



Gustave Caillebotte

Paris Street; Rainy Day

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Cat. 2

*Paris Street; Rainy Day*¹

1877

Oil on canvas; 212.2 × 276.2 cm (83 1/2 × 108 3/4 in.)

Signed and dated: *G. Caillebotte. 1877* (lower left, in gray-brown paint)

The Art Institute of Chicago, Charles H. and Mary F. S. Worcester Collection, 1964.336

*So much, indeed, lies beneath the beautiful appearance of this scene that no description or explanation can easily encapsulate it. On this vast canvas, painted when the artist was 28, and a turning point in his career, Caillebotte brought together as never again the major poles of his vision; perhaps it is the invisible locking force of these polarities—of surface and space, of order and randomness, of discipline and feeling—that imprints the picture so indelibly in the mind.*²

Gustave Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* continues to confound and enthrall us in a way that leads us back to the words of Kirk Varnedoe, who was the first and perhaps most articulate spokesman for the painting's special qualities. In this nearly ten-foot-wide canvas, the artist took on a quintessential Impressionist subject—modern life in an urban setting. Here, a Parisian street is seen from the vantage point of a pedestrian and shown in a crisp detail thoroughly unlike the blurred impressions of similar subjects of Claude Monet or Pierre-Auguste Renoir. While their works impart a sense of motion, immediacy, and the fleeting effects of light and surface, Caillebotte presents us with a frozen moment, as if we are witnessing the sudden click of a camera's shutter. The composition is filled with figures in a rhythmic zigzag pattern and is unified by the umbrellas that punctuate the scene, which is set against a precisely rendered architectural backdrop with shimmering highlights and blue-gray reflections that reinforce the canvas's rainy-day feeling. Nineteenth-century critics tended to assess the painting in terms of its innovations or its deviations from expectations.³ While these remain valid

criteria for understanding this work, modern scholars have also approached it as a case study for the consequences of urban renewal and societal change.⁴ Indeed, *Paris Street* fascinates viewers to this day: its spatial complexity and drama, as well as its grand scale, invite them to offer readings that seem to possess a common thread: that Caillebotte expressed a uniquely personal view of the experience of urban space.⁵ Because his personal vision fell outside the parameters offered in his day by both academic and avant-garde art, there was a long delay in a full appreciation of his work, which was only rectified, starting in the 1970s, by scholars such as Varnedoe and others. To realize this vision, the artist used a set of pictorial strategies that continue to intrigue scholars of his work.

Recent conservation treatment, collaborative examinations, and scholarly study of *Paris Street* have enabled us to at once reengage with these lines of inquiry and open new avenues for understanding this iconic painting, which include not only Caillebotte's choice of the site and approach to depicting it, but also his working process as he created the Art Institute's drawing *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day"* (cat. 1) and transformed it into a monumental canvas.⁶ The sheer scale of this work set it apart from those of the artist's contemporaries and even from his own previous work. The fact that both this painting and its closest preparatory drawing exist under the Art Institute's roof has motivated intensive research that has helped us understand how this painting was conceived and executed. While Caillebotte was often characterized as a wealthy dilettante who helped finance his artist friends, he had great ambitions for *Paris Street; Rainy Day*. Our investigations reveal that he realized those ambitions by employing a particularly dynamic working method in which he relied not only on traditional observational studies and preparatory sketches in graphite, charcoal, and oil paint, but likely also on an optical device available at the time—the camera lucida—as he created the drawing and hence the painting.

Caillebotte and the Urban Space of the rue de Turin

At the third Impressionist exhibition in 1877, Caillebotte emerged as the most active member of the newly nicknamed "impressionists."⁷ His much-remarked-upon immenses tableaux—*The Pont de l'Europe* (fig. 2.1 [Berhaut 1978, no. 44; Berhaut 1994, no. 49]) and the even larger *Paris Street; Rainy Day*—presented ambitious, accessible, and readily understandable representations of upper-middle-class residents in the new neighborhoods around the Gare Saint-Lazare.⁸ The artist, who the previous year had startled viewers with two paintings of workers scraping a floor (see, for example, fig. 2.2 [Berhaut 1978, no. 28; Berhaut 1994, no. 34]), was still regarded as a wealthy but earnest bourgeois who "paints in his spare time."⁹ This assessment was both corroborated and challenged by the two street scenes. On the one hand, their great scale, unmatched by the other works in the exhibition, implied that Caillebotte had access to a spacious studio and sufficient income to purchase large amounts of commercially primed canvas (see under "support" in the technical report). At the same time, his style, technique, and chosen subject matter marked him, to some, as an artist who "knows how to draw and paints more seriously than his colleagues."¹⁰ Indeed, one critic suggested that he was far from a part-time painter, insisting of *Paris Street*, "Those who have criticized the picture have not dreamed how difficult it was, and what skill was necessary to bring off a canvas of this size."¹¹



fig. 2.1 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *The Pont de l'Europe*, 1876. Oil on canvas; 124.7 × 180.6 cm (49 1/8 × 71 1/8 in.). Association des Amis du Petit Palais, Geneva, Switzerland/Bridgeman Images.



fig. 2.2 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *The Floor-Scrapers*, 1875. Oil on canvas; 102 × 146.5 cm (40 3/16 × 57 11/16 in.). Musée d'Orsay, Paris, RF 2718. Photography by Hervé Lewandowski, © RMN-Grand Palais/Art Resource, NY.

Part of this skill, as we shall see, involved capturing the urban landscape itself, which critics recognized as “the intersection made by the rue de Turin and the rue de Moscou.”¹² The work’s title, however—*Rue de Paris; temps de pluie*, as listed in the exhibition catalogue—insists on the anonymity of the spot and suggests its relatively generic character.¹³ Not a square with a definitive central area, the confluence of these streets (all named after major European cities such as Hamburg, Moscow, Rome, and Saint Petersburg) was a large, undefined space (see fig. 2.3).¹⁴ It lacked a landmark such as a central sculpture or tower; this, coupled with Caillebotte’s omission of shop-windows and most street furniture (including newspaper kiosks, advertising columns, drinking fountains, and public urinals), served to further abstract its location except for those familiar with the neighborhood.¹⁵ This is especially true if we compare the work to other scenes of modern life such as *La place des Pyramides* by Giuseppe De Nittis (fig. 2.4), exhibited at the Salon of 1875, or *Sunday at the Church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, Paris* by Jean Béraud (fig. 2.5), exhibited at the Salon of 1877.¹⁶ Unlike *Paris Street*, both of these canvases identify in their titles well-known sites and recognizable streets, taking a more descriptive, anecdotal approach to their subjects.

By the 1870s, when Caillebotte set about sketching this site,¹⁷ construction on this intersection had only recently drawn to a close. The artist’s family had moved to 77, rue de Miromesnil, only a few blocks away, in the previous decade, and Caillebotte would have witnessed the area’s haphazard transformation, which included the extension of the rue de Turin and the excavation of the adjacent rue Clapeyron (fig. 2.6 and fig. 2.7).¹⁸ On these new streets, buildings were wedged into narrow, pie-shaped spaces that do not connect or symmetrically radiate from



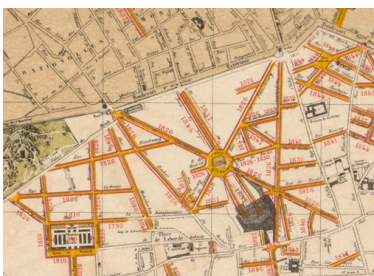
fig. 2.3 Postcard of Carrefour, rues de Moscou, Clapeyron, et de Turin, c. 1905. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Estampes, Paris.



fig. 2.4 Giuseppe De Nittis (Italian, 1846–1884). *La place des Pyramides*, 1875. Oil on canvas; 92.3 × 75 cm (36 3/8 × 29 9/16 in.). Musée d’Orsay, Paris. Bridgeman Images.



fig. 2.5 Jean Béraud (French, 1849–1936). *Sunday at the Church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule, Paris*, 1877. Oil on canvas; 59.4 × 81 cm (23 3/8 × 31 7/8 in.). Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, gift of Mr. and Mrs. William B. Jaffe, 1955, 55.35. Image copyright © The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Image courtesy of Art Resource, NY.



Left: fig. 2.6 *Paris en 1854* (detail), in A. Alphand, *Les travaux de Paris, 1789–1889: Atlas* (Imp. Nationale, 1889), no plate no. Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago. The map shows roads built between 1789 and 1854 (in yellow and red) and indicates the date each was completed.

