



**Albert Dubois-Pillet**  
(1846-1890)

**Quai de Lesseps - Rouen**

c. 1887

*signed bottom left "à Pissarro  
hommage/duBOIS Pillet"*

*Oil on canvas*

*h 32 cm x b 46 cm*

*WRM Dep. FC 743*





Albert Dubois-Pillet – Quai de Lesseps - Rouen  
Brief Report on Technology and Condition

## Brief Report

This view of a relaxed quayside scene was a homage and presumably also a gift to Camille Pissarro, the artist's friend and the first owner of the picture. Dubois-Pillet composed his motif along an austere diagonal and sketched in first in red chalk(?) on the canvas which he had presumably primed himself in white. The red chalk lines can be seen in various places along the boundaries between the different colours (figs. 6-8). The painting was executed in the Pointillist manner, its coloration is balanced and harmonious, and so dense that hardly any of the ground is visible (fig. 9). When applying the colours, the painter proceeded in a highly rational fashion: the first, very coarse, comma-like brush-strokes are then interrupted by short brush-strokes in a different colour, so that the underpainting in many areas remains visible and continues to form the basis of the structure. Paint applications are layered, and the direction of the strokes varies.

In the area of the sea Dubois-Pillet even changes to horizontal strokes crossed with vertical lines. In some cases he worked wet-in-wet, but there were also dry phases. He used pure colours along with blends (figs. 11, 12), but avoided dull colours and often contrasted blue and pink, violet and yellow. One particular feature is the signature and dedication, added after the painting was dry; here Dubois-Pillet used the mixture of capitals and lower-case that had been typical of him since 1884 [Bazalgette 1976, p. 53] (fig. 3). The original texture of the surface has been impaired by earlier restoration measures (fig. 10).



### Picture support canvas

Standard format	close to P8 horizontal (46.0 x 33.0 cm), deviating by up to 1.0 cm
Weave	tabby weave
Canvas characteristics	very close weave, fine fabric with 25 threads per cm vertical and horizontal (fig. 4)
Stretching	not authentic as a result of lining; the stretchmarks from the first stretching are however still visible (fig. 4)
Stretcher/strainer	stretcher with vertical centre-bar, authenticity not determined (fig. 2)
Stretcher/strainer depth	2.0 cm
Traces left by manufacture/processing	industrially produced, with additional piece on the bottom bar
Manufacturer's/dealer's marks	not determined (lined)

### Ground

Sizing	not determined
Colour	white
Application	following cutting-to-size and stretching, drips on the turnover edge
Binding medium	not determined
Texture	very thin, single layer, thicker at the edges



### Composition planning/Underpainting/Underdrawing

Medium/technique	red chalk(?), microscopic reddish-brown particles can be discerned along some outlines; in places the underdrawing medium seems to have combined with the paint (fig. 6, 7)
Extent/character	all the main elements of the composition were underdrawn (fig. 8, f. mapping)
Pentimenti	–

### Paint layer

Paint application/technique and artist's own revision	lay-in of the picture elements in different colours in fairly large comma-like brush-strokes, which however did not cover the ground completely; the picture elements were developed wet-in-wet, coarse brush-strokes being sub-divided and blended by finer ones; final highlights were added after the main areas of paint had dried; altogether a very dense application of paint, there are hardly any places where the ground is visible; the foreground was originally in warm colours, but these were replaced by cooler blue and violet tones
Painting tools	brushes of different degrees of fineness up to 3 mm in breadth
Surface structure	the original texture of the surface has been considerably affected by a lining measure
Palette	visual microscopic inspection reveals: white, intense yellow, medium red, red lake, blue, violet, medium green, bluish-green and blends VIS spectrometry: chrome(?) or cadmium yellow(?), vermillion, rose madder, cobalt blue, Prussian blue, ultramarine(?)
Binding mediums	presumably oil



Albert Dubois-Pillet – Quai de Lesseps - Rouen  
Brief Report on Technology and Condition

