in five issues in April 1877. The group's perceived cohesion benefitted all the participating artists, whose works were better received, on the whole, than they had been at the previous exhibitions. Caillebotte's paintings were no exception, and he enjoyed a mostly favorable reception that positively aligned his works with those by Renoir, Sisley, and Morisot, among others.[209] This reinforcement of Caillebotte's belonging to the group was the intended outcome of the quasi-thematic installation that saw his ambitious ensemble of paintings paired with city views by Monet. However, the realignment of Caillebotte's work with that the group seems to have been a consequence of shifts in the critical interpretation of the group's mission and not of the side-by-side installation of his and Monet's work in the fourth gallery of the

---

[208] "Les *Peintres en bâtiment*, le *Temps de pluie* sont de curieux aspects du paysage parisien." Paul Mantz, "L'Exposition des peintres impressionnistes," *Les Temps* (April 22, 1877), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 166-168.

[209] See for example Jules Claretie's review for *L'Indépendance belge*: "Certes, il y a des gens de talent parmi les *impressionnistes* ; il y a M. Caillebotte et M. Renoir," Claretie, "Le Mouvement parisien: L'Expositions des impressionnistes," *L'Indépendance belge* (April 15, 1877), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:140-141; and Jacques, "Menus propos: Exposition impressionniste," *L'Homme libre* (April 12, 1877), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:156-158.

exhibition space at 6 rue Le Peletier. In fact, none of the critics who saw Caillebotte's work as thematically related with that of his co-exhibitors mentioned Monet's paintings of the Gare Saint-Lazare.

Twenty-six critics describe at least one city painting in their reviews of Caillebotte's work at the 1877 exhibition, but Rivière's summary of the exhibition's installation for *L'Impressionniste* includes the only mention of Caillebotte's city paintings alongside Monet's views of the Gare Saint-Lazare and he simply reports that they hung in the same room. Instead, Caillebotte's views of the Paris street, of the Pont de l'Europe, and of painters outside a storefront are most often compared to his *Portraits in the Countryside*, which no fewer than twelve reviewers described in detail. A number of critics admired *Portraits* as a masterpiece of the exhibition. One reviewer for *Le Petit moniteur universel* wrote that the large canvas "comes close to perfection," and that while *Paris Street* had many of the same qualities, it was "less happy."[210] Thomas Grimm saw the canvases as related in his review, remarking in his description of *Paris Street*: "M. Caillebotte has real qualities; his characters are well-rendered; the perspective is good; his pictures have air, a lot of air – this is the same primary quality of *Portraits in the Countryside*."[211]

---

[210] "[...] Cela n'empêche pas son numéro 3, *Portraits à la campagne,* de côtoyer la perfection. Pour cela il aurait fallu qu'il consentit à donner à ses personnages des tons moins lugubres. En tous cas, c'est là de la véritable impression, et de la bonne. *Rue de Paris, temps de pluie*, par le même, renferme des qualités, mais c'est moins heureux." C.D., "L'exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Petit moniteur universel* (April 8, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:142.

[211] "M. Caillebotte a des qualités réelles; ses personnages sont bien campés; la perspective est bonne; ses tableaux ont de l'air, beaucoup de l'air; c'est le caractère dominant aussi des *Portraits à la campagne*." Thomas Grimm. "Les

For a number of reviewers, these two works by Caillebotte presented an opportunity to further codify the new parameters of *impressionnisme* at the 1877 exhibition. In his review for *La Revue politique et littéraire*, Bigot posed the question outright:

> Is he an "impressionist," that Mr. Caillebotte? Yes, if we look at his *Pont de l'Europe* and his *Portraits in the Countryside*; no, if one looks at his other submissions, especially his big picture, the *Carrefour de la rue de Moscou par un temps de pluie*. Half a dozen people, full-size and open umbrellas, cross the carrefour or walk on the sidewalks. The subject lacks interest, the characters too, and also the painting. M. Caillebotte sees gray and confused.[212]

By Bigot's estimation, Caillebotte's bright, large-scale paintings of people gathered together, deliberately and accidentally, in the streets of Paris and in a private country house garden were both examples of Impressionist painting. Caillebotte's *Paris Street*, by comparison, was too gray, too muddied, and poorly drawn.[213] George Lafenestre took the opposite view in his assessment of the two pictures for *Le Moniteur universel*, writing that *Paris Street* "gives the impression of walking with an umbrella open an

---

Impressionnistes," *Le Petit journal* (April 7, 1877), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:151-153.

[212] "Est-ce bien un 'impressionniste' que M. Caillebotte ? Oui, si l'on regarde son *Pont de l'Europe* et ses *Portraits à la campagne* ; non, si l'on regarde ses aurtres envois, surtout son grand tableau à l'effet, le *Carrefour de la rue de Moscou par un temps de pluie*. Un demi-douzaine de personnes, grandeur nature et parapluies ouverts, traversent le carrefour ou marchent sur les trottoirs. Le sujet manque de'intérêt, les personnages aussi, et aussi la peinture. M. Caillebotte voit gris et confus."Charles Bigot, "Causerie artistique: L'Exposition des 'impressionnistes,'" *La Revue politique et littéraire* (April 28, 1877), 1045-1048, as cited in Berson 1996, I:132-136.

[213] Bigot continues, "Rien de plus dépourvu de caractère et d'expression que ces physionomies, et le dessin est vraiment trop insuffisant." Bigot 1877, as cited in Berson I:132-136.

hour before downpour begins." He added that he prefers *Portraits in the Countryside*: "a lot less impressionist, no doubt, but infinitely more artistic and infinitely truer."[214]

The observations relayed in these two responses to Caillebotte's *Paris Street* and *Portraits in the Countryside* illustrate a fracture in the critical understanding of Impressionism at the third exhibition. For Bigot, Impressionism was characterized by Caillebotte's vibrant, daylight paintings that capture everyday scenes of life in the city and its environs. Despite his disdain for the painting, Lafenestre described *Paris Street* as one that transported its viewer to a particular moment on the street with an umbrella open just before the rain began to fall. While these reviewers were unable to arrive at a consensus about a cohesive group aesthetic or mission at work in the spring of 1877, Caillebotte must have been pleased to see his ambitious pictures at the center of these debates.[215] Although critics did not respond directly to the suite of pictures he

---

[214] "M. Gustave Caillebotte expose *une rue de Paris* (temps de pluie), dont les personnages nous on fait l'impression de gens qui se promèneraient avec un parapluie ouvert une heure avant que l'averse se soit déclarée… Nous aimons mieux ses *Portraits à la campagne*, beaucoup moins impressionnistes sans doute, mais infiniment plus artistiques et infiniment plus vrais." George Lafenestre, "Le Jour et la nuit," *Le Moniteur universel* (April 8, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:168-169.

[215] In particular, see L.G. writing for *La Presse*, "S'il nous fallait décerner une médaille d'honneur dans cet ensemble de tableaux, dont le plus grand nombre est étrange, nous la donnerions sans hésiter à M. Caillebotte, dont les six envois sont réellement intéressants ; nous devons signaler tour particulièrement la grande composition qui s'appelle : *Rue de Paris ; temps de pluie*, et qui accuse de la vigueur, une véritable science de dessin et d'arrangement, et une force de coloris remarquable, quoique avec des effets très simples et des nuances très sobres. Le plus grand tort de M. Caillebotte est que ses tableaux se ressemblent trop et que sa palette accuse une sécheresse et une monotonie fâcheuse. Ses *Portraits à la campagne*, qui sortent un peu de la gamme ordinaire du peintre, ouvrent la porte à l'espérance. La grisâtre n'est peut-être pas le dernier mot de M. Caillebotte." L.G., "Le Salon des 'Impressionnistes,'" *La Presse* (April 6, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:147-148.

produced and exhibited in collaboration with Monet, his efforts to align himself with the group through the quasi-thematic installation of the 1877 exhibition had led to a greater acceptance of his work within the context of Impressionism.

As I argue in the previous chapter, Caillebotte's concerns about the perceived dissonance between his work and that of the group had motivated his strategy at the 1877 exhibition, as had his efforts to distance himself from comparisons to Degas. By 1877, those comparisons between Caillebotte and Degas had all but entirely dropped out of the critical conversation about the younger artist. Of the thirty-three reviews that mention his work, only one compares Caillebotte to Degas. Writing for *L'art français*, Gonzague-Privat remarked: "A false brother has deceived the trust of the head of the school and he still deceives it. He is named Degas. His example was contagious; an apostle named Caillebotte [...]".[216] The comparison seems a vestige of the previous exhibition, as it is not substantiated by any discussion of the works on view in 1877 and is part of a satirical review of the Impressionist project through a protracted religious allegory.

Having successfully reaffirmed his belonging to the Impressionist group and distanced himself from both favorable and unfavorable comparisons to Degas, Caillebotte must have looked to the responses to the 1877 exhibition with an eye for

---

See also Bernadille, "Chronique parisienne : L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Français* (April 13, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:129-131.

[216] "Un faux frère trompa la confiance du chef de l'école, il la trompe encore. On le nomme Degas. Son exemple fut contagieux ; un apôtre du nom de Caillebotte, suborné sans doute par les sicaires de l'Institut, se laissa aller à dessiner et à peindre comme aux plus mauvais jours de la peinture." Gonzague-Privat, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *L'art français* (April 14, 1877), 129-132, as cited in Berson 1996, I:149-150.

the third criticism that had plagued the artist since his public debut in 1876: that his treatment of perspective was flawed and unconvincing. As I argue in Chapter Two, Caillebotte was preoccupied by the negative reviews of his work in 1876 that saw these flaws as the barrier to his entry into more traditional exhibition venues.[217] Caillebotte showed no interest in traditional exhibition venues after the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* by the Salon jury in 1875, but he countered these critiques in 1877 all the same, exhibiting large-scale, ambitious pictures produced in the studio with the aid of oil sketches, charcoal drawings of individual figures and architectural motifs, and complex perspectival drawings made with a straight-edge. Caillebotte's efforts to dispel these critiques about his treatment of perspective proved the least successful strategy he employed at the 1877 exhibition. Despite his deliberate effort to exhibit a group of pictures that were labored and considered in their perspective and composition, about one third of the critics who remarked on these qualities in his work were negative in their assessment of them.[218]

---

[217] See Chapter 2, 6 rue Le Peletier, 1887: Strategy at the Third Exhibition.

[218] Fourteen reviews of the 1877 exhibition make mention of perspective, composition, and drawing in Caillebotte's paintings: Roger Ballu, "L'Exposition des peintres impressionnistes," *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* (April 14, 1877), 147-148, as cited in Berson 1996, I:125-126; Bernadille 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:129-131; Bertall 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:131-132; Bigot 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:132-136; [Gaston Vassy], "La Journée à Paris : L'Exposition des impressionnalistes," *L'Evénement* (April 6, 1877), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:144-145; Fillonneau 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:145-156; L.G. 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:147-148; Grimm 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:151-153; Jacques 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:156-158; Lepelletier 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:158-159; Mantz 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:166-168; Marc de Montifaud, "Salon de 1877," *L'Artiste* (May 1, 1877), 336-340, as cited in Berson 1996, I:170-171; "Exposition des impressionnistes: 6, rue le Peletier; 6," 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:175-176; and Rivière 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:181-184.

Mantz, writing for *Les Temps*, linked the works exhibited in 1877 to those of 1876 directly, beginning with a description of *The Floor Scrapers*:

> The perspective was a little crazy, because, instead of working on a horizontal plane, the unfortunate [workers] maneuvered on a sloping floor and threatened to slip onto the harmless spectator. But the figures were well-lit, the brushwork energetic, and, without its apparent coarseness, the painting had finesse. M. Caillebotte did not learn perspective. The women he has grouped in his Portraits in the Countryside are sitting on rising ground that is not meant to reassure the eye.[219]

Other critics described the perspective flaws in couched terms, writing that "the foreground plane lacks solidity," that "M. Caillebotte considers the composition of a painting a matter unworthy of him," and that his drawing is "truly insufficient."[220] Despite these negative assessments of their treatment of perspective, Caillebotte's work did receive positive attention for its ambitious scale and compositional innovation. Fillonneau called *Paris Street* "more of a trompe l'oeil than an impression," while Grimm wrote more pointedly about the picture in his review for *Le*

---

[219] "La perspective était un peu folle, car, au lieu de travailler sur un plan horizontal, les malheureux manœuvraient sur un parquet incliné et menaçaient de glisser sur le spectateur inoffensif. Mais les figures étaient bien dans la lumière, le pinceau s'annonçait énergique, et, sans sa grossièreté apparente, la peinture avait des finesses. M. Caillebotte n'a pas appris la perspective. Les femmes qu'il a groupées dans ses *Portraits à la campagne* sont assises sur un terrain montant qui n'est pas fait pour rassurer le regard." Mantz 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:166-168.

[220] About *Portraits in the Countryside*, "Mais le premier plan manque de solidité. Les robes ne tombent pas même sur le sol." De Montifaud 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:170-171; "Il est facile de voir en outre que M. Caillebotte considère la composition d'un tableau comme affaire indigne de lui: ses personnages sont groupés au hasard; le cadre coupe en deux, de la tête aux pieds, une figure d'homme vu de dos." Ballu 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:125-126; and Bigot 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:132-136.

Petit Journal: "the perspective is good."[221] As I argue in the previous chapter of this dissertation, one of Caillebotte's motivations for producing these large-scale, perspectivally-complex pictures was the critical reception of *The Floor Scrapers* in 1876. While he was unable to wholly counter those who took issue with the precision and veracity of his perspectival systems in 1876 and 1877, Caillebotte was able to garner positive attention for his labored compositions through the exhibition of this ambitious group of pictures.

Furthermore, the 1877 exhibition proved a success for Caillebotte as its primary organizer. It was a success for the group overall, with critics responding positively to the work on view. Caillebotte's six paintings were well-received and admired in a way that reaffirmed his belonging to the group while minimizing unfavorable comparisons. He was not entirely successful in correcting misconceptions about his competence as a draughtsman, but his efforts were acknowledged and his ambitious pictures were admired all the same. Significantly, his leadership role in the organization of the 1877 exhibition was recognized by critics and by his fellow artists, leaving the twenty-eight-year-old painter well-positioned to play a significant role in the years ahead.

---

[221] "Tout le monde remarquera aussi un autre ouvrage de grande dimension, - plutôt une trompe-l'œil qu'une impression, - qui représente une rue de Paris par un temps de pluie ; le parapluie est extrêmement réussi." Fillonneau 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:145-146; and "… la perspective est bonne…" Grimm 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:151-153.

The Collapse of the 1878 Exhibition

In the initial draft of his will dated November 3, 1876, Caillebotte allocated "the sum necessary to hold, in 1878, in the best possible conditions, an exhibition of painters known as intransigents or impressionists." As I describe in Chapter Two, the group's plans for an 1877 exhibition had begun to take shape in July 1876, and, rather than continuing the biennial rhythm established by the 1874 and 1876 exhibitions, Caillebotte seems to have been looking ahead to exhibitions held consecutively in 1877 and 1878. The exhibition held in 1877 would capitalize on the momentum that emerged during the successful run of the 1876 exhibition, while the proposed 1878 exhibition was timed to coincide with the opening of the Exposition Universelle that May.[222] The large sum Caillebotte set aside for the proposed exhibition – "thirty, forty thousand francs or more," – suggests an ambitious plan, perhaps for a separate pavilion like those used by Courbet and Manet in 1867, as Marrinan theorizes in his analysis of the 1876 will.[223]

It was not until August that the plans for an 1878 Impressionist exhibition were abandoned. These plans are nonetheless worthy of further consideration, as they affirm Caillebotte's investment in the Impressionist group after the 1877 exhibition and prove to have informed his exhibition strategy in the years ahead. The months after the third Impressionist exhibition saw members of the core group of artists in dire financial straits. On May 28, 1877, just four weeks after the close of the exhibition at 6 rue le

---

[222] That Caillebotte proposed an 1878 exhibition so that it would coincide with Exposition Universelle opening in Paris that May was first suggested by Pickvance in his essay on the 1879 exhibition: "Contemporary Popularity and Posthumous Neglect," 243-265 in Moffett ed. 1986, 244.

[223] Marrinan 2017, 134.

Peletier, Caillebotte, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley held an auction of forty-five of their works at Legrand's gallery on the rue Laffitte.[224] Caillebotte's pictures brought the highest prices – 655 and 301 francs for *The Floor Scrapers* and *The House Painters*, respectively – but since both pictures remained in the artist's hands at his death, Caillebotte likely bought the pictures himself, perhaps to encourage bidding on works by his fellow artists.[225] Gustave Geffroy wrote that Pissarro's pictures sold for between 50 and 260 francs, Renoir's for between 47 and 285 francs, and Sisley's for between 105 and 165 francs, with an average price of 169 francs per painting.[226] Despite Caillebotte's efforts to bolster sales, these low prices left the other three participating artists in poor financial health. These conditions were exacerbated by the bankruptcy of Ernest Hoschedé, one of the group's most important patrons, in August 1877. Writing to Zola just days after the collector's financial hardships were made public, Duranty predicted that "the Hoschedé disaster will evidently disturb the camp of our Intransigent friends [...]"[227]

---

[224] The auction catalogue includes nine titles that match the catalogue for the 1877 exhibition: by Caillebotte, *Rabotteurs de parquet*, *Rabotteurs de parquet* [duplicate entries refer to the Musée d'Orsay picture and its private collection variant], and *Peintres en bâtiments*; by Pissarro, *Le Verger*, *Coin de jardin*, and *Paysage*; and by Renoir, *Femme assise*, *Tête de jeune fille*, *Bouquet*. See Merete Bodelsen, "Early Impressionist Sales 1874-94 in the Light of Some Unpublished 'Procès-Verbaux,'" *The Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 110, No. 783 (June 1968), pp. 330-349, 336-337.

[225] Bodelsen 1968, 337.

[226] Geffroy 1922, 93.

[227] Letter from Duranty to Zola as published in Rewald 1973, 413.

These financial setbacks provided an impetus for those artists who valued the group exhibitions as a guaranteed venue where their work would be seen and so the plans for a fourth exhibition to coincide with the opening of the Exposition Universelle in May 1878 were resurrected that spring.[228] Responding to J. Alden Weir's invitation to participate in the Society of American Artists' first exhibition, Cassatt wrote in a letter dated March 10, 1878: "I wish I could have sent something, but I am afraid it is too late now. We expect to have our annual exhibition here, and there are so few of us that we are required to contribute all we have."[229] Later that month, Degas wrote to Caillebotte about a new condition for participation in the Impressionist exhibitions: no artist planning to exhibit with the group could send any pictures to the Salon. He wrote, "I saw Mme. Manet [Berthe Morisot] this morning. She renounces sending to the Salon. She had been told that Monet renounced, as did Renoir, etc. She had not received any notice of the meeting at Legrand's and was surprised."[230] It was at that meeting at Legrand's gallery on March 25th that the group approved the policy regarding Salon submissions, finalized their list of participating

---

[228] In the meantime, Caillebotte had continued his financial support of Monet and Pissarro. In January 1878, he gave Monet a total of 255 francs and Pissarro 750 francs. See Berhaut 1994, p. 273, letter 8. In April 1878, he gave Monet another two payments of 40 francs each. See Monet account book, fols. 20 and 21, as cited in Distel ed. 1994, 314.

[229] Letter from Cassatt to Weir, March 10, 1878, as published in Nancy Mowll Mathews ed., *Cassatt and her Circle: Selected Letters* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1984), 137.

[230] "J'ai vu Mme. Manet ce matin. Elle renonce au Salon. On lui avait dit que Monet renonçait comme Renoir etc. Elle n'avait pas reçu de lettre de convocation chez Legrand et en était surprise." Letter from Degas to Caillebotte, undated [after March 25, 1878], as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 10, 274.

artists, and came to agree on June 1st as the opening date. The date of this meeting corresponds with a list of thirteen names Degas made in his notebook: "Caillebotte, Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, Degas, Mme Morisot, Cézanne, Guillaumin, Mlle. Cassatt, Tillot, Levert, Desboutin."[231] Absent from his list was Renoir, who had decided to submit work to the Salon.[232]

In the days after the meeting at Legrand's, Pissarro wrote to Caillebotte at length about his anxieties that there would be further defections from the group:

> [...] I fear a complete disbandment later. You have heard Monet himself who is afraid of exhibiting. If the best artists slip away, what will become of our artistic union? Monet believes that this prevents us from selling – but I hear all the artists complaining, so that is not the cause. Let us make good pictures, let us not exhibit sketches, let us be very disciplined with our pictures – that is better, don't you think? Because the public rejects the most beautiful sketches, it is a pretext.[233]

---

[231] Theodore Reff, *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), notebook 37, 36. In his analysis, Reff links this page to the preparations for the 1877 exhibition, but inclusion of Cassatt's name and the exclusion of Renoir's establishes that this list is more credibly linked to the negotiations in March 1878.

[232] In 1878, Renoir submitted *Cup of Chocolate* (ca. 1877-78, fig. 68) to the Salon and it was accepted. For a complete list of Renoir's Salon submissions between 1863 and 1890, see Barbara Ehrlich White, "Renoir's Trip to Italy," *The Art Bulletin* Vol. 51, No. 4 (Dec. 1969), pp. 333-351, n. 55.

[233] "Ne pouvons-nous faire notre exposition toute seul? Car il faudra s'attendre à des défections. C'en est fait de notre union. J'aurais bien voulu voir Monet à ce sujet, je le regrette, je crains pour plus tard un débande complète. Vous avez entendu Monet lui-même qui craint d'exposer. Si les meilleurs se dérobent, que deviendra notre union artistique? Monet croit que cela nous empêche de vendre, j'entends tous les artistes se plaindre, donc ce n'est pas là la cause. Faisons de bons tableaux, n'exposons pas d'esquisses, soyons très sévères pour nos tableaux, cela vaut mieux qu'en pensez-vous? Car le public se rebute aux esquisses les plus belles, c'est un prétexte." Letter from Pissarro to Caillebotte, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 53, 109-110. While Bailly-Herzberg and Berhaut both date this letter to 1878, Pickvance provides a more precise date of late March 1878 on the basis of a contemporaneous

At this moment, Pissarro voiced his genuine concerns for the dissolution of the group while reaffirming his own commitment to their exhibition practice. If Caillebotte wrote a response it has been lost, but we can presume that Pissarro knew the younger painter would be a sympathetic and equally devoted ally. Their mutual enthusiasm for an 1878 exhibition only grew after the opening of the Exposition Universelle on May 1, with Pissarro writing to Eugène Murer soon after: "I saw Caillebotte this morning. He is impassioned about the idea of an exhibition, since his visit to the [Exposition] Universelle has persuaded him that ours could only gain from the comparison."[234] Although no records of the group's efforts to secure an exhibition space or finalize a checklist survive, the planned June 1 opening date held until the middle of May, when Pissarro wrote once more to Caillebotte to describe a conversation with Degas wherein the two agreed that an early summer exhibition would be impossible to coordinate and that their audiences would be siphoned off by the spectacle on the Champs de Mars. Instead, Degas argued for an opening in September or October.[235] As Pissarro reported to Caillebotte: "Our public, he [Degas] adds, is always the same, a small

---

description of Cézanne's plans written in a letter to Zola that is dated March 28, 1878. See Pickvance in Moffett ed. 1986, 262, fns. 14 and 16.

[234] "J'ai vu Caillebotte ce matin. Il est enflammé de l'idée d'une exposition car sa visite à l'Universelle l'a persuadé que la nôtre ne pouvait que gagner à la comparaison. Je crois que jamais le moment n'a été plus propice, car il est honteux de ne pas voir un seul maître bien représenté." Letter from Pissarro to Murer, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 60, 115-116.

[235] Letter from Pissarro to Caillebotte, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 55, 111.

nucleus that is concerned about us, they will come back to our show, autumn would be a good time."[236]

In June, the group faced another setback with the forced sale of Hoschedé's collection at dismally low prices. Held at the Hôtel Drouot on June 5th and 6th, the sale comprised one hundred paintings and watercolors, with forty-eight works by members of the core Impressionist group. In her analysis of the sale, Merete Bodelsen notes that their pictures were put up for auction as a separate group on the second day and the prices they obtained diminished the artists' prospects for future sales in the months ahead.[237] Sisley sold thirteen pictures at an average of 112 francs apiece while Renoir sold three pictures for 31, 42, and 84 francs respectively. No artist fared worse than Pissarro, however, whose nine pictures brought in a total of 404 francs, averaging just 45 francs each. He described the despair he felt after the sale in a letter to Murer:

> For eight days I have been running all over Paris, searching in vain for the right type, a buyer of Impressionist paintings. I am still searching. [...] I ended up finding an enthusiast, but the Hoschedé sale killed me. He will decide on some inferior pictures than mine, which he can procure at a good price at the Hôtel Drouot. Here I am again, penniless.[238]

---

[236] "Notre public, ajoute-t-il, est toujours le même, c'est un petit noyau qui s'occupe de nous, il reviendra fidèle à notre exposition, l'automne serait une époque favorable." Letter from Pissarro to Caillebotte, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 55, 111.

[237] Bodelsen 1968, 339.

[238] "Voilà huit jours que je cours tout Paris, cherchant en vain l'homme-type, acheteur de tableaux d'Impressionniste. Je cherche encore. [...] J'avais fini par dénicher un enthousiaste, mais le vente Hoschedé m'a tué. Il se décidera pour quelques tableaux inférieurs de moi, qu'il pourra procurer à bon prix à l'Hôtel Drouot, me voilà encore sans le sou." Letter from Pissarro to Murer, Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 57, 113.

The surviving correspondence includes no further mention of a fall exhibition until late August, when Pissarro wrote to Murer once more: "Useless to count on our exhibition, it would be a failure [...] People have had enough of this dreary art, of this exacting, stupid painting which demands some attention, some thought – all that is too serious."[239] Nearly two years after Caillebotte first drafted his will setting aside a substantial sum of money for an ambitious exhibition "painters known as intransigents or impressionists" to be held in 1878, their plans were abandoned.

Organizing the 1879 Exhibition

Six months after the collapse of their plans for an 1878 exhibition, members of the core Impressionist group reconvened to set into motion plans for a fourth Impressionist exhibition that would be held at 28 avenue de l'Opéra in the spring of 1879. Writing for *Roma Artistica* in February, Diego Martelli wrote about the plans for an upcoming exhibition: "We will have this year, in March or April, an exhibition of the Impressionists richer than usual, although several of them, for reasons of convenience, are abstaining from participating."[240] The tensions inherent to the planning of the exhibition are hinted at in this announcement and the exhibition would open on April 15 without the participation of Cézanne, Morisot, Renoir, or Sisley.

---

[239] "Inutile de compter sur notre exposition, ce serait un four […] On en a assez de cet art morose, de cette peinture exigeante, stupide, qui demande de l'attention, de la réflexion – c'est trop sérieux tout cela." Letter from Pissarro to Murer, Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 70, 126-127.

[240] "Nous aurons cette année, en mars ou avril, une Expositions des impressionnistes plus riche que d'habitude, bien que quelques-uns d'entre eux, pour des raisons de convenance, s'abstiennent d'y participer," "Correspondance [1 fév. 1879]", *Roma artistica*, as published in Francesca Errico ed., *Diego Martelli: Les impressionnistes et l'art moderne* (Paris: Editions Vilo, 1979), 100-102.

Despite this partial dissolution of the core Impressionist group, the organization of the 1879 exhibition required tireless strategic coordination. A series of letters written between March and April places two artists at the center of those efforts: Degas and Caillebotte.

By mid-March 1879, several artists had voiced their reluctance to participate in an independent group exhibition. Writing to Georges de Bellio on March 10, Monet expressed his reluctance: "I hear that my friends are preparing a new exhibition this year; I renounce taking part in it, not having done anything worth being shown."[241] In a letter to Duret written later that same week, Sisley made clear that his decision to withhold work from the independent exhibition was directly linked to the policy that no participants could submit work to the Salon that same year.[242] He explained:

> It is true that our exhibitions have served to make us known and in this have been very useful to me, but I believe we must not isolate ourselves too long. We are still far from the moment when we shall be able to do without the prestige attached to the official exhibitions. I am, therefore, determined to submit to the Salon.[243]

---

[241] "J'apprends que mes amis font une nouvelle exposition cette année, je fois renoncer à y prendre part, n'ayant rien fait qui vaille la peine d'être exposé." Letter from Monet to de Bellio, March 10, 1879, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, I:426, letter no. 155.

[242] This policy was familiar to critics as early as 1877. In his review of the 1877 exhibition, Charles Bigot wrote: "Ils [les impressionnistes] on fait, cette année, une obligation à quiconque voulait se joindre à eux de ne rien présenter au Salon des Champs-Élysées." See Bigot 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:132-136.

[243] "Je suis fatigué de végéter comme je le fais depuis si longtemps. Le moment est venu pour moi de prendre une décision. Nos expositions ont servi, il est vrai, à nous faire connaître et en cela elles nous ont été très utiles, mail il ne faut pas, je crois, s'isoler plus longtemps. Le moment est encore loin où l'on pourra se passer du prestige qui s'attache aux expositions officielles. Je suis donc résolu à envoyer au

As I discuss in Chapter Two of this dissertation, Sisley was among the artists who advocated for changes to the Salon system in 1867 and although his work was accepted in 1866, 1868, and 1870, he would not show again at the Salon.[244] Of the defectors from the group in 1879, only Renoir would see his work accepted at the Salon that year.[245]

A letter written by Degas to Caillebotte in mid-March reveals that the two artists were aware of the fracturing within the core Impressionist group but nonetheless determined to mount the best possible exhibition in light of these challenging circumstances. In his letter, Degas took stock of their list of participants:

> Sisley declines. I saw Pissarro this morning; Cézanne is going to arrive in several days, and Guillaumin will see him then. Monet still only knows one thing – that he is not sending to the Salon [...] Mlle Cassatt is seeing Mlle Morisot tomorrow and will know her decision. We are therefore almost certainly: Caillebotte, Pissarro, Mlle. Cassatt, Mlle. Morisot, Monet, Cézanne, Guillaumin, Rouart, Tillot, Levert, Raffaëlli, Zandomeneghi, Maureau, Bracquemond, Cazin, Degas, Mme. Cazin.[246]

Salon." Letter from Sisley to Duret, March 14, 1879, as published in Théodore Duret, "Quelques Lettres de Manet et Sisley," *La Revue blanche* (January 1899), 436.

[244] Sisley saw his submitted work rejected at the Salon in 1867, 1872, 1873, and 1879. See "Chronology," 182-183 in MaryAnne Stevens ed., *Alfred Sisley: Impressionist Master* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

[245] In 1879, Renoir enjoyed critical success at the Salon with his *Portrait of Mme. Charpentier and her Children*. In his essay "The Crisis of Impressionism," Joel Isaacson writes that this success was "thanks to the influence of his patron who secured an advantageous hanging position." See Joel Isaacson, "The Crisis of Impressionism," in *The Crisis of Impressionism: 1878 to 1882* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Art Museum, 1980), pp. 2-47, 4. For a complete list of Renoir's acceptances and rejections at the Salon, see White 1969, 338, n. 55.

[246] Letter from Degas to Caillebotte, undated [March 1879], as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 16, 274.

As Ronald Pickvance notes in his account of the collaboration between Caillebotte and Degas in 1879, Degas's list of participants corresponds to one he made on a page in his notebook a few days prior.[247] In the weeks ahead, he crossed out several names and added others, as the list ran over onto the next page. Among the cancelled names are those of Cézanne and Guillaumin, who, along with Sisley and Renoir, abstained from the 1879 exhibition due to the new policy that required participants to withhold work from the Salon.[248]

While Degas managed the list of participants, Caillebotte set to work to convince Monet, whose reluctance to participate was not linked to planned submissions to the Salon but instead to his despair about the quantity and quality of works he had available for exhibition in the spring of 1879. In mid-March, Caillebotte wrote to Monet to offer his help in wrangling pictures for the exhibition:

> So try not to discourage yourself like this. Since you are not working, come to Paris, you have time to collect all the possible pictures [...] If there isn't a frame on the *Drapeaux* [1878, fig. 69], I will take care of it. I will take care of everything. Send me a list immediately, or rather send it to M. Portier, 54 rue Lepic. Put down as many canvases as you can. I bet that you will have a superb exhibition [...] You get discouraged in a frightening way [...] You do not need to see all the owners of your pictures to make your list. Simply give the list of those

---

[247] Pickvance in Moffett ed. 1986, 246-247.

[248] Cézanne returned to Paris in March 1879 after a year spent mostly in L'Estaque and wrote to Pissarro in a letter dated April 1, "I think that amidst all the difficulties caused by my sending to the Salon, it will be more convenient for me not to take part of the exhibition of the Impressionists." See John Rewald, *Paul Cézanne, letters* (Oxford: B. Cassirer, 1976), 181.

> you wish to include. I will spend the week running around for you, if you wish.[249]

Caillebotte's enthusiasm for Monet's participation in the fourth Impressionist exhibition convinced the older artist to exhibit twenty-nine works. His encouragement coincides with a period of sustained financial support of the artist.[250] In December 1878, Monet moved into a two-room apartment at 20, rue Vintimille, where Caillebotte would pay the rent until the fall of 1881.[251] Through the purchase of works, cash advances, and gifts, Caillebotte would give Monet six thousand francs in 1879, a sum that amounted to twenty percent of his annual income earned through rental properties co-owned with his brother, Martial.[252]

---

[249] "Tâchez donc de ne pas vous décourager comme cela. Puisque vous ne travaillez pas, venez à Paris, vous avez le temps de ramasser tous les tableaux possibles. Je me charge de M. de Bellio. S'il n'y a pas de cadre aux *Drapeaux*, je me charge du cadre. Je vous réponds de tout. Envoyez-moi un catalogue immédiatement, ou plutôt envoyez-le à M. Portier, 54, rue Lepic. Mettez le plus de toiles que vous pourrez. Je parie que vous aurez une exposition superbe. Vous êtes toujours le même. Vous vous découragez d'une manière effrayante. Si vous voyiez comme Pissarro est vert. Venez. Et votre catalogue? Vous n'avez pas besoin d'avoir vu tous les propriétaires de vos tableaux pour votre catalogue. Donnez toujours la liste de ce que vous espérez mettre. Je passerai la semaine à courir pour vous si vous voulez." Caillebotte to Monet, late March 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter 15, 275.

[250] In a letter to Murer dated March 25, 1879, Monet admits: "J'aurais dû refuser de prendre part à notre dernière exposition n'ayant rien à y montrer; ce n'est qu'à contrecœur et pour ne pas passer pour un lâcheur que j'ai dû me laisser fléchir." As published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, I: 436, letter no. 156.

[251] Archives de Paris, Land Registry D1P4 1221, as cited in Distel ed. 1994, 314.

[252] Between January and December 1879, Caillebotte would advance Monet 2500 francs, make cash payments of 3200 francs, and purchase two works for 200 and 100 francs, respectively. These sums are known from Monet's account books, fols. 25-27 and were republished in Distel's chronology, see Distel ed. 1994, 314-315. Caillebotte's annual rental income in 1879 is known through the family archives, as reported by Distel ed. 1994, 314.

While Caillebotte was materially invested in preserving the core group of artists that remained, Degas and Pissarro looked beyond the list of past participants in late March to fill gaps in the exhibition slated to open in mid-April. On April 3, Gauguin wrote to Pissarro to "accept with pleasure the invitation which you and M. Degas were kind enough to send me [...]".[253] The late acceptances of Henri Somm and Adolph-Felix Cals rounded out the final list of sixteen exhibitors.[254] The complementary efforts undertaken by Degas and Caillebotte in the spring of 1879 signal a crucial distinction in how each artist approached the organization of the fourth independent exhibition. For Degas, the character of the exhibition was underpinned by the policy of excluding participants who had also submitted works to the Salon that year and his belief in this policy was underscored by his efforts to rename the group in advance of their fourth exhibition.

In April 1879, Degas drafted four versions of the poster for the exhibition, taking up versions that described "a group of artists," "a group of independent artists, realists and Impressionists," before finally arriving at a title for the exhibition, "4th Exhibition, by a group of Independent artists."[255] That the group was now officially

---

[253] Rewald 1973, 423.

[254] Morisot's name is listed in Degas's notebook [see fn. 226], although Degas reports to Caillebotte in mid-March that Cassatt will visit her the next day to receive her final decision – see letter from Degas to Caillebotte, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 16, 274. Her reasoning with regards to the 1879 exhibition is unknown but her daughter, Julie, was only five months old when it opened.

[255] "4e Exposition/faite par/un groupe d'artistes," became "4e Exposition/faite par/un groupe d'artistes indépendan[ts]/réalistes/et/Impressionnistes/28 Av.," which then became, "4e Exposition/faite par un/Groupe d'artistes Indépendants/28 Av. Opéra/du [...]" Reff 1976, vol. I, 135-138, Notebook 31: 56, 59, 58, 39. That the final draft is p.

one of Independents was noticed by Martelli, who wrote to his friend Francesco Gioli in late March or early April about an upcoming exhibition "of the old Impressionists, who this year have taken the more reasonable name of *Indepéndants*."[256] Degas saw fit to advertise their exhibition as such and before the exhibition's opening, "all the walls of Paris were covered with superb posters, and this title [*les artistes indépendants*] shined in immense letters."[257]

Caillebotte must have agreed to the rebranding of the group. The anti-authoritarian streak that prompted his initial participation in the 1876 exhibition continued through 1878, when he held steadfast to plans for an exhibition that would open alongside the Exposition Universelle, believing that theirs "could only gain from the comparison."[258] While he and Degas were aligned on this issue of assertive independence, Caillebotte seems to have also been motivated by a nostalgia for the success of the 1877 exhibition and by his significant personal and financial investment

---

39 is first suggested by Pickvance, as "the last line was left for the insertion of the dates, "du..." See Pickvance in Moffett ed. 1986, 263, n. 40.

256 Letter from Diego Martelli to Francesco Gioli, late March 1879. See Errico ed. 1979, 28-33.

257 This account of the posters hung throughout the city is from a review published in *Le Gaulois* on April 20, 1879, "Aujourd'hui, ces messieurs et ces dames s'intitulent: *les artistes indépendants*. Tous les murs de Paris ont été recouverts hier de superbes affiches, où ce titre rayonne en lettres immenses." Un Domino, "Echos de Paris," *Le Gaulois* (20 April 1879), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:218.

258 See the discussion of Caillebotte's decision to participate in the 1876 exhibition in Chapter 2, 11 rue Le Peletier, 1876: "Il sait bien que c'est ainsi qu'il se fera un nom.": Caillebotte's Debut. "J'ai vu Caillebotte ce matin. Il est enflammé de l'idée d'une exposition car sa visite à l'Universelle l'a persuadé que la nôtre ne pouvait que gagner à la comparaison." Letter from Pissarro to Murer, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, 115-116, letter 60.

in the career of Monet, who he cajoled into participation by promising to do the logistical work of rounding up pictures and having them framed in advance of the April 10th opening date.[259] While he and Degas collaborated to secure the final list of fourteen participants, Caillebotte was singularly determined to ensure Monet's participation in the 1879 exhibition.

Beyond his personal investment in Monet's continued participation in these group exhibitions, Caillebotte must have known that without Cézanne, Renoir, Sisley, and Morisot, it was crucial to reunite a core group of artists to preserve continuity between the 1879 exhibitions and its antecedents in 1874, 1876, and 1877. His efforts were recognized in the long and generous review penned by Jules Poignard for *Le Gaulois*, which offers biographical sketches of four exhibitors – Degas, Monet, Pissarro, and Caillebotte – while mentioning no others.[260] Caillebotte wrote to Poignard as soon as the article was published:

> Monsieur, I must thank you for your article of this morning. Especially as you are the only one, this year, who has defended us, and you have done so very decisively [...] P.S. I much regret that you forgot Miss. Cassatt and a word for the absent [les absents] this year: Cézanne, Renoir, Sisley, and Mademoiselle Morisot.[261]

---

[259] Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, late March 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 15, 274.

[260] Montjoyeux [Jules Poignard], "Chroniques parisiennes: Les Indépendants," *Le Gaulois* (April 18, 1879), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 232-234. Pickvance quotes this review at great length in his essay, "Contemporary Popularity and Posthumous Neglect," and writes, "It was surely Caillebotte who helped prepare the article." While this is a tempting possibility, I have not found sufficient evidence to support the notion that Caillebotte assisted Poignard in drafting this review. See Pickvance in Moffett 1986, 252.

[261] "Monsieur, Je tiendrai à vous remercier de votre article de ce matin. D'autant plus que vous êtes le seul cette année qui nous ayez défendus et vous l'avez fait très

It is clear from this letter – the only surviving correspondence between Caillebotte and a critic responding to one of his group exhibitions – that Caillebotte saw Cézanne, Renoir, Sisley, and Morisot as temporary abdicants of the Impressionist group. His regret that they were not named in an article describing an exhibition in which they did not participate makes clear that his organization of the 1879 exhibition was shaped in large part by his desire to preserve the core structure of the group. For Caillebotte, the composition of the Impressionist group was fixed by 1879 and participation in the fourth exhibition, while preferred, was not a requirement for continued membership. While Degas' efforts were directed towards the mounting of the best possible independent exhibition with the deliberate exclusion of those who chose to send works to the Salon, Caillebotte's efforts in the spring of 1879 were devoted to the continuation of an Impressionist group whose influence would extend beyond the rented exhibition space at 28 avenue de l'Opéra.

In the absence of extensive contemporary descriptions like those found in Duranty's brochure from 1876 or in Rivière's short-lived *L'Impressioniste* periodical from 1877, less is known about the installation of the 1879 exhibition than about those

---

carrément [...] G. Caillebotte. P.S. Je regrette bien que vous ayez oublié Miss Cassatt et un mot pour les absents de cette année: Cézanne, Renoir, Sisley, Mademoiselle Morisot. Merci tout de même." Letter from Caillebotte to Jules Poignard, April 17, 1879. Berhaut 1994, letter 18, 275. This letter is not addressed to Poignard directly but must have been to him because of Caillebotte's description of the article. Although the letter is dated April 17, one day before the publication of Poignard's review in *Le Gaulois*, this must be an error on Caillebotte's part. Only two reviews of the 1879 exhibition were published on April 17: Louis Leroy, "Beaux-Arts," *Le Charivari* (April 17, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 227-228, which mentions Cassatt by name; and Paul Parfait, "Chronique du jour," *Le Charivari* (April 17, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:235, which mentions no artist by name.

earlier independent exhibitions. In his review for *Roma artistica*, Martelli described a beautiful first floor apartment in a newly-built house at a prestigious address on the avenue de l'Opéra, which had been ceremoniously opened by President MacMahon in September 1877.[262] In his review for *Le Siècle*, Henry Havard offered the only room-by-room account of the exhibition: drawings and watercolors by Lebourg, Rouart, and Piette in the first room, works by Forain, Marie Bracquemond, and Degas in the second, and Cassatt's works in the third room, presumably hung alongside others, though Havard mentions only Cassatt.[263] In the fourth room, works by Tillot and Zandomeneghi, and in the fifth, "les grands prêtres de l'*impressionisme*," Monet and Pissarro. Caillebotte's works were not mentioned until a postscript at the end of the review, where Havard admitted: "This omission is all the more culpable because Mr. Caillebotte has lavished himself at the *Exposition des Indépendants* with an abundance close to prolixity."[264] Havard described the installation of Caillebotte's work on every wall and on easels that filled the galleries.

---

[262] "La loro esposizione fu aperta nella nuova Avenue de l'Opéra, in un bellissimo primo piano d'una casa nuovamente costruita." Diego Martelli, "I pittori impressionisti francesi: Quarta esposizione," *Roma artistica* (June 27, 1879), 170, as cited in Berson 1996, I:230-231. See also: *L'Illustration* (September 29, 1877), 194-195. For a description of MacMahon's ceremonial opening of the avenue de l'Opéra, see: Norma Evenson, *Paris: A Century of Change, 1878-1978* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1979), 10.

[263] Henry Havard, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Siècle* (April 27, 1879), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224.

[264] "Cette omission est d'autant plus coupable que M. Caillebotte s'est prodigué, à l'Exposition des Indépendants, avec une abondance voisine de la prolixité." Havard 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224.

Beyond this account of where the work hung, little is known about the orchestration of this installation and about whether artists were invited to place their own pictures or if those decisions were made by a hanging committee. In his account of the 1879 exhibition, Ronald Pickvance relies on an article written by Gustave Goetschy for *Le Voltaire* in April 1881:

> Usually M. Degas leads the caravan. About February, he goes out to look, consulting the noticeboards and interrogating the concierges. 'Do you have a free apartment in the house?' – 'Yes sir.' – 'Would the proprietor agree to let it for a month?' If the proprietor agrees, M. Degas gives a sign to his companions. The interior decorator is informed immediately. As many works are collected as a drawing-room, a dining-room, two bedrooms, a bathroom, and kitchen could contain. A turnstile is installed in the ante-room and a day for the opening is fixed.[265]

This process is confirmed by sketches in Degas's notebook, made in the spring of 1879; alongside floor plans of the apartment, a note is made to call on Belloir, "tapissier-décorateur."[266]

---

[265] "C'est d'ordinaire M. Degas qui mène la caravane. Vers Février il se met en quête, interrogeant les écriteaux et scrutant les concierges, 'Vous avez un appartement libre, dans la maison, dites?' Oui, monsieur,' 'Le propriétaire consentirait à le louer pour un mois, dites?' Si le propriétaire y consent, M. Degas fait signe à ses compagnons. Le tapissier est immédiatement avisé. On réunit autant d'œuvres qu'un salon, une salle à manger, deux chambres à coucher, un cabinet de toilette et une cuisine peuvent en contenir, on installe un tourniquet dans l'antichambre et l'on prend jour pour l'ouverture." Gustave Goetschy, *Le Voltaire* (5 April 1881), as cited in Berson 1996, I:344-345. Pickvance quoted this review in his account of the 1879 exhibition, but it is crucial to note that this specific description was written in response to the 1881 exhibition, and while Goetschy described a pattern, "Usually M. Degas leads the caravan...," Caillebotte did not participate in the 1881 exhibition and so this should not be relied on as a singular source for the division of logistical responsibility between Degas and Caillebotte.

[266] Reff 1976, vol. I, 135-138, Notebook 31, fn. 39.

