REPRESENTATIONS OF MUSIC IN NINETEENTH – CENTURY FRENCH ART

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER IN LETTERS

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Abbreviations

bk (a book within a printed work)
ca (circa)
cf (compare)
chap. (chapter)
coll. (collection)
comm. (commissaire, curator)
et al. (and others)
ff (and following)
ill. (illustration)
loc. cit. (the place cited)
n (note/footnote)
op. cit. (work cited)
p. (page sequence)
pp. (multiple pages)
t.(tome)

INTRODUCTION

In France, the period beginning with the reign of Napoléon III, followed by the Third Republic is a period of great creativity in Literature and Art. In painting, the aesthetic movements of Romanticism, Impressionism, Symbolism, and Naturalism give birth to major artists such as Monet, Manet and Delacroix whose works are recognized as the origins and foundations of Modern art as we know it today. The period is also one during which, thanks to the towering figures of composers including Frank Liszt, Hector Berlioz and Richard Wagner, a new musical culture spreads throughout French society, and where amateur playing, particularly of the piano, becomes a regular leisure activity in bourgeois households.

The influence of major aesthetic movements on the art of the period has long been the subject of historical studies. The pictorial works of the major artists of the time, as well as those of many lesser-known ones have been examined in numerous art-historical monographs and made accessible to the public through many national and international exhibitions.

Surprisingly, relatively little attention has been paid to how music was represented in the art of this period. An exhibition entitled *Visual Music* was held at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, in 2005, and can be seen as a model. It covered the later part of the period starting in 1900. The exhibition *La Musique et la Peinture 1600-1900, trois siècles d'iconographie musicale, oeuvres des collections publiques françaises*, (Nice], A.C.M.E.,1991) showed works from a period of hundred years, but only those kept in French national collections. However, a recent exhibition entitled *Tintamarre!: Instruments de musique dans l'art, 1860-1910* and held at the Musée des Impressionnismes in Giverny in 2017, though limited in its selection of works, is a sign of the new attention being paid by art historians to the representation of music during the period.

Pioneering explorations in the field were often the work of musicologists. Edward Lockspeiser's study, *Music and Painting* published in 1973, is a "study in comparative ideas from Turner to Schoenberg". Closer to our interest from the point of view of its approach, though still more general, is a study by Anthony Blunt and Edward Lockspeiser *French Art and Music since 1500* that appeared the in 1974.[1] Their generalist approach

[1] Anthony Blunt and Edward Lockspeiser, *French art and music since 1500*, London: Methuen, 1974.

within a historical context has however been remade by a new mode of art-historical scholarship. In analysing pictorial representations of music, this new mode focuses not just on the literal meaning of a representation or on its technicity, but on the effect that the unique "pictorial qualities" that distinguish an individual work or group of works by an artist created in the viewer. Comparing the perceived meaning of a work with its critical reception and, in turn, with the artist's appropriation or rejection of contemporary critics, will then offer a way to reinscribe the work into its historical-cultural context. This new mode of art-historical criticism, illustrated in important studies by art historians including Anne Leonard, James Rubin and Therese Dolan, has given us a model for how to approach our own study.[2]

Bearing in mind these points, our approach has been both quantitative and qualitative, i.e., formalist and historical in a sense which we shall more precisely define later. A first task has been to identify as many paintings of the period with musical subjects as possible. To obtain as broad a view as possible of the representation of music in the art of the period, we have examined a number of *Catalogues* for official Salons and *Albums* of state purchases. Obviously, a full examination covering the entire period would have led us far beyond the scope of this dissertation.[3] Our choice of *Catalogues* has been guided by what are generally considered by art historians to be important dates in the history of Salon showings. When works exhibited were purchased by the State, *Albums* of reproductions of the works were edited and published by the *Ministère des Beaux-Arts*. These *Albums* are kept in *Archives Nationale* and are available online in the *Base Arcade* and have been another key source.[4]

Our search of these databases has produced interesting results. In the official production of the period, relatively few paintings have musical subjects in the broadest sense of the term. Those that do fall into three categories: some are formal

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[2] In particular, James H. Rubin, *Manet's Silence and the Poetics of Bouquets*, Cambridge 1994, Martha Ward, & Anne Leonard, *Looking and Listening in Nineteenth-Century France*, Chicago University Press, 2007, Anne Leonard, "Picture Listening in the late Nineteenth Century", *Art Bulletin*, vol. 89, 2007; Therese Dolan, *Manet, Wagner and the Musical Culture of their Time*, Ashgate, 2013.
These and other studies by these authors are fully listed in our footnotes and in our bibliography.

[3] A full list of Salon catalogues is given in Pierre Sanchez & Dominique Lobstein, *Les catalogues des Salons*, X, 1872-1874, to XVI, 1890-1892.

[4] Accessible at www2.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/arcade/pres.htm.

portraits of musicians or of opera and operetta singers, both men and women.[5] A few genre scenes show a player at his instrument, usually a piano, in a domestic setting. On the other hand, our search has shown the important role of allegories as a pictorial style used to express the idea of music.

This broad distribution of the categories by genre reflects the status of music in the society of the period and those trends and fashions in musical culture that artists shared with their public. Chapter 1 will therefore examine the context that to some degree explains the choices of musical subjects made by these artists and their official recognition in the Salons. In this regard state policies in the Arts explain the growing number of allegories of music shown in the decades 1870-80. As often the only works directly commissioned by the State or public authorities, allegories of Music deserve separate treatment, which will be reserved for Chapter 4.

The search of Salon sources has shown the conventional nature of the musical subjects treated. On the other hand, works of "peinture moderne" that were rejected from the official *Salons*, were exhibited in independently organized salons. A number of these works eventually reached French national collections. Writing on the painter and wealthy collector Etienne Moreau-Denaton's donation of 1907, the art critic Maurice Tourneux wrote that "having eventually forced the gates of the Luxembourg", Manet, Sisley and Monet "have now reached the reserves of the Louvre", adding with the "revanchard" spirit of the times, that France was now able to face "the wise conquests of America and Germany".[6] The *Base Joconde*, created under the auspices of the French *Ministère de la Culture* has enabled us to identify those works that were later acquired by the State.[7].

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[5] The latter two achieved the status of stars, as shown by the number of lithographs published by print editors for sale to their admirers.

[6]"Manet, Sisley, Pissarro, M. Claude Monet, après avoir forcé les portes du Luxembourg par suite de l'acceptation du legs Caillebotte, viennent aujourd'hui grossir la réserve destinée au Louvre. La France sera désormais en mesure d'opposer aux conquêtes avisées de l'Allemagne et de l'Amérique [ces] œuvres d'élite", Maurice Tourneux, "La donation Moreau-Nélaton au Musée du Louvre, *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Ier janvier, 595e livraison 1907, pp. 25, 37-38, 42 (online gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/).

[7] Accessible online at http://www2.culture.gouv.fr/documentation/joconde/fr.

Many such works were also offered for sale by Gallery owners, among whom was Paul Durand-Ruel, who dominated the alternative art market.[8] Public auctions also gave amateurs the opportunity to acquire works. The further history of such acquisitions can be quite complex. For example, the 1863 *Salon des Refusés* is famous for the works it included, such as Édouard Manet's *Le Bain* (later *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*), James Whistler's *Dame Blanche* and three landscapes painted by Camille Pissarro. Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* was unsold in 1863 but was shown again in Roland-Druel's *Exposition de peinture*, the second show of Impressionist artists in 1876. Acquired by the famous baritone and collector Jean-Baptiste Faure, the painting later came into the possession of Moreau-Nélaton in 1884. It was shown in *Exposition Universelle Centenniale de l'art français*, Paris, 1900,[9] Eventually it was donated to the Louvre. James McNeill Whistler's *Dame Blanche* (a portrait of his wife later known as *Symphony in White No 1*), was first painted for the 1862 London Royal Academy Exhibition. Shown at the commercial London gallery *Morgan's,* then in the *Salon des refusés*, it was acquired by the American collector Harris Whittemore, shown in the *Whistler Memorial Exhibition* in Boston in 1904 and it is now in the *National Gallery of Art*, Washington. Pissarro's three landscapes, painted at La Varenne-Saint-Hilaire, were all exhibited with the same general title of *Paysage*. The artist handed over for sale the landscapes, together with other of his works, to Durand-Ruel after they met in London.[10] Such sales make it difficult to identify those that have remained in private hands and those found in Museum collections today.

Considering the important role of private collectors, we have also explored some catalogues of sales and auctions conducted by Durand-Ruel and occasionally the recent

[8] An important source on the art market of the period are his Memoirs. Published in their version extant in 1912, they have been fully edited and revised with indexes in Paul Durand-Ruel, *Memoirs of the First Impressionist Art Dealer (1831-1922). Revised, corrected and annotated by Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel and Flavie Durand-Ruel*. Paris, Flammarion S.A.,2014. See also Claire Durand-Ruel, Durand-Ruel Snollaerts, Paul Durand-Ruel: le marchand des impressionnistes, [Paris]:Gallimard, 2014.

[9] See, André Mellerio, *L'Exposition de 1900 et l'impressionisme,* Paris: H. Floury, 1900.

[10] Cf. Wildenstein Institute, *Pissarro: catalogue critique des peintures [par] Joachim Pissaro et Claire Durand-Ruel Snollaerts; avec la collab. d' Alexia de Buffévent et Annie Champié; trad. de Mark Hutchinson et Michael Taylor,* Paris: Wildenstein Institute publications, 2005.

catalogues of active auction houses, such as Sotheby's and Hôtel Drouot.[11] American art buyers were among the earliest and keenest collectors of "peintres modernes" and acquired numerous works by Impressionists and Neo-impressionist artists. These collectors made major donations to public art institutions, and this has led us also to explore the catalogues of American museums and galleries systematically.

These more extended searches have enabled us to identify and select a number of works directly relevant to our original question, or to use the conventional French term, our *problématique*, i.e., argument. These are works that represent musicians either before, during or after the moment of a performance. This selection it is not and could not be purely "objective" in the sense of being detached from any other consideration than their subject. As theoreticians of reception aesthetics, among them William Kemp, have argued, our perception of a work of art is orientated by what he calls "offers of reception" to the work, both internal and external.[12] Our selection has inevitably been determined by two external factors. One is their validation by the critical tradition: many of the paintings that emerged from our search were already identified, i.e. selected, not to say elected, as important or great works of art by art criticism.

Another factor that inevitably "slants" our selection is our own viewpoint. The established paradigms of formal art criticism, colour included, are what the art methodologist Donald A. Gordon has called the determinants of aesthetic judgment.[13] Donald Gordon has shown that the judgment reached in the critical analysis of a painting, allegedly based purely on these formal paradigms, always involves an element of subjectivity on the part of the evaluator.[14] Formalism in art criticism may succeed to a certain degree, to bracket the

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[11] A privately-owned Pissarro landscape, with the title *Landcape at La Varenne-Saint-Hilaire* and described as oil on panel; 19 X 25 cm, for example, was sold through Koller Auktionen, Zürich, Switzerland on June 26, 2015.

[12] William P., "The Work of Art and Its Beholder. The Methodology of the Aesthetic of Reception" in, Mak A. Cheetham, ed., *The Subjects of Art History: Historical Objects in Contemporary perspectives*, 9, Cambridge 1998, pp. 180-196.

[13] Donald A. Gordon, "Methodology in the Study of Art Evaluation", *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 10, nº 4, Special Issue on Psychology and the Arts (Jun. 1952), pp. 338-352 (www.jstor.org/stable/426064).

[14] Analysing the judgments of art experts on ten untitled student paintings, Donald Gordon found that the judgments were based, as expected, on technical aspects of the paintings, but were in the final analysis associated with subjective ones, such as "bad, good, pleasing, not pleasing".

subject of a painting, its historical or social context, but a formalistic approach cannot help but be coloured by the aesthetic experiences of the critic. An art critic who is also a practicing musician, will of course bring to their understanding of a work a technical knowledge born out of practice. This will make that critic more likely to notice technical details, such as the position of the hands in the figure of a pianist. But more crucially our "musical" art critic inevitably brings to their assessment of the painting, a personal perspective on the nature and experience of music.

With these reservations in mind, we have approached the paintings that we analyse in our final chapter, as visual music. The paintings we have selected represent a *musical moment*. and to them we address our original question: in what sense can they be said to evoke or express *the experience of music*. It is when a painter goes beyond a realistic representation of playing an instrument or of the social context of the performance, as in genre scenes, that the portrait or figure of a musician may convey, by a kind of "revelation", an emotional dynamic similar to that which forms between a performer and a listener. We shall ask of the paintings that we have selected, whether they succeed in evoking in pictorial language the emotions aroused by music, and if so by what means? Does the image of a given representation of a musical event, by its own agency, achieve that effect?

The modern art of the period invites these interrogations of particular way of seeing. Baudelaire, in *The painter of Modern Life* (1863), defined modernity as the art of the "ephemeral, the fugitive, the contingent". The paintings that we analyse, whether or not they include the figure of an audience, capture a transitory moment of music, contingent on listening. We shall ask if they invite the beholder to be a listener and if so, how.

Our methodology is formal in the sense that we have used the standard tools of art criticism, with its traditional categories of technique, notably line, composition, configuration.[15] Since Greek sculpture and throughout its long history, art has expressed emotions by gestures and facial expressions. These were understood as external signs of emotions as effects of the body. In the Renaissance and during the classical period, these

[15] Our guiding works have been Laurie Scheiner Adams's *The Methodologies of Art, An Introduction*, New-York, Routlege, 2010, 2nd ed.

signs became codified.[16] In the paintings under consideration, we consider how line conjures up musical gestures and participates in the figuration of the facial expression of emotion. But in the French art of the nineteenth century, with and after Delacroix, colour triumphed over line and form. The importance of this in "modern" art is fully discussed in Chapter 3, which pays particular attention to the use of colour and texture as evocations of the emotion of music. In this respect musicological notions of harmony, dissonance, melody and counterpoint, have provided useful tools of analysis.

The subject matter of our paintings nevertheless requires that we also pay attention to their iconography, in the Panovskian sense of the term. The growing contemporary fashion for the piano and to a lesser of the degree for the guitar as amateur instruments, which we analyse in Chapter 2, led to the emergence of an iconography of piano playing and, to a lesser degree, of guitar playing in paintings of the period. As we shall see "at the piano" became an iconographical *topos*. It can be a self-referencing icon as in Renoir's compositions but in other works, an image of someone "at an instrument" can also be a reference, if not a direct quotation, to the past iconography of instrument playing, recognisable to contemporary viewers of the painting.

Any artistic representation is nevertheless grounded in the dominant forms characteristic of the historical period in which they were conceived and created. Traditionally the periodization of art has been expressed mostly in terms of "styles" (formalized modes of representation) "conventions" (established rules of practice) and of "schools" (historical group of paintings or painters sharing the same style). For our period, schools such as Impressionism or Symbolism are convenient labels that have been used to situate a painting within a period and a style. This has guided how the paintings under consideration are arranged in our final chapter. The historicity of the works we analyse, however, goes far beyond their participation in these movements. Works of art are culturally bound; as John Berger has shown in the case of the Nude, it is not just by their own referencing of a school that the paintings of our period are historically bound. Berger points out that it addresses the 'visualities', the ways of seeing of contemporary audiences. To coin a phrase, the musical scenes in our paintings also, address the 'musicalities' of their viewers.

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[16] Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, in particular first published in 1593 and many times during the following two centuries, though intended primarily as a repertoire of allegorical figures standing for moral and psychological virtues or attitudes was mined for iconic representations of all forms of emotions.

Works of art are read and interpreted in different ways. The world of historical art criticism has become pluralistic in the methodologies it uses, as Mary Mothersill showed, as early as 1973, when she reviewed a number of Arnold Isenberg's essays on theory in criticism.[17] We have taken stock of the diversity of new methods, which have become established, and consequently our own methodology is a mixed one. Nevertheless, our fundamental methodology is based on the work of the linguist Roman Jakobson who, following his ground-breaking work *Fundamentals of language* (1956), used the analytical concepts he developed to analyze the poetics of Text. Jakobson identified three main functions in language: connotative, referential and phatic.[18] Bearing these functions in mind, we have applied the analytical tools that Jakobson applied to poetic texts to the pictorial text in order to bring out those aspects of a painting that make it a *pictorial utterance.* Particularly useful in this regard is Jakobson's distinction between metaphor and metonymy which alerts us on the one hand to the metaphoric connotations of the *narrative of a painting* – what is taking place in the subject represented – and on the other hand, to the metonymic function of the *pictorial language* of a painting which, in the closeness of the single space of the canvas, expresses, through harmony and dissonance, the emotion if not the essence of music. To call upon Roman Jakobson again, in its singular *markedness*, the pictorial language used by an artist constitutes the artist's unique "voice".

"Voice", or to use the term "style" in the sense that Paul Crowther gives to it in his *Phenomenology of Modern Art,* is the aesthetic disclosure by which the individual artist represents the world.[19] Though the notion of voice comprehends the traditional idea of style i.e., the way the artist handles paint, chooses colour and types of subjects, it is not restricted to it. To refer to another philosopher and critic, Jean-Luc Marion, it is the

[17] Mary Mothersill, "Introduction" to *Selected Essays of Arnold Isenberg*, ed. William Callagan et al., The University of Chicago Press, 1973, p. xxv-xxxx in particular.

[18] We refer specifically to two major texts by Roman Jakobson, "Linguistics and Poetics" in *Style in Language*, ed.Thomas A. Sebeok, Cambridge, Mass., MIT Press, p. 350–377 and "Metaphor and Metonymy" in Roman Jakobson, *Selected Writings*, Vol. II, The Hague, Mouton, 1971, p. 239-59.

[19] Paul Crowther *The Phenomenology of Modern Art: Exploding Deleuze, illuminating style,* London, Continuum International Publishing, 2012. Introduction: the interpretation of Modern Art pp. 2-4, p. 7.

revelation, the "gift", behind the appearance.[20] In our discussion, voice is the way the painter in a painting reveals visually the invisibility of music as an experience.

Chapter 1, entitled *The Changing Status and Perception of Music in France in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century*, situates the representations of Music in their general cultural and social context. Chapter 2, "*Correspondances": Music and the New Aesthetics*, discusses the aesthetic speculations of the period regarding the links between the various arts and their influence on representations of music in painting. Chapter 3, *Pictorial Allegories of Music*, traces the emergence and importance of the figure of Orpheus as a symbol of Music. Chapter 4, *Colour Theory, Art and the Representation of Music*, focuses on the importance of colour as a means of expressing musical emotion. Chapter 5, *Visual Music in Official and the "Non-Official" Salons of the Second part of the Nineteenth Century*, reviews the production of the period in order to assess the relative place occupied by musical representations within it.

[20] Jean-Luc Marion, *La Croisée du visible*, Paris, PUF, 1996, Eng. tr., *The Visible and the Revealed*, New York, Fordham University Press, 2008 (online Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, Michigan Publishing, 2018).

Chapter 1

The Changing Status and Perception of Music and Art in France During the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The representation of moments of musical experience, of playing and listening to music, in the French art of the nineteenth century testify to the changing status and perception of music in French society during this period. The changes that took place, particularly in the second half of the century, reflect the rise of a new urban and bourgeois culture, which came to dominate taste during the period. After outlining the social context in which this occurred, this chapter examines the role of the State in the promotion of the Arts, including music, and details the profound changes which affected the reception and perception of music at the time, both in society and in the visual arts.

The rise of a new bourgeois culture

The place of music as a leisure activity underwent a great transformation in nineteenth-century France. Those changes resulted from a number of social and economic factors that affected the status of all the Arts in French society. Most important was the rise of an urban bourgeoisie, which brought about a new perception of culture and the place of the Arts, including music, in social and personal life. This chapter will consider how the rise of the bourgeoisie to economic, social and political power affected the status of music during the period of the Second Empire and the beginnings of the Third Republic

The new bourgeoisie emerged in France with the transformation of the economy. While in England the industrial revolution arrived earlier, France underwent an industrial revolution which was late but more condensed, resulting in a rapid process of urbanization. The population of Paris in 1801 was 600,000. In the six years from 1851 to 1872, this population increased by 20% and by 1881, it had risen to over two million. A similar increase affected most major urban centres. It was even more dramatic in provincial cities, such as for instance, Marseille where, between 1846 and 1872, the population increased by 60%.[21]

The impetus for the changes in the perception and status of the Arts came from the new

[21] Roger Price, *A Social History of Nineteenth Century France* (Hutchinson 1987).

urban bourgeoisie. This new bourgeoisie was diverse: its first strata were made up of an elite of property owners, factory owners, and professionals, lawyers, doctors, and academics.

These new middle classes were resident mainly in towns. Through their daily contact with a wide public, the upper strata of the bourgeoisie transmitted a new perception of culture as a form of leisure and influenced the lower social groups of urban society. Individuals with social aspirations – tradesmen, artisans, even skilled workers, among them printers – from these groups, copied bourgeois tastes. The new bourgeois elites became as influential as the nobility had previously been in determining tastes. Affluence gave them access to activities and to cultural goods previously generally reserved for the nobility. Within the bourgeois family unit, leisure became an important activity: women would play the piano, draw or paint or embroider, men would frequent brasseries and cafés, where they played billiards, read newspapers and commented upon artistic events. Social standing was demonstrated by participating in a cycle of balls where dress, manner and opinion reinforced social roles.

A new bourgeois ideology also played a role in changing the status and perception of the role of the Arts, including music, in society. The Arts, in general, and music, in particular, could be imitated by the working classes and were seen by the new elite as encouraging personal growth in all individuals and, as a consequence, as the means of social integration. Already in 1848 Charles Renouvier in his *Manuel républicain de l'homme et du citoyen* considered theatres and museums as reflections of fraternity and education.[22] Later, Victor Hugo linked the progress and changes in mankind to the role of the Arts in society. By the end of the Second Empire the idea had become commonplace among artists and writers.

In reality, urban artisans had long enjoyed their own forms of culture and entertainment. With industrialization and the changes that took place in the workplace and in its activities, however, the traditional forms of artisan culture, including popular music, were disappearing among urban workers. To prevent a growing alienation among the working classes, the promotion of cultural pursuits and education in the Arts began to be seen as instruments of social policy, as offering means of social integration. Music in particular was seen not only as a way of bonding and relaxation, but also morally as a method of

[22] *cf.* Jann Pasler, *Composing the Citizen: Music as Public Utility in Third Republic France* (University of California Press 2009).

democratizing modern life. It provided the public with a "moral" form of entertainment that took them away from "less moral" forms of leisure. This interaction between classes could also erode boundaries and foster a sense of belonging. The urban worker could not only be educated to appreciate the musical culture of the bourgeoisie, but could, it was thought, actively take part in it himself. The assumed universality of music offered a model of social integration: at best it could be an instrument of social mobility, as a worker could gain respectability from the knowledge or practice of music. As the conception of music became more aesthetic, its popularization and promotion were seen as answering a social and political need.

Art and the secularization of culture

The popularization of culture was also linked to its overall secularization. Bourgeois intellectualism was anti-clerical. Within the growing working classes, whose daily routine had changed, there was resentment towards the clergy who retained the traditional Christian approach to charity and saw poverty as the wages of sin. For centuries, the Church had played a major role as patron of all forms of artistic production, from music to paintings. But the Church was identified with cultural and political conservatism and was associated with the Ancien Régime. The Second Empire, by making its own stamp on public artistic life, further diminished the traditional leadership of the Church in cultural matters and intervened in artistic creation and the promotion of the Arts through forms of patronage associated with a wish to control opinion and at times with censorship. With the consolidation of the institutions of the Third Republic in the late seventies, the secularization of culture further accelerated.

As regards art, in the preceding centuries numerous churches had been adorned with religious oil paintings donated by pious patrons. With growing secularisation, individual commissions of religious scenes by devout patrons for the churches where they worshipped became far less frequent. Under the Concordat of Napoleon I, the Catholic Church retained control of the decoration of its buildings, subject to the condition that the State provided the costs. As a result, much religious art of the period became large decorative schemes, jointly commissioned by church and municipality. In Paris, between 1856 and 1860, the painter Hippolyte Flandrin executed a cycle of academic murals in an oil-wax medium ("encaustique") to decorate the nave of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, of which a number of preparatory sketches are known (cf. *La Résurrection du Christ*, oil on cardboard, h. 18.5, x l. 32 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris). Some schemes, on the other

hand, were received less favourably by conservative Catholic opinion. Among these were Delacroix's murals for the Église Saint-Sulpice in Paris, *Jacob Wrestling with the Angel* and *Heliodorus Driven from the Temple* (oval, oil-wax medium ("encaustique"), major axis 4.9 m x minor axis 3.7 m, each), completed in 1861,[23] and Puvis de Chavannes' murals for the church of Saint Genevieve, begun in 1876 and now in the Pantheon,[24] *L'Éducation de Sainte Geneviève* and *La Vie Pastoral de Sainte Geneviève* (See the *Triptych*, oil on panel, left (panel A), h.134.6 x w. 81.9 cm); centre (panel B, h. 134.6 x w. 89.2 cm); right (panel C): 52-3/4 x 32-1/4 (134 x 81.9 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam).

The popularization of musical culture: the role of associations

Private music associations began to develop long before the Second Empire. Their aim was to encourage appreciation and amateur practice, much like the associations concerned with art, the *cercles artistiques*, that had also emerged. In Paris one of the first musical associations, the *Association des artistes musiciens* was founded as early as 1844, while in the provinces, the conductor Charles Vervoitte founded a *Société Académique* in Rouen.[25]

Further developments of these musical societies took place during the Third Republic. They did not just encourage choir practice by *orphéons*, but also popular listening. A typical association of the period was set up in the Café Rouge in 1889. The series, called *Concerts Rouges*, featured Conservatoire students and took place nightly in this brasserie in the Rue de Tournon. The *Concerts Touche* had a similar approach. Performing in a brasserie on Boulevard de Strasbourg, musicians played chamber and orchestral works. Occasionally they would sell miniature scores of the pieces they had played, giving their performances an additional educational slant. They attracted audiences by asking composers to conduct their own music (for example, Camille Erlanger) and the public

[23] Cf. Joyce C. Polistena, 'Eugène Delacroix, Murals in the Chapel of The Holy Angels, Saint-Sulpice', (online) Smarthistory. org.

[24] Cf. Jack Spector, *The murals of Eugene Delacroix at Saint-Sulpice*, New-York,Rutgers University, 1967.

[25] See Ellis, Katharine, *Interpreting the Musical Past. Early Musicin Nineteenth-Century France*, Oxford University Press, 2005, ch. "Patterns of revival", pp. 63-65.

could receive weekly programs by post at a price of one franc per week.[26] The music performed by these *brasserie* orchestras was an increasingly middlebrow mixture of music adapted from anything form chamber to operatic music.

A broader public interest was encouraged and supported by popular magazines. *La Famille*, a family magazine, advertised reproductions of music scores on 12 October 1879. Another similar magazine, *La Vie de la Famille* published a regular section entitled "connaissances utiles" and later, a monthly collection of scores was published in its "Album Musical".

Music and art: from the popular to the professional

Popular musicianship and popular participation in performance was encouraged through prizes and competitions, which expanded in the 1880s. In many areas, children and wind bands were encouraged to compete. Between 1877 and 1889, a weekly periodical *Le Mélomane* (directed by Henri Garrigue) started an international composition competition and in 1892 the *Figaro Musical*, published yearly as a supplement to the daily newspaper, awarded a prize of 500 francs for the best "Allegro militaire" for wind bands. The press wrote about competitions for entrants and graduates of the Paris Conservatoire, printing entrance exam pieces for instrumentalists and singers. Numerous other prizes existed. A prize for the best quartet was awarded by the *Societé des Compositeurs* in 1873 and prizes for the best symphony in 1875, 1878 and 1880. *The Cressent Foundation* sponsored and awarded 2500 francs to the best opera or opera-comique every third year from 1873.[27]

Municipalities encouraged this trend. 10,000 Francs was put towards the encouragement of music by the Conseil Municipal de Paris. It included two small prizes for teachers in local schools who presented the best music students. Three other prizes were awarded to private schools of music and one prize to women who wanted to become music teachers. Amateur choirs were also supported, such as the choral society founded by Louis-Albert Bourgault-Ducoudray, a composer who became the first Professor of Music History in the Paris Conservatoire.

Most significant was the development of amateur male choirs, who sang together for their own enjoyment and for public appreciation. In the preceding period, *orphéons* were

[26]See Jann Pasler, *Writing Through Music: Essays on Music, Culture and Politics*, Oxford University Press 2008.

[27] See Jann Pasler 2009 op. cit.

composed of wealthy amateurs who performed mostly sacred or early music (Palestrina, Handel, Rameau). [28] However, as musical literacy and score reading spread among artisans and shopkeepers, partly thanks to the basic musical education provided in schools and by municipal and working men's' bands, brass bands, *orphéons* spread all over France with an increasingly broad membership and performing a wider range of more contemporary music, including pieces written especially for them by French composers. [29] In 1874, the *Institut orphéonique français* was founded in Paris. Its aim was to introduce amateur musical societies, from choirs to brass bands, to a greater knowledge and understanding of 'the masterpieces of the great Master composers'. By 1884, a journalist from the popular daily *Le Petit Parisien*, could write that there were *'orphéons* and *sociétés orphéoniques'* everywhere in France.[30]

The spread of *orphéons* and the active promotion of music by municipalities led to a growing respect for amateur musical skills among the lower classes. At the same time, they also led to increased social recognition for professional musicians who began to approach performing from a commercial point of view. Notices were printed in the press about concerts taking place, but the performers themselves began to send their own notices to the press.[31] As public concerts did not provide a sufficient regular income, musicians turned to private teaching and performances. Composers also sought professional recognition: The *Société nationale de musique* was founded in 1871. Among its founding members were Camille Saint-Saens, César Frank and Jules Massenet. The stated aim of the Society was to promote the works of living French composers. Though there was a clear anti-German, particularly anti-Wagnerian, bias in its aims, the Society also became a watchdog ensuring that composers' performing rights were respected and that they received adequate payment for performances of their work.

These developments in the area of musicianship were only one aspect of a more general professionalization of artistic practice. Theories of "pure art" or of "art pour art" may

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[28] Katharine Ellis, op. cit., pp 64-67.

[29] Music-hall and comic songs, such as "Il était un orphéoniste…" or "C'est nécessaire…" (by Rutteau, the "Comique des Orphéonistes") testify to their long-lasting popularity.

[30] "Aujourd'hui tout le monde sait ce que c'est que l'Orphéon, puisqu'il y a des société orphéoniques un peu partout", Jean Frollo (pseud. Charles-Ange Laisant), " Les Orphéons", *Le Petit Parisien*, 17 nov. 1884.

[31] See William Weber, *Music and the Middle Class: The Social Structure of Concert Life in London, Paris and Vienna between 1830 and 1848* (Aldershot: Ashgate c2004).

have provided artists with a sublimated view of their art, but the social conditions in which they practised their art said otherwise. Already in the 1840s, Gustave Courbet made no secret of managing the marketing his works as a professional determined to make a living from their sales.[32] By 1870, a professional art market, dominated with the towering figure of the gallery-owner Durand Rue (see Introduction), was flourishing and private gallery owners became the commercial intermediaries between the public and artists unable to rely on State or Church commissions. Music witnessed a similar rise: impresarios not only represented famous soloists but also organized public concerts and tours.

The professionalization of orchestras

The growth of orchestras performing to mass audiences played a crucial part in the encouragement of a general taste for music and in the diversification of musical culture. In 1873, Jean-Etienne Pasdeloup's orchestra gave "concerts populaires" in the Paris *Cirque d'hiver*, which were attended by a public numbering between four and five thousand. The audience was comprised of petit bourgeois and workers who could buy a ticket for the price of a ride in an 'autobus à impériale', horse-drawn carriages that had become the main means of public transport. The music performed was a mixture of genres and periods: Pasdeloup's concerts would start with a classical overture and end with a symphony. In the middle section of the concert there would be a concerto, chorus or dance, or excerpts from chamber music or opera. The number of pieces played grew from four or five items in the early 1860s to between five and eight by the late 1860s and early 1870s.[33] Audiences could learn about different styles through this mix of the well-known and new. Through the comparison of different works, the audience could attune their ear to new styles and not merely experience music passively.

The *Concerts Colonne* followed in the same vein. Colonne mixed symphonies and choruses, marches and opera excerpts, French and German classics and contemporary music. For his concerts, Colonne had booklets printed that could be up to twelve pages long. [34] Colonne championed the composer Berlioz and his program writer, Charles Malherbe, consistently wrote on Berlioz's struggle to be recognized despite winning the

[32] See Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, *The Most Arrogant Man in France: Gustave Courbet and the Nineteenth Century*, Princeton University Press, 2007, pp. 13 ff.

[33] See Jann Pasler 2009 op. cit.

[34] See the *Program notes for the Concerts Colonne, 1st November 1885*, in Jann Pasler 2009, op. cit.

Prix de Rome. By the 1890s, despite early rejection by the public, Berlioz had become very popular with families and programs featuring his works were published in the magazine *Le Vie de Famille* from 1891 to 1892.

Another important concert entrepreneur was the conductor Charles Lamoureux, who had made his name by creating the first Wagner opera to be performed in 1862 in Paris. Lamoureux had conducted for the Opéra and the Opéra-Comique as well as the *Société des Concerts du Conservatoire*. He moved his orchestra to the Eden-theatre, which was beside the Paris Opera house. Like Pasdeloup's and Colonne's, Lamoureux's concerts were accompanied by a published "Petit Bulletin" for additional information. A devoted admirer of Wagner, he succeeded in overcoming the public's resistance to the German composer through the *Concerts Lamoureux,* established in 1881. In his "Petits Bulletins", Lamoureux stressed the French context in which some of Wagner's works should be received. Tristan, he wrote, was a character from French legends. Lamoureux emphasized that some of Wagner's compositions had been written during the composer's frequent visits to Paris.

Previously, many bourgeois music lovers from the provinces had been denied access to the prestigious conservatoire concerts, as subscriptions were expensive. The situation changed with the advent of public concerts by the Colonne, Lamoureux, and Pasdeloup orchestras. Following their example, similar public concerts began to be given regularly in provincial French cities: in Marseille and Brest in 1872; in Lyon in 1874; in Angers and Lille in 1876. Popular interest grew and many "cercles artistiques" and 'Sociétés Philharmoniques' began to flourish in the provinces. Already, according to a "Revue de (l'année) 1872", published in the *Revue et Gazette Musicale* of 5 January 1873, eight million francs had been spent by the population on concerts and theatres during the first half of 1872.[35]

The increased diversification of audiences

As symphonic concerts became professionalized, the playing of music became diversified, making it more accessible to a broader, less sophisticated public. Music was played in more diverse places, such as hotels, gardens, or brasseries. Concert promenades in a lighter vein were organized every Thursday in Paris throughout 1887. That year, the

[35]Quoted by Jann Pasler 2009 op. cit.

conductor of the *Opera Comique*, Jules Danube, played one hundred days consecutively in the *Palais de l'Industrie*.

Musical compositions performed by the professional orchestras were only accessible to fee-paying audiences. As a reaction, amateur performances made music available to a wider public. In Lyon, in 1884 for instance, amateur musicians performed in *Societés Philharmoniques*. Wind bands and military bands played a major role in this regard. Transcriptions were written for these bands, adapting the music of composers like Wagner and Jules Massenet. Concert programs published in local newspapers helped to reach a broader audience. These ensembles performed widely in the provinces and could attract between five and six thousand spectators, with a mix of all classes.

In Paris, by the 1860s, the Tuileries gardens had been the venue for promenade concerts, as depicted in Édouard Manet's 1862 painting *La Musique aux Tuileries* (1862, oil on canvas, h. 76 x w 118 cm, Dublin, Hugh Lane municipal Gallery & London, National Gallery, ill. 1). The work shows that the audience of Tuileries concerts represented in the background consisted of fashionable ladies and gentlemen, while the characters in the foreground can be identified as belonging to Manet's artistic circle. Manet's *La Musique aux Tuileries* concert, points to the gradual segregation of the audience that the popularization of music was bringing about.

It could be argued that a similar segregation of tastes was taking place in art. The reception of Manet and of other Modern artists may have been slow in coming about and the audience of the *Tuileries* concert may have favoured Salon and pompier art, but some of those present at least, were sophisticated enough appreciate Manet's work as the artist may have intended it. But it is doubtful that any member of the lower classes ever viewed the works of Modern artists or had even heard of them except through newspaper caricatures. The lower classes of French society had their own, very different visual culture, which was largely one of street signs, posters and fair ground shows. If they had access to "high art" it was through the spread of chromolithography which produced mass reproductions of famous paintings, such as, in England, Sir Edwin Landseer's (1803-73) *Stag at Bay*, published in 1848, or, in France, Théodore Chassériau's *Venus Anadyomene* after his painting of 1846 or Géricault's *Radeau de la Méduse*.

The music the popular classes increasingly came to enjoy was lighter, made up of military tunes, of chansonnettes and of music played in dance halls or by street musicians. It was for them that the fifty outdoor concerts in Paris alone were given in the summers of the 1870s and 1880s. And it was also primarily for them that military bands including the

band of the *Garde Républicaine* gave outdoor and promenade concerts,

As the musical culture of the Parisian elites became increasingly sophisticated, its "vulgarization", so to speak, to make it accessible to the lower social orders, created a "common" musical culture primarily destined for them. The entrepreneur Aristide Boucicaut, the founder of the recently opened department store, *Le Bon Marché*, saw it as a means to educate and improve his employees. To ensure their fidelity as well as a way to publicize the popular aspect of the stores, he offered free music lessons to them. There was a choir and a wind band that regularly gave concerts (between ten and thirteen in the summer) publicizing the store itself. The repertoire mixed high classical and contemporary popular genres, such as chansonettes. But the two trends of "high" and "low" music were already diverging, as increasingly did popular and "high" art. As we shall see, the policies of the Third Republic in music and art and its disengagement from music and art education further increased the gap.

Music in society salons

Many of the musicians who played for the great symphonic professional orchestras, though professionally trained, were not full-time members of the ensembles. To them, particularly to younger graduates of the Conservatoire, society salons offered a chance to make their début.

The performance of music for a select audience by hired instrumentalists who received a "discreet" fee was already a feature of aristocratic life in the eighteenth century and the fashion continued during the Third Empire and the Third Republic. Among the most exclusive salons were those of Countess Greffulhe and of the Princesse de Polignac. Guests who frequented the society salons were ladies who tried to emulate aristocrats, but came from a more mixed social milieu, made up of old and new Empire nobility, financiers and wealthy industrialists. Among such salons of the period, two are noteworthy for having been frequented by the painters Maurice Denis and Henry Lerolle: the salons of Jenny Ellenberger, wife of the financier Hugo Finaly, and the salon of Berthe de Rayssac, wife of the "homme de lettres" Saint-Cyr de Rayssac and sponsor of the composer Ernest Chausson (1855-1899). During the latter's "soirées", held every Wednesday, Chausson accompanied her on the piano as she sang "chansons".[36]

[36] Cf. Delphine Grivel, *Maurice Denis et la musique*, Lyon, Symétrie, 2011, coll. "Perpetuum mobile", in part., pp. 4-5.

The society ladies who organized their own salons, though genuinely interested in music and art, saw themselves as sponsors of talent as well as social hosts. In *Un Amour de Swann*, part 2 of Book I, of *A la recherches du temps perdu*, first published in 1913, but set in the late-nineteenth century, Marcel Proust satirized the social and artistic pretentions of the character of Mme Vedurin, in whose salon Swann, the protagonist, hears "la petite sonate de Vinteuil" for the first time. Nevertheless, these society salons offered a chance for artists, composers and "hommes de lettres" to achieve recognition. They were also occasions for writers, artists and musicians to exchange ideas about art in general and to discuss current issues of aesthetics. Together with newspapers and revues in the columns of which these exchanges found a broader resonance, they contributed to the continuing interest in issues of aesthetics, which characterized the intellectual life of the period.

The rise of amateur bourgeois instrument playing

The major change that affected music during the period above all others, was the central place that amateur instrument playing quickly came to occupy in bourgeois households. In the second half of the nineteenth century, drawing was already a well-established form of personal leisure for young women who had been taught the basic techniques during their convent education. By the 1870s women artists showed works in the Salons. The fame of the painter Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899) and of her rural paintings, which appealed to the fascination of countryside life for increasingly urbanized audiences, gave further legitimacy to the fashion for young bourgeois spending their leisure time drawing and painting watercolours.[37] On the other hand, amateur instrumental practice was a new phenomenon in bourgeois households. As an indicator, between 160 and 170 women competed for piano instruction at the Conservatoire during the 1870s. This rose to 223 in 1881, while in 1886 the number was 200. Altogether women represented 84% of pianists competing to enter.[38]

The rapid spread of amateur, bourgeois instrument playing was made possible by technical improvements in the construction of some instruments, which facilitated their use by amateurs. This was particularly the case for the piano and the guitar. The new

[37] On these and other aspects, see Tamar Garb, *Women and Artistic Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Paris*, Yale University Press, 1994.

[38] Jann Pasler 2008 op. cit.

models of pianos and the guitars could be produced in factories, while the fabrication of violins, perfected in the eighteenth century by the celebrated Italian makers, Antonio Stradivari, the Amati's and the Guarneris, remained a highly specialized craft. Furthermore, mastering these two instruments did not require the technical ability and the lengthy apprenticeship that the violin did.

The piano was the most common instrument by far, and the one most favoured and played by women. Young boys also learnt the piano at home, and gentlemen could occasionally play it socially, but it was learning the guitar and playing it in society that became fashionable for men in the latter part of the century, as shown in a painting by Pierre-Georges Jeanniot (1848-1934), *Une Chanson de Gibert dans le Salon de Madame Madeleine* (1891, oil on canvas, 56,1 x 97,6 cm, Musée d'Art et d'industrie André Diligent, Roubaix). One of the advantages of the piano was that it was a family instrument that could be rented for around 10 francs a month. A guitar had to be purchased separately and would have to be changed as a young learner grew older and more skilful.

