Edward Hopper

Edward Hopper, the best-known American realist of the inter-war period who made solitude and introspection important themes in his painting.

He was born in New York State, on 22 July 1882. His family were solidly middle-class: his father owned a dry goods store where the young Hopper sometimes worked after school. By 1899 he had already decided to become an artist.

He first attended the New York School of Illustrating, then in 1900 transferred to the New York School of Art.

However, like the majority of the young American artists of the time, he longed to study in France. With his parents' help he finally left for Paris in October 1906. "*I used to go to the cafés at night and sit and watch. I went to the theatre a little. Paris had no great or immediate impact on me. Who did I meet? Nobody.*"

In addition to spending some months in Paris, he visited London, Amsterdam, Berlin and Brussels. He was well read in French literature, and could quote Verlaine in the original. For some time his painting was full of reminiscences of what he had seen abroad.

He painted hotels, motels, trains and highways, and also liked to paint the public and semi-public places where people gathered: restaurants, theatres, cinemas and offices. But even in these paintings he stressed the theme of loneliness. Hopper was a frequent movie-goer, and there is often a cinematic quality in his work. He died in 1967, isolated if not forgotten. His true importance has only been fully realized in the years since his death."

Adapted from "Lives of the Great 20th-Century Artists", by Edward Lucie-Smith - *the Artchive.com*

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