

Ragpicker

Édouard Manet . 1865-1869

The Ragpicker is one of seven very famous paintings of its kind. It is the largest of the seven. These paintings are so inventive because they are single figures set onto a canvas with no, or a neutral background. As you can see, the floor completely fades into the wall that is perceived to be behind the beggar. These types of paintings are very hard to do because it leaves the viewer with no perspective of the figures size. Also, it is hard to make it look like the figure is on the canvas, three dimensionally without a background. A lot of critics during the late 1800's did not appreciate these paintings because of its unconventional form. However, I think that makes this picture even more significant. It's almost like an optical illusion to me, for the bum to be so 3D on a flat surface with no background. That is what drew me to this painting originally.



This painting was inspired by a Spanish painter that Manet discovered on a trip he took to Madrid. The name of the artist was Diego Velázquez, who painted "Philosophers," Aesop and Menippus, shown to the right. These pictures have the same concept as Ragpicker, single figures set on neutral backgrounds.

Édouard Manet was a French painter. He was born in Paris in 1832, and died in 1883. He was a very significant painter in his time. He painted during the Realist and the Impressionist Movements. People often confuse his works with the paintings of Claude Monet, also a very famous painter during this time. Some of Manet's paintings were very controversial, and often considered "modern". Some people credit Manet for inspiring the younger, upcoming artists to start the impressionist movement.

