



PIERRE-AUGUSTE RENOIR (1841-1919)

Portrait de Femme

Signed lower right, "Renoir"

pastel on paper

19 x 16 1/8 in. (29 1/4 x 26 1/4 x 2 3/4 in.)

1885

38437

PROVENANCE:

Collection of Dr. Hans Bethge, Berlin
Private Collection, Southern Germany

Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1848-1919) was one of the Impressionist movement's central figures, admired for his soft palette and signature brushwork that captured the ephemeral moment, freezing it in time.

Renoir was fascinated with the atmospheric effects that could be achieved with pastel, as it best captured the essence and subtlety of light. His pastels were the source of experimentation with new printing mediums as he worked in collaboration with the French art publisher and dealer, Ambroise Vollard, to create pastel counterproofs, or reverse impressions on separate sheets mirroring the original. This exploration demonstrates how vital the pastel drawings were to the master. Works on paper by Renoir are an attractive complement to the oil paintings, which can sell at auction for up to \$78,000,000 USD.

Renoir's pastel drawings allowed the artist to explore his subject spontaneously. "Portrait de femme" (1885) was held in a private European collection for many years and exhibits Renoir's mastery of the pastel medium.

Pierre-Auguste Renoir is regarded as one of the most famous and well respected Impressionist artists of the 19th and 20th centuries. Born in Limoges, Haute-Vienne, France, Renoir was a working class prodigy, who studied and gained inspiration from the French master painters Alfred Sisley, Frederic Bazille, and Claude Monet. This French artist was a leading force in the development of the revolutionary Impressionistic style, and dramatically drifted from the classical and romantic schools of art so popular during this time.

Renoir gained initial acclaim when he displayed work in the first Impressionist exhibition in Paris, in 1874. That same year two of his works were shown with Durand-Ruel in London. His maturity as a painter heightened during the mid- 1880's as he applied a more formal and disciplined technique to his painting and portraiture style. However, after 1890 his return to the use of thinly brushed color and changed his painting direction once. This style reflected a more synthesized and airy appeal of dissolved outlines and implied imagery. This prolific artist painted with a warm sensuality, making his paintings some of the most well-known works in the history of art.

