The piano had many further attractions for the amateur player. You could play harmonies on the piano, and it was also easier to transcribe more complex pieces, such as symphonies, for it. Piano transcriptions for four or more hands also added to the pleasure of playing together. Transcriptions of symphonies and early music were soon widely available through publishers or in kiosks. All levels of technique were catered for, ensuring that anyone with a basic knowledge could play. They could also be borrowed from libraries. Encouragement to learn and practise an instrument in the home came from magazines such as *Le Ménestrel* and *Le Mélomane*, which gave notice of virtuoso concerts. Short piano transcriptions were published in works such as *Echos du Temps Passé* ([s.p.] [s.n.], 1857) by Weckerlin, the Paris Conservatoire librarian. Theodore Michaelis published transcriptions of entire works, for example, *Les Chefs-d'Oeuvre classiques de l'Opera Francais* (engraved and published by L. Parent. 1877). Piano exercises were published by *Le Figaro* newspaper: every Wednesday, between two and four pages of scores were reproduced, mostly for piano.

Performing at home was seen not just as an ideal pursuit for children but also as a way of family and social bonding. Families who learned music together could perform it together as a form of leisure time, while enhancing their status in the eyes of other families of the same social rank. The piano had the additional advantage that it could provide accompaniment when singing melodies written for lyric poetry. For example, an album of these songs with piano accompaniments, written for young women singers by two

women, Mélanie Waldor and Octavie Romey, and entitled *Les lys et les roses*, was published in 1880.[39] It soon became expected that a young woman from a good bourgeois family seeking an appropriate suitor, should be able to sing and accompany herself on the piano. A soirée where an acceptable suitor would sing accompanied on the piano by the young woman of his dreams offered an occasion for supervised, "decent" flirting.

Two paintings of the period provide evidence for the social role of accompanied singing. The first indicates the perception of piano playing as a sign of a woman's talent and good education, the second shows the place accorded to women singing to piano accompaniment at social functions. The first of these paintings, entitled *Hommage au talent*, is by Auguste Toulmouche, a portraitist of fashionable ladies (1829-1890). The location of the original work cannot be traced, and it is only known from a contemporary print reproduction, which testifies to its popularity. The black and white print, published by Goupil, shows that its subject was a young woman standing at the open door of her balcony and about to pick up a bunch of flowers that has been thrown to her by her paramour. Behind her is show the reason for the homage, her piano, only half visible but with a score still open on it. This romanticised scene depicts the dreams of many such young women amateur pianists. The second painting is by Giovanni Boldoni (1842-1931). Entitled *La Cantante Mondana*, oil on canvas, c. 1884, 61 x 46 cm, Ferrara, Museo Boldini, it shows a young fashionable singer, accompanied by a pianist, obviously during a bourgeois soirée (ill. 2).

The State and the Arts: the Second Empire

All these developments took place in the context of State policy in the field of culture. In the Second Empire, Napoléon III was authoritarian in matters of politics and literature, given its influence on public opinion, but he had a more open attitude towards music and art.[40] In architecture he was resolutely modernist and encouraged Baron Haussmann to transform Paris. Napoléon III encouraged public art and commissioned public statuary, for instance the construction of Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux's *Fontaine Des Quatre-Parties-*

[39] Mélanie Waldor and Octavie Romey, *Les lys et les roses*, ([Paris], Lit[hographie] Bertauts, 1880), available on Gallica. Mélanie Waldor was a poetess and held a literary salon. Mélanie Romey composed the music for the album.

[40] See Stephane Kirkland *Paris Reborn: Napoléon III, Baron Haussmann, and the Quest to Build a Modern City*, New-York, St Martin Press 2013.

Du-Monde in the Luxembourg Gardens, begun in 1867, conceived as a monument to the French colonial empire.

Art was used an instrument of propaganda by the regime as it had been for centuries. Like all rulers, Napoléon III commission portraits of himself. In Édouard Dubufe's *L'Empereur Napoléon* (1853, oil on canvas, h,265 cm x w. 191.5 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) he is shown on the right, standing in front of his imposing throne and facing the viewer at a slight angle. Jean-Hippolyte Flandrin's later full-length *Portrait de S. M. l'Empereur* (1861, oil on canvas, h. 212 cm x w.147 cm, Musée national du Château de Versailles) shows an ageing Napoleon III with tired eyes and a tired face. The Emperor disliked Flandrin's more perceptive treatment, but the portrait was a great success when it was shown in London in 1862 and in the 1863 Salon. Copies by several artists, among them Alphonse Carriere and Louis Acquesson de la Chevreuse, are now held in provincial and municipal museums. Nevertheless, the policy of acquisitions of the directors of the Musée du Luxembourg, which continued under his reign to be "le Musée des artistes vivants", was not limited to the more official academic works shown in the Salon.

In lyrical works, Napoleon III became something of a trendsetter. During his reign, opera attained a status never quite reached before. It was at his behest that the Paris Opera house, the *Palais Garnier*, was built between 1862 and 1867, when its façade was revealed for the start of *Exposition Universelle*. By 1868, according to *La Semaine Musicale*, France had some 337 theatres, as compared, for instance, to 150 in Great Britain. Most of the fashionable dramatic and musical performances took place in Paris venues.[41]

Much operatic repertoire favoured by the Emperor, including Donizetti's and Meyerberg's, had already long been staged in Paris. Yet, while Meyerberg's *L'Africainei* in its last revised version, was staged in the Opera as late as 1865, forty years after its first composition, Verdi's *Don Carlos*, a modern opera with a political message, was composed especially for the venue and performed there only two years later.

The Paris career of Jacques Offenbach illustrates the mixture of innovations and continuities that characterized music during Napoleon's reign.[42] Born in Cologne in 1818, Offenbach came to Paris to study in the Conservatoire. From 1825 to 1835 he began a

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[41] Quoted by David Tunley, *Singers and Songs. A background to romantic French song 1830-1870*, ch. "Musical Paris", p. 11.

[42] See Andrew Lamb « Offenbach, Jacques » in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, London, 1992.

brilliant career as solo cellist and conductor. He was attached to the *Opéra Comique* and his first two lyric productions were performed there. In 1855, having left the *Opéra Comique*, he set up his own lyric theatre, *Les Bouffes-Parisiens*, where, during the last two decades of the Third Empire, he created a number of popular operettas, while also finding success at the *Théatre des Variétés* with *La Belle Hélène,* 1864. By 1874, after a brief interruption, he had composed and produced several opéra-bouffe and opéra-comique, including *Orphée aux Enfers*. Offenbach's *La Haine*, produced that year from a play by Victorien Sardou, was a veiled historical and musical allegory of the devastation and conflicts associated with the Paris Siege. But Offenbach soon returned to the genre of *opera comique* much favoured by the public, with compositions and productions that continued uninterrupted until his death in 1880.

The Third Republic and the Arts

In Paris, the Franco-Prussian War and the rising of the Commune, slowed down but did not put a stop to these public concerts and performances of operatic music, though the selection of works performed in the Opera and at the *Concerts des Tuileries* showed a certain anti-German bais and a short-lived "populist" spirit.[43]

Once the Siege had ended and the Paris revolutionary Commune had been brutally crushed, the fledgling Third Republic policy on music and art retained the legacy of the Empire, though developing it along two different, parallel lines, which were not equally successful. The first was education. Under Jules Ferry, first as Ministre de l'instruction publique in 1879-80 and again in 1883, then as Président du Conseil (i.e., Prime Minister) in 1880-81 and again in 1883-85, state-organized artistic and musical education finally became a reality. During his first ministerial tenure, as minister for public instruction in 1879, Ferry appointed Edmond Turquet to the post of Under Secretary of state for public education and fine arts. Turquet continued to hold similar posts under Ferry and later, under various governments, until 1886. It was Turquet who ensured the successful realization of state policies in favour of universal primary education in music and art.

In the field of education, the laws of 1881-82, the so-called "Jules Ferry Laws", provided

[43] Jess Tyre, "Music in Paris during the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune ", *The Journal of Musicology*, vol. 22, no. 2, Spring 2005, pp. 173-202. See also Morley, Delphine, "'Dans le palais du son, on fait de la farine': Performing at the Opéra during the 1870 Siege of Paris", *Music and Letters*, vol. 93, Issue 1, February 2012, pp. 1–28.

for drawing classes to be given in primary schools. The same laws introduced basic musical instruction into the syllabuses of primary schools and colleges. Originally, history of art, drawing, vocal music and piano were conceived as 'enseignements spéciaux' designed to develop special skills. Though recruiting teachers capable of giving drawing classes posed no particular problem, this was far from being the case for music. As an *instruction* from the Ministry of 1889 shows, the teaching of music remained limited to singing.[44] Only when new and simplified textbooks were published, could basic musical instruction be provided in schools.

The most important changes in the State approach to the Arts were signalled by a law of May 1872 which removed the administration the Arts from the direct control of the executive. There followed a *Conseil Superieur des Beaux-Arts* created in 1875 by the Minister of public instruction, religion and fine arts, the Marquis de Chennevieres. The *Conseil* was now the overarching authority in the field, charged with guiding ministries in artistic policy through specialised or ad hoc subcommittees.

Nevertheless, the Arts could not be fully insulated from the politics of prestige and national, "revanchard" pride. To affirm its authority, the new Republican regime undertook major programs of civic construction. As a consequence, the government intervened to modernize traditional artisan production and commissioned allegorical imagery for public buildings. Furthermore, France's international prestige needed to be restored after the disaster of the Franco-Prussian War. In 1886, Edmond Turquet sent a mission to Germany and Austria to study how state institutions were engaged in the promotion of 'les arts appliqués à l'industrie'. The report noted that the German Empire was planning a 'grand Musée des Arts décoratifs'.[45]

Despite this spirit of pride in the early decades, reforms in the administration of the Arts and the shift of arts policy from direct governmental decisions to administrative management led to a gradual disengagement of the State. Significantly, when the Paris *Musée des Arts Décoratifs* opened in 1905, it owed its collections to the embers of the *Union des Arts Décoratifs*.

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[44] *cf. Circulaires et instructions officielles relatives à l'instruction publique…,* Paris, Delalain Tome Ix & X, octobre 1885, mai 1889 (available on Gallica).

[45] *cf.* Marius Vachon, *Rapports à Monsieur Edmond Turquet, sous-secrétaire d'État sur les industries artistiques en Allemagne, Autriche-Hongrie… etc*, Paris, A; Quentin 1885 (available on Gallica) .

In music, state assistance was limited to providing occasional administrative and financial support to already well-established activities. A "Déclaration d'utilité publique" supported the organization of concerts. Pasdeloup's *Concerts populaires* received a subsidy from the government that amounted to 20,000 francs in 1878. In 1876, the government created a competition and offered 10,000 francs to the winning composer along with performance in a major venue. Government subsidies included 500 Francs for young composers in 1873 and 2000 francs to the *Concerts Colonne* in 1875.[46] In contrast, little encouragement was given to more popular musical entertainment. In July 1880, allowance was made for any citizen with "two and a half francs to spare" to open a café. This led to a proliferation of cafés opening, where music was played by musicians who depended on intermittent fees for income.

In art, the consequences were far more lasting and far more profound. Due to the pre-eminence of Paris as a city of artists, there already existed an active private market for art over which the state administration had little control. Intervention was tardy and limited to attempts at adapting administrative sponsorship to the new commercial reality. Aside from being accepted for the annual official Academy Salon, there were several other ways in which artists could raise their profile, principally gallery shows, and exhibitions mounted privately by societies of artists. The reforms of the fossilized Salon system – the creation of two juries, one for history and figure painting and another for genre, landscape and still life, and the ending of life-membership for jury members – came too late. In 1880, the long and distinguished history of the *Académie* came to an end.[47]

The end of official Salons opened up new opportunities for showing and viewing art, placing all exhibitions on an equal footing. The Salons of the *Société des artistes français* and the *Société des artistes independents* all vied to be the most prestigious salon in France. Only the highly unpopular *Triennal*e remained as a state exhibition, exhibiting only official artists.

In conclusion

The end of the century marked the end of a period in art as well as in music. The gradual

[46]See Jann Pasler 2009, op. cit.

[47] See Patricia Mainardi, *The End of the Salon: Art and the State in the Early Third Republic*, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

disengagement of the State from artistic and musical creation had the major, only superficially paradoxical consequence of making critics and entrepreneurs in music and art the arbiters of taste. In art, the non-interventionist policy of the State led to greater dependency of artists on commercial art dealers. The "modernity" of paintings from the previous half-century gradually gained general public recognition with the entry of the works by those artists into national collections. In reaction to what they now considered mainstream art, new connoisseurs dedicated themselves to promoting and collecting *avant-garde* art – the term beginning to be used in this sense in the 1880s.

In music, the Third Republic policy of providing basic musical instruction only accelerated the disappearance of the peasant art of singing and music-making transmitted from generation to generation in rural populations. The popular French chanson became the most commonly shared form of musical experience. The new genre, regular in form and sentimental in the feelings it voiced, was a version of the romances favoured by bourgeois amateurs. The long and separate tradition of artisan singing was also transformed under the influence of the dominant bourgeois culture. The original words of the rallying song sung by Lyon silk weavers during their rising in 1844 were changed and the new version of *Le Chant des Canuts* was sung fifty years later by Aristide Bruant, a composer who triumphed in cafés-concerts, at the Lyon *Exposition Universelle* of 1894.

During this period, the growing and varied presence of music in society had major influences on the art of the period. Music offered new subjects to painters. Many prominent Modern artists who achieved fame – Manet, Monet, Renoir, Caillebotte – were passionate music lovers. It was to be expected that some of their works would address the musical fashions of their viewers, as well as their own musical tastes.

The 'musical paintings of these artists', however, are not the modern equivalents of the genre depicted by many Dutch artists of the seventeenth century. Neither should the instruments featured in their works be interpreted as individual symbols of music, the meaning of which would be independent from the total effect of the painting, but rather as the expression in visual language of the special aesthetic experience produced by music. Musical paintings, as James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis have pointed out, reflect two models of the relationship between art and music, in terms of convergence and analogy.[48] These models, however, can only be understood as two ways of interpreting

[48] James H. Rubin and Olivia Mattis ed, "Introduction", *Rival sisters, art and music at the birth of modernism, 1815-1915*, Ashgate, 2014

the all-embracing idea of the "correspondance" between all arts, which saw music as the purest and the art coming closest to the aesthetic ideal to which all arts were said to aspire. Beginning with Baudelaire, the language of "correspondances" became the dominant language of criticism during this period, whether in literature, art or music. In art, the idea was best expressed by James Whistler when he wrote about his own paintings, 'as music is the poetry of sound, so is painting the poetry of sight, and the subject matter has nothing to do with the harmony of sight or colour'.[49] The next chapter shall trace the emergence and the impact of the idea of "correspondances" as it throws light on how painters sought to express musicality in their own visual 'voice'.

[49] James Whistler in *The gentle art of making enemies*, London, William Heinemann, 1890.

Chapter 2

"CORRESPONDANCES": MUSIC, ART AND THE NEW AESTHETICS

The emergence of a new aesthetics

A new way of understanding the Arts emerged and developed in France in the nineteenth century. Turning away from the debates on the sublime and the beautiful of the previous, Romantic period, this new approach to aesthetics owed little to the analytical method that had previously been articulated in Germany by philosophers such as Hegel. Rather, the new aesthetics emerged from within the Parisian artistic and literary circles of the mid-nineteenth century. As shown in the previous chapter, the new bourgeoisie encouraged practice of and access to the Arts, while in the salons, writers, artists and musicians met and set their conceptions against one another. Official exhibitions and public concerts also raised public awareness of the Arts. The debates that took place within literary and artistic circles were further encouraged by the figure of the critic and the importance of critical notices regularly published in periodicals. This chapter will discuss the place that music occupied in the new debates on the relationships between the Arts and will evaluate how they may have had an impact on the representation of music in painting.

By the mid-nineteenth century, what the Arts had in common had become the topic of much critical and theoretical thinking. Fundamental to this thinking was the notion that all senses were, in some manner, linked to one another. The idea of a correlation between the senses was not in itself new, but what distinguishes the nineteenth century was the way this idea was given a grounding in the new scientific psychology of synaesthesia and, above all, how it found its expression in a new the new aesthetic notion of "correspondance".

Synaesthesia and 'the problem of colour hearing'

As the gap thought to exist between the literary, the artistic and the musical began to narrow in the nineteenth century in France, and as the boundaries that were assumed to separate them began to be destabilized, some scientists began to research auditory, visual and literary creativity and search for possible links with the neurological condition called synaesthesia. Synaesthesia manifests itself in many different ways. One person may see a colour when hearing a particular musical pitch. Others experience a taste when they see

a geometrical drawing. Others still experience a specific smell associated with certain sounds or colours. Two synaesthetes see two different colours when hearing the same note. What is significant is the 'heightened state of aesthetic awareness', which arises as a result of the synaesthetic experience.

These investigations were described by Alfred Binet as 'the problem of colour hearing'. Binet wrote in *La Revue des Deux Mondes*: "a question of much interest in these days is that of colour hearing…repeatedly discussed in the daily press, literary and scientific reviews, medical theses…poetry, in romance and even in the theatre.

It seems that the first ever medical account of synaesthesia was in the dissertation of George Tobias Ludwig Sachs (1786-1814). His subject was albinism, but he had a small chapter on synaesthesia in his thesis. In France, it was the physician Édouard Cornaz who first wrote on synaesthesia in his 1848 doctoral thesis on *Congenital Abnormalities of the Eyes and their Appendices*. After it was published, new cases of synaesthesia emerged. Synaesthesia was described as an external stimulus that created an experience of colour. For example, different musical notes in the scale produce their own colour in the mind of the listener (chromesthesia).

Francis Galton, in his *Inquiries into the Human Faculty* of 1883, was the first to provide a description of synaesthesia and to show that synaesthesia was passed down between families. In 1892, in his doctoral thesis, Jules Millet broadened the definition of synaesthesia as the phenomenon when two or more senses created a third stimulus. The number of reported cases increased to the point that the *Congrès International de Psychologie Physiologique* (Paris 1890) called for its own investigation into the phenomenon.[50]

The scientific interest in synaesthesia as a neurological phenomenon, in which two or several senses are involuntarily associated, paralleled the debates that took place in artistic and literary circles on how the musical, the verbal and the pictorial were related in the Arts. In an age when science was beginning to assert its pre-eminence, synaesthesia offered a scientific justification for aesthetic theory. But synaesthesia served above all as a metaphor for the idea that in artistic experiences the senses are merged and that barriers

[50] J. Jewanski, S. Day, J. Ward, J., "A Colourful Albino: The First Documented Case of Synaesthesia, by George Tobias Ludwig Sachs in 1812", *Journal of the History of Neurosciences*, Jul-Sep 2009, Vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 293-303. See also Ceglie, Flavio, 'The Concept of Synaesthesia in the Late-Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Century', in *History & Philosophy of Psychology*, vol. 9, no. 2, (2007), pp. 57-61.

ought to be broken down between the different arts.[51] Borrowing the term made famous by Baudelaire, we shall call the new aesthetics, "the aesthetics of 'correspondances'". The emergence and influence of these new aesthetics can be seen in particular in the writings of Eugène Delacroix, Charles Baudelaire and Théophile Gautier, and illustrated in the music of Richard Wagner and Claude Debussy.

Baudelaire and the aesthetics of "correspondances"

The poet Charles Baudelaire made his literary debut as a critic in 1845 with a review of the Salon of that year. With this began a new development in critical thought, and Baudelaire took his inspiration from the visual arts, in particular, for his poetry. His writings also consisted of critical reviews and pieces, with discussions on the Salons or thoughts on individual writers. In the Salons, he compared the aesthetic experience of looking at a work of art with the transposition of that experience into the art of the written word. Although he was aware that it was impossible to paint a smell, he believed that through language one could create an impression of it: a particular sensation or emotion, such as a musical one, could be evoked through a particular language. Though Baudelaire stressed that, in the language of art, music or poetry criticism, subjectivity was fundamentally involved. In his piece on the Salon de 1859 he wrote: "How happy it is to have dreams and how glorious to have expressed them…". With him poetic reverie became part of art criticism.

In the standard French dictionaries of the times Littré or Larousse, the word "correspondance" is not commonly defined in the sense that Baudelaire gave it, except as an equivalent to harmony. The Swedish scientist Emanuel Swedenborg, and the German Romantic poet and composer E.T.A Hoffmann particularly influenced Baudelaire. However, the way Baudelaire used the term gave it an esoteric dimension of a potential hidden harmony. In the poem entitled *Correspondances*, included in the collection Les Fleurs du Mal (1857/1861) he wrote:

Like far echoes that distantly congregate,
In a shadowy and profound unity,
Vast as the night air, in its clarity,
Perfumes, colours, sounds reverberate… (*Correspondances*,)

[51] Catherine M. Mulveanna, "Synaesthesia, the Arts and creativity…" in Neurological Disorders in Famous Artists: Part 2, ed. Bogousslavsky & Hennerici, Kargen, 200, p. 206-8.

In the poem, colours, smells and sounds echo one-another: 'Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent'. For Baudelaire, in the aesthetic experience, the boundaries between the senses become blurred. To express this, a language must be found that makes one sensation translatable into another. The language of *correspondance* was, he believed, the language of poetic reverie shaping the reader's unconscious imagination.[52]

A new poetic palette: Theophile Gautier and "correspondances" aesthetics

The idea of "correspondances" between the pictorial and the musical, as Baudelaire understood it, was further developed to include the poetic by the poet Theophile Gautier (1811-1872). Gautier had a technical knowledge of painting, having started out as a "rapin" in the painter Rioult's studio. He frequented the salon that the Polish pianist Maria Kalergis opened in Paris between 1847 and 1857, a salon also visited by Chopin, Liszt and Wagner.

Gautier used this technical knowledge and his musical culture when he turned to a career as a professional writer of both criticism and poetry. In the 1850s he was editor of the literary review, *L'Artiste* (1831-1904), and he also edited the *Journal de la Littérature et des Arts* from 1856 until 1859. In his writings Gautier used the single term of "artiste" to refer to a composer, writer or painter. The revues he edited combined art and music criticism, while poetry and etchings were featured together. While Gautier is said to have disliked his critical writings, there is nevertheless a link between his criticism and poetry. Through his art criticism he expressed himself creatively, using it as a natural progression towards his poetic writing.[53]

Of Gautier's collection *Émaux et Camées* (1852), it has been said that the approach to writing poetry was similar to the approach of painters of the nineteenth century. That is, in the same way a painter would choose his colour palette before creating a composition, the poet often chose his rhyme scheme before writing a line of a poem. Baudelaire wrote of Gautier that he achieved "the fusion of a double element from music and painting, by

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[52] C'est un bonheur de rêver, et c'était une gloire d'exprimer ce qu'on rêvait…' Charles Baudelaire, *Œuvres Complètes,* ed. Claude Pichois, Paris: Gallimard, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1975-6 (my translation). 2. vol., vol. II, p. 256.

[53] On this and other aspects of Gautier's art see, David Kelley, "Transpositions…" in *Artistic Relations: Literature and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-century France,* ed. Peter Collier & Robert Lethbridge, New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1994.

framing (the verse) as a melody is framed and a purple glow of more than exact and symmetrical rhymes".

Gautier believed he could use artistic references in the same way as a painter would choose to copy and interpret another artist's work: a historical subject or a portrait of a person of renown. Such references, he believed, transformed into the rich language of poetry, would sublimate the reader in the same way a painting sublimates the viewer. As an example, *Symphonie en Blanc Majeur* ("Symphony in White Major") is a poem first published in January 1849 and dedicated to the pianist Maria Kalergis. Oddly, taking his image from Couture's *Romains de la Decadence/Orgie Romaine* (1847, oil on canvas, h. 52 x w. 84, Paris, Musée d'Orsay) the poem celebrates a young woman as a divine marble goddess, cold white and iridescent, whose heart the poet hopes he will transform through the symbolic colour of pink. Gautier also appealed to music to recreate an atmosphere suggestive of a synaesthetic experience. His poem, 'Variations sur le carnaval de Venise' is based on the violinist Paganini's variations on a popular melody and also uses paintings of views of Venice by Canaletto as references.[54] Using words such as "pizzicato", "corde", "gamme", "chromatique", terms normally used in musical contexts, a synaesthetic image of Venice is created. On a chromatic scale, Gautier used a vocabulary of poetry whereby imagery and metaphor were taken from painting and music themselves. Harmony between elements through various moods or tones created the idea of a 'language' common to all fields. The language of Gautier's poetry is the clearest example of a 'palettiste' approach to literary writing that drew on the principles of the new aesthetics but also encountered its own limits: the musicality of his verse lies in its prosody, but the musical language and imagery succeeds only in evoking globally the subjects of the paintings to which the poems allude.

Baudelaire: colour as the key to "correspondances" between the Arts

We come closer to a *correspondance* between art, music and poetic language with Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*. In some of the poems, colour is the trigger of what comes close to a true synaesthetic experience. This is the case, in particular, in the poem entitled *La Chevelure* (*The Head of Hair*), where the lover's shock of black hair – a 'house of taut darkness' ('pavillon de ténèbres tendues') – stirs the poet's imagination and evokes a sea

[54] Theophile Gautier, *Poésies complètes*, ed. René Jasinski, Paris: Nizet, 1970, 3 vol., III, nos. 16 &17.

journey to exotic lands. Then colour merges into smell, and the fragrance of the hair turns into music: “As music floats other spirits away / Mine, my love, sails your fragrance instead” and, as the experience becomes more intense, all his sensations merge, “my soul’s a drinker/ of sound, colour, scent/ in rolling waves” (*La Chevelure*).

In Baudelaire’s critical writings, as well as in his poems, colour is understood both pictorially and musically, and is said to be a key for an understanding of how art affects us. In this emphasis on colour, Baudelaire, therefore, placed himself on the side of Delacroix, and in opposition to the contemporary rules of academic painting, according to which colour came only second to drawing. In academic painting, drawing was treated as a type of geometry, whereas colour was the filling in of this geometry. Colour only enhanced the necessary shapes that were brought into existence through the line. Baudelaire turned this idea around, believing that nature was not made up of lines, but of juxtaposing blocks of colour. In his analysis, line separates objects, making us capable of distinguishing them from one another. Colour, however, blends this linear demarcation making the division between subject and object less abstract.[55]

In his essay *De la couleur* from his *Salon* of 1846, Baudelaire returned to the idea that the expression of art is primarily through colour as it harmonizes and connects the different elements of a picture and dominates those various elements. In his review of the 1846 Salon, he wrote: “When a particular tone is given to a particular part of a (pictorial) composition, that tone becomes the key to the whole composition”.[56] For Baudelaire, the qualities of a great painting were those of ‘harmony’, ‘unity’, or ‘melody’, musical qualities which only colour could achieve. He viewed colour as the music of painting, and in *Le Peintre de la vie moderne* he wrote that “even seen at a distance, without grasping what its subject is, a Delacroix painting has already produced an impression of

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[55] “Une conception, devenue composition, a besoin de se mouvoir dans un milieu colouré qui lui soit particulier. Il y a évidemment un ton particulier attribué à une partie quelconque du tableau qui devient clef et qui gouverne les autres”. Our emphasis. Quoted by Alfred Boime, "The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century", in *Theories of Art from Wincklemann to Baudelaire*, ed. Moshe Barasch, Routledge: London 1990.

[56] Baudelaire, “Salon de 1846, III De la couleur”, in OC, T. II. On the Salon, see Halsted J.B “Charles Baudelaire: The Salon of 1846”. In: Halsted J.B., ed, Romanticism. The Documentary History of Western Civilization. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

happiness or melancholy in the soul"[57]. Baudelaire appears to have been saying that the impression made by Delacroix's works was similar to that made by a momentary musical experience. For Baudelaire, in Delacroix's art, colour had its own language, a language that spoke directly to the imagination of the viewer, a language that nevertheless could be translated into the other languages of poetry and of music.[58]

Delacroix, Baudelaire and the new aesthetics

Delacroix was interested in the relationship between the different senses, but from his perspective as a painter and it was this that led him to reflect on the nature of art and aesthetics. Though his ambition to create a "Dictionnaire Des Beaux-Arts" was never realized, in his letters and his journals, he discussed how art is created and the qualities the artist needed to create works of art. Delacroix shared this interest with the poets and art critics whom he knew and who moved in the same circles as him, particularly Baudelaire and Gautier. Both were concerned with the theoretical question of aesthetics common to both painting and poetry. As poets, they believed that the imagery of a work of art, whether it be a poem or a painting, had a similar goal and that the transposition of nature into a fictionalized imaginative painting was a process similar to one the poet applied in his own poetry.

Delacroix was also a friend of Frederic Chopin. Chopin made Delacroix realize that despite its mathematical dimension (in the fugue, for example), music could not be reduced to an ordering of sound. And though Delacroix was aware that the essence of music was intangible, he thought that painting should seek to achieve something similar to music. Painting should aspire to create emotion in the viewer, as music does in the listener, and in painting emotion could be achieved through colour.

On the other hand, although he recognized that they shared the same interest in aesthetics, Delacroix was suspicious of Baudelaire and Gautier as critics, as can be seen in his *Journal*. He believed that often art criticism was an opportunity taken by the critic to

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[57] "…vu à une distance trop grande pour analyser ou même comprendre le sujet, un tableau de Delacroix a déjà produit sur l'âme une impression riche, heureuse ou mélancolique". Baudelaire, "Le Peintre de la Vie Modern" in Curiosités esthétiques, L'Art Romantique, ed. H. Lemaitre, Paris: Classiques Garnier, 1990, p. 630.

[58] Baudelaire, OC, T. II, p. 659.11 Baudelaire, "L'Art philosophique", in Écrits sur l'art..., ed. Francis Moulinat, Paris: Librairie générale française, 1999, coll. Le Livre de poche, 1971.

outshine the artists they were writing about. Delacroix wrote of Gautier: "he takes a painting, describes it as he feels and produces a "tableau" which is charming, but is not a veritable piece of criticism…"

This does not mean, however, that Delacroix was not influenced by the ideas of the two poets, and in particular Baudelaire's. Delacroix shared with Baudelaire the view that imagination played a key role in the act of creating a work of art and that a work of art was a means of communication between 'the soul of the artist and the soul of the spectator'. According to Delacroix, from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century, colours, gestures, scene-setting and nature evoked emotion, but by the nineteenth century, this had been abandoned with the emergence of the French tradition of 'reason' and the growing influence of 'realism'. This view ignored the debates of the late-seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries on the relative merits of colour and drawing, as exemplified in Dupuy du Grez's *Traité Sur La Peinture* (1699-1700). Nevertheless, Delacroix believed the two traditions of reason and realism were in opposition to the creative processes of the artistic imagination.

For Baudelaire, too, imagination was at the centre of aesthetic emotion for both artist and audience. For him, the power of imagination was 'an almost divine faculty which at once perceives certain hidden relationships in the world'. Delacroix's paintings were the pictorial manifestation of this. In his *Journal*, Delacroix showed his appreciation of the poet's perception of his art.[59] When on the death of the artist in 1863, Baudelaire wrote in praise of his works, he saw imagination as the essence of the Delacroix's achievement.[60]

Baudelaire also firmly believed that art had value in itself. In his article, *L'Art Philosophique* (probably dating to 1859) Baudelaire put two conceptions of Art in opposition: 'pure' and philosophical'. He wrote that 'philosophical art' tries to teach us something, whereas 'pure art' has no outward purpose. In his writings on the Salon of

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[59] "Il prend un tableau, le décrit à sa manière, fait lui-même un tableau qui est charmant, mais il n'a pas fait un acte de véritable critique; pourvu qu'il trouve à faire chatoyer, miroiter les expressions macaroniques qu'il trouve avec un plaisir qui vous gagne quelquefois…il est content, il a atteint son but d'écrivain curieux…"Delacroix's *Journal*, quoted by David Scott, "Pictorial Poetics, Poetry and the Visual", in *Arts in Nineteenth-Century France*, Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 515-51.

[60] The three articles known as *L'Œuvre et la vie d'Eugène Delacroix* were first published in the periodical *L'Opinion Nationale*, and reprinted and included in *L'Art Romantique*. On the evolution of Delacroix's art and its critical reception, see Simon Lee, *Delacroix*, Phaidon, Arts and Ideas Series, 2015.

1859, he challenged the idea that art was or should be a reflection of nature. He also rejected the idea that artists should paint what they see, as opposed to what they feel or dream.[61]

This notion of "pure art", when applied to some of Delacroix's paintings, shows the limits of Baudelaire's understanding of Delacroix. For in many of Delacroix's works, among them religious and historical scenes, the narrative element, to which their titles draw attention, is a dimension of the paintings. Not only colour, but gestures, scene-setting and the treatment of forms play their part in the impact of the works on the spectator. In his celebrated 1830 painting *La liberté guidant le peuple (28 juillet 1830)* (oil on canvas, h. 260, cm x w. 325cm, Paris,Musée du Louvre), the statuesque figure of Liberty with raised arm, dominates the narrative action. In the later 1848 painting, *The Lamentation* (*Christ at the Tomb*) (oil on canvas h. 162.6 cm x w. 132.1 cm, Boston Museum of Fine Arts), dark tones dominate, suggesting grief, but the posture of Christ's body echoes a long graphic tradition of pietàs, and Delacroix maintains a balance between bold colour contrasts, as in the rough painting of Christ's head and torso, and more carefully rendered details like the crown of thorns. Later generations held this picture in particular esteem: in 1869, Frédéric Bazille tried to persuade a wealthy cousin to buy it, describing it as "one of the most beautiful paintings of the French School"; in 1876 the novelist Henry James praised its "singular profundity of imagination".

From "pure art" to "total art": Wagner's new operatic music and its influence in France[62]

The first performances of Wagner's operas in France were delayed, because of the hostility of composers and more generally by the 'revanchard' spirit of much of the press after the humiliating defeat suffered by France in the Franco-Prussian war and the further humiliation of the proclamation of the German Empire in Versailles in 1871. The first presentation of *Lohengrin* in the Paris house *L'Éden Théàtre* in 1887/8, was met with critical hostility and it was only in 1891 that a performance of *Lohengrin* at the *Opéra*

[61]Baudelaire, OC, T. II, p. 659. Baudelaire, "L'Art philosophique", in *Écrits sur l'art...*, ed. Francis Moulinat, Paris: Librairie générale française, 1999, coll. Le Livre de poche, 1971.

[62] On the reception of Wagner in France in the decades 1880-1890, see Michał Piotr Mrozowicki, *Richard Wagner et sa réception en France. Du ressentiment à l'enthousiasme (1883-1893*), Paris, Symétrie, 2016, 2 vol.

Garnier took place. It was only then, thanks to the conductor Charles Lamoureux, whose reputation was well established with Parisian audiences, that the public came to realize how revolutionary Wagner's conception of operatic art was.

It was in art criticism that the influence of Wagner's conception of 'total art' had a more pervasive influence. In his essay *Opera and Music* (1851), Wagner put forward his ideas of a "total work of art" *(Gesamtkunstwerk*). He described how different strands of the Arts could be united in a single purpose. He believed emotional responses to music should be externalized in an almost dream-like way. Until his operas and, most importantly, *The Ring*, were actually performed in the 1860s, most art and music critics, had not experienced the fullest expression of Wagner's "total art", and only knew his symphonic music. The ground for the enthusiastic reception of his symphonic compositions had been prepared by the revelation in Paris of Beethoven's symphonies, and had the effect, in the words of Berlioz, of "a thunderbolt". For the French composer and many avid amateurs of modernity, it overturned the pillar of his Conservatoire training, i.e. the assumption that instrumental music was inferior to dramatic.[63] Paradoxically, in view of the later realization of the dramatic nature of Wagner's "total art", it was his theoretical writings and his orchestral compositions, associated with Beethoven's, that first strengthened art critics' conviction that that a language of "musical *correspondances* " was the best way to express the aesthetic emotion aroused by the visual asrts. After hearing Wagner's concert of January 25th, 1860, at the *Théâtre des Italiens*, Baudelaire wrote a letter to the composer. In it he described, in a synaesthetic manner, how, during the *Tristan Prelude*, he had seen a 'dark red gradually become the incandescence of a furnace'. A final explosion of white had seemed to him the cry of a soul risen to paroxysm. Baudelaire in his essay entitled *Richard Wagner et Tannhäuser*, stated that the idea of a union of the Arts was the link between his poem *Correspondances* and Wagner's theory of *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[64] Wagner's symphonic pieces, which were excerpts, could be seen as 'tableaux' a term actually used by the critic Champfleury.

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[63] Cf. Cf. Katherine Kolb, ed. *Berlioz on Music : Selected criticism, 1824-1837,* trans.by Samuel N. Rosenberg, Oxford University Press, [2015]

[64] Gerald D. Turbow, 'Art and Politics: Wagnerism in France', in *Wagnerism in European Culture and Politics,* eds., David C. Large and William Weber, Cornell University Press, 1984, Ithaca and London, p. 145.

Wagner's ideas also encouraged new ventures, where the viewing of paintings was accompanied by a musical performance. The founding member of the *Société Nationale des Beaux Arts* established in 1862, Louis Martinet, used his gallery as a venue where music could be performed while paintings were on view. It was in Martinet's gallery that Manet's *Musique aux Tuileries* went on view in March 1863. The critic and composer J. J. Debillemont, in an article published in *Le Courrier artistique* of 15 April 1863, praised Martinet for "the truly delicious assimilation" between the musical and the visual that viewers of Jean-Louis David's *Marat* had experienced while listening to a composition by Beethoven in Martinet's gallery. [65] Beethoven's piece must have been one of his ten sonatas for piano and violin, and David's oil painting was perhaps a copy or probably the replica, known as *La Mort de Marat* (h. 111.3 x w.861, cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Rheims, acquired in 1873). The choice of this work is at first surprising, until one realises that it was shown in 1846 at an exhibition held in the *Bazar Bonne Nouvelle* in Paris and that the painting was discussed by Baudelaire in his review of the exhibition.[66]

Not all art critics, however, welcomed the influence of Wagner's aesthetic theories on art criticism. In particular, a controversy flared up in 1860 between the anti-Wagnerian music critic Jean-François Fétis and the writer and art critic Champfleury. Fundamentally, the conflict between the two critics was on the nature of music and the nature of art. Fétis compared Wagner's music to Courbet's art, denouncing both as "realist", in the sense that they were "imitative". Of Courbet's art he wrote "what is real is not truth to material, but truth to art" and of Wagner, "what he does not understand is that truth in art is not the contingent, the accessory, and that beauty, that is to say art, in its essence is independent of it".[67]

There are allusive, though not "imitative", features in Wagner's music, as when an instrument evokes, say, the song of a bird, but no art or music critic having attended a performance of *The Ring* could seriously think of Wagner's music as 'realist'. What has been called the Realist Debate, can be seen as a confused shadow boxing about the object

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[65] quoted by Therese Dolan, op. cit., "Introduction", p. 11.

[66]The review "Le musée classique du Bazar Bonne Nouvelle", was later republished in his *Curiosités esthétiques* of 1868 p. 201-203.

[67] The history of the controversy and its impact are discussed by Therese Dolan her chapter entitled "Realism and Music: Champfleury, Courbet, Wagner, and Manet", op. cit., in part. pp 110-119. All quotes come from this chapter.

of art as art and the meaning of the ideal of beauty to which the visual and the musical were said to aspire.

Wagner's operas finally triumphed in Paris and on provincial stages, notably in Rouen. The *Revue Wagnerienne* was set up in 1885 by Téodor de Wyzew, Édouard Dujardin and Houston Stewart Chamberlain as a newsletter promoting Wagner's activities, including concert listings and articles by Wagner himself. The experience of Wagner's operatic "total art" and its promotion in periodicals such as *Revue Wagnerienne*, changed the terms in which the debate on the relationship between the visual and the musical was conducted, by elevating it to a statement of the universal, of the fundamental characteristics of what made art "total art".

A good example of this is provided by an article reviewing the Salons of 1891, published in the *Mercure de France* of that year and entitled "Raciocinations familières d'ailleurs vaines à propos des Trois Salons de 1891". Its author, the critic Gabriel-Albert Aurier, wrote that "the work of art should have as its primary aim the expression of an idea which should be expressed in a symbolic form and in a synthetic and subjective mode which should also be decorative".[68] Gabriel-Albert Aurier's prescriptive statement reads like a belated symbolist manifesto, a decade after many symbolist paintings had been created. But it testifies nevertheless to how critics had come to understand, in Wagnerian terms of "total art", symbolist works of the preceding decade such as Gustave Moreau's *Galatea* (c 1880, oil on panel, 85.5 × 66 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) as well as other, albeit rather different works, such as Puvis de Chavannes's *Le Rêve. Il voit dans son sommeil L'amour, La gloire et La richesse lui apparaître* (1883, oil on canvas, h. 82 x w. 102 mm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay).

