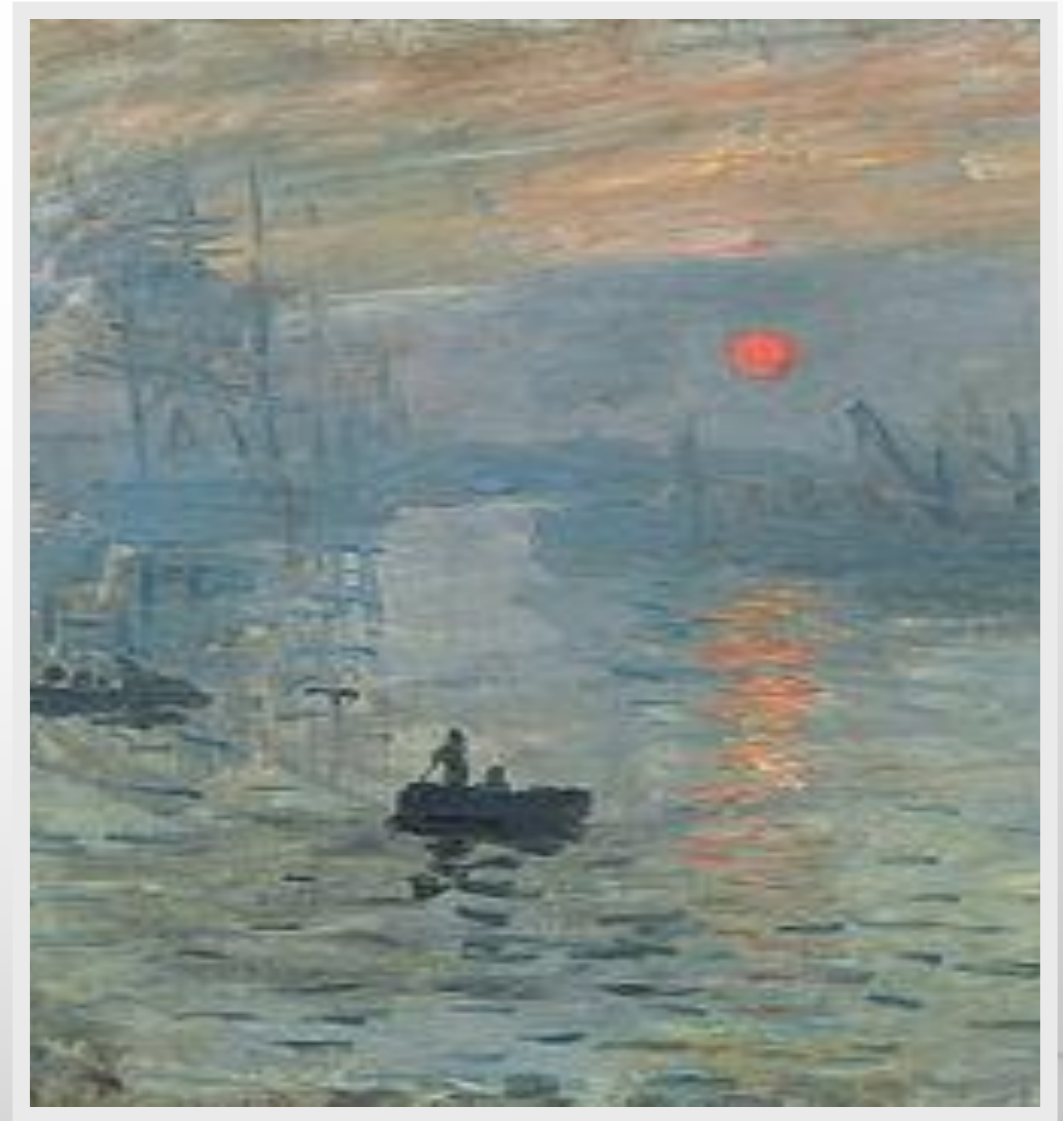


IMPRESSIONISM

- **IMPRESSIONISM** IS A 19TH-CENTURY ART MOVEMENT CHARACTERIZED BY RELATIVELY SMALL, THIN, YET VISIBLE BRUSH STROKES, OPEN COMPOSITION, EMPHASIS ON ACCURATE DEPICTION OF LIGHT IN ITS CHANGING QUALITIES (OFTEN ACCENTUATING THE EFFECTS OF THE PASSAGE OF TIME), ORDINARY SUBJECT MATTER, INCLUSION OF *MOVEMENT* AS A CRUCIAL ELEMENT OF HUMAN PERCEPTION AND EXPERIENCE, AND UNUSUAL VISUAL ANGLES. IMPRESSIONISM ORIGINATED WITH A GROUP OF PARIS-BASED ARTISTS WHOSE INDEPENDENT EXHIBITIONS BROUGHT THEM TO PROMINENCE DURING THE 1870S AND 1880S.

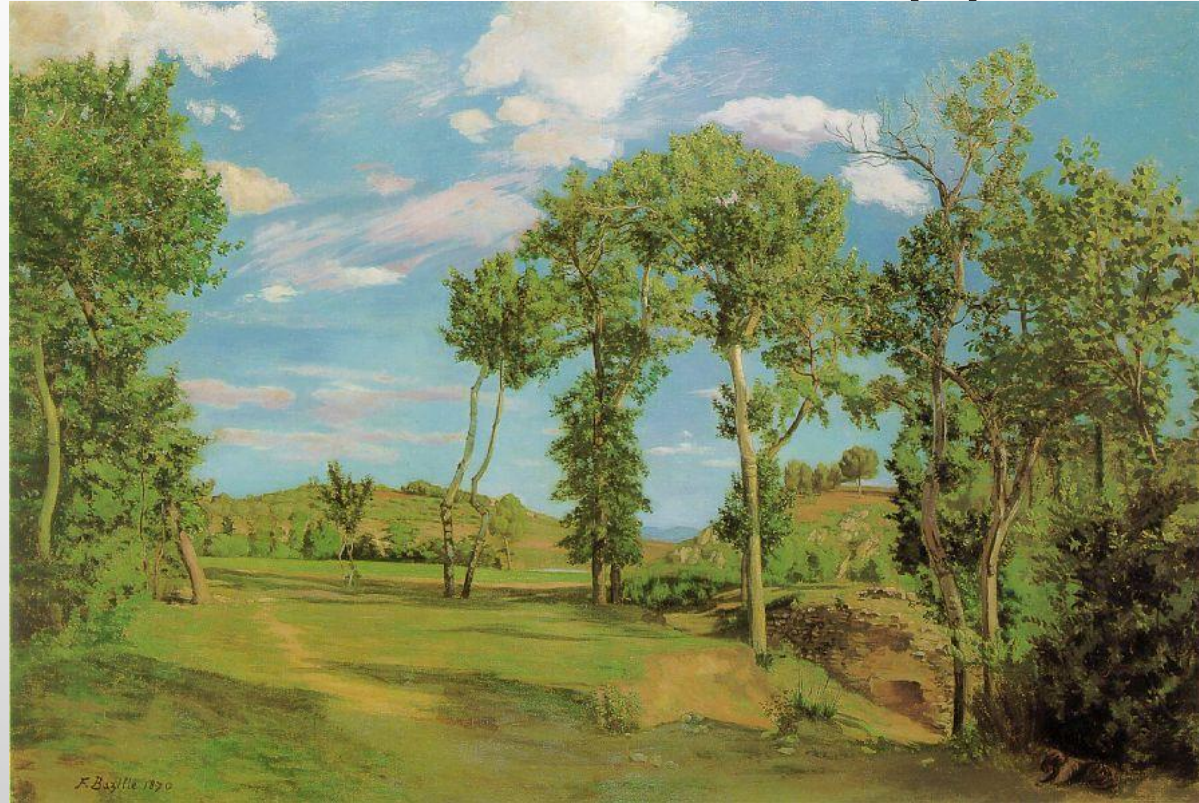
THE IMPRESSIONISTS FACED HARSH OPPOSITION FROM THE CONVENTIONAL ART COMMUNITY IN FRANCE. THE NAME OF THE STYLE DERIVES FROM THE TITLE OF A CLAUDE MONET WORK, *IMPRESSION, SOLEIL LEVANT (IMPRESSION, SUNRISE)*, WHICH PROVOKED THE CRITIC LOUIS LEROY TO COIN THE TERM IN A SATIRICAL REVIEW PUBLISHED IN THE PARISIAN NEWSPAPER *LE CHARIVARI*.



CONTENT AND COMPOSITION

PRIOR TO THE IMPRESSIONISTS, OTHER PAINTERS, NOTABLY SUCH 17TH-CENTURY DUTCH PAINTERS AS JAN STEEN, HAD EMPHASIZED COMMON SUBJECTS, BUT THEIR METHODS OF COMPOSITION WERE TRADITIONAL. THEY ARRANGED THEIR COMPOSITIONS SO THAT THE MAIN SUBJECT COMMANDED THE VIEWER'S ATTENTION. J. M. W. TURNER, WHILE AN ARTIST OF THE ROMANTIC ERA, ANTICIPATED THE STYLE OF IMPRESSIONISM WITH HIS ARTWORK. THE IMPRESSIONISTS RELAXED THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN SUBJECT AND BACKGROUND SO THAT THE EFFECT OF AN IMPRESSIONIST PAINTING OFTEN RESEMBLES A SNAPSHOT, A PART OF A LARGER REALITY CAPTURED AS IF BY CHANCE. PHOTOGRAPHY WAS GAINING POPULARITY, AND AS CAMERAS BECAME MORE PORTABLE, PHOTOGRAPHS BECAME MORE CANDID. PHOTOGRAPHY INSPIRED IMPRESSIONISTS TO REPRESENT MOMENTARY ACTION, NOT ONLY IN THE FLEETING LIGHTS OF A LANDSCAPE, BUT IN THE DAY-TO-DAY LIVES OF PEOPLE.

FRÉDÉRIC BAZILLE (WHO ONLY
POSTHUMOUSLY PARTICIPATED IN THE
IMPRESSIONIST EXHIBITIONS) (1841–1870)



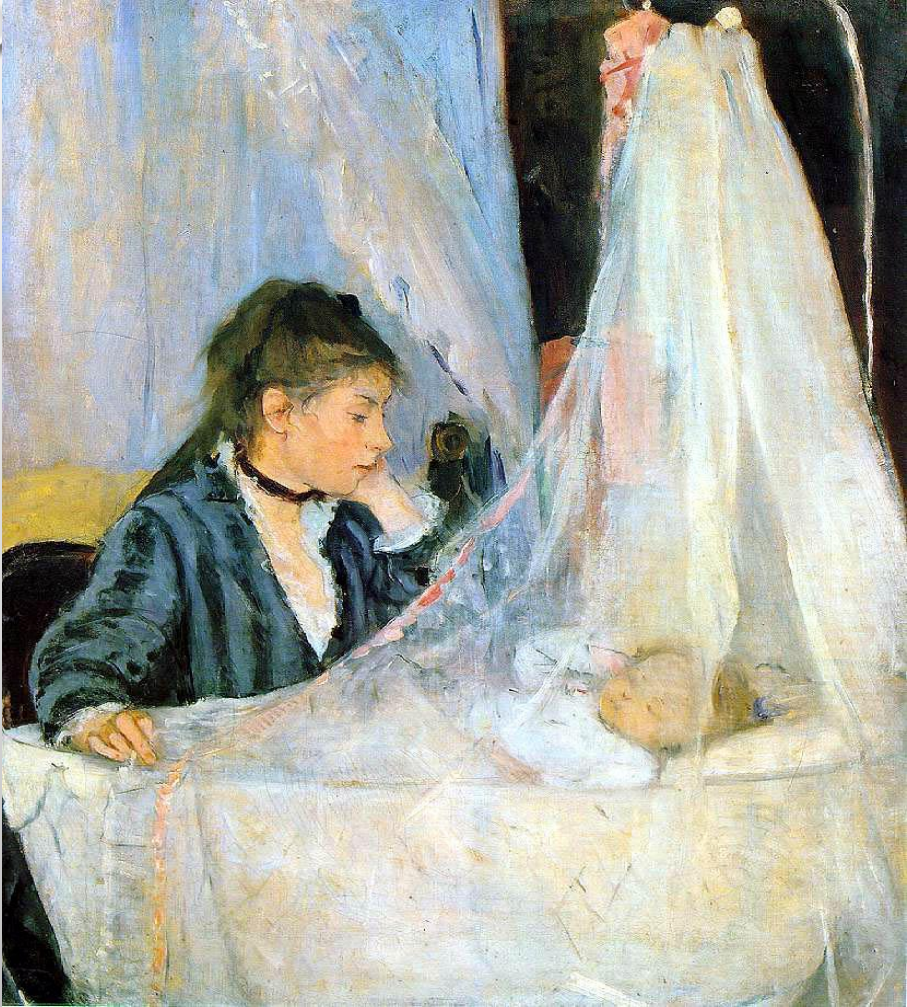
PAYSAGE AU BORD DU LEZ, 1870, [MINNEAPOLIS INSTITUTE
OF ART](#)

ALFRED SISLEY (1839–1899)



BRIDGE AT VILLENEUVE-LA-GARENNE, 1872, [METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART](#)

BERTHE MORISOT (WHO PARTICIPATED IN
ALL IMPRESSIONIST EXHIBITIONS EXCEPT IN
1879) (1841–1895)

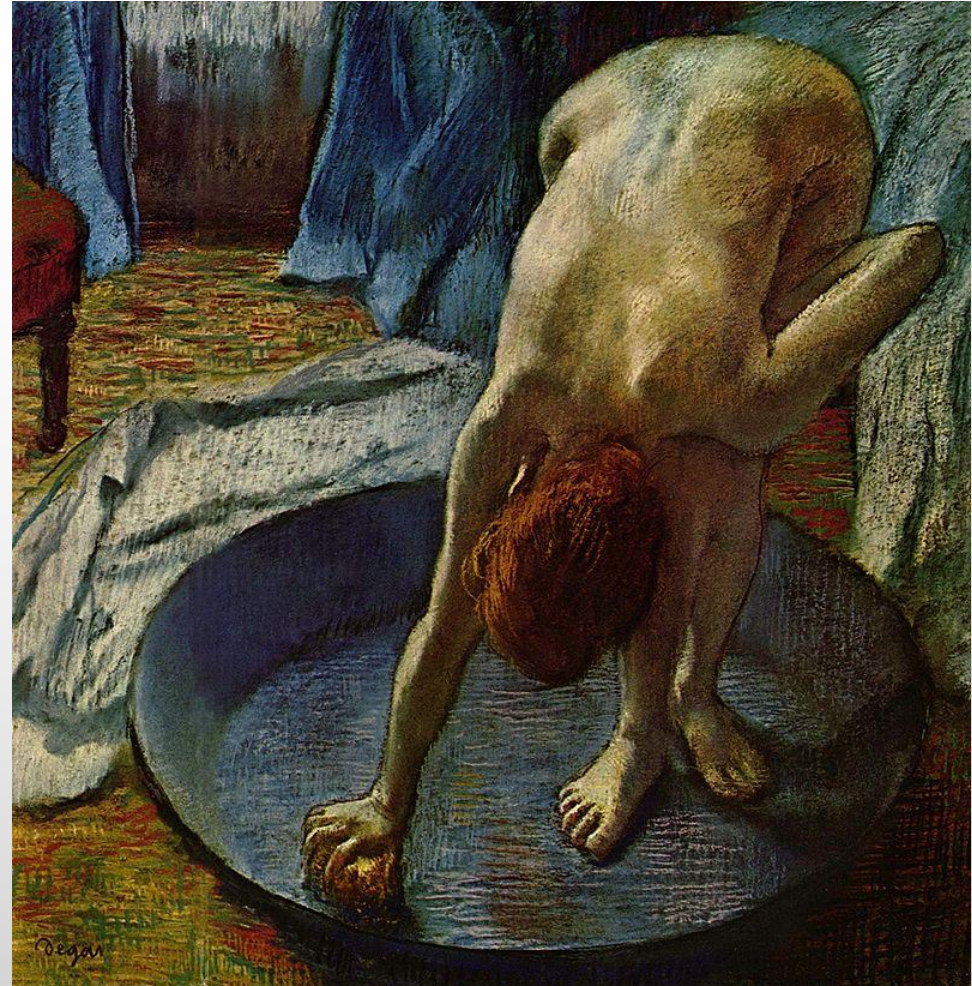


THE CRADLE, 1872, MUSÉE D'ORSAY

EDGAR DEGAS (WHO DESPISED THE TERM IMPRESSIONIST) (1834–1917)



DANCER WITH A BOUQUET OF FLOWERS (STAR OF THE BALLET),
1878



Woman in the Bath, 1886, Hill–Stead Museum, Farmington,
Connecticut

PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR (WHO PARTICIPATED IN IMPRESSIONIST EXHIBITIONS IN 1874, 1876, 1877 AND 1882) (1841–1919)



Portrait of Mademoiselle Irène Cahen d'Anvers (La Petite Irène), 1880, Foundation E.G. Bührle, Zürich

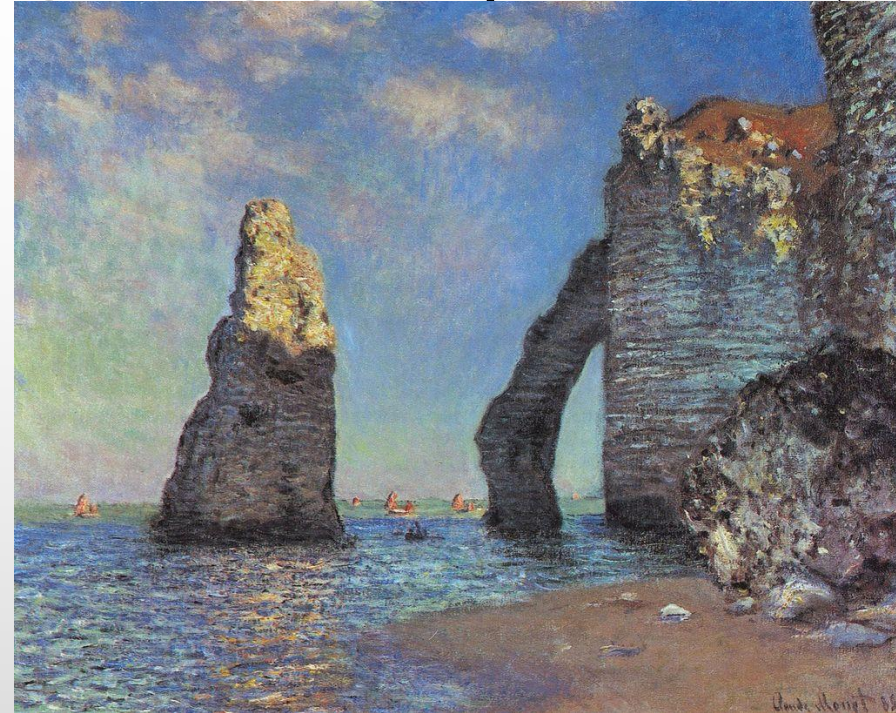


On the Terrace, 1881, Art Institute of Chicago

CLAUDE MONET (THE MOST PROLIFIC OF THE IMPRESSIONISTS AND THE ONE WHO EMBODIES THEIR AESTHETIC MOST OBVIOUSLY(1840–1926)



JARDIN À SAINTE-ADRESSE, 1867, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK



The Cliff at Étretat after the Storm, 1885, Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts