

# Mary Cassatt



## Early Life

- Born: May 22, 1844 in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania
- Was one of seven children
- Born into a wealthy family with the father being a stockbroker and land speculator, and the mother coming from a banking family
- Family felt travel was integral to education so Cassatt spent many years in Europe.

## More family...

- Despite growing up in a wealthy family who could support her passion for art, her parents were strongly against her becoming an artist.
- Not caring about her parents support, she still continued pursuing her passion.

# School



- Cassatt dropped out of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts because of the patronizing attitude of the male students/teachers
- Only 20% were females
- Slow pace

# Continuing her studies



- After dropping out, she began studying with the masters of Ecole des Beaux-Arts
- Studied primarily with Jean-Léon Gérôme who was known for his hyper-realistic technique
- Joined a painting class led by Charles Chaplin
- During the classes trips, they would paint peasants on the countryside doing everyday activities



# Cassatt's Art Thriving



Her piece Mandoline Player was the first of her work to be accepted to the Paris Salon in 1868.

Early work is Realism



# Her struggles



- Her paintings were not very famous during her time period
- Considered giving up painting
- Moved to France for good in 1871.
- Edgar Degas invited her to show her works with the Impressionists. Would exhibit with them for years, becoming the 1<sup>st</sup> American to do so.
  - Became the first American to have their art recognized outside of America.



Merry Caswell







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this is an actual close-up image of our art reproductions



# 1900's



- 1900's is when she focused all her attention of painting mothers and children
- Brother Alexander Cassatt died in 1906
- Diagnosed with diabetes, rheumatism, neuralgia, and cataracts in 1911
- slowly made her blind
- She continued painting until 1914 when she was almost completely blind



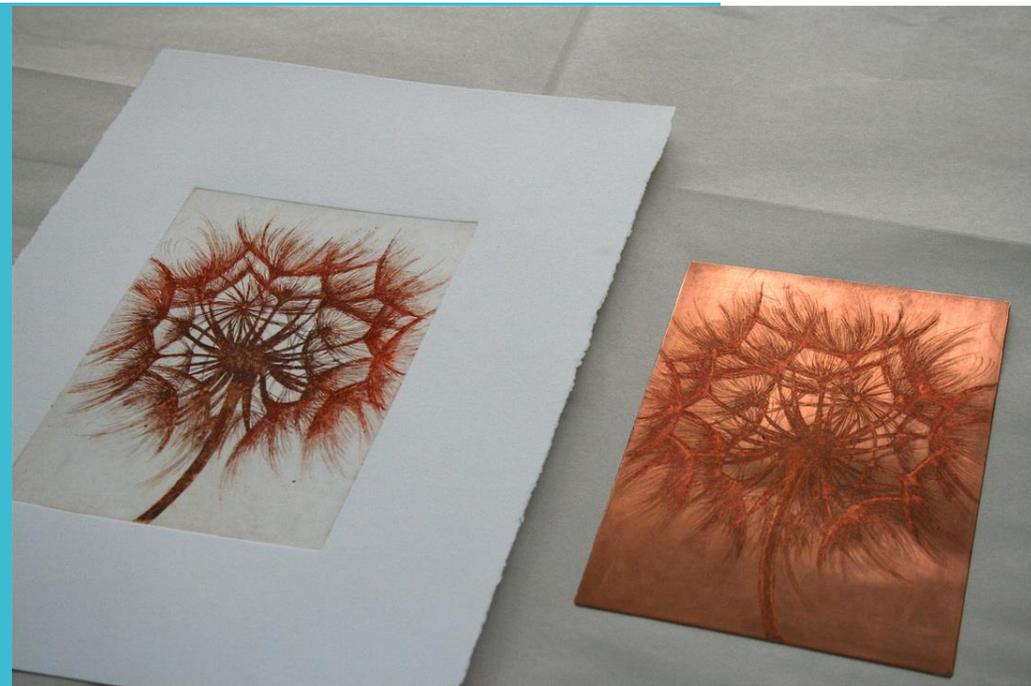
Mary Cassatt



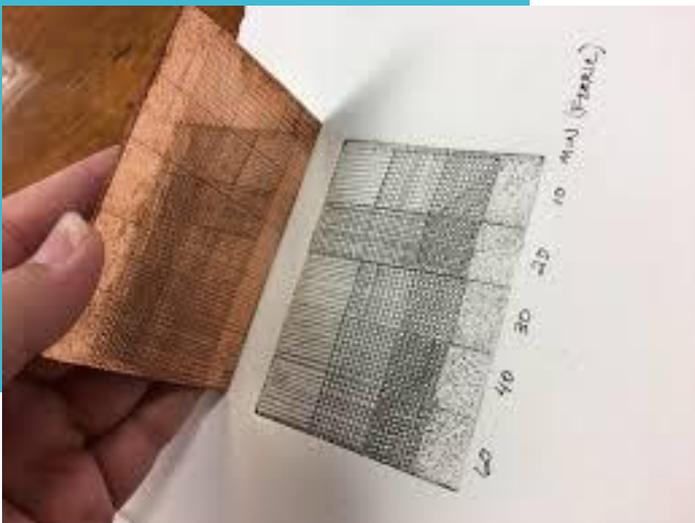




# Transition to Dry point Art



- During the 1890's Cassatt's work moved away from Impressionism as she was influenced by Degas to explore print making techniques.
- One of those techniques was **dry point**. This is a printmaking technique where the artist will create a "drawing" on a plate like copper using a diamond, or carbide tipped needle. It acts like a pencil to carve out a drawing on the plate. The artist will use ink on the plate and the plate will be "stamped" onto a piece of paper.
- Cassatt would add color to the paper.



