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*Watchful listening*

Media transpositions in Edouard Manet's 1862 paintings and prints

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requirements for the degree of

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## Abstract

This thesis examines a selection of the prints and paintings produced in 1862 by Edouard Manet. My point of departure is works associated with his first retrospective, a portfolio of prints entitled *Huit gravures à l'eau-forte*. Like most of Manet's printed works from this era these reproduce either his or other artists' paintings. I discuss their interaction with contemporaneous (or earlier) paintings and other creative work, in a variety of media, both by Manet and by his precursors which share similar subject-matter. I demonstrate that in these works Manet was participating in the well-established early nineteenth-century practice of "re-mediation", that is the belief that art created for one medium can be recreated in another. The artist was developing new values for visual media through his rigorous re-interpretation of traditional ideas about reproduction in the fine arts.

Manet's work in adapting and broadening the re-mediation process was shared with his avant-garde contemporaries. They were not simply translating a work from its original context into a new medium. They combined, in a single creation, art originating from a variety of media. The outcome of their endeavours was a work designed to engage a range of senses, intensifying its impact. The same outcome was sought by Manet. His works are redolent with references to non-visual elements. The practice appears to have originated in his commitment to representing music. He adopted a variety of mechanisms for manifesting the invisible presence of sound, usually musical sound. The representation of aural phenomena was an interest shared by his contemporaries reflecting the pre-eminent status of the medium. Music determined Manet's subject-matter in a number of key works. Many other early works call attention to experiences which although unseen are nevertheless available to the senses. These steer the viewer's attention away from ostensible subject-matter toward things and actions that are hidden, implicit or somehow not visually present. The visual operates as the work's superficial surface. What the spectator could be induced to extrapolate by going beyond the purely visual is what gave these superficially uncomplicated images their unique resonance. Manet was simulating synaesthetic experiences analogous to those striven for in the works of his contemporaries, Wagner and Baudelaire.

In tackling French art I am writing back to the country where my ancestor **John Campbell Lindsay Ewing** lost his life in the Great War. This thesis is dedicated to him and his fellow countrymen who fought, and died prematurely, out of a belief in pan-national cultural values.



## Acknowledgements

This thesis has incurred debts I can't possibly repay. Here I try to account for those which are personal.

I begin with the inestimable generosity with which my friend Dr John (Bruno) Gianni has passed on to me his knowledge of French language and culture. At the same time, by his willingness to engage with the topic of this thesis, he has become my principal interlocutor.

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The University of Auckland library has been equally important in bringing this thesis to a successful conclusion. Writing about a mid-nineteenth century French artist would have been impossible without the sterling services of an Interloans Department, headed by Christine Jackson for most of the period and ably supported by a dedicated staff of highly professional assistants. I am equally indebted to the staff at the Fine Arts library, all of whom have been able

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Online correspondence has also played a significant role in bringing this thesis to a successful conclusion. Again I have mentioned by name some of the most significant of these in the body of my thesis. This is the place, however, to specifically mention two especially fruitful dealings I have had with patient correspondents. Professor James Rubin, one of the world's foremost Manet scholars, has supported and advised me in my work since 2008; I am proud to include his name in this place. Another correspondent who typifies the finest values in intellectual enquiry is Dr Simon Wynberg one of the guitar's foremost scholars. He made it possible for me to approach the mid-nineteenth century history of the guitar with a greater degree of confidence than would otherwise have been the case.

This is too short a list, leaving out many who have helped in making this thesis. I beg their forgiveness.

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## Prologue: “Synaesthesia” in Edouard Manet’s 1862 prints and paintings

Paintings and prints made by Edouard Manet in 1862 are redolent with references to non-visual elements. In this thesis I will be arguing that the practice originated in his commitment to representing music and that he adopted a variety of mechanisms for manifesting the invisible presence of sound, usually musical sound. Concomitantly many other early works call attention to experiences which are unseen yet available to the senses. In some works Manet foregrounds a sensation of touch, often juxtaposed with the figure’s gaze; in others he evokes unseen actions either beyond the picture frame or masked within it. These techniques steer the viewer’s attention away from ostensible subject-matter toward things and actions that are hidden, implicit or somehow not visually present.<sup>1</sup> The visible operates as the work’s superficial surface. What the spectator can be induced to extrapolate by recognising Manet introduces elements beyond that gives these superficially uncomplicated images their unique resonance. Music is Manet’s master-model.<sup>2</sup> In works of this period it inspires his introduction of non-visual sensuous phenomena. The resonances they engender permeate these paintings and prints. Manet was committed to simulating *synaesthetic* experiences analogous to those striven for in the works of his great contemporaries, Wagner and Baudelaire.

This prologue will clarify my meaning when I use this term. It is commonly used in at least two distinct contexts today. In relation to works of art “synaesthesia” designates that which is capable of arousing multiple sensuous responses. Roland Posner and Dagmar Schmauks define this aspect of “synaesthesia” as “an art programme which makes artists design works of art so that they affect several senses at the same time.”<sup>3</sup> This definition differs from that in use in contemporary scientific circles where it has a more confined meaning. There it describes an involuntary sensation induced in human subjects when they are exposed to a

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<sup>1</sup> A commitment to describing invisible phenomena characterises the paintings of Eugène Delacroix, according to Charles Baudelaire. Baudelaire said Delacroix is pre-eminent in translating “... the invisible, the impalpable, the dream, the sensibilities [*les nerfs*], the *soul*...” «Delacroix...a mieux traduit qu’aucun autre. ...C’est l’invisible, c’est l’impalpable, c’est le rêve, c’est les nerfs, c’est l’*ame*... » in Baudelaire’s 1864 article «L’œuvre et la vie d’Eugène Delacroix » Pichois: II, p744. [Published in *Baudelaire Oeuvres complètes* edited by Claude Pichois. Paris: Gallimard. Throughout this thesis I will be using this edition when quoting from Baudelaire’s *Collected Works* and will identify it by the annotation “Pichois” followed by the volume and page number.]

<sup>2</sup> I have adopted this metaphor from Champa, K., 1999. “Concert music: the master model for radical painting in France, 1830-1890” *Imago musicae* 16-17, pp207-221.

<sup>3</sup> “Synaesthesia” by Posner and Schmauks in Huppaufl, B. and Wulf, C. eds, 2009. *Dynamics and Performativity of Imagination: The image between the visible and the invisible*. New York, Routledge. P324.

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stimulus in a seemingly unrelated sense.<sup>4</sup> In the context of mid-nineteenth century art production, despite there being any hard evidence that the artists involved were clinically synaesthetic, it provides a word for the effect artists were seeking when they set about to amalgamate media in a single work. I will present evidence that suggests nineteenth-century artists preceding Manet were aware of the neuro-physiological condition. But a work could feature synaesthesia without implying its creator is a synaesthete. Using hearsay knowledge, an artist could incorporate it in a work for reasons that have only to do with an artistic agenda. It is reasonable to presume those artists who attempted to mimic its process were pursuing the powerful effects generated by the experience. This “splashing over of impressions from one sense modality to another” could be expected to intensify the artwork’s impact.<sup>5</sup> Such was the painter’s goal according to Eugène Delacroix. A successful painting is not defined by comparing cold Classicism with warm Romanticism: “True warmth,” irrespective of style “is the power to move the beholder.”<sup>6</sup>

Synaesthesia, as a neuro-physiological condition, remains imperfectly understood. Significant unresolved issues relevant to its occurrence in artistic contexts include whether it is inherited or whether it can be learnt. One hypothesis proposes that it is universally present in a nascent state and has been suppressed in most people’s brains during its maturation. A related hypothesis is that, for unknown reasons, synaesthesia is brought to consciousness amongst a select group while it operates subliminally in us all. According to this hypothesis most people fail to recognise that they have it, even though elements of synaesthesia are part of our everyday thinking. Given these doubts and the current scientific interest in the topic it is not unlikely that significant advances in understanding remain to be made. One outcome of such research may be to reconcile scientific understanding of the neurological condition with a long-standing artistic interest in the fusion of the senses.

For hundreds of years artists have proceeded as if they were aware of the condition. Works designed to bring about a fusion of the senses within the arts, such

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<sup>4</sup> Ramachandran, V. and Hubbard, E., 2001. “Synaesthesia – A window into perception, thought and language” *Journal of Consciousness Studies*, 8(12), pp. 3–34.

<sup>5</sup> Gombrich, E. (1961) *Art and Illusion* London, Phaidon. P366.

<sup>6</sup> Delacroix, E. (1980) *Journal 1822-1863* edited by A. Joubin, revised by R. Labourdette, Paris, Plon p605 (translated and quoted in Vincent Pomarède “The Silent Arts’ and Music: Eugène Delacroix, a painter who loved music” in Lederballe, T. Ed. 2000. *Delacroix: The music of painting*. Ordrupgaard in collaboration with Rhodos, Copenhagen. Pp63-101 at p100, n6.)

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as paintings allegorising the senses, created a simulacrum of synaesthetic experiences. Even though “evidences for a true correspondence of sensations are difficult to obtain” as Erika von Erhardt-Siebold in her trail-blazing monograph on the subject noted, and “even if transpositions as such were not records of moments of experience, the associations between various sensations seem spontaneous enough to allow a blending of only such impressions as the author has really experienced.”<sup>7</sup> Irrespective of personal endowments, social and intellectual interests in the middle of the nineteenth century created an environment conducive to synaesthesia’s exploitation by artists. That environment will be explored in the course of this thesis. The current neuro-physiological understanding of the condition makes it impossible to verify that nineteenth-century artists were personally endowed with synaesthetic capacities. The case of Franz Liszt is instructive. Today he is almost universally acknowledged to have been synaesthetic, however evidence for his having the condition was not published in his lifetime. The comments which certify his standing were reported anonymously in a newspaper published in Berlin fifty years after the event, at the height of the late nineteenth century interest in the phenomenon.<sup>8</sup>

Such evidence does not exist for earlier nineteenth-century artists. Yet a number of those closest to Manet were involved in making artworks that focussed on combining sensorial references. E.T.A. Hoffmann, Eugène Delacroix, Théophile Gautier and Charles Baudelaire all divulge in imaginative expression what synesthetes experience involuntarily. No specific report would assure us that the artist’s representation originated in a synesthete’s typical experience. Those who study the phenomenon from a scientific perspective are therefore cautious about identifying a constitutional synaesthetic mentality as the inspiration for these artists’ activities. Cytowic and Eagleman, for instance argue that “we have to carefully separate those who use synaesthesia as an intellectual idea of sensory fusion from individuals with genuine perceptual synaesthesia.”<sup>9</sup> In the former cases, lacking anecdotal reasons for believing the artists were synaesthetic, it is usual to presume

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<sup>7</sup> The work *Synaesthesien in der englischen Dichtung des 19. Jahrhunderts*, 1919 was published in *Englische Studien* 53 (1919) pp1-157 and 196-334. My quotation is extracted from a redaction published as Erhardt-Siebold, E von. 1932 “Harmony of the senses in English, German and French Romanticism” *PMLA* 47(2), 577-592 at p589.

<sup>8</sup> Cytowic, R. & Eagleman, D., 2009. *Wednesday is Indigo Blue* Cambridge, MIT Press. P93 and n8 p263.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid* P13. This oft-repeated truism seems to reflect a desire to confine the term to scientifically verifiable phenomena.



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their interest in the phenomenon was intellectual rather than behavioural. Cytowic and Eagleman claim works by such artists reflect an “understanding that there are equivalent associations among different dimensions of experience that we best understand as metaphor.”<sup>10</sup>

It is plain that in discourses about the arts the term has a wider field of reference than that encompassed in scientific circles. In historical studies of nineteenth-century artists there is an increasing tendency to accept Erhardt-Siebold’s contention that, if the works by a specific artist betray a synaesthetic sub-text, it is not outrageous to assume the artist was aware of the condition and wanted that awareness to be visible in specific works of art. It follows from this that in describing such instances a commentator would use the word “synaesthetic” without being concerned with whether the artist can be shown to have experienced the neuro-physiological condition.

Typical of this approach is an essay by Therese Dolan who, in an upcoming publication *Perspectives on Manet* (February 2012) will be pursuing the idea that “Manet provides a visual testament to his friend [Ernest Cabaner] as a chromoesthete. ... Cabaner’s poem [*Sonnet à sept nombres*] engaged in semiotic uncertainty by its arbitrary linkage of sounds, feelings and colours that ultimately resist any totalizing effort of clear meaning or logic of experience, ... . Manet took similar modernist liberties in his pastel, *providing a moment of uniquely heightened synaesthetic perception for the observer.*”<sup>11</sup> The Spanish poet Angel Gonzalez Garcia also used the term in an essay about Manet he wrote for an exhibition mounted at the Prado, in Madrid in 2004. He wrote that Manet’s paintings seem to provide two experiences which are difficult to perceive simultaneously: “it is...like *two planes* which enclose and define a terrain in which the senses become confused and resound... Manet used it throughout his career, insisting on all sorts of synaesthesia, of sensorial games that created complications.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> *Ibid* P193.

<sup>11</sup> This description (my italics) is based on the abstract the author provided for a conference presentation of the topic foreshadowed in the publisher’s publicity for the book.

<http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/files/ioz9eg/Poetics%20and%20Visual%20Culture.pdf>(Accessed 20 May 2011).

<sup>12</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P415-6.

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Gonzalez-Garcia's formulation brings to the forefront a question central to this thesis' purpose. What are writers who use the term in relation to works of art trying to achieve? What surplus is being reached for when a term, used in a not-strictly-scientific sense, is inserted into a discourse about an artwork or an artist?

A two-pronged approach to answering this question will conclude this prologue. In the first place I provide examples where writers use the term to describe the artistic context in which E.T.A. Hoffmann, Eugène Delacroix, Théophile Gautier and Charles Baudelaire operated. It is not difficult to establish their influence on Manet's work (Hoffmann through the medium of Baudelaire, who quoted him in his 1846 *Salon* review). These examples support my application of the term to Manet's 1862 portfolio of prints. The prints and their associated paintings demonstrate that he was conversant with artistic applications of synaesthetic phenomena.

My second approach outlines usage of the term "synaesthesia" by writers in critical commentaries on modern artistic contexts. These participate in extending the term beyond strictly scientific definitions.

Val Scullion and Marion Treby have claimed, in a recent article, that E.T.A. Hoffmann (1776-1822) "was a synaesthete who inextricably fused the timbral qualities of voice, note and word." They claim that "the contemporary psychological model of the brain as a *sensorium commune*" would have provided a conceptual basis for describing this function. To exemplify Hoffmann's understanding of the interrelation of hearing and seeing they cite a passage in Hoffmann's *Johannes Kreisler's Lehrbrief (Johannes Kreisler's Indenture, 1815)*: "Just as in the words of a brilliant physicist, hearing is seeing from within, so to the musician seeing is hearing from within, attainable only through the profoundest awareness of music, which resounds from everything his eye falls upon, and vibrates in sympathy with his spirit." The authors acknowledge a gap between the usual synaesthetic experience "which has no creative outcome" and what they dub "creative synaesthesia" which they describe as the cognitive expression of a contiguous experience "shaped by cross-sensory stimuli." They refuse to accept that this is merely a metaphoric analogy, arrived at through rational association. Instead they track "the ability of some artists with synaesthetic tendencies to pass immediately from the fusion of multi-sensory perception to mental percepts related to metaphor, and thence to creative

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synaesthetic writing.”<sup>13</sup> As they note this has already been observed as a likely link by which seemingly unrelated concepts and ideas become the basis for creativity.

Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) is another instance of an artist recently associated with synaesthesia. Examples from his voluminous writing are used to support the idea. Often cited is his description of the impression “a particular juxtaposition of colours, lights and shades” made on the viewer. In referring to it as “the music of painting” his language draws upon synaesthetic analogies.<sup>14</sup> In a letter written to Baudelaire in 1861 Delacroix claimed “the mysterious effects of line and colour” were the “musical and arabesque part” of a painting.<sup>15</sup> Here he may have been responding to Baudelaire’s comment in his review of the *Exposition universelle* of 1855 that the effect of Delacroix’s paintings is “often quasi-musical.”<sup>16</sup> Delacroix seldom included music in the subject-matter of his paintings. Rather his improvised execution, what Lederballe describes as “the painter’s pulsating movements” where “quick, sporadic strokes of paint” have been laid onto the canvas, establishes the most significant analogy with music in his art.<sup>17</sup> As Anne-Birgitte Fonsmark asserts “he saw an intimate association between the concordant harmonies of music and composition in painting as expressed by colour and line, and a number of his works can be viewed in the light of his ideas about such synaesthetic correspondences between the two arts.”<sup>18</sup>

Comparisons which equated his paintings with music and sound often recur in reviews written during his lifetime. Théophile Thoré, in a review of the 1847 *Salon* described Delacroix’s painting *Christ on the Cross* (sketch) 1845 in musical terms: “It

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<sup>13</sup> Scullion, V. & Treby, M. 2010 “Creative synaesthesia in E.T.A. Hoffmann’s *Ritter Gluck*”. *European Review* 18(2), 239-262. P240; p255n20; p242.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Lederballe, T. “Delacroix’s enthusiasm: Abduction as genre in his painting” pp103-121 in Lederballe, T. Ed. 2000. *Delacroix: The music of painting*. Ordrupgaard in collaboration with Rhodos, Copenhagen. P115n17. Peter Vergo discusses the significance of this comment in Vergo, P., 2010. *The music of painting. Music, modernism and the visual arts from the Romantics to John Cage*. London, Phaidon Pp68-69.

<sup>15</sup> Delacroix, E., 1936-1938 *Correspondance générale d'Eugène Delacroix* publiée par André Joubin, Plon, Paris, vol. iv, p276. « [...] ces effets mystérieux de la ligne et de la couleur, que ne sentent, hélas! que peu d’adeptes. Cette partie musical et arabesque n’est rien pour bien des gens qui regardent un tableau comme les Anglais regardent une contrée quand ils voyagent. »

<sup>16</sup> « Puis ces admirables accords de sa couleur font rêver d’harmonie et de mélodie, et l’impression qu’on emporte de ses tableaux est souvent quasi musicale. » Baudelaire, C., 1976. *Exposition universelle, 1855, Beaux-arts*. Pichois II, p595.

<sup>17</sup> See the reference in note 13; p120.

<sup>18</sup> Fonsmark, A.-B. “Delacroix: The music of painting” pp9-44 in Lederballe, T. Ed. 2000. *Delacroix: The music of painting*. Ordrupgaard in collaboration with Rhodos, Copenhagen. P13.

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is absolutely as in music, where all the notes group themselves in the prevailing harmony and dance in a chorus.”<sup>19</sup> And in 1859, Manet’s friend Zacharie Astruc, in the course of a long review of the *Salon* of that year, devoted several pages to Delacroix. He hailed the “mysterious enigma” of his genius, associating it with “most unusual colour phenomena”. Lamenting his inability to analyse “the sumptuousness, the brilliance, the glamour, the whimsical fluidity of his tones” he asserts “one needs to see it – one needs to hear it - yes, to hear it, because his paintings seem made from notes. These are splendid symphonies, the German art of sound applied to colour, the same knowing combination of instruments ...”<sup>20</sup> Finally Charles Blanc, in his obituary of Delacroix, describing the ceiling paintings made for the library of the Palais Bourbon (1838-1847) in Paris recognises “a kind of melody that emanates from it like a prelude”.<sup>21</sup> These may all be no more than the seductive appeal of a compelling metaphor, if it wasn’t for the way the “music of painting” was affirmed in Delacroix’s own writing as something only recognised by “a few adepts”.

We have no way of telling whether these connections emerged from Delacroix’s experience of synaesthesia, as described by science. We do have this accumulation of statements, from his lifetime, where the two arts are equated. The importance of music to Delacroix’s painting practice cannot be gainsaid. Through his influence the visual arts are lifted “out of a literary mode of thinking into a musically coloured experience.” Fonsmark concludes this “was a central element in the whole artistic project that was Delacroix’s.”<sup>22</sup>

Contemporaneously, the romantic poet Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) was obsessed with what are described as “intersensorial metaphors”. They were one of his most common poetic devices. He acknowledged the origins of these “metaphors” in his own experience, quite possibly heightened by his experiments with hashish. In a feuilleton published in *La Presse* in 1843 he claimed “I heard the sound of colours:

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<sup>19</sup> Lederballe, T. *Catalogue* in Lederballe, T. Ed. 2000. *Delacroix: The music of painting*. Ordstrupgaard in collaboration with Rhodos, Copenhagen. P136.

<sup>20</sup> Astruc, Z. 1859. *Les 14 Stations du Salon*, Paris. P272.

<sup>21</sup> Blanc, C. 1864. « Eugène Delacroix » in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6<sup>e</sup> année, tome seizième (January-June 1864) p104 [February 1864].

<sup>22</sup> Fonsmark, A.-B. “ Delacroix: The music of painting” pp9-44 in Lederballe, T. Ed. 2000. *Delacroix: The music of painting*. Ordstrupgaard in collaboration with Rhodos, Copenhagen. P34.

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green, red, blue and yellow sounds occurred to me in perfectly distinct waves.”<sup>23</sup> In a survey of his poetry Etienne de Ullmann found a “massive group of borrowings from the visual transferred into the domain of sound” and another large group where references to touch were translated into experiences associated with hearing and sight. Ullmann claims that in Gautier’s poem collection *Emaux et Camées* “the principal idea is clearly synaesthetic”. At the time when Gautier’s poetry was still being studied (in the first half of the twentieth century) there was some controversy about whether these derived from personal psychological experience. Despite the tenor of the times being unsympathetic to such explanations, Ullmann came to the conclusion Gautier’s use of synaesthetic analogies was “situated between a tour de force and an habitual way of thinking encouraged by the milieu and the moment.”<sup>24</sup> By the 1980s, however, a reaction had set in against the idea of literary metaphors having any connection with synaesthesia. Nicholas Ruddick led the charge in his article on “synaesthesia” in Emily Dickinson’s poetry. Examining criticism focussed, in particular, on nineteenth-century English poetry he argued that “to give the name ‘synaesthesia’ to a phenomenon so obviously unconnected to the psycho-physiological aberration that shares that designation is to ensure that all sorts of confusion will continue to occur among critics interested in the language of poetry.” He condemned the “cultish fascination with clinical synaesthesia of certain nineteenth-century writers” arguing “similes and metaphors with an intersensory texture” had been used “by most poets of all ages.”<sup>25</sup> As I have shown this attitude is shared by Cytowic and Eagleman in their 2009 book on the topic. That the word “synaesthesia” continues to have value in artistic discourses, despite this obstacle of scientific orthodoxy, indicates that there is more to this phenomenon than scientists have yet discovered. Artists are at the forefront of an exploration of it that goes beyond scientific method. In the next part of my prologue I will introduce thinkers who are prepared to defend its application to artworks.

My discussion of the historical context for Manet’s synaesthetic ambitions concludes with synaesthetic allusions in the writing of Charles Baudelaire (1821-

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<sup>23</sup> « J'entendais le bruit des couleurs: des sons verts, rouges, bleus, jaunes, m'arrivaient par ondes parfaitement distinctes. » Quoted in O'Malley, G. 1957. “Literary synaesthesia” *The journal of aesthetics and art criticism* 15(4) pp391-411. P408.

<sup>24</sup> Ullmann, E. 1947. « L’art de la transposition dans la poésie de Théophile Gautier » *Français moderne* 15 pp265-286. P272-3; p279; p286.

<sup>25</sup> Ruddick, N. 1984. “‘Synaesthesia’ in Emily Dickinson’s poetry” *Poetics Today* 5(1): 59-78. P75; p77.

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1867). Like Gautier's, his is permeated with inter-sensorial analogies. His ideas on the subject are influenced by all the other artists I have so far described and his friendship with Manet had a significant influence on that artist. This will be an underlying theme in the chapters to come.

Baudelaire wrote about synaesthetic experiences as early as 1846, in his *Salon* review of that year. He quoted Hoffmann who had observed that when he heard music "I find an analogy and an intimate linkage between colours, sounds and perfumes." This was said by Baudelaire to "perfectly express my idea".<sup>26</sup> On the strength of this extract alone it would be reasonable to presume, as have many twentieth century commentators, that the poet/critic was less concerned with reflecting a personal experience of synaesthesia than with using the work of earlier figures to establish the basis for his intersensorial analogies. Even Baudelaire's poem *Correspondances*, included in the collection *Les fleurs du mal* (1857), has been described as "a poetic rendering of Emanuel Swedenborg's *Entsprechungen* (correspondences), his reformulation of the medieval alchemists' occult principle of correspondences."<sup>27</sup> But this poem, above all others, has given rise to a multitude of comments about its synaesthetic allusions. These are particularly generated by the lines in the sestet describing the interaction of perfumes, colours and sounds.<sup>28</sup> Beryl Schlossman in *The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire* states "Baudelaire reshapes the Romantic concept of synaesthesia ... as a form of voluptuous sensual experience and as the translation of that experience into art." In the same collection another essayist, Barbara Wright, refers to "the combination of different modes of perception, known as 'synaesthesia'" which underpins the sestet. This section of the

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<sup>26</sup> Pichois II p425. Baudelaire was quoting from Hoffmann's *Kreisleriana*. It was extracted from book 19 of the *Contes et fantaisies* of E.T.A. Hoffmann translated by M. Loève-Veimars, Paris, E. Renduel, 1832, pp45-46.

<sup>27</sup> Dann, K. T., 1998. *Bright Colors Falsely Seen: Synaesthesia and the Search for Transcendent Knowledge* New Haven, Yale University Press. P37. The author is relying on Baudelaire's description of Swedenborg's ideas in *Réflexions sur quelques-uns de mes contemporains: Victor Hugo* (Pichois II, P133.)

<sup>28</sup> *Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,  
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,  
— Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,*

*Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,  
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encens,  
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.*

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poem, “moving from one sense impression to another” are said to be “examples of horizontal synaesthesia.”<sup>29</sup>

The recurrence of imagery dependent upon inter-sensorial comparisons suggests that, whether through Baudelaire’s experiences as a drug-taker or for other unknown reasons, he was personally acquainted with the phenomenon. This is vividly illustrated in his 1860 publication *Les Paradis artificiels*. In *Le Poème du hachisch* he describes his experiences after having ingested the drug and notes “sounds take on colours and colours are invested with [*contiennent*] music.” What follows is interesting, however. He seems to imply such inter-sensorial experiences were part of his normal consciousness. Recognising that these drugged states are no more than “intensely lifelike” [*fort naturel*] he adds “every poetic brain, in its healthy, normal state, easily conceives such analogies.”<sup>30</sup> This is not unequivocal evidence that Baudelaire was synaesthetic. Nevertheless, if Baudelaire is using the verb to conceive [*concevoir*] in the sense of “give birth” (as Claire Lyu states in her analysis of this essay’s language) then to so describe a synaesthetic experience would come very close to those descriptions used in modern science.<sup>31</sup>

The literary historian René Wellek argues that Baudelaire “uses synaesthesia as merely another analogy in the great dictionary of symbolism. ...There is no confusion of the senses in him; there is only an art of translation, a rhetoric of analogizing in which the metaphors, alternating among the senses, play only a minor role.”<sup>32</sup> Baudelaire describes what metaphor means to him in *Le Poème du haschisch*. It distinguishes a poetic sensibility from that of someone under the influence of the drug. Metaphor retains a distance from life. The drugged experience collapses this. The drugged experience is similar to “a fantastic novel as if it was living instead of being written.”<sup>33</sup> Once again, however, in exemplifying this rule he gives rise to a description that resembles the experience of a synaesthete. He insists that an hallucination experienced by the drug-taker is unlike a “pure” hallucination

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<sup>29</sup> Schlossman, B. “Baudelaire's place in literary and cultural history” in Lloyd, R. ed. 2006. *The Cambridge Companion to Baudelaire* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. P177. Wright, B. “Baudelaire's poetic journey in *Les Fleurs du Mal*” in *ibid* p33.

<sup>30</sup> Pichois I, p419.

<sup>31</sup> Lyu, C. 1994. ““High” Poetics: Baudelaire's *Le Poème du hachisch*” *MLN* 109(4), 698-730. P718.

<sup>32</sup> Wellek, R. 1966. *A history of modern criticism: 1750-1950. The later nineteenth century*. London, Jonathan Cape. P445.

<sup>33</sup> « N'êtes-vous pas alors semblable à un roman fantastique qui serait vivant au lieu d'être écrit. » Pichois I, p420.

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known to medicine. The latter is “sudden, perfect and inevitable [*fatale*]; moreover it requires no pretext or excuse taken from the world of exterior objects. The sufferer [*malade*] sees a form, hears sounds where there are none.”<sup>34</sup>

Rémi Brague sees in Baudelaire’s doctrine of correspondences “an example, perhaps the pre-eminent [*privilegié*] example of the « cult of multiplied sensations »”.<sup>35</sup> In the twentieth century, as I have already discussed, this idea of multiplied sensations has had a difficult reception. Sceptics, often associated with a period when synaesthesia had a less credible standing than it has today, have been scathing in their condemnation of its “cultic” resonances. Kevin Dann, for instance, has condemned the belief of those who claim that we are all synaesthetes that it will lead to a “perfect fusion of the senses” and fulfil “a popular longing for metaphors of transcendence.”<sup>36</sup> Other modern writers are more comfortable with construing effects discernable in Baudelaire’s writing as instances of his recognition that art has to deal with and represent, as Ernst Gombrich writes “the world of the mind where shapes and colours stand for feelings”.<sup>37</sup>

Gombrich’s treatment of the theme of “synaesthesia” in the visual arts emphasizes that any analysis in the visual arts needs to acknowledge the impact of the senses [=“feelings”] on our appreciation. For example he considers how the visual experience of Mondrian’s *Broadway boogie-woogie* (1942) generates an appreciation of what the piano-based musical style known as boogie-woogie means to him.<sup>38</sup> The idea that multiple senses are involved in aesthetic experience has been taken up recently by theorists trying to account for contemporary performance. It is their analysis that provides my contemporary interpretation of the concept of synaesthesia. I will be using the term to describe works made by Manet during 1862 demonstrating that its application is not inconsistent with, albeit it extends the word’s use as a description of the neuro-physiological phenomenon. In this extended use synaesthesia can be seen as a “human capacity for perception which shifts between

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<sup>34</sup> « ... l’hallucination est soudaine, parfaite et fatale ; de plus, elle ne trouve pas de prétexte ni d’excuse dans le monde des objets extérieurs. » Pichois I, p420.

<sup>35</sup> « culte de la sensation multipliée », the richly evocative phrase used by Baudelaire in *Mon cœur mis à nu* XXXVIII, Pichois I p701 as quoted in Brague, R. 2008. *Image vagabonde : Essai sur l’imaginaire baudelairien* Chatou, Les éditions de la transparence. P37.

<sup>36</sup> Dann, K. T., 1998. *Bright Colors Falsely Seen: Synaesthesia and the Search for Transcendent Knowledge* New Haven, Yale University Press. P180.

<sup>37</sup> Gombrich, E. (1961) *Art and Illusion* London, Phaidon. P368.

<sup>38</sup> Gombrich’s discussion of the issue is contained in *Ibid* pp366-376.



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realms; between the sensual and intellectual; between the literal and lateral.”<sup>39</sup> Synaesthesia is, therefore, an “additive experience” where the combination of senses creates a more complex experience for the perceiver allowing a “multisensory evaluation”. (Mahon, quoting Cytowic, p17.) Gonzalez-Garcia description of Manet’s paintings as “two experiences which are difficult to perceive simultaneously” leads us closer to the duck/rabbit visual paradox adopted by Gombrich to describe “the elusive magic of transformation”.<sup>40</sup> In Manet’s case this “elusive magic” is concerned not just with the visual representation of performative scenes in many of his 1862 works of art. It also evokes sensations of touch or sound, cues serving to remind the viewer of the performance’s origin in another medium.

In applying a range of sensuous responses to the appreciation of Manet’s images they are experienced as more than just detached visual experiences seen at arms’ length. By including those aspects not encompassed by the mind’s eye the auditor is made to experience a more intense response to the artistic stimulus.

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<sup>39</sup> Machon, J. 2009. *(Syn)aesthetics: Redefining visceral performance* Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan. P15.

<sup>40</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P415-6; Gombrich, E. (1961) *Art and Illusion* London, Phaidon. P6.

## Introduction: Manet's medial traverse in 1862: Context and history

*C'est, du reste, un des diagnostics de l'état spirituel de notre siècle que les arts aspirent, sinon à se suppléer l'un l'autre, du moins à se prêter réciproquement des forces nouvelles.*<sup>1</sup>

Filled with optimism after his success with the painting *Spaniard playing the guitar* (1860) at the 1861 *Salon*, where it gained an "Honourable Mention", Edouard Manet was creating original works at an astonishing rate, right up till the 1863 *Salon*.<sup>2</sup> The *catalogue raisonné* of the artist's works, assembled by Denis Rouart and Daniel Wildenstein in 1975, shows he completed eighteen paintings in that year, amongst them works of primary importance to understanding his oeuvre.<sup>3</sup> This is too great a number to do them all justice in the ambit of this thesis. By concentrating on the prints collected in the Cadart Portfolio and associated paintings which share a common theme of music, I generate the core idea for this thesis. I demonstrate how these musical interests were the occasion for Manet to involve the visual arts in broader cross-media goals. It was when Manet "mutually involved" music and painting that he gave "fresh means" to his oeuvre. These initiated influential changes to art production during the second half of the nineteenth century.

Throughout Manet's life, despite his ongoing commitment to exhibiting in the Paris *Salon*, he was also promoting his works in a variety of contexts. His first public outing was at the newly created private gallery run by Louis Martinet (1814-1895) on the Boulevard des Italiens.<sup>4</sup> Later in his career, in 1877, he would exhibit in the window of a fashionable shop *Maison Alphonse Giroux* on the Boulevard des Capucines. In between he created a pavilion to exhibit his works in competition with

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<sup>1</sup> "One of the symptoms of the spiritual circumstances of our era is the way the arts aspire, if not to supplant one another, at least to be mutually involved in giving to each fresh means" in Baudelaire's 1864 article «L'œuvre et la vie d'Eugène Delacroix» Pichois: II p744.

<sup>2</sup> According to the 1983 Retrospective Exhibition catalogue, Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., this title *Espagnol jouant de la guitar* was how the work was described in the catalogue for the *Salon*. P63. *Le Guitarero* was Manet's later name for the work. He inscribed it thus in his draft for a frontispiece for the 1863 portfolio of prints (Harris 39. Hereafter I will use Jean Harris' 1990 catalogue numbering to identify prints by Manet I am referring to, adding it in brackets after the reference to the work in the text. Despite misgivings concerning this publication's accuracy, it is the most recent *Catalogue raisonné* of his prints and is widely disseminated. *Edouard Manet, The graphic work, A catalogue raisonné* by Jean C. Harris; revised by Joel M. Smith (1990) San Francisco, A. Wofsy Fine Arts). Throughout this thesis I mostly use English translations of the French titles for Manet's works, except in cases where this results in awkward neologisms.

<sup>3</sup> Rouart, D. & Wildenstein, D., 1975. *Edouard Manet: catalogue raisonne* Lausanne: Bibliothèque des arts.

<sup>4</sup> Poggi, J., 2008. Les galeries du boulevard des Italiens, antichambre de la modernité. *48/14 La Revue du musée d'Orsay*, 27, 22-33. Manet exhibited *The Reader* (1861, St Louis Art Museum, Missouri) and *Boy with Cherries* (1859, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Lisbon) during the summer of 1861, joined later by *The Spanish Singer* (1860, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), p24.

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the 1867 Universal Exhibition, and on another occasion, in 1876, he turned his studio into an exhibition space in response to his refusal at the *Salon* of that year. These alternative exhibition spaces are evidence of Manet's fervour to make his name known to a wide public. In his earlier career this fervour found its outlet in his involvement with print-making. He was a founder-member of the *Société des Aquafortistes*, a collective of artists affiliated with a printer Auguste Delâtre (1822-1907) and the publisher-editor, Cadart, which had its beginnings in 1862. Its aim was to bring prints made by etching and aquatint to the attention of collectors, connoisseurs and the general public. In September of that year it released its first publication; a sampler consisting of four works, one each by prominent or promising Parisian artists, Manet amongst them.

It had grown out of a revival of the art of etching that had slowly developed over the 1850s, leading to the adoption of the technique by a number of the young avant-garde artists. Manet produced twenty or so prints in the year of its formation. These were etchings and a single lithograph, many of them created in multiple states. A selection taken from these works made up the portfolio published under the aegis of the *Société* by its editor Cadart, in the aftermath of that first publication. In choosing to write about these works I have presumed they will provide insights into printmaking's influence on Manet's working methods. I also expect them to present the major issues absorbing his attention the year before the advent of modernism.<sup>5</sup> It is evident that, by the decision to publish them as a portfolio, this group of prints was intended to be seen together. Manet's selection was the outcome of an editing process, the reason for which has never been explored. This thesis will address that, balancing the understandable emphasis in critical writing on the portfolio's *Spanish* characteristics with a new approach, one which foregrounds its musical analogies.

Manet's first print for the *Société* was the etching *The Gypsies* (Harris 18). After that publication it did not reappear until it was included in his privately organised 1867 Retrospective exhibition. I will be devoting my third chapter to this work,

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<sup>5</sup> If there is any one watershed that pins modernism to a particular event and place, the most widely accepted candidate is the *Salon des Refusés* associated with the 1863 Paris *Salon*. See Gaëton Picon's 1974 book *1863* Geneva, Skira. He argues it was "never really what we think it was". (This phrase, summarising Picon's argument, occurs in a conversation involving Stephen Bann recorded in Bann, S., 2007. *Ways around modernism* New York: Routledge on p63; Bann comments "1863 has been *made* the watershed by a process of retrospective building" p64).

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examining the source and consequences of Manet's commitment to the mythology of Gypsy musicians. Like the other prints I discuss that were not part of the Cadart Portfolio, this image is central to Manet's interest in portraying music-related themes. While typical of his procedures in its citation of other artists' work, it evidently drew inspiration from the discussion of Gypsies in other contemporary media. I will be arguing that Manet embodied in this work the values they initiated in music.

Two copies responding to works by the artist Manet took to be Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599 –1660): *The Little Cavaliers* (Harris 5) and *Philip IV* (Harris 15) were included in his Cadart Portfolio. In my second chapter I focus on these prints copied from Spanish artists. They stand at the head of the powerful discourse concerning Manet's Spanish themes which has dominated Manet scholarship. Two recent exhibitions have been devoted to the topic. The first took place in 2003 at the Musée d'Orsay in Paris and at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. The second, at the Prado Museum in Madrid from October 2003 till January 2004, featured a different selection of works, but the theme of this exhibition was analogous to the first. In this chapter I will be arguing that Manet is not re-enacting a particularly "Spanish" style in either the paintings or prints making up these works. Instead they are more usefully related to his strategic effort in the early 1860s to align his subject-matter with the rage for things Spanish. These "Spanish" works do not overtly conform to the pattern I have discerned in the rest of the works making up the Cadart Portfolio. I am therefore concerned in this chapter with establishing a corrective to their inflated importance in his oeuvre at this date.

For the portfolio Manet went beyond the familiar nineteenth century practice of reproducing in print selected paintings by revered predecessors. He had a more broadly-based interest in translating works originating in other media and his prints became the place where a number of variant exercises in that interest were played out. On the simplest level it is continued with three prints in the portfolio which apply this tradition to his own paintings: *The Guitarist* (Harris 12), *The Absinthe Drinker* (Harris 16) and *The Espada* (Harris 35).<sup>6</sup> Each of these works is important to the development of my theme and accordingly each is treated in a separate chapter.

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<sup>6</sup> *The Spanish Singer* converted to a print is usually referred to as *The Guitarist* after the title Manet gave it in his list of prints for the 1863 portfolio. *The Espada* is the title Manet gave his print after the painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* again in his 1863 frontispiece print (Harris 39).

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He was also prepared to make works of art where his reliance on predecessors was overt but took up only part of the work. In chapter four I examine the complex interplay of print, painting and contemporary image-making tied up in the origins and development of the painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* (1862, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). Manet was re-imagining the traditional French motif of the woman-as-hero by aligning it with Spanish subject-matter. His use of that subject-matter for contemporary political effect, and his incorporation of references to the print series by Goya have put commentators off the track of its underlying meditation on a French motif, created in an atmosphere where light opera and costume pieces for the theatre interact with photography. Cast into performative contexts, the image exemplifies the artist's interest in expanding the repertoire of visual media. This work concerns itself with identifying elements in the visual arts capable of mimicking time-based media.

The work usually known under the generic title *The Spanish Singer* can only be fully grasped by considering its two versions, both the painting and the print. Because of the works' centrality to my thesis these merit two chapters. The two works emerge from a complex inter-relation between iconographic sources and contemporary musical controversies. In chapter five I address issues raised by the reversal of the guitar in the painting, seeing this in an art historical context and concluding that Manet made deliberated decisions regarding the guitar's placement that had ample visual precedents. In chapter six I re-examine these works, this time developing the implications of Manet's compositional decisions against the backdrop both of the lively musical criticism with which so many of his acquaintances were involved and of his domestic arrangements. I look in particular at the critical reception of Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser*, performed in the same year as this painting was made, speculating about its possible relation to Manet's works with a musical theme.

Two prints in the Cadart Portfolio, *The Young Woman* (Harris 19) along with *The Absinthe Drinker*, were translated into one of Manet's largest paintings: *The Old Musician*.<sup>7</sup> These works' relationship with art by past masters is not straight-forward, as we will discover as I come to the chapters which discuss them. My first of three

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<sup>7</sup> I have not used the conventional translation of the title given to *La petite fille* in English texts. Ambiguity surrounds this construction in Manet's oeuvre (his use of "petit" in *Les petits cavaliers* is not referring to the age of the protagonists) and "fille" has a number of possible connotations when translated into English.

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chapters on this configuration of works, chapter seven, examines how their presence in *The Old Musician* has helped determine Manet's themes in that work. Their character and visual appearance changed as they moved from print to painting. Images originally devised for quite different contexts are re-imagined to fit within Manet's particular grasp of what was involved in visual story-making. I will be presenting my arguments for the case that this painting is based on a literary text dealing with musical history intertwined with the work of a romantic painter, Ary Scheffer (1795-1858). Manet turns out to have had surprising connections with this long-neglected artist.

A second chapter on the issues raised by *The Old Musician* extends my treatment of Manet's musical themes by addressing, in particular, the way he figures listening in that painting. I see listening as a central plank in his synaesthetic programme to figure an auditory presence in this work. (It is also addressed in chapter one where I discuss the print *Silentium*, in chapter five on *The Spanish Singer*, and is reprised in an examination of an obscure early etching, *The Travellers*, undertaken in chapter ten.) My third approach, in chapter nine, deals with the etchings that feed into *The Old Musician*. Here I discuss how the historical and contemporary context for printmaking came to impinge on the construction of the image *The Young Woman*, both in its original print form and when it reappears as a component of the painting *The Old Musician*. Manet's allegiance to the populist tradition in French etching is acknowledged here and its implications for the kind of image he produced are worked through.

The remaining prints from the Cadart Portfolio, on domestic themes, consist of *The Toilette* (Harris 20), *The Boy with a Dog* (Harris 11) and *The Urchin* (Harris 31), which was originally physically linked with *The Young Woman* on the same etched plate.<sup>8</sup> Of this group, three out of the four are not overt copies of any existing painting and any citation of past art, beyond what is normal, is a matter for debate. These are the works in the portfolio that break the reproductive mould into which the rest of those works was cast. Their relationship with the other works in the portfolio is a matter of thematic similarities. My eleventh chapter discussing them focuses on what I understand as their "diegetic" space. Manet extended traditional pictorial space to

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<sup>8</sup> I have adopted the nomenclature used in the 1983 Retrospective Exhibition catalogue (and by Harris) for the two "boy with dog" images.

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create an appropriate setting for invisible phenomena he was evoking.<sup>9</sup> These works are a band apart because, unlike many of the other works in the portfolio, they do not reference music. But they are depicting situations that are a logical extension of the musical concerns raised by Manet's other prints. For that reason they are treated in a chapter at the end of this thesis.

Certain foreigners from Manet's 1862 output have also found their way into this thesis. My opening chapter, for example, is devoted to a print *Silentium* (Harris 3) which did not make it into either the portfolios published in 1862 or another created for private circulation in 1863. This probably happened because of damage to the plate. The work's subject-matter and source material firmly aligns it with the prints in the portfolio; it is an unvarnished expression of the portfolio's underlying themes, here construed as the relation of visual and audible experiences.

There is another group of prints from 1862, unpublished in Manet's lifetime, which are germane to this enquiry. Although they, like the domestic prints, are independent of Manet's painted production, in this case their subject-matter does incorporate references to music, either directly or implicitly. The three etchings are his second "Frontispiece" etching (Harris 38), *The Travellers* (Harris 4) and *The Street Singer* (Harris 22). Each has something distinctive to contribute to the argument in this thesis. Because of this I am extending the reach of my thesis, beyond the group of prints comprising the portfolio, to accommodate them and will discuss them in depth in my tenth chapter.

In the first place this artist's role as print-maker reflects his commitment to a process of circulation of images, both his own and those of selected forebears. Thus many of his prints have a close relation with the subject-matter of his paintings; enabling him to vary his interpretation while providing cheaper images for a populist market. Others were involved in the translation of a past master's works into a contemporary idiom. There was a third group; they are prints which prefigured independent Impressionist printmaking. These works were unrelated to painting and demonstrate that Manet's approach to printmaking, deriving from the reproduction of images, developed a life of its own. Each of these categories is treated in this thesis, within the chapter-structure already outlined.

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<sup>9</sup> *Inter alia* the OED defines "diegetic" as "the fictional time, place, characters, and events which constitute the universe of the narrative." It is customarily used in relation to cinema and literature.

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In 1862 the act of transferring images, originating elsewhere, into the medium of etching provided Manet with the opportunity to revisit his intentions. Etching had the effect of manipulating meaning. As T. J. Clark observes, Impressionist printmakers “relished the way different techniques produced discontinuities in the texture of their visual ideology”.<sup>10</sup> Every new form endowed works with an identity distinct from previous manifestations. The challenge to the artist was to demonstrate that he could imbue this new identity with qualities unique to the medium. What remains to be shown is whether this interaction between old and new was capable of generating a unity of purpose and a material integrity over the collection as a whole.

My thesis is concerned with unravelling the threads between works collected in or associated with the 1862 Cadart portfolio. I will demonstrate how they were held together by his response to musical and related non-visual experiences. I will also examine how their stylistic features were inflected by the media in which they were inscribed. The advantage of starting from Manet’s prints, rather than from his more celebrated paintings, is that I am obliged to consider their unusual object-quality. These printed works often belayed their reproductive origins with a sketch-like, improvisatory style. By observing the image take form within and across media, I uncover reasons for Manet’s commitment to printmaking. I will be relating this slippage between media to his quest for affective presence in the 1862 works.

It is, by now, well recognised that Manet was intensively involved in reproductive processes, having, in particular, a broadly-based fascination with processes involving translation between media. An example is his student copying of the *Venus of Urbino* (1857, Private Collection) by Titian (c. 1473/1490 –1576) culminating in his series of works grouped around the painting *Olympia* (1865, Musée d’Orsay, Paris). It shows itself more generally in the tracing onto the copper plate of a drawing after one of his own paintings, in the illustration of literary texts, his frequent use of photographs as an aid in the process of printmaking, and in the unvarnished incorporation of photographic images in his works. It is what Jean Clay describes as “the *unfolding* operation ... at the core of the artist's work...under the sign of the series, through a whole apparatus of tracings, photos, engravings, and so forth.”<sup>11</sup> Thus this enquiry begins by examining how his work in print-making fits this model

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<sup>10</sup> Clark, T.J., 1975. The productions of the press. *Times literary supplement*, 401. P401.

<sup>11</sup> Clay, J., 1983. Ointments, makeup, pollen. *October*, 27, 3-44. P16.



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and then proceeds to discuss how his more experimental prints appear to break free of it.

Print-making is itself twinned; at the technical level it involves a symbiotic relationship with repetition. This is what makes the medium different from any other in the visual arts. The material object on which the image is inscribed interposes between the artist's original idea and the final paper copy, making the print the third manifestation of a process which relies on repeating a fixed *topos* in different media and states. Baudelaire often used the expression *traduire* [translate] to describe such a creative process, arguing that translation began with the mental image the artist had already created from the flux of experience: "every good, true draftsman draws according to an image imprinted in the brain, and does not simply imitate nature."<sup>12</sup> The print series therefore originates in something observed or otherwise tangible. 'Translation' occluded its idealization lodged in the brain with the process of creating the work of art in a specific medium. The work was seen to undergo interpretive adaptations enforced by the distinctive characteristics of that medium. I will discuss, in a subsequent chapter, his belief that this idealization was capable of finding expression in distinctly unrelated media, crossing the barrier of the senses in the process.

This dichotomy between the original conception and its copy in a particular medium had a long history in French aesthetic theory. As early as 1649 Abraham Bosse (c.1602/1604-1676) had defined the difference between original and copy in these terms. Bosse had claimed only the work conceived in the mind is original, untainted by the imputation of copying appearances.<sup>13</sup> This was the approach adopted by Victor Cousin (1792-1867), the early nineteenth century French philosopher. He was influential in his 1858 claim that "the foundation of art is the idea; what makes art is above all the realization of the idea, and not the imitation of such and such a form in particular".<sup>14</sup> "This suggests," says Paul Duro, "that formulations of the original/copy debate which tend to equate an original as 'by the hand of the artist' and the copy to an imitation of another artwork are simplistic in the

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<sup>12</sup> « tous les bons et vrais dessinateurs dessinent d'après l'image écrite dans leur cerveau, et non d'après le nature » Charles Baudelaire *The painter of modern life* (Pichois II, 698).

<sup>13</sup> Duro, P., 1991. Quotational art : plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose. *Art History*, 14, 294-300. P296.

<sup>14</sup> Bann, S., 2001. *Parallel lines : printmakers, painters and photographers in nineteenth-century France* New Haven; London: Yale University Press. P28.

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extreme and blind to the historical nuances of the debate" (Duro *ibid*, p296). In a century as historicist as the nineteenth, where artists were well versed in art's history, "copying" was part of the armoury of every artist. The print became the site for copying, made into an institution. As such it was deeply immersed in discussions of issues surrounding the idea of originality. The "idea" behind a reproductive work comprised not just the work it was reproducing but also the approach to its new manifestation adopted by the print-maker. "Originality" continued to be a matter for debate throughout the century, irrespective of the level of technical skill applied in the process of converting the image into its new medium. What counted for originality was related to matters of technique. There was very little stigma attached to the re-appearance of a former pictorial motif.

In fact, throughout its history, print-making had been devoted to devising suitable means for reproducing the subject-matter of painting. As early as Andrea Mantegna (1431-1506) and Marc-Antonio Raimondi (c.1480-c.1534) prints were used to translate works of art originally created in another visual medium. Mantegna's workshop produced engravings copying his *Triumph of Caesar* or drawings for it. (Nine paintings made between 1486-1505 were created for the Ducal Palace in Mantua and are now in Hampton Court Palace, London). These were perhaps the first prints understood to be depicting paintings. With an increasing pace of innovation in art, and the growth of a critical interest in it amongst a non-professional public, reliable depictions of paintings filled an obvious need. The next stage began when Titian in Venice, and Raphael (1483-1520) in Rome, almost simultaneously began to collaborate with printmakers to make prints to their designs. Titian at this stage worked with Domenico Campagnola (c.1500-1564) and others on woodcuts, whilst Raphael worked with Raimondi on engravings, for which many of Raphael's drawings survive. Rather later, the paintings done by the School of Fontainebleau were copied in etchings, apparently in a brief organised programme, many undertaken by the painters themselves.

Prior to the nineteenth century it was widely accepted that such reproductive prints also had a life of their own. They were creating a "modern" interpretation of the original and it was acceptable for print-makers to impose creative amendments on the original image. In the eighteenth century in France Jean-Georges Wille (1715-1808) and Jean-Jacques de Boissieu (1736-1810) had no scruples about altering the

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original work in their prints “after” seventeenth-century Flemish artists. Boissieu added spectators who did not exist in the original; Wille created integral frames within the engraved image. Both acted as if the printed rendition was a further remove from the reality on which the original was based and they wanted their print to signify this process.<sup>15</sup>

The revival of classicism in painting in the latter half of the eighteenth century was accompanied by a decline in the involvement of artists in the making of prints. Printmaking became the preserve of specialists trained in and exclusively involved with reproductive engraving. There were, of course, notable exceptions. Gabriel de St Aubin (1724-1780) was something of a solitary figure with his broadly handled drawings and etchings of everyday life. And the tradition of etching was not entirely lacking in practitioners in the first part of the nineteenth century. There were etchers who forged an independent career, albeit they hardly emerged from relative obscurity. Paul Huet (1804-1869) was described by Burty in his 1869 catalogue of the artist’s works as responsible for the beginnings of landscape etching in France, one of the only favoured genres for the medium in the first half of the nineteenth century. Huet’s work was described by the great nineteenth century print collector and writer Henri Beraldi as that of a precursor, “clearing the way and ploughing the field, as they say, in which have emerged the powerful foliage of the modern art.”<sup>16</sup>

Another artist who continued the tradition of etching from the 1830s until his death in 1887 was Eugène Bléry (1805-1887), the master of Charles Méryon (1821-1868). Beraldi describes his “considerable and justified” success, proposing that many people went to the Salon just to see his works and noting that he was awarded all the medals and decorated for his work in 1846. Compared to Huet this man was no precursor of the avant-garde, however. On the contrary, Beraldi says he was “a pupil of Boissieu by influence, almost an eighteenth-century engraver living amongst us” (*ibid* Vol. 2, p99; Bléry was still alive when this was published). He worked

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<sup>15</sup> Wille and Boissieu were major figures in eighteenth century French print-making and were significant figures in the revival of that earlier Flemish school, making prints after Gerard Ter Borch (1617-1681) and Karel Dujardin (1622-1678). At the time Manet was active both schools were “coming in for a new period of intense popularity” Bann, S., 2006. Photography by other means? The Engravings of Ferdinand Gaillard. *Art Bulletin*, 88, 119-138. P126.

<sup>16</sup> Beraldi, H., 1981 [1885-1892]. *Les graveurs du XIXe siècle : guide de l’amateur d’estampes modernes* Nogent-Le-Roi: [S.l.] : L.A.M.E., 1981. “Il fut un précurseur, déblayant et labourant, comme on l’a dit, le sol où ont poussé les puissantes frondaisons de l’art modern.” Vol. 8, P129.

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directly from nature or from his own drawings; his landscapes and tree portraits belonging to Barbizon naturalism. He also produced many closely focused botanical studies gracefully composed with an acute realization of species.

Etching had not failed to attract talented practitioners in the first half of the nineteenth century. But in the main etchers and lithographers were confined to peripheral tasks associated with the publishing industry such as illustrating books, making images to accompany music covers, or devising caricatures in the press. Artisan engravers replaced them in creating the most prestigious copies of earlier and contemporary paintings. It was a thriving business funded by publishing houses employing modern manufacturing and marketing techniques. In this context the creative adaptation of painted images practised by eighteenth-century print-makers was abandoned in favour of an “exactly repeatable pictorial statement”.<sup>17</sup> This took place well before the introduction of the photographic image made it possible to detect creative licence.

Even in this context questions about the accuracy of a reproduction were affected by issues of originality. The writer George Sand (Amantine Aurore Lucile Dupin, later Baroness Dudevant, 1804-1876), in her autobiography, describes the debate she was party to, in the studio of Paul Mercuri (1804-1884) and Luigi Calamatta (1801-1869). These were two of the century’s pre-eminent print engravers; they were discussing the subject of the reproductive work’s fidelity to its model. The question concerned “whether engraving ought to be the exact reproduction or the ingenious interpretation of masterpieces.” Sand came to the conclusion that the engraver was obliged to “preserve intact for posterity the idea of the master”. She stated that “only a faithful and literal translation is a fitting means to the end of an intelligent copy.”<sup>18</sup>

The “accuracy” of such reproductions was a matter of earnest debate, evolving as the capacity of photography to create a seemingly “untouched” copy of the original changed its parameters. It had always been recognised that the medium affected the capacity of the print to duplicate the original. The focus of criticism became fixed on

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<sup>17</sup> See Ivins, W.M., 1969 (1953). *Prints and visual communication* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. P97.

<sup>18</sup> «si la gravure doit être l’exacte reproduction ou l’ingénieuse interprétation de l’œuvre des maîtres... conserver intacte à la postérité la pensée des maîtres... la consommation intelligent de cette publication exige une traduction fidèle et littérale.» Lubin, G. (ed.) (1971) *George Sand, Œuvres autobiographiques*, Paris: Gallimard. Volume II pp277ff.

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questions of faithfulness. By the middle of the century this was treated with a subtlety which it is difficult to replicate today without losing the fine balance critics sought between technical ability and creativity, both of which they valued in any print after another work of art. Henri Delaborde (1811-1889), conservator of the department of prints of the *Bibliothèque impériale* for thirty years from 1855, was the nineteenth century's most distinguished commentator on reproductive printmaking. He repeated Sand's view that, in reproducing paintings recognised as masterpieces, the engraver had to be "the 'simple translator' who will not presume to alter or over-interpret the works that he engraves."<sup>19</sup> There was a crucial caveat to this formulation. It was recognised that in some instances, and these were the most valued, the engraver could go further and 'interpret' when he was sufficiently skilled to improve upon the original. In the field of reproductive engraving there developed the recognition that the medium could allow for innovative technical treatments of paintings. These would take the image beyond the original's form of expression. An example, which captures the values prized in that era, is Delaborde's assessment of the way Louis-Pierre Henriquel-Dupont (1797-1892) undertook the reproduction of the *Hémicycle des Beaux-Arts* (1837, Encaustic wall painting, école nationale supérieur des Beaux-Arts, Paris) by Paul Delaroche (1797-1856). Henriquel-Dupont is described as being able to "translate faithfully" Delaroche's painting "while bringing it to its final conclusion, and adding a certain new quality without for all that transforming it." (Bann, *ibid* (2001) p204.) So despite being a product from business houses churning out repeatable images, in some instances the reproductive print attained the status of an original work of art. It was valued for the distinctive contributions being made to the original image by its creator's exploitation of the capacities of the medium. When George Sand reviewed Calamatta's version of *The Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) she praised its capacity to extend the life of the original through its mastery of the art of drawing. (Lubin *op cit* II 280).

Reproductive engraving was endorsed by conservative critics because it was possible to identify, in the work, the mark of the artist making it. Writing after the 1855 Universal Exhibition in Paris, at which photography was hailed as "one of the new arts with a universal applicability..." Delaborde described reproductive engraving as

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<sup>19</sup> Bann, *op cit* (2001) p128.

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an art “precisely because it enables, even requires, the application of intellect and discrimination in the work of reproduction.” Even if he wasn’t saying explicitly, he was implying that as much as an original painting gave expression to the style of the artist, so too, the engraver’s reproduction embodied a personal touch, full of life. An engraving gave expression to the artist’s mark-making; it had an *individual* identity which was not rooted in the work it was copying, but in the character of its creator. Delaborde had no difficulty recognizing the unmatched capacity of photography to create images of things, such as sculpture and architecture, but he maintained that print-making had an independent life. Therefore even in the specialist field of the reproductive print the interpretive instinct was kept alive. Debates about the adequacy of reproductive techniques in duplicating a work originating in another medium, demonstrate this. They show that the creative skills of the printmaker had never been completely submerged. The idea of a gulf between the interpretive and the reproductive print in the nineteenth century is the result of an inadequate appreciation of the subtleties of the discourses surrounding the medium in the period under review.

But Delaborde also made room in his article for a response to the revival of etching, already taking place in the 1850s in Paris. He suggested that those print-makers who were also artists (instead of being simply skilled workers) needed to direct their attention to creating works with qualities which photography was least able to imitate, specifying expression, physiognomy and style.<sup>20</sup> Artists fully endorsed this attitude. They envisaged going beyond the technical brilliance of reproductive engraving by introducing a personal artistic element irrespective of whether they were making reproductive or entirely original printed images. An article in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* of 1865 distinguishes between photography and prints in these terms. The author argued “photography is a mirror” while “in relation to prints, it is no longer possible for us to consider the work it interprets; we only admire the personal skill of the interpreter.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> «Parmi les arts nouveaux d’une application universelle » Delaborde in Rouillé, A., 1989. *La Photographie en France : textes & controverses, une anthologie, 1816-1871* Paris: Macula p189. «Précisément parce qu’elle permet, qu’elle exige même la participation de la pensée et du gout à un travail de reproduction » *ibid*, p228 ; « au lieu d’être seulement des ouvriers adroit »...« l’expression, la physionomie, le style » *ibid* p237.

<sup>21</sup> «la photographie...est un miroir » while «Il ne nous est plus possible, devant une estampe, de considérer l’œuvre interprétée; nous n’y admirons que l’habileté personnelle de l’interprète. » *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*

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Manet's prints after the paintings of another artist therefore occurred in a context where controversies over differences between a painting and its reproductive print had been on-going. Even in circumstances where it would seem the print-maker was seeking to faithfully imitate the appearance of the painting there were fundamental disagreements about whether this had, in fact, been achieved. By the 1860s it had become clear that for avant-garde critics the tradition of reproductive engraving was no longer seen to fulfil this function. Phillipe Burty (1830-1890), who was closely allied with the etching revival, had produced damning criticism, accusing engravers of having created the most depressing chilliness ("la plus désolante froideur") in pursuit of this elusive accuracy. Burty proposed that printmaking adopt a more interpretive approach and supported the revival of etching associated with the creation of *La Société des Aquafortistes*.<sup>22</sup> Predicting that photography would surpass reproductive print-making as the medium of choice for those wanting an accurate copy of a painted original, he urged artists to adopt etching, sharing Baudelaire's belief that "it is the most suitable [medium] for divulging human spontaneity".<sup>23</sup> The balance between a standardised formula for the reproduction of paintings by engraving and interpretive skills applied to the task by artist-print-makers was tipping in favour of placing greater emphasis on individual "handwriting".

It was during this period that, in the visual arts generally, "realism" had come to be distinguished from "naturalism". The realistic agenda placed particular emphasis on the mark of the individual who made it. Naturalism in painting had been criticized for failing to allow the interpretive input of its creator.<sup>24</sup> Its replacement "realism" was less concerned with mimetic accuracy. Rather than a photographic image of the "real" world, it tracked the artist's idea of the original. The process by which images came into being was valued above any representational outcome. As Clay describes it: "The work is not thought out in advance and then *executed*: it formulates *itself*, it conducts *itself*, it verifies *itself* through the successive clarifications by which it is established. It emerges, beyond the shock that launches it, from the

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(1865) pp316-7; article signed by M. de Saint-Santin. Manet even made one image that broke with this hard and fast distinction when he retouched with watercolour and gouache the photograph of *Le chemin de fer*.

<sup>22</sup> Burty, P., 1863. La gravure et la lithographie. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 147-160. Pp148, 151.

<sup>23</sup> Charles Baudelaire *L'eau-forte est à la mode* (April 1862) "Qui est le mieux faite pour trahir l'homme spontané" Pichois II, 736.

<sup>24</sup> Gasser, M., 1990. Between "from today, painting is dead" and "how the sun became a painter": a close look at reactions to photography in Paris, 1839-1853. *Image*, 33, 8-29. P26.

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painter's acceptance of the coincidences and discrepancies contained in his material."<sup>25</sup>

The 1850s saw the beginnings of the revival of etching as a serious artistic medium in its own right. To begin with, its most vigorous proponents emerged from the ranks of craftsmen involved in commercial print production. Charles-Emile Jacque (1813-1894), Félix Henri Bracquemond (1833-1914) and Charles-François Daubigny (1817-1878) slowly gained acceptance for their independent etchings, establishing the medium as an alternative expressive mode for artists. These men were, by and large, more closely connected to printmaking than they were to painting. But their example pointed the way to the development of printmaking in the 1860s. Henceforth artist-printmakers made etchings designed for the art market independently of any publisher's larger purpose. Emma Chambers observes: "One of the key factors in the rise in status of etching as a medium and of etchers as professional artists was the repositioning of etching within the exhibition culture of the late nineteenth century."<sup>26</sup>

During this decade printmaking's most original practitioners were Charles Meryon (1821-1868) whose most important works date between 1850 and 1855 and Rodolphe Bresdin (1822-1885). They were prepared to incorporate in their prints innovations coming from sources only peripherally related to the fine arts. Meryon used the camera obscura to accurately describe architectural features. These were incorporated with obscure and at times grotesque personal imagery, some of it derived from his experiences in the Pacific. Bresdin layered tracings from popular illustrated journals and books in a style which was "highly personal: a seemingly unsystematic, but in fact highly studied, niggly scrawling".<sup>27</sup> Bracquemond too, in his commitment to the decorative art of Jean Le Pautre (1618-1682), was experimenting with flat, purely decorative planes adorned with images of extraordinary violence. These artists demonstrated that print-making had other functions than the reproduction of paintings.

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<sup>25</sup> Clay, J., 1983. Ointments, makeup, pollen. *October*, 27, 3-44. P28.

<sup>26</sup> Chambers, E., 1999. *An indolent and blundering art? The etching revival and the redefinition of etching in England, 1838-1892*. Aldershot: Brookfield: Ashgate. P167.

<sup>27</sup> Bresdin's "complex layering of tracings from popular illustrated journals and books" is described by David Becker in 2001, Bowen, Dackerman & Mansfield (eds). *Dear print fan: a festschrift for Marjorie B. Cohn* Cambridge, Harvard, 121-134.



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With the exception of sporadic *Salon* notices critical attention was slow in coming. By the end of the decade of the fifties, however, enthusiastic encomiums about the independent aesthetic value of etched prints were being written by eminent *litterateurs*. Charles Blanc (1813-1882), the founding editor of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* attested to etching's importance, writing articles in both 1859 and 1861 in its favour. In his 1861 article he described etching as "the work of a master who writes his thoughts while he invents it, and who transmits it without the intermediary of a translator..."<sup>28</sup> Philippe Burty, Pierre Jules Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) and Baudelaire were the first writers to hail the inauguration of the *Société des Aquafortistes*. Burty announced the formation of the Society in his *Salon* review of 1861: "We are also assured that a Society is to be set up in imitation of that in London [the Etching Club set up in 1838] and that a special editor will bring together all the capricious products of our painters' etching needles."<sup>29</sup> Its first edition of four prints was widely recognised in the press and garnered a significant review in *Le Boulevard* on 7 September 1862 written by Albert Patin de la Fizelière (1819-1878).<sup>30</sup>

Although there is no definitive record of its absolute beginnings Bruno Foucart claims it was instituted after Alphonse Legros had returned from London. In January 1861 he had stayed with the amateur artist Edwin Edwards (1823-1879), to whom he had taught etching, moving in circles connected to the Etching Club.<sup>31</sup> On his return to Paris, Legros was organising the publication of a portfolio of prints *Esquisses à l'eau-forte* with Cadart and took the opportunity to propose, along with the writer Hippolyte Babou, the creation of the Society. It combined the input of artists, writers, Cadart and the printer Auguste Delâtre (1822-1907) running his own printing presses.<sup>32</sup> Manet was a foundation member; he was also a member of *La société nationale des Beaux-Arts* formed in the same year. Both institutions were set up to

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<sup>28</sup> Blanc, C., 1861. De la gravure à l'eau-forte et des eaux-fortes de Jacque. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 9, 193-208. P194.

<sup>29</sup> Wilcox, T.E., 1987. *Alphonse Legros (1837-1911)* Dijon: Musée des Beaux-Arts. P55. Legros had been friends with Whistler and through him also made the acquaintance of Francis Seymour Haden (1818-1910) who was to become the patron of the Society. Haden was an amateur printmaker. Burty's announcement appeared in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* Vol XI, August 1861, pp174-5.

<sup>30</sup> Bailly-Herzberg, J., 1972. *L'eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle; la Société des Aquafortistes, 1862-1867* Paris: L. Laget. She provides details of this first edition and on p52 lists all the notices in the French press.

<sup>31</sup> Wilcox (1987) *op cit* p55. Legros had been friends with Whistler and through him also made the acquaintance of Haden who was to become the patron of the *Société*. Haden, a surgeon, was another amateur printmaker.

<sup>32</sup> Hippolyte Babou, acting perhaps for Auguste Poulet-Malassis (1825-1878), was said by Moreau-Nelaton, in *Manet raconté par lui-même*, to be one of the initiators (1926, vol.1, p34).

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provide new markets for the rapidly burgeoning art production of the Second Empire. They were alternative outlets to the *Salon* and mark a turning point in the development of modern methods for marketing artworks.

The Society had a policy of accepting submissions from a wider range of artists than could hope to gain admission to the *Salon*. A statement of its intent produced by the publishers claimed the Society “will be able to carry current artistic ideas right into the most modest classes of design through its cheapness.”<sup>33</sup> Combined with this ambition was a desire to draw upon a wide range of participants. Membership was accepted from the provinces as well as from other countries. At the time it was the most democratic institution administering an exhibition policy then existing in France. Janis describes the consequences of this policy: “Ranks of amateurs and minor artists distinguish etching from 1860 onward” and “the etching revival's general encouragement originated one thing: it permitted dilettantism the illusion of artistic seriousness and rewarded mediocrity with critical accolades.”<sup>34</sup>

Critics promoted etching as a means of immediately conveying ones ideas without any intermediary and of rapidly transmitting impressions in a highly personal and infinitely varied manner. There was no uniformity of style between its various participants, simply a uniformity of taste. Critics and artists were united in seeking what Jean Harris describes as a “deliberate informality”, a set of general qualities which the more original etchings sought to embody: freedom, boldness, spontaneity, brevity, naiveté, intimacy, simplicity and informality.<sup>35</sup> In the Society's first volumes it is manifested in a marked predilection for truculent effects, for clashing contrasts, and for a summary coarse handwriting.

At times Manet's procedures in both painting and printmaking shared this contemporary interest in expressing oneself “naively” and with “sincerity” at the

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<sup>33</sup> Bailly-Herzberg, J., (1972) *op cit* p37.

<sup>34</sup> Janis, E.P., 1980. Setting the tone - The revival of etching, the importance of ink. In C.F. Ives (ed.) *The painterly print*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art p12. Lochnan describes the rise of Seymour Haden in the Society as indicative of a more conservative approach to etching techniques. The initial bad press garnered for the first portfolio of the Society induced the jury to “search for etchings which were more ‘finished’ and attractive.” Lochnan, K.J., 1984. The politics of publication and the growth of personal and professional rivalries. *The etchings of James McNeill Whistler*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 137-139, 296. P139.

<sup>35</sup> Harris, J.C, 1990. *Edouard Manet: The graphic work: a catalogue raisonné*, San Francisco: A. Wofsy Fine Arts.

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expense of fine finish and other overt manifestations of artistic skilfulness.<sup>36</sup> In the case of etching he was participating in a discourse which focussed on these qualities. There the originality and spontaneity of the sketch were hailed as the specific value of the technique. Gilbert Hamerton describes the artist's etching in terms of its analogy with his sketching: "'he is sincere and natural; and thus such sketches reveal the mind of the artist so clearly, and are on that account highly prized by the most intelligent lovers of art."<sup>37</sup> This was contrasted with the eighteenth-century French etching practice which to a large degree consisted merely in transferring worked drawings to copper. Baudelaire referred to etchings as *gribouillages* ("scribbles") which reveal the soul of the artist and Burty saw the technique making possible "the rapid and ample translation of both thought and sentiment"<sup>38</sup> This implied an amendment to the notion of a connection between etching and drawing and this amendment was fundamental to the aesthetics of the etching revival. Théophile Gautier, in his preface to the first year edition of works published under the aegis of the Society, entitled "Eaux-fortes modernes", stated "each etching is an original drawing," and stressed the need for spontaneity, for capturing in etching "the idea ...of the master, bubbling with life."<sup>39</sup> Baudelaire and Burty shared these views.

Spontaneous execution did not preclude the use of preparatory drawings, however. Bracquemond, Legros, Manet, and James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903) all occasionally used them. But this was only in the context of an emphasis on spontaneity which had been recognised and practised since the mid-1840s when Adolphe Hervier published an album of *Griffonis* and Bracquemond had published "a series of sketches of various subjects" around 1855. Etching was seen as a medium which provided the opportunity to focus on evocation rather than description. The

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<sup>36</sup> "...nineteenth-century theorists claimed that genius became visible in the mark of the hand and that the activity of the hand signified the engagement of the mind, a spirituality modernism transformed into self-expression. The tendency to join mind or self to hand or body was itself especially marked after the advent of photography." Shiff, R., 1989. Phototropism (Figuring the proper). *Retaining the original: multiple originals, copies, and reproductions*. Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 161-180. P172. Manet wrote, in the preface to his private exhibition catalogue in 1867: "The artist is not saying: Come and see perfect works; rather: Come and see honest works."

<sup>37</sup> Hamerton, P.G., 1864. Modern etchings in France. *The Fine arts quarterly review*, 2, 69-110 P69..

<sup>38</sup> « la traduction rapide et suffisante de la pensée et du sentiment. » Burty, P., 1863. La gravure et la lithographie. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 147-160. P151.

<sup>39</sup> « L'idée même du maître, toute pétillante de vie et de spontanéité, sans l'intermédiaire d'aucune traduction. Chaque eau-forte est un dessin original... » Reprinted in Bailly-Herzberg, J., 1972(b). *L'eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle; La Société des Aquafortistes, 1862-1867* Paris: L. Laget p266.

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artist was able to create great art in a moment's mood, following a fancy, or taking a chance. This equated printmaking with a practice in journalism where *feuilletonistes* had transfigured its traditional reportorial role with their interpretive treatment of current events. In the chapters to come I will also examine its relation to the musical practice of improvisation.

While an air of improvisation characterises some of Manet's early works, it is not true of them all; in fact as Harris has so acutely observed he had two distinct styles.<sup>40</sup> One shows the laboured deliberation and orderliness of a process in which Manet seems to be struggling for reproductive fidelity at the expense of any engagement with improvised etching in the terms described by these critics. This approach can usually be associated with his attempts to reproduce his own paintings. *The Urchin* or *Lola de Valence* (Harris 33) conform to this pattern. This is not to say that these painstakingly created imitations of his paintings do not incorporate new elements, often in the treatment of space. The flatness of the page was more openly acknowledged than in even the flattest of his paintings. Hatchings often seem to pin the principal image to the frontal plane. He also experimented with reducing representational elements towards decoration. Both innovations disclose an interest in using the medium to extend his visual vocabulary. They began in printmaking and found their most radical expression in that medium. The question whether this reflects sensitivity to the unique effects printmaking bestows on the image or whether it is merely a manifestation of Manet's desire never to exactly repeat himself, the outcome is a considerable thickening of any one motif. It can no longer be exclusively associated with one instance or medium. As Douglas Druick says "Manet used etching to explore the possibilities of changes in both light and colouristic handling when moving from one medium to another."<sup>41</sup>

In Manet's early print production other works are more improvised in their appearance, evidence that he saw the print-making process as generating a variety of styles. These are images which either have no painted equivalent or change the painted image radically in its processing as a print. For instance, *The Boy and Dog* and *The Toilette* both share a sketch-like finish and unconstrained gestural quality.

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<sup>40</sup> See, in particular, the discussion of his stylistic development in the introduction to her catalogue raisonné of his works *op cit* (1990) pp17-23.

<sup>41</sup> Druick, D. & Zegers, P., 1984. Degas and the printed image 1856-1914. In S.W. Reed & B.S. Shapiro (eds.) *Edgar Degas: The painter as printmaker*. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, lxxii, 272. P139.

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These give the impression of a work which evokes an emotional experience freely dashed off in a moment of inspiration. Here the finished work makes a virtue of its interpretive freedom. The personal stamp of the artist overrides any consistent imitative ambition.

An artist's works will never be subsumed under a critical interpretation without exceptions or qualifications to it. That Manet's print production has different facets will become clear in the course of my analysis of those works in subsequent chapters. My intention is to demonstrate that the prints and the paintings related to them, despite their importance for modern developments in the arts, also have close links with a romantic past. They exemplify Baudelaire's judgement, in a letter to Theophile Thoré in 1864, that "M. Manet, who is considered a raving madman, is quite simply a very loyal, straightforward man, doing his best to be reasonable but unfortunately marked by Romanticism from birth."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Lloyd, R. (trans & ed.), 1986 *Selected letters of Charles Baudelaire: The conquest of solitude*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, p203.

## Chapter 1: *Silentium* and the interaction of hand and eye

*Au fond d'une bibliothèque antique, dans le demi-jour propice qui caresse et suggère les longues pensées, Harpocrate, debout et solennel, un doigt posé sur sa bouche, vous commande le silence, et, comme un pédagogue pythagorien, vous dit: Chut ! avec un geste plein d'autorité. Apollon et les Muses, fantômes impérieux, dont les formes divines éclatent dans la pénombre, surveillent vos pensées, assistent à vos travaux, et vous encouragent au sublime.<sup>1</sup>*

The singular print – *Silentium* – opens my discussion of Manet's prints. (Harris 3 [Fig. 1])<sup>2</sup> Lacking any affiliated works in Manet's painted oeuvre, it nevertheless gives rise to the synaesthetic mixing of the senses addressed by them all. Picturing a silent signalling of speech, or of sound controlled by a familiar visual rebus, it exemplifies Manet's interest in representing the unseen.<sup>3</sup> Concomitantly it draws attention to embodied authority - and mocks it, perhaps, enabling an ambiguous spectator response. Above all it gives expression to the elusive appearance of knowledge, written but concealed, within the scribbling of words or *traits* of the engraver's needle. Hinting at the inability to say anything essential, circling on the periphery of meaning, it foreshadows the mysterious supplement embodied in all the works described in this thesis. In this work Manet entrenches doubts about meaning; they infect its viewing. Unpublished in Manet's lifetime and destined for ultimate obscurity, what can be achieved by rousing *Silentium* one more time for the brief moment it takes to read the image before returning it again to the silence that eventually covers all endeavours?

Here I have blended my response to the print under consideration with the standpoint I imagine Manet adopted when he created this print out of the work of another artist, artfully mixing ideas he had about the visualisation of the auditory quality of silence with those laid down four centuries previously by Fra Angelico (c1395-1455) in the cloister of the San Marco monastery [Fig. 2]. Léon Rosenthal, the first critic to write exclusively about Manet's prints, was also the first to record how

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<sup>1</sup>"In the depths of an ancient library, in the auspicious semidarkness which cajoles and suggests extended thinking, Harpocrate, upright and solemn, a finger resting on his lips, commands your silence, and, like a Pythagorean pedagogue, addresses you, in a gesture full of authority: Hush! Apollo and the muses, imperious spirits, whose divine forms materialise in the half-light, watch over your thoughts, assist in your endeavours and arouse your feeling for the sublime." Charles Baudelaire *The 1859 Salon VIII Sculpture* (Pichois II p669).

<sup>2</sup>For the purposes of this thesis images pertaining to my discussion are collected together and printed in Part 2. In this Part 1 I indicate the presence of that image in Part 2 by adding a number inside square brackets after the relevant titles. These images are also available on a CD which accompanies this thesis. There they can be viewed in an unformatted collection or as a sequential slide show.

<sup>3</sup>The motif has recently reappeared in the art world. Francis Alÿs had on show at the Tate Modern, London a work in which a room is entirely dedicated to silence, with rubber tiles deadening the sound of one's footsteps, each tile decorated with a picture of a finger raised to the lips (until 5 September 2010.)

this work by Manet reproduces a fresco by Fra Angelico in the monastery of San Marco, Florence.<sup>4</sup> His uncertainty about how Manet came by the original is now largely resolved. It is presumed Manet copied the image during a session at the monastery, thought to have taken place in the course of a visit to Florence in 1857.<sup>5</sup> Rosenthal had fewer doubts about its meaning; noting its performative dimension, he proposed that the work “seems to invite us to meditate”.<sup>6</sup>

Such an interpretation is just one of the possible ways to construe Manet’s re-use of this familiar gesture. Another critic, art historian and Surveyor of The Queen’s Pictures for the Royal Collection, Christopher Lloyd, has described the print as ‘one of the wittiest transmutations in the history of art.’<sup>7</sup> “Transmute”, “transpose”, “translate” all of these words describe, in subtly different detail what is taking place as Manet, over four hundred years after the original event, reinscribes this fresco as an etched print. These words hint at the changes visited on the image as a result of that hiatus. In the nineteenth century the motif had accreted a rich corpus of art works. These were not necessarily responding to Fra Angelico’s image; it is unclear how well it was known. Undoubtedly Manet would have known that when artists used the motif what they intended it to signify varied.

He would almost certainly have been acquainted with the quotation I have used at the head of this chapter. Taken from Baudelaire’s 1859 *Salon* review in the chapter devoted to sculpture, it is an instance of the ambiguity surrounding the motif. On the face of it, Baudelaire’s exhortation serves as a kind of prayer to classical gods, seeking their assistance in his efforts to derive insight for his studies. His reference to Harpocrates was presumably derived from his knowledge that classical authors considered the god gives insight into divine matters. Constructed by them out of a misinterpretation of the role of an Egyptian god, it had been represented, since classical times, with the borrowed motif of the finger to the mouth.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Rosenthal, L., 1925. *Manet, aquafortiste et lithographe* Paris: Le Goupy. P27.

