

canvas and copy the *ébauche* on to it. Keep the original which was such a success, use it as a guide and unhesitatingly put anything you like into the copy.⁵

He emphasised the importance of retaining purity of COLOUR and immediacy of TOUCH, and advocated retaining the freshness of the *ébauche* by allowing far more of it to show in the finished work than was acceptable in standard academic practice. His students, who included Manet, Puvis de Chavannes, and the American painters Mary Cassatt and William Morris Hunt, took heed. In turn, in his own busy Boston teaching studio Hunt advised his students:

If we would only work simply! If a bit of canvas uncovered has a better effect than it would have if paint were on it; if something half-done looks better than anything finished; in a word, if the Lord helps us in that way, let us say, ‘Much obliged!’ and take the help.⁶

The Impressionists essentially conflated the *ébauche* and the final work. Moreover they signified their questioning of academic procedure by sometimes referring to their exhibited works as *études*, *ébauches* or *esquisses*. Hence what had been seen as a private, preparatory activity had come out into the public arena. It is thus understandable that the more conservative academic painters found such activities to be a shocking betrayal of trade secrets.

See: *CROQUIS, ESQUISSE, ÉTUDE, FINISH*

¹ In Boime, p. 88

² J.N. Paillet de Montabert, *Traité complet de la peinture*, 1828-9, in Boime, p. 37

³ *Dictionnaire de l'Académie des Beaux-Arts*, in Boime, p. 89

⁴ 1 March 1847, in Delacroix, 1995, pp. 70-1

⁵ T. Couture, *Méthode et entretiens d'atelier*, 1867, in Boime, p. 73

⁶ See Hunt, p. 11

École des Beaux-Arts

OF ALL THE INSTITUTIONS WITHIN WHICH ART COULD BE STUDIED, none was as prestigious or influential as the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Students flocked to study there from all over France and beyond. The list of its alumni is a roll call of illustrious artists, including the painters David, Ingres, Delacroix, Millet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Seurat, Bonnard, Denis, Bouguereau, Gérôme, Breton, and the sculptors Bourdelle, Carpeaux and Dalou. Foreign students included the Americans Thomas Eakins and Robert Henri and the Dutchman Joseph Israëls. The close links between the École and other sectors of the art establishment, such as the Académie des Beaux-Arts, the Académie de France in Rome and the Salon jury, conferred added status and promised professional success to its students. It served as an exemplar for art schools in provincial France, as well as in most other European countries and their colonies.

For most of the nineteenth-century students at the École had to be between 18 and 30 years of age, and they had to be male. Women were excluded until 1897. From their outsiders' perspective the École could appear a wondrous place, as the aspiring Russian artist Marie