

FACT SHEET

About Degas:

- Hilaire-Germain-Edgar-Degas was born in Paris on July 19, 1834, and died there on September 27, 1917.
- Degas attended Paris Opéra performances regularly throughout his life.
- Degas sometimes attended the same opera or ballet 30 times. Many of his works depict the operas and ballets he attended.
- Unlike many of his contemporary Impressionist colleagues, who painted the outdoor light of the countryside, Degas enjoyed reproducing the glamorous lights of opera halls and theaters.
- Approximately three-quarters of Degas' dance images are of events beyond the public gaze, such as in practice studios for the dancers and backstage areas of the opera house.
- Degas was known as the "painter of dancers," with more than half of his works devoted to the on- and off-stage activities of dance students and stars.
- Degas' eyesight began to fail in his later years. Despite his progressive blindness, he continued working until the end of his life.

About the Exhibition:

- This is the largest number of Degas' dance images ever exhibited together. It is unlikely that such a grouping will be reassembled for this generation.
- Despite the celebrity of Degas' dance images, no major exhibition has previously attempted to present fully his work in the visual and historical context of the 19th century ballet.
- Paintings, drawings, sculptures, and contextual materials from 97 collections in 11 countries appear in the exhibition.
- Art from more than 40 private collections will be included. Many of these works are rarely on view to the public.
- This exhibition presents more than 100 works of art by Degas at each venue. To see these works otherwise, one would have to travel to 47 cities around the world.

- In addition to works by the artist, the exhibition includes objects that help place Degas' art in context, among them, set models and costume designs for productions that he attended, photographs of dancers that he knew and painted, and a ballet slipper that he kept in his studio.
- The extensive exhibition research reveals a great deal about the realism of Degas' work. For the first time, numerous dancers in Degas' art are identified, as are actual stage productions that he depicted. For example, the subject for *Dancer with Raised Arms, Seen from the Back* (National Museum, Belgrade) is named and proven to be the model for numerous other drawings as well. *Ballet Rehearsal on the Stage* (Musée d'Orsay) is recognized as a rehearsal of Mozart's *Don Giovanni*.
- The exhibition travels to the Philadelphia Museum of Art where it is on view from February 12–May 11, 2003.