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Cheryl K. Snay

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By

Cheryl Kathleen Snay

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ABSTRACT

RENOIR AND THE CHARPTENTIERS: THE SYMBIOTIC NATURE OF THE ARTIST/PATRON RELATIONSHIP

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This thesis examines the relationship between Renoir and the Georges Charpentier family focusing on the various manifestations of that relationship, including the portrait *Madame Charpentier and Her Children,* Renoir's work for the publication *La Vie Moderne* and his participation in the publisher's gallery established as a corollary to the magazine. George Charpentier's and his wife, Marguerite Lemonnier's, biographies are reviewed to acquaint the reader with the subjects. The patronage model used in this study concentrates on the artist's role, rather than the patron's, in this relationship and his efforts to gain recognition by peers, critics, patrons and the public. The findings, based on the evidence of this relationship, show that Renoir was more actively involved in securing his own success and advancing the interests of the Impressionists than is generally thought.

To the Dragon Lady

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Introduction

Hanging in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City is the portrait of *Madame Charpentier and Her Children* painted in 1878 by Pierre Auguste Renoir. The painting is often touted as a masterpiece and is cited as the turning point in the artist's career. Renoir admitted his debt to his patroness: "Now my dear friend, be nice enough to thank Mme. Charpentier on behalf of her most devoted artist and that I'll never forget that if some day I finally pass the rope [succeed] it is to her that I owe it because alone I am certainly not capable of it."[1] As such, the relationship between the sitters and the artist warrants examination. A thorough study of the interaction between Renoir and the Charpentiers has not been completed in the past. This thesis seeks to remedy that situation and to revive old information that has lain dormant which could contribute to a new understanding of the artist and the patron.

The Renoir-Charpentier relationship is an example of how artists actively participated in securing their own success. Renoir identifies himself as a cork that floats along with the current[2] and his letters to his patrons take on a passive and submissive tone. Yet, he used the Charpentiers and the various means at their disposal to advance his career, that of his colleagues and of the Impressionist movement in general. Renoir told his son that "We were only too

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[1]Michel Florisoone, "Lettres Inédites: Renoir et la Famille Charpentier," *Amour Art* 19 (February 1938): 32. I would like to thank Elisa Fisher for her help in translating this and several other articles from French into English.

[2]Ambroise Vollard, *Renoir: An Intimate Record* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1934), 40, 50. "I am like a cork thrown into a stream and tossed about on the current." Although this statement was made in reference to his painting, he tells Vollard later that ". . . I have never tried to plan out my life in advance; I have always accepted things as they came along."

glad to have the rich bourgeois to fall back on," and although he disapproved of their values, he believed something good would result from his relationship with them.[1] This examination of their interaction identifies the various manifestations of this relationship and suggests impacts on both the patron and the artist. Renoir's work for *La Vie Moderne*, his participation in the gallery attached to the publication's offices, or his role in his patron's personal and social life are rarely discussed. It may be true that Renoir could not have achieved as much as he did without the help of the Charpentiers; but it is incorrect to assume that his success is the result of their efforts alone. The Charpentiers supported many other artists who never achieved the recognition that Renoir did.

Originally, this thesis was not conceived as a traditional patronage study. Rather, at its inception, it focused on biographical information gleaned from secondary sources or sources published only in French. I then compared those facts to the paintings and prints to determine what impact they may have had on the pictures. Some scholars have identified a tradition in patronage studies to emphasize the patron's role in the creative output of the artists. Artists are portrayed as passive beneficiaries of their favor. Anne Distel alludes to this trend in the introduction to her recent book: "The prescience of these collectors has long been recognized; it would be superfluous to praise them."[2] She also acknowledged that "the Impressionist artists and their paintings might seem to be given

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[1]Jean Renoir, *Renoir, My Father* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1962), 101.

[2]Anne Distel, trans. by Barbara Perroud-Benson, *Impressionism: The First Collectors* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1990), 7-8.

short shrift amid all that." Several art historians have recently turned the table on this approach and examined the reciprocity of the artist/patron relationship. At the 1991 College Art Association conference in Washington, D. C., a session focused on the artists' efforts to advance their own careers in the fifteenth through the seventeenth centuries.[1] Here it was pointed out that artists sought to achieve success by gaining the recognition and respect of several groups: peers, critics, patrons and the public. This model of success used in patronage studies of the Renaissance and Baroque eras can be applied to the nineteenth century. In order to garner the favor of these various groups, later artists engaged in a variety of activities, including initiating exhibitions and sales, forming societies and publishing their ideas.

Biographies and formal analyses independent of one another are useful but not conclusive. Because the focus is so intent on "who" and "how", they neglect to answer "why." These approaches remove the people and the work from their social context, which gives them shape and form. When these three methods (biographical, formal and social) are combined, however, they provide a different perspective on the problem.

Renoir and the Charpentiers met in 1875 and embarked in a relationship that was mutually beneficial. It was a bond, however, that required active cultivation on the part of the artist. The Charpentiers and all their various endeavors provided Renoir with an

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[1]Elizabeth Pilliod, "The Role of Artists in Advancing Their Own Careers, 15th-17th Centuries." Session at the annual conference of the College Art Association, Washington, D.C., February 1991.

opportunity to gain the recognition from peers, critics, patrons and the public that he needed to secure his professional status as an artist. By assuming the role of "court painter" in the democratic society embodied by the Charpentier salons, Renoir gained access to the network of artists, critics, potential patrons and supporters that would affirm his position in the art market. He mingled with academic artists who could influence salon juries. He met government officials who awarded commissions. The Charpentiers also benefitted by having Renoir promote a public image of the family as wealthy, established and innovative bourgeoisie. They sought to fill the void left by the deposed aristocracy after the fall of the Empire and could only do so convincingly by using the old symbols. Moreover, in the new society where everyone was equal under the law and the gaps between the classes were closing, they sought to distinguish themselves from the lower classes. Acquiring the attributes that had been ascribed to the upperclasses allowed them to do that.

When Renoir was denied critical recognition by the established journalists early in his career, he and Rivière founded a journal, *Les Impressionistes*, in 1877, which championed the Impressionist cause.[1] That effort was short-lived. Several years later he supported the Charpentier periodical with the same aim supposedly without pay, but not without reward. With it, he gained favorable criticism from the authors in the Charpentier stable as well as his own brother who was employed by the publisher. The network of

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[1]John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1973), 394.

influential people at the weekly salon also helped to garner critical exposure.

The drawings Renoir submitted for inclusion in *La Vie Moderne* had a decidedly commercial aspect. Hoping to gain commissions and develop a strong patronage base, he contributed to the journal images that displayed his talent for portraiture. By comparing the early prints with post-1883 prints, a shift can be detected in his strategy. His career was slightly more stable after his success at the Salon of 1879. Instead of creating original work in the print medium, he copied his own paintings and used them as illustrations for articles and stories. The reliance on portraiture was waning and he lifted images of the modern life out of his own repertoire of paintings. In an effort to extend his role with the periodical, he offered suggestions about features and advertisements.

To gain public acknowledgement and fame, Renoir engaged in a program of exhibitions that would directly appeal to it. By focusing on portraits -- everyone is interested in pictures of themselves or of people they know --, he hoped to win its favor. In yet another demonstration of his willingness to actively engage in promoting his career, Renoir helped organize the Impressionist exhibitions at which he showed mostly portraits. The Impressionists were denied access to the official salons and by extension to the art market. The artists designed these exhibitions to remedy that situation. However, when Renoir was given the opportunity to participate in the official system by submitting the Charpentier portrait, he abandoned these early cooperative efforts. When the Charpentiers gave Renoir his first one-

man show at their gallery, he chose to continue his portrait program. The strategy was a successful one.

Relationships are bilateral. The Charpentiers did not patronize Renoir and the other Impressionists solely out of pity or with an altruistic desire to nurture the creative spirit. John Rewald observed that the publication *La Vie Moderne* was a balance between the trendy and the conservative.[1] That balance is borne through every enterprise the Charpentiers undertook, through their personal lives, their business decisions and their art collection. In an effort to establish their social position, they acted in ways that illustrated their desire to be avant-garde and staid at the same time. They vacillated from being on the cutting edge to being staunchly conservative. Collecting art had previously been the prerogative of the aristocracy; so by engaging in that activity after the 1870 wars, the Charpentiers gained status. But because the social structure had changed -- democratic, industrial and capitalist -- their conservatism had to be tempered with artists of the modern school.

Emile Zola wrote that an artist "exists by virtue of himself and not of the subjects he has chosen . . . . The object or person to be painted are pretexts. . . Genius consists in conveying this object or person in a new, more real or greater sense. As for me, it is not the tree, the countenance, the scene which touches me; it is the man I find in the work. . . ."[2] What kind of man does Renoir reveal himself to be in this family portrait? What is the real or greater sense

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[1]Rewald, *Studies in Impressionism* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1985), 14.

[2]Rewald, *History*, 143.

conveyed? The portrait is not only of the Charpentiers, or of Renoir's temperament as Zola proposed. It is also a portrait of its era and yields revealing evidence about the artist/patron relationship.

In addition to the paintings and other original work Renoir made for the Charpentiers, the weekly illustrated magazine, *La Vie Moderne*, provided him with another avenue for expression. Edmond de Goncourt warned us in his journal entry dated February 2, 1885, "Poor twentieth century, what a sell if it tries to get information about the nineteenth century from the newspapers!"[1] Despite Goncourt's contempt for contemporary periodicals, it provides access to Renoir's lesser known work and has served as one of the primary sources for this study. The artist's attitude toward magazine illustration and his involvement in the way of suggestions and advice reveal his style and personality. There are also articles about or referring to Renoir and the Impressionist group as well as the art world in general. For these reasons, study of the periodical is essential and contributes significantly to our understanding of the Renoir-Charpentier relationship.

The Charpentiers established a gallery by the same name in the office of the publication. Renoir had his first one-man show there. He participated in several group shows and encouraged the Charpentiers to hold one-person exhibitions for his peers. The portrait, the publication and the gallery reveal aspects about the

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[1]George J. Becker and Edith Philips, trans. and ed. *The Goncourt Journals: Paris and the Arts, 1851-1896* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1971), 216.

patron-artist relationship and the condition of nineteenth-century art production.

I. Renoir and the Charpentiers

An examination of the relationship between Renoir and the Charpentiers is best started by introducing the characters. Renoir's biography illustrates the democratization of art in the last half of the nineteenth century as well as the marriage between art and industry or craft. Never losing sight of his artisanal roots, Renoir entered the "professional" art track and sought to change it.

Born in 1841 to a tailor in Limoges, Renoir moved with his family to Paris when he was a child. He was apprenticed as a porcelain painter in 1854 but also took drawing lessons from Louis-Denis Caillouette's school of drawing and decorative arts. Albert Boime explained the educational reforms that were occurring since 1835 as it related to art and the academy in relation to France's image as an economic, political and industrial leader in Europe.[1] The administration in France sought to bolster its position through a series of reforms that deeply affected the nature of art education in the country. The municipal drawing school Renoir attended was a part of this educational reform program, which sought to educate France's working classes and thereby increase production and establish the country's supremacy in Europe.[2] These new policies undoubtedly had much to do with Renoir developing into an anti-intellectual and self-proclaimed painter-worker.

The union of art and craft is easily discerned in Renoir's upbringing. His drawing instructor modelled the figurines for Levy

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[1]Albert Boime, "The Teaching of Fine Arts and the Avant-Garde in France during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century," *Arts Magazine*, 60 (December 1985), 46, 50.

