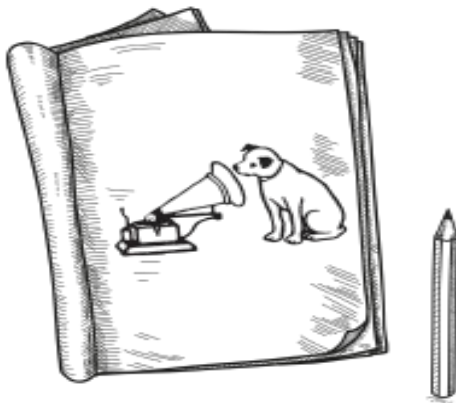


# *the* Solari Report

Food for the Soul: Women in Art at the Barnes  
with Catherine Austin Fitts  
Nina Heyn, and Ulrike Granögger

*May 10, 2024*

*Transcript*



**Catherine Austin Fitts:** Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the *Food for the Soul Podcast* on *The Solari Report*. I am joined by Nina Heyn, the author of *Food for the Soul*, and Ulrike Granögger, who is our *Future Science* host, but a great art admirer as well. I'm Catherine Austin Fitts. We are still enjoying the high of the trip to the Barnes Foundation. Nina, tell us what happened.

**Nina Heyn:** Hello. What happened was that the three of us have had the chance to enjoy Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia. We are now sharing our experiences and favorites, and we want to talk about various paintings that are at that place. We took the occasion because in the same way a few years back, we had "A Year of da Vinci" celebrating the artist's anniversary by going to various museums all over Europe. We were in Paris, we were in Milan, and talked about various of his paintings and his life and what it means to the contemporary life.

**Fitts:** The last time the three of us did a podcast, we were sitting in an amazing apartment in Paris talking about da Vinci and we were high from that visit.

**Heyn:** Exactly. We are repeating the experience this year, when we have themed it "Women in Art". One of the elements of this theme is the book that I have written that is coming out this year, published by Solari. That will be the Solari premiere of an art book. The book will be entitled *Women in Art, Artists, Models, and Those Who Made It Happen*. This is the title of the book coming sometime later this year, but it is also the theme of everything that we write about and look at this year in terms of art.

**Ulrike Granögger:** If I can just chime in here, Nina has a hard time talking about her own book as the author.

**Fitts:** It's beautiful.

**Granögger:** It is so beautiful. Everybody will just love this book.

**Fitts:** It collects up many of the columns that you've written for *Food for the Soul* with the artwork. There's tons of eye candy, but the stories are fascinating. It's like an adventure in the lives of these incredible artists.

**Heyn:** Hopefully that will be the future gift for Solari readers and subscribers.

**Fitts:** Everybody's getting that book for Christmas.

**Heyn:** At the moment, let's go back to Barnes Foundation. For those who are

not familiar with either Dr. Barnes or the museum, maybe you, Catherine...

**Fitts:** I grew up on Dr. Barnes because my father was a surgeon at the University of Pennsylvania. He had gone to Penn Medical School. He was a surgeon at University of Pennsylvania and became the chairman of surgery at Pennsylvania. Dr. Barnes had studied at the University of Pennsylvania, and after he graduated, he decided to become, he didn't want to be a doctor, he wanted to be a chemist.

All my life, the Barnes Collection of Art, which Barnes had collected after he'd made his fortune, which I'll describe what he did, it was very hard to get in and to get tickets, and to get private showings, but if you were part of the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, you had an in. All my life as a child, I'd hear about Dr. Barnes and the collection, and you were always like, "Daddy, when can I finally see this?"

The anticipation of seeing the Barnes Collection was many, many years coming for me, but it was something I grew up with. It was a part of my childhood. Anyway, Barnes had created a medicine that would help protect your eyes. I don't begin to explain how it worked.

**Heyn:** It's silver nitrate.

**Fitts:** Silver nitrate.

**Heyn:** Till this day is protecting the eyes, especially it's given to newborn children to protect from gonorrhoea, for example, or any other infection that can happen during the birth, for example.

**Fitts:** Barnes sold his company literally a few months before the stock market crash.

**Heyn:** In 1920.

**Fitts:** He sold it at the absolute high, got the money. He was married, but never had children. His money, and so after the success of his company started to collect, he had a high school friend who plugged him into the impressionists, and he started to collect fantastic amounts of the impressionists, and that became his passion. Now, what I was taught as a child was that he was very uncomfortable with the Philadelphia Art Establishment and the Philadelphia Art

Museum.

He was insistent on keeping the collection very, very separate and keeping it in-- He had had a mansion in Lower Merion, and he left it under the auspices of one of the universities in the area. It's a long story, but if you look at the popularity of the collection, the place where he had set it up and organized it could not handle the demand. Ultimately, there's a very famous documentary called *The Art of the Steal*, about how the Philadelphia establishment engineered the breaking of the trust and the lawless movement of the Barnes Foundation down to the parkway, where the Philadelphia Museum, the Rodin Museum, the Curtis Institute, all the art museums in Philadelphia are down there.

