French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945
The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Editor
Claude Monet, *Boulevard des Capucines, 1873–1874*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Artist</strong></th>
<th>Claude Monet, French, 1840–1926</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Title</strong></td>
<td><em>Boulevard des Capucines</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Object Date</strong></td>
<td>1873–1874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alternate and Variant Titles</strong></td>
<td><em>Les Grands Boulevards</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Medium</strong></td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dimensions (Unframed)</strong></td>
<td>31 5/8 x 23 3/4 in. (80.3 x 60.3 cm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Signature</strong></td>
<td>Signed lower right: Claude Monet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Credit Line</strong></td>
<td>The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Purchase: The Kenneth A. and Helen F. Spencer Foundation Acquisition Fund, F72-35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

doi: 10.37764/78973.5.626

**Catalogue Entry**

**Citation**

Chicago:


MLA:


High above his native city of Paris in late 1873/early 1874, Claude Monet perched with his paints, palette, brushes, and canvases on the upper-level balconies of 35 *boulevard des Capucines*. The building was emblazoned with ten-foot-high red neon letters spelling the nickname of its owner, famed photographer Gaspard-Félix Tournachon (1820–1889), better known as Nadar. Looking northeast, toward the Place de l’Opéra, Monet painted two canvases of nearly identical proportions, but in different formats—a vertical composition, now at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and a horizontal canvas, now in the Pushkin Museum collection (Fig. 1), the latter of which Monet exhibited in the inaugural Impressionist exhibition in 1874 in Nadar’s former studio.¹

Both canvases take their titles from the street they represent. Considered one of Paris’s four “Grand Boulevards,” the Boulevard des Capucines runs through the north of Paris, from the Rue des Capucines toward the Place de l’Opéra. Designed in the late 1600s and named after a convent that formerly occupied a place on the street, the boulevard was redesigned by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann as part of Napoleon III’s campaign to modernize the city and its thoroughfares in
the mid-nineteenth century. The paintings present a snapshot of one of the liveliest commercial districts of the newly redesigned city. With the sketch-like subject matter, fragmentation of the figure, elevated vantage point, tilted perspective, sharp diagonals, and topographical accuracy, Monet’s approach bears much in common with the formal characteristics of nineteenth-century aerial and stereographic photography, a medium that fostered a new way of seeing, and with one of its most savvy practitioners, Félix Nadar.

![Image](image.jpg)

Fig. 1. Claude Monet, Boulevard des Capucines, 1873, oil on canvas, 24 x 31 1/2 in. (61 x 80 cm), The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

In the Nelson-Atkins composition, Monet captures the hustle-bustle of the boulevard on a cool, wintry day. Some women with parasols stroll, and possibly shop, alongside men in top hats and families with children, including a girl in a pink-and-white dress who ambles away from a balloon vendor holding a bunch of pink balloons. Others may be guests of the Grand Hôtel, seen at the center left amid the mansard-style hip roofs of the stylish new multistory apartment buildings. A single burgundy-and-yellow Morris advertising column stands sentinel near the row of snow-covered hansom cabs that cuts a sharp diagonal into the picture plane. Those with occupants, including an omnibus, whiz down the boulevard in a blur. Appearing at right corner, hovering over the street from the balcony next to Nadar’s studio, two onlookers in top hats survey the frenetic activity below. Above them is the Place de l’Opéra, home to architect Charles Garnier’s new opera house. Monet’s figures are loose, mere suggestions, some hastily laid down on the canvas in dry brushy strokes over areas of exposed ground. While he left reserves for the foreground figures and the tops of the trees, in other areas there is evidence he painted on top of a wet ground, adding and developing as he went in order to realize his vision. This suggests he may have viewed the work as a sketch, an idea supported by an entry in Monet’s account books in the spring of 1875 noting a sale of “3 esquisses” (three sketches) to the painter and photographer Charles Vaillant de Meixmorn de Dombasle (1839-1912) for 300 francs.

The Pushkin Boulevard presents the same view, but in contrast to the evenly diffuse blue-violet wintry haze in the Nelson-Atkins composition, it is bathed in a golden glow on the left half of the composition, while the right half falls into deep shadow. The two canvases are essentially effets, painted in different light, probably at different times of day. The horizontal format of the Pushkin picture clips the tops of the buildings along the left edge but allows for a wider expanse of crowd; the figures, although still loosely painted, are rendered with more clarity than those of the Nelson-Atkins composition, in particular, the two men in top-hats who survey the street below, suggesting the Pushkin picture came second. What remains murky, however, are the precise dating of these two canvases and further evidence to support the order of their execution.

Most scholars, including Daniel Wildenstein, accept the 1873 inscription on the Pushkin picture, suggesting Monet painted it in the fall of 1873, and that the Nelson-Atkins canvas followed closely thereafter in the winter of 1873/1874 to account for the snow. However, the execution of the canvases as noted above, in tandem with Monet selling the Nelson-Atkins Boulevard des Capucines to Dombasle as a sketch, suggests a reversal of order. Monet was in Paris often that fall/early winter of 1873/1874 as part of developing conversations around organizing the first Impressionist exhibition. Presumably discussions were underway about using Nadar’s former studio as a venue, so it is likely Monet started both canvases that fall with the idea of presenting one of them from the very room in which he painted it. It was a calculated move. Recently, however, Joel Isaacson challenged the Pushkin date, arguing instead for an early 1874 completion for both the Pushkin and the Nelson-Atkins pictures, a period during which many other scholars believe Monet was in Amsterdam. Isaacson reconnected the paintings to carnival, a month-long celebration that occurs annually between Epiphany (January 6) and Lent. Carnival brought grand processions down the boulevard des Capucines during the last three days of celebration known as the jours de gras, or “fat
days," which in 1874 fell on February 15-17,9 the precise period Isaacson places the Pushkin picture, when crowds and masked processions were at their peak. However, rather than starting the canvases from scratch in mid-February, a mere two months before the exhibition, in a move that feels haphazard rather than contemplated, it makes more sense that Monet at least roughed both canvases out in the late fall, starting first with the Nelson-Atkins picture. Having worked through some of the major compositional issues in the Nelson-Atkins painting, his approach in the Pushkin picture is more resolved. Notwithstanding the rain that fell all three days of the jours de gras in 1874, there is precedent for Monet choosing a moment to capitalize on the crowds as part of a marketing strategy for his pictures.9 And what a stroke of marketing genius to show them from the very vantage point of his forthcoming exhibition venue!

Fig. 2. Félix Nadar, Aerial View of the Arc de Triomphe, 1868, wet collodion print, in Walter Benjamin, “Paris: Capital of the 19th Century,” Arcades Project, Brown Digital Repository, Brown University Library

Monet’s high vantage point, looking down and across the street, places an emphasis on the fore and middle grounds of both pictures, with the result that the street appears to tilt toward the picture plane. This is more evident in the Nelson-Atkins canvas, with its vertical format. The resulting compressed space is made all the more apparent by an emphasis on flattening, rather than the modeling power of light.10 This same extreme compression of space can be seen in an aerial photograph taken by Nadar of the six new avenues designed by Haussman extending from the Arc de Triomphe in 1868 (Fig. 2).11 Nadar was obsessed with flight, and he pioneered and patented many photographic apparatuses to try to capture it visually. He made aerial photos by using a tethered balloon, for instance, and Monet’s inclusion of balloons near the top-hatted spectators who view the boulevard from up above, as Nadar did during his many aerial adventures, thus takes on new meaning.12 With the advent of dual-lens stereoscopic cameras at mid-century, French photographers including Adolphe Braun (1811-1877) and Hippolyte Jouvin (1829–1909) captured the boulevards and flurry of activity of the city.13 Like a stereoscopic view of the boulevard des Capucines possibly taken by Jouvin in the mid-1860s, many stereographic images are vertically oriented (Fig. 3). As suggested by April M. Watson, “the strong diagonal recessionals [in vertical views] helped intensify a three-dimensional effect when the images were viewed through a stereoscope.”14 In painting and in aerial photography, however, the effect is flattening. Monet repeats this strong diagonal in both versions of Boulevard des Capucines, although it is more evident in the vertical Nelson-Atkins composition and the steep row of trees that cut across its picture plane. The figures are fragmented in both Monet’s work and in early photography—due to the long exposure times—further alluding to the inspiration Monet derived from photography. It was not the first time Monet adopted a heightened vista in his paintings, nor the first time there was an affinity between his work (and that of other young Impressionists) and photography, which fostered a new way of looking at the world.15

Monet’s Boulevard pictures form the second group of nearly two dozen views of Paris the artist produced intermittently over the course of a decade, beginning in 1867. Many scholars agree that the impetus for these paintings was probably the International Exposition (Exposition universelle d’art et d’industrie) held in Paris that summer, which showcased the modern advancements of the city on a world stage. Monet went to the Louvre for inspiration, but instead of looking at the historic pictures inside the building, he painted views of the new modern city outside, from the Louvre’s eastern balcony—a popular vantage point for photographers, including Gustave Le Gray (1820–1884).16 Monet made three city views, including a vertical and horizontal composition of nearly identical dimensions
that both look south: *Quai du Louvre* (ca. 1867; Kunstmuseum Den Haag) and *Garden of the Princess* (Fig. 4). George Shackelford has argued that “the two paintings may be based on a common photographic source” because of the shared contour of the skyline, centering on the dome of the Pantheon. Alternatively, Shackelford surmises, the artist may have copied one painting from the other with tracing or a type of cartoon. There are no known studies for the Nelson-Atkins Boulevard, or evidence of any underdrawings, and the grand buildings along the left edge share a profile with the Pushkin version, seemingly supporting the theory that Monet could have relied on a photograph in their development. While Monet dismissed the use of any photographic aid later in life, as did other Impressionists, Shackelford rightly asks why Monet would not have used this type of tool, given its resonances with his work. Moreover, as photography was becoming incredibly successful in garnering attention through exhibition and sales, with their presentation of a thriving modern city and its inhabitants, the approach to the medium would seem all the more appealing to Monet, who was hoping to do the same.