<sup>5</sup> De Leiris, A., 1969. *The drawings of Edouard Manet* Berkeley: University of California Press. He details the known drawings from the monastery. P45. Meller, P., 2002. Manet in Italy: some newly identified sources for his early sketchbooks. *The Burlington Magazine*, 144, 68-110. He discusses their dating. P110.

<sup>6</sup> « Semble nous inviter à la méditation. » *op cit.* P27.

<sup>7</sup> Lloyd, C., 1988. Manet and Fra Angelico. *Source*, VII, 20-24. P22.

<sup>8</sup> “Harpocrates is the childhood name of the Egyptian sun god Horus. There are many pictorial representations in which he seems to put his index finger to his lips — a symbol, according to Plutarch, of insight into divine matters. Plutarch misinterpreted the position of the finger, which alluded merely to childhood, as a profound

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Baudelaire does not again refer to the God, or the gesture, in this chapter that it introduces, leaving the prominently placed inscription isolated and seemingly irrelevant to the rest of the discussion. There is, however, a reference in the text which might explain why he placed that inscription at the head of his chapter. The name of Auguste Préault (1809-1879) is invoked in the section's concluding comment. This occurs in a context where Baudelaire implies his work surpasses any of the sculptures he has reviewed. What provides the link with the opening inscription is that he was likely referring to Préault's well known and widely reproduced work, dubbed *Le silence*. The gesture of the finger to the mouth is central to it [Fig.3]. Created originally in 1842 to adorn the top of the tomb of Jacques Roblès in Père Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, the work was famous after its triumphant exposure in the 1849 *Salon*. If Baudelaire did have that work in mind when he penned his "prayer", then he used Préault's work to introduce ideas for which it was probably not originally created. As a tomb sculpture, today it is assumed to depict a framed head "signalling that life is forever silenced by death". (Baltimore Museum of Art image label.)

Susan Canning, in her informative essay on the nineteenth century history of the motif, notes the downcast eyes of the figure in Préault's sculpture. She proposes they would have suggested "an inward, contemplative state of consciousness" in most nineteenth century representations.<sup>9</sup> In the case of Préault's sculpture, however, she sees it reflecting "an alliance of silence with death and withdrawal from active life" *ibid*. This was not Baudelaire's meaning when he associated the gesture with the inspiration that comes with contemplation and study. His invocation amounted to a reinterpretation of the contemporary work. By explicitly referring to the god Harpocrates he was introducing terms from an older tradition that significantly extended the meaning of Préault's sculpture. And yet, although Manet's use of Fra Angelico's image goes through a similar procedure, it does not follow that Manet's image, too, was "an invitation to meditate" (Rosenthal, *op cit*). The figure, in both its original form as a fresco by Fra Angelico and as a print by Manet, engages directly with the spectator. This suggests a more active state of mind than is encompassed

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gesture of secrecy; nevertheless, Harpocrates became a touchstone among authors who venerated esoteric secrecy and silence". Mulsow, M., 2010. HARPOCRATISM: Gestures of Retreat in Early Modern Germany *Common Knowledge*, 16, 110-127. P115.

<sup>9</sup> Canning, S., 1979. Fernand Khnopff and the iconography of silence. *Arts Magazine*, LIV, 170-176. P172.



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by inward contemplation, or meditation. Manet had a lifelong interest in the interaction a work of art sets up with the viewer and this probably explains why his attention was initially drawn to Fra Angelico's obscure image. But why he chose it does not explain what he chose to do with it. That is the mystery this chapter will seek to investigate.

Manet's intention in transposing the fresco image by Fra Angelico is by no means self-evident. Manet may well have recognised that Baudelaire's invocation of Harpocrates was connected with Pr eault's sculpture. Both author and sculptor would have been within his circle of friends or at least he would have known about them by 1862, the approximate date for the print. Furthermore Pr eault's work had been extensively publicized. A photograph of it by Joly-Grangedor (1819-1871) appears to have been widely distributed and it was etched for publication in *Le magasin pittoresque* XXIX, in 1861.<sup>10</sup> There was also an article concerning the tomb published in *L'illustration* (12 October 1861, no972, p230-1) and numerous other contemporary publications attest to the artist's lively presence in contemporary art criticism.<sup>11</sup>

Pr eault and Manet moved in similar social circles; they also shared an interest in the naturalist re-interpretation of Christian imagery. Instance of the former assertion are numerous. Pr eault made tomb sculptures for Emile Ollivier's brother, Aristide, killed in a duel in 1853 and buried Montpellier, and for Philibert Rouvi ere (1809-1865) depicting Hamlet confronting his father's ghost. This last is the subject Manet used for his portrait of the artist. Manet was acquainted with Emile Ollivier and made him the subject of a print in 1860 (Harris 1). He also, in 1866, painted Rouvi ere as Hamlet (National Gallery of Art, Washington. Pr eault's associations with the movement designed to de-sanctify Christian art date back to the 1840s. Michael Driskel describes how his masterpiece, a crucifixion carved in wood, was refused at the *Salon* of 1840 because of its attempt to represent Christ "as an exemplary member of the lower orders".<sup>12</sup> By the time Manet exhibited his *The scourging of Christ* in the 1865 *Salon* "the appearance of Christ ... was a highly charged

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<sup>10</sup>Reff, T., 1967. Redon's "Le Silence": An Iconographic Interpretation. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 70, 359-68. P368, n27.

<sup>11</sup> See Millard, C., 1997. *Auguste Pr eault: sculpteur romantique 1809-1879* Paris Gallimard. The references to contemporary publications are to be found in "Bibliographie generale" pp306-327.

<sup>12</sup> Driskel, M.P., 1985. Manet, Naturalism and the Politics of Christian Art. *Arts Magazine*, 60, 44-54. Pp52, 48, 53, 54.

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ideological issue.” Manet creates a “plebeian, unidealized image of his central personage”, leading Michael Driskel to conclude that Manet “was doubtlessly aware of how his work was likely to be perceived.”

Manet’s print may not re-create the emphasis in Pr eault’s work on the association of silence with death but it does participate in the same naturalist milieu being created for religious art at this time. The reference to the work of Fra Angelico is consistent with that reinterpretation of the artistic traditions associated with Christianity. Manet retained from his model the figure’s Dominican vestments but otherwise divested him of specific attributes such as the blood-stained forehead and the view of the sword in the figure’s back, which in the original identify him as a martyred saint, Saint Peter the enforcer of the Order’s rules. This equivocation between inscribing his figure with the costume of the Order but omitting specific identifying characteristics poses the question of the extent to which the work continues to draw down the other-worldly associations implicit in Fra Angelico’s Christian treatment of the motif.

On the other hand, visual evidence in the print does not support an argument that Manet was interested in Fra Angelico’s innovative visual practices rather than his religious intentions. Manet’s construction of the space occupied by his figure has none of the rich visual ambiguity of his model. At this remove it is even more difficult to determine whether Manet expected his audience to realise that his work had an intimate relationship with Fra Angelico’s work. This is not one of that artist’s most celebrated images and it is often omitted from monographs. Yet there was a growing level of awareness of the Early Renaissance figure during this period. Interest in Fra Angelico’s paintings, which had begun in the 1830s in France had increased exponentially in the intervening thirty years and was at a high level by the time of Manet’s adaptation. The first book-length French monograph on the artist appeared in 1857.<sup>13</sup> And numerous works of art were modelled after his paintings and murals.

Even if the specific source of the work would have been obscure, its early Renaissance origins could have been readily identified by an informed contemporary

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<sup>13</sup> The topic is dealt with in both Driskel, M.P., 1992. *Representing belief: religion, art, and society in nineteenth-century France*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press. P68 and Davenport, N., 1998. The revival of Fra Angelico and Matthias Gr unewald in nineteenth-century French religious art. *Nineteenth-century French studies* 27, 157-199. P169.

audience. Manet was participating in a widely shared upsurge of interest in early Renaissance art. Michael Fried cites the testimony of Jacques de Biez (1852-1915), writing one year after Manet's death. De Biez had described Manet as "a French primitive" in the context of a claim that Manet and Ingres had the same vision of a return to nature by way of the "primitives".<sup>14</sup> According to Fried, Antonin Proust (1832-1905), Manet's first book-length biographer, had a similar phrase, claiming that Manet admired "the conscientious sincerity of the Italian primitives" (*ibid.* 884).

Fra Angelico was not the only early Renaissance artist to attract Manet's attention when he was copying artworks during his Italian sojourn(s). Manet also made copies of frescoes by the early Renaissance artist Benozzo Gozzoli (c. 1421 – 1497). These were not the contributions Gozzoli made at San Marco while he was Fra Angelico's pupil. Rather Manet went to Pisa and copied the already damaged frescoes in the Camposanto. These were celebrated in the nineteenth century. (Destroyed by Allied bombing in the Second World War, they have largely faded from art historians' consciousness.) Peter Meller comments that "Gozzoli was seen as the connecting link between Fra Angelico and the Umbrian school, meaning the Perugino-Raphael line."<sup>15</sup> These copies resurface in works by Manet, including prints. Most notably the serving boy which Manet copied from Gozzoli's *Story of Abraham and Hagar* is included in the *Spanish Cavaliers* (1860, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon) and reappears later in the major painting *The Balcony* (1868-9, Musée d'Orsay, Paris). Manet also dedicated a print to this figure: the *Boy carrying a tray* (Harris 28). And the pendant figure in Gozzoli's fresco of a boy facing inwards is said by Meller to have been the model for Manet's prints of a *Boy with sword* (Harris 25, 26 and 27), although this claim requires a greater leap from the original.<sup>16</sup>

These early Renaissance works, in de Biez's phrase "radiant with memory, full of promises" (Fried *ibid*) were chosen for emulation by Manet who presumably shared the contemporary awareness of their radical departures from the norms of

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<sup>14</sup> Fried, M. 1996. From memory to oblivion: Manet and the origins of modernist painting. In Reinink, W. and Stumpel, J., (eds.), *Memory and oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art held in Amsterdam, 1-7 September 1996*, Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers. P884 and n15.

<sup>15</sup> Meller, P., 2002. Manet in Italy: some newly identified sources for his early sketchbooks. *The Burlington Magazine*, 144, 68-110. P71.

<sup>16</sup> Meller's fullest treatment of these attributions is in the appendix to his article, *op cit*, at p92. He acknowledges there the other possible sources that have been adduced for both these prints, without adjudicating between them.

medieval art. However, to simply subsume Manet's print under an art historical context fails to account for Fra Angelico's particular importance in the revival of religious art in France in the nineteenth century. From the 1830s on he had been central to attempts to recover a pious spirit devoted to transcribing faith into art. He was seen as "anti-establishment, anti-classical, non-rhetorical, anti-academic, and deeply mystical" (Davenport, *op cit* n15, p157). In 1861 there had been a short-lived attempt to revive a religious community of artists whose goal was to invest Christian art with a pietistic attitude exemplified by Fra Angelico's paintings (*ibid* p160).

Manet made at least six works of art with religious subject-matter, including another more or less contemporaneous print *The candle seller* (Harris 8), an image set in a church and showing a devout old woman, her hand deformed with arthritis, praying on her knees.<sup>17</sup> So while there is evidence that the artist was not wholeheartedly committed to the observance of the rituals of the Roman Catholic church (his son declined the offer of the Archbishop of Paris to officiate at his father's death-bed<sup>18</sup>) he was imbued with its visual repertoire and sufficiently conversant with Christian doctrine to openly represent its motifs in his art. He also maintained friendly connections with religious figures. The most notable of these was with the Abbé Augustin-Jean Hurel (dates unknown), known to his family, whom he portrayed twice during his career, (once in 1859 and again in 1875) and to whom he gave an early work with a Christian subject, *Christ as a gardener* (1856, Private Collection). This work too may have connections with Fra Angelico's treatment of the motif in the San Marco monastery. On the other hand, while the Abbé wrote at length about contemporary religious art, he made only passing reference to a group of painters which includes Manet.<sup>19</sup> Nor do Manet's religious works reflect Hurel's Ultramontane beliefs (Driskel, *op cit* n15, p54).

In the light of the sketchy evidence for Manet's religious beliefs, it seems reasonably modest to assert that *Silentium* demonstrates the artist was attracted to

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<sup>17</sup> I thank Hope Saska for the suggestion, while she accompanied my study of the image at the Detroit Institute of Art, that the deformation of this hand might be due to arthritis.

<sup>18</sup> Leon's reply is recorded in Tabarant, A., 1947. *Manet et ses œuvres* Paris: Gallimard. P475.

<sup>19</sup> In *Times Literary Supplement* over two weeks at the beginning of April 1964, Edgar Wind conducted a correspondence with Alan Bowness (in response to Bowness' review of Wind's *Art and Anarchy* (1963)) in which the matters of Manet's religious beliefs and his affiliations with Abbé Hurel are discussed at length. Wind insists that Manet was a "practising Catholic and bound by an enduring friendship to the Abbé Hurel" TLS 2April 1964.

Fra Angelico's religious art. Adopting the naturalistic forms of that artist, he imitated not just the composition, *mutatis mutandis*, but also the intangible quality of silence. Apart from the lack of signifying attributes, what makes Manet's work different is the facial expression on his figure. In comparing the two works, it is clear that its good-humoured mien is some distance from the severity of his model's address. All in all, in the context of the currently powerful discourse concerning Manet's anti-establishment realism, this work contributes to the conclusion that the artist was comfortable with the presence of religious figures in his art.

When Fra Angelico's obscure work is discussed today it is usually described as "Saint Peter Martyr admonishing silence".<sup>20</sup> But unlike many other frescoes in the complex, Fra Angelico inscribed no words to accompany this image. This title has been bestowed upon it by later viewers. It is one that has induced many an error. All that can be discerned from visual inspection is that the image, which is situated in a lunette above the entrance to the sacristy on the west wall of the cloisters, represents that saint, a man who distinguished himself in the conscientious enforcement of the rules of the Dominican Order and was martyred because of his role. It is not clear why he is the saint designated to carry out this role here.

Creighton Gilbert published, in 1985, an illuminating study in which he outlined the possible meaning of the original version of this work.<sup>21</sup> He points out that there is no documentary evidence for there being a rule about silence in the Dominican Order at that time. He adds "Citations could be provided, however, from the general period of the fresco, to show that the same meaning [*viz* "the gesture of finger on lips enjoins such silence"] was indeed already established" (p65). Nevertheless, quoting from manuals encoding sign languages (generated, ironically enough, by the very rules about silence in monasteries), he shows that the gesture did not signify "Silentium" (or the "simple description of the state of silence") but rather "Tacere", which indeed "enjoins someone to keep quiet" *ibid*. The gesture's equivalent in words

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<sup>20</sup> Baldini *L'opera completa dell'Angelico* Milan, 1970 describes the figure as "in the act of indicating silence" and Pope-Hennessy *Fra Angelico 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, London, 1974 captioned the work "Saint Peter Martyr Enjoining Silence". Both references are given in Gilbert, C., 1985. A sign about signing in a fresco by Fra Angelico. In W.W. Clark (ed.) *Tribute to Lotte Brand Philip: Art historian and detective*. New York: Abaris Books, 65-70. p65. Didi-Huberman in his book on Fra Angelico *Fra Angelico: Dissemblance & Figuration* (1995), Chicago at p90 and Meller, P., 2002. Manet in Italy: some newly identified sources for his early sketchbooks. *The Burlington Magazine*, 144, 68-110 at p75 repeat this interpretation of Fra Angelico's image.

<sup>21</sup> Gilbert, C., *supra*.

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is closer to Baudelaire's performative "Chut" than to Manet's more formal Latin "Silentium".

As it turns out this is not conclusive evidence favouring the traditional interpretation of the fresco. Gilbert insists that contemporaneous rules of the small Observant subdivision of the Dominican order to which San Marco and Fra Angelico belonged provide relevant information about its intent. Considering these along with the image's placement and its relationship with similar lunette frescoes in the same building, he comes up with startling conclusions. He claims that this image of St Peter fulfilled two specific functions. In the first place, in like fashion to equivalent images above other doors leading from the cloisters, this image functioned as a sign. It indicated to the novices that when they passed through the door over which the fresco presided they would find themselves in a space where they could seek permission to speak. It also signified what gesture would be appropriate for their request; this finger to the lip was how they should ask permission. With justice Gilbert concludes "It [the sign] would appear to mean exactly the opposite of what has been presumed" (p67).

Already this introduces ambiguity concerning Manet's understanding of the image. It is perhaps not justified to imagine Manet would have intuited the insights Gilbert came to as a result of his academic research. If he had it would presumably have turned up in earlier critical discussions of this image. This probability is reinforced by the addition, in Manet's print, of the ambiguous word "Silentium" with which he inscribes it. Considering Gilbert's discriminations alone, and ignoring his new interpretation, we are left doubting whether Manet thought of the image as one *admonishing* silence, or merely referring to the state. Furthermore the minor but significant change Manet makes to the expression of the figure contributes to weakening its meaningful association with the original. There the saint is severe and unwavering in his stare, in Manet's image the figure appears to be smiling; his wide-eyed look is anything but unfriendly.

It is equally unjustified to presume he would have seen the image in terms laid down by orthodox twentieth-century interpretations. What is called for is a more sensitive appreciation of its nineteenth-century context, even though such appreciation has to take place without the benefit of any commentary from that period specifically about it. Accordingly a broader-brush approach is the only one available.

As Michael Driskel points out “the meaning of a painting ... is constituted within an articulated system of differences and is determined to a large extent by what the work is *not*” (*op cit* (1985) p44). In this case, just like Baudelaire, Manet is likely to have read, or seen, contemporary treatments of the subject of “Silence”. And he had a number of sources available to him. Baudelaire’s emphasis on its linkage with inspiration and access to “sublime” knowledge was not, as I have emphasized, shared by Prévault, who used the motif in a context where it could reasonably be associated with the silence that accompanies death. Neither of these treatments, however, resembles Manet’s.

The other available image treating the subject of *Silence* he is likely to have known was one created by Théodore Chassériau (1819-1856) for the base of the stairwell to the Cour des Comptes.<sup>22</sup> [Fig. 4] That configuration was painted between 1844 and 1848. It was part of a large mural decoration that extended up the walls of the stairway and across the landing of the first floor at this centre of government operations. Visitors would have encountered this image on first seeing the mural and its placement was a measure of its importance to the artist. The entire complex was destroyed by fire at the time of the Commune (1871) and all that remains is the badly damaged fragment of a full-sized figure.

The female figure with her finger to her lips, in *grisaille*, was an allegorical personification situated in a landscape with two others, *Study* and *Meditation*. The images at the time were hailed by Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) for their lively expression and accessible symbolism. He wrote a detailed description for *La Presse* on December 15 1848, characterising the ensemble as a “living allegory” (*allégorie vivante*). He described this figure as “Silence, personified by a beautiful woman, her finger to her mouth, [which] indicates the respect due a serious place”.<sup>23</sup> The author of Chassériau’s *catalogue raisonné* Marc Sandoz describes the entire configuration

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<sup>22</sup> Today, according to WordReference.com, the term would be translated as “State Audit Office” or “Court of Auditors”. In the nineteenth century it appears to have had two sections, one had to do with the public accounts; the other was concerned with government expenditure and was involved with state pensions. <http://www.ccrek.be/FR/ApercuHistorique.htm>

Manet’s father’s was a judge who was obliged to take early retirement on a pension after suffering a stroke. It is, therefore, not at all unlikely that Edouard Manet, the eldest son, would have visited the offices, if only in the course of enquiries about his father’s pension.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Guégan, S., Pomarède, V. & Prat, L.-A., 2002. *Théodore Chassériau, 1819–1856: The Unknown Romantic* New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art Series. P218; Sandoz, M., 1974. *Théodore Chassériau catalogue raisonné des Peintures et Estampes* Paris: Arts et Métiers Graphiques. P46

as having “profound impact throughout the rest of the nineteenth century.” These works in particular are evidence of Chassériau’s modernism. Although allegorical figures they are presented without esoteric attributes and are posed naturally in a credible landscape. Sandoz claims they represent the fulfilment of ideas about the need for art to portray a contemporary reality which he describes as the “outcome of Stendhal’s thinking.”<sup>24</sup>

Chassériau and Manet treat their allegorical subjects similarly. Both refuse to burden their images with attributes that would reduce the figure to the mere realisation of its allegorical source material. And Chassériau’s figure of Silence resembles Manet’s in one significant detail; the figure engages directly with the viewer. Although her look is coy in its address, unlike Manet’s boldly direct treatment of the theme, this engagement is evidence that Manet could have been aware, when he made his print, of Chassériau’s earlier allegorical treatment. Manet’s foregrounding of the figure’s relationship with the viewer, as if there is a natural interaction between them, was a technique available to him from romantic imagery such as this. I cannot prove this was the image that generated Manet’s interest in the figure’s relationship with the spectator. It was too pervasive a motif throughout his oeuvre. But what cannot be denied is that here is an instance of the on-going process of modernising allegorical renderings that was taking place throughout the early part of the nineteenth century. It was a process that Manet took part in; he by no means initiated it.

The modern context into which Manet was inserting his repetition of Fra Angelico’s work is also manifested by the written element included outside the frame. This is not derived from the work’s painted original which had no given title. Rather it indexes writing, already alluded to by the book in Fra Angelico’s original image. What can Manet have meant by his unusual decision to expand this allusion by including this word *Silentium*?

Jay Fisher has argued that textual additions to Manet’s prints were used by the artist when the works in question were not part of a portfolio.<sup>25</sup> Many of the printed images created by the artist-printmakers of the etching revival were published

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<sup>24</sup> «Profonds retentissements au XIX siècle...L’aboutissement de la pensée de Stendhal » p Sandoz *op cit* p39, 47.

<sup>25</sup> The written title “would have made it self-sufficient outside a portfolio of prints.” Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. P57.



in portfolios. Fisher proposes therefore that such typically close connections between images underpinned Manet's decision that his stand-alone images would be enhanced by the addition of a title. The practice is exemplified by the work of his contemporary etching colleague Charles-François Daubigny who made a separate etching of an image from his series *The boat trip* and inscribed a title on this stand-alone instance.<sup>26</sup> During this period of his close involvement with other etchers, in the early 1860s, Manet was not shy about attaching text to his paintings. Both *Lola de Valence* (1862, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) and *Olympia* (1865, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), at the time of their first exhibition, were accompanied by poetic texts. And the print Manet made of the former, when it appeared in its fourth state at the 1863 *Salon des Refusés*, also carried the quatrain Baudelaire had composed for the painting. In addition to *Silentium*, Manet adopts the practice of appending a title only for two "Spanish" prints. In *Le Bailarin don Mariano Camprubi* (Harris 34) it conforms to the conventions for theatrical prints generally. The other contemporaneous instance is the first version of *Au Prado* (Harris 44). These are insufficient examples to create a generalisation, in view of the fact that other unpublished prints from this period contain no added words.

Manet would not have been inspired to add his writing by the other treatments of the motif already discussed; words were not used in them. He could have adopted the practice from quite a separate source. Inscribed titles, although unusual at the time, are found in etchings without connections to portfolios; in the work of Félix Bracquemond, for example.<sup>27</sup> But no source related to Manet's print has been found, certainly not one that would explain his use of it in this instance. All I can assert is that the word *Silentium* was in common use in nineteenth century artistic circles. It described the awareness of a vast domain of interiority, not necessarily religious.

This re-interpretation of ideas about silence had its Romantic beginnings with the German writer Novalis (Georg Philipp Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772–1801)) who wrote in one of his aphorisms collected under the title *Miscellaneous Remarks* (1797): "Friendship, love, piety should be handled in a secret manner. One should only talk about them in rare, confidential moments, reach a silent understanding about them - Many things are too tender to be thought of; more things yet,

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<sup>26</sup> Melot, M., 1980. *Graphic art of the Pre-Impressionists* New York: Harry N. Abrams. P281, D 109.

<sup>27</sup> Bouillon, J.-P., 1987. *Félix Bracquemond: Le réalisme absolu* Genève: Skira. An example is on P118.

to be talked about.”<sup>28</sup> If Manet, rather than admonishing, is in fact soliciting silence he could be doing so for reasons not unlike those referred to in this text; it would be consistent with the privacy in which he conducted his personal affairs.

Other manifestations of this change in sensibility can be seen throughout the early part of the nineteenth century. One striking instance is the poem *Silentium* (1830) by the Russian poet Fyodor Ivanovich Tyutchev (Russian: Фёдор Иванович Тютчев; 1803 - 1873):

*Silentium*

*Speak not, lie hidden, and conceal  
the way you dream, the things you feel.*

*Deep in your spirit let them rise  
akin to stars in crystal skies  
that set before the night is blurred:  
delight in them and speak no word.*

*How can a heart expression find?  
How should another know your mind?  
Will he discern what quickens you?  
A thought once uttered is untrue.  
Dimmed is the fountainhead when stirred:  
drink at the source and speak no word.*

*Live in your inner self alone  
within your soul a world has grown,  
the magic of veiled thoughts that might  
be blinded by the outer light,  
drowned in the noise of day, unheard...  
take in their song and speak no word.*

(translated by Vladimir Nabokov)<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Translated and reproduced in Novalis & Gellay, A., 1991. Miscellaneous Remarks [Original Version of *Pollen*]. *New Literary History*, 22, 383-406. P387

<sup>29</sup><http://lib.ru/NABOKOW/silent.txt>. Unusually titled in Latin, Tyutchev's poem consists of a Russian text. Although this poem is by one of Russia's foremost romantic poets the only tenuous circumstantial evidence I can find for his works being available to French-speaking audiences in Paris in the 1860s is that Ivan

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While Tyutchev uses words like “spirit” and “soul”, which in English have a long history of association with Christian ideas, this poem demonstrates a marked lack of commitment to such ideas. Instead it prefers to give voice to private experiences. The poet, like Novalis, suggests human subjects are inhabited by inarticulate emotions and feelings and proposes that these surpass any capacity to represent them. There was a similar fable (and poem) written by Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849). Named *Silence* it was translated in the 1850s into French by Baudelaire, along with his other poem about the dissolution of Being, *The Raven*.

An equivalent French literary interest in such ideas comes from George Sand (1804-1876) an enormously influential writer in mid-nineteenth century France. In her autobiography, she vividly evokes the idea in a form where religious ideas linger, within a private universe. She proposed that “the soul always encloses the purest of its treasures as an innermost reserve which it must surrender to God alone.”<sup>30</sup>

All these instances demonstrate that the *topos* was widely pondered and powerful imagery was devised to approximate its effects. I am unable to determine whether Manet knew any of these texts. What can be said is that his adaptation of Fra Angelico’s image demonstrates awareness of the issues surrounding the very word he so deliberately inscribed on the plate for his version. It would appear to be the mechanism by which Manet aligned the image with a larger treatment of the *l’âme renfermé* recurring throughout Manet’s work in one form or another.

George Mauner is one of the few modern critics who have attempted to explain what he sees this image representing.<sup>31</sup> Unfortunately his ideas emerge from a last-ditch effort in his 1975 book to justify the hidden iconographic meanings he had detected in Manet’s works. This distorts his analysis. He speculated that this print might have been created as an admonition to keep his counsel in the face of

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Sergeyevich Turgenev (1818-1883), his editor, had a close association with Pauline Viardot-Garcia (1821-1910), herself acquainted with Manet’s friends.

<sup>30</sup> “L’âme renfermé toujours le plus pur de ses trésors comme un fonds de réserve qu’elle doit rendre à Dieu seul” (Lubin, G. (ed.), 1971. *George Sand, Œuvres autobiographiques*, Paris: Gallimard. P276). The phrase *l’âme renfermé* originates with Leibniz’s polemic against John Locke’s *Essay concerning human understanding* (1690).

<sup>31</sup> Apart from his stimulating observation about Manet’s wit, Christopher Lloyd ventures no interpretation of the print in his above-cited article, using it only as corroborating evidence for the suggestion that the pose of the barmaid in *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* is taken from Fra Angelico’s image of *Christ in the tomb*, another lunette in the cloister at San Marco.

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negative responses to his work.<sup>32</sup> Manet would have thought, he is suggesting, that trying to explain his works by any means other than through artistic creation was fruitless. Manet is indeed very reticent and scarcely talked about his work in any correspondence that survives. This may have been adopted early on in his career, well before the 1863 *Salon*. Mauner shows it was an idea shared by his colleagues and rivals. He quotes Théodore Duret (1838-1927) who in *Théâtre de marionettes* (1863) said “Since a man must almost always expect to see his intentions misunderstood, it is preferable not to reveal one’s intentions at all” *op cit* p184. Mauner then makes the larger point that Manet “clearly conveys this conviction” that truth had to be veiled. According to Mauner this was because Manet’s ideas were esoteric and would generally be ill-received.

Irrespective of how one feels about Mauner’s larger thesis in that book, his idea that Manet “veiled” his truths is one that continues to hold sway. But as an interpretation of this image it is heedless of the peculiarities of the print medium and it does not respond to the importance Manet places on the role of the spectator. It is difficult to see what the artist would have gained from creating such a message in a medium that originally, at least, he must have envisaged publishing and disseminating. Given the direct and insistent gaze of the depicted figure, the print seems to be an invitation to the viewer to enlist in a conspiracy rather than an autobiographical reference to the artist’s methodology. Mauner’s interpretation has an insuperable difficulty. In a word it provides no answer to the question the image’s creation as a print poses: Who might have been the supposed audience for such a message?

Silence, whatever its significance, constitutes the subject of the image but anything that might explain *what for* or *about what* is systematically withheld. Speaking about it therefore reeks of contradiction. The book in Manet’s image, which from its size could even be construed as a portfolio or as a tablet, is mute. It faces away from us and contains no words that would reveal its meaning. Nor does the image occur in a context where what the image is about might be thought self-evident (as turned out to be the case in the original Manet copied, despite changes in interpretation). Here the pointed arch Fra Angelico makes integral to his painting

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<sup>32</sup> Mauner, G.L., 1975. *Manet, peintre-philosophe: a study of the painter's themes* University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press. Pp184-5.

within the lunette has been omitted and Manet utilises instead the lunette's simple curved top. In the context of Manet's print it presents as no more than a window in a wall. All that is given by Manet is a figure signifying silence. All we know is that we are being invited to "keep our silence" rather than being told to "hush". The print's combination of word and image is implying that the experience, be it inwardness or some more explicit state of mind, is one the viewer is enjoined to keep hidden.

The work could be construed as exemplary of a certain enigmatic withdrawal from meaning in Manet's works. In this particular re-use of an early Renaissance source he seems to be displaying a fundamental scepticism about the intentions revealed in his source. Whatever had given meaning to Fra Angelico's work is expunged from the scene of the print. Does the work that Manet undertakes in this image involve unpacking the circumstances that inform a work of art with meaning? Jean Clay, for example, asserts, "It is precisely because he quotes – and by his mode of quotation – that Manet breaks with the fiction of an art history always already grounded in precedent. In squandering the past, he only adds to the uncertainty of its future..." And Georges Bataille proposes that Manet derides conventional approaches to meaning in painting and that his artwork "freed from the functions of discourse" is closer to music. He describes the outcome as "the silence of painting" which consists of the "song of forms and colours."<sup>33</sup>

As is often the case in interpretations of Manet's works, where what is being shown expresses only indirectly what is being addressed, Clay and Bataille overlook the importance of the subject of the image. The effect of their argument is to give insufficient emphasis to the presence of phenomena associated with hearing. This image is one of many where Manet engages with the visual arts' capacity to embrace qualities drawn from other senses, in this particular instance, the aural sense. Hedged about with qualifications about the heard, almost denying that such is capable of visual expression, sound – in the form of its absence – takes centre stage. Its importance to Manet is represented by his willingness to underline the fact by the inscription of writing in the image. Manet's textual addition is signalling that whatever the print is trying to convey cannot be simply understood by confining ones attention to its purely visual features. The addition of this word indicates that interpretation is

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<sup>33</sup> Clay, J., 1983. Ointments, makeup, pollen. *October*, 27, 3-44. P4. Bataille, G., 1983. *Manet* Geneva: Skira. « libérée des fonctions du discours », « le silence de la peinture » « chant des formes et des couleurs » p35.

demanded. The spectator must be open to the potential of visual images to access meanings originating in allied sensorial domains.

It is unlikely that Manet was solely inspired by his involvement with printmaking to explore art's potential for cross-medial communication. I will be exploring its larger context in subsequent chapters. But even within the visual arts barriers between media were crumbling. A print reproduction of a fresco image was an incongruous and audacious undertaking. It involved Manet in a massive reduction in scale, in a denial of fresco's colour values and in the loss of contextual relevance. As such it might be tempting to associate it with the experimental procedures of the *Société des Aquafortistes's* etchers and see it as an instance of Manet's modernism. But the field of printmaking is not so easily divided between dogged reproductive engravers working within the narrow ambit of reproducing paintings versus free-spirited and innovative etchers creating "original" print images out of whatever came to mind.

Parisian art circles were celebrating, at the same time as Manet's early print productivity, one of the grandest reproductive efforts made in France during the first half of the nineteenth century. Louis Henriquel-Dupont (1797-1892), an eminent reproductive engraver working in Paris, had converted to print form Paul Delaroche's (1797-1856) fresco *Hemicycle des Beaux-Arts*, created for the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris in 1841. The original was an enormous work, taking up 24.7m of semi-circular wall space. It was described by Charles Blanc (1813-1882) as "one of the greatest *machines* of modern painting."<sup>34</sup> Henriquel-Dupont's version was completed in 1853. In 1860 Blanc, the editor of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* and himself a trained engraver, described the engraving in the course of an article about the mural. He emphasized the interpretive aspect in Henriquel-Dupont's version of Delaroche's mural. Blanc suggested that "literal translation of a painting is never possible for an engraver."<sup>35</sup> He proposed that rather than making a straight copy a sensitive print rendition would adopt the same strategy as a musician who transposes a tune, a

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<sup>34</sup> Blanc, C., 1860. L'hemicycle de Paul Delaroche gravé par Henriquel-Dupont. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, VII, 354-61. p354. « une des plus grands machines de l'école moderne. ». The work is discussed in Bann, S., 2001. *Parallel lines: printmakers, painters and photographers in nineteenth-century France* New Haven and London: Yale University Press. It is central to his comprehensive treatment of reproductive engraving in nineteenth-century France.

<sup>35</sup> « [L]a traduction littérale d'une peinture est-elle impossible au graveur. » (Blanc, *ibid*)

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common analogy for a time which was ruled by the sense of music as a “master model.”<sup>36</sup>

Manet’s work may be a witty variation on the original, but it is also participating in an on-going tradition in print-making circles. This was a tradition that believed it was possible to translate a work of any dimensions or medium into a print, where it could be judged in its own right, the print operating as a kind of critical commentary on the original. Henriquel-Dupont’s version of the Delaroche is evidence of that. Art’s detachment from a specific medium was not a practice exclusively undertaken by members of the avant-garde. From this point of view Manet can be seen as aligned with rather than alienated from his respected forbears and contemporaries.

Henriquel-Dupont is not the only contemporaneous printmaker requiring consideration when interpreting Manet’s work. The artist’s allegiance to a different school of print-makers and their values are also embodied in this print. *Silentium* was created, it is generally believed, between 1862 and 1864.<sup>37</sup> This was the time of the rebirth of the “interpretive” print when enthusiasm for etching, which Manet shared, was at its highest.<sup>38</sup> It is printed, in three states but was never published in Manet’s lifetime. Juliet Wilson-Bareau has presented a convincing hypothesis for this neglect.

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<sup>36</sup> Champa, K.S., 1999. Concert music: the master model for radical painting in France, 1830-1890. *Imago musicae*, 16-17, 207-221. In 1837 Franz Liszt wrote, in a letter to Adolphe Pictet: “Thus the piano score is to an orchestral composition what an engraving is to a painting: it multiplies it, it makes it available to everyone, and if it fails to transmit its colours, it still renders its lights and its shadows.” Reprinted in *An artist’s journey* ed. Suttoni (1989) Chicago, 45.

<sup>37</sup> I acknowledge here the difficulties that dog the dating of Manet’s prints where stylistic arguments cross with documentary evidence without resolving many of the most important issues. The date of production of this print is today usually thought to be later than the 1862 portfolio. This conclusion is based on Juliet Wilson-Bareau’s observation that the third state was printed on paper used for *Société des Aquafortistes* publications between November 1863 and May 1864: Wilson, J., 1978. *Manet; dessins, aquarelles, eaux-fortes, lithographies, correspondance* Paris: Huguette Berès., cat no. 19. Fisher speculates in his 1985 catalogue that the plate might have been prepared for a new edition of his prints but was abandoned after oxidation ruined its appearance. Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. Pp56-7. It should, however, be noted that Michel Melot in Melot, M., 1996. *The impressionist print* New Haven and London: Yale University Press continues to subscribe to the traditional dating of this print, which is 1860, p53. This more traditional view would push its completion back before the *Caricature of Emile Ollivier* which has a secure published date of April 1860.

<sup>38</sup> See Bailly-Herzberg, J., 1972(b). *L’eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle; La Société des Aquafortistes, 1862-1867* Paris: L. Laget. The work is fundamental for an understanding of the role of the *Société des Aquafortistes*. Its exclusive focus on that movement means that it does not address the earlier and in some ways more significant aspects of the revival of etching in Paris which took place in the 1850s.

Her inspection of papers and states showed the third state was printed on paper used by the *Société* between November 1863 and May 1864. Fisher pointed out that the impression of the first state is on *chine* paper, the same paper that was used for a portfolio of his prints circulated to his friends in 1863.<sup>39</sup> It is possible that corrosion on the plate, perhaps caused by acid burns on its surface, which can be seen in the second state as random patches of black ink, prevented it being included in that series. (The third state is the outcome of attempts to get rid of this damage and includes some trimming of the plate.) It is nevertheless an appropriate work with which to introduce Manet's reproductive prints because it so clearly exemplifies where he deviates from the practice of traditional reproductive engravers while maintaining a very close link with his source material.

Manet copied an image which itself retained the connections of art with received religious dogma, while also giving it new parameters. At the dawn of the Renaissance Fra Angelico had initiated a revaluation of that religious connection by his exploration of spatial conventions. In the lunette his figure seems to over-reach the limits of his frame and impinge on the space of the viewer. Fra Angelico's innovation was to treat the space within the image as if it was continuous with that outside it. The work even contained an allusion to depth in the squared segments of that frame. Signs intimating the presence of God's representative in human space may have appealed to Manet's interest in naturalistic treatments of Christ's life, an interest also manifested in the other religious paintings he was making more or less contemporaneously.<sup>40</sup> In his version of the Fra Angelico image he retains the religious connotations of the figure's dress and omits the outward signs of the saint's martyrdom. Also he does not demonstrate any interest in the work's perspectival innovations. Instead he exploits the implications of the original's use of a sign system as a substitute for sound.

Manet seems to have seen this signalling aspect of the original as an opportunity to focus on its temporal implications. Although his version is still as frontal as the original, and therefore seemingly hieratic, it uses changes from the original to

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<sup>39</sup> Wilson, J., 1978. *Manet; dessins, aquarelles, eaux-fortes, lithographies, correspondance* Paris: Huguette Berès. This work is unpaginated. The reference to *Silentium's* various papers is in Catalogue No. 19. In Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. He discusses states and dating including the possible connections of the first state with the 1863 portfolio: Cat No 23, pp56-7.

<sup>40</sup> Driskel, M.P., 1985. Manet, Naturalism and the Politics of Christian Art. *Arts Magazine*, 60.



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instil in the print a sense of a passing moment when silence is substituted for sound in a bodily gesture. This is achieved by altering Fra Angelico's stiff, iconic depiction of the saint. By dispensing with his admonitory frown, and furthermore, divesting him of his saintly attributes, Manet refocuses attention onto the interaction between eye and hand. The effect is to emphasize those invisible qualities embodied in senses other than the visual, introjecting time and aural experience into the visual medium. This effect is conveyed also in the positive-negative interaction that unites the print with photography. Manet, it can be said, endows this image with a new sense of the unseen. Visual experience is being opened out to the presence of aural and tactile values as well. In exploiting the unfigured blankness of the sheet to accentuate the drama of the moment; in harmonising the white robes with the neutral background, he reduces the image to a bare minimum of traced lines. This abbreviated adaptation of the original painting contributes to the impression that only the essential can be captured by the movement of the etching needle. It is scurrying to keep pace with the fleeting impressions the scene has deposited on his brain. His stylistic changes, imposed by the change of medium, have also brought about an alteration in the tone of the original. His new tone is more in keeping with the role of an observer alive to the multiplicity of and diversity within sensuous experience. The experience of the eyes is the starting point but they play their part in this print in harmonisation with other senses, implicitly present.

The effect of photography on the way artists constructed their etchings is exemplified by Manet's work. On the one hand he replaces the style of the original by using a distinctive "handwriting". In that respect his copy is created in conscious contradiction to the mechanical duplication afforded by a photograph and is part of the strategy adopted by the interpretive printmaker. When he is repeating an image from the past he distinguishes his product by making it bear the marks of individuality. This public reluctance to embrace photography's new technologies is, however, matched by a repressed fascination with the new medium. It shows itself in the work's "photogenic" quality, a word Phillipe Ortel uses to describe the way image-making was infected by a way of seeing derived from photography during this period.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Ortel, P., 2000. Poetry, the picturesque and the photogenic quality in the nineteenth century. *Journal of European studies*, 30, 19-33.

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Photography, with its capacity to capture any image at which the camera is pointed, creates a sense that reality is all of a piece, one image has as much to reveal of it as another. The outcome is an image to which no experience associated with a particular faculty can be attributed. Manet's print is polysemic, in this sense. If it has any "meaning" this is derivable from a number of sources and senses. These include its origins, its contemporary analogies and its critical context; but nothing is precisely definable. In place of this definable meaning the image is that which the artist has chosen to single out from the passage of time. Formerly freighted with implicit iconographic connotations, the experience being described is reduced to a fleeting visual aspect, valuable because it records a moment of contact with the viewer. Manet creates an image which gives the impression it is recording an event happening before our very eyes, attempting through this immediacy to mimic the indexical nature of the photographic image. Compared with the Fra Angelico, with its implication that the saint has emerged fully formed into the viewer's space and is the embodiment of an immortal religious message brought down to earth, Manet's version of the frontal address separates one moment from the passage of time, a moment when the figure good-humouredly addresses the viewer.

This immediacy is not, however, as thorough-going as in those works by the artist where the stroke of the brush, or etching stylus calls to mind an improvised response to a visual impression. This image has been created by bounding lines and regular patterns of in-fill strokes; its execution is less dynamic than others of his earlier prints like *Boy and Dog, At the Prado* (Harris 45) or even *The Young Woman*. Constrained, perhaps, by his reproductive ambitions, the artist created an image whose power is vitiated by his equivocations of style between repeating the clarity of the former image and creating a new and distinctive interpretation.

What distinguishes this work from its predecessor is its seemingly unmotivated existence. It cries out for an attempt to recognise how the original came to Manet's attention and in particular why he chose to reproduce it. Some motivation was doubtless supplied by critical comments like that with which I opened this chapter. They don't, however, explain why this image in particular would have caught Manet's eye as he wandered the cloisters of San Marco monastery in search of motifs to copy in 1857. I can only presume that its imagery has some relation to the known facts of

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Manet's personal life. How could such an image have intersected with these circumstances?

The depicted gesture is commonly employed in everyday experience, especially around young children. A relic of the once extensive sign language developed in monastic orders which practised silence, it often serves today to create silence in a context where the use of the adult's voice would add to the mayhem. It is reasonable to presume it would have served similar purposes in Manet's day. A bodily performance is exhorting the alteration to a state of mind; a visual sign is standing for an aural experience. The print's composition reinforces this split between the senses; the eyes focus on the viewer, the overlarge hands do their own work, independently carrying out the significant action. At this level it is unexceptionable to claim that Manet is translating something of common parlance, something observed or otherwise tangible which is outside the creative economy of exchange.

In biographical terms, Manet's son, Leon Koella, was born in 1852; by the time Manet came to make this print Koella would have been between ten and twelve and there would have been no call for the mannerism as a family device.<sup>42</sup> If the gesture was present to Manet's mind and likely to trigger recognition of a pattern already established in art history it must have occurred much earlier, when the child was still a pre-schooler. It is indeed around this time that Manet probably made his first contact with Fra Angelico's image. The latest authority on the question of when Manet made his copies in Florence is Peter Meller *op cit*. He addresses the question of the dates in a postscript to his article. There is no evidence for a visit in 1856 and the documented presence of Manet in Italy in 1853 shows he would have been left very little time for making copies. This leaves 1857 as the more likely date for his copies. If Meller is correct, this would correspond with the child being barely five.

The conscientious art historian is therefore obliged to ask whether the image could have had latent personal meanings. Is it possible that when Manet made the print, at least five years after its copying from the walls of San Marco, the work was still being driven by personal circumstances? Nothing certain can be said about

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<sup>42</sup> I have no new information with which to enter the debate about Leon's legitimacy, brought to the forefront of Manet criticism in Nancy Locke's 2001 *Manet and the family romance* Princeton, Princeton University Press. That he was Manet's son, in the modern sense of the word, is evidenced by the artist's commitment to his upbringing.

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Manet's reason for his initial interest in the image. Even granting an initial family context for his image, some new impetus would have been needed to induce Manet to turn to this drawn copy as the model for this etching.

Current theories from recent biographers, art historians, and socio-cultural critics like Brombert (1996), Zimmermann (2000) and Locke (2001) maintain that his works and their contribution to modernism can best be understood by taking into account details from his private life.<sup>43</sup> It might be profitable to extend Mauner's idea about keeping ones counsel to the discourse about paternity and family secrets that these writers have made so central an issue in Manet research. Accordingly it becomes possible to see this image, with its picturing of a benevolent father-figure indicating the necessity to stay silent, as Manet giving voice to an action which cannot be acknowledged directly. He would be seen as playing around the edges of disclosure, adverting to the presence of secret knowledge while withholding any specific reference to what that might consist of. Locke had suggested the boy was the child of a liaison between Manet's father and his wife-to-be. Out of the conflicting emotions engendered by the artist's response to this strange *ménage à trois* emerges a "special form, or position of 'spectatorship' - let us call it seeing (or imagining) what the father would have seen" which she states "is crucial to my argument that we can observe an Oedipal family drama at play in Manet's early work."<sup>44</sup> Her analyses of Manet's works as Oedipal requires us to accept that Manet is directing his art at his father, that his father is both voyeur and sometimes subject in these works.

This approach, in this case, shares the same fundamental drawback I described for the Mauner thesis. It is difficult to envisage Manet's father being in any sense the audience for this image. Besides which, it does not explain why an address to the father would be couched in the terms of an etched plate designed for widespread transmission. I revert to the objection that there is virtually no good reason to imagine an audience, specific to the etched image, for such an

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<sup>43</sup> Brombert, B.A., 1996. *Edouard Manet: rebel in a frock coat* Boston: Little Brown.; Zimmermann, M.F., 2000. *Présences de l'absent*. In R. Michel (ed.) *Où en est l'interprétation de l'œuvre d'art*. Paris: Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 157-204.; Locke, *op cit*. David Carrier makes a powerful argument for seeing research about Manet progressing along these pathways: Carrier, D., 1997. Review of Fried and Rubin's books on Manet. *Art Bulletin*, 79, 334-8.

<sup>44</sup> Locke *op cit* p83.

interpretation. I do not wish to completely close off the avenues of biographical information concerning Manet's personal life and will return to this question.

Angel Gonzalez Garcia, in a recent catalogue for an exhibition of Manet's paintings at the Prado has described Manet adopting a strategy to complicate painting.<sup>45</sup> "There are three ...devices tested out by Manet to complicate painting: ... the masking of the main motif, its shift, either towards another painting or within this one, and last but not least, the cross-over of sensations..." *ibid*. He cites the cross-over between the sense of sight and touch. Do the "hands see" (as Gonzalez Garcia suggests in the context of works, like *Portrait of the artist's parents*, 1862, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) leaving the eyes to do other things like engage with the spectator?

I describe this work as figuring a cross-over between sight and sound, mediated through the finger's touch to the lips. Gonzalez continues "there were hidden or disguised things in his works, things not totally evident or obvious, as if on a different plane and interlinked in such a way that one conceals the other and vice versa ...". The idea that painting is confined to the representation of visual phenomena is cast as a self-evident truism, if not a shibboleth. It had been one of the arguments in the eighteenth century by which Lessing prised painting apart from poetry, in his deconstruction of the classical *ut pictura poesis*. He wrote "the poet can raise to this degree of illusion [*that provided by a painting*] the representation of objects other than those that are visible. Consequently, whole categories of pictures which the poet claims as his own must necessarily be beyond the reach of the artist."<sup>46</sup> By Manet's day this version of the doctrine was coming under attack from poets and critics alike, especially because it failed to account for their interest in creating works of art involving a fusion of the senses. Manet's image, which gives *silence* such tangible visibility, is part of this reaction.

The figure, in this print, engages our attention with his eyes, but his fingers hint at something invisible. Manet's use of the word *Silentium* draws attention to the cross-over between the senses of sight and hearing involved in the visible rendering of an aural experience. Words are used to supplement the visual experience, just as the visual is the cue to an aural experience in this image.

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<sup>45</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P411.

<sup>46</sup> Lessing, G.E., 1962. *Laocoon: an essay on the limits of painting and poetry* Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill. P77.

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Manet is using writing redundantly in a work which is consciously drawing upon a Christian religious treatment of a traditional gesture. Irrespective of whatever else it signifies, this redundancy makes the connection overt. The Latin word “Silentium” signals to his viewer that the artist is accessing an image whose origins are in the imagery of the Catholic Church (The only place where the language was still widely used).

Manet’s repetitive strategy in this print, grows out of the context of nineteenth-century revivals of “primitive” Italian art. But Manet’s print is not just a contemporary repetition of a theme used by Christian artists. Making visible an aural experience, while playing simultaneously with the expression of a past in the present, he is capturing a moment in its passing. The print is making a visible sign for absenting aurality. These are outward signs but they lie at the heart of Manet’s intentions in making this print. They suggest his strategy of repetition was adopted to assert his place in the contemporary artistic scene, possibly competing with the published reproduction of a familiar motif. Printmaking, always closely linked with the written word, provided the context in which he addressed his interest in the visible representation of non-visual phenomena, identified in the mural by Fra Angelico.

In the course of this chapter I have presented four possible interpretations associated with the silencing gesture. In acknowledging the impossibility of fixing on any one of those to specify the image’s significance to Manet, I am obliged to recognise the manifold nature of the past life of the image, one resistant to any possible synthesis. My sense of the image can repeat (but only as something new) that which was recognised by Manet who was both repeating anew the image created before him by Fra Angelico and accreting to that repetition experiences provided by Chassériau, Préault, Tyutchev and Henriquel-Dupont, his father, his son and we don’t know who else. But of these possible sources only one, that provided by Fra Angelico, has the status of being explicitly acknowledged by Manet.

It stands as the one source which is repeated. All the rest are extrapolations from the pre-life of the image. There can, however, be no fixed outcome, no definitive or *correct* way of responding to the phenomenon of the repeated image, such that it can provide a model for all future encounters with similar works. A momentary connection with this particular instance of repetition in the work of Edouard Manet needs to be discarded in order to clear the decks for the future encounter with other

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instances where, in his prints, Manet repeats the work of the past, in the history of art. The baggage that can be carried from this encounter with repetition in Manet's work amounts to a feeling for the work's pure intensity and concomitantly for the ideas surrounding it. The task of the writer is to remain open to the complexity of thought generated by this accumulation of ideas and intense feeling garnered from the piling together of images from different sources to which Manet's name provides a focal point.

Lawrence Kramer, discussing "Wittgenstein's Chopin", sees what takes place when a work of art derives its subject from experiences in other media, as "perhaps best conceived as a conceptual equivalent to the space of hybridity described by Homi Bhabba...a liminal symbolic space that is also an everyday object."<sup>47</sup> This mode for interpreting the image sets it as the model for my discussion of the prints by Manet contained in his 1862 portfolio.

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<sup>47</sup> Kramer, L., 2007. Wittgenstein's Chopin: Interdisciplinarity and 'the Music Itself'. In G. Beer, M. Bowie & B. Perrey (eds.) *In(ter)discipline. New languages for criticism*. London: Legenda, 41-51. P42.

## Chapter 2: Manet's "Velázquez" copies: Reproducing *espagnolisme*

*Le Musée Espagnol est venu augmenter le volume des idées générales que vous devez posséder sur l'art ; car vous savez parfaitement que, comme un musée national est une communion dont la douce influence attendrit les cœurs et assouplit les volontés, de même un musée étranger est une communion internationale, où deux peuples, s'observant et s'étudiant plus à l'aise, se pénètrent mutuellement, et fraternisent sans discussion.*<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter I discuss three reproductive prints made by Edouard Manet, two of which *The Little Cavaliers* (Harris 5, Fig. 5) and *Philip IV, King of Spain* (Harris 15, Fig. 6) were included in the Cadart portfolio of 1862. These prints specified their dual authorship; inscribed on the plate was the notation that they were after paintings by the great Spanish painter Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599 –1660). The third, *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* (Harris 14, Fig. 7) is also after "Velázquez", although not described as such by Manet, nor included in the portfolio. It is sufficiently co-terminus with the other two to merit inclusion in this chapter. Two of these works *The Little Cavaliers* (1855-9, Chrysler Museum, Virginia Fig. 8) and *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* (c1859, [disputed authorship] Private Collection Fig. 9) were also executed by Manet in oils, made most probably before the etchings.<sup>2</sup>

Manet's prints after "Velázquez" exemplify the mobility of images rooted in different contexts. Their presence in his oeuvre is evidence of his use of the visual arts to achieve elusive, if not unattainable, goals. Here, unlike the case of *Silentium*, the evidence for the elusive emerges not so much from the subject-matter of the

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I am using the French neologism *espagnolisme* to signify the (French romantic) generic stereotype of what Spain is (and am keeping it in lower case) instead of the jarring term "Spanishicity" applied by Carol Armstrong in Armstrong, C.M., 2002. *Manet Manette* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Hereafter I will refer to Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599 –1660) by his commonly accepted metonymic, except when I am describing works formerly ascribed to him but now given to another artist. Then I will put inverted commas around the name.

<sup>1</sup> "The Spanish museum has augmented the volume of general ideas you can possess about art; for you well understand that, just as a national museum is a form of communion whose gentle influence softens the heart and bends the will, likewise a museum of foreign works is an international form of communion, where two people, observing and studying each other at their ease, pervade each other and fraternize, without any discussion." Charles Baudelaire *The 1846 Salon* (Pichois II, 417)

<sup>2</sup> Manet coined the title *The Little Cavaliers* for his copy of the painting known as *Gathering of Gentlemen*. Carole Armstrong gives a date of 1855-1860 for that painting, making it well-nigh impossible that the print could have preceded it, *op cit* p339 n10. See the discussion in Wilson-Bareau, J., 1984. The portrait of Ambrose Adam by Edouard Manet. *The Burlington Magazine*, 126, 750-758.

Brainerd, A.W., c1988. *The Infanta adventure and the lost Manet*. Foreword by Albert Boime; report by Walter C. McCrone. Long Beach, Michigan City, Ind. Reichl Press. The controversy concerning the authenticity of this painting is treated, at length, in this book.



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works *per se* but rather is to be found in the works' status. Manet inserted supposed masterpieces from Spain's Golden Age of Painting between the contemporary context for reproductive prints and contemporary respect for Spanish painting, particularly the works of Velázquez.<sup>3</sup> His copies demonstrate mastery of a respected forebear's work, a suitable ambition for an apprentice, beyond that these works live in an aesthetic limbo.

I will investigate the circumstances of their occurrence in an effort to explain why he felt it necessary to give them such a central role in his print output. This will provide a context for Manet's fascination with and exploitation of the otherness of Spanish art. He repeated the publication of *The Little Cavaliers* on two other occasions in his lifetime (1863 and 1874), exhibited both this and the *Philip IV, King of Spain* in 1863 and 1867, *The Little Cavaliers* alone in 1869 and *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* in the 1874 Cadart portfolio. These are images which can be seen as another instance of the cultural appropriation I explored in my discussion of Manet's print after Fra Angelico, in Chapter 1. There Manet had re-created a religious theme; one that originated with classical writers misreading earlier Egyptian symbolic imagery and appropriated by Fra Angelico for quite distinct purposes; purposes that Manet himself misread. Introducing readings never raised in the fresco image he accessed, Manet's re-deployment of it as a reproductive print, provoked or suggested by other nineteenth-century works, gave rise to an invisible, if not subliminal, idea about how religion might be made manifest in the life and output of a bourgeois artist. In considering this chapter's prints no explanation for Manet's use of images of the Spanish Royal Family and of the painters and gentlemen of that court is self-evident. While they too compete with other nineteenth-century reproductive prints, works which create the context within which Manet launched his reproductions, it is much less clear what new readings were intended by Manet.

At the time Manet was making these prints the normal business of reproduction, heretofore conducted in a fruitful alliance of publishing houses and jobbing artisanal printmakers, was being created anew in artists' etchings. Manet was in the forefront of these developments, one that captured the imagination of the era's

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<sup>3</sup> According to Jonathan Brown, Spain's Golden Age of Painting runs between 1500 and 1700. He uses these dates to book-end his latest redaction of *Golden Age of Painting in Spain* (1991), entitled *Spanish Art 1500-1700* (1998) Yale.

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eminent critics. Théophile Thoré, in his introduction to the third year's suite of publications by the *Société des Aquafortistes* wrote "compared to drawing, etching is the analogue of printing and the press, which multiply written thought."<sup>4</sup> It displays in black ink on a blank (usually white) sheet of paper a re-interpretation of previously formed ideas or "written thought". Etchers, like Manet, shared with reproductive engravers this idea that their work was a re-interpretation. By simulating inspired spontaneity they departed from the latter, however. Their techniques aimed to create the illusion the artist was transferring thought directly to the etching plate. In this their approach was similar to that undertaken, says Richard Shiff, by "a large group of artists and theorists" whose "interest lies instead in the *act* of representation...artistic activity itself becomes an epistemological norm...the mimetic act - as expression - becomes more significant than any given mimetic representation."<sup>5</sup> The blurring of the line between reproduction and personal expression was then in its heyday, exemplified by the interpretive and improvisatory techniques of virtuoso musicians. When making copies etchers expected the mark of their individual penmanship would flavour their interpretation of the already existing image. This individualised encounter with the original image gave substance to their "despotic mnemonic", the personality of the artist and their subjective experiences that Baudelaire referred to in describing the drawing style of Constantin Guys (Pichois II, 698).

While Manet's print output demonstrates that he whole-heartedly embraced these values, he gained from the etching revival an opportunity to attempt an even more ambitious extension in the expressive means available to visual media. In his work the reproductive print was not just an exercise in the bestowal of a personal touch upon a valued forebear. The capacity of printmaking to provide the artist with multiples drew the creation of images closer to time-based media; it was an art form "which alters when it alteration finds". His treatment of themes, adopted from easily identifiable paintings by "Velázquez", in multiple states and duplicated printings republished in a number of different contexts, is a characteristic these prints shared with many other etchings by this artist. This characteristic projects the image into a

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<sup>4</sup> "Relativement au dessin, l'eau-forte est l'analogue de l'imprimerie et de la presse, qui multiplient la pensée écrite." Théophile Thoré [W. Burger], "Société des Aquafortistes: Préface, troisième année," cited in Bailly-Herzberg, J., 1972. *L'eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle; la Société des Aquafortistes, 1862-1867* Paris: L. Laget., 1:271.

<sup>5</sup> Shiff, R., 1984b. Representation, copying, and the technique of originality. *New Literary History*, 15, 333-363. P348.

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performative mode. Manet's reproduction recaptures a past painting in a present perception, while also capturing that perception as it passes, leaving open the possibility of multiple perceptions, a possibility that Manet explores not just in reproductions made in the different media of painting and etching but also, in the two published etchings, in multiple states which embody subtle variations. In changing how the image is to be seen, his practice as an artist incorporates time-based perceptions, aligning such works with literary and musical modes of creation. A work which extends backwards to its precursor and sideways towards all the other versions created by the artist sets up a sequential dynamic that offers the possibility that the work be seen as allegorical. It is an allegory of seeing, one in which the virtual spreading of the work along an axis of imaginary time, gives duration to what is, in fact, simultaneous within the viewer. A sequential narrative treatment of a topic that is not necessarily temporal at all raises the question of the referential status of Manet's versions. Though the mimetic is strongly in evidence, these prints are not primarily determined by mimetic moments. Relating more strongly to each other than they do to their source, they are allegorizing the viewer's (and the artist's) indecision about the significance and meaning of the original.<sup>6</sup>

Printmaking, with its malleable matrix, tolerated uncertainty and thus sanctioned experiments with media transpositions. This was drawn attention to at the time. Many critical comparisons were made with the *said* and the *written*.<sup>7</sup> Thoré was aware of the medial flux represented in etching. He held it had certain qualities – and more specifically an interest in the improvisatory – in common with verbal experiences. He described etchings, compared to paintings and engravings, as like “spoken prose which devotes itself to improvised speech, in lively and spiritual conversations, and that great orators worked up to a flow of eloquence when the judges are of a high calibre and the subject profound. It is apparent that an improvised speech by Mirabeau [Honoré Gabriel Riqueti, Comte de *Mirabeau*, 1749–1791] is highly literary and political and as good as a beautiful book written with

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<sup>6</sup> The notion of the “fundamental structure of allegory” is taken from the ideas of Paul de Man, discussed by Miner, M., 1995. *Resonant gaps between Baudelaire and Wagner* Athens: University of Georgia Press at p 54 and 214, note 41.

<sup>7</sup> Arnar, A., 2008. Seduced by the etcher's needle: French writers and the graphic arts in nineteenth-century France. In E.K. Helsinger (ed.) *The “Writing” of Modern Life: The etching revival in France, Britain and the U.S., 1850-1940* Chicago: Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago. P40.

forethought in solitude. Unbeknownst to him Mirabeau was etching.”<sup>8</sup> Thoré is arguing that “etching” was a methodology, a way of proceeding, above and beyond technical constraints. Manet’s variant versions of a single image suggest an improvised relationship with their acknowledged source. Multiple re-inscriptions of the image unfix any sense of the original’s authority and confuse notions of artistic agency. The reproductive print, in the modern format of etching with its personal connotations of an artist’s writing, made possible Manet’s play between sublimating his own identity and encompassing that of his respected forebear. Manet “interpreting” Velázquez, in the context of a lively reproductive practice undertaken within all the arts, was analogous to Liszt playing Beethoven. It implied that the virtuosic artist could express the intentions of the original creator making possible a more privileged access to that figure, than could be achieved even by the original. Its static, inert presence came alive through the layering provided by the personalised interpretation.

For Manet, in his busily productive 1862 year, the making of prints was as important to him as the creation of paintings. This was the year when the *Société des Aquafortistes* was getting underway. Manet, through his association with Félix Bracquemond (1833 –1914), was a foundation member and enthusiastic contributor to its publications. It was also the year after the public acknowledgement of his success with *The Spanish Singer* at the Salon of 1861. The surge in confidence this no doubt generated helped make it one of his most productive. Not coincidentally this was also the year when the subject-matter of many of his works reflects a self-presentation as an artist intent on establishing his name through allusions to Spanish subject-matter. In works with a strong Spanish influence, like *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, Manet made a point of casting his models in what are self-evidently artificial, one could say “dramatic” roles. The artificiality of their situation is designed to give the impression that these named or identifiable individuals are acting out a role, as if they are, so to speak, actors on a stage. In the instance of these Spanish reproductive prints, Manet is himself performing a role; he assumes an identity as the privileged interpreter of “Velázquez”. These figures in the reproductive

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<sup>8</sup> « L’eau-forte est relativement à la peinture et à la gravure, comme cette littérature parlée, qui se dépense en discours improvisés, en conversations vives et spirituelles et que les grands orateurs élèvent jusqu’à l’éloquence quand la tribune est haute et le sujet profond. Apparemment qu’une improvisation de Mirabeau est du grand littéraire et politique aussi bien qu’un beau livre écrit avec méditation dans la solitude. Mirabeau faisait de l’eau-forte sans le savoir. » *op cit* n4.

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works never take on an independent role free of their Spanish origins. They only have a life of their own when Manet later inserts them (or stand-ins for them) in other works.

Manet's self-creation as the pre-eminent representative of *espagnolisme* in the visual arts probably had its origins in the widespread involvement of the French elite in experiencing and representing Spanish culture. Beginning in the early part of the nineteenth century, since the Peninsular Wars, it was an interest that cannot be separated from and should be seen in terms of the nineteenth-century European fascination with the exotic. In northern Europe, Spain had been identified as part of the alien East since the Arabic incursions into that country during the Middle Ages. That was an event, which, having precipitated for centuries a "near vacuum in cultural interaction," bred the misconceptions and cultural clichés characteristically arising from lack of personal experience of another people.<sup>9</sup> Even after centuries of Franco-Spanish competition for the hegemonic domination of Europe, there persisted through to the end of the eighteenth century "widespread ignorance of the culture of Islamic Spain". Roberto Dainotto, discussing Montesquieu's (Charles-Louis de Secondat, baron de La Brède et de *Montesquieu*, 1689-1755) Hispanophobic prejudices attributes to him a basically dismissive attitude. Montesquieu's view of Spain is "as an appendage of the Oriental world of Islam, the civilisation of Spain did not constitute an integral part of Europe."<sup>10</sup> The other voice of the "enlightened" French intellectual, Voltaire (François-Marie Arouet 1694–1778) was equally prejudiced. He remarked that Spain was a country "with which we are no better acquainted than with the most savage parts of Africa, and which does not deserve the trouble of being known." Alfonso de Salvio observes, this attitude "must be attributed in large part to a deep prejudice which was shared by many of his contemporaries."<sup>11</sup>

In the nineteenth century, however, the country came to be perceived by its Northern European neighbours (and even by Spanish intellectuals) as a territory where the lines distinguishing the West and the Orient became blurred. What set in

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<sup>9</sup> Menocal, M.R., 1981. Close encounters in medieval Provence: Spain's role in the birth of troubadour poetry. *Hispanic Review*, 49, 43-64. P51.

<sup>10</sup> Dainotto, R.M., 2006. The discreet charm of the Arabist theory: Juan Andrés, historicism and the de-centering of Montesquieu's Europe. *European History Quarterly*, 36, 7-29. P24.

<sup>11</sup> De Salvio, A., 1924. Voltaire and Spain. *Hispania*, 2, 69-110. P69.

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motion that change in attitudes was the French invasion of Spain during the Napoleonic Wars. Veterans from the war were in the forefront of efforts to bring the rich heritage of Spanish visual art to the attention of French connoisseurs. By 1838 French agents of the “Citizen-King” Louis-Philippe had acquired in Spain enough instances of supposed Spanish art to set up the Spanish Gallery in the Louvre. As an institution it appears to have inspired not so much direct borrowing from Spanish artworks as the efflorescence of works with “Spanish” subject-matter.<sup>12</sup> It no doubt contributed to the fashion for *espagnolisme*. And it contributed to the reversal by the 1860s of attitudes which saw Spain as the exotic “other” of French nationalism. The editor of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Charles Blanc was now prepared to praise the Spanish people in racialist terms as a “pure-blooded race...that had an Arab...cultural foundation”.<sup>13</sup>

In fact, the fashion for things Spanish reached new heights in the course of the Second Empire. The interest of the French in Spain had been given “a big boost” by the fact that Napoleon III’s consort was Spanish.<sup>14</sup> A mania for Spanish art and Spanish subject-matter in artworks developed and was shared by many artists, not just those from the avant-garde. Manet’s contemporaries, Alphonse Legros (1837-1911), Edgar Degas (1834-1917), François Bonvin (1817-1887), Gustave Moreau (1826-1898) and Henri-Victor Regnault (1810-1878) all made works which were virtual, but not literal or acknowledged copies of Spanish masters. Velázquez was everybody’s favourite. His pre-eminence was acknowledged not just by artists alone; he was equated with the greatest Italian artists by major critics. Thoré devoted a chapter of his 1857 book *Tresors d’art en Angleterre* to the artist, describing him as “The greatest painter who has ever lived”.<sup>15</sup> Nor did critics neglect other major figures from the golden age. In the 1850s Charles Blanc wrote about Jusepe Ribera (1591-1652), Diego Velázquez, Bartolomé Murillo (1617-1682), Francisco de Zurbarán (1598-1664) and Alonso Cano (1601-1667) for his *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles*. And all of these Spanish painters were assiduously copied. Studies using the Louvre records show that between 1841 and 1880, 534 copies from the Spanish

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<sup>12</sup> Luxenberg, A., 2008. *The Galerie Espagnole and the Museo Nacional 1835–1853: Saving Spanish art, or the politics of patrimony* Aldershot: Ashgate.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Armstrong, C.M., 2002. *Manet Manette* New Haven: Yale University Press. P94.

<sup>14</sup> Elderfield, J., 2006. *Manet and the Execution of Maximilian* New York: The Museum of Modern Art. P24.

<sup>15</sup> Jowell, F.S., 2003. Thoré-Bürger’s art collection: “A rather unusual gallery of bric-à-brac” *Simiolus: Netherlands quarterly for the history of art*, 30, 54-119. P222 “le plus peintre qui ait jamais existe.”

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golden age were acquired by the state. Comparing the decades covered by that study, the 1860s were a significant high-point. Twice as many copies were made as in the decade before, an output that was only outstripped by the decade during which the Spanish Gallery was open.<sup>16</sup>

Despite this torrent of enthusiasm, experience of and knowledge about the works by Spanish masters was sketchy. Mostly they were still kept in Madrid, accessible in public collections only in the Prado. In such circumstances it is not surprising that paintings from numerous sources had the famous name of Velázquez attached to them. In Manet's day the practice was widespread and indiscriminating. Juliet Wilson-Bareau describes an anonymous painting of a monk acquired as a Velázquez by the Louvre in 1850, which Manet is recorded requesting permission to copy in 1851. The work's attribution was controversial at the time of purchase and Wilson-Bareau questions "How could curators and critics accept such an unlikely painting as the work of Velázquez."<sup>17</sup> The fact is all the works Manet chose to copy, in this early part of his career, ostensibly because they were by that famous artist, were mis-attributed. None of Manet's copies from the supposed Spanish master are today accepted as deriving from the master himself.

This is just one example of a distinct lacuna in research about Manet's knowledge of Velázquez before his trip to Spain. Another is evident in discussions of the way such works as *The Spanish Singer* is praised for its resemblance to paintings by the master. As far as can be discovered, his works to which such ascriptions are being made (such as the Apsley House *Water Seller of Seville* of 1623) were never within Manet's purview at this time. Admittedly Manet was able to see reproductive prints of some of Velázquez's works. Svetlana Alpers claims "Manet's earliest access to Velázquez was in part through Goya's prints."<sup>18</sup> But descriptions of the influence of Velázquez's influence on Manet repeatedly refer to Velázquez's colour and facture and these, however brilliant Manet's ability to intuit, can hardly have been available to Manet through print reproductions. If ever there was a trope in art history that has

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<sup>16</sup> Lobstein, D., 2003. Nineteenth-century French copies after Spanish old masters. In G. Tinterow & G. Lacambre (eds.) *Manet/Velázquez etc.* Appendix I: 327-339. Pp327ff.

<sup>17</sup> Wilson-Bareau, J., 2003a. Catalogue: "Prints and drawings". In G. Tinterow & G. Lacambre (eds.) *Manet/Velázquez: the French taste for Spanish painting.* New York, New Haven and London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. P203.

<sup>18</sup> Alpers, S., 2005. *The vexations of art: Velázquez and others* New Haven and London: Yale University Press P288.

established itself through unthinking repetition, the idea that Manet's artistry is based on his knowledge of Velázquez's paintings, is it! In the early 1860s he had not seen anything by the artist, and by the time of his trip to Madrid in 1866 his style was well established.

Rather than acknowledging that Manet's enthusiasm for the art of "Velázquez" was a species of the *espagnolisme* raging in Paris in the early 1860s, some critics have argued he became interested in Spanish stylistic innovations through visits to the Spanish Gallery. Pierre Daix's view is that Manet, in visiting the collection with his uncle as a teenager, would have been struck not just by the romantic subject-matter but also by the manner and style of painting. He claims Manet found inspiration in the astonishing "effect of the real" provided by the colour and vivid touch of Velázquez.<sup>19</sup> It is asserted that two celebrated works in that collection were Manet's models. Both of them are not by Velázquez but rather by Zurbaran, the real sensation of the Gallery. They are his *Circumcision* (c1638-40, Grenoble museum) and *St Francis in Meditation* (c1635-1640, National Gallery, London). The figure of the boy with a tray which recurs in Manet's paintings *Spanish Cavaliers* and *Luncheon in the Studio* is said to have been derived from the *Circumcision* while the kneeling figure in *Monk at Prayer* looks very like *St Francis in Meditation*.<sup>20</sup> Zurbaran could have been a magnet to the young viewer. His works made an impression on the critics and these two works in particular represented the artist at the height of his powers.

But there are more credible sources for both these images, ones which do not require Manet to have been converted to Spanish art at the age of sixteen and to have retained his memory of what he saw in the Spanish Gallery, before it closed in 1848, with sufficient freshness to use them as models in his own work years later. The boy with a tray, for instance, was copied by Manet, probably in 1857, from a fresco by Benozzo Gozzoli in the Camposanto in Pisa. (See my discussion in chapter 1.) And for the monk at prayer Manet would have had access to a multitude of possible precedents: Charles Jacque (1813-1894) had made one such, Jean-Jacques de Boissieu (1736-1810) another, with a bare head, as in the Manet. Alternatively Manet could have taken his figure from Zurbaran's *The Display of the*

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<sup>19</sup> Daix, P., 1983. *La vie de peintre d'Edouard Manet* Paris: Fayard. P12.

<sup>20</sup>The first recorded painting by Zurbaran to be owned in France, *St Francis* came into the hands of Jean-Jacques de Boissieu. He used it to make his pastiche, the etching *Fathers in the desert* (Perez 103). He also treated the theme of the kneeling monk in an etching *Monks chanting the offices* (Perez 93).



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*Body of St Bonaventura* with its kneeling monk in the foreground. That painting was then in the Louvre and known to Manet. All in all it is unlikely that at the remove of thirteen to fourteen years Manet was still responding to impressions he got as a teenager. The theory that his interest in Spanish painting was directly triggered by the Spanish Gallery seems untenable. Its indirect influence, beginning with other more senior writers and critics may, however, have filtered down to the young student keen to discover new ways of creating art and interested in the potential for change embodied in the exotic.

Theodore Reff suggests another approach to the question of the origins of Manet's interest in Spanish art. He proposes that Manet went to Spain in 1852.<sup>21</sup> This assumption is based on the memoirs of Charles Limet (dates unknown), a distinguished lawyer and friend of the family. Limet claims that when he met Manet in Venice in 1853, the artist had already been to Spain the year previously to study paintings in Madrid and Seville.<sup>22</sup> Reff acknowledges "it remains, however, only an intriguing and unconfirmed possibility" (Reff *op cit* n21 p14). It is surprising that Manet's correspondence makes no mention of the fact. There exists an abundance (for Manet) of correspondence surrounding his trip to Spain in 1865 and it contains not the slightest hint he had already been there. Furthermore his response to the paintings by Velázquez he then saw at the Prado has the savour of someone seeing something for the first time.

So if the connection with the Spanish Gallery could only have been a faint memory when Manet started out as a professional painter - and Manet's experience of genuine Spanish art had been similar to that of any other insular Parisian - what, over and above the desire to replicate the success of *The Spanish Singer*, suggested he make a flood works with Spanish subjects in 1862 and 1863? The most likely explanation begins with his embracing the fashion for things Spanish. Set in train by the Franco-Spanish war and encouraged by the Spanish orientation of French writers, it was influenced by a then widely held interest in exotic national identities. He would have known about the way this had been expressed in paintings and prints by his French artistic predecessors such as Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863),

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<sup>21</sup> Reff, T., 2005. *Manet's Incident in a bullfight* New York: The Frick Collection. P13..

<sup>22</sup> Limet accompanied Emile Ollivier (1825-1913) on this trip. Ollivier wrote about the encounter in his diary. Anonymous Editor, 1945. Manet and Venice. *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, 87, 185-187.

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Chasseriau, Dehodencq (Edme Alexis Alfred Dehodencq, 1822-1882) and Gustave Courbet (1819-1877). They had all made paintings with Orientalist and Spanish subject-matter. It could also have been enhanced by his personal friendship with the Hispanist Zacharie Astruc (1833-1907) as well as by his experiences of Spanish stage performers. And personal circumstances, such as his experience of nationality as difference through his relationship with a Dutch woman and the close proximity of his studio to the migrant labourers who inhabited the Batignolles area (and from whom many of his models at this time are derived) must have played their part.

This miscellany of factors all at some remove from the realities of Spanish painting may be why, when discussing Manet's early relationship to Spanish art, critics are reluctant to specify what stylistic features, as opposed to Spanish subject-matter, he derived from Spanish models. His bravura brush-strokes are much more convincingly related to precedents found in artists like Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1736-1806) whose *Figures de Fantasie* were available to him in the La Caze collection. None of the Spanish works available to him in Paris at the time are painted in that manner. His treatment of colour resembles that of a number of artists of the seicento, amongst whom the bold use of primary colours was common not just to Spanish but to Italian and French artists, as well. Finally there is the matter of Manet's innovative and influential treatment of light where figure-ground relationships are dissolved in an enveloping spatial penumbra without limits. In a letter to Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) written during his visit to Spain in 1865, he described how he discovered this technique in Velázquez's *The Jester Pablo de Valladolid* (1635, Prado). While his lighting in earlier Spanish-inspired works is remarkable it is not confined to Spanish-inspired works only and is more likely to have been modelled on photographic techniques. He developed it further in the direction of dissolving space and focussing on the transient effects of light after he had the experience of seeing the masterpieces in the Prado. This is not a phenomenon associated with his pre-Spanish-journey art.

As Jean Rousseau noted, in his review of Manet's paintings at the 1864 *Salon* "Manet paints Spain like Bonvin paints France"<sup>23</sup> As this statement implies, these artists' common style had nothing to do with their subject-matter. Alisa Luxenberg has provided a welcome corrective to the unsubstantiated guesswork which comes

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<sup>23</sup> "M. Manet peint l'Espagne comme M. Bonvin peint la France..." Quoted in Reff (*op cit* 2005, 37 n16).

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into play when critics are looking for connections between Manet and Velázquez, clarifying the limitations to their stylistic similarity. In her contrast between the facture of Manet's *The Tragic Actor* and Velázquez's *Pablo de Valladolid* she notes: "Manet's black paint glistens in separate and visible touches on the surface, entirely different from Velázquez's matte, continuous, and rather flat black tones. Manet could not have learned to paint his blacks from Velázquez. In modelling the figure's hands, Manet applied distinct strokes of lights and darks that break up the surface and flatten the forms; this contrasts with the more integrated chiaroscuro and illusionistic modelling of the hands painted, however broadly, by Velázquez. The former is a modernist approach that begins to divorce the signifier (brushstroke) from the signified (form), while the Spaniard's technique here followed conventional figurative painting practice."<sup>24</sup>

A more productive approach to understanding the origin of Manet's interest in Spanish art is to recognise that it emerged from French literary sources.<sup>25</sup> This would serve to explain why Manet's early work lacks references to specific stylistic precedents derived from Spanish models. By construing his Spanish subjects as an instance of his openness to literary influences, we can explain how he came to accurately transcribe motifs dealing with Spanish subjects. Details in his paintings and prints derived from literature about Spain signalled his version of *espagnolisme* had authentic origins in literary eye-witness accounts. Thus we learn that he was personally acquainted with *Travels in Spain* (1843) by Théophile Gautier (1811-1872) because he uses that author's description of details of the dress of *espadas* to adorn his principal figure in his painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* (1862, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).<sup>26</sup> And the painting *The Students of Salamanca* (1860, Private Collection) is widely accepted as illustrating an episode in the French literary work *Gil Blas* (1715 *et seq*) by Alain-René Lesage (1668-1747), a book which is set in Spain and is based on Spanish models. Manet's relationship with literature at this point in his career has none of the subtle juxtapositions and harmonies that accompany his visually created equivalents to poetic texts in his

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<sup>24</sup> Luxenberg, A., 2004. Alisa Luxenberg reviews Manet/Velasquez. *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 3. [http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/spring\\_04/articles/luxe\\_exhi.html](http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/spring_04/articles/luxe_exhi.html)

<sup>25</sup>"The Galerie Espagnole of Louis-Philippe" by Jeannine Baticle in *Manet/Velazquez* (2003), *op.cit.*, p175

<sup>26</sup>Mena Marques, M.B. (ed.) 2004 *Manet en el Prado*, Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado. P443. In fact, says Marques, the "silken hose" described by Gautier is "the only lifelike detail of a real contemporary bullfighter's costume" in Manet's painting.

