

Fantin-Latour and the Problem of the Group in Nineteenth-Century French Painting



Fellow Men: Fantin-Latour and the Problem of the Group in Nineteenth-Century French Painting

by Bridget Alsdorf

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) was a French painter known for his portraits and genre scenes. He was a prominent member of the Realist movement, and his work often reflected the social and cultural changes of his time.

One of the most striking features of Fantin-Latour's paintings is his focus on groups of people. He painted numerous group portraits, as well as genre scenes depicting people interacting in various settings. This focus on the group was unusual for the time, as most artists preferred to paint individuals.

In this article, we will explore the significance of Fantin-Latour's focus on the group in nineteenth-century French painting. We will examine the

different ways in which he depicted groups, and we will consider the social and cultural factors that influenced his choice of subject matter.

Fantin-Latour's Group Portraits

Fantin-Latour's group portraits are some of his most famous works. He painted portraits of artists, writers, musicians, and other celebrities of his time. These portraits often depicted the subjects in a relaxed and informal setting, and they reveal a great deal about the personalities and relationships of the people involved.

One of the most famous examples of Fantin-Latour's group portraits is *A Studio at Les Batignolles* (1870). This painting depicts a group of young artists who were part of the Batignolles group, a loose association of artists who shared a commitment to Realism.



Another notable group portrait by Fantin-Latour is *A Corner of the Table* (1872). This painting depicts a group of writers and critics who were part of the Naturalist movement, a literary movement that emphasized the depiction of everyday life.

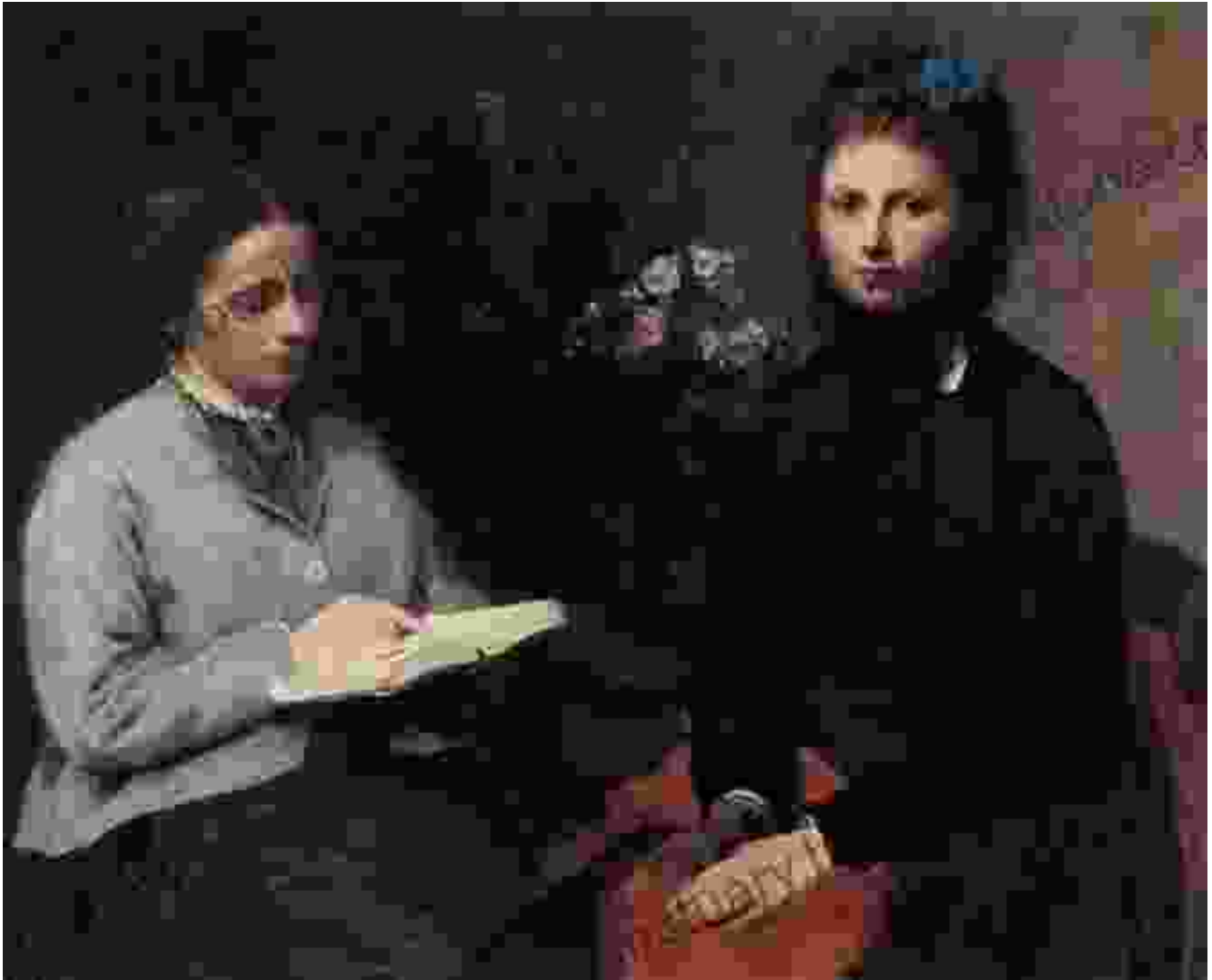


Henri Fantin-Latour, *A Corner of the Table*, 1872. Oil on canvas, 65 × 81 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.

Fantin-Latour's Genre Scenes

In addition to his group portraits, Fantin-Latour also painted a number of genre scenes depicting people interacting in various settings. These scenes often provide a glimpse into the everyday life of nineteenth-century France.

One example of Fantin-Latour's genre scenes is *The Reading* (1877). This painting depicts a young woman reading to her family. The painting is notable for its realism and its depiction of a domestic scene.



Another example of Fantin-Latour's genre scenes is *The Corner of the Table* (1885). This painting depicts a group of people sitting around a table in a cafe. The painting is notable for its depiction of the urban life of Paris.



Henri Fantin-Latour, *The Corner of the Table*, 1885. Oil on canvas, 81 × 65 cm. Minneapolis Institute of Art, Minneapolis.

The Significance of Fantin-Latour's Focus on the Group

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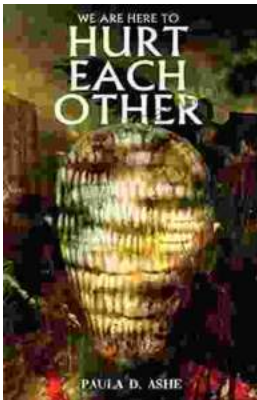
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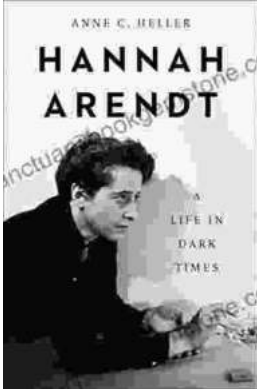
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