

Cézanne's Portraits of His Most Painted Model Open at The Met

November 14, 2014

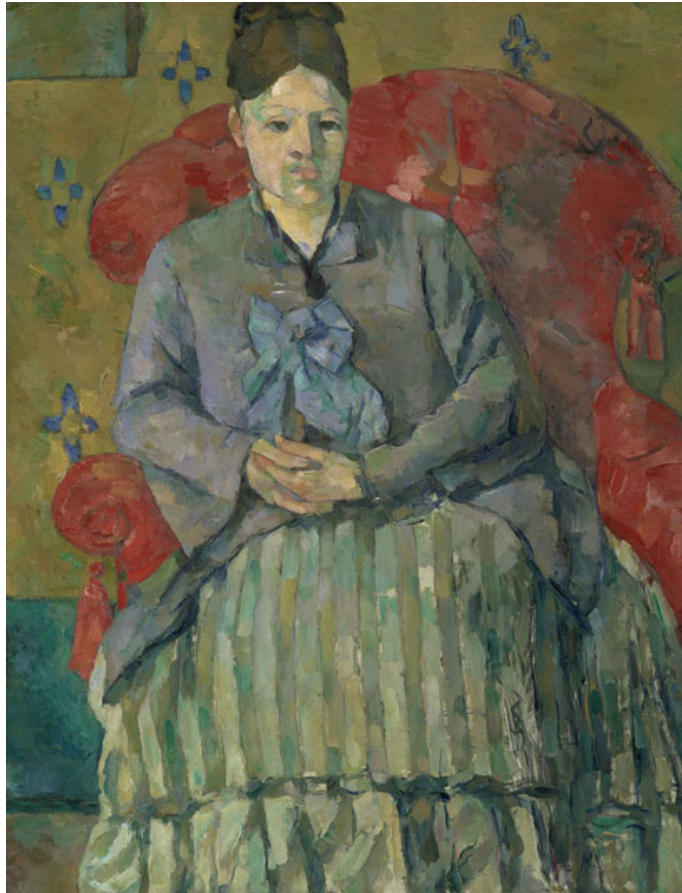
by Hamptons Art Hub Staff

"Madame Cézanne", the first exhibition of portraits by Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) portraying his most painted model—his wife, Hortense Fiquet (1850–1922),—opens at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on November 19, 2014. "Madame Cézanne" traces Cézanne's lifelong attachment to the woman who was his longstanding model, wife, and mother of their son, Paul. The exhibition continues through March 15, 2015 in the Robert Lehman Collection, located on the first floor. The show opens to museum members on November 17 with an evening reception from 6 to 8 p.m. and a Members Exhibition Preview on Tuesday, November 18, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. for Supporting, Sustaining and Friend Members of the museum.

"Madame Cézanne" will feature 24 of the 29 known portraits of Hortense Fiquet that Cézanne painted over 20 years. The exhibition examines the complex partnership between husband and wife through portraits in oil, watercolor, and graphite. Works include *Madame Cézanne in the Conservatory* (1891) and *Madame Cézanne in a Red Dress* (1888–90), both from the Metropolitan Museum's collection.

Additional highlights on works on canvas on loan from museums located in the United States, German and Japan. They include *Madame Cézanne in a Red Armchair* (ca. 1877) (The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston); *Madame Cézanne* (ca. 1885) (from a private collection on loan to Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Nationalgalerie, Museum Berggruen, Berlin); *Portrait of Madame Cézanne* (ca. 1885–87) (Philadelphia Museum of Art); *Portrait of Madame Cézanne in a Striped Dress* (1883–85) (Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan) and *Madame Cézanne in Blue* (ca. 1888–90) (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston).

Highlights of works on paper include three watercolors, 14 drawings, and three rare sketchbooks bearing affectionate studies of Hortense and a young Paul.



“Madame Cézanne in a Red Armchair” by Paul Cézanne (circa 1877). Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Cézanne met Hortense in Paris in 1869 while she was working as a bookbinder, according to The Met. Details of first encounter are unknown and an early portrait from 1872 suggests Hortense was modeling for Cézanne by the age of 22. She went on to profoundly influenced Cezanne’s portrait practice for over two decades but was never well received by Cezanne’s family or friends.

Hortense’s portraits can seem removed and the critics citing Hortense’s sour expression and remote demeanor compounded a reputation that was undeserved, according to The Met.

“Cézanne took great pains to conceal his mistress and their only child, Paul, from his family fearing his authoritative father’s disapproval,” according to an exhibition release. “The complicated subterfuge led to separate residences, frequent and often desperate appeals for funds, and long periods of living apart, even after their marriage in 1886. Despite this seeming neglect, the portraits attest to the constancy of a relationship that was critical to the artist’s practice and development. Their story is a compelling one, perhaps all the more so for the absence of its particulars.”

“Madame Cézanne” is organized by Dita Amory, Acting Associate Curator in Charge and Administrator of The Robert Lehman Collection at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, with Kathryn Kremnitzer, Research Assistant. The exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue written by a team of

scholars and edited by Amory. It is published by The Metropolitan Museum of Art and distributed by Yale University Press.

“Paul Cézanne: Drawings and Watercolors from the Metropolitan Museum’s Collection” will be on view in Gallery 960 in the Robert Lehman Wing from November 18, 2014 through March 15, 2015.

BASIC FACTS: “Madame Cézanne” opens November 19 and remains on view through March 15, 2015 in the Robert Lehman Collection gallery, located on the First Floor. “Paul Cézanne: Drawings and Watercolors from the Metropolitan Museum’s Collection” will be exhibited November 18, 2014 through March 15, 2015. The Metropolitan Museum of Art is located at 1000 5th Ave, New York, NY 10028. www.metmuseum.org.

Related Programming:

December 7, 2014: *Sunday at the Met* event takes place from 3 to 4:30 p.m. Includes exhibition tours, gallery talks with conservators and curators, and a studio workshop focusing on portraiture through drawing.

February 6, 2015: *February Obsession*, a performance by the Metropolitan Museum’s Quartet in Residence, the Attacca Quartet. The program will draw inspiration from the “Madame Cézanne exhibition. Check with the Met’s website for upcoming details.

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