While Degas may well have spearheaded the logistical arrangements of the 1879 exhibition, it was almost certainly Caillebotte who paid the necessary advances to secure the space and appropriate furnishings. The Degas family enjoyed considerable wealth through the mid-nineteenth century but by 1874, the family bank, their primary source of income, was near collapse.[267] By 1876 it had failed, and in 1878, Edgar's brother René defaulted on debts to the family business and abandoned his blind wife and six children.[268] The collapse of his family in the mid- and late-1870s left Degas dependent on the sale of his works for income for the first time in his career. While Degas's financial health was in decline, the death of Caillebotte's mother in October 1878 brought a period of increased wealth and independence for the younger artist, who received over 700,000 francs in December 1878 as part of the final disbursement of the estates of his parents.[269] Caillebotte's wealth was exaggerated in press accounts, with Bertall writing that the "charming young man, one of the best brought up," had an annual income of one hundred thousand francs. Gossip aside, the writer's assertion that "there is enough there to assure independence forever,"

---

[267] To better understand the context for the collapse of the Degas family bank, see: Anthony Rowley, *Évolution Économique de la France du Milieu du XIX^e siècle à 1914* (Paris: Société d'Édition d'Enseignement Supérieur, 1982), especially Chapter 3, section 1, "La Banque – la structure bancaire, la stratégie bancaire, le marché financier," pp. 139-185. For a summary of the Degas family business, see Marilyn Brown, *Degas and the Business of Art: A Cotton Office in New Orlean*s (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994).

[268] Linda Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (New York: Harper & Row, 1989), 159.

[269] Distel ed. 1994, 314.

indicates that Caillebotte exerted financial control over the organization of the group exhibitions and that this arrangement was known to members of the press.[270]

Bertall recognized Caillebotte's material support of the 1879 exhibition, but he also described the young artist's ideological leadership. In his review for *Paris-Journal*, he wrote that Manet, once the incontestable head of the group, had pushed out to sea the boat containing his disciples, "[and] the boat nevertheless continued to sail without him in its noble independence [...] it is M. Caillebotte who took, with a firm hand, the rudder of this boat, which without him would perhaps sail adrift."[271] Bertall credited Caillebotte's leadership of the group to his secure financial position, but also noted that the young artist exhibited "no fewer than thirty-five paintings, magnificently framed, which energetically affirm his temperament and his convictions."[272] It is through this group – the largest Caillebotte would exhibit at any

---

[270] "Si nous en croyons des sources tout à fait autorisées, M. Caillebotte, jeune homme charmant et des mieux élevés, est à la tête d'une centaine de mille francs de rente: il y a là de quoi assurer à tout jamais l'indépendance." Bertall, "Exposition des indépendants: Ex-Impressionnistes, demain intentionnistes," *L'Artiste* (June 1, 1879), 396-398, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213.

[271] "Lui [Manet], le chef incontesté jadis, a repoussé du pied la barque qui contenait ses disciples, et la barque néanmoins a continué à voguer sans lui dans sa noble indépendance. Pendant que M. Manet passait avec armes et bagages dans le camp des croisés de l'art, c'est M. Caillebotte qui a pris d'une main ferme le gouvernail de cette barque, qui sans lui voguerait peut-être à la dérive." Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213. Bertall's choice of a boating metaphor was probably not accidental, as this review coincides with Caillebotte's earliest victories as a member of the Cercle de la Voile de Paris. He would win two first and two second prizes with his yacht *Iris* in the 1879 season. See Distel ed. 1994, 341-342 for a complete chronology of his sailing achievements.

[272] "Il n'a pas moins de trente-cinq tableaux, magnifiquement encadrés, qui s'affirment d'une manière énergique son tempérament et ses convictions." Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213.

one exhibition in his lifetime – that we can begin to understand the relationship between his ambitions for the group and his ambitions as an individual artist in 1879.

Caillebotte's Strategy at the Fourth Impressionist Exhibition

Unlike his colleagues who submitted work to the Salon in 1878 and whose work went to auction at the Hôtel Drouot in June of that year, Caillebotte did not see his work on public view between May 1877 and April 1879.[273] In 1876, his strategy at the second exhibition had centered on retribution for the rejection of *The Floor Scrapers* at the Salon in 1875, while his submissions to the third exhibition were shaped by a deliberate painting campaign and strategy that unfolded over the months between May 1876 and March 1877. When it came time to select paintings for the 1879 exhibition, Caillebotte had two years' worth of work in his studio and no single guiding principle by which to make his selections. In order to understand his strategy, we must first evaluate the works he would have had ready for exhibition that spring. The paintings that he produced between the close of the third exhibition and the opening of the fourth represent a shift in his studio practice toward new materials, techniques, and compositions, and, significantly, toward work that further aligned the artist with the broader artistic concerns of the Impressionist group in the late 1870s.

In Marie Berhaut's 1951 monograph on the artist, she published the recollections of the living descendants of Caillebotte's brother, Martial, about *The Pont de l'Europe* having been painted partially *en plein air*: "he [Gustave] built an

---

[273] See the discussion of the auction of works by Caillebotte, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley at Legrand's gallery on May 28th, 1877 in Chapter 3, 28 avenue de l'Opéra, 1879: The Collapse of the 1878 Exhibition.

omnibus so he could paint in all weather."[274] In reality, the city pictures that Caillebotte exhibited in 1877 were studio pictures, carefully planned with sketches and studies in a variety of media.[275] He had painted out of doors before, first in Naples alongside de Nittis (fig. 33) and then at the Caillebotte family property in Yerres, where he produced complex and technically accomplished pictures like *L'Yerres, Effect of Rain* (1875, fig. 70). Between 1877 and 1879, he returned to landscape painting with renewed attention and enthusiasm.[276] In the summer of 1877, he executed a number of pastel drawings of the family property in Yerres, including *Le mur du jardin potager, Yerres* (1877, fig. 71). Caillebotte's turn to pastels presented a solution to the material difficulties of working outdoors and corresponds with his purchase of a number of pastels and pastelized monotypes by Degas.[277] On the whole, this new direction in Caillebotte's work can be linked to purchases he made in the first half of 1877. In addition to Renoir's *The Swing*, Caillebotte acquired three landscapes by Pissarro and an "*esquisse Tuileries*" by Monet.[278] The reversed mirror view of *Bal*

---

[274] "[...] il fit construire un omnibus afin de pouvoir peindre par tous les temps" in "La Vie et l'œuvre de Gustave Caillebotte," Berhaut 1951, n.p. [section: Vues de Paris].

[275] See the architectural and perspectival studies published as D-8 through 10 in Varnedoe 1976, 186.

[276] For discussion of Caillebotte's landscape painting before 1876 and his decision not to exhibit landscapes with the Impressionist group at his debut, see Chapter 2, 11 rue Le Peletier, 1876: "Il sait bien que c'est ainsi qu'il se fera un nom": Caillebotte's Debut.

[277] The link between Caillebotte's recent purchase of pastelized monotypes by Degas and his new interest in pastels soon thereafter is noted by Marrinan in his account of Caillebotte's artistic practice that year. See Marrinan 2017, 154-155.

[278] Caillebotte lent those three landscapes to the 1877 exhibition: *Les toits rouges: Coin du village, effet d'hiver* (1877, fig. 72); *La Moisson à Montfoucault*; and *Paysage*

at the Moulin de la Galette in the background of his *Self-Portrait at the Easel*, (1879, fig. 74) reveals his practice of keeping works by other artists in his studio and his renewed interest in painting *en plein air* was likely tied to his purchase of landscapes by Renoir, Pissarro, and Monet.

At the 1877 exhibition, Caillebotte had worked collaboratively with Monet to exhibit a suite of pictures of the Gare Saint-Lazare and its immediate vicinity. In the summer of 1877, Caillebotte sought to extend the artistic dialogue between the two men by taking up the subject of Monet's *The Parc Monceau* (1876, fig. 75), painted in 1876 and first exhibited at the third Impressionist exhibition. Caillebotte's *The Parc Monceau* (1877, fig. 76) reprises Monet's brightly lit view of the park with just a few nondescript figures in the background. In both pictures, the sun-dappled green of the grass and foliage fills two-thirds of the canvas. In his painting, probably made *en plein air*, Monet renders the depth of the scene by layering bands of sunlight, shadow, and trees. Caillebotte makes the subject his own by including his now-familiar compositional motif of a path that carves through the composition.[279] He raises the horizon line relative to that of Monet's picture, creating an immersive effect that

---

avec rochers, Montfoucault (1874, fig. 73). The purchase of these three pictures is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Two, 6 rue Le Peletier, 1877: Designing the Third Exhibition. The source for Caillebotte's purchase of the Monet sketch is the Monet account book, fol. 13v, as cited in Distel ed. 1994, 313.

[279] The motif of a winding path receding into space would be adapted by Monet in his later pictures of the park, made in the spring and summer of 1878 (1878, fig. 77). See Colta Feller Ives et al. eds., *Public Parks, Private Gardens: Paris to Provence* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2018), 46-48. As Marrinan notes in his description of the picture, Caillebotte's *The Parc Monceau* shares its composition structure with Monet's *Corner of an Apartment*, which Caillebotte owned. This comparison was first made in Distel ed. 1994, 115.

places the viewer at the center of a composition that we can imagine extending beyond the frame of the picture in all directions. Caillebotte's eagerness to reassert the relationship between Monet's work and his own soon after the close of the 1877 exhibition through *plein air* painting was probably linked to the critics' failure to recognize the intentional installation of *The Pont de l'Europe* alongside Monet's paintings and by lingering anxieties about his place within the group. Even the positive reviews that Caillebotte received in 1877 separated him from "the true impressionist landscape painters," as Burty put it in his piece for *La République française*. In *The Parc Monceau*, Caillebotte takes up "true impressionist landscape" painting with Monet as his model. While he must have been pleased by the reviews written in 1877 by Bigot, Grimm, and others who discovered an emerging Impressionist aesthetic that included pictures like *Paris Street, Rainy Day* and *Portraits in the Countryside*, Caillebotte's art was still characterized in terms of its difference from that of his co-exhibitors, and he may have had that critique in mind when he painted the Parc Monceau in the summer of 1877.

In addition to these landscapes and outdoor scenes in pastels and oils, Caillebotte produced a large group of portraits in 1877, 1878, and the first half of 1879. Caillebotte was new to portraiture, having painted only two single-figure portraits and one self-portrait before 1877.[280] Between 1877 and 1879, he painted twenty portraits whose sitters include members of his family and of his social circle beyond the members of the Impressionist group. Caillebotte had exhibited a single portrait of his mother at the 1877 exhibition that was universally well-received, and

---

[280] They are *Portrait de Bérenger* (before 1875, fig. 78), *The Painter Morot in his Studio* (fig. 17), and *Self-Portrait* (1875, fig. 79).

perhaps he felt encouraged by its positive reception.[281] In their composition and scale, these portraits were fairly conventional and a number of them were given as gifts to their sitters within the artist's lifetime.[282] The portraits that Caillebotte made between 1877 and 1879 are characterized by a certain directness and intensity, with sitters depicted in private, domestic spheres. These portraits often veered into scenes of quiet, solitary activity, such as the *Portrait of Mlle. Boissière Knitting* and the *Portrait of Eugène Daufresne* (1878, fig. 82). In the latter, the artist's cousin is shown immersed in his book and oblivious to his surroundings. In the *Portrait of Richard Gallo* (1878, fig. 83), by comparison, the sitter meets the viewer's gaze with self-possessed confidence. Caillebotte created believable, immersive settings for his sitters by laboring over the particulars of these interior scenes.

Caillebotte's decision to exhibit a group of eight portraits at the 1879 exhibition reflected his studio practice in months since the 1877 exhibition and represented another example of Caillebotte's sensitivity to his critics in the mid- and late-1870s. Rather than seeking to correct what he perceived to be a misunderstanding of his work, as he had done by exhibiting a suite of large-scale, perspectivally complex paintings at the 1877 exhibition, Caillebotte instead chose to exhibit works that he hoped would receive the same uncontroversial, positive reception that his

---

[281] Caillebotte also exhibited *Portraits à la campagne* and *Portraits dans un intérieur*, but in each case, the title "portraits" is used to indicate a specificity of the figures pictured in what should otherwise be understood as an interior and an exterior genre scene.

[282] For example, *Portrait of A. Cassabois* (1877, fig. 80) was given to its sitter before 1894. Cassabois was a friend of both Caillebotte and his older brother Martial and he appears as a card player in *The Bezique Game* (1880, fig. 81). He also gave portraits to his cousin, Eugène Daufresne, and to his friends Richard Gallo and Paul Hugot.

Portrait of Mme. Martial Caillebotte had received in 1877. The portrait was admired by a number of critics, but Burty was the most indulgent, insisting that it would have earned a medal at the Salon.[283] Léon de Lora, one of Caillebotte's harsher critics, wrote that while the portrait was not well-painted, it was "very alive," all the same.[284]

As the final list of exhibition participants began to take shape in March 1879, Caillebotte must have begun to consider how his works would be installed alongside those by his co-exhibitors. In the end, he would show as many as forty works, the largest number at any of his eight lifetime exhibitions.[285] Of those, only twenty-five were listed in the catalogue. Three additional pictures can be added to the list on the basis of descriptions by critics: *Une Vache et une chèvre*, since believed to have been destroyed, *Les Orangers* (1878, fig. 84), and *Self-Portrait at the Easel*.[286] The works he selected for the exhibition can be categorized into three groups: at least fifteen

---

[283] "Le portrait d'une dame âgée, la mère de l'artiste, je crois, est une étude intelligente, serrée, sentie. Elle eût suffi pour mériter au Salon une médaille à ce jeune peintre dont l'avenir est certain." Ph. B. [Burty] 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:123-125.

[284] "[…] une vieille dame à cheveux gris, absorbée dans sa broderie, qui est, sinon très bien peint, du moins très vivant." Léon de Lora, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Gaulois* (April 10, 1877), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:161-163.

[285] The exact number of works that Caillebotte exhibited in 1879 is unknown. Diego Martelli describes seeing "quasi quaranta tele," while Bertall wrote, "Il n'a pas moins de trente-cinq tableaux [...]." See Diego Martelli 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:230-231 and Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213.

[286] A painting described as *Veau* is mentioned by no fewer than ten critics in 1879, but it has not been identified or recovered. It is mentioned in the literature as late at 1882, see L. Leroy, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Charivari* (March 17, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:402. Both *Les Orangers* and *Self-Portrait at the Easel* are described in the anonymous review written for *La Vie parisienne*: X, "Choses et autres," *La Vie parisienne* (May 10, 1879), 275-275, as cited in Berson 1996, I:252.

landscapes and scenes of outdoor leisure, including six pastels; eight portraits; and three views of Paris. Caillebotte probably planned to show a group of landscapes at a future exhibition as early as the summer of 1877, when he began his two-year *plein air* painting campaign.[287]

Between the 1877 and 1879 exhibitions, Caillebotte had begun his experiments with printmaking.[288] While his charcoal and pencil drawings were often preparatory works for oil paintings, the drypoint prints he made in 1877 and 1878 were produced in front of the paintings to which they are related, resulting in a mirror image. As Dorothee Hansen describes in her article on Caillebotte's prints, a pair of drypoints related to *Canotiers* (1877, fig. 85) present a complex order of production.[289] The oil painting further develops a composition first laid out in a large, gridded chalk drawing (1877, fig. 86). The unsure handling and uneven impression of the drypoint now in a

---

[287] The decision to exhibit such a large group of landscapes, nearly all of which were painted in Yerres, must have also been linked to nostalgia over the loss of the family home after the death of Caillebotte's mother in October 1878. The Yerres property was sold in 1879, although the exact date is unknown. As Distel explains in her chronology, "according to the local Land Registry, in which two- or three-year delays in recording such events are common, the departure of the Caillebottes from the property and the assumption of possession by the new owner, Pierre Ferdinand Dubois, takes place in 1881. (Land Registry, Yerres township, OW 339)." See Distel ed. 1994, 314. Caillebotte makes no mention of the Yerres property in any surviving correspondence from 1879 and paints no pictures there after 1878, and so the sale can be more precisely dated to the first half of 1879.

[288] Caillebotte's experiments with printmaking were undoubtedly influenced by his relationships with Degas and Pissarro, who were making etchings and drypoints in the mid- to late 1870s. Caillebotte's prints have been understudied in the literature and are ripe for further research, although the topic falls outside the scope of this dissertation.

[289] Dorothee Hansen, "Newly Discovered Prints by Gustave Caillebotte," *The Burlington Magazine* Vol. 151, No. 1272 (March 2009), 160-162.

private collection (1877, fig. 87) suggest a first attempt at transferring the image. A small, gridded pencil drawing on a larger sheet of tracing paper (1877, fig. 88) is scaled to the first state impression and was probably used as a bridge between the painting and the first miniaturized print. Caillebotte later produced a second state drypoint (1877, fig. 89) that reverses the image back to the orientation of the painting.

Hansen argues that a smaller chalk drawing (1877, fig. 90) was a preparatory work made between the first and second states.[290] However, Caillebotte includes his signature within the frame of the image in that small chalk drawing, suggesting that it was made when he was first imagining the eventual print as an original work of art and planning to sign a final state drypoint on the plate. It is therefore more likely that Caillebotte produced the small chalk drawing before he began printing, so that he would better understand how the linear composition would read at 16 by 24 cm. Caillebotte did not sign either surviving drypoint but his understanding of the prints as original works of art is further supported by his print after *Madame Boissière Knitting* (1877, fig. 91). The sketchy handling of the drypoint medium in the *Madame Boissière* print indicates that Caillebotte did not approach his experiments with printmaking as a means for mechanically reproducing his paintings but as an artistic exploration of familiar compositions. The *Madame Boissière* sheet is signed by the artist in pencil, suggesting that he considered exhibiting the print, but in the end, Caillebotte exhibited no prints and only the painting versions of *Canotiers* and *Madame Boissière Knitting* at the 1879 exhibition. *Canotiers* and its related works were a first pass at integrating the artist/viewer into the moving boat, rather than

---

[290] Hansen 2009, 162.

picturing a boat from an external vantage point. This view seated inside a boat is reprised in another major canvas exhibited in 1879, *A Boating Party* (1878, fig. 92).

Despite his decision not to include prints in the 1879 exhibition, Caillebotte did choose to exhibit works in pastel for the first time in his career. His strategy was undoubtedly linked to the success of Degas's pastels at the 1877 exhibition, three of which were lent from Caillebotte's own collection.[291] Dismissing large-scale oil paintings such as *The Pont de l'Europe* and *Paris Street, Rainy Day*, as "cold," "limp and heavy," Frédéric Chevalier described the wide range of works by Degas on view:

> The chorus singers, the stage managers, the star dancers, the ballet master, the prima donnas of café-concerts, every sickly and smiling member of this world of song and dance inspires from M. Degas a suite of watercolors, pastels, and drawings that are alive with an entirely Parisian and modern feeling.[292]

It was too far outside of Caillebotte's artistic practice in 1878 and 1879 to embrace the subjects that had garnered Degas such attention at the third exhibition, but Degas's success and the ready acceptance of his pastelized monotypes as finished works created a context for Caillebotte to exhibit a significantly larger group of works in both oils and pastels at the 1879 exhibition.[293] While his strategy at the 1877

---

[291] See the discussion of Caillebotte's strategy as a lender to the 1877 exhibition in Chapter 2, 6 rue Le Peletier, 1877: Strategy at the Third Exhibition.

[292] "Les choristes, les régisseurs, les choryphées, les maîtres de ballet, les prime-donne des cafés-concerts, tout ce monde souffreteux et souriant du chant et de la danse inspire à M. Degas une suite d'aquarelles, de pastels et de dessins qui vivent d'un sentiment absolument parisien et moderne." Frédéric Chevalier, "Les Impressionnistes" *L'Artiste* (May 1, 1877), 329-333, as cited in Berson 1996, I:137-140.

[293] Caillebotte had exhibited six works each in the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions. By comparison, Degas exhibited twenty works at the 1877 exhibition.

exhibition had been partially motivated by a desire to distance himself from Degas, the exhibition of pastels in 1879 presented an opportunity for Caillebotte to capitalize on the older artist's success by exhibiting works on canvas and on paper. Degas had worked with monotypes and pastels to create images of Parisian nightlife, the theater, and female nudes, while Caillebotte worked in pastels *en plein air* to produce views of the estate at Yerres and portraits of the family members who gathered there. By producing works that stood so far apart from Degas's in their subjects and compositions, Caillebotte was able to experiment with new media without risking a return to the critical interpretation of his work as merely derivative. Similarly, it seems likely that Caillebotte's decision to exhibit three decorative panels – *Fishing* (1878, fig. 93), *Bathers* (1878, fig. 94), and *Boaters on the Yerres* (1878, fig. 95) – was linked to the critical success of Monet's *Dindons* at the 1877 exhibition.[294]

While Caillebotte had limited his submissions to the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions to conventionally formatted, medium- and large-scale oil paintings on canvas, the success of Monet and Degas's work in unusual media and formats emboldened the younger artist to exhibit a more diverse group of works than ever before.[295] The finished pastels that he exhibited in 1879 included *Jardin Potager, Yerres* (1877, fig. 96) and *Vallée de l'Yerres* (1877, fig. 97), two works that show the

---

[294] The success of Monet's *Dindons* was summarized by Bertall in his review for *Paris-Journal*: "Une des toiles les plus appréciées par les gens convaincus, constate l'impression reçue par l'auteur à l'aspect d'un troupeau de dindons blancs, grimpés les uns sur les autres, et placés dans un vaste champ de chicorée." Bertall 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:131-132.

[295] The one exception, *Paris Street, Rainy Day*, was far larger than any other painting exhibited at any of the eight Impressionist exhibitions. Curiously, few critics remarked on its unusual scale.

artist capitalizing on the mobility made possible by working in pastel to create works *en plein air*. Both are scaled to match the oil paintings on view – 41 x 54 cm and 57 x 72 cm, respectively – and both are signed and dated. The pastel drawing of the vegetable garden at Yerres was made around the same time *Wall of the Kitchen Garden at Yerres* (1877, fig. 98) and Caillebotte's decision to exhibit the drawing and not the painting shows his desire to present works done in a variety of media at the 1879 exhibition.

In addition to these works made in Yerres and the group of portraits, Caillebotte exhibited three pictures he must have made in Paris: two views of rooftops seen from a window and one view of the rue Halévy, seen from the sixth floor. These three paintings stand apart in Caillebotte's lifetime exhibition practice because all three are listed in the exhibition catalogue as belonging to private collectors: *Vue de toits, Paris* (1878, fig. 99), "Appartient à M. A.C"; *Toits sous la neige, Paris* (1878, fig. 100), "Appartient à M.K."; and *Rue Halévy, vue d'un sixième étage* (1878, fig. 101), "Appartient à M.H."[296] Art historians have long maintained that Caillebotte never sold a painting in his lifetime, a theory based on the scarcity of paintings by Caillebotte in collections outside of his family at his death in 1894 and on the absence of any record of sales. While it is imaginable that Caillebotte would have given pastel drawings to friends as gifts and then borrowed them back to include in the exhibition, it is peculiar to see three oil paintings listed as belonging to collectors, particularly when the practice of borrowing from collectors for the exhibitions was intended to

---

[296] The three pastels lent from collectors to the 1879 exhibition are: *Bathers* (1877, fig. 102), "Appartient à M. G.M."; *Vallée de l'Yerres,* "Appartient à M. E.M."; and *Rivière d'Yerres* (not identified), "Appartient à M.K."

lend work a certain prestige that would send other collectors to their studio.[297] More peculiar still is the provenance of *Toits sous la neige, Paris*, a painting now in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay. The painting is listed as lent to the 1879 exhibition by "M.K." but the painting was in Caillebotte's own collection at his death and was accepted by the French State as a gift from Martial Caillebotte in 1894. Today, the Musée d'Orsay lists the possible identity of "M.K" as "Caillebotte?" in their documentation of the painting's provenance and the matter remains unresolved.[298]

Regardless of the collection of origin for these three pictures of Paris, they represent an anomaly within the group of pictures that Caillebotte exhibited in 1879. With just three exceptions, Caillebotte chose to exhibit a group of works that was composed of outdoor scenes and portraits. Not coincidentally, his decision put his work in conversation with that of two artists he still believed to be at the center of the critical discourse about the future of Impressionism: Degas and Monet. Of the twenty-nine paintings exhibited by Monet in 1879, twenty-six were landscape paintings or other outdoor, exurban scenes. Two of these landscapes – *Pommiers, Vétheuil* (1878, fig. 103) and *L'Eglise de Vétheuil, neige* (ca. 1878-79, fig. 104) – were lent to the show from Caillebotte's collection and the rest were rounded up by the younger artist on Monet's behalf.[299] Given the degree of influence Caillebotte wielded over Monet

---

[297] This was certainly the case for Monet, who exhibited six paintings from his studio alongside twenty-nine works borrowed from collectors and dealers, a majority of which were explicitly named: MM. Duret, de Bellio, Hayem, Murer, Durand-Ruel, et cetera.

[298] The file for this painting, RF 876, RF 2730, INV 335, was consulted at the Documentation de la conservation in October 2016.

[299] "Donnez toujours la liste de ce que vous espérez mettre. Je passerai la semaine à courir pour vous si vous voulez." Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, late March 1879,

in 1878 and 1879, it seems likely that Caillebotte steered him towards this group of recent landscape paintings with his own studio reserve in mind.[300] Caillebotte had significantly less, if any, influence over the pictures that Degas chose to exhibit in 1879, but their final checklists began to come together as the two artists were in frequent contact regarding the logistics of the exhibition's opening.

Degas's decision to exhibit a group of seven portraits in 1879 was unusual – he had exhibited no portraits at the 1874 exhibition, two in 1876, and only one in 1877. Like Caillebotte, Degas chose to exhibit portraits of sitters in defined interior settings, following Duranty's prescription that the details of an apartment be "clear enough to enable us to deduce the character and habits of its occupant."[301] Degas's portraits of Duranty (1879, fig. 105) and Martelli (1879, fig. 106) show the cluttered workspaces of two prominent art critics. While Caillebotte often used setting to relate the social class of his sitter, as in the finely appointed apartment of his cousin, Eugène Daufresne, Degas's portraits reflected the interior life of the sitter. For both artists, portraiture was an exploration of psychological disjunction from the viewer, with Caillebotte's cousin absorbed in his novel and Duranty and Martelli looking out as though lost in thought.

---

as published in Berhaut 1994, letter 15, 274. In his account of the organization of the 1879 exhibition, Pickvance writes that Monet left the selection of pictures "entirely to Caillebotte." See Pickvance in Moffett ed. 1986, 254.

[300] Of the eighty works that Wildenstein dates to between the 1877 and 1879 exhibitions, seventy-three are landscapes. See Wildenstein 1974-1991, I:310-342, nos. 450-530.

[301] Edmond Duranty, *La Nouvelle peinture: A propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les galeries Durand-Ruel* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1876).

Caillebotte's inability – or rather, unwillingness – to singularly align himself with either Degas or Monet at the 1877 and 1879 exhibitions speaks to the challenges of balancing his individual ambition with that of the group.[302] Caillebotte's close relationship with Monet and his patronage of the older artist in the mid- to late-1870s was evident in his decision to buy works by Monet, and to exhibit alongside Monet at every opportunity. He also began to paint like Monet, demonstrating a new interest in landscape painting and in the atmospheric treatment of light. His relationship with Degas was more fraught, splintering for good in 1881 with Caillebotte's refusal to participate in the sixth Impressionist exhibition, but he must have admired Degas's bravado and the two shared an interest in views of contemporary life taken from unusual vantage points and in portraiture of family members and friends.

Despite his continued efforts to balance the relationship between his work and that of Monet and Degas, Caillebotte's exhibition strategy in 1879 represented a decisive shift away from his approaches to the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions. Whereas he had planned small, thoughtful installations of six works in previous years, he exhibited at least twenty-eight in 1879. He may have exhibited as many as twenty additional pictures, *hors catalogue*. About the installation of Caillebotte's works, Havard wrote, "He is everywhere, covering entire walls, climbing easels. He is the one who gives [the exhibition] a cheerful note."[303] Caillebotte's installation of his own work

---

[302] In his account of the crucial period between 1877 and 1882, George Shackelford describes Caillebotte's "shift of aesthetic allegiance from the urbane and cerebral naturalism represented by Degas to the ocular pastoralism typified by Monet" as having taken place in stages during these years. George Shackelford, "Man in the Middle," from Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 50.

[303] "Il est partout, couvrant des murailles entières, escaladant des chevalets. C'est lui qui fournit la note gaie." Havard 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224.

throughout the rooms of the exhibition space represents the strongest affirmation of belonging to the Impressionist group to date. Whereas he had tried to strategically align his paintings in thoughtful pairings with those by Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro at the 1877 exhibition, in 1879 he sought to immerse his works within the broader Impressionist context, inviting comparisons of his work to those on view by all fifteen other exhibitors.[304]

Caillebotte's decision to flood the 1879 exhibition with his own pictures is even more striking when we consider the evidence that he added the additional pictures after the exhibition's opening on April 10th. Eleven critics mention the number of paintings by Caillebotte, but their reported tallies jump significantly after the first week of the exhibition. In reviews published April 11, Louis Besson and Alfred Wolff wrote that he showed "twenty-five" or "about twenty" works.[305] The review in *Le Soir* published the next day reiterated that it was "a modest group of twenty-four," but by April 16, Armand Silvestre writes that there were "numerous canvases" on view by the artist, an assessment shared by Poignard in his review published on April 18.[306] By April 23, there were "more than twenty little canvases of

---

[304] See the discussion of the installation at the 1877 exhibition in Chapter Two: Caillebotte and the Impressionists, Before 1879: "Designing the Third Exhibition," and "Strategy at the Third Exhibition."

[305] "Les vingt-cinq toiles [...] de M. Caillebotte [...]" Louis Besson, "MM. les impressionnistes," *L'Evénement* (April 11, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 213-214; and Albert Wolff, "Les Indépendants," *Le Figaro* (April 11, 1879), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:251.

[306] "[...] une modest bagage de vingt-quatre toiles," "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Soir* (April 12, 1879), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 241; "les nombreuses toiles de M. Caillebotte," Armand Silvestre, "Les Expositions: Des Indépendants," *L'Estafette* (April 16, 1879), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 239; and

bathers and boaters" alone and by April 27, Caillebotte was "everywhere," exhibiting a group of "as many as forty paintings."[307]

Caillebotte was reading the criticism about the 1879 exhibition as it was being published – he wrote to Monet to share press clippings the evening the exhibition opened – and so his decision to add additional canvases in the first week is easily explained.[308] He is not mentioned in two important early reviews, those appearing in *Le Soleil* and *Le Petit Journal* the day after the exhibition's opening, likely prompting anxieties that his submissions would go unnoticed as compared to the large groups of works exhibited by Monet and Degas – nearly thirty apiece.[309] In most of the twelve reviews published before April 16 that described his work in detail, Caillebotte's

---

"M. Caillebotte a exposé un grand nombre des toiles," Montjoyeux [Poignard] 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 232-234.

[307] "[...] plus de vingt petites toiles des baigneurs et des canotiers," Henry Cochin, "Les Peintres impressionnistes," *Le Français* (April 23, 1879), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 216-217; Havard 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224; and "ses quarante toiles," J. de Tarade, "L'Exposition des peintres, indépendants," *L'Europe artiste* (April 27, 1879), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:244-245. A later review by Fournel described "twenty-five" paintings, but it was written after the close of the exhibition and probably relied on the exhibition catalogue, which lists exactly twenty-five works by Caillebotte, see Fournel "Les Œuvres et les hommes: Courrier de théâtre, de le littérature et des arts," *Le Correspondant* (May 25, 1879), 729-730, as cited in Berson 1996, I:220-221. Bertall, who wrote with greater specificity about Caillebotte's work in a review published in *L'Artiste* on June 1, remembered "no fewer than thirty-five works," Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 212.

[308] Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, April 10, 1879: "Mon ami, Je vous envoie quelques journaux [...]" Berhaut 1994, letter no. 17, 274-275.

[309] E.C., "Deux Expositions," *Le Soleil* (April 11, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:216; and "Les Artistes indépendants," (April 11, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:235.

paintings were not well received. The paintings that receive the highest praise are his paintings of bathers and boaters. In *Le Soir*, one critic wrote that his work reveals "boating and impressionism to be two liberal arts that join hands," and in *La Presse*, Edmond Renoir described his boating pictures as "bearing witness to a search for truth."[310] Encouraged by this positive reception of his scenes of outdoor bourgeois leisure, Caillebotte added as many as ten or fifteen additional works in this vein, probably within the first week of the exhibition's four-week run. These additions explain why Henry Cochin noted seeing twenty paintings of boaters and bathers when only nine were listed in the catalogue and why, by April 27, Havard described seeing Caillebotte's paintings displayed on easels in the galleries, a detail not mentioned in any of the early reviews.[311]

Caillebotte's decision to add works after the opening date represents a significant shift in his exhibition strategy at the 1879 exhibition. Whereas his approach to the 1877 exhibition had been calculated, his installation planned months in advance with paintings made specifically for the exhibition, his strategy in 1879 was more fluid. His initial motivation was to advance the interests of the group. To that end, he selected a group of pictures from his studio reserve that complemented the critical understanding of Impressionism in the late 1870s and resonated with the diverse group

---

[310] "[...] études nombreuses de canotiers qui nous prouvent que le canotage et l'impressionnisme sont deux arts libéraux qui se donnent la main," "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Soir* (April 12, 1879), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:241; and "les *Canotiers*, de M. Caillebotte, qui témoignent d'une grande recherche de la vérité," E.R., "Les Impressionnistes," *La Presse* (April 11, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:237.

[311] Cochin, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 216-217 and Havard 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224.

of works on display. As reviews of the exhibition began to appear in the press, Caillebotte turned with renewed attention to the reception of his own art. He added as many as fifteen works *hors catalogue* to compensate for a lack of critical attention as compared to other artists and he chose to add landscapes and outdoor scenes of leisure, perhaps as a competitive reflex to the positive attention Monet and Pissarro received for their landscapes in those early reviews.[312] Given the evolution of Caillebotte's strategy during the course of the exhibition's run, his success in 1879 can be evaluated only by considering the reception of his works within the context of the exhibition as a whole.

"Cette école du plein soleil": The Critics in 1879

On April 10th, 1879, the "4e Exposition faite par un Groupe d'artistes Indépendants," opened to the public at 28 avenue de l'Opéra. That evening, Caillebotte wrote to Monet, "We are saved, this evening at five the receipts [for admission] surpassed four hundred francs. Two years ago, at our worst opening day, we were below three hundred and fifty francs."[313] He encloses a number of press

---

[312] For example, E.C. wrote that Monet's landscapes were "très justes, très variés, très sincères," and an anonymous reviewer for *Le Petite Republique* wrote that Pissarro was "celui qui sait le plus. Un paysagiste original, un praticien habile et un admirable poète…" E.C. "Deux Expositions," *Le Soleil* (April 11, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:214; and "Exposition de peinture par un groupe d'artistes dissidents," *La Petite République* (April 13, 1879), 2-3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:236-237.

[313] "Mon cher Ami, Je vous envoie quelques journaux, je supprime ceux où il y a que quelques annonces. Nous sommes sauvés, ce soir à cinq heures la recette dépassait 400 francs. Il y deux ans, le jour de l'ouverture qui est le plus faible, nous étions au-dessous de 350. Demain ou après-demain nous aurons un article dans *Le Figaro*. Pas besoin de vous faire remarquer quelques insanités, ne croyez pas par exemple que Degas ait envoyé ses 27 ou 30 numéros. Il est bien embêtant, mais il faut avouer qu'il a bien du talent. Il y a des choses étonnantes. J'espère que vous viendrez à Paris d'ici

clippings announcing the exhibition's opening. From there, the critical response to the 1879 exhibition grew significantly. While the total number of reviews and articles was similar to those published about the 1876 and 1877 exhibition, the discussions of the 1879 exhibition in the press included extensive reviews and broader pieces of criticism by Bertall, Duranty, and others.[314] In order to parse the large volume of criticism that emerged during the 1879 exhibition, I will highlight a few common themes in the discussion of Caillebotte's work and that of his co-exhibitors by examining three reviews that ran in major newspapers and that proved influential to other critics writing for other journals.

Leroy was among the first critics to write at some length about the 1879 exhibition, penning a review for the satirical journal *Le Charivari* within the first week of its opening. He wrote about the exhibition with the same approach as in years past, highlighting a few works and mocking them in specific terms. From the outset, he took issue with the group's decision to rename themselves:

> Now, if you notice a certain bitterness in the course of this article, you will not be surprised. I was deeply hurt to see my godchildren, who were held by me on the baptismal font of Impressionism, about five or six years ago, to give up the brilliant name I had given them to adorn

---

la fermeture et que vous verrez cela. Je suis chargé par Duranty de vous demander un dessin pour un journal. Il demande un de vos *Drapeaux* ou *Pommiers*, ou autre chose de Vétheuil si vous préférez. Envoyez le plus tôt possible au bureau de l'Exposition. Tout à vous. G. Caillebotte." Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, April 10, 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 17, 274-275

[314] These tallies are derived from Berson 1996, vol. I and do not include illustrations or caricatures.

> themselves with denomination as vague as that of 'artistes indépendants.'[315]

Leroy was playing with a joke he had made in past years about his coining of the term "impressionniste" at the 1874 exhibition, but he pointed to a trend in the critical reception of the fourth exhibition. Despite Degas's careful revision of the group's title from "un groupe d'artistes" to a "un groupe d'artistes indépendants, réalistes et impressionnistes," before, finally, "un groupe d'artistes indépendants," the change in the group's designation was widely criticized, prompting Bachaumont to write: "The independents of today are the impressionists of yesterday and I liked their old name better: it said something and represented a doctrine."[316] Leroy went further, writing that their "haughty declaration of enfranchisement" only pertains to "the chains of drawing and the slavery of color."[317]

The first and primary target of Leroy's satire is Caillebotte, whose painting of a cow and goat he described as "pushing independence too far."[318] *Une Vache et une*

---

315 "Maintenant, si l'on remarque une certaine amertume dans le courant de cet article, il ne faudra pas s'en étonner outre mesure. J'ai été profondément blessé de voir mes filleuls, tenus par moi sur les fonts de baptême de l'impressionnisme, il y a de cela cinq ou six ans, renoncer au nom brillant que je leur avais donné pour s'affubler d'une dénomination aussi vague que celle d''artistes indépendants.'" Leroy 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:227-228.

316 "Les indépendants d'aujourd'hui sont les impressionnistes d'hier, et j'aimais mieux leur première enseigne: elle disait quelque chose et représentait une doctrine." Bauchaumont, "Notes parisiennes," *Le Sportsman* (April 12, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:210-211.

317 "À moins pourtant que cette hautaine déclaration d'affranchissement - comme on l'a déjà dit ici - ne porte que sur les chaînes du dessin et l'esclavage de la couleur." Leroy 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:227-228.

318 Leroy 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:227-228.

chèvre was among the most derided works in the exhibition, perhaps prompting the artist to destroy the painting.[319] The picture would haunt Caillebotte in the years ahead, as it is mentioned in reviews of subsequent Impressionist exhibitions, including one in which Caillebotte did not participate.[320] Leroy goes on to describe Caillebotte's perceived over-reliance on the color blue: "Everything is blue with him. What he spends in cobalt, navy blue, bleaching indigo, it is terrifying! Azure has never been lavished on a canvas with such profusion!"[321] This would become a common

---

[319] The overall composition of the painting is known from the illustration by Draner, "Chez MM. les peintres indépendants," *Le Charivari* (April 23, 1879), captioned "Le veau (en est-ce bien un?) phénoménal. – Destiné au musée des antiquités anté-diluviennes," (1879, fig. 107). See also: Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213; Louis Besson, "MM. les impressionnistes," *L'Evénement* (April 11, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:213-214; Henry Fouquier, "Chronique," *Le XIX^e Siècle* (April 27, 1879), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:219-220; Havard 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224; Jean de la Leude, "Les Ratés de la peinture (les indépendants)," *La Plume* (May 1, 1879), 65-66, as cited in Berson 228; X., "Exposition des artistes indépendants, avenue de l'Opéra," *Le Journal des arts* (May 9, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:251-252.

[320] It is mentioned in Arthur Baignères, "Exposition des œuvre de M.J. de Nittis: 5^e Exposition de peinture, par MM. Bracquemond, Caillebotte, Degas, etc.," *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* (April 10, 1880), 117-118, as cited in Berson 1996, I:266-267; Henry Havard, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Siècle* (April 5, 1881), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:346-347; Henry Havard, "Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Siècle* (March 2, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:391-392; M.V., "Beaux-arts, lettres et sciences," *La France* (March 3, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:415; and Louis Leroy, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Charivari* (March 17, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:402. These mentions fulfill Havard's prophecy that the painting would become legendary; see Havard 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:222-224.

[321] "Tout est bleu chez lui. Ce qu'il dépense en cobalt, en outremer, en indigo de blanchisseuse, est effrayant à penser! Jamais l'azur n'a été prodigué sur une toile avec cette profusion!" Leroy 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:227-228. A similar critique was made of Monet's pictures at the 1877 exhibition – see, for example, Bernadille: "Personne n'abuse plus cruellement du bleu que M. Claude Monet. Il en a mis partout:

theme in the critical reception of Caillebotte's work in 1879. The *peintre-indigo*, as an anonymous reviewer for *La Vie parisienne* called him, was described by Fouquier as "fiercely loyal to blue," and by Lostalot as having "an unfortunate tendency to see everything in blue."[322]

A number of critics wrote that he painted the Seine as though its waters were more blue than the Mediterranean and Pierre Véron speculated that perhaps nature had played a joke on him, "making him see everything in lilac: men, roofs, trees."[323] Caillebotte's portraits were not exempt from this criticism, with a reviewer remarking about one: "The gentleman's nose is blue, his hair is blue, his legs are blue, his hands blue."[324] The oversized hand of the sitter and the forceful patterning of the wallpaper and divan in *Portrait de Monsieur R.* (1879, fig. 108) were satirized in a caricature by Bec for *Le Monde Parisienne* (1879, fig. 109), but below the black and white illustration, the caricaturist took care to note the peculiar colors in the caption: "This young man dipped in blue…"[325] Caillebotte's reputation for overindulging in the use

---

dans ses intérieurs comme dans ses jardins." Bernadille 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:129-130.

322 Fouquier 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:219-220; and Alfred de Lostalot, "Expositions des artistes indépendants," *Les Beaux-Arts illustrés* vol. 10 (1879), 82-83, as cited in Berson 1996, I:228-230.

323 "Il y a là un certain M. Caillebotte à qui la nature me paraît jouer un bien drôle de tour. Elle lui fait voir tout en lilas : les hommes, les toits, les arbres." Pierre Véron, "La Ville et le théâtre: Chronique parisienne," *Le Journal amusant* (April 19, 1879), 7, as cited in Berson 1996, I:250.

324 X, "Choses et autres," *La Vie parisienne* (May 10, 1879), 275-276, as cited in Berson 1996, I:252.

325 Bec, *Le Monde parisienne* (May 31, 1879), as cited in Berson 1996, I:256.

of blues and violets did not go unnoticed by Duranty, who wrote one of the most significant pieces of contemporary criticism about the 1879 exhibition.

In his review for *La Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité*, Duranty defined Impressionism by its participants, writing that the new policy forbidding same-year submissions to the Salon limited the group at the exhibition to three: Monet, Pissarro, and Caillebotte. He wrote that this "*école de plein soleil*" still conducted its arduous work, "which resembled the experiments of a chemist or a physicist."[326] He goes on to say that the decomposition of light by these artists had necessarily and unavoidably led to "series of studies on iridescence, on violet, blue, yellow, and rosy colors, where the public could only see fire."[327] Duranty's framing of the Impressionist project in the context of "la decomposition de la lumière" in "La Nouvelle peinture" had become a crucial component of the contemporary criticism by 1879, with Poignard going so

---

[326] "Ainsi se créa cette école du plein soleil, si curieuse par ses recherches coloristes qui ont paru souvent bizarres et choquantes. Si l'on a longtemps vu peindre, si l'on s'est trouvé associée aux gens qui cherchent une issue nouvelle en arts, les tentatives de ce groupe prennent un intérêt qu'elles ne peuvent avoir ni pour ceux qui ne savent ce que c'est que peindre, ni pour ceux qui, voulant avoir des valeurs immédiates et à peu près sûres dans leurs galléries, ne s'occupent que des résultats définitifs et sont plus railleurs que bienveillants pour des essais laborieux qui ressemblent aux expériences du chimiste ou du physicien. Il faut bien dire encore que cette prise corps à corps avec la lumière n'était point commode, qu'il a fallu décomposer pour ainsi dire ses éléments, qu'on s'est laissé entraîner, et il n'en pouvait être autrement, à des séries d'études sur l'irisation, sur les gammes violette, bleue, jaune, rosée, où le public ne pouvait voir que du feu, et où il ne croyait discerner qu'un parti-pris d'excentricité et presque de plaisanterie." Duranty, "La Quatrième Exposition faite par un groupe d'artistes indépendants," *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* (April 19, 1879), 126-128, as cited in Berson 1996, I:218-219.

[327] "… des séries d'études sur l'irisation, sue les gammes violette, bleue, jaune, rosée, où le public ne pouvait voir que du feu…'" Duranty 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:218-219.

far as to paraphrase entire sections of the 1876 text in his review of the fourth exhibition, substituting *lumière* with *clarité*.[328] About Caillebotte's experiments with these techniques, Duranty wrote:

> [He] could be a victim of the violets and the blues. He has not been painting for long, and perhaps his personal temperament should take him to another pictorial route. Under his bitter masonry, and beyond his errors, there is a sort of cruel intensity of effect, which, in three or four portraits, takes you by its heavy insistence. I would like to see him play with his art, and to abstain from his fierce and dreary attempts to violate nature, which easily resists him.[329]

Duranty's suggestion that Caillebotte abandon landscape painting in favor of another pictorial route would prove one of the most influential critiques that the artist received in 1879. It is part of a broader trend in the critical reception of Caillebotte's work at the fourth exhibition, where his portraits were both admired and criticized for their peculiar qualities and his landscape paintings were seen as derivative of superior examples by Monet and Pissarro.

---

[328] "N'est-ce pas assez déjà d'avoir parcouru la campagne, au milieu de l'été, et de s'être aperçus que nul encore n'avait essayé de rendre? Que la grande clarté décolorait les tons? Que le soleil, reflété par les objets, tend, à force de clarté, à les ramener à cette unité lumineuse qui fond ses sept rayons prismatiques en un seul état incolore – qui est la lumière?" Montjoyeux [Poignard] 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 232-234.

[329] "Quant à M. Caillebotte, il se pourrait qu'il fût une victime de la gamme violette et de la gamme bleue. Il n'y a pas très-longtemps qu'il fait de la peinture, et peut-être son tempérament personnel devrait-il l'emmener dans une autre route picturale. Sous sa maçonnerie acharnée, et à travers ses erreurs, il y a une sorte de cruelle intensité d'effet qui, dans trois ou quatre portraits, vous prend par sa pesante insistance. Je voudrais le voir jouer avec son art, et moins s'obstiner à une tentative de viol farouche et morne sur la nature qui lui résiste aisément." Duranty 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:218-219.

One of the harshest criticisms of Caillebotte at the 1879 exhibition was penned by Burty in his review for *La République française.* Burty had been an admirer of the young artist at past exhibitions, praising *The Floor Scrapers* in 1876 and the *Portrait of Mme. C* in 1877.[330] In 1879, however, he faulted Caillebotte for having deceived his audience at the previous exhibitions. He wrote:

> We will not hesitate, for example, to reproach Mr. Caillebotte for lying from the beginning. He had given us close studies done quite originally, according to types; today, he gives us hastily brushed canvases, with inconsistent drawing and with colors lacking convictions. Are these studies? It was not necessary to expose such a large number. And to present them as paintings, it is foolishness.[331]

As I outline in the previous section of this chapter, Caillebotte's work in the studio had shifted towards new media, techniques, and subjects in the two years between the third and fourth Impressionist exhibitions. Several critics took note of this shift in his artistic practice, but Burty was among those who dismissed the type, finish, and sheer number of exhibited works by Caillebotte outright.

In his analysis of the 1879 exhibition for *The New Painting* in 1986, Pickvance characterized the exhibition as a critical failure for Caillebotte, the youngest member of the core Impressionist group. He cites only three critics – Edmond Renoir, Silvestre, and Arèsene Houssaye – as having "registered the slightest sympathy or

---

[330] Burty 1876, as cited in Berson 1996, I:64-66; and Burty 1877, as cited in Berson 1996, I:123-125.

[331] "Nous n'hésiterons pas, par exemple, à reprocher à M. Caillebotte d'avoir menti à ses débuts. Il nous avait donné des études serrées d'une disposition originale d'après des types; aujourd'hui il nous livre des toiles hâtivement brossées, d'un dessin inconsistant et d'une couleur sans convictions. Sont-ce des études? Il n'était point nécessaire d'en exposer une pareille ribambelle. Quant à les présenter comme des tableaux, c'est de la fauté." Burty 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:209-210.

appreciation," for Caillebotte's paintings.[332] It is true that the critics were harsher, on the whole, in their discussion of Caillebotte's work than they had been in 1876 or 1877, but his remarkably positive reception at those exhibitions had set high expectations for his work. Still, the critical response to Caillebotte's third exhibition was not as dire as Pickvance presented. Since 1986, a number of additional reviews of the 1879 exhibition have been recovered and of the thirty-one critics that mentioned him, thirteen are at least partially positive in their assessment of his paintings.

Cochin, for example, wrote that the artist was deserving of special mention as "the only serious and truly convincing impressionist."[333] The anonymous reviewer for *The American Register* admired the Yerres pictures, noting "some excellent outdoor

---

[332] Pickvance in Moffett ed. 1986, 256. Armand Silvestre wrote his paintings contained some "curious observations" and that the *Portrait of Madame C.* was the best of his submissions that year. In his review for *La Presse*, Edmond Renoir wrote that Caillebotte's work bears witness to a search for truth and Arèsene Houssaye, writing under the penname F.-C. de Syène, grouped Caillebotte together with Monet and Pissarro as at the center of "the new school," without elaborating on any of Caillebotte's paintings. "Il y a de très curieuses recherches dans les nombreuses toiles de M. Caillebotte, le plus intransigeant, sans comparaison, du groupe, et dont la femme en bleu est le meilleur envoi." Silvestre 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 239; and "[...] les *Canotiers*, de M. Caillebotte, qui témoignent d'une grande recherche de la vérité [...]" E.R. 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:237, and "C'est surtout dans les toiles de M. Caillebotte, de M. Monet, de M. Pissarro que la nouvelle école apparaît sous son aspect le plus expressif." F.-C. de Syène [Arèsene Houssaye] "Salon de 1879," *L'Artiste* (May 1, 1879), 289-293, as cited in Berson 1996, I:242-244.

[333] "… le seul impressionniste sérieux et vraiment convaincu." Henry Cochin, "Les Peintres impressionnistes," *Le Français* (April 23, 1879), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:216-217.

effects of light," while Silvestre and Bachaumont preferred the group of portraits.[334] Paul Sébillot wrote positively about his outdoor paintings, too, but qualified his praise:

> Works of this nature must be seen individually, and do not support being neighbored by any others; pictures done in a different style would make these seem brutal and crude, while putting them side by side would extinguish paintings of a more discreet tone by their violent lights.[335]

Victor Fournel was more direct in his critique of the large installation of outdoor pictures, writing that Caillebotte ought to better choose and vary his subjects.[336]

All said, despite the positive reception of some pictures by some critics, Caillebotte's decision to flood the 1879 exhibition with additional pictures after its opening backfired. Very few reviewers had positive things to say about the large group of *plein air* paintings on view in every room of the exhibition; instead, their sheer number presented ample opportunities for ridicule and their installation on easels only encouraged comments about their lack of finish. Caillebotte's success at the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions had left the critics expecting more ambitious and thoughtful

---

334 "The Exhibition of Independent Artists," *The American Register* (May 17, 1879), 6, as cited in Berson 1996, I:209; Silvestre 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 239; and Bachaumont, "Notes parisiennes," *Le Sportsman* (April 12, 1879), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:210-211.

335 "[L]es œuvres de cette nature doivent être vues à part, et ne supportent aucun voisinage; des tableaux faits autrement les feraient paraître brutaux et grossiers de facture, tandis que de leur côté ils éteindraient par leurs lumières violentes les peintures d'une tonalité plus discrète." Paul Sébillot, "Revue artistique," *La Plume* (May 15, 1879), 73, as cited in Berson 1996, I:238-239.

336 "[Caillebotte] pourra lui-même devenir un peintre à la condition d'abord de mieux choisir et varier ses sujets [...]" Victor Fournel, "L'Œuvre et les hommes: Courrier de théâtre, de la littérature et des arts," *Le Correspondant* (May 25, 1879), 729-730, as cited in Berson 1996, I:220-221.

works; the reviewer for *L'Europe artiste* rued the absence of such works: "We know that M. Caillebotte knows how to draw and that he has made serious studies [in the past]".[337] The critique of Caillebotte's installation strategy at the exhibition must have been frustrating for the artist, particularly when so many of the critics who derided his exhibition strategy in 1879 had failed to notice or mention his collaborative painting campaign with Monet in late 1876 and early 1877 and their thematic installation at the third Impressionist exhibition. Critics were, for the first time, cognizant of Caillebotte's deliberate exhibition strategy with the Impressionist group and they deemed it a failure.

One positive outcome of the discussion of Caillebotte's exhibition strategy in 1879 was the critical recognition of Caillebotte as the leader of the Impressionist group and primary organizer of their exhibitions. In years since the 1877 exhibition, Caillebotte had received the full disbursement of his parents' estate and his wealth was known to critics, with Bertall writing that his efforts and resources were enough to guarantee the group's independence in perpetuity.[338] He would embrace his public

---

[337] "Nous savons que M. Caillebotte sait dessiner et qu'il a fait des sérieuses études […]" J. de Tarade, "L'Exposition des peintres, indépendants," *L'Europe artiste* (April 27, 1879), 1-2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:244-245.

[338] "[...] il y a là de quoi assurer à tout jamais l'indépendance." Bertall 1879 as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213. See also, "Lui [Manet], le chef incontesté jadis, a repoussé du pied la barque qui contenait ses disciples, et la barque néanmoins a continué à voguer sans lui dans sa noble indépendance. Pendant que M. Manet passait avec armes et bagages dans le camp des croisés de l'art, c'est M. Caillebotte qui a pris d'une main ferme le gouvernail de cette barque, qui sans lui voguerait peut-être à la dérive. Si M. Caillebotte est assez dévoué à la cause pour payer princièrement de son argent la publicité donnée à l'école dont il est devenu par acclamation le chef vénéré, il paye aussi de sa personne." Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213.

role as exhibition organizer in the months ahead but the critics' hostility toward Caillebotte at the 1879 exhibition as compared to his positive reception in 1876 and 1877 colored his interpretation of the overall reception of the fourth Impressionist exhibition. In mid-May, he wrote to Monet, "We have made some progress. I regret you could not follow the exhibition from nearby. But for the painters and for the public, despite the malevolence of the press, we have achieved a great deal. Manet himself is beginning to see that he has taken the wrong road. Courage, then."[339] Despite his view that the critics had been unfair, he believed the group had made progress at their fourth independent exhibition.

10 rue des Pyramides, 1880

Plans for a Fifth Exhibition

At the close of the fourth Impressionist exhibition on May 1, 1879, the core members of the Impressionist group found their financial situation largely unchanged by the relative success they had found at 28 avenue de l'Opéra.[340] The money raised by the price of admission amounted to just over 400 francs per participant and while the exhibition was generally well-received by critics, there was little in the way of a corresponding uptick in the sale of paintings immediately thereafter. Monet and

---

[339] "En somme c'est un progrès. Je regrette que vous n'ayez pu suivre cela de près. Mais pour les peintres, pour le public, malgré la malveillance de la presse, nous avons beaucoup fait. Manet lui-même commence à voir qu'il a fait fausse route. Du courage donc." Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, late May 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 20.

[340] "Notre bénéfice s'élève à 439 fr. 50 par tête." Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, late May 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 20.

Pissarro continued to struggle, prompting Caillebotte to send them additional money along with their portions of the proceeds from the exhibition.[341] By comparison, Renoir, who decided not to participate in the 1879 exhibition, had found critical acclaim for his portrait of Jeanne Samary (1877, fig. 110) and his large group portrait of Madame Charpentier and her children (1879, fig. 111). The prestige of the sitter in the Charpentier portrait ensured its acceptance and favorable installation at the Salon, where it was admired for its charm, fresh spontaneity, and rich palette.[342]

When the Salon opened in 1879, Castagnary wrote at length about the painting and Renoir's place in the art world:

> […] it is necessary to place M. Renoir. No one has less visible ties. Where does he come from? No school, no system, no tradition can claim to be his. […] We have seen him sometimes mixed with the Impressionists, which contributed to throw some ambiguity on its way; but he does not dwell upon it, and it is at the Salon, along with the major artists, that he comes looking for publicity […] His *Portrait de Madame Charpentier et ses enfants* is one of the most interesting works […] the palette is extremely rich. An agile and witty brush ran over all the objects that make up this charming interior […].[343]

---

[341] Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, late May 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 20 and letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, June 17, 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 21.

[342] For the most thorough consideration of Renoir's strategy at the Salon, see "An Impressionist Painting Large: Renoir, Exhibitions, and the Full-Length Format, 1863-1885," in Colin Bailey, *Renoir, Impressionism, and Full-Length Painting* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, in association with The Frick Collection, 2012), 2-39.

[343] "Au premier rang de ceux qui tourmente l'esprit nouveau et qui cherchent dans la vie environnante la matière d'un art original, sans imitation ni ressouvenir, il faut placer M. Renoir. Nul n'a moins d'attaches visibles. D'où sort-il? Aucune école, aucun système, aucune tradition ne peut le revendiquer comme sien. Ce n'est pas un spécialiste, s'adonnant à un genre exclusif, paysage ou nature morte; c'est un peintre complet, peignant l'histoire ou les mœurs (qui seront de l'histoire dans un quart de

In the days after the opening of the fourth Impressionist exhibition, Caillebotte wrote to Poignard to thank him for his review, noting that he "forgot Miss. Cassatt and a word for the absent this year: Cézanne, Renoir, Sisley, and Mademoiselle Morisot."[344] While the core group of Impressionists was fixed in Caillebotte's mind by the spring of 1879, Castagnary's view of Renoir was as an artist who "sometimes mixed with the Impressionists."[345] Renoir would return to exhibit with the

---

siècle) et subordonnant les choses à l'être, la scène à l'acteur. On l'a vu parfois mêlé aux impressionnistes, ce qui a contribué à jeter quelque équivoque sur sa manière; mais il ne s'y attarde point, et c'est au Salon, concurremment avec les gros des artistes, qu'il vient demander sa parte de publicité. La critique ne peut manquer de lui être favorable. Son Portrait de Madame Charpentier et de ses enfants est un œuvre des plus intéressantes. Peut-être les figures sont-elles un peur courtes, un peu ramassées dans leurs proportions; mais la palette est d'une richesse extrême. Une brosse agile et spirituelle a couru sur tous les objets qui composent cet intérieur charmant; sous ses touches rapides, ils se sont disposés et modelés avec cette grâce vive et souriante qui fait l'enchantement de la couleur." [Jules] Castagnary, "Salon de 1879. 7e article," *Le Siècle* (July 2, 1879), 2. The Charpentier painting was also described and admired in reviews by Arthur Baignères, who called it "happy and alive," by Charles Bigot, who complimented its freshness and movement, and by Philippe Burty, who wrote that its velvety treatment of flesh created an effect like that of a large-scale pastel drawing. See Arthur Baignères, "Le Salon de 1879 (Deuxième article)," *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 2nd ser., 20 (July 1879), 54; Charles Bigot, "Salon de 1879: II. La peinture," *La Revue politique et littéraire* 8 (June 7, 1879), 1155–56; and Philippe Burty, "Le Salon de 1879—III: Les portraits," *La République française* (May 27, 1879), 3.

[344] Letter from Caillebotte to Jules Poignard, April 17, 1879. Berhaut 1994, letter no. 18, 275. See fn. 258.

[345] In his review, Baignères shared Castagnary's view that Renoir had, at long last, abandoned the Impressionist group in favor of the Salon, "[...] M. Renoir, un intransigeant converti qui trouve avec raison qu'il a assez de talent pour exposer avec tout le monde. L'ensemble du portrait de Mme. C et de ses enfants est très agréable à voir; il est gai et vivant. Faut-il s'appesantir et regarder longtemps? ce n'est peut-être pas très prudent : on découvrirait des jambes un peu... Mais ne cherchons point chicane à M. Renoir ; il est rentré dans le giron de l'Église, saluons sa bienvenue, oublions la forme et ne parlons que de coloration." Baignères 1879, 54.

Impressionist group in 1882, but the partial dissolution of the group in the spring of 1879 marked a fracture from which they would never fully recover. Renoir's decision to send works to the Salon in the spring of 1879 in place of the Impressionist exhibition paid off; the exhibition of *Madame Charpentier and her Children* garnered Renoir the public attention he craved and strengthened his ties to Charpentier, his most significant patron at the time. Renoir's success at the Salon did not go unnoticed by his Impressionist colleagues. In a letter to Murer, Pissarro wrote, "Renoir has a big success at the Salon. I believe he is launched. So much the better! Poverty is so hard."[346] In the months ahead, Degas and Caillebotte would struggle to keep the core group of Impressionist painters together as key members reconsidered how success could be measured outside the Salon.

When the fifth Impressionist exhibition opened on April 1, 1880, Renoir, Sisley, and Cézanne abstained again and they were joined by Monet, who sent *The Seine at Lavacourt* (1880, fig. 112) and *The Ice Floes* (1880, fig. 113) to the Salon jury, which accepted the former and refused the latter. Monet must have known that his acceptance and success at the Salon was far from guaranteed; while Renoir's pictures were admired in 1879, Cézanne's and Sisley's were rejected by the jury before the Salon's opening in May. Still, the success of *Madame Charpentier and Her Children* prompted Monet to reconsider his participation in the 1880 independent exhibition. In the weeks leading up to its opening, the artist wrote to Théodore Duret to explain why he would not be participating: "I can be rather sure of doing some

---

[346] "Renoir a un grand succès au Salon. Je crois qu'il est lancé. Tant mieux ! C'est si dur, la misère !" Letter from Pissarro to Murer, May 27, 1879, as published in A. Tabarant, *Pissarro* (Paris: F. Rieder, 1924), 45.

business, in particular with [Georges] Petit, once I have forced the door of the Salon."[347] A return to the "official emporium," as he called it, presented Monet with an opportunity to improve his financial situation and to recover some of the professional momentum he had lost in the mid-1870s.

This renewed interest in the Salon among members of the Impressionist group coincided with a political shift to the left in France and a corresponding liberalization of Salon policies. In January 1879, the consolidation of republican electoral victories culminated with a majority in the Senate and the inauguration of center-left president Jules Grévy.[348] The new minister of public instruction and fine arts, Jules Ferry, instituted changes before the opening of the Salon of 1879, where the franchise for the election of the jury was expanded to include those who had won honorable mentions in previous years as well as artists who had exhibited in three previous Salons.[349] The corresponding expansion of the jury candidate pool from 195 artists to 960 increased the chances of electing jury members who agreed with Ferry's affirmation of "the

---

[347] "[...] mais je crois qu'il était de mon intérêt de prendre ce parti étant à peu près sûr de faire certaines affaires, notamment avec Petit, une fois que j'aurai forcé la porte du Salon ; mais ce n'est pas pour goût que je fais cela, et il est bien malheureux que la presse et le public aient pris si peu au sérieux nos petites expositions bien préférables à ce bazar officiel. Enfin, puisqu'il faut en passer par là, allons-y." Letter from Monet to Duret, March 8, 1880, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, I:438, letter no. 173.

[348] See Francis Jourdain, *L'art officiel de Jules Grevy à Albert Lebrun* (Souillac: Mulhouse, 1949).

[349] See Scott Allan, "*Faux-Frère*: Manet and the Salon, 1879-1882," in Scott Allan, Emily A. Beeny, and Gloria Groom eds., *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist's Late Years* (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2019), 15-42, n. 23, comparing Paris 1878, XCXIV (art. 16) to Paris 1879c, CII (art. 16).

liberty of art" over more traditional, paternalistic models of arts administration.[350] In 1881, the state would relinquish control of the Salon to the artists and their newly formed Société des Artistes Français, expanding the jury electorate to include all previous exhibitors at the Salon and more than doubling the jury size from fifteen to forty members in the painting section.[351] This sea change in the administration and character of the Salon in the late 1870s and early 1880s offered Cézanne, Monet, Renoir, and Sisley renewed hope that success at the Salon was attainable and contributed to the division that left a diluted group of participants for the 1880 exhibition.

Absent significant contemporary accounts of the planning of the fifth Impressionist exhibition, art historians have relied on a few key pieces of correspondence to reconstruct its origins and have worked backwards from the press coverage of its opening to fill in the gaps. That Degas played an active role in the organization is known from the list of participants, which saw Monet, Renoir, and Sisley replaced with painters from Degas's circle, including Cassatt, Forain, Zandomeneghi, and the one true newcomer, Raffaëlli. When the fifth Impressionist exhibition opened on April 1st, only four core members of the Impressionist group remained: Caillebotte, Degas, Pissarro, and Morisot. Of these artists, only Pissarro was wholly dependent on the sale of his work for income and, as John Rewald notes in his

---

[350] See Allan in Allan et al. eds. 2019, n. 24, comparing Paris 1878, XCVII, and Paris 1879c, CVII. Ferry's affirmation of "the liberty of art" is from his speech at the awards ceremony for the 1879 Salon, as published in the 1880 Salon catalogue, pp. v-xiv, and as quoted in Mainardi 1993, 61-62.

[351] See Allan in Allan et al. eds. 2019, n. 30, comparing Paris 1880c, CXII (art. 15) and Paris 1881, CI (art. 4).

account of the 1880 exhibition, he, "in renouncing possible Salon success, chose indefinite poverty."[352]

It was Degas who insisted that the group bill itself as "UN GROUPE D'ARTISTES INDÉPENDANTS" in red text on the vivid green posters printed to announce the opening of the exhibition.[353] Degas and Caillebotte found themselves at odds with regards to the posters as an expression of their group identity. In an undated letter to Felix Bracquemond sent just before the exhibition's opening, Degas described the in-fighting:

> It [the exhibition] is opening April 1st. The posters will be up tomorrow or Monday […] There was a big fight with Caillebotte as to whether or not to put the names. I had to give in and let him put them up […] All the good reasons and the good taste in the world can achieve nothing against the inertia of the others and the obstinacy of Caillebotte.[354]

This letter points to the interpersonal conflict that would lead to Caillebotte's abstention from the 1881 exhibition and his eventual distancing from the Impressionist group after the 1882 exhibition.

---

[352] Rewald 1973, 341.

[353] In his essay, "Disarray and Disappointment," Moffett published an example of the exhibition poster from the collection of Mme. J. Chagnaud-Forain. See Moffett in Moffett ed. 1986, 296.

[354] "Ça ouvre le premier Avril. Les affiches vont être posées demain ou Lundi. Elles sont en lettres rouges vif sur fond vert. Il y a eu avec Caillebotte grande lutte pour mettre ou non les noms. J'ai dû lui céder et les laisser mettre […] Toutes les bonnes raisons et le goût ne font rien sur l'inertie des autres et l'entêtement de Caillebotte." Letter from Degas to Bracquemond, undated [just before April 1, 1880], as published in Marcel Guérin ed., *Letters de Degas* (Paris: B. Grasset, 1945), 51-52, letter XXIV.

At the heart of the eventual fallout between Caillebotte and Degas were their divergent views about Impressionist group identity in the late 1870s and early 1880s. As discussed in a previous section of this chapter, Degas understood the group exhibitions as an exercise in independence from the Salon and he forbid artists from submitting works to both. His frustration with Caillebotte's insistence on putting the names of the participating artists on the exhibition poster reflects his commitment to independence as a unifying concept with the composition of the group changing each year. For Caillebotte, the Impressionist group was defined by past participation, and even those who chose to submit to the Salon in 1879 were counted as Impressionists. He wanted to see the names of his co-exhibitors listed on the poster as a way to signal to audiences those who would be representing the broader Impressionist project at that year's exhibition. In addition to this key difference, Degas and Caillebotte simply did not work well together as co-organizers. As Caillebotte put it in a letter to Monet about the 1879 exhibition: "There's no need to point out to you certain ridiculous circumstances […] He [Degas] is very aggravating, but we have to admit that he has great talent."[355]

Degas also seems to have begun to consider Caillebotte as an artistic rival or competitor by the fifth exhibition, writing to Pissarro in 1880: "I am told that Caillebotte is doing the traffic islands of the boulevard Haussmann from his

---

[355] "Pas besoin de vous faire remarquer quelques insanités [...] Il est bien embêtant, mais il faut avouer qu'il a bien du talent." Caillebotte to Monet, April 10, 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 17.

windows."[356] Degas had been thinking about unusual viewpoints and perspectives himself at this time, writing in his notebook, beneath a sketch of the Pantheon "no one has yet done monuments or houses from down below, underneath, up close, the way one sees them when moving through the streets."[357] After Caillebotte's poor showing in 1879, he redirected his work in the studio toward "the demands of modernism," as Joris-Karl Huysmans put it in his review of the 1880 exhibition.[358] The canvases he would exhibit in 1880 were more closely aligned with Degas's compositionally ambitious pictures of the late 1870s and the older artist must have recognized the comparisons critics would draw between the two men in 1880, comparisons that had been absent from the critical discourse surrounding the 1879 exhibition.

---

[356] "Caillebotte fait des fenêtres des refuges du Boulevard Haussmann, m'a-t-on dit." Letter from Degas to Pissarro, undated [1880], as published in Guérin ed. 1945, 54, letter XXV.

[357] "On n'a jamais fait encore les monuments ou les maisons, d'en bas, en dessous, de près, comme on les voit en passant dans les rues." Reff 1976, vol. I, notebook 30, fn. 196. The relationship between this note in Degas's notebook and the letter to Pissarro is suggested by Marrinan in his chapter, "Boulevard Haussmann," see Marrinan 2017, 213-237.

[358] "En résumé, M. Caillebotte a rejeté le système des taches impressionnistes qui forcent l'œil à cligner pour rétablir l'aplomb des êtres et des choses; il s'est borné à suivre l'orthodoxe méthode des maîtres et il a modifié leur exécution, il l'a pliée aux exigences du modernisme, en quelque sorte rajeunie et faite sienne." Joris-Karl Huysmans, "L'Exposition des indépendants en 1880," *L'Art moderne* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1883), 85-123, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292.

The 1880 Exhibition

The news that the 1880 exhibition would be even more fractured than that of the previous spring was lampooned in the press on January 24, with Tout-Paris writing for *Le Gaulois*:

> In a few days, admirers of the 'New School' of pictures will receive, in the mail or otherwise, a letter worded as follows: 'The Impressionist School has the honor of informing you of the sad loss that it recently suffered in the person of Claude Monet, one of its venerated masters. The burial services for Monet will be celebrated next 1 May – the morning of the opening [of the Salon] […] [Signed] Degas, Head of the School; Raffaëlli, successor of the deceased; Cassatt, Caillebotte, Louis Forain, Bracquemond, Rouard [sic], etc… ex-friends, ex-students, and ex-partisans.[359]

When the exhibition did open on April 1, without pictures by Monet for the first time, the chaotic setting seemed to match the discord within the group of Impressionist painters. In his review for *Le Voltaire*, Goetschy wrote that the exhibition was held on the mezzanine level of an unfinished building and that, "the incessant noise of work fills the place; masons, metal-workers, carpenters, daubers, painters – I speak of the other kind– fill the building from bottom to top."[360] In his essay on the 1880

---

[359] "Dans quelques jours, les admirateurs de la « nouvelle École » picturale recevront, par la poste ou autrement, une lettre ainsi conçue : *L'École impressionniste a l'honneur de vous faire part de la perte douloureuse qu'elle vient de faire en la personne de M. Claude MONET, l'un de ses maîtres vénérés. Les obsèques de M. Claude MONET seront célébrées le 1er mai prochain, à dix heures du matin, - le lendemain du vernissages, - en l'église du Palais de l'Industrie […] De la part de M. Degas, chef de l'École ; M. Rafaelli, successeur du défunt ; Miss Cassatt, M. Caillebotte, M. Pissarro, M. Louis Forain, M. Bacquemond, M. Rouard, etc…, ses ex-amis, ex-élèves et ex-partisans.*" Tout-Paris, "La Journée parisienne: Impressions d'un impressionniste," *Le Gaulois* (January 24, 1880), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:310-311 [italicized formatting preserved from the original].

[360] "Cette année, c'est à l'entresol d'une bâtisse inachevée de la rue des Pyramides qu'ils ont élu domicile. La rumeur du travail emplit incessamment la maison; les

exhibition, Charles S. Moffett reads Goetschy's review literally, but it seems clear that the critic was playing a bit with the derogatory description of the Impressionist painters as "house painters" that took hold in the 1877 criticism, noting "the inexplicable and prismatic variegations by Guillaumin who – let it be said in passing – seems to me one of the loveliest jokes that house painting [*la peinture en bâtiments*] has foisted on Impressionism."[361]

Other reviewers highlighted the perceived chaos and disorder of the 1880 exhibition. Silvestre, usually a champion of the group, wrote in his review that audiences "searched in vain for a trace of the particular vision that gave the little school the recognition it deserved in the art of recent years."[362] Havard described the installation of works across "many rooms":

> The walls are wide; each artist can shape his domain according to his means; some even occupy an individual room, and for many of these misunderstood artists, that seems to the primary purpose of the exhibition. The ease with which they please themselves proves, in effect, that in their eyes quantity is as important as quality, and that if

---

maçons, les serruriers, les menuisiers, les barbouilleurs et les peintres – je parle des autres – l'occupent du bas au faîte […]" Gustave Goetschy, "Indépendants et impressionnistes," *Le Voltaire* (April 6, 1880), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:282-283.

361 "[…] les inexplicables et prismatiques bariolages de M. Guillaumin, qui – soit dit en passant – me semble être un des plus jolis farceurs que la peinture en bâtiments ait légués à l'impressionnisme." Goetschy 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:282-283. See Moffett in Moffett ed. 1986, 293-308.

362 "[…] on chercherait vainement dans leurs envois une trace des recherches très particulières qui ont valu à cette petite école une place dans l'art de ces dernières années." Armand Silvestre, "Le Monde des arts: Exposition de la rue des Pyramides (premier article)," *La Vie Moderne* (April 24, 1880), 262, as cited in Berson 1996, I:306-307.

> they cannot hope to succeed by merit then they will do so by numbers.[363]

The layout seems to have been largely unplanned, with works grouped by artist in an installation like that of the 1876 exhibition. Caillebotte had worked to develop layouts for the 1877 and 1879 exhibitions that saw works by individual artists integrated across one or more rooms, but the 1880 exhibition saw a return to a monographic installation. Degas's influence is clear – the grouping of works by individual artists was aligned with his view of the Impressionist group as one brought together by their commitment to independent exhibitions outside of the Salon and not necessarily by shared artistic goals. Havard's observation that the artists exhibited large numbers of works does not refer to oil paintings; Caillebotte, Degas, Forain, and Pissarro all exhibited many fewer paintings in 1880 than they had in 1879, but Félix Bracquemond, Degas, Levert, and Pissarro all appear to have exhibited many more works than were individually listed in the exhibition catalogue.

The 1880 exhibition saw a boom in works on paper, with Bracquemond exhibiting an unnumbered suite of prints, Degas exhibiting several groups of drawings under a single entry, "Dessins," Levert exhibiting a "cadre d'eaux-fortes," and Pissarro showing a group of prints, each exhibited in several states.[364] No other artist

---

[363] "Mais les pièces sont nombreuses, les murailles sont vastes; chacun peut s'y tailler un petit empire proportionné à ses moyens; quelques-uns même occupent une chambre spéciale et il semble que ce soit là, pour la plupart de ces artistes incompris, le but principal de l'exposition. La facilité avec laquelle ils se prodiguent montre, en effet, que la quantité, à leurs yeux, a au moins autant d'importance que la qualité et qu'ils espèrent réussir sinon par le mérite, du moins par le nombre." Henry Havard, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Siècle* (April 2, 1880), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 284-285.

[364] For example, Berson's catalogue no. V-142 corresponds with the entry "Eaux-fortes: Un cadre," which was comprised of two prints, *La Masure* (1879, fig. 114) and

showed as many works as the group's only first-time participant, Raffaëlli, who exhibited forty-one works, including paintings, watercolors, pastels, and prints. On the whole, Raffaëlli was admired more than any other artist in the show, with Claretie describing the works as "surprising and really unparalleled […]" and the artist's temperament as "unique, powerful and refined […]".[365] Just as they had done with Caillebotte in 1876, critics questioned his decision to exhibit with the Impressionist group. Baignères, for example, asked: "What is he [Raffaëlli] going to do in this hell? He undoubtedly yielded to the desire to exhibit many pictures and to be more visible than at the exhibition on the Champs-Elysées."[366] As the character of the Impressionist project began to turn in Degas's favor, towards a group of artists united by their desire to exhibit outside of the Salon, Raffaëlli emerged as a favorite among critics despite the incongruity of his work with that of the members of the core Impressionist group, both absent and present at the 1880 exhibition. As Moffett argues: "Raffaëlli was in the right place and the right time, and his burst of success

---

Chemin sous-bois à Pontoise (1879, fig. 115) shown in three and two states, respectively. The exact impressions have not been identified and the figures included here are representative examples.

[365] "Mais ce qui est surprenant, hors de pair, dans cette exposition, ce sont les tableaux et les études de M. J.-F. Raffaëlli […] un tempérament singulier, puissant, et fin […]" Jules Claretie, "La Vie à Paris: M. de Nittis et les impressionnistes," *Le Temps* (April 6, 1880), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:273-274.

[366] "Que va-t-il faire dans cette galère? Sans doute il a cédé au désir d'exposer beaucoup de toiles et d'être plus regardé qu'à l'exposition des Champs-Élysées où cependant il a toujours été très-remarqué." Arthur Baignères, "Exposition des œuvres de M. J. de Nittis: 5e Exposition de peinture, par MM. Bracquemond, Caillebotte, Degas, etc." *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* (April 10, 1880), 117-118, as cited in Berson 1996, I:266-267.

supports the proposition that timing is everything. He offered apparent stability during a time of instability, stylistic floundering, and disloyalty."[367]

"Les reins plus forts": Caillebotte in 1880

Despite the attention paid to the group's celebrated newcomer, Caillebotte's work did not go unnoticed at the fifth Impressionist exhibition. In the longest review of the 1880 exhibition, Huysmans wrote admiringly about Caillebotte's *Still Life: Glasses, Carafes, and Fruit-Dishes* (1879, fig. 116), describing the artist as "cured" of his "mania for indigo" and writing that "his technique is simple without being fussy; it's the modern system anticipated by Manet, applied and fulfilled by a painter with a more reliable craft and a stronger backbone."[368] Huysmans recognized that after his poor showing in 1879, Caillebotte was pursuing his own artistic vision in the spring of 1880:

> In short, M. Caillebotte has rejected the system of impressionist smudges [*taches*] that force the eye to blink to restore the balance of people and things; he has confined himself to following the orthodox method of the masters, and he has modified their execution, he has bent it to the demands of modernism, in a way that is rejuvenated and made his own.[369]

---

[367] Moffett in Moffett ed.1986, 304.

[368] "L'indigomanie, qui a fait tant de ravages dans les rangs de ces peintres [...] [Caillebotte] s'est guéri [...] Ici, comme dans ses autres œuvres, la facture de M. Caillebotte est simple, sans tatillonnage ; c'est la formule moderne entrevue par Manet, appliquée et complétée par un peintre dont le métier et plus sûr et les reins plus forts." Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292. This translation of the idiomatic phrase "les reins plus forts" to having "a stronger backbone" is derived from Marrinan 2017, 214.

[369] "En résumé, M. Caillebotte a rejeté le système des taches impressionnistes qui forcent l'œil à cligner pour rétablir l'aplomb des êtres et des choses; il s'est borné à

Caillebotte was disappointed by the reception of his large group of outdoor paintings at the 1879 exhibition, writing to Monet shortly after its close about the "malevolent press."[370] In the months between the close of the fourth Impressionist exhibition and the fifth, Caillebotte readjusted his strategy toward an artistic vision more closely aligned with his success at the 1876 and 1877 exhibitions and that adjustment began with his work in the studio.

In 1879 and 1880, Caillebotte continued to paint portraits and of the eleven works he would exhibit at the 1880 exhibition, three were named portraits: *Portrait of Jules Richemont* (1879, fig. 117), *Portrait of Paul Hugot* (1878, fig. 118), and a pastel, *Portrait of Camille Daurelle* (1877, fig. 119). While these works were emblematic of Caillebotte's continued work producing portraits after the 1879 exhibition, the *Portrait of Paul Hugot* was a last-minute substitution pulled from Caillebotte's studio reserve to replace the self-portrait listed as *Portrait de M. G.C.* in the exhibition catalogue.[371] The large suite of outdoor pictures he exhibited in 1879 did feature models from his family and social circle engaged in leisure activities at his family's property in Yerres, but the interior scenes he had exhibited in 1876 and the views of his neighborhood he had exhibited in 1877 were understood by critics as autobiographical in a way that the

---

suivre l'orthodoxe méthode des maîtres et il a modifié leur exécution, il l'a pliée aux exigences du modernisme, en quelque sorte rajeunie et faite sienne." Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292.

[370] "… malgré la malveillance de la presse…" Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, late May 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 20, 275.

[371] That Caillebotte exhibited the *Portrait of Paul Hugot* instead is known from descriptions of the picture in contemporary reviews; Silvestre referred to it by its title in the catalogue, "Portrait de M. G.C." but he describes the figure as, "debout et coiffé d'un chapeau." See Silvestre 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:306-307.

outdoor paintings were not. Caillebotte's plan to exhibit a self-portrait is evidence that his exhibition strategy in 1880 was framed around a return to more obviously autobiographical paintings, like those that had garnered positive critical attention in 1876 and 1877.

In addition to Caillebotte's group of Impressionist colleagues and co-exhibitors, he maintained a social circle comprised of modern Parisian bourgeois and intellectuals; its members overlapped as they enjoyed leisurely pursuits in the city and its neighboring suburbs. Caillebotte first began to use identifiable models outside of his own family members in paintings he exhibited at the 1879 exhibition and this practice accelerated in the early 1880s.[372] The *Portrait of Jules Richemont* is set in Caillebotte's new apartment at 31 boulevard Haussmann, where he lived with his brother Martial after the sale of the family home in February 1879. The characteristic architectural molding and the red upholstered chair appear in several other portraits from the period, including *Portrait of a Man* (1880, fig. 121) and *The Bezique Game*. Whereas the *Portrait of a Man* catches its sitter in a moment of quiet contemplation, looking out at the treetops and architecture beyond, Richemont meets the viewer's gaze from a slightly elevated position. An unseen window to his right casts the figure in partial daylight and the bright white of his starched collar and cuffs index his standing as a member of the haute-bourgeoisie.[373] Richemont's identity has not been

---

[372] For example, Jules Dubois was used as a model for *A Boating Party*, exhibited in 1879. He reappears in a named portrait set in the boulevard Haussmann apartment in 1885 (1885, fig. 120).

[373] Gloria Groom points to the significance of the collar and cuffs in her catalogue entry for the picture, see Distel ed. 1994, no. 75, 201.

recovered but he was likely a friend and the way in which he sits at ease in the painter's apartment reaffirms their mutual belonging to an elite social milieu.

The portrait of Richemont was exhibited alongside another single-figure portrait of an individual from Caillebotte's social circle, his *Portrait of Paul Hugot*.[374] In its scale, format, and high level of finish, the full-length portrait stands apart from others in Caillebotte's *œuvre*. Worked in a richly monochromatic range of black, grays and blues, M. Hugot stands against an undefined, plain background. No single aspect of the figure's attire or features or setting is overemphasized. The result is a portrait that recalls figure studies for *Paris Street, Rainy Day* and *The Pont de l'Europe*.[375] Marrinan points to a small, squared drawing to suggest a photographic basis for the painting and while there is no other evidence to support that Caillebotte was working from a photograph, this theory may explain the portrait's undefined background and unfocused gaze.[376]

Despite the surface conventionality of these portraits of men from the artist's social circle, there is an uneasiness to Caillebotte's depictions of Richemont and Hugot.[377] The daylight that enters through the window to Richemont's right casts the

---

[374] That the portraits were exhibited side by side is known from Henry Trianon's review of the 1880 exhibition, see "Cinquième Exposition par un groupe d'artistes indépendants (10, rue des Pyramides)" *Le Constitutionnel* (April 8, 1880), 2-3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 312-314.

[375] For example, *Study of a Man under an Umbrella Seen from the Front, with Studies of Hands* (1877, fig. 122).

[376] Published in Jean Chardeau, *Les dessins de Caillebotte* (Paris: Hermé, 1989), 82.

[377] Groom calls the Richemont portrait one that adhered to "the Republican ideal of portraiture," for example, in Distel ed. 1994, no. 75, 201.

left side of his face in shadow, complicating the direct eye contact between sitter and viewer. While Richemont's posture is similar to that of Zandomeneghi's *Portrait of Diego Martelli* (1879, fig. 123) from the same year, Richemont's chair is too small for his frame and he is leaning so far to his right that he looks as though he might slid off the seat.[378] The familiar red velvet armchair is miniaturized to emphasize his subject's imposing frame.[379] While the setting and its furnishings are used to emphasize the body in the *Portrait of Richemont*, the scale and peculiarity of the figure in the *Portrait of Paul Hugot* are highlighted by the indistinct setting. The near life-size figure wears a top hat and black overcoat, with a walking stick tipped over his shoulder. The undefined background squares the viewer's focus on the well-dressed, confidently positioned figure, but Hugot looks down and away from the viewer, his expression forlorn. The reserved and melancholic tone of both the Richemont and Hugot portraits prompted comparisons to Naturalist writers, with Trianon writing the portrait of Hugot was "almost a portrait *à la* Balzac; now we would say *à la* Zola."[380]

Caillebotte's social status was recognized by critics, who described him as a "charming young man, one of the best brought up," and who wrote about the significance of his financial support of the Impressionist group.[381] In his review of

---

[378] The comparison to Zandomeneghi's portrait of Martelli was first made by Groom in Distel ed. 1994, 201.

[379] Caillebotte manipulation of domestic interiors is explored in depth in Elizabeth Benjamin, "All the Discomforts of Home," in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, pp. 85-97.

[380] "C'est presque un portrait à la Balzac; on dirait maintenant à la Zola." Trianon 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 312-314.

[381] "M. Caillebotte, jeune homme charmant et des mieux élevés…" Bertall 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:212-213.

1879 exhibition, de Lostalot reminded readers of the "famous" *Floor Scrapers* from three years prior, while Poignard went further, describing the young artist as a celebrity within the group and detailing the particulars of his apartment, his family life, and his interests outside of painting.[382] By exhibiting the portraits of Richemont and Hugot side by side at the 1880 exhibition, Caillebotte stepped back from the Impressionist landscapes and outdoor scenes of leisure that had been panned by critics in 1879. He sought to capitalize on his relative celebrity by exhibiting portraits of men from his social circle. Rather than embracing the conventions of traditional portraiture that he had learned in the studio of the esteemed portraitist Bonnat, Caillebotte sought out unusual lighting effects and compositions that reflected his vision for modern portrait-making.

In addition to the portraits, Caillebotte exhibited *Interior, Woman at the Window* (1880, fig. 124) and *Interior, Woman Reading* (1880, fig. 125), which some critics read as a pair and as commentary on the realities of bourgeois marriage in the early Third Republic. Caillebotte, himself a lifelong bachelor, places his sitters in close quarters but severs them psychologically. *Woman Reading* shows the couple reading, their thoughts occupied by a world outside of the domestic interior in which they are pictured. In *Woman at the Window*, Caillebotte takes this theme of estrangement further: the man reads a newspaper, unaware of the woman who looks out beyond the window. While the female figure remains unidentified, the man is Richard Gallo, a friend of the artist who has been identified as the sitter for a number

---

[382] "M. Caillebotte, dont les *Parqueteurs* ont été un instant célèbres…" Lostalot 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:228-230; and Montjoyeux [Poignard] 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 232-234.

of works, including named portraits, leisure scenes set both indoors and *en plein air*, and group scenes.[383] As the longtime editor of *Le Constitutionel*, Gallo – shown here reading an unidentified newspaper – represented a link between Caillebotte and the Parisian newspapers that the artist would obsessively read for the critical responses to the group exhibitions.

Caillebotte reprises the theme of psychological disjunction with *At a Café* (1880, fig. 128), one of the largest pictures he would exhibit at any of his eight lifetime exhibitions. The world of Parisian café culture had been explored by Degas and Manet, but Caillebotte's picture stands apart in its scale, its compositional complexity, and in its view of an all-male clientele at midday, with the sunlit trees visible beyond the window in the top right corner of the picture.[384] The male figure, who Eugène Véron described as a type, "very much of our time," is familiar from at least three other paintings from 1880: *Portrait of a Man*, *Man on a Balcony* (1880, fig. 130) and *A Balcony: Boulevard Haussmann* (1880, fig. 131).[385] The model for all four pictures was probably Albert Courtier, Caillebotte's notary and long-time

---

[383] The Gallo portrait group includes: *Portrait of Richard Gallo*, *Self-portrait at the Easel*, *Interior, Woman Reading*; *Interior, Woman at the Window*, *Game of Bezique*, *Portrait of Richard Gallo*, (1881, fig. 126), and *Richard Gallo and His Dog*, (1884, fig. 127). The depth of Caillebotte's reimagining of Gallo reveals their close friendship and the artist's diverse compositional interests. The social fluidity between city and suburbs further facilitated this interest in reusing models.

[384] Raffëlli would exhibit his all-male, daylit café scene, *The Absinthe Drinkers* (1881, fig. 129), at the sixth Impressionist exhibition the following year. For further discussion of the café as Impressionist motif, see Herbert 1988, 65-72.

[385] "C'est un type saisi sur le vif, et qui appartient bien réellement à notre époque." Eugène Véron, "Cinquième Exposition des indépendants," *L'Art* Vol. 21 (1880), 92-94, as cited in Berson 1996, I:315-318.

friend.[386] His daughter, Jenny, was Caillebotte's goddaughter, and the painter visited the Courtier family home in Meaux in 1878, painting the chapterhouse of the cathedral there (1878, fig. 132). In *Portrait of a Man* (1880, fig. 121), Courtier is shown in an expected setting for a man of his social standing: impeccably dressed, at ease in a lush interior, seated near a window that undoubtedly overlooks a prestigious neighborhood.

The marble tabletops, gilded architectural molding, and rich burgundy velvet of the banquette in *At a Café* signal a high-end establishment and recall the domestic interiors of the Richemont portrait and of *Interior, Woman at the Window* and *Interior, Woman Reading*. In this way, the picture reaffirms the autobiographical project of Caillebotte's exhibition strategy at the 1880 exhibition – these are paintings that reflect Caillebotte's social standing apart from his artistic affiliation with the Impressionist group. However, the man who leans against the tabletop, looking off into the near-distance to his left, subverts this setting and blocks our (mirrored) view of the café's interior. Coarser and more imposing than his Boulevard Haussmann doppelgänger, the male figure for *At a Café* was described by Trianon as "an individual living on the edge, or, better said, ready to fly or fight."[387] For Huysmans, he was a barfly:

> The partly turned posture, narrowed eyes, the hesitating player's slightly trembling hand, the forward bend, the haughty and sharp look

---

[386] Berhaut identifies the figure in *Man on a Balcony* as "probablement M[e] Courtier, notaire et ami de la famille," see Berhaut 1994, 132, no. 149. Marrinan writes that "The principal character of *In a Café* is a familiar face who appears in *Portrait of a Man*, *A Balcony: Boulevard Haussmann*, and perhaps *A Man on a Balcony*." See Marrinan 2017, 232.

