

# Pierre-Auguste Renoir

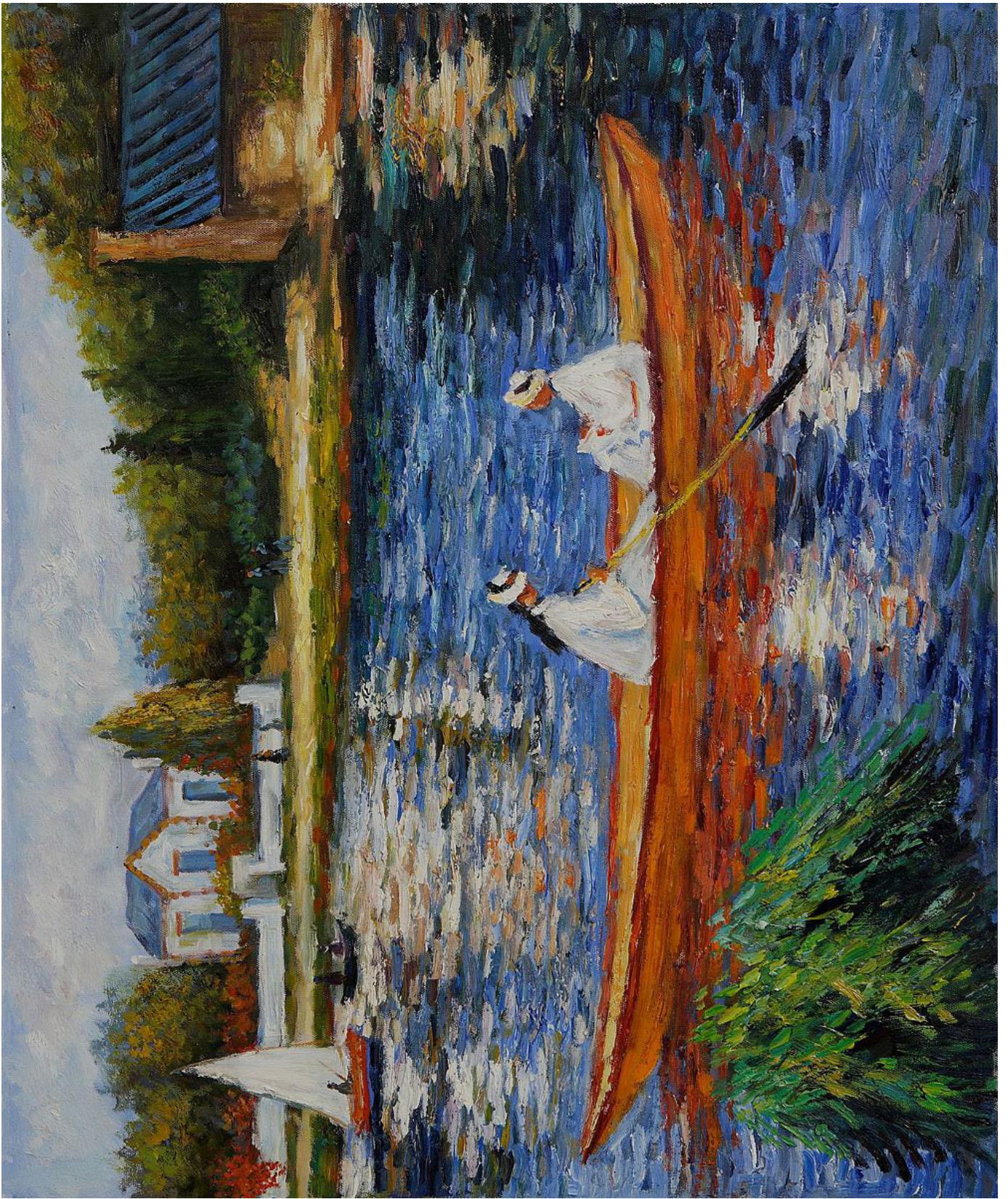
## Picture Study

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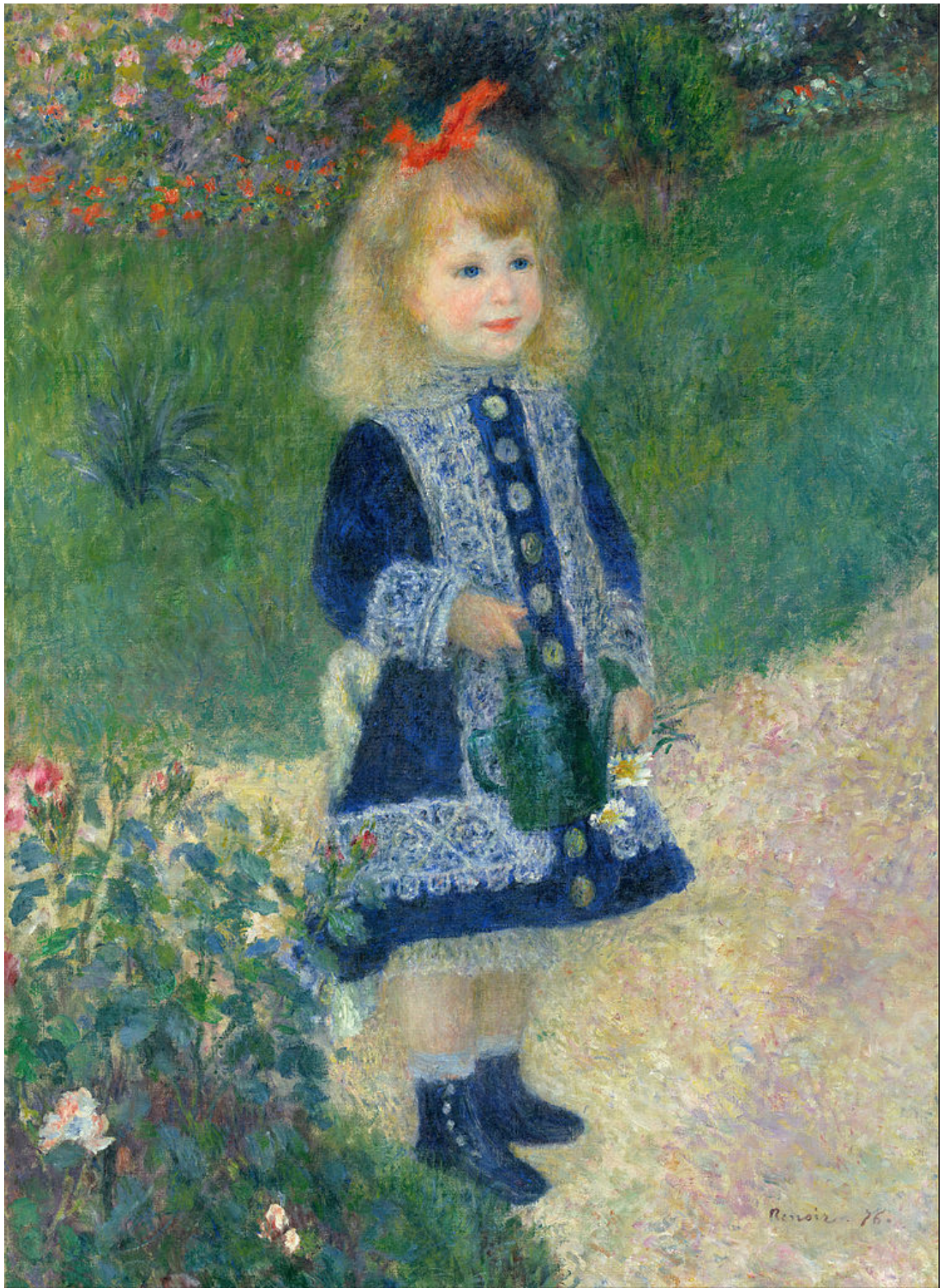
The Skiff (Boating on the Seine)

