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First Major U.S. Retrospective of Camille Pissarro in Over 40 Years to Premiere at Denver Art Museum in Fall 2025

The *Honest Eye: Camille Pissarro's Impressionism* highlights the work of the artist, known as "the first impressionist," from his youth in the Caribbean to final days in Paris through nearly 80 paintings

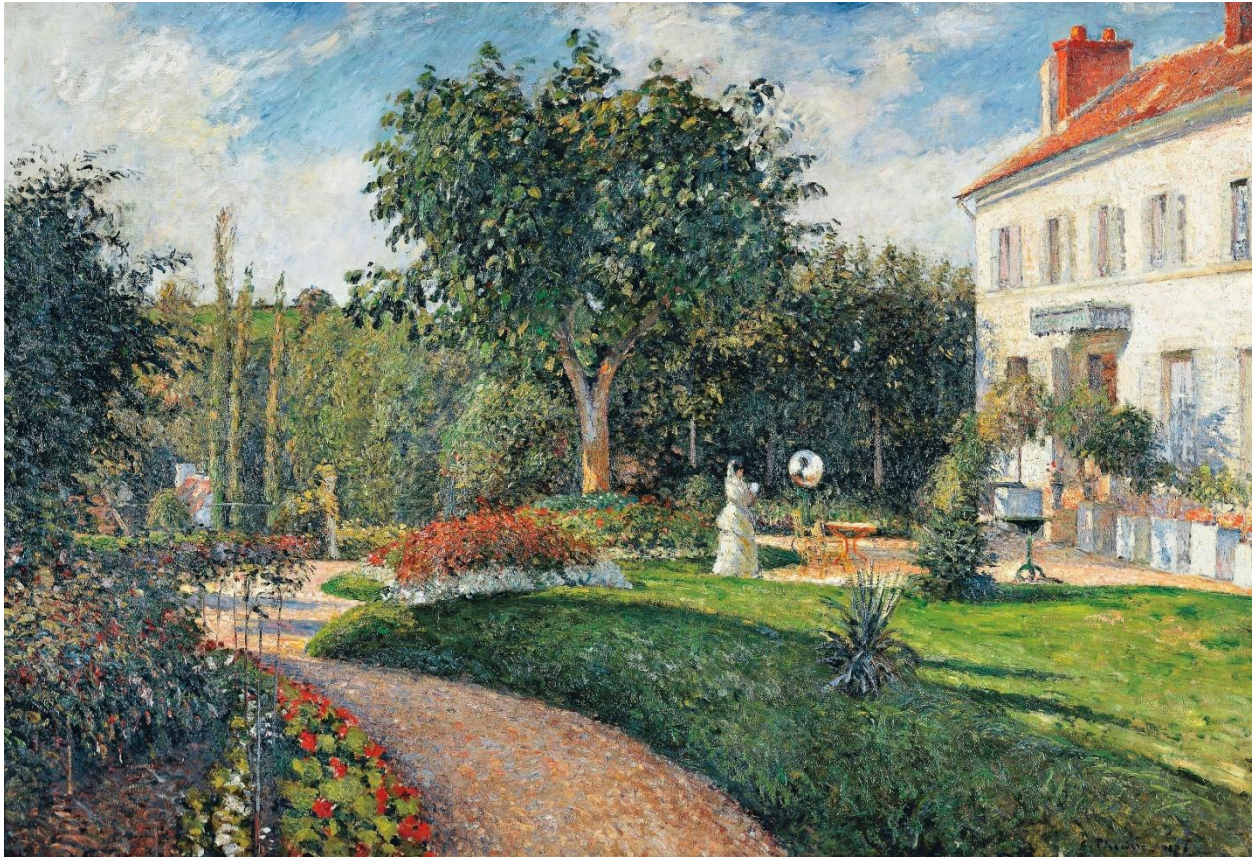


DENVER – November 12, 2024 –The Denver Art Museum (DAM) is proud to announce that it will present a major exhibition of works by Camille Pissarro (1830–1903) in the fall of 2025, providing an overview of the artist's illustrious career and examining his singular role within the Impressionist movement. Opening October 26, 2025, *The Honest Eye: Camille Pissarro's Impressionism* is the first major U.S. museum retrospective of the artist's oeuvre in more than four decades.

