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4. Pierre Bonnard (1867-1947), *Portrait au chien*, 1941, Oil on board

5. Édouard Vuillard (1868-1940), *Souvenir d'une dernière visite à Forain*, around 1928, Tempera on board

6. Suzanne Valadon (1867-1938), *Anémones au verre blanc*, Oil on board

From 1888, **Maurice Denis** (1870-1943) was active in helping establish the theories of the Nabi school, aspiring to set art onto a new, more spiritual and authentic path. From 1898, Denis worked on large scale decorative interiors such as his ceiling of the Champs-Élysées in 1912 (*Esquisses pour la décoration du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées*). Throughout his life he sought to reconcile his decorative ambitions - which drew on the essential components of painting such as plane, colour and composition - with the demands of his constantly changing subject matter, his Catholic faith and his need to describe modern life or travel memories. Maurice Denis was fond of Italy; his landscape *Saint-François au désert*, with the vertical cadences of its cypresses, and *Vasque de la Villa Médicis* in Rome, which he painted over and over between 1895 and 1937, both express his religious sentiment and sense of symbolism.

The work of **Pierre Bonnard** (1867-1947) drew inspiration from the tail-end of Impressionism and the Nabi movement, of which he was one of the leading artists. He was also influenced by the Japanese vogue, with its different conception of perspective and space. Pierre Bonnard was the first of the Nabis to take an interest in posters. He rejected the model of traditional painting in favour of areas of stark colour, elegantly outlined to achieve a decorative effect. Through the intimacy of his subjects, he gradually established a personal style, dominated by colour and giving him scope to celebrate light. In 1937, in *Le golf de Saint-Tropez au couchant*, he used glowing colours to fully represent the sensory impressions of a scene and the infinite possibilities of light. He remained faithful to the same themes throughout his life, and in 1941, painted *Portrait au chien*, an interior scene. He questioned the relationship between space and light while at the same time exploring colour, in a manner that was both inventive and harmonious.

Around 1890, **Édouard Vuillard** (1868-1940) adopted a synthetist method which relied on memory and imagination rather than direct observation. From 1900, he returned to a precise and minutely observed realism. Throughout his career, he painted scenes from everyday life. His depiction of bourgeois interiors combines with the depth and sensitivity of portraits such as *Femme au bouquet*. From 1923 to 1937, he set out to portray his fellow artists and friends, Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis and Aristide Maillol. In 1928 he painted *Souvenir d'une dernière visite à Forain*, a tribute to the past and his old friendships with Toulouse-Lautrec and the Natanson brothers. In this work, which he donated to the Albi Museum, Vuillard captures the gaze of the old artist within the subtle grey atmosphere of the studio.

From 1880, **Suzanne Valadon** (1865-1938) posed as model Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. No doubt it was in memory of the bond that united Valadon and Lautrec that the State bestowed the Albi Museum with the canvas purchased from the artist in 1938, the year of her death. The still life, *Anémones au verre blanc* was painted at the end of her life as an artist. The extreme simplicity of composition sets off the anemones, symbolic both of death and renewal of nature.