



Light

Monet at Giverny: A Novel

Eva Figes

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"I have never read a text which goes even half as far as this one in expressing the particular poignancy which lay at the heart of the impressionist movement. I say this as an art critic. As a novelist I would simply like to pay my tribute to the mastery of language, portraiture and storytelling which Figes has now at her command." **John Berger**

Reprinted for the first time in nearly 25 years, this shimmering short novel gives an extraordinary portrait of a day in the life of an artist at work and at home. In prose as luminous as the colors Monet is using to portray his beloved garden, Eva Figes guides us through the day, from the dawn ('midnight blueblack growing grey and misty') through midday ('the sun was high now...shrinking what little shadow remained, fading colours, the pink rambler roses on the fence by the railway track looked almost white, and the grass had turned a tired yellow') to evening ('the tide of shadows rising as the sunset glow faded outside and the room grew dark.'). Monet's wife, Alice, grieving for a lost daughter; a living daughter, Germaine, fretting that she will not be able to marry the young man she loves; their friend, the abbe, eating and drinking with them, observing the essential faith of the painter's art; two children, playing, closest to Monet in the freshness and certainty of their vision; all experiencing in very different ways the richness of the light that Monet works unceasingly to pin down in his last, great paintings.

Eva Figes, born in Berlin, moved to England with her family in 1939. She has published novels and social theory, including the feminist classic, *Patriarchal Attitudes*. She has two children, the author Kate Figes and the historian Orlando Figes.