

# GUSTAVE COURBET

## GUSTAVE COURBET

September 7, 2014 – January 18, 2015

**CAUTION:** Please do not touch the works of art!



*Whenever this symbol appears on the exhibit labels, it means you will find the work of art discussed in detail under the corresponding number in this guide.*

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### Films

Two films will be showing in the museum's Winter Garden during the exhibition:

***Gustave Courbet, Die Ursprünge seiner Welt***, 2007 (52 minutes), by Romain Goupil;  
***Der Ursprung der Welt***, 1996 (26 minutes), by Jean-Paul Fargier.

**GUSTAVE COURBET**

Gustave Courbet, who was born on June 10, 1819, in Ornans in the Franche-Comté region of eastern France and died December 31, 1877, in La Tour-de-Peilz on Lake Geneva, counts among the most important forerunners of classic modernism. His self-confident demeanor, the emphasis he placed upon his individuality as an artist, his inclination towards provocation and breaking taboos, not to mention his revolutionary painting technique, were to set standards that have influenced generations of artists. The exhibition at the Fondation Beyeler is the first dedicated to Gustave Courbet in Switzerland for over fifteen years.

The show presents pioneering works from all phases of the artist's career, including a number of paintings that have rarely been seen in public or which indeed for many decades were not publicly accessible at all. Greeting us at the very beginning are the early, complex self-portraits with which Courbet made his impressive debut on the Paris art scene and which have become icons of the nineteenth century. These are followed by scenes capturing the artist's native countryside, pictures of secluded streams and springs, rock formations and grottoes that revolutionized landscape painting. With his representations of waves and his views of the sea, Courbet succeeds in conveying the beauty and dynamism of nature each time anew. His winterscapes prove him to be a virtuoso painter of the color white. Paint, the artist's material, now becomes the actual subject of art: the significance of the motif wanes and the "how" becomes as important as the "what"—a fundamental development paving the way ultimately towards abstraction. At the heart of the exhibition are Courbet's mysterious female nudes beside water and his famous picture *The Origin of the World*: the profound impact of this painted breach of taboo continues to be felt in art right up to the present day.

The exhibition was created by Ulf Küster, curator at the Fondation Beyeler, and is part of the "Courbet Season", a joint venture with the Musées d'art et d'histoire in Geneva, which is mounting a concurrent show in the Musée Rath that focuses upon Courbet's years in Switzerland.

**1 • *Le Fou de peur (Portrait de l'artiste)*, ca. 1844/45  
*The Man Mad with Fear (Le Fou de peur)***

It initially cost the young Courbet, with his French provincial background, a good deal of effort to gain a foothold as a painter in Paris. It is probably no coincidence that the majority of his self-portraits should fall into this early, insecure phase, when the artist was still searching for his own personal and artistic path. Courbet portrays himself in a wide variety of poses and roles, of which *The Man Mad with Fear* is probably the most extreme example—it was once exhibited under the title *The Suicide*.

The painting appears to have been left unfinished in the lower section; to contemporaries, it must have looked like a sketch—although Courbet did not label it as such in his exhibition of 1855. If Courbet did indeed consider his self-portrait to be complete, *The Man Mad with Fear* may be understood as a programmatic statement: before the eyes of the public, the ambitious artist is taking a leap into the dark, here represented by a mix of colors consisting of pure painting, liberated from all tradition. This is both bold and perilous; only the painted imprint of a hand in the lower right-hand corner seems to respond to Courbet's reach into the unknown.

