

Great Artists-Renoir

In this Essay I have chosen to write about Renoir, one of the most famous and talented artists of the 19th century. He was born on the 25th of February 1841 into a poor family. He had 6 brothers and sisters, two of whom died in infancy. His father was a tailor and his mother a dressmaker. Despite such a poor background, Renoir became the heart of the Impressionist group.

Renoir started painting at the age of 13 after being apprenticed by a porcelain painter, he later worked decorating blinds and painting fans. The successful Swiss-born painter Charles Gleyre probably influenced Renoir considerably. Renoir typically painted figure compositions although he also did a lot of works in the forest of Fontainebleau. Renoir was very successful especially into the latter part of his life, when he was reckoned with not only in France but also internationally. Renoir's last few years were bitter and cruel, in June 1912 a paralysis attack left him unable to walk again, he lost his life in 1915 and two of his three sons were seriously injured in the first world war. Despite national and personal tragedies, Renoir continued to work with help of assistants till he died on the 3rd of December 1919. He was 78 years old.

One of his most successful works is called 'LUNCHEON OF THE BOATING PARTY' it was painted whilst he stayed at the riverside in at Chatou. It shows a group of boatmen and their girlfriends dining together around tables full of half eaten food. I think this painting could be to show his joy at finding true love, Aline who is on the painting will be married to him soon.

Like most of Renoir's paintings, the colors are bright. There is also a lot of contrast, white, black, blue, green orange. The use of bright colors might suggest Renoir's good mood. The painting is very impressionist yet also has the pleasurable informality and warmth of Renoir's earlier paintings in the 1870s.

By looking at the painting, I would guess it's probably afternoon on a somewhat cloudy yet warm day. This is because although much of the sky is covered by greenery, what we do see is a dark dull gray color. However most of the men in the foreground seem to be wearing thin clothes, this suggests it wasn't a cold day. The color of the sky seems to contradict everything else about the party.

The texture is very fine and detailed, it would probably feel very smooth if I was to touch the painting, and it gives a very realistic feel to the people in the painting.

His brushstrokes are contrasting, whilst they are very fine, short and delicate up close, in the distance, the background is fussy and dreamy, the brush stokes look long and almost careless. This may be to make the people stand out more.

Renoir has been very successful in making the painting 3D, making it almost come to life; the use of overlapping gives substantial depths to the painting.

The composition is difficult to make out, it seems as if a lot of the characters are grouped to the right of the painting, once again there is a lot of overlap which is used wonderfully.

This painting makes me feel festive and happy, in my opinion that's just what Renoir was trying to achieve. He uses a contrast of very detailed and almost photographic foreground to a fussy and

dreamy looking background. This in fact leads me to think that Renoir may have been short sighted, which allowed him to see very well up close but rather unclear some distance away.

Another successful painting and one of my favorite is called 'IN A MEADOW' It was painted in 1890 whilst staying with fellow artist at Mazy during summer and autumn. The pastoral painting is of two young girls picking flowers beside a tree in the countryside. It is mostly figure composure yet it is also a fine landscape. I think the artist may have been trying to capture the beauty of the countryside.

The artist has used very bright yet pale colors, like his previous painting, in style it marks a return to the soft nature of his early paintings and away from the harsher influence of the Renaissance. As a result the colors used are dreamy and light, 'warm yet not hot' he uses a lot of pale yellow, white. There is also use of orange, green white, pink and some blue. The artist may be trying to give a pleasant and dreamy feel to his painting. Almost heavenly in my opinion as this painting could easily be used in a church leaflet, a vision of heaven.

The tones in the painting is bright, making it seem like a bright sunny summer day, there doesn't seem to be a cloud in the sky, however the shades of orange suggests that it maybe winter and there is dead leaves on the ground. I think the artist has quite successfully made a happy, cheerful and up-lifting mood for his painting. This maybe to represent his happy family life with his wife, Aline.

The texture seems to be thin yet lumpy, it might feel somewhat rough to the touch. The texture is similar everywhere, except the two little girls, who seem to be more fine and detailed. I believe the painter is trying to achieve a contrasting feel to the little girls and the background just like the previous painting of the boating party.

The brushstrokes used by Renoir seems to be somewhat varied, on the foreground the 2 girls are painted using very delicate, fine and detailed strokes, possibly with a small brush. Meanwhile on the background, the brushstrokes seem to be almost careless, bold and long. Once again this allows the girls to stand out a lot more.

The girls stand out immediately for reasons explained earlier, the use of fussiness makes the painting look slightly 2D, yet Renoir has successfully added some depth into the painting by adding what looks like a little house, hills and trees in the distance.

The composition appears easy yet effective, there is a general triangle from the blonde girl's head, to the end of other girl's dress and the blonde girl's bottom. On their right is a healthy looking tree, to their left is more trees but appear more fussy and gets fussier and we go into the distance, where there seems to be a house, hills and more trees. Not only has Renoir created a very effective contrast to make the little girls stand out. He has also given the picture a dreamy and heavenly feel. I'm not sure whether that was done deliberately or my second theory, Renoir's eye problem had got worse and he can only see clearly whatever that is close.

Looking at this picture makes me go dreamy, tired and happy. I think the artist was trying to create a wonderful mood, celebrating his happy life with his wife Lain. The painting doesn't quite look as realistic as the previous painting because of the fussiness.

Personally I feel that Renoir's works are all very imaginative, thoughtful and very pleasant to look at. I like both paintings because of their unique style; I also like Renoir's methods and technique. In my opinion, the painting 'IN THE MEADOWS' is my favorite because of its

pleasant mix of colors. I am certain Renoir's works were masterpieces of his time, which reminds me of other great artists like Monet and Michelangelo.