

# GEORGES D'ESPAGNAT



A painter, illustrator and set designer, after completing his school studies Georges d'Espagnat (Melun, 1870-Paris, 1950) settled in Paris in order to train as a painter. He soon, however, abandoned academic training and become a self-taught artist. D'Espagnat spent lengthy periods in the Louvre where he particularly focused on the work of Peter Paul Rubens and Eugène Delacroix. During that period of his youth he became friends with Louis Valtat and Albert André. His first exhibitions were held at the gallery Le Barc de Boutteville until 1898, when, having met Paul Durand-Ruel, he began to present his works in that dealer's gallery. Later on D'Espagnat also sent works to the Salon d'Automne in Paris.

The artist travelled around Italy, Portugal, Sicily and Morocco and frequently visited Auguste Renoir on the Côte d'Azur. He received important commissions as a decorator for private homes and official buildings such as the town hall of Vincennes and the Salon Victor Hugo in the Palais du Luxembourg, Paris.

# ALBERT ANDRÉ



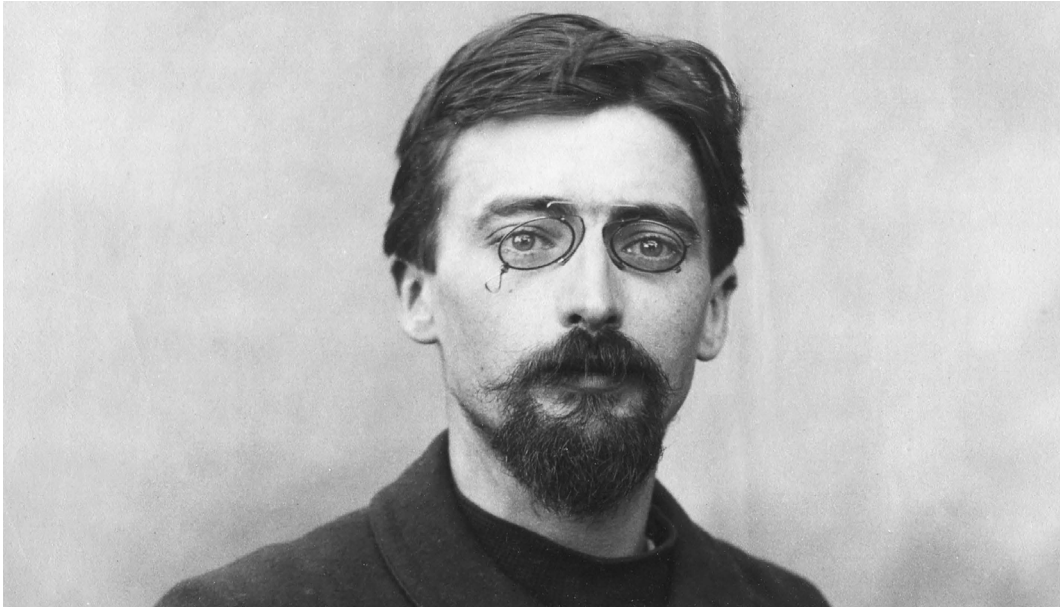
At the age of twenty Albert André (Lyon, 1869-Laudun, 1954) enrolled at the Académie Julian in Paris where he met the painters Paul Ranson, Georges d'Espagnat and Louis Valtat. D'Espagnat and André would frequently travel together around the South of France.

In 1894 André participated in the Salon des Indépendants, showing five canvases that Durand-Ruel acquired on the advice of Auguste Renoir, whom he portrayed on several occasions and of whom he wrote the first biography.

Encouraged by Renoir himself, in 1917 André accepted the position of chief curator of the museum at Bagnols-sur-Cèze, expanding its collection with works by the leading Impressionist masters as well as by D'Espagnat, Maxime Maufra, Ker-Xavier Roussel, Félix Vallotton and Valtat.

André moved to Paris then, after a period in Marseilles during the First World War, in 1939 he settled permanently in his family's home in Laudun in the French region of Occitania. These three places and their surrounding landscapes occupy a key role in his work.

# GUSTAVE LOISEAU



After a period as a decorator, from 1887 Gustave Loiseau (Paris, 1865-Pontoise, 1935) entirely devoted himself to painting. In 1890 he travelled to Pont-Aven where he became friends with Henry Moret and Maxime Maufra and met Paul Gauguin.

In 1893 he joined the Société des Artistes Indépendants and was subsequently a frequent exhibitor at the exhibitions of “Impressionist and Symbolist Painters” organised by the gallery Le Barc de Boutteville. In 1897 he established a professional relationship with Paul Durand-Ruel and began travelling around France in search of inspiration. Loiseau’s chosen destinations and motifs were Pornic and Pontoise and the Rivers Oise and Eure in the regions of Brittany and Normandy, which he depicted in a manner influenced by Camille Pissarro, employing a very distinctive technique based on small juxtaposed brushstrokes.

Continuing in the footsteps of the Impressionists, of whom he considered himself an heir, Loiseau, who was known as “the historian of the Seine”, explored the banks of that river and its tributaries as Alfred Sisley had done before him.

# HENRY MORET



In 1876 Henry Moret (Cherbourg, 1856-Paris, 1913) entered the School of Fine Arts in Paris after taking painting classes during his military service. From the outset of his career he exhibited at various salons, showing scenes of the coasts of southern Finisterre in Brittany.

In Pont-Aven in 1888 Moret made his first contact with Paul Gauguin, Émile Bernard and Paul Sérusier and two years later with Maxime Maufra and Gustave Loiseau, with whom he forged long-lasting ties of friendship. In late 1894 he settled permanently in the coastal town of Doëlan and travelled around the coastline and islands of Brittany (Groix, Ouessant, Belle-Île-en-Mer, Houat and Glénan). In 1895 Moret met Paul Durand-Ruel, who guaranteed him regular purchases and protected him from material worries. From the outset of his career Moret participated in various exhibitions and salons in Paris, as well as the Salon de la Libre Esthétique in Brussels. He achieved his greatest success in 1904 when the French State acquired one of his works.

# MAXIME MAUFRA



After studying with the brothers Charles and Alfred Leduc, Maxime Maufra (Nantes, 1861-Poncé-sur-le Loir, 1918) went to London in 1883, where he was captivated by the work of J. W. M. Turner. In 1886 he took part in the exhibition of the Amis des Beaux-Arts in Nantes. In 1890 he travelled to Pont-Aven where he met Gustave Loiseau, Henry Moret, Paul Gauguin and Paul Sérusier.

In 1894 Maufra settled in Paris and met Paul Durand-Ruel. The artist divided his life between Paris (in the winter) and Brittany (in the summer), painting numerous seascapes and landscapes in the latter. He was also a great traveller. Maufra explored Normandy and discovered the Dauphiné, Savoy, Luxembourg, the Midi, the Italian Riviera and Algeria, among other places. He actively participated in the artistic life of both his native region of Brittany and that of Paris through frequent exhibitions. In 1916 he was appointed painter to the Navy Office.