### Surface finish

Authenticity/Condition	varnished, not authentic
------------------------	--------------------------

### Signature/Mark

When?	picture was signed on the dry paint-layer with a brush in blue paint
-------	--

Autograph signature	in the artist's own hand, presumably added when he gave the painting to Pissarro, as the dedication and signature were added at the same time (fig. 3)
---------------------	--

Serial	–
--------	---

### Frame

Authenticity	not authentic
--------------	---------------

### State of preservation

Considerable abrasion of the paint-layer and ground on the high points of the canvas weave, particularly striking in the region of the sky and at the edges; the abrasion occurred prior to the lining (fig. 10); unmistakable changes to the surface structure, including pressure marks in the paint layer; various retouching measures.

### Additional remarks

–



## Literature

- Bazalgette 1976: Lily Bazalgette, Albert Dubois-Pillet, sa vie et son œuvre (1846-1890), Paris 1976, p. 53
- Budde/Schaefer 2001: Rainer Budde, Barbara Schaefer, Miracle de la couleur (exhib. cat. Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, 8 September - 9 December 2001), Cologne 2001, cat. no. 39, p. 104, with ill.

## Source of illustrations

All illustrations and figures Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud

## Examination methods used

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| ✓ Incident light                       | ✓ VIS spectrometry                       |
| ✓ Raking light                         | – Wood identification                    |
| – Reflected light                      | – FTIR (Fourier transform spectroscopy)  |
| – Transmitted light                    | – EDX (Energy Dispersive X-ray analysis) |
| ✓ Ultraviolet fluorescence             | – Microchemical analysis                 |
| ✓ Infrared reflectography              |  |
| – False-colour infrared reflectography |  |
| – X-ray                                |  |
| ✓ Stereomicroscopy                     |  |

Author of examination:	Christine Dörr
Author of brief report:	Hans Portsteffen

Date: 09/2006
Date: 09/2007



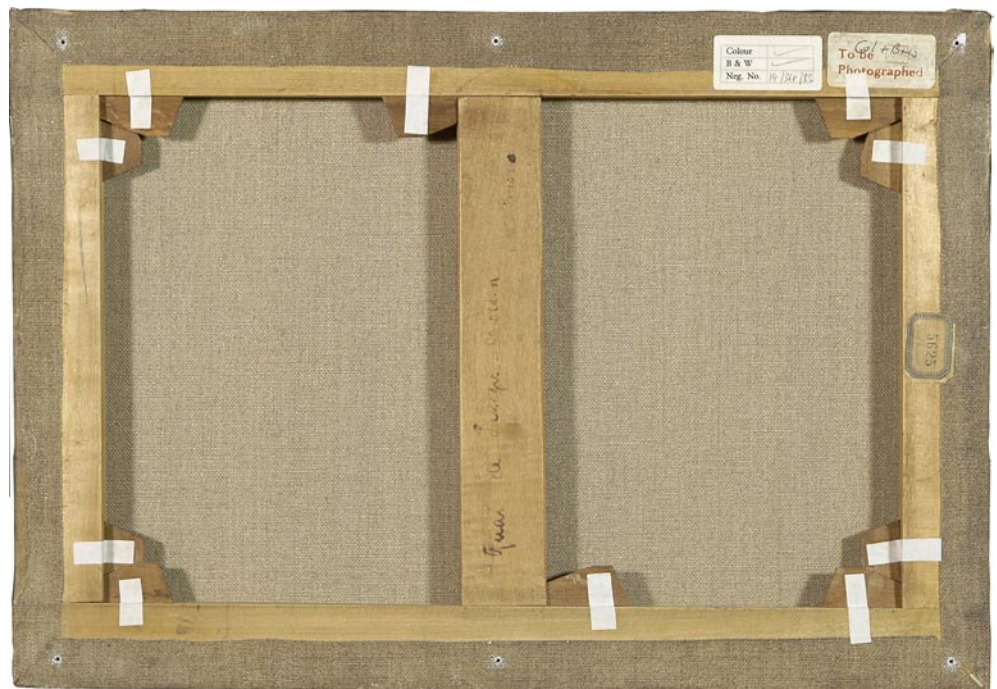


Albert Dubois-Pillet – Quai de Lesseps - Rouen  
Brief Report on Technology and Condition

