

The Frick Art & Historical Center and France

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The Frick collection in New York City and Pittsburgh houses one of the finest private collections of art in the world.

French art has been part of the collections at the Frick Art & Historical Center in Pittsburgh since industrialist Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919) and his family resided at Clayton at the turn of the twentieth century.

Frick was an important American art collector and patron. The Frick collection in New York City and Pittsburgh houses one of the finest private collections of art in the world. Mr. Frick and his daughter, Helen Clay Frick (1888–1984) collected French fine and decorative art from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Paintings by French artists purchased by Henry Clay Frick, including canvases by Claude Monet, Théodore Rousseau, Narcisse-Virgile Díaz de la Peña, and Emile Friant, are currently on display at Clayton, the restored Frick family home in Pittsburgh, which is open to the public as a historic house museum.

At the turn of the twentieth century, French painter Théobald Chartran, a friend of the Frick family, was commissioned to create portraits of Henry Clay Frick and Helen Clay Frick - both of which currently hang in Clayton - and several other notable Pittsburghers, including Andrew Carnegie and Charles Lockhart and his wife.

The Frick Art Museum in Pittsburgh, which houses Helen Clay Frick's permanent collection of art, contains an array of French artwork, ranging from a seventeenth-century painting by Antoine LeNain, to a large-scale rococo canvas by François Boucher, to a magnificent recently restored nineteenth-century Napoleonic battle painting by Jean-Louis Ernest Meissonier. The museum, admission to which is free, features several fine examples of the *fête galante* genre by French rococo painters Jean-Baptiste Pater and Nicolas Lancret, as well as works by Hubert Robert and Jean François de Troy. Also on display is a terra cotta bust of his wife by Jean-Antoine Houdon.

In addition to displaying works from the permanent collection, the Frick Art & Historical Center presents special exhibitions. One of these exhibitions is *Jean-François Millet: Drawn into the Light*, a 1999 international loan exhibition and catalogue that examined Millet's influential drawings. The Frick's important collection of Millet pastels were featured in this show.

The Frick also supports and presents work by contemporary artists. In 2002, French photographer Christian Milovanoff, currently a professor at the Ecole Nationale de la Photographie in Arles, presented a new series of photographs created in Pittsburgh during his 2001–2002 Frick artist residency.