

# Ernest I. blumenschein



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Full What Makes a Painting Stand Out Ernest Blumenschein's "Eagle Fan" is a painting made of oil on canvass. It is a portrait of an Indian-American holding what could be supposed as a fan made from eagle's feathers which explain the title of the artwork. From the way the subject is dressed, his background could obviously be determined. He has a headdress made from feathers which is widely used among the native Americans especially those who have high positions in the community. The subject in the painting also reflects the artist's interest in the back-numbered life in the southwest which was not yet greatly influenced by European cultures.

The painting beautifully depicts the young man in a photographic manner. The artist effectively used colors not only to create a natural look on the details of the painting but also to express the culture of the subject. Native Americans are known to use colorful woven garments and this painting illustrates how color is important to them. The man's headdress and the eagle fan are remarkably crimson in color which often symbolizes royalty in most cultures. The two different kinds of feather are distinctively defined not only by their colors but also by their texture. This is created through the use of thick, long brushstrokes and thin, short brushstrokes. The long and thick brushstrokes create the rougher texture of the bigger feathers while the short and thin brushstrokes give a more defined detail of the finer feathers. These finer feathers are colored brown and black which gives a contrasting color to the dominant red. There are also black lines in between the red feathers which effectively show the divisions of the feathers and shows in detail how they are arranged with one feather placed on top of another. Other colors used on the headdress are white, blue and yellow which also add to the contrasting hues to the warm color red.

The simple off-white shirt also contrasts the grand elements of the headdress and the fan. It is portrayed as naturally as it would be look on a person. There are creases on the clothing which is created through the use of short, thick brushstrokes. Darker colors are also used to emphasize the folds, making an impression that the folds create a shadow on the garment. This technique makes the folds stand out. Such also create an almost photographic image because even though the painting is two-dimensional, the image reflects a three-dimensional characteristic. This is evident especially on the midsection of the painting wherein the part of the man's headdress overlaps his hair and chest part. The same is true with the hand and eagle fan overlapping parts of the hair and chest. The hand is shown to be holding the fan tightly not only because of the closed fist but also because the hand covers the handle of the fan which suggests that it is behind the hand. This suggests a sense of thickness and distance meaning, there are spaces in between the aforementioned parts of the image and that they also have a certain thickness. In addition to the characteristics of the painting mentioned above, it is perhaps important to mention that the background could have been intentionally left clear. This makes the subject stand out more and takes the attention of the viewer more focused on the image portrayed.