

VAN GOGH *to* PICASSO

THE BERGGRUEN COLLECTION *at* THE NATIONAL GALLERY



Van Gogh to Picasso

The Berggruen Collection at The National Gallery

江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章

Van Gogh to Picasso

The Berggruen Collection at The National Gallery

Catalogue by Richard Kendall

Essays by Lizzie Barker and Camilla Cazalet

The National Gallery, London

© National Gallery Publications Limited 1991

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior permission in writing from the publisher.

First published in Great Britain in 1991 by
National Gallery Publications Limited
5/6 Pall Mall East, London SW1Y 5BA

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Kendall, Richard

Van Gogh to Picasso: the Berggruen Collection at the National Gallery.

1. European visual arts, 1800 – – Catalogues, indexes

I. Title II. Barker, Lizzie III. Cazalet, Camilla IV. National Gallery, Great Britain
709.0346

ISBN 0-947645-83-7 (hardback)

ISBN 0-947645-82-9 (paperback)

Printed and bound in Italy by
Amilcare Pizzi, S.p.a., Milan

Designed by Peter Guy

Provenance and bibliography are based on the work of Jean M. Marquis, with additions by Richard Kendall. African art entries compiled by Jean Paul Barbier (J.P.B.), Henry John Drewal (H.J.D.), and Louis Perrois (L.P.).

Cover: Picasso, *Seated Nude drying her Foot*, 1921; Cat. no. 49.

Contents

| | |
|-----|---|
| 6 | List of Exhibits |
| 8 | Acknowledgements |
| 9 | Director's Foreword |
| 11 | Modern Old Masters: The Berggruen Collection at The National Gallery Lizzie Barker |
| 35 | Catalogue Richard Kendall |
| 35 | Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) |
| 41 | Georges Seurat (1859–1891) |
| 71 | Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) |
| 91 | Georges Braque (1882–1963) |
| 97 | Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) |
| 181 | Joan Miró (1893–1983) |
| 185 | African Art |
| 195 | Heinz Berggruen: A Personal View Camilla Cazalet |
| 201 | Bibliography |
| 209 | Illustration Acknowledgements |

List of Exhibits

Vincent van Gogh

- 1 *An Autumn Garden*, 1888
- 2 *Arles, View from the Wheat Fields*, 1888

Georges Seurat

- 3 *Crouching Boy*, c. 1882
- 4 *The Lady in Black*, c. 1882
- 5 *The Nanny*, c. 1882
- 6 *Woman Reading*, c. 1883
- 7 *The Rainbow*, c. 1883
- 8 *Man in a Bowler Hat*, 1883–4
- 9 *A Seated Man reading on a Terrace*, c. 1884
- 10 *Study for 'La Grande Jatte'*, 1884–5
- 11 *The Morning Walk*, 1884–5
- 12 *Family Group (Condolences)*, c. 1886
- 13 *The Bridge at Courbevoie*, 1886
- 14 *The Seine seen from La Grande Jatte*, 1888
- 15 *Les Poseuses (The Artist's Models)*, 1888
- 16 *The Channel of Gravelines, Grand Fort-Philippe*, 1890

Paul Cézanne

- 17 *Portrait of Madame Cézanne*, c. 1885
- 18 *Path in Chantilly*, 1888
- 19 *Mont Sainte-Victoire*, 1888–90
- 20 *Study for the 'Cardplayers'*, 1890–2
- 21 *Jug and Fruit*, 1893–4
- 22 *Girl with a Doll*, c. 1899
- 23 *Young Girl with a Doll*, 1902–4
- 24 *A Letter to his Son*, 1906
- 25 *Portrait of the Gardener Vallier*, c. 1906

Georges Braque

- 26 *Still Life with Pipe (Le Quotidien du Midi)*, 1913–14
- 27 *Still Life with Glass and Newspaper (Le Guéridon)*, 1913

Pablo Picasso

- 28 *At the Café-Concert*, 1902
- 29 *Head of a Young Man*, 1906
- 30 *Two Female Nudes*, 1906

- 31 *Sailor rolling a Cigarette*, 1907
- 32 *Female Nude (Study for 'Les Demoiselles d'Avignon')*, 1907
- 33 *Fruit-bowl with Pears and Apples*, 1908
- 34 *Head of a Woman*, 1909
- 35 *Portrait of Georges Braque*, 1909–10
- 36 *Still Life on a Piano*, 1911–12
- 37 *Still Life with Glass and Deck of Cards (Homage to Max Jacob)*, 1914
- 38 *Glass and Dice*, 1914
- 39 *Still Life with a Bunch of Grapes*, 1914
- 40 *The Absinthe Glass*, 1914
- 41 *Ma Jolie*, 1914
- 42 *Guitar and Newspaper*, 1916
- 43 *Playing Card, Glass and Bottle on a Guéridon*, 1916
- 44 *Man seated at a Table*, 1916
- 45 *Harlequin with Guitar*, 1918
- 46 *The Sisley Family*, 1919
- 47 *Still Life in front of a Window, Saint-Raphaël*, 1919
- 48 *Two Women on the Beach*, 1920
- 49 *Seated Nude drying her Foot*, 1921
- 50 *Two Bathers*, 1921
- 51 *Seated Nude*, 1922–3
- 52 *Bullfight*, 1923
- 53 *Still Life with Blue Guitar*, 1924
- 54 *Silenus in Dancing Company*, 1933
- 55 *The Sculptor and his Statue*, 1933
- 56 *Minotauromachy*, 1935
- 57 *Head of a Faun*, 1937
- 58 *The Circus Horse*, 1937
- 59 *Portrait of Nusch*, 1937
- 60 *Woman with a Hat*, 1938
- 61 *Reclining Female Nude*, 1938
- 62 *The Sailor*, 1938
- 63 *The Yellow Sweater*, 1939
- 64 *Woman Seated*, 1940
- 65 *Portrait of a Woman*, 1940
- 66 *Man Sleeping*, 1942
- 67 *The Crane*, 1952
- 68 *Reclining Nude*, 1969

Joan Miró

- 69 *Dialogue of Insects*, 1924–5

African Art

- 70 *Bas-relief*, Benin
- 71 *Large Kalao-Pogada Bird*
- 72 *Ancestor Cult Reliquary Figure*, Kota
- 73 *Ijo Spirit Figure*

Acknowledgements

Many people have helped in the preparation of this catalogue and the exhibition that it accompanies. Above all, the Gallery is grateful to Heinz Berggruen and to Olivier Berggruen for their untiring support and advice. We are also indebted to the author of the catalogue, Richard Kendall, for his enthusiasm, hard work and scholarship. Jean Marquis generously allowed us to use material that he prepared for an exhibition of the Berggruen Collection in Geneva in 1988, and also supplied updated references for several works.

Tim Clark of the Department of Japanese Antiquities at the British Museum, London, helped to catalogue Picasso's *Head of a Young Man* (Cat. no. 29).

Within the National Gallery the assistance of the following is gratefully acknowledged: Astrid Athen, Lizzie Barker, Karen Bath, Peter Brett and the Working Party, Jill Dunkerton, John England, Herb Gillman, Patricia Goddard, Eric Harding, Sara Hattrick, Mary Hersov, Jo Kent, Caroline Macready, Margaret Stewart, Joe Swift, June Wallis, Michael Wilson, Louise Woodroff and Martin Wyld. Felicity Luard, Sue Curnow and Emma Shackleton worked with patience and skill to prepare this catalogue for publication.

John Leighton
Curator of Nineteenth-Century Painting

Foreword

This catalogue marks not just an exhibition, but one of the most generous loans made to the National Gallery in its entire history. For the next few months the Berggruen Collection will be shown on its own in Rooms 44, 45 and 46; for the following five years the paintings, and a rotating selection of the works on paper, will hang alongside paintings belonging to the National Gallery. The Berggruen study for Seurat's *Bathers at Asnières* will be near the painting itself; and two versions of Cézanne's *Avenue at Chantilly* will hang side by side. Joined together, the two collections will offer one of the most distinguished showings of Cézanne and Seurat anywhere in the world. The British public will thus be able to study first the achievement of a collector of rare discernment, and later to see those same works, hung with our own paintings, to form the closing chapter of that part of the story of Western painting which is told at Trafalgar Square.

And a little bit more – the great run of works by Picasso carries the Berggruen Collection past the middle of this century, and well beyond the point at which the Tate Gallery takes up the tale. Nonetheless, visitors will, I believe, see at once why Heinz Berggruen wanted the Picassos to remain together, spanning as they do the whole career of this century's greatest artist. And the temporary trespass on the territory of Millbank will for these five years allow Picasso to be viewed not as a pioneer modern, but as the last – and among the greatest – of the Old Masters.

The Berggruen Collection would have been welcomed by any city; but it can truly be said that it is doubly welcome in London. British collections, extravagantly rich in Old Master paintings, are – unlike their equivalents in France and the United States – poor in the works of the Post-Impressionists, and effectively unable to show the heroic Cubist endeavours of Braque and Picasso. By his generous loan, Heinz Berggruen has made this failing good, and the British public will now be able to get to know these pictures at a level quite impossible through a temporary exhibition or a brief visit to Paris.

Throughout the preparation of this exhibition, and the inevitable mass of arrangements and details, the Berggruen family have been unfailingly generous of time and help. I must particularly express my gratitude to Olivier Berggruen, who has devoted much energy to bringing this venture to so happy a conclusion.

To Heinz Berggruen our debt is of an unusual order. He has put all his knowledge and enthusiasm at our disposal in the compiling of this catalogue. He has contributed to every discussion about the transport and presentation of the Collection. Above all, he is sharing his pictures for five years with the British public. On behalf of the National Gallery, and of that wider public, I should like to express to him our affectionate thanks.

Neil MacGregor
Director

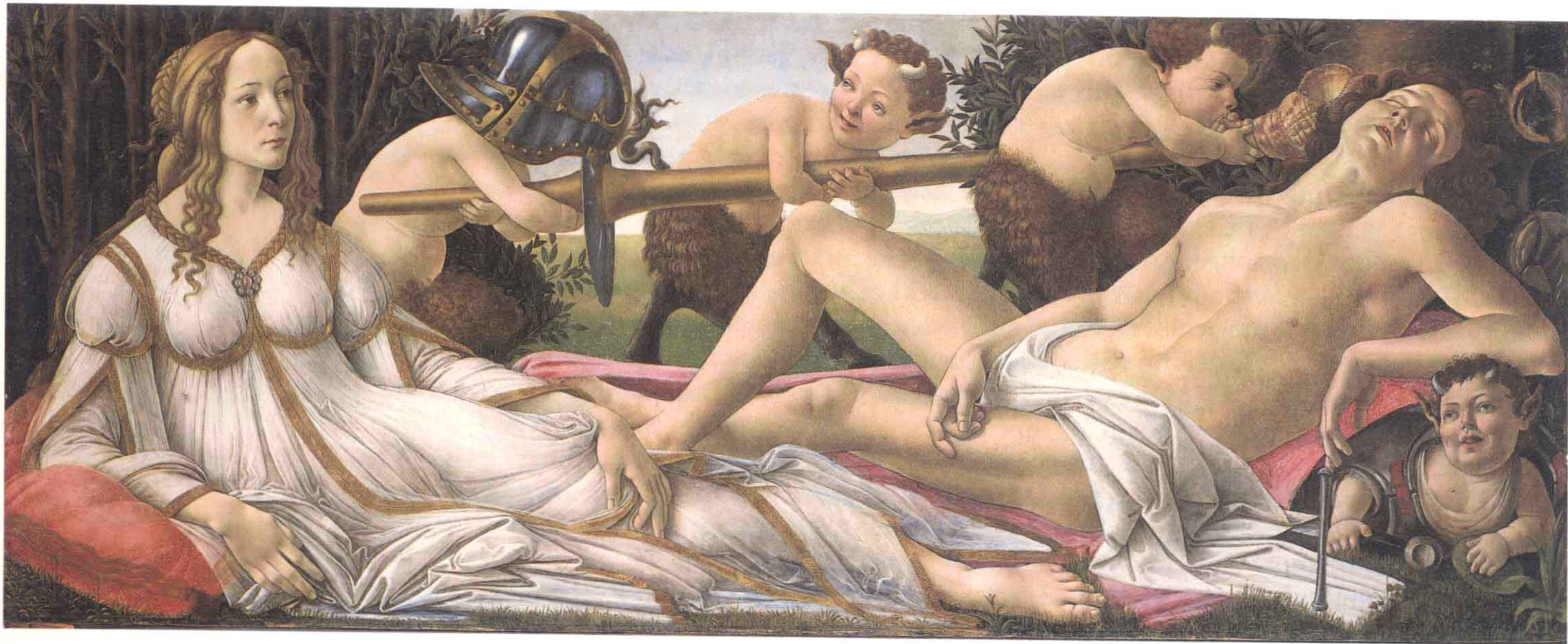
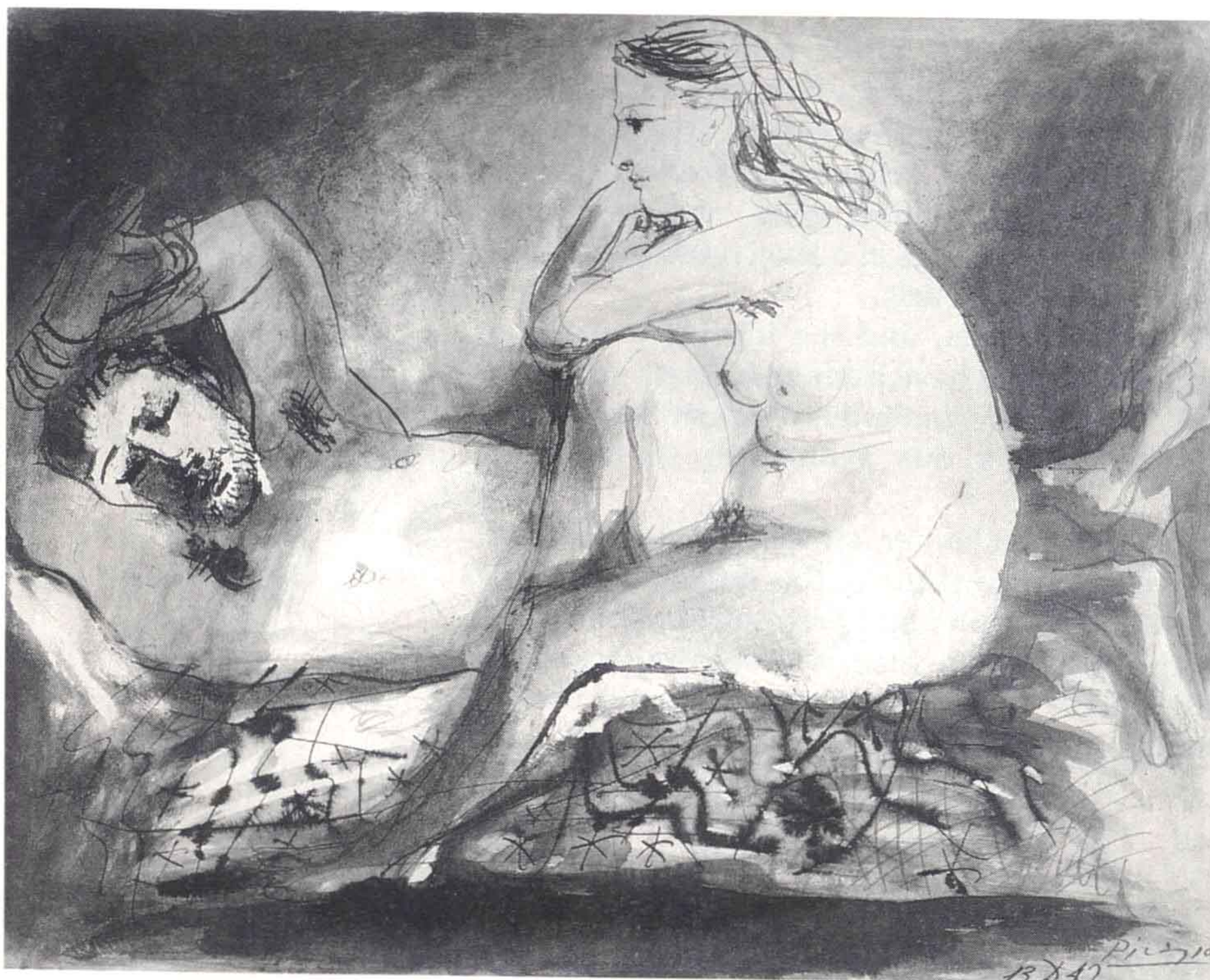


Plate 1 Above Botticelli (about 1445–1510), *Venus and Mars*.
Wood, painted area 69.2 × 173.4 cm.
The National Gallery, London.
Cat. no. 66 Left Picasso, *Man Sleeping*, 1942.



Modern Old Masters

The Berggruen Collection at The National Gallery

Lizzie Barker

Throughout his mercurial career, Picasso remained determined to keep art open-ended, 'alive' and 'dangerous'. He believed that to finish a work was to kill it and made a practice of re-enacting his own and other artists' works. He once referred jokingly to himself as a collector who created his collection by repainting other peoples' pictures that he admired.

Picasso was critical of tasteful but unimaginative museum and gallery displays, which he felt destroyed the essential life force of art: 'If you want to kill a picture all you have to do is hang it beautifully on a nail and soon you will see nothing of it but the frame. When it's out of place you see it better.'¹ Yet he would surely have relished seeing the Berggruen Collection lodged in the National Gallery, not only for the opportunity of testing so many of his own works against famous Old Master paintings but also for the chance to see how both modern and Old Master collections appear to take on new life and change in response to each other. Picasso told the writer Christian Zervos in 1935: 'A picture lives a life like a living creature, undergoing changes imposed on us by our life from day to day. This is natural enough, as the picture lives only through the man who is looking at it.'²

When Picasso saw a number of his works hung beside paintings in a temporary exhibition at the Louvre in 1946 he was at first very anxious to see if his art could hold its own against famous Old Masters, but he soon overcame his nervousness and exclaimed to George Salles, Director of the Louvre: 'You see it's the same thing, it's the same thing!'³ It is easy to understand Picasso's enthusiasm about 'the same thing' when considering his drawing *Man Sleeping*, 1942 (Cat. no. 66), which makes an excellent companion to Botticelli's *Venus and Mars* (Plate 1). They share the subject of a watched sleeper, which has been a recurring theme in mythological painting, although more commonly in the form of males watching over sleeping female nudes. Both artists create a mood of poetic reverie, contrasting the serene, reflecting but also questing expression of the vigilant female with the oblivion of the sleeping male.

This new liaison makes familiar aspects of Picasso and Botticelli's work seem fresh and provocative. One can appreciate how both artists successfully used anatomical distortion to heighten the descriptive, expressive and formal potency of their figures without destroying a sense of their idealised classical beauty. The comparison also augments the spectator's appreciation of these works' unique qualities and individual power. Picasso, for example, is less reticent about the relationship between the male and female characters. He places them close together on a bed and attends to such details as tufts of body hair and the woman's fleshy belly, which help to suggest the physicality and sensuality of their relationship. By contrast with Botticelli's polished and rather limp young man, Picasso's rugged male is in active slumber. Although his feet are splayed, the muscles in his upper body are taut with his arms locked firmly behind his head. The spectator is witnessing only a momentary pause in this couple's lovemaking.

Modern works in the Berggruen Collection seem to engage, fraternise and cultivate links with National Gallery paintings in several different ways. Direct kinship exists, for example, where a number of the works are studies for or

1 R. Penrose, *Picasso: His Life and Work*, London 1958, p. 71.

2 Conversation with Christian Zervos, at Boisgeloup in 1935, in Dore Ashton, *Picasso on Art: A Selection of Views*, London 1972, p. 8.

3 Penrose, op. cit., p. 395.

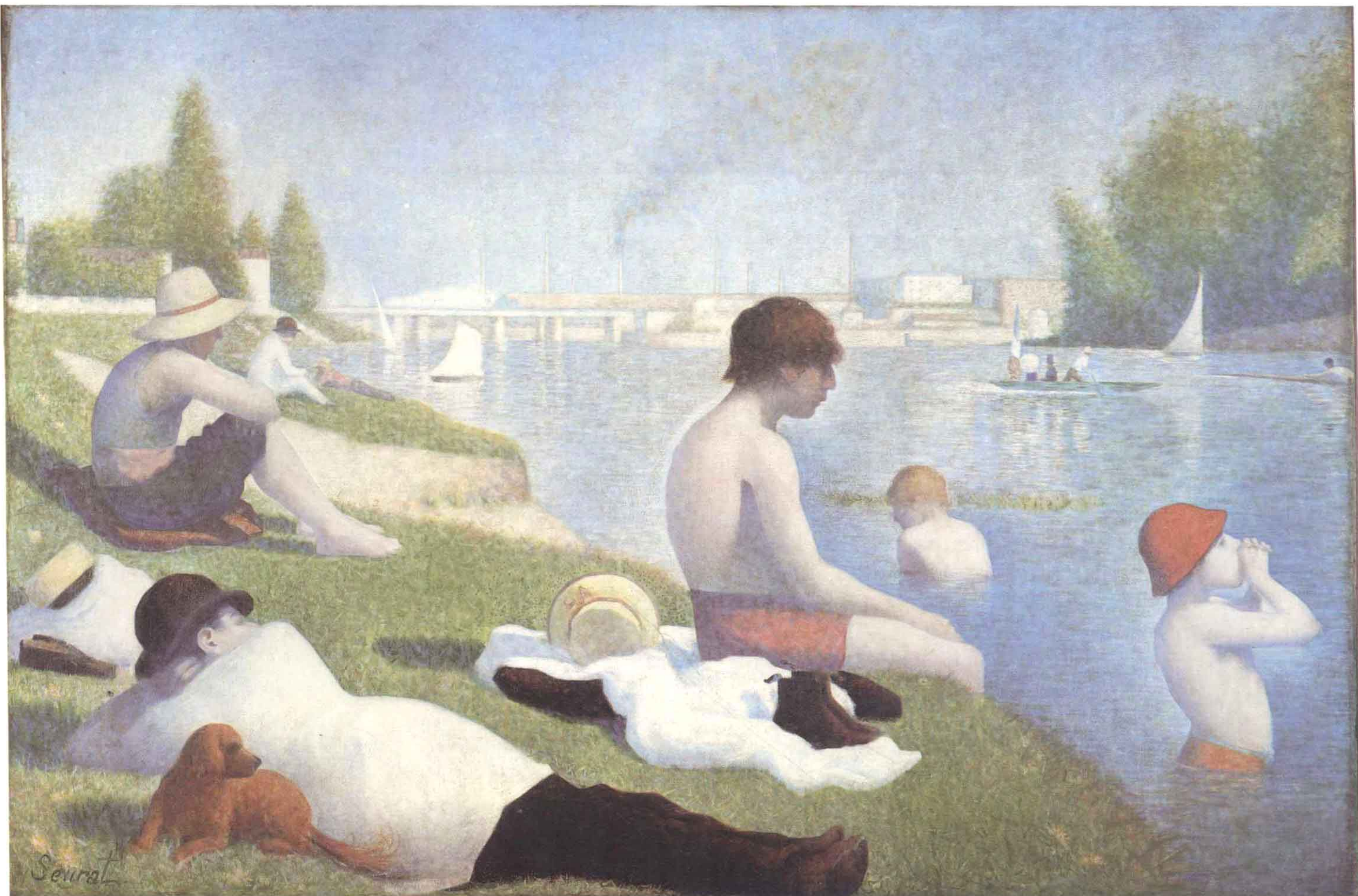


Plate 2 Above Seurat, *Bathers at Asnières*, 1883–4. Oil on canvas, 201 × 300 cm. The National Gallery, London.

Cat. no. 7 Left Seurat, *The Rainbow*, c. 1883.



variations on National Gallery paintings. Other relationships are established by default, where Berggruen works fill gaps in the National Gallery Collection and assist in providing a more comprehensive display of an artist's work. Many of the modern works of the Berggruen Collection, far from representing a break with the art of the past, extend and manipulate established traditions and genres of painting and can be linked to companion works in the National Gallery. Finally, other works in the Berggruen Collection, which have no historical links with the National Gallery Collection, appear to forge new relationships through a mysterious sense of affinity, like Picasso's drawing *Man Sleeping*, and Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*.

Several works by Seurat and Cézanne in the Berggruen Collection are directly related to National Gallery paintings. There are, for example, oil sketches and conté crayon drawings that are studies for the monumental National Gallery painting by Seurat, *Bathers at Asnières* (Plate 2). These studies indicate something of the extent and range of Seurat's preparatory work for *Bathers at Asnières*, which represented his first grand bid for recognition at the Salon des Indépendants in 1884. He painted many small rapid sketches in oil, such as *The Rainbow* (Cat. no. 7), directly in front of his subject on the banks of the Seine, in order to record the movements of boats and people and to capture the particular effects of weather and reflections on the water. He also made highly finished studies in conté crayon, such as the *Man in a Bowler Hat* (Cat. no. 8), which he



Cat. no. 8 Seurat, *Man in a Bowler Hat*, 1883–4.

drew from models posed in his studio, suggesting the volumes of their clothes and bodies solely through contrasts of tone.

The Rainbow study is very close in many ways to the final painting in terms of the artist's viewpoint and the character and disposition of the figures. Even the cropped figure of a man in a straw hat at the bottom of the study appears, from the angle of his shoulder, to be reclining. He may well be the prototype for the large reclining figure wearing a bowler hat in the finished painting, which Seurat developed in his studio in the conté drawing *Man in a Bowler Hat*.

There are, however, fascinating differences in the atmospheric effects of *The Rainbow* study and the finished painting. In contrast to the stability and sense of classical order in the *Bathers at Asnières*, the study has a raw immediacy, suggesting a very particular and transient state in the weather. The turbulent strokes loaded with blue pigment used for the sky and the presence of the rainbow give the impression that there has been a recent downpour of summer rain and that the air is heavy with moisture.

The reunification of these studies with the *Bathers at Asnières* gives new insight into the artist's creative process: the way he transformed and re-created his direct experience of nature in the studio. A similar metamorphosis can be detected in two Cézanne paintings of Chantilly. The *Path in Chantilly* (Cat. no. 18) is not a study but an independent variation on the *Avenue at Chantilly* (Plate 3) in the National Gallery Collection. Both were probably painted in 1888 when Cézanne stayed at Chantilly and explored the tree-lined avenues in the grounds of the Château. The paintings share a similar composition: the deep perspective of a leafy avenue played off against strong horizontal bands of light and shadow. The exact location, atmospheric effects and Cézanne's formal experiments are, however, quite different. The *Avenue at Chantilly* reveals a distant view of houses, the receding path broken by low barriers or gates. By contrast, the *Path in Chantilly* bears no trace of human presence and conveys a much wilder atmosphere. The foliage seems denser and Cézanne's brushstrokes are more evident in the flickering patches of colour that unify the surface of the painting.



Cat. no. 18 Left Cézanne,
Path in Chantilly, 1888.
Plate 3 Opposite Cézanne,
Avenue at Chantilly, 1888.
Oil on canvas, 82 × 66 cm.
The National Gallery, London.





Plate 4 Poussin, *Landscape with a Man killed by a Snake*, c. 1648. Oil on canvas, 119.4 × 198.8 cm. The National Gallery, London.