

## Manet: Portraying Life Object Labels at Toledo Museum of Art pt.2

### Models

#### **The Amazon (Summer)**

About 1882

Oil on canvas

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid

Catalogue 43

The sitter for this portrait was the daughter of Mme Saguez, a bookseller whose shop on the Rue de Moscou was close to Manet's studio on the Rue d'Amsterdam. Wearing a riding uniform that was borrowed from Manet's painter friend, Emmanuel Gaillard-Lépinay, the young woman (her given name is not known) appears as a poised, fashionable, and professional horsewoman—popularly termed an “Amazon.” As such, she is the representation of a modern “type” observed in Paris parks that had gained popularity in the press, portrait photography, and fine art.

Though not known for certain, it is thought likely that *The Amazon (Summer)* was painted as part of a commission Manet received from his lifelong friend Antonin Proust (see his portrait in the previous gallery), a series of four pictures allegorizing the seasons to which *Autumn (Portrait of Méry Laurent)*, exhibited nearby, also belonged.

#### **Autumn (Portrait of Méry Laurent)**

1881

Oil on canvas

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nancy

Catalogue 55

A rare commission within Manet's work, *Autumn (Portrait of Méry Laurent)* was painted for the artist's longtime friend Antonin Proust (see his portrait in the previous gallery) as part of a planned but not completed series of four pictures allegorizing the seasons. *Spring*, today in a private collection, was also painted in 1881 (Manet's print after his painting is displayed in the gallery of pastels). *The Amazon*, exhibited nearby, may have been intended as “Summer.”

For his model Manet drew on his close acquaintance, Méry Laurent (1849–1900). A minor actress, witty conversationalist, and brilliant courtesan, Laurent (born Anne Rose Suzanne Louviot) ran in literary, musical, and artistic circles that included Manet, whom she met in 1876 at an exhibition of his work held at his studio. As the painter's health deteriorated in the last years of his life, Laurent became a close friend, and the two were frequent correspondents. Laurent poses in *Autumn* wearing an outfit purchased for the occasion from famous British-born Parisian designer Worth. Serving as the backdrop is a Japanese robe, an unusual design choice inspired by Manet's fascination with Japanese woodcut prints and designs.

*Left to right:*

**Isabelle Lemonnier with a White Collar**

About 1879–82

Oil on canvas

Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen

Catalogue 62

**Isabelle Lemonnier with a Muff**

About 1879

Oil on canvas

Dallas Museum of Art. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Algur H. Meadows and the Meadows Foundation Incorporated

Catalogue 61

Along with Méry Laurent who posed for *Autumn* (on view nearby), Isabelle Lemonnier (1857–1926) was a favorite model in the last years of Manet's career, posing for six oil portraits and several watercolor sketches. Charming, sophisticated, and well-connected, she was the daughter of the imperial court jeweler to Napoléon III and the sister-in-law of publisher Georges Charpentier, an early and important supporter of Manet and the Impressionists. Lemonnier became a close friend of Manet, who conducted an extensive correspondence with her.

Lemonnier appears in both of these paintings posed similarly in three-quarter length and looking as if she has just arrived (or is ready to go out). In one she wears a fur-lined coat with a muff, while in the other she is dressed in a fashionable double-breasted jacket with a dashing white bow visible at her neck. Though it is known Manet had requested of Lemonnier photographs of herself that he could consult when painting portraits of her, these two examples both manifest the verve of having been painted in the studio from life.

**Victorine Meurent**

About 1862

Oil on canvas

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gift of Richard C. Paine in memory of his father, Robert Treat Paine 2<sup>nd</sup>

Catalogue 50

In 1862 Victorine Louise Meurent (1844–1927) met Manet and quickly became one of his favorite models, posing for seven major works between 1862 and 1873. Her creamy-white skin and “Titian” red hair provided Manet with great visual intrigue for many of his most famous paintings. This straight portrait signals Meurent's debut in Manet's body of work, featuring her

direct, yet blank gaze that would later find resonance in his scandalous paintings of 1863, *Olympia* and *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (*Luncheon on the Grass*).

Although Meurent was known for her lively manner and witty conversation, here her face appears indifferent, forcing the viewer to look at the formal qualities of the portrait, such as the dramatic frontal lighting. In this way, her portrait conveys little narrative, a chief characteristic of modern art that Manet is partially credited with creating.

The Toledo Museum of Art's exhibition on view in Gallery 1, *Museum People: Faces of TMA*, with its 684 photographs of faces, offers a striking comparison to Manet's portrait created exactly 150 years previously.

### **Street Singer**

About 1862

Oil on canvas

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Bequest of Sarah Choate Sears in memory of her husband, Joshua Montgomery Sears

Catalogue 51

Manet's model Victorine Meurent (1844–1927) is seen here in the role of a Parisian “type,” the street singer. Manet's close friend and biographer Antonin Proust (see his portrait in the previous gallery), records that Meurent is depicted exiting a coarse bar located near Manet's studio on Rue Guyot.

Although seemingly straightforward to today's viewer, *Street Singer* presents what many contemporary critics called a “distortion of reality.” Meurent is painted wearing finery that a marginal member of society such as a street singer never could have afforded. However, Manet's frequent champion Émile Zola came to his defense, celebrating the composition for being the product of “nature which seems to me to have been analyzed with extreme simplicity and exactitude...[one] senses in it an acute search for the truth, the conscientious work of a man who wants, above all, to state frankly what he sees.”

## **The Railway**

1873

Oil on canvas

National Gallery of Art, Washington. Gift of Horace Havemeyer in memory of his mother, Louisine W. Havemeyer, 1956.10.1

Catalogue 53

Although accepted to the Salon of 1874, *The Railway* was received with the usual derision and confusion that accompanied many of Manet's paintings. One critic, getting to the heart of the ambiguities in Manet's figure paintings, remarked: "Is Manet's *Railway* a double portrait or a subject picture? ...We lack information to solve this problem." Manet's model Victorine Meurent (1844–1927) posed as the young woman adorned in a fashionable dress of blue twill and a flowered hat. Her young, well-dressed companion may be the daughter of Manet's friend, Alphonse Hirsch.

Though likely painted indoors, the two figures are positioned as if in Hirsch's backyard along the Rue de Rome, adjacent to the Saint-Lazare train station and to Manet's studio on Rue de Saint Pétersbourg (the door and windows of which are at the upper left). They are separated by imposing black bars from the rail tracks on which a locomotive, hidden in a plume of steam, has just arrived at the station. Meurent stares in the direction of the viewer, seemingly uninterested in the action behind her. The girl, however, is anxious to catch a glimpse of the train and the bustle of the modern, changing world.

Unknown Photographer

## **Portrait of Méry Laurent**

Date unknown

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

## **Manet Object Labels: Pastels**

### **Portrait of Alphonse Maureau**

About 1880

Pastel with gouache on canvas prepared with a gouache ground  
Art Institute of Chicago. Gift of Edward L. Brewster, 1950.123

Catalogue 22

An animal and landscape painter who exhibited with the Impressionists, Alphonse Maureau (about 1830–about 1883) is seen pictured, glass in hand, at Café Nouvelle Athènes, a locale frequented by Manet and the Impressionists in the early 1870s. Appearing as a café *habitué*, Maureau functions as one of Manet’s Parisian “types”—character staples of modern Paris, such as the top-hatted urbane gentleman or the fashionable courtesan.

From the 1850s, cafés experienced significant change and expansion as part of the modernization of Paris, becoming a neutral space for social, intellectual, and amorous encounters. Presented in this context, Maureau inhabits the transitional zone between straight portraiture and a scene of contemporary life.

### **Mme Guillemet**

1880

Pastel on canvas, mounted on Masonite  
Saint Louis Art Museum. Funds given by John Merrill Olin

Catalogue 40

In this portrait of Madame Guillemet, born Jeanne Julie Charlotte Besnier de la Pontonerie in 1850, she appears as a fashionable member of the Parisian bourgeoisie. She married Jules Guillemet in 1871, and may have operated a fashionable clothes boutique with him until their divorce 17 years later. During their marriage, the Guillemets became acquainted with Manet. Pictured almost in profile, Guillemet’s sparkling eyes and provocative expression are defined subtly through Manet’s economical strokes of pigment, while rapid wisps of chalk define her hair, eyes, and cheeks.

In the same year as he made this portrait, Manet wrote to Mme Guillemet while he was convalescing in Bellevue outside Paris for a leg damaged by syphilis (the leg would eventually be amputated). The letter included playful, flirtatious sketches of Guillemet’s stockinged legs and fashionable shoes emerging from her skirts—sketches that Manet referred to in the letter as “sweet nonsense which enables me to spend my time very pleasantly.”

### **Portrait of Eva Gonzalès**

About 1879

Pastel on paper  
Private collection

## Catalogue 14

As Manet's only pupil, Eva Gonzalès (1843–1883) occupies a unique place within Manet's biography. The two were introduced through mutual friend and artist Alfred Stevens, and Gonzalès began studying with Manet. She benefitted greatly from his tutelage, becoming a talented figure painter associated with the Impressionists.

This charming head-and-shoulders portrait, however, does not clue the viewer in to her profession. Rather, it functions more as a fashion plate, her looks lending themselves well to Manet's penchant for depicting attractive women in pastel at the end of his career. Pictured with a slight smile, Gonzalès exudes a cool confidence that Manet has captured through his delicate blending of pastels.

### **Girl in a Summer Bonnet (Jeanne Demarsy)**

About 1879

Pastel on canvas

Collection of Diane B. Wilsey

## Catalogue 57

Jeanne Demarsy, born Anne Darlaud (1865–1937), had already posed as a model for both Manet and Auguste Renoir before making her name as a successful and popular actress on the Paris stage during the 1880s and 1890s. Demarsy's beauty ensured her a place in the series of pastel portraits of attractive young women that Manet created toward the end of his life. Manet's enthusiasm for haute couture is manifested through Demarsy's extravagant hat, which may have been supplied through celebrated milliner Madame Virot, whose hat design can be seen in the etching *Jeanne (Spring)* nearby.

### **Jeanne (Spring)**

1882; printed 1890

Etching with aquatint

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Professional model Jeanne Demarsy (1865–1937) posed in 1881 for the painting *Spring*, one of four allegories of the Seasons commissioned by Antonin Proust in that year (see the paintings *Autumn* and *The Amazon* in the Models section). Manet made this etching after the painting, which was exhibited at the Salon in 1881 where it enjoyed great critical acclaim.

### **Mme Édouard Manet**

1873

Pastel on paper, mounted on canvas

Toledo Museum of Art. Gift of Mrs. C. Lockhart McKelvy, 1952.17

Seen in Manet's work in pastel, oil, and ink, his wife Suzanne Leenhoff (1829–1906) was a source of inspiration throughout the artist's career. Like many of the portraits that were created of Suzanne, this profile image in pastel was meant purely for private consumption, functioning as

both a site of experimentation for Manet and also as a site of intimate exchange between himself and his wife.

Unknown Photographer

**Portrait of Jeanne Demarsy**

Date unknown

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Unknown Photographer

**Portrait of Jeanne Demarsy**

Date unknown

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

## **The Status Portrait**

### **Portrait of Mme Brunet**

1862–63

Oil on canvas

J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles

Catalogue 36

Recent research on this painting, acquired by the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2011, suggests an identification of the sitter as Caroline de Pène (born 1837), who in October 1861 married the sculptor Eugène-Cyrille Brunet, a former traveling companion of Manet's. The prominent wedding band on her ungloved hand may well allude to this recent occasion. The critic Théodore Duret (see his portrait in the previous section) recorded Manet's account of the painting's initial reception by the sitter: "It seems she was not pretty. Following his own inclinations, [Manet] must have accentuated her distinctive facial features. In any event, when she saw herself on the canvas, and the way she looked there, she began to cry—it is Manet himself who told me about this—and left the studio with her husband, wanting never to see the picture again."

Created early in Manet's career, *Mme Brunet* owes its aesthetic to 17<sup>th</sup>-century Spanish painting, particularly that of Diego Velázquez, who Manet greatly admired. Originally full-length, the composition had already been cut to its present three-quarter-length format by 1867. It is thought that at the time of this alteration the flat landscape background was added.

### **The Promenade (Mme Gamby)**

About 1880

Oil on canvas

Tokyo Fuji Art Museum

Catalogue 37

Manet painted *The Promenade (Mme Gamby)* almost two decades after his *Portrait of Mme Brunet* exhibited nearby, and the contrast between these two portraits eloquently illustrates the stylistic journey the artist had traveled. In the early work, heavy, closely laid brushwork and a dark palette dominate, while looser, freer brushwork and a lighter palette characterize this later endeavor.

Mme Gamby possibly can be identified as Marie Joséphine Bullot (born 1849) who was acquainted with both Degas and Manet. She divorced Hippolyte Gamby in 1886 and subsequently married Tiburce Morisot, the brother of Manet's friend and sister-in-law Berthe Morisot. Despite the lush outdoor setting, it is known that *The Promenade* was executed in Manet's studio in the Rue d'Amsterdam, rather than *en plein air* (in the open air).



### **Portrait of Lise Campinéanu**

1878

Oil on canvas

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, Missouri (Purchase: William Rockhill Nelson Trust, 36-5)

Catalogue 48

While visiting Paris from his home in Bucharest, Jean Campinéanu took the advice of his uncle, Manet's physician Dr. Georges de Bellio, and commissioned Manet to paint this portrait of his young daughter, Lise (1872–1949). Unlike the overly sentimental images of children that were popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Manet's portrait depicts the bright-eyed six-year-old Lise with sophistication and poise, while maintaining the child-like affectation her age dictates. Lise's casual pose, likely inspired by contemporary portrait photography, reveals a fashionable set of gloves and a gold bracelet on her right wrist. She wears what appears to be an oversized powder blue party dress that innocently slips off her left shoulder. In this way Manet signals to the viewer that despite her social status, she is still very much a child.

### **Portrait of M. Brun**

1879

Oil on canvas

National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo. Donated by the heirs of Mr. Kojiro Matsukata

Catalogue 38

Little biographical information is known about Armand Brun other than that he resided in Bellevue, outside Paris, and that he was a neighbor and friend of the opera singer Emilie Ambre, whose portrait by Manet is displayed in the previous gallery. Manet stayed in Bellevue in September and October 1879. It is then that he may have made this portrait—though it is not known if it was commissioned by the sitter or executed at the artist's own initiative.

Despite our lack of data about Brun, Manet gives us a great deal of information about what kind of man he was. Shown in the impressive format of full-length and life-size, Brun is very much an individual of means, elegantly clad in town attire with a top hat upon his head. His pose is a deliberate and stylish one: legs apart, hands in his pockets, and elbows pointed. Set against a backdrop of greenery, presumably that of his formal garden, Brun projects the aura of the quintessential modern man.

## **Portrait of Georges Clemenceau**

1879–80

Oil on canvas

Kimbell Art Museum, Fort Worth, Texas

Catalogue 44

Before Georges Clemenceau (1841–1929) became the two-time prime minister of France—from 1906 to 1909 and from 1917 to 1920—and the architect of its victory in World War I (1914–18), he was a journalist who founded the radical Republican journal *La Justice*. Manet’s motivation for creating this portrait may have stemmed from his desire to record the launch of *La Justice*, whose political stance mirrored his own.

The famed politician appears with his arms crossed in a strikingly similar manner to that seen in a photograph taken only a few years previously (see the display case in this gallery). Clemenceau is presented as a public figure at the Tribune of the Chambre des Députés (Chamber of Deputies) of which he had been a member since 1876. His speech, which Manet suggests he has just delivered or is just about to, rests on the parapet.

## **Portrait of Henri Rochefort**

1881

Oil on canvas

Hamburger Kunsthalle

Catalogue 47

Henri Rochefort (1830–1913) was a radically outspoken critic of the Second Empire, the regime of Louis-Napoléon (Napoléon III), nephew of Napoléon Bonaparte. The Second Empire lasted from 1852 to 1870, when defeat in the Franco-Prussian War forced Napoléon III into exile. Rochefort’s siding in 1871 with the short-lived uprising known as the Paris Commune resulted in his internment in a penal colony on New Caledonia in the South Pacific. Through the Amnesty of 21 July 1880, he was allowed to return to France where he published the socialist paper *L’Intransigeant* and became an outspoken nationalist.

Rochefort sat begrudgingly for this portrait at Manet’s behest, his gaze making no attempt to connect with the viewer. Manet depicts Rochefort with loose brushstrokes, his arms crossed—a sign for a “man of action”—and with no attributes that infer his professional status. The painting was displayed in the Salon of 1881 where one critic penned an opinion diametrically opposite the prevailing current assessment: “His *Portrait of Rochefort*...does not hold together. You could think that these flesh tones were made of green cheese, all speckled and spotted, and that the hair is grey smoke. There is no contrast, no life.”

### **Portrait of M. Antonin Proust**

1880

Oil on canvas

Toledo Museum of Art. Gift of Edward Drummond Libbey, 1925.108

Catalogue 45

Exuding a smartness of both intellect and style—his nickname was “Monsieur Eau de Cologne”—and possessing a casual air that nonetheless derives from a formal, even regal pose, Antonin Proust (1832–1905) gazes toward us with powerful self-assurance in Manet’s great portrait of 1880. A childhood friend of Manet born in exactly the same year, Proust and his compatriot studied to become artists alongside one another at the Collège Rollin and then at Thomas Couture’s studio.

However, Proust (no relation to the writer Marcel Proust) was destined to a career as a journalist and politician who assumed an anti-Imperialist stance shared by Manet. He was elected in 1876 to Parliament and briefly served as Minister of Fine Arts from November 1881 to January 1882, during which time Proust had Manet made a Knight of the French Legion of Honor. He would write a biography of Manet that remains of vital importance, and with Théodore Duret (see his portrait in the previous gallery), organized in 1884 the memorial exhibition devoted to Manet’s art following the artist’s death the year before.

### **Chez Le Père Lathuille—En Plein Air**

1879

Oil on canvas

Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tournai

Catalogue 60

Painted in the summer of 1879, the setting of this striking and utterly engaging composition is the terrace of the restaurant “Chez le Père Lathuille” located at 7 Avenue de Clichy, not far from both Manet’s home and studio. The model at left is Louis Gauthier-Lathuille (born 1857), son of the proprietor of the establishment. The actress Ellen Andrée (1857–1925) was the initial model for his companion, but was replaced by Judith French when acting commitments intervened.

The modern subject of café and cabaret life had recently become a popular one for artists such as Manet, Degas, and Renoir, as well as for writers like Émile Zola. As the title conveys, Manet executed this painting *en plein air* (in the open air) on the grounds of the restaurant. Nevertheless, it is a carefully planned and highly constructed composition. As the waiter at right judiciously bides his time, an amorous encounter unfolds. The eyes of the two protagonists lock. The young man leans forward, his arm encircling his partner. The slightly older woman remains attentive yet upright. It is a gloriously painted narrative of seduction that Manet leaves intriguingly indeterminate.

## Manet's Letter to Antonin Proust

Manet's portrait of Antonin Proust was exhibited in the Salon of 1880. Not long after the opening, the artist wrote to Proust:

[May 1880]

*To Antonin Proust*

*Your portrait has been at the Salon for three weeks now, my dear Proust, unflatteringly displayed on a slanting panel near a door and getting a still more unflattering reception. But it's my lot to be abused and I take it philosophically. No one realizes, though . . . how difficult it is to place a figure on canvas and concentrate all the attention on this single figure without losing its lively, full-blooded character. Compared with that, it's child's play to bring off two figures whose attraction lies in their contrasting personalities. Oh yes, the portrait in a hat, in which everything is blue, so they said! Well, I'm ready for them. I myself won't be there to see it. But when I'm gone they'll recognize the rightness of my vision and my ideas. Your portrait is an absolutely honest work. I can remember as if it were yesterday the quick way I sketched in the glove belonging to the bare hand. At that very moment you said, "Please, not another brushstroke," and I felt we were in such perfect agreement that I couldn't resist the impulse to embrace you. Well! I hope no one takes it into his head later on to stick the portrait in a public collection! I've always been horrified by the mania for piling up works of art without leaving any space between the frames, as if they were the latest fancy goods on the shelves of a fashionable shop. But time will tell. It's in the lap of the gods.*

*Ed. Manet*

## Manet and the Salon of 1880

*Antonin Proust* and *Chez Le Père Lathuille—En Plein Air* were both accepted for exhibition at the Salon of 1880. They were shown together again in 1884 at Manet's memorial exhibition. *Manet: Portraying Life* is only the second time they have been displayed together since that time. Their imagery encapsulates the theme of this exhibition: Manet's straight portraiture and his genre scenes depicting known individuals in representations of modern life.

The reception of the two paintings in 1880 was mixed, even within the writings of individual critics. Paul Mantz approved of *Antonin Proust*, but dismissed *Chez Le Père Lathuille*:

*Taking shelter behind his portrait of M. Proust, M. Manet suddenly unleashed his devices on us and offered us a plein-air scene of the most worrisome variety...for reasons not explained, the young man has blue hair. The young woman has no idea how inelegant she is...let us forget this nightmare.*

J. K. Huysmans, on the other hand, claimed not to understand the gravity of Proust's portrait, but heaped adulation on the café scene:

*The young man and woman are superb. This canvas catches the eye because it is so clear and bright; it shines among all these official paintings which turn rancid as soon as one sees them. This is the modernism that I have spoken about! People eating lunch in real light, in the open air... life shown as it is, without exaggeration.*

Unknown Photographer

**Portrait of Georges Clemenceau**

Date unknown

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Studio Benque et Cie.

Wilhelm Benque,

French, 1843–1903

**Georges Clemenceau**

About 1876

Photograph

Collection Musée Clemenceau, Paris

François-Marie-Louis-Alexandre Gobinet de Villecholle Frank

French, 1816–1906

**Antonin Proust**

About 1877

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Unknown Photographer

**Portrait of Henri Rochefort**

Date unknown

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Unknown Photographer

**Portrait of Ellen Andrée (*Chez Le Père Lathuille*)**

Date unknown

Carte-de-visite (calling card)

Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris

Anders Leonard Zorn

Swedish, 1860–1920

**Antonin Proust**

1889

Etching

Toledo Museum of Art. Grace J. Hitchcock Collection, 1981.215

Auguste Rodin

French, 1840–1917

**Antonin Proust**

About 1880–85

Drypoint

Toledo Museum of Art. Grace J. Hitchcock Collection, 1981.211