[387] "… une existence sur la branche, ou pour mieux dire, sur la brèche." Trianon 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 312-314.

> of a man who beats trumps, all this is sketched out, grasped; a pillar of the tavern, with his hat crushed on the nape of his neck, his hands stuck in his pockets, we seen him plenty in all the brasseries, hailing the waiters by their first names, bragging and joking about backgammon games, drinking beers on credit!"[388]

In the four paintings that use Courtier as a model, Caillebotte blurred social distinctions by recasting his friend as various social types. In *Portrait of a Man*, he is well-dressed, looking out from his equally well-appointed position in the boulevard Haussmann apartment, whereas in *A Balcony, Boulevard Haussmann*, he leans nonchalantly against the wall, his leg bent with his hands in his pockets. His fashionable clothing, not altogether different from that of *Portrait of a Man*, is undermined by his informal posture and "melon," or derby hat.[389] The subtle blurring between bon and petit bourgeoise is further emphasized by the juxtaposition of the man in the top hat behind him, who leans out over the balcony railing. A mismatched pair, these two men seem oblivious to one another. Courtier appears as a rougher character in *At a Café* but reappears in *A Man on a Balcony*, probably painted after the other three pictures, in his own top hat.[390] In this final painting, Courtier is restored as

---

[388] "La posture un peu renversée, l'œil un peu plissé, la main un peu tremblante du joueur qui hésite, la penchée en avant, le geste haut et brusque de l'homme qui bat atout, tout cela est croqué, saisi, et ce pilier d'estaminet, avec son chapeau écrasé sur la nuque, ses mains plantées dans les poches, l'avons-nous assez vu dans toutes les brasseries, hélant les garçons par leurs prénoms, hâblant et blaguant sur les coups de jacquet, s'enfournant à crédit des chopes!" Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292.

[389] See Gloria Groom's catalogue entry for Distel ed. 1994, 209, no. 79. She describes the unidentified model in that picture as wearing "the informal 'melon' hat that had been popular in the previous decade." Groom cites R.T. Wilcox, *The Mode in Hats and Headdress* (New York and London, 1989), 248.

[390] That *Man on a Balcony* was painted last of these four pictures is supported by its exhibition in 1882 and not in 1880.

the bourgeois character from *Portrait of a Man*, leaning out from a balcony overlooking the corner of the rue Gluck and the boulevard Haussmann, taking in the city that unfolds at his feet..[391]

Just as the interior scenes of marital discord can be read as a critique of the institution of marriage in the early Third Republic, the series of four Courtier paintings show Caillebotte's interest in a broader social commentary. Whereas Caillebotte had approached the 1879 exhibition with an eye towards cohesion with the Impressionist aesthetic, exhibiting a large group of pictures similar to those exhibited by Monet and Pissarro, he reaffirmed his difference from those artists with his exhibition strategy at the 1880 exhibition. The character and composition of the Impressionist group had begun to shift in 1880 and Caillebotte's practice as an artist shifted, too, back towards the kinds of inventive compositions with which he had made his debut in 1876. His interior scenes and named portraits reaffirmed his belonging to a different social class than the Impressionist landscape painters and the ubiquity of his bachelor's apartment as a setting can be further understood as an autobiographical statement. At this moment in his career, Caillebotte embraced the critics' interest in his life beyond the studio and exhibited a group of paintings that reflected his social standing and his circle beyond the Impressionist group.

---

[391] See further discussion of this group of Courtier pictures in the final section of this chapter, 251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882: Caillebotte's Strategy at his Final Impressionist Exhibition.

The Critical Response to the Fifth Impressionist Exhibition

While the critical response to the 1880 exhibition was largely negative, the overall reception of Caillebotte's work was mixed and slightly more positive than negative. Six critics situated him as a leader of the group, the "head of the school," the "principal apostle," the "king, no sorry, the president," and "the *coryphée*" of the group.[392] As I discuss in the previous section, Huysmans recognized Caillebotte's effort to distance himself from the failed landscape campaign of 1879. Another influential writer, Mantz, observed Caillebotte's shift back to portraits and interior scenes, writing:

> Last year, M. Caillebotte began to make us sad. In an exhibition that we did not cover because it was not very interesting, the painter of *The Floor Scrapers* began landscape painting, and, forgetting his independence, he revealed himself to be a humble imitator of M. Camille Pissarro […] Today M. Caillebotte, freer and more personal, returns to the portrait, to interior scenes […].[393]

---

[392] See Bertall, "Les Indépendants: Exposition des ex-impressionnistes, ex-naturalistes, ex-nihilistes, etc. etc.: Rue des Pyramides," *Paris Journal* (April 7, 1880), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 269-268; de Charry, "Les Salon de 1880: Préface: Les Impressionnistes," *Le Pays* (April 10, 1880), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 271-273; J.L. "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *L'Ordre* (April 6, 1880), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 296; and M. de Thémines, "Causerie: Beaux-Arts: Les Artistes indépendants," *La Patrie* (April 7, 1880), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 309-311.

[393] "L'année dernière, M. Caillebotte commença à nous attrister. Dans une exposition dont on s'est abstenu de rendre compte parce qu'elle était peu intéressante, l'auteur des Raboteurs de parquet abordait le paysage, et, oubliant qu'indépendance oblige, il s'avouait l'humble imitateur de M. Camille Pissarro. Cette résolution parut grave. Aujourd'hui M. Caillebotte, plus personnel et plus libre, revient au portrait, aux scènes d'intérieur, à la nature morte, et l'ancien ennemi de l'idéal se proclame adorateur de la chimère." Paul Mantz, "Exposition des œuvres des artistes indépendants," *Le Temps* (April 14, 1880), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:296-299.

Caillebotte's plan to remind critics of his most successful works from the 1876 exhibition, in particular, was successful, and four writers mentioned *The Floor Scrapers* in their reviews of the 1880 exhibition.[394] In the reviews that describe his work, the two *Interior* paintings and *At a Café* were the most admired.

At the center of the critical discussion of the *Interior* paintings was the marital discord that critics saw therein. Bertall admired the reality of *Woman Reading*, its "convincing and generous spirit," while Huysmans read the two paintings as a pair, linked by an ongoing narrative. About *Woman at the Window*, "a clear masterpiece" in his view, Huysmans wrote that the couple was bored with their day-to-day existence: "it is a corner of our contemporary existence, fixed as is. The couple is bored, as often happens in life." In the other picture, "the idle boredom of the first interior is gone; this couple has nothing to say to each other, but they accept, without complaint, with a resigned sweetness, the situation […]".[395] His interpretation of the couple as having

---

[394] See: Goetschy 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:282-283; Baignères 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:266-267; Mantz 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:296-299; Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292.

[395] "C'est un coin de l'existence contemporaine, fixé tel quel. Le couple s'ennuie, comme cela arrive dans la vie, souvent; une senteur de ménage dans une situation d'argent facile, s'échappe de cet intérieur. M. Caillebotte est le peintre de la bourgeoisie à l'aise, du commerce et de la finance, pourvoyant largement à leurs besoins, sans être pour cela très riches, habitant près de la rue Lafayette ou dans les environs du boulevard Haussmann. […] Au fond, par un bizarre et incompréhensible effet de perspective, un monsieur apparaît, microscopique, couché sur un divan, lisant un livre, la tête posée sur un coussin qui semble énorme ; au premier plan, une femme vue de profil, lit un journal. Ici, l'ennui désœuvré du premier intérieur que nous venons de voir n'est plus; ce couple n'a rien à se dire, mais il accepte, sans révolte, avec une douceur résignée la situation qu'a faite la permanence du contact, l'habitude" Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292. This is as compared to Huysmans's own critique of marriage in *En Ménage*, published the following year, wherein he likens bourgeois marriage to prostitution. See Mary Morton, "Against the

accepted a stable, if uneventful, marriage is more optimistic than the provocative reading put forth by critics like Mantz, who interpreted the distance between the two figures as echoing a psychological distance: "divorce is inevitable […] the scene takes place in a room that is limited in its size and yet we estimate that four or five kilometers separate this couple."[396]

The peculiar composition of *Woman Reading* provoked a number of critics who saw the distance between the two figures and the oversized scale of the foreground female figure as willful denials of traditional gender roles. Dalligny wrote that the wife was life-size, while the husband looked like "a Huret doll, dressed as a little boy."[397] Trianon interpreted the wife's scale as a marker of her control over her husband, writing that her hand touching his head made the husband look "like a doll, a children's toy."[398] The gendered reading roles have also been reversed in Caillebotte's picture, with the wife reading a newspaper, engaged with the world

---

Grain: Gustave Caillebotte and Paul Durand-Ruel's Impressionism," in André Dombrowski ed., *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Impressionism* (forthcoming).

[396] "Pour des gens qui ne sont pas à la même échelle, le divorce est inévitable […] La scène se passe dans une chambre de dimension forte restreinte, et cependant on peut évaluer à quatre ou cinq kilomètres la distance qui sépare les deux personnages." Mantz 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:296-299.

[397] "La dame est grosse comme vous ou moi, le mari a juste la taille d'une poupée Huret habillée en petit garçon…" Aug. Dalligny, "L'Exposition de la rue des Pyramides," *Le Journal des arts* (April 16, 1880), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:274-275.

[398] "Quant au mari, même en tenant compte de puissant effet de recule de rapetissement causé par le contact apparent de sa tête avec la main de sa femme, il ressemble à une poupée, un jouet d'enfant." Trianon 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 312-314.

beyond their apartment, and the husband consuming a paperback novel. Charry, who otherwise wrote admiringly about Caillebotte's work, interpreted the husband as a kept man, "a very little man she has placed on the couch by her side; she keeps him tidy and gives him something to read."[399] What is most telling in these reviews, however, is the critics' identification of the scene as one from Caillebotte's world. As Huysmans concludes in his description of *Woman Reading*: "M. Caillebotte is the painter of the bourgeoisie at ease, those from commerce and finance, who have all that they need without being very rich, those who live near the rue Lafayette or around the Boulevard Haussmann."[400] By exhibiting a group of interior pictures that reflected his own social standing apart from that of his Impressionist co-exhibitors, Caillebotte sought to recreate the success of his paintings at the 1876 and 1877 exhibition, and, in the *Interiors*, critics saw scenes from the artist's own milieu inflected with social commentary.

A return to the kinds of inventive and unusual compositions with which Caillebotte had made a name for himself at previous exhibitions revived some of the critical discourse that had surrounded those pictures. The critic's comments about Caillebotte's deliberate distortion of scale and perspective in *Woman Reading* recalls the discussion of the sliding piano in *Young Man Playing a Piano* or uneasiness of the

---

[399] "…un tout petit bonhomme qu'elle a allongé sur un canapé à ses côtés; elle n'a rien négligé pour sa toilette, lui a donné quelque chose à lire." Charry 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 271-273.

[400] "M. Caillebotte est le peintre de la bourgeoisie à l'aise, du commerce et de la finance, pourvoyant largement à leurs besoins, sans être pour cela très riches, habitant près de la rue Lafayette ou dans les environs du boulevard Haussmann." Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292.

tilted floor in *The Floor Scrapers* at the 1876 exhibition.[401] Véron defended the artist, writing that Caillebotte had not ignored the rules of perspective, but that he could have alleviated the peculiarities of the composition by creating space between the chair and the sofa. The same floral-patterned sofa is conventionally scaled in *Self-Portrait at the Easel* and *The Bezique Game*, so while Caillebotte exaggerates the diminutive effect of the distance between the husband and the wife in *Woman Reading*, most critics did not recognize the distortion as deliberate, instead writing that "the law of distances, a sense of proportion, they don't exist in his [Caillebotte's] eyes."[402]

The critical preoccupation with Caillebotte's treatment of pictorial space at the 1880 exhibition extended to *At a Café*. In his review for *Le Journal des arts*, Dalligny did not recognize the mirror behind the standing figure, writing "the men who drink absinthe behind him, separated by a simple banquette, are as big as Lemercier de Neuville's *puppazi*," comparing their diminutive size to puppets designed by a popular performer.[403] A preparatory drawing for the painting, now in the collection of the Yale University Art Gallery (1880, fig. 133), reveals that Caillebotte always planned to include a mirror behind the main figure, although he adjusts the angle in the final

---

[401] See Chapter 2, 11 rue Le Peletier: Caillebotte's Reception in 1876.

[402] "La loi des distances, le sentiment des proportions n'existent pas à ses yeux." Dalligny 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 274-275. For further discussion of Caillebotte's distortion of scale in these interior pictures, see Benjamin in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, pp. 85-98.

[403] "Les gens qui prennent l'absinthe derrière lui, et dont une simple banquette le sépare, sont grands comme des Puppazi de Lemercier de Neuville." Dalligny 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 274-275. For more about Lemercier de Neuville, see Henryk Jurkowski, *History of European Puppetry* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1996), vol. I, pp. 391-399.

composition so that his model is more closely aligned with his reflection. Charles Ephrussi mistook the framing of the mirror for another room, behind the banquette – "two tiny drinkers sitting at a table in the backroom" – but the two figures are in fact seated behind where the painter is presumed to be standing.[404] Behind the two drinkers is another mirror, revealed by the doubling of derby and top hats on the gilded rack affixed to it. The red-striped awning that appears to open behind them is in fact being diagonally reflected from a window that is to the main figure's right, out of view but confirmed by the raking light that comes in from the left edge of the canvas.

At a Café is among the largest paintings Caillebotte exhibited in his lifetime and its billing as the first entry in the exhibition catalogue further signals its significance and ambition.[405] It is the only painting by Caillebotte that depicts an urban interior other than his own home or studio and the complexity of the composition suggests that Caillebotte sought out the café as a setting that would allow for this system of compounded reflections. In this canvas, Caillebotte takes the complex perspectival systems he developed in *Paris Street, Rainy Day* and *The Pont de l'Europe* even further. Rather than situating his viewer at the threshold of the space of the picture, stepping onto the street with eyes fixed ahead, Caillebotte places us in the center of the café, in front of a mirrored image of the two men seated behind us.

---

[404] "De même, les deux petits buveurs (n°. 6) attablés dans l'arrière-salle d'un café […]" Charles Ephrussi, "Expositions des artistes indépendants," *Gazette des beaux-arts* (May 1, 1880), 485-488, as cited in Berson 1996, I:277-279.

[405] It is 153 by 114 cm, very close in size to *The Floor Scrapers* (102 by 146 cm.) It is also comparable in its format and scale to *Man at his Bath* (144.8 by 114.3 cm), which was exhibited in 1888 with Les XX. The two largest pictures that Caillebotte exhibited in his lifetime are *Paris Street, Rainy Day* (212.2 by 276.2 cm), *The Pont de l'Europe* (125 by 180 cm).

He creates a fictive space that extends beyond the viewer in all directions and the effect is wholly immersive, particularly given the near- life-size scale of the figure.[406] In his description of the picture, Huysmans centers this first-person experience: "A gentleman, standing, looks at us […]".[407] Huysmans is also the only critic who draws attention to the mirror in these contemporary reviews, writing that "a large mirror in a gold frame decorated with fly-stitching reflects the shoulders of the gentleman and shows us the whole interior of the café."[408] That Huysmans recognized the complexities of Caillebotte's picture comes as no surprise – the two were not just casual acquaintances but friends, linked through their shared interest in boating.[409]

The immersive, first-person sensation that Caillebotte creates in *At a Café* amplifies the individualized and quasi-autobiographical effect of his group of pictures

---

[406] In his analysis of *At a Café*, Marrinan presents a convincing interpretation of the picture as linked to the circle of Naturalist novelists that had Zola at its center. See Marrinan 2017, 235-237.

[407] "Un monsieur, debout, nous regarde […]" Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292.

[408] "[…] une grande glace au cadre d'or tiqueté par des points de mouches, réverbère les épaules du monsieur debout et répercute tout l'intérieur du café." Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 199, I:285-292. While no other critic mentions the mirror, Edmond Renoir did write that "L'arrangement de son *Intérieur de café* plaîra par sa vérité […]" Edmond Renoir, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *La Presse* (April 9, 1880), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 305-307.

[409] In May 1883, Pissarro wrote to his son Lucien to complain that Huysmans "met Caillebotte au-dessus de Monet, pourquoi?" Letter dated May 13, 1883, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 148, 206-207. On May 18, Lucien replied, "I also find that he [Huysmans] is too indulgent with Caillebotte, but here's the explanation of this mystery: they are boating buddies, and the 'pullers' don't attack one another." See Anne Thorold ed., *The Letters of Lucien to Camille Pissarro, 1883-1903* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 21.

at the 1880 exhibition. Whereas 1879 marked a year of experimentation with landscape painting in the style of Pissarro and Monet, the 1880 exhibition heralded a return to the ambitious, personal, and often peculiar mode of picture-making with which he had made his reputation in 1876 and 1877. Even the critics who wrote disparagingly about his work in 1880 echoed the familiar language of the previous exhibitions, writing that "successive planes do not exist, distances are flattened" in his work and that the strangeness of his compositions "lends a humorous note to this otherwise discordant exhibition."[410] His strategy at the 1880 exhibition reflected the advice given to him by Duranty in 1879, "[Caillebotte] has not been painting for long, and perhaps his personal temperament should take him to another pictorial route […] I would like to see him play with his art, and to abstain from his fierce and dreary attempts to violate nature, which easily resists him."[411] While Caillebotte was unable to reclaim the success of major canvases like *The Floor Scrapers* and *The Pont de l'Europe*, his exhibition of *At a Café* and the *Interior* pairing in 1880 signaled a reassertion of his individual identity apart from the other members of the Impressionist group and a return to his individualized vision for modern painting.

---

410 "[…] les plans successifs n'existent pas pour lui; les distances sont supprimées," Ephrussi 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:277-279.

"[…] M. Caillebotte, qui tient dans la troupe l'emploi comique et donne la note drôle dans ce concert un peu discordant." Havard 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 284-285.

411 "Il n'y a pas très-longtemps qu'il fait de la peinture, et peut-être son tempérament personnel devrait-il l'emmener dans une autre route picturale […] Je voudrais le voir jouer avec son art, et moins s'obstiner à une tentative de viol farouche et morne sur la nature qui lui résiste aisément." Duranty 1879, as cited in Berson 1996, I:217-218.

251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882

"Une école banale": The Impressionists after 1880

The interpersonal conflict between Degas and Caillebotte marred the organization of the 1880 exhibition and the result was a discordant group of pictures in which critics could find no unifying thesis or theme. The absence of several artists was noticed by critics like Ephrussi, who wrote that it was "regrettable that the whole Impressionist group is not represented at the rue des Pyramides," going on to name Manet, Sisley, Renoir, and Monet as those missing.[412] His view of the Impressionist group as being composed of a fixed set of artists regardless of their participation in the exhibitions was aligned with Caillebotte's vision for the project. Degas must have felt vindicated by the critical success of his recruits, particularly Rafaëlli, but those same reviewers did not see independence as a viable unifying principle. In his review for *Le Voltaire*, Goetschy predicted that the group's affiliation would be short-lived: "It does not seem to me that the eighteen artists who make up the group of *Indépendants* will remain united for much longer. No artistic relationship binds them to each other. It is a group composed of disparate and diverse parts."[413] By 1880, the members of the core Impressionist group – Caillebotte, Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley – had attracted the attention of important critics and, in the case of Monet and Renoir,

---

412 "Il est regrettable que tout le groupe impressionniste ne soit pas représenté à la rue des Pyramides […]" Ephrussi 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:277-279. Manet is consistently counted among the missing of the core Impressionist group, despite never having participated in one of their exhibitions.

413 "Les dix-huit artistes qui forment le groupe des *Indépendants* ne me semblent pas appelés à rester unis bien longtemps encore. Aucune parenté artistique ne les lie les uns aux autres. C'est un groupe composé d'éléments disparates et divers." Goetschy 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:282-283.

established reputations for themselves that fostered the patronage of private collectors. When Monet was asked in June 1880 if he still considered himself an Impressionist, he replied: "I am still and always intend to be an Impressionist […] but I see only very rarely the men and women who are my colleagues. The little church has become a banal school that opens its doors to the first-come dauber."[414]

Caillebotte recognized the failure of the 1880 exhibition to live up to his vision for their continued collaboration. In January 1881, he wrote to Pissarro to voice his concerns about the future of the group exhibitions:

> What is to become of our exhibitions? This is my well-considered opinion: we ought to continue only in an artistic direction, the sole direction – in the final sense – that is of interest to us all. I ask, therefore, that a show should be composed of all those who have contributed real interest to the subject, that is, you, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Mlle. Morisot, Mlle. Cassatt, Cézanne, Guillaumin; if you wish, Gauguin, perhaps Cordey, and myself. […] Degas brought disunity to our group.[415]

---

414 "Je suis toujours et je veux toujours être impressionniste. C'est moi-même qui ai trouvé le mot ou qui du moins, par un tableau que j'avais exposé, ai fourni à un reporter quelconque du *Figaro* l'occasion de lancer ce brûlot. Il a eu du succès, comme vous voyez. Je suis impressionniste, dis-je ; mais je ne vois plus que très rarement mes confrères, hommes ou femmes. La petite église est devenue aujourd'hui une école banale qui ouvre ses portes au premier barbouilleur venu […]" E. Taboureux, "Claude Monet," *La Vie Moderne* (June 12, 1880), 380.

415 "Que vont devenir nos expositions ? Voici quant à moi mon avis bien arrêté là-dessus : nous devons continuer et continuer uniquement dans un sens artistique, le seul en définitive qui soit intéressant pour nous. Je demande donc qu'une exposition soit faite avec tous ceux qui ont apporté ou apporteront un intérêt réel dans la question. C'est-à-dire vous, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Mlle. Morisot, Mlle. Cassat, Cézanne, Guillaumin, si vous voulez Gauguin, peut-être Cordey et moi […] Degas a apporté la désorganisation parmi nous." Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 24, 1880, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275-276, letter no. 23.

Caillebotte's view that Degas had undermined the cohesion of the Impressionist group was undoubtedly rooted in the personal conflict between the two men, but he went on to describe Degas as having spoiled the group by inviting Lepic, Legros, Zandomeneghi, and Raffaëlli, men Caillebotte believed to be inferior artists.[416] Pissarro had first raised the issue of lesser painters in an 1878 letter to Caillebotte, but in his reply, he reminded the younger artist that among the new recruits that Degas had brought into the group was Caillebotte himself.[417] Still, Caillebotte held firm. Above all else, he could not tolerate Degas's disloyalty to Renoir and Monet, writing to Pissarro: "As a person, he [Degas] has gone so far as to say to me, speaking of Renoir and Monet, 'Do you invite those people to your house?' You can see that while he has great talent, he does not have great character."[418] By the end of January 1881, he had made up his mind: "I do not believe that an exhibition is possible this year. But I certainly will not repeat the one held last year."[419] When the sixth Impressionist

---

[416] "[…] quelque phalange de lutteurs résolus pour la grande cause du réalisme !!!" Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 24, 1881, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275-276, letter no. 23.

[417] "Si les meilleurs se dérobent, que deviendra notre union artistique?" Letter from Pissarro to Caillebotte, March 1878, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 53, 109-110. Letter from Pissarro to Caillebotte, January 27, 1881, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 24, 276.

[418] "Comme homme il a été jusqu'à me dire en parlent de Renoir et de Monet, 'Vous recevez ces gens-là chez vous ?' Vous voyez que s'il a un grand talent il n'as pas un grand caractère." Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 24, 1881, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275-276, letter no. 23. Caillebotte would echo this sentiment in another undated letter to Pissarro, "quel talent, oui, mais quel caractère," as published in Berhaut 1994, 276, letter no. 26.

[419] "[…] je ne crois pas une exposition possible cette année. Mais certainement je ne recommencerai pas celle de l'année dernière." Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 28, 1880, as published in Berhaut 1994, 276, letter no. 25.

exhibition opened on April 1881, Caillebotte's work was not included for the first time since 1876.

It is clear from Caillebotte's letters to Pissarro that his frustration with Degas was at the center of his decision to abstain from the 1881 exhibition; he made things personal, writing: "Degas's showcase is not enough for me."[420] In the end, Degas did not hesitate to organize an exhibition without him. The sixth Impressionist exhibition was held at 35 boulevard des Capucines, the same address where the first exhibition had been held. Whereas the 1874 exhibition was installed in Nadar's former studio, the exhibition space in 1881 consisted of five small rooms connected by cramped corridors in a mezzanine level at the back of the building. The works were crowded together in poorly-lit spaces and Havard reported that the rooms were too narrow for visitors to step back and see the pictures.[421] Caillebotte, Monet, Renoir, and Sisley did not send pictures. Of the thirteen remaining exhibitors, Degas and his followers made up eight.[422] Due to the comparatively low profile of many of these artists as compared to that of the core Impressionist group and the indefinite titles that appear in the

---

[420] "La vitrine de Degas ne me suffit pas." Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 28, 1880, as published in Berhaut 1994, 276, letter no. 25.

[421] "Or, cette étroitesse est, dans le cas présent, d'autant plus fâcheuse qu'elle ne permet point au visiteur de prendre le recul nécessaire pour bien juger des œuvres […]" Henry Havard, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Siècle* (April 3, 1881), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:346-347.

[422] These eight are counted as Cassatt, Degas, Forain, Raffaëlli, Rouart, Tillot, Vidal, and Zandomeneghi.

exhibition catalogue, the checklist of the 1881 exhibition has been only partially reconstructed.[423]

The works that have been identified as among those included in the 1881 exhibition include Raffaëlli's *The Absinthe Drinkers*, Gauguin's *Étude de nu* (1880, fig. 134), and several important works by Degas, including *Criminal Physiognomies* (ca. 1881, fig. 135) and his *Little Dancer, Fourteen Years* (1881, fig. 136). While Cassatt, Morisot, and Pissarro chose to exhibit landscapes and domestic genre scenes that were more closely aligned with the critical understanding of Impressionism in the early 1880s, reviewers paid more attention to Raffaëlli's rag pickers and Degas's criminals than to Morisot and Cassatt's mothers and babies. As Fronia E. Wissman explains: "The subject of greatest interest to the majority of them [the critics at the 1881 exhibition], and, upon inspection, to the artists, was the issue of Realism, a term that encompassed the subsidiary ideas of the modern and the ugly."[424] Caillebotte had disparaged what he called the fighters "for this great cause of realism" in his letter to Pissarro and with him out of the way, Degas was able to organize the sixth Impressionist exhibition around these artistic interests.[425] Many critics found the

---

[423] Of the 170 works listed in the exhibition catalogue, only forty-eight have been identified. None of the works exhibited by Tillot, Vidal, or Vignon and only six of the thirty-four works exhibited by Raffaëlli have been identified. See Berson 1996, II: 179-187.

[424] Fronia E. Wissman, "Realists Among the Impressionists," in Moffett ed. 1986, 337-374, 338.

[425] "[…] quelque phalange de lutteurs résolus pour la grande cause du réalisme !!!" Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 24, 1881, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275-276, letter no. 23.

subject matter pictured in the exhibition objectionable, with Trianon writing that the participating artists seem to "need that which is ugly, horrible, and repugnant."[426]

In addition to their descriptions, positive and negative, linking the artists at the sixth Impressionist exhibitions to Realist and Naturalist writers such as Balzac and Zola, the critics in 1881 accorded a good deal of attention to the shift in the composition of the group. Champier wrote that the leadership had abandoned the group: "[…]MM. Manet, Renoir, Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley and Caillebotte were noteworthy only because of their absence. It's a desertion."[427] Valabrègue went further, scolding those who decided not to participate: "I note with regret that there are absentees; I came to study a group, and as I begin, I congratulate those who have remained faithful to the association."[428] Silvestre, a long-time supporter of the Impressionist exhibitions, shared Caillebotte's view of the Impressionist group as having a fixed membership that was no longer represented at the exhibition organized by Degas in 1881:

---

426 "Il leur faut à tout prix le laid, l'horrible, l'exceptionnel dans le hideux." Henry Trianon, "Sixième Exposition de peinture par un groupe d'artistes: 35, boulevard des Capucines," *Le Constitutionnel* (April 24, 1881), 2-3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:366-369.

427 "Leur sixième exposition ne différait guère des précédentes, sauf que les chefs de file, tels que MM. Manet, Renoir, Claude Monet, Alfred Sisley, Caillebotte n'y brillaient plus que par leur absence. C'est une désertion." Victor Champier, "La Société des artistes indépendants," *L'Année artistique: 1881* (Paris, A. Quantin, 1882), 167-169, as cited in Berson 1996, I:332-333.

428 "Que sont devenus Caillebotte, Renoir, Sisley, Claude Monet ? Mme. Marie Bacquemond [sic] n'a rien envoyé cette année. Je remarque avec regret qu'il y a des absents ; je viens étudier un groupe, et en commençant mon examen, je félicite tout d'abord ceux qui sont restés fidèles à l'association." Antony Valabrègue, "Beaux-Arts: L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *La Revue littéraire et artistique* (April 15, 188), 180-181, as cited in Berson 1996, I:369-370.

> And now Impressionism, has it survived? Has it even ever existed? I am one of those, I admit, for whom this word represented a perfectly determined order of ideas. If it did not characterize a theory, it corresponded, at least, to a certain community of aspirations and ideals.[429]

Like Caillebotte, Silvestre saw the composition of the Impressionist group as fixed around artists who had their affiliation in common above all else. In their minds, the substitution of Monet and Renoir with Zandomeneghi and Raffaëlli was corrosive to the character of the group.

A number of critics who noticed the absence of the core group of Impressionist painters took issue with the shift towards a group identity centered on independence from the Salon. Havard put it best:

> It made sense, when the Salon was an official body, when the jury was appointed by the administration, that artists would stand against the intrusion of authority in the field of art. But today, the situation has changed. The artists are the masters. Independence reigns everywhere. Why then stay away?[430]

Renoir, Sisley, and Monet saw the administrative changes at the Salon as presenting a new opportunity for the exhibition of their work and their optimism did not go

---

[429] "Et maintenant l'impressionnisme, a-t-il vécu ? A-t-il même existe jamais ? Je suis de ceux, je l'avoue, pour qui ce mot représentait un ordre d'idées parfaitement déterminé. S'il ne caractérisait pas une théorie, il correspondait, du moins, à une certaine communauté d'aspirations et d'idéal. Cet idéal pourrait être jugé insuffisant, mais ces aspirations étaient, au moins, intéressantes." Armand Silvestre, "Le Monde des arts: Sixième Exposition des artistes indépendants," *La Vie moderne* (April 16, 1881), 250-251, as cited by Berson 1996, I:365-367.

[430] "Il s'expliquait, alors que le Salon était chose officielle, alors que le jury était nommé par l'administration, que des artistes protestassent contre l'intrusion de l'autorité dans le domaine de l'art. Mais aujourd'hui la situation n'est plus la même. Les artistes sont les maîtres. L'indépendance règne partout. Pourquoi dès lors se tenir à l'écart ?" Havard 1881, as cited in Berson 1996, I:346-347.

unnoticed by critics. The Société anonyme was founded in 1873 as a response to artists' desire for an alternative exhibition venue, particularly as the Ministry of Fine Arts continued to tighten admission requirements through the mid-1870s. In the years ahead, the group's identity evolved to include, as Silvestre put it, "a perfectly determined order of ideas," centered on the work exhibited by its core members.[431]

Despite his decision to abstain from the 1881 exhibition, Caillebotte must have read the reviews with interest and he would have seen his name mentioned in a quarter of them.[432] In the months between the close of the fifth Impressionist exhibition at the end of April 1880 and the opening of the sixth in April 1881, Caillebotte continued to paint in the studio and *en plein air*, particularly during a sojourn to Villers-sur-Mer in August.[433] He continued to send money to Monet, both in exchange for works and as

---

[431] Silvestre 1881, as cited by Berson 1996, I:365-367.

[432] They are: Champier 1881, as cited in Berson 1996, I:332-333; Aug. Dalligny, "Les Indépendants: Sixième Exposition," *Le Journal des arts* (April 8, 1881), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:335-336; Victor Fournel, "Les Oeuvres et les hommes: Courrier du théâtre, de la littérature et des arts," *Le Correspondant* (April 10, 1881), 171-172, as cited in Berson 1996, I:341; Havard 1881, as cited in Berson 1996, I:346-347; Joris-Karl Huysmans, "L'Exposition des indépendants en 1881," *L'Art moderne* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1883), 225-257, as cited in Berson 1996, I:348-355; Paul Mantz, "Expositions des œuvres des artistes indépendants," *Le Temps* (April 23, 1881), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:356-359; André Michel, "Expositions des artistes indépendants," *Le Parlement* (April 5, 1881), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:359-360; "Nouvelles artistiques: Les Impressionnistes," *Le Petit Journal* (April 4, 1881), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:263; Valabrègue 1881, as cited in Berson 1996, I:369-370; and X, "Exposition des artistes indépendants," *La Chronique des arts et de la curiosité* (April 2, 1881), 109-110, as cited in Berson 1996, I:372.

[433] A number of these paintings from Villers-sur-Mer are dated, see Berhaut 1994, nos. 161 to 178.

gifts.[434] He also became increasingly involved with sailing, participating in regattas at Argenteuil, Le Havre, Trouville and Fécamp and winning ten first prizes between February and October 1880.[435] The sixth Impressionist exhibition opened and closed in the spring of 1881 without his participation and Caillebotte distanced himself geographically from the Parisian art world too, purchasing a property on the banks of the Seine in Petit Gennevilliers with his brother.[436] Their new home was across the river from Argenteuil, where the Cercle de la Voile de Paris activities were centered, and the 1881 yachting season saw Caillebotte participating in regattas there, as well as in Le Havre, and Trouville.[437] At thirty-years old, the painter seemed ready to leave the exhibitions in Paris behind in favor of his comparatively easy success with sailing in Petit Gennevilliers, but in the spring of 1882, the core group of Impressionist artists banded together once more to mount a seventh exhibition, one that saw the return of Renoir, Monet, Sisley, and Caillebotte.

Planning the Seventh Exhibition

The possibility of a seventh Impressionist exhibition was first raised by Gauguin in a letter to Pissarro describing Henri Rouart's suggestion that the group

---

[434] See the summary of Caillebotte's payments to Monet in Distel ed. 1994, p. 315. The total sum Caillebotte rendered to Monet between April 1880 and April 1881was 1640 francs, with 200 francs repaid.

[435] See Distel ed. 1994, 341-342 for a complete chronology of his sailing achievements. For further discussion of the relationship between his accomplishments in sailing and his painting practice, see the forthcoming Raybone 2019.

[436] Distel ed. 1994, 315

[437] Distel ed. 1994, 341-342.

organize a show in an exhibition hall on the grounds of the Salle Valentino.[438] Rouart is unnamed in the letter, but Gauguin reports that he is willing to finance the rental of the exhibition space for up to eight thousand francs, with admission collected at the gate making up the remaining balance. As soon as the exhibition was proposed, the old objections about the participation of Degas's cohort of Realist paintings were renewed. From the outset, Gauguin cast Degas as an obstacle to the organization of the exhibition, writing to Pissarro that it would be an excellent opportunity, "if Degas does not put too many sticks in the wheels."[439] In December 1881, Gauguin wrote to Pissarro once more to say that he would not participate alongside Degas's followers: "Despite all my good will, I can no longer continue to serve as buffoon for M. Raffaeli [sic] and Co."[440] In the weeks ahead, Gauguin and Pissarro found themselves committed to renting the exhibition space but unable to resolve the matter of Degas's participation.

---

[438] "[…] il est venu un individu me proposer de prendre à sa charge … notre exposition. Je crois que si Degas ne met pas trop de bâtons dans le roues c'est une occasion superbe pour faire notre exposition (jour et soir à la lumière). Pour ma part je trouve la proposition excellente. Il nous offre la location pour un prix de 6 à 8000 F frais faits par lui, et au-dessus de ce chiffre partager les entrées." Undated letter from Gaugin to Pissarro, which was part of the Archives de Camille Pissarro sale at the Hôtel Drouot, November 21, 1975, lot 33. This letter is published in Joel Isaacson's Essay, "The Painters Called Impressionists," in Moffett ed. 1986, pp. 373-390, n. 21.

[439] "… si Degas ne met pas trop de bâtons dans le roues…" Undated letter from Gaugin to Pissarro, which was part of the Archives de Camille Pissarro sale at the Hôtel Drouot, November 21, 1975, from Isaacson in Moffett ed. 1986, n. 21.

[440] "Malgré tout ma bonne volonté, je ne puis pas continuer plus longtemps à servir du bouffon à M. Raffaeli [sic] Cie. […]" Letter from Gauguin to Pissarro, December 14, 1881, Archives de Camille Pissarro, lot 34, from Isaacson 1986, n. 24.

The most striking letter in this series is that of Gauguin to Pissarro on January 25, 1882, wherein Gauguin offers to abstain from the exhibition to secure the participation of the core Impressionist group:

> If you give up the game, then it's finished […] Go see Caillebotte and organize yourselves to exhibit this year [...] if Caillebotte does not want me, then I give you permission [to go ahead without me], what is essential is that the Impressionists exhibit […] Make the exhibition five if you would like, with you, Guillaumin, Renoir, Monet, and Caillebotte, but do it.[441]

In his account of this correspondence, Joel Isaacson interprets Gauguin's urgency in light of his experience as a stockbroker.[442] Gauguin had witnessed the failure of the Union Générale six days earlier and understood the impending economic downturn better than did his fellow painters. The stock market crash that followed sent France's economy into a recession until the end of the decade, prompting Gauguin to dedicate himself to painting full-time.[443] Regardless of Gauguin's motivation, his earnest self-renunciation launched Pissarro into action. Within a week, the older artist made

---

[441] "Si vous abandonnez la partie vous pouvez dire que c'est bien fini […] Voyez Caillebotte et organisez-vous pour exposer cette année… si Caillebotte ne veut pas de moi je vous donne autorisation pleine l'essential c'est que les impressionistes [sic] exposent parce que plus tard on pourra voir qui on veut… De toutes façons Degas voulait depuis deux ans s'en aller seulement au fond il ne voulait pas s'en aller seul il tenait à faire tomber tout avec lui. Faites l'exposition à cinq si vous voulez, vous, Guillaumin, Renoir, Monet, et Caillebotte, mais faites-la." Letter from Gauguin to Pissarro, January 25, 1882, Archives de Camille Pissarro, lot 38, from Isaacson in Moffett ed. 1986, n. 26.

[442] See Isaacson in Moffett ed. 1986, n. 26.

[443] Real GDP did not recover to its pre-1882 level until 1888. See Eugene N. White, "The Crash of 1882 and the Bailout of the Paris Bourse," *Cliometrica* (2007) 1:115–144.

contact with Caillebotte, Monet, and Morisot, as well as with the dealer Durand-Ruel, whose participation assured that Monet's paintings would be included in the final checklist.

As the plans for a seventh exhibition began to come together, Caillebotte tried to negotiate Degas's participation without that of Raffaëlli. He reported back to Pissarro: "There is no exhibition with Degas. Degas will not let go of Raffaëlli for the sole reason that we ask him to let Raffaëlli go […]".[444] Rouart served as mediator for these negotiations but they were unsuccessful. In his report to Pissarro, Caillebotte laid out their options:

> Two outcomes present themselves. [First,] Degas will bypass us and make an exhibition with Raffaëlli and Mlle. Cassatt. Second option, Degas and Rouart renounce their lease [on the exhibition space] and we will organize an exhibition that includes you, Monet, Renoir, Cezanne, Sisley, Mlle. Morisot, Gauguin, and me - not Degas, he will refuse – and Mlle. Cassat if she wants, but she will refuse. Rouart is always for conciliation, but I think, personally, that conciliation does not consist of my playing the gullible fool.[445]

On March 1, 1882, the seventh Impressionist exhibition opened with the participation of Caillebotte, Gauguin, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley and without that

---

[444] "Il n'y a pas d'exposition faisable avec Degas. Degas ne lâchera pas Raffaëlli pour cette unique raison qu'on lui demande de le lâcher, et il le lâchera d'autant moins." Undated letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 26, 276.

[445] "[…] deux cas peuvent se présenter. Degas passera outre et fera une exposition avec Raffaëlli et Mlle. Cassatt. 2e cas, Degas, Rouart, renonceront à leur bail et nous ferons une exposition ainsi composée de vous, Monet, Renoir, Cézanne, Sisley, Mlle. Morisot, Gauguin, et moi – pas de Degas, il refusera – Mlle. Cassatt si elle veut, mais elle refusera. Rouart est toujours pour la conciliation, je pense, moi, que la conciliation ne consiste pas à jouer un rôle de jobard." Undated letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, as published in Berhaut 1994, letter no. 26, 276.

of Degas, Rouart, or Cassatt. The composition of the group was not finalized until the last week of February, when Monet realized that Durand-Ruel's participation made his abstention impossible. Six days before the exhibition's opening, Renoir, who was in L'Estaque convalescing from a long illness, wrote to the dealer with his concerns that Pissarro and Gauguin's participation would compromise his position with the Salon and the wealthy patrons he had been courting since the late 1870s.[446] In the days ahead, Renoir must have realized, as did Monet, that Durand-Ruel would show the paintings he owned either way and the artist resigned himself to participation.[447]

The exhibition opened at 251 rue Saint-Honoré, in an exhibition hall built to show a panorama of the battle of Reichshoffen, one of the most devastating defeats of the Franco-Prussian War.[448] Pissarro wrote to Monet about the installation on February 24: "We hang the paintings Monday morning; Sunday night if possible [February 26 and 27]. You can count on us to try to give you complete satisfaction in

---

[446] He saw Pissarro and Gauguin as socialists, anarchists, and revolutionaries. See his February 26, 1882 letter to Durand-Ruel as published in Lionello Venturi, *Les archives de l'impressionnisme* (Paris: Durand-Ruel, 1939), I:121: "Je vous ai adressé ce matin un télégramme ainsi conçu: 'Les tableaux que vous avec de moi son votre propriété, je ne puis vous empêcher d'en disposer, mais ce ne sera pas moi qui exposera.' Ces quelques mots sont l'expression complète de ma pensée. Il est donc bien entendu que je n'adhère en aucune façon à la combinaison Pissarro-Gauguin et que je n'accepte pas d'être compris une seule minute dans le groupe dit des Indépendants. La première raison est que j'expose au Salon, ce qui ne s'accorde guère avec le reste. Donc je refuse et je refuse encore."

[447] For further discussion of Durand-Ruel's growing role in the organization of exhibitions of Impressionist painting in the early 1880s, see Chapter 4, 6 East 23rd Street, 1886: Caillebotte and Durand-Ruel.

[448] Isaacson in Moffett ed. 1986, 376.

the placement of your canvases; in any case, Caillebotte and I will be there."[449] The critic Vassy visited the exhibition space on February 28 and in his review for *Le Réveil*, he described the two men at work:

> Hat pushed back, hands in his pockets, M. Caillebote [sic] comes and goes, giving orders, surveying the hanging of the canvases, and working like a porter, as if he didn't have an income of a hundred and fifty thousand francs. Alongside him, M. Pissaro [sic], seated on a large trunk, watched him with interest […] and seemed tired from assisting with so much activity.[450]

The works were installed on a mezzanine level above the panorama, arranged in three registers. Despite the ample space and high ceilings, the two hundred works filled the walls and several large paintings had to be placed on easels.[451] "One by one," Vassy continued, "the paintings took their places, and astonishing landscapes, fantastic groupings, incredible combinations of colors caught the attention of the privileged

---

[449] "Nous accrochons lundi matin; dimanche soir si c'est possible. Vous pouvez compter que nous tâcherons de vous donner toute satisfaction pour le placement de vos toiles ; du reste, Caillebotte et moi, nous serons là." Letter from Pissarro to Monet, February 24, 1882, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, 154-156, letter 98.

[450] "Le chapeau en arrière, les mains dans les poches, M. Caillebote [sic] allait et venait, donnant des ordres, surveillant l'accrochage des toiles, et travaillant comme un commissionnaire, exactement comme s'il n'avait pas cent cinquante mille francs de rente. A côté de lui, M. Pissaro [sic], assis sur une grosse malle, le regardait avec intérêt, se démenait comme un diable dans un bénitier, et semblait fatiguée lui-même d'assister à tant de mouvement. Cependant, un à un, les tableaux prenaient place, et d'étonnant paysages, des groupements fantastiques, d'invraisemblables combinaisons de couleurs tiraient l'œil des spectateurs privilégiés de cette répétition générale." Fichtre [Gaston Vassy], "L'Actualité: L'Exposition des peintres indépendants," *Le Réveil* (March 2, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387-389.

[451] The installation would change somewhat over the course of the exhibition's run, as artists scrambled to frame pictures in time, adding works *hors catalogue*.

spectators of this dress rehearsal."[452] In 1882, for the first time, a critic responded to the installation of an Impressionist exhibition as though the work of hanging pictures was a form of artistic practice in its own right. For Vassy, the installation was a performance and Caillebotte was the maestro at its center.

Caillebotte's Strategy at his Final Impressionist Exhibition

In 1880, Durand-Ruel began to purchase paintings from Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, and Renoir regularly, giving those artists a degree of financial security that they had not had since the early 1870s. Those purchases were backed with a credit line extended by Jules Feder, director of the Union Générale bank, and when the bank collapsed on January 19, 1882, Durand-Ruel found himself in the position of having to repay those loans sooner than he had anticipated.[453] The corresponding crash of the bourse led to widely-felt financial repercussions, prompting Manet to write to Morisot: "Business is bad. Everyone is penniless as a result of the recent financial events, and painting is feeling the effect."[454] In early February, Durand-Ruel began to work with Pissarro and Caillebotte to convince the others to mount a profit-generating exhibition. When Monet and Renoir waivered, Durand-Ruel made it clear that he would be exhibiting their paintings from his collection, thereby guaranteeing their participation.

---

[452] Vassy 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387-389.

[453] Patry ed. 2015, 214-215.

[454] Letter from Édouard Manet to Berthe Morisot, as published in Adler and Garb eds. 1987, 118.

