



Camille Pissarro, *The Artist's Garden at Eragny*, 1898
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection
Image courtesy of the Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington

IMPRESSIONIST GARDENS

31 July to 17 October 2010

NATIONAL GALLERY COMPLEX, The Mound, Edinburgh, EH2 2EL

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www.nationalgalleries.org

The highlight of the 2010 summer season at the National Gallery Complex will be a ground-breaking exhibition on the subject of paintings of *Impressionist Gardens*. This major international exhibition of around 90 works will include spectacular loans from collections around the world, and will be the first ever to be devoted to this fascinating subject. The famous names of Impressionism will be well represented, with fine examples by Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Manet and Sisley. In addition, the exhibition will examine the continued significance of the Impressionist garden to the generation of artists working immediately after the Impressionists, such as Cézanne and Pierre Bonnard. Lenders to *Impressionist Gardens*, which has been organised in partnership with the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza in Madrid, will include the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the National Gallery of Art, Washington; the Musée d'Orsay, Paris; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; the Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart; the Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen; Tate, London; and the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Rome. This will be the only UK showing.

Gardens and flowers were a constant theme in Impressionist painting and inspired these great artists to produce some of their most beautiful and memorable paintings. Claude Monet is perhaps the best known in this respect, with his famous paintings of the gardens of his various homes, most notably the splendid garden he created at his house at Giverny in rural Normandy. All the Impressionists, however, featured gardens in their work, ranging from the 'working' or kitchen gardens portrayed by Camille Pissarro, Alfred Sisley and Berthe Morisot, to the splendidly ambitious gardens of Gustave Caillebotte, himself a member of the Impressionist group, and whose magnificent bequest of Impressionist paintings to the French state forms the basis of the world-famous collection of Impressionism now housed in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

This exhibition will trace the origins of the Impressionist garden, beginning with examples by the great school of early 19th-century flower painters at Lyons and looking at such important precursors as Delacroix and Corot, before moving on to the ambitious central section of the show which will feature many outstanding paintings by the Impressionists themselves. A final section will examine the 'spread' of the Impressionist garden in the late 19th and early 20th

century. European and American artists will feature in this section and will include Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Gustav Klimt and John Singer Sargent.

In addition to providing this dazzling array of world-class masterpieces, the exhibition will also illustrate the history of gardening during the 19th century, demonstrating how attention switched from the great estates and parks to the suburban garden, an environment which the Impressionists very much made their own as they portrayed 'modern life'. The exhibition will therefore have a twin appeal, both to those who love great art and to the great army of gardening enthusiasts everywhere.

Impressionist Gardens is being curated by Michael Clarke, Director of the National Gallery of Scotland and organiser of many exhibitions on Impressionism, and Dr Clare Willson, Reader in History of Art at the University of Glasgow and a world expert on the subject.

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**For further information and images, please call the Press Office
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