



# Cézanne

Page 4:

*Portrait of the Artist, 1873-1876.*

Oil on canvas, 53 x 64 cm,

Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

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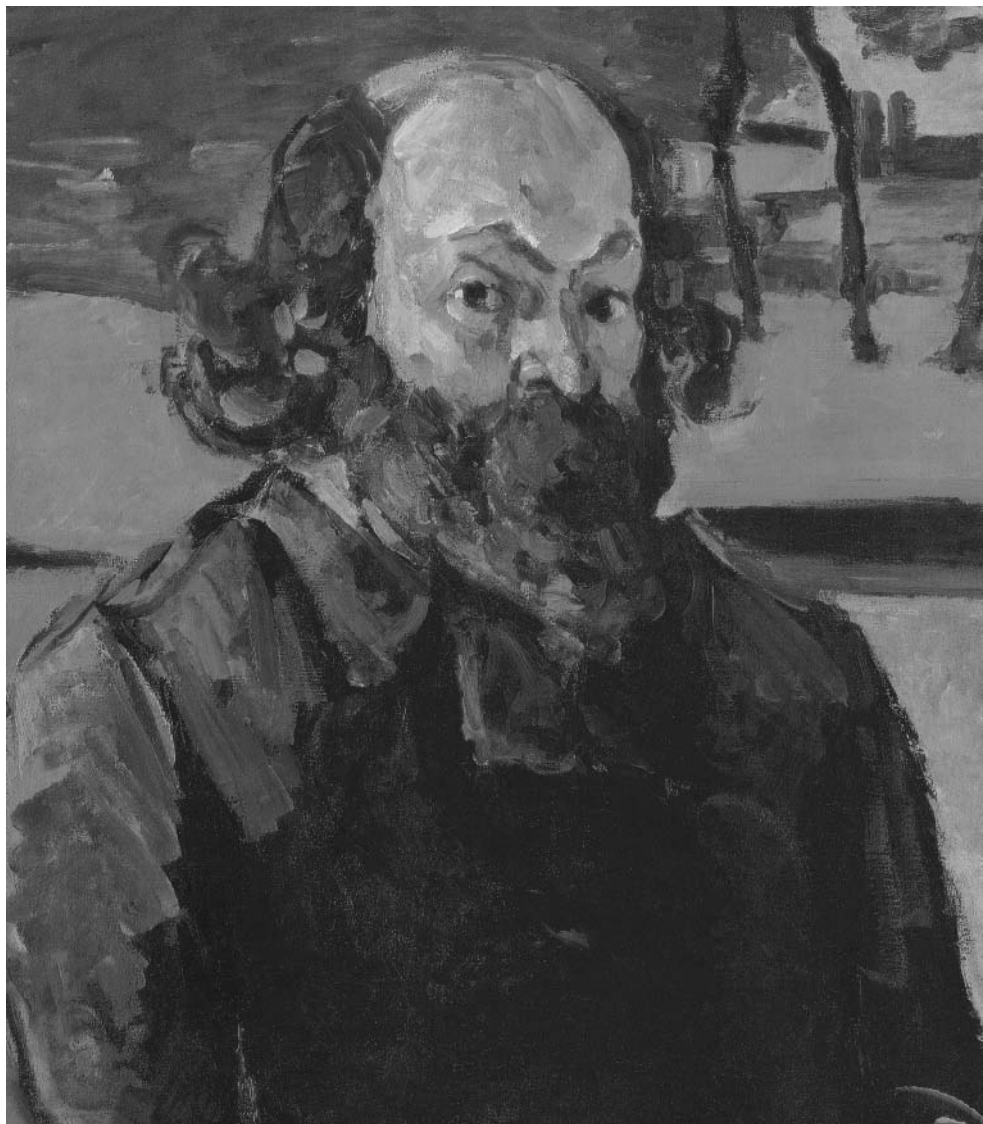
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“When I judge art, I take my painting and put it next to a God made object like a tree or flower. If it clashes, it is not art.”

Paul Cézanne



# Chronology

- 1839 Paul Cézanne is born on January 19, in Aix-en-Provence.
- 1849–1851 Studies as a half-boarder at the St. Joseph school together with Philippe Solari, the future sculptor, and Henri Gasquet.
- 1852–1858 Studies at the Collège Bourbon in Aix, with Émile Zola and Baptistin Baille. Enrolls at the municipal school of drawing at the Aix Museum.
- 1859 Studies law at Aix University and continues to attend the municipal school of drawing from November 1859 until August 1860. Sets up a studio at the Jas de Bouffan.
- 1861 Leaves Aix for Paris. Works at the Académie Suisse, meets Armand Guillaumin and Camille Pissarro, and paints a portrait of Zola, destroying it unfinished. Returns to Aix in September and starts work in his father's bank. Attends the municipal school of drawing in Aix.
- 1862 Leaves the bank in January and devotes himself entirely to painting. In November he goes a second time to Paris and settles there.
- 1863 Works at the Académie Suisse together with Antoine Guillemet, Guillaumin, and Francisco Oller. He and Zola visit the Salon and the Salon des Refusés.
- 1864 Sends one of his works to the Salon, but the Jury rejects it. Copies a painting by Eugène Delacroix at the Louvre.
- 1866 The Jury of the Salon rejects his portrait of Valabrègue (V. 126). Cézanne writes a letter of protest to Count Nieuwerkerke, chairman of the Beaux-Arts, with the demand that the Salon des Refusés be reopened. Zola's articles published in the newspaper *L'Événement* in defence of avant-garde artists are issued in a separate pamphlet with a dedication to Cézanne.
- 1867 His paintings *Punch and Rum* and *Intoxication* are rejected by the Salon. Zola defends him in the press (*Figaro*, April 12, 1867).
- 1869 Meets Hortense Fiquet (b. 1850), who works at a bookbinder's and also as a model. Once again rejected by the Salon.
- 1870 After the declaration of the Franco-Prussian war, he works in Aix and later goes to L'Estaque, accompanied by Hortense Fiquet. Zola comes to stay with him for a short time. After the pronouncement of the Third Republic, his father is elected a member of the Municipal Council and Cézanne a member of the fine arts commission of the Aix school. However, he does not participate in the commission's activities.
- 1872 Birth of Paul, his son, by Hortense Fiquet. Cézanne moves with his family to Pontoise where he works with Pissarro.
- 1873 Lives in Auvers-sur-Oise, working in the house of Dr. Gachet. Pissarro introduces him to Julien Tanguy, the art dealer.
- 1873 Takes part in the first Impressionist exhibition (Société anonyme des artistes peintres, sculpteurs et graveurs), held from April 15 to May 15. He exhibits *The House of the Hanged Man* (V. 133), *A Modern Olympia* (V. 225), and the study *Landscape at Auvers*.
- 1876 He refuses to send his works to the second Impressionist exhibition and in August returns to Paris.
- 1877 Works with Pissarro in Pontoise and Auvers, and also in Chantilly, Fontainebleau, and Issy.

P. CEZANNE

- 1880 In August he stays with Zola in Medan, meeting Joris Karl Huysmans.
- 1881 Lives in Pontoise (but keeps his apartment in Paris) where he works with Pissarro and meets Paul Gauguin.
- 1882 Admitted to the Salon as a "pupil of Guillemet."
- 1883 At the end of December he visits Claude Monet and Renoir. On May 4, he goes to the funeral of Édouard Manet.
- 1884 The portrait he submits for the Salon is rejected by the panel, and from then onwards Cézanne apparently sends no more of his works to the Salon. Paul Signac buys one of his landscapes from Tanguy.
- 1886 In March, Zola's *L'Œuvre* is published. Breaks with Zola. On April 28, Cézanne marries Hortense Fiquet. In the summer he lives in Paris and in Hattenville. On October 23, his father dies, leaving him a legacy.
- 1887 Exhibits in Brussels with "Les XX."
- 1888 In January Renoir stays with him in Aix and they work together.
- 1889 Exhibits *The House of the Hanged Man at Auvers* at the World Exposition of 1889–1890.
- 1890 In January he exhibits three paintings at the seventh exhibition of "Les XX" in Brussels, among them is *The House of the Hanged Man at Auvers*.
- 1894 In the fall he visits Monet at Giverny where he meets Joseph Clemenceau, Auguste Rodin, Octave Mirbeau, Gustave Geffroy, and Mary Cassat.
- 1895 Cézanne's first personal exhibition is organized by Vollard on Rue Laffitte (150 works). Two of Cézanne's landscapes are bequeathed by Gustave Caillebotte to the Musée de Luxembourg.
- 1897 October 25, death of Cézanne's mother. One of his landscapes is acquired by the National Gallery in Berlin as a gift from a Berlin patron of the arts.
- 1900 His *Vase of Fruit, Glass, and Apples* (V. 341), *Pool at the Jas de Bouffan* (V. 167), and a landscape are displayed at the exhibition "A Century of French Art," held at the World Exposition in Paris.
- 1901 Denis exhibits *Hommage à Cézanne* at the Salon of the Société des Artistes Français. Cézanne sends several paintings to the Exposition de la Libre Esthétique in Brussels and to the Salon des Indépendants. He builds a studio on Chemin des Lauves, not far from Aix.
- 1902 Death of Zola on September 29.
- 1903 Lives in Aix. His paintings are shown at the Impressionist exhibition of the Vienna Secession, among them *Mardi Gras* and *Road at Pontoise*.
- 1904 A large retrospective exhibition at the Salon d'Automne. A large individual exhibition at the Cassirer Gallery, Berlin.
- 1905 Takes part in an exhibition at the Grafton Gallery in London, organized by Paul Durand-Ruel.
- 1906 *The Château Noir* is exhibited at the Société des Amis des Arts in Aix as the work of one of Pissarro's pupils. On October 6, the Salon d'Automne opens, at which ten of Cézanne's works are shown. On October 22, the death of the artist.
- 1907 Posthumous exhibition at the Salon d'Automne.



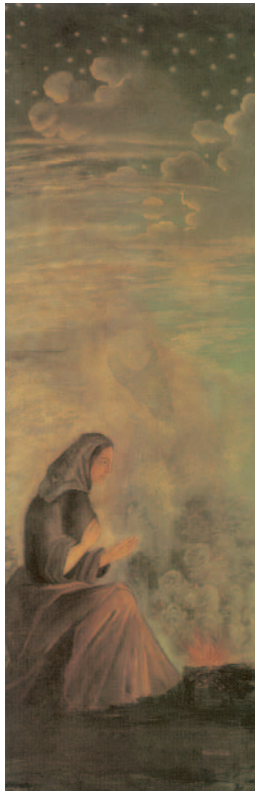
At the turn of the century, Cézanne began to be taken more and more seriously by the avant-garde: Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Vlaminck, Derain, and others, among them young Russian painters whose new art owed much to the master from Provence. However, many of Cézanne's contemporaries did not realize his true greatness.

## The Four Seasons

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1859-1860

Oil on canvas, 314 x 104 cm each  
Musée du Petit Palais, Paris





When Paul Cézanne died in October 1906 in Aix-en-Provence, the Paris newspapers reacted by publishing a handful of rather equivocal obituaries. “Imperfect talent,” “crude painting,” “an artist that never was,” “incapable of anything but sketches,” owing to “a congenital sight defect” — such were the epithets showered on the great artist during his lifetime and repeated at his graveside.

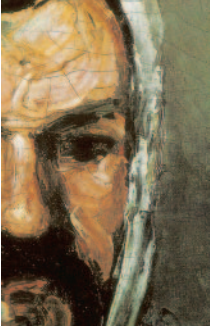
## Two Women and Child in an Interior

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1860

Oil on canvas, 91 x 72 cm  
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





This was not merely due to a lack of understanding on the part of individual artists and critics, but above all to an objective factor — the complexity of his art, his specific artistic system which he developed throughout his career and did not embody *in toto* in any single one of his works.

## Uncle Dominic as a Monk

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1865

Oil on canvas, 65.1 x 54.6 cm  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York





Cézanne was perhaps the most complex artist of the nineteenth century. "One cannot help feeling something akin to awe in the face of Cézanne's greatness," wrote Lionello Venturi. "You seem to be entering an unfamiliar world — rich and austere with peaks so high that they seem inaccessible."

