



97. This photograph of Monet in his first studio was taken in mid-November 1913 and published in *Je sais tout* magazine, January 14, 1914. Hanging on the walls behind the artist are two early *Water Lilies* paintings (cat. no. 111 can be seen at the far left) and *The Red Kerchief: Portrait of Camille Monet* (cat. no. 25). Paul Paulin's bust of Monet is visible on the painter's desk.

July 18–September 30 Eight paintings by Monet are included in an exhibition of nineteenth-century French art at the Kunstverein, Frankfurt, which acquires two of the works.³⁴

July 26 Monet reports to Geffroy that a Dr. Valude has diagnosed him with a cataract problem—"the right eye no longer sees anything, the other is also slightly affected"—and has prescribed treatment to retard the inevitable aggravation of the condition.

Clemenceau, a medical doctor himself (he received his degree in 1865), assures Monet on July 28: "You are in no danger whatsoever of losing your eyesight. . . . The cataract on the bad eye will certainly soon ripen and then one could operate. But that is nothing, and the continuity of your eyesight is assured."³⁵

August 5 Monet reports that a bad storm has damaged the garden, breaking one of the weeping willows planted beside the water lily pond, drastically altering the shadow patterns fundamental to Monet's most important motifs.³⁶

August Bonnard, who has exhibited at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery, Paris, since 1906, buys a house called Ma Roulette at Vernonnet, outside Vernon. Like Monet, who is a frequent visitor, Bonnard paints out-of-doors on his property; unlike Monet, he does not cultivate a garden.³⁷

September 17 Durand-Ruel sends two unsigned paintings of the Palazzo Ducale back to Giverny at Monet's request; the artist needs to refer to them in order to finish a third version.³⁸

Late October Seven of Monet's Venice paintings are exhibited at the Brooks Reed Gallery, Boston. Working with Durand-Ruel, this gallery will present works by Monet, in group or one-artist exhibitions, every year from 1911 to 1923.

November At the sale of Alice Monet's belongings on November 8 organized by Jacques Hoschedé, Monet buys nearly everything back to give to the children. Probably around this same time, Jacques sells eight unsigned Monet paintings (perhaps gifts to Alice) to Georges Bernheim, cousin of Josse and Gaston Bernheim, who sells them back to Monet. Meanwhile, Jean Monet's condition worsens, and Monet buys a house for Jean and Blanche in Giverny, selling the trout farm they had started in Beaumont-Le-Roger (Eure) two years earlier. Monet asks Durand-Ruel to put aside a small Cézanne until further notice.³⁹

November 29 Monet sends three figure paintings to Durand-Ruel to be relined. In 1913 he will send a still larger canvas to the dealer for the same reason.⁴⁰

1913

January A group of Monet's Venice paintings are exhibited at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York.⁴¹

February 9 Durand-Ruel comes to Giverny and apparently buys ten paintings, which Monet sends to Paris in early March; the exact circumstances of the transaction are uncertain because

the whereabouts of any account ledgers Monet might have kept after 1912 are unknown.⁴²

February 15–March 15 Five paintings by Monet are included in the controversial International Exhibition of Modern Art at the 69th Regiment Armory, New York. The exhibition travels to The Art Institute of Chicago (March 24–April 16), and Copley Hall, Boston (April 28–May 19).

Mid-February Monet takes a trip to Switzerland in his new car with Michel and the Butlers, stopping at Lucerne and St. Moritz and taking a scenic train trip. Monet wants to return to Switzerland to paint the following year.⁴³

April 23 Monet goes to see Geffroy at the Gobelins factory, Paris, where the *Water Lilies* tapestries are finished.

In Paris, Dr. Vasquez accompanies Monet to another eye examination. This year Monet seeks many medical opinions in the hope that some specialist may provide non-surgical relief for his cataracts.⁴⁴

May An exhibition of thirty-eight works by Butler is presented by Durand-Ruel in Paris, although the artist had returned to America with his family earlier in the year to install a group of historical murals in White Plains, New York. The outbreak of war in 1914 keeps the Butler family in the United States.⁴⁵

June 23–July 10 Fourteen paintings by Monet are included in an *Art moderne* exhibition at the Manzi-Joyant Gallery, Paris.

July Celebrated horticulturalist Georges Truffaut visits Giverny and writes a preface for an

article about Monet's irises (published in the October 1913 issue of *Jardinage*) written by his chief gardener, Félix Breuil. Over the next dozen years, Truffaut will use photographs of Monet's garden to illustrate *Jardinage* articles on topical horticultural issues.⁴⁶

Around August 16–24 With Mirbeau, Monet visits the country home in Yainville, near Ju-mièges, of playwright/filmmaker Sacha Guitry and actress Charlotte Lysès to give them gardening advice.⁴⁷

Summer Monet paints *Flowering Arches*. American opera singer Marguerite Namara visits the artist at the same time as Sacha Guitry and gives a recital at the water lily pond, where the Butlers' piano has been transported for the occasion. According to Namara, she often gave impromptu tea-time concerts at Monet's: "Once [Monet] came over to me at the piano and drew up his famous armchair and sat down. He asked me if I knew the soprano-baritone duet from *Le nozze di Figaro* of Mozart. Of course, I did, and we went right into it. We sang the entire thing, including the recitative; he knew all the words. His voice was not a very beautiful sound, but it was on pitch and full of vitality and energy just like himself."⁴⁸

September 6–17 After a week-long visit with Guitry and Lysès, Monet has lunch with Vuillard at the Bernheims' Villers-sur-Mer country house, now being decorated with murals by the younger artist.⁴⁹

Mid-November André Arnyvelde comes to Giverny to interview Monet for an article published on January 14, 1914, in *Je sais tout*. He notices three cars parked in the garage. Chain-smoking, Monet tells Arnyvelde that, with the exception of the past two or three months, he has hardly worked at all since his wife's death in 1911. A photograph of Monet in the first studio (fig. no. 97), taken to accompany the article, shows two early *Water Lilies* paintings (see cat. no. 111), one framed, of the sort Monet had shown to the reporter Guillemot in 1897. Their presence in the studio suggests Monet's interest in returning to a mural project.⁵⁰

December 10 Monet goes with Geffroy to the 1913 National Museums Acquisitions exhibition at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, to see the Gobelins tapestries based on his *Water Lilies* paintings.⁵¹

1914

January Monet, himself bedridden with flu, is preoccupied with the worsening condition of Jean Monet, who cannot be moved from the first studio. On February 9 Jean dies.⁵²

February 1–16 Exhibition of twenty Monet paintings (see cat. nos. 11, 34, 105, and possibly 100) at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York.



98. Monet at work in the water lily garden on a large canvas (cat. no. 147) in July 1915. Nitia Salerou and Blanche Monet appear in the foreground.



99. Monet at work in the water lily garden during the summer of 1915. This photograph is a still from Sacha Guitry's silent movie *Ceux de chez nous*.

March 10 Monet goes to Paris, where his son Michel is convalescing in the Hôtel Terminus after an operation.⁵³

March 2–21 Fifty paintings by Monet (see cat. no. 116) comprise a retrospective at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, Paris.⁵⁴

April 30 Monet writes to Geffroy that he intends to do large works, taking up an old idea, referring to the water lily mural decorations that he had shown to Guillemot in 1897. Monet will later explain his momentous decision to undertake a culminating project departing in style from anything he had achieved previously: "A day finally came, a blessed day, when I seemed to feel that my [cataract] malady was provisionally checked. I tried a series of experiments destined to give me an account of the special limits

and possibilities of my vision, and with great joy I found that although I was still insensitive to the finer shades and tonalities of colors seen close up, nevertheless my eyes did not betray me when I stepped back and took in the motif in large masses. . . . While working on my sketches, I said to myself that a series of impressions of the ensemble [of the water lily pond] done at the times of day when my eyesight was more likely to be precise, would be of some interest. I waited until the idea took shape, until the arrangement and the composition of the motifs gradually became inscribed in my brain, and then when the day came that I felt I had sufficient trumps in my hand to try my luck with some real hope of success, I made up my mind to act, and I acted."⁵⁵



100. Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1916. Oil on canvas; 200.5 × 201 cm, 78¹⁵/₁₆ × 79¹/₈ in. The National Museum of Western Art, Matsukata Collection, Tokyo (P.1959.151) [W 1800].