After nine years of struggling to gain acceptance into the Salon as fine art rather than being relegated to exhibitions of industrial products, photography as a medium was officially accepted into the Salon in 1859, and it was both commercially and artistically successful. Many of the young Impressionists, including Monet, were in a similar position of wanting and needing acceptance into the Salon, both as a stamp of official approval and as a place to show their work. Yet by the early 1870s Monet was not having much success on either of these fronts; in fact, he was regressing. By the mid-1870s, he was struggling to sell fully developed and finished paintings to dealers, so he adopted a different strategy by selling sketches, likely including the Nelson-Atkins Boulevard des Capucines. Similarly, Nadar deftly pivoted from one strategy to another to garner attention for his works, including installing ten-foot-high red neon letters spelling out his name on his building, not only to attract attention but to signal he was a pioneer in his use of electric light. Monet thought of the perennial publicist when developing a strategy to counteract his own plight. He recalled: “For some time, my friends and I had been systematically rejected by the abovementioned jury. What were we to do? It’s not just about painting, you’ve got to sell, you’ve got to live. The dealers didn’t want anything to do with us. We needed to show our work, but where? Nadar, the great Nadar, who is so kind, lent us his place.”

Nadar knew his audience, how to market himself, and how to sell photographs. In fact, his audacious marketing schemes did not go unnoticed by his friend and former colleague Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), who caricatured him in a print entitled “Nadar Raising Photography to the Height of Art,” in which a top-hatted Nadar looks down from a tethered balloon at all the shops advertising his medium (Fig. 5). Arguably, Monet was trying to raise art to the height of photography by placing his top-hatted gentleman high above the city, like Nadar in his balloon, and adopting strategies he felt would appeal to his market, to the place where he exhibited, and to the unique and thoroughly modern vision that photography afforded, with the spectator in mind, above all.
Fig. 5. Honoré Daumier, *Nadar Rasoir Photography to the Height of Art*, May 25, 1862, lithograph, image: 10 1/2 x 8 11/16 in. (26.7 x 22.1 cm); plate: 17 1/2 x 12 5/16 in. (44.5 x 31.3 cm), The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund, 1926

Aimee Marcerue DeGalan  
April 2021

Notes

1. While many of the contemporary reviews of the 1874 exhibition could conceivably apply to both pictures, hence the long debate over which canvas was exhibited, an English review by Frederick Wedmore noted that “Claude Monet sends the ‘Boulevard des Capucines’ a rough oil sketch some four feet long.” This measurement must refer to a framed dimension and could only relate to the width of the horizontal Pushkin canvas, as the framed height of the Nelson-Atkins Boulevard is 43 3/8 in. See Frederick Wedmore, “Pictures in Paris: The Exhibition of ‘Les Impressionistes’,” *The Examiner* (June 13, 1874): 633–34, as cited in Ed Lilley, “A Rediscovered English Review of the 1874 Impressionist Exhibition,” *Burlington Magazine* 154, no. 1317 (2012): 845.


3. See the accompanying technical essay by Diana M. Jaskiery.

4. As per a note in the curatorial files, Charles de Meixmoran de Dombasle bought ten works from Monet in 1873. He acquired an additional three sketches in 1875. Although these are not individually enumerated, it is likely that the Nelson-Atkins *Boulevard des Capucines* was in the 1875 transaction. I am grateful to Simon Kelly, curator of modern and contemporary art, St. Louis Art Museum, for sharing information and his thoughts about the 1875 sale. See Monet’s entry under May 4, 1875, “M. de Dombasle / [illegible] / 3 esquisses 300 [francs]” (*Monet’s livre de comptes, ventes janvier-juillet 1875*, Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris. A photocopy of this page is in the curatorial object file, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art).

5. In the spring of 1874, following the first Impressionist exhibition, Jean-Baptiste Faure bought four works by Monet for 4,000 francs, including the Pushkin *Boulevard des Capucines*. The pricing structure of 1,000 francs per picture, suggests Monet considered this a finished work. For the notation of Monet’s account books, see Anne Distel, *Impressionism: The First Collectors*, trans. Barbara Perround-Benson (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), 84.

November and December 1873, which could account for the white covering on the hansom cabs and ground in the Nelson-Atkins picture. It did not snow until February 9, 1874. See the Observatoire de la marine et du bureau des longitudes, Paris et Observatoire de Montsouris, Bulletin mensuel de l'Observatoire Physique Central de Monsouris (Paris: Gauthier-Villars, 1873/1874), https://bibnum.obspm.fr/ark:/11287/2BfGK and https://bibnum.obspm.fr/ark:/11287/VPTcP.


8. Isaacson, “Monet: Le Boulevard des Capucines en Carnival.” Gustave Geffroy first made this connection to carnival in an 1883 review of the Pushkin picture at Durand-Ruel, a position he maintained along with the painting’s 1873 date in his 1922 biography, authored nearly twenty-five years into his friendship with Monet. See Geffroy, “Chronique—Claude Monet,” 2, and Geffroy, Claude Monet, 263, where he titled the Pushkin painting Le Boulevard des Capucines en Carnival.

