Claude Monet's Perceived Nature: the Clos Normand Garden

Rebecca Lynn Reeve
Bucknell University, rlr027@bucknell.edu

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Claude Monet’s Perceived Nature: The Clos Normand Garden

by

Rebecca L. Reeve

A Proposal Submitted to the Honors Council

For Honors in Art History

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Approved by:

Roger Rothman
Advisor: Roger Rothman

Christopher Camuto
Thesis Second-Reader: Christopher Camuto

Janice Mann
Department Chairperson: Janice Mann
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Preface

Since I discovered my love for art and art history I have been enthralled with the paintings of Claude Monet. Claude Monet is one of the most notable modern artists for his contributions in re-inventing the depiction of the natural world in bright colors and bold impasto, later known as the Impressionist style. Scholars have noted that throughout his life he was lured to the sense of beauty found in man-made environments such as city streets, parks and gardens. As he matured he devoted progressively more time to creating the most beautiful depictions of nature, turning away from human subjects and finding solace in his gardens. It was through this love of the natural world that his paintings became so famous, most notably the works based on his water lily garden in Giverny.

Last year I had the opportunity to visit Monet’s house in Giverny. I was able to walk along the paths of his water lily garden and even took the time to sit on a bench and paint the Japanese bridge. Little did I know, there was a second garden next to Monet’s house, which I will henceforth call the Clos Normand garden, named after his property at Giverny. Up to that point, I had never encountered references to this garden in any books on Monet. Through my opportunity to view the gardens in person I realized the water lily garden has distinct ties to Japanese garden design whereas the Clos Normand garden resembles more closely the gardens I saw at French châteaux. As I researched this house garden, it became apparent that there was a disparity in the scholarship pertaining to the water lily garden as opposed to the Clos Normand garden.
Additionally, there is only limited scholarship on the paintings Monet made based on the Clos Normand garden. Instead, scholars have focused almost all of their attention on the water lily garden and subsequent paintings. Daniel Wildenstein wrote the entire first volume of the Catalogue Raisonné on Monet without specifically mentioning a single painting based on the Clos Normand garden (Monet, vol. 1). Even one of the most notable American scholars on Monet, Paul Tucker, glosses over the Clos Normand garden in the numerous volumes he wrote on Monet’s life. When scholars, like Tucker, do mention the Clos Normand garden and its subsequent paintings, it is quite brief as compared to the time spent discussing the water lily garden.

One major reason that such a disparity exists is that the water lily garden and resultant paintings exemplify one of Monet’s most productive and innovative periods starting around 1900 and lasting until his death in 1926. Claude Monet, as his last dying gift to France, donated twenty-two panel paintings of the water lily garden. These panels were given their own wing, designed by Monet himself, in the Musée de L’Orangerie. The composition, brushwork, number and size of these panels are all reasons why scholars choose to focus specifically on the water lily paintings as opposed to those of the Clos Normand garden. With paintings that are more closely studied, it is expected that much more has been written about the garden on which these paintings were based. However, it is important to note that the Clos Normand garden was painted at the exact same time and at the same property. Therefore, a study of Monet’s late work would be incomplete without an understanding of both the Clos Normand garden and the ensuing paintings in addition to the water lily garden. By examining this portion of Monet’s work, much about Monet’s obsession with nature, specifically controlled nature in gardens, is illuminated.
In order to understand the role of gardens in Monet’s late paintings it is important to examine the history of Monet’s interest in gardens, which is the subject of chapter one. Chapter two focuses on the history of gardens in France and Japan and how both influence Monet’s own gardens. After understanding the cultural implications within these two gardens, chapter three revolves around a study of Monet’s late paintings, both the Clos Normand paintings and the water lily paintings. Throughout chapter three I hope to demonstrate the significance of the Clos Normand paintings. Within this chapter, the paintings of each garden are compared and contrasted in order to see if Monet’s subject matter manipulated the way in which he painted. Additionally, the Clos Normand paintings are discussed for their own innovations as opposed to those of the water lily garden. Through a more comprehensive study of the Clos Normand paintings, I aim to improve the scholarly understanding of Claude Monet’s late career.
Chapter One

Monet’s Lifelong Interest in Gardens

Of the more than eight hundred paintings he completed during the first half of his career before moving to Giverny, over one hundred are views of sun-dappled gardens or flower-rich still lifes. (Tucker 1995: 178)

Claude Monet had a career-long obsession with contrived nature in parks and, more specifically, gardens. These motifs allowed him to explore the human relationship with nature. During the last thirty years of his life he focused almost exclusively on painting the gardens at his house in Giverny. In order to understand the significance of his late garden paintings, we must understand Monet’s decades long engagement with gardens and how that fits into the history of landscape painting in France. For this reason, I will look at his attitudes towards gardens as they align with a larger cultural shift that occurred in France in the nineteenth century.

The Industrialization of France and Contrived Nature

Prior to the French Revolution parks and gardens were enjoyed by the aristocracy but, after the Revolution, parks and gardens became popular amongst the expanding bourgeoisie. Large promenades became an “aesthetic and political desire of administrators to bring order to both the appearance of the city and the behavior of its residents” (Hunt 2002: 69). Gardens and parks were thought to increase the quality of life throughout Paris and other French cities as well as improve general public health. Additionally, gardens were a necessary part of the economic growth of the city. With the new importance placed on parks and gardens, the homes next to promenades and public parks increased in value and were reserved for the higher social classes. Because of the status associated with houses near parks and promenades, gardens became a
status symbol. Only wealthy citizens could afford to plant and upkeep gardens in their own homes.

Other than their economic value, parks and gardens were celebrated for their aesthetic qualities. These spaces brought beauty and nature back into the newly industrialized city of Paris. The parks and gardens in the modernized country provided a return to the past for French citizens under the assumption that “in urban society people are not fully themselves... they have lost something wholesome and precious” (Schapiro 1997: 95). Parks reintegrated this lost nature into the city in a calculated way. House gardens did the same thing in a private setting.

Paradoxically, gardens and parks were thought to allow a return to the natural world on one hand, yet on the other were inherently contrived. Even today, gardens are deliberately planned to most effectively trick the brain into believing one is immersed in nature. Humans are attracted to beauty, symmetry, and balance. Therefore, each pathway and grouping of flowers is perfectly orchestrated to create an idealized version of nature. As such, the nineteenth century obsession with gardens and parks in France is not unusual when viewed as coinciding with the modernization of the country.

The obsession with gardens permeated multiple levels of French culture, as seen in the literary references made about gardens. Victor Hugo’s 1862 novel, Les Misérables, referenced gardens saying, “A garden to walk in and immensity to dream in-- what more could he ask?... some flowers on earth, and all the stars in the sky” (Hugo 2017: 52). Marcel Proust’s title À la recherche du temps perdu: À l’ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs (In Search of Lost Time: In the Shade of Girls in Flowers) also referenced flowers which were associated with gardens (Gache-Patin 1990: 212). Both literary references to gardens and flowers create a more comprehensive picture of the importance of gardens in nineteenth century France.
Additionally, numerous horticultural books, magazines, and almanacs were published throughout the mid to late nineteenth century. Most notably, *Le Jardin (The Garden)* had its first issue in 1887. It was also fashionable to teach lectures on the subject of gardening such as the *Cours d’horticulture (Horticultural Course)* by Alexandre Poiteau which was published in 1847 (Gache-Patin 1990: 208).

Monet began his career as an artist painting the coast of Normandy under the mentorship of Eugène Boudin (Tucker 1995: 10). Upon his move to Paris as a young man, he became enamored with painting parks and gardens. It is through the use of this subject matter in addition to Monet’s innovative techniques in the Impressionist style that he became so popular.

**Monet’s Inspiration: Predecessors and Contemporaries**

Monet was not alone in the use of the subject matter of parks and gardens. As public parks and gardens came to be understood as a necessary part of modern city life and a motif that spanned the arts, many French painters, including Claude Monet, chose “gardenscapes,” a term used often by Sylvie Gache-Patin, as their new subject matter. Specifically, Monet’s contemporaries, the Impressionists, latched onto this new motif.

With Monet, a new generation of French landscape painters began to take form-- the Impressionists. Together they questioned and adapted the previously agreed upon notion of what constituted a landscape painting. While Monet was perhaps Impressionism’s biggest proponent, and was therefore referred to as the Father of Impressionism, there were many other artists who used similar techniques at the exact same time. These were all colleagues of Monet who helped in the development of this historic style. The Impressionists originally consisted of six Impressionist artists-- Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas, Berthe Morisot, and Alfred Sisley along with friends of the artists-- Edouard Béliard, Armand
Guillaumin, Ludovic Lepic, Léopold Levert, and Henri Rouart. Together they formed an artistic association called the Société Anonyme. The Société Anonyme was the first time practicing artists formed a business association amongst themselves and presented their own work separate from the French government (Tucker 1995: 77).

With these artists the Impressionist style came to fruition. The style was characterized by visible brushstrokes, an emphasis on light and movement and an insistence on the plein-air style of painting, produced with “a quick eye, dextrous hand, and a sensitive temperament” (Eisenman 2010: 17). The plein-air, or open air, technique required artists to paint outdoors. The goal was to capture one’s first “impression.” Many of the innovations which came along with the Impressionist painters were informed by the work of their predecessors. Therefore, it is important to understand the contemporary moment in landscape painting in which these artists were working and to note how the work of major artists inspired the Impressionist generation of painters.

Landscape painting, as a field, was not perceived as a valid artistic pursuit until the beginning of the nineteenth century. Other than Joseph Vernet, who was a popular landscape painter in the eighteenth century, most French artists chose instead to focus on figure painting or still life as their main subject matter. It was not until Pierre-Henri de Valenciennes returned from Italy, in love with the landscapes that he found there, that he introduced the idea of a landscape painter to French culture. With the publication of his book, *Elémens de perspective pratique* (*Elements of Practical Perspective*), Valenciennes created “a receptive climate for landscape painting in France” (Champa 1991: 15). Valenciennes is the artist who epitomized the first generation of French landscape painters.
Valenciennes, who “theorized that the historical and moral emanations from landscape paintings gave them significance beyond mere appearances,” had his work recognized when the French Academy created a prize for landscape painting in 1817 (Champa 1991: 16). Landscape painting’s popularity steadily increased and eclipsed the prominence of past painting subjects. The newfound appreciation for landscape paved the way for a second generation of artists who took contemporary views on nature and translated them onto the canvas. Among these artists, known as the Generation of 1830, two were the most profound painters of the French landscape. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot and Théodore Rousseau brought to this novel field innovative methods of capturing nature. For these artists, “to paint landscape was the clearest declaration of a desire for freedom” for “only in an academically disrespected genre was there the promise of a broad and open field of language space for an artist to explore” (Champa 1991: 25). Because landscape was a recent development, there were not as many conventions to critique. Therefore, artists could take greater liberties with their paintings. Landscape provided a freedom not previously experienced by artists.

Within this second generation of painters, Corot leaned towards Romantic views on nature whereas Rousseau had more Realistic views, even though they painted at approximately the same time. While Corot was a painter himself, he was most known as a teacher of painting who “set the standards for landscape practice...without intentionally dictating how other artists should work” (Champa 1991: 116). Corot did not focus on modernity like the Impressionists that came after him. When looking at the works of Corot such as Forêt de Fontainebleau (Forest of Fontainebleau) [Figure 1] from 1846, the viewer is not bombarded with political messages, like those employed by many of the Realist painters. Instead, the viewer is presented with the French countryside-- small villages and rural pathways that the average French citizen would have
recognized. While Corot, being a Romantic artist, may have idealized aspects of nature that characteristically summarized the French landscape, he was not trying to show an antiquated ideal of nature, devoid of humans. He instead sought a balance between the French countryside as nature and the French countryside as human-inhabited land.

Working alongside Corot in the second generation of landscape artists, Théodore Rousseau turned to Realistic views on landscape painting. Inspired by the paintings of the Englishman, John Constable, Rousseau adapted Constable’s scientific landscape paintings and, in works like *Paysage avec terres agricoles (Landscape with Farmland)* [Figure 2], painted the French landscape more poetically (Champa 1991: 212). Nineteenth century landscape artists, such as Rousseau, were not satisfied with depicting the landscape in a methodical, textbook fashion. It was through the reconsideration of Constable’s scientific methods of landscape that Rousseau developed a poetic outlook on French landscape painting.

Rousseau found that landscapes were most powerful when they did not try to idealize the natural environment. While he did include humans in many of his paintings, as did Corot, Rousseau was under “a conscious understanding that the ideal of ecological awareness is not just an awareness of nature’s processes, but a harmonious integration of people within the natural environments and ecosystems” (Thomas 2010: 48). Therefore, fishermen, farmers and other peasants were incorporated into Rousseau’s nature scenes. These laborers had a deep-rooted connection to the land so they naturally fit into the landscape.

