Land of Myths The Art of GUSTAVE MOREAU

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FERENC TÓTH

Vision and Invention. The Studio Experiments of Gustave Moreau

SUCCESS AT THE SALON EXHIBITIONS

Gustave Moreau was the first true Symbolist painter, the darling of the decadent aestheticist literary circles and the idol of a successful and large circle of artists who, instead of exploring nature, delved into the world of mystery. After his death Moreau and the entire Symbolist movement were dealt the cruellest blow that can befall an artist: that of oblivion. His name and up till then rejected art were rediscovered when, in 1961, a large monographic exhibition[1] was organised in the Louvre. The art criticism published in the decades since has restored him among the most pre-eminent artists of the 19th century, and once again Moreau is appreciated by distant posterity as a respected forerunner.

A curious paradox arises in connection with the appraisal of Moreau's art. His contemporaries, who held him in high esteem, as well as the generation that came after his death and turned away from his art based their judgement on a narrow slice of Moreau's work i.e. that exhibited at the Paris Salons[2] of 1864–1869 and 1876–1880. In the intermittent period he temporarily and after 1880 permanently retreated from public appearances, shutting himself away from the outside world to create works of art for himself – and for (distant) posterity.

Moreau regularly took part in annual exhibitions from as early as the beginning of the 1850s but he primarily acquired major success and recognition in 1864 (*Oedipus and the Sphinx,* fig. 13), in 1866 (*Orpheus,* cat. no. 25) and in 1876 (his two versions of the Salome theme, fig. 14 and 5, as well as *Hercules and the Lernaean Hydra,* fig. 15). It was chiefly these works which demonstrated to the public the marked characteristics of his talent and the splendour of his themes taken from both Greco-Roman mythology and the Bible that captivated his contemporaries – critics and fellow artists alike.

Moreau set out upon his true career as an artist at the same time as the first advent of the Impressionists. In 1863, the year before his first success, the exhibition at the Salon des Refusés[3] caused a storm with the display of pictures by Manet, Cézanne, Pissarro, Guillaumin and Whistler, rejected from the official Salon. Yet, in contrast to these artists Moreau in many ways preserved the delicate style of the annual Salon exhibitions and to a certain extent the traces of his links with academic art. However, the tools he employed were replete with the imaginative power of expression. Although this created a sensation with its novelty he represented

the opposite trend to the ideas of the young reformers who in their painting were rooted in materialism and based their art on the study of nature. Apart from their chronological overlap the two approaches had nothing else in common. The only meeting point was in the person of Degas, who appeared at the exhibitions organised by the Impressionists and made his own niche within the movement. Moreau met Degas during his sojourn in Rome in 1857–1859 and a close bond of friendship formed between the two men. Despite their virulent debates, they shared a devotion to cultural tradition and had mutual respect for one another's painting.

FIG. 13 ▪ OEDIPUS AND THE SPHINX, OIL ON CANVAS, 206 × 105 CM, NEW YORK, THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

The same year, in 1882, Moreau was awarded the title of Officer of the Legion of Honour and Manet was made a knight of the Legion of Honour. In connection to the event Antonin Proust, the minister for the arts awarding this recognition, noted Manet's opinion about his fellow artist: "I like him very much, but he is going down the wrong path. Society people go into raptures over *Jacob and the Angel,* but Gustave Moreau, who is very much in earnest, will have a deplorable influence on our time. He takes us back to the incomprehensible, and we today want everything to be understood. There is no denying it, it is he who has the upper hand at the moment, so much so that what people admire today in Corot is no longer the certainty of the study made from nature but the uncertainty of the picture made in the studio."[4] Moreau later explained to his students about Manet's painting from the other perspective, saying that Manet "despite his very great refinements of tone, has no skill at all in composition and the expression of feeling".[5] However, it indicates Moreau's reverence for artistic output regardless of whatever artistic trend it represents that he refused to sign a petition in 1895 written in protest against the Caillebotte estate being accepted by the Musée du Luxembourg.[6]

Moreau regarded himself as an historical painter following in the footsteps of Ingres, Delacroix and Chassériau and in his notes he set himself the objective of cultivating epic, or "heroic", painting. "Many will find it surprising that I regard some of my works with modest proportions and an intimate style to be works of great epic painting, which I intended them to be. In any case, I think this is where I made the biggest progress and the achievement I'm the proudest of; however, people will neither understand nor appreciate it. But this of little concern to me."[7] Among his fellow artists he exerted the greatest direct influence upon Odilon Redon, who held in high regard Moreau's modern view, his pictures created with a vast power of the imagination, the beautiful colours and the rhythm of his lines which breathed new life into historical painting.[8] Moreau aspired to the timeless values of humanism, seeking inspiration in the cultural achievements and symbols of the past, filling them with new meaning. As Geneviève Lacambre, one of the leading art researchers on Moreau, summarised his achievements: "In the solitary pursuit of a kind of history painting that he termed *peinture épique* (epic painting) in opposition to contemporary trends of academic naturalism and Impressionism, Moreau interpreted the art of the past in innovative ways and cleared the way for the art of the future, Symbolism in particular, but also Surrealism."[9]

The period after 1880, when Moreau resolved to completely withdraw from the public gaze, overlapped with the point in time when Symbolism was coming into its own; his death coincided with the end of the movement. This may have had a role in his name becoming less known outside France as opposed to his not so talented followers who were regular participants in the international exhibitions of the Rose+Croix in Paris, Les Vingts in Brussels and the Vienna Secession. Though Moreau continued to be a popular guest of Parisian societal salons at an older age the interest he aroused was pervaded by the mystery of his life as a

hermit. His pictures that had been successful at an earlier stage caused excitement in the imagination of literary and artistic circles and served as a constant inspiration. However, along with the decline of Symbolism Moreau faded ever more into the background. The old approach that was sustained in regard to his works, the pompousness and excessively literary quality of his thematic allusions made no impression on the formalist attitude of the avant-garde era to come. Furthermore, by that time the powerful expressivity and inner radiance of Moreau's paintings that had caused a sensation some decades earlier were widely used technical tools.

At the retrospective exhibition held in 1961 the public was presented with a picture of Moreau's art that starkly contrasted with the one held previously. Included among the 145 works were the paintings that had become well known from the former Salon exhibitions and which had reached the Louvre exhibition halls from various public and private collections from both France and abroad. In addition to these there were quite a lot of works that prior to this point had remained unknown, including both large and small oil paintings, unfinished works and sketches. The latter of these were selected from Moreau's barely visited Parisian studio and family home which had been converted into a museum.

Moreau withdrew from participation in the Salon exhibitions for the first time in 1869, when two of his paintings (*Prometheus,* cat. no. 5 and *Jupiter and Europa*[10]) exhibited there were harshly criticised. Nonetheless, in 1876 he returned with resounding success and it was primarily his two Salome pictures that became an emblematic motif in the artistic life of the period. In the years that followed Moreau still sent some of his pictures to the exhibitions but in 1880 he withdrew to his studio for good. He disappeared from the public eye, forbidding his works to be reproduced and very rarely sold any of them and then only when being pressed to do so. After his retreat from public life Moreau enjoyed many especially active years during which he never gave up painting. His favourable financial standing freed him from being influenced by material considerations and he was able to follow his own imagination and devote himself entirely to his art. Until 1880 he was mostly guided by his appearances at the Salon exhibitions, but afterwards he produced art for himself. He sought the final conclusion of the path he had set out upon, and experimented with works of art that in comparison with his earlier compositions had an altogether new concept. He regarded the works he produced in his studio during his period of seclusion as his true works of art that came from his heart. "I love my own art so much that I am the happiest when I can practise exclusively for myself."[11] He gradually converted his studio, which was also his home, so that after his death it could be bequeathed to the French state along with the work he produced in the almost twenty last years of his life. He most probably believed that of all the works of art he produced it was the ones in his studio-home that needed to be preserved for future generations.

REDRAWN MYTHS

Following his withdrawal from public life Moreau returned again and again to his favourite themes. He put some of his pictures that had been exhibited earlier and then languished in his studio back on the easel and reworked them. He applied the same practice to his more subdued and less personal work entitled *Prometheus,* which had received criticism at the Salon of 1869. It was probably his dissatisfaction or an attempt at trying new ideas that led him to repaint certain parts of the picture and to loosen up the background scenery. It was during this process that prominently bold blue bands of paint were added in the top left corner.

