

Jean-Honore Fragonard (1732-1806)

Jean-Honore Fragonard was born in Provence in the town of Grasse. At the age of 18, he left home for Paris where he studied with Boucher and possibly with Chardin. He was awarded the *Prix de Rome* in 1752 but studied with Vanloo and Lépicié before going to Rome in 1756. In 1759 Fragonard and his contemporary, Hubert Robert, were invited to accompany the Abbe de Saint-Non on a trip to southern Italy and Sicily. The two young men, each strongly influencing the other, sketched and painted archeological scenes, landscapes and religious and genre works, all on a small scale. During the trip, Fragonard had the opportunity to study the richly colored and highly lit works of the Neapolitan painters and, returning to Paris by way of Venice, also studied his Venetian contemporaries and the works of older Venetian, Dutch and Flemish masters, some of whose work he copied.

Upon his return to France in 1761, Fragonard was admitted to the Academy with a work more classical in subject than in execution. Then, in 1765, he gave up historical and religious paintings to work in the style for which he is best known, painting landscapes and interiors peopled with enchanting young lovers, cupids and Venuses, in a refreshingly lights atmosphere of pure *joie de vivre*. Among his famous patrons were Madame de Pompadour, the financier Bergeret (who accompanied him to Italy again in 1773) and Madame du Barry for whom he painted the great panels of *Progress in Love*, now in the Frick Museum in New York. Du Barry refused the completed works and Fragonard kept them in his own home, taking them with him to Grasse when he fled the horrors of the Revolution in 1790.

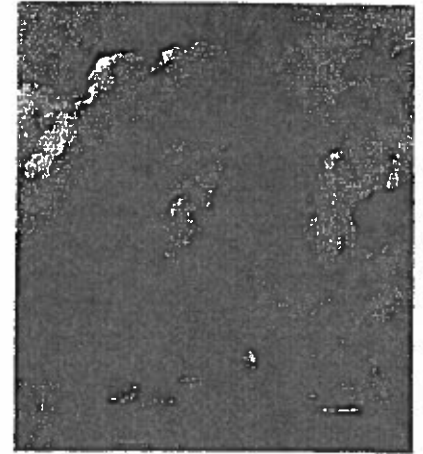
The artist returned to Paris where he had already received official recognition and was made a member of the Jury of Arts and named to a post in the newly created Louvre Museum. He had, however, outlived his period and the sober thought of the revolutionary era, indicated in the painting of David, could not include Fragonard. He was ousted from his Louvre apartment in 1806 and deprived of his pension, and died in poverty in the same year.

One of the most brilliantly original French painters of the late eighteenth century, Fragonard painted with a spontaneity and a fluidity of technique that recall Rubens. His imagination, delicate wit and refinement combined to create volatile poetic canvases that present the best aspects of the period of Louis XVI.

Blindman's Bluff (1765)

Although indubitably French in spirit and design, this painting includes in its landscape details the tall cypress trees and the fountain that Fragonard sketched at the Tivoli gardens in Rome. The landscape in this work is much more important than the human figures which are small in comparison to the grandeur of nature. But Fragonard has spotlighted the central blindfolded figure with a ray of sunshine, thus giving her more importance than her fellow players who are half lost in the shadows. This principle of focusing on a figure or object by the use of light or color, typical of eighteenth-century French art, may be noted again in the red costume of the reclining youth in the center foreground and in the colors that draw the viewer's eyes to the watching figures at the right.

Artist(last name/first)	Fragonard, Jean-Honoré
Birth/Death / Nationality	1732-1806 French
Title of Work	Blind-Man's Buff
Date of Work	1765
Period or Style	Rococo
Size and Medium	22.5 x 28.5
Location of this Work	National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC
Other Works by Artist	The Swing, A Young Girl Reading a Book



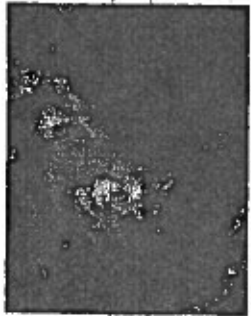
Most Important Facts about Artist or Painting:
 Artist: 1. Studied under Boucher and also a court painter to Louis XV.
 2. Painted playful hedonism in a Rococo style + historic references
 This 3. Produced 550 paintings, plus etchings and drawings.
 Painting 1. Is the Tivoli Gardens in Rome, shown over grown.
 2. Symbolizes the game of courtship, rich, whimsical life style

