York Art Gallery

Monet in York

The Water-Lily Pond

Teacher Resource Pack

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How to use this resource

This Teacher Resource Pack is aimed at helping you get the most out of a visit with your pupils to the National Treasures: Monet in York 'The Water-Lily Pond' temporary exhibition at York Art Gallery.

The resource provides an overview of each part of the exhibition, with a selection of key artworks for your class to find and discuss, and some ideas for activities you can set your pupils back at school.

With the exception of Monet's painting *'The Water-Lily Pond'* — which is on loan from the National Gallery, London — we have chosen to focus on artworks from within our own collections at York Art Gallery.

Curriculum links

A visit to York Art Gallery to explore the National Treasures: Monet in York *'The Water-Lily Pond'* exhibition has the potential to cover the following areas of the National Curriculum:

Key stage 1

Pupils should be taught:

- to use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination
- to develop a wide range of art and design techniques in using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space
- about the work of a range of artists, craft makers and designers, describing the differences and similarities between different practices and disciplines, and making links to their own work.

Key stage 2

Pupils should be taught:

- to create sketch books to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas
- to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials [for example, pencil, charcoal, paint, clay]
- about great artists, architects and designers in history.

Visiting York Art Gallery



Photo by Duncan Lomax, Ravage Productions

York Art Gallery is open for schools to visit on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. The earliest we can accommodate groups on site is 10.00am.

All school visits to York Art Gallery must be booked in advance. Groups that arrive without pre-booking will risk being turned away.

Please visit our website (yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk) for more information about arranging a visit. Alternatively, you can contact us directly by emailing: schools@ymt.org.uk.

There are a number of additional resources that we can make available to groups visiting the National Treasures: Monet in York *'The Water-Lily Pond'* exhibition.

- Our 'Draw Like Monet!' trail leads pupils around eight frames in the Museum Gardens to be inspired by Monet's love of painting in the open air.
- Sketching kits, which include clipboards, paper, pencils, sharpeners, rubbers and erasers, can be loaned to visiting schools.

Please let us know when making a booking whether you would like to access any of these additional resources.

About the exhibition

National Treasures: Monet in York *'The Water-Lily Pond'* gives visitors an insight into Monet and his work, the artists who inspired him, and the impact his work has had on artists past and present.

1. The first room in the exhibition looks at artists and artworks that inspired Monet. This includes:

- The work of French artists who broke with tradition by starting to paint outside during the early 1800s.
- Japanese woodblock prints known as *ukiyo-e* (pictures of the floating world), which had a large impact on Monet's work as they were made in series.

2. The second room in the exhibition contains artworks by some of the artists who Monet saw as his mentors. This includes:

- A painting by Eugène Boudin, an artist who worked in the open air and painted many countryside scenes.

The space also contains works by artists who were inspired by Monet. This includes:

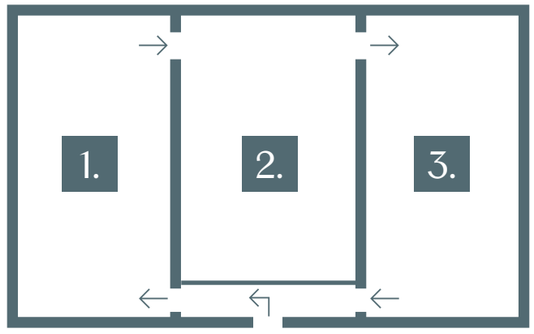
- A painting by Charles Condor who, influenced by Monet, began to use bright colours in his own paintings.

This room is where you can find Monet's painting '*The Water-Lily Pond*'.

