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Edgar Degas and the Ottocento

Claire Louise Kovacs
University of Iowa

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EDGAR DEGAS AND THE OTTOCENTO

by

Claire Louise Kovacs

An Abstract

Of a thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Art History in the Graduate College of The University of Iowa

May 2010

Thesis Supervisor: Professor Dorothy Johnson

My study of Edgar Degas provides an arena for the examination of how artistic production can elucidate the complexities of cultural diversity, particularly through the evolution of artistic identity through overlapping cultural influences. Previous scholarship on Degas has been mainly Francophile in orientation, while my work focuses on the parameters of artistic reciprocity between Degas and nineteenth-century Italian art, artists and critics. Degas spent the majority of his formative years (July 1856-April 1860) traveling and studying in Italy, with extended periods in Rome, Naples and Florence. He actively sketched after the Italian Renaissance masters, participated in life drawing sessions at the Villa Medici, and partook in artistic exchange through friendships established in the social atmosphere of cafés. Familial bonds, through blood and marriage, to Naples and Florence provided Degas with additional ties to the peninsula. His camaraderie with Italian artists and critics did not end upon his return to Paris. Rather, these Italian artists became a vital part of Degas' social circle, with whom he travelled, dined, and participated in a variety of artistic exchanges. These exchanges fundamentally impacted Degas' oeuvre, as well as those of the Italians. Exploring Degas' connections with the art community of Italy allows a reevaluation of the traditional understanding of Degas as a French artist. It focuses attention on the impact that Italian aesthetics had on the formation of Degas' style which has been historically understood as tied to Parisian modernism.

Degas provides a unique opportunity to study the impact of multicultural influences arising from his attention to the artistic methodology of the French Academy, his Italian lineage and his role as a French tourist and artist in Italy. Finding the structure of the *École* too constrictive and instead preferring to forge a parallel route to

Academicism, Degas traveled to the peninsula outside of the sphere of the French Academy. He relied on a shared language, culture and familial connections to remain abroad longer and travel more extensively than many of his contemporaries. As a result Degas is much more rooted in the Italian culture than any of his French contemporaries. The many dimensions and experiences of Degas' Italian sojourn affected the burgeoning career of an artist who intended to join the ranks of the history painters, and instead found himself a critical observer of contemporary life.

What I elucidate in this dissertation is how deeply rooted Degas is in the language, cultures and history of Italy. These unbreakable ties, the many aspects of the Italian cultures in which he feels at home are absorbed and brought back to Paris and into his oeuvre. This study seeks to demonstrate that Degas was neither wholly French nor Italian (or for that matter, American), rather his multiple dimensions make for an international, truly cosmopolitan artist in the second half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, I engage and explore the social and artistic relationships of a group of artists who were acutely aware of the pressures of nationalism and the boundaries of nations, but while conceding to these realities, did not want to be limited by such demarcations. This reading of the evidence allows for a more meaningful investigation of the modalities of the formation of artistic identity and dialogue in the nineteenth century.

Abstract Approved:

Thesis Supervisor

Title and Department

Date

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May 2010

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Graduate College
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Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph. D. thesis of

Claire Louise Kovacs

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the
Doctor of Philosophy degree in Art History at the May 2010 graduation.

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Robert Rorex

Wallace Tomasini

In memory of Albert E.R. Schneider Jr.

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CHAPTER I OVERTURE

‘[a] plurality of loyalties [is] a reality of life’

Christopher Duggan, *A Force of Destiny*

Introduction

My study of Edgar Degas provides an arena for the examination of how artistic production can elucidate the complexities of cultural diversity, particularly through the evolution of artistic identity through overlapping cultural influences. Previous scholarship on Degas has been mainly Francophile in orientation, while my work focuses on the parameters of artistic reciprocity between Degas and nineteenth century Italian art, artists and critics. Degas spent the majority of his formative years (July 1856-April 1860) traveling and studying in Italy, with extended periods in Rome, Naples and Florence. He actively sketched after the Italian Renaissance masters, participated in life drawing sessions at the Villa Medici, and partook in artistic exchange through friendships established in the social atmosphere of cafés. Familial bonds, through blood and marriage, to Naples and Florence provided Degas with additional ties to the peninsula. His camaraderie with Italian artists did not end upon his return to Paris. Rather, these Italian artists became a vital part of Degas’ social circle, with whom he travelled, dined, and participated in a variety of artistic exchanges, which fundamentally impacted Degas’ oeuvre, as well as those of the Italians. Exploring Degas’ connections with the art community of Italy allows a reevaluation of the traditional image of Degas as a French artist. It focuses attention on the effect that the Italian aesthetic had on the formation of Degas’ style which has been historically understood as tied to Parisian modernism.

Degas provides a unique opportunity to study the impact of multicultural influences arising from his attention to the artistic methodology of the Academy, his Italian lineage and his role as a French tourist in Italy. Finding the structure of the *École* too constrictive and instead preferring to forge a parallel route to Academicism, Degas traveled to the peninsula outside of the sphere of the French Academy. He relied on a shared language, culture and familial connections to remain abroad longer and travel more extensively than many of his contemporaries, and as a result Degas is much more rooted in the Italian culture than any of his French colleagues. The many experiences of Degas' Italian sojourn affected the burgeoning career of an artist who intended to join the ranks of the history painters, and instead found himself a critical observer of contemporary life.

What I elucidate in this dissertation is how deeply rooted Degas is in the language, cultures and history of Italy. These unbreakable ties, the certain aspects of the Italian cultures in which he felt at home are ingested and brought back to Paris and into his oeuvre. Degas neither wholly French nor Italian (or for that matter, American), rather his multiple dimensions make for an international, truly cosmopolitan Parisian artist in the second half of the nineteenth century. Furthermore, I engage and question the social and artistic relationships of a group of artists who were acutely aware of the pressures of nationalism and the boundaries of nations, but while conceding to the realities, did not want to be limited by such demarcations. This reading of the evidence allows for a more meaningful investigation of the realities of the formation of artistic identity and dialogue in the nineteenth century.

First hand study of the art and archival material enables me to reconstruct in concrete detail the process of exchange between Degas and a variety of ottocento artists and critics, including Diego Martelli, Giovanni Fattori, Telemaco Signorini, Giovanni Boldini, Giuseppe De Nittis and Federico Zandomenighi. My extensive study of the primary sources of these Italian artists, found in various archives and the visual material found in museums complements research into Degas' own art, correspondence and notebooks.

Historiography

Several scholars, including Norma Broude and Theodore Reff, have examined Degas' relationship with Italy and the Macchiaioli, a group of Italian artists based in Tuscany in the latter half of the nineteenth century.¹ Their work has situated the Macchiaioli within Degas' early social circles, particularly during his time spent in the Caffè Michelangiolo in Florence. Broude's work stems from her dissertation and attempts to situate the Macchiaioli within nineteenth-century art historical discourse through a discussion that leans heavily on formalism and documentary evidence, often at the expense of contextualization of the works within larger political or social spheres. Her work touches on Degas only to add credence to the Macchiaioli as an artistic group in their own right. Theodore Reff's work on the relationship between Degas and the

¹ See Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London,: Phaidon, 1971), Norma Broude, "An Early Friend of Degas in Florence: A Newly-Identified Portrait Drawing of Degas by Giovanni Fattori," *The Burlington Magazine* 115, no. 848 (1973), Norma Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Academicism and Modernism in Nineteenth Century Italian Painting* (1967), Norma Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), Norma Broude, "The Macchiaioli As "Proto-Impressionists": Realism, Popular Science and the Re-Shaping of Macchia Romanticism, 1862-1886," *The Art Bulletin* 52, no. 4 (1970), Norma Broude, "The Macchiaioli: Academicism and Modernism in Nineteenth Century Italian Painting" (Ph.D., Columbia University, 1967), Norma Broude, "The Macchiaioli: Effect and Expression in Nineteenth-Century Florentine Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 52, no. 1 (1970), Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Edgar Degas and Naples," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963), and Lamberto Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963).

Macchiaioli focuses more specifically on the nature of Degas' sketchbooks and the sources of influence for the caricatural sketches contained therein. My study not only investigates more specific examples of artistic exchange between Degas and the Macchiaioli, but it also looks into Degas' patronage of the Caffè Greco in Rome and the resultant artistic relationships developed during his intermittent stays in Rome from 1856-58.

A 1963 issue of *The Burlington Magazine* devoted to Degas contained a number of articles that addressed Degas' Italian lineage and the friendships he formed in Italy.² Jean Sutherland Boggs' article entitled "Edgar Degas and Naples," outlines the familial relationships on the Degas side of the family, and thus provides a starting point for my investigation of his time spent in Italy by exploring his initial social circle – that of his paternal family. Phoebe Pool's article, "Degas and Moreau," focuses on the friendship cultivated between Degas and Gustave Moreau while both were beginning their artistic careers in Rome. This is particularly important for my study because it exemplifies an artistic relationship that developed during Degas' time in Italy, setting the stage for additional research on similar friendships. Also included is an article entitled "Three Italian Friends of Degas," written by Lamberto Vitali, which briefly outlines the rapport between Degas and two Italian painters, Telemaco Signorini and Federico Zandomenighi, and the Italian critic Diego Martelli. These three figures greatly influenced Degas and will figure prominently in my dissertation.

² Theodore Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963), Phoebe Pool, "Degas and Moreau," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963), Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas", Boggs, "Edgar Degas and Naples."

Theodore Reff and Jean Sutherland Boggs catalogued Degas' sketchbooks in order to understand their chronology, the sources for many of his drawings and their tangential impetus for inspiration.³ The chronological dating of the sketchbooks was begun by Jean Sutherland Boggs, in a series of three articles published in 1958 by *The Burlington Magazine* that systematize Degas' sketchbooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale. She organized the sketchbooks into three groups which she labeled 'Group A' for material before 1859, 'Group B' for material created from 1859-61, and 'Group C' for all the later notebooks.⁴ To further identify their chronology, she placed them in order within the groups. To give the reader some sense of size and appearance, she included descriptions and made some primary attempts at identifying 'studies for' (works Degas saw through to completion), 'projects' (drawings for uncompleted works), 'studies of' (landscapes, figure studies, etc.), 'studies from' (copies of other artists' works), 'notes' (related to Degas' career), and 'personal notes' (of a more intimate nature). Picking up where Boggs left off, Reff wrote a series of articles which focus on Degas' process of copying from older artists and mapped out a more methodical process of imitation within Degas' sketchbooks. Through four articles published in the years 1963-71, Reff and his students identified many of the sources for Degas' fragmentary sketches found within the

³ See Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale I: Group a (1853-1858)," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 662 (1958), Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale Ii: Group B (1858-1861)," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 663 (1958), Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale Iii: Group C (1863-1886)," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 664 (1958), Theodore Reff, "Addenda on Degas's Copies," *The Burlington Magazine* 107, no. 747 (1965), Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art.", Theodore Reff, "Further Thoughts on Degas's Copies," *The Burlington Magazine* 113, no. 822 (1971), Theodore Reff, "New Light on Degas's Copies," *The Burlington Magazine* 106, no. 735 (1964), *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).

⁴ Boggs did not provide dates for later notebooks because Degas' use of the notebooks becomes very informal and sporadic in the years following 1861.

pages of his sketchbooks. In addition to the articles, Reff worked as the editor for *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas* (1976), which reproduces (in thumbnails) the pages from Degas' sketchbooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale and other known collections. In the introductory essay, Reff briefly builds upon Boggs' research in order to examine the function of the sketchbooks in Degas' working processes.

Italian scholarship, on the other hand, has dealt with the issue of Italy and its repercussions on Degas' career, albeit from a more regional perspective. The scholarship is site-specific, in the sense that the majority of it comes from Naples and focuses on the city's imperative influence on the formative aspects of Degas' career, as well as his familial history in the region. Regardless, this body of literature is highly informative for the sheer amount of detailed information it contains, and the opportunities it provides to begin the discussion. Unfortunately, few American or French scholars give appropriate consideration to these important sources. Raimondi's *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917* details Degas' paternal family and their role in Naples.⁵ Two works that focus on the formative role of Naples on Degas' career are Spinello's *Degas e Napoli: Gli Anni Giovanili* which functions as a summary of the basic ideas and Bianca's more informative article "La Formazione Italiana di Edgar Degas."⁶

Another recent source of Italian scholarship on the topic is the 2003 exhibition catalogue for *Degas e gli Italiani a Parigi*, organized by the Museo Boldini in Ferrara.⁷ A

⁵ Riccardo Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917* (Napoli: SAV, 1958).

⁶ Michele Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana di Edgar Degas," *Questioni d'Arte*, Rosario Spinillo, *Degas e Napoli gli Anni Giovanili* (Salerno, Italy: Plectica, 2005).

⁷ Ann Dumas, ed., *Degas e gli Italiani a Parigi* (Ferrara: Ferrara Arte, 2003).

greatly abbreviated English-language version is also available.⁸ Other examples include the 1999 exhibition and catalogue for *In Toscana, dopo Degas* and the 1998 exhibition and catalogue *Aria di Parigi nella Pittura Italiana del second Ottocento*, which provide interesting starting points for specific discussions on aspects of ottocento culture in Paris.⁹ In addition, there have been a number of exhibitions staged that focus on different aspects of Degas' career that do not bring up issues of the Italian question, other than passing remarks about his lineage. An example of such an exhibition was the 1987 *Degas Scultore*, held in Verona. (Figure A1) A final area of important Italian scholarship is in the investigation of the interactions between ottocento artists and Paris, especially the work on Giovanni Boldini such as Alessandra Borgogelli's article "Un Italiano a Parigi: l'Antologica di Boldini alla Permanente" and Raffaele de Grada's *Boldini: un Parigino di Ferrara*.¹⁰

Within more recent English literature on Degas, the issue of Degas and his Italian influences, if noted at all, has been little more than repeated from the work of the aforementioned scholars.¹¹ No new research has been done on this subject in the last twenty years in English, and no overarching study of the relationships between Degas and

⁸ Ann Dumas, *Degas and the Italians in Paris* (Edinburgh: National Galleries of Scotland, 2003).

⁹ Francesca Cagianelli and Elena Lazzarini, *In Toscana, Dopo Degas: Dal Sogno Medioevale alla Città Moderna* (Crespina: Comune di Crespina, 1999). Giuliano Matteucci, ed., *Aria di Parigi nella Pittura Italiana del Secondo Ottocento* (Livorno: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1998).

¹⁰ Alessandra Borgogelli, "Un Italiano a Parigi; L'antologica di Boldini alla Permanente," *Art e dossier*, no. 34 (April 1989). Raffaele De Grada, *Boldini: un Parigino di Ferrara* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale d'Arte, 1963). Another area of scholarship is Marion La Grange's recent work on the Italian expatriates' interactions with the Goupil gallery in Paris. See for example Marion Lagrange, "Entre la Maison Goupil et L'Italie, un Axe Commercial Porteur d'une Image Identitaire," *Histoire de l'art*, no. 52 (June 2003).

¹¹ For example see Roy McMullen, *Degas: His Life, Times and Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), Carol M. Armstrong, "Reading the Work of Degas," *Odd Man Out: Readings of the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 101-156, Denys Sutton, "The Italy of Dreams," *Degas, Life and Work*, (New York: Artabras, 1991), 27-44.

Italy has been undertaken. This lacuna, coupled with the recent interest in transnational dialogues of artistic exchange – particularly those focusing on Italy,¹² make the moment ripe for my work on the topic.

French Impressions of Italian Painting

The Italian submissions to the Exposition Universelle in 1855 included works by Lanzirotti, Jean Dupré, Gandolfi, Bonnardel, Gibson, Wolff – representing Tuscany, Sardinia, the Papal States and the Kingdom of Two Sicilies.¹³ In addition, while generally disappointed with the Italian submissions, Théophile Gautier mentions Palizzi and Hayez’s work individually, calling Palizzi’s “honnêtes, rustiques et naïfs.”¹⁴ Overall the critical reaction to the Italian artists’ submissions was dismal, and smacked of disappointment over the seemingly grand fall from grace. Four examples summarize the overtly harsh criticism of the art seen as derivative and lacking any sort of creative pulse, comparing them to their Italian forefathers to further exacerbate the projected failures. Gautier is the first to take this tack, suggesting that the art of the Renaissance was divinely inspired, and that current practitioners are nothing more than lazy copyists:

Est-ce à dire pour cela que Dieu mesure le génie à l’humanité d’une main plus parcimonieuse ? – Non. – Seulement il dispense ses faveurs à d’autres moins bien traités auparavant. – Pendant trois siècles d’Italie, assise sur son trône d’or, a gardé le sceptre de la peinture, de la sculpture et de l’architecture. Ses dômes s’arrondissaient dans le ciel bleu : la fresque splendide recouvrait ses édifices comme un vêtement royal ; ses marbres étincelants et purs se dressaient rivaux des marbres antiques nouvellement sortis de terre. – Rome, Florence, Venise, formaient une radieuse trinité. Léonard de Vinci, Michel-Ange, Raphaël, Corrège,

¹² For example Francesca Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence: Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 1. ed. (Milano: Electa, 2007). James Hamilton, *Turner e L’Italia* (Ferrara: Ferrara arte, 2008).

¹³ Claude Vignon, *Exposition Universelle de 1855* (Paris: Librairie d’Auguste Fontaine, 1855), 132-34.

¹⁴ Théophile Gautier, *Les Beaux-Arts en Europe*, vol. 2 (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, Librairies-Éditeurs, 1855), 125.

Titien, Paul Véronèse, pour ne nommer que les plus illustres, éblouissaient le monde de leur rayonnement.

Aujourd'hui l'Italie, épuisée de merveilles, se repose. Son atelier, si actif jadis, n'est plus qu'un musée; elle ne figure que pour mémoire à l'Exposition universelle; de ses magnifiques écoles florentine, romaine, vénitienne, il ne reste que des chefs-d'œuvre: elles n'ont plus d'élèves; à peine quelques copistes s'efforcent de perpétuer des images qui s'effacent. Mais l'Italie, *alma parens*, a largement payé sa dette au genre humain, et ce n'est pas nous qui commettrons cette impiété de railler sa misère. – Après la Grèce, elle a donné au monde le type le plus élevé du beau. Qu'importe si elle ne couvre que quelques toises de murailles avec de médiocres peintures au congrès de l'art moderne? Nous lui sommes toujours redevables.

He continues with exposition on French art by comparison, emphasizing the shift of the center of the art world, “La France, au contraire, a grandi... On va maintenant à Paris comme autrefois l'on allait à Rome: c'est, personne ne le conteste, la métropole de l'art.”¹⁵

Another critic's words carry on with this idea of Rome abdicating its throne as the center of the art world:

L'Italie ou le tombeau de la peinture... Je n'accuse personne, mais l'art est tombé bien bas à Rome, à Naples et à Florence... Leur exposition dénote beaucoup de vouloir, à défaut de génie; mais on devine, en comptant les envois de l'Italie, que cette grande nation a renoncé à la gloire qu'elle abdique et qu'elle n'en veut plus.¹⁶

The critic Paul Nibelle muses on the traditional role of Italy as a Mecca for emerging artists, now that the center has shifted to Paris:

Ainsi, dans le cinq tableaux qui composent au Palais de Beaux-arts l'exposition des Deux Siciles, nous comptons deux paysages de Francesco et ce deux *Paysages* sont des vues de notre Bretagne. Qu'est donc devenu le beau ciel d'Italie? Est-ce que cette nature qui passionnait le génie de Claude Lorraine et donnait la fièvre à Salvator Rosa a perdu jusqu'à son prestige. Quoi! L'art

¹⁵ Théophile Gautier, *Les Beaux-Arts en Europe*, vol. 1 (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères, Librairies-Éditeurs, 1855), 4-5.

¹⁶ E. About. *Voyage à travers l'exposition des Beaux-Arts (peinture et sculpture)*. Paris, 1855. Quoted from Lagrange, "Entre la Maison Goupil et L'Italie, un Axe Commercial Porteur d'une Image Identitaire," 122.

lorsqu'il a à sa disposition ce grand rayonnement de la lumière italienne et cette coupole azurée de la mer napolitaine, vient demander des effets et des modèles à nos cotes et à nos climats ! Par quel étrange contraste l'Italie vient-elle étudier en France, lorsque la France va étudier en Italie, où plutôt vit encore des souvenirs et des leçons que l'Italie lui a laissés ?¹⁷

Claude Vignon points to trends towards decadence coupled with facile derivative

aesthetic inquiry as the reason for the marked decline in quality seen in Italian works:

Et l'Italie? pauvre et sèche copiste d'un genre bâtard, que fait-elle des traditions de Michel-Ange, le plus audacieux des génies de l'art. Le maître qui fit de la pâle et maigre figure du Christ un type de force et de splendeur, et transporta dans le paradis du Dante la virile beauté de l'Olympe d'Homère? de son divin Sanzio? de Titien, le coloriste unique, qui nous a transmis vivants pour ainsi dire, les papes, les empereurs, les rois et les grands seigneurs se partageant l'Europe au seizième siècle? du gracieux Corrège? du Vinci au suaves et pensives créations? du fougueux Salvator Rosa, le peinture des tempêtes des batailles et des apparitions d'outre-tombe ?

Décadence! décadence! c'est le glas qui sonne pour le génie artistique de ces nations déchues! plus pauvres que les contrées nouvelles, qui ont au moins une originalité propre; elles ont tout à retrouver pour reconquérir la vie qui leur manque; c'est au musée du Louvre qu'il faut aller aujourd'hui applaudir aux triomphes de l'Italie...¹⁸

Such overtly harsh criticism of their country's submissions must have been difficult for Dominico Morelli, Saverio Altamura and Serafino De Tivoli to bear during their trip to the 1855 Exposition Universelle, but perhaps the reaction of the world to Italy's art spurred them to further examine their own artistic practices. It is possible that these critical reactions, coupled with the variety of novel experiences had by the trio provided significant impetus for the reevaluation of Italian artistic practice in the latter half of the ottocento.

¹⁷ Paul Nibelle. *La Lummière* 6 October 1855, 16. Quoted from Spinillo, *Degas e Napoli gli Anni Giovanili*, 18.

¹⁸ Vignon, *Exposition Universelle de 1855*, 9-10.

These reconsiderations, due to a combination of factors, including the criticisms of 1855 coupled with a need to reassess and reconsider a national aesthetic did cause the French to take note. The *Grand Dictionnaire Universel* published from 1866-77 included an entry on Italian painting. The entry specifically mentions a number of artists, organized by their geographic association: M.M. Ussi (Florence), Andrea Gastaldi (Turin), Federigo Faruffini (Sesto), Dom. Morelli, Fr. Castiglione, Camillo Miola, Joachim Toma, Ed. Tofano, Joseph & Phillippe Pazzi (Naples), Pompeo Molmenti, Antonio Zona, R. Gianetti (Venice), Gordigiani and Benassai (Florence), L. Busi (Bologna), Induno, Guido Gonin (Turin), Moïse Bianchi (Monza), Al. Focosi (Milan), and Alb. Pasini (Busseto). The entry also suggests an effort on the part of the artists to reconsider their aesthetic inquires, and attempt to dialogue with more global issues:

Le régime d'oppression politique que a pesé si longtemps l'Italie n'a sans doute pas été étranger à l'abaissement de l'art dans ce pays... Aujourd'hui, l'Italie est libre ; libre de manifester ses pensées, ses aspirations ; libre d'exprimer son idéal ; libre de suivre la voie où l'entraînera son génie. Est-ce à dire qu'au sortir de ce long 'recueillement' si semblable à léthargie elle soit déjà prête à ressaisir le sceptre de l'art, que la servitude avait fait tomber ses mains ? Non. La grande nation a besoin de réparer ses forces avant de songer sérieusement à la lutte : tant que ses blessures ne seront pas cicatrisées, tant qu'elle ne sera pas revivifiée par le régime salubre de la liberté, elle sera réduite, comme une convalescente, à marcher à tâtons. Mais, nous en avons le ferme espoir, l'heure est proche où l'art italien, émancipé, brillera d'un nouvel éclat. Déjà, quelques-unes des œuvres envoyées à l'Exposition universelle de Paris, en 1867, ont révélé de sérieux efforts pour sortir de la banalité et de la convention.¹⁹

French criticism continued to become more accepting of Italian art, for the overt reason that it began to dialogue with parallel investigations into modernism. In his

¹⁹ "Italie - Peinture," in *Grand Dictionnaire Universel du XIXe Siècle: Français, Historique, Géographique, Mythologique, Bibliographique, Littéraire, Artistique, Scientifique, Etc.*, ed. Pierre Larousse (Genève: Slatkine, 1982), 837.

criticism of the Universal Exhibition of 1889, Georges Lafenestre had the following to say:

On peut à peine prendre pour des Italiens M. Boldini, le plus pétillant et les plus spirituels de leurs portraitistes, MM. Pittara, Ancillotti, Rossano, Cortazzo, Marchetti, Spiridon, Detti, paysagistes, anecdotiers ou costumiers, ayant tous de la main, quelques uns de la finesse, mais tous archi franchisés.²⁰

The tone has shifted radically from the earlier 1855 criticism. Further examples of the dialogue between French critics and Italian artists will be discussed throughout this dissertation, in the particular context of the themes and artists addressed. Such views are imperative to consider, as they would have had an effect upon the relationships between Italian artists and their French counterparts throughout the variety of dialogues occurring in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Further issues of a lasting dialogue between the French and Italian artists will be considered throughout this study, but it is also important to first reflect on the lasting lines of demarcation between the cultures. An example can be seen in the life story, Giuseppe De Nittis, an Italian expatriate who considered Paris his home after moving there in 1867. De Nittis passed away suddenly in Paris in 1884. While his work was commercially successful in the city and he was a member of the social circles of Degas, Caillebotte and the Goncourts, the critical reception of retrospectives staged after his death mark a different tone. His widow, Léontine, ended up so frustrated with his waning reputation in France that she decided, contrary to his wishes, not to donate the effects of his studio to the city of Paris, but rather had them returned to his hometown of Barletta, where the collection resides today.

²⁰ Georges Lafenestre, "La peinture étrangère à l'Exposition Universelle". *Revue des deux Mondes* 1 November 1889. Quoted in Lagrange, "Entre la Maison Goupil et L'Italie, un Axe Commercial Porteur d'une Image Identitaire," 129.

Degas the Parisian (a Familial Perspective)

Another artist who straddled the lines of demarcation between French and Italian culture was Degas, whose familial background provided him with a unique opportunity to interact with Italian artists in a way that set him apart from others of his Parisian circles. It is the repercussions of this nuanced interaction that will be the crux of this investigation.

Vollard, in writing about Degas, reminisced about his unique personality, which was often laced with sharp wit:

It has been said of M. Ingres that he was ‘a Chinese painter astray among the ruins of Athens in the middle of the nineteenth century.’ It might be said of Degas that as far as social life went, he was astray in a time that was not his own. He belonged to another period, a period in which politeness still existed, and a sense of hierarchy and the cult of one’s own country.²¹

Carol Armstrong also picks up on this vein in her discussion of Degas’ personality in

Odd Man Out:

His attitudes were all patrician ones: his famous love of aphorism, his devotion to a code of family honor and a cult of male friendship, his habit of double-edged *badinage* with women of wit, even his closely guarded privacy: these were the attitudes of the old *honnête homme*...Degas was, as one put it, a ‘Parisien pur sang.’²²

This emphasis on the ‘cult of one’s own country’ and ‘Parisian pur sang’ is particularly interesting when one begins to examine his complex heritage and relationship with

²¹ Ambroise Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, trans. Violet M. MacDonald (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), 269. Degas’ writings consist of his brief notations within his notebooks and his correspondence, both of which are meager in terms of Degas’ philosophies on issues of art, culture, etc. Such issues were more likely to come up in conversations with the Parisian painter. Therefore, this study utilizes a combination of secondary textual sources to give the reader a greater sense of Degas’ thinking on a variety of topics. Of course the use of such texts does have methodological implications, particularly in that it relies on other’s recollections to provide framework. Of course it is valid for the reader to question the veracity of such statements (as much as one would Degas’ own writings), and thus when possible, a number of sources are used to corroborate statements.

²² *La Petite République française*, 1879; Carol M. Armstrong, *Odd Man Out: Readings of the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), 23.

Italians, both on the peninsula and in Paris. While it goes without saying that Degas' heritage was one of a French background, but it is concurrently a background that extends beyond the borders of France to the New World and Italy. Perhaps it is more appropriate to focus on the idea of Degas as a pure-blooded Parisian. Paris, like Degas, was a complex melting pot in the latter decades of the nineteenth century, home to a variety of expatriates from across the globe, and especially the western hemisphere. Its recently novel identity as the center of the art world only exacerbated this sense of the polycultural qualities of the French capital. The remainder of this chapter will frame Degas in a similar light. His familial heritage provided him a unique opportunity to understand this artistic melting pot, and it is from this unique perspective forms his distinctive role as a true Parisian in the most global sense of the word.

George Moore comments on Degas' family history, noting that "Degas is the last person of whom inquiry could be made. He would at once smell an article, and he nips such projects as a terrier nips rats."²³ Regardless, it is possible to reconstruct Degas' familial heritage.²⁴ While it is suggested in most scholarly literature that Degas was born into an aristocratic family, the work of Roy McMullen into Degas' familial heritage suggests that Degas' family fortune did not hail from landed gentry, but rather from shady speculation less than fifty years before his birth. Degas' paternal grandfather, René-Hilaire Degas made his money first as a grain speculator during the Revolution. At the start of the Revolution, Hilaire fled Paris in 1793 for Naples, the reasons for which

²³ George Moore, "Degas: The Painter of Modern Life," *Magazine of Art* 13 (1890): 422.

²⁴ For a greater understanding of Degas' family structure, see Appendix J. See also Roy McMullen, *Degas: His Life, Times and Work* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984), 2-16., Gail Feigenbaum and Jean Sutherland Boggs, *Degas and New Orleans: A French Impressionist in America* (New Orleans : New Orleans Museum of Art ; Copenhagen : Ordrupgaard, 1999)., Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917*.

are hypothesized by Degas' niece Jeanne Fèvre in *Mon oncle Degas*, who suggested that Hilaire was wanted by the Revolutionaries because of his royalist sympathies and his engagement to one of the 'Virgins of Verdun' (virgins who presented flowers to Marie Antoinette on her way to the guillotine). He then fled Paris, joined Napoleon's Egyptian campaign and ended up in Naples under the command of one of Napoleon's generals.²⁵

In contrast, and a more likely story is told by Degas to Paul Valéry on 28 July 1904: that it was Hilaire's speculation on the grain market at the time of the Revolution that caused him to flee Paris and the Terror in 1793, taking a boat from Marseilles to Naples. In Naples, Hilaire rapidly prospered and took employment with Genoese merchant Lorenzo Freppa, whose daughter, Aurora, he married in 1804. By 1836, he owned properties in and around Naples and established the bank Degas, Padre e Figli with his sons Edouard, Achille and Henri. His oldest son, Auguste (Edgar's father) had been sent to Paris in 1825 to study commerce and run the Paris office of the bank.

In the 1840s, members of the family began signing their names 'de Gas', suggesting that they were entitled to the *particule*, indicating landed gentry, and one relative even went as far as to hire a genealogist to create a family tree to legitimize the pretension.²⁶ (Figure A2) In reality, Degas was not descended from aristocracy; rather a parish registry in 1770 lists the birth of Hilaire to a 'Pierre Degas, *boulangier*', a provincial baker. The class into which Degas was born was the *nouveau grande bourgeoisie*, haunted by recent memories of displacement and revolution.

²⁵ Jeanne Fèvre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs et Documents Inédits* (Genève: P. Cailler, 1949), 18-19.

²⁶ See *Ibid.*, 14-21. In light of these facts, I have decided to only use the particulate version of the cognomen when directly discussing issues of familial heritage.

René, whose own religious background is unknown, married into a Catholic Neapolitan family. Don Antonio Freppa, was a doctor of sacred theology and brother of Lorenzo Freppa, who married Rosa Aurisicchino. Their daughter, Giovanna Aurora Theresa married René Hilaire Degas in 1804. Their children were baptized by Don Freppa at Santi Giuseppe e Christoforo detta dell'Ospedaletto in Naples.²⁷ Per the code of the Two Sicilies, you could be a Neapolitan citizen if born in Naples. For foreigners to get citizenship: “esplicita istanza e dichiara di fissure a Napoli il Proprio domicilio.”²⁸ René did own property in Naples, and as such could have petitioned for citizenship, but instead kept his French citizenship.²⁹ The choice was a wise one politically, as on 27 June 1815 he became the official ‘agente di cambio’ of the Second Bourbon Restoration.³⁰ This appointment followed on the heels of some financial difficulties following the Napoleonic occupation, in the years 1806-10. Letters from René Hilaire to his brother Auguste detail these difficulties.³¹ His political leanings, as well as a light onto his personality is suggested through a letter dated 21 February 1813 by Auguste Degas, brother of René Hilaire, in which he referred to his brother as ‘le petit napolitaine’.³² His continued high esteem in the circles of the Neapolitan elite was carried on by his son,

²⁷ Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917*, 73.

²⁸ Art. 11 delle leggi civili del 1819. *Ibid.*, 129.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 130.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *Ibid.*, 61-66.

³² Letter reproduced *Ibid.*, 58.

Giovanni Odardo Degas, who in 1837 was named a member of the Honor Guard of the King of Naples, a group made up solely of members of the Neapolitan elite.³³

While establishing the Parisian branch of the family bank, Auguste met Célestine Musson, herself a recent transplant to the city from New Orleans, and the two were soon engaged to be married. While Degas' American relations are thoroughly discussed elsewhere, it is important to briefly discuss his maternal family, especially their relations with his paternal family, in order to understand the complexity of his familial background and its repercussions on his artistic output.³⁴

There is some suggestion that René Hilaire was worried about his son's connections with the Musson family. He was particularly concerned that his son might be financially led astray by Germain Musson, and his fears were realized in 1873 when Auguste sold off his patrimony in Italy for 131,976.36 lire, probably to invest with Achille and René in New Orleans, which would have later disastrous effects on the financial stability of the Degas family.³⁵ An even earlier worry surfaced in the fall 1835 exchange of letters between René-Hilaire and his wife Aurora, who was visiting Paris at the time, suggests that Germain was pressuring his new son-in-law to enter into a

³³ Ibid., 130. Of course not all members of the family shared the same political leanings, as Gennaro Bellilli, the husband of Degas' sister Laura, was exiled to Florence for his involvement in the Revolutions of 1848. He was specifically named in the publication of demands in *Pei Crociati Napoli* on the 30 March 1848. See Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917*, 169-89.

³⁴ For a discussion of Degas' maternal family in New Orleans, see Christopher E. G. Benfey, *Degas in New Orleans: Encounters in the Creole World of Kate Chopin and George Washington Cable* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), Marilyn Brown, *Degas and the Business of Art: A Cotton Office in New Orleans* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), Gail Feigenbaum, "Edgar Degas, Almost a Son of Louisiana," in *Degas and New Orleans: A French Impressionist in America*, ed. Gail Feigenbaum and Boggs Jean Sutherland (New Orleans : New Orleans Museum of Art ; Copenhagen : Ordrupgaard, 1999), Feigenbaum and Boggs, *Degas and New Orleans: A French Impressionist in America*, John Rewald, "Degas and His Family in New Orleans," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* xxx (1946).

³⁵ Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917*, 105-09. See also Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Edgar Degas and Naples," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963): 274.

partnership that would establish a cotton warehouse in Le Havre. René-Hilaire said that he would only back Auguste's endeavors if he took another of his brothers into the partnership. Auguste was not amenable to this proposal. René-Hilaire then wrote to his wife in a state of shock and dismay at the tone of a letter he had received from Germain chastising him for his selfishness.³⁶

The family was opposed to Auguste's marriage to Célestine Musson, and had little use of the Musson family, but quickly became emotionally attached to Célestine once she became a member of the family.³⁷ Like the Degas family, the Mussons were most likely Catholic, owing to the presence of two-hand written Musson family catechism books, c. 1858.³⁸ The Degas family also kept the Musson family up to speed on paternal familial news. In a letter dated 17 January 1862, Thérèse writes to Mathilde Musson about the upcoming marriage of her uncle Edouard in Naples to Miss Cicerale. She notes that she is unsure of the exact date of the marriage, but that it is looming very soon on the horizon.³⁹ In another letter from Auguste Degas to Michel Musson, he mentions the upcoming marriage of Thérèse to Edmondo Morbilli, "jeune napolitain

³⁶ Feigenbaum, "Edgar Degas, Almost a Son of Louisiana," 7.

³⁷ Boggs, "Edgar Degas and Naples," 274.

³⁸ Box 1, Folder 24. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," (Manuscripts Collection, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University).

³⁹ Letter from Thérèse Degas to Mathilde Musson, 17 January 1862. Ibid., Box 1, Folder 28b. See also Marilyn R. Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory* (New Orleans: Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University, 1991), 4.

possédant peu d'argent, des espérances, 26 ans et beaucoup d'amour."⁴⁰ René recounts his father's words in a letter from the same date.⁴¹

The marriage between the Musson and Degas families created a number of ties between North America, France and Italy. In fact, an introduction from the Mussons to the Degas family in Paris or in Italy must have been in the possession of quite a few visitors. In 1834, shortly after the marriage of Célestine and Auguste, the Louisiana planter Duncan Kenner is in Naples borrowing horses from Henri Degas, Auguste's brother, all doubtless on the strength of a Musson introduction. It is most likely that the introduction came from Célestine, whom Kenner met while in Paris a number of times before his trip to Naples.

In June 1863, Odile Longer Musson accompanied her two daughters, Estelle and Désirée, on a three year sojourn to Paris to escape the chaos surrounding the Union occupation of New Orleans. It was during this trip that Edgar and his brothers first became acquainted with their American cousins, a relationship that would have significant repercussions for all of their lives. Contrary to popular opinion about Degas' personality, Didi Musson writes of her recollections of Edgar during their trip, "Edgard [sic] qu'on nous avait dit si brusque, est rempli d'attention et d'amabilité."⁴² Much later, his aunt, Odile Musson echoes these sentiments in a draft response to a letter from M. and Mme. Paul Lemoisne:

⁴⁰ Letter from Auguste Degas to Michel Musson, 6 March 1863. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 33a. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 5.

⁴¹ Letter from René Degas to Michel Musson, 6 March 1863. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 33b. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 5.

⁴² Letter from Didi Musson to Michel Musson, 24 June 1863. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 34d. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 5.