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## ROOM 1

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### **2 • *La Rencontre (Bonjour Monsieur Courbet)*, 1854** *The Meeting (Bonjour Monsieur Courbet)*

The picture was painted on the occasion of Courbet's first visit to his patron Alfred Bruyas in Montpellier, and shows the two men meeting not in the town, but on a country road. What at first sight looks like a friendly encounter reveals itself, upon closer inspection, as a boldly staged self-portrait of the artist. Look at the size and the position of the men: although Courbet, on the right, is at eye level with his benefactor, who is accompanied by a dog and a manservant, he clearly surpasses Bruyas in height. He is also the only figure not standing in shadow and claims one half of the composition for himself. He furthermore presents himself as a traveler and thus as a worldly and above all independent man, who carries all his possessions on his back. This is no Romantic Bohemian seeking recognition, but an artist brimming with self-confidence.

### **3 • *Autoportrait sous forme d'une pipe*, 1858** *Self-Portrait in the Form of a Pipe*

Although the title promises us a self-portrait of the artist, what we are actually looking at is a still life in the Dutch tradition of *trompe-l'œil*. This witty but nonetheless odd association allows much scope for interpretation: has the self-confident Courbet here completely stepped out of the picture for once? Or is the tobacco pipe hanging alone on the wall taking a sharp, ironic dig at the ratings system by which art genres were judged in Courbet's day? In comparison to the representation of the human figure, in the nineteenth century the still life—in other words, the depiction of objects—was namely considered inferior. It is possible that Courbet is also alluding to the analogies between pipe and paintbrush: take a look at the *Self-portrait with Black Dog* (also in this room) and see how the artist is holding his pipe—just like a brush. Courbet painted the picture in 1858 during a stay in Frankfurt am Main and left it behind with his artist friends as a memento.

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## ROOM 2

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### **4 • *Paysage du Jura (Rochers d'Ornans, le matin)*, ca. 1851** *Jura Landscape at Ornans*

Gustave Courbet was born on June 10, 1819. Where precisely, we do not know, since the official records make no note of an exact birthplace. The story told in Courbet's family was that his mother had given birth to him under a tree by the side of the road, having been unable to complete the distance in time from Flagey, where her husband had a farm and considerable landholdings, to Ornans, where her parents lived. A recurrent and striking motif in Courbet's landscapes is the transition between high-lying plateau (the countryside around Flagey) and valley (Ornans)—a characteristic of the mountainous Jura region in which he grew up. Courbet's oeuvre is hallmarked by the realistic—as opposed to idealizing—gaze that he turns upon his subjects. Even if his paintings were produced in the studio, they testify to a detailed study of nature in the places they portray.

### **5 • *La Roche Pourrie, étude géologique*, 1864** *The Roche-Pourrie, Geological Study*

*La Roche Pourrie* (literally “the rotten rock”) is an imposing geological formation near Salins-les-Bains, some 40 kilometers from Ornans. Courbet painted this work on behalf of the geologist Jules Marcou, who had recognized that the artist's painting technique—and in particular the way in which he applied his paint in thick layers with a palette knife (a type of spatula)—gave him the ability to represent rock strata with extreme accuracy. The fortified complex with a bridge seen in diminutive scale in the top left-hand corner, together with the darkly clad man decipherable only with difficulty in the foreground, allow the towering presence of the rock mass to come clearly to the fore.

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## ROOM 2

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### 6 • *L'Orée de la forêt*, ca. 1856

*The Fringe of the Forest*

This painting is one of Courbet's most impressive forest pictures. It does not show a classic landscape subject: no person is to be seen and no story is told. The motif seems to have been picked at random. Courbet once again shows us one of the distinctive features of his native countryside—the transition from woods to open field. Only when we look closely does the composition start to emerge. On the left-hand side of the picture, we can make out a forest path leading away into the background. The painting is dominated, however, by the gnarled trees in the foreground: they block the path and our view, only to gently lead our gaze leftwards, first deeper into the picture and finally out of the woods to the open sky.