Fig. 1  
Recto



Fig. 2  
Verso, lined







Albert Dubois-Pillet – Quai de Lesseps - Rouen  
Brief Report on Technology and Condition

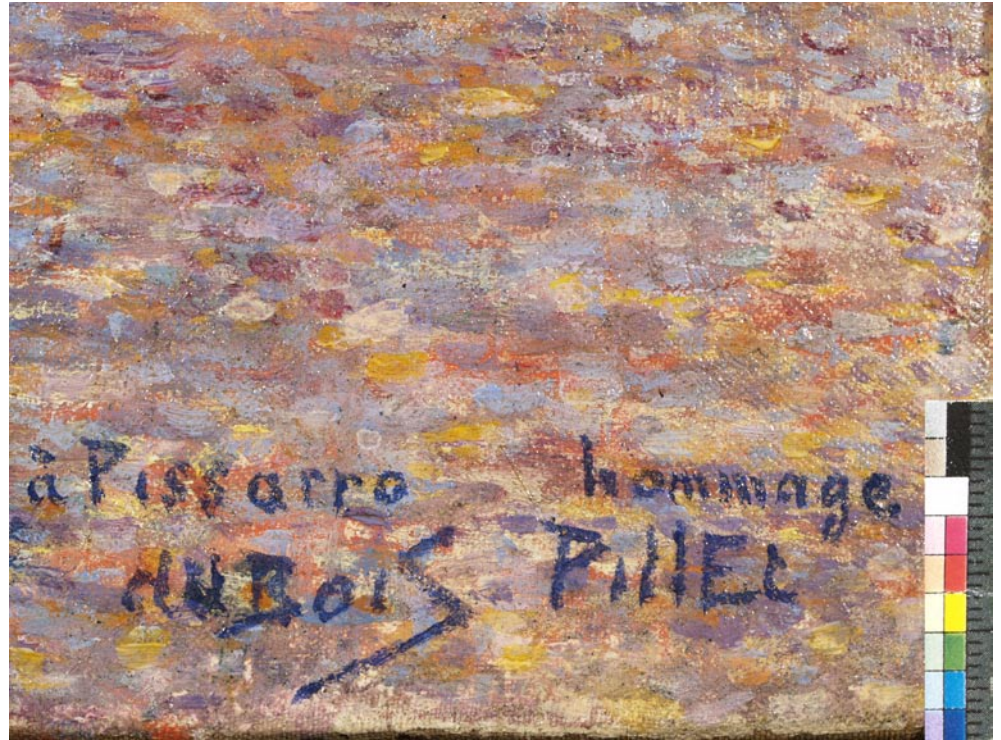


Fig. 3  
Detail, signature and  
dedication



Fig. 4  
Detail, foldover edge  
with stretchmarks  
resulting from the  
original stretching;  
replaced nails





Fig. 5  
Detail, raking light;  
stretchmarks resulting  
from the original stretch-  
ing, reinforcement of  
the canvas structure by  
lining

