Pierre-Auguste Renoir
French, 1841-1919

Acrobats at the Cirque Fernando (Francisca and Angelina Wartenberg)
1879
Oil on canvas
51 3/4 x 39 1/8 in. (131.5 x 99.5 cm)
Potter Palmer Collection
1922.440

## **Provenance** [from OSCI working file 12.19.12]

Deposited by the artist with Durand-Ruel, Paris, Apr. 6, 1881.<sup>1</sup>

Sold to Durand-Ruel, Paris, May 12, 1882, for 2,000 fr.<sup>2</sup>

Sold to Potter Palmer (died 1902), Chicago, May 11, 1892, for 8,000 fr.<sup>3</sup>

By descent to his widow, Mrs. Potter (Bertha Honoré) Palmer (died 1918).

By descent to her sons Honoré Palmer and Potter Palmer, Jr.

Given to the Art Institute of Chicago, 1922.

# **Exhibition History**

Paris, Offices of La Vie Moderne, *Cinquième Exposition de La Vie moderne, P.-A. Renoir*, June 19–July 3, 1879, no. cat.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> According to the Durand-Ruel Archives, "Déposé par l'artiste chez Durand-Ruel Paris le 6 avril 1881, *Les Petites acrobates*." Durand-Ruel, Livre de dépôt Paris 1879-84, dépôt n°3155 «Les Petites acrobates»; see Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> According to the Durand-Ruel Archives, "(stock 2362), *Les Saltimbanques."* Durand-Ruel, Livre de stock Paris 1880-82; see Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> According to the Durand-Ruel Archives, "Vendu par Durand-Ruel Paris (stock 319) à Potter Palmer le 11 mai 1892 pour 8000 francs, *Dans le cirque*." Durand-Ruel, Livre de stock Paris 1891; see Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> For a discussion of the exhibition dates see Barbara Ehrlich White *Renoir: His Life, Art, and Letters* (Harry N. Abrams, 1984), p. 88. For the inclusion of the work in the exhibition see Edmond Renoir, "Cinquième exposition de La Vie Moderne – P.-A. Renoir," *La Vie Moderne* (June 19, 1879), p. 175; and Jacques-Émile Blanche, *Les* 

Paris, 251, rue Saint-Honoré, Salons du Panorama de Reischoffen, *7me exposition des artistes independants* [Seventh Impressionist Exhibition], Mar. 1–31, 1882, no cat. no.<sup>5</sup>

New York, American Art Galleries, *Works in Oil and Pastel by the Impressionists of Paris*, April 10–28, 1886, cat. 209; New York, National Academy of Design, May 25–June 30, 1886.<sup>6</sup>

Paris, Galeries Durand-Ruel, Exposition A. Renoir, May 1892, cat. 3.7

Cambridge, Massachusetts, Fogg Art Museum, *Exhibition of French Painting of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Mar. 6–Apr. 7, 1929, cat. 80 (ill.).<sup>8</sup>

Northampton, Massachusetts, Smith College Museum of Art, *One Picture Exhibition*, Winter 1932–1933, no. cat.(?).<sup>9</sup>

Arts Plastiques (Les Editions de France, 1931), p. 73. [are these the best references to cite to justify this exhibition?]

- <sup>5</sup> Confirmed by the Durand-Ruel Archives; see Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago. The painting was exhibited but was not included in the exhibition catalogue. See Fichtre, "L'Actualité: L'Exposition des peintres independents," *Le Réveil* (Mar. 2, 1882), p. 1, in which the painting is referred to as *Saltimbanques*.
- <sup>6</sup> Confirmed by the Durand-Ruel Archives; see Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago. See Lionello Venturi, *Les Archives de l'Impressionnisme: Lettres de Renoir, Monet, Pissarro, Sisley et autres. Mémoires de Paul Durand-Ruel. Documents*, Vol. 1 (Durand-Ruel Éditeurs, 1939), p. 77, which states that the exhibition opened April 10, 1886 and lasted for one month. "Celle-ci, qui s'ouvre le 10 avril dans les salles de l' "American Art Association", dure un mois." [Exhibition dates are not included in curatorial copy. Can the closing date for the first venue be confirmed?] Venturi also states that the exhibition was moved to the National Academy of Design on May 25. "Les succès est suffisant pour qu'elle soit transportée le 25 mai dans les salles de la "National Academy of design", où les impressionnistes reçoivent pour la première fois une sorte de consécration officielle." [Can the closing date for the second venue be confirmed? Not included in curatorial file copy.]
- <sup>7</sup> Confirmed by the Durand-Ruel Archives; see Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago.
- <sup>8</sup> The catalogue lists the closing date as Apr. 6, 1929, but the exhibition was extended for one day. See Albert Franz Cochrane, "Only Regular Gallery Exhibitions Marked Week Just Completed–Fogg Museum Adds One Day of Life to Great French Collection," *Boston Transcript* (March 30, 1929), p. 2.

