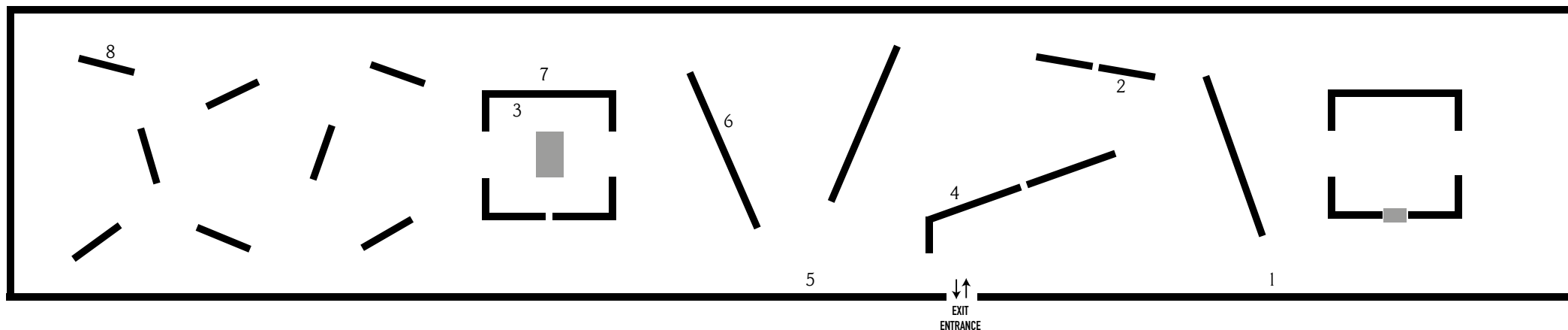




SUZANNE VALADON

A WORLD OF HER OWN

GALERIE 2



Born Marie-Clémentine Valadon in Bessines-sur-Gartempe, Haute-Vienne, on 23 September 1865, Suzanne Valadon moved to the Montmartre district of Paris around 1866 with her mother, who worked as a cleaner and later as a laundress. In 1870 Marie-Clémentine Valadon was sent to Nantes to live with her half-sister, where she experienced the insurrectionary events of the Paris Commune from afar. In 1873 she produced her first drawings. Back in Paris in 1876, she took on various apprenticeships: in a dressmaker's workshop, at a florist's shop and at the market to provide for the household that she once again formed with her mother on the Rue Cortot.

Going by the name of Maria, then Suzanne, she became a model for Puvis de Chavannes, then Renoir, Toulouse-Lautrec, Henner, Wertheimer and Hynais. In 1882 she met Miquel Utrillo. A year later, she gave birth to Maurice and produced her first painting. In 1893 she met Erik Satie, who shared her life for a few months, then Edgar Degas, who bought her works and taught her printmaking. In 1909 she exhibited at the Salon d'Automne with *Summer (Été)*, also known as *Adam et Eve (Adam et Ève)*, the first work in the history of modern art by a woman and one depicting a frontal male nude. She devoted herself entirely to her art until her death in 1938, leaving 480 paintings, 275 drawings and 31 engravings.

Almost sixty years since the last retrospective dedicated to Valadon at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris in 1967, the new exhibition initiated by the Centre Pompidou-Metz, [Suzanne Valadon: A World of Her Own](#), celebrates the unique artist in the Parisian landscape at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Her independence from the avant-garde and her place at the heart of the "infernal trio" she formed with Maurice Utrillo and André Utter have long overshadowed an in-depth analysis of her work, of which the present retrospective offers a renewed reading in the light of the reflections now driving our society.

Valadon lived on the cusp of two centuries, in an era marked by multiple revolutions: industrial, societal, political, intellectual and artistic. Her life holds the clues to an era that saw the blossoming of pictorial modernity and its new artistic paths: in turn the realism of Gustave Courbet, the voluptuous nudes of Jean-Auguste Dominique Ingres and the naturalistic landscapes of the Barbizon School, followed by the anti-academicism of Édouard Manet, the impressionist metamorphosis and aesthetic experimentation of Paul Gauguin and Paul Cézanne, and the symbolism of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes.

She lived in a Paris reshaped by Napoleon's ambitions and the pauperisation of neighbourhoods by Georges Eugène Haussmann public works. She witnessed the emergence of cultural industries and the beginnings of a revived art market. She joined the bohemian scene and fully embraced the new life in the French capital at cafés, bals musettes and cabarets. Valadon was a resolutely modern woman who lived life to the full in an era of great ideological shifts. Her protean art took the form of drawing, printmaking and painting.

"I have drawn madly so that when I no longer have eyes, I have some at my fingertips," declared the artist in her manifesto *Suzanne Valadon ou L'Absolu*.



A question to ask or the desire to chat ?
Our facilitators are at your disposal.



