



Impressionism: Renoir

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) began his artistry as a teenager working at a porcelain factory where he painted vases and dinnerware. Encouragement from his employer and friends convinced him to continue with his painting after his layoff from the factory.

Renoir began working with Claude Monet in the late 1860's. Together, they developed what would later be known as the Impressionist style. With their easels set up side by side, Renoir and Monet refined their technique with many hours of practice.

Unlike Monet, however, Renoir was more interested in painting people than landscapes. His subjects were often women, children, nude figures and scenes from everyday middle-class life. Like many of the Impressionists, he used his wife, family and friends as models. He wasn't interested in portraying bleak events or melancholy themes on his canvases — he preferred to show the brighter side of life.

Towards the end of his life, Renoir suffered from severe arthritis. Although his pain was excruciating and his hand could barely hold a brush, he was still able to produce some remarkable artwork.



Jean and Geneviève Caillebotte, 1895