Il a été reçu ici comme vous le dite plutôt comme un aimable garçon, un cousin bien aimé, un neveu préféré, que comme le *Grand artiste* [sic], puisleque lui même a demandé 'à ce qu'on ne vienne pas le recevoir à la gare' tant il détesté la publicité, le monde et l'embarras d'être forcé de faire l'aimable, un trait très prononcé dans la famille Musson de nos jours.⁴³

René married his cousin Estelle in 1868. He and his brother Achille moved to New Orleans to set up business with their maternal family in the cotton industry. Estelle bore René three children, and had one daughter from a previous marriage to Joseph Davis Balfour, nephew of Jefferson Davis and an officer in the Confederate army who was killed during the Civil War. Soon after her marriage to René, Estelle began to develop eye problems and eventually was declared legally blind. Their neighbor, America Durrive, would come over and read the newspaper to Estelle. Soon a relationship formed between René and America, and the two soon abandoned New Orleans, married illegally in Cleveland, and moved to Paris.⁴⁴ After René abandoned Estelle and their children, there were strained relations between the Mussons and Edgar. René's actions caused a rift between the formerly close brothers, but propriety prevented Degas from contacting his maternal family. In a letter from Henri Musson to Michel (Estelle's father), he writes that he has seen Edgar:

Le brave garçon, car c'est une bonne délicate et intelligente nature, répugne à vous écrire. Il est tellement honteux des agissements de ses frères qu'il craint que vous ne le confondiez avec eux – c'est évidemment une fausse vue de son esprit, je le lui aie dit sur tous les tons.⁴⁵

⁴³ Draft of a letter from Odile Musson to M. and Mme. Paul Lemoisne, c. 1933. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 5, Folder 3.

⁴⁴ Harvey Buchanan, "Edgar Degas and Ludovic Lepic: An Impressionist Friendship," *Cleveland Studies in the History of Art* 2 (1997).

⁴⁵ Letter from Henri Musson to Michel Musson, 27 June 1881. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 4, Folder 20. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 36.

The reference to Achille refers to his involvement in a shooting incident at the Paris Bourse in 1875.⁴⁶ Achille was accosted on the front steps of the Paris Bourse by the husband of his former mistress and, in turn, shot and wounded the man with a revolver.

In response Michel wrote to Henri:

Ce que tu me dis *de lui et de sa part* nous est une preuve bien sensible de son attachement et de sa sympathie pour nous. Sa nature d'élite devait le porter à se venger de notre côté ; s'il lui coûte de nous l'espérons' *mais qu'il signe et date* (en place d'une lettre) un croquis de *toi*...Est-ce qu'Edgar ne se fera pas [de son ?] plaisir de remplir ma collection?⁴⁷

In a letter from Michel to Edgar in 1883, which included an obituary for Henri, it seems that their relationship was patched up. Her writes:

Mais si je perds un frère, je retrouve un neveu – Enfant prodigue qui me reviens après avoir beaucoup souffert, je t'ouvre mes bras et te bénis! Tu es bien *cet* Edgar que nous aimions toujours, le fils chéri de ma sœur Célestine, le préféré de mes filles. Comme elles quartent tu es *créole* par le cœur ; de naissance et d'esprit tu es bien français; mais tu n'es pas, comme *eux*...lazzaroni.⁴⁸

This harsh statement is particularly interesting when one considers Michel Musson's involvement in the White League, a racist organization which incited street fighting in New Orleans in the 1870s.

Degas' relationship with his father Auguste was not one of unconditional support and understanding. In an 1861 letter to his father-in-law, Auguste gives a sense of his

⁴⁶ It was Achille who, in the end, remained closest to the Musson family. In 1878, after René's elopement, Achille returned to America to attempt to sort out his brother's affairs. Correspondence between Désirée and Achille at this time suggests a remaining strain on the relationship. Achille was in New York at the time, and soon found himself in the midst his own whirlwind romance with Emma Hermann, the niece of Odile Musson. The two married in 1881. Emma was also the granddaughter of a Jewish immigrant to the United States, and was in Paris during Degas' vehement anti-Semitic outbursts during the Dreyfus Affair. See Feigenbaum and Boggs, *Degas and New Orleans: A French Impressionist in America*, 284-86.

⁴⁷ Letter from Michel Musson to Henri Musson, 31 July 1881. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 4, Folder 22. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 37.

⁴⁸ Letter from Michel Musson to Edgar Degas, 12 July 1883. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 4, Folder 37. See also "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," 39.

disappointment in what he saw as his son's inability to establish himself as an artist. He laments, "Notre Raphael travaille toujours mais n'a encore rien produit d'achevé, cependant les années passent."⁴⁹ Another letter continues along the same vein: "Que dire d'Edgar, nous attendons impatiemment le jour où s'ouvrira l'exposition des peintures. Pour ma part, j'ai tout lieu de croire qu'il ne sera pas à temps, il n'aura point adressé ce qu'il faut."⁵⁰ Auguste was confident in his views on art, having introduced his son to the world as a child. As a result, he often felt the necessity to voice his critical opinions regarding his son's artistic output. Such an exchange is exemplified in his reaction to a series of portraits that Degas undertook of the Ducros and the Millaudon families, friends and cousins of the Musson family in New Orleans. In 1857-58, Mme Ducros and her daughter and son-in-law, M. and Mme Millaudon, and their daughters went on a long trip to Europe: Paris and Rome, where Degas worked various portraits of the group. In a letter from the 13 August 1858, Auguste Degas warmly congratulates his son on the drawing of Angèle et Gabrielle, but was not pleased with the portraits of M. et Mme. Millaudon and M. and Mme. Ducros.⁵¹

Before their estrangement, on account of René's abandonment of Estelle and their children, Degas and his brother René were very close.⁵² In a letter to Michel Musson, René comments upon Edgar's drive, "Quant à Edgar, nous ne le connaissez pas encore. Il travaille avec furie, et ne pense qu'à une chose, à sa peinture. Il ne se donne pas le temps

⁴⁹ Letter from Auguste DeGas to Michel Musson, 21 November 1861. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 27d. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 4.

⁵⁰ Letter from Auguste DeGas to Michel Musson, 6 March 1863. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 33a. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 5.

⁵¹ Paul-Andre Lemoisne et al., *Degas et Son Oeuvre*, 5 vols., vol. 2 (New York: Garland Pub., 1984), 18.

⁵² See "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 5, Folder 8b-c.

de s'amuser tant il travaille."⁵³ He continues the following year in a similar vein, "Edgar travaille toujours énormément sans en avoir l'air. Ce qui fermente dans cette tête est effrayant. Pour ma part je crois et suis même convaincu qu'il a non seulement du talent mais même du génie, seulement exprimera-t-il ce qu'il sent ? That's the question."⁵⁴

Degas and René's sense of humor shines through in a letter from René to Estelle, discussing their imminent arrival in New Orleans. René writes, "Préparez-vous à recevoir dignement le Grrrrand Artiste [sic], il demande à ce qu'on ne vienne pas avec Brun Band, compagnie de milice, pompier, clergé, etc."⁵⁵

In addition, Edgar supported René's plans to move to New Orleans and go into the cotton business with Michel Musson. A letter that focuses on the disagreements between René and his father, Auguste, regarding his profession, René recounts the disagreement between the two of them. His father expressed his wish for René to enter the family banking firm in Naples, while René does not want to comply, noting that he will always be under the shadow of his family, particularly Edouard Degas and his son George. He mentions an "incompatibilité d'humeur avec les oncles". He has decided to go to New Orleans, regardless if his father gives his consent. Edgar supports him, he writes, "Edgar qui connaît t la famille m'a bien dit que si je voulais arriver à quelque chose il fallait me détacher complètement sous le rapport de l'intérêt & n'en dépendre

⁵³ Letter from René Degas to Michel Musson, 6 March 1863. Ibid., Box 1, Folder 33b. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 5.

⁵⁴ Letter from René Degas to Michel Musson, 22 April 1864. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 66. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 10. Letter originally in both English and French.

⁵⁵ Letter from René Degas to Estelle Musson, 17 July 1872. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Book 2, Folder 46b. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 20.

que sous le rapport de l'affection. Il est affligé de me voir partir car nous nous aimons beaucoup mais se rend bien compte que je trouverai mon existence plutôt là-bas qu'ici."⁵⁶

Degas and Travel

Degas' correspondence during his travels – or in some cases, the lack thereof – is very telling about his experiences. During his fundamental sojourn in Italy, he wrote very little to his family. In a letter to his brother René, Degas clearly shows his determination to study in the museum as much as possible during his time in Naples, noting, “Je n'ai guère la patience ni le temps de s'en écrire bien long. –Je vais aller au Musée ce matin.”⁵⁷ In a similar vein, René apologizes on his brother's behalf in a letter to their uncle Michel Musson on Degas' tendencies towards written silence: “Edgar est tellement absorbé par sa peinture qu'il n'écrit à personne malgré nos représentations. Ça ne l'empêche pas de penser souvent à vous et de désirer vivement vous voir.”⁵⁸ It is clear that Degas did not want to waste a minute describing his experiences, rather he wanted to dive in, and squeeze every moment and lesson from the moment. In an explanation of the lack of letters from this period, Fèvre relays the following passage from a letter from Degas to Valernes: “Ce fut l'époque la plus extraordinaire de ma vie ; en dehors de quelques mots jetés sur le papier pour donner de mes nouvelles aux miens, je n'ai rien écrit. Je dessinais.”⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Letter from René Degas to Michel Musson, 26 August 1864. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 2, Folder 8. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 12.

⁵⁷ Letter from Degas to René Degas, 24 March 1860. Reproduced in Theodore Reff, "Some Unpublished Letters of Degas," *The Art Bulletin* 50, no. 1 (1968): 91-92.

⁵⁸ Letter from René Degas to Michel Musson, 17 January 1861. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 1, Folder 27b. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 4.

⁵⁹ Fèvre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs et Documents Inédits*, 40 n 1.

Comparatively, Degas' letters to James Tissot from New Orleans are filled with lists of scenery. He writes:

Everything attracts me here...I look at everything...Villas with column in different styles, painted white, in gardens of magnolias, orange trees, banana trees, negroes in old clothes like the junk from *La Belle Jardinière* or from Marseilles, rosy white children in black arms, charabancs or omnibuses drawn by mules, the tall funnels of the steamboats towering at the end of the main street.⁶⁰

In addition, Degas' letters home during his sojourn in New Orleans tell more about his quotidian routine than any of his other travel correspondence. Such comparisons suggest that the various trips and their resultant correspondence speak to the different aims of Degas' travel. In addition, Degas' more forthcoming descriptions to Tissot might also suggest a different audience: a fellow artist who would appreciate a description of the engaging visual imagery that he discovered on the streets of New Orleans.

Degas' travel had a variety of purposes throughout his life – from familial obligations to the augmentation of his artistic education. A passage from a 1910 letter to Alexis Rouart reflects much of Degas' artistic career in the sense that he engaged with objects and ideas until he mastered them. It suggests that the same held true for travel. He writes, “No, my dear friend, I am no longer of these artists who race to the Italian frontier. One remains in the damp, facing the Bal Tabarin.”⁶¹

Degas arrived in New Orleans in October 1872, in order to visit family, and stayed for five months at 2306 Esplanade with his brothers René and Achille, his uncle Michel Musson and his cousins. His brothers had established a cotton firm, the Degas

⁶⁰ Quoted from Benfey, *Degas in New Orleans: Encounters in the Creole World of Kate Chopin and George Washington Cable*, 82.

⁶¹ The Bal Tabarin was a dance hall, across the street from his apartment. Letter from Degas to Alexis Rouart, 11 Mars 1910. Edgar Degas and Marcel Guerin, *Letters*, trans. Marguerite Kay (Oxford: B. Cassirer, 1947), 229.

Brothers firm, which was on Union Street; just above Canal St. Degas would walk there every day from their home on Esplanade. His preparations for the trip also speak to the importance he placed on learning and communicating in a foreign tongue, and thus perhaps speaks to his commitment to the Italian language throughout his life. In a humorous passage from a letter to Estelle Musson, René writes of Edgar's obsession with the proper pronunciation of English words, "Il est toujours le même, mails a la rage de vouloir prononcer des mots anglais, il a répété turkey buzzard pendant une semaine."⁶² From the moment of his arrival in the New World, everything American had impressed Degas. New York, after the ten-day crossing by ship, struck him as a "great town and a great port" with "charming spots" that Monet or Pissarro could have made something of. He felt more at home in the "immense city" of New York than in London, observing – as though to claim his mother's country as his own – that American faces had much more in common with French physiognomies than English. He reported to his father, in a letter from New York, that his ear was already becoming accustomed to the English language, and in a few days he was certain to "insinuate himself" into conversations.⁶³

It was a time of uncertainty in his career, as he had not yet settled on the subjects and styles that would occupy his oeuvre. He had painted his first pictures of ballet rehearsals and race horses, but was uncertain about their quality. He wrote to Tissot from New Orleans, "What impression did my dance picture make on you...and the others?" His *At the Races* and *Dance Class at the Opera* were exhibited in London on November

⁶² Letter from René Degas to Estelle Musson, 12 July 1872. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 2, Folder 46b. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 20.

⁶³ Benfey, *Degas in New Orleans: Encounters in the Creole World of Kate Chopin and George Washington Cable*, 81. See also Fèvre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs et Documents Inédits*, 30.

2, 1872.⁶⁴ His commitment to painting contemporary life was recent and wavering, and he had not yet established a consistent market for his work.

He reread Rousseau's *Confessions* while in New Orleans, and in two letters he referred to a passage in which Rousseau reported that he "used to go out at daybreak [and] whichever way he went, without noticing it, he examined everything:...he started on work that would take ten years to finish and left it without regret at the end of ten minutes." Degas noted "that is my case exactly...I am accumulating plans which would take ten lifetimes to carry out." Almost immediately though, Degas began to complain that the light was too bright, and that the models would not remain still in their sittings, that his stay was too short to make sense out of his surroundings, emphasizing, "Nothing but a really long stay can reveal the customs of a people...Instantaneousness is photography, nothing more."⁶⁵ His time in America seems to have solidified his conviction that the appropriate subject matter for his art was found on the streets and buildings of Paris. He expressed as much in letters to friends back in Europe:

How many things I have seen, and how many plans they have suggested to my mind!...but already I have cast them aside, I want to see nothing but my corner and dig away obediently. Art doesn't grow wilder, it recapitulates. And, if you will have comparisons, I shall tell you that in order to produce good fruit, one must grow espalier fashion. You remain there throughout life, arms outspread to take what passes, what is around you and live from it...So I am hoarding projects which would require ten lives to put into execution. I shall abandon them in six weeks, without regret, to return and leave no more MY HOME.

He continues in another letter, "It is better to concentrate oneself, and in order to do so one ought to see little." And again in another, "...one likes and one makes art only of that

⁶⁴ Benfey, *Degas in New Orleans: Encounters in the Creole World of Kate Chopin and George Washington Cable*, 13 and n12.

⁶⁵ Quoted from *Ibid.*, 88,90.

to which one is accustomed, the new captivates and bores in turn.”⁶⁶ Most telling is a letter to Tissot, in which he remarks that “Everything is beautiful in this world of the people. But one Paris laundry girl, with bare arms, is worth it all for such a pronounced Parisian as I am.”⁶⁷

In his mature years, Degas would often travel but would express unease at being away from his studio. It seems that he was unable and/or uncomfortable working away from his Parisian studio, surrounded by different visual experiences of which he was unfamiliar. In a letter to Ludovic Halévy from Interlaken, Switzerland Degas wrote, “It is impossible for me to live far away from my studio and not to work. In a few days I shall be content.”⁶⁸ In a notebook used in 1877-83, Degas made a notation on his love of the cityscape of Paris: “on n’a jamais fait encore les monuments / ou les maisons, d’en bas, en dessous, de près/ comme on les voit en passant dans les/ rues.”⁶⁹ Lafond echoes Halévy in his biography of Degas, noting, “Voyager n’était pas dans les habitudes de Degas, mais il connaissait à merveille l’Italie.” He continues with a summary of Degas’ travels to Naples, England, Belgium, Holland, Spain, but concludes, “il est vrai qu’au retour à Paris, ils se quittèrent à la gare d’Austerlitz, puis, oncques ne se revirent.”⁷⁰

While Degas traveled to many locales, Italy, Spain, Morocco, Belgium, New Orleans and

⁶⁶ Letters written by Degas to friends while in New Orleans. Quoted from Rewald, “Degas and His Family in New Orleans,” 113-14.

⁶⁷ Letter from Degas to Tissot, 19 Novembre 1872. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 18.

⁶⁸ Letter from Degas to Ludovic Halévy, 31 Auguste, 1893. *Ibid.*, 186.

⁶⁹ Nb 30 p 196. The majority of the pages of Degas’ notebooks are reproduced in *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976). Further citations will only list the notebook and page number. I am using Reff’s system of numbering established in the aforementioned citation. A concordance of previous citations systems is also listed in the Reff text. A list of the notebooks, dates of use and ownership information can be found in Appendix B.

⁷⁰ Paul Lafond, *Degas*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Paris,: Floury, 1918), 86.

England, Paris was the city he preferred. According to a note in Fèvre's *Mon oncle Degas*, he was to have exclaimed, "Oh! Paris, s'est chez toi qu'il est doux de vivre, c'est chez toi que je veux mourir!"⁷¹

There is a similarity here to the methodical working process of Charles Dickens, which was summarized by G.K. Chesterton:

In May of 1846 he ran over to Switzerland and tried to write *Dombey and Son* at Lausanne....He could not get on. He attributed this especially to his love of London and his loss of it, 'the absence of streets and numbers of figures...My figures seem disposed to stagnate without crowds about them.'⁷²

Perhaps Degas worried about a similar fate in his oeuvre. Conversely, Vollard recounts Degas' feelings on Gauguin, which have some interesting repercussions on his views regarding travel and one's oeuvre: "Degas ranked Gauguin very high. He only reproached him for having gone to the ends of the earth to paint." Degas mused, "Cannot one paint just as well in the Batignolles, as in Tahiti?"⁷³

Degas' travel was extremely methodical, as evidenced through notations in his notebooks. On the inside cover of Notebook 2, used in 1854-55, is a schematic of Lyons with monument markings⁷⁴, as well as an itinerary and time tables of boat to Châlons.⁷⁵ A notebook used in 1855, during his trip to Lyons in July-September, includes further notes on the planned trip, including art that he planned on viewing during his travels.⁷⁶ A

⁷¹ Fèvre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs et Documents Inédits*, 37 n 1.

⁷² G.K. Chesterton, *Dickens*. Quoted from Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), M11a, 1 438.

⁷³ Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*.

⁷⁴ Nb 2 p A

⁷⁵ Nb 2 p 1

⁷⁶ Nb 3 passim

partial copy of Raphael's *Pope Leo X & Two Cardinals* from the Naples Museum (no. 138) with a notation of 'Naples 18 Juillet' [1856], suggests that in addition to a methodical planning of his travels, that once he arrived in a location, he wasted no time getting straight to work, as he had just arrived a day earlier.⁷⁷ Of course, regardless of his serious approach to his travel, Degas was not immune from more pedestrian touristic intentions, as exemplified in the tangible reminders of his presence left during his travels. While at Fort Richelieu at Sète, he wrote his initials (EDG) on the last step of the staircase to the terrace.⁷⁸

Of course, Degas was far from the only artist to travel to Italy, and as discussed in later sections, he was taking part in a long tradition of artistic pilgrimage to the peninsula that extended back to the Renaissance. An echo of Degas' intentions can be seen in the travels of J.M.W. Turner, made some six decades prior.⁷⁹ Like Degas, before Turner had the opportunity to study in Italy, he studied works by Poussin, Lorrain and Italian masters in British collections. In 1802 he made his first trip to the continent, visiting Paris, among other places, where he studied works in Louvre. Turner's *The Holy Family* from 1803 was strongly influenced by this visit to Louvre in the palette and compositional style of Titian.⁸⁰ Also like Degas, Turner filled two sketchbooks while on the continent, many of

⁷⁷ Nb4 p 17. For arrival in Naples, see *Giornale del Regno delle Due Sicilie*, 17 July 1856 which records his arrival.

⁷⁸ Nb 4 p 93

⁷⁹ Exhibition *Turner e l'Italia*, Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara. 22 January 2009. See also Hamilton, *Turner e L'italia*.

⁸⁰ J.M.W. Turner, *Holy Family*, 1803, Oil on canvas, Tate Collection.

Due to the large number of images discussed in this dissertation, I have opted to not reproduce the works more firmly entrenched in the canon, rather providing a footnote of the citation information for the interested reader. Instead I devote more time to reproducing images that are probably less familiar to the reader, and those more familiar works that bear particular import to the discussions.

which he later worked up into watercolors and oils. An 1819 trip to Italy saw Turner filling even more notebooks, where he tried to capture sunlight in watercolor. He specifically tried to utilize the medium through scraping, layering in to convey the nuances of light.⁸¹ Turner's memories cropped up of his Italian trips throughout his oeuvre, and his exposure Italian sunshine permanently changed his palette – even in his works in England.⁸² In 1828 he was back in the Eternal City for three months, fascinated with the living history of the city – the coexistence of the ancient and the modern, and how a creative tension was created through the latter emerging from the former. His time in Italy was essential to his later aesthetics, as he took the traditional ideas of perspective, color and form that were established in art historical canons, subsumed them in his studies and moved past them – working through and past history. His canvases became obsessed with light, and worked to turn washes of paint into captured nuances of light.

Unlike the freedom afforded Degas at the outset of his career, Claude Monet's life did not provide the opportunity until the 1880s, in which his familial situation gave him the freedom to travel and recent purchases by Durand-Ruel gave him the means. Like Degas, artistic and social factors played a large role in Monet's travel plans, his itinerary often was influenced by invitations or suggestions by his friends, family and patrons: he worked occasionally at a villa in Petites-Dalles on the Normandy coast that belonged to his brother Léon and he went to Holland in 1886 at the invitation of Baron d'Estournelles de Constant, Secretary in the French Embassy in the Hague, to paint the tulip fields.

Travel was part of Monet's artistic ambitions in the 1880s, but his haphazard choices

⁸¹ Exemplified in J.M.W. Turner, *Rome: the Claudian Aqueduct* from *Rome: Color Studies* sketchbook, 1819, Gouache and watercolor on paper, Tate Collection

⁸² J.M.W. Turner, *Hythe, Kent*, 1824, Engraving on chine collé, mounted on cardboard, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.

provided no lasting personal links to the areas or artistic impetus in his oeuvre. After his marriage to Alice in 1892, his trips became less frequent and more touristic in their intent and less focused on artistic output. Only his trip to Venice in 1908 provided any particular inspiration for Monet's canvases, including works such as *Twilight, Venice*.⁸³

Degas the Italian

As Rouart notes, Degas could speak "Neapolitan with the most authentic accent and fluency, and would sometimes hum a fragment of a popular song the way they sing them there in the streets."⁸⁴ Such sentiments are echoed by Meier-Graefe who speaks of an embittered old man, who only finds some peace in his Italian nostalgia:

One of my Italian acquaintances in Paris assured me that he had sometimes spent a few pleasant hours with the old man, but only when he spoke Italian. Italian spoken with a Neapolitan accent was almost his mother tongue. Anything which recalled the youth he had spent in the South caused an occasional ray to illuminate his graven features. As a Frenchman, he was anything but gay. His laughter had an edge of steel.⁸⁵

Vollard also comments about the Italian aspects of Degas later in life, but focuses on Degas' visage, "...in spite of his forlorn appearance, there was always a certain distinction about him to the end. He had the air of having stepped out of a portrait, say, of the Italian school. Degas had, in fact, Italian ancestors, and as he grew older, he came to look more and more like a Neapolitan."⁸⁶

⁸³ See John House, *Monet, Nature into Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 12. Claude Monet, *Twilight, Venice*, 1908, Oil on canvas, Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo.

⁸⁴ Paul Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, vol. 12, *The Collected Works of Paul Valery* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 27.

⁸⁵ Julius Meier-Graefe, *Degas*, trans. John Holroyd Reece (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1923), 16.

⁸⁶ Ambroise Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, trans. Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Greenberg Publisher, Inc., 1927), 148. See also Carlo Tridenti, "Degas e le Sue Relazioni con L'italia," *Il Giornale d'Italia*, 14 June 1936.

Of course none of these comments question Degas' cultural heritage, which is never questioned to be anything but French, *pure sang*. Such sentiments are embodied in the words of Georges Grappe who suggested that there was, "nul tempérament ne fut plus français, plus parisien même que Degas."⁸⁷ The realities of the situation are much more complex and fragmented. In fact, a better description of Degas is to focus on the second half of Grappe's phrase: Degas is a Parisian. He is Parisian in the sense that his own heritage is a complex melting pot of French, Neapolitan and Creole roots that reflect the cosmopolitanism of Paris in the nineteenth century. Degas is as much Neapolitan and Creole as he is French, and therefore it is more accurate to situate him in the cosmopolitan atmosphere of the complexity of Paris, rather than root his cultural heritage solely in his French background.

Degas' complex familial heritage is not often investigated in the literature, and when it is, it is only mentioned in passing and emphasizes his family's French roots, and in the process eroding any sense of culture culled from the realities of its complex heritage. Some authors suggest that this was the mindset of Degas himself, such as in Riccardo Raimondi's account of Degas' Neapolitan family:

Se dunque l'avo paterno di Edgar Degas, che pur aveva avuto tutto da Napoli: asilo, lavoro, ospitalità, la moglie giovanissima e degna, una fortuna economica non comune; se suo padre e i fratelli di lui, tutti vollero serbar fede alla loro patria di origine, malgrado nelle loro vene scorresse metà sangue italiano, è perfettamente logico e giustificato che il pittore Edgar, la cui madre era anch'essa di sangue francese, seguisse la tradizione ed il sentimento di famiglia e restasse di nome, di spirito, di costume, francese.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Georges Grappe, *Degas*. Quoted from Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917*, 279.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 131.

Such an attitude is surprising, considering that the function of the volume is to focus on Degas' Neapolitan heritage. It takes as its role model works such as that written by Paul Lafond, which acknowledges Degas' heritage, but emphasizes its French roots:

Les antécédents héréditaires de Degas sont pour surprendre au premier abord. Son atavisme familial le destinait assez mal, semble-t-il, à devenir le parisien par excellence qui il fut, bien que né d'un napolitain e d'une américaine. Tous deux n'en étaient pas moins de pure origine française, de familles des plus affinées, restées très attachées à la mère-patrie. Les de Gas – car le nom s'écrivait en deux mot, c'est le peintre qui, à partir de 1870, en signant ses œuvres, supprima la particule -, sont de vieille souche.⁸⁹

It is important to note that nowhere in his writings, correspondence or second-hand relay of his conversations does Degas himself comment on the idea that he is a Frenchman above all else. In reality, the importance of his family and the strong ties to the Neapolitan branch in particular, as well as his command over the language, belie the importance that he placed on the culture of his family. These more complex realities of the situation are only addressed in the words of Meier-Graefe, who notes the particularity of Degas' heritage, especially comparison with his Parisian compatriots:

Degas was not a pure Frenchman...Can the strangeness of Degas' art be traced to his descent? It is true that no one knew certain sides of Parisian life better than he did. Many of his pictures are commentaries on the manners of his age. An outsider often has the keenest eye for the peculiarities of his surroundings. This curious faculty of Degas, the observer of a particular world, might be proffered as evidence that he remained a stranger in the realm of art.⁹⁰

Scholars seem to be more comfortable in nodding to the import of Italy in relation to his art, rather than his heritage. Raimondi takes the route of nodding to the notion of 'genius' when discussing Degas' art in a non-geographic or cultural sense:

⁸⁹ Lafond, *Degas*, 81.

⁹⁰ Meier-Graefe, *Degas*, 18-19.

Prodotti da nazionalità diverse, vissuti in ambienti – sociali, politici, economici – diversi, le loro opere si realizzarono con tendenze ed aspirazioni differenti; ma furono tutti figli dell'Arte e del gran mondo dell'Arte fratelli: tutti espressione superba del genio umano.

Ed il Genio non ha nazionalità: l'umanità tutta intera è la sua nazione, e la sua patria.⁹¹

More traditionally, Italian art historians shy away from claiming any sense of ownership over Degas' heritage, but rather emphasize the importance of his stay in Italy in the resolution of his personal aesthetics. Such a treatment is exemplified in Michele Biancale's essay "La formazione italiana di Edgar Degas", in which she notes:

...mimica e nel gestire meridionali nessuno, o quasi, di tutti i monografisti del pittore, pur notando la sua presenza a Napoli e in Italia nel periodo giovanile in cui le sensazioni si formano e si fissano in modo indelebile, dà seguito a tale fatto come se fosse puramente incidentale, niente affatto importante e senza sviluppo.⁹²

In a later section, she directly attributes his conception of movement and gesture to his time spent in Naples, under the influence of its highly-gesticulating inhabitants:

Carattere napoletano dell'arte di Degas; arte napoletana, perché, secondo una comune idea del partenopeismo, espressiva di movimenti, mimetica e vivente. E non diciamo che un tanto di verità non sia in contesto porre il nascimento dell'arte in una disposizione naturale subordinata al carattere etnico; cosa che qualche anno fa era indignatamente respinta dall'estetica e dalla critica... sul carattere napoletano dell'arte di Degas, trascura d'analizzare la vera portata del mimetismo napoletano come costitutivo, in nuce, d'essa. Così il suo enunciato prende quasi l'aspetto d'un luogo comune sul gestire dei napoletani e, si stenta a capire come abbia potuto determinare il movimento di Degas.⁹³

Even her French counterparts cannot ignore the strong impact that his time spent in Italy had upon his oeuvre. J.E. Blanche calls Degas, "...ce parisien élève à Naples voit

⁹¹ Raimondi, *Degas e la sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917*, 280.

⁹² Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana di Edgar Degas," 35.

⁹³ Ibid. See also Paul Valéry, *Degas Dance Dessin* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 55-61.

l'homme et la vie contemporaine avec l'œil d'un moderne et d'un Italien du XV siècle."⁹⁴

Even Lemoisne, couching his statements in Degas' own remarks, gives nod to the

importance of Italy in his oeuvre:

...si l'Italie n'a pas changé son caractère et ses goûts déjà très affirmés, certains de ses artistes, surtout les Primitifs, exaltèrent en lui ce besoin intense de vie qui le dévorait déjà : 'Ah ! ces gens-la sentaient la vie', écrit-il à propos des fresques de Giotto à Assise, 'ils ne la rainaient jamais...Puissé-je être de leur famille si je deviens un caractère assez convaincu et fixé pour faire de la peinture que vaille des sermons !'⁹⁵

Of course for Lemoisne and others, it is the same Italy that has been the source of inspiration for countless artists – both before and after Degas. This study will take these ideas a step beyond these tried-and-true constructs of the art historical narrative to investigate how Degas' unique position – his familial heritage – allowed for a novel dialogue with Italian art. Not only art of the past, but contemporaneous art and artists as well.

⁹⁴ Jacques-Emile Blanche, *Propos de Peinture*, 3 vols., vol. 1: De David a Degas (Paris: Emile-Paul Freres, 1921-1928).

⁹⁵ Paul-Andre Lemoisne, "Les Carnets de Degas au Cabinet des Estampes," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (April 1921): 221.

CHAPTER II
DEGAS, THE COPY AND THE ACADEMY: RESONANCES WITH THE PAST

Victor Hugo works standing up, and, since he cannot find a suitable antique to serve as his desk, he writes on a stack of stools and large books which is covered with a carpet. It is on the Bible, it is on the Nuremberg Chronicles that the poet leans and spreads his paper.

Louis Ulbach, *Les Contemporains*

In a humorous caricature of the artist, Barrere creates an image of Degas as a Diogenial misanthrope, functioning in a self-imposed solitude, completely removed from the realities and dialogues of contemporaneous artistic fashion. (Figure A3) While he did have certain social characteristics that might have been off-putting and was often outspoken about his artistic taste, he was far from an artist operating outside of the realities of modern life and the struggle with its role in the visual arts. Instead, his position as a figurehead in the Impressionist exhibitions and his constant interaction with issues surrounding influence and artistic dialogue do create the opposite impression: an artist whose artistic exchanges were fundamental inspiration for his oeuvre throughout his career.¹

Degas and his contemporaries came of age during a more stable political milieu than previous generations.² The more solid political scene provided an arena for a rounded humanistic education for Degas at Lycée Louis-le-Grand, where he attended classes from 1845-1852. School records note that his best subjects were Latin, Greek,

¹ It is of import to note that Degas was not alone among the impressionists in his dialogue with the past. As exemplified in the exhibition *Inspiring Impressionism*, the Impressionists as a group interacted with the art of the canon in a variety of ways, from rote copying to discreet resonance, from homage to parody, the artists did address the foundational tropes of the canon as they struggled to fulfill their own aesthetic conceptions of Baudelaire's call. See *Inspiring Impressionism: The Impressionists and the Art of the Past*, ed. Ann Dumas (Denver; New Haven: Denver Art Museum; Yale University Press, 2007).

² Phoebe Pool, "The History Pictures of Edgar Degas and Their Background," *Apollo* LXXX, no. 32 (1964): 308.

history and, eventually, drawing. Although he ultimately became proficient, Degas did not shine in his earliest drawing classes. Quarterly reports noted that “Degas applies himself successfully” (fourth term, 1847), makes “good work and good progress” (first term, 1848), later completes “good work, satisfactory progress” and finally until the completion of his time, his marks were simply “good”.³ While at the Lycée, Degas was taught drawing by Léon Cogniet and Adolphe Roehn, and it was probably Cogniet who advised Degas to attend classes in the studio of his former pupil Félix-Joseph Barrias. While Degas does not directly comment on his first masters and their role in the formation of his oeuvre, traces of their influence can be seen in some of his early plans for history paintings, particularly his studies for a planned *Tintoretto Painting his Dead Daughter*, whose subject matter was Cogniet’s most celebrated painting.

Setting out to become a history painter, Degas looked to tradition both for his training and his influences. In the 1850s, the hierarchy of painting established in the sixteenth century was still in place and history painting was considered the grand genre, both in its final product and in the skill needed to undertake such a composition. In 1854, Degas began to study under Louis Lamothe, a pupil of Ingres, and enrolled at the *École des Beaux Arts* in 1855-56. Because of the financial support of his family, he did not concern himself with earning a living from his art and as such, had the freedom to work outside the strict confines of Academic tradition. He soon outgrew Lamothe and also did not find what he was searching for in classes at the *École*. Still interested in tradition, particularly the importance of line and composition, he continued to follow the prescribed course of training advocated by the *École*, which included copying great masters, which

³ Quoted from Henri Loyrette, “What Is Fermenting in That Head Is Frightening,” in *Degas*, ed. Jean Sutherland Boggs (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988).

he first undertook in the Prints and Drawings Department and the galleries of the Louvre. Copying in the Louvre allowed him to begin to understand the intricacies of the canon while developing friendships with other budding artists. An anecdotal quote by Degas, recorded by Lafond, summarizes the forces that propelled Degas towards the museum and away from the École:

L'École des Beaux-arts telle qu'elle est établie, ne produisant que des artistes timorés, manquant totalement de cette originalité indispensable, devrait être supprimée. Elle est nuisible au premier chef, et serait remplacée par des ateliers où les élèves auraient la faculté de travailler gratuitement d'après le modèle vivant. Tout artiste pourrait être autorisé à y enseigner avec l'assentiment des élèves. Rien de plus. Les musées sont là pour apprendre l'histoire de l'art et quelque chose en plus; car, s'ils suscitent, chez les faibles, des désirs d'imitation, ils donnent, aux forts, des moyens d'émancipation. Quand donc l'État se décidera-t-il à ne point s'occuper de l'enseignement de l'art?⁴

For many nineteenth-century artists, the Louvre served as an *alma mater*, providing an artistic education in the canon that was different yet just as important as the skills learned in the studio. Both private studios and the École des Beaux-Arts expected students to round out their education by copying. As a result, large numbers of students made copies in a variety of media of the Louvre's collection of paintings, sculptures and works on paper. Artists both for and against the academic tradition copied in its hallowed galleries. For some, it was because imitation was a cornerstone to the academic tradition, and for others it provided a freedom for continued study outside the bounds of the traditional academic system. But no student went to the Louvre to make exact replicas; rather copies were seen as a means to develop the student's modes of expression.⁵

⁴ Paul Lafond, *Degas*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Paris,: Flourey, 1918), 75.

⁵ Paul Duro, "Copyists in the Louvre in the Middle Decades of the Nineteenth Century," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 61 (1988).

If the pedagogical significance of the copy was never contested in an artist's training, the manner in which a copy should be undertaken was not so clear cut. In some cases, a simple sketch would suffice, but in others, only a literal translation of the original would be adequate.⁶ For example, in noting the significance of the process of the copy, Ingres was quick to encourage his students to:

Do simple, quick sketches from the old masters; it is one way to look at them and study them properly. But it is a waste of time to reproduce a whole painting which anyone can do with a little patience. While you become involved in its technical procedures you lose sight of the main point, the essence of the masterpiece.⁷

Degas, like many of his contemporaries, rejected many aspects of the traditions of the École, yet found truth in the ideas echoed by Cézanne that “le Louvre est le livre où nous apprenons à lire.”⁸ Personal study of tradition through the collections of the Cabinet des Estampes and the Louvre had already been part of the working method of earlier independent artists such as Delacroix, and copying played an intrinsic role of the formation of Degas' contemporaries, including Cézanne, Manet, Renoir, Bazille, Morisot, and Fantin-Latour. It became a bastion of training both in and outside of the Academy, and provided an alternative to the stipulated doctrines of the École, offering a location where, as Theodore Reff notes, “the problems of figurative composition which faced them could be studied in the work of masters congenial to their own taste or temperament.”⁹

⁶ Albert Boime, *The Academy and French Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (London,: Phaidon, 1971), 42.

⁷ Quoted from Ibid.

⁸ Quoted from Theodore Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963). 241 n 3

⁹ Theodore Reff, "Copyists in the Louvre, 1850-1870," *The Art Bulletin* 46, no. 4 (1964): 553.

While numerous artists followed in these footsteps of tradition, many of Degas' contemporaries concurrently began to consider the Louvre as a symbol of the absolute dominion of the arts by the Academy, blinding generations of artists to the aesthetic demands of the present, something that many only thought could be overcome by its literal or figural burning of the institution to the ground. Differences in opinion could even be found between close friends, as Degas' intimate acquaintance Duranty who blithely states in the journal *Réalisme*, "si j'avais eu des allumettes, je mettais le feu sans remords à cette catacombe, avec l'intime conviction que je servais la cause de l'art à venir."¹⁰

Such arguments were not resolved during Degas' lifetime (or for that matter, our own), and their reverberations can be heard in a member of the next generation of artists, the Neoimpressionist Paul Signac, who found that his study of the great masters made a better case for *not* copying the works of the past; instead he advocated nature as one's master in order to fully convey the colors of life on the canvas. He elucidates as much in his journal:

...les œuvres *intactes* des maîtres italiens (fresques de Pinturicchio, Ghirlandaio, Perugin [sp], Signorelli, cartons de Raphaël et de Mantegna) prouvent que tous ces maîtres se sont évertués à peindre le plus coloré possible. Seul le temps et les mauvais soins ont noirci leurs œuvres. – Les œuvres de Turner me prouvent qu'il faut être libre de toute idée d'imitation et de copie, et qu'il faut créer des teintes. Le plus fort coloriste sera celui que créera le plus. S'astreindre à copier la nature, c'est se priver des 99/100 des sujets et des harmonies que le peintre libre pourra traiter. Comme c'est restreint ce que l'on pourrait copier – comme c'est illimité ce que l'on peut créer ! Comment peindre d'après nature : l'Ondine offrant l'anneau à Massaniello, ou les *Convulsionnaires de Tanger* ? On en est réduit alors à copier des petits arbres et des petites maisons, des petits coins. – C'est l'effet que me font mes tableaux en rentrant : ils me semblent être des études et des fragments pour des œuvres à exécuter, mais non des tableaux. Faire des compositions plus

¹⁰ Edmond Duranty, "Notes Sur L'art," *Réalisme* 1 (10 Juillet 1856).

étendues, plus variées de teintes, plus garnies d'*objets* (raison d'être, explication des teintes : les drapeaux de Turner), plus panoramiques.¹¹

What sets apart Degas from many of his contemporaries is that he never completely turned his back on the traditions of artistic process advocated through academic training. Even after leaving the École to travel in Italy, his companions in Rome were members of the French Academy – Delaunay, Bonnat – who would later copy with Degas in the Louvre and whose stay in the Rome was supported by the city of Bayonne, Gustave Moreau – who shared his enthusiasm for quattrocento masters and Tourny – who was copying frescoes in the Sistine Chapel. As he matured in his style, Degas never abandoned his belief in the importance of studying older art. The drawings he had made in Italy, in what he would later call “l'époque la plus extraordinaire de ma vie” were observed to be hanging in his studio long after his return.¹²

Continuing to follow the traditional training methods outside of the confines of the École, Degas set off to Italy in 1856 to Naples, Florence, and Rome for an extended stay in which he copied from varied sources in a variety of collections. At this time he made many copies, both painted and in sketchbooks, which allowed him to come to terms with traditional elements of composition and design, while concurrently parsing out his own identity as an artist. An exemplary work can be seen in a sheet of drawings undertaken while studying in Florence. Its range in subject matter, media and the function of the copies suggests the variety exhibited in the majority of Degas' formative works. (Figure A4) The work includes a study after a head of a woman attributed to the Leonardo school which was also copied by Moreau, a quick study of pose of a horse and

¹¹ Paul Signac, Journal, April 1898. Reproduced in Paul Signac, "Journal Inédit," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (Avril 1952): 279-80.

¹² Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art." 242 n 7

rider perhaps inspired by Van Dyck's *Equestrian Portrait of Charles V* in the Uffizi, a study of Giuliana Bellelli, Roman portrait studies and a study from Raphael's drawing for the *Massacre of the Innocents*. Like this work suggests, Degas' copies slowly shifted from entire compositions, to specific fragments of the painting, suggesting a burgeoning interest in the fragment and a rethinking of compositional tradition. In addition, it suggests that Degas had a keen eye for challenging compositions and his attempts to master them through study. In order to more fully understand the purpose for this shift, as well as the function of the copy in Degas' oeuvre, one must take a moment to understand the processes and theories behind their creation.

Copy: Theory and Process

Today we are inundated with images and have facile access to reproductions, but in the middle decades of the nineteenth century, the process of photographically reproducing works of art was in its nascent stages. Before photographs and other reproductive media such as chromolithographs, which closely reproduced the qualities of the original medium, artists relied on wood engravings such as those found in Blanc's *Histoire des peintures de toutes les écoles* or in issues of the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* to disseminate images. Photographic reproductions were begun by Alinari in 1852 and a series of photographs of works in the Prado was published in 1863 by Jean Laurent in Paris.

In order to understand the nuances of color and line, artists copied directly from paintings in museums, repositories of the art historical canon. While copying has an esteemed status within the Academic system, its specific purpose and use was subject to much variation – artists seeking a variety of stimuli or solutions could copy after one

work or from varied precedents.¹³ An example of the former can be seen in a comparison of Moreau and Degas' copies of Daniele da Volterra's *Deposition* in which Degas and Moreau both copy fragments of the composition for specific ends: Moreau focuses on the pose of Christ while Degas concentrates on the facial expression of the swooning Virgin. (Figures A5-7) Another example can be seen in a comparison between Degas and Rodin's handling of the *Borghese Gladiator*. (Figure A8) Rodin's quick sketch is a study in the potential energy of the pose, emphasizing the outline to summarize its significance and energy captured within it. (Figure A9) Degas, by contrast, is much more methodical in his study. (Figure A10) He sketches the sculpture three times on the page, first ingesting the specifics of the overall pose from varying angles and distances, and then attending to a prolonged study of the musculature and torsion of the figure's back muscles. Richard Thomson concludes, "[e]ach artist satisfied his own requirements, manipulating the Antique prototype to address his own specific practical purposes."¹⁴

Artists utilized the process of copying in different ways and for different ends. In his article, "The Creative Copy in Late Nineteenth-Century Art", Thomson summarizes three main uses for the copy within the Academic system: first to "to acclimatize the student to the 'ideal forms' of the Antique and the High Renaissance" through the poses of life models, bridging the "deficiencies of the 'natural' model into harmony with the 'ideal' of the pose"; to train the student to emulate a master's technique; and finally "to explore a master's compositional practice: how he manipulated a pose to accord with the

¹³ Richard Thomson, "The Creative Copy in Late Nineteenth Century French Art," in *Drawing: Masters and Methods Raphael to Redon. Papers Presented to the Ian Woodner Master Drawings Symposium at the Royal Academy of Arts, London* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1992), 21.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 23.

rhythm and pattern of a composition.”¹⁵ Beyond the classroom, the process of copying and its repercussions on an artist’s oeuvre lay at the heart of issues of emulation and innovation, as will be discussed below.

As is always the case when one considers issues of coming to terms with and moving past the ideas of influence, the search for the essence of an object and its use in a final product is oft confused with the idea of appropriating that object wholesale. For students copying after the canon, as Paul Duro notes, the difficulty lies in avoiding the pitfall of the “belief that to reproduce the original was in some way to possess it, thereby making the imitation not a simple reproduction of appearances, but an evocation of the essence of another.”¹⁶

In his essay “On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life”, Nietzsche expounds upon the problem that later Bloom will call the ‘anxiety of influence,’ wherein one is almost debilitated by the weight of tradition and the appeal to consume and move past the canon.¹⁷ The construct of ingesting influence in its most basic state is that it is necessary to build upon past tradition, and to create for the future. This is what distinguishes great artists from the mediocre - their ability to keep a sense of self in the face of the burden of the past. Instead of being consumed, they utilize it to legitimize their own work. Nietzsche, in his discussion of the common pitfalls of one’s comprehension of history, comments upon those that find themselves consumed by

¹⁵ Ibid., 23, 25.

¹⁶ Paul Duro, “The Lure of Rome: The Academic Copy and the *Académie De France* in the Nineteenth Century,” in *Art and the Academy in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rafael Cardoso Denis and Colin Trodd (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2000), 134.

¹⁷ See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

legitimizing themselves through tradition. In particular that they neglect to move beyond it, instead becoming mere collectors of tropes, creating collages of the past:

Then there appears the repulsive spectacle of a blind rage for collecting, a restless raking together of everything that has ever existed. Man is encased in the stench of must and mould; through the antiquarian approach he succeeds in reducing even a more creative disposition, a nobler desire, to an insatiable thirst for novelty, or rather for antiquity and for all and everything; often he sinks so low that in the end he is content to gobble down any food whatever, even the dust of biographical minutiae.¹⁸

While he speaks more generally about the burdens of history, his words coalesce to define the fundamental problem of influence when an artist finds himself lost in the forest. Nietzsche cautions, “history can be borne only by strong personalities, weak ones are utterly extinguished by it. The reason is that history confuses the feelings and sensibility when these are not strong enough to assess the past by themselves.”¹⁹

Such a mindset of perseverance and patience without the fundamental component of talent can be seen in the character of Garnotelle in the Goncourt’s novel *Manette Salomon*, published in 1867. Garnotelle is awarded the Prix de Rome, not because of his talent or prospects, but because of his character as a diligent copyist:

Garnotelle montrait l’exemple de ce que peut, en art, la volonté sans le don, l’effort ingrate, ce courage de la médiocrité: la patience. A force d’application, de persévérance, il était devenu un dessinateur presque savant, le meilleur de tout l’atelier. Mais il n’avait que le dessin exact et pauvre, la ligne sèche, un contour copié, peiné et servile, où rien ne vibrait de la liberté, de la personnalité des grands traducteurs de la forme, de ce qui, dans un beau dessin d’Italie, ravit par l’attribution du caractère, l’exagération magistrale, la faute même dans la force ou dans la grâce. Son trait consciencieux, sans grandeur, sans largeur, sans audace, sans émotion, était pour ainsi dire impersonnel. Dans ce dessinateur, le coloriste n’existait pas, l’arrangeur était médiocre, et n’avait que des imaginations de seconde main, empruntées à une douzaine de tableaux connus. Garnotelle était, en un mot, l’homme des qualités négatives, l’élève sans vice d’originalité, auquel

¹⁸ Friedrich Nietzsche, "On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life," in *Untimely Meditations* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 74.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 86.

une sagesse native de coloris, le respect de la tradition de l'école, un précoce archaïsme académique, une maturité vieillotte, semblaient assurer et promettre le prix de Rome.²⁰

Meant as a criticism of the Academic system, Garnotelle exemplifies the idea of rote repetition that critics of the École decried as the reason for the plethora of mediocre archaic artists who were accomplished in understanding the nuances of Academic style, but whose compositions possessed not an ounce of originality or audacity.

Such criticism is not an overall condemnation of the Academic system. Rather, it focuses its ire at the inability of those artists to consume and move beyond the tropes of the system. In his wisdom to would-be translators, Samuel Butler's words find parallel in the appropriate response to dealing with the burden of tradition: "If you wish to preserve the spirit of a dead author (or artist) you must not skin him, stuff him, and set him up in a case. You must eat him, digest him, and let him live in you with such life as you have, for better or for worse."²¹

The concept of anxiety is built upon in Bryson's *Tradition and Desire from David to Delacroix* in which he rightly obfuscates the idea – separating the ideas of influence seen by the viewer and his implicit reaction from the burden of influence felt by the creator:

...for most viewers...tradition supplies every reason for activity and celebration; but that for the artist who is obliged by a stylistic consensus...to imitate the art of the past, or who perceives his place in tradition as one of late coming, or both, tradition can assume a less beneficent guise; one that threatens the foundation of his self-definition as a painter, that is, as one who gives to the world what the world never saw before.²²

²⁰ Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Manette Salomon*, Nouv. ed. (Paris: Bibliotheque-Charpentier, 1896), 64.

²¹ Quoted from Jack Hillier, "The Western Taste for Japanese Prints," *Storia dell'Arte* XXVII (1976): 115.

²² Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire from David to Delacroix* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), xvii.

It is here that he makes plain the double-edged sword of influence, in both its necessity as a foundation and the onus of the process of moving beyond it.

In a discussion of Delacroix's *Dante and Vergil Crossing the Styx* and its relation to the *Belvedere Torso* and Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel, Bryson brings up a very pertinent point in the process of assimilating influence into one's oeuvre.

Bryson notes:

To view influence as primarily forward-directed – the source nudges or coaxes its user into creative action – suppresses the equally available reading of the same evidence in the *opposite* direction: that the finally minor role of the Torso, or the fresco, or the Sistine ceiling, may be the outcome of a massive effort to *overcome* the weight and authority of Antiquity, of Michelangelo.²³

Such a statement plays into his later discussion of the traditional Vasarian 'Giotto as the heir to Cimabue' anecdote, Bryson points out the dual-edged nature of pictorial tradition, which he calls schema:

The work of 'testing' the inherited schema against the world of actual appearances constantly points beyond inheritance: in discovering how skin really does curve and inflect over the bone-structure of the body, and how these curves and inflection actually look when bathed in light, at exactly these points Giotto ceases to be Cimabue's heir: he moves out of legacy into a fresh, uncharted zone unaided, and to that extent his visual discoveries are circumscribed by his predecessor; but what the predecessor has supplied is a schema that indicates beyond itself, towards a virgin land. The concept of 'testing' allots to tradition a role as a positive as it is delimited: positive, in that it supplies the painter with an indispensable repertoire of instruments with which to confront the visual field; delimited, in that once the painter scans the world of appearances through the instruments the past supplies, he will see beyond the old grid work to those phenomena which emerge precisely in the gaps or shortcomings of past formulae: tradition presents of itself the means of its own undoing.²⁴

²³ Ibid., 6.

²⁴ Ibid., 13.

It is from this discussion that Bryson sets up the appropriate modes for a discussion of influence in an art historical text. Influence should be seen, and used in the studio context, as the foundations – or schema – from which the artist begins to examine his world. In the process of creation, the artist should find fault in the current schema and in doing so, provide a novel approach to the visual conundrum set out before him – be the conundrum what it may. In order to break the circuit of recycled repetitions, the trap of which Nietzsche warns, the artist must begin with the schema that he is set up to confront and move beyond.

It is this burden or anxiety that one must meet head-on and move past in order to appropriately deal with the complications of tradition. One does not create within a vacuum, and tradition is there to learn from, ingest and move beyond. Bryson, placing himself in the first person of a painter philosophizes:

If the precursors are agents of anxiety in painting, it is not necessarily because the masters painted better, but because it is through their images that I must fashion my own. They take from me what might have been mine and what still must be made mine, for if I yield to what they have said then I will no longer speak, but be spoken; no longer see, but be seen. Tradition is what looks at me as I paint, and just as before the gaze of another the lines of force that placed me at the centre of my lived horizon reverse, making of me a spectacle, a visible object of the other's sight, so before tradition I as a painter lose my uniqueness and my plenitude of vision, and am made a latecomer whose vision cannot be retained as my own. *If I succumb fully to the images within which I am condemned to articulate my sight, I shall cease to be an artist, and become instead the blinded vessel of others' sight.* [my emphasis]²⁵

Echoing the anxiety of Bloom and the warnings of Nietzsche, Bryson summarizes how one subverts the conundrum of influence:

In terms of painting and its tradition, the artist possesses no identity unless he can achieve distance from the work of the past. Until such distance is reached, he is absorbed by what he contemplates; tradition floods him and reveals only itself,

²⁵ Ibid., 81.

not the subject that views. Separation from tradition occurs only when the painter is brought back to himself or revealed to himself by his desire, since the lack at work I desire draws a line around himself, while at the same time establishing tradition as the background against which his identity emerges. Only when the painter experiences the void within him which is his desire to produce an image, can he innovate against tradition: this moment, when the potential image is experienced as a lack within tradition, can be seen as the elective moment of his vocation and inspiration as a painter. The problem for him then, is that the void will at once refill with the imagery of the past, and annul his identity forged in desire, unless desire itself is maintained: it is a 'dissipative' structure, requiring energy for its maintenance, like a standing wave: the painter's effort is to resist the onrush of images in whose flood his immanent identity will drown. The preservation of desire is achieved by introducing breaks into tradition, nodal points that can interrupt the continuum of tradition by turning the force of tradition on itself: points and turnings which the present discussion has named as tropes.²⁶

It is through this brave confrontation with the powers of influence that one finds his own voice, and in doing so, a place for his oeuvre in the trajectory of the canon.

Aside from the lessons of influence (and its resultant anxiety) consumed by Degas in the process of his copying after the great masters, it is important to touch briefly on the nuances of a more contemporaneous form of influence: the more fluid interactions between Degas and his contemporaries. In this system we see a more complicated dynamic. Instead of a clear directionality and course of influence in their artistic relationships, the system is more intricate. Not only do we see influences of the past that find themselves filtered through conversation and shared experience (e.g. copying, museum visits, café conversations, etc.), but we also see the dialogues, resonances and interactions established among the artists' oeuvres. From a variety of inputs the artist again, in the Bryson model of influence, must ingest them and create something that is uniquely one's own vision. It is these convoluted streams of dialogue that we will trace throughout the remaining chapters of this dissertation. None of these artists worked in a

²⁶ Ibid., 129-30.

vacuum. Instead we will examine how dialogues and relationships established between the artists – from a variety of perspectives – resulted in works which find resonance in each other but in the end, function independently as unique voices in the last decades of the nineteenth century. These artists ingested a variety of inputs – artistic, social or even nationalistic – and utilized them to create work that itself contributed to the unending cycle of dialogues, relationships, influences, and resonances.

Such sentiments find voice in the writings of Waldemar George, who writes in 1931 of the importance of investigating the formative moments of Degas' career, not just celebrating the epitome of his oeuvre:

Since Baudelaire and the Goncourts, the whole of criticism rests on a misunderstanding. The works of painters and the works of poets are never studied for themselves. The idea of Progress...that prototype of the man of the ottocento, has entirely warmed the judgment of the public. Henceforth, painter's work only acquires its *raison d'être* when it constitutes a genuine contribution, when it helps the development of art, or when it exercises a direct influence upon the destinies of the new painting. This superstition of originality, this tendency to give a work of art a duration, to connect it with time, which passes, flies, and which, too often, drags in its wake tributary products of the moment, have made us lose sight of the drawings Degas executed during his long stay in Naples, in Rome.²⁷

In his essay, George focuses on the formative years and finds import in the aesthetics of the fledgling master. He examines the process of ingesting tradition, not from the outside and endpoints, but instead from the heart of the awkward period, finding voice and beauty in the search for Degas' own aesthetic voice.

Another issue that will come up throughout this dissertation is the idea of filters or indirect influence. Examples include the Italianate influence on Degas' oeuvre before his direct experience with a plethora of Italian works, through French sources such as

²⁷ Waldemar George, "The Youth of Degas," *Formes* 15 (May 1931): 76.

Poussin whose oeuvre has a “French spirit with Italian influences”²⁸, or the influence of Cinquecento on Ingres’ oeuvre, which then was indirectly filtered to Degas through his fascination with the French master. Such cases of indirect influence can also be seen outside Degas’ oeuvre in an artist of the previous generation who shared with Degas a fascination with the peninsula – Turner. In his early works art historians have clearly identified an Italianate influence on his oeuvre through his study of Poussin and Italian masters in the Louvre, long before his trips to Italy.²⁹

An Overview of Degas’ Copies

Aside from a few exceptions, Degas’ copies belong to an intense period of study between his registration at the Cabinet des Estampes in 1853 and his return to Paris from Italy in 1861. Reff suggests that Degas’ copies in their entirety fall into three phases, organized chronologically, which belie his changing tastes and development as an artist.³⁰ The first period established by Reff falls between the years of 1853-56, which encompassed Degas’ time as a student in the Cabinet des Estampes, the École des Beaux-Arts and the Louvre and summer trips to museums in Southern France. During this period, Degas focused primarily on Classical Greek sculpture, especially the Parthenon frieze seen indirectly through plaster casts, and High Renaissance paintings seen through engravings. This classical taste was probably due to a combination of his teacher Lamothe, a follower of Ingres and his training at the École. Ingres’ retrospective exhibition held in 1855 might have also held bearing on Degas’ classicizing interests during this period.

²⁸ Michele Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana Di Edgar Degas," *Questioni d'Arte*: 37.

²⁹ See James Hamilton, *Turner E L'italia* (Ferrara: Ferrara arte, 2008).

³⁰ See Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art," 245.

In 1856-58 Degas left the École to study independently in the Louvre, as well as in the museums of Naples, Rome and Florence during his excursions to Italy. At this point in his career his copies, which find their beginnings in the classical line, become increasingly painterly. The greater emphasis on the palette resulted in many copies in oil which exist as carefully painted reproductions that focus on the palette and composition, seen in Degas' interpretive copy of Mantegna. (Figures A11-12) Still remaining in the broader classical tradition, Degas begins to choose works that are more dynamic, expressive, and emotive; Hellenistic as an alternative to Parthenon reliefs, late rather than early Raphael, Poussin's baroque phase, and the works of Michelangelo and Signorelli. It is also during this time that Degas begins to explore the Baroque period as a whole, focusing on the works of Poussin, Rembrandt and Velázquez. The import of Mantegna and Velázquez on Degas' oeuvre can be seen through the eyes of the Goncourt brothers in an excerpt of their *Journal* of 1874 in which they recalled Degas' *Répétition de ballet sur la scène* in which "while standing on tiptoe to demonstrate the dancers' steps," he spoke of "the tender softness of Velázquez and the silhouetted flatness of Mantegna."³¹ (Figure A13)

Degas' final phase of heavy emphasis in copying works of the canon finds its expression during the years 1858-61 in Italy and Paris. Now a maturing artist, undertaking his own projects, Degas looks to the canon with a novel sense of independence. Instead of remaining relatively faithful to the original compositions, his sketches take on a more rapid quality, which suggest the intent of the original. It seems

³¹ 13 February 1874. Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 10 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956), 163-64.

that at this point Degas has absorbed the lessons of his independent study of the classical tradition and instead turns to the works in search of inspiration. In addition, Degas might have looked to the canon to find solutions to problems of composition and pose within his own projects. Some sense of his classical grounding remains in his copies after Raphael and Ingres, but for the most part Degas has abandoned the line in favor of the painterly style of artists such as Giorgione, Titian, Van Dyck and Velázquez.³²

Reff observes that Degas utilized copies:

...[n]ot only as a way of recording an image he found meaningful or a composition he admired, nor as an intimate means of investigating an older master's style or technique, was the copy important from the beginning of his career: it was also an essential part of his creative process, a method of appropriating from works of art the formal or iconographic elements he needed to solve specific pictorial problems.³³

This appropriation of formal and iconographic elements took on a greater importance as Degas matured. At the beginning of his training Degas, following the academic tradition, subsumed the masters in a similar manner as he suggested to young artists in his comments to Vollard. A greater emphasis was placed on the internalization of concepts of palette, line and composition, which decreased as Degas matured as an artist. Even as his career progressed, Degas retained the original purpose of copying to some degree: intense investigation of the pictorial structures and techniques of the canon. In addition to the tradition of the internalization the style of the old masters before embarking on one's own, Degas also adhered to the traditional hierarchies of art in choosing the works for

³² Few copies are definitively datable to the period after Degas' return to Paris in 1861. Works from the canon do appear in his oeuvre during this time, but they often take the form of identifiable pictures within a larger composition, often a portrait, and their presence in the composition is a reflection of the sitter and function in a completely different way than the copies that function only as such.

³³ Theodore Reff, "Further Thoughts on Degas's Copies," *The Burlington Magazine* 113, no. 822 (1971): 534.

study. Many of his copies are concerned with the human figure, oftentimes isolated from a larger composition and studied independently. In the process, there are few studies of genre scenes and landscapes; his focus is trained upon portraiture and historical compositions.

While copies in oil and on loose sheets do exist, the majority of Degas' copies were composed in his notebooks, which have survived almost completely intact, with few suffering the fate of total dismemberment and dispersion. Reff notes that the notebooks, which concurrently function as a memorandum, address book, scrapbook and series of drawings, "constitutes a unique record of artistic activity and one that is of the highest interest historically."³⁴ They allow the viewer to glimpse the experimental nature of Degas the draughtsman and give us insight into the formative periods of his style, his working methods and their theoretical foundations, his interests not only artistically but also in literature, and his opinions on topics as varied as religion and politics. The notebooks are relatively reliably dated, through the examination of the notes inscribed on the pages, and also are well-distributed chronologically. They do not have the chronological coherence of Delacroix's journals, but conversely they do not possess the self-conscious tone of Gauguin's albums. The evolution of the notebooks are very personal, never meant for an external audience and as such function as a glimpse of Degas' personality and art. Reff notes that:

...[i]n general their contents are an indiscriminate mixture of impressive pen or pencil drawings and trivial sketches or doodles, of considered theoretical statements and banal memoranda, accounts, and addresses; and their arrangement, rarely controlled by inscribed dates, is in most cases the product of random usage that avoids the systematic filling of a

³⁴ Theodore Reff, "Introduction," in *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 1.

given notebook and its orderly relation to others. Practical and private in character, and generally moderate in size, they were for Degas essentially two things: first, a means of recording the appearance of an appointment or an address; and second, a way of visualizing the appearance of a picture he planned, a fictional scene he read, a fantasy he imagined, or of working out a pictorial form or a theoretical position.³⁵

Degas' taste and the fidelity of his copies was already recognized in early writings on the artist by Grappe and Lemoisne, but a careful study of their sources and their significance was not seriously attempted until the work of Boggs and Reff in the mid-twentieth century.³⁶ The earliest references to his notebooks are in an inventory of the contents of his studio drawn up after his death in September 1917 by his dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, who notes '1 carton contenant 10 carnets de notes de l'artiste' and '22 carnets de croquis.' These thirty-two notebooks were excluded from the four public sales of Degas' studio and remained in the possession of his brother René de Gas, who donated twenty-eight of the notebooks to the Bibliothèque Nationale in 1920.³⁷ Of the remaining four notebooks originally found in Degas' studio, two are now housed in the Cabinet des Dessins in the Louvre and one is in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Six additional notebooks that were not in Degas' studio during the inventory are now privately owned.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 4.

³⁶ See Georges Pierre Francois Grappe, *E. M. Degas* (London: International Art, 1909), Paul-Andre Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 5 vols., vol. 1 (New York: Garland Pub., 1984), Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale I: Group a (1853-1858)," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 662 (1958), Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale II: Group B (1858-1861)," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 663 (1958), Jean Sutherland Boggs, "Degas Notebooks at the Bibliothèque Nationale III: Group C (1863-1886)," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 664 (1958), Theodore Reff, "Addenda on Degas's Copies," *The Burlington Magazine* 107, no. 747 (1965), Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art.", Reff, "Further Thoughts on Degas's Copies.", Theodore Reff, "New Light on Degas's Copies," *The Burlington Magazine* 106, no. 735 (1964), *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976).

³⁷ As noted in other sources, the curator at the time was Lemoisne. See *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections*

There has been some mention of the dismemberment of additional notebooks, but these numbers are relatively few in comparison.

The earliest notebook is dateable to 1853 and the latest to 1882-86. The drawings in the notebooks held at the Bibliothèque Nationale, by far the largest and most precisely dated group, fall almost entirely in the years of intense study, 1853-61, between his registration in the Cabinet des Estampes and his return to Paris from Italy. Those in the Louvre notebooks are dateable to 1856-57, and the only dated examples in the sales of his studio were created in the years 1856-1860, having belonged, perhaps, to other notebooks that were later dismembered.

It is difficult to rely only on the dating of the drawings because it has been suggested that Degas dated many of these early drawings near the end of his life, when his memory was no longer as accurate. Instead, dating of the drawings can be coaxed out of the writing surrounding the drawings and the subjects of the drawings themselves. Such information provides clues that, when combined with Degas' known travel itineraries and historical events, allow the drawings and other writings found within the pages of the notebooks to be estimated with varying degrees of accuracy. An additional difficulty in dating lies in Degas' use of the notebooks, while the tomes seem to fall in a relatively chronological order, the use of the pages is not consecutive and at times Degas utilized multiple books over extended periods of time.

However, Degas' notebooks provide a thorough record of his evolution as an artist, particularly Notebook 18, used from 1859-1864. The notebook was used at one of the most critical moments in his development, a moment when he was equally inclined to look back at the tradition of Classical and Romantic art and forward to the emerging

aesthetic of Realist and Impressionist art in which he would play a decisive role.³⁸ The notebooks relay the essence of the character of Degas, as seen in a reflection scribbled into one of the margins, he muses:

Il me semble qu'aujourd'hui, si l'on veut faire sérieusement de l'art et se faire une petit coin à soi original ou du moins se garder la plus innocente des personnalités, il faut se retremper dans la solitude, il y a trop de cancans, on dirait que les tableaux se font comme les prix de bourse par le frottement des gens avides de gagner, on a autant besoin pour ainsi dire de l'esprit et des idées de son voisin pour faire que se soit que les gens d'affaires ont besoin des capitaux des autres pour gagner au jeu. Tout ce commerce vous aiguise l'esprit et vous fausse le jugement.³⁹

Such commentary cuts to the heart of Degas' relationship with art production, modern culture and the contemporaneous art market. He was well aware of the role that society – in all its permutations – played in the production of his work, but becoming wrapped up in it too much would only dilute and ultimately ruin the purpose and impetus behind his oeuvre.

In addition, the notebooks also allow a glimpse into the mind of the artist as he proceeds to study outside the realm of the Academy. In a notebook used in 1853, Degas takes notes on Jean Cousin's *L'Art de Dessiner*, reprinted in Paris in 1821. His notes focus on proportions and foreshortening of human body, and also include drawings with projection lines and further notes to denote a proper sense of proportion.⁴⁰ Degas also used the notebooks as a space to take notes from textual sources on planned compositions. In the planning of a composition of *St. Christopher Carrying the Christ*

³⁸ Theodore Reff, "Notebook 18: Introduction," in *Degas : Form and Space*, ed. Maurice Guillaud (Paris ; New York: Centre culturel du Marais, 1984), 229.

³⁹ Quoted from Paul-Andre Lemoisne, "Les Carnets De Degas Au Cabinet Des Estampes," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (April 1921): 220.

⁴⁰ Nb1, p 13-36. Jean Cousin, *L'art De Dessiner* (Paris: 1821).

Child Degas took notes on the saint's life from his reading of the *Golden Legend*.⁴¹ His compositions would often lead him to particular subject matter, either written or visual in preparation. An example can be found in his planned *La Femme de Candaules* which obliged him to make many studies of Greek pottery.⁴²

In a practice that he would carry on in his mature studies, Degas often made notations of color in his sketches. An example can be seen in a finely shaded copy of Brescianino's *Portrait of a Young Man* with color notations.⁴³ There is evidence of other French artists utilizing a similar method while in Italy. Unlike Degas, Delaunay notes artist, title, location and copy date of his copies. Like Degas, he takes notations on colors, an example owned by the Louvre includes a copy of Giotto *Lamentation* with color notes.⁴⁴

In addition to making sketches of them, Degas would often take written notes on works he saw, creating dialogues between his growing visual canon. An example can be seen in his notations on works viewed at Musée Calvet in Avignon, particularly 'un Corot' (*Paysage d'Italie*) and 'le petit Barrat' (David's *Mort de Joseph Barra*), which Degas later copied in oil.⁴⁵ The notations also include a shaded copy of *Barra*.⁴⁶ These notes seem to function as an aide de mémoire.

⁴¹ Nb 6 p 23-22 (used in reverse order)

⁴² Nb 6, passim

⁴³ Nb 4, p 99

⁴⁴ Louvre RF 1895, 8 verso

⁴⁵ Nb 4, p 71; Oil copy Lemoisne no. 8. Such notations of Lemoisne, followed by numbers refer to Degas' catalogue raisonné: Paul-Andre Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 5 vols. (New York: Garland Pub., 1984).

⁴⁶ Nb 4, p 64

At the time of Reff's first study of the copies found within the notebooks in 1963, "Degas's Copies of Older Art," he pinpointed two-hundred and ninety identifiable sources. Of this larger group of sources, forty-five were identified as antique, seventy-five as Early Renaissance, one-hundred and ten were Late Renaissance and thirty-five were Baroque. At this point Reff noted the following artists as those which Degas copied more than five times, noting that revisitation on the part of Degas was a fairly reliable marker of interest: Parthenon sculpture, Hellenistic terracotta, Roman frescoes, Gozzoli, Ginoirelli, Mantegna, Perugino, Leonardo, Raphael, Marcantonio, Michelangelo, Titian, Poussin, Van Dyck, Velázquez, Hogarth and Ingres.⁴⁷

By the time Reff published his article, "Further Thought on Degas's Copies" in 1971 and his compilation of the notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and other sources, he had identified over six hundred copies undertaken in the course of Degas' oeuvre.⁴⁸ Utilizing Reff's methodology of Degas' revisitation five or more times as a marker of interest, the following artists, genres and media can also be included: Delacroix, Dürer, Géricault, Greek and Etruscan vases, Greek and Roman minor arts, Greek and Roman portrait busts, statuettes, and reliefs, and Veneziano.

The Baroque and Rembrandt

A brief segue into an examination of Degas' interaction with Italian Baroque artists sheds some light onto his aesthetic preferences in the process of copying. The revisitation numbers function as points of reference in order to statistically prove that

⁴⁷ See Reff, "Degas's Copies of Older Art," 246. It should be noted here that his studies would not have been possible without the important series of articles published by J. S. Boggs, beginning the process of categorizing and organizing the drawings in the BN into tentative chronological frameworks.

⁴⁸ Reff, "Further Thoughts on Degas's Copies."

Degas had but a fleeting interest in the artists of the Italian Baroque.⁴⁹ Of the six-hundred plus copies that exist and identified by modern scholars, only four have can be positively identified as copies after Italian Baroque artists. Therefore from a purely statistical standpoint, only 0.67% of Degas' copies fall into the category of the Italian Baroque. While the choices that he did copy and their influences will be discussed below, it is interesting to note that Degas had ample opportunity to study and copy after the Baroque masters – both in the halls of the Louvre and in the cities of Italy – why he did not remains unclear. Perhaps he was not drawn to their compositions and their palettes, as he was their Baroque contemporaries Poussin, Velázquez and Rembrandt. It is conceivable that this triumvirate satiated his interest in the Baroque color, movement and intensity of expression in a way that the Italian Baroque artists could not. While Degas followed tradition only when it suited his individual needs, perhaps the contemporaneous nineteenth-century criticisms of the Baroque had some discernable influence on Degas and thus he did not give these artists and their oeuvres a second glance.

A brief examination of the influence of Poussin through Degas' copies of the master lends some light to the function of the Baroque in Degas' aesthetic evolution. His copy of Poussin's *The Triumph of Flora*, like many of his later copies, delineates from a detailed rendering of line in order to capture the compositional essence of Poussin's masterpiece. (Figures A14-15) Degas' focus in copying this work is to examine the mechanism of Poussin's utilization of many figures in a complex setting. The original

⁴⁹ A brief note on methodology: Beginning with Reff's seminal study, I applied his "5-plus" method to his supplemental appendices of copies, the catalogue of the notebooks and to the catalogue of his estate (obviously there is some overlap between these, but that was taken into consideration in the process.)

work is successful in the delicate balance of a complex composition while concurrently maintaining qualities of order and tranquility, qualities also found in many of Degas' own works. Perhaps it was the careful study of paintings such as *The Triumph of Flora* that enabled Degas to capture the essence of stillness in his varied subjects.

The Italian Baroque did have considerable influence on Poussin in respect to composition, theme and palette. An example can be seen in the basic similarities between Poussin's *The Triumph of Flora* and Annibale Carracci's *Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne* in the Farnese Gallery. (Figure A16) Both bear basic similarities in their theme, multi-figural compositions and palette. But in Poussin's painting there is the aforementioned sense of quiet celebration of the Triumph, while Annibale's *Triumph* gives off a pervasive sense of joviality in its atmosphere. It is possible to state that the Italian Baroque influenced Degas indirectly through his interest in the oeuvre of Poussin, but that this Italian influence was filtered through Poussin. He functions as an intermediary between Degas and the Italian Baroque in a way that negates any real discussion of overt influence. If Degas was so captivated by the qualities admired in the Italian Baroque by Poussin, he would have addressed their source, given his ample opportunity to do so. Instead, Degas turns to Poussin and Italian Renaissance painters, such as Paolo Uccello, when interested in copying multi-figural compositions. (Figures A17-20) When interested in attending to the emotive nature oft seen in the Italian Baroque, Degas seems to prefer Hellenistic Greek sculpture, Mannerism and Michelangelo to the Carracci, Caravaggio and Gentileschi.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ While one cannot conclusively state why Degas preferred the styles of artists such as Poussin and Uccello to Caravaggio or Michelangelo, it most likely derives from his interest in the rational aspects of line, over color, embodied in his early embrace of the studied linear qualities of Ingres.

The singular exception to this trend is the attention paid by Degas to Domenichino's *Flagellation of St Andrew* in the Oratorio di Sant' Andrea. (Figures A21-22) The notebook was utilized by Degas in Naples and Rome between July and December of 1856, and Reff has identified that this drawing was made after mid-October because of Degas' departure from Naples to the Cività Vecchia is recorded in the *Giornale del Regno delle Due Sicilie*, 9 October 1856.⁵¹ Degas' copy of the *Flagellation* functions as a simplified version of his copy of Poussin's *Triumph*, it is clear that his attention was drawn to Domenichino's handling of the figural groups in the foreground of the fresco, paying little to no attention to the architectural details or the group of figures in the background. Again it seems that Domenichino offered to Degas the opportunity to study the successful placement of figures within a larger composition.

The remaining three copies from Italian Baroque artists share with the *Flagellation* Degas' interest in the figure, but they are more typical of his selective copying practices - a focus on the pose of the singular figure, either through the selection of a portrait or when the singular figure is removed from its larger context. At the time attributed to Domenichino, the *Portrait of a Young Man* at the Musée Fabre in Montpellier was copied by Degas at some point during his travels in the region between September 1855 and October 1866.⁵² (Figure A23) The notebook was used in Provence, Paris and Naples during this time period, and again in Paris from 1859-60. The copy of the *Portrait* is hastily drawn, with an emphasis on the pose and countenance of the figure.

⁵¹ *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 53.

⁵² Alessandro Allori, *Portrait of a Young Man*, Oil on slate, Musée Fabre, Montpellier

The sketch is enframed, suggesting the original frame of the painting as it hung in the galleries.

The only work by Caravaggio that Degas copied was the central figure from his *Portrait of Alof de Wignacourt* which hung in the galleries at the Louvre.⁵³ (Figure A24) The notebook page features two partial copies of the principal figure of Alof de Wignacourt, four sketches for the *Famille Bellelli* showing the clock on the mantel, and a partly cancelled sketch of a profile of a man's head with a wig and small hat. This copy reiterates the theme thus established that many of Degas' copies functioned around the figure, its pose and its relation to the overall composition.⁵⁴

While an overview of the role of chronological periods such as seicento can provide the reader with some sense of their function in his working method, a prolonged study of his interest in Rembrandt can provide a more nuanced reading of the purpose and function of the copy of specific aesthetic principles within Degas' oeuvre. Degas' familiarity with the 'Rembrandt manner' can be seen in some brief notes he made to himself in regard to a planned group portrait in the period of 1858-60.⁵⁵ (Figure A25) He pondered the possibility, "faire le portrait d'une famille/à l'air. dans l'esprit et toutes/les audaces de la ronde de nuit [Rembrandt's *Night Watch*] / mais il faut être peintre bien/peintre." The note was followed by a rapid sketch of a couple outdoors with other forms, possibly children beside them, enframed with additional notations about the composition.

⁵³ Caravaggio, *Portrait of Alof de Wignacourt*, 1607-1608, Oil on canvas, The Louvre, Paris

⁵⁴ The final copy of an Italian Baroque work undertaken by Degas was Agostino Carracci's *Portrait of a Canon of Bologna* in the Lyons Museum, mentioned in the appendix of Reff, "New Light on Degas's Copies." The work is listed as: Agostino Carracci, *Portrait of a Canon of Bologna*, Lyons Museum 16 (Private Collection, Paris). I was unable to track down an image of the original in the Lyons Museum, so to the best of my knowledge, Degas' copy does not appear to be reproduced in the BN catalogue. Reff's listing in the appendix suggests that this is not part of a larger notebook, but rather a loose drawing.

⁵⁵ Nb 13 p 50.

His comments belie his opinion of Rembrandt's style, he wants to capture the spirit and the 'night' quality of the composition but he wants to ensure that he does not paint in the 'rough' manner of the master. The lack of any extant copies after Rembrandt's paintings suggests that Degas may have been impressed with the sense of spirit conveyed through the paint, but that he had little regard for its application to the canvas.