They plop the Barnes Museum down, and dreadful as their behavior was, I will say this, it makes the collection much more accessible to a much greater group of people. I think they did a beautiful job. They built a new building, and they absolutely kept the organization of the collection as he had done it initially. When you go and you see the collection, you're seeing it in a building that has far more light, far more parking, and is much more accessible, but it holds to the integrity of how he organized the collection.

**Heyn:** Whereas to speak to that also, there is also another important aspect with any museum of fine art these days, is that if the collection is not held in a place that A, can be secured because there's a lot of art theft. If this is an older building that doesn't have proper security, it's very hard to protect it. That's one thing and the other one is that, because these paintings are over a hundred years old, you need to keep them in the climate controlled and light controlled conditions.

There is one of the paintings at the Barnes Foundation, which is the seminal painting of modern art, probably the most important painting. It's called *The Joy of Life* by Henri Matisse, which he has painted in, I think 1906. The painting launched the modern style of art to the point that Picasso, as soon as he saw this painting, he just went home. First, he was quite pissed off that someone stole his thunder, but then he went and started working on his *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, the famous painting that is now at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Those two paintings are basically the foundation, if you like, the pillars of the modern way of--

**Fitts:** They launched the Impressionist movement?

**Heyn:** No, he launched the Modern Art, the one that is divorced from the need to represent something very realistic, maybe in a style of impersonation, but still a realistic narrative story and becomes just art for art, the joy of it, if you like, the color or the shape. It has been found recently, I think 2015 or something like this, but recently, in any case in the 21st century, that the yellow that is in that painting, *The Joy of Life* by Matisse, the yellow that he had used, it's a cadmium yellow, it is unfortunately losing the yellowness of it under the influence of light.

The light is actually reacting with the yellow paint that was used by Matisse. Unless this painting is really protected, we will not have this painting in a few dozen years. It will just bleach out completely. That yellow has sulfur, and the sulfur is reacting with oxygen in the air or something like this. This is an argument for having the art housed in a purpose-built building that can actually protect paintings from the ravages of time, if you like.

**Granögger:** If I can just say, as a foreigner coming to Philadelphia, I felt like they did a remarkable job also in the architecture of fitting that huge building – it's a very vast building – into the whole street and into the whole district. I think it's very well done.

**Fitts:** I think so too. It's unusual for me to say such glowing things about the Philadelphia Establishment, but I think they did an excellent job.

**Heyn:** I think that we could maybe just give an idea of how unique this museum is in terms of the collection of Impressionist and post-Impressionist art. Maybe you can do that, give a little statistics.

**Fitts:** Renoir, we have 181, which is why I love the Barnes so much because I love Renoir. Gauguin is 69. Is that how you pronounce it?

**Heyn:** Yes.

**Fitts:** Van Gogh is 7. Toulouse is several. I don't know how many. Matisse is 59. Picasso, 46. Modigliani, 36.

**Heyn:** Modigliani is several. I don't know how many exactly.

**Fitts:** Toulouse-Lautrec is several.

**Heyn:** Which museum has 181 works? It's amazing.

**Fitts:** In Paris, we were at-- what's the Impressionists' museum?

**Heyn:** Musée d'Orsay.

**Fitts:** Right, d'Orsay. How many Renoirs do they have?

**Heyn:** I don't know, but not that many, I think less.

**Fitts:** Does anybody have 181 Renoirs?

**Heyn:** Probably not. It is an amazing collection that he has to speak to the fact, how this collection started if you like. In 1922, he has asked his childhood friend, as you said, Catherine, I think his name was William Glackens who was also a painter, to go to Paris and help him start the collection. The guy went to Paris and came back with 33 paintings, which is fantastic. The moment Dr. Barnes--

**Fitts:** For 20,000, amazing.

**Heyn:** That makes a deal of the century. Anyway, so he goes there, he buys those paintings, brings them back. Dr. Barnes takes a look at it, falls in love with all this, and within the same year, in 1922, he goes to Paris twice and just starts buying like there's no tomorrow. He was a fantastic negotiator and very astute in what he was choosing and how he was choosing.

He was able to choose some fantastic artworks that were already famous, already have been in some collections. Because of the generational change, the people who originally owned that, let's say, Gertrude Stein and her brother, Leo Stein, have already gotten rid of the *Joy of Life* by Matisse that it went to a dealer and then Dr. Barnes was able to negotiate and purchase this painting. He was at the perfect moment in Paris to buy the history of art if you like.

**Fitts:** He bought them before the war. Correct?

**Heyn:** Oh, yes. 1922, this is where he was buying the majority of this fantastic... He has been buying artworks for many, many decades later.

**Granögger:** He captured a moment just before it disappeared.

**Heyn:** Absolutely.

**Fitts:** It was after World War I and before World War II.

**Heyn:** Correct. That is the perfect moment. He has been buying and he died in 1951. He has been buying throughout his life. Mid-1930s, perfect moment to be buying art because of the generational change, that something was collected and then the families were getting rid of it. A lot of Monet paintings that he has bought. He has bought them from the family because this was the time for them to be getting rid of them. It was a perfect moment.

