



Grant Wood
Self Portrait, 1932-1941
Oil on masonite, 1961.1

Self Portrait



Grant Wood (1891-1942) Grant Wood's style was initially influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement and then Impressionism; as he matured, his style shifted and became notable for its level of clarity and detail. This is attributed to his interest in the fifteenth-century Northern European paintings he saw during his multiple trips to Europe, such as works by Albrecht Dürer and Hans Memling.

A product of its time

Grant Wood was one of the foremost Regionalist artists. His artworks are identified in the Regionalist tradition, alongside prominent artists John Steuart Curry and Thomas Hart Benton. Regionalism became popular in America during and after the Great Depression, as much of the content focused on reassuring images from the Midwest, including the beauty of the land and the goodness of the people.

Take a closer look

Grant Wood employed a technique called Pointillism in *Self Portrait*. Pointillism is a late 19th-century technique that was introduced by George Seurat and involves painting small dots of pure colors that exist next to each other without physically mixing them in order to create an image. The viewer will see the complete image because of the eye's natural process of optical mixing, which blends the colors together optically to create even brighter colors.

Did you know?

Grant Wood is known for having frequently worn overalls and originally painted himself wearing them in *Self Portrait*, only later deciding to cover his white shirt and overalls with the heavy blue pigment that now represents a shirt.

On your own

Grant Wood Archive: <http://figgeartmuseum.org/Grant-Wood.aspx>

Cedar Rapids Museum of Art: <http://www.crma.org/Content/Grant-Wood.aspx>

American Gothic House: <http://www.americangothichouse.net>

University of Virginia: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~ma98/haven/wood/intro.html>