### 7 • *Chevreuil à la source*, 1860–1870

*Rocky Landscape with Deer*

It was Gustave Courbet's opinion that only someone who was profoundly familiar with a landscape could do it justice in a painting. As a passionate walker and hunter, he observed nature at first hand and sought to reproduce it in its original state and geological complexity. The massive, slightly overhanging rock wall in *Rocky Landscape with Deer* almost completely fills the surface of the picture, whereby the irregular structure of the individual rock strata stands out particularly clearly. Below lies a colorful carpet of sediment made up of earth, stones and grass, which leads on the left to the palely shimmering waters of a spring. Within the mixture of ochers, greens and blues, the dark roe deer and the delicate doe behind it emerge only upon second glance. The real subject of this painting lies not in the wild animals embedded in impasto dashes of paint and brushstrokes, but in Courbet's approach to the different materials found in nature, which he pieces together layer by layer on the canvas.

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## ROOM 3

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### 8 • *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir, vallée de la Loue*, 1855

*The Stream of the Puits-Noir, Valley of the Loue*

### *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir*, ca. 1855

*The Stream of the Puits-Noir*

Among the works that Courbet showed in the Art section of the 1855 *Exposition universelle* was the relatively large-format landscape painting *The Stream of the Puits-Noir, Valley of the Loue*. The picture is unusual in several respects. We look into a deserted, densely wooded valley that is narrowly bordered by rocks. A small patch of blue sky can be seen overhead. Our eye is not drawn towards a focal point as in traditional landscapes, and only gradually do we make out the course of the stream disappearing into the background. The picture's impression of darkness is by no means due to the ageing of the paint and canvas: anyone familiar with the quiet valleys near Ornans knows just how somber, almost sinister they can be. Dark patches, representing light-swallowing zones of apparently bottomless water, are a striking feature of the painting. The spot it shows is called Puits-Noir, meaning "Black Well", and can be found relatively unchanged even today. The name alludes to the sinkholes that are a distinctive feature of the region's karst landscape: water seeps down into the countless subterranean cavities in the limestone, only to resurface somewhere else from seemingly unfathomable depths. The smaller picture, which presents the same motif in sharper focus, may have been executed first, before Courbet decided to paint a broader, more panoramic view of the valley.

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## ROOM 3

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### 9 • *Le Ruisseau du Puits-Noir*, 1869

*The Stream of the Puits-Noir*

This picture, too, offers a view of the secluded Puits-Noir valley near Ornans. Yet again, Courbet seems to have chosen a view for his landscape painting somewhat at random. This time, however, he concentrates not on a panoramic representation of valley and stream, but focuses attention on one detail: the rocks caught by the sun along the bank. He thereby accentuates the geological structure of the rock, insofar as he gives the impression of reproducing it on his canvas in superimposed, impasto layers of paint.

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## ROOM 4

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### 10 • *La Jeune Baigneuse*, 1866

*The Young Bather*

Courbet's pictures of naked women beside water, surrounded by verdant undergrowth, were produced in the years between 1866 and 1868. The three paintings of more or less identical size on show here offer variations on the theme of the oneness of woman and nature, a subject with a long tradition in art history. Female personifications of springs, along with fair maidens frolicking in rivers, grottoes and lakes, have existed since antiquity. Woman as intermediary between (spring) water and vegetation embodies fertility, initiation and sexuality. Courbet deliberately capitalizes on the fact that this motif carries an erotic charge. His young bather presents herself naked besides a pool of deepest black. Somewhat tentatively, as if she were first testing the temperature, she dips one foot into the water. So as not to slip, she grips a branch that is far too slender to support her with her left hand, while using her right to hold up her red hair. Will she plunge into the dark forest waters or simply bathe her feet? Courbet's ambiguous picture captivates us with its erotic aura and the wonderful natural interplay of foliage, light and water.

