

French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Editor



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Eugène Boudin, *The Beach*, ca. 1865, and *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874

Artist	Eugène Boudin, French, 1824–1898
Title	<i>The Beach</i>
Object Date	ca. 1865
Alternate and Variant Titles	<i>La plage</i>
Medium	Pastel on paper
Dimensions (Unframed)	7 1/2 x 11 5/8 in. (19.1 x 29.5 cm)
Signature	Signed lower right: E. Boudin
Credit Line	The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Gift of Henry W. and Marion H. Bloch, 2015.13.2

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Artist	Eugène Boudin, French, 1824–1898
Title	<i>Trouville, Beach Scene</i>
Object Date	1874
Alternate and Variant Titles	<i>Trouville, scène de plage</i>
Medium	Oil on wood panel
Dimensions (Unframed)	8 1/8 x 16 1/4 in. (20.6 x 41.3 cm)
Signature	Signed and dated lower right: E. Boudin / Trouville Aout 1874.
Credit Line	The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Gift of Henry W. and Marion H. Bloch, 2015.13.4

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Fig. 1. Emile Levy & Cie (publisher), *Sea Bathing at Trouville*, 1887, color lithograph, 31 1/2 x 23 5/8 in. (80 x 60 cm), Bibliothèque nationale de France, Estampes et photographie, Paris, ENT DN-1 (LEVY, Emile/18)-FT6

“I was desperate; I had to get out of this stone prison at all costs, and I resolved to visit Trouville. The crush of dazed travelers proved that I was not alone in feeling the urgent need for a little bit of fresh air.”¹ So begins a travel piece by the Parisian journalist Léon Arbaud from the summer of 1863. Like many residents of the City of Light, Arbaud felt confined by the narrow streets and crowded spaces—the urban renewal scheme undertaken by Napoleon III’s appointee, Baron Haussmann, was still ongoing—and so he decided that the only solution was a weekend getaway to the coast of Normandy. Seaside holidays were already a well-established tradition in many parts of Europe; French aristocrats had borrowed this practice from their British peers early in the nineteenth century.² However, advances in rail technology and a midcentury surge in *trains de plaisir* (round-trip rail service from Paris to the shore) made littoral towns more accessible than ever before.³ Each

summer, Parisians seeking a respite from urban life flocked to the beaches in greater numbers than the previous year.

One of the most popular destinations from the 1860s on was Trouville. Originally a Viking port, it was still an unspoiled village with “its houses piled on top of one another, black, gray, red, white, facing every which way without alignment and without symmetry” when a teenage Gustave Flaubert vacationed there with his family in 1838.⁴ That changed dramatically in the ensuing decades. Several new hotels were constructed to entice tourists, including the Hôtel de la Plage in 1840, the Hôtel Bellevue in 1843, the Hôtel de la Mer in 1855, and the Hôtel des Roches Noires in 1866.⁵ Some out-of-towners came for the casino: Louis Philippe I had abolished the Royal Lottery in 1836 and Parisian gambling houses in 1837, but he tolerated gambling outside the capital, especially at seaside resorts.⁶ The main draw, however, was the waterfront, billed in advertisements as “the most beautiful beach in the world” (Fig. 1). In an 1887 poster by Émile Lévy et Cie, elegantly dressed men, women, and children parade along the shore, which stretches as far as the eye can see. Many visitors preferred Trouville’s soft white sand to Le Havre’s pebbles, which were less forgiving on the feet and often bombarded the legs of swimmers.⁷ Trouville also boasted an expansive bathing area with separate zones for each sex and one coed section, all with different dress codes.⁸ By the early 1860s, it was attracting not only Parisians craving rejuvenation but also important dignitaries like Empress Eugénie and the Ottoman ambassador to France.⁹

Trouville was also a magnet for artists. Eugène Boudin (1824–1898) is believed to have first visited this resort in June 1862.¹⁰ Born in Normandy, he typically spent the winter in Paris and the summer closer to home, often at Trouville or its sister town, Deauville. During those summer sojourns, Boudin produced hundreds of beach scenes, two of which belong to the Nelson-Atkins. The earlier of these two is a pastel known simply as *The Beach*. Boudin began experimenting with pastel in the late 1840s, making rapid studies of cloud formations that earned the praise of both the writer Charles Baudelaire and the painter Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot (1796–1875).¹¹ He continued to use pastel masterfully throughout his five-decade career, even though he rarely exhibited his pastel drawings or considered them autonomous works.¹² The Nelson-Atkins pastel bears no date, but it must have been created in the mid-1860s since it passed through the Galerie Cadart et Luquet in

Paris, a short-lived partnership between Alfred Cadart (1828–1875) and Jules Joseph Luquet (b. 1824) that existed from October 1863 to October 1867.¹³ At that time, Boudin was still struggling to make ends meet, and most of his patrons were from Le Havre, where his parents lived.¹⁴



Fig. 2. Eugène Boudin, *The Beach at Trouville*, 1863, oil on canvas, 13 9/16 x 22 5/8 in. (34.5 x 57.5 cm), private collection. Photo © Lefevre Fine Art Ltd., London / Bridgeman Images

The setting for *The Beach* is uncertain, but Trouville is a strong candidate.¹⁵ Not only did Boudin visit this town annually during the mid-1860s, staying at 23 rue Farabe in 1864 and 9 rue d'Isly from 1865 onward, but also he produced two paintings at Trouville during this period that feature a mounted horse in the foreground, just like the Kansas City pastel.¹⁶ Though Boudin frequently depicted horses pulling *cabines de bain* (bathing cabins) to and from the sea, he rarely portrayed beachgoers on horseback.¹⁷ An exception is the privately owned painting *The Beach at Trouville* (Fig. 2). Gazing directly at the viewer is a stationary equestrian who seems to have paused from chatting with the stylish couple beside him. All three figures are conscious of being captured on canvas, and the scene itself is carefully composed: a diagonal line could be traced from the horseman's hat to the tip of the French flag to the spire of the adjacent building. By contrast, the horse and rider in the Nelson-Atkins pastel are on the move and evidently unaware of Boudin's presence. The scene is also ephemeral in nature. A few seconds later, it seems, and they would have passed out of sight.