As Pissarro explained to Monet on February 24: "For Durand and for us, the exhibition is a necessity."[455]

In that same letter, Pissarro alluded to confusion about Caillebotte's participation in the seventh exhibition. He writes that for weeks, he had been working with Caillebotte to "regroup as homogeneously as possible." The letter continues: "An error has obviously slipped into the letter that M. Durand writes to you [...] Caillebotte has maintained for some time that he is with us; he has only one condition: it is to have you."[456] Despite the economic downturn of 1882, Caillebotte expanded his property in Petit Gennevilliers that year, building two new structures.[457] He had no debt to repay and no need to sell works from his studio or from his private collection to cover his expenses. Instead, his decision to participate in the seventh Impressionist exhibition was motivated by a desire to reconvene the core group of Impressionist artists and he considered Monet to be at the center of that group. He shared the older artist's view that the exhibition should be *entre nous* and he made it clear to Pissarro

---

455 "Pour Durand et même pour nous, l'exposition est une nécessité [...]" Letter from Pissarro to Monet, February 24, 1882, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, 154-156, letter 98

456 "Je vous avoue que je n'y comprends plus rien. Voilà deux ou trois semaines que je fais des grands efforts pour tâcher d'arriver, d'accord avec notre ami Caillebotte, à une entente pour reconstituer notre groupe aussi homogène que possible. Une erreur s'est évidement glissé dans la lettre que vous écrit M. Durand, car jamais, vous le pensez bien, nous n'avons séparé Caillebotte de notre groupe. J'attendais avec anxiété votre réponse depuis hier, pour courir chez lui et nous mettre en œuvre. C'est du reste convenu depuis longtemps avec Caillebotte qu'il est avec nous ; il n'y mettait qu'une condition : c'est de vous avoir." Letter from Pissarro to Monet, February 24, 1882, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, 154-156, letter 98

457 Distel ed. 1994, 315.

that Degas's participation would preclude his own. Caillebotte maintained his view that the Impressionist group was fixed around artists who had their affiliation in common above all else and, as he put it to Pissarro in 1881, Degas had brought disunity to the group.[458]

The organization of the 1882 exhibition happened over a period of several weeks, not months, and so there was no time for any of the participating artists to produce new work. Instead, the paintings, drawings, and sculptures exhibited at 251 rue Saint-Honoré were primarily works made in 1880 or 1881.[459] Caillebotte exhibited sixteen paintings in a range of subjects and sizes.[460] Ten have been identified and of those, four are inscribed with dates: *Man on a Balcony*, *Portrait of Richard Gallo*, *Portrait of Jules Froyez* (1881, fig. 137), and *Boulevard Seen from Above* (1880, fig. 138).[461] The other six works can be dated as follows on the basis of style, subject, and other documentation: *The Bezique Game*, *Fruit Displayed on a*

---

458 "Degas a apporté la désorganisation parmi nous." Letter from Caillebotte to Pissarro, January 24, 1880, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275-276, letter no. 23.

459 Of the 109 works listed in the catalogue that have since been identified, 73 can be dated to between 1880 and 1882 on the basis of inscriptions or other documentation. The remainder are undated. Only three identified paintings can be conclusively dated to before 1880, see Berson 1996. nos. VII-124, VII-145, and VII-151.

460 He also exhibited a pastel, *Marine*, that has not been identified.

461 In her 1996 volume, Berson identifies *Pêcheur* (VII-17) as *Pêcheurs au bord de l'Yerres* on the basis of Berhaut's identification in the 1978 catalogue raisonné. Berhaut abandons that identification in the 1994 revised catalogue, see no. 117. The singular title, *Pêcheur*, seems to discount the two-figure painting identified by Berson. No surviving painting by Caillebotte feature a single fisherman and the absence of critical discussion of the picture in 1882 makes future identification of the painting listed under VII-17 unlikely.

Stand (ca. 1881-82, fig. 139), *Régates à Villers* (1880, fig. 140), *Route d'Honfleur à Trouville* (1880, fig. 141), *A Balcony, Boulevard Haussmann*, and *La Vallée de la Tocques, Trouville* (1880, fig. 142). Caillebotte's paintings were not on view between the close of the fifth Impressionist exhibition on April 30, 1880, and the opening of the seventh on March 1, 1882, and so the 1882 exhibition presented an opportunity for the artist to show works he had undertaken in the meantime.

The group of works that Caillebotte exhibited in 1882 was the most diverse of any at his five lifetime exhibitions with the Impressionist group. The range of subjects – nine landscapes, three city paintings, two interiors, two portraits, and one still life – and the range of sizes from pastels and modestly scaled landscapes to larger pictures such as *The Bezique Game* (121 x 161 cm) indicate that Caillebotte saw the exhibition as an opportunity to highlight the variety and range of his studio practice. His submissions to previous exhibitions were often painted to respond to criticism in previous years or to maximize favorable comparisons between his work and that of his fellow Impressionists, but the rapid organization of the seventh exhibition left Caillebotte with no time to undertake a new painting campaign. His strategy was less responsive to the criticism than it had been in previous years and he instead selected works with an eye to exhibiting a range of works aligned with those by his co-exhibitors, particularly those by Monet and Renoir. As had become Caillebotte's practice, his largest and most accomplished pictures are listed first in the exhibition catalogue and the remainder are grouped roughly by subject. Pissarro's letter to Monet on February 24th and Vassy's description of the evening before the opening place Caillebotte at the center of the installation of works in the final week of February 1882. He would have had the opportunity to evaluate his own selected works in

relation to those by other participating artists and the consequences of that reflection are evident in the final group of works.

After the disastrous reception of his large group of outdoor scenes in 1879, Caillebotte exhibited only one pastel landscape in 1880, *Paysage, Environs d'Yerres* (ca. 1878, fig. 143). Described by Huysmans as "very accurate in tone," the small landscape was otherwise ignored by critics at the 1880 exhibition.[462] The return of Monet, Sisley, and Renoir to the 1882 exhibition meant that roughly three-quarters of the two hundred and ten exhibited pictures were landscapes. These paintings created a context for Caillebotte to show nine of the landscapes he had produced in the years since the 1880 exhibition. His views of the coastline in Trouville and Villers-sur-Mer share compositional and geographic resonances with Monet's group of paintings from Fécamp. Renoir and Sisley exhibited recent paintings from Venice and By, as well as suburban views of the Seine made in Chatou, Saint-Mammès, and Veneux. Each of the nine participating artists exhibited at least one landscape picture, prompting Bigot to write in his review for *La Revue politique et littéraire* that the seventh Impressionist exhibition was "truly one of a school."[463]

At the 1880 exhibition, Caillebotte's most critically successful pictures had been *At a Café*. Although the principal figure stands alone in the painting, the setting

---

462 "[…] un paysage très juste de ton […]" Huysmans 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I:285-292. The only other critic to mention the pastel is Trianon, who simply noted that Caillebotte exhibited "un paysage." Trianon 1880, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 312-314.

463 "Voici du moins une exposition qui est vraiment celle d'une école." Charles Bigot, "Beaux-Arts: Les Petits Salons: L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *La Revue politique et littéraire* (March 4, 1882), 281-282, as cited in Berson 1996, I:381.

is one of all-male sociability. The two patrons reflected in the mirror do not appear to be engaged in conversation but in quiet companionship, with one leaning his head on his hand and looking down, perhaps into a drink that is out of view. Caillebotte reprised this theme of camaraderie among men with *The Bezique Game*. Gathered in the apartment Caillebotte shared with his brother Martial, a group plays a game of cards. They represent a diverse set of professional interests – a money-broker, an architect, and a newspaper editor counted among them – brought together by their shared position as members of the Parisian social elite.[464] They are absorbed in their leisure without the need for external distractions; theirs is a gathering devoid of food and drink, of music and small talk, and of women. On the sofa, Paul Hugot, familiar from the 1878 portrait, is detached from the group, lost in thought as his heavy-lidded eyes look out over their heads towards the viewer. The directness of his look, coupled with the intense concentration of the other figures, underscores the intimacy of the picture.

Another complex scene of confident male sociability, *The Bezique Game* was compared by critics to Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party* (1880-81, fig. 144). An outdoor scene of men and women gathered on the upstairs terrace of the Restaurant

---

[464] The men, from left to right, as identified in Berhaut 1994, no. 185: Dessommes, Paul Hugot sitting, Brault, Richard Gallo standing, Cassabois, and Martial Caillebotte. Édouard Dessommes was a fellow-artist who had a studio in Paris on the rue de Clichy, where Caillebotte painted *Vue de Toits, Paris* (fig. 99). See Berhaut 1994, nos. 106 and 184. Maurice Brault was a money-broker and yachting friend of the artist's, whose family property was adjacent to that of the Caillebottes in Yerres. See Daniel Charles, *Le mystère Caillebotte: l'œuvre architecturale de Gustave Caillebotte, peintre impressionniste, jardinier, philatéliste et régatier* (Grenoble: Glénat, 1994), 19. Cassabois was a friend of the artist about whom little is known. He sat for a named portrait by Caillebotte (fig. 80).

Fournaise to indulge in food, drink, and conversation stands apart from Caillebotte's painting in its bright palette and lively tone. Despite the differences between the two pictures, they were painted concurrently, and Caillebotte was aware of Renoir's project; in fact, he appears in the picture, seated backwards in a chair at the bottom right. The two paintings are nearly identical in size and feature similar compositions, with a figural group gathered around a table, balanced slightly towards the right of the canvas.[465] They feature similar figural types: the standing figure who leans back against the railing in Renoir's picture and Gallo, who leans forward with his hands in his pockets in Caillebotte's. The compositional framing by figures seen in profile – Aline Charigot and Caillebotte in *Luncheon of the Boating Party*, and in *The Bezique Game*, Maurice Brault and Martial Caillebotte – is repeated in both paintings. The direct gaze of Hugot out at the viewer is not matched in Renoir's picture, but in the middle ground, a woman in a decorated straw hat looks out above her tipped glass.[466]

As Caillebotte worked with Pissarro to secure Renoir's participation in the 1882 exhibition, he must have been keenly aware of the resonances between *Luncheon*

---

[465] *Luncheon of the Boating Party* measures 129.5 x 172.7 cm, while *The Bezique Game* measures 121 x 161 cm. Gauguin was the only other artist to exhibit at that scale in 1882 – his *Intérieur du peintre à Paris, rue Carcel* measures 130.5 x 162.5 cm. As Caroline Shields notes in her dissertation, Gauguin listed the work under the title *Fleurs, nature morte* as a way of calling attention to his ambition in the genre of still life painting. See Caroline Shields, "Gauguin's Early Still Lifes at the Impressionist Exhibitions," in "Introduction," *Objects of Memory: Paul Gauguin and Still Life Painting, 1880-1901*. (University of Maryland: PhD dissertation, 2017).

[466] The latest scholarship on *Luncheon of the Boating Party* can be found in Eliza Rathbone's essay, "Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party: 'Le dernier grand tableau,*'" in Eliza Rathbone ed., *Renoir and Friends: Luncheon of the Boating Party* (Washington, DC: The Philips Collection, 2017, 12-49.

of the Boating Party and his *The Bezique Game*, the largest painting he would exhibit that year.[467] The two artists had been friends since Caillebotte's first exhibition with the Impressionist group and when he drafted his will in 1878, he named Renoir executor of his estate, a designation he extended in the revised wills of 1883 and 1889. They had worked together to oversee the installation of the 1877 exhibition, one that featured Caillebotte's city paintings alongside Renoir's multi-figure, large-scale *Bal at the Moulin de la Galette* and *The Swing*, pictures that pushed the two artists to the forefront of the Impressionist group.[468] In 1882, Caillebotte chose other paintings that shared compositional details with Renoir's canvas, like *Man on a Balcony*, which repeats the red-striped awning at the Restaurant Fournaise, and the two marine paintings, which recall the view of sailboats on the Seine beyond the terrace.[469] By exhibiting pictures that shared these subtle details with Renoir's large painting, Caillebotte sought to revive the positive association of his work with Renoir's and to create broader cohesion among the works on view at 251 rue Saint-Honoré. This strategy complemented his decision to exhibit nine landscape paintings alongside similar works by Monet and Sisley. His efforts to promote a group identity that was unified and cohesive were particularly important after the uneven participation of artists at the 1880 and 1881 exhibitions.

---

[467] Mary Morton discusses the relationship between the two paintings in her essay, "Renoir/Caillebotte: Realist Relations," in Rathbone ed. 2017, 66-85.

[468] Caillebotte owned those works by Renoir and lent them to the 1877 exhibition.

[469] A red-striped awning also appears in *At a Café*.

In addition to selecting pictures that complemented those on view by Renoir, Monet, and Sisley, Caillebotte took some risks with his selections for the 1882 exhibition. His *Fruit Displayed on a Stand* stands apart from the smaller, conventional still lifes favored by his Impressionist colleagues in its scale. The bright colors of the eleven varieties of fruits are set in contrast to the crisp white paper and the tight focus of the composition is unusual, with just the edge of zinc storage containers and a few background ferns giving a sense of space and setting to the picture. In his analysis of the painting, Pierre Wittmer posits that it represents the emptying of a storage larder at Yerres when the property was sold.[470] While the quantity and sheer variety of fruits support Wittmer's suggestion, the pears and Reine-Claudes plums pictured were in season in the late summer, while the oranges would have been available in the winter.[471] Instead, it seems that Caillebotte produced this composition from memory, bringing together these fruits in an imagined *fruitier*'s display like those found in Caillebotte's ninth arrondissement neighborhood.[472] *Fruits Displayed on a Stand*, or simply *Fruits*, as it was listed in the 1882 catalogue, was one of the largest still lifes exhibited at any of the eight Impressionist exhibitions and Caillebotte's handling of each piece of fruit as an individual object speaks to his care in producing this unconventional painting.[473]

---

[470] Pierre Wittmer, *Caillebotte and his Garden at Yerres* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1991), 98-99.

[471] Wittmer 1991, 99.

[472] A commercial context for this painting is suggested in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 186.

[473] The larger still lifes were Monet's *Still Life with Flowers and Fruit* (100 x 80.7 cm), exhibited in 1879, and his *Bouquet of Sunflowers* (101 x 81.5 cm), exhibited in

While Caillebotte selected *The Bezique Game* and several landscape paintings to align his work with that of Renoir, Monet, and Sisley, his decision to exhibit *Fruits Displayed on a Stand* set his work apart from the other still life paintings on view in 1882. That year, Monet chose to exhibit a painting he titled "Gibiers, nature morte," which has since been identified as either *Still-Life with Pheasants and Plovers* (1879, fig. 145), now in the collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Art, or *Les Faisans* (1879, fig. 146), now in a private collection. The two works show dead game birds presented on a crisp white sheet draped over a table. By the spring of 1882, Caillebotte had painted similarly formatted and scaled still lifes, such as *Plate of Peaches* (ca. 1882, fig. 147). He had also painted game birds, in *Chicken, Game Birds, and Hares* (ca. 1882, fig. 148), for example. Perhaps neither picture was completed in time for the 1882 exhibition, but Caillebotte instead chose to exhibit a larger (75 x 100 cm) still life devoid of the context that grounds the Monet painting in a concrete, albeit ambiguous, setting. Rather than aligning the subject of his chosen still life with that by Monet, Caillebotte seized an opportunity to set his work apart from that by his co-exhibitors. His strategy at the 1882 exhibition hinged on this balance between distinguishing himself by presenting a range of works and promoting a cohesive group identity despite the fracture of the Impressionist group by the early 1880s.[474]

1882. As discussed in fn. 460, Gauguin's *Fleurs, nature mort*, exhibited in 1882, is a still life in name only.

[474] Caillebotte was nonetheless influenced by Monet's still lifes and in 1883, he would paint his own views of game birds presented on a marble table, such as *Game Birds and Lemons* (1883, fig. 149), which was the first Caillebotte painting to be acquired by an American public collection when the Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield (now the Michele and Donald D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts) purchased it in 1952.

In an undated letter to Pissarro, probably written in 1880, Degas wrote that Caillebotte was painting the traffic islands on the Boulevard Haussmann as seen from above.[475] That picture (1880, fig. 150) would not be exhibited in Caillebotte's lifetime, but at the 1882 exhibition, Caillebotte included *Boulevard Seen from Above*, one of the most striking views of Paris by any member of the Impressionist group.[476] Caillebotte had painted city views from his apartment windows before, exhibiting *The Rue Halévy, Seen from the Sixth Floor* in 1879. His view of the rue Halévy leading toward the Opèra has a precedent in Monet's *Boulevard des Capucines* (1873, fig. 151) and anticipates Pissarro's views of the city from above in the late 1890s.[477] Caillebotte produced three views of the rue Halévy in 1878 and chose to exhibit the most provocative of them at the 1879 exhibition, a plunging, all-encompassing view that is painted so close to the edge as to obscure the railing and the balcony plants visible in the other two pictures.[478]

Caillebotte's *Boulevard Seen from Above* goes further still. Our view is one that looks almost straight down below the painter's window, dramatically foreshortening the passersby on the sidewalk and the cab on the street. The painting is often linked to Japanese prints for its cropping and attention to surface details, but its

---

[475] "Caillebotte fait des fenêtres des refuges du Boulevard Haussmann m'a-t-on dit." Letter from Degas to Pissarro, undated [1880], as published in Guérin ed. 1945, 54, letter XXV.

[476] *A Traffic Island, Boulevard Haussmann* did not go on public view until the retrospective organized at Caillebotte's death in 1894.

[477] See Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 140.

[478] The other two paintings share a title, *The Rue Halévy, Seen from a Balcony* (1877, fig. 152) and (1878, fig. 153).

peculiar vantage point and collapsed perspective create a more obvious narrative link to another painting at the 1882 exhibition, *A Balcony, Boulevard Haussmann*, in which a top-hatted figure leans out over the balcony railing and looks down through the trees below. As Marrinan notes in his analysis of the *Boulevard Seen from Above*, this repeats a narrative link between *Portrait of a Man*, a painting of a seated figure looking out a window, and *View Through a Balcony* (1880, fig. 154), a companion painting that represents what he sees.[479] The pairing of *A Balcony* with *Boulevard* seems more significant, however, both because it was exhibited during the artist's lifetime and because both feature a model who appears in other paintings by Caillebotte exhibited at the 1880 exhibition.

As I argue in a previous section of this chapter, Albert Courtier was the likely model for *A Balcony, Boulevard Haussmann* and *At a Café*, two paintings included by the artist in the fifth Impressionist exhibition organized in 1880. Courtier reappears as the model for *A Man on a Balcony*, exhibited at the 1882 exhibition alongside *Boulevard Seen from Above*, a painting that conveys the view of his top-hatted companion from *A Balcony*. This is not to say that Caillebotte deliberately selected *Boulevard Seen from Above* to evoke the critical success of the two Courtier paintings he had exhibited in 1880. Instead, he seems to have chosen to exhibit *Boulevard* as a natural progression from the distinctive views of the city he had exhibited at prior exhibitions. It is an ambitious, accomplished painting, and, with Degas on the sidelines for the first time, Caillebotte no doubt recognized an opportunity to present himself as a highly original, forward-looking painter of the modern city. His reuse of

---

[479] To Marrinan's argument, I would add that these paintings are scaled as a pair.

Courtier as a model in paintings that he exhibited in the 1880 and 1882 exhibitions links the two, despite the intervening exhibition that Caillebotte missed in 1881. The repeated figure of Courtier operated as a surrogate for the artist himself, an individual from his own social class and neighborhood who moved with ease through the bourgeois, urban spaces pictured in Caillebotte's paintings from the 1882 exhibition.

Caillebotte's exhibition strategy in 1880 was shaped by his critical failure in 1879. He turned away from *plein air* painting, returning to the ambitious, personal, and often-peculiar mode of painting that had been a critical success in 1876 and 1877. This short-lived abandonment of the Impressionist landscape tradition coincides with the loss of Monet, Renoir, and Sisley as co-exhibitors. Their return to the Impressionist exhibition in 1882 created a context wherein Caillebotte could exhibit a greater range of pictures than he had in past years. The group of paintings that he chose for the 1882 exhibition included examples of all of his types of modern picture-making: strange and often haunting portraits, ambiguous interior scenes, still lifes rendered in unusual formats, striking views of the city, and richly painted landscapes. At the 1882 exhibition, the first where his active, hands-on mode of exhibition-making was recognized by critics, Caillebotte found a balance that, while composed of recent works, seemed to represent the sum of his career to date. It was, chronologically speaking, a true mid-career exhibition – he had made his debut with the Impressionist group six years prior and it would be six years until his final lifetime exhibition with Les XX in Brussels.

Chapter 4

CAILLEBOTTE ABROAD AND ON THE MARKET, 1886 AND 1888

The close of the 1882 exhibition marked the beginning of a four-year hiatus for Caillebotte, whose work would not go on view again until 1886. The first section of this chapter begins with an analysis of the critical reception of the 1882 exhibition. Overall, the works on view were disparaged for their quantity and uniformity, but Caillebotte's *The Bezique Game* and Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party* stood apart in their positive reception by critics and the exhibition solidified Caillebotte's position as *de facto* leader of the Impressionist group. The section then turns toward the exhibition organized by Durand-Ruel in New York in the spring of 1886. I consider how Caillebotte's disengagement from the Parisian art scene after 1882 coincides with Durand-Ruel's return to the center of the Impressionist circle and I evaluate their existing relationship to establish a context for Caillebotte's participation in the 1886 exhibition. I argue that Caillebotte's exclusion from the Impressionist canon prior to the mid-1880s was due both to the perceived radicalism of his work and to Durand-Ruel's desire to control and manipulate the market for Impressionist paintings. While Durand-Ruel organized single-artist exhibitions for Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, and Renoir as a way to leverage his monopolistic control over the painters, Caillebotte remained on the outside, choosing not to sell to or purchase from the dealer.

Caillebotte was not included in any of Durand-Ruel's group exhibitions until the spring of 1886 and I argue that his decision to participate in the New York venture

was motivated by nostalgia for the independent exhibitions and by his desire to side with Monet, Renoir, and Sisley rather than to take part in the concurrent exhibition being organized by Degas in Paris. In my analysis of Caillebotte's strategy, I argue that he chose paintings that best represented his exhibition practice at the previous group exhibitions, as well as newer landscapes that resonated with similar works by Monet, Renoir, and Sisley. In the critical response to the exhibition, I identify a tendency for American and British writers to use the term "Impressionist" to describe all contemporary French art exhibited abroad, a trend that proved Durand-Ruel's success in capturing a market for the Impressionist painters.

In the second section of this chapter, I contextualize Octave Maus's invitation to send works to the annual exhibition of Les XX in 1888. I evaluate the correspondence between Maus and the French painter – correspondence that has yet to be published as part of the Caillebotte scholarship – to determine Caillebotte's strategy for selecting works to send to Brussels. I argue that by choosing paintings that had never been on view in Paris or New York, Caillebotte sought to distinguish himself and his art at this exhibition of Europe's leading avant-garde. He listed *Man at his Bath* first among his proposed works, although the painting would be pulled from the main gallery space before the exhibition's opening. Two pieces of criticism written in response to the large-scale male nude reveal that the painting was perceived as an image of a sexualized male body and in one instance, the critic suggested that Caillebotte himself was engaged in sexual activity with his sitter. I argue that this interpretation of the painting as a subversion of heteronormative expectations led to its removal from the main exhibition space.

The final section of this chapter considers Caillebotte's second exhibition with Durand-Ruel, which would be his eighth and last lifetime exhibition. Organized in Paris in the spring of 1888, the exhibition opened in spite of protests by Monet, who tried, unsuccessfully, to discourage his fellow Impressionist painters from participating. Caillebotte himself expressed reservations about the exhibition and voiced his nostalgia for the artist-organized group exhibitions of the late 1870s and early 1880s, but he nonetheless exhibited six works with Durand-Ruel that spring. I present evidence that Caillebotte chose to participate because he thought the exhibition would provide a venue for *Man at his Bath*. Just as his first exhibition in the spring of 1876 had served as a venue for the debut of *The Floor Scrapers* after its rejection by the Salon jury in 1875, the exhibition of *Man at his Bath* in Paris in 1888 presented an opportunity for vindication after the removal of the picture from the main gallery space at the exhibition of Les XX earlier that spring. However, when the exhibition opened on May 25, the large-scale male nude had been excluded. Instead, Durand-Ruel had limited the exhibited works to mostly landscapes and Caillebotte's work was received by critics as that of a *retardataire* Impressionist whose paintings were derivative of superior examples by Sisley and Pissarro. Caillebotte's reputation was irrevocably damaged when he surrendered control of the exhibition of his paintings to the commercially-driven dealer, and his work would not go on public view again until the retrospective organized after his death in 1894.

6 East 23rd Street, 1886

'M. Caillebotte et son école': The Critics in 1882

The organization of the 1882 exhibition hinged on the extrication of Degas and of his influence and so it is unsurprising that so much of its critical reception was centered on his absence. Of the sixty-six editorial reviews written in response to the exhibition, exactly half mention Degas by name.[480] In his review for *Le Temps*,

---

[480] The term "editorial reviews" is used here to refer to reviews that offer analysis or commentary beyond a simple announcement of the exhibition. The reviews that mention Degas are: Jacques de Biez, "Les Petits Salons: Les 'Indépendants'" *Paris* (March 8, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:380-381; Charles Bigot, "Beaux-Arts: Les Petits Salons: L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *La Revue politique et littéraire* (March 4, 1882), 281-282, as cited in Berson 1996, I:381; André C., "Les Petits Sands: L'Exposition des artistes indépendants au Panorama de Reichshoffen," *Le Français* (March 7, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:383; Paul de Charry, "Beaux-Arts," *Le Pays* (March 14, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:383-384; Jules Claretie, "La Vie à Paris: Les *Indépendants*," *Le Temps* (March 3, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 386; Durand, "Echos du jour: Paris," *La Presse* (March 3, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:386; Charles Flor, "Deux Expositions," *Le National* (March 3, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387-389; Gérôme, "Courrier de Paris: L'Exposition des peintres indépendants," *L'Univers illustré* (March 18, 1882), 163, as cited in Berson 1996, I:389-390; Gonzague-Privat, "Les Artistes indépendants," *L'Evénement* (March 4, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:390-391; Henry Havard, "Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Siècle* (March 2, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:391; Alexandre Hepp, "Impressionnisme," *Le Voltaire* (March 3, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson, 1996, I:393-394; A. Hustin, "L'Exposition des peintres indépendants," *L'Estafette* (March 3, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:394-395; A. Hustin, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Moniteur des arts* (March 10, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 395-396; J.-K. Huysmans, "Appendice," *L'Art moderne* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1883), 261-277, as cited in Berson 1996, I:396-398; Paul de Katow, "L'Exposition des peintres indépendants," *Gil Blas* (March 1, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:398-399; La Fare, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Gaulois* (March 2, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:400-401; Meurville, "Exposition des indépendants," *Gazette de France* (March 21, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:403-404; J.P., "Beaux-Arts: L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Petit Parisien* (March 4, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:407-408; Henri Rivière, "Aux indépendants," *Le Chat noir* (April 8, 1882), 4, as cited in Berson 1996,

Claretie enumerated a chain reaction of departures from the Impressionist group: "M. Degas, the painter of dancers, retired, Miss Cassatt followed M. Degas, M. Raffaelli followed Miss Cassatt."[481] Paul de Charry was more direct in his review, "[…] Vidal, Forain, Raffaëlli, Degas and a few others have shamelessly abandoned M. Caillebotte and his school."[482] In addition to their observations about the change in the group's composition, critics were preoccupied with the small number of participating artists – just nine, whereas the previous exhibitions had had as many as sixteen – and by the extraordinary number of canvases on view. "Just these nine [artists], they're exhibiting two hundred and three canvases. Incredible fecundity!" remarked the reviewer from *La Petite République française*. In his review, Burty put it simply: "It is too many, too much."[483]

I:409; Armand Sallanches, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants," *Le Journal des arts* (March 3, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:412; Armand Silvestre, "Le Monde des arts: Expositions particulières: Septième Exposition des artistes indépendants," *La Vie moderne* (March 11, 1882), 150-151, as cited in Berson 1996, I:413-414; M.V., "Beaux-Arts, lettres et sciences," *La France* (March 3, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:415; and Albert Wolff, "Quelques Expositions," *Le Figaro* (March 2, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:416.

[481] "M. Degas, le peintre des danseuses, s'est retiré, Miss Cassatt a suivi M. Degas, M. Raffaëlli a suivi miss Cassatt." Claretie 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 386.

[482] "Vidal, Forain, Rafaëlli, Degas et quelques autres ont-ils abandonné sans vergogne M. Caillebotte et son école." de Charry 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:383-384.

[483] "À eux neuf, ils exposent deux cent trois toiles. Fécondité grande!" "Petite Chronique," *La Petite République française* (March 3, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:408; and "Elle est trop nombreuse, beaucoup trop." Ph. Burty, "Les Aquarelles, les indépendants et le cercle des arts libéraux," *La République française* (March 8, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:381-383.

Despite their criticism of the scale of the 1882 exhibition, reviewers identified a homogeneity among the works on view that had been absent from previous exhibitions, particularly from those held in 1880 and 1881. For some critics, like the one writing for *Le Français*, this homogeneity collapsed all of the works into a single, flat aesthetic style. He wrote: "It is a remarkable thing among these painters; their process is always the same: a bias for exaggerated impasto, stains of discordant colors, blue or violet shadows, trees of a garish green, etc. If you've seen one canvas, you've seen fifty."[484] In his review, Nélesque disparaged both the quantity and the uniformity of the works on view: "there are 500 canvases that are so similar to each other that any one artist could have painted them all..."[485] Havard observed the same cohesion among the landscapes on view at the 1882 exhibition and wrote about Monet's work as the epitome of this kind of painting: "When M. C. Monet forces us back ten steps to see that his landscapes, at a distance, can give a fairly accurate impression of nature, he did not, as far as I know, solve a problem, demonstrate a truth, or make any progress in the art. Nature does not ask us to retreat ten steps to appreciate its effects […]"[486]

---

[484] "Il est une chose remarquable chez ces peintres; leur procédé est toujours le même: un parti pris d'empâtements exagérés, des taches de couleurs discordants, d'ombres bleues ou violettes, d'arbres d'un vert criard, etc… Qui a vu une toile en a vu cinquante." André C., "Les Petits Salons: L'Exposition des artistes indépendants au Panorama de Reichshoffen," *Le Français* (March 7, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:383.

[485] "…il y a là 500 toiles qui se ressemblent tellement; que n'importe lequel d'entre eux aurait pu les exécuter toutes…" F. Nélesque, "Chronique: Les Expositions artistiques," *L'Europe artiste* (March 19, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:405.

[486] "Quand M. C. Monet nous force à nous reculer de dix pas pour découvrir que ses paysages, à cette distance, peuvent donner une impression assez exacte de la nature, il

Despite the large number of landscapes exhibited in 1882, the two works that received the most critical attention were Caillebotte's *The Bezique Game* and Renoir's *The Luncheon of the Boating Party*. As I argue in the previous chapter, Caillebotte must have been keenly aware of the resonances between the two pictures and his decision to exhibit his painting was part of an effort to promote a group identity that was unified and cohesive.[487] The critics characterized the group of landscape paintings as inherently congruous, but Caillebotte's decision to exhibit his *Bezique Game* alongside Renoir's *Luncheon* created a parallel group identity that was not wholly dependent on landscape painting. Critics highlighted the inherent differences between these two depictions of group sociability, but nonetheless grouped them as works that, as de Charry wrote, shared "the honors of the exhibition."[488] De Charry singled out Caillebotte's attention to the somber individuality of each figure – "the attitudes are well-understood, one reads the thought on the faces of the players, and

---

n'a pas, que je sache, résolu un problème, démontré une vérité, ni fait faire à l'art le plus mince progrès. La nature n'a pas besoin qu'on se recule de dix pas pour apprécier ses accents, et si un long corridor est désormais indispensable pour contempler les tableaux, ce devient un mince agrément d'avoir chez soi de la peinture." Havard 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:391-392.

[487] See the discussion of these paintings in Chapter 3, 251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882: Caillebotte's Strategy at his Final Lifetime Exhibition.

[488] "Cette œuvre [*Un déjeuner à Bougival*] et *la Partie de Bézigue* [sic] de M. Caillebotte, set partagent les honneurs de l'exposition." Paul de Charry, " Beaux-Arts," *Le Pays* (March 14, 1882), 3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:383-384. Havard also paired the two in his review, writing: "J'ai gardé pour la fin M. Caillebotte et M. Renoir, parce que l'un et l'autre représentent le gros effort de armée." Havard 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:391-392.

the absorption is complete" – while noting that *The Luncheon* was, by comparison, "fresh, free without being too bawdy."[489]

In his review for *La Petite Presse*, Henry Robert wrote that the "somber tone" of Caillebotte's interior was "quite appropriate for the subject," while Renoir's livelier figures represented a variety of moods, "each one expressing a thought, or weariness, or boredom, or pleasure."[490] For several critics, Renoir's painting, its setting, and its figures were quintessentially Parisian, while *The Bezique Game* lacked specificity; it was, for Charles Flor, simply "an interesting interior scene."[491] Huysmans was more generous with his praise for Caillebotte's canvas, writing that it was as if "a window has opened in the wall of the room and in front of us, cut by the frame of the window,

---

[489] "La *Partie de Bézigue* [sic] est très remarquable, les attitudes sont bien comprises, on lit la pensée sur le front des joueurs, et l'absorption est complète […] *Un déjeuner à Bougival* […] C'est frais, libre sans être trop égrillard." De Charry 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:383-384.

[490] "*Un déjeuner à Bougival*… les convives – canotiers et canotières, - sont là dans des attitudes diverses… chacun exprimant une pensée, ou de lassitude, ou d'ennui, ou de plaisir… Cela s'appelle la *Partie de piquet* et cela est traité dans une tonalité sombre d'intérieur très propre au sujet." Henry Robert, "Chronique Parisienne: Le Salon des impressionnistes," *La Petite Presse* (March 5, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:409-410.

[491] "Il y a là deux charmantes petites femmes, dont l'une qui fait faire le beau à un griffon, est le plus amusant type de Parisienne qu'on puisse imaginer." Fichtre [Gaston Vassy], "L'Actualité: L'Exposition des peintre indépendants," *Le Réveil* (March 2, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387; "M. Renoir – *Le Dîner à Bougival*, grande toile très lumineuse et d'un cachet très parisien." Gaston d'Alq., "Art et bibelots: L'Exposition des peintres indépendants," *La Liberté* (March 2, 1882), as cited in Berson 1996, I:379; "…l'œil du peintre a trouvé des couleurs nouvelles, pour la flore des environs de Paris, dans les fumées du vin." Jean de Nivelle, "Les Peintres indépendants," *Le Soleil* (March 4, 1882), as cited in Berson 1996, I:406-407; and "Sa *Partie de bézigue* [sic] est une intéressante scène d'intérieur." Flor 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387-389.

we see, without being seen, people smoking, absorbed [in their game], frowning, hands hesitant on the cards […]".[492] He goes on to describe Caillebotte's "supple and varied talents" before chastising the press for not fully recognizing his accomplishments.[493]

Other writers were more critical of Caillebotte's picture, describing its "complete lack of sharpness" and its "ugly and bored" figures.[494] Still others were baffled by the variety of works exhibited by Caillebotte, describing *The Bezique Game* alongside *Boulevard Seen from Above*, one of the most radical paintings Caillebotte would exhibit in his lifetime. "What a strange idea to paint the sidewalk seen from

---

[492] "Imagine qu'une fenêtre s'est ouverte dans le mur de la salle et qu'en face de nous, coupés par le cadre de la croisée, vous apercevez, sans être vus pas eux, des gens qui fument, absorbés, les sourcils froncés, les mains hésitantes sur les cartes, en méditant le coup triomphant du 250 !" Huysmans 1882, ..

[493] "Ces deux tableaux rentrant dans l'ordre de ceux dont j'ai déjà parlé, je n'insisterai pas sur l'originalité qu'ils décèlent, car je veux me borner simplement, dans cet appendice à mes précédents Salons, à montrer la souplesse et la variété de talent de ce peintre. Il exhibe, au Panorama, des échantillons de tous les genres : des intérieurs, des paysages de terre et de mer, des natures morts […] Encore que les injustices littéraires et artistiques n'aient plus le don de m'émouvoir, je reste, malgré moi, surpris du persistant silence que garde la presse envers un tel peintre." Huysmans 1885, as cited in Berson 1996, I:396-398.

[494] "Sa *Partie de bézigue* [sic] présente, à côté d'une excellent étude d'expression dans le joueur tenant une pipe entre ses dents, une absence entière de netteté." Emile Hennequin, "Beaux-Arts: Les Expositions des arts libéraux et des artistes indépendants," *La Revue littéraire et artistique* (March 11, 1882), 155, as cited in Berson 1996, I:392-393; and "Qu'y a-t-il de commun entre cette œuvre et ces *Joueurs de bezigue* [sic] dont pas un n'exprime la passion, intérêt, ou seulement d'intelligence ? *Aussi laids qu'ennuyés*, tel pourrait être le titre de ce tableau." Meurville 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:403-404.

above!" remarked Flor in his review for *La National*.[495] The critic from *Le Gaulois* noted the unusual composition and perspective of the painting:

> M. Caillebotte must have seen double that day! All the characters are in shorthand: on a sloping green bench, a poor man […] contorts himself to stand at an angle; if he does not hurry away, a tree, placed just beside him, will fall on his head.[496]

This snide concern for a figure placed in what seemed to critics a perspectivally-distorted composition is familiar from the responses to *Young Man Playing the Piano* in 1876 and *Interior, Woman Reading* in 1880. The visually disorienting *Boulevard Seen From Above* did receive a positive response from some critics, including Armand Sallanches, who praised the painting as "very curious and well-studied" and counted it as one of the works by Caillebotte that "strikes us with its originality."[497]

In addition to these critiques of Caillebotte's treatment of perspective, a number of writers echoed the same complaints about his use of color that had plagued the artist at the 1879 and 1880 exhibitions. "The exhibitors of the Rue Saint-Honoré have divvied up the rainbow," wrote de Thémines in his review for *La Patrie*, "M. Guillaumin took the red, M. Monet the orange, M. Caillebotte the blue, M. Renoir the

---

[495] "Quelle singulière idée de peindre le trottoir vu d'en haut !" Flor 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387-389.

[496] "Tous les personnages sont en raccourci: sur un banc vert en pente, un pauvre homme, - noir, naturellement, - fait des contorsions pour se tenir en biais ; s'il ne se dépêche de se retirer, un arbre, placé à côté, va lui tomber sur la tête." La Fare 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:400-401.

[497] "En dehors de ces quatre artistes d'un réel talent [Renoir, Monet, Morisot, Sisley], nous avons encore à citer : M. Caillebotte dont les tableaux frappent surtout par leur originalité : tels sont 'Boulevard vu d'en haut'; 'Homme au balcon' ; 'La partie de Bezigue', morceau très curieux et bien étudié." Sallanches 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:412.

violet, etc."[498] While Caillebotte's *Marine* pastel (unidentified) was admired by a number of critics – Paul de Charry called it "charming" and Flor remarked on its loveliness – still others derided the painter's "singular mania of seeing everything in the color of ink."[499] Even those who otherwise admired Caillebotte's work commented on the peculiarity of his reliance on blues, violets, and black. Only one critic, Jacques de Biez, wrote in defense of Caillebotte's palette, reminding his readers: "[…] black is never found in the open air, and when a frock coat as dark as this one is hit by sunlight, it ceases to be black, and that is a fact that must be recorded. That's why Mr. Caillebotte's *Homme au balcon*, with its slate coat, is not as ridiculous as so many people say."[500]

Caillebotte was unable to recreate the near-universal acclaim he had achieved in 1876 and 1877, although several critics did note his progress.[501] His pastels and his

---

[498] "Les exposants de la rue Saint-Honoré se sont partagé l'arc-en-ciel: M. Guillaumin a pris le rouge, M. Monet l'orange, M. Caillebotte le bleu, M. Renoir le violet, etc." M. de Thémines, "Beaux-Arts: L'Expositions des indépendants," *La Patrie* (March 7, 1882), 2-3, as cited in Berson 1996, I:414-415.

[499] "Si M. Caillebotte, n'était pas affligé de la singulière manie de tout voir couleur d'encre, dans la nature, il n'aurait rien qui le distingue d'un peintre de talent ordinaire." Fichtre [Gaston Vassy] 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387.

[500] "[..] le noir ne se trouve jamais dans le plein air, et qu'une redingote si sombre fût-elle, s'éclaire au soleil et cesse d'être noire, c'est un mérite qu'il faut enregistrer. C'est pourquoi l*'Homme au balcon*, de M. Caillebotte, avec sa redingote ardoisée, n'est pas si ridicule que trop de gens voudraient le faire entendre." De Biez 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:380-381.

[501] For example, A. Hustin wrote about "cette évolution qui se prépare dans le camp impressionniste" in his response to Caillebotte's work, while Huysmans wrote that despite the missteps of previous years, "les tableaux qu'il [Caillebotte] expose cette année, témoignent que ses grandes qualités sont demeurées intactes." Hustin 1882, as

Normandy landscapes were well-received, but the large oil paintings he chose to exhibit at the 1882 exhibition were met with many of the same critiques that had plagued the artist in 1879 and 1880. Still, the 1882 exhibition was a critical success for Caillebotte insofar as it solidified his position as the *de facto* leader of the Impressionist group. The cohesive, majority-landscape group of works exhibited at the Panorama de Reichshoffen prompted a number of writers to refer to the painters as belonging to a school. Of those writers who described a school, five named Caillebotte as the leader or *le chef de l'École*.[502] Vassy vividly characterized the active role Caillebotte took in the installation of the exhibition, "giving orders, surveying the hanging of the canvases, and working like a porter."[503] Alexandre Hepp linked Caillebotte's leadership to his prestigious upbringing, describing him as "a bourgeois of the harmless type, who lives very comfortably, hates compliments, only wants to defend his school and would never win a victory."[504] A number of writers used

---

cited in Berson 1996, I: 395-396 and Huysmans 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:396-398. See also Havard's comments about his progress, as cited in fn. 501.

[502] "Je demanderai par exemple à M. Caillebotte, que je considère comme le chef de l'École (et cela s'adresse de même aux huit autres exposants; car il y a là 500 toiles qui se ressemblent tellement ; que n'importe lequel d'entre eux aurait pu les exécuter toutes…)" Nélesque 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:405.

[503] "Le chapeau en arrière, les mains dans les poches, M. Caillebote [sic] allait et venait, donnant des ordres, surveillant l'accrochage des toiles, et travaillant comme un commissionnaire, exactement comme s'il n'avait pas cent cinquante mille francs de rente." Fichtre [Gaston Vassy], "L'Actualité: L'Exposition des peintres indépendants," *Le Réveil* (March 2, 1882), 1, as cited in Berson 1996, I:387-389.

[504] "Caillebotte, un bourgeois de l'espèce inoffensive, vit très retiré, déteste les compliments, ne demande qu'à défendre son école et ne voudrait jamais remporter de victoire." Hepp 1882, as cited in Berson, 1996, I:393-394.

superlatives to describe Caillebotte's position vis-à-vis the group; for Hustin, he was "the most fanatical impressionist" and "the most puritanical of the independents," while Jean de Nivelle labeled him, "one of the most indefatigable independents."[505]

Other writers framed Caillebotte's leadership in the context of what they predicted to be the eventual collapse of the group and their independent exhibitions. In his lengthy review for *Le Siècle*, for example, Havard speculated that the exhibition of *The Bezique Game* and *Luncheon of the Boating Party* signaled a dissolution of the group in favor of a return to the state-sponsored Salon system. He wrote:

> We must congratulate him [Caillebotte] because he has made so much progress. But these advances are alarming for the School […] M. Caillebotte has become accustomed to worrying about perspective and putting his characters in a good position. He has, moreover, rid his palette of the false tones in which he had taken pleasure […] M. Renoir's conversion is not as brilliant as that of Mr. Caillebotte […] he is already a deserter - an apostate who sacrifices to the false gods, for he exhibits at the Salon like a simple Bonnat or a vulgar Baudry. When Mr. Renoir and Mr. Caillebotte have taken flight to the academic spheres, the intransigence in painting will be in peril.[506]

---

505 "Prenez l'impressionniste le plus fanatique: M. Caillebotte," Hustin 1882a, *as cited in Berson 1996, I:394-395*; "M. Caillebotte, par exemple, qui s'annonçait comme le plus puritain des indépendants […]" Hustin 1882b, as cited in Berson 1996, I: 395-396; and "Un des plus acharnés indépendants, M. Caillebotte…" De Nivelle 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:406-407.

506 "Il faut l'en féliciter car il est en très grands progrès. Mais ces progrès sont alarmants pour l'École […] M. Caillebotte a pris l'habitude de se préoccuper de la perspective et de mettre ses personnages d'aplomb. Il a en outre débarrassé sa palette des tons faux où il se complaisait […] La conversion de M. Renoir n'est pas aussi éclatante que celle de M. Caillebotte […] c'est déjà un déserteur – un apostat qui sacrifie aux faux dieux, car il expose au Salon comme un simple Bonnat ou un vulgaire Baudry." Havard 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:391-392.

This notion that Caillebotte and Renoir would soon abandon their group for the Salon was echoed by Leroy, who wrote that the latter would soon defect if he was not careful.[507] As Caillebotte worked in the studio and in the galleries to produce and exhibit paintings that corrected the misconceptions that critics had about his work at the 1879 and 1880 exhibition, those same critics saw his evolution as prefiguring an eventual desertion and dissolution of the group.

Meurville saw the changes in the work that Caillebotte chose to exhibit in 1882 as evidence that he was deliberately limiting himself so as to match the aesthetic of his school. In his review for the *Gazette de France*, he described him as "the tireless M. Caillebotte, who is really better than his entourage" but who "feels obliged by his antecedents, indeed by the school he has formed."[508] While a majority of the critics who commented on Caillebotte's poor fit with the broader Impressionist group predicted it would lead to his eventual defection from the group, de Nivelle believed that it would lead to their desertion of him. In his review for *Le Soleil*, he quoted Pierre Corneille's *Médée* (1635): "there are already defections among the painters, and

---

[507] "Si M. Caillebotte n'y prend garde, il fera défection avant peu." L. Leroy, "Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Charivari* (March 17, 1882), 2, as cited in Berson 1996, I:402.