FIG. 14 ▪ SALOME DANCING BEFORE HEROD, OIL ON CANVAS, 144 × 103.5 CM, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, HAMMER MUSEUM, THE ARMAND HAMMER COLLECTION, GIFT OF THE ARMAND HAMMER FOUNDATION. PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT WEDEMEYER

He altered some of his compositions by experimenting with them simultaneously along various lines, painting a series of versions in connection to a particular subject. After the 1876 exhibition the figure of Salome reappeared the most frequently on his numerous studies and apparently finished canvases and sketches. These works were variations on the two basic motifs (the depiction of exotic sensuality in the dance of veils and the mental drama evoked by the vision of Saint John the Baptist's head) Moreau had already used in the pictures earlier displayed to the public but he also exhibited new compositional ideas (cat. no. 124, 125, 126).

Huge and surprising compositions cover the walls of the large hall on the second floor of Moreau's studio which was left to posterity as a museum but at one time was barred to his contemporaries. The pictures

FIG. 15 ▪ HERCULES AND THE LERNAEAN HYDRA, OIL ON CANVAS, 175 × 153 CM, CHICAGO, THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO

themselves and recollections of his friends prove[12] that Moreau spent long years of excruciating effort on these works and on occasion made changes to them over a period of thirty years. He continually supplemented them with new details, and on repainting the pictures added a new pictorial layer to the composition. Thus, it can be said that the museum only preserves unfinished works, but in reality Moreau knew at the very outset that they were to remain unfinished forever.

The themes of Moreau's pictures throughout of his life were restricted to events taken from ancient mythology and the Bible. However, numerous cultural elements were blended in the depictions of the figures, scenery, ornamentation and attire in the large-scale scenes he painted in the last period of his career.[13] Moreau followed his own imagination in these compositions and he juxtaposed divergent geographical and historical motifs and various tools of expression in an unusual way. These compositions are characteristic of Moreau and, despite their sketchiness, the most mature works of Symbolism. The literary source and the evocation of mythical figures from the beginnings of human culture represented only a starting point for his monumental scenes (fig. 2, 3, 16 and 34). During the creative process that at times lasted for decades Moreau gradually cleared the path for the free expression of creativity and a new approach of evocative painterliness which replaced historical depiction. "I am particularly cut out for dreams, to phantasmagorias of imagination, in that I bring any to every reading, every narrative of bygone or remote civilisations, the naïveté, the essential credulity of a child."[14]

The pictorial effect of the works Moreau created in seclusion, away from the eyes of the public at which time he was able to ignore any external aspect, displays far greater courage than his earlier pieces displayed to the public. They are marked by a definite priority given to colour to the detriment of the articulation of forms. In a considerable part of his works the contours are surrounded only by loosely zigzagging brushstrokes of intense, warm colours. The increasing dominance of Moreau's colourism in his art is indicated by the surprising number of watercolours he painted. This technique requires a high degree of spontaneity and a delicate hand. Moreau often combined it with gouache to achieve a more enlivened colour effect. "Yet what freedom he himself was capable of in his watercolours, what arresting boldness in some of his painted sketches, where the colours run riot! For us these works in the making are often more attractive than the finished canvases, finished to excess in many cases," wrote Moreau's monographer.[15]

In contrast to the colourism represented by the Impressionists who recorded forms broken up by light, in his soul and the principles of painting Moreau remained a romantic to the last. Moreau regarded himself as the artistic successor of Delacroix and Chassériau and was unable to accept either the materialistic approach of the Impressionists or the scientific art pursued by Seurat and Pissarro in his late period. He used reds and greens in an anti-naturalistic way to go off on visual adventures. A painterly quality disassociated with the subject it represents is manifested in the liberating of the facture and the bold plasticity applied.

Even in his early pictures Moreau used the palette-knife when applying paint. Free imagination is mixed together with precise naturalism in many of his paintings displayed at the Salon, in which a prominent difference of technique can be seen in the depiction of the main figures and that of the background (fig. 13 and 15, cat. no. 5 and 25). The carefully elaborated and hieratically formed main figure which fills almost the entire pictorial space is surrounded by a far more painterly and in places sketchily detailed Leonardesque landscape. Moreau

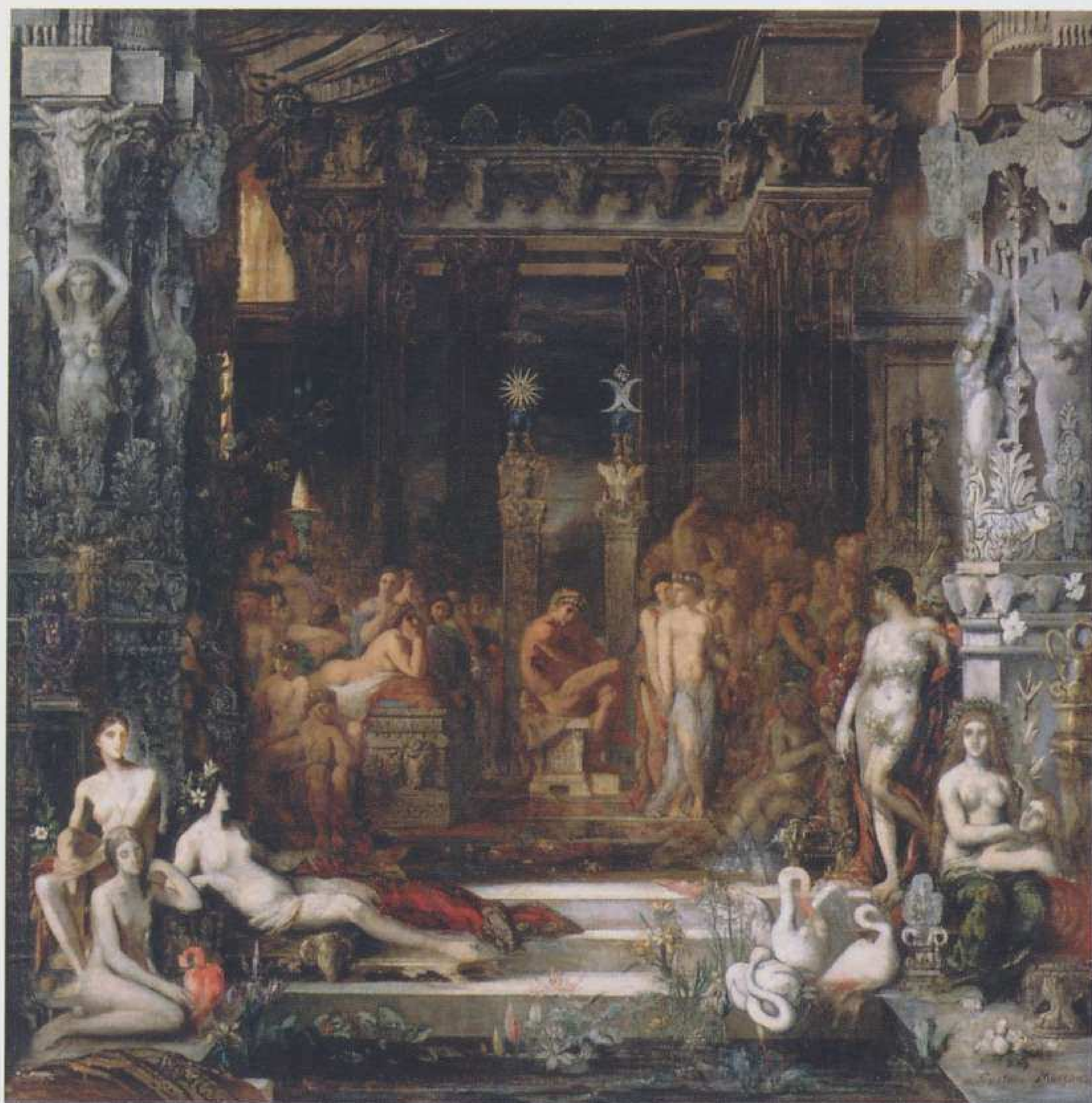

FIG. 16 ▪ THE DAUGHTERS OF THESPIUS, OIL ON CANVAS, 258 × 255 CM, MGM, CAT. 25

used vertical bands of paint to express the gloominess of the imaginary space and the material mass of cliffs towering over the hero. The dim sunlight mysteriously filters through the sky enlivened by wide, horizontal strokes applied with the palette-knife.

