

Throughout the book, these informally captioned illustrations show clearly the garden features and design strategies that Jacques describes. It sometimes seems a pity, however, that the author is disinclined to analyse both images and texts of the time more closely, in order to chart some of the desires and aspirations that are discernible in the kinds of garden-making that he discusses. An engraving of Badminton by Knyff and Kip (1699) shows twenty criss-crossing avenues (or 'vistos', to use the term preferred by the author), radiating not only from the house but also from other landmarks. A caption explains that they were planted to resemble 'rides through a forest on the French model', and notes that the network of vistos was never as complete as in the print. It would be useful to chart the assumptions about landscape, and its relation both to power and to pleasure, that made it possible to handle the terrain in ways that now seem so intriguing and, in bringing foreign models to distinctively English topographies, boldly inventive.

¹ A.L. Tigner: *Literature and the Renaissance Garden from Elizabeth I to Charles II: England's Paradise*, London 2012, p.213.

Jacques-François Blondel. Un architecte dans la 'République des Arts'. Etude et édition de ses 'Discours'. Edited by Aurélien Davrius. 752 pp. incl. 18 b. & w. ills. (Librairie Droz, Geneva, 2016), £89. ISBN 978-2-600-01951-4.

Reviewed by ROBIN MIDDLETON

ONE APPROACHES THIS book with real interest. Few ambitious publications have appeared on Blondel in recent years; what there is – a book on the rebuilding of the centre of Metz in the eighteenth century – is also by Aurélien Davrius. The imprimatur of Droz, the sheer fatness of the book and the panoply of scholarly punctilio inspire confidence – soon to be dashed.

The preface lauds the work as a rediscovery of Blondel. The book itself comprises forty-three 'Textes', for the most part writings by Blondel – a selection of thirty-two of the 130 or so entries he wrote for the *Encyclopédie*; the nine introductory lectures to the courses; extracts from the *Cours d'architecture* and *L'Homme du monde éclairé par les arts*, along with addresses, reports and letters relating to his dealings with the Académie d'Architecture, the most important of which are the inventory of the library, drawn up with the mathematician Charles Etienne Louis Camus, dated 12th July 1763, and a request for money for a list of books of 2nd November 1763, complemented by an inventory of the library of 1795–96. Additional 'Textes' include notices from the *Année Littéraire* and the *Mercur de France* relating to

Blondel's courses; three book reviews from these magazines of works by Laugier, Leroy and Patte; an 'Inventaire après le décès de S. François-Jacques Blondel' of 17th January 1774; and an 'Eloge historique' by François Franque, published in the *Journal des Beaux-Arts et des Sciences* in March 1774. This makes for a motley array. Davrius has updated the orthography throughout, which might be considered a mistake.

A rough count of the pages with texts by Blondel indicates that about two-thirds are already available in reprints of Blondel's books (none of these are cited or listed in the bibliography); of the remaining third, half consists of the entries from the *Encyclopédie* – useful perhaps, although Kevin Harrington has already dealt more comprehensively with the matter. The entries were, in any event, fully absorbed into the *Cours*.

The nine opening lectures consist of the three from 1747, 1754 and 1771, reprinted and well known; the six others would be better termed 'opening remarks' as they are brief and add nothing to Blondel's theory of architecture. Reed Benhamou's articles on Blondel's teachings and his school, although listed in the bibliography, are not cited here. The choice of extracts from the *Cours d'architecture* is puzzling. The focus seems to be largely on his designs for churches. Most of these I discussed over fifty years ago in an article on the Abbé de Cordemoy and the eighteenth-century interest in Gothic, which gave them something of a context; the article is not mentioned nor included in the bibliography.¹ The book reviews are all known and are cited in monographs on the authors involved. The same might be said of most of the academic reports and correspondence; almost all are noted in Wolfgang Schöller's *Die 'Académie Royale d'Architecture' 1671–1793* of 1993, together with the request for money for books (Marigny thought professors should supply them). The two inventories of the library are in Schöller's appendices (including a host of other objects); that of An IV (1795/96) is in Werner Szambien's *Symétrie, gout, caractère* (1986), noted by Davrius, but not listed in his bibliography.

