

The Rural Life Series

The Parkville Frame Gallery is pleased to offer **The Rural Life Series**. This series is a collection of images created by well-known and well-respected artists who specialized in painting scenes from rural life. We think you will enjoy having these pictures in your home, office, or business. Let's work on a project together.



Shepherdess With Her Flock (ca.1863)

Jean-François Millet
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Date painted: ca. 1863

How originally painted: Oil on canvas

Size: 14 5/16 x 18 11/16 inches

Where on display: Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France

The Artist: Jean-François Millet (French, 1814--1875) French painter Jean-François Millet, whose humble manner of living stands in stark contrast to the impact his work had on many artists who succeeded him, saw Godliness and virtue in physical labor. Best known for his paintings of peasants toiling in rural landscapes, and the religious sub-texts that often accompanied them, he turned his back on the academic style of his early artistic education and co-founded the Barbizon school near Fontainebleau in Normandy, France with fellow artist Théodore Rousseau.

The Art: *Shepherdess With Her Flock* Millet expressed a desire to paint a work showing a shepherdess with her flock as early as 1862. As his friend Alfred Sensier related, this theme "obsessed the artist's mind" until he exhibited the work at the Paris Salon of 1864, where it was a great success, called a "refined canvas" by some and a "masterpiece" by others. It was particularly esteemed by the middle-classes in Paris, who preferred idealized paintings of rural life to caring about the hard life of real peasants.



Landscape with Cattle and Sheep (ca.1852)

Constant Troyon

Minneapolis Institute of Arts

Date painted: ca.1852

How originally painted: Oil on canvas

Size: Large, 38 ½ x 51 ½ Inches

Where on display: Minneapolis Institute of Arts

The Artist: **Constant Emile Troyon** (French, 1810--1865) established himself as one of the most prominent members of the Barbizon School, a loosely associated group of artists working in the small village of Barbizon, France, on the edge of the Forest at Fontainebleau. His work took on international dimensions through exhibitions abroad, more so than any other artist connected to that group. His paintings were initially dedicated to the realistic depiction of the landscape, but after a decisive journey to Holland in 1847, he expanded his oeuvre and gained international renown by becoming an "animalier," a professional animal painter. Troyon effectively used his previous experience as a landscape painter to situate his impressive representations of animals in their natural environment.

When he was just seven, and his mother was working as a burnisher in a porcelain factory, he began studying under Riocreux, Troyon's godfather and director of the factory, who would later take on Troyon. He was not the most diligent student, however, and preferred to wander outdoors rather than sit for official lessons. Fittingly, he began his early career as a painter in the porcelain factory and would continue this until the late 1830's, at which point he became a professional landscape painter.

The Art: ***Landscape with Cattle and Sheep*** once belonged to James J. Hill (1838-1916), the Minnesota railroad magnate whose collection of European paintings forms the basis of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts nineteenth-century holdings.



The Rooks Have Come Back (1871)

Aleksey Savrasov

Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow

Date painted: 1871

How originally painted: Oil on canvas

Size: 62 x 48.5 cm

Where on display: Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia

The Artist: **Aleksey Kondratievich Savrasov** (Russian, 1830 - 1897) was born into the family of a merchant. He began to draw early and in 1838 he enrolled as a student of professor Rabus at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. He graduated in 1850, and immediately began to specialize in landscape painting. In 1852, he traveled to Ukraine. Then, in 1854 at the invitation of the Grand Duchess Maria Nikolayevna, President of the Imperial Academy of Arts, he moved to the neighborhood of St. Petersburg. In 1857, Savrasov became a teacher at the Moscow School of painting, sculpturing and architecture. His best disciples, Isaac Levitan and Konstantin Korovin, remembered their teacher with admiration and gratitude.

The Art: ***The Rooks Have Come Back*** is considered by many critics to be the high point in Savrasov's artistic career. Using a common, even trivial episode of birds returning home, and an extremely simple landscape, Savrasov emotionally showed the transition of nature from winter to spring. It was a new type of *lyrical landscape* painting, called later by critics *the mood landscape*. Many Russians learn about this painting during their early education as children.



Harvest at La Crau (1888)
Vincent van Gogh

Date painted: 1888

How originally painted: Oil

Size: 2' 5" x 3' 0"

Where on display: Van Gogh Museum

The Artist: Vincent van Gogh (1853 -- 1890) The last few decades of the nineteenth century saw immense changes in almost all aspects of life, including the arts and music. Van Gogh's short career came as the Impressionists were disbanding, and even more avant-garde artists were emerging. Though it was one of Van Gogh's initial wishes to 'belong' to a group of artists, his work bridged a number of different movements, so that in just 10 years he managed to incorporate elements of the Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, Symbolists, Expressionists and Fauves within his art. It was this period that gave birth to modern art, and made the transition from traditional to new. Despite the innovations there was still an overriding lack of acceptance for these artists who were paving the way for the new century of art. was

The Art: *Harvest at La Crau* was one of many paintings that Van Gogh made of the countryside surrounding Arles, and reflects his experiments with flat areas of color and bold outlines. He differentiated his brushstrokes, seen here in the spiky cut cornfield contrasted against the flat area of standing corn, and was applying his paint in great thick strokes that lend the picture plane a textural quality.



Burning Brush (1884)
Daniel Ridgeway Knight

Date painted: 1884

How originally painted: Oil on canvas

Size: 46.5 x 58 inches

The Artist: **Daniel Ridgeway Knight** (1839 – 1924) was an American artist born at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He was a pupil at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Paris, under Gleyre, and later worked in the private studio of Meissonier. After 1872 he lived in France, having a house and studio at Poissy on the Seine.

He painted peasant women out of doors with great popular success. He was awarded the silver medal and Cross of the Legion of Honor, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1889, and was made a Knight of the Royal Order of St. Michael of Bavaria, Munich, 1893, and receiving the gold medal of honor from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Philadelphia, 1893. His son, Louis Aston Knight (1873 - 1948), is also known as a landscape painter. (From Wikipedia)

The Art: ***Burning Brush*** (1884) From his cottage in Poissey with its glass-enclosed studio and gardens, Knight was able to work in the "open" protected from the weather in an aesthetically controlled environment. His clients, in France and America primarily, filled his waiting lists because his moist gardens and distant rivers were pleasingly rendered, but also because his models filled a sentimental need for an agreeable human reference. In 1888, Knight told author and critic George Sheldon, "These peasants are as happy and content as any similar class in the world. They all save money and are small capitalists and investors.... They work hard to be sure but plenty of people do that."