



**PICASSO** LOOKS AT  
**DEGAS**

Gallery Guide for Families

**THE  
CLARK**

# Early Career

Degas is best known for his paintings of ballerinas. Picasso, almost 50 years younger than Degas, is often called the greatest artist of the modern period. Although many suppose that there was no connection between these two very different artists, this exhibition explores the idea that Picasso was in fact significantly influenced by the work of Degas.



Edgar Degas, French, 1834-1917



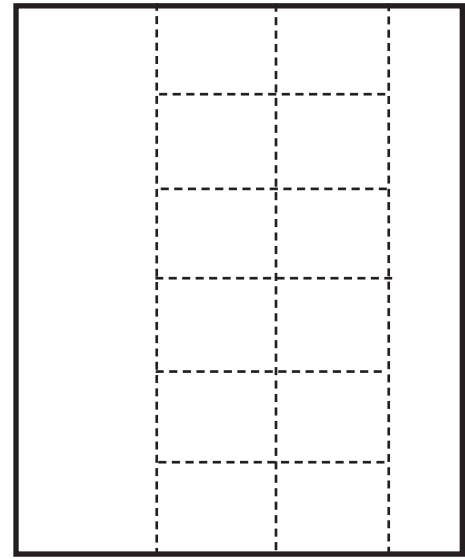
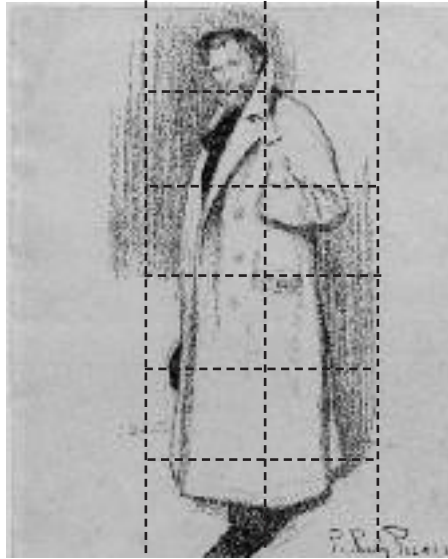
Pablo Picasso, Spanish, 1881-1973

LEFT: *Self-Portrait*, c 1857-58, by Edgar Degas (The Clark)  
RIGHT: *Self-Portrait*, 1896, by Pablo Picasso. Museu Picasso, Barcelona (MPB 110.076). © Museu Picasso, Barcelona / Ramon Mura / © 2010 Estate of Pablo Picasso / ARS, New York

Both men were trained in traditional art schools where they spent hours upon hours learning to draw. As you can see, many of their lessons involved a focus on the human figure, drawing both from live models and from classical statues. Their goal was to get the proportions and details just right.

Find Picasso's *The Artist's Father, with a Copy of the Magazine "Gil Blas" in His Pocket*.

**Try to copy this drawing in the box on the right. We've added some grid lines to help you.**



ABOVE: *The Artist's Father, with a Copy of the Magazine "Gil Blas" in His Pocket*, 1899, by Pablo Picasso. Museu Picasso, Barcelona (MPB 110.032). © Museu Picasso, Barcelona / AHCB-AF / J. CALAFEEL / © 2010 Estate of Pablo Picasso / ARS, New York

# Paris Night Life

The next part of the exhibition is upstairs in Gallery C. Go up the stairs and follow the signs and VOILA!, you will find yourself in Paris, the center of the art world around 1900. Degas was a well-known and successful artist by then, recognized for the original way he captured every day Parisian life. As a younger man, he had loved the nightlife of Paris and tried to capture its excitement in many of his paintings.

Picasso first visited Paris in 1900, so he too could be in the middle of the art scene and make his name as one of the great artists. He was very interested in Degas's work and would often choose the same subjects, sometimes trying to be even more original than Degas. **Take a look at the images in this gallery and see how Picasso reinterpreted many of the same scenes he found in Degas's work.**

Find Degas's ***Singers on Stage*** and Picasso's ***Stuffed Shirts***, two small pictures hanging side by side.

(The expression "stuffed shirt" is generally insulting and suggests that someone is a bit too serious and stiff.)

