
Manet, Edouard

(b Paris, Jan 23, 1832; d Paris, April 30, 1883).

Beatrice Farwell

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French painter and printmaker. Once classified as an Impressionist, he has subsequently been regarded as a Realist who influenced and was influenced by the Impressionist painters of the 1870s, though he never exhibited with them nor adopted fully their ideas and procedures. His painting is notable for its brilliant *alla prima* painterly technique; in both paintings and prints he introduced a new era of modern, urban subject-matter (see fig.). In his relatively short career he evolved from an early style marked by dramatic light-dark contrasts and based on Spanish 17th-century painting to high-keyed, freely brushed compositions whose content bordered at times on Symbolism.



Edouard Manet: Young Lady in 1866, oil on canvas, 1.85×1.29 m, 1866 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Erwin Davis, 1889, Accession ID: 89.21.3); image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

1. Life and work.

(i) 1832–59.

Manet was the eldest of three sons of Auguste Manet, a distinguished civil servant in the Ministry of Justice, and Eugénie Désirée Fournier, daughter of a diplomatic envoy to the Swedish court. Although he showed talent for drawing and caricature at an early age, his career as an artist began only after his secondary education at the Collège Rollin and two attempts to enter the Naval College, in which he failed even after a training voyage to Rio de Janeiro (1848–9). Encouraged as a schoolboy in his love of art by his maternal uncle Edouard Fournier and by his school-friend Antonin Proust, later to become Minister of Fine Arts, he enrolled, with Proust, in the atelier of Thomas Couture in September 1850. Among his earliest extant works are copies made in the Louvre after Venetian and Florentine Renaissance Masters and Dutch genre painters. His eclecticism reflected the example of Couture, who also taught the traditional techniques and colour formulae that Manet was later to abandon. During his six years of training with Couture, Manet did not enter the Prix de Rome, preferring to visit museums in Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria and Italy. In February 1856 he established his own studio, and in 1857 he went again to Florence.

(ii) 1859–65.

By 1860 Manet had moved his studio twice and had set up home with Suzanne Leenhoff, his family's piano teacher, who became his wife in 1863 (see fig.). Manet's earliest independent works such as his portrait of *Mme Brunet* (?1860; New York, priv. col., see Rouart and Wildenstein, no. 31) are dark in tone and are indebted to earlier artists, notably Velázquez, Rubens and Italian Renaissance Masters. His first Salon entry—the *Absinthe Drinker* (1859; Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyp.)—was refused in 1859, in spite of favourable comment from Delacroix. The *Spanish Singer* (1860; New York, Met.) and his portrait of *M. and Mme Manet* (1860; Paris, Mus. d'Orsay) were accepted in 1861 (the Salon was then biennial), winning an honourable mention and one favourable review. In the same year he also showed work at a private gallery and at the Imperial Academy in St Petersburg. Manet's hopes for early success, inspired by these auspicious beginnings, were soon disappointed.

Manet's art showed marked change and maturation during 1862. The enormous canvas the *Old Musician* (Washington, DC, N.G.A.) still referred to Spanish and other Old Master painting but introduced the subject of marginal city life, while the smaller *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* (1862; London, N.G.) was his first straightforward image of a contemporary urban scene. In such works as *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* and the *Street Singer* (c. 1862; Boston, MA, Mus. F.A.) he identified himself with the dandy in pursuit of the 'heroism of modern life', reflecting his close association with Charles Baudelaire. A number of pictures were shown in an exhibition at the Galerie Martinet in early 1863, when the first clear signs of unfavourable critical reception emerged.

The three paintings Manet submitted to the Salon of 1863 were refused along with so many other works that the Emperor instituted a 'Salon des refusés', at which the *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (Paris, Mus. d'Orsay) was the centre of a critical storm, in part for its challenging subject-matter and in part for its innovative colour and brushwork. Controversy greeted his accepted Salon entries for many years thereafter, reaching its height in the scandal provoked by his *Olympia* (Paris, Mus. d'Orsay), painted in

1863 but first shown in 1865. In *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia* an element of ironic mockery colours the homage paid to Italian Renaissance art. In poses derived from works by Raphael and Titian, Manet presented on the one hand a foursome of profligate youths picnicking and bathing in compromising circumstances while mimicking idealized river gods of antiquity, and on the other, a heroic but brazen nude figure of a reclining modern courtesan in the pose and setting of Titian's *Venus of Urbino* (1538; Florence, Uffizi). In these, as in several works of 1862 and later, Manet depicted a favoured model, Victorine Meurent. Scholarship has shown these famous compositions to assimilate to Old Master designs the spirit of the popular libertine lithographic and photographic imagery that had become part of the visual culture of mid-19th-century France. By inserting a vulgar modernity into the complex web of references in these paintings, Manet put himself in a theoretical position similar to that of Gustave Courbet, whose work had shocked the French public and critics in the 1850s; but Manet's urban emphasis and a cool, unmodulated paint surface were foreign to Courbet's art.