9. For the weather in February 1873, see the Observatoire de la marine et du bureau des longitudes, Paris et Observatoire de Montsouris, (1873), 2:75, https://bibnum.obspm.fr/ark:/11287/2BfGK. In his 1867 paintings realized from the balcony of the Louvre (Quai du Louvre and Garden of the Princess; see fig. 4), Monet capitalized on the crowds who were in town that summer for the International Exposition. He planned for this again in 1878, when he obtained permission to paint from two different balconies in an effort to capture the national holiday in celebration of France’s recovery from the war with Prussia. The paintings are The Rue Montorgeuil, 30th of June 1878 (1878; Musée d’Orsay, Paris) and The Rue Saint-Denis 30th of June 1878 (1878; Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rouen).


11. Several of these formal characteristics, including the use of an elevated bird’s eye view, were also related to his familiarity with Japanese ukiyo-e prints by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858) and Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849). However, the prints do not present the figures in a sketch-like manner as Monet did, nor as early contemporary photography did.


15. Monet first adopted an elevated vantage point in his painting Garden at Saint-Adresse, 1867, oil on canvas, 38 5/8 x 51 1/8 in. (98.1 x 129.9 cm), Metropolitan Museum of Art, as noted in Charles S. Moffett, Impressionism: A Centenary Exhibition, exh. cat. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1974), 159.


17. For an example of a work produced by Le Gray from this vantage point, see Gustave Le Gray, Panorama de Paris, vers le Pont Neuf, about 1859, albumen collodion print on glass, 15 3/4 x 20 1/8 in. (40 x 51 cm), Musée d’Orsay, Paris, 1985.129, cited in Thompson, Monet and Architecture, 92.


22. In 1865, Monet submitted two works to the Salon and gained one acceptance. He continued to submit to the Salons of 1867, 1868, 1869, and 1870, with only one painting accepted, in 1868. As has been shown by Virginia Spate, Monet had some success selling a number of pictures to Paul Durand-Ruel and a few other collectors in 1872–73; however, these were generally more conservative paintings, not the type of subject matter or approach to figure and form as seen in Monet’s Boulevards paintings. See Virginia Spate, Claude Monet: The Color of Time (London: Thames and Hudson, 1992), 89.

23. As Simon Kelly has shown, it is possible that Monet was making a “thoughtful attempt to tap into an established market for landscape etudes and esquisses dating back several decades at least until the start of the century.” I am extremely grateful to Kelly, who shared his insight on this aspect of Monet’s marketing strategy, as discussed in his unpublished paper, “Monet and Commercial Strategy” (presented at the Musée d’Orsay, 2009).


---

**Technical Entry**

**Citation**

**Chicago:**


**MLA:**


---

**Fig. 6. Detail of bottom edge original turnover creases and filled tack holes, Boulevard des Capucines (1873-1874)**

*Boulevard des Capucines* was completed on an estimated linen canvas with a pronounced twill weave. Although Monet frequently purchased prepared canvases from a variety of artist suppliers such as Ange Ottoz, Vielle-Troisgros, Hardy-Allen, and Deforge-Carpentier, the painting is fully lined with no identifying canvas stamp. It is clear, however, that the current painting size is somewhat larger than its original size. Original tack holes and creases from the original turnover edge are visible along the bottom edge of the picture plane, indicating that the current height is slightly larger than the original dimensions (Fig. 6). In addition, the paint layer stops short of the left, right, and top edges of the picture plane and corresponds to the creases associated with the original turnover edges (Fig. 7). Together these attributes reveal that the original size of the painting was approximately 58.5 centimeters by 78.5 centimeters, while the painting’s current dimensions are 60.3 centimeters by 80.4 centimeters. Neither set of dimensions correspond to standard stretcher sizes found in historic supplier catalogs. The previous, possibly original, stretcher was replaced in 1972 by James Roth, who described it as “single mortice [sic] corners, butt-end, with (2) crossbars and wood keys.”

One analog photograph of the painting reverse in the
The ground layer was commercially prepared. Its thin and even application extends onto the tacking margins, and there is neither cusping nor a buildup of ground along the turnover edge that would indicate application by hand after the canvas was stretched. Like many Impressionist painters, Monet commonly purchased canvases with tinted or colored grounds specifically to emphasize the tonality of the composition, and thus itself to become a part of the composition. Here its warm, blush tone creates simultaneous contrast with the surrounding paint, in which neighboring colors are amplified. In 1888 Monet discussed his use of this color effect, stating that “... colour owes its brightness to force of contrast rather than to its inherent qualities; ... primary colours look brightest when they are brought into contact with their complementaries.” This is especially noticeable in the sky of Boulevard des Capucines, where the ground layer appears orange in contrast to the blue (Fig. 8). In this detail, the blush and blue tones are striking when compared to the white brushstrokes seen near the center of the image. Due to this optical illusion the ground color seems to shift slightly across the painting, even though microscopy suggests that the ground is consistent in composition, with isolated blue and red particles, and more heavily concentrated black and coarse yellow particles. While in the sky the ground layer appears orange, in the foreground, the ground layer appears to be a cooler red tone where it lies adjacent to gray-green paint strokes (Fig. 6).

