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Left: Paul Signac, *Herblay – The Riverbank (op. 204)*, 1889. Oil on canvas. SBMA, Gift of Lord and Lady Ridley-Tree

Santa Barbara Museum of Art presents

A Legacy of Giving:
The Lady Leslie and Lord Paul Ridley-Tree Collection

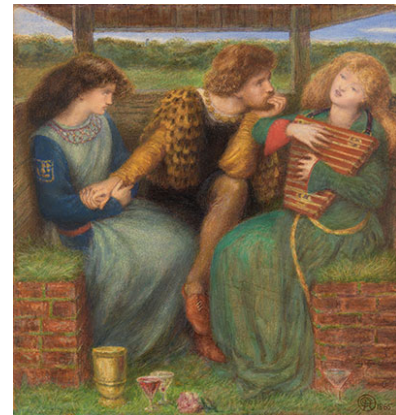
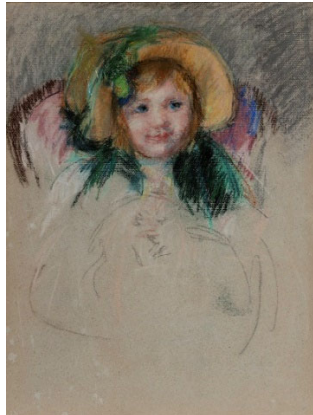
On View July 7 – November 3, 2024

June 10, 2024 — The Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition, *A Legacy of Giving: The Lady Leslie and Lord Paul Ridley-Tree Collection*, on view July 7 – November 3, 2024.

For over 25 years, Lady Leslie and Lord Paul Ridley-Tree generously supported the Santa Barbara Museum of Art in its mission “to integrate art into the lives of people.” Leslie Ridley-Tree served on the Board of Trustees for 15 years, President of the Board of Trustees from 1994 to 1996, and became a Life Honorary Trustee in 2014. She led the Peck Wing renovation campaign committee in the early 1980s and was a lead contributor to the recent renovation, which culminated in 2021. She understood that the Museum had to connect with people and use art to open minds. To that end, she helped to make significant exhibitions possible, including *Eternal China: Splendors from the First Dynasties* (1998) and *Botticelli, Titian, and Beyond: Masterpieces of Italian Painting from Glasgow Museums* (2015). To further this goal, she supported the refurbishment of a building on Arrellaga Street, renamed the Ridley-Tree Education Center at McCormick House, which now hosts art classes and camp programs. Finally, for over a quarter of a century, she and Paul donated outright or partially underwrote the acquisition of 58 artworks.

With the Ridley-Trees belief in the interlocking roles of art and education in mind, this exhibition takes 30 artworks from the 19th century that they donated and explores five themes relevant to the 21st century: environmentalism, expanding social roles for women, the need for artists to brand themselves, the role fantasy for picturing impossible worlds or times long ago, and how women artist managed carve out a career. The exhibition includes artworks by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot, Paul Signac, Claude Monet, Childe Hassam, Alfred Sisley, Gustave Caillebotte, Camille Pissarro, Henri Fantin-Latour, Eugène Boudin, Gustave Courbet, Charles François Daubigny, Narcisse Diaz de la Peña,

Charles Émile Jacque, Francois Auguste Ortman, and Théodore Rousseau.



Left: Mary Cassatt, *Sara in a Bonnet*. Pastel. SBMA, Bequest of Leslie L. Ridley-Tree.

Center: Alfred Sisley, *Springtime in Moret-sur-Loing*, 1890. Oil on canvas. SBMA, Bequest of Leslie L. Ridley-Tree

Right: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *The Merciless Lady*, 1865. Watercolor and bodycolor on paper. SBMA, Bequest of Leslie L. Ridley-Tree.

Because *A Legacy of Giving* is really about a legacy of teaching, the following expands on the five themes of the exhibition. First, modern day environmental conservation had an early moment with the Barbizon artists, and tourists petitioned the French government to turn the Forests of Fontainebleau into a preserve and protect its varied hardwoods from being replaced by a single species of pine tree. Second, against the background of rapid industrialization with railroads, factories, and cities growing and expanding across France and Great Britain, artists often sought out vestiges of older—and soon-to-disappear—ways of life, either eliminating these modern incursions or putting them on the periphery. Third, this collection demonstrates how women like Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot managed the difficult task of making careers for themselves by turning to the subjects of women, motherhood, domestic life, and children. Fourth, other artists, such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti or Frederick Leighton, sought refuge in fantasies of medieval life or ancient Rome rather than confront the upheavals of their own times. Finally, there were commercial galleries regularly exhibiting and selling artwork, highly publicized exhibitions at annual salons and world's fairs, and newspapers reporting on all of this to stir up interest in controversy.

In conjunction with the exhibition and in the spirit of Ridley-Tree's legacy of community support, the Museum will be partnering with many of the local organizations that were recipients of their generosity, including Lotusland, Opera Santa Barbara, Santa Barbara City College (SBCC), Santa Barbara Symphony, Santa Barbara Zoo, and more. Specific programming includes:

July 7: Exhibition Family Guide available (in collaboration with the Santa Barbara Zoo)

July 14 and August 11: Studio Sundays

July 25: SBCC Summer Jazz and Ted Nash Concert (in collaboration with SBCC Music Department) and inspired by works in the exhibition

August 1/September 5: Family 1st Thursday

September 5: Pop-Up Opera (in collaboration with Opera Santa Barbara)

September 8: Free Community Day

October 13: S. Hollis Clayson, Prof. Emerita Northwestern University, talk on Mary Cassatt's radical printmaking techniques

October 20: Day of the Dead – Altar to Leslie Ridley-Tree, created by Museum Teaching Artists on display with other community altars

October 26: En Plein Air at Lotusland

More information will be available at www.sbma.net.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is one of the finest museums on the West coast and is celebrated for the superb quality of its permanent collection. Its mission is to integrate art into the lives of people through internationally recognized exhibitions and special programs, as well as the thoughtful presentation of its permanent collection.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.

Open Tuesday – Sunday 11 am to 5 pm, Free Thursday Evenings 5 to 8 pm

805.963.4364 www.sbma.net

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