Petit Palais
Musée des Beaux-Arts
de la Ville de Paris

Eva Gonzalès

A Free-Spirited Artist

15 September 2026 - 24 January 2027

PRESS RELEASE
June 2026



Eva Gonzalès, *Jeune fille au réveil,* vers 1877-1878. Kunsthalle Bremen – Der Kunstverein in Bremen, photo : Lars Lohrisch, Public Domain Mark 1.0

CURATORS:
Annick Lemoine, former Director of the Petit Palais, President of the Musées d'Orsay and de l'Orangerie

SPECIALIST CURATORS:
Stéphanie Cantarutti, Head Heritage Curator, Head of Modern Painting (1800-1890) at the Petit Palais
Fleur Roos Rosa de Carvalho, Curator of Prints and Drawings at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam

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The Petit Palais is presenting a major monographic exhibition devoted to the painter Eva Gonzalès (1847–1883), prior to its presentation at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam in February 2027. A contemporary of Mary Cassatt and Berthe Morisot—with whom she is often associated—Eva Gonzalès has never been the subject of a large retrospective, neither in France nor internationally. Endowed with a remarkable sensibility, she was the only pupil of Édouard Manet, with whom she shared an exceptional artistic relationship. Supported by a loving and cultured family, she succeeded in establishing her own distinctive voice at a time that was not particularly welcoming to women artists. Featuring almost one hundred works—paintings, pastels, and prints—this exhibition pays tribute to an artist with an assured talent who died prematurely at the age of thirty-four.

The exhibition is organized chronologically so as to trace her career and invites visitors to discover a determined personality by stepping into the intimacy of her private world.

Coming from a well-educated, bourgeois background, Eva Gonzalès benefited from an early age from an environment conducive to the development of her artistic calling. Her father, Emmanuel Gonzalès, was a renowned journalist and man of letters who rubbed shoulders with many important figures of the Parisian art scene, while her mother, musician Céline Ragut, hosted a salon that was

frequented by the French capital's literary and social elite. Although she trained in the studio of Charles Chaplin, the young painter soon broke away to cultivate her own sensitive style, as may be seen in works like *La Psyché* (c. 1869–1870, National Gallery, London), *La Fenêtre* (c. 1865–1870, Denver Art Museum), and *Le Moineau* (c. 1865–1870, private collection).

Her meeting with Édouard Manet in 1869 was a key turning point in her career: she became his only pupil and one of his models, while at the same time, continuing to pursue an independent career. She exhibited regularly at the Salon between 1870 and 1883, without ever becoming a member of the Impressionist group. Notable works presented at the Salon include *Une loge aux Italiens* (1874, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) and *Le Clairon* (1870, Musée de Gajac, Villeneuve-sur-Lot). These paintings clearly reveal the influence of Manet, both in terms of the choice of subject matter and the free and confident brushwork.

The exhibition showcases a subtle and intimate body of work, attentive to female figures and everyday life. Light-filled interior scenes, graceful portraits, and landscapes painted along the Normandy coastline make up a highly refined pictorial world, as evidenced by *Jeune fille au réveil* (1877–1878, Kunsthalle, Bremen) and *Miss et bébé* (1877–1878, National Gallery of Art, Washington).
In 1879, Eva Gonzalès married the painter and printmaker Henri Guérard. Their relationship, nourished by an ongoing artistic exchange, was marked by a genuine intellectual and emotional bond. Her sister Jeanne—who served as her model, pupil, and confidante—also played a major role in her work. Jeanne appears wearing her sister Eva's wedding dress in a striking mise en abyme for a composition that would sadly echo the twists of fate to come. A few years after Eva's untimely death, Jeanne would marry Henri Guérard.

In 1883, Eva Gonzalès's career came to a very abrupt end: she died just a few days after the birth of her son, shortly after the passing of Édouard Manet. Despite the positive critical reception of her work during her lifetime and a retrospective held at the Salon known as *La Vie moderne* in Paris in 1885, her work gradually faded into obscurity.
Long overshadowed by the major narratives of Modernism, Eva Gonzalès is now considered a pivotal figure in the painting of her era. This exhibition aims to restore her rightful place in art history and to reveal—through her unique vision—the brilliance of a corpus that has gone unrecognized for too long. A selection of works by Berthe Morisot, Mary Cassatt, and Marie Bracquemond are presented alongside hers, pointing at the intersecting trajectories of the female artists of that time, and the conditions in which they created their art in the late nineteenth century.

The exhibition was organized in collaboration with the Van Gogh Museum of Amsterdam and benefits from the exceptional support of the Musée d'Orsay.

Van Gogh Museum Amsterdam

Musée d'Orsay

With the support of Musée Marmottan Monet Académie des Beaux-Arts

PRACTICAL INFORMATION
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Tuesday to Sunday from 10am-6pm.
Late-night opening on Friday and Saturday until 10pm.

Admission:
Full price: €14
Reduced price: €12

Bookings advised on petitpalais.paris.en

Suitable for visitors with disabilities.



Eva Gonzalès, *Une loge aux italiens*, v. 1874.
Huile sur toile, 97,7 x 130 cm.
Paris, musée d'Orsay. © GrandPalaisRmn (musée d'Orsay) / Hervé Lewandowski