[2]Ibid, 50.

et Frères, the porcelain factory to which Renoir was apprenticed. Under his instructor's tutelage, Renoir advanced from painting flowers on the porcelain to painting figures.[1] The technological advances for which the country strove eventually occurred and made hand craftsmanship unprofitable. Renoir left the porcelain factory and took on odd jobs painting window blinds, screens, fans and café murals.

With the loss of steady employment in a trade, Renoir decided to become a "fine" artist. Under the sponsorship of Caillouette, he entered the studio of the Swiss academic painter, Charles Gleyre, at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in 1861.[2] Despite his hard work and dedication to his studies, he gained no official recognition. His test results were less than stellar; he won no competitions or awards and was not accepted into the salon until 1864. In 1861 Bazille, Monet and Sisley joined Renoir as students in Gleyre's studio, and the four aspiring artists formed the core of what was to become the Impressionist group. Gleyre's studio closed in 1864 for lack of funds and the instructor's declining health, ending the group's formal student years.

Between 1864 and 1875 Renoir lived a bohemian lifestyle, moving in and out of his friends studios and apartments. He took what commissions he could get, mostly those given him by his friends' families. He submitted entries to the salons annually and

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid. See also chronologies published in Wadley, *Renoir: A Retrospective* (New York: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, Inc., 1987), 15 and White, *Renoir: His Life, Art and Letters* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1984), 297.

was accepted or showed in 1864, 1865, 1868, 1869 and 1870.[1] In 1873 he signed a petition requesting that a Salon des Refusés be reestablished in the manner of the famous one of 1863. In 1874 he helped organize the first exhibition of the Societé Anonyme, which turned its back on the official Salon and sought a new means of exposure. Still working on the fringes of the official art market, Renoir and his friends organized an auction in 1875 at the Hôtel Drouot, where he sold several paintings at disappointingly low prices to a few collectors, including Georges Charpentier.[2]

This was the initial connection between the artist and patron and was followed by the Charpentiers commissioning several portraits from Renoir between 1875 and 1880. One of these was the family portrait which as a major success at the Salon of 1879. With this assurance and a large fee in hand he traveled to Italy. The period after his return is noted as his "crisis" years when his style became considerably drier. The change is detected not only in his paintings but in the magazine illustrations he supplied Charpentier for *La Vie Moderne.*

Georges Charpentier's great grandfather was Henry-François-Marie Charpentier, born in Soissons in 1769.[3] Under the Ancien Régime, Henry was a distinguished member of the magistrature and held many military titles and honors. His name was ultimately

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[1]Nicholas Wadley, *Renoir: A Retrospective* (New York: Hugh Lauter Levin Associates, Inc., 1987), 15.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Michel Robida, *Ces Bourgeois de Paris* (Paris: René Juillard, 1955), 120. The biographies of the Charpentier and Lemonnier families were compiled using this source and *Le Salon Charpentier* by the same author. The work of Anne Distel and Jean-Yves Mollier are also cited.

engraved on the Arc de Triomphe. He was a count of the Empire and a major-general of the army. Georges' father, Gervais (born 1805), was a publisher. His most important contribution to the history of French book production was his "packaging" and the price innovations it spawned.[1] Prior to the 1830s, books were sold as serials, not published in a single, complete volume. Readers would buy a book several chapters at a time. When they had collected all the parts, they would have them bound together. Gervais developed a much smaller format that allowed him to publish a book in its entirety (for the first time in France) and thereby reduce its cost by almost one-half to 3.50 francs.

The relationship between Gervais and Georges was stormy. Michel Robida described Gervais as a quarrelsome character who, when confronted by Georges' impudence, banished Georges from the family home. Thereafter, he generally lived the life of a bohemian -- much like Renoir did. During the schism with his father, Georges met and fell in love with Marguerite Lemonnier, the daughter of wealthy bourgeoisie. He knew that her family would not permit her to marry a man with no occupation, career opportunities or inheritance. In order to regain his father's good favor and secure himself an income, Georges had to prove himself worthy of succeeding in the publishing business. With the aid of his friend Emile Bergerat, Georges wrote a skit inspired by Marguerite. The play, *La Folie Persecutrice,* was performed in several small theaters. According to Robida, Gervais

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[1]Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973-77) vol. 2, *Intellect, Taste and Anxiety,* 356.

accepted his prodigal son back into his good graces "with tears in his eyes".[1]

Another account based on the review of legal documents, contracts, wills and separation decrees indicated that there was more to the story than that.[2] Gervais suspected his young wife, Justine Aspasia Generelly, of infidelity and doubted Georges' paternity. The couple was legally separated and maintained separate residences. Georges was raised by his mother after the separation. Gervais' attention and finances were focused on his nieces and nephews and earlier versions of his will leave the family business, le Bibliothèque Charpentier, to them rather than to Georges. Upon Gervais' death on July 14, 1871, Georges with the financial backing of Maurice Dreyfous, bought out his relatives' claims on the publishing business and secured his career.

Marguerite Lemonnier's mother, Sophie Reygondo du Chatenet, came from intellectual and cultivated bourgeoisie. Among her ancestors were publishers, painters and engravers as well as scientists, botanists and authors. Marguerite's father, Gabriel Lemonnier, (born 1805) was reared in the elegant cult of the Empress Josephine. When Louis Napolean gained power as the Prince-President, loyal friends introduced him to Gabriel. As a result, Gabriel was given the title and position of Jeweller to the Crown. He also gained access to and won over as one of his client's

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[1]Michel Robida, *Le Salon Charpentier et Les Impressionistes* (Paris: Bibliothèque des Arts, 1958), 16-25.

[2]Jean-Yves Mollier, *L'Argent et les Lettres: Histoire du Capitalisme d'Edition 1880-1920* (Paris: Librarie Arthenie Fayard, 1988), 208-211. See also Becker, *Trente Années d'Amitié: Lettres de l'Editeur Georges Charpentier à Emile Zola* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1980), 29, note 2.

Queen Isabella of Spain, after whom he named one of his daughters. The Lemonnier home at 25 Place Vendome was decorated with the crests and insignia of his royal protectors. The couple bought the Château de Saint-Clair in Gomtez-le-Chatel and the Château de Launey at Saint-Sever. Their art collection included works by Le Brun, Prud'hon, Delacroix, Raffet, Diaz, Charlet, Eugene Lami and other painters of the French classical school. Their children included Marguerite (born March 1, 1848), Isabelle and two sons.

The Franco-Prussian War and the Commune of 1870-71 brought the demise of the Lemonnier family fortune as well as the death of a son at the Battle of Reischoffen. Gabriel was at the Chambre when the empire collapsed and the Republic was declared. Nevertheless, he and his family stayed at their Place Vendome residence until fighting broke out in the square and the Vendome column was pulled down. At that point, Gabriel and his future son-in-law, Georges Charpentier, ran to Bergerat to obtain a *laissez-passer* for his family. They relocated to the Rue Sainte-Anne where Antoinette Regnault, Gabriel's mother, already lived.[1] The collapse of the Empire and the ensuing political upheaval ruined Marguerite's family financially. She watched as her mother suffered and died from the "sudden deprivation of wealth."[2] The validity of this dramatic comment by the nephew-author is doubtful since there is an undated letter from Renoir to Mme. Charpentier expressing sympathy for the recent burial of her mother and extending

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[1]Robida *Ces Bourgeois*, 105 ff.
[2]Robida, *Le Salon Charpentier*, 94.

condolences to her sister, Isabelle.[1] While the letter is undated, Renoir most likely did not make the Charpentier's acquaintance until 1875 and didn't begin corresponding with them until shortly after that. Consequently, the mother's death could not have occurred suddenly in 1870-71.

Georges Charpentier and Marguerite Lemonnier were married at the Chateau du Saint-Clair in 1871, a month after Gervais' death and he secured the publishing business. Robida and Fosca cited their marriage date as 1872, but recent studies indicate the earlier date.[2]

After settling at 11 Rue de Grenelle above the offices of the publishing business, Marguerite carried on her mother's tradition of hosting weekly salons on Friday nights. She invited artists, musicians, authors and politicians. Gambetta recognized the special place that the Charpentier salon held in Parisian society. "Le Salon Charpentier aura en le fortune, chose regarde comme impossible en France de réunir et de mettre en contact des gens d'opinion differente, qui s'estiment et s'apprecient chacun, bien entendu, gardant son opinion."[3] Her salon accommodated both radical politicians like Léon Gambetta, Georges Clemenceau and Eugène Spuller[4] and aristocratic women, such as the Duchess de Rohon and

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[1]Florisoone, "Lettres," 38.

[2]Distel, *Collectors*, 141.

[3]Robida, *Ces Bourgeois*, 117, quoted an entry in the Goncourt Journal dated January 19, 1877.

[4]Eugene Spuller (1835-1896), was trained as a lawyer and became a close friend of Léon Gambetta. He enjoyed a long career in government, serving as deputy, under secretary of foreign affairs and later as a senator. Despite his radical political views, he believed in organized religion and worked to improve church-state relations. Renoir painted Spuller's portrait circa 1877. Patrick H. Hutton, *Historical Dictionary of the Third French Republic 1870-1940*, vol. 2 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1986), 973.

the Duchess d'Uzès.[1] Artists included the aristocratic Degas, the working-class Renoir and academics like Bonnat, Carolus-Duran and Jacques Louis Henner. Madame Charpentier moderated disputes between the philosophically opposed politicians, artists and their wives. There were episodes where Marguerite smoothed the ruffled feathers of insecure wives and patched up rifts in friendships and marriages. According to the Goncourt journal, Mme. Charpentier was a "neuropathe promenant sa neuropathie toutes les journees et toutes les soirees dans le monde."

Her salon reflected the new democratic society. She catered to no one's ego. There was no hierarchy of space, no one participant awarded a seat of honor around whom everyone else flocked.[2] They supported the avant-garde and the revolutionary and defended them from the derogatory opinions of their contemporaries, like Albert Wolf.[3]

The Charpentiers took Renoir under their wing, not only commissioning him to do portraits and decorations, but introducing him to other wealthy and/or influential people who could act as patrons and allies. For example, the Charpentiers encouraged Gambetta to employ Renoir for a governmental commission. Gambetta declined for political reasons, explaining that Renoir and the Impressionists were revolutionaries.[4] His acquaintance with Gambetta was not fruitless, however. Gambetta later helped the

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[1]François Fosca, trans. by Mary I. Martin, *Renoir: His Life and Work* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), 91.

[2]Robida, *Ces Bourgeois*, 130-31.

[3]Robida, *Le Salon Charpentier*, 47.

[4]Wadley, *Retrospective*, 137.

Impressionists upon Renoir's request to gain much needed critical attention in the *Republique-Francaise*.[1] In another instance, Renoir asked Georges Charpentier to intercede on his behalf to his politician friend, Lafenestre, so Renoir could smooth the way for a governmental commission to be facilitated by Spuller. The commission, for reasons unknown, did not materialize.[2]

The salon went strong until the 1890s when the Dreyfus Affair[3] polarized the nation. Her guests fell into two camps: the Dreyfusards or the anti-Dreyfusards. Renoir belonged to the latter and exhibited conservative and anti-Semitic tendencies. Mme. Charpentier tried to no avail to repair the rift that had fragmented France and displayed itself in the microcosm of her salon.[4] Another factor contributing to its demise was the death of their son in 1895, after which the family was more melancholic and reserved. Mme. Charpentier also became increasingly involved with the nursery for the children of single working mothers, called La Pouponnière-Nouvelle Etoile des Enfants de France.[5] Renoir himself had planted the germ of this idea for a nursery with Mme. Charpentier as early as 1876. She did not pursue the idea then, citing her involvement with the publishing business. But Renoir took it upon himself to organize

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[1]Robida, *Le Salon Charpentier*, 111.

[2]Fosca, *Renoir*, 103. See also Florisoone, "Lettres," 32.

[3]Norman L. Kleeblatt, *The Dreyfus Affair: Art, Truth, and Justice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 1. "Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, was accused of treason in late 1894. His court-martial, conviction, incarceration, retrial, and ultimate rehabilitation in 1906 developed into a political event that divided France and had repercussions throughout England and Western Europe."

[4]Becker, *Trente Années*, 12.

[5]Distel, *Collectors*, 146.

a benefit dance at the Moulin de la Galette. The event was well-attended, but was a financial failure. They raised only enough to cover the costs.

Marguerite's participation in the publishing business and her social duties were limited by her domestic responsibilities. Their family included Georgette, born in 1872; Marcel, 1874-1876; Paul, 1875-1895; and Jeanne, born in 1880.[1] In addition to the Rue de Grenelle apartment, the couple built a villa at Royon that they called La Paradou and designed a large botanical garden.[2] Georgette Charpentier married Abel Hermant in March, 1888, and was divorced in 1893. She was remarried to Pierre Chambolle and bore a son, Robert, in October 1894.[3] She married a third time to M. E. Tournan. Marguerite Charpentier died November 30, 1904; Georges Charpentier died in November 15, 1905.[4] Their collection of art, including the Impressionist paintings, was auctioned in 1907 at which time the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York acquired the portrait *Madame Charpentier and her Children* with the help of Durand-Ruel.

How Renoir made the acquaintance and gained the friendship of these important patrons is unclear. Robida, Florisoone and Jean Renoir suggested that the artist knew the family and painted works for them as early as 1869, using as evidence the painting entitled

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[1]R. Descharnes, "Flaubert et Ses Editeurs Michel Levy et Georges Charpentier," *Revue d'Histoire Litteraire de la France* 18 (1911): 627-665. See also Becker, *Trente Années*, 20, note 1, letter 3.

[2]Robida, *Ces Bourgeois*, 131.

[3]Becker, *Trente Années*, 121, note 4, letter 81.

[4]Distel, *Collectors*, 147.

Mme. Théodore Charpentier.[1] (Figure 1) Douglas Cooper explained that this commission, however, was obtained through Renoir's friendship with Jules Le Couer, not Georges Charpentier.[2] Jules' brother, Charles, married Marie Charpentier, whose father was the architect Théodore Charpentier. It is a portrait of Marie's mother, not Georges' whose mother's portrait would have been titled Mme. Gervais Charpentier. The family relationship between Gervais-Georges and Théodore-Marie is uncertain. They may have been uncles and cousins. The Charpentier name is relatively common in France and they may not have been related at all. François Fosca noted that Marguerite commissioned five portraits from Renoir, including one of Mme. Gervais Charpentier. Mollier also mentioned a portrait of Aspasia Charpentier in his research of the French publishing industry. However, this portrait is not listed in Daulte's catalogue raisonné of Renoir, nor does it appear in a catalog of Renoir's drawings by John Rewald. Inquiries at the Frick, National Gallery of Art and the Witt Photographic Archives provided no evidence of such a painting. The painting was either confused with Mme. Théodore Charpentier or is lost.

According to Jean Renoir, Arsène Houssaye and Théophile Gautier introduced Renoir to the publisher.[3] But another source speculated that it was a relative of Marguerite, Count Armand Doria,

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[1]Renoir, *My Father,* 115. Renoir met the Charpentiers before the War of 1870 "as is testified by the portrait of the elder Mme. Charpentier, painted in 1869." See also Florisoone, "Lettres," 31.

[2]Douglas Cooper, "Renoir, Lise & the Le Coeur Family: A Study of Renoir's Early Development II: The Le Coeurs." *Burlington Magazine* 101 (September 1959); 326.

[3]Renoir, *My Father,* 115.

who put the two parties in contact.[1] The first tangible evidence of the Renoir-Georges Charpentier relationship is Georges' purchase of *Le Pêcheur à la Ligne* for 180 francs and *Tête de Femme* for 85 francs from the Hôtel Drouot auction in 1875 that the Impressionists organized.[2] Distel indicated that there was a third painting purchased by Charpentier from the sale, but did not specify a title. Shortly thereafter, the Charpentiers commissioned single portraits of Marguerite and Georgette; commissions Renoir readily accepted. Théodore Duret showed that Renoir, as well as the rest of the Impressionists, was in a precarious financial and professional position.[3] The Impressionist exhibition of 1874 and the 1875 auction were financial failures. Moreover, their work was not well received by the critics. They were scoffed at and ridiculed. These first commissions offered Renoir some hope and marked the beginning of a profitable relationship with his patrons. Renoir revealed his scorn for the critics: "Madame Charpentier reminded me of my early loves, the women Fragonard painted. The little girls had charming dimples in their cheeks. The family complimented me on my work. I was able to forget the journalists' abuse. I had not only free models, but obliging ones."[4]

A partial listing of the Charpentiers' collection is found in the 1907 Hôtel Drouot sales catalog. Nine works by Renoir were sold,

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[1]Marie Blunden, trans. by James Emmons, *Impressionists and Impressionism* (New York: Rizzoli, 1976), 165.

[2]François Daulte, *Auguste Renoir: Catalogue Raisonné de l'Oeuvre Peint* (Lausanne: Editions Durand-Ruel, c1971) #118.

[3]Léonce Bénédite, "*Madame Charpentier and Her Children*, by Auguste Renoir," *Burlington Magazine*, 12 (October 1907), 132.

[4]Renoir, *My Father*, 141.

including *Madame Charpentier et Ses Enfants* and *Le Pêcheur à la Ligne*, a series of four paintings entitled *Les Quatre Saisons*, *La Femme au Chapeau de Paille* and portraits of Léon Reisener and the Comte de Beust. Henner was represented at the sale with four paintings and three drawings. There were three Monet pieces; two Fantin-Latours; two Sisleys; and one each of Sargent, Pissarro, Puvis de Chavannes, Boudin, Desboutin, Cézanne, Degas and Manet. There were also many works by artists who have fallen into obscurity.[1]

[1]Hotel Drouot, *Catalog des Tableaux, Aquarelles, Pastels et Dessins par E. Boudin, Cazin, Cézanne, Degas, Fantin-Latour, Forain, Henner, Lebourg, Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Puvis de Chavannes, Renoir, Roll, Sargent, Sisley, etc. etc.* (Paris: Hotel Drouot, 1907).

II. *Mme. Charpentier and Her Children* -- The Portrait

The small portrait of Mme. Charpentier and that of her daughter Georgette mark the beginning of Renoir's relationship with the Charpentiers. (Figures 2 and 3) They were exhibited at the 1877 Exhibition of the Impressionists along with *Dancing at the Moulin de la Galette*, the *Portrait of Mlle. Samary* and the *Portrait of Mme. Alphonse Daudet.*[1]

He convinced his patrons to allow him to paint a larger portrait "of the model who inspired him with confidence in a further success."[2] (Figure 4) Lionello Venturi called the family portrait a social but not an artistic masterpiece.[3] The portrait is as Proust predicted an historical document of nineteenth-century Parisian society. It raises issues about the status of women, the position of the family in social and economic settings, the changing art market, the role of art collectors and dealers, and the quest for beauty and truth vs. speculation and the recognition of the impact of speculation on art production. The portrait is examined here as a masterpiece of social comment.

The setting for the group portrait reveals some interesting aspects about social order and perspectives, some of which are confirmed and endorsed by contemporary literary records. Baudelaire wrote in his essay, "The Painter of Modern Life", about

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[1]See Burty's review in Wadley, *Retrospective*, 109; Moffett, *New Painting*, (San Francisco: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986), 206; and Fosca, *Renoir*, 110.

[2]Wadley, *Retrospective*, 239-240.

[3]Lionello Venturi, *Modern Painters* (New York: Scribner, 1947-50), vol. 2, *Impressionists and Symbolists*, 106.

the position of women in society, their role and relationship with men as well as with artists.

> . . . that being in whom Joseph de Maistre saw a graceful animal whose beauty enlivened and made easier the serious game of politics; . . . for whom, but above all *through whom,* artists and poets create their most exquisite jewels; . . . . Everything that adorns woman, everything that serves to show off her beauty, is part of herself; and those artists who have made a particular study of this enigmatic being dote no less on all the details of the *mundus muliebris* than on Woman herself. . . . What poet, in sitting down to paint the pleasure caused by the sight of a beautiful woman, would venture to separate her from her costume? . . . woman and her dress -- an indivisible unity?[1]

Baudelaire's attitude toward women expressed in the 1863 essay was still in vogue years later. In Edmond Goncourt's journal dated November 15, 1885, there is a statement particularly appropros to *Mme. Charpentier and Her Children.* Georges Charpentier, Goncourt and other friends were participating in an "all-male gathering" when the women or "spouse collectors" came to collect their husbands. "The women look very well against the background of the scene and harmonize wonderfully with the furniture."[2] Women were regarded as props rather than actors. Critics' seemingly banal interest in Marguerite's black Worth dress makes

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[1]Jonathan Mayne, trans. and ed., *Charles Baudelaire: The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays* (London: Phaidon Press, 1964), 30-31. The series of articles first appeared in *Le Figaro* on November 26, November 29 and December 3, 1863.

[2]Robert Baldick. trans. and ed. *Pages from the Goncourt Journal* (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), 308.

sense in light of the attitudes of women as ornament. The costume was also noted because of the social status it afforded the model. Its extreme expense was not lost on the cost-conscious middle classes. In addition, it underscores the political ambiguity of the Charpentiers. Worth owed his success to the empire and the Empress Eugenie's court. When the regime fell in 1870 and the empress went into exile, he never hid his loyalty to her and continued to supply the royalty of Europe with wardrobes.[1] The Charpentiers assumed the role of nobility in the new democratic society by engaging in those activities which had previously been its domain, including supporting the arts and being dressed by their couturiers. They displayed their portraits and their wealth and by doing so established their own status and reenforced their own values.[2]

Nothing was moved or rearranged for the portrait. Renoir needed to interpret his sitters in an "informal setting and an atmosphere of intimacy."[3] Proust commented that the portrait was a far more accurate historical document than comparable portraits by Pierre Auguste Cot or Charles Chaplin.[4] This is true not just because of the furnishings it depicts, but because of the values it reenforces. Edmond Renoir wrote in a letter to Bergerat, the editor of *La Vie*

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[1]Charles Frederick Worth (1825-1895) was the English fashion designer to the Empress Eugénie until 1870. He continued operating his shop after the installation of the Republic, selling to the wealthy. Edith Saunders, *The Age of Worth: Couturier to the Empress Eugénie* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955), 186. See also Diana de Marly, *Worth: Father of Haute Couture* (Great Britain: Elm Tree Books, 1980).

[2]Aleksa Celebonovic, *The History of Salon Painting* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974); 35.

[3]Renoir, *My Father*, 193.

[4]Robida, *Le Salon*, 56.