Rousseau was also one of the forerunners of the Barbizon school. The Barbizon school of artists was named after the village of Barbizon, which was a popular landscapist destination. This school grew from the Romantic school of landscape painters. Whereas Romantic artists, such as Corot, focused on the idealization of nature, the Barbizon artists, such as Rousseau, aimed to
create a Realistic depiction of nature. This Realistic depiction was accomplished through a “direct study from nature, be it landscape or the human figure” (Herbert 1962: 15).

Barbizon artists turned away from the Italian landscapes traditionally used in landscape painting and they instead used French, Dutch and English landscapes for inspiration. The Italian landscape, much more static in its weather, was easier for painters to idealize and return to often over a long period of time. By contrast, Northern landscapes, such as those found in England, were unpredictable in their weather and prevented long studies. The fleeting aspect of the natural world in the Northern climate contributed to the Barbizon artists’ obsession with plein-air painting, and the attempt to capture fleeting moments in nature.

From the second generation of artists, the generation of Corot and Rousseau, Monet drew much inspiration. This generation greatly promoted the use of plein-air painting. They also had a true dedication to translating nature, seen in the French countryside, onto the canvas. Monet employed both of these crucial aspects of landscape painting in his own work. However, there were many differences in the paintings that Monet created as compared to the paintings of both Corot and Rousseau. In the thirty years between the Generation of 1830 and the Impressionists, French landscape painting changed drastically.

Eugène Boudin was a key artist who bridged the gap between the second generation, the Generation of 1830, and the Impressionists. Boudin carved a path for himself in French landscape painting in his choice of subject matter-- the seascapes of his native Normandy. It was there that the young Claude Monet met Boudin who became his first artistic mentor. Boudin was the person who encouraged Monet’s experimentation with oil paints and use of the plein-air technique.
Boudin was also influential in his lighter palette. It was typical, at this time in landscape painting, to emphasize the ethereal effects of a bright sky juxtaposed against a dark ground. Boudin, instead, parted ways from the conventions of Corot and other landscapists and painted both the sky and the ground in the same range of brighter colors (Champa 1991: 105). Boudin’s color choices were “uniquely fresh in the landscape practice of the early 1860s... It is the palette from which Monet will begin” (Champa 1991: 105). Furthermore, it is perhaps Boudin that inspired the deep-rooted obsession with water that Monet carried with him throughout his life. Because of these reasons, many of Monet’s early works were directly influenced by the work of Boudin. The similarities between the two artists is seen in the comparison of Boudin’s *Le Havre (The Port)* [Figure 3] and Monet’s *L’Embouchure de la Seine à Honfleur (Mouth of the Seine at Honfleur)* [Figure 4]. Both of these paintings use a similar subject matter and color palettes. Boudin’s painting was made after that of Monet but still shows the exchange that occurred between the two artists.

Monet owed the French field of landscape painting to Valenciennes who was its pioneer. Corot and Rousseau gave Monet a deep-rooted love for nature and were the artists who spearheaded the use of the plein-air technique. Boudin, as Monet’s first artistic mentor, taught him how to use oil paints, inspired Monet with his lighter palette, and prompted Monet’s obsession with water. Monet drew aspects from each of these artists into his own work and adapted their techniques to better capture the moment in which he was living.

Where Monet truly progressed from his predecessors was in the inclusion of specific types of human figures. The figures Monet depicted in his paintings had a different relationship to nature than those in the works of Corot, Rousseau, and Boudin. The earlier painters understood that humans had their place in the world. While these artists did not exclude human
figures from landscape paintings, they each chose members of certain social classes to include in their works. Farmers, fishermen and peasants were thought to be a natural part of the landscape. These laborers, excluded from the cities, belonged in the French countryside. Therefore, their inclusion in the paintings of the country was not deceitful. All other humans were not to be included in landscape paintings. Monet flipped this idea on its head, as seen in his painting *La Plage à Trouville (Beach at Trouville)* [Figure 5] from 1870 in which wealthy vacationers litter the entire beach and a seaside village takes up more than half of the canvas. No longer were landscapes for showing nature devoid of all humans except those that had a deep relationship to the land.

Along with Monet, the other Impressionist painters progressed from the conventions of the Generation of 1830. The crucial way in which the Impressionists diverged from the artists of the past was in the inclusion of the bourgeoisie and the incorporation of urban environments into landscape painting. As Greg Thomas notes: “Where Barbizon pictures depict uncultivated lands peopled with working villagers, most Impressionist landscapes of the 1860s and 1870s center on modern Parisians visiting popular leisure destinations for pleasure” (Thomas 2010: 49). While past landscapists documented and celebrated the French landscape, the Impressionists celebrated the industrialization of France. Whereas early art critics thought that “the taste for landscape was a reaction against the experience of modern urban life and a form of refuge from its mental and physical pressures,” Impressionism celebrated this same industrialization (House 2010: 38). The glorification of modernized France was the Impressionist’s contribution to the field of landscape painting.

Within the industrialization of France that the Impressionists chose as their subject, gardens and parks were an important motif. There are many Impressionist paintings by artists
other than Monet that used the setting of a park or garden. Auguste Renoir, another of the original Impressionist painters, created numerous works that focused on gardens. His *Fille avec un arrosoir* (*Girl with a Watering Can*) [Figure 6] from 1876, right at the beginning of the Impressionist style, depicts a small girl walking on a garden path holding a green watering can. Renoir even painted a canvas of Monet painting in Monet’s garden at Argenteuil. *Claude Monet peignant dans son jardin à Argenteuil* (*Claude Monet Painting in his Garden at Argenteuil*) [Figure 7] from 1873 not only shows that Renoir used gardens as his subject matter, but documents Claude Monet using the same garden as a subject. Monet within the same year painted his garden at Argenteuil as seen in *Le Jardin de Monet à Argenteuil, les Dahlias* (*The Artist’s Garden at Argenteuil, The Dahlias*) [Figure 8]. This could possibly be the canvas Monet is painting in Renoir’s work.

In addition to being informed by the older generations of landscape painters, Monet’s views on nature were also influenced by artists that were working during his own time. Like Monet, these artists were concerned with the human relationship to nature and used the setting of gardens and parks to communicate their views. Monet’s own painting, *Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe, (Luncheon on the Grass)* [Figure 9] from 1865 was directly influenced by the painting of the same name, by Édouard Manet [Figure 10]. Manet painted a picnic scene in the forest with two clothed men and a naked woman. Monet reflected on this work by Manet and, in his own work, placed multiple human figures in contemporary dress in the middle of the woods. The undeniable visual similarities between these works display Monet’s engagement with the work of his contemporaries. With such a direct influence captured on the canvas, it is clear that Monet looked to contemporary works to formulate his own ideas on the interaction between humans and nature.
The impact of his predecessors and contemporaries led to the start of Monet’s lifelong interest in gardens. Gardens were a subject that he returned to often, regardless of his whereabouts, until the end of his career. Interestingly, as Monet aged he devoted more time to nature alone, instead of his traditional human subjects. Most other artists at this time continued to paint humans interacting with nature.

**Garden Paintings Throughout Monet’s Early Career**

Starting in 1866 Monet painted a monumental canvas that he submitted to the Salon of 1867. *Femmes au jardin (Women in the Garden)* [Figure 11] depicts four women relaxing in a garden. This was one of the first explicit references to gardens in the work of Monet and was also his largest painting using a garden motif until his late career. Another work, *Jeanne-Marguerite Lecadre au jardin (Jeanne-Marguerite Lecadre in a Garden)* [Figure 12], also from 1866, showcases a garden in which a woman dressed in all white holds a small, white parasol as she meanders through the scene. Both of these works are some of the earliest examples of the garden motif in Monet’s oeuvre and show his placement of bourgeois women in the setting of a garden. Monet particularly reflects on the popularity of parks and gardens as a way to beautify cities in his painting *Le Jardin de l’infante (Garden of the Princess)* [Figure 13] from 1867. This work depicts the Quai du Louvre right around the time that the World Fair of 1867 was happening (Oberlin Museum). As seen from this work, while human activity centered around the fair is included, almost half of the canvas is taken up by the large park seen on the lower left half of the work. Similar to the gardens in *Femmes* and *Jeanne-Marguerite*, this work shows the park as a catalyst for human activity.

*Terrasse à Sainte-Adresse (Garden at Sainte-Adresse)* [Figure 14] from 1867 was another work made within the span of the two years between 1866-67 in which Monet
emphasized the motif of the garden and its use by the bourgeoisie. This work exhibited “coastal life enjoyed by modern, upper middle class people” (Tucker 1995: 27). Both Monet’s aunt and father, members of the bourgeois class, are sitting on the sunny terrace, overlooking the ocean and surrounded by a brightly colored garden.

In *Sainte-Adresse*, the garden provides the backdrop for the human activities which take precedence over the natural setting. This is seen in the way the figures are relatively centered on the canvas and emphasized by the brightest highlights. The garden, by contrast, creeps across the lower edges of the canvas and is constrained to the bottom half of the painting. This painting is most importantly a display of human interaction and enjoyment with nature providing an environment in which this can happen.

After *Sainte-Adresse* Monet dedicated many more works to the subject of gardens. This work, and the works that followed, showcased Monet’s experimentation with the human relationship to nature. As his career progressed, he ceased using gardens as the backdrop for human activities and focused on the gardens themselves.

The next group of paintings showing domestic gardens that appeared in Claude Monet’s body of work came from his house in Argenteuil, such as *Camille dans le jardin de la maison d’Argenteuil* (Camille in the Garden at Argenteuil) [Figure 15]. This work, painted in 1876, coincided with the birth of Impressionism as an artistic style. It represented one of the first paintings Monet created incorporating both the motif of gardens and Impressionist techniques.

The techniques of Impressionism are apparent in *Camille dans le jardin*, especially when compared to *Sainte Adresse*. Small, visible brushstrokes create a textured canvas and a sense of movement throughout the scene. The brushstrokes in *Sainte Adresse* are refined in comparison to the typical impasto of Impressionist works, as demonstrated by *Camille dans le jardin*. Whereas
Sainte Adresse uses blocks of light and shadow, Camille dans le jardin is instead more even in contrast between light and dark. Additionally, the shadows have a similar range in color as compared to the highlights, meaning that Monet paid equal attention to the subtleties of colors found in shadows as well as highlights, a characteristic technique of the Impressionist style. It is through Camille dans le jardin that the viewer sees the combination of Monet’s innovative painting techniques and his use of the timely motif of a garden.

Camille dans le jardin also differs from Sainte Adresse in the human relationship to nature. Whereas Sainte Adresse emphasizes primarily the human interaction occurring in the scene, Camille dans le jardin is equal between nature and figure. The gardens here are still a place for humans to enjoy leisurely activity, yet the physical proportion of the canvas given to the garden is greater than that given to the figure of Camille. This lends greater importance to nature.

After living in Argenteuil for eight years Monet moved to Vétheuil where he was “alone in a place where earth and sky, land and water, the artist and the environment [were] in perfect accord” (Tucker 1995: 101). The move away from Paris followed Monet’s desire to turn more fully to nature. Vétheuil is significantly farther outside of Paris as compared to Argenteuil. Le Jardin de Monet à Vétheuil (Monet’s Garden at Vétheuil) [Figure 16] from 1880 embodied the continued dedication to gardens that Monet possessed: “Monet planted gardens wherever he lived” (The Artist’s Garden at Vétheuil).

In this work, the subtleties of color take precedence over human interaction. From bright red to subdued turquoise to warm gold, the true beauty of this work comes out in Monet’s depiction of his garden. Continuing his divergence from human subjects, there is a smaller emphasis placed on humans in this painting as compared to Camille dans le jardin. Monet’s son,
Michel, is seen in a small white and blue outfit and a small cap. Sunflowers tower over his figure, completely overpowering him. The faint figures of, possibly, Camille and Jean, Monet’s first wife and other son, are seen farther down on the path but they too are overpowered by the size of the sunflowers.

**Giverny and the Turn to Nature**

Having established that Monet was devoted to his gardens since the beginning of his career, his masterpiece, Giverny can be discussed in context. Monet moved to Giverny in 1883. The house that he first rented and later bought in November of 1890 was a pink stucco house nicknamed the Le Pressoir, or, the cider house. Originally, next to the house, there was an extensive fruit and vegetable garden and an orchard used as a source of food by the previous occupants. After Monet officially purchased the house he had free reign over the grounds and “the first thing he did… was to tear up the kitchen garden, visual beauty quickly replacing productivity” (Tucker 1989: 255).

