

# Peder Balke

Norwegian, 1804–1887

## *Finnmark Landscape*, c. 1860

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

The lonely, craggy tree set in an expansive landscape was an important motif in Romantic landscapes. Here it may represent the resilience and endurance of life. The tree stands in the flat landscape of the Finnmark region in northeastern Norway. Wrapped in a thick coat of snow, all life seems to be frozen on this endless plateau. Instead of depicting a famous landmark or vista, Balke envisioned a landscape with no distinctive features. He painted this vision of Finnmark almost thirty years after he had visited the region.

# Peder Balke

Norwegian, 1804–1887

## *Old Trees*, late 1840s

Oil on paper, mounted on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Balke painted this small sketch extremely quickly, leaving parts of it unfinished, as you can see in the foreground.

In *Old Trees*, Balke explores the dramatic effects of light in a mountainous landscape. The enormous mountain or cliff to the right creates a steep diagonal line that is mirrored by the slanted trunk of the dying tree. Although Balke did not note the location, the view evokes famous Norwegian sites such as the North Cape.

# Peder Balke

Norwegian, 1804–1887

## *Seascape*, 1860s

Oil on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

This powerful view of a violent seascape defies its small size. Once more, Balke shows the ongoing confrontation between man and nature, represented by the lone ship struggling against the ocean waves. To capture the tumultuous waves and brooding clouds, Balke pushed the limits of his artistic expression.

For example, he rendered the ocean spray hitting the sail of the ship by pressing his thumb straight onto the wet canvas. The dark blue, black, and white colors, applied in thin layers, create an almost monochromatic effect, adding to the painting's melancholic mood.

Unlike many other works, Balke proudly signed this painting. It was presented to the public for the first time in 1914 at an exhibition celebrating the centennial of Norway's constitution, once again linking Norway's national identity with the Romantic landscape painters.

# Peder Balke

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## *Moonlit View of Stockholm,* c. 1850

Oil on panel

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Stockholm, the capital of Sweden, was a large bustling city in 1850. Yet Balke paints it from a distance across a body of water, suppressing the human element. Instead of focusing on an accurate portrayal of Stockholm, Balke emphasizes the nocturnal atmosphere with clouds shrouding the full moon. In this way, he treats this city scene similarly to his landscapes.

As a capital city, Stockholm had a Royal Academy of Fine Arts that attracted many Norwegian artists. Balke lived in the Swedish capital for four years, from 1829 to 1833, and painted this view some twenty years after his stay.

# Peder Balke

Norwegian, 1804–1887

## *The Mountain Range* *“Trolltindene,”* c. 1845

Oil on primed paper, mounted on board

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Amidst the dark sea, majestic mountains, and immense clouds, a steamer chugs along the hazy coast. The wind is blowing so hard that the small ship lists at an angle. As in many of the works in this exhibition, the presence of humans illustrates the continuous struggle of mankind in this northern region. By placing the mountain range at the center and using a limited color palette, Balke dramatizes the contrast between nature and humans. He often neglected topographical accuracy in favor of creating powerful compositions that evoke the awe-inspiring vistas of the North.

# Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot

French, 1796–1875

## *Castel Sant'Elia*, 1826

Oil on paper, mounted on panel

Gift of Henry E. Schnakenberg, 1950.9

Here, French painter Corot depicts the hill town of Sant'Elia, Italy, in the shimmering hot summer light. He travelled to the small town north of Rome and painted this sketch outdoors on the spot, just as his Scandinavian colleagues did at similar sites.

For a long time, Italy was an important destination for artists learning their craft. Johan Christian Dahl and Thomas Fearnley also spent time there, attracted by crumbling ruins, ancient towns, and Mediterranean landscapes.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Chalk Pit near Maxen, 1835*

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Dahl took liberties with color, using predominantly warm earth tones rather than chalky whites and greys. The result transforms this German pit into a sundrenched vista reminiscent of a Mediterranean site. Other contemporaries painted the pit as well, but no one rendered it with such vigorous brush strokes and bold colors.

Maxen, a town outside of Dresden, became a meeting place for Romantic artists in Germany. Dahl visited it several times and might have sketched the local chalk pit on one of his trips.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Fjord Landscape with Menhir,* 1837

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Menhirs are standing stones that were part of tomb constructions. They were erected across Northern Europe from the Bronze Age up to the Middle Ages. This solitary stone is marked with long horizontal runes—letters from an ancient Germanic alphabet. The runes call to mind the Viking Age, an important period of Scandinavian history that Norwegians were eager to explore. Dahl and other Romantic painters had a strong interest in history and archeology; he depicted menhirs in several of his works. Standing next to a contemporary farmhouse, this menhir is embedded in a setting that unites the past with the present.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Forest Study from Grosser Garten, Dresden, 1822*

Oil on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

This study provides a snapshot of the undergrowth in the Grosser Garten, a large public garden in Dresden, Germany. Dahl was not interested in depicting the elaborate grandeur of the park as a whole. Instead, he concentrated on the arbitrary detail of a large stone and its immediate surroundings. The effects of the dappled sunlight and different shadows might have particularly challenged and fascinated him.

Because the painting is so detailed, it would have been hard for Dahl to have painted it completely outdoors. He likely started the work in the park and finished it in his studio.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Mountain Farm*, 1854

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

When Dahl painted this work in Dresden, Germany, he was in his mid-sixties and perhaps knew he would never set foot in Norway again. The melancholic mood of this late work is evoked by the sunset casting the last warm rays of sun on a small farm. The deep shadows in the foreground suggest the coldness of a night in the mountains. The focus on the transformation of day into night could be seen as a metaphor for the artist's own aging process.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Shipwreck on the Coast between Larvik and Fredriksvern, 1847*

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

A group of soldiers helplessly observe a sinking ship with two sailors still on board. The ship floats like a nutshell among the ravaging sea and massive cliffs. Shipwrecks illustrate the helplessness of mankind facing the power of nature in a way that few other subjects can convey.

Because it evokes awe and horror, this subject was fashionable during Dahl's lifetime. He painted several versions of shipwrecks throughout his career.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Study of a Rock from Nystuen on Filefjell, 1850*

Oil on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Dahl treats this large stone almost like the subject of a portrait. He uses animated brushstrokes and a palette of gray tones to depict both the rock and overcast weather conditions and add a sense of gloominess to the work.

He painted this sketch during his last trip to Norway during the summer of 1850. As usual, he would draw incessantly in his sketchbooks and create oil sketches on paper, which he later used as models after he returned to his studio.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Vesuv by Night*, 1823

Oil on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

A dramatic volcanic eruption dominates this work. Far from creating a realistic rendering of the event, Dahl romanticizes the eruption with a dramatic low angle, heaving waves, and a stormy sky. Within this spectacular scene sprouts an immense column of glimmering lava.

The volcano depicted is Mount Vesuvius in Italy. Dahl travelled to the Bay of Naples on an invitation from the Danish Prince Christian Frederick. During his stay, he went on several sketching tours and climbed to the top of the volcano several times. He even witnessed a nocturnal eruption of the volcano, which likely inspired this painting.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *View at Skjolden in Lyster,* 1843

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

The small village of Skjolden lies at the very end of a long winding fjord in central Norway. Villagers there made their living from fishing and farming. This little town was briefly the home of the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Dahl's view of Skjolden emphasizes the town's remoteness. He nestles the buildings in the shadow of two overlapping mountains while playing with the illusion of depth. The mountains in the background seem to recede into a light-filled valley we cannot see. Dahl must have been content with this view, since he exhibited it at the annual exhibition of the Dresden Academy of Fine Arts.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *View of Nærøydalen, 1847*

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Located between Oslo and Bergen, the Nærøy Valley provides some of the most dramatic views in Norway. Dahl visited it several times. Here he shows the daily activities along the river, with farmers stopping for a chat and smoke billowing from farmhouses nestled in the valley. Dahl might have been particularly fascinated by the strong contrast between shadow and light created by the surrounding mountains. He uses rich colors that create a harmonious vision of humanity and the natural world.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *View of Ølyo Farm, Valdres,* 1846

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Dahl creates a harmonious vision of the countryside by using a horizontal format and a carefully arranged composition. A crooked road leads our eye on a meandering path to a farm built on a small hill. The massive mountain range provides a dramatic background to this pastoral setting, while farmers and travelers go about their day at a leisurely pace. The isolated birch tree to the left stands out with its dead branches. Whether it serves as a symbol for the circle of life or merely as a visual prop to accentuate the foreground is up for debate.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *Waterfall in Hemsedal*, 1845

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Dahl was fascinated by waterfalls and rapids throughout his career. They stood for the beauty of nature and an expression of its awesome power. He painted this waterfall in his studio in Dresden, Germany, probably using sketches made during a trip to Hemsedal, Norway, a year before. Shortly after Dahl had finished the painting, he sold it in Dresden to an English collector. At this time, Dahl was known as a leading Romantic landscape painter across Europe.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *Arco Naturale, Capri,* before 1833

Oil on paper, mounted on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

The Arco Naturale in Capri, Italy, is a natural arch formed by thousands of years of erosion from the sea. Fearnley's depiction of the arch radiates with color. The warm earth tones of the stone contrast sharply with the cool blues of Tyrrhenian Sea. The sea seems to stretch beyond the horizon and blend with the sky in a wash of color. Artists have been traveling to the Bay of Naples and its islands since ancient times. Fearnley visited the area together with a group of Scandinavian artists.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *Fishermen at Sorrento*, 1834

Oil on paper, mounted on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

To refine his education and join the lively communities of other European artists, Fearnley stayed in Italy for a few years. During the summers of 1833 and 1834, Fearnley painted the coast of Naples along the Sorrento peninsula. This work features the dramatic cliffs overlooking the bay, depicted in bold and luminous colors.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *Valley of Lauterbrunnen, 1835*

Oil on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Staubach Falls, at almost one thousand feet high, is one of the tallest waterfalls in Switzerland. It was a well-known attraction during Fearnley's life time. Although he included it here on the right, he did not depict its might and power. Instead, he focused on the recess of the valley, with high mountain peaks closing in. Fearnley painted this view of Lauterbrunnen Valley, outdoors using fluid, sketchy brushstrokes. He skillfully captures the hazy weather conditions of the high alpines, with the overcast sky obscuring the view and adding a sense of mystery to the scene.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *Tree Study, by a Stream, Granvin, 1839*

Oil on board

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Fearnley zooms in on a single tree clinging to the side of a cliff. A stream rushes past a steep drop below. He turns this unexpected perspective into a lively study of light and shadow. The cropped tree and vertical placement of the river add drama to the painting. Fearnley roughly sketched out the background, giving it a sense of life and movement. This sketch might have been used as a basis for a larger painting done in his studio or as a work of art in its own right.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *The Mountain Wetterhorn,* 1835

Oil on paper, mounted on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Humans have always been fascinated by mountains. Their towering peaks invite awe at the power and mystery of nature. For Romantic painters interested in evoking nature's emotional potential, the Alps were an ideal subject. Wetterhorn, a mountain in the Swiss Alps, has been the subject of paintings since the late eighteenth century.

Fearnley contrasts the stark and uninhabitable mountain peaks with the fertile valley below. Like two halves of a whole, the combined environments create a unified and balanced vista.

# Georg Heinrich Crola

German, 1804–1879

## *A Thunderstorm on Lake Chiemsee, 1833*

Oil on canvas

The Ella Gallup Sumner and Mary Catlin Sumner Collection Fund. Purchased in honor of Gertrud Bourgoyne for her twenty-five years of devoted service to the Wadsworth Atheneum, 2002.5.1

A craggy oak tree will have to withstand the power of an oncoming storm as people run for cover. Crola pays close attention to their garments, which tell us they are peasants from Bavaria, Germany.

As an art student in Dresden during the 1820s, Crola was part of the artistic circle that also included the Norwegian artists Johan Christian Dahl and Thomas Fearnley, and the German artist Caspar David Friedrich. As Romantic artists working at the same time, they all took an interest in creating emotionally charged landscapes like this one.

