

IMPRESSIONISM

1867-1886

Impressionism

- ❑ Originated in France in 1870's
- ❑ Invention of photography
- ❑ At first the public did not like their work. One newspaper critic called their work sketches or impressions, but not finished pieces.
- ❑ Thought it was a joke.
- ❑ Many works were rejected by academy, public rebelled = creation of Salon of the Rejected



Monet – Impression Sunrise

Style Characteristics

- ❑ Light was important to the Impressionists. They wanted to capture the moment at a glance.
- ❑ Scenes of daily leisurely activities (movement away from historical themes)
- ❑ Loose/small brushstrokes to simulate actual reflected light (revolutionary technique)
- ❑ Pastel colours (with blues and violets replacing blacks and browns)
- ❑ Lack of a structured composition (as compared to a triangular Renaissance layout)
- ❑ Natural lighting
- ❑ Reproduced artists' visual "impression"
- ❑ "Suggestion" rather than representation



Know your Artists...

Edouard Manet

Father of Impressionism – never stopped using black

Claude Monet

Most committed Impressionist painter, repeatedly painted objects over and over to observe how light affects colour

Pierre-Auguste Renoir

Rosy-cheeked people in social settings

Edgar Degas

Diagonal compositions, skilled at drawing, pastel, & painting, ballerinas

Mary Cassatt

American-born, known for women & children in natural domestic settings



Edouard Manet

Father of Impressionism
– never stopped using
black



Edouard Manet, *Luncheon on the Grass*, 1862-63



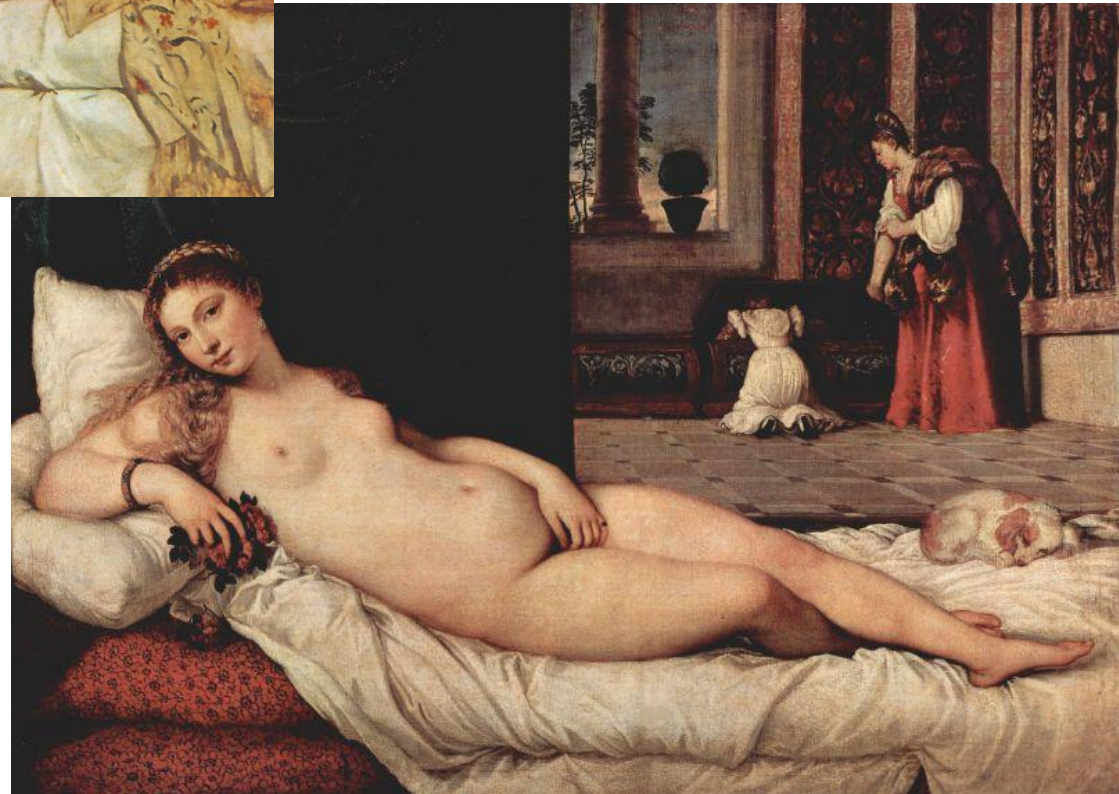
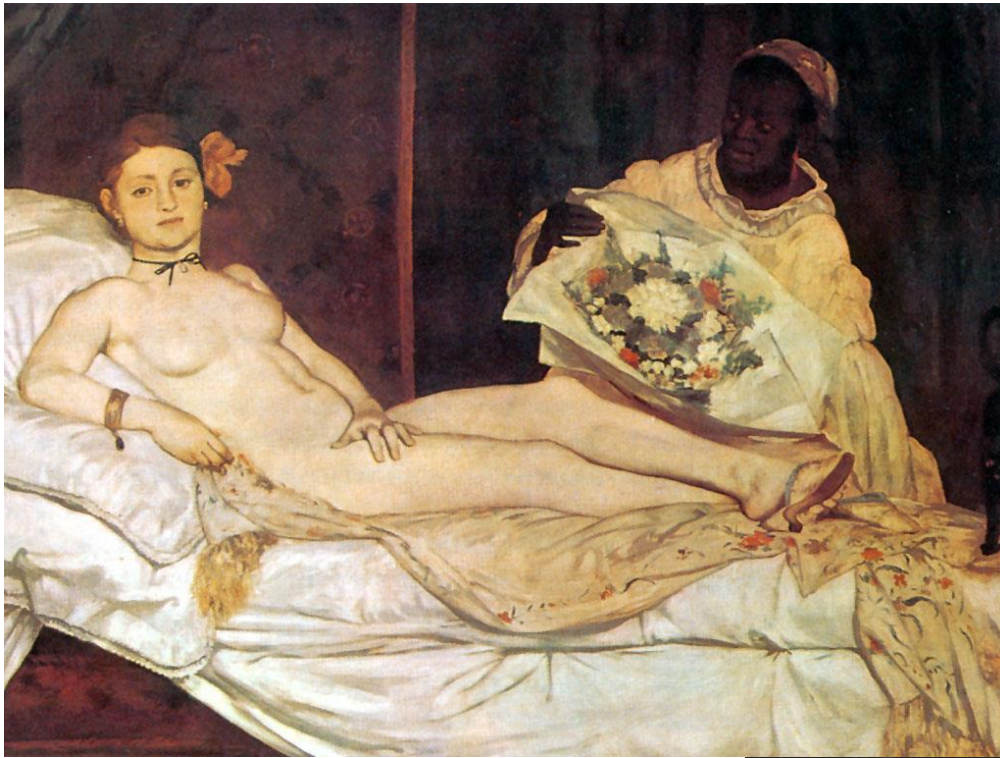
- Little sense of space
- loose brushwork
- unnatural lighting
- Minimal modeling of flesh (like a cutout)
- willful refusal to follow rules of academy
- indications of a narrative yet confusing



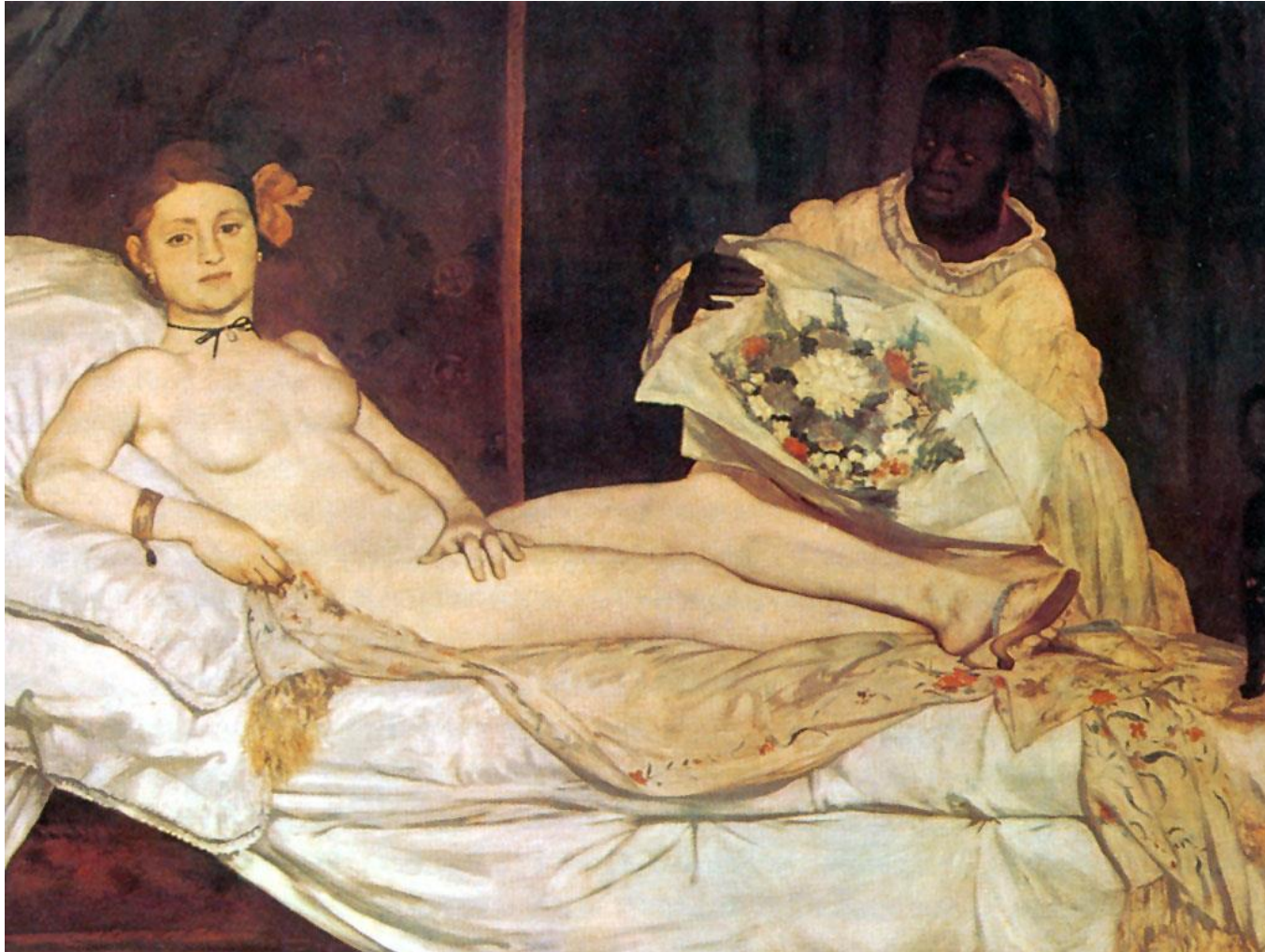
□ M. Raimondi, *Judgment of Paris*, c1515.
HIGH ITAL RENAISSANCE

