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Gagosian to Present Paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir in Hong Kong



Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Jeune femme en costume oriental devant une table à thé*, 1909–10, oil on canvas, 31 7/8 × 26 inches (81 × 65.9 cm)

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The simplest subjects are the immortal ones.

—Pierre-Auguste Renoir

HONG KONG, November 19, 2022—Gagosian is pleased to announce an exhibition of paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Featuring nine works that span his career from the 1870s through the 1910s, the exhibition includes Impressionist landscapes and female figure paintings.

As a founder and principal figure of Impressionism, Renoir played a fundamental role in the group's move from studio-based traditionalism to an art centered on modern life in and around Paris. Working in the open air, the Impressionists transcribed their sensory experience, rendering ephemeral effects of light through broken brushstrokes of saturated color. *Bords de Seine à Argenteuil* (c. 1881–82) pictures one of the Impressionists' favorite sites in a town near Paris. Two stylishly dressed women on the banks of the Seine are integrated into a dynamic composition of boats, bridge, clouds, and water. *Le Jardin d'essai à Alger* (1881) emerged from the artist's travels to Algeria. Representing the city's botanical garden, it depicts palm fronds, vibrant sunlight, and dappled shadows in an allée occupied by promenading figures.

Women were Renoir's favored subject throughout his career, from his Impressionist depictions of fashionable Parisiennes to the figures in domestic and natural settings of his later years. From the 1880s, Renoir shifted his approach to one inspired by the old masters—above all Raphael and Rubens—introducing linear precision, smooth modeling, and more structured compositions to his paintings of the female form. For the remainder of his career, he explored the reconciliation of this classical approach to the figure with the luminous palette and loose brushwork of Impressionism, producing a new mode of figuration marked by its sensuality and innovative modern palette.

Femme assise (c. 1879) epitomizes Renoir's facility with pastels, its active strokes defining the subject's emergence from the picture plane. *Portrait de fillette sur fond bleu* (c. 1890) distinguishes between the smooth modeling of the young sitter's head, the subtle gradations of her auburn hair, and the loose brushwork in whites, blues, and pinks that conveys the folds of her dress. The vibrant palette and dress of the woman depicted in *Femme au collier de perles* (c. 1900) recalls the bravura style and chromatic experimentation of Rococo painters such as François Boucher and Jean-Honoré Fragonard.

Jeune femme en costume oriental devant une table à thé (1909–10) represents a young woman in a domestic setting, the scene's serenity emphasized by the artist's soft brushwork and glowing palette. At ease in her dishabille, she poses with a gilt table set for tea, the roses in her hair playing off the warm hues that define her figure. *Nu s'essuyant* (1912) is an exceptional example of Renoir's late nudes, an intimate rendering of a female bather in an imagined arcadian setting. Painted with soft yet confidently defined brushwork, the nude figure emerges from a background that is suffused with light and gentle curves, establishing a sense of harmony and idyllic grace.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir was born in 1841 in Limoges, France, and died in 1919, in Cagnes-sur-Mer, France. The son of a tailor and a dressmaker, he grew up in Paris. Renoir began studying under Charles Gleyre in 1862, meeting Frédéric Bazille, Claude Monet, and Alfred Sisley. He made his debut at the Paris Salon in 1864 and presented his paintings in the first three Impressionist exhibitions from 1874 through 1877. His exhibition of *Madame Charpentier and her Children* (1878) in the 1879 Salon signaled the artist's critical and popular success. In 1900, Renoir was named Chevalier de l'Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur and promoted to Commandeur in 1919. That year, he was invited to visit the Louvre and see his work hanging with the old masters. Renoir's paintings are found in major institutional collections worldwide.

#PierreAugusteRenoir

PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR

Opening Reception: Tuesday, November 22, 6–8pm

November 22, 2022–January 7, 2023

7/F Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong

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