

**Musée  
Marmottan  
Monet**

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July 5th  
2015**

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**LA TOILETTE  
NAISSANCE  
DE L'INTIME**

THE INVENTION OF PRIVACY

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## I FOREWORD



« Famed worldwide for its rich Claude Monet and Berthe Morisot collections, the Musée Marmottan Monet organized two major exhibitions in 2014 to celebrate the eightieth anniversary of its foundation: *Impressionist Works from Private Collections: 100 Masterpieces*, and *Monet's Impression, Sunrise: The Biography of a Painting*. But if this birthday program gives the impression that the museum collections are limited to the art of the late nineteenth century, the reality is very different. Constituted from no less than thirty gifts and bequests, they reflect the eclectic taste of our founder, Paul Marmottan, and of our benefactors generally.

Witness to these private passions, half the artworks held here come from other periods, ranging from the thirteenth to the twentieth century. Stained glass from Soissons Cathedral, a polyptych by the Master of Cesi, a *cassone* from the School of Ferrara, polychrome wooden sculptures from the School of Malines, and tapestries from Brussels offer a survey of medieval and Renaissance art articulated around one of France's finest collections of illuminated manuscripts. The museum also houses several pieces from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including *The Pipe Smoker* (1623) by Dirck van Baburen and *Views of the Château and Park at Raincy* (1780) by Carmontelle. Art from the Directory to the Empire is represented in all its forms: paintings by Pajou, Fabre, and above all Boilly (the museum has a remarkable set of his portraits), marbles from the School of Canova and Bartolini, furniture by Jacob-Desmalter and bronzes by Thomire constitute the decor of the Marmottan town house. Alongside paintings by Caillebotte, Corot, Gauguin, Manet, Pissarro, and Sisley, which enrich all this, a Chagall, *Bride with Blue Face*, illustrates the openness of the Musée Marmottan Monet to all forms of art and all periods.

In 2015 we want to reveal these riches in a new way by bringing together works from the fifteenth century to the present in order to highlight a specific aspect of our history and our culture. The exhibition *The Invention of Privacy* is part of this. Some hundred pieces - tapestries, paintings, sculptures, photographs, engravings - describe a new practice, the toilette, accompanied by the evolution of corporeal rituals as well as the eventual appearance of a dedicated space. A space that was closed off as actions were invented and the individual appropriated a time that was truly personal. The exhibition also traces the impact of this new theme on the arts in the late nineteenth century with, notably, the birth of the modern nude. The twentieth century marks a turning point. The theme of the toilette provided the avant-garde with an opportunity to convey personal and collective suffering by means of destructured forms. It also questioned consumerism. As for the twenty-first century, it is probing the collusion of notions such as privacy and exhibition, and revisiting the art of the past.

This event could not have happened without the cooperation of major French and foreign museums, and of many private collectors. We would like to thank them here. I am also grateful to the curators of the exhibition, Georges Vigarello and Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen, for their remarkable contribution and their unfailing commitment to a project that combines the history of art and the history of culture, and happily marries emotion and erudition. »

**Patrick de Carolis**

Director, Musée Marmottan Monet

## II PRESS RELEASE

Unidentified artist (School of Fontainebleau), *Presumed Portrait of Gabrielle d'Estrées and the Duchesse de Villars in the Bath*, late sixteenth century, Montpellier, Musée languedocien, collections de la Société archéologique de Montpellier

*This painting is a variation on an original, now in the Louvre, which depicts Gabrielle d'Estrées, mistress of Henri IV, and her sister. The two women are in the bath, a tub covered by a sheet, isolated by curtains. In the background, a wet nurse breastfeeds: the bath is no doubt linked to churching. The figures are meant to be refined: the busts remain upright, the limbs immobile, the faces made-up—far from poses of cleansing. The chemises that the bathers wear accentuate this reserve, even though the tub mingles the bodies.*



**After its 80th anniversary celebrations with 'Impressionist works from Private Collections' and 'Impression Sunrise,' the Musée Marmottan Monet will now present from February 12th to July 5th, 2015 the first exhibition ever dedicated to the theme of 'La Toilette and the Invention of Privacy.' The exhibition brings together works by major artists of the fifteenth century to the present, explores the rituals of cleanliness, their spaces and their gestures.**

This is the first time such a subject, unique and indispensable, is presented in the form of an exhibition. In these works that reflect everyday practices that might seem mundane, the public will discover the pleasures and surprises with a depth that few expected.

Prestigious museums and international collections joined enthusiastically in this project giving major loans, including some paintings that have never been shown since their creation. One hundred paintings, sculptures, prints, photographs and motion pictures («time-lapse») allow to offer an exceptional exhibition.

The exhibition opens with an outstanding collection of engravings by Dürer, de Primaticci, paintings from the l'École de Fontainebleau, including a Clouet, the outstanding *Femme à la puce* by Georges de La Tour, a unique and amazing collection of François Boucher, showing the invention of gestures and the special places one washed in the Old Regime Europe.

► PRESS RELEASE

**Alain Jacquet, *Gaby d'Estrées*,  
1965, Paris, galerie Vallois**

*Alain Jacquet is a representative of Mec'art, which is dedicated to the production of images by mechanical transfer processes.*

*The source of his silk-screen prints is not reality, but the history of art itself. Here, Jacquet revisits the Presumed Portrait of Gabrielle d'Estrées and the Duchesse de Villars in the Bath by the school of Fontainebleau (room 1). He did not content himself, however, with copying the original; he makes it look like a vaguely disturbing advertising photo. This modernization is evident in the title, in which the first name of the mistress of Henri IV is Americanized as "Gaby."*



In the second part of the exhibition, visitors will discover that with the nineteenth century there was a profound renewal of tools and modes of cleanliness. The appearance of the bathroom, that of a more diverse and abundant use of water inspired Manet, Berthe Morisot, Degas, Toulouse Lautrec and other artists, not least, unpublished scenes of women washing in tubs or in makeshift tanks. The gestures are disrupted, the space becomes definitively closed and made to conceal privacy, from which emerges a deep impression of intimacy and modernity.

The last part of the exhibition presents to the visitor the both familiar and disconcerting modern bathrooms and their «functional» uses, with artworks from Pierre Bonnard which show bathroom spaces where one is allowed, away from the eyes of others and the noise of the city, to dream.