Children's Museum, Circus Scenes, Dec. 1-14, 1932.10

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, A Century of Progress Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, May 23-Nov. 1, 1933, cat. 351 (ill.). [Link PDF]

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, A Century of Progress Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, June 1–Oct. 31, 1934, cat. 240.<sup>12</sup> [Link PDF]

Baltimore, Baltimore Museum of Art, *A Survey of French Painting*, Nov. 23, 1934–Jan. 1, 1935, cat. 33 (ill.).

Pittsburgh, Carnegie Institute, A Survey of French Painting, Apr. 2–May 14, 1936, cat. 42.

Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art, *The Twentieth Anniversary Exhibition: The Official Art Exhibit of the Great Lakes Exposition*, June 26–Oct. 4, 1936, cat. 302.

New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Renoir: A Special Exhibition of His Paintings, May 18-Sept. 12, 1937, cat. 15 (ill.).

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, *The Masterpiece of the Month: Two Little Circus Girls, by August Renoir (French, 1841–1919)*, Jan. 3–31, 1939, no cat. <sup>13</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> See J. A., "Exhibitions," *Bulletin of Smith College Museum of Art* 14 (May 1933), pp. 13–16; and Smith College Museum of Art, "Accessions and Loans," *Bulletin of Smith College Museum of Art* 14 (May 1933), p. 22. [We have not yet located an exhibition catalogue. Can the exhibition dates and title be verified? Contact Smith College Museum of Art?]

According to Art Institute's Museum Registration Department Artists Sheets, Registrar's Records, Art Institute of Chicago. [We have not yet located an exhibition catalogue. To research in Art Institute Institutional Archives or contact Chicago Children's Museum?]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> The exhibition catalogue lists the dates as June 1–Nov. 1, 1933, but newspaper articles confirm the exhibition opened on May 23. See India Moffett, "Art Show of 1,500 World Famous Treasures Is Opened at Institute," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 23, 1933, p. 17; and Virginia Gardner, "Record Throng of 1,367,000 Views Art Show," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Oct. 29, 1933, p. 7.

The exhibition catalogue lists the dates as June 1–Nov. 1, 1934, but newspaper articles confirm the exhibition closed on Oct. 31. See "Fair Art Exhibition Closes Forever at 5:30 This Afternoon," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Oct. 31, 1934, p. 2; and "Shippers Start Dismantling Art Exhibition Today," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, Nov. 1, 1934, p. 3.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> See Art Institute of Chicago, "Exhibitions," *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 33, 1 (Jan. 1939), p. 15 [link PDF]; and [Notes and Bibliography, Jan. 1938-Dec. 1941, pp. 57-60 (typewritten) – no copy in curatorial file, ask AIC institutional archives.]

Paris, Musée de L'Orangerie, *De David A Toulouse Lautrec: Chefs-d'Oevres des Collections Américaines*, Apr. 20–July 3, 1955, cat. 46 (ill.).<sup>14</sup>

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, *Paintings by Renoir*, Feb. 3–Apr. 1, 1973, cat. 24 (ill.).

Pittsburgh, Carnegie Institute, *Celebration: Inaugural Exhibition of the Sarah Scaife Gallery of the Museum of Art*, Oct. 26, 1974–Jan. 5, 1975, cat. 7 (ill.).

Tokyo, Seibu Museum of Art, *Shikago Bijutsukan Insho-ha ten (The Impressionist Tradition: Masterpieces from the Art Institute of Chicago),* Oct. 18–Dec. 17, 1985, cat. 33 (ill.); Fukuoka, Fukuoka Art Museum, Jan. 5–Feb. 2, 1986; Kyoto, Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, Mar. 4–Apr. 13, 1986.

Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874–1886*, Jan. 17–Apr. 6, 1986, cat. 134 (ill.); Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum, Apr. 19–July 6, 1986 (San Francisco only).

Leningrad [St. Petersburg], Hermitage, Ot Delakrua do Matissa: shedevry frantsuzskoĭ zhivopici XIX-nachala XX veka, iz Muieià Metropoliten v Niù-Ĭorke i Khudozhestvennogo Instituta v Chikago [From Delacroix to Matisse: Great French Paintings From the XIX Century to the Beginning of the XXth Century from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and the Art Institute of Chicago], Mar. 15–May 16, 1988, cat. 21 (ill.); Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, May 30–July 30, 1988.

Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, *Chicago's Dream, A World's Treasure: The Art Institute of Chicago, 1893–1993*, Nov. 1, 1993–Jan. 9, 1994, no cat. no.

Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, *Renoir's Portraits: Impressions of an Age*, June 27–Sept. 14, 1997, cat. 35 (ill.); Chicago, Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 17, 1997–Jan. 4, 1998; Fort Worth, Texas, Kimbell Art Museum, Feb. 8–April 26, 1998.

Fort Worth, Texas, Kimbell Art Museum, *The Impressionists: Master Paintings from the Art Institute of Chicago*, June 29–Nov. 2, 2008, cat. 26 (ill.).

New York, Frick Collection, *Renoir, Impressionism, and Full–Length Painting*, Feb. 7–May 13, 2012, cat. 44 (ill.).

The exhibition catalogue does not include exhibition dates, but newspaper articles confirm the exhibition opened on April 20<sup>th</sup> and closed on July 3<sup>rd</sup>. See Aline Saarinen, "U.S.–Lent Works on View in Paris," *New York Times* (Apr. 20, 1955), p. C37; and Arthur O. Sulzberger, "Cultural Salute to France Ending," *New York Times* (July 3, 1955), p. 34.

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Ambroise Vollard, *Tableaux, Pastels & Dessins de Pierre-Auguste Renoir*, vol. 1 (Ambroise Vollard, 1918), p. 87, no. 348 (ill.).

Ambroise Vollard, *La Vie & L'Oeuvre de Pierre–Auguste Renoir* (Ambroise Vollard, 1919), p. 67.<sup>17</sup>

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Art Institute of Chicago, Forty-Third Annual Report For the Year 1921 (Art Institute of Chicago, 1921), p. 39 (ill.). [LINK PDF?]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Reprinted in Lionello Venturi, *Les Archives de l'Impressionnisme: Lettres de Renoir, Monet, Pissarro, Sisley et autres. Mémoires de Paul Durand-Ruel. Documents*, vol. 2 (Durand-Ruel, 1939), p. 337 and is first printed in English in Wildenstein, *Renoir: A Loan Exhibition for the Benefit of the Citizens' Committee for Children of New York City, Inc.*, exh. cat. trans., Mary Blume (Gallery Press, 1958), p. 10.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> The French translation is Julius Meier-Graefe, *Auguste Renoir*, trans. A. S. Maillet (H. Floury, 1912), p. 12.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> The English translation is Ambroise Vollard, *Renoir: An Intimate Record*, trans. Harold L Van Doren and Randolph T. Weaver (Alfred A Knopf, 1925), pp. 69, 237.

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M.C., "Renoirs in the Institute," *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 19, 3 (Mar. 1925), pp. 32, 33 (ill.). [LINK PDF]

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R.[eginald] H.[oward] Wilenski, *French Painting* (Hale, Cushman and Flint, 1931), pp. 262; pl. 107.

Jacques-Émile Blanche, Les Arts Plastiques (Les Editions de France, 1931), p. 73.20

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Reprinted in Art Institute of Chicago, *Handbook of Sculpture, Architecture, and Paintings, Part II, Paintings* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1923), p. 69, cat. 847.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Reprinted in Art Institute of Chicago, *A Guide to the Paintings in the Permanent Collection* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1932), pp. 63 (ill.); 168, cat. 22.440.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> The painting is not mentioned specifically by title, but rather is described as, "les deux fillettes acrobats."

Art Institute of Chicago, Catalogue of A Century of Progress Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture, exh. cat. (Art Institute of Chicago, 1933), pp. 50, cat. 351; pl. 58/cat. 351. [LINK PDF]

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Daniel Catton Rich, "The Exhibition of French Art, "Art Institue" of Chicago," *Formes* 33 (1933), p. 382.

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Art Institute of Chicago, *A Brief Illustrated Guide to the Collections* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1935), p. 28 (ill.).<sup>22</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> The English translation of this article is Daniel Catton Rich, "French Impressionists in the Art Institute of Chicago," *Pantheon: Monatsschrift für freunde und sammler der kunst*, trans. C.C.H. Drechsel (F. Bruckmann AG., 1933), p. 18.

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AIC Archives II, R, 819.<sup>23</sup>

Henry McBride, "The Renoirs of America: An Appreciation of the Metropolitan Museum's Exhibition," *Art News* 35, 31 (May 1, 1937), pp. 60, 68 (ill.), 158.

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Art Institute of Chicago, "Exhibitions," Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago 33, 1 (Jan. 1939), p. 15. [LINK PDF]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Reprinted in Art Institute of Chicago, *A Brief Illustrated Guide to the Collections* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1941), p. 34 (ill.); Art Institute of Chicago, *An Illustrated Guide to the Collections of The Art Institute of Chicago* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1945), p. 36; Art Institute of Chicago, *An Illustrated Guide to the Collections of The Art Institute of Chicago* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1948), p. 33; and Art Institute of Chicago, *An Illustrated Guide to the Collections of the Art Institute of Chicago* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1956), p. 34. [editor: in 1945, work is no longer illustrated – significant change? Should 1945 be broken out to main list with 1948 and 1956 in a footnote to it??]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> [from AIC curatorial department card, no copy in curatorial file. Is this the letter we received in 1942 identifying the two girls. Musée de L'Orangerie mentions "Archive II, 819" in reference to the letter identifying the Wartenburg Sisters. Inquire with AIC institutional archives.]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> The painting is not mentioned by title, but is described as "Renoir chose the two little daughters of the *chef de cirque* and painted them in tights, juggling bright fruit."

R.[eginald] H.[oward] Wilenski, *Modern French Painters* (Reynal & Hitchcook, [1940]), p. 337.<sup>25</sup>

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Daniel Catton Rich, "Potter Palmer and the Art Development of the Museum," *Bulletin of the Art Institute of Chicago* 37, 6 (Nov. 1943), p. 84 (ill.). [LINK PDF]

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<sup>26</sup> [no copy in curatorial file. Digitized on Google Books. Requested a photocopy via Interlibrary Loan.]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Reprinted in R.[eginald] H.[oward] Wilenski, *Modern French Painters* (Faber & Faber, 1944), p. 337.

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François Fosca, *Renoir: L'homme et son oeuvre* (Éditions Aimery Somogy, 1961), pp. 112 (ill.), 118, 281.<sup>30</sup>

Rodolfo Pallucchini, "L'Art Institute di Chicago," L'Illustrazione del Medico 33, 218 (Feb. 1966), pp. 14; 15, fig. 7.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup> Included in typescript catalogue supplement, November 15, 1966, p. 50; typescript catalogue supplement, September 15, 1967, p. 50; typescript catalogue supplement, December 18, 1968, p. 76; typescript catalogue supplement, February 10, 1971, p. 95; and typescript catalogue supplement, September 15, 1971, p. 11. Art Institute of Chicago Archives.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> The English translation of this book is François Fosca, *Renoir, His Life and Work*, trans. Mary I. Martin (Prentice-Hall, 1962), pp. 112 (ill.), 117, 269.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Reprinted in John Maxon, *The Art Institute of Chicago* (Harry N. Abrams, 1977), pp. 85–86 (ill.); and John Maxon, *The Art Institute of Chicago* (Thames and Hudson, 1987), pp. 85–86 (ill.).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>33</sup> [Editor: this book is not paginated and the plate numbers are not unique (they restart with each chapter). Include page number, bracketed?]

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup> Reprinted in Art Institute of Chicago, *Pocketguide* (Art Institute of Chicago, 1997), pp. 16, no. 25 (ill.); 61; and Art Institute of Chicago, *Pocketguide* (Art Institute of Chicago, 2009), pp. 43, no. 84 (ill.); 63.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> The painting is not titled, but is described as "...un splendide tableau sur ce thème en représentant deux petites acrobats, Francesca et Angelina Wartenberg au cirque Fernando en train de recevoir ces oranges. Le tableau (The Art Institute, Chicago) date de 1879; exposé à la septième exposition des impressionnistes en 1882..."

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>39</sup> [per photo request sheet, no copy in curatorial file. Can this be confirmed with the original?]

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup> This exhibition catalogue was simultaneously published as Gloria Groom and Douglas Druick, with the assistance of Dorota Chudzicka and Jill Shaw, *The Age of Impressionism at the Art Institute of Chicago* (Art Institute of Chicago/Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 14 (ill.); 70–71, cat. 26 (ill.); 129, for distribution at the Art Institute of Chicago; the latter was republished as Gloria Groom and Douglas Druick, with the assistance of Dorota Chudzicka and Jill Shaw, *The Age of French Impressionism: Masterpieces from the Art Institute of Chicago* (Art Institute of Chicago/Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 14 (ill.); 76–77, cat. 32 (ill.); 145.

<sup>41</sup> Gloria Groom, "Les espaces de la modernité," in Gloria Groom, ed., *L'Impressionnisme et la Mode*, exh. cat. (Musée d'Orsay/Skira Flammarion, 2012), p. 52.

# <u>Archival Documentation from the Durand-Ruel Archives</u> Stock Durand-Ruel Paris 319 et 2362 [illustrate Durand-Ruel label here or just in conservation report?]

Stock Durand-Ruel Paris 319, Dans le cirque, Livre de stock Paris 1891;
 Stock Durand-Ruel Paris 2362, Les Saltimbanques, Livre de stock Paris 1880-82; les livres de stock Paris sont renumérotés jusqu'en 1891.<sup>42</sup>

### **Photo Durand-Ruel Paris 193**

• Jongleuses au cirque, 1891 (pas de date ni de moi précis)<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> See Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> See Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel to the Art Institute of Chicago, Oct. 5, 2010. Curatorial Object File, Art Institute of Chicago.

<sup>43</sup> See Paul Louis Durand Ruel and Flavie Durand Ruel to the Art Institute of