In addition to an awareness of Rembrandt's style, Degas also made a number of copies after the master including Rembrandt's *Four Illustrations to a Spanish book* and *Three oriental figures [Jacob and Laban]* which now reside in private collections.⁵⁶ While Degas' copies are not available for comparison, the choice of subject matter does raise some questions, even if no conclusions can be drawn. The compositions are interesting because of their difference in style. The *Four Illustrations* in particular does provide a condensed lesson in Rembrandt's handling chiaroscuro and gradations in shading; perhaps it was these qualities that drew Degas to these prints. Without more information on the circumstances of their transcription, one is left with more questions than answers in regard to Degas' intention.

Such attention to Rembrandt's copies early in his career does find resonance in his later works, an example of the appropriate utilization of the copying process. In his discussion of Degas' pastel bathers, submissions to the eighth Impressionist exhibition, the critic Gustave Geffroy notes: "Sans qu'il soit besoin de recourir à des précédents artistiques, sans que la *Bethsabée* de Rembrandt soit citée à l'appui, on se figurera

⁵⁶ See Reff, "New Light on Degas's Copies," 251. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Four illustrations to a Spanish Book*, 1655, Etching with burin and drypoint, B 36; Rembrandt van Rijn, *Three Oriental Figures [Jacob and Laban?]*, 1641, Etching, B 118

aisément le peintre en face de réalités de cette nature et s'efforçant à les transcrire par les signes visible du dessin et de la couleur."⁵⁷

Degas sketched a partial copy of Rembrandt's etching of *The Death of the Virgin* which shows the Virgin and an old man, perhaps one of the Apostles, comforting her. (Figures A26-27) The composition is reversed from the original etching, which suggests that the copy was not made from an original print but rather a reproduction. On this same page, perhaps spurred by the subject of the Death of the Virgin and his presumed location in Italy, is a study for a planned composition of *Tintoretto Painting his Dead Daughter*. The tilt of the Virgin's head as she expires finds emulation in the pose of Tintoretto's daughter in Degas' sketch. The story, undoubtedly fictitious, was popular in the nineteenth century, as seen in the version exhibited in the Salon of 1843 by Léon Cogniet. (Figure A28) This proposed composition was entertained by Degas for an extended period of time because it was again attended to in a number of sketches in 1857 as well as two more nuanced studies of the composition.⁵⁸ (Figures A29-30)

While in Rome in 1856-57, Degas became reacquainted with the artist Joseph Tourny, whom he first met with in 1854-55, evidenced by an address in his notebook of a 'Tourny' at 20 rue des Marais/St. Germain and a 'Tourney' at rue St Jacques.⁵⁹ Tourny was in Rome employed by the French statesmen Louis-Adolphe Thiers to paint copies after the frescoes in the Sistine Chapel for the newly founded Musée des Etudes. A

⁵⁷ Gustave Geffroy, "Salon de 1886: VIII. Hors du Salon: Les Impressionnistes" *La Justice* 26 May 1886, 1-2. Reproduced in Ruth Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, vol. 1: Reviews (San Francisco, CA; Seattle: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco ; distributed by the University of Washington Press, 1996), 451.

⁵⁸ Nb. 10, p. 9, 12, 13

⁵⁹ Nb 2, p 6; Nb 2, p 86.

product of their association was that Tourny instructed Degas on the process of engravings, which Degas picked up rapidly and practiced by copying Rembrandt's *Young Man in a Velvet Cap*, which he first sketched in his notebook and then reproduced in the form of an engraving.⁶⁰ (Figures A31-32) Unlike his other copies of Rembrandt, this copy is the only known reproductive engraving undertaken by Degas. It seems that Degas was attempting to assimilate the style of the master through rote imitation of Rembrandt's artistic method. He utilizes a combination of incised lines and a careful wiping of the plate to create an aesthetic similar to the Rembrandt original.

A careful study of *Young Man in a Velvet Cap* and *Rembrandt Drawing at a Window* provided the basics for an etched portrait of Tourny in the style of Rembrandt. (Figures A33-34) Like *Young Man in a Velvet Cap*, Degas makes use of a similar beret and models Tourny's facial composition after that of the young man. From Rembrandt's self portrait Degas appropriates the use of the open window and table, as well as the shading in the face which suggests a greater sense of depth than seen in his copy of *Young Man*. Here Tourny, like Rembrandt, seems to have been momentarily interrupted from his work and as such gives the viewer his full attention. It must have been quite flattering for Tourny to have his portrait refer to the great master Rembrandt.

The Metropolitan Museum of Art houses three prints of *The Engraver Joseph Tourny* which further suggest the engraving's purpose as a teaching aid for Degas. The first is the most cleanly wiped of the three versions. (Figure A35) Its purpose seems to tend towards a proof to ensure appropriate plate preparation - focusing on incised lines and their relationship to each other, instead of utilizing the ink to garner greater depth.

⁶⁰ Nb 10 p 13

The second version leaves a bit more ink on the plate. (Figure A36) Here Degas seems to experiment with shadows through ink on the face. The entire plate has a bit of ink remaining on the surface to create a different tonal aesthetic to the print. The final version echoes the aesthetics of Rembrandt's etchings more so than the other two versions. (Figure A37) Here Degas is heavy handed with the application of ink to the plate, employing very little wiping, in order to create shadows and a deep tonal range. In addition, this plate seems to be of a different state, as the window was reworked to give a greater sense of the framework and the separation of space between the inside and the outside.

A similar process of experimentation is seen when one compares the three versions of an engraved self portrait of Degas created in the same year. As with the aforementioned versions of *Tourny*, the first print seems to be an exercise in line, at the expense of tonal qualities that might be added through inking the plate. (Figure A38) It suggests that this print was an early proof, minimally inked to ensure that the hatching is adequate to convey a basic sense of composition and volume. In a second version, Degas utilizes a heavier layer of ink especially in the jacket, creating a mottled effect. (Figure A39) His face exhibits a greater attention to wiping the plate and the area surrounding the figure is almost entirely devoid of any ink. The final version again exhibits Rembrandt-esque aesthetics in the treatment of the plate. (Fig. 11.38) In the process of preparing this print, much ink is left on the plate with creates a romantic, hazy, mottled aesthetic to the entire composition.

While he will return to intaglio prints later in his career through etching experiments in Paris in the company of others including De Nittis, it is pertinent to note

that Degas also experimented with a number of engravings that revolved around Dante's Inferno, a popular subject amongst Italian printmakers. One example, his *Dante and Virgil*, is composed of the two figures, Dante and Virgil outside the gates of the city of hell. (Figure A40) The inscription, in Italian, at the bottom references the location and includes the inscription that was written above the gate: Abandon all hope, ye who enter here.⁶¹

Emulation, or the desire to artistically surpass an older master is a well known phenomenon in the history of art. The process undertaken through emulation is closely linked to that of copying. Artists are encouraged to first learn from the example of their masters and then match and outdo them. Joshua Reynolds affirms the use of the copy as a pedagogical tool in one of his "Discourses on Art" given to the Royal Academy on 11 December 1769. He advised young artists to compare their "efforts with those of some great master" in order to learn first humility, then perseverance and finally confidence as their work increasingly approximated to their chosen example. He suggests that by doing so one will find the "fortitude sufficient to forego the gratifications of present vanity for future honour."⁶²

In the theoretical vein of Bryson, Degas functions as many young artists, attempting to set his work apart from tradition by surpassing it. This is most clearly seen in the evolution of original compositions that find their impetus in the process of copying. Degas' *Portrait of Joseph Tourny* functions as simulacra of the original, emulation through copy. Vasari recounted how Raphael, having vainly tried to rival Michelangelo

⁶¹ Degas' *Dante and Virgil*, Oil on canvas, 1857-58 (Lemoisne 36) was exhibited in the exhibition *Artistes français en Italie* at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris in 1934

⁶² Joshua Reynolds, *Seven Discourses on Art* [Electronic Book] (Project Gutenberg, 1778); available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2176/2176-h/2176-h.htm>.

in painting the nude resolved to “to seek to equal, and perchance to surpass him, in...others.”⁶³ Emulation is not simply copying but a re-creating and re-envisioning of art anew. For Joshua Reynolds, purpose of imitation is never the “barrenness and servility” of the slavish copy, but to have “continually before us the great works of Art to impregnate our minds with kindred ideas.”⁶⁴

Degas’ Travels and the Copy

On 13 August 1858, a few days after his arrival in Florence, Degas wrote to the Director of the Accademia di Belli Arti, requesting permission to study at Santissima Annunziata, just a stone’s throw away from l’Accademia.⁶⁵ He writes in formal French, which suggests that at this point he was not yet comfortable with the Italian language to utilize it in his formal communications. Furthermore, the letter’s date, shortly following his arrival in the city, allows a glimpse into the focus of the young artist to continue his studies under the auspices of the academic tradition. During his time in Italy, Degas focused mainly on two major principles of academic training: copying after the masters and, when ready, drawing from life. It was Degas’ parallel existence outside the auspices of the Academy, however, that allowed him a bit more freedom in his choices of what to attend to in his process of emulation. Commenting on Degas’ choices, Hippolyte Taine notes that rather than focusing on the picturesque and popular, Degas only copied antiques “seul dans les salles silencieuses.”⁶⁶ Such sentiments of stepping outside the

⁶³ Quoted from James Clifton, "Vasari on Competition," *Sixteenth Century Journal* 27, no. 1 (1996): 39.

⁶⁴ Reynolds, *Seven Discourses on Art*.

⁶⁵ Letter from Degas to the Director of the Accademia di Belli Arti, 3 Août 1858. Reproduced in Lamberto Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963): 269.

⁶⁶ Hippolyte Taine, *Italy*, trans. John Durand, 4th ed., vol. 1 (New York,: Holt, 1889), 71.

boundaries of fashionable process are echoed in Henri Loyrette's biography of Degas in which he notes that the artist disregarded the prevailing contemporaneous prejudices surrounding Roman wall paintings - namely that they were not paintings at all, but rather decorative objects or reproductions of famous Greek works.⁶⁷ Degas himself lucidly sums up this method of emulation in a margin of his notebook, "Que je me pénétre bien que je ne sais rien du tout. C'est le seul moyen d'avancer."⁶⁸

During this time his family expressed frustration at comparative lack of communication during this period of the artist's life. Degas, it is clear, was attempting to make the most of every moment on the peninsula, ingesting all that the fecundity of its artistic treasure had to offer through contemplation and copy. In a letter to his brother René, Degas clearly shows his determination to study in the museum as much as possible during his time in Naples, noting, "Je n'ai guère la patience ni le temps de s'en écrire bien long. –Je vais aller au Musée ce matin."⁶⁹ In an explanation of the lack of letters from this period, Degas' niece Jeanne Fèvre relays the following passage from a letter from Degas to Evariste de Valernes: "Ce fut l'époque la plus extraordinaire de ma vie; en dehors de quelques mots jetés sur le papier pour donner de mes nouvelles aux miens, je n'ai rien écrit. Je dessinais."⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Henri Loyrette, *Degas* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 89.

⁶⁸ *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* Nb7 p12.

⁶⁹ Letter from Degas to René De Gas, 24 Mars 1860. Reproduced in Theodore Reff, "Some Unpublished Letters of Degas," *The Art Bulletin* 50, no. 1 (1968): 91-92.

⁷⁰ Jeanne Fèvre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs Et Documents Inédits* (Genève: P. Cailler, 1949), 40 n 1. The only letters that express some part of his quotidian routine while travelling were those written while in New Orleans.

The atmosphere in Naples that Degas found when he arrived in July 1856 was one of intermingling artistic influences, and it is in this vein that we see Degas amalgamating techniques and tropes from a variety of sources in the process of creating his own unique aesthetics.⁷¹ Such processes have a long tradition in the Neapolitan region. During the Aragonese dynasty (1442-1557) many foreign artists were brought to Naples including Matteo di Giovanni, who hailed from Siena, and Antonio da Rimpatta, born in Bologna. The synthesis of influences can be clearly seen in the Renaissance works of Colantonio, teacher of Antonello da Messina, who was one of the first southern Italian painters to learn the Flemish techniques of oil painting. A court painter of Alfonso V of Aragon, he blended techniques from the variety of artists brought to Naples artists from Iberia, Burgundy, Provence, and Flanders. Colantonio's *St. Jerome in his Study* clearly illustrates Flemish and Burgundian influences in the interest in detail throughout the composition, while his *Deposition* finds further Flemish resonance in a series of tapestries bought by Alphonso of Aragon. (Figures A42-43) Colantonio was not alone in this process of amalgamation at the end of the fifteenth century in Naples. The Master of St. Severino's *St. Severino and St. Sossio Polyptych* exemplifies Flemish, Spanish and Ferranese techniques in the use of perspective and palette. (Figure A44)

While in Naples, Degas spent much of his time in what was then the Museo Real Borbonico, whose collections are now found in the Museo di Capodimonte and the Museo Archeologico Nazionale. He copied a variety of works, focusing his efforts on Roman paintings, specifically mythological and history scenes from Pompeii and Herculaneum which had been removed from their original sites and transplanted in the

⁷¹ Degas also visited Naples with his father in 1854.

museum galleries.⁷² The aesthetics of the frescoes lingered in his impressionable mind, as evidenced by the number of copies of Roman paintings made from reproductions while in Rome in 1856.⁷³ In addition to ancient works in two dimensions, Degas also found inspiration in a number of Roman and Greek sculptural works⁷⁴, as well as an Attic red-figure krater *Oenomaos preparing a Sacrifice*⁷⁵ in the galleries of the museum.

While not to the extent that he would in other Italian cities, Degas did turn his attention to works of the Italian Renaissance, including works by Donatello, Cesare da Sesto, Titan and Andrea del Sarto.⁷⁶ Again in the case of Titian it seems that Degas was influenced by works that he saw while in Naples, even after he departed from the city, as his copy of Titian's *Pope Paul III and his Nephews* was created from a reproduction

⁷² *Woman with Flowers*, Naples Museum 8834 [Nb 7 p 3v, 8, 19v]; *Departure of Chryseis*, Naples Museum 9108 [Nb 7 p 8; Nb 10 p 321]; *Triumphant Poet*, Naples Museum 9036 [Nb 7 p 9]; *Achilles on Skyros*, Naples Museum 9110 [Nb 7 p 15]; *Hercules and Telephos*, Naples Museum 9008 [Nb 7 p 15, 16]; *Marriage of Hera and Zeus*, Naples Museum 9559 [Nb 7 p 14, 17, 17v]; *Achilles and Patroklos*, Naples Museum 9020 [4th Sale 86f]; *Perseus Rescuing Andromeda*, Naples Museum 8995 [4th Sale 128b]; *Musical Concert*, Naples Museum 9021 [Nb 7 p 18]; *Mars and Venus*, Naples Museum 9249 [frmr Coll. Jean Nepveu-Degas; Reproduced in Reff, "Further Thoughts"]; *Surrender of Briseis*, NM 9105 [Nb 7 p 12, 16v]; *Marriage of Hera and Zeus*, Naples Museum 9559 [Nb 7 p 14, 17]; *Achilles on Skyros*, NM 9110 [Nb 7 p 15]. Museum accession numbers according to *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections*. It is of import to note that these lists are not complete. Rather they are meant to give example of Degas' various tastes in copying through an examination of his notebooks. Other notebooks that are now disassembled or loose sketches are not included.

⁷³ *Maenad Dancing*, Naples Museum 9295 [Nb 8 p 26v]; *Education of Achilles*, Naples Museum 9109 [Nb 6 p 38]; *Medea before Killing her Children*, Naples Museum 8976 [Nb 6 p 39]

⁷⁴ *Bronze Horse*, Naples Museum 4904 [Nb 6 p 64]; *Poseidonias*, Greek bust, Naples Museum 6142 [Nb 7 p 2]; *Unknown Roman*, Roman bust, Naples Museum 6144 [Nb 7 p 2]; *Herm of Philetairos of Pergamon*, Greek, Naples Museum 6148 [Nb 7 p 2]; *Double Herm of Herodotos and Thucydides*, Greek, Naples Museum 6239 [Nb 7 p 4v]; *The Delphic Gods*, Greek relief, Villa Albani 822 (?) [Nb 8 p 82]

⁷⁵ Naples Museum 82920 [Nb 2 p 43]

⁷⁶ Italian School, 16th c., *Bust of Dante*, Naples Museum 700 [Nb 11 p 10]; Donatello and Michelozzo, *Brancacci Monument*, S. Angelo a Nilo [Nb 10 p 30, 31]; Cesare da Sesto, *Adoration of the Magi*, Naples Museum 124 [4th Sale 86c]; Andrea del Sarto after Raphael, *Pope Leo X and Two Cardinals*, Naples Museum 138 [Nb 4 p 17]; Titian, *Pope Paul III*, NM 130 [Nb 4 p 20]; Antonio Solario (?), *St. Benedict Brought as a Young Man to Rome*, Chiostro di S. Severino [Nb 7 p 11]

while he was in Rome.⁷⁷ As noted above, Degas often paid little attention to what was popular in terms of the Academy's attention while copying. Instead he focused his attention on compositions that provided something personally meaningful – either a nuance of compositional structure, pose or emotional gesture of a figure – to focus his energies upon in the process of copying. This is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that of all of the works copied in the Museo Real Borbonico, only one, Andrea del Sarto's own copy after Raphael, *Pope Leo X and Two Cardinals* warrants mention in a gallery guide from the previous decade.⁷⁸

While Degas most often explored the galleries on his own, he did sometimes have company, such as Mr. Burel, a collector and family friend, with whom he visited the mosaics and paintings galleries.⁷⁹ In addition to copies of compositions – either in their entirety or in fragmented form – Degas also took copious notes on compositions he saw while in Naples.⁸⁰ Through these notes, Degas begins to create a dialogue of relationships and resonances between the works he was presently viewing and those in his own memory – a personal canon. An example can be seen in his notes on the mosaics in the Museo Real Borbonico, whose palette he compares to Veronese. His notes, it is

⁷⁷ Naples Muesum 129 [Nb 8 p 14]

⁷⁸ Room 4, Stanislaus Aloe, *Guide Pour La Galerie Des Tableaux Du Musée Bourbon* (Naples: Typographie de Vergile, 1843), no 289, p 51. Another, Lorrain's *Landscape with the Nymph Egeria* which Degas took notes on is also mentioned: Room 6, Aloe, *Guide Pour La Galerie Des Tableaux Du Musée Bourbon*, no 397 p 62.

⁷⁹ Nb 4 p 19

⁸⁰ Workshop of Raphael, *Cardinal Alessandro Farnese*, NM 145 [Nb 4 p 18]; Francesco Salviati, *Anonymous Sitter*, NM 142 [Nb 4 p 18]; Workshop of Raphael, *Holy Family*, NM 146 [Nb 4 p 18]; Titian, *Pope Paul III and his Nephews*, NM 129 [Nb 4 p 18]; NM 106 [Nb 4 p 18]; NM 107 [Nb 4 p 18]; Antonio Rimpatta, *Virgin and Saints*, NM 94 [Nb 4 p 18]; Lorrain, *Landscape with the Nymph Egeria*, NM 184 [Nb 4 p 18]; *Helle and Phrixos*, NM 8889 [Nb 19 p 8, 8A]

clear, are only shallow textual reminders, as he forgot to bring along his box of pastels to better elucidate the visual metaphor:

Mosaïques au Musée [de Naples]/ comment oublier que l'antique, l'art/ le plus fort, est le plus charmant ? / coloristes comme Véronèse, audacieux/ et toujours harmonieux.//Les ombres sont pleines de jeu. / que de ressources dans derrière/ une figure est travaillé à l'infini par / des tons de turquoises, lilas, rosés - / quelle variété.// Cette mosaïque près de la fenêtre/ représentant un homme assis sur un/ bélier qui traverse de l'eau, avec / une femme qui lève un bras exquis est / une adorable et sui vaut l'idée de / cette harmonie qu'un beau et éclatant / Véronèse, gris comme de l'argent/ et coloré comme du sang. // si j'avais ma boîte de pastels je m'en....ferai un leçon pour toute ma vie. / c'est Phrygus – et Ella sa sœur.⁸¹

In Rome, Degas spent much of his efforts sitting in on life drawing classes at the Academié de France à Rome and the impromptu night studios in the company of Chapu, Moreau and others, he also frequented the museums and churches in the Eternal City.

Degas spent October 1856-July 1857 and November 1857 - July 1858 in the city.

Unfortunately the records of pemessi ai copisti for the Vatican museums do not extend back that far⁸² and no records exist of Degas registering for permission to copy at the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana⁸³, or at the Museo Capitolino⁸⁴; therefore one must refer only to the record of the notebooks and loose copies to garner a sense of Degas' method of sketching in Rome.

Again Degas spent a bit of time sketching from ancient statuary in museums and the Imperial Forum⁸⁵, but more attention in Rome was paid to works by a variety of

⁸¹ Nb 19 p 8, 8A

⁸² Correspondence with Dott.ssa Maria Antonietta De Angelis, Archivio Storico Musei Vaticani, 24 February 2009.

⁸³ Correspondence with Dott. Massimo Ceresa, Reference Librarian, Vatican Library, 20 March 2009.

⁸⁴ Correspondence with Alessandra Marrone, Archivio Storico Capitolino, 15 May 2009.

⁸⁵ *Rehea offering a stone to Cronus*, Greek relief, Capitoline, Salone no. 3a [Nb 8 p 3]; Greek candelabrum, Vatican, Galleria delle Statue no. 412 [Nb 8 p 3v]; Arch of Septimus Severus, Tabularium, and Temple of Saturn [Nb 8 p 18]

Italian Renaissance artists – from Pollaiuolo to Michelangelo – and one work by Van Dyck. In addition to pure copies, Degas also created a number of inspired sketches, works that closely mirrored an existing work, but took artistic license in moving beyond the composition. In this, Degas begins to tentatively work beyond the present composition, in a manner that suggests the first tentative steps beyond rote copying into creating works whose foundation is in the tropes of the canon.⁸⁶

Degas' interest in the ancient past seems to wane while in Florence⁸⁷, but understandably his fascination with the quattrocento and cinquecento continued to expand while in the birthplace of the Renaissance.⁸⁸ In addition, Degas examines the works of Van Dyck and Snyders, found on the gallery walls of the Uffizi.⁸⁹ On 11 August 1858, Degas writes to the director of the Uffizi, requesting permission to copy in the galleries: “Monsieur le Directeur, Je désirerais faire des croquis dans la Galerie des Dessins aux Offices. Agréez, Monsieur, l’assurance de mes sentiments distingués. E. Degas” The director’s response was written on the same letter, granting him permission for twenty days: “Concesso fare ricordi in genere per giorni 20.”⁹⁰ Like his time spent copying in Rome, Degas also moved beyond the straightforward copy. This experimental

⁸⁶ *Roman wearing a toga*, Vatican, Atrio dei Quattro Cancelli no. 9 [Nb 11 p 12]; *Niobide Chiaramonte*, Greek, Vatican, Museo Chiaramonti no. 176 [Nb 11 p 14]; *Epicurius*, Greek, Palazzo Margherita (frmr.) [Nb 11 p 15]; *Athena*, Greek, Museo Chiaramonti, Vatican, no. 403 [Nb 11 p 16]

⁸⁷ *Asklepios restored as Zeus*, Uffizi 223 [Nb 12 p 5]

⁸⁸ Botticelli, *Young Man in a Capuche*, Pitti Palace 372 [Nb 12 p 19]; Bronzino, *Young Girl with a Missal*, Uffizi 770 [Nb 12 p 43]; Leonardo, *Adoration of the Magi*, Uffizi 1594 [Nb 12 p 74]; Parmigianino, *Circe and the Companions of Ulysses*, Uffizi 750E [Nb 13 p 17]; Araldi, *Portrait of Barbara Pallavicino*, Uffizi 8383 [Nb 19 p 20]; Castagno, *Equestrian Portrait of Niccolò da Tolentino*, Duomo [Nb 12 p 89]

⁸⁹ Van Dyck, *Equestrian Portrait of Charles V*, Uffizi 1439 [Nb 12 p 11, 72]; Snyders, *Wild Boar Hunt*, Uffizi 805 [Nb 12 p 40]

⁹⁰ Archivio storico degli Uffizi. Filza 82 Anno 1858 part 2 tab 65. Many thanks to Dr. Sheila Barker for sharing this source with me. Similar in request to the 3 August 1858 to the director of the Accademia di Belli Arti, requesting permission to study at Santissima Annunziata.

process can be seen in the combination of Castagno's *Equestrian Portrait of Niccolò da Tolentino* and Uccello's *Equestrian Portrait of Sir John Hawkwood* in a sketch.⁹¹ He moves beyond these inspired and combined sketches in the early studies for his early historical compositions, *David and Goliath* and *La Fille de Jephthé*, which find their genesis in Michelangelo's *David* and Gozzoli's *Adoration of the Magi*.⁹² Here he utilizes these tropes as a starting point, from which he moves beyond in the planning of his final compositions. It is in such examples that one can clearly see the essential basis of influence in Degas' early work: the canon functions as a foundational touchstone from which he will expand beyond and extend in the process of discovering his own aesthetic voice. This search is best expressed in an examination of his dialogues with the genre of portraiture.

Tropes of Tradition and Degas' Portraiture

At the beginning of Degas' career, his father predicted that portraiture would be the "finest jewel in [his] crown"⁹³ and encouraged the fledgling artist to focus on the genre. While a more thorough study of Degas' portraiture will be attended to in the following chapters, it is of import to note the significance that Degas' study of old masters had on his interpretations of the genre. Art historians such as John Collins have noted Degas' ability to create a sense of chronological transcendence in his portraiture.⁹⁴

⁹¹ Nb 13 p 3

⁹² Study for *David and Goliath* [inspired sketch] from Michelangelo, *David*, Accademia [Nb 12 p 6]; Study for *La Fille de Jephthé* [inspired sketch] from Gozzoli, *Adoration of the Magi*, Palazzo Medici-Riccardi [Nb 12 p 93]

⁹³ Quoted from Felix Andreas Baumann and Marianne Karabelnik, *Degas Portraits* (London: Merrell Holberton, 1994), 18. See also John Collins, "An Elegant Alliance: Impressionist Portraiture and the Art of the Past," in *Inspiring Impressionism: The Impressionists and the Art of the Past*, ed. Ann Dumas (Denver; New Haven: Denver Art Museum; Yale University Press, 2007), 219.

⁹⁴ See Collins, "An Elegant Alliance: Impressionist Portraiture and the Art of the Past," 219.

His interest in physiognomy emerges in this formative period of the 1850s and 60s, when still working within the constructs of academic tradition, Degas often focused on the facial characteristics of figures, much in the same manner as the expressive heads created in the *École*.⁹⁵ Such focused study finds resonance in his later preparatory sketches for his own portraits, which have a timeless quality much like the visages found in the pantheon of the canon.

Degas tried to envision an ‘epic portrait’ of the poet Albert de Musset that would, working within his methodology of aesthetics, combine Renaissance portraiture with a sense of modernity. In a notebook used in 1859, Degas sketched a study for the proposed portrait. (Figure A45) Musset is shown in full length, with his head turned melancholically down towards the right of the picture plane. On the opposite page he mused: “Comment faire un portrait épique de Musset? L’Arioste de Mr. Beaucousin le dit beaucoup, mais [il] reste à trouver une composition que peigne notre temps.”⁹⁶ The passage refers to *Aristo*, a sixteenth century portrait formerly in the collection of Edmond Beaucousin, a friend of Degas’ family, refers to the great sixteenth century poet, setting the stage for a clear allusion between the two poets.⁹⁷ Musset had only died two years earlier and was at the center of literary controversy sparked by the publication of George Sand’s autobiographical novel *Elle et Lui*.⁹⁸ In addition, Degas might have also hoped for further connections between Titian and Musset’s short story *Le Fils du Titien*, in which

⁹⁵ See John House, "Toward a 'Modern' Lavater? Degas and Manet," in *Physiognomy in Profile: Lavater's Impact on European Culture*, ed. Melissa Percival and Graeme Tytler (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2005).

⁹⁶ Nb 27 p 6-7

⁹⁷ The portrait was attributed to Titian in Degas’ time, now attributed to Palma Vecchio.

⁹⁸ Georges Sand, *Elle Et Lui* (Paris: Hachette et Cie, 1859).

the protagonist is blessed with his father's artistic talents, but forsakes art in favor of an overwhelming love.⁹⁹

Another example of the prototypical significance of the study of the masters on his portraiture can be seen in his composition *Portrait of a Young Woman* of c. 1858-59, studied through the linear qualities of drawing and the painted canvas. (Figures A46-47) It is clear that a red chalk drawing of a young woman at the Uffizi, at time attributed to Leonardo, now attributed to Bachiacca was a basis for the compositional elements of pose, costume and expression, while Degas allowed himself freedom of experimentation in the color palette of the composition.¹⁰⁰ (Figure A48) The composition might also have had an impact on *The Bellelli Family*, in particular Degas' statuesque portrayal of Laura Bellelli and his emphasis on her dignity and comportment, which was evocative of the emotional dislocation within the Renaissance composition. (Figure A49) Degas most likely did not begin the canvas until his return to Paris, but his notebooks are filled with plans for compositions, which he worked on while staying with his family in Florence.

The juxtaposed yet disinterested models of Giovanni Cariani's *Double Portrait* held a particular fascination for the young portrait painter, and in 1858-60 he painted an oil copy of the original.¹⁰¹ (Figure A50-51) The enigmatic qualities of the sitters, completely remote from each other while sharing the same space, was a compositional structure that Degas returned to a number of times throughout his oeuvre.¹⁰² A roughly

⁹⁹ Alfred de Musset, *Le Fils Du Titien.- Margot.- Frédéric Et Bernerette* (Brussels: J. Jamar, 1838).

¹⁰⁰ Moreau also created a copy of this drawing, now housed in the collections of the Musée Moreau.

¹⁰¹ Attributed to Giovanni Bellini during Degas' time.

¹⁰² There is a vast tradition of double portraits in the art historical canon, particularly in the genre of wedding portraits such as Piero della Francesca, *Battista Sforza* and *Federico da Montefeltro*, c. 1472, Oil and tempera on panel, Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence and Jan van Eyck, *The Arnolfini Portrait*, 1434, Oil

contemporaneous work to the Cariani copy, a portrait of Gabrielle and Angèle Beaugard was painted while Degas was in Rome. (Figure A52) The Millaudons, the mother and step-father of the girls, were close friends of the Musson family. Degas revisits this compositional trope almost a decade later in two portraits. The first is his portrait of his cousins Giovanna and Giuliana Bellelli, painted in 1865-66. (Figure A53) The artist intensifies the sense of alienation and isolation of the Venetian double portrait in posing the two girls facing away from one another, completely eliminating any interaction and suggesting emotional tension brought on by the recent death of their father. The second is his *Double Portrait of the Montejasi Sisters*, painted during the same period, and again perhaps utilizing the compositional trope to create a commentary on the relationship between the sisters. (Figure A54)

Degas as Collector

Of course, in addition to copying after and departing from works of the canon, Degas also was an avid collector. He began collecting art early in his life, but was forced to sell this first collection to the dealer Hector Brame by 1875 in order to meet financial obligations that his father's death forced him to assume.¹⁰³ These obligations were caused, in part, by a particularly disastrous speculation in cotton futures by René in 1866, which would weaken the De Gas bank and plague the family during the liquidation of the family bank in the 1870s. René writes to Michel Musson about the disastrous

on panel, National Gallery, London. There are also double portraits that function to suggest a relationship between two individuals, such as Hans Holbein the Younger, *The French Ambassadors*, 1533, Oil on panel, National Gallery, London.

¹⁰³ No records remain of the contents of Degas' first collection. Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, vol.1, 173.

repercussions of this speculation, which cost him about \$8000.¹⁰⁴ A letter from Henri Musson to Michel Musson which discusses the liquidation of the De Gas bank gives a clearer picture of the repercussions of the familial monetary problems on Degas, and his assistance in attempting to right the family's reputation: "Je suis parvenu avec ce que j'ai trouvé en caisse, avec le secours d'Edgar et de Fèvre, de donner aux créanciers 30% sur les 50% à eux promis pour combler[?] sa faillite...la B[an]que fait fendre les meubles de Fèvre et d'Edgar...Je vois à Paris, Edgar se priver de tout, vivre du moins possible...L'honneur est engagé."¹⁰⁵

The second version of Degas' art collection began in earnest in the 1890s when sales of his own work allowed him to fully indulge in his passion. In November 1897 Degas moved into an apartment in the ninth arrondissement at 37 rue Victor Massé in order to accommodate his large collection.¹⁰⁶ It was dominated by works by Ingres and Delacroix. He owned twenty paintings and eighty-eight drawings by Ingres and thirteen paintings and one hundred twenty nine works on paper by Delacroix. In addition to the two icons of the early decades of the nineteenth century, Degas also owned a few old masters including two El Grecos – *Saint Dominic in Prayer* and *Saint Ildefonso*, a

¹⁰⁴ Letter from René DeGas to Michel Musson, 25 July 1866. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," (Manuscripts Collection, Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University), Box 2, Folder 23. See also Marilyn R. Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory* (New Orleans: Howard-Tilton Memorial Library, Tulane University, 1991), 15-16.

¹⁰⁵ Letter from Henri Musson to Michel Musson, 17 January 1877. "The Degas-Musson Family Papers," Box 3, Folder 7a. See also Brown, *The Degas-Musson Family Papers: An Annotated Inventory*, 25-26.

¹⁰⁶ For a firsthand account of the collection, see Lafond, *Degas*, 117-22.

painting of a horse then-attributed to Cuyp, a portrait by Perronneau and four works by Tiepolo.¹⁰⁷

Degas also owned works by Corot, including *Ruines dans la campagne romaine*, sold to Degas at the Vente Doria (No. 93) in May 1899(?) for 1.150 F and *Tivoli-Villa d'Este - Étude d'arbres*, sold to Degas at the Vente Doria (No. 118) in Mai 1899 for 410 F.¹⁰⁸ These Italian landscapes are similar in conception to Degas' landscapes, and show a resonance between the works of Degas and Corot. In addition, the fact that these works were purchased after the dissemination of Degas' first collection in 1875 shows a continued interest in subject matter and compositional structure that interested Degas early in his career. Corot's *Italienne assise (Rome)* was sold to Degas at the Hôtel Drouot 6 April 1879 for 52 francs.¹⁰⁹ (Figure A55) This work in particular bears a resemblance to Degas' early studies of Italian women, which shows the artist's affinity for the similar Academic working style of Corot.

Ingres' *Study for the Apotheosis of Homer*, owned by Degas, is a composite study including the profile of Raphael and his hands, hands of Apelles and the tragedian Racine, which was inspired by Raphael's Vatican Stanze. (Figure A56) The work finds import in the oeuvre of Degas because it suggests how strongly Ingres influenced his working process, in particular his emphasis on the fragment in his studies. While this

¹⁰⁷ El Greco, *Saint Dominic in Prayer*, ca. 1605, Oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. El Greco, *Saint Ildefonso*, ca. 1603-1614, Oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. Tiepolo, *Étude de figures assises*, Tiepolo, *Étude d'Agnes*, Tiepolo, *Étude de figures*, Tiepolo, *Lucifer chasse du Paradis*

¹⁰⁸ Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Ruines dans la Campagne Romaine*. See Alfred Robaut and Etienne Moreau-Nelaton, *L'oeuvre De Corot, Catalogue Raisonne Et Illustre, Precede De L'histoire De Corot Et De Ses Oeuvres*, vol. II (Paris: L. Laget, 1965), 38 No. 98 bis.; Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Tivoli - Villa d'Este Étude d'Arbres*. See Robaut and Moreau-Nelaton, *L'oeuvre De Corot, Catalogue Raisonne Et Illustre, Precede De L'histoire De Corot Et De Ses Oeuvres*, 160 No. 450.

¹⁰⁹ Robaut and Moreau-Nelaton, *L'oeuvre De Corot, Catalogue Raisonne Et Illustre, Precede De L'histoire De Corot Et De Ses Oeuvres*, 40 No. 113.

practice stems from Academic tradition, its place within Degas' collection suggests the value Degas placed on this process and the aesthetics of the fragment. In addition, it finds echo in his own working process, particularly in his methodical studies of these fragments, such as his finished oil reflection of Laura Bellelli's hand in *Study of Hands*, completed in preparation for his *Bellelli Family*. (Figure A57) Degas' collection is ripe for comparison with earlier Old Master collections in which the artist would gather a body of drawings that functioned as a reference library of poses, gestures and motifs, and as such can be seen as an extension of his process of copying in his early stages.¹¹⁰

Degas' method echoes Benjamin's early thoughts in the preparations for his vast *Arcades Project*, in which he notes, "Collecting is a primal phenomenon of study: the student collects knowledge."¹¹¹

Degas' passion for collecting art was borderline obsessive in nature. In a letter to Lafond, Bartholomé sheds some light on the passion: "Degas carries on...buying, buying: in the evening he asks himself how he will pay for what he bought that day, and the next morning he starts again: still Ingres, some Delacroix, and El Greco this week. And then he takes a certain pride in announcing that he can no longer afford to clothe himself."¹¹² In his memoir, Halévy echoes Bartholomé's sentiments, noting a memory of a monologue by the compulsive artist, "Here is my new Van Gogh and my Cézanne; I buy! I buy! I can't stop myself. The trying thing is that people are beginning to know it, so they bid against me: they know that when I want something, I absolutely must have

¹¹⁰ Ann Dumas, *Degas as a Collector* (London: Apollo Magazine, 1996), 27.

¹¹¹ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), H4,3 210.

¹¹² Letter from Bartholomé to Lafond, 4 October 1896. Denys Sutton and Jean Adhemar, "Lettres Inédites De Degas a Paul Lafond Et Autres Documents," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 109 (1987): 83, n. 41.

it.”¹¹³ The provenance of works in his collection intrigued Degas. He was particularly pleased to acquire works that were once owned by other artists. Upon his purchase of El Greco’s *Saint Ildefonso*, he noted “This picture hung for a long time over Millet’s bed.”¹¹⁴ Walter Sickert provides the most detailed memories of Degas, his mania as a collector, and the aura that the collection created when one was honored with the opportunity to explore the treasures:

He was an *enragé* collector. At the rue Victor Massé he had three suites of apartments, one to live in, the one above for his collection, and at the top of his house, his studio. I have sometimes in the second apartment threaded my way with him, by the light of a candle, through the forest of easels standing so close to each other that we could hardly pass between them, each one groaning under a life sized portrait by Ingres, or holding early Corots and other things I cannot remember.¹¹⁵

For a time, Degas contemplated the creation of a museum to house his collection and studio contents. According to Valéry, the idea was abandoned when he paid a visit to the newly installed Musée Moreau on Rue de la Rouchefoucauld. Degas observed, “How truly sinister...it might be a family vault...All those pictures crammed together look to me like a *Thesaurus*, a *Gradus ad Parnassum*.”¹¹⁶ Perhaps these words do not pertain to the fruit of Moreau’s labors, but rather Degas’s worries about his own collection. Specifically, how his own work would look in the light of a retrospective, especially when hung next to his collection. Perhaps he worried that his limited subject matter

¹¹³ Daniel Halevy, *My Friend Degas*, 1st American ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1964), 73.

¹¹⁴ Unpublished notes, Private collection. Quoted in Dumas, *Degas as a Collector*, 18.

