

EARLY 20TH CENTURY EUROPEAN PAINTINGS

MILWAUKEE ART INSTITUTE • SUMMER 1957

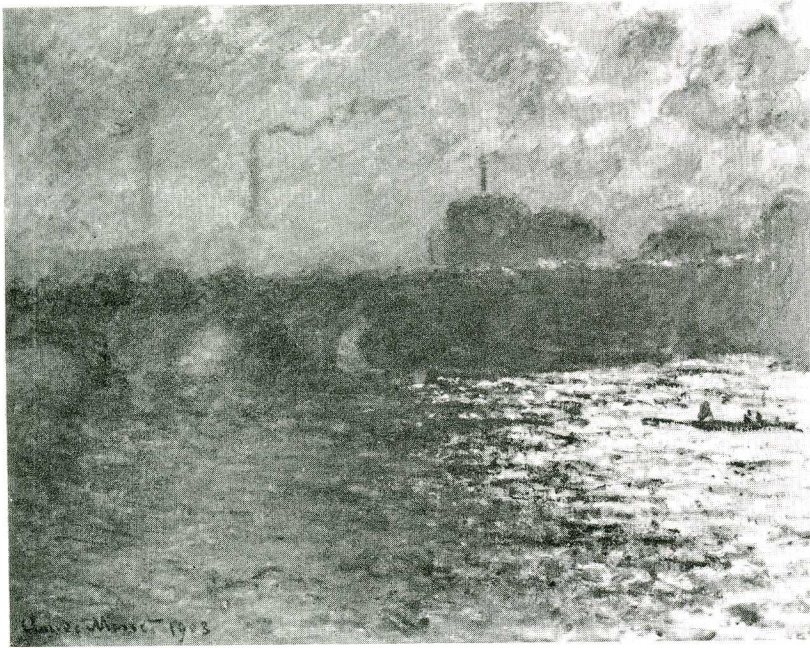


Raoul Dufy, French, (1877-1953), "River Scene", 1908, oil on canvas, 18 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 22", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.

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IMPRESSIONISM

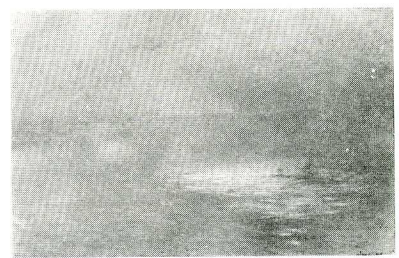


Claude Monet, French, (1840-1926), "Waterloo Bridge", 1903, oil on canvas, 27" x 35", Gift of Mrs. Albert T. Friedmann, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.

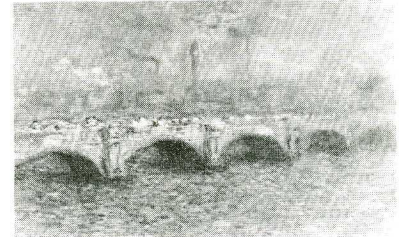
Early in this century Claude Monet devoted a number of his canvases to a view of Waterloo Bridge with the Thames below and beyond it some buildings in London. In the early morning, in mid-day fog, in the late afternoon and at sunset he painted the scene, obsessed with the desire to capture the effects of natural light.

The leader of the Impressionists, Monet spent the last years of his life painting such series of canvases under different conditions of weather and light. His *Haystacks* of 1891 were the first of these series, the last, *Waterlilies*, painted in his garden at Giverny, at first discredited, have recently attracted great attention.

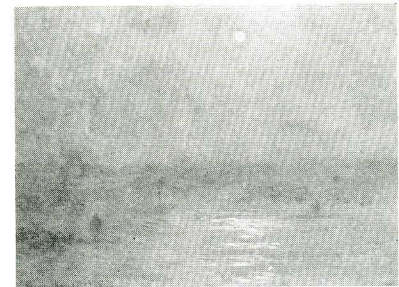
Shortly before his death he wrote, "I have always had a horror of theories . . . I have only the merit of having painted directly from nature, trying to convey my impressions in the presence of the most fugitive effects."



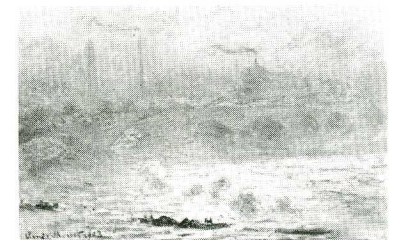
Photograph courtesy of M. Knoedler and Co., New York.



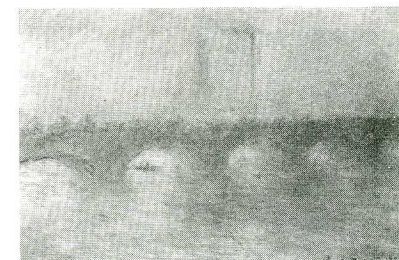
The Art Institute of Chicago, Mr. and Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson Collection.