"Wagnerian art"

The promotion of Wagnerism and the late but overwhelming presence of the composer's major works on operatic stages, undoubtedly played a part in encouraging the new art movement known as Symbolism that broke away from impressionism by returning to the

[68] See *Mercure de France* 1891, T. II, juillet 1891, p. 30-40: "L'œuvre d'art devra être premièrement idéiste, puisque son idéal unique sera l'expression de l'idée, deuxièmement symboliste puisqu'elle exprimera cette idée en forme, troisièmement synthétique puisqu'elle écrira ses formes, ses signes selon un mode de compréhension général, quatrièmement subjective" (available at https://obvil.sorbonne-universite.fr/corpus/)

figurative and the idealized. But Wagner was unique in the art of the period for having fostered a sub-genre that was given the label of "Wagnerian art".[69]

Excluding the numerous portraits of the composer, "Wagnerian paintings" were produced by Salon artists, now largely forgotten, such as Gaston Bussière (1862-1928), Jacquez Wagrez (1846-1928), Charles Maurin (1856-1914) and Georges-Antoine Rochegrosse (1859-1938). One example is Bussière's *Apparition de Brunnehilde à Sigmund* (1895, oil on canvas, h. 495 x w. 365), known only from a photograph in Braun's Peintures modernes of 1896. The composition is a tableau, "freezing" a crucial moment in Act II of *The Walkyrie*. The staged encounter between Siegmund and Brunnelhilde is seen up close, as from the orchestral pit, and dramatized by the accentuated forms and gestures not of the performers but of the archetypal characters.[70] At the opposite end of the spectrum, Rochegrosse's *Le Chevalier aux fleurs* (1894, oil on canvas, h. 232 x h. 372, Paris, Musée d'Orsay) is an attempt to render Wager's atmospheric music pictorially, announcing a moment of epiphany in the drama. Rochegrosse's composition shows Parsifal in his shining armour crossing the enchanted meadows of Klingsor, the Magician, surrounded by the Flower Maidens. In the *Journal des Débats*, Rochegrosse explained that his intention was not to give an exact representation of the scene from Wagner's opera, but to "symboliser l'esprit même de la scène, "l'être épris d'ideal, les yeux fixés vers son but, marche à travers la vie". Unfortunately, blurred by the overly shimmering treatment of the garden, the serpentine shapes given to the Flower Maidens are more academically seductive than pictorially bewitching. The critic Camille Le Senne, in an article in *Le Ménestrel* of June 1894 (no. 21), wrote, that the artist "so often devoted to classical archaeology" had now chosen to flatter "le goût wagnérien", but that "sa palette

[69] The catalogues of two exhibition offer a panorama of "Wagnerian" Art: Paul Lang (comm.), *Exposition Richard Wagner, Visions d'artistes, d'Auguste Renoir à Anselm Kiefer*, Genève, Musée Rath, septembre-janvier 2006, Paris, Somogy; Genève, Musées d'art et d'histoire, 2005; & Martine Kahane & Nicole Wild, ExpositionWagner et la France, octobre-janvier 1983/4, Théâtre National de l'Opéra, Paris, Paris, Herscher, 1983

[70] In the 1894 Salon des artistes français, Bussière showed another représentaion of a scene from the ssme Act, La Révélation, Brünnhilde découvrant Sieglinde et Siegmund, (1894, h. 236 cm x w. 304 cm, Musée Thomas Henry Cherbourg-en-Cotentin).

de peintre impressioniste, ses colorations scintillantes" turned the painting into a firework display like "la robe de la Loïe Fuller".[71]

Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) and Wagner

Henri Fantin-Latour is an exception; He could be said to have anticipated the later trend in 'Wagnerian art', but his Wagnerian compositions are not illustrations of Wagner's operatic scenes. Rather they must be understood as attempts to translate into visual images the musical emotion that he felt when listening to Wagner's symphonic music.

Already a devoted amateur of the symphonic works of Schuman and Berlioz, Fantin-Latour was enchanted, in the full sense of term, by performances of orchestral excerpts from Wagner's operas at the *Salle Herz* in 1861 and at the *Concerts Populaires* conducted by Pasdeloup in 1862. Fantin-Latour immediately wanted to communicate the musical emotion he had experienced. In 1861 and 1864, two of his three stays in England, he became friendly with Whistler's brother-in-law, Edwin Edwards and frequented the Edwards' home. Mrs Edwards was an accomplished pianist and Fantin-Latour presented her with transcriptions of Wagner's music.

Attending performances of Wagner's operas and symphonic works confirmed in Fantin-Latour, the belief music was the language of his own soul. In a conversation with the critic Camille Mauclair, he said that "the soul is like music".[72] In a letter of 1876, he tells of a performance of the *Daughters of The Rhine* that he attended in Bayreuth. The music, he wrote, had opened to him as an "espace mystique".[73]

One of his first 'Wagnerian' works was the painting *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* (1864, oil on canvas, 116.8 × 149.8 cm, Los Angeles, County Museum of Art), shown in the 1864 Salon.[74] Therese Dolan, in her analysis of Fantin-Latour's painting, suggests that it is "most likely" the painter transposed the Venusberg scene that Wagner had situated in a subterranean grotto into a "sunny landscape" inspired by Titian's *Pastoral Concert*, then

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[71] Quoted in the catalogue *ExpositionWagner et la France*. notice 382, p. 141-2. Loïe Fuller (1862-1928), was an American dancer who reached fame in Paris, with her theatrical lighting and "serpentine" dancing.

[72] Camille Mauclair, *Servitude et grandeur littéraires*, 6e edition, Paris, Ollendorff, 1922, p. 158, quoted in translation in Therese Dolan, (op. cit, note 73 below) p. 161.

[73] On the painter's passionate love of music music, see Adolphe Jullien, *Fantin-Latour: sa vie et ses amitiés, lettres inédites et souvenirs personnels*, Paris, L. Laveur, 1909, I, chap. III "Un peintre méloman, pp 89-124.

[74] There is also a painting with some variants in Hamburg's Kunsthalle.

attributed to Giorgione.[75] Undoubtedly, Fantin-Latour 's painting is set in a pastoral scene, which already transposes into a tranquil context the orgiastic character of the scene in *Tannhäuser*, an aspect which was over-emphasized in its first Paris production. On the other hand, it is hard to find in the depiction of the female figures the voluptuousness characteristic of academic nudes of the time. Far from being made obvious by a clear delineation of the shape of their bodies, as has been suggested, the vaporous white of the female figure resting on the lap of the Minnesinger-knight with his lyre on the left in the foreground, and that of the dancer in a translucent robe in the middle ground echoes that of the river seen in the background and of the misty cloud in the foreground on the right. The effect is more ethereal than erotic.

This is the effect that Fantin-Latour realized best suited his desire to express in visual language the spiritual emotion that Wagner's music provoked in him. The pastel, *Les filles du Rhin/L'Or du Rhin* ((1876, pastel and charcoal on paper, h. 52. 9 cm. x w. 35.2 cm., Paris, Musée du Luxembourg), already succeeds in rendering the shadowy, enchanting depths of the waters of the Rhine, while the figures of the water nymphs form an undulating S, likening them to the main *ondine* Flosshilde, but not quite with the fullness and lyricism of the music. But it was in lithography and the unusual way he used it that Fantin-Latour found the medium that came closest to expressing the emotion he experienced when listening to Wagner's *Tetralogy* in his art.[76]

In Fantin-Latour's lithographic production, images had a unique association with music. The allegory *Le Génie de la musique*, for instance, shows an angel holding a palm out to the four composers, Schumann, Berlioz, Wagner and Brahms. In *Robert Schuman La Dernière composition* (lithograph in black on light grey chine, 4.47 × 3.27 cm (image); 593 × 449 mm (sheet), Chicago Art Institute), the lettering under the image reproduces a few chords from one of the five-part songs in *Romanzen und Balladen*, (1849-51). This association is the most personal in the series of lithographs executed between 1862 and

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[75] Therese Dolan, "Ebony Keys: Fantin's *Venusberg* Scene and Manet's *Ballroom*", in *Manet, Wagner and the Culture of Their Time*, Ashgate, 2013, pp. 153-167, see in part. "Fantin and Tannhauser", pp. 161-167.

[76]See Léonce Benedite, *Catalogue des lithographies originales de Henri Fantin-Latour*, 1899, Librairie-imprimeries réunies, Paris, 1899 (new ed., 2016, https://issuu.com/designedit/docs/fantin). On Fantin-Latour's technique, see. W. McC. "Fantin-Latour Lithographs", *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art 7*, no. 9 1920): 135–38.

1876 and in the lithographs shown in the 1878 and 1880 Salons. Nearly all were inspired by Wagner's *The Rheingold*.

What lithography offered to Fantin-Latour becomes evident when we compare the lithograph *Tannhäuser: Venusberg* (1876, pencil in black with scraping on stone on greyish-ivory chine laid down on thick ivory wove paper, 498 × 598 mm, The Art Institute, Chicago) with the earlier oil painting. The "otherworldliness" of the scene, already suggested by the lightly brushed tones of the painting, is made more immediate by the surprising manner in which Fantin-Latour succeeds in obtaining lithographic tones of black and of white. The same effect is achieved in many other outstanding lithographs inspired by the spiritual experience that Fantin-Latour believed Wagner's music opened to him. In the *Finale de la Walkure* (1879, crayon and grattoir on cream-coloured paper, h. 40, x w. 56.8, Musée de Grenoble), for instance, contrasts of blacks and white illuminate the scene. The figures appear to be flying in a dream-like world; they are transmogrified, as if carried away by the movement, the *élan* of music.

To achieve this effect Fantin-Latour the technique of a style of line-engraving, the mezzotint, adapted to lithography. Its dark-to-light method, where the metal plate of copper or later steel is closely and uniformly striated, means that, if inked, the whole impression would be black. The design is then produced by burnishing it on the plate. Fantin-Latour seems to have first scraped the lithographic stone, finely but not as regularly as the rocker would on metal plates and then applied the design by transferring it from paper.[77]

Mezzotints had long been passionately collected in England, where they were appreciated as original creations and not just interpretative reproductions of paintings. Edwin Edwards, with whom Fantin-Latour spent time in England, had become an engraver and the painter had first met him when Edwards came to Paris to have some of his etchings printed. Fantin-Latour could not but have seen the work of another English engraver, Richard Josey (1840-1906), who produced a mezzotint of James McNeill Whistler's *Arrangement in Grey and Black No. 1*, known as *Portrait of the Painter's mother,* (1871, Oil on canvas, h. 144.3 cm × 162.4 cm Musée d'Orsay, Paris). There is little doubt that it

[77] See McK., W. McC., "Fantin-Latour Lithographs", *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art*, vol. 7, no. 9, 1920, pp. 135–138 (www.jstor.org/stable/25136419).

was in English mezzotints that Fantin-Latour found his inspiration for his "Wagnerian" lithographs.

In the production of famous British mezzotint makers, like John Landseer and John Martin in particular, luminosity is achieved by the contrast of the velvety black with the brilliance of "absolute" white. The effect is dramatic. Fantin-Latour's achievement was to produce lithographic tones of black and white that created an effect of dreaminess and otherness and expressed for him his experience of Wagner's music. At the beginning of the following century, the British art historian and critic, Cyril Davenport wrote that "the mezzotint engraver transforms the picture as it were, into a new language".[78] Fantin-Latour found his "voice" in the language of the mezzotint, creating a new 'musical' lithographic language, unique in contemporary attempts to evoke the experience of music.

Reaction: the visual in Debussy's impressionistic music:

The music of Claude Debussy (1862-1918) shows the strong influence that the aesthetics of *correspondances* had on own his musical sensitivity. The term "impressionism" was first applied to Debussy by the secretary of the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* in 1887. By that year, Wagnerism and symbolism were the dominant aesthetic form, but Debussy reacted strongly against Wagner's style of composition. Though applied pejoratively, the term nevertheless adequately defines the mood and spirit of Debussy's compositions.

Literary examples of Debussy's aesthetic frame of mind can be seen in two poems written by him and published in December 1892 by Francis Vielé-Griffin in his literary journal *Entretiens Politiques et Littéraires*. Debussy set these poems to music in 1893 under the title *Proses Lyriques* and he performed them with his then fiancée Thérèse Rogers in 1894.[79]

The last lines of the poems read: "D'étranges soupirs s'élèvent sous les arbres Mon âme! / C'est du rêve ancien qui t'éteint!". Note the use of words such as "soupirs", which means "sighs", but is also used in music to refer to a rest. This transposing or transferring of the musical to the literary is characteristic of the language of *correspondances*, while the dreamlike image of singing touching the soul also shows a strong Baudelairean influence. The visual and the pictorial play an even greater part than the literary in Debussy's music, to the point that he could be said to have pictorial-musical ideas, as suggested by the titles

[78] Cyril Davenport, *Mezzotints*, London, Methuen and Co., 1904, p. 69.

[79] Cf. Arthur B. Wenk, *Claude Debussy and the Poets*, University of California Press,

he gives to his pieces, such as *Clair de Lune* and *Feux d'Artifice*. One should stress, though, that in the scores of these piano *Preludes* each piece is just given a number, from one to twenty-four. It is only at the end of the piece that the composer has added what can be called a "post-title", in the form of a word, a sentence or a verse (written in brackets and with ellipses). Nevertheless, in his challenging essay, *Monsieur Croche Antidilettante,* first published late in his life in 1921, Debussy wrote that a musical movement, with its "mysterious mathematics", was the artistic equivalent of "the changing motions of the natural world". The "post-titles" of *Préludes* are intended to refer to an idea, an image or an emotion, 'sparked off', so to speak, by the pieces already composed.

Thus, in Debussy's compositions, the musical language was meant to be heard as evoking visual impressions in sound, as if from an Impressionist painting. Finding a source of inspiration in nature, as in the compositions *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un Faune* (1894) or *La Mer* (1905) was something that Debussy claimed to have in common with the Impressionist artists. He believed that the Impressionists had sought to create an "impression"' that spoke directly to the emotions of the viewer. The correlation between visual sensation and its expression in music was, for him, evident. Debussy saw his music as the aural equivalent of visual impressions and sought to achieve this with a style of composition that used dissonances and harmonies with tonal leaps, sometimes unrelated to one another.

In Debussy's piano compositions, in particular, musical structure became secondary to musical colour and tone. The introduction of composing in a key that was not clearly identifiable as major or minor was a device that made the music seem ungrounded and fleeting, sensory and spontaneous. These changes in musical convention were first perceived as offensive to an academic establishment by then wedded to a symphonic "Wagnerian" idea of music. In later lyrical works, notably his opera in five acts *Pelléas et Mélisande* from a poem by the symbolist Maurice Maeterlinck, dissonance became more of a metaphoric device, intended to suggest the telling of a drama. Nevertheless, Debussy's piano compositions and his lyrical poems are the closest that any French composer of this period came to translating visual impressions into musical ones.

Conclusion: art, music and the new aesthetics

This chapter has shown how a new aesthetics came to dominate thinking about the Arts in the second half of the nineteenth century. In articulating the new aesthetics, literary

and art critics had a major influence. They looked at paintings not so much for their subject, but for the aesthetic emotion that a work sought to elicit in the viewer. In literature, this led some poets to use the musicality of French verse as a means to evoke the essence of music. Conversely, musical compositions known as program music, such as Hector Berlioz's *La Damnation de Faust* or Richard Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegels Lustige Streiche*, were presented as a form that succeeded in telling a tale in musical language.

We have shown the limits of poetic language as a way of eliciting an emotion akin to musical emotion. Poems that claimed to achieve this, can only be read as metaphors for music. In program music, meanwhile, Berlioz and Strauss's titles suggested that the composer wanted the listener to "read the music" sequentially and literally, as if he or she were reading the story it claimed to tell, but the eponymous characters in these works are more like emblems for the style of their compositions. In Berlioz's piece, Faust is representative of the singularity of the sequences of chords and the orchestration, in Strauss's, Eulenspiegel is emblematic of the polytonal treatment of the two themes that crisscross the work.

Michael Tymkiw, in his analysis of Fantin-Latour's lithographs, writes that the artist's attempt at "transcribing" Wagner's music failed and remained "descriptive or most frequently narrative.[80] Odilon Redon in his judgment on Fantin-Latour's original lithographs, on the other hand, better expressed the nature of the challenge that Fantin-Latour and all artists faced in translating the language of music into their own. Despite his careful research, wrote Odilon Redon, Fantin-Latour did not realize "that no colour can render the musical world, which is uniquely and deeply internal and without support from real nature".

Odilon Redon's comment points to the limits of any attempt to translate music into painting. These limits are imposed by the very essence of music. Already in 1857, as the new aesthetics affirmed *correspondances* between music and art, Herman von Helmholtz, in his popular lecture *On the Physiological Causes of Harmony in Music*, insisted that music is "the most immaterial of the Arts". The immateriality of music makes the

[80] Odilon Redon, *To Myself*, trans. Mira Jacob & Jeanne Wasserman, New-York: George Brazille, 1996, p. 130, quoted by Michael Tymkiw, in "Pictorially transcribing music; the Wagner lithographs of Henri Fantin-Latour and Odilon Redon" in Martha Ward & Anne Leonard ed., Looking and Listening in Nineteenth-Century France, Smart Museum of Art, University of Chicago, 2007.

performer and the listener construct music as it "happens in time". Without the functioning of a 'constructive imagination' particular to the experience of music, a listener would not hear melodies but merely individual tones occurring seriatim. Music creates instant emotions in the performer and the listener – joy, peace, sadness – but, fundamentally, music is self-referential.

The aesthetic emotion created by music is of a different temporal and structural nature to that elicited in poetry or aroused by a painting. This does not mean that the aesthetic emotion of music does not find a *correspondance,* an analogy, or better perhaps, an echo, in the visual experience of the listener. As the conductor Sergiu Celibidache writes, the essence of music lies in "la relation structurelle et intemporelle du son et les structures du moi et des affects humains".[81] Listening to pieces that a contemporary composer, Maurice Rollinat (1846-1903), had composed on poems by Baudelaire, the *Homme de Lettre*s Edmont de Goncourt, in his *Journal* of 14 June 1863, wrote that until then, he had found Rollinat's music either "too macabre or excessively pious". But he found himself "possessed" by the new pieces. This was music, he wrote, "calling for a superior understanding... the music of a poet".[82]

In the Catalogue of the 2017 exhibition *Tintamarre!: instruments de musique dans l'art, 1860-1910,* held at Musée des Impressionnismes in Giverny, the director of the Museum and curator of the exhibition, Frédéric Frank draws attention to the importance of one of its highlights, James McNeill Whistler's portrait of Deborah Haden, *At the piano* (1859-60, oil on canvas, 67 x 91.6 cm, Cincinnati, The Taft Museum of Art). The portrait was first shown in 1860 at the Royal Academy and then in the 1867 Salon. Frédéric Frank writes in his introduction to the *Catalogue*, that Whistler's work had a major influence on Manet, Fantin-Latour, Renoir and Bazille, as an attempt to meet "the challenge of expressing the idea of music in painting".

In painting, an idea can only be expressed allegorically, as was the case of allegories of music, which we analyze in Chapter 4. It is not, however, the idea or the essence of music,

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[81] Sergiue Celibidache, *La Musique n'est rien*, La musique n'est rien: textes et entretiens pour une phénoménologie de la musique réunis et traduits de l'allemand par Hadrien France-Lanord et Patrick Lang, Arles, Actes Sud 2012, pp, 20 ff.

[82] "Une musique d'une compréhension supérieure… de la musique de poète… de la musique parlant aux homes de lettres", Edmond de Goncourt, *Journal. Mémoires la vie littéraire… 2e série, 3e volume, (tome 6 1878-1884)*, Paris, Biliothèque Charpentier, p. 265-6 (my translation).

that some painters, we believe, attempted to express, but the emotion of the musical moment which they chose as their subject. In this regard, new possibilities offered themselves to nineteenth-century artists. While the materials used in painting had hardly changed since the preceding centuries, chemistry created new colourings, opening up new opportunities for the painter's palette. Artists could think of their art not only in musical terms, as the idea of "correspondances" invited them to do but could now treat the colours on their palettes as an essential material to render the musical experience of the musical moment they depicted. Expression rather than translation now became a possibility. The next chapter will look at these developments and consider the impact they had on the modern art of the period.

Chapter 3

PICTORIAL ALLEGORIES OF MUSIC

As music began to occupy an increasingly important place in the public and private spheres, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed a revival of interest in myths and traditional folk tales, both for the stories they tell and for the legendary or mythical characters who appear in them. These myths and tales have long been understood as forms of allegory, wherein events and characters function as symbolic representations of virtue, (i.e., abnegation, fidelity) or vice (i.e., greed selfishness).

Characters and narratives from the myths of Antiquity, as well from the Bible, are depicted in many pictorial works of the Classical period. Taking the example of Orpheus and Euridice, relevant to this chapter, *The Gallery Companion* lists three major paintings that take their story as a subject: Giovanni Bellini's *Orpheus* (ca 1515), Roelandt Savery's *Orpheus* (1628) and Rubens's magnificent *Death of Euridice* (1636-38), as well as Nicolas Poussin's *Landscape with Orpheus and Eurydice* (1648-50).[83]

The place of allegorical scenes and allegorical figures in public buildings of the nineteenth century

In the literature of the nineteenth century, as in earlier periods, allegorical figures old and new, continued to be used, particularly in poetry, as the embodiments of strongly experienced emotions. Thus, in Victor Hugo's poem *La Conscience* (1853), the figure of Cain fleeing the wrath of God is the embodiment of a relentless gnawing remorse. In Baudelaire's poem *Le Cygne* (1877), the swan who escapes from his cage and seeks some refuge in the devastated landscape created by modern urbanism embodies the despairing loneliness of all exiles.

But it was in pictorial art that allegory, so present in the classical pictorial tradition (outlined above), continued to be used. This continued use answered the need to provide large-scale interior decoration for public buildings. During the July Monarchy and the Second Empire, artists who gained official Salon recognition were offered commissions to decorate public buildings. An outstanding example was the first commission that

[83] Marcus Lodwick, *The Gallery Companion. Understanding Western Art*, Thames and Hudson, 2005. Altogether seventy-six illustrations of classical characters are detailed in *The Gallery Companion*.

Delacroix received in 1833 to decorate the *Salon du Roi* in the Chamber of Deputies at the *Palais Bourbon*. In 1837/38, he began work on a second, more ambitious commission, the decoration of the Library at the *Palais Bourbon*, a project he finally completed in 1847. It was conceived as a sequence of mixed historical and classical figures and scenes. Delacroix devised a scheme that continued to be a model for the decoration of public space in the decades that followed.

The scheme extended from the south to the north ends of the library and was intended to celebrate the subjects of the books in the library as they were arranged and classified according to conventions in use since the early-seventeenth century in booksellers' catalogues and adopted in Paris by Gabriel Naudé for the *Bibliothèque Mazarine,* which opened in 1643. This classification was systematized by Brunet, author of the *Manuel du Libraire et de l'Amateur de Livres* (four Paris editions, between 1810 and 1842-44). Its *Table Méthodique* was used as a reference for the books in a number of important municipal libraries, including, for example, Grenoble's.

During the Third Republic, a new impetus was given to the murals and ceiling decorations of large public architectural spaces by state and municipal authorities. Encouraged by Charles Philippe de Chennevieres, the Director of Fine Arts between 1870 and 1880, the Third Republic undertook a vast program of artistic decoration in many public buildings. The reconstruction of the Paris Hôtel de Ville, begun soon after its destruction by fire during the *Commune* of 1871, set an example for the municipalities of major provincial cities. Ninety-seven painters and over one hundred sculptors were commissioned to decorate the new Hôtel de Ville.[84] To the mix of historical classical and mythological scenes, which followed the scheme inaugurated largely by Delacroix, the painters added two new categories: scenes celebrating the countryside around Paris and the industrial life of the city's inhabitants.

The completion of the Paris Hôtel de Ville's decoration was followed by a proliferation

[84] For an overall view of the decorations and a list of the artists involved, see Jean-Jacques Lévêque, L'Hôtel de Ville de Paris, Paris, Pierre Horay Éditeur, 1983. A full list was given by the Paris official archivist, Lucien Labeau in his *L'Hôtel de ville de Paris*, Paris, Paris, impr. de Chaix Lambeau, 1912, available on Gallica (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k6503524g?rk=42918;4 last.cons.06/2019).Unfortunately, dimensions are not given.

of mythological scenes in the decoration of municipal architectural spaces undertaken by provincial municipalities. The ostentatious display of mythological scenes or figures in the Hôtel de Ville may have been toned down in these other public buildings, but overall, the Paris decorations established conventions and created clichés that were followed in all provincial cities, with the addition, dictated by municipal pride, of scenes of local life. One of the last town halls to be constructed was in Tours in the Loire Valley. It was designed by the Tours architect Victor Laloux and built between 1896 and 1904. Among its decorations were allegories of *Courage and Strength* by Jean-Baptiste Hugues in the west wing and, in the east wing, of *Education and Vigilance* by Alphonse Cordonnier. Later, in 1901-1903, the Council Room was decorated with a tryptic on Jeanne of Arc's life by Jean-Paul Laurens.

In *pompier* paintings, nude female figures, often set on a seaside background, continued to be depicted and exhibited in many Salons between 1860-1890, with examples including Jules Laurens *La Baigneuse* (1864), Adolphe Bouguereau's *Baigneuse* (1879) or *Les Deux Baigneuses* also by Bouguereau (1884). In the Paris Hôtel de Ville, nude female figures were used to symbolize not only the Arts but the sciences as well, blatantly appealing to the latent voyeurism of the Parisian public. But in the decoration of public spaces in staunchly Catholic cities such as, among others, Tours, the female figures used to symbolize the Arts, sciences and virtues, were more chastely partially clothed. It could be said that the only originality of provincial schemes, compared to the Paris decorations they tried to emulate, was an added dimension of prudery.

More importantly from our perspective, despite the increasing interest in music shown by French society, allegorical scenes with music as their themes or figures symbolizing Music as an art are not frequent in the decoration of public spaces, even among the numerous decorations of the Paris Hôtel de Ville. One allegorical figure for an arch, by Jacques Ferdinand Humbert (1842-1934), known from its preparatory drawing and destined for a cornice, features the single figure of a woman holding a lyre. But, as shown by the branch of an olive tree in her other hand, she is not an allegory of music, but a *passepartout* figure of the province of Languedoc (graphite and pastel, h. 68 x w. 93, Paris, Petit Palais). On the coffered ceiling of its Petit Salon, a composition by Felix-Joseph Barrias (1822-1907) shows a woman emerging from clouds and conducting a small orchestra of violins and a cello on her left, drum and guitar to the right. On the ceiling of the grand reception room, the Salle des Fêtes (50 metres long, 30 meters wide

and 12 meters high), is featured Henri Gervex's *La Musique à travers les Âges*.[85] A woman is shown is on stage singing to the accompaniment of members of an orchestra, their backs to the viewer. On the right is a lodge, presumably in an opera house, with characters holding binoculars. The clever perspective has allowed Gervex to place, at the centre of his composition, a vast ethereal allegory directly under the gaze of the viewer below. It shows a stand with score, an oboe, a violin and a larger cello played by a putto. Over and above the group, in ethereal clouds, a herald in the form of a woman holds a trumpet in her right hand and, on her stretched left arm, a crown of laurels.

It is notable that in both these compositions music is represented through scenes alluding to its performance, and that no single figure is immediately and directly identifiable as the embodiment of the idea of Music itself as an art. One of the reasons must be that in the stories transmitted by the classical tradition that could have provided models, none of the nine Muses (those daughters of Zeus born of nights of passion with Mnemosyne, and representing the power of inspiration shared by all creators in poets and artists) has Music as her special area of influence.[86] Among them, at least five have musical instruments as attributes but this was due to the fact that, in Greece and in Rome, the role of music was mostly to accompany recitation, dancing and dramatic performance. As examples, Terpsichore, with attributes such as a harp or lyre, is the Muse of Dance and Lyric Poetry, while Euterpe, the Muse of Music, depicted with a flute or trumpet, is also the Muse of Lyric Poetry, as is Erato with her tambourine and lyre. To find a figure that could be immediately identified as symbolizing Music, painters (and sculptors), had to turn to other Ancient figures, Homer and Orpheus, who were already associated with the art of the musician in the paintings of the preceding periods. As pointed out in Chapter 1, these two mythical figures, with the rich literary and artistic tradition attached to them, both had a claim to becoming the figure best able to express the links between poetry, art and music to a Nineteenth-century public versed in classical culture. However, the first decades of the century saw the figure of Homer start to be eclipsed, while that of Orpheus reached its zenith in figurative arts in the second half of the century.

Orpheus Redivivus

[85] The exact dimensions of this oil on panel are not known. A black and white photograph is available on https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b84356527/f1 last accessed 06/2019.

[86] See Marcus Lodwick, op. cit., p. 81.

The development during the second period of the century of a new pictorial treatment of Orpheus, allowing for a visual rather than a literal legibility of the narrative, can be attributed to two important cultural factors already visible in the earlier period. The first was a "new celebration" of Orpheus which took place at the time. Major operatic works contributed to this celebration, in particular Gluck's opera *Orphée*. From Monteverdi's *Orfeo* 1607 to Marc-Antoine Charpentier's cantata *Orphée descendant* (circa 1683), the story of Orpheus has inspired a number of musicians, but it is Gluck's opera, composed in 1762 that, to quote Jacqueline Bellas, "stabilized" the musical myth of Orpheus. A rendition of the celebrated lament "J'ai perdu mon Eurydice" became a requirement in the repertoire of amateur tenors, strengthening the association of the figure of Orpheus with the power of Music. [87]

Two dates are important in the new musical celebration of Orpheus, 1824 and 1858. Gluck's opera was first performed in the Paris Opéra in 1774 and several times in the following years. However, though other works by Gluck continued to be performed in the Opera, *Orphée* ceased to be in the repertoire until a new production in 1824. The rediscovery helped to focus attention on the place that music holds in the original myth. It inspired Liszt to compose his symphonic poem number 4, *Orpheus*, when the Court of Weimar, where he was resident composer, asked him to help in the production of Gluck's opera in 1853-54. Berlioz also re-wrote the original score to adapt it to contemporary voices and instruments.

In 1858, Offenbach's *Orphée aux enfers* was performed in *Théatre des Bouffes-Parisiens*. Its satirical parody of Gluck's work went as far as integrating the original lament of Orpheus into its score. As noted by Bellas, the operetta is a "dépoétisation" of the myth. In demystifying Gluck's grieving lover, Offenbach encouraged a new, less Romantic way of looking at the story.

A second factor was educational as well as cultural: the pre-eminence of the Latin Orpheus over the Greek Homer in the classical education of the period. Two Latin literary works also contributed to a revival of interest in the myth. The first is Ovid's *Metamorphoses.* In Book XI, lines 1-66 the story of Orpheus is told at great length and in great detail. A close reading of the poem shows that, according to Ovid, it was the beauty of Orpheus's music that infuriated the Mænads because it cancelled out theirs. In

[87] Jacqueline Bellas, 'Orphée au XIXe et au XXe siècle: interférences littéraires et musicales', *Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études littéraires françaises,* 1970, no 22 (online).

the poem, Orpheus' severed head and his lyre, thrown into the river, continue to make music. The other classical source is Virgil's *Georgics*; Book IV, lines 453-13 focus on the fate of Eurydice, as foreseen by a Carpathian seer, Caerulian Proteus ("caerulian", it should be noted means "deep blue").

According to the Catalogue of the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, some nineteen editions or re-prints of *The Metamorphoses* were published in France between 1860 and 1890. Most of them are selections, often in Latin with parallel translation, that contain the relevant lines. In the same period, twenty-seven editions or re-prints of the *Georgics* were available, a majority of them in Latin with parallel translation. They were mostly destined for students of upper-secondary schools, *Collèges* run by religious orders and state *Lycées*, where the sons of social elites acquired a classical education.

In the humanities curriculum, the Latin language and Roman literature dominated. Regular practise, scanning and learning by heart, gave the students a direct access to the texts of Ovid and Virgil and a familiarity with the celebrated passages of these source texts that they retained during their entire adult life. Greek was also studied in these educational establishments, but access to the Greek text of the Iliad and the Odyssey was rendered difficult by their prosody and their archaism. The students' knowledge of Greek Poetry was often limited to Anacreon. These original texts hardly ever featured in the secondary curriculum, and Greek poetry was often limited to this. In the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, familiarity with Homer was gained through French translations of the *Iliad* and of the Odyssey by Anne Dacier and Houdard de la Motte.[88] According to the *Catalogue* of the Bibliothèque Nationale, twenty-eight editions of Madame Dacier's unfaithful but elegant renderings of Homer, were published between 1712, when it was first published, and 1827 when Ingres completed his decoration of the Louvre ceiling, *L'Apothéose d'Homère*. By that time, however the rhetoric of eighteenth-century translations from the Classics had fallen out of fashion.

The eclipse of Homer and the rise of Orpheus: Ingres and Delacroix

In classical mythological scenes, Delacroix's decoration for the Library of the Palais Bourbon heralded the change. *Orphée vient policer les Grecs encore sauvages et leur*

[88] See Richard E. Morton, *Examining Changes in the Eighteenth-Century French Translations of Homer's Iliad by Anne Dacier and Houdar de La Motte*, Lewiston N.Y, E. Mellen press, 2004.

enseigne les arts is a large oil on canvas.[89] It fills the great semi-dome, measuring eleven meters by eight, situated to the right of the entrance of the Library at its south end.[90] Orpheus is depicted at the centre, holding his lyre and bringing the Arts and civilization to Greek men and women as centaurs and naiads watch in amazement. Apart from the lyre, the only association of the figure of Orpheus with music is allusive, suggesting, according to Delacroix himself, that the two goddesses of the Arts and Peace depicted descending from the sky to earth are dawn by "the enchanter's voice". [91] Delacroix started work on the canvas ten years after Ingres had produced his own large composition for the Louvre, *L'Apothéose d'Homère*, which celebrated Homer as a supreme deity worshipped by illustrious past literary and artistic worthies.

In art as well as in literature, choices of subjects and their treatment reflected the predominant trends in taste and aesthetics. Ingres (1789-1867) was one of the last representatives of Neo-classicism. Like all Neo-classicists, among whom it was said the Bard had found His clergy (the Ancients) and His catechumens (the Moderns), Ingres worshipped Homer. Homer was Ingres's favourite poet.[92] He believed Homer to be "the principle and the model of all beauty in the Arts as in Letters".[93]

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[89] Having earlier tried and given up tempera, for his decorative paintings, whether on plaster or on mounted canvas, Delacroix used the technique of adding a little colourless wax to his oils. See Gilles, to borrow Gilles's Néret', *Eugène Delaccroix. The Prince of Romanticism*, Taschen, 2010, p. 77.

[90] For a diagram and description of the decorative scheme, see Simon Lee, *Delacroix*, Phaidon, 2015, p. 208-218. A detailed study of the relations between systems of book classification and library decoration schemes, and of how Delacroix approached them, is provided by Anita Hopmans in her article "Delacroix's Decorations in the Palais Bourbon Library: A Classic Example of an Unacademic Approach", in *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art*, vol. 17, 4 (1987), p. 240-269.

[90] For an overall view of the decorations and a list of the artists involved, see Jean-Jacques Lévêque, *L'Hôtel de Ville de Paris*, Paris, Pierre Horay Éditeur, 1983.

[91] Delacroix's own description of the scene in the daily paper *The Constitutionel*, 31Janary 1848 (translated and quoted in Simon Lee, op. cit., p.209).On the opposite Northern dome, a historical scene, "Attila suivi de ses hordes barbares foule aux pieds l'Italie et les Arts" is a powerful allegory of savagery.

[92] On the importance of the legendary figure of Homer for Neo-Classicists, see Regis Michel, Le *Beau idéal ou l'art du concept*, Paris, Éditions de la Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989, in part., p. 110-112.

[93] "Homère est le principe et le modèle de toute beauté dans les arts comme dans les lettres", as reported by his biographer H. Delaborde in *Ingres, sa vie, ses travaux, sa doctrine…,* (Paris, 1870), quoted in Regis Michel, op. cit., p. 145.

The younger Delacroix (1798-1863) was influenced by the tastes and aesthetics of Romanticism, characterized in French Literature, notably poetry. The poets Alphonse Lamartine (1790-1869), Alfred de Musset, Alfred de Vigny (1797-1863) and Gérard de Nerval (1808-1855) saw in Orpheus the archetype of the lyric poet who had brought, in the latter's words "sublime truths" to men.[94] Delacroix's own words testify that he shared the view that Orpheus was the "enchanter" who had brought the Arts to the Greeks and civilized mankind.

It would be wrong, however, to speak of an 'opposition' between the two allegorical figures of Homer and Orpheus between 1827 and 1837; i.e., between the year Ingres completed his *L'Apothéose d'Homère* in the Louvre, and the year Delacroix began his Orpheus composition for the Library of the Palais Bourbon. Delacroix also made use of the figure of Homer as an allegory for the Arts. In the northern hemicycle of the Library, in one of the five smaller dome bays, his composition Alexandre *et les Poèmes d'Homer* shows Homer wearing a wreath and holding a lyre as Alexander receives his poems. The figure of Homer joins also Dante in Delacroix's pen-and-ink on paper sketch, *Dante rencontrant Homère dans les Enfers.*[95]

These different associations suggest the various options that presented themselves to painters looking for a single significant allegorical figure. Strikingly, in Ingres's case, there is one known sketch where it is the figure of Orpheus that joins Homer. *Homère et Orphée* (1826/7, oil sketch, 44 x 53 cm, Montauban, Musée Ingres, ill. 3*)* is a preparatory sketch for figures to be included in his large allegorical composition *L'Apothéose d'Homère,* commissioned for the ceiling of the Louvre Grande Galerie, later replaced by a copy, and to be shown at the 1855 Exposition Universelle. The sketch shows Homer's face and part of his trunk facing the painter. On his left, Ingres has sketched a hazy figure turned towards Homer as if looking over the Bard's right-hand shoulder. There is no reason to doubt the identification of that second figure as Orpheus, as given in the title of the sketch.

In the finished Louvre painting, the figure standing to the right, that is on the noble side of Homer, is Dante, identified by his green Italian headgear. Though Dante is partially in the shadow of Homer, as it were, he is placed at nearly the same level as the Greek poet.

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[94] Nerval, *Les Filles du Feu*, 1854, quoted by Léon Cellier in "Le Romantisme et le mythe d'Orphée", *Cahiers de l'Association internationale des études francaises*, 1958, n°10. pp. 138-157.

[95] These sketches in the Louvre Cabinet des Estampes. See Anita Hopmans, op. cit., pp 251, 256, 260.

Dante looks up at Homer in admiration, as a resplendent angel is about to place a crown on Homer's head. The figure of a bearded Orpheus is shown in a white robe on the left of Homer's elevated throne, looking up at him in veneration and holding up a musical instrument. Curiously, the instrument is not a lyre but a cithara, a much larger instrument and one of common attributes not of Orpheus but of Apollo. Orpheus is depicted in front of a group but at a significantly lower level than both Homer and Dante.

The representation of Orpheus in the *Homère et Orphée* oil sketch is very different. Orpheus's half-open mouth suggests not so much admiration as anticipation. Above all Orpheus is like "a dwarf looking over the shoulder of a giant", a phrase often applied to the idea that "modernity" respects "antiquity" but moves on and leaves leaving antiquity behind.

Art historians all agree that *L'Apothéose of Homère,* was an artistic declaration of Ingres's commitment to classicism. This widely shared view is further supported by the fact that soon after completing the ceiling, Ingres began working on a drawing destined to be used for a line engraving that would have ensured an extensive circulation for the composition. Ingres only finished it in 1865, two years before his death. The drawing (lead pencil and lavis on paper, h. 64.5 x w. 53 cms) is now preserved in the Louvre *Cabinet des Estampes.*[96] The reduction of the composition into a print would have been faithful to the large oil composition and to its organisation, while the sharpness of line engraving would have rendered Ingres's clarity of line even more striking. If we see the painting as an artistic manifesto, then the intended engraving would have been Ingres's artistic testament.

Homère et Orphée, of course is only a sketch, and one cannot draw too much meaning from the posture given to Orpheus or from the haziness of its figuring, shaped by light strokes of brushes rather than by lines. Nevertheless, the spontaneity of the sketch may be said to reveal, in an artist like Ingres, otherwise so in control of his art, the unconscious realisation of the new challenge about to be faced by his allegorical art.

The gradual eclipse of the Classical Homer by a Romantic Orpheus that took centre stage in the 1860s was anticipated in the early decades of the nineteenth century by compositions that treated the myth as an allegory of the tragedy of human love. These compositions presaged the renewed interest in the figure of Orpheus that was beginning

[96] Reproduced and described in Regis Michel, op. cit., notice no 86.

to make itself known, even if, in their essentially narrative and theatrical approach, the figure remained mythological, not symbolic.

Beginnings: Mythological Orpheus, Pierre Lacour Père (1745-1814) and Michel Martin Drolling (1789-1851)

Two works of the preceding period herald the reappearance of Orpheus as subject matter: Pierre Lacour's *Orphée perdant Eurydice* (1805, oil on wood panel, 48.5 x 58.5 cm, Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux-Arts, ill. 4) and Michel Martin Drolling's *Orphée et Eurydice* (1820, oil on canvas, 0.385 x 0.465 cm, Dijon, Musée National Magnin, ill. 5). A comparison of the two pictorial treatments of the mythological tale suggests that Drolling was influenced by Lacour. In this sense, the two works could be said to already constitute the beginnings of a revival of the figure of Orpheus himself. But it was only when the myth began being reinterpreted by later artists that art witnessed the later emergence of Orpheus as a possible emblematic figure of Music.

The painter and engraver Pierre Lacour was an artist who painted not only mythological and historical works, but also landscapes and portraits. He was born in 1745 in Bordeaux. He was a student of the engraver André Lavau and then of the painter Joseph-Marie Vien in Paris. After winning second place in the Prix de Rome in 1769, he returned to Bordeaux in 1774 where he became a member of the *Académie* in 1779. He was a friend of the architect Louis-Guy Combes with whom he updated the *Grand Théâtre* in 1779 and subsequently established the Beaux-Arts of the city, where he was the chief conservationist. He exhibited nearly twenty paintings in the Bordeaux salon of 1774 and exhibited in the Paris Salon for the first time in 1796.