**Granögger:** That's quite fascinating because it is also reflected in the works of art, as you are going to tell us also, that change of period. I think it is quite fascinating on how many levels there is transition in here.

**Heyn:** This is the history of the Fabulous Barnes Foundation. This is to me, personally, as I told you, that when we were talking with Ulrike, that this is like a candy store for me. It's like, "Oh, look at this. Oh, look at this."

**Granögger:** If I may say, if you walk with Nina through a museum like this, it's like, we didn't want to spend so much time because we were going to another museum, but then the time just flew. Nina is really an encyclopedia of art walking on two legs. Just starting off talking is phenomenal.

**Fitts:** When we went to all the Renoirs at the Rijksmuseum. Do you remember that? Everybody was following Nina around. It looked like you were giving a tour because everybody was just following you, they wanted to hear what you would say.

**Heyn:** At the Barnes, the lady who was a curator, I think, or guide, she was giving me an evil eye. It's just like, this petition, what is this woman doing. That was that. What I wanted to talk with the three of us, three as being women, so that's maybe very useful in this case, about amongst those hundreds of paintings, there's several paintings that capture or that the artists have captured women doing something that is not being done anymore by women, meaning the world has changed, the lives of women have changed. It captures some occupations or activities of women that have basically changed because life has changed.

At the same time, there are beautiful paintings. Obviously, talking about paintings is not the same as showing them. We will show some of them at the Food for the Soul website so that you can refer to them looking at them. I will give the titles of paintings and Ulrike maybe you can describe them and we can

talk about what has changed. The first one that I was thinking we could talk about is Renoir's painting that is called *The Family of the Artist*, meaning his own family, in which he has five people.

I'll just say which people they are. This is his wife, Aline Charigot, his older son, his younger son, the nanny, and then there is a girl who is a neighbor who is just basically there to complete the composition. There's a nanny here. You want to talk about this or if you can talk about this?

**Granögger:** Well, Catherine can talk about nanny.

**Fitts:** Nannies exist today.

**Heyn:** They do, yes.

**Granögger:** That's not as an institution in the family like it was.

**Heyn:** Correct. Because this is a bourgeois family and having a nanny available was just an obvious thing. There are children in the house, there will be a nanny to come with it.

**Fitts:** Right.

**Heyn:** These days, child care is much more institutionalized just because there are not that many nannies around.

**Fitts:** You still have nannies.

**Heyn:** We still have nannies.

**Fitts:** A lot of young women will go to another country and travel.

**Heyn:** The au pairs.

**Fitts:** Yes, the au pairs.

**Heyn:** That maybe hasn't changed much. I think that this is nanny as a organic part of the family. The nanny would come in and stay for years. The children would grow up with a stability, especially Renoir, he was always treating the ladies, the maids or nannies that were in his family as members of the family. He was very good about that. Of course, he portrayed them in many, many paintings.



**Fitts:** The funny thing is, the thing I noticed about Renoirs, women are always beautiful. They're always interesting. Whenever you see a woman in Renoir it's like, "Oh, that looks like an interesting person, that looks like somebody I'd like to know." They're appealing people. I think it's very revolutionary how appealing he makes women. Here's this picture and the women all look appealing and he doesn't. Have you noticed?

**Granögger:** I think it's a nice observation, especially when we talk about other paintings later on, how the women are glowing from deep inside.

**Fitts:** Everybody's glowing except for Renoir.

**Granögger:** They carry everything, it seems.

**Heyn:** I think it's a beautiful, charming picture. You're absolutely right. He was adamant that the reason he paints mainly children and women, he did some male portraits, but only as commissioned portraits or portraits of his friends, but very few of them, because he said, "That's the only thing I'm interested in painting. I am interested in painting beauty and I find beauty in women and children because of their glowing skin." It's a delicacy of features.

**Fitts:** It's the glow. He always does this glow.

**Heyn:** That's what he wanted. He says, "I'm not going to be apologetic about it. This is what I like. I am not like other artists who love to paint the city part of life. That wasn't him. He wasn't interested in that. This one is a painting by Édouard Manet. It's called *Laundry* painted in 1875 and it portrays a woman who has a wooden bucket. I don't even know if she has a washing board because this is a chair.

**Fitts:** The bucket's on a chair.

**Heyn:** The bucket is on a chair. Then there's a little toddler who is helping her to do the wash. Obviously, we all do the laundry these days, but we do not do the laundry like this anymore.

**Fitts:** We used to do it like this on the farm. That's exactly how we did the laundry.

[laughter.]

**Heyn:** Exactly. There used to be buckets and just doing it by hand and then hanging it on a string, but that doesn't happen anymore. There's something to be said for technology. Having a washer dryer, it makes life a little bit easier.

**Fitts:** I know, but when you're hanging on the line it smells better.

**Granögger:** Oh so much better, when the wind blows through it, oh yes.

**Heyn:** Yes, I do that too. That is true, but I would rather that the machine did the first hard part, because it is very, very hard work. In the 19th century, 20th century, but certainly in 19th century, every household had so called the laundry day where everything, not just a little shirt, but the bedding would be washed. This was very hard work, these acres and acres of fabric that had to be washed and dried and ironed and whatever.