Right: fig. 2.7 *Paris en 1871*, plate XII (detail), in A. Alphand, *Les travaux de Paris, 1789–1889: Atlas* (Imp. Nationale, 1889). Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, Art Institute of Chicago. The map shows roads built between 1854 and 1871 (in yellow and red) and indicates the date each was completed.

a center point; even the extension of the rue de Turin is not straight but rather jogs to the right (fig. 2.8). The artist would have passed through the intersection on his daily walks or carriage rides to the Café Guerbois (fig. 2.9) and, beginning in 1876 or 1877, to the Impressionists' new gathering place at the Café de la Nouvelle-Athènes.¹⁹ The view depicted in *Paris Street* therefore allowed Caillebotte to be a spectator, observing his customary route through the intersection on his way to the cafés, along the rue de Saint-Petersbourg, from the vantage point of the rue de Turin. And he also surely intended that *Paris Street* should designate a merging of the old and new city, especially for the viewers of his day, acutely aware of the large-scale transformation of their city.²⁰ For example, the couple and lone male in the foreground walk on a narrow sidewalk indicative of the old city; acting as a counterbalance across the intersection is the recently constructed building with the pharmacy, second from the left.²¹

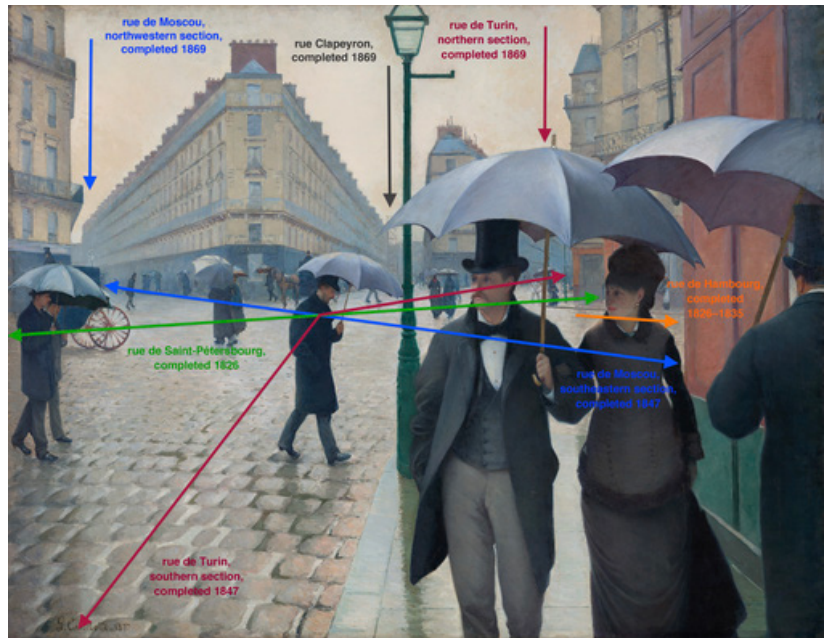


fig. 2.8 Annotated image of Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing street names and their dates of completion. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336. Annotations by Genevieve Westerby.

While his complex setting is in itself relatively unremarkable for a large European city, the way in which Caillebotte chose to render it is extraordinary. In the painting, the space that, as noted, appears rather confused on a map is deployed before the viewer with an ordered grandeur, resulting in a highly complex and unified space with streets flowing like the confluence of many rivers through a set of steep and narrow canyons created by the tall buildings. In both *Paris Street* and the related architectural drawing (cat. 1), buildings loom in and out, creating a space that is both sweepingly organized and visually animated and complex. What makes this scene so dramatic is the near-life-size foreground figures and the dynamic staging, which simultaneously pushes our attention back and pulls it forward. This vacillation depends not only on the immediacy of the foreground figures, but also on the large number of pedestrians in the background, whose diminishing scale helps to lengthen the depth of field. The sense that the viewer could saunter right into the picture is in part engendered by this placement of the foreground and background figures; it is also rooted in the positioning of vanishing points, one of which can be found between the two women who walk away from the viewer just to the right of the lamppost.²² These elements, along with other techniques and alterations (see technical report), work together to create a perspective that seems at once willfully studied and photographic.



fig. 2.9 Annotated map of Paris, 1878 (detail), in Alexandre Aimé Vuillemin, *Nouveau plan de Paris divisé en vingt arrondissements* (1878). Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Cartes et plans, GE C-7157. Annotations show (1) Caillebotte's home at 77, rue de Miromesnil; (2) Café Guerbois at 11, grande rue des Batignolles (later called avenue de Clichy); (3) Café de la Nouvelle-Athènes at the place Pigalle. The star indicates the intersection that is depicted in *Paris Street; Rainy Day*. Annotations by Genevieve Westerby.

Creating *Paris Street; Rainy Day*: New Discoveries about Caillebotte's Process

Indeed, the question of photography's relationship to urban views of this period—and to *Paris Street* in particular—is a compelling one. Pierre-Auguste Renoir's slightly earlier *Pont Neuf, Paris* (fig. 2.10), for instance, adopts a bird's-eye view that is similar to those seen in popular stereoscopic images (see fig. 2.11). Such pictures were available in the 1860s and always featured this type of elevated viewpoint. When Caillebotte created *Paris Street*, however, photography was still incapable of giving us what his painting does: an image that sharply records both moving figures at street level and buildings in an architectural setting.²³

Despite this, early viewers considered Caillebotte's image to be photographic. As Paul Sébillot remarked in 1877, “[This painting] gives an idea of what photography will become.”²⁴ And no examination of the canvas can escape obvious analogies to wide-angle photography.²⁵ Since several of Caillebotte's independent drawings share a format and dimensions similar to photographic plates, in his seminal 1976 study, Peter Galassi suggested that the artist might have traced his drawings, using photos as guides.²⁶ Since then, scholars have assumed that Caillebotte employed either a photographic source or another optical tool, such as the tent camera obscura, to create the Art Institute's *Study for “Paris Street; Rainy Day”* (fig. 2.12) and, in turn, the final painting.²⁷ This assumption also resulted from the study's remarkably accurate rendering of its site—a closeness that has been recently underscored by research overlaying the drawing onto a three-dimensional virtual model of the intersection.²⁸

How, then, did Caillebotte create his sketch? Our recent close inspection of the drawing suggests that it is unlikely that he traced it from a photograph. First, the paper is far too thick for that use.²⁹ Second, the drawing would likely display evidence of lens distortions such as bowing at the edges, which it does not; these were typical effects of the photographic camera and the early camera obscura, which both relied on optical lenses.³⁰ Third, capturing the broad angle of view presented in the drawing would have required a nonstandard lens.³¹



fig. 2.10 Pierre-Auguste Renoir (French, 1841–1919). *Pont Neuf, Paris*, 1872. Oil on canvas; 75.3 × 93.7 cm (29 5/8 × 36 7/8 in.). National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection, 1970.17.58.



fig. 2.11 Stereoscopic view, looking south, across the *Pont Neuf, Paris*, 1860s. Photograph by George Eastman House/Getty Images.



fig. 2.12 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *Study for “Paris Street; Rainy Day,”* 1877. Graphite, with touches of erasing, and touches of charcoal on tan, moderately thick, moderately textured handmade laid paper; 302 × 465 mm. The Art Institute of Chicago, restricted gift of the Jentes Family Foundation, 2011.420. See cat. 1.

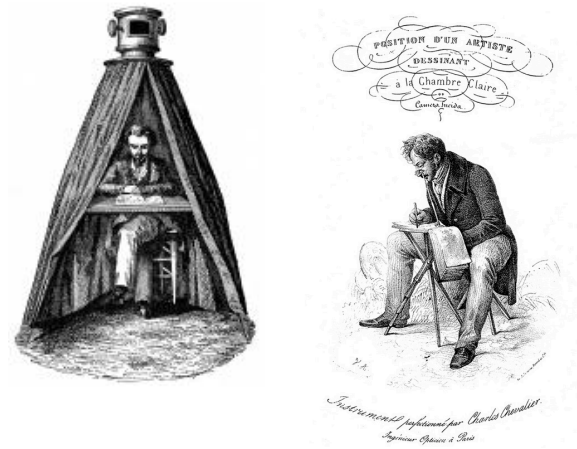
The tent camera obscura, although free from lens distortions and capable of capturing a wide angle of view thanks to its rotating turret, is also a poor candidate.³² Here, the artist is essentially inside the camera and can easily trace the clear projection coming from above. In order to accommodate the user, this device would by its very nature have a high vantage point, probably above eye level (see fig. 2.13). In addition to the obvious challenge of erecting such a large setup on the busy rue de Turin, this high vantage—significantly higher than the chest-high view seen in the initial on-site stage of Caillebotte’s sketch (see cat. 1, Curatorial Entry, para. 6)—is the strongest argument against his use of a tent camera obscura. Furthermore, the sketchy, freehand nature of his lines in that initial sketch does not suggest the kind of careful tracing fostered by this device.

Indeed, the sketch’s unique qualities prompted us to explore another possibility: the camera lucida. Unlike the two instruments previously examined, the camera lucida does not produce a projected image that an artist can capture through careful tracing or photography (see fig. 2.14).³³ Instead, it consists of a small prism on a rod that can be attached to a portable table (see fig. 2.15). Using it, the artist looks down through the prism at the paper; the scene before him or her is reflected through the prism, creating the illusion that it is overlaid on the paper (see fig. 2.16). As art historian and scientist Erna Fiorentini explains it, “The observer sees on the paper merely a virtual image corresponding to his or her retinal impression. It is not a projection existing outside the eye, but an image available only to the observer’s perception, and invisible to others.”³⁴

For this reason, employing the device takes practice to learn; the sketchy lines of *Study for “Paris Street; Rainy Day”* suggest that Caillebotte was proficient, but not expert, in using it. The sketch’s broad angle of view could also have resulted from the camera lucida, which allows the artist to achieve a wide viewing angle of 70° to 80°; the geometry of the prism keeps objects in focus across a wide depth of field so that both the foreground and background are equally sharp. The vantage point also corresponds to that of Caillebotte’s initial sketch: even if the instrument was used while standing, it would capture a scene at the level of the artist’s eyes with his head down, at or slightly above chest height.

