



THE BARNES FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

***Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist***

***Major Exhibition of Work by Under Recognized  
Founding Member of Impressionism to Make  
US Premiere at Barnes Foundation***

**Philadelphia, PA, May 9, 2018**—This fall, the Barnes Foundation will present the US debut of a landmark exhibition exploring the significant yet under recognized contributions of Berthe Morisot (1841–1895), one of the founders of impressionism. The first monographic exhibition of the artist to be held in the US since 1987, *Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist* provides new insight into a defining chapter in art history and the opportunity to experience Morisot’s work in context of the Barnes’s unparalleled collection of impressionist, post-impressionist, and early modernist paintings. The internationally touring exhibition is co-organized by the Barnes Foundation, Dallas Museum of Art, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, and the Musées d’Orsay et de l’Orangerie, Paris. It will be on view at the Barnes from October 21, 2018, through January 14, 2019.

Berthe Morisot was celebrated in her time as a leader of the movement, and her innovative works were coveted by dealers and collectors alike. Despite her accomplishments, today she is not as well-known as her impressionist colleagues, a group that includes Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Co-curated by Sylvie Patry, Consulting Curator at the Barnes Foundation and Chief Curator/Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Collections at the Musée d’Orsay, Paris, and Nicole R. Myers, The Lillian and James H. Clark Curator of European Painting and Sculpture at the Dallas Museum of Art, *Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist* will both illuminate and reassert Morisot’s role as an essential figure within the impressionist movement and the development of modern art in Paris in the second half of the 19th century.

“We look forward to fleshing out the story of impressionism represented in our holdings with the presentation of this groundbreaking exhibition,” says Thom Collins, executive director and president of the Barnes Foundation. “This international collaboration introduces important new scholarship that contributes to a more complete understanding of impressionism and Berthe Morisot as a revolutionary figure within the movement.”

*Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist* focuses on the artist’s figure paintings and portraits, with approximately 70 paintings from public and private collections on view. The exhibition traces the exceptional path of a female painter who, in opposition to the norms of her time and social background, became an important member of the Parisian avant-garde from the late 1860s until her death in 1895. Through her portrayal of the human figure, Morisot was able to explore the themes of modern life that came to define impressionism, such as the intimacy of contemporary bourgeois living and leisure activities, the importance of fashion and the toilette, and women’s domestic work, all while blurring the lines between interior and exterior, public and private, finished and unfinished.

“Though Berthe Morisot held an important place at the heart of the impressionist movement, she has historically enjoyed far less acclaim than her male counterparts,” says Patry. “Through this landmark exhibition, together with colleagues at our partner museums around the world, we are thrilled to bring renewed international attention to the significant work of Morisot.”

Organized semi-chronologically, the exhibition will examine Morisot's painterly innovations and fundamental position within impressionism across the arc of her productive yet relatively short life. The exhibition explores the following periods and themes of Morisot's work:

- **Becoming an Artist** – The introductory section looks at Morisot's formative years, when she left behind the amateur artistic practice associated with women of her upbringing and established herself as both a professional artist and a key contributor to the emerging impressionist movement in the late 1860s and early 1870s.
- **Painting the Figure *en plein air*** – A selection of Morisot's plein air paintings of figures in both country and coastal settings highlights her innovative treatment of modern themes and immersive approach that integrates her subjects within their environments through brushwork and palette.
- **Fashion, Femininity, and la Parisienne** – The importance of fashion in constructing modern femininity forms a central part of the artist's paintings of the 1870s and 1880s. This interest is revealed in Morisot's creations and adaptations of quintessential impressionist subjects, such as elegant Parisian women shown at the ball or dressing in their homes.
- **Women at Work** – Morisot's depictions of domestic servants—the majority of whom she employed in her household—parallel her own status as a working professional woman. Her interest in painting these women raises questions about bourgeois living and the intimacy of the shared domestic setting.
- **Finished/Unfinished** – The increasing immediacy of Morisot's technique, and her radical experimentation with the concept of finished and unfinished in her work, exposes the process of painting and furthers the indeterminacy between figure and setting introduced in her plein air work.
- **Windows and Thresholds** – Morisot's interest in liminal spaces is revealed in her paintings of subjects such as doorways and windows. Within these often spatially ambiguous settings, Morisot's masterful evocation of light and atmosphere, the most ephemeral of her subjects, serves to anchor the human figure in a transitory space.
- **A Studio of Her Own** – Morisot's late-career paintings from the 1890s often depict her personal domestic space, which served as both studio and setting. During this period, Morisot reached a new expressiveness in her painting as figures become increasingly enveloped by their surroundings. The vibrant, saturated palette and sinuous brushwork that she adopted in these final works demonstrate their visual affinities with the emerging symbolist aesthetic of the time.

#### **Exhibition Organization:**

*Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist* is organized by the Barnes Foundation, Dallas Museum of Art, Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec, and the Musées d'Orsay et de l'Orangerie, Paris. The exhibition is co-curated by Sylvie Patry, Consulting Curator at the Barnes Foundation and Chief Curator/Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs and Collections at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris, and Nicole R. Myers, The Lillian and James H. Clark Curator of European Painting and Sculpture at the Dallas Museum of Art.

#### **Exhibition Tour:**

- **Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec**, Québec (June 21–September 23, 2018)
- **The Barnes Foundation**, Philadelphia (October 21, 2018–January 14, 2019)
- **Dallas Museum of Art**, Dallas (February 24–May 26, 2019)
- **Musée d'Orsay**, Paris (June 18–September 22, 2019)

### **Exhibition Catalogue:**

The exhibition is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue that emphasizes the importance of understanding Morisot's work in light of her dialogue with contemporary artistic movements—impressionism, but also post-impressionism and symbolism. *Berthe Morisot: Woman Impressionist* makes an important contribution to the field, with interdisciplinary scholarship and a specific focus on Morisot's pioneering developments as a painter first, woman second. An English- and French-language catalogue will be co-published by Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. and the Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia, in association with the Dallas Museum of Art and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. A separate French-language catalogue will be published by the Musée d'Orsay, Paris. The book contains essays by Morisot scholars including the exhibition co-curators Sylvie Patry and Nicole R. Myers; Cindy Kang, Barnes Foundation; Marianne Mathieu, Musée Marmottan Monet; and Bill Scott, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, as well as a chronology by Amy Wojciechowski with additional research by Monique Nonne (hardcover, \$55).

### **SPONSORS:**

This exhibition is sponsored by

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### **ABOUT THE BARNES FOUNDATION**

The Barnes Foundation is a non-profit cultural and educational institution that shares its unparalleled art collection with the public, organizes special exhibitions, and presents programming that fosters new ways of thinking about human creativity. The Barnes collection is displayed in ensembles that integrate art and objects from across cultures and time periods, overturning traditional hierarchies and revealing universal elements of human expression. Home to one of the world's finest collections of impressionist, post-impressionist, and early modern paintings—including the largest groups of paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Paul Cézanne in existence—the Barnes brings together renowned masterworks by such artists as Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Amedeo Modigliani, and Vincent van Gogh, alongside ancient, medieval, Renaissance, and non-Western art as well as metalwork, furniture, and decorative art.

The Barnes Foundation was established by Dr. Albert C. Barnes in 1922 to “promote the advancement of education and the appreciation of the fine arts and horticulture.” Since moving to the heart of Philadelphia in 2012, the Barnes has expanded its commitment to teaching visual literacy in groundbreaking ways, investing in original scholarship relating to its collection and enhancing accessibility throughout every facet of its program.

The Barnes Foundation is open Wednesday–Monday, and tickets can be purchased on-site, online, or by calling 215.278.7200. Ticket prices and current hours are listed on our website.

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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