

The Masterpiece

By Émile Zola

Unabridged

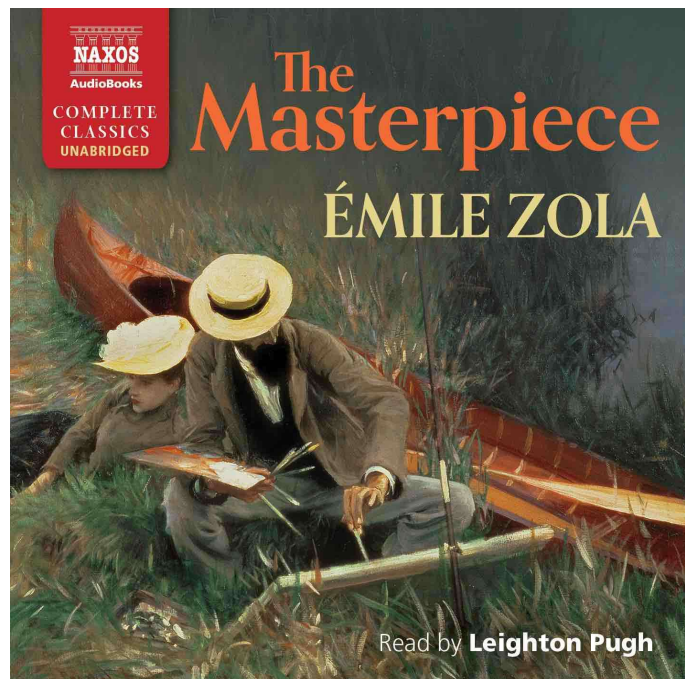
Read by Leighton Pugh

DESCRIPTION

Perhaps the most autobiographical of Zola's Rougon-Macquart cycle of novels, *The Masterpiece* is a hard, bleak, and raw portrait of unrecognized artistic genius. Claude Lantier, brother to Nana and son of Gervaise, is a struggling painter who dreams of conquering Paris's art scene with his revolutionary 'open air' style of painting. Discouraged and mocked, Claude retreats to the countryside with a young woman from Clermont, with whom he has fallen in love, before returning to Paris, where he continues to experience rejection at every turn. Zola's depiction of a frustrated artist is said to have drawn heavily on the real-life experiences of Édouard Manet and Paul Cézanne, the latter of whom broke off his friendship with the author upon reading the novel.

SALES AND MARKETING POINTS

- A first-hand look at the art world of mid-19th-century Paris.
- Leighton Pugh gives us a wonderfully intelligent reading.
- *Germinal*, *Nana* and *L'Assommoir*, read by Leighton Pugh, are also available on Naxos AudioBooks.



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