¹¹⁵ Walter Sickert, "Degas," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 31, no. 176 (1917): 186.

¹¹⁶ Paul Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, vol. 12, *The Collected Works of Paul Valery* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 33.

would be emphasized in a negative, thesaurus-like light and that the parallels between his aesthetic choices would also be reduced to a graded process from the canon of masters.

Returning to Benjamin's *Arcades Project*, we find another lengthy passage of note in the work in progress:

Perhaps the most deeply hidden motive of the person who collects can be described this way: he takes up the struggle against dispersion. Right from the start, the great collector is struck by the confusion, by the scatter, in which the things of the world are found. It is the same spectacle that so preoccupied the men of the Baroque in particular, the world image of the allegorist cannot be explained is, as it were, the polar opposite of the collector. He has given up the attempt to elucidate things through research into their properties and relations. He dislodges things from their context and, from the outset, relies on his profundity to illuminate their meaning. The collector, by contrast, brings together what belongs together; by keeping in mind their affinities and their succession in time, he can eventually furnish information about his objects. Nevertheless – and this is more important than all the differences that may exist between them – in every collector hides and allegorist, and in every allegorist a collector. As far as the collector is concerned, his collection is never complete; for let him discover just a single piece missing, and everything he's collected remains a patchwork, which is what things are allegory from the beginning. On the other hand, the allegorist – for whom objects represent only keywords in a secret dictionary, which will make known their meanings to the initiated – precisely the allegorist can never have enough of things. With him, one thing is so little capable of taking the place of another that no possible reflection suffices to foresee what meaning his profundity might lay claim to for each one of them.¹¹⁷

In some ways, Degas embodied Benjamin's definition of both collector and allegorist.¹¹⁸

In the process of collecting, Degas brings together pieces to create a cohesive dialogue through the relations between works. While at the same time in his own work and the process of ingesting influence, he disassembles these tropes, creating new aesthetic – and allegorical – meanings in his oeuvre.

Influence: Comparison to Other French Artists

¹¹⁷ Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, H4a,1 211.

¹¹⁸ As do art historians and connoisseurs.

Before one begins an extended inquiry into the dialogues between Degas and his Italian contemporaries, it is of import to briefly consider the major French influences on the developing oeuvre of Degas; influences that will find repercussions through the lens of his Italian sojourns. Of those masters of the previous generation, it was in the oeuvre of Ingres that Degas found the most resonance. As Robert Rosenblum aptly observes, “For a master like Degas, committed to the empirical record of the modern world, Ingres’ taut draftsmanship and calculated silhouettes offered an abstract skeleton on which to construct new observations of contemporary fact.”¹¹⁹

Degas, through Halévy’s memoirs, speaks of his first meeting with Ingres in 1855 in a conversation with Blanche:

I was sent to go and ask him for the loan of a picture for an exhibition. And I took advantage of the opportunity to tell him that I was doing some painting, that I was in love with art and would like his advice. The pictures that hung in his studio are still photographed in my mind. ‘Draw lines, young man,’ he said to me, ‘draw lines; whether from memory or after nature. Then you will be a good artist.’ ‘The curious thing about that interview,’ said Jacques Blanche, ‘is that in the history of painting you will be Ingres’s pupil.’¹²⁰

This particular incident was brought up again to Valéry in 1905, when Degas admits that some of the studies that he owns by Ingres were on the walls in Ingres’ studio that day. Valéry continues, noting that Degas spoke of another occasion in which he met Ingres, this time with his drawing portfolio in hand. Ingres looked at the budding artist’s portfolio and exclaimed, “Excellent! Young man, never work from nature. Always from memory, or from the engravings of the masters.”¹²¹ The issue of nature and its role in the

¹¹⁹ Robert Rosenblum, *Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres* (New York: H.N. Abrams, 1990), 47.

¹²⁰ As an adolescent, Degas was friends with Paul Valpinçons, whose father owned Ingres’ famous *Bather*. Halévy, *My Friend Degas*, 50.

¹²¹ Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 35.

drawing process in these two quotes brings up some points of contention on the role of nature in the process of drawing. Obviously in his own working method, Degas took to heart the former comment. It is clear that Degas was deeply affected by Ingres' method, as he would quote the master's apothegms at every opportunity, including, "Drawing is not outside the line, but within it", "You must follow the modeling like a fly walking on a sheet of paper" and "The muscles are my good friends, but I've forgotten their names."¹²²

In his discussion of Degas, George Moore recounts a visitor's experience in Degas' apartment in the Rue Pigalle, a red-chalk drawing by Ingres catches the visitor's eye to which Degas responds:

Ah! Look at it, I bought it only a few days ago; it is a drawing of a female hand by Ingres; look at those finger-nails, see how they are indicated. That's my idea of genius, a man who finds a hand so lovely, so wonderful, so difficult to render, that he will shut himself up all his life, content to do nothing else but indicate finger nails.

Moore suggests that the whole of Degas' artistic purpose can be summed up in this offhand remark about the Ingres drawing, that Degas, "...has shut himself up all his life to draw again and again, in a hundred different combinations, only slightly varied, those few aspects of life which his nature led him to consider artistically, and for which his genius alone holds the artistic formulae."¹²³ But, as Moore points out, Degas is as different from Ingres as Bret Harte was from Dickens, "the method is obviously the same when you go to its root, but the subject matter is so different that the method is in all outward characteristics transformed, and no complain of want of originality of treatment is for a moment tenable."¹²⁴ Instead of Ingres' classical subject matter, Degas applies the

¹²² Ibid., 33.

¹²³ George Moore, "Degas: The Painter of Modern Life," *Magazine of Art* 13 (1890): 419.

¹²⁴ Ibid.: 422.

style of ‘drawing by the character’ instead of ‘drawing by the masses’ of brothels and opera houses, subject matter of modern life. Sickert also echoes such sentiment in his reminiscences of Degas’ noting, “I always tried to urge my colleagues to seek for new combinations along the path of draftsmanship, which I consider a more fruitful field than that of colour. But they wouldn’t listen to me, and have gone the other way.”¹²⁵

Vollard writes of the time he asked Degas whether he knew Ingres to which Degas responded, “I went to see him one evening with a letter of introduction. He received me very kindly. Suddenly he was taken with a fit of giddiness, and flung out his arms as though seeking something to hang on to. I had just time to catch him in my arms.” Vollard relays his thoughts on this account, “What a fine subject for a *Prix de Rome* painting! Ingres in the arms of Degas! The last representative of a dying epoch borne up by the herald of a new one.”¹²⁶

In his copies of the master, Degas was mainly attracted to the ‘plastic perfection’ of pose in Ingres’ compositions, and as such concentrated his efforts on learning from the mythological and religious compositions, rather than his portraiture. As was the case with much of his copying, Degas often isolated a figure that he found to have a particular resonance.¹²⁷ As his confidence continues to build in his own artistic abilities, Degas continues to return to Ingres’ works as touchstones for singular figures in his own larger compositions, but these studies find the artist employing a greater freedom in his draftsmanship and confidence in his abilities.

¹²⁵ Noted as occurring in Summer of 1885. Sickert, "Degas," 184-85.

¹²⁶ Ambroise Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, trans. Violet M. MacDonald (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), 89-90.

¹²⁷ Theodore Reff, "Three Great Draftsmen," in *Degas, the Artist's Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987), 44.

Another important figure in Degas' formative stages was Eugene Delacroix. While Delacroix's relationship with the classical tradition has been marginalized by much contemporary scholarship, it was clearly noted by his contemporaries including Baudelaire.¹²⁸ Unlike his copies after artists such as Ingres, Degas often copied Delacroix's compositions in their entirety, emphasizing through notation issues of the palette and conception of the composition. Reff suggests that Degas' perpetual dissatisfaction with his works and the tangential incessant need to revise compositions find their origin in the artist's attempts to reconcile these competing modes of vision seen through the precedents of Ingres and Delacroix.¹²⁹ An anecdotal story tells of the time that Degas found the opportunity to examine a palette once belonging to Delacroix and subsequently fashioned one for himself – finding its organization analogous to a box of pastels. He encouraged young artists to follow this informative process in understanding the master's conceptions of color. Delacroix's influence on Degas waned in the latter part of the 1860s and 70s, instead being replaced with an interest in the works of Velázquez and Mantegna, probably stemming from the shared interest in Realism and refined surface.

Delacroix, in his *Journals*, echoes some of the sentiments of the role of influence in the evolution of an artist's aesthetics. He contrasts the working methods of Raphael and Rubens in the role of copying in their oeuvres. He begins with Raphael, whom he calls "the greatest of all painters" and "the most diligent of copyists." Delacroix outlines the slow struggle to ingest the tropes of the canon in the method of Raphael:

¹²⁸ See Dorothy Johnson, "Delacroix's Dialogue with the French Classical Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Delacroix*, ed. Beth Segal Wright (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

¹²⁹ Reff, "Three Great Draftsmen."

He imitated his master, which left a permanent mark on his style; he imitated the Antique and the masters who preceded him, but gradually freed himself from the swaddling clothes in which he found them wrapped; finally, he imitated his own contemporaries such as Albrecht Dürer, Titian, Michelangelo, etc.¹³⁰

In contrast was the method of Rubens, on whom Delacroix writes:

Rubens was Rubens from the beginning. It is noteworthy that he never varied his execution, and only modified it very little after taking it from his master. When he copied Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, or Titian – and he copied continually – he seems more typically Rubens than in his original works.¹³¹

Using Delacroix's dichotomy, Degas took the path of Raphael in his utilization of the process of the copy in his developing oeuvre.

Honoré Daumier utilized past precedent within his caricatures in a different way than his contemporaries. He utilized the viewer's recognition of past tropes as a device in which to amplify meaning of the contemporaneous context. He even utilized this concept in a critique of the dangers of the Academic system – a struggle that finds echo in the words of Nietzsche and Bryson. In his *Les paysagistes: Le premier copie la nature, le second copie le premier*, published in *Le Charivari* in 1865, Daumier depicts an enterprising landscape artist who overtly copies a composition in progress by one of his neighbors. (Figure A58) The concept of art aping nature (*ars simia naturae*) has a long tradition that extends back to the Renaissance, and artists as varied as Chardin, Watteau

¹³⁰ It is important to keep in mind that the *Journal* was not published until 1893, so such quotations are not meant to suggest that Degas was working directly from the ideas espoused in Delacroix's journals, rather that he was working within a similar tradition. Eugène Delacroix, *The Journal of Eugene Delacroix: A Selection*, ed. Hubert Wellington, trans. Lucy Norton, 3rd ed., *Arts & Letters* (London: Phaidon Press, 2001), 413.

¹³¹ *Ibid.* It is important to keep in mind that the *Journal* was not published until 1893, so it would not have been part of Degas' formative arsenal.

and Grandville have utilized this notion of aping to make commentary upon the act of mimesis without the necessary thought processes of creativity and originality.¹³²

As Shao-Chien Tseng points out, the concept of art functioning as a means of rote repetition of nature finds resonance outside of the visual sphere, in a number of novels written in the nineteenth century.¹³³ Writers including Balzac, Champfleury, the Goncourts, Zola, and Proust emphasized the importance of ideas applying the lens interpretation to nature. Much like the importance of an evolving personal aesthetic in regard learning from the tropes of the canon, the process by which nature is transformed through a personal filter is equally as important. Such philosophies were also shared by the Positivist theoretician Hippolyte-Adolphe Taine in his *Philosophie de l'Art* (1865) in which he promoted the importance of imagination in the process of transforming nature into an art.

The complexity of Degas' style can be seen in his varied interests in his process of copying. Ingres, Delacroix and Daumier help us to understand the distinctive ways that Degas examined works of the canon in order to coax lessons from them. As Reff aptly summarizes:

...what is remarkable is the extent to which he was able to appreciate the distinctive and in many ways mutually exclusive styles of all three simultaneously and, without any hint of eclecticism, to assimilate important elements of them into his own style. As we have seen Ingres' art epitomized for him from the beginning a Neoclassical ideal of harmonious form and incisive drawing, just as Delacroix's embodied a Romantic ideal of poetic conception and vibrant coloring, Daumier's later represented a Realist ideal of trenchant observation and conventional design, all of which were essential features of his own art.¹³⁴

¹³² See H.W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Renaissance* (London: Warburg Institute, 1952), 287-326.

¹³³ See Shao-Chien Tseng, "Honore Daumier and the Institution of Art" (The University of Iowa, 1998), 13-76.

¹³⁴ Reff, "Three Great Draftsmen," 86.

As an artist, Degas was far from Diogenian in his approach. Instead of separating himself from society he followed the process of influence that while difficult in its endeavor is well tread as a path on which other artists travelled in their own search for an aesthetic voice in which to articulate their age. Courbet was said to have spent time in the Louvre copying Correggio and Ingres, but moved on to his own style. Picasso articulates this process of working through the tropes of the canon and utilizing the masters as a foundation which to stand upon in his words: “I paint in reaction to the paintings which count for me, but I also work with what the [imaginary] museum lacks. Look carefully! It is just as important. You must do what is not there, what has never been done.”¹³⁵ He best articulates the process of ingesting influence when commenting upon a group of young artists whom he encountered once he had established his aesthetic: “When I was their age, I drew like Raphael, but it has taken me a lifetime to draw like a child.”¹³⁶

Academic Approaches in Italy

The import of the French aesthetic can be further ascertained by an investigation of the French Academy in Rome. The community of French artists in Rome was one that was characterized by a close-knit camaraderie and an impermeable border. They had little contact with Italian society in general and particularly little interaction with Italian artists. In his memoirs, Hippolyte Taine wrote of Rome as a provincial city, “untidy, badly planned, baroque and dirty.”¹³⁷ It was common for the artists to be disappointed upon

¹³⁵ Conversation between Picasso and André Malraux. André Malraux, *Tête D’obsidienne*, trans. June Guicharnaud and Jacques Giucharnaud (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994).

¹³⁶ Conversation between Picasso to Roland Penrose. Marilyn McCully, ed., *A Picasso Anthology: Documents, Criticism, Reminiscences* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain in association with Thames and Hudson, 1981).

¹³⁷ Hippolyte Taine, *Voyage En Italie*, 2 vols., vol. 1: Naples et Rome (Paris: Julliard, 1965), 24.

their arrival to the city, but upon taking their leave they would be filled with, as Edmond About wrote, “with regret, indeed with heartbreak.”¹³⁸ Finding contemporary art lackluster, About disdained the community noting that there were only a “small number of true artists,” but “a plethora of manufacturers living off the reputations of their ancestors.”¹³⁹ Jean-Jacques Henner confessed that he stayed five years in Rome “without seeing a single modern picture.”¹⁴⁰ In the entirety of his writings, he only mentions two interactions with Italian artists, once finding himself in a studio of a Florentine artist and once seeing the works of Domenico Induno.¹⁴¹ In a similar vein a few years later, Henri Regnault criticizes Rome: “Il n’y a pas à Rome un seul modèle d’homme fait, puissant et souple. On ne trouve que de petits jeunes gens efféminés, plus ou moins mous et maigres.”¹⁴²

Such a close-minded point of view probably even pervaded Degas’ interactions with the city, regardless of his propensity for involvement with the artistic communities of Naples and Florence. It is probable that Degas was strongly influenced by the tight-knit French community surrounding the Académie de France à Rome, and limited his contacts to that social and artistic circle. Such a sentiment is echoed by Henri Loyrette, who notes that Degas did not take any active part in Italian life, noting contacts only with Stefano Galletti, a sculptor working mainly at Santa Maria in Aquiro and San Andrea della Valle in Rome, and Leopoldo Lambertini with the possible addition of Cristiano

¹³⁸ Edmond About, *Rome Contemporaine* (Paris: M. Lévy frères et Cie., 1861), 62.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 182.

¹⁴⁰ Jean-Jacques Henner, unpublished journal, Musée Henner, Paris. See also Reff, "Introduction."

¹⁴¹ Loyrette, *Degas*, 94.

¹⁴² Henri Regnault, *Correspondance D’henri Regnault*, ed. Arthur Duparc (Paris: Charpentier, 1872), 258.

Banti.¹⁴³ This perspective, however, could also be seen as francocentric as the nineteenth century French community in Rome, since Loyrette neglects to mention any of Degas' interactions with artists in Florence or Naples.

The Accademia di San Luca and Accademia del Nudo¹⁴⁴, did have reciprocal privileges with the French Academy and it would have been possible for Degas, especially with his familial contacts in Italy, to take part in classes. Unfortunately due to the chaos stemming from the revolutions beginning in 1848, the Accademia del Nudo was not active between the years of 1848-1870.¹⁴⁵ Therefore the lack of such an Italian socio-artistic focal point for students in Rome perhaps points to a further reason that Degas did not actively participate in Roman artistic society.

Like Degas, Jacques-Louis David spent an extended period on the peninsula from 1775-80, but in the role of a winner of the Prix de Rome. His time spent in the Eternal City and his encounters with contemporaneous Italian and other European artists, in addition to his encounters with the great art of the past, catalyzed his painting and eventually led him to achieve the statue of premier painter in France.¹⁴⁶ In a similar vein to the atmosphere of the 1850s, the pensionnaires were actively discouraged by the Academy from social interactions with the Roman patriciate and foreign artists, as the authorities feared that these interactions would encourage them to undertake distracting

¹⁴³ Loyrette, "'What Is Fermenting in That Head Is Frightening'," 39.

¹⁴⁴ First established by Pompeo Batoni in 1751 at the Capitoline Museum as a location where artists could participate in life drawing sessions free of charge was subsumed into the main academy by Benedict XIV in 1754. It quickly became a site of cultural and artistic exchange.

¹⁴⁵ Conversation with Angela Cipriani and research at the Archivio Storico di San Luca, 16 February 2009.

¹⁴⁶ See Christopher Johns, "The Roman Experience of Jacques-Louis David, 1775-80," in *Jacques-Louis David: New Perspectives*, ed. Dorothy Johnson (Newark [Del.]: University of Delaware Press, 2006).

commissions and further subsume the pensionnaires into what was already a thriving Roman art market.

After winning the Prix, David insisted that he would not be ‘seduced’ by the antique, but little more than a fortnight in the city caused him to fundamentally call into question his working processes and abilities as an artist, provoking a fundamental reexamination of his training and method. David soon realized that a few years study of the masters would lead to the necessary reinvention of his aesthetic fundamentals, which would eventually lead to his reinvention. Reflecting on his student years David noted:

I made and remade incessantly, beginning at a point of triviality and refining by lines until finally my contours almost had the grandeur, purity, finesse and grace that I found in beautiful antique figures and that I had admired in the author of the Stanze and Loggias.¹⁴⁷

As Christopher Johns has pointed out through his careful examination of David’s Roman drawings, the artist did not consider direct study after nature and idealized academic drawing after antiquities and old masters to be mutually exclusive. Instead the artist often combined these genres, while freely interpreting his sources, instilling in them a sense of contemporaneity, as the artist remarked, “Je l’assaisonnais à la sauce moderne.”¹⁴⁸

The program for pensionnaires at the French Academy included study of painting, sculpture, architecture, mathematics, geometry, perspective and anatomy, the foundation of which, as Paul Duro notes was the , “imitation of the Antique, and emulation of the masters of the Roman High Renaissance.”¹⁴⁹ While in the city, Degas

¹⁴⁷ Quoted from Ibid., 59.

¹⁴⁸ Quoted from Ibid., 61.

¹⁴⁹ Duro, "The Lure of Rome: The Academic Copy and the *Académie De France* in the Nineteenth Century," 133.

befriended a number of pensionnaires¹⁵⁰, including Henri-Michel-Antoine Chapu, Ferdinand Gaillard and Jules-Élie Delaunay.¹⁵¹ The director during Degas' tenure in Rome was Victor Schnetz, who held the position from 1853-1865. Schnetz, as mentioned above, opened the life drawing classes to non-pensionnaires and it is clear that Degas did take part in these sessions, perhaps where he came to be acquainted with Chapu and Delaunay. In addition to his influence over Degas' emerging aesthetic by providing an environment in which he could continue his education, there is a correspondence between Degas' Italian genre scenes and Schnetz's work, which in turn are clearly based on a tradition that extends beyond Schnetz to Corot and Géricault. (Figures A59-61) This comparison is not meant to suggest that Schnetz had a direct influence upon Degas, but rather speaks to the pervasive reverberations of the aesthetics of Corot and Géricault that took a transalpine route to artists throughout the Italian peninsula. As Loyrette notes, the tradition is “une sorte de lieu commun auquel sacrifiait tout artiste séjournant dans la péninsule.”¹⁵²

Works such as *Study of a Draped Figure* emphasize Degas' commitment to Academic training, even if he was taking part in the process from outside the Academic circle. (Figure A62) In the work, the figure's pose is repeated to ensure that the nuances

¹⁵⁰ Pensionnaires at the French Academy during Degas' stay in Rome:

Painters: Félix-Henri Giacomotti (1855-59); Théodore Maillot (1855-58); Émile Lévy (1855-57); Félix-Auguste Clément (1857-61); Jules-Élie Delaunay (1857-60); Charles-François Sellier (1858-62)

Sculptors: Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1855-59); Henri-Michel-Antoine Chapu (1856-60); Amédée-Donatien Doublemard (1856-58); Henri-Charles Maniglier (1857-61); Joseph Tournois (1858-62)

Landscape: Jean-François Bernard (1855-57); Jules Didier (1858-61)

¹⁵¹ Fevre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs Et Documents Inédits*, 36.

¹⁵² *Degas E L'italia*, ed. Henri Loyrette (Roma: Fratelli Palombi, 1984), 116.

of the drapery as it falls from the figure's torso is adequately handled. The repetitions focus on the highlights in convex areas gathered around the torso and how the fabric breaks at his feet. Through such studies, one can see the slow methodical artist refining his mastery of the craft of draftsmanship, which will find its essence in his mature oeuvre.

Aside from Chapu and Delaunay, Degas also befriended a number of French artists working in the Eternal City including Joseph-Gabriel Tourny, Léon Bonnat, Jean-Jacques Henner and Gustave Moreau.¹⁵³ Aside from participating in life drawing sessions at the Academy, these artists formed a sort of 'Académie du soir' where the artists would meet together, draw from models, collaborate and discuss techniques outside of the confines of the Academy. It seems as if male models meeting the standards of these French artists were found hard to come by, as evidenced in a note Degas wrote to his newfound acquaintance, sculptor Henri Chapu, Degas comments on and gives the address of a model, that he thought could pose: "Comme les modèles manquent voyais [] cet homme qui a l'air très beau pourrait poser. Je vous salue./E. Degas"¹⁵⁴

In this group, Moreau took on the role of mentor¹⁵⁵, and the sessions were organized much like the life drawing sessions at the Academy, in drawing after a nude model. The group was quite taken with Raphael and his circle and, as a result, would often copy after the masters in addition to the life drawing. As a group they returned to

¹⁵³ Degas kept in touch with Tourny after his sojourn in Rome, as evidenced by his notebook used from 1868-1873. Nb 24 p 105 contains an address of a contact/introduction for Tourny in Madrid, and Nb 24 p 101 lists his address in Madrid: "Carrera San Geronimo 33/Madrid 8bre [October] Pisa".

¹⁵⁴ Louvre, Department of Prints and Drawings, A499

¹⁵⁵ Arlette Sérullaz, "Dessins De Degas Et Des Artistes Français En Italie (1856-1860). Étude Technique," in *Degas Inédit : Actes Du Colloque Degas, Musée D'orsay, 18-21 Avril 1988* (Paris: Documentation française, 1989).

drawing techniques of the Renaissance, foregoing lead pencils which were replaced with pen and ink or silverpoint. In addition, they also began drawing on artisanally produced tinted paper (green, blue, pink, ochre, grey, etc.) This tinted paper would become part of Degas' repertoire for his entire career. An example can be seen in *Danseuse assise*, drawn on blue paper. (Figure A63) The colored paper creates a base from which to work up the figures, allowing bits of color to show through, adding a sense of depth to the figures that hearkened back to Renaissance aesthetics. The utilization of the paper allows Degas to not only work in the tones of brown and white of the ink, but also the blue of the paper.

This collaborative, experimental period was of importance to each one of these artists in their artistic evolution. In a letter to his parents, Chapu writes:

Je suis, en ce moment-ci, en train de mettre un peu d'ordre dans mes cartons. Ce n'est pas fort amusant, mais c'était nécessaire depuis longtemps, j'avais beaucoup de croquis et dessins qui s'abimaient à traîner. Je les rogne et je les colle sur du papier blanc ; ils ont l'air plus propres tout de suite et je crois qu'ils y gagent même un peu, c'est un encouragement à continuer.¹⁵⁶

Artists such as Delaunay would incorporate the skills garnered through the study of this fundamental process in their final compositions throughout their careers, utilizing the Academic poses after models and inserting them into their historical compositions, as seen in Delaunay's *Peste à Rome* submitted to the 1869 Salon.¹⁵⁷ Working parallel to this tradition, Degas also used these posed models as foundational constructs in his proposed compositions. Examples can be seen in the same model posed as both the angel and Saint

¹⁵⁶ Letter from Chapu to his parents, 20 July 1859. Ibid., 142.

¹⁵⁷ Elie Delaunay, *Peste à Rome*, Salon 1869, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay

John the Baptist for a composition that he would mull over throughout his notebooks.¹⁵⁸

Degas utilized a number of Academic conventions in his figure drawings, from a variety of ages and genders of models, to models poised after classical poses from the *Borghese Gladiator* to *Apoxyomenos*. (Figures A64-67) Degas also utilized the Academic tradition of the expressive head to study manners in which to convey emotion, as seen in three studies of the same man expressing different emotional states. (Figures A68-70)

In addition to the life drawing sessions, it is probable that this group of artists did defy the proscriptions of the *École* and occasionally visit locales such as the Caffè Greco near the Spanish Steps, where the local artists converged to discuss issues of contemporaneous aesthetics. One of the major topics of the day at such gatherings was the advancement of photography, and while exposed to the ideas in France, the Italian obsession with the medium could not have gone unnoticed by the artists. Such influences on Degas' oeuvre will be discussed in later chapters, but it is of import to note that it is probable that other French artists were also touched by the Roman shutter bug that would have repercussions on their oeuvres, long after they left the Eternal City. An example can be seen in the strong perspectival composition of Bonnat's *Interior of the Sistine Chapel*, painted fifteen years after his Italian sojourn. (Figure A71)

Out of all the French artists in Rome, it was with Moreau that Degas established the most significant connection, both artistically and socially. It is suggested by a notation of address of Moreau in a notebook that Degas used in 1854-55 that the two might have been at least passing acquaintances before their overlapping stays in Rome,

¹⁵⁸ See Nb 5 p 48; Nb 7 p 27; Nb 8 p 5, 7v, 8v, 24, 68v, 69v-70v, 73v; Nb 9 p 15, 29, 42-43, 55; Nb 10 p 26, 33, 35-36, 39, 40, 49, 51; Nb 11 p 34-36; Nb 12 p 24; Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.65a

and subsequent travels to Florence together in 1857, evidence for which is seen in two sketched portraits of Degas undertaken by Moreau.¹⁵⁹ (Figures A72-73) As Phoebe Pool points out in her seminal article on the relationship between the painters, their predilections towards certain aesthetics and their subsequent friendship encouraged each to explore works by artists whom had previously not played a major part in their emulative processes.¹⁶⁰ For Degas, Moreau's position as a student of Théodore Chassériau led him to copy works by Delacroix and Van Dyck, while Moreau was encouraged to investigate Ingres and quattrocento masters such as Carpaccio, Botticelli and Donatello through his association with the Ingresque pupil, Degas. Through the mechanism of artistic dialogue, these two artists whose aesthetic tendencies were very different were allowed a window into the world of the other. In addition to copying together, Degas and Moreau also participated in the open life drawing sessions at the Villa Medici and at the impromptu night studio. Drawings by both Degas and Moreau of a male model in a similar pose – a *contrapposto* stance with left hand resting upon his left shoulder – helps solidify this friendship and establishes that they attended the same drawing sessions. (Figures A74-75)

A dialogue between the two artists extended beyond their shared experiences, as seen in a letter written to Moreau, while Degas waited for him to return to Florence from a study trip to Venice. Degas writes of his progress of copying, and also expresses some worry about an emptiness felt in his own life, one that would prove true in the

¹⁵⁹ Degas has a notation for Moreau at [rue] st Marc 5/Chex un Pesch tailleur, Nb 2, p 89

¹⁶⁰ See Phoebe Pool, "Degas and Moreau," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963).

future as well. The letter expresses the deep friendship that established itself between the two artists:

Encore ceci sur moi, puis c'est tout: j'ai fini mon esquisse du Giorgion; ça m'a demandé près de trois semaines. J'ai fait presque une copie de l'ange de Véronèse dans son ébauche et j'ai commence le paysage du Giorgion (Jugement de Salomon) de même grandeur; peut-être j'y mettrais les figures. J'ai fait quelques dessins. En somme j'ai été moins courageux que j'espérais.

Je ne veux pas lâcher avant un résultat, cependant. Etant en l'air ici le mieux est d'employer mon temps à mon métier. Je ne pourrais rien entreprendre de moi. Il faut une grande patience dans le dur chemin où je me suis engagé. J'avais vos encouragements; comme s'ils me manquent, je recommence à me désespérer un peu comme par le passé. Je me rappelle la conversation que nous avons eu à Florence sur les tristes qui sont la part de celui qui s'occupe d'art. Il y avait moins d'exagération que je ne pensais dans ce que vous disiez. Ces tristesses n'ont guères de compensation en effet. Elles augmentent avec l'âge et les progrès et la jeunesse n'est plus pour vous consoler par un peu plus d'illusions et d'espérances. Quelqu'affection qu'on ait pour sa famille et de passion pour l'art, il y a un vide que ça même ne peut combler. Vous m'entendez, je crois, bien que je n'exprime pas assez.

Je vous parle de tristesse à vous qui devez être dans la joie. Car l'amour de vos parents doit vous remplir tout le cœur. Vous me lirez probablement comme je vous écoutais, en souriant.¹⁶¹

Two months later, Degas again writes to Moreau again speaking of Moreau's influence on the younger artists, Degas included, noting Moreau's penchants for color but speaks of his own fondness for the linear aspects of Florentine art, noting "qu'il est temps de venir dessiner à Florence."¹⁶² The correspondence also dealt with their current projects. In a letter to Moreau, Degas writes of his progress on *The Bellelli Family*:

Je voudrais un certaine grâce naturelle avec une noblesse que je ne sais comment qualifier. Van Dyck est un fameux artistes, Giorgion aussi, Botticelli aussi, Mantenga aussi, Rembrandt aussi, Carpaccio aussi. Voyez y autre chose que de

¹⁶¹ Letter from Degas to Moreau, 21 September 1858. Reproduced in Theodore Reff, "More Unpublished Letters of Degas," *The Art Bulletin* 51, no. 3 (1969): 281-82.

¹⁶² Letter from Degas to Moreau, 27 November 1858. Reproduced in *Ibid.*: 282-84.

feu, si vous pouvez. Faites comme quand je me frottais comme un ours contre votre épaule pour attester hautement que je vous comprenais.¹⁶³

Like Degas, it is clear that Moreau quite enjoyed his time in Italy, finding sufficient inspiration in the amalgam of the canon and the contemporaneous milieu in which he frequented in Rome. In a letter to his parents, Moreau writes, “Rien ne se perd ici, et toutes ces aspirations si grandes vers un certain idéal que l’on peut avoir trouvent leur objet et leur satisfaction dans les nobles choses qui vous entourent.”¹⁶⁴ It is also from these letters that one gleans a bit more about the daily routine of pensionnaires and their interactions with other French artists in Rome, as he notes that he regularly practiced at the Villa Mèdici, he went after dinner from seven until nine-thirty and whenever he didn’t have anything better to do.¹⁶⁵

Pool notes that it was inevitable that Degas should eventually outgrow Moreau, particularly because Moreau's lack of interest in painting the contemporary world that was out of sync with Degas' own growing interest in representing modern life.¹⁶⁶ Valéry relates an exchange between Degas and Moreau, that was somewhat in jest, noting that one day Moreau inquired, “Are you really proposing to revive painting by means of the dance?” to which Degas replied, “And you...are you proposing to renovate it with jewelry?” Degas often would say of Moreau, “He wants to make us believe the Gods wore watch chains....”¹⁶⁷

¹⁶³ Letter from Degas to Gustave Moreau, 27 Novembre 1858. Reproduced in *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁴ Letter from Gustave Moreau to his Parents, 7 Janvier 1858. Paris, Musée Gustave Moreau. Quoted from Loyrette, *Degas*, 97.

¹⁶⁵ Letter from Gustave Moreau to his Parents, 14 Janvier 1858. Paris, Musée Gustave Moreau. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 98.

¹⁶⁶ Pool, "Degas and Moreau."

¹⁶⁷ Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 33.

At first glance, Degas' history compositions seem very dissimilar to those of Moreau, suggesting that the two, after a prolonged period of shared experience, parted aesthetic ways. Like a bird building a nest, Moreau seems to constantly accumulate complexity and detail in his compositions while Degas has a propensity to pare down all perceived inessentials until he arrives at a streamlined composition. But an examination of Moreau's *L'enlèvement d'Europe* and Degas' *Scène de guerre au Moyen Age* from four years earlier shows a similarity in the basic compositional structure of the two history paintings. (Figures A76-77) Moreau's composition of four years later exhibits a similar construction of the composition, in the academic pose of Europa foregrounded in a landscape derived from prolonged study of the quattrocento. It is not the purpose of this comparison to suggest that Moreau was influenced by Degas' composition, but rather to further emphasize the shared experience of Italy that profoundly affected these two artists whose aesthetics took such disparate paths.

Degas' work, which Loyrette calls "contemporary concerns beneath a thin archaeological veneer", with Orleans burning in the background functioned most likely as an allegory of the American Civil War, which brought a number of members of his maternal family from New Orleans to Paris to find a respite from the chaos enveloping the city.¹⁶⁸ The work, like Degas' other forays into the genre of history painting, is methodical in its construction and the poses of the figures are very Academic in their composition and the figures' armor is reminiscent of that found in Caravaggio's *Alof da Wigancourt*, which Degas studied in the Louvre.

¹⁶⁸ Loyrette, "What Is Fermenting in That Head Is Frightening." See also Loyrette, *Degas*, 164-65.

Degas did keep up relationships with some of his friends made while in Rome, at least for a time. Degas executed a portrait of Bonnat in 1863, when the two were both in Paris. (Figure A78) Perhaps he was spurred to create the portrait because he thought that Bonnat had the air of a Venetian ambassador.¹⁶⁹ At some point after its creation, Degas and Bonnat fell out of touch, but Rouart recounts their reunion:

Having gone to the Cauterets for the waters, [Degas] happened to be on the open deck of an omnibus, when a gentleman next to him introduced himself. It was Bonnat. It was then that the latter asked him: 'Degas, what's become of that portrait you painted of me years ago? I'd greatly like to have it....'

'It's still in my studio. I would gladly give it to you.' After a moment's hesitation, Bonnat risked, 'But you don't like my things!' (No doubt he was thinking of making an offer of something in exchange.) Very annoyed, Degas replied: 'Ah, Bonnat, what do you think, haven't we both had our say?' And there the matter stood.¹⁷⁰

Rouart recounts that his father finally reunited Bonnat with the portrait.

The Copy and its Role in Degas' Aesthetic

Although he did not make his name as a history painter, in the traditional sense, the time spent learning from tradition and consuming the genre of history painting was not for naught. Degas' preoccupation with line through the works of Ingres and Greek vases, Renaissance and Baroque systems of perspective and composition, and the significant moment seen in classical revivals of the Renaissance and Neoclassical periods, provided unique material for Degas' artistic repertoire and his responses to modern subject matter.

The coalescing of these three elements: line, composition and the significant moment in Degas' modern aesthetic can be best seen in his works in series, such as the

¹⁶⁹ Paul-Andre Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 5 vols., vol. 2 (New York: Garland Pub., 1984), 56.

¹⁷⁰ Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 98.

brothel monotypes or his images of dancers. (Figures A79-80) It is through a sustained study of each of these concepts, that Degas is able to manipulate the composition in a novel way. If he had not mastered the aforementioned elements, his attempts at originality would likely be awkward and unsuccessful; instead one sees a unified conception that is possible through sustained study – fully understanding and then turning the conceptions on their heads. His interest in the fragment is intensified in many of these compositions, specifically in their cropped viewpoints and unique dialogues with perspective. In addition, Degas displays a sense of superior draftsmanship in his use of contour. Such efforts are a nod to quattrocento artists and Ingres who were so influential in the development of his aesthetic. Finally, Degas' uncanny sense of a 'snapshot' quality in his works toys with the traditional idea of the significant moment. As many have noted, instead of picking a moment that is pregnant with meaning, he seems to choose mundane moments, moments of rest before or after the performance. Such a choice, combined with the framing of the composition, line and perspective is suggestive of narrative, but at the same time his choice divorces these works from any overt content. As such, Degas' works use tradition and his study of it to form a flâneur's recording of the modern, an aesthetic that while novel, would not be possible without a dialogue with tradition.

Much like the entirety of his oeuvre, Degas' copies find themselves existing somewhere between the work of artists of the Academy, such as Ingres and his students, and his contemporaries, Impressionists such as Monet. Steeped in the tradition of copying from the great masters, even after he dropped out of the *École* and registered to study independently at the Louvre and during his sojourns to Italy, he carried on this tradition

of copying from the great masters, art that inspired him either thematically or compositionally until late in his career.¹⁷¹

When prompted by Vollard as to how one should acquire the skill of painting, Degas replied, “Il faut copier et recopier les maîtres, et ce n’est qu’après avoir donné toutes les preuves d’un bon copiste qu’il pourra raisonnablement vous être permis de faire un radis d’après nature.”¹⁷² Degas’ copy after Mantegna’s *Crucifixion* finds itself as a prime example of the process of Degas’ copying. The palette and overall composition of Degas’ copy conforms to Mantegna’s original, suggesting that Degas was working to improve upon his own compositions through the balance found in Mantegna’s entire work through a delicate balance of figural groups. (Figures A11-12) Degas’ artistic liberties can be found in the cropping of the scene, which removed the soldiers in the foreground and the relinquishment of many of Mantegna’s details, preference instead for depth through color instead of line – both characteristics that will help define Degas’ style.

Degas’ Artistic Process

Throughout his career, Degas adhered to the practice of the old masters in which one makes a series of careful preparatory studies for composition. According to Fèvre, Degas followed the Ingresque tradition as if it were Gospel: “Faites des lignes, beaucoup de lignes, d’après nature et de mémoire.”¹⁷³ The additive, methodical nature of Degas’

¹⁷¹ Degas registered at the Louvre on 7 April 1853 as a pupil of Barrias. He began copying Franciabigio’s *Portrait of a Man* (Louvre 1644) on 20 April 1854 and Parmagianino’s *Portrait of a Young Man* (Louvre 1506), at the time considered a Raphael self-portrait, on 31 October 1854. Registered again on 3 September 1861, 14 January 1862, 26 October 1865 and 26 March 1868 as a pupil of Emile Lévy. See Reff, “Copyists in the Louvre, 1850-1870,” 555.

¹⁷² Ambroise Vollard, *Degas, an Intimate Portrait* (New York: Crown, 1937), 64.