### Man in a Cotton Hat

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1865

Oil on canvas, 79.7 x 64.1 cm  
Museum of Modern Art, New York





It is not in fact an easy thing to attain those heights. Today Cézanne's art unfolds before us with all the consistency of a logical development, the first stages of which already contain the seeds of the final fruit. But to a person who could see only separate fragments of the whole, much of Cézanne's œuvre must naturally have seemed strange and incomprehensible.

## Bread and Eggs

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1865

Oil on canvas, 59 x 76 cm  
Cincinnati Art Museum, Cincinnati





Most people were struck by the odd diversity of styles and the differing stages of completion of his paintings. In some paintings, one saw a fury of emotion, which bursts through in vigorous, tumultuous forms and in brutally powerful volumes apparently sculpted in colored clay; in others, there was rational, carefully conceived composition and an incredible variety of color modulations.

## The Strove in the Studio

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1865-1868

Oil on canvas, 42 x 30 cm  
Private Collection, London





Some works resembled rough sketches in which a few transparent brushstrokes produced a sense of depth, while in others, powerfully modeled figures entered into complex, interdependent spatial relationships — what the Russian artist Alexei Nuremberg has aptly called “the tying together of space.”

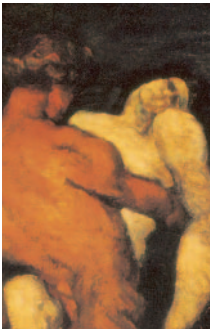
### Portrait of the Artist's Father

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1866-1867

Oil on canvas, 119.3 x 198.5 cm  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC





Cézanne himself, with his constant laments about the impossibility of conveying his own sensations, prompted critics to speak of the fragmentary character of his work. He saw each of his paintings as nothing but an incomplete part of the whole.

## The Abduction

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1867

Oil on canvas, 93.5 x 117 cm  
The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge





Often, after dozens of interminable sessions, Cézanne would abandon the picture he had started, hoping to return to it later. In each succeeding work he would try to overcome the imperfection of the previous one, to make it more finished than before: "I am long on hair and beard but short on talent."

## The Black Scipion

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c. 1867

Oil on canvas, 107 x 83 cm  
Museu de Arte, São Paulo





Exactly a month before his death, Cézanne wrote to Émile Bernard: "Shall I attain the aim so ardently desired and so long pursued? I want to, but as long as the goal is not reached, I shall feel a vague malaise until I reach the haven, that is, until I achieve a greater perfection than before, and thus prove the tightness of my theories."

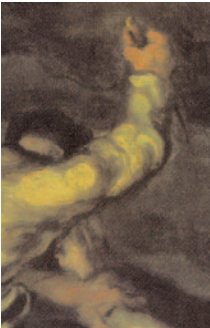
## The Temptation of Saint Anthony

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1867-1870

Oil on canvas, 57 x 76 cm  
E.G. Bührle Foundation, Zurich





Such thoughts, shot through with bitterness, are a tragic theme recurring in Cézanne's correspondence and conversations with his friends. They are the tragedy of his whole life — a tragedy of constant doubting, dissatisfaction, and lack of confidence in his own ability.

## Murder

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1867-1870

Oil on canvas, 65.4 x 81.2 cm  
Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool





But here, too, was the mainspring of his art, which developed as a tree grows or a rock forms — by the slow accumulation of more and more new layers on a given foundation. Often Cézanne would take a knife and scrape off all he had managed to paint during a day of hard work, or in a fit of exasperation throw it out of the window.

### Girl at the Piano (Overture to “Tannhäuser”)

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1868

Oil on canvas, 57.8 x 92.5 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





He was also prone, when moving from one studio to another, to forget to take with him dozens of paintings he considered unfinished. He hoped eventually to render his entire vision of the world in one great, complete work of art, as did the geniuses of classical painting, and having “redone Nature according to Poussin,” to emulate Poussin.

### The Madeleine or Sorrow

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1868-1869

Oil on canvas, 165 x 125 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





But to a person living at the end of the nineteenth century the surrounding reality seemed far more complex and unstable than to someone living in Poussin's time. Cézanne devoted many years to the search for such means, hoping eventually to bring them all together.

### Green Pot and Tin Kettle

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c. 1869

Oil on canvas, 64 x 81 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





His ultimate aim was to paint a masterpiece, and he did create many works that we now consider to be masterpieces. But apart from that, he evolved a new creative method and a new artistic system which he adhered to consistently throughout his life.

## Luncheon on the Grass

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1869-1870

Private Collection, Paris





In creating this system he contributed to the birth of twentieth-century art. It would be useless to look for the essence and meaning of Cézanne's new artistic system in his own pronouncements. Cézanne had no use for thoughts on art expressed by any other means except "with brush in hand."

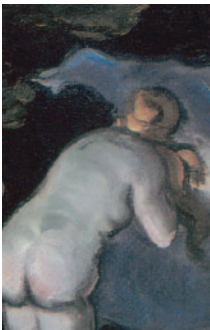
### Portrait of Anthony Valabrègue

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1869-1871

Oil on canvas, 60.4 x 50.2 cm  
J.P. Getty Museum, Malibu





His pronouncements bear the stamp not so much of theoretical postulates as of practical advice to fellow artists. It is not therefore to the artist's theoretical statements but to his works that we must look for an explanation of how his creative method gradually came into its own, how the links of the whole chain which today we justly call "Cézanne's artistic system" were forged.

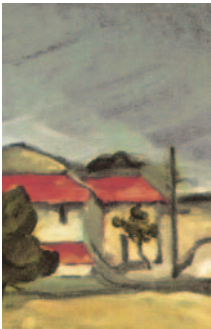
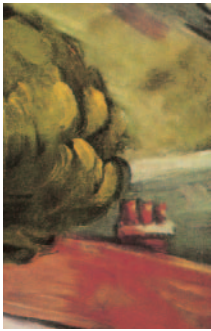
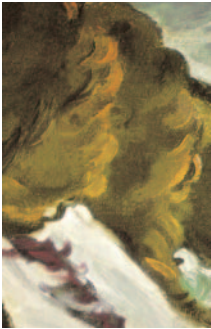
## Pastoral

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1870

Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





In April 1861, the 22-year-old Paul Cézanne, son of a wealthy banker in Aix-en-Provence, arrived in Paris. His aim, his passion, his most fervent wish was to devote himself body and soul to art. Behind him was a solid classical education received in the college of Aix, rather modest successes (according to his teachers) at the local school of drawing and,

### Melting Snow at l'Estaque

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1870

Oil on canvas, 72.5 x 92 cm  
Wildenstein Collection, New York





above all, years of rapturous absorption of the unrestrained romanticism of Victor Hugo, Alfred de Musset, and Charles Baudelaire, years of youthful dreaming, together with Émile Zola, of the lofty calling of the artist and of their future collaboration in the field of art.

### Trench at the Foot of Mont Sainte-Victoire

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1870-1871

Oil on canvas, 80 x 129 cm  
Neue Staatsgalerie, Munich





In his first year in Paris, Cézanne evidently still had a certain respect for the acknowledged masters and was willing to join them. During this short period he was at a crossroads; being not fully aware of his talent, he was trying in vain to find himself, and finally returned to Aix,



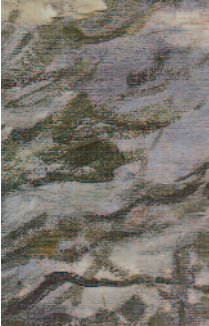
### Self-Portrait with Cap

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1872

Oil on canvas, 53 x 39.7 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





acceding to his father's wishes, to continue the family business. One day he wrote on a page in a ledger: *Mon père le banquier ne voit pas sans frémir, Au fond de son comptoir naître un peintre à venir...*

## The House of Dr. Gachet in Auvers

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1872-1873

Oil on canvas, 46 x 38 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





Ultimately Cézanne the banker was obliged to abandon his hopes of making his son a worthy successor to himself in business; granting him a very modest allowance of 250 francs a month, he let Paul go to Paris to devote himself to his consuming passion. There Cézanne took up art in earnest.

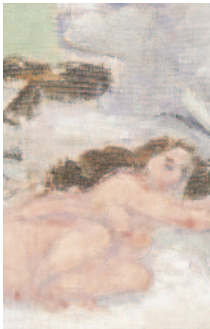
### The House of the Hanged Man at Auvers

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1873

Oil on canvas, 66 x 55 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





Anxious to obtain a fundamental artistic training, he was preparing to enter the École des Beaux-Arts and worked hard at the Academie Suisse in a desire to improve his technique. He failed the entrance examination for the École des Beaux-Arts, but at the same time found new friends, above all Camille Pissarro, who was to exert a substantial influence on his artistic development.

### A Modern Olympia

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1873

Oil on canvas, 46 x 55.5 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





During that first decade, generally considered from the years 1859 to 1870, Cézanne's work was marked by a wealth of themes and experiments. Among the few surviving works of his youth are genre scenes, compositions on religious and mythological subjects, and decorative allegoric panels with which he adorned the walls of the Jas de Bouffan, his parents' estate.

### Flowers in a little Delft Vase

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c. 1873

Oil on canvas, 41 x 27 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





Sometimes these are copies of prints or of pictures from his mother's and sister's fashion magazines. These early works already bear the stamp of the artist's individuality. They reveal his love for powerful, massive forms and simplified light-and-shade relations.



### Flowers in a Blue Vase

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1873-1875

Oil on canvas, 55.2 x 46 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





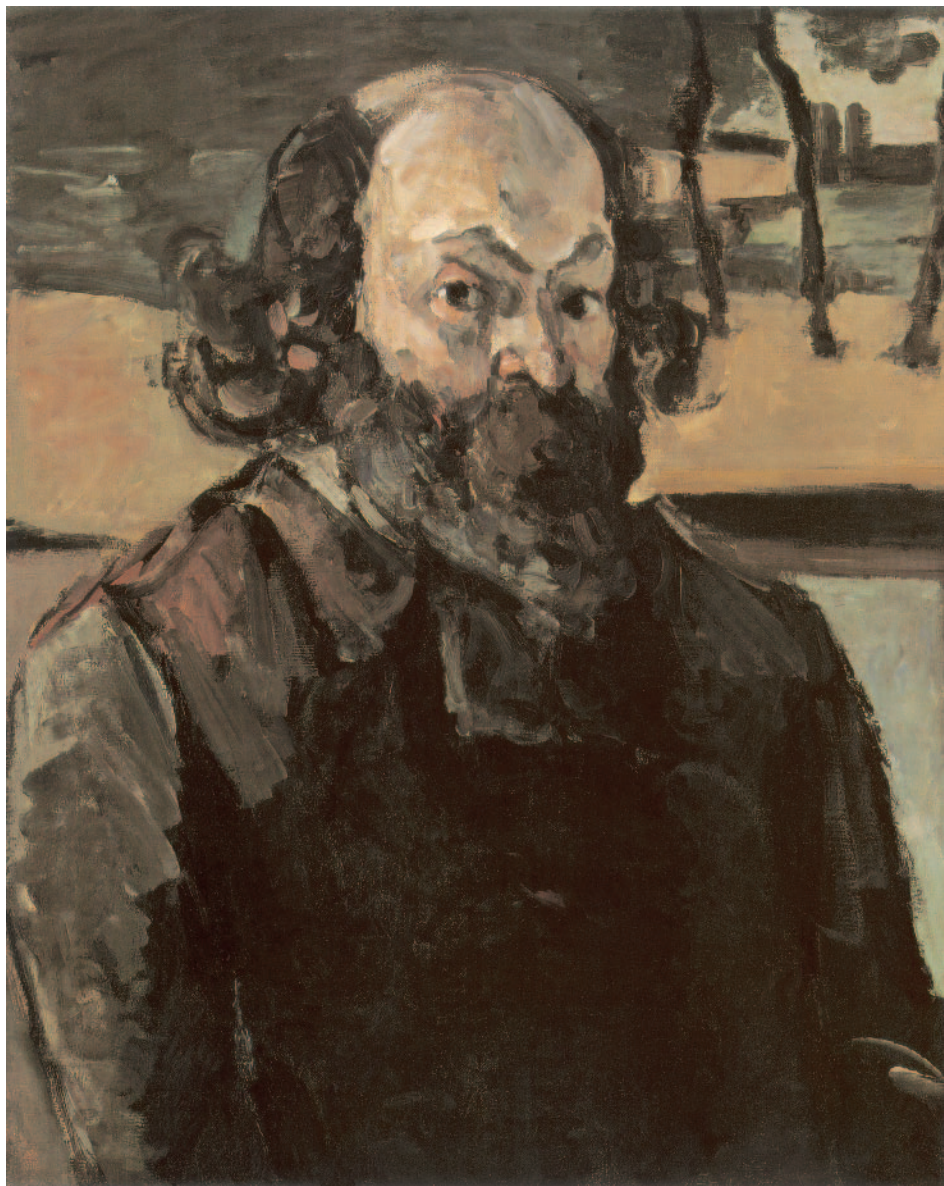
He was in no hurry to follow the Impressionists out of the museum halls and the studio's atmosphere of concentration in order to paint in the open air. He was immersed in an imaginary fantasy world, consumed by the desire to express an irresistible flood of human passion.

