

RA



Charles I

Reuniting his remarkable
art collection

Near the RA

Drawing focus

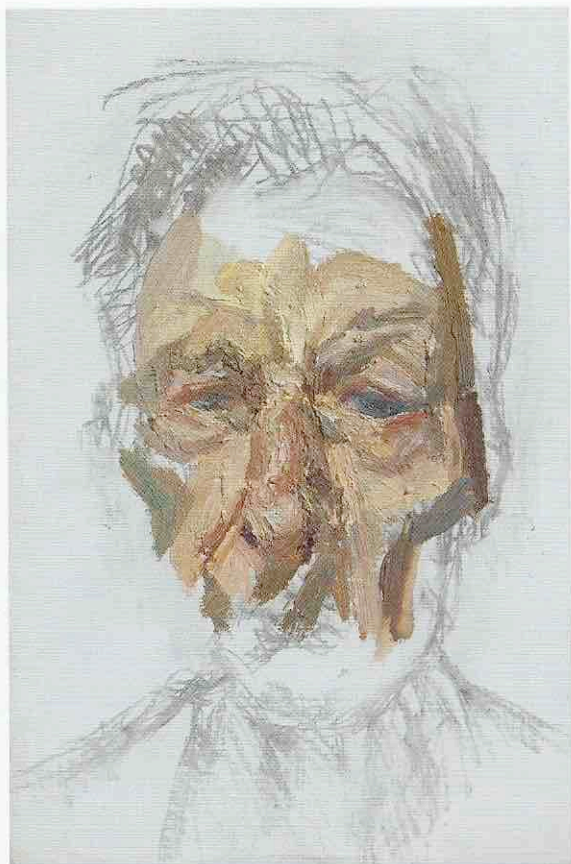
On the cusp of its 250th anniversary, the **Royal Academy (1)** explores the past, present and future of working from life in its exhibition 'From Life', tracing a line from the historic study of life drawing in the RA Schools to the use of emerging digital technologies by contemporary artists today (11 Dec–11 March 2018; page 62). The show's highlights include a 1980 work by Lucian Freud that reveals how life drawing was, literally, the basis of the great artist's paintings (page 66). A girl's lower face and neck has been created in Freud's characteristic brushstrokes; the rest of her body remains sketched out in charcoal, a technique that he used on all of his canvases before beginning to paint.

Fans of Freud should also visit **Ordo vas (2)**, which displays a late self-portrait of the artist in oil and charcoal (2002, above left) that demonstrates the same process. The work is part of the gallery's small, top quality show on the School of London, and is contrasted with an earlier ink self-portrait by Freud, as well as drawings and paintings by Frank Auerbach, Francis Bacon and RB Kitaj RA among others (25 Savile Row; 22 Feb–28 April 2018). Freud himself admired and collected Degas – leaving the nation three of his bronzes – and the French artist's works on paper form a large part of the Degas exhibition at the **National Gallery (3)** drawn from Glasgow's Burrell Collection (Trafalgar Square; until 7 May 2018). As well as pastel works animated by colour contrasts, the show includes an interesting black chalk study of a ballerina (*Dancer at the Barre*, c.1885, left). Here one can see how the artist reworked the rendering of the dancer's arms.

The subject of a survey show at **Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac (4)**, Merdardo Rosso is often compared to his contemporary Rodin, for the way his sculptures capture bodies in transition (37 Dover Street; 23 Nov–10 Feb 2018). But his working process was arguably more radical than the French artist's. Rosso's drawings of figures and cityscapes, are often impressionistic to the point of abstraction, and the sculptor would experiment with photographing drawings, printing the photographs onto drawing paper to play with tonal effects.

The surface material of paper becomes sculptural in the hands of Victor Ehikhamenor, whose multifaceted work features at **Tyburn Gallery (5)** (26 Barrett Street; 24 Nov to 20 Jan 2018). The Lagos-based artist, who represented Nigeria at this year's Venice Biennale, perforates parchment with tiny holes to 'draw' symbolic, stylised figures. At the **Royal Institute of British Architects (6)** Buenos Aires-born Pablo Bronstein hangs historic works on paper from RIBA's collection alongside his own drawings of buildings, in a show that examines 'pseudo Georgian' architecture (66 Portland Place; until 11 Feb 2018). Bronstein says he is fascinated by how this style of architecture can 'pander to delusions about our past, and flatter our vanity of wealth and class'.

Film is the focus for fellow London-based artist Marie Harnett, whose closely detailed, small-scale drawings of film stills are on view at **Alan Cristea (7)** (43 Pall Mall; 22 Nov–6 Jan 2018). Fleeting frames from classics such as *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* and recent films such as *Carol* are made permanent in pencil, as their original context falls away.



Top: *Self-Portrait*, 2002,
by Lucian Freud



Above: *Dancer at the Barre*, c.1885,
by Edgar Degas