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1870s prints. Nevertheless, it is highly unlikely, given his friendship with Baudelaire (if nothing else), that he was ignorant of major literary works and the evidence shows he was prepared to create visual equivalents for what he found in them.

In the early 1860s, therefore, when Manet was making his images after Spanish painters, the *idea* of Spanish painting, rather than particular stylistic devices, influenced his choice of works to copy. This was an idea composed of a *mélange* of attributions, from anonymous Italian painters to Ribera and Luca Giordano (1634-1705), as well as to Velázquez's imitators within the milieu of Spanish art. The point of his demonstrating an ability to create works in the great Spanish artist's name was that it conferred authority on all his work in the context of the general mania for things Spanish. The fact that his models were inferior versions, or worse, imitations of the great Spanish master's works and style was unimportant for that purpose. Charles Stirling had already doubted the authenticity of the *Portrait of a Monk* (1633) by 1855, four years after Manet had applied to copy it. Louis Viardot (1800-1883) had questioned the quality, if not the authorship, of the *Gathering of Gentlemen* in his 1860 book on Parisian museums and by 1866 the authorship of the painting *Dead Soldier* (1630s? National Gallery, London), which Manet referred to in his *Dead Toreador* (1864, NGA, Washington), was also being questioned.<sup>27</sup> If these critics could cast an appraising eye over these wrongly attributed works and see through the label describing the maker to its inferior reality below, it is only the arrogance of the art historian that allows Manet to have been so confused as to have been taken in by them. That he nevertheless went ahead and copied their motifs in significant works of his own demonstrates that he was enamoured of the idea of their Spanishness rather than respecting an individual for his distinctive artistic skills. The tenor of his report to Fantin-Latour during his visit to Madrid acknowledging the wrongful attribution of the "Velázquez" *Portrait of Philip IV* (also indirectly of the *Gathering of Gentlemen*) indicates as much. It shows no disappointment at the fact that he had lavished so much attention on copying minor works by unknown artists or mere studio copies. "The full-length portrait in the Louvre we have is not from his hand. Only *The Infanta Marguerita* is indisputable."<sup>28</sup> This suggests he was not

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<sup>27</sup> Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez : the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven and London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. Pp460, 458 and 459.

<sup>28</sup> Wilson-Bareau, J., 1991. *Manet by himself: correspondence & conversation, paintings, pastels, prints & drawings*. London: Macdonald. P34.

particularly surprised to find another more authentic version of that work. Nor did it prevent him from continuing to publish and display the print *Philip IV*. In the 1874 printing the earlier letters below the image have been eliminated but in its place Manet has written “éd. Manet d’après Velasquez”, hardly the inscription of an artist obsessed with precise nuances of authorship.

Moreover to state that it was the *idea* rather than any meaningful engagement with the *style* of Spanish painting that inspired Manet’s interest in that art in the early 1860s is not to dismiss his responses later, after he had seen them *in situ*, in Madrid (and Toledo). He seems then to have incorporated his enhanced understanding of Velázquez’s art in his own work through the way he surrounded a figure with the semblance of pure air, most particularly. But also his use of half-transparent marks and moving traces of paint recall the Spanish master. On the other hand earlier works, and especially the prints, have a much more complex genealogy, one that includes elements from his study of Goya but much else besides, and not all of it Spanish.

In view of these arguments, the status of the prints made after the “Velázquez” paintings he saw in the Louvre becomes problematic. These works were created as reproductive; the inscriptions on the two he published verify that. Thus the question applied to the print *Silentium* equally applies here: “what is the implication of the statement that the latter image *repeats* the former”? Can it simply be said that Manet was sufficiently enamoured of the name “Velázquez” to want to copy works attributed to him whenever he got the opportunity, without their having any other significance, iconographically or in personal terms.<sup>29</sup> Most commentators are content to talk about them in purely technical terms. They trace Manet’s deviations from the painted originals or observe the development of his etching technique as the states evolved. Thus they implicitly see the works as nothing more than reproductive exercises,

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<sup>29</sup> These are the terms in which Jean-Paul Bouillon describes the copying activities of Félix Bracquemond, Manet’s colleague at this time: “A fundamental artistic activity, sufficient unto itself, or, more precisely, finding its intrinsic value in the sole fact of the copy, which is to say in the form – or the formalism – of the transposition, independently of its subject, of its iconographic motif, *of its literal or symbolic content.*” « activité artistique fondamentale, se suffisant à elle même, ou plus précisément trouvant sa valeur propre dans le seul fait de la copie c'est-à-dire dans le forme - ou la formalisme - de la transposition, indépendamment de son sujet, de son motif iconographique, *de son contenu littéral ou symbolique* » Bouillon, J.-P., 1979. Félix Bracquemond: Les années d'apprentissage (1849-1859) La genèse d'un réalisme positiviste. Doctorat, Université de Lille III. P111.

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however much rhetoric is devoted to making distinctions between “interpretive” and “traditional reproductive” prints.<sup>30</sup> A more productive approach is to see the way these prints collude with the intentions I described in Chapter 1 for Manet’s reproduction *Silentium*.

In the case of his copies after Velázquez he was not focussed on art’s capacity to figure the cross-over to senses usually associated with non-visual media. Rather this set of repetitive prints made it possible for Manet to construct for himself a role as the modern interpreter of the Spanish painter in Paris. By adopting iconic images of Spanish art (well, at least, they were “iconic” for that time and place) by not just adopting them but actually re-enacting them in the form of paintings and etchings, he gave them a modern reality where they fused the Spanish original with the handiwork of the artist Edouard Manet. He used these images to create for himself a persona that was not simply that of the imitator of things Spanish, observing a culture from the outside and picking off the choice bits to represent, although he did that too. These prints served an additional purpose. They enabled him to occupy in Paris the high ground of Spanish visual culture, representing himself as the modern Velázquez.

In *Silentium* Manet was creating an image that operated on an interface between sound and sight, attempting to treat equally the senses associated with each. In these three Spanish prints he makes a similar bid for a hybrid middle ground; hovering between two concepts of personal and national identity he displays his interest in what the unfixing of those identities might look like. The prints then stand as emblems of Manet’s adoption of the mask of Velázquezian *espagnolisme*, proof that what he has been able to achieve is the transposition of Velázquez’s painterly presence into a medium that is sufficiently flexible to accommodate together the two artists in the same image. These works present themselves in the form of a hybrid, something that is French and Spanish, Manet and Velázquez.

This ambition to make his works stand for Velázquez, in the print medium, did not enable him to side-step the pressures being exerted on printmaking by its rapid increase in popularity and the influx of amateur experimentalists in the 1860s. These factors contributed to an uncertainty of vision disclosed by wide variations in the tonal

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<sup>30</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. p46.

treatment of these prints. The two published prints *Philip IV* and *The Little Cavaliers* ran the gamut from purely linear etching to later versions that were saturated in aquatint. In the case of *The Little Cavaliers* he reworked a print from the first state with watercolour (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). Each new version re-invents his subjective impression by experimenting with the ability of etching to mimic tonal variation generated by colour and chiaroscuro in the original. This is the interpretation favoured by Melot who claims it “testifies to something above and beyond the passion for technique displayed by someone like Bracquemond”.<sup>31</sup> Yet it is important to recognise that this reworking occurred much later than the 1862 or 1863 editions. Fashionable developments in inking and the use of aquatint became intrinsic to print-makers’ interest in experimenting with the medium. Productive relationships with printers and publishers meant that developments in the style of print presentation were encouraged by input from all sides. It is possible that more radical tonal variations were driven by his advisors rather than by the artist himself.

The choice of subject-matter was doubtless driven by the artist, however, determined by what was available to him in Paris at the time. Having fixed upon the idea of reproducing Velázquez he was confined to depicting, in two of the prints, *Portrait of Phillip IV* and *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* the unfamiliar milieu of Spanish royalty as described by court painters. Only in the third does he get the opportunity to create a group portrait, copying what he thought to be portraits of these court painters.<sup>32</sup> Manet’s interpretation of *Portrait of Phillip IV* shows the king in a setting that carried with it none of the trappings of royalty used in equivalent French paintings. Velázquez’s paintings of royalty were monarchical propaganda, “imbued with the same sacredness and untouchableness of the king’s person.”<sup>33</sup> Works depicting royal figures, in that context, were experienced “within specific ideological and discursive contexts”. While they repudiated ostentatious displays of rank, representations of the royal family emphasised their kingly qualities by focussing on a personal appearance that united realism with an idealisation of the king’s features, *ibid.* But when two such royal portraits were repeated by Manet, in a context where

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<sup>31</sup> Melot, M., 1996. *The impressionist print* New Haven and London: Yale University Press. P58.

<sup>32</sup> The Louvre register, recording applications to copy paintings described the *Gathering of gentlemen* as “Portrait de Velasquez et autre personages” in its post-1856 edition (Tinterow, *op cit* fn 27; p207n18).

<sup>33</sup> Feros, A., 2002 “Sacred and terrifying gazes” Languages and images of power in early modern Spain *In* Stratton-Pruitt, S (ed). *The Cambridge companion to Velázquez*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. Pp68-86 at p82.

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he is reputed to have been sceptical about the legitimacy of France's current rulers, these works would appear to carry some of his political scepticism in their wake.

Their original implications of kingly presence having been entirely dissipated by the passage of time, what is left of the original *Phillip IV* is the association of royalty with the bloodthirsty and in the second image *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* she is a mere child. Neither image would have generated an equivalent to the sense of respect for majesty that we are given to believe the original created. The use of printmaking underlined this subversion of the original's authority. While the portrait in oil, by the king's painter, indexed the presence of His, or Her Majesty, a reproductive print reduces that aura of kingship to just another image culled from the annals of art history. Manet may be repeating the performance of royalty that Velázquez carried out with so much aplomb in his portraits of the royal family, but in Manet's case they are performances with an ironic, even sceptical twist, challenging the assumption of power that accompanies titular positions of authority.

Theodore Reff suggests that the contemporaneous painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* is an allusion to the empress Eugénie. John Elderfield has expanded that reference, by relating the killing going on in the back of that painting to the "almost equally incredible drama going on in Mexico."<sup>34</sup> In particular he surmises that just as the bulls in Goya's prints (used to establish the background in that painting) "may symbolise popular resistance to the first Napoleon's campaign to conquer Spain" so Manet may have replicated the image in order to refer to a similar campaign being pursued in Mexico, *ibid*. In Manet's print of *Philip IV* the weaponry being held by the King could be making a similar point. It implies that Napoleon III had to use force to assume power and he was continuing to do so in Mexico, at the very time this print was being published.

Manet's interest in and attempts to repeat the image of *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* does not enter the same territory as that traversed by his repetition of *Philip IV*. Children, even royal children, already connote authority figures with a measure of irony, if not melancholy; this work above all others. Yet it is difficult to believe Manet undertook the repetition of this image as an exercise in the subversion of royal power. Rather he had good contemporary reasons for being interested in the

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<sup>34</sup> Both references are contained in Elderfield, J., 2006. *Manet and the Execution of Maximilian* New York: The Museum of Modern Art. p38.



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image, beyond the fact of its presumed authorship. It had been reproduced in the *Magasin pittoresque* in 1841 and had attracted the attention of the romantics. Jean-François Millet (1814-1875) had said he was inspired by the painting for his 1845 work *Portrait of Antoinette Hébert*, a work that has been described as “one of the greatest portraits ever painted of a child” in the Hayward Gallery catalogue to accompany an exhibition of works by that artist.<sup>35</sup> Manet’s interest in portraying his own son may have been encouraged by Millet’s achievement.

The work had also been the subject of a long poem by Victor Hugo (1802-1885), which itself was commented on by Théophile Gautier. Both of these writers were interested in the capacity of one art-form to reproduce the effect of another in a practice then known as *la transposition d’art*. In this case Hugo attempted to repeat the effect of the painted image in his written text. Ilse Lipschultz describes what she sees as his “penetrating recreation” commenting: “In *La Rose de l’Infante* ... one can recognise line by line, colour by colour, the Louvre’s *Infante Margarita*. Hugo transposes Velázquez’ canvas to the written page not only with the most sensitive observation of visual details, but also with a penetrating recreation of the painting’s mood.”<sup>36</sup> Théophile Gautier analyzed the common vision of the poet and the painter in words that would have struck a chord with Manet who himself was to devote a great deal of effort to transposing musical and written art-forms in his paintings and prints throughout his life. Gautier described the poem as a “scene appearing as if painted with Velázquez’ palette.” In another instance in his etching known as *The Travellers*, discussed in Chapter 10, Manet returned an image already transposed by a French poet back to the visual medium. This work had been adapted from the print *Gypsies on the March* (c1621) by Jacques Callot (1592-1625) and transcribed into the poem *Bohémiens en voyage* by Baudelaire. In both that and this work, Manet’s effort was to re-create a work of art that already existed in more than one medium, giving it a fresh existence with characteristics borrowed from them both.

This work *The Infanta Marie Margeurite* made a great impact on artists at that time. Degas made an etched version, reflecting one of the earliest occasions on which these two artists crossed paths. Fantin-Latour also applied to copy it in 1854.

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<sup>35</sup> Herbert, R.L., 1976. *Jean-Francois Millet*. Hayward Gallery, London: Arts Council of Great Britain. P36.

<sup>36</sup> Lipschutz, I.H., 1972. *Spanish Painting and the French Romantics*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press. p168.

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Manet, in recuperating this painting in both painted and etched versions was therefore not just measuring himself against and identifying himself with the Spanish master. He seems to have been also making his own contribution to the nineteenth-century discourse about this work that had taken as many forms as there were appropriate media in which to treat it. But by returning the work to its origins he was affirming his commitment to the exotic world of Spanish art over and above any solidarity he was showing with his fellow-countrymen's variations on the theme.

The significance of the *Gathering of Gentlemen* to Manet appears to have emerged from a variety of personal and professional considerations. It is a work with a long history. The original painting is now thought to be a fragment of a larger work by Juan Battista Martinez del Mazo, Velázquez's son-in-law. At the time of its entry to the Louvre, in 1851, it was identified as a group portrait, two of the figures, on the left-hand end of the canvas, were thought to be respectively a self-portrait of Velázquez, with Murillo at his side. The subject of the group portrait was obviously one that attracted Manet, as indeed it did many of his contemporaries. It has been suggested Manet drew inspiration from this work for a number of his most ambitious paintings from 1862, *The Old Musician*, *Ballet Espagnol* and *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* are the most conspicuous; but paintings of a Spanish atelier and *The Students of Salamanca* have also been suggested.

Wilson-Bareau suggests Manet's use of this work as a model makes it necessary to consider "that Manet's compositional arbitrariness is derived from his understanding of what was a fragment".<sup>37</sup> This work, today only admired for its influence on Manet, also has the potential to undermine the thesis that Manet's emulative procedures derived from his desire to be visibly identified with the canonical great in western art. Whatever his feelings in 1862 about performing "Velázquez" the fact that he was prepared to entertain such a flexible notion about the works represented by that name suggests his uses of past art relied on sources which "were meaningful in their subjects as well as their forms".<sup>38</sup> He appears to have been prepared to use art historical sources whose relation to the canon of famous artists could be flexibly construed.

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<sup>37</sup> Wilson-Bareau, J., 2003c. Manet and Spain. In G. Tinterow & G. Lacambre (eds.) *Manet/Velázquez: the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York, New Haven and London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. P208

<sup>38</sup> Reff, T., 2005. *Manet's Incident in a bullfight* New York: The Frick Collection. P30.

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The presence of these reproductive prints in Manet's oeuvre of this time, alongside his images of Spanish performers and stage performances marks his indeterminacy, his lack of certainty as to what exactly the Spanish character of his images stood for. This artist, whose only contact with Spain had been through essentially second-hand experiences, adopted the strategy at this point in his career of covering all the possible bases associated with the fashion for things Spanish to which he had made a fortunate addition in his work *The Spanish Singer*. He had pursued Spanish threads back to their sources and plundered those for further images that would reinforce his standing as the pre-eminent visual interpreter of Spanish themes in contemporary Paris. Prints served his purposes best in this regard because they were already accepted as legitimate works of art even when they were confined to the repetition of well-known paintings. They were the best way to establish Manet's credentials as a "Spanish artist working in Paris" reproducing the works known to be derived from the acknowledged titan of Spanish painting. Through the print distribution networks Manet could expect that his name would come to be associated with the prestige of Spanish-derived cultural commodities.

Ideas of national identity were what Manet was playing with in these copies. They are ideas which, in the twentieth century have come to be associated with racism and the oppression of minorities. Of course it makes no sense to tarnish Manet with the twentieth century's crimes, but nevertheless his complicity in the construction of nationalistic identities cannot be avoided.

The two published prints after "Velázquez" are pivotal in this construction. They are where Manet unequivocally stakes his claim to the heritage bestowed by that artist's name. Part of this chapter has attempted to reconstruct its identifying features. I have argued that these were largely unrelated to any distinctive features in genuine paintings by Velázquez. Rather what Manet was working from were works by Velázquez's followers aided and abetted by a miscellany of vaguely similar painting from the seicento, irrespective of nationality. He was blurring the borders between his roles as a Spanish and French artist just as his paintings of recognised models blurred the boundaries between character and actress, performance and reality.

The specific nature of these prints had another indirect effect on Manet's repetitive practices. These prints conferred authority because they transferred

identity. Through them Manet can be seen making an effort, with what he construed to be canonical Spanish artworks, to create himself as the practitioner of Spanish art in Paris. He is implying that he was able to recuperate the great name associated with the paintings, thereby endowing his own work with the *mana* of the original artist.<sup>39</sup> The belief that the power of an original can somehow re-emerge in its copy, even though that copy might have existed in a different medium, is exemplified by these copies of his revered predecessor. He demonstrates his commitment to this belief through the multitude of ways he incorporates compositional details from these copies in subsequent works, even though, as I have pointed out, it could not be said that the painted style of his artwork turns Spanish as a result of this exposure to these *faux*-“Velázquez”.

There is thus a curious dichotomy. His style remains rooted in French practices in its openness to influences from a number of quarters. I have discussed his susceptibility to photography in its various manifestations affecting his use of lighting and choice of subject-matter. Art from the early Renaissance contributed to his odd perspectival effects and provided models for unusual poses. And the Italian art of the seicento, with its experimental facture and its techniques for making a vivid impression through high colour and placement of the image close to the picture plane, filtered through to a number of Manet’s early works.

On the other hand Manet found inspiration in these Spanish works for details of composition, suggesting, at first glance, that he was “influenced” by them. But this “influence” had nothing to do with distinctive Spanish qualities, whatever they may be. It is therefore not so surprising that in returning from Madrid after his exposure to the genuine works by Velázquez and other Spanish masters (particularly Goya) he moderated his overt references to Spain and its culture. Henceforth his references to Spanish forebears emerge from works which make no bones about their French subjects, such as the *Portrait of Rouvière*, the *Execution of Maximilian* and *The Balcony*. They do their Spanish referencing without the Spanish paraphernalia surrounding his earlier self-advertising as a latter-day Velázquez.

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<sup>39</sup> “Mana” a term first used in the English language in 1843 (OED) and implying the “belief in a force altogether distinct from physical power, which acts in all kinds of ways for good and evil, and which it is of the greatest advantage to possess or control.” (Codrington, 1877, in OED Online)

### Chapter 3: The “Gypsies”: Abroad, Asunder and At Home

*Cher Liszt, à travers les brumes, par delà les fleuves, par-dessus les villes où les pianos chantent votre gloire, où l'imprimerie traduit votre sagesse, en quelque lieu que vous soyez, dans les splendeurs de la ville éternelle ou dans les brumes des pays rêveurs que console Cambrinus, improvisant des chants de délectation ou d'ineffable douleur, ou confiant au papier vos méditations abstruses, chanter de la Volupté et de l'Angoisse éternelles, philosophe, poète et artiste, je vous salue en l'immortalité!*<sup>1</sup>

I have devoted two chapters of this thesis to four prints by Manet which are overt instances of his repeating works by other artists in another medium. These are the only times in his career as a professional artist (as opposed to his early student copies) where his use of previous artworks is largely unmediated by emendations, additions or subtractions. His significant action was to inscribe the original in a new artistic and intellectual context. This led to the translation of its original meaning; the works are now invested with changed thematic associations. Manet's act of repetition, surmounting the boundaries between media, became the personal performance of an original by another artist. A common enough practice in the world of music, in the realms of high art that Manet aspired to conquer it was a significant departure. He had construed the works by “Velázquez” as a painted force rather than a painted object, in his hands they became a process rather than a self-contained entity. Meaning would emerge from context and medium rather than from artistic innovation. At this stage of his career Manet was emphatically recording his identification with honoured forebears, an identification that was intrinsic to his artistic procedures.

In these overtly imitative early works, despite their artistic borrowings, Manet is nevertheless vindicating his own vision. Of course the influence of predecessors is a major constraint; Manet is not giving his subjectivity free rein. Rather they and Manet are together in a liminal space, between that of reproduction, personified by the traces of the other contributors, and the artist's performance of presence figured through individualised “hand-writing”. Preconceptions about the personality of the

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In my heading I am referring to the name of the print by Manet. In instances in this thesis when I use this racialised term “Gypsies” to refer to an ethnic minority I acknowledge that I am involved with a categorisation with its own complicated genealogy and usage. I have principally relied upon Charnon-Deutsch, L., 2004. *The Spanish Gypsy: the history of a European obsession* Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, for my understanding of the term. In deference to her use I intend capitalising the word every time I use it (except when I am quoting another author).

<sup>1</sup> “Dear Liszt . . . singer of Delight and ineffable Sorrow, philosopher, poet, and artist, I salute you in your Immortality.” An extract from Charles Baudelaire *Le Thyse* in *Petits poèmes en prose ou Le Spleen de Paris* (Pichois I, 336).

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artist and about what art is or should be are replaced by a depersonalized treatment of the signifying conventions as if these were wholly dependent on time and place.

Manet's translation of the original, even if not entirely disrupting the usual function of reproduction in the print medium, was broadening its scope. From the onset of Romanticism and up till the 1860s the reproductive engraver redeployed an original (usually a painting) avoiding any suggestion of overt re-interpretation. But this widely accepted convention had changed by Manet's day, spurred on by the competition provided by a mechanistic reproductive technique in photography. Some of print medium's most eminent critics, Delaborde and Blanc, for instance, had acknowledged that the process of transposing a work between media lay the original open to interpretive changes brought about, either consciously or not, by the demands of the medium. They recognised that even a faithful imitation of the work of another artist gave rise to images with an inescapable and distinctive individuality. Manet's reproductive work is a signal instance of this. It is manifested, for example, in the invitation to silence in *Silentium*. The image re-occurs in potentially multiple instances; the medium of print-making was capable of shadowing the cadenced effect set in motion by the original experience described in the fresco, expressed visually by the interaction of hand and eye. Reflecting its changed context, Manet's print gets behind the fresco's function as a sign advertising the place where speech was allowed, to the auditory experience it referenced. His version serves a purpose parallel to the original; in this print Manet provides an opportunity for visual arts to be conceived as a vehicle for sound, ordinarily associated with speech and music.

Such rhetorical amplification of an original idea was not confined to the world of reproductive engraving, even though it is revealed in the starkest possible terms in that established tradition. In painting, too, and even in the face of the emphasis being placed by artists such as Courbet and his followers on the "realism" of their generic subject-matter, avant-garde critics such as Baudelaire, as early as his *Salon* review of 1846, were emphasizing the subjective perceptions of the individual artist as an intrinsic aspect of a different notion of reality. In the 1859 *Salon* Baudelaire refined his approach, drawing attention to the primary role of the artist's imagination in the creation of the work of art. To the artworks created by the conventional *positivist* who represents things as they appear, avoiding any reference to the sensibility of the creator, he proposed those created by an imaginative artist who "wants to use his

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mind to give insight into things and project that reflection onto others.”<sup>2</sup> Artists had experimented with transgressive compositional devices before Manet. There were instances in painting of framing which cut-off or decentred pertinent aspects of the image. Flat frontal lighting, abrupt changes in scale and instantaneity of poses and gestures were all to be found in various other earlier works. But in the nineteenth century they had little currency until the arrival of photography. Manet may never have openly acknowledged the inspiration he derived from technological developments. Nevertheless these new conventions naturalised the means he used to suggest his works spontaneously depicted a world view. One in which, as Ortel describes it, reality is all of a piece, any image has as much to reveal of it as another. “By photographing the present time, the nineteenth century sees the present as a photograph.”<sup>3</sup>

Through such innovations Manet, in not just his overtly reproductive works, coordinated widely-scattered elements in order to develop his artistic purpose and the mode of representing his own vision. This source material was transformed through his use of surprising juxtaposition and the linking of images with disparate origins, producing an effect of simultaneity and movement that was not dependent on narrative development. His new visions had the capacity to call attention to something long hidden. He was embellishing reality by creating works which repeated the experience of imaginative creations, originating in sources drawn from a variety of media.

In Chapter 2 I returned to Manet’s participation in the changing face of representation by examining images created around a notion of *espagnolisme*. The prints after “Velázquez” disseminated Manet’s cultural appropriation of identity, his repetition performed the original function assumed by that artist in his images of

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<sup>2</sup> « ... l’imaginaire, dit : ‘Je veux illuminer les choses avec mon esprit et en projeter le reflet sur les autres esprits.’ » (Pichois : 2.627). Mallarmé uses a similar construction in his essay *The Impressionists and Edouard Manet*, characterising realism as a movement that “sought to impress itself upon the mind by the lively depiction of things as they appeared to be and vigorously excluded all meddling imagination.” The essay is reproduced in Moffett, C.S., 1986. *The New Painting: Impressionism 1874-1886* San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco The reference is on p28.

<sup>3</sup> Ortel, P., 2000. Poetry, the picturesque and the photogenic quality in the nineteenth century. *Journal of European studies*, 30, 19-33 p31. Earlier Ortel describes the radical changes in perception effected by the advent of photography in the following terms: “Indeed, the tool is not merely a medium of representation. It is also a framework, or a filter, by which reality is perceived, and thereby it carries out a *certain modelization of reality*” p20. (Italics in original.)

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royalty, making it serve new purposes. The subject-matter is the “nature” of the sign for things Spanish. Manet thoroughly explored its implications in a number of works in the early 1860s. Not only did he adopt the names of artists known to him from the golden age of Spanish painting he also took as his models the performed subjectivity of Spanish dancers and other professionals from the contemporary stage in *Lola de Valence* and *Spanish Ballet* for instance. Both models consisted of already created works which Manet chose to replicate, re-enacting their life force, their *enargeia*, in a profound re-interpretation of the notion of mimesis. The authenticity of his images is complicated, on the reproductive side, by the interaction between the personal marks created by the artist named Manet and the faithful transcription in a new medium of images by the artist named Velázquez. On the performative Manet layered his notions of *espagnolisme* over the top of those evoked by other performers of its “reality”. But in both cases he repeats the performance of a Spanish role initially created elsewhere, articulated using the expressive values associated with the medium of etching, at this time. By un-fixing an original work from its natural context, he enabled it to operate in an environment where representation, in this instance hovering between the Spanish subject-matter and the French execution of it, was involved in nullifying boundaries, undertaking the same subversive strategy that resulted earlier in images accommodating aural phenomena.

Beyond his essentially reproductive prints there are a number of works on this “Spanish” theme in both Manet’s painting and print-making, works whose displays reflect the theatrical implications generated by this repetition. Original ideas derived from past art are adapted to conform to the demand for modern subject-matter (and, as it turns out, to his formal concerns as well). Their presence in his work is usually available to be seen by the knowledgeable viewer even though in a number of instances their specific source is obscured. It is plain that in this matter of Manet’s sources his acknowledgement of his predecessors covers a spectrum ranging between overt disclosures to intentional disguise.

I have begun this thesis by addressing images where Manet makes no effort to disguise his borrowing. Indeed, in the prints after “Velázquez”, he inscribed the name of the original creator onto the plate bearing his copy. In the other work *Silentium*, the presence of a predecessor is perspicuous. In this chapter I examine a suite of works, existing as drawings, prints and paintings created (and recreated)



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over an extended period, all of which begin with two related prints made in the early 1860s. Entitled *The Gypsies*, after the second of these, the set constitutes a third option for derived images [Figs. 10 and 11]. In these, although no-one doubts the use of forebears' material, debate still revolves around who provided it. And this debate, which draws its energy from questions about why Manet used source material, demonstrates that the artist was not always willing to allow his creative processes to be subordinated to a predecessor's input, however much he exploited its capacity to increase the work's resonant power.

In the first place what made this suite different is that it reflected motifs and ideas Manet chose from his contemporary milieu. Recognising that he combined these with a more broadly construed re-use of images from the history of art generates insights into the origins of Manet's approach to creating visual imagery which pullulate with different media. By introjecting these models into hybrid imaginative constructions which made room for literary, musical and cultural ideas about Gypsies as performers, Manet was able to associate his traditional artistic ambition to gain acceptance in the *Salon* with the hurly-burly of popularly produced mass culture. Attempting a productive cross-fertilisation of high and low genre, derived equally from the past and the present, he explored their expression in the various media available to him using their diversity to avoid resolving a definitive image.

The Gypsy served as the symbolic embodiment of a non-conformist lifestyle in the earlier part of the nineteenth century in Paris. Changes in aesthetic values instituted by the romantic eschewal of the classicism espoused by Jacques-Louis David and his followers led to artists in all media taking an interest in exotic locales and minority groups. Fascination with the marginal, the exotic and the pre-modern had given rise to a simple set of stereotypical characteristics by which Gypsies living in the Batignolles region of the city were identified. Because they were imagined as having originated from the Eastern European region of Bohemia that name came to be applied to anyone who identified with a rebellious and free spirited rejection of conventional mores characteristic of bourgeois society. Mary Gluck identifies a number of different groups to whom the term was applied: "disaffected youths on the verge of serious careers, marginalized types with problematic livelihoods and outright criminal elements that often intersected with professional revolutionaries,

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conspirators and anarchists.”<sup>4</sup> Between 1830 and 1849 there emerged from within these ranks a growing community of artists and literary figures. Largely unsuccessful financially, they professed to live by values such as frugality, mutual assistance, identification with the urban poor and rejection of middle-class morality, especially as it applied to relations between the sexes. Its most visible representative was Henry Murger (Louis-Henri Murger, 1822-1861), a struggling writer who had created a series of portraits of his fellow bohemians for a small magazine *Le Corsaire* during the 1840s. In 1849 he had the good fortune to see his work adapted for the stage to great public acclaim. Titled *La Vie de la Bohème* it made the writer both wealthy and famous while bringing thinly fictionalised but recognisable characters to the attention of a middle class audience. Murger’s writing gave notoriety to a “Society of Water-Drinkers”; its members were characterised as living in a state of such extreme poverty they were reduced to drinking water, unable to afford even the cheapest of France’s abundant *vins ordinaires*.

In the 1850s, while Edouard Manet was a student in the atelier of Thomas Couture he is said by his biographer, and fellow student, Antonin Proust to have been friendly with Murger, dining regularly with the writer.<sup>5</sup> There are justified doubts about Proust’s remembrance of dates and personalities fifty years after the events he is recounting. Yet Manet’s early artistic production demonstrates that in his fascination with the down-and-out or disaffected element of Parisian city life he was chronicling the same stratum of society that provided the raw material by which Murger made his fortune. His first *Salon* submission *The Absinthe Drinker* (1859 and 1867-71, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen) drew upon characteristic aspects of bohemian life, such as its marginality, its dandified aspirations and its involvement with alcohol. Subsequently Manet intensified his production of imagery reflecting life in the streets of Paris with a series of works depicting street performers. These include two versions of *Street Singers* made in or around 1862, one a major painting (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston), the other an obscure etching (Harris 22). The drawing and etching for *The Bear Trainer* (Harris 9) and the drawing *The Acrobats*

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<sup>4</sup> Gluck, M., 2005. *Popular Bohemia: Modernism and urban culture in nineteenth-century Paris* Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press P10.

<sup>5</sup> Proust, A., 1913. *Edouard Manet Souvenirs* Paris: Librairie Renouard. Proust describes Manet lunching with Murger, while still a student, but denies that either Murger or his friend Barbey d’Aurevilly (1808-1889) were much involved with his artistic interests, pp13-4.

(*Les saltimbanques*) (De Leiris 217) also fit within this series. Apart from the painting, these were sketch-like scenes; none were included in his 1862 portfolio.

The model provided by *The Absinthe Drinker* gave rise to a different artistic procedure for representing these bohemian types, however. It is the one he chose from the beginning for his *Gypsy* images. Using quotations garnered from his extensive exposure to works of past art held in French museums (or available to him as printed reproductions of such works), humble denizens of the Parisian underworld were depicted in these images using the grandiose symbolism of western high art. The effect was to identify sordid or disregarded aspects of present-day reality with the allegorical values implicit in the original. What changes over the three years between *The Absinthe Drinker* of 1859 and the images associated with the first portfolio of prints is that this present-day subject-matter becomes more overtly exotic. Identifying these societal outcasts as people of Spanish descent became Manet's preoccupation. This development is exemplified by the changing nature of his *Gypsy* images through the period, the first of which has been held to be amongst the earliest of his printed works.

Manet's prints have obscure beginnings. While they have been well recorded, in three catalogues raisonnés and in numerous exhibitions, there remain fundamental differences between commentators about their chronology, to say nothing of their *raison d'être*. Complications abound, making these differences perfectly understandable and rendering their resolution highly unlikely. An instance is the controversy over which of Manet's prints is his first. This is usually given to the lithographed *Caricature of Emile Ollivier* (Harris 1) on account of its known early date. It was published in Etienne Carjat's weekly newspaper *Diogène* on 14 April 1860; today it is often described as "his earliest graphic work".<sup>6</sup> The existence of this date does not itself guarantee chronological priority, nor does any other evidence surrounding this print do that. It is no more than a convenient start point, acknowledging that nothing in the known facts of Manet's life explains why else he would have taken up printmaking at this point.

Disregarding this difficulty, Théodore Duret in his 1902 biography proposed *Silentium* as Manet's first print.<sup>7</sup> This suggestion was picked up by Marcel Guérin,

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<sup>6</sup> Dolan, T., 2000c. Manet's *Portrait-Charge* of Emile Ollivier. *Print Quarterly*, 17, 17-26. P17.

<sup>7</sup> Duret, T., 1902. *Histoire d'Édouard Manet et de son œuvre*, Paris: H. Floury. P103.

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who compiled the second (and most respected) of the catalogues raisonnés devoted to his prints. He gave it third place after the caricature and a portrait of *Edgar Allan Poe* (Harris 2).<sup>8</sup> Michel Melot, one-time Keeper of Prints and Photography at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris (and the creator of exhibitions and books about the pre-Impressionist print-makers as well as the Impressionists) is the latest supporter of this chronology. In his 1994 book on *The Impressionist print* he again put forward the idea that “Manet’s earliest etching is a rough reproduction of a fresco by Fra Angelico, taken from a drawing brought back from Italy in 1857”.<sup>9</sup> He was ignoring (or ignorant of) the arguments put forward by both Juliet Wilson[-Bareau] and Jay Fisher who had already disagreed with Duret’s assessment.<sup>10</sup> They had interpreted the work’s so-called “roughness” of execution as a firm, assured manner. They also saw no reason to give the print an early date in order to closely link it with the presumed drawing undertaken in Florence in 1857. They pointed out that throughout his career Manet revised works from his own past, sometimes a distant past.

Evidence that Manet may nevertheless have taken up etching as early as 1860, perhaps through his friendship with Bracquemond and/or Legros, is provided by the first etching depicting the artist’s father (Harris 6). Inscribed on that print is the date 1860, accepted by some (e.g. in Wilson-Bareau’s 1978 Bères catalogue) as the date when the print was made. An alternative explanation is that it could be a retrospective reference to the date Manet created the related painting of his parents. If the print was made after the painting, as is supposed to have been Manet’s normal practice, it could push the date for the print’s execution back to 1861 or even nearer to 1862.<sup>11</sup> Then Manet’s use of the date of execution of the painting on the print would conform to his alternative use of a date in his Mannheim version of *The Execution of Maximilian*. He inscribed that, not with the date of his execution but rather with the date of Maximilian’s.

Irrespective of this doubt, because this work is evidence of Manet’s interest in printmaking as an independent activity, not merely providing an image to accompany

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<sup>8</sup> Guérin, M., 1969. *L’Oeuvre gravé de Manet : avec un supplement nouvellement ajouté* New York: Da Capo.

<sup>9</sup> Melot, M., 1996. *The impressionist print* New Haven and London: Yale University Press P53.

<sup>10</sup> Wilson, J., 1978. *Manet; dessins, aquarelles, eaux-fortes, lithographies, correspondance* Paris: Huguette Bères. Cat. No19.; Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. P56.

<sup>11</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *Op cit* “It is unlikely the print actually dates from 1860...” p33.

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text, it is reasonable to assume it comes after the caricature, which anyway was made very early in 1860. The notion that this *Portrait of the Artist's Father* is amongst the earliest of his etchings is underpinned by the work's appearance. Manet was having difficulties with the medium in this print, evident in its scribbled erasures. These are thought to be the reason why it was abandoned in favour of another effort. Analogous infelicities of construction and the crude delineation of figures mark the unnamed, unpublished and very rare version of *The Gypsies* (Harris 17). Dubbed, with hindsight, *The Little Gypsies* both on account of its size and its difference from the other more accomplished plate; it should be seen as one of Manet's three earliest prints, along with the first version of *Portrait of the Artist's Father* and, for similar reasons, the first version of *Boy with Sword* (Harris 24).<sup>12</sup> These prints' laboured appearance can logically be sheeted home to the artist's inexperience.

Fisher, in 1985, proposed that this *Gypsies* print "must stand near the beginning of Manet's printmaking career" *ibid* p31. If we accept the presumed *terminus a quo* of March 1860 provided by the caricature, this would mean that these beginnings coincide, more or less, with the painting of *The Spanish singer*, a sensation at the 1861 *Salon*. Such an approach to dating designates these works as trials, experiments with the expressive potential of the medium. They certainly do not demonstrate the self-assurance of Manet's later, more accomplished, images made for the publications of the *Société des Aquafortistes*.

This dating raises questions, however. I have proposed Manet created his first version of the print as one of his tentative experiments as a tyro printmaker. But that does not explain what provided the inspiration for this series of *Gypsy* images. Nor does it explain why there appears to have been such a gap between the first and the two other related versions of the same grouping of figures. These consist of a second much larger and more fluent etching which repeated the subject, while reversing the placement of the figures. This was made sometime before September 1862 and was published on the occasion of the first issue of the *Société des Aquafortistes*, along with etchings by Félix Bracquemond, Charles Daubigny, Alphonse Legros and Theodule Ribot. At some point in this sequence he also created the painting, *The Gypsies*; its dating can only be guessed at. The "evidence" for positioning it last in the

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<sup>12</sup>Alphonse Legros told Étienne Moreau-Nélaton (1859-1927) he helped Manet with the execution of the first version of *Boy with sword*. Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. P81.

sequence is that it was not exhibited until 1863 in Manet's display of fourteen of his works at the massive exhibition, involving at least fifty artists and over one hundred works, at the private gallery run by Louis Martinet.<sup>13</sup>

This painting had a short lifespan in its original form. It was dismembered after being exhibited in 1867. Traces of it have survived; only recently the principal figure reappeared on the art-market, along with another fragment showing the straw basket and garlic cloves. (These works were purchased by the Louvre for its new museum at Abu Dhabi.) [Figs. 12 and 13] This latter detail was originally situated at the feet of the seated woman with child. It occurs in the second print version (it is not present in *The Little Gypsies*), and is recorded in a parody representing the painted work in its original form made when it was shown in 1867. [Fig. 14] From the evidence of these fragments the painting, when it was entire, resembled the second print version more closely than the first.

Before and after the dismemberment, the fragment that shows the *Boy drinking* was re-presented in multiple formats. First it was incorporated in an illustration Manet made for a magazine *L'Autographe au Salon et dans les ateliers* (1865). [Fig. 15] After that it figures in two distinctly different reprises. The reworked detail from the painting was made into a separate work of art: *Boy with Pitcher* (1862/1872, Art Institute of Chicago). There his figure was lengthened at the expense of the woman with child motif. [Fig. 16] And in the 1870s the boy is transmuted into a monumental figure outlined against a barren desert scene in the print known as *The water drinker* (Harris 43). [Fig. 17] A coda shows the mountains behind the boy, visible in the print version, as one of the discarded illustrations for Charles Cros' (1842-1888) poem *La Fleuve* ([1874] Harris 79b). [Fig. 18]

*The Little Gypsies* establishes the basic compositional schema. Despite numerous changes in detail and a reversal of the entire configuration it remains constant through the three initial versions, prior to dismemberment. This consists of a male standing figure carrying a guitar strapped to his back who dominates the composition by his central placement. Behind him and to his side are a seated mother and child. A third half-figure is standing behind her.

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<sup>13</sup> On the part Louis Martinet's Gallery played in exhibiting modern art in the early 1860s, see Poggi, J., 2008. *Les galeries du boulevard des Italiens, antichambre de la modernité. 48/14 La Revue du musée d'Orsay*, 27, 22-33. He discusses the scale of the exhibition, for which there is no surviving catalogue, on p26 and note 21.

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In this first version the short rotund figure of the central musician is decidedly unheroic. He has a large-brimmed hat of a type commonly worn by subsidiary characters in *commedia dell arte* representations; both Nicolas Lancret (1690-1743) and Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) show figures sporting such hats in their paintings on that theme. His other characteristics include large flat feet and a gormless expression. Nothing about his clothing associates the figure with distinctive national characteristics.

Seen in terms of their iconographical references, Manet presents us with a slightly comical centrally posed musician, possibly drawn from the repertoire of *Commedia dell arte* figural representations. These representations were a vital part not just of Manet's visual vocabulary; George Sand's son Maurice had produced a two volume work in 1859 dealing, in detail, with all the traditional figures and including profuse illustrations.<sup>14</sup> Juxtaposed with this dominant figure is the configuration of three subordinated and linked individuals, seemingly drawn from a different iconographic tradition, although Manet goes to some lengths to disguise this fact. The most likely source for these images is to be found in Christian imagery in which Mary, the Christ child and Joseph are linked together. The drinking figure narrows considerably the iconographic options here. In fact the only situation where they can be found together is in depictions of the *Rest on the flight into Egypt*.<sup>15</sup> This iconographic tradition is flexible enough to accommodate all the figures Manet assembles here. Gypsies were traditionally considered to have come out of Egypt and there was even a legend associated with the story of the Flight that suggested they had been damned for failing to help the Holy Family. Even the presence of the musician is not unprecedented in this context. In the sixteenth century, in particular, musicians were often represented accompanying the Holy Family on their flight. This pictorial tradition is known to have persisted into the nineteenth century, although my source provides only German examples of this practice.<sup>16</sup> Manet appears then to

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<sup>14</sup> Sand, M., 1859. *Masques et bouffons (comédie italienne): texte et dessins* Paris: Michel Lévy.

<sup>15</sup> Isaacson suggests two possible sources, one of which - a panel painting by Melchior Broederlam (c1350-after 1409) covering the outward facing wings of a carved altarpiece representing the Crucifixion by Jacques de Baerze (1393-1399) in the museum at Dijon - has possibly the *ur*-image of a figure drinking *à la regelade*. [Fig. 19] However further research would be needed to establish Manet's knowledge of this work. Isaacson, J., 1969. *Manet and Spain* Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Museum of Art, University of Michigan. P30.

<sup>16</sup> Slim, H.C., 1983. Music in and out of Egypt: A Little-Studied Iconographical Tradition. *Musica disciplina*, 37, 289-326.

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have adopted an apocryphal Biblical context for three of the elements that commonly arose in the Gypsy-Bohemian discourses current in Paris. He signalled poverty, through the representation of the water-drinker, unconventional familial associations with the humble mother and child setting and a commitment to the arts, typified by the central figure's carrying a guitar.

What remain to be discussed is the possible autobiographical associations this print engenders. The dichotomy between the solitary musician and the family group may well have autobiographical connotations. The idea that the central figure looked upon the subsidiary group as a burdensome responsibility is well captured in Randon's 1867 caricature of the painting. His caption below the image begins with the name *Les Gitanos*, to which he adds a sub-title "(or) Paternal love." Then he suggests, with further text, that we put the following (translated) words in the mouth of the principal figure: "Who will free me of all this. I will give him the buzzing gnat and my blessing to boot."<sup>17</sup>

As I said earlier, what is puzzling about the chronological development of the *Gypsy* motif is the long hiatus between each of the three versions. Looking at the external evidence for their dating one might legitimately speculate, as does Manuela Mena Marqués in the latest exhibition catalogue devoted to Manet, that "the etching of *The Gypsies* may possibly have been produced before the painting depicting the same theme."<sup>18</sup> He supposes Manet was under pressure to provide a suitably spectacular image for the first *livraison* of the *Société* and chose to remake his earlier print, squaring up the version in the Bibliothèque nationale for that purpose. If Manet began print-making in 1861 the earlier print, if indeed it is positioned at the beginning of Manet's efforts in the medium, was probably made at least a year before the second version.<sup>19</sup> I propose that internal visual evidence supports this contention.

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<sup>17</sup> "Qui est-ce qui veut me débarrasser de ça? Je lui donne le moucheron et ma benediction par-dessus le marché."

<sup>18</sup> Mena Marqués, M.B. (ed.) 2004. *Manet en el Prado*, Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado. P448.

Hanson made the same observation in her 1970 article discussing the cutting of the *Gypsies* canvas: Hanson, A.C., 1970. Edouard Manet, "Les Gitanos", and the cut canvas. *Burlington magazine*, 112, 158-66. P162.

The matter of the reversal may be accounted for. Manet could have used the original etching as his model for both the painting and the new print, resulting in a reversed image in the print and an image in the same orientation as the original *The little Gypsies* in the painting.

<sup>19</sup> These difficult matters of chronology have been given alternative explanations in some exhibition catalogues. Wilson-Bareau in her 1977 *Ingelheim am Rhein* catalogue gives the first version a date of 1862 so that its



This later version of the work was made after the success of *The Spanish singer* at the 1861 *Salon*. That work's Spanish connotations were enthusiastically lauded by Gautier in his review of the 1861 *Salon*. I argued in my previous chapter Manet undertook to explore *espagnolisme* with single-minded dedication in 1862. But, before the *Salon*, neither Spanish art nor Spanish subject-matter was Manet's all-consuming passion. Netherlandish precedents, for example, had featured in a number of his pre-1862 works. I have suggested there is nothing about the first of Manet's *Gypsy* prints that can unequivocally be said to denote *espagnolisme*. The second larger version has emphatically introduced Spanish Gypsy references. The principal figure's apparel and the newly introduced basket with spilt garlic cloves all signify *espagnolisme*. But the changes were not confined to outward adornments. All the figures personal features are transformed as well. Said by Fisher to have been modelled from life in the first version, the second shows the guitarist as a stock figure identifiable with current fashions for representing Spanish Gypsies, exuding "a casual elegance and a cool, street-wise pride" according to Marilyn Brown.<sup>20</sup>

The *Salon* success of *The Spanish singer* did not just trigger these changes; it also provided the means to do so. It gave Manet access to what he would have identified as an "authentic-looking" Spanish Gypsy. This is contained in a work by an artist whose qualifications to represent the type authentically were, by reason of his origins, incontestable. Achille Zo (1826-1901), an artist from the Basque country, garnered an *Honourable Mention* in that fateful *Salon* showing for his painting *Gypsy family on the move*. [Fig. 20] It depicts a large family grouping on a road in the Spanish countryside en route to their next stop. They are being led by a centrally placed young adult male strumming on a mandolin. But it is the subsidiary figure, standing to the left side of the main group who seems to have been the subject of attention by both artists more or less within the same year.

Zo and Manet could have been acquainted although no reference I have been able to discover in Manet literature refers to it as such. Circumstantial details alone raise the possibility these two men may have known each other. They were both

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appearance can coincide with the later etched version (cat no 16), although she back-dates this in the Bères catalogue. The 1990 edition of Harris's catalogue *Edouard Manet: The Graphic Work* imitates that earlier presumption, although bets are hedged; the date is given as "1861 or early 1862" (p83, cat no 17).

<sup>20</sup> Brown, M.R., 1985. *Gypsies and other Bohemians: the myth of the artist in nineteenth-century France* Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press P79.

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pupils of Couture's, albeit at different times and for different durations. Zo is from Bayonne and went back there in 1871. Bayonne is not far from where Manet sent his wife and son during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. He stayed with them at Oloron-Sainte-Marie, in February 1871 and would have passed through Bayonne on his way to Arcachon where he recuperated with his family. Manet is said to have been offered accommodation for his family in Oloron-Sainte-Marie by a M. Lailhacar, according to information from the Fondation, E. G. Bührle Collection. The Collection owns a painting *Oloron-Sainte-Marie* (1871, Zurich), a view from the house they were staying in, made by Manet after meeting up with them again in 1871. I have no evidence of a connection between these two and the artist Zo which would explain why and how Manet arranged this distant refuge for his family.

They also shared, in the early 1860s, an interest in the representation of elderly devout women in church. This strange genre was fashionable at the time. It also attracted the attention of Alphonse Legros in his famous *Ex Voto* (1860, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Dijon) and in prints such as *Communion in the church of St Medard*. Manet's friend, Alfred Stevens (1823-1906), was another working in this genre, making in 1861 his painting of a woman lighting candles in a church *In Memoriam* (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston). And a watercolour by Achille Zo *Marguerite listening to the Dies Irae* (Walters Museum of Art, Baltimore, acquired 1864) has great affinity with Manet's print *The Candle Seller* (Harris 8). But these are slim pickings. All we know for sure is that Zo is a Basque national who lived in Paris until 1871. He specialized in paintings which reflect his knowledge of that cultural milieu, many of them are today described as "Orientalist".

The model for the central figure in Manet's *The Gypsies* is closer to the figure in Zo's painting than to any other accepted source for Manet's figure. [Fig. 21] Philippe Auguste Jeanron's (1809-1877) *Limousine* from *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* is usually favoured, merely because of its more distant resemblance. But Manet's use of the figure from Zo's painting is a more logical choice given his interest in Spanish subject-matter. Unless we are to make a very much earlier date for Manet's presumed second version of *The Gypsies* Zo's figure must pre-date Manet's. Quite clearly there are important differences between the two images as well, especially in matters of style. They are not, however, significant enough to dismiss the connection. Moreover it would be absurd to suggest that Manet was incapable of

adapting stylistic traits in the works he adopted. Considering the range of artists from whom he sourced images, from Marcantonio Raimondi to Rubens to Velázquez he clearly had no difficulty on that score.

Stephen Bann has demonstrated Manet's affinities with another more famous Orientalist, Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904).<sup>21</sup> This work is further evidence of Manet's preparedness to make forays into this discredited genre. It raises the presumption that when Manet was making this version of the gypsy musician he had no particular model for the principal figure and instead chose to work with an already painted image by another artist. More importantly, perhaps, it also demonstrates his commitment to a representative *espagnolisme* endorsed by the work of an artist with claims to next to native ethnicity. Using thus the work of a contemporary artist is not unprecedented in Manet's oeuvre, although this may be the most extreme instance of it at this time in his career. But more or less at the same time as he was creating his *Gypsies* images he was also painting another work on a related theme *The Old Musician* (1862, National Gallery of Art, Washington). This painting is centred on a representation of a known figure, the Gypsy model Leon Lagrène, posed after the classical sculpture *Chrysippus* which Manet had copied in the Louvre. It has long been held that the figure of the girl holding a baby, on the left side of the canvas, was taken from an 1861 entry to the *Salon* Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger's Gypsy painting *The Kidnapped Child*. This points to a presumption that the 1861 *Salon* was central to Manet's subsequent 1862 works. Collaterally it points to his willingness to use contemporary models in his search for images that would signify the Gypsy in the eyes of his contemporary audience.<sup>22</sup>

There is a broader significance to this willingness to incorporate quotations from Manet's contemporaries in his art, whether in his paintings or in his prints. It demonstrates the importance to Manet of imitation, to the point where he was prepared to take the risk that his allusions to other artists, both past and present, could be recognised. He adopted a strategy of repetition to generate subject-matter

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<sup>21</sup> Bann, S., 1997. *Paul Delaroche. History Painted* London: Reaktion Books P196.

<sup>22</sup> On further occasions in Manet's career he is thought to have used as model the art of his contemporaries. Apart from the controversial suggestion that the young girl in *The old musician* is derived from a painting by Schlesinger (see Fried 181 but Brown, 1985, 203n16 and House, 1985, 104 *contra*); Juliet Wilson-Bareau and Malcolm Park have claimed that Manet's painting *The ball at the Opéra* "is a rigorously structured paraphrase of a canvas by Eugène Giraud [another Orientalist] that was exhibited at the 1867 *Salon*": Wilson-Bareau, J. & Park, M., 2008. *Division and revision: Manet's Reichshoffen revealed* London: Paul Holberton, p60 n29.

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at this time, relying on seemingly improvised handiwork to signal his distinctiveness. At the heart of this process is a contradictory play: Referential subject-matter is created “spontaneously” in a medium that itself was bound up with a contrast between its essentially repetitious nature, spanning centuries, and a unique time-bound performative style. Manet’s use of repetition in new contexts reveals the capacity to embody new meanings or, rather, to reveal meanings that lay embedded in the original. In the prints I have examined in my previous chapters which repeated without significant variation in subject-matter a single work, this insistence on the determining power of a new context was mediated only by the discourse his improvisatory style set up within the image itself. These other works, such as the *Gypsies* suite, are more complex renditions of the same insight. They acknowledge that within an overarching repetition strategy Manet could set up further subsidiary repetitions: repetitions could take the form of repeating not just one but two earlier works. In playing those off against one another he could generate original insights out of their juxtaposition.

Another manifestation of that repetitive strategy had been the repetition in the print medium of an earlier painting, giving him the opportunity to render the image according to the new principals concerning improvisatory handiwork evolved in association with the revival of etching. This generated new meanings, implicit in the original. Now, with the *Gypsies* suite, if the presumption that one at least of his prints preceded the painting is correct, then Manet repeated a print in the medium of painting, presumably intending to explore the potential of this transfer to generate the same sense of newness and original insight. Unfortunately that work no longer exists in its original form. Nothing can be concluded from the remaining fragments about his capacity to transfer into painting the improvisatory style he established with his prints. But a contemporaneous painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* (1862, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) does just that. This work traces a similar trajectory, deriving a major part of its painted presence from a print model, which Manet reinvents as a painting, before taking this hybrid image and recasting it as a print. I will examine that work in my next chapter.

It seems reasonable to conclude from this discussion that the figure at the centre of the *Gypsies* collection of images, repeated from a painting by Achille Zo, was no-one known to Manet personally. With caution, this can be generalized to a

judgement that Manet appears to have had no personal knowledge of or interaction with musicians who could be construed as Gypsy at this point in his life. That he was nonetheless committed to a notion of their creative musical flair, a flair that he wanted to both portray and index, is suggested by the central position given to the guitar in all the images making up this suite.<sup>23</sup> But the origins of this interest are likely to be as readily found in literary or other cultural sources, as in his personal experience of Gypsy musicians.

The concluding portion of this chapter proposes an answer to the mystery I referred to earlier: Why Manet chose to make a work depicting a Gypsy guitarist as one of his first etchings? I have already mapped out an implicit answer to this question by describing what I think the image is not. His interest in portraying a Gypsy musician in a family scene was not simply a currently fashionable adaptation of the discourse about Bohemians, brought back into the limelight by the death of Henry Murger. Restricting the interpretation of the motif so that it “partakes of the prevailing interest in picturesque genre” completely overlooks the presence of the guitar in all three versions.<sup>24</sup> Despite Isaacson’s incisive recognition of the disguised Christian iconography he disregards the guitar altogether, emphasising rather the work’s “Spanish quality” (*ibid* p30). In the context of the portfolio, not to mention in the context of Manet’s other works in all media from this period, this is ahistorical. The instrument features in too many of his works to be simply ignored. Rather it is necessary to unpick its significance.

To achieve this I need to pursue further ideas about what the image is not about. I have argued that the first version of *The Gypsies* conflates quotations from two sources. One was a representation of the perennial motif, the *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*. The other, also not securely aligned with any particular model, appears in the first version to draw upon Manet’s knowledge of *Commedia dell arte* figures in French painting.

This recounting of sources does not encompass the work’s entire terrain. It too fails to fully account for the guitar. Images with guitars would not be difficult to find in

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<sup>23</sup> The situation was different by the middle of the decade. It is well documented that Manet knew and was friendly with the Catalan composer and guitar player Jaime Bosch (1826-1895). He made for Bosch in 1866 the lithograph of the guitarist playing his instrument, used as the cover for one of his compositions (Harris 29).

<sup>24</sup> Isaacson, J., 1969. *Manet and Spain* Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Museum of Art, University of Michigan. P29.

the oeuvre of Watteau. For example his stunning *La partie quarrée* (c1714, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco) or even more appositely *Love in the Italian theatre* (n.d. Gemäldegalerie, Berlin) both give the instrument a central place in the composition. Moreover in the latter the guitarist sports a hat very similar to that on the head of Manet's figure. But in Manet's print the guitar plays a pivotal role. Occupying the empty space opposite the family grouping and clearly intended to act as a foil to them; it is the freely disposed counter-weight to their cramped presence.

So the image is not just about the contrast between hearth and home and an artist's métier although, as Randon so acutely observed, it is at least partially about that. But, more specifically, it is about the presence of music in this image, a presence that can be felt in the vast majority of the images made for this portfolio. In the *Gypsies* series the guitar's importance as representative of that musical presence is insisted upon in this first image. In the second print (and possibly in the painting) its protuberant presence is toned down somewhat in the interests of a more balanced composition. But music has not been expunged from the image, at most it has only been more finely balanced with the other elements.

Thus this collection of images, not then about the work/life balance alone, have a deeper significance. That significance has nothing to do with the evident *espagnolisme* of the later versions. Clearly Manet grasped the opportunity afforded by his remaking the image to load it with Spanish signifiers. He would undoubtedly have been aware of the common associations of the guitar with Spanish Gypsies, especially by late 1862 when, as he illustrates in his painting *Spanish Ballet*, guitarists were an essential element of that troupe of Spanish dancers.<sup>25</sup> Before that date numerous Orientalizing painters such as Charles Porion (1814-1868) and Antoine Dumas (1820-1859) had made works for the *Salons* of the 1850s which showed guitars being played by Spanish Gypsy subjects.<sup>26</sup> Unquestionably Spanish Gypsies were closely aligned in the nineteenth-century European imagination with guitars and with music generally. Copious instances of the instrument being played occur in illustrations Gustave Doré (1832-1883) made for Baron Jean-Charles

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<sup>25</sup> They performed at the Odéon "opening there on April 27 and then at the Hippodrome from August 12 to August 17." Tinterow, G. & Loyrette, H., 1994. *Origins of Impressionism* New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art p395.

<sup>26</sup> Their works are represented in Pakesch, P. & Formanek, V., 2005. *Blicke auf Carmen* Koln: Landesmuseum Joanneum. Pp 209 (Porion) and 232 (Dumas).

Davillier's (1823-1883) *Espagne*. Published in 1874 it was a record of a journey made by the two men throughout Spain in the 1860s; some images had been published in magazine articles during the 1860s.<sup>27</sup> It might thus seem logical to assume a Spanish context for the first *Gypsies* print simply on the strength of the presence of the guitar. But I have argued that the original *Gypsy* etching does not demonstrate any interest in accumulating those marks of *espagnolisme* that profusely adorn the later works. It is therefore not reasonable to assume that the instrument occurring in this early work is there merely to provide staffage appropriate to a Spanish context.

While the first version of this series was probably made around the same time as the painting *The Spanish Singer* it was not the *espagnolisme* that Manet was so concerned with emphasizing in either image (Gautier's self-regarding review to the contrary). It was rather the fact of the musicianship, the presence of music in the lives of these *Bohemian* characters. When Manet was compiling a frontispiece for a later publication on which he inscribed a list of the prints it would include, he chose not to designate the printed version of his *Spanish Singer* by its *Salon* title, but rather called it *The Guitarist (Le Guitarero)*. By then he was drawing attention to its musical rather than to its Spanish connotations.

Music had a personal significance for the artist – a significance that transcended the ethnic persiflage with which he surrounded his images in 1862. This was not just a reflection of his covert connections with a skilled pianist in his home life, although that too may be an element in this work. What I prefer to emphasize here is his wider artistic ambition to incorporate references to music within his oeuvre. This is usually (strangely) overlooked in discussions of this suite of images. Despite that its centrality to Manet's artistic output in 1862 cannot be gainsaid.

For the present (since the rest of this thesis will be returning to this topic) I want to address the question of how music came to play such a significant role in this work – in this suite of works – in particular. I want to explain why, in the period before the triumph Manet experienced with the *Spanish Singer* at the 1861 *Salon* he was making an image of a Gypsy musician, as one of his first etchings. Recalling the

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<sup>27</sup> "Musiciens ambulants [by Doré] first appeared in Baron Charles Davillier, "Voyage en Espagne" *Le Tour du monde* 8 (1863): 356. The series, which appeared between 1862 to 1873, was published as *L'Espagne* in 1874 and as *Spain*, an English translation, in 1876." Boone, M.E., 2007. *Vistas de España. American views of art and life in Spain, 1860-1914* New Haven and London: Yale University Press. P232, n52.

experimental context from which it emerged, that of an artist trying his hand at a new medium, we might profitably consider what would have led him to believe that a subject-matter focussed on unconventional music-making by society's outcasts would have been an appropriate setting-off point.

Manet chose to begin his imaginative images in the medium of etching (those not directly related to his family) by concentrating on Gypsies and their musical prowess. There was no shortage of models for such a combination, George Sand for instance had written her famous novel *Consuelo, The Gypsy Singer* (1842) on that topic. Théophile Gautier showed an equal fascination with their unconventional lifestyle. In his 1852 travelogue *Constantinople* he described his own ambition to join with Gypsies in their life of vagabondage and he took up the theme again when he wrote about the ethnographic painter Théodore Valério in his review of the 1859 *Salon*.<sup>28</sup> And Charles Baudelaire was equally smitten with the ways of the Gypsies. He wrote a famous poem on the subject *Bohémien en voyage*, which Manet undoubtedly knew. His unpublished jottings include the urge to “glorify vagabondage and what one can call bohemianism”<sup>29</sup>. But all of these figures fail to provide models that could have directly influenced Manet's production of his Gypsy images. Instead we need to turn for that to the figure whose writing about Gypsy music unites them all. As Baudelaire acknowledges in a continuation of the remark I have quoted: “Cult of the sensation multiplied and expressed in music. Refer to Liszt.”

He wasn't the only figure in Manet's life that could have provided a reference to Franz Liszt. It is alleged Manet's wife-to-be came to Paris from her homeland in Holland through becoming acquainted with Liszt.<sup>30</sup> But apart from that unconfirmed account there were many opportunities for Manet to have known about and had

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<sup>28</sup> Gautier, T. 1853 *Constantinople* Paris: Michel Lévy Frères. P338 ; *Exposition de 1859*, ed. W. Drost and U. Henniges, Heidelberg [1992]. P38.

<sup>29</sup> « Glorifier le vagabondage et ce qu'on peut appeler le bohémianisme. Culte de la sensation multipliée et s'exprimant par la musique. En référer à Liszt. » (Pichois II, 701)

<sup>30</sup> Anrooy, A.V., 1950. *Impromptu - Une page d'amour d'Edouard Manet* Switzerland (?): Editions du Mont Blanc, recounts the story of Susanne Leenhoff being encouraged to go to Paris by Franz Liszt after he heard her playing during a visit to the village where she was brought up. It has currency on websites connected to the village and to local historical information but has received no independent confirmation:

<https://www.zaltbommel.nl/http://www.streekarchiefbommelerwaard.nl/>

Manet also knew Blandine Liszt, the daughter of the composer and Marie d'Agoult, through his friendship with Blandine's husband. See Dolan, T., 2000. Manet's *Portrait-Charge* of Emile Ollivier. *Print Quarterly*, 17, 17-26 and my discussion in Chapter 7.



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access to Liszt through his writing. Liszt had recently published in Paris a sensational book *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859). The book was owned by Baudelaire who had received his copy from the author in exchange for his article *Richard Wagner et Tannhäuser en Paris*.<sup>31</sup> It argued for Gypsy music's role in the rejuvenation of western traditions. It continues to exercise musical scholars as well as historians recounting the history of western responses to the incursion of the *Romani* people into Europe.<sup>32</sup>

Part of Liszt's practice consisted of manipulating music so that it appeared to float free of prescribed formulations. He recast grand aesthetic constructions into humble one-man re-interpretations and published works where the boundaries between original compositions and arrangements are "well and truly blurred"?<sup>33</sup> He aligned his procedures with the Gypsies' appropriation and reconstitution of musical material from the past using virtuosic, improvisatory skills to "perform on the musical materials a transformatory function that borders on the metaphysical."<sup>34</sup> Like them Liszt was committed to the hybridisation of western art music and folk or gypsy music, just as he was involved in recreating artworks from other media, especially paintings, in his compositions.<sup>35</sup> Finally he was one of the few early nineteenth century figures to have spoken about music in terms of visual experiences. Today he

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<sup>31</sup> In a recent article Barbara Bohac examines the evidence for the poet having read Liszt's book in Baudelaire's later poems from *Le Spleen de Paris*, namely *Les Vocations* and *Le Thyrses* (1865). It is possible that Manet came to know the book through his friendship with the poet, if not through his family's connections. Bohac, B. 2011, "Baudelaire et Liszt: le génie de la rhapsodie" *Romantisme* 151(1), 87-100.

<sup>32</sup> Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval. My appreciation of this book is greatly enhanced by Nicholas Saul's commentary in Saul, N., 2007. *Gypsies and Orientalism in German Literature and Anthropology of the Long Nineteenth Century* London: Legenda. My discussion of Liszt's understanding of Hegel's theories about the epic as a culture's highest self-expression is drawn from his analysis, where page references are cued to the German edition of Liszt's work. The substantial contribution made by Liszt's ideas to a re-assessment of Gypsy music has also recently been recognised in a number of other modern commentaries which have undertaken a wholesale reassessment of the substance of this much maligned book. See in particular Malvinni, D., 2004. *The Gypsy Caravan: From Real Roma to Imaginary Gypsies in Western Music* London: Routledge. Moussa, S. (ed.), 2008. *Le mythe des Bohémiens dans la littérature et les arts en Europe*, Paris Harmattan.

<sup>33</sup> Hamilton, K. 2005. "Liszt's Early and Weimar Period Works," in Hamilton, K. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Liszt*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P84.

<sup>34</sup> Brown, J. 2007 *Bartok and the grotesque: studies in modernity, the body and contradiction in music* Aldershot, Ashgate. P44.

<sup>35</sup> See the discussion in Vergo, P. 2010 *Music, Modernism and the Visual Arts from the Romantics to John Cage* London, Phaidon. Pp 89-95.

is widely regarded as having been synaesthetic.<sup>36</sup> All these are characteristics which recur, in a different context, in Manet's works at this time. The balance of this thesis will make the presumption that, while the evidence is not conclusive, it is highly likely that Manet knew about, was interested in and used aspects of Liszt's production as models for his own works.

Franz Liszt was an international music celebrity. In 1850-1860s he was at the height of his fame. His oeuvre consisted of works which ranged from orchestral pieces of stupefying monumentality to humble transcriptions based on masterpieces from the flourishing school of Romantic music; Beethoven's Symphonies converted to piano solos was a particular *tour-de-force*.<sup>37</sup> And he wrote about his transcription practice in terms which, had Manet read them, he would have instantly recognised. They capture his own practice of creating etched transcriptions of works by artists such as Fra Angelico and even more appropriately the Spanish master from the Golden Age: "The piano score is to an orchestral composition what an engraving is to a painting: it multiplies it, it makes it available to everyone, and if it fails to transmit its colours, it still renders its lights and its shadows."<sup>38</sup> Here, at last, (if anywhere) is the source for Manet's commitment to representing Gypsies. They were described by Liszt as embodying a quality of naïve improvised music-making that was nevertheless capable of revealing the soul of Gypsy culture:

"In gratifying his own sensual pleasure, in intoxicating himself with a physical voluptuousness, he found without the slightest exertion of any intellectual effort, the language that he alone could employ. While he was stroking his bow to and fro across the violin's strings, inspiration showed him

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<sup>36</sup> The story of Liszt exhorting his orchestra to play "a little bluer, if you please! That tone type requires it ..." is repeated in the literature on synaesthesia, *ad nauseum*. It was first described in an anonymous article published in 1895, nine years after his death in *Neuen Berliner Musikzeitung* (August 29, 1895). My reference to this passage, translated, comes from Cytowic, R. and Eagleman, D. 2009 *Wednesday is indigo blue: Discovering the brain of synaesthesia* Cambridge MA, MIT Press. P263, n8.

<sup>37</sup> "The Weimar years, from 1848 through 1861, were those in which Liszt set down his greatest compositions: the final versions of the first two *Années de pèlerinage*; the final versions of the *Études d'exécution transcendante* and the *Grandes études de Paganini*; the Piano Concerto no. 1 and no. 2; the Piano Sonata in B Minor; the *Mephisto Waltz* no. 1 and the *Totentanz*; the first twelve *Symphonic Poems*; the *Dante* Symphony and the *Faust* Symphony; and much more." Metzner, Paul. c1998 *Crescendo of the Virtuoso: Spectacle, Skill, and Self-Promotion in Paris during the Age of Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press. The full set of transcriptions was finally published in 1865 and dedicated to Hans von Bülow.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Reynaud, C., 2003. Berlioz, Liszt and the question of virtuosity. In P. Bloom (ed.) *Berlioz: past, present, future : bicentenary essays*. Rochester, New York: University of Rochester Press, 105-122 at p115.

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rhythms, cadences, modulations, songs, speechifying, narratives! – He surrendered then to this secret art, he cast in this bewitching mould a glorified charm that was to distance him from our preoccupations. It kept him insulated from all our temptations, governing him exclusively and despotically. He radiated with a golden aura from some inner glow specific to him; making him play and shine in the exhilarating performance of a wild and bizarre harmony, full of dissonances, but still sonorous and vibrant, created using a mixture of juxtaposed colours and strident modulations, of sudden changes and unexpected metamorphoses, similar to the hallucinatory apperceptions produced by hashish.”<sup>39</sup>

Liszt’s focus on performance as a measure of artistic worth is another species of then current preoccupations with the improvised and expressive “handwriting” lauded by critics as characteristic of the etching revival. This is not surprising since Liszt shares with Baudelaire (and many of his contemporaries) a vision of the arts as a totality in which any one medium can be transmuted or infiltrated by another and in all of which the executants’ improvisatory approach had come to new prominence. Baudelaire, in the *Salon of 1859*, had written of “the shared concurrence in all the arts and the congruity of their methods!”<sup>40</sup> In this extract Liszt talks not just of the violin’s capacity to mimic speech and narrative; he also calls upon visual qualities *couleurs* and *contours* for his analysis of music. Both usages suggest he shared Baudelaire’s faith in the creator’s ability to extract an expressive vocabulary from associated media.

Gypsies were the ostensive subject of these prints by Manet. He was attracted to them, at least in part, because their artistic practices, as described by Liszt,

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<sup>39</sup> «En satisfaisant à un plaisir sensuel, en s'enivrant d'une volupté matérielle, il trouvait sans le pénible effort d'un travail intellectuel quelconque le langage qu'il pouvait seul employer. Tandis qu'il promenait l'archet sur les cordes d'un violon, l'inspiration lui enseignait des rythmes, des cadences, des modulations, des chants, des parlers, des discours! -Il confia alors à cet art discret, il jeta dans ce moule énigmatique la glorification du charme qui le tient éloigné de nos préoccupations, qui le rend inaccessible à toutes nos tentations, qui le gouverne uniquement et despotiquement. Il y révéla le rayon doré de quelque lumière intérieure à lui propre; il le fit jouer et miroiter dans la fascination d'une harmonie sauvage, fantasque, pleine de dissonances, mais sonore et vibrante, qu'il créa par un mélange de couleurs tranchées et de contours heurtés, de subits changements et de métamorphoses imprévues, semblables aux aperceptions hallucinées que produit le hadchis [sic]» Liszt *op cit* p19.

<sup>40</sup> Baudelaire (1859) “...les parties concordantes de tous les arts et les ressemblances dans leurs methods” Pichois II 627.

embodied the same approach which inspired Manet to take up printmaking at that time and which underlay his usage of overt quotation in his paintings. The first version of *The Gypsies* exemplifies this spontaneity and inspired naivety that Liszt praised. Manet sought to index with his etching style the “inner glow” that, according to Liszt, these artists displayed and transmitted in their live performances of music. Their musical prowess, symbolised by the guitar held by the principal figure, was manifested in an ecstatic performance of inherited skilfulness. Manet’s work likewise intertwines his virtuosic execution with allusions to the “traditional vocabulary of his art.”

The much larger picture that Liszt created, describing the significance of Gypsy music, coincides with the thesis Michael Fried developed, first in his 1969 *Artforum* article and then later in his book *Manet’s modernism* (1996).<sup>41</sup> Fried argued that Manet’s use of sources from the history of art had an underlying programme. This is how he describes it: “It was, one might say, in order to secure the Frenchness on which his own conviction as a (French) painter depended that Manet found it necessary to concern himself both with what seemed to him the authentically French painting of the past and with the natural genius of that painting...Manet’s involvement with the art of the past [was] in terms of a conscious programme to establish a particular kind of relation, which I have described as one of access, to the painting of the major foreign schools...I think of this aspect of Manet’s art as a deliberate attempt to establish the universality of *his own painting*” (1996, pp120, 126).

If this was indeed Manet’s ambition, it demonstrates that the artist’s procedures were closely aligned with those Liszt described constituting his interpretation of Gypsy music.<sup>42</sup> Liszt had been inspired by Hegel’s idea that national identity emerged from art practices that represented the artist’s grasp of the relation between idea and the world. Hegel claimed that the epic provided the best means for a culture to assemble disparate events or series of events into an aesthetic whole; this would reflect the national culture from which it emerges and which it paints.

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<sup>41</sup> Fried, M., 1969. Manet’s Sources: Aspects of His Art, 1859-1865 *Artforum*, 7, 28-82. Fried, M., 1996. *Manet’s modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

<sup>42</sup> The discussion of these issues comes at the beginning of Liszt’s book, pp13-24, where he quotes extensively from the French translation of Hegel’s *Lectures on Aesthetics* (1821). Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval. Liszt describes their musical epos, as “the book of a people, the profound source providing the means to awaken its consciousness” “le livre d’un peuple lorsqu’il forme la source profonde où il puisa la conscience de lui-même” p22.

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Every characteristic aspect of that culture would find itself reflected in such a work. Thus the Bible served to express the Hebrew nation's spiritual world view, just as Homer's epics did the same for the Greeks. In Hegel's view every great civilisation had its own epic which revealed the "the mental foundation of a people's consciousness." Liszt, quoting Hegel, argued that every nation possesses in its pre-modern phase its own folk epic. These arise, he said, in the shape of poetic fragments and songs which express with a startling immediacy some aspect, but not all, of the national spirit. They accumulate slowly but surely over time, until at a certain point they either form a large coherent body of their own accord or fall into the hands of a poet who then transforms the incoherent fragments into a transparent aesthetic whole.

For the Gypsy nation Liszt envisages a slightly different route to the creation of this national epic. Without material providing the precursor conditions for a literary epic, they have instead a non-verbal resource in the form of their instrumental music. This is their raw material and its content is the essence of the Gypsy national character. Liszt then puts himself forward as the man who is capable of collecting and fusing these musical fragments into the dazzling musical totality which is the *Hungarian Rhapsodies*. Concerned that in the face of encroaching modernity Gypsy culture is dying out Liszt makes the claim that by his intimate knowledge of their music he will create the work which amounts to a compendious synthesis of all that has gone before. He will recuperate the authentic Gypsy voice in that other, freer, non-verbal medium, music. And his version of Gypsy music will provide the Gypsies with an individual face in the Hegelian cultural gallery of mankind.

It is impossible to say whether Manet's extensive use of source material, in his early 1860s works, was inspired by this idea. But if, as I have suggested, he was aware of Liszt's argument, then his interest in the productive melding of music, art history and a range of media in which he embedded his images would tend to suggest that he saw himself, as Fried argues, attempting the grand summation of art's extensive historical back catalogue. But it is necessary to append one caveat to this scenario. Fried's commitment to the "purity" of modernism and to the practice of reducing painting to its bare essentials cannot be applied to Manet's practice. He was committed not just to creating works which provided access to "the authentically French painting of the past" he was also committed to opening his practice out so

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that it could accommodate experiences originating in other media and in non-visual sensuous phenomena.

This involved making his artwork capacious enough to accommodate experiences from the world of music, for example. In the case of his representation of the world of Gypsy music in his suite of works I have been discussing in this chapter, the fact that the playing of the instrument is not included in his visualization and that the presence of music is not overtly manifested brings this work closer to the painting *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* where again nothing specifically musical is on show. But sound is impliedly present in both these images. Here it is reflected in the way of life of the Gypsy subject and is embodied in the presence of the instrument and in the image of the boy drinking and the baby crying (possibly even more strongly expressed in the painted image, if Randon's parody is as accurate as it seems). Liszt, likewise, finds music in the way of life of the Gypsy, even in their everyday activities. He describes the multiple sensations accorded by the experience of the Gypsy troupe setting out on their travels, as being crowned by "a scale whose gigantic octave envelopes all our acoustic perceptions" and in his writing provides numerous alliterations as a verbal equivalent for it.<sup>43</sup> Manet's visual equivalent for Gypsies and their music in these images also emerges from the details of their everyday life, as if their musicianship was as intrinsic to their existence as food and water.

I have described how Liszt's book *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859) brought to the attention of its readers the significance of music created by Gypsy musicians. I have referred to his argument, borrowed from Hegel, that it was the most concentrated and important manifestation of the culture's underlying values. Music was the living embodiment of the Gypsy's distinctive spirituality.<sup>44</sup> Its repertoire comprising those fragments, if combined, would constitute a totalizing mirror of the culture, a signature cultural production which would sum up the essence of Gypsy national consciousness. Gypsy music recuperates Gypsy

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<sup>43</sup> « une gamme dont la gigantesque octave embrassait toutes nos perceptions acoustiques. » Liszt, *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie*. P117.

<sup>44</sup> Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval, p 144 : " They didn't back away from any brazenness in music since it corresponded to their instinct for daring, seeing in it the faithful portrayal of their being." « Ils ne reculent devant aucune hardiesse en musique dès qu'elle correspond à leurs hardis instincts, dès qu'ils y voient la peinture fidèle de leur être. »

culture which makes a unique contribution to the world's cultural production.<sup>45</sup> The fractured, abject Gypsy identity is recalled into dignified membership of the human family. Liszt posited a role for himself in this creation of a musical national epic. His *Hungarian Rhapsodies* would fuse the fragmented Gypsy music into a single organic epic text. His creation would thereby resemble other national epics such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the Bible and various Arabic, Nordic and Iberian examples. While all these other examples are drawn from literature, Liszt saw that the Gypsy's illiterate, uncultivated spontaneity would contribute a previously uncharted original voice to the realm of World Music.<sup>46</sup> Sarga Moussa describes Liszt's appreciation and adoption of Gypsy music as "an attempt to transform music ("fine" music) into popular forms thus making possible a profound renewal. Under the pretext of describing a kind of genre, Liszt suggests what could be his own 'music of the future' which integrating a multitude of audible phenomena, considered up till then as simple 'noises', would simultaneously broaden our sensorial capacities."<sup>47</sup>

Fried, in his analysis of Manet's quotational practices had described Manet constructing himself as another such master-compiler, one who saw his mission as establishing the universality of his own painting. By drawing from an international repertoire and fusing images drawn from different sources into artworks that transcended their particular origins, he too would be creating an epic compendium of painting. One that, Fried implies, laid the basis for modernism's subsequent concern with establishing the ground-rules and procedures distinctive to the medium.

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<sup>45</sup> A musical epic can thus be the *Bible*, the *book* of a people, when it fashions the *profound source by which people give voice to their consciousness ... they had to sing to say.*" « Une épopée musicale peut donc être la *Bible*, le *livre* d'un peuple lorsqu'il forme la *source profonde où il puisa la conscience de lui-même ... ils ont dû chanter pour dire.* » *ibid* pp22-3.

<sup>46</sup> "On the whole our musicians, professional and civilised men, do not understand anything about suddenly immersing yourself in a fluid which at once both burns and freezes us; of passing without preparation from one totality to that which is furthest removed from it." « Pour la plupart, nos musiciens, gens de métier et gens civilisés, commencent par ne rien comprendre à cette manière de s'immerger soudainement dans un fluide qui, instantanément, nous glace ou nous brûle ; de passer sans préparation aucune d'une totalité à celle qui en est la plus éloignée. » *ibid* p145.

