Table of Contents

Director’s Foreword

Paul Cezanne (French, 1839–1906) is renowned for the paintings, watercolors, and drawings that resulted from his lifelong endeavor to create pictures one sensation at a time. This digital publication celebrates Cezanne’s groundbreaking, famously deliberate and nonlinear artmaking technique by presenting close, detailed examinations of his paintings and drawings in the Art Institute of Chicago’s collection.

Cezanne’s work was first shown at the Art Institute in 1913, and in subsequent decades the museum also became one of the few places in the United States where audiences could regularly see his canvases. The Art Institute acquired *The Basket of Apples* (cat. 10) in 1926, making our institution one of the first museums in the country to own a Cezanne painting. *Basket of Apples* is one of only a handful of paintings the artist signed and was among those shown in his first retrospective at the Galerie Ambroise Vollard in Paris in November 1895. Since its entry into the Art Institute’s collection, the painting has been a touchstone of modern art for visitors, students, and especially artists, who continue to puzzle over its unique perspective and complex composition.

In 2022 the Art Institute, together with Tate Modern, presented a landmark loan exhibition of Cezanne’s work that was the first show to explore the relationship, both in subject and process, between the artist’s late paintings and watercolors. The present digital volume builds on this work, led by Gloria Groom and Caitlin Haskell at the Art Institute, by republishing a 2022 essay on Cezanne’s technique and materials and by presenting new, in-depth research by Art Institute scientists and conservators on the Cezanne works in

our collection, all in a richly illustrated, open-access format.

This volume on Cezanne belongs to a comprehensive, multipart research and digital publishing project on Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works at the Art Institute of Chicago. This is the seventh installment in a series launched in 2014 and 2015 with volumes on Claude Monet and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. These groundbreaking scholarly publications have since been joined by volumes on Gustave Caillebotte, Camille Pissarro, Paul Gauguin, and Édouard Manet. Each of the catalogues deepens our knowledge of the significance of these art objects to their art historical moment, to our collection, and to the material means of their creation.

In addition to the Art Institute team investigating the technical history of these objects, we are fortunate to have engaged two internationally acclaimed Cezanne scholars to examine the eight paintings and six watercolors in our holdings. Paul Smith, professorial research fellow at Warwick University, has investigated the role of literature, social circles, geography, and topography in Cezanne's oeuvre. Paul eagerly signed on to collaborate with Kim Muir, paintings research conservator at the Art Institute. Together with Art Institute conservation scientist Giovanni Verri they unlocked and addressed outstanding questions about these paintings that only a deeper dive could achieve. Fabienne Ruppen, assistant curator, prints and drawings, at Kunstmuseum Basel, combined her vast knowledge of Cezanne's paper supports and media with extensive examination by independent paper conservator Kristi Dahm, formerly of the Art Institute. Dahm and Ruppen's essays offer valuable insights into what makes a Cezanne watercolor so luminous and painterly.

Coeditors Kim Muir and Gloria Groom, Chair and David and Mary Winton Green Curator, Painting and Sculpture of Europe, were enthusiastic supporters and key organizers of this project. Together with the Publishing and Experience Design teams, they have brought us one step closer to fulfilling the goal set over a decade ago: to present an accessible history of the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist collection—one of the cornerstones of the Art Institute's celebrated holdings. Cezanne's distinctive approach to painting set him apart from his Impressionist and Post-Impressionist peers and forged a new path for his artistic descendants, who recognized the tectonic shift his work introduced. Both Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso are said to have remarked that Cezanne "is father to us all." We are honored to

steward, study, interpret, and present this extraordinary legacy.

James Rondeau
President and Eloise W. Martin Director
The Art Institute of Chicago

HOW TO CITE

James Rondeau, "Director's Foreword," in *Cezanne Paintings and Watercolors at the Art Institute of Chicago*, ed. Gloria Groom and Kim Muir (Art Institute of Chicago, 2026), https://doi.org/10.53269/9780865593251/01. © 2026 by The Art Institute of Chicago. This work is licensed under a CC BY-NC 4.0 license: creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/.

Download printable PDF

Sign up for our enewsletter to receive updates.

Email address

Subscribe

See all newsletters

BACK TO TOP

Visit
Exhibitions and Events
The Collection

Michigan Avenue Entrance
111 South Michigan Avenue
Chicago, IL 60603

Modern Wing Entrance
159 East Monroe Street
Chicago, IL 60603

About us

Mission and History
Leadership
Departments
Financial Reporting

Support us

Membership
Luminary
Planned Giving
Corporate Sponsorship

Learn with us

Families
Teens
Educators
Ryan Learning Center

Follow us

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

YouTube

Press
Careers
Contact
Venue Rental
Image Licensing
SAIC
Terms