¹⁷³ Fèvre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs Et Documents Inédits*, 37.

compositions put him at odds with the conception of Realism outlined by Zola in *L'Oeuvre*. In his recollections, Walter Sickert writes that in Degas' was fond of pointing out Zola's error, that he, "wrecks the Neo-Innocent painter, who is the hero of the novel, on the rock of a great synthetic effort, where, properly to characterize the movement, he should have come to disaster on dissipation of effort, a kind of running to seed in sketches."¹⁷⁴

It is this application of the methodical classical technique that Degas applied to contemporaneous urban themes. Echoing the Academic progression, Degas pontificated that, "The masters must be copied over and over again, and it is only after proving yourself a good copyist that you should reasonably be permitted to draw a radish from nature."¹⁷⁵ He expressed a similar emphasis on learning painting process from a thorough study of convention in his words of instruction to Berthe Morisot, "the study of nature is meaningless, since the art of painting is a question of conventions, and that it was by far the best thing to learn drawing from Holbein..."¹⁷⁶ Degas copied Holbein's *Anne of Cleves* in 1861-62.¹⁷⁷ (Figure A81) His interest in the work and its importance as a foundational trope in contemporaneous art can be seen in his purchase in of Gauguin's *La Belle Angèle* (1889) which finds its source in the aforementioned Holbein.¹⁷⁸ Holbein's work, along with Velázquez's *Dona Antonia de Ipeñarrieta colfiglio*, finds resonance in the in the pose and comportment of Laura Bellelli and her daughter, Laura, in his *The*

¹⁷⁴ Sickert, "Degas," 191.

¹⁷⁵ Degas, quoted from Vollard, *Degas, an Intimate Portrait*, 64.

¹⁷⁶ Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 83.

¹⁷⁷ Hans Holbein, *Anne of Cleves*, 1538-39, Parchment glued on canvas, The Louvre, Paris

¹⁷⁸ Paul Gauguin, *La Belle Angèle*, 1889, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay

Bellelli Family.¹⁷⁹ (Figure A49) This process of copying and its repercussions on his oeuvre did not end when Degas moved on to his more mature works, as he created *Le souper au bal* in 1878, based on a work by Adolph Menzel.¹⁸⁰ (Figure A82)

But these experiences of copying and travel did not instill in the artist a need to paint radical subject matter; instead they instilled in him a love for the streets of Paris and the many nuances of genre it had to offer the young painter of contemporary life. His experiences copying allowed him to see Paris through the eyes of tradition and create methodical works that function within tradition and fulfill Baudelaire's call. As Lafond noted at the beginning of the twentieth century:

Il sentait et appréciait d'une façon particulière 'l'ardente naïveté des vieux maîtres' selon l'expression de Ch. Baudelaire, quoique ce ne fût pas alors le moment de leur culte; l'admiration allait ailleurs... La puissance d'originalité de Degas, loin d'être entravée la sévère discipline de l'étude des grands classiques, n'en a été que fortifiée. Une telle étude n'a rien du servilisme, ne gêne en rien la personnalité.¹⁸¹

The concurrent study of the canon and Degas' urban experiences molded his aesthetic, as he gives credit to Giotto: "Ah! Giotto! ['fais' cancelled] laisse moi voir Paris, et toi/ Paris laisse moi voir Giotto!"¹⁸² For Degas, it was the melding of his city and his experiences studying the canon that provided the basic impetus for his particular view of the world. His aesthetics, grounded in tradition, provide a nuanced view of the modern world through the lenses of the past.

¹⁷⁹ Diego Velázquez, *Doña Antonia de Ipeñarrieta y Galdós and Her Son Don Luis*, 1634, Oil on canvas, Museo del Prado, Madrid

¹⁸⁰ Adolph Menzel, *Supper at the Ball*, 1878, Oil on canvas, Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin. See Philip Conisbee, "Menzel Seen from America," in *Adolph Menzel 1815-1905: Between Romanticism and Impressionism*, ed. Claude Keisch, et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 16.

¹⁸¹ Lafond, *Degas*, 35.

¹⁸² Nb. 22, p. 5

A similar sentiment derives from his travels themselves, as described in a letter to Frölich, in which Degas comments on all of the new places he has seen in his travels to New Orleans, but notes that he wants “nothing but [his] own little corner where [he] shall dig assiduously. Art does not expand, it repeats itself. And, if you want comparisons at all costs, I may tell you that in order to produce good fruit one must line up on an espalier. One remains thus all one’s life, arms extended, mouth open, so as to assimilate what is happening, what is around one and alive.”¹⁸³ He inquires to Frölich as to whether he has ever read Rousseau’s *Confessions* in which he would go out at daybreak and try to begin a work that would take ten years to finish it, and abandon it after ten minutes. Degas notes a similar experience in New Orleans.¹⁸⁴ He notes:

Everything attracts me here. I look at everything, I shall even describe everything to you accurately when I get back....In this way I am accumulating plans which would take ten lifetimes to carry out. In six weeks time I shall drop them without regret in order to regain and never more to leave *my home*.¹⁸⁵

It is almost as if Degas feels unable to accurately record anything but the life of Paris. He writes in a similar vein to Henri Rouart, “Manet would see lovely things here, even more than I do. He would not make any more of them. One loves and gives art only to the things to which one is accustomed. New things capture your fancy and bore you by turns.” Recounting the same thoughts on *Confessions*, Degas adds, “Life is too short and the strength one has only just suffices. – Well then, long live fine laundering in

¹⁸³ Letter from Degas to Henri Rouart, 5 December 1872. Edgar Degas and Marcel Guerin, *Letters*, trans. Marguerite Kay (Oxford: B. Cassirer, 1947), 25.

¹⁸⁴ Degas was rereading *The Confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (1782) while in New Orleans. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. Angela Scholar (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹⁸⁵ Letter from Degas to Frölich, 27 Novembre 1872. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 21.

France.”¹⁸⁶ He concludes, “It is not good to do Parisian art and Louisiana [sic] art indiscriminately, it is liable to turn into the *Monde Illustré*. –And then nothing but a really long stay can reveal the customs of a people, that is to say their charm. – Instantaneousness is photography, nothing more.”¹⁸⁷ One day Vollard expressed surprise at Degas’ method of crafting a landscape indoors, to which the curmudgeonly Degas replied: “Just an occasional glance out of the window is enough when I am travelling. I can get along very well without even going out of my own house. With a bowl of soup and three old brushes, you can make the finest landscape ever painted...There’s Rouart who painted a water-color on the edge of a cliff the other day! Painting is not a sport...”¹⁸⁸

This methodical study of Paris creates what Herbert calls Degas’ “predilection for the estranged moment,” which in reality is his contemporary response to the connotations of the significant moment so pursued in the genre of history painting.¹⁸⁹ In Degas’ oeuvre, there is a propensity to heroicize the mundane aspects of contemporary urban life as exemplified in the anecdotal exchange between Halévy and Degas. Speaking to Degas regarding a group portrait composed in the summer of 1885 of Albert Boulanger-Cavé, Ludovic Halévy, Henri Gervex, Jacques Blanche, Walter Sickert and Daniel Halévy, Ludovic pointed out that Sickert’s collar was half turned up, to which Degas replied,

¹⁸⁶ Letter from Degas to Henri Rouart, 5 December 1872. *Ibid.*, 25. In the letter Degas notes that he is rereading Rousseau in the evenings.

¹⁸⁷ Letter from Degas to Frolich, 27 Novembre 1872. *Ibid.*, 22.

¹⁸⁸ Ambroise Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, trans. Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Greenberg Publisher, Inc., 1927), 90-91.

¹⁸⁹ Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism : Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press, 1988), 57.

“Laissez. C’est bien.”¹⁹⁰ Ludovic simply shrugged his shoulders and said “Degas cherche toujours l’accident.”¹⁹¹

The significant or pregnant moment is an essential component to the composition of a history painting, and Degas’ methodical compositions allow for him to choose the moment of depiction of dancers as carefully as David’s *Death of Marat*. As G.E. Lessing notes, “Painting, in its coexistent compositions, can use but a single moment of an action, and must therefore choose the most pregnant one, the one most suggestive of what has gone before and what is to follow.”¹⁹² In doing so, the moment is extended and allows the viewer to simultaneously peruse the composition and extrapolate the narrative. Degas’ choice of the accidental and the mundane allows for a prolonged contemplation of the novelties of modern urbanity.

In Lessing’s discussion of ‘visual progressive action’ – which is chronological in its development – versus ‘visual stationary action’ – which is spatial in its development’, he notes, “[s]ince painting, because its signs or means of imitation can be combined only in space, must relinquish all representations of time, therefore progressive actions, as such, cannot come within its range. It must content itself with actions in space; in other words, with mere bodies, whose attitude lets us infer their action.”¹⁹³ Through his study of the tropes of the canon, Degas has internalized the import of comportment. While his figures might emphasize the mundane, they act as conduits of a prolonged study of the

¹⁹⁰ Edgar Degas, *Six Friends at Dieppe*, 1885, Pastel, Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art

¹⁹¹ Sickert, "Degas," 184.

¹⁹² Gotthold Ephraim Laokoon Lessing, *Laocoon: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, trans. Edward Allen McCormick (New York: The Noonday Press, 1957), 92.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 90.

body and its place in modernity. In the age of rapidly progressive speed, his works function, through Degas' methodical process of composition, as reflective studies of the insignificant moment clarified through imbued gesture. An example can be seen in *Dancers in the Wings*, which focuses the viewer's attention on a moment literally behind the scenes as the dancer steadies herself on the back of a stage set to adjust her slipper. (Figure A83) Others move around her and the insignificance is emphasized through her unfocused gaze. It is just a brief, mundane moment in her life that Degas has captured in pastel. The work functions like many within his oeuvre, in the manner that Michael Fried calls 'absorptive thematics', which in effect pauses the passage of time and allows the viewer to contemplate the represented scene in an unhurried manner, and move beyond the scene to contemplations of the media itself and the larger socio-cultural spheres.¹⁹⁴

For Degas these issues of moment were contained within a much larger concern – his emphasis on the contour. As Degas was apt to note, for him, “Le Dessin n'est pas la forme, il est la manière de voir la forme.”¹⁹⁵ Such an emphasis on contour, as noted, emerges from his training steeped in the Ingresque tradition of the Academy, in which he made a multitude of studies before moving on to the final composition. His work takes on the mundane moments that pass so quickly, but as Degas himself notes:

...I assure you that no art is less spontaneous than mine. What I do is the result of reflection and the study of the great masters...I know nothing about inspiration, spontaneity or temperament... It is very difficult to be great as the old masters were great. In that ages you were great or you did not exist at all, but in these days everything conspires to support the feeble.¹⁹⁶

¹⁹⁴ Michael Fried, *Realism, Writing, Disfiguration: On Thomas Eakins and Stephen Crane* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 43-44.

¹⁹⁵ Paul Valéry, *Degas Dance Dessin* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 197.

¹⁹⁶ Moore, "Degas: The Painter of Modern Life," 423.

For Degas, the point of his work was to ennoble the aspects of modernity – even the seemingly mundane – through the careful study and methodical process begun by the masters, and this studied process provided a solid framework for contemporary interpretations on the grand machines of generations past. Smaller dimensions, and novel subject matter, but no less studied and methodical than their enormous counterparts.

From these constructed studies, Degas would build up his compositions which would function independently from the action of origin, instead coalescing into a nuanced study of form which would then be used as a touchstone for the aforementioned contemplations of media, pose and subject matter. Degas did not deny the reality of his purpose in choices of subject matter, as he noted to Vollard, “They call me the painter of dancers...they don’t understand that for me the dancer has been an excuse to paint beautiful fabrics and to interpret movement.”¹⁹⁷

An examination of a review by Fénéon in 1886 of Degas’ crayon drawings at the exhibition in the Rue Lafitte provides a unique perspective on the critical reaction of this working process:

The crouching, gourd-like women fill the bathtub as pupa: with her chin on her breast, one is scratching the back of her head; another, her arm stuck to her back, and twisted a half circle is rubbing her behind with a dripping sponge. An angular backbone is stretched; fore-arms – which press forward breasts as ripe as Virgoulée pears – fall vertically between legs to dip a washing-cloth in the water where the feet are. The hair falling down over the shoulders, the breasts over the hips, the belly over the thighs, the limbs over their joints, make this ugly woman – seen from above lying on her bed with her hands pressed to her hams – look like a series of rather swollen cylinders joined together. A woman seen from the front, on her knees is drying herself, with her thighs wide open and her head sunk over the loose flesh of her torso. And it is in disreputable furnished rooms, in the vilest

¹⁹⁷ Quoted from wall text in *Mystery and Glitter: Pastels from the Musée d’Orsay Collection*, Musée d’Orsay. 5 December 2008.

retreats that these richly patinized bodies, ravaged by childbirths and illness expose or stretch themselves.¹⁹⁸

Through this review, it is clear that Fénéon was eager to exclude Degas from the other Impressionists on account of his artistic process. While reviling the realities of the human body depicted by the detached eye of Degas, Fénéon further vilifies him because of his depiction of these revulsions through what is clearly an Academic process of a ‘series of cylinders.’ These bodies were not impressions at all; instead they find their genesis in the exact heart of what separates Degas from his contemporaries: synthesized observations of form, movement and expression unified in a perfected, yet far from ideal form.

These behaviors lead to an almost obsessive compulsion towards reworking his compositions, as is clearly recorded in reminiscences by Ernest Rouart,

Degas was very difficult to satisfy, and could rarely convince himself that a picture was quite finished. Not that he sought, except in his youthful works, the minute execution, the finish, which others may have found excessive, but which nonetheless inspired him to some remarkable pictures, and at times to masterpieces.

What was needed to satisfy him was that any work of his should give a sense of completeness, not in the perfection of detail but in the over-all impression it was meant to make; first of all in the construction and then in the co-ordination of the various elements that went to make it, which meant an exact relationship between the lines of the drawing, the values, and the colors among themselves.

He placed enormous value on composition, on the general arabesque of line, and then on the rendering of the form and its modeling, on the *emphasis* of the drawing, as he called it. He could never feel that he had gone far enough in the vigorous rendering of a form.¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁸ Quoted from Sven Lovgren, *The Genesis of Modernism: Seurat, Gauguin, Van Gogh, & French Symbolism in the 1880's*, Rev. ed. (Bloomington,: Indiana University Press, 1971), 59.

¹⁹⁹ Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 91.

Rouart notes that whenever Degas came across an earlier work of his creation, he always wanted to return to his studio with it, and rework it, adding the following anecdote for emphasis:

One day, I happened to be with him at an exhibition where a pastel of his, a nude dating from several years earlier, was shown. After examining it carefully, he said to me: “It’s flabby! *Not enough emphasis!*” And in spite of all I could say in defense of the nude, which was certainly a lovely thing, he refused to change his mind.²⁰⁰

Vollard discusses a similar story also regarding Ernest Rouart, “He knew the artist’s mania for adding final touches to his pictures no matter how finished they were. And so to protect himself, he fastened the famous *Danseuses* to the wall with chains. Degas would say to him: ‘Now that foot, Rouart, needs just one more little touch -’ But Rouart had no fear of losing his picture; he had confidence in the strength of the chains.”²⁰¹

While there are some important tenants to Degas’ oeuvre that find resonance throughout his career, he was constantly consumed with furthering the limits of his process. Another anecdote told by Vollard illustrates Degas’ propensity for constant artistic self-reflection: “I told him about the painter Y., who had come to me in great excitement, exclaiming: ‘Well, I’ve found my true style at last!’ to which Degas replied, ‘Well, I’m glad I haven’t found my style yet. I’d be bored to death...’”²⁰²

Copying/Influence Later in Degas’ Career

The importance of the process of draftsmanship and the Academic method still held precedence in Degas’ mind as the most fruitful method from which to learn the precepts of the artistic method. To Jacques-Émile Blanche he was known to emphasize

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 91-92.

²⁰¹ Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, 110-11.

²⁰² Ibid., 117.

the process, echoing the words of Ingres many years prior: “Make a drawing. Start it over again, trace it. Start and trace it again.”²⁰³ While Degas did not take on any formal pupils, he did find himself in the role of teacher to Ernest Rouart, son of Henri Rouart the former classmate of Degas’, his captain in the artillery division of the National Guard during Degas’ enlistment during the Prussian siege of Paris in 1870 and close friend. In 1897 Ernest went at Degas’ suggestion to the Louvre to study early Italian Renaissance painters through the process of the copy. Ernest undertook a study of Mantegna’s *Christ Crucified between the Two Thieves*, of which Degas made a copy in 1860.²⁰⁴ In addition, Rouart copied the following works at the Louvre, most likely at the suggestion of Degas: Filippo Lippi’s *Madonna and Child with Two Saints* (Louvre 1344) on 12 June 1897, Carpaccio’s *St. Stephen Preaching in Jerusalem* (Louvre 1211) on 1 October 1897, and Mantegna’s *Wisdom Victorious over the Vices* (Louvre 1376) on 5 November 1897.²⁰⁵ Their presence reminds one of the continued importance ascribed to Venetian painting by Degas, still in the late decades of his artistic career.

Degas also made another copy of Mantegna’s *Wisdom Victorious over the Vices* from a photograph at the same time that Rouart was working on his copy under the direction of Degas.²⁰⁶ (Figure A84) He reminisces: “When Degas made me copy the Mantegna in the Louvre, *Wisdom Expelling the Vices*, he had some novel ideas about how the old masters worked, and wanted me to make the copy according to a technique

²⁰³ Quoted in Jacques-Émile Blanche, “Notes sur la peinture moderne.” Quoted from Anne F. Maheux, *Degas Pastels* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1988), 23.

²⁰⁴ Halevy, *My Friend Degas*, 76.

²⁰⁵ In his recollections, Rouart finds his copy after Carpaccio to be a much more successful copy than that of Mantegna’s *Wisdom Victorious over the Vices*. See Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 96.

²⁰⁶ Andrea Mantegna, *Wisdom Victorious over the Vices*, 1502, Oil on canvas, The Louvre, Paris

he had thought up, which was much closer to that of the Venetians than to that of Mantegna.” Degas had Rouart begin with a very bright terre-verde base, then building up red glazes to create appropriate skin tone. This process is not so much solely Venetian, as it is trecento and Venetian in its conception. The process of adding the glazes caused some head-butting between Degas and Rouart, the latter waited for the word of the master to begin, while the former hoped that Rouart would begin on his own, and then planned to “give a few masterful hints.” The end result, according to Rouart, was not successful, noting that it was the combination of early Renaissance painting techniques, used in the production of tempera compositions, with the medium of oil that had been the composition’s downfall. Degas would chide Rouart as to when he would finish, noting that he had started a copy at his studio, from a photograph. This copy was never finished, however, and was sold under the label ‘French School’ and later purchased by Rouart from a dealer as a memento of his experiences.²⁰⁷

Regardless of the outcome in practice, Rouart notes that Degas’ “admiration for the coloring and the technique of the old masters spurred him on to researches on the subject, and to elaborating theories and systems on the natural method of painting – the craft, as he called it.” Reminded of the Mantegna debacle, Rouart is careful to note however, that he “could see very well that in practice, once the work was in the stocks, he was not nearly so sure of the matter when he discussed it.” Rouart clarifies, “[s]uch an artist as he can only make theory and practice work together when he gets down to it on the canvas.” Rouart notes that Degas had a clear mastery over the advantages and limits

²⁰⁷ Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 95-96.

of various media, “His imagination was acute, not simply in the conception of a work, but also as to how and with what material means to carry it out.”²⁰⁸

Aside from his copy of Mantegna undertaken alongside Rouart, Degas was still making copies in 1868-72, after his return from Italy, including studies of Mantegna’s *Crucifixion*, Sébastien del Piombo’s *Holy Family* of which he made two copies, and Poussin’s *Rape of the Sabine Women*, which Degas copied around 1870.²⁰⁹

The lessons learned from Degas’ copies early in his career have ramifications on issues of composition and pose throughout his career. A copy after an engraving of a preparatory drawing by Raphael for the *School of Athens* focuses on the formal interrelationship between two figures which emphasizes a narrative connection through gesture and repetitive contrapposto.²¹⁰ (Figure A85) Such compositional relationships would continue to interest Degas, such as in his drawings of Harlequin and Colombine created in the mid-1890s and their reuse of the symmetrical contrapposto. (Figure A86) Thomson notes, “[o]f course Degas did not expressly recall that Raphael copy. But the lesson that it had taught had become an instinctive part of his repertoire.”²¹¹ Other examples of the resonance of the past on Degas’ oeuvre can be seen in his *Mlle Fiocre dans le Ballet de la Scène* which finds a sense of monumentality similar to the oeuvre of

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 96-97.

²⁰⁹ Del Piombo’s work was attributed to Giorgione in the nineteenth century.

²¹⁰ After a Raphael drawing in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. W. Ottley, *Figures from The School of Athens*, engraving. Reproduced in *The Italian School of Design*. London, 1823, between pp. 50-51. See Thomson, “The Creative Copy in Late Nineteenth Century French Art.”

²¹¹ Ibid., 30.

Piero della Francesca and his *Semiramis Building Babylon*, which exhibits a Palladian sense of perspective.²¹² (Figures A87-88)

In his novel *Le Peintre Louis Martin*, Duranty creates a fictional exchange between two artists as Louis Martin comes across Degas copying Poussin's *Rape of the Sabines* in the Louvre. Duranty, through Martin, characterizes Degas as:

...[un] artiste d'une rare intelligence, préoccupé d'*idées*, ce qui semblait étrange à la plupart de ses confrères; aussi profitant de ce qu'il n'y avait pas de méthode ni de transitions dans son cerveau actif, toujours en ébullition, l'appelait-on inventeur du clair-obscur social.

When Martin criticizes what he sees as the banality and insignificance of the gestures in the Poussin, Degas responds that it is the “pureté de dessin, largeur de modelé, grandeur de disposition” that has drawn him to the work. He notes the lack of discipline the Martin brings to the process of copying, calling it a translation or ‘dressing-up’ the work. These comments belie the true intention of the copy in the working method of Degas, for him it is not enough to simply copy the work, but to reproduce it, fully dismantling and then reassembling the components of construction.²¹³

Conclusion

In Degas' process of consuming tradition, he sets up a process of dialogue, exchange and influence that will find reverberations in his interactions with art throughout his career – both art of the canon and the art created by his contemporaries. His attention to the Academic tradition and the unique processes formed from this attention to detail and interest in the fundamental processes of creation provide in Degas a unique spirit of inquiry that allows him to constantly dialogue with art and artists in a

²¹² Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana Di Edgar Degas," 37.

²¹³ Edmond Duranty, "Le Peintre Louis Martin," in *Le Pays Des Arts* (Paris: G. Charpentier, 1881), 335-36.

manner that is constantly influencing his oeuvre. Not in overt repetitive ways, but rather allowing him to constantly learn and perfect his methodical process of art making.

CHAPTER III
DEGAS, CAFFÈ CULTURE AND ITALIAN DIALOGUES, 1856-1860

Se prendo il colorito ai Veneziani,
a quelli di Bologna il chiaroscuro,
il disegno a Firenze, ed ai Romani
il far grandioso nobile e sicuro;
se la grazia di Parma non trascuro
ma ne condisco il piatto a piene mani;
di chi dice di no non me ne curo
ché fatta l'arte avrò per gli Italiani.
Unisco tutti insieme questi ingredienti,
tal qual come fu unita la nazione,
ed un pasto ne fo per tutti i denti;
poi servo caldo a Roma al gran *Salone*,
e l'arte che s'opponne a stai portenti
l'atto reciterà di contrizione.

Telemaco Signorini
[Enrico Gasi Molteni, pseud.],
“Ricetta per far l'Arte italiana”,
Le 99 Discussioni Artistiche

Degas' voyage to Italy encouraged his artistic maturation through more than the traditional parallel routes of study of the masters and life drawing sessions. Degas also interacted with his Italian contemporaries in a profound manner, and it was this part of his artistic evolution that distinguishes him from his contemporaries in Paris.¹ His aesthetic dialogues with artists in Naples and Florence especially, coupled with his parallel, yet conventional, academic training created the opportunity for Degas to utilize an 'Italian filter' on concepts that he had already encountered in France, specifically in the genre of caricature and the medium of photography. This allowed him to see these influences through the eyes of his Italian compatriots and had fundamental repercussions on the evolving aesthetics of the young artist. As repeatedly noted in the cycles of Degas

¹ Degas was not the only French artist from the latter half of the nineteenth century who visited Italy, but the only one who had familial and cultural connections to the peninsular nation. In July 1871, Caillebotte visited Naples with his Father.

reportage in Italy, he was able, through his Italian experiences to find “una fusione perfetta e riconoscibile di cultura e di istinto, di giusti riflessi e di intima emozione.”²

Rome

When Degas arrived in Rome in 1856, he channeled Flaubert’s words, noting, “Rome est le plus splendide musée qu’il y ait au monde.”³ As mentioned in the previous chapter, it seems that Degas had little interaction with contemporaneous Roman artists, perhaps the result of the French Academy’s discouragement of interactions between the Roman community and its pensionnaires, with whom Degas was close. With that being said, there is some scattered evidence of his interactions with Italians in the Eternal City, perhaps those whom he met at the Caffè Greco, a popular haunt for artists and critics to discuss contemporary issues in the art world.⁴ The first piece of evidence is a drawn portrait of Degas, found in his studio after his death. The work exhibits an “Atelier Ed Degas” stamp and also includes a notation in the Degas’ handwriting in the lower right corner: “Salletti/d’après moi/Rome”, the words functioning as an aide de mémoire. (Figure A89) The full-length work shows Degas dressed in a similar manner to Moreau’s portrait of the artist in Florence from the same period. (Figure A72) Another artist that made acquaintance with Degas was the Siense painter Amos Cassioli who was in Rome

² Carlo Tridenti, “Degas E Le Sue Relazioni Con L’Italia,” *Il Giornale d’Italia*, 14 June 1936. See also Michele Bonuomo, “Edgar Degas, L’italiano,” *Il Mattino*, 18 January 1985.

³ Jeanne Fevre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs Et Documents Inédits* (Genève: P. Cailler, 1949), 34.

⁴ Loyrette suggests that Degas was acquainted with Stefano Galletti, a sculptor working mainly at Santa Maria in Aquiro and San Andrea della Valle in Rome, but I have not uncovered any evidence to suggest that this is the case. See Henri Loyrette, “What Is Fermenting in That Head Is Frightening,” in *Degas*, ed. Jean Sutherland Boggs (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988), 39.

at the end of 1856 and became familiar with a number of pensionnaires, and through them Degas, of whom he created a portrait in 1857.⁵ (Figure A90)

The artists would often congregate in the l'Omnibus room of Caffè Grecco, just a short stroll from the Spanish Steps at 86, Via dei Condotti.⁶ (Figure A91) The café was founded in 1760, and long before Degas crossed its threshold was popular long as a local Mecca for artists, musicians, and writers to meet, and exchange ideas on contemporary topics. Figures as varied as Goethe, Keats and Mendelssohn took respite and entered into discussion within the café's compartmentalized rooms. While finding the cafés in Italy to be inferior to those found in Paris, Hippolyte Taine wrote about the Caffè Greco in his travel memoir *Italy*:

In the morning we breakfast at the cafe Greco; this is a long, low, smoky apartment, not brilliant or attractive, but convenient: it appears to be like the rest throughout Italy. This one, which is the best in Rome, would pass for a third-rate cafe in Paris. It is true that almost everything here is good and cheap; the coffee, which is excellent, costs three sous a cup.⁷

During Degas' tenure in the city, artists including Caneva, Celentano, Simelli, Tuminello, and Cabianca would congregate at the café, as their studios were localized nearby around the Tridente of Piazza del Popolo. It is most likely here that Degas met non-French artists while in the city. Cabianca "felt it was his duty" to take visiting painters, including the Tuscan artists Signorini, Fattori, Cecioni, Borrani, and Banti, to Caffè Greco in the evenings. In addition, Caffè Greco was a location for the exchange of

⁵ Francesca Cagianelli, "'Ah! Giotto, Lasciami Vedere Parigi, E Tu, Parigi, Lasciami Vedere Giotto!' Riflessioni Di Edgar Degas in Toscana, Mentre Gli Artisti Del Caffè Michelangelo Lottano 'Fra L'accademia E Il Realismo'," in *In Toscana, Dopo Degas: Dal Sogno Medioevale Alla Città Moderna*, ed. Francesca Cagianelli and Elena Lazzarini (Crespina: Comune di Crespina, 1999), 38.

⁶ For a greater understanding of Degas' Rome, see map in Appendix F.

⁷ Hippolyte Taine, *Italy*, trans. John Durand, 4th ed., vol. 1 (New York,: Holt, 1889), 99.

information between practitioners of a variety of media, most importantly between painters and photographers, which would have reverberations back to Florence where such ideas would be continued to be discussed at the Caffè Michelangiolo.

Naples

Before his travels to Rome and Florence, Degas's first stop on his extended tour of the peninsula was in Naples. His family home in the city was the Palazzo Pignatelli di Monteleone at 53, Calata Trinità maggiore, a baroque palazzo.⁸ (Figures A92-93) Hilaire De Gas purchased the Palazzo Grande in 1823, which then housed the family's important collection, including works by Filippo Palizzi and Gabriele Smarigassi, and a rich library including encyclopedias, and the complete works by Voltaire, Diderot and Rousseau.⁹ In addition, the palazzo was situated on one of the most historically aristocratic and important streets in Naples, just adjacent to the Piazza and church of Gesu'Nuovo and the Spire of the Immaculate Virgin (1750). (Figure A94) In addition to the palazzo, the family also acquired in 1825 a villa in San Rocco di Capodimonte, an area to the north of the city which overlooks the Gulf of Naples. Degas' portrait of his grandfather, seated as a regal patriarch, comfortable in his Neapolitan surroundings, was composed in the villa.¹⁰ (Figure A95)

⁸ For a greater understanding of Degas' Naples, see map in Appendix G.

⁹Construction began on the palazzo in 1532 by the Duke of Monteleone, and the structure saw renovations in 1718, including a new portal design. 1788 brought further restorations that divided into 'Palazzo Grande' and the 'Palazzo Piccolo.'

For more on the estate of Hilaire De Gas, see Leopoldo Cortelli, "Hilaire De Gas Estate Documents," (Archivio notarile, Napoli, 24 Novembre 1864). Leopoldo Cortelli, "Hilaire De Gas Estate Documents," (Archivio notarile, Napoli, 1873). Leopoldo Cortelli, "Hilaire De Gas Estate Documents," (Archivio notarile, Napoli, 1864). These materials are unpublished and will be dealt with thoroughly in later studies by the author.

¹⁰ Studies Nb 4, p 21-23

Arriving in Naples on 17 July 1856, Degas began his four years on the peninsula that formed a fundamental nexus of development in the aesthetics of his mature oeuvre. It is clear the Degas had fond memories of his time spent in the region which gave him his first taste of how Italy combines the glories of the ancient world, the Renaissance and contemporary culture into an amalgam from which he would emerge.¹¹ In a letter written later in his life to his friend Louis Bouilhet, Degas reminisces “C’est à Naples qu’il faut aller pour se retremper de jeunesse, pour aimer la vie. Le soleil même en est amoureux. Tout est gai et facile.”¹²

Most interesting in the search for Neapolitan resonances in Degas’ oeuvre is the critic Valéry’s exploration of the source of Degas’ propensity toward studied, nuanced mimicry. He writes that Degas’:

...passion was to reconstruct the body of the female animal as the specialized slave of the dance, the laundry...or the streets; and the more or less distorted bodies whose articulated structure he always arranges in very precarious attitudes...make the whole structural mechanism of a living being seem to grimace like a face.

Valéry continues by stating that if he were an art critic, he would assign some of the origin to Degas’ Neapolitan blood, noting, “[the] mime is native to Naples, where there is never a word without a gesture, a story without acting, no individual without his store of parts to play, always available and always convincing.”¹³ An emphasis on gesture is a result, not merely as Valéry suggests of an interest in mimes, but of a prolonged study of Degas’ own Neapolitan family and Italian culture in general and the tandem import

¹¹ For a full timeline of Degas’ travels in Italy, see Appendix D.

¹² Letter from Degas to Louis Bouilhet, undated. Quoted in Fevre, *Mon Oncle Degas: Souvenirs Et Documents Inédits*, 34.

¹³ Paul Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, vol. 12, *The Collected Works of Paul Valery* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 54-55.

placed on gesture and expression as a means of communication. It is quite probable that such a bipronged mode of communication, an emphasis on hand gestures and expression combined with the Italian language, in comparison to his native French would have had an indelible impact on the young artist, cropping up as an emphasis on expression and gesture throughout his oeuvre.¹⁴

Another avenue for understanding the fundamental relationship between Naples and Degas' development as an artist can be seen in a brief investigation into his emphasis on color in his notebooks used while in Campania. A page from Notebook 19 conveys this sense in a written lamentation of his neglecting to bring a box of pastels with him to the museum that day; he instead had to resort to text to convey a sense of appropriate color:

Cette mosaïque près de la fenêtre/représentant un homme assis sur un/ bélier qui traverse de l'eau, avec/ une femme qui lève un bras exquis est/ une adorable et savante ébauche.//Réellement je ne sais rien/ trouver qui donne plus l'idée de/ cette harmonie qu'un beau et éclatant/Véronèse, gris comme de l'argent/ et coloré comme du sang. //si j'avais ma boîte de pastels je m'en./ ferai une leçon pour toute ma vie...¹⁵

Such emphasis on his pastels suggests the utmost importance that comprehending the nuances of color had within the artist's formation. It suggests that Degas' attention goes beyond composition and line, as suggested in the previous chapter, to a study of the gradations of palette and its use.

Aside from the aforementioned passages, he often utilized color throughout the notebooks, but often was not pleased with the limitations of the medium of watercolor and resorted to color notations as addenda. An example can be seen in Notebook 19, in

¹⁴ See also Michele Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana Di Edgar Degas," *Questioni d'Arte*.

¹⁵ Nb 19 p 8-8A. Reference to *Helle and Phrixos*, Naples Museum 8889.

which he makes notations on Delacroix's *Démosthène Harangue les Flots de la Mer* which he had copied at the Palais Bourbon while still in Paris.¹⁶ Here Degas recalls the work as an aide de memoire in notes for a planned composition. He would like to create a palette for the Bay of Naples that is 'comme la mer du Démosthène de Delacroix'.

Neapolitan Landscapes

In addition, it is clear that the time spent in the region had repercussions for his understanding of the genre of landscape. Notes from a trip from Rome to Florence in November 1857-August 1858, suggest that his time in the Neapolitan countryside allowed him to distinguish certain unmistakable characteristics of the surrounding regional landscapes. He discusses *St. Jerome* by Matteo Balducci in S. Agostino, "...on se croirait dans la/campagne de Naples, tant la/ nature est fertile et cultivée."¹⁷ As such, it is important to note that the majority of Degas' attention to the genre of landscapes occurred while he was visiting Naples. The heavy emphasis on copying after works in the museums, landscape and genre studies in the towns suggest a solitary learning experience in Naples. It is not until Rome and Florence where other, more social, modes of learning are suggested in notebooks, such as sitting in on life drawing classes, or visiting museums with others. Perhaps the solitude was necessary to consume the basics of draftsmanship. A watercolor of Naples created while Degas was in the city in 1860 turns up again in a portrait of Thérèse that Degas painted to commemorate her engagement to her cousin Edmondo Morbilli, a member of a prominent Neapolitan family. (Figures A96-97) As noted by many scholars, in the background of the portrait is

¹⁶ Nb 19 p 15

¹⁷ Nb 11 p 64

a window that opens up onto a view of Naples, perhaps an allusion to Thérèse's upcoming move to the city. Since the portrait was painted while Degas was in Paris, he relied heavily on the watercolor in his sketchbook to provide realistic allusions to the city.

While Naples solidified the concepts of landscape in his oeuvre, it was in Paris that Degas first began to think about the genre. On 18 January 1856, Degas discussed issues of the genre with Gregoire Soutzo, an engraver and landscape painter and friend of his father.¹⁸ It was most likely Soutzo who introduced Degas to the potentials of landscapes, melding Corot and Claude Lorrain into a more modern aesthetic. While in Italy he saw some of Lorrain's works, in particular *Paysage avec la nymphe Égérie* on which he wrote, "le plus beau Claude Lorrain qui se puisse voir. Le ciel est comme de l'argent et les ombres vous parlent."¹⁹

Writing in his notebook, he pondered the process of creating landscapes: "Il faut [du courage] – ne jamais marchander avec la nature. Il y a du courage en effet à aborder de front la nature dans ses grandes lignes et de la lâcheté à le faire par des facettes et des détails."²⁰ This emphasis on the larger composition is seen in his *Italian Landscape seen through an Arch*, which dates from Degas' first visit to Naples and is roughly contemporaneous with the notebook commentary. (Figure A98) Its composition is framed through a window of the villa, towards the fortress of Capodimonte. The opening creates

¹⁸ Olivier Bonfait and Sebastien Allard, *Maesta Di Roma, Da Napoleone All'unita D'italia : D'ingres a Degas : Les Artistes Francais a Rome* (Milan; Rome: Electa ; Academie de France, 2003), 437. See also Richard Kendall, *Degas Landscapes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 10.

¹⁹ Quoted from Boggs Jean Sutherland, *Degas* (New York; Ottawa: Metropolitan Museum of Art; National Gallery of Canada, 1988), 153.

²⁰ Nb 13 p 49

a meta-portal through which the landscape is highlighted, placing emphasis on the view. Degas does not allow himself to get lost in the process of crafting the landscape. Next to a finely shaded study for this work,²¹ Degas wrote out a quote from Dante's *Purgatorio*: "Chiamavi 'l cielo e 'intorno vi si/gira/monstandovi le sue bellezze eterne, /e l'occhio vostro pur a terra/mira".²² The emphasis in this quotation echoes the content of Degas' earlier reflections on landscape: an exhortation to focus on the grander scheme, rather than finding oneself led astray in the detail.

The Neapolitan landscape was constantly evoked in Degas oeuvre, in a variety of manifestations. In addition to the aforementioned watercolor, a sketch and notes on the town of Cicero, located at the north end of Gulf of Gaeta, near Naples was pasted into a notebook.²³ It is in my contention that this inclusion suggests that the notebook was not brought on the trip, but rather the image and those that follow²⁴ were a dialogue with other landscapes also pasted in, including impressions of *Paysage Rocheux*,²⁵ and a photo of a rocky landscape.²⁶ These landscapes were inserted in order to create a dialogue of design for the rocky landscape of an early study of *La Fille de Jephthé*. A final example in this discourse can be seen to the return to images of Vesuvius through pastels and monotypes created in the early 1890s. Degas was not in Naples during this time, but

²¹ Nb 7 p 19. Other studies Nb 7 p 6, 7.

²² "Heaven would call – and it encircles – you;/ it lets you see its never-ending beauties;/ and yet your eyes would only see the ground." Dante Alighieri, *Purgatorio*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (New York: Bantam Classic/Random House, 2004), Canto XIV 148-50. Degas may have transcribed Dante's text incorrectly, as the original reads: "Chiamavi 'l cielo e 'ntorno vi si gira, / mostrandovi le sue bellezze etterne, / e l'occhio vostro pur a terra mira;"

²³ Nb 18 p 107

²⁴ Nb 18 p 108, 108A, 110, 111(1-3)

²⁵ Nb 18 p 101, 102

²⁶ Nb 18 p 100

perhaps news of its recent volcanic activity encouraged him to revisit the natural wonder that was so dear to his memories of the region. (Figure A99)

The Palizzi Brothers & Accademia di Belli Arti di Napoli

In addition to the rich inspiration provided by his surroundings, the works of Neapolitan artists such as the Palizzi brothers and other members of the Academy had a fundamental impact on Degas' developing oeuvre. Various scholars have suggested that Degas possibly attended classes at the Accademia di Belli Arti while in Naples, perhaps in conjunction with his studies of objects in the collection and presaging the manner in which he would take part in the French Academy in Rome.²⁷ It has also been suggested that he partook in classes in drawing lead by Giuseppe Mancinelli, painting with Camillo Guerra, sculpture classes with Tito Angelini and landscape classes with Smarigassi.²⁸ Unfortunately, aside from these references in secondary sources, I have not been able to uncover any archival proof of such activities. However, one can find an awareness of a number of Neapolitan painters' oeuvres in Degas' developing aesthetics, particularly the work of the Palizzi brothers.

Filippo Palizzi – whose brothers Giuseppe, Francesco Paolo and Niccola were also painters – studied at the Reale Istituto di Belle Arti di Napoli from 1837 alongside another painter whose work influenced Degas, Domenico Morelli. (Figure A100) Like Degas at the École, Filippo found little solace in the traditions of the Accademia and

²⁷ The Real Istituto di Accademia di Belli Arti in Napoli was founded by Charles III of Bourbon in 1752 and was originally situated on the site of the church of San Carlo alle Mortelle, the location of a pre-existing sculpture workshop. In 1780 it was relocated to the Museo Bourbonico and just after the Kingdom of Naples joined the nation state of Italy in 1864, it moved again to its current location, the ex-convent complex of S. Giovanni delle Monache.

²⁸ Riccardo Raimondi, *Degas E La Sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917* (Napoli: SAV, 1958), 252. See also Paolo Ricci, *I Fratelli Palizzi*, ed. Enrico Piconi, *I Grandi Pittori Italiani Dell'ottocento* (Milan: Bramante Editrice, 1960), 47-48.

quickly enrolled instead at the free school lead by Giuseppe Bonolis, with a focus on *all'aperto* principles and the aesthetic concept that form that is dependent on content which he would emphasize throughout his career as a painter. Influenced by his brother Giuseppe's interactions with the Barbizon school at Fontainebleau and his return to Naples in 1854, Filippo's style became even more distanced from the contemporaneous landscape genre in the vein of Dutch aesthetics filtered through Neapolitan tradition, in the favor of a style that emphasized brightly illuminated views and a focus on the play of light conveyed through detail. His emphasis on light found resonance in other Neapolitan painters including Michele Cammarano, Marco de Gregorio, Domenico Morelli and Saverio Altamura and had repercussions in the Tuscan tradition of the Macchiaioli.²⁹

An examination of Filippo's works such as *La Sera del 18 Febbraio 1848 a Napoli* suggests a clear attempt to capture the energy of the moment through his application of paint, emphasizing the aesthetic principle of form following function. (Figure A101) The work, which depicts events from the 1848 revolutions, finds echo a few decades later in the modernist aesthetic choices of the urban scenes of Caillebotte through his emphasis on strong perspectival lines in the buildings and in Pissarro's textural surfaces which convey the chaos of the urban environment. Further resonances with French aesthetic preoccupations can be seen in Niccola Palizzi's *Le Corse ad Agnano*, with its focus on the moment of the race which finds reverberation in Manet's *The Races at Longchamp*.³⁰ (Figure A102) Such comparisons are not meant to suggest a direct influence on the aforementioned Parisian painters, rather that the Palizzis' aesthetic

²⁹ Mariantonietta Picone Petrusa. "Palizzi." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T064856pg2> (accessed February 14, 2009).

³⁰ Edouard Manet, *The Races at Longchamp*, c. 1867, Oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago

choices create an ideal amalgam to which Degas might have been drawn while visiting the city as an emerging artist. In other words, Niccola, like Manet, and Filippo, like Caillebotte, were investigating manners in which to convey modern life on canvas, and in doing so provided Degas with another opportunity to examine how other artists approached the problems that had begun to permeate his mind, and provided the occasion to examine other solutions.

While no known documentary evidence exists to suggest an overt interaction between the Palizzi brothers and Degas while he was in the city, it has been suggested that Degas would have come in contact with the artist through his interactions with the Academy and his social interactions with the Neapolitan artistic community.³¹ Similar to the correlations between Niccola's *Le Corse ad Agnano* and Manet's *The Races at Longchamp*, echoes of Degas' later racing scenes can be seen in Filippo's *Caccia alla Volpe*. (Figure A103) The work emphasizes the moments in preparation for hunt instead of some moment of intense action. It captures the mundane preparations for the hunt, and as such finds echo in many of Degas' later works, particularly his racing scenes, that take on a similar attention and subversion of the idea of the significant moment. Filippo created many studies of horses, and often his works exhibit a portrait-like quality in his depictions of animals.³² Works such as Filippo's *Study for Caccia alla Volpe* finds resonance in Degas' later jockey studies, such as his *Four Studies of a Jockey*. (Figures A104-105) The jockey in this image seems to be almost an afterthought, functioning only as a placeholder, with the emphasis of the composition devoted to the nuances of the

³¹ Ricci, *I Fratelli Palizzi*, 47-48.

³² Francis Napier, *Pittura Napoletana Dell'ottocento* (Naples: Fausto Fiorentino, nd), 92.

horse's pose. In Degas' work, one sees the opposite in terms of attention: the horse functioning as a substrate for a prolonged study of the jockey's pose. Regardless of the shift in attention, the purpose of both Filippo and Degas' studies are the same: a protracted investigation of the nuances of pose, be it the rider or the horse.

Dominico Morelli and Degas

Dominico Morelli, along with Filippo Palizzi, was the leading figure of the Neapolitan school in the latter half of the nineteenth century. (Figure A106) His innovative approaches combined Romantic subject matter with a realistic treatment, bold renderings of palette and use of chiaroscuro which had repercussions on a variety of groups, from Academic circles to the Macchiaioli. Morelli trained at the Academy in Naples. While at the Academy, he befriended Filippo Palizzi, whom Morelli later credited with having taught him to rightly observe nature and convey its effects by means of palette, tone and chiaroscuro. Morelli was also politically active, taking part in the uprisings of 1848 where he was wounded and briefly arrested, and his political leanings would find voice in his compositions throughout his career.

In 1845 Morelli won the Concorso Triennale, which allowed him to briefly visit Rome, to which he returned in subsequent years, admiring the work of Raphael and Michelangelo and in a visit in 1847, put him in contact with the Nazarenes.³³ In 1855-56, Morelli travelled extensively, visiting various regions of Italy, Germany, the Low Countries, England and the Exposition Universelle in Paris. While in Paris he met Léon Gérôme and Ernest Meissonier, Louis Gallait while in Belgium and Lawrence Alma-Tadema in England. In Milan, Venice and Florence he met artists who were reacting to

³³ The Concorso Triennale was a triannual competition for students at the Accademia di Belli Arti di Napoli, which allowed them to travel to and study in Rome.

the constraints of academic training, which encouraged him to establish and maintain these links with the nationalistic intention of creating a unified style for the newly formed nation state.³⁴

It has been suggested that perhaps Degas met Morelli through his aunt, Duchess Montejasi Cicerale, her daughters Elena and Camilla, or Camilla's husband Pasquale Rosso-Cardone, who owned a number of paintings by the artist.³⁵ In addition, Hilaire de Gas also owned works by Morelli, so it is not unreasonable to assume that Hilaire would have brokered a meeting between his aspiring artist grandson and the leading Neapolitan painter.³⁶ Regardless of the exact mechanism of his awareness, it is clear that Degas would have been cognizant of Morelli's oeuvre while in Naples, and perhaps even had the occasion to meet with the Neapolitan painter.

A recent gallery exhibition at Galleria Carlo Virgilio in Rome brought to light a portrait of a young girl between ten and twelve years of age, by Morelli, painted between the years of 1850-52. (Figure A107) The work exhibits in the lower right corner of the verso the inscription 'Teresa', which has led some scholars to suggest that perhaps this is a portrait of Degas' sister. Such a suggestion has been made on formal evidence of a similarity of the eyes and mouth of the sitter, and a comparison with self-portraits of both Degas and later portraits of Thérèse. Unfortunately there is no direct evidence of the commission, nor evidence that Auguste and the family were in Naples during this time

³⁴ Efrem Gisella Calingaert. "Morelli, Domenico." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T059562> (accessed February 8, 2009).

³⁵ Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana Di Edgar Degas," 36. Pasquale Rosso-Cardone also owned works by Pomigliano d'Arco

³⁶ Cortelli, "Hilaire De Gas Estate Documents."

period.³⁷ At the moment, one cannot rule out the possibility of the identification, especially considering that Hilaire did own works by Morelli, but the evidence is not strong enough to garner a strict identification of the sitter. Like many of Morelli's works, the use of tricolore in the composition, suggests a possible political undertone to the portrait.³⁸ Morelli's involvement in the Risorgimento finds reiteration in the politicized use of color in compositions such as *I Iconoclasti*. (Figure A109) Such an overt political inclusion makes it even less convincing that the work is a portrait of Thérèse, as Hilaire's political alliances with the Bourbons would have made him less than likely to overtly sponsor the movement.

Italian art historians such as Michele Biancale have seen resonances of Morelli's aesthetics throughout Degas' oeuvre, from his portrait of *Duchess Montejasi and her Daughters* in which she sees a "pensarono con singolare e umana spontaneità", similar to Morelli's oeuvre, as well as a general air of the Neapolitan school.³⁹ In her discussion of *The Bellelli Family*, she notes:

I neri hanno una grana morelliana compatta su cui si staccano i grigi e i bianchi più materialmente freddi nel napoletano più mordenti e alitanti in Degas, il fondo a tocchi e a strie, esatto nei rapporti e, fuori dell'amorfismo dei fondi uniti, respirante e vivente è tipicamente morelliano.⁴⁰

But it is imperative to not over-Italianize Degas' oeuvre. Instead of searching for overt correspondences between specific works by Degas and Morelli, it is of greater import to

³⁷ See Elena Di Majo, *Edgar Degas E L'italia: Riflessioni Su Un Ritratto Inedito Di Domenico Morelli* (Roma: Carlo Virgilio, 2007). The only provenance of the work is that it came to the gallery from an unknown Neapolitan family.

³⁸ Conversation with Dott. Stefano Grandesso, Galleria Carlo Virgilio, 12 February 2009.

³⁹ Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana Di Edgar Degas," 36.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

see the larger picture and how the Neapolitan master aesthetics might have found resonance in the developing oeuvre of the young Degas.

Morelli's first and perhaps most significant work in his aesthetic style which moved away from Neoclassicism and towards the Neapolitan style of Romantic Realism was his *I Iconoclasti*, created in 1855. The painting exhibits a strong sense of linear modeling, a fiery palette, strong chiaroscuro and a overt lack of finish, yet finds clear precedent in works such as Hayez' *La Meditazione* in its brooding Romantic intensity and hard linear qualities. (Figure A109) *I Iconoclasti* depicts the Byzantine monk and painter St. Lazarus, whose countenance echoes Christ and is taunted with the destruction of the icons that he created, as he waits for his right hand to be amputated by his captors. It functioned as a metaphor for the persecution of liberal artists by the Bourbon government, and as such echoes the sustained interest throughout Italy at the time in a call for a nationalistic art and a reemphasis on scenes of martyrdom and related topics of liberty and the Risorgimento.⁴¹ The work was exhibited at that year's Esposizione di Belle Arti and received much public acclaim that would establish Morelli's reputation. Despite its none-too-subtle political innuendo, it was purchased in 1857 by Ferdinand II, King of Naples and Sicily, who then commissioned from Morelli a fresco cycle of the *Life of St. Francis*, which, aside from two studies, remained unfinished.⁴²

The two studies for the *Life of St. Francis* work frame different moments in the narrative and suggests that Morelli was experimenting with various moments in the story in order to find the one with the appropriate significance to convey his purposes. This

⁴¹ Barbara Cinelli, "Firenze 1861 Anomalie Di Una Esposizione," *Ricerche di storia dell'arte*, no. 18 (1982): 30.

⁴² Now housed in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome.

methodical process of building up the composition, as well as the strong palette, crisp modeling and intensity of chiaroscuro would have held significant resonance with the young Degas, who would attend to the very same stylistic elements in his compositions throughout his career.

Degas found even more to emulate in Morelli's portraiture, where his realistic vocabulary was most effective, creating penetrating characterizations and strong physical presence in the sitters, as exemplified in Morelli's *Portrait of Bernardo Celentano*. (Figure A110) The portrait, one half of an exchange of portraits between Morelli and Celentano, depicts the painter looking quite dapper, dressed in tails and a top hat, in front of postings for *Benvenuto Cellini*, an opera by Hector Berlioz, perhaps on his way to the theater.⁴³ Morelli's composition, palette and crisp linear handling of the surface are echoed in Degas' own contemporaneous portraits, such as his portrait of his grandfather Hilaire painted while in Naples, which exhibits a similar comportment of sitter, handling of paint and crisp palette. A pendant to Morelli's work was Celentano's portrait of Morelli which finds the artist, hat in hand, placed in front of a study of a work in progress, a clear allusion to Morelli's *The Iconoclasts*. (Figure A111) The work, found in the collections of Morelli at his death, also finds resonance in Degas' oeuvre, particularly in his much later *The Collector*, as there is a similarities in the sitters' easy comportment coupled with an intense gaze.(Figure A112)

Bernardo Celentano studied first at the Academy in Naples, but left the institution in 1852 when he was convinced by Morelli that his artistic education would be better

⁴³ The opera was not performed in Naples until its Italian premier in 1967; therefore Morelli was either comparing Celentano to the Florentine sculptor, or perhaps making reference to his attendance at a performance in Paris in 1838, in Wimar in 1851 and 1856, or in London in 1853.

served by study in Rome. He returned to Naples in September 1854 and accompanied Morelli to Florence shortly after his return.⁴⁴ His interest in Realism, and particularly the effects of lighting translated into paint find strong iteration in his portraits such as his *Portrait of the Painter Ruggiero* and its emphasis on the quality of light through yellow and white tonalities resonate with Degas' *Portrait of Princess Metternich*. (Figures A113-114) As previously mentioned, it is not meant to suggest that these works have direct correlation with specific works in Degas' oeuvre, but rather that Celentano and Morelli's experimentation with light, attention to crisp, linear modeling, and a strong palette finds resonance in the artist's developing oeuvre.

Gioacchino Toma

Gioacchino Toma was born in Galatina in the Neapolitan region and was orphaned at the age of six, spending a despondent childhood and adolescence shuttling between various convents and poorhouses. While the experiences must have been very unhappy for the young Toma, he did draw on them throughout his career for subject matter. Toma was first introduced to drawing while attending an art school in the hospice for the poor in Giovinazzo, a small town along the Adriatic. He moved to Naples in 1855 and was under the employ of Alessandro Fergola, an ornamental painter. In 1857 he was exiled to Piedmonte d'Alife, a small town sixty kilometers from Naples, as a result of a mistaken arrest for alleged conspiracy. While in the town, he befriended a number of local liberal aristocrats who initiated him into the secret society of the Carbonari and became his first patrons. Toma returned to Naples in 1858 and enrolled in the Accademia,

⁴⁴ Mariantonietta Picone Petrusa. "Celentano, Bernardo." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T015107> (accessed February 8, 2009).

attending classes of Morelli. He participated for two years in the Garibaldi led campaign for the unification of Italy, and returned to painting, exhibiting *A Revolutionary Priest* at the Esposizione Nazionale in Florence in 1861.⁴⁵

Finding inspiration in the Romantic emphasis of Morelli and Filippo Palizzi's works, Toma began to focus his subject matter on works that deemphasized the narrative in favor of allusion to psychological states and emotional sentiment in both historical and contemporary themes. During this period, Toma began to incorporate the aesthetics that would inform his oeuvre: an emphasis on harsh perspective and severe composition, coupled with a sharp attention to the modulations of light which kept his subject matter from appearing trite and sentimental. An example of this modulated emotional response through composition can be seen in his *Luisa Sanfelice* (Figure A115), which conveys the story of Donna Luisa Molinas, alias Sanfelice, a heroine and symbol of the Neapolitan Revolution of 1799. The reality of her story was much more dubious: she supported both the revolutionaries and the Bourbons, and during her imprisonment, she got pregnant to stave off execution.⁴⁶ The composition depicts her sewing clothes for her unborn child. The dramatic emotions are restrained and intellectualized, creating the opportunity for reflective contemplation through Toma's composition which conveys an imposing, minimal and severe interior through perspective, structure and palette. The door, which would lead Luisa to freedom, is dramatically recessed into the wall, emphasized through a vivid perspectival recession in comparison with the shallow space of her prison cell,

⁴⁵ Location unknown, see Biancale, "La Formazione Italiana Di Edgar Degas," pl. 10. Marianonietta Picone Petrusa. "Toma, Gioacchino." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T085458> (accessed February 8, 2009).

⁴⁶ Roberta Olson, *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1992), 210.

placing emphasis on the claustrophobic realities of prison. Such concepts are further emphasized through Toma's use of light and shadow. Light filters in through an unseen window, illuminating the figure of Luisa and casting a dark shadow of her profile on the bare prison wall. The door is also enveloped in shadow. Together these work to emphasize the importance of Luisa and the stark, depressing reality of her incarceration. Writing of the painting in 1934, Ortolani spoke of "l'emozione tenta di prevalere sull'immagine e d'essere una sorta di contenuto della forma pittorica."⁴⁷

Toma and Morelli in particular emphasize the import of the incorporation of the silent and psychological overtones to Neapolitan Realism; instead of solely providing a substrate for the conveyance of the narrative or action, the emphasis in subject matter couples with a sustained interest in perspective and light to create penetrating psychological studies of situations.⁴⁸ While no evidence has emerged to suggest that Degas had a direct relationship with Toma, either while in Naples or later in his life, the elements emphasized by Toma which resonate the structural principles of Neapolitan studies of Realism find repercussions in Degas' oeuvre.

The most striking example is an examination of Degas' *Interior* and his emphasis on the intense emotive power of the scene through sharp linear qualities, accent on light and the dramatic use of perspective and construction of space which together coalesce into a compressed, claustrophobic intensely emotive space.⁴⁹ (Figure A116) The principal

⁴⁷ Quoted from Luisa Martorelli, ed., *Domenico Morelli E Il Suo Tempo: 1823-1901 Dal Romanticismo Al Simbolismo* (Naples: Electa, 2005), 100.

⁴⁸ Elena Di Maio and Matteo Lafranconi, *Galleria Nazionale D'arte Moderna: Le Collezioni: Il Xix Secolo* (Milan: Electa, 2006), 122.

⁴⁹ For other scholarship on *The Interior*, see Theodore Reff, "Degas and the Literature of His Time - I," *The Burlington Magazine* 112, no. 810 (1970).

importance of the construction of a psychologically-appropriate space can be seen in an oil study for the composition of two successive open doorways whose space between is tightly compressed to convey the impossibility of passing between rooms, instead emphasizing an even greater sense of claustrophobia through the inability to navigate the space between the two opportunities for escape. (Figure A117) While in the final work Degas forgoes this compositional trope in favor of the device of the man physically blocking a closed door, its existence confirms Degas' attention to the aspects of psychological intensity that can be conveyed through the construction of spaces. Furthermore, in the final composition Degas reinforces the confines of the space through the construct of the mirror, which does not reflect a window or other suggestion of a world outside the walls. Instead it merely returns a reflection of the room and its limits, further emphasizing the claustrophobia of the scene and the intensity of the emotional response of the figures depicted within it.

Drawing on his own experiences, Toma's *L'Orfana*, painted in 1862, a few years prior to Degas' attention to subject matter conveys a similar emotional range through the construction of space. (Figure A118) In this work, Toma expresses the profound sadness experienced by a newly orphaned girl as she is overcome with emotion in a moment of devastating realization of the realities of the situation while standing at the foot of her mother's death bed. Discussing the conception of the work, Toma wrote:

...un giorno mentre me ne stavo tranquillamente alla finestra, posai gli occhi su di una graziosa ragazza vestita tutta di nero.
Pensai di fare un quadretto con quella bella figurina, e...dipinsi con essa un'orfana, che, dopo molto tempo, rivede gli abiti della madre. Trattai, con l'istessa altri vari soggettini... Il suo nome era Nannina....⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Quoted from *Civiltà Dell'ottocento Le Arti Figurative*, (Naples: Electa, 1997), 560.

The unmade bed and the chairs at its side subtly convey the events that transpired prior to this emotional moment captured on canvas, while the young girl's black attire confirms the finality and near proximity of the events. The death bed has not even been stripped of its linens, nor the chairs rearranged to create distance from the emotional impact of the event.

In a similar manner to *Luisa Sanfelice*, Toma pays close attention to the construction of space and use of light to further emphasize the subtle, yet crushing, emotive connotation of the work. He frames the closely cropped composition to include only the two walls adjacent to the bed, reinforcing the all-encompassing reality that the young orphan must now face. Her mother's death, symbolized by the unmade bed, is her only reality at the moment, and as such her world does not exist beyond these two adjacent walls. In addition, Toma's decision to cast the bed and chairs in shadow allows the viewer to discern additional layers of emotional depth, while perhaps concurrently inserting a minute possibility of recovery and optimism into the composition through the warm light highlighting the orphan. In *The Interior*, Degas utilizes his light in a similar manner to convey the emotional import through his illumination of the kneeling woman, the table behind her and the bed, while casting an ominous shadow of the man on the door.

The placement of the table and box at the center of the composition also finds resonance in works by Morelli, such as his *La Terrazza*, a study for *Storia di un paggio innamorato*. (Figure A119) While Morelli's work functions as more of a compositional study, devoid of emotive or narrative content, the aesthetic beauty of the strong perspectival organization of space and the contrast between the chair and stool which

function as still lifes in contrast to the stark walls of the terrace seem to have the distilled aesthetic qualities of Degas' composition within *The Interior*. My point here is not to suggest that Degas would have seen *La Terrazza*, or that it had a direct effect on his compositional choices in *The Interior*, rather that the aesthetic qualities outlined above find echo in both works, and suggest a parallel questioning of the purpose and aesthetic beauty of the organization of space and light which interested both Morelli, Toma and Degas.

The Neapolitan conception of space and use of light found its way, through the travels and discussions of artists, to Florence where artists such as Adriano Cecioni also experimented with the constructs to convey a more intellectualized emotive composition. Cecioni's *Interior with Figure* of also finds resonance in similar themes seen in Morelli, Toma and Degas' abovementioned works. (Figure A120) In a similar manner to Degas' study for *The Interior*, Cecioni utilizes a compression of space between two doorways – here one open and one closed – to create a sense of imprisonment and claustrophobia. Like Toma's orphan, Cecioni's woman is dressed in black and finds herself crumpling next to a freshly made bed, overcome with emotion, holding in her hands perhaps the linens that she just changed. Prefiguring Degas's later composition, directly in front of the woman is a stool on which lie an open sewing box and various accoutrements of sewing. Also in a similar manner to Degas' painting, the exact subject matter of the composition is ambiguous, but it is clear that the woman is in mourning for something lost and, similar to Toma's orphan, is overcome with emotion at the location of the bed which has sparked some memory.

As I have discovered, another reiteration of the work can be seen in the examination of a Fratelli Alinari stereoscopic photograph that depicts a cuckolded husband who confronts his adulterous wife while her lover peeks out from the closet. (Figure A121) The cropped bed, wallpapered interior, and abandoned chair in the center of the room finds perspectival and compositional similarity with Degas' composition. In addition, the abrupt transitions of Degas' painting – from fore to middle to background – find echo in the planar, stage-set divisions of space typical of a stereoscopic image.

The compositions by Morelli, Toma, Cecioni, Alinari and Degas find resonance in one another, and while archival evidence does not suggest that the artists were aware of the other's specific works while preparing their own compositions, the resonances found in their construction of space, composition and light suggest that they all find derivation from Neapolitan aesthetic principles and photographic techniques that were discussed both verbally and pictorially throughout the peninsula. In other words, the strong resonances between these artists' works suggest that they were all deeply engaged in similar topics of composition.

Florence

Degas arrived in Florence on 4 August 1858, and stayed that summer with his Aunt Laura and her husband Gennaro Bellelli at their apartment at 12 Piazza Maria Antonia.⁵¹ The piazza with its open spaces, grand facades and rectilinear plan is the most French in its design of all the piazzas in Florence, finding resonance in Parisian locales such as the Palais Royal. (Figure A122) It was created during the reign of the Grand

⁵¹ Letter from Degas René Hilaire, 13 August 1858. Edgar Degas, *Lettres De Degas* (Paris: Grasset, 1945). For a greater understanding of Degas' Florence, see map in Appendix H.

Duke Leopold II over the site of a vegetable garden known as 'Giardino di Barbano', and was named after the Grand Duchess Maria Antonia, second wife of Leopold II. It was renamed Piazza dell'Indipendenza in 1859 for the 27 April when people of Florence voted for the end of Lorraine rule and the annexation to the new Kingdom of Italy.⁵² It was in this piazza in 1859 that Leopold II, before heading into exile, left Florence in the hands of the people in the form of the crowd gathering in the Piazza Barbano.⁵³

As he was wont to do throughout his career, while in Florence Degas straddled the line between Academic art, associating with Viscoti, Cassioli and Alessandro Franchi, and the avant garde, by establishing lasting friendships with members of the Macchiaioli whom he encountered at the Caffè Michelangiolo.⁵⁴ More so than any other city, his time spent in Florence allowed him the opportunity to absorb important components of tradition stemming from his studies of early Renaissance sources in the museums and religious institutions throughout the city, but it also allowed him the opportunity to interact with contemporaneous practitioners, struggling with the same conundrums that he faced in his aesthetic development: namely how to utilize tradition in a manner that was appropriate to convey modern life. The conversations begun in the Caffè Michelangiolo provided the impetus for an examination and clarification of the foundational principles from which he would build his oeuvre.

Macchiaioli

⁵² Wall text, Monument to Ubaldino Peruzzi, Piazza Indipendenza, 10 January 2009.

⁵³ Degas would have just missed this important moment in history, as he returned to France for a brief period in March 1859.

⁵⁴ Beatrice Paolozzi Strozzi, "Degas E Firenze" (paper presented at the L'Idea di Firenze: Temi e Interpretazioni nell'arte straniera dell'Ottocento, Firenze, 1986).

The members of the Macchiaioli first called themselves the ‘Effettisti’, and the group was born out of Dominico Morelli, Saverio Altamura and Serafino De Tivoli’s trip to the Paris Exposition Universelle in 1855.⁵⁵ The trio returned to Florence, filled with ideas and demanding experimentation outside the strict codification of genres and a further experimentation into the nuances of light and its interplay in compositions. Odardo Borrani’s *Estasi di Santa Theresa* exemplifies this new-found emphasis on light outside the academic tradition. (Figure A123) The composition examines the function of light in a composition through its choice of subject matter: Bernini’s sculptural group and emphasis on the play of light in the design of the original sculpture. It is clear that Borrani chose the subject matter as an opportunity to examine the saturated palette provided by the variety of marbles included in Bernini’s chapel. The group that came together in Florence in the late 1850s and early 1860s included Giuseppe Abbati, Christiano Banti, Odoardo Borrani, Vincenzo Cabianca, Vito D’Ancona, Serafino De Tivoli, Giovanni Fattori, Silvestro Lega, Faffaello Seresi and Telemaco Signorini. (Figure A124)

The term ‘Macchiaioli’ first appeared in the text of an article entitled “Ciarle fiorentine”, written by Giuseppe Rigutini under the pseudonym ‘Luigi’ which appeared in the *Gazzetta del Popolo* on 3 November 1862. The article’s intention was to ridicule an article written by Telemaco Signorini, under the pseudonym ‘X’, entitled “Alcune parole sulla esposizione artistica delle sale della Società Promotrice” in *La Nuova Europa* on 19 October 1861. It is in Signorini’s article in which the term ‘*macchia*’ finds a definition:

⁵⁵ De Tivoli returned to Paris a number of times and in 1863 he exhibited in the Salon des Refusés. Between 1873-1890, he lived in Paris. He returned to Florence in 1890, where he lived in relative isolation until his death in 1892.

“none other than a too-determined method of chiaroscuro, and the result of the need felt by the artists of that time to emancipate themselves from the capital defect of the old school, which is an excessive transparency in the bodies that sacrifices the solidity and relief of its paintings.”⁵⁶

There is a sense of uncertainty in exactly what the term ‘*macchia*’ meant to these Ottocento Tuscan artists. The term was in use by at least the sixteenth century when Vasari used the word to connote the idea of sketch, and the term was used again to use a method by Titian in his late works.⁵⁷ Nancy Troyer gives a detailed description of the ottocento etymology of the term ‘*macchia*’:

‘*Macchia*’ in its most common meaning is ‘spot’, or ‘blotch’, usually carrying a negative connotation; also, the term is adopted for ‘underbrush, thicket, bushes’, either actual or in pictures. A small painting or sketch that succeeds well can be called a *bella macchia*, and the expression *mezza-macchia* is used for a mezzo-tint in which the shadows are not fully realized, or for an academic sketch or study in which the lights and darks are considerably simplified. Dictionaries from the nineteenth century to the present give *darsi alla macchia* and *stampara alla macchia* in normal usage, the former meaning to hide out, to ‘go on the lam’ in American underworld parlance, and the latter, to print clandestinely. One dictionary goes so far as to call a *macchiaiolo* a secret sinner, especially one given to unnatural vice. In the adjectival form, as in *porco macchiaiolo*, the meaning becomes ‘wild pig’, especially the variety hunted in the marshlands of the Tuscan Marmma. The ironic element in the articles cited above is that, according to nineteenth-century Florentine usage, in which a *macchiaiolo* can be a prankster who amuses himself at the expense of others and uses ridicule as his weapon, it was Rigutini who was being the *macchiaiolo*. The ridicule inherent in the nickname sprang also either from ignorance, or the ignoring, of the historic significance of the term *macchia* in the artistic vocabulary of Italy from the time of the Renaissance.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Quoted from Nancy Jane Gray Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900" (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1978), 3.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 10-11.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 4-5.

Writing in retrospect, the two major voices of the Macchiaioli, Cecioni and Martelli both also attempt to articulate the nuances of the term. Cecioni defines it in terms of use in the transcription of 'il vero' onto canvas:

Il vero results from *maccie* of *color* and of *chiaroscuro*, each one of which has its own value, which is measured by means of *relationship*. In every *macchia* this relationship has a double value: as light or dark, and as color. When one says: the tone is right as to color, but not as to value, it means it is too light or too dark, related to other tones.⁵⁹

Martelli, on the other hand, emphasizes the procedural aspects of *macchia*:

Everyone at that time who detached himself from the old creed and returned to the pure and antique traditions of art, studying it seriously, was busy finding the theory of *chiaroscuro* and the relationship of one color with another, whether they were found next to one another on the canvas on the same perspective plane or whether beside one another on the canvas but in different perspective planes; theory completely experimental that determines the *values* of the tines to be used in the painting, but which has no code where it can be shown in laws nor treatises from which it might be learned. Each one, seeking assiduously to reproduce the impressions of his own *vero*, little by little forms his own scale and his own tonality.⁶⁰

In summary, it is clear that there is little agreement on the exact definition and etymology of the term *macchia*. It is probable that the conception of the theory evolved over the course of the movement and was often personalized within the specific oeuvres of its practitioners. In addition in the case of Martelli and Cecioni, they attempted to codify the history of the Macchiaioli with the written theories on early experiments informed by later knowledge.

Macchiaioli literature suggests that the first attempts at the ottocento construction of *macchia* took place when Signorini and Cabianca painted together at La Spezia in

⁵⁹Adriano Cecioni, *Scritti E Ricordi*, ed. Gustavo Uzielli (Florence: Tipografia Domenicana, 1905).. Quoted from Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 47.

⁶⁰ Diego Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, ed. Boschetto Antonio (Firenze: Sansoni, 1952), 217.

1858. Signorini's *Merciaio della Spezia* is a small oil sketch on cardboard painted with an emphasis on chiaroscuro through rapid brushstrokes and a lack of emphasis on detail. (Figure A125) The work served as a preparatory sketch for a larger work exhibited at the Florentine Promotrice of 1859.⁶¹ (Figure A126)

Martelli writes of the public's reaction to the presentation of a sketch as a finished product:

The public became irritated with these demolishers who never gave complete paintings, who did not offer a synthesis of their thought as food for the erudite dissertations of the learned, and, furious, it bit them with the criticism of their journalists and condemned them ruthlessly through the ostracism of their purchases.⁶²

But as Martelli continues in another essay, the purpose of these sketches was an attempt to understand the function of light, its play across the natural scene, and a convincing reproduction of this transience through the sketch:

The first and most important part of the campaign thus ended, through which the secret of the light was almost reconquered in painting, and the plastic line had acquired a more real and more natural movement, there returned to the surface the eternal question that divides the painting from the study from nature.

To fall in love with a tonality presented by nature, translate it with color in such a way that in this translation might be reflected all the effects of nature itself and all the sensation that the soul of the artist has experienced, is he to make a painting or a study?

Difficult question, that for me is like another, whether blondes or brunettes are more beautiful...Coming to painting, I think that the painting must, in general, be a conception of the mind, such that theoretically speaking it should and might be done rather *di maniera* than copying; but with so large a dose of knowing that nature never comes to be sacrificed, as moving as the truth itself. This definition allows the facing of any subject matter whatever, the representation of any scene, and any dimension of painting.⁶³

⁶¹ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 37.

⁶² Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 218.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 210.

But as Cecioni concedes in an essay on Lega, it was impossible to create an *all'aperto* sketch without concessions to convention, “Even *sul vero* one makes reminiscences, because when one works one does not look at nature.”⁶⁴

Regardless, the import of the Macchiaioli – be it *all'aperto* sketches or finished studio works – is a dedication to the study of light and atmosphere for its own sake through the forsaking of convention and the incorporation of color and optical theory, particularly through the incorporation of white and black to denote light and its absence on canvas.⁶⁵ Furthermore, it is this interest and dedication that would have lasting effects on many artists with whom Degas interacted throughout his career. Such dedication can be seen in the flattened palette of works such as Cabianca’s *Pia de’ Tolomei condotta al castello Maremma* which combines utilizes a flattened composition, lacking any sense of chiaroscuro, with the Tuscan tradition of simplified figures, echoing the furtive steps towards the Renaissance, begun Giotto’s voluminous, yet simplified figures in the trecento. (Figure A127) Such pictorial experimentation lead to works composed solely for the purpose of examining the combination of light and form, exemplified in Abbati’s *Cloister* with its blocks of marble existing in the picture plane only as an excuse to study the effects of light upon them. (Figure A128)

As Norma Broude has pointed out, there is a tendency in art historical circles to disregard the Macchiaioli as ‘proto-Impressionists’ whose work was less brilliant than

⁶⁴ Cecioni, *Scritti E Ricordi*, 346.

⁶⁵ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 14-15.

their younger Parisian contemporaries.⁶⁶ One of the major points of contention is the writings of Adriano Cecioni, whose work functions as one of the histories of the group.⁶⁷ The essays, however well meaning in their attempts at unbiased recollection, were written in the 1880s, almost thirty years after the inception of the movement and after the establishment of the Impressionist movement and its influence on Cecioni through his contacts with Degas and other artists during his stays in Paris. With the Impressionists, the Macchiaioli did share the desire to capture their experiences of nature on canvas, a goal which at least initially depended on the quick and spontaneous sketch created *all'aperto*. Both groups were also concerned with how to effectively translate these sketches into a finished product. The balance between these two components - *all'aperto* and studio elements of the composition – and how that balance was to be achieved is where the groups differed. In addition, the work of the works Macchiaioli have an inherent sense of solidity and naivety, strongly influenced by their Tuscan artistic tradition, something that the Impressionist works are lacking.

Caffè Michelangiolo

While it is important to understand the aesthetic theories of the Macchiaioli, it is also important to understand the social environments in which these theories found a voice, and in the nineteenth century, the Mecca for artists and the birthplace of aesthetic ideas was the café. The Macchiaioli had the Caffè Michelangiolo. Located at 21 via Largo (today via Camillo Cavour), the café opened in 1845 and was purchased by

⁶⁶ Norma F. Broude, "The Macchiaioli As "Proto-Impressionists": Realism, Popular Science and the Re-Shaping of Macchia Romanticism, 1862-1886," *The Art Bulletin* 52, no. 4 (1970). See also Norma Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 10-11.

⁶⁷ Other written sources include the writings of Diego Martelli and those of Telemaco Signorini.

Odoardo Borrani a decade later, at which point it became a haven for artists and writers. In his book *Caricaturisti e Caricaturati di Caffè Michelangiolo*, Signorini identifies the beginning of the Macchiaioli's affair with the café: "Nel 1855 feci anch'io la mia prima comparsa al Michelangiolo insieme a Odoardo Borrani, e vennero con noi Vincenzo Cabianca e Cristiano Banti."⁶⁸ It remained a beacon for Florentine artistic creativity until it changed hands in 1866, at which point the new proprietor made it clear that he no longer appreciated the creatively-minded clientele. The café was made up of two rooms, the first for the 'usual' clients, while the back room was the domain of the loud, politically- and later artistically-interested patrons.

The at-times boisterous atmosphere of Michelangiolo, paired with the intimidating liberal, non-Academic bent to conversations created an intimidating environment that many non-engaged patrons avoided. These conversations were enlivened by something that was a custom of the period, and became a habit at caffè Michelangiolo: il pònce, a drink comprised of coffee and rum.⁶⁹ Like the reputation of absinthe in Paris in the nineteenth century, il pònce attained a scandalous reputation. Piero Bargellini writes of the pònce-influenced atmosphere at Macchiaioli:

Gli accademici, se avessero potuto, avrebbero libato ambrosia; i romantici erano ancora al caffè senza intrugli; i puristi, astemi, attingevano acqua nei chiostri silenti. Se passando da Via Larga venivano ai loro orecchi le rauche grida dei consumatori di pònci, accademici e puristi mutavano di marciapiede. Non era

⁶⁸ Telemaco Signorini, *Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo* (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1952). Quoted from Aldo Fiordelli, *Caffè Michelangiolo La Culla Dei Macchiaioli/the Cradle of the Macchiaioli* (Florence: Nuova Toscana Editrice, 2005), 11.

