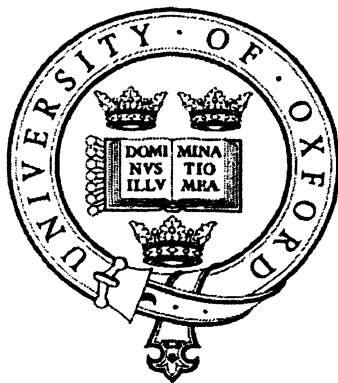


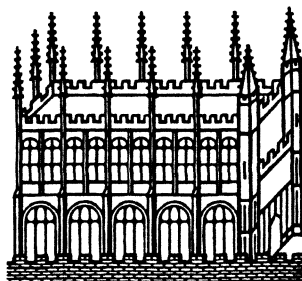


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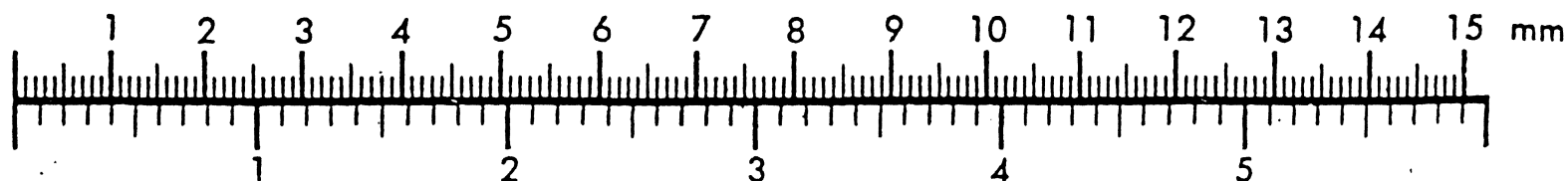
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**Théodore Rousseau (1812-67),
his patrons and his public.**

Simon Kelly

D. Phil. Thesis, Trinity Term 1996^{MT}

**St. Edmund Hall,
University of Oxford**

Short abstract

This thesis is a case study of the relationship between a nineteenth-century French landscape painter, Théodore Rousseau, and his patrons and public. My aim is to reconstruct the context in which Rousseau's work was created, thereby inferring what the artist intended for his painting and how his collectors and public approached the style of his work. The thesis examines the nature of the dynamic between Rousseau and his consumers and the extent to which the artist's style may, or may not, be affected by the taste of his audience.

In Part I, I examine Rousseau's involvement with the members of his circle including those who supported him during his years of absence from the Salon, the critic, Théophile Thoré, the industrialist, Frédéric Hartmann and the civil servant, Alfred Sensier. This provides a framework for discussion of a number of ideas which preoccupied both the artist and his patrons including the level of finish in his work, the importance of pantheism, responses to commercial deforestation and the continuing resonances of ancient Greek culture.

In Part II, I look at the problem of Rousseau's response to the expansion of the public sphere for art in the nineteenth-century. I approach this by locating Rousseau within the institutional structures of the art world which acted as intermediary between the painter and a wider public. These include the public exhibition, the rôle of the reproduction in the dissemination of his imagery, the importance of one-man public

auctions and the position of the dealer as an outlet for the sale of his work.

In reconstructing the dynamic between Rousseau and his patrons and public, I have relied above all on primary sources. These have included the often unpublished correspondence of the artist and his collectors, contemporary Salon criticism and sale catalogues, auctioneers' records and the stock-books of the Durand-Ruel firm of dealers, as well as a close formal analysis of Rousseau's paintings themselves.

**Théodore Rousseau (1812-1867),
his patrons and his public.**

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**St. Edmund Hall,
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Long abstract

This thesis is a case study of the relationship between a nineteenth-century French landscape painter, Théodore Rousseau, and his patrons and public. My interest lies in the interaction between the artist and his audience, in that dynamic which exists between the production and consumption of the artistic work. I approach the nature of this dynamic through a reconstruction of the context in which Rousseau's work was created, thereby providing inferences about what the artist intended for his art and indicating how his collectors and public might have approached the style of his work. The thesis examines the nature of the intersection between the artist's habits of looking, thinking and working and his patrons' habits of looking and thinking about art.

Although there are now signs of a reawakening interest in Rousseau and the Barbizon School with two *catalogues raisonnés* on the artist at present being written in France, this is still a neglected area in the literature in contrast to the industry of works on Impressionism. The last biography of Rousseau, for example, dates from 1910. There is also a lack of writing on nineteenth-century French patronage. Although the work of Francis Haskell and Albert Boime has provided models for an approach to collecting at this time and the writing of Linda Whiteley and Nicholas Green models for the study of dealers, the theme of the consumption of artistic work in nineteenth-century France remains a field ripe for exploration. The same is even more true for the theme of the 'public' in nineteenth-century France. Both Thomas Crow and Richard Wrigley have explored

this notion in the context of eighteenth-century France but the French public of the nineteenth-century remains a largely unknown quantity.

In approaching the problem of Rousseau's relationship with his patrons and public, I have divided my thesis into two sections. In Part I I look at Rousseau's close involvement with the members of his circle. This has involved examining the ideas and taste of both Rousseau and those patrons in his circle before identifying the similarities and differences in mentality of the artist and his supporters. In Part II I examine the nature of the dynamic between Rousseau and his public and more particularly the artist's response to the expansion of the public sphere for art in the nineteenth-century. I have approached the problem of Rousseau's interaction with his public by locating the artist within the institutional framework of the art world which acted as intermediary between artist and a wider public. Part II, therefore, contains chapters on Rousseau's involvement with the public exhibition, the reproduction of his work, the auction house and the increasingly important rôle of the dealer and his gallery.

A reconstruction of Rousseau's involvement with his circle has involved consultation of the artist's largely unpublished correspondence housed in the Cabinet des Dessins, Louvre as well as examination of any surviving letters from patrons to the artist, particularly the extensive cache of letters from Frédéric Hartmann to Rousseau in the Louvre. I have also tried to reconstruct the collecting habits of his patrons through examination of sale catalogues while, in the cases of Thoré, Sensier and Périer, I have read their art criticism to understand their ideology as a background to their relationship with Rousseau. I have also examined at first hand the style of those paintings which are the principal subject of discussion between the artist and his circle in an attempt to examine the manner in which Rousseau's reaction to his patrons is reflected in his art.

Rousseau's public was a heterogeneous entity who bought his work for a wide variety of reasons. When I come to talk of this 'public' I have, where possible, attempted to identify this term with some specificity. While no records exist about the nature of the Salon public or of the public which acquired reproductions of his work, I have been able to consult unpublished auctioneers' records and the stockbooks of the Durand-Ruel firm of dealers in order to identify those buyers of Rousseau's work who constituted his auction house and dealer 'public'. Consultation of Salon criticism has also enabled me to

reconstruct contemporary perceptions of a 'public' taste. The issue of Rousseau's engagement with his public is closely bound up with another major problem examined in the thesis, namely the nature of the artist's response to the commodification of culture in nineteenth-century France. How does Rousseau address the challenge of improving his economic standing within an expanding art market where old-style patronal relationships between artist and collector are increasingly rare?

Rousseau has passed down to posterity as 'le Grand Refusé', the model of the victimised artist regularly refused by a Salon Jury. In Chapter I, I examine that circle of collectors who were prepared to patronise him during the July Monarchy despite or, perhaps, because of his Salon rejection. This was a disparate group made up of an artist, Ary Scheffer, a banker, Paul Périer, an operatic baritone, Paul Barroilhet, a newspaper proprietor, Louis Véron, a lawyer, Henri Didier and a high-quality draper, Paul Collot. All shared a taste for the new school of naturalistic landscape painters working in that painterly style popular among modern artists since the rise of the Romantics in the 1820s. All also shared a taste for a lack of *fini* in painting while they opposed the institution of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, the body responsible for the organisation of the Salon Jury. In the history of nineteenth-century patronage, Rousseau emerges as the first example of an artist to win his significant collector support outside the Salon.

One of Rousseau's most important supporters during the July Monarchy was the critic, Théophile Thoré, who served as his principal public apologist during these years. In Chapter II, I look at the close relationship between the two men founded on their mutual interest in the metaphysical and particularly in pantheism, the belief in the immanence of the divine within nature which informs Rousseau's work from the early 1830s until his death. While metaphysics provided Thoré with a foundation for political ideas which he spent much of his life trying to realise, Rousseau was little interested in political activism, preferring to concentrate on a private, mystical engagement with nature. This difference is reflected in their attitudes to the commercial exploitation of the forest. Thoré's opposition to deforestation is articulated in polemical articles in the Press while Rousseau's approach is one of fatalistic acceptance.

In Chapter III, I examine the association between Rousseau and the Alsatian textile industrialist, Frédéric Hartmann, the artist's most important patron of the Second Empire. In contrast

to the lack of surviving correspondence between Rousseau and his July Monarchy collectors, an extensive body of letters survives between Rousseau and Hartmann on the subject of that small group of paintings which obsessed the artist for much of the 1850s and 1860s including *La Ferme dans les Landes*, *Le Four Communal* and *Le Village de Becquigny*. This has enabled me to trace the developing relationship between the two men with the patron increasingly willing to criticise the artist's work while offering suggestions for improvement. Hartmann's letters focus on the level of finish in Rousseau's work and indicate his penchant for a precise but varied handling and rejection of both a sketchy technique and a highly meticulous, uniform facture. Rousseau in turn writes in defence of his works indicating the rationale behind his paintings, his search for a sense of permanence and order in his late work in contrast to the more turbulent vision of his early style.