3. The final room in the exhibition looks at the impact that Monet, and Impressionism, have had on the development of modern art. This includes:

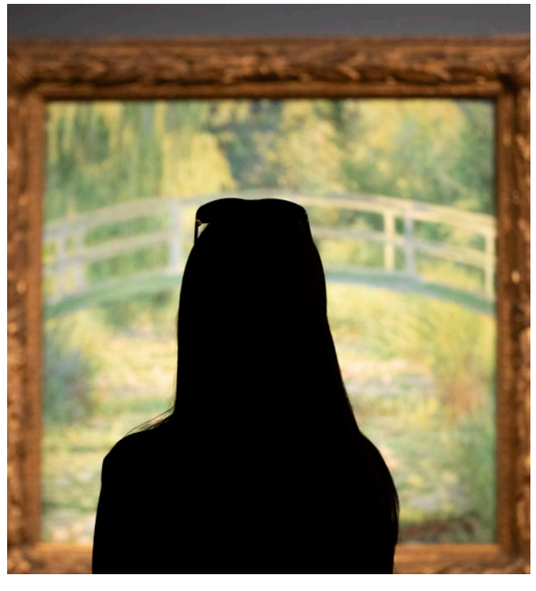
- Paintings, ceramics and even Pop Art created in styles that move on from Monet's ways of working.
- A new body of work created by Michaela Yearwood-Dan, which has partly been inspired by Monet's *The Water-Lily Pond*.

Plan of York Art Gallery spaces



Top photo by Charlotte Graham Photography. Bottom photo by Duncan Lomax, Ravage Productions





Keep an eye out for...

The National Treasures: Monet in York *'The Water Lily Pond'* exhibition offers several opportunities for pupils to engage with and view the displayed artworks in alternative ways:

Our 'Draw like Monet! Trail' leads pupils around eight frames in the Museum Gardens to be inspired by Monet's love of painting in the open air. Please let us know during the booking process if you would like to access copies of this trail for your class.

Artist Sam Metz has created four tactile objects in collaboration with Pinc College, a creative college for neurodivergent students aged 16–18. There is a short film in the first room of the exhibition which explains how to use these objects. Look out for the hand symbols inviting you to pick up and interact with these objects as you move around the exhibition.

Louise Thompson from Mindful Museums has developed three guided meditations for the exhibition and one for our gardens. These are designed to encourage visitors to reflect on the artworks inside and the wildflower meadow outside. Look out for the ear symbols next to QR codes which you can use to access and listen to these meditations using your own device and headphones.

A digital touch table in the second room enables visitors to zoom in and get up close to the brushstrokes and colours in *'The Water-Lily Pond'*.

Room One: Open air painting and the Barbizon School

Open air painting

Monet was influenced by a group of French landscape artists who had broken with tradition by starting to paint *en plein air* during the early 1800s. *En plein air* refers to the practice of painting outdoors, in the open air, rather than inside in a studio.

Monet was a founding member of the Impressionist movement. The Impressionists believed in working outside and showing changes in natural light in their surroundings by using quick brushstrokes.

Guillemet was friends with many of the Impressionists, including Monet. In this painting, an artist — possibly Guillemet himself — is shown seated at his easel, painting the landscape. Guillemet's quick and energetic brushwork can be seen in the clouds moving across the sky, and in the low, rough vegetation blowing in the breeze.

Enquiry questions

- Discuss what you think the differences might be between painting in a studio indoors, and painting outside in the open air. What might be some of the benefits and challenges of both ways of working?
- Explore the works in this gallery. Can you tell what time of day or of year they were painted? What clues lead you to your answer?

Suggested activity

- Explore a green space near your school (or even the Museum Gardens) and enjoy making some open air paintings or sketches of your own.



Jean-Baptiste-Antoine Guillemet
(1843–1918)
Artist in a Landscape
Oil on canvas

The Barbizon School

Between 1830 and 1870, a group of French artists gathered to paint in the forest of Fontainebleau near the village of Barbizon. The Barbizon School's commitment to observing and capturing the changing nature of sunlight had an important influence on the Impressionists, including Monet.

Artist Camille Corot sketched in the forest from 1822, and carefully recorded the changing effects of light and weather before returning to his studio to paint. He painted 'souvenirs' of wooded landscapes, which he worked up in the studio using soft colours to capture changes in light and weather.