Co-organized by the DAM and the Museum Barberini in Potsdam, Germany, the exhibition brings together more than 80 paintings from nearly 50 international museums and private collections, alongside six works from the DAM's holdings. On view through Feb. 8, 2026, *The*

Honest Eye will feature landscapes, cityscapes, still lifes, and figure paintings, showcasing the breadth of Pissarro's oeuvre and the various influences that shaped his practice as he responded to the social and political environment of the day.

"Through this exhibition, we hope visitors will explore Pissarro's ability to capture everyday life in a way that elevates the mundane, while understanding the pivotal role he played in shaping the Impressionist movement," said **Christoph Heinrich, Frederick and Jan Mayer Director**. "After our successful collaboration for *Claude Monet-The truth of Nature* in 2019, we're thrilled to partner with the Museum Barberini again to bring important examples of Pissarro's work to audiences in the U.S., including significant international loans, some of them have never been shown in this country before."



Born on the island of St. Thomas in what was then the Danish West Indies (now the U.S. Virgin Islands) to French Jewish parents, Pissarro spent time in Caracas and La Guaira, Venezuela, before settling in Paris in 1855. There, he became acquainted with a group of young artists who were challenging the traditional modes of painting and would eventually go on to birth the Impressionist movement. A versatile artist, Pissarro embodied the role of insider, contributing to the establishment of Impressionism as a coherent avant-garde phenomenon while maintaining his artistic independence as he eschewed his peers' choice of upper-class subject matter to depict scenes of the mundane. *The Honest Eye* reflects this dichotomy, while selections from Pissarro's letters provide insights into his artistic process and worldview more broadly.

"Pissarro was a true architect of the impressionist movement. His colleague and friend Cezanne called him 'the first impressionist.' The only artist to present work at all eight Impressionist exhibitions in Paris, Pissarro was a defining figure whose oeuvre captured a changing society in the throes of industrialization, straddling the rural and urban in his depictions of daily life," said **Clarisse Fava-Piz, Associate Curator of European and American Art before 1900.**

The exhibition traces four decades of Pissarro's career, illustrating the evolution of his practice from his early years in the Caribbean and South America, to his time in Paris at the dawn of the Impressionist movement, to his family life in Éragny, and his later years depicting the cities and harbors of northern France.



The Honest Eye opens with a focus on a lesser-known facet of Pissarro's oeuvre, showcasing sketches, watercolors, and oil paintings he created in his native St. Thomas as well as during the time he spent in Venezuela, illustrating his early proclivity towards painting *en plein air*, or outdoors with the subject in full view. These works are followed by a selection of paintings that illustrate Pissarro's journey as an artist upon his arrival in France, which showcase tendencies towards the soft lines and broken brushwork that later became hallmarks of Impressionist style. A highlight is *Banks of the Oise at Pontoise* (1867), a major painting from the DAM's collection that speaks to the evolving landscape in and around Paris as industrialization took hold and reflects how Pissarro integrated modern elements into more traditional rural scenes.

The focus shifts to Pissarro's family, to whom he was devoted, and their domestic life, as the exhibition progresses. Included are portraits of the artist and his wife Julie as well as several of their children, several of whom grew up to be artists themselves.

Canonical paintings created by the artist as his style matured into true Impressionism welcome viewers in the next section, such as *Gelée Blanche* (1873), on loan from the Musée d'Orsay, a major example of how Pissarro expertly captured the dynamics of light and shade across the rural landscape. Subsequent works demonstrate how Pissarro was unique among the Impressionists in his continued fascination with the daily life of the working class. These paintings illustrate the ways in which the artist drew inspiration from sources beyond nature, looking to farms and fields, town squares and marketplaces,

portraying peasants harvesting hay and tending to chores, and butchers selling their wares to the local townsfolk.

Additional works explore how Pissarro's political leanings and anarchist sympathies influenced his artistic production through the display of several works on paper prepared for the album *Les Turpitudes Sociales* between 1889 and 1890. This section with lavish paintings such as *Hoar-Frost*, *Peasant Girl Making a Fire*—one of seven paintings on loan from the Hasso Plattner Collection at the Museum Barberini, Potsdam—also illustrates Pissarro's experimentation with Neo-Impressionism through works that exemplify the pointillist approach that the artist embraced as a natural evolution of Impressionism.