Curators:

**Georges Vigarello**, historian

**Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen**, art historian

### III INTRODUCTION BY CURATORS

Southern Netherlands, *The Bath*, ca. 1500, Paris, musée de Cluny - Musée national du

#### Moyen Age

*This tapestry is an example of an early Renaissance conception of the bath: a bath that is taken during the summer, in a garden. A young noblewoman prepares her body, perhaps for a wedding night: she is surrounded by music, and jewels and sweetmeats are brought to her. She makes no cleansing gesture, deemed too prosaic, but remains immobile, naked to the hips, nearly ideal in her perfection. The bath verges on the dream-like: a hymn to beauty and femininity. The space is utopian and exposed; the nature prolific and saturated with colors.*



The hanging at the Musée de Cluny evoking an “episode of seigneurial life” in the sixteenth century illustrates a splendid bath: servants busy themselves around the bather whose stone basin is surrounded by luxuriant greenery. The musical instruments, perfumes, and colors suggest a state of sensorial alertness. The bath here stands for plenitude and pleasure, and is also a pretext for representing the naked body, a slender, lithe, and triumphant body in a refined setting. This image is particular, almost unreal in its perfection: there is no indication of everyday life, no action telling of ablution or care. In fact, this work belongs to the tradition that, in the early modern era, gave us all those women bathers in a prolific natural setting, bringing together fountains and skies, liquids and flowers, linen and flesh around hieratic, majestically posed bodies. For what is celebrated here is the nude, ideal forms—an apogee, rather than the very prosaic action of washing. Here, the bath is merely a pretext. Such scenes gain in ideality what they lose in reality. Frequent references to biblical

and mythological figures make it possible to ignore sartorial codes and reveal what everyday life may hide. Here, painters revealed what was “underneath,” these “perfect” lines offered up to the viewer’s gaze, in what was a significant step at a time when the profane was gaining in importance and Venus was subtly starting to compete with the Virgin. Hence these bodies with their delicate, milky complexions, their heightened forms, one important instance of which are Tintoretto’s *Susanna and the Elders*, especially the one at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna. This was a way of giving visual form to beauty in a period—the Renaissance—that witnessed an unprecedented obsession with physical excellence. But it is also a way of conveying modesty—that of Susanna espied by the old men, or that of Bathsheba in her bath, glimpsed by David. These women’s expressions, their attempts to hide themselves, offer all the delicacy expected of femininity. The traditional scene of the bath is thus concerned more with the body than with daily life, more with beauty and modesty than with washing.

Setting aside painterly interest in the bath as a pretext, immersion in a basin or frequentation of steam rooms was rare in the early modern period. Yes, there were *baigneries* in one or two large châteaux. Yes, important treatises on health did mention the hygienic effects of taking a bath. But not only was water scarce in the cities and houses of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it was also an object of fear. Spending time immersed in liquid and the opening of the pores in its heat were thought to cause fragility, making the body vulnerable to “venom,” and to the plague in particular. Starting in the late Middle Ages, more and more commentators stigmatized and rarefied the use of water: “For the bath, the veins are then open, and the water could enter the chief limbs of the body and reduce their virtue to nothingness,” warns one fifteenth-century treatise on healthy living. And indeed, such practices were never anything but limited.

What are precious, though, are these representations of the almost “mythic” bath from the dawn of the modern era. Their testimony to the ideal of physical beauty and perfection of lines is still linked with the idea of privacy. They play on the “covered” and the “uncovered,” the hidden and its secret. They delineate an intimacy made of adornment and veiling. Clothing protects. It is a “frontier.” Here, intimacy begins at the limits of the body, designating an “interior” that the fabric must cover, while affirming a decisive element of mystery and self-possession.

More frequent, and also more realistic, are toilette scenes: the woman sitting in front of her mirror, examining her complexion, applying powder, combing her hair. They reveal the growing importance of clothing, finery—of appearance—in the nascent modern world. They show the increasing prominence of norms, so much so that these become the subjects of illustrations touching, especially, on style and self-presentation. They also reveal how tiny a role was played by water in such matutinal operations, these “dry” practices in which cloths, perfume, and ointments were the main tools for cleaning, and even the hands were just furtively splashed with liquid. What these scenes especially reveal are zones of social tolerance that are pretty much forgotten today. A woman at her toilette was such a fitting subject for painters and engravers, say, because she was supposed to be making a show of herself.

The world of her bedchamber, or her boudoir, could easily be occupied by servants, by family and friends, and by visitors. The art of conversation could be practiced there, and likewise the art of exchange or sociability. There was not a trace of privacy as we think of it now. The woman applied makeup, groomed, and dressed herself in the presence of others, even if, of course, she never showed any nudity, that final rampart of her private self.

What the history of the toilette reveals is indeed the profound transformation of this image, as reflected in the work of painters and engravers. And it is this profound transformation that the present exhibition seeks to illustrate. The theme has been little studied and never made the subject of a project such as this one. The space of the “interior” changes, for example, in the eighteenth century. The scene becomes private, the place more “exclusive.” Water, too, becomes more commonplace, more “normal” as past fears are forgotten and new practices of ablution are adopted, which in turn, and at once, reduces tolerance of the outside gaze. For while servants might still be allowed to witness the use of the bidet and washing of the private parts, of the feet, and of other parts of the body, this was no longer done before visitors. The toilette was now divided into two parts: the first being the moment of a new intimacy related to new ways of washing; the second, the time of sociability corresponding to adjustment and the art of finishing touches.

This second moment, too, would be transformed by the end of the eighteenth century. By then, the once thoroughly social act of dressing had ceased to tolerate outside visitors. In her *Dictionnaire des étiquettes*, published in the first years of the nineteenth century, Madame de Genlis went so far as to express her amazement that such tolerance had ever existed. Now the scene of the toilette as a whole became private, disappearing from the grand genre of painting and being left to “naughty” or even “bawdy” illustrations. Above all, the space of the toilette itself was becoming closed, confined to the bedroom or the *cabinet de toilette*, as it imperceptibly became a feature of the bourgeois world, a place for the affirmation, the rediscovery, and the expression of the individual in actions that were strictly personal. The apparatus was thus transformed, becoming a medium for the “subject” and her own instruments, her new intimacy. This conquest, it must be said, was part of a broader emancipation and its symbol. For the culture of the eighteenth century developed private space around new practices of which solitary and reclusive private reading and the growth in personal documents (of the *for privé*) is the most decisive example.