In its stead, Monet planted a large house garden, which I will call the Clos Normand garden, with distinct ties to traditional French garden design. However, this garden is often eclipsed by the garden across the street from Monet’s Giverny house-- the water lily garden. The water lily garden, and subsequent paintings, have been the subject of much scholarly attention. Most people thinking of the works of Claude Monet conjure up an image of the water lily paintings.

What is unique about both of these gardens is that Monet created each of them from scratch which gave him a clean slate to build any garden he desired. Whereas other plein-air artists painted from the environments they found, Monet had a specific vision for the canvases he
wanted to create. This vision inspired him to build the Clos Normand garden and the water lily garden. It should therefore be noted that both the physical gardens in Giverny and the paintings of them are manifestations of Monet’s creativity as an artist and express his perspective on nature.

_Terrassee à Sainte-Adresse, Camille dans le jardin de la maison d’Argenteuil, and Le Jardin de Monet à Vétheuil_ show Monet’s shift from a human-centric artist to a nature-centric artist. Yet it is not until Monet began to create works at Giverny that he became wholly consumed by nature and tossed the human aspect aside. As shown by these three paintings, while Monet had been fascinated by nature his entire life, it was often used as a backdrop for human activities. Contrary to this tendency, many of his works at Giverny focused solely on the gardens that he had there, both the water lily garden and the Clos Normand garden.

This turn to nature has been debated by many scholars. Each scholar has a different reason for Monet’s shift in subject matter. Stephen Eisenman, a notable scholar on Impressionism, furthers this point by saying, “no scholar or critic has adequately explained the profound loss of social mooring attested in Monet’s paintings beginning in the 1880s, but whatever its personal, professional, or political determinants, it grew more profound with each passing year” (Eisenman 2010: 28).

John House posits that this shift was of an economic purpose. House states that Monet withdrew farther into nature because “modern subjects, under the new expansionist régime, had lost their shock value,” and because “it was a smart market move for a forty-year-old artist seeking to establish a career on a firm economic footing” (House 2010: 44). By the expansionist régime, House is referring to the industrialization and modernization of Paris that prompted outward movement from the city. With the development of new forms of transportation, urban
aspects of the city crept into the countryside and became a cliché subject for painters. Therefore, Monet, who was trying to create a novel legacy, had to assert himself as differing from the rest of his contemporaries and turned solely to nature. House illuminates his own reasoning by stating that he does not believe one can take an artist’s choice in subject matter at face-value. Just because Monet decided to paint nature devoid of human subjects during his time at Giverny does not mean that he was attempting to communicate an emotional or philosophical agenda. House believes instead that it was Monet playing into the French art market in sole hopes of inflating his fame and bank account.

Greg Thomas explains this same shift as being spurred when Monet saw Gustave Courbet’s nature paintings exhibited in 1867. Courbet’s works were particularly immersive in nature. Thomas believed that “while tracing human aesthetic interaction with the environment, these works exclude actual figures and undermine the artist/beholder’s viewpoint” (Thomas 2010: 55). Monet took this immersion as inspiration, according to Thomas, and brought it to the extreme in his paintings at Giverny.

Paul Tucker speculates that Monet turned away from humans and civilization because he was disgusted by the political state of affairs in France. Daniel Wildenstein also believes this to be a factor in Monet’s turn to nature. Tucker uses the fact that for much of Monet’s career he painted works that showcased and celebrated the industrialization and vibrant culture of France. One needs only to look at La Rue Montorgeuil à Paris. Fête du 30 juin 1878 (Montorgeuil street in Paris. Celebration of June 30, 1878) [Figure 17] from 1878, which depicts a crowded Parisian street exploding with French flags, or Sainte Adresse, which also includes a French flag flying in the wind, to illuminate this point.
One justification Tucker uses to show Monet’s support of the French political climate deteriorated was the Dreyfus affair: “it was only when that scandal spread its sordidness across the nation that Monet gave up his lifelong project of immortalizing his native land” (Tucker 1995). The Dreyfus affair was a political scandal that began in 1894 when Alfred Dreyfus, a French, Jewish military officer, was accused of communicating military secrets to Germany. When it came to light that it was not Dreyfus but another officer that had leaked these secrets the French military attempted a cover up. Émile Zola, a famous writer and close friend of Claude Monet, published a letter titled *J’accuse (I accuse)* that was published in a French newspaper. This letter called attention to the corruption and anti-semitism demonstrated by French government throughout this event. The letter garnered great attention and soon the French people became deeply divided between those that supported Dreyfus, including Monet, and those that supported the French government and military. Tucker cites this as one of the major reasons that Monet chose to spend the rest of his life in Giverny: “it was no coincidence that Monet turned to his water garden only after his rise to prominence and after the heinous Dreyfus affair had broken” (Tucker 1995: 180). This statement epitomizes the disregard for the Clos Normand garden that scholars demonstrate. Tucker discounts the Clos Normand gardens as a place in which Monet could find solace by saying he turned to his water lily garden. Both of these gardens are located at Monet’s house in Giverny yet Tucker only speaks of the water lily garden.

One of the main reasons Tucker likely ignores the Clos Normand garden was because it does nothing to prove his claim-- because Monet felt such disgust for his native country he had to sequester himself in Giverny. The water lily garden, on the other hand, does supports this claim for it employs Japanese, not French, ideals of perfecting nature in its creation. The Clos Normand garden, on the other hand, would weaken Tucker’s argument because it has much
stronger ties to European, specifically French, ideals of garden design. I posit that Tucker explicitly restricted his statement to the water lily garden because his claim is only effective when he overlooks the fact that Claude Monet designed the Clos Normand garden with French history in mind.

It would be one thing to say Monet turned away from France and found solace in his water lily garden if he had altogether stopped painting the Clos Normand garden. But that is by no means that case. He continued to paint the Clos Normand garden for essentially as long as he painted the water lily garden. For example, he painted one of his Clos Normand paintings, *L’Allée de rosiers, Giverny (The Path Under the Rose Arches, Giverny)* [Figure 54] between 1920-22, only four years before his death, and another, *La Maison dans les roses (The House among Roses)* [Figure 57] in 1925, only one year before he died.

While the reason for Monet’s shift to nature is often disputed by scholars, most scholars acknowledge that this shift did occur. It is understood that after Monet moved to Giverny, he devoted progressively more time to nature, in the form of his gardens, and less time to human subjects or environments. Because this is a distinct shift in Monet’s subject matter, gardens must be understood as an important motif in the work of Monet.

* * *

As previously stated, Monet had two gardens at his house in Giverny-- the water lily garden and the Clos Normand garden. Scholars have often overlooked the Clos Normand garden. Instead, most scholarship on Monet’s gardens at Giverny is dedicated only to the water lily garden. In this chapter, I established that Monet was innovative in his approach to landscape painting. He utilized contemporary subjects, such as gardens and parks, throughout most of his career.
However, the use of gardens was not uncommon in nineteenth century France. Therefore, something unique was in play in terms of Monet’s gardens at Giverny. Both the creation of his gardens and the way that Monet translated them onto canvas led to the novelty of Monet’s gardens and subsequent paintings. The fact that gardens were important to Monet for much of his career makes his large gardens in Giverny even more significant. The creation of both of his gardens and how they follow a dichotomous relationship to nature will be discussed in the next chapter.
Chapter Two

The Gardens at Giverny

Gardening was so important to him that had he not been a painter, he probably would have been a botanist.
(Tucker 1989: 255)

Monet’s garden obsession early in his career manifested itself in his paintings. Giverny, on the other hand, showcased the physical gardens Monet created as evidence of his gardening obsession. As Claude Monet aged, his depictions of humans and the industrialization of France decreased. Monet turned away from the subject matter utilized by the Impressionists—la vie quotidienne—and instead focused on nature. His immersion in nature centered around the two gardens he created in Giverny, the water lily garden and the Clos Normand garden [Figure 18]. These gardens exhibited ties to two different perspectives on nature—-a Japanese perspective in the water lily garden and a French perspective in the Clos Normand garden.

Monet worked tirelessly on both of his gardens to create environments for his paintings. Stephen Eisenman suggests that Monet was “a pioneer of ecological painting” (Eisenman 2010: 27). Having just discussed Monet’s career-long interest in gardens as a painting motif, it was not unusual that in his final home he built the largest and most creative gardens. Unfortunately, almost all of the scholarship on Monet’s gardens in Giverny focus on the water lily garden. The Clos Normand garden, by contrast, is often overlooked or only briefly mentioned. However, the Clos Norman garden can supplement the existing information about Monet as an artists and a gardener. Therefore, I will dedicate the majority of this chapter to a discussion of the creation of Monet’s Clos Normand garden.

Although, in their current form, the gardens at Giverny have been restored, they still provide us with a vast amount of knowledge on Monet as not only a painter but also a gardener.
Countless hours and vast amounts of resources have gone into the restoration of the gardens. While these restorations can be trusted to an extent, there are additional resources we can look to in order to get a holistic picture of what went into the creation of Monet’s Giverny gardens.

**Monet the Gardener**

As previously stated in the first chapter, Claude Monet moved to Giverny in 1883. After officially purchasing the house, Monet tore up the existing garden and planted a large house garden, the Clos Normand garden. A few years later he obtained another plot of land across the street from his house. He turned this plot into the famous water lily garden.

In order to create the physical gardens, Monet invested hours into studying horticulture. He obsessed over catalogues, magazines and various other gardening publications (Gache-Patin 1984: 215). Gertrude Jekyll, an English gardener, published multiple books on gardening including *Colour in the Flower Garden* from 1908 and *Wall and the Water Gardens* from 1903 which both influenced the gardens of Monet. Jekyll spoke of the specific nursery from which she bought her water lilies and Monet used the same nursery to buy his own (Eisenman 2010: 31). Upon purchasing his property in Giverny, he built a greenhouse to experiment with various types of flowers, hybridization, and soil compositions. It was necessary, in his mind, to understand the science behind soil chemistry and moisture levels along with different planting techniques for his flowers. While it was easier to utilize flowers and plants native to France, Monet experimented with different plant species in his greenhouse. This allowed him to cultivate numerous foreign plants that he later used throughout his gardens.

Monet, known to be quite particular about his gardens, constantly worried when he was away from Giverny. In a letter to his gardener from February of 1900, Monet gave very specific directions on how to tend to the plants:
...From the 15th to the 25th, lay the dahlias down to root; plant out those with shoots before I get back. -- Don’t forget the lily bulbs. --Should the Japanese paonies arrive plant them immediately if the weather permits, taking care initially to protect buds from the cold, as much from the heat of the sun… (Kendall 2001: 187).

The letter goes on for quite some time, continuing with specific instructions on when, where, and how to plant each flower in the garden and tend to those that would need extra care during the winter. The level of detail into which Monet goes in this letter showed the precision he used to control every aspect of his gardens.

During his travels he also wrote many letters home to his second wife, Alice, or to his friends, where he fretted over the state of his gardens. He often wrote to Alice saying how much he missed his home there. Whilst painting in Christiana, Norway, he wrote to her saying, “You’ve no idea how much I think of Giverny in this fine weather and envy you being there” (Kendall 2001: 182). In this same letter, he spoke to how nervous he was about the winter in Giverny and what effect it would have on the plants:

I can see that it’s very cold where you are too, but it’s nothing compared to here; your night temperatures are our day ones. I can well understand how happy the skaters are, but I dread what’s happening to the garden, the bulbs. Is the ice on the pond being watched carefully? It would be very sad if everything planted there were to die. (Kendall 2001: 182)

It was not only during his absence from Giverny that Monet worried about the condition of his gardens. While he was at home there, he often wrote to friends telling them about the weather and how it was affecting his garden. In February of 1910 he wrote to his art dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel, saying,
We are getting along, but no more than that, especially my wife, floods have also given us a good deal of trouble and anxiety; I thought for a while that my entire garden would be destroyed and I was very concerned. Finally the water receded little by little, and although I’ve lost a lot of plants, it will probably be less calamitous than I’d feared. (Kendall 2001: 242-3)

In August of 1912 he wrote to a friend saying,

I set to work, but with this weather I haven’t managed to do anything and to add to my miseries an appalling storm has created havoc in my garden. The weeping willows I was so proud of have been torn apart and stripped; the finest entirely broken up. In short, a real disaster and a real worry for me. (Kendall 2001: 246)

While it seemed as though Monet was fanatical about his gardens, it must be remembered he did not create the gardens solely for the sake of gardening. He designed these artificial environments so that, in the end, he could paint them. The gardens were created in the three dimensional world in order to be translated on to the two dimensional canvas. As John House puts it,

the paradoxical relationship between nature and art appears most vividly in Monet’s late paintings of his water garden. The ingredients of the garden were all natural, but this self-contained world was a wholly artificial composition, forged out of local plants and trees combined with flowers and shrubs imported from sources as far away as Japan, and designed and tended to Monet’s exacting requirements, both as a physical haven and as the ideal subject matter for his art. (House 2010: 44-5)

While House is referring specifically to the water garden in this quote, the same statement can be applied to the Clos Normand garden as well. Both gardens were seemingly natural environments
that, in actuality, were rigidly constructed to be painted. This quote illuminates my original critique of the scholarship written on Monet--most scholars only briefly mention or completely overlook the Clos Normand garden. John House, in a statement that could apply to both gardens, chooses instead to speak only of the water lily garden. I will now look more closely at the creation of the water lily garden to explain why most scholars focus on it as opposed to the Clos Normand garden.