**11 • *Les Trois Baigneuses*, 1865–68***The Three Bathers*

A young, raven-haired woman with her eyes closed and her lips slightly parted has draped one arm over her female companion, who attempts to support and guide her as she balances uncertainly above the water. Another female companion with magnificent auburn hair is seated on a mossy rock on the right, her back turned to the viewer, gently holding her friend's other arm. Both these two are naked; only the woman on the bank is dressed in a makeshift gown. The pose of the female nude in the center is confusing: she seems less to slip into the water than to hover in the air. In the run-up to our exhibition, this painting was restored and at the same time analyzed with the latest scientific methods. It thereby emerged that other compositions lie hidden beneath the uppermost layer of paint. The original, subsequently overpainted version showed a solitary female nude stretched out on the ground in a natural setting. In the final picture, Courbet has given her two female companions and rotated her position through 90 degrees from horizontal to vertical, so that her originally reclining figure is now "standing".

**12 • *La Source*, 1868***The Source*

Unlike *The Young Bather* (10 •), the woman in *The Source* not only plunges one foot in the water but also reaches her hand into a tumbling waterfall. This recalls the famous painting of the same name by Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, completed in 1856. In contrast to Ingres' mythologically transfigured nude, who appears standing with a stream of water flowing steadily over her left hand from an upturned amphora, Courbet shows his naked rear-view figure with a natural skin tone and a broad backside that are far from all idealization, and replaces the antique jar with a spring issuing from the ground. The lifelike treatment of the woman's skin, whose bulges and hollows the painter clearly

emphasizes, and the emphasis upon her feminine curves, did not correspond to current notions of beauty. For most contemporaries, such realism was shocking and scandalous. The mysterious scene nevertheless lures the viewer away to enchanted places. Is the woman turned away from us (but whose face, even in this pose, should normally be partly visible) one of the many figures from tales told in the Franche-Comté, whose countenance would frighten the viewer to death?

**13 • *Le Puits-Noir*, 1860–65***The Shaded Stream at Le Puits-Noir*

The picture, which invokes a generous sense of spatial depth, shows another detail of the Puits-Noir or "Black Well" valley near Ornans. Do these images of concealed openings in the karst landscape not also carry a symbolic meaning, in allusion to the female sex? This suspicion has been regularly voiced, above all bearing in mind Courbet's famous painting *The Origin of the World* (cf. ROOM 7, 23 •). Be that as it may, the grottoes in the Jura are referred to locally as *dames* (ladies) and according to local mythology are the dwellings of nymphs and fairies. And when we visit these mysterious places and see their many subterranean springs, it is easy to feel that the Earth is here giving birth to itself.

**14 • *La Source de la Loue*, 1864***The Source of the Loue*

Courbet painted the source of the Loue, the river that flowed through his home town of Ornans, in at least six known versions. The present picture takes the viewer right up close to the grotto, so that we look directly across the water at the steeply rising rock walls and into the menacing mouth of the cavern. The fisherman with his throwing spear on the wooden promontory is made to look tiny by comparison. In Old Master fashion, Courbet worked on a canvas that had first been primed in a dark color, causing the ocher rocks to stand out and allowing the viewer to look deep into the Earth's interior. Through the pale, mostly unmixed colors, the substance of the rocks and water transforms into an abstract paint mass, as it were. The result is a nature that seems powerfully animated and which, in its pure and authentic form, corresponds to the impressions registered by Courbet at first hand in front of the motif.

**15 • *La Source du Lison*, 1864***The Source of the Lison*

The Lison emerges from the rocks of the French Jura a few kilometers west of the source of the Loue, near the municipality of Nans-sous-Sainte-Anne. Here the painter presents a frontal view of the waters as they spill out of the slightly elevated grotto, gather in the pool below and appear to flow out over the lower edge of the picture towards the viewer. The mosses, grasses and trees flourishing on the left bank and clinging to outcrops on the steep-sided cliff provide a verdant framework for this portrait-format composition. In his detailed reproduction of the massive limestone walls, the reflective surface of the water and the white foam, Courbet approaches, with impressive painterly means, the power and original essence of this natural spectacle.