For a brief moment, a 'Discours' by J.D. Leroy of 1763 stirs interest; but it turns out to be a report relating to an ongoing debate on the publication of the Academy's lectures. Schöller noted it, but did not identify it as the work of Leroy. The only useful texts to be included in Davrius's assembly are the obituary notice by Franque (although Michel Gallet cited it many years back in his dictionary of eighteenth-century French architects, which, as one might expect, is not noted here) and the 'Inventaire après décès', which includes Blondel's books (despite his anathemas, he had Borromini). The 'Inventaire' is indeed a find.

The bibliography, as must be apparent, is unreliable. Additional omissions include the articles and the book of 1860 by Henri Prost, the pioneer scholar of Blondel; two of Jeanne Lejeaux's early articles and my own account

of Blondel's *Cours*.² The entry on the English translation of Leroy's *Ruines* is so garbled as to be almost unrecognisable. Davrius's compilation neither reveals the evolution of Blondel's thought nor does it embody his core texts; it is a work of dissemblance, pedantic, but not pedantic enough.

¹ R. Middleton: 'The Abbé de Cordemoy and the Graeco-Gothic Ideal: A Prelude to Romantic Classicism', *Journal of The Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 25 (1962), pp.278–320; and *idem*: 'The Abbé de Cordemoy and the Graeco-Gothic Ideal. Part II', *ibid.*, 26 (1963), pp.90–123.

² H. Prost: *Jacques-François Blondel et son œuvre*, Metz 1860; J. Lejeaux: 'Un architecte français, Jacques-François Blondel', *Revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 52 (1927), p.223–33; *idem*: 'Jacques-François Blondel, professeur d'architecture (1705–1774)', *Architecture* 50 (1927), pp.23–27; and R. Middleton: 'Jacques François Blondel and the "Cours d'Architecture"', *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 41, 4 (1982), pp.333–34.

Gustave Caillebotte: Painting the Paris of Naturalism, 1872–1887. By Michael Marrinan. 416 pp. incl. 116 col. + 78 b. & w. ills. (The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, 2017), £45. ISBN 978-1-60606-507-5.

Reviewed by SAMUEL RAYBONE

MICHAEL MARRINAN'S STUDY of Gustave Caillebotte offers valuable new material and presents revisionist interpretations of his paintings that deserve to reinvigorate scholarly debates that have, over the last decade, started to approach a consensus. The book is divided into five parts (together with an introduction and an epilogue) that proceed chronologically; each part comprises two or three thematic chapters.

Part one, 'Caillebotte's World', exemplifies Marrinan's impressive primary research, and narrates Caillebotte's early years within the intertwined contexts of his family's growing prosperity and the redevelopment of Paris under Baron Haussmann. Caillebotte's position between his family's upper-class conservatism and the ostensible radicalism of his artistic friends is typically understood to have produced a sense of alienation that registered in his paintings as social critique. However, for Marrinan, Caillebotte's decision to join the Impressionists did not constitute a repudiation of his *haut bourgeois* roots. Rather, 'Caillebotte came to modernity via Vermeer' (p.33) and the other Dutch artists admired by bourgeois thinkers such as Hippolyte Taine. In the works examined in this section – which include *Young man at his window*, *Luncheon* (both in private collections), and *Floor scrapers* (Musée d'Orsay, Paris) – Marrinan's revisionist Caillebotte, more inclined to celebration than critique, develops an 'empowered vision' (p.81) that translates the capital stake of his class in Haussmann's Paris into a visual

control over it and allows him to reconcile the different parts of his life.

The next part, 'Walking the City', examines Caillebotte's street scenes of 1876–77: *Paris street; rainy day* (Art Institute of Chicago), *Pont de l'Europe* and *The housepainters* (both in private collections). In each, Marrinan sees Caillebotte keen to convey his lived experience of the city and fashion a self-image 'at home in this neighbourhood of leisure' (p.88). However, anxieties about his place within Impressionism compete with his understanding of the spatial logic of Haussmann's Paris, tensions that manifest in Caillebotte's paintings with unsettling perspectives as spatial deformations. Instead of connoting urban alienation, these paintings present a 'magic mix of visual impact and psychological experience' of the modern city 'through the eyes and obsessions of a young man who [. . .] loved it dearly' (p.127).

Part three, 'Impresario of Impressionism', traces Caillebotte's efforts to work his way into the Impressionist circle. Inspired by the experiments of Monet and Degas, in the suburban setting of the family home at Yerres, Caillebotte rethought the 'socially structured vision' (p.131) of his previous works. The resulting experimental triptych of *panneaux décoratifs* was, however, met with silence at the Fourth Impressionist Exhibition of 1879. This, along with the loss of his mother in October 1878, prompted Caillebotte 'to embrace [. . .] the identity of diligent worker he had long suppressed in deference to his family' (p.207).