Such a dynamic of privatization inevitably continued and grew in the nineteenth century. Soon it was the very domesticity of such toilette scenes that was less tolerated. Hence the totally renewed images that engravers loved to create, showing doors closing, bolts being drawn, the better to ensure privacy. The only things that exist here are actions that are supposed to escape all gazes, all that is affirmed is isolation, a totally personalized form of attention. This is the decisive phase in which the contemporary standard is formulated. What this requires, as we all know, is not just spatial; it also concerns attitudes, behavior, and tools. It also becomes psychological, with individuals existing in relation to themselves, studying themselves with a freedom that is strictly personal.

► INTRODUCTION BY CURATORS

It is, then, the nineteenth century that finally institutes the new situation, witnessing the general spread of the *cabinet de toilette* and, at the end of the century, of the bathroom supplied with water that, for the first time, reaches all floors. Here is a totally new space, at first reserved to the elite, then spreading ineluctably to all the other levels of society. As a result, the “secret” itself was redeployed, complexified, deepened. It is this “secret,” too, that became a new concern of painters once pictorial culture had, toward the end of the nineteenth century, moved toward a realism attentive to themes from everyday life and once, too, the legitimacy increasingly allowed to pleasure and desire made it possible to reinstate the mystery and power of images of intimacy. And, in renewing representations of the toilette and bath, it also renewed representations of nudity itself. Not only what is underneath, supposedly presenting the features, the physical lines that are not usually seen, but also the underside of actions, the teeming of life, of gestures, of self-contact, deemed all the more captivating in that they are enacted within the heart of the hidden. The scene of the toilette and bath now acquire a very new dynamic, a profusion of movements, the play of sponges, various ways of rubbing, the flow of water over the flesh. The nude itself is no longer the body of a model, but the prosaic, everyday body. Secret actions now outweigh the ideal of form.

In this ultimate and highly contemporary phase, the abandonment of these immersed bodies to water goes beyond washing or grooming and enters the psychological pleasure of a solitude savored in a milieu that is as welcoming as it is warm and yielding. This reflexive, almost meditative privacy makes water and the bath the moment of a total return back into the self, accompanying the triumph of a new kind of individualism. Now even the assured gazes of these contemporary bathers in their bath, their deliberate and proud gazes, are forever beyond the domesticating reach of the photographer or painter.

In this immense sequence, privacy, initially limited to the margins of clothing, has, in the emerging modern world, constructed a specific space with its own instruments and distinctive actions, one where that same intimacy, initially surprised by the intrusive gaze of the outsider, has now acquired sufficient self-assurance to be able to challenge that same gaze.

Georges Vigarello

Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen

## IV TOUR OF THE EXHIBITION

The major changes in hygiene practices and personal grooming in the course of Western history are not limited to the pursuit of “cleanliness.” These practices represent so much more. They have contributed to an extension of the private sphere. In other words, they have increased the place allocated to what is private and personal, to the most secret part of individuals. They enrich and define the actions one performs in private. Thus, the individual gains in self-affirmation and autonomy.

The visual arts demonstrate this: not only do they undress bodies, but they also show them engaging in hygiene and beauty practices that are increasingly specific, increasingly private, in spaces that gradually isolate and conceal those performing them. This dynamic has resulted in an “appropriation” of space, the invention of a constantly growing of actions, and a new conception of what is private.

### 1 | The Amorous Bath of the Renaissance

Unidentified artist  
(School of Fontainebleau),  
*Venus with Mirror*,  
last third of the sixteenth century,  
Mâcon, Musée des Ursulines  
*The toilette is a ritual dance: the body moves without changing place, the gestures identical day after day. This dance can only be seen by the person performing it. The artist who represents it pretends not to be there. In the sixteenth century, the painter who depicted the naked woman with an ideal body (“Venus”) gazing at herself in a mirror captured her pose in a choreography that is as elegant as it is artificial. In the closing years of the nineteenth century, Edwaerd Muybridge, promoter of chronophotography, captured with his lens the real movements of a less graceful body, then animated them with an instrument called a “praxinoscope.”*



During the Renaissance, public baths, so common in the Middle Ages, finally disappeared. Water, the sharing of which constituted a festive occasion, was regarded with suspicion as a possible vector of disease. Only the social elite continued to bathe: in a few prestigious “bathing apartments” in châteaux or, particularly women, in the recess of the bedchamber. The “ladies in their bath” or “ladies at their toilette” painted by the school of Fontainebleau in France in the late sixteenth century bear witness to this new wish to be enclosed. The rite represented is not simply hygienic: the representations are linked to amorous practices or those symbolic of fecundity. Moreover, the places themselves are indistinct, with multiple openings; the baths tolerated the presence of several people; and women bathing in them accepted the presence of other adult women and of children, including older ones.

Abraham Bosse (after),  
*Sight (Woman at Her Toilette)*,  
after 1635, Tours,  
Musée des Beaux-Arts

After rising, a woman duly  
coiffed, checks her appearance  
in the reflection of the mirror.

An image symbolic of the  
classical toilette: the fact that  
the body is covered up suggests  
the absence of washing; the  
“toilette” objects—fan, cushion,  
various boxes—confirm the  
actions of grooming; as does  
the white cloth, delicately held  
by the servant, indicating the  
“dry toilette.” An enclosed  
space, but not totally “isolated,”  
since a young man at the  
window observes the sky with  
a telescope, a few steps  
from the bed.