In Chapter IV, I examine Rousseau's involvement with the civil servant, Alfred Sensier. Like Thoré, Sensier promoted Rousseau's interests through his critical writing, particularly his biography of the painter, *Souvenirs sur Théodore Rousseau*, while he also acted as a catalyst for the expression of Rousseau's own ideas. Sensier's aesthetic is founded on the belief that art should result from contact with nature, hence his penchant for Rousseau's plein-air sketches. During the early 1860s, Rousseau was probably the first French landscape painter to be influenced by Japanese prints. This informs the ostensibly decorative style he developed at this time which Sensier saw as a sign that the artist was compromising his integrity to nature. Rousseau's highly cogitated approach to his art is evident in his letters to Sensier defending his style and meditating on the nature of modelling. For Rousseau, light is the principal vehicle in the pictorial organisation of his works. For much of his career his compositions are founded on strong chiaroscuro contrasts. In the early 1860s, however, he rejected chiaroscuro as a means of modelling his forms and instead embraced a stylistic 'flatness' allied to an enveloping blond luminosity which, he argued, represented a greater naturalism as opposed to the artificial system of chiaroscuro modelling. Both Rousseau and Sensier also shared a nostalgia for an antique past which they saw as revived in the primeval woods of the forest of Fontainebleau. While Rousseau was fascinated by the poetry and mythology of ancient Greece, Sensier developed a penchant for ancient Gallic history. The conservatism of both men ensured that they opposed the rise of tourism in the forest. Rousseau's late work reveals his rejection of

an iconography of modernity and instead a retreat into a fictive Arcadian past.

For much of the early part of his career Rousseau produced his work for a private circle of initiates to his studio. However, in the late 1840s, he began to move out into the public arena through the exhibition, reproduction and auction of his work. In Part II, I examine Rousseau's relationship with a wider public.

In Chapter V, I look at Rousseau's involvement with the public exhibition. After early Salon success, his large-scale submission *Paysage du Jura* provided evidence of his ambition to historicize landscape painting, to bring to landscape the intellectual and emotional resonances traditionally accorded to history painting. This project was thwarted by the refusal of his work and for the rest of his life he cultivated a persona of artistic outsider, victimised by the Salon administration. During the latter part of his life, however, he showed regularly at the Paris Salon while also showing in exhibitions in the provinces and abroad. By the 1850s, he had developed a coherent exhibition strategy for the display of his work, focusing on his 'right' to show paintings of his own choice. According to many critics, Rousseau's loose handling was the principal reason why the public did not support his work. It may be that, in response to public taste, Rousseau chose to exhibit paintings in the more highly finished style which he had used occasionally from the early 1830s but these were also works of considerable conviction, and it is notable that though his early sketchy style brought him refusal by the Salon Jury and the meticulous, uniform facture of his late work much adverse criticism, Rousseau did not adapt his technique in order to win success but, instead, persevered with stylistic experimentation.

Rousseau's willingness to communicate with the public is also evident in his eventual interest in the reproduction of his work. In Chapter VI, I look at the rôle of the reproduction in disseminating Rousseau's imagery to a wide public, many of whom gained access to his work through the reproductive image rather than the viewing of original paintings. During the 1840s and early 1850s, Rousseau's works were widely reproduced by a circle of supporters and, in conjunction with Thoré's criticism, served to create a public image of Rousseau as the type of a poetic and melancholic landscape painter. Only in the 1860s did Rousseau begin to reproduce his own work while in the same decade his desire to reach beyond his circle of patrons to a wider

public is clear in his ambitious project for the large-scale reproduction of his work, *L'Oeuvre*.

His desire to reach the public is also clear in his readiness to use the new marketing method of the one-man public auction as a means for the sale of his work. In Chapter VII, I examine the three auction sales of his painting which he held during his lifetime in 1850, 1861 and 1863. A wide variety of his work appeared in these sales ranging from plein-air sketches dating back to the beginning of his career (in the 1850 sale) to meticulously-finished studio works in 1861. The buyers of these paintings included the State, dealers and a large number of collectors among the public who often bought only single works.

In Chapter VIII, I examine Rousseau's involvement with dealers. During the July Monarchy, he notably avoided contact with the world of dealers, preferring to pursue his ambition of creating high art founded on a diligent study of nature rather than work for the market, an ideal informed by his academic background. By the late 1840s, however, in accord with his shift into the public arena at this time, he was increasingly willing to sell work to dealers. His letters of the 1850s reveal his commercial acumen and development of strategies for successful involvement with the art market. This thesis also argues that the rise of the art market was formative to the actual creation of many of Rousseau's works of art produced for dealers or for the auction house. It is not my intention to argue that the market was necessarily hostile to Rousseau's artistic development. Indeed I would argue that market forces provided Rousseau with the opportunity to produce some of his most beautiful works. The culmination of his association with dealers came in 1866 when Durand-Ruel and Brame acquired most of his studio contents, heralding a more modern approach to dealing. That 'public' who subsequently acquired his work from the dealers, like the 'public' at the auction house, represented a disparate group who bought his work for a number of reasons, including an interest in speculation, a genuine passion for the formal aspects of his work such as his rich colour or sketchy technique, an intention to use his paintings as study aids or to enjoy them as a souvenir of a place visited or as a source of solace from the expanding industrialised city.

Rousseau emerges from his involvement with his patrons and public as a man of ideas, fascinated by myth and the spiritual, highly conscious of his own sense of artistic independence and intent on technical experiment. He emerges

also as a figure with a willingness to engage in a commercial culture and a shrewd awareness of the workings of the expanding art market. Such a conflation of interests represents an attitude, increasingly common among artists from the 1820s onwards. Among his contemporaries, Rousseau's attitude was, perhaps, closest to the example of Delacroix. In embracing an interest both in Romantic ideas and the workings of the market, Rousseau came to embody a new artistic paradigm which has become a commonplace on the twentieth century.