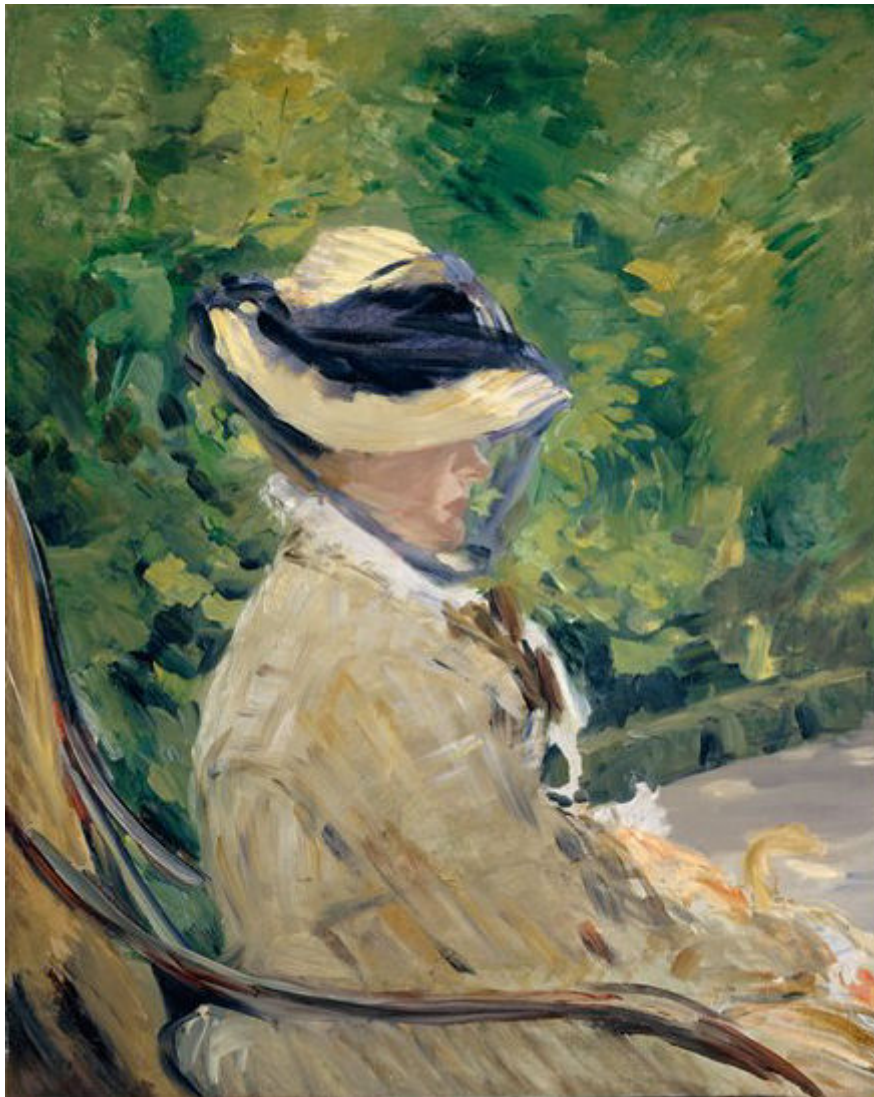


Edouard Manet: *Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, oil on canvas, 2.08×2.65m, 1863 (Paris, Musée d'Orsay); Photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY



Edouard Manet: *Dead Christ and the Angels*, Oil on canvas, 70 5/8 x 59 in. (179.4 x 149.9 cm), 1864 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, H. O. Havemeyer Collection, Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929, Accession ID:29.100.51); photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art <http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110001395> <<http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/110001395>>

Acting on his lifelong conviction that the Salon was the place to compete, Manet continued to submit works with varying success: *Episode at a Bull-fight* (?1864-5; fragment, Washington, DC, N.G.A.) and *Dead Christ and Angels* (1864; New York, Met.) were accepted in 1864, *Jesus Mocked by Soldiers* (1865; Chicago, IL, A. Inst.) in 1865 with *Olympia*. He enjoyed a certain notoriety and was considered the leader of a 'school' that included Edgar Degas and the younger Impressionists whom he saw regularly at the Café Guerbois. In the summer of 1865, following the critical fiasco of *Olympia*, he travelled to Spain where he first saw major works by Goya and Velázquez. Although he had previously painted many pictures with Spanish themes, he was newly inspired by the formal and colouristic features of Spanish painting to produce such paintings as *Matador Saluting* (1866-7; New York, Met.).



