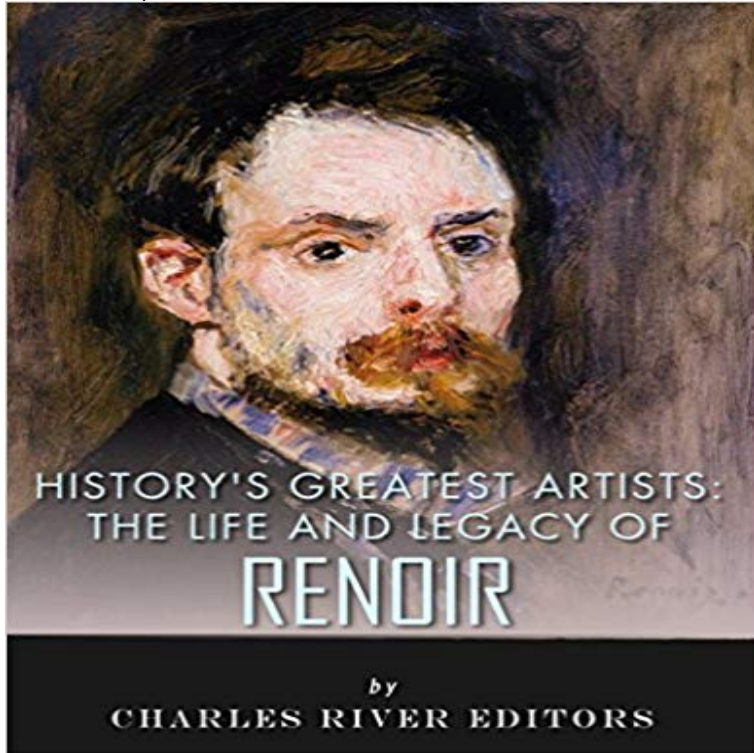


## History's Greatest Artists: The Life and Legacy of Renoir



\*Includes pictures \*Includes Renoir's quotes about his life and work \*Includes online resources and a bibliography for further reading \*Includes a table of contents

To my mind, a picture should be something pleasant, cheerful, and pretty, yes pretty! There are too many unpleasant things in life as it is without creating still more of them. Renoir

Pierre-Auguste Renoir stands alongside Claude Monet at the very peak of Impressionist painting, and though neither of them can be credited with founding the movement (that honor likely goes to Edouard Manet or Edgar Degas), Renoir and Monet remain inextricably tied to the key characteristics of Impressionism: loose brushwork; outdoor painting; an emphasis on capturing natural light and shadow; and a focus on remaining in Paris and the surrounding countryside. Yet if Monet and Renoir are each remembered for their affiliation with these descriptors, differences nevertheless distinguish them, especially the fact that Renoir concentrated less on nature than did Monet, attending instead to scenes depicting Parisian leisure activity. This thematic concern for depicting scenes of idyllic Parisian enjoyment, such as rowing in boats or grand luncheons, imbues Renoir with a greater sense of joie-de-vivre than Monet or perhaps any of the other members of the Impressionist cohort. Even though Renoir's art shares much in common with his Impressionist colleagues, both his handling of paint and even his subject matter contain significant differences that render him truly unique as a painter. That Renoir captured scenes of leisure better than any of his contemporaries was surprising and unlikely considering the background in which he was raised. Denied the opportunity for a proper education, Renoir's painting, which started at a young age, was borne more out of a need to work than in pursuit of a lifelong passion. Renoir certainly loved to paint, but like Monet,

painting always remained his profession, and he treated it as such. Famed art dealer Ambrose Vollard summarized this aspect of the great painter, noting, He went to his studio just as punctually as a clerk to his office. In the evening, after a game of checkers or dominoes with Madame Renoir, he went to bed early; he was afraid it would affect his work the next day if he stayed up late. All his life, painting was his only pleasure, his only relaxation. These remarks point not only to Renoirs love for painting but also the professionalism that he brought toward the endeavor. Even after becoming financially stable, and even after acquiring arthritis late in life, Renoir continued to paint with the same drive that he displayed as a young artist. Of course, it is not unusual for famous artists to paint until theyre physically unable to do so, but Renoirs undying obligation to his profession speaks to the extent to which he absorbed the humble values impressed upon him during his blue-collar upbringing. Indeed, Renoir possessed a supreme gift for painting, but his work ethic should not be overlooked in the narrative charting his rise to fame. Historys Greatest Artists: The Life and Legacy of Renoir looks at the personal background that led to him becoming an artist and the cultural climate in which he rose to fame. Renoirs formal technique and artistic legacy are also analyzed, including his working methods and education. Along with pictures of important people, places, and events, you will learn about Renoir like never before, in no time at all.

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