**Théodore Rousseau (1812-1867), his
patrons and his public**



Théodore Rousseau (1812-1867),

his patrons and his public

In Two Volumes

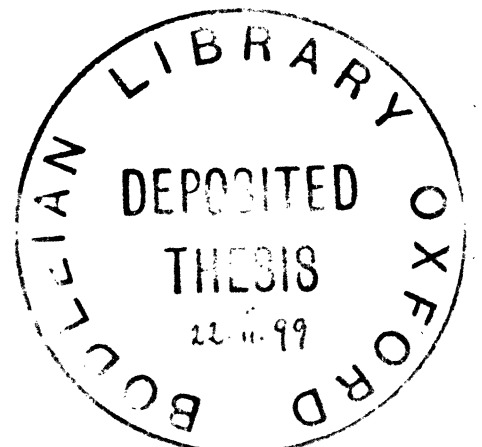
Volume I

Simon Kelly

St. Edmund Hall, Oxford.

D. Phil. Thesis

Trinity Term 1996¹⁹⁹⁷



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77. *Vue du Mont Blanc, prise de la Faucille (Jura)* (Salon of 1867). Oil on canvas, 63 x 100cm. Private Collection, U. S. A. On loan to Minneapolis Institute of Art.
78. *Métairie sur les bords de l'Oise* (Exposition Universelle de 1867). Oil on canvas, 41 x 64 cm. England, Private Collection.
79. *L'Automne (fin d' Octobre)* (Exposition Universelle of 1867). Oil on canvas. Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
80. C. Monet: *La Plage à Sainte-Adresse* (1867). Oil on canvas, 76 x 103 cm. Art Institute of Chicago.
81. A-J-J-M. Devéria: 'Portrait, 9 heures du matin: Mme Annette Boulanger', from *Les Dix-huit heures d'une Parisienne*. Hand-coloured lithograph, c. 1830. Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis.
82. *Lisière de Forêt*. Lithograph by L. Français. *Les Beaux-Arts*, t. I, 13e livraison (1843).
83. *Le Plateau de Bellecroix*. Etching by Ch. Jacque (although signed Jeanron). Frontispiece to T. Thoré, *Salon de 1844*.
84. *Paysage*. Etching by Ch. Jacque. *L'Artiste*, 4e série, t. III, 8e livraison (23 February, 1845).
85. *Effet de nuit dans un marais*. Soft-ground etching by L. Marvy. *L'Artiste*, 4e série, t. VII. 16e livraison (18 October, 1846).
86. *Lisière de forêt*. Lithograph by L. Français. *Les Artistes Contemporains*, Vol. I (1846), no. 7.

87. *Souvenir de la forêt de Chambord*. Lithograph by J. Laurens. *Les Artistes Contemporains*, Vol. II (1850), no. 96.
88. *Lisière de la forêt de Clairbois* (1836). Etching, 11 x 22 cm. Paris, Cabinet des estampes.
89. *La Plaine de Barbizon* (1864). Pen and ink on paper. *L'Autographe au Salon de 1864 et dans les ateliers*.
90. *Le petit pêcheur* (c. 1850). Oil on canvas, 21 x 31 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre.
91. *Mélancolie*. Lithograph by P-J. Delbarre. *L'Artiste*, 5e série, t. V, 3e livraison, (1 July, 1850).
92. *Le Matin*. Lithograph by Anastasi. *L'Artiste*, 5e série, t. V, 8e livraison (15 September, 1850).
93. *Don Quichotte et Sancho Panza*. Etching by F. Lefman. *L'Artiste*, 5e série, t. V, 12e livraison (15 November, 1850).
94. *Don Quichotte et Sancho Panza*. Watercolour. Unlocated. Reproduced in A. Braun, *Rousseau: L'Oeuvre*, no. 76.
95. *Le Bas-Meudon*. Etching by F. Lefman after Rousseau. *L'Artiste*, 5e série, t. V, 16e livraison (16 January, 1851).
96. *Le Chêne de Roche* (1861). Etching, 13 x 21 cm. Paris, Cabinet des estampes.
97. *Le Cérissier de la Plante-à-Biau* (1862). Glass plate, 22 x 28 cm.
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99. *Soleil Couchant d'automne (Landes)* (1844?). Oil on panel, 21 x 24 cm. London, National Gallery.
100. *Les îlots du Bas-Meudon* (late 1840s). Oil on panel, 24 x 33.5 cm. Private Collection.
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102. *Le Plateau de Bellecroix, forêt de Fontainebleau* (1837-47). Oil on canvas, 29 x 59 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre.
103. *Les Chevriers*. Oil on canvas, 68 x 88 cm. Private Collection.
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107. *Sentier dans les roches* (1861). Oil on canvas, 42 x 63 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum.
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112. C. Daubigny. Frontispiece to Durand-Ruel's *Spécimens les plus brillants de l'École Moderne* (1845).
113. *La plaine en avant des Pyrénées* (mid-1840s). Oil on panel, 24 x 28 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre.
114. *Un pré bordé d'arbres* (mid 1850s). Oil on panel, 42 x 63 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
115. *L'Abreuvoir* (mid-1850s?). Oil on panel, 42 x 64 cm. Reims, Musée St-Denis.
116. F. Roybet: *Portrait of Hector Brame* (mid-1860s) Oil on canvas. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-arts.
117. H. Merle: *Portrait of Paul Durand-Ruel* (mid-1860s). Oil on canvas. Private Collection.

