The main portion of the collection of paintings brought together by Adelaide Milton de Groot was lent to the Museum as early as 1936, not long after the painter collector returned to America from a prolonged residence in France. Devoted especially to works by French painters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Miss de Groot’s loan brought to the Museum’s galleries valuable works by artists then considered germane to the Museum of Modern Art but not yet represented at the Metropolitan. Among the artists whose paintings were thus offered to public contemplation were Van Gogh, Gauguin, Toulouse-Lautrec, Utrillo, Morisot, Sisley, Pascin, Picasso, Matisse, Derain, Vuillard, Bonnard, Dufy, Rousseau le Douanier, and Modigliani. In 1942 The Garden at Cagnes, a fine late Renoir in his abstract style, was added to the group.

Among the most interesting of these paintings, now at the Museum for twelve years, is Manet’s unfinished portrait of his wife, a work first exhibited in 1867. Seemingly from a far earlier era but actually painted a scant eight years before is the sensitive and decorative portrait of Countess Lamsdorff by Winterhalter. The collection also includes fine American paintings by Eakins, Chase, Homer, and Eilshemius.

Several years after her arrival in New York Miss de Groot added some paintings of earlier periods. Among these are Rubens’ skillful study for his early Dispute of the Church Fathers, Jordaens’ firm and compact Holy Family, and the sculpturesque Saint Christopher by Piazzetta.

Above: The Tropics, by Henri Rousseau (1844-1910), a characteristic view of an imaginary jungle painted about 1907.
A Study of Two Heads, by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640). Rubens must have painted this study early in his career, about 1609, when he was preparing for the church of Saint Paul in Antwerp the large altarpiece illustrating the Dispute about the Holy Sacrament. The vigorous head with the curly beard and parted lips appears again in this altarpiece, on the figure beside the two mitered Church Fathers at the left. The upturned eyes and burning expression suggest that Rubens intended a prophet, or perhaps Saint Paul. 1609 was the year in which he began one of his most famous works, the noble Elevation of the Cross now in the cathedral of Antwerp.
The Holy Family with Shepherds, by Jacob Jordaens (1593-1678). Signed, and dated 1616. This is the earliest dated painting by Jordaens known today and a work of his most pleasing period. In the type of the Virgin and the rendering of the flesh tones Jordaens shows how much he depended at this time on his great Flemish contemporary, Rubens.
Saint Christopher, by Giovanni Battista Piazzetta (1682-1754). The great beauty of this picture lies in the rich textures of the paint and in the bold and interesting modeling in light and shadow. These characteristics of Piazzetta’s art were later developed by his gifted follower Tiepolo into a related, but more delicate style, magnificently light and airy.
Countess Maria Ivanovna Lamsdorff, by François Xavier Winterhalter (1806-1873). Signed, and dated 1859. The young countess, who was the wife of the Russian ambassador in Paris, is shown here when she was only twenty. Winterhalter, though born in Germany, settled in Paris, where he became the favorite painter of the Empress Eugénie. In this portrait he has managed to convey not only a summary effect of elegance but much of the lady's grace and fragile appeal.
Self-Portrait, by Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890). Van Gogh painted this portrait in Paris in 1886 or 1887, when, under the influence of the contemporary French Impressionists, especially the pointillists, his style changed abruptly and his color became much brighter. On the reverse is a painting of a peasant peeling a potato, showing still the heavy brushwork and dark tonality of the works he had painted a few years before when he was at Neunen in Holland.
Madame Manet, by Édouard Manet (1832-1883). Suzanne Leenhoff was a pianist, with a considerable reputation as an interpreter of Mozart and Beethoven, who had given lessons to Manet when he was a boy. In 1863 she was married to him in her native town of Zalt-Bommel in Holland. Manet showed this portrait of his wife in his exhibition on the Place de l'Alma in 1867.
The Englishman at the Moulin Rouge, by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901). From this pastel sketch, made in 1892, Toulouse-Lautrec created a handsome colored lithograph. He has shown here one of his friends, W. T. Warrener, an English student of painting, with Rayon d'Or and La Sauterelle, performers at the Montmartre café which his works immortalized.