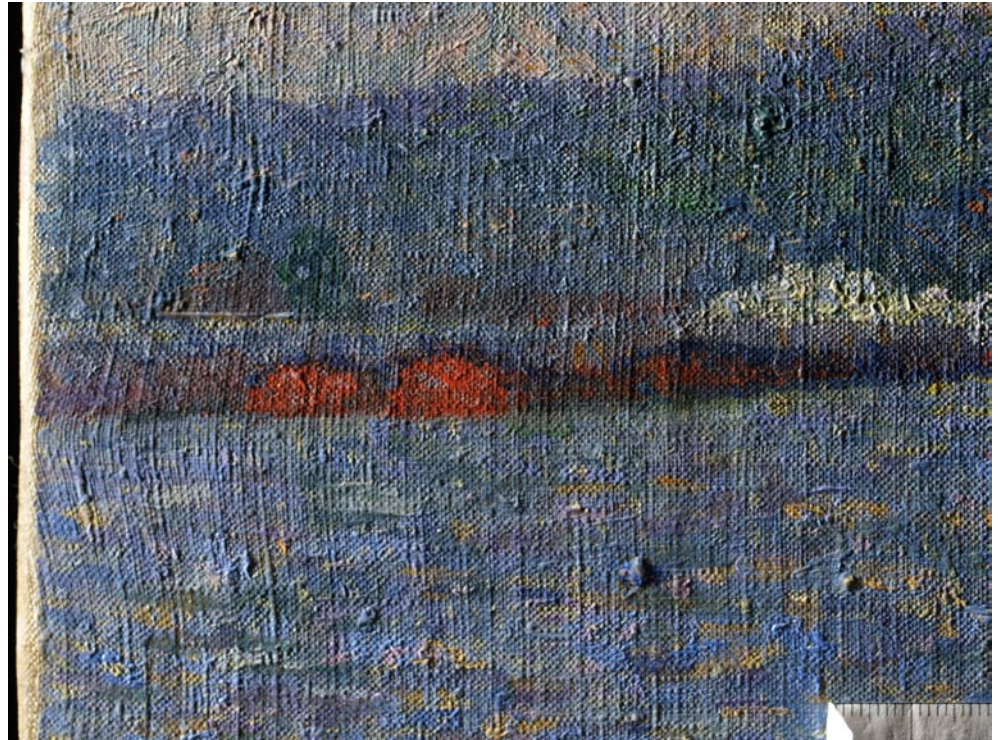
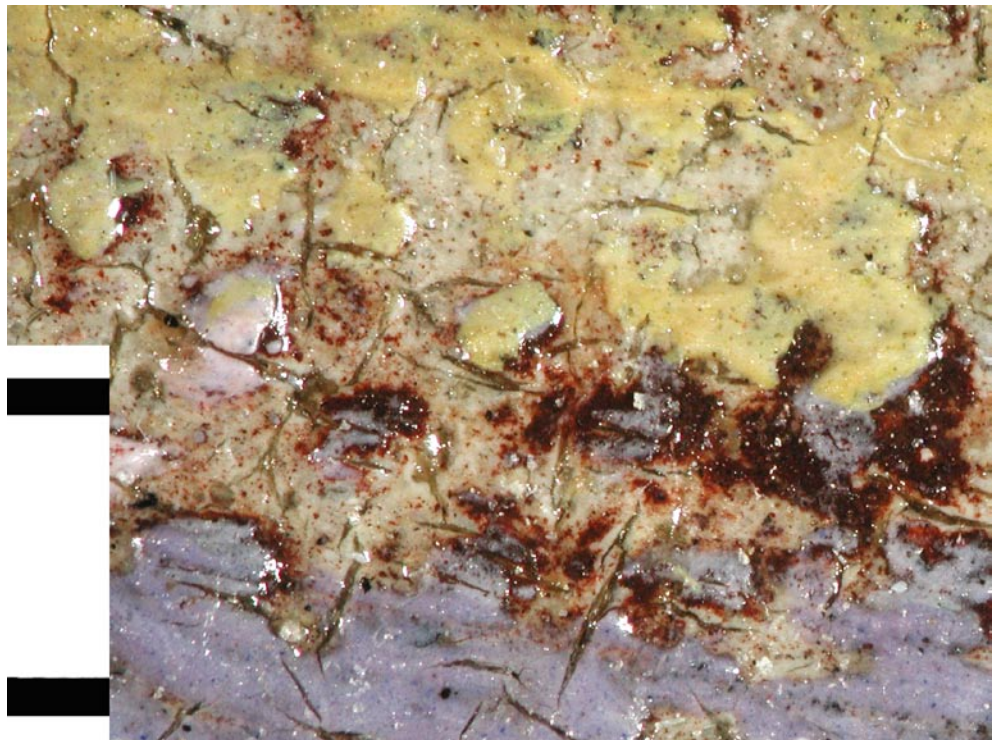


Fig. 6  
Red-chalk underdrawing  
where there are gaps in  
the paint,  
microscopic photograph  
(M = 1 mm)







Albert Dubois-Pillet – Quai de Lesseps - Rouen  
Brief Report on Technology and Condition



Fig. 7  
Attempt at reconstruction, red-chalk stroke on ground, varnished, microscopic photograph (M = 1 mm)



Fig. 8  
Mapping of the visible red-chalk strokes of the underdrawing





Fig. 9  
Very dense paint  
applications,  
microscopic photograph  
(M = 1 mm)

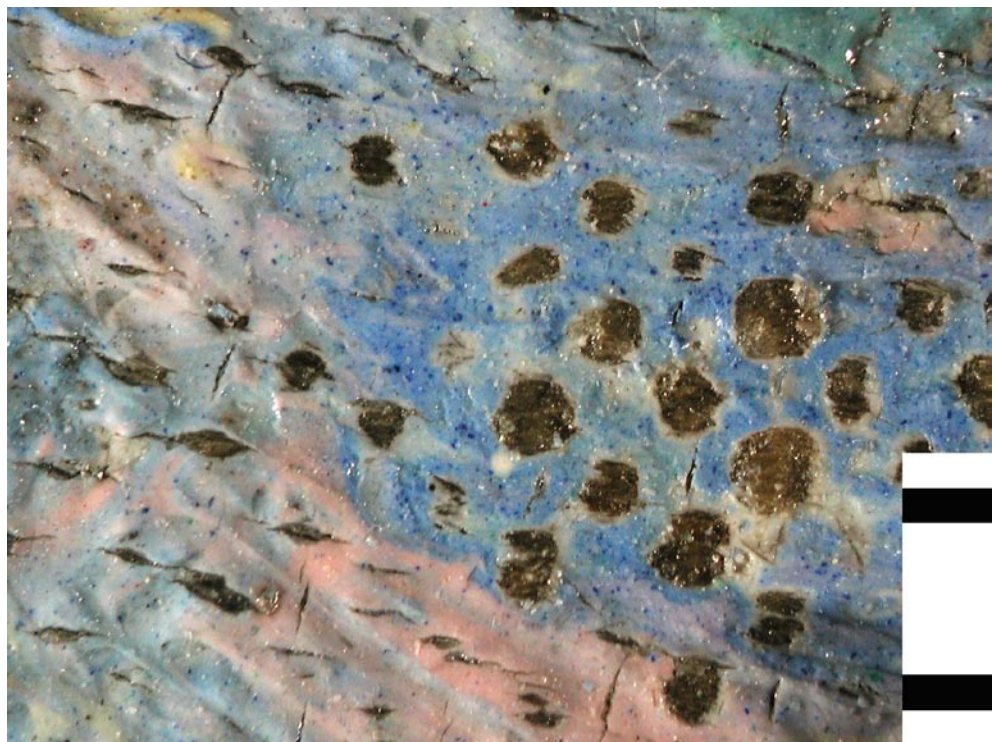


Fig. 10  
Abrasion of the paint-  
layer on the high points  
of the canvas weave;  
subsequent lining has  
totally flattened the  
surface of the picture,  
microscopic photograph  
(M = 1 mm)





Fig. 11  
Blend of pink and  
pale blue, microscopic  
photograph (M = 1 mm)



Fig. 12  
Rose madder,  
microscopic photograph  
(M = 1 mm)