Moreau's distinctive trait of the palette-knife, a conspicuous and autonomous technique, is seen as an aspiration going against mimetic art. In the middle of the 19th century others also used this technique for the rough application of colours. In Courbet's landscapes it strengthens the material quality of the pictorial surface and evokes the raw plasticity of the depicted element of nature, whereas in Moreau's case it is used to liberate the painted surface and thus enhance the independent, intuitive effect created by the facture. In his later paintings in addition to using a palette-knife Moreau sometimes applied the paint with his fingers or directly from the tube. He created a thick, glowing impasto and in this way filled the whole surface, creating an extremely expressive effect in many of his paintings.

In the works preserved in his studio Moreau freely combined different technical tools as well as motifs that were at great variance with each other. In his oil paintings he often used tempera and watercolour to create the effect of glazing. In one characteristic group of his works he supplemented the loosely applied foundation layer with an ornamental pattern drawn in black Indian ink. For example, in *The Unicorns* (fig. 17) the contours of the embellishments on the figures such as the settings of the jewellery and the decorative draperies create a web of ornaments. These are unfilled contours of ornamentation such as the ones in *Orpheus,* in the two Salome themes exhibited at the Salon in 1876, and in *Jupiter and Semele* (fig. 11), although in these last examples they are painted in resplendent colours. A strange mysticism pervades the large-scale compositions of *The Triumph of Alexander the Great* and *The Chimeras* (fig. 10 and 8) due to a view opening up between the karstic rocks onto distant, exotic buildings that are meticulously drawn in Indian ink down to the tiniest detail without colour. Indian and Islam architectural ornaments, Persian ornamentation and motifs of Etruscan jewellery, reproduced by Moreau from archaeological publications, photographs of buildings and plates preserved in the Louvre's collection of prints,[16] intermingle within these compositions.

In some pictures the ornamentation drawn in Indian ink covers the entire surface like a homogenous network. Moreau began painting the two versions of Salome (fig. 18, cat. no. 104) preserved in the Gustave Moreau Museum at the same time as the canvases he sent to the Salon exhibition of 1876. Although intending these to be the companion pieces of the latter two Moreau eventually stopped working on them. Though sketchy in its first phase, the scene, wrapped in mysterious gloom, portrayed in the two pictures remaining in the museum was spatially well modelled and the main figures elaborated with sensuous plasticity. As pointed out by Marie-Laure de Contenson,[17] Moreau added the architectural arabesque to *The Apparition* at the end of his life, in 1897, borrowing the Romanesque architectural motifs from an art album he became familiar with at that time. Moreau undoubtedly supplemented the complementary details in *Salome Dancing* in his last, experimental period, too.

Pierre-Louis Mathieu, the author of the oeuvre catalogue of Moreau's "finished" works (those that left the studio), believes that in some pictures the interwoven decorative patterns are the contours of settings which

were to be filled in with embellishments in the final phase of the painting process. In other cases, however, the painter left these unfinished intentionally.[18] The latter hypothesis is supported by the diverse pictorial dimensions of the drawn layer and the foundation layer in the case of the Salome pictures. For example, a motif borrowed from the crowning piece of a reliquary triptych can be seen in the bottom right corner of *The Apparition* which is independent of the picture's actual architecture.[19] In *Salome Dancing* the architecture's filigree ornament continues on Salome's body, but the white of the dark background turns into black on the light nude surface of the woman's skin. This refined decorative tissue forms a separate web between the pictorial space and the beholder. The two layers are painted one over the other and it can be assumed that Moreau had a conscious plan when he created the paradox between the two-dimensional ornament and the transparent three-dimensional space behind it.

A great number of pictures were found in Moreau's studio executed with this technique and left "incomplete" after several years of making changes and additions to them. Moreau did not even begin filling in the "settings", so it is likely that he was so pleased with the emotional effect created by the double dimension that he did not wish to take the painting process beyond this point.

AN ABSTRACT ADVENTURE THROUGH IMAGINATION

A certain group of works found among the relaxed sketches and inventive technical experiments in Gustave Moreau's studio museum comes as a real surprise to the visitor who sees it several generations after the artist died. What we have here are smaller oil paintings and watercolours executed in resplendent colours and free from thematic allusions. The almost two hundred undated pictures are entitled in the inventory as "Sketches" and according to the artistic concepts of the 20th century they can be described as genuine abstract compositions. The works in the showcases on the museum's third floor (the rest are kept in the storerooms) have been on display since the museum opened but did not receive any significant publicity for sixty years.[20] They were first on show in 1960 in Paris, at the exhibition entitled *Antagonisms*.[21] This was one year prior to the retrospective exhibition of the Louvre and presented the antecedents of Modernism. Moreau's studies in colour were even exhibited in the United States in 1961 along with works by the two other experimental artists of the era, Odilon Redon and Rodolphe Bresdin.[22]

These newly emerged works caused a major stir and soon fiery debates ensued, discussing their meaning and the intention of their maker. Some were of the opinion that these compositions were merely probing sketches, i.e. preliminary studies that were customarily made by artists of academic art, too. Alan Bowness, who expounded his new interpretation of Symbolism in a catalogue study written in 1972, attached the same importance to the Symbolist movement in breaking the ground for Modernism as to the Impressionists, but even he used a moderate tone when evaluating Moreau's "abstract" sketches.[23] He saw them as nothing more than mere seeds of pictures and haphazardly applied techniques designed to stimulate the artist's imagination. In his view, these studies were simply sketches Moreau made in order to build up the richly decorated surface of pictures he was still working on. Mathieu summed up the arguments similar to those above, thus: "We had to wait as long as 1960 for certain critics and painters to start remembering these pictures, which most of them did when they contrasted Moreau's official career with his secret adventure, and during which they posed the following quintessential question: what could Gustave Moreau have had in mind when he painted his abstract pictures, twenty years before Kandinsky and Kupka? The answer was given immediately: an artist as accurate and sophisticated as Moreau, who was a member of the École des Beaux-Arts – the first abstract painter was Hanș Hartung, who became a member in 1977 – and a professor at this prestigious institution along with Bonnat and Gérôme, could not have made abstract works around 1890, or if he did, he did not do it intentionally."[24]

FIG. 17 • THE UNICORNS, OIL AND TEMPERA ON CANVAS, 115 × 90 CM, MGM, CAT. 213

Moreau's contemporaries, although only the ones belonging to his innermost circle, visited the museum before it actually opened and had the chance to see the works preserved in the cabinet. As he wrote in a publication that came out a year after Moreau's death, Léonce Bénédite, curator of the Musée du Luxembourg,

FIG. 18 ▪ THE APPARITION, OIL ON CANVAS, 142 × 103 CM, MGM, CAT. 222

was one of those few who were entranced upon seeing these works at that time. He evaluated them for what they really were, not caring about what other motives might have guided the artist's imagination. "His imagination was fired by tones whose suggestive combinations, in the eminently impressionable brain of this creator, aroused sensations which immediately revealed themselves in the concrete aspects of a rich symbol. Here then is the magic of art at work, the mystery of colour taking effect. As may be seen from certain apparently incomprehensible sketches in his studio, a few tones brought together by chance on the palette and juxtaposed on a panel are enough for him to convey in this contrast or harmony the expressive meaning of a peculiar language of his own. He carefully recorded these deliberate or unexpected notations, enlarging on them in the realm of feeling that they evoked, and seeing with his clear eyes the shape of his dream slowly emerging."[25]

In his catalogue study of 1961 Dore Ashton decidedly acknowledges that through these small pictures with loose facture Moreau stepped out of the realm of traditional representational painting into the world of abstraction.[26] American Abstract Expressionist painter Paul Jenkins calls attention to the technical inventions used in these pictures. In these works he discovered such consciously carried out experiments with paint that could only have stemmed from the liberation of the artist's imagination and a kind of inner purification.[27] Having left behind the earlier uncertainty in regard to these experiments of form, Mathieu discussed the significance of these pictures not only within the oeuvre but also placed in a wider perspective. "Moreau's abstract paintings can no longer be ignored in a derogatory way, as if they had only arisen by chance. This artist demonstrated an intellectual effort to break away from the depiction of nature. Some years before 1900 he actually made the first attempt at creating abstract art, which is something that cannot be ignored anymore."[28]

In his notes Moreau used the term "abstraction" many times as an ideal to be carried into effect. "One thing predominates in me: an allurement of the greatest ardour towards abstraction. The expression of human feelings, of man's passions, interests me no doubt very much. But I am less inclined to express these workings of the soul and spirit than to render visible, as it were, the inner flashes of insight which one cannot connect with anything, which have something divine in their apparent meaninglessness and which, as conveyed by the wonderful effects of pure painting, open up really magical, I may say even sublime horizons."[29] The use of the word should not be separated from its original meaning. In the 19th century abstract was in general not used as a synonym for non-figurative, and it did not necessarily mean without a theme or object. Instead, it denoted abstraction from what one experiences in reality and it had varying degrees. In Susan Freudenheim's words, the abstract meant the "spiritual element" for Moreau, which was an organic content of his works.[30] The recent exhibition of Schirn Kunsthalle in Frankfurt approached the abstract pictures of the century's three artists who developed their own forms of expression, William Turner, Victor Hugo and Gustave Moreau, in an historical context. Non-representational art was not unknown even prior to 1900, although it mostly included illustrations for psychological purposes, experiments with colour and study sketches not intended to be works of art. The conscious application of non-figurative elements can be seen in the experimental painting of the three artists.

