

# THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

### Fact Sheet

### Snowy Landscape at Éragny by Camille Pissarro



Title:	Snowy Landscape at Éragny, with an Apple Tree
Maker:	Camille Pissarro (1830-1903)
Medium:	Oil on canvas
Date:	1895
Dimensions:	h. 38.1 x w. 46 cm
Museum Number:	PD.974-1963
Gallery:	5

## Key Dates for Pissarro

1830	Born St Thomas, Virgin Island, West Indies
1842	Sent to boarding school at Passy, near Paris
1853	Goes to Venezuela with Danish artist Fritz Melbye
1855	Studies in Paris with Anton Melbye and others
1857	Pissarro spends summer at Montmorency with family and paints from nature following Corot's advice
1869-70	Paints with Monet, Sisley and Renoir along Seine
1869	Franco-Prussian War – Pissarro goes to London with family
Early 1870s	Paints in Impressionist style, range of subjects from factories, peasant population of Brittany and landscapes
1874	First Impressionist Exhibition
1881	Visited by Cézanne, Gauguin and Guillaumin
1884	Moves to Éragny-sur-Epte
1885	Meets Signac and Seurat
1886	Eighth and last Impressionist exhibition – Neo-Impressionist room contained works by Pissarro, Seurat, Signac and son Lucien Pissarro
1890	Produces album of anarchist drawings <i>Turpitudes Sociales</i>
1890s	Gradually abandons Neo-Impressionist style preferring style which allowed him to capture sensations of nature
1895	PAINTS THIS SNOWSCAPE from the window of studio in garden at Éragny- sur - Epte
1903	Dies in Paris

The move to Éragny was triggered in 1884 by the need to find a large inexpensive property for Pissarro's expanding family. At that time he and his wife Julie were expecting their fifth child, and in fact went on to have eight children, although two daughters died young. At the end of his garden in Éragny was a large barn which Pissarro converted into a studio with huge windows to let in natural light. It was from there that this landscape was painted. The orchard and surrounding countryside were the principal motifs in Pissarro's paintings of the 1890s.

What makes this painting different is the fluid brushwork and the use of bright, unmixed colours against a white ground, as opposed to the thicker impasto and more flecked handling of other paintings of this date. The surface of the paint in this picture has a smoothness, and the brushstrokes have a calligraphic quality which some say reflect Pissarro's interest in the decorative arts at this time. We know that in December 1895 Pissarro made several visits to the Salon de l'Art Nouveau organised by the dealer Samuel Bing.

This rural snow scene, like many of his late rural landscapes, investigates the effects of season, weather and time of day much more closely than Pissarro had ever done before. The cold greys of his earlier snow scene in Brittany have been replaced here by the warmer tones seen in snow in sunlit conditions. The whites in this painting vary from blue-grey to mauve and peach-pink, depending on the absence or presence of weak sunlight. The distinctive twisted trunk of the apple tree in the foreground features prominently in many of the artist's paintings and watercolours from Éragny.