

[Les Sirenes](#) by [Pierre Auguste Renoir](#)  
Lithograph on Paper - Main Subject: Impressionism



**Item Number**  
5845951001

**Retail Value**  
\$1,300

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**Dimensions (As Shown)**  
8.25W x 9.5H Inches  
20.96W x 24.13H cm

**Medium**  
Lithograph on Paper

**Edition**  
- Limited Edition of 375  
- Plate-Signed 

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**About Pierre Auguste Renoir**

Pierre Auguste Renoir was a French impressionist painter noted for his radiant, intimate paintings, particularly of the female nude. Recognized by critics as one of the greatest and most independent painters of his period, Renoir is noted for the harmony of his lines, the brilliance of his color, and the intimate charm of his wide variety of subjects. Unlike other impressionists he was as much interested in painting the single human figure or family group portraits as he was in landscapes; unlike them, too, he did not subordinate composition and plasticity of form to attempts at rendering the effect of light.



Renoir was born in Limoges on February 25, 1841. As a child he worked in a porcelain factory in Paris, painting designs on china; at 17 he copied paintings on fans, lamp shades, and blinds. He studied painting formally in 1862-63 at the academy of the Swiss painter Charles Gabriel Gleyre in Paris. Renoir's early work was influenced by two French artists, Claude Monet in his treatment of light and the romantic painter Eugène Delacroix in his treatment of color.

Renoir first exhibited his paintings in Paris in 1864, but he did not gain recognition until 1874, at the first exhibition of painters of the new impressionist school. One of the most famous of all impressionist works is Renoir's *Le Bal au Moulin de la Galette* (1876, Musée du Louvre, Paris), an open-air scene of a café, in which his mastery in figure painting and in representing light is evident. Outstanding examples of his talents as a portraitist are *Madame Charpentier* and *Her Children* (1878, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City) and *Jeanne Samary*.

Renoir fully established his reputation with a solo exhibition held at the Durand-Ruel Gallery in Paris in 1883. In 1887 he completed a series of studies of a group of nude female figures known as *The Bathers* (Philadelphia Museum of Art). These reveal his extraordinary ability to depict the lustrous, pearly color and texture of skin and to impart lyrical feeling and plasticity to a subject; they are unsurpassed in the history of modern painting in their representation of feminine grace.

Many of his later paintings also treat the same theme in an increasingly bold rhythmic style. During the last 20 years of his life Renoir was crippled by arthritis; unable to move his hands freely, he continued to paint, however, by using a brush strapped to his arm. Renoir died at Cagnes, a village in the south of France, on December 3, 1919.

## Lithograph on Paper

This printing technique uses a planographic process in which prints are pulled on a special press from a flat stone or metal surface. The surface has been chemically treated so that ink sticks only to the design areas, and is repelled by the non-image areas. Lithography was invented in Germany in 1798. The early history of lithography is dominated by great French artists such as Daumier and Delacroix, and later by Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, Picasso, Braque and Miro.

Based on the principle that oil and water repel, a Lithograph is created when an artist produces an oil-based or pen image on a stone or piece of metal. This surface is then moistened and covered with an oil-based ink. The resulting chemical reaction between the oil and water drives away the ink on the surface except where the drawing was first done. Fine quality paper is then placed against the surface and a lithographic press is used to create the print. Modern technology and processes have provided artists with many unique methods with which to create magnificent lithographs. In the 1890s color lithography became enormously popular with French artists, Toulouse-Lautrec most notably of all, and by 1900 the medium in both color and monotone was an accepted part of printmaking, although France and the US have used it more than other countries. George

Bellows, Alphonse Mucha, Pablo Picasso, Jasper Johns, David Hockney and Robert Rauschenberg are a few of the artists who have produced most of their prints in the medium.

As a special form of lithography, the Serilith process is sometimes used. Serilith are mixed media original prints created in a process where an artist uses the lithograph and serigraph process. The separations for both processes are hand drawn by the artist. The serilith technique is used primarily to create fine art limited print editions.

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