In this respect, *The Beach* has more in common with works like *Two Riders on the Beach* and *A Rider and Elegant People on a Beach* (Figs. 3–4). The former, a pastel in private hands, shows two equestrians on a deserted beach heading away from the viewer. Their pace is

unhurried, and the light suggests early morning or dusk. The latter, a watercolor-and-graphite drawing from an album belonging to the Musée d'Orsay, offers a side view of a mounted horse, two dogs, and several pedestrians on the beach. Boudin plotted the figures first and then added the surrounding scenery—the same technique that he used for the Nelson-Atkins pastel.¹⁸ All three images record a fleeting moment witnessed by Boudin and were probably executed *sur le motif*, as was the artist's custom for small-scale sketches.¹⁹ A prolific draughtsman, Boudin may have revisited these riding scenes when painting more finished works like *The Beach at Trouville* (see Fig. 2).



Fig. 3. Eugène Boudin, *Two Riders on the Beach*, ca. 1864–1868, pastel on paper laid down on paper, 7 1/8 x 10 3/4 in. (18.1 x 27.3 cm), private collection. Photo © Christie's Images/Bridgeman Images



Fig. 4. Eugène Boudin, *A Rider and Elegant People on a Beach*, 1866, watercolor and graphite on paper, 5 11/16 x 9 11/16 in. (14.5 x 24.6 cm), Musée d'Orsay, Paris, RF18207-recto-folio1. Photo: Tony Querec © RMN-Grand Palais / Art Resource, NY

Boudin continued to represent the beach on and off for the rest of his professional life. He even developed his own subcategory of seaside images—bands of chic bourgeois holidaymakers socializing on the coast of Trouville or Deauville. According to Scottish art historian

Vivien Hamilton's tally, Boudin completed more than three hundred such paintings between 1862 and 1895, an astounding number that does not take into account his many renditions of this theme in pastel and watercolor.²⁰ The Nelson-Atkins picture *Trouville, Beach Scene* is a prime example of this subgenre. Boudin painted it in August 1874, a few months after participating in the inaugural Impressionist exhibition and one month after his fiftieth birthday. By that point in time, most of Boudin's beach scenes were intended for a small circle of personal acquaintances.²¹ The Nelson-Atkins panel was acquired from Boudin by Jean Théodore Elie Bullier (1831–1909), owner of a famous Parisian dance hall known as *le bal Bullier*, and it remained within his family for four generations.²²



Fig. 5. Neurdein frères, *Trouville: Bathing Hour at the Beach*, ca. 1890–1900, albumen print, 13 3/8 x 16 9/16 in. (34 x 42 cm), Bibliothèque nationale de France, Estampes et photographie, Paris, PETFOL-VE-1442

The painting portrays more than a dozen vacationers dressed to the nines and seated in a frieze-like arrangement. Most of the figures occupy chairs, but the nursemaid and children are settled directly on the sand—a subtle sign of their difference in class and age, respectively.²³ Boudin's contemporaries often commented on his fondness for representing masses of people. Historian Albert Sorel said of him in 1899: "In his paintings, he likes groups [and] he depicts the dense, lively crowd more willingly than the individual."²⁴ There is no denying this predilection, but it is also true that Boudin was simply recording what he saw. Period photographs of Trouville beach show tightly packed clusters of fashionable people. In a photo by Neurdein

frères, more than fifty beachgoers congregate near the shoreline, flanked by cabins and umbrellas (Fig. 5).²⁵ The men wear striped bathing costumes or suits and boater hats, while the women are clad in the latest Third Republic trends. Many lounge in the same wooden chairs with horizontal slats that appear in the Nelson-Atkins panel.

Some critics, in an effort to assimilate Boudin into the narrative of Impressionism, have overstated his desire to capture the effects of light and atmosphere at Trouville and downplayed his interest in studying high society.²⁶ Art columnist Dorothy Odenheimer, for example, waxed poetic about Boudin's treatment of "the prismatic dust of sunlight and the filter of moist air" and claimed that the beachgoers in his painting *Approaching Storm* (1864; Art Institute of Chicago) were "merely a foil to set off the sky."²⁷ Boudin was certainly attentive to the nuances of weather, but he was also an astute observer of social dynamics, and his figures often communicate much through small gestures. In the Nelson-Atkins panel, the central group of bourgeois men and women form a closed ring from which the nanny, children, and viewer are excluded. One top-hatted gentleman stares pointedly at us, as if to emphasize our interloper status. This unstinting gaze was a recurring pictorial device for Boudin: many works depict one or more figures looking squarely at the viewer.²⁸ The Walters Art Museum's *Trouville* of 1871 (Fig. 6), for instance, shows several beachgoers gazing directly at us, including the seated man at left, the woman in yellow, and the servant with a hand on her hip. If their stares do not amount to "legible anecdotal interchanges," as art historian John House put it, they do attest to Boudin's skills of perception and his curiosity about the socialites who flocked to Trouville.²⁹



Fig. 6. Eugène Boudin, *Trouville*, 1871, oil on panel, 7 1/16 x 18 1/4 in. (18 x 46.4 cm), Walters Art Museum, Baltimore

