

Soyer, Moses (1899-1974), twin brother is Raphael Soyer
b. Borisoglebsk, Russia; lived New York City

EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- Free classes with brother at Cooper Union, then National Academy of Design, Ferrer Art School and finally the Art School of the Educational Alliance. Also studied in Europe. Eventually taught at Educational Alliance School.
- Influenced by Rembrandt, Corot, Degas. Was student of Robert Henri. Also influenced by Eakins and Hopper, Daumier and Courbet.
- Encouraged by parents-3 Soyer brothers became artists.

BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Works are American people/subject-felt that as American artist, it was inappropriate to imitate European artists, but was influenced by them. Jewish subject matter absent. Also did many portraits.
- Directness of presentation, clarity of form. Believed practice of drawing essential for an artist.
- Used models from the street-all types and sizes. Also interested in dancers-wife was a dancer.
- Worked for WPA. Led quiet social protests about unemployment, working conditions, etc. but like brother Raphael, did not paint works with an activist bent. Called himself a 'Humanist Realist'.
- Realism-interpret the essence of a subject to reveal truths hidden by ordinary appearance vs. Naturalism-shallow glance at surface appearance to depict accuracy.
- Never interested in Abstract Exp. but after it developed his brushwork did become freer, palette brightened, looser forms.
- Interested in conveying his feelings for a subject, uncover the secrets of his sitters, render world with simplicity and directness. Blends objectivity (recording appearances) with subjectivity (combining emotion in representing reality).

KIA WORK-*Girl Buttoning Sweater*, 1949, oil on canvas

- fairly loose brushwork, subdued palette, painting in background adds interest and texture and frames figure.
- Isolated figure, solitary, lonely?
- Eyes downcast-are we more of a voyeur in this work than the Raphael Soyer painting? Why or why not?