<sup>47</sup> Moussa, S. (ed.) (2008) *Le mythe des Bohémiens dans la littérature et les arts en Europe*, Paris Harmattan P231 « une tentative d'ouvrir la musique (la 'belle' musique) à des formes populaires dont la prise en compte permettrait un profond renouvellement. Sous prétexte de décrire une scène de genre, Liszt suggère ce que pourrait être sa propre 'musique de l'avenir', laquelle, intégrant une multitude de phénomènes sonores considérés jusque-là comme de simples 'bruits', élargirait du même coup nos propres capacités sensorielles. »

## Chapter 4: *Mademoiselle V. in the costume of an Espada*

*In truth, the measure of a poet's greatness is that which he does not say in order to let what is inexpressible speak to us for itself.*<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter I will be considering works created by Manet which can be subsumed under the title for the oil: *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*. Following on from the oil on canvas, owned by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York that is signed and dated "éd. Manet 1862" [Fig. 22] is a water-colour, owned by the Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, signed "Manet" but not dated. This reproduces in reverse the painting [Fig. 23]. There is also an etching signed "éd. Manet". That has no inscribed date either [Fig. 24]. The print exists in three states of which only the third was published. After its appearance in the Cadart portfolio, where it was simply entitled "*l'Espada*", it was never republished (Harris 35).<sup>2</sup>

Fisher describes *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* as "one of the last plates completed for the 1862 Cadart edition".<sup>3</sup> This draws attention to the uncertainty surrounding the sequence of these works and flies in the face of the list Manet provided on the title page for the portfolio, where this work comes fourth. Fisher's 'late' completion date rules out any supposition that the order Manet created there is chronological. Although Fisher's claim is unsubstantiated it gains credence from internal evidence. It has been established by means of X-rays that the painting underwent considerable changes late in its development. These changes in the painting are faithfully reflected in the watercolour and the print. Since the painting was not exhibited until the *Salon des Refusés* in 1863, the idea that the painting may not have been finished much before the publication of the September 1862 portfolio of prints does not seem unlikely. Carol Armstrong has added further complications to this already complex matter by advancing the theory that the print might have been made before the painting was completed. Commentators had presumed the painting's chronological priority at least since Alain de Leiris's discussion of the print's

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<sup>1</sup> Wagner, R., 1979. "Music of the future" In *Three Wagner Essays translated by Robert L. Jacobs* London: Eulenburg Books. P40

<sup>2</sup> It appears on the list of fourteen prints for Manet's proposed 1863 portfolio and may have been included in it, but no evidence exists to establish this.

<sup>3</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. P50. This is a privilege it must share with *Philip IV, King of Spain* since the latter was only purchased by the Louvre in May 1862 and Manet made six different states before it was ready for publication. Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez : the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. P505.



relation to the watercolour.<sup>4</sup> De Leiris had suggested Manet used a photograph of the oil painting to establish an accurate copy of it on a smaller scale. He then transferred it to his water-colour intermediary and traced the outlines of that scaled-down version onto his copper plate in preparation for etching. De Leiris acknowledged Adolphe Tabarant who, in his book *Manet et ses oeuvres*, had suggested the water-colour preceded the painting.<sup>5</sup> In reply de Leiris argued the water-colour was a “synthetic, simplified version of the motif”. This led him to conclude “Manet relied on the more elaborate version of the painting already executed at the time”.

Carole Armstrong has reignited this never particularly vigorous debate about precedence; one that has emerged to contradict the presumption that Manet only ever made prints after his paintings – and to raise the question of the reason for Manet making prints at this time. She argues in her book *Manet Manette* (2002) that the oil painting was “begun in the spring of 1862” but “was probably not finished to Manet’s satisfaction in time for the exhibition at Martinet’s the next March” i.e. March 1863. Manet’s other work with a similar history *The Gypsies* did have its first airing, as a painting, at Martinet’s and Armstrong’s supposition appears to be based on the fact of the omission of *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* from that showing. Jérôme Poggi, in a recent article, suggests it did not appear then not because it was unfinished but rather as a consequence of Manet’s exhibition strategy, arguing that Manet held back from the Martinet show works he intended for the 1863 *Salon*.<sup>6</sup>

In my last chapter I presented evidence that the first state of the print *Les Gitanos* in all likelihood preceded the making of his painting. If correct, this instance is sufficient to overturn the presumption that Manet always made his prints *after* his paintings. But to pursue this line in this case encounters major hurdles. None is more insuperable than the evidence, disclosed by X-rays, that the oil painting originally showed Victorine holding the cape in both hands. According to Charles Moffett in the 1983 exhibition catalogue “The sword was added and the necessary modifications

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<sup>4</sup>De Leiris, A., 1969. *The drawings of Edouard Manet* Berkeley: University of California Press, p12 and p13n8.

<sup>5</sup>Tabarant, A., 1947. *Manet et ses oeuvres* Paris: Gallimard, p30.

<sup>6</sup> « Manet se voit contraint de faire le choix stratégique des œuvres qu’il enverra au Salon, réservant le reste de sa production au boulevard des Italiens » Martinet was an innovative gallery director. His exhibitions incorporated simultaneous musical performances and the proprietor attempted to establish an income for artists, not from sales but by charging visitors to his exhibitions: Poggi, J., 2008. *Les galeries du boulevard des Italiens, antichambre de la modernité. 48/14 La revue du musée d’Orsay*, 27, 22-33. P25.

[were] evidently made at a relatively advanced stage in the development of the painting".<sup>7</sup> Wilson-Bareau, in the same catalogue goes further, claiming "the motifs borrowed from Goya were added at a later date". If we are to proceed following the traditional ordering of the three versions, the oil, then the watercolour and then the print, Manet must have (more or less) completed the painting in time for him to make those copies by late August 1862. Thus there was a hiatus of a year and a delay in the painting's exhibition history between the first publication of the print and the painting's first appearance at the 1863 *Salon des Refusés*. This rather odd sequence is difficult to reconcile with the presumption that Manet's prints were made in order to advertise his paintings.<sup>8</sup> As in the case of the prints after "Velázquez", it raises questions about the purpose of these prints, questions which have never been adequately addressed. Why did Manet display them when he did if they were not a supplement to an existing painting? Whatever the explanation for that it seems that their independent *raison d'être* was related to the exigencies of his print portfolio; the pressure to compile a powerful collection of what would have looked like original compositions, alongside his more overtly reproductive works, induced the artist to forgo the surprise effect gained from showing his painting first. An enhanced standing for this portfolio in Manet's independent art production follows from these conclusions.

The best discussion of the relation of the later works to the oil painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* is an early publication overseen by Kermit Swila Champa. Writing in an exhibition catalogue describing French watercolours and drawings from the Rhode Island School of Design Museum Collection (1975) the author assesses the status of the watercolour as the "middle term" in a comparison with both the painting and the print. The article makes the judgement that it "neither preserves the character of that 'motif' as it is found in the painting, nor contributes to the development of the graphic equivalent to the oil. The formal departures which the watercolour makes from the oil constitute an essentially

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<sup>7</sup> Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. P114. Subsequent quotation is at p117. [Future quotations from this catalogue are listed under (author name) "Moffett", unless the French version of this catalogue has been referenced in which case it is listed under (author name) "Cachin".

<sup>8</sup> Fisher states "In making prints, he was clearly motivated by a desire to popularize his art, using the print as a means of visual communication" (15). Melot, in the 1983 catalogue claims "the print was still a derivative form, the image of an image, whose function was to popularize art for a wider public by representing in a more accessible medium what had first been expressed in a painting or a drawing" (36).

separate reworking of the initial conception.” Likewise, “the etching reconsiders the accomplishments of both prior members of this series.”<sup>9</sup>

In these works Manet is experimenting with formal changes wrought on the appearance of an image in the course of its transfer between media. As I have already shown, in discussing Manet’s purely reproductive prints, the constancy of an image’s meaning is undermined across both the time and space encompassed by medial changes. In the process of re-articulating ideas in new contexts, works take on a different flavour. It is not just time that accretes new meanings to old ideas. Expectations generated by the new medium also set in motion fresh approaches to the work’s original meaning. In the realm of the visual the mode of expression has traditionally imposed social, economic and intellectual expectations on the work being represented. Manet appears to have found, in the act of re-invention opened by traversing these visual borders, a means to incorporate aesthetic experiences derived from other than the fine arts. Printmaking, with its analogies to writing and with photography, sensitised him to the inter-relationships operating between different modes of the visual arts. It led him to explore their border’s flexibility, experimenting with what else the visual medium was capable of accommodating. He engaged with and jumbled together a variety of media, especially in the works being considered in this chapter. Their traces persist in the finished works. Manet’s procedures left visible their origins in paintings and prints from a wide variety of periods and contexts. In the painting this loyalty to these sources disrupted established pictorial ideals.

In the process of establishing his print version Manet takes a different course. The third state of this print, the first published, incorporates aquatint in the shaded areas, considerably darkening the ground plane on which the figure stands. Isaacson described this as Manet’s effort “to arrive at a result approximating the oil painting, which was his prime object and point of departure”. But “the point of departure” is a long way from the point of arrival. Fisher indicates how, in the etching there is a “progression of shading from dark to light receding to the brightly lit background”. The outcome is that “the states ...show little evidence of a struggle to find an equivalent

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<sup>9</sup> Champa, K.S., 1975. Selection V: French watercolors and drawings from the Museum's collection, ca. 1800-1910. Providence: Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design. I am cautious about attributing this commentary to Champa since it is signed, at the end of the entry, by SAD [Susan A. Denker]. P107.

for the painting's qualities". He describes the etching as "a variant work of art that translated the original into a different visual language." This is a reprise of the argument put forward by Denker in Champa's book. That author recognised that this process of changing the colour values of the oil painting begins with the watercolour. Manet has created "a more syncopated contrast of effects" by breaking up the strong hue and value contrasts of the oil. The effect is to 'assert the continuity of the picture plane in a less disjointed fashion than in the painting.'<sup>10</sup> She notes that this integrating effect is not sustained in the watercolour. In particular Manet's displacement of the sword so that it now points directly towards the upper right hand corner has an unsettling effect on the position of the figure's body. In combination with the shadow placed behind her upper body it has the effect of thrusting "The upper portion of the figure ... violently forward into unbalanced relief against the rest of the picture...[and] her relationship to the viewer [is transformed] into psychological confrontation" (Champa/Denker (1975) *ibid*).

This was not Manet's last word on the subject. In the etching he extends the upper edge so that the sword no longer engages directly with the corner and by shifting the figure's gaze slightly he lessens the overdramatic effect of the watercolour. The author concludes "these and other changes do not in any respect restore the look of the painting for the purposes of reproduction. Like the watercolour, the etching discloses Manet's involvement in testing the limits of the initial work in both another variant and in a different medium" (Champa/Denker (1975) *ibid*). The etching, mind you, duplicates the orientation of the painting; it is one of the few prints by the artist to do this. Yet the artist is not seeking stylistic homogeneity between the two media. With the change of medium Manet extended the cursive qualities of the painting at the expense of its colouristic effects. In Isaacson's commentary he notes the emphasis Manet placed on "a sketchy stroke, a clustering of strokes into patches of black, white and gray, patches which dapple forms, break them up, establish a piebald unity in the name of the entire surface rather than in terms of the depicted volumes and isolation of individual forms in an illusionistic pictorial world" (Isaacson (1969) *op cit* p31). As much as anything else, this claim exposes the difficulties attendant on purely formal analyses. Does the establishment of an overall unity by

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<sup>10</sup> Isaacson, J., 1969. *Manet and Spain* Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Museum of Art, University of Michigan p30; Fisher *op cit* n3 (1985) p51; Champa *op cit* n9 (1975) p107.

means of integrative visual effects help or hinder the “illusionistic pictorial world”? Perhaps it depends on the conditions for its viewing.

Jean Harris, in the same catalogue appears to contradict Isaacson, arguing that “the space in the etched version seems to read more satisfactorily than in the oil, partly because of the difference in medium with its relatively greater consistency of handling, and partly because of the restricted ‘colour’ of the etched version” (Isaacson (1969) *op cit* p3-4). In the movement from the painting to the print Manet’s priorities seem to have changed. A flattened picture surface in which integrative effects are achieved marks the print as different from the painting. It suggests Manet was sensitive to the medium’s appearance as a page or sheet of paper viewed horizontally and created a new sense of space to reflect that. Could it be that, in the eyes of the artist, the etching was sufficiently removed from the appearance of the painting that he had no hesitation in showing the printed work first? He recognised that the painting achieved something different with its disjunctive, as opposed to integrative, pictorial field.

The painting left visible traces of its origins in previously created print works. No-one doubts that Manet was overtly quoting the *Tauromaquia* series by Francisco José de Goya y Lucientes (1746–1828) for the background action in the painting, although it is clear that he amalgamated images from a number of Goya’s prints to create his version.<sup>11</sup> By the time Manet had come to make his etching these signs of the co-existence of different media in the same work have largely been ironed out. In the process, however, even the formal means used by the original printmaker have been subjected to a heavy process of amendment. On closer inspection, Manet’s etching style in his print version of the painting, as exemplified by the long, roughly parallel lines that make up the figure of the bull and the shadows that underlay the protagonists is much more characteristic of the eighteenth-century Italian style of print-making than the more tightly controlled, closely spaced lines reinforcing representational contours used in the Goya [Fig. 25].

Harris, in her revised *catalogue raisonné*, points to changes in Manet’s printmaking style associated with this example: “One major distinction between this print and earlier ones is that Manet has not so completely reserved one form of

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<sup>11</sup> Isaacson (1969), *op cit*, provides references to six separate prints and specifies the details in the painting dependent on each. P31.

handling for the background and another for the foreground, but has employed the sketchy manner, with its long, fine, unbroken lines throughout the picture surface".<sup>12</sup> Manet has not employed the etching style favoured by Goya for those parts of the image most associated with that artist and the same lack of attention to a specifically Goyaesque style characterises the entire print. This is not to rule out the influence of Goya in the aquatint applied to the later states of the print, although its use was so widespread in Manet's day that one hardly needs Goya's name to justify its presence.

Thus the presence of this print in the Cadart portfolio testifies to the importance Manet attached to his own print production at this time. He neither confined himself to straight-forward reproductive work based on paintings by established masters, after the fashion of traditional printmaking practice; nor did he create original prints which were mere pastiches. He was not mimicking the style of prints made by his respected forebears in that medium even when the situation would seem to have made such a procedure the logical way to proceed. In the prints after this painting, *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*, Manet pursued an independent mode of execution, borrowing from Giovanni Antonio Canaletto (1697-1768) his long fine unbroken lines which Manet brings down from the sky to articulate the substance beneath Victorine's feet. From Giovanni Batista Tiepolo (1696-1770)'s *Scherzi* he borrows the summary treatment of forms and discontinuous lines within figures, the darkening by means of cross-hatching and the artful use of the white of the paper to suggest depth of field. This is not evidence that supports the conclusion the artist was making prints in order to advertise his paintings. In applying his knowledge of the printmakers of the past and in his unwavering commitment to originality and spontaneity as measures of his artistic practice, these works have an independent value.

Rather than conforming in both subject and execution to a singular model for the stylistic features of his work, Manet compounds the references in the etching after *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada*. By using the great synthetists of the Italian seicento he is able to create an appearance of visual unity in a print part of which is reproducing the etchings of Goya. Back in 1925 Rosenthal, justly, invoked the name of Chassériau when he was describing Manet's approach to print-making.

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<sup>12</sup>Harris, J.C. & Smith, J.M., 1990. *Edouard Manet : the graphic work : a catalogue raisonné*, San Francisco: A. Wofsy Fine Arts. P126.

He saw in these two artist-printmakers the same arbitrary harshness; manifested in their prints by impatience with minute detail and fine finish. These artists spill out from the confines of the page, indifferent to minor errors; they focussed on the free and vigorous expression of the motif.<sup>13</sup> The prints for *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* and *The Gypsies* share this summarily sketched treatment. It gives the impression of an improvised virtuosity as if by that methodology alone Manet could make manifest his own artistic temperament and thereby justify the repetition of his painted work.

Bearing in mind the confusion surrounding the chronology of both these etchings, and in particular that of *The Gypsies*, the virtuosic treatment of the image reached for in the prints perhaps also had the effect of authorising, for Manet, a more radical approach to syntax in his painted versions as well. These two paintings were amongst the most radical revisions of syntactical orthodoxy attempted by Manet at this time. The one *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* dislocated conventional perspectival organisation of the picture space and the other *The Gypsies* treated the distribution of the figures in the canvas in such a cavalier fashion that its reception is widely believed to have been responsible for the work's dismemberment. Syntactical innovations such as these betokened an approach to the shibboleths of composition that was prepared to sweep them aside in favour of another approach. One in which an impression of spontaneity and improvisation would predominate.

Now while in printmaking this clearly had the authority of critical approval, for the reasons discussed in my Introduction, in painting change was accepted much more slowly. There was still too great a weight of tradition and entrenched attitudes to allow sweeping changes to painting's syntax without encountering virulent opposition. It was only an artist such as Manet, with his lordly indifference to the accepted boundaries between media, who could attempt such innovations. Even in his case there would be a long time before they became accepted. In the meantime his own doubts would lead him to dismember his works and recast them in a more conventional form. Throughout his life works which displayed an experimental

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<sup>13</sup> « L'artiste semble à l'étroit dans les dimensions qu'il s'est imposées: on dirait qu'il déborde la page, son expression a un accent vigoureux et ne craint pas une incorrection apparente. » Rosenthal, L., 1925. *Manet, aquafortiste et lithographe* Paris: Le Goupy. P36-7.

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manipulation of perspectival conventions would disappear and occasional prints or drawings would persist as the only evidence of their originally much more radical format.<sup>14</sup>

Manet mixed and matched styles and techniques from a number of different sources to create this suite of works. In the process he disdained to duplicate the original style of his overtly borrowed subject-matter. The outcome is that, on closer analysis, the apparent surface of the work breaks down, giving over to multiple source references. The same polyglot exploitation of source material haunts analysis of the work's subject-matter. This image, which appears to be describing a distinctively Spanish cultural experience, is dependent on imagery from a much broader context. It is redolent of contemporary French debates and issues, filtered through Manet's responsiveness to an art history that is by no means purely Spanish. This chapter thus takes up and extends the argument that I broached in my second chapter concerning Manet's strategic use of Spanish sources in the process of pursuing other goals. Here his referencing Spanish artworks as well as contemporary Spanish themes, such as the bullfight, served purposes closely related to current French issues.

My overall argument in this thesis has been and will continue to be that the works associated with the 1862 portfolio of prints were concerned with extending art's vocabulary. Through the evocation of sounds, music and other non-visual experiences Manet was pointing the way to a redefinition of art's referential function; his art of this period participates in a movement to integrate the arts, complicating his works by incorporating synaesthetic experiences. The works I am discussing in this chapter are not so unequivocally related to any other instances of this approach in the portfolio. They are implied rather by details in the principal figure's presentation. In the painting *Victorine catches our eye*, her presence hovers between a conspiracy of crossed gazes with her viewers and the extremely violent business both suggested and in fact undertaken by hands. In the print that physical business transacted by the hands clashes with her more abstracted gaze but loses none of its incongruity. In all these versions Manet focussed on crossed senses; touch and sight are overtly

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<sup>14</sup> The persistence of this process into the late 1870s has recently been illustrated using the paintings which were the outcome of the dismemberment of the *Reichsoffen* for their example: Wilson-Bareau, J. & Park, M., 2008. *Division and revision: Manet's Reichshoffen revealed* London: Paul Holberton.



juxtaposed. The effect of this is to deny stability to the visual experience and to allude to a myriad of disparate origins, using masquerade and allegory to disguise their significance. Hidden allusions are embedded in the very facture of the work and they penetrate its every feature. But their clarity is dissolved in a web of complex cross-references. Manet generates a set of images in which the evidence of the eye is insufficient to unravel the works' meaning. Isaacson describes "the painting as "one of the most 'modern' and prescient compositions of the entire nineteenth century..."<sup>15</sup> In my construction it is also one of the most comprehensive in its embrace of a nineteenth century *modus operandi* and one of the most successful in the sublimation of the sources from which it drew inspiration.

Drawing on Moffet's analysis of the X-rays of this painting taken for the 1983 retrospective exhibition, I have described how Juliet Wilson-Bareau concluded the Goya reference was made part of the painting's mix only at the last moment. Later formulations, articulated in the water-colour and the print, display an ambition to integrate the foreground with the background bullfighting scene as if they naturally fit together. But this was not how the image was originally constructed. The principal figure was centred in the foreground. It dominated the composition in a fashion analogous to that in the suite *The Gypsies*. Manet's compositional procedure in both works then had to deal with the issue of how to fit an appropriate background context around this figure. Emerging from Manet's solution is a visual tension that he attempted to resolve in his later versions of both works. The pyramidal and hierarchical surface order, its geometrical arrangement as a two-dimensional pattern continues to conflict with the general randomness of the world depicted in the subsidiary construction. Manet's use of perspective in this context is idiosyncratic; his setting which serves to provide a backdrop for the frontal figure cannot overcome the artificiality of the means he uses to conjoin the two elements making up the work.

Manet was prepared to make perspicuous his use of another artist's work for this background aspect of the painting; it matches his more disguised practice in the *Gypsies* suite. Both result in amalgamations of pictorial conventions whose origins are in different artistic traditions. They were worked up by the artist to create the illusion that the two aspects are in some measure iconographically connected. Just as he did in the *Gypsies* suite, Manet found his source for the principal figure in

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<sup>15</sup> Isaacson, J., 1969. *Manet and Spain* Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Museum of Art, University of Michigan. P31.

contemporary representations and he combined that, in the background, with imagery taken from the history of art. By thus generating both works out of the juxtaposition of disparate sources and by refusing to subsume their product under any clearly identifiable generic concept he created a work of art that exists as a palimpsest of social and artistic references. They straddle the past and the present, denying the viewer the satisfaction of an overarching idea that could uncomplicatedly explain their creation.

In my previous chapter I discussed the process by which Manet's construction of the principal figure drew upon a number of different sources, going through changes that reflected his increasing knowledge of the appearance of "genuine" Spanish-Gypsy musicians. In this work the process reversed the order he adopted there but was no less complex. We know that he began by posing his identified female model in the costume of a male Spanish bullfighter. Victorine Meurent was dressed following a description of such a figure in Théophile Gautier's *Voyage in Spain* (1843).<sup>16</sup> Originally she held in both her hands the cape that, after late changes, now falls oddly from the left hand alone. Although Manet accurately reproduces what Gautier had described as the appropriate dress and equipment for such a figure, the artist leaves the spectator in no doubt as to the artificiality of the identity being adopted.

In the works discussed in my second chapter when Manet copied a revered Spanish forebear, he was simulating a new personal identity, one in which the Spanish master of the Golden Age was reincarnated as a French painter of mid-nineteenth century Paris. This was the only time his procedures amounted to integrating his own identity with that of another painter. Even works like *Olympia* (1865, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) and *Monk at Prayer* (1865, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) despite their clear-cut references to earlier artists' works do not so unequivocally register that. Instead, at this stage in his career and up until his suite of works for which Berthe Morisot modelled, he adopted the practice of imposing a

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<sup>16</sup>Gautier's description is excerpted in *Manet en el Prado* (2004) p443 as follows "...the man carries no defence weapon; he is dressed as if for a dance: silken hose and pumps..." Once again Manet utilises dodgy sources, sources which themselves are less than credible witnesses to what they appear to describe. Alisa Luxenberg suggests Gautier's description is "drawn on Gautier's literary cross-dresser *Mlle de Maupin* (1835-36)" Luxenberg, A., 2008. *The Galerie Espagnole and the Museo Nacional 1835-1853: Saving Spanish Art, or the Politics of Patrimony* Aldershot: Ashgate p247 and n51, p255.

similar slippery sense of identity on the models that posed for him. Complicating their recognisable identity became a favoured technique within his works. They retained the markers of their individuality, their characteristic features, while they were simultaneously being cast in roles that suggested identities at odds with that. *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* is one of the first of these works and Manet signals this innovation through its title.

Manet's approach was to construct model and role as a palimpsest, laying one identity over the other and leaving the under layer visible. Variations on this procedure had a long history in French art and Manet would have been aware of notable examples. Available to him through the La Caze collection were Jean-Honoré Fragonard (1732-1806)'s *Portraits de fantaisie*.<sup>17</sup> He could have seen there the painting said to represent a known individual, the brother of Fragonard's patron Saint-Non, M. De la Bretèche, as *La Musique*. [Fig. 26] Manet may well have been attracted to Fragonard's seemingly spontaneous brushwork and lingered over their deliberate confounding of the real and the imagined. As Mary Sheriff describes them: "Through the consistent use of other portraits or portrait conventions, Fragonard played on the expectations that an audience would bring to a work in that genre. The presence of attributes that signalled an occupation or rank for each figure further encouraged the viewer to see these paintings as portrayals of real and identifiable individuals. But other clues signify make-believe: all the figures are costumed and their garb does not copy contemporary, theatrical, or historical dress, but is composed of picturesque elements culled from other paintings and imaginatively synthesized."<sup>18</sup>

In Manet's case the clues signifying make-believe spill over from the principal figure's costume into her setting. It is most clearly exemplified by his juxtaposition where the horse's rump reflects the woman's backside, a match-up only possible in the painter's studio. This practice follows examples by the famous early nineteenth

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<sup>17</sup> I discuss this private collection which Manet is known to have accessed, in Chapter Five. Its value as a resource for painters of Manet's generation is documented in the exhibition catalogue which accompanied a 2007 display in the Louvre of works both deriving from and copying after this collection. Faroult, G. & Eloy, S. (eds.) (2007) *La collection La Caze. Chefs-d'oeuvres des peintures des XVII et XVIII siècles*, Paris: Musée du Louvre éditions. There were four works by Fragonard designated as *portraits de fantaisie* in the La Caze collection. The Louvre owned another four and six are in other public and private collections. Sheriff, M. D., 1987. Invention, Resemblance, and Fragonard's Portraits de Fantaisie. *The Art Bulletin*, 69, 77-87. P77.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. p84.

century painter Delaroche who selected non-professional models for his historical paintings. These models were initially drawn from private contacts, as with his fellow student Adolphe Roger, who modelled for *Filippo Lippi*. But he subsequently decided to use public figures, such as the actor Edmond Geffroy (1804-1895), who posed for his assassinated Duc de Guise. While inhabiting the role as the duke he was also capable of being identified by his viewers as that well known actor.

In all the versions of this work it is reasonable to conclude that Manet's principal figure fails to denote a stable, fixed idea of gender, personality or situation. All but her name has been dissolved into a notion of performance as the work's principal reality. He has fractured the canonical idea of a coherent spatial envelope containing a believable *mise-en-scène* and replaced it with one of his most overt essays in a multi-media approach to the visual arts. This image incorporates references to printmaking, photography and previous paintings, to name just the visual media, crammed together in this singular space. In particular it sets in motion ambiguous gender relations, where if one thing stands for another, both are merely arbitrary.

The figure's pose is at least in part derived from contemporary photographic practices, so ably documented by Elizabeth McCauley in *A. A. E. Disderi and the Carte de Visite portrait photograph* (1985). McCauley draws attention to that genre of contemporary *cartes de visite* concerned with performative roles being played by actors and those who wanted to imitate them. The posed disguise of the foreground figure was often constructed against a flattened background made up from studio props artfully integrated with painted scenery. She asserts that, in this image "There is no need to posit the influence of Raimondi prints or popular images on this figure [*Mlle V in the costume...*] ... Countless carte photographs of these espadas in costumes ... circulated through Paris in 1862 and 1863" (Fig. 27).<sup>19</sup>

Such photographs were extremely popular, but there are elements of this particular image which do not resemble a conventional *carte de visite*. At a time when everyone from the Empress Eugenie downwards was having *cartes* made of themselves, the undress, in particular the revealed legs, shown in both Manet's image and the *carte* it resembles was transgressive. It could only be associated with

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<sup>19</sup> McCauley, E.A., 1985. *A. A. E. Disderi and the Carte de Visite portrait photograph* New Haven and London: Yale University Press. P185.

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someone who, aware of the sexualized connotations, was comfortable with the more flexible dress codes applied to a woman acting a part, one that had its roots in dramatic performances where celebrated actresses undertook the “breeches role” or “leg show”.

These recent introductions of lower-class music hall bawdy shows in middle class theatres were enormously popular. Female actors, usually scantily dressed, played male gendered roles in melodramas that focussed on their sexual allure at the expense of their acting ability. They attracted huge audiences and made a name for themselves as much for their private offstage lives as for the heroic deeds they were representing onstage. Figures such as Lola Montez (1821-1861), and Adah Menken (1835-1868) were well-known internationally. Manet was personally acquainted with just such a figure, one who had made an impact on the Parisian stages in the early 1860s. He undertook an extensive suite of works devoted to her. The dancer Lola de Valence appears in a number of his works in painted, printed and drawn versions, always slightly differently envisaged, in one version sweetly beguiling, in another mannish with a moustache. Her impact on the Parisian circles Manet frequented was enormous; Manet’s friend Zacharie Astruc seems to have been particularly struck by her. He wrote poetry and occasional music in her honour, for which Manet provided a cover illustration.<sup>20</sup>

Moreover photos of theatrical stars were profusely available in the windows of shops in the centre of Paris. These were avidly collected. In 1860 the gossip columnist for *Le monde illustré* assumed viewing celebrity photos was a common parlour game.<sup>21</sup> It is to this aspect of the life of the performer that Manet’s work references. A photograph made of Adah Menken dressed in one of her costumes for the role she constantly reprised as a cross-dressing male warrior shows this type of image. (Fig. 28) Manet’s figure likewise resembles a costumed performer striking a characteristic pose for the camera rather than an actor caught in mid-performance. This resemblance to staged photographs of performers against a contrived

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<sup>20</sup> In Flescher, S., 1978b. *Zacharie Astruc: Critic, Artist and Japoniste (1833-1907)* New York: Garland Publishing. The author documents the obsession Manet and his circle had for this artist. Baudelaire’s quatrain composed to accompany the painting Manet made of her has a sexual subtext, one that is repeated in the correspondence between Astruc and his friends when he was going to Spain and hoping to meet her again.

<sup>21</sup> Berlanstein, L., 2004. Historicizing and Gendering Celebrity Culture: Famous Women in Nineteenth-Century France. *Journal of Women’s History*, 16, 65-91. P71.

background demonstrates Manet had not strayed far from his similar practice of transposing painted and frescoed images, described in the earlier chapters of this thesis. The same strategy is being applied here to popular photographic imagery.

This image of Victorine closely resembles photographic imagery created to represent and promote these women's theatrical identities outside the contained space of the theatre. Maria Buszek describes the political implications embedded in such images: "female performers were among the first women to negotiate a rare grey area between the two poles of the period's societal binary for their sex. They were proof that there existed alternative, unstable, and powerful roles for women in the modern public sphere – transgressive identities that were not only made visible but even celebrated in the theatre and its promotional imagery."<sup>22</sup>

Manet had a lifelong interest in representing women in exotic costume. He portrayed Berthe Morisot in Spanish garb for his painting *Berthe Morisot with a fan* (1872, Musée d'Orsay). This is another image where the fact of "dressing up" seems to have made it possible to also address, implicitly, the eroticism embodied in such representations. Marni Kessler describes what is going on as "a scene of seduction ... the players created and staged by Manet himself, agreed to by Morisot."<sup>23</sup> He also garbed Nina de Callais in an exotic costume provocatively extending her figure across a sofa. Later he represented Ellen Ambrée in Spanish costume making reference to her role in Bizet's *Carmen*.<sup>24</sup> In all these representations women are constructed as "figures of fantasy". This is the phrase he used when defending his painting of Nina de Callais to her estranged husband who had objected to its possible exhibition, writing to Manet to ensure that it would not appear in public.

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<sup>22</sup> Buszek, M.E., 2006. *Pin-up girls. Feminism, sexuality, popular culture* Durham and London: Duke University Press. P77.

<sup>23</sup> Kessler, M.R., 1999. Unmasking Manet's Morisot. *Art Bulletin*, LXXXI, 473-489. P481. The series of paintings in which Morisot appears has been productively examined in a number of recent publications. By Fine, A.M., 1987. Portraits of Berthe Morisot: Manet's modern images of melancholy. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, CX, 17-20; Maratray, H., 2004. Edouard Manet: portraits de Berthe Morisot. *Revue de Louvre*, 54, 112-119; Armstrong in *Manet Manette* (2002) *op cit*; not to mention the sportive treatment of the relationship in chick-lit.

<sup>24</sup> It is apparent that Manet never saw Ambrée in this role. In Manet's lifetime she only ever performed it in America with Colonel Mapleson's Italian Opera Company in 1879. Dolan, T., 2006. *En garde: Manet's portrait of Emilie Ambre in the role of Bizet's Carmen. Nineteenth-century art worldwide*, <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/spring06index> Accessed 6 July 2010.

Accessed 6/7/2010.

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In the early 1860s the most popular roles being performed by famous women actors at this time, both in Europe and America, were those which featured women playing the heroic part, often in men's clothing. In the course of the play the hero is undressed, revealing the gender beneath the clothes.<sup>25</sup> It is this cross-over between depictions of the female warrior and her commodified representation by performers who are photographed in that role which Manet undertakes in this painting. The painting complexly inter-twines images of an actress with scenes from a bull-fight positing the possibility that there might be a symbiotic relation between the two.

The reference in this painting to the warrior-hero as a Spanish bull-fighter is uniquely Manet's invention. For all the *cartes* McCauley has been able to produce which show similarly dressed figures nothing has been found which marries such a figure with such a background. But this is perhaps not surprising. Few other artists at this time had as committed an interest as Manet's in the representation of women in transgressive roles. In a survey of paintings with Spanish subjects shown at the Paris *Salon* between 1845 and 1865 Dominique Lobstein has shown that the stock image of Spain was "made up of beautiful women of virtue and great character and sinister robbers ..."<sup>26</sup> It was Manet's practice to create images that had both topical relevance and a connection to the history of art. In this instance we need to look beyond Manet's Spanish context for the widespread theme of the woman as warrior. His treatment was essentially French in origin.

For French audiences in the nineteenth century the most commonly represented image of the female hero was drawn from the newly developed history of Joan of Arc (1412-1431). This myth of Joan was a distinctly nineteenth century invention. Admittedly she had featured in earlier artistic representations. But at the beginning of that century images emerged that would reflect authentic historical research dedicated to reviving her memory, carried forward by a romantically inspired surge of enthusiasm for medieval history. Despite her cross-dressing role, she embodied a number of traits that epitomised what were seen as essential

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<sup>25</sup> In fiction the motif played its part in George Sand's enormously successful novel *Consuelo* (1842) where the heroine cross-dresses during her travels in Bohemia. In the theatre Adah Isaacs Menken cross-dressed in order to perform the title role in H. M. Milner's Byronically derived *Mazeppa*. The denouement where her sexuality is revealed in a feat of naked horseback riding drew enormous crowds to her performances in America, Britain, Austria and France from 1861 until her death in Paris in 1868.

<sup>26</sup> Pakesch, P. & Formanek, V., 2005. *Blicke auf Carmen* Koln: Landesmuseum Joanneum. P177.

characteristics of French cultural identity. She stood for the notion of the female warrior, emerging anonymously from the people to lead them against foreign invaders. The myth alluded to admired qualities such as self-sacrifice, Christian piety and dedication to the preservation of national identity.<sup>27</sup>

The French historian, poet, translator and official, Philippe-Alexandre Le Brun de Charmettes (1785-1870) was responsible for rescuing the historical figure of Joan of Arc from partial oblivion and turning her into a national heroine. He used original documents in one of the first instances of that hallowed practice, writing *The Orleanid, a national epic in 28 cantos* in 1821, which was a reduced version of his four-volume *magnum opus* written in 1817. This book included illustrations, one of them demonstrates the same structural elements as Manet's painting. It features a woman in a warrior's uniform with her sword held aloft in the foreground. A reduced background depicts her scene of triumph (Fig. 29). It serves to support my suggestion that Manet drew upon imagery such as this for his painting.

Jules Michelet (1798-1874), who was a strong influence on Manet's own nationalistic inclinations, wrote the next most famous version of the Joan story in 1841 as part of his nineteen volume *Histoire de France*. Like Le Brun de Charmettes, he later significantly revised this version and published it separately in 1852 and 1863, casting her more in the guise of an anti-clerical Republican. Michelet saw her as representative of the spirit of the French people. He believed she was capable of unifying France and making her great. His Joan "becomes an exercise in symbolical politics on the borderlines of science, literature and religion".<sup>28</sup> He was anxious to emphasize her human qualities, construing her as a heroine, a figure of French womanhood.

The most popular version of her story in Manet's time was written in 1860 by the historian Henri-Alexandre Wallon (1812-1904). Manet would have known him personally; he was the teacher of history at the Collège Rollin (Manet's secondary school).<sup>29</sup> His version was sent to Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) when he was preparing his opera *The Maid of Orleans* (1878). Wallon's text went into fifteen

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<sup>27</sup> Darras, J., 2003. A myth on trial. In D. Goy-Blanquet (ed.) *Joan of Arc: A saint for all reasons* Aldershot Ashgate. P105.

<sup>28</sup> Darras *op cit* p105.

<sup>29</sup> Proust, A., 1996. *Edouard Manet souvenirs* Paris L'Échoppe. P10.



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editions.<sup>30</sup> He stood for a more conservative Catholicism and his work attempted to reconcile her Republican image by identifying traditional Catholic values in her biographical details.<sup>31</sup>

By the time Manet came to construct his female heroine, religion and republicanism had split into two camps with fervent adherents on both sides.<sup>32</sup> Those who associated religious values with the temporal power of the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church identified Joan's Christian beliefs as an allegiance between the Crown and the Church, one which valued spiritual beliefs and the importance of religious piety. (Driskel describes this grouping as the Ultramontanes, those who "looked beyond the mountains" because their loyalties lay with "an inordinate respect" for the authority of the Italian Church.<sup>33</sup>) Opposed to the power and influence of the Church were figures with close familial links to Manet, such as Michelet and Ernest Renan (1823–1892).<sup>34</sup> They subscribed to a positivist belief in secular progress, a belief that saw the Maid of Orleans representing the people's struggle against the church and its moral authority and a figurehead for the unification of France around values of collective justice and national patriotism. The controversy was very much alive in the early 1860s and French intellectual circles were largely divided into two camps. While the Abbé Hurel, Manet's friend, was closely associated with the Ultramontanes, Manet's secular image of the woman warrior is more aligned with Michelet's 1853 "pragmatic portrait" of the Maid. That marked the date when Michelet had "forsaken his youthful Catholic mysticism and cultivation of the standard romantic martyred-messiah myth in favour of anti-clerical Republicanism".<sup>35</sup> So when it came to Manet representing the woman as warrior-hero it is not surprising that his

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<sup>30</sup> An informative source of information on Wallon's version is the address given by Jean Cluzel, Secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie des sciences morales et politiques, at the Institute of France in October 2004. [http://www.asmp.fr/travaux/exceptionnelles/cluzel\\_wallon.pdf](http://www.asmp.fr/travaux/exceptionnelles/cluzel_wallon.pdf) Accessed 25 May 2009.

<sup>31</sup> « Wallon est l'auteur qui marqua le plus l'historiographie catholique de Jeanne d'Arc pendant la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle et contribua le plus à son évolution. » Krumeich, G., 1993. *Jeanne d'Arc à travers les siècles* Paris: Albin Michel. P150.

<sup>32</sup> Nadia Margolis "Rewriting the right: High priests, heroes and hooligans in the portrayal of Joan of Arc (1824-1945) in *Joan of Arc: A saint for all reasons* p68.

<sup>33</sup> Driskel, M.P., 1992. *Representing belief: religion, art, and society in nineteenth-century France*. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press. P6.

<sup>34</sup> Fried describes the Manet family relationship with Michelet (1996, *op cit*, p510 n17.) Manet's relationship with Renan, married to Ary Scheffer's niece, could have come about through Manet's friendship with Cornelia Scheffer, dealt with in Chapter 7. Possibly, these relationships were a result of his wife's Dutch connections.

<sup>35</sup> Margolis, N., *op cit*, p66.

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image of her would eschew religious associations and concentrate on her as a young girl of the masses.

Joan had previously been represented in major paintings by Delaroche (1824) and Ingres (1854) as well as in monumental public sculpture. François Rude (1784-1855) made a version in 1852 which stood in the gardens of the Luxembourg but it was the version by Marie d'Orlean (1813-1839) *Joan of Arc in Prayer* (1837) which was especially celebrated. It could be found in varying sizes and materials in churches, museums, public squares, and private collections throughout France. It shows the essential personal attributes her medieval contemporaries described, her short slender frame and a boy's haircut. It was the most successful of the multitude of images of Joan made during the July Monarchy (1830-1848) but it did not dissuade countless followers, "practically every year's *Salon* had a portrait of Joan."<sup>36</sup>

Delaroche's 1825 image *Joan of Arc in Prison* is probably the most significant for Manet's characterization of the warrior heroine. He had created a fictional scene unsanctioned by any historical facts, using anti-British feeling to give it topical relevance.<sup>37</sup> And he inaugurated the practice of depicting historical representations rendering action as a staged moment. As Paul Duro observes this "has less to do with the norms and expectations of traditional history painting than with capturing a moment in a very human melodrama."<sup>38</sup> In Manet's representation, the presence of the Goya pastiche is an acknowledgement that such captured moments are constructed by the artist, who turns popular iconographic symbols to his own nationalistic purposes.

Manet's scrupulous attention to the details of her dress, her cropped hair and her cross-dressed clothing resembles the contemporaneous mania for accuracy of historical detail that characterised the most famous of these precedent representations of the Maid, those by Ingres and Marie d'Orléans. The latter's representation of the Maid in prayer had been one of the most widely reproduced images of the nineteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Its emphasis on historical veracity suggests the

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<sup>36</sup>Pernoud, R., & Clin, M-V., 1999. *Joan of Arc: Her Story*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin. P242.

<sup>37</sup> "This construction of the Maid's persecution tapped into popular Anglophobia." Heimann, N.M., 2005. *Joan of Arc in French art and culture (1700-1855): from satire to sanctity* Aldershot: Ashgate. P127.

<sup>38</sup>Duro, P., 2005. Giving up on history? Challenges to the hierarchy of the genres in early nineteenth-century France. *Art History*, 28, 689-711. P698.

<sup>39</sup> Heimann *op cit* n37, p155.

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pressures Manet felt himself under to correctly represent his figure's *espada* costume and adopt images of the bull-fight whose authenticity could not be gainsaid, given their genealogy. It had another characteristic that may well have served to inspire Manet. The Orléan work made no effort to align the Maid with any doctrinal point of view, avoiding any overt reference to the Catholic Church or the monarchy. An 1861 description of the cast bronze version of this work praises its capacity to represent the figure in a dual light: "in the costume there is, mixed together, the woman and the warrior."

Lastly there was the image of the Maid created by Ingres, an avowed Ultramontane, who made his stiffly hieratic image under commission from the Ministry of State in 1854. Here the inclusion of the artist as one of the bystanders in the image reflects the way he saw identification with her retinue as legitimating his eminent standing in French artistic circles. Manet's image may be said to be advertent to his sense of identification with a strain of painting practice that associated itself with Spanish forebears. Ingres' work was widely criticized for its lack of warmth and nobility. Maxine DuCamp stated that "this young girl ... has nothing historic but her costume".<sup>40</sup> Manet's, by contrast, has all the ardour of a young woman committed to her transgressive role, acting out the part prescribed by the artist.

Manet's painting *Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* undertakes complex repetitive practices based on the juxtaposition of contemporary popular imagery with references to an established art vocabulary, defined by preceding artists. By drawing upon an eclectic mix of art styles and periods, utilising their models for a variety of purposes, from the development of an iconography to the determination of poses, he created a startlingly modernistic work, enigmatic and yet visually compelling. I have asserted that historically it relies on imagery concerned with female heroines saving their homeland and I have suggested it might have originally been inspired by the imagery surrounding Joan of Arc.

In previous chapters I have described Manet's secular adaptation of religious imagery in his prints *Silentium* and *The Gypsies*. In this chapter I have attempted to demonstrate that he undertook a similar adaptation of national-religious imagery but

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<sup>40</sup> The last two citations are sourced in Heimann *op cit* n37, p150 and p171.

to justify this claim I need to describe how this odd image can be interpreted to conform to those religious forebears. Why does Manet cast the resonant image of the French woman warrior in the guise of a costumed *espada* at a bull-fight? Theodore Reff has a useful political explanation, one moreover that accounts for the satiric conflation of a pin-up image with a sacred shibboleth of French national identity. He suggests Manet was engaging with the “moral debasement” represented in Empress Eugénie’s infatuation with bull-fighting, that the painting makes “an allusion to the decadent moral values of the Second Empire” and is also “an attack on one of its major international actions, the invasion of Mexico in 1862.”<sup>41</sup>

This can account for most of the elements of the painting. John Elderfield, in the recent publication *Manet and the execution of Maximilian* (2006) supports Reff’s interpretation and suggests the contemporary relevance of representations of bullfights. These are thought to have been used by Goya as a disguised metaphor for French oppression of the Spanish.<sup>42</sup> The theory usefully foreshadows Manet’s later involvement in the protests against the invasion of Mexico. Finally it acknowledges that an element of disguise is intrinsic to the work and cannot be avoided in formulating an interpretation of this image.

*Mademoiselle V. . . in the Costume of an Espada* is a measure of Manet’s interest in representing what I described in my last chapter as the idea of the cultural *epos*. It references representative Spanish cultural values and implicitly draws attention to those from France. His palimpsest consists of amalgamating imagery that was foundational for a sense of national identity in both countries. There is in this image, with its contemporary flavour drawn from photographic media and dramatic performance, a commitment to re-inscribing the archetypal in the present, drawing attention to the way images with a significant historical genealogy are capable of being invested with new life, relevant to the definition of French cultural identity. By this token the work is more than an ephemeral satire, it is not a *blague*.<sup>43</sup> It does not

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<sup>41</sup> Reff, T., 2005. *Manet's Incident in a bullfight* New York: The Frick Collection. Pp22-3.

<sup>42</sup> Elderfield, J., 2006. *Manet and the Execution of Maximilian* New York: The Museum of Modern Art, p27: “Did Manet know or surmise that the bulls in Goya’s prints may symbolize popular resistance to the first Napoleon’s campaign to conquer Spain, and did he replicate this image in order to tell of the replication of that campaign, in Mexico, by Napoleon’s nephew?” See his fn27 where the idea is traced back to an unpublished address by Janis Tomlinson at the 71<sup>st</sup> annual meeting of the College Arts Association, Philadelphia, February 17-19, 1983.

<sup>43</sup> *Le Petit Larousse* 1996 defines *blague* as « histoire imaginée pour faire rire ou pour tromper. » The OED *Online* gives : “Pretentious falsehood, ‘humbug.’” Art historian, Linda Nochlin, made an early use of the term in

dismiss efforts directed towards creating a sense of national identity, efforts that the “woman as warrior” motif was based in. On the other hand the eye/hand dichotomy in the heart of the work introduces a *cæsura* which pervades Manet’s treatment of nationalist issues here as well as in other “Spanish” works discussed in Chapter 2.

So if Reff is correct in his assumption that the contemporary French context being referenced is a covert allusion to Napoleon III’s foreign adventures, then the painting *may* be seen to reflect disillusionment with rather than affirmation of nationalist myths, although in 1862, Napoleon’s adventures were not as unsuccessful, nor as unpopular, as they were by 1866. Whatever Manet’s political attitude his commitment to responding to that situation might also serve to explain why the print was released in advance of his painting. Then the print’s omission in all further lifetime publications by the artist would be explicable. Its political message had not been recognised. On the next occasion for political commentary seized by the artist Maximilian had been shot and more explicit imagery was appropriate.

Whatever the exact tenor of Manet’s political attitudes in 1862, his work with this motif is concerned with observing the way cultural identity is constructed. The artist acknowledges its multifarious origins and translates its recent populist manifestations into a form that would have meant the *Salon* of 1863 was an appropriate context for it. This painting – and its subsequent print – comes across as a serious attempt to rethink the visualisation of foundational national myths; it affirms the important role painting had in contributing towards their realisation.

It is tempting to see Manet’s source in one of the fabulous female heroines from the history of art, a Judith killing Holofernes is the most likely. But Manet has disguised his sources, in this instance, so well that no one preceding work can be proposed as its incontestable model.<sup>44</sup> The construction undertaken by Manet for the background in his painting equally proceeds from a variety of images. It is again impossible to define precisely which original images were used by Manet for the background image. That they were, however, prints is signified by the lightly disguised evidence of their original format. Manet largely follows the inherently

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relation to Manet in Nochlin, L. “The Invention of the Avant-Garde: France, 1830-1880.” Reprinted in 1989 *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society*. New York: Harper & Row Publishers.

<sup>44</sup> Giovanni Battista Salvi da Sassoferrato’s (1609-1685) *Judith with the head of Holofernes* (before 1640), which Manet would have seen when he visited the church of San Pietro in Perugia where it is kept, is a possibility, but it does not account for the earlier version where Victorine is holding the cape in both hands.

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abstract patterning of light and dark in Goya's prints and mimics the flattening of space characteristic of printmaking in general and Goya's *Tauromaquia* prints in particular. This process of allocating a portion of the overall scenario to evident print sources heightens the air of unreality which hangs over the entire work. The outcome is a queasy cohabitation of two distinct media. Manet seems to flaunt his refusal to attempt the unification of the two images. But rather than flaunting the nationality of his sources, he is flouting their "original" status as distinct prints and paintings. He even parodies the usual mechanisms by which a show of unity is achieved in painting, drawing attention to the disparities of scale which have resulted from his forced wedding. Shapes cohere even when scale suggests otherwise.

This is the signature image of Manet's visual output. It confounds any analysis that attempts to treat the work as a straight-forward description of a realistic scene. If its allegorical connotations are not recognised analysis relapses into meaninglessness. Just as a piece of music will evoke a multitude of associations without the listener being sure of the universal validity of any of them so this painting's object and origin are impossible to grasp. In the process, however, the most vivid and splendid of illusions may pass before our eyes. Angel Gonzalez Garcia has the best articulation of the difficulties that haunt this work: "Perhaps in this painting [*Olympia*] of Manet's and in many others by the artist, in fact almost all of them, there is not one painting but two: an empty painting and a full one; a place of simplifications and another of complications. But this is not quite the case; it is more like *two planes* which enclose and define a terrain in which the senses become confused and resound. A sounding box of the body which both the artist and the spectator put into the work, obliged to put it just *there*, in that undefined, troubled and wavering place that is the painting."<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P415.

## Chapter 5: *The Spanish Singer* : Its origins and cognates

*Ever since there has been painting, man has translated his listening to the silence of the world into forms. For every act of listening responds and it is with his hands that the painter responds, in turn giving something to listen to. Painting makes us inhabit silence: that of the world, a musical silence.*<sup>1</sup>

In my last chapter I concluded with the quotation from Angel Gonzalez Garcia which drew attention to the bifurcated nature of Manet's paintings. His typology suggested we appreciate in Manet's works their simultaneous appearance "as an empty painting and a full one; a place of simplifications and another of complications".<sup>2</sup> I applied that conception to the suite of works titled *Mlle V. ... in the costume of an espada*. These, I argued, complicate their surface layer (or "plane" in Garcia's formulation) through their recuperation of national myths, Spanish and French symbols of national identity, re-inscribing these in populist imagery associated with performance and the theatre. This presentation, amounts to a familiar medial transposition along the lines practised by Antoine Watteau, who regularly showed figures as if their presence depended upon some kind of theatrical scenario. But in Manet's case imagery associated with Joan of Arc, while nowhere overtly identified, underlies Manet's construction of the "woman as hero". A myth popularly associated with the construction of French national identity provided the gravitas needed to rescue this work from simple parody.

Garcia (and Clark's) characterisation can be applied to all the works I have discussed. Superficially appearing as "empty...simplifications", they are "full and complicated". In the group of works I am describing in this chapter it arises from their provision of a context for the representation of non-visual experiences. Already I have shown that the sounding of silence in *Silentium* and the presence of musical associations in *The Gypsies* emerge as implicit features – these are artworks that aspire to transcend the accepted boundaries between media. Even in the Spanish copies Manet remediated the painted works of a respected predecessor. His copies liberate the works of that artist from their connection with a specific medium. These new versions stand as substitutes for those earlier works. Manet is extending visibility within his works, incorporating supplementary material which redirects attention away from the work's ostensible subject. In this and the next chapter I will be considering

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<sup>1</sup> Chrétien, J.-L., 2003. *Hand to hand: listening to the work of art* New York: Fordham University Press. P57.

<sup>2</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. At p415. T. J. Clark had emphasized "the experience of modernity is precisely the experience of the two states, the two tonalities, at the same time." Clark, T.J., 2002. Modernism, postmodernism, and steam. *October*, 100, 154-174. P166.

the suite of works which, more than any others, were foundational for Manet's lifetime interest in representing the performance of music (sometimes merely the circumstances for such a performance) as a means for achieving this expansion of painting's expressive capacity.

The earliest version is the painting now known as *The Spanish Singer* [Fig. 30]. It is assumed to have been painted during 1860, perhaps after Manet moved in the summer into a new studio on the rue de Douai. Manet inscribed the date 1860 next to his signature but like other documented instances there is no strong reason for believing that this date describes the completion of the piece.<sup>3</sup> The work may not have been finished until 1861 and the date could be recording when it was started. In Manet's career this painting is the first in a series of major paintings, and of works which now only exist as prints, all suffused with musical connotations. Dealing only with the works made between 1860 and 1862, these are *Spanish Ballet*, *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, *The Street Singer*, *The Gypsies* and *The Old Musician* plus assorted still lifes and genre prints. It is the most significant work of the year described by Juliet Wilson-Bareau as "a breakthrough". She proposes "a major change occurred in the artist's work in 1860," it is my contention music precipitated it.<sup>4</sup>

*The Spanish Singer* (1860, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) was one of two submissions to the 1861 *Salon*. There the visual experience is supplemented by its musical theme. In the other submission, the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents* (1860, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), a similar strategy is applied to concealing the truth about his father's aphasia. His physical impairment and loss is hidden behind a convincing facade of bourgeois respectability.<sup>5</sup>

The mediation of Manet's ideas through both printed and painted forms appears to have been part of his larger strategy by which all the arts could be expressed within an expanded and capacious idea of picture making. Throughout his career Manet made works of art which report – and doubtless aim to repeat – the

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<sup>3</sup> See my comments about Manet's dating practices in Chapter 3.

<sup>4</sup> Juliet Wilson-Bareau in Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez: the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. p485.

<sup>5</sup> Strauber, S., 2005. Suffering in silence: Disease and disability in Manet's early portraiture. In D.J. Johnson & D. Ogawa (eds.) *Seeing and beyond: Essays on eighteenth- to twenty-first-century art in honour of Kermit S. Champa*. New York: Peter Lang, pp64-86.



experience of imaginative creations originating in other artistic media. Manet was not alone in this endeavour. In fact he was part of a larger movement in the nineteenth century to break down the barriers between the arts. Manet's contribution to this movement coincided with the work of others pursuing the same ambitions in poetry and music. He was acquainted with these figures, in some cases personally, in others he could not have avoided knowing them by reputation. But Manet was no mere follower. He was vitally involved, first contributing to the movement with his painting *The Spanish Singer*. There Manet draws our attention to the performance of music by his *Bohemian* character and, matching the inspired commitment of his depicted figure with a performance of his own, completed the head of the figure in a frenzy of activity. According to Proust it was painted in a single session ("du premier coup"), after just two hours of work.<sup>6</sup>

The painting, exhibited at the *Salon* of 1861 under the title, "Spaniard Playing the Guitar" (*l'Espagnol jouant de la guitare*), is the work's first surviving manifestation. X-rays confirm Proust's account. There is very little repainting, only the neck of the guitar was painted at least twice, possibly three times and the model's right hand was shifted accordingly; both are in slightly higher positions than they were originally.<sup>7</sup> No earlier drawings or concept pieces survive to show how the painting evolved. It was enthusiastically received by fellow artists, critics and, we can reasonably presume, the *Salon's* visitors. No-one commented, publicly, on the fact of the painting's reversal of the guitarist's conventional playing position. Only Théophile Gautier made a snide allusion to the model's amateurish grasp of the guitar - describing it as being held as if it were a ham.<sup>8</sup>

Manet then went to considerable lengths to create independent etched versions of the image. They were preceded by a sequence of intermediate works whose role in the process remains murky and whose order has not been definitively determined. These intermediate works may include a very early instance of his use of photography to achieve scaled down versions of the original painting. Richard Brettel maintains that Manet had a photograph of the painting, "which he then traced

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<sup>6</sup>Proust, A., 1996. *Edouard Manet souvenirs* Paris L'Échoppe. P28.

<sup>7</sup> Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. P64 and (fig.b).

<sup>8</sup>"How he bawls lustily, while scraping on his leg of ham" « Comme il braille de bon courage en raclant le jambon » Gautier, T., 1861. *Abécédaire du Salon de 1861* Paris: E. Dentu. P265.

and used as the basis for both the watercolor and the subsequent print.”<sup>9</sup> No evidence known to me supports this claim, however. What has survived is a watercolour; it remakes the image in smaller dimensions and in a different medium (Dallas Museum of Art) [Fig. 31].<sup>10</sup> It might have been created as an intermediary between the painting and the print, but it was not the traced source for the print, being approximately double the size of the latter. Alain de Leiris refers to it as “pure painting” by which I take him to mean that the work has qualities, amongst which one might number its miniaturisation of the original, that mark it as a distinct work of art.<sup>11</sup> The watercolour, like the subsequent prints, describes a slightly smaller pictorial field than does the painting, and certain details (the right shoe, the onions/garlic, the cigarette smoke, the shirtfront, and the scarf) have been adapted to its reduced scale. The background is both lighter and more transparent than in the oil version, and the floor recedes more dramatically.<sup>12</sup> The work appears to reinvent the original painting, as if the idea Manet is trying to express was not exhausted by its first appearance.

Between that and the print there is also a privately owned tracing [Fig. 32]. It is thought Manet used that to transfer the image to the plate for etching.<sup>13</sup> But since no dimensions are available for this work it is impossible to be sure whether the tracing is taken from the watercolour, a photograph or a later drawing. I want, however, to draw attention to the fact that if he had used the tracing for that purpose the artist could have easily constructed his print to match the direction of his painting. He used that procedure in so constructing a later print, *Mlle V. ... in the costume of an espada*. That, in this instance, his print reverses the direction of the painting would, at first sight, seem significant.

It has given rise to the commonly repeated half-truth that by doing this Manet “righted the left-handedness of the guitarist”.<sup>14</sup> Mena Marques in the 2004 exhibition

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<sup>9</sup> Brettel, R.R., 1995. *Impressionist Paintings, Drawings, and Sculpture from the Wendy and Emery Reves Collection Dallas*: Dallas Museum of Art. P27.

<sup>10</sup> The dimensions of the painting are 147.3 x 114.3 cm; the watercolour’s 56.8 x 51.4 cm. The print, at its largest (in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> states) is 31 x 24.7 cm.

<sup>11</sup> De Leiris, A., 1969. *The drawings of Edouard Manet* Berkeley: University of California Press. P11.

<sup>12</sup> This analysis relies on a description in Brettel *op cit* p27.

<sup>13</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. He says it was “probably used for the direct transcription of the composition to the copper surface.” P43.

<sup>14</sup> Armstrong, C.M., 2002. *Manet Manette* New Haven: Yale University Press, p83.

catalogue *Manet en el Prado* claims “In the engraved version, Manet also corrected his mistake, as the composition is reversed – intentionally, no doubt – with respect to the painting” (p434) [Fig. 33]. This presumption, that reversing the image “corrects his mistake” does not, however, take into account the problem that arises from reversing a guitar which was already back to front (and the strings upside down) in the painting. The print shows diminishing frets, as they approach the sound hole, on the upper side of the instrument. In representing any actual instrument this would be an irrational configuration. Such diminishing frets would always be on the lower side.<sup>15</sup> Manet’s reversal of the painted image has accentuated what was already in the painting a problematic treatment of a crucial aspect of the guitar, an instrument otherwise represented with stunning attention to verisimilitude. This irrationality emerges in the context of his installing a conventional playing position for the musician. If the tracing is indeed the precursor for the print it is evident that the reversal of the painted image was a deliberated act whose implications I will be exploring in this chapter and the next.

This often recuperated controversy about the reversed position of the guitar in the painting has been debated at least since shortly after Manet’s death. Manet’s early biographers failed to agree. Did he *knowingly* set his model the pose, *aware* that it amounted to an unrealistic representation? Antonin Proust, Manet’s boyhood friend and sometimes unreliable biographer, in his 1897 *Souvenirs*, recreates an undated incident describing how an acquaintance drew Manet’s attention to the pose: “Yesterday Renaud de Vilbac came by. [Charles Renaud de Vilbac (1829-1884) was an organist, arranger and composer.] He saw only one thing: that my guiterrero plays left-handed on a guitar strung to be played with the right hand. What do you say to that?”<sup>16</sup> Usually this incident is interpreted as if Manet is unmoved by the

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<sup>15</sup> A guitar expert, Ken Hartdegen, in a personal email (17-7-2006) describing the reasons why Manet’s image is irrational in its printed form states: “Reversing the prints in the etching process doesn’t change that [mistake]: the short frets are never on the thumb side of the plucking hand—they are on the finger side because high strings use fingers, bass strings use the thumb. Once you’ve got it you don’t sketch it upside down. Wilful ignorance seems hard to argue. The position in *guiterrero* is only conventional if you fail to see the upside down short frets still upside down! His mistake is not corrected so I maintain it was not noticed. The person who etched did not correct the short frets on the treble side. The guitar becomes an upside down left-handed guitar – not a right way round right-handed guitar as it appears superficially. The short frets give it away.”

<sup>16</sup> « Hier, Renaud de Vilbac est venu. Il n’a vu qu’une chose. C’est que mon *Guitarero* joue de la main gauche une guitare accordée pour être jouée de la main droite. Qu’en dis-tu ? » Proust, A., 1996. *Edouard Manet souvenirs* Paris L’Échoppe. P28.

observation and uninterested in correcting the error. Construing the exchange in those terms is perhaps an example of art historians' wishful thinking. It has the great advantage of disposing of the problem with the minimum of fuss.

The other contemporary testimony comes from the renowned baritone Jean-Baptiste Faure (1830-1914). He was one of Manet's most significant collectors and owned the painting until 1906. When he was interviewed just after Manet's death he asserted that the position of the guitar was a mistake not noticed until long after the picture was finished (although how long is left unstated). In his (translated) words: "*The Guitarist* is now known as 'le gaucher' because the man is playing left-handedly – an oddity that Manet and his friends did not notice until long afterwards."<sup>17</sup>

Three possible ways to resolve this contradictory testimony have been suggested. James Rubin proposes Manet's "impossible arrangement" was "deliberately stressing artifice".<sup>18</sup> This interpretation has received a lot of support. It presumes Manet's strategy is witting and generates the consequential inference that the reversal in the print is not Manet's effort to rectify this "error". Rather he was entrenching paradoxical irrationality in an already problematic image of the guitar. Contradicting this approach is the simpler explanation, adopted by the 2004 *Prado* exhibition catalogue that Manet, without revisiting the scene as it had been posed in his studio, simply reversed the painted image. Thereby he was "correcting" his initial error. This proposed resolution of the difficulties attending Manet's painted version of the work pays no attention to the other oddities in the guitarist's pose - such as the model's clumsy fingering position on his right hand and the irrational placement of the guitar's frets. A third possibility, often suggested by guitar *aficionados*, is that Manet witnessed guitar virtuosi playing the guitar in all manner of unconventional positions. His painting was realistically reproducing that experience. Whichever assumption is chosen, his reasons for not correcting the guitar's appearance in the process of creating his print version are enmeshed in ambiguity.

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<sup>17</sup>Quoted in English in the *1983 Exhibition Catalogue* which was quoting from Tabarant, A., 1947. *Manet et ses oeuvres* Paris: Gallimard. P42.

<sup>18</sup>Rubin, J.H., 1994. *Manet's silence and the poetics of bouquets* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. "Was he deliberately stressing artifice – that is, that the painting was a studio pose rather than a slice of life?" P36. I take this opportunity to thank Professor Rubin for his encouragement and assistance in formulating my ideas about this painting.

A temporary resolution to this problem is to argue that, while Manet was not indifferent to the look of an actual performance, when he reversed his painted image he gave no thought to the implications of that reversal for a “realistic” depiction of the instrument. His interest was focussed, as in the earlier print *Silentium* as much as in *Mlle V...in the costume of an espada*, on a more pictorial issue concerned with the visual separation of hand and eye. As in those other works the former is doing the action while the latter engages elsewhere. “Their hands see, leaving their eyes to occupy themselves with another issue, that of looking at us and looking back at themselves, as well, of course, as letting themselves be seen, in offering themselves like a coordinated, bent back body.”<sup>19</sup> If then the print version bears no relation to anything seen in the real world it amounts to printmaking doing its own thinking here. The visual experience is detached from realistic representation and equated with phenomena associated with the medium, such as reversal of the image, duplication of visual effects and independence from traditions about the process of creating a realistic image. But although, as Hubert Damisch has demonstrated, artistic processes have their own logic and can help determine how an image is going to materialise, I am discontented with this explanation in this instance.<sup>20</sup> It fails to fully account for the presence of music in this painting. I will return to this issue. In the meantime I am interested in exploring these works using the traditional tools of the art historian. What I hope to demonstrate by doing this is that the analysis leaves a significant hole in our understanding of this work. One that can only be mended by directly addressing the musical issues the painting and its accompanying print raise. But I will delay that analysis until my next chapter.

In a list Manet drafted on a projected title page, he described the print version of this image as “*le Guitarero*”. It appears first, a position which cannot be due to its chronological priority if my argument in Chapter 3 about *The Gypsies* is accepted. More probably it reflects the work’s importance in the eyes of the artist. And it is the first in a series of images where a visual representation is making space for other sensuous experiences. The print is known in six states, itself a measure of Manet’s search for a satisfactory version of an image already existing in two redactions. It

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<sup>19</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P412.

<sup>20</sup> Damisch, H., 1994. *The Origin of Perspective* Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: The MIT Press. P446.

leads to some of his most striking images as an original printmaker.<sup>21</sup> In working up this graphic supplement to his painting “he did not try to overcome the printmaker’s dilemma of a reversed image, concentrating instead on a consistent translation of the original, not a reproduction but an interpretive drawing on copper.”<sup>22</sup> In spite of his efforts, however, he appears to have been dissatisfied with the results. In a letter to an unidentified correspondent he describes two prints *The Guitarist* and *The Urchin* that he could substitute for *The little Cavaliers* which had evidently been requested. Manet comments “I prefer *The Urchin* as an example of print-making.”<sup>23</sup>

There are significant differences between the states of the etching. As these unfolded he freely worked the plate surface making changes in shading, detail and effects of light. At the beginning of this process the darkened background of the painting undergoes significant changes. The contrast between the illuminated figure and the dense darkened background is inverted. Manet makes the background light instead of dark, marking that space with “kinetic strokes and emphases which did not figure in the original”. These marks animate the atmosphere around the figure and make this print “a different, autonomous work.”<sup>24</sup> [Fig. 34] Manet was not prefiguring abstraction here; his marks still have a residual connection with representation. They stand for experiences, such as the flickering sensations compounded of light and sound, which were not capable of being pictured directly.

He was trying to overcome the limitations imposed by the static quality of representation in the visual arts in works such as these. Even so, it is a noteworthy feature of his printmaking endeavours at this time that raw strokes of the graver, translated into clustered lines on the print betoken a freedom of expression not yet seen in Manet’s painting style. Only the related painting *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* (1862, National Gallery, London) approaches such a radical detachment of the signifier from what is being represented.

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<sup>21</sup> Wilson, J., 1978. *Manet; dessins, aquarelles, eaux-fortes, lithographies, correspondance* Paris: Huguette Berès, describes “successive printings [of this work] some of which have yet to be defined.” [N.P.] Cat No 29.

<sup>22</sup> Fisher *op cit*, p43.

<sup>23</sup> Adhémar, J., 1965. Manet et l'estampe. *Nouvelles de l'estampe*, 7, 230-234. : « pour moi, le Gamin est préférable comme spécimen de gravure. » p231.

<sup>24</sup> Wilson, J. & Melot, M., 1977. *Edouard Manet: L'Oeuvre Gravé* Ingelheim am Rhein: Stadtverwaltung Ingelheim. I have translated Michel Melot’s essay, from which this extract is derived; it is included, in Part 2, as an Appendix to this thesis.

This charged background combines with a dazzling light illuminating the singer to create an ambiguous setting, one suggestive of the setting for a performance. This effect is intensified as Manet develops the image over a number of states, principally through his adding a dense network of linear accents to the figure's hat and jacket, to the earthenware pitcher (known as an "alcarraza" in Spanish) and to the bench. By these means he creates a velvety blackness; the jacket is especially lustrous. These darkened elements combine to stand out strongly against the light space. As the states evolve this lightened area is increasingly confined to a narrow passage of illumination emanating from the front right-hand corner of the print. Although textures of the hat, the cloak, the neck of the guitar, the bench and the alcarraza are subtly differentiated from each other, the effect of intensifying the background element enforces an overall tonality. Those areas of detail, which previously appeared darker, end up more in keeping with it. As a result the image, in its later states, is more dramatic and richly finished. The changes seem designed to work the print towards a more painterly finish, one where the whiteness of the page slowly gets submerged in a tracery of etched lines. As the image progresses through these various states the motif is seen with even greater clarity and vigour than in the painting which it copies.<sup>25</sup>

The sketchy and linear form of the first state of the etching suggests that Manet may have directly transcribed the watercolour into the etching medium. In the second state the image already shows the darkening process, which will be the focus of Manet's amendments in subsequent states. It is inscribed with the date 1861 and was printed in just a few impressions. This date was effaced for the purposes of the 1862 Cadart portfolio which features the fifth state of the print [Fig. 35]. No subsequent editions carry a date. In 1867 he added a signature to the plate, and the name of the print studio "Delâtre", and printed an edition for the publication *L'Artiste*.

The earliest known reference to the print occurs in the 13 April 1862 issue of the *Chronique des Arts et de la Curiosité* where the anonymous author refers to

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<sup>25</sup> Isaacson, J., 1969. *Manet and Spain* Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Museum of Art, University of Michigan. This observation is made by Jean Harris in her introduction to "Manet's graphic work of the sixties" on p3. In many respects her analysis of Manet's print-making style has never been bettered. Joel Fisher adds that the effectiveness of this print is only discernable in versions printed on a delicate chine in the third state. He argues for "the superiority of proofs on chine over the more standard editions where the heavy film of ink eliminates the subtleties of Manet's etching style." Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. P44.

seeing it on display in the shop run by Manet's publisher, Alfred Cadart.<sup>26</sup> It would therefore have been ready for the first publication of prints made by the *Société des Aquafortistes* in September of that year. Perhaps it was not included because the rules of the Society called for the exhibition of original prints. For all the changes Manet made to the painted image with this print, its previous fame would have made it hard to gain acceptance of the work as an "original print" in the eyes of his contemporaries.<sup>27</sup>

When, for his 1862 portfolio, Manet designated this print *The Guitarist*, or *Le Guitarero*, (not *The Spanish Singer*, its *Salon* title) he may have been responding to Gautier calling it by that name in his review of the 1861 *Salon*. Its effect was to downgrade the *Spanish* character of the original painting as a signifier of the work's identity. Indeed, Gautier in his *Salon* review, had drawn attention to the melange of clothing originating from a variety of national contexts. Emile Lambert has pointed out: "Dear Theo was enchanted by the headscarf and the espadrilles, but all the same he carefully noted the Marseilles-type jacket and the pants from Montmartre of this *guiterrero*."<sup>28</sup> In short, contrary to the illusion of Spanish and realist authenticity, the figure depicted in *The Spanish Singer* is a picturesque counterfeit created in the artist's studio. In his text accompanying the 2004 catalogue Angel Gonzalez Garcia recognises an element of parody in Gautier's description. "He gives rein to his most comic side with a certain crudeness. Thus, when he says that '[this guitarist) does not come from the Opéra-Comique [of Paris]' we need to appreciate that the figure seems to him genuinely Spanish, and thus ridiculous like 'things in Spain' in general." Gonzalez Garcia underlines the point Gautier is making about Manet's patronising attitudes to Spanish cultural expression: "Manet had seemed to Gautier no more than a caricaturist capable of perceiving the caricature-like element to be found on the surface of Spanish painting...Manet would not have seen what lay within the

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<sup>26</sup> Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez : the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. P504 reprints the text in English and French.

<sup>27</sup> "La Société ne publiera que des œuvres originales," taken from a reproduction of the *Société's* rules published in Bailly-Herzberg, J., 1972b. *L'eau-forte de peintre au dix-neuvième siècle; la Société des Aquafortistes, 1862-1867* Paris: L. Laget. P39. In my analysis of the work in Chapter 3 I pointed out that it is uncertain whether the work Manet chose for inclusion in the portfolio, *The Gypsies*, already existed as a painting. At all events the print was the first version of that work to be exposed.

<sup>28</sup> Lambert, E., 1933. Manet et l'Espagne. *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, IX, 369-382. Pp374-5.



paintings of the ‘Spaniards’, but mere comic details ....”<sup>29</sup> Gonzalez Garcia is making a particularly pungent point about the unconsciously patronising, if not bigoted, attitudes embedded in these mid-nineteenth century Frenchmen’s attitudes, which, I have argued, seep into all of Manet’s *Spanish* works of this period.

It would, however, be unfair to attribute these attitudes to Manet alone; they were widespread in French culture. Nor, in the context of this chapter is it germane to the wider enquiry. The crucial issue here is the fact of the unusual pose. And to suggest, as Faure does, that Manet could have created this image without understanding how guitars were played is to propose a very surprising hypothesis.

In the first place it needs to account for the fact that Manet had a guitar amongst his studio possessions. The guitar in *The Spanish Singer* is in all probability the same one that appears in the paintings *The Street Singer* (1862, MFA, Boston) *Hat and Guitar* (1862, Musée Calvet, Avignon) and in such prints as *Hat and Guitar* (Harris 38 and 39), *The Gypsies* and *The Street Singer* (Harris 22). Despite their more casual construction all these images show a guitar with the same bulbous head and black neck. Interestingly, it is not the guitar which features in the print made for Jaime Bosch *Plainte Moresque* of 1865 (Harris 29) nor in the 1869 painting *The Music Lesson* (MFA Boston) where the figures depicted are themselves proficient guitarists and are presumably holding their own instruments.<sup>30</sup> Manet’s numerous guitar images recur in a number of contexts, not all of them Spanish, as if the instrument held some peculiar fascination for the artist. It does not figure merely as an exotic extra in these representations, but rather as integral to their constitution. To suppose he did not have some knowledge of how it was played therefore lacks credibility.

Since the manufacture of guitars with receding frets had gone out of fashion by Manet’s day the instrument, when Manet painted it, was at least thirty-five years old and probably made in France.<sup>31</sup> Manet’s extremely meticulous representation of

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<sup>29</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P411-2.

<sup>30</sup> In *The Street Singer* Manet subordinated the look of the guitar to the painting’s overall colour scheme, it is the only time when the guitar’s ribbon is not painted red. Even the unrealistic painting of Victorine “playing” the guitar in the 1867 *Woman Playing the Guitar* (Hill-Stead Museum, Farmington) shows a red ribbon.

<sup>31</sup> During an email correspondence, Len Verrett proposed that the guitar, because of its deeper body, may be a Spanish copy of the French design: “However, I’m not sure the guitar is French - the body seems deeper more

it, as if the instrument was a valuable possession treasured in its own right, supports the presumption that it is a Lacote made during the 1820s [Fig. 36].<sup>32</sup> This was the instrument of choice of celebrated guitarists such as Fernando Sor (1778-1839) Zani di Ferrante (1801-1878) and Ferdinando Carulli (1770-1841).<sup>33</sup> Its presence in Manet's studio and repeated appearance in his works featuring a guitar suggests the instrument originated from an earlier generation of the family. His mother at one time would have used such an instrument to accompany herself singing. She was a respected singer and performed at family salons. Prior to the modernization of the piano in the 1840s the guitar was the instrument bourgeois music makers used to accompany such activities.<sup>34</sup> A painting which demonstrates the instrument's importance in those music making contexts is the work by Jean-Baptiste Greuze (1725-1805) which depicts the Marquise de Bezons tuning her guitar *Anne-Marie de Bricqueville de Laluserne, marquise de Bezons* (1758, Baltimore Museum of Art) [Fig. 37].

If this presumption of a family history with the instrument is correct it is hard to imagine the discrepant position of the player was not noticed before the work was

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like the Spanish guitars. It was probably an obscure Spanish maker of that period, or could have been from the many workshops of Mirecourt. I doubt a street singer could afford a Lacote." Verrett's website is a mine of information on guitars of this period: [www.EarlyRomanticGuitar.com](http://www.EarlyRomanticGuitar.com)

I deeply respect Len Verrett's encyclopaedic knowledge of early romantic guitars. He may be taking too literal an approach to Manet's painting in constructing his interpretation to conform to the work's ostensible subject. Even so, what he brings to the surface is another layer of incongruity in the work. At that time no supposed Spanish singer would have been seen playing a French guitar. And if the instrument depicted is indeed a Lacote it is very unlikely it would have been found in such humble surroundings.

<sup>32</sup> The Lacote design had, however, been copied in the workshops of Mirecourt. One famous example originating from Mirecourt is a similar looking guitar manufactured by Henri Grobert (1794-1869). This instrument was owned by Niccolò Paganini (1782-1840) and Hector Berlioz (1803-1869). It is now on display in the *Cité de la Musique* in Paris. Thus, from the evidence provided by his painting, it is not possible to be sure about who manufactured Manet's guitar. The history of French guitar construction is treated in a number of different texts, see Friederich, D., 1992. *Regards sur la facture française de guitare depuis 1850. Les cahiers de la guitare*, 41, 24-28. The author treats the issues of original and copy raised here, without, however, mentioning Manet's representation. My presumption that Manet is representing an original Lacote and not a copy is an extrapolation from the lengths he went to in articulating the guitar in all its detailed splendour.

<sup>33</sup> Len Verrett comments "Sor concertized with Lacote, the Italians such as Ferranti and Carulli later played Lacote, as did most of the leading musicians in Paris" *op cit*.

<sup>34</sup> Florence Gétreau (whose kindness to a struggling researcher in Paris will never be forgotten) describes a caesura in representations of pianos being played in the early half of the nineteenth century: Gétreau, F., 2006. *Histoire des instruments et représentations de la musique en France, une mise en perspective disciplinaire dans le contexte international, habilitation à diriger des recherches (HDR)*. Université François-Rabelais. P81.

sent to the 1861 *Salon*. As Frédéric Bazille (1841-1870)'s 1870 work *The Artist's Studio in the Rue de la Condamine* shows, artists were accustomed to discussing their works with their peers before the work was finished. Manet's musically informed wife-to-be was modelling for the artist at that time; she could have mentioned its unusual pose. And Manet had musically informed friends as well. Zacharie Astruc (1833-1907), for instance, was too knowledgeable to have missed noticing what was discrepant in Manet's image. As a teenager in Toulouse he had learned to play the guitar, which he accompanied with a beautiful singing voice.<sup>35</sup> It is known that Manet and Astruc were friends, although it is not clear when they first became acquainted. The presumption that Manet was unaware of his guitar's unlikely position or of his model's insensitive playing position becomes increasingly difficult to sustain.

From Manet's prior studies of music-related images there is yet more evidence that he *wittingly* turned the guitar in this painting away from its normal position. In Manet's student days he had copied images where stringed instruments were being played appropriately on at least two occasions. Once while he was studying in Florence in the 1850s he copied dancing figures from della Robbia's *Cantoria* and could hardly have failed to notice contiguous figures strumming stringed instruments, held conventionally. Also, again during the 1850s, he made a student copy of Titian's *Concert Champêtre* with its conventional lutenist. There is, moreover, a third work; a study entitled *Etude de mains, joueuse de guitar* although no-one seems to know whether this was created before the painting [Fig. 38].<sup>36</sup>

Manet is also known to have frequented music halls and other places of public entertainment. It is not for nothing that the great impresario Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880) was included in Manet's line-up of melomanes in his painting *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* (1862). Specific evidence of Manet's attendance at events like those masterminded by Offenbach is provided by the painting *The Spanish Ballet* (1862). This demonstrates his knowledge of Beaumarchais' *The Barber of Seville*.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Flescher, S., 1978b. *Zacharie Astruc: Critic, Artist and Japoniste (1833-1907)* New York: Garland Publishing. P7 n6 « According to Léon Séché, "Figures Bretonnes et Angevines" *La Revue illustrée de Bretagne & d'Anjou* (January 15, 1889), p62. »

<sup>36</sup> This is illustrated in Duret's biography (first published in 1902). It re-emerged on the art market in 2001 at Christie's in New York: Lot 102, Sale 9640. There is no clarity about the date for this work. The description which accompanies the Christie's auction entry gives it as 1860-2, but on no known basis.

<sup>37</sup> Tinterow, G. & Loyrette, H., 1994. *Origins of Impressionism* New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art. P395.