**The Water Lily Garden**

It is generally acknowledged by scholars that Monet’s water lily garden has a distinct Japanese influence, especially when compared to the Clos Normand garden. Monet’s love for Japanese culture permeated his entire time at Giverny for he was an active collector of Japanese woodblock prints. He is quoted in a letter to his art dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel saying, “it would be kind of you to let me know how long your Japanese exhibition goes on, as I want very much to see it” (Kendall 2001: 176). Japanese woodblock prints covered the walls of his house and are still on display today [Figure 47]. Japanese art and gardening have always had strong ties to one another which is why Monet’s apparent interest in the art of Japan translated well into the water lily garden.

While much of the artistic culture of Japan was influenced by China, there was still autonomy in Japanese culture. The native religion of Japan, Shinto, stressed a peaceful relationship to nature and emphasized the maintenance of the natural landscape. This clashed with the typical relationship experienced in Europe between humans and nature: “Where the medieval Europe saw malignant spirits in every forest and mountain waste demanding to be exorcised or subdued, the contemporary followers of Shinto seem to have felt an instinctive reverence for every stone, plant, and animal” (Adams 1991: 231). One reason for this difference
was that the experience of nature was always a deeply spiritual and religious one in Japan. The first time the word garden, niwa, was seen in Japanese literature it “was used to indicate a piece of ground purified for the worship of the gods” (Adams 1991: 231). Due to the highly spiritual relationship with nature, Japanese gardens typically celebrated nature’s inherent appearance as compared to European gardens which manipulated the appearance of nature.

Strict, written rules governing the art of garden design existed in Japan since the the eleventh century. Attributed to Tachibana-no Toshitsuna, the Sakuteiki was perhaps the oldest known treatise on garden design (Adams 1991: 232). This treatise outlined the rigid rules to be used in every garden in Japan. These guidelines were followed for centuries. A few centuries after the Sakuteiki, a Buddhist priest, Kenko, wrote a series of essays on the aesthetics of beauty that had a great impact on garden art in Japan due to the influence of Buddhism brought through cultural exchange with China. These essays spoke to the idea of imperfection in nature and the celebration of beauty found in all seasons and times of day, not just springtime which is often the only time nature is celebrated in the West (Adams 1991: 237). From these two governing sets of rules, the Sakuteiki and Kenko’s essays, many different styles of gardens emerged in Japanese culture.

Due to the limited amount of space in Japan, gardens were typically reserved for the nobility or for religious buildings such as monasteries. However, there was a movement to create a greater number of domestic gardens after the end of the Heian period in the twelfth century. Years of civil wars ensued following the Heian period and gardens provided a pleasurable escape for upper-class families (Adams 1991: 241). These domestic gardens typically followed the conventions of a tea garden.
A Japanese tea garden was not religious and provided a space to rest. The ceremony of drinking tea in the garden was calculated and led to most tea gardens having similar characteristics. There was a tea house in which the tea was consumed, separate from the main house. Additionally, a path led the viewer through the garden towards this tea house. Because of this path, the tea garden was the first type of Japanese garden meant to be viewed in a specific, preconceived order (Adams 1991: 248).

From the sequential tea garden arose the stroll gardens of the Edo period which lasted from 1603 to 1867. Perhaps the most notable example of an Edo stroll garden was the Katsura imperial villa in Kyoto which still exists today [Figure 19]. The influence of this particular garden reached all the way to England where most people liken Stourhead garden in Wiltshire [Figure 20], built in 1725, to it. If Japanese garden art had such a direct impact on gardens in England, it was no surprise that this same influence reached France as well. Katsura exemplified the characteristics of a stroll garden, many of which were also utilized by Monet in his water lily garden.

Katsura was started by Prince Toshihito in 1620 but the construction was mostly attributed to Kobori Enshu (Adams 1991: 250). The garden was centered around a lake, just like Monet’s water lily garden. Monet went to great lengths diverting water from the Epte river that ran by his house [Figure 21]. There was much contention throughout the residents of Giverny who thought that diverting the river would ruin their agriculture. Monet wrote letters to the Préfect of Eure which stated his intentions for the diversion:

May I humbly submit a few observations relative to the opposition drawn up by the municipal council and a few inhabitants of Giverny, relating to two inquests concerning the request I had the honour of making to you with the aim of obtaining authorization for
a water channel on the River Epte, the purpose of which is to supply a pond where I would like to grow aquatic plants. (Kendall 2001: 179)

He continued on to explain that his pond would not harm the environment and that “it [was] merely intended for leisure and to delight the eye and also to provide motifs to paint” (Kendall, 2001: 180). Centralizing a garden around a lake or pond, which was one of the most obvious elements of Monet’s garden, was very popular in Japanese garden design as well.

Other than Katsura being centered around a lake, the pathways there were laid out so that visitors progressed through the garden in a certain way, experiencing a number of different highlighted views. Stroll gardens employed a technique called shakkei, or borrowed landscape, throughout the entire garden. As the viewer walked through the garden, they could look around and see a number of different landscape types, such as a mountain scene, that appeared as if it was naturally in the garden. In reality, elements were merely brought in to create the appearance of mountains. In this way, stroll gardens were often described as “a completely make-believe world of landscape artifice” (Adams 1991: 254). The pathways in a stroll garden were also likened to the unrolling of a scroll-- as the viewer followed along the path, or as the scroll was unrolled, orchestrated elements were uncovered, forcing the viewer to focus on each individually. This was thought to have refocused the viewer on nature and, therefore, improved their garden experience.

Similar to Katsura, Monet’s winding pathways around the water lily garden [Figure 22] were very similar to those seen in Japanese stroll gardens. As visitors walked through the water lily garden, they were presented with multiple different spots to rest and experience alternate views of the pond [Figure 23]. From the area under the flowering arches to the two bridges Monet built on either side of the garden, there were many different vantage points from which to
appreciate the garden [Figures 24-26]. This was probably helpful to Monet as a painter, for he had many different places from which he could set up his easel and paint.

Apart from providing a motif to paint, the bridges found throughout Monet’s water lily garden were influenced by Japanese stroll gardens. Bridges were an important part of a stroll garden, especially because they permitted the inclusion of water [Figure 27]. The bridges allowed visitors to continue on their path over ponds or lakes while providing a view of the water. Monet took this architectural element and worked it into both his water lily garden and the subsequent paintings based off of this garden [Figure 28]. There are over forty-five canvases dedicated solely to the Japanese bridge (Wildenstein 1996, 3-4). The Japanese influence in the bridge was perhaps more apparent in the fact that Monet named many of his paintings based off that bridge *Le Pont japonais*, or some variation of that name, which translates to The Japanese Bridge.

Where Monet began to diverge from the traditions of Japanese gardens was in his abundant use of flowers [Figures 29-30]. Flowers were celebrated in Japanese culture and Chinese culture which had a great deal of influence over Japan. Both of these cultures had a flower calendar in which every month was assigned a specific flower. There was also a special art form, Ikebana, which was the art of arranging flowers. Flower festivals were held throughout Japan and all members of society participated in the festivities, showing that the entire country found flowers to be an important part of the culture, not just the nobility (Gothein 1928: 257-60). Even though flowers were celebrated in Japan, Japanese gardens did not use flowers in the same way that European gardens did.

Everywhere one turns in the water lily garden there is an explosion of coordinated colors in the blooming flowers [Figure 31-32]. Flowers line the paths and the banks of the pond and
decorate one of the bridges. Although the garden has been restored since Monet lived there, many paintings exist that demonstrate the wealth of different plants found in the water lily garden. Monet used native French plants in addition to imported foreign flowers and plants throughout his garden. Agapanthus, as seen in three paintings, is native to Southern Africa.\textsuperscript{1} Irises were also important in the water lily garden with twenty of Monet’s canvases dedicated to them specifically around the water garden.\textsuperscript{2} Hemerocallis, or daylilies, are often used in Chinese cuisine and are found in two of Monet’s paintings.\textsuperscript{3} Wisteria was a crucial flower in the garden of Monet. This flowering vine, native to China, Japan, and Korea, was a decorative hanging on Monet’s Japanese bridge. In one letter to his friend Georges Clemenceau, Monet stated, “I was hoping to see you yesterday, you didn’t come and I’m very upset since the wisteria has never been lovelier and in this heat it won’t last any time” (Kendall 2001: 259). Monet dedicated approximately seven paintings to his wisteria plants.\textsuperscript{4} Aside from flowers, the Weeping Willow tree was important to Monet’s water lily garden. Glimpses of the willow branches are seen throughout the \textit{Grandes Décorations} and Monet painted approximately twenty-four other canvases featuring willow trees.\textsuperscript{5}

Most importantly, in terms of flowers, was Monet’s use of the water lily. He named the entire garden for this one flower—Le Bassin des Nymphéas, translated to the water lily pond. The lotus was an important symbol in the Buddhist religion, symbolizing spiritual purity and paradise and therefore had significance in Japanese culture (Adams 1991: 229). Water lilies were the closest flower to the lotus that Monet could cultivate in France.

While Monet used several flowers that had ties to Japanese culture, he arranged them in a European way. Within Japanese gardens, simplicity was one of the most important elements and flowers were thought to be superfluous. More often, Japanese garden designers used rocks, a
trend which has never been fully grasped by gardeners outside of China or Japan. Monet, on the other hand, planted flowers abundantly in his water lily garden.

While Monet’s use of flowers did not closely follow Japanese tradition, the other elements of his garden, which emulated those of Japanese stroll gardens, gave the water lily garden a distinctly Japanese appearance. Being that Giverny is located in France, a Japanese garden seemed out of place. This is probably one of the reasons why scholars have given so much more attention to Monet’s water lily garden. However, the intrigue of Monet’s other garden, the Clos Normand garden becomes apparent when examined as having historical ties to France. By looking at the French history of garden design, the importance of the Clos Normand garden becomes clearer and demonstrates the close relationship Monet had to his native country.

The Clos Normand Garden

Whereas balance with nature was emphasized in Japanese culture, Europeans spent the majority of their time trying to control it. Within Europe there was a consistent “struggle to impose some kind of order on a turbulent, unpredictable, and often perverse nature” (Adams 1991: 181). This power dynamic was apparent in the gardens of Europe as early as ancient times.

Today, not much physical evidence remains that proves the existence of gardens in ancient times, due to the perishability of plants. Fortunately, scholars can learn about the history of gardening through references found in ancient texts. Homer’s Odyssey describes the palace of Alcinous, and makes a direct reference to the garden there: “Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,” while continuing on to describe the fruit-bearing trees and herbs that were to be found in that very garden (Homer 2012). Because gardens are thus used as literary settings, it is logical to assume that gardens existed at this time.
Continuing on to medieval times, many references to gardens were made in religious contexts. This manifested itself in the rise in popularity of Christian monastery gardens. During the rule of Charlemagne, important documents appeared, one of which was the plan to a monastery in St. Gall, Switzerland. These plans detailed three out of the four gardens that were in that monastery. In addition to these plans, a Latin poem by Walafrid Strabo in which 444 lines describe gardens, and a list of seventy-three plants and fruit trees were both found to be from the same time. What these three documents demonstrate is that gardens were prevalent in multiple realms-- the religious, the literary, and the horticultural-- during medieval times.

Also in Europe at this time, an increase in artistic depictions of gardens occurred. Painting became increasingly common as an artistic medium and was frequently used to depict religious scenes. As gardens were often religiously affiliated, garden motifs crept into paintings. Gardens were typically used as settings within the paintings. In particular, the Christian monastic garden, an enclosed garden referred to as the hortus conclusus, held great importance in medieval Christianity and was seen in an increasing number of paintings depicting religious scenes. This type of garden was enclosed by a wall and equated with the womb of the Virgin Mary. The combination of paintings that include gardens as background scenery and the written references to gardens create an idea of what gardens looked like in medieval times.

Monastery gardens, and medieval gardens in general, had overarching characteristics, many of which are seen in the garden at the Château de Bois Richeux [Figure 33]. There was an emphasis on rectangular and square forms, both in the shape of the entire garden and in the smaller beds within each garden. The beds within the gardens were often raised and herbs, not flowers, were utilized as the main plants. Tree grafting was used as decoration and turf seats,
raised beds of dirt covered in moss or grass, permitted seating throughout the garden (Thacker 1979: 84-6).