Throughout the paint layer, a variety of applications are found, ranging from thin and dry brushwork to more heavily applied “dabs” within figures and highlights. Overall, there is limited low impasto, and each compositional element’s handling varies from the next, creating depth and a sense of atmospheric perspective. There is no apparent underdrawing or underpainting visible in standard viewing light, nor is one detected in infrared reflectography. The order in which the compositional elements were painted is difficult to determine, as it appears Monet revisited sections numerous times. The center of the composition is especially sketchy and dry-brushed. The sky and pale foreground seem to have been thinly laid-in first, with reserve areas for the trees silhouetted against the sky and select figures in the foreground. In these instances, some boundaries of the sky and foreground are slightly overpainted with trees and figures, respectively, while generous amounts of exposed ground remain. Monet
returned to add paint in the sky, occasionally pulling the brush over tree elements and chimneys in a scumble (Fig. 9).

The foreground was partially wet when figures were placed in their reserves, as can be seen in the lower right section of Figure 10. Here deep blue of the figures has been pulled through the adjacent cool-toned foreground, while the warm ground layer peeks through both the figures and the foreground. Additionally, although there were reserves left for some figures, many were painted on top of the then dried foreground, with no reserve or surrounding exposed ground (Fig. 11). This indicates that while some figures were clearly anticipated in the early stages of painting, others were added by Monet later in the painting process as he finalized the composition. In both instances, and throughout the painting, many compositional elements were painted with a light touch, allowing the paint to only skim the canvas weave tops and skip the twill interstices, revealing a variety of layers beneath (Fig. 10). Anthea Callen described this as giving “shimmering effects that evoke both the wintery atmosphere and the sensation of distance from a high viewpoint [. . .].”

Highlights, such as on the carriages, were among the last painted, with a thicker application and with some strokes blending wet-over-wet with surrounding paint that had not quite dried (Fig. 12).

The painting has undergone at least three conservation treatments. It originally entered the collection with a glue-based lining that was removed and replaced in 1972 with a wax-based lining. While the original canvas is twill weave, a secondary vertical weave pattern is visible, likely weave interference caused by an early lining fabric (Fig. 13). Areas of low impasto were slightly flattened during one of the lining processes. In 2006, the painting was cleaned, and a low-concentration synthetic varnish was applied in order to maintain a relatively “unvarnished” appearance while suitably saturating the paint layer.

Losses to the ground layer and subsequently paint layer are present throughout the painting, often forming horizontal cracks, and may relate to the painting’s lining or lining reversal history. In the 1972 condition report prior to treatment, the paint was noted as being friable and flaking, indicating that some loss pre-dates that lining reversal. The ground and paint layers are now stable, with no new flaking or delamination visible. Overall there is minimal retouching, with the majority found in the lower half and along the edges. There are areas that appear to be abrasions, but because of the dry-brush application, it is often difficult to differentiate between possible abrasion and Monet’s technique.

5. Bomford et al., *Art in the Making: Impressionism*, 88. For a larger discussion on Monet’s use of color and simultaneous contrast see pages 87–89.

6. While Monet often used simultaneous contrast within the paint layer, his use of the ground layer to amplify colors, as seen here in *Boulevard des Capucines*, can also be found in *The Beach at Trouville* (1870; National Gallery, London) and *The Petit Bras of the Seine at Argenteuil* (1872; National Gallery, London). See Bomford et al., *Art in the Making: Impressionism*, 129–30, 144–45.

7. The painting was examined with a Hamamatsu infrared vidicon camera.


10. The current lining material does not display this vertical texture. Labeled samples of the lining material removed in 1972 were retained in the object file, but also do not have a pronounced weave pattern that might have caused the vertical pattern. As neither the lining material removed in 1972 nor the current lining material added that same year have this pronounced pattern, it is likely that the treatment history of the painting included an even earlier lining.


### Notes


4. Monet was known for using colored or tinted grounds during the 1870s, some of which may have been applied by Ottoz, others by the artist himself. Without sampling, it is unclear on this painting if there is one tinted ground or two thinly applied grounds with the upper layer being tinted.


Notes

[1] According to *Impressionnisme en Lorraine*, exh. cat. (Nancy: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1975), the painting was bought by Meixmonor de Dombasle in 1875 from Claude Monet and was in Meixmonor’s collection until his death in 1912.


[4] The painting was not sold in James Horace Harding’s estate sales of 1941. According to the Frick Collection, where James Horace Harding was on the Board of Trustees, there’s nothing in his correspondence related to the Nelson-Atkins picture. The Frick suspects that the painting was inherited by his widow, who inherited her husband’s estate, and then sold after her death in 1935. See email from Eugenie Fortier, Frick Art Reference Library Archives, New York, to Glynnis Stevenson, NAMA, April 3, 2017, NAMA curatorial files.