The exhibition continues with an examination of the major themes that occupied Pissarro in the latter half of his career, with sections dedicated to the places and landscapes from which Pissarro drew continued inspiration, beginning with a focus on his family home and

studio in the village of Éragny just outside of Paris. Works featured illustrate how Pissarro captured this sanctuary throughout the changing seasons, such as in *Spring at Éragny (Printemps à Éragny)* (1900) from the DAM's collection. Also on view are paintings Pissarro created during his time in Rouen, Dieppe, and Le Havre towards the end of his life, showcasing his fascination with the maritime infrastructure in these cities, as seen through depictions of the iron bridge of Rouen and the frenetic movement of life along the harbor.

The exhibition closes with a significant selection of paintings capturing life in Paris, from hazy depictions of the morning commute in Montmartre and lively city scenes of the Pont Neuf to peaceful moments at the Louvre and the Tuileries. Works on view in this section illustrate Pissarro's continued gravitation towards the quotidian even as he turned towards capturing the urban splendor of nineteenth-century Paris.

Exhibition Organization and Support

The Honest Eye: Camille Pissarro's Impressionism is co-organized by the Denver Art Museum and the Museum Barberini, Potsdam, and curated by DAM's Clarisse Fava-Piz, Associate Curator of European and American Art before 1900; Claire Durand-Ruel, independent art historian and co-author of the catalogue raisonné on Pissarro's paintings; and Nerina Santorius, Curator and Head of Impressionism at the Museum Barberini, following Daniel Zamani in his position, who did groundbreaking work in the early stages of the project. The exhibition will be on view at the DAM from October 26, 2025, through February 8, 2026.

It is presented by Barbara Bridges with additional support from the Tom Taplin Jr. and Ted Taplin Endowment, Lori and Grady Durham, the Kristin and Charles Lohmiller Exhibitions Fund, Kathie and Keith Finger, the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by *5280 Magazine* and CBS Colorado.

A fully illustrated catalogue accompanying the exhibition, and published by Prestel Publishing, will include essays by renowned scholars and curators Claire Durand-Ruel, Clarisse Fava-Piz, Colin Harrison, and Daniel Zamani. The publication will be available in the Shop at the Denver Art Museum and through the online shop.

About the Denver Art Museum

The Denver Art Museum is an educational, nonprofit resource that sparks creative thinking and expression through transformative experiences with art. Its mission is to enrich lives by sparking creative thinking and expression. Its holdings reflect the city and region—and provide invaluable ways for the community to learn about cultures from around the world. Metro residents support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD), a unique funding source serving hundreds of metro Denver arts, culture, and scientific organizations.

For museum information, visit www.denverartmuseum.org or call 720-865-5000.

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Image credits:

Image 1: Camille Pissarro, *Self-Portrait (autoportrait)*, 1873. Oil on canvas; 21 7/8 × 18 1/8 in. Musée d'Orsay: Donation Paul-Emile Pissarro, 1930. Image courtesy akg-images/Laurent Lecat

Image 2: Camille Pissarro, *The Garden of Les Mathurins, property of the Deraismes Sisters, Pontoise (Le Jardin des Mathurins, Pontoise, propriété des soeurs Deraismes)*, 1876. Oil on canvas; 44 5/8 × 65 1/8 in. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri: Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust. Image courtesy akg-images / De Agostini Picture Lib. / J. E. Bulloz

Image 3 : Camille Pissarro, *Hoar-Frost at Ennery (Gelée blanche à Ennery)*, 1873. Oil on canvas. 25 3/4 × 36 3/4 in. Musée d'Orsay: Legs Enriqueta Alsop au nom du Dr. Eduardo Mollard, 1972. Image courtesy akg-images / De Agostini Picture Lib. / G. Dagli Orti

Image 4 : Camille Pissarro, *Hoar-Frost, Peasant Girl Making a Fire (Gelée blanche, jeune paysanne faisant du feu)*, 1888. Oil on canvas; 36 1/2 × 36 3/8 in. Hasso Plattner Collection at the Museum Barberini. Image courtesy akg-images/Laurent Lecat