



LEILA HELLER GALLERY

AILEEN BORDMAN



MONET'S GARDEN



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March 5 - May 3, 2025

LEILA HELLER GALLERY.

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*Aileen Bordman: Monet's Garden*  
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Front Cover Image: *Giverny: 01*, 2014  
Inside Cover Images: Detail of *Giverny: 74*, 2016  
Back Cover Image: *Giverny: 02*, 2014

# *MONET'S GARDEN*



# Monet's Garden

Essay by Janis Gardner Cecil

*“If ever I should set eyes on the garden of Claude Monet,  
I imagine I would find a place of tints and hues  
more than blossoms; not so much a garden of flowers  
in the old sense, as a garden of colors laid out in a manner  
different from nature.”*

– Marcel Proust (1871 - 1922)

Leila Heller and I are thrilled to present the debut gallery exhibition of work by American photographer Aileen Bordman, whose photographs of Claude Monet's iconic gardens in Giverny, France, capture what the Impressionist painter called “my one and only masterpiece.”

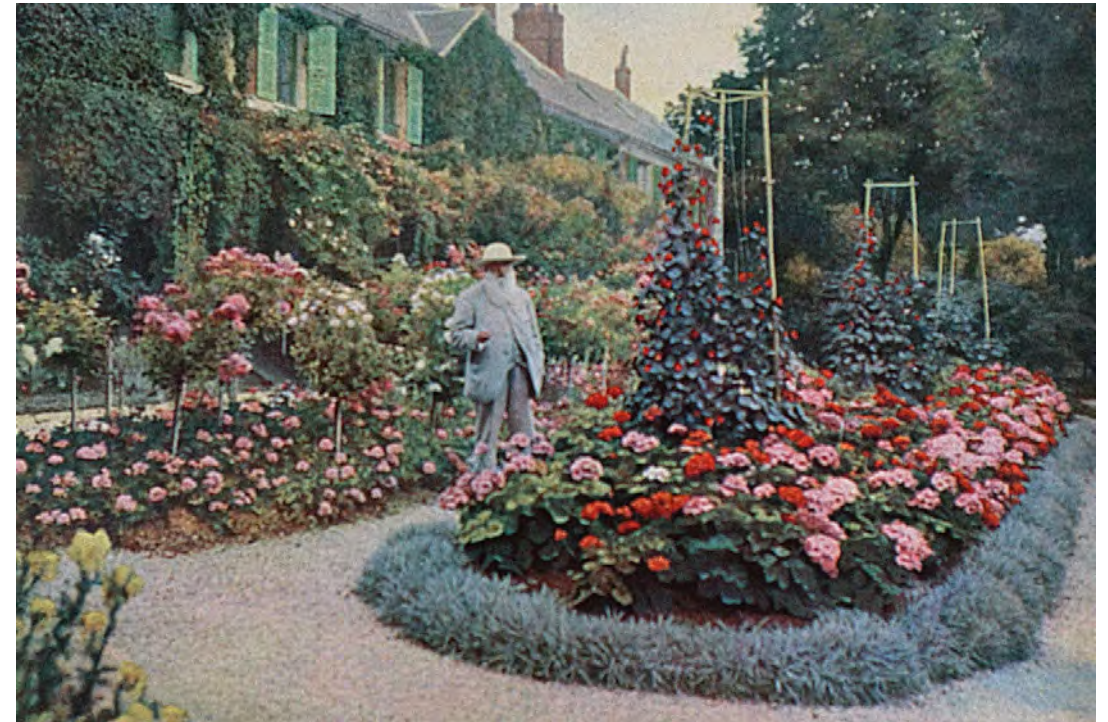
Bordman's photographs of Giverny range from large-scale, horizontal landscapes that capture views of the Japanese Bridge and water lilies of the *Bassin* to the rose-covered archways and meandering paths of the *Clos Normand*. Other works focus on tightly composed sections of the artist's cultivated color harmonies in the full bloom of the spring season. Bordman's carefully conceived images capture many of the hundreds of species of flora that comprise Giverny's gardens. Her work reflects a deep and intimate knowledge of the site and its particularities, which only a lifetime of passionate study could allow.