It is possible that Caillebotte could have been exposed to the camera lucida through his friend Maurice Brault, who as an engineer would have no doubt been quite familiar with the device, which was advertised in scientific journals and recommended in treatises aimed at architects and engineers.³⁵ It would have been readily available to Parisians, since the *opticien* Charles Louis Chevalier, one of the camera lucida’s most famous proponents in the city, had a store almost across the street from the Musée du Louvre, run by his successors through the late 1880s (see fig. 2.14).³⁶

The Art Institute’s research team, with the help of Pablo Garcia, Assistant Professor of Contemporary Practices at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, sought to investigate this theory about the camera lucida’s centrality to the genesis of *Paris Street; Rainy Day*.³⁷ In an experiment conducted in March 2015 in Paris, Garcia attempted to re-create the making of the initial sketch on the rue de Turin sidewalk with a nineteenth-century camera lucida from his own collection. Using the results of another recent study to locate the exact location on the pavement, he revealed that the view captured by Caillebotte’s sketch aligns almost perfectly with that visible in a camera lucida (for fig. 2.17, see [video on YouTube](#)).³⁸ Indeed, by revisiting the original



Left: fig. 2.13 Tent camera obscura, nineteenth century. Universal History Archive/ UIG/ Bridgeman Images.

Right: fig. 2.14 The cover of Charles Chevalier, *Conseils aux artistes et aux amateurs, sur l'application de la chambre claire à l'art du dessin* (C. Chevalier, 1838).

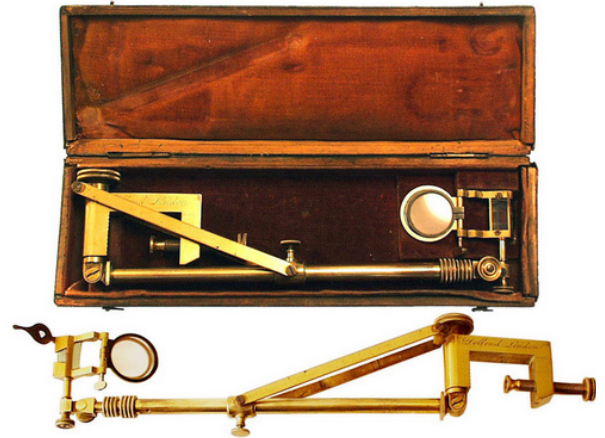


fig. 2.15 A nineteenth-century camera lucida and its carrying case.

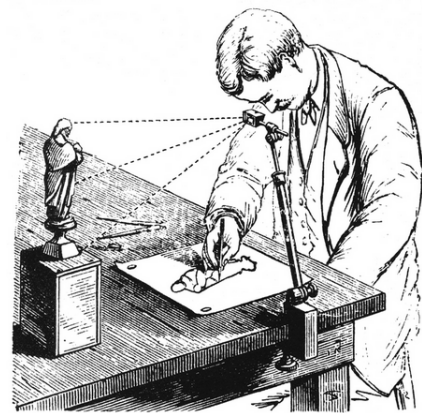


fig. 2.16 A mid-nineteenth-century illustration of a camera lucida.

position and conditions of the drawing, Garcia was able to determine that the vantage point of the initial sketch was approximately fifty inches off the ground, roughly what would have resulted from an artist of Caillebotte's height using an optical device at chest level.³⁹

While our recent experiments provide compelling evidence that suggests the likely use of the camera lucida in the initial stages of *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day,"* no documentary evidence has yet been found that confirms the specific use of such a tool by Caillebotte. However, it may not be surprising that the deployment of such a device was not widely discussed. Proponents of the Impressionists criticized compositions that were merely depicted with a photograph-like crispness. Émile Zola, for instance, criticized Caillebotte's *Floor-Scrapers* (fig. 2.2 [Berhaut 1978, no. 28; Berhaut 1994, no. 34]) and *Young Man at His Window* (1875; private collection [Berhaut 1978, no. 26; Berhaut 1994, no. 32]), complaining, "Because of their precision, the paintings are entirely anti-artistic, clear as glass, bourgeois. The mere photography of reality is paltry when not enriched by the original stamp of artistic talent."⁴⁰

Zola's words exemplify the misunderstandings to which works by Caillebotte were subject in his day and for a long time thereafter. These words completely miss the many unconventional "artistic" decisions Caillebotte made in his choice of subject and its depiction. As Varnedoe eloquently stated, the "patiently objective realism in the details" of *Floor-Scrapers* is offset by "a strikingly willful, personal sense of pictorial organization," which is evident in "the raised horizon line, the laterally expanded foreground and swiftly plunging perspective . . . the bold use of asymmetry and void in the composition; and the mesmerizing fascination with pattern."⁴¹ All of these traits are heightened in *Paris Street; Rainy Day*. Though lacking in insight, Zola's complaints do explain why Caillebotte might have been less than open about his methods, especially if they involved the use of optical tools easily associated in the minds of his contemporaries with the "anti-artistic" qualities of photography.

The next step in our team's research was to determine how Caillebotte transferred the design from the finished sketch—whose perspective view he had already adjusted (see cat. 1)—onto a piece of canvas. The fact that the Art Institute owns both the preparatory drawing and final painting allowed us to conduct an in-depth analysis and comparison of these works for the first time. The first-ever examination of *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day"* under high magnification revealed small indentations near the horizon, vanishing points, and a number of prominent vertical features that align with the principal architectural matrices of the rue de Turin intersection (see fig. 2.18 and fig. 2.19 [video on YouTube]). These suggest that Caillebotte may have employed a tool such as calipers (see fig. 2.20) or a proportional compass to scale up the drawing and create the architectural foundation—the earliest stages of underdrawing—in the painting. When many of these features and the distances between them were measured and compared between the drawing and the painting, it became clear that there is roughly a 1:7 ratio of enlargement.⁴² When we re-created the process of transferring the sketch onto canvas, this ratio proved to be very close to the features in the final painting (see fig. 2.21).⁴³ With a work of this size, the most logical arrangement would have been to tack the loose canvas to the studio wall, perhaps with the drawing tacked up beside it or on a nearby table. Next, Caillebotte probably would have carefully measured the distances between the vanishing points on the drawing and placed tacks or small nails at the

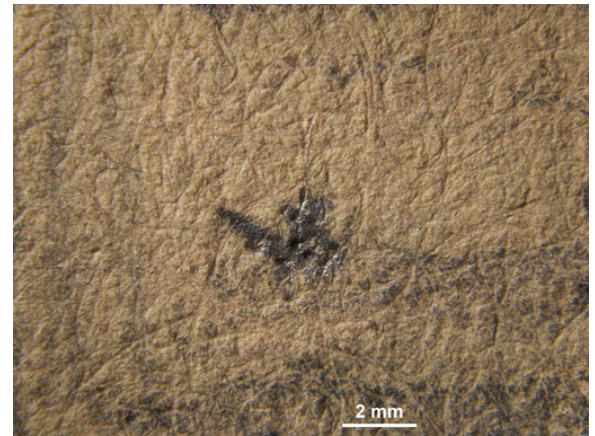


fig. 2.18 Photomicrograph of tool marks on the main vanishing point in Caillebotte's *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day"* (1877). The Art Institute of Chicago, 2011.420.



fig. 2.20 Late seventeenth-century wing dividers. From Maya Hambly, *Drawing Instruments, 1580–1980* (Sotheby's Publications, 1988), p. 26, fig. 60.

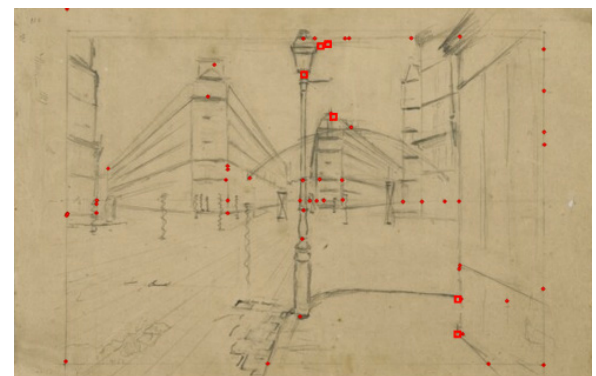


fig. 2.21 Caillebotte's preparatory drawing *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day"* (1877; see cat. 1), the final painting *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877), and the re-created enlargement of the drawing on a blank canvas at a scale of 7:1 with the drawing. Annotations indicate the placement of indentations found on the the drawing. The Art Institute of Chicago, 2011.420 and 1964.336. Re-created enlargement drawing by Pablo Garcia. Interactive image.

corresponding locations on the painting; an infrared image of the painting has revealed, for the first time, the visible pinholes created by this technique (see fig. 2.22).⁴⁴ When the horizon and vanishing points were finalized, the artist likely then determined the placement of the prominent verticals in the composition and the heights of the horizontals off the horizon. Then, possibly bracing a straight edge against the tacks in his vanishing points, he could easily have connected the verticals, re-creating on canvas the architectural skeleton he established in the study drawing. Garcia recently demonstrated this process using a reproduction of the drawing and a piece of primed canvas with approximately the same dimensions as *Paris Street*, which was tacked to a wall, to simulate Caillebotte's technique (for fig. 2.23, see [video on YouTube](#)).