Moderne, that Renoir lets himself be carried away by the sitter and the setting.[1]

The furniture in the room is identified as a Japanese armchair, a bamboo table, a Dutch glass bottle, Italian vase and a tapestry or Japanese screen in the background. The furnishings indicated that Mme. Charpentier succumbed to the fashionable japonoiserie, prints, embroidered panels that was popular at the time, which Renoir later regretted. Renoir called the Japanese influence unfortunate. "The picture later horrified Renoir, whose dislike of Japanese art came from having seen too much japonoiserie."[2]

Madame Charpentier is shown in a black dress with her son, Paul, sitting on a sofa. Georgette sits on the family dog, Porto. The identically-dressed children caused some scholars and critics to misidentify Paul as Jeanne, the Charpentiers' youngest daughter. However, Jeanne was born two years after this portrait was painted, in 1880.

Marguerite was a model of "the graceful animal whose beauty enlivened and made easier the serious game of politics" that Baudelaire described earlier. She was known as the peace maker and moderator between opposing forces. Her salons functioned as politically neutral territory for radicals and conservatives, atheists and Catholics, as well as entertainment. More political and economic compromises could be worked out in the Charpentier salon than in the offices or conference rooms. This situation demonstrates the

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[1]Wadley, *Retrospective*, 131.

[2]Frank Whitford, *Japanese Prints and Western Painters* (New York: Macmillan Publishers, Inc., 1977), 168.

ambiguous position women occupied in society. On the one hand, they were perceived as demure and house-bound, always deferring to the "stronger sex" in dealing with external matters; on the other, they played a very active, albeit subtle, role in advancing the political and social values of their class by creating and controlling an environment for compromise between adversaries. As a member of the *haute bourgeoisie* in the new capitalist democracy, Marguerite continued the courtly tradition of enlightened patronage by inviting the fallen aristocracy and the new republicans, the avant-garde and academic artists to her weekly salons.

Porto, the dog, is included in the "family portrait;" Georges, the husband and father, is not. In Edgar Degas' portrait of the *Bellelli Family*, (Figure 5) the father figure is pushed to the extreme right with his back turned to the viewer. He is remote and estranged. The mother and daughters dominate the canvas and form a steadfast pyramidal composition. Georges does not even appear in his family's portrait. This is not particularly unusual given the strict spheres of responsibility each family member dominated. In a contemporary book by Dr. Louis Seraine entitled *The Health of Married People*, the roles for the family members are outlined. "To ensure happiness, the partners must keep strictly within their respective roles."[1] Men represented the force, activity and authority of the family and attended to all its external affairs. Women dominated the internal affairs of the household and represented grace, intuition and sympathy.

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[1]Theodore Zeldin, *France*, vol. 1, *Ambition, Love and Politics*, 300.

That was the policy, not the reality. Marguerite was quite involved in her husband's publishing business, citing it as the reason she could not pursue Renoir's *pouponnière* idea when he first suggested it. Many of the artists as well as the authors corresponded with Marguerite and brought their concerns directly to her because they knew that Georges would be slow and negligent in responding. "Charming, but not serious enough," was Edmond de Goncourt's opinion of Georges Charpentier.[1] She was active in the publication of *La Vie Moderne*, and one can be certain that the articles and regular features dealing with fashion, "chic" and children's health reflected her taste and influence.

It's also interesting to note that Renoir, an avant-garde, so-called revolutionary Impressionist painter was chosen to depict Mme. Charpentier and the children, while the academic artist Jacques-Louis Henner was given the commission for her husband's portrait. Georges Rivière's opinion of that portrait was that it gave the handsome sitter the attitude of discolored wax "like one sees in the shop windows of certain coiffeurs."[2] The tone, he said, was like buttered, sliced bread. Nevertheless, the Henner portrait occupied a place of honor in Mme. Charpentier's salon, hanging on the dado where everyone came to admire it and compliment the artist. Rivière observed that Henner realized the compliments were insincere or made by people whose judgement was flawed. He recognized that his talent was modest; but he also knew that making

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[1]Becker, *Trente Années*, 28, note 1. This was in a letter to Zola from Edmond de Goncourt.

[2]Georges Rivière, *Renoir et Ses Amis* (Paris: H. Fleury, 1921), 170.

pictures was more profitable than making wooden shoes and a commission by the well-to-do could save him from the fate of a poor provincial.[1]

Renoir's mode of operation indicated that he held a similar view as he had been promoting his portraits of society members as early as 1876. In the Impressionist Exhibition in 1876, portraits made up nearly half (eight of eighteen) of his display; Desboutin had eight of thirteen; Degas, six of twenty-four. In 1877, Renoir again showed more portraits (seven of twenty-one) than any of his other colleagues. In 1877, only two of the thirty paintings Monet showed are portraits. Renoir's one-person exhibition at the Charpentier's gallery also featured portraits, as will be discussed later.

The Charpentiers persuaded Renoir not to participate in the Impressionist exhibition of 1879. Rather, they encouraged him to submit the family portrait to the official Salon. Having the Impressionist portrait shown at the salon, the Charpentiers kept one foot in both the conservative and avant-garde worlds. The portrait worked better as a propaganda tool in promoting their image at the salon. In a letter dated March 1879 to Caillebotte regarding their Impressionist exhibition, Pissarro wrote: "Zola is pushing Cézanne at the Salon, just as the Charpentiers are pushing Renoir."[2] Incidentally, neither one participated in the Impressionist exhibition, which signaled the group's demise. Renoir submitted the portrait along

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Moffett, *The New Painting*, 245.

with one of Jeanne Samary, the actress, both of which were accepted at the Salon as numbers 2527 and 2528 respectively.[1]

Mme. Charpentier used her influence with members of the hanging committee to see that the painting was well placed. (A poor position on the Salon walls could cause a meritorious painting to be overlooked.) According to Renoir in an interview in 1904, "Mme. Charpentier wanted to be in a good position, and Mme. Charpentier knew the members of the jury, whom she lobbied vigorously. This did not prevent what happened the day when I sent the little Mendès, they were put under the awning where no one saw them."[2] According to Huysman's review of the Salon of 1879, her portrait was hung on the staircase of the Salon, a highly visible position.[3] Robida reported that the painting hung at the entrance of the gallery.[4]

Another factor in its favorable placement is its convention. The Charpentier portrait compared to the Samary portrait, which was skied, is formal and conservative in its composition, coloring and handling. Mme. Charpentier is the apex of a pyramidal composition. The black and white arc of the woman's dress is balanced by the black and white dog, all of which frames the brilliant blue and white of the children. Despite all the informality, naturalness and the lack of artificiality which some critics noted and for which Renoir strove,

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[1]Daulte, Renoir, #266 and #263.

[2]Barbara Ehrlich White, ed. *Impressionism in Perspective* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1978), 22. The painting Renoir is referring to here is the portrait of the *Daughters of Catulle Mendès*, which was painted in 1888 and exhibited in the Salon of 1890.

[3]Wadley, *Retrospective*, 120.

[4]Robida, *Ces Bourgeois*, 131.

it comes off as showy and bordering on the contrived. This is seen more clearly when compared with Louise Abbéma's group portrait *Luncheon in the Conservatory* of 1877. (Figure 6) Her painting also uses a classic triangular composition but splays the figures out in the fashion of a Greek frieze. The figures are much more relaxed. The woman on the far right leans back on the overstuffed sofa and props her head up lazily with her left hand. On the far left the man seated on the stool leans forward with his elbows resting on his knees, shoulders slumped and smokes a cigarette. There is a dog present here as well, but this one is lapping up the plate of food someone has given him from the table.

By contrast, Paul sits quietly with his hands in his lap. The Charpentiers look comfortable but posed for the artist. One gets the impression from the Abbéma picture that s/he has interrupted a very casual meal. Renoir, like many of the Impressionists, avoided the anecdotal when dealing with the images of contemporary life, which tended to trivialize it. "That's what is important: to escape from the subject matter, to avoid being 'literary' and so choose something that everybody knows -- still better, no story at all."[1] This aspect of Renoir's style suited the Charpentier's purpose of establishing their prestige as it harkens back to an eighteenth-century tradition of establishing a social hierarchy through portraiture.

There are some wonderful, luscious bits of painting in the Charpentier portrait: the children's hair is a tour de force of golden

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[1]Renoir, *My Father*, 66.

locks highlighted by slight strokes of green and blue. The rendering of texture and color in the dog is admirable. And the analogy between Mme. Charpentier and the dog is not only compositionally effective but witty in that both are draped in black and white with their respective gold bobbles.

The edge of the sofa extends from Mme. Charpentier's right hand to Georgette's head, locking the figures into a tight composition analogous to their tight family structure. Movement is emphasized with the sharp diagonal from the lower left to upper right. The white bow of Georgette's dress, the angle of the peacock's tail, the wing of the crane behind Mme. Charpentier, the pattern of the rug all point to Mme. Charpentier who dominates the composition as she dominated her salon and her family's domestic life. The visual space is deep and keeps the viewer an ample distance from the family scene. The size of the canvas and the angle of the poses emphasize the portrait's formality and monumentality. Viewed from the stairway where the portrait is believed to have been positioned at the Salon, the elevation of the family to the status of an icon would have been all the more prominent.

The painting can easily be seen as representing French nineteenth-century bourgeois society in microcosm for the Charpentiers embraced liberal politics and revolutionary art, published authors of the naturalist and realist school while operating within a very strict social order that revered conservative politics and academic art. The sense of dignified ease and opulent wealth of the picture exists in the painting as a reflection of the conservative side, but Renoir paints it in a freely-brushed, coloristic style that

does much to create a tension within the picture reflecting this dichotomy.

At Mme. Charpentier's prompting, the portrait was well received by the critics. In Burty's review of the Salon, he commented that the portrait was "ruled by a feeling of modern harmony," and had the "bloom of an outsized pastel."[1] Pastel was a medium used in the eighteenth century and associated with images of the aristocracy. Renoir's inclination to incorporate that style in his painting and Burty's recognition of it was no doubt appreciated by the Charpentiers who sought to make a visual link between themselves and the former aristocracy.

Huysman wrote in his review that Renoir had achieved "exquisite flesh tones," "ingenious sense of grouping," and that the painting was executed with skill and daring.[2] Castagnary also reviewed the exhibition and found Renoir's figures slightly squat but the palette was extremely rich, and the execution free and spontaneous.[3] According to Barbara White, two critics who had previously been negative toward Renoir's work changed their opinions.[4] A third criticized the drawing and perspective. Another critic registered his complaints although he complimented the artist for abandoning the Impressionists who were holding an exhibition concurrently with the salon.[5] Ernest Chesnau observed in his work

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[1]Wadley, *Retrospective*, 119.
[2]Ibid., 120.
[3]Ibid.
[4]White, *Renoir: Life*, 88.
[5]Ibid.

that Renoir modeled by tone, not line; by light and the reflections of reflections to the exclusion of contour.[1]

It is questionable whether the portrait actually merited all the praise it received, or if the reviewers were somewhat beholden to the sitter and did not want to risk her displeasure. Many were authors whose books Georges Charpentier published and who frequented the Charpentier salons. These may also have been critics who were favorably inclined to the cause of Impressionism anyway and saw Renoir's participation in the Salon as a way to institutionalize and gain acceptance for their own cause. Renoir's letters to the Charpentiers published by Michel Florisoone are replete with introductions and requests by Renoir of people who wanted to see the painting at the Charpentier house. The painting was already very popular by the time it was hung in the Salon.

The Charpentiers paid 1,500 francs for the painting in 1879, the largest sum Renoir had ever received for a painting to date. The painting was exhibited in the *Exposition des XX* in 1886. In January 1907, the portrait was sold by the Charpentier estate at the Hôtel Drouot to Durand-Ruel who bought it on behalf of Roger Fry for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It sold for 84,000 francs plus 10% commission for a total of 92,000 francs.[2] At the time, it was the largest sum paid for the painting of a living artist. Fry apparently was criticized for the purchase as it seems he may have circumvented normal acquisition procedures to secure the painting

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[1]Victor Champier, *L'Année Artistique, 1879* (Paris: A. Quantin, 1880), 108.

[2]Hôtel Drouot sales catalogue, 19. The next highest price paid was for *Pêcheur* for 14,090 francs; a Cézanne for 4,700 francs

for the Museum. By December 1907 Fry resigned from the museum staff, but was kept on as an advisor until 1910.[1]

[1]Denys Sutton, ed. *The Letters of Roger Fry*, (London: Chatto & Windus, Ltd., 1972), vol. 1, 26 and 97.

III. *La Vie Moderne* - The Journal

At his wife's prompting, Georges Charpentier published a journal that would champion the cause of the Impressionists and the avant-garde.[1] Renoir and his friend Georges Rivière had embarked on a similar project two years earlier by publishing *L'Impressioniste, Journal d'Art,* in conjunction with the Impressionist exhibition of 1877, the aim of which was to defend the painters from negative criticism.[2] Charpentier's magazine was also a convenient and useful method for marketing the novels and books that his firm published. On April 10, 1879, the first issue of *La Vie Moderne* appeared in Paris. Charpentier's long-time friend, Emile Bergerat was chosen as the editor-in-chief. Edmond Renoir, the artist's brother, was a contributor to the magazine and later became its editor and the director of the gallery. Georges took Maurice Dreyfous and Eugène Fasquelle as partners.[3]

Bergerat and Charpentier outlined the goals of the enterprise in its inaugural issue in an article entitled "Notre Programme."[4] They wanted to provide the following: an illustrated journal which could be read with pleasure and profit; a literary journal whose illustrations could be viewed with interest; a journal which "the double redaction" guaranteed the most authoritative names and the most celebrated signatures and who each week put on the family's table the spiritual distractions and intellectual joys which the

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[1]Florisoone, "Lettres," 35. See also Vollard, *Renoir,* 90.

[2]Rewald, *History,* 394.

[3]Fosca, *Renoir,* 90. See also Distel, *Collectors,* 141 and 146.

[4]Emile Bergerat, "Notre Programme," *La Vie Moderne* (April 10, 1879), 2-3. The next several paragraphs are paraphrased from the article.

civilized man needed like his white bread; a journal admirably printed on rich paper, of a convenient format (size), easily reliable and "joignant" to the particular charm of the art journals, the charm more general of the news journals; a journal which combined text and drawings to aid the reader with all the elements for regarding art and politics; "to give him [the reader] in his armchair the spectacle of all the scientific discoveries . . ."[1]

The editors promised to be favorable to innovations, open to various ideas and new research. The new journal dedicated to novelty was created by a new system: cooperative origins. It was born out of a group of believers who are important men because of their commercial, literary or artistic activity. The enterprise would thrive as a result of their participation in the communal enterprise.[2]

Again Renoir and Charpentier displayed similar tendencies. Communal effort was the basis for the Impressionist auctions and exhibitions, which Renoir was instrumental in organizing. It was the foundation for his daycare fundraiser in 1876. It was the underlying principle for Renoir's Society of the Irregularists proposal of 1884.[3] The idea of "communal effort" was a common phenomena during this time period. Despite its frequency, cooperating did not, in fact, secure success. All of these cooperative ventures failed, some more quickly than others.

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[1]Ibid.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Wadley, *Renoir*, 164. "The Society of the Irregularists" was Renoir's proposal for a new association to be formed, which stressed organizing exhibitions for craftspeople who embraced "irregularity," traditional hand craftsmanship, originality and nature as a model for motifs. He also called for the establishment of a "complete grammar of art" and an archive of photographs of architectural monuments.

The introduction continued to explain that *La Vie Moderne* set out to do what no one had dared to do; to say what no one was willing to say; to show what no one deigned to see. They claimed that what distinguished them was that they revered and upheld the lofty position of family life of which "the most skeptical did not dare to acknowledge its tranquil bliss. The collaborators on this effort do not subscribe to the philosophy of the Folies Bergère which said that the family was dead; instead the publishers rejoice in the family."[1] Indeed, the family portrait is a manifestation of this philosophy. Georges seemed all the more determined to overcome his personal history of having come from a broken home.

The editors found it incomprehensible that there was still a distinction between fine and "industrial" art.[2] Here, they articulated a philosophy that Renoir lived. His education and his experience in painting murals, window shades and porcelain illustrated these ideas about the lack of distinction between the two types of art. In 1884, Renoir proposed the Society of the Irregularists, whose aim it was to organize exhibitions of work by artists, painters, architects, goldsmiths and embroiderers.[3] The union between artist and patron was reenforced.

The magazine appeared weekly and was approximately 16-20 pages long. It contained poems, short stories published in serial format, plays, critiques of the annual Salons and other exhibitions around Paris, and critiques of literature and theater. There were

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[1]Ibid.
[2]Ibid.
[3]Wadley, *Retrospective*, 164.

regular columns on "Sports Hippique" or horse races which had become a popular past time for the bourgeoisie. There were occasional articles on "Yachting." Other regular columns included the "Chronique Financiere," the "Chronique Scientifique," and a current events called "Notes Diverses."

In a letter dated January 12, 1880, Renoir relayed Mme. Berard's suggestion to Mme. Charpentier that the last page of the journal be dedicated to the fashion of the week. It would feature hats, dresses and accessories. This would attract more women to the audience and increase advertising revenues. Renoir volunteered to take responsibility for the undertaking, contacting designers and making the drawings.[1] While sources say that the suggestion was never executed,[2] feature articles did appear from time to time showing and discussing "la mode." There was a column called the "Gazette du Chic" which occurred periodically. Although the idea was carried out in part, it was not executed by Renoir as suggested. Several examples of Worth costumes are found in the week of June 12, 1880, (p. 381), October 12, 1882, page 669 and January 15, 1881, page 40 but neither these, nor any other fashion plates were drawn by Renoir. (Figure 7) In fact, the illustration included here was drawn by a woman.

There were also columns discussing interior decoration and advice on the care and health of infants and children. Despite some claims that the publication was created to promote and defend the

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[1]Florisoone, "Lettres," 35.

[2]Rewald, *Studies*, 17. "Since the idea was not carried out, Mme. Charpentier must not have thought it was worth very much."

cause of the "New Painting,"[1] many academic and bourgeois realist artists provided the illustrations, including Jean-Jacques Henner, Jean-Louis Ernest Meissonnier, Léon Bonnat, Bastien-Le Page, Ernst Liphart and others. As Rewald pointed out, the publication demonstrated a mediation between the trendy and the avant-garde.[2]

Goncourt recorded that the Charpentier publishing business was experiencing financial difficulties by 1883. While business had always been "shaky" things had deteriorated to such an extent that it was to be sold to Calmann-Lévy. But the deal fell through and everyone prepared for the worst. The author reported that one of Charpentier's cashiers, Gaulet, sold him out and went to work for Marpon, a competitor, who would "swallow him up less nobly."[3] By 1885 the firm was run by Gaston Lèbre. Although Charpentier retained possession of the enterprise, he is said to have lost interest in it. Contemporary with the financial stress, Edmond Renoir left his position as editor for the publication. According to Rewald, publication ceased in 1893.[4] Charpentier finally sold the business to his long-time partner, Fasquelle, upon his retirement in 1896 and moved to 3 Avenue Bois de Boulogne.[5]

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[1]Renoir, *My Father*, 141.

[2]Rewald, *Studies*, 14.

[3]Becker, *Goncourt*, 200-204. Journal entries dated April 5, 1883 and May 17, 1884.

[4]Rewald, *Studies*, 22-23. In locating copies of the journal for this study, the reference librarian at the University of North Carolina indicated that they owned all the issues through 1902 and some microfilm of 1917, which means that the magazine may have continued after 1893, but perhaps under a different publisher.

[5]Becker, *Trente Années*, 126, note 2, letter 86.

The work that Renoir contributed to the magazine exemplifies the compromises that the artist was willing to make in order to advance his career using the opportunities Charpentier offered him. His initial efforts show how he reconciled the Impressionist style with a linear medium. In the later periodical illustrations, there is a noticeable shift in his style and his choice of subject matter. Comparing his early and later work and using that of other contributors as a foil will bring these points into focus.

Renoir's first contribution to the publication, *Homage to Léon Riesener*, appeared on the cover of the second issue on April 17, 1879. (Figure 8) He admitted that he didn't like and had difficulty with the print medium called *gillotage*. For an artist whose "drawing is a juxtaposition of hues not of line,"[1] a technique which emphasized line proved problematic. Renoir told Ambroise Vollard, "But the worst part about it was that they made us draw on a kind of paper which we had to scrape in order to produce the whites. I never could learn to use it properly."[2] With a painter's perspective on the problem, Renoir started with a grey middle ground, adding to achieve the blacks and scraping away to create white resulting in a brushy effect. Soft, fleshy, nude women bear aloft a medallion with the artist's image draped with a tangle of vegetation. True to Impressionist interests, the play of light over the composition is paramount. The white of the artist's hair and shirt vibrate against the black recesses of the medallion. The contrast between the smaller highlights in the foliage and fluttering fabric and the obvious

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[1]quote of Armand Silvestre in Wadley, *Retrospective*, 157.
[2]Vollard, *Renoir*, 90-91.

scraping and gouging technique make an intense and agitated image. With his eyes fixed on some distant goal, Reisener is portrayed as a steadfast man, but one that is romantic and sensual.[1]

Renoir's discomfort with the medium and technique becomes all the more apparent when compared to Ernst Liphart's bust-length portrait of Thomas Couture in the same issue. (Figure 9) Liphart was a history painter and engraver. Although his likeness is drier and less interesting, his command over the medium is noticeable. He stayed with a simple white background and limited any detail to the face of the sitter. The image is clear, concise and highly delineated. The jacket is barely outlined and formed by negative space. These characteristics were in keeping with the bourgeois realist tendencies in vogue concurrently with Impressionism.

Renoir's second contribution to the publication was a portrait of M. Le Comte de Beust, the ambassador from Austria-Hungary, in the May 8, 1879, issue of the journal on page 77. (Figure 10) The background for this composition, although still heavy and grey, is much simpler. The subject is seated for a three-quarter view with his arms tightly folded across his chest, the fingers digging into his arm. The gouges and scratches found in the Reisener portrait reappear more forcefully in this picture, radiating from the figure like sharp nails.[2]

In July Renoir produced two more portraits, both of which appeared on the cover. A study of a girl's head (July 3, 1879)

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[1]The signed drawing on *papier Gillot, Portrait of Riesener,* was listed as item #72 in the Hôtel Drouot sales catalog and sold for 110 francs.

[2]This portrait appeared in the 1907 Hôtel Drouot sales catalog listed as #73, a signed drawing on *papier Gillot,* and sold for 100 francs.

enclosed in a circle again demonstrated Renoir's interest in the play of light falling across the figure. (Figure 11) The child's eyes are shaded by the brim of a flowered hat; but the sun falls on her mouth and neck forming concentric circles. The poet, Théodore de Banville, was featured on July 10, 1879, and his image is similar in format to the earlier portrait of Reisener. (Figure 12) Banville was also enclosed in a medallion draped with garlands and surrounded by fluttering birds, nude children playing musical instruments and a woman in an evening gown with a fan sitting in the corner. Renoir seemed to have better control over technique at this point. The scratches are more gently curving and softer than in any of the previous prints. His use of the medallion format, quasi-putti and muses is reminiscent of the eighteenth-century tradition, which the Charpentiers found admirable in their family portrait.