Lacour's *Orphée Perdant Eurydice* is a highly dramatic painting in the classical style. The focus is on Orpheus on the right-hand side of the painting at the moment of loss. Eurydice is featured on the left-hand side on the painting, wrenched away from him. Both figures are lit almost as if by a spotlight, adding to the theatrical effect with hands outstretched and bodies twisted. Eurydice is mid-step and is being pulled back into the darkness by a third, more shadowy figure that must be Charon. The land from which he hails is a land of shadows, and Lacour emphasizes this by placing him in the background. The centrepiece holding the three figures together is a flowing ochre cloak, which separates Orpheus and Eurydice by forming a physical barrier, but also paradoxically brings the three figures together at the moment of loss. Orpheus' twisted body as he looks back is placed on a rock by Lacour, in an almost stage-like posture. Eurydice seems to

attempt to climb onto the rock, but Charon's leg stops her. From Orpheus' left hand swings his lyre, while his right hand is raised to Eurydice. Eurydice tries to pull away Charon's ochre cloak but does so fruitlessly.

Michel Martin Drolling's *Orphée and Eurydice* continues the dramatic and theatrical classicism which characterizes Lacour's depiction. Michel Martin Drolling began his artistic career under his father, Martin Drolling. He then became a student of Jacques Louis Davis in 1806 and won the Prix de Rome in 1810 for his painting *Colère d'Achille*. He was elected a member of the Académie des Beaux-Arts de l'Institut de France in 1837 and received a teaching position in the École des Beaux-Arts de Paris.

Though his *Orphée and Eurydice* was painted fifteen years after Lacour's work, the painting has many similarities with the former that may have influenced it. Both Lacour and Drolling have chosen to represent a climactic moment and it is the narrative of the myth. Drolling, like Lacour, uses a triangular formation: on the left Orpheus nearly naked stretches out his arms towards the inert and supine Eurydice. He is about to pull Eurydice from the Hades, with the help of Mercury, identified by his caduceus, suggested by the volutes of mist around the group. Behind Euryidice, Mercury has emerged from mist to hold her on the right. Orpheus is mid-step, arms outstretched towards Eurydice, with his left hand seeming to briefly touch her forearm. Prominent in the foreground is his lyre, which he has abandoned on the ground. His posture and the dusty pink cloak flowing out behind him create a sense of urgency and movement. While his body fully faces the viewer, his face is turned towards and fixed on Eurydice. His pose contrasts with Eurydice's, stretched nearly horizontally and wearing a white garment wrapped fully around her, twisted and caught and almost transparent.

In the background on the right, the river Styx is shown, with its boat just distinguishable emerging from a red sky. Charon's figure, with green cloak and winged helmet, emerges from the cloud, which is white. Eurydice herself is being forcibly pulled back to the Styx and is nearly horizontal with her feet off the ground. Her posture and the colour white suggest that she already belongs to the other world. Orpheus's lyre lies in the foreground, abandoned in haste as he reaches for his wife. The faces are characteristically neo-classical, with strong profiles. The only figure shown facing the viewer is Charon, but, as in Lacour, none of the three figures look at the viewer. The viewer is a spectator, a witness to an inevitable event.

In both Lacour and Drolling's paintings, the episode is treated in a most dramatic fashion. The theatrical nature of the representation is shown in the positioning of the three bodies

in both paintings, a positioning that would, outside of a theatrical setting, be almost impossible to maintain. The use of light in both paintings draws the eye of the viewer to the group formed by the three figures in the same way stage lighting would. However, their use of colour is different. Drolling uses softer colours with white, pinks and greens. In contrast Lacour uses red and golds, stronger and darker, but his figures are also softer and less linear. Both paintings construct a scene which is theatrical. This is all the more striking in Drolling's painting, as the composition of the group is close to that of a sculpture. The pictorial language is that of a mythological scene, rather than of a narrative.

Romantic Orpheus: Camille Corot (1860, Francois-Louis Français (1863) and Emile Levy (1866)

As colour was replacing line in painting already, mythological genre scenes were considered by some critics to be out of fashion. One of these critics, Albert de la Fizelière, in his review "Coup d'œil sur le Salon of 1861", published in *L'Artiste*, wrote that in Salons, "l'allégorie mythologique a fait son temps (had seen its day)".[97] De la Fizelière appears to have ignored the fact that it was in the very same Salon of 1861 that Corot exhibited his *Orphée*. De la Fizelière did not anticipate that mythological figures such as of Orpheus would continue to have a place in the production of the decades that followed Corot's work in the Salon, nor that the figure of Orpheus in particular would emerge in a number of paintings of the period 1860-1890 as a singular allegorical symbol of Music and its power.

Camille Corot's *Orphée ramenant Eurydice des Enfers* (1861, oil on canvas, 112.7 x 19 cm, Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts, ill. 6) is an oblong work where the two figures, Orpheus holding Eurydice behind him by the hand, are featured in the foreground. With his other hand Orpheus holds up his lyre. The lyre's rather prominent position acts as a marker in a scene two thirds of which is taken up by a landscape with trees and a pond. In the background, behind the pond, a group of small figures, female mourners, can be distinguished. Though they are shown standing, the haziness of their forms makes them merge into the landscape, suggestive of the proximity of the entrance to the Underworld. The landscape and the group tell the viewer that the scene is taking place close to it.

Théophile Gautier was far from enthusiastic about the piece. In his *Abécédaire du Salon de 1861*, he criticizes the "bizarre figure of Orpheus and the rigidity of the pose of

[97] *L'Artiste. Beaux Arts et Belles Lettres*, nouvelle série, t. XII, p250-1.

Eurydice: "une Eurydice raide comme une poupée.[98] Gautier, usually appreciative of Corot's landscapes missed the role of the landscape in the painting.[99] Corot did not intend to be realistic in his depiction of the two figures, but to create a Romantic sense of foreboding through the landscape setting. The painting achieves this by way of the subtle melancholic atmosphere of the landscape with the sad poses of the hazy figures of the women, who are already mourning, in the background. This creates the atmosphere of a musical mood of grey, green and blue.

Corot's achievement probably inspired a number of Romantic treatments of the story of Orpheus. Two of particular interest were produced within a few years of Corot's own. They form a cluster, not just by reason of that proximity and of the interval of just three years that separates them, but also because of the important role played by the Musée du Luxembourg in bringing significant examples of contemporary art to a broader public. *Orphée* was originally displayed in the Musée in 1863, moved to the Louvre in January 1874, but returned to the Luxembourg museum soon afterwards. The painting finally returned to the Louvre in 1946 after forty-five years in the Sénat. It is now in *Musée d'Orsay*. In 1818, the Musée was conceived as a gallery which acquired works under the direction of the Beaux-Arts.[100] During the Third Empire, the museum gradually became a 'musée de passage' according to its catalogue of 1874, which could be broadly understood as an antechamber or a holding place for purchases or gifts that were to be given either to the Louvre or to other museums. Though one of its rules was to retain works from artists who had died, this rule was not followed, and these works were replaced as the museum developed. During the Second Empire, works from living artists became part of the museum's ethos as older paintings were moved to other locations. In 1874, a re-organization of its holdings took place. Part of the older collections, works by Delacroix and Aligny, for example, were taken away while some were shown for a short period at the same time as new paintings.

According to the *Catalogue of an Exhibition in the Musée du Luxembourg in 1874*, out of 240 paintings making up the collection held at that date, twenty belonged to the period 1850-1874, ninety-four paintings were painted between 1860 and 1869, and forty-four

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[98] Théophile Gautier, *Abécédaire du Salon de 1861,* Paris: E. Dentu, 1861, p. 112

[99] See Yvon Le Scanff, "Gautier et le "moment" Corot du paysage", *Revue d'Histoire littéraire de la France,* 111e année, no. 2 (avril 2011), pp. 405-416.

were painted between 1870 and 1874. The paintings held by the Musée in 1874 can be said to provide "a vast panorama" of the art of Second Empire and of the beginnings of the Third Republic.[101]

Orphée (1863, oil on canvas, 1.95 x 130 cm, Paris Musée d'Orsay, ill. 7), by François-Louis Français (1814-1897), also came to the Musée from the Salon of 1863. 1834 had been a turning point for F.-L. Français, as he entered the atelier of Jean Gigoux where he was advised and helped by Camille Corot. With the help and influence of Corot, he went to Italy where he spent four years between 1845 and 1849. After his return he exhibited regularly in the Salons and received recognition from the state, with the award in 1853 of "Officier de la Légion d'Honneur". He later became a member of the *Institut de France* in 1890.

The painting shows Orpheus leaning against a central tree, the scale of which almost overwhelms him, while his lyre lies abandoned and alone on the other side of the tree. The reflection of the moon in the foreground illuminates the lyre, but the lamenting Orpheus himself is in shadow on the left, surrounded by rambling trees that appear to reflect his mood. In the background a group of people are seen emerging from a building overgrown with more trees.

According to the *Catalogue of the Musée du Luxembourg*, the painting was a success at the Salon of 1863 and was noted in particular for both for its subject matter and setting. The posture of Orpheus is one of Romantic dejection. And while the focal, central tree and the right side of the picture contain clean lines, the overgrowing trees that dwarf the figure of Odysseus and the ruin in the background contribute to creating a feeling of loneliness and abandonment. The scene catches the melancholy of the moment when, after losing Eurydice, Orpheus has retired to the wilderness. Only the light that falls on the lyre suggests that Orpheus will return to music and find solace in its power.

Emile Levy's *La Mort d'Orphée* (1866, oil on canvas, 206 x. 133 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay, ill. 8) was purchased by the state in the Salon of 1866 and first exhibited in the Musée du Luxembourg between 1867 to 1901, and then sent to the Louvre. Emile Levy (1826-1890) was a French academic painter who painted portraits, genre and history subjects. Originally a student under Édouard Picot and Abel de Pujol, he won the Grand

[101] *Grand Palais: Le Musée du Luxembourg en 1874, Catalogue rédigé par Geneviève Lacambre, avec la collaboration de Jacqueline de Rohan-Chabot,* Paris, Éditions des Musées Nationaux, 1974.

Prix de Rome in 1854. After a two-year stay in Italy (1855 to 1857) he returned to France, and it was during the period that followed that he painted this.

In contrast with the previous two paintings, this painting is populated with figures. It is a carefully arranged, rather contrived composition, filled with the figures of the Thracian Mænads rejoicing in the death of Orpheus in poses that suggest various states of frenzy. According to Ovid, the Mænads were jealous of Orpheus's music and, angered by the fact he could not forget Eurydice, they had violently attacked and killed him after he had lost Eurydice. Two figures of Mænad women stand out in the rather crowded composition. On the right-hand side, one of them dances with her back away from the viewer, lifting her blue robe while her long golden hair falls down her back nearly to her knees. The other woman, her face half-turned to the viewer, has grabbed Orpheus's left arm and is holding a stick in her raised right arm, ready to hit Orpheus again. The body of Orpheus is shown in the foreground in a classical resting posture: he lies on his left side, near naked, with his right arm lying on the ground near with reeds and water lilies. The water is that of the river Hebros into which his head and his lyre will be thrown by the Mænads. The colours of the blues, pinks and green suggest the peacefulness of the place to which Orpheus withdrew after Eurydice's return to Hades, the retreat that he created and filled with his own music and where he now lies. The painter has assumed that the viewer knows the details of the episode he has represented from Ovid. At first sight, the composition is essentially narrative and is an attempt to depict, in an academic manner, the dramatic moment of Orpheus's death before his head was severed. However, one element of the painting does not feature in the story and, when viewed closely, adds a Romantic touch to the scene. Behind the body of Orpheus, Levy has placed the figure of a woman, obviously one of the Mænads, who bends over the body, while trying to lift the cloth under which it lies. There is no frenzy in her face, but a look of curiosity and amazement. By the look on the Maenad's face, Levy seems to suggest that this Maenad realizes that Orpheus's music has already survived and that it will continue to survive his death.

With Romanticism, painting had begun to break away from a mythological figure of Orpheus. Orpheus was emerging as the symbolic figure able to suggest different aspects of the idea of music, a figure which was even more fully realized in paintings of the Symbolic period.

The symbolism of Orpheus's Head: Gustave Moreau (1826-1898) and Odilon Redon

(1840-1916)

Two paintings of the period break away from these Romantic representations of episodes of the myth. The subject is the same in both Gustave Moreau's and Odilon Redon's works, namely the symbolic moment in Ovid's tale when Orpheus's head, having been ripped off by the Mænads and thrown into the river Hebros, continues to sing as it floats on the water, to be washed ashore on Lesbos. The two paintings focus on or rather "freeze" to use a cinematic phrase, that magical moment when Orpheus is transmogrified into his own legend and turns, for the viewer, into a symbol of the eternal power of music. There is a varied pictorial tradition in which severed heads are represented, but both in choosing the head of Orpheus as their subject and in their treatment of it, Gustav Moreau and Odilon Redon (particularly the former, whose work inspired the latter) were innovative in several ways. Firstly, paintings in this tradition, which mostly date from the Renaissance, are pictorial interpretations of two passages from the Old or the New Testament: the decapitation of Holofernes by Judith in the Book of Judith and the passage in Mark 6 that tells of Salome ordering the decapitation of John the Baptist as a gift for Herod. Secondly, all of the paintings in the tradition depict the scene of the decapitation or of the presentation of the head that has just been severed. The act and the reactions to it, not the head itself, are the primary subjects. For instance, in Caravaggio's painting (1598), the decapitation of Holofernes is directly represented, while in Veronese's work (circa 1580) Judith holds up the bleeding head but turns away from it. In another of Caravaggio's paintings (1608), the head of John the Baptist is held by the executioner over a silver dish carried by Salome. Nearer to Moreau's and Redon's time, propaganda images of severed heads appeared in French Revolutionary prints. In the tradition, as well as in Revolutionary prints, the images are characterized by their gruesomeness.[102] Moreau and Redon, on the contrary, emphasize their serenity.

In Gustave Moreau's painting *Orphée* (1865, oil on wood, 155 x 99.5 cm, Paris, Grand Palais/ Musée d'Orsay, ill. 9) a female figure, presumably a woman from Lesbos, is shown holding Orpheus's head on her lap. The woman is dressed in ornate clothing and her face and Orpheus's look very similar, both physically and in expression. Though the figure of the woman dominates the painting as a presence, that presence is calming and

[102] Cf. the severed head of Louis XVI in profile in Ronald Poulson, "la Tête tranchée", La Caricature française et la Révolution, Catalogue, ed.James Cuno,Los Angeles, Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, 1988, p. 16.

contemplative. The day seems to be just ending. The twilight hue and the landscape populated with flowers and turtles add to the mood of reflection and contemplation.

The finery of the woman's clothes is mirrored by the finery of the instrument, which is highly decorated, to match her dress. The clothes and the unusually shaped instrument, a mix of pipes and Arabic zither that stands for the lyre, undoubtedly reflect the orientalist tastes of the time, but the intention is not a gratuitous exoticism, but rather the sublimation of the group. Both the woman and Orpheus have their eyes closed and both are shown in a near profile and seem locked in peaceful reflection. Looks, pose and decor each contribute to exalting the spirituality of the scene. The turtle, which appears at the bottom right-hand of the picture, is a symbol of patience and determination in finding one's spiritual way. One can recall here that Moreau was interested in the contemporary revival of Rosicrucianism associated with symbolism, and promoted by Joséphin Peladan, though he refused to exhibit in the *Salon de la Rose Croix* in 1892.[21]

The strangest and most original feature of the painting is the way Orpheus's head is shown as resting on the musical instrument, as if fused to it. This treatment of the severed head can be compared, however, to the artist's water-colour *Apparition* (1874-76), in which Salome is shown having a vision of John the Baptist's head surrounded by a halo. The same treatment is also found in the artist's *Hérodias et Salomé* (1888). In *Orpheus*, the head is equally transformed by the illusion of its fusion with the instrument. Ennobled and given a spiritual dimension, the head may be seen as symbolic of the spirituality of music. In the background, on a high rock, a pastoral group listens to a flute player, as a reminder to the worshipping viewer that music will always live. Late in his career, in 1891, Moreau returned to the figure of Orpheus with his painting *Orphée sur la Tombe* (after 1891, oil on canvas, h. 173 x w. 128 cms, Paris, Musée Gustave Moreau). The painting is autobiographical and was executed during the painter's mourning of the death of his mistress.[103] An overwhelming sense of rending grief is expressed by the figure of Orpheus in a quasi-crucified position looking into what appears to be small heaps of freshly dug earth. The desolation of the figure is emphasized by a dark background of trees that allow only a portion of white sky to appear above them. Against the trees a half-finished funeral monument, in the form of a Greek temple, is painted in dark ochre, a clear allusion to those erected in the Paris Montmartre cemetery at the time.

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[103] Pierre-Louis Mathieu, Geneviève Lacambre, Marie-Cécile Forest, *Le Musée Gustave Moreau*, Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2005, pp. 76-7

This image of Orpheus' head resting on a lyre, as in the previous painting by Gustav Moreau, was borrowed and adapted by Redon in his *Tête d'Orphée*, (after 1866, oil on canvas, h. 32.2 x w. 40 cms. Paris, Musée d'Orsay, ill. 10), said to have been painted sometime after 1886.[104] There is a drawing by Redon of the same theme, dated from circa 1881, which was shown at the Redon exhibition at Durand-Ruel. In the drawing we can see a singing Orpheus, with his head raised up, chanting from the lyre. The painting is less literal than the drawing, although it is a variation on the same theme. Using Moreau's idea, the painting shows Orpheus with a laurel around his head and his eyes closed, washed up on the ground under a sky which has a large cloud in the centre. The lyre is purple and red, matching the purple of the horizon, while Orpheus's head rests at an angle on a raised mound to the left of the painting. Orpheus himself rendered is in a brown colour with a nuance of red, purple and white and it is impossible to read his expression as his features are only suggestions. This is different from the drawing which instead takes the mythical interpretation of Orpheus's singing more obviously.

The lyre, cloud and laurel are the only parts of the painting which are shown in detail and even so their treatment only hints at what they represent. The painting uses colours and tones that are so subtle that Redon is only one step away from completely abstracting the painting from the myth. The painting appears to turn away from any immediate allegorical interpretation, or even to resist it. But Redon is known to have been an accomplished violinist. As a painter he must have wondered if something so non-literal and transient as music could be captured on a canvas. If so, the contrast between the dark tones of the lower half of the painting and those light ones may express the idea that like Orpheus, the death of music is followed by its rebirth. But we can also see in the treatment of the image, an anticipation, whether conscious or not on Redon's part, of the idea that abstraction may be the best pictorial way of visually expressing the essence of music.

The lyre as a signifier: Orpheus spiritually transformed

In the paintings of Moreau and Redon, the head of Orpheus undergoes a symbolic transformation, but the images produced are not easily accessible. In the academic paintings of the period, the new manner of interpreting the story gives it a broader and perhaps more universal dimension. The paintings we are going to analyse make up the last cluster of works representing Orpheus. In them, Orpheus's attribute, the lyre, is a

[104] Redon returned a number of times to the theme in drawings or pastels.

reminder of his oft retold story. But it is essentially the icon of its meaning, of the spiritual "message" of Music.

The iconic meaning of Orpheus's lyre is exemplified by *La lamentation d'Orphée*, by Alexandre Séon (1855-1917), and by Gaston Bussière's *La Gloire (ou Orphée).* Both of these artists were associated with the late-nineteenth century *Rose et Croix* movement, a syncretic movement that emphasized the universal spiritual dimension present in all art.[105] Both exhibited in the *Salon de la Rose + Croix* (1892-1897) of which Séon was a one of the founders. The Exhibitions were organized by Joséphin Sâr Péladan, founder of the Ordre de la Rose + Croix who published a "grandiloquent" manifesto in Le Figaro of 2 September 1891. Altogether, some 290 artists exhibited in the six Salons, but Péladan's dogmatism alienated the major Catholic symbolist artist Puvis de Chavannes.[106]

Alexandre Séon started his career as a student of the Académie des Beaux-Arts of Lyon. In 1877, he moved to Paris where he encountered, amongst others, Georges Seurat. However, it was while under Puvis de Chavannes that he developed his style, first as a student, then as his assistant. Séon's painting, *La lamentation d'Orphée* (date uncertain, oil on canvas, 73 x l11.6 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay, ill. 11), shows the figure of Orpheus, lying on the sand in a barren and deserted landscape. Rocks in the background and around Orpheus are painted in a very linear manner and reinforce the sense of loneliness and sadness arising out of the scene. Orpheus lies outstretched on the sand as a drowned sailor washed ashore would. His right arm covers his face. The academic pose of the figure draws the immediate attention of the viewer: lying motionless, the figure is one of despair. This is the moment immediately after Eurydice has been lost forever, when Orpheus is overcome with grief.

Attracted first to his group and the stillness of the landscape, the viewer's eye notices the lyre, the only spot of brown colour on the canvas. Orpheus holds his lyre close to him in a gesture similar to an embrace. The radiance of the of the blues and of the yellow of the sand with the stillness of the pose, give the scene an "otherworldly" quality. Its silent emotion evokes the feelings of desolation that accompany grieving. These are universal

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[105] The "rose" is a symbol of beauty, the "croix" a symbol of redemption through it. See Robert Pincus-Witten, *Occult Symbolism in France: Joséphin Péladan and the Salons de la Rose-Croix*, Garland Publishing, 1976. Cf also, the sources quoted in note 21 of this chapter.

[106]Richard Hobbs, "Salon de la Rose + Croix", *GroveOnline* https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T075397

feelings and, as we participate in them vicariously, our eyes notice the only object in the picture, the lyre, the only spot of brown. The lyre is a marker that recalls both the character and the episode alluded to in the painting, but its symbolic function goes beyond that. Orpheus holds it in his left arm, close to him with his right arm in an embrace. Euridice is gone for ever, but the lyre is still there: nothing will separate Orpheus from his music. The power of Music will transcend Death.

Gaston Bussière's *La Gloire (ou Orphée)* (1890, oil on canvas, 220 x 160 cm, Macon, Musée des Ursulines, ill. 12) was exhibited in the 1890 Salon. After the Paris É*cole Des Beaux-Arts*, Bussière (1862-1928) studied in the ateliers of Alexandre Cabanel and of Puvis de Chavannes and became associated with the Rosicrucians. He exhibited in the symbolist *Salon de la Rose + Croix* between 1893 and 1895. Like many of his symbolist friends, Bussière enjoyed the music of Berlioz and Wagner.

La Gloire (ou Orphée) shows three figures: a group in the foreground shows the dead Orpheus, his head and upper body reposing on the lap of a nymph, as if in a Pieta. Her hair is dark brown, her eyes lowered. The colour of the water is whitish with a light tint of green, as are the arms and trunk of the Pieta-like nymph holding Orpheus. Orpheus's head is not severed, though the red of the cloth covering the lower part of his body strongly evokes blood, as do spots of red on the arms of the nymph. A slight lividness, the colour of death, is shared by the body of Orpheus and that of the Nymph holding his corpse. A diaphanous garment half reveals the naked form of the Nymph.

In later works, Bussière was not averse to renewing his acquaintance with the long established *pompier* tradition, where legendary or mythological scenes are the occasion to exhibit naked figures of women in aquatic scenery. Examples include his *Les Néréides* (1902, oil on canvas, 88.9 x 116.2 cms, present location not known, for a reproduction see https://www.artrenewal.org/artworks/les-nereides/gaston-bussiere/37677, last accessed 07/2019) or photographs such as *Ondine dans l'eau* (1900, Macon, Musée des Ursulines). Coupled with these two colours on the opposite sides of the spectrum, is the white gown of the standing nymph.

But there is not even an unconscious hint of Eros and Thanatos in the contrastive representation of this nymph and the other nymph shown standing against the dark background. Clothed in a full white garment with a blond mane of her hair over her shoulder, she looks beyond the group and down to the ground below, directly at the viewer. She is an apparition, depicted as if floating over and beyond the mourning scene below on the right.

Close to his corpse is Orpheus's broken lyre. Orpheus is dead, his music has died with him. Of course, by its essence music is transient. It comes to an end to be reborn again with each new performance. This is what Bussiere means by the word 'gloire' that he added to the title of his painting, and by the way he painted a nymph-like apparition: in death Orpheus will be glorified and the glory of Music is that in its end is also its rebirth.

In conclusion, the history of the representation of Orpheus in the Nineteenth century shows that, as the tale of Orpheus was treated less narratively, his figure acquired a symbolic and later a spiritual dimension that came closer to suggesting the truer essence of musical experience. As we have shown, this evolution was influenced by and reflected in the different aesthetic movements and trends that appeared during the period. With the end of massive programmes of public building undertaken during the Second Empire and the Third Republic, allegories lost their usefulness as an essential element of decoration. In the twentieth century a rare example of such decoration was produced by Raoul Dufy, Ferdinand Léger and other artists for the 1937 International Exhibition in Paris.

Chapter 4

Colour Theory, Art and the Representation of Musical Experience

In allegories of the idea of Music as the Art of Arts, colour remains largely decorative or symbolic. In that function, allegories are part of a long tradition of assigning an inherent symbolic meaning to some colours and particularly to the "triad" of white, red and black. In his *Language of Colour: An Introduction*, Theo van Leeuwen reviews the different theories that in the past that have attributed inherent meanings to colour.[107] These meanings assigned to major colours evolved over the course history, and their evolution was determined by their socio-cultural uses, as a number of major studies by Michel Pastoureau have demonstrated.[108]

Traditionally, inherent values also were assigned to musical modes, each mode said to express a specific emotion. The conjunction of the two traditions led some experimentalists to design musical instruments which could play music according to colour. During the Renaissance, the Milanese artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1527-1593) conducted the first experiment on sound and colour at the end of the sixteenth century. He placed coloured pieces of paper on an early keyboard instrument known as a "gravicembalo". Musical intervals, the steps that make up the distance between notes, were placed alongside colours. High tones were linked to dark colours and low tones to light colours. Bass notes, the lowest notes, were linked to white, and green and blue were used to colour this white. Later, the French Jesuit Louis-Bertand Castel (1688–1757) in his *La musique en couleurs* (1720) developed a musical instrument that related musical harmonies and colour. His "clavecin oculaire" was constructed like a pianoforte, where hammers hit keys, which opened "ampollae" holding coloured substances. In playing the keyboard, colours replaced sound.[109]

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[107] Theo van Leeuwen, *Language of Colour: An Introduction*, Routledge 2010.

[108] See Michel Pastoureau's studies on the meanings assigned to blue green and red and their cultural uses and his *Noir. Histoire d'une couleur*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2008., pp. 50-56 (English transl. *Black: The History of a Color*, Princeton University Press, 2009).

[109] On the "clavecin oculaire", see Corinna Gepner, *Le père Castel et le clavecin oculaire: carrefour de l'esthétique et des savoirs dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, H. Champion, 2014.

In the allegories that we have analysed also, colour is used to suggest emotion, but the emotion is not that of the music of Orpheus's harp, but the dramatic emotion aroused by the episodes of the myth depicted. On the other hand, the "musical paintings" of the nineteenth century under consideration in this chapter, do not use colours for their assumed "natural resonance", i.e., for their traditional symbolic value. The colour harmonies, dissonances and variations on tones in these works structure the representation. They are the visual repertoire of the musical moment depicted, and the means to express the musical experience of that moment captured on the canvas.[110] In this sense the "music" of these paintings expresses or attempts to express the musical emotion created by the moment represented.

The new colour materials

What made these attempts possible for French Modernist painters was, in the first instance, the broadening of the range of pigments available. But the possibilities this offered to painters in their art were also influenced by a new formulation of the laws of light and colour by the French Chemist Eugène Chevreul. As we shall see, these two advances played a growing role in how painters used colours to express musical emotion visually in their works.

First, progress in science and technology in the nineteenth century led to the perfecting of colour pigments by manufacturers and this greatly increased the range of colours and the variety of pigments available. Cobalt, manganese and chlorine had been discovered in the eighteenth century. Further discoveries led to the absorption of traditional chemical lore into a new science of chemistry, first organic then inorganic, with the formulation in chemical notation of the chemical transformations of chemical bodies.

During the nineteenth century, the production of many colours began on an industrial scale in France: among them, burgundy violet, cobalt blues, aquamarines, greens made from arsenic, oranges, reds and white made from zinc and lead. Not satisfied merely with the discovery of new pigments, in their laboratories chemists also worked on the processes required for their industrial fabrication.[111] It was in Dijon in 1781 that the

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[110] These reflexions are inspired by our reading of Richard Wollheim's *Art and its Object*, sections 28-33, Peregrine Books, 1978, pp. 78-89.

[111] Delamare, F. & Guineau, B., *Les matériaux de la couleur*, Paris, Gallimard, 1999, in part. ch. iv, p. 98-126.

chemist Courtois fabricated the first type of white made from zinc, though white made from lead remained the white of choice for painters, as it was easier to apply and spread better on the canvas surface. Another chemist, J.B. Guimet successfully developed a process for the large-scale fabrication of a pigment of blue. Industry followed laboratory discoveries: Frederic Kuhlmann in Lille was among the first to industrially produce sulphuric acid (H2SO4) nitric acid (HNO3), and barium sulphate (BaSO4), used as bases for the synthesis of colour materials.

The possibilities offered by the chemical synthesis of organic chemical components radically changed the market for coloured materials. By the 1860s, chemists were already identifying new extracts from plant tinctures that could serve as principal colorants. These tinctures were the first steps, which led to more discoveries of organic chemical colorants. In 1859, Emanuel Verguin synthesized a component of fuchsia red, which became much sought after under the trade name of magenta. He sold the rights to his discovery to the *Société Renard et Francs* of Lyon.

Until that time, the chemistry of colour had essentially been a mineral-based chemistry. In 1858 in Paris in the laboratory of Wurtz at École de medicine, the Scottish chemist Couper and the German chemist Kekulé began to investigate the structure of inorganic and organic molecules and identified what set them apart i.e., the presence of carbon. Once the molecular structures and their chemical reactions were understood, synthesizing them and manufacturing colours for painters' palettes became commercially profitable. By the end of the nineteenth century, the manufacturers of paints such as Windsor and Newton in England or Lefranc in France were offering an entire range of synthesized colours.

However commercially successful, synthesized colours were not as stable as had first been hoped. For example, the 'rose vif' ordered by Van Gogh between 1888 and 1889 soon turned into a pale blue on his canvases. Pastels, a mixture of pigments, made of a compacted powder with minerals bound together, were particularly fragile when exposed to light. With time, more lasting, albeit more expensive pigments were produced. New pastels resistant to light and humidity, for instance, were eventually produced, replacing the first fragile pastel colours previously available to artists.

Artists have always been attracted to new pigments, materials and new foundations and have been ready to experiment with their use in their artistic practice. Experiment in art originates with the creative imagination of the individual artist and with the possibilities he sees in the new materials available to him. On the other hand, it also reflects, to a

certain degree, current theories about the scientific foundations of the techniques of his art. A notable historical example is the role that Brunelleschi's theory of architectural geometry played in the development of linear perspective by artists. Recent approaches to art criticism now recognize that this is also the case for the Modern art of the period under consideration. In the second half of the nineteenth century, experimentation in the use of colour by Modernist artists art cannot be separated from the new understanding of the laws of colour, which accompanied the new and developing science of the period, chemistry.

Eugène Chevreul (1786-1889) and the new laws of colour

Historians of French Modern Art have recently paid special attention to Eugène Chevreul, an experimental chemist who achieved fame during the period as the theoretician who gave a new formulation to the laws of colour and of colour perception. In his late twenties and early thirties, as a professor of chemistry in a Paris Lycée, Chevreul had already gained a reputation for papers he published in the emerging field of organic chemistry, but it was his appointment in 1824 as director of the revived Gobelins tapestry factory in Paris, that led him to concentrate his research on colour.[112]

During the Ancien Régime, the *Manufacture des Gobelins*, wove the many of the magnificent tapestries that furnished and adorned the royal palaces and the residences of French grandees. Each tapestry was a unique creation, the interpretation in woven coloured silk threads, of a "carton" created by specialist "cartoon painters" from an original model sketched by an artist. The revived Gobelins factory of which Chevreul became the director was charged primarily with the dying of the wool and silk threads, which were then sent for weaving to the other two Gobelins manufactures, the Paris *Savonnerie* and the Gobelins factory established in Beauvais. Before the dying process started, the silk and wool were cleaned, and the dyes were examined for their brightness and stability when exposed to light and air. Complaints were received at Gobelins about the quality of the dyes they used, in particular the blues, violets, greys and blacks. The colours of dyes in the threads appeared to change when woven with threads coloured with a different dye. Chevreul analysed of the composition of the black dye and found that the dye had remained stable when the threads were woven. It was the same in the case of

[112] On Chevreul's career and on his scientific achievements, our information comes from Georges Bouchard, *Chevreul*, Paris, Editions de la Madeleine, 1932 (available on Gallica).

other dyes. Chevreul concluded that it was not that the chemistry of the dyes was unstable, nor that the dyeing process was not uniform, but that the individual colours of the threads changed for the eye, when they were seen together with threads of a different colour. The juxtaposition of colours led to their modification.

Further analyses led Chevreul to identify different tones of primary and complementary colours, to define and name them and to classify them. To demonstrate how colours and their different tones affected each other when juxtaposed, Chevreul designed a number of diagrams based on the well- known "colour wheel" that Isaac Newton had designed to demonstrate the spectrum. Chevreul's "cercles chromatiques" demonstrated the "resonance" of colours when juxtaposed with one another.[113]

In 1839, Chevreul published his results in his *De la loi du contraste simultané des couleurs et de l'assortiment des objets colorés*.[114] Chevreul's fundamental law, the law of simultaneous contrast, states that a coloured object when juxtaposed to one of a different colour, appears not as its own separate colour, but as a new, different one. In the case of two complementary colours that are contiguous, the tone of each of them is strengthened, creating harmony. A contrast between different tones of the same colour tends to weaken the lighter tone and strengthen the stronger. In the case of non-complementary colours, continuity may create a harmonious effect, but contrast can also produce a clash. However, in complimentary colours, variations of tone within each colour can produce different effects. In the case of the two complimentary colours red and green, a different effect is obtained if the green is a vibrant one and the red a pink red. Finally, as white is

[113] Newton understood the relations between colours in terms of mathematical proportions. The "colour wheel" was based the musical analogy of the eight degrees of the diatonic scale. octave musical analogy with the octave. The term of "resonance" is our own term, used to avoid confusion. On Newton's research on the spectrum, and its posterity, see Patricia Fara, "Newton shows the light: a commentary on Newton (1672). A letter … containing his new theory about light and colours…" *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society*, published online 13 April 2015, https://doi.org/10.1098/rsta.2014.0213.

[114] *De la loi du contraste simultané des couleurs et de l'assortiment des objets colorés considérés d'après cette loi dans ses rapports avec la peinture, les tapisseries des Gobelins, les tapisseries de Beauvais pour meubles, les tapis, les vitraux colorés, l'impression des étoffes, l'imprimerie, l'enluminure, la décoration des édifices, l'habillement et l'horticulture par M. E. Chevreul*, Paris, Pitois-Levrault, 1839. An English translation by John Spanton, *The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colors* was published in New-York and London in 1859. A new translation, entitled *On the Law of Simultaneous Contrast of Colors*, with commentary, additional chapters, and colour graphics by Dan Margulis appeared in 2020.

the result of the combination of all the colours of the spectrum, in white, it is the light reflected and the light absorbed that were complementary.

In different *Memoirs* that he published late in life, Chevreul further studied "successive contrast", i.e., the apparent modification of two colours when looked at one after the other, and "rotative contrast", when colours are seen on a circle in motion. Though Chevreul never actually used the term, what he was describing were the optical effects due to light falling on two juxtaposed colours. For Chevreul, "absolute colour" could be viewed separately from objects or from contrast only by training the eye. Since Descartes's *La Dioptrique*, a short treatise added to his *Discours de la Méthode* published in 1637, all illusions including colour illusions, were understood as errors induced in the mind by the senses. Chevreul realized that a coloured object is never really seen separately from other objects next to it, except when artificially isolated from them. The changes in a colour when seen simultaneously with other colours were not an illusion but, he believed, a natural optical effect.

Chevreul's analyses of the chemical composition of pigments had another important consequence. In the century that followed Newton's 1672 paper to the Royal Society, the engraver Jacques-Christophe Le Blon had experimented with colours in printing. In his *L'Harmonie du coloris dans la peinture* published in 1725, Le Blon reduced the primary colours as material components of light from seven, which Newton believed he had demonstrated by decomposing light through a prism, to three. For le Blon, the three "primary" colours, blue, red, yellow, each with its complementary colour, were the foundations of printing in colour.[115] By the end of the eighteenth century, wave theory had largely rendered obsolete Newton's concept of light as made up of colour particles that were somehow material.[116] Le Blon "reduction" of his theory, however, had, by then, gained acceptance in art. Chevreul's demonstration that primary colours had different tones, and that according to their tones contrast created different effects, rendered the

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[115] *L'Harmonie du coloris dans la peinture reduite en pratique mecanique et à des regles sures & faciles: avec des figures en couleur... Par J.C. le Blon*, [n.n.], London, 1725. On Le Blon's experiment in colour printing and on his writings, see Otto M. Lilien, *Jacob Christoph Le Blon, 1667-1741: inventor of three- and four colour printing*, Stuttgart, Hiersemann, 1985.

[116] Newton never departed from this view. In the alchemical research that he conducted during the rest of his life, he tried to identify the "Green Lion", the single elementary building block from which all physical and material objects derived. Cf. Betty Jo Teeter Dobbs, *The Foundations of Newton's Alchemy or, the Hunting of the Green Lion*, Cambridge University Press, 1975.

tenet that blue, red and yellow as primary colours were the basis for all artistic paintings more problematic.

Though Chevreul "translated", in terms of chemical composition, Newton's physical conception of colour and light, he nevertheless retained its conceptual framework. Like "Newtonian" optical physics, Chevreul's "optical chemistry" ignored to a large extent the psychological dimension of colour perception, which Descartes had first addressed. Yet, in 1810, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who as a naturalist as well as a poet, fascinated by how vision structures the world for us,[117] had already published his *Theory of colour* (*Zur Farbenlehre*), which was receiving attention among scientists. Goethe demonstrated how crucial our experience of colour is for a proper understanding of it. Chevreul was aware, like Newton and Goethe before him, that colour fringes appear on the boundaries between colours, but unlike Goethe, he did not pay attention to the fact these fringes can vary according to the angle from which a colour circle is viewed. Goethe's more empirical approach led him to recognize the essential role of (non-spectral) magenta blue and, as an epitome of his research, Goethe created a colour circle that included magenta. What Goethe showed was the infinite number of colour variations that occur as the viewer moves while looking at a painting, and as light transitions across it. In brief, for Goethe, the colours perceived are those of what could be termed the "after-image", i.e., the image that colour creates, under variations of light, in the viewer's mind as a consequence of the transition across colours.[118]

Goethe's original approach to colour perception was ignored in France. His *Theory of Colour*, first published in 1810, was translated into English and published by Charles Lock Eastlake, in 1841, but it was not fully translated into French until the second half of the twentieth century. There is no doubt that in France, the influential role of Chevreul played its part in the eclipse of Goethe's original contribution. In England, on the contrary, it had a major influence on the English artist James M. W. Turner (1775–1851)

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[117] Cf. George Steiner, *The Theory of Knowledge Implicit in Goethe's World Conception* (1924), tr. William Linderman, Dornach, Switzerland, The General Anthropological Society, 1919 (online Rudolf Steiner Archive & e.Lib).

[118] On Goethe's "revision "of Newton's colour theory see the article by Fara in *Philosophical Transactions* quoted in note 7, above. On Goethe's understanding of colour and its implications for aesthetics see, Danièle Cohn, *Goethe et l'esthétique. La lyre d'Orphée*, Paris, Flammarion, 1999.

who explicitly acknowledged it in his 1843 work *Light and Colour (Goethe's Theory)* (oil on canvas, h. 78.7 cm x w. 78.57 cm, The Tate Gallery, London).[119]

Chevreul, Delacroix's use of colour and music

In France, a different approach to colour in painting was already established by the time Chevreul's treatise was published. With Théodore Gericault (1791-1824), line remained the means by which the subject of a work was defined, but colour replaced it as texture and became an essential means of the artistic representation of emotion. The triumph of colour over line burst upon the art scene with Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863). Delacroix's reputation was already established when Chevreul's treatise was published. Nevertheless, Chevreul's Law of simultaneous contrast later influenced the painter as it became more widely known.[120]

In 1822, Delacroix exhibited at the Salon for the first time, and two years later he showed *Scène des massacres de Scio* also known as *Massacre at Chios* (1824, oil on canvas h. 419 cm × w. 354 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre). Although the contrast of white tones (the female victims) and tones of dark brown (the aggressors) reinforces the violence depicted in the scene, the use of colour in the painting remains essentially symbolic: the whites of innocence for the victims, the darks of evil for the perpetrators.

It is however with the 1826 *Mort de Sardanapale,* (oil on canvas, h. 81 x w.100 cm., Paris, Musée du Louvre, copy by Delacroix of the larger painting), that colour contrasts ceased to have a symbolic meaning and became central elements of Delacroix's compositions. The work, shown in the 1827 Salon, is said to be inspired by Lord Byron's play *Sardanapalus* (1821).[121]

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[119] On the question of Goethe's influence on Turner, see Gerald Finley, "The Deluge Pictures: Reflections on Goethe, J. M. W. Turner and Early Nineteenth-Century Science", *Zeitschrift Für Kunstgeschichte*, vol. 60, no. 4, 1997, pp. 530–548 (*JSTOR*, www.jstor.org/stable/1482865 Last accessed 8 Apr. 2020); and John Cage, *J.M.W. Turner: A Wonderful Range of Mind* Yale University Press, 1991.