# Jean Antoine Théodore Gudin

French, 1802–1880

## *Storm*

Watercolor on paper

Bequest of Mrs. Charles C. Beach, 1951.163

Gudin was a master at rendering the elements, as seen here in the crushing waves, torrential sky, and windswept tree. Marine painting had a long tradition in Europe, but the Romantic artists were less interested in accurately depicting ships and vessels. Instead, they stressed the atmospheric details of the scene. Gudin was the most celebrated painter of seascapes in France during the first half of the nineteenth century and was much admired by Norwegian artist Peder Balke.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *At Carrara, 1840*

Oil on paper, mounted on paperboard

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

The quarry of Carrara, Italy, has been a famous source of marble since ancient Rome. With a few brush strokes, Fearnley sketches the view of this famous site. He composed the painting looking up from a ravine with small figures climbing the hillside. The contrast between the tiny figures set into a monumental landscape was an artistic technique designed to evoke awe in the transcendent power of nature.

# Thomas Cole

American, born England, 1801–1848

## *Kaaterskill Falls*, 1826

Oil on canvas

Bequest of Daniel Wadsworth, 1848.15

We see Cole's vision of Kaaterskill Falls through the opening of a cavern. This intimate perspective makes the viewer feel as if they are part of the scene. The turbulent spray of the water, moody sunset, and autumnal foliage paint a deeply romantic picture of the landscape. Like his Norwegian contemporaries, Cole was fascinated by the wildness of nature. His paintings of the American landscape were a vehicle for patriotism, depicting the country's land with reverence of famous monuments. Cole was an influential teacher to a group of American landscape painters, just as Johan Christian Dahl was with his Norwegian pupils.

# Johan Christian Dahl

Norwegian, 1788–1857

## *View of the Feigumfoss in Lysterfjord, 1848*

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

The Feigumfoss is one of the highest waterfalls in Norway. The mighty height of this waterfall is dwarfed by Dahl's sweeping view of the mountains. At the center, a pointed rock leads your eye far into the background. On either side, the curving lines of the mountains seem to cascade toward the center. The lonely shepherd with his goats adds to the romantic sentiment of the painting.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *Riders in a Landscape (View over Romsdal with Romsdalthorn in Background), 1837*

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

In the background of this landscape looms the famous Romsdalthorn in Norway. Fearnley captures the mountain's characteristic cone shaped top, covered in snow for most of the year. With great precision and care, he depicts this grand alpine vista with its rocks, craggy birch trees, and small bushes.

The rugged mountains and wind-swept clouds give this painting a romantic feeling. An eagle perches on the twisted limbs of a dead tree while two travelers ride by in a carriage. The riders, tiny in the landscape, may represent the insignificance of humanity in the face of nature's immensity.

# Joseph Mallord William Turner

English, 1775–1851

## *Village of Göschenen, 1825–30*

Watercolor on paper

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

The village of Göschenen is situated in the Reuss Valley, one of the most spectacular settings in Switzerland. In this dramatic view, Turner captures the Reuss River with the village, adjacent mountains, and a blurry sky. The warm, golden light, however, is not what you would see in the High Alps. Rather, it speaks to Turner's talent in using color to express and evoke powerful emotions. Turner was deeply fascinated by the Alps and travelled to Switzerland regularly throughout his life.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *Lake Gosau near Salzburg,* 1837/38

Watercolor and body color on paper

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

A lone craggy tree, an icy mountain lake, and snowy mountain peaks are common motifs in Fearnley's body of work. Here he uses the fluid medium of watercolors applied with sweeping strokes, a limited palette, and an emphasis on expressive outlines. He painted *Lake Gosau near Salzburg* after a larger version in oil paint, probably for his own record.

# Thomas Fearnley

Norwegian, 1802–1842

## *View over the Elbe*, 1829/30

Oil on canvas

Collection of Asbjørn Lunde

Pictured here is a sweeping view of the Elbe Valley. During his stay in Dresden, Fearnley went on short study trips to explore the nearby countryside, leading to works like this one. Fearnley creates visual interest by rendering the fields and towns in the background in more detail than the bushes and trees in the foreground.

At that time, Dresden was the capital of the Romantic movement in Germany. Johan Christian Dahl and Caspar David Friedrich were leading artists in the city and had considerable influence on their students, including Fearnley and Peder Balke. All of these Romantic artists were interested in creating landscapes that could evoke powerful emotions from their viewers.