1844–1926

Mary Cassatt beyond the mother-and-child picture

Twenty paintings and prints



Mary Cassatt, an American painter who worked in France, exhibited with the Impressionists and made domestic life her subject. She painted women at the theatre, children at play, people arranging their hair or sealing letters, showing her subjects absorbed in what they were doing rather than holding a formal pose. The twenty works below include oil paintings, a pastel, and colour prints. In the colour prints, made using drypoint, softground etching and aquatint, a few outlines and areas of flat colour are enough to establish a room or a figure.

An editorial selection, not a complete catalogue of Cassatt's work.

Explore this selection in Artline

Open these twenty works alongside books and events from their period. The lifespan view includes Mary Cassatt, Berthe Morisot, Edgar Degas and Claude Monet. These comparisons provide historical context, not claims of direct influence.

Artworks in context Who lived when?

artlines.org/guides/mary-cassatt

The selection · 20

1. Little Girl in a Blue Armchair
   Mary Cassatt · 1878
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   Mary Cassatt · c. 1878/1879
4. The Cup of Tea
   Mary Cassatt · c. 1880–1881
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18. The Child's Bath
    Mary Cassatt · 1893
19. Breakfast in Bed
    Mary Cassatt · 1897
20. Woman with a Sunflower
    Mary Cassatt · c. 1905

01 / 20

Little Girl in a Blue Armchair

Mary Cassatt

1878 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

A girl has sprawled in a blue armchair, legs stretched across the seat, while a small dog rests on another chair. Cassatt gives as much space to the furniture as to the child, and the scale of the large chairs makes the unstudied posture all the more apparent.

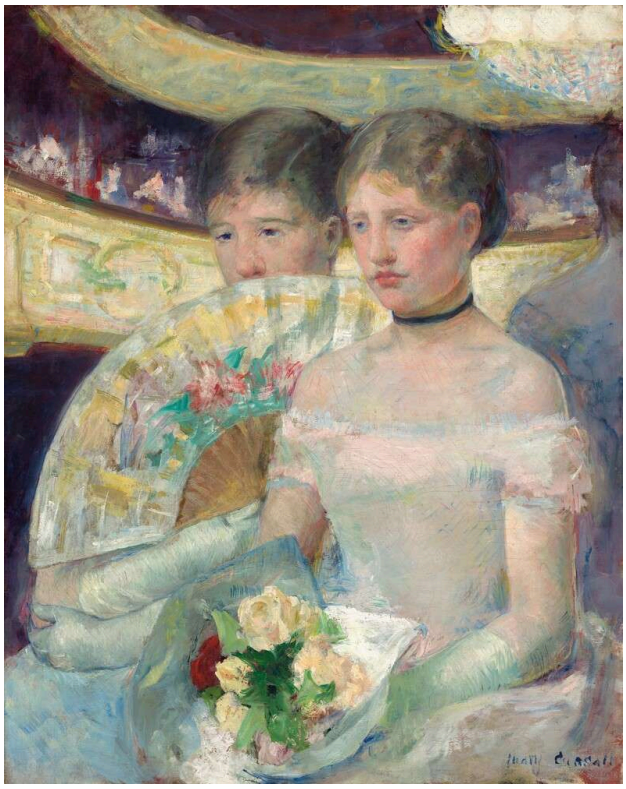
Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1983.1.18

02 / 20

The Loge

Mary Cassatt

c. 1878-1880 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

A loge is a theatre box. Two women sit in the box, dressed in bright fabric and flowers. An open fan partly covers one woman's face; the other holds flowers in her lap. The stage is not shown.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.96

03 / 20

Woman with a Fan

Mary Cassatt

c. 1878/1879 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

The woman looks straight out, while a mirror behind her reflects her head and chair from another angle. An open fan lies across her lap.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.95

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The Cup of Tea

Mary Cassatt

c. 1880–1881 · Oil on canvas · The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Mary Cassatt; reproduction via WikiArt · Public domain (WikiArt per-object label)

A woman in an elaborate hat, gloves and pink dress holds a teacup partway to her lips. The cup and saucer divide the gesture between two hands.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 22.16.17

05 / 20

Young Girl at a Window

Mary Cassatt

c. 1883-1884 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

A girl sits with her attention on the dog in her lap. Through the window behind her, roofs and greenery recede into the distance.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 2014.79.9

06 / 20

Children Playing on the Beach

Mary Cassatt

1884 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

Cassatt places the children in the foreground, leaving the sea as a narrow band behind them. The digging is shown in detail: awkward grips, bent arms, small bodies concentrated on the task.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1970.17.19

07 / 20

Child in a Straw Hat

Mary Cassatt

c. 1886 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

Against a plain background, a child in simple clothing stands with hands joined, wearing a straw hat with an uneven brim. The face is unsmiling, the cheeks warm-coloured.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1983.1.17

08 / 20

Girl Arranging Her Hair

Mary Cassatt

1886 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

One arm reaches back, the other gathers the hair forward. The practical task creates the pose, a set of angles against a dense red pattern.

Cassatt would return to the problem in her bathing and dressing scenes: how to show ordinary coordinated movement clearly.