101. Interior of the third studio before a ventilator was installed in the southeast corner in late April 1916.

June 4 Because he is so absorbed in his new mural project, Monet does not attend the opening at the Louvre of the inaugural exhibition of the Camondo bequest, which includes fourteen of his paintings (see cat. no. 123), despite the museum's policy never to show works by living artists. He writes to Durand-Ruel on June 29 that he gets up at 4 A.M. and works all day. His eyesight does not trouble him.⁵⁶

July 6 Monet invites Geffroy to come see the results of two months' ceaseless work. Around this time, writer Michel Georges-Michel and Clemenceau observe two enormous *Water Lilies* panels.⁵⁷

August 1 When Germany declares war on Russia, France mobilizes its military forces. Germany declares war on France on August 3 and invades Belgium the next day, provoking Britain to declare war. Six days later Jean-Pierre Hoschedé leaves for the front. On August 24 one million German troops invade France.⁵⁸

August 31 Concerned about the possible advance of enemy forces, Germaine Salerou (whose husband has been called up) and her children leave Giverny for Blois, where her aunt lives. Monet considers sending many of his paintings to be stored in Paris, but he will stay in Giverny.⁵⁹

September 5 Allied forces halt the German advance toward Paris on the river Marne, roughly forty kilometers from the capital.

September–October Mary and Frederick MacMonnies, American artists residing in Giverny, establish a makeshift fourteen-bed hospital on their property for war wounded.

Monet provides vegetables for the hospital from his garden.⁶⁰

December 1 Monet writes to Geffroy: "I am back at work; it is still the best way not to think too much about current woes, even though I should be a bit ashamed to think about little investigations into forms and colors while so many people suffer and die for us."⁶¹

1915

January 15 Monet writes to Raymond Koechlin—a collector and leader in arts organizations who served as the president of the Société des amis du Louvre—that, having recovered from an illness, he is again at work on his murals, developing studies begun at the water lily pond the previous summer. Given the difficulty of moving canvases of this scale in and out of the second studio—which is entered by a staircase—it is unclear where Monet works during these winter months. Also unknown is how the seventy-five-year-old painter manages to paint the bottom portions of such large canvases, which rest at floor level in his studio.¹

February 1–16 Exhibition of eighteen works by Monet (see cat. nos. 109 and 114) at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York.

February 25 Monet asks Joyant to provide the dimensions of his gallery in Paris, presumably investigating possible exhibition sites for his murals.²

March The St. Louis Art Museum acquires Monet's *Charing Cross Bridge*.³

Mid-March Michel Monet goes to Rouen to begin infantry service as a volunteer. His

unit is deployed to Orbel on April 2. Now only Blanche Monet remains with Monet at Giverny, although Germaine Salerou and her children visit.⁴

June 17 Mirbeau, Geffroy, Lucien Descaves, Léon Hennique, and J.-H. Rosny—writers who are members of the Académie Goncourt, which holds monthly lunches in Paris to which Monet is invited—visit Giverny to see the murals in progress. Descaves later recalls seeing works of great size (2 × 3 and even 2 × 5 meters) in a studio space and that a special studio for these works is being built. Monet estimates that he will need five years to finish his project. He has already prepared 170 square meters of canvas, the amount required for about twenty large panels.⁵

June 21 Monet has lunch with Vuillard, who writes in his diary: "[Monet's] large canvases, like the ceiling of [the Sistine Chapel], suggest rhythm and color, all works linked by a majestic lyricism. After lunch alone with B[onnard] in the small studio . . . we went down to the water lily garden."⁶

Summer Two works by Monet (see cat. no. 11) are included in the Panama–Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco. Three works by Butler are also exhibited.

July 5 Monet is granted a work permit to construct a new studio on the northeast corner of his property, which he had recently extended by buying an adjacent plot of land. Maurice Lanctuit, a Vernon contractor, oversees the demolition of existing structures on the site and the subsequent building, initially estimating that the studio will cost roughly 30,000 francs to build, not including the installation



102. Monet in his third studio, late 1915/early 1916.

of central heating. The finished studio will be one huge skylighted space—fifteen meters high, with a floor area of 23×12 meters. But in August Monet will confess that he finds the exterior of the new studio hideously ugly.⁷

October 24 Monet writes to Geffroy that he is moving into the new studio and will soon finally get a good idea of the large-scale works that have been under way for more than a year already. By the end of the year, the cost of the building project rises to roughly 50,000 francs.⁸

November 22–December 5 Remarkable footage of Monet painting at the pond this summer is included in Sacha Guitry's film *Ceux de chez nous* (see fig. no. 99), presented at the Variétés Theater, Paris, with commentary provided by the filmmaker. Monet attends one of the screenings of this historic silent movie documenting France's greatest living artists, including Degas, Renoir, and Rodin. Unfortunately, the filmmaker's heirs have restricted the availability of this valuable film for decades.⁹

December 22 Monet writes to the Bernheim brothers: "I am working hard and wasting masses of color. Happily the days are short, otherwise I would need to stop, from being unable any longer to afford the paints I am using."¹⁰

1916

January–February Monet sends paintings, the signature on at least one of them still wet, to an exhibition at the Paris gallery of Georges Bernheim to benefit prisoners of war. Throughout the war, Monet will donate works to many such benefits.¹¹

February German troops attack Verdun, where Michel Monet is deployed. This four-month-long battle leaves 650,000 dead. Michel takes a few days leave at Giverny in late February.¹²

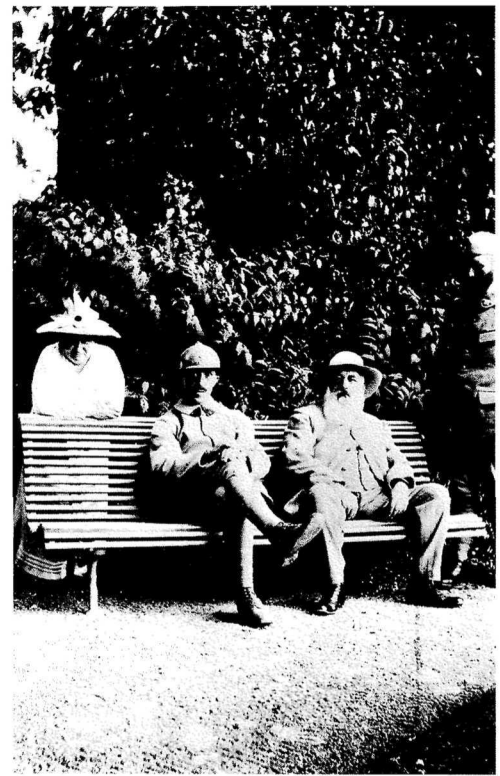
April 1 Urged by Etienne Clémentel, wartime Minister of Commerce and Industry, Rodin signs the document donating his works to France on condition that the State transform the Hôtel Biron into a Rodin museum. Formal acceptance will follow on September 16, initiating debate in the Chamber of Deputies and then the Senate, which will give its approval at year's end.¹³

April 26 Monet asks Bonnard to come to Giverny to see his murals in progress, warning him that the following day workers will upset everything in his third studio while installing a ventilator. In the earliest snapshots of the murals in progress—still unframed, but mounted on chassis for easy movement—the ventilator is absent. Perhaps taken by Geffroy's friend Moreau, these snapshots show four panels dovetailed together to form a 17-meter-wide composition, dominated by two willow trees (see fig. nos. 101 and 102).¹⁴

April 29 Monet agrees to donate a pastel or an oil sketch to a sale organized by Clémentel's wife to benefit war orphans.¹⁵

May 9 Monet has been to Paris and left two *Thames* pastels for glazing, one of which he will donate to a benefit sale for French seamen. It does not sell. In December he will agree to donate another pastel to a war benefit.¹⁶

May 22 Hard at work, Monet orders from his art supplier six stretched canvases measuring 2×1.5 meters and six measuring 2×1.3 meters (see cat. no. 148).¹⁷



103. Blanche Hoschedé, Michel Monet, Claude Monet, and Jean-Pierre Hoschedé, September 1, 1916.

November 4 Durand-Ruel's sons come to Giverny, purchasing works that Monet, who is preoccupied with his decorations, does not send off until the end of March 1917.¹⁸

Around November 12 Clemenceau sees the murals in progress at Giverny.¹⁹

November 28 Monet writes to the Bernheim brothers that Matisse is welcome to come to Giverny in two weeks, since by that time Monet will have put the final touches on several large "machines," i.e., his murals. But by December 12 Monet has changed his mind, writing to the Bernheims that they should send no visitors for the time being: "Just now I have thrown myself into transformations on my large canvases . . . and my mood is foul." He explains to Guitry on December 14: "I lost things that had gone well that I wanted to improve, and I must recover them by whatever means."²⁰

December 9–23 Exhibition at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York, of fifteen paintings by Monet (see cat. no. 108).

1917

January 16–17 Record-setting auction at the Plaza Hotel, New York, of James Sutton's art collection, including twenty-four Monet paintings. Of these, his 1903 *Water Lilies* (cat. no. 125) "caused a sensation when hung, for by



104. Monet's work table in the third studio, photographed by Georges or Joseph Durand-Ruel, November 11, 1917.

reason of the mirage and reflection of the water it appeared as if it were upside-down."²¹

February 9 Joseph Durand-Ruel writes to Monet that his brother Georges would like photographs of the large panels in progress: "He has talked about them with several of our clients who are interested in buying them for their city's museum, and he believes that he would have opportunities to sell them if he had photographs of the decorations and the prices that you would wish to have." Monet replies to Georges Durand-Ruel on February 12: "I have no photographs of the decorations and will make none until the work—which, by the way, does not always proceed as I would wish—is a little closer to being finished, at least in part. . . . So for now it is useless to talk of sales and prices."²²

February 16 Death of Mirbeau. Monet, who had visited Mirbeau on his sickbed in late November 1916, is overcome with grief at the funeral in Paris on February 19.²³

April 1 Monet agrees to donate a work to a sale arranged by Arthur Meyer to benefit war victims.²⁴

April 5 The United States declares war on Germany.

April 13–29 Monet donates a 1913 painting to an exhibition at the Georges Petit Gallery, Paris, of works to be sold to benefit the Fraternity of Artists.²⁵

April 16–May 5 An Etretat pastel by Monet is included in a benefit exhibition at the French Naval League, Paris.²⁶

April 26 In response to a request from Clémentel and Albert Dalimier, the Deputy-Secretary for the Ministry of Fine Arts, Blanche suggests that Monet produce a design for a car-

pet that might be woven at the Gobelins factory to complement his mural decorations.²⁷

April 30 Clémentel and Dalimier come to Giverny to discuss the project for a carpet. Monet agrees to their request to paint Rheims Cathedral, which had first been bombarded in September 1914, after the current shelling subsides. In return, they offer to help Monet keep his car and obtain gas for it. Monet also needs their help to obtain coal. Monet receives an official commission for the Rheims project on November 1, but it goes unrealized.²⁸

May 1 Monet, who has just bought a painting by Albert Marquet of the bay of Naples from Georges Petit (apparently at a benefit sale), invites Marquet and Matisse to come to Giverny on May 10.²⁹

August 7 Death of eighty-two-year-old Léon Monet in Maromme.³⁰

August 28 Monet writes to Joseph Durand-Ruel that, since late May 1917, he has been working harder than ever; he will continue to do so through early October, when he moves his operations from the water garden site back to the third studio.³¹

September 27 Death of Degas. Monet attends the funeral in Paris on September 28.³²

Mid-October Monet buys two paintings by Butler's son, James, from Durand-Ruel. James is serving in France with American forces.

The Bernheim brothers ask Monet to write to Degas's brother encouraging him to discuss the estate sale with them.³³

Last Half of October After postponing their departure for nearly a week, Monet and Blanche take a rest trip to the Normandy coast.³⁴

November 5 Clemenceau becomes Prime Minister, retaining his position as Minister of War.³⁵

November 11 Georges and Joseph Durand-Ruel visit Giverny and take snapshots showing Monet's work table and eight or nine of the dozen 2 × 4.25-meter panels under way in the third studio (see fig. no. 104). Most of the large panels now have thin frame moldings along their top edges. The dealers reserve five old easel-size paintings, pending some finishing touches; eventually Monet destroys two of the five as unsatisfactory.³⁶

November 17 Death of Rodin.³⁷

November 26 Monet sends seven pastels to the Bernheim brothers for glazing. Monet intends the best four as a gift for someone unidentified, and the others are for future benefit sales.³⁸

1918

January 11 Monet urgently needs more flat brushes and stretched canvases from his art supplier. In order to transport the large canvases to Giverny, Monet asks Clémentel to exempt him from wartime civilian rail freight restrictions.³⁹

Early February Thiébault-Sisson apparently visits Giverny; his detailed account of the visit will be published in 1927. Monet has now finished eight of a projected twelve 2 × 4.5-meter works for an ensemble, and has already begun the remaining four, which he estimates might take another year to complete if his eyesight holds out. Monet also has some 6-meter- and 8-meter-wide canvases under way by now. "If I have regained my sense of color in the large canvases I've just shown you, it is because I have adapted my working methods to my eyesight and because most of the time I have laid down the color haphazardly, on the one hand trusting solely to the labels on my tubes of paint and, on the other, to force of habit, to the way in which I have always laid out my materials on my palette. I soon grew used to it, and I've never made a mistake. I should add that my infirmity has sometimes gone into remittance and that on more than one occasion my color vision has come back as it was before, and I have profited from those moments to make the necessary adjustments."⁴⁰

February 20–21 Benefit sale organized by Countess Marquiset in Paris for a hospital for wounded soldiers at Janson-de-Sailly. Monet donates an important 1907 *Water Lilies* painting, which is bought by Durand-Ruel in partnership with the Bernheim brothers.⁴¹

March–July German forces shell Paris as they make their final westward advance. In June Monet considers abandoning Giverny in the face of this threat.⁴²



105. Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1917–19. Oil on canvas; 100 × 300 cm, 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 118 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. Musée Marmottan, Paris (5118) [W 1902].

March 17 The Bernheim brothers visit Giverny and choose several paintings to purchase jointly with Durand-Ruel, whose Paris gallery narrowly escapes bombing.⁴³

April 30 Monet orders twenty stretched canvases, 1 × 2 meters each, from his art supplier (see cat. no. 153).⁴⁴

May Fraternity of Artists benefit sale at the Georges Petit Gallery, Paris. Monet donates a 1908 *Water Lilies* tondo (cat. no. 141).⁴⁵

Spring–Summer Monet begins three new series at his water garden: a group of *Japanese Bridge* paintings rendered on a few of the 1 × 2-meter canvases ordered from his art supplier on April 30; a dozen easel-scale *Weeping Willow* paintings, so darkly rendered that their twisting branches suggest anguish and grief, as if in response to the war (see cat. no. 152); and four easel-scale views of one end of the water garden (see cat. no. 151).⁴⁶

June 21 Monet thanks Gaston Bernheim for offering to place his paintings in safekeeping at the Rouen Museum, but he declines. In the event of an enemy advance, he says, he would want to perish amidst what he had done at Giverny.⁴⁷

June 28 *La Bulletin de la vie artistique* reports an official decision to maintain the gardens surrounding the Hôtel Biron as part of the Rodin Museum.

August 19 Bicycling from Vernon to Giverny, René Gimpel and Georges Bernheim visit Monet. Gimpel notes in his diary: “A dozen canvases arranged in a circle on the floor, one next to another, all about 2 meters wide and 1.2 meters high.” The fourteen surviving 1 × 2-meter format *Water Lilies* paintings all show a single motif (as if Monet had adapted his single-theme series methods to decorative horizontal formats); in other words, they could not be ar-

anged end-to-end to provide a continuous panorama (see cat. no. 153). The dealers notice a total of about thirty canvases under way, all of which they would happily have bought, even though their size and the fact that they were conceived for installation at ground level would make them hard to market. Monet explains: “I work on the paintings all day. They bring them to me one after the other. In the atmosphere a color reappears that I had found and sketched on one of the canvases yesterday. Quickly I am passed the painting and I try my best to put down this vision definitively, but usually it disappears as quickly as it came into view to make room for another color already rendered several days before on another study which is almost instantly placed before me . . . and so on all the day.” Gimpel comments upon the artist’s youthful demeanor: “I have never seen a man of that age look so young. . . . He looked like a young father, who, on December 25th, put on a false white beard so that his children would believe in Santa Claus.”⁴⁸

October After a summer of constant work out-of-doors, Monet writes to Gaston Bernheim that he is now back in his third studio to work indoors for the winter. Monet asks Clémentel to help his paint supplier, who has run out of oil to make paints.

Shchukin’s private art collection opens in Moscow as the First Museum of Modern Western Painting, with six works by Monet.⁴⁹

November 11 Armistice.