Biographical Highlights Of Artist
 Fragonard moved to Paris at the age of six. He was apprenticed to Francois Boucher, a well-know 18th C. French Rococo painter. He also studied at the French Academy in Rome under the court painter to Louis XV. He studied Italian Baroque painting, landscape and antiquities. On return to Paris, he received commissions from Louis XV's pleasure loving court. He painted exuberant landscapes, portraits, and semi-erotic outdoor party scenes in the Rococo style (light-hearted subject matter, pastel colors and sinuous curves based on vines and flowers.) He received commissions from Mme. du Barry, the mistress to Louis XV, but the works were rejected probably because of the intimate nature and the Rococo style which was now being replaced by the neoclassical (noble) sensibilities preceding the French Revolution. He attempted more neoclassical subject matter. He left Paris during the French Revolution (1789-199) and when he returned found that most of his patrons had been exiled or guillotined. He died in obscurity at age 74. He produced 550 paintings, many etchings and drawings.

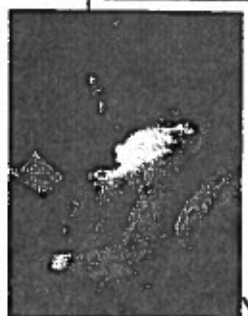
Information about THIS Painting
 This painting dates from his "middle" years when he painted in his Rococo style for his royal commissions. Here well dressed men, women and children play blindman's bluff in an overgrown garden setting....The Tivoli Gardens of Rome. It symbolizes the game of courtship. The trees and sky are overpowering in size to the figures, but elements of civilization are taming nature (the fountain, arbors, sculptures, walls and people.) Above the cliff is a statue with a Roman helmet. The fountain also has classic Roman figures. A waterfall comes down from the between the oversized trees. A setting sun illuminates the people enjoying a hedonistic leisure...a picnic, lovers talking. This piece was done as a companion piece to "The Swing".

Presentation Ideas and Questions
 Do the people look like they are having a good time? What are their actives?
 Have you ever seen trees this big? What is the statue above the cliff?
 Look at the clouds. Is there a storm coming?
 What kinds of things have you seen in parks you have been to? Statues, fountains, lawns, walls?
 Point out that Fragonard was Berthe Morisot's grandfather.

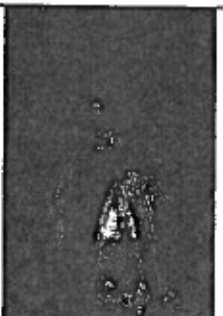
Compare or Contrast to
 To other types of landscapes: Rousseau's, Remington's .
 Ask which other painting in the group could be Fragonard's, but at night....Point out that Whistler's is also a park where fireworks at night were one of the favored activities.



The Swing



Young Girl Reading a Book



Stolen Kiss

instead decided to pursue the significantly more lucrative genre of erotic art, in which he had already established a reputation.

In 1766 Fragonard was commissioned to paint the now-famous canvas *The Swing* (1766-67). After this he received a steady stream of commissions for erotic or sensual paintings from various wealthy patrons throughout Paris. In 1767 Fragonard exhibited at the Salon again, where his erotic scenes understandably came under fire from critics, marking this as his last appearance at the Salon. Undeterred, he continued to paint erotic commissions, as well as a series of portraits of his friends and patrons in fancy dresses, such as *The Actor* (1769).

Three years later Fragonard married Marie-Anne Gérard, the elder daughter of a perfumer from Grasse, who had originally come to Fragonard for instruction in painting. Although the marriage was a fairly happy one, Marie-Anne was a homely woman, and Fragonard later showed a marked interest in her significantly more charming younger sister, Marguerite Gérard, who came to live with the Fragonards in 1775 to take painting lessons.

In 1771 Fragonard was commissioned by Madame du Barry, King Louis XV's mistress to paint four panels for a new garden pavilion at her château de Louveciennes. The result was the *Progress of Love* series (1770-1772), which was later returned to the painter in 1773 and replaced with a set of panels in the new semi-classical style. Fragonard was deeply hurt by this turn of events, refusing the payment offered with the paintings' return.

Later that year Fragonard went on a second trip to Italy, this time at the expense of Bergeret de Grancourt, a wealthy financier, who would soon become an important patron. Upon his return, Fragonard used his refreshed memories of the Italian landscape to paint a series of canvases, including *The Swing* (1775) and *Blind Man's Bluff* (1775). During this period he also painted a number of domestic scenes and portraits of women, including *A Young Girl Reading* (1775) and *The Love Letter* (1775).

