## DEGAS

FROM PAGE B1

into the boxes and orchestrapit. It is here inside the theater that the audience is mesmerized by dancers dramatically lit by primitive rows of gas lamps. Now a landmark exhibition brings all of these experiences together for one dazzling look at the ballet. Degas and the Dance gathers more than 120 of his paintings, drawings, pastels, and sculptures from 97 collections in nearly a dozen countries for Degas and the Dance. Organized by the American Federation of Arts. Detroit Institute of Arts and Philadelphia Museum of Art, this large-scale survey took

Detroit Institute of Arts and Philadelphia Museum of Art, this large-seale survey took five-years for curators Richard Kendall and Jill DeVonyar to research and assemble. It is the first to explore Degas' work on the Paris ballet.

The American Federation of the Arts contacted the two curators who researched Degas' relationship with the Paris Oppera Ballet. They estimate half of his total artistic output focuses on dancers', said George Keyes, DIA curator of European paintings.

Keyes became involved in the project more than two years ago. One hundred sixty pieces, more than 120 by Degas himself, are on display in the exhibition premiering at the Detroit Institute of Arts. Close to 20 pieces come from the DIAs collection, approximately 10 of them by Degas, The remaining pieces come from the DASS of lection, approximately 10 of them by Degas. The remainin, 40 pieces include set designs and work by other artists.

### THEMATIC SEGMENTS

Broken down thematically in segments that follow the activities and careers of an erest that follow the activities and careers of an erest that the segment of the segment

and paraded their mistresses. It was the bourgeois mixing with the older aristocracy.

An 1873 fire destroyed the old opera house, the rue Le Peletie Opera. A new one, the Palais Garnier, already in the planning stages, opened in Jan. 5, 1875 but Degas never lost his affection for Le Peletier with its classroom lit by a wall of arched French windows. In later paintings he drew on his imagination to recreate it. Exhibition designer Elroy Quenroe uses architecture to echo Degas paintings and create a sense of space that 'grokes a world inhabited by ballet dancers.

"Dancers came from the lower segment of society," said Keyes. They started as pre-teens in order to make the grade to be accepted into troupes and were regularly assessed.

Keyes is extremely knowledgeable about Degas and the dancers. Gallery by gallery he spollights work in which Degas experimented with color, tendique and composition.

The portnat The Ballet Master Gulos Perrot) shows he's an incredibly experienced artist, said Keyes. "Degas diluted oil with turpentine to sketch the figure then lipshighted with pastel. He used the study for the painting next to It."

SKETCHES AND SCULPTURE

#### SKETCHES AND SCULPTURE

The exhibition's second thematic segment combines drawing technique and sculptures. It's apparent by looking at the sketches of dancers that Degas was a master draftsman. For the sculptures Degas worked only in wax after constructing an armature of wire so that he could change any eliment he felt imperfect.

At the time of his death in 1917 about 1300 of the waxes were found in the studio, said Keyes. About 70 were salvaged and the family suthorized call tions of about 30 sculptures of

# All volunteers need is a friendly face

BY LINDA ANN CHOMIN STAFF WRITER

The Detroit Institute of Arts is expecting visitors, hundreds of thousands of them before this year's blockbuster Degas and the Dance closes on Jan. 12.

Gloria Parker's already lined up 1,000 volunteers to serve as hosts and hostsesses in the galleries but still needs at least 1,000 more. All you need is a friendly, smilling face.

Were looking for people to be ambassadors in the galleries, "said Gloria Parker, volunteer manager." A tot did it for van Gogh so we have people returning but we welcome anyone interested in volunteering. Volunteers give directions but do not discuss work. That's the role of trained docents. One of the most important tasks is assisting security officers to see that no one touches the art works.

Undoubtedly the best part of being volunteer is the opportunity to see the retworks. Undoubtedly the best part of being volunteer is the opportunity to see the retworks.

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If you're interested in a close up view of Degas' paintings, drawings, , call (313) 494-5221 or send e-mail sculptures and pastels, scappures and passers, can (2017) 797-2221 of settle demand to degasvol@dia.org to volunteer. A brief training session before your shift is all you need - along with that smile and a pair of comfortable shoes. Volunteers will be on their feet and walking in the galleries for 3 1/2 hours.

Ichomin@oe.homecomm.net [ (734) 953-2145

dancers, nudes and horses.
"The sculpture Little Dancer, Aged 14 recalls a young gif who was thrown out of the ballet troupe. It was remarkable for its time because Degas incorporated actual dance shoes, tutu and wig. It was also quite controversial. When it was calibitative to the property of the pro

and wig. It was also quite con-troversial. When it was exhibit-ed in 1881 it created a contro-versy because it was big enough to seem real and her vixen-like personality was being paraded before the public.

Breathtaking is the only word for Degas and the Dance.

Dancer with Red Stockings, a pastel, is bold and sponta-neous and has an intima-neous and has an intima-ted squite remarkable. These dancers went through rigorous training six days a week, said Keyes. Dancer Stretching (1882-1885) shows she's in

pain, totally exhausted. It's a remarkably candid drawing as is The Dance Examination (1880). Degas was influenced by the world of photography. The dancer on the right is cut off as if in a photograph, It makes it instantaneous, in the proposet. It creates a newhole.

makes it instantaneous, in the moment. It creates a psychological reaction. You get caught up in the tense world.

A selection of drawings demonstrates Degas' penchant for using paper in a rainbow of colors including pink, beige, mint green, and Venetian blue But Degas went beyond changing his color of paper to employ extraordinary innovations. In one work, ballerinas stand on the infront of a wall mirror which reflects a vista of Paris and its Mansard roofs. Other dancers are occupied with their

wn activities as Degas once

own activities as Degas once gain uses roving subjects to chave the viewer in. The activities never resolve themselves and hence the eye keeps roving around the composition. Degas work is never resolve themselves and hence the eye keeps roving around the composition. Degas work is never static making the viewer feel as if he or she is there watching and listening. Degas is one of the great modern painters of late 18th and early 19th century, said Keyes. The pastels are intense, the subject matter is appealing and most importantly these works will never again be exhibited together ugain in our lifetime.

Objects such as Degas' sketchbooks are so fragile they're kept in cases. But visitors don't have to settle for seeing the open book behind glass. The DIA's education department has developed an electronic version. One touch of the screen and the page flips to another page explaining how figures were used. And multiple monitors allow more than a few wisitors at a time to view them.

#### MORE THAN PAINTINGS

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The DLAs installation of Degas and the Dance offers a number of ways to learn about what motivated this French master to fecus half of his life's work on dance. A gallery devoted to Western antiquities reveals the reason he painted ballet. Degas studied classical antiquity as a young man and believed it was the only modern art form traceable back to the Greeks.

A nine-minute program of Dayton Ballet documents dance today and the movement that attracted Degas back then. Or Try Ballet in a room which allows visitors to stand at a barre and look into the mirror and so through the five positions.

"The exhibition's a good place for meditation. Think about the way he's recording motion and the human body. In Orgies of Color - Degas used this term himself — he starts to experiment with scale and uses color that has a brilliance in oil and pastel. Some of the most researched are the late works in pastel. Degas was a fastidious artist neurostic about his eyesight. By 1905 he was effectively blind and couldn't sec. Two Dancers is an amazing pastel that's almost never been subject to daylight. It's so fresh and to daylight. It's so fresh and

perfectly preserved. Lights play on heads, arms and bosom. It's

on neads, arms and cosoni. Its quite riveting. "Degas' subjects were high end recreational activities of the upper class - horse racing and opera, ballet. The exhibi-tion gives us a glimpse into a

bygone era. Degas was fascinated by the rhythm of animal and human locomotion. It's a strange and haunting world by the time you get to these late years."

ichomin@oe.homecomm.net 1 (734) 953-2145



