


# YELLOW ROOM • NORTH & EAST WALLS

 At the opening of the museum in 1903, and for concerts in the early years, this room was used as the men's cloakroom. Many of the objects displayed here retain a connection with music, and most of the paintings belong to the era of the museum's founding. For the first visitors, this was a space of the modern world, while the galleries beyond were devoted to the past.

## The Music Cases

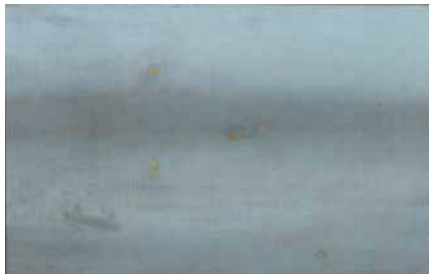
These cases are filled principally with memorabilia of musicians and composers whom Isabella Gardner admired. Throughout her life, she was passionate about attending concerts and operas. She also supported many musicians, commissioning works and following their careers. The love of music preceded her collecting of art, and she presented prestigious concerts at her Beacon Street house and then at the museum. Soprano Nellie Melba, pianist Ignace Paderewski, violinists Charles Martin Loeffler and Fritz Kriesler, and actor/singer Paul Robeson were among those who performed at her private recitals.

  
12



James McNeill Whistler  
American, 1843–1903  
**Harmony in Blue and Silver: Trouville, 1865**  
Oil on canvas

This radically simplified beach scene is really little more than three horizontal stripes of paint across the canvas that suggest beach, sea, and sky. The figure gazing out to sea is French painter Gustave Courbet, who worked alongside Whistler at Trouville. The painting thus pays homage to the older artist who had been such an innovative and adventurous force in French painting.



James McNeill Whistler  
American, 1843–1903  
**Nocturne, Blue and Silver: Battersea Reach, About 1872–78**  
Oil on canvas