In 'A Man About Town', Marrinan groups six works made in 1880 into pairs that, he argues, demonstrate Caillebotte's 'proto-modernist' project to find a painterly correlate to the way Emile Zola's literary naturalism blurred first- and third-person perception. *View through a balcony* (Van Gogh Museum,

Amsterdam), *Boulevard seen from above* and *A traffic island on the Boulevard Haussmann* (both in private collections) are each said to reveal the subjective perception of the figures portrayed objectively in *Portrait of a man* (private collection), *A balcony: Boulevard Haussmann* (Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), and *A man on a balcony: Boulevard Haussmann* (private collection), respectively. *In a café* (Musée des beaux-arts, Rouen), Marrinan convincingly argues, represents the attempted synthesis of multiple subjective and objective perceptions within a single painting.

Another naturalist text, J.-K. Huysmans's *En ménage* (1881), informs Marrinan's reading of Caillebotte's domestic interiors of 1880. Often understood as exposés of the alienated bourgeois domesticity festering behind Haussmann's façades, for Marrinan they instead carefully triangulate Caillebotte's problematic bachelorhood by exploring, rather than critiquing, other, more traditional home lives. In the following chapter, Marrinan understands Caillebotte's treatment of bodies in nudes and portraits as revealing the tensions inherent in his all-male circle and his growing reservations about the value of Naturalism.

Part Five, 'Upscale Diversions' examines a shift in Caillebotte's attention in the early 1880s towards still lifes that celebrate Paris's commercialised gastronomic delights, such as *Gateaux* (Fig.55), and coastal, fluvial and landscape scenes which facilitated a final surge in pictorial experimentation in Trouville, Argenteuil and Petit Gennevilliers.

It is curious that Marrinan, elsewhere remarkably attentive to Caillebotte's life and times, elects to downplay or ignore the other labours to which Caillebotte devoted himself: yachting, gardening and philately. Marrinan's Caillebotte is uncritically aware

of the skilled manual labour (of floor scrapers, butchers, laundresses and gardeners) on which his comfort depends, and only superficially attentive to the analogies between their work and his own. This politically normative Caillebotte is the logical consequence of Marrinan's premise of extrapolating Caillebotte's political world-view (about which we have no direct evidence) directly from his class context. Marrinan's characterisation of Caillebotte as a 'diligent worker' is thus made without reference to the important contexts of labour politics and the other pursuits at which Caillebotte himself worked diligently. Given that Marrinan identifies the tension between Caillebotte's assumed worker identity and the class-bound expectations of his family, this was a missed opportunity to test his own revisionist interpretation against the moments of friction that have fascinated other scholars. Nevertheless, in disputing the settled interpretation of this artist and broadening the scope of debate, Marrinan's monograph is essential reading for scholars of Caillebotte and Impressionism.

Frank Dicksee, 1853–1928: His Art and Life. By Simon Toll. 240 pp. incl. 170 col. + 170 b. & w. ills. (ACC Art Books, Woodbridge, 2016), \$95. ISBN 978-1-851-49831-4.

Reviewed by RICHARD ORMOND

THIS BOOK IS the first ever to have been published on the artist, and the author, Simon Toll, deserves credit for his diligent and wide-ranging research. The book combines a general survey of Frank Dicksee's life and career with an invaluable catalogue raisonné, and is accompanied by a good selection of high-quality illustrations. The survey is rather old-fashioned in style, following the artist's career year by year, picture by picture, with extensive quotations from contemporary reviews. It is long on description, short on analysis. The discourses of contemporary art history, with their emphasis on zeitgeist, social issues and gender, find no echo here, nor is there much about Dicksee's place in the broader context of Victorian and post-Victorian art. Nevertheless, the book, in its roundabout way, does capture the essence of this ambitious, industrious and well-trained artist.

Dicksee was one of those middle-ranking British painters of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth who were stalwarts of the Royal Academy. He could turn his hand to almost any genre, painting historical and poetic dramas, fancy pictures, scenes of contemporary life, landscapes and portraits with equal fluency. He was a beautiful and accomplished draughtsman, and that skill underpinned his paintings. Like other young artists of the period he first made his way as



55. *Gateaux*, by Gustave Caillebotte. c.1881–82. Canvas, 54 by 73 cm. (Private collection).