By 1780 Fragonard's career had passed its peak. Erotic paintings and the exuberant decorative style he was known for had gradually begun to go out of fashion, replaced by Neo-Classicism, which would gain more popularity in the years leading up to the French Revolution. When the Revolution did occur in 1789, Fragonard and his family were not affected in any significant way, although they did flee to Grasse during the Terror. They returned in 1791, and a year later Fragonard's son entered the studio of arguably the most influential painters in France, *Jacques-Louis David*. It was thanks to him that Fragonard gained an administrative post in the newly formed Museums Commission in 1793. The post granted him free accommodation at the Louvre and a steady income which allowed him to live in comfort for the next handful of years.

By 1799, however, he was ousted from both the Commission and the Louvre, when Napoleon decided to turn it into a museum. The Fragonards took lodgings with Marguerite Gérard in the Palais Royale. Fragonard died seven years later on 22 August 1806.

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Bibliography:

Fragonard. Biographical and Critical Study by Jacques Thuillier. 1967. Geneva.

Egyptian Art- Unknown

Milton Avery

2.2 AVERY, MILTON

1893-1965 United States

White Rooster (1947)

oil on canvas, 61 1/2" x 50 3/4" (156 x 129 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Gift of Joyce Blaffer von Bothmer, 1975

The Artist

Milton Avery was born in Altman, New York, in 1893. In 1905, he moved with his family to Hartford, Connecticut, where he studied art briefly. Avery was essentially self-taught, relying on the adoption of European trends to create an original yet intimate art.

Avery was greatly influenced by the French artist Henri Matisse. Matisse rejected the use of local or descriptive color in his art and sought to reduce objects to their essentials to emphasize overall decorative qualities. Though Matisse is considered an Expressionist by some, he, unlike his German counterparts, did not portray the anxiety or social ills of his time. He sought to create an aesthetic object that heightened one's senses to the beauty that surrounds us.

Following in Matisse's footsteps, Avery turned to the people and scenes of his everyday life for the subject of his paintings. These include many fine portraits of his wife, Sally, also a painter; of his daughter, March, as well as rural scenes he recorded during summer vacations in Vermont and Maine. These thinly painted oils are tender poems constructed with lovely shades of pink, purple, orange, yellow, blue and green.

Avery had his first one-man show in 1928. He was a highly respected artist and was an important influence on the next generation of Abstract Expressionist artists as they continued to explore the powers of color, while often eschewing even the simplest figuration. Avery's art particularly influenced Rothko and Gottlieb. While alive, Avery was given two retrospective exhibitions: one in 1952 at the Baltimore Museum and one in 1960 at the Whitney Museum of American Art in New York. Two posthumous retrospective exhibitions were held in 1983, one at the Albright-Knox Art Gallery in Buffalo and one at the Minneapolis Institute of Art.

The Image

In *White Rooster*, Avery draws our attention to a fantasy landscape inhabited by a large rooster and two much smaller brown hens. Avery does not depend solely on his eccentric use of color to draw our attention away from the expectations of realism. In this topsy-turvy world, the rooster, though close to its true color, is particularly massive. In this work, Avery subverts the illusion of a three-dimensional realm to draw our attention, not only on the huge rooster, but also on the flowing shapes that remain on the surface of the canvas. These shapes of intense color, ruffled by an invisible breeze, remind us that a painting is called a painting because it is truly about paint.

Dominant Elements and Principles of Design

The two dominant elements of art used are:

Color In this work, a tree with impossible blue foliage and a gray/blue trunk stands out in front of varying shades of undulating pink that define the landscape. The vivid green in the background seems a much more naturalistic rendering of green trees on rolling mountains, but closer inspection reveals that what is visible is a curving pattern of green paint.

Shape All the shapes depicted here are done in curves: the tree, the rooster, the hens. Everything is rounded. Even the sinuous lines in the background suggest hills and space.

The main principle of design used is:

Dominance The huge white rooster, enormous in comparison with the little hens and the blue tree, is planted right in the center of the painting. The viewer's eye is irresistibly drawn to him; one's gaze starts at the curve of the tail, slides along the length of the only straight line in the image to stop at the tiny pecking head, not far from the heads of the two hens. The whole image is a hymn to the rooster (to nature? the country? virility? the protector?).

Suggested Activity

Theme Have students work on the theme of hens and roosters, preferably after having shown them some slides of different types of roosters.

Media Oil or soft pastels on 12" x 18" (31 x 46 cm) construction paper.