Édouard Manet: Madame Manet at Bellevue, oil on canvas, 8.06×6.03 m, 1880 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg Collection, Gift of Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg, 1997, Bequest of Walter H. Annenberg, 2002, Accession ID: 1997.391.4); image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art

Manet played an important part in the revival of original etchings. His career as a printmaker, though it presents problems of chronology, seems to have begun in 1860, with one lithographic caricature and a number of etchings. He showed etchings in 1862 at the print publisher and dealer Cadart's and became a founder-member of the Société des Aquafortistes under whose auspices he issued a portfolio of etchings the same year. This portfolio was reissued with some changes and additions in 1874. Etching was his favoured medium until the late 1860s, after which lithography became more important.

(iii) 1865–70.

Emile Zola, writing in *L'Événement* on the Salon of 1866, launched a spirited defence of Manet, whose *The Fifer* (1866; Paris, Mus. d'Orsay) and the *Tragic Actor* (1865; Washington, DC, N.G.A.) had been rejected by that year's Salon jury. In 1867 he published a fuller biographical and critical study. This support gained Zola the friendship of Manet who painted his portrait in 1868 (Paris, Mus. d'Orsay). The portrait shows the impact on Manet's art of Japanese woodblock prints, newly available in Paris since

the opening of Japan to the West in 1853. A tendency toward flattened space and unmodulated areas of colour, already present in such earlier works as *Mlle Victorine in the Costume of an Espada* (1862; New York, Met.), was reinforced, and Japanese artefacts began to appear as accessories. Zola's criticism pointed out these features in Manet's art and argued that he was primarily interested in the act of painting and of representing visual experience rather than in the subject-matter depicted. This approach, intended to defuse hostile reactions to the somewhat shocking subject-matter of *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*, had the added effect of aligning Manet's art with the prevailing avant-garde theory of Art for Art's Sake.



Edouard Manet: *The Fifer*, oil on canvas, 1.61×0.97 mm, 1866 (Paris, Musée d'Orsay); photo credit: Réunion des Musées Nationaux/Art Resource, NY

Not having been invited to participate in the Exposition Universelle of 1867, Manet set up a private exhibition of 50 of his works next to the exposition grounds in a specially constructed pavilion that was ignored by the public and press alike. Manet had, however, published a catalogue with a short, unsigned preface (repr. in Moreau-Nélaton, 1926, i, pp. 86-7), one of the few statements about his art that can be attributed to his own ideas (it has been presumed that he received help from his literary friends). In it the importance of exhibiting is stressed, and his work is characterized as 'sincere', one of the watchwords of the Realist movement.

In 1867 Manet undertook to paint a vast canvas representing the execution of the Emperor Maximilian, an event that had taken place in Mexico on 19 June of that year. Five versions of this composition exist: a full-scale oil study (Boston, MA, Mus. F.A.), a group of fragments from a dismembered canvas (London, N.G.), a lithograph (see 1977 exh. cat., no. 54), a small definitive sketch (Copenhagen, Ny Carlsberg Glyp.) and the definitive canvas (Mannheim, Ksthalle; see fig.). Drawing inspiration from Goya's Third of May 1808 (1814; Madrid, Prado) and contemporary pictorial reportage, Manet created a Realist image devoid of any romantic commentary such as that found in Goya. The charge of lack of interest in his subject is difficult to sustain in this case in view of the time and energy he devoted to it. More persuasive is the proposal that understatement for greater effect (litotes) was his aim (1983 exh. cat., p. 18). Early in 1868 Manet was advised by the administration that his painting of the execution would not be accepted at the next Salon and that authorization to publish the lithograph of it would not be granted. Although Manet defended himself on artistic grounds through notices by journalist friends, it is clear that the subject was calculated to embarrass the imperial regime, an intention that accords with his lifelong Republican sympathies.



Edouard Manet: The Execution of Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, June 19, 1867 (Mannheim, Städtische Kunsthalle); Photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY



Edouard Manet: *The Balcony*, oil on canvas, 1.70×1.24 m, 1868 (Paris, Musée d'Orsay); photo credit: Erich Lessing/Art Resource, NY

In the summer of 1868 Manet met the painter Berthe Morisot who was briefly his pupil; she married his brother, Eugène, in 1874, and also modelled for several pictures, including *Resting*, *Portrait of Berthe Morisot* (1870; Providence, RI, Sch. Des., Mus. A.). The most celebrated of these works, *The Balcony* (1868–9; Paris, Mus. d'Orsay), was accepted at the Salon of 1869, together with *Luncheon in the Studio* (1868; Munich, Neue Pin.). These two pictures were Manet's masterpieces of the late 1860s and display many of his abiding qualities. The most prominent tones were flatly applied and unusual: silky black for Léon Leenhoff's jacket in the *Luncheon* and piercing green for the railings in *The Balcony*. He employed the traditional compositional formulae of earlier art but with minimal spatial recession, creating awkward disjunctions of scale, particularly in the *Luncheon*. Nor do his figures relate in any conventional formal or psychological sense. A mood of enigmatic isolation pervades both the bohemian interior of the *Luncheon* and the more elegant exterior of *The Balcony*.



Edouard Manet: Luncheon in the Studio, oil on canvas, 1.18×1.53 m, 1868 (Munich, Neue Pinakothek); photo credit: Scala/Art Resource, NY

In 1869 another painter, Eva Gonzalès, became Manet's student and posed for a portrait (London, N.G.) shown in the Salon of 1870. Although his direct effect on Morisot and Gonzalès was considerable, his influence was far broader, and his position as head of a school was acknowledged by the Café Guerbois group and by contemporary critics.

In 1868 and 1869 Manet and his family had holidays at Boulogne-sur-Mer, where he made a number of marine paintings, ferry departures and beach scenes (e.g. *Folkestone Boat*, *Boulogne*, 1869; Philadelphia, PA, Mus. A.). His early attraction to the sea is perhaps reflected in his summer sojourns at various maritime resorts between 1868 and 1873, interrupted only by the Franco-Prussian war and civil strife of 1870-71.

(iv) 1870-79.

In early 1870 Manet fought a duel with the journalist-critic Louis-Edmond Duranty, whose friend he nevertheless remained, and made common cause with other artists in an attempt to effect changes in the selection of Salon jurors. With the approach of the Prussian Army in September 1870 he sent his family to a resort in the Pyrenees, and joined the National Guard. After the end of the siege of Paris in February 1871, he rejoined his family and remained in the provinces until the days immediately

following the 'bloody week' of 21–28 May. A federation of artists under the short-lived Paris Commune had elected him a delegate in his absence, but this organization soon evaporated. Manet's attitude towards the Commune is not documented, but scholarship on the lithographs he made following its bloody events (*Civil War* and *The Barricade*; see 1977 exh. cat., no. 72) suggests that although he did not side actively with the Commune, he did oppose its suppressors (*Art Journal*, 1985, pp. 36–42).

The war of 1870 divided Manet's career into two distinct halves. A number of profound changes in his life and art marked the beginning of the second decade of his professional career. In 1872 he moved his studio to the Rue de Saint-Pétersbourg near the Place de l'Europe, and he and his circle abandoned the Café Guerbois for the Café de la Nouvelle Athènes in the Place Pigalle, then in a newly constructed area of Paris. He travelled in the Netherlands in 1872, renewing his acquaintance with the works of Dutch Masters, especially those of Frans Hals, an experience that is reflected in *Le Bon Bock* (Tyson priv. col., on loan to Philadelphia, PA, Mus. A.); this painting was shown in the Salon of 1873 to unexpected critical acclaim from formerly hostile quarters and equally unexpected adverse criticism from his friends. In 1872 he sold 24 pictures to the dealer Durand-Ruel. He also acquired a new circle of friends who came to his studio, which had become the focus of his social as well as his professional life. At the centre of this circle were Nina de Callias, a somewhat unconventional woman of wealth, generosity and talent, and Stéphane Mallarmé, who replaced Baudelaire, who had died in 1867, in the painter's affections. Among those who frequented their salons were artists, poets, writers, composers and journalists, including Marcellin Desboutin, Verlaine, Leconte de Lisle, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Jean Richepin, Henri Rochefort, François Coppée and Anatole France.

