

MEDIA RELEASE

Monet's Garden: The Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris



On May 10, the National Gallery of Victoria will open this year's highly anticipated Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibition, *Monet's Garden: The Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris*.

Exclusive to Melbourne, this stunning exhibition will feature more than sixty works devoted to Claude Monet's iconic garden at Giverny.

Monet's Garden traces the evolution of these garden motifs over a period of twenty years, revealing the transition of Monet's purely Impressionist style to the more personal pictorial idiom that he adopted in later life.

Minister for the Arts Heidi Victoria MP said the exhibition will bring some of Monet's greatest masterpieces to Australia for the first time.

"Monet is one of the key figures of 19th and 20th century art. He was the grandmaster of Impressionism, an art movement that has inspired artists for more than a century, and he created some of the best known and loved works of the modern era. It is set to be a spectacular exhibition that will give audiences an insight into Monet's works, his life and inspiration and I look forward to welcoming it to Melbourne and to the NGV," Mrs Victoria said.

NGV Director, Tony Ellwood, said the exhibition would feature Monet's most well-known works, from a stunning suite of enormous waterlilies paintings to his iconic garden motifs, as well as some rarely seen late paintings.

"*Monet's Garden* is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the world of Monet and the garden that became his lifelong obsession.

"We are thrilled to collaborate with the Musée Marmottan, home to one of the largest collections of works by Monet in the world, to bring these masterpieces to Melbourne for the first time," said Mr Ellwood.

The exhibition will include more than fifty masterpieces from the Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris, as well as other paintings from leading international museums and private collections around the world. Early photographs of the artist and his garden will also be on display.

Opening with a pair of portraits of Claude Monet and his wife Camille painted in 1872 by Pierre-August Renoir, the start of the exhibition tells the story of Monet's early life.

The exhibition then takes visitors on a journey beginning with Monet's arrival in Giverny in 1883 and the first steps taken towards the creation of the garden that would serve as inspiration for the remainder of Monet's life.

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The first section of the show will include a series of paintings that Monet produced during the years the garden at Giverny was being laid out. These were created in Normandy, in the valley of the Seine, or during Monet's travels to Norway and London. Highlights include *Field of Yellow Irises* at Giverny 1887 and *Parliament, Reflections on the Thames* 1900.

The second section of the exhibition will consist entirely of paintings representing Monet's beautiful garden at Giverny, produced between 1897 and 1926.

Mr Ellwood said: "Through these paintings, visitors will experience every aspect of Monet's garden; the iconic Japanese footbridge, the waterlilies and other flowers including irises, agapanthus, wisteria, the weeping willow and the alley of roses.

"The show concludes with a spectacular, specially commissioned filmic installation which will immerse visitors in the daily beauty of Monet's garden as it is today. Entitled 'The Last day at Giverny', it will present Monet's beautiful garden from sunrise to sunset on the last day of the season this year. This circular display will surround and embrace visitors leaving a powerful parting impression of Monet's garden," said Mr Ellwood.

The exhibition will also present a series of rarely seen late works by Monet; some of the last easel paintings created in the garden in Giverny as the artist began to lose his sight. These works represent a radical departure from Monet's earlier style and will provide visitors to the exhibition with the unique opportunity to explore a lesser known period in the artist's life.

This will be the tenth Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibition at the NGV since the series began in 2004 with *The Impressionists*. It has since attracted more than 3.5 million people to Melbourne's cultural institutions. *Monet's Garden* will be presented alongside *Hollywood Costume* at the Australian Centre for the Moving Image in 2013.

The exhibition is organised by the Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris in association with the National Gallery of Victoria and Art Exhibitions Australia.

***Monet's Garden: The Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris* will be on at the National Gallery of Victoria from 10 May until 8 September 2013. Tickets on sale now. Adult \$26 | Child \$10 | Concession \$22.50.**

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