Water, in the form of pools and water displays, were another important characteristic of medieval gardens. Water had a distinct connection to religion in that it was a purifier. William Howard Adams elaborates on the importance of water in gardens in this period stating that “it is not human to treasure the commonplace, at least not in the west. Yet there is hardly a garden in the world that does not somehow celebrate the fundamental importance of water” (Adams 1991: 55). This adoration for water and its controlled use in gardens was one of the main themes carried over into the Renaissance and beyond. In addition to the Japanese influence to use water in the water lily garden, Monet’s fascination with water usage in gardens was likely also influenced by the medieval fascination with water.

Christian monasteries were perhaps the most prevalent form of gardens in the middle ages. They utilized many of the characteristics found in medieval gardens but also focused on gardening as “a spiritual refuge” and an “escape” from the troubles of the world (Adams 1991: 49). Monks practiced gardening techniques as a way to cultivate plants for healing and medicinal purposes. William Howard Adams argues that “the preoccupation with the healing powers of plants encouraged a growing awareness that nature herself might be coaxed to give up some of her secrets to alleviate or cure the demons that she herself created” (Adams 1991: 52). As gardens were increasingly used for the cultivation of medicinal herbs, quality of life improved. This was one of the major moments in garden history-- when Europeans realized there were benefits to controlling nature. The desire to control nature played an important role in the gardens of the Renaissance as well.
After the medieval period in France, the Renaissance brought about the beginning of the French tradition of house gardens as they are understood today. Gardens were added to existing medieval châteaux as a way to beautify them and add status to the property, such as the Château de Langeais [Figure 34]. The nobility were the only ones able to afford châteaux so gardens became associated with wealth and power. This was the beginning of gardens as status symbols reserved for the wealthier members of society, something that is echoed during the industrialization of France.

Like medieval gardens, Renaissance gardens were “endlessly reticulated and preoccupied with symmetry” (Comito 1978: 51). With symmetry came a strong emphasis on balance. However, what Renaissance gardens highlighted most was the idea of “conceit” which, when applied to garden design, led to a love of intricacy and decorative appearance (Thacker 1979: 125). The love of intricacy manifested itself most clearly in knots, a specific way of laying plants on the ground to create a carpet-like pattern. Two types of knots were most common, the closed and open knot. The closed knots grew low to the ground, typically in a square frame of fragrant herbs or flowers such as lavender or rosemary, with an intricate design of evergreen bushes [Figure 35]. The gaps between these low bushes were filled with multicolored flowers or sand. Open knots were characterized by a square divided into sections without interweaving lines [Figure 36].

Renaissance gardens had particular trouble creating a sense of harmony between the châteaux and the gardens. Because the gardens were often additions to the buildings, there was no sense of coherence between the two. As garden design progressed there was a stronger push to build the gardens and houses simultaneously. This led to the consideration of gardens as an
architectural element. Architects and gardeners, from that point on, worked hand in hand. The turn towards coherence marked the beginning of the French formal garden.

This shift to the French formal garden occurred around 1600 (Thacker 1979: 139). Symmetry and a tamed, orderly nature were the goals on which the French formal garden was founded. This was accomplished through long allées and symmetrical parterres, low lying flower beds, as well as evenly placed pools of water and fountains. Additionally, it was fundamental to have a sense of harmony between the home and gardens. Although the palace of Versailles is the most notable example of the principles of the French formal garden, I will begin by examining Vaux-le-Vicomte [Figure 37] which was one of the first houses that used these conventions.

Vaux-le-Vicomte, a château in Maincy, France, was designed primarily by Nicolas Fouquet. He commissioned Louis Le Vau to design the château, Charles Le Brun to create the garden sculptures and oversee the interior decoration, and André Le Nôtre to design the gardens. This château was the first time that all three individuals responsible for the architecture and the garden worked together throughout the building process.

André Le Nôtre played a critical role in making this château memorable for he was the biggest proponent of the French formal garden. Le Nôtre was born into a family of gardeners for his father and grandfather both worked on the gardens of the Tuileries. Along with Vaux-le-Vicomte, André Le Nôtre worked on such châteaux as Chantilly, Fontainebleau, Saint-Cloud and Saint-Germain as well as part of the Tuileries gardens.

Again, what was most important to the French formal garden was symmetry and order. As mentioned earlier, there had to be an element of harmony between the home and the gardens. Today, as well as during its creation, the palace of Versailles, another château for which André
Le Nôtre was the chief landscape designer, is one of the shining examples of the characteristics of the French formal garden [Figure 38]. Versailles has one long allée that starts from the back entrance to the palace and extends back through the entire garden [Figure 39]. On either side of this axis, there is vertical symmetry exhibited through flower beds and plots of grass that perfectly mirror each other across the vertical axis. Shrubs, and trees are planted at exactly the same distance from each other. Flowers in the parterres are color coordinated to create the appearance of an ornate carpet. Pools of water and fountains are perfectly orchestrated to highlight certain areas of the garden as the viewers walk through it. These water displays, at the time of their creation, were one of the main attractions of the Versailles gardens. Everything at Versailles is calculated to create a sense of order and symmetry in an attempt to demonstrate total control of man over nature.

All of the work put into the garden was intended to glorify the king. It was at Versailles that “imposing rules of order on the environment as rigid as those of the military… summed up the absolute monarchy” of the Sun King or, Louis XIV (Adams 1991:116). With such precision over the creation of the gardens at Versailles, the king exhibited his power over the most untamable force on earth-- nature. This was a demonstration of control put on, not only for other countries, but for the people of France.

Around the eighteenth century, opposition to the Formal French garden arose. As Rococo thought eclipsed the Baroque era, so too was garden art affected. Influenced by new gardening trends in England, “the softening, weakening, and variation of the French Formal rigidity and seriousness,” increased in popularity (Thacker 1979: 163). Just as landscape painting around this time looked to England for inspiration, garden design followed typically English forms. Rococo
gardens, which focused on a light and playful treatment of more traditionally rigid forms, progressively took over starting around 1715 (Thacker 1979: 173).

Claude Monet’s Clos Normand garden demonstrates a natural progression from French garden history. Upon examination of the plan of Monet’s house garden, many elements link back to the characteristics found in the gardens of Medieval and Renaissance times as well as the French formal garden [Figure 40]. Most of Monet’s flowerbeds were either square or rectangular, like those found in medieval gardens. Monet’s garden was not originally built with the house, recalling the addition of gardens to existing châteaux during the Renaissance. Monet ripped up the vegetable garden and orchard originally on his property and replaced them with a flower garden which served an exclusively aesthetic purpose.

The period most influential in Monet’s Clos Normand garden was the French formal garden. Like Versailles, Monet arranged a long allée that ran from his house door through the entirety of his garden. The flower beds, although not perfectly symmetric across the vertical axis, are structured and rigidly rectangular. Pathways run through the garden to create straight lines that divide the flower beds. The rigidity seen in the plan of the Clos Normand garden emulates those characteristics that were most important to the French formal garden.

What becomes more apparent through the observation of the garden is how Monet progressed from the French formal garden conventions. In the same way that Rococo gardens softened the rigidity of garden design, so too did the Clos Normand garden add elements to eliminate some of the formality. Both the way that Monet’s main allée appears today [Figure 41], and at the time when he was alive [Figure 42], show this reduction in rigidity. The flowers on either side creep out onto the gravel of the pathway, something that would have never been allowed in a French formal garden where the distinction between plants and pathway were
extremely harsh. Whereas the parterres in the French formal garden were planted low to the ground, creating the appearance of a carpet, Monet’s garden had tall growing plants that, at the time he was alive, were human height. This abundance of plant growth is seen throughout the entire Clos Normand garden.

In addition to the plant height and location, the garden of Monet includes a range of flowers with a wide variety of colors [Figures 43-44]. He coordinated them to bloom throughout the entire year so he always had flowers to paint (Eisenman 2010: 31). The way he arranged the plants in the individual beds combined flowers of different heights and colors which complemented each other and increased the aesthetic beauty of the flower beds. As Proust said, when recalling a visit to Monet’s Clos Normand garden, his garden was

a colorist garden, if I may call it that, of flowers arranged in a whole that is not entirely that of nature, since they have been planted in such a way that only those flowers blossom together whose shades match, harmonize infinitely in a blue or pink expanse, and which this powerfully revealed intention on the part of the painter had dematerialized, in a way, from all that is not color. (Gache-Patin 1990: 216)

The abundance of flowers of differing heights and colors along the way the flowers crept out of the flower beds are all ways in which Monet progressed from the French formal garden.

The changes Monet made were logical in that they aided what he was trying to accomplish with his Clos Normand garden. Monet did have a love of gardening but he was also creating his garden to be painted. Because he was an Impressionist painter, it made more sense for him to look at a subject that was diverse and dynamic. Therefore, the Clos Normand garden was crafted to create a more interesting subject matter for the Impressionist painter while still reflecting on the traditions of past French garden design.
Claude Monet’s two gardens, the water lily garden and the Clos Normand garden, show two differing perspectives on the control, or lack thereof, of nature. By employing these two perspectives Monet created two distinct gardens which were then translated onto canvas. An understanding of the history related to the creation of each garden is crucial to understand the importance of the paintings based on each. While the water lily garden has been celebrated for its innovation, there was merit in the strong ties Monet’s Clos Normand garden had to the history of garden design in France. Understanding these links to French culture helps to inform the study of Monet and the deep connection he had to his country. This will be illuminated further by a study of the paintings he made based on each of the two gardens at Giverny.
Chapter Three

The Clos Normand Paintings

Just as Monet the painter is increasingly present in the broad handling of the painted surface so is Monet the gardener in the planted color schemes and landscape compositions of these late works. (Wildenstein, 1978: 13)

Having examined the life-long interest Monet had in gardens and the importance that gardens played in modern France, I am now in a position to analyze the paintings Monet made in the years between 1899 and 1926. During his late career, Monet had a dual interest in the gardens of Europe and Japan. While his gardens are physical manifestations of this dual interest, a true comparison of the two would not be complete without a discussion of the paintings he made based on each garden. While the water lily paintings have been highly celebrated, scholars tend to ignore the paintings of the Clos Normand garden. However, these paintings highlight Monet’s views on nature and whether or not these views changed depending on what garden he was painting. There were some things Monet accomplished in the water lily garden paintings that were incredibly novel, such as his composition, brushwork and color choices. However, there were also innovative strides Monet made with his Clos Normand garden paintings that he was not able to accomplish in the water lily garden paintings.

1899-1904

*Le Pont aux nymphéas (The Bridge over The Water Lily Pond)* [Figure 45] from 1899 was one of the first paintings Monet created of either garden. It depicts a scene of the water lily pond with the famous Japanese bridge. The painting is divided roughly into equal halves with the top half showing bushes and trees around the perimeter of the pond and the lower half showing the...
water lilies in bloom. The bridge bisects the composition horizontally, just above the center. The paintings is also symmetric across the vertical axis.

Though the painting depicts a Japanese bridge, its compositional elements are reflective of the long tradition of European art Monet inherited from the Romantics, Realists, and Impressionists before him. This balance in composition, both across the vertical and horizontal axis, draws on European painting conventions that began in the Renaissance. Another typically European element of this painting is the sense of depth alluded to in the way the water lily pond shows one-point linear perspective. The pond takes up the entire bottom edge of the canvas and becomes narrower as the viewer’s eye moves up into the painting. This creates an illusion of depth and indicates to the viewer that the bridge is over the pond. There is also a clear indication of depth in the way the bridge is perceived to be in front of the trees, bushes, and flowers in the background. Lastly, the colors Monet chose are subdued, naturalistic and painted in the Impressionist technique of small, visible brushstrokes. Colors such as these were typically found in Impressionist paintings as opposed to Japanese works of art.

The traditionally European techniques in this painting contradict the Japanese garden design on which this garden was based. The lack of Japanese artistic conventions in Le Pont is particularly interesting when compared to Japanese woodblock prints. Monet had numerous Japanese woodblock prints throughout his house [Figure 47]. He is also quoted as having an interest in Japanese art. In a letter to Shintaro Yamashita, he said he had “a deep admiration for Japanese art and a great sense of fellowship with the Japanese” (Kendall, 2001: 254).

The Japanese woodblock print, Wisteria at Kameido Tenjin Shrine [Figure 46], by Utagawa Hiroshige from 1856 provides an excellent comparison to Monet’s Le Pont. The similarities between these two works is seen in the subject matter. Each work showcases a
curved bridge with handrails-- in line with the typical Japanese style of bridges-- over a pond. Where the differences come through is in the composition and color choices of each work. *Wisteria* showcases many characteristics that were popular within Japanese art at that time. Whereas *Le Pont* is relatively symmetric across the horizontal and vertical axis, *Wisteria* is emphatically asymmetric. Asymmetry, a popular characteristic employed in Japanese woodblock prints, is emphasized in *Wisteria* by the trees that pop out from the left and right edges of the composition. Tendrils of wisteria come down from the top of the composition but are slightly off center towards the left side of the print. A long stalk of bamboo emerges from the bottom of the print, to the left of the center, and cuts through the entire composition. Each of these elements contribute to the asymmetry of *Wisteria* and demonstrate the difference between the European composition of *Le Pont*.

Other differences between the two works that show the stylistic contrast between European and Japanese art involve color choices and pigment application. Monet chose to use rather naturalistic colors such as subdued greens, pinks, blues and browns. He took these colors and applied them in small brushstrokes. The impasto created by this technique aided the sense of movement throughout his paintings and better captured fleeting light. Because of these small brushstrokes, Monet used hundreds of subtle variations in color to create his scene. By contrast, Hiroshige used only a few colors to create his print. Hiroshige’s pond is a solid block of blue with some dark shading, of the same hue, to create shadows under the trees and bridge. These blocks of color lead to a flatter surface which is characteristic of Japanese woodblock prints. Hiroshige also strayed from naturalism in the brick red color used in the sky at the top of the painting. The blocks of color, the use of non-naturalistic colors, and the asymmetry are all ways in which this Japanese woodblock print differs from the work by Monet. Therefore, for this
painting, even though Monet used a Japanese subject matter, his water lily garden, in this painting his style is traditionally European.

One of the first known instances in which Monet painted the Clos Normand garden is his 1899-1900 painting *Pommiers en fleurs (Apple Trees in Bloom)* [Figure 48]. This work proves to be a telling comparison with *Le Pont* for it is painted in the same year but instead uses the subject of the Clos Normand garden. A bright and lively scene, this work showcases Monet’s attempt to capture his house garden.

Similar to *Le Pont*, Monet’s style is characteristically European in composition, color, and brushstrokes. In terms of composition, the path cutting through the flowerbeds is slightly off-center towards the right side of the canvas but the work as a whole feels balanced. Two trees are shown in the background on either side of the path and the addition of another tree in the left foreground helps to balance the path on the right. Additionally, there is a clear sense of depth in the painting as the path leads the viewer’s eye from the bottom of the canvas, up into the middle. The trees in the background are hazier as compared to those in the foreground and blend into the background leaves. This use of atmospheric perspective increases the sense of depth. The overlapping of the irises over the path also creates a sense of depth. The depth achieved in this painting through linear perspective in the path, atmospheric perspective and overlapping are all traditional conventions in French landscape painting.

The colors Monet used are naturalistic, albeit slightly over-saturated. The yellows and greens of the grass and tree leaves evoke a sense of idealized nature, for grass and trees in reality are more subdued than how they are seen in this work. The bright hues of pink, red, and blue in the image exaggerate the lushness of the garden. Monet also used the typical Impressionist technique of visible brushstrokes that creates a sense of movement on the canvas. This work
provides a nice introduction to the first of Monet’s Clos Normand garden paintings and the traditional techniques he used.

Painted at approximately the same time as Pomières en fleurs, Monet’s painting Le Bassin aux nymphéas, harmonie rose (Water Lily Pond, Symphony in Rose) [Figure 49] from 1900 shows the artistic experimentation of Monet. This work contains the same motif of the Japanese bridge as first seen in Le Pont but was painted one year later. There are many differences between these two works which show the progression Monet made as a painter. Asymmetry versus symmetry and color choice are two aspects Monet experimented with in Harmonie rose. Whereas the Le Pont is symmetric over the horizontal and vertical axis, Harmonie rose is asymmetric in its composition. The bridge in Harmonie rose is off center towards the right side of the painting. An outcropping of bushes coming from the bottom left corner that move up the left side of the canvas further emphasizes the asymmetry. Additionally, the color choices in Harmonie rose are slightly less naturalistic, making this painting lean towards the conventions of Japanese woodblock prints. Highly saturated yellows and reds are found throughout the painting as opposed to the more subdued blues and greens in Le Pont. This asymmetry and change in color choice are precursors to Monet’s departure from European pictorial traditions.

Where Monet followed European conventions in Harmonie rose was in the illusion of depth that he created on a two dimensional canvas. Within the work there is a clear foreground, middleground, and background that draws the viewer’s eye back into the canvas. The distinction between each ground is accomplished through Monet’s use of overlapping. The bushes in the foreground overlap the pond and the bridge which in turn overlap the background trees and bushes. With his illusion of depth, Monet held to European norms. Therefore, this painting
alludes to some of Monet’s tendencies towards Japanese artistic convention, through the asymmetry and color choices, while still showing his use of European conventions in the illusion of depth.

A question posed by Monet’s late paintings is whether or not his views on nature and the way he translated them onto canvas differed based on the garden. In *Le Bassin*, a painting based on the water lily garden, certain characteristics imitate Japanese conventions, such as asymmetry and color choice. Because Monet used these Japanese characteristics to portray the Japanese garden, it is assumed that his technique did indeed change depending on subject matter. Yet, a painting Monet made during approximately the same year has many parallels in technique with *Le Bassin* but is based on the other garden— the Clos Normand garden. *Le Jardin de Monet, les iris (Irises in Monet’s Garden)* [Figure 50] is one of the first known paintings of the Clos Normand garden, after *Les Pommiers*. When compared to *Le Bassin* it shows similar changes in technique. Therefore, it cannot yet be said that Monet’s subject matter impacted how he viewed and depicted nature.

*Le Jardin* is an important work in Claude Monet’s career for three reasons. Firstly, it was one of the first paintings Monet created based on the Clos Normand garden. Secondly, it shows the influence of Japanese artistic conventions in Monet’s work, regardless of subject matter. Thirdly, it evidences Monet’s progression from the French formal garden conventions in the physical garden. The most notable way in which Monet departed from European conventions within *Le Jardin* was the composition. In *Le Jardin* Monet positioned himself between two flower beds and angled his canvas to the left. This created the illusion of diagonal flower beds even though, in reality, they were straight. Asymmetry in *Harmonie rose*, indicates a Japanese inspiration in Monet’s work. So too does the asymmetry in *Le Jardin* show that Monet used
Japanese conventions in his paintings. It is natural to assume the Japanese influence would only be seen in the paintings of the water lily garden. However, as *Le Jardin* demonstrates, many of these same artistic changes were happening in Monet’s paintings, regardless of subject matter.

*Le Jardin* also shows the European artistic conventions Monet used, for it is typical of the Impressionist style which Monet had spent nearly thirty years practicing. The canvas is split in half horizontally, with the dark trellises on the upper half and the light iris flowers on the lower half, creating a sense of balance. There is no black in the painting and instead, shadows, seen mostly on the upper half of the canvas, are alternating hues of rich brown and deep green. The small brushstrokes that comprise the irises create an explosion of flowers within the three visible flower beds. In the foreground each individual flower is distinguishable from the one to the next. As the iris beds recede into the background they are transformed into a flurry of chaotic hues of purple and pink. In the background of the painting, just peeking out from behind the leaves, hints of the pink stucco house with its green shutters can be seen, a reminder that while we are seemingly experiencing a complete immersion in nature, home is right next door.

What is particularly important in *Le Jardin* is the way it provides evidence of the original appearance of the Clos Normand garden. As they stand today, Monet’s gardens have been restored. While much time and money was put into the restoration, it was impossible to perfectly imitate the true appearance of the garden. *Le Jardin* allows the viewer to more clearly understand which aspects of the Clos Normand garden used French gardening principles. Not only does this painting provide evidence to the French formal garden techniques used by Monet, it also showcases the way in which Monet progressed from the French formal garden. It should not be forgotten that Monet exerted a great deal of control over his garden because it was, in the end, not just for enjoyment but intended to be painted.
This painting of the Clos Normand garden affirms Monet’s use of French constructs of nature in his garden design. Recall that in the French formal garden, symmetry and order are the most important characteristics. Flowerbeds are intersected by straight lines that divide the beds into evenly sized and spaced plots. In the formal garden there is usually one main pathway, an allée, starting at the doorway to the house and running down the center of the gardens. Hints of all of these characteristics are found in the Clos Normand garden as evidenced in this painting.

While *Le Jardin* was painted at an angle, try to imagine these straight walkways as running perpendicular to the house in the background. The walkways create a sense of symmetry and order the flower beds so that each can be distinguished from the next. Order also appears in the way the flowers come to a complete stop at the walkway. The walkway on the right side of the canvas demonstrates the symmetrical and ordered divide between the flower bed on the right, just peeking out of the lower right hand corner, and the flowerbed that runs through the majority of the painting. To the left of this flowerbed is the largest walkway in the Clos Normand garden, a nod to the long, imposing allées found in most French formal gardens. While the allée is only hinted at in this painting, seen on the left hand side, it is still a way in which Monet used the French traditions of garden design to create his gardens.

*Le Jardin* not only shows the French formal garden techniques used by Monet but also his progressions from those same conventions in the physical garden. The ways in which Monet’s Clos Normand garden departs from the French formal garden aid in creating a subject matter that better lends itself to the Impressionist style. Therefore, Monet built his gardens to suit his needs as an artist. He had a vision for his paintings and created his own environment to suit that. In this way, Monet’s Clos Normand garden and subsequent paintings are synonymous expressions of Monet’s creativity, for they were made for each other.
Although flowers in formal gardens were traditionally low-lying, Monet chose instead to use irises, a tall-growing flower, which created a sense of height. This height allowed for many more variations in highlights and shadows as the flowers grew around each other. This was more appealing to an Impressionist painter. Flowerbeds in formal gardens were also highly calculated to create the appearance of block patterns on the ground. Monet, in comparison, planted this entire bed full of the same flower that naturally varied in color and height. By planting his flowerbeds to be more “wild,” or perhaps less controlled in the formal sense of the word, he created a better environment to be painted in the Impressionist style.

Additionally, Le Jardin has a distinct sense of movement, allowing the viewer to imagine how the warm light streamed in through the foliage and down onto the flower beds. The brushstrokes in the flower beds move in different directions creating a jumble of color. This is juxtaposed next to the pathway comprised almost entirely of horizontal brushstrokes, and the foliage on the upper half of the canvas painted with vertical brushstrokes. The sense of movement in the painting is further emphasized by the vertical lines of the flowerbeds, created by the asymmetric location from which Monet chose to paint. This sense of movement and the play of light is the epitome of the Impressionist style.

Une Allée du jardin de Monet, Giverny (Main Path through the Garden at Giverny) [Figure 51], from 1902, is another painting of the Clos Normand garden that evidences the appearance of the original garden. This work also combines Japanese and French characteristics. Similar to Le Jardin, Une Allée is painted in the typical Impressionist style. Visible brushstrokes create a flurry of color and emphasize the movement of light in the garden. This work is painted with naturalistic colors, if not slightly warmer and more saturated than those in Le Jardin. The brightest highlights of the flowers and accents on the house draw the eye around the canvas.
Another compositional element that directs the eye through the canvas is the wide path, the grande allée, running through the middle of the painting. This work is one of the best examples of the traditionally French layout of Monet’s garden for it showcases the linearity of the physical Clos Normand garden better than most other paintings by Monet. Because this pathway is painted head on, it creates a strong sense of one-point linear perspective. Linear perspective is commonly used in traditional French landscape painting. This central allée also recalls the French formal gardens of the seventeenth century, such as the palace of Versailles. This pathway divides the canvas into almost identical halves, with the flower beds on either side of the path mirroring each other. The house in the background is seen peeking out from beneath the canopy of trees with one door held open, inviting the viewer to walk up into the painting and along the path to reach the doorway.

Similar to Le Jardin, this painting shows the progression in garden design Monet employed in his Clos Normand garden. Whereas French formal gardens had low parterres that did not extend past the edge of the plot, this garden is overgrown with plant life. The flowers extend from the bottom of the canvas to above the midline, making those in the middle of the painting appear as though they are as tall as a human figure. The plants around the edges of the allée creep out towards the path, creating a sense of movement and blurring the boundary between pathway and garden. Plant overgrowth onto the path would never have occurred in a French formal garden. Instead there would have been a harsh edge distinguishing the path from the plants. By painting his garden in such a way that the French garden design was apparent, Monet highlighted the aspects of his garden that progressed from the French formal garden, just as he highlighted aspects of the Impressionist style which were progressions from French landscape traditions.
1904-1918

Around the mid 1910s, Monet became more experimental with his compositions. This period saw a distinct shift in Monet’s style as it became increasingly influenced by Japanese conventions. With this shift, Monet changed the experience of his viewers. This effect is most noticeable in his water lily paintings. *Nymphéas (Water Lilies)* [Figure 52], from 1907, epitomizes the changes he made, especially when compared to *Le Bassin des Nymphéas (The Water Lily Pond)* [Figure 53], a painting of the same subject, from 1904. As these two paintings were only three years apart, Monet likely made these changes in style within this small time frame. While there are still some similarities between these two paintings such as Monet’s continued use of ethereal colors, the differences between the two are noticeable.

*Nymphéas* is one of the first paintings in which Monet did away with the horizon line, leaving the viewer confused and unable to place themselves in space. This is the biggest change in composition that Monet experimented with from that point onwards. In *Le Bassin* a clear horizon line is seen in the upper fourth of the painting. This line is differentiated by a change in brushstrokes indicating that the viewer is no longer looking at the pond, but instead at the bushes and grass growing on the banks. No such horizon line is given in *Nymphéas*.

With the loss of the horizon line, Monet created a different experience for the viewers that had not yet been seen by a wide audience in France. Instead of painting his typical paintings which created the experience of looking at a garden, *Nymphéas* was an immersion in the pond. No longer was the viewer looking at a pond, they were within it, surrounded by water lilies and the subtle changes of light from ripples across the surface of the water. Turning the painting into an immersive environment was novel at this time in French landscape painting. This novelty is
one of the reasons Monet’s water lily paintings have been, to this day, some of the most memorable French landscapes.

What makes these water lily paintings even more unusual is that Monet did not eliminate the horizon line outside of the water lily pond. Perhaps it was because the water allowed for the elimination of the horizon line more easily than other subjects. This elimination indicates that the Japanese influence in Monet’s paintings increased. He was so enthralled with his new development that he painted thirty-eight of canvases of the water lily pond within the following six years. Paintings of the Clos Normand garden did not reappear once within this six-year water lily obsession. It was not until *La Maison de l’artiste à Giverny (The Artist’s House at Giverny)* [Figure 54], from 1912-13, that another painting of the Clos Normand garden appeared in Monet’s work. He did, however, travel to Venice during this time. Perhaps the trip to Italy inspired the return to traditional European conventions Monet saw in his works around 1912.

*La Maison* is more traditional, especially when compared to the water lily canvases painted in the years prior to this work. The painting’s composition and color choices indicate that Monet was painting his traditionally French garden in a traditionally European way. This leads to the assumption that there was something inherently different in the way Monet viewed and painted his two gardens. Not only did Monet return to a previous, more traditional subject matter, the Clos Normand garden, he also returned to a European way of painting. Perhaps the Clos Normand garden, as a subject matter, allowed Monet to return to past Impressionist techniques from which he took a hiatus for the previous ten years. The Clos Normand garden, in this painting, was an opportunity for Monet to return to old subject matters and techniques that he was not yet finished with.
The colors Monet employed are naturalistic and better reflect the palette he employed in past paintings of his gardens, such as his garden in Vétheuil [Figure 16]. Warm yellows, reds and browns are contrasted within La Maison against deep greens to evoke a lush garden. Monet’s house peeks out over trees in the top left corner of the canvas.

There is a clear indication of space in this painting which is a return to European conventions. Additionally, instead of being immersed in the garden, the viewer understands they are looking in on it. There is a clear foreground with the grouping of flowering bushes in the lower right corner of the canvas. The middleground, composed of trees and flowers, overlaps the background of the house, sky and a dark mass of trees. The horizon line reappears, a return to Monet’s older techniques before the horizon was lost in the water lily pond.

The focus on composition, color choice, and sense of depth are all traditional, European notions. Although many scholars view the later part of Monet’s career as the most innovative in terms of composition, La Maison, with its traditional ties calls this notion into question. While it may be true that many of his water lily paintings were novel in their composition, there were still paintings created by Monet at this time that were traditional.

As seen in the previous works, there is overlap between many of Monet’s paintings of each garden. Furthermore, some aspects of Monet’s paintings depended upon which garden he was looking at. Les Arceaux fleuris, Giverny (The Flowered Arches at Giverny) [Figure 55], from 1913, a painting based off of the water lily garden, illuminates many of these overlaps and differences when compared to La Maison.

Les Arceaux was painted at approximately the time as La Maison. As such, it provides a more effective comparison in terms of the stylistic timeline of Monet’s career. It would be inadequate to use only La Maison as proof of Monet’s return to traditional ways of painting. This
point is more powerful when *Les Arceaux*, a water lily garden painting, also exhibits these same traditional techniques.

The horizon line reappears in *Les Arceaux* just as it does in *La Maison*. It is also understood that the viewer is looking at a garden instead of being immersed within one. These were two of the features that made *La Maison* traditionally European. However, the fact that *Les Arceaux* is based off the water lily garden and also uses these techniques begins to undermine the assumption that Monet made different stylistic choices based on the garden he was painting. In actuality, Monet overlapped stylistic choices throughout all of his garden paintings. It is unsurprising that an artist would paint two different subjects in similar ways—he was, after all, the same artist. Yet it should be noted that Monet had not painted the water lily garden in such a traditional way since the loss of the horizon line around 1904-1907. Therefore, his return to more traditional techniques was likely inspired by his return to the Clos Normand garden.

Since these two paintings have so many techniques in common, their differences are more apparent. Whereas *La Maison* has depth throughout the painting, much of that depth disappears in *Les Arceaux*. Depth is lost in *Les Arceaux* through the perfect mirror of the image across the horizontal axis. The pond reflection manipulates the viewer’s perception of what objects are real and what are merely reflection. This flattens the image, leading to almost no sense of depth in this work.

Monet played with the juxtaposition of depth and flatness in many other works later in his career. I argue that in the water lily paintings he did not create such a clear juxtaposition. His water lily paintings are most effective because they immerse the viewer in the pond, eliminating the illusion of depth. The water lily garden, in general, with its curving lines and large expanses of water lends itself perfectly to this loss of depth. By contrast, Monet more effectively
 juxtaposed depth and flatness in his paintings of the Clos Normand garden. The Clos Normand garden’s layout has straight lines in the walkways and the flowerbeds that logically lead the viewer to see depth in the paintings. However, Monet painted in a way that created a decorative surface, flattening the canvas. Therefore, the viewer is left with a much more visually complex combination of depth, seen in the pathways of the Clos Normand garden, next to the flatness of his stylistic choices. This juxtaposition is one thing the Clos Normand paintings could accomplish that the water lily paintings could not. Depth contrasted with flatness is seen clearly in *L’Allée de rosiers, Giverny*.

**1918-1924**

After the completion of *La Maison* and *Les Arceaux*, Monet spent about ten years painting solely his water lily garden. It is not until *L’Allée de rosiers, Giverny (The Path Under the Rose Arches, Giverny)* [Figure 56], painted in 1920-22, that he returned to his Clos Normand garden as a subject matter. Just as the ten-year gap in Clos Normand paintings before *La Maison* revealed something about the importance of the Clos Normand garden, so too was this ten year gap significant. *L’Allée* represented a distinct shift in style. Monet abandoned much of his old illusionistic tendencies and focused almost entirely on color and light. Upon first glance, it is difficult for the viewer to comprehend what they are looking at. Our eyes are bombarded with a wall of color that is incomprehensible as a garden until the title of the painting is read. The colors in *L’Allée* are not naturalistic, but instead are much darker and more vibrant. Instead of his typical greens and blues, Monet chose warmer colors like red, yellow and even some bright purples.

Upon further inspection, forms begin to take shape. A bright yellow path, starting at the bottom center of the canvas, recedes into the background. As the eye travels upwards, semi-
circular forms horizontally bisect the composition, once in the center and again at the top of the canvas. These are the rose trellises that cover the main allée of the Clos Normand garden. The diminishing arches, along with the pathway, indicate that the viewer’s eye recedes back into space. The linear perspective of the path as well as the trellises progressively decreasing in size are two traditional methods of creating depth. Furthermore, the illusion of depth enhanced by nature of the layout of the physical gardens distinguishes the paintings of the Clos Normand garden from the water lily garden. There are no straight pathways in the water lily garden that could create the same effect.

Monet’s increased ability to juxtapose depth and flatness in the Clos Normand garden paintings as opposed to the water lily paintings is more apparent when L’Allée is compared to Le Pont japonais (The Japanese Bridge) [Figure 57] from 1922. Using a similar style and composition, Monet paints a completely different subject matter. Le Pont japonais is based off of the water lily garden whereas L’Allée is based off of the Clos Normand garden. The similarities in composition and style makes these two paintings an effective comparison of Monet’s differing technique when painting the Clos Normand garden as opposed to the water lily garden. These paintings were also made at approximately the same time so they allow for a more accurate comparison.

Semi-circular shapes in the middle of Le Pont japonais echo the arches in L’Allée. However, as the name tells us, the former is understood to be the shape of the Japanese bridge found in the water lily garden—a motif Monet used in many paintings of this garden. In addition to their compositional similarities, both paintings use similar brushwork and color choices. Le Pont japonais diverges from the typical colors Monet used for his other water lily paintings. Whereas he usually used subdued, light blues, greens, and purples, in this painting Monet used
dark greens, yellows, and reds. In *L’Allée*, Monet also used darker shades of red, yellow and green. Monet’s brushstrokes are more obvious and larger in these two paintings as compared to his past works.

Perhaps the change in color and painting technique, the brushstrokes in both paintings are looser and more visible, was due to the fact that Monet suffered from cataracts during these years. Both of these paintings were painted between 1920-22, right around the time that Monet’s eyes were at their worst. As he stated in a letter to his good friend Gustave Geffroy in January of 1920: “for some while I’ve been in a state of utter despair and I’m disgusted with all I’ve done. Day by day my sight is going and I can sense only too well that with it comes an end to my long-cherished hopes to do better” (Kendall 2001: 253). Monet went to many doctors to figure out how best to get rid of his cataracts without further damaging his eyes. In September of 1922, most likely a few months after he painted these two canvases, he wrote to thank Doctor Charles Coutela: “I have to tell you at once of the effect that the drops you prescribed for my left eye have had. It’s quite simply wonderful. I haven’t seen as well as I can now for a long while” (Kendall 2001: 260). As some scholars argue, the changes in Monet’s color use and brushwork are perhaps explainable by something as natural as his deteriorating eyesight. Paul Tucker states that “these pictures are the product of an old man crying at the light, knowing that his fate is upon him and his nineteenth-century allegiance to nature... is now drawing to a close” (Tucker 1995: 219-20).

Regardless of the state of his eyes, the fact that these two paintings were painted at approximately the same time, with similar techniques, and of the two different gardens allows for a comparison of Monet’s perspective on each garden. The main difference seen in these two very similar paintings is that Monet played with depth in his Clos Normand painting and did not do
the same with the water lily painting. Whereas Monet used the path and receding arches in
*L’Allée*, the Japanese bridge does nothing to create depth. Instead, the viewer is left trying to
decipher a wall of color. This same characteristic of loss of perspective is echoed through most
of Monet’s water lily paintings after he lost the horizon line and immersed the viewer in the
pond.

*L’Allée* was also painted as a wall of color. Yet there are clear indications of depth in
*L’Allée*. It is in the utter lack of depth in *Le Pont japonais* that we see Monet was painting
differently between the two gardens. The difference in physical layout of the two gardens
allowed Monet to accomplish innovations in his Clos Normand paintings. Within *L’Allée* he
created indications of depth in the path and the arches but painted the entire canvas in such a way
that it appears to be flat. The surface of the canvas is decorative in its flatness with all of the
small brushes of color. I argue that this presents the viewer with a more visually complex
painting. *L’Allée* should logically be a scene with depth. Yet it is painted in a way that eliminates
much of the depth. This juxtaposition only appears in these paintings because of the style of
garden. Therefore, while many people say the water lily gardens and subsequent paintings were
much more innovative, the Clos Normand paintings cannot be forgotten. Many scholars overlook
the paintings of the Clos Normand garden, writing them off as traditional and, possibly, boring.
Yet, Monet accomplished visually stimulating canvases based on the Clos Normand garden that
were not translatable to works based off of the water lily garden.

In addition to the innovation in *L’Allée* as a counterpart to *Le Pont japonais*, the painting
is intriguing in itself. With this painting, Monet turns his canvas into a flurry of brushstrokes and
colors, creating a highly decorative surface. Illusionism is no longer a primary goal. Therefore,
the act of painting becomes the painting. Out of the thousands of canvases that Monet painted, no
other paintings are as abstracted as this one and the few others of the same subject painted at this time.  