[120] Delacroix's knowledge of Chevreul and of the latter's influence on the painter is fully discussed and analysed by Georges Roque in, *Art et science de la couleur: Chevreul et les peintres, de Delacroix à l'abstraction, nouv. édition, revue*, Paris, Gallimard, 2009, chap. 2, pp. 235-255.

[121] Cf. the polemics on the issue in the columns of the *Burlington Magazine* which followed J. Spector's review of *Sardanapalus* (*The Burlington Magazine* vol.118, no 884, Nov. 1976, pp. 773-775, online jstor.org/stable/878595).

Whether it was inspired by Byron or not, *The Death of Sardanapalus*. marks Delacroix's entry into a world of colour that was to be his definitive "voice", with colour as the essential element that gave its integral meaning to the representation. In the painting, a large band of bright red tinged with orange red, punctuated by the figures of three concubines, dead or about to be killed, crosses the scene. At the top, viewed from below, is the figure of Sardanapalus. His robe, rolled around his arm, is a greyish white made more luminous by the white sheet that cover his legs, which are abnormally elongated so that the white of the cloth fuses into the white flesh of the dead concubine lying at his feet. In the foreground on the left, a group of two figures shows a concubine whose throat is about to be cut by a man holding a dagger. Both the victim and the executioner are rendered in a shade of white close to that used for the other concubine and Sardanapalus's robe and sheet. At the centre of the composition is an area of ochre from which the barely distinguishable shape of a dead elephant emerges along with the sharper tone of a figure of a woman, presumably one of the concubines. Hers is the only figure that faces the viewer. The emotionless look which she has been given and which she directs at the viewer asking him not to be emotionally involved in the horror of what he sees, but to be a detached spectator of a representation staging in spectator they may first elicit, but to be the spectator of its stage representation in the painting.

The use of tones, both contrasting and complementary, in *The Death of Sardanapalus* characterizes many of the literary, historical or religious scenes that Delacroix subsequently painted. It gives these scenes their own pictorial rhetoric, where colour tones function not as tropes of emotions, but as schemes which, together, give the paintings their unique structures through a dynamic exaltation of colour.[122] Some critics have argued that in *The Death of Sardanapalus*, despite the brilliance of the red schemes and white tones, the "unevenness of the lighting" creates a dramatic imbalance in the composition.[123] On the contrary the unity of meaning in the work comes precisely from this imbalance, created largely by the use of white to highlight the other colours, which

[122] The terms of "trope" and "scheme" are used here in the sense they are given in the rhetoric of discourse as for instance in Edward P.J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, Oxford University Press, 1990.

[123] Among them, Simon Lee in his *Delacroix*, London, Phaidon 2015. On the reception of the painting see Patrick Noon & Christopher Riopelle, *Delacroix and the rise of Modern Art, Catalogue of an Exhibition held at the London National Gallery, February 22 – May 22, 2016*, Yale University Press, 2016.

visually dramatizes the sudden collapse of Sardanapalus's world, from *eros* to *thanatos.* By stark contrast, in Byron's play, the character of Sardanapalus is an ironic example of how a hedonistic man can, under pressure, turn into a hero.

A similar use of white is also evident in the large 1824 painting, *Scène des massacres de Scio, familles grecques attendant la mort ou l'esclavage* (oil on canvas, 419 cm. x w. 354 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre), shown in the Salon of 1824. In the same Salon, Constable showed some recent landscapes, which Delacroix saw. According to a contemporary story, Delacroix's viewing of Constable's new works made him realize that, compared to Constable's manner, his own way of treating colour in *Scène des massacres de Scio* lacked luminosity. The story tells of Delacroix then hastily touched up the work before it was shown. The painting shows evidence of having been touched up on several occasions, and different expert examinations do not agree on what was retouched, when and by whom. But it is nevertheless significant that, according to the story, Delacroix intensified the whites to bring out the luminosity of the other colours.[124]

In the colour schemes of *The Death of Sardanapalus,* Delacroix seems to have anticipated the basic idea behind the "Law of Simultaneous Contrast". Before its publication in 1839, Chevreul's theory was already known in artistic milieus, through a series of lectures linked to the yearly Salon, which he gave at the *Louvre.* They were reported in the magazine *Le Magasin Pittoresque,* in three successive notices, in which the editors drew attention to Chevreul's "emphasis on complementary colours, placing blues beside oranges and violet beside yellow".[125] It is likely that Delacroix learnt about Chevreul's research on simultaneous colour contrast from the magazine, before the book was actually published. It is also known that later in 1848 the painter had in his possession notes from a lecture given by Chevreul in the *Gobelins* factory in January of that year.

What is certain is that Delacroix was familiar with the Chevreul effect before 1848. The writer George Sand was a friend of Delacroix and Chopin's lover.[126] She reports a

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[124] The anecdote originated with Charles Sylvestre in his study of Delacroix in *Histoires des artistes français et étrangers* (1855) and with Frederic Villot's article on Constable in Revue Universelle des Arts (1856), It was analysed in detail by Michel Florisoone, Michel in his article "Constable and the 'Massacres De Scio' by Delacroix", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes,* vol. 20, no. 1/2, 1957, pp. 180–185 (www.jstor.org/stable/750159).

[125] *Le Magasin Pittoresque,* Deuxième année, 1834, pp. 63, 90 & 98.

[126] On George Sand's relationship with Delacroix, see the catalogue of the exhibition Eugène Delacroix and George Sand. A Friendship in Words and Images, Le Louvre, sept. 2016-febr. 2017.

conversation when Delacroix said to Chopin, "look, hand me this blue cushion and that red rug. Let us place them side-by-side, so that the two tones are contiguous. They steal from each other. The red has become tinged with blue with blue has faded from the red and in the middle a violet tone has appeared".[127]

The question remains of how his understanding of Chevreul's Law actually affected his own practice. To discuss this, we shall briefly analyse his 1840 work *L'Entrée des Croisés à Constantinople* (1840, oil on canvas, h. 411 cm. x w. 497 cm., Musée du Louvre, Paris). The work was exhibited in the Salon of 1841, and in a page of his *Journal* for 1840 one finds a chromatic circle sketched in preparation for the painting and probably based on one of Chevreul's published circles.[128]

In the painting, the main colours echo one another, but are not contiguous, thus avoiding the effect that Delacroix demonstrated to Chopin. As in the earlier *Death of Sardanapalus*, a spot of ochre placed centrally under the main group draws the spectator's attention. In this central group, shaped as a pyramid, the orangey red of the garment of the imploring man on the left, echoes the orangey browns of the horse on which the crusader sits, but the white of the body of the woman next to them keeps the two tones separate, allowing them to retain their brilliance. The blues of the sky and in the background are complementary to the orangey browns of the horseman and his group but are separated from them by the white-outlined buildings of Constantinople, which also gives depth to the perspective.

Between 1833 and 1843 Delacroix was also engaged in a succession of decorative schemes for the interiors of major buildings. The role of complementary colours in the decoration of buildings is discussed by Chevreul, but he hardly touches upon the fundamental question for such decorations, of retaining their luminosity. In contrast, according to some contemporary testimonies,[129] Delacroix paid a great deal of attention to this issue before beginning his decorative schemes and prepared different conjunctions of tones from his palette on pieces of cloth to assess their relative luminosity. Chevreul

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[127] "Tiens, donne-moi ce cousin bleu et ce tapis rouge. Plaçons-les côte à côte. Tu vois ue là ù les deux tons se touchent, ils se volent l'un l'autre. Le rouge devient teinté de bleu et le bleu lavé de rouge et au milieu le violet se produit", quoted in Georges Roque op. cit., p. 254.

[128] *Journal d'Eugène Delacroix, nouvelle édition intégrale établie par Michèle Hannoosh,* Paris, José Corti, 2009, 2 v., vol. I, p. 257.

[129] For instance, the painter Paul Sérusier, Paul (1864-1927), in his *A B C de la peinture*, Paris, la Douce France, 1921.

taught Delacroix how to retain the "dynamic exaltation" of colour tones that echoes throughout his paintings, without creating, except where intended, their relative toning down through the effect of "simultaneous contiguity".

Is there "musical language" in Delacroix's paintings? In the previous chapter we saw that, in his review of the Salon of 1846 and later, in his review of the *Exposition Internationale* of 1855, Baudelaire wrote that "the accords of colour in Delacroix's paintings created an impression that can be said to be musical". Baudelaire's language about Delacroix's "chords", might lead one to misunderstand Delacroix's own conceptions of a painter's understanding and practise of colour. Delacroix, thought of colour "harmony" as contrast. The effect he sought might probably better expressed analogically by the term of "counterpoint", i.e., a conjunction of colours emphasized by contrast. Another musical term, "fanfare", might be applied to the riotous effect achieved, in a battle scene depicted in his 1837 *La Bataille de Taillebourg. 21juillet 1242* (1837 oil on canvas, h. 485 cm x w. 554 cm., Musée national du Château de Versailles), a term that Baudelaire also used about Delacroix's art.[130]

There is no doubt, on the other hand, that Delacroix both played and loved music,[131] nor that Delacroix thought of colours arranged on the canvas as "the music of painting". Though his declarations on music did not mean that, for him, musical composition offered a model for pictorial composition.[132] He was thinking primarily, we believe, of the aesthetic experience of the viewer in whom the combination of colours on the canvas had the power to elicit in the spectator the type of emotion aroused by music. If musicality, in this general sense, can be applied to paintings such as *La Bataille de Taillebourg*, musicality is created not by a melody, but the succession of "achords", of contrastive tones painted together. On many of Delacroix's canvasses, particularly in representations of historical and religious scenes and particularly when first viewed from a distance, the contrast of colours may indeed arouse a flash of emotion not dissimilar to the one created in the listener by large-scale symphonic pieces, such as Beethoven's. In *La Liberté*

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[130] In his poem *Les Phares* (*Beacons*): …where strange fanfares fade/And pass, as in Weber, like a stifled sigh…" Quoted in. 290 (S. Lees' translation). The association of Weber's music with fanfare, a showy piece played by trumpets and brass, is to say the least, odd.

[131] On Delacroix's tastes in music, see Gilbert Chase, "Delacroix and Music", *Music & Letters* vol. 15, 3 (JJul.1934), pp. 239-24 www.jstor.org/stable/728433. Last accessed 15 Feb. 2019.

Guidant le Peuple (1830, oil on canvas, h. 260.1 cm x w. 325.4 × 325.4 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre), the contrast of the blacks, the whites and the red of the tricolour flag, combined with the emphatically dramatic poses, can be said to be truly operatic.

On the other hand, there is a small number of specific representations of musical scenes in Delacroix's vast production that provide evidence that the painter could also use colour to suggest the nature of the particular musical emotion associated with the scenes represented. One of the best known of his representations of a musician playing an instrument is the figure of an oud player, which occupies a central place among the participants in a Jewish Moroccan wedding, *La Noce juive au Maroc*, (about 1839, oil on canvas, h. 105 cm. x w. 140 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre, ill. 13, detail). Accompanied by the bendir, a framed drum, the musician plays the oud, a five-string plucked instrument, mostly used in Algeria, Chaabi and Morocco in Sephardic music.

Overall, the painter has avoided sharp contours on the canvas, using subdued shades, the better to emphasize the brilliance of the red upper garment of the musician, highlighted centrally by the well of "light created by the white wall of the courtyard where the festivity takes place, and which gives depth to the scene. As in the case of the figures that are featured in other scenes sketched by Delacroix during his visit to Morocco in 1822, the pose and the garb of the musician are in the orientalist tradition that had begun to be established in French paintings of the period.[133] The treatment is essentially picturesque and it is this picturesque aspect of the oriental figure in particular that explains why the detail was later copied by at least two painters: Armand Cambon in his *Musiciens Juifs* (between 1841-1885, oil on canvas, h. 35 cm. x w. 27 cm., Musée Ingres, Montauban) and Odilon Redon in his *La Noce Juive* (before 1870, oil on canvas, h. 40 cm. x l. 32.2 cm, Musée d'Orsay). In Delacroix's *La Noce juive au Maroc*, the poses of the oud player and the figures grouped on the left-hand side of the canvas, their poses and movements, suggest that that Delacroix's main purpose was to represent the traditional dancing that

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[39] See Petra ten-Doesschate Chu, "A Science and Art at once": Delacroix's pictorial theory and practice, in Beth S, Wright ed., op. cit., p88-107. Cf. also Cf. Martin Oldham, "A colourful conundrum: Delacroix remains a puzzling figure in an illuminating show about his influence", Apollo, vol. 183, no. 641, Apr. 2016, p. 90 ff.

[133] For the place of orientalism in the art of the period, see John M. MacKenzie, *Orientalism: History, Theory, and the Arts*, Manchester University Press, c1995. On Delacroix's place within the French orientalist movement, see Barbara Wright *Delacroix et l'aube de l'orientalisme: De Decamps à Fromentin, peintures et dessins, Domaine de Chantilly*, Paris, Somogy, 2012.

celebrated important social and family events in Jewish Moroccan society rather than the music itself.

However, among portraits by Eugène Delacroix representing the sole figure of a musician playing an instrument, one provides a different perspective on how the painter attempted to suggest the unique nature of musical experience. Delacroix's *Niccolò Paganini* (1831, oil on cardboard on wood panel, h.44.8 x w. 30.1 cm, The Philipps Collection, Washington D.C., ill. 14) stands out among the numerous representations, including many caricatures, of the celebrated virtuoso. In Delacroix's painting, Paganini is represented dressed entirely in black, standing against a background of shades of black and dark brown. Paganini's rest on a plain surface in dark ochre. A brilliant white, contrasting with the darkness of the rest of the surface of the canvas, concentrates the eye on the face and hands of the violinist, emphasizing his total concentration in his playing. Eyes closed; the virtuoso is possessed by the music he plays. Delacroix's *Niccolò Paganini* shows how the brilliance of black associated with white could offer the means to suggest the essence of a musical experience in painting.

Chevreul, the Impressionists and music[134]

In the case of Delacroix, Chevreul's influence was direct, but limited, only reinforcing the painter's wishes not to have tone alteration interfere with his "dynamic exaltation" of colour. Chevreul's *De la loi du contraste simultané des couleurs* was not, in fact, intended to offer a set of rules to artists on how to paint. It was a scientific and technical treatise, seven hundred pages long, and not easily accessible to non-scientists. The book was primarily concerned with the application of the Law of simultaneous contrast to many practical activities, from ceramics and horticulture to framing and clothing. Chevreul was interested in the practical applications of colour: one example he gave was how, in military uniform, shirt, and trousers could complement each other. In the applied arts of dyeing, ceramics or stained glass, Chevreul's treatise had an immediate practical use. Painters, Delacroix included, and art critics also first learnt about Chevreul's Law, mostly from the chromatic plates of his treatise,[135] and from popularizing lectures he gave, which took place every two years until the 1850s.

In the following decades, Chevreul's Law of simultaneous contrast became more widely known in artistic milieus and, in the eyes and writings of art critics, it became associated with Impressionism. One of these early critics was the dramatist, novelist and critic Louis Émile Edmond Duranty (1833-1880) in his brochure entitled *La Nouvelle Peintur*e, produced on the occasion of the Durand-Ruel, April 1876 exhibition. [136] Duranty was a realist novelist who had published the short-lived revue *Réalime* in 1856-7 and, in *La Nouvelle Peinture*, he was highly selective in the painters and paintings that he commented upon, as noted by Michel Guérin, editor of the 1947 edition of the brochure. Duranty ignored many of the important "Modernes" who showed in the gallery, he did

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[134] For an understanding of the scientific issues relating to colour perception and art, we have consulted the articles of J. Koenderink, J. "Towards a New Theory of Vision" Revisited". *Topoi*, vol. 35, pp. 571–581, 2016 (doi.org/10.1007/s11245-014-9288-x) and of Robert. Pepperrel, "Seeing without Objects: Visual Indeterminacy and Art", *Leonardo*, vol. 39 (5), pp. 394–400, 2006, where the author sums up his many contributions on the question (https://doi.org/10.1162/leon.2006.39.5.394).

[135] See the reproductions of two of Chevreul's Chromatic circles in Georges Roque, "Chevreul's colour theory and its consequences for artists", in *Colour and Textiles: From Past to Future, the Colour Group (GB) meeting*, June 2010.

[136] Louis-Émile-Edmond, Duranty, *La nouvelle peinture: à propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les galeries Durand-Ruel*, Paris: E. Dentu, 1876, new ed. by Michel Guérin, Paris, Floury, 1946 (online, Gallica).

not use the term "impressionistes", with its then derogatory connotations, nor did he name Chevreul or his Law, but it is clear that he had it in mind when he alluded to works by Monet and Pissarro, writing that "they recognize that strong light discolours tones … and reduce objects to a single luminous unit where the seven chromatic rays are but one single luminous shine".[137]

The works which were shown in the next exhibition of 1877, during which five numbers of *L'Impressioniste Journal d'Art* were published, confirmed the view of critics that their creators formed a group that shared a common approach to colour.[138] Among these works were Alfred Sisley's *L'île de la Grande Jatte* (1873, oil on canvas, h. 50.5 cm x l. 65 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris), Camille Pissarro's *La Côte des Bœux à l'Hermitage* (1877, oil on canvas, h. 114.9 x w. 87.6 cm, The Tate Gallery, London) and Claude Monet's *Étang à Montgeron* (1877, oil on canvas, h. x w. 172 cm x 193, The Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg). Émile Zola wrote about the artists of the exhibition as a group: "ce qu'ils ont de commun entre eux… c'est une parenté de vision". Though it is only in a later review of the 1880 exhibition that Zola wrote of the "décompositions et recompositions" that characterized, in his view, "ce qu'on a appelé l'impressionnisme", [139], there is little doubt that he, like other critics had Chevreul in mind. Already another art critic. Philippe Burty wrote, in one of his "notes parisiennes" published in the *Sémaphore de Marseille La République française* of April 1877, that what dominated in the group was "la recherche de la lumiére et de l'irisation de la couleur".[140] In art criticism, Impressionism was becoming defined by its application of Chevreul's Law to the treatment of colour on the canvas.

Among these 1877 painters, there is no doubt that Claude Monet knew Chevreul's Law of simultaneous contrast and used his knowledge consciously in his paintings. In an

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[137] "[une forte lumière] fond les sept rayons prismatiques en un seul éclat incolore", *La nouvelle peinture,* ed. Michel Guérin, p. 39.

[138] *Catalogue de la 3e Exposition de peinture par [etc], 6 Rue le Pelletier 6, Paris…Avril 1877* (available on Gallica).

[139] Philippe Burty, "Une exposition: les peintres impressionnistes", "Notes parisiennes", *Sémaphore de Marseille,* 19 avril 1877.

[140] Cf. Martha Ward, "Impressionist installations and private exhibitions", *The Art Bulletin* vol. 73, no. 4 (Dec. 1991), pp. 599-622 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/3045832. Last accessed 10 Apr. 2020). Marta Ward shows that the Impressionists took great care to ensure how room hangings and frames contrasted or were in harmony with their paintings.

interview he gave in England, he is reported as saying: "Colour owes its brightness to force of contrast rather than to its inherent qualities…primary colours look brightest when they are brought into contrast with their complementary".[141] In the 1874 exhibition Claude Monet had shown his *Impression. Soleil Levant* (1872, oil on canvas, h. 48 cm x w. 63 cm, Paris, Musée Marmottan Monet), the painting that gave Impressionism its name. Contrast is present in *Impression. Soleil Levant*, where the variations of blues of the vast expanse of water in the foreground and of the harbour installations in the background contrast sharply with the black of the two skiffs and the orange of the sun and its reflection that structure the scene. In the 1876 Exhibition, which led Duranty to write his brochure, Monet showed his *Le Train dans la Neige. La Locomotive* (1875, oil on canvas, h. 59 cm x w. 78 cm, Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris). The use of contrast is even more evident in this later work: the variations in tones of greys of the train and sky contrast with the whites of the paths, and more violently with the touch of red and the two touches of yellow at the front of the locomotive, which lighten the scene. They punctuate the scene, as if to evoke the rhythmic puffs of the engine building up steam. Contrast gives this work a rhythmic musicality.

In *La Nouvelle Peinture*, Duranty, like the other critics, thought that the "liberation" of art by the impressionist painters came from their discovery of contrast, which enabled them to dispense with the common use of "the dark" ("les ténèbres") in painting, as the sole means of giving luminosity to colour tones. Later the "cloisonniste" painter Émile Bernard (1868-1941) agreed with Duranty, but judged that an unfortunate consequence of the "négation du noir" by impressionists painters was that their works lacked relief.[142] Émile Duranty in one of his novels later published by instalments ("feuilletons") in 1872, told the story of an aspiring young artist, Louis Martin, for whom the sight of a Manet in the *Salon des Refusés* was a moment of liberation, "un affranchissement".[143] Yet Duranty and later Émile Bernard missed, in the works of Édouard Manet, the "liberation" produced by his use of black, which goes far beyond the highlighting of colours or the

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[141] Quoted in Bomford, D., et al, *Art in the Making: Impressionism*, London, The National Gallery/ New Haven, Yale University Press, 1990, p. 88.

[142] Quoted in *Duranty, Nouvelle Peinture*, ed. M. Guérin, p. 21.

[143] Marcel Crouzet, "Bibliographie d'Edmond Duranty, éditée par Claire Dupin", in Marie Gispert, Catherine Méneux, ed., *Bibliographies de critiques d'art francophones, mis en ligne en février 2017*, (http://critiquesdart.univ-paris1.fr/louis-edmond-duranty. Last accessed 10 Aug. 2020).

partitioning of flat areas of strong colour. If with impressionism "colour became light", with Manet black became light.[144]

One critic who realized how the use of black played a fundamental role in the luminosity and expressivity of Manet's paintings was the poet Stéphane Mallarmé. Reacting to the rejection of Édouard Manet's *Bal masqué à l'Opéra,* in his note "Le jury de peinture pour 1874 et M. Manet", published in *La Renaissance littéraire et artistique* (12 April 1874) and over the following two years in articles translated into English and published in *The Athenaeum* of London, Mallarmé wrote of Manet's prominent use of black in *Bal masqué à l'Opéra* as the true mark of the modernity of "le nouvel art français".[145]

The role of black as an inner source of light is already evident in Manet's *Le Balcon* (1868-1869, oil on canvas, h. 170 cm x w. 124.5 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris). On the canvas, the flat area of black in the dark rectangle of the room behind the group contrasts strongly with the plain dullness of the whites on the faces of the group and the tops of the women's dresses. The contrast is made more striking by its framing with the bright green lines of the shutters and the balustrade. The touch of blue of the man's tie only emphasizes it, giving to the scene an impassivity, which many viewers mistook for deadness or stiffness.

In *Bal masqué à l'Opéra* (1873, oil on canvas, h. 59.1 cm x w. 72.5 cm, National Gallery of Art, Washington) the work on which Stéphane Mallarmé wrote, black acquires a different expressivity. The scene depicted is set within a part of the "Grand Salon" of Opéra Garnier, where gentlemen in top hats and black-tie crowd together.[146] Only three figures, one in disguise appearing in the left-hand corner of the painting, and two young barmaids ready to attend to the gentlemen's needs, add touches of colour to the scene. The contrast of the broad white line of the stone floor of the upper foyer protruding over the bar of the Grand Salon, gives depth to the enclosed area where the figures of the gentlemen in black tie are shown without perspective. But the contrast also creates a sense of fun, further emphasized by the gaily coloured disguise of the figure on the left. As

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[144] The following analyses owe much to Georges Roque, *Quand la lumière devient couleur*, Paris, Gallimard, 2018 (coll., Art et Artistes), 2018.

[145] Stéphane Mallarmé, *Œuvres complètes*, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Gallimard, tome I, 1998 et tome II, 2003, quoted by Bertrand Marchal, "Mallarmé critique d'art ?", *Revue d'histoire littéraire de la France*, 2011/2, vol. III, pp. 333-340.

[146] Among the male figures in black, one can distinguish, faintly, only one female figure dressed in black and wearing a mask.

Mallarmé noted, in *Le Bal masqué à l'Opéra* "la gamme délicieuse trouvée dans les noirs" avoids "la monotonie possible du fond d'habits noirs".[147] Disconcertingly at first, variations of black in the painting transmit to the viewer the feeling of the gaiety, however artificial, experienced by the crowd. The music of the ball has stopped, but the exhilaration it created is made visible by the shining black.

Édouard Manet's truly musical painting is one of his most celebrated works, *Madame Manet au Piano* (1868, oil on canvas, 0.385 cm x 0.465 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, ill. 15). Manet was a music lover. Above the door of his Paris studio, rue Guyot, he had placed a painting representing a large basket with a guitar and a hat in it. Manet's wife, whom he met when she taught his brothers, was a piano teacher and an accomplished amateur performer. There are earlier paintings by Manet that represent a musician playing. Among them *Le Chanteur à la Guitare*, also known as *L'Espagnol à la Guitare*, (1860, oil on canvas, 147.3 × 114.3 cm., New-York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, ill. 16). By the 1860s, the earlier eighteenth-century and romantic guitar had evolved and had become fashionable. It had a larger body and six single strings and was a relatively easy instrument to learn compared to the piano or the violin, it was associated with Spanish musical culture, which was coming into vogue at the time.[148] The poet and critic Théophile Gautier in his review of *Le Chanteur à la Guitare*, while lauding the composition, made short shrift of its musical intentions, exclaiming: "Caramba! How he [the character in the panting] bawls lustily, while scraping on his leg his "jambon" (literally "ham").[149] In her analysis of the painting, Therese Dolan, notes that "jambon" was a slang term for the guitar in Spain and that Gautier's comment was intended to draw attention to the character's pose. Manet recorded a private visit by Charles Renaud de Vilbac (1829–1884), an organist, arranger and composer, before the painting was sent away for exhibition: "He saw only one thing: that my guiterrero (sic) plays left-handed on a guitar strung to be played with the right hand. What do you say to that?[150]

It is the case that Manet, in the painting, has reversed the guitarist's conventional playing

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[147] Quoted in Claude Imbert, "Manet, effects of black, *Paragraph.* 34(2) July 2020, pp. 187-198 (Online ISSN: 1750-0176).

[148] See Harvey Turnbull & P. Spark, "Guitar" in *The New Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* 1980, updated online 2009.

[149] Théophile Gautier, *Abécédaire du Salon de 1861*, Paris: E. Dentu, 1961, p. 265.

[150] Antonin Proust, *Édouard Manet: Souvenirs*, Paris: L'Échoppe, 1996, p. 28.

position and that the fingering is totally inappropriate. For some critics, Manet appears to have intended to "correct his mistake" by producing an engraving in which the composition is reversed [151]. Others have suggested, in the words of James Rubin, that by the "impossible arrangement" of the figure in the painting, Manet was "deliberately stressing artifice".[152] Indeed a characteristic of art in the age of Manet, as Timothy Clark has argued, is that "it produces and savours discrepancy".

If, as Therese Dolan has argued, Manet deliberately "embedded the hand error at the very heart of the painting",[153] if the painting is not intended as a slice of life, what then is the meaning of this "distorted" figure of an artist and his instrument?

Manet, in this painting returned to the classical "gesture and feature" approach to the treatment of figures, but he did so not realistically but in an emphatic, quasi-expressionist manner. The whites of the hands, shoes and scarf of the character flashing out of the dark background, the ochres of the face accentuate the wildness of the open mouth and the eyes. The guitarist is shown in rapture, possessed by music. The jug of wine at the right bottom end corner as an accessory in a Dutch painting, calls on us to enjoy the intoxicating power of music.

Compared to *L'Espagnol à la Guitare*, Manet's *Madame Manet au Piano* marks a radical departure, both in the style of music evoked – loud and popular in one, quiet and intimate in the other – and in the manner in which the musical emotion is visually expressed – a riot of colour in one, the luminosity of dark in the other.

The motif of the "woman at the piano", more than that of "man or woman at the guitar", was already established when Manet painted *Madame Manet au Piano*.[154] The

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[151] Ewing Campbell, "Manet's Spanish Guitar Upside Down: A Paradoxical Construction", *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, vol. 15, 2, pp. 110-125 See also Jane Mayo Roos's discussion of the "deceptive realism" of the painting, in "Manet and the Impressionist Moment, in Therese Dolan Perspectives on Manet, op. cit., pp. 73-82.

[152] James Rubin, *Manet's Silence and the Poetics of Bouquets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 36.

[153] Thérèse Dolan, ed., "Introduction", in *Perspectives on Manet*, Farnham: Ashgate, p. 4.

[154] Charlotte Eyerman has explored the importance of the "woman at the piano" motif in the work of male artists of the period, stressing that it contributed to a new construction of femininity. but limits her study to the work of male artists. Cf. Charlotte. N. Eyerman, "The composition of femininity. The significance of the piano motif in Nineteenth-Century French culture", Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley 1997 (elibrary.ru last accessed 15 Feb. 2020. See also by the same author, "1820s to the 1870s: the piano calls

iconography was adapted from that of harpsichord, spinet or virginal playing scenes, often represented in seventeenth-century Dutch "conversation pieces".[155] Compositions showing women at the harpsichord were also exhibited in the eighteenth-century Salons of the *Académie de peinture*. The *Livret* of the *Académie* for 1793 lists a "Portrait de femme appuyée sur son clavecin", and a "Portrait de femme touchant du piano-forte".[156] A few years later, the 1798 *Livret* records three portraits of young women "touchant du piano".[157]

In Dutch art, the scene represented can be a music lesson, as in Gabriel Metsu's *La Leçon de Virginal* (3rd half of the 17th century, oil on wood panel, h. 32 cm x w. 24.5 cm, Musée du Louvre, Paris). In the painting, the focus is on the group formed by the male teacher and the female student, with a hint of flirting. This is made more obvious in an engraving by the Dutch engraver Jeremiasz Falk (1610-1677), by the putti at the feet of a young woman facing the viewer sideways who is playing the harpsichord, as on her left, a young man plays the lute. Dutch scenes of instrument playing can also be allegorical, where a duo of instrument player and listener or a duo of instrumentalists, embody the sense of hearing as in Hendrick Goltzius' painting *L'Ouïe,* previously known as *Le Duo* (last quarter 16th c., oil on wood panel, h. 63.8 cm x w. 51 cm, Musée national Magnin, Dijon). Manet is known to have had in his possession an engraving of a Metsu, probably *La femme au virginal* (about 1662, h. 23.9 cm x w. 19.19 cm, Musée des Beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris, Petit Palais, Paris). In Metsu's painting, a young woman seen in profile is shown alone, sitting on a chair in front of a virginal. The greys of her dress, and its light pink ties, her lowered eyelids show that she is in a musical reverie.

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the tune", in P*iano roles: three hundred years of life with the piano*, ed. E. Bomberger, Yale U.P., 1999 (openbibart.frl Last accessed 15 Feb. 2020).

[155] On the differences between these instruments, see David Rowland, *Early Keyboard Instruments: A Practical Guide*, Cambridge University Press, 2001 (coll. "Cambridge handbooks to the historical performance of music").

[156] *See* Jules Guiffet, "Table des portraits exposés aux Salons du Dix-huitième siècle jusqu'en 1800", *Nouvelles archives de l'art français*, Tome 5 (1889), reprinted in *Revue de l'art français ancien et moderne*, Paris, 1973.

[157] The factors that explain this rapid change are analysed by Florence Gétreau, "L'iconographie du clavecin en France (1789-1889"), in *Musique ancienne - instruments et imagination. Actes des Rencontres Internationales harmoniques*, Lausanne, 2004, Michael Latcham, ed., Bern, Suisse, pp. 169-192 (halshs-00009576 pp. 189-192, halshs-40009576. Last accessed 15 Feb. 2020).

With the pose and the sense of a musical reverie, Manet's *Madame Manet au Piano* cannot fail to evoke Metsu's *La femme au virginal*. The figure of Madame Manet represented in the painting is not that of a "sitter" posing for a portrait, as in other "at the piano" scenes, such as Louis Jacquesson de la Chevreuse's *Portrait d'Emilie Borelli au Piano* (1867, oil on canvas, h. 55.8 cm x w. 46. 5 cm, Private collection). An X-ray analysis of a rare Manet self-portrait, *Autoportrait à la Palette* (1878–79, 83 × 67 cm, sold at Sotheby's in June 2010, private collection) has shown that it was painted over a portrait of Susanne Manet in which she is depicted in profile as in *Madame Manet au Piano*. But in this painting, though the profile is well delineated and easily recognizable to all those who knew Manet's wife, the focus is on her gaze rather than on the face. Madame Manet's eyes are not fixed on the score but look above and beyond it. The white and pinking colouring of the face echoes the colouring of the hands. The dark brown tone of the piano merges into the black of Madame Manet's dress, forming a large area of dark that draws attention to the face and the hands.

Madame Manet is not depicted with her fingers on the keyboard, nor is the composition zoomed in on the instrument. Her hands appear as if they have just played the final chord, and lifted from the keyboard, poised suspended over it. Her figure and the instrument take up most of the space, thanks to a shortening of perspective on the piano, while in the right-hand corner the reflection of a small section of the room in a wall mirror gives some depth to the scene. The space of the room is still filled with the last chord Madame Manet has just played.

Contrary to a number of other paintings showing scenes "at the piano", the subject of the painting is not the performance itself, but its effect on the performer and on the listeners not shown in the painting but present nevertheless in us as we view it. Madame Manet has just stopped playing. She is poised as if carried away into another world, absorbed in what she has finished playing and in the "other worldly", dreamy experience of music, like her hazy shadow upon the grey of the wainscoting in the background.

The iconography of "woman at the piano" truly became one of an intimate personal experience with James Abbot McNeill Whistler's 1858-59 work *At the Piano* (oil on canvas, h. 67 cm x w. 91.6 cm, The Taft Museum, Cincinnati, Ohio). The space of Whistler's composition is entirely occupied lengthways by the artist's half-sister Deborah Haden in black clothes, playing on a grand piano, while, leaning upon it opposite her, her daughter, all in white, listens intently. Manet admired *At the Piano* when it was exhibited in Paris. In April 1867, he forwarded Whistler a letter from the painter Théodore Thoré,

praising the painting, adding "Ah que je voudrais avoir ça pour mettre au milieu de mes vieux maîtres […] avec ma van der Meer de Delft".[158] The two paintings obviously echo each other but in reverse: both work by contrast, but there is horizontality in Whistler's, verticality in Manet's. More crucially, the experience of Music is embodied in the white of the figure of the young girl in Whistler, while it is embodied in the black of the figure of Madame Manet. Whistler understood this when he said of Manet, "He painted you know à la manière noire".[159] Far from creating "opaqueness", as the novelists and critics Edmont and Jules Goncourt who were not immediately taken by his art, wrote of some of Manet's paintings, in the composition, the spots of slightly hazy whites shining through a large obscure area create a brilliance intended to be perceived as the visual reflection of Madame Monet's experience of a personal musical moment.[160]

The musicality of tonal harmonies: Charles Blanc, Vincent Van Gogh and Auguste Renoir

In a section of his *Quand la lumière deviant couleur,* George Roque discusses John Gage's view of Turner's chromatic system as chiaroscuro.[161] In a further section of the same work, Georges Roque points out that the values of black and white that structure many of Manet's works are sharply contrasted and thus very different from Turner' chiaroscuro.[162] That Chevreul was interested in the luminosity of contrasts is not in doubt, but his starting point was the stability not the luminosity of black pigments. And it remains a question whether Manet's use of black, so different from Turner's chiaroscuro, owes that much to Chevreul, rather than Whistler.

On the other hand, two artists of the period – Vincent Van Gogh and Auguste Renoir – show Chevreul's influence, albeit mediated by the engraver, art historian and critic Charles Blanc (1813-1882), in the way they play on tones to create luminosity in their works.[163] According to Georges Roque, Charles Blanc's intention, in his *Grammaire des*

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[158] Quoted in Robin Spencer in "Whistler, Manet, and the Tradition of the Avant-Garde", *Studies in the History of Art*, vol. 19, 1987, p. 47 (www.jstor.org/stable/42618020 Last accessed 20 March 2020).

[159] Quoted in Suzanne Singletary, "Manet and Whistler; Baudelairean *voyage*", in Therese Dolan, ed., *Perspectives on Manet*, Ashgate, c2012, p. 67.

[160] With Manet "…the time has arrived of opaque, mat, plaster-like painting". Edmond & Jules De Goncourt, *Journal. Mémoires de la vie littéraire*, 9 vol., vol. VIII, p. 54 (my translation).

[161] See, John Cage, *J.M.W. Turner*, op cit. Yale University Press, 1991.

[162] Georges Roque, *Quand la lumière devient couleur*, Paris, Gallimard, 2018, II, pp. 61-79 in part.

[163] Georges Roque, *Art et science de la couleur*, op. cit., 2e partie, ch. Xiv.

arts du dessin and his *Artistes de mon Temps*,[164] was to "disqualify accidental uses of colour" – a better word might be "spontaneous" – in order to support the superiority of drawing over colour and the 'stability' of line. Indeed, in *Les Artistes de mon Temps*, in a chapter on Auguste Dupré, Charles Blanc wrote that a painter "who would only use colour to express himself… could never appear great in the eyes of other [painters] …".[165] In the same chapter, turning to Delacroix's *Naufrage de Dom Juan* (1840), Blanc asked, "How could one hope to reproduce this *Naufrage de Dom Juan* in black and white without monotony?". [166] He obviously bowed to Delacroix's greatness, but had to concede, in his chapter on the painter, that his figures escape criticism because of the enveloping tones and light of their contours.[167] In Charles Blanc's view, monotony could be avoided, and the stability of form maintained only by "la complémentarité harmonieuse des tons de couleurs".

An often-quoted letter from Van Gogh to his brother Théo, shows that his reading of Charles Blanc made him aware of the challenge that combining the iconographic and the chromatic could present when following the law of the contrast of colours. Comparing Delacroix's *Christ Endormi Pendant la Tempête* (ca 1853, oil on canvas, h. 50.8 cm × w. 61 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City) and Millet's *Le Semeur* (1850, oil on canvas, h. 101.6 cm x w. 82.6 cm, Museum of Fine Arts Boston), Van Gogh pointed out that they were "d'une facture absolument différente". In Delacroix's work, *Christ Endormi Pendant la Tempête*, blue and green, with violet and red spots ("taches"), reds and a little lemon yellow for the halo, speak "a symbolic language". Millett's *Le Semeur*, he noted is in "a colourless grey". "Could one paint *Le Semeur* using colour, for instance

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[164] Charles Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin: architecture, sculpture, peinture, jardins: gravure en pierres fines, gravure en médailles, gravure en taille-douce, eau-forte, manière noire, aqua-tinte, gravure en bois, camaïeu, gravure en couleurs, lithographie …,* Paris, Vve J. Renouard, 1867; *Les artistes de mon temps par M. Charles Blanc*, Paris, F. Didot, 1876.

[165] Charles Blanc, "Auguste Dupré" in *Les artistes de mon temps*, p. 83 (my translation).

[166] Idem, my translation.

[167] "…parce que le ton en masque la forme, parce que la lumière enveloppe les contours"…, op. cit., p. 56.

using the simultaneous contrast of yellow and violet, as in the Apollo ceiling of Delacroix?", asked Van Gogh. "Yes, so try it!".[168]

This is exactly what Van Gogh did during his internment in the Saint-Rémy-de Provence hospice in the summer of 1889. Experimenting with Charles Blanc's notion that the contrast of intensities could be a way of changing the degree of light or depth, Van Gogh produced ten copies of *Le Semeur*. In *Les Artistes de mon Temps* Blanc had written: "If one brings together similar colours in their pure state, but with different degrees of energy, such as dark blue and light blue, one will obtain another effect in which there will be contrast in colour intensity, but harmony in sameness".[169] In *Grammaire des arts du dessin,* Charles Blanc also recommended that in highly coloured paintings, "white should be used to rest and refresh the eye".

In a letter to Émile Bernard, Van Gogh commented on one of his copies of *Le Semeur* (1889 oil on canvas, h. 54 cm x w. 55cm, Niarchos Collection, Zurich Museum): "the painting is divided in two, the top half is yellow, the lower half violet. The white on the trousers is a rest for the eye and distracts it at the moment when the excessive contrast between the yellow and the violet would annoy it"[170]

The new syntax of colour in Van Gogh's paintings is evidently the result of his having absorbed the technical lessons of *Les Artistes de mon Temps.* If Van Gogh however, as in the letter to Théo quoted above, appeared to endorse Charles Blanc's view of the symbolism of colour in Delacroix's *Christ Endormi Pendant la Tempête*, he did not use colours for their symbolic values in his works, particularly the later ones. What characterizes his later Southern "voice" is the overall harmony of contrasting tones of luminous colours.

From Charles Blanc, Van Gogh also learnt the lesson that black should be used to avoid the melting of one tone into another. This was needed when painting under the bright sunlight of the *Midi,* which faded colour tones. The use of marked dark contours of the mountains in the background becomes evident in an Arles painting like *Champ de blé: le*

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[168] Van Gogh, V., *Correspondance générale*, M. Beerblock and L. Roëtland, eds, notes by G. Charensol, Paris: Gallimard, 1990, 3 vol., III, n° 503, p. 184-185, quoted in Roque, G. op. cit., p. 322 (my translation).

[169] *Les Artistes de mon Temps*, p. 66 (my translation). On this see also Roque G., *Art et science de la couleur*, p. 330.

