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## Degas in Bronze: The Complete Sculptures

Boise Art Museum

June 19th through September 18, 2004

Hilaire Germain Edgar Degas, born to a banking family in 1834, is regarded as one of the greatest sculptors second only to Rodin. Like much in the art world, which artist is better is certainly in dispute.



Title 1: *Woman Resting Head on One Hand, Bust, 1930s*

Title 2: *Head Resting on One Hand, Bust*

Artist: Edgar Degas (1834-1917)

Medium: Bronze

Dimensions: 12 x 18 x 16 cm

Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil

Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

Degas studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. His earliest works included historical paintings and portraits of family and friends. In the 1870's he turned his artistic talent to sculpture.

This exhibition, ***Degas in Bronze: The Complete Sculptures***, is comprised of 73 sculptures from the Museu de Arte de São Paulo in Brazil. Visitors will

have the opportunity to view one of the most beloved Degas work *Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen*.



Title 1: *Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen*, Date Unknown

Title 2: *Ballet Dancer, Dressed*

Medium: Bronze

10 x 50.5 x 49.5 cm

Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil

The Three Images Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

Impressionist artists capture a fleeting moment in time using light, color and motion to portray the image. *Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen* is unique in its use of mixed media along with traditional bronze. Degas added a realistic tulle skirt and the scalp is infused with horsehair which is tied with a ribbon. The sculpture is positioned to capture the exact moment the girl struck this pose. Close your eyes and the girl has moved and the moment is lost.

Typically the new in art was rejected fervently by the critics, and when *Little Dancer, Aged Fourteen* was first exhibited the use of mixed media was not appreciated. Degas never again publicly displayed his sculptures during his lifetime. Luckily for art enthusiasts he did not cease his output.



Title: *Horse at Trough*, 1930s  
Artist: Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
Medium: Bronze  
Dimensions: 17 x 72 x 14 cm  
Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil  
Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

Degas, like Monet, had several recurring themes in his works most famously ballet dancers but he was also fond of horses.



Title: *Prancing Horse*, 1930s  
Artist: Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
Medium: Bronze  
Dimensions: 27 x 31 x 13.5 cm  
Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil  
Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum



The Museu de Art de São Paulo Degas Bronze sculptures is one of only four complete sets in the world.

Near the end of his life with his eyesight rapidly failing Degas created wax molds that were later cast in bronze, posthumously by his heirs.

Left: Title: *Spanish Dance*, 1930s  
 Artist: Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
 Medium: Bronze  
 Dimensions: 49 x 9 x 8 cm  
 Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil  
 Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

## Bronze is Cast

In 1919 Adrien A. Hébrard was permitted to produce 22 sets of bronzes from 73 wax sculptures.



Title: *Dancer Looking at the Sole of Her Right Foot*, 1930s  
 Artist: Edgar Degas (1834-1917)  
 Medium: Bronze  
 Dimensions: 49 x 23 x 34 cm  
 Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil  
 Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

The Hébrard castings produced 1,300 individual sculptures and four complete sets of the 73 works. This practice was not in any way unusual. Artist's rarely cast their own work in bronze. Thanks to the

talents of Hébrard and his master artisan Albino Palazzolo the original Degas wax casts remain. Traditionally they would have been destroyed as part of the casting. However Palazzolo brilliantly coated the casts with gelatin and it was the gelatin version that was lost in the process of creating the bronze work. This allowed the original to survive and more than one copy to be taken.



Title: *Woman Rubbing her Back with a Sponge, Torso*, 1920s

Artist: Edgar Degas (1834-1917)

Medium: Bronze

Dimensions: 50 x 30 x 23 cm

Permanent Collection: Museu de Art de São Paulo, Brazil

Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

## **Boise Art Museum**



Title: *Boise Art Museum Front with Crowd*  
Image Courtesy: The Boise Art Museum

While visiting ***Degas: The Complete Sculptures*** allow time to view the impressive glass exhibit by William Morris.

Myth, Object and the Animal  
June 19th - October 17th, 2004

William Morris was a master glassblower for Dale Chihuly. Morris is acclaimed for his innovative use of color, design and surface texture in his sculptures. This collection is inspired by archaeological themes from a multitude of cultures.

This is the time to visit Boise for a rare opportunity to view ***Degas in Bronze: The Complete Sculptures***, and witness the developing talent of Degas as Impressionist Sculptor.

[The Boise Art Museum](http://www.boiseartmuseum.org) at [www.boiseartmuseum.org](http://www.boiseartmuseum.org)

[Idaho Tourism](http://www.visitid.org) at [www.visitid.org](http://www.visitid.org)

[Museu de Art De São Paulo](http://www.masp.art.br) at [www.masp.art.br](http://www.masp.art.br)

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