



# **A Brush With Nature: The Gere Collection of Landscape Oil Sketches, Revised Edition (National Gallery London Publications)**

*Christopher Riopelle, Xavier Bray*

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Beginning in the 1950s, John and Charlotte Gere, both distinguished art historians, pioneered the collecting of small-scale landscape oil sketches created by 18th- and 19th-century artists working out of doors in nature. Such paintings, created quickly to capture subtle atmospheric effects and the fleeting play of light, played a vital role in the visual training of generations of European artists. The pictures were not conceived of as finished works of art, were rarely if ever exhibited during the artists' lifetimes, and were often kept in the studio for later consultation. The collection now numbers some 75 works including paintings by Corot, Valenciennes, Frederic Leighton and Thomas Jones, as well as by less well-known artists such as Gille-Francois Closson and Simon Denis. While the majority were painted in Italy, they include works by British, French, Italian, German, Belgian and Scandinavian artists. These documents of artists at work form what is perhaps the most comprehensive private collection of its kind.

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