[170] Van Gogh, V., "Letter to Émile Bernard", June 1888, quoted in Roque, G., op. cit., p. 323 (my translation).

faucheur (June 1889, oil on canvas, h. 73 cm x w. 92 cm, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam). In his 1889 *Pietà* (Sept. 1889, oil on canvas, 42 cm x h 34 cm, Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam), an interpretation from an engraving of Delacroix's 1850 *Pietà* (oil on canvas, h. 35 cm x w. 27 cm, The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo), Van Gogh pays homage to Delacroix's colour contrasts: variations of yellow and green for the body of Christ and of blue for the Mother's robes green and yellow-blue with a strong, marking of the contours of the two figures in black.[171]

Van Gogh did not create any paintings with musical subjects or themes. In a letter to his brother Théo of 19 September 1889, while he was engaged in making copies of Millet's *Le Semeur*, he wrote that composing in paint is not like composing in music: "if some person plays Beethoven, he adds his own interpretation". The letter is confused, but perhaps in writing this, Van Gogh wanted to suggest to his brother, that his Millet copies should be viewed each as a work in its own right, with its self-defining musicality of colour harmony and contrast.

Auguste Renoir is also known to have been familiar with Charles Blanc's ideas.[172] As Roque notes in another section of his *Quand la couleur*, quoting from a number of the painter's letters and declarations,[173] Renoir emphatically rejected the notion, attributed to Impressionism, that black is a non-colour. Roque points to examples, particularly portraits, where black plays its part, beyond delineating contours, in contrasting areas of light and dark. Nevertheless, in the numerous musical scenes that Renoir painted, harmonies and tones of light colours are by far the most dominant. As the contemporary critic and novelist Octave Mirbeau rightly noted, in Renoir's paintings of women, a harmony of light and tone "evokes the interior musicality of woman".[174] Soft harmonies of tone also suffuse Renoir's musical scenes.

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[171] Cf. *Vincent van Gogh en den Moderne Kunst,* Catalogue, ed Roland Dorn et al., Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum, 1990, nos. 33 & 37 respectively.

[172] Ambroise Vollard, *Auguste Renoir (1841-1919: avec onze illustrations, dont huit phototypies*, Paris, G. Crès, 1920, p. 148. It is possible that the paintings of the so-called "manière aigre" ("harsh style") period where line reasserts itself to a certain extent over colour were directly inspired by Blanc's views.

[173] From *Renoir. Écrits, entretiens et lettres sur l'art; textes réunis, présentés et annotés par Augustin de Butler*, Paris, Les Éditions de l'Amateur, 2002.

[174] Octave Mirbeau, "La France (8.12.1884)", in *Notes sur l'Art,* ed. Pierre Michel (online, my translation). Mirbeau lost his position as art critic in the periodical *L'Ordre* for his article in praise of Manet, Monet and Cézanne.

According to his friend, the gallery owner Antoine Vollard, Renoir had well-defined likes and dislikes as regards composers and works. He enjoyed works by eighteenth-century Italian composers and contemporary *romances*. Contrary to many of his fellow artists, including Fantin-Latour, Renoir was not a lover of Wagner's music.[175] The musical scenes that Renoir depicted reflect his marked preferences for vocal pieces, chamber music and instrumental solo music where melodies and melodic variations are of the essence.

For the musicologist Catherine Merle, the musical instrument was "the starting point" of Renoir's inspiration in most of his musical works.[176] This might sometimes be the case, but for thirty years a recurrent motif for Renoir was "women at the piano" or, more precisely, young girls and young women at the piano. It could also be said, rightly, that some such scenes are Renoir's variations on an already conventional genre painting of private family groups and that they answered the demand of a growing bourgeois market.[177].

Nevertheless, in a number of such compositions, Renoir succeeded in evoking, through harmonies of tone, the fluidity of music and the emotion of the player absorbed in it. One of these is *Jeunes Filles au Piano* (1892, oil on canvas, h. 116 x w. 90 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay Ill 17).[178] It is part of a series or "repetitions", to use Renoir's own term, i.e., variations on a motif. It was originally commissioned to be hung in *Musée du Luxembourg* and exists in three other versions, two of them in other public collections. The painting belongs to a style of picture frequent in Renoir's œuvre, featuring young girls or young women engaged in some kind of leisure activity – playing with a hoop in the case of *Fillette au Cerceau* (oil on canvas, 1885, Washington National Art Gallery),

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[175] As reported by Antoine Vollard in his *En écoutant Cézanne, Degas, Renoir*, Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1938, XI, p. 205.

[176] Catherine, Merle, "Le traitement de l'instrument de musique: Chez Pierre-Auguste Renoir", in *Observatoire Musical Français, Musicologies d'aujourd'hui: Conférences et séminaires,* No 41, Paris, Université de Paris IV- Sorbonne, 2009, pp. 55-62.

[177] See Charlotte N. Eyerman, "Playing the market. Renoir's Young Girls at the Piano series', in *Music and Modern Art*, ed. James Leggio, Routledge, in part. pp. 37-32.

[178] An oil on canvas version is on display at the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art and an oil sketch for the composition at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris. Cf. Guy-Patrice Dauberville, *Renoir: Catalogue raisonné des tableaux, pastels, dessins et aquarelles; avec la collaboration de Camille Fremontier-Murphy*, Paris, Éditions Bernheim-Jeune, 2007.

or holding an animal or a bird, as in *La Jeune fille au Faucon* (oil on canvas, 1880, Williamstown, Mass., Clark Art Institute). The accessories, object or animal, create a sense of intimacy, but their main function is to depict the particular gesture and posture specific to what the sitter is doing.

On first looking at *Jeunes Filles au Piano*, its subject is not very different from those just listed. Charlotte Eyerman has remarked that in many such scenes, the figure remains frozen, "trapped in the same gesture".[179] But precision of gesture does not necessarily create stiffness. In *Jeunes Filles au Piano,* the girl on the left follows the score of the music that the young pianist is deciphering. The pianist turns the page with her left hand, while playing the treble clef. The position of the fingers is quite precise. This girl's third finger is pressing down on what is probably the octave above middle C. The shape of the right-hand corner of the instrument is quite sharply delineated and made prominent by the brown of its colour. So are the edges of the piano leg and of the cushion on which the young player sits. The scene represented is an occasional moment of piano playing: the brown of the piano, the eyes of the two girls and the hands of the girl at the piano, precisely delineated, express the concentration of the moment. Though the piano is indeed the starting point, it is not just an accessory, even as it serves as a support for the left elbow of the girl leaning to look at the score. The contours of the bodies, clothes and furnishings are bathed in a haze of yellow orange and white tones to which the eye is drawn. Colour fills most of the space of the room, creating a joyous atmosphere just as the music would, evoking, to use Octave Mirbeau's phrase, the luminosity of the girls' musical moment.

Renoir later returned to the subject with the painting *Yvonne et Christine Lerolle au piano* (1897-8, oil on canvas, 73 x 92 cm, Paris, Musée de l'Orangerie). In that painting the treatment of the two young girls is very different. In her *Journal* of 25 October 1897, Julie Manet, the daughter of Berthe Morissot, described the work, which she saw in Renoir's house, as "ravishing". She noted the "delicious expression" of Christine and Yvonne's dress "ravishingly painted". Her reaction is significant: she saw the

[179] Charlotte Eyerman, op. cit., loc. cit.

composition as it was primarily intended to be, an intimate family group portrait, not a musical scene.[180]

Like Manet, Renoir also represented a guitar player, this time with a female subject, in his *Femme à la Guitare* (ca 1896-1897, oil on canvas, h. 65.8 x w. 54.6 cm, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts, ill. 18). In *Jeunes Filles au Piano*, the association of the two charming figures places the viewer as much in the position of spectator as of listener. In *Femme à la Guitare*, on the contrary, the woman is shown on her own. She is sitting in a light brownish armchair with a light-yellow cushion at her feet. She is dressed in a floating white gown. The furnishings and the shimmering white gown all conspire to draw the viewer's eye to the musician playing. As in *Jeunes Filles au Piano*, the player's fingering is accurate: she is using the tips of her left fingers to press down the strings, placing her little finger on the fourth string at the sixth fret and her middle finger is on the third string at the fifth fret. She strums the strings with the thumb of her right hand, a Spanish technique. However, though the pose is accurate, the focus is not just on the actual playing. Her face shows a musician's concentration, a deep involvement in the music; the subdued colours and her quiet smile show she is absorbed in it.[181]

Renoir is known to have often declared that painting cannot be reduced to scientific formula.[182] Nevertheless, the two paintings exemplify one of Charles Blanc's observations: simultaneous tones of complimentary colours, when close to each other, create harmony. In these two paintings their fusion creates a soft, peaceful atmosphere calling on the viewer to be also a silent listener to the music played. In *Femme à la Guitare*, the melodic variations of the white of her gown, and the semi-tones of the background also evoke the chromatic variations, which characterize music played on a chromatic guitar.

Scientific art: Helmholtz, pointillism and the music of rhythm

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[180] Julie Mnet, *Journal: 1893-1899, introduction par Rosalind de Boland Roberts et Jane Roberts*, Paris, Scala, 1987, p. 157. "C'est ravissant. Christine a une expression délicieuse, Yvonne n'est pas bien ressemblante mais à une robe blanche ravissamment peinte…" (my translation).

[181] Cf. [M.R.R.] *Bulletin of the City Art Museum of St Louis,* vol. XXIV, 3, July 1939, p. 26-27.

[182] For instance, "En peinture, il n'y a pas un seul procédé qui s'accommode d'être mis en couleur" (Ambroise Vollard, *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux*, Paris, Albin Michel, 1937, p. 323-4. for instance, Renoir's attitude compared to that of other fellow artists, see to the science of colour in Paul Zelanski & M. P, Fischer, *Les théories de la couleur*. Paris, France: Thalia; 2006.

A new treatment of colour as a scientific art in painting, asserted itself with the pointillist art of Georges Seurat (1859-1891) and Paul Signac (1863-1935). In its pointillist version, Neo-impressionism clearly marked a self-conscious break from Impressionism by its systematic application to painting of the new science of light and colour. [183]. The experimental aesthetics of pointillism reflect the broad influence of a new physics of light, which had emerged in the 1860s and which by the 1880s, had become the norm in scientific research, reaching the stasis that historians of science call the "normal" science of a period.[184] This new science integrated the experimental advances made in the physics of light waves by German, American and British physicists. It was popularized early in Germany and England, principally by Hermann von Helmholtz (1821-1894). Helmholtz's *Optique physiologique,* published in 1867 was a French translation of a collection of three lectures published in Germany in 1856, 1860 and 1866, respectively.[185] The avowed aim of the work was to provide a systematic presentation of the physics of light and to show how it could benefit from integrating into it "the teachings of the senses". Helmholtz recognized the contributions made by Goethe and Chevreul on the subject, integrating them into a new scientific system.[186]

The critic Felix Fénéon, commenting on pointillist works by Seurat, Signac and Pissarro shown in the 1886 Exhibition, and analysing in particular Seurat's *Un dimanche après-midi à l'île de la Grande Jatte* (1884-1886, oil on canvas, h. 207.6 cm x w. 308 cm, Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago), perceptively noted that in their works, he found not a mix of "couleurs-matières", but a mix of "couleurs-lumières.[187] Seurat is known to have attended public demonstrations on white light that were given in *Les Gobelins*. In *l'île de*

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[183] This section draws from Georges Roque's "Chevreul and Impressionism: a reappraisal", *Art Bulletin,* vol. 78, 1 March 1996; and Roque, Georges, "Chevreul's colour theory and its consequences for artists", based upon a paper presented in Paris in June 2010 to the meeting Colour and Textiles. Group (G B): "From Past to Future ", published by the *Colour Group (Great Britain),* 2011.

[184] We use the phrase "normal science" in the meaning given to it by Thomas Kuhn, in this now classical work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (first edition: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

[185] *Optique physiologique, par H. Helmlholtz, ... traduite par Émile Javal et N.-Th. Klein*, Paris, V. Masson et fils, 1867.

[186] *Optique physiologique,* 1867, pp. 545, 973 and pp. 510-513, respectively.

[187] Felix Fénéon, *Les impressionnistes en 1886*, Paris, publications de "la Vogue", 1886, p. 20-21: "ils divisent le ton d'une manière consciente et scientifique … ces couleurs isolées sur la toile se recomposent sur la rétine: on a donc non un mélange de couleurs-matières, mais un mélange de couleurs-lumières…".

la Grande Jatte, tones have been decomposed into minute spots of pure colours, painted very close to one another, so that all the colours of the prism can produce a lighting effect both in the whole composition and, simultaneously, in localized areas of it, according to simultaneous contrasts or degradation. Even though, in his *Les Impressionistes en 1886*, Fénéon did not refer to Helmholtz by name, it is clear that he realized that in its "Helmholtzian" formulation, the new science of light led pointillist painters to use the decomposition of light into discreet colour units, which the painter recomposed on the canvas to create luminous effects.

It can also be argued that the influence of Helmholtz on pointillism extended beyond colour, to a new idea of the *correspondance* of music and art. Chevreul, as one would expect, distinguished "la successivité" characteristic of music, from "la simultanéité" which characterizes the Fine Arts. "Les Beaux arts", wrote Chevreul in one of his later *Lettres adressées à M. Villemain, ...* (1856), "agissent par une impression simultanée", nevertheless he added that his method could lead to a general "esthétique expérimentale" but he never developed his thoughts on the subject. [188] Though Helmholtz, in the *Second series* of his *Popular lectures on scientific subjects* (on the "*Physiological Causes of Harmony in Music*"), declared that music is "the most immaterial of the Arts", he also researched the physiological and physical aspects of music, including a mathematically formalized representation of the quality of tones. In one of his scientific writings, he sought to demonstrate the equivalence of scales of tone and scales of musical notes. In the *Second series* of his *Popular lectures on scientific subjects*, he put forward the view that the physiological and mathematical principles of analysis he had formulated, "next to music, seem to predominate more particularly in painting". Unlike Chevreul, Helmholtz, had a conception of what a general experimental aesthetics might be.

Helmholtz's thoughts were popularized by the German physiologist Ernst Brücke, whose *Principes scientifiques des beaux-arts: essais et fragments de théorie* were translated into French and published in 1878 in an edition that included Helmholtz's original lecture.[189]. Brücke noted that "les artistes ne connaissent pas assez l'importance considérable des lois

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[188] *Lettres adressées à M. Villemain, ... sur la méthode en général et sur la définition du mot "fait" relativement aux sciences, aux lettres, aux beaux-arts, etc., etc., par M. E. Chevreul, ...*, Paris, Garnier frères, 1856, Lettre II, p. 88.

[189] *Principes scientifiques des beaux-arts: essais et fragments de théorie par E. Brücke, ... suivis de L'optique et la peinture par H. Helmholtz,* Paris, G. Baillière, 1878.

du son". There is little doubt that, with his publication, Brücker wanted to bring the physical *correspondance* between music and art to the attention of artists: in the same way as any difference in the pitch of a tone participates in the unique perception of a musical piece when performed, so single tones of different strength placed simultaneously together on a particular canvas give it its specific light.

It is tempting to apply to pointillist works, the musical metaphor of a visual score, where dots of colour create multiple chords, each with its own pitch, turning them into symphonies of light.[190] In reality, in the only two paintings by Georges Seurat and Paul Signac that represent a scene associated with music and which are directly inspired by some of Charles Blanc's theories, the visual musicality is that of rhythm not of chords. Georges Seurat's 1889-90 painting *Le Chahut* (oil on canvas, h. 170 cm x w. 141 cm, Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, The Netherlands) captures the end of a Chorus-line quadrille. The painting is composed of two main groups, a smaller group of musicians on the left corner, a larger group of dancers occupying the right-hand space. One of the musicians, in pointillist dots of darkish blue, shows his back to the viewer and holds the long stem of his bass instrument – perhaps a quote from Edgar Degas's 1876-77, *Café Concert at Les Ambassadeurs*. The modulated pointillist colours, associated with the diagonal lines of the bass and the raised right legs of the dancers, give a staccato dynamism to the painting, evocative of the rhythm of the can-can music.[191] The lasciviousness of the scene is embodied by the leering figure of a spectator half seen in the right-hand corner.

In Paul Signac's *Opus 217. Against the Enamel of a Background Rhythmic with Beats and Angels, Tones, and Tints, Portrait of M. Félix Fénéon in 1890* (1890, oil on canvas, h. 73.5 cm x w. 92.5 cm, MoMA, New York), hundreds of dots of colour tones whirl around in the background, like the wings of a child's windmill. The magic of rhythm twirls in front of the viewer's eye as if conjured up by the figure of Félix Fénéon, dressed in a magician's garb, holding a lily in his hand.[192]

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[190] We use the term of "musical metaphor" as it is used by Michael Spitzer, in *Metaphor and Musical Thought*, University of Chicago Press, 2004.

[191] Cf Robert L. Herbert, *Georges Seurat, 1859-1891,* The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991, pp. 340-44.

[192] We have been unable to access Jane Block and Ellen Wardwell Lee, *Impressionist Portrait 1886-1904*, Indianapolis Museum Of Art, to consider how they analyse Fénéon's portrait in this painting.

In “Chevreul and Impressionism: a reappraisal”, Georges Roque has drawn attention to a letter that Camille Pissarro wrote to Durand-Ruel in 1885, in which he enclosed an account of his “new artistic doctrine” of pointillism. The purpose of the letter was to settle a question of priority, by making it clear, to quote his words, “that M. Seurat, an artist of great worth, was the first to have the idea of applying scientific theory, after having studied it fully. I have only followed, as have my other colleagues, Signac and Dubois-Pillet, the example given by Seurat”. [193]

Commenting on the letter, Georges Roque points out that Pissarro was being deliberately modest when attributing to Seurat the “discovery” of applying scientific theory to painting. In fact, Pissarro was older than Seurat and wanted to encourage him, as can be shown by his inclusion of Seurat in the exhibition of 1886. However, Pissarro did not want to attribute too much importance to the alleged discovery. In another letter, this time to Signac, Pissarro referred again to Seurat as being the first in France to have used the new science of colour in painting. “That’s absurd”, he wrote as if as an afterthought, “after all, art is not scientific theory…”.[194]

The issue of priority in the invention of pointillism is significant in a number of ways. It draws attention to the shock of the new that pointillist works created. The letter to Durand-Ruel was written soon after the Eighth Impressionist Exhibition, held in the *La Maison Dorée* in May and June 1886.[195]. Pissarro, Monet, Renoir, and Pissarro’s son, Lucien, all showed in it. It was in this Exhibition, in the same viewing space as the works of these established artists, that Paul Signac showed his *Les Gazomètres. Clichy* (1885, oil on canvas, h. 81 cm x w. 65 cm, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne) and that Seurat showed his iconic *La Grande Jatte* painting.

However, the arrival of pointillism on the art scene also testifies to the end of the earlier ideal of *correspondance* between all the Arts, which Baudelaire had made fashionable decades earlier. Science was now seen as offering a possible bridge between music and art, but the bridge no longer extended to poetry, the art of language. In a sense this

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[193] Letter of 6 Nov. 1886 (my translation). cf. Jeanine Bailly-Herzberg, ed., *Correspondance de Camille Pissarro*, T. 2, Saint-Ouen-l’-Aumône, Éd. Du Valhermeil, 1981, quoted by G. Roque, “Chevreul and Impressionism: a reappraisal’, *Art Bulletin*, vol. 78, 1 March 1996.

[194] Letter of 30 Aug. 1888, quoted in Roque, *Chevreul et les peintres…*, p. 289 (my translation).

[195] For a brief account of the exhibition, see for instance Henry Fèvre, L’exposition des impressionnistes: 1886, Paris, L’Echoppe, 1992.

amounted to a liberation of art and of art criticism from a conscious or unconscious desire to think of a painting in a language other than pictorial. But as Pissarro realized, the aesthetic emotion created by viewing a painting cannot really be expressed in the language of science, i.e., mathematics.

At the same time and to return to Charles Blanc's remark about Delacroix quoted earlier, it is hard to see how the riot of coloured dots on a pointillist canvas could be transposed into the black and white image of an engraving, even in lithography. Yet as we have seen, one of the truly modernist aspects of Édouard Manet was his use of the luminosity of black to express musical emotion. Roque has drawn attention to the emergence of a chromatic system "entirely organized around the opposition of a luminous pole and an obscure pole".[196] He argues that this chromatic system of darkness and whiteness must be seen as an inversion of the pictorial values of later artists, in particular painters of scenes under the bright sunlight of the South. As photography became the new black-and-white art and as pointillism the new modernity, the lesson of Manet's use of his chromatic system to express a musical experience, was not lost on one painter: Henry Lerolle.

Darkness and light: Henry Lerolle (1848-1929) and spiritual music

One of the most striking evocations of the power of music through the use of contrast between zones of darkness and light is Henry Lerolle's 1885 *À l'Orgue*, also known as *The Organ Rehearsal*. Music played an important part in the lives of Lerolle's family and his intimate circle of friends. Madame Lerolle's sister, Jeanne, was married to the composer Ernest Chausson, while other musicians who frequented his home were Vincent d'Indy and Claude Debussy.[197] Among many other works, Vincent d'Indy composed an oratorio, *Le Légende de Saint Christophe*, which premiered much later, based on themes from Gregorian chant. Ernest Chausson's instrumental music, meanwhile, is melodic, rhapsodic and moody.

Henry Lerolle was also a close friend of the devout Catholic painter Maurice Denis. He owned several Denis paintings including his pointillist *Mystère catholique* (1889, oil on canvas, h. 97 cm x w. 143 cm, Musée départemental Maurice Denis, Saint-Germain-en Laye). Maurice Denis, mentions the success of Lerolle's *À l'Orgue* in a collection of his articles on art theory and he later devoted a short monograph to Lerolle, which reproduces

[196] Georges Roque, *Quand la lumière devient couleur*, Paris, Gallimard, 2018, p. 70.

[197] On Ernest Chausson and Vincent d'Indy, see their entries in the *Grove Dictionary of Music*.

a few letters to Lerolle, including three by Claude Debussy, written when the composer was writing *Pelléas et Mélisandre*.[198]

Henry Lerolle's *À l'Orgue* (1885, oil on canvas, h. 236.9 x w. 362.6 cm, New-York, metropolitan Museum of Art, ill. 19). was first exhibited in New-York by the Paris art dealer, Durand-Ruel. The composition is set in the Paris church of Saint-François Xavier. At the organ, one recognizes the profile of Henry Chausson. In the composition, the vaults of the church are outlined in their bare essentials. Sharpness of line delineates the figures of the organist, the singer, the members of the choir and the soloist at the centre of the painting. They are shown on the balcony in a fixed pose. Along a diagonal, across half of the composition, the nave of the church is filled with light. The grisaille technique and the simplified values of whites against the dark shades of black and brown of the figures on the balcony define two contrasting musical spaces: the one on the left where music is about to be made and the one on right where it is going to be heard. Standing at a point where the two spaces meet, the figure of the singer mediates between the two, suggesting a powerful expectation of the music about to be performed. Neither the building nor the listeners and performers are the true subject of the painting. The painting is a pictorial rendering of the power of music as it is about to fill the church as well as the listeners and performers. The concentration of the listeners, looking inwards, and that of the organist and of the singer, facing forwards, further emphasize the intensity of the musical moment. The sound of the music about to be heard carries them away. We, the spectators are turned into listeners, expecting to be absorbed ourselves by the presence of an invisible music.

On the occasion of its exhibition in New York, the art critic of the *New York Independent* wrote: "There is no striving for effect, no attempt at conventional 'picture-making,' either in the grouping of the figures, or in the chosen types, or in the sober shapes and colours of their attire. Five or six members of the choir are sitting and standing in natural attitudes, listening intently to the soprano, who is standing at the rail singing alone to the accompaniment of the organist…"[199]. Like him, most art critics of the period judged the

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[198] Maurice Denis, *Théories, 1890-1910: du symbolisme et de Gauguin vers un nouvel ordre classique*, 3rd rd., Paris, Bibliothèque de "l'Occident", 1913 & *Henry Lerolle et ses amis, suivi de quelques lettres d'amis*, Paris, Imprimerie Duranton, 1832.

[199] See Agnes Armstrong, "À l'Orgue: An Investigation of Henry Lerolle's Painting and Its Subjects", *The Tracker: Journal of the Organ Historical Society*, vol.59, 3, p. 14-22. The information on the history of the work comes from this article.

painter's approach to be realistic Only one critic, not a contemporary of Lerolle's, appears to have perceived how the opposition of dark and white evoked silence pregnant with music in the scene. The critic wrote that the painting "made ravishing harmonies audible to the eye,"[200] "Ravishing" may appear an inappropriate term for the solemnity of religious music about to fill the space of the representation, unless the critic was referring to a form of spiritual ravishment.

In an earlier religious work by Lerolle, *La Communion des Apôtres* (1878, oil on canvas, h. 43.9 cm x w. 29.3 cm, La Chapelle du Sacré-Cœur, Paris), obviously inspired by Veronese, the white of both Christ's robe and the tablecloth at the Last Supper shine through the dark group of the Apostles. Like his friend Maurice Denis, Lerolle was part of the resurgence of a less dogmatic, more devotional form of the Catholic religion in France in the last decades of the century. Maurice Denis in his *Mystère catholique* affirmed his Catholic belief through a bright, decorative, pastel-coloured pointillist depiction. Lerolle, on the other hand, chose to express his faith through the contrast of dark and light. If music is the language of the soul, there is spirituality in the visual music of *À l'Orgue*.

[200] Quoted in Maurice Denis, *Henry Lerolle et ses amis*, Paris, Imprimerie Duranton, 1932, p. 16.

Chapter 5

VISUAL MUSIC IN OFFICIAL AND THE "NON-OFFICIAL" SALONS OF THE SECOND PART OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

This final chapter places the individual works we have previously discussed within the context of the evolution of art during the latter part of the Second Empire and during the decades 1870-1890, when the Third Republic was established and consolidated. The visual music that we identify and exemplify, covers all manners of representation, with the exception of allegory, a special case discussed in Chapter 3. To do so, we shall adapt the classification of works by themes within genre categories adopted by some art historians when they provide a systematic survey of the whole production of an artist, as for instance James H. Rubin in his *Manet*.[201] For this study, these categories, portraits of musicians, instruments, etc.

Our starting point will be the Salon of the *Exposition Universelle* of 1867 as it offers a view of the genres of paintings that came to dominate the production of the following decades. Already in 1863, after protests by artists who were "rejected" from the Salon, Napoleon III arranged for a special separate show, called the Salon des Refusés. Édouard Manet seized the opportunity offered by the *Salon des Refusés* to challenge official art by exhibiting his Déjeuner sur l'herbe (1863, oil on canvas, h. 208 cm, w. 264.5 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris).[202] By displacing the Salon from its traditional prestigious location in the Louvre to the *Palais de l'Industrie,* the *Exposition* of 1867 dismantled, in the words of the art historian Patricia Mainardi, "the classical hierarchy of categories" and led to the gradual erosion of the traditional values that governed aesthetic preferences in the eyes of the public.[203] Secondly the transfer of public responsibility to the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* and its subsequent rivalry with

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[201] James H. Rubin, *Manet*, Paris: Flammarion, 2010. See, for instance t. I " Musicians and assemblies", pp. 41-52.

[202] David Wildenstein, "le Salon des refusés de 1863", *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Sept. 1965, pp. 125-152. See also Albert Boime, "The Salon des Refusés and the Evolution of Modern Art", *Art Quarterly,* 1969, 32, available at www.albertboime.com/articles/12.pdf (last accessed 08/2019).

[203] Mainardi, Patricia, *The End of the Salon: Art and the State in the Early Third Republic*, Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Government-sponsored institutions led to the weakening of institutional authority.[204] A turning point, in this respect, was the 1879 Salon.

By that year, France was on her way to recovery from the disaster of the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune. Republican stability enabled a streamlining of Government agencies. After 1879, the salons of the *Académie des Beaux-Arts* were no longer organized by the *Administration des Beaux-Arts* but came under the general direction of the *Ministère de l'instruction publique*. In the following decades a growing number of alternative exhibition venues opened up to groups of artists, as did the showrooms of forward-looking major art dealers, such as Durand-Ruel, offering more opportunities for showing different styles of painting. In 1884 the *Société des Artistes Indépendants* held an annual exhibition, the *Salon des Indépendants* and the first salon of *Société Nationale des Beaux–Arts* was held in 1890.

Identifying works which have a musical theme nevertheless poses a number of problems. Art, as understood by the nineteenth century, included a variety of media, though it was less diverse than today, considering for instance, the present-day fashion of installations. The works that were shown in Salons, official or not, covered all contemporary media and they were classified accordingly in the catalogues, under "peinture", "sculpture" and so on.[205] In the 1879 Salon, for instance, some 30 of the 135 state purchases were sculptures, most of them "moulages", with a few busts in marble and full length statues in bronze. One likely explanation for the large number of "moulages" is that they could have been destined for public buildings. Some paintings purchased in the Salons by the State were also destined to provide models for the decoration of public buildings.[206] In limiting ourselves strictly to paintings, we are aware that we introduce a bias in our assessment of the relative place of representation of

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[204] Cf. Jane Mayo Roos, *Early Impressionism and the French State*, Cambridge University Press, 1996, in part. chap. 5, pp. 73-90 and Particia Mainardi, *The End of the Salon: Art and state in the Early Third Republic*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, chap 13, pp. 123-153 and chap. 20, pp. 194-97.

[205] As, for instance, in *Catalogue des ouvrages de peinture, sculpture, gravure, lithographie et architecture: refusés par le Jury de 1863 et exposés, par décision de S.M. l'Empereur au salon annexe, Palais des Champs-Élysées, le 15 mai 1863*.

[206] For example, in the 1868 Salon *L'Aurore* (oil on canvas, dimensions unknown, *Catalogue*, no. 186) by M. Ranvier was a study for the ceiling of *Palais de la Légion d'Honneur* and F. H. Giacomotti's *La Gloire de Rubens* (h. 70 x w. 90 cm, *Catalogue*, no. 1012) Giacomotti's *La Gloire de Rubens*, no. 58) was a study for the decoration of a ceiling of *Palais du Luxembourg* (*Catalogue*, no. 1012).

musicians in the Salons, but the sculpture of the second half of the nineteenth century, in particular, is a field of study for only a few specialist historians and would take us far beyond our brief.

Secondly, only a selection of the works listed in the Salon catalogues were selected for purchase. These were reproduced, in black and white, in the corresponding Salon albums available in *Base Arcade*. Some but not all, then, are accessible in *Base Joconde* or worldwide museum collections. For the others, we can only rely on the titles given in the catalogues. Occasionally, their subsequent history, sometimes with brief descriptions can be traced in sales records. Fortunately, reviews of Salons published by art critics in periodicals could also be quite detailed in their descriptions, though these descriptions are bound to reflect their authors tastes regarding current artistic trends.

Visual music in its historical artistic context

Visual music, like the whole artistic production of the period, was affected by these major structural changes influencing the art market. New trends and new styles broadened the public conception of what constituted art. On the other hand, nineteenth-century art audiences were far more limited than today's public. Art consumerism today, promoted by mass media, makes the public more immediately ready to accept new fashions, as in the case of installations, for instance. In the nineteenth century, viewing was largely restricted to Salons and galleries. Except for an elite of adventurous connoisseurs, continuity rather than modernity governed taste.

Considering genres first, in a review of the 1861 Salon, the critic Albert de la Fizelière, remarked that mythological compositions were falling out of fashion, and noted the increasing space occupied in Salons by "la peinture d'histoire" and 'la peinture de chevalet".[207] La Fizelière's *A-Z ou le Salon en miniature* lists at least 9 contemporary historical scenes, including two "battles of Soferino', as opposed to fourteen "genre" scenes, in which genre La Fizelière incudes Jean-François Millet's *D'Attente* (1860, oil on canvas, h. 83.8 x w. 121.7, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City), said to be "dans le genre rustique". Even more than his idiosyncratic examples of the works he chooses to describe, La Fizelière's style of description testifies to the confusion created

[207] Albert de la Fizelière, *A-Z ou le Salon en miniature*, Paris, Poulet-Malassis et de Broise, 1861. This short work is a curious mixture of accurate descriptions and peremptory critical judgements. Our figures are based only on the entries where the author identifies the work with precision.

by the dismantling of tradition commented upon by Mainardi: a portrait by Hippolite Flandrin is said to be "comme Raphael et comme Ingres" (p. 27) and "le réalisme" of one of Courbet's is a "poésie du cœur" (p. 21).[208] La Fizelière did not anticipate that mythological compositions and historical scenes would make a re-appearance in the decorations of public buildings after 1871. Nevertheless, before that date, La Fizelière's assessment appeared to be correct. Reviewing the 1867 Salon for the French newspaper *La Liberté*, Jules-Antoine Castagnary wrote that "Religion is dead, History is dead, Mythology is dead".[209] Castagnary was a partisan for Naturalism, but even the conservative Paul de Saint-Victor came to the same conclusion in his reviews of the Salon for *La Presse*, regretting that art had renounced the path of heroic form and pure beauty and was falling back on "scenes of manner… on curiosities and on genre scenes".[210]

In the catalogue of the 1879 Salon, which lists a selected, albeit significant portion of the exhibition, the majority of paintings are landscapes (forests, lakes and seashores), numbering 22, or religious subjects, numbering 13, followed closely by scenes of everyday lives, mostly of the peasantry, numbering 12. In the list there are 8 historical scenes, among them 5 from ancient history and 3 from the Middle Ages. The latter include Moreau de Tours' first successful large work in the genre that became one of his specialties, *Blanche de Castille Reine de France* (1879, oil on canvas, 1.70 m x 2.40 m, Musée de Téssé, Le Mans). Of the 4 allegories listed, two reflect the new politics of the time: one allegory commemorates the 1878 Exhibition, an oil on panel entitled *Paris, sous les auspices de la République, convie les nations aux luttes pacifiques des arts et de l'industrie.* There are 2 nudes, among them a cliché pencil sketch by Emmanuel Bemmer, *Une dormeuse*. The list also includes 2 mythological scenes, among them William Bouguéreau's *Naissance de Vénus* (1879, oil on canvas, h. 3 m. x. w. 2.15 m, Paris, Musée d'Orsay), which, despite its obvious reference to Botticelli, is principally a display of academic nudity.[211] Yet it is in the same Salon of 1879 that Manet exhibited his *Dans la Serre* (oil on canvas, h. 115 cm x w. 150 cm, Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin) and *En*

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[208] Unidentified, but one of the five landscapes that Courbet sent to the exhibition. Cf. A. Wagner, "Courbet's landscapes and their Market, *Art History,* 4 (1981), pp. 410-431.

[209] Quoted in translation by Patricia Mainardi, *Art and Politics of the Second Empire: The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867*, New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1987, p. 139.

[210] Quoted in translation by Patricia Mainardi, op. cit., loc. cit.

[211] *Catalogue illustré du Salon, 1879 sous la direction de F. G. Dumas* (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k110428c/f1, last accessed 07/2019).

Bateau (1874, oil on canvas, h. 97.2 cm x w. 130.2 cm Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) and Renoir showed his *Portrait de Mademoiselle Jeanne Samary* (1878, h. 174 cm x w. 101cm, Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg). J. K. Huysmans commented on Monet's works, but Lucy H. Hooper, reviewing the Salon in the *Art Journal*, did not comment on any of them, though she praised Jules Sebastien-Lepage's *Octobre, Récolte de pommes de terre* (1878, oil on canvas, 189.7 cm x 196 cm, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne) for its "pitiless sincerity of rendition".[212]

Nearly a decade after the 1879 Salon, the *Catalogue* of the 1888 Salon shows that despite Impressionism, the rise first of Symbolism and, in reaction, of Naturalism, the tastes of both the public and the State remained largely unchanged. Of the 2586 entries listed in its *Catalogue illustré*, we can categorize with some certainty nearly half, i.e., some 1240 works.[213] While polished still-lives and flower-bouquets feature in some works, two categories continued to dominate: landscapes (491) and portraits (378). Scenes of rural or maritime life were still numerous, (some 71), though scenes of urban life or of workday activities were a greater proportion (158 identified). Reflecting a continued interest during a period of colonial expansion, the catalogue lists 30 oriental scenes. And, despite their long-heralded disappearance, historical scenes and scenes of battles were still present (27 and 49 respectively), though with increasing topicality, as at least half commemorated contemporary events.

At the end of our period, in 1895, the critic and Secretary of Paris *École des Beaux-Arts*, Gustave Larroumet, took stock of the situation in *L'art et l'État en France*, writing of the "anarchy currently reigning in the way in which art presents itself [in France]".[214] His use of the word "anarchy" reflects the views of the secretary of a conservative teaching institution, diversity and eclecticism would be more appropriate terms.

The musical themes – in the sense we use this term (see above and note 1) – taken by painters as their subjects during the period reflect the same diversity overall with one significant difference: while all categories of paintings continue to be present throughout, visual music remains relatively rare in a period when first mythology and history and then

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[212] Lucy H. Hooper, "The Paris Salon of 1879. I", *The Art Journal* (1875-1887), vol. 5, 1879, pp. 217–219 (jstor.org/stable/20569385), last accessed 10 March 2021.

[213] *Catalogue des ouvrages exposés au Palais des Champs-Élysées, le 1er mai 1888, Paris, Ludovic Baschet [1888]* (https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k110428c/f1, last accessed 25/07/2019).

[214] Gustave Larroumet, *L'art et l'État en France*, Paris, Hachette, 1895, p. 93.

landscape dominated the art scene. Works with a musical theme make an appearance more sporadically and often in groups or clusters. Emulation or competition among artists was obviously a factor, but it is noticeable that a desire to take advantage of current fashions also played a part in artists' choices. While visual music showed a continuing vitality, its themes did not receive the same attention or treatment throughout the period. Some were mostly favoured by painters mostly in specific moments, others recurred at several times. The frequency of a theme's treatment during one period does not exclude its reappearance in a later one but, in general, choices were influenced by the emergence of new styles, such as orientalism or naturalism. It is from this perspective that we proceed to examine some of the most significant musical themes present in works during the period.

The instrument as emblem of a musical genre

Representations of single instruments are comparatively rare and usually function as emblems of favoured musical genres. Military music was enjoyed by all social categories and a number of paintings shown in early Salons of the period show the trumpet or bugle, a characteristic military instrument and, where the trumpeter is featured, they serve as emblems of military heroism. A Catalogue for the 1861 Salon lists at least two works showing a trumpeter, including one by a pupil of Vernet, J. Luchodolski, entitled *Trompette polonais* (cat. no. 1587) and one, among the several he exhibited, by Jean-Louis Meissonier (1815 – 1891) *Le Musicien* (1859, oil on canvas, h. 24.1 x w. 17.5 Clark Art Institute, Williamstown MA USA).[215] Commenting on this painting in his A-Z of the 1861 Salon (p. 38) where it was shown, La Fizelière declared Messonier "le plus grand des peintres en petit". The following year, however, the catastrophic defeat of the Napoleon III's *zouaves* at Puebla was a blow to the pride that the French took in heroic military charges. In this context, Manet's painting *Le Fifre* (1866, oil on canvas, h. 161cm x w. 97 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris) can be seen as subverting an established emblem of grandeur and heroism. The figure of a young fifer is in the uniform of *Garde Nationale*, a local form of Parisian militia. Some critics, notably Émile Zola at the time and, recently, J. A. Hiddleston, have remarked that the flatness and the bright colours of this painting

[215] Louis Auvray, *Exposition des Beaux-Arts*, Paris, Aux Bureaux de la Revue Artistique, 1861.

evoke the figures of soldiers produced by the *imagerie d'Épinal*.[216] Two years later, Manet painted his *L'Exécution de Maximilien* (1868-69, oil on canvas, [fuller version] h. 252 cm x w. 305 cm, Kunsthalle Mannheim). After the catastrophic defeat of France in the Franco-Prussian War, Meissonier returned to the trumpet, but significantly as an evocation of a more triumphant past, with his *Le Trompette de 1807* (1875, oil on panel, h. 135.9 cm x w. 142.6 cm, private collection), shown in the 1874 Salon.[217] This vignette image of a trumpeter was one of a number of studies for his triumphalist work celebrating Napoleon's last great victory *1807 Friedland* (1875, oil on painting, 135.9 x 242.6 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New-York). In Twentieth-century paintings, the trumpet regains its emblematic role in Twentieth-century representations of Jazz bands.

The guitar became popular with men during the period. It is an occasional motif in Manet's paintings as well in works by other painters. With the exception of one of Manet's paintings, (discussed below) however, it is less an emblem of Spanish guitar music, of which there were many regional traditions evoking a fairly fanciful picturesque Spain with typified costumes and sceneries. Modern symphonic instruments, on the other hand, are rarely featured. It may be that the subject was too new, relatively, for artists to perceive it as attractive to a public with traditional tastes in easel painting. It may also be that symphonic music remained, for a long time, an elite taste. Furthermore, the absence of pictorial models for such representations must have played a part; religious "Trumpeting Angels" and aristocratic "Concert Champêtres" could hardly offer a model for the depiction of a contemporary orchestral performance.

In the 1879 Salon we can identify one painting, the title of which suggests that it is emblematic of a particular style of orchestral work associated with an instrument. Though no illustration is available in the catalogue, the composition, C. Fouqué's *Fantaisie sur le hautbois* (no. 1260), was obviously conceived with reference to the freer orchestral composition of *fantaisie*. Popular at the time, the modern oboe, developed in the 1860s, played a full part in these compositions, as in Hector Berlioz's *Fantaisie sur la "Tempête" de Shakespeare* and his oratorio *Elliot.* The Salon coincided with the new

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[216] J. A. Hiddleston, "Baudelaire, Manet, and Modernity" *The Modern Language Review,* vol. 87, no. 3, 1992, pp. 567–575 www.jstor.org/stable/3732920, last accessed 20 Jan. 2020.

[217] Cf. J. W. Mollett, *Illustrated Biographies of Modern Artists: Meissonier*, London, Scribner and Welford, 1882.

seasons of *Concerts Colonne* and *Concerts Pasdeloup*, which opened in 1878 and marked the consecration the composer.[218]

A rarer occurrence of another symphonic instrument, the modern Buffet bassoon, is found in Edgar Degas's *L'Orchestre de l'Opéra* (ca 1870, oil on canvas, h. 56.5 cm x w. 46 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris). The work shows a symphonic orchestra in performance. In the painting, the diagonal lines of the instruments in the wind section echo in reverse those of the cello and the double bass and succeed in evoking the surge of symphonic chords. In symphonies of the period, the bassoon did not play solos but dialogued with the other winds, the cellos or the double bass. The small size of the painting enables Degas to focus the perspective sharply on the bore of bassoon, comparatively over-sized and occupying the largest space on the left-hand side, being played by the instrumentalist.

Portraits of musicians performing

Another category of paintings, individualized portraits of performing musicians confirm the relative rarity of musical subjects in our period. Though portraits continued to be numerous in Salon showings, few were actually portraits of musicians. Prints reproducing line drawings were by far the most frequent medium used to popularize the images of famous performers, usually singers. Obviously, the rarity of portraits showing a musician actually performing on an instrument is also explained by the fact that for an accurate portrait of his performance, a musician would have to attend several sittings, while for a print all that was required was a single sketch of a singer donning the costume and assuming the pose of the operatic role that made him or her famous.

Judging by existing black and white contemporary reproductions, Jeanne Rongier's *César Frank à la console de Sainte Clotilde,* [219] an oil portrait of the composer shown in the 1888 Salon, was closely and accurately examined. César Frank was the organist of the great Cavaillé Coll organ of the church of Sainte Clotilde and, in this work, his massive frame balances that of the huge console. His left hand is shown pressing one of the keys of the upper keyboard (the so-called swell), while he is pulling a stop with his powerful right hand as if for a finale chord. Jeanne Rongier seems to have chosen to capture the

[218] As noted in the musical periodical, *Le Ménestrel,* of 6/10/1878, pp. 360-61.

[219] The portrait is in private ownership and no detailed material description is available. See the reference to the painter in the "Special Salon number" of *L'Art français, Revue artistique hebdomadaire*, 1888, by Firmin Javel.

moment when the organ produced its most spectacular sound.

In contrast, the personal link between artist and sitter is evident in Gauguin's portrait of his friend, the cellist Fritz Schneklud, in *Le Violoncelliste* (1894 oil on canvas h. 92.7 x w. 73.3 cm, Baltimore Art Museum). The two shades of opposite colours, blue for the cellist's garb and orange red for his instruments emphasize the figure of the cellist, which occupies the central space in composition. Gauguin has, however, also paid particular attention to the positioning of the hands and the concentration of the musician's face, highlighted by tones of light ochre.

Two other portraits of musicians stand out from the production of the period. In both of these the musician is a "doppelgänger" of the artist. In one of Courbet's over twenty self-portraits, *Le Violoncelliste* (1847, oil on canvas, h. 112.2 x w. 86.8, Portland Art Museum, ill. 20), the painter represents himself holding a cello.[220] Courbet did not play a musical instrument and there is no attempt at musical accuracy in the portrait: the cello is placed far too off the shoulder and the fingers of the right hand do not show that he could be playing the strings.[221] Courbet was left-handed. The pose adopted suggests that he painted his reflection in a mirror. Most commentators have seen in the portrait a metaphor for the painter himself, the bow representing his palette. Contrary to most of Courbet's other self-portraits, though, there is no theatricality in the representation.[222] As Claire Moran has argued, the "strange disguises" of these self-portraits create a critical distance between the artist and the work and "serve as a commentary on his aesthetics".[223] The comment is particularly applicable to this work. There is no realism in the composition: the cello and the shape of Courbet and of the instrument blend in a wave of brown and other dark colours from which only Courbet's face emerges in shades of white. The visual

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[220] Cf. Georges Riat, *Gustave Courbet. Peintre*, Paris, E. Floury, p. 65. The portrait was first shown in Courbet's Brussels exhibition of 1850, see *Gustave Courbet et la Belgique - Réalisme de l'art vivant à l'air libre. Catalogue d'exposition*, Brussels, Editions Silvana, 2013.

[221] This is even more evident in a preparatory drawing in pencil, pen and black ink on light brown cardboard (h. 22 cm x w. 18 cm) from the Triton Collection Foundation, sold at Christies in 2015 (auction 4053).

[222] See Marie-Thérèse de Forges, *Autoportraits de Courbet. Exposition, Paris, Musée national du Louvre*. 1973, Paris, Éditions des Musées nationaux, 1973.

[223] Claire Moran, "Theatricality, irony and artifice in Gustave Courbet's self-portraits. *Journal of Romance Studies*, vol. 13, no. 2 (Summer 2003) pp. 41-61 (doi: 103167/jrs.2013.130203, last accessed 08/2019).

effects achieved in this way capture a moment of revelation: Courbet, the painter, sees himself as a musician emerging from a surge of dark colours to find his inspiration in a rhapsody of sound. The painting catches this pregnant moment. Perhaps it was this unconscious realization that led Courbet to cut out the top right quarter of the picture and substitute a new piece of canvas with a sheet of printed music on a stand, an act which has puzzled art historians and critics.

In a later work, the painter Adolphe Monticelli (1824-1886) represented himself in his *Autoportrait en Méphisto du Faust de Gounod* (ca 1875-1877), oil on wood panel, private ownership). Van Gogh admired Monticelli, and the painting was shown in the exhibition *Van Gogh et Monticelli* held in Marseille in 1957.[224] In the painting, Méphisto-Monticelli is shown full-length and sideways. He is dressed in a devil's floating costume, with a winged cap like horns, all in bright crimson red. With his right hand he plucks a round-backed mandolin in depicted in a light ochre colour, as are his hands and face. The poet Émile Verhaeren, in an article on Monticelli published in *L'Art Moderne*, in 1882,[225] thought that the crimson red of Faust's garb suggested blood, but the ochres of the guitar, the face and the hand, and the black background give it more of a ruby-like shimmer. There is a playfulness in the painting. Gounod's Méphisto character, however Machiavellian, has also something of the jester in him, as in Act V, when Faust, guitar in hand, is to about to serenade Marguerite. But to the viewer who knew Gounod's opera, the grandiloquence of the red in the painting could not fail, whether or not intentionally, to evoke the "rodomontades" of Mephistopheles.

Listening to music

In many genres of visual music, the viewer is called to be like the audience featured in the composition, to be a spectator not a listener. In some outstanding works analysed in Chapter 4, colour succeeds in evoking that special aesthetic emotion aroused by performing or listening to a musical piece. Two paintings, on the other hand, succeed in representing the communion of emotion shared by the listener and the performer in a musical moment. Degas' *Lorenzo Pagans et Auguste de Gas* (1871/1872, oil on canvas,

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[224] *Vincent Van Gogh [Vincent et Monticelli, ed. Charles Mauron].* Catalogue, Musée Cantini, Marseille, 1957.

[225] E. Verhaeren, "Monticelli", *Art Moderne*, 24 Novembre1889, repr. in *Sensations*, Paris, Crès & Cie, 1927, quoted in Georges Raillard, *Monticelli l'étrange*, Marseille, A. Dimanche, 2008, pp. 103.

0.545 x 0.395 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay) (ill. 21) shows, in one composition, an individual performer and his listener sharing the same emotional experience. In concerts given by professional musicians in bourgeois homes, it was usual for the women to be seated at the front, while men stood behind them. In orchestral performances organized by *Concerts Pasdeloup* or *Concerts Colonne*, the audience was seated. Except when a group had been arranged to applaud or to boo, decorum meant that the audience should remain seated until the last bows were taken by the soloist and the conductor. The scene depicted by Degas is, on the contrary, informal, private, not to say intimate. In the foreground he has painted the figure of the Spanish guitarist and tenor Pagans singing to the accompaniment of his instrument. On his left, slightly behind him, Degas has featured his father, Auguste, listening intensely. The two figures are seated in front of what seems to be a piano, with a score open on it. Both figures are dressed in black and stand out against the ochre background of the back wall. They are so close to one another that the black of Lorenzo's suit merges with that of Auguste's. They are united in music. Most striking is Degas's father's pose: his body is slightly bent in a relaxed way, his face lowered and pensive, his hands joined together. He is wrapped up in music. So is Lorenzo: he obviously knows what he sings and plays, as he does not have to look at the instrument. He, too, is carried away by his music and by a communion in a unique musical moment.
Henri Fantin-Latour's group portrait (1836-1904) *Autour du Piano* (1885, oil on canvas, h. 160 x w. 222 cm Musée d'Orsay Paris, ill. 22) is a group portrait of composers and music lovers that also evokes the sharing of a musical experience. Grouped around the composer Emmanuel Chabrier at the piano, are the composer Edmond Maitre and the composer Amédé Pigeon seated and, standing from left to right, the critic Adolphe Julien, the composers Arthur Boisseau and Camille Benoit, the amateur musician Antoine Lascoux and the composer Vincent d'Indy. Though Antoine Lascoux was the founder of the music group *Le Petit Wagner*, to whom the individuals in the painting all belonged, Fantin-Latour "feared nothing more than the painting being taken as a (Wagnerian) musical manifesto", as his friend Adolphe Julien emphatically stated.[226] Nor is *Autour du piano* a homage to the German composer designed as a "pendant" to *Hommage à Delacroix* (1864, oil on canvas, h. 160 cm x w. 250 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris).[227] Fantin-

[226] Adolphe Jullien, *Fantin-Latour: sa vie et ses amitiés, lettres inédites et souvenirs personnels...*, Paris, L. Laveur, 1909, pp. 126-131.

[227] Quoted in Bridget Alsdorf, op. cit. note 30, p. 142.

Latour has excluded from *Autour du Piano* any accessory, bust or meaningful portrait that would allude to Wagner. Undoubtedly, as we saw in Chapter 2, for Fantin-Latour Wagner's operas came closer to "total art" and the music that Chabrier plays is most probably one of the many transcriptions of Wagner's melodies for the piano. But the composition is not an attempt to translate or transcribe Wagner's music into painting.

The painting is more than a modern conversation piece, unlike the earlier group composition by Fantin-Latour, entitled *Un Coin de Table* (oil on canvas, h. 160 cm x w. 225 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris). In the 1872 painting, each of the main characters sitting at a table is occupied with something different: the poet Rimbaud muses, hand on chin while his friend and lover, the poet Verlaine, holds a glass of wine in his right hand. Another character is shown searching his pocket, an empty cup in front of him on the table, and a fourth holds a book while smoking his pipe. In *Autour du Piano* on the contrary, everyone, even the pianist, appears transfixed in a special musical moment. Chabrier's hands on the keyboard and the open score on the piano show that he is playing. The poses of the figures that make up the two groups, whether sitting or standing, clearly show that are listening intently, steeped in or enthralled by the music.[228]

In the painting, the half tones of mahogany brown of the piano and the whitish grey of the door in the background create a slightly subdued atmosphere, whilst the black of the men's suits give solemnity to the moment. The sense of stillness of this quasi-religious atmosphere gives unity to the composition. Each of the sitters is shown in the subjective state that music creates in him, while at the same time sharing sympathetically the experience of the others. The intense stillness of that shared musical moment calls on the viewer to "unite with the listeners in the painting in sympathy", as Octave Mirbeau observed with *Le Salon* in *Notes sur l'Art*,[229] and to become, in the words of the art-historian Anne Leonard, "another listener"[230] "Le vide de l'ensemble", which the critic Philippe Bury decried, is a celebration of "music itself", as Adolphe Julien aptly remarked. Fantin-Latour's *Autour du Piano,* captures the nature of musical time, in which

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[228] On questions of interpretation of the painting, see Bridget Alsdorf, *Fellow Men. Fantin-Latour and the problem of the group in nineteenth-century French painting*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2017.

[229] Octave Mirbeau, op. cit., "Le Salon" (1885).

[230] Anne Leonard, "The Musical Imagination of Henri Fantin-Latour" in Rubin, James H. & Olivia Mattis, eds, *Rival Sisters, Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014, pp. 201-221.

the mind reconstructs the past and anticipates the future.[231]

Musical genre scenes

In the art of the period, by far the most frequent depictions of amateur performance combine the figure of an amateur player and a piano. But, contrary to Édouard Manet's *Madame Manet au piano* discussed in Chapter 4, the featured player in most of these compositions is not an identifiable individual. These are interior scenes belonging to a genre already depicted by Dutch painters of the Seventeenth century in particular.

In the 1879 Salon, the Franco-Belgian artist Gustave Léonard de Jonghe's (1829-1893) *La berceuse de Chopin* (no. 875) explicitly refers to a specific piano composition. In this case, too, the Salon *Catalogue* does not provide an illustration, but we have descriptions and comments from contemporary critics who reviewed it. The first comes from the novelist and critic Joris-Karl Huysmans.[232] Huysmans was a symbolist and a caustic critic. In his review, he describes the painting, sarcastically, as showing a little girl "languidly butchering" Chopin's piece to the admiration of her mother, who holds an infant in her arms. The work cannot be traced, but Huysmans provides us with a description of the colours used: mauve for the girl's dress, blue for the mother's and red for the covering of the armchair on which she sits. Huysmans wrote that the artist must have chosen them in order to show off his skill at painting cloths. These comments on the colours of the painting seem unfair. De Jonghe's *Berceuse* obviously belonged to a type of interior piano scenes much appreciated by the public of the Salons for their treatment of elegant young ladies, where the piano or other occasional accessories serve as contrast to the brilliance of the splendid dress, as in another de Jonghe composition, *Dame am Klavier mit Kakadu* (?1870, oil on painting, h. 66 x w. 48 cm, private ownership).[233]

The genre was made famous by the brilliant artiste Auguste Toulmouche. As an example of this style of composition, Toulmouche's *Le Billet* (1883, oil on canvas, h. 66 x w 45

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[231] This last comment is inspired by a reading of Frank Mercier's interpretation of Piero della Francesca's *Flagellation of Christ*, in the light of Augustine's theology of time. Cf. in Frank Mercier, "Salvation in perspective: A new interpretation of Piero della Francesca's *Flagellation of Christ*", *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, vol. 72, no. 3, 2017, pp. 737-771.

[232] The review first appeared in *La Revue littéraire et artistique* and was re-printed in his 1893 *L'Art Moderne*, (VIII, 51), 1893. The quotations, in my translation, are from the second edition, Paris, Stock, 1902.

[233] Described as lot 328 in Kettere Kunst, *Auction sale catalogue 355* (19/06/2009).

cms, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes, ill. 23) shows a young woman standing full-length and sideways reading a note that she has found in the posy she holds in her hand. As in many of Toulmouche's paintings and other similar compositions, the figure of a woman is there primarily to play on a striking contrast of colours, between the indigo blue of a large interior curtain and the shimmering pink of the woman's dress. An even more dramatic display of colours is found later, with a reprise of the theme in several society scenes by the Italian painter Giovanni Boldini, for example, his *Signora al Pianoforte* (?1890, oil on painting, 15 x 13 cm, private collection). This way of playing upon colour contrasts is precisely the aspect that another critic, the writer and admirer of classical Antiquity, Arsène Houssaye, (1815-1896) praised in De Jonghe's *Berceuse***.** Writing in an 1879 number of *L'Artiste, Journal de la littérature et des beaux-arts*, Houssaye thought it "a most intimate scene, radiating with splendid colours and grace…".[234] Huysmans certainly exaggerated when he wrote that De Joghne's treatment of the scene turned his Berceuse into "a kind of still life". Nevertheless, the brilliance of the scene, to use Houssaye's words, would hardly suggest the exquisite quality of Chopin's piece. The original title of Chopin's *Berceuse*, his lullaby in D flat major (opus 57, 1844) was *Variantes*. Contrary to the brilliance of his *Études* (opus 10), the piece is a set of sixteen short, dreamy variations on a melodic line. Its harmonic progression is based on a repeating cycle, and the "broderie" of the ornamentation, is delicate rather than "brilliant".[235]

In the catalogue of the 1879 Salon, another painting, L. E. Adan's *Un Petit Prodige* (no. 10) depicts a scene of piano playing in an interior setting. The scene shown in the corresponding *Album* (no. 10) is set in a bourgeois interior. In the foreground, on the left, a mother has interrupted what appears to be her crochet to listen to a very young girl at the piano. On the right, an older woman in black has dozed off in her armchair. Another young woman is shown standing by the young performer and turning the pages, while three guests sitting at a table look on. The only other character depicted standing is a young man, shown on the right behind the old woman in the armchair. He is discreetly applauding, but his attention is obviously directed at the young lady performing, not at the music. A young servant girl peeps at the scene from behind a half-opened curtain.

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[234] "Une scène toute intime (qui) réunit un rayonnement de couleur splendide et de grâce", *L'Artiste. Journal de la littérature et des beaux-arts,* 50e année (1879), T. II, p. 422.

[235] Cf. Paul Pittion, *La Musique*, [Paris], Pierre Bordas et fils, pp. 293-296.

This is an interior scene of bourgeois life when a musical moment offers an occasion to depict a family.

The setting of such genre scenes later moved from the "private" family room to the more public drawing room, two distinct spaces in a bourgeois house or apartment of the period, as illustrated by the central role they play in the amorous intrigues of the eponymous character of Guy de Maupassant's novel *Bel Ami* (1885). But the nature of these interior musical scenes remained fundamentally the same during our period. In 1890, at the first Salon of *Société Nationale des Beaux–Arts*, held in association with the *Société des Artistes Français*, the painter Julius Rolshoven (1838-1930), an American who had studied in the Académie Julian and had a studio in Paris, showed a painting entitled *A Musical Matinée*. The present location of the work is untraceable, but an *Album* of black and white plates, photogravures of the paintings shown in the Salon, was published in London and Paris that year.[236] As reproduced in black and white in the *Album*, Julius Rolshoven's work shows a pianist in the background with three ladies seated and three men standing in the forefront of the picture. They do not appear to be listening attentively to what is being played and one of the men is shown talking to the woman seated on the right. Even more evident than in the previous two compositions, this is an image of bourgeois society, where music is represented as a leisure activity. The three musical scenes that we have described remain essentially genre scenes, where the musical theme acts as an anchor for recording a family or social occasion. Judging by their reproductions in the same *Album* from *Base Arcade*, two other paintings in a similar vein were shown at the Salon: L. C. Breslaus' *Chanson enfantine* and F. G. Morisset's *Musique: femme at piano* (locations unknown).[237]

The figure shown in interior piano scenes was predominantly that of a young woman. The image of a woman at the piano, originally the subject of fashion plates and not infrequently of caricatures, was elevated to become one of the most favoured subjects of visual music paintings. Even in faithful portrayals of society ladies, the pose is typified, and the person treated as an embodiment of femininity, charm and elegance. Manet's

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[236] The edition we have had access to, appears to be an English edition of the French *Salon de 1890. Société des Artistes français et Société nationale des Beaux-Arts,* edited by the art historian Maurice Hamel. We have been unable to trace the location of the painting and our description is based on the *Album* photograph.

[237] *Société Nationale des Beaux-Art. Catalogue illustré du Salon de 1899,* Paris, Ludovic Baschet éditeur, 1899.

Madame Manet au piano is an exception in that the character represented is a mature woman, seen in full profile at the instrument. A desire to echo Manet and his original use of black in a work of visual music, inspired similar compositions by two of his friends: Degas' *Madame Camus au piano* (1869, oil on canvas, h. 139 cm x w. 94 cm, Foundation E.G. Bührle, Zürich) and Gustave Caillebotte's *La Leçon de piano* (about 1879, oil on painting, h. 81 cm x w. 65, Musée Marmottan Monet, Paris), a homage to Manet's figuring of a pianist and use of black. On the other hand, the type was already very much a cliché when Renoir produced his paintings of young girls at the piano, some of whom are at least named. Only Berthe Morisot, it has been argued, later managed to "subvert the passivity and superficiality that characterized male-produced versions of the theme" in two of her works: *Le Piano* (1888, pastel on canvas, 64 x 80cm, private collection)[238] and *Lucie Léon au Piano* (1892, oil on canvas, h. 38 cm x w. 33 cm, Art Museum, Seattle).[239]

Figuring the musician: from the realist to the picturesque and the exotic

The art historian James Henri Rubin includes Manet's *Le Vieux Musicien* (1862, oil on canvas, 187 x 248 cm, Washington DC, National Gallery of Art, ill. 24) in a section that he entitles "musicians and assemblies" in his 2010 study of Manet.[240] When first looked at, the subject of the composition, as the title of the painting suggests, is the figure of the Old Musician at its centre. However, James Rubin's classification draws our attention to the perspective that Manet intended the viewer to have on this work. The Old Musician is shown having just sat down and holds his violin and bow in his hands, looking in the direction of the viewer. The weather-beaten face and the brown cloak he wears make it a realistic representation of a man who has spent much time outdoors. Two figures on the right of the composition stand close behind him. A man with a hat and a woman, only half shown, have just come across him, as does the viewer, somewhere in the countryside.

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[238] The work is described and illustrated in J. D. Rey, *Berthe Morisot*, Paris, Flammarion, 1982, p. 89. Cf. Christie's Auction Catalogue 5892.

[239] "Morisot departed from the static and amateurish qualities common in the woman at the piano motif to create images whose subjects are physically engaged with the music", Erin E. Ehresmann Hackmaann, *Variations on a Theme: Berthe Morisot's Reinterpretation of the "Woman at the Piano" Motif in Her Images of Girls at the Piano, 1888–1892*, University of Cincinnati, Design, Architecture, Art and Planning: Art History, 2011, abstract (http://rave.ohiolink.edu/etdc/view?acc_num=ucin1306498264).

[240] James H. Rubin, "Musicians and assemblies", *Manet*, Paris: Flammarion, 2010, I, pp. 41-52.

The man has a look of curiosity on his face, but there is also a note of sympathy on the woman's. On the left of the musician stand three children. The boy on the right of the group appears to be waiting for the musician to play and so does the girl on the left who faces him, holding a baby in her arms.

It was customary in peasant families for older girls to be charged with looking after infants, which, with her tattered blue dress, makes this a realistic representation of a young peasant girl. Manet has, however, introduced a note of fantasy into the painting: the girl in the middle looks dressed up, wearing a fancy hat and bouffant trousers. The boy has his arm around her, and her attire suggests that they have both come from a party, perhaps a wedding.

The painting is a realistic representation of one of the rare moments in the life of the French peasant farmers when traditional music making offered relief to the harsh reality of daily toil.[241] But her light top and her light brown trousers introduce a bright note in the otherwise dark or darkish colours of the rest of the group. The eye is drawn to the look on her face, both peaceful and dreamy. Contrary to some of Millet's peasant scenes, there is no "social romanticism" in the representation.[242] The assembled characters call on the viewer to see the scene, as they do with curiosity, but without condescension.

From the quasi-pastoral in Manet, the figure of the musician became picturesque when placed in an urban setting. Frédéric Bazille's (1841-1870) *Petite Chanteuse Italienne des Rues* (1866, oil on canvas, 130.5 x 97.5, Montpellier, Musée Fabre, ill. 25) is an early example of the evolution. The figure of a little girl forms the greatest part of the painting. She stands on a background of a Parisian street corner, with its typical narrow angular buildings. She holds her instrument, a fiddle, in the manner of traditional Italian fiddlers: not tucked under her chin, but against her body. Her attire suggests poverty but also decorum, particularly in the small hat with flowers that she wears. A puzzling aspect of the little musician is the look on her face, which is turned towards the right as she looks up. This is meant to signify expectancy; it was customary for people living in Parisian buildings to throw coins to street musicians below as a token of appreciation or simply

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[241] For a comparison, see *The Peasant in French 19th Century Art: an Exhibition Organized for the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, Dublin by James Thompson, with the assistance of Madeleine Fidell Beaufort and John Horne*…, Dublin, Douglas Hyde Gallery, Trinity College, 1980.

[242] The phrase is used by André Fermigier, about some of Millet's rural scenes, in his *Jean-François Millet*, Genève, Skira; [Paris], Flammarion, 1977.

from a sense of charity. Her face is that of a child, but her squat body is dressed in adult clothing, as in early Renaissance paintings of children. She is a lonely figure depicted against a dark, rather overpowering background of Parisian buildings.

Italian travelling musicians were often seen in French cities at this time. Paintings featuring them were shown at Salons, including, for example, M. Regnard, *Musiciens italiens* (1860) and M. Nanteuil-Leboeuf's *Jeune pifferaro* (1869), listed in *Base Arcade*. Such conventional paintings play on the picturesque, while the perspective in Bazille's *Petite Chanteuse Italienne des Rues* adds sentimentality to the scene. By contrast, in the abundant production of Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904), the figure of the Italian travelling musician acquires an ultra-realistic, dramatic dimension.[243] In 1843 as a young man of 18, Gérôme travelled to Southern Italy, but his *Pifferari* "repetitions", painted in 1854-55 and shown in the Salons of these years were produced in his studio. Gérôme's *Pifferari* are all figures of ambulant Abruzzi musicians holding, but not playing, their instruments: a zampogna, a tubular cornemuse made-up of several cane pipes. Typically, as in his *Pifferaro* of 1854 (oil on paper pasted on wood, h. 18.1 cm x w. 12.9 cm, Musée d'arts, Nantes), the figure is shown from below. Against the light that illuminates him from behind, the brown tones of the musician make his figure recede, the better to draw attention to the exaggeratedly large, out of proportion instrument on his left, further emphasized by the white of the musician's loose shirt. The lighting focuses the eye on the apparently gigantic instrument that he carries.[244] Taken out of the expected setting of a Parisian street or a Southern landscape, the *pifferaro* becomes a figure of exotic curiosity for the viewer.

In a number of orientalist paintings that Gérôme produced following several stays in Turkey and in Egypt, another series of scenes feature the exotic figures of bashi-bazouks, mercenary soldiers recruited for the Ottoman Empire. Among these, his *Bachi-Bazouk Chantant* (1868, oil on canvas, h. 46.3 cm x w. 66 cm, Walters Art Gallery, ill. 26) shows one of these soldiers singing to the accompaniment of his oud, while, in the background, three similar figures in various states of dazed stupor have been smoking, probably

[243] Gérôme's production is catalogued and analysed in Gerald M. Ackerman, *La Vie et l'Œuvre de Jean-Léon Gérôme,* Courbevoie (Paris), ACR, 1986.

[244] Cf. Sophie Makariou & Charlotte Maury, "Le paradoxe du réalisme, Gérôme en Orient", in Laurence des Cars, Dominique de Font-Réaulx & Édouard Papet *Jean-Léon Gérôme, 1824-1904: l'histoire en spectacle,* Paris: Musée d'Orsay; Skira-Flammarion, 2010, pp. 261-ff.

hashish from a hookah. “Bashi-bazouk” literally means “one whose head is turned, crazy-head” and Gerald Ackerman has suggested that some aspects of the scene recall Dutch scenes of festivities. The red and white dress of the singer undoubtedly contrasts joyously with the grey sleepiness of the scene in the background. Like many orientalist paintings of the time, Gérôme’s *Bachi-Bazouk* scenes appealed to the fascination of an imagined or unfamiliar Orient. One wonders, however, if his more knowledgeable viewers would not have noticed, in his *Bachi-Bazouk Chantant,* a touch of satire on popular Arabic chanting in the way the bashi-bazouk’s half-open mouth hints at the melismatic tune he is singing, while the odd figure of the raven facing him at his feet, is depicted with beak open and obviously cawing.

Street musicians: from caricature to social naturalism

A new figuration of street musicians emerges in the last decades of the nineteenth century. There is a long tradition of prints showing street musicians. They are often featured in Dutch satirical engravings of the seventeenth century, in which the draftsman adopts a satirical touch, emphasizing the contorted postures and grimacing of the musicians playing. French graphic artists continued this tradition in political cartoons during the French Revolution and in social satire in the earlier part of our period.[245] The caricaturist Honoré Daumier added lettering to one of the states of his lithograph *Les Musiciens de Paris* published in *La Caricature* of 14 November 1841 (lithograph, sheet 34.3 cm x 26.2 cm, image 24.3 x 19.6 cm, The Metropolitan Museum, New York). The text included a verse from a popular song – “Où peut-on être mieux (bis.) / Qu'au sien de sa famille” – and the wry comment “these three artists would be happier in a tavern”.[246]

Daumier’s caricatures, of course, spared no class, his target ranged from aristocrats to politicians to professionals and to the idle bourgeois and working artisans. But a change was already noticeable in the production of an etcher like Duseigulier (1841-1906), who, in the 1870s, engraved scenes showing realistic figures of paupers or vagrants (“gueux”).[247] In the 1890 Salon, genre scenes became the most numerous, totalling 40, compared to

[245] Gétreau, Florence. “Street Musicians of Paris: Evolution of an Image” *Music in Art*, vol. 23, no. 1/2, 1998, pp. 62–78 (jstor.org/stable/41561904. Last accessed 17 Nov. 2020).

[246] At bottom centre: “Ces trois artistes se trouveraient mieux au sein du cabaret, et leur jeune associé au sein d'une partie de billes”.

[247] See his entry in Jeanne Bailly-Hetzberg, *L’Estampe francaise 1830-1950*, Paris, Flammarion, 1985.

12 religious scenes, 11 portraits, 9 allegories, 8 nudes and 7 (contemporary) military scenes. Though a number of these genre scenes are traditional home or urban scenes, some depict characters from the working and lower classes, while some, such as Henri Cain (1857-1939)'s *Chanteurs ambulants*, listed in the *Guide* to the Salon of 1890, featured street musicians.[248]

Already in the 1888 exhibition, scenes of street musicians formed an identifiable cluster.[249] Among them, to judge by their titles, were Edmont Louis Dupain's (1847-1933 *Musique de Rue* (Cat. no. 904), Alexandre J. Chantron's (1842-1918) *La Petite Marchande de Chansons* (Cat. no. 542), and André Crochepierre's (1860-1937) *La Chanson des Gueux* (Cat. no. 670).[250]

The new figure in these street musician scenes has been associated by art critics with a new style of realistic painting labelled naturalism, by association with an experimental form of literary fiction practiced by the writer Émile Zola. In the Preface to the 1876 edition of *L'Assomoir*, first published in instalments, Zola declared that his intention was to create a "purely philological work", which he believed to be "of great social and historical interest" ("d'un vif intérêt historique et social"). Zola's statement cannot fail to evoke, in art, Courbet's statement in his letter to Chamfleury about his 1855 exhibition, that his intention had been "to record the manners, ideas, and aspect of the age as I myself saw them".[251]

Most contemporary critics made this link between the earlier realism and its representations of peasants and the new attention in naturalism to common labouring people. On naturalist works by the Marseille artist Stanislas Torrents (1839-1916, such as *Le Chaudronnier* (last quarter 19th c., oil on canvas, h. 92 cm x w. 73 cm, Musée municipal, Digne-les-Bains), the critic Louis Bès wrote that "like Courbet, he could call himself a student of nature…his parti-pris is to borrow his subjects from the incidents of

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[248] Société nationale des Beaux-Arts, *Salon de 1890. Palais de l'Industrie. Guide Complet…* (no. 425)

[249] G. Dumas, *Salon de 1888, Catalogue illustré. Peinture et sculpture*, Paris, Ludovic Baschet éditeur, 1888.

[250] Unfortunately, these paintings are not illustrated in the Catalogue and remain untraceable.

[251] Quoted in translation in Margaret Armburst Seibert "A Political and a Pictorial Tradition Used in Gustave Courbet's Real Allegory" *The Art Bulletin*, vol. 65, no. 2, 1983, pp. 311–316 (www.jstor.org/stable/3050325. Last accessed 12 Apr. 2020).

the life of people".[252] The critic Henry Howard, reviewing for *Le Siècle* the Salon of 1883, an earlier naturalist painting of Stanislas Torrents, *Le Joueur de Violoncelle* (Musée de Cannes),[253] wrote that "what is important for [the artist], is the picturesque motif and the choice of figures".[254]

However, a search for picturesque motifs beyond the exotic, is only one factor that accounts for the emergence of a new manner of representing scenes of street musician in painting. The evolution of the image reflected an increased public awareness of the precarious life of those at the bottom of French society, the down-and-outs (the "dans la dèche"), the needy (the "indigents"), the homeless (the "sans-abris"). The marginality of dropouts such as tramps ("vagabonds") or hoboes ("trimardeurs") ceased to be attributed only to laziness, while socialist figures, such as the poet Jean Richepin or anarchists like the geographer Élisée Reclus, denounced precarity and poverty as the direct consequences of capitalist exploitation.[255]

The new figure of the street musician in art must therefore be placed in a double context, illustrated by two complementary exhibitions: the first on the "Illusions of Reality: Naturalist painting" (Amsterdam, 2010-11),[256] the other on "Fernand Pelez and la parade

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[252] "Il pourrait comme Courbet s'intituler élève dela nature…Pour un naturaliste, il n'y a qu'un parti à prendre, emprunter les incidents de la vie des gens", Louis Brès, "L'exposition de la Société des amis des arts au Cercle artistique", *Le Sémaphore*, 24-25 octobre 1880, quoted in Catalogue. Exposition Peintres de la Couleur en Provence, Paris, Musée du Luxembourg, mai-août 1995, Réunion des musées nationaux, 1995.

[253] Regrettably, the *Musée de la Castre* in Cannes does not provide any information about its paintings. Some information and an image of the painting is found in the catalogue *Peintres de la couleur en Provence 1876-1920*, reference in note 45.

[254] "Ce qui importe pour lui, c'est le motif pittoresque, c'est e choix des figures", *Le Siècle*, 13 mai 1883, quoted by Jean Roger Soubiran, "Le naturalisme en Provence", in Sophie Biass-Fabiani ed. *Peintres de la couleur en Provence 1876-1920, Exposition de Marseille Office régional de la culture Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur,* 1995, p. 55.

[255] Cf. John Hutton "Les Prolos abondent. Neo-Impressionism and the Anarchist image of the Trimardeur", *The Art Bulletin*, June 1990, pp. 296-309 (stor.org/stable/3045735. last accessed 17 Nov. 2010); and by the same author, *Neo-Impressionism and The Search For Solid Ground: Art, Science, And Anarchism in Fin-De-Siècle France*, Louisiana State University Press, 1994.

[256] Gabriel P. Weisberg, *Illusions of Reality: Naturalist painting, photography and cinema, 1875-1918. Catalogue of an Exhibition held in the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam, Holland, Aug 2010-Jan 2011*. Cf. also *The Realist Tradition: an Exhibition of French Painting & Drawing 1830-1900*, ed. Gabriel P. Weisberg, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museums Association, 1982.

des humbles" (Paris, 2009-10).[257] These two catalogues comparatively illustrate the tensions existing within what we shall call the social naturalism of the late nineteenth century, i.e., between the illusion of reality of its style and the social commitment of its themes.

From this perspective we shall examine two paintings that have street musicians in their subject. The instruments featured in the two paintings are clearly those associated with the musical genres familiar to popular audiences and both paintings share an apparent documentary dimension and create the illusion of a photographic "snapshot". It is, however, debatable whether the perspective that they call on the viewer to adopt is to be seen as the equivalent to the "objective" posture adopted by Naturalist novelists in their narratives.

Albert Bartholomé's *Les Musiciens*, also called *Musiciens dans Une Cour*, (1883, oil on canvas, 0.78 x 0. 64 cm, Paris, Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris, ill. 27) is a more straightforward depiction of three musicians playing in the courtyard of a building. The one on the left, a guitarist, is also the singer. The representation is realistic: the position of the instrument of the flautist on the left is accurate, as is that of the violinist at the centre of the group, back turned to the viewer. The courtyard in which they play is easily recognisable as belonging to a Parisian apartment building. On the other hand, the composition is more than "reportage" of a daily occurrence in the Paris of the time. Two spectators are featured in it. On the left hand-side, peering from behind the half-raised curtain of the window of the ground floor lodge, is the concierge, watching as she is wont to do. The depiction would be strictly social naturalistic were it not for the figure of a young girl, perhaps the daughter of the concierge, shown on the left, standing halfway into the entrance to the building. Her grey dress and her pale face contrast with the black attire of the musicians. There is a look of concentration and sadness on her face. Is she thinking about what the life of the performers might be, or, more likely, is she taken by the sadness of the song?

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[257] *Fernand Pelez, 1848-1913, La parade des humbles: [Exposition, Paris, Petit Palais, Musée des beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris], Sept. 2009- Jan. 2010*, ed. Isabelle Collet, Paris-musées, 2009.Cf. Jennifer Johnson's detailed review, "The Sideshow at the Salon: Positioning the Spectator and Transforming Spectacle in Fernand Pelez's Grimaces et misère -- Les Saltimbanques (1888)", in *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* (Autumn 2018), vol. 17 Issue 2, pp. 136-148.

Fernand Pelez's (1843-1913) *Grimaces et Misère. Les Saltimbanques,* (1888, oil on canvas, Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris) is a large mural consisting of a sequence of three compositions of unequal length on five contiguous panels of unequal length. The mural is a striking example of what the art historian Robert Rosenblum, who first drew attention to the work of the artist, has called "the other side of the Post-Impressionist coin".[258]

A separate version of the third composition exists, known as *Les Musiciens* (1888, oil on canvas, 222 x 165.5 cm, Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1953, ill. 28). It shows three down-and-out musicians sitting on stools upon a raised concrete platform. The three old musicians are obviously out of work and dejected. They sit holding their idle instruments down in front of them and facing the artist, but with their eyes down. The scene appears to be captured from street level, though from a lower angle than one would expect given the musician's position. The lack of lustre to the black of their clothes and the dullness of the brown of their faces gives the composition a gloominess of mood, reflecting that of the musicians. Within the gloomy atmosphere of the whole painting, only the instruments, a wooden clarinet, a simple *trompette coulissante* and a military bassoon are highlighted. These are old-fashioned instruments clearly of a type played by the circus artists featured in the main panel. In the mind of a contemporary viewer, they would also immediately conjure up the type of brass instruments that were played by bands hired for humble funerals. The visual mood of the scene evokes the musical mood of the dirges that accompany simple folk to their graves. The perspective leads the viewer to focus on the despondency of the three out-of-work musicians, an impression further emphasized by the drab wall against which they are slouching and the bitter irony of a torn poster with a faded inscription which reads "Concert Français".

There is no pathos in the sullen figures facing the viewer on the same plane. Pelez has avoided emphasising the detail of the poster in this version, which, by contrast, might call for a pity for the out-of-work musicians that would make the composition into a pictorial appeal for compassion. The painter asks the viewer to look and take his word: this is the reality of casual work for street musicians, the grim social side of street music

[258] Robert Rosenblum, "Fernand Pelez, or The Other Side of the Post-Impressionist Coin," in Moshe Barasch and Lucy Freeman Sandler, eds., *Art, the Ape of Nature: Studies in Honor of H. W. Janson,* New York, H. N. Abrams, 1981, pp. 707-18.

The same gloominess and the same objective are achieved by the same pictorial means, in another work by the artist: *Sans-Asile*, also known as *Les Explulsés* (1883, oil on canvas, h. 136 cm x w. 236 cm, Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-arts de la Ville de Paris). A mother and her five children are shown sitting against a wall in the street, directly on the ground. On the right-hand side, a small stove and a bucket point to their eviction. On the left hand-side sits a little boy. Posted on the wall behind him are a torn "Avis", a legal notice, and, with bitter irony, two posters advertising a "Grande Fête". In this case also, the painting calls for social awareness more than for compassion. Unless, as suggested in the description on the official *Musée* site, one sees the earth in the foreground as an allusion to the death that threatens the destitute family or perhaps a reminder of the passage in Matthew's Gospel, "You are the salt of the earth, but if the salt has lost its flavour, with what will it be salted?" (Matthew 5:13).

The left-hand composition of the full mural *Grimace et Misère Les Saltimbanques* (h. 222cm x w. 405cm) shows a group of five fun-fair performers, from left to right: a little drummer boy crying, three young girls in the gear of acrobats and another one peeping through the grey hangings of the fun-fair tent. To her left on the rostrum is a bass drum. The second composition features a seated dwarf and, in front of the red curtain door, a clown and the barker of the show. The third composition is the mural version of *Les Musiciens*. It has two additional elements that are not present in the separate version: the three musicians are sitting under a canopy running the full length across the image, with a little monkey sitting on the left on top of it. Running along front of the canopy is a fully and clearly lettered inscription which reads "orchestre français".

Two parrots are also featured in the other compositions. The circus animals add a touch of fancy and provide a link to the entire mural, which can be viewed as a single "saltimbanques" scene, on which the critic Henry Houssaye remarked, "Les Sacrobates (sic) de m. Pelez n'ont pas la bonne humeur des saltimbanques de Dumersan et Varin". There is nothing comical or ludicrous in the mural, compared to the contemporary representations of travelling comedians.[259] Nor is there any pathetic dramatization of the lives of young acrobats as, in Gustave Doré's *Les Saltimbanques. l'Enfant blesse* (1874, oil on canvas, h. 224 cm x w. 184 cm, Musée d'art Roger-Quillot, Clermond-Ferrand). Each composition can be viewed as a large vignette of the drab and hard life of fair

[259] E.g., the 1871 coloured lithograph, *Les Saltimbanques* by Charles Jérémie Fuhr, in the Musée Carnavalet.

performers: the thin greyish figures of the little acrobats or tightrope walkers wait for their number to be called, the clown in his comical robe strains to look funny.

In 1888, when Pelez showed *Grimaces et Misère* in the *Palais de l'Industrie* Salon, Georges Seurat exhibited his *Parade de Cirque* (1887-8, oil on canvas, h. 99.7 cm x w. 149.9 cm, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) at the *Salon des Indépendants*. In the painting, a scene of the Cirque Covi, the nearly faceless performers are identifiable only by their generic accessories, their instruments or the comic hairdo of the barker. Their figures fade in the twilight of the early evening scene. The two works announce the "fin de siècle" of the visual music that we have identified. In the period that followed, Matisse's *Musique* large canvas (1910, oil on canvas, h. 99.7 cm x w. 149.9 cm, Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg) pares down naked, red figures of the musicians emerging from a haze of shades of blue, while Picasso deconstructs the musician and his instrument in his *L'accordéoniste* (1911, oil on canvas, h. 130.2 cm x w. 89.5 cm, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York,) each trying new ways to express the emotion of musical experience.