It is clear, however, that the artist adjusted the composition in a few key ways during this transfer stage. His first task, which was to establish the horizon, would have been challenging, since by this point he appears to have been adjusting both the top and the bottom of his composition.⁴⁵ The artist would also have been fully aware that, given the height of his canvas, the painted scene would need to be notably taller than the one he established in *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day."* Armed with this information, he proceeded to plan the horizon so as to add a substantial expanse to the lower part of the scene, increasing its total height by approximately 17 percent.⁴⁶ This important change had the effect of distorting the space of the immediate foreground, with cobblestones that appear too wide, outsized, and dramatically splayed. In the end, Caillebotte positioned the horizon at roughly the viewer's eye level, which satisfied the demands of the composition and also helped heighten the viewer's identification with and immersion in the scene.

Alongside the Art Institute's drawing, which Caillebotte used to record the essential aspects of the architecture and space of the rue de Turin intersection, the painted sketch in the Musée Marmottan Monet (fig. 2.24 [Berhaut 1978, no. 51; Berhaut 1994, no. 56]) served as the other crucial preparatory document for the final painting. It is there that he further developed the placement of the figures, the color palette, and the general atmosphere of the scene.⁴⁷ In one sense, this reflected his working process, which appears to have been fluid rather than linear. As he labored over the painting, he tested out various changes, toggling between the canvas itself and *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day,"* individual studies of figures and other features such as cobblestones, and the Marmottan sketch. In a few cases, it seems that the changes visible in the final painting were first explored there. Perhaps chief among these was the addition of the lone male figure who enters the composition at the far right (see technical report).⁴⁸ Caillebotte also experimented with a darker, warmer tone for the sky in the sketch, seen between the buildings. And just as this touch of atmosphere on the sketch appears to be a later addition, in the final painting, several areas of the sky—most notably between the buildings and near the lamppost—have a similar warmer, darker tone that was added over mostly dry paint; the similarity in application between the two paintings is clearly visible in UV (fig. 2.25).⁴⁹ In this way, the Marmottan sketch suggests itself as more than just a stage between the architectural drawing and the final painting, but as an intermittent undertaking that seems to have served as both a preparatory sketch and as a testing ground. In the end, however, the artist made many other changes directly on the final canvas—indeed, he went on to modify every building and legible

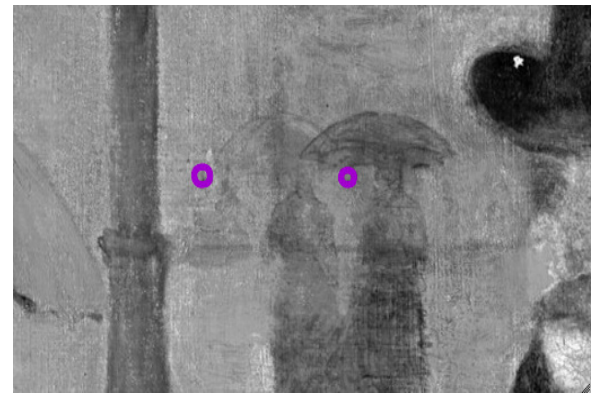


fig. 2.22 Infrared detail (IRcameras of Santa Barbara, 2.0–2.4 μm) of two vanishing-point pinholes in Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877). The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336. Image captured by John K. Delaney and Kathryn A. Dooley, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Interactive image.



fig. 2.24 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *Sketch for "Paris Street; Rainy Day,"* 1877. Oil on canvas; 54 × 65 cm (21 1/4 × 25 5/8 in.). Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris. Photography by Pierre-Yves Duval.



fig. 2.25 UV images of Caillebotte's *Sketch for "Paris Street; Rainy Day"* (1877; Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris) (left) and *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) (right) showing similar paint application in the sky. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336.

figure in some way or another, adjusting proportions, details of architecture and clothing, and the edges of the composition. The two largest and most radical of the changes to the final painting are the movement of the café building farther to the right and the addition of the large rear-facing male figure in front of it (see under “paint layer” in the technical report). Our understanding of the work’s composition has also been substantially altered by recent cleaning and treatment, leaving us with a much better notion of what early viewers saw and complicating traditional readings of the work’s palette and tone (fig. 2.26). In 1880 the Belgian Symbolist writer and critic Joris-Karl Huysmans praised Caillebotte for having rid himself of the “indigomania,” or overuse of violet-blues, that had afflicted his works of the 1870s.⁵⁰ It is possible that Huysmans was referring especially to *Paris Street* with its lavender-hued umbrellas, which until recently were masked by a discolored varnish (see under “conservation history” in the technical report). Julia Sagraves, meanwhile, has described the final painting’s shroud of overall gray as less “Impressionist” than the Marmottan sketch, with its yellowish sky (fig. 2.24).⁵¹ While it is true that the sketch’s open brushwork and loose, unfinished style is characteristically Impressionist, the recent cleaning of the Art Institute’s painting and removal of overpainting has revealed a similar color scheme.⁵² This discovery enables us to clearly state that Caillebotte wanted this monumental painting to possess the luminosity and subtle atmospheric gradations in tone—in this case, the hint of sun after the rain—as the sketch. For his part, Kirk Varnedoe noted that “[t]he almost shadowless grey light of the sky, reflected by the rain-washed surfaces, [has] given the picture a cool pewter tonality”; this palette has lightened somewhat to include lemon yellows and soft lavenders.⁵³

The Cast of Characters

One might say that Caillebotte composed the architectural setting of *Paris Street* like a stage set and then summoned his cast of characters from a number of preparatory drawings and related works (fig. 2.27 [Berhaut 1978, no. 50A; Berhaut 1994, no. 55], fig. 2.28, and fig. 2.29). With few exceptions, Caillebotte conceived these drawings independently of the architectural setting and probably made them before the painted study



fig. 2.26 Caillebotte’s *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing the painting before and after its recent treatment. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336. Interactive image



fig. 2.27 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *Study of a Couple Seen from the Front under an Umbrella*, 1877. Graphite and charcoal on buff paper; 470 × 309 mm. Private collection. Photograph © Christie’s Images/ Bridgeman Images.



Left: fig. 2.28 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *Study of a Woman with a Large Umbrella, Seen from the Back*, 1877. Graphite on cream paper; 470 × 317 mm. Private collection.



Right: fig. 2.29 Gustave Caillebotte (French, 1848–1894). *Study of a Man under an Umbrella Facing Right*, 1877. Graphite and charcoal on buff paper; 451 × 392 mm. Private collection, courtesy of Brame et Lorenceau, Paris.

in the Musée Marmottan Monet (fig. 2.24).⁵⁴ There are, however, several figures who appear in the final painting that were not included in the painted sketch; these include the two women in the background, just to the right of the lamppost (fig. 2.30).⁵⁵ All the figures were drawn before they were painted, and the artist continued to modify them throughout the painting process, making several adjustments to the foreground couple, including the angle of their heads, the folds of their garments, and their accessories (see fig. 2.31 and under “paint layer” in the technical report). One critic in 1877 mentioned the “bizarreness of certain details” in *Paris Street*.⁵⁶ These observed oddities included “a figure cut in half and another who is only a pair of legs, dangling from an umbrella” (see fig. 2.32) that Galassi claimed were drawn from the strange cropping of forms found in photography.⁵⁷ But by the 1870s these were common ways of visualizing modern life and movement, and for this canvas, Caillebotte might have taken a cue from the popular press, caricatures, or other works by Edgar Degas, such as *Yellow Dancers (In the Wings)* of 1874/76, in which the disembodied legs of ballerinas are glimpsed behind the stage curtain (fig. 2.33), or *The Dance Class* of circa 1873, which includes the legs of two ballerinas, hanging under shimmering blue-white tutus, as they descend a spiral staircase (fig. 2.34).⁵⁸ An interest



fig. 2.30 Detail of Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing women walking away in the background. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336.



fig. 2.31 Transmitted-infrared (Sinar rePro, 1.0–1.1 μm) and natural-light details of the main couple in Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877). The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336. Interactive image.



fig. 2.32 Detail of Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing a pair of legs that are just visible below an umbrella. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336.