- Rejected by the academy
- problem = she's not a Venus, confrontational, modern Parisians of the time
- Breaks classical rules
- assumption of sexuality in non-classical manner
- sensual still life

Compare **Manet's Olympia** with **Titian's Venus of Urbino**



Edouard Manet, *Olympia*, 1863



- Challenges established ideas about what great art is
- Not a Venus (features not idealized and perfected)
- Not coy but confronting audience
- Prostitute
- Symbols of sexual theme: ribbon around neck, black cat
- Servant handing her flowers from a customer
- Flatness of body (“I’m not going to pretend that my painting isn’t paint”)
- Modern beauty for the real world
- Willfully challenges rules of academy

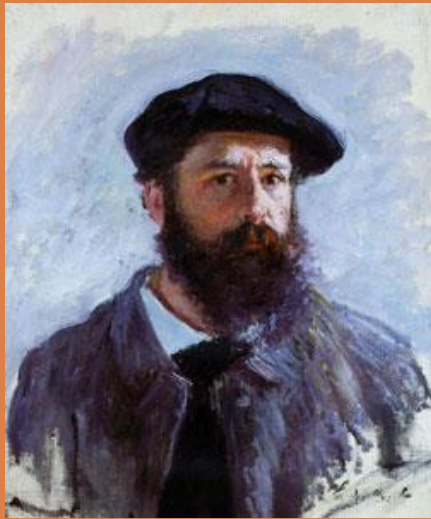
Edouard Manet, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1882



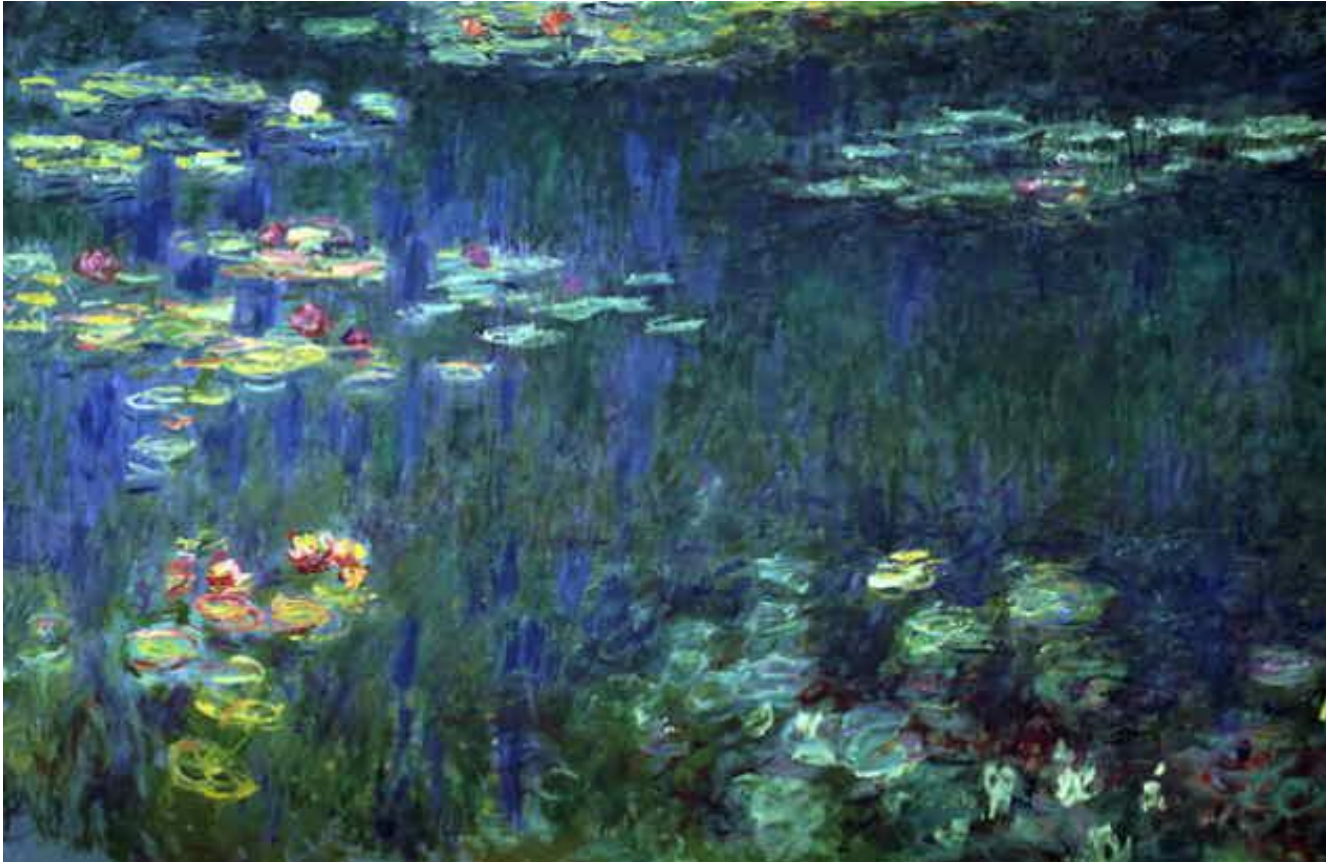
- Things we know:
 - Night club in Paris for upper middle class
 - Actual waitress
- Things we don't know:
 - Reflection in mirror does not match up
 - Distance/ vacancy in her eyes, inaccessible
 - Bored? Sulky? Sad?
 - Detachment from her surroundings
- Manet's final painting

Claude Monet

**Most committed
Impressionist painter,
repeatedly painted objects
over and over to observe
how light affects colour**



Claude Monet – Water lilies



- Monet's garden
- Was nearly blind at the time
- Harmonious colour
- Not traditional landscape – no horizon
- Rough application of paint, layers
- Colours are overlaid, not blended
- Play of light reflecting on water

Claude Monet — Water lilies and the Japanese Bridge



- ❑ Monet's garden
- ❑ Solid colours
- ❑ Short brushstrokes
- ❑ Layering single colours
- ❑ Painted multiply canvases at once to catch light at different times of day

Pierre-Auguste Renoir

Famous for rosy-cheeked people in social settings



Renoir – Dance at the Moulin de Galette

- Moments in time, fleeting effects of light
- Showcased people in social setting (home is no longer a place for social gathering)
- Leisurely
- Interactions among groups
- Loose brushwork
- Radical at the time – no focus





Renoir – On the Terrace

- Middle/
upper class
- Moments in time
- Candid
- Loose brushwork
- Rosy-cheeks
- Unknowns



Edgar Degas, L'Etoile, 1878

Considered the master of drawing the human figure in motion

Known for paintings of ballerinas



- **Very diagonal compositions**
- **Figures tend to run-off sides**
- **Strong but natural light sources**
- **Unfinished backgrounds accentuate the action**

Edgar Degas, *Ballet Rehearsal*, 1876

- Frequent cut-off figures, objects, stairs = his interest in capturing single moments in time, like photography
- Prominent diagonals of floorboards carry viewers eyes throughout painting



Edgar Degas, *The Dancing Class*, 1873-75



- Often behind the scenes depictions
- Candid

Mary Cassatt

American-born

Known for women &
children in natural domestic
settings



- Responsible for the care of her aging parents.
- Could not frequent the cafes and bars with her male artist friends
- Because of these restrictions, Cassatt's subjects were principally women and children

Mary Cassatt, *The Bath*, 1892

- Tender relationship between a mother and child.
- Visual solidity of the mother and child contrasts with the flattened patterning of the wallpaper and rug.
- Moment in time



Mary Cassatt, *Mother and Child*, 1889



Contrast how Renoir and Cassatt depict the relationship between a guardian and a child