## 2 | The Dry Toilette, A Social Occasion

In the seventeenth century, the bath disappeared from practices and representations. The everyday actions of cleanliness were carried out without water, which was rare, of poor quality, and was thought to propagate disorders or contagions. At the very beginning of the following century, Jean Baptiste de La Salle once again confirmed: “Neatness demands that you wipe your face every morning with a white cloth in order to clean it. It is not good to wash with water, for this makes the countenance more sensitive to the cold in winter and to sunburn in summer.” As ablutions mainly concerned the hands, coded actions evolved for hairstyling, the application of cosmetics, and dressing. The archetypal setting was the bed-chamber, and more precisely a table: reserved for that purpose, it was covered with a rug, itself covered by a fine cloth—the *toilette*, strictly speaking—on which were placed mirror and unguents. This toilette was sometimes a social occasion: the woman was not alone, but there was a certain promiscuity. She allowed servants and visitors to enter, including those of the opposite sex.

### 3 | On One's Own

In northern Europe in the seventeenth century, the toilette gave rise to representations that were less standardized than in France. The nude “endured” but, influenced by Caravaggism at least indirectly, took on a new realism: at that time, the models were the maidservants or perhaps the partners of the painters. Bourgeois young women—coquettes—also adorned themselves in front of their mirrors. Water is still absent from these toilettes. The narrow framing reinforces the impression of privacy, whether the Lorraine woman is a servant in a moment alone (Georges de La Tour) or one isolated from the rest of the world when making herself beautiful (Nicolas Régnier).

**Georges de La Tour, *Woman Catching a Flea*, 1638, Nancy, Musée Lorrain**  
*The paintings of Georges de la Tour, who hailed from Lorraine, featured dark colors, figures marked with realism, humble objects, and restrained gestures. In the seventeenth century, the rarity of ablutions encouraged vermin. In the social elite, changing linen was thought to prevent the invasion of lice and fleas. Such a luxury was out of reach for this woman, no doubt a humble servant, reduced to trying to find the creatures on her person and crushing them. The trivial theme is handled with a contemplativeness that elevates it to the sublime.*

**Nicolas Régnier, *Vanity, or Young Woman at Her Toilette*, 1626, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts**  
*The scene looks classical—mirror, perfumes, unguents, cosmetics, comb, and jewels atop a luxurious table—as does the caliber of the lady. These are fragile objects, too, like beauty. The “serious” painting of the seventeenth century delighted in reversing appearances: it reminds the viewer of the possible decline underneath the triumphant aesthetic, underlines the “work of the Devil” underneath the excess of attention paid to oneself, and reminds the viewer of the foulness of the flesh, as does the fact that there is what seems to be a chamber pot behind the mirror.*



### 4 | The Enlightenment: Discretion and Indiscretion

**François Eisen, *A Young Woman at Her Toilette*, 1742, Abbeville, Musée d'Abbeville**  
*This apparently ordinary scene is in fact rather risqué. A bourdalou, a chamber pot adapted to women's anatomies, appears in the foreground, and the dog moves closer to sniff at it. In the background, a servant fills a bidet: in the 1740s, it was a new piece of furniture and had a rather racy reputation. The mistress, still pink from the pleasures of the night, is about to carry out her toilette intime. The servant will no doubt assist her, but an innocent young girl must be spared the sight of it.*



With the progressive return of water in the eighteenth century, the variety of private actions that the ablutions entailed made a more “private” practice necessary. Accessories such as the footbath and bidet were invented, but it was still long before the bathtub became widespread. The new sensibility led to a discreet phase of the toilette, which still allowed the presence of servants of the same sex. The moments of personal grooming were divided in two: a “private” first toilette and a second, which remained social. Promiscuity was no longer tolerated. Nevertheless, the layout of the home, which did not yet contain dedicated spaces, and the very novelty of the rites of ablution, encouraged “accidents” and arranged indiscretions: the intruder who accidentally enters, the voyeur who tries to observe what he should not, and the half-open door that perhaps hides someone became requisite motifs of the artworks.



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1. François Boucher, *The Docile Dog*, 1742? Or 1760?, Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe

2. François Boucher, *The Raised Skirt*, 1742? Or 1760?, Private collection

3. François Boucher, *The Spoiled Child*, 1742? Or 1760?, Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe

4. François Boucher, *The Indiscreet Eye*, or *Urinating Woman*, 1742? Or 1760?, Private collection

*In the eighteenth century, spaces became more specific. Women had their boudoirs; men their private studies, which became smoking rooms. In these rooms, the paintings that decorated the walls tended to be licentious. The most libertine were hidden, either by a curtain or by another painting, as was the case for Courbet's *The Origin of the World*. For the financier*

*Randon de Boisset, Boucher painted these four pictures such in a way that they are "covered" (the paintings too risqué to be on permanent display) and "uncovered" (the versions that hide the others). The ladies in pink and green who respectively accompany a child and play with a dog conceal the same ladies getting up off a commode*

*(visible on the left) and urinating in a boudalou. Behind the latter, a "voyeur" enjoys what he sees, surely in a mirror. The coarseness of the subjects in the "covered" paintings (including the dog sniffing at the lady) is tempered by the virtuoso show of ribbons and lace, the subtlety of the colors, and the pearliness of the flesh tones.*

## 5 | After 1800, the Closing of the Space

In the early nineteenth century, the notion of what is private changed profoundly. Madame de Genlis, the author of *Le Dictionnaire des étiquettes* (1818), wrote: “It must be said that there were sometimes things in very bad taste... For example, the almost general habit women had of dressing in front of men, and that of being painted at one’s toilette.” Tolerated in the past, the presence of others, visitor or servant, was no longer accepted, and the person washing carefully shut the door behind him– or herself. Orchestrating this “hiding,” painters, who at the same time aspired to greatness, broke with the libertine themes of the previous century and restricted their representations of private gestures to preparations for hairstyling or dressing. Only the engraving, a popular medium that prospered thanks to the illustrated press, still dared represent bodies. It did so with a discreet eroticism: suggesting and poking fun, rather than showing.

## 6 | Late Nineteenth Century: Specialized Spaces and New Bodies

**Edouard Manet, *Nude Arranging Her Hair*, 1879,**  
Private collection  
Manet’s model is cropped at the top of the thighs. The nude woman still has a bracelet on and there is probably a garter—she has pulled on her stockings: discreetly risqué. The figure is heavy: while the bust is strait, a fold forms above the navel, the flesh sags under the raised arm. The decor, sketched out, shows a curtain protecting a bed on which cushions may be glimpsed. The clearly private moment captured is imbued with sensuality that the touch exalts by avoiding the “finish” of a long-worked painting.



