

CÉZANNE, MONET, RENOIR
FRENCH IMPRESSIONISM FROM THE MUSEUM
LANGMATT

Lower Belvedere
25 September 2025 to 8 February 2026



Pierre-August Renoir, *The Boat*, c. 1878
© Museum Langmatt, Stiftung Sidney and Jenny Brown, Baden, Switzerland

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The Belvedere's exhibition of more than sixty works from the Museum Langmatt in Baden near Zurich showcases one of the most important private collections of French Impressionism in Europe.

General Director Stella Rollig: Jenny and Sidney Brown were creating their collection at the same time as international acquisitions were being made for the Modern Gallery in Vienna, the predecessor institution of the Belvedere, thereby adding a core collection of Impressionist art to the museum's holdings. It is therefore a particular pleasure that the Belvedere was one of only three international museums selected to display the treasures of Langmatt while the Swiss museum is being renovated.

Jenny and Sidney Brown started building up their collection of French Impressionism in 1908, a time when artists such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Paul Gauguin were not yet widely acclaimed. Paul Cézanne's still life *Peaches, Carafe, and Person*, for example, was the first painting by the artist to enter a collection in Switzerland. Collecting such a wide range of Impressionist art of such high quality was made possible by the family fortune and Sidney's position as technical director of the global electrical engineering group Brown, Boveri & Cie.

The Museum Langmatt's collection is remarkable both because it was amassed so early on and as it reflects the personalities of the collectors and shifts in cultural-political interests, said curator Alexander Klee.

Jenny and Sidney Brown rarely loaned works to exhibitions during their lifetimes, the collection's quality and scope remaining largely under the radar as a result. Sidney's death in 1941 brought an end to their collecting; Jenny survived her husband by twenty-seven years and died in 1968. Yet even after their deaths, works from their collection were hardly ever on public display. This was to change in 1987 when John Alfred Brown, their last surviving son, bequeathed Villa Langmatt with its park, exquisite interior, and, above all, collection of French Impressionist paintings to the city of Baden. The Art Nouveau Villa Langmatt was not only a residence but also a platform for a family's passion for art. Since 1990 it has been open to the public as the Museum Langmatt.

EXHIBITION TEXTS

Key examples of French Impressionism were among the first works acquired for the Modern Gallery in Vienna, now the Belvedere, when it was founded in 1903, and feature in its permanent displays today. At around the same time—in 1908—industrialist couple Jenny and Sidney Brown started assembling what would become one of Europe's most important private collections of French Impressionism. Based in Baden near Zurich, the couple started collecting at a time when artists such as Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Paul Gauguin were not yet widely known in Switzerland. Paul Cézanne's still life *Peaches, Carafe, and Person*, for example, was the first painting by this artist ever to enter a collection in the country. The Browns acquired a representative selection of Impressionist paintings from international galleries, placing a particular focus on the work of Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Comprising mainly small-scale works, their collection fit well in the rooms of their Art Nouveau home Villa Langmatt, integrating art into their daily lives. The Brown family's former residence was opened to the public in 1990 as the Museum Langmatt. As the museum is temporarily closed for renovation, a selection of works from this unique collection can now be displayed at the Belvedere.

The Collection of Jenny and Sidney Brown

Industrialist couple Sidney Brown (1865–1941) and Jenny Sulzer-Brown (1871–1968) laid the foundations of their art collection early on in their marriage. Sidney worked for Brown, Boveri & Cie. (BBC), the electrical engineering group established by his brother, Charles. Despite acquiring two paintings by contemporary French artists while honeymooning in Paris in 1896, at the turn of the century the Browns were still mainly interested in art from the Munich Secession. They had a gallery room added to Villa Langmatt especially to present the large paintings they had recently purchased. From 1908 their focus shifted, and they sold many pieces from their existing collection to fund the acquisition of French Impressionist works. The family's collection was not confined to paintings, however. Until Sidney Brown's death they also acquired French furniture from the 18th and 19th centuries, sculptures, drawings, textiles, silver, porcelain, and Chinese ceramics.

The Museum Langmatt

In 1899 Jenny and Sidney Brown commissioned Swiss architect Karl Moser to design a villa on the site known as the "lange Matte" (long meadow) above River Limmat in Baden near Zurich. This magnificent Art Nouveau building surrounded by a park became the family home for the couple and their three sons, Sidney Hamlet (1898–1970), John Alfred (1900–1987), and Harry Frank (1905–1972). In 1979 John Alfred bequeathed the villa and art collection to the city of Baden, stipulating that the ensemble was to be preserved as a museum. The property was adapted after his death and has been open to the public as the Museum Langmatt since 1990. In the same period as the creation of the Langmatt Collection, Impressionist works were also being acquired for the Modern Gallery in Vienna—now the Belvedere—and these form part of its core collection today.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Exhibition	Cézanne, Monet, Renoir French Impressionism from the Museum Langmatt
Curator	Alexander Klee
Duration	25 September 2025 to 8 February 2026
Location	Lower Belvedere, Rennweg 6, 1030 Vienna
Opening Hours	Monday to Sunday, 10 am to 6 pm
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For more information on the exhibition and high-resolution press photos please visit www.belvedere.at/en/press