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Quadreria – Portrait gallery

Suzanne Valadon's painting was marked from the start by portraits of her relatives and genre scenes. Her work was favourably received at the official salons, which were freeing themselves from the dogma of the hierarchy of subjects. From 1903, she relentlessly pursued her research into the expressiveness of her figures, mainly her friends and relatives. She depicted them in interiors, gradually abandoning the sober settings of her earlier works. Pursuing the goals of the Pont-Aven school, she attempted in this painting to capture fully a state of mind. This group of works, presented here in the style of a gallery of Italian Renaissance portraits, provides clues about Valadon's entourage: her niece and great-niece, Marie Coca and Gilberte; the collectors Mauricia Coquiote, Charles Wakefield-Mori and Madame Pétridès; and her husband André Utter's family. In the canvas *Marie Coca and her daughter Gilberte* (*Marie Coca et sa fille Gilberte*), Valadon indulged in the "painting-within-a-painting" tradition, quoting Edgar Degas' *Ballet Rehearsal at the Opera* (*Une répétition d'un ballet à l'opéra*) at the top left of the composition. Its inverted presentation in relation to the painting suggests that it is an engraving Degas produced between 1890 and 1917, displayed on the opposite wall.

1 *Marie Coca and Her Daughter Gilberte* (*Marie Coca et sa fille Gilberte*), 1913
Oil on canvas, 162 × 129,5 cm
Lyon, musée des Beaux-Arts, 1935-51

2 *Portrait of Germaine Eisenmann* (*Portrait de Germaine Eisenmann*), 1924
Oil on canvas, 81 × 65 cm
Private collection

3 *Madame Robert Rey and Her Daughter Sylvie* (*Madame Robert Rey et sa fille Sylvie*), c. 1920
Oil on canvas, 92 × 60 cm
Izmir, Arkas Sanat Merkezi, 841

4 *Les Dames Rivière*, 1924
Oil on canvas, 100 × 74 cm
Paris, private collection, PGS

5 *Portrait of Mauricia Coquiote* (*Portrait de Mauricia Coquiote*), 1915
Oil on canvas, 93 × 73 cm
Donation Charles Wakefield-Mori, 1939
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, on loan to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Menton, AM 3800 P

6 *Portrait of Bernard Lemaire's Mother* (*Portrait de la mère de Bernard Lemaire*), 1894
Oil on canvas, 52 × 40 cm
Val-d'Oise, collection de la Ville de Sannois, on loan to the Musée de Montmartre, MSVT 2005.1.1

7 *The Utter Family* (*La Famille Utter*), 1921
Oil on canvas, 95 × 135 cm
Robert Le Masle bequest, 1974
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 1974-124

8 *Portrait of Louis Moysès, Founder of Le Boeuf sur le Toit* (*Portrait de Louis Moysès, fondateur du Bœuf sur le Toit*), c. 1924
Oil on canvas, 65,3 × 54 cm
Weisman-Michel collection, on loan to the Musée de Montmartre

9 *The Artist's Mother* (*La Mère de l'artiste*), 1912 - Oil on canvas, recto, 82 × 62 cm
Gift of Dr Albert Charpentier, 1935
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 2046 P (R)

10 *Portrait of Geneviève Camax-Zoegger* (*Portrait de Geneviève Camax-Zoegger*), 1936
Oil on canvas, 55 × 46 cm
Florence, Bellini collection

11 *Germaine Utter in Front of Her Window* (*Germaine Utter devant sa fenêtre*), 1926
Oil on canvas, 73 × 54 cm
Private collection

12 *Portrait of Charles Wakefield-Mori* (*Portrait de Charles Wakefield-Mori*), 1922
Oil on canvas, 68,5 × 57,5 cm
Deed of gift by Charles Wakefield-Mori, 1939, Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, on loan to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Menton, AM 3769 P

13 *Portrait of Nora Kars* (*Portrait de Nora Kars*), 1922
Oil on canvas, 73,5 × 54 cm
Madame Georges Kars bequest, 1966
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 4354 P

14 *Portrait of Miss Lily Walton* (*Portrait de Miss Lily Walton*), 1922
Oil on canvas, 100 × 81 cm
State purchase, 1938
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, on loan to the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Limoges, AM 2204 P

15 *Portrait of a Woman* (*Portrait d'une femme*), 1934 - Oil on canvas, 41 × 33cm
Weisman-Michel collection, on loan to the Musée de Montmartre

16 *Portrait of Madame Maurice Utrillo* (*Portrait de Madame Maurice Utrillo* (*Lucie Valore*)), 1937
Oil on canvas, 55,9 × 46 cm
Paris, private collection

17 *Girl Crocheting* (*Jeune Fille faisant du crochet*), vers 1892 - Oil on canvas, 46 × 38cm
Robert Le Masle bequest, 1974
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, AM 1974-120

18 *Portrait of Madame Pétridès* (*Portrait de Madame Pétridès*), 1937
Oil on canvas, 55 × 46,5 cm
Paris, private collection

19 *Woman in an Armchair* (*Femme dans un fauteuil* (*Portrait de Madame G.*)), 1919
Oil on canvas, 73 × 60 cm
Weisman-Michel collection, on loan to the Musée de Montmartre

20 *André Utter and His Dogs* (*André Utter et ses chiens*), 1932
Oil on canvas, 163,5 × 131 cm
Villefranche-sur-Saône, musée municipal Paul-Dini, 1999.1.395



Fourteen self-portraits

From the very first drawings she made in charcoal, pastel and graphite around 1883, the self-portrait has played a central role in Valadon's work. Throughout her life, her self-portraits expressed her personality; she depicted herself without compromise. "You have to be hard on yourself, have a conscience, look yourself in the face" she said.

