

SOPHIE RENOIR ORAL HISTORY

Interviewer: Elizabeth Gorayeb	Interviewee: Sophie Renoir	Date of interview: April 7th, 2021
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ELIZABETH GORAYEB: I'm Elizabeth Gorayeb, and I'm here today with Sophie Renoir. It's April 7th, 2021, and we're recording an oral history for the Wildenstein Plattner Institute's Pierre-Auguste Renoir oral history series. Sophie, do I have your permission to record this interview?

SOPHIE RENOIR: Of course you do.

EG: Excellent. Thank you very much. Sophie, why don't we start by a little introduction. Could you tell me who you are in relation to Renoir?

SR: I'm his great-granddaughter. And the granddaughter of Pierre, his older son, and the daughter of Claude, himself the son of Pierre. And then my father has two children, my brother, half-brother Jacques, and me.

EG: Okay. And do you have children yourself?

SR: Yes, I do. I've got two wonderful kids, who are adults, in fact. They have 26 and 22 years old, two boys. And I'm, like every mother, very proud of them.

EG: Of course, of course. So, I'm just going to begin by asking you some questions about your life. Starting, of course, with your childhood. Where did you grow up?

SR: I grew up in Paris, most of the time, and then my parents decided to move to Essoyes. Which you know what -- the family house was. They're all buried in the cemetery next to the house. All the Renoir family, I mean: Auguste, Aline, and Jean, Pierre -- my father, of course, like everybody. And I've lived there for three years and a half, because my parents wanted to preserve me, I would say, about the Renoir problem. You know, like, they didn't want me to be raised like a little Parisian of the 16ème [16th *arrondissement* of Paris] girl. They preferred me to -- yeah, that I would have an education in the countryside, being raised very simply.

In fact, I only learned I was from this -- I was part of this family, I was like eight years old or something. I didn't understand very well, you know? People in the school, children asked me all the time, Oh, are you part of the family Renoir? I said, "Yes." Well, and who are you? And I said, "Well, I don't know?"

EG: [laughs]

SR: "Who am I? I don't know. I am me -- I don't know." So, once I asked my father and my mother, and my parents answered me, Oh, you had a great-grandfather that made paintings. And it happens

that everyone loves them. And that was the only answer I got, you know.

EG: And did you have any paintings in your house?

SR: Yes, we did at this time. Sadly, they are all gone, [laughs] but at this time, we did. We had the *Autoportrait* of Renoir, a portrait of Coco, and a portrait of Pierre, a marvelous one. And some *nature mortes* [still lives] -- it was fruits, and a portrait also of Aline. [gestures] Like this, a small portrait of Aline, old Aline. And some sculptures.

EG: And when you were a little girl, looking around your house, did you get a sense that these were important pictures? Or were they just things that were in your house, like part of the furniture.

SR: To be honest, it was just things in the house.

EG: Interesting.

SR: It was normal. Yeah, except for the *Venus*. We had this sculpture of Venus, high like this, [gestures] approximately. And I was really shocked as a young girl, because this *Venus* was naked. So I always dressed her with some, uh, how do you say -- *écharpe* [scarf], scarves and stuff. But no, that was really -- once, once, I had a little clue. Because my mother was eating chicken with her fingers. And she was in front of the portraits, there was the three of them in front of us. And she said, "Well,

that's luxury, is eating a chicken with your hands in front of a Renoir. That's fantastic."

EG: [laughs] I can imagine. When was the first time you went to a museum and you saw a Renoir portrait and it clicked that, wait a minute, this was someone in my family. When did you get it, that this was a big deal to other people?

SR: I have to tell you, I don't really remember, because I always used to go to museums, all the time. I mean, my father was a famous director of photography, and we were in England for a James Bond there. He was shooting there. So, we went to -- National Gallery and all the museums with my mother during the day, waiting for my father. And I was like, ten years old at this time? Not even ten, maybe nine. So, you know, it was so usual -- I've always been in museums and seen paintings. And not only of Renoir, of course, because my family used to like very much other Impressionists and other painters, too, of course. But I don't have really a moment. Maybe once, I do remember at the Courtauld Gallery, but I was much older then, looking at *La Loge*. And I was really impressed. You know, thinking, Oh, I've never really looked at it that way. But I was older. Yeah, I was like an adult.

No, it was natural for us. You know, it's -- I've always been there. I asked my mother, and I've done the same with my sons. Meaning, when did you -- first time take me to a museum. She said, "Oh, I don't remember, because sometimes we just went there for an hour." Just to see a painting, *La Joconde* or a

Monet or any other. You know? It was part of education. It was really natural. And I did the same with my sons. Like, this -- they love museums. They are not afraid. You know, sometimes, young people, they don't want to go because they're a bit scared of -- Oh, maybe I won't understand, or I won't be able to understand, blah blah. No! Art is so natural.

EG: So, art is so natural. And it sounds to me like you have a lot of artists in your family, in the film industry, in photography. Can you talk a little -- a bit about that?

SR: Yeah, we have the son in the middle, Jean Renoir, who was a famous director. And I met him when I was young, and he was really a funny guy. Very nice person. His regret that was for me very flattering, because I made my first movie, I was 13 years old. And he said to me, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I'm too old and we cannot be in this movie together." That was very -- ah! I was impressed. But he was my uncle Jean, you know, first of all. Before being a genius that everybody knows, he was my uncle.

We keep that in the family, having a very natural -- um, how could I say that. First of all, it's my great-grandfather. And then, it's the famous painter you all know. But first of all, it's the family thing. For Jean Renoir, it's the same. It's my great-uncle. You know, sometimes people tell me, Oh, Jean Renoir would think that, or, He used to think -- I say, "Well, what do you know?" [laughter] Because you couldn't ask him. So, it's very simple. They were really normal people. Jean was starting to make his movies when his father died. Before, he was I guess

maybe impressed, or didn't know really what to do. Anyway, it's because of a woman that he made movies, so, you know.

EG: Oh, really. Talk -- what about that?

SR: Yeah, well, the last model of Renoir was Dedée, and Dedée wanted to be an actress. So, when Auguste died, Jean started to make movies, because he wanted his wife to be happy. And then, he made some movies with her, only with her. You know, as a star, to her, to become a star from them. Well, she didn't really, but -- yeah, that's fun.

EG: So, did you become interested in films because of your great-uncle, or did that come from somewhere else?

SR: No, that -- I was watching movies very young and I wasn't allowed to watch TV very much, you know, at this time. But I was sneaking -- you know, I tried to watch the television from behind the couch and stuff. But usually, when I had the permission to watch a movie, I used to dress and to put some perfume, you know, to watch a beautiful movie like *Some Like It Hot* or *Singin' in the Rain*, movies like this. All that came from a long time. I always -- no. The first time I really thought, Oh, I want to do that, is when I saw this movie with Jimmy Stewart talking to a rabbit. It's called *Harvey*, and I thought, Oh, I want to be part of this universe when you can talk to people and they are not really in the reality, they are not real, you know? And be able to move from a person to another. But only movies, of course.

EG: So, did you ever think about becoming a painter or an artist, other than an actress?

SR: No. I have to say, the talent is not hereditary. No, no. Drawing is not -- no. No, I'm a photographer now also. We've got this sense, I would say, but it's more like because the parents -- my parents, me for my sons, because they can see they have this special way of looking at things. It's an education, stuff, I guess. It's because we're a family that -- we think that it's very important to watch the light, to see sunrises or sun shines. You know, every -- different colors in the room. Everywhere we go, we are very sensible about this.

EG: Mm-hm.

SR: It's more like there's no painter, ever, ever, impossible.

EG: Well, you are very involved with the paintings of Renoir as a quote unquote expert. I think you would say -- you would disagree otherwise, but I think you're an expert.