CONCLUSION

In nineteenth-century France, Music and Art underwent fundamental changes. Though this is true also for other European countries, two aspects of the history of these two arts are particularly marked in France: in Music, one was the emergence of a group of composers of typically French symphonic and chamber music, as well as the major impact that Richard Wagner's concept of "total art" had not only on opera but on musical tastes including those of artists. Another was the generalisation of amateur bourgeois practise particularly of piano playing. As regards Art, obviously France the country was the birthplace of Impressionism and of Symbolism, that transformed artistic practice. Less obviously, but nevertheless fundamental, was the extent of the influence that of art criticism and generally reflections on the aesthetics of art had, not necessarily directly on artistic practise, but undoubtedly on the public reception and understanding of modern art works. I have tried to situate these developments in their historical and in their aesthetic context. These developments are associated with a spirit of modernism, with a demand for the new which was associated with the profound political, economic and social changes that occurred during the Second Empire and the French Republic. Yet the changes which this demand brought about were of a different nature: modernity in Art, had a dimension of contestation, of challenge to the art establishment; in music it was more a gradual discovery of new forms and of new tastes, not exclusive of established ones.

My purpose in this dissertation has been to discover the extent to what extent the general growth of a musical culture influenced artists in their works, specifically how the performance of music and the listening to music that were represented in paintings. The question I ask is not just one concerning the literal or narrative representation of musical subjects in the art of the period – i.e., which musical moments were represented in paintings – but whether these representations succeeding in expressing visually the aesthetic experience of music in the performer and the listener. Following a number of philosophers and also composers from the period and from our time, who have reflected on how music is expressed and received, starting with the premise that the aesthetic emotion created by music has its unique characteristics: it is temporal not spatial, it can be shared but remains a singular personal experience. Music comes into being when and only when it is performed, but the essence of music transcends each of its performances.

My question is: Did artists when they represent a musical moment succeed in transcending its representation and give a visual expression to the aesthetic emotion created by that moment?

There is a long tradition of representing in art some types of musical performances, whether religious (angels and trumpets, or instance) or as a form of society entertainment (as for instance Concerts Champêtres). On the other hand, among the few thinkers the early Nineteenth who reflected on the nature of aesthetic judgement, a view emerged that music was the purest form of art, transcending all the others. In the second half of the Nineteenth-century, this view led to the notion of "correspondence", to the idea that formal correspondences can be discovered between music and the other arts, and that music provides the key. This notion became a common one in the period under study largely through the writings of Charles Baudelaire. Did modernist artists, whether they were influenced directly by the notion, attempt to create a correspondence in the viewer's perception, between the aesthetic visual emotion aroused by a painting representing a musical moment, and the musical emotion associated with it.

Music and art criticism share a common vocabulary, a vocabulary, which when used during the period, reflected Baudelaire's notion. Art criticism made use of this vocabulary and continues to use it analogically, to express the impression made by a particular painting. The limits of this vocabulary are obvious as a method of interpretation. "Harmony", for instance describes the overall impression that a painting produces on the eye, but in music the term describes the tonality of a piece created by a combination of notes. "Composition" describes the arrangement of elements within the space of a painting, but the corresponding term in music describes the formal structure of a piece, i.e. the succession of sequences of chords and keys. In music, the colour of a piece is largely a function of how it is interpreted when it is performed. More fundamentally, can one really say that an individual painting "translates" or "transposes" in the visual language of a fixed image, a particular style of music as performed in a transient musical moment, and if, it does, by what means?

For this period an important case in point is the relation of some art to the music of Richard Wagner A recent school of historical art criticism has drawn attention to the links between a cluster of musical representations and the music of Wagner, that were created in the period when the composer's operas achieved many devoted enthusiasts in France in the 1880s. Art historians, among them Therese Dolan, have shown the place that Wagner's music held in the surrounding culture and in the personal tastes of some

modernist painters, notably Manet and Fantin-Latour. Its influence appears obvious in the "Wagnerian art" of these artists who selected, as their subjects, scenes from the major operatic works. However, influence does not necessarily mean that any homology can be discovered between the pictorial means used in these paintings and their spatial organization on the canvas, on the one hand, and the structure of Wagner's operatic music on the other. The "Wagnerian" compositions of the group of artists who in the 1860s are Wagnerian enthusiasts primarily illustrate moments in Wagnerian works, when the composer is at his dramatic best. They play on the theatricality of Wagner's mythical medievalist settings. The figures depicted in the scenes are more like performers singing their role, a convention of the genre, but inadequate for an evocation of Wagner's musicality. One finds it difficult to discover in the technique of the paintings, specific elements that correspond, for instance, to the unending melodic line of the "Tale of the Graal" in Act III of *Lohengrin,* or to the pattern which moves up and down the pitch, to the arpeggios punctuated by cadences which create the sense of the military charge of the *Ride of the Walkiries*. Perhaps it is this realisation that led Fantin-Latour to best achieve an evocation of Wagner, by limiting his technique, paradoxically to the controlled scratching of a lithographic stone.

To assign a metaphoric or metonymic value to the pictorial elements of these works is to come up against the issue of the indeterminacy or their possible visual polysemy. More generally, the use of analogical language soon finds its limits: it does not tell us if the visual effect of a musical scene represented in a painting, succeeds in evoking in the viewer looking at the painting the musical emotion experienced by the performer or the listener of the particular musical moment captured on the canvas.

Nevertheless, I have attempted to identify works of the period that attains a "register" -to borrow a term from linguistics – that does achieve a "register' that gives to the representation its own singular musical "voice". To do so, I have first engaged in the systematic survey of contemporary Salon listings and gallery catalogues to identify as many paintings as possible whose subject is music and among them those that produce that unique "voice". As identification has also benefited from consulting contemporary periodicals where critics reviewed Salon and Gallery showings and address the musical aspects of the works they review.

The results of the survey provide the context to the analyse I offer in my fifth chapter. One unexpected result, given the general and growing spread of music performing and of concert-going in the France of the period, is the relatively small number of paintings that

chose music in whatever aspect of music as their subject. And when they do, most representations are in traditional formats, favoured by Salon buyers or consecrated by state purchases. Most of the works featuring a piano or a pianist fall within the category of genre scenes, many a home performance, paying as much if not more attention to the surroundings and to the people present than to the music performed. In portraiture, the piano, when present, is often an accessory, testifying to the social standing of the person represented. The long tradition of allegorizing music continued, but it was only with Corot that the treatment of the figure of Orpheus began to take on an obviously allegorical meaning, gradually overtaking the narrative representation of the myth originating in Ovid and Virgil. The later part of the period has also shown the emergence of naturalistic scenes, this time of urban street music. With rare exceptions, these scenes are in the manner of 'a snapshot', and while testifying to a growing awareness of the social destitution of street performers, few to give an idea of the nature of music they played.

In the same way, from scores and from sheet music we have a precise idea of the style of music played by amateur musicians: romances, duets or transcriptions, usually for the piano, less frequently for the violin or the guitar. However, the piece being played is very rarely identified, and, if so, only by a title given to the painting.

Nevertheless, our survey has led us to identify paintings that, intentionally or not on the part of the painter, appear to transcend, so to speak, visual literalness to achieve a musical literality, to use Jakobsonian terms, i.e., a visual emotion that echoes the musical emotion experienced by the performer(s) or listener(s) who are the featured participants to the musical moment represented.

These paintings appear in small clusters spread associated to the different schools or styles such as Naturalism, Orientalism or Symbolism that emerge during the period. These analyses show that in some of these works, while reflecting the manner of a particular school, the treatment of the subject goes beyond the picturesque, the realist or the symbolical, to evoke the particular power of the music of a particular performance. Given the gap that will always exist between the two arts, bridging them to create a "visual music" that evokes in the viewer the essence of the musical experience, necessarily entailed displacement and condensation. I have attempted to show in each individual work how transposition - not correspondence - might have been achieved by the artist.

From the analysis of some of these "musical" paintings some general conclusions emerge. The first one concerns the relative role of line and colour in the transposition of the musical into the visual. It is generally acknowledged by art historians that in the first half

of the century, colour took over from line as the main medium of expression in modernist art: to simplify, after Ingres came Delacroix. Yet in in these "musical" paintings, line continued to play a fundamental role in the representation. Anyone who has attended a concert cannot fail to have noticed how typified the composure of the listener can be - the attentive stillness of the body, the dreaminess or alertness of the face and of the eyes, reflecting an inner involvement in the music. In the intimate conversation that the musician entertains with his or her instrument, particularly in the case of string and keyboard instruments, (s)he lives the music, the head and the body lifted to lean lovingly again over the piano, the hands momentarily suspended or about to pluck the strings of the guitar over the keyboard. In musical paintings like Manet's *Madame Manet au Piano* (illustration no.15) or Degas's *Lorenzo Pagans* (illustration no.21), line draws the attentive viewer to these features. It acts as a signifier of the power of music to possess and embody itself in the person who experiences it. In Gerome's *Bachi-Bazouk Chantant* (illustration no. 26*)*, the fixed oval of the instrument repeating the oval of the musician's face draws attention to the monotonous repetitiveness of his melopoeiac tune.

Another conclusion concerns how changes in the availability and the use of new pigments changed the way in which artists could express musicality. As George Roque has shown in recent studies, the importance of the development of synthetic pigments did not primarily lie in the way they offered alternatives to natural pigments. Modernist painters, from Monet to Van Gogh, continued to use a mix of organic and synthetic ones. Their importance, in my view, lay first in the diversity of tones and shades that were available for each colour. A consequence of that diversity was that no fixed symbolic value could continue to be assigned to a single basic colour. Modulations on one colour, as for instance the shades of blues in Renoir's *Jeunes Filles au Piano* (illustration no. 17), now allowed the painter to create the atmosphere full of musical nuances. A second consequence concerns the diffused influence of the research of French chemist Michel Chevreul, also studied by George Roque, on the perception of colour. Chevreul's law on the simultaneous contrast of colours drew painter's attention to changes in their perception when they are contiguous and on pictorial means to maintain their separateness on the canvas. The musicality of paintings if sought could now find its expression in pictorial harmony, counterpoint and modulation.

Few paintings of the period go beyond the depiction of the characters involved in performance, to in some way create in the viewer a sense of music. sNevertheless, the few that do and that I have analysed come closer to expressing the special experience of

playing and listening to Music. But they also show the limits of the attempts of ‘the silent art’ of painting to make the viewer ‘listen’ to colour and to ‘see’ sound.

The cutting point for this dissertation is set at 1900. The years 1900 were years when after Claude Debussy, Igor Stravinsky and Serge Prokofiev transformed music. In the works of these last two composers, dissonance is used to deform and re-form the musical line. Their works coincided it with the emergence in painting of the cubist movement where the “disjointed” image of musical paintings attempts to express dissonance. My final conclusion is that in retrospect, only when painting radically moves away from the tradition of genres, could it succeed in visual transposing the essence of musical experience.

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Fig. 1. Édouard Manet (1832-1883) *La Musique aux Tuileries* (1862, oil on canvas, h. 76 x w 118 cm, Dublin, Hugh Lane municipal Gallery & London, National Gallery)

Fig. 2. Giovanni Boldoni (1842-1931) *La Cantante Mondana* (c. 1884, oil on canvas, h. 61 x w. 46 cm, Ferrara, Museo Boldini)

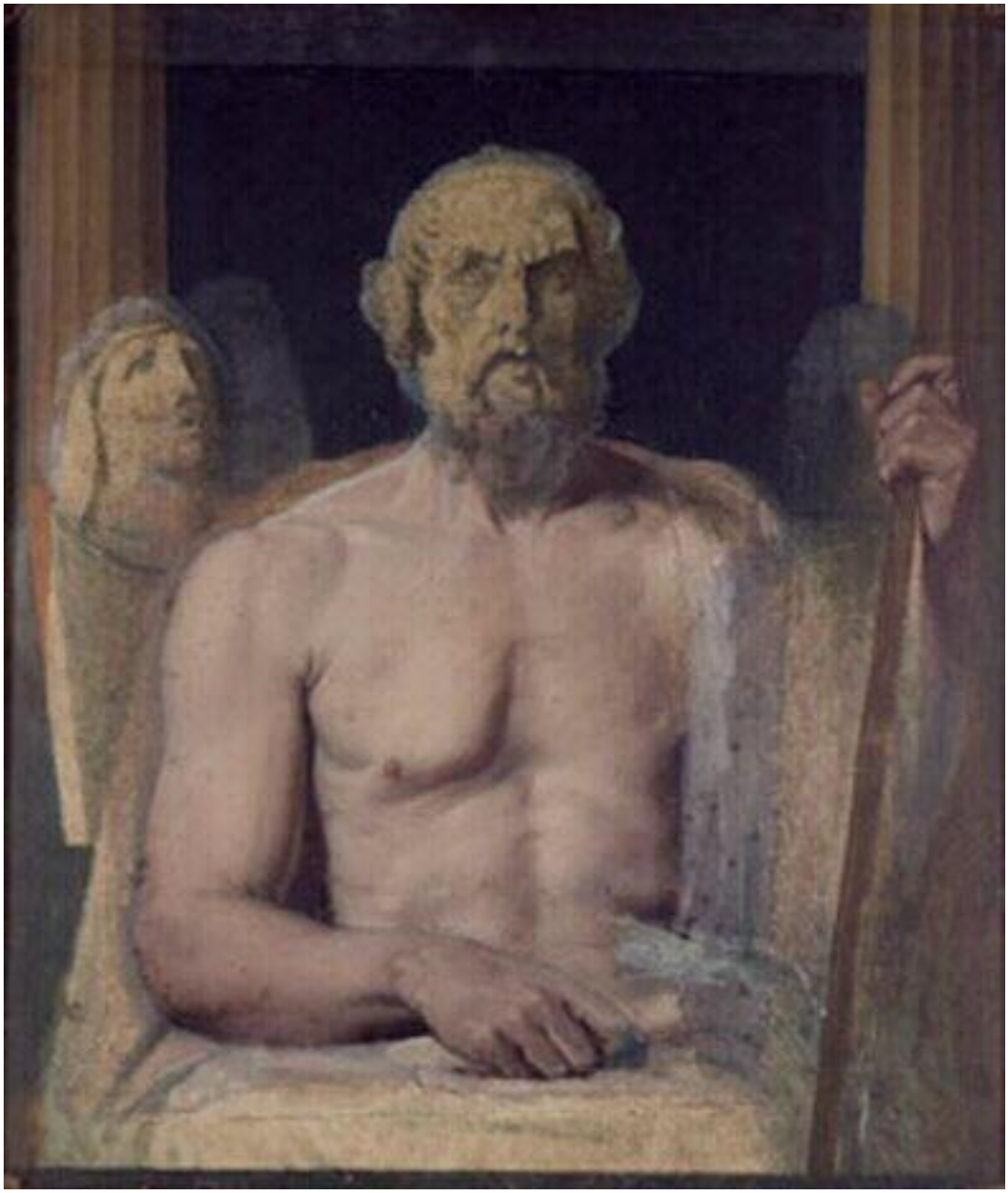

Fig. 3. Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres (1780-1867) *Homère et Orphée* (1826/7, oil sketch, h. 44 x w.53 cm, Montauban, Musée Ingres)

Fig. 4. Pierre Lacour (1745-1814) *Orphée perdant Eurydice* (1805, oil on wood panel, 48.5 x 58.5 cm, Bordeaux, Musée des Beaux- Arts)

Fig. 5. Michel Martin Drolling (1789-1851) *Orphée et Eurydice* (1820, oil on canvas, 0.385 x 0.465 cm, Dijon, Musée National Magnin)

Fig. 6. Jean-Baptiste Corot (1796 1875) ***Orphée ramenant Eurydice des Enfers*** **(1861, oil on canvas, 112.7 x 19 cm, Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts)**

Fig. 7. François-Louis Français (1814-1897) *Orphée* (1863, oil on canvas, 1.95 x 130 cm, Paris Musée d'Orsay)

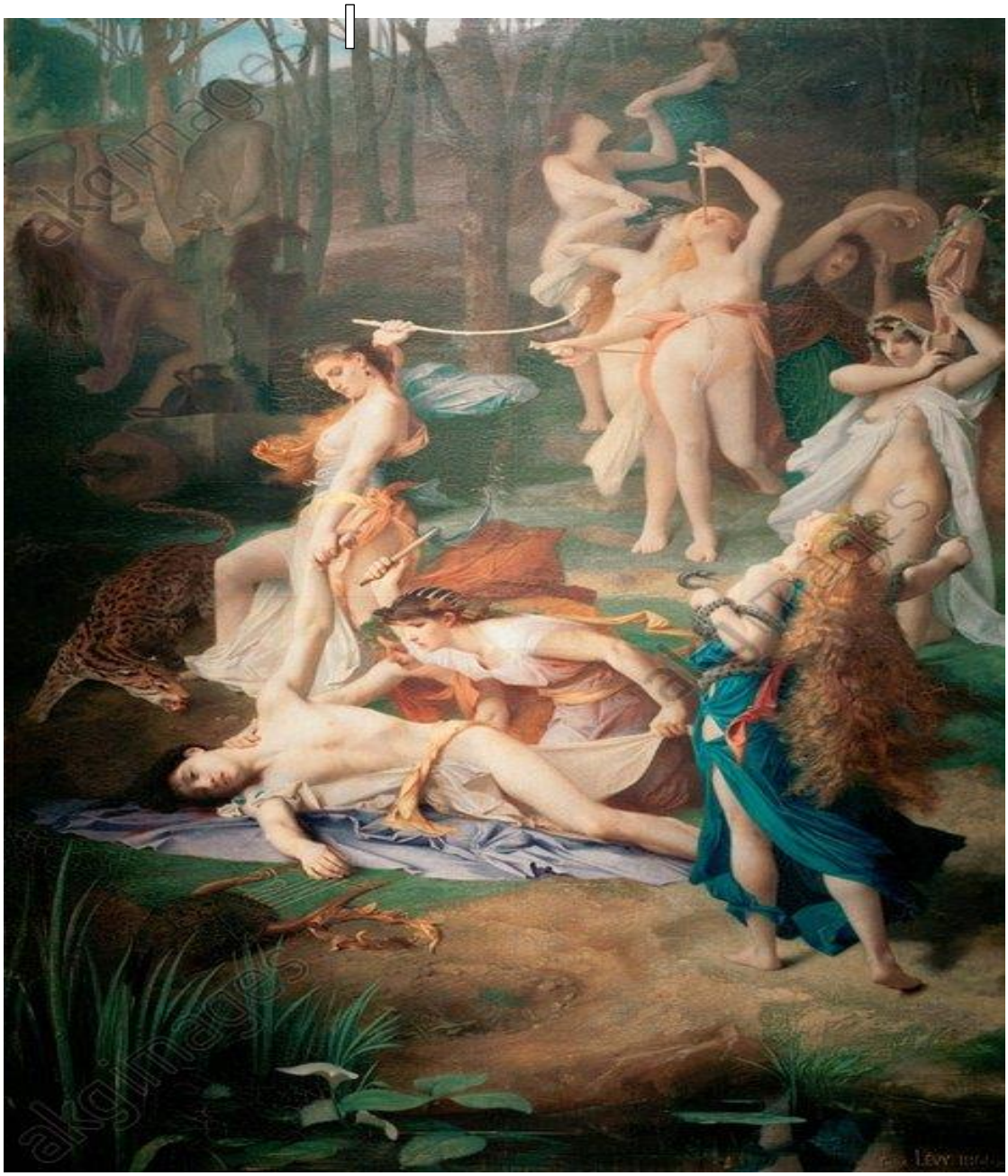

Fig. 8. Emile Levy (1826-1890) *La Mort d'Orphée* (1866, oil on canvas, 206 x. 133 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay)

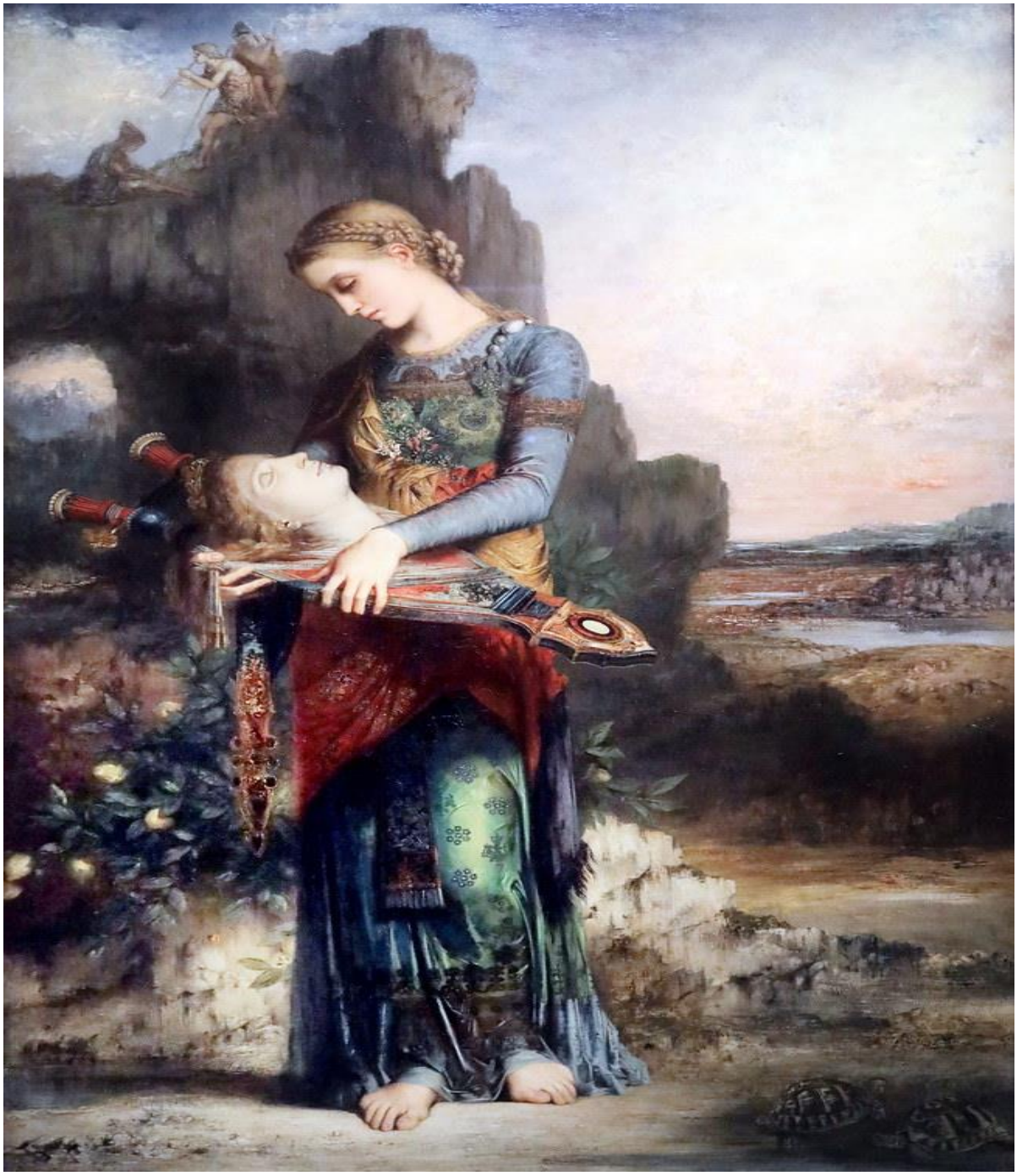

Fig. 9. Gustave Moreau (1826-1898) *Orphée* (1865, oil on wood, 155 x 99.5 cm, Paris, Grand Palais/ Musée d'Orsay)

Fig. 10. Odilon Redon (1840- 1916) ***Tête d'Orphée*** **(after 1866, oil on canvas, h. 32.2 x w. 40 cm. Paris, Musée d'Orsay)**

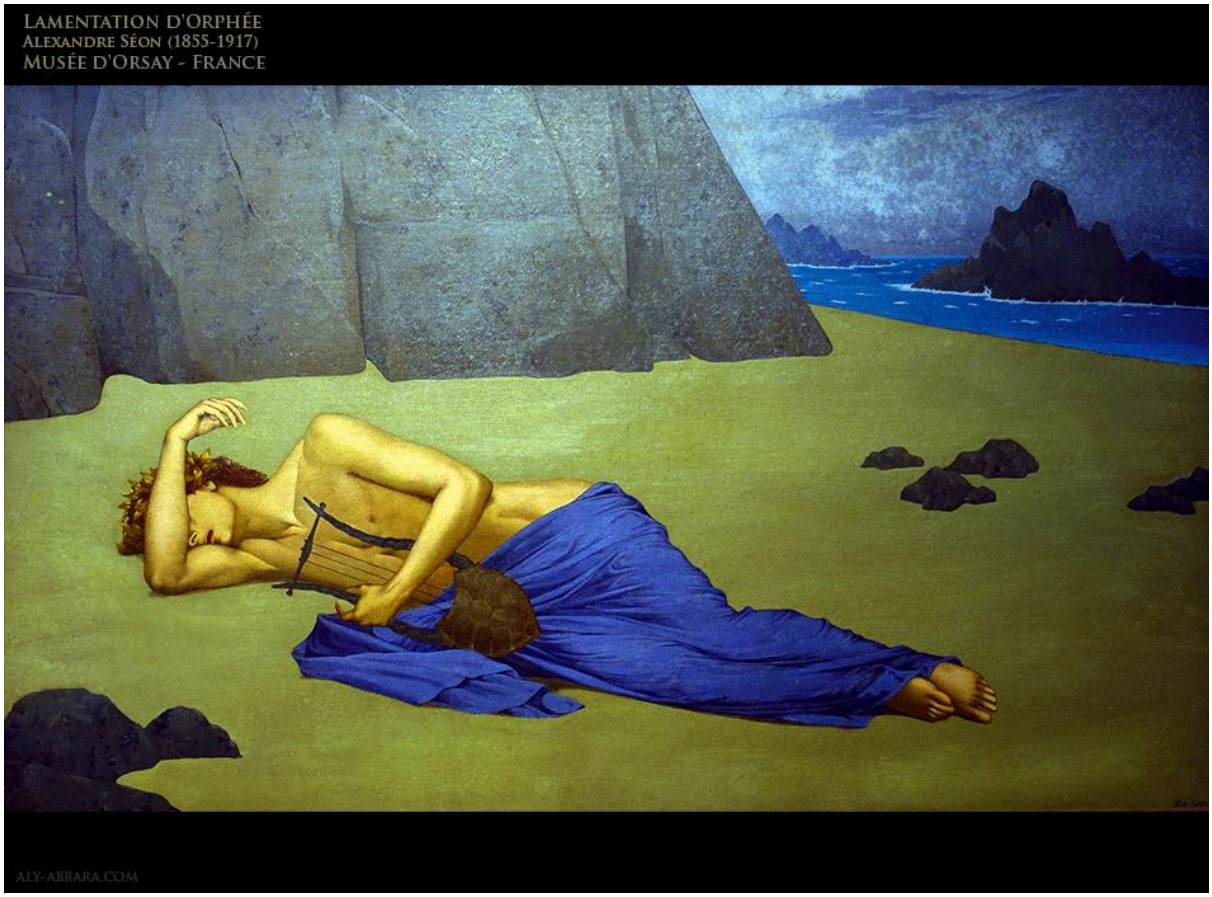

Fig. 11. Alexandre Séon (1855-1917) ***La lamentation d'Orphée*** **(date uncertain, oil on canvas, 73 x l11.6 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay)**

Fig. 12. Gaston Bussière (1862-1928) *La Gloire (ou Orphée*) (1890, oil on canvas, 220 x 160 cm, Macon, Musée des Ursulines)

Fig. 13. Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) (*La Noce juive au Maroc,* about 1839, oil on canvas, 105 x 140 cm, Paris, Musée du Louvre, detail)

Fig. 14. Eugène Delacroix (1798-1863) *Niccolò Paganini* (1831, oil on cardboard on wood panel, 44.8 x 30.1 cm, Washington D.C., The Philipps Collection)

Fig. 15. Édouard Manet (1832-1883) ***Madame Manet au Piano*** **(1868, oil on canvas, 0.385 cm x 0.465 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay)**

Fig. 16. Édouard Manet (1832-1883) ***L'Espagnol a la guitare*** **(1860, oil on canvas, 147.3 x 114.3 cm, New York,The Metropolitan Museum of Art)**

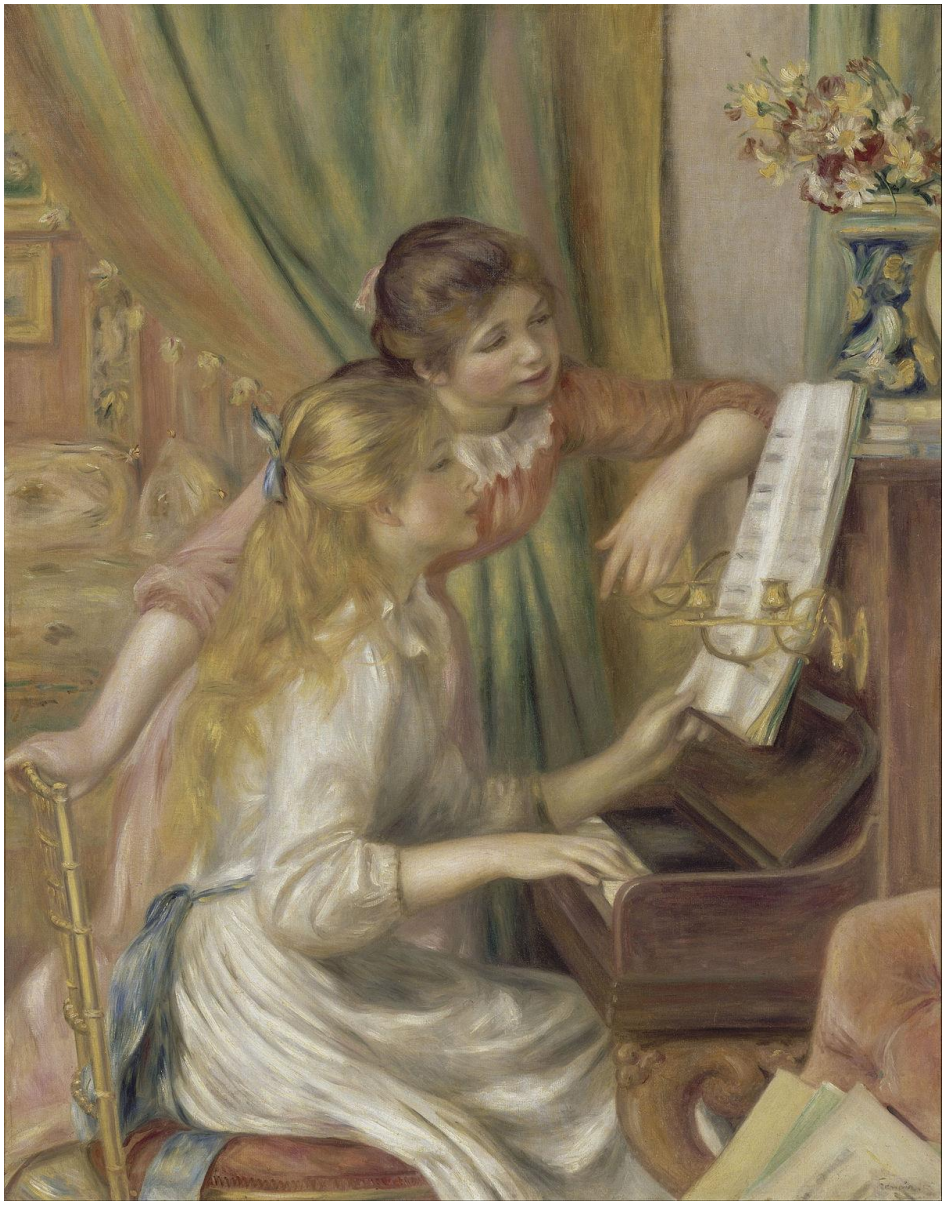

Fig. 17. Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) *Jeunes Filles au Piano* (1892, oil on canvas, 116 x w. 90cm Paris, Musée d'Orsay)

Fig. 18. Auguste Renoir (1841-1919) *Femme à la Guitare* (ca 1896-1897, oil on canvas, 65.8 x w. 54.6cm, Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts)

Fig. 19. Henri Lerolle (1848-1929) *À l'Orgue* (1885, oil on canvas, 236.9 x w. 362.6 cm, New-York, Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Fig. 20. Gustave Coubet (1819-1877) *Le Violoncelliste* (1847, oil on canvas, 112. 2 x 86. 8cm, Portland Art Museum)

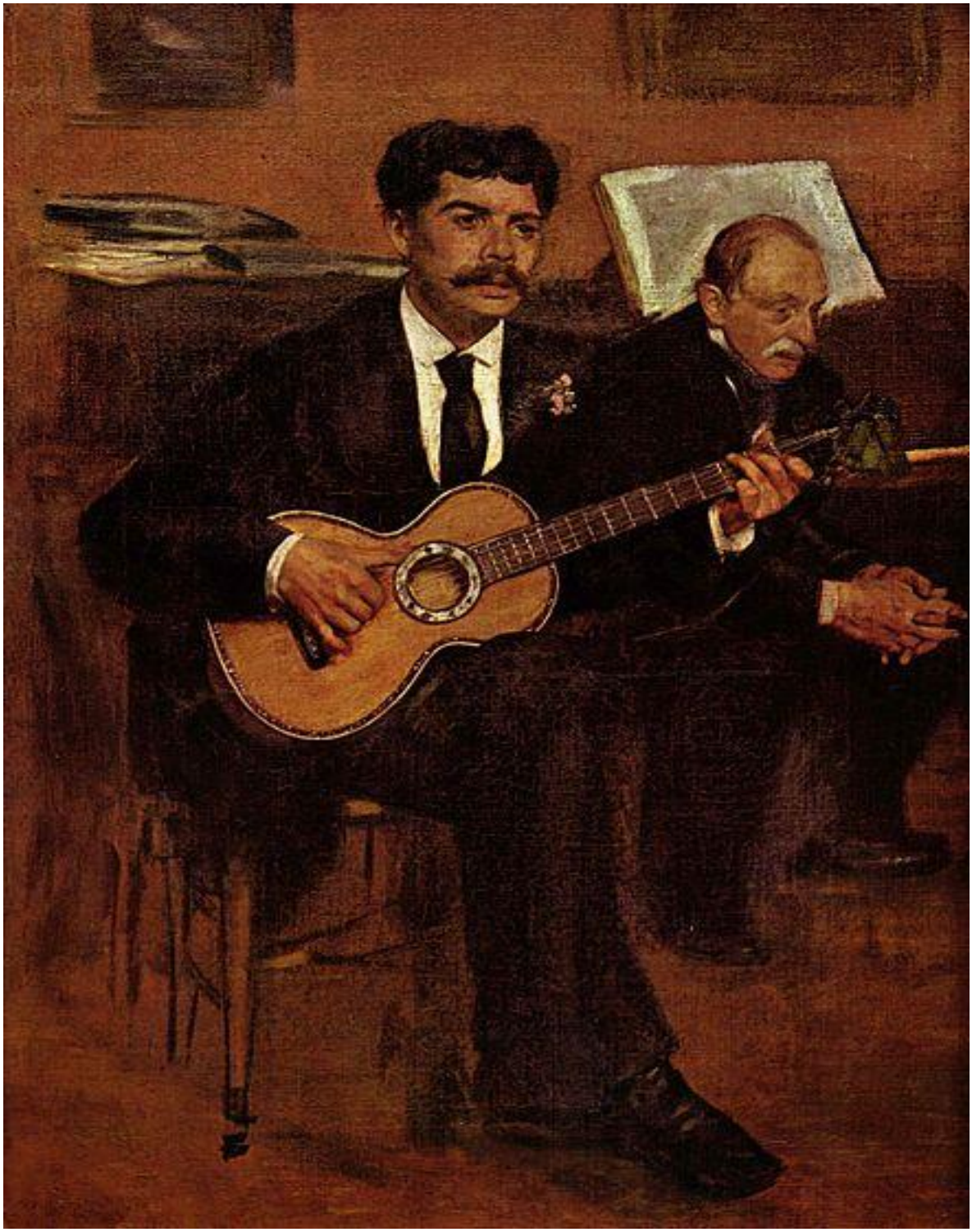

Fig. 21. Edgar Degas (1834-1917) *Lorenzo Pagans et Auguste de Gas* (1871/1872, oil on canvas, 0.545 x 0.395 cm, Paris, Musée d'Orsay)

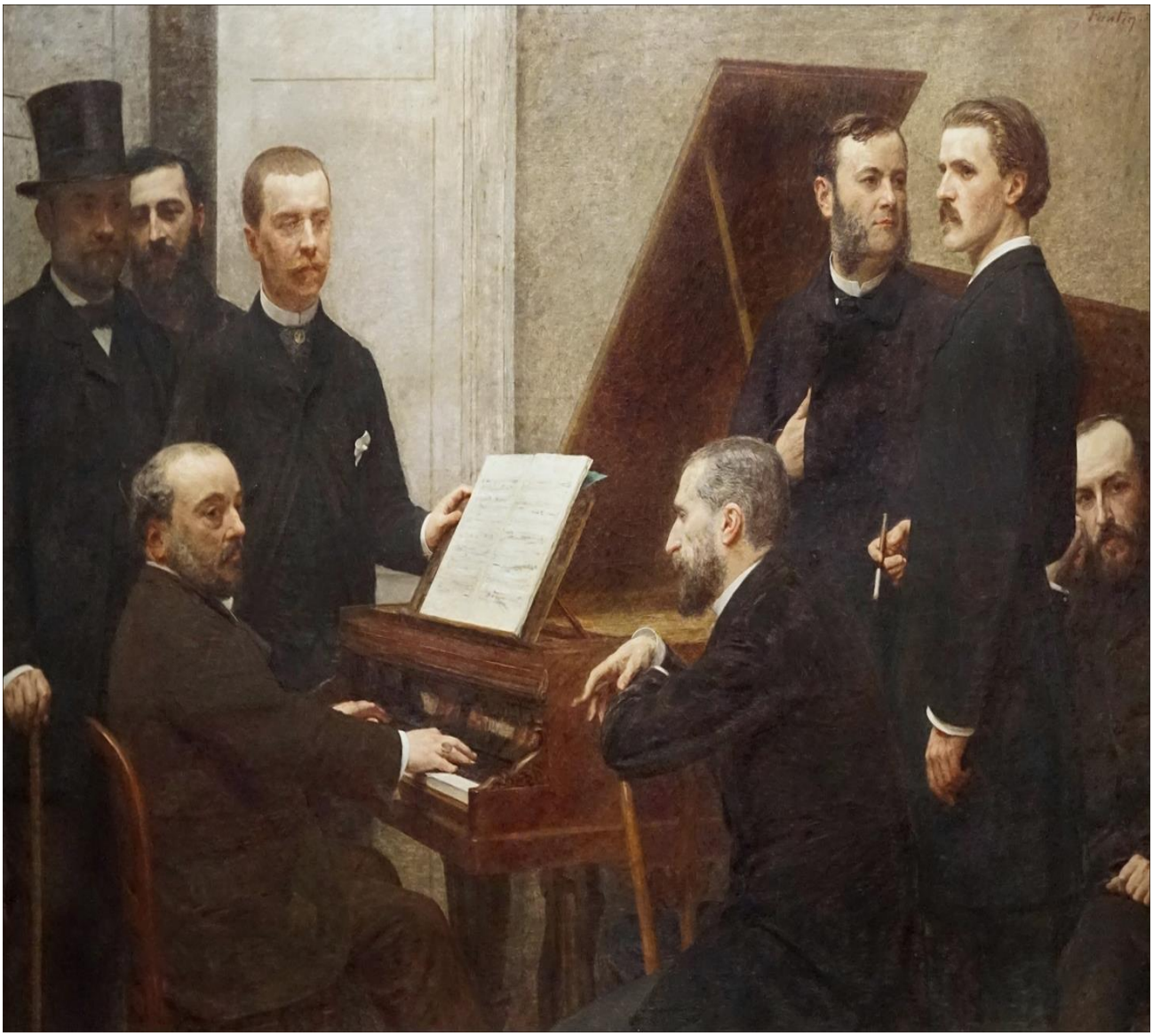

Fig. 22. Henri Fantin-Latour (1836-1904) *Autour du Piano* (1885, oil on canvas, 160 x 222 cm Paris,Musée d'Orsay)

Fig. 23. Auguste Toulmouche (1829-1890) ***Le Billet*** **(1883, oil on canvas, 66 x 45 cm, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nantes)**

Fig. 24. Édouard Manet (1832-1883) *Le Vieux Musicien* (1862, oil on canvas, 187 x 248 cm, Washington DC, National Gallery of Art)

Fig. 25. Frédéric Bazille (1841-1870s) *Petite Chanteuse Italienne des Rues* (1866, oil on canvas, 130.5 x 97.5, Montpellier, Musée Fabre)

Fig. 26. Jean-Léon Gérôme (1824-1904) *Bachi-Bazouk Chantant* (1868, oil on canvas, 46.3 cm x 66 cm, Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery)

Fig. 27. Albert Bartholomé (1848-1928) *Les Musiciens,* also called *Musiciens dans Une Cour,* (1883, oil on canvas, 0.78 x 0. 64 cm, Paris, Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris)

Fig. 28. Fernand Pelez (1843-1913) *Grimaces et Misère*, also known as *Les Musiciens* (1888, oil on canvas, 222 x 165.5 cm, Nantes Musée des Beaux-Arts)