It is incontestable that Manet had an interest throughout his active life in representing performances in public venues, especially musical performances. In the 1870s he made numerous on-the-spot studies of performers for his paintings resulting from the cut canvas *Reichshoffen*, as Juliet Wilson-Bareau and Malcolm Park have recently illustrated.<sup>38</sup> Although this occurred at least fifteen years later, it seems reasonable to presume that, at the beginning of his career, he would have sought out and studied guitarists performing when he was doing preliminary research for this painting. Both the painting and print evoke a performance milieu, one in which the model is immersed in acting the role of singer in front of and up close against an unseen audience. This is Manet's first real success in conflating the real and virtual audiences that lie beyond the canvas, a success he will follow up when he constructs a theatrical space for *Mlle V... in the costume of an espada* and will bring to its apotheosis in the famous works of direct engagement with the viewer in *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*. In this work that implicit recognition of an unseen audience reinforces the presumption that what Manet was representing here resembled something he had himself seen in a live performance.

He was not without opportunities to do so. Famous guitarists were in Paris in the early 1860s. The Bolognese guitarist and composer Marco Aurelio Zani di Ferrante (1801-1878), "a free-thinking *Risorgimento* man once lionised as Europe's greatest guitar virtuoso" was performing in Paris in the late 1850s.<sup>39</sup> Guy Chapalain refers to his visibility in the Parisian press, claiming "the year 1859 was the high-point of his renown; his Parisian concerts received very flattering critiques from F. Reyer in the *Courrier de Paris*, and from Berlioz, in the *Journal des Débats*."<sup>40</sup>

Jaime Bosch (1826-1895), the Catalan guitarist with whom Manet is known to have had a close friendship in the mid-1860s, had been in France since 1852 and was celebrated as the Paganini of the guitar. It is unknown whether Manet knew him

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<sup>38</sup> Wilson-Bareau, J. & Park, M., 2008. *Division and revision: Manet's Reichshoffen revealed* London: Paul Holberton.

<sup>39</sup> Wynberg, S., 1989 *Marco Aurelio Zani de Ferranti: A Biography* Heidelberg: Chanterelle Verlag. I am grateful for Dr Weinberg's willingness to share with me, in a protracted email conversation, his extensive knowledge on the subject of the guitar and its music in nineteenth-century Europe.

<sup>40</sup> « L'année suivante [1859] fut celle de l'apogée de sa renommée, ses prestations parisiennes reçurent des critiques très flatteuses de F. Reyer, dans le *Courrier de Paris*, de Berlioz, dans le *Journal des Débats*. » Chapalain, G., 1999. La guitare et son répertoire au XIXe siècle; 1850-1920 novations et permanence. Doctorat. Paris-Sorbonne, Paris IV. P392.

as early as 1860. His etched cover illustration of the guitarist for Bosch's piece *Plainte Moresque* (for guitar) was made in 1866 and Manet's correspondence concerning the guitarist's availability for concert performances dates from that time.

Adolphe Tabarant has put forward a most convincing source, if we are to presume Manet's inspiration came from what he could have known about an artist who was a contemporary local music phenomenon. He proposed the figure of the guitarist was inspired by the famous Andalusian performer, Huerta Y Caturla (1800-1874).<sup>41</sup> He was the subject of lengthy articles in the Parisian press in November and December 1860. The *Journal amusant* devoted two articles to him. One, written by the publisher Charles Philipon (1800-1862) included a letter of appreciation from Giacomo Rossini (1792-1868); a later edition of the same newspaper, dated the 8<sup>th</sup> of December, carried a caricature of the guitarist by Gillot on its front cover [Fig. 39]. Titled *Le guitariste Huerta* it shows him surrounded by a variety of musical instruments. The caricature is accompanied by a commentary which suggests he was able to conjure their sounds from his guitar and concludes "If this guitar is enchanted then those who listen to it are the more."<sup>42</sup> Manet's image similarly presumes the involvement of the singer/guitarist with his performance will be matched by the rapt attention of his viewers. They will be straining to imagine the sounds the work evokes; the work assaults their senses with movement, colour and implied sound.

A supplement to the journal features a photograph of Huerta and a commentary which emphasized his Spanish roots, noting his involvement in the composition of the famous Spanish national song *La marche de Riego*.<sup>43</sup> The guitarist was renowned for his unusual performance style.<sup>44</sup> An English musical journal in 1855 told how he would play the guitar while holding it in all kinds of unconventional positions: "Huerta performed, to rest himself, one of the dances of his

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<sup>41</sup> Tabarant, ( 1947) *op cit*, p41.

<sup>42</sup> *Journal amusant* no 258 of the 8<sup>th</sup> of December 1860. «Si cette guitare-là est enchantée, ceux qui l'écotent le sont encore bien plus.» Suárez-Pajares, J. & Coldwell, R., 2006. *A. T. Huerta: Life and works*: DGA Editions, p46.

<sup>43</sup> Authorship of this tune, as famous as the *Marseilleise*, is now subject to dispute. See "El himno de Riego" in *Política* Nos 24 and 25 April-May 1997, January-February 1998. Huerta is no longer included amongst its possible composers, merely using the tune extensively in the course of his performance career.

<sup>44</sup> Tabarant, A., 1947. *Manet et ses oeuvres* Paris: Gallimard. P41. He describes Huerta as « le premier de l'Europe ». He appears to presume that the fact of Huerta's Spanish nationality fitted him as Manet's inspiration.

native country, accompanying it on his guitar, which he raised above his head, threw behind his back, and passed between his legs, all without ceasing to dance.”<sup>45</sup> Dance, or at least visually dramatic physical movement, is figured in Manet’s image, movements which have nothing to do with – indeed are inimical to – the playing of the instrument by any ordinary musician. But construing his guitarist as performing some kind of virtuoso trickery inadequately accounts for either the non-specific playing position of the fingers ‘grasping the neck of the guitar like a ham’ or the oddly articulated image of the instrument in the print version.

Moreover there is no possibility that Manet was representing the elderly Huerta in his painting. Quite apart from the fact that Manet’s young singer bears no resemblance to Huerta, Huerta did not sing in his concerts (having lost his singing voice early in his career, according to the same article), nor did Manet make any effort to represent Huerta’s instrument, present in both the published image and in the photograph taken by Nadar.<sup>46</sup>

Manet may have got the idea for his image in response to a performance, nevertheless. If that figure was Huerta then the choice of a Spanish ethnicity for his figure would have a basis in observed experience, however much the context Manet creates for his guitarist’s performance fails to resemble the bourgeois *salons* within which figures like Huerta, di Ferrante and Bosch customarily played. But these works by Manet bear no resemblance to photographic representations of known guitarists from this period. In accordance with convention, photographs of these known guitarists show them sitting stiffly in their bourgeois finery, holding their guitars as badges of their profession. That contemporary context cannot be shown to have made any contribution to the work’s final appearance.

Nor does Manet’s image resemble those depicting the guitar being played in popular contexts at that time. There is no question that guitars were an instrument of the street, and there was a vogue for representing these figures in France in the nineteenth century. Representative examples can be seen in images by Daumier, Töppfer and Valentin reproduced in popular magazines. For instance in the

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<sup>45</sup> Reported in *The musical world* November 3 1855. Presumably he would have had no difficulty playing it back to front without the strings being reset even though his legs were moving at the same time!

<sup>46</sup>Information on the life and music of Huerta has been taken from Suárez-Pajares, J. & Coldwell, R *op cit* and Hernán Mouro’s web-site article “The sublime barbarian, Trinitario Huerta, and the guitar as concert instrument in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.” <http://www.hernanmouro.com/> Accessed 10 July 2010.

magazine *L'illustration* such figures are often depicted and at times they are shown holding their musical instruments unconventionally. In the October 10 issue of 1846 (Issue No189) a group described as “Types espagnols” includes a standing costumed figure holding and playing a guitar back to front. [Fig. 40]<sup>47</sup> The obscurity and very early date for this image make it unlikely to have influenced Manet, however. More pertinently, Manet’s teacher Thomas Couture showed *Un Ménestrel* in the 1843 *Salon*. This figure is holding, but not playing a lute to the left of his body. And in 1847 Gustave Courbet made at least two paintings (one in Portland Art Museum, the other at the National Museum in Stockholm) depicting a cellist playing left-handedly. While these images provide precedent for the representation of musical instruments back-to-front, they are not contemporary with Manet’s image, nor are any of them sufficiently like his image to suggest they were influential. The reasons that motivated Courbet and Couture to create their works do not seem to have been a source of inspiration for anything specific in Manet’s images.<sup>48</sup>

Manet did, of course, make his own works of art representing street musicians. One of these, the 1862 oil painting *The Street Singer*, demonstrates his commitment to representing these figures and his desire to capture their appearance as they went about their business. Another is the seldom considered etching *The Street Singer* also usually ascribed to 1862. But capturing the image of a specific street player does not seem to have been his object when he made the suite of works associated with *The Spanish Singer*. In this work Manet seems uninterested in personalising the figure of the guitarist.<sup>49</sup> And his work inhabits a different world from that represented by works by numerous other “realist” artists who were making their own versions of street guitarists playing conventionally in undistinguished settings.

In the nineteenth century, contemporaneous with Manet, Maurice Sand (1823-1889) showed guitars being played left-handedly in his illustrations for the *Commedia*

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<sup>47</sup>These images are reproduced from Cohen, H.R., 1983. *Les gravures musicales dans "L'illustration"* Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval. Vol. 1. P89.

<sup>48</sup> Kermit Champa describes Courbet's *Self-portrait: The violin-cellist* “as a ‘real allegory’ of the artist masturbating, which is related to the patent unreality of the instrument and the positioning of the fingers.” Champa, K.S., 1991. *The rise of landscape painting in France. The rise of landscape painting in France.* Manchester, NH: Currier Gallery of Art/Harry N. Abrams, 23-56. P139.

<sup>49</sup> Susan Waller discusses Manet’s early use of professional models in Waller, S., 2007. *Realist quandaries: Posing professional and proprietary models in the 1860s.* *Art Bulletin*, 89, 239-265. Pp239-240.

*dell'arte* figure of *Brighella* (published in 1850 and 1857).<sup>50</sup> Staging musical performances in a theatrical context involves creating a disparity between the appearance of the player, on stage, and the performer of the music, in the pits. Such a discrimination, which draws attention to incongruous visual experiences, occurs in Manet's *Mlle V... in the costume of an espada*. There the figure's presence was almost entirely theatrical and the painting's spatial construction enhanced that. This is not the case in *The Spanish Singer*. There is no suggestion in this painting of an alternative, more credible space. The performer does not appear to be miming a production whose musical aspect is being provided off-stage. Despite that, the possibility that Manet envisaged this image in terms of a theatrical performance should not be dismissed out of hand.

I have laboured the point about whether there is anything in the contemporary performance environment that could be said to provide a model for Manet's versions of *The Spanish Singer*. What I have shown is that, while there were ample opportunities to see guitars being played we have no information that would support a presumption the painting arises directly from such a context. For the balance of this chapter I will demonstrate how the work draws from the history of painted guitar images even as it vividly depicts what looks like a performance.

It was characteristic of Manet's practice at this time of his career, when he was making both paintings and prints, to rely on visual precedents from the history of art. But as Moffett observes "the question of possible sources and influences has also generated considerable discussion."<sup>51</sup> Writers have suggested Raimondi, Teniers, Greuze and Goya are the artists whose images of guitar players may have influenced Manet.<sup>52</sup> There is good supporting evidence that Manet could have known these.

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<sup>50</sup> Roberto Cuppone in *Théâtre inédit, documents et dessins* by George Sand - Maurice Sand (CIRVI 1988, Moncalieri (Torino): CIRVI, 1997) reproduces these images created by Maurice Sand on p152 et seq.

<sup>51</sup> Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. P64.

<sup>52</sup> Ann Hanson in Hanson, A.C., 1977. *Manet and the modern tradition* New Haven: Yale University Press suggests "Manet had looked at a number of paintings by Teniers" p59; Joel Isaacson in *Isaacson, J., 1969. Manet and Spain Ann Arbor, Michigan: The Museum of Art, University of Michigan* proposed that "another possible source, more promising than the Goya, is the engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi of *Jean-Philotée Achillini* (Joueur de guitare)..." p28; Michel Melot in Melot, M., 1996. *The impressionist print* New Haven and London: Yale University Press persists in supporting the Goya connection: "Manet looked upon Goya as a true spiritual father...Manet's *Guitarrero* dates from the year following the publication of Goya's etching" [*Blind guitar player*] p55. The latest Exhibition Catalogue, Mena Marques, M.B. (ed.) (2004) *Manet en el Prado*, Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado repeats the Marcantonio Raimondi and Greuze attributions and contributes



When it comes to seeing them as the model for Manet's painting, however, they all have one outstanding defect. He shows the guitar being held, counter-intuitively, to the right of the figure, as if the guitarist is left-handed. With the exception of the Greuze, all these source images show right-handed players of stringed instruments who are playing conventionally. (In the Greuze the instrument is being tuned, not played.) Copying such images would have been inconveniently awkward. Manet would have been required to reverse the work he was using as his model. As the use of source material for his painting *Fishing (La Peche, 1859-62?* Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)) demonstrates, that was not how he usually proceeded.

Nor is there any evidence that he derived his model from a contemporary source. Images of guitar players, in works by Courbet, Ribot and Daumier, never show left-handed playing. Moreover many of these images actually postdate Manet's, reinforcing the feeling that *The Spanish Singer* was a powerful influence on his fellow artists. For instance Ribot's three images that are known to me are the most engaged with the act of playing an instrument but they all postdate Manet's.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore none of these images aim for the kind of accuracy demonstrated by Manet in his depiction of the instrument.<sup>54</sup>

Since antiquity, reversing the normal position for playing a musical instrument carried extra-musical connotations. The pseudo-Hyginus, in his account of the epic contest between Apollo and Marsyas, describes how "Marsyas was departing as victor, when Apollo turned his lyre upside down, and played the same tune--a thing which Marsyas couldn't do with the pipes. And so Apollo defeated Marsyas."<sup>55</sup> In visual representations upside down instruments had been embedded in populist

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three new sources, *Portrait of Mouton playing the lute* by François de Troy (1645-1730); *Hurdy-gurdy player* by Georges de la Tour (1593-1652) and a fresco by Antoine Pesne (1683-1757) lost in the Second World War. These works are illustrated on pp161-163 fig. 71, 72 and 74.

<sup>53</sup> *The guitar player* (1862 Musée des Beaux-Arts, Reims) and two versions of *The mandolin player* (1862, Private collections). *The singers* (1863-8, Cleveland Museum of Art) is slightly more realistic.

<sup>54</sup> Charles Porion's *El Descanso: Valencian Customs* (1856, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux) was displayed at the *Salon* in 1856. [Fig. 41] It faithfully represents the instrument, played in a conventional position. This is the most accurate representation I have discovered from this period. Even so detail is muted, the strumming fingers are invisible and the instrument, although similar to Manet's, is less individualised. This realistic mode of guitar representation is characteristic of the same artist's *Andalucian scene* n.d. (where the same guitar is clutched to the left of the figure). This painting was sold at Christies on November 9 2001: Sale 6506, Lot 9.

<sup>55</sup> <http://www.theoi.com/Text/HyginusFabulae4.html#165> This website transcribes *The Myths of Hyginus*, translated and edited by Mary Grant, 1960. University of Kansas Publications in Humanistic Studies, no. 34. Lawrence: University of Kansas Press.

contexts for music. At least since the time of Jacques Callot (1592-1635), who represents various stringed instruments played left-handedly, itinerant entertainers in unconventional poses and heedless amateurs were distinguished this way from more serious music-makers holding guitars. Commonly the artist is implying that such a figure is focussed on presenting his song or accompanying some other more important activity and therefore indifferent to whether his accompanying instrument is positioned unconventionally. But its classical connotation as a demonstration of superior virtuosity has never been lost.

In the eighteenth century Antoine Watteau showed guitarists in a number of unconventional poses, including a drawing in the Louvre of a left-handed guitarist (R.F. 57195). Artists making prints after Watteau like Louis Crepy (1680-?) and Jean-François Janinet (1752-1814) were also prepared to create back-to-front guitar players.<sup>56</sup> These were depicted playing their instruments in contexts where the musicians would not be expected to demonstrate a virtuoso's skilfulness. In the rich field of eighteenth-century French prints there are other examples, such as Augustin de Saint-Aubin (1736-1807) who copied Jean-Baptiste Le Prince's (1734-1781) painting of an amorous swain serenading his lover and dubbed it *L'Amour à l'Espagnole*, carefully retaining the back-to-front lute shown in the original [Fig. 42]. Another image by Jean-Baptiste Le Prince *La Danse Russe*, shows two lute players holding their instruments reversed. In both these examples the exoticism of the setting presumably authorised the reversal of the normal.<sup>57</sup>

There is therefore a well-established tradition of left-handed guitarists and it is amongst these works of art that it is logical to look for the sources for Manet's decision to pose the model unconventionally in this image. At this time in his career and at least up until *Olympia* Manet seems to have chosen the pose he asked his models to adopt after having fixed upon a subject derived from earlier works of art. The eighteenth century painters and printmakers described above are unlikely to

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<sup>56</sup> In fact Janinet seemed to make something of a speciality of this sub-genre. His independent work *Woman Playing the Guitar* of 1788-9 (represented in Grasselli, M.M., 2003. *Colourful impressions. The printmaking revolution in eighteenth-century France* Washington: National Gallery of Art. P134 cat no 74) shows a disordered space in which the left-sided guitar playing is a metaphor for the up-side-down world represented in this print.

<sup>57</sup> The image *La Danse Russe* is reproduced in Grasselli *op cit* p72 cat no 20 (Le Prince) and the painting by Jean-Baptiste Le Prince, which Saint-Aubin modelled in his print, is held at the Museum in Dijon. It belonged originally to Claude Anthelme Honore Trimolet. In the Getty Research Library there is a collection of his papers.

have fulfilled that function; they would scarcely have been available to Manet unless he went to unrecorded lengths to find them. However there was one image to which he could readily have had access, one moreover that, at that time, was endowed with the magical name of Velázquez.

As I have indicated this was about all the incentive Manet needed to pursue it for copying purposes.<sup>58</sup> Yet in this case, as indeed in most others of Manet's so-called "sources", what the original provided was not something to be copied slavishly but more a road-map. A similar *modus operandi* characterises *The Old Musician*. In that painting the conception is widely recognised to derive from Velázquez's *The Drinkers* while the execution calls upon a variety of sources for specific figures within the work. And the same procedure generated *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* where Titian's *Concert champêtre* is again only the conceptual under-girding of a work based on a number of different sources. While it cannot be doubted that Manet's original conception emerged from the company of a specific work from art's history, it did not therefore follow that that work was copied without alteration. In many cases the "copying" was such that nothing specific can be traced to the original source, merely its conception.

If *The Old Musician* and *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* are works whose conceptual origin can be traced to a well-known, veritably, canonical source, the conceptual source for this work has never before been recognised. That is because, until very recently, through accidents of re-attribution and re-location, it was not available for art historical scrutiny. The painting *Lute Player* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Pau) Manet probably believed to be by Velázquez is now thought to be by Giovanni Francesco Cipper, also known as "Il Todeschini" [Fig. 43]. It depicts a standing lutenist holding his instrument in the opposite direction to what is normal, as does Manet's guitarist, strumming and singing with the same inwardly directed concentration displayed by Manet's figure. This man is clearly an itinerant musician. He is placed in a nondescript setting and is accompanied by accessories – in this case a basket containing printed matter. Apart from the historical attribution of the authorship of this work to Velázquez, a presumption that this work is the conceptual source for Manet's

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<sup>58</sup> There is, of course, an intended irony in this statement, given that only one of the works involved in this generalisation was actually by the master. The others were themselves copies, or they emerged from the circles around Velázquez. Some are just plain misattributions.

image gains plausibility from the fact that the work entered the La Caze collection in May 1859, in time for Manet to have seen it before he started on his own guitarist painting. This was probably finished late in 1860 or early 1861.

The inclusion of the pseudo-Velázquez in a recent catalogue devoted to the works Louis La Caze donated to the Louvre in 1869 means it can now be included as a likely available source for Manet's conception.<sup>59</sup> It was sold to La Caze as a Ribera, but when it was catalogued at the time of the Louvre donation it was described as being by Velázquez; Manet and his contemporaries, eager to see Velázquez paintings wherever they could be persuaded of a connection, however tenuous, probably accepted its attribution. They were certainly not as obsessed as we are today by questions of authorship. A generalized notion sufficed not just for Manet but for many other eminent artists. Delacroix, for instance, was similarly deceived in his attempt to copy what he took to be a work by the Spanish master.<sup>60</sup> Manet would have been keen to study a new so-called Velázquez and he had documented opportunities to do so. The work was kept on the ground floor of the La Caze residence. Manet is thought to have visited there from 1858 onwards.<sup>61</sup>

After La Caze donated his collection to the Louvre, his less esteemed works were allocated to provincial museums in France. This one was sent, in 1872, to the museum in Pau (in the Pyrennes) where it has remained in total obscurity to this day. Just recently it has been included in the illustrated catalogue of all the works still extant from the donation. These were collected in a CD and appended to the publication which was released when selected works from the collection were exhibited in the Louvre in 2007. The fact that just three years after the 1869 donation the Louvre authorities had sent it to Pau implies it was not then held in very high esteem. It could be argued, as indeed it has concerning other so-called Velázquez works Manet copied, that while he was aware of the failings of his model, this did not

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<sup>59</sup> Faroult, G. & Eloy, S. (eds.) (2007) *La collection La Caze. Chefs-d'oeuvres des peintures des XVII et XVIII siècles*, Paris: Musée du Louvre éditions.

<sup>60</sup> Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez : the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. Gary Tinterow, in his essay "Raphael replaced: The triumph of Spanish painting in France" identifies a painting of Charles II by Carreno de Miranda (1614-1685) that Delacroix took to be by Velázquez, writing in his journal "if I were to take up my palette this moment, and I'm dying to, that fine Velázquez would obsess me." P31.

<sup>61</sup> Faroult & Eloy (2007) *op cit*, p140.

bother him.<sup>62</sup> Rather it inspired him to work to surpass them. In such instances he may have been equally happy for the viewer to be aware of the model he had sourced, realising that the comparison could only redound to his favour. Another possible interpretation of Manet's use of this source could be that he never intended it to become public knowledge. At the time of his accessing the image he was presumably ignorant of the collection's final destination and subsequent availability to public scrutiny. He may have confidently anticipated that this source would never see the light of day. So while this work has sources they were not being advertised by Manet as such.

If this attribution is accepted it does not solve the problem of which models Manet used for the figure of the guitarist. Here, just as in *The absinthe drinker* (which Fried argues, derives from one model for the torso and another for the legs<sup>63</sup>) Manet combined two separate works. The upper body resembles, very closely, the figure of a guitarist in a print after a painting by Karel Dujardin (1626-1678). Dujardin is largely forgotten today, although the Rijksmuseum has recently concluded an exhibition of twenty of his works (14 December 2007-16 March 2008). But in Manet's day he was more renowned. The Louvre has some fine works which came down to it from the collection of Louis XVI, including a spectacular *Crucifixion*. La Caze also owned one of his characteristic animal paintings. However the work which is the "source" for Manet's upper body in *The Spanish Singer* is a then celebrated genre painting, entitled *Les grands charlatans*, also in the Louvre. It depicts a troupe of players in an Italianate landscape performing as medical charlatans. But rather than the painting itself, it is the print after the painting that Manet used for his model. It matches the orientation of Manet's painting, saving him from the tiresome business of reversing the painted image before copying it.<sup>64</sup> [Fig. 44] In Charles Blanc's 1858 book *Le trésor de la curiosité: tiré des catalogues de vente de tableaux, dessins... he*

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<sup>62</sup> Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez: the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press. Juliet Wilson-Bareau acknowledges as much, in her essay on "Manet and Spain". Manet's interest in works like *Portrait of a monk*, thought to have been by Velázquez, is only credible because he was "still a beginner." P205.

<sup>63</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. P34.

<sup>64</sup> For the same reason, it is probably this print which provided the image for Manet's figure emerging from behind the curtain in his so-called *Second frontispiece illustration*. See Mauner, G.L., 1975. *Manet, peintre-philosophe: a study of the painter's themes* University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press. Mauner is the first to identify the Dujardin as the likely source for this image. P168.

describes the print after Dujardin in terms which reinforce the presumption Manet would have known it : “Everyone knows the fine etching which Boissieu made after this masterpiece. There is a pretty reproduction of it in my *Histoire des Peintres*.”<sup>65</sup> The print after Dujardin’s painting, by Jean-Jacques de Boissieu, enters a circuit of reproduction here, bestowing its own reproductive origins on Manet’s further development of the theme.

The source for the pose of the legs in Manet’s painting has been the subject of argument, but is still basically unresolved. The problem is that, as an accompaniment to images of guitarists holding the instrument in the conventional right-handed position, it is a common configuration, especially when the foot-stool, usually shown supporting the elevated leg, is present. David Teniers the Younger (1610-1690) and Greuze both provide instances; although it is Greuze’s *The bird-catcher tuning his guitar* which is widely thought to be the source Manet used. No-one, however, has been able to establish that Manet could have seen this image. Recently Meller has pointed to a similar disposition of the legs in an earlier drawing by Manet. This work is itself derived, once again, from a print, this time reversing a painting by Perino del Vaga (1501-1547) *Jupiter and Danae*, which is a cartoon for the Furti di Giove tapestry in Mantua.<sup>66</sup> [Fig. 45] Manet’s source for his legs in this painting has survived a long and tortuous route. And Meller has introduced a justifiable reason to doubt the long-held attribution to Greuze.

I have already referred to the difficulties presented by the existence of minor works amongst Manet’s sources. All the sources I have described here fit that bill. A bill complicated by the impossibility of specifying which work Manet drew his inspiration from in the original production of the image, changing as it is moved from one medium to the next. What makes them an interesting and instructive collection does not therefore have anything to do with Fried’s ideas about why Manet used so

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<sup>65</sup> « Tout le monde connaît la belle eau-forte exécutée par Boissieu d’après ce chef-d’œuvre. On en trouve une jolie reproduction dans notre *Histoire des Peintres* ... » The reference occurs in volume 2, p70. This establishes that the reproduction in Blanc’s *Histoire* is itself a copy of Boissieu’s print, re-reversing Dujardin’s painting. Jean-Jacques de Boissieu was an amateur printmaker resident in Lyons during the latter half of the eighteenth century. He was also the first French owner of Francisco de Zurbaran’s (1598-1664) celebrated painting *Saint Francis* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lyon).

<sup>66</sup> Meller, P., 2002. Manet in Italy: some newly identified sources for his early sketchbooks. *The Burlington Magazine*, 144, 68-110. P102, illustrated on p99. Manet could have accessed the print from two sources, either the *Recueil Crozat I*, Plate 62 or Reveil’s: *Galerie des arts et de l’histoire* (Paris, 1836) II, Plate 73.

frequently and so blatantly images from the past.<sup>67</sup> It rather has to do with the kind of images they were. Manet took his sources from three media, at least. The work's initial conception derives from a painting possibly believed by Manet to be canonical. In the process of converting it into his own creation he accessed a melange of prints, a drawing itself reproductive, not to mention an identifiable musical instrument. Each of these contributes a specific and identifiable element to this work.

The "Velázquez"/Todeschini and the Dujardin/Boissieu both display their guitarists as something other than professional musicians. Manet was inspired by the first of these representations at once because of the unnatural pose which depicts the instrument being played while the guitar is held reversed and again because of the way it represents the player's commitment to his performance. Manet appears to have been looking for an image that enabled his guitarist to step beyond the conventional treatment of the theme typified by the painting by Greuze. He found it in this Todeschini. But then he was sufficiently committed to the realistic values dominant at this time to want to present this paradoxical pose as if it somehow represented a normal occurrence. Boissieu's reversed print version of Dujardin's painting provided him with this. Here the musician is a performer in a staged production of knowing parody. The troupe of actors is mounting a performance about the quack doctor within the *Commedia dell arte* format. Everybody is playing a part and is costumed appropriately. Both these sources contribute to the undermining of the conventional music-playing image and as such provide an important clue to the meaning of Manet's painting. The figure's evident lack of knowledge about guitar playing, more naturally associates his persona with a staged performance in the manner of the figure in the Dujardin/Boissieu.

In the next chapter I will be exploring the implications of this conclusion. For the rest of this chapter I want to summarise what else has been achieved by this close inspection of the art historical context for these images and return to the problem with the printed image that none of this inspection has succeeded in resolving.

Manet is committed to incorporating music in these works; music persists as a singular quality on its own account. This commitment is embodied in the first place by

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<sup>67</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

## Chapter 5

the figure's energetic musical persona. Bent to the task of projecting the music he is making, his gaze has retreated inward. The close proximity of the viewer to the scene is an invitation to mimic this absorbed attention to musical creation figured by the artist and embodied by his subject. But this is only half of the painting's representation of a musical event. The other half is figured by the representation of the guitar. And, curiously, that seems at odds with the energetic musician. The instrument frontally presented and showing merely traces of its physical depth is flat across the middle of the scene. An expensive and beautiful instrument is being grasped "like a ham" (in Gautier's memorable phrase). Whatever else one can say about it, it is not being played. Any sound emerging from such a playing position would be unrecognisable as music in any form understood in Manet's day.

In this chapter I have tried to establish that Manet's treatment of this instrument was not born out of naïve heedlessness. On the contrary my argument has attempted to prove that in posing the instrument as he did he was proceeding in full consciousness of its implications. This is consistent with a fully respectful response to a creation by an artist of such standing. To introduce concepts of the artist's inadvertence and error at the heart of a thesis about such a figure is simply presumptuous. In the spirit of a genuine intellectual exercise it makes more sense to provide a rational explanation for what Manet undertook when he created the painting. And this goes for the print as well. Instead of seeing the patent unreality in the representation of the guitar as Homer nodding the writer is obliged to attempt to explain why he would have represented this absurdity.

What I am talking about here is, however, a very minor discrepancy –when analysed visually. In a largely disregarded medium an artist has failed to correctly transpose the receding frets on the body of the guitar in the process of translating an already established image into another medium. It is so minor a visual glitch that, as I have documented, the two most recent books on the artist (Armstrong and Mena Marques) ignore it completely.

But in this minor visual glitch is the supplementary musical material which serves to undermine any approach that tries to interpret this work purely in visual terms. There is, for the musician (as for the non-musician alerted to the fact) a gaping wound in Manet's representation, an incongruity at the heart of the instrument's representation that jumps out of the image and demands to be accounted for. This



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concern that the musician brings to Manet's image provides the focus for its revised interpretation. If the presumption of Manet's deliberated consciousness is to be sustained an explanation must be found for this caesura between the visual and the musical.

That is why a purely art historical approach to dealing with this work only gets us so far. It has no way of dealing with this issue. To come to grips with it something needs to be garnered from related fields contemporary with this work's creation. Ideas about the inter-relation of the arts of painting and music have to be entertained. Ideas that could indicate a resolution of the dilemma brought into being by this subversive musical supplement to the visual experience.

## Chapter 6: *The Spanish Singer's* Musical Context in 1860-1861

*Indem sie gemeinsam wirken, gewinnt jede von ihnen das Vermögen, gerade das sein und leisten zu können, was sie ihrem eigenthümlichsten Wesen nach zu sein und zu leisten verlangen. Dadurch, daß jede da, wo ihr Vermögen endet, in die andere, von da ab vermögende, ausgehen kann, bewahrt sie sich rein, frei und selbstständig als das, was sie ist.*<sup>1</sup>

*Il lui fut impossible de ne pas penser d'une manière double, poétiquement et musicalement, de ne pas entrevoir toute idée sous deux formes simultanées, l'un des deux arts commençant sa fonction là où s'arrêtent les limites de l'autre.*<sup>2</sup>

In the previous chapter I have emphasized the use Manet made of visual sources in his construction of *The Spanish Singer* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) and its cognate *Le Guitarero*. However committed the artist was to the representation of music, these works have a solid foundation in the specifics of the art he was practising. Manet was not making the mistake Baudelaire attributed to Ary Scheffer (1795-1858) in his *Salon of 1846* article. There the critic accused the painter of confusing methods appropriate to the different arts.<sup>3</sup> Manet, on the other hand, used creative techniques rooted in the traditions of painting (and printmaking) to achieve his effects. In the course of developing iconographic material derived from music, Manet was challenging conventional boundaries between media by appending these ideas to the visual configuration. They were being acknowledged explicitly not just in the subject of his works but in the substance of his painterly decisions. While this work never ceased in its appeal to a picture-loving public, his inclusion of a musical supplement suggested visual intelligence alone was insufficient to appreciate its achievement. The work made a pitch for an audience capable of appreciating music references in an artistic context, irrespective of whether the context was that of painting or printmaking. Is it for this reason that art historians have persistently

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<sup>1</sup>“By working in common, each gains the power to be and do precisely that which in its most idiosyncratic nature it desires to be and do. Through the fact that each of the sister arts can, where its power ends, be absorbed in the other whose power starts out from that point, it preserves itself pure, free and independent as what it is.” (Richard Wagner *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* 1849, 1967.) Dr Kate Heslop (Department of Scandinavian Studies, Zurich University) provided the translation.

<sup>2</sup>“It was impossible for him [Richard Wagner] not to think in a double manner, both poetically and musically, to not sense in every idea two simultaneous forms, one of those two arts takes up its function at the point where the other comes up against its limits.” Baudelaire in *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris* (Pichois II, 787-8).

<sup>3</sup> Baudelaire says “poetry is not the immediate goal of the painter; when by happenstance it is mixed with painting, the work is the better for it, but it cannot disguise a painting’s weaknesses.” « la poésie n’est pas le but immédiat du peintre ; quand elle se trouve mêlée à la peinture, l’oeuvre n’en vaut que mieux, mais elle ne peut pas en déguiser les faiblesses. » *Salon de 1846* (Pichois II, 474).

overlooked the implications, which to a musician are so glaring, in the reversal and re-reversal of the guitar in Manet's suite of works?<sup>4</sup>

Michael Fried opened the field up when he acknowledged Manet's interest in the performing arts. But his analysis went no further.<sup>5</sup> By and large art historians have avoided discussing either why music came to play such an important role in Manet's works or its implications for his practice.<sup>6</sup> This is a hiatus in research on the artist. It comes about because, other than what can be assumed from his paintings (and prints), there is an almost total lack of information about Manet's musical interests. But in view of his repeated treatment of music in his art this lack needs to be tackled. In this chapter, as an alternative strategy, I will be describing how the works interact with a broader cultural milieu.

My argument is that when, in *The Spanish Singer*, Manet wanted to suggest the presence of music (or simply sound) in his representation, that is, to figure the presence of a quality incapable of direct visual embodiment, he did so by making that anomalous shift between the senses into a pictorial conundrum challenging logical resolution. As a preliminary observation I call upon what Angel Gonzalez Garcia describes as Manet's "games of *what can be seen and what can't*."<sup>7</sup> *The Spanish Singer* is suffused with non-visual references. There is the *heat and smoke* from the cigarette on the floor under the singer's foot or the *smell* from the garlic and onions in the corner of the painting nearest the spectator. Knowing the function of the terracotta flask we are encouraged to think it contains wine. These are all

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<sup>4</sup> Websites and editorials in magazines devoted to the guitar come back again and again to this painting, debating the reasons for Manet's placement of the guitar. Unfortunately the participants often display ignorance about the visual which is the equal of art historian's ignorance of the musical.

<sup>5</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. P471, N44. Despite writing a fascinating note on the subject Fried is essentially concerned only with aspects of "theatricality" as they conform to his ideas about the medium of painting *per se*. He ignores the specific importance of music to Manet's art.

<sup>6</sup> Kermit Champa was the best placed to fill this lacuna and he made a start on the subject in Champa, K.S., 1999. Concert music : the master model for radical painting in France, 1830-1890. *Imago musicae*, 16-17, 207-221. On p211 he refers to the fallout from Wagner's presence in Paris in 1860-1 describing "a highly influential group of emerging artists [who] began attending in earnest to Wagner, listening to his music whenever they could and in whatever ways they could - public concerts and all manner of private gatherings around the ubiquitous domestic piano. Included in this group (without necessarily excluding their friends) were Edouard Manet (whose wife was an accomplished pianist), Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Frédéric Bazille, Henri Fantin-Latour, and Paul Cézanne."

<sup>7</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P412. (His italics.)

synecdoches of the principal theme. What that amounts to in this work, what can't be seen and only by implication heard, is the sound of music.<sup>8</sup>

For the *Salon* audience his painting engendered an additional dislocation. The senses being assailed would derive no satisfaction from the perfumes and titbits of a rich, bourgeois interior. Unlike Jean-Baptiste Greuze's *Anne-Marie de Bricqueville de Laluserne, marquise de Bezons* (1759, Baltimore, BMA) the setting here is anonymous and nondescript; this interior space has few of that painting's comforts. Nor do the musical scores evident in that painting re-occur here. Nothing, apart from the expensive instrument, attests to the guitarist's knowledgeable participation in the world of the composed piece. This is a populist performance context; it eschews reference to music's classical associations. In sum, the performance figured in this painting bears very little relation to that which took place in the family *salon*.

Depicting a popular musician in an unconventional musical pose would have fitted with representations of the newly fashionable genre of folk music. In the cities popular music was the backbone of the burgeoning *café-concerts*. Manet was to make a number of images in the 1870s representing singers in their renditions of topical lyrics.<sup>9</sup> At the same time unsophisticated music originating with provincial French peasant classes was coming to the attention of the urban public. Enthusiastic collectors had started publishing compendious volumes listing popular poetry, legends, fables and songs. These became material for literary *Salons* and artists' *Ateliers*. Collections of folk music were often accompanied by a commentary which emphasized the poetry of its lyrics and largely ignored its instrumental accompaniment.<sup>10</sup>

This dichotomy between the singer and the instrumentalist, an important aspect of Manet's painting, matches what is known of these performative contexts. Manet would have been aware of the dynamic role being played by popular song in

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<sup>8</sup> Gregory Galligan's discussion of this work, while unresponsive to its music, makes a similar point: "An apparent paradox of my reading is that I am suggesting that figurative passages may serve to reference disfigurative aspects of the picture. Indeed, I submit that this is an important conceptual complexity of Manet's work." Galligan, G., 1998. The self pictured: Manet, the mirror, and the occupation of realist painting. *The Art Bulletin*, 80, 138-171. P169, n78.

<sup>9</sup> They are documented by T. J. Clark in Clark, T.J., 1984 (1999). *The painting of modern life: Paris in the art of Manet and his followers* New York: Knopf. Pp205-239.

<sup>10</sup> Leterrier, S.-A., 1999. Musique populaire et musique savante au XIXe siècle. Du "peuple" au "public". *Revue d'histoire du XIXe siècle*, 19, 89-103. On the *chanson populaire* see pp 101ff.

the articulation of an alternative to classical music through his friendship with Jules Husson (Champfleury, 1820-1889).<sup>11</sup> He had been responsible for the publication of a collection of songs from the French provinces co-edited with Jean-Baptiste Wekerlin (1821-1910). The book *Chansons populaires des Provinces de France* was compiled from other works with a more restricted geographic scope and published in 1860. It was illustrated by major artistic figures such as Gustave Courbet, Felix Bracquemond, Charles Jacque and Maurice Sand. In a formulation similar to that Liszt had developed for Gypsy music, Champfleury, who was searching for terms that could be applied to the vast geographic reach of this music, fixed upon what he saw as these songs unbridled expressiveness. He described them as “spontaneous cries which suddenly emerge from the heart of the people.” Observing that they lacked the rhetorical devices used by more sophisticated composers he argued their lyrics embraced a wide range of emotions even without these authors having the benefit of education or musical training.<sup>12</sup> He was followed in this by the critic Philippe Burty (1830-1890), an influential writer with a particular interest in popular cultural forms, writing and collecting in the fields of printmaking and japonism. His review of the book for the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* also emphasized the spontaneity and lack of conventional musical values the songs embodied. For him their “irregular and unrhymed poetry, their music which was without regular rhythm and exceeded harmonic laws” made it possible to “express more readily images than ideas, sensations than sentiments.”<sup>13</sup> Composed music was undergoing one of its regular splits – between the art of the masses and that of the cultural elite – and Manet’s works register this movement. He juxtaposes his impassioned singer, moved by the intensity of his delivery with his precious guitar held in front of his body, like a trophy, without any suggestion of genuine engagement with it.

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<sup>11</sup> The principal documentary evidence for claiming they were friends is his later appearance in Manet’s 1862 painting *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* (London, National Gallery). His features can be seen represented between Manet’s self-portrait and that of Albert de Balleroy at the extreme left of the image. The *Manet en el Prado* catalogue (p438) claims Manet’s “closest friends” are collected together in this left-hand corner of the image.

<sup>12</sup> Champfleury, J.H. & Wekerlin, J.-B., 1860. *Chansons Populaires des Provinces de France* Paris L'Ecrivain et Toubon. «...ces cris spontanés qui s'échappent tout à coup du coeur des peuples» p.i.  
«On dirait que l'absence de toute éducation n'a servi qu'à rendre plus vives les sensations. La joie, la tristesse, l'amour y sont dépeints plus fortement, n'étant bridés par aucune rhétorique.» *ibid* p.xxvii.

<sup>13</sup> Burty, P., 1860b. Review of Champfleury’s book in *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* Series 1, Volume 6 (3), 1 May, p182 : « Leur poésie irrégulière et sans rime, leur musique sans rythme arrêté, et en dehors des lois harmoniques, expriment plus volontiers des images que des idées, des sensations que des sentiments. »

Champfleury saw a productive interaction between music sourced from provincial France and its city counterparts. He claimed the music of the provinces could provide a source of inspiration for modern artists, while reciprocally he recognised that country songs often had their basis in love songs originating in the cities.<sup>14</sup> And he applied his observations to modern art, arguing that artists could likewise transcend the stultifying traditions of academic art by infusing their creations with popular content.

Champfleury is representative of a group of amateur ethno-musicologists collecting French folk songs at this time. The enterprise was from the start embroiled in political controversy. A conservative faction believed their collecting activities enhanced the capacity of music to instil socially harmonious sentiments. In their eyes the enterprise expressed the positive values served by music in creating a beneficent, untroubled community. For them the popular *chanson* came to symbolise an ingenuous art based on widely held feelings and on experiences that were commonly shared. Their collectors “stressed musical genres that they considered to be spiritual, soothing, or socially benign.”<sup>15</sup> Champfleury represented a different point of view. He emphasized the songs’ capacity to realistically depict the social conditions of the peasantry with a direct power of sentiment. Such music vigorously pressed such social concerns of the rural poor as the status of women (the “battle between the sexes”) and the effect of industrialisation brought by the encroachment of the railways into rural areas. These themes were highlighted by his choice of songs.

Thus the singer in Manet’s painting *The Spanish Singer* emerges from a lively contemporary discourse concerned with the regeneration of the arts through its connection with popular culture. Elements in Manet’s painting draw upon the “realist” agenda put forward by Champfleury and other like-minded critics, such as Edmond Duranty and Max Buchon. Both produced articles in the 1850s which equated realism in art not just with the expression of the external aspect of the observable social world but also with instinct, passion and desires.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> « Les paysans, chantent tous des romances de la ville et par une singulière bascule, les villes ont soif des chansons de paysans » Champfleury *ibid* p.iii.

<sup>15</sup> Fulcher, J., 1980. The Popular Chanson of the Second Empire: "Music of the Peasants" in France. *Acta musicologica*, 52 27-37. P28.

<sup>16</sup> Fulcher, J., 1981. Wagner as democrat and realist in France. *Stanford French Review*, Spring, 97-106. P101-2.

Champfleury was no professional musician and his criticism adopted the perspective of a committed amateur. His written appreciation of untutored folk music, at the time, would have been seen as consistent with his unfashionable championing of the music of Richard Wagner.<sup>17</sup> That composer's presence in Paris, on the occasion of his conducting concerts with extracts from his operas in 1860 and managing the production of his opera *Tannhäuser* in 1861, had stirred up a lot of controversy, much of it with a distinct political sub-text. Champfleury particularly admired Wagner's music because of its capacity, like folk song, to communicate directly and powerfully to a broadly based audience. He was confronting, in voicing such opinions, a conservative faction which dominated French musical criticism. Wagner had been damned by them for what was seen as his democratic music; music that was feared because of its capacity to give voice to instinctual experiences. The pre-eminent music critic Francois-Joseph Fétis (1784-1871) had described him as "the Courbet of music" and from the "school of Proudhon". Conservative critics condemned him as seditious "pursuing an art ... attempting to release the unreflective, the instinctive, the common or base." Champfleury, on the other hand, was prepared to praise it because "it ignored convention in the interest of emotional truth".<sup>18</sup>

To music critics such as Champfleury both the lyrical folk-songs of the people and the elemental forms of emotion called forth by Wagner's music were aspects of a realist art and were linked to a collective cultural reality. The political implications of Wagner's music were like those Champfleury saw reflected in popular song, a model associated with liberty and release where the social order, as it should be, was reflected. Champfleury was writing here not just in support of Wagner's music but

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<sup>17</sup> In the section on Wagner in Champfleury's 1861 *Grandes figures d'hier et d'aujourd'hui* Paris: Poulet-Malassis et de Broise pp155-6, he reprints Wagner's 1841 description of his visit to Beethoven (published originally in the *Revue et Gazette musicale de Paris* 19, 22 and 29 November and 3 December) where Wagner had reported Beethoven on the subject of the interaction of musical instruments with the human voice.

"Well (says Beethoven) reunite these two elements; translate the vague and abrupt sentiments of savage nature through the language of instruments, in opposition to the positive ideas of the soul represented by the human voice, which will exercise a luminous influence on the conflict of the former, regulating their elan and moderating their violence."

« Eh bien! (dit Beethoven), réunissez ces deux éléments; traduisez les sentiments vagues et abrupt de la nature sauvage par la langage des instruments, en opposition avec les idées positives de l'âme représentée par la voix humaine, et celle-ci exercera une influence lumineuse sur le conflit des premiers, en réglant leur élan et modérant leur violence. »

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* Pp98-99.

also as the French representative of a European interest in connecting art with populist roots. Wagner was also passing himself off, at this time, as an artist committed to the idea that musical drama was born out of the spirit of the *Volk*. He claimed he was drawing directly on the figures of the mythopoetic popular imagination.<sup>19</sup>

If Champfleury and Manet knew each other in 1860, as seems likely, it is possible Champfleury's description of the contemporary musical context could have been important for Manet's developing ideas about his painting. He had highlighted the relative importance of the song, as opposed to the musical accompaniment, a discrimination that I suggest takes place in Manet's painting. But Champfleury's advocacy, applied to folk music generally, does not seem sufficiently specific. It was not articulated in explicit enough terms to lead to the conclusion it provided motivation for Manet to construct, at the heart of these works, such a radical dichotomy between the singer and his instrument. Manet's revolutionary treatment of music, symbolised by his reversal of the position of the guitar, could not have been prompted by Champfleury alone, however closely their attitudes can be aligned.

In my chapter on *The Gypsies* I discussed Manet's exposure at this early part of his career to musical contexts described by Franz Liszt. I have already referred to the possible personal connections between these artists noting that, like his friend Charles Baudelaire, he may have had early access to and have read Liszt's recently published book *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859).<sup>20</sup> In examining the circumstances surrounding the creation of the images published as *Les Gitanos*, I suggested he might have been influenced by arguments in that book, especially as they relate to Liszt's ideas about the unconstrained nature of Gypsy music making. In the ferment of ideas concerned with *Bohemians* and constructions of Gypsy identity circulating in Paris at this time it is perhaps unwise to identify one source and claim it is more likely than any other to be the inspiration for Manet's versions of this contemporary myth. Irrespective of the close and documented links

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<sup>19</sup> Borchmeyer, D., 2003 *Drama and the world of Richard Wagner* Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press. Borchmeyer disputes Wagner's claim arguing that, in fact, he "either passed over in silence or else disparaged the modern versions of the tales that he himself had adapted" p101. But he does not deny that Wagner's rhetoric underlined his musical connections with traditional folk song.

<sup>20</sup> Marilyn Brown has shown that Liszt sent the book to Baudelaire in 1861 in exchange for a copy of *Les paradis artificiels* published and promptly sent to the musician in 1860. Brown, M.R., 1985a. *Gypsies and other Bohemians: the myth of the artist in nineteenth-century France* Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press. P27.



between Manet, Baudelaire and Liszt, it is safer merely to assert that Liszt's ideas give insight into the discourses about creativity current in the French capital when Manet was making this painting. Without wanting to claim here that Manet was directly inspired by this literary source its existence supports the argument that in creating the works beginning with *The Spanish Singer*, Manet was focussed on issues already given artistic form in Paris in 1860. I am using a reciprocal feedback between Manet and Liszt in this history of the period to enrich not just our understanding of specific works of art but also their contribution to the broader cultural milieu.

In his advocacy of Gypsy music Liszt drew attention to its potential to revolutionise western music. It would introduce an exotic strain both romantic and profoundly modern. This music, based on improvisatory performances of unannotated music was, in the first place, an opportunity for virtuosic display. The pre-eminence given by Gypsy musicians to virtuosity led to a music practice that was marked by an independence from the conventions and training of the classical music tradition. Even their greatest exponents had no conception of written music. Talking of the musician János Bihari (1764-1827), whom Liszt had heard and been deeply influenced by as a young man, he claimed any effort to write down what he had created would have done no more than inhibit his spontaneity.<sup>21</sup> These musicians prized above all else their ability to evoke violent, primitive musical feelings. Liszt described Bihari as one who "loved the electrically charged atmosphere which he spread around him through his playing; he cherished the moments when, himself moved, he saw others infected with the same impressions."<sup>22</sup>

Gypsy ignorance of classical values was therefore accounted a virtue; it was thought to enhance the communicative value of their music. In this respect Liszt celebrated the fact that their music consisted of a "process of modulation based in effect on a total negation of anything systematic." He argued that its compelling character resulted from their indifference to incorporating sophisticated transitions and intermediate modulations in their music. He claimed sophistication of that kind was so "excessively rare" in the structuring of their musical offerings one was obliged

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<sup>21</sup> Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval. P196.

<sup>22</sup> «Il a aimé l'atmosphère chargée d'électricité qu'il repandait autour de lui par ses chants ; il chérissait les moments où, ému lui-même, il voyait les autres contagés de ses impressions. » *Ibid* p201-2.

to conclude that when it occurred it had to be considered a modern corruption, an effacement of the original type. What they typically used instead was “the brusque succession of one tone after another”.<sup>23</sup> The abandonment of tonal modulation is the very characteristic that distinguishes Manet’s painting. Starting with *The Spanish Singer* his works feature abrupt juxtapositions of unmodulated colour in a process that is hailed as evidence of his modern approach.

Liszt proposed that a listener enjoying the advantage of not *knowing* music and being impressionable, would be drawn to “the liberty and richness of rhythms, their multiplicity and their flexibility, something never found elsewhere to the same degree.”<sup>24</sup> In their music making everything was permitted, their art derived neither from “a science that one learns, nor a practised craft, nor a skilfulness taught by using certain procedures and expedients, like that of a magician, nor a spell whose formula can be adopted like a recipe.”<sup>25</sup> Such a description can be applied *mutatis mutandis* to Manet’s painting, which also broke away from the traditional school-based procedures. Liszt’s description of the Gypsy musicians’ creative process prefigures Mallarmé’s description of the way Manet painted. Mallarmé had claimed his procedure consisted of the artist “plunging headlong into it ... like a man who knows that his surest plan to learn to swim safely is, dangerous as it may seem, to throw himself into the water”. Liszt talked of the Gypsy musicians following a similar procedure, one which he said was beyond the comprehension of the school trained Western musician, “a manner of immersing themselves suddenly in a fluid which instantaneously either freezes or burns us.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> «..il y aurait à mentionner en premier lieu son système de modulation, basé sur une sorte de négation totale de tout système à cet égard. Les Zigeuner ne connaissent pas plus de dogmes, de lois, de règle, de discipline en musique qu’ailleurs.... Chez eux, les modulations intermédiaires sont si peu obligatoires, qu’on peut même les appeler excessivement rares, et les considérer, quand elles se présentent, comme une corruption des temps modernes, comme un effacement, comme une oblitération du type originel. Les accords de transition sont à peu d’exceptions près, complètement omis dans la brusque attaque d’un ton après un autre. » *Ibid*, p144.

<sup>24</sup> «Ce qui avant tout et plus que tout le gagne à cette musique, c’est la liberté et la richesse des rythmes, leur multiplicité et leur souplesse qui ne se retrouvent nulle part ailleurs au même degré. » *Ibid*, p147.

<sup>25</sup> « L’art n’étant pour eux, ni une science que l’on apprend, ni un métier que l’on pratique, ni une habileté qui s’enseigne avec certains procédés et expédients, comme celle du prestidigitateur, ni un sortilège dont on puisse recevoir le formule comme une recette. » *Ibid*, p144.

<sup>26</sup> « Pour la plupart nos musiciens, gens de métier et gens civilisés, commencent par ne rien comprendre à cette manière de s’immerger soudainement dans un fluide qui, instantanément, nous glace ou nous brûle... » *Ibid*

This collection of references is not meant to demonstrate that Manet adopted his artistic procedures after having read Liszt's book as if he chose to create a pictorial style matching what that artist was saying about Gypsy music. Such would be a distortion, committing the solecism of confusing analogy with identity and forgetting that analogies identify similarities within disparities. The similarities I am proposing between Manet's painting style and the arguments Liszt introduces in his description of Gypsy music are presented as evidence of a commonality of approach to aesthetic issues at this time. In particular all these artists appear to have sought a simplification of formal means in the arts in pursuit of a more populist subject-matter. In the case of Liszt this could be seen as an early and halting attempt to accommodate popular performative modes of music within the classical tradition. For Manet it amounted to a sophisticated address directed at the same issue seen from the perspective of a painter working in a tradition equally thought to be in need of regeneration. While he was aware of, trained in and conflicted about his own art historical past, the issues were the same and they were addressed by using somewhat similar methods.

It is impossible to determine whether Manet was aware of the analogies between his turn to populist (musical) subject-matter using reduced modulation of tones and simplification of compositional elements in his painting and the same abbreviated modulation and spontaneous musical composition adopted and written about by Franz Liszt. The implications of their commonality in approach should not be ignored, however, even though they most likely came from different sources. Across different media approaches to art-making show such a degree of similarity that unless one is to subscribe to a notion of a *Zeitgeist* it has to be presumed these artists were talking to each other and providing models for each other's work. Charles Baudelaire, the poet whose own work profoundly addresses these issues, may well have been the conduit, despite difficulties of chronology, which I will address. But when it comes to analysing Liszt's influence on Manet, although it is likely to have been significant, there remains something *sui generis* about this one of Manet's work. Nothing in Liszt's description of Gypsy music suggests it could have provided the source for Manet's reversal strategy in *The Spanish Singer*.

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P145. The translation of Mallarmé's famous article is adopted from Rubin, J.H., 1994. *Manet's silence and the poetics of bouquets* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. P232.

Champfleury's and Liszt's critical formulations are two instances of contemporaneous music discourse likely to have been known by the artist. I have argued neither contains anything that would satisfactorily explain why Manet adopted his reversal strategy. Before I analyse my third contextual candidate, I will briefly mention two other contemporary influences, present either as part of the contemporary context for music or of a personal nature, which might have impacted on his musical representations.

One of the most tantalising takes its cue from the portrait of the music impresario Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880) in Manet's 1862 painting *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*. If the relationship between these two men were better understood something more might be made out of the impression that Manet's *Spanish Singer* images suggest a performance context. Offenbach was mounting shows, at the time of the making of this painting, which included broadly satirical parodies of hallowed musical traditions. These treated conventions to irreverent reversals, reverting to eighteenth-century models in order to make light-hearted jabs at a contemporary scene over-inflated with its own importance.<sup>27</sup> But nothing to date has come to light which would justify including Offenbach in my analysis. The only independent evidence that the two men knew each other comes from the end of Manet's working career, when a cousin of the composer, Judith French, was apparently modelling for Manet's painting *At Père Lathuille's* (1879, Musée de Tournai).<sup>28</sup> However the earlier painting is not conclusive proof they knew each other. When Manet painted the figures that appear in *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* he used, when he needed to, photographs of some of them.<sup>29</sup> Offenbach's image in photographed form was widely available and Manet could easily have used one when he included the composer with the other figures in the painting associated with music. As things stand, his presence in the 1862 painting acknowledges his centrality to musical culture in Paris during the

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<sup>27</sup> Everist, M., 2009. Jacques Offenbach: The Music of the Past and the Image of the Present. In A. Fauser & M. Everist (eds.) *Music, Theater, and Cultural Transfer Paris, 1830-1914*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, has a fascinating description of Offenbach's ambitions and in my chapter on *The Old Musician* I will be indicating that Manet's own work reflects some of that composer's techniques in a review he mounted in 1860, *Le carnaval des revues*.

<sup>28</sup> Tabarant, A., 1947. *Manet et ses oeuvres* Paris: Gallimard. P325.

<sup>29</sup> Juliet Wilson-Bareau has shown that the couple to the left of Fantin-Latour and above and behind Astruc, is the sculptor Eugène Brunet with his wife; she illustrates this discovery with a carte-de-visite photograph which duplicates the pose and appearance of the protagonists: Wilson-Bareau, J., 1991(a). London, National Gallery: *Art in the Making. Impressionism. Exhibition Review. The Burlington Magazine*, 133, 127-9. P129 Fig.68.

Second Empire but provides no more specific information about his personal connections with the artist. Nevertheless Manet could have been aware of Offenbach's productions without knowing the man personally. More research is needed to establish whether he was important in Manet's construction of this set of images.

Finally, the figure of Suzanne Leenhoff, Manet's mistress and wife-to-be casts a shadowy presence over all of Manet's musical works. He later explicitly acknowledged her musical skills in *Madame Edouard Manet Playing the Piano* (1867-8, Paris, Musée d'Orsay). But in these early paintings and prints with musical subjects, created while his relationship with her was still a secret, it is impossible to separate out what might be construed as her influence. She was undoubtedly a skilled pianist; she came to Paris in the late 1840s in order to pursue a career in that field, apparently enrolling at the Paris Conservatoire. She could have met Offenbach there; he would have been a fellow pupil.<sup>30</sup> She was intimate with Manet, modelling for him around the time this painting was being created; the print *La Toilette* is evidence for that. It is likely she would have seen *The Spanish Singer* while it was being made and surely inconceivable she wouldn't have discussed it. Then too, the fact that it was submitted to the 1861 *Salon* in company with the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents* (1860, Paris, Musée d'Orsay) gives the two works a more than coincidental connection, as if they stand for the two aspects uppermost in Manet's life at the time – his family allegiances and his mistress's music. But none of this bears a logical relationship with the odd decision Manet made about the composition of *The Spanish Singer*, it merely deepens the mystery.

It is simple, logical and consistent to argue that Manet knew the guitar was silent, in his painting. That much is clear. We can presume that he did not expect to radically break through the sense barriers dividing the two arts. It could be said that for that reason it did not concern him which way round the guitar was represented. He just had an interest in the way its seductive shape interacted with the man's body, nothing more was at stake than that. "Paradox" it may seem but Manet's attitude

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<sup>30</sup> Buylinckx, J.J.A., 1998. Een concert van Suzanne Leenhoff in Zaltbommel. *Tussen de Voorn en Loevstein*, XXXIV, 19-22 describes her early musical career. There is no record of her having graduated from the Conservatoire.

could have been a good deal more casual. By this token, nothing was at stake then and nothing extra should be read into the image now. Let sleeping dogs lie.

The view that holds works of art are enigmatic happily supports this approach. Whatever our conclusions, it can be argued, nothing is definite and fixed. It would be better to start from this attitude and let it forestall all fruitless attempts to read significance into images. The work of art is an object in the real world as well as the representation of an artist's vision. We can never know that we have acceded to the second so we should stick with the first. Anything intermediate has not enough substance to command respect and not enough evidence to support its conclusions.

In contradistinction to this approach this thesis argues that the work constitutes an intervention in the history of art. For that reason we investigate as much of its context as illuminates a larger discourse about Manet's relationship to music. There follows on from that an even larger discourse about his contribution to the nineteenth century artist interest in the interaction between artistic media, known at the time as the *transposition d'art*. It is incontestable that, at this stage in his career, Manet was interested in music and in its representation in his art.

The thought that Manet may have created this juxtaposition deliberately, the thought that has inspired James Rubin's insightful description of the work as "emphasizing artifice" inspires others, more specifically musical ones.<sup>31</sup> Manet's work hovers between sensuous experience and technical know-how in an uneasy juxtaposition where one seems to unthread the other's rightful place in the painting. Such an analysis finds no echo in the music contexts I have so far considered. The place I have been able to discover where matters analogous to this were being addressed is in the context of opera and opera criticism. There lively debates were taking place about music's definition and status. In these we find arguments most relevant to the strategies Manet adopted in introducing music into his paintings.

Therefore to fully grasp the significance of Manet's innovative gesture we need to investigate the presence in Paris of Richard Wagner, the most powerful force for change in European music in the second half of the nineteenth century and a controversial figure in Paris during his stay in the capital from 1859-1861. His

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<sup>31</sup> Rubin, J.H., 1994. *Manet's silence and the poetics of bouquets* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. P36.

presence generated a ferment of ideas amongst a circle of Paris' elite artists to which Manet belonged. It was a ferment that in all likelihood extended to his domestic arrangements. Suzanne Leenhoff is known to have been up-to-date in her musical tastes and, as Manet's wife, she later played piano transcriptions of Wagner's music to Baudelaire on his death-bed.<sup>32</sup> Manet would have been aware of the issues swirling around Wagner's stay if not as a result of his own interests then certainly in tandem with hers.

What brings the Wagnerian influence on the Parisian musical scene in the early 1860s to bear on issues within *The Spanish Singer* does not just emerge unmediated from the composer's ideas. In particular it relates to the debate about them initiated by Baudelaire's landmark essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris* (1861). The story of Baudelaire's involvement in Wagner's literary reception can be opened with the letter Baudelaire had written to Wagner in February 1860. In it he conveyed his ecstatic response to the concert he had attended either in January or February 1860. Wagner had conducted three concerts giving excerpts from *Tannhäuser*, *Lohengrin*, the overture to *The Flying Dutchman* and the prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*. Baudelaire had stated unequivocally "I owe you the greatest musical joy that I have ever experienced."<sup>33</sup> Subsequently, in his correspondence, he mentioned he was undertaking a more considered essay about Wagner's music, working on it throughout 1860.<sup>34</sup>

This essay's publication was triggered by Baudelaire attending one of the three performances that took place in March 1861 of Richard Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser*. These performances had generated such controversy and virulent commentary Baudelaire felt obliged to rush into print his essay defending Wagner. This intense interest in Wagner specifically and in music in general was displayed not just by Baudelaire. It also swept up in its wake other prominent figures like Champfleury, Gautier, de Banville, Doré, Fantin-Latour and Astruc. The roll call of influential figures that came to Wagner's defence after the performance fiascos

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<sup>32</sup> The reference to Suzanne Manet playing Wagner first occurs in Jullien, A., 1909. *Fantin-Latour, sa vie et ses amitiés* Paris: Laveur. P100.

<sup>33</sup> Baudelaire, C., 1973. *Correspondance* Paris: Gallimard. P667.

<sup>34</sup> Miner, M., 1995. *Resonant gaps between Baudelaire and Wagner* Athens: University of Georgia Press. P203, n4.

covers like a palimpsest the names we most closely associate with Manet today.<sup>35</sup> According to Joseph Acquisto, this scandal and its accompanying essay virtually launched the mania for Wagner that swept Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century; the essay “rewrites the nature of aesthetic experience in the 1860s”.<sup>36</sup> His description of Wagner’s effect matches what is said in the *Dictionnaire de la musique en France au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle*. There Annegret Fauser and Manuela Schwartz claim “The famous scandal at the premiere of *Tannhäuser* which took place in Paris in 1861 was the catalysing event changing Wagner, from one day to the next, from a controversial musician in the world of music into a prophet proclaiming the art of the future, thanks, in particular, to the writing of Baudelaire.”<sup>37</sup>

Baudelaire’s great contribution to the matters raised in Manet’s painting arises out of his demonstration that a work of art, or of criticism, is capable of mirroring another work originating in another medium. The essay’s importance for understanding what Manet hoped to achieve in turning towards picturing musical events and the experience of sound in a visual medium cannot be over-estimated. A direct link between the essay and this painting is difficult to establish. It is possible to argue that Manet may not have come to know Baudelaire’s essay in time for this influence to manifest itself in the case of *The Spanish Singer*. Just as in my discussion of the possible influence of Liszt’s writing on Manet’s painting, the only way forward is to make a more general argument about a climate for art’s interactions with music that is not dependent on a direct and knowing transmission of ideas. Close attention to the chronological details of both artists’ works, in their relation to the Wagnerian phenomenon in 1860 and 1861, shows how uncertain is the basis for any more definite statement.

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<sup>35</sup> Annegret Fauser describes Parisian audiences “divided into Wagnerians and anti-Wagnerians ...before Wagner’s operas ever reached the Parisian stage, his *Musique de l’Avenir* was performed as an on-going saga onstage as well as off.” Fauser, A., 2009. *Tannhäuser* and its French Critics. In A. Fauser & M. Everist (eds.) *Music, Theater, and Cultural Transfer: Paris, 1830-1914*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 228-255. P234.

<sup>36</sup> Acquisto, J., 2004. Uprooting the lyric: Baudelaire in Wagner’s forests. *Nineteenth century French studies*, 32, 223-237. P223.

<sup>37</sup> In the same Dictionary, Hervé Lacombe states that “Before the 1870-1880s, Wagner’s work is little played, scarcely published and even less studied in France.” These quotations from the dictionary have been sourced in Everist, M., 2007 Review of *Dictionnaire de la musique en France au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle* by Joël-Marie Fauquet. *Music and Letters*, 88, 502-505. P1306. It may be a reasonable response to this academic quibbling to point out that the circle of Wagner admirers amongst the French literati in the early 1860s carried an influence way beyond their numbers.



Early biographical sources have contradictory opinions about when Manet and Baudelaire became acquainted. Manet's boyhood friend, Antonin Proust, has Baudelaire on friendly terms with Manet from the 1850s. In particular he describes Baudelaire being present when Manet's unsuccessful submission to the 1859 *Salon* was returned.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand Paul Alexis (1847-1901), Zola's biographer, writing twenty years earlier in *Revue moderne et naturaliste* 1880, claims that Manet was introduced to Baudelaire by Duranty shortly after the Salon of 1861.<sup>39</sup> Beatrice Farwell is one modern critic who has taken cognisance of this discrepancy in the biographical record and commented "the evidence is not altogether convincing that Manet and Baudelaire were good friends before 1862."<sup>40</sup> Usually this discrepancy is ignored in Manet studies. The latest exhibition catalogue *Manet en el Prado* (2003), in an article by Juliet Wilson-Bareau, takes Proust's chronology for fact, while abandoning the matter of the closeness of their friendship to the ambiguity of language: "The two men knew each other in the 1850s and were in close contact in the 1860s."<sup>41</sup> A recent article by Stéphane Guégan in the on-line newsletter *La Tribune de l'Art*, 11 July 2010, enters this controversy with a new piece of information. It provides evidence that a copy of a book on *Théophile Gautier* published by Baudelaire in 1859 carries a dedication to Manet. The presumption is that such a dedication copy would have been sent close to its publication date, suggesting that the two figures may have been linked by this time.<sup>42</sup> Despite misgivings I will be adopting that line in the balance of this chapter. I will endeavour to construct my argument so that it does not depend upon Manet knowing in advance of its publication Baudelaire's analysis of Wagner's music. Of course this does not exclude the possibility that Manet could have gleaned information by and about Wagner from other publications available to him in Paris at the time that he was creating *The Spanish Singer*.

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<sup>38</sup> Brombert, B.A., 1996. *Edouard Manet: rebel in a frock coat*, Boston: Little Brown. Pp14 and 23.

<sup>39</sup> Alexis, P., 1880. Manet. *La revue moderne et naturaliste*, 289–95.

<sup>40</sup> Farwell, B., 1981. *Manet and the nude: a study of iconography in the Second Empire* New York: Garland Pub. P56.

<sup>41</sup> Mena Marques, M.B. (ed.) (2004) *Manet en el Prado*, Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado. P383. At p390 n36 she cites Proust as her authority for this statement.

<sup>42</sup> <http://www.latribunedelart.com/petites-notes-sur-manet-3-manet-versus-baudelaire-article002664.html>  
Accessed 12 July 2010.

As I stated in my previous chapter, Manet is thought to have made his painting *The Spanish Singer* during 1860 (the date inscribed on its surface) beginning perhaps in the summer after he had moved to a new studio. If this is correct then if he did have any knowledge of Baudelaire's article it could only have come about through their discussing what they were both creating. The article itself, published in March 1861, came out too late for it, in its published form, to have influenced Manet's painting. The date of publication is only relevant if one presumes the two men were not yet in personal communication with each other. My presumption that they were already friends is one that, as I have indicated, is supported in the literature.

The suggestion of a later cross-fertilization between Baudelaire's essay and Manet's 1862 work *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* has already been made by Thérèse Dolan who comments "Considering the close relationship between [Baudelaire's *Wagner*] text and Manet's visual work, it is highly probable that Manet knew this essay and that he intentionally created certain visual elements of *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* in reference to some passages of Baudelaire's text" (2005, 119, retranslated from the French).<sup>43</sup> Dolan's assertion of fundamental similarities between Baudelaire's article and Manet's production of music-related images parallels Baudelaire's aspirations in his essay. Described by Susan Bernstein as the attempt to "perform the translation of music into literature and stand in the stead of music itself" Manet was undertaking the parallel and equally mammoth task of translating music into painting in the various works he created between 1860 and 1862 and later.<sup>44</sup> It therefore is instructive to examine Baudelaire's self-conscious attempt to marry his written text with the music of Wagner's opera. I undertake this because I believe it deals with similar issues to those confronted by Manet.

Anxious to establish the equation between his own efforts in poetry and what Wagner was claiming for music, seeing them both attempting to evoke the world of unmediated emotion, Baudelaire quoted an extract from his own poem *Correspondances* in the course of his essay. This quotation occurs directly after he

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<sup>43</sup> In the course of her essay she also presumes Manet would have known Baudelaire's famous poem *Correspondances* "doubtless, one can presume Manet knew this important work by Baudelaire" Dolan, T., 2005. *Œuvres d'art de l'avenir: Manet, Baudelaire et Wagner*. In D. Conroy & J. Gratton (eds.) *L'œil écrit: études sur des rapports entre texte et image 1800-1940* Geneva: Skatline, 119-141. P132, n7.

<sup>44</sup> Bernstein, S., 1998. *Virtuosity of the Nineteenth Century: Performing Music and Language in Heine, Liszt, and Baudelaire* Stanford: Stanford University Press. P136.

## Chapter 6

has drawn upon his own repeatedly stated belief in the capacity for aesthetic experiences to reflect the same underlying idea despite their being experienced in different media: “The only really surprising thing would be that sound could not express colour, that colours could not give the idea of melody, and that both sound and colour together were unsuitable as media for ideas; since all things always have been expressed by reciprocal analogies, ever since the day when God created the world as a complex indivisible totality.”<sup>45</sup>

The poem then describes the subject’s evoking, from the raw material of an unmediated sensuous experience, the corresponding poetic construction that will succeed in conveying it to others. But this is no simple matter. The poem entertains a distinctively fractured interpretation of the idea. In a work which first states the ideal and then proceeds in the later stanzas (not reprinted in his Wagner article) to deconstruct his own premises, Baudelaire implies the sensual dimension to experience is no more than a mirage, fleeting, unreliable and unrecuperable. In the poem we are treated to an essential separation between the poet’s own being and whatever cannot be identified with him: the world of natural objects, of other human beings, society or God. Accordingly the poem comes to conclude that a natural realm where the senses are experienced as a totality is a romantic dream. Baudelaire, the modern poet, can only replace it with the infinite mirroring of figural language. Many modern commentators have pointed to the fatal undermining of any sense of unity provided by the word “comme” in Baudelaire’s poem: Beryl Schlossman summarises their conclusion: “In *Correspondances* the ‘ténébreuse et profonde unité’ of line 6 is subject to a ‘comme’ of resemblance. This ‘comme’ - typical of Baudelairean usage - posits resemblance as a figural connection rather than a factual one; the relation of ‘les parfums, les couleurs, et les sons’ to ‘unité’ remains hypothetical and even virtual”.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> « ...ce qui serait vraiment surprenante, c’est que le son *ne pût pas* suggérer la couleur, que les couleurs *ne pussent pas* donner l’idée d’une mélodie, et que le son et le couleur fussent impropres à traduire des idées ; les choses s’étant toujours exprimées par une analogie réciproque, depuis le jour où Dieu a proféré le monde comme une complexe et indivisible totalité. » [Pichois II, p784]. I include the French text for *Correspondances* at the conclusion to this chapter.

<sup>46</sup> Schlossman, B., 1992. Benjamin’s *Über Einige Motive bei Baudelaire*: The secret architecture of *Correspondances*. *MLN*, 107, 548-579. P578. De Man, P., 1984. *The rhetoric of romanticism* New York: Columbia University Press, p254 suggests “the stated meaning of the poem becomes threatened by the stutter, the *piétinement* of aimless enumeration.”

As Joseph Acquisto observes “the purity of an esthetic experience in the forest is now reinscribed within the logic of citationality, disunity, fragmentation, and crisis.”<sup>47</sup> It is characteristic of Manet’s approach to the business of transferring auditory phenomena into a visual medium that he too will use the “infinite mirroring” of visual tropes, thereby asserting the connection between his depicted musical subject-matter and any original musical experience it was attempting to evoke. This clustered “logic of citationality, disunity, fragmentation and crisis” underlies the references to music he makes in his painting, demonstrating a similar gap between his original experience and its recreation.

Baudelaire’s essay marked his discovery that the act of writing about Wagner’s music led him to the limits of what literature was capable of expressing. His writing about the experience of listening to Wagner’s music turned into an act of memorisation, not itself the ecstatic experience but its description, the reportage of what had been a personal experience. No doubt Baudelaire had written with the expectation that any art, or critical commentary on it, is capable of carrying its audience beyond the confines of its medium. This is the model that music had so compellingly impressed upon him. And his critical text is embedded with poetic effects designed to match that capacity of music. Critics such as Bernstein and Heath Lees have commented on the persuasive action of the text on its reader. “Baudelaire’s italics, spacing, and quotation marks operate musically; they are ‘prosaic’ counterparts to the ‘musical’ traits of language (melody, rhythm, rhyme, sonority, and so on) traditionally identified with music” says Bernstein. Heath Lees expands this insight arguing that Baudelaire’s essay was cast “in language that aims to enchant the ear and orientate the mind in one fused process”.<sup>48</sup> This goes too far, however. Baudelaire resorts to fragmented clusters of literary devices to convey his sense of the musical event in his written prose. The colliding of the media, generated by his techniques, effects no resolution of their separate states into a larger whole.

Devices used by Baudelaire to engender a “musical” sense in a normally unrelated medium are reinvented in Manet’s painting. Like Baudelaire he makes use of tactics originating in painting to engender a sense of music. One such, long in

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<sup>47</sup> Acquisto, J., 2004. Uprooting the lyric: Baudelaire in Wagner's forests. *Nineteenth century French studies*, 32, 223-237. P234.

<sup>48</sup> Bernstein *op cit* p144. Lees, H., 2007. *Mallarmé and Wagner: Music and Poetic Language* Aldershot and Burlington, Vt: Ashgate. P91.

vogue in paintings with music subject-matter, displays his flexible approach to using the dynamics of the gaze. Music's capacity to absorb our attention is pictured by creating an out of picture focus for the singer's gaze. Raphael's *The Ecstasy of St Cecilia* (c1514-6, Bologna, Pinacoteca Nazionale) is an early inscription of this outer-directed gaze. But there the musician is transmitting what she alone hears of the Heavenly chorus. Manet's version has the singer attending to his own performance through a gaze projected beyond the canvas and avoiding contact with a possible source. More or less contemporaneous with Manet's, is Degas's portrait of his father listening to the guitarist Pagans *Lorenzo Pagans and Auguste de Gas, the Artist's Father*. (c.1871-72 Paris Musée d'Orsay). There too M. Degas looks down and out of the picture space, his eyes unfocussed. Music was understood to project its listener into an *alternative nature*. By projecting the singer's gaze into an indeterminate distance Manet refers this traditional device in this painting.<sup>49</sup> However physically close the presumed audience is to music's creation here, there is a separation between our normal consciousness and the musical effect indexed by the distant, unfocused gaze of the singer. This otherworldliness in the singer's gaze is the balance Manet creates with the animated presence of the man himself. Music is being personified; it emerges from a specific performance context, taking shape as an abstract quality, one that is merely contiguous with and not in any sense dependent on the presence of the guitar.

Manet also uses painting's raw material to encapsulate a sense of music. Pure greens, greys and yellows stand out against a black blank background and stud the overarching uniformity of space. They call to mind and are reminiscent of the crisp bright tones of the guitar, which in the painting is the locus of that cross-over between the senses. This equation of music and colour is taken a step further in *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*. There Manet uses patches of syncopated colours which have been dotted across the canvas to describe features and items of clothing. But rather than attaching themselves convincingly to their representational contexts they appear to adhere to the front surface of the canvas, creating an abstract pattern of buttery paint marks. Detached from their referents they independently determine our viewing experience. Thérèse Dolan describes the effect of these "touches of pigment"; "in

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<sup>49</sup> Anne Leonard suggests "Such works relied on the premise that listening to music is distinct from other experiences and induces an emotional state particular to it." Leonard, A., 2007. Picturing listening in the late nineteenth century. *Art Bulletin*, 89, 266-286. P272.

their differentiation from the ingenious imitations of objects and persons – they act more like a metaphor than like a faithful replica of the figurative aspect.”<sup>50</sup>

The composition making use of pictorial devices, such as the body’s S-curve around the frontally presented guitar and Manet’s projection of the figure onto the frontal plane of the picture surface (by means of the raised leg) works to evoke the excitement of being present at a live musical performance. Here Manet connects the visual devices with the singing part of the musical experience, as if a contorted physiognomy can stand for the sensuous immediacy of the sound being created.

Finally, a wide range of sensory analogies, heat, smell, taste and even touch are introduced and they are there to cue the viewer to the presence in it of other than visual phenomena. The presence of these cues alerts the spectator to the likelihood that the painting can also evoke the sound of music.

These are all standard visual devices used by painters to refer to the presence of music in their work. Manet, however had another string to his bow. His unique contribution to the painting-music interface was to insert in a perfectly credible visual scenario a radically disjunctive reference to the business of music-making. He was keeping music alive in the viewer’s consciousness by not just making this disjunction the centre-piece of his painting, but also by re-inventing it for the purposes of his prints. Just like his procedure in *Silentium* where, as I have argued, we are alerted to the important role being played by the hands in alluding to the presence of sound, in a configuration that creates a suture with the activity of the eyes, here too dichotomous scenarios make us aware of what is unusual, because musical, in this visual experience.

By creating a visual conundrum at the heart of his representation, by dissecting music’s physical form, he was not just drawing attention to its contemporary status, as Rubin argues.<sup>51</sup> He was also relying on the illogicality of the image to generate an alternative appreciation of painting’s expressive potential. At the beginning of the twentieth century, Kandinsky discovered in abstraction the solution to the question what painting should represent and music “the most immaterial art” provided the model for his radical departure from conventional

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<sup>50</sup> Dolan *op cit* (n41): pp 132-3.

<sup>51</sup> Rubin *op cit* n30.

representation.<sup>52</sup> This approach was not available to Manet at this juncture. But, with a cultural commitment to caricature and a well-developed sense of the absurd Manet was able instead to employ visual paradox to make a similar statement about what lies behind the image. This appeal to paradox unleashed the potential for the unexpected to emerge. Manet's is not a "normalising" image; there is no explanation that fully encompasses its visual effect. As such it generates the possibility for a viewer reaction drawing on sense experiences that can be described as alternatives to visual perceptions.

To conclude, I want to demonstrate that with this painting Manet was exploiting an observation about the contemporary status of music. I am arguing that he undertook his radical suture not purely out of an attempt to find a solution to the quandary Baudelaire describes in *Correspondances* and his essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris*. Rather he was drawing upon ideas represented by and discussed in relation to Wagner's music, putting them into a visual context and giving them a distinctive visual function. He was able, by this approach, to turn his painting into a meditation about the interaction of the past and the present in art, in general. Let me start by observing that this painting, and its prints, were initiating a discourse about capturing a moment in its pregnancy (the singer, in full stride) which became so central to the Impressionist methodology. He juxtaposed that with a valedictory acknowledgement of the history of art (the guitar, in all its representational glory). In this painting the moment is recorded where the former is supplanting the latter.

What this most resembles in the musical sphere was the "dynamic forward thrust" of Wagner's music dramas. These were surmounting the confinement of music to an abstract tradition of absolute music, one unmediated by the presence of poetry. Baudelaire observed that in Wagner's operas the relationship of music with the lyric voice was intrinsic to its meaning, pointing out that "without the poetry Wagner's music would still be a poetic work."<sup>53</sup> Wagner had written in his *Lettre sur musique* about the importance to him of the poetic in the creation of his music-dramas. He wrote "poetry will find without difficulty the means, it will acknowledge that its deepest and most profound aspiration is to resolve itself once and for all in

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<sup>52</sup> See the discussion in Henry, M., 2009. *Seeing the Invisible: On Kandinsky* London: Continuum International Publishing Group Ltd. P113.

<sup>53</sup> « En effet, sans poésie, la musique de Wagner serait encore une œuvre poétique... » Pichois II, 803.

music, since it will recognise in music, a need that in its turn poetry alone can satisfy.”<sup>54</sup> True to his words, the libretto attained an unprecedented importance in his operas leading, in the twentieth century, to them being criticized for subordinating the music to the poetic. Words supplanted traditional structural forms imposed by musical conventions: “Music, the most crucial element of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, was forced merely to repeat what the words had already said.”<sup>55</sup>

At this point it is appropriate to pause and consider the coincidence of Wagner’s treatment of the relation between words and music in his operas and Manet’s treatment of the same material in his painting. From this distance, and with available resources, nothing can prove that Manet was fully conscious of Wagner’s procedures. Nor that he was deliberately creating his work in response to those. But, in the final analysis, the presumption of such a deliberated link is not necessary. Manipulation of media boundaries was undertaken by avant-garde artists in a range of disciplines at this time. When it comes to such innovators as Manet, Baudelaire and Wagner ideas that one of these artists developed and exemplified in their work filtered through to the others. Even if Manet had not consciously been intending to illustrate Wagner’s ideas about the mixing of media in a larger art-work, this is the outcome of this work. Therefore an explanation that sees in contemporary circumstances the basis for his position needs to be introduced to make the work understandable. Our notions of history are forever connecting the personal and individual with larger social movements even when there is nothing that directly proves the connection. I have been careful to avoid any imputation that I am relying on the notion of the *Zeitgeist* to bolster my argument here. Rather what I am suggesting is that not enough research has been done on the subject of Manet’s musical interests to discover how the connection of his works with advanced musical thinking came about. It is my feeling that our ignorance of the role of Suzanne

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<sup>54</sup> « La poésie en trouvera sans peine le moyen, elle reconnaîtra que sa secrète et profonde aspiration est de se résoudre finalement dans la musique, dès qu’elle apercevra dans la musique un besoin qu’à son tour la poésie peut seule satisfaire. » Acquisto, J., 2006. *French Symbolist Poetry and the Idea of Music* Aldershot: Ashgate. Pxxxvi. He takes this extract from the French version of an essay that was published in Paris in 1861, simultaneously in French and German.

<sup>55</sup> “The more it [music] pushed itself to the fore the more superfluous it became, and this in turn affected its formal integrity.” Baragwanath, N., 2006. *Musicology and critical theory: The case of Wagner, Adorno and Horkheimer. Music and Letters*, 87, 52-71. P64.



Leenhoff accounts for this hiatus and I look forward to reading the results of research concerning her which are currently being advanced to fill in some of these gaps.

That said, it is the case that Wagner was writing about the innovatory aspects of his music in publications that could have been read in Paris. At the time Manet was making his painting, interest in Wagner's ideas was intense and they were being frequently discussed. What Wagner had to say about this very movement of music away from purely instrumental forms is germane to what Manet appears to be describing in his painting. Wagner acknowledged the dichotomy between his music-dramas and instrumental music. In fact his written discussion of that theme began a debate about our understanding of "music" which continues today. One aspect of this debate focuses on what is understood by the term "absolute music".<sup>56</sup> The term first appeared in an introduction Wagner wrote to accompany his performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony in Dresden in 1846. There he celebrated the fourth movements' "decisively more speaking character". It "comes forth", he says "nearly abandoning the confines of *absolute music*, [it] confronts the other instruments as though with powerful, emotional speech..."<sup>57</sup>

Wagner revisited the notion three years later in the series of writings he created while he was in Zurich. Here his discussion appears to have been influenced by Feuerbach's critique of the Hegelian concept of the absolute as a philosophical term used in idealist philosophy. Feuerbach "as an alternative to absolute spirit as a creation of absolute thought ... proposed a more anthropological approach based on the immediacy of sensory experience. He suggested a radical reordering of being over thinking, the sensuous over the spiritual". (Pederson, 242) Wagner subscribed to Feuerbach's rejection of religiosity. He aimed to move perceptions of music away from its solitary eminence as the spiritual summit of human experience. He wanted to see it reintegrated in a performative context. In that respect it would resemble the role

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<sup>56</sup>Kivy, P., 2009. *Antithetical arts: On the ancient quarrel between literature and music* Oxford: Oxford University Press. Kivy takes an affirmative approach to its philosophy; Pederson, S., 2009. Defining the term 'absolute music' historically. *Music and Letters*, 90, 240-262. Pederson denies its paradigmatic status, using its variably defined history to evacuate it of meaning.

<sup>57</sup> Pederson *op cit* p241 [emphasis added]. He includes at p255, Nietzsche's unpublished comment on this view of Wagner's: "What are we to think of that enormous aesthetic superstition: that Beethoven himself, with that fourth movement of the Ninth, made a solemn statement about the limits of absolute music, yea, unlocked the portals of a new art in which music could even represent images and concepts, and thus become accessible to the 'conscious spirit'." References to Pederson from now on will follow quotations in my text.

he presumed it was given in theatre in ancient Greece. There, he believed, it participated in creating an aesthetic experience where all the artistic media were combined. Such would be music's future. To quote a modern commentary, in his essay *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (1849) "Wagner argues that the dialectic of history has made absolute music a thing of the past, and that now the time has come to envision an 'artwork of the future'". Wagner was envisaging "the coming together of the different arts to form something higher" (Pederson, 244).

While I cannot say that Manet had read this essay, it was available to Parisian readers in 1860 in truncated form in the essay *Lettre sur la musique* attached to Wagner's *Quatre Poèmes d'Opéra* (1861). This essay gives a succinct account of Wagner's central ideas about the relation of music to poetry and specifically about Wagner's commitment to what he called "The Art-Work of the Future." In that form it had been read by Baudelaire, at least. He refers to it in his essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris* (1861) [Pichois II 789-90]. He implies that he understands its implications when he asserts that "Wagner had never stopped repeating that the role of music (dramatic music) was to *speak* the sentiment ... in other words to express the undefined part of feeling which speech, too positive by nature, cannot render..." Manet demonstrates his singer "speaking the sentiment", as if painting, too, had a part to play in this confluence of artistic media.

Baudelaire was alive to the implications of Wagner's music-drama mix. He made a particular point in his essay of describing the Overture to *Tannhäuser*. Observing how that music embodies "the struggle of two principles which have chosen the human heart as the principal field of battle" he proposes that the opera revolves around these dichotomous elements.<sup>58</sup> In Manet's painting the sensuous act of singing is analogously divided from the technical brilliance of the guitar representation with the two musical modes at odds with each other.

Manet appears to be commenting on musical interpretation, pointing to the hiatus between the poetic intensity of the depicted singer and the technical mastery of the depicted guitar. It is tempting to conclude from this that the communicative

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<sup>58</sup> «Comme Wagner n'avait jamais cessé de répéter que la musique (dramatique) devait *parler* le sentiment ... c'est-à-dire exprimer la partie indéfinie du sentiment que la parole, trop positive, ne peut pas rendre»  
« *Tannhäuser* représente la lutte des deux principes qui ont choisi le cœur humain pour principal champ de bataille » Pichois II, Pp 786, 794.

aspect of music (and indeed painting) is being called into question. The painting registers Manet's recognition that giving art over to the moment, the event, was incompatible with a recognisable artistic tradition, the one subverted the capacity of the other to create a meaningfully integrated image. This aligns my interpretation of the image with T. J. Clark's assessment of the dissolution of old values and uncertainty in what replaces them in the "modernist" strain in nineteenth-century advanced art. Discussing Manet's painting *The Railway* (1873, NGA, Washington) he posits Manet creating in that painting a metaphor for "a general, maybe constitutive instability – for things in modernity incessantly changing their shape, hurrying forward, dispersing and growing impalpable."<sup>59</sup> Through the animation of the singing figure Manet is allowing the "musical" aspect of painting to come forth. Side-lining the technical mastery involved in a consummate musical performance, Manet equates that performance with his own "musical" treatment of a painted theme. The static, "found" quality of his guitar representation is the measure of the limitations to Manet's synaesthetic ambition, the measure of painting's (and music's) lost aspirations for unity and comprehensiveness. In its impotence, it registers the gulf between art and music the painting has striven to overcome, at the same time that it participates in the discourse about music's own confrontation with questions of self-sufficiency and vaulting ambition.

I am concerned about the negativity of such an interpretation. I am uncertain whether it represents what Manet was aiming to achieve or whether it is not merely a recent extrapolation born out of despair about the failure of art to signal any way forward in today's dire political situation. When I look again at this painting I am struck by the guitar's representation. I cannot believe that Manet would have devoted so much painstaking work to creating, as part of this painting, an image whose place it was to signal an end to the traditional art of depicting. His deeply respectful commitment to creating an image of such stunning beauty is at odds with an interpretation that sees in it a valedictory swansong for art's traditions. So instead of Clark's despair I prefer to imagine that the work signals Manet's hopefulness. It was hopefulness, felt at that time, about the integration of the arts. Manet perhaps was incorporating what painting had always done best, irrespective of its representational accuracy, with a new dynamic catholicity gained from opening the medium to

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<sup>59</sup> Clark, T.J., 2002. Modernism, postmodernism, and steam. *October*, 100, 154-174. P158.

influences from other art-forms. In this instance he was allowing into painting the characteristic element of music in its time-bound ephemerality. Could it be that in this art-work he was also looking towards a time when art-forms could operate together without limitations imposed by disciplinary boundaries? That was certainly Wagner's ambition. Baudelaire, too, in his essay discussing Wagner's opera *Tannhäuser* had written about this sense of the absorption of one medium in another. As I quoted earlier: "the only really surprising thing would be that sound could not suggest colour, that colours could not give the idea of melody, and that both sound and colour together were unsuitable as media for ideas; since all things always have been expressed by reciprocal analogy..." [Pichois II 784]. When Manet was making of his musical images a pictorial equivalent of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* he was demonstrating the capacity of visual media to absorb and expand through their relationship with music.

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Correspondances

*La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers  
Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles;  
L'homme y passe à travers des forêts de symboles  
Qui l'observent avec des regards familiers.  
  
Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent  
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,  
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,  
Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.  
  
Il est des parfums frais comme des chairs d'enfants,  
Doux comme les hautbois, verts comme les prairies,  
— Et d'autres, corrompus, riches et triomphants,  
Ayant l'expansion des choses infinies,  
Comme l'ambre, le musc, le benjoin et l'encens,  
Qui chantent les transports de l'esprit et des sens.*

Charles Baudelaire <sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Charles Baudelaire, Poem No IV, *Les Feurs du mal*. Pichois I, 11.

## Chapter 7: Why Manet's *Absinthe Drinker* appears in *The Old Musician*

*Les peintres qui obéissent à l'imagination cherchent dans leur dictionnaire les éléments qui s'accordent à leur conception; encore, en les ajustant avec un certain art, leur donnent-ils une physionomie toute nouvelle.*<sup>1</sup>

In Manet's edition of prints published by Cadart in 1862 two etchings, *The Gypsies* and *The Young Woman* [*La petite fille*], at least, refer to Gypsies, albeit the second comes by that status indirectly. The first of these I discussed in Chapter 4. *The Gypsies*, brings into focus what were described in the literature and other representations of the day as their typical characteristics. In that print Manet chose to highlight the Gypsies association with music, their itinerant lifestyle, and their loose familial relations. Aside from possible personal considerations, his most likely source for bringing their association with music to the forefront of these characteristics would have been his reading of the literary work by Franz Liszt on the subject of Gypsy music *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859).<sup>2</sup> That work, more than any other, also informs the image of *The Old Musician* and this chapter will be largely devoted to developing the implications of their association.

It is a measure of the closeness of *The Old Musician* [Fig. 46] to Manet's print production that versions of figures in two etchings included in the 1862 Cadart portfolio are repeated in it. Both undergo changes in format to accompany their change in medium, albeit each at different stages in their transformation. The more straight-forward is the print *The Young Woman*.<sup>3</sup> [Fig. 47] Questions of chronology - did the print come before, or after, the painting - haunt this work and they are questions I will address in the ninth chapter. The other question raised concerning this print and insistently addressed in the literature is whether Manet drew upon a

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<sup>1</sup> "In following their imagination painters search through their dictionary for elements which correspond with their conception; moreover, by means of artful adjustment, they endow them with a totally new appearance." Charles Baudelaire, *Life and work of Eugène Delacroix* (Pichois II, 747).

<sup>2</sup> The Gypsies commitment to music is referred to throughout the book; discussion of their social and familial relations is less common. Nevertheless Liszt is concerned to acknowledge their exoticism and describes their independence from national allegiances and from conventional family ties. Comparing them to other inhabitants of the countries they are found in, Liszt asserts "The Gypsies are not like that. They repudiate notions of the family as much as those of the mother country, of house and home, of property in general. The entire world they take for the mother country; every ground they tread is theirs; their family is the tribe formed and gathered together by chance..." "Il n'en est point ainsi des Bohémiens qui répudient les notions de famille autant que celles de patrie, d'habitation, de propriété. Le terre entier, ils l'ont prise pour patrie; tout sol qu'ils foulent est le leur; leur famille, c'est la tribu formée et rassemblée par le hasard..." Liszt, *op cit* p50.

<sup>3</sup> I am aware that the title Manet gave this image, *La petite fille*, is usually translated into English as *The Little Girl*. To my mind this is insensible both etymologically and phenomenologically. What is not clear to me is the extent to which the term "jeune fille" was used interchangeably with the term "petite fille" in Paris in 1860.

previous work with unmistakable Gypsy connotations in creating it. This is also not yet settled. What is less arguable is that by the time he had included it in *The Old Musician* it served to reprise that combination of a female figure holding a baby that had featured in *The Gypsies*. In this second manifestation of the theme in Gypsy-related imagery, she plays a more complex role. She appears as a young mother but she also looks to be related to the other figures clustered around the seated violinist. This pair gives expression to the same interaction of music and maternity found in *The Gypsies*. It occurs in a context which incorporates a parallel focus on the nomadic and the family, construed in a more extended, tribal, sense.

*The Absinthe Drinker* is the second image from *The Old Musician*, which also occurs in the Cadart portfolio. It provides the key to the work's interpretation and will be the focus of this chapter. The differing manifestations of the character, depicted in its numerous redactions, all need to be taken into account. The figure first appears as a "bohemian low life" in the 1859 painting (1859 and 1867-71, Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen), then as a drinker with a bottle at his feet in the 1862 print portfolio, then as a dancing spectator in *The Old Musician*, finally as a drinking figure with glass and bottle in the watercolour at the Hill-Stead Museum (Farmington, Connecticut).<sup>4</sup> [Figs. 48-51] These make up a composite figure enmeshed in mystery and art historical debate. None more so than the question of his original form – does the appearance of this figure in *The Old Musician* coincide with how he looked in the painting *The Absinthe Drinker* when it was Manet's unsuccessful submission to the 1859 Salon?<sup>5</sup>

The question arises because the figure in *The Absinthe Drinker* had a different appearance in a parody of the painting made by Gilbert Randon (1814-1884) when it

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<sup>4</sup> Reff, T., 1982. *Manet and modern Paris : one hundred paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by Manet and his contemporaries* Washington, D.C. National Gallery of Art; University of Chicago Press. P184. Reff's reference to this character's "bohemianism" is a loose construction. As far as is known, the man who modelled for the original painting, a rag-picker named Colardet, had no relation to Gypsies thought to originate in Bohemia.

<sup>5</sup> A recent (6 July 2010) online article by Stéphane Guégan in *La Tribune de l'Art* has questioned whether this was indeed Manet's first Salon submission: « Rien, en fait, ne prouve que le tableau a été soumis au jury du Salon de 1859. On sait que la toile de Copenhague, jusqu'à sa vente en 1872, ne présentait qu'une demi-figure plutôt banale, maladroite, et qui n'avait rien d'un « début » au Salon, comme Manet en rêvait. La critique en 1861, qu'il reste cependant à creuser, ne fait pas allusion à ce premier échec. » Accessed 12 July 2010. <http://www.latribunedelart.com/petites-notes-sur-manet-3-manet-versus-baudelaire-article002664.html>

was exhibited in Manet's 1867 Retrospective Exhibition.<sup>6</sup> [Fig. 52] There he is cross-legged, with his legs stopped at the ankles. He looks in the caricature as if he is firmly seated and is accompanied by no perceptible characteristics, apart from the title, that would mark him as a drinker. Randon's commentary focuses on this and seems to have goaded Manet into making the image in the Hill-Stead Museum with its accompanying glass of absinthe. This detail was included in his reconstituted painting.

Charles Stuckey presumes that the current version of that early painting *The Absinthe Drinker* (1859), was created by adding a strip of canvas to the bottom of the painting shown in Randon's 1867 caricature. This made possible a change in the configuration of the legs so that they conformed to his appearance in *The Old Musician*. These changes took place sometime between the painting's appearance in Manet's 1867 Retrospective Exhibition and its sale in 1872 to Paul Durand-Ruel (1831-1922). As part of her research while cleaning *The Old Musician* at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, the conservator Ann Hoenigswald matched that figure's appearance in the painting she was cleaning with the ostensibly earlier (but later amended) painting. She discovered that "it was precisely the same size and shape as the top-hatted figure in *The Old Musician*."<sup>7</sup> Thus Manet appears to have used the figure in *The Old Musician* as his model for the final version of *The Absinthe Drinker*.

Stuckey, basing his proposal on comments made by Manet's son Leon Leenhoff after the artist's death, suggested that the original version of the painting, as presented to the 1859 *Salon*, was a three-quarter length figure. When Manet re-used the figure prior to (or possibly after) inserting it in *The Old Musician* "the artist added the legs and glass of absinthe."<sup>8</sup> Michael Fried concurred "Manet [in 1862] gave

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<sup>6</sup> Randon's collection of caricatures was published in *Le Journal Amusant* on June 29, 1867 (no. 600) pp6-8.

<sup>7</sup> Her discovery is described on the American *National Public Radio* report (NPR) June 16, 2009 <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=105158824>

<sup>8</sup>Stuckey, C.F., 1983. Manet revisited: Whodunit. *Art in America*, LXXI, 158-177;239;241. P163. (The comments by Leenhoff are to be found in the archives of the Bibliothèque nationale, in the Cabinet des estampes.) House, in the same year, was equally convinced of its original three-quarter length and its later change in format: House, J., 1983. Seeing Manet whole. *Art in America*, LXXI, 178-187. "*The Absinthe Drinker* of 1858-9 ...was submitted to the 1859 Salon, and exhibited in 1867, as a three-quarter figure. The figure thus appears full-length for the first time in *The Old Musician* of 1862, and, as a single figure, in the etching of the same year, years before *The Absinthe Drinker* was enlarged to become one of Manet's series of philosophers." P185.

himself an opportunity to redo that figure, to paint it as he had wished he had painted it three years before.”<sup>9</sup>

Here, once again, the issue of the chronological precedence of Manet’s prints and paintings comes back into contention. From stylistic evidence provided by the prints for this image it is clear that they were not created anywhere near the time of the original painting. As Fisher points out Manet “achieved a demonstrable confidence in his etching style that clearly separates this plate from earlier works that had no consistent view of the graphic potentials of the etched line.”<sup>10</sup> He supposes it was made “about the same time” [p40] as the painting *The Old Musician*. In this case the water-colour/drawing in the Rosenwald Collection in Washington with its less pronounced toe-tapping left foot, was probably also made at that time as a preliminary study, establishing the full-length figure but preceding the introduction of the bottle at the feet of the drinker visible in the print.<sup>11</sup> [Fig. 53]

This presumed sequence has been contradicted in an article by Anne Birgitte Fonsmark, originally published in 1985 in the house publication *Meddelelser* (“Communications”) of the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, where the painting resides.<sup>12</sup> Her on-the-spot analysis of the seam where the additional piece of canvas was added to make possible the change into the image’s current state, led her to the conclusion that, if we accept the traditional description of events “when we look low down in the picture field, the absinthe drinker’s legs in that case would have been cut in a both incongruous and completely untraditional place, just above the figure’s feet. As that is hardly likely, the possibility exists that the picture was actually created as a full-length image (of somewhat smaller dimensions than today) before being cut to the 1867 exhibition length and later increased back to the whole figure image we have

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<sup>9</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. P37. In the same text Fried (subsequently) acknowledges and appears to accept an alternative argument put forward in an article written by Anne Birgitte Fonsmark in 1985, which I will discuss presently. This occurs in his footnote 2, p508.

<sup>10</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. P18.

<sup>11</sup> De Leiris, A., 1969. *The drawings of Edouard Manet* Berkeley: University of California Press. P104, Cat No.147. Both De Leiris and the National Gallery date this work to 1858-9, implying that it was a preliminary study for the painting. But there is very little record of Manet working in this way. It is more likely that he used the watercolour to work out his ideas in 1862 when he was altering the 1859 format for the purposes of his painting *The Old Musician*. This is how Manet proceeded when making his print he called *The Guitarrero*.

<sup>12</sup> Fonsmark, A.-B., 1985. Absinthdrikken. *Meddelelser fra Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* XLI, 5-32.



today.”<sup>13</sup> This argument about the position of the cut is supported by her noting the presence of an extra length of folded-under canvas “covered with dark brown paint” (p78 *Hafnia* version) although she fails to mention whether there were visible traces of the legs on this strip.

Fonsmark’s is now the orthodox view. Manet treated this painting to two separate attacks. In the first, sometime between 1862 and 1867, he reduced its dimensions by cutting off the feet presumed to have been present when the work was first created. In that form, with consequential amendments to the configuration of the legs, it was seen by Randon and pictured as such at Manet’s 1867 Retrospective exhibition. Fonsmark speculates in her earlier article about the reasons Manet may have made these changes, speculation that she drops in the English language version, leaving a lacuna where an explanation is called for.<sup>14</sup> Then between 1867 and 1872 he changed the painting again, reconfigured the legs and replaced the feet, presumably copying from *The Old Musician* and making it longer than it was in its original form in the process.<sup>15</sup> This is an absurdly complicated explanation. It is made even more so by questionable arguments about the place where Manet cut the canvas. Fonsmark’s claims about the unlikelihood of the figure being cut at the ankles ignores the fact that the figure in the print *The Young Woman* is similarly

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<sup>13</sup> “ når vi sålangt ned i billedfeltet, at absinthdrikkerens ben i givet fald ville have været beskåret på et både uharmonisk og ganske utraditionelt sted – lige over figurens fodder. Da det næppe et sandsynligt, består der den mulighed, at billedet faktisk er skabt som et helfigurbillede (af lidt mindre dimensioner end nutidens), for dernæst at blive beskåret til 1867 – udstillingens længde – og siden igen øget til nutidens helfigurbillede.” *Op cit* P19. Dr Kate Heslop (Department of Scandinavian Studies, Zurich University) provided the translation. I have gone back to the original Danish text in an effort to eliminate the ambiguities in the English version of it provided in Fonsmark, A.B., 1987. “The Absinthe Drinker” - and Manet’s picture-making.” *Hafnia: Copenhagen Papers in the History of Art* . 11, 76-91. The equivalent text, in this amended version, is provided on p78.

<sup>14</sup> “In the catalogue Manet gave his reasons for mounting a one-man show. They are perhaps not very surprising, being characterised by a wish to be respectable and to avoid provocation and may be seen as an expression of the marked ambivalence of his relationship to the establishment which he wanted partly to provoke and partly to be accepted by. In this connection it could therefore be tempting to interpret the cutting of the *Absinthe Drinker* as an attempt to dampen [or dull] its provocative content, rather than as a purely formal experiment.”

“I det ledsagende katalog gav Manet sine ‘Grunde til en særudstilling.’ De er måske lidt overraskende – præget af et ønske at være pæn, at undgå provokationer, og må ses som et udslag af hans mærkelige dobbeltforhold til det etablerede, som han dels ville udæske, dels accepteres af. I denne sammenhæng kunne det derfor være fristende at tolke beskæringen af ‘Absinthdrikkeren’ som et forsøg på at dæmpe dets provokerende indhold snarere end som et rent formelt eksperiment.” *op cit* pp21-22.

<sup>15</sup> Fonsmark presumes a shorter original by comparing the dimensions of the print and discovering that they do not have the same proportions as the (later altered) painting. This argument occurs on P81 of the *Hafnia* version.

truncated above the feet and in paintings throughout his life from the *Boy with Dog* of 1860-1 (Private collection) to the *Portrait of Proust* of 1880 (Toledo Museum of Art) he excluded the feet in his portraits of figures.

The question is further complicated by the matter of sources for Manet's original version. Fonsmark does not go into this other than to reference Stuckey's claim that, by extending the figure, "Manet intended to bring this early work into line with three other full-length paintings of the street-philosopher type."<sup>16</sup> Fried does, but his claim that Goya's prints after Velázquez's paintings *Aesop* and *Menippus* (1639-1640 Prado Museum, Madrid) are possible sources falters because of a lack of evidence establishing how Manet could have seen these obscure works.<sup>17</sup> [Fig. 54]. On the other hand, if the image was originally three-quarter-length then there were works readily available to him in Paris that could have provided his model. These are a set of four paintings, then thought to be by Jusepe de Ribera (1591-1652), which depict three-quarter-length philosopher-beggar types and which Manet had every opportunity to see in the La Caze Collection.<sup>18</sup> [Fig. 55]

What all this serves to signify is that Fried's identification of Watteau's *L'indifférent* (1716-1718, formerly in the La Caze Collection, now Paris, Louvre) as the source for the "odd, almost dance-like elegance and formality of the pose [in *The Absinthe Drinker*]" finds its *raison d'être* in the dance step taken by the figure when he reappears in *The Old Musician*. [Fig. 56] After having represented in *The Spanish Singer* a performer so involved in his performance that his whole body is moving in relation to the music, Manet was making an equivalent show here of music's influence on its auditors, again translating it into bodily movements.

Two biographical analogies have been proposed for this figure, although the model is named, Colardet, and his occupation, rag-picker, known.<sup>19</sup> In the first place

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<sup>16</sup> Fonsmark, A.B., 1987. "The Absinthe Drinker" - and Manet's picture-making. *Hafnia: Copenhagen Papers in the History of Art* . 11, 76-91. P89.

<sup>17</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. P34. They are hard enough to find references to, or representations of them today.

<sup>18</sup> Faroult, G. & Eloy, S. (eds.) (2007) *La collection La Caze. Chefs-d'oeuvres des peintures des XVII et XVIII siècles*, Paris: Musée du Louvre éditions. The works, which are in fact by Luca Giordano (1634-1705), are listed in the catalogue as M.I. 894-897 incl. P264.

<sup>19</sup> Reff, T., 1982. *Manet and modern Paris: one hundred paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by Manet and his contemporaries* Washington: National Gallery of Art. P182. The author sources Moreau-Nelaton (1926) P182.

it is confidently claimed that “The face of the etched *The Absinthe Drinker* looks very much like Nadar’s photograph of Baudelaire taken in 1860 – the same photograph which Manet copied when he etched Baudelaire’s portrait five years later.”<sup>20</sup> [Fig. 57] Manet might have wanted to represent Baudelaire given the poet’s identification with rag-pickers in his poem *Le Vin des chiffonniers*. A more convincing suggestion is that the figure is a disguised portrait of Manet, himself.<sup>21</sup> The personal dimension to this portrayal arises out of the artist’s commitment, perhaps inspired by Baudelaire’s identification, to adopting the avant-garde stance of marginality. Manet, according to Nancy Locke, “lays claim to his own territory as an artist” by a “strategy to assume the disguise of the ragpicker.” This is related to “other early Manet costume pieces”, and is seen as documenting “Manet’s interest in masquerade and disguise”.<sup>22</sup> The idea that a figure taken from an artist’s oeuvre can stand in for its creator underlies the unusual array of citations in *The Old Musician* and as we will see it is like similar techniques used in theatrical presentations at that time. The fact that biography is read into this image is therefore not surprising. In the discussion in the ninth chapter I will suggest the same eliding takes place with the figure of the young woman in that work. As Nancy Locke asserts “Manet picture[s] members of his own family as gypsies and street types”; this practice has its beginnings in this first attempt by the artist to gain admission to the 1859 *Salon* with *The Absinthe Drinker*. (*Ibid* p64).

This painting, *The Old Musician* with its plethora of personal and art historical references, was first exhibited in March 1863 at the private *Galerie Martinet*. It was part of an exhibition of fourteen paintings Manet mounted just prior to the 1863 *Salon*. Given its scale it is tempting to suppose this work had been intended as a *Salon* submission. But the only other lifetime showing was at the retrospective exhibition the artist mounted after he had been excluded from exhibiting at the

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<sup>20</sup>Ligo, L.L., 2006. *Manet, Baudelaire and photography* Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press P231, n38. (Félix Nadar, the celebrity photographer was the adopted name of Gaspard-Félix Tournachon 1820-1910.) This analogy first surfaced in Juliet Wilson’s 1978 *Beres* catalogue and was taken up by Reff, T., 1982. *Manet and modern Paris : one hundred paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by Manet and his contemporaries* Washington: National Gallery of Art who wrote “Manet’s etched portrait of him [Baudelaire] strangely resembles that of the absinthe drinker” P182.

<sup>21</sup>Lajer-Burcharth, E., 1985. Modernity and the conditions of disguise: Manet’s *Absinthe Drinker*. *Art Journal*, 45, 18-26. “Manet identifies the artist’s task with that of a scavenger, appropriating and making meaningful what is left at his disposal” p22.

<sup>22</sup>Locke, N., 2001. *Manet and the family romance* Princeton, N.J; Oxford: Princeton University Press. P64.

Universal Exposition of 1867.<sup>23</sup> At this 1867 show it was hung beside the as-yet uncut smaller painting *The Gypsies*. For all the internal differences between the two, they shared the same height and their juxtaposition must have given rise to the suspicion that they were thematically linked. To this day the view persists; as Carol Armstrong observes, “*The Gitanos* and *The Old Musician* together make a good example of Manet’s often repeated habit of painting pairs of similar subjects in contrasting manners.”<sup>24</sup> The painting never generated, in Manet’s lifetime, the critical reception given to his other works. For instance, despite its size, it was not one of the paintings parodied by Randon. Nor did Manet ever sell it. Today, largely as a result of recent critical interest in the work (Michael Fried’s work in particular), the painting is seen as a visual compendium of Manet’s early art historical interests and as an iconographical representation of the modernity hailed in Baudelaire’s essay *The painter of modern life*.<sup>25</sup>

In this chapter I approach *The Old Musician* from the angle of its participation in Manet’s early group of works with musical and performative themes and as one of the paintings, perhaps *the* painting, most closely associated with his production of prints in the portfolio he published under the aegis of Alfred Cadart in 1862. On the one hand, it is closely tied in with Manet’s representations of (Gypsy) musicians, on another, the one that interested Fried, it, like all the works in the Cadart portfolio, is riddled with citations of other works. I will be extending that range by identifying a source for the truncated figure on the extreme right-hand side of the painting. For the present, however, I want to make a larger observation about the contemporary context for Manet’s citations by drawing attention to the way its occurrence in this work resembles that practice in theatrical contexts. This provides a model for Manet’s stagey line-up of figures, figures whose origins are in the works of other well-known artists as well as in Manet’s own previous works.

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<sup>23</sup> Armstrong, C.M., 2002. *Manet Manette* New Haven: Yale University Press provides the best description of Manet’s 1867 retrospective exhibition. She lists the works (p11), shows images of a “sampling” (pp28-29) and reproduces also Randon’s three pages of caricatures (pp12-13).

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid* p17.

<sup>25</sup> Blake, N. & Frascina, F., 1993. Modern Practices of Art and Modernity. In Francis Frascina, Nigel Blake, Briony Fer, T. Garb & Charles Harrison (eds.) *Modernity and Modernism: French Painting in the Nineteenth Century*. New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press in association with the Open University, 50–140 at pp82-95. The authors treat the work in these terms. Larry Ligo *op cit* describes it, more elegantly, but predictably, as “a visual manifesto of his recently adopted Baudelairean aesthetic” p229. Alain de Leiris and Marilyn Brown used similar rhetoric.

A specific theatrical instance of this practice occurs in a work by one of the musical figures Manet represents in *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, Jacques Offenbach (1819-1880). His 1860 *Le Carnaval des Revues* contained characterisations of famous composers of operettas, Wolfgang Mozart (1756-1791), Christoph Gluck (1714-1787), Carl von Weber (1786-1826) and André Grétry (1741-1813). They all appeared on the stage, singing songs from their own works. Their role in the review was to comment on and interact with contemporary musical events, one of which was Wagner's concert performance in February 1860.<sup>26</sup> There are, of course, differences in the way this use of sources is played out between Offenbach's and Manet's works, determined by differences in context. Manet's staging of his musical event, the playing of the instrument by the old musician, would not have gained anything particularly resonant if he had peopled it with portraits of famous painters. Besides, this was an idea that had already found its visual consummation in Delaroche's 1841 *Hemicycle* on the walls of the National School of Fine Arts in Paris. Manet's brilliant adaptation was to populate his painting with figures from the great artists' works. Thus they would stand in for their makers. Manet was using the same conceit that Offenbach had developed, giving it a more vivid realisation. Fried's contention that Manet created works like this one to "establish the universality of *his own painting*" does not go far enough.<sup>27</sup> He was also assigning roles in his visual drama to this compendious collection of art historical figures. He appears to have exploited their presence to signal that his contemporary artistic practice consisted of a broadened conception of what it was possible to include in painting. Music provided the context and it also, on this occasion, gave rise to a *mise-en-scène* whose closest analogy was with opera. In this respect, it is not without significance that some of the figures he borrows are derived from a performative context.

At the centre of this visual drama, both physically and metaphorically, is the figure of the old musician. Manet's model for the violinist was the well-known artists' model Jean Lagrène, a person with impeccable Gypsy credentials.<sup>28</sup> [Fig. 58] Even if

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<sup>26</sup> Everist, M., 2009. Jacques Offenbach: The Music of the Past and the Image of the Present. In A. Fauser & M. Everist (eds.) *Music, Theater, and Cultural Transfer Paris, 1830-1914*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 72-98. P76. The review had its première on 10 February, just days after Wagner's performances, a measure of the intense interest in Wagner and the immediate critical response his performances engendered.

<sup>27</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. P126. [His italics.]

<sup>28</sup> Brown, M.R., 1978. Manet's *Old Musician*: Portrait of a Gypsy and Naturalist Allegory. *Studies in the History of Art*, 8, 77-87 published the author's discovery that Manet's principal figure resembled the Gypsy model Jean

he was not known to Manet's contemporary audience, the painter took advantage of this choice to articulate characteristics that would have been seen as authentic Gypsy physiognomy. In particular he took pains to produce darkened skin tones, especially on the hands. This is accentuated to such a degree that the colour of the violin and the colour of the man's hands are virtually identical; indeed the instrument and the hand holding it merge at crucial points. By this device Manet made Lagrène's connection with the violin, which he is depicted playing, one generating both visual and musical resonance.<sup>29</sup> But only the hands connected to the violin signify a Gypsy context; otherwise clues as to Gypsy cultural values are largely a matter of a setting suitable for a nomadic people and their unconventional familial grouping. Skin colour is not used to identify any of the other figures as Gypsy, with the partial exception of the small boy, next to the seated musician. Even so, the figures grouped on the left-hand side of the painting are clustered around the violinist as if it is his music rather than any other feature that unites them.

At the time Manet made this painting, Gypsies in popular French mythology were identified as either Spanish or Eastern European. But the artist provides no cues to national identity. Rather, this group is displayed as a loose arrangement of associated individuals in an undistinguished rural landscape. Just as in his other Gypsy works from this period, the painting evokes Gypsy itinerants, adopting a nomadic lifestyle, with the freedom to dress, travel and associate at their own volition. They seem to be presented as poetic relics of a pre-industrial age. Challenging cultural uniformity, they are united in their spiritual commitment to music. They are united, too, in another more technical sense, with the Gypsies Manet portrayed in the various images I described in Chapter 3. And their focus on the musician in this painting is related to the presence of musical themes in *The Spanish Singer* and its

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Lagrène. She points out that Manet made no overt reference to Gypsies in the title, stating "Manet did not openly proclaim the identity of the old musician as a *bohémien*" (p87). She suggests this may have been a result of his sensitivity to being himself labelled *bohémien*.

<sup>29</sup> De Leiris, A.D., 1964. Manet, Guérault and Chryssippos. *The Art Bulletin*, 46, 401-404. His discussion, at p402 drew attention to the dual focus in Manet's drawing on the head and the hands. This feature, as we have seen in the discussion of *Silentium* in Chapter 1, was used by the artist to signify the presence in a work of non-visual elements. While the drawing focuses on the hand *per se*, this focus is translated in the painting to its interaction with the violin and its struck note. On the "'cross talk' among physically adjacent or connected brain tissues and their implications for our understanding of synaesthesia see Cretien van Campen 2007 *The Hidden Sense Synesthesia in Art and Science*, Boston, MIT Press and in particular its review in *Art Bulletin* September 2009.

cognates. What all three works have in common is music. Each of them is an exercise in synaesthesia inasmuch as each takes its subject from a theme extra to visual experience, blending the audible with the visual. The significance of this is that it is not in the material sourced from the history of art that these works find their *raison d'être*. But nor is it in any particular musical event. Rather Manet is depending upon a literary text, Liszt's *Des bohèmiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859) for his information about Gypsies. And it is that text's compelling case for the importance of Gypsy music to an unfolding set of aesthetic values that sets the parameters under which this image, in particular, is constructed.

Manet's choice of literary models to establish themes for his works of art was well established by the time of these works and continued throughout his life. Later he was involved with poets, sketching illustrations and devising prints to accompany their works, just as he devised paintings to illustrate moments from plays, operas and musical performances. However one interprets Baudelaire's intemperate condemnation of Ary Scheffer in his 1846 *Salon* review as an exemplar of artists who "invoke the help of all the other arts...asking for help and protection from poetry" Manet gave no sign of being cowed.<sup>30</sup>

This interest of his in imagery based on literary texts started early in his career. Two painted copies of Delacroix's *Barque of Dante* (loosely based on fictional events taken from Canto eight) introduce his practice. The second, dated 1859 by the owners, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, suggests it was not just a student interest. The following year he undertook his first independent work illustrating a specific incident in a literary text. This painting, *Students of Salamanca* (1860, 73x93cm, Pola Museum of Art, Fuji-Hakone-Izu National Park) pictured the reactions of two students to the finding of buried treasure. It is an incident from the novel *Gil Blas* by Alain-René LeSage (1668-1747), a novel Manet must have known.<sup>31</sup> [Fig. 59] Also in 1862

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<sup>30</sup> « Le doute a conduit certains artistes à implorer le secours de tous les autres arts . . . M. Ary Scheffer s'est aperçu, - un peu tard sans doute, - qu'il n'était pas né peintre. Dès lors il fallut recourir à d'autres moyens ; et il demanda aide et protection à la poésie. » Charles Baudelaire *Salon de 1846* Pichois II, 474.

<sup>31</sup> He may well have been introduced to the motif by the 1857 *Salon* painting *Les deux écoliers de Salamanque* by Eugene Ernest Hillemacher (French, 1818-1887), reproduced in *Magasin pittoresque* Vol 25, December 1857, p50. Proust in his 1913 *Souvenirs* claims he was initially attracted to Jean Gigoux's illustration of the theme in an 1838 edition of the book (p54). Even so he would have had no doubt about the literary origins of the motif. See the discussion in Farwell, B., 1981. *Manet and the nude: a study of iconography in the Second Empire* New York: Garland Pub., pp59-62. Recently, in 2009, Atsushi Miura, at the University of Tokyo Centre

he created, in *The Spanish Ballet* (1862, Phillips Collection, Washington), an image which is said precisely to represent a moment in opera. The interlude during the first act of the *Barber of Seville* performed at the Odéon is identified through the work's background figures who were performers staying on stage while the dance took place.<sup>32</sup> [Fig. 60] So it should come as no surprise to discover him revisiting this procedure in these Gypsy-themed 1862 works. While, given the interest in *bohemian* types, he would have had ample opportunity to create an image of Gypsies borrowed from an earlier visual source, none has been proposed in the literature on the subject. This is because he chose to make a painting to illustrate a description he sourced from Liszt's important text.

Liszt described an historical Gypsy family of touring musicians led by the violin virtuoso Csinka Panna (1711?-1772), implying that they were instrumental in making Gypsy music known beyond its ethnic boundaries. The group consisted of the young woman Csinka Panna, another Gypsy musician who was her husband, and her two brothers-in-law. Her principal role in the quartet was the focus of his description: "She began at a young age to play brilliantly on this instrument and married, at fourteen, another Gypsy who along with his two brothers was a musician as well, which made it possible for him to promptly bring together a little family orchestra, which soon became renowned."<sup>33</sup> While Liszt's text gives no further information it is known that the quartet had been very successful, touring Europe. After the virtuoso's death we know from independent sources that she "became a legend, the heroine of a number of stories, novels, poems and plays, as well as a subject for Czech and Slovak

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for Philosophy, has written "*A Reconsideration of Edouard Manet's The Students of Salamanca*." He concludes that "There certainly is a literary subject in *The Students of Salamanca* by Manet and it does indeed convey an allegory of an individual at the cross-roads where one's fate may diverge depending on one's careless or prudent choices." P48.

The work is available on-line: [utcp.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp/blog/2009/04/atsushi-mi/index\\_en.php#anchor\\_more](http://utcp.c.u-tokyo.ac.jp/blog/2009/04/atsushi-mi/index_en.php#anchor_more)  
<sup>32</sup> "The dancers occupy the front of the stage, while in the shadows Figaro in black and the Count 'in a large brown cloak and slouch hat' await a sign from the charming Rosina." Commentary quoted from catalogue entry for the painting in Tinterow, G. & Loyrette, H., 1994. *Origins of Impressionism* New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Cat no86, p395-6. The description of the figure in brown is a quotation from Beaumarchais.

<sup>33</sup> «Elle commença très jeune à jouer d'une manière fort brillante sur cet instrument et épousa à quatorze ans un Bohémien également musicien ainsi que ses deux frères, ce qui lui permet de réunir aussitôt un petit orchestra de famille, qui ne tarda pas à être bien famé.» Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval. P187. Liszt also describes two other Gypsy violin virtuosos, « John Bihary » and « Czermak ». Both postdate Panna and neither is described as involved with a quartet.



## Chapter 7

painters.”<sup>34</sup> Liszt’s description tells us nothing about her husband. Once again independent sources confirm that he was a blacksmith as well as a musician, that he was older than her and that she bore him four children. I will come presently to consider what other evidence there is for my contention that these figures in Manet’s painting are a group of performers united by their attention to the defining moment of music played by the old musician.

As I have already acknowledged, the evidence for Manet’s links with Liszt is attenuated. The story is told (in a highly romanticised format) that his wife-to-be, Suzanne Leenhoff, was encouraged to go to Paris by the musician when he heard her playing during a stop-off in her home town, Zaltbommel, in 1845.<sup>35</sup> As with so many other biographical details concerning Manet and his family, no-one has yet been able to confirm this incident. But Suzanne Leenhoff’s musical talent is well attested. It is known that she gave a public performance in her home city in 1853 on a return visit after the birth of her son.<sup>36</sup> In Paris she must have moved in circles frequented by the haute bourgeoisie to have become the Manet’s piano teacher, but how she achieved this recognition has not been verified. Anrooy suggests she was patronised by Liszt while he was in the capital (p65). Whether it was through her contacts that Manet became conversant with Liszt is therefore still to be established.

Thus precise information aligning Manet’s depiction of the old musician as a muscular, older figure (and of the youthful woman’s maternal relationship with the baby) with biographical details remains unsourced. Manet may have been privy to extra information on such topics through his wife’s connections or through his own with Blandine, the daughter of Marie d’Agoult and Franz Liszt. He had attended her marriage to Émile Ollivier when he was in Florence in 1857 and the couple is said to have dined at the Manet household shortly after arriving back in Paris in December of that year.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Arne B. Mann (Ed), 1992, *Neznámi Rómovia* Bratislava: Ister Science Press, p126.

<sup>35</sup> Anrooy, A.V., 1950. *Impromptu - Une page d'amour d'Edouard Manet* Switzerland (?): Editions du Mont Blanc. P48.

<sup>36</sup> Buylinckx, J.J.A., 1998. Een concert van Suzanne Leenhoff in Zaltbommel. *Tussen de Voorn en Loevstein*, XXXIV, 19-22. She is described in the newspaper article attesting to this event as a student at the Paris Conservatory, although a search in its archives has not turned up her name as a graduate.

<sup>37</sup> Thérèse Dolan provides evidence for his attendance at the marriage in Florence in Dolan, T., 2000. Manet's *Portrait-Charge* of Emile Ollivier. *Print Quarterly*, 17, 17-26. Klàra Hamburger provides important information about the close and friendly relations between Ollivier, his wife Blandine, Wagner, and Liszt in Hamburger, K.,

On the other hand he may have had personal reasons for treating the bare story to these extensions (reasons I will discuss in my ninth chapter). Nevertheless the coincidence of Manet's configuration with the story told by Liszt is striking, even if it only explains how the collection of figures on the left-hand side of the canvas could have come into being. What I have yet to account for are the figures on the right-hand side of the canvas. This is a painting whose final appearance conceals, even if it does not always obliterate, the amendments and additions that took place in the course of its making. It is a work on the move, one that comes to a halt, so to speak, at the sound of the Gypsy's violin. Manet leaves significant passages, such as the area of ground around the young woman, largely unfinished.

Visually, this is not the only evidence of indecision. The two sides of the painting also appear uneasily juxtaposed. There is scientific evidence to support this. According to the conservator who recently cleaned this painting, Ann Hoenigswald, the four figures on the left-hand side of the painting made up Manet's original idea for the entire composition. He added the two figures to the right of the old musician later.<sup>38</sup> And yet from the beginning Manet appears to have had other agendas beyond the depiction of a known musical quartet. For instance, on the left-hand side he linked the young woman with the earlier image *The Gypsies* by using the same trope of the staring baby. Liszt's written text provides no precedent for Manet's decision to burden this young woman with a child; its repetition in the two works suggests this addition was a personal element of particular significance to Manet. But it is to the right-hand side figures that attention needs to be directed for confirming evidence that the work, as a whole is indebted to the influence of Franz Liszt.

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1986. Liszt and Émile Ollivier. *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, 28, 65-77. Nancy Locke in *Manet and the family romance* (2001) Princeton p48 and 189 n46, ascribes the information about the dinner date to a family friend, Charles Limet, who wrote about the meeting in his memoirs. (Limet's reminiscences, as I have noted in my chapter on Manet's "Spanish" works, are not always accepted as reliable in modern scholarship.)

<sup>38</sup> Her views are described on National Public Radio report (NPR) June 16, 2009: ['Manet's initial idea for the painting comprised these four figures alone and that the addition of the two to the right of the Old Musician was an afterthought: the conservation detectives revealed a secret about *The Old Musician*: Manet seems to have wrestled with the composition of this work. The painting centers on a bearded old fellow draped in a blanket; he sits with a violin in one hand and a bow in the other, looking straight at the viewer. Nearby, on the left side of the canvas, stand two country boys and a barefoot girl (possibly a Gypsy) holding a baby. "I think that's all he had in mind originally," Hoenigswald says. And then, she reasons, Manet changed his mind. He added two more figures to the right of the musician.... To the viewer, the two figures may appear to be afterthoughts — not fully integrated into the overall composition.']

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=105158824>

This is provided, in an unexpected and surprising way, by the figure on the extreme right-hand side of the canvas. This strangely abstracted “spectator” figure has long been the subject of speculation as to its origins, identity and *raison d’être*. By default, almost, the figure is regarded as portraying a model named Guérout, a man described as “an old Jew with a white beard” in an address book owned by the artist.<sup>39</sup> Despite there being no photograph to confirm his appearance, nor any other sliver of supporting evidence, this tenuous factoid led to a widely accepted “interpretation” of the figure, an interpretation without relation to anything else going on in the painting. While this is a work that demands speculative explanations for its *mise-en-scène*, there should at least be a requirement that the theory does more than account for the presence of a single individual. So, without justification, Manet is said to be using this figure to establish a link with the notion of the Wandering Jew. Marilyn Brown, for instance, states baldly “At the extreme right of the composition, with turban and walking staff, is found the Wandering Jew”.<sup>40</sup> What is interesting about such “bald” statements is that they serve to absolve their authors of any obligation to attribute the image to any particular source. “Wandering Jew”, it would seem, has its own distinctive and unmistakable iconography.

If Liszt’s influence on the conception of the work is taken into account, this “interpretation” does not fit into an integrated description of the painting. His book *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859) contains unequivocal and scurrilous characterisations of Jews whom Liszt takes care to distinguish from Gypsy musicians. In particular, while acknowledging the significant contribution Jewish people have made to the flourishing of classical western music, he compares them unfavourably with the Gypsies because they have failed to create an equivalent national form of music.<sup>41</sup> So while, as a species of racist identification, the interpretation of this figure as the “Wandering Jew” does not necessarily conflict with Manet’s interest in representing ethnic *types*, there is no other corroborating evidence which associates this particular figure with a note in Manet’s address book; Michael Fried justly casts doubt upon it.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Adolphe Tabarant discovered the entry. In ~ (1947) *Manet et ses oeuvres*, Paris: Gallimard, p47, he claimed the old musician had been modelled by Guérout.

<sup>40</sup> *op cit* pp84-5. Blake and Franscina *op cit* p82 do the same.

<sup>41</sup> Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval p36.

<sup>42</sup> He describes such an ascription as “far from certain” in *Manet’s modernism* (1996) p529, n131.

George Mauner gave the figure a more specific role, without suggesting any particular source, when he suggested that his elderly appearance plays its part in the painting which represents the “stage of life” upon which the “Stages of Life” are portrayed. “The series begins with infancy, in the image of the babe in arms. It continues with a representation of childhood, symbolized by the two boys, who are followed by the mature cloaked figure, and terminates with the aged man in the turban at the extreme right.”<sup>43</sup> The difficulties with this as a complete account of the painting is that it does not explain why Manet gives us two boys, nor why he inserted the figure from his earlier painting *The Absinthe Drinker*.

A more productive approach to finding a source for this image, one that would serve to explain his presence, starts with observing that his position is analogous to Manet’s self-portrait on the left-hand edge of *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*. Half in and half out of the painting, he may be seen in both cases as standing for the “spectator” of the scene unfolding before him. Here Manet appears to be reprising the roles played in that painting by his self-portrait, and by that of Count Albert de Balleroy his studio compatriot. There these “spectator” figures herald Manet’s allies in the creation of a new artistic avant-garde, one closely aligned with music. The *Old Musician*’s principal focus is on the celebrated and virtuosic music quartet. The “spectator” figure’s venerable appearance fulfils an analogous function here. It renders his participation in that group’s trail-blazing emergence from the tribal mists into a broader social and cultural setting, heralding its appearance. The fact that Manet used the motif twice in the same year suggests its importance to him. And, in view of his then persistent use of source material harvested from other works of art it also suggests he was powerfully influenced by an earlier model.

Manet would have recognised that this heralding function is provided in Liszt’s book by the author. But in his painting, based upon an extract from that book, Manet does not endow the spectator-figure with a recognisable portrait of the musician. In a work where all resemblances are subsumed in a host of art historical references, to have portrayed one of the most instantly recognisable figures in nineteenth-century celebrity culture would have defeated the work’s novel approach to creating a

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<sup>43</sup> *Manet, peintre-philosophe* (1975) Pennsylvania, at p57. I derive this characterisation of George Mauner’s argument from Larry Ligo’s *Manet, Baudelaire and photography* (2006) Edwin Mellen Press, at p233 n44.

“realistic” scenario for this musical troupe within the purview of art history.<sup>44</sup> A portrait of Liszt for the figure bearing witness to a new development in music would have distracted attention from the historicized associations of this central group. Manet’s more subtle acknowledgement of the literary source for his construction of a music quartet was achieved by adopting a subsidiary figure from a romantic painting *Three Magi* (1844) by Ary Scheffer (1795-1858).<sup>45</sup> [Fig. 61]

It was then understood that, in this celebrated painting, Liszt is represented in the guise of one of the three wise men (or Magi). The painting consists of a centrally placed portrait of the pianist-composer dressed in priestly costume. His uplifted face is illumined by descending rays of light emanating from outside the picture frame. Alongside him is a bearded figure in profile at the left-hand edge of the painting, cut off by the frame. This figure is dressed in a flowing cloak, is hooded and holds a rolled-up scroll against his chest with a conspicuously articulated hand. Like Manet’s figure he holds a staff in the other. His gaze is likewise directed downwards. As in

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<sup>44</sup> Imre Kovács states “His portraits in various genres ... made Liszt one of the best-known ‘faces’ of the 19<sup>th</sup> century” in “The portrait of Liszt as an allegory of the artist in Ary Scheffer’s *Three Magi*” *Studia musicologica* (2008) 49(1-2) 91-104 at p92.

<sup>45</sup> Manet’s indebtedness to Scheffer is raised by Stephen Bann in *Ways around modernism* (2007) New York, drawing on an original analysis by Zimmermann, M.F., 2000. *Présences de l’absent. In R. Michel (ed.) Où en est l’interprétation de l’oeuvre d’art.* Paris: Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 157-204. Bann relates Manet’s *Déjeuner (à l’atelier)* (1868) to Scheffer’s *Le coupeur de nappe* (1851) on p65. Bann refuses to “go much further into the curious contemporary evidence for Manet’s attitude to Scheffer’s work”. Adolphe Tabarant describes close family connections between Manet and Scheffer in Tabarant, A., 1947. *Manet et ses oeuvres* Paris: Gallimard p102. These connections are elaborated in Ewals, L.J.I., 1996. *Ary Scheffer, 1795-1858 les Musées de la ville de Paris, Musée de la vie romantique, 10 avril - 28 juillet 1996* Paris: Paris musées. Ewals notes Tabarant’s claim that Cornelia Scheffer, the artist’s daughter, worked with Manet in the 1860s on joint projects and proposes that Manet painted his religious works during this period of interaction, “not by chance” “ce qui n’est peut-être pas dû au hasard”. This is derived from the fact that Cornelia was related by marriage to the famous re-interpreter of Christianity, Ernest Renan. Manet’s religious paintings are thought to reflect views propounded by that philosopher: P74. This was also the time when Suzanne Leenhoff’s brother-in-law, Joseph Mezzara (1820-1901), who according to Léon Leenhoff was living nearby, was creating the statue of Ary Scheffer, on the commission of Scheffer’s daughter, now standing in Scheffer Square in Dordrecht. Manet could have seen the *Three Magi* when it was exhibited in Paris in 1859 at a retrospective exhibition of that artist’s work mounted the year after his death. See *Catalogue des œuvres de Ary Scheffer exposées au profit de la caisse de secours de l’association des artistes, peintres, sculpteurs, architectes et dessinateurs* (1859) Paris, cat no 53. The exhibition was mounted in galleries built for the occasion in the gardens of the Marquis of Hertford, on 26 Boulevard des Italiens. It is said to have attracted over 2000 visitors each day it was open: Émile Perrin in *Revue européenne* (1859) Paris, volume 3, p191. Louis Martinet, who helped arrange it, also mounted there his series of influential exhibitions one of which, in 1861, included works by Manet. The work also had a number of reproductive prints made after it. I have not been able to determine whether these reverse the direction of the painting.

Manet's painting, he appears psychically cut-off from his closely packed compatriots. These figures (the third, to the other side of the divinely illumined Liszt, is staring fixedly in Liszt's direction, not unlike the contiguous boy in *The Old Musician*) are said, by Imre Kovács, to "represent the three stages of life...." And the old man is "staring resignedly in front of himself, without taking notice of the star" *op cit* p93. George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans, 1819-1880), the British writer, saw the painting while it was in Liszt's possession and described what she saw as its symbolic significance: "There are two aged men who have spent their lives in trying to unravel the destinies of the world, and who are looking for the Deliverer – for the light from on high. Their young fellow-seeker, having the fresh inspiration of early life, is the first to discern the herald star, and his ecstasy reveals it to his companions."<sup>46</sup>

Eliot's précis is not sufficiently accurate, inasmuch as the half-figure, re-used by Manet, is shown to be unresponsive to the situation unfolding in front of him. Both artists provide an alternative onlooker who, by contrast, demonstrates that he is responsive to the new situation. Manet may well have been prepared to give a place in his painting to the originator of the idea for the figure group on the left but he was not, for all that, prepared to sacrifice his own privileged and alert position as the principal initiator of the scene. Here he reverses the positions given to the two figures in the *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* version of the spectator scenario.

There are differences of scale, artfully disguised and mediated by the central figure of the seated violinist, between these spectator figures and the others. But otherwise Manet, just as in *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, makes no distinction between them and the rest of the canvas. Nevertheless the painting's use of a traditional artists' trope, one that involves picturing together separate dimensions of experience, cannot be gainsaid. And undoubtedly Manet would have been aware of a celebrated use of the same device in the same artist who provided him with the model for the bystander.<sup>47</sup> In Ary Scheffer's renowned *Dante and Virgil encounter the shades of Francesco and Paolo di Rimini in the Underworld* (1835, Paris, Louvre) the artist had similarly elided the usually separated realms of bystander and action. [Fig. 62] His side-by-side treatment of the theme relied solely on the subject-matter to make the viewer aware that the figures inhabit distinct spaces. In Scheffer's painting

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<sup>46</sup> Quoted in Kovács *op cit* p96.

<sup>47</sup> Manet would also have known Couture's use of the device in his celebrated *Romans of the Decadence* (1847)

the incident described in Dante's *Inferno* (Circle 2, Canto 5) is observed by the poet in the company of Virgil.

As we have seen, Manet created an image just as disjunctive and bifurcated in *Mlle V ... in the costume of an espada*. But in this work his treatment is closer to Scheffer's. The two figures on the right-hand edge of the scene are presented as bystanders, not participants, in the scenario depicted in the balance of the canvas. Inscribing himself, in the form of his 1859 painting, the *Absinthe Drinker*, as the more aware of the two figures, Manet directs our attention within the painting, to the quartet. There, following the direction signified by the turned head, he appears to be dividing attention between its principal figure's creation of music and the young woman's maternal embrace. By this reading, the figure who stands in for Liszt is present, participating in the image's origins, and another of Manet's creations literally "stands in" for the artist, the one whose view of the scene is his own invention. Scheffer's two dimensional transposition, in *Dante and Virgil encounter the shades of Francesco and Paolo di Rimini in the Underworld* does not go this far. He privileges the original literary creator and the scene he created; any reference to the painter is subsumed by these figures' identifiable fictional roles. This format is complicated in Manet's painting. His insistence on foregrounding the two figures who had a hand in the work's creation by creating literal "stand ins" for them both, leaves the matter of reference and role inextricably intertwined.<sup>48</sup> However valid it is to see analogies between that painting by Scheffer and this work, the idea of the onlooker's testamentary role has its origins in that other painting by Scheffer *The Three Magi*. Manet, responding to the role the three magi played in the religious story of Christ's birth, bestows a similar function on these onlooker figures in this painting about the "birth" of a new kind of music.

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<sup>48</sup> Manet's figure from his previous painting, reprised in this work, ineluctably reminds one of the Don's encounter with himself in part 2 of Cervantes *Don Quixote*, in a scene where he comes upon his own story being produced in the printing house (vol. 4 chapter 62 in the Shelton translation). See Carlos Fuentes' discussion of the scene in Fuentes, C., 1988. *Cervantes, or The Critique of Reading*. In C. Fuentes (ed.) *Myself with Others: Selected Essays*. London: Andre Deutsch. P58.

## Chapter 8: *The Old Musician*: Looking at Listening

*Il a aimé l'atmosphère chargée d'électricité qu'il répandait autour de lui par ses chants; il chérissait les moments où, ému lui-même, il voyait les autres contagiés de ses impressions.*<sup>1</sup>

Just as in *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, what unites spectator and participant in *The Old Musician* is that everybody in the painting can be construed responding to the central presence of music. Residual traces of the idealist notion of music's mysterious power create for the whole work an uneasy interface between naturalism and the ideal. In parallel with what in my chapters on *The Spanish Singer* I have described as his relentless attacks on conventional methods for representing music, Manet launches here another essay in that genre. Music's presence, overtly figured by the Old Musician's plucked note, gives rise to the implication that these figures are united in their attentive listening, figured by a combination of abstracted and focused gazes. I agree with Marilyn Brown that these "bohemian wanderers are brought together formally and thematically ... by listening to the sounds of the violin strings being plucked by the gypsy musician in their midst ... This subtle indication of the active power of the gypsy's art serves to energise an otherwise static world..."<sup>2</sup> Compared with the solitary listening embodied in *Silentium* and *The Spanish Singer*, Manet varies the picture, but not the effect, by including in his image figures that are intently focused on music's source; the old musician, himself.

This static roll-call of assembled figures is transfigured by Manet's use of largely undisguised artistic models derived from other artworks. Since Michael Fried's work on Manet, it has been accepted that the artist complicated his initial conception; his seemingly naturalistic figures have in fact been adapted and collected together from western painting's history.<sup>3</sup> This would be strange enough; what could potentially have made it alienating is that these figures jumble together references from many different periods. Starting with the reference to Roman classical sculpture

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<sup>1</sup> "He loved the electric atmosphere in which, by means of his tunes, he was immersed. He cherished the moments when, himself moved, he saw others caught up in his intensity." Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval p201-2. Liszt is describing the Gypsy virtuoso, Bihari.

<sup>2</sup> Brown "Manet's *Old Musician*..." *op cit* p85 (I have selectively excerpted from this text). Brown devotes some effort, in the course of this article, to tracing Manet's link to Liszt and his book on Gypsy musicians, arguing for a subsidiary connection through his friendship with Baudelaire. At the time of her writing that book Manet's family's direct links with Liszt's family had not been established.

<sup>3</sup> The essay which initiated this intense scrutiny was first published in 1969: Fried, M., 1969. *Manet's Sources: Aspects of His Art, 1859-1865* *Artforum*, 7, 28-82. He provides illustrations and arguments which I have not felt it necessary to duplicate.



provided by the pose of the old musician, we can identify recognizable models for most of the figures thanks to Fried's research. The darkly clothed boy beside the old musician, which as Nancy Locke asserts is "the boy who posed in *Boy with dog*" (Locke, 2001, p62), is based on similar figures in the naively realistic paintings of the Le Nain brothers from the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> Beside this figure, the boy in white is an adaptation of Antoine Watteau's *Gilles* (1721, Paris, Louvre) accessible to Manet in the La Caze collection. This pair originates as participant-performers in musical or dramatic contexts. They retain some semblance of their origins in their participation, each in their own way, in the performance evoked by the Old Musician.

Of all the other figures the young woman and child has been subjected to the most divergent opinions in discussions of its origins. Fried in his 1996 book *Manet's modernism* favoured as the source, a contemporary Gypsy painting *The Stolen Child* by Henri-Guillaume Schlesinger (1814-1893) which was exhibited in the 1861 *Salon*.<sup>5</sup> I will come back to that attribution. Suffice to say, they resemble, at least as closely, a similar couple in an image from the late eighteenth century world of printmaking. Which of these two sources provided the model may boil down to a question of chronological priority between this painting and Manet's print of the young woman, a print originally paired with his other genre image *Boy with dog* (Harris 11).

No acceptable source has been proposed for the figure on the extreme right of the canvas. I suggested in the last chapter that it comes from the romantic painting *Three Magi* (1844) made by Ary Scheffer in the early nineteenth century. Finally the painting connects with the almost present by means of Manet's adaptation of another of his earlier works *Le buveur d'absinthe*, an image which serves the same function as the literary *doppelganger* in *Don Quixote*.

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<sup>4</sup> The painting most commonly supposed to have been the direct source for the figure is Antoine Le Nain's *The Village Piper* (1642, Detroit Institute of Arts). This painting had been illustrated in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* in 1860. Fried claims *The Horseman's Resting Place* by Louis le Nain (c1640s, London, Victoria and Albert Museum) was also a major influence, stating "It is not clear how Manet came to see any of the known versions, but the visual evidence alone suggests overwhelmingly that he did." *Op cit* (1996) p469, n23. I find his argument, asserting Manet's use of a particular source and basing it on the simple fact of visual association, congenial although, in my opinion, excessive reliance on this results in erroneous attributions. None is more damaging to his overall argument than the ascription of the source for the drinking boy to Rubens' *Bacchus* (1638-40, Hermitage Museum).

<sup>5</sup> This was originally identified by Anne Hanson in Hanson, A.C., 1972b. "Popular imagery and the work of Edouard Manet" In U. Finke (ed.) *French 19th century painting and literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 133-163. The work's current whereabouts is unknown. Its appearance, however, is recognized in a reproductive wood engraving published in *Le Magasin pittoresque* 29 (1861): 293.

Manet adopted the repetitive strategy he had been practising in his printed works, and used this strategy of repetition to re-contextualise his honoured forebears. In 1862 this was a practice he had developed and extended to include music, reconceptualised, in making this his largest ever painting. Beginning with the account of a revolutionary group of Gypsy musicians in the passage from Liszt's *Des bohèmiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* (1859) he was combining art history with musical history to create and comment upon an imaginative representation of that quartet. This, like *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* was another of his tribute paintings. In this instance, at one level he was acknowledging his respected forebears, in contradistinction to acknowledging his avant-garde contemporaries. At another, one that is conveniently overlooked in almost all the discussion of Manet's *Tribute* works, he was in both works drawing attention to music and the various ways it exercised an influence upon his painting style; Manet's innovations in the world of painting.

In Chapter 3 I discussed how Manet's exposure to the writing of Liszt would have made him aware of the composer's claim to be creating, in his *Hungarian Rhapsodies*, a Gypsy music that would initiate a revolutionary change in the world of music. As Fried has shown such an ambition was matched by Manet's, whose art, he says, was "a deliberate attempt to establish the universality of his own painting."<sup>6</sup> In this painting, while Manet's overt citations demonstrate his immersion in the painted tradition, his execution eschews learned conventions in favour of passion, spontaneity and eloquence; these were the qualities which would break the citations free of their original contexts. Fried articulates the point he is making about Manet's ambition as follows. "In order to secure the Frenchness of his own work – one of the chief imperatives of his enterprise at that time – he found himself compelled to establish connections of different degrees of explicitness between his paintings and the work of those painters of the past who seemed to him authentically French".<sup>7</sup> Manet's summation of the painterly tradition cast him in the same role as this celebrated Gypsy group. He would approach painting using the stylistic methods Liszt had argued characterised the Gypsy's musical innovations. By giving free rein to their passion, spontaneity and eloquence they were able to insert virtuosic qualities into a larger pan-European cultural milieu. Manet's self-construction had him

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<sup>6</sup>Fried (1996) *op cit* p126. [His italics.]

<sup>7</sup>Fried (1996) *op cit* p86.

at a similar cross-road; from the timeless mists of western painting Manet was the free-spirited innovator who would project that tradition into the maelstrom of the present.

In order to allay the historic construction of the Gypsy's foreignness, Franz Liszt had devoted portions of his book to accounts written by people who lived amongst them. Manet gives his group an equivalent normalisation (Fried talks about the work's "realism") by utilising previously created visual models to stand for individual members of the musical quartet. Thereby he asserted this humble group's identification with valued and normalising artistic precursors. This band apart is then bracketed, so to speak, by the two spectator figures. Just as in the Scheffer which served as their model, these focus our attention on the idealistic values underlying the creation of this composed scenario. While inspiration, or the virtuosic style, can give rise to a "truthfulness" that eludes the academic, Manet's position on such romantic ideals is never entirely clear. In this painting no less than in *The Spanish Singer*, sincerity competes with detachment to introduce doubt. Music's capacity to capture the attention is what Manet appears to value and focus upon. And in this as in so many others of his works at this time he adopted techniques such as facingness, a sketchy execution and a flat poster-like suppression of half-tones which were all designed to achieve the same virtuosic appeal he shared with Liszt in admiring in Gypsy musicians.

It is instructive to observe how the application of these values brings about changes in each of the figures he adopts, drawn from distinct historic and stylistic periods. Manet's painterly skill has been directed towards flattening the overt signs of these origins so that they appear as if naturally occurring together. In this he seems to be trying out a different strategy from the one he used in *Mlle V ... in the costume of an espada*. There the citation from Goya in the bullfighting scene makes no attempt to hide its iconographic origins in Spanish etching despite the foreground figure being sourced in works reflecting an alternative style. Here the distinction between different source materials is principally indicated by the division of the work into two implied sections – the Gypsy group and its onlookers are distinguished by scale as well as by position, just as in the Scheffer. Even so, Manet appears to have gone to greater lengths to make it seem as if the various figures could share the same stylistic treatment, in spite of their originating from varied stylistic sources. His

transposed images are created in a style different from the style of the images from which they are borrowed.<sup>8</sup> If this is his agenda, it is one that posits a broad overarching unity to the arts he is drawing from and demonstrates that one image can seamlessly integrate them all.

This recasting of prior works of art in a new context does not, as I discussed earlier in this thesis, merely change the effect of the original. In fact this is far from central to Manet's ambition in creating this work. The references to previous artists are, on the whole, clear and unequivocal, just as clear and unequivocal as in the *Silentium* print and in the Spanish copies. By working all these references into the same composition he achieves a kind of unity that accommodates not just the different styles he started from but also the varying picture spaces the work exploits. There is no fundamental contradiction, he seems to be asserting, between the realistic depiction of characters (standing in for rather than resembling historical figures in the development of a Gypsy musical tradition) and the use of painting to examine its own traditions and past styles of art. This contrast is schematized in this painting through the use of the spectator figures. They reflect the self-consciousness of the artist. In the process of creating an image that represents a story about the beginnings of Gypsy performance history, he sees himself, the dancing figure, contributing to contemporary discourses about music's role in the establishment of aesthetic value in painting. An abstract invisible phenomenon, listening and responding to sound, would be the motif by which Manet strove to unite these different manifestations of culture. Whether it is correct to interpret this as Manet's loss of confidence in the capacity of the painted image to signify depends on the extent to which one is prepared to recognise his striving for synaesthetic effects in his work as a falling away from the ideals of painting.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> In Meller, P., 2002. Manet in Italy: some newly identified sources for his early sketchbooks. *The Burlington Magazine*, 144, 68-110 the author demonstrates Manet's previous interest in this practice when he transposed the image of the boy holding a tray from Gozzoli into the painting *Cavaliers espagnol* (1861, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts).

<sup>9</sup> Joseph Tanke in "The Specter of Manet: A Contribution to the Archaeology of Painting" *The Journal of aesthetics and art criticism* (2008) 66:4 pp381-392 quotes Foucault "what makes modern art since the nineteenth century [is] this incessant movement by which each rule that is posed, or each rule that is deduced, induced or inferred from each of the preceding acts, finds itself rejected and refused by the following act. There is a sort of permanent cynicism regarding all established art in all new forms of art" p384. Tanke comments "Manet's canvases transform their cultural valuations with a semi-hostile gesture that pits culture against itself" *ibid*.

Manet goes about establishing the figures' sensitivity to an aural presence using a number of different mechanisms. In the first place his procedures exploit the analogies between music and painting in their respective use of previous works. Composers have always had an interest in the repetition of their own and other's works within a larger structure. While reproduction of a painting in a print format was widely practised in the nineteenth century and was intrinsic to Manet's practice during this period, his self-quotation by inserting a previous painting in a subsequent painted work was highly unusual. But such repetitions were common currency in the musical arts. To take just one well-known example, virtually every movement of the Bach *B-minor Mass* has a recognisable vocal or instrumental antecedent. Additionally the transposition of musical compositions from one medium to another was well established. In the nineteenth century Liszt, in particular, was famous for his piano reductions of well-known orchestral works. He created piano transcriptions from not just the symphonies of Beethoven but also out of songs by Schubert. His biographer describes the process in the following terms "His arrangements amount to a kind of self-effacement. When we survey them complete, it is rather like walking around a gallery, peopled by all the great personalities of the past – Beethoven, Bach, Berlioz, Wagner, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Verdi and Mozart – the roll call is endless."<sup>10</sup> But equally Liszt was prepared to orchestrate works which had origins in piano pieces, symphonic poems began as piano accompaniments to songs and were gradually worked up to a full-blown orchestral version.<sup>11</sup> Repetition is, of course, a basic component of musical structure but that it extends across works as well as persisting within them and that it was also a well recognised aspect to the music career of Franz Liszt suggests that musical procedures provided Manet with the model for this work. His strong allegiance to giving visual form to musical models meant that he was prepared to chance his arm in such repetitions hoping, perhaps, to evoke the echo of their original force and create thereby something like a resonant structure.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Walker, A., 1981. Liszt and the Schubert song transcriptions. *The Musical Quarterly*, LXVII 50-63 at p63.

<sup>11</sup> Bonner, A., 1986. Liszt's "Les Préludes" and "Les Quatre Éléments:" A Re-investigation *19th-Century Music*, 10, 95-107.

<sup>12</sup> An artist's reduplication of figures from one work in another does occur, especially in narrative fresco cycles. This is discussed in Ruvoldt, M., 2003. Michelangelo's Dream. *The Art Bulletin*, 85, 86-113, at p95-97 but Berger, K., 1999. *A theory of art* Oxford: Oxford University Press points out "self-quotation/allusion is incomparably less common in painting than it is in music or even literature" p181.

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The same repetitive device made it possible for Manet to mimic music's fundamental quality of extension in time. There is a single frozen note at the heart of this work, the one struck by the Gypsy violinist. This is matched visually by his intense gaze outwards at the viewer. Combined, these bestow upon the painting its sense of occupying a pregnant moment, struck full with watchfulness. But this is only half of the picture. Just as a musical performance is made up of a succession of such moments, the later moment subsuming the former, so all of Manet's painting's attendees are themselves evoked by evolving images. Manet obliges us, through his complicit appeal to historical precedents, to recognise in these newly minted versions of the figures their participation in the passage of time. This not only stretches back to the vintage of the original image from which Manet had drawn his adaptation for each of the depicted figures. It also moves through time.

These images have multiple manifestations, as is well exemplified by the art historian's varied and not always competing attributions for *The Young Woman*. Like the *Absinthe Drinker* and the *Boy with Dog* these are images that are not merely laden with acknowledgements to other artists' works; they can also be seen to change according to where they occur in Manet's own work. In his congruent printed images, published as part of the 1862 Cadart portfolio, the young woman and the boy had no musical associations and were produced as a linked duet of domestically-related images. This variability is also visited upon the figure derived from the *Absinthe Drinker*. Probably this was a three-quarter figure in 1859, seated with crossed legs according to the Randon caricature. In the 1862 Cadart portfolio print he is a drinker, perhaps a drunkard, standing with his bottle on the ground beside him. Here, without the bottle, he stands-in for Manet himself, his "dancing" feet responding to the sound of music. In Manet's prints all three figures are embedded in a different context and have different characteristics. Irrespective of whether the painting or the print came first, Manet would have been aware that all these instances of these cross-quotations could have been recognised by an attentive viewer.

As a result of their multiple manifestations the fixed quality of the image is unsettled, as you look at it. It is launched on a time-based evolution, similar to that created in music. The unfinished aspect we observe in parts of the painting, especially the landscape around the young woman, along with the accumulation, even overlapping of images on the right-hand side, give material substance to this

sense of a work evolving in time. By supplementing the evidence of the eyes with an awareness of the underlying multiplicity of parallel figures, the viewer participates in the unfolding drama of the painting. Just as music contains two aspects of temporality, instantaneity and duration, so in front of this work the viewer's experience is directed both to its immediacy and to its multiple re-inscriptions. The experience combines "an ecstasy *made of pleasure and of knowledge* ... hovering above and well away from the natural world". Such is the experience Baudelaire describes on listening to Wagner's music.<sup>13</sup>

These evocations of parallel procedures between painting and music are supplemented by visual tokens contrived to assert the figures' sensitivity to an aural presence. His listeners' concentration on the inner experience induced by music provides the work's most powerful unifying device. It cannot be doubted that Manet used this device elsewhere in a variety of contexts, not all of them musical, throughout his career. These early works on the theme of attending to an inward state brought on by music, or reading, originate the practice. I am arguing here that rather than accepting the somewhat dismissive suggestion that these figures are "self-absorbed or in blank day-dreams", we should recognise that their attention has been directed towards what is not visible.<sup>14</sup> We saw Manet beginning to develop this procedure in *The Spanish Singer*. In this work the device is applied to a collective of figures. They make it possible for Manet to create an effect of unified attention that is considerably more telling. And as might be expected in the representation of an audience's experience of inwardness, Manet acknowledges variety in their responses.

The first challenge was to make a naturalistic scene in which it becomes obvious that all the figures in it are sharing the same aural experience. It would not work if each of the figures looked fixedly either at the source of the sound or away out of the picture space. Too much of either mechanism would create an unnatural ambience, alienating the viewer and diminishing the painting's impact. Nevertheless to have some of the figures in either of these positions is intrinsic to creating this inward effect. In this respect, the disjunctive gazes of the two boys are extremely

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<sup>13</sup> « Alors je concus pleinement l'idée d'une âme se mouvant dans un milieu lumineux, d'une extase *faite de volupté et de connaissance*, et planant au-dessus et bien loin du monde naturel » *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris* Pichois II P785. [Italics in original.]

<sup>14</sup> Blake and Franscina *op cit* p84.

effective. They are close enough together to suggest that what attracts the attention of one should have drawn the other's attention as well. Only an explanation that can account, as attentive listening does, for their differing gazes, overcomes the strange effect of their physical togetherness being matched by their psychic separation. Manet reinforces this sense of their being distracted by the music by the way he treats the eyes of the *Gilles* figure; his look is oriented outside the picture space but otherwise it is undirected, just the treatment Manet applied to the figure in *The Spanish Singer*. This is not a gaze and it is in stark contrast to his companion's fixed stare at the old musician.

Beyond this central group Manet takes advantage of the young woman's lost profile and the elderly bearded figure's downward gaze to express a sense of being overwhelmed by the power of the music. Listening without looking is how a visual artist is able to represent the figure engrossed in an inner experience which has primacy. Visually linked with music making they are overshadowed by it. This may serve to explain a feature of this painting which is unusual in Manet's oeuvre. In the baby he creates a second figure gazing outwards, seemingly catching our eye. This figure, like the old musician, himself, does not seem to be absorbed by the music. They are calling upon the viewer to participate in the experience of the invisible musical note. The final figure not accounted for in this compendium of absorbed listening is the stand-in for Manet, the one-time absinthe drinker. What Michael Fried describes as the "odd, almost dance-like formality" of this figure's pose suggests he is aware of and responding to a musical experience. The impossibility of being sure about his gaze, he "has been given only the vaguest indication of eyes" deflects attention from his face to that very part of his anatomy which has given viewers so much difficulty but which carries within itself a musical supplement.<sup>15</sup>

Just as Baudelaire had developed, in his essay on Richard Wagner, "an altogether new vocabulary for verbalising the experience of music" so Manet initiated

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<sup>15</sup> Fried *op cit* pp34, 289. Evocations of dance were commonly adopted by Baudelaire to broaden the formal and expressive scope of his verse and prose. And this interest in dance was shared by Gautier, Mallarmé and Paul Valéry, to name just the literary figures. See the discussion in Braswell, S., 2006 "An aesthetics of movement, Baudelaire, poetic renewal, and the invitation of dance." *French forum*, 31, 23-43. Degas, of course had a similar interest in extending his visual vocabulary by representing figures in a number of dance poses.



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in these music images early in his career a set of visual conventions that would be definitional for subsequent Impressionist representations of a musical experience.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Anne Leonard in Leonard, A., 2007. Picturing listening in the late nineteenth century. *Art Bulletin*, 89, 266-286. Her description of Baudelaire's equivalent invention in literary texts is located at p 269.

## Chapter 9: Tangled chronology and *The Young Woman*

*Tout l'univers visible n'est qu'un magasin d'images et de signes auxquels l'imagination donnera une place et une valeur relative.*<sup>1</sup>

In my last two chapters I discussed the way Manet introduced music into his painting of *The Old Musician*. I argued that he was prepared to alter the appearance of his figure in the earlier painting *The Absinthe Drinker* in order to make it better conform with this new thematic material. This alteration, the conversion of the figure into full-length by the addition of dancing feet, then became the basis for a number of matching images in water-colour and etching until, after the 1867 Retrospective Exhibition, Manet decided to incorporate these changes in the original 1859 painting as well.