With a technique founded in twentieth century photography, Bordman uses a variety of Sony cameras, always fitted with Zeiss lenses (the same brand that Monet himself used in his spectacles). Bordman's extensive knowledge of Monet's planting process in the *Bassin*, *Clos Normand*, and the artist's two-acre kitchen garden has been fundamental to her artistic practice, as she has sought to capture Monet's intricate garden compositions and color schemes. Just as Monet brought his rich understanding of color theory and atmosphere to Giverny's garden design, Bordman's aesthetic is shaped by the Impressionist movement, including a focus on the effects of changing light and temporal mood.

Aileen Bordman remarks, “Through decades of studying Monet's Garden at Giverny, from my youth in the 1980s to now, I have observed that Giverny has changed in a multitude of ways. With these works, I seek to share the grand vision that Monet intended for his most special creation. Monet's enduring love for nature is often present in his paintings yet is felt most at Giverny through his careful selection and arrangement of thousands of flowers, bushes and trees with dazzling color and distinct perspectival effects. Since its restoration, the garden has evolved into a global destination, attracting over 10,000 visitors daily during the season. Through my work I aim to share the serenity, energy, and beauty of Giverny, inspiring others to experience it for themselves.”

Embodied in Bordman's Giverny series is the history of the garden as a personal refuge, source of inspiration, and a place of divine expression. Within every image there is the animating spirit of the garden's creator - Claude Monet - as well as the physical labor and dedication of as many as one hundred horticulturalists and laborers that tend to the garden's design, continued growth and cultural legacy. Parallel to the appreciation for the extraordinary beauty of the garden lies the appreciation of its fragility. The threat of global warming, the necessity of a fresh water supply, and the reliance upon human caretaking are implicit in every frame.

The roots of Bordman's passion began with her mother, Dame Helen Rappel Bordman (1932-2020), one of a small group of dedicated Americans responsible, alongside French authorities and benefactors, for the renaissance of Monet's garden and home at Giverny. Monet lived and worked at Giverny from 1883 to 1926, but the property was bequeathed to his son after his death and ultimately left to ruin in 1947. The meticulous restoration process began in 1974 when the Institut de France, which inherited the property, asked art historian Gérard Van der Kamp (1912-2002) to restore the desolate home and gardens of Claude Monet. American philanthropist Lila Acheson Wallace, at the suggestion of Metropolitan Museum Curator, Charles Moffett, supported this effort with generous funds, and her friend Helen Bordman joined their vigorous campaign to rescue this cultural treasure for all to visit and enjoy.



Claude Monet outside of his house in Giverny, France.

Throughout the next years and for decades after, Dame Bordman helped to raise significant financial support to grow, maintain and operate Fondation Claude Monet in Giverny, leading the development of a creative volunteer program that has included historians, gardeners, and artists alike. Dame Bordman kept an apartment at Giverny for four decades, with her daughter a frequent visitor. Drawing upon these special ties to Giverny, Aileen Bordman came to know every square inch of the garden at every time of day. Dame Bordman was awarded the Chevalier, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, by the French Minister of Culture in 2017 in recognition of her great contribution to French culture, a rarity for an American. In honor of Claude Monet and her mother's dedicated service to Giverny, Bordman now carries the baton, bringing the world of Claude Monet to all.

In addition to her work as a photographer, Aileen Bordman is an author, filmmaker, and entrepreneur. Bordman's two best-selling books, *Monet's Palate Cookbook: The Artist & His Kitchen Garden at Giverny* (Gibbs Smith, 2015), with a foreword by Meryl Streep, and *Everyday Monet* (Harper Collins, 2018), feature her photography as well as extensive information about the artist and his life.

