



Mary Cassatt: Prints and Drawings from the Collection of Ambroise Vollard

Marc Rosen, Susan Pinsky

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Mary Cassatt (1844–1926), the American-born Impressionist, was captivated by the challenges and artistic possibilities of making prints. These works were a central part of her discipline as a draughtsman, allowing her to focus on the essentials of form, gesture, and expression. During Cassatt’s extended residence in France, Ambroise Vollard, the cutting-edge dealer in Paris best known for his appreciation and promotion of the works of Cézanne and Picasso, was stunned by the vitality and modern vision of her works on paper. In particular, Vollard was fascinated by the sequential development of the prints, which provided an extraordinary visual record of her creative process. Vollard later acquired Cassatt’s entire collection of her prints and drawings, most of which had never been exhibited. These works remained in his holdings until his death in 1939, when they were acquired by the distinguished French dealer and collector, Henri M. Petiet. Part of this trove of works was finally brought to light in 2000 by Marc Rosen Fine Art, Ltd. in the groundbreaking exhibition “Mary Cassatt: Prints and Drawings from the Artist’s Studio” held at Adelson Galleries. Another aspect of her artistic experimentation was displayed in the 2004 exhibition, “Art in the Mirror: The Counterproofs of Mary Cassatt,” which presented previously unknown pastel transfers.

The full depth of this astonishing cache of Cassatt’s graphic works is revealed in the final exhibition of this series, “Cassatt from the Collection of Vollard: Prints and Drawings.” The exhibition and this accompanying catalogue include nearly 100 etchings, aquatints, and a group of important early drawings, which reveal the range of the artist’s creative process and add to our understanding of her innovative approach to art. Of particular interest are the works dealing with the artist’s central themes addressing the place of women in society and her unsentimental representations of women with children. In addition to the illustrations the catalogue includes a foreword by Warren Adelson, an introduction by Marc Rosen, and essays by Nancy Mowll Mathews and Sarah Bertalan.

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