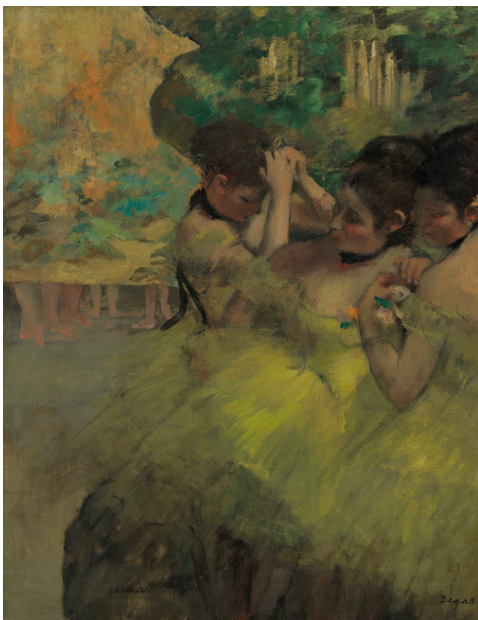


fig. 2.33 Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917). *Yellow Dancers (In the Wings)*, 1874/76. Oil on canvas; 73.5 × 59.5 cm (28 15/16 × 23 7/16 in.). The Art Institute of Chicago, gift of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Palmer, Mrs. Bertha P. Thorne, Mr. and Mrs. Arthur M. Wood, and Mrs. Rose M. Palmer, 1963.923.



fig. 2.34 Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917). *The Dance Class*, c. 1873. Oil on canvas, 47.6 × 62.2 cm (18 3/4 × 24 1/2 in.). The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., Corcoran Collection (William A. Clark Collection), 2014.79.710.

in motion permeated popular science, and Caillebotte, too, seems to have felt the need to portray objects and people in flux. On the wheels of the carriage, for instance, he delicately dry-brushed red and blue over the already-thick-painted cobblestones in order to create the thin spokes, which are so lightly painted that they appear blurred (fig. 2.35). In both preparatory drawings and the final painting, moreover, the artist indicated the lifted ball or heel of the foot in an attempt to show the physiology of walking (see, for example, fig. 2.29). As one critic wrote admiringly, “The man walks, and you know the play of the muscles by the pants-legs.”⁵⁹ The artist’s drawings of figures stem from direct observation and are believable within the context of his monumental stop-action canvas, but when compared to 1863 line drawings of “real human individuals in the act of walking” made from “stereoscopic views of the streets and public places of Paris and of New York” (see fig. 2.36), Caillebotte’s interest in expressing motion, despite his use of optical devices, was more impressionist than scientific, similar to his suggestion of wheels in motion.⁶⁰

Caillebotte’s figures are not so dissimilar to those pictured in the 1863 line drawings and include a cast of characters from different social classes. While working people are present, they play a role that is peripheral to the largely bourgeois demographic signaled by the foreground couple.⁶¹ But even within this pair, costume historian Aileen Ribeiro noted discreet gender differences between the “expansiveness and careless grace” of the male figure and his companion’s “self-contained neatness.”⁶² The woman wears a decorous half veil, a pocket kerchief that matches the silk scarf at her neck, and gloves—accessories that complement her rich but understated woolen two-piece dress with its matching fur cuff and toque.⁶³ Her gloves, which were a later addition and not shown in the Marmottan sketch (see Paint Layer in the technical report), reinforce her appropriate feminine tidiness. Moreover, what Varnedoe described as “the one pearl that shines from the ear of the delicately veiled lady on the right” can now, thanks to the recent cleaning, be recognized as something seemingly more luxurious—a sparkling, diamond-like gem (see fig. 2.37).⁶⁴ This attire makes clear this figure’s status as a *bonne* (“correct”) Parisienne, as opposed to the freer, bolder stance of her male companion, who has slipped a hand into the pocket of an open coat that strangely lacks both buttons and buttonholes, indicating an easy but also deliberate attitude, perhaps that of a veteran flaneur.⁶⁵ Caillebotte may also have taken some sartorial liberties, choosing to override strict realism in order to preserve the smoothly unbroken lines of the open coat, whose curving lines act as an elegant counterpoint to the pronounced vertical of the nearby lamppost.



fig. 2.37 Detail of Caillebotte’s *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing the sparkling, diamond-like earring of the foreground woman and also the apron-clad woman in the doorway behind her. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336.



fig. 2.35 Detail of Caillebotte’s *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing how the artist blurred the spokes of the cart wheel to suggest motion. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336.



fig. 2.36 Drawings of walking men taken from stereoscopic views of the streets and public places of Paris and New York. From Oliver Wendell Holmes, “The Human Wheel, Its Spokes and Felloes,” *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1863), p. 570.

The other figures, at least twenty-four in number, run the social gamut, and their class roles are now more discernible. At first glance, for example, the figures in front of the second building from the left appear to be a middle-class couple. But neither are they a couple nor do they walk together (fig. 2.38); instead, they cross midstreet.⁶⁶ The details of their attire suggest that they may be street merchants rather than consumers: the woman wears a tattered shawl and a skirt with an uneven hemline, and the man's overcoat is too long when compared to the fashionable knee-length paletots sported by the other males in the painting.⁶⁷ Other nonbourgeois characters include the ladder-carrying workman in a loose white smock and light trousers, and the apron-clad woman in the doorway at right (fig. 2.37). These figures are linked both by their placement along the horizon line and by their relationship to the umbrellas (one appears to hover over the workman's head at center and another is being opened by the domestic). By including these stereotypical images of the capital's denizens, Caillebotte incorporated the visual language of caricature and popular prints, both of which were important sources for modern painters, enabling them to represent crowds and movement in a way that photography could not.

The cleaning of *Paris Street* thus brought into clearer view the spectrum of social classes that are present in the composition. A greater awareness of this aspect of the picture enables the viewer to feel not only the push and pull of the soaring architecture, the plunging perspective of the cobblestone streets, and the zigzag rhythm of the figures that dot the composition, but also a significant fluctuation between connection and distance among the social strata present in this urban setting.

And our discoveries beneath the surface are just as interesting, revealing the resourcefulness, determination, and skill that Caillebotte displayed in re-creating on canvas such a complex scene on such a large scale. One can almost envision the artist at work, as he gradually brought into being and refined his conception through innumerable, small, repetitive acts, decisions, and adjustments. These actions—and the many, at times microscopic traces of them revealed through our study—are what led to the stunning transformation of *Study for "Paris Street; Rainy Day"* and other unassuming preparatory works into the grand canvas we know today. By imagining, through a close study of the physical evidence, the careful steps the artist took in recording the features of the scene before him, and then translating the preparatory studies into a large-scale work, we have a privileged glimpse into the workings of the artist's mind and hand. As we explore the evidence of the artist's extensive, dynamic, even obsessive process of revision, the final painting emerges even more clearly as the extraordinary distillation of a vast repertoire of ideas, sources, elements, and choices, ultimately leading to a whole that is indeed far greater than the sum of its parts. In following the traces of this process, we begin to grasp very concretely why this picture has proven to be so inexhaustibly challenging and fascinating.

With the exception of several smaller and sketchier paintings made shortly after *Paris Street*, Caillebotte would never again paint a multifigural composition on this scale, nor would he paint modern life from street level.⁶⁸ By 1879 he moved from the rue de Miromesnil to the boulevard Haussmann. Although the artist continued to focus on the city's traffic islands, pavements, and street lamps, he made his new paintings from the elevated vantage point of his balcony, an approach that lacked the immediacy and directness of *Pont de l'Europe* and *Paris Street*. The resulting pictures focused more selectively on some of the features that are gathered in this—his greatest work—in one all-encompassing synthesis.

Gloria Groom and Kelly Keegan



fig. 2.38 Detail of Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day* (1877) showing the figures who pass each other in front of the second building from the left. The Art Institute of Chicago, 1964.336.

Notes

1
Paris Street; Rainy Day (Berhaut 1978, no. 52; Berhaut 1994, no. 57) corresponds to the Caillebotte catalogues raisonnés: Berhaut 1978, pp. 98–99, cat. 52 (ill.); and Berhaut 1994, pp. 92–93, cat. 57 (ill.). The Art Institute currently uses a title that is based on the title that was given to the painting when it was exhibited at the third Impressionist exhibition. The painting had the following titles during the lifetime of the artist:

Apr. 1877: *Rue de Paris; Temps de pluie* (Catalogue de la 3^e exposition de peinture, exh. cat. [E. Capiomont et V. Renault, 1877], p. 3, cat. 1; according to Berhaut 1994, pp. 92–93, cat. 57 [ill.].)

2
 J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 112.

3
 Caillebotte received both praise and rebuke in response to his submission of *Paris Street* to the third Impressionist exhibition. Among the criticisms he received were complaints that Caillebotte's depiction of a rainy day was missing the rain, and that the structure of his composition resulted in bizarre details such as the overly ubiquitous umbrellas, insistently prominent lamppost, and overly meticulous renderings of pavement stones. See, for example, Anonymous [possibly Gaston Vassy], "La journée à Paris: L'exposition des impressionnistes," *L'événement*, Apr. 6, 1877, p. 2; and E. Lepelletier [Edmond-Adolphe de Bouhélier], "Les impressionnistes," *Le radical*, Apr. 8, 1877, pp. 2–3. For these and other critiques of the third Impressionist exhibition, see Ruth Berson, ed., *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886; Documentation*, vol. 1, Reviews (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco/University of Washington Press, 1996), pp. 123–200.

4
 See, for example, J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), pp. 110–13; and Julia Sagraves, "Paris Street; Rainy Day and Related Studies," in Anne Distel, Douglas Druick, Gloria Groom, and Rodolphe Rapetti, with Julia Sagraves and an essay by Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, exh. cat. (Musée d'Orsay/Art Institute of Chicago, 1995), pp. 116–22.