1

Suzanne Valadon, *Self-Portrait (Autoportrait)*, 1903

Suzanne Valadon, model for fashionable painters

Noticed for her cheeky look, Suzanne Valadon quickly found favour with the Montmartre painters of the turn of the century. A favourite model of the Montmartre set before becoming a recognised artist, she regularly posed for Renoir, who portrayed her several times as a traditional bather.



Pierre Auguste Renoir,
Nude in a Landscape
(*Femme nue dans un paysage*), 1883

Peer recognition

It was through her drawings that Suzanne Valadon revealed herself. While she soon established herself as a key artist in the fashionable salons of the period, she also quickly found support from important art dealers. From 1893 she exhibited at the renowned Barc de Bouteville and was regularly shown at the Galerie Berthe Weill, which, along with the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune, was one of her most loyal allies.



Male nudity

In 1909 Suzanne Valadon drew the body of André Utter, her second husband, twenty-one years her junior and a friend of her son. She was probably one of the first women in the history of art to depict a male nude frontally. Nude model classes were long forbidden to female artists.

Suzanne Valadon,
André Utter Nude, from the Back
(*André Utter nu, de dos*), vers 1909

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Drawing

An intuitive practice that she took up from an early age, drawing was an important stage in Suzanne Valadon's artistic development. Her subjects, domestic scenes or nudes of youth triumphant, place her in the legacy of Ingres and Degas.



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Landscapes and large outdoor nudes

Suzanne Valadon met Puvis de Chavannes in the early 1880s. For seven years, he had her work as a model, sometimes a nymph, sometimes an ephebe. Through him, she also trained her eye, talked about art for hours on end and developed her line. Her later work bears witness to this influence, which she assimilated and reinterpreted, just like the symbolist lesson.



Suzanne Valadon, *The Joy of Life (La Joie de vivre)*, 1911 5



Suzanne Valadon, *Catherine in the Tub*
(*Catherine au tub*), 1895

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Domestic scenes

Printmaking is an exception in Suzanne Valadon's career. She produced about thirty prints until around 1915. In this medium, traditionally favoured by men, she quickly found her audience. *Catherine in the Tub* (*Catherine au tub*), her first known etching, shows her mastery of soft varnish, a technique that gives a soft effect to the whole.

Matisse-style fabrics

Painted in 1917, *The Lady with the Little Dog* (*La Dame au petit chien*) portrays an androgynous, lonely and sensual person, whom the low angle makes imposing, almost sculptural. Her nudity is both hidden and suggested by a large, richly coloured cloth, which Suzanne Valadon was particularly fond of using in her compositions. The model may have been her husband, André Utter. This painting, rarely shown, reveals a certain strangeness in its facture and in the choice of subject.

Painting

It was not until 1909 that Suzanne Valadon fully embraced painting. Dominated by nudes, landscapes, still lifes with fauvist overtones and lavishly decorated interiors, Suzanne Valadon's paintings were as much an extension of the precepts of the École de Paris as they were a prelude to expressionism.



Suzanne Valadon, 6
Still Life with Flowers and Pineapple
(*Nature morte aux fleurs et à l'ananas*), 1924

Suzanne Valadon,
The Lady with the Little Dog (*La Dame au petit chien*), 1917



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Printmaking

From 1896, Suzanne Valadon was taught printmaking by Edgar Degas in his studio. A transitional stage between ink and brush in her work, in which she deployed all the characteristic vigour of her sharp, precise line.

VISITOR INFORMATION

OPENING HOURS

Every day, except Tuesdays and 1st May

1st April to 31 October

Monday > Sunday : 10-18:00

Du 1^{er} avril au 31 octobre

Monday > Thursday : 10-18:00

Friday > Sunday : 10-19:00

TICKETS

On sale at desks and on-site at centrepompidou-metz.fr, as well as through resellers.

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Catalogue

Suzanne Valadon. Un monde à soi

Under the direction of Chiara Parisi

Éditions du Centre Pompidou-Metz

264 pages, 42 €

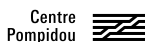
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The exhibition was devised and organised by the Centre Pompidou-Metz and will be travelling, in adapted form, to the Musée d'art de Nantes and the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya.

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