**Théophile Alexandre Steinlen, *The Bath*, 1902,**  
Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne



In the third quarter of the nineteenth century, cities—first in England and only later in France—set out to “conquer water.” It took some time for “running water” to be distributed to all buildings, and even more for it to reach the upper floors and all dwellings. However, water became much more accessible and the practice of daily washing a hygienic requirement. “The woman at her toilette” once again became a pictorial theme. The genre of the nude was reinvented: the new bodies were imperfect—sometimes heavy, aging, adolescent, or too angular—a far cry from the ideal anatomies of the academic nude. The gestures were new, sometimes abrupt, and also lacked the elegance of traditional poses; evoking secretions and odors, they radiated a more animal sensuality. The decor, close to the bedroom or *cabinet de toilette* cluttered with pitchers and basins, is commonplace and thus “modern.”

## 7 | The Modern Toilette

**Edgard Degas, *Woman in Her Bath Sponging Her Leg*, ca. 1883, Paris, musée d'Orsay**

**Edgard Degas, *After the Bath, Reclining Nude*, 1885-1890, Suisse, Collection Nahmad**

*The pastel gave Degas the ideal medium for evoking the sensuality of the female body. He drew with color, crushing it, applying it in streaks and patches, transformed the powderiness into vibrations: he kneaded and caressed it, as if he were touching and caressing the body. Lying on a towel on the floor, on a presumably soft carpet, between the basin and the bedspread, the bather, after the tub, drifts off to sleep; her mules are simple red patches thrown next to a bathrobe or towel behind her.*



In the late 19th century, Degas revolutionized the representation of the toilette. The themes and accessories were not new—the woman in all possible poses, the basin and pitcher in the bedroom or the *cabinet de toilette*, then the bathtub in the bathroom—but the way they are handled is: the point of view (low-angle or overhead) and framing (narrowing in on the bodies), and the treatment of surfaces and colors that, particularly the pastels, evoke the sensations of living flesh and soft hair, and the sensual pleasure of touching towels, carpets, and other textiles. After 1900, Pierre Bonnard took up the strategy of conveying flesh tones using color. The decor evolved over time: Marthe, his companion, was in the tub, then in the bathroom. A new relationship, however, was established between women and the toilette. It was less a matter of washing oneself than of feeling, less a matter of attiring oneself than forgetting oneself, or rather of finding oneself. The bathroom became a refuge from the world, the toilette, a moment when time no longer existed.

**Pierre Bonnard, *Nude in the Bath*, undated (ca. 1940), Private collection**

*In the mid-1920s, Bonnard painted his first "bathtubs" in oil and full-scale, or in gouache and in a modest size, as is the case here. The nudes slide into the water with unprecedented languor. Almost entirely immersed, the body melts, dissolves into the colors and distortions of the space, taking shape in the light. The water changes the image. It is not longer hygiene but "relaxation"—in French, the psychological sense of the word détente dates from the twentieth century.*



## 8 | Avant-Gardes: The Female Nude, A Formal Problem?

**František Kupka,**  
*The Lipstick, 1908, Paris,*  
musée national d'Art moderne  
– Centre Georges Pompidou

*This painting of a prostitute is reminiscent of Red Gigolette, a canvas by Kupka painted in the same year. Another version exists, The Lipstick II. These canvases were early works by Kupka, whose painting later evolved toward abstraction. Already heavily made-up, the woman reapplies her lipstick.*

*Kupka was interested not only in the subject, a woman applying makeup, but also in the combination of colors, which was inspired by the Fauves: the green of the neck, the white of the powdered skin, the extravagant red of the lips.*



In the early twentieth century, the female nude represented a challenge for the artists of the “avant-gardes”: how to convey a woman’s body and sensuality in a language that was not merely imitative. The problem was tackled first by Cézanne, who chose to paint bathers who were no longer nymphs outdoors: a radically bold approach. Picasso, who drew compulsively, sketched women—his successive companions—bathing in his home. The sketches were exercises. He demonstrated that the painter explored, not over the years, but sometimes the same day or even the same morning, a variety of solutions: experiments that range from

a realistic approach—emphatic lines, clearly heavy bodies molded by the light—to a line inspired by the “classical” line, or a deliberately schematic approach that deconstructs and reconstructs bodies by highlighting their structures and joints.

**Fernand Léger, Women at Their Dressing Table, 1920, Suisse,**  
collection Nahmad

*In 1920 Léger, back from the war and recovered from a lung infection, painted eight canvases on the theme of women looking at themselves in the mirror. The jubilation that shows in this painting is commensurate with the pleasure that the painter felt at rediscovering the joys of everyday life. While other artists were tempted by a “return to order,” he remained faithful to the modern ethic and made use of geometry (straight lines, cylinders, arcs of circles to indicate hair and jars of ointments), flat tints, and fragmented bodies and objects.*

**Pablo Picasso, Woman with Watch, April 30, 1936, Paris, musée Picasso**

*The model, Dora Maar, who became Picasso’s lover in 1936, is dressed and undressed (a breast emerges, the body can be seen underneath the dress), a semi-attached garland of flowers falls down limply, the woman has painted nails, and a comb is placed near her thigh. Sitting on the floor, she stretches her neck to gaze at herself, a new Narcissus. The check of the garment does not follow the anatomy—the painting is not illusionistic. The tight cropping makes the coming face-to-face with oneself more marked. Because of the watch, a reference to the passing of time, the painting made be considered a vanitas of sorts. The the civil war began in Spain in 1936 and the shadow of death hangs over this painting.*



## 9 | Lotions and Potions: Advertising and Painting

**Natalino Bentivoglio Scarpa, known as Cagnaccio di San Pietro, *Woman at the Mirror*, 1927, Verona, Fondazione Cariverona collection**  
*Cagnaccio di San Pietro belongs to the so-called school of "magic realism." His vision of the toilette is one of acute and modern realism: the high-angle view that evokes the cinema, the palette of contrasting blues and reds, and the originality of the woman's reflection, partially repeated by the beveled edge of the mirror, and which reveals a pale, heavy, and soft breast. This woman applying lipstick no longer has anything in common with Kupka's heavily made-up prostitute: she's a well-groomed bourgeois woman, a socialite no doubt, and vain.*



Immediately after World War I, the efforts of entrepreneurs such as Helena Rubinstein, Estée Lauder, and Elizabeth Arden established the concept of the "house of beauty" and began to distribute the first cosmetic "lines." Henceforth, middle-class women wore makeup. Ten years later, nascent advertising photography began to support campaigns for beauty and skin-care products. This phenomenon, in which women photographers (the Frenchwoman Laure Albin Guyot and the German Germaine Krull) participated, influenced the way that society looked at the toilette and renewed its representations. It also reinforced sleek and reassuring imagery like that—of

admirable virtuosity—of Cagnaccio di San Pietro in the Italy of Mussolini, who relegated woman to the home to do the housework and take care of the children, or make herself beautiful for the man she loves.