[5] See Knoedler label numbered 24721 on verso. The Estate of Mrs. Dorothea Horace Harding had the painting delivered to Knoedler on March 7, 1935. Upon receipt, Knoedler decided to retain the picture on commission rather than purchase it from the estate. See email Karen Mayer-Roux, Archivist, Special Collections, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, to Glynnis Stevenson, NAMA, October 11, 2019, NAMA curatorial files.

Series IV. Inventory cards, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles.


[9] Following the death of her husband in 1956, Field moved to an apartment in New York City. The Caumsett Estate was purchased by New York State on February 3, 1961 and converted into a state park. Though she sold off much of the art she inherited, Boulevard des Capucines was in her New York apartment when she sold the painting to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art through E.V. Thaw, New York in 1972. See letter from E.V. Thaw and Co., Inc. to Mr. Ralph T. Coe, NAMA, November 21, 1974, NAMA curatorial files. Previous scholars confused Mrs. Marshall Field III and Mrs. Marshall Field IV. According to Matthew Bessell, Caumsett: The home of Marshall Field III in Lloyd Harbor, New York, Boulevard des Capucines was among the pictures inherited by Ruth Field after her husband’s death (p. 25). Ralph T. Coe states that the painting was owned by Ruth Field before being bought by NAMA; see Ralph T. Coe, “Claude Monet’s ‘Boulevard des Capucines’: After a Century,” Bulletin (The Nelson Gallery and Atkins Museum) 5, no. 3 (February 1976). Eugene Victor Thaw confirmed that the painting was purchased directly from Mrs. Marshall Field III not Mrs. Marshall Field IV; see letter from E.V. Thaw and Co. to Meghan Gray, NAMA, July 14, 2011, NAMA curatorial files.

Related Works

Claude Monet, Boulevard des Capucines, 1873, oil on canvas, 24 x 31 1/2 in. (61 x 80 cm), Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow.

Copies

Charles de Meirmoron de Dombasle, after Claude Monet, Boulevard des Capucines, ca. 1875–1912, oil on cardboard, 127 3/16 x 88 9/16 in. (323 x 225 cm), private collection, France.

Exhibitions

Exposition des Peintres de l’École française du XIXe Siècle, Knoedler and Company, Paris, opened May 12, 1924, no. 42, as Les Grands Boulevards.

The 1870s in France, Carroll Carstairs Gallery, New York, December 1938, no cat., as Les Grands Boulevards.

A Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Claude Monet for the Benefit of the Children of Giverny, Wildenstein, New York, April 11–May 12, 1945, no. 17, as Les Grands Boulevards.

“What they said”: Postscript to Art Criticism For the benefit of the Museum of Modern Art on its 20th Anniversary, Durand-Ruel Galleries, New York, November 28–December 17, 1949, no. 4, as Boulevard des Capucines.

Great French Paintings: An Exhibition in Memory of Chauncey McCormick, Art Institute of Chicago, January 20–February 20, 1955, no. 26, as Les Grands Boulevards.

Masterpieces of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Painting, National Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, April 25–May 24, 1959, unnumbered, as Boulevard des Capucines.

Olympia’s Progeny; French Impressionist and Post-Impressionist Paintings (1865–1905), Wildenstein, New York, October 28–November 27, 1965, no. 12, as Boulevard des Capucines.


“One Hundred Years of Impressionism:” A Tribute to Durand-Ruel: A Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the New York University Art Collection, Wildenstein, New York, April 2–May 9, 1970, no. 18, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Paintings by Monet, The Art Institute of Chicago, March 15–May 11, 1975, no. 36, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Monet: A Retrospective, Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo, February 11–April 7, 1994; Nagoya City Art Museum, April 16–June 12, 1994; Hiroshima Museum of Art, June 18–July 31, 1994, no. 19, as Le boulevard des Capucines.


Monet and the Birth of Impressionism, Städel Museum, Frankfurt am Main, March 11–June 21, 2015, no. 61, as The Boulevard des Capucines / Le Boulevard des Capucines.


References


Exposition des Peintres de l’École française du XIXe Siècle, exh. cat. (Paris: Knoedler, 1924), 13, as Les Grands Boulevards.


Maurice Malinge, Claude Monet (Monaco: Les Documents d’Art, 1943), 61, 146, (repro.), as Le Boulevard.

Possibly Camille Mauclair, Claude Monet et l’impressionnisme (Paris: J. Renard, 1943), 45, as Boulevards.

A Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Claude Monet for the Benefit of the Children of Giverny, exh. cat. (New York:
Wildenstein, 1944), 28, 31, (repro.), as Les Grands Boulevards.


Oscar Reuterswärd, Monet: En konstnärshistorik (Stockholm: Albert Bonniers Förlag, 1948), 70–72, 76, 81, 281, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines i små.


Claude Monet: An exhibition of paintings arranged by the Arts Council of Great Britain in association with the Edinburgh Festival Society, exh. cat. (London: Tate Gallery, 1957), 11, 22, as Boulevard des Capucines.


