

dancers: degas

by Jerry Ratch

What we see is the aspiration of flesh to beauty
not the fact, which may be ugly. That the light pours
down on them, as they wait in the wings to go on
stage. The cool and warm pastels separating
on their flesh. Green and white above, warm red
and blue in the shadows beside a cheekbone
electric blue at the eyelid and temple, or
encircling the ear. Warm red on the mouth
As one reaches back, adjusting a strap to
keep her shoulder bare, the pastels separate
and blend into a presence more alive. As if
seen through moist glass, the colors in streaks
side by side, so that the eye must put them together
to achieve a wholeness beyond flesh, with just the
light of the available moment

Image Detail