## 10 | Julio Gonzales, *le Grand Fer*

**Julio González, *Woman Combing Her Hair*, 1931, Paris, musée national d'Art moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou**  
*When he forged, hammered, and cut up iron, assembled the pieces, then welded them, González was constructing silhouettes more than he was seeking to form volumes. His sculpture is a "drawing in space," which liberates the expressiveness of the forms. But, unlike drawings, González's iron sculptures should be viewed as genuinely three-dimensional works: that is, they should be viewed not only from the front but also by walking around them to appreciate them from multiple points of view.*



Julio González was, like his close friend Pablo Picasso, a Spaniard in Paris. Around 1930, the time of the large iron sculpture *Woman Combing Her Hair*, he engaged in a dialogue with Picasso about the renewal of sculpture. A metal sculptor, González used iron, and not bronze, as a material and welding, and not cast iron, as a technique. The forms he was used to were sharp-edged. The series of drawings in this room shows how, like Picasso, he used the resources of drawing to explore forms. Dating from a little under a decade later than the sculpture, the drawing *Woman Combing Her Hair* (1940) highlights the curves of the female body: the breast revealed by the half-open bathrobe, the profile of the face, and the long hair to be combed. The raised arms of the sculpture are reminiscent of the drawing *Woman in Chemise Combing Her Hair* (1909). But the subjects explicit in these works are refined in the large iron sculpture by a process of abstraction.

## 11 | Here and Now

Around the year 2000, it became difficult to individualize the theme of the toilette in the visual arts. The material conquests, of water and of the bathroom, had taken place long ago. The question of the nude, or at least that of adorning oneself, was no longer topical. Consequently, the works that represented the toilette had to take more general aesthetic questions into consideration. Alain Jacquet's silk-screen print and Erró's painting pertain to a postmodernism of quotation that alludes to the works of art history; Erik Dietman's love of word play and irony is evident in his unusual objects. For photographers, however, the female body is still an essential subject. The connection to fashion and advertising, combined with technological advances, led to unusual experiments and stimulated new research: in the work of Erwin Blumenfeld just after World War II and on the threshold of the twenty-first century in the work of Bettina Rheims.



Erwin Blumenfeld, *Study for an advertising photograph*, 1948, Paris, musée national d'Art moderne – Centre Georges Pompidou

## V IMAGES AVAILABLE FOR THE PRESS



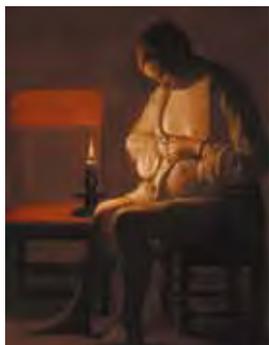
**1 – Southern Netherlands – *The Bath***  
ca. 1500 – Paris, musée de Cluny – Musée national du Moyen Âge – © RMN Grand Palais (musée de Cluny – musée national du Moyen-Âge) / Franck Raux



**2 – Unidentified artist (School of Fontainebleau) – *Presumed Portrait of Gabrielle d'Estrees and the Duchesse de Villars in the Bath*** – Late sixteenth century, oil on canvas – 63,5 x 84 cm – © Musée de la Société Archéologique, Montpellier, France Giraudon Bridgeman Images – BRIDGEMAN



**3 – Nicolas Régnier – *Vanity or Young Woman at Her Toilette*** – 1626 – Oil on canvas – 132 x 105,5 cm – Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts – © 2014, DeAgostini Picture Library/Scala, Florence



**4 – Georges de LaTour – *Woman Catching a Flea*** – 1638 – Oil on canvas 121 x 89 cm – Nancy, Musée Lorrain © RMN-Grand Palais / Philippe Bernard



**5 – Salomon de Bray – *A Young Woman Combing Her Hair*** – Ca. 1635 – Oil on panel 54 x 46 cm – Paris, musée du Louvre, department of Paintings, gift of the Société des Amis du Louvre, 1995 – © RMN-Grand Palais (musée du Louvre) / Gérard Blot



**6 – Abraham Bosse (after) – *La Vue (femme à sa toilette)*** – Sight (Woman at Her Toilette) – After 1635 – Oil on canvas 104 x 137 cm – Tours, musée des Beaux-Arts – © Musée des Beaux-Arts de Tours



**7 – François Eisen – *A Young Woman at Her Toilette*** – 1742 – Oil on canvas 36,5 x 27,3 cm – Abbeville, Musée d'Abbeville © RMN-Grand Palais / Thierry Ollivier



**8 – François Boucher – *The Beauty Spot, or A Lady at Her Toilette*** – 1738 Oil on canvas – 86 x 76 cm – Private collection – © Courtesy of P & D Colnaghi & Co, Ltd, London



**9 – François Boucher – *The Docile Dog*** 1742? Or 1760? – Oil on canvas 52,5 x 41,5 cm – Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe – © akg-images



**10 – François Boucher – *The Indiscreet Eye or Urinating Woman* – 1742? Or 1760? – Huile sur toile – 52,5 x 42 cm**  
Collection particulière – © Christian Baraja  
Collection particulière – (Libre de droit)



**11 – François Boucher – *The Spoiled Child* – 1742? Or 1760? – Oil on canvas 52,5 x 41,5 cm – Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe – © akg-images**



**12 – François Boucher – *The Raised Skirt* 1742? or 1760? – Oil on canvas – 52,5x42 cm**  
Private collection – © Christian Baraja



