

Henri Cross and the Neo-Impressionists

Paris Art Studies – Henri Edmond Cross 1839 - 1906

1856 – Born Henri Edmond Joseph Delacroix in Douai.

1865 – His parents move to near Lille where they are given the direction of fabric dye works by a cousin, Dr Auguste Soins.

1866 – Dr Soins who is a widower without children takes the young Edmond under his wing and pays for his first drawing lessons with the artist Carolus Durand in Lille.

1874 – After finishing the collège, Edmond studies at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Lille.

1875 – Studies briefly at the studio of François Bonvin in Paris.

1878 – Completes his training at the Lille drawing school.

1879 – Moves to Paris where he works in the studio of fellow Douai painter, Emile Dupont-Zipcy.

1883 – On Bonvin’s advice he changes his professional name to “Cross” (English version of “croix”) to avoid confusion with the name of the famous romantic master Eugène Delacroix.

1884 – Exhibits in new Salon des Indépendants, the first jury-less artist’s salon to be organized in Paris. There he meets the future Neo-Impressionists: Signac, Angrand, Dubois-Pillet, and Seurat who is exhibiting his first great picture, the Baignade à Asnières.

1885 – No Salon des Indépendants this year, he shows for the last time at the official Salon.

1886 – The Neo-Impressionists are allotted an entire room in the 8th and last Impressionist exhibition where Seurat shows A Sunday Afternoon on the Grande Jatte. Cross shows 7 paintings in the second Salon des Indépendants along with Angrand, Dubois-Pillet and Lucien Pissarro. Visits Belgium and Holland.

1887 – Adopts his definite professional name “Henri Edmond Cross” so as not to be confused with the glass paste sculptor Henry Cross. Shows 6 paintings in the Salon des Indépendants along with Angrand, Dubois-Pillet Luce and Seurat.

1888 – Visits the côte d’Azur for the first time and paints in Eze and Nice. Exhibits 4 pictures at the Salon des Indépendants. Meets Irma Clare.

1889 – Is invited to show in the new Brussels avant garde Salon by its director Octave Maus, the XX where he meets the Symbolist poet Emile Verhaeren and the painter Theo Van Rysselberghe.

1890 – Visits great Japanese art exhibition at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris organized by the Art Nouveau dealer Samuel Bing.

1891 – Elected vice chairman of the Salon des Indépendants. Exhibits his first “Divisionist” painting, a portrait of Irma Clare. Devastated by Seurat’s death on 29 March. Suffering from chronic rheumatism decides to move to the south of France. Rents a house in Cabasson near Le Lavandou. Shows with his Neo-Impressionist and Nabi friends at the Galerie le Bac de Boutteville in Paris and at a winter exhibition at the Beaux Arts of Monaco.

1892 – Signac settles in St Tropez. Luce visits Signac there and Cross in Cabasson.

1893 – Exhibits with the XX in Brussels and at the Salon des Indépendants. Marries Irma Clare in the town hall of the 16th arrdt in the presence of his parents and Dr Soins. Shows with other Neo-Impressionists at the “Boutique Néo” on the rue Lafitte. Moves into his new house near St Tropez at St Clair.

1894 – First solo show at the boutique Néo which closes at the end of the year.

1895 – Shows at the Libre Esthétique exhibition in Brussels which has replaced the XX since 1894. Exhibits also at the Indépendants and Bing’s Art Nouveau gallery. His brother in law Robert with his wife and child move close

to the Crosses at St Clair.

1896 – He translates Ruskin's "Elements of Drawing" for Signac. Van Rysselberghe spends 2 months with him in the summer. He contributes a lithograph to the Anarchist review Temps Nouveaux favored by the Neo-Impressionists.

1897 – Shows 3 landscapes at the Libre Esthétique in Brussels.

1898 – Shows at the Indépendants and also in the first Neo-Impressionist exhibition in Germany at the Keller und Reiner gallery in Berlin.

1899 – Exhibits with the other Neo-impressionists at the Galerie Durand Ruel, the main Impressionist gallery since the 1870's in a show praised by the critics. His rheumatism worsens and deforms one of his legs.

1900 – Signac who has just bought his first car takes him on driving tours of the Var. For the first time he does not participate in the Salon des Indépendants.

1901 – Exhibits again in Berlin and at the Paris World's Fair. The dealer Ambroise Vollard buys 9 paintings.

1903 – Participates in Neo-Impressionist show organized by German dealer Paul Cassirer in Hamburg, Berlin and Weimar. Visits Italy with Clare. Exhibits at the inaugural show of Galerie Druet in Paris.

1904 – Visits Signac in St Tropez and the painter Valtat in Anthéor. Participates in 10th anniversary of the Libre Esthétique in Brussels. Sees frequently Matisse staying near Signac in St Tropez.

1905 – Exhibits 30 paintings and 30 watercolors at the gallery Druet, show is great critical and commercial success. A colony of young painters arrive in St Tropez in the spring: Camoin, Manguin, Marquet and Valtat nearby in Agay. Signac finishes decoration of his villa La Hune, hangs "Air du Soir" in his salon with Matisse's "Luxe, Calme et Volupté" bought at the Indépendants that year. Dr Soins, the artist's beloved uncle dies.

1906 – Works enthusiastically at St Clair with a new model, Cécile, who poses for him outdoors in oak wood behind the house. Exhibits at Berlin Secession, show travels to other German cities.

1907 – Third solo exhibition at Bernheim gallery. Preface for catalog written by Marice Denis. Octave Maus, Kessler (greatest German collector of the day) and the Russian Morozov buy pictures. Suffers from attack of iritis (eye disease) and debilitating rheumatism.

1908 – Still exhausted, exhibits only a few works in Brussels and at the Golden Fleece salon in Moscow. Tours Italy.

1909 – Watercolor and pastel exhibition at Bernheim Jeune. Too tired to come to Paris for it, now in constant pain, looked after by close friends Luce and van Rysselberghe. Hospitalized in Paris suffering from cancer.

1910 – Taken back home to St Clair in January. Dies on 16 May surrounded by family aged 54. Is buried in Le Lavandou.