November 12 Monet writes to Clemenceau, offering a new *Weeping Willow* painting and a large decorative *Water Lilies* panel, both nearly finished, to the State to celebrate the Allied victory. Monet specifies that they should go to the Museum of Decorative Arts, Paris, presumably since the Moreau-Nélaton collection is there. This offer is unrealized, perhaps because Cle-

menceau and Geffroy propose a much more ambitious donation of twelve decorative panels as a monument to peace, when they come to Giverny on November 18 with two automobiles and four chauffeurs. “You saved France,” Monet tells Clemenceau, who replies, “No, it was the infantry.”⁵⁰

November 23 Monet blacks out while working in the third studio.⁵¹

November 28 Georges Bernheim and Gimpel return to Giverny. Bernheim brings along a portrait of Monet by Renoir. Monet claims to have a quite similar one that is fake (possibly fig. no. 25). They also bring an early landscape for Monet to sign. Dissatisfied with the trees at left, Monet signs the canvas in the middle to indicate where he thinks it should be cut down. Bernheim buys two floral still lifes and a painting of apple trees for 48,000 francs. Gimpel’s diary details the art supplies on Monet’s low work table in the third studio.⁵²

November 30 Joseph and Georges Durand-Ruel evidently visit Giverny and purchase six more paintings, including two brand-new *Water Lily Pond* compositions. Around this time, the Bernheim brothers also come to buy two *Weeping Willow* paintings. For his 1918 easel-scale works, Monet charges 20,000 francs each.

Monet’s bank records indicate that his accounts at the Vernon bank bring him roughly 40,000 francs in annual interest.⁵³

1919

January 18–End of January Monet–Rodin exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery, Paris, includes four 1918 paintings that Monet had sent to Paris the week before the opening.⁵⁴

February 19 Clemenceau is wounded in an assassination attempt.

May Exhibition of sixteen recent works by Monet (see cat. no. 126) at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York.⁵⁵

June 24 Monet reports to Josse Bernheim that all the gardeners who have worked for him for the past twenty years have quit. Later this year the household staff quits.⁵⁶

August 25 Monet is working on a series of landscapes, setting aside the *Water Lilies* murals until the winter. One dated *Japanese Bridge* painting (cat. no. 154) probably belongs to this new group of works; it is perhaps the first in a series Monet devotes to that theme over the next years. The smaller scale of these works poses some challenges for the artist. The following February, Monet explains to Gimpel, "I can't [paint on easel-scale canvases] anymore because I've become used to painting broadly and with big brushes."⁵⁷

October or November The Bernheim brothers buy four 1 × 2-meter *Water Lilies* paintings (negotiating a half-share partnership in the purchase with Durand-Ruel in 1921).⁵⁸

November 9 Clemenceau, who now visits Giverny frequently, recommends that Monet undergo an operation for his cataracts, but Monet hesitates because he is concerned that total blindness might result. He plans to contact Mary Cassatt, who recently underwent this operation.

Monet writes to Geffroy on November 19 that his worsening eyesight has forced him to stop painting before he could bring his decorations to satisfactory conclusion.⁵⁹

November 29 Joyant has sent Monet the floor plan of his gallery in Paris, which might be a suitable exhibition space for the panels. Monet invites Joyant to Giverny to discuss the prospects, but he warns: "Even though my friends want me to exhibit, it is hard at my age, especially since it involves important things, at least in terms of scale."⁶⁰

December 3 Death of Renoir in Cagnes.⁶¹

1920

January 14–15 Auction of the collection of Arthur B. Emmons, an early Newport, Rhode Island, collector, at the Plaza Hotel, New York, includes twenty Monet paintings.¹

January 17 Awaiting the results in Giverny, Clemenceau is defeated in the French presidential election; he consequently resigns the premiership.²

January 20 Hampered by worsening vision and confessing complete discouragement with his work, Monet promises to help Geffroy with research for a biography commissioned by the Bernheim brothers. When Geffroy decides

against participating in the project, Thiébauld-Sisson and Alexandre compete to replace him as author.³

February 1 Gimpel visits Giverny with Georges Bernheim, who manages to buy three paintings for 18,000 francs each. Complaining again about his eyesight, Monet also tells them that Clemenceau visits him most Sundays.⁴

February 19 Monet thanks Koechlin for his support of the proposed purchase of *Women in the Garden* (fig. no. 14) by the Société des amis du Louvre. Monet will make this purchase a prerequisite for his donation of the *Water Lilies* decorations to the State.⁵

March 25 Representing the Nantes Museum, novelist Marc Elder visits Giverny, and Monet agrees to donate two pastels. Elder publishes an account of the visit in the April 6 issue of *Excelsior*. Around this time, constant appeals from buyers are disturbing to Monet. Among them is Léonce Bénédict, acting on behalf of Baron Matsukata, Kojiro, who is amassing works for a museum to be built in Japan.⁶

June 4 In the morning, Monet receives painter Albert André and his wife and agrees to donate a *Water Lilies* painting to the Léon Alègre Museum in Bagnols-sur-Cèze. After lunch Monet receives Joseph Durand-Ruel, accompanied by Mrs. Charles (Sara) Hutchinson (wife of the president of the Board of Trustees of The Art Institute of Chicago) and Chicago collectors Mr. and Mrs. Martin Ryerson, who are contemplating the purchase of Monet's *Water Lilies* decorations for their museum. One slightly later account of the visit contends that an architect accompanies the Chicago group. According to the Monet obituary published by the *Chicago Daily Tribune* on December 6, 1926, this three-million-dollar American offer was for thirty large paintings.⁷

Summer Less aggravated by poor eyesight, Monet takes up painting out-of-doors during the mornings. Despite the heat inside the third studio, he continues there in the afternoons.⁸

June–July Thiébauld-Sisson unofficially negotiates with his close friend the Council of Ministers president Alexandre Millerand, the Fine Arts Ministry director Paul Léon, and Monet in an attempt to expedite the donation of the *Water Lilies* decorations to the State. By July 8 Monet warns Thiébauld-Sisson to desist and to keep private any information shared with him. During at least some of this time, the writer is staying across the street from Monet, at the Hôtel Baudy. In August Alexandre also takes up unofficial negotiations.⁹

July 12 Presuming eventual agreement with the State about his donation of the *Water Lilies* decorations, Monet writes to Clémentel asking for ten tons of coal for his studio: "If the State



106. Georges Clemenceau, Monet, and Lily Butler on the wisteria-covered Japanese bridge, photographed at the time of the visit of Count Sanji Kuroki and Princess Matsukata in June 1921.

wants me to work for it, they must provide the means."¹⁰

September 23 Monet reschedules a lunch with Thiébauld-Sisson, who is staying at the Hôtel Baudy, and then the same day postpones it to the following week: "Now, let me tell you that I absolutely refuse to have any more of these conversations that are more like interviews. . . . After you leave, I regret having said so much."¹¹

September 27 Arrangements having been made by Alexandre, Paul Léon visits Giverny, accompanied at Monet's request by Koechlin, and they reach agreement in principle about the donation.¹²

September 28 Léon telephones Bonnier (now acclaimed as an Art Nouveau architect), requesting on behalf of Monet that he design a pavilion to house the artist's murals in the gardens of the new Rodin Museum in Paris.¹³

October 3 Bonnier visits Giverny to discuss the proposed pavilion for the *Water Lilies*. Two days later he sends a preliminary plan for a skylighted elliptical rotunda in line with Monet's intentions, as well as an alternative circular groundplan. At this stage, four multi-panel compositions are part of the twelve-panel ensemble: *Three Willows* (four panels running 17 meters wide, visible in fig. nos. 101, 102, and 104), *The Clouds*, *Green Reflections*, and *Agapanthus*. In the space between the water lily decorations and the ceiling, Monet plans to add a decorative frieze (cat. no. 156). Coordinating

the radii of an ellipse encompassing compositions of different sizes raises complex architectural problems that require expensive solutions. Throughout October, November, and December, Bonnier works closely with Monet, whose concept for the building project evolves constantly.¹⁴

October 10 or 11 Georges Bernheim drives Gimpel to Giverny in his Panhard. A white-liveried butler serves an elaborate lunch in the yellow-on-yellow dining room (see fig. no. 65), reached via a blue-on-blue anteroom, both installed with Japanese prints. Monet had obtained the two sideboards near Fécamp, and he had painted them—as well as the three side tables and the chairs—in tones of yellow. Monet confirms to Bernheim that he will donate twelve of his recent decorative paintings for installation in the gardens on the boulevard des Invalides side of the new Rodin Museum, if a structure is constructed to his specifications. Monet also shows them *Women in the Garden* (fig. no. 14) and confides, “Today the State has agreed to buy it from me for 200,000 francs and has asked for two years to pay for it; it’s to compensate me for the canvases that I am giving to the Rodin Museum.”¹⁵

October 14–25 Press coverage of the negotiations under way between Monet and the State begins. Both Thiébauld-Sisson and Alexandre publish insiders’ accounts. Monet objects to their claims that the State has already agreed to purchase *Women in the Garden* and stresses that the agreement is contingent upon funding, pending parliamentary approval. Another article reports that Monet has offered his Giverny home and all remaining works to the State as a museum, reportedly even proposing a curator.¹⁶

November 14 Monet’s eightieth birthday. Invited for the occasion, the Duke de Tréville writes an extensive account of this and another visit, which Monet will review prior to its publication in *La Revue de l’art ancien et moderne* in January and February 1927, supplemented by photographs taken by Claude Choumoff at a later date. Thiébauld-Sisson had unsuccessfully proposed that Monet use his birthday for political gain by inviting high-ranking officials.¹⁷

November 16 First reference in the press to the possibility that Monet should be offered the Académie des Beaux-Arts seat now vacant after the death of Luc-Olivier Merson. By January 1921 Monet has declined the honor, to the dismay of his supporters, who are aware that the ongoing negotiations with the State can only be hampered by his easily misunderstood contempt for such official recognition.¹⁸

1921

January 21–February 2 Forty-five paintings by Monet (see cat. nos. 83, 138, 154, and possi-



107. Claude Monet, *The Japanese Bridge*, 1922. Oil on canvas; 89 × 116 cm, 35 × 45³/₁₆ in. Courtesy of Sotheby’s [W 1921].

bly 133) are exhibited in a retrospective at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery, Paris.¹⁹

January 26 Monet complains to the Bernheim brothers about an article commissioned by them from Marcel Pays that appears this day in *Excelsior*: “If you ever want to send a journalist to me, let me know in advance please, or better, never do it: these gentlemen have a way of making me talk which is hardly to my taste and moreover they are inclined to change totally what I tell them.” Pays quotes the artist: “Alas, I see less and less. . . . I used to paint out-of-doors facing the sun. Today I need to avoid lateral light, which darkens my colors. Nevertheless, I always paint at the times of day most propitious for me, as long as my paint tubes and brushes are not mixed up. . . . I will paint almost blind as Beethoven composed completely deaf.” Such an admission is perhaps imprudent during the current debate over State funding for Monet’s project.²⁰

January–March Bonnier, whom Monet has evidently requested to try another elliptical plan rather than a circular one, reports back that the difficulties are insurmountable. Unhappy with a circular scheme, Monet then proposes to Léon that the problem be solved by reducing the number of works in his intended donation from twelve to eight or ten. In response, the Ministry of Fine Arts proposes renovating an existing building under its auspices.²¹

February 2 Monet sends *Women in the Garden* to Paris, now that the State has agreed to

purchase it for 200,000 francs, which Monet will receive in May.²²

February 21 Geffroy has begun to write a biography of Monet.²³

March 20 Monet complains to Gaston Bernheim that the illustrations chosen for Alexandre’s monograph are mostly works that have already been reproduced many times and that there are no figure paintings. Arrangements are made to photograph some figure paintings.²⁴

April 1 Inspection by Bonnier, Clemenceau, Geffroy, and Léon of the Jeu de Paume and Orangerie buildings on the Place de la Concorde, possible structures to be renovated for Monet’s decorative ensemble. Clemenceau rejects the Jeu de Paume but urges Monet to agree to the Orangerie, which had the previous December been placed under the administration of the Luxembourg Museum.

Monet inspects the Orangerie with Léon Bérard (Minister of Public Instruction and Fine Arts), architect Victor Blavette, Bonnier, Clemenceau, Geffroy, and Léon on April 6. Presumably on a visit to the Louvre this day, Monet tells Clemenceau that his favorite painting is Watteau’s *Embarkation for the Island of Cythera*.²⁵

April 17 Monet writes to Léon that he should cooperate with Bonnier to speed along the renovations at the Orangerie, warning that his donation will be nullified should he die before the space is ready. But by April 25 Monet again writes to Léon that he wishes to renounce his



108. Monet and the American opera singer Marguerite Namara in the third studio, photographed by Harry B. Lachman in July 1922.

donation rather than compromise his original intentions by installing his decorations in the narrow Orangerie space.²⁶

April 30 André comes to Giverny with a group of American friends, possibly from The Art Institute of Chicago, which around now commissions André (through Durand-Ruel) to paint Monet's portrait (one version in a private collection, one in The Art Institute of Chicago).²⁷

Mid-May The Butlers return to Giverny from America, although by winter Alice (Lily) Butler will return to New York.²⁸

June Probably early in the month, Clemenceau visits Giverny with Count Sanji Kuroki and his wife, Princess Matsukata (the baron's daughter); the Japanese collectors buy a 1907 *Water Lilies* painting (cat. no. 136). The guests later send Monet a group of snapshots taken during the visit (see fig. no. 106). Monet has many visitors now, including Elder, who is gathering material for a book about the artist.²⁹

June 1 In a spirit of compromise, Monet asks Alexandre to inform Léon and Bérard that he will reconsider and even enlarge his donation if the Orangerie space can be extended three or four meters, thus allowing him to create ensembles in two rooms instead of one.

On June 19, replying to Alexandre that Bonnier could be replaced as architect if need be, Monet reports that he still has not heard anything from Léon about his last proposal and now has a serious offer for some of his *Water Lilies* panels and will need to sell. Bonnier is replaced by year's end.³⁰

September 30 Publication by Editions Bernheim-Jeune of *Claude Monet* by Alexandre.³¹

Before October 12 Monet takes a ten-day trip to the seashore with Blanche and Michel; they visit Clemenceau at Bernouville for several days beginning October 3 or 4 and stop at the Nantes Museum on their way home. The next month, Monet promises to donate a painting to the museum.³²

Mid-October–Early November While receiving many visitors, Monet rearranges the installation of works in his first and second studios, which have been depleted by recent sales. Presumably among these recent sales are a group of as many as ten works bought for or by Baron Matsukata.³³

October 30 A day after Clemenceau visits Giverny, Monet writes to him outlining in detail his proposal for the *Water Lilies* donation. Resigned to the Orangerie site, Monet has this summer "reduced several motifs." Instead of twelve panels, Monet now conceives of a suite of eighteen to be arranged in two rooms, a (lost) draft for which he encloses: in the second room his *Three Willows* composition would face *Green Reflections*, and to each side would be a 6-meter-wide panel (possibly cat. no. 159). Clemenceau immediately discusses this possibility with Léon, who agrees to Monet's new two-room proposal, putting the donation back on track by November 2, although the news needs to remain confidential until an official order can be issued. Clemenceau also proposes that Léon consider accepting for the Louvre the unfinished *Self-Portrait* (cat. no. 144) that he had rescued from Monet in 1917 when the artist threatened to destroy it.³⁴

November 8 Clemenceau brings Léon and Bonnier to Giverny to discuss revived donation plans. The following day Monet provides Léon with a list of works for each room. Although Monet refers to eighteen panels in the text

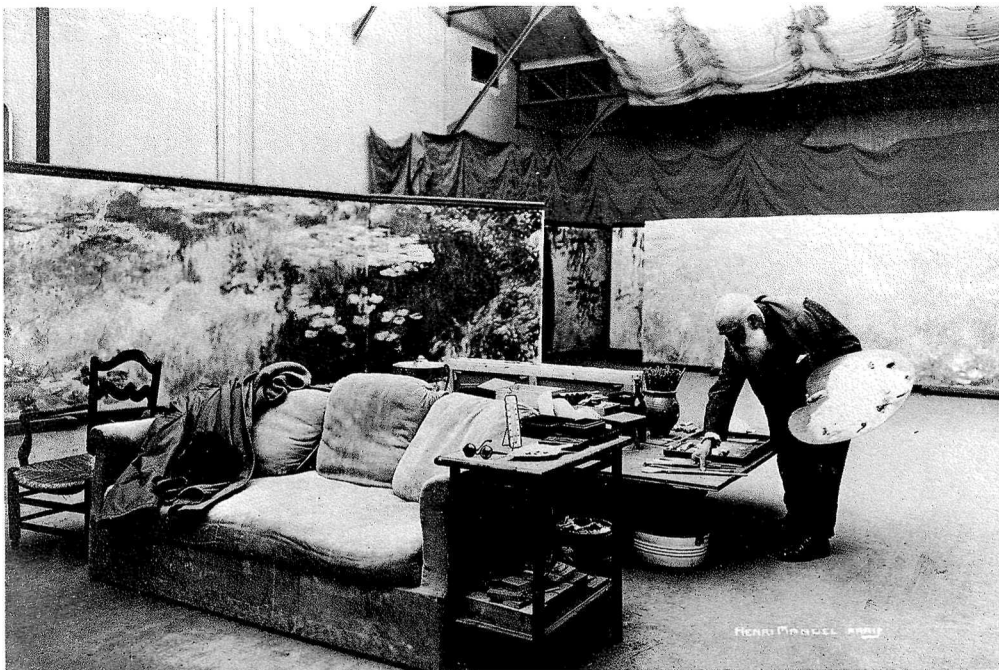
of this letter, the accompanying list includes twenty panels grouped into four compositions for each room: *Green Reflections* (two panels), *Agapanthus* (now two panels), *The Clouds* (three panels, considerably reworked since December 1920 but eventually dropped from the project), *Morning* (three panels not included in the December 1920 ensemble, and eventually reworked by Monet, who replaces one of the panels with two half panels), *Three Willows* (four panels, eventually reworked into two compositions), *Reflections of Trees* (two panels not included in the December 1920 ensemble), and two 6-meter-wide panels to be determined (see cat. no. 158). Léon tells Monet to expect the renovation work to be completed by spring 1922, which will allow him another three to four months' work on the paintings and a final chance to compare the paintings with the motifs at his garden pond.³⁵