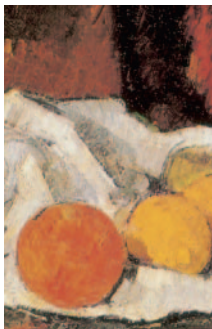
## Portrait of the Artist

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1873-1876

Oil on canvas, 53 x 64 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





Then, as before, he was attracted, above all, by the art of strong emotions. For an artist with Cézanne's keen sense of the dramatic complexity of the world, a simple representation of the visible was insufficient. He would constantly modify and deform figures, emphasizing in them what he thought to be most important and creating compositions with unstable equilibrium.

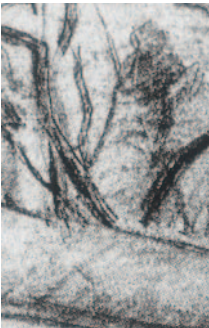
## The Buffet

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1873-1877

Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm  
Szépművészeti Múzeum, Budapest





*Two Women and Child in an Interior*, the earliest of Cézanne's pictures in Russian museums, was executed in the 1860s. Cézanne achieves an effect of depth by the use of a few skillfully arranged objects: a curtain, a small table, and an armchair.

### Trees in a Park

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1874

Lead pencil, 23.6 x 17.7 cm  
Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Vienna





The figures of two women and a girl are grouped around a goldfish bowl. Their poses are thematically not defined, their movements slow, they are absorbed in themselves as if spellbound by the measured movements of the three goldfish in the water.

### Auvers, Panoramic View

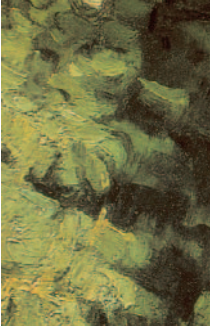
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c. 1874

Oil on canvas, 65.2 x 81.3 cm

The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago





The same dull, dark tone is used for the background, the deep shadows on the objects, and the water in the goldfish bowl. And this creates a sense of one environment, enclosing human beings, fish and objects alike.

### Path in Jas de Bouffan

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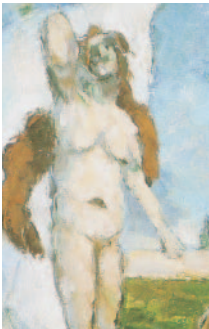
1874-1875

Oil on canvas, 38.1 x 46 cm  
Tate Gallery, London





A hypnotizing atmosphere of inner concentration pervades the scene, mutes the sonority of the colors, and slows down the characters' movements, transforming what is in essence an ordinary genre scene into a kind of fantastic dream.



## Bathers

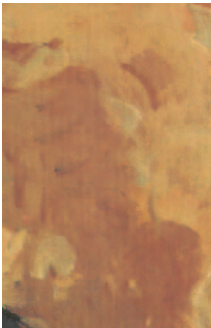
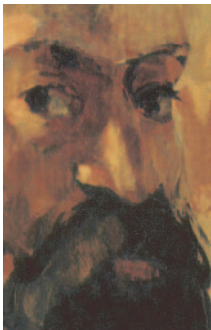
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1874-1875

Oil on canvas, 38.1 x 46 cm

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York





The inner tension, still bound by static forms in *Two Women and Child in an Interior*, is released with tremendous explosive force in other paintings, accompanied by a buildup of color contrasts. Traditional subjects like *Pastoral*, *Luncheon on the Grass*, *Fishing*, and others are set in unreal, fantastic surroundings reminiscent of strange, dreamlike visions.

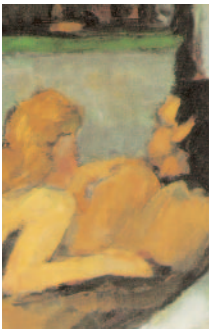
### Self-Portrait with a Pink Background

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c. 1875

Oil on canvas, 65 x 54 cm  
Private Collection, Basel





The painting *The Murder* seems to be seen through the eyes of a man stunned by the sight of the murderer's hand raised over his victim. Forms here are generalized in the extreme and are subordinated to a whirlwind of movement: the man's clothes rise corkscrew fashion following the thrust of the hand clutching the knife;

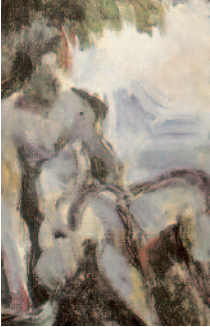
### Afternoon in Naples (Rum Punch)

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1875

Oil on canvas, 37 x 45 cm  
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra





on the right there emerges from the depth a sinister female figure, a kind of chimera, the whole weight of her boulder-like body falling upon the victim; the sharply designated diagonal of the landscape plane recedes into the depths of the painting, and a swirling storm-cloud hangs low over the scene.

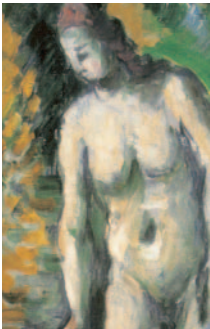
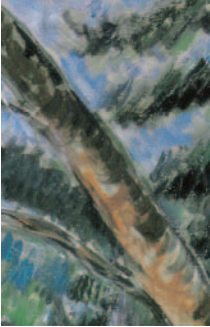
## Five Bathers

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1875-1877

Oil on canvas, 22 x 33 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





Cézanne put a lot of effort into this composition, as is evidenced by the large number of preparatory drawings. Yet it still looks as if it were painted in a transport of frenzy — the artist applied thick dabs of paint with a palette knife and modeled form with pools of color, striving to truthfully express his own powerful sensations.

### Three Bathers

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1875-1877

Oil on canvas, 52 x 55 cm  
Musée du Petit Palais, Paris





These works were born in the heated imagination of a painter living in provincial bourgeois surroundings, where everything was in opposition to his strivings and hostile to the urgings of his rather prolonged youth.

### Road at Pontoise (Clos des Mathurins)

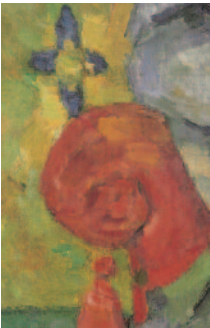
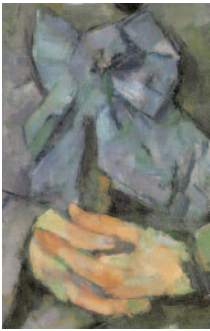
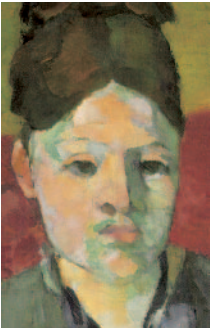
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1875-1877

Oil on canvas, 58 x 71 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





He took up with Hortense Fiquet, a girl not of his social class, but for many years — until 1886 — he was obliged to conceal the liaison and the birth of his son from his father, and to live and keep his family on an irregular pittance.

Madame Cézanne in a Red Armchair  
(Madame Cézanne in a Striped Skirt)

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c. 1877

Oil on canvas, 72.4 x 55.9 cm

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston





Cézanne's *Orgy* (1864-1868, private collection), *Pastoral* (c. 1870, ex-collection of J. Pellerin, Paris), *Luncheon on the Grass* and many other works painted in the late sixties and early seventies, are permeated with an atmosphere of unreality.



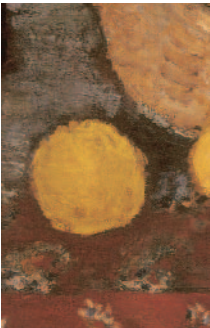
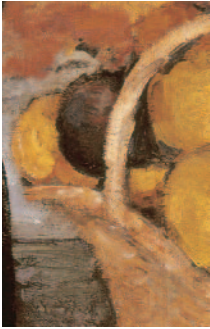
### The Eternal Female

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c. 1877

Oil on canvas, 43 x 53 cm  
Private Collection, New York





The titles of these pictures are so out of keeping with the traditional idea of the genre that the painter must have chosen them with tongue in cheek. It can be said without fear of error that despite the many influences apparent in these paintings, they are unique in French mid-nineteenth-century art, being the product of the artist's powerful individual vision of the world.

### Still Life with a Soup Tureen

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1877

Oil on canvas, 82 x 65 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





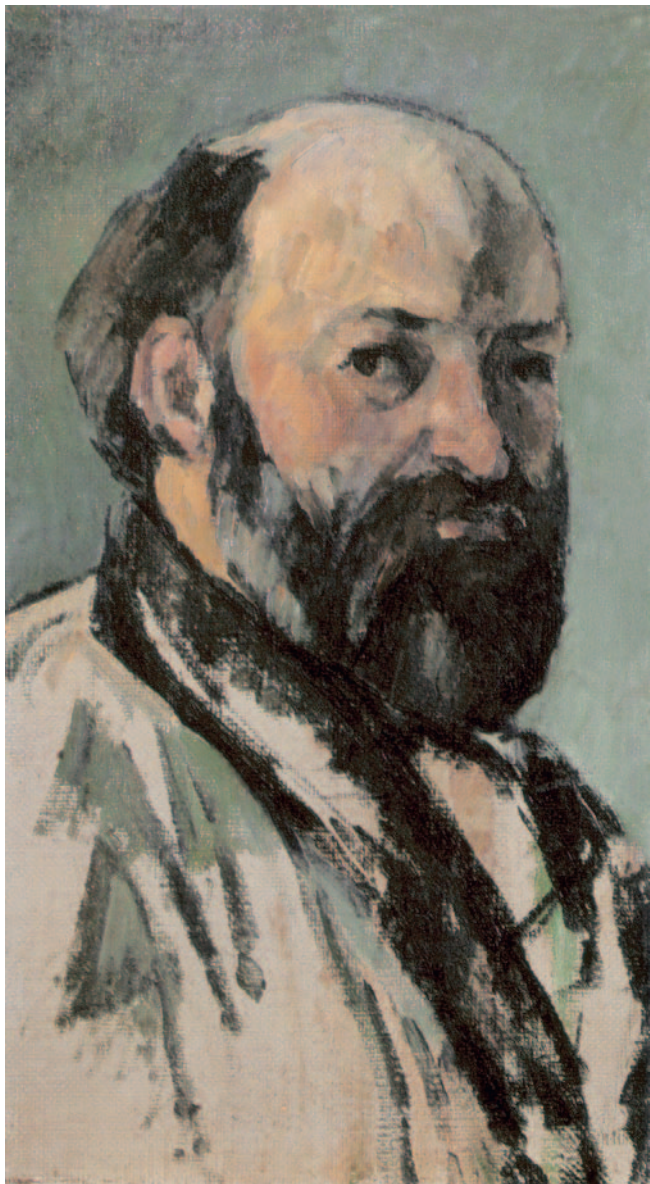
The painting *Uncle Dominique as a Monk* is one of the *Uncle Dominique* series in which the subject is portrayed in one case as a lawyer, in another wearing ordinary indoor clothes, in others in a cap or in fantastic headgear. From the frontal pose in each of these works one can infer that the artist attempted to build up a strongly pronounced relief on the canvas's surface.

### Self-Portrait

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1877-1880

Oil on canvas, 25.5 x 14.5 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





By piling up dabs of paint one upon the other, he created an almost sculptural effect. Obviously, from the very beginning, Cézanne developed a taste for strongly expressed volume, and his painting *Dish of Peaches* (c. 1890-1894, Oskar Reinhart Collection, Switzerland) — a copy of part of a composition by a seventeenth-century Dutch still-life artist, displayed in the Aix municipal museum — may serve as an example.

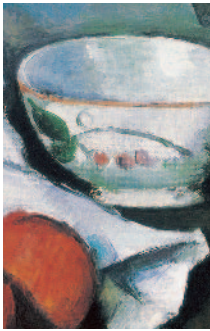
### Bay of Marseille from l'Estaque

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1878-1879

Oil on canvas, 55 x 73 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





The interest in the interaction of immobility and movement is also evident in the *Portrait of the Artist's Father* (1866–1867, private collection). By slightly moving the figure in relation to the armchair, and the armchair in relation to the wall, the painter has brought all the elements of the picture into a state of instability which, however, is compensated for by the frontal pose of the figure and the implanting of a large newspaper in the hands of Auguste Cézanne.

## Fruit

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1879

Oil on canvas, 45 x 55.3 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





*Girl at the Piano* is another, more complex work, and the third and only surviving version of *Overture to 'Tannhäuser'* (1866), so called in tribute to Richard Wagner. The idea of fusing the everyday world with a more elevated one is embodied in the monumental immobility of the figures, the solemn, concentrated calm of their poses, and the measured rhythm of the ornamental pattern calling to mind a musical note or a bass clef as it slowly drifts across the wall.

### Bridge in Maincy near Melun

---

c. 1879

Oil on canvas, 58.5 x 72.5 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





The compositional scheme worked out by the artist lends the scene a special austerity, uniting all the elements and introducing a note of solemnity comparable to that found in medieval icons. Looking at this canvas, one is aware of Cézanne's immense influence on twentieth-century artists.

## Fruits

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1879

Oil on canvas, 45 x 55.3 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





Indeed, the free reconstruction of traditional spatial forms, the violation of established scales, and a synthesized, simplified drawing at which Cézanne arrived by dint of strenuous and intensive experimentation have become a matter of course in twentieth-century art.

### Still Life with Dish, Glass and Apples

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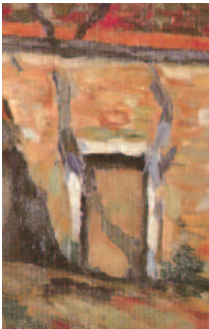
1879-1880

Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm  
Private Collection, Paris





These and a number of other features give Cézanne's work its originality, make it unlike anything done before his time. But Cézanne fully realized the need of mastering the light-and-air medium and to this end was prepared to forego some of his discoveries.

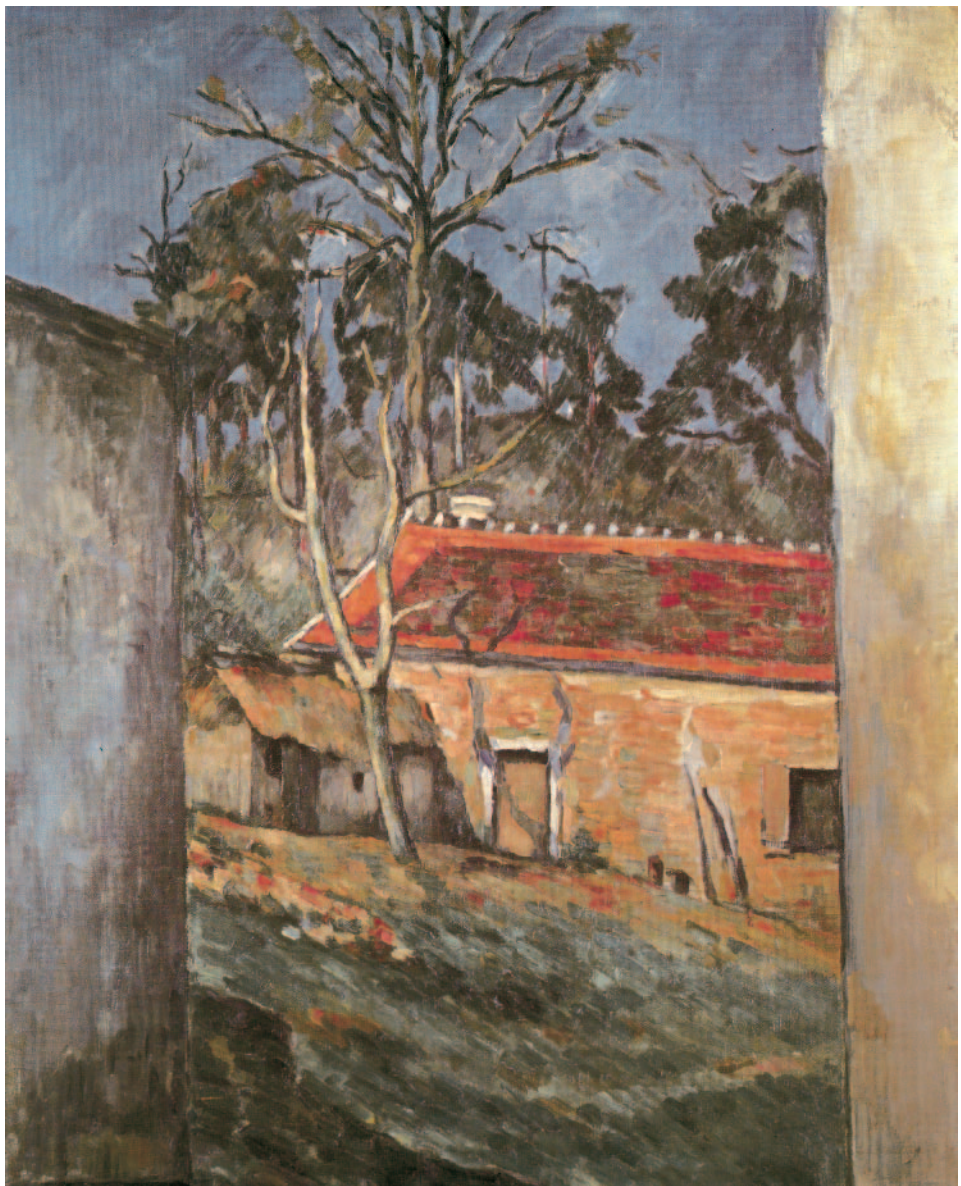


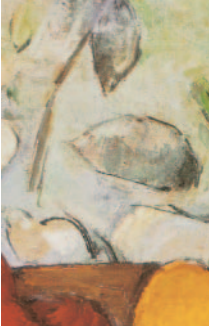
## Court of a Farm in Auvers

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1879-1880

Oil on canvas, 65 x 54 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





That was one of the reasons why he became close to the Impressionists in the 1870s. Evidence of his first sorties into the outside world is to be seen in his landscapes of the very end of the 1860s. Only in 1872 did he set out to work regularly in the open air.

## Apples and Biscuits

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1879-1882

Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm  
Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris





It may be assumed that Pissarro gave some advice to Cézanne, when he settled in Pontoise in 1872 and when a close creative association came into being between the two painters, which continued with minor breaks until 1877.

### Pitcher, Fruits and Tablecloth

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1879-1882

Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm  
Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris





This was the only period of tutelage in Cézanne's life, a period in which he was directly affected by an outside influence, and Pissarro was the only painter of that time who exercised such an influence upon him. They worked side by side on the same motifs, and certain of their pictures of those years bear traces of mutual influence.

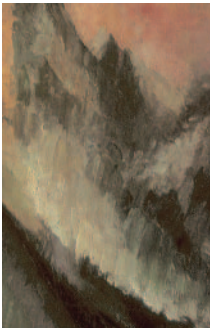
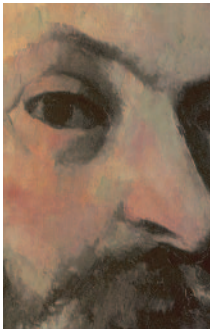
### Dish of Apples

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1879-1882

Oil on canvas, 55 x 74.5 cm  
Oskar Reinhart Collection, Winterthur





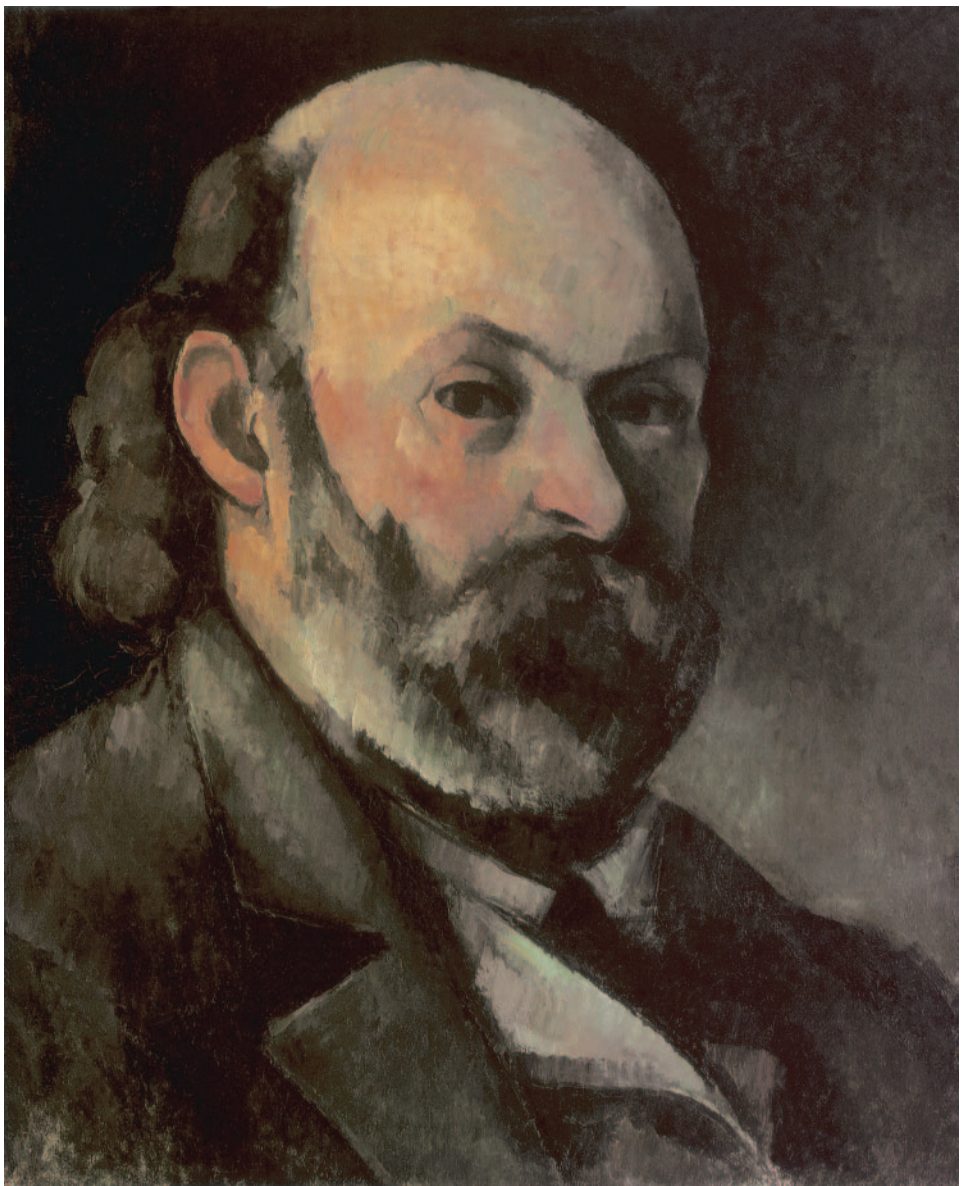
Later Pissarro wrote: "Of course, we were always together; but it is also true that each of us preserved one valuable thing — his own sensation." The first result of this association was a lightening of Cézanne's palette. In his canvas *The House of the Hanged Man at Auvers* (1873, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), the only trace of romanticism was the name which, however, had no direct connection with its subject matter.

### Self-Portrait

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1879-1882

Oil on canvas, 39.5 x 24.5 cm  
Private Collection





While using light Impressionist tones, Cézanne nevertheless applied the paint thickly. His contact with Pissarro, and through him, with the Impressionists, at a time when the Impressionist trend had reached its zenith, was a turning point in Cézanne's work. Pissarro gave him a method the absence of which he, Cézanne, acutely felt in his early period.

### Landscape in Provence

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c. 1880

Watercolor, 34.6 x 49.9 cm  
Kunsthau Zurich, Zurich





But under Cézanne's brush this method produced unexpected results, for the strivings of Cézanne and those of Pissarro were in many ways dissimilar. Cézanne willingly listened to Pissarro's advice, especially as this mild and patient man had an exceptional gift as a teacher.

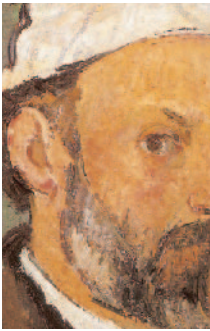
### Bassin in Jas de Bouffan

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1880-1890

Oil on canvas, 64.8 x 81 cm  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York





But at the beginning of his Auvers period Cézanne was not equipped to react so speedily to what he perceived. He was used to pondering over a painting. His thick, heavy brushstrokes were not suitable for expressing fleeting atmospheric nuances.

### Self-Portrait in a White Hat

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1881-1882

Oil on canvas, 55.5 x 46 cm  
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen  
Neue Pinakothek, Munich





In addition, he was not satisfied with such unconditional dependence on the chromatic range provided by nature. He wanted to find a synthetic solution to all the harmonies offered by nature, and he strove for constructively well-thought-out space in a painting.

### Plain by Mont Sainte-Victoire

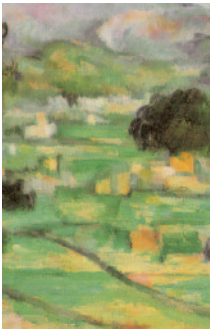
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1882-1885

Oil on canvas, 58 x 72 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





The following dilemma confronted Cézanne: he had either to accept Impressionism with all its wild play of interacting color reflections and shimmering mist of the light and air medium, or he must reject it and, together with it, his new perception of the world. This perception, partly under the influence of Impressionism, was becoming wider, more profound and more acute. Cézanne wavered.

### Mont Sainte-Victoire, View from Bellevue

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1882-1885

Oil on canvas, 65.4 x 81.6 cm  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York





But even in his most Impressionistic works he could never accept entirely the system of painting in tiny, divided brushstrokes which enabled Monet and Pissarro to achieve a sense of the continual changes of air and light. *Road at Pontoise* is an example of Cézanne's version of Impressionism.

### Vase of Flowers on a Table

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1882-1887

Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm  
Private Collection, Paris





Following Pissarro's advice, he regards the motif first of all "from the point of view of form and color," he "does not fix his eye on one point," does not stress the thematically focal point of a composition — all the elements of a landscape are of equal value in his eyes, and he paints them simultaneously, observing at the same time the reflections of colors on everything that surrounds them.

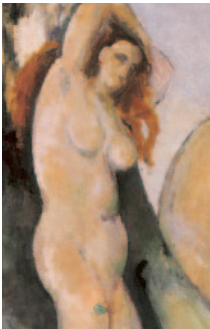
### Portrait of Madame Cézanne

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1883-1885

Oil on canvas, 62 x 51 cm  
Private Collection, Philadelphia





The main problem which Cézanne tackled during this period, whether in landscape, portrait, or still life, was how to achieve the wealth of color reflections revealed by light, while preserving a sense of the material mass and form of objects.

### Bathers in Front of a Tent

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1883-1885

Oil on canvas, 63.5 x 81 cm  
Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart





Two of his paintings in the Hermitage demonstrate his searchings along these lines, notably *Flowers in a Blue Vase* and *Self-Portrait in a Cap*. In his *Flowers in a Blue Vase*, Cézanne brings out the form of the objects by his control of the brush.



### Still Life with a Chest of Drawers

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1883-1887

Oil on canvas, 73.3 x 92.2 cm  
Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen  
Neue Pinakothek, Munich





For Cézanne the bouquet is a combination of separate flowers, stems, and leaves. It is first of all a pictorial form, as strict and definite as the very vessel in which it is held. In *Self-Portrait in a Cap*, the face, the clothes, and the cap are treated as a solid color mass of the same texture throughout.

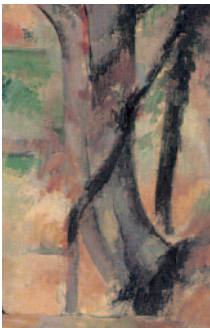
### Self-Portrait with Palette

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1884

Oil on canvas, 92.5 x 73 cm  
E.G. Bührle Foundation, Zurich





Brushstrokes that are close in tone fuse together to form a single reddish-brown surface on which the green reflections (graduating to violet bluish and blue) create the sensation of natural hollows and recesses filled in with shadow.

## Trees and House

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1885

Oil on canvas, 54 x 73 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





The difference between Cézanne's and Pissarro's methods was inelegantly but precisely defined by a peasant who watched both artists at work: "Monsieur Pissarro, when he is working, pokes, Monsieur Cézanne dabs." The period of Cézanne's closest links with the Impressionists is in the 1870s; he exhibited with them in 1874 and in 1877.

### Village in Provence

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c. 1885

Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm  
Kunsthalle, Bremen





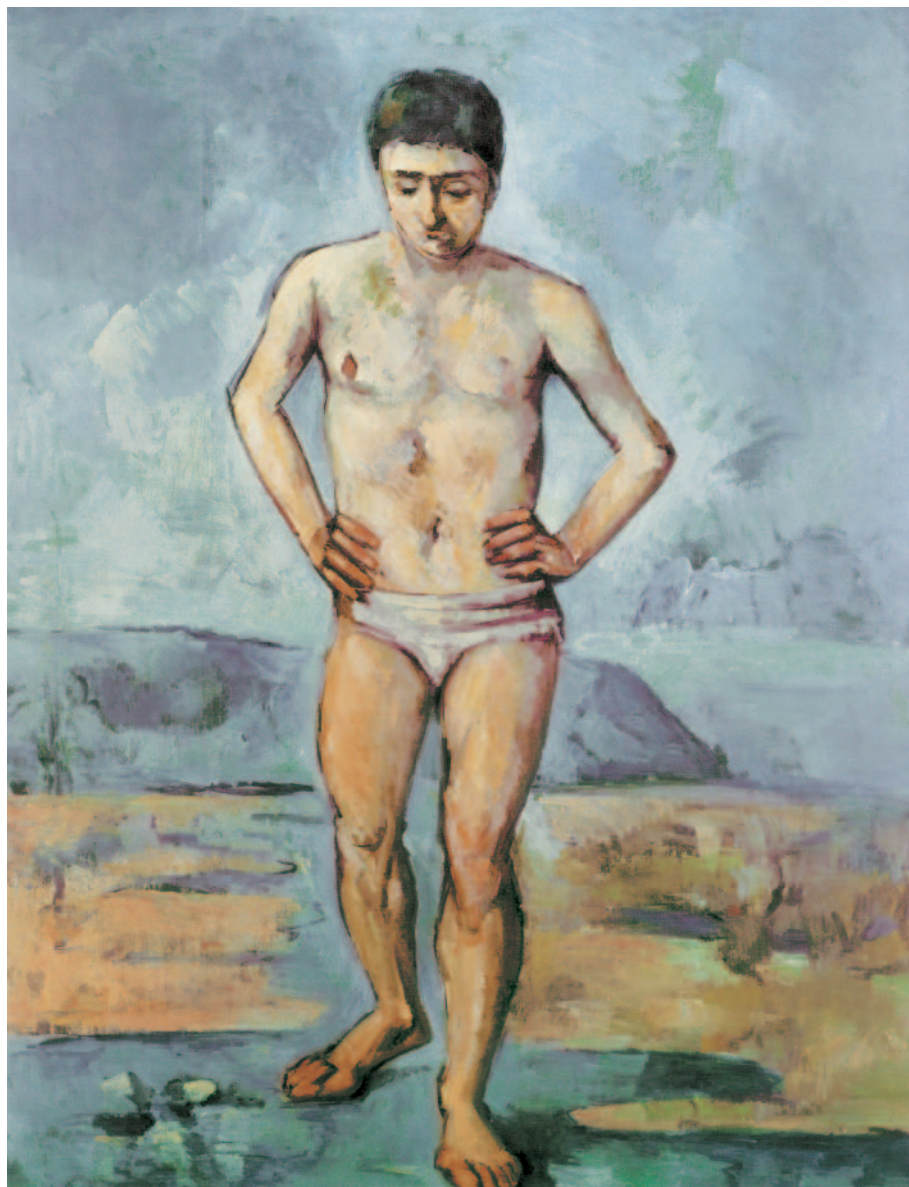
However, by the end of the decade, the artist began to sharply feel the incompatibility of his understanding of a painting with some aspects of the Impressionist method. "I keep on working, but with little success, and it's all too far removed from the general trend..." he wrote in 1878.

## The Great Bather

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c. 1885

Oil on canvas, 127 x 96.8 cm  
Museum of Modern Art, New York





Cézanne gradually moved away from Impressionism, though continued to be on friendly terms with Monet and Pissarro, even going so far as to work with Renoir in the 1880s, but this time on a new basis. Thus, at the end of the 1870s, now almost forty, Cézanne once again finds himself at a crossroads. And the painter sets out on a new quest.

### Tall Trees in Jas de Bouffan

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1885-1887

Oil on canvas, 64.7 x 79.5 cm  
Courtauld Institute Galleries, London





Strictly speaking, Cézanne's work falls into two main stages: before 1873 and afterwards, when the artist started to paint from life and began to master reality, a process which went on day by day until his very death. Cézanne himself formulated his understanding of theory as *"tout est en art surtout théorie, développée et appliquée au contact de la nature."*

Path of Chestnut Trees in Jas  
de Bouffan in the Winter

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1885-1886

Oil on canvas, 73.8 x 93 cm  
The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis





In other words, for him theory was what Émile Bernard called “thinking with brush in hand” about methods of recreating reality. Cézanne did not agree with anything less than portraying nature in accordance with truth and “embracing it as a whole.” And if perhaps he too often recognized the impossibility of attaining the unattainable, he did not want to reconcile himself to that and could not bring himself to do so.



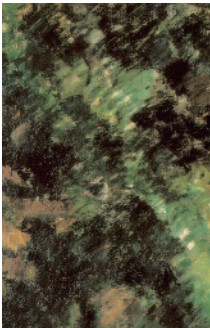
## Gardanne

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1885-1886

Oil on canvas, 92 x 73 cm  
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn





At a certain stage, Cézanne's idea of embracing reality as a whole confronted him with the need to tackle the practical task of maintaining the achievements of the Impressionists, above all in the spatial treatment of light and air, without losing the wealth of objects and colors of reality.

### Trees in a Park (The Jas de Bouffan)

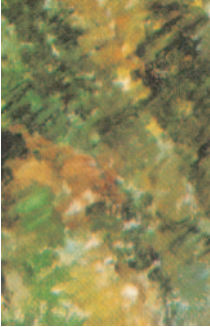
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1885-1887

Oil on canvas, 72 x 91 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





Although in the late 1870s Cézanne and the Impressionists parted company, this did not mean an ideological rupture: their aims and tasks continued to coincide in more respects than one. In his works of the late 1870s, we already see a tendency toward a logical consistency of pictorial means.

### The Jas de Bouffan (detail)

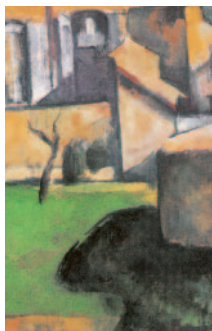
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1885-1887

Oil on canvas, 72 x 91 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





This becomes especially clear if we compare two self-portraits: one painted in the Impressionist period 1873-1875 and the other, executed between 1879 and 1885. In the Hermitage canvas, Cézanne still makes a substantially intuitive use of the law of optical perception, according to which warm tones (pinks and yellows) seem to stand out, to come nearer to us, and cold ones (blues and greens) to recede into the depths.

## House and Farm in Jas de Bouffan

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1885-1887

Oil on canvas, 60.5 x 73.5 cm

Národní Galerie, Prague





In the *Moscow Self-Portrait*, these advancing and receding tones are kept under strict, rational control by the artist. The nearer to the periphery, the thicker their layer, the more intensive their dark cold hues. The nearer to the center, the more warm yellowish tones, gradually changing to yellow, orange, and pink colors, begin to show through.

## The Aqueduct

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1885-1887

Oil on canvas, 91 x 72 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





These dabs of paint are not perceived here as color reflections shifting over the surface of the object; they are transformed into certain spatial microplanes used by Cézanne to indicate the extension of form from the surface of the canvas into the depths of the picture.

## The Great Pine (Mont Sainte-Victoire)

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1886-1887

Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm

Phillips Collection, Washington DC





By this method the artist achieves an almost stereoscopic effect: the left-hand side of the face seems to be illuminated and is therefore approaching us, while the right-hand side is plunged in shade, is receding from us, giving the effect of a turning head.



## Blue Vase

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1885-1887

Oil on canvas, 61 x 50 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





As a result the form takes on a third dimension before our very eyes, demonstrating the unimpeachable logic of its construction. Perhaps there is no other European artist of the past two centuries whose work of still life has occupied so honored a place. This is quite understandable: Cézanne took up this genre as a result of his heightened interest in plastic form.

The Banks of the Marne  
(Villa on the Bank of a River)

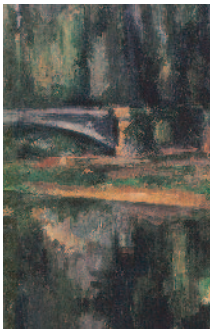
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1888

Oil on canvas, 65.5 x 81.3 cm

Hermitage, St. Petersburg





In the 1880s, he produced numerous variations depicting fruit, crockery, vases, and tablecloths, i.e. everything that was stable and unchanging, that could be painted carefully for a long time. The still life *Fruit* is one of a long series of still lifes of this kind.

## The Banks of the Marne

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1888

Oil on canvas, 71 x 90 cm  
Pushkine Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





Here we find the same devices as are seen in the Moscow self-portrait: Cézanne builds up the forms of the objects with the aid of warm, advancing tones and cold, receding color planes. As firm as billiard balls, the orange-colored fruits, press down upon the surface of the table with all their perceptible weight, the yellow lemon acquires three dimensions in the greenish shadows at the edges.

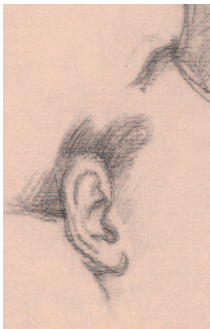
### Pierrot and Harlequin (Mardi Gras)

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1888

Oil on canvas, 102 x 81 cm  
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





At the center of this composition Cézanne places a tablecloth whose soft, amorphous mass does not link the surrounding objects into a single whole but, on the contrary, emphasizes the autonomous existence of each object in pictorial space. The gleaming fruit do not lose their colorfulness in the darkened part of the picture.

### Study for the Painting Mardi Gras

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c. 1888

Drawing, black pencil, lead pencil,  
cream paper, 24.5 x 30.6 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





In this way light ceases to be something external to the object. Subsequently Cézanne's development proceeds in three main directions, those revealing the rich color relations between objects, the relations between their forms and volumes, and between objects and the space in which they exist.

## Peaches and Pears

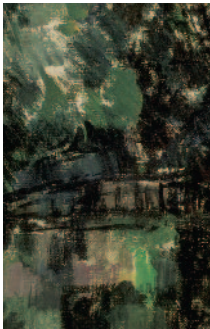
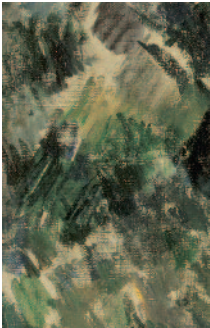
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1888-1890

Oil on canvas, 61 x 90 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





Two still lifes housed in Russian collections, *Peaches and Pears* (1888–1890, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts) and *Still Life with Curtain*, done ten years later, illustrate the stages along this road. In comparison with *Fruit*, where the contrast between dark and light in parts of the composition still plays a rather significant role,

### Bridge and Pool

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1888-1890

Oil on canvas, 64 x 79 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





in *Peaches and Pears*, light has not only ceased to exist as an external source, but it has been transformed into the objects' natural color. In handling pictorial space Cézanne does not reject the principles of classical composition based on singling out the central point and arranging the parts in an equilibrium bordering on symmetry.

### Still Life with Basket

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1888-1890

Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





He merely makes these principles more complex, transforms them. The strict order and the complex equilibrium so typical of Cézanne's constructivist period, a period that came to an end about 1890, reign in this painting. One gets quite a different impression from the *Still Life with Curtain* kept in the permanent collection of the Hermitage.

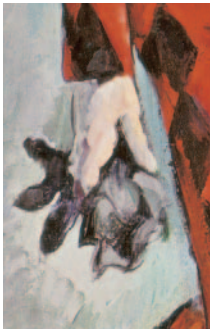
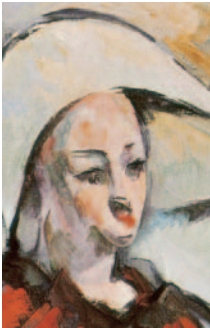
### Portrait of Paul Cézanne, Artist's Son with Hat

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1888-1890

Oil on canvas, 64.5 x 54 cm  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC





The dishes of fruit are pushed to the side of the viewer, the fruit hang onto the sloping surface by a miracle governed by the laws of pictorial gravity, obviously in contrast to those of Newton. The still life, in which the artist could freely arrange objects, was for him a kind of laboratory in handling space.

## Harlequin

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1889-1890

Oil on canvas, 92 x 65 cm  
Rothschild Collection, Cambridge





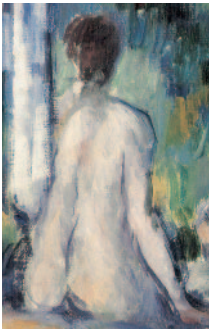
But how can one achieve such integrity in landscape, when the painter, working in the open air, is dependent upon a given space? This problem must have constantly confronted Cézanne. Its complexity was aggravated by the fact that the artist, relying on the visual authenticity of his perception, also tried to express the all-encompassing, synthetic picture of nature that would accord with his keen sense of the world's great cosmic forces.

### Dish with Fruits and Drapery

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1898-1899





“One is neither too scrupulous nor too sincere nor too submissive to nature; but one is more or less master of one’s model and, above all, of the means of expression. Get to the heart of what is before you and continue to express yourself as logically as possible”:

### Bathers (Study)

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early 1890s

Oil on canvas, 26 x 40 cm

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





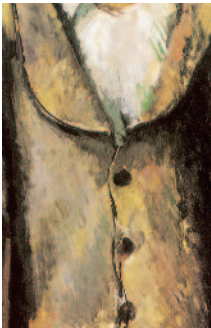
This simple truth expounded by Cézanne was one he scrupulously followed. Landscape always occupied a prominent place in Cézanne's work. But it was only in 1870–1871, during his pre-Impressionist period, when for the first time he turned to the images of L'Estaque and Mont Sainte-Victoire at Aix, that the first signs of a new orientation appeared in his landscapes.

## Bathers

1890-1892

Oil on canvas, 60 x 82 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





*Melting Snow at L'Estaque* and *Trench at the Foot of Mont Sainte-Victoire* (Neue Pinakothek, Munich) are paintings in which two types of Cézanne's landscape compositions can be discerned — the "baroque," with a dynamic diagonal structure (*Melting Snow at L'Estaque*), and the classical, with an alternation of canvas-wide parallel color zones (*Trench at the Foot of Mont Sainte-Victoire*).

### Man Smoking a Pipe

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1890-1892

Oil on canvas, 73 x 60 cm  
Courtauld Institute Galleries, London





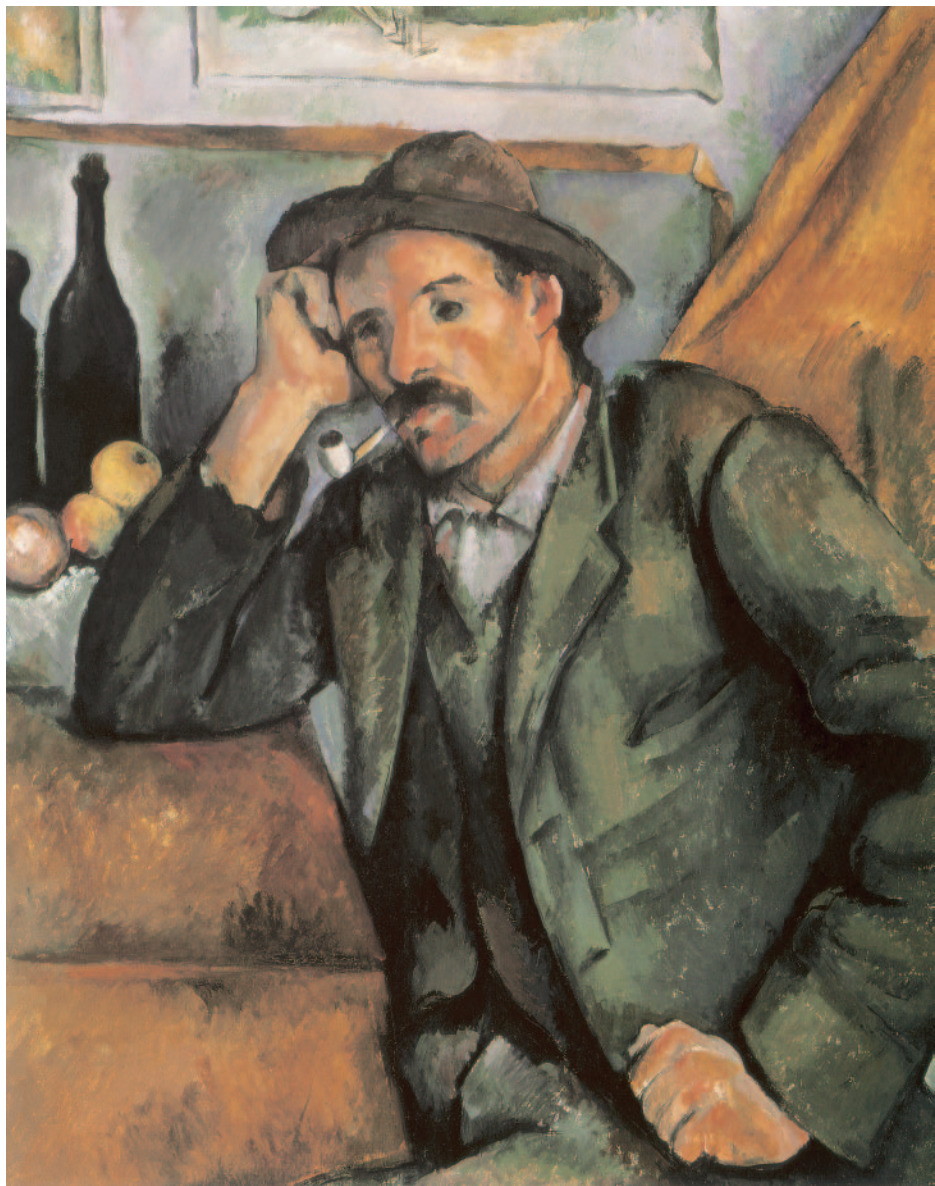
These two canvases are of course merely early experiments; they lack observation of nature and there is no aerial medium what-so-ever. But here one can already see Cézanne's grasp of great spaces and his synthetic image of nature. *Plain by Mont Sainte-Victoire* (1882–1885, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts) has some compositional similarity with the *Trench*.

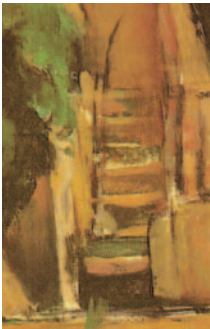
### The Smoker

---

1890-1892

Oil on canvas, 92.5 x 73.5 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





But how far the artist has departed from the former image, how complicated space has become in this, at first glance elementary, compositional scheme. The artist leads the viewer's eye to the mountain by means of parallel color zones that imperceptibly taper off into radii.

## The House in Bellevue

---

1890-1894

Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm  
Private Collection, Geneva





The compositional scheme of *Trees in a Park* (1885–1887, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts) also has an affinity with the traditional. Nineteenth-century artists often turned to the so-called *sous-bois* method of composition, conveying a sense of depth through a barrier of trees. In *Trees in a Park*, the trees predominate, absorbing into their orbit everything around them.

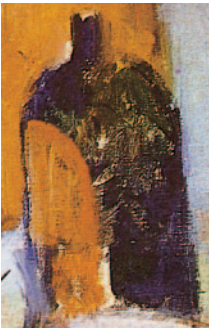
### Woman with a Coffee Pot

---

1890-1895

Oil on canvas, 130.5 x 96.5 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





To a certain extent this disguises Cézanne's unconventional understanding of depth. Cézanne reorganizes relations between all objects, violating scale, creating the effect of depth and immediately breaking it down by plunging into inverse perspective. Therefore, objects in the background seem remote and near, and the space of the earth both flat and deep.

## Still Life with Bottles and Apples

---

1890-1894

Oil on canvas, 50.5 x 52.5 cm  
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam





From one landscape to another Cézanne experimented in object and spatial relations. In his *The Aqueduct* (1885–1887, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts), the narrow space of the foreground consists of large green and orange patches, and a row of pines with their boughs raised to the sky is aligned immediately beyond it. But Cézanne eliminates the material differences between spatial planes.



## Bathers

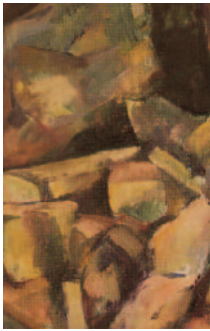
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1890-1900

Oil on canvas, 22 x 33.5 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris







The whirling green brushstrokes model the resilient crowns of the trees, while in the center of the canvas, where the pines cut across the line of the hill on the horizon, these strokes, without losing their specific texture, absorb the bluish-violet tones of the mountain separated from the trees by an immense distance, as if shreds of thickened space, filled with air, are caught between the spreading branches and cannot disengage themselves.

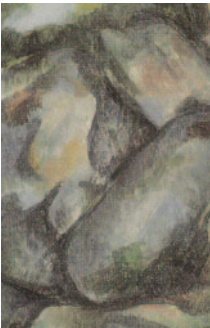
## Millstone

---

1892-1894

Oil on canvas, 73.5 x 92 cm  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia





It was in landscapes of this type that the essential aspects of Cézanne's artistic system were realized. In them he shifts planes, intermingles the far and the near, yet preserves a distinct sense of three-dimensionality of space receding into the depths.

### Rocks in the Woods

---

c. 1893

Oil on canvas, 51 x 61.5 cm  
Kunsthaus Zurich, Zurich





In this way, and this perhaps is the most important feature, Cézanne consistently avoids indicating the precise place from which he looks at the surrounding environment. It is virtually impossible to define the vantage point from which Cézanne's landscapes were viewed and painted.

### Pitcher and Fruits

---

1893-1894

Oil on canvas, 42.2 x 62.8 cm  
Berggruen Collection, Paris





Cézanne's work from the late seventies to the late eighties is usually termed his Constructivist period because of his strictly logical method, rational composition, and so on. These principles determine the style of his portraits, still lifes, and landscapes painted at the time. Perhaps they are most evident in his figure compositions.

### A Bottle of Peppermint

---

1894

Oil on canvas, 65.9 x 82.1 cm  
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC





In 1888, simultaneously with *The Banks of the Marne River* Cézanne created another masterpiece, *Pierrot and Harlequin (Mardi Gras, 1888, E.G.Buhrle Collection, Switzerland)*, in which he depicted the traditional characters of the French folk theater (1888, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts).



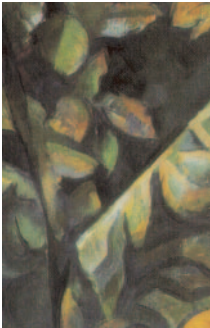
### View of the Château Noir

---

1894-1895

Oil on canvas, 73.5 x 92.5 cm  
Oskar Reinhart Collection, Winterthur





There is no denying that Cézanne's interpretation of the images is traditional, but instead of the usual burlesque clownery, he creates something different. He avoids everything that might seem transient — a spontaneous gesture or fleeting smile. He precludes the slightest possibility of an accidental turn of figure, marking a transition from one movement to another.

### Still Life with Curtain

---

1895

Oil on canvas, 55 x 74.5 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





In 1886, a change in Cézanne's fortunes occurred. His father died, leaving him the house at Aix, the villa Jas de Bouffan, and a substantial legacy to him and his sisters. Shortly before this Cézanne had married Hortense Fiquet. At last, he was freed of constant financial problems and everyday worries.

### Man Smoking a Pipe

---

1895-1900

Oil on canvas, 91 x 72 cm  
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





Up to that time the jury had only once, in 1882, admitted one of his paintings into the Salon, and that only on the insistence of his friend Antoine Guillemet, while those works which were occasionally displayed at unofficial exhibitions met with furious onslaughts by critics and the public alike.

## Apples and Oranges

---

1895-1900

Oil on canvas, 74 x 93 cm  
Musée d'Orsay, Paris





The blows of fate only spurred Cézanne on to harder work. From the beginning of the nineties up to his death he lived almost without a break at Aix, traveling occasionally to Paris to visit his family. Regularly every morning Cézanne would set off to paint. He executed landscapes, portraits, and still lifes.

### The Old Woman with a Rosary

---

1896

Oil on canvas, 80.6 x 65.5 cm  
National Gallery, London





In his studio or at home he painted peasants who posed for him for long periods, retaining throughout their unhurried manner, immobility, and patience — qualities his more intellectual models could seldom attain. This was how he painted his *Card Players* series (1890–1892), the finest example of which is in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

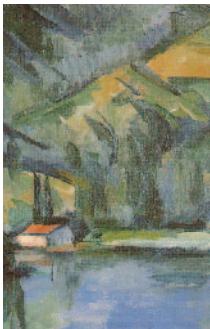
### Great Pine near Aix

---

late 1890s

Oil on canvas, 72 x 91 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





Here two figures and the details of the interior are incorporated into a rigid compositional scheme. If in the mind's eye one prolongs the inclinations of the figures of the two players, and the lines of their hands, then a distinct rhomboid is formed, the apexes of which lie outside the canvas; at the same time the bottle in the center of the composition divides the rhomboid vertically, and the rear edge of the table horizontally.

## The Lake at Annecy

---

1896

Oil on canvas, 64 x 81.3 cm  
Courtauld Institute Galleries, London





This constructivist logic gives the composition a surprising stability and imparts a monumental quality to the images of the peasants. Two paintings in Russian collections are executed in the same way: *The Smoker* (Hermitage), and *Man Smoking a Pipe*, both dated 1895–1900.

### Mont Sainte-Victoire

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1896-1898

Oil on canvas, 78 x 99 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





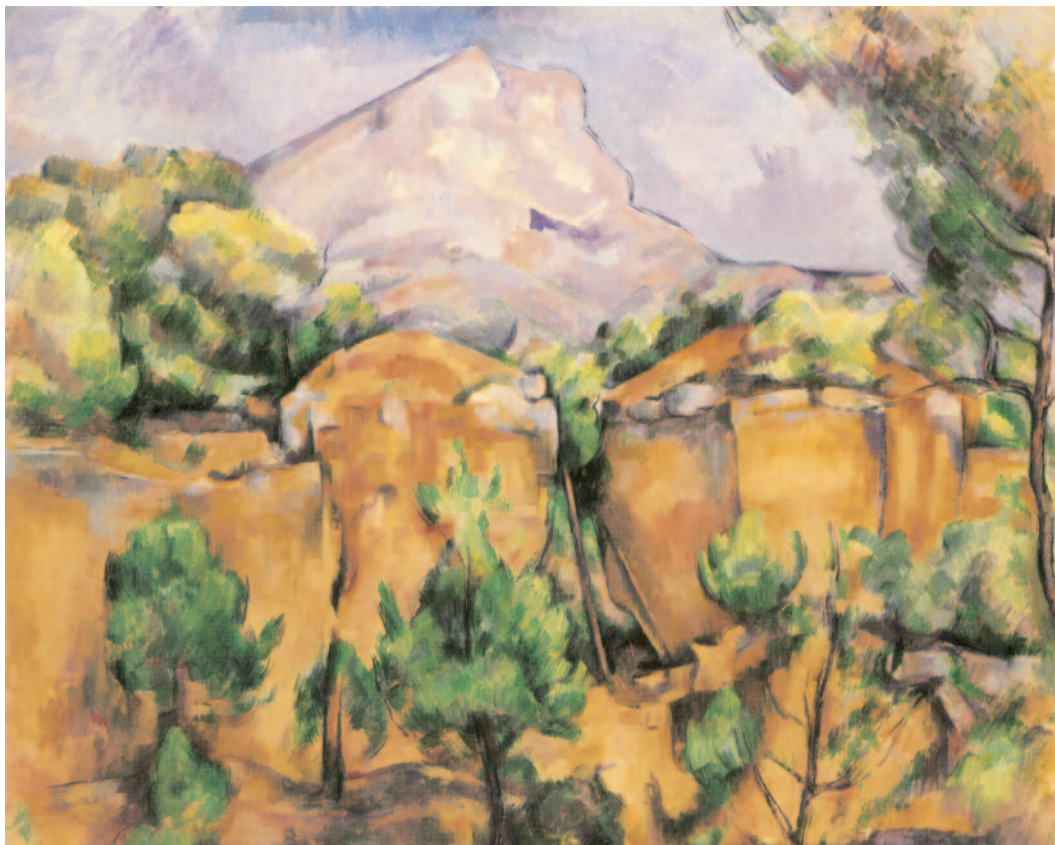
One would have thought that toward the end of the 1880s Cézanne was achieving his desire: he transformed Impressionism into “something solid and durable, like the art of the museums.” In place of the fragmentary character of an Impressionist painting,

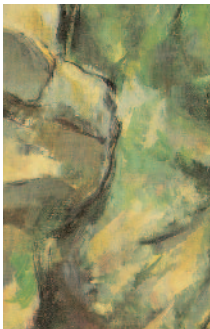
### Mont Sainte-Victoire, View from Bibémus

---

c. 1897

Oil on canvas, 65 x 80 cm  
Museum of Art, Baltimore





Cézanne asserted the composition structured according to classical laws. In place of the fleeting nature of atmospheric and psychological states came Cézannesque stability, based on an equilibrium between immobility and movement. Evidently, this too could not completely satisfy the artist whose main aim was to “embrace reality as a whole.”

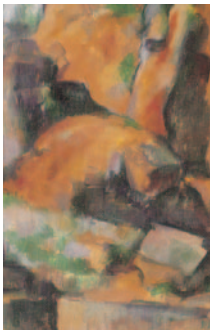
### In the Park of the Château Noir

---

1898

Oil on canvas, 92 x 73 cm  
Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris





In his later years, Cézanne experienced a re-awakening of the sensations of his romantic youth — sensations of the intense and dynamic life of the universe. To him the realization of this meant the coupling of one more, and now last, link to his system of embodying reality;

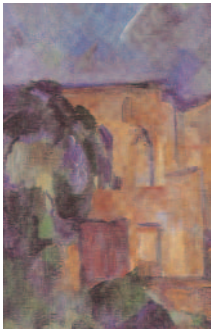
### Bibémus Quarry

---

1898-1900

Oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm  
Folkwang Museum, Essen





it meant setting down on the immobile surface of the canvas the motion of formative rhythms and processes of life as they come into being, at the same time preserving the material stability of natural forms. It was a formidable task which necessitated a reassessment of all his old ideas.

### In the Park of the Château Noir

---

1900

Oil on canvas, 94 x 74 cm  
Musée Picasso, Paris





One of the supreme achievements of Cézanne's later period is undoubtedly *Mont Sainte-Victoire*. The dynamic motion permeating this landscape can be sensed both in the movement of the brushstrokes and in the energetic curving of the lines and vibrations of the light-and-air medium.



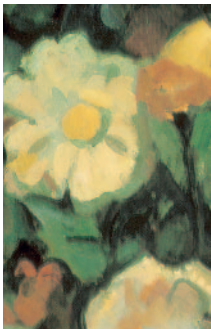
## The Château Noir

---

1900

Oil on canvas, 73.6 x 93.2 cm  
Museum of Modern Art, New York





If one looks at Mont Sainte-Victoire from the side Cézanne painted it, one gets quite a different view from that shown in his painting. Cézanne placed houses which in reality are hidden by trees at the very foot of the mountain; he considerably increased the size of the mountain in comparison with the adjacent hollows and tracts of forest.

