

Our Art website: <http://www.kalitheafreeuk.com>  
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# SUMMER EQUINOX - Edition #10

21<sup>st</sup> June 2023



‘Rest is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under trees on a summer’s day, listening to the murmur of the water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means a waste of time.’

Recreation - John Lubbock 1894

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## Welcome to our June 2023 edition

We hope you’re well and now that warmer weather is upon us at long last, have started to enjoy the summer.

### Important Announcement – Please note

In our March edition, we mentioned that, because we have yet to produce sufficient brand new work to exhibit, we won’t be participating in this year’s FarOpen Art Trail Exhibition. It is with much regret that, for the same reason, we have also decided to cease production of these, our quarterly newsletters. At some future time, when we do have new work to exhibit, you can rest assured that, as a former subscriber, you’ll be the first to know, via a ‘special bulletin’. Meanwhile, we hope you’ll enjoy reading this, our final edition.

## Visit us online, where we’re still open all hours!

Remember that you can still visit our Art Website at:

<http://www.kalitheafreeuk.com>

where not only can you see the full catalogue of all our art but also, you can directly purchase cards, prints, original works and enquire about bespoke commissions.

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## 2023 FarOpen Art Trail

Art lovers really will be spoilt for choice this year, as no less than 73 of our fellow FarOpen members will be opening their studios between Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July and Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July, inclusive. Details of all participating artists and makers, plus their locations and opening times, can be found on the FarOpen website at:

[www.faropen.co.uk](http://www.faropen.co.uk)

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## “Art and About”

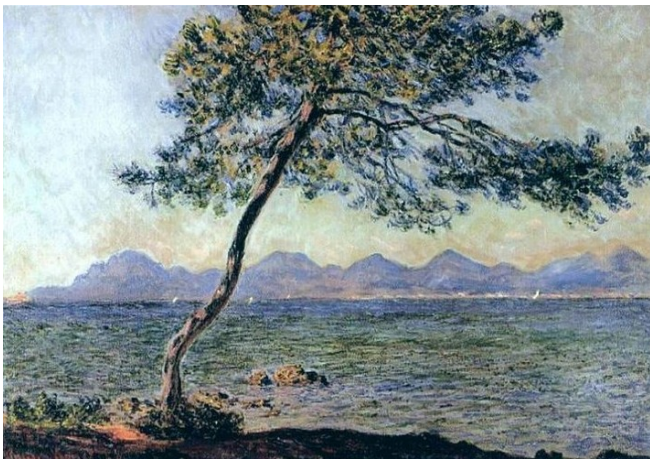
This is the last in our series featuring artists whose work we've encountered during our travels.

### An Artsy Road Trip Along the Riviera... and Beyond

This was the prequel to the rail-based trip we featured in our spring issue. With hindsight, we're very glad we did it in 2015, before Brexit, the Covid pandemic and the energy crisis made travelling more complicated – not to mention, expensive! In addition, there was the 'age factor': back then, it was almost impossible to read a travel article that didn't mention 'bucket lists' or – and especially in those aimed at the 'over fifties' – the phrase 'adventure before dementia'.

So, although we started planning our trip with a strictly artsy theme in mind, we became increasingly side-tracked by other attractions we could take in en-route and consequently, ended up with a rather ambitious itinerary, indeed.

We flew out to Nice with EasyJet and having already decided that we wouldn't need a car for the first couple of days, we caught a regular, reasonably priced local bus to Antibes where, in 1888 Monet had come to paint. Staying for four months at the Château de la Pinade, a large mansion converted into art studios on the Cap d'Antibes, Monet did 40 paintings of Antibes Bay.



"At Cap D'Antibes" - Monet

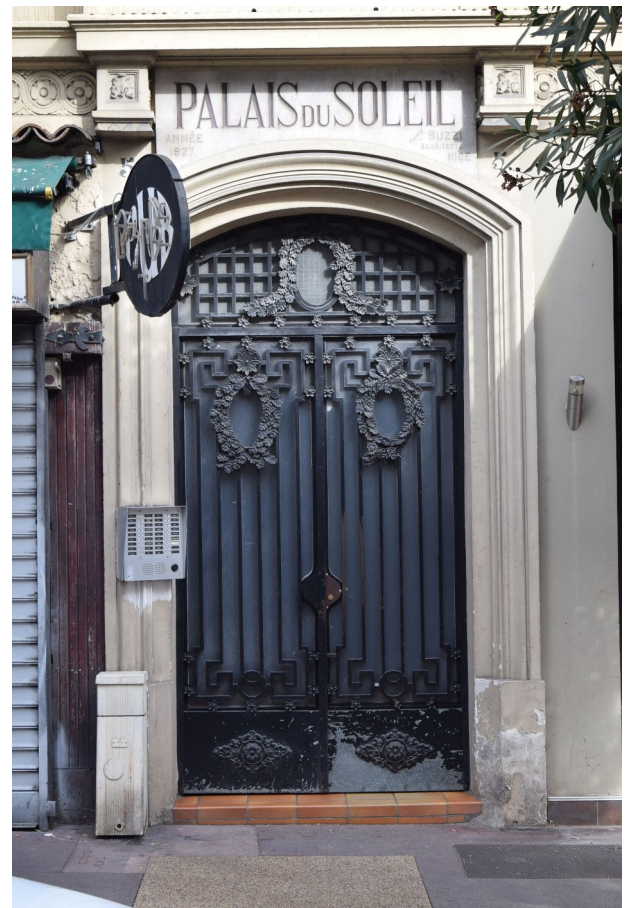
Those of you familiar with Monet's work will know of his recurring interest in watery

subjects, right from his early paintings of the cliffs at Étretat and other places along France's northern coast but while a pilgrimage there might be on the cards in the future, the prospect of soaking up the sunshine and swimming in a warm sea was infinitely more appealing!

We stayed at Le Petit Castel, a small but charming family-run hotel, situated on a quiet, tree-lined avenue which, on foot, was only five minutes from the beach and twenty from Juan Les Pins, where the art deco architecture of many of the hotels evoke the glamorous heyday of the Riviera in the 1920s.



The decorative Juan-les-Pins railway bridge in town



Palais du Soleil (built 1927) - Juan-les-Pins.



Another 1920s Art Deco gem in Juan-les-Pins.



1920s revisited.

On the third day, we collected our pre-booked hire car and headed up into the Maritime Alps, in search of the Gîte de la Baume, situated not far from the ancient village of Castellane, dominated by an iconic landmark, the Chapelle Nôtre Dame du Roc.

On arrival at the Gîte, the place seemed deserted and when, bleary-eyed, the proprietor eventually did come to the door, he told us check in time wasn't until 5 p.m. Apart from this initial misunderstanding, the Gîte was everything we'd imagined it to be: rustic and traditional but with all mod cons

and serving locally produced, home-cooked food at dinner and breakfast.



The Chapelle Nôtre Dame du Roc is just visible from the village

After one night, we were on our way again, heading west through the stunning scenery of the Verdon Gorge, though unfortunately, when we pulled over to photograph the sublime view, our camera chose that very moment to conk out on us!

Eventually we arrived at the next point on our pilgrimage: Cézanne's home town of Aix-en-Provence, when we first stayed at the Cézanne Hotel and paid an albeit fleeting visit to Cézanne's Atelier (both of which we described fully in last quarter's rail trip article). In 1883, when Cézanne was in L'Estaque, he was visited by two other Impressionist luminaries, Renoir and Monet, who had teamed up for a painting trip in the region. Incidentally, during our visit to the Atelier, we saw an original letter from Monet to Cézanne on display in one of the 'memorabilia cabinets'.

After just one night in Aix, it was time to head to Arles but not before we'd made an unscheduled detour to Avignon, where we couldn't resist the temptation to dance on the famous bridge and sing the song:

*Sur le pont d'Avignon  
 Tout le monde y danse, danse,  
 Sur le pont d'Avignon,  
 Tout le monde y danse en rond.*



The remains of the celebrated Pont D'Avignon.

In Arles, we experienced the 'Festival du Cheval', ate in the Van Gogh Café and stayed for two nights at the Hôtel le Rodin (all of which we described fully in our rail trip article). We then returned to Aix for one night, after which we intended to head back to Antibes via the coast road but as we hadn't yet pre-booked any accommodation, we searched online and booked two nights B&B, near the small coastal village of Le Pradet.

On checking in to the hotel, the manager informed us that the adjacent restaurant wouldn't be open during our stay, so we drove out to the nearby little harbour where, in its sole restaurant, we had a very enjoyable sea food lunch and later, dinner. However, on our second night, disaster struck! The harbour restaurant was in total darkness, so we drove around for miles trying but failing to find any eatery at all that was open. In the end, there was nothing for it but to return to our hotel room where, on finding a nearly empty bottle of wine, we finished off the last few dregs and had a very early night indeed.

The following day, after a long drive along the coast road, stopping only for a short spot of sunbathing on a beach at Le Lavandou, we were glad to get back to the civilization of Antibes, where we checked back in to the Petit Castel hotel, to enjoy our remaining two days relaxing on the beach and especially, to be spoilt for choice by all the many eateries, all of which, to our immense relief, were open.



Juan-le-Pins - Le Petit Castell's breakfast courtyard .

In retrospect, although it was rather manic and stressful at times, we thoroughly enjoyed our adventurous road trip. However, when we returned to the region in 2018, we were more than happy to let the train take the strain. Well, if you are heading for France this summer, we wish you Bonnes Vacances and, if you're driving, do 'tenez le droit'!

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