“One Hundred Years of Impressionism”: A Tribute to Durand-Ruel; A Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the New

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art | French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

Phoebe Pool, Impressionism (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), 16-17, 117, 272, 284, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


“Monet’s Snowy Boulevard,” Kansas City Star 93, no. 129 (January 24, 1973): unpaginated, as Boulevard des Capucines.

“Try this Quick Quiz,” Kansas City Star 93, no. 133 (January 28, 1973): 4B, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Mrs. R.E. Weavering, “A Joy Forever: Nelson Gallery visitors cluster around the new acquisition, Monet’s “Boulevard des Capucines.” The impressionist work will give pleasure to many for many years to come, says one reader,” Kansas City Star (March 26, 1973): (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Donald Hoffmann, “Gifts to the Gallery,” Kansas City Star 93, no. 294 (July 8, 1973): E[1], as Boulevard des Capucines.


Donald Hoffmann, “Gifts Grace Gallery’s 40th Year,” Kansas City Times 106, no. 82 (December 12, 1973): 1, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Steven Z. Levine, “Monet’s Pairs,” Arts Magazine 49, no. 10 (June 1975): 74, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Impressionnisme en Lorraine, exh. cat. (Nancy: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1975), unpaginated, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Michel Hoog, Monet (London: Eyre Methuen, 1978), unpaginated, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Donald Hoffmann, “The fine art of contributing to the gallery: Benefactors’ gifts help keep inflation at bay at the Nelson,” *Kansas City Star* 101, no. 225 (June 7, 1981): 1f, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Mark Fraser and E.A. Torriero, “Nelson Gallery hopes changes will paint a new portrait,” *Kansas City Times* (January 30, 1982): A10, as *Boulevard Des Capucines*.


Paul Hayes Tucker, *Monet at Argenteuil* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), xii, 163, 172, (repro.), as *Boulevard des Capucines* (Le *Boulevard des Capucines*).

Helen O. Borowitz, “The Rembrandt and Monet of Marcel Proust,” *Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 70, no. 2 (February 1983): 90, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.

George L. McKenna, “My favorite things: What do the curators like?,” *Kansas City Star* 103, no. 186 (April 24, 1983): 13, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Paul [Hayes] Tucker, “The first Impressionist exhibition and Monet’s Impression, Sunrise: a tale of times, commerce and patriotism,” *Art History* 7, no. 4 (December 1984): 475n1, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


(Leningrad: Aurora Art, 1984), 127, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Horst Keller, Claude Monet (Munich: Verlag F. Bruckmann KG, 1985), 60–61, 72, 166, (repro.), as Der Boulevard des Capucines.


Denys Sutton, “Impressionism and Revisionism,” Apollo 123, no. 292 (June 1986): 404, 413n1, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


“The Nelson Gallery, institute form solid base for art landscape,” Kansas City Star 109, no. 135 (February 22,
1989): 26, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.

R. R. Bernier, “Monet’s ‘Language of the Sketch’,” *Art History* 12, no. 3 (September 1989): 319n4, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Janet Braide and Nancy Parke-Taylor, Caroline and Frank Armington: *Canadian Painter-Etchers in Paris* ([Brampton, Canada]: Art Gallery of Peel, 1990), 44, 78n99, (repro.), as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Katsumi Miyazaki, *The Great History of Art* (Kyoto, Japan: Dōhōsha Shuppan, 1990), 67, 142, 144, (repro.).


The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art | French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945


Alice Thorson, “The Nelson celebrates its 60th; Museum built its reputation, collection virtually ‘from scratch’,” *Kansas City Star* (July 18, 1993): J1, as *Boulevard des Capucines, Paris*.


Richard Kendall, *Degas Landscapes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 179, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


255, 259n10, 278, 298, (repro.), as *Le boulevard des Capucines*.


Alice Thorson, “Monet-mania strikes—Chicago Art Institute presents largest showing of impressionist’s works,” *Kansas City Star* (July 23, 1995): J1, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


George Gurley, “It is ‘Art History,’ indeed; KU’s Marilyn Stokstad labored eight years to produce a work of tremendous scope,” *Kansas City Star* (April 28, 1996): J1, as *Boulevard des Capucines, Paris*.


Peter Clothier, “Star Attractions,” *ARTnews* 95, no. 7 (Summer 1996): 42, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.

Alice Thorson, “Have an art attack at museums, galleries,” *Kansas City Star* (June 23, 1996): 52, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Daniel Wildenstein, Monet or The Triumph of Impressionism (Cologne: Benedikt Taschen Verlag GmbH, 1996), no. 293, pp. 103–05, 479 (repro.), as The Boulevard des Capucines.


Alice Thorson, “Traveling treasures: Some gallery favorites to go on tour as Nelson gears up for expansion,” Kansas City Star (December 13, 1997): E1, as Boulevard.


Matthias Arnold, Claude Monet (Reinbek bei Hamburg, Germany: Rowohlt, 1998), 98.


Alice Thorson, “City has art to please any palate,” Kansas City Star (June 20, 1999): 90, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Claude Monet, La poesia della luce; Sette capolavori dell’Art Institute di Chicago a Palazzo Pitti, exh. cat. (Florence: Giunti, 1999), 16, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Craig Horst, “Travel on Foot to See the Quirky and Classic Art of Kansas City,” Salt Lake Tribune 250, no. 65 (June 18, 2000): H1, as Boulevard des Capucines.