118. *Rochers de Saint Vincent* (1830). Oil on paper laid down on canvas, 34 x 43 cm. Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham
119. *Intérieur de forêt* (1857). Oil on panel, 31 x 44 cm. Private Collection.
120. *Chênes détachés sur la lisière des gorges d'Apremont* (1858). Oil on canvas, 53 x 64 cm. Indiana University Art Museum.
121. *Plaine rocheuse de Barbizon* (1860). Oil on panel, 41 x 64 cm. Private Collection.
122. *Vue de Paris prise des hauteurs de Saint-Cloud* (1833). Oil on canvas, 61 x 115 cm. Brussels, Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique.

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Preface

Although he was one of Europe's best-known painters at his death in 1867, Rousseau's posthumous reputation has suffered as a result of the twentieth-century preoccupation with the Impressionists. For much of this century, Rousseau's work and that of the Barbizon School has not been examined in its historical context but seen only as a staging post on the way towards the telos of Impressionism. That this attitude still remains is suggested by the fact that Rousseau's works most appreciated by modern taste are his sketches which anticipate Impressionist technique¹.

The decline in Rousseau's reputation can be dated to the period around World War I. Before this time interest in his work remained strong. In the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries his paintings were often sold for astronomical prices while biographical studies of his work also appeared frequently, of which the most important, the *Souvenirs sur Théodore Rousseau* (1872) by his friend, Alfred Sensier, still serves as a fundamental text for any work on the painter. In 1910, the distinguished French scholar, Prosper Dorbec, also published a biography of the painter, but this has been the last book on Rousseau until the present day².

¹ See Hazlitt Gallery, 'Le Grand Refusé', *Théodore Rousseau*, Introduction by J. Baer (London, 1961). Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts, Norwich, and Hazlitt, Gooden & Fox, London, *Théodore Rousseau*, Essay and catalogue by N. Green, (London, 1982), p.8.

² The early biographies of Rousseau in addition to those of Sensier and Dorbec are: P. Burty, *Maîtres et petits-maîtres* (Paris, 1877); E. Chesneau, *Peintres et statuaires romantiques* (Paris, 1880); W. Mollett, *The Painters of Barbizon*, (London, 1890); D. Croal Thomson, *The Barbizon School*, (London,

In the years after World War I, Rousseau's reputation underwent a radical reversal of fortune. Taste now favoured the bright colouring of the Impressionists and Rousseau's often dark and bituminous palette attracted little interest, a situation made worse by the fact that many of his works have deteriorated and blackened badly with age. A synthetic overview of his career was also hindered paradoxically by his success on the auction circuit before World War I which contributed to the widespread dispersal of his painting.

Signs of a reawakening interest in Rousseau's work can, however, be dated to 1961 when the London dealer, Hazlitt, held a show entitled '*Le Grand Refusé*', *Théodore Rousseau*. Six years later, the Louvre organized a large-scale exhibition to mark the centenary of his death followed, in 1982, by a show of Rousseau's work organized by Hazlitt, Gooden and Fox with a catalogue by the late Nicholas Green. In recent years, an increased interest in the Barbizon School has been marked by a series of exhibitions culminating in the ambitious *Corot, Courbet und die Maler von Barbizon*, held in Munich in 1996³. In addition to this, two separate *catalogues raisonnés* of Rousseau's output are at present being produced in France by Pierre Miquel and Michel Schulmann.

This thesis examines the relationship between Rousseau and his patrons and public. My interest lies in the interaction between the artist and his audience, in that dynamic which exists between

1902); A. Thomson, *Jean-Francois Millet and the Barbizon School* (London, 1903); E. Michel, *Les Maîtres du Paysage* (Paris, 1906).

³ Other recent Barbizon School exhibitions are: Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, *Barbizon Revisited* (Boston, 1962); Barbizon, Salle des Fêtes, *Barbizon au temps de Millet* (Paris, 1975); Bremen, Kunsthalle, *Zurück zur Natur* (Bremen, 1977); Aulnay-sous-Bois, Galerie de l'hôtel de ville, *Barbizon revisité* (Aulnay-sous-bois, 1992); Brame & Lorenceau, Paris and Agnew's, London, *Barbizon & L'École de la Nature* (Paris, 1992).

the production and consumption of the artistic work. Rousseau's consumers can be loosely divided into two groups, one personal and one more depersonalized. In the former group we find a significant interplay between artist and patron with a group of collectors often engaged in close association with the painter and enjoying easy access to his studio. In the latter, Rousseau engages with a wider public indirectly through the intermediaries of the public exhibition, the reproductive media, the auction house and the dealer gallery.