Renoir did not produce another print for the publication again until 1883. Due to his success with the Charpentier portrait at the Salon of 1879, he spent his time on commissioned portraits, which paid better than magazine work. "We all collaborated. We were to be paid out of the earnings; in other words, none of us got a single sou."[1] Then in 1881 he left for Algiers, returned briefly then went to Italy. The later works were more often than not copies of other paintings, not work that was original to that medium or made specifically for the magazine.

While in Palermo, Renoir painted the portrait of Richard Wagner, which briefly was in the Charpentier collection. In 1883

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[1] Vollard, *Renoir*, 90.

Renoir made a print of the Wagner portrait to be published with the composer's obituary on February 24, 1883. (Figures 13 and 14) In an undated letter to Georges Charpentier, Renoir wrote: "If the portrait that I made for you of Wagner suffices, and you wish to put a word of explanation with it, you may put that this portrait was made in Palermo on the 15th of January 1882, the day after Wagner finished *Parsifal*."[1] Barbara White believes this letter accompanied the portrait when it was sent from Italy to the Charpentiers and that the portrait was rejected.[2] If the portrait was intended for their personal collection, though, why would it need to be sufficient? And why would they need an explanatory note? The letter might be referring to the print after the oil painting since Renoir's explanatory note appeared virtually verbatim with the print in *La Vie Moderne*. If this is the case, the letter may be dated to mid-February 1883. The purpose of the original portrait is not well understood. It was not commissioned by the sitter since Renoir had to plead for an interview and sitting and reportedly did the painting in 20 minutes. According to an entry in Julie Manet's diary, Renoir told her that the portrait was painted at the request of his friends and studio mates "who played a lot of music."[3] If this is the case, why would he have sent it to the Charpentiers?[4]

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[1]Florisoone, "Lettres," 38.

[2]White, *Renoir: Life*, 120.

[3]Rosalind de Roberts and Jane Roberts, eds., *Growing Up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet* (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 134.

[4]Daulte, *Renoir*, #394. The author lists the provenance of this painting as first in the Charpentier collection. Then the painting was back in Renoir's hands. He sold the painting to Robert de Bonnières in 1886.

In April 1883 Renoir executed a copy of Riesener's painting *Leda* for the journal. (Figure 15) The subject was out of character for Renoir, whose own nudes were charming and innocent, never lecherous or violent. It seems incongruent to have the Impressionist copying the titillating sensuality of the bourgeois realist painters.

In a flurry of activity from November 3, 1883, through January 26, 1884, Renoir produced six prints for the publication. *Dance at Bougival* served to illustrate "Mademoiselle Zélia" by Paul Lhote on November 3, 1883. (Figure 16) Renoir and Lhote were close friends and served as models for each other's work. Lhote was identified as the male model for this painting and the other two of the same dance theme, *Dance in the Country* and *Dance in the City.* Likewise, Lhote's short story was based on Renoir's Montmartre days.[1]

For the next two illustrations, there does not appear to be a counterpart in painting. On December 8, 1883, Renoir illustrated another Lhote story with *A Couple in the Street.* (Figure 17) The following week Edmond Renoir's article "L'Etiquette" was accompanied by a picture of the author in Menton that Renoir had made earlier. (Figure 18) In the Renoir *Retrospective* catalog, this print is dated as 1881. On December 22, 1883, Renoir's work sunk to its lowest depths. On the cover of the journal was a portrait of the dancer Mlle. Rosita Mauri in her role in *Farandole.* (Figure 19) The drawing is awkward and uncharacteristically flat. The light is even and bright with no modulation of light and shade on the limbs to soften and shape them. The figure is short and stocky. Instead of

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[1]Michael Raeburn, ed. *Renoir* (London: The Arts Council of Great Britain, 1985), 236.

using the dark, heavily worked background in his earlier prints, Renoir merely scribbles around the figure.

The continuation of Edmond's article on December 29, was shown with a variation of Renoir's painting, *La Promenade,* 1870. (Figure 20) The composition for the print and the painting are identical although the position of the man and woman are reversed. Renoir also updated the woman's dress.[1]

Renoir provided an illustration for Emile Zola's novel *L'Assommoir* which was published in the book but never appeared in the journal as was planned.[2] Renoir prepared a copy of Manet's *Fifer* which appeared with the latter's obituary on January 12, 1884. (Figure 21) The last work Renoir did for the journal was a copy of his own painting, *Dance in the Country,* on January 26, 1884. (Figure 22) (It's interesting to note that Distel comments about the earlier dance theme painting/print, but not this one.)

The increased activity with the journal and the print medium coincided with his "classical crisis," which was the result of his travels abroad. During the 1880s, Renoir became more concerned with academic ideals and specifically linearity. ("I'm sorry I am not more like Ingres."[3]) During this time he was more receptive to the medium with its emphasis on line. Also, because he is becoming more secure as an artist and is receiving more regular commissions, his interest in producing new images for the magazine waned. The later illustrations also exemplify Renoir's willingness to compromise

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[1]Raeburn, *Renoir,* 236.

[2]For a reproduction of this illustration, see Rewald, *Studies,* 16.

[3]Edward Lockspeiser, "The Renoir Portraits of Wagner," *Music & Letters.* 18 (1937), 18.

Impressionist ideals. It was pointed out earlier that Renoir rejected narrative qualities in his paintings. In the post-1883 illustrations, however, he not only inserted copies of his paintings into the context of a story, but included exerpts from the stories beneath the pictures.

IV. La Vie Moderne -- The Gallery

The Charpentiers provided artists with exhibition space as well as critical acclaim in their journal. A gallery directed by Edmond Renoir was established in the office of the journal at 11 Rue des Italiens and was to be the corollary to the publication. Each exhibition lasted approximately 15 days and usually featured the work of a single artist in one exhibition. In the explanation of their goals for the gallery published in the magazine, the editors proclaimed to open the space to all artists regardless of importance or genre. Visitors would be able to see carefully finished salon paintings hanging next to loosely treated rough sketches or "croquis" drawn on the spot either in pencil or charcoal.

These exhibitions were the "artists' studios transported to the boulevard" -- easily accessible to the public without the formality of a meeting and introduction. If he [the visitor] wanted information [about the artist] he could get it from a purely official, disinterested intermediary, not a merchant eager to sell or from an unobliging third party. Artists and amateurs are in the habit of frequenting the exhibitions; they meet there and between the two of them establish profitable relationships.[1]

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[1] "Cette exposition. . . présentera ce caractère particulier que chacune d'elles réunira les oeuvres d'un seul artiste, sans distinction d'importance ou de genre: on verra figurer à côté du tableau de 'salon' peint avec soin, parachevé, la pochade traitée plus largement, ou le croquis dessin d'emblée soit au crayon, soit au fusain. . . . S'il désire quelque renseignement il l'obtiendra d'un intermédiaire purement officieux, désinteressé, scrupuleux, non d'un marchand pressé de vendre ou d'un tiers peut-être désobligeant. Artistes et amateurs prendront certainement l'habitude de frequenter notre exposition; il s'y rencontreront, et, entre eux s'etabliront des relations profitable." *La Vie Moderne* (April 10, 1979), 14-15.

Charpentier's innovation in the art market was to hold one-person shows. The first exhibition beginning on April 10, 1879, was of Ulysse Butin's seascapes which were described as noble, sweet and melancholic.[1] The next exhibition began on May 1 and was of de Nittis' work. Rewald wrote that this was the first exhibition and that 2,000-3,000 people visited it daily.[2] The third exhibition featured a woman artist, Louise Abbéma. In the description of the exhibition in the magazine on May 22, 1879, Edmond Renoir remarked about the progress women were making in the profession. This was followed by a show of Antoine Vollon's work.

Renoir's first one-man exhibition was the fifth exhibition held in the gallery and opened on June 19, 1879. Carrying the portrait theme over from the Impressionist exhibitions and his concurrent salon entries, Renoir showed only portraits. "I have the intention of doing there, if the gentlemen consent to it, an exhibition of nothing but portraits, which will attract a lot of people, I believe."[3] In a letter to Mme. Charpentier he indicated that he intended to put the little Samary portrait in the shop.[4] Barbara White identified some of the other portraits that appeared in the exhibition. Besides Mlle. Samary, there was Théodore de Banville, Mlle. Plunkett, Alphonse Daudet's baby, Elizabeth Maître and a double portrait of Francisca and Angelina Wartenberg.[5] Rewald also suggests that four portrait

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[1]Ibid, 15.

[2]Rewald, *History*, 431. In *Studies*, however, Rewald correctly names Butin's exhibition as occurring first.

[3]Robida, *Le Salon Charpentier*, 72.

[4]Florisoone, "Lettres," 34.

[5]White, *Renoir*, 88.

pastels all entitled Head of a Young Girl were included in this exhibition.[1]

Edmond Renoir wrote a letter to Bergerat which was published in *La Vie Moderne*. He explained that his brother's approach to painting was to not arrange things for the benefit of the picture. The exhibition of paintings is a faithful picture of modern life; it lacks convention and it is nature with all its unexpected and intense harmony. The issue of its convention and its naturalness has been discussed previously. Writing "It is in following my brother's ensemble . . .,"[2] Edmond displayed a growing tendency to emphasize the artist and his oeuvre, not the quality of the individual paintings. He believed the exhibition was a portrait of the artist himself: "This is the artist, this is where he started, what he went through and where he is now." The article outlined the elder's biography and past artistic experiences.[3]

Renoir's work was also shown in an exhibition entitled *Le Dessins de la Vie Moderne -- Première Series* featuring the work of all the contributing artists up until July. The show was divided into two distinct parts. First were the drawings of the "masters," -- members of the academy, exhibitors at the Salon, winners of the *Prix*. These were reproductions made by the artists themselves of their own major work. Among them were Laurens, Henner, Bastien-Le Page, Butin and Bonnat. The second part was made up of illustrations, decorations and "d'actualité". They were masters of the

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[1]Rewald, *Renoir Drawings* (New York: H. Bittner, 1946), 16.

[2]Rewald, *Studies*, 18.

[3]Edmond Renoir, "Letter to the Editor," *La Vie Moderne*, (June 19, 1879): 174-5.

genre. Renoir fell into this latter group. The exhibition was organized in order to show the ecclecticism of the first three months of the journal and to make sense of it all to the public. "Our gallery is a complete microcosm of contemporary art. . . It represents the most varied, opposing and divers art to stimulate public taste and to provide specimens for critical exercises."[1]

If the journal was considered a mediator between the avant-garde and the conservative, so was the gallery. In addition, to these one-person shows that were the result of the new art market structure, the gallery of La Vie Moderne organized shows with popular appeal. Bordering on kitsch, there were exhibitions of painted tambourins and Easter eggs, in which Renoir participated. The show beginning on December 20, 1879, displayed the *Tambours de Basque* decorated by various collaborating artists -- Renoir and Henner among others. Henner's work is illustrated in the journal, while Renoir's is not mentioned specifically.[2] An article about the exhibition of painted Easter eggs appeared in the March 20, 1880, issue of the journal. They had many reasons for believing the show would be successful. One was that the artists who agreed to participate were among the most loved by the public. Furthermore, "It is impossible to imagine a bibelot more modern and more

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[1]*La Vie Moderne*, (July 17, 1879): 239.

[2]*La Vie Moderne*, (December 20, 1879): 592. For reference to Renoir's participation in this exhibition, see "Liste des Expositions" from the exhibition catalog *Renoir* which occured at the Galeries Nationales Palais, Paris 14 Mai - 2 Septembre 1985.

decorative" than the Easter egg.[1] Incidentally, Degas was miffed at not being included in this show.

The Charpentiers not only exhibited Renoir's work in their own gallery but made arrangements for him to show at other galleries as well. In an undated letter to Mme. Charpentier, Renoir thanks her for arranging an exhibition at Georges Petit's gallery.[2]

In June 1879 Renoir asked the Charpentiers to host an exhibition of Sisley's work, which he assured them would sell.[3] But Sisley was not given his show until 1881. Edouard Manet showed there in April 1880 and Claude Monet had his one-person exhibition in June 1880.

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[1]"Les Oeufs de Paques de la Vie Moderne," *La Vie Moderne*, (March 20, 1880): 183.

[2]Florisoone, "Lettres," 38.

[3]Florisoone, "Lettres," 35.

V. Conclusion

Madame Charpentier and Her Children is the most apparent manifestation of the symbiotic relationship between Renoir and Charpentier. Renoir benefitted financially as it was the highest paid commission he had received until that time. The portrait won him favor at the Salon and recognition among his peers. The critical acclaim he received for the painting helped him gain status in the art market. His portrait commissions increased after his success with this painting at the salon. The astronomical price the portrait brought at auction thirty years later confirmed the position he had worked to achieve in the art market.

The portrait served a purpose for the Charpentiers as well. It asserted a new image of republican nobility and reaffirmed the bourgeois values of family and wealth. The publishing business was never free from economic worries, yet the portraits give the impression of affluence and security. Renoir played the role of courtier in the democratic salon. He offered his services in a variety of capacities, including drawing menus for their dinners and arranging for them to rent chalets.[1] In addition he made suggestions regarding the publishing and gallery business and charities.

By examining Renoir's work for the Charpentiers in all its various manifestations, the patron's role in the creative process is demystified. Renoir can not be viewed as a parasite or a passive recipient of his patron's good will. Renoir was active in securing his own success and Charpentier's motives were not entirely altruistic.

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[1]Florisoone, "Lettres," 37.

Success for both the artist and the patron depended on a keen sense of the public's interests and needs and their own ability to compromise and adapt. In the new democratic society which emerged after 1870, this awareness of the public became crucial. Their relationship was cemented by the fact that they each lived by a similar philosophy. Both attempted to appeal to the public without offending it. They each sought to maintain a balance between the avant-garde and the conservative. Renoir exhibited with any group -- official or Impressionist -- that advanced his career. Charpentier printed anyone's work as long as it sold.[1] It was a successful strategy.

There were impediments to this thesis; some technical in nature, others methodological. Reliable sources for objective facts about the patrons are relatively scarce. Most of the information about the Charpentiers is taken from two books written by Marguerite Charpentier's nephew, Michel Robida. These are family histories and memoirs and reflect the subjectivity of the author. The books take on a romantic and nostalgic quality which led another author to refer to them as "golden legends." Mollier, who wrote the history of publishing in France, was a more authoritative source for information about the family. Yet, there are still some "facts" that he presents without citing sources, which causes one to view them with suspicion. Anne Distel's patronage studies provide information about

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[1]Goncourt noted in a journal entry dated August 18, 1887, that Mme. Zola complained of the obsenity of her husband's newest book. Mme. Charpentier "beaming happily had murmured: 'Oh come now surely it isn't as bad as all that?' And Charpentier in hilarious mood, had patted his cheeks and chortled: 'It will sell all the better if it is!'" Baldick, *Goncourt Journals*, 331.

the Charpentiers, but she does not always list her sources. Conflicting versions of facts are noted, but without access to records and primary data, most of which are located in France, I was unable to determine which "facts" are correct. Moreover, because some of the text is very technical and in French, my translations are rough. A thorough examination of the Charpentiers as art patrons should include an identification of the items in their collection and to whom they were dispersed upon their death. Access to those records is limited as well.

In retrospect, I find there also to be a methodological limitation to this study. Because the scope of the thesis was so narrowly defined, it does not allow generalizations to be made about the role of patronage in nineteenth-century art production despite the temptation to do so. The focus here was on the specific relationship between Renoir and the Charpentiers and its manifestations in the portrait, the publication and to a lesser extent the gallery. Whether or not this Renoir/Charpentier liaison was a trend resulting from social, political and market changes or if it was an anomaly is a question that could profitably be pursued beyond the limits of a Master of Arts thesis.

Several critics remarked that the portrait served as historical evidence of nineteenth-century French society, which begs the question of this work in a broader sociological framework. Charpentier himself identified two contradictory perceptions of the role of the family in the new democratic society: that espoused by the Folies Bergère versus that embraced by the conservative bourgeoisie. Identifying exactly what the Folies Bergère attitude

towards the family was by delving into a broader spectrum of contemporary periodicals as well as sociological studies would clarify Charpentier's position and provide evidence of the changing role of the family in the democratic and capitalist society. A closer reading of quantitative research -- the work of Zeldin, for example -- regarding family issues (divorce rates, the role of children in the family, income and expenses, property, religion, work, etc.) could lead to a new perception of the family portrait.

Another avenue of research would be to investigate all the participants of Mme. Charpentier's salons. This could add strength to the networking argument, particularly in the form of letters, contracts or journal entries to any of the parties. For example, there exists some evidence of an affinity for a relationship between Henner and Renoir similar to the relationship between Renoir and Charpentier. All three were interested in maintaining that avant-garde versus conservative balance. Yet, other than a few cursory comments that the two artists may have mingled at the same salons, there is no evidence that such a relationship existed. A thorough examination of the Henner-Renoir-Charpentier triad could add an interesting dimension to our knowledge of nineteenth-century patronage and art production.

Despite these unexplored topics, the thesis is valuable because it identifies and consolidates the work that Renoir contributed to *La Vie Moderne* in one study. It also presents, in English, a close look at the biographies of the Charpentiers as patrons and how their personal experiences and philosophies coincided so closely with Renoir's. By focusing on the role of the artist in the artist/patron

relationship, the direction of patronage studies is shifting into equilibrium.

FIGURES

Figure 1. Renoir, Mme. Theodore Charpentier, 1869.

Figure 2. Renoir, Mme. Georges Charpentier, 1876.

Figure 3. Renoir. *Georgette Seated,* 1876.

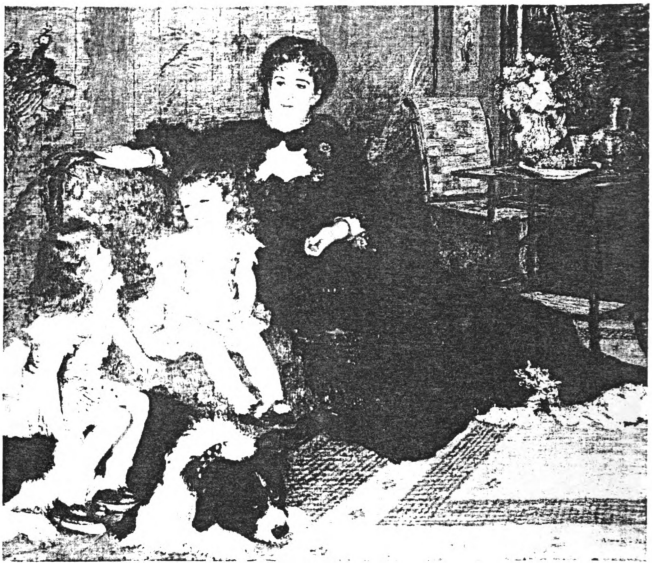

Figure 4. Renoir, Mme. Charpentier and Her Children, 1878.

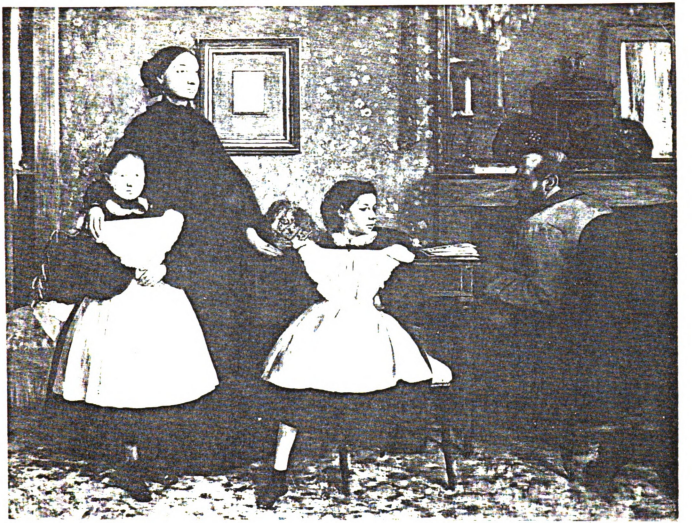

Figure 5. Degas, *The Bellelli Family,* 1859-60.

Figure 6. Louise Abbéma, *Luncheon in the Conservatory,* 1877.

UNE TOILETTE PAR MOIS

Costume d'automne créé par Worth. Dessin de Mlle Mesnil.

Figure 7. Mesnil, Costume d'Automne créé par Worth, *La Vie Moderne,* October 21, 1882, page 669.

Première Année. N° 2. Jeudi 17 Avril 1879.

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LÉON RIESENER, par Renoir

Figure 8. Renoir, Homage to Leon Riesener, *La Vie Moderne*, April 17, 1879, cover.

THOMAS COUTURE
(Dessin de M. de Liphart.)

Figure 9. Ernst Liphart, Thomas Couture, *La Vie Moderne*, April 17, 1879, page 20.

M. LE COMTE DE BEUST. — Etude d'après nature, par RENOIR.

Figure 10. Renoir, M. Le Comte de Beust, *La Vie Moderne*, May 8, 1879, page 77.

Première Année. N° 13. Jeudi 3 Juillet 1879.

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TÊTE D'ÉTUDE, PAR RENOIR

Figure 11. Renoir, Study of a Head, *La Vie Moderne*, July 3, 1879, cover.

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THÉODORE DE BANVILLE, PAR RENOIR.

Figure 12. Renoir, Théodore de Banville, *La Vie Moderne,* July 10, 1879, cover.

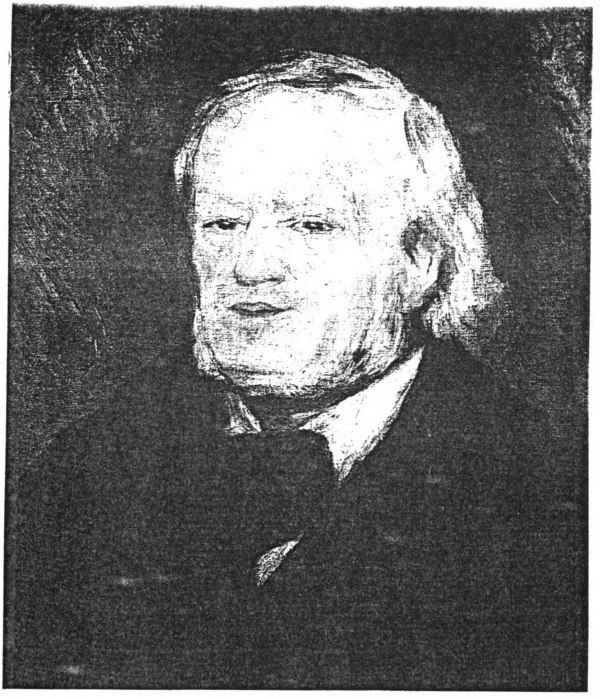

Figure 13. Renoir, Wagner, 1882.

Richard Wagner, dessin de Renoir, d'après le portrait à l'huile qu'il fit à Palerme le 15 janvier 1882, le lendemain du jour où Wagner terminait *Parsifal*.

Figure 14. Renoir, Wagner, *La Vie Moderne*, February 24, 1883.

Figure 15. Renoir, Leda after Riesener, *La Vie Moderne*, April 1883, page 256.

Elle valsait, délicieusement abandonnée.....

Figure 16. Renoir, after Dance at Bougival, *La Vie Moderne*, November 3, 1883, page 707.

Figure 17. Renoir, untitled [A Couple in the Street], *La Vie Moderne*, December 8, 1883, page 782.

Figure 18. Renoir, untitled [Edmond Renoir in Menton], *La Vie Moderne*, December 15, 1883, page 803.

Figure 19. Renoir, Mlle. Rosita Mauri, *La Vie Moderne*, December 22, 1883, cover.

Figure 20. Renoir, after La Promenade, *La Vie Moderne*, January 12, 1884, page 860.

LE « FIFRE » DE MANET. — Dessin de Renoir.

Figure 21. Renoir, Le Fifer de Manet, *La Vie Moderne*, January 12, 1884, page 860.

Figure 22. Renoir, The Dance [after Dance in the Country], *La Vie Moderne*, January 26, 1884, page 59.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

1907 Sales Catalogue of the Charpentier Estate

The following pages include the title page and the list of objects auctioned at this sale. Items marked with an asterisk are described in the original catalog. Items marked with two asterisks are described and illustrated in the original catalog. The Ryerson and Burnham Libraries at the Art Institute of Chicago and the Cleveland Museum of Art Library own copies of the catalog. Dimensions are given in centimeters; height precedes width.

Catalogue des Tableaux Aquarelles, Pastels, et Dessins par E. Boudin, Cazin, Cezanne, Degas, Fantin-Latour, Forain, Henner, Lebourg, Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, Puvis de Chavannes, Renoir, Roll, Sargent, Sisley, etc. etc.

Composant la Collection de Feu M. Georges Charpentier, editeur

Salle no. 6
le jeudi 11 Avril 1907 à 2 heures

Commissaire-Priseur:
M. Paul Chevallier

Experts
M. Bernheim Jeune

exposition le mercredi Avril 10, 1907

[10% sales commission]

no. 1 Boucher, F. *Marseille-Marine;* canvas, 33 x 56; signed and dated 1880.

no. 2 Boudin (Eugene). *Plage de Trouville;* panel, 18 x 35; signed.

no. 3 Cezanne, Paul. *Deux Figures d'Hommes dans un Jardin;* canvas, 39 x 31*.

no. 4 Damoye (E.). *En Rase Plaine;* 33 x 59; signed and dated '89.

no. 5 Damoye (E.). *Sur la Grève;* panel, 33 x 49; signed and dated '83.

no. 6 Eliot (Maurice). *Paysage d'Eté;* canvas, 45 x 55; signed.

no. 7 Fantin-Latour. *Portrait de Legros;* panel, 26 x 23; signed and dated '56*.

no. 8 Gervex (H.). *La Femme au Miroir;* canvas, 21 x 10 1/2; signed.

no. 9 Gleize. *La Beauté;* panel, 21 x 27; signed.

no. 10 Guiar. *Vendage;* canvas, 35 x 24; signed.

no. 11 Guiar. *Paysage;* canvas, 33 x 45; signed.

no. 12 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *Femme Nue se Coiffant;* panel, 24 x 29 1/2*.

no. 13 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *Femme Vue de Dos;* panel, 29 x 40**.

no. 14 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *Madeleine;* panel, 24 x 40*.

no. 15 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *Madeleine Lisant;* panel, 15 x 24; signed*.

no. 16 Jeanniot (G.). *Paysage;* panel, 65 x 41; signed.

no. 17 Kaemmerer (F. H.). *Le Gardeuse de Traineaux;* canvas, 36 x 22 1/2; signed.

no. 18 Lebourg (Albert). *Rives de Seine;* canvas, 35 x 65; signed*.

no. 19 Monet (Claude). Chausse d'Argenteuil; canvas, 59 x 79; signed**.

no. 20 Monet (Claude); *La Seine - Paysage d'Automne;* canvas, 55 x 73; signed*.

no. 21 Renoir; *La Famille Charpentier;* canvas, 1 m 52 cm x 1 m 91 cm; signed and dated 1878**.

no. 22 Renoir. *Le Pêcheur à la Ligne;* canvas, 55 x 65 1/2; signed**.

no. 23 Rochegrosse (Georges). *Les Bretonnes au Cimetière;* panel, 41 x 27; signed*.

no. 24 Roll. *Sous Bois;* canvas, 83 x 61; signed*.

no. 25 Rop (Felicien). *Les Etangs de Saclay* (Seine-et-Oise) offert à son ami Armond Gouzieu; 28 x 44.

no. 26 Stevens (Léopold). *Le Petit Breton;* panel, 61 x 17; signed.

no. 27 Wilder (A.). *Falaises de Bretagne;* canvas, 78 x 65; signed and dated 1901.

Watercolors, Pastels and Drawings

no. 28 Bastien-LePage (J.). *Le Docteur Herbeau à Cheval;* drawing, 21 x 15 1/2; signed and dated '77.

no. 29 Bastien-LePage (J.). *Le Docteur Herbeau;* drawing, 22 x 16; signed.

no. 30 De Baumont (Elie). *Perrette;* drawing in pen, 17 x 23; signed.

no. 31 Braquemond. *La Rixe,* d'après le tableau de Meissonier; etching.

no. 32 Cazin (J. C.). Composition pour un plafond figurant allegorisant les arts du drawing; crayon, 42 x 23; signed.

no. 33 Chaplin (Ch.). *La Nue.* drawing in two pencils, 18 x 28; signed.

no. 34 Degas. *La Precaution;* very beautiful pastel, 20 x 25; signed*.

no. 35 Desboutin (Marcellin). *L'Homme à la Pipe;* etching, 43 x 37; signed.

no. 36 Duez (E.). *L'Artiste - Portrait d'Ulysse Butin;* pencil drawing, 41 x 39; signed.

no. 37 Fantin-Latour. *Jeune Fille Dissinant - Portrait de Mlle. R***;* fragment of a painting of 1879; drawing, 22 x 20.

no. 38 Forain (Jean-Louis). *Un Coin de Salon chez M. Charpentier;* watercolor, 30 x 18; signed.

no. 39 Forain (Jean-Louis). *Couloir de Théatre;* ink drawing highlighted with color, 33 x 23; signed.

no. 40 Forain (Jean-Louis). *Au Bord de la Mer.*

no. 41 Gautier (Théophile). *Mlle. de Maupin;* drawing in pen and pencil, 13 x 10 1/2; signed.

no. 42 Gautier (Théophile). *Esmerelda;* sanguine, 13 x 10; signed.

no. 43 Giacomelli. *Le Retour du Troupeau;* drawing in Indian ink, 28 x 22; signed.

no. 44 Gonzales, Eva. Variation sur "La Finette" de Watteau; pastel, 45 x 27; signed.

no. 45 Guiar. *Les Deux Filles de Lepic.* watercolor, 31 x 38; signed and dated '85.

no. 46 Haraucourt (Edmond). *Partir, C'est Mourir un Peu! -- Marine;* medallion pastel, 34 in diameter; signed.

no. 47 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *Portrait du Frère de l'Artiste;* drawing in pencil, 26 x 18; signed.

no. 48 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *L'Alsacienne;* drawing, 18 x 10 1/2; signed.

no. 49 Henner (Jean-Jacques). *Portrait de l'Artiste par Lui-Meme;* drawing, 33 x 26; signed and dated 1879.

no. 50 Ibels. *Arlequin;* pastel, 34 x 13; signed.

no. 51 Jeanniot (G.). *Le Parc Monceau;* watercolor, 24 x 34; signed and dated 1881.

no. 52 Laurens (Jean-Paul). *Portrait du Fils de l'Artiste;* drawing, 30 x 24; signed.

no. 53 Le Andre. four drawings in Indian ink; 22 x 17; signed and dated 1889.

no. 54 Leloir (Maurice). Illustration pour "Mademoiselle de la Seiglière" (Petite Bibliothèque Charpentier); drawing in pen, 25 x 17; signed and dated, 1879.

no. 55 Le Maire (Madeleine). *Colombine;* drawing, 30 x 19; signed.

no. 56 Manet (Edouard). *Polinchinelle;* color lithograph, 45 x 30; signed.

no. 57 Meunier (Constantin). *Les Puddleurs;* drawings, 28 x 39; signed.

no. 58 Monet (Claude). *Le Moulin en Hollande;* drawing, 30 x 48; signed.

no. 59 Moreau (Adrien). *Marguerite au Miroir;* drawing, 38 x 23; signed.

no. 60 Nanteuil (Celestin). L'Alchemiste; watercolor, 43 x 34; signed.

no. 61 De Nittis. *Femme en Chemisette;* pastel, 72 x 49.

no. 62 Osterlind. *Les Chanteuses de Cours - Espagne;* watercolor, 71 x 54; signed.

no. 63 Piette (L.). *La Cathédrale du Mans;* watercolor, 27 1/2 x 54; signed and dated 1874.

no. 64 Piette (L.). *Le Marché;* watercolor, 32 x 54; signed and dated, 1875.

no. 65 Pille (Henri). *Le Marché Antique;* drawing, 22 x 55; signed.

no. 66 Pissarro (Camille). *A la Rivière;* gouache, 26 x 56; signed*.

no. 67 Puvis de Chavannes. *Allegorie;* sepia drawing, 24 x 47; signed*.

no. 68 Raffaelli (J. F.). *Aux Courses;* drawing in Conté, 16 x 34 1/2; signed.

no. 69 Renoir. *Les Quatre Saisons;* pastel, 45 x 29; signed**.

no. 70 Renoir. *Les Quatre Saisons;* pastel, 45 x 29; signed*.

no. 71 Renoir. *La Femme au Chapeau de Paille.* watercolor, 18 x 15.

no. 72 Renoir. *Portrait de Riesener;* drawing on Gillot paper, 30 x 24; signed.

no. 73 Renoir. *Portrait du Comte de Beust;* drawing on Gillot paper, 37 x 31; signed.

no. 74 Renoir. *Les Quatre Saisons;* pastel, 45 x 20; signed*.

no. 75 Renoir. *Les Quatre Saisons;* pastel, 45 x 29; signed.

no. 76 Renouard (Paul). *Silhouettes Féminines,* drawings in Indian ink, each 27 x 71; signed.

no. 77 Rochegrosse (Georges). Deux illustrations pour l'oeuvre de Paul de Musset (Petite Bibliothèque Charpentier); drawing, 28 x 19; signed.

no. 78 Sargent. *La Gitane;* charcoal drawing, 21 x 32; signed.

no. 79 Sisley (Alfred). *Le Pré au Bord de la Rivière;* pastel, 29 x 40 signed*.

no. 80 Sisley (Alfred). *Les Oies;* pastel, 29 x 40; signed*.

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