

1857 Madame Bovary (Gustave Flaubert)

1869 * Mahatma Ghandi

1871 German armies take Paris

1886 Statue of Liberty in New York harbour

1887-1889 Eiffel Tower built in Paris

1888 Sunflowers (Vincent van Gogh)

1900 The Interpretation of Dreams (Sigmund Freud)

IMPRESSIONISM 1860-1915

1860-1915 IMPRESSIONISM

CUBISM 1915-1920

EXPRESSIONISM 1920-1940

ÉDOUARD MANET

The French painter and graphic artist Édouard Manet captured the full spectrum of Parisian life in his shimmering paintings. Even though he never took part in an Impressionist exhibition his rapid, seemingly fleeting brushstrokes influenced the Impressionist artists to an extraordinary extent.

"One must live in one's times and create what one sees" was Manet's firm conviction. This is why he would stroll down the magnificent boulevards of his home city of Paris in top hat, gloves and smart boots – seeking inspiration in bars, cafés and cabarets, at race meetings and masked balls in the midst of the seething mass of people with their elegantly gleaming silk dresses and glittering jewellery, black tailcoats and top hats. As the son of a high-ranking civil servant Manet had enough money to visit the city's places of entertainment with his artist friends. "I love this life," Manet once said, "I love the salons, the noise, the lights, the parties, the colour." But Manet did not just show the joys and beauty of Paris, he also identified the loneliness that can assail people who live in big cities.

The many faces of Paris

In Manet's day, artists in painting schools and academies were still being taught to paint historical pictures showing scenes from the Bible or Greek mythology. Manet, on the other hand, showed everyday life in cafés, stations, operetta theatres and parks with their beggars, street singers, construction workers and the fashionably adorned coffee-house clientele in all their variety and shimmering colours. The Academy prescribed that artists should paint precisely and carefully, but Manet painted in a 'modern' way, with many colour nuances and rapid brushstrokes that blurred the details; his 'blobs' of colour set next to each other produce an image only when viewed from a distance. Manet also made use of photography, which had become fashionable. In his paintings, a passer-by occasionally enters the scene, half cut off, as if captured in a random snapshot. In *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, for example, the legs of a trapeze artist are projecting into the top left-hand corner of the picture – inconceivable in the carefully planned pictures of Academy artists.

Nudes that caused a stir

Manet's nudes in particular created a great to-do at exhibitions and were constantly rejected by the jury for the famous Parisian art competitions, the annual Salons. Viewers of his picture *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* found the woman's nakedness as scandalous as the liberties in painting style. The perspectives and relative sizes are not correctly portrayed in the picture: in comparison with the bathing woman, the boat by the river bank is far too small. Manet defiantly placed one of these pictures, showing a self-confident woman at her morning toilet, in the window of a junk shop on a Parisian boulevard. After all, his pictures were created not in museums, but in the city's streets and public buildings.



1832 Édouard Manet born on 23 January in Paris

1849 Decides to become an artist

1859 His first picture submitted to a Salon is rejected

1862 Turns to painting Parisian life

1863 The Emperor pronounces *Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe* "indecent"

1867 Organises his own show in a specially constructed wooden hut

1872 Receives his first commissions

1874 Marries Berthe Morisot

1883 Manet dies on 30 April in his native Paris

[above]
Édouard Manet. Photograph

MANET

One of the most influential painters of the 19th Century.

Unconventional scenes from modern life.

Bold brushwork.

Influenced the impressionists.

Did not see himself as a revolutionary.

Saw himself as following in the footsteps of the Old Masters.

Critics at the time saw his work as controversial, they subjected him to abuse and condemned his work as incompetent and obscene.

Manet was very hurt by the response to his work as he was craving recognition.

Born in Paris on the 23 Jan 1832.

Eldest son of a civil servant in the Ministry of Justice.

Comfortable middle-class background.

Not destined to follow in his father's footsteps.

Not the academic type.

Preferred to be at home with his mother whom he adored.

Learning to draw from his uncle Edmond Fournier who had a passion for art.

His father refused to let him train as a painter and he made him join the navy but when he was refused by the navy his father let him enrollee at the Paris studio of Thomas Couture.

His talent was instinctive and he quickly showed promise.

At 18 he already had decided ideas about painting and they did not coincide with his master.

The traditions and artificiality of academic art exasperated him.

Manet was only rebellious in his art and was actually a gentleman. He still wanted to be accepted by the Salon. = traditional academic gallery of Paris.

He visited Rome and copied all the great masters.

He worked hard but also played hard and visited cafes, for discussions with the cream of artistic society.

He always attracted friends including the poet Charles Baudelaire.

In 1859 he submitted his first painting to the Salon "The Absinthe Drinker". He was unanimously refused and was bitterly disappointed.

He submitted the painting "The luncheon on the grass" to the Salon in 1863. It was also rejected and was accepted by the newly established Salon Des Refuses.

Here Manet found himself surrounded by the distinguished artists of the time including Cézanne.

The Salon Des Refuses drew huge crowds who came to ridicule but for Manet's painting there was outright fury. They scoffed at the indecency of a nude woman seated on the grass casually with two men dressed in modern suits.

Manet soon earned the reputation as the leader of the non-conformists.

In 1865 the Salon accepted and hung the nude "L'Olympia", a storm broke out.

The critics were scandalized by what they saw, a naked prostitute - a female gorilla gazing candidly and unashamedly from the picture masquerading as a classical Venus.

This was seen as deliberately sneering at tradition.

After a trip to Spain where he was bowled over by Goya, he was still hoping to change the public in his favour and so he held a private exhibition in the Paris world fair of 1867.

In July 1870 his work was disrupted by the Franco-Prussian war. He remained in Paris but sent his family away and later joined them.

In 1871 he returned to Paris where he stayed until his nervous breakdown.

When he recovered he started experimenting with open air painting and his palette became lighter. He painted in a brighter more spontaneous style.

He was a great supporter of the impressionists and sympathetic to their aims but refused to take part in their famous exhibition of 1874.

In the late 1870s he had ill health and he died in 1883 aged 51.

STYLE

Revolutionary who was obsessed with conventional academic success.

Painted with the impressionists but never exhibited with them.

A painter of modern life who had profound reverence for the Old Masters.

These contradictions reflect in the variety of his work, he tried everything.

Unlike his contemporaries he rarely repeated familiar or favourite themes.

He was superb draughtsman and pastel artist.

He had great intuitive feeling for the work of the masters.

He carried notebooks and sketched constantly.

His sketches seize with such certainty a characteristic trait or a decisive moment.

His working method in painting was to capture the spontaneity of the sketches.

Although the impressionists did not use black Manet used it skillfully to contrast lighter tones.

He was also a printmaker so he thought in terms of the bold contrast of the black on white.

He was influenced by Japanese prints, which have strong colours and flat patterns.

Distinctive boldness in the use of composition and also in his handling of paint.

He lacked traditional modeling of the flesh, muscles and bones.

His painting was free from anecdotal, literary or moralistic comment.

Djeuner sur L'Herbe

84½" X 106¾" - Oil on canvas

Musée D'Orsay, Paris.

- Rejected by the Official Salon - so exhibited in the Salon de Refusés. :
Caused much furor!
- Painting depicts a nude female & two clothed males in a park - in the background another female bathes -
- The combination of a naked female & male figure was based on an image by Venetian 16th painter Giorgione - which hung in Louvre - 'The Concert Champêtre' but those figures were in historical costume & female figure idealized - more like a Greek statue -
- Manet's female nude - is painted very realistically & stares boldly out of the work - the men are also in contemporary Parisian dress - this combination was seen as a scandal.
- Figure in background is based on a figure by Raphael - but appears out of proportion -
The water & landscape are not clearly defined - (trees again are sketchy) the painting appears disjointed - the individual elements not carefully composed.
- The painting also includes a richly painted still-life in the left foreground.