5
 Andrea Frey, *Der Stadtraum in der französischen Malerei, 1860–1900* (Reimer, 1999), p. 170.6

6
 This essay is indebted first of all to Kirk Varnedoe's groundbreaking work on the artist for the 1976–77 exhibition *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition* and his subsequent work, including "Odd Man In: A Brief Historiography of Caillebotte's Changing Roles in the History of Art," in Anne Distel, Douglas Druick, Gloria Groom, and Rodolphe Rapetti, with Julia Sagraves and an essay by Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, exh. cat. (Musée d'Orsay/Art Institute of Chicago, 1995). This essay is also greatly indebted to other seminal scholarship, including the essays by Julia Sagraves and Anne Distel in *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*; Michael Fried, "Caillebotte's Impressionism," in *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionist Paris*, ed. Norma Broude (Rutgers University Press, 2002), pp. 66–116; and Claude Ghez, who published an important text on *Pont de l'Europe* for the 2012 exhibition *Gustave Caillebotte: An Impressionist and Photography* and for the 2013 exhibition *Gustave Caillebotte: Impressionist in Modern Paris*. We are grateful to Dr. Ghez for his collaboration with the Art Institute's conservators, for presenting his research to date at the Caillebotte study day held April 22, 2014, at the Art Institute of Chicago, and for sharing with us his unpublished manuscript on *Paris Street; Rainy Day*, which was the first to map—by using a three-dimensional model—the artist's vantage point and perspective. We are equally grateful to Michael Marrinan, not only for his essay on Caillebotte's earliest relationships with Giuseppe De Nittis, but even more so for making available the chapter titled "Rue de Turin" in his forthcoming book from the Getty Research Institute, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Painter in Paris, 1872–1887*, which contains valuable insights into the Art Institute's painting. Finally, we are extremely grateful to Paintings Conservator Faye Wrubel for her astute observations of Caillebotte's technique and working process and for the spirited dialogue which took place during and after her treatment of the painting, which led us to many of our new discoveries.

7
 See Stephen F. Eisenman, "The Intransigent Artist, or How the Impressionists Got Their Name," in *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886*, ed. Charles S. Moffett, with the assistance of Ruth Berson, Barbara Lee Williams, and Fronia E. Wissman, exh. cat. (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986), pp. 51–59. For Caillebotte's role in organizing the third Impressionist exhibition, see, in this same publication, Richard R. Brettell, "The 'First' Exhibition of Impressionist Painters," pp. 189–202.

8
 See, for example, Anonymous [possibly Gaston Vassy], "La journée à Paris: L'exposition des impressionnistes," *L'événement*, Apr. 6, 1877, p. 2, reprinted in Ruth Berson, ed., *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886; Documentation*, vol. 1, Reviews (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco/University of Washington Press, 1996), p. 145: "Les toiles les plus remarquables sont, sans contredit, celles de M. Gustave Caillebotte, un millionnaire qui fait de la peinture à ses moments perdus. Citons surtout deux immenses tableaux, — tous deux beaucoup trop uniformément gris, mais très bien dessinés." (The most remarkable canvases are, without argument, those of Monsieur Gustave Caillebotte, a millionaire who paints in his spare time. Two immense pictures should be especially mentioned—both too uniformly grey, but very well drawn.) Excerpt translated in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 210. The Art Institute painting was mentioned in at least twenty-seven reviews of the exhibition, transcribed in Berson, *The New Painting*, pp. 123–200.

9
 See Anonymous [possibly Gaston Vassy], "La journée à Paris: L'exposition des impressionnistes," *L'événement*, Apr. 6, 1877, p. 2, excerpt translated in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 210.

10
 "Exposition des impressionnistes: 6, rue Le Peletier," *La petite république française*, Apr. 10, 1877, p. 2, excerpt translated in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 212.

11
 Georges Rivière, "L'exposition des impressionnistes," *L'impressionniste*, Apr. 14, 1877, pp. 1–4, 6, excerpt translated in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 215.

12
 Anonymous [possibly Gaston Vassy], "La journée à Paris: L'exposition des impressionnistes," *L'événement*, Apr. 6, 1877, p. 2, excerpt translated in *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886*, ed. Charles S. Moffett, with the assistance of Ruth Berson, Barbara Lee Williams, and Fronia E. Wissman, exh. cat. (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986), p. 208. The painting has been known by many different titles, including the more descriptive *Rue de Paris, temps de Pluie: Le Carrefour formé par les rues de Turin, Petrograd, et Chapeyron* [sic], in the 1956 catalogue for the exhibition *Paintings from the Collection of Walter P. Chrysler, Jr.*; it was later corrected to *Rue de Paris; temps de pluie (Paris, A Rainy Day—Intersection of the rue de Turin and the rue de Moscou)* in the catalogue for the 1976–77 exhibition *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*. At the Art Institute the painting was incorrectly titled *Umbrellas in the Place de l'Europe on a Rainy Day* when it first entered the collection; after several intervening variations, in 1991 the museum adopted the current title, a translation of the one used at the third Impressionist exhibition in 1877.

13
 Unlike the nearby place de l'Europe or the place de Clichy, this intersection was unnamed during Caillebotte's lifetime. Unofficially known as the "carrefour de la rue de Moscou," in January 1987 the intersection was officially given the name "place de Dublin"; see Juliet Wilson-Bureau, *Manet, Monet, and the Gare Saint-Lazare*, exh. cat. (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C./Yale University Press, 1998), p. 187, n. 63.14. The intersection remained largely undefined until 1878, when, for pedestrian safety, two traffic islands were added, which can be seen in a postcard dating to 1905 (fig. 2.3). These islands flanked either side of the rue de Saint-Petersbourg and each included a five-branched candelabrum-style street lamp. The lamppost seen in Caillebotte's depiction of the intersection was replaced at the same time. See Wilson-Bureau, *Manet, Monet, and the Gare Saint-Lazare*, p. 92.

- 15 See Ruth E. Iskin, *Modern Women and Parisian Consumer Culture in Impressionist Painting* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 116–17, 122.
- 16 Many scholars have pointed out the potential influence of De Nittis, whom Caillebotte visited in Italy in 1872 and 1875, and who may have shaped the way in which Caillebotte depicts space. See Berhaut 1978, p. 8. See also Michael Marrinan, “Caillebotte as Professional Painter: From Studio to the Public Eye,” in *Gustave Caillebotte and the Fashioning of Identity in Impressionist Paris*, ed. Norma Broude (Rutgers University Press, 2002), pp. 35–45.
- 17 While little is known about Caillebotte’s methods as he worked at this site, one scholar has said that for *The Pont de l’Europe*, “Family tradition has it that Caillebotte worked on the site of the pont de l’Europe, from a windowed carriage so that he could continue in all weather.” See J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 98; see also Marie Berhaut, *Caillebotte*, with an introduction by Daniel Wildenstein (Wildenstein, 1951), n.pag. (“Vues de Paris”).
- 18 We are grateful to Genevieve Westerby, Research Associate at the Art Institute of Chicago, for this reference and other contributions to this essay.
- 19 See Michael Marrinan, “Rue de Turin,” in *Gustave Caillebotte: A Painter in Paris, 1872–1887* (Getty Research Institute, forthcoming). For the cafés the Impressionists frequented in the 1870s, see John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, 4th ed. (Museum of Modern Art, New York/New York Graphic Society, 1973), pp. 197–210, 399–406.
- 20 See Michael Marrinan, “Rue de Turin,” in *Gustave Caillebotte: A Painter in Paris, 1872–1887* (Getty Research Institute, forthcoming).
- 21 For the width of Haussmann’s new sidewalks, see Ruth E. Iskin, *Modern Women and Parisian Consumer Culture in Impressionist Painting* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 122; and H. Lamirault, ed., “Rue,” in *La grande encyclopédie: Inventaire raisonné des sciences, des lettres et des arts*, vol. 28 (Société Anonyme de “La Grande encyclopédie,” 1885–1902), p. 1125.
- 22 From the perspective of the viewer, this is also the main vanishing point. Many of the elements in the foreground—the buildings on the far left and far right, the cobblestones, and the sidewalk—all recede to this vanishing point. For a discussion of the vanishing points employed in the painting, see under “compositional planning” in the technical report.
- 23 See Anne McCauley, David H. McAlpin Professor of the History of Photography and Modern Art, Princeton University, to Gloria Groom, Jan. 12, 2015, e-mail correspondence, curatorial object file, Art Institute of Chicago.
- 24 Paul Sébillot, “Exposition des impressionnistes,” *Le bien public*, Apr. 7, 1877, p. 2, excerpt translated in *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886*, ed. Charles S. Moffett, with the assistance of Ruth Berson, Barbara Lee Williams, and Fronia E. Wissman, exh. cat. (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986), p. 209: “It gives an idea of what photography will become when the means are found to reproduce colors with their full intensity and subtlety.” (Cela donne l’idée de ce que sera la photographie quand on aura trouvé le moyen de reproduire les couleurs avec leur intensité et leur finesse.)
- 25 See Peter Galassi, “Caillebotte’s Method,” in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), pp. 192–206; and J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Peter Galassi, “Caillebotte’s Space,” in the same publication, pp. 60–73. In these essays, Galassi and Varnedoe explain in great detail the different views obtained through the use of a 55 mm lens compared to the wider view created by a 24 mm lens, and how this wide-angle effect is comparable to *Paris Street* and other paintings by Caillebotte.
- 26 Peter Galassi, “Caillebotte’s Method,” in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 199. Galassi (p. 193) views a gridded preparatory drawing for *Oarsmen* (1877; private collection [Berhaut 1978, no. 75; Berhaut 1994, no. 83]) as further evidence for the use of photographic plates in Caillebotte’s drawing process. The gridded preparatory drawing for *Oarsmen* is included on the right side of a preparatory drawing for *Paris Street*; see Julia Sagraves, “The Street,” in Anne Distel, Douglas Druick, Gloria Groom, and Rodolphe Rapetti, with Julia Sagraves and an essay by Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, exh. cat. (Musée d’Orsay/Art Institute of Chicago, 1995), p. 127, cat. 44 (ill.).
- 27 See, for example, Renzo Dubbini, *Geography of the Gaze: Urban and Rural Vision in Early Modern Europe*, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 201. See also Aileen Ribeiro, “Gustave Caillebotte, *Paris Street; Rainy Day*,” in *Impressionism, Fashion, and Modernity*, ed. Gloria Groom, exh. cat. (Art Institute of Chicago/Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York/Musée d’Orsay/Yale University Press, 2012), p. 188; and Claude P. J. Ghez and Orselie Bernier, “Gustave Caillebotte’s ‘Jour de Paris, temps de pluie’: From Cityscape to Stage Set” (unpublished manuscript, 2014).
- 28 Claude P. J. Ghez and Orselie Bernier, “Gustave Caillebotte’s ‘Jour de Paris, temps de pluie’: From Cityscape to Stage Set” (unpublished manuscript, 2014).
- 29 See cat. 1, *Study for “Paris Street; Rainy Day,”* technical report. Galassi himself admitted that while the study could have been derived from a photograph, the thickness of the paper, which was not a tracing paper, would have made tracing highly unlikely. See Peter Galassi, “Caillebotte’s Method,” in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 199.
- 30 Artists, scientists, and other enthusiasts complained about these distortions. See Erna Fiorentini, “Camera Obscura vs. Camera Lucida—Distinguishing Early Nineteenth Century Modes of Seeing,” preprint 307 (Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, 2006), p. 15.
- 31 The angle of view in *Paris Street; Rainy Day*, which is found to be 56°, would require a 38 mm lens that, while not generally considered wide angle, is certainly shorter than a standard 55 mm lens. The angle of view as well as the lens length (specifically 38.2 mm) were determined by Claude P. J. Ghez and Orselie Bernier in “Gustave Caillebotte’s ‘Jour de Paris, temps de pluie’: From Cityscape to Stage Set” (unpublished manuscript, 2014). According to Ghez and Bernier, lenses typically called wide angle would be 28 mm or shorter with viewing angles of 65° or more. For further discussion of the wide angle of view, see J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Peter Galassi, “Caillebotte’s Space,” in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), pp. 61–63. By contrast, Caillebotte’s *Pont de l’Europe* (fig. 2.1) of the previous year combined three different vantage points but with only a 24° viewing angle at each point. For a discussion of the multiple vantage points and viewing angles, see Claude P. J. Ghez and Pietro Galifi della Bagliva, “Deconstructing Gustave Caillebotte’s *Le Pont de l’Europe* (1876),” in *Gustave Caillebotte: Impressionist in Modern Paris*, ed. Shimbata Yasuhide, exh. cat. (Bridgestone Museum of Art/Ishibashi Foundation, 2013), pp. 232–33.
- 32 After around 1820, the tent camera obscura’s traditional mirror-and-lens system was replaced with a curved prism. Erna Fiorentini, “Camera Obscura vs. Camera Lucida—Distinguishing Early Nineteenth Century Modes of Seeing,” preprint 307 (Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, 2006), p. 15. While the camera obscura has been proposed before, by Varnedoe and Galassi, among others, the tent camera obscura was recently suggested by Claude P. J. Ghez and Orselie Bernier in “Gustave Caillebotte’s ‘Jour de Paris, temps de pluie’: From Cityscape to Stage Set” (unpublished manuscript, 2014); see J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Peter Galassi, “Caillebotte’s Space,” in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 60.