**Fitts:** Your husband died and then you had to take in laundry.

**Heyn:** That too, which is-- Then the guy was a happy man because then he could paint 37 paintings of laundry women. That's another story. That has changed. This is capturing a moment that the laundry does not get done like this anymore. Here's a painting also by Renoir. It says that it's the woman doing crochet which is something that is also a slightly passé type of activity.

**Fitts:** Although I would point out when we were driving from Ohio to the Hudson Valley, Carolyn was in the back seat crocheting.

**Granögger:** Crocheting? Not knitting?.

**Fitts:** I think it was crocheting. If you look at what she made, she made one of the parts you pick up the hot pan with, whatever.

**Heyn:** It's still done as a hobby but much less. It is a beautiful painting just showing something, and people usually these days just spend more time on the cell phone than the crotchet needle.

**Granögger:** In Europe you see this quite a lot. You still see people on the train, as you said. I also think of Doctors for Covid Ethics, there's this wonderful doctor, a scientist, she's not a doctor actually, and while she is on the meeting she is knitting. And I see men in Europe.

**Fitts:** Oh, really?

**Granögger:** Yes.

**Fitts:** How lovely.

**Granögger:** That has been almost a trend for the Green Movement and for more ecologically-minded people. They are sitting there, men are sitting there knitting their own jumpers or garments.

**Heyn:** Knitting. If you love Waldorf school and Rudolf Steiner, and Montessori and all those philosophies, in that schooling, children of both sexes are taught to knit. At least 70, 100 years ago, boys and girls, they both were taught to knit. This was not gender-related kind of actually.

**Granögger:** Something I never liked, by the way.

**Heyn:** Knitting?

**Granögger:** I never liked it.

**Heyn:** I spent my entire childhood knitting. There is another one here. This is painted by Claude Monet. He painted his wife. It's called *Madame Monet Embroidering*. What I find fascinating is that this is a painting in which you see this contraption on what she embroiders. It's almost like an easel for painting. It's a piece of furniture, if you like, on what you put the fabric and then you can embroider by sitting and doing it for hours. Embroidery still happens a lot, but I don't see that furniture anymore. It's not an activity that we have room or time for.

**Fitts:** It's a beautiful painting.

**Heyn:** This is definitely an Impressionistic painting with the light coming into-- It looks like she's in a sunroom probably because that looks to me like there's glass behind. Maybe this is winter and the sun is coming in, and they brought all the plants in for the winter. She's sitting in an indoor garden.

**Granögger:** That focus that she has, and that pouring herself into it.

**Fitts:** Peace.

**Granögger:** Yes, peace.

**Heyn:** I think just much less time that women have to sit and embroider.

**Granögger:** Where is the peace gone?

**Heyn:** Exactly. This is something that definitely is not happening anymore. This is a Renoir. Renoir's painting entitled, *Woman Darning*, meaning doing repairing-

**Fitts:** Yes, repairing the socks.

**Heyn:** -the socks, yes. We do not do that anymore.

**Fitts:** No. No, out they go.

**Heyn:** If a sock has a hole, we don't spend the time to darn. This is the activity that definitely has gone away with the modern life.

**Granögger:** You know what? Preparing for so many changes that we are, I still know how to do it.

**Heyn:** Really?

**Fitts:** I know how to do it as well. I was taught at school.

**Granögger:** It might even come in handy eventually.

**Heyn:** It does if we know how to darn.

**Granögger:** It does.

**Heyn:** It has changed. It is something that doesn't happen anymore. I find it charming that there's such a painting here, and it is one of your favorite. This is the painting that you Ulrike have loved so much, so maybe you can talk about it. I'll just introduce the title of it. It's Renoir's *Mother and Child* from 1881.

**Granögger:** I enjoyed it so much after you explained it, Nina. You have this talent of pointing out things. Then suddenly you begin to notice those things. As you were saying, many of the paintings in the Barnes Foundation collection are transitional, and I would say on several levels of the meaning of transition, not just epochal, but also internally. What we see here is this lovely, young mother with a toddler, with a boy baby on her lap.

What is striking is that since have been in 2019 to the da Vinci exhibition where we saw many of the Madonna's, look at the foot that she puts forward just a little bit. Look at the blue of her garment or of her .. it's not a garment, but it's

more like a jacket or a blouse and an apron, and also the boy, how he sits on her and how he has the finger at the mouth. This is so reminiscent of some of the Italian paintings of the Madonna and the child and Anna, the mother.

**Heyn:** It's definitely on purpose.

**Granögger:** Yes.

**Heyn:** What happened was that in 1881, Renoir finally had enough money to go to Italy, because he has come from modest beginnings and there was never enough money for food and paint, much less traveling. Eventually he did have money. He went to Italy, after he has created many paintings already that were quite famous. The seminal paintings of Impressionists. He went to Italy, and he obviously started looking at Raphael and Michelangelo and da Vinci.

**Fitts:** This is after he--

**Heyn:** After he came back, and he wrote about it in numerous letters. He says, "I was nothing. I didn't know how to paint. I didn't know anything about painting," which obviously is not true, but it was obviously something that impressed him enormously, the very fact that there is a different way of painting. Obviously, he fell in love with all those Madonna's. This is his painting that corresponds to all the paintings that he has seen, because the blue that you see on the girl's clothing is basically evoking the blue of the color of the robe of Madonna.

**Fitts:** The thing I love about this one is how active the boy looks.

**Heyn:** Yes, he's squirming.

**Fitts:** He's all plump and squirming around, and he looks so lively. You get this feeling of liveliness, which is unusual.

**Heyn:** It is absolutely charming painting. He's drawing onto the huge tradition of Renaissance Madonnas painted in Italy, but obviously, he's making it a very modern painting. She's sitting in a chair, she's a nanny or a sister. She's holding a regular toddler in contemporary cloths. He makes this bridge, but also Ulrike is absolutely right, that many of the paintings that Dr. Barnes has collected are the transitional paintings from the point of view of the development of each of these famous artists that they used to do something and then he collects the

painting that documents the new phase, in their style or in their biography. They are excellent paintings to learn about the history, which is what his goal was.

**Granögger:** It's another example of how much he must have appreciated women and children, because you elevate the everyday beauty into almost that theological beauty that he knows from Italy.

**Heyn:** It's the joy in the painting. This is a painting by Amedeo Modigliani. Modigliani was an Italian artist who lived in Paris, died quite young of tuberculosis. This kind of tragic life. He died at 37. This is painted almost at the very end of his life. The painting is called *Redhead Woman in Evening Dress* and portrays his girlfriend at the time, Jean Hebuterne. It's not named like this, it's just a woman in evening dress. What I like about this painting is, other than this, if you like the art by Modigliani which is very flat, very modern. This is the new art, if you like, we are even post-Impressionist, where you're like, this is really a modern painting.

This is like what Picasso was doing, and then Cubis were doing. It's flat surfaces. If you, for example, look at her face he just does a few almost like a pencil drawing. The eye is just like a black hole, if you like, and the nose is just like a line. This is a very modern art of painting. He knows that we all know what the face looks like. He doesn't need to render it in absolute photographic detail. There is photography for that. This is painted in 1918, photography is there. "We don't need that anymore," he says. Let's just look at the color, and shape, and the elegance of this woman.

In terms of transition, what I like about it as well as a modern painting, this is no longer a commissioned portrait of an aristocrat who just had enough money to pay to have his beautiful formal portrait for her dining room painted. This is not what Impressionists did, a lot of his paintings are of the models who are usually prostitutes who for a few Francs were just posing in order to make a living. It is a painting of a modern woman who happens to be a girlfriend of the artist, but it's just basically a model whom he uses.

The role of a woman model has also changed. This is not a paid-for commissioned portrait. Nobody paid him to paint it. This is not painting the desperate women in the streets, because no self-respecting woman would ever pose to a painter for a painting. It was just like, "You must be crazy, I'm not going to do that." There's a change of a role of a woman on a portrait. It's a

different kind of a portrait. I like that. Now we should talk about favorites.

**Fitts:** Yes. I have a game I play whenever I go to a museum, and that is I get to pretend that I can take one painting home and I have to choose which one. It sounds easy. It's not. It's very hard.

**Heyn:** Not at Barnes. It's very difficult. There's too many of them.

**Fitts:** Now this is the one I would take home. I have this as a screensaver on my laptop.

**Heyn:** Oh, really?

**Fitts:** Yes.

**Heyn:** Since nobody can see that painting, I'm going to name it. This is Renoir's painting called *Reading* from about 1891. It shows two girls. I would say they're about 10 years old, 12, max, maybe. Maybe a bit younger, who are sitting next to each other, looking at something that they are reading together.

**Fitts:** I used to have an etching by Renoir called-- Was it two sisters sitting on a beach, or two young girls sitting on a beach, and I eventually gave it to my sister. It reminds me a little bit of that etching. Now, I just love how they're doing this together. You see these two beautiful girls and they're just engrossed in reading together. It has this wonderful energy.

**Heyn:** It has these beautiful glowing colors because one of the girls is wearing a pink dress, the other one, a white one. They have kind of reddish blonde hair. The sun is reflecting off these hairs. This looks like a glow that emanates from them which is also the glow of youth to great extent. They're very young girls. There's innocence, radiating purity if you like. That is not easy to capture. It's easier to describe than to actually capture in a painting.

**Granögger:** But he does, he captures them.

**Heyn:** He does. That's why he's Renoir. I'm just saying. It's easier to say it. It's like, "Yes, you think that? Then go and paint it." Many of them tried and not that many of them successfully. This is your favorite painting called *Reading*. Ulrike, you have chosen a very fantastic painting which I will name first then you can talk about it. It's by Henri Matisse. It's called *The Three Sisters (Triptych)* because there's three paintings of very large size from floor to ceiling size next

to each other.

It was painted in 1917 and it's probably the pièce de resistance, the masterful treasury of Barne's foundation. Major artwork in that collection.

