

Edgar degas research

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Edgar Degas was both a man and an artist of contradictions. The French artist, painter, and sculptor Edgar Degas was born on July 19, 1834 in Paris, France. Degas died September 27, 1917 in Paris, France. Degas is associated historically with the Impressionists because of his concentration on scenes of contemporary life and he never painted outdoors and rarely depicted landscape and also his desire to capture the transitory moment. Degas surpassed other impressionists in compositional sense; his use of vibrant expressive color became his primary concern in his late works.

Degas was one of the first to understand and creatively use the new pictorial possibilities offered by photography and Japanese prints. With that being said, in describing the physical characteristics of one of Degas's most famous still life paintings, was titled "Woman with Chrysanthemums", painted in the year 1865. The medium used was oil on canvas and the scale was 29" x 36 1/2". The subject is a female figure depicted sitting at the right side of a table with a bouquet of flowers in the center and also a glass pitcher of water with gloves placed beside the glass pitcher.

The painting is objective, and it is because the huge bouquet of flowers opens the viewer's eye and draws one into the still life painting dominating almost overshadowing the figure. As an artist Degas utilized several major elements of art in his still life famous painting, "Woman with Chrysanthemums", therefore, one of the major elements utilized was use Lines. Degas utilized lines in his painting of the table and the open window at the right side of the painting. A second element of art utilized in this painting was the use Color.

Degas uses bright spots of color in the bouquet, yellow, red, and specifically white, mostly the general coloring of the painting was subdued, with shades of brown being the predominate coloring. Degas utilized a third element of art being Space. Degas captured the look of Japanese prints and influenced Degas's painting, as Japanese also is the shallowness of the space, accented by the flowered wallpaper to the left of the picture. A fourth major element utilized in Degas's "Woman with Chrysanthemums" described is use Mass. The artist utilized mass with the fullness of the massive bouquet of flowers.

Degas utilized the element of texture brilliantly in his rendering of the colorful bouquet of mums. In describing how Degas organized the elements with the principles of design, firstly, unity and variety is utilized with the consistency of color throughout the painting. The mass bouquet of flowers dominates the center, the flowered wall paper behind the table and the flowers that are seen through the open window on the right of the painting. Utilizing another one of the elements of art and principles of design, Degas utilized Balance in this particular painting.

Degas placed the woman figure at the far right where she occupies less than a third of the composition, her body cut in half by the picture's edge. The mass of flowers dominates the center, and the glass pitcher and the lady's gloves casually tossed on the table, help to balance the composition, which in turn acts as a visual foil to the figure. Emphasis is utilized in the painting as Degas captured the visual appearance, an impression of the inner mood of the woman staring off in to space, her cheek resting on her hand, looking as though she is lost in reflection and unaware of the encroaching bouquet of Chrysanthemums.

Directional Forces utilized are using the implied lines for the viewer's eye to follow the beautiful colors throughout the painting. Also, another way the artist utilized elements with the principles would be through Contrast. The difference between the artist's use of light and dark throughout his painting. In describing how Degas organized the elements with the principles of design, Repetition and Rhythm with the vivid colors of the flowers flow through and gives the composition unity.

Moving along describing the organized elements with the principles of design, scale and proportion, in which the figure of the woman compared to the enormous still life. Degas was influenced by the Impressionist during his time, and also he had formed some friendships. Most importantly Edgar Degas was highly influenced by the Japanese prints and photography. He also carried over the Japanese influence and used the symbolic flower of Japan, once known as The Land of Chrysanthemums in his paintings.

Furthermore, Degas created many daring compositional innovations. His study of Japanese prints led him to experiment with unusual visual lines and asymmetrical compositions. His subjects would often seem cropped at the edges, or seemed to appear to be accidental cutoff views and off-centered subjects, as in *Woman with Chrysanthemums*. Moreover, Degas's content and meaning of the selection was the woman in the painting staring off into space, her cheek resting on her hand, lost in deep thought unaware of the dominating bouquet of Chrysanthemums.

In conclusion, Edgar Degas's painting of " *Woman with Chrysanthemums*" was chosen because of its unusual and unique composition. Also, the

unusually unbalanced painting made curiosity prevail. The asymmetrical principle of design and accidental cutoff views were intriguing as to why Edgar Degas painted as he once did long ago. Personally liking Chrysanthemums and beautiful bouquets of flowers made the painting easy to choose for the essay. Edgar Degas truly was both a man and an artist of contradictions.