National Gallery of Canada Collection.



Dill Collection, Denver Art Museum.

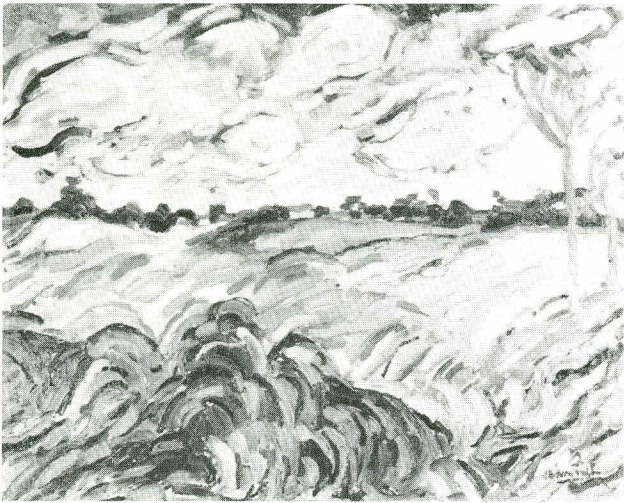


Photograph courtesy of M. Knoedler and Co., New York.

THE FAUVES



Georges Braque, French, born 1882, "Seated Nude", 1906, oil on canvas, 25½" x 19", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.



Maurice de Vlaminck, French, born 1876, "The Wheat Field", c. 1906, oil on canvas, 44" x 50", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.

Only a few years separate the atmospheric *Waterloo Bridge* and the two colorful, vigorous paintings by Vlaminck and Braque. At a glance, one would realize that many changes were taking place in the ferment of Paris.

The young artists full of bravado gave vent to their enthusiasm and excitement in paintings of brilliant color and sweeping lines. So in 1905 Paris received another shock — les fauves, "the wild beasts" exhibited their work. "Formless confusion of colors . . . the barbaric and naive sport of a child," a critic called it. In this year Vlaminck painted the Institute's landscape. In 1906 Braque exhibited with Vlaminck, Matisse, Derain and others and in that year painted *Seated Nude*, now owned by the Institute. The unusual landscape by Dufy, illustrated as the frontispiece of this booklet, was done shortly after this time.



*Fernand Leger, French, (1881-1953),
"Three Figures", 1910-1911, oil on canvas,
76½" x 45½",
Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.*

CUBISM



Detail, showing head of Apollinaire.

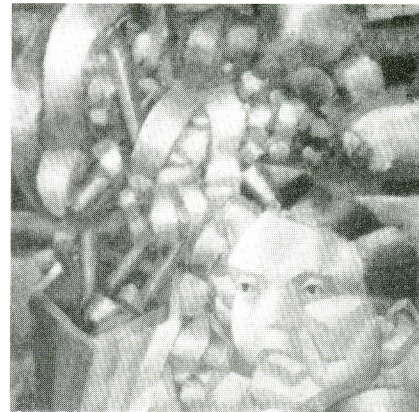
In 1906 Cezanne, who had rebelled against the limited aims of the Impressionists, produced his most advanced work, then died. Ten years before he had written a prophetic letter to a young friend. "Perhaps I was born too early. I was more the painter of your generation than of mine . . . You will stamp your art with an impulse that only those possessed of true feeling can give it."

In 1906 young Picasso entered a long period of concentration and work that carried on Cezanne's struggle to produce art of conception rather than imitation. Soon Braque joined him, then Leger and others. "When we invented cubism", Picasso said, "we had no intention whatever of inventing Cubism. We wanted simply to express what was in us . . . Cubism has kept itself within the limits and limitations of painting, never pretending to go beyond it . . . Our subjects might be different, as we have introduced into painting objects and forms that were formerly ignored. We kept our eyes open to our surroundings, and also our brains."

Leger, more than any other of these painters, kept his eyes on the new surroundings of his age. His interest in the forms of machinery and the effect of mechanical movement are evident in *Three Figures*, a major painting of 1910, in the collection of the Institute. The three faces suggest those of his friends, the painters—Juan Gris and Marie Laurencin (to the left and above) and Apollinaire, the poet and champion of the Cubists. In 1913 Apollinaire wrote that Leger "is a painter, a simple painter, and I rejoice as much in his simplicity as in the solidity of his judgment."



Detail, showing statue of a woman.



Detail, showing head of Juan Gris.

THREE LANDSCAPES

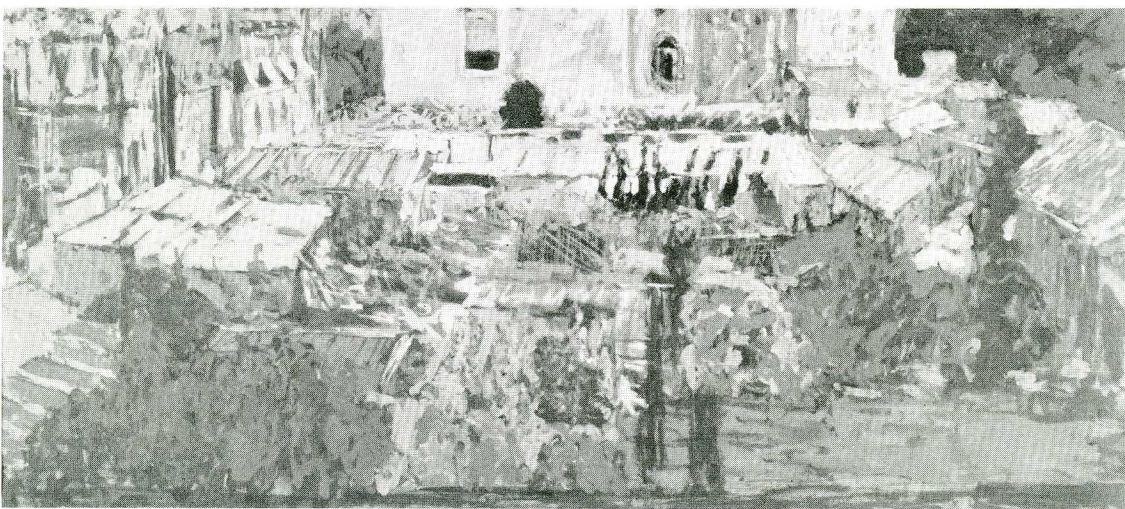
We would like to believe that there is a definite pattern in the development of art in this century. However, the only constant thread is an endless variety based on the artist's reliance on his own experience, thought and expression. The highly personal art of Utrillo, Bonnard and Vuillard lie outside any of the many "isms". Utrillo is known for street scenes in the suburbs of his native Paris, painted in harmonious tones, with richly textured paint. Whereas, the effect of Utrillo's work is immediate, Bonnard and Vuillard reveal themselves slowly and gain interest the longer we view their work. It is not surprising to learn that Bonnard's finest paintings were the fruit of long meditation and constant change, nor to find that "he remained young and simple to the end of his days, retaining the miraculous youth of the artist and poet."



Maurice Utrillo, French, (1883-1955), "The Church at Torquoy", White Period, oil on canvas, 24" x 31".
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.



Pierre Bonnard, French, (1867-1947), "View of the Studio at Midi", 1945, oil on canvas, 37 1/4" x 49 1/4", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.



Jean Edouard Vuillard, French, (1868-1940), "View From the Artist's Studio, Rue de la Pompe", 1905, oil on cardboard, 28" x 61 3/4", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Lynde Bradley, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.

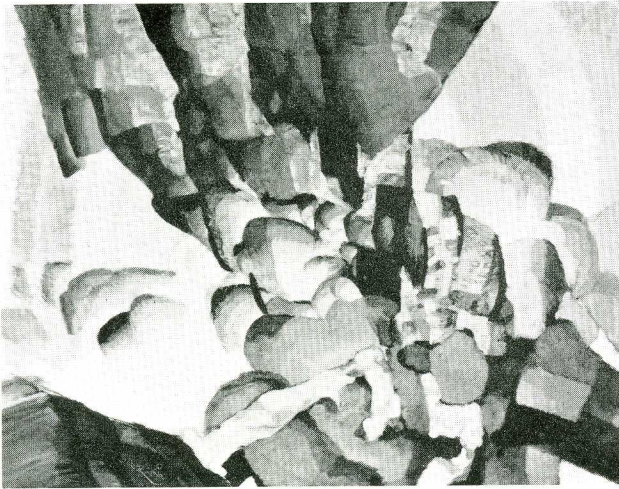
EXPRESSIONISM

AND ABSTRACTION



Karl Hofer, German, (1878-1955), "Still Life: Flowers with Figure", 1935, oil on canvas, 29" x 27", Gift of friends in memory of Adolph Finkler, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.

Franz Kupka, Czechoslovakian, born 1871, "Shades of Violet", 1919, oil on canvas, 33" x 42 1/2", Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Zadok, Milwaukee Art Institute Collection.



Also fortified by the work of Van Gogh and Gauguin, the young artists in Germany burst forth with colorful, energetic paintings like those of the Fauves in Paris. The young German's work was more massive, often tragic in subject matter and sometimes full of slashing black lines. Though like the French they talked and exhibited in informal groups, the greatest of them retained their individuality.

In 1910 Kandinsky, a member of one of these groups, made one of the first non-figurative paintings of this century. Franz Kupka, a Czechoslovakian, began his first totally abstract work a year afterward and eight years later painted *Shades of Violet*, now in the collection of the Institute. "The work of art," Kupka wrote, "being in itself abstract reality, needs to be made up of invented elements."

Karl Hofer blended the subject matter and color of his fellow Germans with a traditional handling of space. He had studied in Paris the work of the Impressionists, the Fauves and the Cubists.

CREDITS

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