In this painting he has created a light-coloured ground, where the silvery purple tones suggest it is evening. Corot had a big impact on Monet who, in 1897, declared: 'There is only one master here — Corot. We are nothing compared to him, nothing'.

Enquiry questions

- Have a look at the paintings in this section of the gallery. How much can you tell about the weather, season or time of day by looking carefully at the brushstrokes?
- Imagine you are standing in one of these landscapes. What can you see, smell and hear around you?

Suggested activity

- Corot's painting was an important influence for Monet. Think about an artist who has really inspired you. Can you create a picture inspired by the techniques they use?



Camille Corot
(1796–1875)
Landscape, 1860–70
Oil on canvas

Room One: Monet and Japanese prints

The woodblock prints displayed in this room are known as *ukiyo-e* (pictures of the floating world). This art form first developed in Japan during the Edo period (1603–1863).

Katsushika Hokusai and Utagawa Hiroshige were the two most famous *ukiyo-e* landscape print artists.

In the 1860s, cheap Japanese prints and books became widely available in Paris. Monet collected over 200 of these prints and they came to influence his work.

He was particularly inspired by the idea of creating several works that focused on a single place or motif under different light and weather conditions.

In his garden at his home in Giverny, Monet planted Japanese peonies and bamboo on the banks of his water-lily pond and constructed an arched Japanese-style bridge, which can be seen in his painting *The Water-Lily Pond*.



Monet in his dining room at Giverny, from the collection of Phillippe Piguet



Utagawa Hiroshige
(1797–1858)
Kozuke Haruna-yama setchū (Mount Haruna in the Snow, Kozuke), 1853
Woodblock

This print comes from Hiroshige's series Famous Places in the Sixty-odd Provinces (1853–56), a set of prints showing landscapes through the changing seasons.

He uses different shades of blue to show the depth of the gorge, which makes the figures crossing the bridge seem really tiny. His use of grey also makes the white of the snow stand out. This is an effect Monet used when creating his own wintry artworks.

Enquiry questions

- Explore the Japanese prints in this space. Make a list of some of the tiny details you see. How many of them include people or animals, for example? What do you notice about the way these are portrayed?
- There are clues in some of these works about the time of day or year in which they were painted. Can you find some of these?

Suggested activities

- Inspired by these Japanese prints, create a series of photographs, prints or paintings. Choose one view, but capture it at different times of the day, in different weather, or in different seasons.
- Think about a particular landmark near you. How does it change from season to season? Write a poem using language as though you are a painter capturing these changes.

Room Two: 'The Water-Lily Pond'

Claude Monet was a leading French Impressionist painter. *The Water-Lily Pond* is one of his most well-known paintings. The work is a celebration of painting in the open air and closely observing nature. It also reflects Monet's love of his carefully designed gardens. You will find this painting in the second room of the exhibition.

The Impressionists liked to paint outside rather than indoors. Their aim was to capture the movement and life of what they saw, and to show it as if it were happening right there on the canvas. Impressionist painters were known for painting quickly using thick, sometimes messy, brushstrokes. Painting quickly helped them to capture changes in light.

The Water-Lily Pond shows a view of Monet's beloved water garden at his home in the village of Giverny, Normandy. In the painting, Monet uses bright colours and thick, visible, brushstrokes. Monet created over 250 pictures of his garden. He later said: 'It took me some time to understand my water-lilies. And then all at once, I had the revelation — how wonderful my pond was — and reached for my palette'.

Enquiry questions

- Spend some time quietly looking at the painting, moving up close and observing it from a distance around the room. What do you notice about the brushstrokes? What colours can you see? How has Monet painted the waterlilies?
- Imagine you are standing on the bridge in this painting. What might you see, hear and smell at different times of year?

Suggested activity

- Have a go at using chalky or oil pastels to make a watery scene in an Impressionist style. How might you represent light and reflections?