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, c. 1879



# Girl with Watering Can

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1876



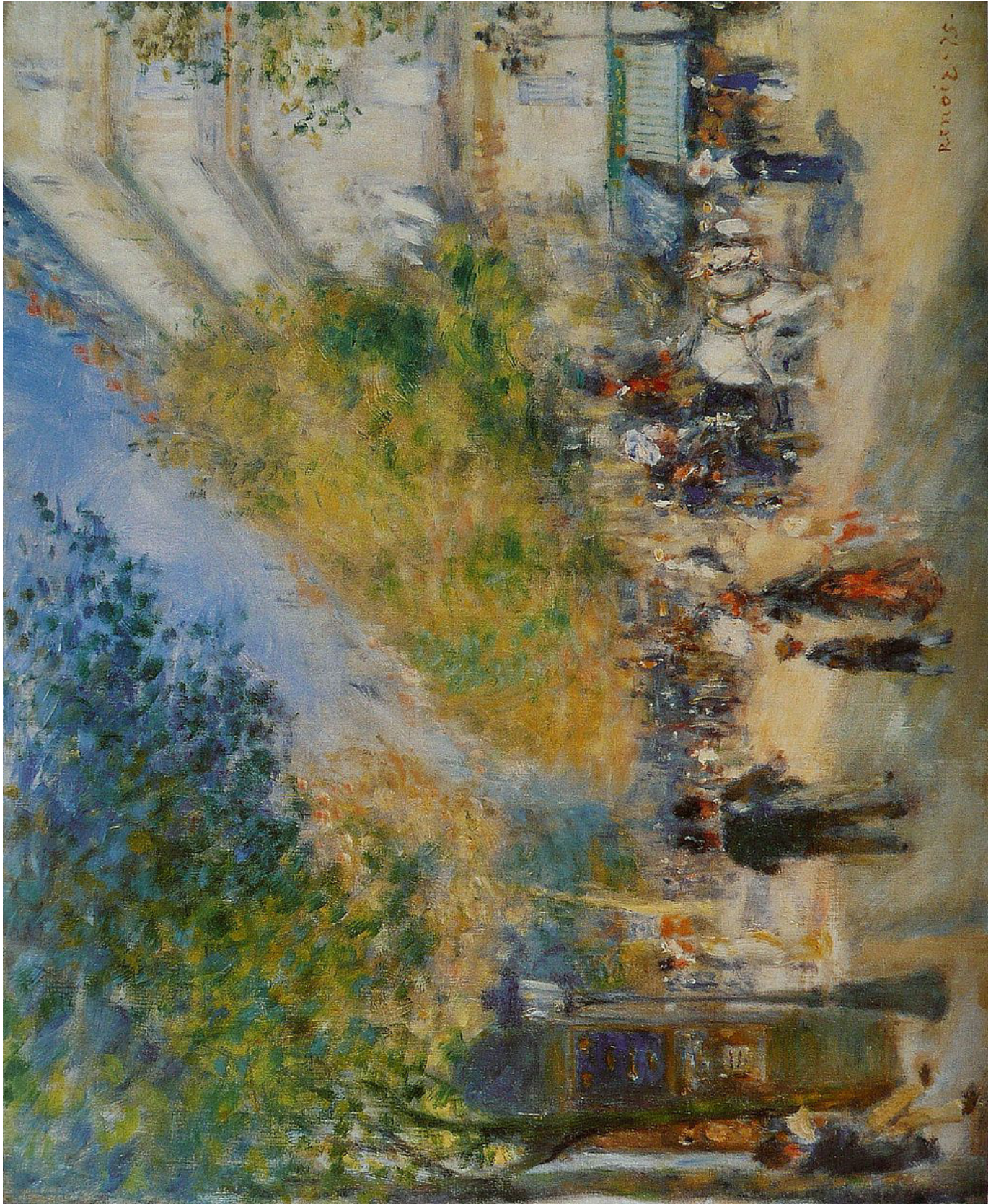
# Two Young Girls at the Piano

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1895



Les Grands Boulevard  
Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1875





Two Sisters (on the Terrace)

Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1881



Flowers in a Vase  
Pierre-Auguste Renoir, 1866



# Pierre-August Renoir

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) was born in Limoges, France and moved to Paris in 1845. As a youth, he was employed in a porcelain factory, painting flowers on china. In 1862, he entered the studio of Charles Gleyre, where he began a lifelong friendship with Claude Monet and the other Impressionist painters. The Impressionistic style is characterized by short brush strokes using bright colors which simulates reflected light in the painting. One of the most popular famous artists, Renoir painted people, gardens, flowers, and everyday scenes. Many of his works will probably be very familiar to you and your student.

Note: In *Boating on the Seine*, the date of the painting is written 'c. 1879'. Explain to your student that this is an abbreviation for the Latin word 'circa' which means 'around, in the vicinity (neighborhood) of'. The exact date of a painting or other work with this notation means that the exact date is not known, but can be estimated.

## ARTIST BIO NOTES

*These notes are provided to aid the teacher's own background research on the artist and his or her works. This is not meant to be presented to students as a list of facts and dates. When you first introduce the artist, tell students where the artist fits into the timeline of history, and where the artist lived and worked. Add a few more details with each new picture, but the information you share should be short and simple unless your students ask questions or wish to know more. Keep the main focus of your Picture Study time on observation and narration of the details of the picture.*

*Note: if a footnote appears with a fact that is not a direct quote, the fact comes from ONE source only.*

## LIFE AND CHARACTER

- ◆ 1841, born in Limoges, France to a working-class family.
- ◆ 1845, moved with his family to Paris.
- ◆ 1854, first job at a porcelain factory.
- ◆ 1862, entered the studio of Gleyre.

