

Manet's "olympia" and monet's "les nymphéas" (the water lilies)

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number 03 February Video Review: Manet, Olympia and Monet, Les Nymphéas (The Water Lilies In his colorful painting titled Olympia Edouard Manet exploits a tradition of making sensual portraits of young women, which is old as art itself. But his erotic painting of a nude woman differs strikingly from what we used to see in the similar artwork of the ancient Greeks and Romans. The immediate model for Manet's Olympia was Titian's Venus of Urbino. In his painting Manet rejects some elements of the academic technique stripping away a traditional veil of mythology intrinsic to paintings alike created by his forerunners. By his Olympia Manet dared to challenge the established artistic ideas. A nude woman portrayed in his painting does not possess idealistic features of goddesses from Renaissance portraits, for instance. There is no perfect beauty in the woman lying on a couch of her Paris apartment. Moreover, this woman was recognized as a prostitute, which added an element of vulgarity to the painting. In every detail of the painting Manet was trying to unmask a perfect illusion, which portraits of nude women used to have before.

2. A spectacular painting The Water Lilies was created by Claude Monet after the death of his wife and the death of his son in the decline of his years. This painting was not just an attempt to capture the beauty of this world found in his earlier paintings but a desire to preserve a certain sense of a beautiful moment that was to pass like any other. The surface is somewhat rough and is painted with dry brush layer by layer. A fabulous color harmony makes the painting of a small pond located in Monet's backyard even more beautiful than reality. Monet places a viewer in a strange position, from which neither the ground nor the horizon could be seen. The reflection of weeping willows

in the water frames the painting just like trees do in classical landscape paintings, but the lack of perspective to the horizon defies classical standards of landscape painting aesthetics. Monet managed to convey the infinity of depth of the water combined with the infinite sky and saturated clouds reflected in the pond, which altogether give us a sense of permanence and transcendence at the same time.

Works Cited

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