



Degas (Basic Art Series 2.0)

Bernd Growe

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Dance class: The master of bodies in motion

Most commonly associated with the birth of the Impressionist movement in mid-19th-century Paris, **Edgar Degas** (1834–1917) in fact defied easy categorization and instead developed a unique style, strongly influenced by **Old Masters, the body in motion, and everyday urban life**.

The elder scion of a wealthy family, Degas cofounded a series of exhibitions of “Impressionist” art, but soon disassociated himself from the group in pursuit of a more realist approach. His subjects centered on the **teeming, noisy streets of Paris**, as well as its leisure entertainments, such as horse racing, cabarets, and, most particularly, ballet. With often ambitious, off-kilter vantage points, his **images of ballerinas numbered approximately 1,500 works**, all deeply invested in the physicality and the discipline of dance.

Through illustrations of *Foyer de la Danse* (1872), *Musicians in the Orchestra* (1872) and many more, this book provides an essential overview of the artist who resisted categorization but created a category of his own, **a world of classical resonance, bold compositions, and an endless fascination with movement**, which together produced some of the most striking and influential works of the era.

About the series:

Each book in TASCHEN’s Basic Art series features:

- a detailed chronological summary of the life and oeuvre of the artist, covering his or her cultural and historical importance
- a concise biography
- approximately 100 illustrations with explanatory captions

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