FARM *to* TABLE

Food and Identity in the Age of Impressionism

Large Print Labels

Farm to Table: Food and Identity in the Age of Impressionism explores the intersections of art, gastronomy, and national identity in France in the late 1800s. The exhibition showcases more than 60 paintings and sculptures, including the work of Jules Dalou, Victor Gilbert, Paul Gauguin, Eva Gonzalès, Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Vincent van Gogh—artists who examined the nation's unique relationship with food. The bounty of France's agriculture and its chefs' skill had long helped define its strength and position on the international stage. This self-image as the world's culinary capital became more important in the late nineteenth century as the country grappled with war, political instability, imperialism, and industrialization. In this climate, France's culinary traditions signaled notions of its refinement, fortitude, and ingenuity while exposing fractures destabilizing national identity. From cultivation to consumption, food was central to notions of glory but also those of collective pain. Farm to Table puts this history on view through the eyes and hands of the period's greatest artists, who avidly brought subjects from agricultural fields to Parisian dining rooms into their works, documenting and reinforcing monumental cultural shifts at the heart of European modernity.

At Pasture

Pasture is an Old French word that denotes fields suitable for grazing. In the mid-19th century, after years of instability in France, its pastures symbolized the nation's potential growth. The authors of the paintings in this section championed shepherds not only as the caretakers of French livestock and the soil and fields that sustained them but also as stewards of the nation, their labor providing sustenance for its people. Regions and locales such as Barbizon, Le Havre, and Le Hague inspired an entire generation of painters who sought to elevate the genre of landscape in the eyes of the public. Their works also often helped advocate for the working classes living in the rural parts of France often overlooked by the bourgeois (middle-class) and ruling classes concentrated in cities.

Jean-François Millet
(French, 1814–1875)

Pasture Near Cherbourg (Normandy)
1871–1872

oil on canvas
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Bequest of Mrs. Erasmus C. Lindley in memory of her father, James J. Hill
49.5

Many French artists who did not serve in the National Guard fled Paris at the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, among them Jean-François Millet, who traveled to Barbizon and Normandy. He completed this painting in the year following the war. Its visible brushwork and vibrant colors hint at the influence of early Impressionism on Millet.

Rosa Bonheur
(French, 1822–1899)

Landscape with Cattle
late 19th century

oil on canvas
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Gift of Dr. Edward Krumbhaar and
Hermann Krumbhaar
1921-69.1

Rolling green hills nourish the cows in Rosa Bonheur's *Landscape with Cattle*, which she likely created around her home near the forest of Fontainebleau, southeast of Paris. Here, Bonheur offers a type of animal portraiture that imbues the cows in the foreground with a sense of character. The standing cow to the right, her udders swollen, is ready to provide the foundational raw materials of France's rich dairy culture.

Unlike the Impressionist group, which included several female artists, Bonheur is one of the only Realist artists who was a woman. Her prioritization of the landscape genre and animal painting was unique among these painters, whose direct look at modern life more often focused on human subjects.

Charles-Émile Jacque
(French, 1813–1894)

The Shepherd and His Flock
1880

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.
71.2055

With attention to textural details and dramatic compositions, Charles-Émile Jacque's paintings of farm animals, farmworkers, and landscapes celebrate the natural world and the tasks of everyday life. He is particularly notable for his sensitivity to light, which he deploys to highlight the importance of simple objects. In this painting, an opening in the clouds illuminates the subjects from behind.

Jacque's shepherd towers over his flock, highlighting his role as protector, which is echoed by his herding dog in the lower right. This composition, like those of Jean-François Millet and Julien Dupré, forefronts the essential and honorable labor of France's farmers.

Anton Mauve
(Dutch, 1838–1888)

Shepherd and Sheep
circa 1880

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Bequest of Mary Hanna
1956.117

Anton Mauve was known for his depictions of farm life, particularly sheep herding. In this painting, he captures the flock from a unique point of view, showing the shepherd, his dog, and the sheep walking away from the viewer. With soft, lyrical brushstrokes, he captured the hazy light of the early evening as it plays across the backs of the animals.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, The Hague became the center of a major school of landscape painting. Inspired by Barbizon School artists such as Jean-François Millet, whose work could be seen in art galleries in the Netherlands, Dutch artists like Mauve recorded the gray skies, flat terrain, and simple peasant life of their native country.

Theodore Robinson
(American, 1852–1896)

Road by the Mill
1892

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Gift of Alfred T. and Eugenia I. Goshorn
1924.7

After studying in Chicago and New York, Theodore Robinson continued his training in Paris in the late 1870s, studying alongside fellow American John Singer Sargent. On his second extended stay in France, which began in 1884, he became involved with the Giverny artist colony. A close friend of Claude Monet, Robinson's painting style was influenced by the Impressionists' lighter palette, loose brushwork, and attention to light effects. Robinson made this painting in 1892, the same year he returned to the United States.

Adolphe-Félix Cals
(French, 1810–1880)

Luncheon in Honfleur
1875

oil on canvas
Musée d'Orsay, Paris
RF 1486

In this view of a quiet lunch in Normandy, Adolphe-Félix Cals suggests the timelessness of life on France's western coast. A couple shares a simple meal as they sit among their chickens and ducks, with children at play in the background. By distancing the viewer from the details of the table, Cals makes the painting less about the food and more about communion. This scene of rural family unity, breaking bread in harmony with nature, appears divorced from the pressures of modernity, which were destabilizing notions of French values.

Honfleur was a frequent subject and destination for Impressionist artists such as Claude Monet and Eugène Boudin (both represented in this exhibition). After traveling throughout France, Cals settled in Honfleur in 1873, remaining there until his death in 1880.

Eugène Boudin
(French, 1824–1898)

Herd of Cows under Stormy Sky
1887

oil on canvas
Musée d'art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
B37

Eugène Boudin often painted the landscapes and seascapes of Normandy in northern France. The swift brushstrokes we see here, which make the grass, sky, and clouds appear in a state of flux, reflect Boudin's immediate translation of nature through plein-air (outdoor) oil studies.

This herd appears to be the popular Normande cow, highly valued for their milk, which is perfect for producing cheeses such as Camembert de Normandie. Boudin's focus on the herd offers a glimpse into French dairy farming in the late nineteenth century when food products were key to economics and national identity.

The Fields

Prior to the 1800s, the rural laboring class suffered considerable social stigma. This began to change as the century progressed, and the economic, social, and political conflicts within France gave rise to a different kind of 'peasant.' This ideal rural worker could become peaceful, literate, and secularized with the help of the state—in short, become the repository of French values—and provide a bulwark against the radical urban working class. Unlike city workers, who were often seen as threats to the republic in the wake of the 1871 Paris Commune (a violent urban uprising), these rural workers could at once signal the grandeur of France's agrarian traditions and herald a future of economic advancement and political agency.

The artworks in this section reveal the backbreaking labor of rural workers, whose efforts were at the foundation of France's food supply. Central to these works are the agricultural products of wheat, oats, and barley, essential in creating the country's crusty baguettes, rustic *pain de campagne*, flakey croissants, and pillowy brioches.

Julien Dupré
(French, 1851–1910)

Haying Scene
1884

oil on canvas
Saint Louis Art Museum
Gift of Justina G. Catlin in memory
of her husband, Daniel Catlin
25:1917

Dressed in the French flag's red, white, and blue, a peasant woman focused on turning hay becomes a virtuous Marianne—the personification of the French Republic. As the sky darkens with an approaching storm, she continues her task with determination, symbolizing the country's perseverance in the face of turmoil.

In this scene, Dupré has chosen to forefront the hard labor required of farmers—both female and male—and the demanding task of haymaking. Hay, often a mixture of grasses and legumes, provided both bedding and feed for livestock, which, in turn, would provide the nation with meat, butter, and milk—staples of French cuisine.

Léon-Augustin Lhermitte
(French, 1844–1925)

The Gleaners
1887

oil on canvas
Philadelphia Museum of Art
The George W. Elkins Collection
E1924-4-19

Gleaners collected the stalks of grain left behind in the reaping process for their own humble meals. These members of the rural poor were frequent subjects in art of the late nineteenth century. In Lhermitte's example, two women stoop to gather grain while two others converse. Detailing each loose stalk of grain in the field in front of them, Lhermitte underscores the taxing and monotonous aspects of the work. Despite the women's vulnerable economic position, their active poses and powerful physiques suggest health and strength as they labor at the foot of a massive haystack. A character study by Lhermitte of a single laborer is also on view in this gallery.

Léon-Augustin Lhermitte
(French, 1844–1925)

Peasant Woman Resting
1903

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Gift of Emilie L. Heine in memory
of Mr. and Mrs. John Hauck
1940.978

A peasant woman sits atop a bundle of hay for a midday rest, her sickle at her feet. Léon-Augustin Lhermitte, who often advocated for the rural peasant class through his paintings, has depicted this woman lost in her thoughts, suggesting that there is more to her than just manual labor. The gold band encircling her left ring finger may allude to this fact and indicate that she, like any other citizen of France, has a family to support.

Daniel Ridgway Knight
(American, 1839–1924)

Harvest Scene
1875

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.
71.2118

Daniel Ridgway Knight studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts from 1858 to 1861, and then in Paris until 1863. He returned to the United States to serve in the army during the Civil War but then returned to France in 1872, where he lived for the rest of his life.

Inspired by Barbizon School painters, Knight specialized in meticulously rendered and warmly illuminated rural views of working people. In *Harvest Scene*, he idealizes the lives of multiple generations of peasants enjoying a meal together on a break from the hard work of harvesting and stacking hay.

Claude Monet
(French, 1840–1926)

The Haystack
1891

oil on canvas
Private collection

In the early 1890s, Claude Monet created a series of more than 20 paintings of haystacks (more correctly termed grainstacks) in the fields bordering his home in Giverny, depicting their architectural forms at various times of day and under different weather conditions.

Cereal grains (wheat, barley, oats) and the act of farming were of fundamental importance to French identity. Haystacks—agricultural "monuments" that speak both to the natural world and human society—were the first subject of Monet's series paintings, which would later include poplars and Rouen Cathedral—all subjects related to French fortitude and longevity.

Jean-François Millet
(French, 1814–1875)

Going to Work
1851–1853

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Bequest of Mary M. Emery
1927.411

Jean-François Millet was a founder of the Barbizon School, a group of naturalistic landscape painters associated with the Fontainebleau Forest outside Paris. Millet, however, turned much of his attention to local peasants and laborers, which he observed and painted as they went about their daily activities.

In his canvases, Millet often blurs his figures' faces, obscuring them in shadow. Unlike other painters represented in this gallery, who carefully described the features of individuals, Millet favored a generalized depiction of rural life. In this way, he sought to represent rural laborers as heroic, anonymous embodiments of moral virtue.

Alfred Boucher
(French, 1850–1934)

Peasant Woman Leaning on a Pitchfork
late 1800s

bronze
Chrysler Museum of Art
Museum purchase with funds donated by
Kathryn K. Porter, 89.65

Alfred Boucher spent several years studying in Rome and Florence before embarking on a successful career in Paris. He received many large public commissions from the 1890s through the 1910s, and the French state purchased several of the sculptures he exhibited at the Salon. Critics and the public particularly appreciated his representations of female subjects and his balance of realism and idealism.

A friend of Auguste Rodin's and Camille Claudel's first teacher, Boucher introduced these two sculptors in the early 1880s, beginning a storied relationship that would result in great art and personal tragedy.

Aimé-Jules Dalou
(French, 1838–1902)

Sower
1894–1896

plaster
Petit Palais Musée des beaux-arts de la ville de Paris
PPS351

Aimé-Jules Dalou's *Sower*, a farm worker represented scattering seeds from his apron, offers a grand and noble vision of rural labor. The vignettes around the pedestal emphasize the constancy of farming. Though many agricultural techniques had changed with new technologies, the centuries-old manual efforts integral to cultivating the land remained vibrant in the nation's collective consciousness. Dalou proposed this composition for a monument to workers, emphasizing France's food traditions as central to national identity.

Gustave Achille Guillaumet
(French, 1840–1887)

Saharan Dwelling, Biskra District, Algeria
1882

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter Chrysler, Jr.
71.655

As had generations of French artists before him, Gustave Achille Guillaumet visited North Africa to find "exotic" subject matter that was popular among his European audiences. In this painting, Guillaumet portrays the daily kitchen routines of a rural home in Algeria's Biskra District on the northern edge of the Sahara Desert.

In an environment of dusty light and deep, cool shadows, family members work together in the kitchen, grinding grains and milking a sheep. Stairs leading upward toward bright daylight suggest that much of the clay-walled, high-ceilinged home is below ground level, a necessary means of temperature regulation in the desert

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climate. Though the household activities shown here would be familiar to French audiences, the Algerian setting gave them an alternative view of agrarian life.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
(French, 1841–1919)

Field of Banana Trees
1881

oil on canvas
Musée d'Orsay, Paris
RF 1959 1

Pierre-Auguste Renoir's depiction of Algerian banana trees focuses on a desirable crop that could not be cultivated effectively in France, evoking the economic drive central to European imperialism.

Landscape, especially without figures, was an infrequent subject for Renoir. The lush and impenetrable vegetation, consisting of greens and speckled with flecks of oranges and yellows, was likely painted from a high vantage point overlooking the Essai Garden. Located in Hamma, Algeria, this garden was constructed by French colonizers tasked with cultivating north African crops. The white buildings of the large city of Algiers appear in the distance. Renoir exhibited this work at the 1895 *Société des Peintres Orientalistes Français* exhibition, where critics praised his abstract rendering of palms in the sunlight.

Bounty of the Sea

As early as 1830, the steam-powered engine began to transform maritime battles and trade throughout Europe. French ports such as Trouville started to grow, increasing the importance of the maritime provinces of Brittany, Normandy, and Provence. Steamboats allowed for longer trips and larger hauls, providing goods to support the rising populations of French cities. The islands of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, along the southwestern coast of Newfoundland and Labrador (a province in modern-day Canada), also contributed to France's sea trade. Imports and fishing bounties traveled from France's northwestern and southern coasts through its extensive river network to provide city markets, such as Les Halles in Paris, with fresh seafood and international trade goods. This section's artworks capture the fishing industry's tools and markets and showcase some lesser-known occupations, such as worm and snail gathering.

Claude Monet
(French, 1840–1926)

Red Mullets
circa 1870

oil on canvas
Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum
Friends of the Fogg Art Museum Fund
1925.16

Atop a conch shell-shaped napkin, these two red mullets appear to be fresh from the market. Sourced from the Mediterranean Sea and Northern Atlantic, these relatively small fish became a common ingredient in French cuisine in this period. Claude Monet painted the mullet's scales in a frenzy of peach and white brushstrokes and chose to display the fish prior to it being filleted. However, the high vantage point suggests that a chef is about to prepare them for consumption. Heavily influenced by the Spanish and Dutch genre traditions, Monet often cropped his still lifes closely, placing their subjects centrally on the canvas.

Léon Gustave Ravanne
(French, 1854–1904)

Fishermen
1899

oil on canvas
Musée d’art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
M0720

Léon-Gustave Ravanne is known for his evocative paintings of the sea, even though he grew up in the landlocked town of Meulan-en-Yvelines near Paris. Ravanne depicts a routine morning handoff in this scene: fishermen selling their catches to *poissonniers* (fishmongers or fish cooks) and women with baskets. A row of fishing boats cuts diagonally across the view, drawing our attention to the fishers as they pull in their goods from the ocean ashore. Ravanne used soft smudges to create the shiny effect of water on the sand, showing his skill at painting water, light, and atmospheric color. In 1896, he became the official painter of France’s navy, highlighting his role in rendering the French maritime world of the late nineteenth century.

Eugène Boudin
(French, 1824–1898)

Trouville
1891

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Museum Purchase
1957.214

Born in Honfleur, Eugène Boudin was a native of the northern coast of France, a frequent subject of his canvases. Boudin's handling of the effects of light and water made him a favorite among the artists now known as Impressionists. This work encapsulates Boudin's move towards Impressionist brushwork near the end of his career.

In this scene, Boudin documents Trouville, a port city in Normandy that became a popular tourist destination in the nineteenth century. Boudin often painted the city, depicting its beachgoers and fishermen with equal importance. Here, Boudin cleverly contrasts the fishing vessels in the foreground with the boats of leisure servicing tourists seen in the distance.

Eugène Boudin
(French, 1824–1898)

The Worm Gatherers
circa 1883–1889

oil on panel
Musée d'art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
B136

In this oil sketch, Eugène Boudin shows the process of worm gathering, which was an essential task for fishers who used them for bait. By disrupting soil or sand (at low tide), gatherers encouraged worms to surface for harvesting. Here, Boudin's rough and sinuous brushwork alludes to the movements of a baited hook and references his growing interest in Impressionism.

Eugène Boudin
(French, 1824–1898)

The Fish Market at Trouville
1894

oil on panel
Musée d’art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
B16

With a flurry of brushwork, Eugène Boudin captures the busy fish market nestled between the buildings of Trouville. The combination of black, ochre, blue, and whites creates a somewhat limited palette that represents Trouville’s defining environs of sand, sea, and sky.

Georges-Henri Fauvel
(French, 1861–1930)

Fish Shop
1881

oil on canvas
Musée d'art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
A118

Primarily known for his paintings of hunting dogs and landscapes, this interior scene is a rare subject for Georges-Henri Fauvel. In this work, he depicts a line of *poissoniers* (fishmongers or fish cooks) responsible for catching and preparing marine products for sale.

Victor Gabriel Gilbert
(French, 1847–1933)

Fish Market at Les Halles
1881

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Museum purchase
2022.18

In this painting, Victor Gabriel Gilbert revels in the bounty of France's seas but also highlights an idealized view of social cohesion. Beneath the orderly architecture of Les Halles, Paris's central market, a well-dressed woman in a fur-trimmed jacket, a female fish seller, a domestic worker, and a blue-bloused laborer interact harmoniously, normalizing the relations between social classes and genders. Gilbert encapsulates the entire market economy in a single scene.

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Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux
(French, 1827–1875)

The Winkle Picker
1874

bronze
Wilkes Collection

In 1874, Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux left Paris for the seaside village of Puys, in Normandy, to recover from surgery. There, he saw a woman carrying a basket of shellfish on her hip and was immediately taken with what he termed the “majesty of this poor creature.” The term winkle picker refers both to the person who harvests periwinkles, a kind of seasnail, and the pointed tool used to gather the shelled mollusks.

Barbizet Studio
(Attributed Manufactory, circa 1850)

Charger
circa 1880s

glazed ceramic
Cincinnati Art Museum
Gift of Mrs. J. Louis Ransohoff
1923.943

To produce the variety of lifelike, three-dimensional animals decorating the surface of this charger, or large plate, the artist made plaster molds directly from the creatures he sought to recreate and cast them in clay. The term Palissy ware refers to this realistic style featuring brightly colored lead-based glazes, as they imitate the work of the French Renaissance potter Bernard Palissy (1510–1589). Victor Barbizet (circa 1805–circa 1870) is credited with establishing the mass production of this type of rustic ware in Paris in the nineteenth century.

Garden & Grove

By the mid-nineteenth century, growing populations in French cities—Paris especially—forced many residents out of the city centers and into the suburbs. This population movement prompted new construction projects for gardens and orchards that could support the demand for food production, resulting in small-scale agricultural developments that nestled between homes and other buildings just outside the center. The paintings in this section provide a glimpse of these changes, as artists were eager to document the convergence of rural and urban environs.

Paul Gauguin
(French, 1848–1903)

Market Gardens at Vaugirard
1879

oil on canvas
Smith College Museum of Art
Purchased, SC
1953.55

This view from Paul Gauguin's studio at the edge of Paris reveals the area's patchwork of rich market gardens, which supplied the city with a wide array of produce. When Gauguin painted this work, it was a neighborhood on the brink of massive change. Paris incorporated the town of Vaugirard in 1860, and the quarter began shifting from a quasi-rural hamlet to a more urban area that would accommodate the influx of people moving to the capital.

Camille Pissarro
(French, 1830–1903)

Cabbage Patch near the Village
1875

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Gift of Albert P. Strietmann
1952.240

Camille Pissarro was a pivotal figure in the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist movements. Born in the Danish West Indies, he moved to France, where he exhibited in all eight Impressionist exhibitions and mentored artists including Paul Cezanne and Vincent van Gogh.

In *Cabbage Patch near the Village*, Pissarro shows men and women bending to harvest their cabbage crop. The village's geometric architecture anchors the scene. The visual balance among fields, workers, architecture, and the rural setting suggests a more general harmony in the systems of agricultural production. Pissarro gives the impression of bright sun and gentle breeze by

juxtaposing different shades of blue in the sky and green in the foreground.

Artist Gustave Caillebotte, who donated his art collection to the French state, owned this painting. However, *Cabbage Patch near the Village* was rejected from the gift, as it was thought to present incendiary socio-political ideas regarding the peasant classes.

Camille Pissarro
(French, 1830–1903)

The Gardener–Old Peasant with Cabbage

1883–1895

oil on canvas
National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 1994.59.6

An older man with ruddy skin clutches a cabbage, trimming its outer leaves. Piled high behind him, a mound of the leafy vegetables acts as a backdrop for the gardener's portrait. Fringes of gray hair sprout from under his peanut-brown hat, and his jaw falls slack as he focuses on his task.

This was a profoundly personal painting for Camille Pissarro, as critics once deridingly labeled him as a specialist of cabbage paintings. His repeated depictions of the humble vegetable, a common fixture in the diets of the poor, evoke his empathy for the working class, who suffered economically under the Third Republic's industrialization. Therefore, Pissarro's frequent representation of the

lower classes amongst the vegetables was often contentious with upper-middle class audiences.

Alfred Sisley
(French, 1839–1899)

The Kitchen Garden
1872

oil on canvas
Kimbell Art Museum
Gift of Anne W. Marion in honor
of Kay Fortson, 2015
AG2015.01

Painted the year after the Siege of Paris (1870–1871) and two years before the first Impressionist exhibition (April 1874), Alfred Sisley's *Kitchen Garden* depicts a domestic landscape, focusing on garden paths and blooming beds of vegetables and flowers. Two white buildings rise in the background, providing a focal point for the view, but also subtly disrupting the harmonious union of the paths, fence, modest shed, and greenhouse in the foreground. Depicting a flourishing urban garden on the heels of the extreme wartime food scarcity, Sisley may be alluding to the nation's resilience.

Born in Paris to British parents, Sisley preferred to

live in the smaller French towns along the Seine, which he often used as subjects for his paintings. During his time at the École des Beaux-Arts, he befriended fellow Impressionists Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Frédéric Bazille, Claude Monet, and Camille Pissarro.

Alfred Sisley
(French, 1839–1899)

Apple Trees in Flower
1880

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.
77.412

In 1880, Sisley settled near the forests of Fontainebleau, a region southeast of Paris with a long history of *en plein air* (outdoor) painting. Apples, a common fruit in France, were available for harvest from late summer through autumn and in multiple provinces. Here, Sisley has chosen to show the trees in bloom, capturing the natural beauty of the French countryside in spring.

Vincent van Gogh
(Dutch, 1853–1890)

Vineyards at Auvers
1890

oil on canvas
Saint Louis Art Museum
Funds given by Mrs. Mark C. Steinberg
8:1953

In this canvas, Vincent van Gogh seems to relish the contrast between the curving forms of grape vines and their askew arbors in the foreground, and the more structured geometries of the houses and fencing beyond. Red poppies provide a decorative border at left, their notes of color balanced by the orange roofs in the town. Van Gogh constructs the painting with his characteristic, heavily loaded brushstrokes.

In May 1890, after spending two years in the south of France, Van Gogh moved to the village of Auvers, just to the north of Paris. He spent two prolific months there, producing about seventy paintings, including *Undergrowth with Two Figures*, on view in the museum's Gallery 227.

Bourgeois Table

Already in the nineteenth century, the French table depended on a global food production system. Chiefly controlled by colonial governments , these structures leveraged resources and labor in favor of European economic gain.

Within France, the ostensibly apolitical nature of cuisine was used to promote national goals over partisan interests. Culinary practices could serve nationalistic objectives, as the fellowship of the table had the power to transcend political divisions. The artworks in this section highlight the domestic side of French culinary nationalism, showing that food intertwined the lives of the French populus across socio-economic and political lines.

Étienne-Prosper Berne-Bellecour
(French, 1838–1910)

The Dessert (The Remains of the Meal)
1876

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Museum purchase
2000.24

Étienne-Prosper Berne-Bellecour suggests the glory of a formal dinner through what is left when the guests depart—a fantastic array of silver, glass, ceramics, linen, fruit, biscuits, and table decorations. A detailed representation of the aftermath of a feast, the painting contains hidden information and poses unanswered questions. The sugar cubes and sweet treats show the dependence of the French dining experience on colonial sugar production, while the stacked dishes and piles of dining detritus may make us wonder not just who ate this meal but also who will be responsible for cleaning it up.

Eugène Alexis Girardet
(French, 1853–1907)

Dinner, El Kantara, Algeria (Le Repas du Soir)

date unknown

oil on panel
Private collection

Eugène Alexis Giradet visited El Kantara, Algeria, an oasis town just north of the Saharan Desert, on several occasions throughout his career. In 1893, he helped found the *Société des Peintres Orientalistes Français*, which not only encouraged French artists to travel throughout the North African region, but also the French populace. In this scene, Giradet captures the tradition of eating from a communal dish with one's hands. Although the dining practice was foreign to French audiences, artists such as Giradet aimed to popularize the subject of North Africa by painting everyday scenes such as this one. Unfortunately, such documentary presentations of Algerian society reinforced French perceptions that Algeria was premodern and that it could benefit from the so-called civilizing rationales of imperialism.

Marie Bracquemond
(French, 1840–1916)

Under the Lamp
1877

oil on canvas
Mr. and Mrs. R. Stephens Philips, Piedmont, CA

Marie Bracquemond's atmospheric painting captures an intimate dining scene—the painter Alfred Sisley, poised with a raised spoon, sits across from his future wife, Eugénie Lescouezec, who rests her hand on the table. A single gaslight illuminates the figures as steam rises from the bowl before them. Bracquemond meticulously represents the components of a simple meal: bread, soup, salt, pepper, oil, vinegar, and wine. The painting captures the humble pleasures of domestic dining but hints at an unspoken exchange between the couple.

Eva Gonzalès
(French, 1849–1883)

Afternoon Tea
1874

oil on canvas
Dallas Museum of Art
The Eugene and Margaret McDermott
Art Fund, Inc.
2018.5 McD

In this sketch-like oil painting, Eva Gonzalès shows a woman, presumably a domestic servant, preparing afternoon tea and a snack under the gaze of her much younger charge. Known to be Édouard Manet's only pupil, Gonzalès most often painted genre scenes of bourgeois (middle class) life, as did most of her female Impressionist contemporaries. Tragically, the young painter died at the age of 34, just six days after her mentor.

Victoria Dubourg Fantin-Latour
(French, 1840–1926)

Still Life with Brioche
circa 1890

oil on canvas
Dixon Gallery and Gardens
Museum purchase with funds provided by the estate of Cecil Williams Marshall and, by transfer, Mr. and Mrs. Morrie A. Moss
2019.6

Showcasing her skill in capturing different textures, this painting by Victoria Fantin-Latour centers a brioche on an extraordinary tablescape set against a simple background. The pastry's duality—it is at once delicate and hardy—takes center stage. Softer, lighter passages pierce curved and browned sections of crust as Fantin-Latour conveys the treat's crisp shell and its rich, flaky, buttery core. Surrounded by decorative objects and other products of France's terroir (soil), the brioche is an unpretentious centerpiece that nevertheless emphasizes the splendor of the French culinary tradition.

Jean-François Raffaëlli
(French, 1850–1924)

The Preparations for a Hunting Meal
1875

oil on canvas
Musée d'Orsay, Paris
Gift of Wildenstein & Co.
RF 2009 1

The Preparations for a Hunting Meal overwhelms the viewer with bounty from land and sea. The cascade of recently hunted animals and fish and some long-stalked vegetables effectively divides the canvas diagonally. In the less-dense left side of the composition, Jean-François Raffaëlli includes a side of meat and two decanters. Juxtaposed with the animals yet to be cleaned and vegetables with their roots still attached these refined components suggest the passage from the hunt to the table.

Thomas Couture
(French, 1815–1879)

The Little Confectioner
1879

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of the Mowbray Arch Society
2008.14

Thomas Couture was a Parisian painter and teacher known for his detailed style and dramatic narratives. His work connected the Neoclassical tradition popular in the early to mid-nineteenth century with emerging modern movements such as Realism and Impressionism. In this painting, Couture has created a complex portrait of a young confectioner, whose unblemished complexion is marred by an expression of pure misery or exhaustion—a seeming paradox, as a person selling sweets is often expected to put forth a facade of happiness.

Camille Pissarro
(French, 1830–1903)

The Maidservant
1875

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.
71.530

In this sympathetic close-up of a maidservant, Camille Pissarro spotlights a moment of introspection or even sorrow. Her gaze seems to be turned inward rather than resting upon the empty glass and silver spoon on the platter or the vacant bench on the left. The dark green leaves and shadows surrounding the figure suggest a feeling of foreboding.

To The Market

As the population boomed, Paris's medieval urban fabric had become unsustainable by the middle of the 1800s. To modernize the city, Emperor Napoléon III ordered a substantial portion of "Old Paris" demolished and replaced with large boulevards, parks, and markets. Under the direction of the emperor and Baron Haussmann, the architect Victor Baltard designed the market complex Les Halles in a central Paris neighborhood that had long been associated with crime. Baltard's architecture for the central markets was strikingly modern; he constructed towering pavilions of iron and glass that offered distinct buildings for different types of food. The vast scale of the market complex was meant to account for Paris's massive growth, as the city had absorbed former outlying areas and migrant peasants. For over a century, Les Halles stood as an intersectional site, bridging the urban and rural populations.

Victor Gabriel Gilbert
(French, 1847–1933)

Meat Haulers
1884

oil on canvas
Musée des beaux-arts de Bordeaux
Bx E 817

Working on the grand scale typical of the Paris Salon, the premier annual art exhibition in France, Victor Gabriel Gilbert depicts three workers moving a side of beef beneath Les Halles' main pavilions. The neighborhood surrounding Les Halles had been the site of violent uprisings in Paris, and authors frequently used descriptions of animal carcasses as metaphors for revolutionaries' corpses. The men here seem earnest in their labors, and Les Halles' arches behind them seem to suggest a stabilizing social structure, in addition to its useful physical architecture. Gilbert frequently depicted the market during the 1870s and 1880s.

Aimé-Jules Dalou
(French, 1838–1902)

Butcher with His Basket
1889–1898

plaster
Petit Palais, Musée des beaux-arts
de la ville de Paris
PPS228

A student of renowned sculptor Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (whose work is also in this exhibition) Aimé-Jules Dalou entered the École des Beaux-Arts in 1853. After failing to win the prestigious travel fellowship, the Prix de Rome, four times, Dalou opted to earn income from private commissions rather than those sanctioned by the state. Moreover, due to his involvement with the the Paris Commune, the civil insurgency that followed the Siege of Paris in 1871, Dalou had to flee to London after its collapse and remained there until the French government granted him amnesty in 1880. Dalou was widely recognized for his portraiture and as a sculptor of genre subjects, like that of the *Butcher with his Basket* and *The Butcher's Assistant*, and *The Sower*, displayed in another section of this exhibition.

Aimé-Jules Dalou
(French, 1838–1902)

The Butcher's Assistant
1889–1898

plaster
Petit Palais, Musée des beaux-arts
de la ville de Paris
PPS229

Aimé-Jules Dalou
(French, 1838–1902)

Jean-Baptiste Boussingault
modeled 1888–90, cast 1888–1896

bronze
Clark Art Institute
Acquired by the Clark with funds provided by Asbjorn R. Lunde, 2013.3

Aimé-Jules Dalou was friendly with the agronomist Jean-Baptiste Boussingault, who devoted his career to advancing sciences that would benefit society. Boussingault's most lasting influence was in agriculture—he researched crop rotation, nutrients, and soil qualities to help farmers achieve productive labor and financial autonomy. In this bust, Dalou deftly captured his friend's features and lived-in clothes. The result suggests that the scientist was not a sedentary scholar but rather, in the words of one period commentator, "a man of the fields."

Victor Gabriel Gilbert
(French, 1847–1933)

The Square in Front of Les Halles
1880

oil on panel
Musée d’art moderne André Malraux, Le Havre
163

In this scene, Victor Gabriel Gilbert depicts the individual vegetable sellers who set up stands on the Carreau, the walkways beside Les Halles’ main pavilions. The painting overflows with human interaction and vegetal splendor. A girl sells lemons; two dogs play; and women and men chat amid the lettuces, radishes, carrots, and leeks overflowing the tables. In the foreground, a seated female farmer in a patched dress anchors the composition with a timeless stoicism. Yet Gilbert also highlighted the activity of the modern city, suggesting the Carreau as a site of intersection between the urban and rural.

Léon-Augustin Lhermitte
(French, 1844–1925)

Les Halles (sketch)
1889

oil on canvas
Petit Palais, Musée des beaux-arts
de la ville de Paris
PPP4091

In this sketch, Léon-Augustin Lhermitte shows the market as a site of frenetic activity, with people preparing stalls, transporting goods, serving soup, bartering, and bickering. The work reflects the growing economy and the necessity for central markets during the late 1880s and 1890s.

Gustave Courbet
(French, 1819–1877)

Still Life with Apples, Pear, and Pomegranates
1871

oil on canvas
Dallas Museum of Art
The Wendy and Emery Reves Collection
1985.R.18

While imprisoned for his role in the Paris Commune, Gustave Courbet created this humble but powerful image in defiance. Far from the idealized fruit seen in many contemporary still life paintings, Courbet's apples, pear, and pomegranates are irregular in color and imperfect in form. Set against an indistinct, dark background, these fruits have an earthiness and authenticity that speak to Courbet's support for the poor and marginalized, reflecting his rejection of the conventions of the French bourgeoisie (middle class) and aristocracy.

Henri Regnault
(French, 1843–1871)

Still Life with Apples, Pear, and Pomegranates

1871

oil on canvas
Dallas Museum of Art
The Wendy and Emery Reves Collection
1985.R.18

In both still life and figure paintings, Henri Regnault's works typically feature dramatic colors and stark contrasts of light and shadow. Pomegranates, cultivated throughout North Africa and the Mediterranean, often symbolize fertility, abundance, and immortality. But here, with a cracked and dingy wall as a backdrop, the shriveled fruits evoke the memento mori tradition, symbolizing impermanence and the inevitability of death. They rest on a blanket with red, blue, and white stripes—colors of the French flag. Viewers at the time may have read the pomegranates' shriveled skin and the cracked plaster wall as a comment on France's colonial enterprises.

Léon-Augustin Lhermitte
(French, 1844–1925)

Apple Market, Landerneau, Brittany
1878

oil on canvas
Philadelphia Museum of Art
The George W. Elkins Collection
E1924-4-18

Created several years after the establishment of the Third Republic (1870–1940), Léon-Augustin Lhermitte's market alludes to a debate about the new French government's effort to create a national culture from disparate regions, which typically clung to their distinct customs and dialects. This painting is defiantly Breton; the apples are heavily associated with Brittany, a province in Western France, and each woman wears the distinct Breton headscarf, regardless of her socio-economic position. The scene appears timeless and suggests the constancy of a rural hamlet far removed from efforts to modernize and centralize the nation.

Jean-François Raffaëlli
(French, 1850–1924)

Garlic Seller
circa 1880

oil on panel
Private collection, courtesy of Gallery 19C

Set in the outskirts of Paris—a space between urban and rural life—Jean-François Raffaëlli's *Garlic Seller* highlights its subject's weariness as he presses down on his walking stick in a pause during his tiresome daily commute to sell his product at market. His shapeless overcoat, baggy trousers, and well-worn shoes suggest a lower middle-class social position.

Philippe Rousseau
(French, 1816–1887)

Still Life with Asparagus
1880

oil on canvas
The Cleveland Museum of Art
Bequest of Noah L. Butkin
1980.284

Known for their vibrant green or milky white color, asparagus symbolizes fertility, love, and springtime. Here, Philippe Rousseau presents a detailed portrait of the unique vegetable in creams, greens, and purple. Still lifes championing everyday objects and foodstuffs were a staple throughout Rousseau's career, bringing him great recognition in the long-established genre.

Restaurant Culture

France, and Paris in particular, is associated with the birth of modern gastronomy and culinary arts in the Western world, which framed cooking as a profession, as opposed to a trade, and revolutionized restaurant culture. By the nineteenth century, culinary discourse was a cultural and intellectual endeavor for the French public. A refined palate became a point of national prestige, alongside philosophical ideals of the *cuisine bourgeoise*, which stressed simple preparations and quality ingredients.

The nation saw a growth of restaurants within Paris and beyond that gave rise to celebrity chefs such as Auguste Escoffier (1846–1935), who organized kitchen staff along military lines (*brigade de cuisine*—the system still used in many restaurants) and drew inspiration from dining practices abroad (*a*, in which dishes are served sequentially). These developments contributed to the emerging culinary ecosystem that aided France in forging an international identity, which, when expressed in such aphorisms as "France alone…is still capable of training chefs, whereas other countries train cooks," could cross into chauvinism. Despite being a public

space, restaurants became places for intimate exchanges, where friends socialized, and the bourgeoisie and upper classes put on ostentatious displays of their wealth.

James Tissot
(French, 1836–1902)

The Artists' Wives
1885

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr., and The Grandy Fund, Landmark Communications Fund, and "An Affair to Remember" 1982
81.153

With this painting, James Tissot captured the ritual gathering of artists and their wives to break bread the day before the opening of the annual Paris Salon. Set on the terrace of Ledoyen, a restaurant that remains a Parisian institution, Tissot's bustling scene includes portraits of well-known artists such as the sculptor Auguste Rodin, whose bearded, bespectacled face appears near the center. The focus is on conviviality and merriment at a state-sponsored banquet on the eve of the year's most important exhibition.

Jean Béraud
(French, 1849–1935)

Dinner at the Ambassadeurs
1880

oil on canvas
Musée Carnavalet, Histoire de Paris
Bequest of Armand Dorville, 1944
P1736

Jean Béraud's painting shows a couple eating dinner at the Ambassadeurs, one of the chic café-concert halls that emerged as sites for food, flirtation, and entertainment. Despite the show on stage in the background, the two diners are our primary performers. Dressed in black, the man leans forward smoking, while his counterpart in white leans away as she sips her drink. The sexual tension these positions evoke, and the diners' apparent disregard for the entertainers on stage, leaves us wondering about their relationship.

Jean Béraud
(French, 1849–1935)

The Brasserie
1883

oil on canvas
Private collection

Jean Béraud was well known for his lively depictions of Paris. His work shows an Impressionistic focus on both the conditions of light and the activities of modern life. In this loud and boisterous restaurant, warm lamps and velvety booths create a comfortable atmosphere for the guests, whose poses suggest relaxation and contentment—lighting an after-dinner cigar, rolling back with laughter, and leaning across tables to gossip and flirt. Rather than a setting for performance, brasseries offered a space for communal dining and solidarity, and were patronized most often by working-class men.

Joseph-Claude Bail
(French, 1862–1921)

Card Players
1897

oil on canvas
Petit Palais, Musée des beaux-arts
de la ville de Paris
PPP6

Joseph-Claude Bail was a specialist at depicting apprentices and entry-level kitchen workers, and here he offers a view of young cooks at leisure. Dressed in their aprons, playing cards and smoking, the four workers assume a variety of poses that recall paintings of soldiers amusing themselves between duties. The comparison is telling, as French kitchens adopted a military-inspired brigade system through the innovations of chefs such as Auguste Escoffier (1846–1935). Bail renders this perspective on male communion between labors with a charming and incisive effect.

Privation

The historical context of *Farm to Table* begins with the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71). France's defeat by the German armies was an embarrassing military failure with seismic sociopolitical implications that included widespread food shortages and the collapse of Napoleon III's Second Empire. To make matters worse, in the spring of 1871, the working-class Parisians who defended the city during the siege took up arms against the newly established Third Republic. This civil insurgency, known as the Paris Commune, led to further bloodshed, and it took two months for the French Army to suppress the movement and its tens of thousands of supporters.

Consequently, citizens of all socio-economic positions faced the prospect of rebuilding a nation that was severely depleted of resources, and a sense of incendiary unease lingered over the urban working class for the next two decades. Ultimately, the French people persevered through this post-war privation. The artworks in this section suggest tensions surrounding subsistence at the individual and collective level.

William-Adolphe Bouguereau
(French, 1825–1905)

Girl Eating Porridge
1874

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Bequeathed by Reuben R. Springer
1884.335

Idealized depictions of French peasants and country folk were among William-Adolphe Bouguereau's most popular works. His paintings of children, such as this girl eating porridge from a common earthenware bowl, convey a sense of purity and contentment. The simplicity of the setting, from the lack of a table to the cabbage and onion peels on the ground, suggests that she may be a domestic worker.

Bouguereau was one of the most admired artists of the late nineteenth century. Critics, artists, and the public flocked each year to the Paris Salon to see his latest creations; collectors in Europe and America vied to acquire his paintings, often paying

astronomical prices. He was a superb draftsman and staunch defender of traditional painting techniques and subject matter in the face of the Impressionists' radically "modern" approach to painting.

Alphonse Legros
(French, 1837–1911)

The Meal of the Poor
1877

oil on canvas
Tate Modern
Presented by Rosalind,
Countess of Carlisle, 1912
N02898

In a darkly lit room, three men spoon soup from unadorned bowls and drink wine from plain tumblers. A clean white tablecloth adds an aspect of civility to the otherwise humble setting. The server provides the only human interaction in the scene; lost in their own worlds, the diners' shared poverty brings them together regardless of any socio-economic position they once held.

Alphonse Legros, though French-born, moved to London in 1863 and later became a naturalized British citizen. Best known today as a printmaker and medalist, Legros was a major figure in the British etching revival.

Léon-Jean-Bazile Perrault
(French, 1832–1908)

The Orphans
1888

oil on canvas
Chrysler Museum of Art
Gift of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr
71.2062

Léon-Jean-Bazile Perrault was born in Paris and studied at the École des Beaux-Arts, where he learned to follow the French Academic trad-ition of portraying idealized figures engaged in moral narratives.

This secular composition nonetheless recalls the common Christian devotional image of the Madonna and Child. With the painting, Perrault meant to elicit sympathy for the young woman and the child she is holding—perhaps her sibling or another orphan in her care. The older of the two looks directly at us, the gleam in her eyes revealing her vitality despite the pair's apparent poverty. The infant, head thrown back as if asleep or feverish, is

dressed in clean white, set off by the blue skirt and red apple that complete the set of French national colors. The color scheme may pose a critique of a nation that allows such poverty to exist.

Paul-Louis Delance
(French, 1848–1924)

Sketch for the office of the prefect of the Hôtel de Ville: The Famine

1889

oil on canvas
Petit Palais, Musée des beaux-arts
de la ville de Paris
PPP3952

Paul Delance's *Sketch for the office of the prefect of the Hôtel de Ville: The Famine* captures the desperation Parisians felt during the Franco-Prussian War (1870–71) when the invading army encircled the city and cut off supply lines. Cold pervades the painting as smokeless chimneys rise in the sky and heavily bundled Parisians mass together in a ration line outside a bakery. Mothers hug their children while a national guardsman, rifle over his shoulder, stands ready to enforce order.

The reserved rectangle at the lower left of the canvas, which would accommodate the top of a doorway in the painting's final version, serves as a

reminder that this was a sketch for a mural in Paris's city hall, the Hôtel de Ville. Painted nearly 20 years after the siege, *Sketch for the office of the prefect of the Hôtel de Ville: The Famine* is a testament to the war's lasting impact on the French psyche.

Narcisse Chaillou
(French, 1835–1916)

A Rat Seller during the Siege of Paris
1888

oil on canvas
Sheffield Museums
VS 1395

Dressed in the blue, white, and red of France's flag, Narcisse Chaillou's young butcher embodies French culinary nationalism amid the food shortages of the Prussian siege. Rats became a wartime commodity for citizens who could not afford pricier meats. Despite the desperation of the moment, Chaillou's butcher stands proud, smiling as he rolls up his sleeve to preside over a makeshift counter. He appears to relish preparing the rodent in the style of a side of beef for his future customers. A small French flag waves from the back of the chair—an icon of hope and fortitude for the nation. Exhibited at the Salon of 1872, the painting was a public favorite.

Paul Cezanne
(French, 1839–1906)

Still Life with Bread and Eggs
1865

oil on canvas
Cincinnati Art Museum
Gift of Mary E. Johnston
1955.73

Still Life with Bread and Eggs is one of a dozen dark and thickly textured paintings that Paul Cezanne made in the 1860s. Creating simplified forms with rough application of paint, the artist took aim at the traditional styles sanctioned by the Parisian art establishment. Cezanne's hostility towards the norms of painterly finish likely resulted in the rejection of this painting from the 1865 Salon.

Although Cezanne's father was a successful banker, he did not initially support his son's artistic career. In the mid-1860s, Cezanne lived frugally as he moved back and forth to Paris from his family home in Aix-en-Provence, trying to establish himself as a painter in the capital. Perhaps because of financial

constraints, he reused a canvas by painting *Still Life with Bread and Eggs* over an unidentified portrait. The artist sets a modest table of bread, onions, and eggs. An empty glass adds to the sense of scarcity.