It is uncertain what Moreau's intentions were when he created these works that were received with bafflement in his time and now simply arouse surprise. One thing stands out: both the canvases and the small

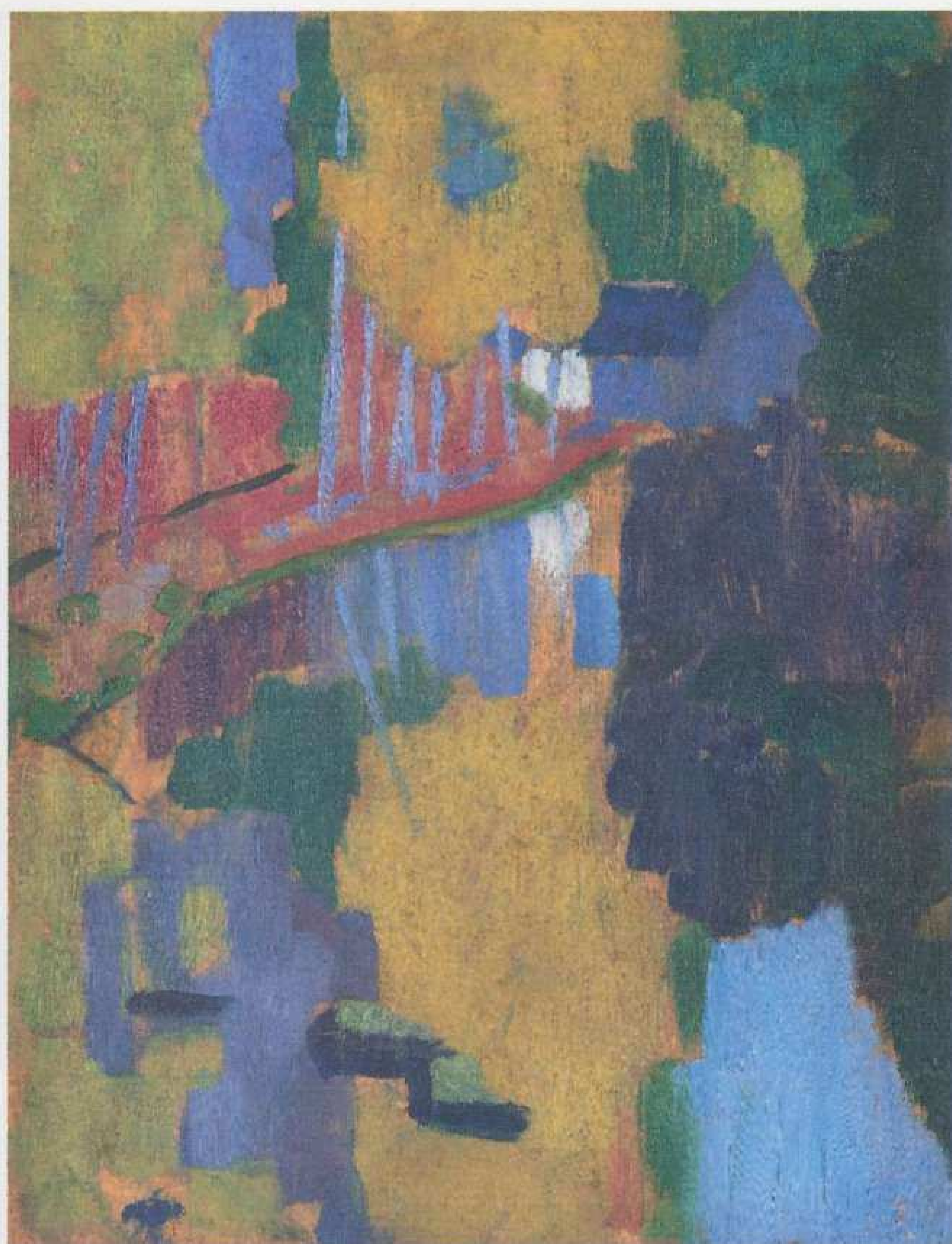

FIG. 19 ▪ PAUL SÉRUSIER, THE TALISMAN, OIL ON WOOD, 27 × 21.5 CM, PARIS, MUSÉE D'ORSAY

panels were carefully primed before being painted on and they were also all framed. Some were framed with simple latches but a great number were placed in a beaded golden frame, apparently to be hung on a wall. It seems that each work in the studio was equally important for Moreau in articulating his art and preserving his mental processes.

For a long time Moreau's critical appraisal followed a thematic approach. He undoubtedly drew inspiration for his works almost entirely from antique mythology and the Bible, and he borrowed motifs from Oriental culture in creating the pictorial environment and ornamentation of his compositions. Certain subjects conveyed special significance for Moreau and some key motifs, mythical figures and scenes preoccupied him throughout his life: he often went back to these, made constant alterations and associated them with new ideas. In the late period of his career he gradually broke away from using defined motifs and forms, and his works varied significantly in their depiction of the recognisable through the representation of emotions associated with a subject to the complete abandonment of natural forms. The pictures belonging to the last group are large and intense patches of colour which might have been attempts at experimenting with mass and colour harmony for particular figural compositions but in many cases cannot be linked to concrete works. A similar manifestation of autonomous painterliness and spontaneity could be seen in Sérusier's *The Talisman* (fig. 19), which he painted in Pont-Aven in 1888 under Gauguin's guidance. Sérusier's improvisatory picture painted on the top of a cigar case largely contributed in forming the group called the Nabis and was one of the sources of inspiration for Maurice Denis to create his definition of Symbolism.[31] This small non-figural composition resembles Moreau's studies in colour and indicates that there was an inclination among artists to use abstraction as early as the 1880s.

In the last twenty years of his life Moreau retreated into his studio and experimented with unusual solutions and unorthodox techniques: he applied bold brushstrokes to create powerful colour effects, at times using his fingers to form shapes (fig. 22), often scratching into the thick layer of paint. Some of the numerous works that never left his studio are probably only sketches and preliminary studies with the evident purpose of a direct demonstration of both the technical tools used and the manner of applying paint. Raphael Rosenberg saw Moreau as an artist embodying the aesthetics of effect, and he subjected the formal elements used by Moreau to a thorough aesthetic analysis.[32] He concluded that Moreau consciously experimented either with lines (without colour) or colour (without lines) in his late sketches, and at times with both. Moreau was open to all kinds of formal innovation. In his art the creation of a picture was centred on technical execution and the direct effect created by the surface, i.e. the layer of paint. In fact, each of his works can be regarded as an experiment according to the 20th century definition of art which stated the constant search for new solutions, visions and discoveries as its ultimate objective. Moreau's works were seen as unfinished sketches in his time but they now create the impression of being compact and complete.

It seems that Moreau's imagination was triggered when he painted series of thematic sketches, enabling him to completely free himself from the constraints of imitative art. Yet, his later figural and abstract works should not be strictly separated. Almost every one of the paintings he made in his later period creates the impression of sketchiness and in some details shows abstract features. For Moreau this incomplete quality is part of a conscious working method and does not mean that these paintings are unfinished. On the contrary,

FIG. 20 ▪ BATTLE OF THE CENTAURS, WATERCOLOUR ON PAPER, 15 × 28 CM, MGM, CAT. 386

this characteristic became the artist's stylistic signature. Over time immanent formal elements grew to be increasingly dominant in Moreau's figural compositions, too. In these works the expressive power of colours and shapes create a dramatic effect, which is linked to the method of narration in this case, but in other works it is applied more autonomously. Just as abstraction – in the original meaning of the word – can have varying degrees, so the spectrum of Moreau's paintings assumed an increasing diversity. However, all the works have a certain level of abstraction, which is one of their most significant common features.

Young painters such as Aman-Jean, Lévy-Dhurmer and De Feure, who were popular artists in fin de siècle Symbolist salons and looked at Moreau and Puvis de Chavannes as their paragon, only had a chance to see the paintings that were displayed at the annual exhibitions before 1880. The myth that surrounded the mysterious last decades of Moreau's life, who was looked upon as a strange hermit, further enchanted the young artists, despite not being able to become acquainted with his paintings. Staying away from exhibitions did not require Moreau to abandon either the social scene or the important events of the period. In fact, he did not have a very high opinion of his fans. "One has never before witnessed a generation, a youth with more worldly instincts, tastes, appearance and behaviour, and one has never before witnessed such enthusiasm for the invisible, a more exclusive need for dreams, mystery, mysticism, symbolism and the undefined. What snobbery! What posing, what horrible showing off, charlatanism and imbecility! And they think they can impress you and make you admire their exquisite, rare and unique taste!"[33]

Odilon Redon's artistic aspirations were stimulated by his encounter with Moreau's canvases, *Oedipus and the Sphinx, Orpheus,* and *The Apparition,* exhibited at the Salon, since they inspired him through their innovation and modern vision.[34] It is a point of interest that the two artists only met in person shortly before Moreau's death. The other important artist who emulated Moreau's symbolism was the Belgian, Fernand Khnopff, who came under Moreau's influence during his time spent in Paris in 1877. However, there is no concrete record of the two men ever actually meeting.[35]

Moreau's experimentation in his later artistic period also made an impact on his contemporaries to a certain degree. He was appointed to the position of professor at the École des Beaux-Arts, where he taught Rouault, Matisse, Manguin, Marquet and Camoin, who belonged to the Fauves and were among the most innovative artists of the decades that were to follow. The Fauves emerged at the same time in France as the Expressionists did in Germany and their first joint appearance (1905) coincided with the formation of Die Brücke in Dresden. The paintings of Gustave Moreau, who was hailed by the painters of the Fauves group as a master, are not customarily linked with this first Avant-garde movement. This makes it especially surprising that Dore Ashton calls some of Moreau's experiments with colour in the works that can be seen

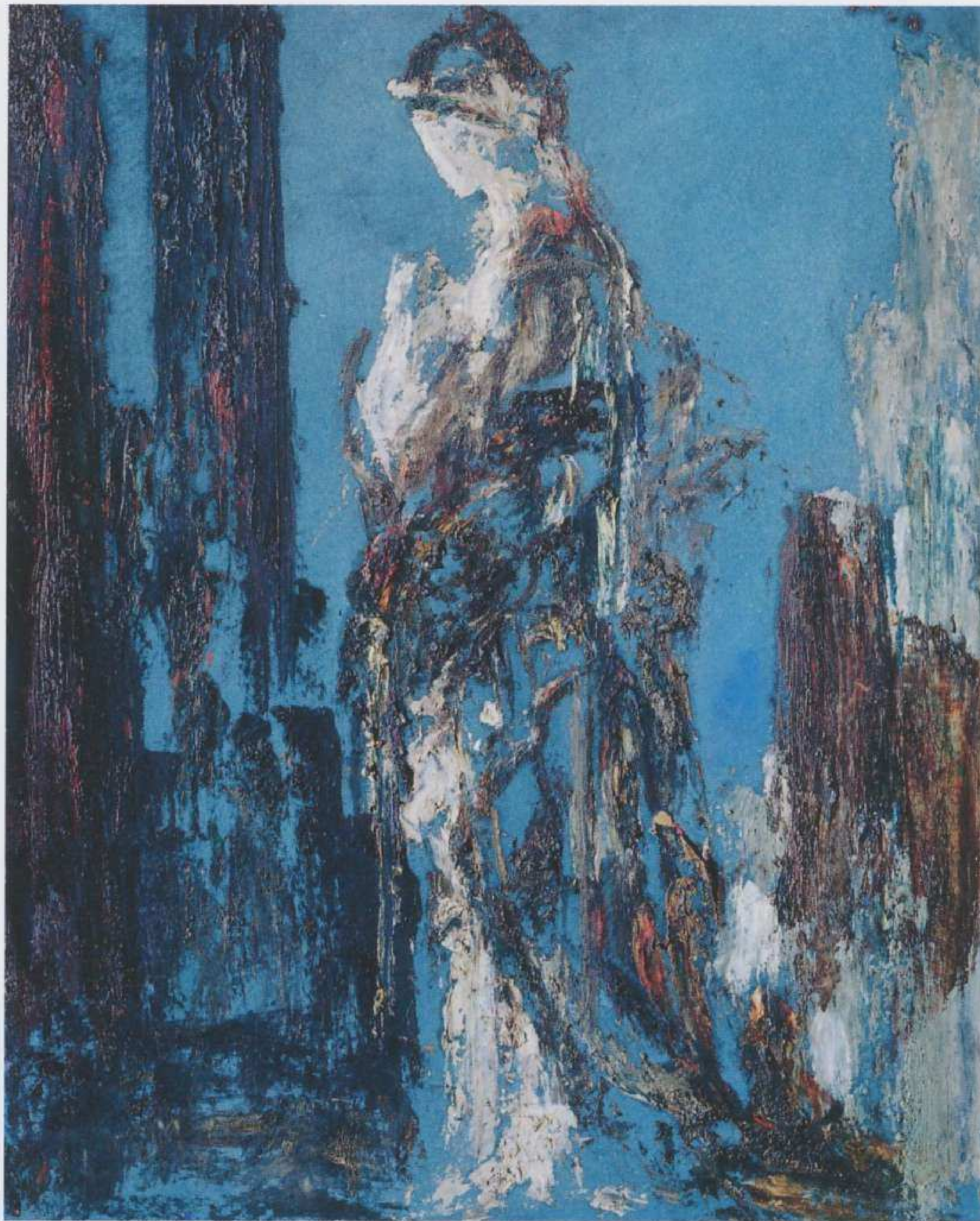

FIG. 21 ▪ HELEN,
OIL ON BOARD, 55 × 45 CM,
MGM, CAT. 903

in the Gustave Moreau Museum as precedents of Expressionism. As he writes, "The freedom of dense cross-strokes, so notable in the last years, can only have come from an emotional release, an inspired realization of the 'dreamed' colour, the 'pure plastic means' which stood on the one side of Moreau's aesthetic."[36] In light of the artistic developments that ensued Mathieu commented on the freedom of Moreau's painting technique in these late years as follows: "But one's misgivings fall away before the less ambitious, the less elaborate works: the watercolours, drawings, initial designs and sketches of all kinds in which Moreau gave free rein to his imagination and let his hand and sensibility take their natural course. Only then do the pure colours burst forth with expressionist violence, pure colours which in themselves possess all the power of suggestion vainly sought for in the more elaborate canvases."[37]

Moreau's students at the École des Beaux-Arts were almost the only ones who saw his works that he kept in his studio closed to the public. The formation of free and radical tools of expression used by these young artists was only partly inspired by these works. Moreau had excellent skills as a teacher and strove to bring out and develop the natural gifts in his students. He tried to convince his students to dispense with the strict rules of academism and the superficiality of Impressionism, and encouraged them to exercise the freedom of artistic expression and an imaginative use of colours that redefines reality. Moreau's studio at the academy became a creative workshop that laid the foundations for the artistic radicalism of the Fauves movement that later emerged.

Moreau's studio and home was first opened as a museum in January 1903, preserving some 1,200 oil paintings and watercolours as well as almost 13,000 drawings. The collection's first curator was Georges Rouault. For quite a long time the collection was received with little enthusiasm and the unfinished works even caused discontent, which is understandable since autonomous artistic experimentation was hardly palatable to the public at that time. On the contrary, such attempts provoked intense public scandal at best. Not much is known about how the leading artists of the period responded to Moreau's works but it is likely that they continued to hold the image they had formed in their minds of Moreau as the Salon's fashionable figure. It is certain that Kandinsky visited the museum in 1906 and was therefore familiar with Moreau's works.[38] Moreau's name was revived with the emergence of the Surrealist movement. Breton began visiting the Gustave Moreau Museum from the age of sixteen and was deeply impressed by it. In the Surrealist manifesto published in 1924 he referred to Moreau as the movement's forerunner.

Three exhibitions organised consecutively around 1960[39] played a key role in redefining Symbolism and ushered in the renaissance of Moreau's works. The first exhibition in Paris and the third one in the US both presented the public with the antecedents of modernism – not held in high esteem up to that point – and thus a larger selection of Moreau's small sketches executed with loose brushwork was also put on display.

FIG. 22 ▪ ABSTRACT SKETCH, OIL ON WOOD, 21.4 × 27 CM, MGM, CAT. 1139

Many were shocked by Moreau's studies in colour made in the 1880s and 1890s as well as by their texture, their unique colour effects and the vibration of intertwining lines that bore a striking resemblance to the neo-Avant-garde abstractions of Hans Hoffman, Willem de Kooning, Clyfford Still and Helen Frankenthaler (fig. 26 and 27). It was no coincidence of course that these events occurred at the time they did. Those prominent artists who saw the seeds of their own ideas in Moreau's experimental works played a significant part in rediscovering these same works.[40] Abstract Expressionism, which was generally regarded as an American artistic movement, had enjoyed great international acclaim by that time and reached a point where its theoreticians looked for its connection with European history. Some authors attempted to link the abstract painters of the New York School with the European Romantics.[41] The exhibition entitled *Antagonisms* identified these origins with such figures of 19th and 20th century modern painting as Chassériau, Burne-Jones, Moreau, Whistler, Carrière, Ensor and Kandinsky.

GUSTAVE MOREAU AND ALTERNATIVES OF MODERNISM

Symbolism on the whole awaited the same fate as Gustave Moreau. Some of the Symbolists still played a significant role at the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris but after that the movement came to be regarded by the French public as old-fashioned, and eventually it sank into oblivion.[42] Moreau was the first to break through this barrier posthumously in the 1960s. The three exhibitions mentioned above were soon followed by others centred on the concept of Symbolism and artists who had previously not been considered significant were brought back into the mainstream of art. These exhibitions earned the same level of recognition for the participating artists as they had once enjoyed in their heyday. Despite this, up to the present day there has only been a precarious and tentative shift away from the strongly embedded response to this group of artists that prevailed prior to these exhibitions. (The only real breakthrough took place in connection with the artistic

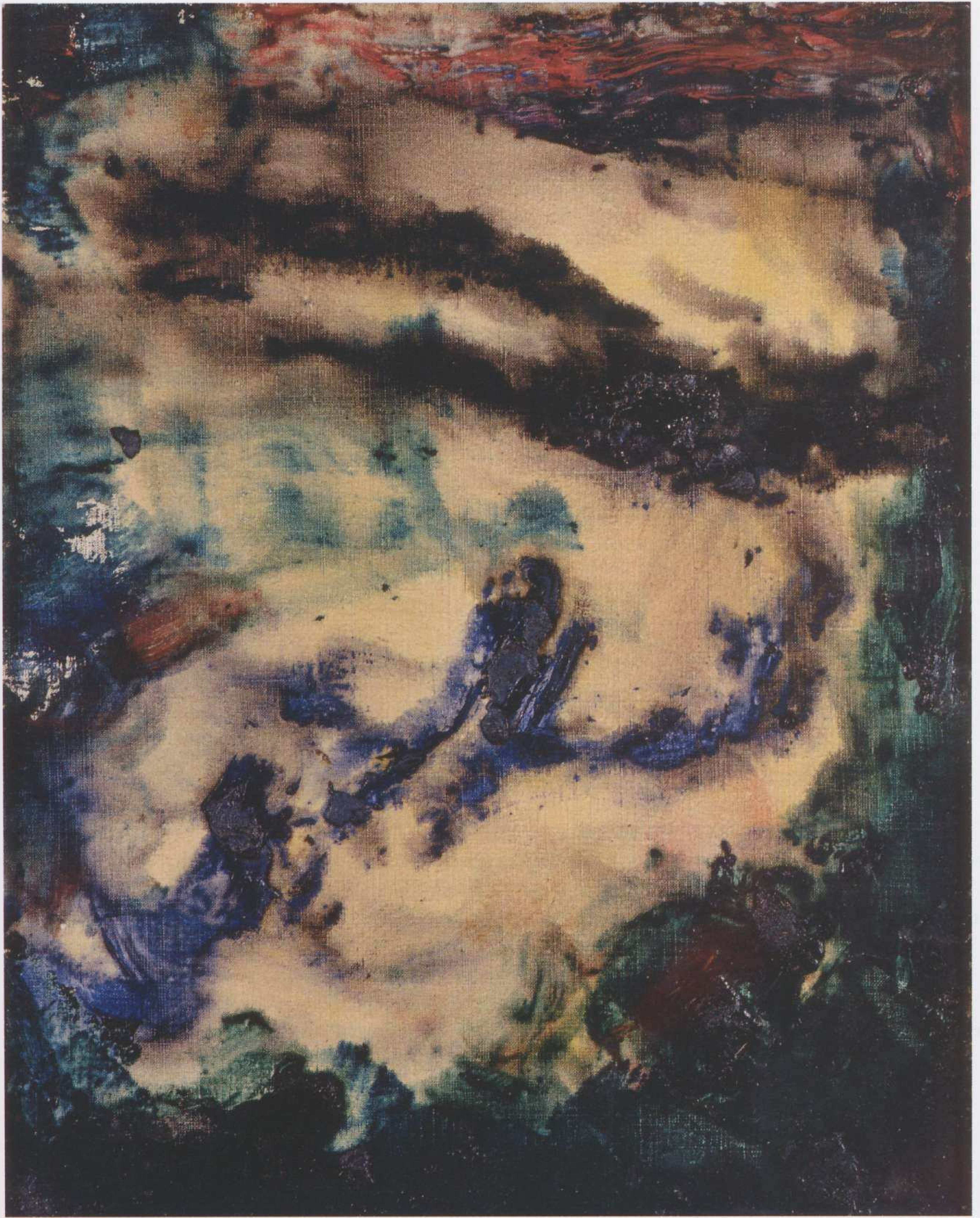

FIG. 23 ▪ ABSTRACT SKETCH, OIL ON CANVAS, 27 × 22 CM, MGM, CAT. 1152

reform represented by the Vienna Secession.) All in all, several issues need to be carefully reconsidered. Most importantly, the artistic developments of the late 19th century can only be evaluated properly and freed from the bias that distorted them if chronological accuracy is maintained and due respect is paid to the dominant system of values of the period.

One of the key issues which determines all others is the problem of the comparison of all artistic development of the period to Impressionism. According to the dominant theory of 20th century art aesthetics European Modernism evolved along a linear line from Impressionism through Post-impressionism into Cubism and

FIG. 24 ▪ HENRI MATISSE, RED ROOM (HARMONY IN RED), 1908, OIL ON CANVAS, 180.5 × 221 CM, INV. NO. GE-9660, PETERSBURG, HERMITAGE

Avant-garde. This rigid idea disregarded the fact that Impressionism did not play a direct role in any country's art life apart from France, where it came into being. The attempts that endeavoured to retrospectively identify some local (German, Scandinavian, Spanish) aspirations as belonging to Impressionism were based on surface phenomena, since the Impressionists were either barely known or rejected by European artists' circles up until the latter years of the 19th century.

Gallery owner Fritz Gurlitt first exhibited a selection of Durand-Ruel's Impressionist collection in Germany in 1883, which was categorically rejected by the contemporaneous artists as "an idiotic new Fashion from Paris".[43] Among those who rejected it was Adolf Menzel, whose relaxed painting technique was subsequently linked by some critics with his French Impressionist contemporaries.[44] Sponsored by donations from the city's wealthy elite businessmen and bankers, Hugo von Tschudi began collecting Impressionist works for the Nationalgalerie in Berlin in 1896. Durand-Ruel started sending pictures to Paul and Bruno Cassirer's newly opened gallery from 1898 and the gallery became his biggest distributor in Germany from this time onwards. Up to the turn of the century, there were hardly any artists and theoreticians who were familiar with the representatives of an even more radical vein of Modernism, who were familiar, for example, with Van Gogh's name and who showed interest in his œuvre. Van Gogh's first appearance in Germany, at the Secession in Berlin in 1901, went unappreciated and not a single one of his paintings was sold. Two years later Klimt managed to convince the society to buy one of the five Van Gogh works exhibited at the Vienna Secession.[45] Gauguin's name only became known in Europe in 1906, thanks to his retrospective exhibition in Paris, and then the large international travelling exhibition of French artists organized one year later.

