



Edgar Degas

Edgar Degas was a famous French artist, best known for painting ballet dancers. He was born in 1834. Edgar showed an early talent for art, but his father worried that he wouldn't be able to make a living at it. He encouraged Edgar to become a lawyer instead. Edgar tried law school, but he still wanted to be an artist. It took some convincing, but eventually, Edgar's father agreed to support his son's chosen career.

Edgar went often to the Louve, a famous art museum in Paris. there, he made copies of the famous paintings. He also went to Italy and studied the works of Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. He stayed with his Aunt who was married to the Baron Bellelli. He later painted a famous picture of their family called The Bellelli Family.

In 1859, Edgar came back to Paris. He submitted his painting to the Salon, the official art exhibition in France. But the Salon was very specific about what they liked and didn't like, and they did not accept his work. Edgar made fronts with other artists who didn't want to be stifled by what the Salon thought was acceptable art. Edgar and his friends began to paint in a new way, paying special attention to light and color. This group of painters became known as the Impressionists. They got this name because a critic at the time said that their paintings seemed to only be "impressions" rather than finished work. Other Impressionists included Claude Monet, Pierre Renoir, and Camille Pissarro.

Though considered one of the Impressionists, Edgar wanted to paint scenes of real life in a realistic way. He painted people captured in ordinary moments. Unlike most of the impressionists, he didn't paint landscapes or outdoor scenes. His favorite thing to paint was ballet dancers. Over the course of the career, he painted thousands of them. Today, the French painter whose work was once rejected by the Salon is hung in art museums all over the world.

1. What nationality was Degas?
2. Degas is best known for painting what?
3. Degas was one of a group of painters known as what?