Modern Art: Social Realities

George Bellows
He was an American painter, known for his bold depictions of urban life in New York City. *The Cliff Dwellers* has been interpreted as a critical social statement about the lower class poor in New York City. His urban landscape depict some of the worst of New York City’s ghettos in the midst of a heat wave, the suffering masses almost literally melting into the streets from the open windows and fire escapes of their tenement slums.

Jacob Lawrence
He learned his art in Harlem during the 1920s in a government sponsored workshop. After his first exhibition at age 21, he began several series of paintings about the heritage of his people and the black struggle for equality. His angular, hard-edge style - he called it “dynamic cubism” is appropriate for his subjects which show struggle, hardship and clashing ideologies.
Edward Hopper, Nighthawks, 1942.

Edward Hopper

He was an American painter whose stark, precisely realistic paintings often convey a mood of solitude and isolation within common-place urban settings. His Nighthawks, depicts lonely customers frequenting a downtown all-night diner. The diner’s harsh electric lights set it off from the gentle night outside.

Make a Sketch of Hopper’s Nighthawks Use Line, Proportion and Detail throughout your drawing.

K/U Use of Line, Proportion & Detail: