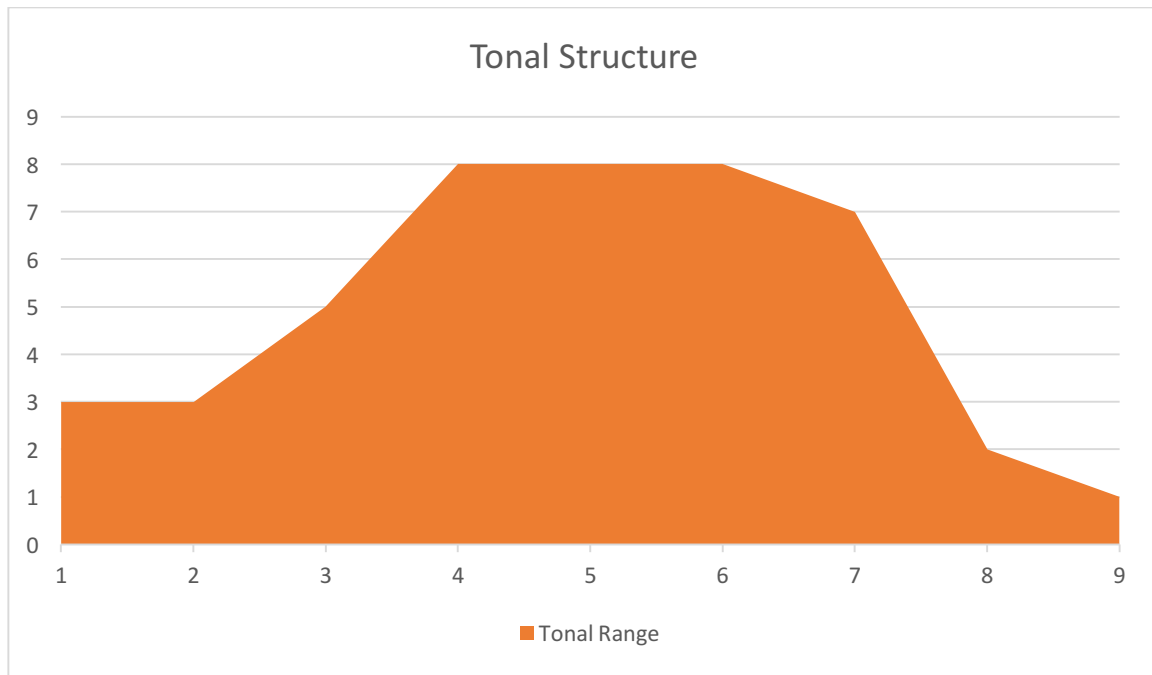




**The Star**

*Edgar Degas*

<http://www.edgar-degas.net/the-star.jsp>



The tonal structure of the picture is as above. The picture has very little bright tones and dark tones and has a majority of mid tones. The gradient of the structure is conveyed through the contrast in the artwork. I think the artist used this tonal structure to highlight and bring forth the main dancer that has the stage lights shone onto her. It gives off a quiet mood and situation where all focus is brought onto this dancer. It also tells me that the setting took place in an interior dark place where it was only lit up by very strong stage lights which explains the very little bright tones on the dancer and the very little dark tones in the background.

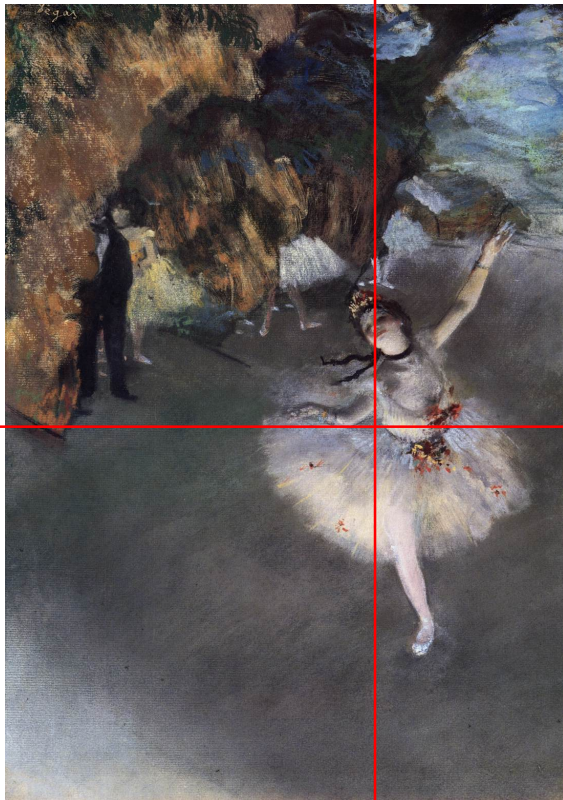
The visual sequence are as follows:



The artist sequenced the dancer first in the visual path by making high contrast on her skin and dress. He then brings our attention to the dancer wearing the yellow dress and the person wearing the black suit. Although yellow is an attractive colour than white, the contrast there is not as strong as compared to the main dancer. As the path progresses, the contrast fades away to the dancer all the way at the back.



Even though the main dancer's head is almost touching the dancer in the background, we know there is a lot of distance between them due to the high contrast in the front and low contrast at the back. A sense of space is achieved.



Another method he uses is by making the girl the biggest thing in the composition and the other objects progressively smaller.

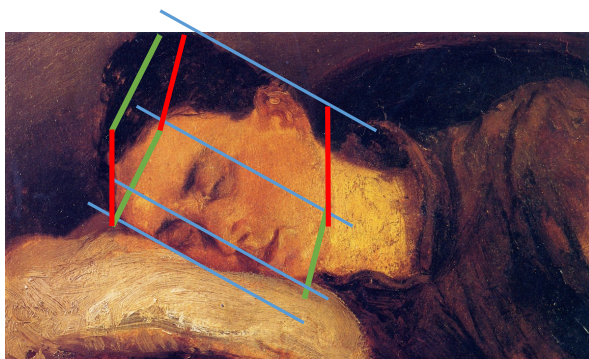
This also affects the rhythm at which we read the picture. The dancers are not even in terms of scale and spacing. Also, the main dancer is placed off centre. This makes the artwork look dynamic and creates movement in the dancer's pose.



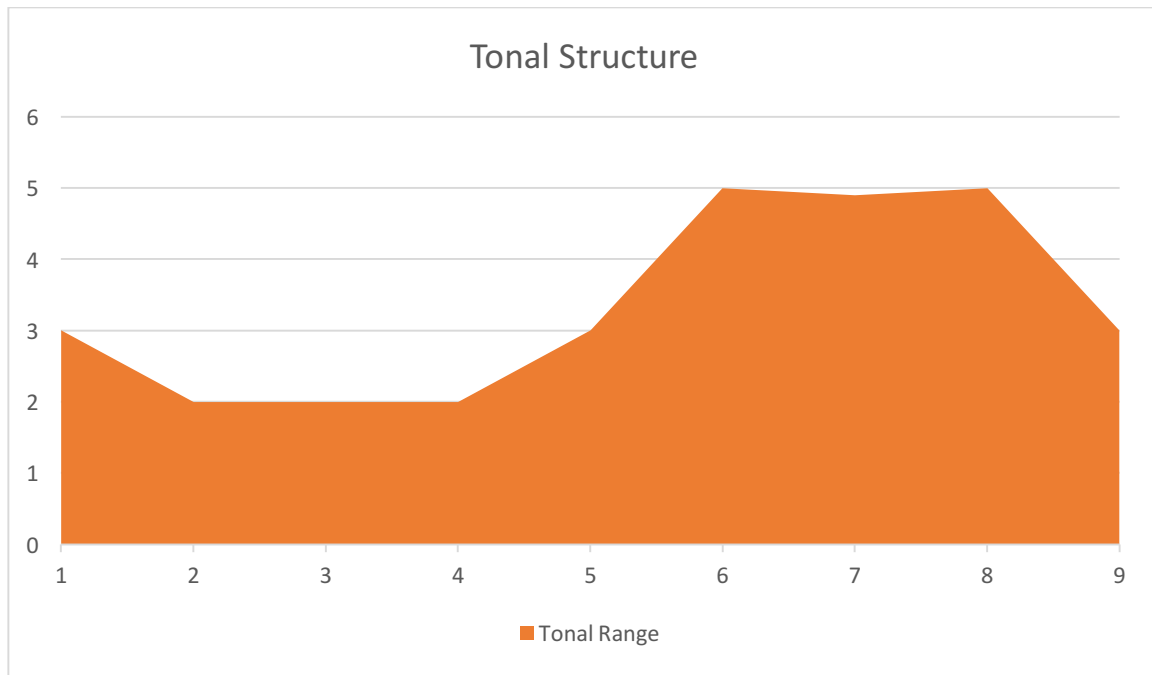
## Woman Sleeping

*Adolph Menzel*

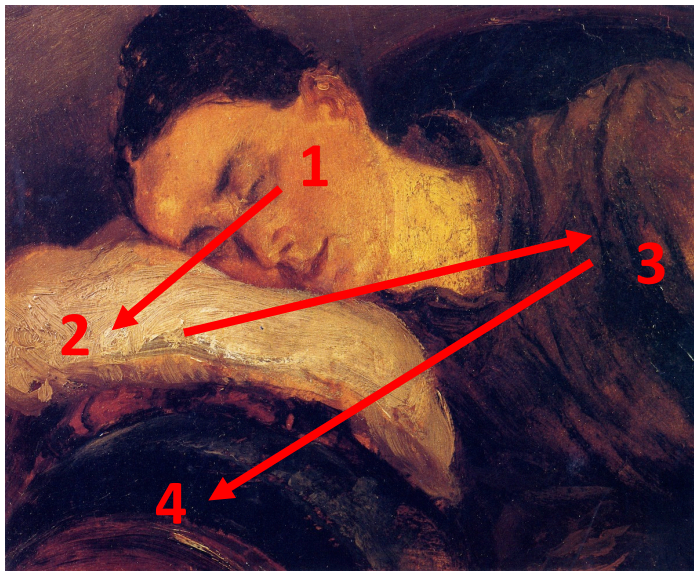
<http://www.the-athenaeum.org/art/detail.php?ID=53767>



I do not think that this artist used mass structures to help him with the form of his anatomy. In the above diagram, the red and green lines are not parallel. They do not form up to be a perfect cube. However, the blue lines seem parallel and I think are the reason why the form still looks correct overall.



The tonal structure of this picture shows smooth gradient with steady differences in its tonal differences even though the artwork has generally more dark tones and little light tones. This may suggest a setting of a dimly lit interior. The artists used this method to slow down our reading of the picture to effectively convey a calming mood. It makes sense as it is after all a scene of a woman sleeping.



This is the visual path that takes place in this picture. The artist uses the brightness of the tones to the darkest to guide our eyes slowly from the woman's face to what she's sleeping on. The artist gently introduces us to the character and the setting.

The picture is also very tightly cropped to her face maybe to emphasise the woman's emotion and the aura as she's sleeping.



**The Mountains Surrounded by Clouds**

*Huang Binhong*

<http://en.cafa.com.cn/huang-binhongs-special-exhibition-of-landscape-painting-on-display-at-anhui-museum.html>



The artist forms the space by overlapping the hills. A sense of dimension is felt when the hills are stacked one above the other while overlapping.

I can feel the height of the hills and the horizontal space the lake has on the bottom of the picture.

I feel that because of that it influences the way I read this artwork – from bottom to up. I can see an entry path forming by the white tones of the lake and “pathway” among the hills. Because of that it creates high contrast, and brings the hills forward towards us from the blurry soft hills at the back.

This may suggest that the artist wanted us to read and feel the flow of picture as if we are walking and experiencing the scenery.

The hills vary in height and it seems as if the hill that is highlighted in GREEN plays a dominant role - mainly because of its scale, taking up most of the composition, and its dark tones that seems to attract our attention.

However, small clear details at the bottom like the houses, trees and rocks seem to create that visual balance against the big dominant hill.