

HISTORY IN ART

Louis Anquetin 1861–1932

7 September 2022

1861 – Louis Anquetin is born in Etrépagny, Normandy and is educated at the grammar school in Rouen. He is encouraged to practise his drawing skills by his parents and soon becomes very interested in painting.

1882 – His parents agree to him moving to Paris to study art, and he joins Léon Bonnat's studio in Montmartre, where he meets Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Bonnat is a noted portraitist but encourages experimentation in art.

1881 – Lautrec and Anquetin transfer to Fernand Cormon's studio, where other students include Vincent van Gogh and Emile Bernard. Anquetin admires Van Gogh's style and is influenced by him but he becomes also a good friend of Bernard.

1882 – Anquetin meets Impressionist artist Claude Monet, and experiments with Impressionism himself.

1886 and 1887 – He produces drawings and pastels of Lautrec and Bernard, and Lautrec paints him too. Anquetin, Lautrec, Bernard and Van Gogh hold joint exhibitions and Anquetin sells his first paintings. Other artists attend the shows, including Camille Pissarro, Paul Signac and Georges Seurat. Through Seurat, Anquetin discovers the Divisionist technique of painting. Anquetin and Bernard begin to experiment with their own form of Post-Impressionism, which becomes known as *cloisonnism*. This name is given to their art by Edouard Dujardin, who was at school with Anquetin in Rouen and is now a writer and critic. Cloisonnism refers to a style in which a painting is constructed using areas of bright, flat colour enclosed by dark lines in the manner of a stained glass window or *cloisonné* enamel miniatures. Other artists will later adopt the technique, including Gauguin.

1888 – Anquetin produces two works in this style that became quite well known. One, *Avenue de Clichy: Five O'Clock in the Evening* is later identified as an influence on Van Gogh's painting *Café Terrace at Night*. Anquetin will later be credited with influencing other artists' works too, including Picasso's famous portrait of the American writer Gertrude Stein.

1889 – With many other artists, including Bernard and Gauguin, Anquetin exhibits works during the Exposition Universelle in 1889 to mark the centenary of the French Revolution. His paintings attract a lot of praise from critics. He begins a series of paintings on women at night, including *Woman on the Champs-Élysées at Night*, which becomes part of his entry for the Salon des Indépendents in 1891.

1894 – Anquetin's trip to Belgium and the Netherlands with Lautrec and Joseph Albert leads to a change in his style and artistic philosophy, as he becomes inspired by the Old Masters including Rubens, Rembrandt and Hals. Over the next few years he increasingly turns to imitating the styles of these painters, which leads to him being ignored by the critics and even losing him many of his

friends. Only Lautrec remains constant in this period. His devotion to 17th-century styles leads him to study anatomy, just like the Old Masters had to do, so that he can accurately portray the human body in art.

1906 – Anquetin marries Berthe Coquinot.

1907 – Anquetin meets a young artist called Jacques Maroger who also admires the Dutch and Flemish Old Masters, and Anquetin takes him on as a pupil and they work together for the rest of Anquetin's life.

1924 – He completes a book on Rubens, which is published.

1932 – Louis Anquetin dies, now almost forgotten.