Craig Horst, “Kansas City museums offer the traditional and the quirky,” Ann Arbor News (June 25, 2000): unpaginated, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Marco Goldin, La Nascita dell’Impressionismo (Conegliano, Italy: Linea d’ombra Libri, 2000), 85, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Alisa Luxenberg, “‘Sticks and stones...’: naming and name-calling in Impressionist imagery,” Word and Image 17, no. 3 (July–September 2001): 284–85, 287, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Lindsay Snider, “A Lasting Impression: French Painters Revolutionize the Art World,” The History Teacher 35, no. 1


Maria Teresa Benedetti, Monet: i luoghi (Florence: Giunti Gruppo Editoriale, 2001), 10, as Boulevard des Capucines.

James Fieser, Moral Philosophy through the Ages (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield, 2001), unpaginated, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Nobuyuki Senzoku, Art Nouveau and Art Deco (Tokyo: Shogakukan, 2001), (repro.).

Paul Hayes Tucker et al., Renoir: From Outsider to Old Master, 1870–1892, exh. cat. (Nagoya, Japan: Chunichi Shimbun, 2001), 234, as Boulevard des Capucines.

Irina Antonova, Old Masters, Impressionists, and Moderns: French Masterworks from the State Pushkin Museum, Moscow (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 114n1, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Dario Gamboni, Potential Images: Ambiguity and Indeterminacy in Modern Art (London: Reaktion, 2002), 109, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Ann Spivak, “Memories are made of this,” *Kansas City Star* (April 9, 2006): 6, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Marco Goldin, *Turner e gli impressionisti: La grande storia del paesaggismo moderno in Europa*, exh. cat. (Treviso, Italy:
Linea d'Ombri Libri, 2006), 253, 261n6, 280, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.


Possibly Karin Sagner, Monet at Giverny (Munich: Prestel, 2006), 104, as Boulevard des Capucines.

Norio Shimada, Claude Monet (Tokyo: Shōgakukan, 2006), 50–51, (repro.).


Claudio Zambianchi, Monet e la pittura en plein air (Florence: E-Ducation.it, 2007), 175, 178–79, (repro.), as Le Boulevard des Capucines.


“Eye Level—'Boulevard des Capucines','” Kansas City Star (February 8, 2009): MG17, as Boulevard des Capucines.

Richard R. Brettell and C. D. Dickerson III, From the Private Collections of Texas: European Art, Ancient to Modern, exh. cat. (Fort Worth, TX: Kimbell Art Museum, 2009), 293, 453, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines.

Alice Thorson, “Art Institute of Chicago reinterprets Edward Munch in a stunning exhibit,” *Kansas City Star* (March 8, 2009): F1, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Alfredo Cramerotti, ed., *Unmapping the City: Perspectives of Flatness* (Bristol, UK: Intellect, 2010), 34, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Laurence Madeline, “C’était l’été 74,” 48/14: *La revue du Musée d’Orsay*, no. 31 (Spring 2011): 59, 65n67, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Camilla Storskog, “Literary Impressionism and Finland: A Critical Digest,” *Scandinavian Studies* 83, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 406n27, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Richard M. Berrong, *Putting Monet and Rembrandt into Words: Pierre Loti’s Recreation and Theorization of Claude Monet’s Impressionism and Rembrandt’s Landscapes in Literature* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Department of Romance Languages, 2013), 42, 44, 88n14, as *Boulevard des Capucines*.

Frédéric Cousinié, ed., *L’impressionnisme: du plein air au territoire* (Mont-Saint-Aignan, France: Presses
24, 251, 253, (repro.), as Boulevard des Capucines and as Le boulevard des Capucines, erroneously cited as being in the Pushkin Museum.


Aline Hauck, Collection Les Rencontres du patrimoine de la Générale, no. 2, Charles de Meurmoran: l’artiste caché (Schiltigheim, France: Aline Hauck, 2014), unpaginated, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Peter Baldinger, Andrea Bischof, and Bodo Hassel, Mit Blick auf Monet: Drei Zeitgenössische Positionen, ed. Stephan Koja (Salzburg: Artbook, 2015), 11, as Boulevard des Capucines.


Vlastimil Tetiva, *Claude Monet: (1840–1926)* (Prague: Regulus, 2015), 19, 60, (repro.), as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Michael Marrinan, Gustave Caillebotte: *Painting the Paris of Naturalism, 1872–1887* (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2016), 50–51, 80, 95, 386, (repro.), as *Boulevard des Capucines*.


Maria Luisa Pacelli, Barbara Guidi, Hélène Pinet, *De Nittis e la rivoluzione dello sguardo*, exh. cat. (Ferrara, Italy: Fondazione Ferrara Arte, 2019), 79, 90n17, (repro.), as *Boulevard des Capucines a Parigi*.

Frances Fowl, “A Woman of No Importance?: Elizabeth Workman’s Collection of Impressionist and Post-