

EDGAR DEGAS (1834-1917)**Étude de cheval**

black chalk on laid paper

12 1/4 x 9 3/8 in. (17 x 20 in.)

17456

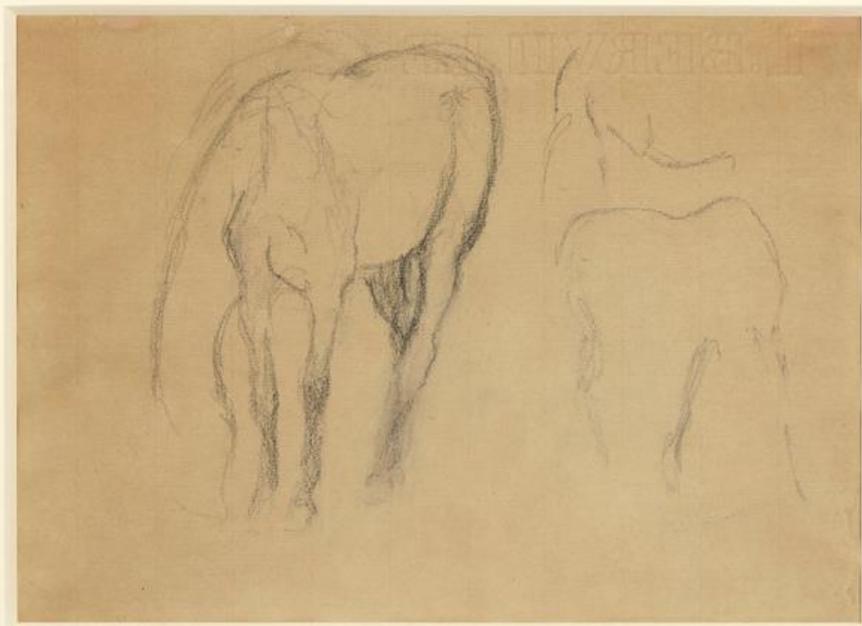
PROVENANCE:

Sotheby's, New York, 29 September 2004, lot 00202

Private Collection, acquired at above

Edgar Degas, was a 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 notable for their psychological complexity and depiction of human isolation. Degas is often identified as an Impressionist. Degas's style reflects his deep respect for the old masters and his great admiration for Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres and Eugène Delacroix. He was also a collector of Japanese prints, whose compositional principles influenced his work. Although famous for horses and dancers, Degas began with conventional historical paintings. During his early career, Degas also painted portraits of individuals and groups. The meticulous naturalism of his youth gave way to an increasing abstraction of form. For all the stylistic evolution, certain features of Degas's work remained the same throughout his life. He always painted indoors, preferring to work in his studio, either from memory or using models. The figure remained his primary subject; his few landscapes were produced from memory or imagination. It was not unusual for him to repeat a subject many times, varying the composition or treatment.

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