- ◆ 1874, the launch of impressionism.
- ◆ 1881-82, traveled to Algeria and Italy.
- ◆ 1890, married Aline Charigot. Had three sons, one who would grow up to become a famous filmmaker.
- ◆ 1890s, began suffering from rheumatoid arthritis.
- ◆ Around 1907, moved to the warmer climate of southern France (Cagnes) because of his health.
- ◆ 1915, Renoir's wife passed away.
- ◆ 1919, died in Cagnes.

#### TRAINING AND CAREER

- ◆ 1854 (age 13), began work at a porcelain factory painting designs on porcelain plates.
- ◆ Around 1860, studied and copied the works at the Louvre, wanting to increase his artistic talents.
- ◆ 1862 (age 21), entered the studio of Charles Gleyre, a Swiss painter.
- ◆ Met and made friends with Sisley, Monet, and Bazille at Gleyre's studio. The four began painting together in the forest of Fontainebleau.
- ◆ Summer of 1869, painted with Monet at a boating and bathing resort along the Seine river near Paris. Together the two artists developed styles and techniques that led to Impressionism.
- ◆ Early 1870s, with critics rejecting Impressionism, Renoir and his friends struggled to sell paintings.
- ◆ Late 1870s, Renoir gained recognition for his portraits, thus acquiring patrons. Painted mainly portraits of women and children.
- ◆ 1881-82, traveled to Algeria and Italy. Already second-guessing impressionism,

Renoir was inspired to take a more classical approach to painting after studying the works by classical artists such as Raphael.

- ◆ 1892, painted *Two Young Girls at the Piano* for the Musée du Luxembourg.
- ◆ 1890s, began suffering from rheumatoid arthritis. Despite the pain and paralysis at times, Renior continued to paint, sometimes strapping a paintbrush to his wrist. He also worked with a young artist, directing him to create sculptures based on his artwork.

### ART STYLE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

- ◆ Decorative style from painting porcelain.
- ◆ One of the first artists to break away from the classical school of thought and launch impressionistic art.
- ◆ Broke off from the norm of painting inside a studio and instead painted outside.
- ◆ Differed from his fellow impressionists by painting figures more often than landscapes. This made him also a more popular impressionist artist.
- ◆ Traded in broken brushstrokes and bright colors for smoother brushstrokes and colors that included black, which he did not use before.
- ◆ He became more focused on the form of his figures rather than the color and brushstroke of his paintings. His portraits became more sculptural and smooth.

### ARTWORKS

- ◆ *Two Young Girls at the Piano*: The French government invited Renoir to submit a work of art to the new Musée du Luxembourg, a museum dedicated to the artwork of living artists. Renoir submitted this famous piece after laboring to create the perfect painting (he painted five versions before submitting).
- ◆ *A Girl with a Watering Can*: an example of how Renoir painted with impressionism yet still retained classical techniques. Impressionism: the bright colors and broken brushstrokes. Classical: smooth face.



## HOW CAN I BE A PAINTER LIKE RENOIR?

- ◆ Practice painting decorations on paper plates.
- ◆ Try painting two different portraits of your mother, your sibling, or one of your friends. For the first portrait, focus on using broken brushstrokes and bright colors. For the second portrait, focus on making it look more realistic with smooth brushstrokes.
- ◆ Attach a paintbrush to your wrist. Try painting without using your fingers!

### ARTIST BIO LINKS

[http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/augu/hd\\_augu.htm](http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/augu/hd_augu.htm) (long, good detail)

[http://www.wga.hu/bio\\_m/r/renoir/biograph.html](http://www.wga.hu/bio_m/r/renoir/biograph.html) (medium, good detail)

<http://www.abcgallery.com/R/renoir/renoirbio.html> (medium, interesting info on paintings & style)

<http://makingartfun.com/htm/f-maf-art-library/renoir-biography.htm> (short, good detail)

### PICTURE SOURCES

<http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/pierre-auguste-renoir-the-skiff-la-yole>

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Auguste\\_Renoir\\_-\\_A\\_Girl\\_with\\_a\\_Watering\\_Can\\_-\\_Google\\_Art\\_Project.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Auguste_Renoir_-_A_Girl_with_a_Watering_Can_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg)

<http://www.renoirgallery.com/gallery.asp?id=183>

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pierre-Auguste\\_Renoir\\_-\\_Les\\_Grands\\_Boulevards.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pierre-Auguste_Renoir_-_Les_Grands_Boulevards.jpg)

[http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Renoir\\_-\\_The\\_Two\\_Sisters,\\_On\\_the\\_Terrace.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Renoir_-_The_Two_Sisters,_On_the_Terrace.jpg)

<http://www.wikiart.org/en/pierre-auguste-renoir/flowers-in-a-vase>