**13 – Berthe Morisot – *In Front of the Mirror* 1890 – Oil on canvas – 55 x 46 cm**  
© Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny



**14 – Wladyslaw Slewinski – *Woman Combing Her Hair* – 1897 – Oil on canvas 64 x 91 cm – Cracovie, musée national**  
© Photographic Studio of the National Museum in Krakow / Jacek Świdarski



**15 – Théophile Alexandre Steinlen – *The Bath* – 1902 – Pastel on paper – 49,5x64,6 cm**  
Lausanne, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts / J.-C. Ducret – Acquisition 1936 – © Musée cantonal des beaux-arts de Lausanne



**16 – Eugène Lomont – *A Young Woman at Her Toilette* – 1898 – Oil on canvas 54 x 65 cm – Beauvais, Musée départemental de l'Oise – © RMN Grand Palais / Thierry Ollivier**



**17 – Edgar Degas – *After the Bath, Reclining Nude* – 1885-1890 – Pastel on paper – 48,3x88,3 cm – Switzerland, Nahmad collection**



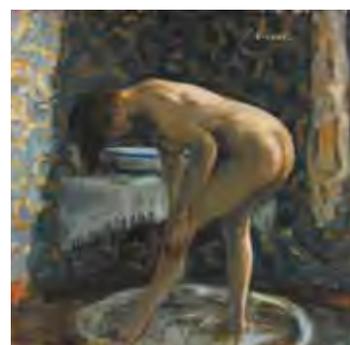
**18 – Edgar Degas – *Woman in Her Bath Sponging Her Leg* – Ca. 1883 – Pastel on monotype – 19,7 x 41 cm – Paris, musée d'Orsay, legs du comte Isaac de Camondo, 1911 – © RMN-Grand Palais (musée d'Orsay) / Hervé Lewandowski**



**19 – Edgar Degas – *After the Bath, Woman Drying Herself* – 1903 – Charcoal with reddish-brown chalk highlights on paper 71 x 71 cm – Switzerland, Nahmad collection – © Suisse, Collection Nahmad / Raphaël BARITHEL – (Libre de droit)**



**20 – Pierre Bonnard – *Nude in the Bath* Undated (ca. 1940?) – Watercolor and gouache on paper – 23,5 x 31,5 cm – Private collection, courtesy Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris – © Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, Paris / Christian Baraja – ADAGP**



**21 – Pierre Bonnard – *Nude in the Bath Tub* – Nude in the Bathtub 1903 – Oil on canvas – 44 x 50 cm**  
Toulouse, Fondation Bemberg



**22 – Henri de Toulouse Lautrec**  
**The Toilette: Madame Favre (Woman Doing Her Hands)** – 1891 – Oil thinned with turpentine on board – 72x76 cm  
Switzerland, Nahmad collection – © Suisse, Collection Nahmad / Raphaël BARITHEL



**23 – František Kupka – The Lipstick**  
1908 – Oil on canvas – 63,5 x 63,5 cm  
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne – Centre de création industrielle, gift of Eugénia Kupka, 1963 – © Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Jean-Claude Planchet – ADAGP



**24 – Natalino Bentivoglio Scarpa, dit Cagnaccio di San Pietro**  
**Woman at the Mirror** – 1927 – oil on canvas – 80x59,5cm Verona, Fondazione Cariverona collection © collezione della Fondazione Cariverona, Italy



**25 – Pablo Picasso – Woman with Watch**  
April 30, 1936 – Oil on canvas – 65x54,2 cm  
Paris, musée Picasso – Pablo Picasso donation in lieu, 1979 – © RMN-Grand Palais / René-Gabriel Ojéda – © Succession Picasso 2015  
Copyright Administration Picasso



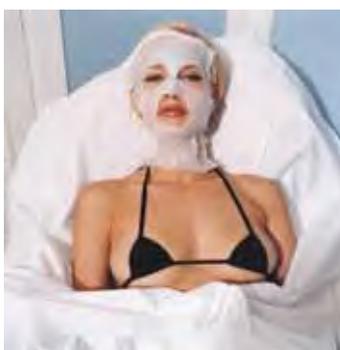
**26 – Fernand Léger – Women at Their Dressing Table** – 1920 – Oil on canvas  
92 x 73 cm – Switzerland, Nahmad collection – © Suisse, Collection Nahmad / Raphaël BARITHEL – ADAGP



**27 – Erwin Blumenfeld – Study for an advertising photograph** – 1948 – Dye transfer  
51 x 41,5 cm – Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne – Centre de création industrielle, purchased in 1986  
© Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais/Christian Bahier / Philippe Migeat – (RMN)



**28 – Bettina Rheims – Karen Mulder with a very small Chanel bra, January 1996, Paris** – 1996 – C-print – 120 x 120 cm  
Paris, collection of the artist – © Bettina Rheims – copyright Studio Bettina Rheims



**29 – Alain Jacquet – Gaby d'Estrées**  
1965 – Four-color silkscreen on canvas  
119 x 172 cm – Courtesy Comité Alain Jacquet and Galerie GP & N Vallois, Paris – © Comité Alain Jacquet – ADAGP

## VI PUBLICATIONS

### 1 Publications

#### **Exhibition catalog published jointly**

#### **by Marmottan Monet Museum and Hazan Editions**

Authors : Georges Vigarello and Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen,

Curators of the exhibition

Size: 22 x 28,5 cm, 224 pages

Price: 29 euros

ISBN: 978 2 7541 0814 0

#### **Hors Série Connaissance des Arts n°653**

**44 pages – Price 9,50 €**

ISBN : 978 275 800 5865 (fr)

ISBN : 978 275 800 5872 (uk)

### 2 Educational workshops

On Wednesdays and during school holidays, or during the school year with the school, children can discover the exhibition «La toilette. Naissance de l'intime. The invention of privacy» and the museum and its collections by attending educational workshops "Les P'tits Marmottan".

