

GAGOSIAN GALLERY

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PRESS RELEASE

GAGOSIAN GALLERY
522 WEST 21ST STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10011
GALLERY HOURS:

T. 212.741.1717
F. 212.741.0006
Mon – Sat: 10:00am– 6:00pm



CLAUDE MONET: *Late Work*

Saturday, May 1 – Saturday, June 26, 2010

Opening reception: Saturday, May 1st, from 6 to 8pm

Curated by Paul Hayes Tucker

The instantaneity of Monet, far from being passive, requires an unusual power of generalization, of abstraction... Monet declares: here is nature, not as you or I habitually see it, but as you are able to see it, not in this or that particular effect but in others like it. The vision I propose to you is superior; my painting will change your reality.

--Michel Butor, 1962

Gagosian Gallery is pleased to present "Claude Monet: Late Work." The most significant gathering of Monet's late paintings to take place in New York in more than thirty years, it will focus on the most important late subjects drawn from his gardens at Giverny—*Nymphéas*, *Le pont japonais*, and *L'allée de rosiers*—which are among the most treasured paintings of his long and prodigious career.

The exhibition begins with a selection of early *Nymphéas* that were first shown in 1909 at the Galerie Durand-Ruel to great critical acclaim. From these delicate, poetic paintings follow the more experimental post-1914 paintings, which were never exhibited during the artist's lifetime. Aggressively rendered with broad brushwork and unusual color combinations these late paintings stand in marked contrast to the more refined 1909 works, attesting to the modernity of Monet's expanded vision.

This exhibition will be the first time that these two quite different but intimately related groups of paintings will be boldly juxtaposed, offering an unprecedented opportunity to compare and contrast the more refined early works with the freer, more experimental canvases from the artist's later years.

The exhibition has been made possible with the generosity of the many public and private international collections willing to share key works to create this auspicious occasion. Among the participating museums from the United States, Europe, and Japan are the Art Institute of Chicago, the Honolulu Academy of Arts, the Fondation Beyeler, Basel, the Musée Marmottan-Monet, Paris, the Pola Museum in Hakone, and Kitaykushu Museum.

An extensive illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition. It includes an essay by Paul Hayes Tucker, one of the foremost authorities on Monet and curator of the exhibition; a detailed chronology of Monet's life and exhibitions while at Giverny written by leading Monet scholar Charles Stuckey and a compendium of historical reviews compiled by Claire Durand-Ruel Snollaerts.

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Oscar Claude Monet was born in Paris in 1840. As a teenager, he developed a reputation as a caricaturist, and studied with the landscape artist Eugène Boudin. Over the course of his prolific career, he produced more than 2,000 paintings. By end of the 1890s he was well established and hailed as France's leading landscape painter. In the remaining years of his life, he staged only four exhibitions, all in Paris — recent works and views of *Le pont japonais* in 1900, a selection of London paintings in 1904, the *Nymphéas* in 1909, and views of Venice in 1912—each to great critical acclaim. On November 12, 1918, the day after the Armistice, Monet offered to donate two paintings to France in honor of the victory. This offer became the basis for his eventual gift of twenty-two decorative panels depicting his water lily garden, which were installed permanently in the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris in 1927. Recent exhibitions of his work include "Monet in the 20th Century," Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (1998, traveled to the Royal Academy of Arts, London in 1999); "Monet, le cycle des Nymphéas," Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris (1999); "Claude Monet ... Up to Digital Impressionism," Fondation Beyeler (2002); "Monet's Garden" and "Monet's Water Lilies," Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010). Oscar Claude Monet died at Giverny in 1926 at the age of 86.

For press inquiries, please contact Virginia Coleman at virginia@gagosian.com or at 212.744.2313.