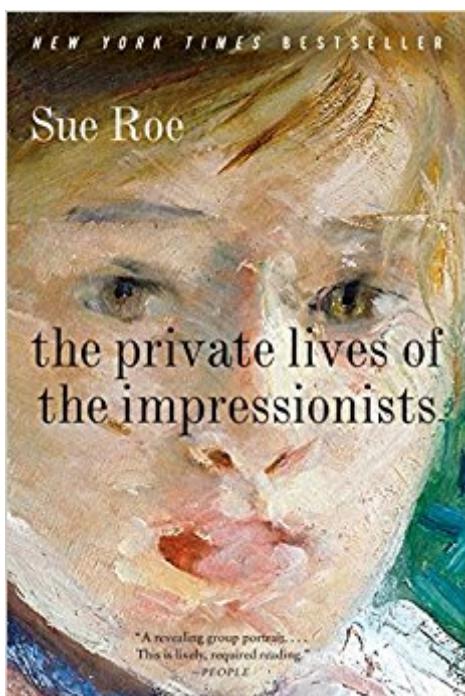


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# The Private Lives Of The Impressionists



## **Synopsis**

Though they were often ridiculed or ignored by their contemporaries, today astonishing sums are paid for their paintings. Their dazzling works are familiar to even the most casual art lovers— but how well does the world know the Impressionists as people? Sue Roe's colorful, lively, poignant, and superbly researched biography, *The Private Lives of the Impressionists*, follows an extraordinary group of artists into their Paris studios, down the rural lanes of Montmartre, and into the rowdy riverside bars of a city undergoing monumental change. Vivid and unforgettable, it casts a brilliant, revealing light on this unparalleled society of genius colleagues who lived and worked together for twenty years and transformed the art world forever with their breathtaking depictions of ordinary life.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

From Monet and Pissarro's first meeting in Paris in 1860 to art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel's influential 1886 Impressionist exhibition in New York City, the group known as the Impressionists— Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Cézanne, Renoir, Degas, Sisley, Morisot and Cassatt— struggled to build their reputations, support themselves financially and create meaningful personal lives. In this meticulously researched and vividly written book, British writer Roe (Gwen John) argues that their drive for success was the strongest unifying factor among this diverse group of artists, including the antisocial, celibate Degas, the socialist Pissarro and the chronically depressed Sisley, who resented the Impressionists' meager public appreciation until the

very end of his life. Roe's nuanced portraits of these artists include personal details both small—the American Cassatt's booming voice and "atrocious" French accent—and significant—Manet's illegitimate son and his upper-middle-class family's elaborate efforts to conceal the child's existence. The result is a comprehensive and revealing group portrait, superbly contextualized within the period's volatile political, socioeconomic and artistic shifts. Roe's book will be of great interest to both art and social historians as well as to the general reader. 16 pages of color illus., b&w illus; 1 map. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** As a grand urban-renewal project engineered by Baron Hausmann transformed Paris under Napoleon III, a group of independent, tenacious, and ambitious painters brought equally radical change to the realm of art. Roe constructs a penetrating group portrait of the revolutionary artists dubbed the impressionists for their atmospheric landscapes and forthright depictions of everyday life. Here, masterfully set against a panoramic rendering of their turbulent times, are Manet, Pissarro, Degas, Monet, Renoir, Cezanne, Sisley, Morisot, and Cassatt, each incisively defined as an individual and in terms of their complex interactions as they devoted themselves to paintings that met only with derision. The entwined stories Roe tells about these disciples of light, color, atmosphere, and commonplace beauty are fascinating and heartbreaking. Roe writes entrancingly of artistic bliss, rowdy cafe life, profound friendships, and transcendent love. But most of the impressionists endured not only contempt but also poverty, familial conflicts, war, and tragedy. Roe's scintillatingly detailed and empathic chronicle of the on-the-edge lives of these paradigm-altering artists will deepen appreciation for the emotional depths of the impressionists' indelible paintings. And for readers interested in learning more about them, see the adjacent Read-alikes column. Donna SeamanCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Wife loves this book! The author goes beyond the paintings & the names of the painters, and looks at - as the title so aptly defines - 'the private lives of the impressionists', and how that played out when they painted. Not a book for those just wanting the same ol pretty paintings, but one that will enrich one's understanding of Impressionism, and provide insight into why the painter did what they did. . .

This fascinating account of the lives of the Impressionists also includes the historical context of the

times which deepens our understanding of the trials and difficulties these artists endured. Knowing the "backstory" of many of the paintings enhances our enjoyment and appreciation of the magnificent art created by the Impressionists. This was a "page turner" for me and an important contribution to the understanding of the French Impressionists and their art.

Wonderful story of the painters daily lives and interconnecting lives with each other. Also of Paris in their time. Highly recommend.

If you have an interest in the impressionist art, artists and era, this book will give you a greater understanding of it all. I picked it up at a museum after a special exhibit of the art and felt a lot clearer about it after reading. The main artists of the movement are depicted along with their families and supporters. Their personalities and struggles are revealed. Written much like a novel, it is easy reading.

Well written and very interesting read.

Good summaries of the lives.

Well researched and enjoyable- but one small detail bothered me: the author has a tendency to call male painters by their last names (Monet, Pissarro, etc), but female painters by their first names (Berthe, Mary, etc). I doubt it was intentionally dismissive, but it was grating.

As far as "private lives" go, this book gives a fairly comprehensive view of the acquaintances, friends, and family who made the impressionist movement what it was. However, I give it 4 stars because I wanted more on the pieces of art and the backstories surrounding them. I felt the coverage wavered throughout the novel.

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