In Part I, I look at the relationship between Rousseau and those figures in his circle who patronised him. I understand 'patronage' to be not only acquisition of painting but also promotion of the artist, particularly the critical apologies written on his behalf and the reproductions of his work which appear in the press. Rousseau inspired support from a small circle of critics and collectors to a degree which was exceptional in mid-nineteenth century France. Other artists of course received partisan support- Millet for example in the latter part of his life- but none received the continuous support which was given to Rousseau. From the time in 1830 when he was taken up by Ary Scheffer as the elder artist's protégé until soon after his death when his memory was sanctified by Sensier's hagiographical biography, Rousseau's name was promoted and his work bought by a group of devoted followers. His interaction with his patrons provides a framework for the discussion of a number of ideas which preoccupied both the artist and various members of his circle. These include attitudes to nature, such as the importance of pantheism and the effects of modernity on the forest of Fontainebleau. They also include attitudes to formal issues, in

particular the degree of 'finish' in Rousseau's paintings, as well as approaches to the art of the past. The members of Rousseau's circle are of considerable interest in their own right and my approach has been to look at their personalities and tastes before comparing and contrasting their ideas with those of Rousseau. An image of Rousseau subsequently emerges refracted through the personalities of his supporters.

In Part II, I concentrate on the artist's own engagement with a wider public. Who constituted this 'public'? In contrast to the civic humanist ideal of a public as homogeneous whole appreciating representations of a universal, abstract nature, Rousseau's public was a mixed and plural group defined by its heterogeneity. Recent discussions of the public have enlightened us for the period of the eighteenth-century⁴ but the nineteenth-century public remains an unknown quantity. I have approached the problem of Rousseau's public by locating the artist within the institutional framework of the French art world which acted as an intermediary between Rousseau and his wider audience. In Rousseau's lifetime we see the emergence of a distinctly modern art world with the increasing importance of the public exhibition (both the official Paris Salon and provincial shows), the rise of the reproduction as a means for the wide-spread dissemination of an artist's imagery, the expansion of the art market focused on the auction house and the emergence of the dealer gallery as an increasingly important outlet for the sale of work. My interest is in Rousseau's response to and engagement with both the

⁴ See in particular T. E. Crow, *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven, 1985), esp. Ch.1, 'The Salon Exhibition in the Eighteenth Century and the Problem of its Public'. See also R. Wrigley, *The Origins of French Art Criticism* (Oxford, 1993), esp. pp. 97-119.

expansion of the public sphere for art and the commodification of culture which takes place in nineteenth-century France. When I come to talk of Rousseau's 'public', I have, where possible, attempted to identify the members of this body with some specificity. While we have no statistics about the size and nature of the Salon audience or of that viewing public which gained access to Rousseau's work through reproductions, the existence of auctioneers' records and the stockbooks of the Durand-Ruel firm has enabled me to identify those buyers of Rousseau's work who constituted his auction house and dealer 'public'.

My research has concentrated on the examination of primary sources. I have drawn on the artist's largely unpublished correspondence housed in the Cabinet des Dessins (c.200 letters) as well as those surviving letters written to Rousseau by his patrons. The substantial body of unpublished letters from Hartmann are of particular interest because of the rare insights they provide into the taste of a nineteenth-century collector. I have also depended on critical reviews of Rousseau's work in an attempt to reconstruct the contemporary reception of his work. My approach has involved close examination of paintings. Where I refer to the formal aspects of individual works in some detail I refer to paintings which I have seen and examined. All titles given are those used when paintings were first exhibited rather than later titles ascribed to individual works. For example Rousseau's well-known work often described today as *La Descente des Vaches* is given its original title, the *Paysage du Jura*. This interest in formal developments is balanced by the location of Rousseau within his wider sociological context. The thesis stands

as a case study of a nineteenth-century landscape painter's involvement with his patrons and public.

Chronology

1812. Pierre-Étienne-Théodore Rousseau born on 15 April, the son of a tailor from Salins in the Jura. Lower-middle-class artisan background though his mother from a family of artists. His great-grandfather, a gilder of king's carriages, his grandfather a mason and one of his uncles, a pupil in the atelier of David. The landscape painter, Pau de Saint-Martin, first cousin of his mother, takes him to work in the forest of Compiègne and encourages him to enter the studio of Rémond.

1827-8. Pupil of Rémond, the winner of Prix de Rome for 'paysage historique' in 1821. Makes copies in Louvre after Karel Dujardin, Van de Velde, Claude Lorrain. After 1828 also works in the private studio of the history painter, Guillon-Lethière.

1829. Competes in Prix de Rome for 'paysage historique' but fails the first stage.

1830. Six-month visit to Auvergne, a region favoured by Rémond. Produces large number of oil sketches judged severely by Rémond but admired by Ary Scheffer, the history painter, who exhibits them in his studio and becomes an important supporter.

1831. Shows at the Salon for the first time with his *Paysage, site d'Auvergne*. Works with Lethière, preoccupied by problems of perspective. Visits Normandy where he meets Paul Huet and makes a number of *plein-air* oil sketches.