NG4240 Claude Monet (1840–1926)
The Water-Lily Pond, 1899.
© The National Gallery, London

Room Two: Monet's Mentors and Inspired by Monet

Monet's Mentors

This room contains works by several artists who Monet thought of as his mentors. This includes work by the French painter Eugène Boudin, who was one of the artists who encouraged Monet to paint in the open air.

Boudin painted many idealised countryside scenes, such as the riverside in this painting. He was committed to working in the open air, and recorded landscapes and livestock using free, energetic, brush strokes.

He focused on capturing small changes in light and colour and claimed that 'three strokes of the brush before nature are worth more than two days of work in the studio'.

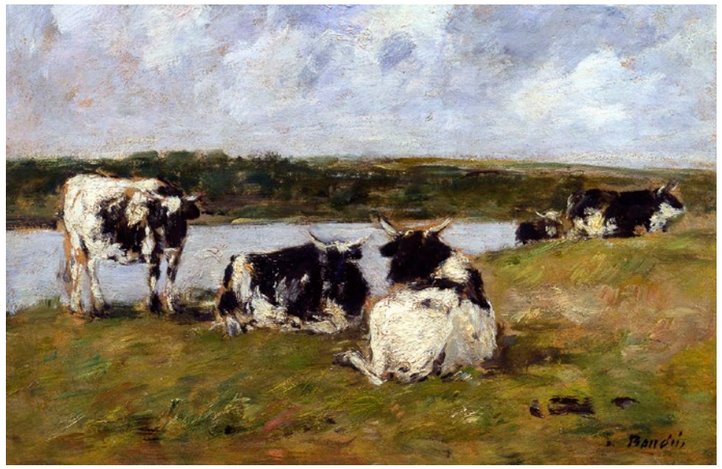
Because of his mentorship of Monet, Boudin was invited to take part in the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874.

Enquiry questions

- Boudin thought that painting in front of nature was far more important than painting back in the studio. Do you agree with this statement? Try and think of reasons for and against your decision.
- There are some tactile objects throughout the gallery. How does it feel to be able to touch these works of art?

Suggested activity

- Try using a paintbrush at different speeds when creating a painting outside. What do you notice when painting quickly or slowly?



Eugène Boudin
(1824–1898)
Cows on a River Bank, 1880–85
Oil on paper on millboard

Inspired by Monet

This section of the exhibition includes works by several artists who were active in the 19th century and were inspired by Monet.

Some spent time with Monet, whilst others followed in his footsteps to witness the same scenery he did. Many went on to promote Monet's ideas and methods in their native countries.

Born in England, Conder emigrated to Australia in 1884, where he became part of the Impressionist movement. He moved to Paris in 1890, and was struck by Monet's art, telling a friend: 'I only wish you could have seen some of his landscapes; *they lived*...'.

Conder travelled to several of the places that Monet visited including Yport, a pretty coastal village in Normandy.

During these trips, Conder began to use a brighter colour palette and more energetic brushstrokes. In this canvas, he has painted chalky cliffs in light blues, pale purples, and yellow-tinged creams.

Enquiry questions

- Look at the paintings on the wall opposite Monet's *The Water-Lily Pond*. Which is your favourite and why?
- Choose one of the paintings. Create a word cloud to express some of the moods, colours and textures in this work. Can you turn these into a poem or piece of descriptive writing?



Charles Conder
(1868–1909)
Yport, Normandy, 1892
Oil on canvas

Room Three: Beyond Monet

Monet, and Impressionism, had a wide-ranging impact on the development on modern art.

Impressionism focused on how artists see the world, challenging the need for art to be an accurate representation of real life. This encouraged artists in the early 20th century to experiment, which led to the creation of movements such as Expressionism, Cubism and Abstraction.

One of these artists was Ethel Walker. Born in Scotland, Walker grew up in London and was the first woman artist elected to the New English Art Club in 1900. During her studies at the Slade School of Art, she visited Paris and was inspired by exhibitions of the French Impressionists.