Guillaume Maccabee

246 MACCABÉE, GUILLAUME

1975- Canada

La fiesta del corazón (Festival of the heart) (2004)

Mixed media, 8.5 x 11 in (21.5 x 28 cm)

Artist's collection

The Artist

At the age of 22, when he had completed his studies in literature, Guillaume Maccabée obtained his first illustration contract. He is a self-taught multidisciplinary artist, who has worked as a freelance illustrator for close to ten years. He has worked in the advertising and corporate worlds as well as for children's publishing and animation. He has been an active member of Quebec's illustrators' association for several years; as a member of the administrative committee, he has been able to participate in the development and recognition of the profession of illustrator in Quebec.

The Image

For Guillaume Maccabée, the festival of the heart evokes the celebration of love, which encompasses everything and transforms how we look at difference, diversity, and adversity. His style is colorful and grotesque, and he outlines forms with a skillful black line. One can recognize the images of people and animals representing different nationalities and human characters. If we look carefully, we can see a multitude of tiny details that create a festive atmosphere.



Edgar Degas

Barbara

①

Edgar Degas

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

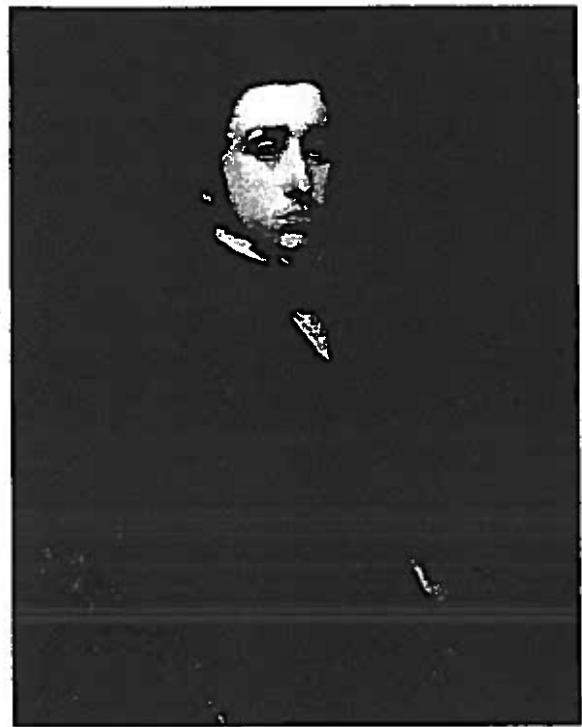
Edgar Degas^[p] (19 July 1834 – 27 September 1917), born **Hilaire-Germain-Edgar De Gas** (French pronunciation: [ilɛʁ ʒɛʁmɛnɛdɡaʁ dəˈɡa]), was a French artist famous for his work in painting, sculpture, printmaking and drawing. He is regarded as one of the founders of Impressionism although he rejected the term, and preferred to be called a realist.^[1] A superb draughtsman, he is especially identified with the subject of the dance, and over half his works depict dancers. These display his mastery in the depiction of movement, as do his racecourse subjects and female nudes. His portraits are notable for their psychological complexity and depiction of human isolation.^[2]

Early in his career, his ambition was to be a history painter, a calling for which he was well prepared by his rigorous academic training and close study of classic art. In his early thirties, he changed course, and by bringing the traditional methods of a history painter to bear on contemporary subject matter, he became a classical painter of modern life.^[3]

Early life

Degas was born in Paris, France, the eldest of five children of Célestine

Edgar Degas



Self-portrait (*Degas au porte-fusain*), 1855

Birth name	Hilaire-Germain-Edgar De Gas
Born	19 July 1834 Paris, France
Died	27 September 1917 (aged 83) Paris, France
Nationality	French
Field	Painting, Sculpture, Drawing
Movement	Impressionism
Works	<i>The Bellelli Family</i> (1858-1867) <i>Woman with Chrysanthemums</i> (1865) <i>Chanteuse de Café</i> (c.1878) <i>At the Milliner's</i> (1882)

Musson De Gas and Augustin De Gas, a banker. The family was moderately wealthy. His mother died when Degas was thirteen, after which his father and grandfather were the main influences on his early life. At age eleven, Degas (in adulthood he abandoned the more pretentious spelling of the family name)^[4] began his schooling with enrollment in the Lycée Louis-le-Grand, graduating in 1853 with a *baccalauréat* in literature.

Influenced Mary Cassatt, Jean-Louis Forain, Walter Sickert, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

Degas began to paint early in his life. By eighteen, he had turned a room in his home into an artist's studio, and in 1853 he registered as a copyist in the Louvre. His father, however, expected him to go to law school. Degas duly registered at the Faculty of Law of the University of Paris in November 1853, but made little effort at his studies there. In 1855, Degas met Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, whom he revered, and whose advice he never forgot: "Draw lines, young man, and still more lines, both from life and from memory, and you will become a good artist."^[5] In April of that same year, Degas received admission to the École des Beaux-Arts, where he studied drawing with Louis Lamothe, under whose guidance he flourished, following the style of Ingres.^[6] In July 1856, Degas traveled to Italy, where he would remain for the next three years. In 1858, while staying with his aunt's family in Naples, he made the first studies for his early masterpiece, *The Bellelli Family*. He also drew and painted copies after Michelangelo, Raphael, Titian, and other artists of the Renaissance, often selecting from an altarpiece an individual head which he treated as a portrait.^[7] By 1860 Degas had made more than seven hundred^[citation needed] copies of works including Italian Renaissance and French Classical art.

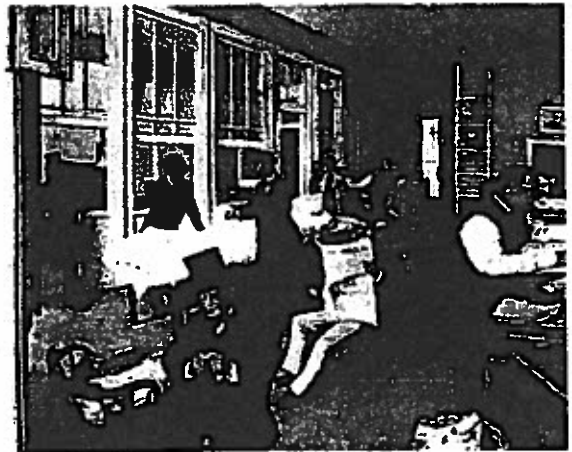
Artistic career

Although he exhibited annually in the Salon during the next five years, he submitted no more history paintings, and his *Steeplechase—The Fallen Jockey* (Salon of 1866) signaled his growing commitment to contemporary subject matter. The change in his art was influenced primarily by the example of Édouard Manet, whom Degas had met in 1864 (while both were copying the same Velázquez portrait in the Louvre, according to a story

At the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, Degas enlisted in the National Guard, where his defense of Paris left him little time for painting. During rifle training his eyesight was found to be defective, and for the rest of his life his eye problems were a constant worry to him.^[11]

not many shadows

After the war, in 1872, Degas began an extended stay in New Orleans, Louisiana, where his brother René and a number of other relatives lived. Staying in a house on Esplanade Avenue, Degas produced a number of works, many depicting family members. One of Degas' New Orleans works, depicting a scene at The Cotton Exchange at New Orleans, garnered favorable attention back in France, and was his only work purchased by a museum (that of Pau) during his lifetime.



The New Orleans Cotton Exchange, 1873

Degas returned to Paris in 1873. The following year his father died, and in the subsequent settling of the estate it was discovered that Degas' brother René had amassed enormous business debts. To preserve the family name, Degas was forced to sell his house and a collection of art he had inherited. Dependent for the first time in his life on sales of his artwork for income, he produced much of his greatest work during the decade beginning in 1874.^[12] By now thoroughly disenchanted with the Salon, Degas joined forces with a group of young artists who were intent upon organizing an independent exhibiting society. The first of their exhibitions, which were quickly dubbed Impressionist Exhibitions, was in 1874. The Impressionists subsequently held seven additional shows, the last in 1886. Degas took a leading role in organizing the exhibitions, and showed his work in all but one of them, despite his persistent conflicts with others in the group. He had little in common with Monet and the other landscape painters, whom he mocked for painting outdoors. Conservative in his social attitudes, he abhorred the scandal created by the exhibitions, as well as the publicity and advertising that his colleagues sought.^[1] He bitterly rejected the label Impressionist that the press had created and popularized, and his insistence on including non-Impressionist artists such as Jean-Louis Forain and Jean-François Raffaëlli in their exhibitions created rancor within the group, contributing to their eventual disbanding in 1886.^[13]

As his financial situation improved through sales of his own work, he was able to indulge his passion for collecting works by artists he admired: old masters such as El Greco and such

contemporaries as Manet, Pissarro, Cézanne, Gauguin, and Van Gogh. Three artists he idolized, Ingres, Delacroix, and Daumier, were especially well represented in his collection.^[14]

In the late 1880s, Degas also developed a passion for photography.^[15] He photographed many of his friends, often by lamplight, as in his double portrait of Renoir and Mallarmé. Other photographs, depicting dancers and nudes, were used for reference in some of Degas' drawings and paintings.^[16]

As the years passed, Degas became isolated, due in part to his belief that a painter could have no personal life.^[17] The Dreyfus Affair controversy brought his anti-Semitic leanings to the fore and he broke with all his Jewish friends.^[18] His argumentative nature was deplored by Renoir, who said of him: "What a creature he was, that Degas! All his friends had to leave him; I was one of the last to go, but even I couldn't stay till the end."^[19]

Although he is known to have been working in pastel as late as the end of 1907, and is believed to have continued making sculpture as late as 1910, he apparently ceased working in 1912, when the impending demolition of his longtime residence on the rue Victor Massé forced a wrenching move to quarters on the boulevard de Clichy.^[20] He never married and spent the last years of his life, nearly blind, restlessly wandering the streets of Paris^[21] before dying in 1917.

Artistic style

Degas is often identified as an Impressionist, an understandable but insufficient description. Impressionism originated in the 1860s and 1870s and grew, in part, from the realism of such painters as Courbet and Corot. The Impressionists painted the realities of the world around them using bright, "dazzling" colors, concentrating primarily on the effects of light, and hoping to infuse their scenes with immediacy.



The Dance Class (La Classe de Danse), 1873–1876, oil on canvas, by Edgar Degas

Technically, Degas differs from the Impressionists in that he "never adopted the Impressionist color fleck",^[22] and he continually belittled their practice of painting *en plein air*.^[23] "He was often as anti-impressionist as the critics who reviewed the shows", according to art historian Carol Armstrong; as Degas himself explained, "no art was ever less spontaneous than mine. What I do is the result of reflection and of the study of the great masters; of inspiration, spontaneity, temperament, I know nothing."^[24] Nonetheless, he is described more accurately as an Impressionist than as a member of any other movement. His scenes of Parisian life, his off-center compositions, his experiments with color and form, and his friendship with several key Impressionist artists—most notably Mary Cassatt and Édouard Manet—all relate him intimately to the Impressionist movement.^[25]



L'Absinthe, 1876, oil on canvas,
by Edgar Degas

By the late 1860s, Degas had shifted from his initial forays into history painting to an original observation of contemporary life. Racecourse scenes provided an opportunity to depict horses and their riders in a modern context. He began to paint women at work, milliners and laundresses. *Mlle. Fiocre in the Ballet La Source*, exhibited in the Salon of 1868, was his first major work to introduce a subject with which he would become especially identified, dancers.^[27]

In many subsequent paintings dancers were shown backstage or in rehearsal, emphasizing their status as professionals doing a job. From 1870 Degas increasingly painted ballet subjects, partly because they sold well and provided him with needed income after his brother's debts had left the family bankrupt.^[28] Degas began to paint café life as well. He urged other artists to paint "real life" instead of traditional mythological or historical

In his paintings of dancers and laundresses, he reveals their occupations not only by their dress and activities but also by their body type. His ballerinas exhibit an athletic physicality, while his laundresses are heavy and solid.^[34]

By the later 1870s Degas had mastered not only the traditional medium of oil on canvas, but pastel as well. The dry medium, which he applied in complex layers and textures, enabled him more easily to reconcile his facility for line with a growing interest in expressive color.

These changes in media engendered the paintings that Degas would produce in later life. Degas began to draw and paint women drying themselves with towels, combing their hair, and bathing (see: *After the Bath*). The strokes that model the form are scribbled more freely than before; backgrounds are simplified.



La Toilette (Woman Combing Her Hair), c. 1884–1886, pastel on paper, by Edgar Degas, Pushkin Museum, Moscow

The meticulous naturalism of his youth gave way to an increasing abstraction of form. Except for his characteristically brilliant draftsmanship and obsession with the figure, the pictures created in this late period of his life bear little superficial resemblance to his early paintings. Ironically, it is these paintings, created late in his life, and after the heyday of the Impressionist movement, that most obviously use the coloristic techniques of Impressionism.^[36]

For all the stylistic evolution, certain features of Degas's work remained the same throughout his life. He always painted indoors, preferring to work in his studio, either from memory or using models.^[37] The figure remained his primary subject; his few landscapes were produced from memory or imagination. It was not unusual for him to repeat a subject many times, varying the composition or treatment. He was a deliberative artist whose works, as Andrew Forge has written, "were prepared, calculated, practiced, developed in stages. They were made up of parts. The adjustment of each part to the whole, their linear arrangement, was the occasion for infinite reflection and experiment."^[38] Degas himself explained, "In art, nothing should look like chance, not even movement".^[28]

Personality and politics

Degas, who believed that "the artist must live alone, and his private life must remain unknown",^[39] lived an outwardly uneventful life. In company he was known for his wit, which could often be cruel. He was characterized as an "old curmudgeon" by the novelist George Moore,^[39] and he deliberately cultivated his reputation as a misanthropic bachelor.^[19] Profoundly conservative in his political opinions, he opposed all social reforms and found little to admire in such technological advances as the telephone.^[39] He fired a model upon learning she was Protestant.^[39] Although Degas painted a number of Jewish subjects from 1865 to 1870, his anti-Semitism became apparent by the mid 1870s.

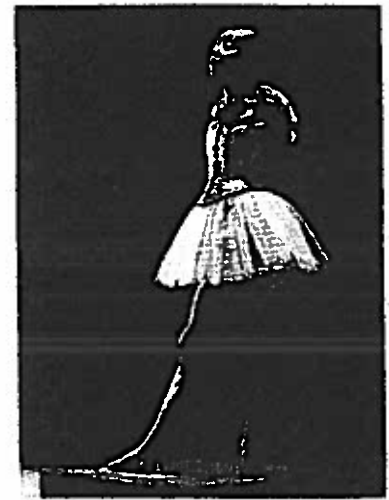
The Dreyfus Affair, which divided Paris from the 1890s to the early 1900s, further intensified his anti-Semitism. By the mid 1890s, he had broken off relations with all of his Jewish friends,^[18] publicly disavowed his previous friendships with Jewish artists, and refused to use models who he believed might be Jewish. He remained an outspoken anti-Semite and member of the anti-Semitic "Anti-Dreyfusards" until his death.^[41]

Reputation

During his life, public reception of Degas' work ranged from admiration to contempt. As a promising artist in the conventional mode, Degas had a number of paintings accepted in the Salon between 1865–1870. These works received praise from Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and the critic, Castagnary.^[42] He soon joined forces with the Impressionists, however, and rejected the rigid rules, judgements, and elitism of the Salon—just as the Salon and general public initially rejected the experimentalism of the Impressionists.

Degas's work was controversial, but was generally admired for its draftsmanship. His *La Petite Danseuse de Quatorze Ans*, or *Little Dancer of Fourteen Years*, which he displayed at the sixth Impressionist exhibition in 1881, was probably his most controversial piece; some critics decried what they thought its "appalling ugliness" while others saw in it a "blossoming."^[43] The suite of nudes Degas exhibited in the eighth Impressionist Exhibition in 1886 produced "the most concentrated body of critical writing on the artist during his lifetime. ... The overall reaction was positive and laudatory."^[44]

Recognized as an important artist by the end of his life, Degas is now considered "one of the founders of Impressionism."^[45] Though his work crossed many stylistic boundaries, his involvement with the other major figures of Impressionism and their exhibitions, his dynamic paintings and sketches of everyday life and activities, and his bold color experiments, served to finally tie him to the Impressionist movement as one of its greatest early artists.



Little Dancer of Fourteen Years,
sculpture by Edgar Degas

Girl at Ironing Board (1869). Great solidity of form, contrast of color, and accurate observation are combined to make an almost Japanese composition of great realism. The foreshortened neck and the squared off line of the shoulders, hunched from the effort of pressing down upon the iron, lead the eye directly to the face that undoubtedly attracted the realist in Degas. Heavy lidded, work worn, she appears here as Degas painted her, with no exaggeration or feeling of distaste, but simply as he saw her.



1040

Giovanna Bellelli is a sketch for the girl's head in Degas' large painting of the Bellelli family, his Italian relatives. The Bellelli family



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1040

Giovanna Bellelli is a sketch for the girl's head in Degas' large painting of the Bellelli family, his Italian relatives. The Bellelli family



James Wyeth

Jamie Wyeth

James ("Jamie") Browning Wyeth (born July 6, 1946) is a contemporary American realist painter, son of Andrew Wyeth, and grandson of N.C. Wyeth. He was raised in Chadds Ford Township, Pennsylvania, and is artistic heir to the Brandywine School tradition, painters who worked in the rural Brandywine River area of Delaware and Pennsylvania, portraying its people, animals, and landscape.

James Wyeth is the second child of Andrew and Betsy Wyeth, born three years after brother Nicholas, his only sibling. He was raised on his parents' farm "The Mill" in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, in much the same way as his father had been brought up, and with much the same influences. He demonstrated the same remarkable skills in drawing as his father had done at comparable ages. He attended public school for six years and then, at his request was privately tutored at home, so he could concentrate on art. His brother Nicholas would later become an art dealer.

