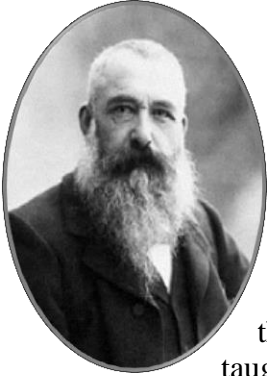


Claude Monet

(moe-NAY) French painter

1840 – 1926

86



Claude Monet was a founder of French Impressionism. The term Impressionism is derived from the title of his painting *Impression, Sunrise*. The second son of Claude and Louise Monet, he was baptized “Oscar-Claude,” but his parents called him Oscar. His father wanted him to go into the family grocery business, but Monet wanted to be an artist. His mother was a singer. In 1851 (11), Monet entered Le Havre secondary school of the arts. Locals knew him for his charcoal caricatures, which he sold for ten to twenty francs. On the beaches of Normandy he met Eugène **Boudin**, who became his mentor and taught him to use oil paints, and "en plein air" (outdoor) techniques for painting.

His mother died when he was **sixteen**. He left school and went to live with his widowed, childless aunt, Marie-Jeanne Lecadre.



On a trip to Paris to visit the Louvre, he saw painters copying from the old masters; instead he sat by a window and painted the view. Monet spent several years in Paris and met painters who became friends and fellow impressionists, such as Édouard **Manet**.



Disillusioned with the traditional art taught at art schools, Monet became a student of Charles Gleyre in Paris, where he met Pierre-Auguste **Renoir**, Frédéric **Bazille**,

and Alfred **Sisley**. They shared new approaches in art, painting the effects of light *en plein air* with broken color and rapid brushstrokes.



Monet's *The Woman in the Green Dress* brought him recognition and featured his future wife, Camille Doncieux. She also modeled for *Women in the Garden*, and *On the Bank of the Seine*, (both right). Camille became pregnant and gave birth to their first child, Jean in 1867 (27).



Monet and Camille married just before the Franco-Prussian War (1870 - 30) and during the war Monet went to England and studied the works of John **Constable** and Joseph **Turner**.

In 1871 (31), he left London to live in Zaandam, Netherlands where the police suspected him of revolutionary activities. He also visited Amsterdam.



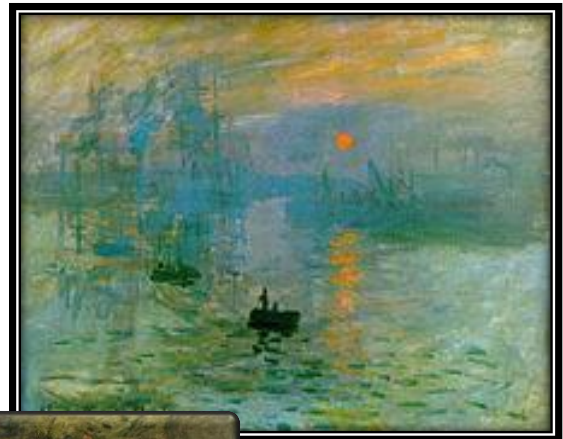
Photo, 1899 (59). *Mouth of the Seine*, 1865 (25). By **Renoir**: *Claude Monet Reading*, 1872 (32). *The Woman in the Green Dress*, Camille Doncieux, 1866 (26). *Madame Monet in a Japanese Costume*, 1875 (35). *Women in the Garden*, 1867 (27). *On the Bank of the Seine*, 1868 (28).



In 1871 (31), he returned to France and until 1878 (38), lived at Argenteuil, where he painted some of his best known works. A village on the bank of the Seine river near Paris, it was a popular Sunday outing destination for Parisians.



In 1872 (32), he painted *Impression, Sunrise* depicting a Le Havre port landscape. From the painting's title, an art critic coined the term "Impressionism," intending it to be a disparagement, but which stuck as a descriptive label.



Camille became ill with tuberculosis in 1876 (36), and gave birth to Michel in 1878 (38). That same year, the Monets moved in with [the Hoschedé family](#). In 1879 (39), Camille, at age 32, died of tuberculosis. Monet painted her on her death bed.

After the death of Camille, Monet (resolving never to in poverty again) began in earnest to create some of his best paintings. He painted several groups of landscapes and seascapes in an effort to document the French countryside. His extensive campaigns evolved into his series paintings.



In 1878 (38) the Monets temporarily moved into the home of Ernest and Alice Hoschedé, a wealthy department store owner and patron of the arts. Both families shared a house in [Vétheuil](#) during the summer. After Ernest became bankrupt and left in 1878 for Belgium, and after the death of Camille Monet in 1879, Alice Hoschedé helped Monet to raise his two sons, Jean and Michel, by taking them to Paris to live with her own six children. Monet continued to live in the house in Vétheuil. In 1880 (40), Alice and the children joined Monet in Vétheuil. After her estranged husband's death, Alice married Claude in 1892 (52).



In 1883 (43), Monet and his large family rented a house on two acres in Giverny. He planted a large garden, had an orchard and painted in a barn that doubled as a studio. The house was close to local schools and the surrounding landscape offered many paintable motifs. The family built up the gardens, and Monet's fortunes began to positively change as his dealer had increasing success in selling his paintings. By 1890 (50), Monet was prosperous enough to buy the property. Monet built a greenhouse and a second studio, which was spacious and well-lit with skylights.



The Artist's house at Argenteuil, 1873 (33). Argenteuil, 1875 (35). Impression, Sunrise, 1872 (32). Camille Monet on her deathbed, 1879 (39). Jean Monet on his hobby horse, 1872 (32). The Artist's Garden at Vétheuil, 1880 (50). Train in the Snow, 1875 (35).



In the 1880s Monet began depicting subjects in varying light and weather conditions. Some of these series included: *Poplars*, *Rouen Cathedral*, *Parliament*, *Mornings on the Seine*, and *Water Lilies*.



Monet was fond of painting his gardens; its water lilies, pond, and bridge. As Monet's wealth grew, his garden evolved. He was its architect, even after he hired seven gardeners.

Between 1883 and 1908 (43-68), Monet traveled to and painted the Mediterranean (including Italy). Alice, died in 1911 (71) and his oldest son Jean (married to Alice's daughter Blanche), died in 1914 (74). After Alice died, Blanche looked after Monet.

His son Michel, served in WW I, and Monet painted a weeping willow tree series as homage to French fallen soldiers.



In 1923 (83), he underwent two operations to remove cataracts. Characteristic cataract victims' vision caused his paintings to have a reddish tone. After the operations he repainted some of these paintings, with bluer water lilies than before.



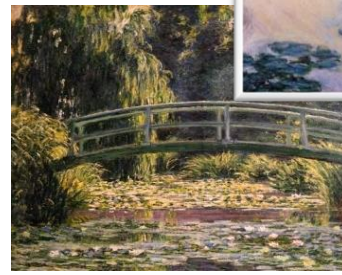
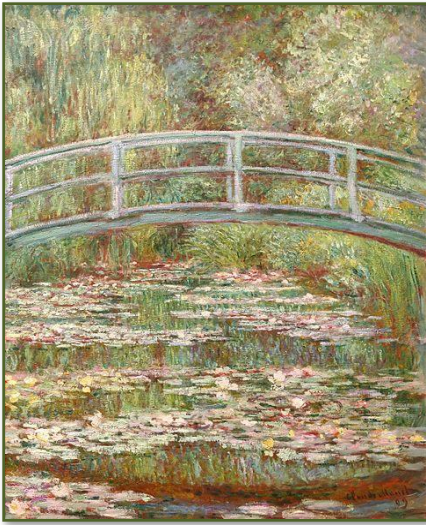
Monet died of lung cancer at 86 and is buried in the Giverny church cemetery. Having insisted that the funeral be kept simple, only about fifty people attended.

His home, garden and pond were bequeathed by Michel to the French Academy of Fine Arts in 1966. Supported by *Foundation Claude Monet*, the estate was restored and opened for public viewing in 1980. The house contains many of his personal effects, including his collections of Japanese woodcut prints.

Poplars (3): 1891 (51). *Rouen Cathedral* (3): 1894 (54).

Photo: Monet, right, in his garden, 1922 (82). *Woman with a Parasol*, 1875 (45). *Weeping Willow*, 1918 (78). *Study of a*

Figure Outdoors: Woman (model: Suzanne Hoschedé, eldest daughter of Alice) with a Parasol, facing left, 1886 (46). *The Japanese Bridge 11*, c. 1920-22 (80-82). *The Japanese Bridge (The Water-Lily Pond and Path by the Water)*, 1900 (60).



< Japanese Bridge at Giverny

L: Bridge over a Pond of Water Lilies, 1899. Water Lilies, 1920–1926. Water Lilies, 1907. Nymphaeas, 1915.

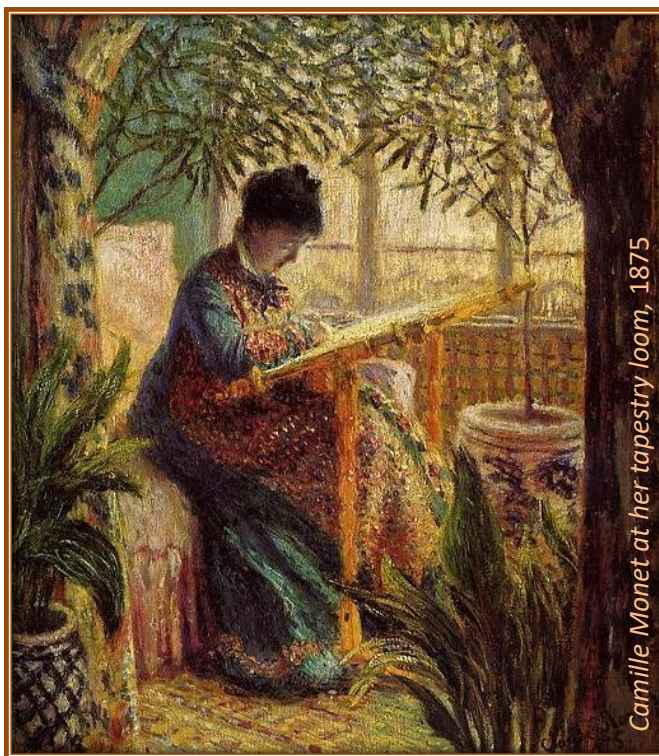


Springtime, 1872

Claude Monet



Camille Monet on a Garden Bench, 1873



Camille Monet at her tapestry loom, 1875



The Luncheon, 1868.