**Fitts:** You think if we were to price all the art out, that would be one of the most valuable pieces?

**Heyn:** Yes and there's a story to that but I'll tell you later.

**Granögger:** We were playing that game that Catherine asked all of us and Ricardo was with us also to go through the museum. I was almost picking the one that you had. I've resonated a lot but then you go upstairs and suddenly you see this. For me it was clear it's not one painting it's a triptych as you said. It's three paintings. It's very tall and it's just breathtaking. There is three different panels of each one portraying three sisters or three women.

It's as Nina pointed out the center one it's almost like a normal portrait where each of the figures is looking to the observer or to the painter but the other two on the left and then to the right they are, again it's almost like exploding or changing the format or the idea of what is a portrait while the left one is, there is no actual point of view or eye-catching perspective because each of the figures is turning to a different direction. Their eyes are looking somewhere else.

The right one is almost like a momentum of motion that could have been captured on a camera where someone is turning around and the people are looking almost with surprise at the observer or at the painter. What is so fascinating to me is that progression of color and of motion that goes through the three triptychs. There's this powerful green, it's a spring green and variations of it and then this violet or how would you call this? This purple color. Each of the paintings have the same colors in a sense but in a different distribution. It's complete. It's really really powerful and so much light in it.

**Heyn:** Yes. Just to speak to you about the paintings. After he has painted those paintings, they got separated. They were so different.

**Fitts:** Really?

**Heyn:** Yes. They were sold to different clients. Dr. Barnes spent a lot of time tracking those paintings and finally reuniting them and putting them together.



He did invite Matisse at some point to decorate part of the foundation buildings. To do frescoes of the dancing women. When finally, Matisse arrived with the frescoes, the commissioned work, he saw those three paintings finally reunited. He was transported because it was the dream for him.

He painted something as Ulrike has beautifully described, as a certain narration story and variation on a theme. There is an intellectual, conceptual thought behind those three paintings. That's why it's called a *Triptych*. He's doing something with those three paintings. Then they got separated. Thanks to Dr. Barnes, they got reunited in one gallery and they are next to each other in the order that he has designated, the artist designated. There's a story to that.

It's not that easy for the paintings to be together. There is another triptych that he has painted in 1906, 1911 I think, or something like this, when a collector called Ivan Morozov who was a Russian collector who bought a lot of Matisse, one of the first collectors of Matisse works, and his patron, if you like, thanks to him Matisse exited the abject poverty and started painting more. Morozov has sent him to Morocco to Tangiers to paint things for him. He paid for this trip. Over there, Matisse painted three paintings, which are blue in color, that show morning, noon, and evening. Three paintings inside the room that showed the different kind of light. Beautiful paintings.

Unfortunately, after Morozov has escaped Russia during the revolution or right after the revolution, his collection stayed with the Soviet Union, if you like, and for various reasons, money, and power, as it usually happens, the three paintings got separated. I've had a chance to see them reunited for the only time when they were shown in Paris at the retrospective of Ivan Morozov collections in 2019, I think.

After that, they went back to Russia and they're separated again and they probably will stay separated forever because they in three different museums. That's what I'm trying to say. Thanks to Dr. Barnes at the Barnes Foundation, you can not only see one of the most exquisite works by Henri Matisse ever, but also they are in the right way, not separated.

**Heyn:** Ulrike, you chose the best.

**Granögger:** Unbeknownst.

**Heyn:** No, it speaks to you. That's why. It's not unbeknownst. It's because this

is exactly what good art is. It just speaks to people the way it should speak to people. That's what I believe at least. I had a hard time to choose because I love them all of course. Let's say that I chose this, and then I can show something because we will have to finish with Cézanne but let me just talk about this painting of Matisse because we started the subject. It's also by Matisse. It's called *The Music Lesson*. Actually, it's not exactly that because there's two paintings called *The Music Lesson*. This one is also *The Music Lesson*, but it's also *The Family*.

It shows four people in the room, the painting from 1917. In that painting, you see his almost grown-up son, Matisse's almost grown-up son. It is 1917 and he already got the orders to go to the First World War, to the front. He's about to leave. The younger son is doing the music lessons, sitting at the piano and learning. The woman next to him is Marguerite, who was Matisse's oldest daughter from a different liaison if you like. He was not married to her mother, but she was living with the family all her life. The person at the very back that almost looks like a man, it's very small. She's sitting in a rocking chair and working on some embroidery is actually Amélie, his wife. She's so small and so far away that you can barely tell who that is.

Matisse himself, because this his family, is present in this painting in two ways. First of all, there is this violin at the very front, and that violin signifies Matisse because he put violin in many of the paintings as a stand-in for himself. He played violin all his life. He was very good at it. He was almost at some point hesitating whether he should become a musician or a painter. Thank God, we are lucky that he decided to be a painter because I don't know if he would be a good musician, but he was certainly a great painter.

In the garden, you see a large figure of one of the sculptures that he did, which is a nude of a woman. That sculpture is pretty big and dominating. He's present in that painting through those two things. This is the time when his family became very dysfunctional, meaning there was a breakdown of his relationship with his wife. His oldest son was going into the army and no nobody knew what was going to happen. Marguerite was always a problem because she was not well. She was not married and she would never get married.

