

C I T I N E R A R Y

Monet: The Late Years

De Young Museum, San Francisco, 2019

1		<p>"The man who conceived and established this small, familiar, magnificent world of his own is not only a great artist in the creation of his paintings, but also in the environment he has made for himself, for his own delight. This house and garden are likewise a work of art, and Monet has invested his life in the creating and perfecting it."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">- Gustave Geffroy</p> <p><i>Where are the house and garden where Monet lived his last years?</i></p>
2		<p>In 1893 Monet added to his property, acquiring another plot of land across the street from his home. After some debate with the local municipality, he received permission to divert the Epte River to create a pond for cultivating water lilies, a flower he may have first learned about from the horticultural display at the 1889 Exposition Universelle, in Paris. The garden's design may have also been inspired by Monet's extensive collection of Japanese prints, which the artist began amassing in the 1860s and had hanging in his dining room. His water-lily garden served as a perfect foil to the more traditional flower garden surrounding his home, which was organized in a grid with rectangular flowerbeds and grand <i>allées</i>.</p> <p><i>Can you find a Monkey Bridge print by Hiroshige and a picture of Monet in his dining room?</i></p>
3		<p>In 1899, Monet painted 12 works from a single vantage point, focusing on the arching blue-green bridge and the microcosm of his water garden. Among the 12 works was the National Gallery's <i>Japanese Footbridge</i>. Monet designed and built the landscape that appears in the painting—from the bridge to the pond and its shape, to the water lilies and other plantings. The artist, who as a leader of the impressionists had espoused the spontaneity of directly observed works that capture the fleeting effects of light and color, had in these later paintings subjected a nature he re-created to sustained, meditated scrutiny. <i>Can you find The Japanese Footbridge?</i></p>
4		<p>Monet's artistic vision knew no limits. After purchasing the property across from his home, Monet set about requesting permission from the local authorities to create a small diversion in the Epte River to create a pond, in which he planned to cultivate aquatic plants. He also requested permission to construct two bridges to cross this water garden. The local neighbors and farmers vigorously opposed the plan, fearing the possible pollution of their water source. A series of letters between Monet and his wife Alice document the artist's sharp temper and steadfast resolve to achieve his vision. In one letter, Monet exclaims, "To hell with the natives of Giverny." Years later, he again engaged with the local government, paying for all the roads in town to be paved to alleviate the dust that constantly contaminated the leaves of his water lilies.</p> <p><i>Can you find The Artist's House?</i></p>

5		<p>Monet traveled as far north as Norway and as far south as Venice to look for different motifs, but he always returned to the places he knew best. He painted this river in Paris, Argenteuil, Vétheuil, and where it emptied into the English Channel. He turned to it again in the summers of 1896 and 1897 for his series of canvases showing how it looked at dawn. He set up his easel at three-thirty each morning in a boat moored just off the riverbank near his house at Giverny. There he sat and painted the series of twenty-one canvases to which this one belongs.</p> <p><i>Can you find the painting depicting the river in the morning? What river is it?</i></p>
6		<p>This painting is one of a small series done late in the artist's life at Giverny. He had done several series showing the same subject matter at different times of day, moving his easel with the changing light and weather conditions. His intent was to illustrate the ways in which light and weather change the appearance of objects.</p> <p><i>Can you find this painting? When was it painted? What museum does it come from? What flower do you think there are in the arches? What time of the year and of the day?</i></p>
7		<p>"It took me a while to understand my waterlilies.... I cultivated them without thinking of painting them... A landscape doesn't captivate you in just one day... And then, all of a sudden, I had a revelation - there was magic in my pond. I seized my palette. Since that moment, I've scarcely painted any other subject."</p> <p><i>Can you find the water lilies in this picture? How many water lily paintings can you find? You might need to step into the garden to find them all...</i></p>
8		<p><i>Can you find this painting? What month do you think water lilies bloom in Monet's garden? What time of the day do you think he painted them?</i></p>
9		<p><i>What about these water lilies? Can you find their painting? Do you think it was painted at the same time as the previous water lilies? Why or why not?</i></p>
10		<p><i>How many water lilies can you see in this painting? What colors are they? What else do you notice?</i></p>

11		<p><i>Can you find these water lilies?</i></p> <p><i>What else can you see in the painting?</i></p>
12		<p>dot.dot.dot.write.your.thought...</p> <p>...</p>
13		<p>...</p>
14		<p>Water Lilies traditionally occupies a place of honor in the Legion's permanent collection galleries. As the vista piece that anchors the space running through galleries 14 to 19, this painting is an integral and beloved feature of the Museums' Impressionist collection.</p> <p>Because of its significance and its size, this painting almost never leaves the Legion's Impressionist gallery. <i>Can you find it?</i></p>
15		<p>Plants, water, and sky seem to merge in Claude Monet's evocative painting of his lily pond at Giverny. The disorienting reflections, bold brushstrokes, and lack of horizon line or spatial depth make Water Lilies appear almost abstract. Painted about 1922, it belongs to a grand project that Monet had conceived as far back as 1897:</p> <p>"Imagine a circular room whose wall... would be entirely filled by a horizon of water spotted with [water lilies]... the calm and silence of the still water reflecting the flowering display; the tones are vague, deliciously nuanced, as delicate as a dream."</p> <p><i>Can you find this water lily? Where do you think you will find a circular room with Monet's water lilies?</i></p>
16		<p><i>Can you find these water lilies?</i></p> <p><i>How would you describe this painting?</i></p>

17		...
<i>How many water lilies did you find? What colors were they? Keep looking for water lilies!</i>		
<i>What flowers are these? Can you find them in Monet's garden?</i>		
18		...
19		...
20		This bird's eye view, possibly from the Japanese bridge, shows a winding path near the pool, bordered with lush flowers. Monet applied thick purples, blues and greens using bold, even crude strokes. The effects were possibly induced by double cataracts which altered his vision.
21		...

22		<p>...</p>
23		<p>...</p>
24		<p>This painting belongs to the last of three series of works depicting the fugitive, fleeting play of light on the artist's beloved pond. In loose, curving lines and tightly knit strokes of multi-colored pigment, Monet captured the illusion of the reflective body of water.</p>
25		<p>This canvas originally formed the centerpiece of a triptych or three-panel work. When installed with its counterparts from The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art and The Cleveland Museum of Art, the large-scale paintings envelop the viewer in a seemingly infinite field of subtle hues and intangible beauty.</p>
26		<p>By the time he began this work in the late teens, Monet had achieved a completely new, fluid, and somewhat audacious style of painting in which the water-lily pond became the point of departure for an almost abstract art.</p>

27		<p>...</p>
28		<p>...</p>
29		<p>During World War I, after several years of inactivity because of bad health and grief over the death of his second wife, Claude Monet embarked on a period of intense work. Building a large studio and improving his garden, he began a group of monumental paintings of water lilies that he would later offer to the French state. Alongside this project, he painted a suite of 19 smaller canvases, including the present one. There is evidence—including a few photographs of the artist working in his garden—that Monet conceived these paintings outdoors and then reworked them in his studio. By this last stage of his career, however, the distinction between observation and memory in his work is intangible, and perhaps even irrelevant.</p>
30		<p>...</p>

During the later years of his life, Claude Monet continued to work in series, returning to views of his home and the Japanese bridge, rose archway, and weeping willows in his gardens. During World War I, Monet remained at his home in Giverny despite the departure of most his staff and shelling outside the town. Scholars often connect the artist's frequent depiction of weeping willows during this time to a sense of mourning and loss. ***How can you describe these paintings?***

Can you notice any departure in style from the previous bridge paintings?

What is similar between these paintings? What is different?

What can be the reason for some of the differences?

31		His style became more expressive as he piled thick pigments layer upon layer in ever more intense colors that often didn't correspond to reality (possibly because his eyesight was failing). Giving up any desire to record minute details, he wove tangled skeins of paint with bold strokes, seeming more concerned with nature's mysteries than with mere appearance.
32		...
33		In this nearly square picture, painted near the end of his life, Monet returned to the subject of the bridge, but it has been transformed by his exuberant brushwork and color. An almost indistinct mass, the bridge is engulfed by an arbor and trailing wisteria that had since been added (and which were tended by the six gardeners that Monet employed). Lavishly covered in paint that is caked on the surface in mounds, the picture is a forceful assertion of the aging painter's unrelenting desire to capture the dazzling effects of the landscape around him.
34		...
35		...
		<i>How would you sketch your Japanese bridge?</i>

Same or Different? Find and describe these paintings!

36		Path under the Rose Arches, Giverny, 1920–1922 Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris
37		Path under the Rose Arches, Giverny, 1920–1922 Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris

Same or Different? Find the weeping willows!

38		...
39		...
40		...