December 14 Léon assures Clemenceau that a working budget will be approved in a few days. He has selected a new architect, Camille Lefèvre, recently appointed as architect to the Louvre.³⁶

1922

January Lefèvre makes plans for the Orangerie rooms that correspond to the panels specified by Monet in his November 9, 1921, letter to Léon, except that in the second room there will now be four 6-meter-wide panels installed as two facing diptychs. The total number of panels at issue is now twenty-two. Meanwhile, Monet is hard at work.³⁷

January 4–21 Exhibition at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York, of nineteen paintings by Monet (see cat. no. 154).



109. Monet in the third studio, photographed by Henri Manuel, late 1923/early 1924.



110. Monet seated in the first studio, probably 1923 or 1924. Note the artist's dark corrective glasses on his desk.

February 5 Death of Paul Durand-Ruel. Monet does not attend the funeral in Paris on February 7.³⁸

February–March A flurry of last-minute revisions takes place as all parties strive to put the *Water Lilies* donation under contract.³⁹

April 12 Monet and Léon notarize a provisional act of donation in Vernon, referring to the January 20, 1920, groundplan by Lefèvre, modified only insofar as the *Agapanthus* diptych is now replaced by a single 6-meter-wide panel (*Setting Sun*—possibly cat. no. 159). The paintings are to be finished by April 1924. The estimated cost to the State for renovations is 600,000 francs. The contract will receive final State approval on December 4.⁴⁰

May 4 Monet asks Bénédite to arrange for the paintings (see cat. no. 93) sold to Matsukata in mid-October to be picked up. Monet writes to Clemenceau that his eyesight is gone, and, as a result, he stops working.

Clemenceau replies that Monet's eye problems could be solved with a simple operation. Around this time Clemenceau composes "Philosophical reflections from the very high concerning the very low," in which God visits Monet, reminding him that "Over a year ago, a wizard [Clemenceau] invited you to the cure. You put it off like those weak people who await everything tomorrow. Today's crisis results. To get out of it, the same wizard shouts to you, 'It's time.' And you still reply, 'Tomorrow.' The clock will not stop for you."⁴¹

May 8 Monet writes to Elder that he ruined his decorations over the winter in a final effort to

perfect them, that he is almost blind and unable to work, and that he has destroyed several of his large panels.⁴²

June 25 Clemenceau comes to Giverny. Monet thanks Geffroy for sending his newly published biography of the artist, but he feels that the quality of the color plates obliges them to halt distribution.⁴³

July Even though Monet is temporarily back at work on his large panels, he agrees that Marguerite Namara can return to Giverny, where she will give a recital in the third studio. American painter/photographer Harry B. Lachman takes photographs of the visit (see fig. no. 108). These show 1-meter-wide and 2-meter-wide panels (including one used for *Morning*, as installed at the Orangerie), evidently painted as extensions for longer panels to provide a variety of flexible new configurations for Monet's constantly revised ensemble.⁴⁴

September 8 Monet goes to Paris for a consultation with Dr. Charles Coutela, an eminent ophthalmologist: his better left eye sees only 1/10. With drops prescribed for this eye, Monet can see two or three times better and thus wants to finish his decorations before any operation. Monet's disappointment that no construction work is yet under way at the Orangerie prompts the removal of some forty-five orange trees from the site only days afterward.⁴⁵

October 15 Joseph Durand-Ruel comes to Giverny. In recent weeks, Monet had been painting a large number of works in his garden with motifs familiar to the dealer, who claims that the paintings are so "black and sad" that they could hardly be marketed.⁴⁶

Probably Late October Elder and his wife visit Giverny and are shocked by the disarray in the large studio: "I saw the frames in the back of the workshop against the wall, those big frames on which Claude Monet fixed those ephemeral confessions of his water lily pond. Shreds of torn canvas hung on the edges. The trace of the knife is still vivid, and the painting bleeds like a wound. The nails are in place; the canvas is still stretched. A raging hand . . . lacerated the panels without bothering to take the canvas off patiently as one would with a precious rug being put away. . . . Under the table is the pile of canvases that the servants have been ordered to burn."⁴⁷

November 9 Monet, complaining of nightmares, asks Clemenceau to have Coutela postpone the operation scheduled for November 18.⁴⁸

December 14 Monet reminds Georges Durand-Ruel that he has honored Durand-Ruel's and the Bernheims' request (made two years earlier) that he charge other dealers double. The artist wonders why they have made no purchases since then, and he now considers himself free of any obligation.⁴⁹

1923

January–February At the Neuilly clinic of Dr. Coutela, Monet undergoes surgery for the removal of the cataract on his right eye, probably on January 8 or 10. He reacts badly to the local anesthetic and recuperates in Paris until January 14.



111. Monet in his garden, probably 1924.



112. Monet in the central pathway of his garden, probably 1925.

He returns to Coutela's clinic on January 31 for a second operation on his right eye and remains there, a very difficult patient, to recuperate. Visitors include the Kojiro Matsukatas.

Monet is allowed to leave the clinic to visit the Orangerie with Clemenceau and Léon on February 17. He returns to Giverny the next day.⁵⁰

March–April Clemenceau and Coutela make visits to Giverny, delivering dark corrective eyeglasses and urging a third operation, on Monet's left eye.⁵¹

March Exhibition at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York, of eighteen works by Monet (see cat. no. 52).

May 18 Monet donates one of his World War I garden paintings (cat. no. 151) to the Grenoble Museum.

July 16 Monet informs the Bernheim brothers that he has now signed canvases that they bought from him recently: some dozen works, including five *Water Lilies* paintings, all to be sold by the dealers to pharmaceuticals magnate Henri Canonne, who amasses a collection of over forty works by Monet (see cat. nos. 133 and 135) almost all at once. Monet misdates at least one of the earlier works that he now signs with difficulty. In late August, the Bernheim brothers visit Giverny to acquire still more canvases for their client Canonne, including additional *Water Lilies* variations.⁵²

July 18 Dr. Coutela, assisted by Dr. Jean Rebière, performs a third operation on Monet's right eye at Giverny. Monet's nervousness makes the procedure under local anesthetic extremely difficult, and Coutela is apprehensive, but when he examines Monet on July 20, he is satisfied. Perhaps during this recuperation,

Georges Bernheim sends to Monet two seascapes from the Salon of 1865 (see cat. no. 4) as a nostalgic diversion.⁵³

August–November Monet has difficulty acclimating himself to new eyeglasses provided by Coutela. Because Monet now sees everything yellowed, Coutela provides tinted lenses to counter the problem and again suggests operating on the left eye. Monet wants to know whether any other painter has had such treatment with successful results. Thanks to yet another pair of corrective eyeglasses, received from Germany in October, Monet goes back to work on his decorations.⁵⁴

October 20 The Durand-Ruel brothers visit Giverny and buy four paintings, but find the many recent garden paintings Monet hopes to sell "atrocious and violent." Considering that Monet had told Elder in 1922 that he wished to paint the Japanese bridge with wisteria, perhaps the dark versions of this motif (see cat. no. 155 and fig. no. 107) are at issue.⁵⁵

November 11 Clemenceau again discusses with Léon the donation of Monet's *Self-Portrait* (cat. no. 144) to the Louvre.⁵⁶

1924

January While Giverny is again flooded, Monet works on his decorations "as if he had an eternity before himself," according to Clemenceau, who wants the project finished on schedule.⁵⁷

January 4–18 More than sixty paintings (see cat. nos. 32, 73, 87, and 152) by Monet are exhibited at the Georges Petit Gallery, Paris, to benefit victims of the devastating September 1, 1923, earthquake in Tokyo. Twenty-four of these works belong to the Matsukata collection, including two late works. Unwilling to exhibit

at this time a large panel like those promised to the State (see fig. no. 100), Monet has Clemenceau urge Léon to force Bénédicte not to include it.⁵⁸

January 18 Monet writes to Coutela that he has received new glasses, although with them he sees even less. He also asks for a bill, which comes to 10,000 francs.⁵⁹

February Exhibition at the Durand-Ruel Gallery, New York, of ten *Water Lilies* paintings (see cat. nos. 125 and 139).