The decorative quality of this painting is more intriguing when considered alongside the fact that gardens are nature in their most decorative form. Many of Monet’s paintings celebrate the manipulation of nature. But it is perhaps this work that most clearly shows his meta-manipulation of the natural world. We must look at Monet’s process as a series of manipulations, removing us from nature. He originally started with nature. Then, Monet created these garden environments in an attempt to improve upon nature in its untouched state. Next, Monet further removed himself from nature in the fact that he perfectly orchestrated his gardens, in part, to be captured on canvas. He spent his late career translating this already manipulated nature through his own eyes and onto the canvas. Additionally, Monet often worked on his paintings within his studio to perfect them further. We are now three times removed from nature. First nature, then the garden, then the gardens as it is translated onto the canvas, then Monet’s manipulation of the canvas in his studio. Now, with this painting, Monet added a fourth layer of manipulation. He did not paint a likeness to nature in L’Allée. Instead he turned a natural scene into pure decoration.

1924-1926

Les Grandes Décorations (The Grand Decorations) [Figure 58] are arguably Monet’s most famous paintings. Housed in the Musée de l’Orangerie, the series consists of twenty-two panels arranged within two large, oval-shaped rooms. Monet worked on these paintings for the last ten years of his life and donated them as his last dying gift to the country of France in honor of his good friend Georges Clemenceau (Wildenstein 1996, 4: 945). When looking at the last part of Monet’s career, scholars often focus solely on these paintings. Once Monet began to paint them,
it is as if he painted nothing else. Most books on Monet end with the donation of these paintings to France.

When standing within one of the oval rooms, one is surrounded on all sides by water lilies. The viewer leaves feeling as if they were within the pond themselves. This effect was masterminded by Monet who personally designed the layout of the museum’s water lily wing. All of the panels utilize many of the Japanese techniques Monet had been using in his paintings since 1907. There is no horizon line in any of his paintings which helps to heighten the immersion in the water lily pond. The colors are subdued, soothing shades of blue, green and purple which allow for a peaceful and contemplative experience of the paintings.

The main focus of the work is the subtleties of changing light on the surface of the water lily pond. Monet created a great amount of movement in terms of color and light for he painted layer upon layer of oil paint on the panels. When staring into the painting in person, the overlap of the brushstrokes creates a dynamic, textured surface. This benefits Monet’s attempt to capture light on water.

Plants are incorporated in the work in two ways, the water lilies and the weeping willow trees. These two plants are seen throughout the twenty-two panels. The water lilies cover the panels from top to bottom, eliminating the horizon line and creating a decorative surface. The willow trees are dispersed throughout the panels and shown as a section of trunk with tendrils of willow branches flowing down from the top of the panels.

The combination of the innovative techniques in the Grandes Décorations, the monumentality of size and number, and the fact that Monet donated them as his last gift to France, make these arguably his most memorable works. That he gave so much time and creativity to France in this way showed his love for his country. Scholars have given much time
to these paintings and to the garden on which they are based because of these reasons. But the
subject matter that he chose for these paintings conflicts with his patriotic message. The
dichotomy between the celebration of France and the use of the Japanese water lily garden
complicates the message of Monet’s *Grandes Décorations*.

It should not be forgotten that he painted the Clos Normand garden while working on the
*Grandes Décorations*. One of the final paintings of the Clos Normand garden was *La Maison
dans les roses (The House among Roses)* [Figure 59] from 1925, only one year before his death.
He painted a few canvases based on this same subject matter around the same time. These
paintings represent the last works created by Monet based off of the Clos Normand garden. After
*L’Allée*, *La Maison dans les roses* shows a return to some of the old techniques used by Monet in
his earlier paintings. However, there are stylistic qualities of this painting that make it unique.

The colors in *La Maison dans les roses* are much brighter compared to both *L’Allée* and
the *Grandes Décorations*. While relatively naturalistic, the blue in the sky is a saturated cerulean
used repeatedly throughout the entire canvas. The pink seen in the roses varies from a cool
lavender to a warm salmon, individualizing each flower. The mint green in the grass overtakes
the foreground of the work and draws the viewer’s eye into the middle of the painting. The bright
colors are further enhanced by the playful brushstrokes.

There does seem to be an illusion of depth within *La Maison dans les roses*. The rose
bushes are in the foreground and a hint of Monet’s house is seen in the background.
Additionally, the wispy grass that starts at the bottom edge of the canvas creates a path that
narrows as it recedes into the background. This path, like the paths in many of Monet’s other
paintings, employs one-point linear perspective to create depth. Similar to *L’Allée*, the
employment of one-point linear perspective is juxtaposed with Monet’s brushstrokes that reduce the canvas to a flat, decorative surface.

The visual differences between *La Maison dans les roses* and *Les Grandes Décorations* are apparent. When compared to the *Grandes Décorations, La Maison dans les roses* uses a palette that is warmer and more lively. While decorative, there is a sense of depth in *La Maison dans les roses*. This work also shows the continued dedication Monet had to his Clos Normand garden for it was painted so late in his life. Additionally, because this painting is based off of the Clos Normand garden, a garden that has deep ties to the garden history of France, it can be said to be a celebration of a French motif. Therefore, this painting demonstrates Monet’s continued dedication to painting landscapes of his native country up until the end of his life.

* * *

Whether or not subject matter changed the way in which Monet painted is a complicated matter. There are many overlaps in painting technique throughout the paintings of both the water lily garden and Clos Normand garden. The water lily garden was a motif Monet returned to many times throughout the later part of his career, a fact widely acknowledged by scholars. However, the Clos Normand garden was a motif that Monet utilized during this same time in his late career. Each painting of the Clos Normand garden provides insight into Monet as a gardener and a painter of the French landscape.

A study of Monet’s late career is not complete without a study of the Clos Normand paintings. However, the Clos Normand paintings only become significant when looked at as first, following in the tradition of French landscape painting and Monet’s own tendencies to paint gardens, second, being based off a garden with close ties to the history of French garden design,
and third, as innovative in their own right. His career-long obsession with gardens culminated in the creation of his largest gardens, those found at Giverny. The physical gardens at Giverny were based off of two different perspectives on nature, the Japanese and the French perspective. The way in which each of these perspectives manifested themselves in the physical gardens provided a diverse range of subject matter for Monet to paint.

Within the paintings themselves, Monet painted both the Clos Normand garden and the water lily garden. In terms of technique, he also used both European and Japanese artistic conventions, likely inspired by his ties to French landscape history and his love for Japanese woodblock prints. Whereas scholars often disassociate the Clos Normand paintings from the late works of Monet, much exchange happened between the two subject matters. Monet used both European and Japanese conventions while painting both gardens. Therefore, the study of Monet’s late paintings is more intertwined than past scholars have acknowledged.

In addition to the similarities between the Clos Normand and water lily paintings, there is something to be said for the innovations of the Clos Normand paintings specifically. Each work by Monet provided new insight into his techniques and his perspectives on nature. Because of the innovations of the Clos Normand garden paintings, their close ties to French garden history, and their place in Monet’s career-long garden obsession, this group of paintings cannot be overlooked in a study of Monet’s late career.
1. The Agapanthus works include the following three paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).


2. The Iris works include the following twenty paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).

   *Iris jaunes* (Yellow Irises). Private collection.
   *Iris* (Irises). Former collection of Michel Monet, Giverny.
   *Iris jaunes* (Yellow Irises). National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo.
   *Iris au bord du chemin* (Irises along the Path). Private collection.
   *Iris* (Irises). Beyeler, Basle.
   *Iris* (Irises). Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago., Illinois.
   *Iris jaunes* (Yellow Irises). E. Teriade, France.
   *Iris jaunes au nuage rose* (Yellow Irises with Pink Cloud). Private collection.
   *Iris* (Irises). Former collection of Michel Monet, Giverny.
   *Iris jaunes* (Yellow Irises). Musée Marmottan, Paris.
   *Iris bleus* (Blue Irises). Private collection, France.
   *Iris jaune* (Yellow Iris). Private collection, United States.

3. The Hemerocallis works include the following two paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).

   *Hémérocalles au bord de l'eau* (Hemerocallis by the Water). Private Collection.

4. The Wisteria works include the following seven paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).

   *Glycines* (Wisteria). Private collection, Italy.
5. The Willow Tree works include the following twenty-four paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).

Nymphéas, reflets de saule (Water lilies, Reflections of Weeping Willows). Benesse Corporation, Yokoyama, Japan.
Nymphéas, reflets de saule (Water lilies, Reflections of Weeping Willows). Private collection, United States.

Saule pleureur (Weeping Willow). Private collection, Switzerland.
Saule pleureur (Weeping Willow). Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, Ohio.
Saule pleureur (Weeping Willow). Beyeler, Basle.
Saule pleureur (Weeping Willow). Private collection, United States.

Saule pleureur (Weeping Willow). Beyeler, Basle.

6. See also Figure 45 and Figure 49 for paintings of Monet’s Japanese bridge.

7. The other paintings of the Path under the Rose Arches from this time include the following six paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).

L’Allée de rosiers (The Path under the Rose Arches). Private collection, Switzerland.
L’Allée de rosiers (The Path under the Rose Arches). Private collection, Switzerland.
L’Allée de rosiers (The Path under the Rose Arches). Musée Marmottan, Paris.
L’Allée de rosiers (The Path under the Rose Arches). Musée Marmottan, Paris.
L’Allée de rosiers (The Path under the Rose Arches). Private collection, Switzerland.

8. The Grandes Décorations in the Musée de l’Orangerie include the following twenty-two panels divided between two rooms (Monet, 1966, 4).
   Soleil couchant (Sunset). One panel. Room 1.
   Reflets verts (Green Reflections). Two panels. Room 1.
   Matin (Morning). Four panels. Room 1.
   Reflets d’arbres (Reflections of Trees). Two panels. Room 2.
   Le Matin aux saules (Morning with Willows). Three panels. Room 2.
   Le matin clair aux saules (Bright Morning with Willows). Three panels. Room 2.

9. The other paintings of the House among Roses from this time include the following five paintings (Monet, 1966, 4).
   La Maison dans les roses (The House among Roses). Private collection, Japan.
   La Maison dans les roses (The House among Roses). Private collection, United States.
   La Maison dans les roses (The House among Roses). Private collection.
   La Maison dans les roses (The House among Roses). Private collection, Japan.
   La Maison dans les roses (The House among Roses). Private collection.
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Figures

**Figure 1.** Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Forêt de Fontainebleau (Forest of Fontainebleau)*, 1846. Oil on canvas. 90 x 129 cm. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

**Figure 2.** Théodore Rousseau, *Paysage avec terres agricoles (Landscape with Farmland)*, 1832. Oil on canvas. Unknown dimensions. Private Collection.
Figure 3. Eugène Boudin, *Le Havre (The Port)*, 1884. Oil on canvas. 32 x 41 cm. Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York.

Figure 4. Claude Monet, *L’Embouchure de la Seine à Honfleur (Mouth of the Seine at Honfleur)*, 1865. Oil on canvas. 90 x 150 cm. Norton Simon Museum, California.
Figure 5. Claude Monet, *La Plage à Trouville (Beach at Trouville)*, 1870. Oil on canvas. 53.5 x 65.0 cm. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Connecticut.

Figure 6. Auguste Renoir, *Fille avec un arrosoir (Girl with a Watering Can)*, 1876. Oil on canvas. 100 x 73 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
Figure 7. Auguste Renoir, *Claude Monet peignant dans son jardin à Argenteuil (Claude Monet Painting in his Garden at Argenteuil)*, 1873. Oil on canvas. 46 x 60 cm. Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Connecticut.

Figure 8. Claude Monet, *Le Jardin de Monet à Argenteuil, les Dahlias (Monet’s Garden at Argenteuil, The Dahlias)*, 1873. Oil on canvas. 61.0 x 82.5 cm. National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.
Figure 9. Claude Monet, *Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe, Partie centrale (Luncheon on the Grass, Central Panel)*, 1866. Oil on canvas. 248 x 217 cm. Musée d’Orsay, Paris.

Figure 10. Édouard Manet, *Le Déjeuner sur l’herbe (Luncheon on the Grass)*, 1863. Oil on canvas. 208.0 x 264.5 cm. Musée d’Orsay, Paris.
Figure 11. Claude Monet, *Femmes au jardin (Women in the Garden)*, 1866. Oil on canvas. 256 x 208 cm. Musée d’Orsay, Paris.

Figure 12. Claude Monet, *Jeanne-Marguerite Lecadre au jardin (Jeanne-Marguerite Lecadre in a Garden)*, 1866. Oil on canvas. 80 x 99 cm. Hermitage, St. Petersburg.
Figure 13. Claude Monet, *Le Jardin de l’infante (Garden of the Princess)*, 1867. Oil on canvas. 91 x 62 cm. Museum of Art, Oberlin College, Ohio.
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