

increase, and so I would be able to spend more time painting. I accepted the grant on their terms. I went overseas, and enjoyed it.

My first Rembrandt I saw in Madrid, where I had gone because I had read that the pictures in the Prado there were the best preserved in the world because of the climate. The Rembrandt was surprising because of the colour. I had always thought of him as rich and brown; but this picture called, I think (I kept no notes), 'Saskia as Flora', gave me an impression of greenish white. It was in a small room in the right wing of the building. While I was looking at it from across the room an old couple, probably from the Antipodes, doing the tour of their lives like me, came in. They walked close to the pictures, he reading, or attempting to read the titles (they were in Spanish). They looked at each picture for a second or two, short-sightedly, she a couple ahead of him. At the 'Saskia' he stopped and called her back. 'Come and look at this, dear—Rembrandt!' But she wouldn't. She was firm with him. 'If we spend too long looking at any one picture, we won't see them all.'

I am wrong about this being my *first* Rembrandt; it was my second. I had seen one, a self-portrait in old age, at the National Gallery of Victoria in Australia in 1958. It was a Rembrandt of the brown sort. It had moved me far more than this Saskia did, bubbling with inward laughter as I was, and yet washed with inward sadness at the behaviour of that elderly couple of tourists.

But it was Goya (despite my intention to concentrate on only three painters) who took command of my eye in the Prado. I could only look incidentally there at Velasquez or El Greco. I made a special trip out to the Florida Chapel to see his frescoes there, which I knew from a book. It was there that a delightful old custodian, when I pleaded to be allowed to stay longer than he wanted me to, answered my plea (that I so loved Goya that I had spent fourteen days in the Museo Prado, looking at his work there) by sweeping his arm round the walls of the Florida and saying 'Goya *superior*'.

I did not encounter Cézanne in the original until I got to London, the National Gallery. There, I am ashamed to say, I fell asleep in front of his 'Dovecot at Bellevue'. Overcome by the artificially heated air and the deep upholstery of a round leather seat, I wearied of fighting for a glimpse of it between brightly-garbed tourists.

It was better at the Courtauld Institute; but even so I had got so much already from prints of Cézanne that contemplation of the originals, though undoubtedly luxurious, couldn't do much more for me, not at first anyway; and I wasn't going to have time to repeat the experience year in and year out, as I would have done if I had lived in Europe. My best Cézanne experience was reserved until I saw 'The Bathers' at the Barnes Foundation in Philadelphia, and marvelled at the blues in it. They reminded me of the windows