In this chapter I will be focussing on the figure from the other work in Manet's 1862 Cadart portfolio which plays its part in *The Old Musician*. Here an original is again subjected to significant changes in the course of its conversion between media. In the case of changes to *The Absinthe Drinker* I left unresolved the question whether Manet first made them in the painting *The Old Musician* and then produced the print (afterwards or perhaps contemporaneously) according to his usual practice. That was justified because taking either position results in no significant consequences. Such was not the case in his two versions of the print *The Gypsies*. There it is more than likely, in fact very probable, that one of the versions, now known as *The little Gypsies* was made before the painting and I presented evidence to support that conclusion and develop its implications. In the case of the *Absinthe Drinker* print nothing conclusive supports one sequence over the other. In this situation it is conventional, in Manet studies, to presume the print came after the painting. If, on the other hand, as I will be arguing in this chapter, the print of *The Young Woman* came before the painting then it would seem we have enough instances to upset that presumption. And such upsetting contributes to a re-assessment of the importance of print-making to Manet at this stage in his career.

Artists taking up print-making do not always act as if it is merely a subsidiary activity where prints are intended to make possible the wider circulation of the images in their paintings. The print production of neither Dürer, nor Rembrandt nor Goya falls within such a generalisation. This had already been acknowledged in Manet's day,

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<sup>1</sup> "The entire visible universe is nothing more than a marketplace of images and of signs to which the imagination will give a place and a relative value." Charles Baudelaire *The 1859 Salon* IV (Pichois II, 627).

when Rembrandt prints, like the Hundred Guilder print (*Christ Healing the Sick*, c.1649), were prized more highly than some of his paintings.<sup>2</sup> Manet created some important prints before they were converted into paintings and his printmaking was often the first place for experiments with innovatory stylistic features which later were taken up in his painting. As early as 1925, Rosenthal argued Manet felt free to develop the implications of innovative subject matter in his printmaking. The allusion to art being made in the open air and to sensations captured in the moment first occurs in prints like *The Races* (Harris 41) and *The Balloon* (Harris 23). There “the graphic composition and its execution are all determined by the desire to give an impression of ‘instantaneity’.”<sup>3</sup> Here Rosenthal acknowledges the priority of printmaking in the development of the aesthetic goals of Impressionist painting. It is a theme that continues to be voiced despite being largely ignored in the major retrospective accounts of that movement.<sup>4</sup> Manet thought through issues about the relation of drawing to painting by his quotation from the prints of others. In the case of *The Old Musician* he developed ideas, which originated in prints, about spatial distribution and the delineation of individual character. These contribute to one of the artist’s oddest works from this period of his career.

In the print, *The Young Woman*, as we will see, it is in his experiments with spatial positioning of his figure on the page that Manet initiated stylistic innovations that were to prove revolutionary for the development of modern art. Manet’s first tentative steps in that direction can be seen in this print.

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<sup>2</sup> Janis, E.P., 1980. Setting the tone - The revival of etching, the importance of ink. In C.F. Ives (ed.) *The painterly print*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. “Certainly the most beautiful wash drawing by Rembrandt never would have fetched the same price as a proof of *The Hundred Guilder Print* or that of *Burgomaster Six’ Blanc* argued to collectors and connoisseurs” p9.

<sup>3</sup> “Mis en page, exécution, tout ici est commandé par le désir de donner un ‘instantané’”. Rosenthal, L., 1925. *Manet, aquafortiste et lithographe* Paris: Le Goupy p148.

<sup>4</sup> “Between the renewal of the original print and the birth of the modern vision, of the impressionist vision, there is not simply coincidence but in fact a significant correlation. All stylistic aspects right up to the vibration of colour can be transferred or discerned, specifically at the intimate level of the printed plate, sometimes earlier and in a more decisive fashion than in painting.” « C'est pourquoi nous verrons qu'il y a non seulement coïncidence mais corrélation significative entre le renouveau de la gravure originale et la naissance de la vision moderne, de la vision impressionniste, dont tous les aspects stylistiques, jusqu'à la vibration de la couleur, peuvent se transférer ou se révéler expressément sur le registre intime de la planche imprimée, parfois plus tôt et de façon plus décisive qu'en peinture » Leymarie, J. & Melot, M., 1971. *Les gravures des impressionnistes: Manet, Pissarro, Renoir, Cézanne, Sisley* Paris: Arts et métiers graphiques, pVI.

In support of my claim that Manet was not following his normal procedure when he incorporated the print *The Young Woman* in *The Old Musician* I begin with observations about the process of reversal characteristic of print production. If he had copied directly from the painting onto the preparatory copper plate, the print would show the image reversed. The fact that it does is therefore *prima facie* evidence for him following his normal procedure. Furthermore, my suggestion that the print was made before the painting has this drawback: he could hardly have copied the print directly when he re-used the image in the painting. That would have obliged him to reverse the image - another unlikely scenario. (It is significant, but hardly conclusive, that there exist no intermediary watercolours for this print image.) I will show that an independent source provided the image for both painting and print and he simply returned to the Ur-image for both versions. So, on that basis alone, the “standard interpretation” is not intrinsically a more credible explanation of his procedures in this instance. It needs, and gets, special pleading to account for the belief that this print is “unique among his reproductive prints in isolating a single figure from a larger composition.”<sup>5</sup>

That special pleading focuses on some scrawls to the sides of both states of the print. Nils Gosta Sandblad in 1954 said they were transposing details from the painting. He proposed “the figure of the girl appears on one of the etchings published by Manet in the early Autumn, and this etching is based on the completed painting, since in its first stages it has taken over not only the model but also the contours of the landscape and the shadows of the tree which are found in the painting – although in the final version of the etching they have been removed.”<sup>6</sup> Problems with this statement may arise because of an awkward translation. After all, there is nothing in the prints, in either of their states that resembles “the shadows of the tree” and “the contours of the landscape” seem to consist of a single peaked line on the woman’s right. But, allowing for inaccuracies, it is possible he was referring to the plant to the left of the young woman in the painting which may appear to crop up again in the

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<sup>5</sup> Reff, T., 1982. *Manet and modern Paris : one hundred paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by Manet and his contemporaries* Washington: National Gallery of Art p186. Actually this is something of a red herring, dependent on a very narrow interpretation of the word “reproductive”. There are prints like *The water drinker*, *Hat and guitar*, *Portrait of the artist’s father* all of which isolate details from a larger composition. A more interesting question would be whether any of these also first occurred as prints. A case could certainly be made for the first version of *Portrait of the artist’s father* and *Hat and guitar* has another tangled chronology.

<sup>6</sup> Sandblad, N.G., 1954. *Manet: Three studies in artistic conception* Lund: New Society of Letters p28.

prints. What unsettles that presumption is the fact that the position of this detail in the print is not consistent with the reversed orientation of the figure. [Fig. 63] If Manet was copying the figure from the painting directly onto the plate I see no reason why he would effect a reversal of the position of the figure but not of the landscape features. The fact of this partial reversal justifies and is the basis for my re-examination of his argument.

I propose that the decorative elements surrounding the young woman serve non-representational functions. These grew out of the circumstances of the print's original creation. It was paired with the etching *The Urchin* (*Le gamin*, so named to distinguish it from another analogous print, *Boy with Dog*) on the same plate.<sup>7</sup> [Fig. 64] These scrawled lines render the space around the young woman ambiguous, blocking the view into space on that side of the image and bringing her closer to the picture plane.<sup>8</sup> Despite this, her forward position is not aligned with that of the boy's. Rather it is as if her more ambiguous occupation of space serves to signify a difference in scale between the two figures irrespective of the equality in size on the sheet. It is noteworthy that she is represented as particularly broad in relation to her height; something that Manet took pains to emphasize when he increased the quantity of black infill on her apron in the second state.<sup>9</sup>

These space-defining lines need to be read as playing their part in the matching of these two images on the copper plate. On the right, and higher in the image, other uniformly horizontal lines serve to entice the eye into depth. These closely spaced parallel lines signify in both works clouds as well as landscape features but the tangled group of lines around the young woman have no specific representational function. Printmaking is sufficiently flexible a medium to enable this

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<sup>7</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation p34. Putting two images on the same plate was widespread, especially so with genre types.

<sup>8</sup> I have already discussed Manet's interest in the development of spatial signifiers in printmaking in *The Spanish Singer*. They are more clearly exemplified by the multiple states of *The Dead Toreador* (Harris 55). In *The tragic actor* (Harris 48) they are used to channel the gaze in the direction of Rouvière's partially visible, perhaps spot lit, shadow.

<sup>9</sup> Suzanne Leenhoff (1830-1906) was twenty-one when she had her only child. Around the time of this painting (and print) she is referred to in a letter by Ambrose Adam (whom Manet had painted). Describing her to his correspondent he notes "as a Dutchwoman she is the shape and size appropriate to her country" [« Elle a un beau talent de musicienne mais en sa qualité de hollandaise elle a les formes et la taille de son Pays; elle paraît du reste blonde et douce. » Wilson-Bareau, J., 1984. The portrait of Ambrose Adam by Édouard Manet. *The Burlington Magazine*, CXXVI, 750-758 ; P758.

non-representational use of linear features to occur; patterning can, in these circumstances, take precedence. The young woman is monumentalised by the left-hand side treatment and contextualised by the right. The plant appears to have been introduced by Manet at the stage when he transferred this image to the painting. Here spatial markers, which worked appropriately in the print medium, were not suitable in a full-sized painting.<sup>10</sup>

As Melot points out other instances of non-realistic decoration occur in Manet's prints, even where the print unquestionably derives from the painting. In *The Spanish Singer* "even if Manet created the etched version himself from his 1862 painting, with a view to popularising the painting and exploiting its success at the *Salon* (following the usual procedure for reproductive engravings) it surpasses straightforward reproduction by adding to the motif, as painted, kinetic strokes and emphases which did not figure in the original and make this print a different, autonomous work."<sup>11</sup>

Whatever Manet was doing with the plant detail in his painting *The Old Musician* he had already established these decorative configurations in his print, for reasons to do with its compatibility with its companion-work. These two works, which were originally created together, were later separated by cutting the plate. This probably took place because the two images display a differing sophistication in the treatment of the medium, specifically in this matter of the contextualisation of the figures. The summary indications locating the young woman are in distinct contrast with the disciplined interplay of line and blank paper, in the image of the boy with a dog, which creates atmospheric depth and at the same time attaches the figure,

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<sup>10</sup> This is not to say that Manet chose to expunge such references to spatial markers, rather he used devices more appropriate to painting. Clay, J., 1983. Ointments, makeup, pollen. *October*, 27, 3-44 discusses his use of overlapping strata of colour which have the effect of presenting closest to the spectator "whatever stands out in the distance in a landscape" and his use of "little piles of pigment" in *Music in the Tuileries* to render ambiguous the space between the foliage and the crowd of strollers p13.

<sup>11</sup> « la version à l'eau-forte que Manet lui-même donna de son tableau en 1862 — quoiqu'elle soit encore exécutée vraisemblablement dans le but de populariser le tableau et exploiter le succès qu'il avait eu au Salon, donc selon le processus habituel de la gravure de reproduction — outrepassa la simple reproduction en ajoutant au motif peint des mouvements d'écriture et des accents qui n'y figuraient pas et font de cette estampe une autre oeuvre, autonome. » Wilson, J. & Melot, M., 1977. *Edouard Manet: L'Oeuvre gravé* Ingelheim am Rhein: Stadtverwaltung Ingelheim p16. This important discussion of Manet's printmaking is translated and appended to this thesis.

despite his truncated legs, more firmly to the page.<sup>12</sup> Manet conceived these figures as vignettes rather than as reproductions of painted compositions and he published these two images together on the same page in the 1862 Cadart portfolio despite the plate having been divided by this time. [Fig. 65]

The traditional sequencing for the two images of *The Young Woman*, the scenario by which the print was made after the painting, involves committing oneself to the following puzzling sequence of events. Manet made both images on the same plate in 1862 after the completion of *The Old Musician* for the purposes of the Cadart portfolio and well after the completion of the painting *The Boy with a Dog* (1860, Private Collection).<sup>13</sup> Then, for some unspecified reason, he cut the plate into two. Finally, very soon afterwards, he published the two prints together on the same sheet, temporarily bringing the plates back together again for that purpose. I am unable to imagine what would make such a course of action believable.

The conundrum is solved if we allow that the print *The Young Woman*, which bears only a passing resemblance, anyway, to the figure of the young woman in *The Old Musician*, was created before that painting. It was not inspired by but served, along with its source, as inspiration for the figure in the painting. In the sequence of Manet's prints it followed the more carefully executed image of *The Urchin*, "the two images belonging to the category of "popular types" which stemmed from the realist tradition in classical art".<sup>14</sup> Somewhere between 1860 (or thereabouts) and autumn 1862 he cut the plate, possibly because he wanted to publish *The Urchin* on its own. It is known, from a letter, that he was particularly proud of this print and maybe he

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<sup>12</sup> What is, at first sight, odd about this difference is that one would expect the first image finished to be that of the *Boy with dog* since it occurs on the left-hand side of the plate and the *Young Woman* looks like it was added in afterwards. But the later image is much more freely rendered, as if the two were created at different times. This difference in time explanation is applied in the case of the two versions of *The Smoker* (Harris 49 and 50) Ambrosini, L., 1994-6. Edouard Manet's smoker: making old genres modern. *Porticus*, XVII-XIX, 33-37 "In sum, the drypoint speaks of Manet's new concern with plein air pictorialism: he reinterprets *The Smoker* now as an Impressionist, producing a newly luminous, atmospheric rendition, continuing his efforts to make old genres modern." But these works are almost twenty years apart. In the second state of the print *The Young Woman* Manet worked to make that image more compatible with the *Boy with Dog* by toning down the landscape indications and intensifying the black portions on the woman's body.

<sup>13</sup> The painting *Boy with Dog* is listed and illustrated in the 1983 exhibition catalogue where François Cachin states "Such juxtapositions of past and present, still fairly literal, the treatment of the sky, and the rather careful modelling of the face suggest an early date, 1860 in preference to the year 1861 noted in the Rouart and Wildenstein catalogue." Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. p58.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* P60.

saw it as being diminished by being published alongside *The Young Woman*.<sup>15</sup> For the Cadart portfolio, on the other hand, because he was displaying a representative collection of the prints he had made to that date, he put these two vignettes together again, temporarily.

While I have devoted what may seem like an inordinate amount of space to an argument of passing interest, its implications are far-reaching.<sup>16</sup> Manet took a work originally intended as a genre piece depicting popular types and incorporated it in one of his largest paintings. The roll-call of quotations appertaining to *The Old Musician* is therefore complete with this attribution. Each of the works in the painting has a distinct and recognisable source, two of these being in previous images created by the artist himself. Moreover this last attribution testifies to the very close relationship operating between his prints and his paintings at this time and demonstrates his commitment as an artist to whatever medium best suited his wider purposes. In the fashion of the great printmakers of the past, Dürer, Rembrandt and Goya his practice gives weight to both media independently. He also reflects the practice of some of his most experienced and skilled fellow practitioners at this time, people like Daubigny and Corot who also are known to have made paintings of works which were originally created as prints.

Manet's procedures reveal his willingness to incorporate in his painting something of the spirit of his print – and more particularly – of its source. We have already seen how the use of source material by Manet was not a simple matter of appropriating any available image, the source and its destination were linked thematically as well. In many instances the kind of source infected the very intent of the work into which it was introduced. The same can be shown to have been the case in this instance.

The erroneous assumption that the print known as *The Young Woman* derived from the painting logically entailed seeing it as part of a Gypsy scenario. This made it

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<sup>15</sup> Adhémar, J., 1965. Manet et l'estampe. *Nouvelles de l'estampe*, 7, 230-234 publishes the letter, to which he gives a date in 1861; p231. This date has, however, been challenged in the 1983 retrospective exhibition catalogue. There the date of 1867 is chosen to align the letter with an upcoming publication of a print by Manet in the magazine *L'Artiste*. *Manet 1832-1883* (1983) *op cit* p62. (See the argument in Harris, J.C., 1970. *Edouard Manet: Graphic Works*, 1st ed. New York: Collectors Editions p32.)

<sup>16</sup> I do not go into the implications concerning dating which follow from this argument. Suffice to say they resolve some of the more awkward contortions required to fit the traditional approach.



reasonable to assume it had another Gypsy image as its source. If, on the other hand, it is presumed that this image had a *prior* life in Manet's artistic output, a presumption that is justified by its physical link to the other print *The Urchin* with its entirely different connotations, the physical separation in the painting between the other members of the quartet and the young woman with her child becomes easier to understand. In that image Manet was not simply illustrating an anecdote about a quartet of Gypsy musicians from Liszt's book out of a desire to create an idyllic vision of an unspoiled artistic community, no matter how mediated by the presence of its visionary authors on the scene. Such an interpretation does not account for the work's second centre of gravity associated with this figure of the young woman. She faces the old musician, completing an open rectangle for which the viewer's position provides the fourth side. Her lost profile may stand for her immersion in the music, but whatever its significance, the baby in her arms provides an unsettling alternative gaze to that directed at us by the seated figure.

Randon had observed interplay between the principal figure and the mother with child in Manet's painting *The Gypsies*. His cartoon parody published when the painting was on display at Manet's retrospective exhibition in 1867 makes of the baby's eyes (and mouth) an important alternative focal point. Judging from the second print version of the image he accurately reflected Manet's interest in representing the interaction between baby and viewer. In this later work, the *Old Musician*, we are being invited to likewise acknowledge that Manet is not single-mindedly focussed on the representation of music, alone. Rather this work, like *The Gypsies*, integrates the musical content with a familial context, suggesting, at the very least, that music's effect is intimately connected with the circumstances of its making.

Music, invisibly casting over the entire work its muted resonances, encounters in this disjunction within the Gypsy quartet an unexpected disruption. Combined together, the figures in this painting make no one unified statement about the visual space they occupy. Instead what is being pictured is the internal listening experience they share, one that transcends the baggage of the past each individual brings to the image through their prior visual sources. Despite their being stripped of the contextual associations which were intrinsic to their original value, there was a danger, nevertheless, that their origins in the great art of the past would be enough to

suggest orthodox cultural values. Truth, beauty and goodness could be intuited from the presence of these exalted ancestral images in Manet's painting. That this was not his intention is made clear by the presence of the young woman with the baby. This is an element of the work that has never been associated with any canonical artist (despite the venerable age and status of the motif). It is also an element which constitutes a distinct focus in the scenario being set up by Manet, one that acts as an alternative to the figure of the Old Musician.

This figure is separated from the group of three male figures by a significant and meaningful gap. Her implicit exclusion from the group is also rendered by the gesture with the violinist's bow, substituting for a conductor's baton. Wielded by the old musician it is conspicuously directed towards the two boys. And yet, even within the painting this young woman's importance gains significance from the implicit parallelism between her lost gaze and the obscured "look" over the head of the old musician and in her direction by the figure whom I have claimed stands for the artist, himself. His line of sight suggests that for all her removal from the others in the Gypsy group she plays a significant independent role in the painting. Her role in the story of the Gypsy quartet that provided Manet with material for his construction of the work was that of its virtuosic inspiration. Here she fulfils another function. One that intersects with the idea of music's unifying force. Manet transfers the story of her musical prowess to the figure of the old musician and gives her instead a more maternal role, one not sanctioned by his original sources, as far as we know.

This figure whose lost profile measures Manet's refusal to characterise her, apart from her attachment to the baby, cannot be associated with the idealist values accreted to figures from art's more noble past. This is not a lowly human being, after the model of Manet's "philosopher-beggars" who disguise a heroic or beautiful interior under a ragged exterior. Nor does her skin colour conform to the standard representations of the swarthy Indian-type favoured for Gypsy paintings at that time, any more than does her baby's shock of blonde hair.<sup>17</sup> Nothing in this figure's context gives the impression they were intended to represent the mythology of Gypsies as child stealers. She appears to be both part of the Gypsy quartet and yet somehow apart from the others. The eyes of her baby, in all their innocence and potential, look

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<sup>17</sup> Nancy Locke, distinguishing her hair colour from the baby's, proposes she is not related to it in Locke, N., 2001. *Manet and the family romance* Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press, p21.

steadfastly out at the world. They challenge the viewer to construe for themselves an equivalent to the internal spectator's viewing position. From this place the viewer's senses are awakened to the sound of music held in common by the participants in this painting.<sup>18</sup> The young woman's composure (typified by her firmly anchored connection with the ground) may suggest she is a committed participant in the Gypsy scenario but her separation from the group implies that she is also, just like the woman with child in Manet's work *The Gypsies*, committed to another kind of attentiveness.<sup>19</sup>

Given the importance of this figure to the unfolding of the painting's *mise en scène* it is surprising that its origins should have come to be so firmly wedded to a minor painting from the 1861 *Salon*, Henri Guillaume Schlesinger's *The Stolen Child* (1861, location unknown). This painting carries none of these connotations. [Fig. 66] No-one doubts Manet was responsive to art historical precedents. As I have indicated by drawing attention to his quotations from the work of Ary Scheffer, he was prepared to mine the works of his immediate predecessors, a procedure that smacks of plagiarism to the modern viewer. At the very least it implies that he had an unusually open-minded willingness to gather references from wherever he needed, irrespective of the age or standing of the artist who provided his source. Nor would this borrowing be an isolated incident. I have already claimed the principal figure of the guitarist in his other Gypsy works changed radically from the first print version to the second because he was responding to another painting from the 1861 *Salon*, the *Gypsy Family on the Move* by Achille Zo. The construction of the myth of the Gypsy in the middle of the nineteenth century by French artists was, it appears, a cooperative affair. Manet finding inspiration in other contemporary images based on this subject-matter seems not to have excited any attention. Indeed he was not the only artist to recycle Gypsy images. The figure who posed for the old musician in Manet's painting went on to become a regular fixture in artists' representations. So much so that the

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<sup>18</sup> Anne Leonard *op cit* states "Listeners pictured in a work of art as exemplars of single-minded focus on an aesthetic object might spur the actual viewers to follow suit. If art could simulate a musical experience for the viewer and elicit a reaction more like that caused by music, it might also be capable of reinforcing and prolonging attention. In this way the spatial art of painting feigns an appropriation, however brief, of music's duration" p278.

<sup>19</sup> The baby catches our attention with its insistent gaze and transfers our attention to listening through the prominence accorded to its visible ear, one of only four depicted in a painting with seven subjects. The association of the attentive gaze with listening is further reinforced by the boy in black. His abnormally large ear was to be repeated by Manet later in *The Fifer* (1866, Paris Musée d'Orsay).

ubiquity of his represented image made it difficult, eventually, for him to find work as an artist's model.<sup>20</sup> Nor could Manet have held these two minor painters, Schlesinger and Zo in particularly high esteem, any more than, as Proust observes, he was sufficiently enamoured of Scheffer's works to contemplate studying with him.<sup>21</sup>

It bears repeating, the obscurity of the artist, or the artwork, that Manet chose as his model does not seem to have been an issue for him. His relation to works, which for a variety of reasons have been deemed by later art historians to be the model for his own creations, is at least two-fold. In some instances he was doing little more than mimicking the outline pose. Such would be true of his use of the painting by Achille Zo to alter the appearance of the principal figure in *The Gypsies*. As Fried observes apropos the Schlesinger, the original work was "used up, rendered null and void in the process."<sup>22</sup> In other instances the painting that provided the initial impetus hardly materialises; in these cases the work's conceptual source has to be distinguished from its purely visual models, which are derived elsewhere. One of the most famous examples of this is provided by the models Manet used for *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1863). According to Proust it was Manet himself who said it had been based on the Giorgione/Titian *Concert Champêtre* (c1509, Paris Louvre).<sup>23</sup> No-one looking at the later work doubts that this is the case. Yet while there are conceptual parallels with the earlier work there is no visible trace of this painting in his redaction. Nor can it be asserted this was the only instance of Manet being inspired to repeat a motif which he derived from a specific work by a famous predecessor. What makes the whole question of his relation to the past so complicated is that, as this example shows, having conceived a conceptual parallel with an earlier work, he was then just

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<sup>20</sup> Blake, N. & Frascina, F., 1993. Modern Practices of Art and Modernity. In Francis Frascina, Nigel Blake, Briony Fer, T. Garb & Charles Harrison (eds.) *Modernity and Modernism: French Painting in the Nineteenth Century*. New Haven CT and London: Yale University Press in association with the Open University, 50–140. P97. They comment "this may be a case of the exhaustion of a modern *myth* – the bohemian gypsy – dressed up as a pre-modern artistic character."

<sup>21</sup> Proust *Edouard Manet-Souvenirs* (1913) Paris 13-14, cited in Stephen Bann's *Ways around modernism* (2007) New York p65. Bann notes that it was Manet who dissuaded Proust from joining Scheffer's atelier. Bann observes "this evident notoriety around 1850 of an artist who is rarely mentioned today points to the virtual certainty that Manet would have been well aware of the standing of Scheffer's works..." n16.

<sup>22</sup> Fried, M., 1996. *Manet's modernism; or, The face of painting in the 1860s* Chicago: University of Chicago Press p183.

<sup>23</sup> The reference appeared in an article for *Studio* published in January 1901. After the outcry over the painting, Manet referred to the "Giorgione" and "emphatically asserted that he had been inspired by it" ["Manet déclarait très haut qu'il s'était inspire..."] Proust's article, (1901. *L'Art d'Édouard Manet*) is reprinted in *Manet's modernism*, pp417-437.

as inclined to draw visual details from other works. This process of amalgamation buried the original under an accumulation of subsidiary references.

There has been controversy over the origins of the girl figure in Manet's painting.<sup>24</sup> In view of the inadequacy of all the currently proposed sources for the girl figure it does not seem unreasonable to suggest a new one. In the debate about the sources for the *Old Musician* John House has responded sceptically to the suggestion that Schlesinger's Gypsy girl in his painting *The Stolen Child* provided the precedent for Manet's young woman. He claims "Manet's putative borrowing of a single-figure pose from the Schlesinger ... seems far from convincing....It is precisely the unspecificity of both setting and figures which allows the picture [Manet's picture, that is] to stand for so wide a range of itinerant (or 'marginal') types."<sup>25</sup> He does not provide an alternative source, perhaps feeling that the image emerges from an amalgamation of a number of different sources, not unlike the bullfighting image in the background of *Mlle V... in the costume of an espada*. This is the approach taken by Nigel Blake and Francis Frascina, who not only give prominence to the Schlesinger but also to a figure "La Béarnaise" by Paquet published in *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (Volume 3, p111).<sup>26</sup> [Fig. 67] The one provides an attenuated contextual analogy, the other a supposed visual likeness but neither puts the two aspects together in a unified pictorial source. Moreover the Schlesinger as source argument is subject to another crippling objection. Construing the iconography of Manet's image as connected with Gypsies, makes it virtually impossible to explain why the plate on which it is inscribed as a print should have been attached, physically, to another image originally made, as a painting, in 1860 which is completely bereft of such associations.

When Manet transferred this image from the print to the painting it is clear, from the X-rays, that he was undecided about this work's final appearance. He continued to make alterations (the most significant being shortening what was originally a taller figure) well after he had completed the other figures on this left-hand

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<sup>24</sup> House, J., 1985. Manet and modern Paris. *The Burlington Magazine*, 127, 104-5. P104; Fried *op cit* p183 are two recent contributions. They provide references to a long-standing debate.

<sup>25</sup>House *ibid*.

<sup>26</sup> In Blake *op cit* at pp 92 and 94. They are dependent on the essay by Hanson, A.C., 1972. Popular imagery and the work of Edouard Manet. In U. Finke (ed.) *French 19th century painting and literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 133-163 who on p146 proposed these analogies.

side. Zinc white, as opposed to lead white, only occurs on her figure on this side of the canvas. In their article in the National Gallery of Art *Bulletin* the conservators point out the significance of this “the alterations to the girl were made at the same time as the two men were included.”<sup>27</sup>

Whatever the reason for Manet’s independent work as a print-maker, there must be included an interest in the kinds of images traditionally associated with the medium. Principal amongst these in Manet’s work at this time were images of quiet domesticity. In both paintings and prints in this period he featured his son in a number of different poses, as a server of drinks, carrying a sword, two of him playing with a dog; he also made images of young women, the one I am considering, another of a woman at her bath and a third, copied from the Spanish, of a figure posing with a chair. All of these works have idiosyncratic treatments of their themes, to be sure, but the conclusion cannot be avoided that Manet was deeply committed to using children in poses that accentuated their homely domesticity. It is in this context that the print of the young woman with her baby has its first outing, I would suggest. Made initially as one of a pair of images, the other of which was the *The Urchin*, these are images that speak of modest genre scenes. Deriving from Dutch seventeenth century paintings of daily life, modest genre scenes had a widespread popularity in most of Western Europe during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century being imitated and adapted by print-makers and illustrators. One of the most common uses was to create a compendium of characteristic *types* like *The Béarnaise* which has been picked upon as the source for Manet’s image. This was a genre that had a huge popularity in France in the middle of the nineteenth century. It gave employment to print-makers who lavishly illustrated books such as *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes*, where putting analogous images together giving each their own pictorial space was a familiar practice.

I am at a loss to explain why commentators making the claim that the image *The Béarnaise* from that publication was Manet’s source, have no difficulty overlooking the absence of the baby in it. Manet’s images integrate the two figures. It is not just a matter of the observant juxtaposition of their two heads, he also represents the intimate closeness of their bodies. This evocation of the sensuous feel

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<sup>27</sup> Jones, K. & Hoenigswald, A., 2009. Shedding new light on *The Old Musician*. *National Gallery of Art. Bulletin*, 41, 2-13 P12.

of a new baby is perhaps only surpassed in Manet's oeuvre by his sensuous, if not erotic, descriptions of women's bodies in his earlier bathing images. His baby's staring eyes are also a striking and unique feature of the painted version. They are not even articulated in the print versions; there the treatment of the eyes resembles their uncertain articulation in the first print version of *The Gypsies*. In both the baby's eyes are obfuscated. Physical closeness and intimacy between mother and child are treated differently in the Gypsy prints where the second version in particular exemplifies the traditional Mary/Jesus interaction of awed wonder.

Is it because of men's lack of involvement with the raising of babies that these features count for so little in (predominantly male) academic discourse? And that a singular image of the young woman alone, drawn from the popular press, is thought adequate to provide Manet with his source material?<sup>28</sup> But, seemingly, Manet was not like that. His work acknowledges that a baby is capable (from the age of six weeks) of focussing on a distant object. This is what makes his representation of the intimate interaction between mother and child in the painting so unusual. The closeness between mother and child is not diminished but it is supplemented by the child's gaze towards the viewer, reminding one of the interactions between royalty and viewer in Velázquez's *Las Meninas*.

The print, however, follows a different agenda. It has features which play an important role in the print version but do not recur in the painting, or in any of the supposed sources that have been suggested. I have discussed one such, the conglomeration of etched lines in front of the girl's skirt. None of this is prefigured in the Schlesinger nor in the image from *Les français peints par eux-mêmes*. This flattened treatment of the image where spatial characteristics are kept to a minimum (one that he adopted when he made the later lithograph of *The Urchin*) suggests Manet derived his source from a figural study not a developed image. I have already suggested that in his print-making endeavours Manet, like many of his fellow artists in the *Société des Aquafortistes* (for which this image was made), had been acquainted with the works of Jean-Jacques de Boissieu and the image that more nearly

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<sup>28</sup> This fine argument is somewhat vitiated by the fact that it was Anne Hanson who first suggested the *Béarnaise* connection. She maintains "the little girls in both paintings [she is referring to the *Stolen Child* by Schlesinger] follow the traditions for the depiction of popular types" and gives the *Béarnaise* image as her reference point. Hanson, A.C., 1972. Popular imagery and the work of Edouard Manet. In U. Finke (ed.) *French 19th century painting and literature*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 133-163. P146.

resembles this one by Manet, in its print form can be found in an etching, a page of figures derived from depictions of family interactions in domestic circumstances, which reproduces a lost sheet of drawings by this man, France's foremost eighteenth-century etcher.<sup>29</sup> [Fig. 68]

It was a simple matter for Manet to copy it onto the plate and produce his print in the orientation shown. Likewise he could insert it into his painting without radically altering the original. This etching (which is signed "Boissieu fecit 1799 and accepted as such in the 1878 catalogue raisonné) has subsequently been rejected by Marie-Félicie Perez, who has re-edited the 1878 catalogue. She establishes it is not by Boissieu, rather it was made by Ignace Joseph de Claussin (1795-1844) after "one or several unlocated drawings by Boissieu".<sup>30</sup> Such a misunderstanding, if misunderstanding it was, should not be interpreted in the light of today's obsessive concern with attributions. Whether this image was "authentically" a Boissieu would have been, as we have seen in the case of the false Velázquez's, a minor concern for Manet. Nor is it significant that, as Perez points out, and Hanson illustrates, he had numerous possible images to choose from. Internal similarities with the Manet show this as the one he adopted. Having done so, he uses it in ways the other options would not have afforded.

The Boissieu images make it possible to account for the chronological relationship between the image of the young woman in the prints and her image in the painting. Manet's first effort, represented by the print in its first state, copies the Boissieu but changes the orientation of the child's head, perhaps to make the entire image more lifelike. [Fig. 69] It seems that, uncertain how to proceed, he fudged the details in a manner that resembles his treatment of the baby in the first state of *Les gitanos*. Part of the reason for his difficulty may have been that the "Boissieu" was equally vague on this point, even though it was only showing the child's head from behind. In the process of changing the child's orientation, Manet also omitted the detail of the child's left arm around the young woman's neck, substituting a pudgy smudge signifying the child's left hand. He also changed the angle of the young woman's left arm but, significantly, he appears to have retained the small purse-like

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<sup>29</sup> Professor Perez, the author of the Boissieu catalogue raisonné, responding to my suggestion of the connection, states in a personal communication: "...la femme tenant un enfant se décèle avec une loupe sur l'estampe de Claussin; dans ce cas aussi, ce n'est guère qu'un «topos» de la vie populaire." 22-01-08.

<sup>30</sup> Perez (1994) p342.



object on her belt. No other explanation offers itself for the small square of cross-hatching at the juncture between the flap of her waistcoat and her arm. The bonnet on the “Boissieu” becomes in Manet’s image a strangely discordant melange of wispy hairs escaping from around the edges of what looks suspiciously like a close-fitting hat of some indeterminate description. There are two distinctive features of the “Boissieu” Manet does not change, however. One is the sharply indented waist at the back of the figure. This is a feature which is not shared by any of the other possible sources. It is also one that Manet never loses sight of, even in the half-finished drawing after the painting. The other common feature is the unusual treatment of the lower garments. Both are composed by a cursory collection of long strokes and omit any details of her legs and feet. Manet, however, adds a black rectangle on the lower front of his image to balance the black of her waistcoat. The odd pocket-like structure Manet included on the young woman’s dress in the painting is matched by a detail in the figure of the young girl as she occurs in another work by Boissieu *Interieur rustique*. [Fig. 70] (Perez 79). This figure appears to share the model used by Claussin; the detail is proof that Manet was acquainted with both images.<sup>31</sup> [Fig. 71]

Jean-Jacques de Boissieu has today been almost completely forgotten but there seems little doubt that when artists were re-inventing the artist’s print in the middle years of the nineteenth century, after about fifty years when the practice had fallen into desuetude thanks to the dominance of reproductive engraving, it was to Boissieu that they turned for their models.<sup>32</sup> He has seldom been acknowledged as a source for some of Manet’s images, despite resemblances between the works of the two artists and corroborating evidence that Boissieu influenced many of the major figures involved in the revival of printmaking taking place in Paris during the 1850s and 1860s.<sup>33</sup> Boissieu’s output is divided. In part it consists of figural studies from life

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<sup>31</sup> The fact that, in the Boissieu, it functions as a patch of light catching the edge of the dress and in the Manet it seems to be a representation of a pocket, shows how Manet was prepared to retain a detail from the former image even though it required him to change its role.

<sup>32</sup> Marie-Félicie Perez has published her thesis on his prints and drawings and has revised and added further commentary to the 1878 catalogue raisonné, which was published in 1996, *L’oeuvre grave de Jean-Jacques de Boissieu* Tricorne, Genève. Apart from her, references to Boissieu in art historical literature are scanty, to say the least.

<sup>33</sup> Jean-Paul Bouillon is the only critic, to my knowledge, to recognise his influence on Manet. In his thesis he points to the resemblance between Manet’s second frontispiece etching and the print after Dujardin made by Boissieu in 1772. Bouillon, J.-P., 1979. Félix Bracquemond: Les années d’apprentissage (1849-1859) La genèse d’un réalisme positiviste. Université de Lille III. P691.

and a range of landscape drawings that have no real equal at this time in France. But, for our purposes his more interesting work consisted of the reproduction and adaptation of major painters and print makers especially the graphic work of Nicolaes Pietersz. Berchem (1620–1683), Jan Asselijn (c. 1610–1652) and Karel Dujardin (ca.1622-1678). His works demonstrate his knowledge of Dutch landscape as well as of genre painting from both the French and Dutch traditions.<sup>34</sup> Images by Boissieu were copied by a wide range of nineteenth century French and German printmakers; Adolph Friedrich Erdmann von Menzel (1815-1905), for instance, is known to have been influenced by Boissieu.<sup>35</sup> Eugène Stanislas Alexandre Bléry (1805-1887) found in Boissieu the precedent for his own adoption of printmaking. Adhémar says “Boissieu was indeed a gifted engraver, whose influence was felt by the most important etchers of 1850, Méryon, Bracquemond, and Bléry.”<sup>36</sup> But there is no evidence that nineteenth century printmakers were using Boissieu’s versions of Dutch paintings to respond to those earlier artists. A celebrated case in point is Manet’s reference to the Polichinelle figure in Dujardin’s *Les grands charlatans*. Internal evidence from Manet’s print, now known as the *Second Frontispiece Etching*, suggests it was copied from a print. The presumption that it was the print by Boissieu and not the painting by Dujardin which provided the support for Manet’s image is given weight by the fact that nothing else in Dujardin’s oeuvre bears any sign of being copied by Manet, despite his popularity in Paris when Manet was painting.<sup>37</sup> In the course of an extensive discussion of Manet’s sources, Nils Gösta Sandblad demonstrates that the artist relied on reproductive prints of old master paintings when he was creating the works derived from them. This is another example of that practice. Manet’s translation of his own paintings into prints coincides with his reliance on printed translations of earlier paintings.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Kaposy, V., 1977. Influences néerlandaises sur les dessins français du XVIII siècle. *Acta Historiae Artium*, 23, 315-328 p 316 draws attention to his indebtedness to Le Nain: “His genre scenes with figures characteristic of provincial life are etchings and watercolours and evoke, at the end of the eighteenth century, the works of le Nain.” [Translated.]

<sup>35</sup> “...on sait que le jeune Menzel s’initia à l’estampe en le copiant” Perez, M.-F., 1986. Les dessins de Jean-Jacques de Boissieu (1736-1810) conservés au cabinet des dessins de Berlin-Dahlem. *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen*, 28, 83-98. P98.

<sup>36</sup> Adhémar, J., 1964. *Graphic art of the 18th century* London: Thames and Hudson p114.

<sup>37</sup> The fascicule in Blanc is evidence of Dujardin’s popularity at this time. Also, Kilian, J.M., 2005. *The Paintings of Karel Du Jardin, 1626-1678: Catalogue Raisonné*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, lists references to the work, *Les grands charlatans* which hung in the Louvre, in publications dated 1852 and 1863.

<sup>38</sup> Sandblad, N.G., 1954. *Manet: Three studies in artistic conception* Lund: New Society of Letters. P43.

Philip Gilbert Hamerton (1834–1894) who in an article for *The Fine Arts Quarterly Review* in 1864 made derisory judgements about Manet's prints, was equivocal about Boissieu. In his 1876 book, *Etching and Etchers* he had the following to say: "Boissieu was an extraordinary master of vulgar imitation, in which no etcher ever surpassed him; and he proved at least this, that there exists in etching a fund of imitative resource which may be drawn upon to an extent little dreamed of by people whose one idea about art is, that it is the imitative copyism of objects, and who hate etching because it is too interpretative for their taste."<sup>39</sup> (p.199)

"Vulgar imitation" was a trait shared by a number of the most eminent eighteenth-century French masters. Watteau, Chardin and Fragonard, for instance, show clearly in their works, the evidence of influence from Dutch painting. Boissieu's works in this genre were themselves copied by his contemporaries. Boucher owned a great many of Boissieu's prints and is said to have derived his image of l'Opérateur for his tapestry *L'Opérateur et la curiosité* in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, from Boissieu's prints after Dujardin.<sup>40</sup>

In the nineteenth century Boissieu's fame continued to spread, his works were reprinted in posthumous editions and he was known to and sought after by collectors. *Le magasin pittoresque* in an 1853 article, which comes at the beginning of the French revival of artist's etchings, devoted four pages to Boissieu. It described him as "the most skilful etcher originating from France."<sup>41</sup> Perez, in her *catalogue raisonné* states: "From 1840 until around 1880 there was a veritable infatuation for Boissieu's prints amongst collectors...They were often printmakers themselves ...in all cases artists and sometimes also dealers."<sup>42</sup> His nephew, Denis Jacques de Boissieu, published an updated version of a catalogue raisonné (originally published by the artist himself in 1804) in 1878. This demonstrates a lively interest in his works would have existed, sufficient to justify the expense of a lavishly illustrated text.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Hamerton, P.G., 1876 [1868]. *Etching & etchers* London: Macmillan and Co. P199.

<sup>40</sup> Standen, E.A. & Slatkin, R.S., 1977. Fêtes Italiennes: Beauvais Tapestries after Boucher in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Metropolitan Museum Journal*, 12, 107-139. P131.

<sup>41</sup> « ... le graveur à l'eau-forte le plus habile que la France ait produit. » *Le magasin pittoresque* 1853, p30.

<sup>42</sup> « Il existe, en effet, de 1840 jusque vers 1880, un véritable engouement pour les estampes de Boissieu chez des collectionneurs...Ils sont souvent graveurs eux-mêmes...en tous les cas artistes et parfois aussi marchands. » Perez (1994) p378.

<sup>43</sup> Boissieu, Jean-Jacques de. 1804. *Œuvres de J.J. de Boissieu*; Boissieu, Denis Jacques de. 1878. *J.J. de Boissieu; catalogue raisonné de son œuvre, orné d'un portrait du maître, par lui-même*. Paris: Rapilly.

Boissieu's works featured in major auctions. For instance at the sale of drawings, prints and books belonging to F. van den Zande, at the end of April 1855, a large number of Boissieu's images were sold.<sup>44</sup> According to Pérez: "The wide distribution of Boissieu's prints in the 19<sup>th</sup> century played a significant part in the dissemination of taste for works whose style and subject-matter derive from Dutch 17<sup>th</sup> century art."<sup>45</sup>

Boissieu's influence on the revival of printmaking in France in the second half of the nineteenth century is significant because by imitating his etchings artists were demonstrating their intention to connect their practices with an obscure amateur artist from provincial France. The reasons for this decision lie in a collection of factors some of which, such as his association with the widespread revival of interest in eighteenth-century French art and Dutch art from the seventeenth century, I have already invoked. But the explanations for the focus going onto such an obscure provincial figure go deeper than that. They have to do also with a growing awareness, fostered by the art magazines as much as by the new prospects opened by rail travel, of the potential models for artists contained in provincial resources. As the converse of the internationalism of Manet's use of sources in Fried's discussion this usefully draws attention to the other unregarded strand of artistic practice in the 1860s. Participants in the etching revival had an interest in widening the range of artistic endeavour by making the practice open to fresh approaches to subject-matter. This was not simply a matter of the avant-garde printmakers of the 1850s and 1860s seeing in Boissieu the object of their patriotic interest in discovering the riches hidden in provincial art. They also took from him a model for representing in art media the everyday life which had been characteristic of prints produced when it was a craft tied to the practical tasks of illustration earlier in the century. Boissieu's example demonstrated the integration of these craft subjects in formats sanctioned by the Dutch and French genre painters he had copied. He provided a conduit to canonical modes of representing the anonymous life of people on the margins of society, a

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<sup>44</sup> The catalogue, written by F. Guichardot, is a major source of information about works by this artist; 1855, *Catalogue de la riche collection d'estampes et de dessins composant le cabinet de feu M. F. van den Zande* Paris. Guichardot's own collection, with its multiple states of prints, including counter-proofs, was bought by le baron Edmond de Rothschild (1845-1934) at Guichardot's posthumous sale in 1875. It is now part of the Rothschild collection of prints held by the Louvre.

<sup>45</sup> Marie-Félicite Pérez « Boissieu, Jean-Jacques de » Grove Art Online. Oxford University Press, <http://www.groveart.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/> Accessed 4 December 2007.

subject that was commonly represented by these new printmakers. In this endeavour to link art-making to a political commitment to representing the life of the poor Boissieu stood for an alternative strand of art-making; his concern had been with representing details of provincial life where matters of social standing were subordinated to the anecdotal recording of characteristic incidents from the life of ordinary people.

There was another aspect to Boissieu's use of source material that would have struck artists like Manet who were creating their own works out of what they could relevantly use in the works of prior artists. Boissieu demonstrated, with his creative extensions of his source material, self-awareness as a copyist and a willingness to draw this to the attention of his viewers by the interpolation of very personal material, be it spectator figures or amusing juxtapositions of idiosyncratic features or the integration of elements from more than one source in the same work.<sup>46</sup> This would have appealed to Manet's self-awareness of the constructed nature of his own use of sources. What is being indicated by this emphasis on Boissieu's role as precursor of the print revival is that source material was used not because contemporary artists were matching themselves against the great figures from the history of art. Rather they chose to use Boissieu because he appeared to be representing the same issues that preoccupied them. His example pointed the way forward for a renewal of the medium through a revival of ancient practices incorporated with contemporary references to the same anonymous subjects who were central to that earlier practice.

Manet would have been interested in Boissieu's prints, irrespective of whether they were canonical or were referencing canonical Netherlandish painters, because of his commitment, underlined by his allegiance to the ideology of print-making in this period of the birth of the *Société des Aquafortistes*, to the representation of ordinary scenes and people from everyday life.<sup>47</sup> As has been demonstrated by the numerous works which represent the boy Leon Leenhoff in a number of different guises, one of

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<sup>46</sup> Slive, S., 2001. *Jacob van Ruisdael : a complete catalogue of his paintings, drawings, and etching* New Haven: Yale University Press p685 describes a copy by Boissieu of a mill from a painting by Ruisdael *Le Moulin de Ruysdael* [sic.] into which appears to have floated a large ferry-boat bearing five figures and a horse "from one of Salamon van Ruysdael's riverscapes."

<sup>47</sup> This motive for copying Boissieu is attributed to Bracquemond arising out of his conversations with Léandre Vaillat at the end of his life. Bouillon, J.-P., 1987. *Félix Bracquemond: Le réalisme absolu* Genève: Skira. p130.

## Chapter 9

which he appended to the plate carrying the image of *The Young Woman*, these representations were in his case also personal. They derived from his private life, their models were his wife-to-be and son and the scenarios the paintings depicted made reference to such details as his future wife's motherhood, an event which took place when Manet had only just started out on his training to be a painter. My claim is this work originated as a print with personal connotations. When Manet took this domestic image and transferred it into his large painting some of those connotations were attached. Suzanne Manet's musical talents and her personal connections with Liszt perhaps motivated Manet to replay the story Liszt had told about Csinka Panna. Suzanne's involvement with Edouard Manet and her having a young baby may have been a covert affair. But it was sustained by Manet throughout the 1850s. The nude studies for which she served as the model moreover demonstrate that this relationship was not simply based on a sense of family loyalty and obligation. His marrying her after his father's death has given rise to speculation. Present-day interpretations of that event do not give sufficient weight to this context.

In my last chapter, which considers the remaining three prints from the Cadart portfolio not yet discussed, *The Urchin*, *Boy and Dog*, and *La toilette* there is no direct relationship with music, but their protagonist, Manet's wife, is the most immediate embodiment of the artist's interest in music. She cannot be overlooked in a thesis that argues for the importance of that subject in the works Manet was creating, made at a time in his life when she was emerging, so to speak, from the closet of secrecy that had surrounded his relationship with her from its beginnings. Prior to that, in my next chapter, I will be considering the other prints made by Manet in 1862, not included in the Cadart portfolio, which have musical subject-matter.

## Chapter 10: Musical themes in unpublished 1862 prints

*Ces voyageurs, pour lesquels est ouvert  
L'empire familier des ténèbres futures.*<sup>1</sup>

Manet often created series of images based around a common theme. Carole Armstrong has recently written on the series of works, spanning thirteen years, in which Victorine Meurent figures. Two articles examine the images, spanning a slightly shorter period, made using Berthe Morisot as his model.<sup>2</sup> An exhibition has also been devoted to the theme of *Manet and the sea*.<sup>3</sup> One series that is not yet fully documented is his assorted images with musical subject-matter, although a start on the subject has been made.<sup>4</sup> This thesis brings together all the prints, and their accompanying paintings, made in 1862 on that subject. In order to maintain a hold on the scope of this work and to benefit from a concentrated focus, I have so far mainly confined my discussion to examining this motif's occurrence in works connected with his Cadart print portfolio of 1862. And I provided a context for these images by discussing also the remaining images contained in that portfolio.

There are three other prints, two without associated paintings, from 1862 – and possibly before – which incorporate music in their subject-matter. These are the prints known as *The Travellers* (Harris 4) [Fig. 72], *The Street Singer* (Harris 22) [Fig. 73] and the so-called *Second Frontispiece Etching* (Harris 38) [Fig. 74], which I will henceforth be calling *Polichinelle presents "Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet*.<sup>5</sup> None of these was published in Manet's lifetime, each for reasons specific to the circumstances of their making. All three exist as single states for which there are only limited trial proofs. Their original provenance is unknown. These images are the subject of this chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> "These travellers, for whom opens out  
The familiar domain of shadowy futures"

Charles Baudelaire *Bohémiens en voyage*, Lines 13-14, Poem No XIII, *Les Feurs du mal* (Pichois I, 18).

The entire poem is reproduced at the end of this chapter.

<sup>2</sup> Armstrong, C.M., 2002. *Manet Manette* New Haven: Yale University Press. Pp135-172; Kessler, M.R., 1999. Unmasking Manet's Morisot. *Art Bulletin*, LXXXI, 473-489; Maratray, H., 2004. Edouard Manet: portraits de Berthe Morisot. *Revue de Louvre*, 54, 112-119.

<sup>3</sup> Originating in Philadelphia in 2004 this is the title of the exhibition catalogue: (Wilson-)Bareau, J., Degener, D.C. & Dewitt, L., 2003. *Manet and the sea* Chicago, Philadelphia, Amsterdam, New Haven: Art Institute of Chicago; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Van Gogh Museum; In Association with Yale University Press.

<sup>4</sup> A recent catalogue publication addresses images associated with cafés-concerts in the 1870s: Wilson-Bareau, J. & Park, M., 2008. *Division and revision: Manet's Reichshoffen revealed* London: Paul Holberton. Professor Thérèse Dolan has also published an extensive collection of articles on the relationship of specific works by Manet to musical themes (listed in my Bibliography) and is said to be shortly publishing a book on the subject.

<sup>5</sup> This work has an associated painting, the still life *Hat and Guitar* (1862, Musée Calvet, Avignon).

In concentrating on these three etchings I am omitting consideration of a group of marginally relevant works made in the period before the *Salon des Refusés*. These are works associated with the name *Lola de Valence* (Harris 32 and 33). They undoubtedly had their beginnings in 1862 with Manet's painting *Spanish Ballet*, which features the troupe of Spanish musicians and dancers then performing in Paris; Lola Meléa (known as Lola de Valence) was a principal dancer. The prints portraying her were not, however, published until 1863 and I am therefore justified in not discussing them. To have done so would, moreover, have involved my examining the relations between music and dance in visual imagery. I have touched on the significance of dance in examining the changes Manet made to his representation of the absinthe drinker in *The Old Musician*. But I am not pursuing this matter further. Less than a thorough examination of the interaction of music and dance in the visual arts would be inappropriate. Incorporating it as a topic in this thesis would open out onto an aspect of the interaction of the arts in the early 1860s with widespread ramifications. I have neither the space nor the time to adequately treat it.

Manet made all the images I discuss in this chapter purely as etchings. His recourse to this medium implies that at one point he intended to publish them. This never took place. Unlike the case of *Silentium* where damage to the plate may have dissuaded him from publishing it, nothing of that kind can be said about these works. Jean-Paul Bouillon has claimed they were experimental studio productions, important for the impressionist aesthetic. The etchings number amongst the few instances where we are privy to Manet's trial procedures, in particular his iconographic experiments.<sup>6</sup> While I agree with his analysis it does not explain why Manet would have resorted to etching to muse over his themes. Surely drawings would have sufficed? Nor does arguing that Manet failed to discriminate between subjects suitable only for drawing and those he would consign to the etched medium resolve the question.<sup>7</sup> Instead I suggest a fuller understanding of what he expected to achieve with his etchings can only be achieved by returning to Thoré's idea concerning the relation of etching to improvised speech.

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<sup>6</sup>« Des pièces aussi importante pour l'esthétique impressionniste que *Le montreur d'ours (...)* ou *le chanteur des rues (...)* ne dépendent d'aucun tableau : ce sont des œuvres d'atelier, purement expérimentales, où le travail du graveur a d'abord valeur prospective, y compris pour l'iconographie ... » Bouillon, J.-P., 1989. L'estampe impressionniste: chronique bibliographique. *Revue de l'Art*, 86, 66-81. P77, n23.

<sup>7</sup> Thus *The Bear Trainer* (Harris 9) exists as a drawing as well as an etching; *The Street Singer* is an etching only; and *The Acrobats'* (1862, Bibliothèque nationale) only manifestation is as a drawing.



Manet was experimenting, as Bouillon argues. He appears to have decided it was possible in etching to simulate the improvisation that had its most vivid realization in Gypsy music. It had been hailed by Liszt. He wrote “The bohemian artist takes a theme from a song or a dance as a pretext for discourse, like an epigraph in a poem. This idea, which he never completely loses sight of, is blurred and modulated through perpetual improvisations.”<sup>8</sup> The works by Manet I am discussing in this chapter don’t exactly fit this formula. They do not have multiple states nor were they repeatedly printed in the same state. Rather they represent additional experiments with the same iconographic material developed in the Cadart Portfolio prints. He shows with these works a desire to push already established ideas into new territory; either in the direction of unrestrained improvisation or into summary formats that bring together dispersed aspects of his early iconographic interests. There is a story, apocryphal perhaps, about Manet meeting Degas when both artists were working on etched reproductions of the pseudo-Velázquez *The Infanta Marie Marguerite* (Harris 14). Manet is said to have expressed his admiration for Degas’ ability to etch freehand. Whatever its truth, the story underlines the importance to the participants in the etching revival of freehand etching.<sup>9</sup>

In these works the theme Manet chose to improvise upon is detached, even remote, from his fresh interpretation. Distance is not the same, however, as a complete lack of any relationship. Manet’s approach to bridging that distance uses procedures he adopted for works with musical subject-matter. Such is clearly the case in considering *The Street Singer*, with its odd repetition of the backward guitar motif of the earlier *Spanish Singer* set of images. Likewise the presence of the guitar in the *Polichinelle* presents “*Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet*” authorises a discussion of that print under the music rubric. That rubric may seem less pertinent in the case of *The Travellers*. There no overt visual clues suggest music is being addressed. But the landscape provides an entry to this music-influenced discussion of travelling.

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<sup>8</sup> « L’artiste bohémien est celui qui ne prend un motif de chanson ou de danse que comme un texte de discours, comme une épigraphe de poème, et qui sur cette idée qu’il ne perd jamais tout à fait de vue, vague et divague durant une improvisation sempiternelle. » Liszt, F., 1999 (1859). *Des bohémiens et de leur musique en Hongrie* Paris: Marval. P150.

<sup>9</sup> The story is dismissed in Druick, D. & Zegers, P., 1984. Degas and the printed image 1856-1914. In S.W. Reed & B.S. Shapiro (eds.) *Edgar Degas: The painter as printmaker*. Boston: Museum of Fine Arts on p. 15 but retold in Tinterow, G. & Lacambre, G., 2003. *Manet/Velázquez : the French taste for Spanish painting*. New York; New Haven; London: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press pp 103, 473.

This print surpasses *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* in its association with the landscape genre. For here, unusually, the landscape is the principal element and the figures travelling through it are shadowy and ill-defined. It was more common for Manet to use landscape when painting genre subjects, as in *The Students of Salamanca* (c1860, Private Collection) or in disguised family portraits as in *Fishing* (1862-3, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). He must, however, have been aware that at that time landscape was in the vanguard of French painting's responsive adaptation to musical influences and analogies.<sup>10</sup> Even so Corot-like "narrow tonalities ...soft webs of brushwork and ... half-real, half-idyllic motifs" were not Manet's style.<sup>11</sup> Landscape had another, more richly metaphoric role, amongst his friends and acquaintances. In a period of widespread attempts to transpose elements between art forms, the metaphor of distance played an important role and the traveller in the landscape was the usual way distance was envisaged.<sup>12</sup> Travelling stood for a great deal more than the literal propulsion of a body through space. No other artist was more aware of the implications of that than Charles Baudelaire. He gave it two distinct formulations in his essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris* as well as making it the subject of a poem *Bohémiens en voyage* (first published in *Les fleurs du mal*, 1857). This is the poem by Baudelaire most comprehensively parsed by a particular work of Manet's - in this etching known as *The Travellers*.<sup>13</sup> Baudelaire would refer to the influence of Liszt's book on his subsequent thinking about the subject; all three artists shared relevant and related values arising from their involvement in contemporary constructions of a largely mythic Gypsy culture.

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<sup>10</sup> See the analysis of music's influence on the landscape painters of the Barbizon school in Kermit Champa's essay in Champa, K.S., 1991. *The rise of landscape painting in France. The rise of landscape painting in France.* Manchester, NH: Currier Gallery of Art/Harry N. Abrams, 23-56. According to Champa music provided the model for Barbizon artists like Corot and Rousseau to explore the possibility of "a truly free, expressive space for painting" and "powerfully reinforced the pursuit of a non-figurative, non-word-emulative type of painting from nature" (pp30, 31).

<sup>11</sup> In Champa, K.S., 2000. "Painted responses to music" published in M.L. Morton & P.L. Schmunk (eds.) *The arts entwined: Music and painting in the nineteenth century.* New York and London: Garland Publishing Inc, 101-117. He reiterates his claim that this style "came literally to stand for what musical painting looked like" P107.

<sup>12</sup> This discussion is indebted to Miner, M., 1995. *Resonant gaps between Baudelaire and Wagner* Athens: University of Georgia Press, especially pp16-24.

<sup>13</sup> Sima Godfrey argues that Baudelaire's prose poem *Les Veuves*, in providing the figure of the veiled widow at the centre of *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*, is evidence of Manet's "specific poetic intertext." Godfrey, S., 2001. *Strangers in the park: Manet, Baudelaire, and La musique aux Tuileries.* In P.A. Ward (ed.) *Baudelaire and the poetics of modernity.* Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 45-60, 203-4. Pp49, 203n3, 204n6.

What makes this image particularly piquant in the context of his transpositional ambitions is that Manet's etching responds to the series of prints known as the *Aegyptiens* (1621) by Jacques Callot (1592-1635), imagery which also provided one of Baudelaire's sources [Fig. 75]. Marilyn Brown, drawing attention to Manet matching "the detail of the child with the cauldron" in Callot's print, asserts "the general conception of the composition" is derived from Callot.<sup>14</sup> Undoubtedly she is correct, but there are too many significant differences between Callot's image and that by Manet to rest content with the idea that he was simply giving that earlier image a landscape context. The print has instead an equally significant relation to discourses being created contemporaneously by Baudelaire and Liszt. These radically affect its visual appearance, moving it a long way from its "general conception" in the work of Callot. Manet's print has an equally significant source in Baudelaire's poem, he is transposing that which had already undergone transposition from Callot's image. In the process it accretes not just visual but also literary and auditory associations. My discussion will focus on this strangely multiplied transposition, one which translates synaesthetic sensations derived from all three sources.

That Baudelaire transposed Callot's images in the formulation of his poem has been acknowledged for a long time in critical literary studies.<sup>15</sup> Paul de Man aligns Baudelaire's practice in his poem with the Romantic poets' interest in transposing visual imagery.<sup>16</sup> In taking issue with Michael Riffaterre's analysis of the poem, he argues Baudelaire's transpositional ambitions give the etching more than an "allusive" significance. This work has what de Man describes as a "genetic" link to Baudelaire's poem. This "genetic" link juxtaposes the poem, by "delicate and

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<sup>14</sup> Brown, M.R., 1985. *Gypsies and other Bohemians: the myth of the artist in nineteenth-century France* Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press. P78.

<sup>15</sup>It was noted as early as 1917 in an article by Émile Bernard "Esthétique de Baudelaire" in *Mercur de France* of 16 October. It is examined in Menemencioglu, M., 1966. Le thème des Bohémiens en Voyage dans la peinture et la poésie de Cervantès à Baudelaire. *Cahiers de l'Association des études françaises*, xviii, 227-238.

<sup>16</sup>Henry Majewski defines what the transposition from painting to poem aims to achieve in the following terms: "A 'transposition d'art' is therefore at the same time a description, a poetic re-creation, and a symbolic interpretation of the painting observed or imagined. The painting's function is to be a point of departure or impetus for the poetic impulse, and ultimately a source of signification in the text. The painting-in-the-poem provides a presence or spiritual essence that gives the work its center, its ideal value." Majewski, H.F., 2002. *Transposing art into texts in French romantic literature* Chapel Hill: Department of Romance Languages, The University of North Carolina. P43. My interest is, of course, in what happens when the direction of the transposition is reversed.

complex” means, with its source.<sup>17</sup> Manet, in the process of developing the motif, was even more ambitiously creating “genetic” links with not one but two previous works of art in different disciplines. In fact, given the mystery surrounding Manet’s intentions for the print, its transpositional strategy is perhaps the one thing it is possible to be certain about, regarding it.

Manet’s knowledge of earlier print-makers was extensive and well documented. Even discounting his independent research as an artist, he could have independently learnt about Callot through any number of literary sources. He had been written about by such figures as Théophile Gautier and Victor Hugo (1802-1885); Arsène Houssaye (1815-1896) had written ten pages about him in *L’Artiste* in 1849, Baudelaire discusses him in at least two of his essays.<sup>18</sup> It is equally inconceivable that Manet would not have been aware of Baudelaire’s poem when he made the print *The Travellers*, whatever the date of the personal friendship of these two men. I will show that the ideas the poem treats are recognizably shared by Manet; they are what distinguish this print, making it impossible to claim that Manet was simply adapting Callot’s images.

Callot’s images bring the Gypsies vividly close to us. Their presence, piled up on the frontal picture plane, implies a connection with the viewer. We are invited to share in ideas about the destination of their journey by the pointing figure at the head of the column in the first of Callot’s series. By contrast, Manet’s image shows some figures in the middle distance, immersed in abundant natural surroundings. They appear to be ambling aimlessly across our field of vision, passing between a line of trees that stretches diagonally from the right foreground to the left background, without acknowledging their presence. Nothing in their posture or position on the picture plane suggests their travelling has a determined bearing. They convey a sense of detachment from the measures of civilized existence; their vagabondage is signified by their lack of connection with the church spire in the distance, almost at right angles to the line of their procession. Nor do they seem to have any connections with the housing, roughly indicated at the top left and bottom right part of the print. As in Baudelaire’s poem where the Gypsies are “casting upon the heavens a glance

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<sup>17</sup>De Man, P., 1972. *Literature and Language: A Commentary*. *New Literary History*, 4, 181-192. P185. I refer, in my second chapter to Victor Hugo’s transposition into poetry of “Velázquez’s *The Infanta Marie Marguerite*.”

<sup>18</sup>The main references to Callot in Baudelaire are in the well-known essays “De L’essence du rire” (Pichois II, 525) and “L’art philosophique (Pichois II, 598).”

weighed down by mournful regrets for long-departed chimeras” Manet’s figures, too, appear to be cast adrift from the “chimerical” consolations of home or religion.<sup>19</sup>

In both poem and print the Gypsies are surrounded by abundant fertility. “Cybele, who loves them, increases the greenery.” (« *Cybèle, qui les aime, augmente ses verdure.* ») But again, in the two works, neither artist provides anything to suggest the Gypsies are responsive to this. It is around this detail that we encounter one significant clue to both works’ sensitivity to possible musical connotations. When Baudelaire wrote about the impact on the environment generated by his travellers as they were passing through it, he referred to the cricket: from the depths of his sandy lair it redoubles his song.<sup>20</sup> Baudelaire brings to the reader’s attention the presence of natural music in the traveller’s context, even as he is at the same time emphasizing the detachment of these figures from natural phenomena. Nothing in his poem suggests a connection between this nature and those travellers. Whatever happens to them in the poem emerges from their ardent eyes and ends only in a shadowy future.

This chance association of vagabondage and natural music is also explicitly evoked by Liszt in his book. In conjuring the sounds made by a travelling troupe, Liszt through his use of language provides a synecdoche for the *musique concrete* composed of the passing of a horse-drawn transport and company. He uses musical metaphors to recall the sound of the Gypsies *en route* which resembled a “formidable octave engaging all our aural perceptions.” In his writing Liszt “manifestly searches to reproduce, stylistically, the ‘exuberant hubbub’ characteristic of Gypsy music.”<sup>21</sup>

In his print Manet makes manifest his own interpretation of this heedless aspect of Gypsy music-making propounded by his colleagues. He depicts a boy dragging a branch along an unformed path as the troupe is passing through the landscape. [Fig. 76] The sound of their passage is being founded in an equivalent image, one that stresses that the Gypsies physical connectedness to the

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<sup>19</sup> « *Promenant sur le ciel des yeux appesantis  
Par le morne regret des chimères absentes.* »

I quote here the relevant section of Baudelaire’s poem. I repeat it, in its entirety, at the end of this chapter.

<sup>20</sup> « *Du fond de son réduit sablonneux, le grillon,  
Les regardant passer, redouble sa chanson* »

<sup>21</sup> Moussa, S. (ed.) (2008) *Le mythe des Bohémiens dans la littérature et les arts en Europe*, Paris Harmattan. P238.

environment they occupy is purely self-initiated. In fact it resembles the way the artist creates his “music” by scraping the wax of the copper plate with his etching tool.

That the imagery Manet inherited from Callot came to be changed as a result of his sensitivity to ideas embodied in Baudelaire’s transposition is further seen in the way both artists address the absence of a discernable sense or direction in the sauntering outlaw band. Baudelaire begins his poem by describing the Gypsies “impassioned pupils” [«*prunelles ardentes*»], as if their stare embodied a special kind of vision, one that can be identified with the ancient theory of extramission. These eyes provide the only source of light in Baudelaire’s poem. And the poem ends with them confronting the “familiar domain of futures full of darkness” [«*L’empire familier des ténèbres futures*»] opening up in the last line. Baudelaire equates those eyes of the Gypsy outlaws with the poet’s; both describe a thoroughly personal world. It is oblivious to the natural miracles taking place around them; the familiar is confined to personal illumination picking out forms in the surrounding gloom.

Manet’s recreation of this aspect of the poem sets up a contrast with the mundane but colourful reality suggested by Callot’s imagery. All his figures are swathed in enveloping vestments disguising their real form and are absorbed in a world of their own. Uncharacteristically for Manet, nobody in this print is making eye-contact with the viewer. The only figure looking out of the picture-space, the boy with the cauldron, is cast so thoroughly into shadow we cannot identify where he is looking or what he is seeing. Baudelaire has referred to the “cult of the image”; what makes the image cultic is the particular vision which illuminates it, one that cult-like is only available to the privileged initiate.<sup>22</sup> Manet likewise creates an image in which the viewer is excluded from the point of view of its figures. Their cultic response to what they see is not available to anyone outside the surface of the picture. We will find in my next chapter that this approach is also characteristic of some of the personal images associated with the Cadart portfolio.

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<sup>22</sup> *Mon coeur mis à nu* (first published posthumously in 1867). In the same section that contained his exhortation: “To glorify vagrancy, and what one can call bohemianism. Cult of the sensation multiplied and expressing itself in music. Refer to Liszt” he also made his avowal of his “great, unique, primitive passion” to “glorify the cult of images.” « Glorifier le culte des images (ma grande, mon unique, ma primitive passion). Glorifier le vagabondage et ce qu’on peut appeler le bohémianisme. Culte de la sensation multipliée et s’exprimant par la musique. En référer à Liszt. » (Pichois II, 701)

The self-launching effort of the traveller is exactly the metaphor Baudelaire chose when he characterized, in his essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris*, his attempt to transpose what he felt about Wagner's music into written form. As Margaret Miner says distance is "one of the fundamental concerns of his essay." She tracks the use of two separate travelling metaphors to illustrate her argument.<sup>23</sup> They occur together when Baudelaire confronts his own lack of specialist knowledge in the technical language of music. The perspective a non-expert is able to bring to the subject is analogous to the view from a "look-out", detached from the landscape it is beholding. This he contrasts with the experience of someone more versed in music. To describe their thorough examination of the topic he uses another travelling metaphor. Baudelaire points out that the "beauty of a landscape" is judged through "travelling successively over all the paths that furrow it."<sup>24</sup> Distance can only be overcome if the writer, Baudelaire is suggesting, can immerse himself so thoroughly in the music that his writing will serve as a mirror for it. Margaret Miner points out that Baudelaire, in another poem *La musique*, demonstrates a great deal of skepticism about his capacity to do this; there he is like a vessel and he suffers from all the passions that vibrate within him. Either he is being tossed around by the waves [of music] or, becalmed, he comes face to face with his despair. In neither case, in that poem, is the writer in command of the situation he finds himself in.<sup>25</sup>

I concluded, in my second chapter on *The Spanish Singer*, that this scepticism was not expunged in Baudelaire's essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris*. The gap between writing and music was, however, addressed in that essay with renewed vigour and writers have documented the various mechanisms Baudelaire used to try and surmount it. Arguing that all the arts evoked and cross-evoked ideas, he claimed they could be encompassed linguistically in some consistently intelligible, referential fashion. In fact, Baudelaire used his Wagner essay to assert a claim of different but conversant and equal status for all the traditional media. Given Manet's well-documented acquaintance with Baudelaire's ideas it is likely he too saw that by using the "travelling" motif he could visually encapsulate the dynamics involved in making connections between media. He created related visual motifs in these prints to exemplify this. Utilising the trope of distance and its contrasting nearness he finds

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<sup>23</sup> Miner (1995) *op cit* P7.

<sup>24</sup> « en parcourant successivement tous les sentiers qui la sillonnent. » Pichois II, 796.

<sup>25</sup> *La Musique* Poem LXIX *Les Fleurs du mal*. Pichois I,68.

a metaphoric equivalent for the strategy he adopts to transpose ideas from poetic and musical forms to visual media.

The dichotomy between eye and hand I have identified in many of the works connected with the Cadart portfolio comes into play again in this print. The detachment of the eye is figured through the remote point of view and the lack of interaction between viewer and participant in the print's action. That visual experience is in strong contrast with the immediacy of the boy's branch-dragging action. Could it be that the distance between eye and hand in this print has been put in place to exemplify the gulf that separates two arts, the visual and the audible? The work as a whole brings to the forefront the synaesthetic ambitions which motivated so much of Manet's work at this time. There have been a number of conflicting opinions concerning this work's place in Manet's oeuvre. Guérin, in his 1944 *Catalogue raisonné* placed it first because of a perceived similarity to his other landscape painting *Fishing (La pêche, 1861-3, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)*, which was then also usually considered to be one of Manet's early works.<sup>26</sup> But more recently Jay Fisher has doubted this, arguing that the print "indicates a more ambitious involvement with printmaking." He notes its use of aquatint along with a "systematic graphic language".<sup>27</sup> Despite these observations it has a strongly improvised appearance, with a sketch-like treatment of many of the details. That this is evidence of a later date is confirmed by the way its execution resembles that in the second of the prints to be discussed here.

This print *The Street Singer* is the most rough-hewn of all the images discussed in this thesis and yet there is little doubt that it follows chronologically *The Spanish Singer* and can be dated to late 1861 or 1862. It is another unpublished print and gives the strongest impression of being experimental. Yet its subject-matter is more deliberated than it first appears. This is the work where the hullabaloo surrounding the strange positioning of the guitar in *The Spanish Singer* (if Proust correctly reports that incident) is acknowledged and commented on by Manet. It is one of the most intriguing etchings from Manet's early career as a printmaker.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Marilyn Brown, in her 1985 book *op cit* is equally committed to its early date, p78.

<sup>27</sup> Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation. P38-9.

<sup>28</sup> The work is reproduced and discussed in Reff, T. & National Gallery of Art (U.S.), 1982. *Manet and modern Paris : one hundred paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs by Manet and his contemporaries* Washington, D.C.; Chicago ; London: National Gallery of Art ; University of Chicago Press., Cat. 68, p.192



Like *The Travellers* this print defies the categories. It neither conforms with Manet's other musical images, in terms of theme, nor does it fulfill any of his usual criteria for an etched image. It does not reproduce any painting, which was Manet's usual motivation for making prints in this period. It exists in only one copy. It was never published and the watermark on the paper is only informative enough to tell us that it could have been made in 1862, which is the date usually ascribed to it. Critics align it with two other prints depicting scenes of popular entertainment which also have no comparable painting *The Bear Trainer* (Harris 9) and *The Balloon* (Harris 23). Because the latter is firmly dated 1862, these ones are as well.

It is an anomaly in more ways than one. Amongst so many 1862 works which treat the guitar as an appurtenance, here it is centre stage. And not just being held, but fully in the midst of a performance; being strummed and sung along with. Manet seems to want to draw our attention to another anomaly, however. The one detail about the instrument which individualizes its appearance is the frets. These are back to their old untenable position. They alone are carefully indicated - if anything can be described as "careful" in this loosely executed work. The head of the woman who hides the hand of the singer is the oddest thing about this work. It is dead centre on the vertical axis with tiny indications of ears on either side of the head. It resembles less any human head than the shape of the guitar body in the same work and draws to mind Manet's other etchings where the guitar is not so scrupulously represented such as his incredible instrument in the prints after *The Spanish Singer* and those depicted in the 1862 still life images of the guitar. Repetition is inscribed both within and about this image; it contains nothing "realistic" save the traces of Manet's hand left by the scurrying needle. Manet is unlikely to have seen an instrument played like this. In the context of musical works, which usually reflect a scrupulous attention to detail and accuracy, this is surely the odd-man-out. Suggesting a street performance quickly transcribed, the image is, in fact, something quite different.<sup>29</sup>

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and Harris, J.C. & Smith, J.M., 1990. *Edouard Manet : the graphic work : a catalogue raisonnée*, Jean C. Harris ; edited by Joel M. Smith. San Francisco: A. Wofsy Fine Arts. Plate 22, p94.

<sup>29</sup> This is not to say that Manet was uninfluenced by prevailing images of musicians performing on the street. Gétreau, F., 1998. Street musicians of Paris: Evolution of an image. *Music in Art*, XXIII, 63-78. reproduces one by Manet's friend Charles Yriarte, of "the famous Joseph Aubert...who was an attraction on the Champs-Élysées in the middle of the century." This image, published in an 1862 Paris newspaper shows three spectator figures, Pp71, 77 (image).

From the fact that Manet adds another significant figure to the construction it can be concluded that the work is allegorical. Or, at least, that is a viable interpretation of the image if it is accepted that the figure of the artist himself has been placed at the guitarist's elbow. The sketchiness denies us the certainty that it is indeed he, but there are good reasons for presuming this might be the case.<sup>30</sup> Michael Fried found a supposed precedent for this print in a work by Alphonse Legros *The Polichinelle Theatre at the Tuileries* [Fig. 77]. If he is correct, this 1861 lithograph would be the most telling evidence of the close artistic collaboration taking place between these two artists at this time. There is no doubt Legros was a friend and colleague of Manet's. They were both founder members of the *Société des Aquafortistes*, set up in 1862. Legros claims he helped Manet with his first etching.<sup>31</sup> Legros' lithograph on which Manet appears to have based his figure of the artist turning away from the spectacle to catch the attention of the audience, is dated 1861, giving it priority over Manet's. In his image, Legros is representing himself as the person who solicits our attention. The motif of the artist, inside his own work, looking back to the spectator is equated by Michael Fried with representations of the marionette theatre of Louis Edmond Duranty (1833–1880).<sup>32</sup> There are repeated instances of it in Manet's works throughout his career. A disguised instance of this practice occurs in *The Old Musician* and there is a blatant self-portrait on the periphery of *Music in the Tuileries Gardens*. Later the motif will be used again in *Masked Ball at the Opéra* (1873-4, National Gallery of Art, Washington). Here Manet is involving the spectator in his knowing comment on the previous work *The Spanish Singer*. Just as the marionette theatre belonged to Polichinelle, he was its chief protagonist, director, author and creator, so also Manet in this print was claiming responsibility for the figure that centre stage, plays his guitar back to front, in a demonstration of improvised virtuosity. Manet melds the action being portrayed with

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<sup>30</sup> This is a bold statement given that the etching is easily the roughest made by this artist. In particular the details of the face of the person standing at the guitarist's elbow dissolve into scrawled, roughly parallel lines on closer inspection. What is remarkable is how, from a more removed perspective, this figure resembles the drawing by Degas, made some years later, of Manet at the races.

<sup>31</sup> Étienne Moreau-Nelaton, in his 1905 edition of Manet's prints, (*Manet, graveur et lithographe* (1906) Paris, no 53) describes Legros' statement. The print in question is said to be the first version of *Boy with a sword*. The story has often been used to justify the connection between these two artists at this time, from Rosenthal, L., 1925. *Manet, aquafortiste et lithographe* Paris: Le Goupy. P45 to McGrady, P.J., 2008. *Manet and friends* Pennsylvania: Palmer Museum of Art. P16.

<sup>32</sup> Fried (1996) *op cit* p474, n66.

the mode of representing it in this print, suggesting that music and the visual arts can share methodology; both can exploit the illusion of improvisation to involve the spectator in the drama of the moment.

If *The Travellers* has the artist detached from the scene technically while in the course of creating it metaphorically, this image has him attached, almost symbiotically, with the source of the music, while also suggesting that the music itself needs to be seen as untutored and spontaneous. Manet, placed exactly at the singer's elbow, catches our eye. He is "speaking through" the principal figure. The guitarist holds up his instrument as he sings, drawing our attention to its (false) position. Here is an instance of Manet's heavily ironical manner. Acknowledging what others construed as his earlier mistake, he draws attention to it by flaunting this repetition of its inaccuracy. Hiding the strumming hand behind the woman's head accentuates the irony.

Manet's images of musical participation focus our attention on the nature of the artistic act in the moment of its performance. Absorption is embodied in the theatrical and equated with creativity. Returning to Bouillon's formulation outlined at the beginning of this chapter, these works are amongst the first by Manet to combine transitory phenomena with a rapidly sketched execution as if print-making could incorporate the consecutive nature of a musical performance. Inspired by his experience of music and given form first in his representations of that activity, these are not works destined to set in place an Impressionist aesthetic. Various forms of immediacy in sensuous presentation would be experimented with during the 1860s in an era when *avant garde* French painters were searching for a way to embody their love of music in their painted work. As it turned out landscape became, once again, the favoured vehicle for generating sensuous immediacy. Manet's role in this development was hardly pivotal, yet his early works discussed in this chapter are indeed "prophetic".<sup>33</sup>

Another sub-series of music-related prints, made between 1862 and 1863, feature the guitar, all of which envisage the instrument free of any human intervention. According to Jean-Louis Chrétien, in such images "...there is also the music that one does not play, that one no longer or does not yet play, in other words

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<sup>33</sup> My analysis of the roots in music of landscape painting is indebted to Kermit Champa's essay "Painted responses to music" *op cit*.

the still life with musical instruments. The musical instrument placed, laid down abandoned, has a presence all its own. Like a mind asleep, which no longer thinks anything, it is the virtuality of all melodies without playing any of them. It is the very realm of sound, the royalty of the sonorous, not captive of silence as if it were in exile, but delivered up to silence where it exerts its plenitude before any choice....”<sup>34</sup>

Two of these are so-called “Frontispiece” etchings; one was intended for the Cadart portfolio, the second for a separate 1863 publication of fourteen prints Manet distributed to his friends.<sup>35</sup> (Harris 38 and 39) They would have been printed on coloured paper and were intended to wrap around the collection of prints as portfolio covers. They both portray the instrument in a pile of studio clothes and other paraphernalia sitting in a basket. Compared with the immaculate image of the guitar made previously in *The Spanish Singer* here it has been twisted on its axis and made to fit a larger decorative scheme. This distorted shape is disguised by a hat placed atop of it.

These elements composing the still life composition are also depicted in the painting, *Hat and Guitar* (1862, Musée Calvet, Avignon). [Fig. 78] In that version the still life is located in front of a cartouche which itself occurs at the mid-point of a decorative border of (what looks like) a heavy stage curtain. The curtain is itself articulated in three-dimensional space. It shows a fold at its base where it meets the left-hand corner of the painting and there appears to be another fold on the axis of the cartouche, as if the cartouche is on a corner and the curtain is receding away from the viewer on the right-hand side [Fig. 79]. This cartouche mixes together various stages of illusion. The space it inhabits is rendered ambiguous by its receding right side. The contents of the basket, which seem to sit in front of the curtain, also appear to meld with the centre-piece of the cartouche. Manet undermines traditional notions of perspective in a sophisticated exploration of the ways the illusion of space can be evoked on a plane surface.