Bordman's acclaimed documentary film *Monet's Palate – A Gastronomic View from the Gardens of Giverny*, examines the connection between fine art and fine cuisine as seen through the eyes of Claude Monet. Meryl Streep's opening narration takes the viewer through the region of Normandy and Monet's home garden. The film includes interviews with art historian Joachim Pissarro, Chefs Alice Waters, Daniel Boulud, and Roger Vergé. Screened from Cannes to New York, the film was featured during the exhibition, *Monet's Garden*, held at the New York Botanical Garden in 2012 and was distributed nationally by American Public Television on PBS, where it can still be viewed.

Bordman's work has been featured in *Forbes Magazine*, *New York Magazine*, *The New York Times*, and *USA Today*, among other international publications. Bordman has lectured about Claude Monet and the gardens at Giverny at museums and cultural venues throughout the United States, including the 92nd Street Y, Kimbell Art Museum, the Nassau County Museum of Art, The Norton Museum of Art, and The New York Botanical Garden.

Janis Gardner Cecil, President, JGC Fine Art.





*Giverny: 01*, 2014  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 4 + 1 AP  
40h x 60w in. / 101.6h x 152.4w cm





*Giverny: 02*, 2014  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 4 + 1 AP  
40h x 40w in. / 101.6h x 101.6w cm



*Giverny: 34*, 2017  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm





Detail of *Giverny*: 34, 2017





*Giverny: 78*, 2016  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm



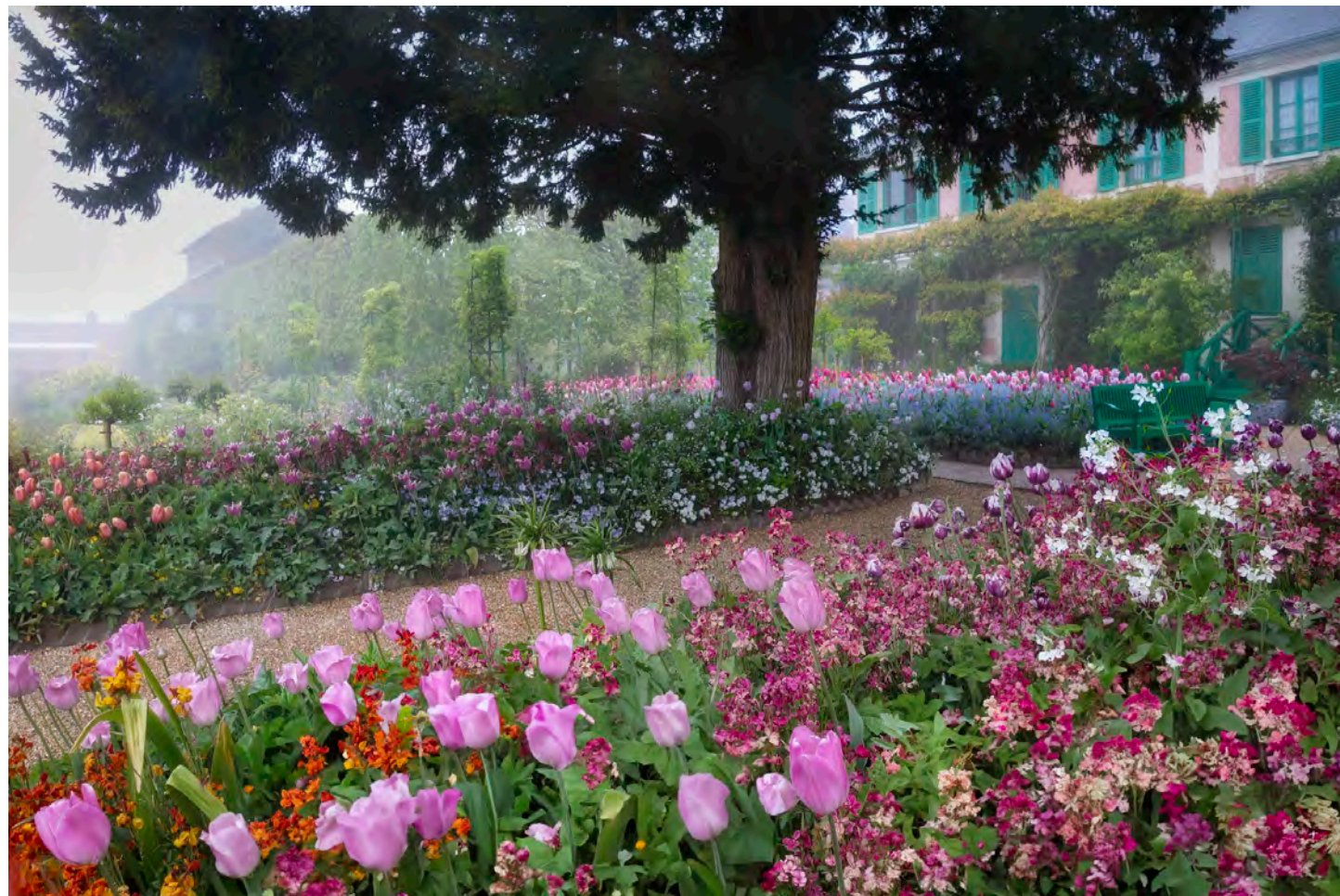
*Giverny: 47*, 2018  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 4 + 1 AP  
40h x 30w in. / 101.6h x 76.2w cm