In his paintings of the early 1870s, Manet began to adopt a higher-keyed coloration and henceforth dispensed with dark backgrounds, as, for example, in *The Railroad* (Washington, DC, N.G.A.) of 1872–3. Equally new was an extreme freedom and sketchiness of brushwork, as in the portrait of Nina de Callias called *Woman with Fans* (Paris, Mus. d'Orsay) of 1873–4. These new features of Manet's art can be traced to his association with the younger generation of Impressionist painters, who exhibited together for the first time in 1874. (Manet was invited to exhibit but declined.) He spent the summer of 1874 at his family property at Gennevilliers, near Argenteuil, where Claude Monet was at work, and where he also saw Gustave Caillebotte and Auguste Renoir. There he painted *Argenteuil (Tournai, Mus. B.-A.)* and *Boating (New York, Met.)*, the major works cited as evidence of Impressionist influence on his art, largely because of their subject-matter (boating on the Seine) but also for their high colour values and intensities and their broken brushwork. Manet travelled to Venice in 1875, where he painted in brilliant, quasi-Impressionist style such works as *Grand Canal at Venice* (1875; Shelburne, VT, Mus.).



Edouard Manet: *Argenteuil*, oil on canvas, 1.49×1.15 m, 1874 (Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts); photo credit: Giraudon/Art Resource, NY

In the 1870s the Salon juries continued to be ambivalent about accepting Manet's pictures. In 1874 *Argenteuil* was accepted; in 1875 *The Linen* (Merion Station, PA, Barnes Found.) and *The Artist* (1875; São Paulo, Mus. A. Assis Châteaubriand) were refused. The jury of 1877 accepted one picture (*Faure as Hamlet*; Essen, Mus. Folkwang) and refused another (*Nana*; Hamburg, Ksthalle). In 1878 he avoided competing for admission to the Exposition Universelle by exhibiting work publicly in his own studio.

Manet's friendships with writers and poets led him to collaborative ventures in printmaking. In 1869 he had made a lithographic poster, *Cats' Rendezvous*, for Champfleury's book *Les Chats*, and in the early 1870s he made several etchings as illustrations; these collaborations with writers provided the basis for the 20th-century *Livre d'artiste*. In 1874 a volume of poems by Charles Cros with etched illustrations by Manet appeared. In 1875 he created his masterpiece of this genre, the illustrations for

Mallarmé's translation of *The Raven* by Edgar Allan Poe. Many of the prints considered among Manet's most important were not published during his lifetime, and several were never published at all, extant only in a few artist's proofs.

(v) 1879–83.

Manet was installed in his last atelier at 77 Rue d'Amsterdam in April 1879. By this time the illness that was to take his life had begun to manifest itself, and he spent annual extended curative sojourns in the country near Paris. During these periods he amused himself by painting small still-lives and flower-pieces (see fig.) and writing letters decorated with charming watercolours (1983 exh. cat., nos 191–205). In 1881 he received a second-class medal and was thereafter excused from jury submission. At the end of that year, with his friend Antonin Proust installed as Minister of Fine Arts, Manet was made Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur, a recognition some thought he should have refused.



Edouard Manet: *White Lilac in a Glass*, oil on canvas, 540×410 mm, 1880 (Berlin, Nationalgalerie); photo credit: Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz/Art Resource, NY



Edouard Manet: *The Bar at the Folies-Bergere*, oil on canvas, 952×1295 mm, 1881–82 (London, Courtauld Institute Galleries); photo credit: Album/Art Resource, NY

Contemporary Paris was the subject of his last major painting and his swan-song at the Salon of 1882, a *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (U. London, Courtauld Inst. Gals.; see fig.). The figure of the cashier at one of the bars in the largest and most sumptuous place of entertainment in the city presides like a goddess over her domain, depicted in strokes of shattering light and colour. Her centred, frontal figure and her moon-like face with its dreamy expression (seen as sad or weary by some) make of her an urban icon flanked by a still-life of bottles, fruit and flowers. She stands in front of a mirror that reflects the auditorium balcony with its seated spectators, as well as the back of the cashier herself and the patron who faces her on the other side of the counter. The scene is an amalgam of disparate areas in the Folies-Bergère, mediated by the equivocal mirror represented as though parallel to the picture plane and the counter but reflecting the woman and the customer as though at an angle. The liberties Manet took with perspective have been much discussed; it can be concluded that Symbolism won out over Realism; the reflection is necessary to the theme. In popular imagery from 1830 to 1880 *la dame du comptoir* always appears with the still-life of her counter in front of her and her reflection, often displaced, in the mirror behind her. Manet underlined this tradition by exaggerating the reflection's displacement.

By September 1882 Manet's condition had deteriorated enough to prompt him to write his will. On 20 April 1883 his left leg was amputated, and on 30 April he died, probably of tertiary syphilis complicated by gangrene. He was buried on 3 May at the Passy cemetery, his coffin borne by pallbearers including Proust, Zola and Monet.

Manet's influence on his successors was paradoxically both negligible and enormous. He had few significant imitators, yet he has been universally regarded as the Father of Modernism. With Courbet he was among the first to take serious risks with the public whose favour he sought, the first to make *alla prima* painting the standard technique for oil painting and one of the first to take liberties with Renaissance perspective and to offer 'pure painting' as a source of aesthetic pleasure. He was a pioneer, again with Courbet, in the rejection of humanistic and historical subject-matter, and shared with Degas the establishment of modern urban life as acceptable material for high art. Manet's art, like the contemporary and analogous Realist and Naturalist movements in French literature, occupies a central place within the larger framework of a new modernist culture that was to affect the evolution of these arts in France well into the 20th century.

2. Technique.

(i) Painting.

Manet was the last great French painter to receive a long and academic training. His technical development, therefore, has particular significance for the evolution of 19th-century art. Once he had graduated from Couture's atelier, he disowned his master's technique as he had disdained while a student the posturing models and the universal insistence on the importance of the nude. He retained for life, however, the use of studio aids and gadgets such as plumb lines and black mirrors and continued throughout his career to outline figures and objects with paint in a kind of brushed drawing derived from Couture's sketching method. His major break with earlier technique was to abandon the practice of covering the canvas with a dark, usually brown, tone upon which the composition was then built up with heavier layers of pigment and translucent glazes. In Manet's mature early style, most passages present a firm, opaque paint layer, and there is little glazing; each colour was selected and applied, from the start, for its final effect (*alla prima* painting). If, after a day's work, he was not satisfied with any completed passage, he scraped it down to the canvas and began again the next day with fresh colours. (Pentiments seen in radiographs represent changes made, sometimes years later, after the original version had dried.)

Manet's adoption of the *alla prima* technique served both practical and expressive purposes and had far-reaching effects on the art of his younger colleagues. The procedure was useful for completing a passage, or a whole painting, in a day. Manet insisted on having his subject before him while painting, a practice adopted and considerably extended by the Impressionists. Their capturing of moments of light and weather in the permanent medium of oil, often executed out of doors, depended absolutely on *alla prima* technique, as time could not be allotted to the drying of intermediate paint layers. Although there have been revivals of complex Old Master techniques, the methods of Manet and the Impressionists have gradually become the standard practice in oil painting in the 20th century.

Among the idiosyncratic features of Manet's style was his simplification of form by letting one stroke or area of paint of a single colour (a *tache*) stand for a more complex reality. This Tachism, though on a larger scale, stood behind the Impressionists' re-creation of the visible world in small dabs of paint. Another, related feature was his fairly consistent omission of intermediate values between extremes of light and dark, producing dramatic contrasts that are most vivid in his early work. This simplification of the rendering of curved surfaces contributed to the 'flatness' of many three-dimensional forms in his work, for instance the nude in *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and the figure of *Olympia*. In both, shadow is

reduced to a band-like outline. These forms are not, however, composed simply of flat, unified colour. Under raking light one can see that his brush followed the roundness of the form. Broader shadows were brushed in where needed but minimized in the painting's final state, and in the nude of the *Déjeuner* there are slight variations in colour throughout of a sort that Titian or Rubens would have achieved by letting the ground show through. For Manet, each of these passages represented the choice of a colour, mixed and brushed on, making his task more difficult since it was carried out without the traditional formulae of layering. The challenge of rendering a particular optical reality excited Manet and gave to his art a peculiar freshness and novelty disturbing to many in his time. The same method was applied to portraiture, and despite Manet's neutral approach to psychological expression as an indicator of 'character', his portraiture is faithful in a photographic sense to the features of his sitters, whether or not a portrait was intended (and was probably influenced by photography).

Manet was as ready to simplify in composition as in the rendering of surfaces. Several works painted in the 1860s were subsequently reduced by simply cutting up the canvas (e.g. *Surprised Nymph*, 1861; Buenos Aires, Mus. N. B.A.). The *Dead Toreador* (?1864-5; Washington, DC, N.G.A.) as shown in 1864 was part of a much larger composition. Although this work may have been cut down in response to adverse criticism of its perspective, other examples suggest a more positive attempt at simplification. X-radiography has provided insight into Manet's working methods in general and especially in the *Execution of Maximilian*, which was repeatedly revised to achieve a starker, simpler statement (1986 exh. cat., pp. 48-64).

(ii) Drawing.

Manet was primarily a painter and did not produce an enormous body of drawings, even though many have surely been lost. The extant drawings are, however, impressive in their own right and are consistent with the paintings in character. A large number of early drawings in pencil or chalk after figures in Old Master paintings reveal a bold, almost aggressive use of outline, drastically simplifying the means of representation in the original, yet maintaining its style and expression. Certain later drawings, heightened with watercolour, that seem to be compositional studies for well-known paintings were probably made after completion of the painting, perhaps with reproductive etching in view. Among a varied sequence of figure studies leading to the great nudes of 1863 is a pencil-and-ink wash drawing of a seated bather (London, priv. col.) that brilliantly displays Manet's early mastery of wash drawing. Many portrait sketches were made in this rapid, summary technique which was later turned to account in illustrative prints. Between 1879 and 1882 he produced a series of pastel portraits of women that fully exploits the fragile delicacy of the medium, for example *Irma Brunner* (c. 1880; Paris, Louvre). Manet's line, whether executed in pencil, pen or wash, is firm, laconic and precise in its representational function, bold and clear in its expression.

(iii) Printmaking.

Manet had a thoughtful and sometimes adventurous approach to printmaking. He produced few prints of any kind after 1875. His etchings were chiefly reproductive of his paintings (e.g. *Dead Christ and Angels*, c. 1866-7; see 1977 exh. cat., no. 51), whereas many of the lithographs were on topical and independent, often popular, subjects. His earliest etchings were influenced by the conservative style of

Alphonse Legros, who taught him the technique. He achieved mastery of the medium between 1860 and 1862, the year in which the portfolio was published by Cadart. Manet incorporated aquatint and other etched tones, and drypoint, into his copperplate repertory, and he relied heavily on the advice and help of colleagues in the biting and printing of his plates. He pursued tonal effects, through both hatched line and aquatint, particularly in the rendering of paintings, a practice at variance with the 'pure etching' ideals of the Société des Aquafortistes. He was much influenced by the etchings of Goya, especially in his use of aquatint (*Au Prado, Fleur exotique*). Since many of his later etchings were made for publication in books, they are much smaller than the imposing early portfolio etchings. He used photographs to reduce and reverse paintings for reproduction in prints, for example *Jeanne—Spring* (1882; see 1977 exh. cat., no. 107).



Edouard Manet: *The Races*, lithograph, 365×514 mm, late 1860s (London, British Museum); photo credit: HIP/Art Resource, NY

Manet was slower to take up lithography. He seems to have composed *The Balloon* (1862; see 1977 exh. cat., no. 28) directly on to a stone offered him by Cadart. The result was never published, deviating so markedly from the stylistic norms of commercial lithography in its very freely sketched manner that the printer refused to make more than trial proofs. While several crayon lithographs were executed in a more conservative style, *The Races* (1865–72; Cambridge, MA, Fogg) stands out as

Manet's most exuberant and striking work in this medium. Exploiting the broad characteristics of the lithographic crayon throughout, his free, energetic line became in one area a scribble that some have interpreted as a precocious modernism, others an expression of frustration over a failed composition. The stone was probably not printed in his lifetime and impressions are extremely rare. He made sheet music cover illustrations for the music and lyrics of friends in the manner of commercial lithographers and treated the tragic events of 1871 in a broad manner related to that of *The Races in*, for example, *The Barricade* (1871; see 1977 exh. cat., no. 72). The seven-colour lithograph *Polichinelle* (see 1977 exh. cat., no. 90) of 1874 was probably heavily dependent on the help of printers in making the colour separations and therefore comparatively timid in technique.

In 1874–6 Manet turned from the familiar commercial crayon medium to a transfer process for a group of prints culminating in his illustrations for *The Raven* (pubd 1875). In this technique, derived from transfer lithography, he was able to exploit his mastery of wash drawing in rapid, evocative sketches on transfer paper subsequently transferred to zinc plates which were etched and printed probably in the relief process of gillotage (1985 exh. cat., p. 115). It is characteristic of Manet's boldness and his openness to new ideas that he should have approached this project using a technique probably untried for such a purpose.

Spontaneity, directness and simplicity were Manet's aim. He bent every technique to these expressive purposes and in doing so created an art that is unique and consistent in producing an effect of immediacy and freshness.

3. Character and personality.

Manet was a well brought up and financially independent member of the old bourgeoisie. Though educated according to the conventions of his class, he retained little interest in reading and wrote almost nothing but letters. His mode of life was discreetly bohemian: he lived with Suzanne Leenhoff for years before their marriage but did not disclose the arrangement even to his most intimate friends. He cut the public figure of a dandy. It is reported by Proust that, although he affected the drawling speech and slouching gait of a Parisian urchin, he never succeeded in looking anything but aristocratic. Blond, blue-eyed and of sunny disposition, he was a witty conversationalist and had charismatic allure for men and women alike. An impressionable youth at the time of the Revolution of 1848, he retained Republican sympathies throughout his life, associating with political liberals and radicals but apparently engaging in no political activities other than occasionally creating works of art that could be seen as offensive to the regime of Napoleon III and the conservative early Third Republic. His association with other men of talent included not only Degas and the Impressionist circle, as well as Henri Fantin-Latour (who had painted his portrait in 1867; for illustration see *Fantin-Latour family*, §2), but a number of major literary figures, including Baudelaire, Théodore de Banville, Zola and Mallarmé. He was a gregarious man who adored society and maintained a salon in his own studio that included radical friends and demi-mondaines.

Manet's personality had a darker side, reflected in his frequent discouragement over his failure to win success and acclaim at the Salon, in his duel with Duranty and in a serious nervous depression in 1871. Occasional pictures express this side of his psyche, such as *The Suicide* of 1881 (ex-Hatvany Col., Budapest), painted at a time when a friend lay gravely ill and Manet himself was already in the grip of his final illness. However, by far the majority of his pictures and the accounts of his friends reveal a temperament basically happy and at ease with the world, even in his last years when physical disability

made standing at his easel difficult. It was during this period that he painted the *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, a work epitomizing the pleasure he took in the life around him, in the image of woman and in the sheer act of looking.

4. Critical reception and posthumous reputation.

Manet was one of many avant-garde 19th-century painters who endured vilification and sarcasm for the novelty of their work. He nevertheless found a few sympathetic critics. The most articulate of these was Zola, who championed Manet's early work and, despite later quarrelling with him, wrote the introduction to Manet's memorial exhibition catalogue in 1884. Mallarmé wrote a profound appreciation of Manet in 1876 that acknowledged his historic connection with Impressionist painting and his engagement with the contemporary world. In contrast with the rich and poetic art of past ages, he praised Manet for his sincerity and simplicity.

By the time of his death, Manet had gained a grudging reputation as an important and influential innovator but had found few understanding defenders. His reputation has risen steeply, and the body of historical and critical writing on his career is extensive. Several of his close friends produced monographic witness accounts of his life: Edmond Bazire, his first biographer; Antonin Proust, his friend since school days; and Théodore Duret, the critic, who compiled the first oeuvre catalogue. Manet benefited from the rise in the reputation of Impressionism, but it was only in the 20th century that independent studies of his life and work were produced. German scholars were the first to treat Manet's art in its historical context (H. von Tschudi, 1902; J. Meier-Graefe, 1912); Etienne Moreau-Nélaton provided the first detailed documentation of his career (1926).

By the 1920s, with formalist criticism dominant, Manet's art was appreciated primarily as 'pure painting'. This critical view continued well into the post-World War II era but was challenged at the time of the centenary exhibition in Paris of 1932. Left-wing intellectuals saw Manet's apparent lack of interest in subject-matter not as a virtue but as a sign of the bourgeois formalism rejected by Marxist aesthetics. A variation on this view was revived in the 1980s by T. J. Clark.

In 1954 a book by the Swedish artist-critic Nils Gösta Sandblad gave Manet studies a new direction. Concentrating on subject-matter and social context as much as on form, Sandblad anticipated the trend in the 1960s and 1970s, seen especially in American art history and criticism, towards the iconographic study of modern art. Writings by Reff, Fried, Hanson, Farwell and others in America, and Hofmann in Germany, have added to Manet's reputation for formal artistry an equal reputation for social engagement and profound awareness of tradition. Research in the 1980s based on X-radiography has sought to establish Manet's working procedures with greater precision. The literature on Manet has from the beginning been marked by wide differences of interpretation that may in part be traced to the protean and enigmatic quality of his creative genius.

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