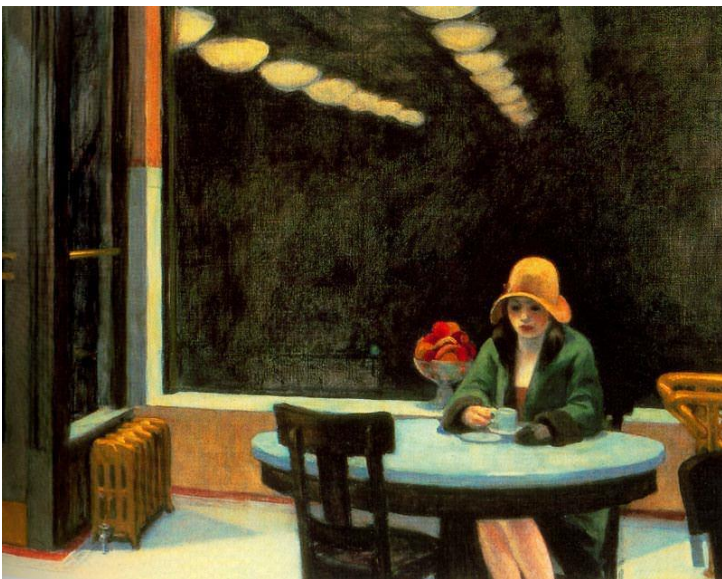


EDWARD HOPPER



Edward Hopper *Girl at Sewing Machine* (1921) Oil on Canvas 48cm x 46cm

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=100988312>



Edward Hopper *Automat* (1927) Oil on Canvas, 71cm × 91cm

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Automat-edward-hopper-1927.jpg>



Edward Hopper *Nighthawks* (1942) Oil on Canvas 84cm x 152cm

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Nighthawks_by_Edward_Hopper.png

Key Facts and Biography

- Edward Hopper was born in Nyack New York in 1882 and died in 1967
- By the age of 10 he was already showing considerable drawing talent
- He studied at the New York School of Art and Design for six years from 1889 to 1905
- He worked for an advertising agency as an illustrator, which he intensely disliked but needed the money
- After struggling to sell paintings he turned to etching in 1915 and this was his main artistic form until the early 1920s
- He met his wife Josephine Nivison who was also a talented artist in 1923, and with her encouragement he started painting in watercolor again
- Josephine took charge of his career and was his main model for more than 40 years, their relationship however was turbulent and often abusive
- His early works were often seascapes, and he had a cottage at Cape Cod
- His distinctive style for which he is best known of realistic urban scenes painted in oil on canvas developed from the 1930s onwards
- He painted common features of American life such as gas stations, motels, restaurants and theatres
- A recurring theme in his portrait work was loneliness and isolation

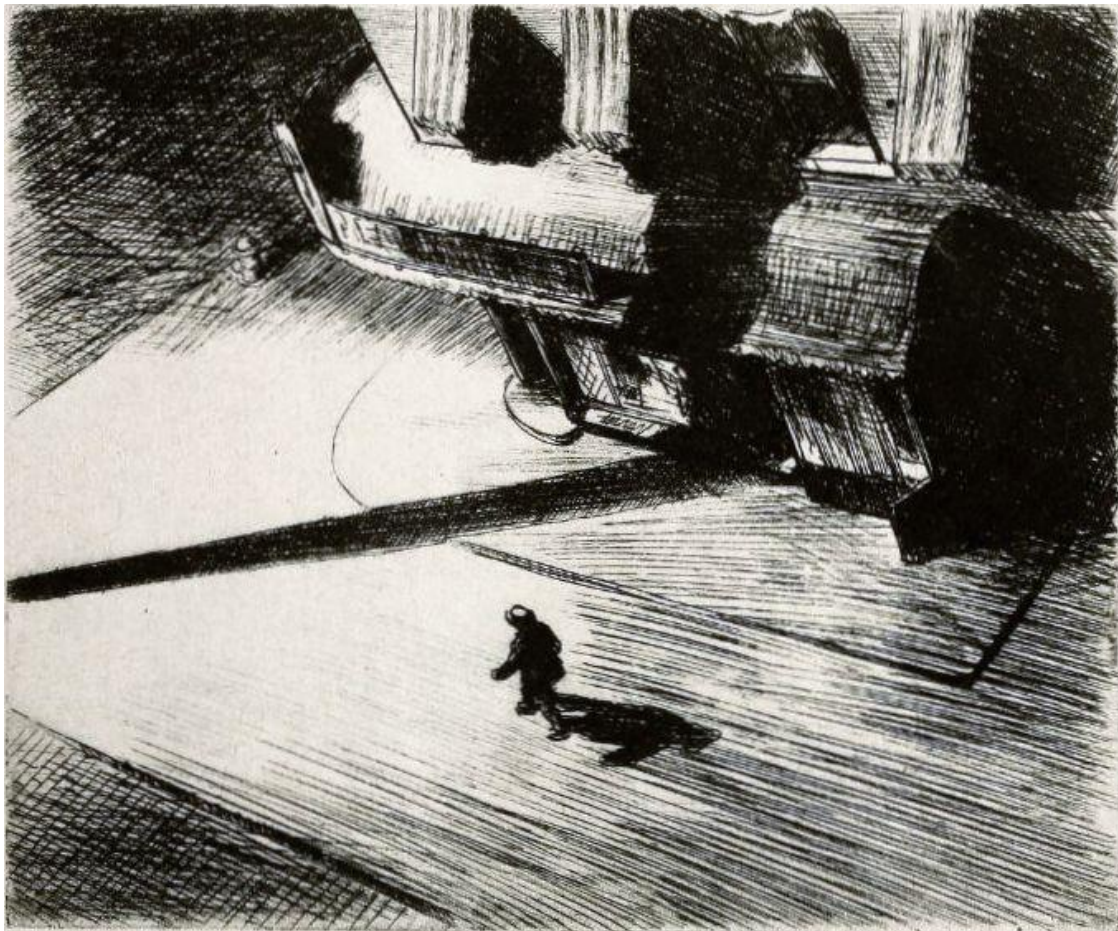
Formal Aspects

Hopper is often associated with American Realism and American Scene Painting. His style is characterized by its attention to detail and its focus on capturing everyday life, particularly in urban and rural American settings. He often uses muted color palettes which give a sense of melancholy, solitude or nostalgia. As seen in the examples of his work above, he uses framing elements like windows and doorways, contrasting light and shadow and careful placement of the people in his paintings to support his storytelling.

My Thoughts on Hopper and His Work

Hopper was producing much of his best known work in the period between the two World Wars and during the time of the Great Depression. His paintings look at the relationship between environments and the human figure and reflect the emotions of many Americans during this period.

In researching this assignment, I scrolled through several online lists of “20 best portrait painters” and I had not previously been aware of his work, except for his etching *Night Shadows* which I had seen recently on the Antiques Road Show.

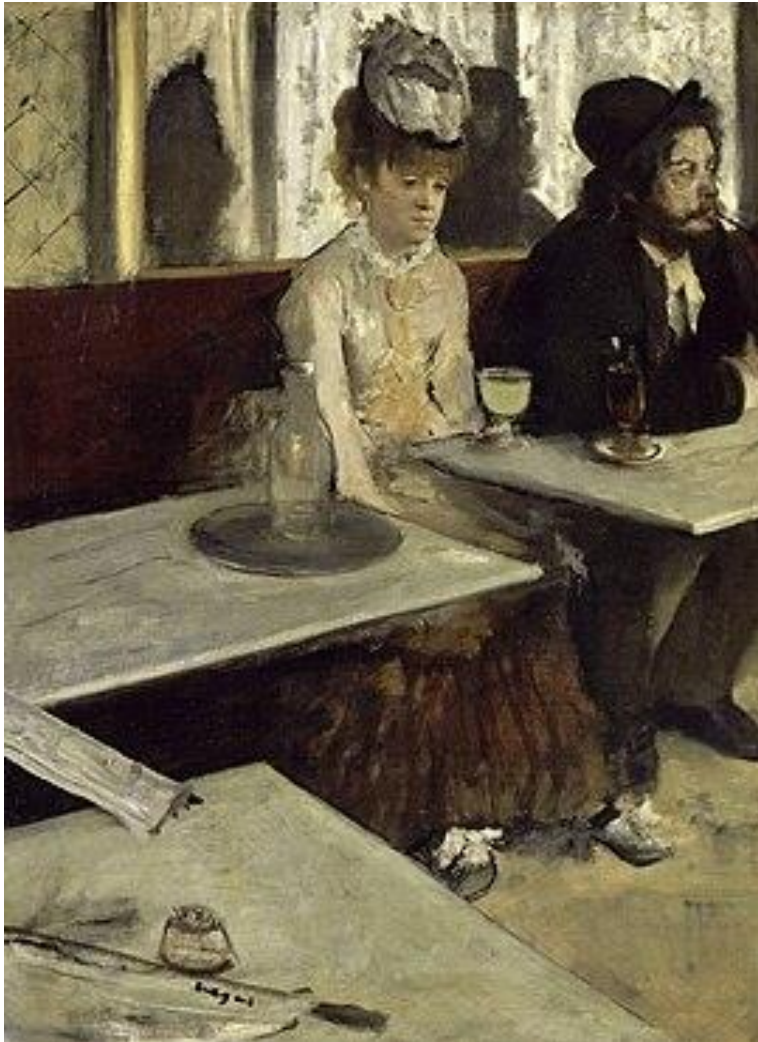


Edward Hopper *Night Shadows* (1921) Etching on Paper Sheet 33.8cm × 36.8 cm, Plate: 17.5cm × 21 cm

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=77138977>

I am drawn to his realistic style and the period of American urban culture which he manages to depict so well is a subject which I find particularly interesting. Many of his works, including all of the ones I have selected for this assignment, show people with a window in the background or people seen through a window and this adds an extra dimension of being a voyeur to his portraits.

Hopper had visited Paris in the 1910s and would have been exposed to the works of the French Impressionists. Though he never adopted their style, keeping to a realistic style of his own, the themes of people in bars and theatres were clearly influenced by impressionist subjects, and you can see similarities between Degas' sad portrait *L'Absinthe* and the woman in café in *Automat* and lonely people in the diner in Hopper's *Nighthawks*.



Edgar Degas *L'Absinthe* (1876) Oil on Canvas 92cm x 68cm

http://art-degas.com/degas_1870_80.html

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