MONET: THE LATE YEARS TREASURE PAINTINGS

1. [Monet in His Garden at Giverny, 1921](#)

Collection of the Troob Family Foundation, Unknown photographer

https://deyoung.famsf.org/sites/default/files/33645_monet_educator_posters_final_web.pdf

2. Utagawa Hiroshige, Monkey Bridge, Kai Province, ca 1841-1842

https://deyoung.famsf.org/sites/default/files/monet_didactics.pdf

3. [The Japanese Footbridge, 1899, National Gallery of Art](#)

<https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.74796.html>

4. [The Artist's House at Giverny, 1913](#)

https://insights.famsf.org/late-monet/#&chapter=chapter_8413644&page=chapter_8413734

5. Morning on the Seine, 1896

<https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/morning-on-the-seine-near-giverny-31395>

<https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/morning-on-the-seine-near-giverny-32693>

6. [Flowering Arches, Giverny 1913, Phoenix Art Museum](#)

[http://egallery.phxart.org/view/objects/asitem/items\\$0040:904](http://egallery.phxart.org/view/objects/asitem/items$0040:904)

7. [The Japanese Footbridge, 1899, National Gallery of Art](#)

<https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.74796.html>

8. Water Lilies, 1905, Private Collection, Dallas

9. [Water Lilies, 1906, Art Institute of Chicago](#)

10. Water Lilies, 1907, Private Collection

11. Water Lilies, Reflection of Tall Grasses, ca. 1897

12. [Water Lilies, 1914-1915, Portland Art Museum](#)

13. Water Lilies, 1914-1915, Collection of Diane B. Wilsey, San Francisco

14. [Water Lilies, ca. 1914-1917, Legion of Honor](#)

[Monet's Water Lilies Returns to the Legion of Honor!](#)

15. [Water Lilies, 1921-1922 \(?\), Toledo Museum of Art](#)

[Art Minute: Claude Monet, "Water Lilies"](#)

16. Water Lilies, 1915-1917, Musée Marmottan Monet

17. [Water Lilies, 1915-1917, Fondation Beyeler](#)

18. Water Lilies and Agapanthus, 1914-1917, Musée Marmottan Monet

19. Day Lilies, 1914-1917, Musée Marmottan Monet

20. Irises, ca. 1914-1917, National Gallery, London

21. Yellow Irises, 1917-1919, Musée Marmottan Monet

22. Roses, 1925-1926, Musée Marmottan Monet

23. Wisteria, 1919-1920, Musée Marmottan Monet

24. [Water Lilies, 1917-1919, Honolulu Museum of Art](#)

25. [Water Lilies \(Agapanthus\). Saint Louis Art Museum](#)

26. [Water Lilies, 1916-1919, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York](#)

27. Water Lilies, ca. 1917-1919, McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, TX

<https://sanantoniomag.com/Online/March-2017/Monet-to-Matisse-A-Century-of-French-Moderns-Opens-at-McNay/>

28. Water Lily Pond, 1917-1919, Private Collection, Sotheby's

29. [Water Lily Pond, 1917/1919, The Art Institute of Chicago](#)

30. Corner of the Water-Lily Pond, 1918-1919, Private Collection

31. [The Japanese Bridge, ca. 1923-1925, Minneapolis Institute of Art](#)

32. [The Japanese Bridge, 1918-1924, Musée Marmottan Monet](#)

33. [The Japanese Bridge. 1918-1926, Philadelphia Museum of Art](#)

34 [The Japanese Bridge, ca. 1918-1924, Fondation Beyeler](#)

35. [The Japanese Bridge, 1919, Kunstmuseum Basel](#)

36. Path under the Rose Arches, Giverny, 1920-1922, Musée Marmottan Monet

Michel Monet Bequest, 1966, 5104

37. Path under the Rose Arches, Giverny, 1920-1922, Musée Marmottan Monet

Michel Monet Bequest, 1966, 5089

38. Weeping Willow, 1918-1919, Musée Marmottan Monet

Michel Monet Bequest, 1966, 5080

39. [Weeping Willow, 1918-1919, Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio](#)

[In the Arms of the Willow](#)

40. Weeping Willow, 1918-1919, Musée Marmottan Monet

Michel Monet Bequest, 1966, 5080

[Claude Monet: The Late Years at San Francisco's de Young Museum](#)

[Claude Monet | 'Water Lily Pond' | Albertina](#)

[Giverny Monet's Garden Calendar](#)

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[Monet The Gardener: Life, And Art, Grow At Giverny](#)

[Monet: The Water Lily Pond](#)

[MUSEUMS OF THE WORLD: Daily art story: Monet's Water Lilies](#)

[Water Lilies \(Monet series\)](#)