33

The name camera lucida derives from the nineteenth-century association of the term camera with drawing. A response to the camera obscura, it likely referred to the concept of “drawing in the light.” See John H. Hammond and Jill Austin, *The Camera Lucida in Art and Science* (IOP, 1987), pp. 13–14.

34

Erna Fiorentini, “Camera Obscura vs. Camera Lucida—Distinguishing Early Nineteenth Century Modes of Seeing,” preprint 307 (Max-Planck-Institut für Wissenschaftsgeschichte, 2006), p. 33.

35

For Maurice Brault, see Anne Distel to Gloria Groom, Feb. 10, 2015, e-mail correspondence, curatorial object file, Art Institute of Chicago. The camera lucida, along with the camera obscura and photographic camera, were available in the shops of *opticiens*, who sold lenses of all types. A quick survey of available color merchants’ catalogues revealed that in the late 1880s, the only available optical devices were the perspective frame, the reflectograph, and various models of pantographs. For contemporary uses of the device by architects and engineers, see Augustin Privat Deschanel, “Chambre Claire (No. 727; Camera Lucida),” in *Traité élémentaire de physique: Ouvrage accompagné de 719 figures dessinées par Bonnafox et Jahandier gravées par Laplante et 3 planches en couleur tirées à part* (Hachett, 1869), p. 913.

36

For a history of the Chevalier business, see Paolo Brenni, “The Chevalier Dynasty,” *Bulletin of the Scientific Instrument Society*, no. 39 (1993), pp. 11–14. For Chevalier’s treatise on the camera lucida, see Charles Chevalier, *Conseils aux artistes et aux amateurs, sur l’application de la chambre claire à l’art du dessin* (C. Chevalier, 1838), http://vision.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/elib/cameralucida/Descriptions/Chevalier_Chambre_Claire_1838.

37

Previously trained as an architect and draftsman, Professor Garcia has studied at length the development and use of optical devices by artists. We are very grateful to Art Institute colleagues who helped pursue this research, especially Antoinette Owen, Head of Paper Conservation and Senior Conservator of Prints and Drawings; Frank Zuccari, Grainger Executive Director of Conservation and Senior Paintings Conservator; Genevieve Westerby, Research Associate in the Department of European Painting and Sculpture; and Paintings Conservator Faye Wrubel.

38

Several aspects of the intersection have been modified since the late nineteenth century, including the addition of the glassed-in porch area and permanent awning to the front of the café, which obscures much of the fourth and fifth buildings from left that are seen in the final *Paris Street* composition. The sidewalk has also been repaved and made narrower than the estimated 2.65 m width in the late nineteenth century. These changes were observed during Professor Garcia’s March 2015 visit to the site, while specific measurements were determined by Claude P. J. Ghez and Orselie Bernier in “Gustave Caillebotte’s ‘Jour de Paris, temps de pluie’: From Cityscape to Stage Set” (unpublished manuscript, 2014).

39

The fifty-inch height is approximate and based on the current elevation of the sidewalk with respect to the scene. Visibility of the stone curbs that likely date from the nineteenth century, both in front of the café building at right and the pharmacy at center, suggests that the elevation of the sidewalk is within a few inches of its former height. For Caillebotte’s height, recorded in 1875 as 1 m 67 cm, see Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte* (Yale University Press, 1987), p. 3.

40

See Hollis Clayson, “A Failed Attempt,” in *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886*, ed. Charles S. Moffett, with the assistance of Ruth Berson, Barbara Lee Williams, and Fronia E. Wissman, exh. cat. (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986), p. 149, quoting Émile Zola, “Lettres de Paris: Deux expositions d’art au mois de mai,” *Le messenger de l’Europe* (Saint Petersburg, June 1876).

41

J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), pp. 83–85.

42

Many thanks to Frank Zuccari for this observation. The ratio is given as an approximation due to the many changes in the painting from the drawing and the inherent difficulty in comparing single graphite lines to brushstrokes of varying widths. Small discrepancies between the re-created enlargement and the visible underdrawing for *Paris Street; Rainy Day* may also be due to rounding or slight adjustments by the artist during the transfer process.

43

The painting’s underdrawing matches the final result from our experiment, to enlarge the sketch to a prepared canvas, in many areas—including the far right building; in other areas, however, Caillebotte seems to have made changes during the transfer process itself. The lack of changes visible in the technical images of the painting in certain areas suggests that Caillebotte made a few alterations to the composition during the transfer process or during the subsequent process of reinforcing the underdrawing in paint. For a full discussion of compositional changes made during the execution of the final painting, including the movement of the far right building, see under “application/technique and artist’s revisions” in the technical report.

44

For three of the vanishing points on the painting, there is a second set of pinholes that are slightly offset, evidence of Caillebotte’s repositioning of the horizon. See technical report.

45

First, it appears that, as Caillebotte made the initial charcoal underdrawing for the painting, he may have turned back to the drawing, marking it up with a new, lower crop for the upper edge (see cat. 1, technical report). Second, perhaps inspired by the painted sketch in the Musée Marmottan Monet (fig. 2.24 [Berhaut 1978, no. 51; Berhaut 1994, no. 56]), he settled on the forward-facing couple for the foreground, who would need to be nearly life-size and cropped in such a way that they seem to be walking. On a related preparatory drawing of these figures (fig. 2.27), Caillebotte roughly marked the spot where he intended to crop them.

46

In the transmitted-infrared image of the painting, there is visible a faint horizontal line through the cobblestones that appears to correspond to the lower compositional edge of the drawing.