**Age :** from 7 – 15 years old

**Duration :** 1h15 (thematic tour and workshop)

**Price :** 9€/per child

**Student tarif:** 7€/per child

**Foreign language tarif**

**(English, Spanish, German and Italian):** 9,5€/per child

**Information and reservations:**

Camille Pabois –Tel : +33(0)1 44 96 50 41

atelier@marmottan.com

## VII CURATORS

### **Georges Vigarello**

Georges Vigarello, director of studies at the Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), has carried out extensive research on the history of practices and representations of the body. He has published, among others, *Le propre et le sale, l'hygiène du corps depuis le Moyen Âge*, Seuil, 1985, Illustrated Edition, 2013, *Histoire de la beauté, le corps et l'art d'embellir de la Renaissance à nos jours*, Point Seuil, 2007, *La silhouette du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle à nos jours, naissance d'un défi*, Seuil, 2012, *Le Sentiment de soi. Histoire de la perception du corps (XVI<sup>e</sup> – XX<sup>e</sup> siècle)*, Seuil, 2014.

### **Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen**

Nadeije Laneyrie-Dagen is a professor of art history at the l'École normale supérieure. A specialist, first in the Renaissance, she explores the past quarter century's issues related to the body and its representations. Her published works include *L'invention du corps* (Flammarion) and a monograph on Rubens (Hazan). She is also the author of art history textbooks (*Lire la peinture*, Larousse; *Histoire de l'art pour tous*, Hazan) that reveal her passion, as demonstrated in the exhibition, of making art enjoyable and accessible.

## VIII THE MUSÉE MARMOTTAN MONET

The Musée  
Marmottan Monet



In 1882, Jules Marmottan (1829-1883), director of the coal mining company Bruay brought in the sixteenth arrondissement of Paris, the former hunting lodge of the Duke of Valmy. At his death in 1883, his son Paul (1856-1932) inherited it. He embellished and enlarged for forty years to make the mansion on rue Louis Boilly a showcase for the collections of medieval and Renaissance art joined by his father's and his own works and art objects, a testimony of his passion for the *First French Empire* period.

At his death in 1932, Paul Marmottan bequeathed to the Académie des Beaux-Arts, his home and integrated its collections to make the Marmottan Museum. The institution opened to the public on June 21, 1934. From 1938, donations and bequests succeeded to double the museum's collections and open into Impressionism.

In 1940, Victorine Donop Monchy (1863-1958) offered the paintings of her father, Dr. George Bellio (1832-1894), doctor and collector of the Impressionists which, he had acquired in the 1870's. Eleven paintings by Morisot Renoir, Pissarro, Sisley and Monet (first and foremost : *Impression, Sunrise* (1872) came to Marmottan. Meaning that it was Victorine Donop Monchy who founded the Impressionist collection in the institution.

In 1966, Michel Monet (1879-1966), the last direct descendant of Claude Monet, introduced his inheritance to the Musée Marmottan. Paintings by Monet and his friends, a substantial amount of correspondence and a variety of resources previously spread between the master's house in Giverny and his son, in Sorel-Moussel join the Marmottan. One hundred paintings of the leader of Impressionism are given tracing his career from 1880 until his death in 1926.

## ► THE MUSÉE MARMOTTAN MONET

Views of Normandy, Creuse, noon, London and Norway demonstrate the passion of the landscape painter. A rare set of large lilies that remained unpublished in the lifetime of the artist add to the legacy of the museum. Michel Monet's contribution means that the Marmottan now hosts the world's largest collection of works by Claude Monet.

The year after the centenary of the death of Berthe Morisot in 1996, the grandchildren of the artist and their wives, Denis (1908-1984) and Annie Rouart (1921-1993) alongside Julien (1901-1994) and Thérèse Rouart (1898-1996) bequeathed twenty five works and some fifty graphic works of the first Impressionist painter. Their collection also includes works by Poussin, Delacroix, Corot, Manet, Gauguin, Renoir, Odilon Redon... Equally important, other collections, such as illuminations of Daniel Wildenstein (1917-2001), joined the museum.

Over the years, the home of Jules and Paul Marmottan has become the most important place for Impressionism. In 2014, the museum wanted to redeploy its collections and to honor this dual identity. The dining room of the mansion is the first highlight of the tour. Bas-reliefs, especially the bronze table by Thomire and furniture by Jacob Desmalter recall the original decor of Paul Marmottan when he was in residence. The Impressionist and modern paintings that are presented – paintings by Caillebotte, Renoir, Morisot, Gauguin and Chagall – are from diverse collections and illustrate the key role of collectors in the history of the institution.

Carmontelle gouaches, paintings by Bidault and Vernet, Pajou Fabre, Gérard, Chaudet Reisener, sculptures by Bartolini and school of Canova adorn the parlors of Paul Marmottan and his room is where you can see the bed of Napoléon Ier au Palais Impérial de Bordeaux. Around his desk by Pierre-Antoine Bellangé, we discover an exceptional collection of paintings by Louis-Leopold Boilly.

The world's largest collection of works by Claude Monet comes in a space designed by architect and former museum director Jacques Carlu. Excavated under the garden between 1966 and 1970, this spacious and modern gallery permanently present alongside *Impression, Sunrise*, the most beautiful collection of artworks bequeathed by Michael Monet.

In 2014, two new rooms furnished in the former outbuildings of the mansion and the first floor of the house were open to the public. They now host the works of Berthe Morisot and the Denis and Anne Rouart foundation.

## IX | **INFORMATIONS PRATIQUES**

### **Address**

2, rue Louis-Boilly  
75016 Paris

### **Website**

[www.marmottan.fr](http://www.marmottan.fr)

### **Access**

Métro : La Muette – Line 9  
RER : Boulayvilliers – Line C  
Bus : 32, 63, 22, 52, P.C.

### **Days and opening times**

Open Tuesday to Sunday from 10am until 6pm  
Thursday evenings until 9pm  
Closed on Mondays, December 25th,  
January 1st and May 1st

### **Prices**

Full Price : 11 €  
Reduced Price : 6,5 €  
Under 7 years old : free

### **Group bookings**

Christine Lecca –Tel : 01 44 96 50 83

### **Educational services**

Camille Pabois –Tel : 01 44 96 50 41

### **Audioguide**

Available in French and English: 3 €

### **Shop**

Open the same hours and days  
as the museum  
Tel : 01 44 96 50 46  
[boutique@marmottan.com](mailto:boutique@marmottan.com)