



CÉZANNE AND AMERICAN MODERNISM

February 14 – May 3, 2010

Paul Cézanne **French, 1839 – 1906**

Born in Aix-en-Provence, Paul Cézanne spent most of his life painting in the south of France, fascinated by the picturesque countryside of his native soil. In 1857, at the age of 18, he began to study drawing in Aix, and four years later moved to Paris to continue his art education. In 1869, Cézanne met Hortense Fiquet, who became his wife and the mother of his son. Throughout the 1860s, Cézanne traveled freely between his home in Aix and Paris.

He became a part of the thriving artistic scene in Paris, becoming close friends with Camille Pissarro, who, during the 1870s, encouraged him to use his creativity to produce tranquil Impressionist landscapes. As his career progressed, he preferred to paint certain subjects – still lifes, landscapes, figurative works and portraits – which were all produced with a strong sense of design, and an innovative technique of building form with layers of color. He had an analytical approach to portraying nature, and his paintings are notable for their substantial, carefully considered compositional structures.

In 1895, Cézanne had his first one-man exhibition at Ambroise Vollard's gallery in Paris, marking the start of a new phase in his career where he received more public attention. Cézanne spent most of the final decade of his life painting the landscape near his home in Aix, and his late works are infused with a new intensity that moves toward abstraction. After his death in 1906, a large-scale retrospective of the artist's work was shown at the Salon d'Automne of 1907, permitting a large audience of critics, art enthusiasts, and fellow artists to see his work for the first time.