47

Recent technical examinations of the Marmottan sketch have revealed the presence of small pinholes at the corners of the work. These pinholes normally suggest the use of taquets bois, or small wooden spacers used to transport or store works face-to-face while wet, but could also indicate that the loose canvas was attached to a board during execution. In either case, these holes, along with the specificity of the architectural details seen in the work—such as the placement and depiction of chimneys, windows, and balconies of the buildings in the background—suggest that the work may have been executed on site, at least in part. See Kelly Keegan’s unpublished manuscript, curatorial object file, Art Institute of Chicago. It is also important to note that, even though the sketch exhibits a certain site specificity with regard to the architectural details, details that are also present in the final painting, the general shape of the buildings is not directly accurate when compared to the site, and, further, that the sketch was not used as a direct transfer matrix for the final composition.

48

In connection with her treatment of *Paris Street; Rainy Day*, Faye Wrubel examined in detail the Marmottan sketch in Paris. She shared her findings in a presentation, titled “A New Look at a Familiar Street Scene: Caillebotte’s *Paris Street; Rainy Day*,” given at a study day focused on *Paris Street; Rainy Day* held at the Art Institute of Chicago on April 22, 2014, in which she observed that in addition to extending off the edges of the work, the basic lines of the architecture also pass under the figure at the far right, unlike the other figures in the painting, suggesting that this lone male figure in the painted sketch was a late addition to the composition. Kelly Keegan has also observed that the thick, pale, textural strokes of the building on the far right remain visible under the relatively thin paint layers used for the lone male figure added to the painted sketch; see Kelly Keegan and John Delaney, “Under the Umbrellas: Observations on the Technical Images of Caillebotte’s *Paris Street; Rainy Day*” (presentation, Art Institute of Chicago, Caillebotte “Paris Street; Rainy Day”: A Study Day, Apr. 22, 2014).

49

The application of paint in this section of the Marmottan sketch (fig. 2.24 [Berhaut 1978, no. 51; Berhaut 1994, no. 56]), compared to the rest of the sky, exhibits a difference in texture, has an unblended quality, and appears to have been added over dry paint, all of which suggests that it was applied later. This addition may have been concurrent with a period of time when Caillebotte was working on the final painting. The added touch of atmosphere was first noticed by Faye Wrubel, who, through close visible-light and UV examination, found a similar handling of paint in the sky in the final painting, which had been painted over in a treatment before the painting entered the Art Institute's collection (see under "conservation history" in the technical report). She shared her findings in a presentation titled "A New Look at a Familiar Street Scene: Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day*," given at a study day focused on *Paris Street; Rainy Day* held at the Art Institute of Chicago on April 22, 2014. Additional observations regarding the sketch and the final painting, made by Wrubel and Kelly Keegan, were presented by Keegan and John Delaney in a talk titled "Under the Umbrellas: Observations on the Technical Images of Caillebotte's *Paris Street; Rainy Day*." One should also note the carriage riding past on the far left of the final painting. Visible in the architectural drawing as a kiosk-shaped element, it is suggested in the Marmottan sketch by the presence of a blue form visible on the far left. The slight curve of the bottom of the shape may suggest the curved body of the carriage seen in approximately the same location in the final painting. For additional observations on the treatment of the sky in the final painting and the progression of the far left carriage, see under "application/technique and artist's revisions" in the technical report.

50

See J.-K. Huysmans, "L'exposition des indépendants en 1880," *L'art moderne* (G. Charpentier, 1883), pp. 85–123, reprinted in Ruth Berson, ed., *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886; Documentation*, vol. 1, *Reviews* (Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco/University of Washington Press, 1996), pp. 285–93, especially p. 286.

51

Julia Sagraves, "*Paris Street; Rainy Day* and Related Studies," in Anne Distel, Douglas Druick, Gloria Groom, and Rodolphe Rapetti, with Julia Sagraves and an essay by Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, exh. cat. (Musée d'Orsay/Art Institute of Chicago, 1995), p. 118.

52

The Marmottan sketch has a very discolored varnish that is minimized in reproduction; however, UV images of the sketch suggest that the palette and distribution of colors are very similar to those in the final painting (see fig. 2.24).

53

J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 111.

54

For a discussion of the chronology of the related preparatory works, particularly in relation to the painted Marmottan sketch and the final painting, see Julia Sagraves, "*Paris Street; Rainy Day* and Related Studies," in Anne Distel, Douglas Druick, Gloria Groom, and Rodolphe Rapetti, with Julia Sagraves and an essay by Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, exh. cat. (Musée d'Orsay/Art Institute of Chicago, 1995), p. 116. See also Peter Galassi, "Caillebotte's Method," in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 192.

55

For more on these two women in the background, and the preparatory drawings for these figures, see Julia Sagraves, "*Paris Street; Rainy Day* and Related Studies," in Anne Distel, Douglas Druick, Gloria Groom, and Rodolphe Rapetti, with Julia Sagraves and an essay by Kirk Varnedoe, *Gustave Caillebotte: Urban Impressionist*, exh. cat. (Musée d'Orsay/Art Institute of Chicago, 1995), p. 120.

56

See E. Lepelletier [Edmond-Adolphe de Bouhélier], "Les impressionnistes," *Le radical*, Apr. 8, 1877, pp. 2–3, excerpt translated in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 211: "There is talent, and a lot of talent, in this canvas, which, in my opinion, would not be prevented at all by the bizarreness of certain details . . . from appearing besides the paintings consecrated by . . . the jury of the Champs-Élysées."

57

Peter Galassi, "Caillebotte's Method," in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T.

Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 205.

58

For popular caricatures of the time, see *Douze années comiques, par Cham, 1868–1879*, introduction by Ludovic Halévy (Calmann Lévy, 1884); Anne McCauley, "Caricature and Photography in Second Empire Paris," *Art Journal* 43, 4 (Winter 1983), pp. 355–60.

59

E. Lepelletier [Edmond-Adolphe de Bouhélier], "Les impressionnistes," *Le radical*, Apr. 8, 1877, pp. 2–3, excerpt translated in J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), pp. 210–11. More recently, photographic historian and theoretician Michel Frizot, cited Caillebotte as the first artist to successfully depict the way the ball of the foot rolls when walking, an extravagant claim that is not evident in *Paris Street*. See Michel Frizot "Comme on marche: De l'exactitude dans l'instant," *48/14: La revue du Musée d'Orsay* 4 (1977), pp. 74–83, cited in Karin Sagner, "Gustave Caillebotte: An Impressionist and Photography," in *Gustave Caillebotte: An Impressionist and Photography*, ed. Karin Sagner and Max Hollein, in cooperation with Ulrich Pohlmann, exh. cat. (Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt/Hirmer, 2012), p. 26, n. 41.

60

See Oliver Wendell Holmes, "The Human Wheel, Its Spokes and Felloes," *Atlantic Monthly* (May 1863), pp. 567–80. We are grateful to Anne McCauley, David H. McAlpin Professor of the History of Photography and Modern Art, Princeton University, for this reference.

61

Andrea Frey sees the figures as coming more from the same social class and remarks that Caillebotte abandoned several of the figural types included in his earlier sketches that would have made the composition more socially diverse; Andrea Frey, *Der Stadtraum in der französischen Malerei, 1860–1900* (Reimer, 1999), p. 168.

62

Aileen Ribeiro, "Gustave Caillebotte, *Paris Street; Rainy Day*," in *Impressionism, Fashion, and Modernity*, ed. Gloria Groom, exh. cat. (Art Institute of Chicago/Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York/Musée d'Orsay/Yale University Press, 2012), p. 189.

63

Recent technical examination has revealed that in a previous stage of the composition, the hands of the foreground woman were not gloved. This is comparable to the ungloved depiction of her right and only visible hand in the Marmottan sketch. Our thanks to Faye Wrubel for noting that the woman's hand is ungloved in the Marmottan sketch.

64

J. Kirk T. Varnedoe and Thomas P. Lee, *Gustave Caillebotte: A Retrospective Exhibition*, with contributions by J. Kirk T. Varnedoe, Marie Berhaut, Peter Galassi, and Hilarie Faberman, exh. cat. (Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 1976), p. 111.

65

Aileen Ribeiro, "Gustave Caillebotte, *Paris Street; Rainy Day*," in *Impressionism, Fashion, and Modernity*, ed. Gloria Groom, exh. cat. (Art Institute of Chicago/Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York/Musée d'Orsay/Yale University Press, 2012), p. 191. A flâneur is generally characterized as a man of leisure who strolls city streets; he is a detached, anonymous observer who also remains an active, fascinated participant in modern street life. All the men whose hands are visible in the painting do not wear gloves, a trait that thus becomes a subtle stand-in for the greater freedom enjoyed by the male gender at the time. We are grateful to independent art historian Margherita Andreotti for this observation.

66

These details were revealed by Faye Wrubel's recent cleaning; see under "conservation history" in the technical report.

67

Her umbrella is unpainted; instead, the tannish color of the ground is allowed to show through (see under "application/technique and artist's revisions" and "ground application/texture" in the technical report).

68

The place Saint Augustin (Apprentis d'Auteuil, Paris [Berkhaut 1978, no. 112; Berkhaut 1994, no. 103]) and *The Pépinière Barracks* (private collection [Berkhaut 1978, no. 113; Berkhaut 1994, no. 104]), both datable to 1877/78.