If you look at this painting, none of the people in this family are looking at each other or relating to each other that much. Everybody's somewhere else. Certainly, the wife is pushed to the very back and dominated by the sculpture of Matisse. There is a lot of tension interaction and unspoken things. To me, is

portrait of a modern family, which very often for various reasons is-

**Fitts:** They're scattered from each other.

**Heyn:** Scattered, not functional, not relating to each other, or relating with difficulty. At the same time, it's a beautiful painting if you look at the colors, something that you love. Maybe you can speak to colors.

**Granögger:** Totally. You see that again, this green is simply captivating in the background. Then it's reflected on the musical notes of Brahms' music and also the brown and the orangy that is reflecting. The composition is just exquisite. Didn't this figure appear in other paintings of his?

**Heyn:** It does appear in other paintings. There's a small model that he made of this nude, and then he made a big one as well. It is a stand-in for his sculptural work if you like. There's a lot of clues in this painting. There's a painting that you can teach art history from it, or you can just sit and enjoy and look at it or have a reproduction of this painting as a screensaver or something and just look at it.

It's one of the paintings that if you ever go to Barnes collection, the Triptych, and this painting is probably completely unmissable because it brings so much joy. I challenge anybody to understand how incredibly talented Matisse was in terms of--

**Fitts:** This is the one you would take home.

**Heyn:** That's the one I would take home if they would let me. Yes. However, my other great love than Matisse is Cézanne. I almost never write about him in *Food for the Soul* because we don't have access to images that much because they're modern painters but my other huge love is Cézanne. It was probably Dr. Barnes' love as well because there's enormous amount of exquisite Cézanne works in that collection.

**Fitts:** Our banker came with us, and this was his choice to take home.

**Heyn:** That was his choice because he got fascinated by the very fact that what Cézanne did, that's what I was facetiously saying when we were looking at this painting, that in art history, there's art before Cézanne and after Cézanne. Meaning after he burst into the scene at some point and started creating his

works, which were completely ridiculed and unrecognized for many, many years by the public, not by the painters.

Every of the major painters who works contemporary of his had in their collections a lot of Cézanne paintings because they knew that his art is something special. They were buying his art long before anybody else. Most of them had to eventually get rid of it. There was, who was that? I think it was Gauguin who had bought one painting by Cézanne that was his biggest treasure. He said, "I will only sell it if I'm in complete dire strait."

Eventually he was in dire strait many, many decades later, and he had to sell his Cézanne. It was the most treasured position of Gauguin, was a Cézanne painting. Matisse and Cézanne are the two painters that first of all are incredible colourists. They're painters in art who are very good about line design. Da Vinci is a perfect example of that. Botticelli, masters of disegno as they used to say in Renaissance Florence, the shapes or the line, the drawing.

Matisse and Cézanne are the people who are the masters of color. You can test it by trying to color in a Cézanne or Matisse painting and see how difficult it is to gather those colors and have them work with each other. You have to have the talent that either you have it or you don't.

That's one thing that it is. This is the *Still Life* that I love. The work that I'm using as an example. He made many, most people probably, if they ever have heard of Cézanne, they're familiar with his *Apples and Paers* in various-- He did a lot of still lives of apples and pears. This is one of them. What is the most striking thing for you when you look at this painting? What is that is like, something strange for you?

**Granögger:** I'm actually corrupted or spoiled by your knowledge that you gave to us, but something that is striking is the perspective, the various types of perspectives that are built into this picture. Normally, we would expect-- or a realistic painting would have a realistic perspective, but here we have probably three or maybe even four perspectives. If you look at the background, if you look at the right-hand side, it angles downwards. This is quite striking. Of course, again, for me, the colors here as well.

**Granögger:** Catherine, what strikes you?

**Fitts:** What strikes me is totally different. It reminds me of a world I used to

live in.

**Heyn:** [laughs] Helter-skelter, slightly?

**Fitts:** No. No, but beautiful draperies. I used to have a brown velvet. My dining room was in a brown velvet that was a pattern, brown velvet that looks just like this, and things were very beautiful. We had lovely food and we had lovely China. It's all very beautiful.

**Heyn:** Yes, he takes all those elements. He does, as Ulrike says, he used different perspectives because he's basically saying that when we look at objects, we look at them from different point of view because we move, our eyes move, our body moves as well. We are not in this static, "This is my point of view. This is like everything looks." He says, "No, this is not how the human eye and human brain works." Within seconds, you look at objects slightly different.

**Fitts:** Right.

**Heyn:** He tried to put it all in here.

**Fitts:** What it talks to me about is abundance. It's about abundance. The beauty of the background, and the drapes, and the fruit, and the vase. It's all about, "There's plenty for everybody. Come and get it."

**Granögger:** Doesn't it radiate also the health. There's no genetically manipulated apples in there. You can actually see it--

**Fitts:** Everything is-- It's not surprising that our banker would choose it because he's a wealth builder and it's a building wealth picture.