What is similar about these two pictures? \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think the figure on the left hand side is doing there? \_\_\_\_\_

What do the titles suggest about how each artist felt about the scenes? \_\_\_\_\_

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# Faces

Go into the next part of the exhibition and you will see three pairs of faces, two of them are sculptures and four of them are pictures. Look carefully at each of the faces.

Which is the most detailed? \_\_\_\_\_

Which has the most personality? \_\_\_\_\_

Choose one of the sculptures and one of the pictures on the wall. In the columns below, write down four words that describe the sculpture, four words that describe the picture, and four words that could be used to describe both.

SCULPTURE

BOTH

PICTURE

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Look carefully at the two sculptures. Why do you think the artists treated the eyes in this way? See if you can come up with a couple of ideas before you decide on the most likely reasons.

# The Bath

As you walk into the next part of the exhibition, you will see several images of women bathing and brushing their hair. Find Degas's sculpture called *The Tub*. What is different about this tub compared to your bathtub(s) at home?

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When Degas and Picasso created the works of art in this gallery, most homes did not have modern plumbing. Taking a bath was a complicated process. Put the steps in order 1 through 4.

- \_\_\_ Pour the scalding hot water into the tub
- \_\_\_ Pump water into a bucket
- \_\_\_ Heat the water on a stove
- \_\_\_ Haul the bucket to the stove

Notice the images of women having their hair brushed. They don't look so comfortable, do they? Did you know...

When these pictures were made most women wore their hair teased and pinned high on their heads. Women of this time rarely washed their hair. Shampoo wasn't commercially available until the 1930s. When these pictures were made women used harsh soap on their hair.

# Dancers

As you learned at the beginning of this guide, Degas was famous for his images of ballerinas. In the next gallery, you'll see many paintings and sculptures of dancers of various shapes and sizes by both Degas and Picasso. Some look like they are standing still, others look like they are caught in the middle of a dance step.

How do the artists suggest motion in some of these images?

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Which dancer seems to be moving the fastest?

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Which pose do you think would be hardest to hold?

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Find the sculptures called *Running Woman* by Picasso and *Grand Arabesque, Second Time* by Degas.

Think of a word to describe each one:

*Running Woman*

*Grand Arabesque, Second Time*

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Why do you think Picasso made his sculpture

*Running Woman* the way he did?

- A) Picasso was trying to capture the feeling of running instead of what a running woman really looks like.
- B) Picasso actually saw the human body in an idiosyncratic way.
- C) Picasso had a good sense of humor.
- D) All of the above.

# Inspired by Degas

Now let's focus on Degas's ***Little Dancer Aged Fourteen***, one of the most famous sculptures in the world. The young dancer who posed for this sculpture was named Marie. Marie had to stand in this pose for many hours over many days while Degas created this sculpture.

Take a walk around ***Little Dancer***. How do you think Marie felt standing in this pose for so long? Circle all the words that apply.

comfortable

tired

strained

pensive

confident

tense

uncomfortable

This sculpture belongs to the Clark. Usually, it's in the middle of Gallery 2 surrounded by Impressionist paintings. The curators decided to move ***Little Dancer*** from where it usually stands so it could be featured in this special exhibition.



RIGHT: *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, 1879–81, by Edgar Degas (The Clark)



ABOVE: *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando*, 1879, by Edgar Degas. Oil on canvas, 117.2 x 77.5 cm. © The National Gallery, London. Bought, 1925 (NG4121) / Art Resource, NY

While *Little Dancer* is here, a borrowed contemporary sculpture, *Hanging Figure*, by artist Juan Muñoz is in its place. Muñoz's piece was influenced by the work of Degas, in particular by a painting called *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando*. (See the picture on the left.) The painting features an acrobat, hanging from a rope held in her teeth.

If you go to Gallery 2 (down the stairs and across the bridge) you will find the Muñoz sculpture in the middle of the room. *What do you think of this? Can you see how this sculpture was based on Degas's painting of Miss La La? Do you think Muñoz made this sculpture working from a live model the way Degas did for the Little Dancer? Why or why not?*

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**This isn't the only sculpture here at the Clark by Juan Muñoz. Visit Stone Hill Center and see the remarkable work of this Spanish sculptor inside the galleries and grounds.**

Detail of *Dancers in the Classroom*,  
c. 1880, by Edgar Degas (The Clark)

For more information about programs at  
the Clark visit [clarkart.edu](http://clarkart.edu)

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