SR: Yes, I would. [laughs]

EG: Can you talk a little bit about that role and how you help to perpetuate the legacy of Renoir with your work with the Wildenstein Institute and then later with the Wildenstein Plattner Institute?

SR: Well, I was very proud and honored that Daniel Wildenstein asked me to be part of this committee, and then Alec and Guy, of course. Because first of all, I didn't think I had the -- I wouldn't -- authority, or you know, the skills or things. But Daniel made me pass a test.

EG: Oh.

SR: Yeah, yeah. I didn't tell you that?

EG: No, what was this test?

SR: Okay. The test was he took me in a little room where there were two paintings. Exactly the same. One, of course, was false and the other one was the real one. And he said to me -- because I said, "You know, I didn't make any art school or history at school, I don't know about this." And he said, "I'm sure you've got something and you can feel it, because you've been raised in the middle of paintings. So you have this, instinctively." Oh, okay. So, he said, "Tell me, which one is the real one?" [gasps] I was like, wow. And if i'm wrong -- you know, I was so scared. And I looked at the painting, and it seems to be quite simple for me. I looked at them both, and one seems so perfect. That I decided that was the wrong one, and I was right.

EG: Mm-hm. Ah.

SR: Yeah, when I told him, he says, "Oh, and why did you choose this one?" I said, "Because the other one is too -- too good.

Too perfect. Too nice. The other one has this -- something I can't even explain. The talent shows." You know what I mean? So, when he asked me to get involved with this committee and with, of course, all the prestigious people who are in it, I was really -- you know, we are a very good group of persons. And we are working very hard and taking much care about what we are doing.

EG: Of course. So, in the United States, we don't have the same situation with the heirs of an artist. I know in France, you have the *droit moral*, and like it or not, you are responsible for maintaining the legacy of your great-grandfather. Are there any times when you think, Oh, this is too much. How am I supposed to maintain the legacy? Because then your -- it will fall on your children, as well. This is something that you are born into and you have to do. How do you feel about that?

SR: Uh. I used to say that, you know, we have a famous criminal person in France that used to kill a lot of women. He's called Landru. So usually, when journalists ask me this question, I say, "Well, it's always better to be called Renoir than Landru." [laughter] Because the -- you know, you inherit beautiful things. No, well it's -- it's always so great, you know, to be able to see and to watch paintings that sometimes the public doesn't see. They're sometimes in collections, very private, and they don't go out at all. So it's a privilege. No it's not [every?] -- it's only that. Life would be easy.

EG: Right, right.

SR: No, it's fantastic. I guess my sons will be ready one day, but -- it's not for me in particular. I mean, anyone in our family can take care of that. But they're not interested, I guess, or they just don't happen to be involved. Anyway, when it's the *droit moral*, everyone has to give his advice.

EG: Right, right. So are you oftentimes invited to Renoir exhibitions around the world? Whenever there's a major Renoir event, do people call you and say, Sophie, please come? How are you kept up to date?

SR: I would hope that could happen more often, but the last time was in the Clark Museum. They invited me for this beautiful exhibit. And I came there with some friends who lived in Boston. It was a huge exhibit, and it was beautiful. I was very -- because there are some paintings that never go out of the Clark.

EG: Right.

SR: So you don't have a chance to see them, in real -- and it changes everything. Because you can always watch videos and stuff, but real, it's not the same. No, yeah, that was the last time. It was just before the COVID, a year before the COVID.

EG: That's interesting, because so much of our life now is online, especially with COVID. So, do you feel that there is a real difference seeing things online or seeing things on a screen versus seeing them in person? I mean, I certainly think

there are, but what's your experience like, viewing things on screen, as an actress and as someone who works in film?

SR: Well, it's like, you know, the theater and the movie. It's not the same. Movie is movie -- theater, it's theater. And both are nice; of course, it's great to be able to see beautiful paintings or art whenever the art is on screen. Of course, it's better than nothing. But the real thing -- it's not the same. You know that.

EG: Right, of course.

SR: Yeah, I'm very frustrated. You know, I just want -- I want the museums to open in France. It's still closed, it's awful.

EG: Yeah.

SR: It's very hard. You know, we miss -- I miss it. Thanks, I'm coming to the committee and I have the chance to see some paintings.

EG: Right, right. Because at the committees, people are sending you the paintings to see in person.

SR: Yes, they do, of course. Yeah, we have -- well, it's beautiful. They take care of it, and we see beautiful stuff. Masterpieces, sometimes, which is a privilege.

EG: That's exciting. Maybe we can talk a little bit about Renoir's actual paintings. I know you named some of them. But the way that he painted over time certainly changed. He did landscapes, he did portraits, he did still lives. Can you talk a little bit about some of your favorite examples? Do you prefer the landscapes; do you prefer the still lives? How do you feel about the way that he portrayed women, as a woman yourself?

SR: Oh, of course. When you see the women of Renoir, and -- well, anything he did, really -- I don't think this man ever painted sadness or depression. You know, people who are depressed. It's always joyful. And that's the best thing in Renoir's painting. When one of my favorites is *La vague*, and I think it's in Chicago -- in Chicago, yeah. And of course, *Danse a la vie*, *Danse à la campagne*. Those are -- I don't have a favorite period, really. No, I -- of course, I love the portraits of the family, because it's my family. But no, I don't have a -- some nudes are nice. No, the landscapes. The landscapes with the lights. You know, it's magic, all the time. And you never get bored with those paintings, never. There's always something you, Oh, I didn't see -- oh, look at this line, and look at this. Yeah, that's -- you know, yeah, no. If I had to choose, it would be hard.

EG: Right, right. So, well, actually, I'm going to pose that choice to you. If there were one picture that you could take and -- either take into your home and spend a weekend with, and then return, I'm not saying you're taking it forever [laughter] --

but there was one that you wish you could just spend a little bit more time with in private. Can you think of one?

SR: There will be several. But one -- huh, let me think. No, I think -- two. Can I say two?

EG: Yes, of course.

SR: I would say *La loge*. Because of *La loge*, and because it's the theater, and so I'm concerned, double concerned, okay. And I think *La vague*, because in *La vague*, there are so many colors that you're not really used to seeing. So, no, I love this painting. That was a real shock for me.

EG: Has your opinion of Renoir changed over time? When you were a younger person looking at his work, as opposed to, you know, after you had children, for example. Did you see some of his works differently?

SR: Of course. Of course. When you become a mother, an adult, a mother then, and et cetera, of course you can see many things. That's change; when I was young, I was looking at the paintings, like in general. Of course, the family portrait talked. For me, it was more significant. But it was just, Oh, yeah, beautiful, yeah, nice. Oh, I like this one very much, blah blah. But then, when you get older, you can see life, you know, on those paintings. Very much. And that's what I like. It's always full of life, full of lights, life, and -- you can always have fun in front of a Renoir painting. [laughter] You know, meaning -- it's

not that you're going to laugh out loud, it means that you smile when you see them.

EG: Yes.

SR: It's very easy to have a smile, and most of the time, when I do, when I go out [at the Orsay?] and I'm walking around the Renoir's painting. And I'm -- sometimes I watch people. And I love to watch the paintings, of course, and then I watch people. For more time than the painting, I have to say, now. And I always loved to see people; the expression of the faces, you know, they have when they are looking, or when they explain. The last time I went there, there was this woman with her daughter explaining the movement of the dress, and I was like, Oh, wow, if Renoir could see that, he would be -- [sighs] that would be wonderful, because that's the point.

EG: Right.

SR: You know, people, when they watch -- you can see the painting in their eyes or in their faces, you know. Yeah. That's pure joy, you know.

EG: So, in your family, were there stories that you were told about your great-grandfather that were passed down? Of course, you never met him yourself, but I'm sure that there were anecdotes that you were told as a child about your great-grandfather, about what he did and what he liked and what

he didn't like, and maybe what he would have thought [laughter] about his paintings now and how they are received now.

SR: Mm, yeah. Oh, I know he used to burn a lot of his drawings.

EG: Oh, really? Why is that?

SR: Because he considered them not good.

EG: Mm. Really?

SR: Yeah. And yeah, my parents met Aline -- not Aline, Gabrielle, sorry -- and they say that Gabrielle told them, "Oh, Mr. Renoir, you know, used to ask me to make a big fire and he used to pass me some drawings, and it was awful. I would say, 'Oh, why are you doing this?' And he said, 'No, because that's not good, and I don't want to go in a museum and saying it's a masterpiece and it's not, you know, and it's not good.'" Because some of his work, he didn't like it very much.

EG: Really!

SR: That's the proof. He was burning drawings, and that's the reason, because otherwise, why?

EG: So, he was very conscious, it seems, of his legacy.

SR: It seems. Sometimes in the committee, we can see some paintings who are not totally -- are *études* [studies] or not

totally finished. And we are -- it's not all very finished, but it's okay. But I guess he considered some of them didn't deserve to stay, you know, and making time, I guess. And also, in Essoyes, there was this plain wood, you know, on the floor, and he used to ask the maid not to wash it with wax, not to put wax on it, because it was dangerous for the kids. So, I guess he was very worried about the health of his kids and the -- *bien-être* [well-being]. For example, he was asking for them to wash them only with water. So, they used to throw a lot of water, plain water, on the floor. So, the floor is very beautiful now, I guess that's why.

EG: [laughs] So the kids wouldn't slip.

SR: Yeah, exactly. So the kids wouldn't slip. And also, all the corners of the tables were -- *comment disiez* [how do you say], you know, cut?

EG: They were rounded.

SR: Right, they were rounded. Because they could hit their heads.

EG: So, it sounds like he was a conscientious grandfather.

SR: A conscientious grandfather and father. Because the atelier he built at the opposite [end] of the house was for him not to disturb the children, because they need to play in the garden and stuff.

EG: Oh, not so that he wouldn't be disturbed. He didn't --
[laughs] --

SR: I've heard that it's because he loved the children and the freedom, always at the same, you know. The freedom of the youth and the children. He would -- I used to -- yeah. My parents told me that. They always told me that they were living in a very natural way of living. The children should go and run everywhere.

EG: It sounds like that's how you grew up, similarly.

SR: Yeah. Like this also, very -- straight education. But a lot of freedom, running away in the garden.

EG: So, was there any pressure put on the children to become artists or to be creatives? No?

SR: No, of course not. If you put pressure to my children, [laughs] it's the opposite that will happen. No, never. No, no, he always -- he used to say, that's what my father and my family told me, that you have to let the children grow like little trees and they will express themselves. Of course, they will grow as a big, huge, beautiful tree. You have to do what you want in your life and not what you should do, or with the pressure of it. That's not, no. And an artist never can express himself with pressure. That's impossible.

EG: For sure, right.

SR: That's why he used to leave -- and he left for Cannes, and for Essoyes, you know, I guess. Because he loved to be in the middle of nothing, at this time.

EG: So, it sounds like his philosophy on parenting and child-rearing and the joy of it and the freedom of it is expressed a lot in his paintings.

SR: Well, you can see what he painted. It shows. You know, I think. I think it shows.

EG: I wonder -- I don't know if you'll be able to answer this question, but let's pretend Renoir had a crystal ball and was looking into the future. What do you think he would -- how do you think he would feel about the art that's being created today? Was he a very avant-garde person when he was an artist, working? Was he always looking at trends that were happening? What do you think?

SR: Oh, I -- [sighs], no, that's -- [laughter] I cannot answer that. I could give you my opinion, but it's not interesting.
[laughter]

EG: Well, [laughs] --

SR: No, I -- well, I [unclear]. But for his time, it was avant-garde, you know, so -- I don't know. I guess, as an artist, he was quite open-minded. A tolerant person, I guess.

EG: And who were some of the artists, maybe later in his life, that he was looking at, that he enjoyed?

SR: Oh, well, this, Paul Louis can answer better than me.

EG: Okay. [laughs] Alright, is there anything I haven't asked you, Sophie, that you'd like to talk about?

SR: No, I could talk about my boys for hours, if you want, but that won't interest you.

EG: Well, I'd love to hear about your boys. Are they interested in expressing themselves creatively? I think one of your boys is a photographer, is that right?

SR: Yeah, one of my boys is -- want to become an actor, what do you think.

EG: Ah, okay.

SR: Yeah, we'll see. No, they are still very young. No, it's like, in the family, we are the -- late person. We don't start to express very young. That's nice. That's fine. No, I don't know. Well, I will stay around if you have any other questions.

EG: Are they -- are they interested in the history of Impressionism and the history of art?

SR: Especially my last son, Jeremy, he's more interested than Alexis. Alexis is more in the acting business and stuff, now, now, now, as Jeremy is more in the past and looking around and getting information, life at this time, at this time. As you know, as Renoir has been accused of different very strange stuff, of thinking, he made some research and stuff to put -- like this he could answer and be very happy and proud about his great-great-grandfather.

EG: Well, that's wonderful. So, do you think that he would be interested in talking publicly about his great-great-grandfather?

SR: Now, no, I think he's too shy.

EG: Aw.

SR: But later, I guess, yeah. Yeah, later. But no, he's too shy.

EG: [laughs] So, one question that I had -- it just occurred to me -- when I first met you, we met in Los Angeles.

SR: Mm.

EG: You were living in Los Angeles. What is your experience like being a person with the name "Renoir" in the United States or in Los Angeles, as opposed to living in Paris as a Renoir? Was there a difference?

SR: Oh, well, the difference was that here, sometimes, as an actress -- it happens sometimes, somebody saw me on television or movies. Never there, never happened.

EG: [laughs]

SR: And yeah, it was fantastic. And then, it happens, I think, in four years like, twice, that somebody asked me, "Oh, are you related to the painter?" And once, a student asked me, "Are you related to the director?" Only twice, yeah, it happened only twice.

EG: But people didn't know anything about your film career in the United States when you --

SR: Well, this student was in the movie business, and he said, "Oh, and aren't you the actress that was in this movie with -- made from Eric Rohmer, *My Girlfriend/Boyfriend*"? Yes. When, you know, that's very funny because in America, they don't ask you this kind of question.

EG: They might think it's rude, do you think, or they just don't know?

SR: I think they might think it's rude. I think some don't -- they just don't -- well, I think because it's a big world, and they don't -- and they can't imagine that many people have the same name, I guess. Or maybe they don't know, I don't know, really. I have no answer.

EG: So, just -- I realize I didn't ask you for this oral history to name some of the works that you've been in. So, Eric Rohmer -- who else have you worked with and what are some of the other films that you've been in?

SR: A lot of televisions; a lot of miniseries, as you call it. Yeah, but you won't know. François Leterrier, it's a very good director here, but no, you don't know him in America.

EG: And are you still acting, actively?

SR: I try! It's very hard. I try. No, I have a play, but it's not -- not yet. Because as you know, the situation. But it will be on, but not now.

EG: What's the play called, so we can --

SR: You know, when you're an actor, you never stop to be an actor.

EG: Sure. [laughs]

SR: It's not -- well. You're never going to retire, I think, never. So, let's cross fingers.

EG: Did you enjoy living in Los Angeles?

SR: Of course. Beautiful weather. People are so nice. They are so friendly and easy. It's easy, you know, to talk to people. No, they're very -- no, I loved it. And I traveled a little. I went to New York, I went to Chicago, I went to Boston. A few days, you know, I didn't live there, but -- very different, East and the West, very different.

EG: Absolutely.

SR: It's like several countries put together, speaking the same language. And you have this unity. It's very -- no, I loved it. And then, I have to say that I went to America for personal reasons that you know, and my sons and I, you know, find there what we were -- yeah, what we were reaching to find.

EG: Yeah, you were very far away from home. Now, you're back in France.

SR: Yeah.

EG: And with the pandemic, we're all shut in, but we've relied so much on video and these interminable Zoom calls that we all find ourselves on. On the one hand, it's -- it can be very demoralizing to be shut in and not be able to see our friends

and go out and interact and go to museums. But on the other hand, I think that COVID has shown just how valuable digital communication actually is. Do you think, or have you thought about, the benefits that digital art history maybe could have? Especially in the time of COVID, when none of us can go out to a museum.

SR: Of course. And the fantastic thing, and it's so easy. I mean, you go on your site, the Wildenstein Plattner Institute, you go on our website, and you can find some audio of people and watch beautiful stuff. You know, it's fantastic. Because you can be at the other side of the world and two persons from both sides of the world can watch the same thing. I mean, it's fantastic.

EG: Right.

SR: It's wonderful. That's great. And thanks, it saves our lives, you know, the internet and stuff.

EG: Well, as you know, we're going to be releasing later in the year the Renoir digital catalogue raisonné of the still lives. There are hundreds of them. They'll all be available online. And I know when I first met you, you asked me if we were ever going to do a book.

SR: Yes! I still -- every time I will see you, I will ask you the same question.

EG: Right. [laughs]

SR: Will you do a book?

EG: Well, I wonder though, has your opinion about that changed since we're now all online? And a lot of us find that we can't access the books. I know that's the case for a lot of our researchers, who are in fact working on this Renoir catalogue raisonné -- they're very excited to have digital scans of the archives and all of the materials that they're going to need.

SR: Fantastic job. Fantastic work. No, I will -- I'm going to answer you, but it won't please you at all.

EG: No, go ahead. [laughter]

SR: I'm sorry, but a book is a book. When you have a book in your hand -- touching, smelling, viewing, you know -- you can even hear the pages when you turn them. Those senses are so important. When it's digital, of course it's fantastic, and because of what's happening now, it's wonderful. But it's not the same. A book is a book.

EG: Well, I do agree with you, a book is a book.

SR: But for example, I hate to give a book to a friend -- you know, my book is my book. I would never share my book. You know? I'm very -- ooh la la. With the digital, of course, it's --

voila, it's fantastic for that. And everyone can have access to it, which is the best. The best.

EG: Our hope is that more people will be able to encounter the work of artists and the information about artists, particularly Renoir, when we do release this digital publication, and perhaps inspire people who want a book to go out and buy one on Renoir.
[laughs]

SR: Yeah.

EG: Whether we'll do printed books in the future, it is yet to be seen. I completely agree with you that holding -- there's nothing like holding a book in your hands and flipping through the pages. But we do hope with this digital tool that it will enable people who can't access books to at least have a taste.

SR: With the digital thing, I always think that somewhere in the other part of the world that I don't know, we'll just push one, two, three buttons, and we'll have a Renoir with these beautiful lights on the computers. Because now computers are so good that you have the perfect colors and stuff. And logging on your website is just fantastic, to be able to do that. Because any students can have access to that. Anybody can have access, which is fantastic. It's not the same with books; of course, you have to buy the book, you have to go, you have to -- it's all a process. But with this, it's so easy. It's great.

EG: Well, thank you. Is there anything else that we can discuss or touch on?

SR: No -- how are you, how's the weather. [laughter]

EG: It's becoming truly springtime here in New York. It's much better. My children are off for Easter break, so they're home today, but yesterday they went to the zoo, and finally life is returning. Well, Sophie Renoir, thank you so much for speaking with me today.

SR: You're very welcome. And I was -- I'm very proud to be in this committee and in the Institute of Wildenstein and Plattner. It's fantastic for me. Thank you very much.

EG: Thank you.

[END OF AUDIO FILE]