

Barbizon and the Making of Modern Landscape

Date/Time	October 6/7/8, 2026. 14.00 – 16.00	Price	£66
Venue	Online	Lecturer	Jo Rhymer

Course overview

By the 1840s, landscape painting in France was in the ascendant. So too was leisure travel. The expansion of railway networks opened up rural France to increasing numbers of leisure travellers exploring new areas of the countryside. Situated about 60 kilometres south of Paris, the Forest of Fontainebleau together with its villages, including Barbizon, became a popular destination for tourists and artists alike.

We will examine work by painters including Théodore Rousseau, Jean-François Millet and Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, all of whom are associated with the Forest and its villages. Our investigation will bring to light the role of Barbizon painters in the advance of landscape painting, and more generally their significance in the development of modern art. Looking at a small selection of works by Eugène Cuvelier and Gustave Le Gray will reveal how the Forest's motifs also inspired photographic innovation.

Sessions

Day 1 – Forest motifs and open air painting. i) Corot and Cuvelier ii) Theodore Rousseau: 'Le Grand Refuse'

Day 2 – The villages and Forest Life. i) Millet and the land ii) Millet and village life

Day 3 – The legacy, and Impressions of Barbizon. i) Bazille, Monet and impressions of the Forest ii) Renoir and Le Gray.

Lecturer

Jo Rhymer is an independent art historian with over twenty years' experience within the gallery and museum education sector. Previously Head of Adult Learning Programmes at the National Gallery and Public Programmes Manager at Sotheby's Institute of Art, Jo has conducted cultural tours both in the UK and abroad. She teaches for a wide range of public and private institutions including the Victoria & Albert Museum and the Wallace Collection, she is a panel tutor for the University of Cambridge Professional and Continuing Education, and is an accredited lecturer for The Arts Society. Her specialist areas are 19th- and early 20th-century French and British art.