**16 • *La Vague*, ca. 1869***The Wave*

In this stormy seascape, waves and clouds testify to the movement and dynamism of uncontrollable elemental forces. A huge breaker towers up like a black wall in front of the viewer, while on either side the billowing waters condense into whitecaps. Courbet applied his paler intermediary colors on top of the dark ground in irregular layers executed rapidly with the palette knife. The churning sea finds its counterpart in the dense and multicolored texture, which to the eyes of the viewer indeed appears as water, clouds and foam. The point of interest is thus no longer the illustrative reproduction of things, but the overwhelming representation of the unpredictable forces of nature.

**17 • *Le Coup de vent, forêt de Fontainebleau*, ca. 1865***The Gust of Wind*

This outstanding work is the largest landscape painting in Courbet's oeuvre. It was commissioned as part of the decorations for a Parisian villa and shows a gathering storm, probably in the Forest of Fontainebleau. The artist here reveals the full breadth of his mastery and his extraordinary modernity. Particular mention should be made of the palette, which for Courbet is very rich, and likewise of the bold composition, which takes up the theme of movement in the shape of gusting wind. This latter is atmospherically portrayed not only through the bent boughs of the trees but also in the elongated cloud formations and the strong contrasts. Courbet applied several, albeit only partially translucent layers of paint, working them both with the brush and with the palette knife, as in the case of the rocks in the middle ground, for example. The canopies of the trees, on the other hand, are executed with a fine, soft brush. While the mountains in the background are rendered in detail, the brushwork in the foreground appears extremely free, almost abstract in character.

**18 • *Arbres sous la neige*, ca. 1865**

*Trees in the Snow*

*Trees in the Snow* shows a landscape detail chosen by Courbet seemingly at random. Renouncing all staffage figures, houses or animals, the artist demonstrates that almost any view of nature is worthy of treatment in a painting. The gently rising forest floor with its dusting of snow, and the trees covered in hoarfrost, bear witness to the artist's ability to represent white in all its guises. Delicate and dirty, bluish and beige colors cover the canvas and establish countless subtle variations of light and shade. Beneath them lies the dark ground that was Courbet's preferred choice and which generates a rich array of tonal contrasts ranging in value from luminously light to profoundly dark. The painter conjures before our eyes the multicolored shimmer of snow in the sunlight and employs finely nuanced shades and textures to transform paint, as it were, into snow and ice.

**19 • *Le Sanglier dans la neige*, ca. 1866**

*Snowy Landscape with Boar*

In *Snowy Landscape with Boar* a wild boar emerges at a run from the pitch-black undergrowth. Dense scrub, rocks and trees border the snowy clearing, which the painter portrays us from just a few meters' distance. Landscapes with wild boar, red deer and roe deer were a favorite subject for Courbet, a keen hunter for whom walking in the forests of his native region was a welcome pastime. He continued going out hunting around Ornans in the winter of 1866/67, too, even though this was officially the closed season. *Snowy Landscape with Boar* is less a hunting picture, however, and more a precisely studied wildlife scene in which a solitary boar, already mature in years, roams through thickets and woods.

**20 • *Braconniers dans la neige*, 1867**

*Poachers in the Snow*

While Courbet made black and opaque darkness the subject of many of his works, he was also a master of white. The color white takes on a very special, almost sculptural character in his winter pictures. In the present painting, the material properties of paint become virtually interchangeable with those of snow. It shows two hunters (or are they poachers?) and their dogs crossing a field of blinding white snow. One of them is threatening his dog with a stick, probably to force it to take up the scent of the animal whose tracks can be seen in the snow. But the color white—just like snow—erases all traces and seems as impenetrable as black at the other end of the spectrum. Its brightness makes the already “shady” men appear all the darker and injects an unsettling note into the scene as a whole.