*Giverny: 28*, 2016  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 4 + 1 AP  
40h x 60w in. / 101.6h x 152.4w cm





*Giverny: 35*, 2016  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm



Detail of *Giverny: 35*, 2016





*Giverny: 95*, 2019  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 10 + 2 APs  
12h x 14w in. / 30.48h x 35.56w cm



*Giverny: 49*, 2019  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm





*Giverny: 74*, 2016  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm





*Giverny: 96*, 2019  
 Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 10 + 2 APs  
 14h x 12w in. / 35.56h x 30.48w cm



Detail of *Giverny: 96*, 2019



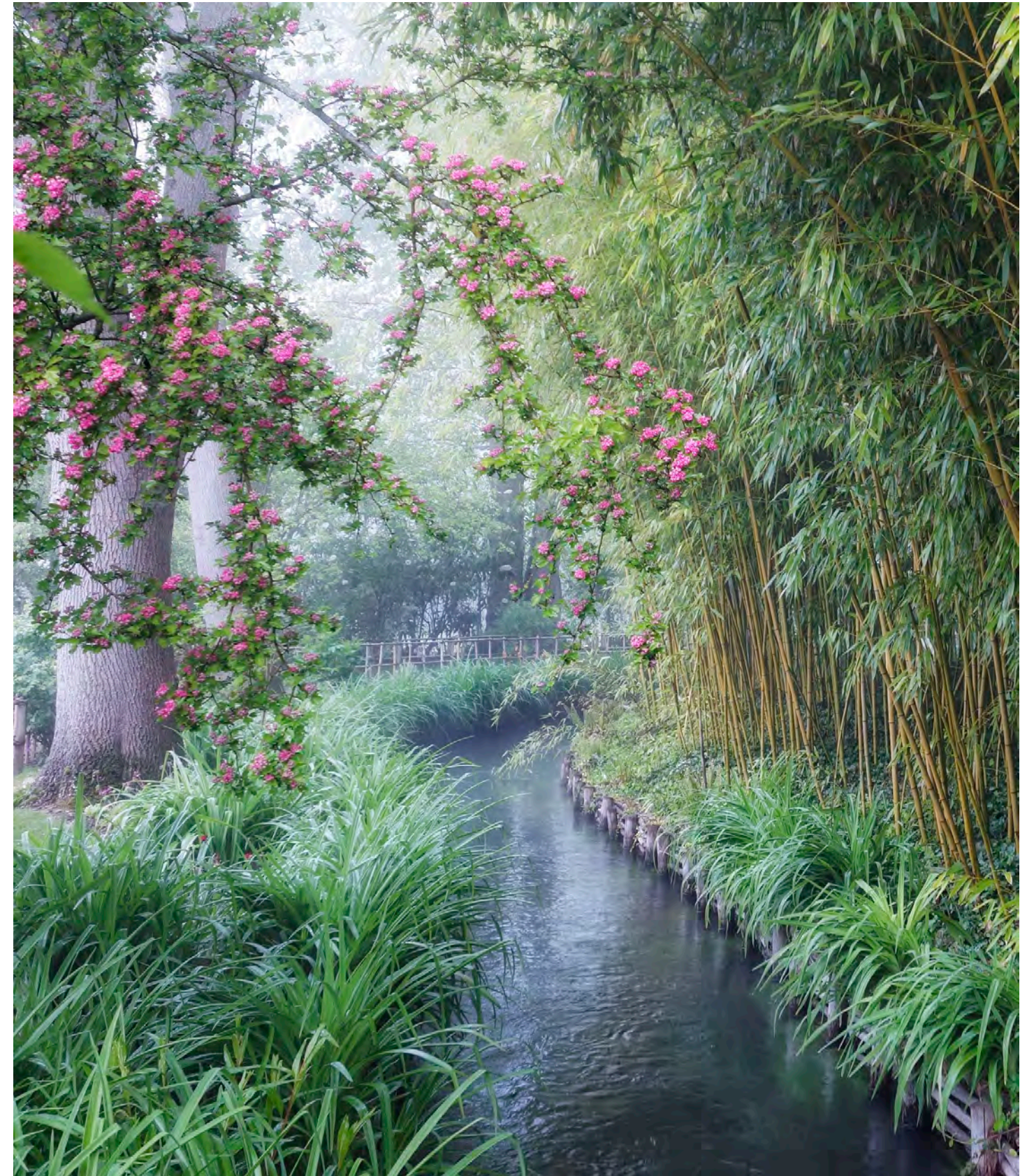


*Giverny: 07, 2018*  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm





*Giverny: 82*, 2018  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 6 + 2 APs  
20h x 30w in. / 50.8h x 76.2w cm



*Giverny: 83*, 2014  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 10 + 2 APs  
14h x 12w in. / 35.56h x 30.48w cm





*Giverny: 80*, 2016  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 4 + 1 AP  
40h x 60w in. / 101.6h x 152.4w cm





*Giverny: 93*, 2015  
Archival Pigment Print, Ed. of 10 + 2 APs  
12h x 14w in. / 30.48h x 35.56w cm

# AILEEN BORDMAN

Biography, Projects and Selected Press

1957	Born in New York, New York. Bordman lives in New York, Michigan and France.
1975-81	B.A, M.A., Penn State University, State College, PA
1981-82	Post-graduate studies, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
1982	First visit to Giverny, resides on site with mother, Dame Helen Rappel Bordman.
1983-2018	Annual visits to Giverny and France as base for other travel. Bordman assisted her mother's activities at Giverny, including lecturing about Claude Monet.
2000-2004	Created and released the film <i>Monet's Palate</i> . Bordman served as the Executive Producer, screenwriter, editor, composer and director of photography for this film. Narration by Meryl Streep with Chefs Daniel Boulud, Roger Vergé and Alice Waters, Michel Richard, art historian Joachim Pissarro, Dame Helen Rappel Bordman, Florence Van Der Kemp and Steve Wynn .
2005	Screening of <i>Monet's Palate</i> at the 92nd Street Y, NY, plus panel discussion featuring Joachim Pissarro, curator Charles Moffett, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Dame Helen Rappel Bordman
2004-2005	Tours <i>Monet's Palate</i> at international film festivals: Black Mariah Film Award
2006-2007	Television broadcast version, <i>Monet's Palate</i> , released.
2007-2008	<i>Today in Monet's Garden – The Lure of Giverny</i> , daily screening, <i>Monet's Palate</i> , Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH
2010 2013	Bordman completes PBS Broadcast appearances to accompany <i>Monet's Palate</i> throughout the U.S. This tour includes Las Vegas and Palm Beach (benefit for Norton Museum of Art). 350 PBS Stations
2012	<i>Monet's Garden</i> , curated by Dr. Paul Hayes Tucker, New York Botanical Garden, Lecture and daily screening, <i>Monet's Palate</i>
2013-2015	Co-author, <i>Monet's Palate Cookbook: The Artist and his Kitchen Garden</i> , with garden expert Derek Fell (1939-2019), Gibbs-Smith, foreword by Meryl Streep
2016	Author, <i>Everyday Monet</i> , Harper Collins publishers
2016	<i>Monet's Palate</i> , Daily film screening and lecture by Aileen Bordman, Nassau County Museum of Art, New York (September-November)
2017	Helen Rappel Bordman, awarded Chevalier, Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, by the Minister of Culture, Republic of France
2018	<i>Everyday Monet: A Giverny-Inspired Gardening and Lifestyle Guide to Living Your Best Impressionist Life</i> , Aileen Bordman, Dey Street Books, June
2018-2021	<i>The Vision of Claude Monet</i> , multipart documentary featuring Aileen Bordman, produced by Zeiss, Inc.
2019	<i>Monet, His Life and Impact</i> , Aileen Bordman, Photography and Film, <i>Monet's Palate</i> , Kimbell Museum of Art, Houston
2019-2023	Official photographer for calendar, <i>Monet's Garden</i> , a Giverny legacy publication since 1990
2020	Passing of Dame Helen Rappel Bordman
2023	UNESCO Cultural Heritage, Panelist