[508] "Je n'ai plus retrouvé cette année que l'infatigable M. Caillebotte qui vaut vraiment mieux que son entourage et qui témoigne de telles qualités qu'on ne peut que regretter son obstination à mal faire. C'est un parti pris chez lui ; il se croit obligé par ses antécédents, hé par l'école qu'il a formée. Hélas, il n'est que le Brigham Young des derniers jours de la peinture, alors qu'il se croit le précurseur d'une rénovation de l'art." Meurville 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:403-404.

the moment is perhaps not distant where M. Caillebotte, left alone, will answer, like Medea: *Moi, et c'est assez*."[509]

The Impressionist exhibition that closed on March 31, 1882 was the last to include works by Caillebotte. The critical reception of his work had fluctuated over the years, with the 1877 and 1879 exhibitions marking his high and low points, respectively. Some common themes emerged in the published responses to his paintings: a critique of his treatment of perspective, concerns about his belonging to the group, and jokes about his overindulgent use of the color blue. Critics were slow to recognize the role that Caillebotte played as an organizer of the independent exhibitions but by 1882, his position had been affirmed by a variety of outlets. Writers like Havard, Meurville, and de Nivelle looked ahead to what was next for the fractured Impressionist group and the thirty-three year old artist at its helm.

Caillebotte and Durand-Ruel

After the close of the 1882 exhibition, Caillebotte began to drift away from the Impressionist group, spending more time at his estate in Petit Gennevilliers and traveling to Trouville in the summer to paint scenes of the coast. He signed and dated a number of these landscapes, including *Les Toits de l'Hôtel des roches noires, Trouville* (1882, fig. 155) and *La Plage de Trouville, vue de la corniche* (1882, fig. 156), perhaps anticipating a future Impressionist exhibition where these paintings

---

[509] "Seulement, il se produit déjà des défections dans la peinture, et le moment n'est peut-être pas éloigné où M. Caillebotte, resté seul, répondra, comme Médée : Moi, et c'est assez." de Nivelle 1882, as cited in Berson 1996, I:406-407. See Pierre Corneille, *Médée* (Geneva: Libraire Droz S.A., 1978), Act I, Scene IV, 317, "Moi, Moi dis-je, et c'est assez."

could go on view.[510] That group exhibition would not come to pass until 1886, at which point Caillebotte had stepped away from the artistic activity in the city, spending more time at his property in the suburbs. The beginning of Caillebotte's disengagement with the Impressionist group in the summer of 1882 coincides with the renewal of Durand-Ruel's interest in the organization of exhibitions as a way to promote his artists.

In order to understand the transfer of leadership that took place after 1882, we must first consider the existing relationship between Caillebotte and the dealer. Durand-Ruel and Caillebotte had worked together on the organization of the 1882 exhibition, with Pissarro acting as an intermediary between the two men.[511] Caillebotte bought works for his collection directly from artists and so Durand-Ruel would not have known the younger man as a client, but as a painter and friend of other members of the Impressionist group. Durand-Ruel first became acquainted with Monet and Pissarro in London in 1871, when he began to purchase and exhibit their work in his gallery on New Bond Street. In 1872, Durand-Ruel met a number of the other painters who would become members of the core Impressionist group, including Degas, Renoir, Sisley, and Morisot. In 1876, he sublet space in his gallery at 11 rue Le Peletier for the second Impressionist exhibition organized that spring. Caillebotte must

---

[510] He was less consistent in his practice of dating pictures after 1883, choosing to sign and date some landscapes but not others. Caillebotte produced eight views of the same field in Gennevillers between 1883 and 1884, rendering its varied colors at different times of year, but he signed only six of them. He included dates on just two: *Champ Jaune, Gennevilliers* (1883, fig. 157) and *La Plaine de Gennevilliers, Champ Jaune* (1884, fig. 158).

[511] The organization of the 1882 exhibition is described in detail in Chapter 3, 251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882: Planning the Seventh Exhibition.

have met Durand-Ruel at the 1876 exhibition, the first in which the young artist participated, if not sooner.

The extant correspondence between Durand-Ruel and Caillebotte consists of just a few brief messages from the painter to the dealer, and so our understanding of their relationship hinges on Caillebotte's exclusion from the earliest Impressionist canon by Durand-Ruel, its primary architect. In her essay "Against the Grain: Gustave Caillebotte and Paul Durand-Ruel's Impressionism," Mary Morton considers the absence of Caillebotte from the pantheon of Impressionist painters first enshrined by Durand-Ruel and later reinforced through publications by Lionello Venturi and John Rewald.[512] Her argument builds on the new research and scholarship that emerged in preparation for the 2015 exhibition "Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market," which explored Durand-Ruel's role in the creation, exhibition, and circulation of works by a pantheon of Impressionist painters that he himself helped to define.[513] As Morton explains, Durand-Ruel's Impressionism was defined by his own artistic judgment, by his instinct for what would be commercially viable, and by his own conservatism as an ardent monarchist and devout Catholic. Caillebotte's absence from the Impressionist canon, Morton argues, is owed to the radicalism of his work and the threat it posed to Durand-Ruel's conservative social values.

Morton's analysis of the relationship between Durand-Ruel and Caillebotte in the context of their divergent values goes far in accounting for the peculiarity of the

---

[512] Morton, "Against the Grain," forthcoming.

[513] Patry ed., 2015.

artist's work as compared to that of his Impressionist colleagues. Caillebotte was independently wealthy and a lifelong bachelor who lived outside of heteronormative expectations of a wealthy heir to an bourgeois family fortune in the Third Republic. He reworked the traditional and emerging genres of French painting – portraits, still lifes, nudes, scenes of urban and suburban leisure – through his own distinctly modern point of view. In her essay, Morton convincingly argues that the nature of Caillebotte's work contributed to his exclusion from the Impressionist narrative first cultivated by Durand-Ruel, but in order to fully understand why Caillebotte was excluded from the dealer's exhibitions, we must account for the extent to which financial manipulation drove the cultivation of an Impressionist aesthetic.

The economic conditions precipitated by the collapse of the Union Générale in early 1882 created a period of stagnation for the members of the Impressionist group and the collectors on whom they had become increasingly dependent.[514] Their principal dealer, Durand-Ruel, found himself heavily in debt and he began to cut back on the stipends allotted to his roster of artists. Instead, he aimed to capitalize on his large stock of paintings by mounting consecutive one-man exhibitions of Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and Sisley in the spring and summer of 1883.[515] Single-artist

---

[514] See further discussion of the economic recession of the early 1880s in Chapter 3, 251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882: Planning the Seventh Exhibition.

[515] These exhibitions proceeded as follows: *Exposition des œuvres de Claude Monet* (March 1-25); *Exposition des œuvres de P.-A. Renoir* (April 1-25); *Exposition des œuvres de C. Pissarro* (May 1-25); and *Alfred Sisley* (June 1-25). The monographic series began with an exhibition of Eugène Boudin's paintings, pastels, and watercolors, which was held from February 1 through 25. See Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel eds., *Paul Durand-Ruel: Memoirs of the First Impressionist Art Dealer (1831-1922)* (Paris: Flammarion, 2014), 213. Caillebotte lent

exhibitions had first emerged in France in the late eighteenth century and became increasingly popular in the 1880s.[516] Renoir, Monet, and Sisley had mounted their first solo exhibitions with Georges Charpentier at the offices of *La Vie moderne* in 1879, 1880, and 1881, respectively.[517] In the spring of 1882, Durand-Ruel played an unprecedented role in the organization of the Impressionists' group exhibition, lending 125 works from his inventory.[518]

While the collapse of Durand-Ruel's financial backer in 1882 put a temporary moratorium on the dealer's ability to purchase works, he had managed to acquire over 450 works by Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, Renoir, and Degas between 1880 and the end of 1882.[519] By purchasing in bulk to create a monopoly of each painter's work and then mounting single-artist exhibitions, Durand-Ruel was able to cultivate exclusivity with these artists and to limit interference from competing dealers such as Georges Petit. This strategy had been tested in 1867, when Durand-Ruel partnered with Hector Brame to purchase ninety-one oil sketches by Théodore Rousseau before mounting a

---

several paintings by Renoir to Durand-Ruel's exhibition in April of that year, including *The Swing* (fig. 54) and *Bal du Moulin de la Galette* (fig. 45).

516 See Sylvie Patry, "Durand-Ruel and the Impressionists' Solo Exhibitions of 1883," in Patry ed. 2015, 100-119. As Patry notes in her essay, eighty-eight single-artist exhibitions were held in Paris in the 1880s, as compared to thirty-five in the 1870s.

517 Patry 2015, 101.

518 See Chapter 3, 251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882: Planning the Seventh Exhibition.

519 This figure is a tally of the figures reported by Patry: 157 by Monet, ninety-five, by Pissarro, eighty-eight by Sisley, eighty-seven by Renoir, and thirty-seven by Degas. See Patry 2015, 102 and fns. 44-48.

solo exhibition of the artist's work that highlighted the crucial role of such sketches to his broader artistic practice.[520]

Despite Durand-Ruel's monopolistic buying, Monet, Pissarro, Sisley, and Renoir retained a quasi-collaborative position in the organization of the single-artist exhibitions. In a memoir published in 1939, the dealer recalled that he took "care to clearly show that these exhibitions were in the best interest of the painters."[521] The extent to which each artist was involved varied; for Monet, a priority was the exhibition of pictures that had "never been seen by the public," while Pissarro described having "complete freedom" over the installation of his pictures in the galleries.[522] At each of these four monographic exhibitions, Durand-Ruel wrangled a variety of subjects and media. A majority of the exhibited works were recent, and

---

[520] The group of ninety-one works was made between March and June 1867 and the exhibition was held that summer, timed to coincide with the Exposition Universelle. In a commissioned catalogue introduction, Burty described the sketches as "vraiment la clef de tout son œuvre qu'il vient de livrer au public en autorisant cette exhibition." See Philippe Burty, *Notice des études peintes par M. Théodore Rousseau exposées au Cercle des Arts* (Paris: Académie des Bibliophiles, 1867), 3. For a more thorough discussion of Durand-Ruel's admiration of Rousseau, see Simon Kelly, "Durand-Ruel, and 'La Belle École of 1830,' in Patry ed. 2015, 56-75.

[521] "J'avais eu soin, pour bien montrer que ces expositions étaient faites dans l'intérêt des peintres, d'emprunter des tableaux de chacun d'eux principaux amateurs qui en possédaient." Paul Durand-Ruel, "Mémoires de Paul Durand-Ruel," in Venturi 1939, 213.

[522] "Je désire faire très prochainement une exposition à Paris. En dehors des choses nouvelles que je veux montrer, je désire montrer également quelques-uns de mes tableaux qui, étant chez les amateurs, n'ont jamais été vus du public." Monet to L.N. Serveau, February 10, 1883, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, II:225, letter no. 322; "Je suis assez satisfait de mon arrangement. Durand m'a laissé complètement libre […]" Pissarro to Lucien, May 13, 1883, as published in Bailly-Herzberg 1980, letter no. 148, 206-207.

contemporary correspondence reveals that some were painted specifically for the exhibitions. In a letter to Pissarro from late 1882, for example, Durand-Ruel encouraged him to paint "small compositions or small figures in gouache, on taffeta […] You know they have been very successful and I am certain these small compositions will be the quickest and best sellers at our next exhibition."[523] Despite the relative autonomy described by Monet and Pissarro, the monographic format of these exhibitions left the artists bound to the dealer, who set the schedule and who required a large number of works to fill the galleries.

In significant ways, Durand-Ruel's organization of the 1883 exhibitions mirrored Caillebotte's coordination of the group exhibitions, particularly those held in 1877, 1879, and 1882. As I argue in the second and third chapters of this dissertation, Caillebotte shaped those exhibitions by advising artists as they selected works to include in the group exhibitions, by lending works from his own collection to ensure a cohesive checklist, and by encouraging at least one artist to pursue a particular subject. Despite these instances of shared strategy, Caillebotte and Durand-Ruel approached the exhibition ventures with divergent motivations. For the dealer, the organization of these single-artist exhibitions was part of a broader strategy aimed at advancing his control of the market for pictures by these painters. The exhibitions produced only modest profits and Durand-Ruel instead underscored the "moral outcome" to the artists, citing the positive reception of Monet, Pissarro, and Renoir's pictures in the

---

[523] *Archives de Camille Pissarro* (Paris, Hôtel Drouot: November 21, 1975), lot no. 21.

domestic and foreign press.[524] While the critical response to the monographic exhibitions was limited – between ten and twenty articles each for Monet, Pissarro, and Sisley as compared over sixty published in response to the 1882 Impressionist exhibition – the reviews were generally positive. These critical successes satisfied the dealer; in a letter to Monet after the close of his monographic exhibition in late March 1883, Durand-Ruel remarked: "You have been successful among people of taste. The number of those who understand you is growing day by day."[525]

It is with their concern for the future prospects of the members of the Impressionist group that Caillebotte and Durand-Ruel's motivations converge. Both sought to organize exhibitions that would present diverse works by these artists in the best possible light and that would raise their profiles, thereby assuring future opportunities for the exhibition and sale of works. Both were willing to collaborate with the artists themselves and with outside stakeholders to ensure that these exhibitions would consist of representative bodies of work. For Caillebotte, that meant "running around" for a week in advance of the 1879 exhibition to borrow Monet's pictures from collectors, just as Durand-Ruel would borrow from Duret, Ephrussi, and other prominent collectors to supplement his own stock at the 1883 exhibitions.[526]

---

[524] See, for example, the letter from Durand-Ruel to Monet, February 13, 1883, in the Archives Durand-Ruel, as cited in Patry 2015, 113, fn. 109.

[525] "Vous avez un vrai succès parmi les gens de goût. Le nombre de ceux qui vous comprennent s'accroit chaque jour." Letter from Durand-Ruel to Monet, March 6, 1883, as published in *Archives Claude Monet, Correspondance d'artiste: Collection Monsieur et Madame Cornebois* (Paris: Artcurial, December 13, 2006) letter no. 61, 38-39.

[526] "Donnez toujours la liste de ce que vous espérez mettre. Je passerai la semaine à courir pour vous si vous voulez." Caillebotte to Monet, late March 1879, as published in Berhaut 1994, 275, letter 15.

That said, Caillebotte's interest in the organization and promotion of the independent group exhibitions centered on his belonging to and support of the group, not on the eventual advancement of his own commercial interests. He never profited directly from one of the Impressionist group exhibitions, siphoning his share of the limited proceeds back into individual artists and future exhibitions.

Caillebotte's finances were unaffected by the contraction in the art market that caused such anxiety among his Impressionist colleagues. As Durand-Ruel began to turn to new marketing models to generate sales for his artists, Caillebotte had no motivation to participate in either monographic or group exhibitions organized by the dealer. In late June 1883, after the final single-artist exhibition had closed, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and Sisley found their positions largely unchanged. Monet and Renoir had managed to sell a picture or two, but neither Pissarro nor Sisley saw a single sale during their exhibitions.[527] Writing to Monet in the fall, Pissarro admitted: "I am very badly off and all but reduced to beggary… very fortunate to have had Caillebotte to help me get past this difficult summer […]"[528] While Caillebotte continued to support his Impressionist colleagues, Durand-Ruel tightened the reins,

---

[527] Patry ed. 2015, 113.

[528] Letter from Pissarro to Monet, undated [fall 1883]: "Si je puis vous être utile, je me mets à votre disposition; je suis bien mal loti et la besace plate, mais à l'occasion, une bonne nouvelle se présentant, quelques petits ventres de loin en loin faites par de petits amateurs timides, et bien heureux d'avoir eu Caillebotte pour m'aider à passer ce cap de l'été, sans lui mes ventes me m'auraient certes pas sauvé du naufrage," as published in Geffroy 1922, 161.

prompting Renoir to admit that the dealer wanted to have "the new painting entirely in his hands."[529]

Durand-Ruel was conscious of his role in shaping an Impressionist aesthetic at this crucial moment and in the spring of 1883, he organized a London exhibition of works by "La Société des Impressionnistes," the first exhibition to use "impressionnistes" in its title.[530] On view in the gallery of Charles William Dowdeswell, the exhibition featured works by Manet, Cassatt, Morisot, Degas, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, and Pissarro in a variety of media, including paintings, drawings, and pastels. Manet, who had never participated in an Impressionist exhibition in Paris, was included in Durand-Ruel's exhibition of *impressionnistes* while Caillebotte, who had participated in five, was not.[531] The name, "La Société des Impressionnistes," was pure fiction, invented by Durand-Ruel in order to attract a sophisticated audience and to present the artists as a coherent group that shared a collective identity. The checklist was printed in the catalogue with French titles and consisted of recent works that were representative of Durand-Ruel's stock: Pissarro's peasants, Monet's Normandy landscapes, Degas's horses and dancers, and by Renoir, the *Dance at Bougival* (1883,

---

529 "Il aurait avoir voulu toute la peinture nouvelle dans sa main." Jean Renoir, *Pierre-Auguste Renoir, mon père* (Paris: Gallimard, 1981), 270.

530 *Paintings, Drawings and Pastels by Members of 'La Société des Impressionnistes'* (London: Dowdeswell Galleries, 1883), n.p. An advertisement ran in *The Times* on June 19 and 21, consisting of provocative quotations from press reviews of the exhibition. See Douglas Cooper, *The Courtauld Collection: A Catalogue and Introduction* (London: University of London, 1954), 23, fn. 6.

531 Manet died on April 30, 1883, ten days after the exhibition opened in London. It was perhaps easier for Durand-Ruel to arrange for Manet's participation during his illness.

fig. 159).[532] Degas and Renoir were admired as the leaders of the school but otherwise, the exhibition was a critical failure.[533] Its pictures were deemed too unfinished, too lurid in their palettes, but the dealer had seized his moment to define the collective of Impressionist artists.[534]

Of the core group of Impressionist artists, Caillebotte and Cézanne were the only artists excluded from the 1883 London exhibition.[535] While Morton makes a convincing case for why Caillebotte's unusual pictures were a poor fit for the socially-conservative brand of Impressionism that Durand-Ruel sought to advance beginning with the 1883 group exhibition, the dealer could have instead exhibited any number of

---

[532] Patry ed. 2015, 185.

[533] The 1883 London exhibition was widely reviewed, prompting Lucien Pissarro to write to his father on May 11, "Ici il n'y a pas un seul journal qui ne donne son avis sur votre exposition." Cooper 1954, 23.

[534] A representative review from the *Illustrated London News*: "The more extravagant of the examples shown greatly shock, by their slightness, roughness, and violent contrasts of bright light, and blue shadows [...] But the great fault of the French Impressionists is their perverse disregard of, or insensibility to, beauty, especially in form." *Illustrated London News* (April 23, 1883), as quoted in Cooper 1954, 24. There were some positive responses, however. See, for example, the anonymous reviews that appeared in *Standard*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and *Artist*, as anthologized in Kate Flint ed., *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception* (London: Routledge, 1984), 57-62. The review that ran in *Standard* read, in part, "They are not going to make us forget either the Rembrandt or Titian of old time, nor the Meissonier, nor the Millais, nor the Hook of to-day. But, with all their deficiencies, they are individual, brilliant, engaging. They are a force to be reckoned with. And one of the greatest causes of their force is the life of their own day that has inspired their art." Flint ed. 1984, 57.

[535] Cézanne was not represented in Durand-Ruel's stock until the 1890s. Durand-Ruel's first Cézanne purchase was made in August 1891. The relationship between Cézanne and Durand-Ruel is described in detail in Joseph Rishel's essay, "The Critical Fortunes of Paul Durand-Ruel," in Patry ed. 2015, 197-205.

the fairly conventional landscapes and scenes of bourgeois suburban leisure that Caillebotte exhibited at the 1879 and 1882 exhibitions. In his introduction of "La Société des Impressionnistes" to London audiences in 1883, Durand-Ruel reaffirmed his definition of Impressionist painting as wholly concerned with the fleeting moments of modern life. The introductory text published in the exhibition catalogue quotes Duret's introduction to the Renoir exhibition organized by Durand-Ruel in Paris earlier that spring: "The impressionists […] in every scene, in every physiognomy or figure reproduced, observe what is fugitive […] the impression, in a word, of the object, to fix it on the canvas."[536] This dealer-approved definition of Impressionism ought to have included Caillebotte, whose paintings were described in the context of their highly subjective, fugitive effects as early as 1877.[537] However, Durand-Ruel knew that Caillebotte did not sell his paintings and the dealer had little to gain from presenting incogrouent work as part of the painting collective over which he otherwise retained market control. Simply put, Durand-Ruel excised Caillebotte from the Impressionist canon as early as 1883 because there was no financial upside to including him. Between 1883 and 1885, Durand-Ruel organized Impressionist

---

[536] "Les impressionnistes, poussant encore plus avant, s'il est possible, dans chaque scène vue, dans chaque physionomie ou figure reproduite, observent l'aspect fugitif, la notation spéciale du moment, l'*impression*, en un mot, de l'objet, pour la fixer sur la toile. Et c'est pourquoi ce nom d'impressionniste a été accepté par les artistes auxquels on voulait faire une injure, comme en valant, après tout, autant qu'un autre." Flint ed. 1984, 3.

[537] See my analysis of the critical responses of Lepelletier, Vassy, and Jacques to Caillebotte's work at the 1877 exhibition in Chapter 3, 28 rue de l'Opèra, 1879: Critical Reception in 1877.

exhibitions in London, Berlin, Boston, and Brussels and Caillebotte's work was not included in any of them.[538]

This period of international activity found Caillebotte splitting his time between Paris and Petit Gennevilliers. He maintained a social calendar in Paris, returning on the first Thursday of each month to dine with the Impressionists and their circle at the Café Riche.[539] The house in Petit Gennevillers would become a site of Caillebotte's continued friendship with members of the core Impressionist group – Renoir often visited Caillebotte's home in Petit Gennevilliers with his wife Aline Charigot and son Pierre.[540] While limited correspondence and the relative historical obscurity of most of Caillebotte's known friends and acquaintances makes it difficult to more precisely map his social sphere, these instances of overlap between Paris and Petit Gennevilliers indicate that Caillebotte's milieu remained relatively fixed, despite his eventual retreat beyond the urban setting where those social bonds were first established.

He continued to paint landscapes in Normandy and Argenteuil, the orchards and gardens of his estate at Petit Gennevilliers, and portraits of his friends, including the *Portrait of Jules Dubois*, which features its sitter in the apartment at 31 boulevard Haussmann. Any number of these works would have been suitable for an

---

[538] Patry ed. 2015, 216-217.

[539] See the discussion of "Le diner des impressionists," in Geffroy 1922, 155-156.

[540] Renoir describes one such visit to Caillebotte's home in Petit Gennevilliers in a letter to Eugèe Murer dated 28 September 1891, as published in Paul Gachet, *Lettres impressionnistes: Pissarro, Cézanne, Guillaumin, Renoir, Monet, Sisley, Vignon, Van Gogh et autres*, (Paris: B. Grasset, 1957), pp. 106-7.

Impressionist exhibition but given the difficulty in organizing the 1882 exhibition, it is no surprise that Caillebotte and his co-exhibitors left the organization of group exhibitions up to Durand-Ruel. As a result, Caillebotte's work went off public view for a period of four years, the longest stretch since he had first exhibited his work in 1876. In the spring of 1886, Caillebotte sent several works to be included as part of Durand-Ruel's exhibition, "Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris," which traveled to the American Art Association and the National Academy of Design in New York City. Why, after a long hiatus, did Caillebotte agree to participate in this dealer-organized exhibition? What did he have to gain from having his work go on view in the United States for the first time, ten years after his public debut at the second Impressionist exhibition? And why did Durand-Ruel invite him to exhibit with the group? These are the questions at the heart of our understanding of Caillebotte's international debut and his participation in the 1886 exhibition in New York.

Organizing "the Impressionists of Paris"

Durand-Ruel's decision to expand his business to New York City was essential to the early development of American collections of Impressionist painting.[541] Collectors from the East Coast and Midwest had been purchasing directly from the dealer's gallery in Paris since the 1860s.[542] His reputation was quickly established,

---

[541] This topic is explored in depth in Frances Weitzenhoffer, *The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America* (New York: Harry Abrams, 1986), particularly pp. 36-53.

[542] Levi Parsons Morton was the first American client noted in Durand-Ruel's records. He purchased paintings by Hugues Mele, Joseph-Urbain Melin, and Leon Caille from Durand-Ruel's Paris gallery in September 1865. This purchase is known through the important research conducted in the Archives Durand-Ruel by Jennifer Thompson and relayed in her essay, "Durand-Ruel in America," published in Patry ed. 2015, 136-151.

and in 1869, a writer for the American Register described him as known among American collectors for "his fascinating manners and straight forwardness in his dealings."[543] It was through one of these early American clients, Levi Parsons Morton, that Durand-Ruel was first able to send works to be exhibited in the United States in 1883. The American Exhibition of the Products, Arts, and Manufactures of Foreign Nations was organized in Boston to honor the centenary of the Treaty of Paris and Morton, the United States Minister to France, ensured the passage of a special act of Congress that allowed goods sent for inclusion in the exhibition to enter duty-free.[544] Durand-Ruel was responsible for organizing the fine arts exhibition that went on view, contracting with a New York-based publishing firm to supervise the unpacking and installation of the works of art and to represent him in the event of sales.[545] Paintings by Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley accounted for just twenty percent of the loans from Durand-Ruel's stock but this group included several significant works, including Renoir's *A Box at the Theater* (1880, fig. 160), and a number of recent landscapes by Monet.[546]

---

[543] As cited in Madeleine Fidell-Beaufort, "The American Art Trade and French Painting at the End of the Nineteenth Century," *Van Gogh Museum Journal* (2000), 101-107, 105, fn. 22. She attributes this quote to *The American Register* 51 (March 27, 1869), 3.

[544] "France: Mr. Morton's Speech," *Galignani's Messenger* (May 21, 1883), 2.

[545] This arrangement is known through a letter from Durand-Ruel to Root & Tinkler, dated June 22, 1883, and currently held in the Archives Durand-Ruel but described by Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, fn. 29.

[546] Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, 139-142.

As Jennifer Thompson discusses in her essay, "Durand-Ruel and America," the Impressionist paintings that went on view at the 1883 exhibition in Boston were widely reviewed in the press, despite their limited numbers.[547] The responses were mixed. One reviewer for *The Independent* wrote of the "narrow line – perhaps only an imaginary line – between madness and genius of the French Impressionists," while another writing for *The Art Amateur* admitted, "these young men are not without talent," before bemoaning that "their conceit of themselves is certainly excessive."[548] While the Boston exhibition did not result in any sales, it paved the way for a second, more substantial exhibition organized at the American Art Association in 1886.

In the spring of 1885, the American collector James Sutton visited Durand-Ruel in Paris to propose an exhibition of French painting at the American Art Association, a newly established art auction and gallery space in New York City.[549] By June, Monet had learned of the proposed venture and he wrote the dealer to express his concern about sending certain pictures "to the land of the Yankees."[550] In

---

[547] Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, 142.

[548] *The Independent* (September 20, 1883), 7; and *The Art Amateur*, vol. 9 no. 5 (October 1883), 90.

[549] Sutton was the American Art Association's founding director. See Gerald D. Bolas, *The Early Years of the American Art Association, 1879-1900* (PhD Dissertation, City University of New York, 1998), particularly "Rehearsal: The American Art Gallery, 1879-1882," and "The Inaugural Year, 1883" for more about the early history of the American Art Association.

[550] Letter from Monet to Durand-Ruel, dated June 27, 1885: "Votre fils m'a parlé de diverses espérances d'affaires (pour l'avenir) en Amérique et en Belgique." Wildenstein 1974-1991, II:260, letter no. 573; and letter from Monet to Durand-Ruel, dated July 28, 1885: "J'ai deux toiles auxquelles je travaille depuis un mois, mais j'avoue que certaines de ces toiles je les verrais à regret partir au pays des Yankees […]" Wildenstein 1974-1991, II:261, letter no. 578.

response, Durand-Ruel assured that the participating artists would be asked to personally select paintings for inclusion in the exhibition.[551] In an appeal to the French Ministry of Fine Arts, Durand-Ruel asked for their support of the project, which he characterized as an opportunity to advance the cause of modern French art at a time when the domestic market was stagnant. The Ministry declined Durand-Ruel's request to be made an official delegate of the government on the basis of the dealer's commercial interests but acknowledged that French artists would be well-served by participation in the exhibition.[552] Plans for the exhibition went forward and in March 1886, Durand-Ruel arrived in New York with forty-three crates of pictures, two-thirds of which came directly from the dealer's stock.

Despite the absence of French institutional support for the venture, Durand-Ruel was able to bring the paintings into the United States duty-free. In an arrangement facilitated by Sutton, the dealer only had to pay tax on works that sold during the course of the exhibition. The increase of the tariff on works of art imported into the United States from ten percent to thirty percent in 1883 had had a chilling effect on the American market for European works of art.[553] As Susan Grant tallies in her essay on the corresponding market for American pictures in France, the raised

---

[551] Pissarro wrote to Lucien in an undated letter [likely January 1886] that Durand-Ruel was visiting Guillaumin, Seurat, and Signac, "to ask for some canvases for the exhibition in America." See Rewald ed. 1973, 66.

[552] This exchange between Durand-Ruel and Edmond Turquet, Sous-secrétaire d'État à l'instruction publique aux Beaux-Arts et aux cultes from April 11, 1885 until January 6, 1886, is detailed in Thompson 2015, 142.

[553] This increase was the American response to the French ban on imported pork from the United States in 1881. See the discussion of its political and economic consequences in Bolas 1998, 197-199.

tariff diminished the annual value of French art imported into the United States by sixty-five percent between 1882 and 1884.[554] By securing an "educational" designation for Durand-Ruel's exhibition, Sutton made the venture financially viable. When the exhibition closed, the dealer owed only $5,500 duty for the works sold during its run, as opposed to the $24,540 that would have been owed had the tariff been applied to the full $81,799 valuation of the imported stock.[555]

The exhibition, "Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris," opened on April 10th in the American Art Association's primary exhibition space at 6 East 23rd Street.[556] Of the 289 works on view, over half were by members of the core Impressionist group, with works by Manet, Georges Seurat, Paul Signac, and others making up the remainder.[557] Durand-Ruel's name did not appear in the exhibition

---

[554] The annual value of French art entering the United States was 9.6 million francs in 1882 and 3.5 million francs in 1884, from Susan Grant, "Whistler's Mother Was Not Alone: French Government Acquisitions of American Paintings, 1871-1900," *Archives of American Art Journal* Vol. 32, No. 2 (1992), 2-15, 4-5. Her source is "Art Notes," *American Register*, January 7, 1885, 6.

[555] This figure is first reported in Hans Huth, "Impressionism Comes to America," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6th series 29 (April 1946), 225-252, 244. Both Bolas and Thompson cite the Durand-Ruel archives for figures related to the total sale made from the 1886 exhibition and Thompson cites the more precise $81,799, see Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, 142.

[556] American Art Association, *Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris* (New York: Press of J.J. Little & Co., 1886).

[557] The participating artists were, as they appear in the catalogue: Édouard Manet, John Lewis Brown, Gustave Caillebotte, Eugène Boudin, Marcellin Desboutin, Auguste Flameng, Joseph Urbain Mélin, Jean-Paul Laurens, Victor Huguet, Desiré François Langée, Charles Édouard Armand-Dumaresq, Augustin Chenu (called Fleury-Chenu), Edgar Degas, Alfred Philippe Roll, Henry Chenu, Paul-Albert Besnard, Frédéric Montenard, Claude Monet, Henry Lerolle, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Camille Pissarro, Armand Guillaumin, Charles-Emmanuel Serret, Paul Signac, Louis

catalogue or in any of the promotional materials, but press accounts widely acknowledged that it was his collection and his exhibition. His decision to title the exhibition "Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris" is evidence of his efforts to make Impressionism – an artistic designation over which he aimed to control majority interest in the domestic and international markets – synonymous with contemporary French art. By ignoring the critical debates about the nature of Impressionism and by presenting a diverse collection of works by living artists under a single, cohesive label, Durand-Ruel sought to further establish his control over the market for contemporary French art.[558]

Two-thirds of the works on view at the American Art Association came from Durand-Ruel's collection. The remainder – nearly one hundred pictures – were on loan from collectors like Jean-Baptiste Faure and from artists like Caillebotte, Seurat, Signac, and Morisot. Morisot's professional relationship with the dealer began in the early 1870s and she had participated in a number of recent exhibitions, sending works to London and Berlin in 1883.[559] Durand-Ruel's decision to borrow works from

---

Émile Benassit, Jean-Louis Forain, Georges Seurat, Berthe Morisot, and Stanislas Lepine. This list is presented with the caveat that the catalogue contains a number of errors, including misprints confusing Monet with Manet, i.e. it lists Monet as the painter of no. 178, "Combat du Kerseage et de l'Alabama," which must be Manet's *The Battle of the USS Kearsarge and the CSS Alabama* (1864, fig. 161).

[558] Of the artists included in the 1886 exhibition, all were living except Manet (d. 1883) and Fleury-Chenu (d. 1875).

[559] He purchased his first picture from her, *Seascape (The Jetty)* (1873, fig. 162) in 1873. See Sylvie Patry et al eds., *Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist* (New York: Rizzoli Electa, 2018), 195. Curiously, this catalogue describes the painting as having been sold to Durand-Ruel in 1873 but then repeats the Virginia Museum of Fine Art's date for the picture, 1875.

Seurat and Signac was part of a broader effort to bring the young Neo-Impressionists into the fold. He had visited Signac's studio in January 1886 at Pissarro's suggestion and in November 1886, he would write to the older artist to ask that he send "notes to help with a better understanding of your works and those of your friends."[560] Like Seurat and Signac, Caillebotte was exhibiting with Durand-Ruel for the first time. He was not, however, a newcomer to group exhibitions of Impressionist painting, and his decision to participate did not take into account future commercial prospects with the influential dealer of contemporary French painting. Instead, Caillebotte's decision to send works to Durand-Ruel's 1886 exhibition in New York City was made in the context of simultaneous efforts to organize an eighth and final Impressionist exhibition in Paris and Caillebotte's unwillingness to participate in it.

As Durand-Ruel was visiting the studios of young artists he hoped to represent internationally and inviting more established artists to select pictures for the New York exhibition, plans were underway in Paris to organize an exhibition that reaffirmed the artists' independence from the commercial interests of dealers. Durand-Ruel had been instrumental in the organization of the seventh exhibition held in 1882, but by late 1885, the core group of Impressionist painters were eager to distance themselves from the dealer. In a letter dated December 17, Monet reassured Durand-Ruel: "I never thought of abandoning you or our friends, be sure of it; our interests are the same, and as I have told you so often, I know what I owe you and the sacrifices you have made for us." He continued:

> I probably did not express myself well, or you misunderstood me, but I did not say that Pissarro, Sisley, and I wanted to operate alone; that was

---

[560] Patry ed. 2015, 218.

> never our thinking. I only told you that if the opportunity arose for us, and without our instigating it, to sell [our work] ourselves, under good conditions, of course, it would not be bad and it would prove that we are not exclusively tied to you; that is the opinion of these two friends and it is [also] mine.[561]

This letter echoes Monet's previous argument that his participation in other group exhibitions – including one organized by Petit in 1885 – would dispel the notion that only Durand-Ruel was willing to invest in Impressionist painting. Monet's view that Durand-Ruel's exclusivity would amplify the perceived radicalism of their paintings was at odds with the dealer's efforts to control majority commercial interest in works by those artists. By reiterating his position, Monet began to lay the groundwork for an eighth Impressionist exhibition.

At various moments during the planning stages for an 1886 exhibition, Caillebotte, Cassatt, Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley all planned to participate.[562] In the end, Caillebotte, Monet, Renoir, and Sisley had decided to abstain, sending works to Durand-Ruel's exhibition in New York instead. The difficulties in organizing the 1886 exhibition centered on the same issues that had

---

[561] "Je n'ai jamais eu la pensée de vous abandonner ni vous ni mes amis, soyez-en persuadé; nos intérêts sont les mêmes et comme je vous l'ai dit bien souvent, je sais trop ce que je vous dois et les sacrifices que vous avez faits pour nous, et quoi qu'il arrive vous n'avez rien à craindre de moi. Je me suis sans doute mal exprimé ou vous m'avez mal compris, mais je ne vous ai jamais dit que Pissarro, Sisley, et moi voulions manœuvrer seuls; cela n'a jamais été notre pensée, je vous ai seulement dit que si l'occasion se présentait pour nous, et sans la provoquer, de vendre nous-mêmes, dans de bonnes conditions bien entendu, ce ne serait peut-être pas mauvais, et prouverait que nous ne sommes pas entièrement liés avec vous; cela est l'opinion de ces deux amis et la mienne." Letter from Monet to Durand-Ruel, December 17, 1885, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, II:270, letter no. 642.

[562] See the letter from Pissarro to Monet, dated December 7, 1885, as published in Geffroy 1922, 164.

plagued the 1881 and 1882 exhibitions, primarily Degas's insistence on a policy of exclusivity. As the first Impressionist exhibition to compete with both the Salon and major dealer-sponsored ventures, the eighth exhibition marked an evolution and a new division in the artists' understanding of the independent group exhibition format.[563]

Writing to Monet in early December 1885, Pissarro argued for an exhibition organized by the painters that would create distance between them and Durand-Ruel: "the exhibition must be an initiative of the artists themselves and must make that point clearly through its composition."[564] Pissarro had already reoriented the composition of the group toward a younger generation of painters, convincing Degas and Morisot to include Seurat and Signac through strategic meetings held in October.[565] Degas's exclusivity policy was formalized in correspondence between Guillaumin and Pissarro in late March, "The exhibition will be made completely independent without the intervention of dealers and with the condition that [artists] cannot send to the Salon or to an exhibition [organized] by a dealer like Petit."[566] Degas had already agreed to include Seurat and Signac, who were sending works to Durand-Ruel's exhibition that

---

563 As Martha Ward describes in her essay on the 1886 exhibition, the core group of Impressionist painters found themselves grappling with "the contradictions of being Independents enmeshed in a market that dealers seemed to control." Martha Ward, "The Rhetoric of Independence and Innovation," in Moffett ed. 1986, 421-442, 421.

564 "[…] il faut que l'exposition ait l'initiative des artistes eux-mêmes et surtout le prouve clairement par sa composition." Pissarro to Monet, December 7, 1885, as published in Bailly-Herzberg ed. 1980, I:356-57, letter 297.

565 Ward in Moffett ed. 1986, 423.

566 Letter from Guillaumin to Pissarro, March 1886, *Archives de Camille Pissarro*, lot no.78.

spring, and so the claim that exhibitors in dealer-sponsored shows were excluded from participation in the independent group exhibition seems to have been nothing more than a defensive response to the withdrawal of Monet, Renoir, Sisley, and Caillebotte from the venture in early 1886. In the end, Durand-Ruel's exhibition would include nineteen paintings by Degas from the dealer's stock and borrowed from collectors in the New York exhibition.[567]

While Pissarro succeeded in bringing a new generation of French painters to the 1886 group exhibition in Paris, he was not able to hold together the core of the Impressionist group. In circumstances very similar to those leading up to the organization of the 1882 exhibition, Monet, Renoir, and Sisley realized that it would be impossible to untangle themselves from the exhibition that Durand-Ruel was organizing in New York for the spring of 1886.[568] The dealer would take their best paintings from his Paris stock to meet the demands of the large exhibition in the United States, leaving little behind for the group exhibition organized by Pissarro and Degas. Caillebotte's decision to withdraw from the 1886 Paris exhibition was tied to the corresponding decisions made by Renoir and Sisley, and particularly by Monet, to whom Caillebotte remained loyal. Despite his successful collaboration with Pissarro to organize the 1882 exhibition, the intervening years had not softened his feelings towards Degas, and when Monet, Renoir, and Sisley declined to participate in the group exhibition organized by Pissarro and Degas, Caillebotte had no reason to participate.

---

[567] *Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris*, 1886, n.p..

[568] See the analysis of the organization of the 1882 exhibition in Chapter 3, 251 rue Saint-Honoré, 1882: Planning the Seventh Exhibition.

There is only one surviving piece of correspondence by Caillebotte from this period, a letter to Durand-Ruel dated June 1, 1885, detailing plans for a dinner at the Café Riche that would include the dealer, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and Sisley. Caillebotte was unable to attend, traveling instead to Normandy to handle "family affairs," but the familiarity of his note reveals that in the years since the two men first met, they had become friendly.[569] While we cannot be certain whose idea it was for Caillebotte to participate in the 1886 exhibition in New York, the artist was likely driven by the same loyalty to the members of the core group of Impressionist painters that kept him out of the group exhibition held concurrently in Paris. If his interest in showing his work after four years had been piqued by the early discussions that surrounded the organization of the Paris exhibition, Durand-Ruel's project presented an ideal venue for Caillebotte to show his works alongside those by colleagues with whom he most closely identified.

Durand-Ruel's motivations for including Caillebotte's work in his first New York exhibition are less clear, as he had no direct commercial or financial relationship with the artist. Where he did see an opportunity for a viable professional relationship was through loans that Caillebotte made to his exhibitions in the 1880s. Of the nineteen works by Degas included in the exhibition, at least three were lent from Caillebotte's own collection.[570] While this represents a low percentage of the total

---

[569] "Jeudi 7h. Café Riche vous ne serez pas très nombreux. Je ne pourrai pas venir étant obligé d'aller ce jour-là en Normandie pour affaires de famille. Duret a prévenu qu'il ne venait pas. Il ne reste donc que vous, Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, et Sisley. Amitiés." Letter from Caillebotte to Durand-Ruel, June 1, 1885, as published in Berhaut 1994, 277, letter no. 34.

[570] The third was *The Dance Lesson* (c. 1879, fig. 163), which was exhibited as "Le Violon" The catalogue for the 1886 exhibition lists seven works under the title

works on view, two were pastelized monotypes – *Women on a Café Terrace* and *The Chorus* – ambitious in their media, technique, and compositions.[571] "Women in a Café" and "Chorus d'Opera," as they were listed, had been lent to the 1877 exhibition in Paris and they filled a gap in Durand-Ruel's stock as examples of Degas's interest in Parisian nightlife and theater in the mid to late 1870s.[572] With Degas unwilling to send works from his studio reserve to the exhibition, Durand-Ruel exhibited works from his own inventory, including *The Ballet from Robert le Diable* (1871, fig. 167), and works lent by private collectors, such as *The Ballet Class* (ca. 1880, fig. 168), which he borrowed from Alexander Cassatt. Although Caillebotte only bought directly from artists, Durand-Ruel might have sought to flatter him as a potential client by asking him to lend several important works by Degas to the 1886 exhibition. Despite the personal disputes between Caillebotte and Degas in the early 1880s, the younger

---

"Danseuse" or "Danseuses" and so a complete checklist cannot be recovered. Any one of these works could correspond with the other three dancer pictures Caillebotte had in his collection by 1886: *Study for the Bust of a Ballet Dancer* (between 1878 and 1879, fig. 164), *Ballet (The Star)* (1876/77, fig. 165), and *Seated Dancer* (1881/83, fig. 166). It seems likely that *Seated Dancer* was the picture exhibited as "Danseuse tirant son bas" but the Musée d'Orsay does not list the 1886 exhibition as part of its exhibition history.

[571] See the discussion of Caillebotte's interest in these works by Degas in Chapter 2, 11 rue Le Peletier, 1876: "Il sait bien que c'est ainsi qu'il se fera un nom": Caillebotte's Debut.

[572] The full list of works by Degas included in the 1886 catalogue were listed: "Ballet de Robert Le Diable," "Women in a Café," "Visit to the Museum," "Danseuse," "Washerwomen," "Danseuse tirant son bas," "Danseuses," "Danseuse," "Singer of the Concert Café," "Le Violon," "La Toilette," "Chorus d'Opera," "Danseuse," "Modiste," "Danseuse," "Behind the Wings," "Repetition de Danse," "Danseuse," and "Drawing the Curtain." See *Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris*, 1886, n.p.

artist remained eager to support the best possible showing of work by Impressionist artists and so this arrangement must have appealed to him. These loans represent the only clear leverage that Caillebotte had over the dealer, and so it seems likely that the artist was invited to show works at the exhibition as a condition of his participation as a lender.

Caillebotte's Strategy in 1886

In previous chapters, I have relied on contemporary criticism to reconstruct the installation of works at each of the five Impressionist exhibitions in which Caillebotte participated. Whereas those catalogues list the exhibited work by artist, the exhibition catalogue published to accompany the 1886 New York exhibition lists the works by gallery, offering a clear map of the five rooms in which the 289 works were installed. The ten works that Caillebotte sent to New York are given English titles and the absence of extensive critical responses to his works has limited the extent to which the pictures can be identified. In the first space, "Gallery A," Caillebotte's "Portrait of a Gentleman" is given pride of place alongside Manet's *Portrait of Faure as Hamlet* (1877, fig. 169). Caillebotte exhibited portraits at four of the independent group exhibitions in Paris but in each case, the picture was titled with the initials of its sitter, e.g. the *Portrait of Jules Richemont,* which was exhibited as "Portrait de M. J. R." in 1880.

The specificity of the English title narrows the scope of possibilities to sitters shown in finely appointed settings or wearing markers of their bourgeois status. The *Portrait of Monsieur R.* (1879, fig. 108) the 1878 *Portrait of Richard Gallo* (fig. 83), the *Portrait of Jules Richemont* (1879, fig. 117), and the 1881 *Portrait of Richard Gallo* (fig. 126) meet these conditions, although the informality of the sitters' postures

in these paintings seems antithetical to the English title's insistence on a "gentleman." Instead, the most likely candidates for "Portrait of a Gentleman" are *Portrait of Paul Hugot* (1878, fig. 118) , *Portrait of a Man* (1880, fig. 121), and the *Portrait of Jules Dubois* (1885, fig. 120). Of these three pictures, the *Portrait of Paul Hugot* is an almost irresistible possibility given its resonances with Manet's *Portrait of Faure*, which hung in the same gallery.[573] The two paintings are close in size and format and both feature a full-length figure, standing in front of a near-monochrome, spatially undefined background.[574] Both men are carefully costumed; Jean-Baptiste Faure appears as the title character from Ambroise Thomas's *Hamlet*, a role he had played over one hundred times at the Paris Opera in the 1860s and 1870s, while Hugot appears in the elegant attire and top hat of a bourgeois gentleman, with papers and gloves tucked into his vest. Hugot holds his walking stick upright, resting against his right arm while Faure points his drawn sabre with his right hand.