*The Great Wave off Kanagawa*

By Hokusai

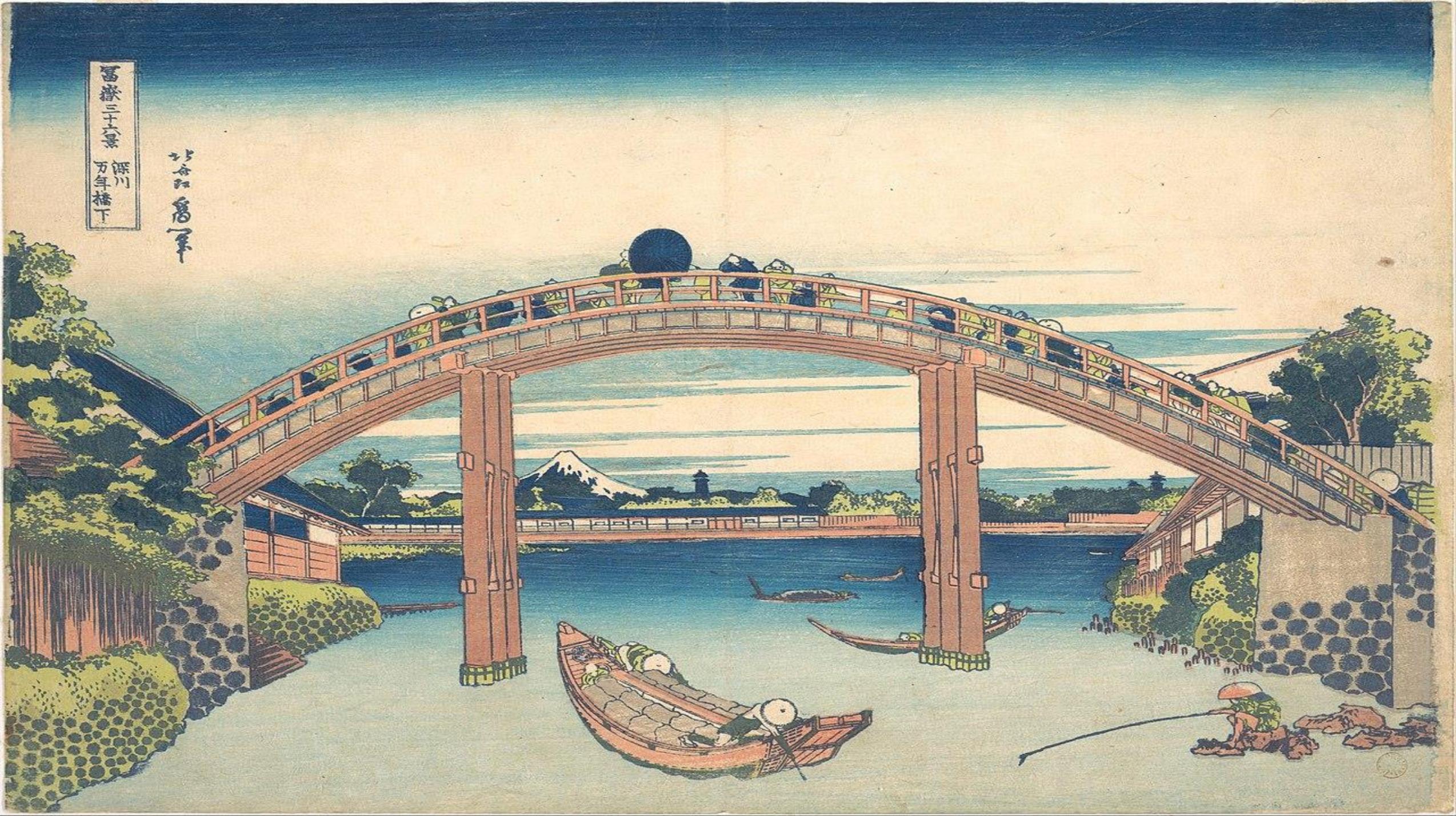
富嶽三十六景 神奈川沖  
浪裏

六舟 葛飾



富澤三十五  
深川  
万年橋下

万年橋









55.17

Mary Cassatt



The Toilet  
Mary Cassatt



# Fight for Women's Rights

- In 1915 she highly supported the women's suffrage movement
- Showed 18 of her works in an exhibition supporting the movement
- Also mentored many young female artists

# Significance and Death

- Died: June 14, 1926 in Chateau de Beaufresne, near Paris
- Mary Cassatt was one of the very few women who were part of the French Impressionist movement in art, and **the only American** during the movement's productive years
- Painting women and children
- First American artist to achieve international recognition