Brigid M. Boyle
August 2020

Notes

1. Léon Arbaud [Mme Lenormant], "Chronique du bord de la mer," *La Semaine des familles*, no. 50 (September 12, 1863): 797–800. "J'étais au désespoir; à tout prix il me fallait sortir de cette prison de pierres, et je résolus de venir à Trouville. La cohue de voyageurs ahuris me prouva que je n'étais pas seul à ressentir l'impérieux besoin d'un peu d'air libre." All translations by Brigid M. Boyle.
2. Vivien Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, exh. cat. (London: John Murray, 1992), 53.
3. Sylvie Gache-Patin and Scott Schaefer, "Impressionism and the Sea," in Andrea P. A. Belloli, *A Day in the Country: Impressionism and the French Landscape*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1984), 273–78. For a period rendering of Parisians jostling to board such a train, see Honoré Daumier, *Les trains de plaisir*, 1864, lithograph, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Rosenwald Collection, 1964.8.577.
4. Gustave Flaubert, *Mémoires d'un fou: Roman* (Paris: H. Floury, 1901), 63. "Ses maisons entassées les unes sur les autres, noires, grises, rouges, blanches, tournées de tous côtés, sans alignement et sans symétrie." Flaubert wrote *Mémoires d'un fou* in 1838, but it was not published until 1901, some two decades after his death. For the Viking history of Trouville, see Adrienne Farrell, "Trouville, Normandy: Faces by Flaubert, Skies by Boudin," *New York Times* (January 23, 1977).
5. Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, 78–80.
6. Jean-Louis Harouel, "From Francis I to Online Betting: The History of Gambling in France," *Pouvoirs* 139, no. 4 (2011): 12.
7. As one period commentator put it: "En cinq heures et tout directement, Paris est à Trouville! C'est une heure de plus que pour Le Havre . . . mais on trouve sur la rive du Calvados une délicieuse plage de sable fin, au lieu de ce terrible galet qui roule là-bas tant d'entorses sous vos pieds, quand, agité par le flot, il ne vous bombarde les jambes de projectiles au moins incommodes et souvent inquiétants." See "Courier de Paris," *Le Monde illustré*, no. 333 (August 29, 1863): 130–31.
8. Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, 55.
9. Boudin commemorated the Empress's excursion in a painting; see The Burrell Collection, Glasgow, no. 35.45. For the ambassador's visit, see "Courier de Paris," 130.
10. Georges Jean-Aubry, *Eugène Boudin d'après des documents inédits: L'Homme et l'œuvre* (Paris: Editions Bernheim-Jeune, 1922), 51. Other artists who painted at Trouville include Jules Achille Noël (1815–1881), Richard Parkes Bonington (1802–1828), Louis Alexandre Dubourg (1821–1891), Charles Louis Mozin (1806–1862), and Charles François Pécrus (1826–1907).
11. Gustave Cahen, *Eugène Boudin, sa vie et son oeuvre* (Paris: H. Flory, 1900), 113. These studies likely served as aide-mémoires for his oil paintings.
12. John House, "Boudin's Modernity," in Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, 16.
13. For more on this gallery, see Monique Nonne, "Alfred Cadart (1828–1875), marchand de tableaux modernes," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français* (2009): 363–73.
14. Michael Clarke, "Boudin: Le Havre," *Burlington Magazine* 158, no. 1364 (November 2016): 921.
15. Its paper support is mounted, so any extant verso inscriptions about its location are obscured from view. See technical notes by Nancy Heugh, Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, February–June 2016, NAMA conservation files.
16. For Boudin's lodgings, see Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, 60. For the paintings in question, see Robert Schmit, *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898*, vol. 1 (Paris: Galerie Schmit, 1973), cats. 261 and 272. Richard R. Brettell wrongly asserted that "None of the numerous beach paintings done in Deauville and Trouville in the mid-1860s has a horse and rider." See Richard R. Brettell and Joachim Pissarro, *Manet to Matisse: Impressionist Masters from the Marion and Henry Bloch Collection*, exh. cat. (Kansas City, MO: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2007), 41.
17. For examples of horses pulling bathing cabins, see Schmit, *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898*, vol. 1, cats. 271, 275, and 294.
18. See technical notes by Nancy Heugh, Heugh-Edmondson Conservation Services, February–June 2016, NAMA conservation files.

19. Brettell and Pissarro, *Manet to Matisse*, 38.
20. Hamilton, *Boudin at Trouville*, 64.
21. Laurent Manœuvre, "Eugène Boudin's Beach Scenes at the Salon during the 1860s," *Burlington Magazine* 161, no. 1394 (May 2019): 374.
22. Jean Théodore Elie Bullier succeeded his uncle François Bullier (1796–1869) as owner of *le bal Bullier* in 1869. Bruno Jarry, great-great-grandson of Jean Théodore Elie Bullier, to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, December 29, 2020, NAMA curatorial files.
23. Boudin painted several studies of nursemaids, including *La Nourrice sur la plage*, ca. 1883–1887, oil on panel, 5 3/4 x 9 1/4 in. (14.5 x 23.5 cm), sold by Pandolfini at the Palazzo Ramirez-Montalvo in Florence on November 23, 2016. See "Town, Country and Lady," *Bbys Magazine*, November 20, 2016, <https://www.barnebys.co.uk/blog/town-country-and-lady>.
24. Quoted in Jean-Aubry, *Eugène Boudin d'après des documents inédits*, 190. "Dans ses tableaux, il aime les groupes, il représente la foule dense et remuante, plus volontiers que l'individu."
25. Neurdein frères was a major photographic enterprise and publishing house active from 1863 to 1918. Run by Étienne (1832–1918) and Louis-Antonin (before 1840–after 1912) Neurdein, the business employed more than one hundred people, including several uncredited "operators" who handled the camera equipment. See Marie-Ève Brouillon, "Photographes et opérateurs: Le travail des Neurdein frères (1863–1918)," *Mil neuf cent*, no. 36 (2018): 95–114.
26. Although Boudin befriended Claude Monet and exhibited with the Impressionists in 1874, he considered himself a loner who did not belong to a particular school: "Je n'eus point de maître à proprement parler; j'ai cherché tout seul sans être d'aucune coterie, d'aucune école." Quoted in Cahen, *Eugène Boudin, sa vie et son oeuvre*, 133.
27. Dorothy Odenheimer, "Boudin, Forerunner of Impressionism," *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 33, no. 5 (September–October 1939): 79–80.
28. See, for example, Schmit, *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898*, vol. 1, cats. 612, 619, 623, and 853.