Beyond the portraits by Caillebotte and Manet, Gallery A was largely dedicated to masterpieces of contemporary French painting, including Manet's *The Fifer* (1866, fig. 170), Degas's *Ballet de Robert le Diable*, Henry Lerolle's *The Organ Rehearsal* (1885, fig. 171), and Caillebotte's *The Floor-Scrapers*, the painting with which he had made his public debut in 1876. Gallery B was reserved for works on paper and included no works by Caillebotte. In Gallery C, Caillebotte exhibited a

---

[573] The *Portrait of Paul Hugot* was in private hands by 1886, having been given to the sitter soon after it was painted. Hugot lent the painting back to Caillebotte so that it could be included, *hors catalogue*, in the 1880 exhibition as a substitution for the planned exhibition of a self-portrait that Caillebotte was unable to complete in time.

[574] The *Portrait of Paul Hugot* is 204 x 92 cm, while Manet's *Portrait of Faure* measures 194 x 131.5 cm.

painting titled "Snow Effect," two landscapes that had not been previously exhibited, and "Child in a Garden," which was probably *Camille Daurelle dans le Parc Yerres* (1877, fig. 172), from the 1880 exhibition.[575] "Snow Effect" was probably *Toits sous la neige, Paris* (1878, fig. 100), a view of the Paris rooftops that was admired by F.-C. de Syène when it was first shown at the 1879 exhibition.[576] The two landscape studies, *Landscape – Study in Yellow and Rose* (1884, fig. 173) and *Landscape – Study in Yellow and Green* (1884, fig. 174), were relatively recent works, painted near his property in Petit Gennevilliers in the summer of 1884. At the 1886 exhibition, they were installed alongside landscapes by Monet, Pissarro, and Guillaumin. Also on view in this gallery were a large group of works by Morisot and several important works by Signac and Seurat.

In Gallery D, Caillebotte exhibited two paintings, "Paddling Canoe" and "Trees in Blossom," now known as *Marroniers Rouges, Argenteuil* (1883, fig. 175).[577] In her 1994 catalogue raisonné, Marie Berhaut identifies the boating picture as *Skiffs* (1877, fig. 176), although its title would fit a number of paintings from the mid- to late 1870s. In the final gallery, Caillebotte showed two more pictures: "Before

---

[575] Berhaut proposes this identification in her catalogue raisonné, see Berhaut 1994, 99, no. 70.

[576] "Deux *Vues de toits* du même artiste, peintes dans une note simple et puissante, étendent au loin des flots d'ardoises, de tuiles, de pignons, de gouttières, de mansardes, de girouettes, et de cheminées." F.-C. de Syène, "Salon de 1879," *L'Artiste* (May 1, 1879), 289-293, as cited in Berson 1996, I:242-244.

[577] Berhaut makes this identification in Berhaut 1994, 171, no. 261. The title – *Trees in Blossom* – is ambiguous but because Berhaut was able to examine *Marronniers Rouges, Argenteuil* in person and I have not, I am inclined to trust her identification of the picture as the one exhibited in New York in 1886.

the Window," probably *Interior, Woman at the Window*, and "The Rowers," a title that would suit a number of boating pictures from the late 1870s, including *Boating on the Yerres* (1877, fig. 177).[578]

When we consider the full range of pictures that Caillebotte chose to exhibit at Durand-Ruel's 1886 exhibition in New York and the identifications proposed above, patterns begin to emerge. Of the ten works, seven had been exhibited at previous independent exhibitions and the remaining three represented his recent work in Petit Gennevilliers. *The Floor-Scrapers* was shown in the first gallery as a signature masterpiece by the artist, in keeping with French critics' infatuation with the painting in the years after its debut.[579] Otherwise, the other previously exhibited works were drawn from the 1879 and 1880 exhibitions. What is most striking about this group of ten pictures is that none were works exhibited at the 1877 exhibition, one of the most critically successful exhibitions of Caillebotte's career. His major canvases from 1877 – *Paris Street, Rainy Day*, *The Pont de l'Europe*, and *The House Painters* – remained in his studio in 1886 and while it would have been logistically difficult to ship *Paris Street*, it is a smaller canvas than Lerolle's *The Organ Rehearsal*, which was shipped to New York in 1886 after being shown at the Salon in 1885.[580]

---

[578] Berhaut identifies *Canotiers* as the picture exhibited in New York in 1886; see Berhaut 1994, 103, no. 83.

[579] See the discussion of the lasting impact of *The Floor-Scrapers* on the critical reception of Caillebotte in the 1870s and 1880s in Chapter 2, 11 rue Le Peletier, 1876: Caillebotte's Reception in 1876.

[580] Base de données: Salon de 1885.

With regards to their placement in galleries, Caillebotte's pictures tended to correspond thematically to other works on view –*The Floor Scrapers* hung in the gallery dedicated to important works from the past ten years, his landscapes appeared alongside landscapes by other artists, and his scenes of outdoor leisure were shown alongside pictures of similar types in galleries D and E. This supports the hypothesis that Caillebotte chose to participate in the 1886 exhibition as a show of support for Monet, Sisley, and Renoir, artists who had had to choose between the eighth Impressionist exhibition in Paris and Durand-Ruel's venture in New York. Caillebotte's loyalty to these core members of the Impressionist group was personal, as well as artistic and aesthetic. As I argue in Chapters Two and Three of this dissertation, Caillebotte's exhibition strategy in Paris was motivated, in part, by his ambition to align his works with those by key members of the Impressionist group. This was especially true at the 1879 and 1880 exhibitions, from which Caillebotte selected six works to be re-exhibited in New York. The three works that he exhibited for the first time in 1886 – *Landscape – Study in Yellow and Rose*, *Landscape – Study in Yellow and Green* and *Marroniers Rougers, Argenteuil* were landscapes that corresponded to similar works on view in galleries C, D, and E, particularly the comparable landscapes exhibited by Monet and Pissarro.

Although they hung in adjacent galleries, the resonances between Caillebotte's landscape *Study in Yellow and Rose* and Monet's *The Wheat Field* (1881, fig. 178) reflect the younger artist's continued interest in exhibiting works aligned with those by his closest artistic ally in the 1880s. Both paintings present views of fields delineated with bold blocks of heavily worked color and high horizon lines. Monet cuts a curving green path from the foreground to midground to create a convincing recession of

space, while Caillebotte relies on the plunging rows of pink and green to draw the viewer's eye back to the horizon. He further simplified his landscape studies to land and sky, with little detail at the horizon line. While Monet's paintings retain the *tachiste* brushwork that was typical of the artist's landscapes from the mid-1880s, Caillebotte works his fields in smooth bands of delineated colors that place further emphasis on his simplified and structured composition. In its reduction of the foreground and midground to bands of colors, Caillebotte's *Study in Yellow and Rose* and *Study in Yellow and Green* resonated with Monet's *Poppy Field in a Hollow Near Giverny* (1885, fig. 179), which was exhibited in 1886 under the title "Poppies in Bloom" in gallery E..[581] By exhibiting the two landscape studies in a gallery adjacent to the ones that included Monet's similar views of Vétheuil and Giverny, Caillebotte revived his previously established exhibition strategy of balancing a cohesive group aesthetic while retaining his own distinctive set of compositional interests. He did not choose to exhibit the drastically elevated views of the shore at Trouville that he had completed in the summer of 1882, instead choosing to emphasize the link between his work and that of Monet, while still showcasing his signature plunging perspectives and more moderately elevated horizon lines.

Success at the American Art Galleries

The bonding privilege that allowed dealers to import pictures without paying any tariff was intended for non-profit institutions devoted to cultural education. The

---

[581] Varnedoe makes this comparison in his discussion of Caillebotte's landscape paintings from 1884, although he does not contextualize this comparison by considering the exhibition history of these two paintings. See Varnedoe 1987, 172.

show that opened on April 10, 1886, was derided by Durand-Ruel's competitors in Manhattan, who saw it as a commercial exhibition that unfairly avoided paying the thirty percent tariff. The venture was subsequently moved to the National Academy of Design in May, a "duly constituted educational institution," as Gerald Bolas puts it, in an attempt to neutralize the animosity growing among American dealers. In its second run, the show was expanded with twenty-one additional works lent by prominent collectors, including H.O. Havemeyer and Alexander Cassatt. A new catalogue was printed to coincide with the reopening of the exhibition on May 25, and it listed lenders by name, effectively reminding audiences that the pictures from Durand-Ruel's stock were, in fact, for sale. In the end, he sold nineteen works for a total value of $18,000.[582] Commercially, the exhibition was not a triumph, but it helped Durand-Ruel forge relationships with American collectors, which seems to have been his aim. Erwin Davis, Alden Weyman Kingman, Havemeyer and James Sutton all bought pictures from the show.[583]

These relationships led Durand-Ruel to arrange for a second exhibition to be held at the American Art Galleries in 1887 and the disputes over tariff owed continued.[584] The American Art Association found itself under investigation and decided to incorporate as the "American Art Association for the Promotion and Encouragement of Art," an organization that would import works for exhibition and

---

[582] Bolas 1998, 200.

[583] Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, 142-143.

[584] This exhibition is described by Thompson in her essay on Durand-Ruel in America. See Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, 146.

not for sale. Their plan was to pay duty only on individual works as they sold. The American custom authorities countered that all works that were imported under duty-free bond would have to return to France.[585] Works purchased from exhibitions organized by the American Art Association, then, would have to return to France and be re-imported into the United States. The ongoing struggle over the tariffs paid on imported works from France prompted Durand-Ruel to establish a gallery in New York to serve as the base for his operations and relationships with American collectors.[586]

The 1886 exhibition may not have generated sales that justified the effort or cost, but it gave Durand-Ruel the foothold he needed to cultivate an American market for contemporary French painting.[587] That said, the critical reception of the exhibition was mixed. In a review that ran in *The Art Amateur*, a critic contextualized the exhibition for his American audience by pointing to the Old Masters – Monet was a follower of Turner and Pissarro of Millet, while Seurat's canvases recalled early Italian frescoes.[588] About Seurat's paintings, he remarked that they would be more effective if they hung from the Trinity Church steeple, so they could be seen from

---

[585] Bolas 1998, 203.

[586] "Biography of Paul Durand-Ruel," in Durand-Ruel and Durand-Ruel eds. 2014, 199-205.

[587] The American Art Association agreed to cover all exhibition costs – shipping, insurance, marketing, and the catalogue – against a commission on works sold. See Weitzenhoffer 1986, 40.

[588] "The Impressionist Exhibition," *Art Amateur* 14 (1886), 121.

Wall Street Ferry.[589] Seurat was a newcomer to the group of Impressionist painters, but this critique echoes responses to works by Monet and Pissarro at the 1882 exhibition.[590] In a generous review for *The Critic*, one American writer recognized the significance of the exhibition as an introduction of contemporary French painting to stateside audiences.[591] He wrote that Monet exhibited "some of the most delicious landscapes ever painted," while Cassatt's paintings ranked "with all but the best of the French school." In summary, "New York has never seen a more entertaining exhibition than this."[592] Luther Hamilton went even further, describing the exhibition as "one of the most important artistic events that ever took place in this country."[593]

Other writers were less generous in their evaluation of the works on view at the American Art Association. For John Smith, writing about the exhibition two years later, most of the paintings were nothing more than "French smears."[594] The reviewer for *The New York Herald* had lodged a similar complaint, writing that a number of

---

589 "In this gallery, a big bathing scene by Seurat, though it has the advantage of the full length of the room, cannot yet be seen from a sufficient distance. It has some of the qualities of an early Italian fresco, and if placed at the top of Trinity steeple and viewed from Wall Street Ferry it might look very well." "The Impressionist Exhibition," *Art Amateur* 14 (1886), 121.

590 See the discussion of the critical reception of the 1882 exhibition in this chapter, 6 East 23rd Street, 1886: 'M. Caillebotte et son école': The Critics in 1882.

591 "The Fine Arts: The French Impressionists," *The Critic* (April 17, 1886), 195.

592 *The Critic* (April 17, 1886), 195.

593 Luther Hamilton, "The Works of the Paris Impressionists in New York," *The Cosmopolitan* vol. I (1886), 240-242.

594 John Smith, "Some Plain Words on American Taste in Art," *Magazine of Art* II (1888), 114.

artists had sent "some studies, not pictures […] there is a lustful rioting in color, which has never been shown in this country."[595] And from London, William Frith wrote that he "hoped that the Impressionists will not be allowed to play their pranks in the Royal Academy Exhibition, for this craze will pass away as everything foolish and fake does."[596] His identification of all the participating painters as Impressionists speaks to the branding success of Durand-Ruel's first major venture in the United States. Coincidentally, a translation of Alfred Stevens' *Impressions on Painting* was published in New York in the fall of 1886.[597] Its editor took pains to explain to their American audience that Stevens made paintings free of the "diseases and exaggerations" that plagued French art and that he was "an Impressionist in the highest artistic sense of the term, because he strives for beauty and not for ugliness."[598] Stevens had never exhibited with the Impressionist group and his editor and translator sought to distance him from those painters while still capitalizing on the marketing successes of Durand-Ruel that collapsed all of contemporary French painting under this single category of "Impressionism".

To these writers in New York and London, the definition of Impressionism was fluid. While the critical debates about *impressionnisme* in the French press centered on discussions of finish, subject matter, group identity, and subjectivity, in

---

[595] *New York Herald* (April 10, 1886), 2.

[596] W.P. Frith, "Crazes in Art," *Magazine of Art* II (1888), 187.

[597] See further discussion of this corresponding publication in Huth 1946, 243-244.

[598] Alfred Stevens, *Impressions on Painting,* translated by C. Adams (New York: G.J. Coombes, 1886), xi-xiv.

the British and American press, the term "Impressionist" was used to categorize all non-academic, contemporary French art as it was exhibited abroad. Hamilton, in his review for *The Cosmopolitan*, was one of the few critics to point to the independence of the Impressionists within the French system, calling the exhibition "a glorious protest against the everlasting commonplace."[599] Otherwise, American writers, and collectors considered "Impressionism" a catch-all term for forward-looking French painting in the 1880s and Durand-Ruel was able to capitalize on this shorthand by further positioning himself as the leading dealer in this new market. This success was enough to guarantee that another exhibition would be held in 1887, and, when it opened on May 25th, the fact that Durand-Ruel would exhibit French paintings in New York had lost its sensational quality – Pissarro had already begun to call it a *salon annuel*.[600] By November 1887, Durand-Ruel had moved his American headquarters to 297 Fifth Avenue and had begun to hold regular auctions of French painting.[601]

The familiar critiques of Caillebotte's treatment of perspective and use of color were absent from the American criticism in 1886 and his work was generally well-received. In *The Critic*, *The Floor Scrapers* was lauded as "a picture of singular aim and admirable execution," but there were dissenters, including the writer for *The Art Amateur*, who predicted that it would "seem to many disagreeably cold in color, and

---

[599] Hamilton 1886, 240.

[600] See letter from Pissarro to Durand-Ruel, November 4, 1886, as published in Venturi 1939, II:23.

[601] Durand-Ruel would soon turn his American business over to his sons, Joseph, Georges, and Charles. Thompson in Patry ed. 2015, 148.

his subtle distinctions of values will hardly suffice to make it popular."[602] As Mary Morton writes in an essay on Caillebotte's lifetime reception: "the somber-toned painting must have felt discordant" alongside landscapes by Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley.[603] Furthermore, American critics did not seem to notice Caillebotte's other works in the galleries dedicated to *plein air* painting by the other core members of the Impressionist group. His efforts to align himself with Monet, Renoir, and Sisley – painters he had followed to New York instead of participating the independent exhibition being organized in Paris – were a failure, as critics did not recognize Caillebotte's work as belonging to the landscape school that had come to epitomize Impressionist painting in the mid-1880s.

In *The Art Amateur*, Caillebotte was identified as among "the less-known and presumably younger members of the school," but no other critic mentioned his work in the context of his fellow landscapists.[604] Although Caillebotte took care to select works that would correspond with those by his closest Impressionist allies, critics only took notice of *The Floor Scrapers* in the first gallery of the exhibition. The reviewer for *The New York Herald* named Caillebotte and Degas as the only members of the group who appreciated "the beautiful in nature," but Caillebotte's work in galleries C, D, or E was not described in any detail.[605] None of Caillebotte's pictures entered any

---

[602] "The Fine Arts: The French Impressionists," *The Critic* (April 17, 1886), 120, and "The Impressionist Exhibition," *The Art Amateur* (May 1886), 14.

[603] Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 68.

[604] "The Impressionist Exhibition," *The Art Amateur* (May 1886), 14

[605] See the aforementioned reviews of the exhibition, as well as "Fine Arts: Exhibition of the Plein-Airistes," *The Nation* vol. 42, no. 1085 (April 15, 1886), 328.

of the early American collections of Impressionism.[606] His work would not be shown at another American exhibition until 1955, when *Boating on the Yerres* and *The Nap* (1877, fig. 180) were included in "Off for the Holidays: A Loan Exhibition of Holiday Travel, Sites, Pastimes, Sports and Pleasures," on view at the Wadsworth Atheneum that spring.[607] Caillebotte would partner with Durand-Ruel once more, exhibiting works in Paris in the spring of 1888 at his final lifetime exhibition.

3 rue de la Régence, 1888

After the close of the second run of Durand-Ruel's exhibition at the National Academy of Design in May 1886, Caillebotte's ten paintings returned to Paris. The artist had not travelled to New York to see his American debut. He continued to split his time between Paris and the suburbs and in the summer of 1886, he made further investments in his life outside of the city, financing a new boatyard in Petit Gennevilliers.[608] He traveled to Vétheuil and the Loire valley that summer, making sketches in Blois and Chaumont.[609] In 1887, he bought his brother Martial out of his

---

606 According to Distel, the pictures were listed with prices in an annotated catalogue held in the Durand-Ruel archives, but there is no evidence that either Caillebotte or Durand-Ruel actively sought buyers for the pictures and none sold during the artist's lifetime. See Distel ed. 1994, 317.

607 *Off for the Holidays: A Loan Exhibition of Holiday Travel, Sites, Pastimes, Sports and Pleasures, April 14 to June 6, 1955* (Hartford, CT: Wadsworth Atheneum, 1955). The consequences of this seven-decade hiatus are explored in Caroline Shields, "Caillebotte's Posthumous Reputation, 1894-1994," in Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 214-249.

608 Distel ed. 1994, 317.

609 As evidenced by drawings published in Christopher Lloyd, "An Unknown Sketchbook by Gustave Caillebotte," *Master Drawings* vol. 26, no. 2, (Summer 1988), 107-118 and 145-169, 116-117, f. 30, 31, and 33.

share of the property in Petit Gennevilliers and purchased several new tracts of land and buildings adjacent to the property.[610] During this period, he did not exhibit his work in Paris or abroad, although he did lend Monet's *Apartment Interior* to an exhibition held at the Galerie Georges Petit in May 1887.[611] On February 4, 1888, the fifth annual exhibition of Les XX opened at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels with eight works by Caillebotte: *Man at his Bath*, *Portrait of Jules Dubois, Portrait of Richard Gallo and his Dog*, *Portrait of E. J. Fontaine* (1885, fig. 181), *Sunflowers Along the Seine* (1885, fig. 182), *Le Petit Bras de la Seine à Argenteuil* (1887, fig. 183), *Arbres en Fleur, Petit Gennevilliers* (1885, fig. 184), and *Langouste à la Parisienne* (1880-82, fig. 185). The exhibition – Caillebotte's first outside the Impressionist group – would be the artist's final lifetime exhibition outside of Paris. In order to understand why Caillebotte chose to exhibit with Les XX in 1888, we must first briefly consider the history and organization of the group and their annual exhibitions.

Les XX before 1888

Les XX was the name adopted by a group of artists who showed work annually in exhibitions organized in Brussels between 1884 and 1893. The exhibition series gained international recognition as one of the most important avant-garde forums of its time. Over the course of nine exhibitions, 126 invited artists, or *invités*, from France,

---

[610] Distel ed. 1994, 317.

[611] Listed as no. "72 – Un coin d'appartement, Appartient à M. G. Caillebotte," *Exposition Internationale de Peinture et de Sculpture, sixième année, du 8 Mai au 8 Juin 1887* (Paris: Galerie Georges Petit, 1887).

Great Britain, the United States, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Norway showed works. The exhibitions grew to include lectures, poetry readings, and musical performances, all held in the gallery spaces. Just as the formation of the Impressionist group has been considered within the context of social and political conditions in France in the 1860s and 1870s, historians of Les XX have pointed to a period of social and economic turbulence during the formation of the group. Given the comparatively liberal policies of Kings Leopold I and II, Brussels had emerged as a refuge for political exiles. As a cultural center with a constitutionally-protected press, Brussels saw an influx of radical ideas in the 1880s, which led to a period of political turbulence that saw strikes demanding better labor protections, universal suffrage, and an overhaul of state education policies.[612]

As Jane Block explains in her history of Les XX, the group had its roots in L'Essor, an artists' organization founded in 1876 that operated outside of the state system of Salons and juries.[613] Despite their independence from the Academic system, L'Essor cultivated the patronage of several important figures, including King Leopold. Within the group, there emerged a liberal faction opposed to this official patronage and the artist Léon Herbo became their target, despised for his "false taste" and "horribly pretentious" academic paintings.[614] In 1883, Frantz Charlet proposed

---

[612] Jane Block, "Les XX: Forum of the Avant-Garde," in *Belgian Art: 1880-1914* (Brooklyn, NY: Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1980), 17-41, 17.

[613] Block 1980, 18.

[614] As they were described in *L'Art Moderne*, a publication that emerged as Les XX's principal defender in the 1880s. See "Septième Exposition de l'Essor," *L'Art Moderne* (January 28, 1883), 29.

that Herbo be excluded from the next L'Essor exhibition. Frantz was censured and along with ten other artists, he withdrew from the group to form Les XX.[615] They chose the name because L'Essor had been founded by twenty artists and its juries comprised of twenty members, so the founding artists set out to recruit nine additional members. The group agreed to organize without a constitution, president, or jury and by late October 1883, the Belgian art critic Octave Maus had accepted the position of Secretary and organizer of the annual exhibitions.[616]

In a letter to his cousin, Eugène Boch, Maus described the formation of Les XX as "a great uprising against everything that is academic, conventional, old fashioned […] we propose to topple everything, and [to] put our poor bourgeois country back on the map."[617] Maus and a committee of three rotating members would meet each year to select invited artists and to organize the exhibitions. The group's anti-hierarchical ideology extended to the installation of those exhibitions, with works grouped according to artist and their placement determined by lot, arranged at the artist's discretion. From the outset, Les XX positioned their annual exhibitions as international events, inviting foreign artists to exhibit works alongside those by both younger and more established members of the Belgian avant-garde. Maus sought to secure the participation of a diverse group of *invités* by deploying members to

---

615 Block 1980, 18.

616 "Chronologie," in Anne Adriaens-Pannier and Micheline Colin eds., *Les XX et La Libre Esthétique: Cent Ans Après* (Brussels: Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, 1993), 17-176, 21.

617 Letter from Maus to Boch, November 1, 1883, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Bouquelle, inventory no. 3900, as cited in Block 1980, 39.

intercede on the group's behalf and to strengthen artistic ties between Brussels and Paris, in particular. Théo van Rysselberghe was especially persuasive, securing the participation of Armand Guillaumin, Albert Dubois-Pillet, and Louis Anquetin in 1887 and of Signac and Vincent Van Gogh in 1889.[618] He effectively discovered Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, inviting him to make his public debut at the 1888 exhibition.

Caillebotte and Maus

In 1885, Maus travelled to Paris to personally invite Monet and Renoir to send works to the 1886 exhibition, laying the foundation for the future participation of members of the Impressionist group.[619] Their impact on the critical response to the exhibition was immediate, with a reviewer for *Le Nord* writing that the 1886 exhibition was a "sanctuary for Impressionism."[620] The critics collapsed all of the participating artists under this single label, "les impressionnistes," using it to describe James Ensor, Alfred Finch, and Jan Toorop.[621] They derided the unfinish of the works on view and they accused Ensor and his group of copying Monet and Renoir.[622]

---

[618] Adriaens-Pannier and Colin eds. 1993, 40-41 and 45-47.

[619] Adriaens-Pannier and Colin eds. 1993, 28-29. See also a letter from van Rysselberghe to Maus, May 27, 1886, reporting that he had heard the Impressionists were "étonnant" and asking him to go look and to "songe au XX." Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 6329.

[620] "L'Exposition du Cercle des XX," *Le Nord* (February 13, 1886).

[621] Block 1980, 26.

[622] A.-J. Wauters, "Aux XX," *La Gazette* (March 14, 1886); and "Les XX," *Le Journal des Beaux-Arts* (February 15, 1886), 20.

Despite the press's negative reception of the invited French painters, Maus was not discouraged from inviting other members of the Impressionist group. In 1887, Morisot and Pissarro sent works to be exhibited and as plans began to come together for the 1888 exhibition, Maus invited Sisley, Degas, and Caillebotte to show works with Les XX. Both Sisley and Degas declined but Caillebotte agreed and sent works to be exhibited alongside those by Jean-Louis Forain, Paul Signac, and Toulouse-Lautrec, among others.[623]

Caillebotte responded by letter to Maus's invitation on December 8, 1887: "I thank you for the honor of your invitation to participate in the 1888 exhibition of Les XX and I accept with the greatest pleasure. I do not now as of yet what exactly I will send but I will send you a list before January 1st."[624] As promised, that list was sent by mail on December 29:

> I will send four painting, two of which are fairly large. Do I need to give you the dimensions before sending them? Here are the titles,

---

[623] These replies are known primarily through letters to Maus currently held in the Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, and as cited in Adriaens-Pannier Colin 1993, 40-41. For example, Degas declines to participate in an undated letter, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 5033.

[624] "8 décembre 87. Monsieur, Je vous remercie de l'honneur que vous me faites en me demandant de participer à l'exposition des XX pour 1888 et j'accepte votre invitation avec le plus grand plaisir. Je ne saurais dès aujourd'hui vous dire exactement ce que j'enverrai mais je vous enverrai une notion avant le 1er janvier. Veuillez agréer, Monsieur, l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments. G Caillebotte." Letter from Caillebotte to Maus, dated December 8, 1887, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 5025. This letter, along with nos. 5026, 5027, and 5028, are not included in the correspondence anthology that appears in Berhaut 1994, 273-280, and to my knowledge, have not been published as part of the Caillebotte scholarship.

1º Homme au bain
2º Étude de soleils
3º Portrait de M. J.D.
4º Nature morte

I will wait to hear from you with shipping instructions.[625]

Maus's replies have been lost but Caillebotte wrote once again on January 11, 1888, with news that he had sent eight canvases to "M. André, packer" to prepare for shipment. He continues:

> I would like to come to Brussels for this exhibition. Please tell me if it would be best to arrive the day before the opening or several days before. How will the placement of the paintings [be determined] etc. etc. I think you will find it quite natural that an artist is interested in how his paintings are exhibited.[626]

---

[625] "29 décembre 87. Monsieur, Je vous enverrai 4 tableaux dont 2 assez grands. Faut-il vous donner les dimensions avant de faire l'envoi ? Voici les titres,

1° Homme au bain
2° Étude de soleils
3° Portrait de M. J. D.
4° Nature morte

J'attends un mot de vous pour tous les renseignements relatifs aux envois. Veuillez agréer l'expression de mes meilleurs sentiments, G. Caillebotte." Letter from Caillebotte to Maus, dated December 29, 1887, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 5026.

[626] "11 janvier 88. Monsieur, J'ai remis à M. André, emballeur, 8 tableaux dont je vous envoie le catalogue. Je désire aller à Bruxelles pour cette exposition. Vous seriez bien aimable de me dire s'il suffira d'y arriver la veille de l'ouverture et non plusieurs jours avant. Comment se fait le classement des tableaux etc. etc. Je crois que vous trouverez tout naturel qu'un peintre s'intéresse à la façon dont se fait l'exposition de ses toiles. Veuillez agréer l'assurance de mes meilleurs sentiments, G. Caillebotte" Letter from Caillebotte to Maus, dated December 8, 1887, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 5027.

Maus must have replied with an invitation because Caillebotte writes once more, on January 14, to thank him: "Thank you for this honor and I accept with absolute pleasure [your invitation] to take part in the banquet."[627] Accounts of Caillebotte's travel over the course of his life have been reconstructed through correspondence and, occasionally, sketchbooks, but no published chronologies include a trip to Brussels in January or February 1888.[628] The extant correspondence between Maus and Caillebotte is limited to these four letters and it seems doubtful that we will ever know for certain if Caillebotte attended the 1888 exhibition of Les XX in person.

"L'étroit refuge"

Despite the uncertainty of whether Caillebotte attended the exhibition and the corresponding banquet, these letters do tell us that Caillebotte took an active role in the selection and installation of his group of works in Brussels. From the December 29 letter, the planned list of exhibited works was expanded from four to eight. The January 14 letter mentions an unframed picture but Caillebotte reassured Maus, "the frame will arrive in Brussels on the 28 or 29 at the latest. It will be easy to reserve a

---

[627] "14 janvier 88. Monsieur, Je vous remercie beaucoup quel honneur que vous me faites et j'accepte avec le plus grand plaisir de prendre part à votre banquet. J'ai oublié de vous dire que dans l'envoi que je vous ai fait Il y a un tableau qui n'a pas de cadre. Le cadre arrivera au plus tard le 28 ou le 29 à Bruxelles. Il sera donc facile de réserver la place de ce tableau. Veuillez agréer l'assurance de mes meilleurs sentiments. G. Caillebotte." Letter from Caillebotte to Maus, dated December 8, 1887, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 5028.

[628] See, for example, Distel 1994, 311-318 and Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 233-239.

space for this picture."[629] The number of works exhibited by each invited artist ranged from one each by Jacques-Emile Blanche and Jules-Clémont Chaplain to twelve and thirteen by Signac and Dubois-Pillet, but a majority of the participating painters submitted between six and eight works. Perhaps Caillebotte's list expanded from four to eight at the encouragement of Maus, so that his group of works would be comparable to that of his fellow *invités*. Caillebotte initially planned to exhibit a large-scale male nude, a portrait, a view of sunflowers along the Seine, and a still-life of a traditionally-prepared lobster dish. The final, expanded checklist included a painting of Richard Gallo walking his dog, a portrait of his neighbor and friend, E.J. Fontaine, and two additional landscapes. These changes do not represent an overhaul of Caillebotte's vision for his group of works but instead an expansion of two existing categories: portraits and outdoor scenes. Six of the eight paintings listed in the exhibition catalogue were made between 1884 and 1885. Only *Langouste à la Parisienne* was an older picture, having been made at some point between 1880 and 1882. *Le Petit Bras de la Seine à Argenteuil* was the most recent picture sent to Brussels; signed and dated 1888, it was probably completed in 1887, given the timeline of its exhibition. None of the paintings that Caillebotte sent to be exhibited with Les XX had been previously shown in Paris or New York.

Both the initial draft and the final checklist have the same painting listed first: the large-scale *Man at his Bath*, which Caillebotte signed and dated 1884.[630]

---

[629] Letter from Caillebotte to Maus, dated December 8, 1887, Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus, inventory no. 5028.

[630] Caillebotte painted another male nude in 1884, *Man Drying his Leg* (1884, fig. 186), which is an unfinished study of a model in the same space.

Measuring 145 by 114 centimeters unframed, it must have been one of the two works that he described to Maus as "fairly large" in his December 1887 letter. At three-quarters life-size, the signed and dated nude is one of Caillebotte's most ambitious paintings and one of the largest canvases he completed in the 1880s. Paintings and pastel drawings of nude women in private domestic interiors by Adolpe-Félix Cals, Degas, Guillaumin, and Gauguin had been exhibited at the 1877, 1881, and 1886 Impressionist exhibitions in Paris, but male nudes were exceedingly rare outside of history painting.[631] Bazille had made paintings of nude and nearly-nude men *en plein air* but the intimacy of Caillebotte's austere interior setting is unmatched in paintings by his Impressionist colleagues.[632] The view is that of a voyeur, observing the muscular young man who has just stepped out of the bath, leaving wet footprints on the floor.[633] His nudity is underscored by the abandoned towel on the floor, the pile of clothes on the chair, and his boots, neatly placed on the left side of the canvas. The viewer sees him from behind, toweling off his midsection with his legs shoulder-width apart. The focus of the picture, slightly off-center to the left but at the vertical center of the composition, is the man's buttocks and scrotum, barely visible between his legs. He faces the light and the right side of his body is rendered in partial shadow.

---

[631] See, for example, Cals, *Femme couchée, étude* (1876, fig. 187), exhibited in 1877; Degas, *Woman Leaving her Bath*, exhibited in 1877; Guillemin, *Femme couchée* (1877, fig. 188), exhibited in 1877; Gauguin, *Étude de nu*, exhibited in 1881; and Degas, *Le Tub* (1886, fig. 189), exhibited in 1886. Morisot also took up the subject of a woman at her toilette, although her paintings did not feature nude models – see, for example, *Femme à sa toilette* (1879-1880, fig. 190), exhibited in 1880.

[632] See, for example, *Fisherman with a Net* (1867, fig. 191) and *Summer Scene (Bathers)*, (1869-70, fig. 192).

[633] In his analysis of the painting, Marrinan argues that the figure turns his back to the viewer "to avoid a crisis of full-frontal nudity." Marrinan 2017, 278.

Varnedoe was the first art historian to write about this picture, which he compares to "numerous paintings and pastels of Degas."[634] In the expanded version of his 1976 exhibition catalogue, he dedicates a whole entry to the painting, which he pairs as a pendant with Caillebotte's large-scale female nude, *Nude on a Couch* (1880, fig. 193), now in the collection of the Minneapolis Institute of Art. He writes that the moment depicted in the male nude, "is more casual, with none of the problematic sexual overtones of the Minneapolis picture."[635] He goes on to describe the painting as one that locks its figure into a grid of horizontal and verticals. For Varnedoe, the figure is "more planar and less complex" than Degas's nude subjects from the 1870s and 1880s.[636] The painting was included in an exhibition that traveled to the Grand Palais, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in 1994 and 1995. In the accompanying catalogue, it is characterized as a picture that "eludes easy classification within the category of nudes in nineteenth-century art."[637] The catalogue entry's author, Gloria Groom, explains that frequent bathing was considered "an effeminate activity, associated with the leisure and self-indulgence that so fascinated artists and writers," and noting that Caillebotte's figure appears to be in a hurry, "this is not a ritual of self-indulgence – the man towels himself off with an almost violent intensity and impatience."[638]

---

[634] Varnedoe 1976, 140.

[635] Varnedoe 1987, 164.

[636] Varnedoe 1987, 164.

[637] Distel ed. 1994, 216.

[638] Distel ed. 1994, 216.

In the twenty-five years since Groom's entry, *Man at his Bath* has been examined by art historians in the context of gender and sexuality studies. Michael Fried points to the "autoaffection" of the man's gesture in a 1999 article, while Tamar Garb and Norma Broude use the painting as a touchstone for their explorations of masculinity, homosexuality, and homosociality in their essays for the 2002 anthology *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionist Paris*.[639] In 2015, the painting's "radical provocation" was highlighted in a short catalogue essay about Caillebotte's nudes.[640] In his discussion of the picture for a 2016 monograph on the artist, Michael Marrinan describes the figure as "a modern man who takes care of his entire body, even its most personal parts," and further contextualizes the painting as having been made the same year that Joris-Karl Huysmans published *À Rebours*, with its frank account of the protagonist's homosexual relationship with a schoolboy.[641]

The eventual interpretation of Caillebotte's large-scale male nude as an subversion of heterosexual expectations is in keeping with the painting's original reception at the 1888 exhibition of Les XX. Groom was the first art historian to note that the painting was removed from public view at the exhibition.[642] She cites an anonymous review in *La Chronique* that report that the painting, along with

---

[639] Michael Fried, "Caillebotte's Impressionism"; Norma Broude, "Outing Impressionism: Homosexuality and Homosocial Bonding in the Work of Caillebotte and Bazille"; and "Masculinity, Muscularity, and Modernity in Caillebotte's Male Figures," in Norma Broude ed., *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionist Paris* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002).

[640] Morton and Shackelford eds. 2015, 180-181.

[641] Marrinan 2017, 273-277.

[642] Groom in Distel ed. 1994, no. 83, 216.

Anquetin's *Toile de fond pour Guignol*, was relegated to a "narrow refuge," or secondary gallery space away from the main exhibition. The anonymous reviewer sought out the missing pictures:

> Two elements intrigue us in the catalogue: Monsieurs Anquetin and Caillebotte announced, amidst their submission, two paintings, which hitherto remain unseen. Having gone to the information [office], a charitable but indiscreet soul, offered to satisfy our curiosity. These two paintings were refused… […] the above-mentioned *barnum***,** with the involvement of one or two friends, decided to refuse paintings, not to the members of the honorable society, but to the guests themselves..., which is simultaneously the apex of illogicality, of impudence and of inhospitality! These paintings, we were allowed to view them in the narrow refuge where they were relegated by the high wisdom of these little gentlemen, and, frankly, they would not have harmed the totality of the *salonnet*, on the contrary! They would have thrown a touch of sweet cheerfulness in the midst of the general exasperation.[643]

---

643 "Deux points nous intriguaient dans le catalogue: MM. Anquetin et Caillebotte annonçaient, parmi leur envoi, deux tableaux jusqu'ici demeurés invisibles. Du premier, une *Toile de fond pour Guignol*, et du second un *Homme au bain*. Étant allé aux renseignements, une âme charitable, mais indiscrète, voulut bien satisfaire notre curiosité. Ces deux toiles ont été refusées... Refusées, entendez-vous biens? Oui, le barnum qui, d'un coup de talon vraiment pompéien, fit sortir du bocal aux huiles la vingtaine de joyeux phénomènes, avait surtout pour but de porter un coup mortel à l'institution fameuse du jury de placement et d'acceptation. Or, voici que le susdit barnum, avec la complicité d'un ou de deux copains, a pris sous sa petite toque de refuses des œuvres, non point à des membres de l'honorable société, mais aux invités eux-mêmes..., ce qui est à la fois le comble de l'illogisme, de l'impudence et de l'inhospitalité! Ces tableaux, nous avons été admis à les contempler dans l'étroit refuge où les a relégués la haute sagesse de ces petits messieurs, et, franchement, ils n'auraient nui en rien à l'ensemble du salonnet, au contraire! Ils auraient jeté une note de gaité douceâtre au milieu de l'exaspération générale. La *Toile de fond pour Guignol* surtout aurait fait naître sur les lèvres du visiteur le bon rire qui désarme... Quant à l'*Homme au bain*, le rire aurait été plus communicatif encore ; que dis-je ? Il aurait fait la chaine, jusqu'aux austères bureaux de l'Art moderne, où, dans le silence du cabinet, se triturent les réclames quintessenciées envoyées sans rougir à cette même presse pour laquelle on n'a ni assez insultes, ni assez des sarcasmes!" "Chez les XX," *La Chronique* (February 10, 1888), n.p. In this context, "barnum" refers to an individual who exploits artists and their talents.

The reviewer goes on to describe Anquetin's painting as one that would have brought "a good, disarming laugh on the lips of the visitors," while "when it comes to the *Man at his Bath*, the laugh would have been even more communicative."[644] While the writer does not speculate as to why *Man at his Bath* was pulled from the main exhibition space, he seems to be alluding to Caillebotte's subversion of heteronormative assumptions with his exhibition of a large-scale male nude. The "communicative laugh" is meant to insinuate that Caillebotte's painting was pulled from the main exhibition space because it was an image of a sexualized male body.

Man at his Bath is not mentioned by name in any of the other reviews of the 1888 exhibition but in *La Réforme*, a critic who went by the initials A. Ch. wrote that "Caillebotte did not clean his palette of romantic juice."[645] Rather than making vague insinuations about the homoerotic content of the bathing scene, this writer suggests that Caillebotte himself was engaged in sexual admiration or activity with his sitter.[646]

---

644 "Chez les XX," *La Chronique* (February 10, 1888), n.p.

645 "Caillebotte, lui, n'a point nettoyé sa palette du jus romantique."A.Ch., "Aux XX : Les Impressionnistes," *La Réforme* (February 11, 1888), n.p.

646 Emile Zola used the term "jus romantique" in *Une Campagne, 1880-1881*, as part of his critique of Victor Hugo, writing: "En vérité, de qui Victor Hugo prétend-il se moquer? Après avoir fait le procès au savoir humain, il vient tranquillement nous offrir comme solution je ne sais quelle migration des âmes d'astre en astre, quelle métempsycose doublée de panthéisme et accommodée au jus romantique de 1830. Et il se dit plein de sécurité, et il semble nous prendre en pitié parce que nous nous adressons à la science pour connaître les vérités de l'homme et de la nature." Emile Zola, *Une campagne, 1880-1881* (Paris: E. Fasquelle, 1903), 49-50. There is no context to suggest that A. Ch. is using the phrase "jus romantique" to refer to Romantic writing, painting, or thought and his insistence on the physicality of the artist failing to "nettoyé sa palette" further supports an interpretation of "jus romantique" as semen.

These responses can be better understood by comparing them to the reception of a near-contemporaneous image of a man at his toilette, Maximillien Luce's *Man Washing* (1887, fig. 194). When the painting first went on view at the Salon des Artistes Indépendants in 1887, Jules Christophe described it in his review for the *Journal des Artistes*: "a proletarian, naked to the waist, washing in an attic with a skylight. The green jug in the foreground is worthy of Chardin."[647] Fénéon admired the artist's honesty and his "unpolished, muscular talent. A bare-chested worker washing himself in an attic with no women."[648] Although altogether different in its composition and handling, Luce's painting shares its subject with *Man at his Bath* and its successful exhibition proves that it was not the subject of a man washing up in an austere setting that so troubled the exhibition organizers and critics in 1888, but the nudity of Caillebotte's figure. This crucial difference prompted, for some, an interpretation of the painting as one of same-sex desire, condemning the painting to a secondary exhibition space and prompting gossip about the artist in the pages of *La Chronique* and *La Réforme*.

While there is no contemporary discussion of why the painting was removed from public view, these responses anticipate the interpretations of Caillebotte's male

---

[647] "Mais son œuvre la plus forte est encore 'la toilette': un prolétaire, nu jusqu'à la ceinture, s'ablutionnant dans une mansarde à tabatière: la cruche verte du premier plan vaut du Chardin." Jules Christophe, "Les Évolutionnistes du Pavillon de la Ville de Paris," *Journal des Artistes* (April 24, 1887), 123.

[648] "Un nouveau-venu, un brutal et un loyal au talent fruste el musculeux. Dans des mansardes sans femmes, un ouvrier nu-torse se débarbouille, un autre trempe une croute dans un bol," Félix Fénéon, "L'Impressionnisme," *L'Émancipation sociale* (April 3, 1887), as published in Félix Fénéon, *Œuvres plus que complètes*, edited by Joan U. Halperin (Geneva: Droz, 1970), vol. 1, 68.

nudes posited by Garb and Broude in the 1990s. The suggestion that Caillebotte's work was excluded because of its perceived sexual undertones is also aligned with Morton's argument about the link between Durand-Ruel's exclusion of Caillebotte from the pantheon of Impressionist artist and the threat his work posed to the dealer's conservative social values. Removed from view at the 1888 exhibition, *Man at his Bath* would not be seen by the public at large until the 1994 exhibition opened at the Grand Palais. No surviving letter or document records Caillebotte's reaction to the removal of his largest painting from the main gallery space.

The seven works by Caillebotte that did go on view in the galleries of the 1888 exhibition of Les XX were fairly well-received by critics, who characterized the artist as "the best known of the Impressionists," and as one of the "most interesting exhibitors."[649] The paintings themselves were not discussed in much detail, but two reviewers compared Caillebotte to Manet and another wrote that he sent "absolutely successful" things to be exhibited.[650] Without other Impressionist paintings to create a

---

649 "M. Caillebotte, lui, fut le plus connu des impressionnistes." [Trublot?], "Les XX" *Le Cri du peuple* (February 9, 1888), n.p.; "Citons, parmi les exposants les plus intéressants MM. Anquetin, Caillebotte, Hellen, Signac, Mellery, Vanderstappen, et Mme. Bresnard, parmi les invités; et parmi les vingtistes, MM. De Groux, Khnopff, Charlier, Dubois, Jan Toorop," "Au Musée ancien s'est ouverte hier..." *La Chronique* (February 5, 1888), n.p.

650 "[…] passons à une peinture plus compréhensible, celle de Caillebotte par exemple. Car, chose étrange dans ce milieu étrange, cet élève de Manet qui passait il n'y a pas si longtemps encore pour un révolutionnaire en appel de muselière […]" Th. Hannon, "Le Salon des Vingt" *Le Rapide* (February 5, 1888), n.p.; "MM. Guillaumin, Helleu, Whistler, même le sous-Manet Caillebotte, et Mme. Bresnard," "L'Exposition des XX" *Nation* (February 22, 1888), n.p.; and "Quelques artistes français, MM. Anquetin, Caillebotte, Signac, Guillaumin, Du Bois-Pillet [sic], ont envoyé des choses absolument réussies, qui ont contribué largement au succès de cette ouverture." L.S. "L'Exposition des XX" *La Nation* (February 5, 1888), n.p.

context for his work, Caillebotte's pictures were grouped with those by the "neo-colorists of the *tachiste* school," by at least two reviewers, with one writing for *Le Journal des artistes*:

> Caillebotte, Signac, Dubois-Pillet, Anquetin resolutely walk forward […] their color system is based on the juxtaposition of pure tones to achieve greater intensity of light. Their principle is undeniably right, but for its application one needs talent and the spirit of observation […] They do not seem to care about the laws of harmony that govern nature and whose results cannot escape any well-constituted eye.[651]

The critic for the *Feuilleton du Précurser* was similarly unimpressed, describing in broad strokes the "rather mediocre portraits and landscapes of M. Caillebotte." For Eugène Demolder, Caillebotte's paintings were old-fashioned in comparison to those by the pointillists: "his clumsy-looking portraits are soundly banal, in his coarse landscapes, the thick plasterings of color are completely vulgar."[652] Of the thirty-seven reviews published in response to the exhibition, only fourteen mention the artist by name and only the reviewer for *La Chronique* describes any of his paintings in

---

[651] "Somme toute, le public belge s'amuse et n'a pas l'air de prendre au sérieux le nouvel évangile des néo-coloristes de l'école tachiste." *Le Salon pour tous* (February 5, 1888); and "Les Caillebotte, Signac, Dubois-Pillet, Anquetin marchent résolument en avant […] Leur système de coloration est basé sur la juxtaposition des tons purs pour arriver par là à une plus grande intensité de lumière. Principe incontestablement juste, mais pour l'application duquel il faut du talent et de l'esprit d'observation. C'est ce qui semble manquer un peu à ces Messieurs, car, au lieu d'atteindre la vibration cherché ou voulue, ils arrivent à une incohérence de tons violet et oranges qui fatiguent la rétine. Ils semblent ne pas se préoccuper des lois d'harmonie qui régissent la nature et dont les résultats n'échappent à aucun œil bien constitué." "Correspondance de Belgique : V^{e} Salon annuel des XX à Bruxelles" *Le Journal des artistes* (February 19, 1888), n.p.

[652] "Ses portraits, aux allures gauches, sont lourdement banals; dans ses paysages, des grossièretés, des plaquages de couleurs épais, de la vulgarité tout plein." Eugène Demolder, "L'Exposition des XX," *La société nouvelle* (February 1888), 183.

detail, mentioning that *Man at his Bath* had been cast out of the main gallery space.[653] Despite his enthusiasm for the project and the varied group of works that he sent to be exhibited, Caillebotte had failed to make a lasting impact at the exhibition of Les XX in 1888. Demolder wrote that Caillebotte had missed his moment to exhibit with the avant-garde; he was, "formerly audacious, a precursor to the *néos* of today."[654] He was not invited back to Brussels and while writers frequently contextualized their criticism in the broader group of *invités* to past exhibitions, there is no mention of Caillebotte in any subsequent reviews of the exhibitions organized by Les XX.[655]

11 rue Le Peletier, 1888

Durand-Ruel and the Impressionists, 1886 – 1888

It is unclear if Caillebotte was able to see his works installed in Brussels or if he kept up with the critical response to the exhibition from Paris. In the spring of 1888, he continued to strengthen his ties to Petit Gennevillers, which had become his primary residence. He had three new buildings constructed there: a studio, a hen-

---

653 The reviews that were published in response to the exhibitions of Les XX were collected and anthologized in *cahiers de presse* by members of the group. Those scrapbooks are currently held in the collection of the Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique and have not been digitized or further anthologized. I consulted these materials in person in October 2018.

654 "Parmi les peintres français invités aux XX, nous trouvons encore M. CAILLEBOTTE qui expose trois portraits, une nature morte, quelques paysages. C'est, paraît-il, un audacieux de jadis, un précurseur de néos d'aujourd'hui." Demolder 1888, 183.

655 See the *cahiers de presse* in the collection of the Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique.

house, and a main house. On May 6, he was elected town councilman and by June, he assumed his position on the town commission overseeing education and public festivals. He continued to paint landscapes of the surrounding area, including a view of his own house from the opposite river bank (1888, fig. 195) and of the factory stacks at Argenteuil (1888, fig. 196). In the two years since his exhibition with Durand-Ruel in New York, he had maintained his relationships with that circle of friends and fellow painters in Paris, traveling into the city to meet for dinner and exchanging letters with Monet. The older artist wrote to Caillebotte in September 1887 about the difficulties he was having with his art: "It has been a month since I've done anything good. I scratched and punctured just about everything I have done and I am very disgusted with myself; a beautiful summer lost. Ah, painting, what torture."[656] Caillebotte had drastically slowed his financial support of Monet by the mid-1880s, but remained a close friend and sympathetic ear.[657]

In the spring of 1888, Monet began to discourage his friends from participating in exhibitions with Durand-Ruel. Tensions between the dealer and the artist had been mounting since the dealer's expansion into the American market in the mid-1880s. Monet was dissatisfied with the dealer's degree of control over his pictures relative to the financial support he received in return and he was actively seeking to place his pictures with other dealers such as Georges Petit and the Maison Goupil.[658] He had

---

[656] "Depuis un mois je ne peux plus rien faire de bon. J'ai gratté et crevé à peu près tout ce que j'avais fait et je suis très dégoûté de moi; un été superbe perdu. Ah la peinture quelle torture." Letter from Monet to Caillebotte, September 7, 1887, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:298, letter no. 1424.

[657] Distel ed. 1994, 317.

[658] Patry ed. 2015, 218-219.

asked the dealer repeatedly for money, writing in February 1887, "you tell me that you are not giving up on me, but it's almost that... tell me if at this moment you can buy from me and have some money for me."[659] He was making similar demands of Georges Petit in these months, writing to Alice Hoschedé in February 1888:

> Petit's letter arrived but with nothing in it. I have been told that M. Petit has been very ill and that it is the cause of this delay, and I am told that he does not forget me [...] but the most likely version is that [this] illness is a story, because here is a young man whose mother sees the Petit family every day and who has not mentioned anything to him; I am furious [...][660]

Unhappy with both dealers, Monet sought to distance himself from Durand-Ruel and asked his colleagues to do the same. About a sale of his pictures in late February over which he had no control, he wrote to Alice with renewed desperation:

> [A]t this moment it is done, but when will I know the result? I telegraphed yesterday to Petit, to Durand, van Gogh and Portier begging them to support my paintings; but did they do it? [...] eight paintings that may have sold for nothing. Because if they have not reached at least the prices that I ask of dealers, it is a disaster for me

---

[659] "Quant à moi, vous me dites bien que vous ne m'abandonnez pas, mais c'est presque tout comme. Notez que je ne vous mets pas en demeure de m'acheter des tableaux, mais je vous demande de me fixer franchement pour moi et Troisgros. En deux mots dites-moi si en ce moment vous pouvez m'acheter et disposer d'un peu d'argent pour moi." Letter from Monet to Durand-Ruel, February 25, 1888, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:221, letter no. 772. See also letter no. 773, dated February 27, 1888, "Donc voyez ce que vous pouvez me donner."

[660] "La lettre de Petit est arrivée mais sans rien dedans. On m'a dit que M. Petit a été très malade et que c'est la cause de ce retard, et l'on me dit qu'il ne m'oublie pas, mais qu'il faut me patienter encore un peu. Mais le plus fort, c'est que [cette] maladie est une histoire, car il y a ici un jeune homme dont la mère voit journellement la famille Petit et qui n'en dit mot à son fils; je suis furieux et lui réponds de la belle façon." Letter from Monet to Alice Hoschedé, February 13, 1888, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:229, letter no. 837.

> [...] If at least I had been informed earlier, I could have asked Caillebotte to purchase them and sold him my shares; it would have been better. Finally, I have only to wait for my fate.[661]

As this letter indicates, Monet was still in regular contact with Caillebotte in the early months of 1888 and when he began to lobby his fellow Impressionists to withhold works from Durand-Ruel's exhibition that spring, Caillebotte was likely among those he asked to abstain.

While Monet initially preferred to place his pictures with competing dealers, by April 1888, he had sworn off participation in any dealer-organized exhibition. In a letter to Alice, he wrote: "I renounce it [exhibiting with dealers] altogether and, on my faith, will not do it [again], even at Durand's. My business may be a little worse, but with Durand I would fall back in the whole gang, which I had a hard time withdrawing from. I have had enough [...]"[662] A few weeks later, he wrote to Charles Durand-Ruel

---

[661] "Décidément, nous n'avons que des choses fâcheuses à nous écrire; votre lettre de ce matin datée de Paris me désole pour vous, mais je veux espérer que cette indisposition et votre fatigue vont se passer. Malheureusement, au retour, vous n'imaginez pas dans quelles transes je suis depuis que je sais cette vente; à l'heure qu'il est, c'est chose faite, mais quand en saurai-je le résultat? J'ai télégraphié hier à Petit, à Durand, van Gogh et Portier les priant de soutenir mes tableaux; mais le feront-ils? Songez donc, huit tableaux qui peuvent s'être vendus rien. Car s'ils n'ont pas atteint au moins les prix que je vends aux marchands, c'est un désastre pour moi et l'impossibilité d'avoir de l'argent. Si au moins j'en avais été prévenu plus tôt, j'aurais pu soit m'entendre avec Caillebotte pour les soutenir et vendre mes actions; cela eût mieux valu. Enfin, je n'ai plus qu'à attendre mon sort." Letter from Monet to Alice Hoschedé, February 27, 1888, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:230, letter no. 844.

[662] "J'y renonce tout à fait et, ma foi, n'en ferai pas même chez Durand. Mes affaires en iront peut-être un peu moins bien, mais chez Durand ce sera encore pour retomber dans toute la bande et sa suite, dont j'avais eu du mal à me retirer. J'en ai assez, j'ai eu la bêtise de faire entrer les autres chez Petit; voilà le résultat." Letter from Monet to Durand-Ruel, April 7, 1888, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:234, letter no. 865.

about his frustrations with how he was being treated by both father and son. He effectively cut ties, writing: "I am letting you know that I am retiring from all exhibitions organized at the rue Laffitte." He quickly wrote to Rodin, Whistler, Morisot, and presumably others to ask that they also consider withholding works, but only Rodin agreed not to send anything to be included in Durand-Ruel's exhibition.[663] Despite Monet's last minute mobilization against the project, the exhibition opened on May 25 with works from Durand-Ruel's stock and French collectors.[664]

The 1888 Paris Exhibition

In the midst of this conflict between Monet and Durand-Ruel, Caillebotte voiced his own concerns about the proposed exhibition. In a letter to Monet dated May 3, he wrote: "I do not understand [organizing] a Durand-Ruel exhibition at this time. It seems silly to me."[665] He wrote to the older artist again on May 9: "I saw Renoir yesterday who told me about all this exhibition business. Nobody understands anything. The moral of all this is that it is very unfortunate that we have not been able to continue together as we did ten years ago."[666] Despite his reservations about the

---

[663] See Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:237-238, letter nos. 887, 888, 889, and 891.

[664] This was precisely the practice that Monet complained about, see his letter to Morisot, as published in Wildenstein 1974-1991, III:237-238, letter no. 891.

[665] "Je ne comprends rien à cette exposition Durand-Ruel, à cette époque. Cela me semble idiote." Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, May 3, 1888, as published in Artcurial 2006, no. 31, 22.

[666] "J'ai vu Renoir hier qui m'a parlé de toutes ces affaires d'exposition. Personne n'y comprend plus rien. La morale de tout ceci c'est que c'est bien regrettable que nous n'ayons pu continuer tous ensemble comme il y a 10 ans." Letter from Caillebotte to Monet, May 3, 1888, as published in Artcurial 2006, no. 31, 22.

dealer-organized venture and his nostalgia for the independent group exhibitions of the late 1870s and early 1880s, Caillebotte nonetheless agreed to participate in the exhibition organized in the spring of 1888. On May 23, he wrote from Petit Gennevilliers: "Sir, here is my list." A numbered list of twelve paintings follows:

1 – Homme au bain
2 – Canotiers
3 – Portrait de Mr. J. D.
4 – Gâteaux
5 – Faisans
6 – Huîtres
7 – Petit Bras Argenteuil
8 – Champ Jaune
9 – Jardin
10 – Une rue de Colombes
11 – Bord de l'eau
12 – Champ jaune et rose

He closes his letter by saying that he will visit Durand-Ruel the following day and reassures the dealer of the paintings' readiness for exhibition, "There is just one painting that does not have a frame."[667] Two days later, an exhibition of works by

---

[667] "Monsieur, Voici ma notice :

1 – Homme au bain
2 – Canotiers
3 – Portrait de Mr. J. D.
4 – Gâteaux
5 – Faisans
6 – Huîtres
7 – Petit Bras Argenteuil
8 – Champ Jaune
9 – Jardin
10 – Une rue de Colombes
11 – Bord de l'eau
12 – Champ jaune et rose

French and British painters opened at the Galerie Durand-Ruel at 11 rue Le Peletier. The number of works by Caillebotte had been cut down to six, listed in the catalogue as "Jardin," "Petit bras à Argenteuil," "Champ jaune et rose," "Canotiers," "Champ jaune," and "Au bord de l'eau."[668] By comparing what he planned to show at the exhibition to what Durand-Ruel would allow, we can better understand the artist's strategy for the 1888 exhibition in Paris and Durand-Ruel's reasons for restricting him to just six paintings.

Just as he had done in his earliest correspondence with Maus, Caillebotte listed the large-scale male nude first in his list of planned works for the exhibition. Having failed to exhibit the ambitious picture in Brussels, it seems that Caillebotte agreed to participate in a final show with Durand-Ruel because the dealer provided a venue for its exhibition. In 1886, Monet's concurrent participation in the New York exhibition had been a primary motivating factor for Caillebotte, who chose to exhibit with Monet and Renoir rather than participating in the exhibition being organized by Degas and his group in Paris. Just two years later, Monet asked his friends to join him in his refusal to send works to shows organized by the dealer. That Caillebotte chose to participate in the 1888 exhibition in Paris when Monet had asked him not to speaks to his determination to publicly exhibit *Man at his Bath*. Just as the 1876 Impressionist exhibition had served as a venue for the debut of *The Floor Scrapers* after its rejection

---

J'irai demain chez vous. Recevez l'assurance de mes meilleurs sentiments. G. Caillebotte Il y a une seule toile sans cadre." Letter from Caillebotte to Durand-Ruel, May 23, 1888, as published in Berhaut 1994, 278, no. 37.

668 Galerie Durand-Ruel, *Exposition: [Brown, Boudin, Caillebotte, Lépine, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, Whistler] ouverte du 25 mai au 25 juin 1888* (Paris : Impr. Leclerq, 1888).

by the Salon jury in 1875, the exhibition of *Man at his Bath* in Paris in 1888 presented an opportunity for vindication after the removal of the picture from the main gallery space at the exhibition of Les XX held earlier that year. In this way, Caillebotte's first and final lifetime exhibitions were both shaped by an impulse to present work that had previously been dismissed as too radical.

When Durand-Ruel's exhibition opened on May 25, 1888, only six of Caillebotte's proposed works hung in the galleries: an unidentified garden picture, *Le Petit Bras de la Seine à Argenteuil*, *Landscape – Study in Yellow and Rose*, *Champ Jaune*, and two other unidentified pictures, "Canotiers" and "Au bord de l'eau," titles that could correspond with any number of paintings made by Caillebotte in the late 1870s and early 1880s. Of three identified paintings, *Le Petit Bras* and *Study in Yellow and Rose* had been previously exhibited, the former with Les XX earlier that year and the latter at the 1886 exhibition with Durand-Ruel in New York. *Champ Jaune* was an 1883 variant of the two landscape studies that had been exhibited in 1886.[669] While Caillebotte had planned to exhibit a range of works, including the male nude, a portrait, three still lifes, and a number of landscapes, Durand-Ruel restricted his group of exhibited works to landscapes and scenes of outdoor leisure. The dealer's strategy aligned Caillebotte's paintings with those by Sisley, who also exhibited exclusively

---

[669] See the fuller discussion of these paintings in the sections that correspond with the 1886 and 1888 exhibitions with Durand-Ruel and Les XX, Chapter 4, 6 East 23rd Street, 1886: Caillebotte's Strategy in 1886 and 3 rue de la Régence, 1888: Caillebotte and Maus.

landscapes, and with those by Pissarro, who exhibited mostly landscapes. At least one hundred of the 120 works on view at the exhibition were landscapes.[670]

While it is plausible that Durand-Ruel removed *Man at his Bath* from Caillebotte's proposed list of works because he wanted the artist to exhibit only landscapes, it seems more likely that it was cut from the final group because of its subject. There were other nudes included in the 1888 exhibition: Renoir exhibited "Baigneuse" and "Étude – femme nue," while Morisot exhibited a watercolor titled "Baigneuse." Renoir and Morisot's nudes have not been identified but because of their female subjects, they were permissible based on conventions about beauty and femininity and Caillebotte's large-scale male nude was not. The sexually-charged intimacy of Caillebotte's figure, whose naked body nearly fills the height of the large-scale canvas, had no place in the galleries at 11 rue le Peletier. The paintings that Durand-Ruel did allow Caillebotte to exhibit were ones that were cohesive with the dealer's stock of Impressionist landscapes. His works were not grouped together as they had been in galleries A, C, D and E at the 1886 exhibition, but instead dispersed throughout the galleries. Whereas Durand-Ruel might have imagined that this second exhibition with Caillebotte signaled a willingness on the part of the artist to sell works aligned with the dealer's brand of Impressionism, he had no interest in exhibiting a picture like *Man at his Bath*.

---

[670] *Exposition: [Brown, Boudin, Caillebotte, Lépine, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, Whistler] ouverte du 25 mai au 25 juin 1888*, n.p.

The Critics' Final Look

That the opportunity to exhibit this unusual and radical painting was a primary motivating factor for Caillebotte's participation in the 1888 exhibition is further supported by the artist's refusal to participate in any subsequent exhibitions with Durand-Ruel. The dealer organized an exhibition of paintings by Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley in 1889 before turning away from the group exhibition format in the early 1890s, organizing single-artists shows for Boudin, Pissarro, Cassatt, Monet, and Renoir in 1891 and for Degas and Lépine in 1892.[671] Caillebotte's work would not go on view again until the posthumous exhibition organized after his death in 1894.

Whereas Caillebotte's exhibitions in the 1870s had centered on a contextualization of his work with that of Degas and Monet, with installations that sought to promote favorable comparisons and minimize unfavorable ones, Durand-Ruel presented Caillebotte's work in the context of similar landscapes by Sisley and Pissarro. It had been six years since his most recent exhibition in Paris and to a visitor encountering Caillebotte's work for the first time, his paintings must have seemed limited in their range and derivative of works by his co-exhibitors. The critical response to the 1888 exhibition with Durand-Ruel was far more limited than it had been at any of his previous exhibitions in Paris. Caillebotte's work was admired by one critic for its "precision and sureness of hand," while another bemoaned the

---

[671] Durand-Ruel and Durand-Ruel eds. 2014, 214-215.

overabundance of landscape paintings, describing the thirty-nine-year-old artist as a "tired and *retardataire* impressionist."[672]

The news that Caillebotte would be exhibiting works with Durand-Ruel in 1888 made its way to Arles, where Van Gogh was renting a room in the Café de la Gare. He wrote to his brother Theo on May 26: "I read an announcement in *L'Intransigeant* that there's going to be an exhibition of the Impressionists at Durand-Ruel — there'll be some works by Caillebot [sic] —I've never seen anything of his, and wanted to ask you to write and tell me what they're like."[673] Theo's reply is lost, but the works he would have seen at Durand-Ruel's galleries were hardly representative of the artist's broader *œuvre*. By restricting the group of paintings at his final lifetime exhibition to just landscapes, Durand-Ruel collapsed the forty-year old artist's career into a single kind of picture-making and one that did not have the distinctive edge of Caillebotte's work from the 1870s and early 1880s. Had Caillebotte been able to exhibit *Man at his Bath* at this final exhibition with Durand-Ruel, it is likely that the trajectory of his late career and his reception as a modern painter would have been quite different. Instead, Caillebotte was remembered by critics as a backward-looking Impressionist landscape painter.

---

672 "M. Gustave Caillebotte – Des champs, des jardins, des canotiers – œuvres d'un impressionniste fatigué et retardataire." Felix Fénéon, "Quelques impressionnistes" *La Cravache* (June 2, 1888), 2; and "L'Exposition des Indépendants" (May 30, 1888), as cited by Morton in Morton and Shackelford ed. 2015, 256, n. 64

673 "Mon cher Theo, J'ai lu dans l'intransigeant l'annonce qu'il y aura une exposition des impressionnistes [sic] chez Durand Ruel – il y aura des Caillebot [sic] – dont je n'ai jamais rien vu et je voulais te demander de m'écrire ce que c'est – il y a aussi certainement d'autres choses remarquables." Letter from Vincent Van Gogh to Theo Van Gogh, May 26, 1888. Van Gogh Museum, inv. no. b530 V/1962.

Chapter 5

CONCLUDING REMARKS

> P.S – Recently, the day after Gustave Caillebotte's death, I expressed here his love of art, his achievements, his devotion, and the gift of his collection of paintings to the Musée du Luxembourg. Today, I am announcing the opening of the exhibition of his works, organized by his family and friends at the gallery Durand-Ruel. There one will get to know an interesting modern personality, his love of water and light, and his playful observation of characters.[674]
>
> Gustave Geffroy, June 4, 1894

On February 21, 1894, nearly six years after the close of his final lifetime exhibition in Paris, Caillebotte died of a stroke at his home in Petit Gennevilliers. As I describe in Chapter One, the public's response to his death was shaped by the news of his bequest of a group of sixty paintings and drawings by Cézanne, Degas, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, and Renoir to the French State.[675] Durand-Ruel organized an exhibition of 122 paintings by Caillebotte in June but the critical response to the retrospective – the first large-scale monographic exhibition of work by any

---

[674] " P.-S. — Récemment, au lendemain de la mort de Gustave Caillebotte, j'ai dit ici le désir d'art, les réalisations, la faculté de dévouement du regretté artiste et le don de sa collection de tableaux au musée du Luxembourg. Aujourd'hui, il reste à annoncer l'ouverture, galerie Durand-Ruel, d'une exposition de ses œuvres, organisée par sa famille et ses amis. On connaîtra là une intéressante personnalité moderne, un amour de l'eau et de la lumière, une observation narquoise des personnages." Gustave Geffroy, "Conversations de Paris. Le legs Bareiller." Le Journal, quotidien, littéraire, artistique et politique n° 615 (June 4, 1894), p. 1.

[675] See Chapter 1: The Caillebotte Bequest.

Impressionist painter– was overshadowed by debates about the State's acquisition and installation of this significant collection of contemporary French art.[676]

When the Caillebotte bequest was first announced, Arsène Alexandre wrote in support of the State's acceptance of it and made a case for the artist's role in the success of the Impressionist group:

> He loved their talent, he vibrated with the same artistic aspirations that they did, and he considered it the easiest thing in the world to help them get by, or better still, to allow them to do their work and to show their value to the public despite the public itself, despite all the obstacles.[677]

About Caillebotte's pictures, Alexandre concluded that *The Floor-Scrapers* was "a painting of great force," and that among his landscapes and still lifes, there were "from time to time, excellent pieces."[678] Geffroy, in his account of the artist's *œuvre*, admitted that there were passages of "curious and at times bizarre effects of foreshortening and proportions," but recognized Caillebotte's best pictures as:

> landscapes of the streets of Paris, sometimes seen from a balcony […] tall aligned houses, houses that formed peaks at crossroads, the atmosphere of the city, the massive beauty of tall cliffs. Here he not

---

676 The 1883 solo exhibitions organized by Durand-Ruel brought together 56 paintings by Monet and 70 by Renoir, for example. See Patry in Patry ed. 2015, 108.

677 "Il aimait leur talent, il se sentait vibrer avec eux aux mêmes aspirations artistiques, et il considérait comme la chose la plus simple du monde de les aider à se tirer d'affaire, ou mieux encore, de leur permettre d'accomplir leur œuvre et de montrer leur valeur au public malgré ce public lui-même, malgré tous les obstacles." Arsène Alexandre, "Chroniques d'Aujourd'hui: Legs Caillebotte," Le Paris (March 14, 1894), 2.

678 "Il s'agit des Parqueteurs, une peinture d'une grande force […] une ou deux natures mortes et un ou deux paysages. Il a exécuté aussi, dans ce sens, de temps en temps d'excellents morceaux." Alexandre 1894, 2.

> only sought but he found originality, and the beginning of something that could well continue.[679]

Other critics were less effusive, with a writer for *Le Siècle* remarking that his works were retrograde and "assez banale."[680] Overall, few writers responded to the works on view, focusing their attention instead on the controversy that surrounded the fate of Caillebotte's collection.

In theory, the 1894 retrospective offered an opportunity for a sustained and deliberate analysis of Caillebotte's twenty-year career. The unevenness of his work from one exhibition to the next and, often, from one painting to the next within the same space, meant that critics had been unable or unwilling to arrive any one set of ideas about his work during his lifetime. While his co-exhibitors became known as painters of recurring subjects or of recognizable styles, Caillebotte's artistic reputation was largely limited to the success of *The Floor-Scrapers* and the failure of *Une Vache et une chèvre*.[681] During his career, the critics seemed at times equally interested in his personal life and his unusual position as a wealthy bachelor and *propriétaire*. The

---

[679] "… il avait obtenu de curieux et parfois bizarres effet de raccourcis et de proportions… la série des paysages des rue de Paris, parfois vues d'un balcon: des avenues larges, des voies droites, de hautes maisons alignées, des maisons qui forment des caps aux carrefours et qui ont vraiment dans l'atmosphère de la ville, la beauté massive de hautes falaises. Là il y eut non seulement recherche, mais trouvaille et originalité et le commencement de quelque chose qui pourra bien être continué." Gustave Geffroy, "L'Art d'aujourd'hui: Gustave Caillebotte," Le Journal 3, No. 516 (February 25, 1894), as published in Berhaut 1978, 261.

[680] "… son tableau des Frotteurs de parquets, œuvre assez banale." Jean-E. Schmitt, "Choses d'art: Le Peintre Caillebotte," Le Siècle (April 7, 1894), 3. Schmitt was permitted to see Caillebotte's work prior to the opening of the posthumous retrospective.

[681] See the discussion of *Une Vache et une chèvre* in Chapter 3, 28 avenue de l'Opèra, 1879: "Cette école du plein soleil": The Critics in 1879.

presentation of over one-fifth of the works he had produced in his lifetime at Durand-Ruel's galleries in 1894 should have been a moment for the public to reflect on his art. Instead, the debate that emerged around his bequest eclipsed the opportunity for a true career retrospective and made permanent the secondary status of Caillebotte's art in the public's memory of him.

In 1921, a second retrospective of Caillebotte's work opened at the Salon d'Automne in Paris. In the essay published to accompany the exhibition, Adolphe Trabant praised the artist and argued: "historians of Impressionism must inscribe the name of Caillebotte alongside the others, not on the same plane, but a bit further, a bit lower, in a good position all the same."[682] Most of his essay is reserved for a sensationalized biography of the artist and a discussion of the Caillebotte bequest, still a controversial topic some twenty-five years later. Caillebotte's status as an artist who ranks "a bit lower" than his Impressionist peers has persisted through the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. In reviews of the 2015 exhibition *Gustave Caillebotte: The Painter's Eye* at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Kimbell Art Museum, he was described as "unfamiliar," "overshadowed," "little-known," and "mostly forgotten."[683] Despite the cultural status of *Paris Street, Rainy*

---

[682] "Son œuvre, en somme, est assez personnelle, neuve, abondante et variée pour qu'en toute équité les historiens de l'Impressionnisme aient le devoir d'inscrire le nom de Caillebotte à la suite des autres, non pas sur le même plan, mais un peu plus loin, un peu plus bas, en bonne place malgré tout." Adolphe Tabarant, "Le peintre Caillebotte et sa collection," *Le bulletin de la vie artistique* (August 1, 1921), 405-413, 408.

[683] See the references to Caillebotte's position relative to the larger Impressionist group in the following reviews: Christopher Knight, "Review: The Kimbell captures 'Painter's Eye,' but it can't elevate Caillebotte," The Los Angeles Times (Dec. 21, 2015); Sebastian Smee, "Beguiling images from a little-known French painter," The

Day – now an icon of the collection at the Art Institute of Chicago, prominently featured in the 1986 film *Ferris Bueller's Day Off* and reproduced on umbrellas, coffee mugs, and calendars – the unevenness of Caillebotte's *œuvre* has long been recognized as the cause of his secondary status among the Impressionist painters. By reevaluating Caillebotte's work through the lens of his participation in eight lifetime exhibitions in Paris, New York, and Brussels, this dissertation explores the link between that unevenness and the artist's evolving exhibition strategies.

I hope that my research encourages new attention to Caillebotte's career within and beyond his decade-long affiliation with the Impressionist group. The systematic study of how his exhibition strategy evolved over a period of twelve years led to new insights about Caillebotte's work that justify a reconsideration of the exhibition strategies of the other members of the core Impressionist group. As an artist who was, from the very outset, materially and ideologically invested in independent exhibition-making, Caillebotte presented an ideal case study for my examination of the development of individual and group strategies at those exhibitions. His lifetime exhibitions were limited to just eight and his career was shorter than that of his co-exhibitors, factors that set clear and manageable parameters for this project. Similar studies of the exhibition strategies of artists like Monet and Pissarro would be more challenging, given the scope of their artistic production and exhibition histories, but nonetheless worthwhile.

Boston Globe (Nov. 28, 2015); Holland Cotter, "Painting Paris in a New, Natural Light,'" The New York Times (July 10, 2015), Section C, p. 17; and Philip Kennicott, "At the National Gallery, Caillebotte's intersection with greatness," The Washington Post (June 26, 2015).

As I argue in Chapters Two and Four, Caillebotte's strategies at his first and final lifetime exhibitions were shaped by the same impulse: to present to Parisian audiences a work that had previously been dismissed as too radical. His success in 1876 with *The Floor Scrapers* shaped his affiliation with the Impressionist group for a decade while his failure to exhibit *Man at his Bath* in Paris in 1888 led to his withdrawal from public exhibitions for the rest of his life. Despite his unwillingness to exhibit his own work after 1888, Caillebotte continued to paint, to lend works from his collection to exhibitions in Paris, and to attend exhibitions of paintings by his colleagues and friends in Paris.[684] In the fall of 1889, he would have had the opportunity to see Van Gogh's *Irises* (1889, fig. 197) at the Salon des Indépendants.[685] In the years ahead, he produced several flower studies in his gardens and greenhouses, including *Iris Bleus, Jardin du Petit Gennevilliers* (1892, fig. 198), a painting that shares with Van Gogh's earlier work an interest in cropped compositions, the thick layering of oil paint to recreate the texture of the floral forms, and the curving silhouettes of the irises in bloom. Even after Caillebotte had stopped

---

[684] For example, he lent several works by Renoir to an exhibition organized by Durand-Ruel in 1892. See Distel ed. 1994, 318. See the ongoing correspondence between Caillebotte and other members of the core Impressionist group, particularly Renoir and Monet, as detailed in Distel ed. 1994, 317-318.

[685] Van Gogh's brother, Theo, submitted the painting to the Salon des Indépendants and wrote about its installation there, saying that it looked "excessivement bien. Ils l'ont mis sur le côté étroit de la salle et il frappe de loin. C'est une belle étude plein d'air & de vie." Letter from Theo to Vincent, dated September 5, 1889. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, inv. nos. b743 a-b V/1962. Caillebotte may have seen the painting again after Van Gogh's death in 1890, as it was purchased by his friend Octave Mirabeau in 1892. See the correspondence between Mirabeau and Caillebotte in Berhaut 1994, letters nos. 45 and 47.

participating in independent group exhibitions, he continued to produce inventive, forward-looking compositions that responded to those on view in Paris.

Throughout this dissertation, I aimed to better understand Caillebotte's career highs and lows through a comprehensive study of the evolution of his exhibition practice and strategy between 1876 and 1888. I identified trends in the critical response to his paintings and analyzed how the artist adjusted his work in the studio so that it would better align with the expectations of his public audiences. I located the visual expression of his ambitions as an exhibition organizer in the works that he chose to exhibit and hold back over the course of his twenty-year career. By approaching his studio and extra-studio practice as intertwined and mutually-influential, this study offers a new mode of engagement with Caillebotte's work and explains, at least in part, the triumph of masterworks like *Paris Street, Rainy Day* and the failure of *plein air* paintings that fall short of those by his Impressionist co-exhibitors.

FIGURES

ALL IMAGES REMOVED DUE TO COPYRIGHT

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archival Collections and Online Databases

Archives de l'Art contemporain en Belgique, Fonds Octave Maus.

Base de données, "Salons et expositions de groupes 1673-1914," salons.musee-orsay.fr, a project by the Musée d'Orsay and by l'Institut national d'histoire de l'art, supported by the Ministère de la Culture et de la communication.

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Richelieu, Département des Estampes et de la photographie.

Documentation de la conservation, Musée d'Orsay.

Getty Research Institute, Special Collections, Kirk Varnedoe Papers, 1890-2006 (bulk 1970-2003).

Selected Primary Sources

American Art Association. *Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris*. New York: Press of J.J. Little & Co., 1886.

Burty, Philippe. *Notice des études peintes par M. Théodore Rousseau exposées au Cercle des Arts*. Paris: Académie des Bibliophiles, 1867

Castagnary, Jules-Antoine. *Salons, 1857-1870*. Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier, 1892.

Catalogue de la 2e Exposition de peinture, par MM. Béliard, Legros, Pissaro... Renoir... Sisley, Degas, Monet (Claude)... Morisot (Berthe) [etc]... 11, rue Le Peletier, avril 1876. Paris: Alcan-Lévy, 1876.

Catalogue de la 3e Exposition de peinture, par M. Caillebotte… 6, rue Le Peletier, avril 1877. Paris : Impr. Capiomont et Renault, 1877.

Catalogue de la 4e exposition de peinture par M. Bracquemond, Mme Bracquemond, M. Caillebotte ... du 10 Avril au 11 Mai 1879. Paris: Imp. de Morris, 1879.

Catalogue de la 6^e Exposition de peinture par Mlle Mary Cassatt, MM. Degas, Forain... Gauguin, Guillaumin, Mme Berthe Morisot, MM. Pissarro, Raffaëlli, Rouart [etc]... du 2 avril au 1^er mai 1881... 35, boulevard des Capucines, Paris. Paris: Imp. de Morris, 1881.

Catalogue de le V^e Exposition des XX, avec un Préambule par M. Octave Maus. Brussels: Mme. Vve Monnom, 1888.

Exposition Internationale de Peinture et de Sculpture, sixième année, du 8 Mai au 8 Juin 1887. Paris: Galerie Georges Petit, 1887.

Galerie Durand-Ruel. *Exposition: [Brown, Boudin, Caillebotte, Lépine, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, Whistler] ouverte du 25 mai au 25 juin 1888*. Paris : Impr. Leclerq, 1888.

Geffroy, Gustave. *Claude Monet*. Paris: Les Éditions G. Crès & C^ie, 1922.

Durand-Ruel et fils. *Exposition rétrospective d'œuvres de G. Caillebotte*. Paris: Galeries Durand-Ruel, 1894.

Duranty, Edmond. *La Nouvelle peinture: A propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les galeries Durand-Ruel*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1876.

Fénéon, Felix. *Œuvres plus que complètes*. Edited by Joan U. Halperin. Geneva: Droz, 1970.

Paintings, Drawings and Pastels by Members of 'La Société des Impressionnistes'. London: Dowdeswell Galleries, 1883.

Société anonyme des artistes peintres, sculpteurs, graveurs, etc. *Premiére exposition 1874: catalogue.* Paris: Impr. Alcan-Lévy, 1874.

Stevens, Alfred. *Impressions on Painting*. Translated by C. Adams. New York: G.J. Coombes, 1886.

Zola, Emile. *Une campagne, 1880-1881*. Paris: E. Fasquelle, 1903.

Selected Secondary Sources

Adler, Kathleen and Tamar Garb eds. *Berthe Morisot: The Correspondence with her Family and Friends*. London: Camden Press, 1987.

Adriaens-Pannier, Anne and Micheline Colin eds. *Les XX et La Libre Esthétique: Cent Ans Après*/ Brussels: Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, 1993.

Angiuli, Emanuela and Fernando Mazzocca eds. *De Nittis*. Venice: Marsilio, 2013.

Armstrong, Carol. *Manet/Manette*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002.

Bailey, Colin. *Renoir, Impressionism, and Full-Length Painting*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, in association with The Frick Collection, 2012.

Bailly-Herzberg, Janine ed. *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro. 1899-1903.* Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980.

Bailly-Herzberg, Janine. "Marcellin Desboutin and his World," *Apollo* 92 (1972): 496-500.

Belgian Art: 1880-1914. New York: Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1980.

Benjamin, Elizabeth. *Caillebotte's Things: People and Possessions Entangled*. PhD diss., Northwestern University, 2015.

Berhaut, Marie. *Gustave Caillebotte (1848-1894). Galerie Beaux-Arts ... au Profit du Musée de Rennes, 25 mai-25 juillet 1951*. Paris: Wildenstein, 1951.

Berhaut, Marie. *Gustave Caillebotte, sa vie et son œuvre: Catalogue raisonné des peintures et pastels*. Paris: Bibliothèque des arts, 1978.

Berhaut, Marie. *Gustave Caillebotte: Catalogue raisonné des peintures et pastels*. Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 1994.

Berson, Ruth. *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874-1886, Documentation*. San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1996.

Boime, Albert. "The Salon des Refusés and the Evolution of Modern Art." *Art Quarterly* 32 (Winter 1969): 411-426.

Bolas, Gerald D. *The Early Years of the American Art Association*, 1879-1900. Ph.D Dissertation, City University of New York, 1998.

Bousquet, Philippe. "Peintres En Bâtiment." *Interprétations*, April 25, 2011. https://artifexinopere.com/?p=844.

Broude, Norma, ed. *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionist Paris*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

Cooper, Douglas. *The Courtauld Collection: A Catalogue and Introduction*. London: University of London, 1954.

Danchev, Alex ed. *The Letters of Paul Cézanne*. London: Thames & Hudson, 2013.

Distel, Anne ed. *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*. New York: Abbeville Press, 1994.

Dombrowski, André ed. *Wiley Blackwell Companion to Impressionism*. Forthcoming.

Durand-Ruel, Paul-Louis and Flavie Durand-Ruel eds. *Paul Durand-Ruel: Memoirs of the First Impressionist Art Dealer (1831-1922)*. Paris: Flammarion, 2014.

Fidell-Beaufort, Madeleine. "The American Art Trade and French Painting at the End of the Nineteenth Century," *Van Gogh Museum Journal* (2000) 101-107.

Flint, Kate ed. *Impressionists in England: The Critical Reception*. London: Routledge, 1984.

Gachet, Paul. *Lettres impressionnistes: Pissarro, Cézanne, Guillaumin, Renoir, Monet, Sisley, Vignon, Van Gogh et autres*. Paris: B. Grasset, 1957.

Grant, Susan. "Whistler's Mother Was Not Alone: French Government Acquisitions of American Paintings, 1871-1900." *Archives of American Art Journal* Vol. 32, No. 2 (1992): 2-15.

Green, Alison. *When Artists Curate: Contemporary Art and the Exhibition as Medium*. London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2018.

Gordon, Robert ed. *Degas*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988.

Gustave Caillebotte, 1848-1894. A loan exhibition in aid of the Hertford British Hospital in Paris. London: Wildenstein & Co., 1966.

Gustave Caillebotte, 1848-1894: a loan exhibition of paintings, September 18th-October 19th, 1968. New York: Wildenstein & Co., 1968

Hansen, Dorothee. "Newly Discovered Prints by Gustave Caillebotte." *The Burlington Magazine* Vol. 151, No. 1272 (March 2009): 160-162.

Herbert, Robert. *Impressionism: Art, Leisure, and Parisian Society*. New Haven, CT : Yale University Press, 1988.

Hilaire, Michel ed., *Frédéric Bazille (1841-1870) and the Birth of Impressionism*. Paris: Flammarion, 2016.

House, John. "New Material on Monet and Pissarro in London in 1870–71," *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. cxx, No. 907 (October 1978): 636-41.

Huth, Hans. “Impressionism Comes to America,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6th series 29 (April 1946): 225-252.

Jiménez, Ángela Julibert. “Les salons de l'Académie de Saint-Luc de Paris.” *Revista de historia da arte e arqueología* (2005), 49-64.

Lees, Sarah ed. *Bonjour Monsieur Courbet! The Bruyas Collection from the Musée Fabre, Montpellier*. Williamstown, MA: Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, 2004.

Lemoine, Serge. *Caillebotte à Yerres, Au Temps de l’impressionnisme*. Paris: Flammarion, 2014.

Lloyd, Christopher. “An Unknown Sketchbook by Gustave Caillebotte,” *Master Drawings* Vol. 26, No. 2, (Summer 1988): 107-118, 145-169.

Mainardi, Patricia. *Art and Politics of the Second Empire: The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987.

Marrinan, Michael. *Gustave Caillebotte. Painting the Paris of Naturalism, 1872-1887*. Los Angeles: Getty Trust Publications, 2017.

Matteucci, Giuliano and Erich Steingräber eds. *The Macchiaoli: Tuscan Painters of the Sunlight*. London: Stair Sainty Matthiesen Gallery, 1984.

Miracco, Renato ed.,*De Nittis, Impressionista italiano*. Rome: Chiostro del Bramante, 2004.

Moffett, Charles ed. *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886*. Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press, 1986.

Morton, Mary and George Shackelford, eds. *Gustave Caillebotte: The Painter’s Eye*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2015.

Off for the Holidays: A Loan Exhibition of Holiday Travel, Sites, Pastimes, Sports and Pleasures, April 14 to June 6, 1955. Hartford, CT: Wadsworth Atheneum, 1955.

O’Neill, Paul. *The Culture of Curating and the Curating of Cultures*. London: MIT Press, 2016.

Patry, Sylvie et al. eds. *Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist*. New York: Rizzoli Electa, 2018

Patry, Sylvie, ed. *Discovering the Impressionists: Paul Durand-Ruel and the New Painting*. Philadelphia, PA: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2015

Pitman, Dianne W. *Bazille: Purity, Pose, and Painting in the 1860s*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998.

Pittaluga, Mary and Enrico Piceni. *De Nittis*. Milan: Bramante, 1963.

Rabinow, Rebecca A., Douglas W. Druick, and Maryline Assante di Panzillo. *Cézanne to Picasso: Ambroise Vollard, Patron of the Avant-Garde*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006

Rathbone, Eliza ed. *Renoir and Friends: Luncheon of the Boating Party*. Washington, DC: The Philips Collection, 2017.

Raybone, Samuel. *Gustave Caillebotte as Worker, Collector, Painter*. London: Bloomsbury Visual Arts, forthcoming 2019.

Renoir, Jean. *Pierre-Auguste Renoir, mon père*. Paris: Gallimard, 1981.

Rewald, John. *Histoire de l'Impressionnisme*. Paris: Michel Albin, 1955.

Rewald, John. *History of Impressionism*. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1946.

Rewald, John. *The History of Impressionism*, Rev. ed. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961.

Rewald, John. *The History of Impressionism*, Rev. ed. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1973.

Roos, Jane Mayo. "Aristocracy in the Arts: Philippe de Chenneviéres and the Salons of the Mid 1870s," *Art Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 1: Nineteenth-Century French Art Institutions (Spring 1989), pp. 53-62.

Roos, Jane Mayo. *Early Impressionism and the French State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Rouart, Denis. *The Correspondence of Berthe Morisot*. New York: George Wittenborn Inc., 1957.

Sagner-Düchting, Karin, Max Hollein, Ulrich Pohlmann, and Bernadette Ott. *Gustave Caillebotte: An Impressionist and Photography*. Frankfurt: Schirn Kunsthalle, 2012.

Shields, Caroline. *Objects of Memory: Paul Gauguin and Still Life Painting, 1880-1901*. University of Maryland: PhD dissertation, 2017.

Tucker, Paul. *Claude Monet: Life and Art*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995.

Vaisse, Pierre. *Deux façons d'écrire l'histoire: le legs Caillebotte*. Paris: Institut national d'histoire de l'art et éditions Ophrys, 2014.

Varnedoe, Kirk. *Gustave Caillebotte*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1987.

Varnedoe, Kirk, with contributions by Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman. *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*. Houston, TX: Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976

Vatuone, Didier ed. *Frédéric Bazille: Correspondance*. Montpellier: Les Presses du Languedoc, 1992.

Weitzenhoffer, Frances. *The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America.* New York: Harry Abrams, 1986.

Wildenstein, Daniel ed. *Monet: Biographie et catalogue raisonné*. Paris: La Bibliothèque des arts, 1974-1991.

Wildenstein, Daniel. *Monet, or, the Triumph of Impressionism*. Translated by Chris Miller and Peter Snowdon. Cologne: Taschen, 2014.

Wildenstein, David. *Gauguin – A Savage in the Making: Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings (1873–1888)*. Paris: Wildenstein Institute, 2002.

Wittmer, Pierre. *Caillebotte and his Garden at Yerres*. New York: Harry Abrams, 1991.

Appendix

LIST OF COLLECTIONS VISITED

To complete this dissertation, I examined works by Gustave Caillebotte and his co-exhibitors (and often the accompanying curatorial files) at the following collections in Belgium, Canada, France, the Netherlands, and the United States. The collections marked with an asterisk (*) have at least one work by Caillebotte.

Collections in Belgium

Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels

Collections in Canada

Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto*

Collections in France

École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris
Musée d'art moderne André-Malraux, Le Havre
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen*
Musée d'Orsay, Paris*
Musée Eugène Boudin, Honfleur
Musée Fabre, Montpellier
Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris*
Petit Palais, Paris*
Propriété Caillebotte, Yerres*

Collections in the Netherlands

Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam*

Collections in the United States

Albright-Knox Gallery, Buffalo, NY*
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin, OH
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL*
Baltimore Museum of Art, Baltimore, MD

Barnes Collection, Philadelphia, PA
Brooklyn Museum of Art, Brooklyn, NY*
Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati, OH
Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH*
Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus OH
Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX*
D'Amour Museum of Fine Arts, Springfield, MA*
Detroit Institute of Art, Detroit, MI
Eskenazi Museum of Art, Bloomington, IN*
Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA
High Museum of Art, Atlanta, GA
The Fogg, Harvard Art Museums, Cambridge, MA
Indianapolis Museum of Art at Newfields, Indianapolis, IN
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, MA
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA
Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, TX*
Legion of Honor Museum, San Francisco, CA
Los Angeles County Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC*
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY*
Milwaukee Art Museum, Milwaukee, WI*
Minneapolis Museum of Art, Minneapolis, MN*
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA*
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX*
Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO*
New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA*
Norton Simon Museum, Pasadena, CA*
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, MA
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA
Phillips Collection, Washington, DC
Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, NJ
Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI
Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, MO
Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Santa Barbara, CA
Seattle Art Museum, Seattle, WA*
Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY
Sterling and Francis Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, MA*
Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, OH*
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, VA*
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT*
Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, MA
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT*