In delicate colors and with intricate lacing of white, gold, and green, Jean-Francois Raffaelli reflects the brilliant skein of God's design made manifest in the beauty of nature and women in his masterpiece, Feeding the Wild Ducks.

At this joyous time of the year—when God's great gifts to mankind are never more evident—we wish you and your loved ones the blessings of health, peace, happiness, and prosperity.

Ethel and Samuel J. LeFrak and Family
Jean-Francois Raffaelli  1850–1924

Born in Paris, Jean-Francois Raffaelli was recognized as one of the great figures of 19th Century art. His French landscapes were hailed as masterworks of a genre which reached its apogee in the 1880s and 90s.

As a young Parisian art student, Raffaelli mastered the schools of realism and naturalism, making his precocious debut in the Salon of 1870, and soon developing into the foremost Academic painter of his time.

In 1880 and 1881, exhibiting with orthodox Impressionist artists, Raffaelli’s works elicited more praise from the critics than that of any other artist. His attention to detail attracted the interest of naturalist writers like Emile Zola, who praised his artistic ability as “unique, powerful, and refined.”

*Feeding the Wild Ducks*, painted in 1878, two years before Raffaelli’s involvement with Impressionism, displays the strong sense of design that would remain a hallmark of his approach to painting. The exotic painting, moreover, helped place Raffaelli in the pantheon of French artists. The elegantly costumed women, the careful observation of the feeding ducks, and the meticulous handling of the distant background make this an enormously appealing landscape and one of the greatest romantic works of the period.

During a career that spanned the birth of Impressionism, Fauvism, Modernism, and Cubism, Raffaelli was awarded a series of medals and prizes that included the Gold Medal at the Paris World’s Fair in 1889. In 1906, he achieved his greatest honor when the French Government recognized his greatness by naming him a Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.

Raffaelli’s works in The LeFrak Collection are among the finest representations of Academic art in the world.