While it would be conventional to suppose this painting was the first in the series picturing the guitar-filled basket, nothing indicates the order in which these

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<sup>34</sup> Chrétien, J.-L., 2003. *Hand to hand : listening to the work of art* New York: Fordham University Press. P29.

<sup>35</sup> Juliet Wilson-Bareau in the 1983 exhibition catalogue *Manet* distinguishes this second cover design and describes its evolution on pp139-41. There is also a drawing, held by the New York Public Library. It was a preliminary study for the second “Frontispiece”.

images were made. Any one of them would qualify as the source of the information that the guitar was one of Manet's studio props. The stage curtain motif is not present in the etching of the still life designed for the 1863 Portfolio but it recurs in the print *Polichinelle presents "Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet* (traditionally entitled *The Second Frontispiece Etching*) - a trial design for the Cadart Portfolio.<sup>36</sup> Here it seems to fulfil a slightly different function. The curtain reaches from the top of a long etching, the role of the cartouche is downplayed, and it has a join through which Manet's figure of Polichinelle pokes his head. Objects significant in Manet's prior productions appear to be somehow elided with it. A series of short vertical strokes in the top right-hand corner of the print suggest a pole from which the curtain is suspended.

*Polichinelle presents "Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet* is one in a sequence of works where Manet was trying out images intended to accompany a cover for his Cadart portfolio. The two known attempts to come up with an acceptable version were both rejected and in the end the portfolio was presented with a purely typographic cover. This work in that sequence gives, in summary form, a compendious collection of citations. Characteristically, these are related to his previous works, meshed in with references to the works of respected forebears and to his contemporaries.

The work has generated significant commentary from Theodore Reff and Michael Fried, in particular.<sup>37</sup> George Mauner and Larry Ligo have both used it to reinforce their theses about Manet's oeuvre, more especially the work's covert references to Baudelaire's writing, and in the process have also contributed some interesting ideas.<sup>38</sup> The outcome of these varied interpretations is, however, that the meaning of this enigmatic work remains unresolved. In my discussion I intend to

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<sup>36</sup> Fried *op cit*, p452, n57 disputes the ordering of these frontispiece etchings. In all probability the work is the first in the series Manet made as covers for his 1862 Cadart portfolio. The 1983 Retrospective exhibition catalogue *Manet* maintains allegiance to the traditional sequencing but proposes a more sensible title *Polichinelle presents "Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet"* (p508). Although the identification of the character behind the curtain with Polichinelle has been challenged by McVaugh, R.E., 1986. *Cyrano de Bergerac and Edouard Manet's frontispiece etchings. The Burlington Magazine*, 128, 642, 645-677, Fried has subsequently linked the image to Duranty's 1861 *Theatre of Polichinelle*, *ibid* pp48-53. I agree with his conclusion and will henceforth be adopting the more sensible title *Polichinelle presents "Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet"*.

<sup>37</sup> Reff's treatments occurs in Reff, T., 1962. *The Symbolism of Manet's Frontispiece Etchings. The Burlington Magazine*, 104, 180+182-187. Fried's is located in his 1996 book at pp48-54.

<sup>38</sup> Mauner, G.L., 1975. *Manet, peintre-philosophe : a study of the painter's themes* University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press. Pp166-180 and Ligo, L.L., 2006. *Manet, Baudelaire and photography* Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press. Pp216-227.

focus on the issue of its possible biographical references and the cross-over between a *mise-en-scène* with its origins in theatre and its recent photographic re-invention.

As I discussed in Chapter 9, this etching is perhaps the strongest evidence for my contention that Manet accessed the etchings of Jean-Jacques de Boissieu when he was working in the milieu of the etching revival at the beginning of the 1860s. When he chose to develop the motif of the figure looking through the curtain he must have had in mind an image originating as the frontispiece for Callot's *Balli di Sfessania* [Fig. 80]. Manet mediates his interpretation, this time through the celebrated painting *Italian Charlatans* (1657, Musée du Louvre, Paris). This work, by Karel Dujardin (1626-1678), depicts a swindle being perpetrated by a troupe of *Commedia dell'arte* dressed actors. But rather than copying the painting, which would have involved a difficult reversal of the configuration of the staring figure, he appears to have made use of Jean-Jacques de Boissieu's etched version, the only one oriented to enable Manet to create his version without further ado [Fig. 81]. Boissieu had created a much copied and much vaunted version of the Dujardin painting.<sup>39</sup> Manet exploited Boissieu's image for the Pulchinella detail, in particular. [Fig. 82]. (By reversing the Manet, I show in this photomerge how his plate image resembles the Boissieu version.)

Apart from the visual similarity, the likelihood that Manet's image has its origin in a historical representation of the populist theatre known as *Commedia dell'arte* can be deduced from current interest in that art form. Michael Fried has discussed how Manet shared his interest in it with a circle of acquaintances. Alphonse Legros and Louis Duranty had been involved in modern manifestations of the *commedia* since the late 1850s and Baudelaire and Théodore de Banville (1823-1891) had been writing about it throughout the 1850s. Finally Maurice Sand's history of the *Commedia dell'arte* had been published in 1860. That book described the characteristic qualities of specific *commedia* characters and may have provoked Manet's identification with one of them and references to others in a variety of works from this period.

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<sup>39</sup>Perez, the author of his catalogue raisonné, maintains that Boissieu's print provided the model for the printmaker who created the image for Charles Blanc's fascicle describing Dujardin in his *Histoire des peintres de toutes les écoles: École Hollandaise* vol. 2. This clarifies how the Blanc reproduction comes to be in the same orientation as the original painting.

What makes Manet's use of this traditional theatrical mode for representing Polichinelle interesting and different from its use in the Dujardin is that it is recurring in a context where photography had adapted theatre's conventions to its own quite different uses. A knowing play on the motif of the actor thrusting his head through the stage curtain had been created in 1854 in the photographic studios run by the Tournachon brothers (Félix and Adrien, the former taking the name "Nadar" by which all the works from that studio came to be recognized). The image shows the mime artist Charles Deburau (1829-1873) in costume, squeezed between the back wall of the photographer's studio and a detached set of double doors. [Fig. 83] He appears about to climb through a torn paper curtain pinned to one of the door's empty panels. The line between artifice and reality has been pushed back in this photograph. The only "reality" worth noting is that of the contrived scene's location in the photographer's studio. The character in costume is knowingly debunking the artifice signified by his stage clothing as a character in the *Commedia dell'arte*. Photography is taking as its motif a widely used convention in popular theatre where the comic character transgresses the boundaries between stage artifice and the audience's view of it.

Manet's version appears to have been created with this photographic complication in mind. He too adapts the convention of the stage curtain turning it into a photographic prop on which all manner of things pertinent to his own world will be attached. In that respect the world outside the curtain is as artificial as that which the curtain conceals. The artist's stand-in is both in front of and behind a curtain. Everything belongs to him and everything plays its part in the drama where what is contrived and what is real has merged. In the instant being depicted, as the actor springs into view, the moment of illusion encompasses everything in sight and suggests that everything out of sight, behind the curtain, will consist of more of the same. Concealment, the behind of things, counts for nothing in this image; we are invited to see the maker in the actor, the boy in the sword and the music in the guitar.<sup>40</sup> A stage performance setting is being used to equate the artificiality of the

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<sup>40</sup> Theodore Reff (1962) *op cit* claims the sword is the same one that occurs in Manet's 1861 works *Boy with sword*. He sees it as "vaguely physiognomic: the blocked-out top of the scabbard, its projecting lug seen as an eye, becomes a face, while the knuckle-bows and fluted shell, both displaced from their normal positions, form a kind of hat above it" and extends the significance of the physiognomic analogy by suggesting that the sword and the actor "seem to turn toward each other." Pp182-3.

theatre's mimetic ambitions with a patently artificial setting located in the photographer's studio. Artifice is not simply a matter of a few props; it occurs both in front of and behind the "curtain" equally. The only "reality" is that of the material paper with its printed image.

In my discussion of *Silentium* in Chapter 1, I pointed out how the meaning of the original image by Fra Angelico had been altered by intervening re-interpretations of the motif. When Manet came to re-inscribe the original its visual context had been affected by its nineteenth century redactions so that even a reasonably faithful copy of the original would come to have a totally different set of connotations. The same is taking place in this image.

That raises the question about the significance of biography in Manet's print output, specifically in this print. What, generally speaking, are the implications of portraying a figure who is also an actor. This issue occupied Manet not just when he was making this image but also in the invention of *Mlle V ... in the costume of an espada* and all the way up to his late works showing Emilie Ambre (1854-1898) as *Carmen* (c.1879, Philadelphia Museum of Art) and Jean-Baptiste Faure (1830-1914) as *Hamlet* (1877, Museum Folkwang, Essen). Is the artist representing in this image his own studio and indicating his role as presenter, just as in *The Street Singer*? Or are we being exhorted to confine our attention to the "essential aspects of his art" as Fried insists?<sup>41</sup> Is this a portrait of an actor in the realization of his role or is it a portrait of the artist, who has taken on this role for the purposes of the print? Manet's image seems to confound these two possibilities. Indeed all his works thicken up referential matter. The play of artifice and biography is taken to the point that biographical references cannot be extricated from art historical roots.

In this work the viewer is confronted by both interpretations operating on our sensibilities at the same time. It has long been recognized that the frontispiece etching contains references to earlier works by Manet; what has not been sufficiently emphasized is the extent to which those images are themselves redolent of art historical associations. Thus the sword hanging from the wall has by most of the commentators been related to that used in Manet's *L'enfant à l'épée* (1861, Metropolitan Museum of art, New York) and much ink has been spilt teasing out the

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<sup>41</sup> Fried (1996) *op cit* p53.



biographical implications of that work. But Mauner has pointed out such a suspended weapon also occurs in Rembrandt's print of *Jan Six* which Manet could have seen in Blanc's fascicle.<sup>42</sup> As a wall-hanging, it seems closer to Delacroix's *Chef, Maure à Meknez*, printed in 1833 and published in *Les Artistes contemporains: Salon De 1833*. [Figs. 84 and 85]

The image of the balloon in a landscape with windmills, a Dutch archetype, undoubtedly references Manet's *Balloon* print (Harris 23). Reff has argued that it symbolizes Manet's proposed movement to Holland to marry his Dutch bride. But it also had important precedents, which Manet could have known about as a result of his interest in the works of Boissieu. Boissieu had made a series of drawings celebrating the early balloon launchings that took place in Lyons. One such, held in the Musée historique of that city, represents the launching of the *Montgolfière* "Flesselles" in a composition closely matched almost one hundred years later by Manet's *Balloon* print. [Fig. 86] Another image, this one not by Boissieu but also concerned with the launching of the first balloon from Lyons in January 1784, shows the same background of domed building used by Manet.<sup>43</sup> [Fig. 87] Manet, possibly for the biographical reasons adumbrated by Reff, alters that landscape behind the balloon in the *Polichinelle* print so that it includes windmills a distinctively Dutch characteristic. But his depiction of these is probably borrowed from a print by Jongkind. This was also a frontispiece etching, entitled *Cahier de six eaux-forte: Vues de Hollande* dated 1862, also published by Cadart. [Fig. 88] The suggestion, by Ligo, that the windmills may equally be those sitting on the top of Montmartre (see his fig. 44) does not vitiate the case for the similarity between Jongkind's and Manet's print versions.

This reference to his Dutch colleague in the *Société des Aquafortistes*, Johan Barthold Jongkind (1819-1891) is further evidence for the claim that Manet's practice of citing his contemporaries was a deliberated strategy, one not yet sufficiently explored in Manet scholarship. Although I have been unable to find a contemporaneous image which demonstrates the curtain motif as a pseudo-theatrical

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<sup>42</sup> Mauner (1975) *op cit* p172.

<sup>43</sup> Gillispie, C.C., 1983. *The Montgolfier brothers and the invention of aviation, 1783-1784: with a word on the importance of ballooning for the science of heat and the art of building railroads* Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. P77. I have cropped this image; no visible name indicates its maker. Nancy Locke has also written about Manet's interest in balloon images; see Locke (2001) p81, n17.

backdrop in a photographer's scenario, a later Nadar image of stage actors posing in front of such a curtain in a studio setting show that Manet was not alone in collapsing the distinction between the staged and the location of its staging. [Fig. 89] As in this Manet etching, the result is an unresolved clashing of two worlds, the biographical and the staged.

This print is another version of the compendious image, along the lines of *The Old Musician*, only here the internal spectator is an amalgamation of two roles, that of the viewer and the creator, one who is stepping into the world of Manet's print production as an actor about to adopt a role in it. The role we, the audience, entertain for the figure is that of the work's creator. He is moving into a space inhabited by relics of the past re-inscribed in the present through their references to Manet's previous works in this medium. His role in that space must be to reveal, for our delectation, those works. The sign attached to the curtain promises to reveal etchings by the artist by opening the curtain and drawing together the inside and our side.

Of the three images I have considered in this chapter, this is work clearly integrates its musical connotations with a more compendious set of references. It also eschews the improvisatory stylistic approach characteristic of the other two works. Here the visual information takes advantage of the work's repetition of elements drawn from other prints without making any noticeable effort to synthesize the traces of their stylistic origins. The three images taken together represent the variety of Manet's approaches to musical subject-matter, demonstrating his encyclopaedic grasp of the issues involved in his synaesthetic enterprise. He ranges from an implicit identification of sound with a tactile experience of the outside world, to a parodic transcription of his earlier success at the 1861 *Salon*, to the mute inscription of the realm of music emerging from personal biographical associations with Manet's private life. All enforce awareness of the centrality of musical motifs to the artist's practice at this juncture in his artistic career.

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*Bohémiens en voyage*

*La tribu prophétique aux prunelles ardentes  
Hier s'est mise en route, emportant ses petits  
Sur son dos, ou livrant à leurs fiers appétits  
Le trésor toujours prêt des mamelles pendantes.*

*Les hommes vont à pied sous leurs armes luisantes  
Le long des chariots où les leurs sont blottis,  
Promenant sur le ciel des yeux appesantis  
Par le morne regret des chimères absentes.*

*Du fond de son réduit sablonneux, le grillon,  
Les regardant passer, redouble sa chanson;  
Cybèle, qui les aime, augmente ses verdure,  
Fait couler le rocher et fleurir le désert  
Devant ces voyageurs, pour lesquels est ouvert  
L'empire familial des ténèbres futures.*

Charles Baudelaire *Bohémiens en voyage*<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Charles Baudelaire *Bohémiens en voyage* Poem No XIII, *Les Feurs du mal*. Pichois I, 18.

## Chapter 11: Variations in realism: Manet's "family" prints

*À Madame Edouard Manet*  
*La musique aux charmantes voix*  
*S'éveille et chant sous vos doigts*  
*Parlant des vieux qu'elle devine;*  
*Et mes vers, oiseaux las d'errer*  
*Volent vers vous, pour s'enivrer*  
*Aux sons de la lyre divine*

Théodore de Banville<sup>1</sup>

In this chapter I discuss three prints in the Cadart portfolio depicting domestic themes. This will complete my consideration of the prints collected together for this 1862 publication and will serve to demonstrate the relation between Manet's images reflecting musical themes and other non-musical images in the portfolio. The prints are named by Manet in an 1863 list on a draft of the cover for the private portfolio he made that year to give away to a group of his friends.<sup>2</sup> There he designates: *The Urchin* (Le Gamin) (Harris 31 [Fig. 90]) *Boy and Dog* (Le Garçon et le Chien) (Harris 11 [Fig. 91]) and *The Toilette* (La Toilette) (Harris 20 [Fig. 92]). Henceforth I will use these names in this chapter. Paintings by Manet to which these works are linked are diverse, ranging from a literal equivalent to works only peripherally related.

The various manifestations of *The Urchin*, the print I discussed at length in my Chapter 9, have been described by Juliet (Wilson-)Bareau in an exhibition catalogue published in *The Burlington Magazine*.<sup>3</sup> Manet began the series, it is thought, with a painting. The version of that painting known today (still in private hands and

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<sup>1</sup> Dedication on the title page of a presentation copy of Théodore de Banville's *Améthystes* owned by the Manet family and collected by Adolphe Tabarant (Morgan Library, Tabarant Archives). The work, published in 1862, is a collection of Banville's poems, modelled on poems by Pierre de Ronsard (1524-1585). This allusive poem, about the entwining of music and poetry, is rendered here in English:

*To Madame Edouard Manet*  
Music, with its enchanting voices  
Is roused by your fingers and sings  
Evoking those ancients it fancies;  
And my verses, birds tired of straying  
Fly towards you, seeking rapture  
In the sounds of the divine lyre

-Théodore de Banville

<sup>2</sup> See the discussion in Fisher, J.M., 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation, pp64-5.

<sup>3</sup> Bareau, J.W. & House, J., 1986. The hidden face of Manet: an investigation of the artist's working processes. Supplement to *The Burlington Magazine* 128, i, 98.

reproduced in the 1983 retrospective exhibition catalogue as *Boy with Dog*, 1860-1861 [Cat no. 6]) was altered before being sold to Durand-Ruel in 1872. [Fig. 93] Its original state, revealed by x-rays, is more nearly reflected in the etching published in the Cadart portfolio. After the 1872 sale Manet made a lithograph version of it, using a photograph by Jules-Michel Godet (active 1860s-1870s) to remind himself of the altered image. This repeats the changes made to the painting and corresponds to the painted version known today.

No equivalent painting by Manet matches the etching *Boy and Dog*. There is, however, what is taken to be a preliminary drawing (de Leiris cat no. 157) [Fig. 94]. These works display a bolder and freer treatment of their theme than Manet adopted for *The Urchin*. They have been construed as “studio experiments” and described as unsuited for a larger-scaled painted version.<sup>4</sup> Three other such works are the *Candle Seller* (Harris 8) and the *Bear Trainer* (Harris 9), said also to date around 1861 to 1862 and the uncertainly dated *Convalescent* (Harris 85). Only Manet’s aforementioned work *Boy with Dog* bears the slightest resemblance to this print, inasmuch as it features the same *dramatis personae*, albeit the boys are differently identified and engaged.

*The Toilette* can be associated with paintings and drawings Manet made in the early 1860s, featuring the nude. The works which most closely resemble this image are to be identified in an extensive range of drawings. The nearest painted image known today is *Surprised Nymph* (1861-2, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires) [Fig. 95]. It displays the same model in a pose which appears to have been inspired by images by Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640) and Rembrandt (Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, 1606–1669). Those, like Manet’s works, emphasize the nude figure’s modesty. According to Wilson-Bareau a painted version of this print may have existed. Proust refers to painted *études* from the early 1860s; one of which he called *La toilette*.<sup>5</sup> An alternative interpretation of this print draws attention to its similarity with *Boy and Dog*, in that both derive from prior drawings.

In sum, in the 1862 Cadart portfolio, when Manet concentrated on domestic scenes, he released two prints of a boy with a dog each of which is executed in an

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<sup>4</sup> Bouillon, J.-P., 1989. L'estampe impressioniste: chronique bibliographique. *Revue de l'Art*, 86, 66-81 at 68n23.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid* p34, 87n19. A video available on YouTube announces the purported discovery of this image underneath another painting: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ta66uThOjkc> Accessed 8 December 2009.

individualised and distinctly different style. The third print, *The Toilette* straddled traditional subjects giving the appearance of both a genre work depicting domestic activity and a female nude, without falling squarely within either of these categories. This third, more heavily worked, image only marginally predates the painting of *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* and possibly also *Olympia*. It has an ambiguous temporal relation to the painting *Surprised Nymph* and shares some values with all these works while establishing its own identity, both stylistically and iconographically.<sup>6</sup> Two of the three etchings I discuss reflect Manet's commitment to the improvisatory style of print-making, the third is one of his most disciplined and carefully executed prints.

More or less contemporaneous works in different factures is commonly said to be the outcome of an artist's unresolved struggle to establish a distinctive personal style. But these pieces do not give that impression. Harris talks of Manet having "two quite different ways of handling etching". She describes an expressive linearity reflecting a romantic, improvisatory manner and works with a quiet tonal emphasis. In the latter, subtle shading of areas is emphasized by means of hatching with very dense networks of lightly bitten, short strokes.<sup>7</sup> The expressive linearity more nearly resembles the style adopted by Manet's contemporaries, Whistler and Jongkind for example. It is said to derive from Manet's knowledge of the Italian etchers of the seventeenth century.<sup>8</sup> The latter's dense networks of lightly bitten, short strokes is closer to the style adopted by Bracquemond, who made an etched copy of the *Erasmus* (1523, Louvre) by Hans Holbein the Younger (1498-1543), look like the finest engraving. In traditional etching such a style is found in early Rembrandt etchings and in Goya's aquatinted plates.

The same ability to use different factures in works closely related in time is found in the artist's paintings, even at the end of Manet's life. The works harvested from the cut canvas *Reichsoffen* have a "vivid, broken touch and multi-focus

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<sup>6</sup> (Wilson-) Bareau argues "The origins of the *Déjeuner* stretch back over at least a year and probably two, *op. cit.* p27. *Olympia* is usually considered to be contemporaneous with this painting and she comes to the same conclusion "the painting may have been started at an earlier date than has been suspected" *Ibid* p45.

<sup>7</sup> Her analysis of Manet's etching styles, which has not been surpassed, occurs in the Introduction to Harris, J.C., 1970. *Edouard Manet: Graphic Works*, 1st ed. New York: Collectors Editions. Pp8-9.

<sup>8</sup> Rosenthal, L., 1925. *Manet, aquafortiste et lithographe* Paris: Le Goupy. He notes the resemblance of Manet's style with Canaletto (acknowledging Duret's *Manet* (1919) p164) p43.. Harris adds Giambattista Tiepolo (Giovanni Battista) (1696 – 1770 ) to the mix. Thinking perhaps of his *Scherzi* and *Capricci*, Tiepolo was earlier proposed by Henri Focillon as one of Manet's models in Focillon, H., 1930. *Maitres de l'Estampe: peintres graveurs* Paris: Libraire Renouard. P131.

composition....The larger more tightly worked *Bar at the Folies Bergère* by contrast shows a smoother, more polished treatment of his subject-matter. His “realistic” style did not constrict his options, using one uniform method was not characteristic of the artist either in painting or in print-making.<sup>9</sup>

If Manet’s realism is not tied to a specific style of execution, could it be said that he eschews traditional iconographical references in his subject-matter in favour of an unadorned imitation of perceptual experience? This is the explanation chosen by Farwell to account for Manet’s modernism in his treatment of the nude. She argues that Manet was “grappling with the problem of posing the nude figure in a manner both monumental and natural” and that Manet’s etching *The Toilette* constitutes “a step along the path that leads from *Nymphe surprise* to *Olympia*.” What distinguishes these later works, in her opinion, is his clear presentation of ‘his nudes without the label of classical idealized beauty’. Instead they constituted the new canon of Realist Art because they were involved with “the endowing of low life with high art.”<sup>10</sup> We will find this does not apply to the prints under consideration in this chapter. Where it might have been reasonable to assume that, with their quiet domestic content, iconography could be expected to give way to a concentration on prosaic reality, such was not the case. Even granting that his works resist “be[ing] assimilated into a single coherent meaning” (House *ibid*) they embody references to classical precedents and have the same basic structure of underlying implications favoured by his romantic predecessors. These references complicate the appearance of this group of images, generating complex readings of seemingly simple scenarios.

What makes these domestic images interesting is that they share with his works with musical themes an aspiration to refer to experiences beyond those being depicted visually. Pascal lefèvre terms this the “diegetic”. In such works the viewer is invited to construct a larger fictional space within which the characters live and work.

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<sup>9</sup> House, J., 1986. Manet's naïveté. *The Burlington Magazine*, 128, 1-19. He describes the different stylistic approaches characteristic of these two works at p14. Prior to this, the argument had been formulated by Jean Clay in his analysis of two paintings Manet made representing the singer Jean-Baptiste Faure (1830-1914). He identifies in “the first canvas [...] a web of quick, nervous strokes that pare away the jagged silhouette of the baritone – who seems to disintegrate in the theatrical sparkle that produces him – the second is a dull and somber mass on a neutral background. Two styles. Almost two painters.” Clay, J., 1983. Ointments, makeup, pollen. *October*, 27, 3-44. P7.

<sup>10</sup> Farwell, B., 1981. *Manet and the nude: a study of iconography in the Second Empire* New York: Garland Pub., pp157; 156; 216; 225.

He notes that “this space can be constructed by the reader in various ways: both by elements that appear inside the frame..., and by elements which remain unseen (which are called in French 'hors champ'). This non-visualised space does not only refer to the virtual supposed space outside the frame (in French called 'hors cadre')..., but also to the supposed 'hidden' space within the borders... (in French called 'hors champ interne'): for instance figures can overlap one another and hide parts for the eye of viewer.”<sup>11</sup> In these prints by Manet the diegetic space being referred to is not based on the implicit presence of the medium of music. The prints are not concerned with drawing attention to the sense of hearing as opposed to sight. However, like those, the domestic prints gain their aesthetic force from the way they draw upon non-visual sensuous experiences and demonstrate his commitment to extending the expressive range of the visual medium. As a whole, the Cadart print collection reflects Manet’s interest in the diegetic at that time.

His immediate, surface goal is describing the intimacy of human relations generated by domestic encounters with his familiars. Since there have often been references to familial situations in the other works in this portfolio, made at the time when he was within twelve months of marrying the woman he had known for over ten years, it is not so exceptional to find familial scenes illustrating this side of Manet’s medium-surpassing endeavours. They are in this respect consistent with the ambitious scheme described for the works I have already discussed. The fact that they eschew any references to music, while their major protagonist, Suzanne Leenhoff, is so closely associated with that medium calls for explanation. In this chapter I will refer to the controversy in recent literature about Manet’s domestic arrangements.<sup>12</sup> But I am not in a position to add much to the debate about the paternity of Suzanne Leenhoff’s son, Leon Koella (as he chose to call himself, after his mother’s death). Nor can an examination of these prints change the nature of that debate in any significant measure.

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<sup>11</sup>lefévre, P., 2006. The construction of space in comics. *Image [&] Narrative: Online magazine of the visual narrative*. 16 ed.: Open Humanities Press, n.p. I have omitted the references to the “panel” characteristic of the comic format being discussed in this article. (Note that I have shown the orthography lefévre has adopted for his surname.)

<sup>12</sup> Locke, N., 2001. *Manet and the family romance* Princeton, N.J.; Oxford: Princeton University Press. This book is the most influential of these accounts. Brombert, B.A., 1996. *Edouard Manet: rebel in a frock coat* Boston: Little Brown also contains research about his private life, but the work is flawed through its author’s partisan disregard for Suzanne Leenhoff. She lacks objectivity, while subscribing to a tiresome “genius” discourse.



Print-making's character as a reproductive process has often given rise to subject matter evoking other media, Delacroix's etchings are typical applications of the medium. He recreates experiences originating from and gaining much of their meaning from literary texts.<sup>13</sup> As I have argued in my previous chapters, in Manet's case this interest in representing the non-visual was not just confined to the literary medium. While his involvement with the practice may originate, in part, in his experience with the medium of print-making, the pervasive presence of musical themes in these and in painted works indicates a broader interest in the inter-relationship of artistic media. Contemporaneous and later paintings are also designed to generate non-visual experiences, not all of them related to music. An instance of this is the domestically focussed painting, the *Portrait of the Artist's Parents* (1862, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) [Fig. 96]. In this Manet induces an empathetic experience of touch through his representation of Madame Manet's hand plunged into the depths of her sewing basket. The painting adopts the device I have described Manet using repeatedly at this time. He divides the viewer's attention between her gaze and an invisible physical sensation. The melancholy of this painting, depicting Manet's father in a post-stroke aphasic state, is barely dissipated by this tactile reference to happier instances of domesticity, Madame Manet's prosaic house-keeping. There is thus, at this stage in Manet's life, a group of contemporaneous works in both painting and print-making which reveal an artist seeking to reach beyond purely visual experiences in picturing.

Manet was not alone in these experiments. It comes in the context of a labile practice he shared with his print-making contemporaries; Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) was equally interested in the pictorial expression or interpretation of music. Beginning in 1862 with his lithograph *Tannhäuser in Venusberg* illustrating a scene from the opera [Fig. 97] he went on to produce multiple interpretations of musical themes, as did Odilon Redon (1840-1916) later in the century.<sup>14</sup> Print-makers in Manet's time were also making works conceived as existing in a space somewhere

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<sup>13</sup> In "Between worlds: Delacroix and painting" David Gervais describes Delacroix's lithographs of literary subject-matter showing "a continuity between the artist's literary response and its visual realization...the literary and the visual belonged within a single continuum of experience" *Cambridge Quarterly* (2000) 29:3 267-283. P275.

<sup>14</sup> See Michael Tymkiw's discussion of "The Wagner lithographs of Henri Fantin-Latour and Odilon Redon" in Ward, M. & Leonard, A., 2007. *Looking and Listening in Nineteenth-Century France* Chicago: Smart Museum Of Art, The University Of Chicago. Pp51-59.

between that of writing and that of picturing, giving access to experiences characteristic of both media. Their images were often reliant for their sources on reproductive media far removed from the painted original where the iconography of the image had been obscured by its presence in changed contexts and multiple reproductions. Artists responded by experimenting with subject-matter which took advantage of these ambiguous origins. The adaptation of these motifs to personal experiences became the norm; influenced perhaps by the widespread preconception that prints were created for private delectation. Contemporary critics argued they were suited for collection in portfolios and were best consulted in intimate communion, either on one's own or in common with a small, select audience.<sup>15</sup> The viewer was a 'reader' of the image in an activity analogous to that appropriate for the literary arts. Manet spells out the characteristics of absorbed concentration in his roughly contemporaneous work *Old Man Reading* (1861, City Art Museum, St Louis). [Fig. 98] Signalling that this activity is equally intrinsic to the experience of prints, he also made an etched version of it. (Harris 13).

Experimental processes in the medium of etching exploited this capacity to create images embodying a mysterious intimacy. Printmakers, such as Delâtre, Cadart's collaborator, were renowned for leaving ink washes on the plate prepared for printing, giving some of Manet's prints, in a later state and printed subsequent to 1862, their overall sheen of impenetrable blackness. Artists joined in this process; heavy applications of aquatint invested in the plate itself gave the context of images like the first state of *Boy and Dog* an other-worldly aura, neither securely outdoors nor architecturally defined.<sup>16</sup> Figures emerged from darkened grounds or, even more mysteriously, these figures were themselves entwined with a complex grid of spontaneous gestural marks; in *The Toilette* the serving maid is just one of the obscured images that lurk in that gloom. Peter Parshall comments "darkness became a kind of visual language understood as encouraging the exploration of shadowed kinds of subjects and indeterminate states of mind" (Parshall, as in n15, p5).

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<sup>15</sup> Charles Blanc refers to prints as "better placed in portfolios than under glass" because otherwise they would lose their unique savour and the viewer would become blasé to their attractions. Blanc, C. 1862. "Le cabinet de M. Thiers" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 12, pp304-5 (quoted in Parshall, P., 2009. *The darker side of light. Arts of privacy, 1850-1900* Washington: National Gallery of Art in association with Lund Humphries. P152n2).

<sup>16</sup> See the discussion of this technique, so characteristic of images created by Delâtre, Cadart's printer, in Janis, E.P., 1980. Setting the tone - The revival of etching, the importance of ink. In C.F. Ives (ed.) *The painterly print*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Simulating painterly effects, the appearance of the print was often enhanced to accentuate its divided allegiances, determining that it could no longer be simply associated with a mundanely illustrative role. This idiosyncratic treatment of the medium was interpreted by the critics associated with its revival as giving the practice its unique character. Baudelaire described Jongkind's etchings as these "singular abbreviations of his paintings". They enabled the discerning connoisseur to undertake "deciphering the soul of the artist in his most rapid scribbles".<sup>17</sup> It was the personality of the artist that, in Baudelaire's view, was being brought to the forefront by these experiments.

Manet's etchings on domestic subjects partook of this engagement with the personal. Even if they could not have been recognised as autobiographical by their first viewers, these prints were indeed a reflection of personal experiences at this time in his life. Although their exploitation of traditional subjects such as the nude and the interaction of human and animal figures would have disguised their personal significance, these were experiences involving, at whatever remove, his future wife and son. They were incorporated in images which served to associate his prosaic lived reality with the traditions of art. And Manet was led by his personal investment in these traditional procedures to display a hidden significance lying beneath the outward formality of conventional image-making.

Of the three images published within the portfolio the one which most clearly conforms to earlier models and is least affiliated with the domestic interior is *The Urchin*, the print already discussed in my chapter 9, *Tangled chronology and The Young Woman*. Any more than its brother representation, the *Boy with Dog*, this is not an image providing insights into its protagonist's character by means of physiological idiosyncrasies. Manet concentrates the viewer's attention instead on the dynamic of the depicted action. And explaining what, about that action, led Manet to place such importance on this image (he not only represented it in paint but also in etching as well as in his later lithograph) draws attention to its concentration on the covert. Angel Gonzalez Garcia in *Manet en el Prado* (2003) talks about Manet making two images in this one work. Overtly Manet creates an unremarkable presentation of a boy with a dog. The other aspect of the image is signalled by the

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<sup>17</sup> Baudelaire "Peintres et aquafortistes" in Pichois II, 740.

hand in the basket reaching for something unseen. The picture invites us to share with the dog a curiosity about what the boy will pull out of the basket:

"What could that be? Everything and nothing obviously....in the meantime, however, we have touched and felt all manner of things, starting with the straw as it brushes our skin. The boy's basket is a virtually endless store of tactile sensations...we see nothing but we can feel everything and not just imagine it...touching sometimes obviates seeing, or in other words, touch distracts us from sight. We ourselves, when we see that neither Manet's mother [in *Portrait of the Artist's Parents*] nor the boy with the dog is looking at us, realise that we have to look in another direction and seek elsewhere."<sup>18</sup>

The image's soporific surface appearance is a deliberated signal flagging the need for the viewer to divert attention to experience beyond the compass of the seen. Gonzalez Garcia's claim that two images co-exist in the same painting leads to the observation "it is as though all his works have two planes or registers that enclose a shifting terrain in which our sensations are caught and become more intense and stimulating, in which our whole body delights" (*ibid* p412). While not sharing T.J. Clark's *fin de siècle* ennui this analysis resembles that in Clark's seminal essay on "Modernism, postmodernism, and steam" where he too describes Manet's works as internally bifurcated:

"Positive and negative, fullness and emptiness, totalization and fragmentation, sophistication and infantilism, euphoria and desperation, an assertion of infinite power and possibility alongside a mimicry of deep aimlessness and loss of bearings. For this, I think, is modernism's root proposal about its world: that the experience of modernity is precisely the experience of the *two* states, the two tonalities, at the same time. Modernism is the art that continually discovers coherence and intensity in tentativeness and schematism, or blankness lurking on the other side of sensuous. And not on the other side, really - for blankness is the form sensuousness and controlled vivacity now actually take."<sup>19</sup>

This division is matched in Manet's works by his style of execution, in both paintings and in prints. Michel Melot noticed it back in 1977 where in his commentary

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<sup>18</sup> Gonzalez Garcia, A., 2004. Painting becomes complicated. In M.B. Mena Marqués (ed.) *Manet en el Prado*. Madrid: Museo nacional del Prado, 408-419. P411.

<sup>19</sup> Clark, T.J., 2002. Modernism, postmodernism, and steam. *October*, 100, 154-174. P166.

on Manet's prints for the Ingelheim-am-Rhein catalogue he described Manet's procedure in making the print for *The Spanish Singer*. It "surpasses straightforward reproduction by adding to the motif, as painted, kinetic strokes and emphases which did not figure in the original and make this print a different, autonomous work."<sup>20</sup> The viewer cannot avoid a fluctuating perception. The image as representation gives way to patches of paint, or flat areas of dense hatching (as in *The Urchin's* right arm) that have a strong independent function. The viewer is forced to choose between two experiences which are difficult to perceive simultaneously: "it is...like *two planes* which enclose and define a terrain in which the senses become confused and resound... Manet used it throughout his career, insisting on all sorts of synaesthesia, of sensorial games that created complications. Above all, the most common of all, in which touch reveals itself as the root and basis of all the others" (Gonzalez Garcia *op cit* p415-6). In *The Urchin* the experience is signified by the absence of animation in the face, the attention of the boy is elsewhere and if we are going to grasp the work's significance we too must attend to experiences for which there is no visual equivalent.

Visual clues gesture in the direction our attention is being diverted towards. We can appreciate the way texture is represented, perhaps most successfully in the lithograph, where operating without the distraction of colour, subtly varied shadings and short sharply rendered diagonal strokes of the crayon, ordered roughly into bands, evoke the woven texture of the straw basket with outstanding tactility.<sup>21</sup> These are matched by the hairiness of the dog, the contrast in textures between the jersey and trousers of the boy and in particular the basket which provides a strong diagonal accent, reaching its apogee in the handle, the point of contact between the visible and the invisible. The basket, taking its place between the dog and the boy's clothes, functions similarly to the guitar in the *Spanish Singer*; its frontal position and large scale relative to the other elements making a point about its relative importance.

This emphasis on finish, with its restrained and enigmatic quality, is a measure of Manet's involvement with the values of printmaking and explains his pride in this print. What will emerge from the basket remains undefined. Indeed the process of

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<sup>20</sup> The original of this article and its translation is included in the appendix in part 2 of this thesis.

<sup>21</sup> Such a comparison is offered only tentatively, since the painting is not publicly accessible.

growing up is like the opening of Pandora's box but even so and taking into account the anticipation being figured by the dog, an air of childhood innocence is still captured in this image.

We find in the related print *Boy and Dog* a similar treatment of this elusiveness theme. Again Manet focuses on inscribing a sensuous physical experience. As in the other print, his depiction draws attention to the instant of time in which the action is transacted. Simultaneously he is gesturing toward a future event beyond the reach of the depicted present, indicated by the boy's attentive gaze towards the unseen spaces to the right of the print.

Manet asks us to consider a future event that is narrated but not seen as the focus of this work.<sup>22</sup> In relation to the last described print, we find the boy and the dog swap roles. The pictorial high-point here is what the dog is holding in his mouth (arrived at late in the formulation of the scenario since it does not figure in the drawing). The stick/stroke is in line with the boy's face and it underlines his gaze. This object signifies and points towards an anticipated change in the course of events being described in the print. On this occasion it is the boy who looks with eager attentiveness, like the dog in the previous image, towards an event about to take place – here the throwing of the stick - there the removal of something from the bag. Like the dog in the other image, here it is the boy, now with a changed identity, who is mostly lost to view. This time, as well as the frame cutting-off our view of what's to come, the boy is truncated by the dog's body, a device which serves both to disguise and to justify the awkwardness of his pose. What is especially noteworthy is that while the anticipatory mood of the previous image is evoked within the context of a static frontal composition here Manet doesn't just reverse the actor's roles, he depicts them in profile, parallel to the picture plane. Thus he displaces the notional viewing position and invests the scene with the illusion of movement. It is as if the two figures have only a very short stage appearance before disappearing off in the direction of the gaze to the right.

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<sup>22</sup> "What Howard Felperin has called 'the evidence of things not seen'." Meek, R., 2006. Ekphrasis in *The Rape of Lucrece* and *The Winter's Tale*. *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 46, 389-414. P147 [Howard Felperin in "'Tongue-tied our Queen?': The deconstruction of presence in *The winter's tale*", in *The uses of the Canon: Elizabethan literature and contemporary theory* (Oxford) 1990, pp35-55 (p38)]

Closer inspection, however, destabilises this illusion. It reveals that the dog is halfway between a crouched and standing position. The boy too is off-balance, leaning heavily on the dog's back with his legs awkwardly splayed. Nothing could induce this animal to remain in that position unless it was the artificiality of an image's frozen moment.<sup>23</sup> This heightens the tension generated by the foreshadowed action in the earlier work, where it was created within a static structure and singular narrative thread. Here an analogous narrative is overlaid by Manet's depiction of the protagonists' instability. Tension is vividly realised in the poses of the protagonists, poised between stability and collapse. Mechanisms emphasizing the unseen implications of the events depicted are invested with lively animation in this print. But in both formulations the implicit narrative is more richly entertained than the drama of the depicted moment. A work of visual art assumes temporal extension using literary devices to figure anticipated but unstated consequential events.

Manet alters his style of execution in the second version to account for this sense of imminent change. This work gives the impression of being an improvised sketch and it is usually described as such.<sup>24</sup> This is belied not just by the existence of a preliminary drawing. In compositional terms it is a carefully ordered scene. Both figures are placed in the centre of the sheet in a conventional pyramidal organisation of space, nothing falls off the edges in this print, not even the screen-like backdrop, which, in the second and third states of the print, like Jackson Pollock's *All-overs*, has all its furry bits at the edges of the screen neatly tucked inwards. Despite its all-over execution this print attacks the contained minimalism of the print *The Urchin* with what, in comparison to the third print in this trio, is only a half-hearted effort. *The*

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<sup>23</sup> Michael Zimmermann describes a "reversal of the pose" in *Luncheon in the studio* (1868, Bayerische Staatsgemalde- sammlungen, Munich) "an instant of immobility occurring, almost by chance in the very place where the artist obliges the model he is wanting to portray to remain immobile." "Le tableau envisagé par Manet était un portrait, dans une pose qui se donne pour un envers de la pose, un instant d'immobilité presque par hasard à l'endroit même où l'artiste oblige le modèle qu'il veut peindre à rester immobile" in "Présences de l'absent. Le jeu des identités dans la peinture de Manet." Published in Zimmermann, M.F., 2000. *Présences de l'absent*. In R. Michel (ed.) *Où en est l'interprétation de l'oeuvre d'art*. Paris: Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, 157-204. P 170.

<sup>24</sup> Wilson, J., 1978. *Manet; dessins, aquarelles, eaux-fortes, lithographies, correspondance* Paris: Huguette Berès. She describes the print as "...one of the rare etchings by Manet which is not copied from a painting. It has the charm and spontaneity of a work directly inscribed on the copper, without the constraint of a finished model, apart from some traced indications taken from a preparatory drawing." (Not paginated) cat. No. 30. In Moffett, C.S., 1983. *Manet 1832-1883* New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc. Juliet Wilson-Bareau describes a pronounced "sense of spontaneity" based on "a very free sketch" p61.

*Urchin* more nearly resembles Manet's execution in the roughly contemporaneous *Portrait chargé d'Émile Ollivier* (Harris 1) with its containing lines and off-centre alternative focus. Manet demonstrates that he is capable of an even more chaotic, yet contained, organisation of the picture space in his third print from the domestic tree *The Toilette*. There Manet gives rein to exuberant, almost obsessive over-facing with patches of closely hatched picture space hiding almost lost images.

Here the foreground and the background are not nearly so agitated. So it might be said this work, in effect, sets up a game of contrasting stylistic values. These are the same values which will later underpin Manet's work *The Execution of Maximilian* (1867, Kunsthalle, Mannheim). There too he created a disparity between the techniques he adopted to represent an event taking place within a fleeting instant and the composed rigidity of the pyramidal, centred image. What marks this earlier approach is the air of unrestrained freedom in the loosely inscribed marks of the graver's pen. It has its equivalent in the painterly treatment adopted in the first (Boston) version of *The Execution*, a treatment which combined the hidden obscurity of things in *The Toilette* with gestural mark-making, a principal characteristic of *Boy with Dog*. Manet abandoned the hidden obscurity in the later images of Maximilian or at least he toned it down to what was obscured by the gunfire smoke. His figural treatment was tightened in favour of precise outlines in the later versions.

Michel Melot maintains the drawing for *Boy and Dog* was made envisaging its conversion into a print: "This interesting work is the only truly original etching by Manet, by which I mean it has not been formulated to reproduce a painting or a drawing. Rather the preparatory drawing, which is known, seems on the contrary to have been subordinated to the print in this instance. That is perhaps why the drawing process is particularly well adapted to both the subject and to the technique."<sup>25</sup>

If this is correct it is germane to this account. We can then assume his drawing rather than being a spontaneous record of an observed event drew its inspiration from traditional imagery on this topic. Even when creating the illusion of capturing a particular experience, Manet's practice at this time was to resort to copying from

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<sup>25</sup> « Cette œuvre présente en outre l'intérêt d'être la seule eau-forte de Manet vraiment originale, c'est-à-dire qu'elle n'a pas été redessinée d'après une peinture ou un dessin à des fins de reproduction, mais que le dessin préparatoire qui existe semble au contraire, pour une fois, avoir été subordonné à la gravure. C'est peut-être pourquoi l'écriture en est particulièrement bien adaptée à la fois au sujet et à la technique. » Melot, M., 1974. *L'Estampe Impressioniste* Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale. Pp52-3.



classical models. This is complicated in this instance by the fact that the two etchings are complementary in so many respects they can be said to constitute a contrary pair. In developing the second image he started out on the path chosen for *The Urchin*. Initiating his procedure by citing a work by a respected forebear, the work underwent radical changes. That occurred because this later work was required to not only reflect the model provided by the respected forebear but also to respond to that earlier work by the artist himself.

Admittedly the work is executed in a style that gives the appearance of a fresh sketch. But Manet is much more likely to have been responding to other images of children with large dogs. It was a genre that had been widely practised since Titian's time. Two possible models were available from artists I have suggested he was particularly responsive to at this stage of his career, viz Ary Scheffer and Jean-Jacques de Boissieu. He could have been thinking of the beautiful painting by Ary Scheffer of his daughter with her arms round a dog reaching to her shoulder *Portrait of Cornelia with Dog* (1840, Dordrechts Museum). [Fig. 99] But this is a static image and bears too little relation to the dynamic pose captured by Manet. It is another of the prints by Jean-Jacques de Boissieu, this one entitled *Two children playing with a dog* that would have provided a more congenial model in this instance (Perez 85) [Fig. 100]. The focus of this enigmatic print is the figure of the dog patiently enduring childish attentions. The children's activity provides the key to deciphering this print. Their intimate physical contact with the dog connotes the vividness and persistence of the sensation of touch, an experience shared by all the people depicted. Touch transcends age with its various barriers to the full exercise of the senses. Boissieu is devoting a visual image to the sensation of touch, with his typically witty exaggeration here in the disparity of the ages and the decrepitude of the elderly, if nothing else. That sense of touch unites a group of people separated not just visually but also in their life span.

Describing Manet's image of *The Urchin* Angel Gonzalez Garcia observes that "touching sometimes obviates seeing, touch distracts us from sight" *op cit* p411. This is equally apparent in the image where Manet displays the boy losing his balance in the effort to make physical contact with the dog, his arms encircling the dog's neck keeping him upright while tipping the dog. The "touching" motif suggests a strong linkage between this work and the print by Boissieu. Whether or not Manet's imagery

is directly based on Boissieu's conception, they both take part in the depiction of similar scenarios.<sup>26</sup>

The importance of printmaking to Manet at this period in his career runs the gamut from his accessing ideas and motifs provided by earlier printmakers, through his experimenting in the medium, drawing on a wide range of stylistic approaches, to his initiating prints which then play a major role in the development of important paintings. Printmaking's eclecticism creates opportunities for Manet to extend visual media; through it he evokes experiences that reach beyond conventional barriers between senses.

The first work in this series of domestic images, *The Urchin*, emerges without significant variation from a painting by Murillo. The second, the *Boy and Dog*, is developed directly from Manet's drawing while amalgamating images from a number of closely related external sources. The third *The Toilette* takes the evolutionary process of developing an original image a stage further. It is a patchwork of referential material and drawn studies enlivened by the ambiguous gaze directed at the (spectator-voyeur) artist. As far as is currently known the print does not correspond to any one specific painting by Manet, nor to one work by any other artist. Its closest relation is with Manet's painted version of the traditional theme of *Susannah and the Elders* known as *The Surprised Nymph*. That painting is a reasonably literal treatment of the theme, outgrowths of an aesthetic tradition whose subject-matter was Old Testament stories of sexual desire and lustfulness. Both these works share with earlier Italian and Dutch images the bashful engagement of their principal figure with the spectator. While such motifs originated with Italian Renaissance painters, the imagery was augmented by Dutch masters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; Manet appears to be taking his inspiration from artists such as Rubens and Rembrandt whose works he could reasonably be expected to have seen.<sup>27</sup> Thus, in this work, he has incorporated elements which relate it to Dutch representations of the bathing figure of *Bathsheba*. In conformity with that tradition Manet's print has an attendant who fulfils the function of internal spectator. Accoutrements characteristic

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<sup>26</sup> Noteworthy, too is the strange oval darkening under the back legs of the dog in the first state of Manet's print, which closely mimics the shadow effect Boissieu creates in the same place.

<sup>27</sup> Sluijter, E.J., 2006. *Rembrandt and the female nude* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Chapter IV deals with this iconographic theme at length.

of paintings depicting *Bathesheba* such as the metal cauldron, the unguent jar are also included.

Beatrice Farwell has studied at length the relationship of this print to a slew of drawings of the female nude thought to date from the same period in Manet's career. She maintains that *The Surprised Nymph* represented "a crucial moment in Manet's development from overt references to ancient art to the use of ancient art sources in contemporary contexts."<sup>28</sup> This work takes that process a stage further. His adaptation of ancient art sources is coordinated with these preliminary drawings which appear to be taken from life. The outcome is an image whose vivid portrayal of a woman observed as she bathes takes on a more personal note than any other print in this portfolio.

There are a number of etchings by Rembrandt which could have contributed to Manet's preliminary thinking about the pose of the principal figure in this work and her outline against an enveloping gloom. In particular the seated position resembles that in *A nude woman seated on a mound* c1631 [Fig. 101]. The *Diana* of the same year has a similarly gloomy surround, albeit outdoors. She has her feet immersed up to her calves in water, a motif that unexpectedly recurs in Manet's print. Various indoors settings for semi-naked women also occur in Rembrandt's print oeuvre. *A half-dressed woman seated before a stove* of 1658 and the related *A seated nude woman with a hat beside her* of the same year use the technique Manet adopted of placing the woman's body in bright relief against a heavily worked background space teeming with incident. *A woman with an arrow* of 1661 includes a background head emerging from the gloom. Finally Rembrandt reprises the motif of a bathing figure up to her ankles in water in *A nude woman bathing her feet in a brook* of 1658.<sup>29</sup> [Fig. 102] In the face of this concatenation of distantly related images, it is a measure of the eclecticism of Manet's sources that the design for the figure of the attendant has been shown, in Meller's magnificent text on Manet's Italian models, to have origins in a print by Giulio Bonasone. It would seem that Manet originally drew a stand-alone

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<sup>28</sup> Farwell (1981) *op cit* n10, P11.

<sup>29</sup> All these images by Rembrandt are discussed and illustrated in Sluijter, E.J., 2006. *Rembrandt and the female nude* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press. Fisher, J.M. in 1985. *The prints of Edouard Manet* Washington: International Exhibitions Foundation argues "The relationship of this etching, striking in its chiaroscuro effects, to Rembrandt's late etching-drypoints of bathers, especially the print *Woman bathing her feet in a brook* from 1658, persuasively suggests a profound influence from the Dutch artist" p16. My suggestion is that it is at least as persuasively linked to the 1631 image but Fisher's general point cannot be gainsaid.

figure in this pose deriving her from a detail in Bonasone's *The Virgin washing the feet of the young Christ* (c1650-1660). He then inserted this figure into a red chalk drawing of a seated bather with her left arm raised (Chicago).<sup>30</sup> [Fig. 103] Manet appears to have also made a number of related drawings, not all so clearly derived from copied sources, which feed into this print.

In this print the shift Manet effects between the iconography for traditional Susannah imagery and that for Bathsheba is most clearly articulated by the gaze of his subject. She is usually and uncontroversially thought to have been modelled by his wife-to-be Susanne Leenhoff. Earlier I described the gaze as "bashful" and equated it with the gaze in the Susannah images, both Rembrandt's and Manet's (bearing in mind that a rather crude copy of the Mauritshaus *Susannah* by Rembrandt was part of the La Caze collection [M.I. 958] and is therefore likely to have been known to Manet). Comparison with the drawings from which the printed image was derived demonstrates the extent to which Manet worked to represent this gaze in a morally complex manner. The drawing from which he is thought to have traced the etched image onto the plate shows a figure looking apprehensively and warily out at the spectator, who at this point in the process must be seen as the artist. [Fig. 104] She appears to be uneasy. Given the circumstances it might be reasonable to conclude this unease is connected to the revelation of her undressed state. By the time this expression has emerged in the printed etching, a more widely disseminated medium where the model can expect to be available for public scrutiny, Manet has toyed with her look. A close inspection of the different states shows him reworking her complicity. At first she seems to acknowledge the sensuality of the depicted moment and displays a resigned acquiescence with the role the figure was being obliged to play out. But Manet revisited the more accepting grimace in the second state of the print. By lightening the shading on the left side of her face thus making that eye visible, by reducing the thickening black lines around the mouth thereby playing down their sensuality and by rendering the focus of her eyes ambiguous through failing to make where they are directed correspond, he has brought the

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<sup>30</sup> Manet's sketch, copying the figure in Giulio Bonasone's print, is in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay (RF 30.374). The connection of that drawing with the earlier version of *The surprised nymph*, revealed by X-rays, is documented in Meller, P., 2002. Manet in Italy: some newly identified sources for his early sketchbooks. *The Burlington Magazine*, 144, 68-110. P97, figs91 and 92. Manet's red chalk modello of the seated bather with her left arm raised is in the collection of the Art Institute of Chicago.

print's treatment of her exposure more closely into alignment with its appearance in the drawing. [Fig. 105]

In making this print with its meaningfully different states, the artist initially represented the intrusion on the bather's privacy as legitimated by her lopsided grin and complicit look, a constructed connivance in the game of revelation and concealment being transacted before our eyes. Then in the second state he reverted to the trepidation and aversion referred to in the drawing. Drawing the widest possible conclusion from this interaction, here Manet explicitly acknowledges the way perceiver and the perceived are bound together in a relation of the utmost intimacy, an intimacy that involves the whole perceiving body, touching, smelling, tasting, not just a disembodied pair of eyes that are inwardly referential.

Manet's intense involvement with the woman and with her apprehensive engagement with the wider audience consequent upon the conversion of the drawn image into a print is brought into relief by the subordinate position and attentive stance of the servant. This figure is no ancient hag reminiscent of the pictorial stereotype of the procuress, so often used in *Bathsheba* images.<sup>31</sup> Instead her youthful profile and immature facial features serve to draw attention to the domestic nature of Manet's image. She embodies none of the connotations of immorality we associate with the servant in the later *Olympia*. Despite this, the print focuses on the principal figure's raw sensuality. Her face, body and legs carry over the physical presence found in the preliminary drawings and despite the gesture of modesty in her raising the cloth around her breasts, the hands draw attention to them and suggest a close physical bond between artist and model. A coyly guarded attitude emerges from her awareness of the attraction exerted by her body. The angularity of the material she is drawing across her body is matched by the other sources of light in the image, the skylight and the sheet held by the serving woman. It contrasts with the bowl's roundness and embodies the drama of the unveiling as she undertakes her ablutions using the bowl. That Manet was attracted to this contradiction between unveiling and concealment is adequately exemplified by his later works on this theme. While there seems nothing irrational about the spatial setup, it teems with

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<sup>31</sup> Rembrandt in all three of his known *Bathsheba* images represents an elderly woman attendant, but does not cast her in the role of the procuress. However, as Sluiter documents, this was a common motif to which Manet would have had ample access *op cit* pp333-363.

incident, all expressed in variations on a dark and difficult to discriminate blackness. This contrast between the sensuous and the cluttered gives this print a strange if not mysterious quality.

By interpreting the image according to its biblical origins we are provided with a hint as to what might have been intended by this treatment. Bathsheba, unlike the biblical Susannah, was no example of chastity and was not seen as such in the earlier representations. Having responded to David's invitation, she committed adultery without resistance. But just as in the Rembrandt image of *Bathsheba* (1654), which Manet undoubtedly would have known since it was the jewel of the La Caze collection, this image does not present her as an example of a dangerous seductress, using her body to provoke lasciviousness on the part of the viewer. The artist invites us to share a sense of the moral ambivalence this beauty generates. Moreover taking into account the implicit discourse between model and artist that the work puts on display, we are not being invited to consider the viewer as exemplifying repugnant wickedness or foolishness. Instead the complicity between artist and model points towards a more complex relationship, one compounded from the spectator's point of view of a sensuous delight in the naked female form and a empathetic response to the model's desire for privacy, despite her compromising position. Just as in *The Surprised Nymph* Manet represents Susannah as one who, despite her response to the address of the onlooker, could not be condemned for her desire to wash herself, so he shows here a figure whose innocence is incorporated as an aspect of the scene, through her modest veiling of her body. If failing on her part is to be entertained it would seem to consist in her being prepared to allow her ablutions to be indiscreetly observed and recorded. But even here the conflation of the studio situation with the bathing motif suggests that this indiscretion was one fostered and even brought about by the artist, the one who is being seduced by her beauty.<sup>32</sup>

Following this train of thought we then return to the woman's refusal to expose herself for the viewer's pleasure. As much as Manet set up the scene that is being depicted so also he participated in the concealment which constitutes the central

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<sup>32</sup> In *Boy with sword* Michael Zimmermann refers to "the boy's look suggests a play with the identity of the painter as well as with that of the spectator...The spectator is the means by which the boy realises that he is seen." Zimmermann, M.F. (2000). *Op cit* p176.

motif of the work. In this, the third of the domestic images he published for this portfolio, the ekphrastic referral to unseen events is less overtly plotted by what is shown. On the other hand, the image itself contains puzzling references which might stand for concealed figures masquerading as seemingly random collections of lines and concentrations of formal elements. The strangest is the profile head visible along the line of the main figure's underarm, with his nose pressed up against her armpit, in one of the strongest declarations of physical attraction it would be possible to articulate in an image at this time. [Fig. 106] Part of Manet's practice and another manifestation of his interest in diegesis, he is suggesting, with the lightest possible touch, hidden or virtually unseen elements disguised as random collections of lines and shapes. Another contemporaneous example can be seen in the little studied painting, *Children at the Tuileries* (1862, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence). This painting teems with shadowy and ghostly figures, many of them barely discernable in reproductions. [Fig. 107] Perhaps the most visible is the looming presence behind the seated profile figure in the middle ground to the left of the dancing girls. [Fig. 108, detail] Just what, if anything, Manet is representing here is impossible to say, but one can scarcely deny the artist's pleasure in representing the unknowable that such a configuration stands for. The pleasure in making scrawled lines stand as figural representations is more overtly manifest in his print, *The Street Singer*. There the construction of a face out of a network of these improvised lines is analogous to the treatment in this print [Fig. 109]. A more moderate approach, consisting of a clearly described outline within which these scrawls indicating facial features are contained, is ventured in the first print version of Baudelaire, usually dated to around this time (Harris 21) [Fig. 110]. Theodore Reff has argued that the same procedure was used in the frontispiece etching *Polichinelle presents "Eaux-fortes par Édouard Manet"*. There the sword on the wall has an "animated appearance in the frontispiece - upright and active in posture, exaggerated in size, highly physiognomic in form..."<sup>33</sup> It was a practice that Manet persisted in throughout his life, albeit his later versions are usually less radical. It emerges most clearly in prints such as the *Profile of Eva Gonzalez* (Harris 68) and *Theodore de Banville* (Harris 81 and 82) but also in the illustrative work he did for poets. But the playfulness of these early efforts is never again to be so strongly manifested.

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<sup>33</sup> Reff, T., 1962. The Symbolism of Manet's Frontispiece Etchings. *The Burlington Magazine*, 104, 180+182-187. P185.

Having been encouraged to look for the hidden within this image one is then tempted to search the gloom in the background for other hints of plotting, seeing in the tangle of crossed lines similarly ghostly heads and looming shadows. Nancy Locke, in discussing the famous hidden motifs discovered by TJ Clark in Manet's paintings, observed apropos *The Toilette* "one of the extraordinary things about the etching is the elusive figure-ground effect as the viewer tries to make out the silhouette of the bather's hair against the curtain and the figure of the maid. This would become a favoured illusion in Manet's oil paintings throughout his career, notoriously in the *Olympia*."<sup>34</sup> Pierre Daix had already pointed out how "The black of the hair is confounded with the shade and the curtains in the background, while the line of the shoulder, very subtly and strongly separated, reflects the light so well that it creates an effect of modelling which does not require any shading."<sup>35</sup> This play with conventional methods of representation goes to its outer limits in such illusionistic techniques, figuring the breakdown of inherited image making and prefiguring a technical free-for-all in pictorial creation.

We are being invited to imagine what Manet is referring to; whatever it is, it is something that cannot be visualised in any normal way. This instance of the unrepresentable has led to him imprinting on the woman's body vestigial human features unrelated to the work's overt discourses, suggesting private meanings beyond the ken of conventional iconography. The dynamic of the represented relationship between artist and model is readily identifiable as referring to the relationship between Manet and his future wife; other figural references integrated within her represented body can only complicate the apparent simplicity of that one-to-one correspondence. We are left to our own devices in interpreting this near-invisible trace, one that, in its many guises, has cropped up within most of the images Manet made for this portfolio. Nor does it occur simply out of the freedom he arrogated in making prints. In paintings such as *Music in the Tuileries Gardens* and its associated works, most strikingly in *Children at the Tuileries* (RISD), the search for hidden faces and features is seemingly endless.

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<sup>34</sup> Locke, N., 2001. *Manet and the family romance* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. P19, n169.

<sup>35</sup> Daix, P., 1983. *La vie de peintre d'Edouard Manet* Paris: Fayard. P96.



Conclusion: Manet's medial traverse: A type of painting that makes the viewer hear

*Une ambition idéale préside, il est vrai, à toutes ses compositions ; mais si, par le choix de ses sujets et sa méthode dramatique, Wagner se rapproche de l'antiquité, par l'énergie passionnée de son expression il est actuellement le représentant le plus vrai de la nature moderne.*<sup>1</sup>

Manet's print-making, in the early 1860s, was a site for significant experimentation in the visual arts. He grappled with the contradictions generated by his commitment to spontaneity and improvisation in a medium which, by its nature, imposed disciplined work procedures. In the course of devising techniques to resolve this he modelled major innovations which later emerged in painting. These underpinned the triumph of Impressionism.<sup>2</sup> In this new style artists concentrated on registering in paint a subjective experience as it unfolded.<sup>3</sup> By creating variant versions in a series of impressions, artists made light of the "truthfulness" residing in any particular instance. Emphasis was displaced onto a process dependent on the visibility of an individual's sincerity and integrity. This loosened the restraints imposed by traditional notions of composition. Traces of an unrefined, unrevised, working process would leave a visible record of the presence of the artist. This practice would fuse the experience of the motif with the recording of it in a gesture of inspired improvisation.

These developments were first modelled in a visual field – that of print-making – facing questions about its function in the 1850s and '60s in Paris. Etchers, already committed to distinguishing their product from that of reproductive engravers, were also seeking ways to outmanoeuvre photography, the medium which was taking an increasing share of the market for cheap images. They fixed upon the idea of the virtuoso performance, adopting techniques simulating improvisation and spontaneity. These qualities bestowed on etchers' products the prestige accorded to transitory events made famous by celebrated musicians. This turn to the momentary came together with an eloquent scepticism about traditional values projected by poets like Baudelaire and led to a search for new subject-matter. Hailed as the answer to reproductive engraving's coldness and photography's mechanistic reflections of an

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<sup>1</sup> "It is true that an ideal ambition presides over all of Wagner's compositions; but if in choice of subject and dramatic method he comes near to antiquity, in his passionate energy of expression he is at the moment the truest representative of modernity." Charles Baudelaire *Richard Wagner et Tannhäuser à Paris* (Pichois II, 806).

<sup>2</sup> Stéphane Guégan writes, 10 June 2010, in *La Tribune de l'Art* "Petites notes sur Manet (2): Manet au Japon" « L'estampe joue au départ un rôle crucial en ouvrant un espace de diffusion et un champ d'expérimentation, dont les retombées en peinture seront innombrables.» <http://www.latribunedelart.com/petites-notes-sur-manet-2-manet-au-japon-article002625.html>. Accessed 12 July 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Chang, B.G., 1999. Deleuze, Monet, and Being Repetitive. *Cultural critique*, 41, 184-217.

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impersonal world, the artist's etching was, on one level, a retrograde, romantic response to these challenges.

If that was the whole story about the revival of artists prints in the 1860s it would register as no more than a Luddite, reactionary, and ultimately irrelevant cul-de-sac in the history of art. Manet's contribution to the history of printmaking amounts to more than that, however. He forged links with revolutionary practices and procedures across the spectrum of the arts. His work was heralding changes in the relationship of the artist with his audience. In this medium it accommodated mechanical means of production, mass markets and cooperative endeavours. Overriding disciplinary exclusiveness, the artist brought to the practice his experience in widely dispersed artistic fields, attempting to draw them together in a synthetic unity. Emerging out of a romantic focus which assumed the universality of artistic inspiration, whatever the discipline, Manet embraced a reproductive approach to art-making in the 1860s. In etching he was usually duplicating and repeating events which had first occurred in another medium. This had the effect of collecting the aesthetic experience generated in the source together with his later manifestation of it. The work, while un-fixed from its primary context, had an afterlife in conjunction with the unique characteristics of its new medium. The medium of print-making was employed to accommodate this transcendence of the boundaries between media.

It was a rhizomatic process; an artwork was thought to gain in intensity and broaden its appeal, flourishing through its connections into a number of art-forms in different media. This approach to the making of printed images was not simply Manet's response to a changing *Zeitgeist*. My thesis has taken pains to indicate the artist's personal experience of parallel changes in the practice of other art forms. He gained inspiration through his links with some other principal agents of this process operating in Paris as well as by his exposure to its contemporary manifestations. His experimental approach to incorporating references to the other arts in his prints and painting was in conformity with the inter-penetration of music and literature brought about by figures like Baudelaire, Wagner and Liszt. All these figures were major players in an ongoing search for means to widen artistic expression. By opening media to influences from associated art-forms they were participating in the radical reformulation of artistic practices. The phenomenon justifies an on-going recognition of the centrality of Paris in the 1860s for developments in all the arts. In being

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sensitive to developments in music and literature and in responding to that by parallel innovations in visual media, Manet generated ambitious new ideas about the scope of any medium.

Manet's print-making in the early 1860s re-conceived ideas about reproduction and repetition as valid artistic processes. His work-practice generated significant and meaningful aesthetic productions out of a bold re-use of previously created artworks – works that had their origins not merely in the sister discipline of painting but also in more removed media. He was demonstrating an innovative approach to traditional reproductive roles in print-making. Drawing upon not just the techniques but also the subject-matter of non-visual media, he was experimenting with fusing disparate sources. Manet's prints in their improvisatory aspect, multiple states and abbreviated drawing testify to his allegiance to the event of creation rather than the fixity of the singular image. In this aspect of his practice Manet was showing the way. It resulted not just from his involvement with printmaking, after all it didn't inspire Bracquemond in the same way. Rather it should be seen as emerging from his appreciation of the value of improvisatory practices in Gypsy music. He endorsed Liszt's admiration for their approach to art-making in the slew of works talked about in the thesis.

Print-making made a second contribution to the onward development of the visual arts in the early 1860s. It too is a consequence of its protagonists' sensitivity to developments in other media. Etching (and lithography) were involved in forging closer relationships between populist image-making and *Salon* painting. Undoubtedly the emergence of etching from under the shadow of reproductive engraving contributed to the expansion of the range of subjects for art. But this development also had its roots in practices within other art forms known to Manet. In particular, changing standards for judging artistic practices in the discipline of music challenged reproductive traditions. Franz Liszt had trumpeted the achievements of Gypsy performers. Their ability to turn performances of unremarkable music into events which united musician and audience in a common ecstatic experience established new criteria for the valuation of an artwork. No longer deprecated for their unreadiness to extend the reach of classical composition, the Gypsy model described, and exemplified, by Liszt demonstrated the value of the one-off, unrepeatably performance. European music could be productively enhanced by

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valuing a player's manner, rather than in the content of the work he was playing. What counted for quality was the performer's individual expression.

The Gypsy musician was a powerful model. In the majority of the works in the Cadart portfolio Manet committed himself to a corresponding approach in print-making. He was recreating in a suitably individual and affective way standard modes of expression from the history of the visual arts. By giving them a focus that emanated from contemporary contexts, he, like the Gypsy musician, became a beacon for change, leading the way to new dimensions of visual experience.

In Paris in 1860 this novel approach to artistic traditions was being modelled by Richard Wagner. His highly controversial staging of *Tannhäuser* had divided the capital and some of Manet's closest acquaintances vigorously entered the debates that followed its performance. Wagner had constructed his opera around the song contests of medieval Germany. He merged this populist art form with contemporary staging effects, including poetry, dancing and spectacle in a single medium of dramatic expression. His idea was to incorporate traditional musical motifs in an operatic performance that would integrate all the arts. Following principles theorized in his 1849 essay on *The Artwork of the Future*, this procedure, dubbed the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, was designed to unify spectator with spectacle and audience members with each other. The idea had been widely discussed in the 1850s and was well understood in Paris. Its equivalence in literature was attempted by Charles Baudelaire who simulated, in his influential essay *Richard Wagner and Tannhäuser in Paris*, his experiences of the opera.

In the printed artwork Manet invited the individual to identify with the creator through an empathic response to the unvarnished recording of the act of creation. Just as in the theatre, in re-experiencing this momentary event, spectator and creator were brought together. Today's debates centre around whether such a totalizing experience reduces the audience's opportunity to respond critically. Juliet Koss describes how, after Nazism's appropriation of Wagner's operas to its own ends, the *Gesamtkunstwerk* came to be seen as creating "an artistic environment or performance in which spectators are expertly maneuvered into dumbfounded passivity by a sinister and powerful creative force."<sup>4</sup> But the essay by Wagner makes

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<sup>4</sup> The issues are addressed in Koss, J., 2010. *Modernism after Wagner*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. The quote is sourced from the Introduction, pxii.

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clear his wish to create, through the power of his musical dramas, a new German people, joined in shared affective experience and oriented toward a democratic future.

Manet's strategies for integrating music-like experiences with references gleaned from the history of art were not just a response to the ideas of Wagner. As I have argued in this thesis he was also alive to the possibility of generating in art an equivalent to Liszt's ideas about the formulation of a non-verbal form of the epic out of Gypsy music; a work of art which could stand as a summary of that culture's aesthetic achievements. Manet's unusual treatment of musical subject-matter in his paintings and prints in this period indicates that, for him, the goal was, like it was for Wagner, a collected work of art. He was not just concerned with including in his present versions references to art's past he also aimed to fuse different media into integrative works. They spanned art's histories and nationalities, referred to experiences of sound as well as of sight and achieved this in works that drew attention to the circumstances of their making.

This argument has necessitated broadening the usual focus on a single art-form characteristic of Art Historical writing. You could say I have modelled in my writing the way other art-forms being practised by Manet's colleagues and contemporaries impinged on his creative output. In the latter half of the twentieth century and in the beginning of the twenty-first, there has developed an increasingly wide range of artistic practices, ones which appeal to other than purely visual sensory perceptions. These have encouraged taking a fresh look at the work of these early modern artists. Manet's production, in particular, had been used by apologists for modernist painting to justify modernism's focus on the autonomy of each medium, exploring aspects specific to it. I have adopted an approach that recognises his artwork's accommodation of phenomena that have their origins in other art-forms. By taking this angle I make the point that his production informs a post-modern aesthetic.

The efflorescence of musical subjects in his works of the early 1860s is evidence of his participation in an international movement towards the integration of the arts. Without intending to diminish the importance of visual media Manet, and his contemporaries in literature and music, saw in the accommodation of experiences taken from other media a way of expanding art's range and accessibility. The

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emergence of the *Société des Aquafortistes* was undoubtedly a symptom of this interest in broadening art's accessibility, but so also were these references to other forms of art-making. Etchings were made with multiplication in mind; invested in its procedures was the goal of reaching out towards a wider audience. The audience it hoped to reach could include those whose initial allegiance was to other media. Hence the medium was used to create imagery to accompany musical scores or to illustrate literary texts; a close association that encouraged the experiments attempting to merge different media that went on in Manet's artistic practice at this time.

The contribution of Manet's prints to the history of art in the second half of the nineteenth century consists then in his commitment to a notion of the dissemination of art beyond the confines of the individual work of art. They incorporated a variety of medial sources in the same image, generating works that appeal to a broadly-based audience. By deepening the interaction between artist, object and viewer the work overcame the limitations of a specific medium, contributed to art's internationalism and laid the groundwork for efforts to assimilate art and music. Manet's notion of a work of art that incorporated references to different media responded to a widespread desire during the Romantic period – most especially manifested in literature – to synthesize artistic experience.<sup>5</sup> Rather than refining and purifying visual art forms he sought inspiration from works of art in other media, borrowing not just procedures but also effects.

There is a similarity between these practices in Manet's output and works that cross between media in ongoing postmodern developments in the arts. It suggests the continuing relevance of Manet's art production in a contemporary art scene. In the context of this re-assessment the importance of 1863 as the watershed in the evolution of a modern idiom comes into question. Manet's interest in the inter-relation of the arts is both the precursor of those practices in the contemporary art world and is itself connected with a more broadly based Romantic commitment to the transposition and amalgamation of art forms between and within media. It is

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<sup>5</sup> See especially Scott, D., 1988. *Pictorialist poetics: poetry and the visual arts in nineteenth-century France* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press and Majewski, H.F., 2002. *Transposing art into texts in French romantic literature* Chapel Hill: Department of Romance Languages, The University of North Carolina and Cenerelli, B.B., 2004. Théophile Gautier et les artistes de son époque - la transposition d'art en faveur de l'art contemporain? *Œuvres et critiques*, XXIX, 57-71.

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appropriate to re-examine Manet's place in a longer nineteenth century tradition. Modern art history should be reconsidering his connections with Théodore Chassériau, Ary Scheffer, Horace Vernet (1789-1863) and Paul Delaroche.<sup>6</sup> By drawing attention to Manet's affiliations with these now discarded heroes of the Romantic era in painting I have sought to unsettle the standard way of describing the artist and to recuperate some of the strangeness of the context for painting in Paris in the 1860s. This has involved sidestepping the insistent emphasis on the *Salon des Refusés* and its inhabitants.

I hope I have written often enough in the course of this thesis about the enormously important contribution Michael Fried has made to Manet scholarship. But for every attraction there is a counter-attraction and one that occurs to me when I read his work is how uniformly canonical, in a late twentieth-century sense of the word, are the models Manet is said by that author to have accessed in his use of honoured forebears. It is as if, between 1860 and 1990 there has been no movement at all in the roll-call of the canonical. But this is patently untrue. And it contributes to weakening the power of Fried's arguments. He leaves no space for the generation of artists that preceded Manet, for instance. Admittedly artists are least prepared to acknowledge the influence of their immediate forebears. But this does not justify their absence from Fried's text. Moreover it diminishes Manet's eclectic approach to his sources. He drew his models from a wide cross-section of works both past and present.

Fried did acknowledge the artist's productive references to works from the early Renaissance and Mellor has considerably extended the scope of those references. But Manet's citation of works from the Italian baroque was seldom accommodated by Fried's typology, despite his insistence on the Manet-Rubens connection. That period in art, however widely admired it was in Manet's day, is missing from Fried's analysis. It cannot be overlooked if Manet's use of print sources is to be treated thoroughly; he was influenced by the print-making styles of Canaletto, Tiepolo and other eighteenth century Venetian printmakers as much as he was by

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<sup>6</sup> On the cross-over from Vernet to Manet see the article by Stéphane Guégan, 27 February 2010 in *La Tribune de l'Art* "Petites notes sur Manet (1) : Manet versus Vernet" in [www.latribunedelart.com/petites-notes-sur-manet-1-manet-versus-vernet-article00459.html](http://www.latribunedelart.com/petites-notes-sur-manet-1-manet-versus-vernet-article00459.html). Accessed 23 July 2010.

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Goya, for example. Our appreciation of the context for art in Manet's day changes when it is recognized that he cited Giordano and Todeschini, and likely was aware of painters like Domenichino and Sassaferrato. A case arguing for Manet's use of a range of artists from that period, not all of them "Spanish", is overdue. It would be enhanced by considering significant influences on his work by artists from his immediate past. A Manet different from the figure who derives his models only from the contemporary modernist canon would be a more mysterious but also a more interesting member of his own generation.

These heady matters pertain to Manet's place in the continuum of Art History and more especially to his unusual exploitation of the discipline in these early works from the beginning of his career. No subsequent writer can begin to discuss that subject without acknowledging Fried's work. But I have argued, in the course of this thesis, that Fried leaves to one side an important aspect of that practice. Manet was not an artist rigidly focused on the glorious history of the discipline, alone. He was also interested in extending its boundaries. And in that respect his works have another aspect to them, one that feeds into his approach to the integration of the arts. There were revolutionary implications in the mechanisms he used to signify a cross-over between experiences of the visible and those, deriving from other senses such as hearing music, usually thought incapable of direct representation. Here his practice is both innovative and trail-blazing. Manet separated his figures' eye contact with the audience from the independent actions of their hands. In a second related technique he employed abstracted gazes to signify listening. Both these developments had the effect of enhancing tactile values in the visual arts.

The action of the hands, in these early works, was independent from and equally as important as the invitation made by the action of the eyes. By and large the gaze alluded to its bearer's separation and otherness in relation to its viewer, while the sense of touch was a device establishing intimacy and connectedness. If the work's audience was to remain connected with the action being described, viewing, in these early works, needed the supplement of touch. From the violence prompted by the weapons held by the protagonists in *Mlle V ... in the costume of an Espada* to the old Gypsy's connection with his instrument in *The Old Musician* touch and looking described quite different dimensions of experience.



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It was in developing the implications of the gaze that Manet created important mechanisms for transmitting significance. In these early works its refusal to meet the eye of the viewer was an indication that the figure was listening rather than looking. In later developments the abstracted gaze came to have an even larger role. Manet was seen to use the technique as a mechanism for introducing ideas about anomie and alienation into painting (and prints). But when in the works created around 1862 the gaze and the action of the hand were linked it was at crucial points where biographical details seem to intrude. I can cite the way Manet inscribed a sketchy profile on the upper body of the figure in *The Toilette* or the unusual juxtaposition of the baby's gaze with the mother's protective grasp in *The Old Musician* as two vivid realizations of this idea. Biography then, becomes another important component of these early works. It not only contributes to their content it also turns these works towards the hidden, towards the heard but unseen world of music often, but also towards picturing a potential future event.

The biographical approach has been one I have come to adopt, reluctantly and with considerable misgivings, in order to explain why Manet chose to focus on music and the invisible in these early works. I am influenced, as indeed are most recent writers on Manet, by Nancy Locke's book *Manet and the family romance* published in 2001. In spite of the inevitably speculative nature of her account, the general idea that Manet's relationship with his wife lies at the bottom of many of his artworks in the early 1860s has been widely accepted in subsequent literature. I have tried to avoid the psychologising characteristic of that book because I am unable to endorse her suggestion that Manet's marriage to Suzanne Leenhoff was motivated by family issues rather than personal attraction. It overlooks the evidence of their intimacy provided by the early nude drawings and the print. Despite that, Locke's thesis that Manet's works have a significant biographical element explains why music loomed so large in these early works. The interests of the woman with whom he was pursuing a covert relationship and to whom he would be married in 1863 is the most likely explanation for the centrality of music to his artistic output. Suzanne Leenhoff has either been ignored or treated shabbily in Manet scholarship, in conformity with a tradition that, as both Germaine Greer in her biography of Shakespeare's wife and Susan Sidlauskas on Cézanne's point out, fails to take into account the important

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role intimate relationships play in an artist's productive life.<sup>7</sup> In matters of artistry, as in most others, it is not the individual genius of the creator which alone makes possible the works to which his name is attached. Manet's endeavours were supported by intimate relationships that sustained and encouraged him. It has been one of the purposes of this thesis to demonstrate the significance of that proposition for his artistic output at this early part of his career.

The problem with the introduction of biographical considerations in writing about art is that it is next to impossible to keep it in proportion. It cuts across other approaches whose significance in a discourse about an individual artist becomes that much the more difficult to assess. In this thesis I have taken the line that, while biographical data helps to explain why the artworks Manet created at this juncture in his career were so heavily influenced by music, there were other considerations that came into play as well.

I have sought a continuous thread within this sequence of works. That is why I have drawn attention to Manet's attempts to represent, the idea of music or the idea of "making absent things present" or the idea of change through repetition. But in all of these constructions what we are seeing is Manet's interest in becoming, like Wagner, one of Baudelaire's truest representatives of modernity. In the process taking place in 1862 he is, like Wagner, demonstrating an "ideal ambition." It is one in which art history provides material equivalent to the musician's "antiquity"; one which responds equally to the exigencies of the moment, both cultural and personal.

THE END

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<sup>7</sup> Greer, G., 2007 *Shakespeare's Wife* London: Bloomsbury.; Sidlauskas, S., 2009. *Cézanne's other: The portraits of Hortense* Berkeley, University of California Press.

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