The number one advocate of Impressionism in Germany was Julius Meier-Graefe. He published his thesis on the history of modern art[46] in 1904, outlining the development of modern art from its linear characteristics to painterliness. In his view of modern art he reserved no place to painting associated in any way with academic

FIG. 25 ▪ STUDY FOR "SALOME DANCING BEFORE HEROD", CAT. NO. 105. (DETAIL)

art and he attached central importance to Impressionism. According to his formalist stance, which coincided at many points with Conrad Fiedler's aesthetic, the role played by prominent artist personalities is replaced by the principle of autonomy and internal development in art. Meier-Graefe saw the aesthetic trend that culminated in 19th century French painting, and within that in Impressionism, as the determining progressive direction of art, and evaluated the developments in Germany in this context. However, Impressionism in Germany was not an impulse springing from within and it bore no connection to local tradition. The examples Meier-Graefe brought from French Impressionism – one and a half or two decades after the group dissolved – spread in Germany thanks to the mediation of progressive museum directors, art dealers and art critics, and was generously financed by the upper-middle classes for whom this trend served as their intellectual support through which they were able to distinguish themselves from the conservative aristocracy.[47]

Deriving the beginnings of Modernism from Impressionism and applying it exclusively to the art of the whole continent is just as questionable as using "Post-impressionism" as an umbrella term for the transition into 20th century Avant-garde. The word Post-impressionism was coined retrospectively on a specific occasion and by a specific person. It was first used in the title of the exhibition "Manet and the Post-Impressionists", organised by Roger Fry in London in 1910, focusing on the up to then mostly unknown pictures of Cézanne, Van Gogh and Gauguin. It is interesting to look at the circumstances of the coining of this word: Desmond MacCarthy, who worked with Fry, related that after a long time of thinking about the appropriate title for the exhibition Fry finally said, "Oh, let's just call them Post-Impressionists; at any rate, they came after the Impressionists."[48] Later this term was used as an umbrella term for artists in the period following Impressionism, who mostly worked in isolation and who were not linked in their objectives by much apart from their radicalism.

For Fry "Post-impressionism" was not the continuation of Impressionism; on the contrary, he regarded the latter as the opposite of the former. In 1908 he included Impressionism among trends that were historically outdated since he saw it as the last phase in the development of traditional artistic objectives which aimed at imitation.[49] It was at this time that he first expressed his negative approach to Impressionism, which he regarded as a cul-de-sac, and it remained the starting point for his critical activity for the rest of his life. In Fry's interpretation "formalism" not only refers to the formal attributes in artistic development but also to the opportunities for autonomous expression by which artists can detach themselves from the visible world. Fry did not advocate the painterly recording of impressions but instead favoured the visual effects created by the material components of a picture's surface or medium.[50] Fry could not have been familiar with Gustave Moreau's late works but it can be subsequently established that the elements in his declared value system and modern vision were not far from Moreau's experiments.

The outlines of an artistic aspiration were clearly apparent in Paris in the 1880s in contrast with the positivist objectivity of Naturalism and Impressionism, the latter being seen as the continuation of the former

FIG. 26 ▪ WILLEM DE KOONING, VALENTINE, 1947, OIL AND ENAMEL ON PAPER AND BOARD, 92.2 × 61.5 CM, NEW YORK, MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

in regard to its basic principles. By this time growing discontent had arisen even within the Impressionists. The coherence in the group became weaker and the members began to seek new directions: Monet experimented with the absolute loosening of forms, Renoir began using classicist formal organisation while Pissarro took an interest in the more scientific style of Pointillism. Gauguin, who mastered his painting technique during his relationship with the Impressionist group, later rejected the recording of superficial impressions perceived by the eye and endeavoured to exploit the potentials of Synthetism to the maximum. In his notes written in Tahiti he expressed his views of his former role models as follows: "They looked, and they saw, harmoniously, but without any goal: they did not build their edifice on any sturdy foundation of reasoning as to why feelings are perceived through colour. They focused their efforts around the eye, not in the mysterious centre of thought, and from there they slipped into scientific reasons."[51]

In one of his notes listing the artists he held to be the most important of his time Gauguin included those who were later recognised by art historians as well, such as Moreau, Puvis de Chavannes, Cazin and Carrière.[52] These names cannot be fitted into the line of development of Modernism as it was defined by 20th century art theory. The indiscriminate use of the term "Post-impressionism" and the almost exclusive dominance of some artists within this umbrella term made an accurate evaluation of the period difficult. What resulted was that those artists who could not be fitted into the "Post-impressionist" category, coined retrospectively by the next generation, virtually lost even the chance of being included in any art historical evaluation. However, in recent decades increased attention has been turned to fin de siècle Paris and some other, largely forgotten European artists.

The last two decades of the 19th century were not only noteworthy because artistic aspirations at variance with Naturalism and Impressionism were widely realised but also because of the aspiration to consolidate these various ideas that differed in their style and tools but shared several features. For example, attempts were made at the conceptual definition of the movement. Jean Moréas published a manifesto in 1886 in *Le Figaro* in which the objectives of poets whom critics at that time called "decadent" were first summed up. Moréas proposed that the most apt description for the literary works conceived in a new spirit was "symbolist".[53] In June 1889 painters at Pont-Aven organised an exhibition entitled "Peintres symbolistes et synthétistes" in Café Volpini. The fundamental manifesto of their new aspirations in painting was published in the following year. The meeting between Bernard, Sérusier and Gauguin in Pont-Aven was one of the main impetuses for Maurice Denis' wording of his study and its often quoted introductory thesis[54] and it became a generally valid declaration of the new artistic trends that appeared around 1890. In a study written about Gauguin the writer and art critic Georges-Albert Aurier formulated the principles that were shared by the many fine arts groups referred to by the umbrella term "Symbolism" even though they differed in the stylistic features they applied,

FIG. 27 • HELEN FRANKENTHALER, PROMETHEUS, 1976, ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 222.3 × 142.2 CM, HOUSTON, THE MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

and for a long time worked independently of one another.[55] In his art criticism Aurier highlights the artistic accomplishments of Gustave Moreau, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Paul Gauguin and Vincent van Gogh, whom he identified as Symbolist painters of exceptional talent.

On approaching the turn of the century Symbolism acquired popularity all over Europe. Besides Paris the movement had local centres, in for example London, Glasgow, Brussels, Antwerp, Munich and Vienna. Artists in these circles represented the new artistic trend and they remained leading figures shaping the art of their respective countries. They were closely connected with each other through organising joint exhibitions and launching periodicals with an international slant. International exhibitions staged in the various centres of Europe welcomed the works of Moreau's and Gauguin's followers, who were also regularly invited to exhibitions in the Salon de la Rose+Croix in Paris and Les Vingts in Brussels.

In German-speaking areas the popularity of the artistic trends collectively referred to as Symbolist was enhanced by their internationality. Local artists in these countries were also affected by the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, which deeply influenced the intellectual life of that time. One of the obvious consequences of the war was an increased sense of patriotism in both countries. In order to escape the conflict a number of artists left France for England, where they became familiar with the works of Turner and Constable. This played a significant role in the fact that on returning to their homelands these artists popularised their Impressionist views as the continuation of close-to-nature landscape painting which was looked upon as a national tradition. The German traditions of art, however, are more deeply embedded in spiritualism and mysticism than anything else. Consequently the Germans regarded Impressionism as the continuation of the intellectual traditions of French painting and they only dispensed with one of its aspects, namely its superficiality of appealing merely to the senses, which they saw as being opposed to the profoundness and soulfulness of German culture.[56]

The above-mentioned rejection of the "French" aspect of Impressionism in Germany was tainted with politics and it was partly the result of this style not having ties with any of the local traditions, contrary to the basic principles of Symbolist painting. In effect, if the internal developments are considered, it was not in regard to a stylistic reform that either Impressionism in Paris or the changes in Munich and Vienna were considered radical. Instead, an intellectual battle was waged by the local progressives against the conservative institutional system, since the very existence of the former (public appearances and press coverage, which were a prerequisite for their entering the art market) was fundamentally limited by the exclusive nature of the latter. Artists in all European cities had to fight their local battles but they managed to maintain a closer connection with the academies than the artists in Paris. This is well demonstrated for example by the career of two emblematic figures of the Munich and Vienna movements, Franz von Stuck and Gustav Klimt, and by the preservation of the stylistic characteristics of historical painting even on their most radical compositions.

One of the points of departure in the Symbolist movement in general was its strong link to cultural traditions rendered in a visually renewed form and with new tools used for expressing emotions. For Moreau – who considered himself a historical painter all his life – Puvis de Chavannes, Redon, Böcklin, Stuck and Klimt mythology and history meant the pure source, while Gauguin was attracted to cultures predating European civilisation and more intact from external influences. This international language had its local colours allowing for numerous variations of individual inventions. In contrast to one of the points of departure in Meier-Graefe's theory, modern artist figures did appear in this period and an artist's personal life was organically linked with his or her artistic production, which also impacted the interpretation of the works of art they produced.

When the first Avant-garde movements emerged, the reverence for historical tradition lost all of its appeal. The thematic elements employed in Symbolist painting were looked upon by the new generation as peculiar and did not attract the attention of those who formulated the new aesthetic theories. The innovative talent of the Symbolists was discovered only later, during the exhibitions in the 1960s, along with the novelty of the tools they used. When the works of Redon, Moreau and Bresdin were exhibited in 1961, the catalogue's studies discussed the formal attributes of the pictures and the artists were heralded as the newly discovered predecessors of Modernism. A decade later Alan Bowness outlined the path of "an alternative tradition" of modern art, starting from the age of Romanticism to the 20th century, and mediated through Symbolism. The key figures identified in this process were Gustave Moreau and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes who continued Chassériau's legacy.[57]

The aforementioned alternative tradition was seen as ultimately different from the method of recording the superficial impressions of the visible world and relying exclusively on perception through the eye: contrary to these, it was based on more complex visual methods of perception and on the emotional effects of sensuality that trigger the imagination. The main tools used by Moreau and Gauguin are direct colour effects independent of the representation of the subject and emotional effects expressed by lines. Another group of experimental works by Moreau in which the facture was lent extreme materiality was unique in his time. The use of autonomous tools of expression, emphasis on the decorative or emotive role of colours and forms, and conveying information more through the material medium of the facture than through the manner of representation – according to 20th century theory – all emphasise a picture as being an "object".

The "abstract" pictures Moreau painted in the seclusion of his studio are unique works of the last years of the 19th century. Monet began to paint his *Water Lilies* series in the year of Moreau's death and it was only from the 1910s that he used techniques that pointed in the direction of complete abstraction from visual subjects. In the art of both artists there is a constant transition between recognisable motifs and a complete autonomy of forms. However, the basic difference between their respective approaches to painting remained throughout their careers. When, in his last years, Moreau painted figural compositions he strove to exploit the autonomous emotional force of colours and forms, while the chosen subject was just a starting point for him. In contrast, Monet's love of nature manifested itself in all his works and he remained a painter of sensory impressions drawn from nature to the very end. When Monet used patches of colour to create an abstract effect he strove to evoke the same visual experience as in a real environment.

So far no concrete signs have been identified in regard to an immediate influence of Moreau's experiments on the work of abstract painters that came after him. Moreau's students at the academy often had the chance to see his pictures – and not many others did – which served as practical illustrations for his lectures on painting technique and colour handling as well as for his emphasis on intuition. Moreau's painting school, where the Fauves were inspired and taught, played an important role in the development of modern art in Paris just as much as Franz von Stuck, who taught at the Academy in Munich in whose studio artists such as Kandinsky, Klee and Albers studied painting. Several of the later abstract painters, for example Malevich, Kupka and Mondrian, also began their careers as Symbolists. Apart from his students Moreau had no personal relationships with the artists of the generation that participated in later reforms. Despite this, Mathieu places his intellectual importance on the same scale as that of Kandinsky's: "When we look at the intellectual and artistic paths taken by Moreau and Kandinsky there are clearly numerous parallels in their attitudes and ideas.

Both sought the answer to the same problem: the aim of a work of art. Both artists were deeply spiritual – or mystical if you like – as were the other artists in the vanguard of abstract art: Mondrian, Kupka, and Hartung."[58] Moreau's painting provides one of the links that tie together 19th century art and the later development of Modernism. His last experiments in which he realised his ideas free of any external influence prove through concrete examples that the direction he represented in painting contained in it the opportunities for the complete autonomy of expression.

1 Paris 1961.
2 The Academy of Fine Arts organised the annual exhibitions with official state sponsorship under the name of Paris Salon (Salon de Paris) from 1725. The exhibitions provided a regular venue for French artists to present their work before the public. From 1881 the events were organised by the Society of French Artists.
3 The exhibition called Salon des Refusés (Salon of the Rejected) was instituted in parallel with the official Salon in 1863, when a great number of works were rejected by the latter.
4 Quoted in Mathieu 1977, p. 144.
5 Ibid.
6 In his will the painter Gustave Caillebotte left his collection comprising sixty-seven pictures, which were largely the works of his fellow Impressionists, to the French state, on condition that they be exhibited in the Musée du Luxembourg. In 1895, one year after Caillebotte's death, the ministry and the art professors of the Académie des Beaux-Arts circulated a petition protesting against the acceptance of the estate.
7 Moreau 2002, vol. II, p. 235–236.
8 Druick 1998–1999, p. 34, no. 9.
9 Lacambre 1998–1999a, 2.
10 *Jupiter and Europa*, oil on canvas, 175 × 130 cm, MGM, Cat. 191.
11 Moreau 2002, vol. I, p. 159.
12 Renan 1900.
13 Kosinski 1987, p. 9–14; Lacambre 1992, p. 79–91; Cook 1996, p. 27–48; Cook 2000, p. 122–143.
14 Moreau 2002, vol. I, p. 161.
15 Mathieu 1977, p. 204.
16 Lacambre 1998–1999b, p. 15–21; Madrid 2006.
17 Contenson 1998–1999, p. 27–29.
18 Mathieu 1998, p. 240–241.
19 Contenson 1998–1999, p. 28.
20 From the works displayed at the current exhibition, those with cat. no. 58 and 128.
21 Paris 1960.
22 New York – Chicago 1961–1962.
23 Bowness 1972, p. 14–20.
24 Mathieu 1980, p. 87.
25 Bénédite 1899. Quoted in Mathieu 1977, p. 186–188.
26 Ashton 1961–1962, p. 108–145.
27 Jenkins 1961.
28 Mathieu 1980, p. 90.
29 Moreau 2002, vol. I, p. 53.
30 Freudenheim 1979–1980, p. 75.
31 "With an air of secrecy he [Sérusier] showed us the top of a cigar case with a landscape with quite undefined contours and a complex construction, in violet, cinnabar-red, Veronese green and other pure colours, which looked as if they had just gushed forth of the tubes, without any white added to them." Denis 1903.
32 Rosenberg 2007, p. 200–271.
33 Moreau 2002, vol. II, p. 326.
34 Druick 1998–1999, p. 34; Jullian 1977, p. 42.
35 Mathieu 1977, p. 240, 243.
36 Ashton 1961–1962, p. 126.
37 Mathieu 1977, p. 20.
38 Ashton (1961–1962) reference to note no. 40: "Klaus Brisch. *Wassily Kandinsky*. (Dissertation, University of Bonn, 1955, p. 27)."
39 See notes no. 1, 21, 22.
40 See study by Paul Jenkins (1961).
41 Freudenheim 1979–1980, p. 71.
42 The only exception was Gauguin whose retrospective exhibition staged in 1906 brought him recognition. Thanks largely to Roger Fry, a few years later his name, together with Cézanne's and Van Gogh's, became inseparable from the beginnings of Modernism. The attention of the Avant-gardists was also kept alive by the international circle of artists with an affinity for Symbolism – Van Gogh, Ensor, Munch – who created a stir with their strongly expressive pictures displayed at debut exhibitions that they organised in various parts of the continent.
43 Pucks 1999, p. 56.
44 About Menzel and French art see Gaehtgens 1996, p. 113–124.
45 Feilchenfeldt 1988, p. 14, 15.
46 Meier-Graefe 1904.
47 Pucks 1999, p. 54–64; Brummer 2000, p. 37–40.
48 MacCarthy 1943. Quoted in Cork 1999–2000, p. 58.
49 Fry 1908, p. 374–375.
50 On Fry's concept of Modernism see Green 1999–2000, p. 13–30 and Prettejohn 1999–2000, p. 31–44.
51 Guérin 1974. Excerpts in Harrison–Wood 1998, p. 993.
52 Gauguin 1951, p. 80–81; Druick 1998–1999, p. 33.
53 Moréas 1886.
54 "Remember that a picture, before being a battle horse, a nude, an anecdote or whatnot, is essentially a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order." Denis 1890. Denis coined the term "Neo-Traditionalism" in contrast to Neo-Impressionism, but in his later writings he used the word Symbolist for the art of Gauguin and his circle.
55 Aurier 1891.
56 Pucks 1999, p. 56.
57 Bowness 1972, p. 14–20.
58 Mathieu 1980, p. 88.