**Heyn:** Everything is vibrant. What the apples symbolize, they symbolize health and nature.

**Fitts:** Yes. It's an abundant world.

**Heyn:** Yes. Absolutely. I cannot not talk about Cézanne when I talk about favorite paintings, but anybody who's going to go to the collection at any point will find something for themselves. Whether this is going to be--

**Fitts:** Well, now you know why we use brown velvet on our dining room.

**Heyn:** Certainly. [laughs]

**Fitts:** The colors work.

**Heyn:** This is a sumptuous, I would say. That's probably a good word, and in a good way, it is something that nourishes the soul, which is what we are about, food for the soul. I think we have run out of time to talk about, and it's very hard to talk about art in general, because it's better to look at art than talk about it, but we just wanted to share with everybody our enjoyment and sense of wonder when you spend an hour or two just looking at paintings and being reminded that art is necessary in our life, just to transport it to something.

**Fitts:** Beauty is necessary for survival. All I can say is if you are traveling to Philadelphia, or if you live in Philadelphia and you haven't been to the Barnes Museum, it's a little bit like living in Memphis and not going to Graceland. Do you know what I mean? [laughs]

**Granögger:** Also, if you've enjoyed this, listening to Nina's explanations, the book--

**Fitts:** *Women in Art* will come this year. We'll certainly let you know when it comes out. It celebrates all the great columns you've written about women. Anyway, it was very interesting when I tried to persuade you to come to Barnes. This is the third year I've tried to persuade you to come to Barnes, and finally you came.

**Heyn:** I'm so happy that I did. Thank you very much for having me in Philadelphia.

**Fitts:** I think it's shocking that I introduced Nina Heyn to an artistic experience. It just goes to show you there's an exception to everything.

**Heyn:** No, it goes to show that you are never, what is it, a prophet in your own country or something like this.

[laughter]

You should humbly just basically listen to the locals as well, I guess. We had a wonderful time, that's for sure.

**Fitts:** I just have to mention one thing that Ricardo said yesterday, because you and Ricardo were going to record an interview on your experience. He said in his life, he can divide his life between two phases, pre-Nina Heyn and after Nina

Heyn. [laughs] Here's the thing. You have this immensely talented young man who was never introduced to art in his life. He and his wife are Dutch, and they had never been to the Reichs Museum or the Van Gogh Museum, and off he goes to the Reichs Museum with you and it's a revolutionary experience.

**Heyn:** A positive experience, meaning, he was happy and he discovered. The interesting thing is that for him, because he was at the museum as well, unfortunately, he cannot join us today, his favorite paintings were none of these Impressionist women darning or whatever, which I can totally understand, but he discovered an artist he didn't know about, Giorgio de Chirico, who is the Italian Symbolist most active during the First World War, the period of 1911 to 1920 is probably the best paintings of his.

He has the realist paintings of strange architecture and strange cities and people in a strange landscape, kind of similar to René Magritte's later paintings or paintings from the same time-- [crosstalk]

**Fitts:** Yes, he loved them.

**Heyn:** That's what was his discovery, and that's what I believe that art museums are. You just go there without any pre-conception, you just go there--[crosstalk]

**Fitts:** Everybody needs to know what they would take home. [laughs]

**Heyn:** Yes, and that's what we recommend to everybody.

**Fitts:** Go find the art that you would take home. Ladies and gentlemen, this has been a pleasure. Check out the other great *Food for the Soul* podcasts. We have a whole selection of both audios and videos on the *Food for the Soul* website, along with great columns on both Nina's museum trips and wonderful movies. You vote for the Academy Awards, so you see how many?

**Heyn:** Not sure... but yes.

**Fitts:** 600 movies a year.

**Heyn:** No, maybe 300, but unfortunately--

**Fitts:** Okay, 300 a year. This is your first beginning of your Food for the Soul year, and you have many more museums to come this year. Give us just a quick two seconds on the schedule.

**Heyn:** Well, not the schedule maybe, but we certainly will be covering a big exhibition of Caspar David Friedrich, romantic German painter, retrospective in Berlin, and big exhibition called *The Birth of Impressionism* in Paris at Musee d'Orsay.

**Fitts:** You're going to have lunch in that great lunchroom? Okay.

[crosstalk]

**Heyn:** Speaking of you, because I'm going along. [chuckles]

**Fitts:** Okay.

**Heyn:** There is an exhibition at Tate, in London, which is called *Now You See Me: Women Artists from 1520 to 1920*, which speaks to the theme of our book.

**Granögger:** Wow, fascinating.

**Heyn:** There's three exhibit big exhibitions that I definitely will try to report on that are coming up in the next few months.

**Fitts:** Ladies and gentlemen, stay tuned on the Food for the Soul website. Thank you for joining us on *Food for the Soul* at Solari Report. Thank you, Nina Heyn.

**Heyn:** Thank you very much, and thank you, Ulrike, for joining us as well.

**Granögger:** Thank you as well.



## **MODIFICATION**

**Transcripts are not always verbatim. Modifications are sometimes made to improve clarity, usefulness and readability, while staying true to the original intent.**

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