

Soyer, Raphael (1899-1987); twin brother is Moses Soyer
b. Borisoglebsk, Russia; lived New York City

EDUCATION/INFLUENCES

- Free classes at Cooper Union, then National Academy, Art Students League, some study/travel in Europe. Influenced by Degas, 16th and 17th century masters, especially Rembrandt; Eakins and other American realists-Hopper, Marsh, etc. Learned to paint and draw from model. Wanted to forget all he learned at Academy and paint in straightforward way about ordinary subjects.
- Encouraged by parents-3 Soyer brothers became artists.

BIG IDEAS/THEMES

- Inspired by New York City and its people, show life with realism and deep sympathy but without social propaganda. Portrayed women often-show character/physical presence-as an individual character. Grew up in poor neighborhood in Bronx-used regular people as models.
- Art has simplicity and absence of academic formulas, flat patterns, concern for naturalistic light, subdued colors, rounded forms. Uses light to model forms.
- Strong political convictions but kept them out of his work-wanted objective portrayal of underprivileged with deep sympathy.
- Later works show a freer handling of paint and showed characters of the changing American city-hippies, poets, artists.
- Prolific portrait painter. Didn't flatter human forms-wanted to show truth of character. Also did self-portraits.
- Works are quiet, introspective-artist was very shy. Wanted psychological content.

KIA WORK-*Seated Dancer*, 1950-1965, oil on canvas

- Often did single figures, sitting, eyes downcast, withdrawn from viewer-lonely figure. What is the overall mood?
- Interested in modern dance and dancers but usually showed them at rest (not good at portraying movement)
- Calm, subdued colors, fairly tight and controlled handling of paint. Small, intimate scene.
- Viewer doesn't feel too much like the voyeur-just coming upon scene of female dancer sitting. Is she resting from exertion and removing her sweater or getting ready to warm up?