It is likely that Walker created this dramatic, panoramic landscape while seated on a bench, overlooking her cottage studio at Robin Hood's Bay, near Whitby.

The influence of Impressionist landscape painting is evidenced by her rapidly applied brushstrokes, which give us an idea of the sensory experience of painting outdoors.

Enquiry questions

- Have a look at the different styles of art in this room. Choose your favourite artwork. How is it similar and how is it different from Monet's style of painting?
- Find the work by pop artist Roy Lichtenstein. How has this artist created a work so different from Monet's?

Suggested activity

- Create a collage using cut up magazines to make an abstract landscape scene using blocks of colour to represent the things you see.



Ethel Walker
(1861–1951)
Landscape at Robin Hood's Bay, 1942–48
Oil on canvas

Room Three: Michaela Yearwood-Dan: Una Sinfonia

Inspired by Monet's interest in changes in light, Yearwood-Dan uses the four seasons as a starting-point for her paintings.

Michaela Yearwood-Dan endeavours to build spaces of community, abundance, and joy. Her visual language draws on a diverse range of influences, including Blackness, queerness, femininity, healing rituals, and carnival culture. Moving freely between media, the artist embeds botanical motifs and text within abstract forms and heavy drips of paint. For this exhibition, she has created a new body of work inspired in part by Monet's *The Water-Lily Pond*.

Drawing upon Monet's fascination with the changing quality of light, Yearwood-Dan takes the seasons as a thematic starting-point for her paintings. These present a bold colour palette, with language and floral motifs immersed within lush forms. Delicate beads and ceramic petals decorate the surface of the canvases, referencing queer histories and exemplifying her preoccupation with texture.

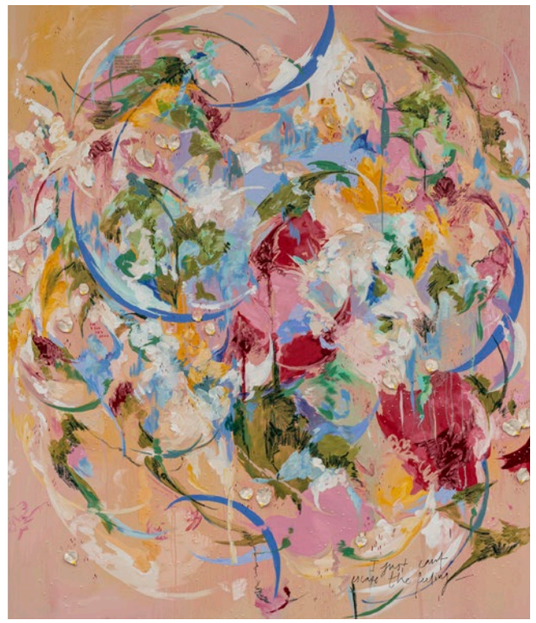
Her works on paper shown here loosely follow the same theme, but offer lively, quicker explorations of the atmospheric qualities which Monet sought to capture in his paintings. They also look to the forms and gestures of Japanese prints that likewise influenced Monet.

Enquiry question

- The four large works by Michaela Yearwood-Dan represent the four seasons. Which season do you think is represented by each of the paintings?

Suggested activity

- Michaela Yearwood-Dan uses words and phrases in her artworks. What are some of the phrases that you might choose to represent you in an artwork? Make a painting which includes some of these.



Michaela Yearwood-Dan (born 1994),
The girls take their places, 2024
Oil, beads and ceramic on canvas
© Michaela Yearwood-Dan. Courtesy of the artist and Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York and Aspen

Notes

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Little Greene
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NATIONAL TREASURES
MONET IN YORK

THE NATIONAL GALLERY | NG200
200 YEARS OF THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Front and back cover:
Detail: NG4240 Claude Monet (1840–1926) *The Water-Lily Pond*, 1899. © The National Gallery, London