March 1 Concerned that work at the Orangerie is nearly complete, Clemenceau writes to Monet: "You decided that your work, interrupted when you were at the end of the race, would be taken up again with half vision. And you found a way to produce a realized masterpiece (I am talking of the *Cloud* panel) and some marvelous preparations. Thereupon, Monet told himself: there is nothing to do but continue. But the good Lord himself will tell you that one cannot make miracles all the time. You are only a man, my friend, and I am greatly glad of that, for if you were the good Lord you would be quite annoying." Whether the *Cloud* panel referred to is the revised version of a triptych photographed in December 1920 or the four-panel-wide composition (see fig. no. 116) showing two thin willow trees silhouetted against clouds reflected on the pond's surface, is not known.⁶⁰

April–June Although Clemenceau dissuades Coutela from seeing his patient at this time, Coutela prescribes new Zeiss glasses, apparently on the recommendation of Denis. Denis's friend, painter André Barbier, delivers these eyeglasses to Monet on June 6 and acts as a liaison between Monet and Denis's oculist, Dr. Jacques Mawas, a research scientist, who comes to Giverny. In June or July, while working out-of-doors, Monet



113. Monet seated in his garden, photographed by Nickolas Muray, probably July 1926. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Mrs. Nickolas Muray.

complains that he sees only blue and thus chooses colors on the basis of tube labels. In response, Barbier has Monet's eyeglasses tinted pale yellow. Monet also asks Barbier to get special paintbrushes for him.⁶¹

June 29 The deadline for delivery long past, Clemenceau, Léon, and apparently Lefèvre come to Giverny and learn that Monet is still unwilling to release his ensemble. Monet now works toward a January 1925 deadline.⁶²

October The Durand-Ruel Gallery moves to the avenue Friedland. Around this same time, the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery also moves, to the avenue Matignon.⁶³

October 8 Angered by Monet's never-ending refinements on his panels, Clemenceau writes: "First you wanted to finish the incomplete parts. That was hardly necessary, but understandable. Then you had the absurd idea to improve the others. Who knows better than yourself that a painter's ideas are constantly changing. If you went back to your *Rouen Cathedral* paintings you would change them. You made new works, the majority of which were and still are masterpieces, if you have not ruined them. Then you wanted to make super-masterpieces—and with an impaired visual faculty that you yourself refused to have corrected. . . . At your request a contract was

completed between yourself and France. The State has kept its part. You asked for a postponement of your deadline and with my intervention you got it. I acted in good faith and now you make me appear like a conspirator who does a disservice both to art and to France to accommodate a friend's foibles. . . . You must finish this honorably."⁶⁴

October 30 Monet and Blanche go to Paris for lunch with Chéret, who is now blind.⁶⁵

November In an article published in *Jardinage* this month, Georges Truffaut proclaims the gardens as Monet's greatest work.⁶⁶

November 8 *Art News* publishes a first-hand account of Monet's final months at work.⁶⁷

November–December Barbier brings the paintbrushes that Monet ordered in late July. Monet shows him and Mawas two versions of a *Japanese Bridge* composition, one with inaccurate, dark colors done before the operation (see cat. no. 155) and another with more accurate tones done afterward in forty-four work sessions (see fig. no. 107). Monet's eyesight improves with new Meyrowitz glasses prescribed by Mawas.⁶⁸

November 28 The Municipal Museum of Art and Industry in Saint-Etienne buys a 1907



114. The water lily garden, probably photographed in 1924 and published in *L'illustration*, January 15, 1927.

Water Lilies tondo from Monet for 30,000 francs (plus 200 francs for the frame).⁶⁹

December 22 Clemenceau writes: "I know that you have begun the large panel again."⁷⁰

1925

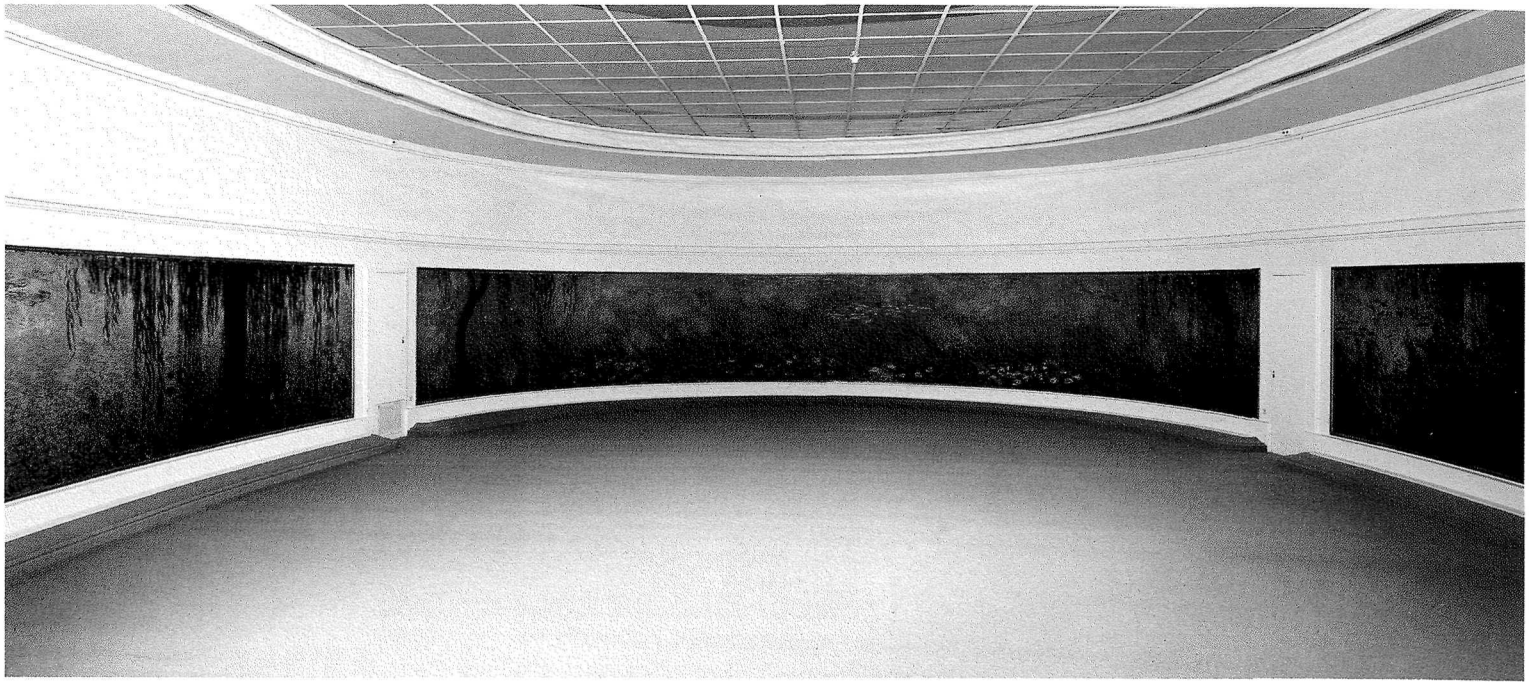
January–March Learning that Monet has written to Léon to revoke his donation, Clemenceau cancels his intended visit to Giverny and will have nothing further to do with someone who breaks his word of honor to France. Clemenceau writes to Blanche on February 12 that he no longer wishes to be involved with the donation and that, should Léon contact him, he will tell him to talk to Monet. Realizing that his strategy is pointless, however, on March 22 Clemenceau returns to Giverny to reestablish his friendship with the artist.

