Edgar Degas

- 1834-1917 (73)
- Paris, France
- Impressionist
Edgar Degas

- French artist famous for his work in painting, sculpture, printmaking and drawing. He is regarded as one of the founders of Impressionism although he rejected the term, and preferred to be called a realist. A superb draughtsman, he is especially identified with the subject of the dance, and over half his works depict dancers. These display his mastery in the depiction of movement, as do his racecourse subjects and female nudes. His portraits are considered to be among the finest in the history of art.
Self portrait, 1855 (21)
The dance class, 1873-1876 (39)
Ballet rehearsal, 1873 (39)
The singer with the glove, 1878 (44)
Woman combing her hair, 1884-6 (50)
Ocular problem

• Progressive, irreversible loss of vision when he was only 36 years old
• 1880-1890 (46-56), a blind spot in the center of Degas’ vision
• Difficulty with the perception of colors late in life
Treatment

- Charles Abadie, MD
- Maurice Perrin, MD
- Edmond Landolt, MD: Landolt C chart, Mary Cassatt, stenopeic spectacle
- Richard Liebreich, MD: pinhole
Diagnosis

- Middle age onset
- Sensitivity to light
- Central blind spot
- Difficulty in distinguishing color
Diagnosis: chorioretinitis

- Infectious: tuberculosis
- Familial hereditary: his first cousin, Estelle Musson de Gas, had similar findings
- Leber’s hereditary optic neuropathy?
Impact on his creations

- From oil painting to **sculpture, pastel**
- After the bath (1889-1905): the lines of color became more coarse and more widely separated, and the shading became diminished.
After the bath, woman drying herself, 1889-90 (55)
Woman drying her hair, 1905 (71)
Dancer looking at sole of the right foot, bronze