At age 12, Jamie studied with his aunt Carolyn Wyeth, a well-known artist in her own right, and the resident at that time of the N. C. Wyeth House and Studio, filled with the art work and props of his grandfather. In the morning he studied English and history at his home and in the afternoon joined other students at the studio, learning fundamentals of drawing and composition. He stated later, "She was very restrictive. It wasn't interesting, but it was important." Through his aunt, Jamie developed an interest in working with oil painting, a medium he enjoyed at a sensory level: the look, smell and feel of it. Carolyn Wyeth and Howard Pyle were his greatest early influences in developing his technique in working with oil paint. While Jamie's work in watercolor was similar to his father's, his colors were more vivid.

As a boy, Jamie was exposed to art in many ways: the works of his talented family members, art books, attendance at exhibitions, meeting with collectors, and becoming acquainted with art historians. He also developed an offbeat sense of humor, sometimes veering to the macabre.^[2]

For at least three years in the early 1960s, when Wyeth was in his middle to late teens, Wyeth painted with his father. Of their close relationship, Wyeth has said: "Quite simply, Andrew Wyeth is my closest friend—and the painter whose work I most admire. The father/son relationship goes out the window when we talk about one another's work. We are completely frank—as we have nothing to gain by being nice. At age 19 [about 1965] he traveled to New York City, to better study the artistic resources of the city and to learn human anatomy by visiting the city morgue.

In 1968, Wyeth married Phyllis Mills, daughter of Alice du Pont Mills and James P. Mills¹, and one of his models. Although she had earlier been permanently crippled in a car accident and must use crutches (and later a motorized chair) to get around, Wyeth finds her a very strong, determined woman whose elusive nature means that he continually discovers something new about her. Mills is the subject of many of his paintings (which usually depict her seated)

including *And Then into the Deep Gorge* (1975), *Wicker* (1979), and *Whale* (1978), as well as, by implication, his painting of Phyllis' hat in *Wolfbane* (1984).

Phyllis had worked for John F. Kennedy when he was a senator and president. She has served on several boards, including "the National Committee for Arts for the Handicapped, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the National Resource Defense Council." A steeplechase rider when young, before her crippling accident, she later took over her parents' thoroughbred horse racing and breeding interests, winning the 2012 Belmont Stakes with Union Rags.¹²¹

In the 1960s Jamie purchased the Lobster Cove property on Monhegan Island in Maine, which had previously been owned by Rockwell Kent, the famed American painter of modernist wilderness landscapes admired by his grandfather and succeeding generations. Jamie has painted many of the local people on Monhegan Island. He and his wife have a home at Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania on the Brandywine. In the 1990s his parents, Betsy and Andrew Wyeth, sold Jamie the Tenants Harbor Light on Southern Island in Maine that they had owned since 1978. As it provides him the solitude and subject matter he most enjoys for his work, most of his painting is done at Tenants Harbor; the rest is done at Chadds Ford. The light station has been inactive since 1933. The tower that held the lantern was reconstructed for his studio.

Early on, Wyeth became interested in oil painting, his grandfather's primary medium, although he is also adept in watercolor and tempera, his father's preferred media. In describing his aunt's way of thickly applying oil to her palette, he stated, "I could eat it. Tempera never looked particularly edible. You have to love a medium to work in it. I love the feel and smell of oil."

In addition to studying his aunt's oil technique, he also admired his father's and grandfather's work, and that of Howard Pyle, his grandfather's teacher, as well as American masters Winslow Homer and Thomas Eakins. What inspired Wyeth most was not the subject matter or technique of his grandfather, but his "sense of total personal involvement with and intuitive grasp of his subjects". Jamie Wyeth adopted a wider palette of colors than his father's, which was closer to his aunt's and grandfather's color choices.

Wyeth's artistic reach is broader than his father's and grandfather's. He excels in drawing, lithography, etching, egg tempera, watercolor, and mixed media. Though grounded in this family's artist tradition and subjects, and bound by the same solitude of his art, his wider travels and experiences have shaped a more rounded artist. In travels to Europe, he studied the Flemish and Dutch masters, and learned the intricate and exacting process of lithography, producing a substantial amount of graphic work.

On portrait painting, Wyeth stated, "To me, a portrait is not so much the actual painting, but just spending the time with the person, traveling with him, watching him eat, watching him sleep. When I work on a portrait, it's really osmosis. I try to become the person I'm painting. A successful portrait isn't about the sitter's physical characteristics—his nose, eyeballs and whatnot—but more the mood and the overall effect. I try not to impose anything of mine on him. I try to get to the point where if the sitter painted, he'd paint a portrait just the way I'm doing it."