29. House, "Boudin's Modernity," 19.

Eugène Boudin, *The Beach*, ca. 1865, 2015.13.2

Technical Entry

Citation

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Rachel Freeman, "Eugène Boudin, *The Beach*, ca. 1865," technical entry in ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.602.2088>.

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Freeman, Rachel. "Eugène Boudin, *The Beach*, ca. 1865," technical entry. *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.602.2088.

Eugène Boudin (1824–1898) was the most skilled plein-air pastelist of his generation. By his mid-40s he had completed so many studies of skies, sea, and beaches that he could quickly lay down an image that accurately described the weather and time of day. *The Beach* is an example of one of Boudin's quickly executed, but studied, sea and shoreline paintings, in which he captures the pastimes of a windy day and realistically records the cool tones of the sand, water, and sky.

Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive study of Boudin's pastel materials and techniques. A survey of his work in other collections revealed that he frequently used colored papers, and blue or gray tones may have appealed to him as a base color for his drawings. The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art's pastel is on a machine-made wove paper. The current paper color is beige, and there is a pink cast to the paper; however, it may have originally been closer to cream.¹ A moderately thick application of pastel obscures much of the paper and its texture. Where visible, around the clouds at upper left and the horse and human figures in the foreground, the paper finish appears uniform, and there is very little texture (Fig. 7). There is no watermark or deckle, and the small, nonstandard dimensions indicate that the paper was

cut from a larger sheet. The dominant media is pastel, applied dry and blended with a soft cloth or tortillon; however, graphite pencil is also present. The work is signed "E. Boudin" in blue pastel.



Fig. 7. Areas of blank paper at the horse's rump and between the rider's arm and horse's neck indicate that Boudin reserved this portion of the paper so that he could fill in the figures without the difficulty of applying pastel over the colors used for the sea, sand, and sky, *The Beach* (ca. 1865)

The artist started with an underdrawing in a brown medium capable of producing a hard and fine line (Fig. 8). The tone of the media appears slightly pink when contrasted with the blues and buff colors of Boudin's palette, and the fast, gestural diagonal lines visible in the sky indicate the placement of clouds, or possibly the direction of the wind. In the beach, the underdrawing indicates dunes or undulations in the sand. Although underdrawing in the sea is obscured by layers of pastel, Boudin likely laid in a horizon line where the water and sky meet.

Similar to his use of *ébauche* for oil paintings,² the major elements of the seascape, the sky with the clouds, the water in the middle ground, and the beach and foreground were laid in with blue, white, green, beige, and pink. Boudin frequently used the broad side of pastel sticks. The sea was blended at left so that the green and dark blue pastel applications mix. However, in the right half of the scene, the pastel strokes were applied on top of each other to create the impression

of a sandbar or other features of the shallows. The colors of the beach were initially blended, with strokes of gray, yellow, light blue, and brown likely added at the end of the painting process to give the sand some relief. The painting is dominated by the figures in the foreground, and the paper below the horse and rider and the two women was left blank, with no evidence of either an underdrawing or an applied undertone.



Fig. 8. The location of visible underdrawing in *The Beach* (ca. 1865) is highlighted in red



Fig. 9. Like the horse and rider, the paper below the two women does not have an underdrawing or underlayers of pastel. The figure in the blue coat is executed on underlayers of pastel. His facial features and the shadow of the flag pole are the only places where graphite pencil is present, *The Beach* (ca. 1865)

Quick strokes of brown, black, and white pastel were used to lay in the forms of the man and the horse. Blending is present along the horse's flanks and the man's coat, but individual lines from the pointed tips of pastel sticks dominate (Fig. 7). The women were laid in using a similar method; however, Boudin appears to have started with a black pastel and initially focused

on dominant features like the bell shape of the white dress and the domes of the parasols (Fig. 9). Blending is present in the gray skirt of the woman at left and the coats of both women. White and a cool gray were blended to indicate the shadow on the back of the white skirt. Boudin paid special attention to some sartorial details by placing fine, short strokes of yellow and black next to each other to indicate either pleating or a surface decoration.

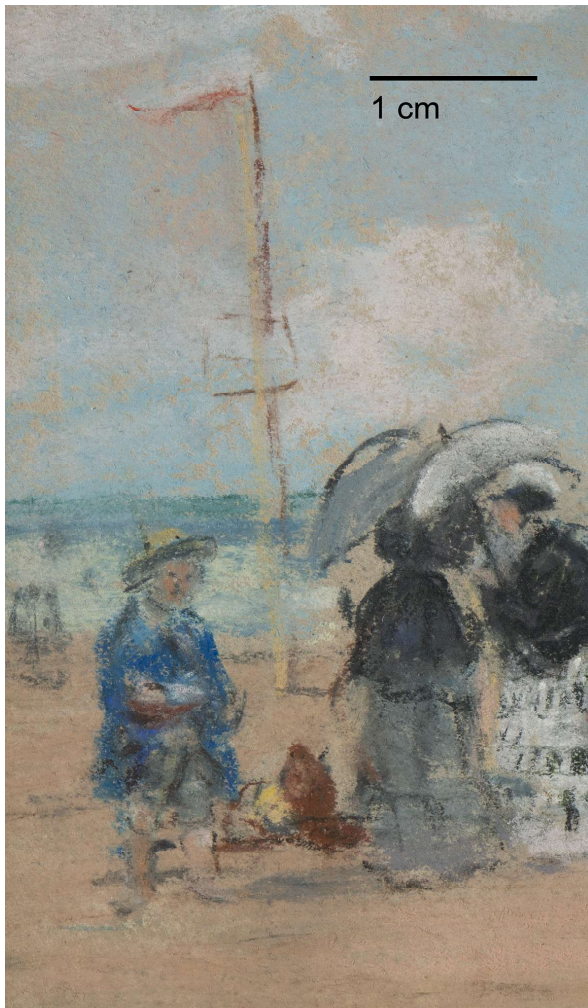


Fig. 10. The flag pole and flag call attention to the time of day and the direction of the wind, *The Beach* (ca. 1865)

Boudin populated the scene with other figures and features. The man in the orange coat at center causes the eye to travel away from the figures in the foreground and linger in the sky and on the tiny strokes of black and orange that indicate people wading in the shallows. The sailboat, vignettted by the women and the equestrian, was applied directly over the blue

underlayers (Fig. 10). It was executed with black and white pointed pastel sticks and a moderate amount of blending to indicate shadows in the sails. The flag indicates the direction of the wind, and the flagpole shows the oblique angle of the sun. The pole consists of a single stroke of ochre for the light, abutted by a few strokes of reddish brown to indicate shadow. The figure in the blue coat is the only figure with facial features. He is applied over the pastel used for the water and the beach. Like the other foreground figures, he was laid in with the tip of a pastel pencil. There is no blending except for his trousers; and the eyes, nose, and mouth, as well as the shadow of the flagpole, are the only occurrences of graphite pencil in the artwork (Fig. 9).

Boudin did not use a fixative, although it would have aided him when he layered the sailboat and the figure in the blue coat over the underlayers of pastel.

Most of the elements in the image are in motion. The horse is mid-prance; the rider turns his head toward the women who lean forward in conversation; the man in orange walks along the shore; and the figure in blue appears to be headed in the direction of the artist. The clouds and the sailboat are being pushed out of the picture frame by the wind. Boudin was able to record the scene with rapidity because he had substantial practice. According to Charles Baudelaire, who saw sketches by the artist in 1859, Boudin made numerous tiny drawings of the sky, sea, and shore and annotated the margins of the drawings with date, time, and weather. Of these drawings, Baudelaire stated:

If you sometimes have the leisure to get to know these meteorological beauties, you could check, by memory, the accuracy of Mr. Boudin's observations. You could hide the caption with your hand and you will easily guess the season, the time, and the wind. I am not exaggerating.³

Although the pastel does faithfully record a morning or afternoon on a windy day, probably in the late summer, any inscription was lost when the edges of the artwork were cut down after the work was executed. A two-centimeter-long cut parallel to the right edge occurs immediately after the signature. The cut was made with a sharp blade and appears to be very old. The upper corners of the sheet are missing, and there are three pin or tack holes present along the upper edge at left. The holes appear to have been made later and do not indicate that the pastel was attached to a board during execution.

The work is currently edge-mounted to a late twentieth-century cream laid paper, and the back is not available for examination. There is evidence of at least two other mounting campaigns. During one, the artwork was attached to a window mat with gummed linen tape applied to the back of the artwork. Before that, brown paper tape was applied to the front edges of the artwork. Removal of the brown tape from the first matting campaign apparently resulted in image loss along the lower left and lower edges. To make the artwork look undamaged, the losses were covered with a yellow beige pastel which does not quite match the tones Boudin used for the sand.

Rachel Freeman
October 2021

Notes

1. The description of paper color, texture, and thickness follows the standard set forth in Elizabeth Lunning and Roy Perkinson, *The Print Council of America Paper Sample Book: A Practical Guide to the Description of Paper* (Boston: Print Council of America, 1996), unpaginated.
2. Virginia Nouwen, "An Investigation into the Materials and Techniques of Eugène Louis Boudin (1824–1898)" (Postgraduate Diploma in the Conservation of Easel Paintings, Final Year Project, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 2018), 18–21.
3. *Œuvres Complètes de Charles Baudelaire*, ed. F. F. Gautier (Paris: Éditions de la Nouvelle Revue Française, 1925), 307, https://www.google.com/books/edition/OEuvres_compl%C3%A8tes_de_Charles_Baudelaire/zrnwAAAAMAAJ.
"Si vous avez eu quelquefois le loisir de faire connaissance avec ces beautés météorologiques, vous pourriez vérifier par mémoire l'exactitude des observations de M. Boudin. La légende cachée avec la main, vous devineriez, la saison, l'heure et le vent. Je n'exagère rien." Any mistakes or inconsistencies in the translation are the fault of the author.

Documentation

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Brigid M. Boyle, "Eugène Boudin, *The Beach*, ca. 1865," documentation in ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.602.4033>.

MLA:

Boyle, Brigid M. "Eugène Boudin, *The Beach*, ca. 1865," documentation. *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.602.4033

Provenance

With Galerie Cadart et Luquet, Paris, by October 15, 1867 [1];

Hembert collection, Paris;

With Raphaël Gérard, Paris, by 1963 [2];

With Rogers and Co., by December 7, 1966 [3];

Purchased from Rogers and Co. at *Barbizon and Nineteenth-Century Paintings, Drawings and Sculpture*, Sotheby's, London, December 7, 1966, lot 98, as *La Plage à Trouville*, by H. M. Cohen, 1966 [4];

With Galerie Schmit, Paris, by February 17, 1981–March 26, 1981 [5];

Purchased from Galerie Schmit by Marion (née Helzberg, 1931–2013) and Henry (1922–2019) Bloch, Shawnee Mission, KS, March 26, 1981–June 15, 2015;

Their gift to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, 2015.

Notes

[1] Alfred Cadart (1828–1875) and Jules Joseph Luquet (b. 1824) formed a partnership in October 1863. They published etchings and operated a gallery together at 79 rue de Richelieu until October 15, 1867, when they dissolved their partnership. In November 1867, Cadart went into business with Léandre Luce at 58 rue Neuve-des-Mathurins. See Monique Nonne, "Alfred Cadart (1828–1875), marchand de tableaux modernes," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français* (2009): 363–73; and Janine Bailly-Herzberg, *L'Eau-forte de*

peintre au dix-neuvième siècle: La Société des Aquafortistes, 1862–1867, vol. 1 (Paris: Leonce Laget, 1972), 252.

[2] Raphaël Louis Félix Gerard (1886–1963) passed away in 1963.

[3] For confirmation that the dealer “Rogers and Co.” consigned *The Beach* to Sotheby’s, see email from Carly Murphy, Sotheby’s, to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, September 17, 2020, NAMA curatorial files. The consignor may have been T. Rogers and Co. Ltd, London, a packing and shipping agency that sometimes sold pictures at auction on behalf of clients. However, the records of T. Rogers and Co. do not extend back to the 1960s, so it has not been possible to confirm this identification; see email from Wil Russell, T. Rogers and Co., to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, October 15, 2020, NAMA curatorial files.

[4] For confirmation that H. M. Cohen purchased *The Beach*, see email from Carly Murphy, Sotheby’s, to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, September 17, 2020, NAMA curatorial files. Murphy did not know Cohen’s full name or city of residence.

[5] See email from Robert Schmit, Galerie Schmit, to Henry Bloch, February 17, 1981, NAMA curatorial files.

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Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 2015.13.4

Technical Entry

Citation

Chicago:

Diana M. Jaskierny, "Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874," technical entry in ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.603.2088>.

MLA:

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Trouville, Beach Scene was completed on wood panel, approximately five millimeters in thickness and beveled on the top and bottom verso edges. The format of this painting does not correspond with a standard size but is similar in size to other panels completed by Boudin.¹ With no supplier markings on the panel's reverse, it is unclear where Boudin acquired this support, as he is known to have purchased his materials from a variety of sources.² Small in size, panels such as these were often used for painting en plein air and could be completed quickly, capturing a moment of everyday life.

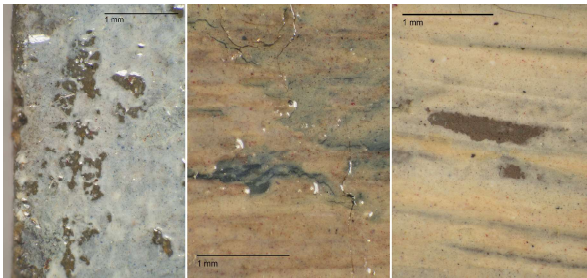


Fig. 11. Photomicrographs of the underpaint in three locations. From left to right: green underpaint on the left edge in the sky, blue underpaint on the left side in the sand, and brown underpaint in the sand above the signature, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)

During examination with a stereomicroscope, no ground layer could be identified.³ However, unprimed wood panels were available at this time from artists' suppliers at a reduced cost and were especially common in small sizes suitable for plein-air painting.⁴ A continuous dark-colored underpainting was found across the picture plane and is visible within drying cracks and skips in the paint. In most instances, this layer appears dark green, with two exceptions: in the sand near the left side this layer appears blue, and in the sand near the figures above the signature it appears brown (Fig. 11).⁵ Although Boudin did experiment with differing underpainting hues relating to the compositional fields,⁶ here the differing hues are small and isolated. They do not appear to be related to the composition, and it is possible this variation was created when he mixed extra paint to reload his brush. Throughout, it appears that this underpainting was allowed to dry completely before

the composition of the beach scene began, as illustrated by the numerous examples of wet-over-dry applications.

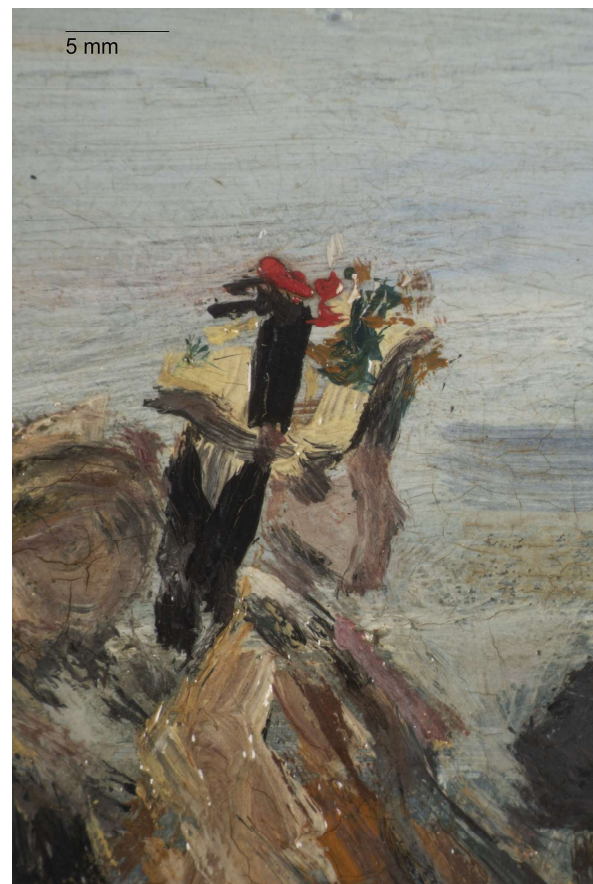


Fig. 12. Photomicrograph revealing lower sky layer beneath female figure, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)

Immediately on top of the underpainting, Boudin blocked in the sky and beach, leaving glimpses of this lower layer visible between the various paint strokes of the figures, as shown in Figure 12. There is no clear indication of an underdrawing or built-up *ébauche* layer to further form the scene. As with the underpainting, this initial blocking-in layer was also allowed to dry fully before the scene was created, indicating that while the majority of the composition may have been completed en plein air, colored preparation for the panel and early layers were likely applied in advance in a studio. The figures were painted quickly and appear to have been executed in one session as wet-over-wet application is visible throughout. Some details, such as the bow on the standing girl's dress, were applied with such a delicate

touch that almost no underlying paint was transferred between brushstrokes (Fig. 13). In contrast, Boudin created the folded parasols with wet-into-wet technique, with the swirls of paint resembling a floral pattern on the parasol to the left (Fig. 14). Once the figures were near completion, Boudin added detail to the background, such as the cloudy atmosphere of the sky. Brushstrokes wrap around the heads of the figures, adjusting the silhouettes, and sometimes pulling the paint wet-over-wet (Fig. 15).

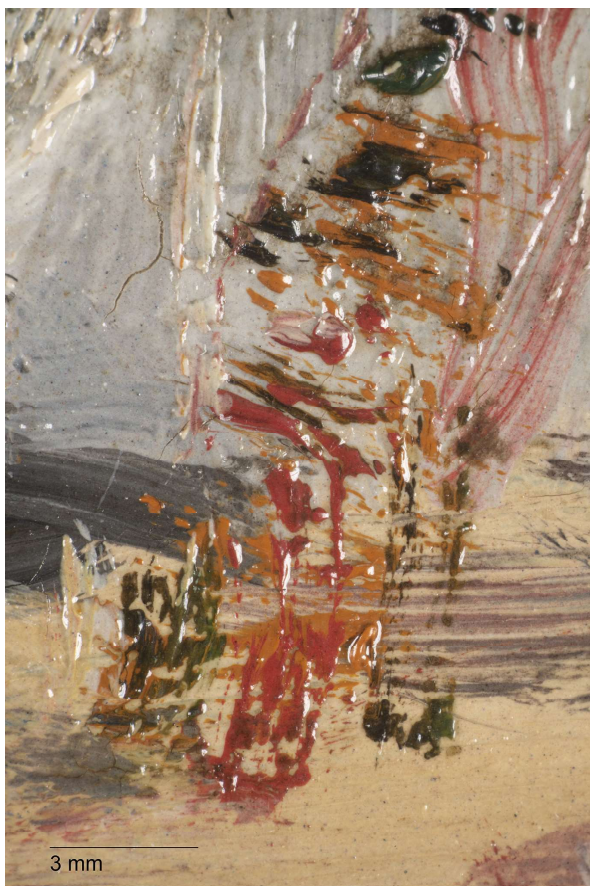


Fig. 13. Photomicrograph of bow on standing girl, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)

Few artist changes are found within this rapidly-executed painting. The ferrule of the central parasol shifted slightly, with the original placement still visible under the blue sky (Fig. 16). Another clear artist change is located at the bottom edge. Here an inscription is partially visible to the left of Boudin's signature. The content of this inscription is unknown, as it was painted over by Boudin and could not be deciphered with infrared reflectography or x-

radiography. The only identifiable letter is an "M" painted in script (Fig. 17).

The paint layer is in excellent condition, with few losses and minimal retouching. In addition to an overall craquelure pattern, there are isolated regions of drying cracks. One horizontal split is present in the panel, following the wood grain. Hairline cracks have formed from this split; however, both the panel and paint layer are stable. The varnish layer, estimated natural resin varnish, has discolored slightly and has some isolated microscopic delamination.



Fig. 14. Photomicrograph of parasol with wet-into-wet paint application, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)

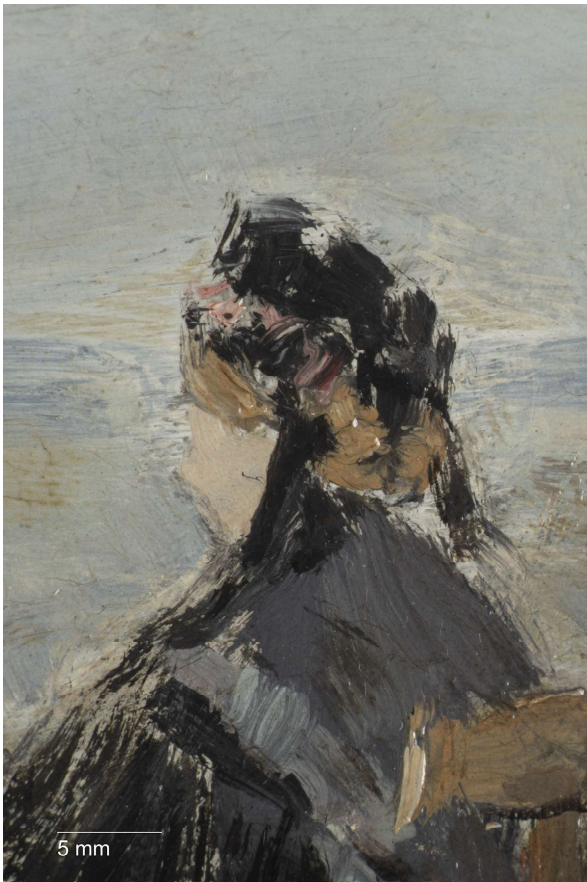


Fig. 15. Detail illustrating a brushstroke from the sky slightly overlapping the figure's head, causing wet-over-wet application within the hat, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)

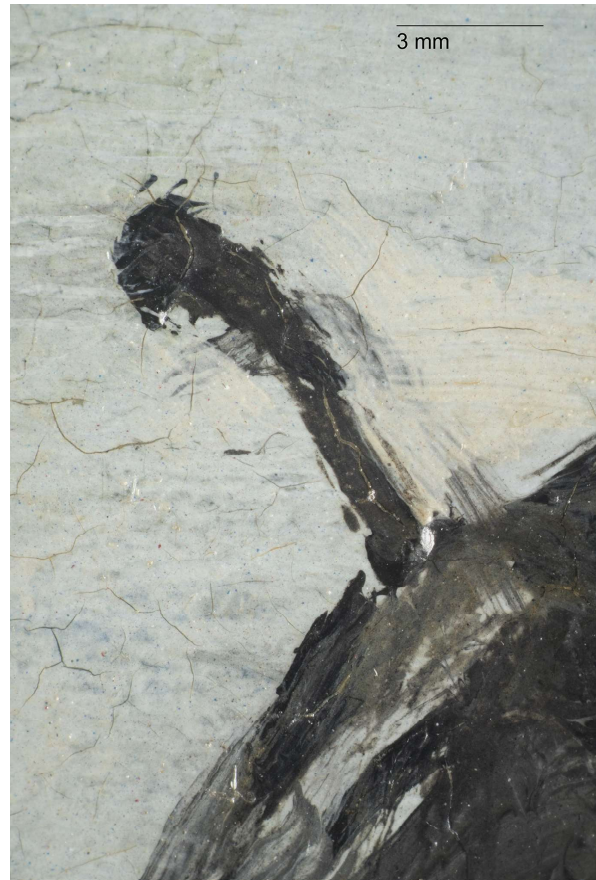


Fig. 16. Photomicrograph of parasol ferrule pentimento, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)



Fig. 17. Photomicrograph of inscription pentimento, *Trouville, Beach Scene* (1874)

Diana M. Jaskierny
February 2021

Notes

1. Documentation of Boudin's painting supports has shown that he employed both standard- and nonstandard-size supports. See Lara

Broecke, "Notes on the Technique of Eugène Boudin," *Hamilton Kerr Institute Bulletin*, no. 4 (2013): 50.

2. Suppliers included artists' colormen, *marchands de malles* (trunk-salesmen), and carpenters. Virginia Nouwen, "An Investigation into the Materials and Techniques of Eugène Louis Boudin (1824–1898)" (Postgraduate Diploma in the Conservation of Easel Paintings, Final Year Project, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, 2018), 7–8.
3. No samples were taken during this examination. It is possible that a ground layer is present; however, this layer could not be identified through microscopy. Boudin often used commercially prepared supports with light-colored grounds. Nouwen, "An Investigation into the Materials and Techniques of Eugène Louis Boudin (1824–1898)," 14–15.
4. Iris Schaefer, Caroline von Saint-George, and Katja Lewerentz, *Painting Light: The Hidden Techniques of the Impressionists* (Milan: Skira, 2008), 53.
5. Similar underpaintings have been identified on paintings in the collection of The National Gallery of London. Nouwen, "An Investigation into the Materials and Techniques of Eugène Louis Boudin (1824–1898)," 18.
6. Nouwen, "An Investigation into the Materials and Techniques of Eugène Louis Boudin (1824–1898)," 19–20.

Documentation

Citation

Chicago:

Brigid M. Boyle, "Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874," documentation in ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan *French Paintings, 1600–1945: The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.603.4033>.

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Boyle, Brigid M. "Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874," documentation. *French Paintings*,

1600–1945: *The Collections of the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.603.4033

Provenance

Acquired from the artist by Jean Théodore Elie Bullier (1831–1909), Paris, by 1898–October 26, 1909 [1];

Given to his granddaughter, Emma Jarry (née Marchand, 1888–1982), Paris, October 26, 1909–no later than April 7, 1982 [2];

By descent to her daughter, Madeleine-Françoise Jarry (1917–1982), Paris, by April 7, 1982–June 29, 1982 [3];

Inherited by her brother, Pierre Jarry (1913–1999), Paris, June 29, 1982–November 27, 1984 [4];

Purchased from Jarry by Adolphe Stein, Paris, on joint account with Richard Green, London, stock no. RH 594, November 27, 1984–February 1985 [5];

Half-share purchased from Adolphe Stein by Richard Green, February 1985–November 13, 1985 [6];

Purchased from Richard Green by Marion (née Helzberg, 1931–2013) and Henry (1922–2019) Bloch, Shawnee Mission, KS, November 13, 1985–June 15, 2015;

Their gift to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, 2015.

Notes

[1] Boudin sold or gifted the painting to Bullier at an unknown date, but certainly before his death in 1898. The owner of a famous Parisian dance hall, Bullier had a wide circle of acquaintances that included many artists. See email from Bruno Jarry, great-great-grandson of Jean Théodore Elie Bullier, to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, December 29, 2020, NAMA curatorial files.

[2] Jean Théodore Elie Bullier's daughter, Ernestine Françoise Bullier (1866–1942), married Gustave Honoré-Léon Raoul Marchand (1875–1935) on July 4, 1887. Their daughter, Emma Marchand, received the painting as a wedding gift from her grandfather when she married Paul Jarry (1883–1934) on October 26, 1909, three weeks before her grandfather's death. See emails from Bruno Jarry to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, December 29, 2020 and January 25, 2021, NAMA curatorial files.

[3] It is unclear precisely when Emma Jarry bequeathed *Trouville, Beach Scene* to her daughter, but she did so prior to her death on April 7, 1982. The two women shared an apartment in Paris beginning in 1946, and the painting remained on view in their salon until Madeleine-Françoise Jarry's death on June 29, 1982, only a few months after her mother's passing. See emails from Bruno Jarry to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, December 29, 2020 and January 25, 2021, NAMA curatorial files.

[4] Pierre Jarry, a resident of Marseille, inherited his sister's apartment and belongings, including *Trouville, Beach Scene*, upon her death. The painting remained in Paris until its sale in 1984. See emails from Bruno Jarry to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, January 25–26, 2021, NAMA curatorial files.

[5] Jarry received payment for the painting on November 27, 1984, but it took several months for the export license to receive approval. See email from Bruno Jarry to Brigid M. Boyle, NAMA, December 29, 2020, and letter from M. Jacot, International Art Transport, to Pierre Jarry, July 10, 1985, NAMA curatorial files. Richard Green stock number from verso label.

[6] For the purchase date of February 1985, see email from Penny Marks, Richard Green, to MacKenzie Mallon, NAMA, April 21, 2015, NAMA curatorial files.

Related Works

Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874, oil on panel, 7 1/4 x 14 in. (18.5 x 35.5 cm), location unknown, cited in Anne-Marie Bergeret-Gourbin et al., *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898*, exh. cat. (Honfleur: Association "Eugène Boudin-Honfleur 92," 1992), 226.

Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874, oil on panel, 6 1/2 x 14 in. (16.7 x 35.5 cm), location unknown, cited in Robert Schmit, *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898* (Paris: Galerie Schmit, 1973), no. 939, p. 1:335.

Eugène Boudin, *Trouville, Beach Scene*, 1874, oil on panel, 7 1/4 x 14 1/4 in. (18.5 x 36 cm), location unknown, cited in Robert Schmit, *Eugène Boudin, 1824–1898* (Paris: Galerie Schmit, 1973), no. 940, p. 1:336.

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