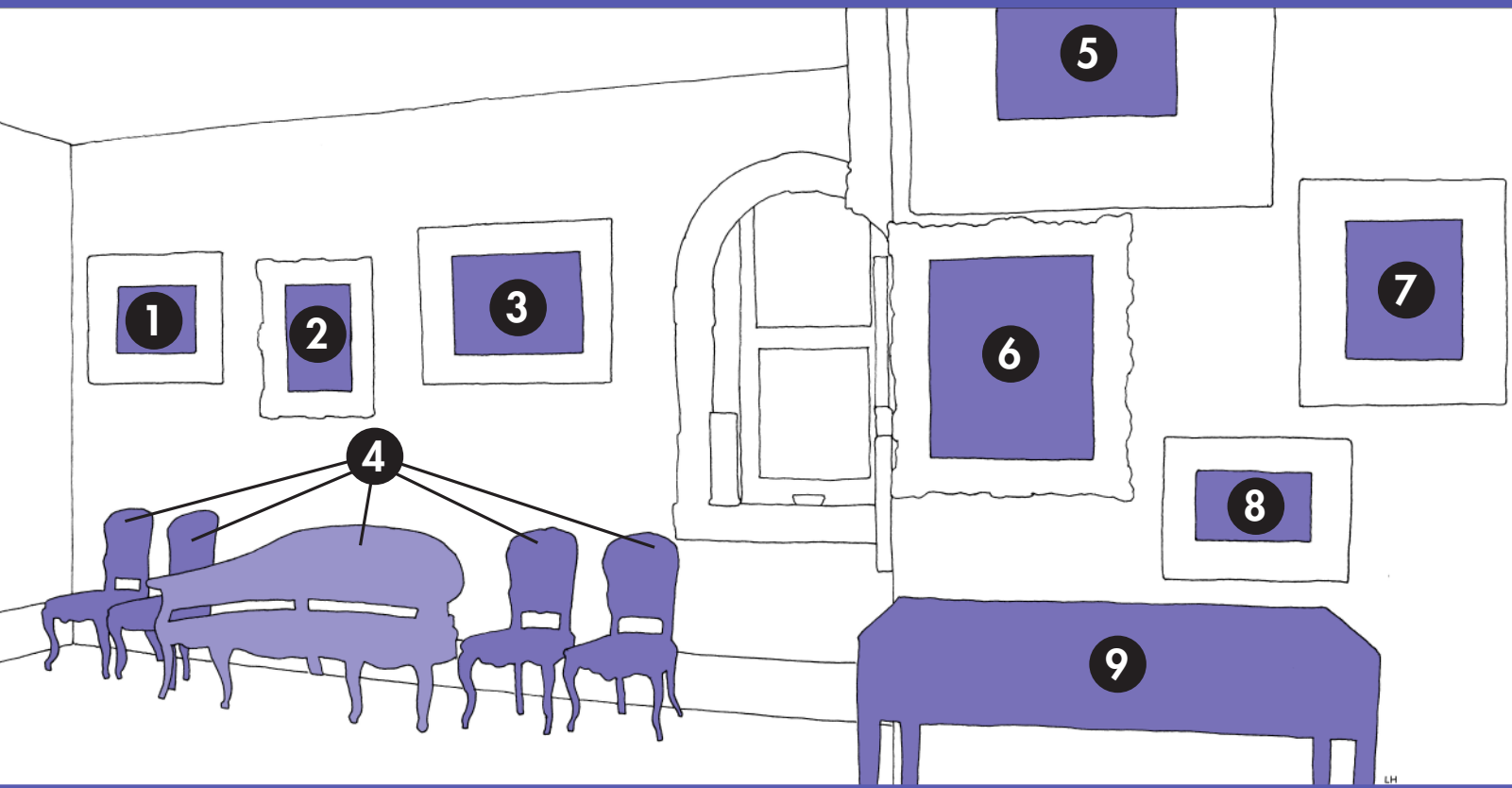
The titles Whistler gave his paintings—seen here in “Harmony” and “Nocturne”—are suggestive of musical compositions, which may be why Isabella Gardner installed them in this room devoted to music. The colors and forms glimpsed in these paintings are so subtle that the subject and place are almost impossible to identify. Indeed, Whistler wished his paintings to trigger pure aesthetic responses. In this work, the thin, sweeping strokes of blue paint are punctuated by darker forms and a few specks of orange and yellow, which suggest boats on the river Thames in London.



Edgar Degas  
French, 1834–1917  
**Portrait of Joséphine Gaujelin, 1867**  
Oil on canvas

Joséphine Gaujelin was a Parisian ballerina who later became a teacher and an actress. Degas was uncompromising in his portraiture and, probably for that reason, seldom received or accepted commissions. Although the sitter did commission this portrait, she rejected it, undoubtedly because Degas portrayed her so sternly. Yet the intensity of the sitter's gaze is both disturbing and compelling. Berthe Morisot wrote that it was “a very pretty little portrait of a very ugly woman.”

# YELLOW ROOM • NORTH & EAST WALLS



**12** **1. Nocturne, Blue and Silver: Battersea Reach**, about 1872–78. James McNeill Whistler (American, 1843–1903). Oil on canvas

**2. Portrait of Joséphine Gaujelin**, 1867. Edgar Degas (French, 1834–1917). Oil on canvas

**3. Harmony in Blue and Silver: Trouville**, 1865. James McNeill Whistler (American, 1843–1903). Oil on canvas

**4. Settee and Side Chairs** (from a suite of furniture: 5 side chairs, 2 armchairs, and 1 settee). French, late 18th century. Wood and caning

**5. Tomb of Gaston de Foix**, 1894. Joseph Lindon Smith (American, 1863–1950). Watercolor on paper

**6. In the Dressing Room**, 1910. Louis Kronberg (American, 1872–1965). Pastel on canvas

**7. A Cottage by a Ford**, about 1860. Constant Troyon (French, 1810–1865). Pastel on paper

**8. The Roman Tower, Andernach**, 1817. J.M.W. Turner (British, 1775–1851). Watercolor on paper [photographic reproduction]

**9. Case:**  
**Viola d'Amore**, 1770s. Tomaso Eberle (Italian, 1727–1792). Wood  
**Mandolin**. Italian, 18th century. Wood


**Chasuble (liturgical vestment)**. Italian, about 1725–50. Brocaded silk

## North Wall (not pictured)

**Mirror**. Italian, 19th century (?)

**Chest of Drawers**. Italian, 19th century. Painted wood. Case on top of the chest contains musical memorabilia.


**Chair**. Italian, 17th century. Wood

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**11**  **Henri Matisse**  
French, 1869–1954  
**The Terrace, St. Tropez, 1904**  
Oil on canvas

Matisse's wife, dressed in a kimono, sits leaning against a boathouse, almost hidden in the scene. Forms and colors play against each other: the sea at the left, the shadow cast by the building, and the twisting branches above flatten the space. This work was painted while the Matisses were staying with painter Paul Signac, in the south of France. Isabella Gardner did not buy much twentieth-century art. This painting and several drawings by Matisse were given to her by a circle of friends who evidently thought that Matisse's interest in figures and identifiable places, as well as his sensuous colors, would appeal to Gardner, who was so passionate about the Italian Renaissance.

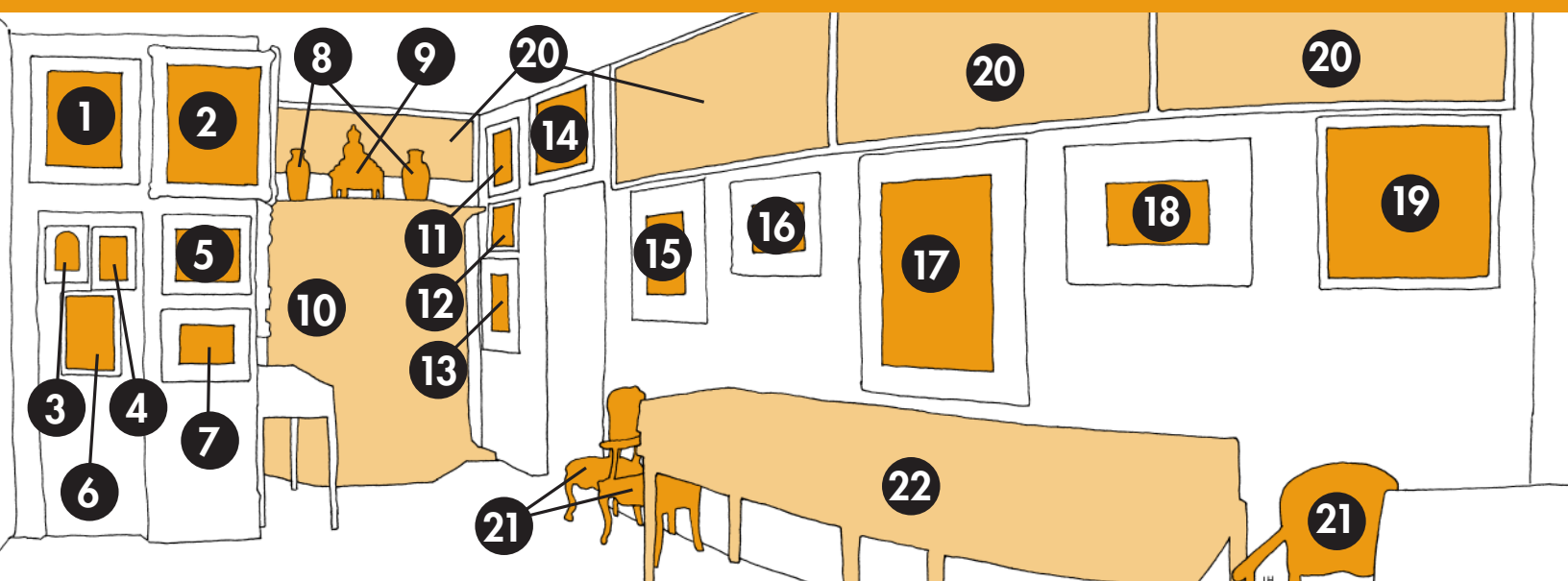


**John S. Sargent**  
American, 1856–1925  
**Charles Martin Loeffler, 1903**  
Oil on canvas

John Singer Sargent became a close friend of Isabella Gardner, who collected a large number of his works. In 1903, shortly after the opening of her museum, Isabella invited Sargent to work in her museum, and he used the Gothic Room on the third floor as his studio. There, he painted this portrait of Loeffler, and gave it to Gardner on her birthday. Sargent inscribed the portrait at the top: "To Mrs. Gardner con buone feste [happy birthday] from her friend John S. Sargent." A composer and violinist, Loeffler (1861–1935) arrived in America in 1881 and the next year began twenty years as assistant concertmaster for the Boston Symphony Orchestra.



# YELLOW ROOM • SOUTH & WEST WALLS



**1. Poppies in a Garden**, 1880s. John Appleton Brown (American, 1844–1902). Pastel on paper

**11** **2. The Terrace, St. Tropez**, 1904. Henri Matisse (French, 1869–1954). Oil on canvas

**3. Isabella of Portugal**, 17th century. Pieter de Jode II (Flemish, 1606–about 1674). Engraving, after a painting by Titian

**4. King John of England**, 18th century. George Vertue (British, 1684–1756). Engraving

**5. The Croquet Party**, 1913. Martin Mower (American, 1870–1960). Oil on canvas

**6. Mrs. Gardner at Fenway Court**, 1903. John S. Sargent (American, 1856–1925). Watercolor on paper

**7. Charleston**, about 1913. Martin Mower (American, 1870–1960). Oil on canvas

**8. Vases (two)**. Chinese, 19th century. Porcelain

**9. Buddha**. Chinese, 18th century. Painted and gilded bronze

**10. Cabinet** contains Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Persian, and Turkish ceramics, including 18 pieces of 18th century Sèvres porcelain and 24 pieces of Worcester Armorial China (English, 1789–1840).

**11. Mary, Queen of Scots under Confinement**, 1793. William Ward (British, 1766–1826). Mezzotint, after a painting by Robert Fulton

**12. Mary, Queen of Scots Leaving Scotland**, 1779. Francesco Bartolozzi (Italian, 1727–1815). Mezzotint, after a watercolor by Richard Westall

**13. Mary, Queen of Scots**, 1779. Francesco Bartolozzi (Italian, 1727–1815). Engraving, after a painting by Federico Zuccheri

**14. Apartments of the Chief Priest, Kyoto**, 1900. Joseph Lindon Smith (American, 1863–1950). Oil on canvas

**15. Lady in Yellow**, 1888. Thomas Wilmer Dewing (American, 1851–1938). Oil on wood

**16. On a Terrace**, about 1845–55. Narcisse Virgile Diaz de la Peña (French, 1807–1876). Oil on canvas

**17. Portrait of Charles Loeffler**, 1903. John S. Sargent (American, 1856–1925). Oil on canvas

**18. Lowland Pastures**, 1870s. Felix François Georges Philibert Ziem (French, 1822–1911). Oil on wood

**19. Love's Greeting**, 1860s. Dante Gabriel Rossetti (British, 1828–1882). Oil on wood

**20. Textiles**. French, early 18th century. Silk

**21. Chairs** (from a suite of furniture: 5 side-chairs, 2 armchairs, and 1 settee). French, late 18th century. Wood and caning

**22. Case** contains autographs, letters, and photographs of musicians, friends, and acquaintances of Isabella Gardner as well as musical memorabilia.