Aileen Bordman would like to acknowledge the mentorship of Carolyn Louise Newhouse, Derek Fell and Elizabeth Avedon.



Selected Press and Appearances

- 2008
- “Monet Buzz Extra – Aileen Bordman – Monet Expert,” Bonjour Paris*
- 2008
- “Why Water Lilies Are a Feast for the Eye – Aileen Bordman,” The New York Times, April 19*
- 2015
- “Lunch with Monet – Aileen Bordman – Interview,” WKQED National Public Radio and BBC*
- 2015
- “Monet-inspired book rich with culinary & gardening tips,” The Philadelphia Inquirer, April 30*
- 2015
- “Aileen Bordman: The Life of Monet, Conversations with Creative Woman,” Radio Sandi Klein, May 26*
- 2015
- “Feast on Great Cookbooks: Top 10 Monet’s Palate Aileen Bordman,” USA Today, July 5th*
- 2015
- “La Belle Cuisine – Aileen Bordman,” New York Daily News, July 17*
- 2015
- “The Connected Table – Aileen Bordman,” iHeart Radio Interview with Melanie Young, August*
- 2015
- “Monet’s Palate: Aileen Bordman,” France Today, August*
- 2016
- “Aileen Bordman: In the Footsteps of Monet,” Elizabeth Avedon Journal, January 16,*  
<https://elizabethavedon.blogspot.com/search?q=aileen+bordman>
- 2018
- “Photographer and Author-Aileen Bordman Cookery by the Book,” Suzy Chase Radio, June 9*
- 2018
- “Monet’s Palate and Claude Monet, Interview with Aileen Bordman,” New Jersey Monthly, July*
- 2018
- “A Passion for Picnics and Entertaining: An Excerpt from ‘Everyday Monet,” France Today, September 6*
- 2020
- “You May Not be Able to Paint Like Monet – Interview, Aileen Bordman,” Colorado Public Radio, January 7*
- 2020
- “Interview with Monet expert, Author and Photographer – Aileen Bordman,” France Today, April 20th*
- 2020
- “Monet’s Lifestyle – Aileen Bordman,” Forbes, June 14*
- 2020
- Entrepreneur, Author and Photographer Aileen Bordman – Sandi Klein Show, July 19*
- 2020
- “Monet and Cézanne – Author and Photographer Aileen Bordman,” South China Morning Post, October 11*
- 2021
- “Cod cooked Cézanne’s way, Monet’s Yorkshire pudding and bouillabaisse – a dish he served Renoir – and other recipes inspired by the Impressionist painter’s garden at Giverny,” South China Morning Post, October 11th*
- 2023
- “The World of Claude Monet – Everyday - Aileen Bordman,” The Joan Hamburg Show, WABC Radio Live*