1832. Again visits Normandy, working with Charles Delaberge. Makes drawings and an oil sketch on subject of failed republican uprising after funeral of General Lamarque.

1833. Exhibits two works at the Salon, the *Vue prise des côtes à Granville*, acquired by Henri Scheffer and a small *Étude d'après nature*. The first receives much critical praise. Lives at 7, rue Chaptal, the Scheffers' house. Receives patronage of Duc d'Orléans as result of Ary Scheffer's influence. First paints in forest of Fontainebleau.

1834. *Paysage, groupe de chênes* first work by Rousseau to be refused by Salon Jury but the meticulous *Lisière d'un bois coupé*,

forêt de Compiègne wins him a third-class medal. Lives at 9, rue Taitbout where he first meets his neighbour, Theophile Thoré and, like Thoré, a member of the circle around Pierre Leroux. Spends the summer in the Alps where he first records his interest in pantheism and sketches the vast *Vue de la chaîne du Mont-Blanc pendant une orage*.

1835. Two *Esquisses*, belonging to the Prince de Joinville, appear in the Salon (possibly entered without the artist's knowledge). Ary Scheffer provides Rousseau with studio in his own atelier to work on the large-scale *Paysage du Jura*. Experiments with use of bitumen.

1836. The vast and ambitious *Paysage du Jura* refused by the Salon Jury and subsequently exhibited, together with other refused works, in Ary Scheffer's studio. Gustave Planche attacks the Jury's severity in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*.

1837. Rousseau visits southern Brittany on the invitation of the young Breton painter, Charles Leroux, and finds the motif for *L'Avenue de Châtaigniers en Vendée* on the Leroux estate.

1838. *Paysage du Jura* refused again at Salon together with a *Vue de Normandie*. Thore's first writings on Rousseau's works appear.

1839. Works for long periods at Barbizon and in the forest of Fontainebleau. Exhibits two works in provincial exhibition at Nantes.

1840. George Sand and Delacroix, having visited Rousseau's studio, procure the State acquisition of *L'Avenue de Châtaigniers en Vendée* for 2,000F.

1841. Rousseau introduced to the young and wealthy collector, Paul Périer, by Diaz. *L'Avenue de châtaigniers en Vendée* refused at Salon, the last time he submits work during the July Monarchy. This work is bought by Périer rather than the State. Works closely with Dupré in the summer in the forest of l'Ile-Adam. Visited there by Périer, Barroilhet and Diaz.

1842. Six-month study trip to the Berry following advice of Dupré. *L'Avenue de Châtaigniers en Vendée* reproduced in *L'Artiste* in etching by Louis Marvy, the first work by Rousseau to be reproduced.

1843. On return to Paris establishes his studio on the Avenue Frochot, next to Dupré.

1844. Travels with Dupré in the Landes and as far south as Pyrenees. Thoré's 'Lettre à Theodore Rousseau' appears in *L'Artiste*.

1845. Works with Dupré at l'Ile-Adam in the autumn and paints *Soleil couchant par temps d'hiver*. The dealer Durand-Ruel first acquires his work. Shows a painting in a small exhibition in the foyer of the Odeon.

1846. Again at l'Ile-Adam with Dupré in the spring. Begins *Une avenue* (Salon of 1849) and the vast *Forêt en hiver, coucher de soleil*. Introduced to Sensier by Dupré. In December, auction of collection of Paul Périer with Rousseau's major works bought in.

1847. Projected marriage to George Sand's adopted daughter, Augustine Brault, ends in failure. Retreats to the forest of Fontainebleau where he is visited by Thoré. The two men undertake a long walk through the forest and Thoré writes an article, 'Par monts et par bois', based on an interview with the artist during this walk on the subject of pantheism and the destruction of the forest through commercial exploitation.

1848. Shows four works at exhibition organised by Baron Taylor in aid of *L'Association des Artistes*.

1849. Return to the Salon for the first time since 1835 with three works. Attracts much critical attention.

1850. Organises auction of 55 of his works in March. Charles Blanc buys several works for the State while a large number of the Parisian public buy single works. Member of the Salon Jury and shows seven paintings, his largest submission so far. Ignored in promotions to Légion d'Honneur. A group of his paintings reproduced in *L'Artiste*.

1851. His works reproduced in the lithographic albums, *Les artistes contemporains* and *Les artistes anciens et modernes*.

1852. Shows two small works at Salon only following persuasion of Nieuwerkerke. Awarded cross of the Légion d'Honneur. Considerable interest in his work at the Collot sale in May. Introduced by Français to Frédéric Hartmann, the Alsatian

industrialist, who is to be his most important collector for much of the Second Empire.

1853. Exhibits single picture at the Salon, *Le Marais dans les Landes*, which receives near unanimous praise.

1854. Elected member of Amsterdam Academy of Fine Arts. The subject of an article in *L'Artiste* by Baschet.

1855. Member of the painting jury for the Exposition Universelle and shows here his first retrospective display with thirteen works dating back to the *Vue prise des côtes à Granville* (1833 Salon). Dispute over hanging of his works which appear in room with work of Decamps. Receives first-class medal and enjoys high reputation with an expansion of collector and dealer interest. Subsequently produces a number of calm and highly finished works for dealers. Assists his friend Millet by anonymously buying *Le Greffeur*, for 4,000F.

1856. Organises social gatherings at Barbizon. Begins to collect Greek coins under influence of Feuardent.

1857. Shows six works at the Salon. Visits Picardy where he makes sketches for the *Village de Becquigny*. Extensive involvement with the dealer Thomas.

1858. Buys two works by Corot at this artist's auction. Discontent with Leroux over the showing of his sketches in a provincial exhibition in Nantes.

1859. Exhibits five paintings at the Salon including Hartmann's *La Ferme dans les Landes* and *Gorges d'Aprémont*. Considerable criticism, especially of *La Ferme* for an excessively meticulous handling. Exchange of letters between Hartmann and Rousseau on subject of these paintings with the collector expressing his dissatisfaction over their handling.

1860. Large retrospective exhibition in gallery of Francis Petit with ten paintings, principally of the 1840s. Reunion with Thoré after the latter's return from exile. Dispute with the dealer Stevens and unable to exhibit *Le Chêne de Roche* at the Brussels Salon.

1861. Holds public sale of twenty-five new works in attempt to improve his financial situation. His one Salon painting, *Le Chêne de roche*, attracts adverse criticism. He complains about hanging of

this work. Makes an etching of the same painting for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, the only reproductive etching he ever makes.

1863. Because of worsening financial position, holds public sale in January of furniture, earthenware and other 'objets d'art'. Influence of Japanese prints evident in two works exhibited at the Salon. Writes long letters to Sensier on subject of the 'modélé'. Undertakes visit to the Alps.

1864. Shows two paintings at the Salon including the *Village de Becquigny* which attracts considerable criticism.

1865. Rumours that he has an incurable illness. Accepts invitation from Napoleon III to his chateau at Compiègne.

1866. Elected supplementary member of Salon Jury and shows two works criticised for their over-meticulousness. In October, his financial problems are solved when the dealers Brame and Durand-Ruel acquire 91 of his pictures, principally his *études*, for 100,000F. Subsequently spends much of this sum on rare high quality prints by artists including Rembrandt and Durer. Elected President of Painting Jury for Exposition Universelle of following year, an indication of the official recognition which he now receives.

1867. A large exhibition of the works bought by Brame and Durand-Ruel at the *Cercle des Arts*, rue de Choiseul, with catalogue introduction by Philippe Burty. Presides over harsh Admissions Jury at 1867 Salon which refuses work of future Impressionists. Shows two paintings at Salon and eight works at the Exposition Universelle where he is awarded one of four grand medals. Overlooked, however, for promotion to position of *officier* of Legion d'Honneur which he sees as grave injustice. Subsequently receives honour through intervention of Emperor. On 1 August, suffers a serious stroke. Sensier writes diary recording Rousseau's thoughts and movements in the last months of his life. Dies on 22 December.

1868. Obituaries by Silvestre (*Le Figaro*), Burty (*Gazette des Beaux-Arts*) and Gautier (*Le Moniteur Universel*). In May, sale of his studio contents and collections of paintings, prints, ancient coins and books.

1869-70. Sensier's *Souvenirs sur Théodore Rousseau* appears in instalments in Durand-Ruel's periodical to promote the modern school, *La Revue Internationale de l'Art et de la Curiosité*

1872. Publication of *Souvenirs sur Théodore Rousseau* in book form by the Durand-Ruel firm.

1876. Amand-Durand and Sensier publish *Etudes et croquis de Theodore Rousseau*.

I

Rousseau and his circle

Chapter 1

Support outside the Salon

Théodore Rousseau has come down to posterity as the paradigm of the refused artist, victimised by a hostile Salon Jury and condemned to poverty through an inability to show work at the Salon- the kind of artist represented by Daumier in his famous lithograph of 1840 (pl. 1). Rousseau's biographer, Alfred Sensier, has been largely responsible for creating this myth around Rousseau, promoting the artist as a great but neglected figure known in his lifetime as 'le grand refusé'. Yet this epithet is a misleading one since Rousseau's work was in fact systematically refused only between 1836 and 1841. Though these refusals did undoubtedly affect the course of his art, Rousseau was surrounded by a network of collectors, artists and critics by the 1840s who provided him with valuable non-Salon support. Indeed between 1842 and 1848 he chose no longer to submit work to the Salon. In this chapter I want to examine Rousseau's relationship with those collectors who chose to support him during his years of absence from the official exhibition. The history of Rousseau's work in the July Monarchy provides a necessary corrective, as we shall see, to that notion perpetuated in much later art history that an artist could only achieve success through exhibition at the Salon¹.

¹ This notion is epitomised by Renoir's well-known comment in a letter to Durand-Ruel of 1881, 'Il y a dans Paris à peine quinze amateurs capables d'aimer un peintre sans le Salon. Il y en a 80,000 qui n'achetèrent même pas un nez si un peintre n'est pas au Salon'. See L. Venturi, *Les Archives de L'Impressionisme* (Paris, 1939), Vol. I, p.115.