### Flowers (Study)

---

1900

Oil on canvas, 77 x 64 cm  
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





As a result, though the mountain comes closer to the viewer, there is no loss whatever of the impression of inaccessible distance, like the sensation experienced on looking from a valley at a mountain ridge which seems near and far at the same time.

## Mont Sainte-Victoire

---

c. 1900

Pencil, gouache, watercolor on white paper

31.1 x 47.9 cm

Musée d'Orsay, Paris





In his *Great Pine Near Aix*, Cézanne was also concerned with developing spherical space. The tree trunk is framed on all four sides by an uneven ring of color in which the green tones of the pine and the carpet of grass are mixed with bluish-violet reflections of air and distance.



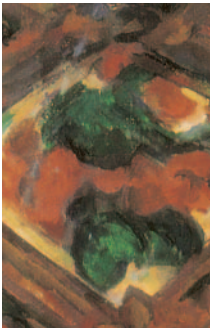
## Bathers

1900-1905

Oil on canvas, 50 x 61 cm

The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago





Scholars have noted the presence of this “spherical space” in Cézanne’s work more than once. However, claims that Cézanne was the first in this field require a little correction. In his mature years, Cézanne’s vision not only became free of symbolic conceptions, but of a host of artistic canons as well.

## Woman in Blue

---

1902-1906

Oil on canvas, 88.5 x 72 cm  
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





He eventually noticed that in nature all lines bend, curve or incline, and to portray parallels converging in space was to him tantamount to “copying truth from a preconceived type,” whereas he wanted “to imitate nature in accordance with truth.”

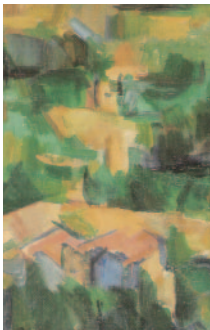
## The Great Bathers

---

1900-1906

Oil on canvas, 127.2 x 196.1 cm  
National Gallery, London





To some extent this led to the stories that Cézanne had defective eyesight. Cézanne himself was very near to believing that his sight was defective and ascribed to it the fact that “the planes overlap each other,” while “absolutely vertical lines seemed to me to be falling.”

### Mont Sainte-Victoire, View from Lauves

---

1902-1904

Oil on canvas, 69.8 x 89.5 cm

Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia





But Cézanne did not want to change his vision of nature and he could not do so. The spherical character of space helped him to convey in the best possible way his pantheistic perception of the dynamic life of nature as a single process uniting and forming in its course all the elements of nature's visual aspect.

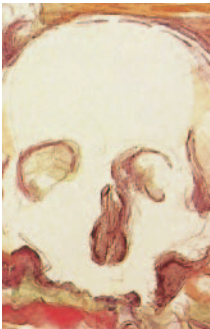
## Mont Sainte-Victoire

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1902-1906

Watercolor and lead pencil, 42.5 x 54.2 cm  
Museum of Modern Art, New York





One might say that Cézanne's pantheistic world perception was seen earlier in his *Bathers* series in which he tackled the task of uniting human figures with landscapes. He had turned to this theme back in the 1870s, and had continued with it all through his artistic career. His small study *Bathers* is part of this series.

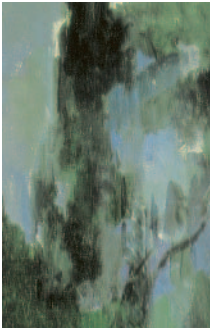
### Three Skulls

---

1904

Watercolor and lead pencil, 47.6 x 62.9 cm  
The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago





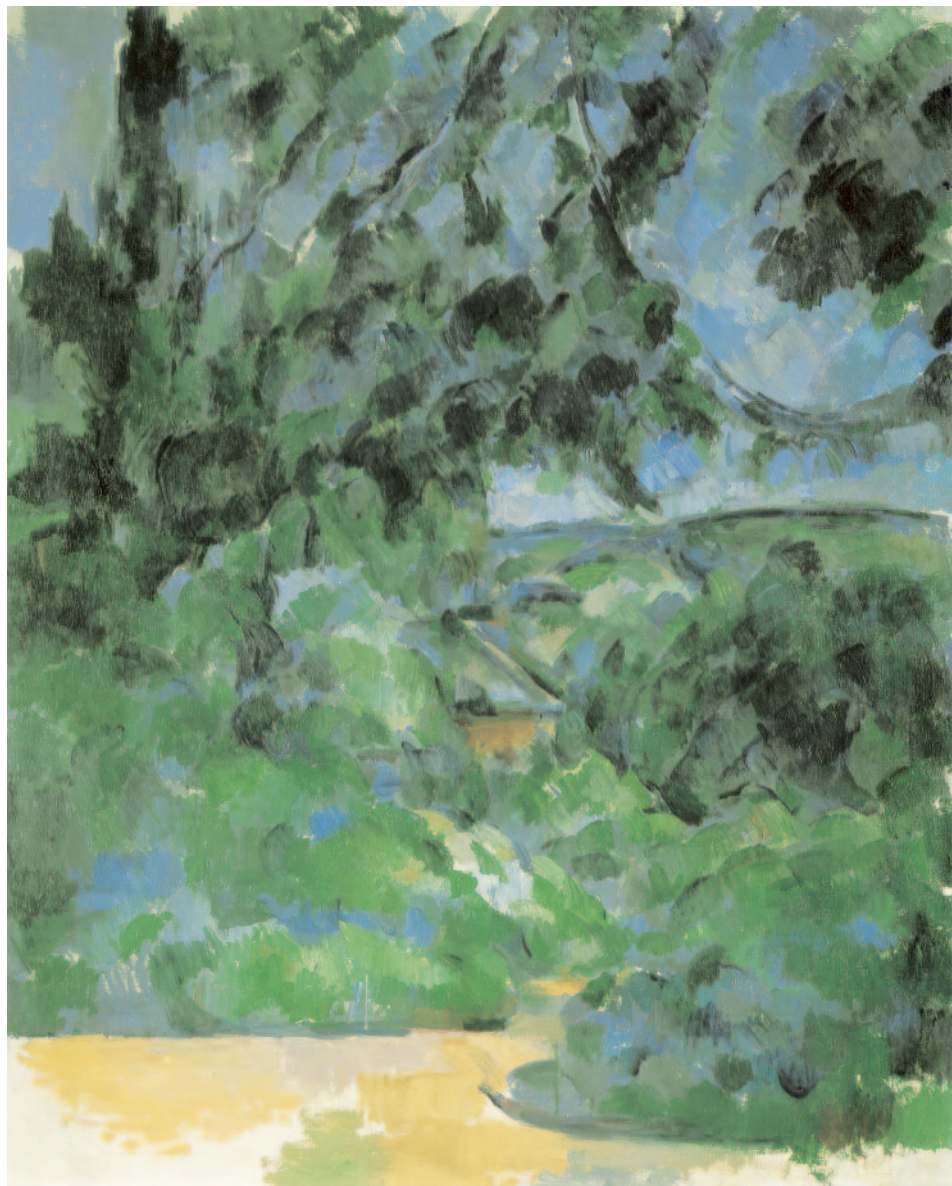
A group of bathers is depicted on a narrow strip in the foreground, and behind them the color patches of the foliage are interrupted by the light blue patches of sky. But is it the sky? Or is it the wide blue surface of the river, reflecting sky and bank?

## The Blue Landscape

---

1904-1906

Oil on canvas, 102 x 83 cm  
Hermitage, St. Petersburg





In his later landscapes, *Flowers* (c. 1900, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts) or *Landscape at Aix (Mont Sainte-Victoire)* Cézanne synthesized the principles of organization of pictorial space worked out by him earlier. He was motivated by the same striving to embrace reality as a whole, which now, as ever before, meant for him the fullest possible expression of his sensation of nature.

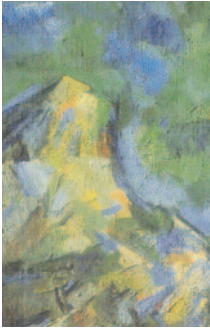
### Mont Sainte-Victoire, View from Lauves

---

1904-1906

Oil on canvas, 60 x 72 cm  
Kunstmuseum, Basel





And to achieve this he perfected to the utmost his method of discarding secondary details in order to penetrate the essence of what was portrayed. In these landscapes, nature in many respects loses the concreteness of its forms but acquires instead the dynamic intensity of its existence.

### Landscape at Aix (Mont Sainte-Victoire)

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1905

Oil on canvas

Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





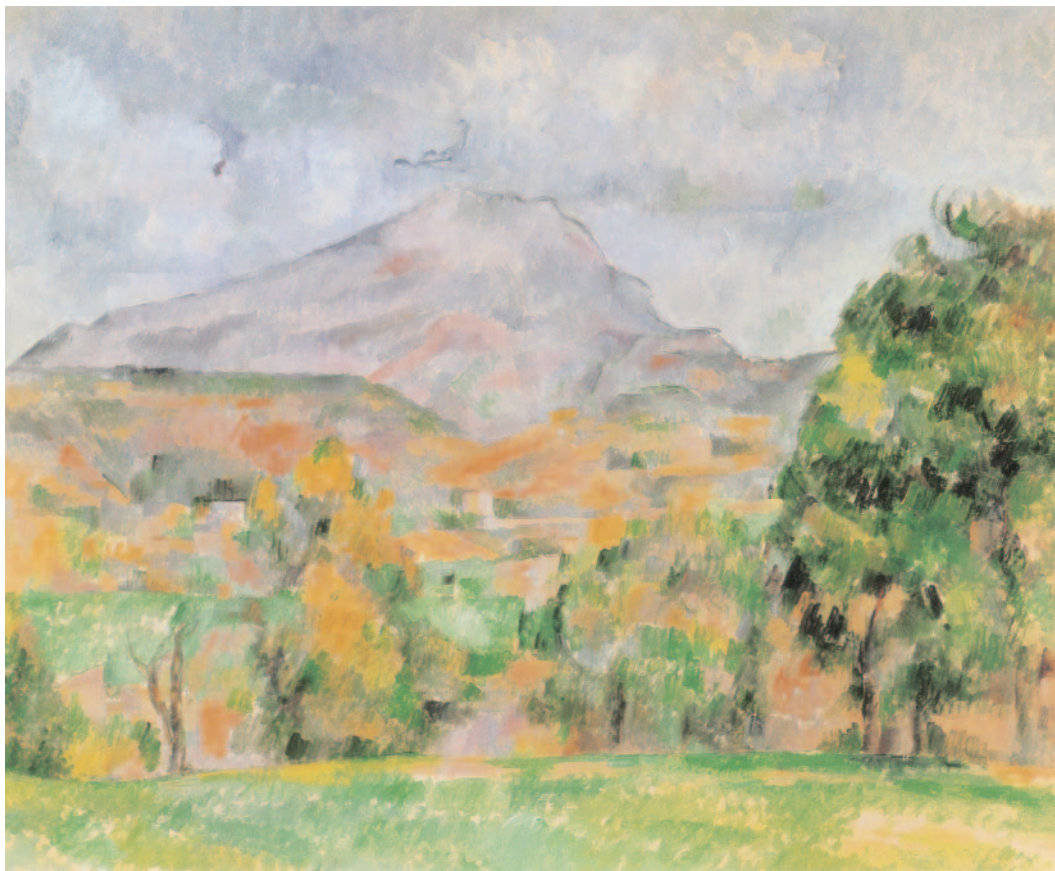
Unlike the Impressionists, Cézanne did not dissolve natural forms in the light and air medium; rather he fused them together, and from this alloy, which has absorbed all the colors and shades of reality, he built the world anew.

### Landscape at Aix (Mont Sainte-Victoire)

---

1905

Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm  
Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow





And this process of creation broke off only with his last heartbeat, the last stroke of his brush. Cézanne died on October 22, 1906, from pneumonia, after catching cold while working on his last “motif”.

### Portrait of Vallier

---

1906

Oil on canvas, 66 x 54 cm  
Private Collection, Switzerland



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