

Listening Practice Set 5

Directions: Read the script. Give yourself 10 minutes to answer the questions in this practice set.

Women Artists of Late Nineteenth-Century Paris

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| Narrator | Listen to part of a lecture in an art history class. |
| Professor | We've been talking about the art world of the late nineteenth century in Paris, and today I'd like to look at the women who went to Paris at that time to become artists. Now, um, from your reading, what do you know |

about Paris ... about the art world of Paris during the late nineteenth century?

Male student People came there from all over the world to study.

Female student It had a lot of art schools and artists who taught painting. There were ... our book mentions classes for women artists. And, uh, it was a good place to go to study art.

Professor If you wanted to become an artist, Paris was not a good place to go—Paris was the place to go. And women could find skilled instructors

there. Um, before the late nineteenth century, if they ... women who wanted to become artists had to take private lessons or learn from family members. They had more limited options than men did. But around 1870, some artists in Paris began to offer classes for female students. These classes were for women only.

And by the end of the nineteenth century, it became much more common for women and men to study together in the same classes. So ... so within a few

decades, things had changed significantly.

Uh, OK, let's back up again and talk about the time period from the 1860s to the 1880s, and talk more about what happened in women's art classes. In 1868, a private art academy opened in Paris—and for decades it was probably the most famous private art school in the world. Its founder, Rodolphe Julian, was a canny businessman and quickly established his school as a premiere destination for women artists. What he did was, after an initial trial

period of mixed classes, he changed the school policy; he completely separated the men and women students.

Female student Any reason why he did that?

Professor Well, like I said, Julian was a brilliant businessman with progressive ideas—he saw that another small private art school where all the students were women was very popular at that time, and that's probably why he adopted the women-only classes. These classes were typically offered by, um ... by established artists and were held in the studio, the ... the

place where they painted. This was a big deal because finally women could study art in a formal setting. And there was another benefit to the group setting of these classes. The classes included weekly criticism. And the teacher would rank the art of all the students in the class, from best to worst. How would you like it if I did that in this class?

Male student No way!

Female student But our textbook said that the competitive ... the competition was good for women. It helped them

see where they needed to improve.

Professor

Isn't that interesting? One woman artist, um, her name was Marie Bashkirtseff. Uh, Bashkirtseff once wrote how she felt about a classmate's work. She thought her classmate's art was much better than her own, and it gave her an incentive to do better. Overall, the competition in the women's art classes gave women more confidence. Confidence that they could also compete in the art world after their schooling. And even though Bashkirtseff couldn't study

in the same classes as men, she was having an impact as an artist. Um, just look at the Salon. What do you know about the Salon?

Female student It was a big exhibition, um, a big art show that they had in Paris every year. The art had to be accepted by judges.

Male student It was a big deal. You could make a name for yourself.

Professor You could have a painting or sculpture in the Salon and go back to your home country saying you'd been a success in Paris. Um, it was sort of a seal of approval. It

was a great encouragement for an artist's career. And by the last two decades of the nineteenth century, one fifth of the paintings in the Salon were by women—much higher than in the past.

In fact, Marie Bashkirtseff herself had a painting in the Salon in 1881. Interestingly, this masterpiece, called *In the Studio*, is a painting of the interior of Julian's art school. Um, it's not in your textbook—I'll show you the painting next week ... Uh, the painting depicts an active, crowded studio with women drawing and painting a

live model. It was actually, Bashkirtseff actually followed Julian's savvy suggestion, and painted her fellow students in a class at the school with the artist herself at the far right—a great advertisement for the school when the painting eventually hung at the Salon, for a women's studio had never been painted before.

Directions: Answer the questions.

1. What is the lecture mainly about?

- A Why the Salon exhibitions became popular among women artists in Paris
- B Why French society did not approve of art schools for women
- C How opportunities for women artists in Paris improved
- D How women artists in Paris cooperated with one another

2. What point does the professor make about Julian when he mentions that Julian's art school offered some classes only for women?

- A Julian's school was the first art school in Paris to offer women-only classes.
- B Julian wanted to encourage the distinctive style of women in Paris.
- C Julian viewed himself as a social reformer.
- D Julian possessed outstanding business skills.

3. What does the professor emphasize as one benefit of competition in women's classes?

- A Women gained more confidence in their artistic abilities.
- B Women became instructors in private art studios.
- C Women were able to sell their paintings for large amounts of money.
- D Women created new styles of painting.

4. According to the professor, what were two ways that the situation of women artists had changed by the end of the nineteenth century in Paris? Choose 2 answers.

- A Women and men took art classes together.
- B Women artists played a greater role in the Salon exhibitions.
- C More schools were established by women artists.
- D Fewer women artists were traveling to Paris.

5. What does the professor imply about Bashkirtseff's painting *In the Studio*?

- A It was one of many paintings that depicted a women's studio.
- B It did not bring Bashkirtseff recognition for her artistic ability.
- C It was criticized for an unrealistic depiction of women artists.
- D It was beneficial for both Bashkirtseff and the school where she studied.

6. Part of the lecture is repeated below. Read it and answer the question.

Female student It had a lot of art schools and artists who taught painting. There were ... our book mentions classes for women artists. And, uh, it was a good place to go to study art.

Professor If you wanted to become an artist, Paris was not a good place to go—Paris was the place to go.

What does the professor mean when he says this:

Professor If you wanted to become an artist, Paris was not a good place to go—Paris was the place to go.

- A Paris was a popular place to visit but not the best place to study art.
- B Paris was the most important place for an artist to study and work.
- C Living in Paris was difficult for women artists from other countries.
- D Studying in Paris was beneficial for some artists, but not for others.