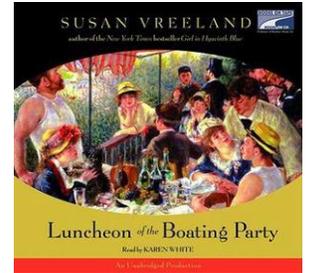


## Renoir Etching and Vreeland's Luncheon of the Boating Party To Make an Impression at the Rosenberg Library this Summer 2013

Rosenberg Library is pleased to announce that the Summer 2013 selection for the Museum Book Club Series is *Luncheon of the Boating Party* by Susan Vreeland. A work of historical fiction, Vreeland's imaginative novel recounts how renowned French artist Pierre-Auguste Renoir created his 1880 masterpiece, *Luncheon of the Boating Party*. The colorful painting depicts a lively group of men and women enjoying a meal on a restaurant terrace. Renoir chose his own friends and colleagues as models for the work, and Vreeland brings life to these historical figures and the time in which they lived—*la vie moderne*.



Vreeland began writing professionally after retiring from a 30-year career as a high school English teacher. Her art-related historical novels have garnered international acclaim and have won numerous literary awards. Other best-selling books by Vreeland include *Girl in Hyacinth Blue*, *The Passion of Artemisia*, and *Clara and Mr. Tiffany*.

### THE IMPRESSIONIST MOVEMENT

During the middle of the nineteenth century, the Academie des Beaux Arts in Paris set the standard for European art and design. Paintings selected for display at the academy's annual Salon dictated popular taste. Instructors at the elite art school encouraged their pupils to create highly polished paintings with realistic details. Preferred subjects included historical or religious scenes, mythological figures, and portraits. A conservative and subdued color palette was used, and brush strokes were carefully blended so as not to be obvious to the viewer.



*Pierre-Auguste Renoir 1880 masterpiece, Luncheon of the Boating Party*

A group of young painters (including Renoir, Monet, Manet, Pissarro, and Cezanne) began to challenge these ideals during the 1870s. They preferred a lighter and brighter color palette and were interested in depicting contemporary people, places, and events. Often their paintings were created outdoors rather than in studios. Their finished works were not heavily detailed; instead they relied on short, unblended brush strokes and intense colors to produce an overall visual effect.

This alliance of artists came to be known as the “Impressionists,” a name which was borrowed from the title of a Claude Monet work entitled *Impression, Sunrise*. Critic Louis Levy coined the term in a scathing review published in a Parisian newspaper following an early independent exhibition by these Salon-rejected painters. Though initially shunned by art critics, the Impressionists gradually garnered admiration and respect from collectors and members of Parisian high society. By the end of his life, Renoir—as well as a number of other Impressionists—enjoyed critical acclaim and financial success.



#### **FROM THE PERMANENT COLLECTION**

Select artworks from the library’s permanent collection will be showcased during the Summer Museum Book Club programs. Among these is an original 1906 dry point etching of a reclining nude by Renoir (above).

Also on display will be a painting of women bathers by 19th century French artist, Marie Francois Firmin-Girard (below). Firmin-Girard is an example of a traditional artist who took a conservative, academic approach to painting during the time when Renoir and his friends broke away from the art establishment. A third work by Italian artist Lorenzo Cecconi portrays a boating party of French aristocrats at Versailles. The formality of Cecconi’s painting is in sharp contrast to Renoir’s Impressionist style.



#### **ABOUT THE BOOK CLUB**

Museum Book Club offers participants the chance to experience art and literature in a more interactive way. Members will have the opportunity to view rarely seen art and historical

artifacts from the Rosenberg Library Museum collection as they discuss related books. The book club will focus on a single book and related museum objects on a quarterly basis.

The first meeting of the Summer 2013 Rosenberg Library Museum Book Club will be a brown bag lunch meeting, Wednesday, June 19th from 12 noon – 1 pm. A second brown bag lunch club will be held on Thursday, July 25th from 12 noon – 1 pm. On Saturday August 24th, the book discussion and art presentation will take place from 11 am-12 pm. Refreshments will be provided at each session.

Registration is required for all Museum Book Club meetings. Established book clubs are encouraged to participate. Groups of over 10 people are asked to call the Reference Desk so that we may arrange to accommodate your entire group.

*Luncheon of the Boating Party* is available for **[check out at the Rosenberg Library](#)**.