On March 25 Monet writes to Mawas, apologizing for not having tried his newest glasses. "When a singer has lost his voice he retires; the painter operated on for a cataract has to give up painting, and it is this which I could not do. Excuse my candor."⁷¹

May 7 Death of Marthe Butler at Giverny.⁷²

July 17 Monet writes to Barbier: "I warn you in advance that I must be free at 10 A.M., being hard at work and with an unequalled joy, for, since your last visit [in April], my vision is completely improved. I am working as never before, satisfied with what I am doing, and if the new eyeglasses are still better, then I ask only that I live to be 100 years old."⁷³

August Monet works on a group of easel-size paintings of his house and rose garden.⁷⁴



115. The *Water Lilies* murals installed in the east room of the Orangerie, Paris.

September–November Monet writes to Gefroy that he worked hard all summer, despite variable weather, and now can get back to his large panels before finally sending them off. He now anticipates delivering the panels the following spring.⁷⁵

1926

January 4 Monet promises Denis that, should he ever again go to Paris, he will see the ceiling fresco that his young colleague has painted above a staircase at the Petit Palais Museum. The history of French art is its subject, culminating with a group portrait of Cézanne, Courbet, Monet, Renoir, and Rodin.⁷⁶

February 8 Clemenceau writes that he is happy to learn that the first shipment of panels to the Orangerie will occur as soon as the paint is dry.⁷⁷

April 4 Clemenceau comes to Giverny to tell Monet that Geffroy died that morning. Afterward, Clemenceau writes: "The human machine is coming apart at the seams. He is stoic and even gay at moments. His panels are finished and will not be touched again. But it is beyond his powers to separate them from himself. . . . The poor Monet did not even find the strength to make a tour of his garden and the expense becomes such that he asked if it would not be best to give it up."⁷⁸

June 14 Marriage at Giverny of Alice (Lily) Butler and Roger Toulgout.⁷⁹

June 30 Vuillard, Roussel, his daughter Annette, and her husband Jacques Saloman come to Giverny to find Monet briefly recovered. In the third studio, they ask why he has a large sheet of absorbent paper, and he replies that tube paints have too much oil for his needs.⁸⁰

July 2 Gimpel comes to Giverny and buys two figure paintings for a total of 200,000 francs.⁸¹

Probably July Nickolas Muray photographs Monet at Giverny (fig. no. 113).⁸²

July 17 Gimpel returns to Giverny with his wife and buys two more paintings for a total of 150,000 francs. Monet tells them that in the last two weeks he has destroyed some sixty paintings, although Blanche says that this is an exaggeration. Blanche cuts the paintings out of the frames with a knife and then Monet oversees incineration.⁸³

Late August Dr. Rebière X-rays Monet and learns that he has an incurable tumor on his left lung. At Clemenceau's urging, specialists are consulted; they diagnose Monet as having pulmonary sclerosis.⁸⁴

September 18 Monet writes to Clemenceau that he can eat and sleep again, thanks to medication: "You should know that if my powers do not return to the point where I can do what I want with the panels, I have decided to give them as they are, at least a part of them."⁸⁵

October 4 Monet writes his last letter, to Léon, expressing his intention now to get back

to work slowly and to arrange for him and the architect to come to Giverny to discuss details.⁸⁶

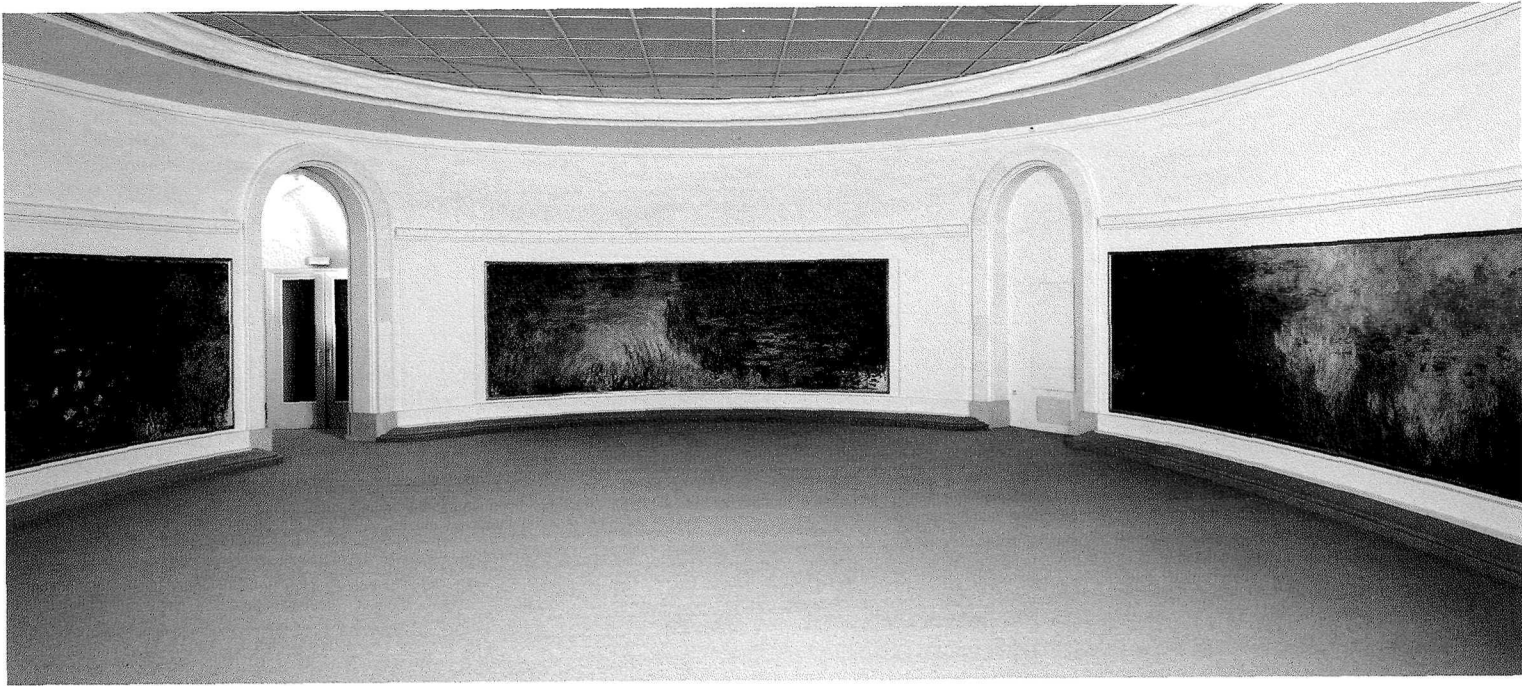
October 25 Marriage at Giverny of Simone Salerou and Robert Piguët.⁸⁷

November–Early December Clemenceau visits on November 21. Monet talks about his garden and predicts that Clemenceau will see the flowers next spring without him. Clemenceau again visits the bedridden and suffering painter on December 2.⁸⁸

December 5 Clemenceau returns to be at Monet's bedside when he dies around 1 P.M. According to one account, Monet's last gesture is to hold up two fingers as an indication of the width he intends for the frames of the *Water Lilies* murals to be installed in the Orangerie.⁸⁹

December 8 Monet is buried in the family plot in the Giverny cemetery, with Clemenceau in attendance. What Monet had hoped would be a small family affair, without ceremony, instead draws a crowd and gets extensive press coverage. Artist Henri Vidal will recall that on a table in Monet's studio there was a volume of Baudelaire's poems open to "L'Etranger," a poem about a man who loves clouds more than anything else.⁹⁰

December 12 Clemenceau gives Monet's *Self-Portrait* (cat. no. 144) to the Louvre, where it is installed a few days later next to Delacroix's *Self-Portrait*, in the same room as Manet's *Olympia* (fig. no. 9).⁹¹



116. The *Water Lilies* murals installed in the west room of the Orangerie, Paris.

Postscript

May 16, 1927 Private viewing of Monet's *Water Lilies* murals installed at the Orangerie, Paris, one day before the official inauguration on May 17. The public opening follows three days later. When someone notices a repaired tear in one of the Orangerie panels, Clemenceau laments that Monet frequently slashed works out of dissatisfaction and anger, estimating that he may have burned five hundred works.⁹²

Because Monet left no will, Michel Monet inherits everything. He subsequently lives off sales of works from his father's collection as well as Monet works left unsold during the artist's lifetime. He builds a country house, where he resides with Gabrielle Bonaventure, a former model, whom he marries in 1931. Michel allows Blanche, who had been caring for Monet since the death of her husband, Jean Monet, in 1914, to stay on at Giverny. She dies on December 8, 1947, after which time the guardianship of the Giverny house passes to her brother Jean-Pierre Hoschedé, who dies on May 27, 1961. Michel dies in a car accident on February 3, 1966. He had willed the remainder of Monet's holdings to the Musée Marmottan, Paris.

June 1971 Renovated to accommodate Michel Monet's bequest, the Musée Marmottan presents its rich holdings of the late works by Monet.

May 1980 Magnificently restored by Director Gérald van der Kemp under the auspices of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, Monet's Giverny house and gardens open to the public.