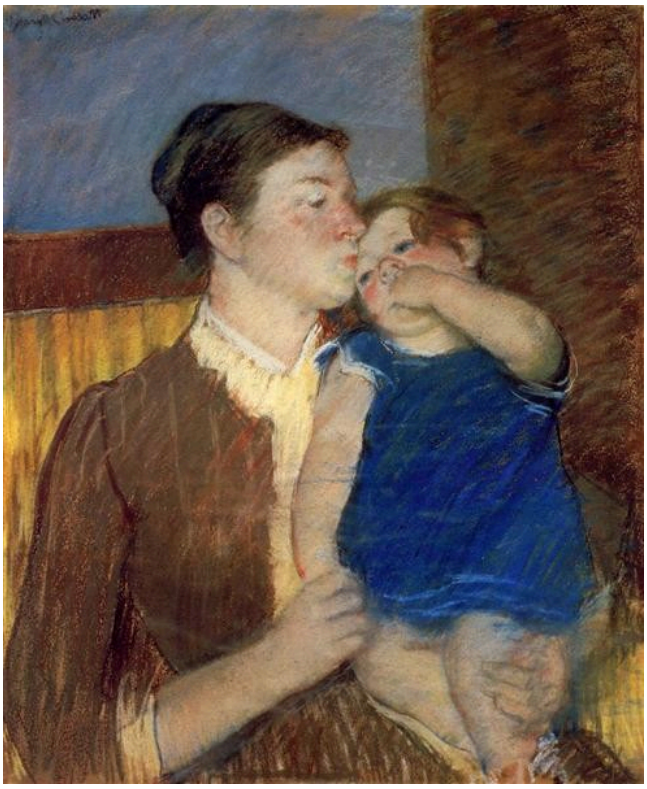
Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.97

09 / 20

Mother's Goodnight Kiss

Mary Cassatt

1888 · Pastel on blue-gray wove paper (faded to tan), mounted on canvas, on a strainer · Art Institute of Chicago



Mary Cassatt; reproduction via WikiArt · Public domain (WikiArt per-object label)

The child reaches up to touch the adult's cheek; the adult supports the child from below. The faces are worked in detail, with broader pastel strokes left visible in the clothing. The paper, originally blue-grey, has faded to tan.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1922.421

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Afternoon Tea Party

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color drypoint, softground etching, and aquatint on laid paper · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

Much of the paper is left bare. A few lines and touches of colour establish two women at tea, one with a raised cup. The inking in this impression is light; others can be much darker.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1943.3.2744

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In the Omnibus

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color drypoint, softground etching, and aquatint on laid paper · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

Two women share a bench. One looks away; the other attends to the baby. The compartment is tight, the figures compressed between a strip of window and the bulk of skirts filling the foreground.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.250

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Maternal Caress

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color drypoint, softground etching, and aquatint · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

The child throws an arm around the woman's neck and presses toward her face. The embrace is outlined as a single continuous shape, the patterned dress distinguishing one body from the other.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1946.21.87

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The Coiffure

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color drypoint, softground etching, and aquatint on laid paper · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

A coiffure is a hairstyle, or the act of arranging one. The woman is seen from behind; a mirror shows her face, bent shoulders and raised arms. With little shading, the line of her back carries the figure against the striped upholstery and patterned wallpaper.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.257

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The Fitting

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color drypoint, softground etching, and aquatint on laid paper · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

A dressmaker kneels to adjust the hem of a customer's striped gown. The mirror reflects the standing customer but not the kneeling dressmaker.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1950.1.42

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The Letter

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color softground etching, drypoint and aquatint on laid paper · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

A woman seals an envelope, bringing it to her mouth. The pale rectangle of the letter stands out against the patterned dress and wallpaper.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.251

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Woman Bathing

Mary Cassatt

1890-1891 · color drypoint, softground etching, and aquatint on laid paper · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt; This file was donated to Wikimedia Commons as part of a project by the National Gallery of Art . Please see the Gallery's Open Access Policy . · CC0 1.0

A woman leans toward a washstand, seen from behind with a mirror providing a second view. Her back is outlined with almost no shading; the stripes of her skirt bend around her hips and define the form.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.253

17 / 20

The Boating Party

Mary Cassatt

1893/1894 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

The rower's dark back occupies much of the foreground; the mother and child sit facing him. The boat's curved edge encloses all three, with water rising high behind them. Broad areas of flat colour make the unequal division of the canvas immediately plain.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.94

18 / 20

The Child's Bath

Mary Cassatt

1893 · Oil on canvas · Art Institute of Chicago



Mary Cassatt · CC0 1.0

Viewed from above, a woman holds a child on her lap and washes one of the child's feet in a basin. Both heads are bent to the task. The round basin and interlocked limbs hold the composition together amid the stripes and patterns surrounding them.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1910.2

19 / 20

Breakfast in Bed

Mary Cassatt

1897 · oil , canvas · The Huntington



Mary Cassatt; reproduction via WikiArt · Public domain (WikiArt source label)

The adult turns toward the child, who looks elsewhere. White pillows and close framing crop out most of the room.

Object source · Open artwork

20 / 20

Woman with a Sunflower

Mary Cassatt

c. 1905 · oil on canvas · National Gallery of Art



Mary Cassatt · NGA Open Access — public domain

A child looks into a hand mirror while a larger mirror behind reflects the pair. The round centre of the sunflower echoes the shape of the small glass.

Object source · Open artwork · Inventory: 1963.10.98

Collections and print states

The works reproduced here are held in different collections. Cassatt's colour prints exist in multiple impressions that can vary in inking and overall tone. The print entries describe the particular impressions illustrated.

Further reading

Mary Cassatt, 1844–1926

Adelyn Dohme Breeskin · National Gallery of Art, 1970 · Free museum PDF

An exhibition catalogue with entries and reproductions covering Cassatt's paintings, pastels and prints.

Mary Cassatt at Work

Jennifer A. Thompson and Laurel Garber · 2024 · Publisher page; purchase or library

An exhibition catalogue examining Cassatt's working methods and the depiction of labour in her paintings. Includes technical research and correspondence relevant to The Fitting and the bathing scenes.

Artist resource · Museum research

Sources checked: 2026-10-12