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**HSBC Presents: Beyond the Frame, Episode 2 – Racehorse at Longchamp by Edgar Degas (1871, possibly reworked in 1874)**

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HORSE: He prepared significantly for his works. He was so far removed from my rapid impression that he wanted to be a legalist thinking that nature is the enemy I'm just horsing around. As you can see in the painting, perhaps the artist is making a statement to the salon, the art establishment of its time.

HOST: HSBC proudly presents Beyond the Frame. A look behind the bigger picture of some of the world's most important impressionist art in this season. We're looking at the rebellion of the impressionists. It wasn't old dreamy brushwork, but rife with bravery, breaking stereotypes and smashing perceptions. Across this series, we go back 150 years to discover some of the surprising stories behind six iconic impressionist artworks, one classic impressionist painting in every episode. Don't take my word for it. You'll hear from the paintings themselves. If you like what you hear and your Beyond the Frame experience. See these renowned artworks for yourself in the National Gallery of Victoria Exhibition, French impressionism from the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston proudly supported by HSBC. It's open now until October three, for tickets visit [ngv.melbourne](http://ngv.melbourne).

Did it actually happen? Was it just a dream? Did he have a photographic memory?

This in the moment Impressionist masterpiece will surprise night delight you. And that was probably Edgar Degas' intention when he created Race Horses at Longchamp, he was actually one of the founding members of impressionism. However, Degas hated being an impressionist, preferring to call himself a realist or an independent. Unlike many of the other impressionists who would paint outside, he was a rebel among rebels and preferred to cozy up in his studio to paint from memory. Like some of the more well-known impressionists, he came from a rich family and was commercially successful in his lifetime. At the time of his death in 1917, his personal art collection was massive in his poor room, hung Cezanne, Gauguin, and Van Gogh.

HOST: Oh, the serenity, this painting of jockeys on their horses hanging about the track of the end of a race was interestingly Degas' first work to be bought by an American museum. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In this series, we could talk to someone in person, the painter to give you lucky listeners, the opportunity to gain some insight into the painting. But as it turns out, we're lucky enough to be joined today by one of the horses, from the painting. Horse, from Race Horses at Longchamp, welcome to Beyond the Frame.

HORSE: You can call me the long face.

HOST: Why the long face?

HORSE: Because I'm a horse. I'm just horsing around. As you can see in the painting, perhaps the artist is making a statement to the salon, the art establishment of its time.

HOST: How so? I see a team of horses casually walking away from frame.

HORSE: Flattering angle, no? I'd like to say I was the one that won, but with great odds, but sadly there was no actual race they're actually painted from memory in the studio and actually, we're horses.

HOST: Really?

HORSE: Really. You see the races became a thing at Longchamp in 1857 brought in by the British actually. It was really the place to be seen in my case, remembered.

HOST: So, when were you painted then? 57?

HORSE: Well, hard to say really. Because Degas didn't mind reworking an old canvas, but it's more likely 71, but other say 74. Also had appeared from 1885 to 88 where he did loads of horse work, art. He didn't mind the races actually. Oh, the ballet or the ballerinas.

HOST: Yeah. He did seem to paint a lot of modern life.

HORSE: Sure. That was the movement. He was totally establishment until he didn't have to be. And then he really did whatever. He hated the term impressionism and didn't want to allowable. All his paintings were done from memory and imagination. He loved to say, "No art can be less spontaneous than mine."

HOST: Less spontaneous?

HORSE: Yes. Less.

HOST: Wow.

HORSE: That guy was a prepper. He prepared significantly for his works. He was so far, removed from a rapid impression that he wanted to be realist. Thinking that nature is the enemy. He chased success, did not paint out those like other artists. Actually, he bought other artists work a lot.

HOST: Wow. You know so much about him.

HORSE: I told you, he painted a lot of horses. I'm a toy in his studio. I was always around, constantly being packed up and moved around too. He never stayed in the same place that long. Even though he lived in beautiful places, he was rich. He didn't own property. When you don't own your house, you don't worry about keeping up the house repairs. Also, homeowners paid a lot of tax. So you don't have to pay that either. He'd rather paint in a studio as opposed to painting on the walls.

HOST: So what was he a fan of?

HORSE: Well, he hated the idea of being a brand and fought to take his name off anything to do with impressionists, except he always lost. They used his name as a brand of regularly. I think he was a fan of painting, I often heard that he tried and fix his paintings when he saw them hanging on people's walls. I'm not sure, but I think he had some trouble letting go of his work. There were a few instances where people bought works, but never received them. One person sold back the rights to paintings he didn't even actually get for 10 times the price, which really irritated Degas because the artists never received any money in those transactions.

HOST: Oh wow. So did he do anything about this or?

HORSE: Oui, in 2006, there was a law enacted that gave artists estates some profit from these transactions.

HOST: Oh, that's great. Because Degas clearly had a huge impact on the art world and you're quite the toy.

HORSE: Merci. It was nice to be here.

HOST: Well, that's all the time we have for today. Horse from race at Longchamp, thank you so much for joining us on Beyond the Frame, proudly brought to you by HSBC in partnership with the national gallery of Victoria is French impressionism exhibition. On the next episode of Beyond the Frame, we take you to Dance at Bougival.

Nice to see, to be dancing. Oh, that's when he became the impressionist that we know. He started painting with Monet in public and really embraced the impressionist style.

Extend the Beyond the Frame experience by seeing this piece and more for yourself at the national gallery of Victoria's French impressionism exhibition brought to you by HSBC, a proud partner of the NGV. It's open now until October three. For tickets search national gallery of Victoria's French impressionism. Make sure to follow, like, and rate this podcast. There's plenty more Beyond the Frame to come visit [ngv.melbourne](http://ngv.melbourne).