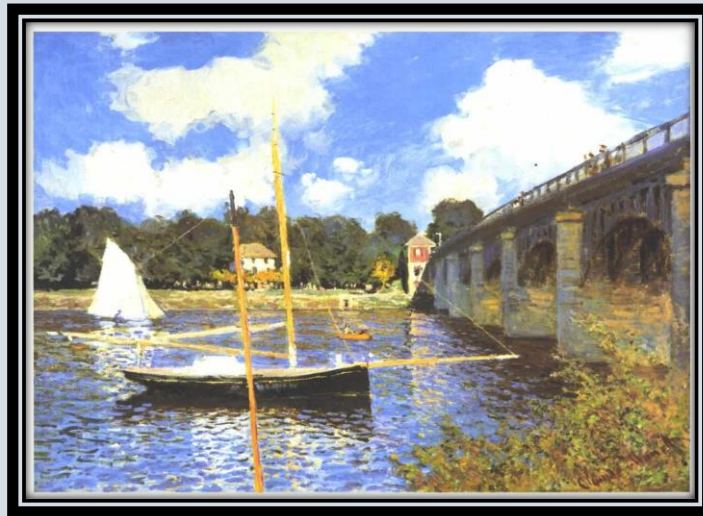


Study day 10 May 2023

The Seine - RIVER OF LIGHT - Home to Impressionism



This wonderful river in France, often referred to as the River of Light, was a great influence on the 19th century artists and the development of Impressionism. From the luminescent estuary which first attracted them, to the area west of Paris which became known as the Cradle of Impressionism they came to seek inspiration. This series of three lectures follows the course of the river and the exploits along it and will aim to uncover new revelations!

Lecture 1 The Seine Estuary - Capturing the 19th century imagination

The ever-changing sky and sparkling Seine estuary where sky, sea and earth seem to fuse, attracted 19th artists, writers and musicians. Through the guidance of the “Master of the Skies,” painter Eugene Boudin, Monet took his first ever painting lesson in the open air here. A new way of approaching art was opened up resulting in Impressionism. This lecture will look at the host of artists who flocked to the picturesque harbour of Honfleur and its surroundings to capture, in Baudelaire’s words “this green and rose vastness which goes to my head like an intoxicating drink”.

Lecture 2 Belle Epoque Paris and the Cradle of Impressionism to the West

In this second lecture we first look at the Capital which Haussmann had revitalised into one of the most elegant and outwardly prosperous cities in Europe, and then look at the context in which the artists worked. “The Modern Age”! From there we move onto a tiny loop of the Seine nicknamed the cradle of Impressionism where our artists struggled to make a living and gain recognition; a far cry from the universal popularity they have today.

Lecture 3 The Path to Success - collectively or independently...

In this the last lecture I want to explore how our artists came to terms with a radically changed and depressed art market and economy following the Franco Prussian War and how they continued nevertheless to grow their careers in art. **They gradually started to drift away from each other often following the course of the Seine to pastures new, sometimes even a tributary of the Seine in search of that ever-special motif; and in their wake a new wave of artists would follow hot on their heels.**

Carole Petipher has worked as a guide/ lecturer in and around Paris using converted barges as her base. She has in depth knowledge of the Seine river having worked on a number of vessels along its course; hence the inspiration for this series of lectures.