**21 • *Bouquet d'asters*, 1859**

*Bouquet of Asters*

In his flower paintings Courbet demonstrates not just the magnificence of his light-filled colors but also his compositional skills and his virtuoso technique. Compare the two flower pictures in this room: whereas *Flowers on a Bench* is characterized by lavish opulence and dynamism, *Bouquet of Asters* exudes a much calmer air. Here the bunch of flowers has been shifted slightly left of the central axis and reaches out towards the right against a dark ground. A few scattered stems lie beside the vase and plate. This constellation gives rise to a wholly captivating visual interplay between the blooms clustered tightly together in the vase and those on the table.

The dedication “à mon ami Baudelaire” at the top of the picture refers to the poet Charles Baudelaire, who was a close friend of Courbet’s and who in 1857 caused a stir with the publication of his collection of poems *Les Fleurs du mal* (The Flowers of Evil).

**22 • *La Source du Lison*, ca. 1864**

*The Source of the Lison*

The fascinating natural spectacle presented by the River Lison as it emerges from its underground source in Courbet’s native Franche-Comté region, was captured with intensity by the artist on several occasions. The spring and waterfall are seen here from a somewhat greater distance than in other grotto pictures by the artist. Massive boulders and dense scrub line the banks and draw our gaze directly towards the dark mouth of the cave, which recedes into the depths of the mountain. The interior life of the grotto, at once awe-inspiring and alluring, lies hidden from view and leads us to imagine mysterious, mystic and not least erotic worlds.

**23 • *L’Origine du monde*, 1866**

*The Origin of the World*

This painting, almost 150 years old, remains a huge provocation even in the present day. Never before had a woman’s body been captured on canvas in this way—without arms or legs and with her naked sex seen in extreme close-up. This sensual nude lies before us like a fragment. Courbet’s representation, with its thought-provoking title *The Origin of the World*, has given rise to countless interpretations: does it celebrate the birthplace and origin of humanity, the world, or even painting, or does it capture the male view of women? Do sexuality and obsession play an explicit role, or should the painting be understood as an allegory? It was in this very field of tension, in the conflict between direct and indirect, realistic and allegorical modes of expression, that Courbet painted the picture. It was not destined for the general public—the picture could never have been shown in an exhibition in the nineteenth century—but for the private sphere. Today it is considered an important testimony to our art and cultural history, one that repeatedly challenges viewers to look at, reflect upon and interpret what they are seeing.

*The Origin of the World* was painted for the Egyptian diplomat Khalil Bey, the owner of a notorious collection of mainly erotic images, who hid it behind a green curtain that he only drew aside for select visitors. Courbet was probably fully aware that, with this work, he had not only broken a taboo but also brought to an abrupt end the centuries-old portrayal of sexuality through oblique allusion. *The Origin of the World* rapidly became the most famous picture no one had ever seen, a veritable “unknown masterpiece” of the nineteenth century and a source of inspiration for generations of artists. People knew about it and spoke of it, even though only a handful had ever set eyes on it. Just a few years after buying the picture, Khalil Bey was obliged to sell his collection. The painting was subsequently owned for many years by the

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## ROOM 7

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Hungarian Baron Ferenc Hatvany and more recently by the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and his wife Sylvie Bataille. It has been on public display in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris since 1995. With the exception of two appearances in New York, the painting is being shown here at the Fondation Beyeler for the first time outside France.

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## ROOM 8

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**24 • *La Bergère (La Fileuse bretonne)*, 1867**  
*The Shepherdess (The Breton Spinner)*

The large picture *The Shepherdess (The Breton Spinner)* has never been seen in a Courbet exhibition before. It shows a young woman in traditional peasant dress busy at her spinning. She is seated at the foot of a tree in the company of a black dog who recalls Courbet's own (see the *Self-portrait with Black Dog* of 1842 in ROOM 1). Behind her, a green belt of bushes or trees stretches away to the left, beyond which the view opens onto the sea in the distant background. The sky above is filled with clouds tinged a delicate pink. On the right, sheep are grazing in a meadow in front of a farmhouse half hidden behind trees. Working with remarkable precision, Courbet has used his palette knife to apply generous layer upon generous layer of paint, and through the resulting variety of hues has orchestrated a wonderful interplay of girl, animal and vegetation. A true idyll. Do these late landscapes not stand in striking contradiction to Courbet's relentless Realism?

**25 • *La Trombe*, 1866**  
*The Waterspout*

In 1865 or 1866, while in Trouville on the Normandy coast, Courbet observed a waterspout over the English Channel and proceeded to record the impressive natural phenomenon in this painting. The water formations rising from the sea to the clouds are built up out of thin, diaphanous layers of color, while the whitecaps and waves in the foreground are executed in a much more impasto manner. Courbet thereby succeeds in heightening yet further the dynamism of his pictorial motif. In this direct reproduction of an impression, Impressionist painting already announces its impending arrival. The numerous sailing boats that Courbet has included in *The Waterspout* serve first of all visually to convey the scale of the scene. At the same time, they underline the danger inherent in the situation and reflect upon the fragility of human existence—a theme running through the whole of Courbet's oeuvre.

**26 • *Bateau à voile près de la côte, ciel orageux*, ca. 1869**  
*Seacoast and Sailboat in the Face of an Approaching Storm*

The sea pieces of the 1860s form a distinct group within Courbet's paintings of nature and are related to other series such as the Jura landscapes and the grotto and wave pictures. Courbet's modernity shows itself again from a new side. The representation of the coast is essentially based on just a few lines, out of which the beach, sea, clouds and sky take shape. The seemingly almost random combinations of these strips of color, and the playful deployment of gradations of widely varying hues, make the picture one of Courbet's most powerful seascapes. In the shape of the sailing boat, he lends the motif a narrative component that heightens yet further the menacing atmosphere of the scene. At the same time, however, Courbet increasingly distances himself from figuration through his highly differentiated handling of paint, laid down partly in thin glazes, partly in thick impasto, and in so doing takes the first steps towards the realm of pure, free painting.

**27 • *Le Bord de mer à Palavas*, 1854**  
*The Sea at Palavas*

Courbet painted this small masterpiece during his stay with his patron Alfred Bruyas in Montpellier, from where he made excursions into the surrounding countryside and to the coast. His serene, sunlit Mediterranean pictures of 1854 mark the beginning of his interest in representations of the sea and water—an interest that would never leave him. He was drawn again and again to an artistic exploration of the self-generating primeval force of bodies of water, in which he saw an analogy to his own powers of creation. Look at the diminutive figure at the bottom of the picture: his pose embodies rapturous enthusiasm for the might and boundlessness of the ocean. It is possible that Courbet has here portrayed himself—as the pointed beard implies (cf. *The Meeting*, ROOM 1, 2 •). This waving man thus carries us full circle and brings us back to the provocatively staged self-portraits with which this exhibition begins.

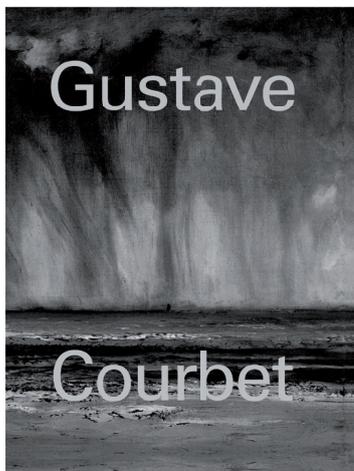
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The ***Gustave Courbet*** exhibition is accompanied by a catalogue published by Hatje Cantz Verlag. English edition, 200 pages, 131 illustrations, CHF 62.50 Further publications on Gustave Courbet are available from our Art Shop: <http://shop.fondationbeyeler.ch>

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- GUSTAVE COURBET**
- PETER DOIG (23.11.2014–22.3.2015)**
- BEYELER COLLECTION**