⁶⁹ The coffee was a lighter blend of Arabica beans than what is served in Italy today, and the rum was of a dark variety. Fiordelli, *Caffè Michelangiolo La Culla Dei Macchiaioli/the Cradle of the Macchiaioli*, 41-42.

così che si rendeva prestigio e onore all'arte italiana. Né l'Italia era donna da corteggiare in simili ambienti.⁷⁰

Some light can be shed on the amount of pònce consumed at caffè Michelangiolo through an examination of Signorini's relation of a humorous exchange:

'Vediamo se indovino quanti ponci ho bevuto oggi?' chiedeva uno degli smargiassi del Caffè, 'Spaccacrani' per gli amici. 'Cinquanta' lo provocavano quelli. E allora lui: 'Eh! Che esagerazioni!... ti par possibile che un uomo possa bere cinquanta ponci in un giorno senza ammazzarsi?' 'O sentiamo via quanti ne hai bevuti' 'Quarantotto', rispondeva lui.⁷¹

The café functioned much in the same manner as Caffè Greco in Rome – as a gathering spot for artists and writers in the city, and a locale where they could freely congregate and discuss contemporaneous issues of aesthetics, politics and other current events. Also like Caffè Greco, it functioned as a Mecca for artists on their visits to the city. As Martelli notes, "Every artist of Italy in passing through Florence stopped in this cenacolo."⁷² In a later article on the café, Signorini sets up the idea of the constantly evolving, multinational community of the caffè:

Così le relazioni ch'essi si erano fatte nei diversi paesi italiani vennero fra noi, e allora il caffè Michelangiolo presentò davvero un aspetto imponente, che non bastando più la stanza, il caffè stesso rigurgitava d'artisti; vi erano Americani e Spagnuoli, Inglesi e Francesi; ogni momento un pranzo, quasi ogni sera una cena, ogni arrivo ed ogni partenza era pretesto sufficiente per riunirci e protestarci amicizia.⁷³

It was within these walls that Tuscan artists, aided by the impetus of their constantly shifting international milieu, pondered the issues surrounding the need for a novel

⁷⁰ Signorini, *Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo*. Fiordelli, *Caffè Michelangiolo La Culla Dei Macchiaioli/the Cradle of the Macchiaioli*, 45.

⁷¹ Signorini, *Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo*. Quoted from Piero Bargellini, *Caffè Michelangiolo* (Florence: Vallecchi, 1944), 166.

⁷² Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 203.

⁷³ Telemaco Signorini, "Il Caffè Michelangiolo," *Gazzettino delle Arti del Disegno*, no. 22 (1867): 174.

national aesthetic. Italy was in the midst of an artistic crisis. It was still the open air museum to which artists flocked for inspiration, but its domination by the Austrian Empire in the first half of the century and its factionalization allowed for no contemporary unified identity. In addition the gradual weakening of the Church and the aristocracy as patrons of the arts, and void of a wealthy middle class to take its place provided few avenues as audience for the contemporary artists. The Risorgimento, aside from its political ramifications also called for a novel Italian identity through reclamation of the visual arts, and it was in places such as the Caffè Michelangiolo that such possibilities were pondered. As Broude notes, the café “might be regarded as a microcosm of that broader process of social and political fusion that would soon begin to bind the country together as a whole.”⁷⁴

The café was often characterized by lively discussion of contemporary artistic issues and the international atmosphere provided the Tuscan artists with the desire to rebel against the moribund aesthetic principles and ‘foreign’ cultural standards in which they were trained at the Academy.⁷⁵ Not surprisingly, many of the artists decided to rebel against the formal Academic tradition that was seen as a French imposition of aesthetic ideals on the Italian sensibility. These artists attempted to reclaim the ideals of Italian painting through a return to the solid formal structures of the past, admired in the works of Rembrandt, Velasquez, Caravaggio, Tintoretto, Ribera, and Tiepolo. They found the emphasis on the quality of light found in the oeuvres of the aforementioned artists to be the quality that was lacking in contemporaneous official art. Concurrently, the artists

⁷⁴ Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 2.

⁷⁵ See for example the discussion of the Demidoff collection: Telemaco Signorini, “Il Caffè Michelangiolo”, *Gazzettino delle arti del disgno*, 15 June 1867.

were inspired by the emphasis on light and its interpretations on canvas in the works of French Romantic painters such as Decamps, Bonheur and the Barbizon school. Through an emulation of the aesthetic principles found in these artists' oeuvres, the Tuscan artists began to experiment with the translation of the medium of light in ways that would eventually lead them to the aesthetic principles that were foundational to the Macchiaioli.⁷⁶

Rallying against *sogettoni*, or the typical subject matter of the Academy, the Macchiaioli promoted *soggetini* in the form of the inconsequential realities of contemporary life in the city and country. Cecioni was not being ironic when he wrote, "Il ciuco che raglia fu tentato da molti; ma furono tante le difficoltà incontrate in quel soggetto che, nonostante le insistenti e replicate prove, nessuno è riuscito fin'ora a farlo bene. E ciò cosa vuol dire? Che il soggetto è arduo."⁷⁷ Rather such a statement reflects upon their attempts to faithfully capture all the nuances of reality. Bargellini concludes:

A questo punto gli artisti del Caffè Michelangiolo, non potendo raccogliere nei loro studi tutta la feccia della città, pensarono a qualcosa di più arrischiato. Sprangarono le boemesche soffitte, e trasferirono loro studi addirittura nel ghetto, nei postriboli, nei manicomi e persino negli ergastoli! Anche di ciò lo scandalo fu grande, e riaccese la disputa sul brutto in arte.⁷⁸

Cecioni's *Il cane indelicato* is an overt reference to this upending of traditional subject matter. His depiction of a defecating dog flies in the face of the gravitas of traditional subject matter. (Figure A129)

In his work *Caricaturisti e caricaturati al Caffè Michelangiolo*, Signorini notes the presence of Degas at the café, along with Tissot, Lafenestre and a 'Morot' (most

⁷⁶ Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 3.

⁷⁷ Quoted from Fiordelli, *Caffè Michelangiolo La Culla Dei Macchiaioli/the Cradle of the Macchiaioli*, 47.

⁷⁸ Bargellini, *Caffè Michelangiolo*, 182.

certainly a misspelling of Moreau.)⁷⁹ The café provided the budding artist with an opportunity to at least listen to the political discussions that would run rampant within its walls.⁸⁰ As Broude notes:

...despite the political radicalism of the Caffè, the young Degas nevertheless chose to frequent it, perhaps upon this occasion taking advantage of the absence of paternal supervision briefly to explore and to spread his wings in Florence in a way that might not have been possible at home.⁸¹

⁷⁹ Degas is listed amongst the first visitors to the café. The list includes Borrani, Cabianca, Banti, Martelli, Morelli, Celentano, Degas, Morot (Moreau), Tissot and Lafenestre. Telemaco Signorini, *Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo* (Florence: 1893), 77. He is mentioned again in the section regarding foreign visitors to the café, including Americans, Austrians, English and French (Degas, Morot (Moreau), Tissot and Lafenestre). Signorini, *Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo*, 121. Visitors from other Italian cities are also mentioned. There may be some discrepancy between the dating of Degas' travels and Signorini's recollections. As Troyer rightly points out, the book was written almost four decades later, and thus it is not surprising that there might be some discrepancies. See Nancy Gray Troyer, "Telemaco Signorini and Macchiaioli Giapponismo: A Report of Research in Progress," *The Art Bulletin* 66, no. 1 (1984): 139 n 19.

Georges LaFenestre was New Orleans-born poet and critic of French art and later curator at the Louvre and member of the Insitut. He was a habitual summer visitor of Martelli's Castiglioncello between 1861-65.

⁸⁰ Degas has very little to say on the topic of politics. The following three examples are the only references found on the subject:

In a letter to Moreau, on the subject of Moreau's upcoming trip to Naples in July 1859, Degas tells Moreau that it is not a dangerous situation, despite the political unrest, in Naples, noting that his brother and sister are in Naples. He also notes that he wrote to his uncle Achille to inquire about the situation. He then goes on to recommend an appropriate hotel for Moreau while he is in Naples and encourages Moreau to call upon his family while there. Letter from Degas to Gustave Moreau, 26 Juin 1859. Reproduced in Theodore Reff, "More Unpublished Letters of Degas," *The Art Bulletin* 51, no. 3 (1969): 285-86.

According to Valéry, Degas was "more contemptuous of opinion, more ignorant of affairs, more impervious to money considerations than anyone in the world, [he] assumed from his own viewpoint that government ought to function with a purity and style which the real conditions of power will never allow." Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, 53.

Finally, Vollard recounts a story that Degas once told while discussing the revolution of 1848: "I remember a story my father used to tell. As he was coming home one day, he ran across a group of men who were firing on troops from an ambush. During the excitement a daring onlooker went up to one of the snipers who seemed to be a poor marksman. He took the man's gun and brought down a soldier, then handed it back to its owner who motioned as if to say, 'No, go on. You're a better shot than I am.' But the stranger said, 'No, I'm not interested in politics.'" See Ambroise Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, trans. Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Greenberg Publisher, Inc., 1927), 55.

⁸¹ Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 256. Broude has equated the radical republicanism of the followers of Mazzini at the Caffè Michelangiolo with the political position of Degas's uncle Baron Bellelli, an exile from Bourbon Naples, but Bellelli was actually a pro-Cavour moderate who favored annexation by Piedmont, and by extension of Cavour's ideas, was an enemy of Mazzini and popular government

On an artistic level, Broude discounts the preoccupations with Barbizon Romanticism that abounded throughout the conversations in the café, suggesting that what she sees as a retardataire preoccupation would have provided few revelations to the artist. Instead Broude points to the Macchiaioli interest in the caricature and photography which would be of interest to the young artist.⁸² On the contrary, one should keep in mind the concentric circles of influence. While such discussions might not be novel to the artistic mind of Degas, such conversations could have provided a new context for issues dealt with in the constructs of Barbizon aestheticism. Degas' attention to both the principles of the Barbizon school, as well as photography and caricature will be dealt with shortly.

Diego Martelli and the Macchiaioli

One of the most frequent visitors to the Caffè Michelangiolo was Diego Martelli. Born into a highly intellectual and liberal family in Prato, he intermittently studied the natural sciences at the University of Pisa between the years of 1856 and 1861. His drawing teacher at University, Annibale Gatti, introduced him to the Caffè Michelangiolo and to members of the Macchiaioli around the same period.⁸³ His family life predisposed him to liberal leanings throughout his life. Prohibited French publications found their way into the Martelli household in Prato, and he comments on how the repercussions of this framed his liberal inclinations:

⁸² Ibid. Phoebe Pool does suggest that Degas' interactions with the concepts of Realism through the Macchiaioli would have had repercussions on his work, but is over reductive in her argument, suggesting that it was in Italy that Degas had his first exposure to these aesthetic tropes, which he would have ignored because of his political persuasions and devotion to Ingres. See Phoebe Pool, "Some Early Friends of Degas," *Apollo* (May 1964).

⁸³ Efrem Gisella Calingaert. "Martelli, Diego." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T054613> (accessed January 25, 2009).

By contraband, a few issues at a time, there came to the house the numbers of a French newspaper, perhaps the *Débats*...and in those days a letter entrusted to the discretion of the rural postman gave notice to friends outside Prato that the issues had arrived. The next day, not from one but from many vehicles sprang those learned priests and fervent laymen, come together to hear the reading, together with Florentine friends, of those exciting and liberal pages...I, not a young man but still a child...nourished myself on the patriotic and artistic enthusiasm of the honorable company the frequented my father's house.⁸⁴

In 1861 Martelli's father passed away, leaving him the estate of Castiglioncello, south of Livorno. The estate was made up of more than 800 acres of shoreline, woods, vineyards, gardens, a main house, a smaller house, stalls, and various outbuildings.⁸⁵ (Figure A130)

It became a meeting place for the group of painters, who would often spend their summers there, sketching and painting. Regular visitors included Giuseppe Abbati, Telemaco Signorini, Odoardo Borrani, Raffaello Sernesi, Vincenzo Cabianca, Giovanni Fattori, Federico Zandomenighi, Giovanni Boldini and the art dealer Luigi Pisani.

Martelli's position in respect to the Macchiaioli during this period at Castiglioncello was a precarious one. In a letter to Uzielli he admits:

I know many of our young celebrities, and I realize that in my position as a well-off person who is a vagabond with a sharp tongue, I have some power over all of them. It has fallen to me to play the part of the jester who is also fooled, a No-man who nonetheless sometimes seems to bend a brain in one direction rather than another and who may have some paternal responsibility for many works that bear someone else's name.⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 199.

⁸⁵ Today Castiglioncello is known as Castello Pasquini. The current structure was begun by Barone Lazzaro in 1899, after purchasing the land from Martelli. It is built upon the original structure, keeping the Medici tower.

⁸⁶ Letter from Diego Martelli to Uzielli. Quoted in Piero Dini, "Diego Martelli, the Macchiaioli, and the Impressionists," in *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting*, ed. Roberta Olson (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1992), 73.

There is no surviving evidence that Degas visited Castiglioncello, and his acquaintance and fellow French citizen Georges Lafenestre did not begin habitually summering at there until 1861, but the possibility still remains that Degas did visit the villa.

Martelli's methodological approach to art criticism was one that was inspired by the theories of Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and Hippolyte Taine in that art is a product of the coalescing of biological inheritance, environmental conditions and social evolution. Echoing their theories even further, Martelli placed emphasis on the tenants of Realism, and was particularly fond of French painting, on which he wrote extensively. He took four trips to Paris, and on his last trip as a correspondent to the Exposition Universelle of 1878 for a number of Italian journals, he made the acquaintance of a number of important personalities, including Manet and Pissarro, as well as reestablishing his friendship with Degas. He perceptively articulated the distinguishing characteristics of modernity found in the oeuvres of Degas and Manet, and these assessments belie his discernment as a critic. His lecture "Gli Impressionisti," delivered at the Circolo Filologico in Livorno after his return to Italy in 1879 and later published, is distinguished amongst Ottocento art criticism for its lucid insights into Impressionist techniques and scientific reasoning.⁸⁷

Telemaco Signorini

Another artist who befriended Degas during his stay in Florence, and remained friends with the Parisian artist throughout his life was Telemaco Signorini. (Figure A131) Hailing from a family entrenched in Tuscan artistic tradition, as both Signorini and his brother Egisto studied under their father Giovanni, who was employed by the Austrian Grand Dukes of Florence to paint topographical views and regional genre scenes.

⁸⁷ Diego Martelli, *Gli Impressionisti* (Pisa: Tipografia Vannucchi, 1880).

Signorini's first love, however, was literature and he spent four years studying at the Scuola degli Scolopi in Florence, leaving in 1852 to return to the visual arts. In 1855 Vito D'Ancona introduced Signorini, Christiano Banti and Vincenzo Cabianca to the Caffè Michelangiolo. Even after his return to painting, the ink never ceased to flow and his memoir, *Caricaturisti e caricaturati al Caffè Michelangiolo* provides a personal memoir of the Macchiaioli. In its pages, he offers clues to the Florentine group's struggle with the burdens of modernity through their reactions works by French artists in the Demidoff collection. And it was through the Demidoff collection, the collection of Prince Peter Troubetzkoy and through the reminiscences of artists that attended the 1855 Exposition Universelle, that Signorini was first introduced to the works of Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps. Decamps' works and their predilections for strong chiaroscuro effects made a strong impression on Signorini and other members of the Macchiaioli.⁸⁸

Signorini began travelling in 1856, first visiting Venice and northern Italy for six months, and returned again to the region with his father in 1858. In 1859 Signorini enlisted with Odoardo Borrani, Adriano Cecioni and Diego Martelli against the Austrians in the Lombardian campaign. During this time, he returned to his art, his head and sketchbook filled with military scenes. He revisited battle sites after the fact to sketch in the *all'aperto* style, as seen in his study of the battle at Solferino and also in the finished work. (Figures A132-133) His study of the battle site conveys his working method, evidenced through the methodical reproduction of the setting, a careful balance of the domed church and surrounding buildings with the sky, offset by his looser handling of the soldiers. The work concurrently conveys Signorini's sense of equilibrium between

⁸⁸ Nancy Gray Troyer. "Signorini, Telemaco." Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online. 25 Jan. 2009. <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T078659>>.

steadfast surroundings and the chaos of military conflict. In addition, it gives nod to his process, a studied meticulous composition of the landscape elements and the insertion of his transient memories of the skirmish. The finished painting gives greater emphasis to the sfumato-esque characteristics of the scene, imparting a sense of instability throughout the entire pictorial plane.

Directly after an exhibition of two of his paintings in the Promotrice of Turin, Signorini made his first trip to Paris in 1861, with Cabianca, Banti and Banti's wife. During their trip they attended the Salon, an exhibition of works by Barbizon artists and met Constant Troyon, Corot and Rousseau.⁸⁹ Signorini reflects upon the import that these experiences had on the aesthetic formation of the Macchiaioli in his *Caricaturisti*:

Il primo, fra gli amici del caffè, che si portasse a Londra e a Parigi per la esposizione del 1855, e al suo ritorno fra noi, propugnando le più progressiste idee sull'arte di quel tempo, fu l'iniziatore dei violenti chiaroscuri che aveva ammirati in Decamps, in Troyon e in Rosa Bonheur da esser chiamato il papà della macchia.⁹⁰

Emboldened by conversations taking place at the Caffè Michelangiolo, Signorini, Cabianca and Banti spent the summer of 1858 at La Spezia, in the Liguria region of northern Italy, studying chiaroscuro effects that would coalesce into Macchiaioli aesthetics, emphasizing tonal structure, pattern and transition at the cost of local color and detail; ideas exemplified in Signorini's *Market at La Spezia*, a small oil sketch on cardboard, painted with an emphasis on tonal relationships conveyed through rapid

⁸⁹ Another source for the influence of Corot on the Macchiaioli comes from Giovanni "Nino" Costa (Rome 1826-Pisa 1903). Costa was a Roman painter, very strongly influenced Corot whom he met on the latter's visit to Italy in 1843. He became part of a larger artistic community in Ariccia after 1849 that included Böcklin and Leighton. He moved to Florence in 1859 and began to frequent the caffè Michelangiolo, where he added to discussions on painting *all'aperto*, but his own aesthetic held more closely to that of his friend Leighton and the Pre-Raphaelites, than to the social undertones of the Macchiaioli. See exhibition catalogue from *Da Corot ai Macchiaioli al simbolismo Nino Costa e il paesaggio dell'anima*, held at Castello Pasquini, Castiglioncello 19 July – 1 November 1990.

⁹⁰ Signorini, *Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo*, 88.

brushstrokes. The work served as a preparatory sketch for the aforementioned larger painting exhibited at the Florentine Promotrice of 1859.⁹¹ (Figures A125-126) As he would articulate later in his life, for Signorini great art demands, “non pas une culture d'histoire ou une imagination d'inventeur, mais une observation scrupuleuse et exacte des formes infinies et des caractères du monde qui nous est contemporain.”⁹² The trio continued their studies with a trip to Paris in 1861. During their trip, they attended the Salon, visited an exhibition of works by Barbizon artists and met Troyon, Corot and Rousseau.

After his visits to Paris, Signorini assumed a new role – that of a moving catalyst. He was, as Martelli notes, someone who “fills himself with the ideas of someone else and makes them his own like a traveling merchant sells objects bought from a wholesaler....”⁹³ His educational background and extensive travels predisposed Signorini to seek out European trends and foreign visitors to Florence, and thus it is not surprising that it was Signorini who first noted another cultured, well travelled young painter in their midst at the Caffè Michelangiolo – Degas. First acquainted with Degas during the his sojourn in Florence in 1858, the French artist introduced Signorini to the aesthetics of Japanese prints, and when Mary Cassatt planned a trip to the Tuscan city, it was to Signorini that Degas wrote, requesting his kindness in receiving the American Impressionist.

⁹¹ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 37.

⁹² Quoted from Phoebe Pool, "Degas and Moreau," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963).

⁹³ Letter from Martelli to Matilda Gioli, 1 June 1878. Quoted from Troyer, "Telemaco Signorini and Macchiaioli Giapponismo: A Report of Research in Progress," 137 n 11.

Signorini never left his literary leanings behind when he embraced the visual arts. Through his various reviews for Italian art journals, such as Martelli's *Gazzettino delle arti del disgenio* and his memoir of caffè Michelangiolo, *Caricaturisti e caricaturati al caffè Michelangiolo*, Signorini functioned – along with Martelli – as one of the Macchiaioli's major voices. He indulged his creativity in verse through the 1886 publication of *Le 99 Discussioni Artistiche*, under the anagramic penname Enrico Gasi Molteni.⁹⁴ The tome includes engravings by L. Cipriani, the frontispiece including a fantastical dragon, while the interior text features historiated initials in the manner of illuminated manuscripts. These historiated initials contain the figure of a bespectacled old man, perhaps Signorini himself, behind the first letter in the modified sonnet, while a nude female figure holds a flowing piece of drapery, within which are hidden Signorini's initials. (Figure A134) The sonnets are written on a variety of subject matter, all relating to the arts – ranging from sonnets on specific individuals to larger aesthetic ideas. As a whole, they function – like the visual products of the Macchiaioli – as a critique of the status quo in the Italian academic system. Sonnet forty-four, “Un Professore” summarizes this theme:

Cià v'era fra i maestri incliti e rari,
 professore in disegno ed in pennello,
 un tal, che correggendo agli scolari,
 tirava i piombi col suo vecchio ombrello.
 Uno scolar, che aveva perso il cervello
 a cercar delle pieghe in modi vari,
 il professore vide entrar bel bello,
 solenne,
 pettoruto e pari pari.
 - Con questo - disse e trasse il fazzoletto -

⁹⁴ Telemaco [Molteni Signorini, Enrico Gasi, pseud.], *Le 99 Discussioni Artistiche* (Florence: 1886). The copy in formerly owned by Martelli is inscribed: “All’ amico Diego Martelli/Signorini”. Biblioteca Marucelliana, Firenze, B° 12.350

tante pieghe le fo su questa mano
 che di vestir gli apostolico scommetto. -
 E disse a un tal, che chiese in modo urbano
 se varia dipinta Venere sul letto:
 - Non son quel pittor porco del Tiziano.⁹⁵

Giovanni Fattori

Giovanni Fattori was born in Livorno and studied there under the religious and genre painter Giuseppe Baldini until 1846 when he moved to Florence and lived with one of Baldini's ex-pupils, Constantino Mosti. (Figure A135) He briefly attended the school of Giuseppe Bezzouili and then, late in the year, he enrolled in classes at the Accademia. Like Degas, Fattori did not fit into the Academic regimen, preferring to read novels recounting medieval themes by authors such as Ugo Fucoli and Walter Scott to the rigors of Academic study. This early interest in medieval fiction provided the basis for his early works and a sustained interest in the depiction of military events – historical and contemporary. In 1846-49, during the Tuscan anti-Austrian movement, Fattori was prevented by his family from enlisting, so instead he distributed pamphlets for the conspirators. After the war of liberation in 1849, Fattori continued his studies at the Accademia until 1853 and began to frequent the Caffè Michelangiolo.

In these early years, Fattori had a studio on the Piazza Barbano and lived with the sculptor Giovanni Paganucchi on Via Nazionale. He painted with Andrea Gastaldi, a painter from Piedmont, which resulted in the creation of his first *all'aperto* landscapes, and around 1857 he was introduced to the Ingresque aesthetics by fellow Livornian

⁹⁵ Telemaco [Molteni Signorini, Enrico Gasi, pseud.], "Un Professore," in *Le 99 Discussioni Artistiche* (Florence: 1886).

Enrico Pollastrini.⁹⁶ Works such as *La Rotonda dei bagni Palmieri* also suggest possible influences of Boudin on the developing oeuvre of Fattori, specifically in the shared characteristics of a small horizontal format and the manner of insertion of figures into the landscape. (Figure A136) In 1859, Fattori came under the formative guidance of Giovanni Costa, when the established painter visited Fattori's studio.

During Degas' intermittent stays in Florence in 1858-60, Fattori befriended the budding painter.⁹⁷ Broude notes that at the time of their meeting, both Degas and Fattori were in the process of resolving their formal training, which provided them with the observational skills necessary for recording novel depictions of modern life.⁹⁸ The formal demands of their training as history painters provided them with the proficiency to record contemporary life through their artistic practice. Broude observes that, aside from obvious differences in theme:

...each, in his own milieu, depicted individuals forced to cope with a modern world of loneliness, alienation and change. And in a certain sense, each, in his concern to record and document life around him, remained true to an earlier and more traditional concept of the responsibility and position of the artist as the painter of 'history.'⁹⁹

In his later writings, Fattori also reflects on this idea of the parallel narratives of Academic and non-Academic art:

⁹⁶ Paul Nicholls. "Fattori, Giovanni." Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online. 27 Jan. 2009 <<http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T027656>>.

⁹⁷ Baccio Maria Bacci, one of Fattori's late students also speaks of a friendship between Fattori and Degas. He also spoke of a portrait (now lost) that Degas painted of Fattori. See Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 249.

⁹⁸ Academic training weighing heavily on Degas' mind throughout his stay in Italy, as evidenced in planned compositions such as that in Nb 7 p 3 of the Vasari-derived story of Giotto drawing one of his flock (here a goat), while Cimabue looks on. The figure of Giotto is clearly a pose derived from one of his life drawing sessions (Sale 69a). Cimabue is shown again leaning against a tree with his arms folded.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*, 260.

Non sono esclusivo di quella scuola o di altra. Rispetto tutte le manifestazioni come per me sono degni di rispetto coloro i quali appartengono con le loro opere ad un'arte retrospettiva. Essi pure hanno portato la loro pietra al grande edificio artistico, se pure lo crediamo, nel secolo presente, in progresso. Io sono vecchio ma nell'arte mi sento ancora giovine ed è perciò che amo i giovani che tentano con entusiasmo perché io pure appartenni alla falange rivoluzionaria dei Macchiaioli. Dunque che i giovani lavorino, tentino, e se carderanno, carderanno sempre da eroi e se vinceranno io non sarò fra quelli che li riceva indietro. Gli antichi, i quattrocentisti e i trecentisti e Raffaello e Leonardo e Donatello e Michelangiolo ed altri saranno sempre da guardarsi e adorarsi, ma non mai da imitarsi – per coloritori i veneti.¹⁰⁰

During the time spent together, there is a similarity in the choices that Degas and Fattori made in their process of copying from Renaissance compositions, particularly their focus on what Broude calls the 'marginal fragments,' concentrating on formal rather than thematic problems.¹⁰¹ While Fattori must have undertaken a number of studies after masters on his own, the few extant studies by Fattori can be dated to 1858-59, the time of his acquaintance with Degas. Evidence of their friendship survives in a sketch of Degas undertaken by Fattori during Degas' second stay in Florence in April 1860.¹⁰² (Figure A137)

As mentioned above, French troops landed at Livorno in May of 1859 and set up camp Cascine Gardens. It is probable that Degas accompanied Fattori on his excursions to the military encampment, perhaps even smoothing the way for the Florentine artist to sketch. In Degas' notebooks from the 1858-59 Florentine sojourn are a number of

¹⁰⁰ Giovanni Fattori, *Scritti Autobiografici Editi E Inediti*, ed. Francesca Errico (Rome: De Luca, 1980), 68.

¹⁰¹ Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 253.

¹⁰² This work was identified by Broude. See Norma Broude, "An Early Friend of Degas in Florence: A Newly-Identified Portrait Drawing of Degas by Giovanni Fattori," *The Burlington Magazine* 115, no. 848 (1973).

sketches devoted to soldiers, a theme uncommon in Degas' oeuvre but prominent in Fattori's production from 1859 onwards.¹⁰³

The artistic dialogue between Fattori and Degas is clearly seen in a comparison of Fattori's *Portrait of Cousin Argia* and Degas' *Portrait of the Princess de Metternich*, which share similar formal characteristics in the three-quarter view, informal pose, light tonality and flattening of forms influenced by Japonisme, and relationship between both works and a photograph by Disdéri of the Princess.¹⁰⁴ (Figures A114, A138-139) The acute experimentation with tonality mirrors contemporary conversations at Caffè Michelangiolo, furthering the circles of exchange that find fruition in the pair of portraits.¹⁰⁵ Degas made a sketch after another Disdéri photograph, with notation in the margin that identifies the source. (Figure A140) Disdéri had an exhibition in Rue Drouot in December 1861, most likely the source of this sketch, but it is probable that Degas and Fattori were familiar with the portrait photographer's work while Degas was in Florence, and the later sketch is suggestive of a continued dialogue once Degas returned to Paris.¹⁰⁶ Such similarities suggest not only a formal artistic dialogue but an exchange of information during the creative process.

There is a similarity in Degas and Fattori's early portraits. Both are working from the same tradition; the sitters have an intensity of gaze, and as such suggest a connection

¹⁰³ Nb 12 p 68-71, 84, 97. Reff points out, their presence reflects the immanent French/Austrian invasion of Italy in 1859. See *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* vol. 1 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 77. and Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 255.

¹⁰⁴ Broude suggests that it might have been through Degas that Fattori had access to Japanese prints. Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 260.

¹⁰⁵ Matteucci, Monati and Spalluti, *Giovanni Fattori: Dipinti 1854-1906*. Quoted from Luciano Bernardini, *La Cugia Argia: Pistoia, Giovanni Fattori E I Carducci* (Livorno, Italy: Books & Co., 2007), 42-43.

¹⁰⁶ "Exposition Photographie De Disdéri," *Le Charivari*, 13 December 1861.

with the artist. Degas' *La Savoiarada* painted shortly after his return from Italy, is similar in construction to *Cousin Argia* and *Princess Metternich*, Fattori's conception of portraits in general and also finds resonance in the genre scenes of Italian women that will be discussed presently. (Figure A141) Fattori's *Portrait of the First Wife* exhibits many similarities to the concepts explored while the two were working together, particularly in its warm palette, three quarter composition, flattened surfaces and the intense gaze of the sitter. (Figure A142) Fattori returns to this compositional trope a quarter-century later in his *Portrait of the Second Wife*. In the work he positions her in a three-quarter pose, this time in a mirror image of his first wife, in front of a neutral background, directly engaging with the viewer. (Figure A143) While the later portrait exhibits a greater focus on three-dimensionality, similarities in palette and pose suggest that Fattori revisited a process of portraiture explored in the 1860s, and as such provides an example of the repercussions of the Fattori and Degas' time spent together providing a foundational aesthetic construct from which each artist would build and nuance his own later works.

An examination of Degas and Fattori's portraits from this period falls closely into line with the Ingresque emphasis on disegno and form, filtered through the works of Antonio Ciseri and his followers, prevalent in Florence at the time. Ciseri's portraits place emphasis on the figure by putting them in a neutral setting, allowing full concentration of the viewer to focus on the nuances of design and line so emphasized in the compositions. Ciseri's *Ritratto di Antonio Tommasi* illustrates the Italian's debt to the French portraitist, particularly in the intricate patterns of line, use of highlight and shadow, and smooth surfaces of the composition. (Figure A144) Degas and Fattori's images share with Ciseri the intention of exploring such aesthetic schemas. The

opportunity to experiment with the Ingresque components of portraiture – either from the source or through Italian filters – provided lessons that the two artists took to heart and moved beyond in later compositions.

Echoes of Fattori and Degas' shared dialogue can be seen in later works, created long after the two had fallen out of contact, such as Fattori's *Il Pittore Eugenio Cecconi che dipinge*.¹⁰⁷ The work illustrates a pictorial construct that Fattori was quite fond of, figures lost in activity (social or otherwise) in an outdoor setting. This composition, and a similar portrait of Silvestro Lega, follows in the pictorial tradition of Velázquez, Rembrandt and others in the depiction of an artist at work. (Figure A145) The viewer is allowed a glimpse of the canvas and the back of the sitter, which acts as a rückenfigur, functioning as a meta-portrait of Fattori. A similar approach can be seen in a number of Degas' portraits, including *Portrait of Manzi* or his *Collector of Prints* (Figures A112, A146), in which both subjects are absorbed in their respective activities. Such examples speak to Degas and Fattori's parallel attention to tradition and innovation within the genre of portraiture.

While Degas maintained or renewed his friendships with a number of Florentines met during 1858-60, there is no evidence of any further contact between Degas and Fattori after Degas' departure from Florence in April 1860. Like Degas' relationship with Moreau during the same period, it seems that Fattori and Degas spent a limited but meaningful time together during Degas' stay in Florence that affected both artists' oeuvres and aesthetic sensibilities, but that in the end they needed to move beyond the shared foundations onto separate paths. These separate paths did find themselves not

¹⁰⁷ Giovanni Fattori, *Il Pittore Eugenio Cecconi che dipinge*, 1878-80, Oil on canvas, Private Collection

divergent, but parallel. As Broude rightly notes, aside from obvious differences in theme in Degas and Fattori's paintings, "each, in his own milieu, depicted individuals forced to cope with a modern world of loneliness, alienation and change. And in a certain sense, each, in his concern to record and document life around him, remained true to an earlier and more traditional concept of the responsibility and position of the artist as the painter of 'history.'"¹⁰⁸ Both artists approached the conundrum of the depiction of contemporary life, reconciling official modes of representation with their own aesthetic notions. Their choice of subject matter, Broude continues, is significant in that horse racing and military scenes represented aspects of "modernity not so far removed in its pictorial possibilities and implications from the processions, parades and battle scenes of history paintings and a more traditional conception of high art."¹⁰⁹

Particular examples emphasize the shared underpinnings of their mature oeuvres, particularly evident in the works of Fattori. His *Lo Stoffato* depicts a horse in motion where the dry surface of the paint, and use of an intense red, aids the sense of desolation and despair. (Figure A147) Such attention, like the mature works of Degas, suggests an awareness of the abilities of the medium to further the meaning of the work. It is not that such realization came to fruition while the two were working together in 1858-60, but the shared sustained interest in the canon, as well as the processes and nuances of media provided a similar foundation from which both artists would work from throughout their careers – regardless of a departure of aesthetic intention.

¹⁰⁸ Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 265.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 253.

Fattori and Degas' attempt to absorb both historical and contemporaneous aesthetic trends, and produce works that, while based in precedent, were singularly their own. Fattori's words in his *Opinioni sull'Arte* (c. 1904) echo this trend, and also find resonance in Degas' prompts in later years to artists struggling to find their own aesthetic voice. Words that seem to echo their shared experiences almost a decade prior to Fattori's exaltation:

Scrupoloso osservatore della natura in tutte le sue manifestazioni, scrupoloso osservatore degli animali, uomini o bruti, in tutte le loro manifestazioni siano di qualunque genere. La scelta dei soggetti: o insufficienti vale a dire di poca importanza drammatica, purché a questi sia raggiunta l'impressione di ciò che ci dà il vero – ovvero soggetti sociali storici, quando siano trattati con talento li osservo e mi sottopongo.¹¹⁰

Cristiano Banti

Cristiano Banti, a collector and painter whose own works were very influenced by French naturalism, owned a home in Florence in the Piazza Barbano, near the Bellelli residence.¹¹¹ Like Martelli, he also owned a villa which became a gathering place for his close circle of artists, including Giovanni Boldini who became very close to Cristiano and especially to his daughter Alaida. Banti's collection was made up of many works of members of the Macchiaioli, including Boldini, Signorini, De Nittis, Abbati, Gordigiani, and focusing mainly on portraits and genre scenes.¹¹² There is no evidence that Banti knew the young Degas during the latter's intermittent stays in Florence between 1858-60, but their overlapping social circles and close living proximity suggests that they would

¹¹⁰ Fattori, *Scritti Autobiografici Editi E Inediti*, 68.

¹¹¹ Giuliano Matteucci, "L'esperienza Italiana Di Degas. Viatico Attraverso Il Grande Museo Della Tradizione Rinascimentale," in *In Toscana, Dopo Degas: Dal Sogno Medioevale Alla Città Moderna*, ed. Francesca Cagianelli and Elena Lazzarini (Crespina: Comune di Crespina, 1999), 19.

¹¹² Banti's collection was donated to the city of Florence after his death. It is now housed in the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Pitti

have had at least a passing acquaintance. Many years after it was painted, Banti, in a letter to Boldini, comments on Degas' *Bellelli Family* which he had the opportunity to see in the company of Altamura on a visit to Degas' studio:

...Rammento di aver veduto il famoso impressionista a Firenze, andammo al suo studio con Altamura padre; egli stava dipingendo un quadro di due o tre figlie che non rammento troppo bene, e, come un sogno, una donna con bambino e non so che altro; rammento dei bianchi, un non so che di abbigliamenti che mi assomigliava un poco al Vandich [sic – Van Dyck].¹¹³

Later letters suggest that Banti was an engaged collector, interested in following the development of Degas' oeuvre. In an 1885 letter to Boldini he expresses his an almost manic insistence upon owning a work by Degas, even if it is a photographic reproduction or a lithograph.¹¹⁴

Sources of French Influence

As mentioned elsewhere, in the 1840-50s ottocento artists had the opportunity to experience the artistic developments in Paris firsthand through the 1855 pilgrimage to the Exposition Universelle by Morelli, Altamura and De Tivioli, and Giuseppe Palizzi's residence at Fontainebleau since 1844 which provided Neapolitan artists with a direct dialogue with the Barbizon school. Works such as Giuseppe Palizzi's *Forest at Fontainebleau* of 1874 suggest a sustained interest by the artist that found repercussions across the Alps decades after it had faded in France. (Figure A148) Finding echo in works such as Théodore Rousseau's *The Large Oak Tree, Forest of Fontainebleau*, they

¹¹³ Letter from Cristiano Banti to Boldini, 11 February 1885. Quoted in Piero Dini, ed., *Dal Caffè Michelangiolo Al Caffè Nouvelle Athènes* (Torino: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1986), 26-27.

¹¹⁴ "E qui faccio dunto raccomandandoti una sola fotografia di un qualunque dipinto del Degas e d'Ingres...Non si trovano litografie dei suoi (di Degas) lavori? Anche una sarei content di possederla!" Letter from Banti to Boldini, 2 February 1885. Reproduced in Cagianelli, "'Ah! Giotto, Lasciami Vedere Parigi, E Tu, Parigi, Lasciami Vedere Giotto!' Riflessioni Di Edgar Degas in Toscana, Mentre Gli Artisti Del Caffè Michelangelo Lottano 'Fra L'accademia E Il Realismo'," 48 n 105.

are pictorial responses to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's promotion of a return to nature, in order to escape the artifice of civilization. (Figure A149) The works display irregular shapes, refuse any geometric regimentation in favor about the specific truths of nature, particularly in the attempt to capture the experience of both the ephemeral and the permanent, the elemental opposition of the horizontal earth and vertical trees which stippled with paint to catch the effects of changing, flickering light. Filippo Palizzi's *Una Contadina coricata sull'erba – Costume di arpino (Napoli)* emphasizes another exchange with France, particularly a fascination with the oeuvre of Courbet – here his *Young Ladies on the Banks of the Seine* – which would again be reemphasized for Italian artists through attendance at or reading reviews of Courbet's 1855 retrospective.¹¹⁵

Another example of the attention to Realist aesthetics and themes, particularly those of Courbet, is Borrani's *Lo Spaccapietre*, which combines an interest in the monumental depiction of the working class with the Barbizon-derived interest in the depictions of light championed by the Macchiaioli. The split interest between light and subject matter can be clearly seen in a comparison with Courbet's *The Stonebreakers*. While the figures fill the compositional space in Courbet's canvas, the figure in Borrani's is given a shared billing with the trio of birch trees in the upper half of the composition, and light, pervading the entire composition, is the unifying force. (Figures A150-151)

In Florence, artists would have become well acquainted with French artists such as Ingres, Delacroix and Delaroche through the presence of the Demidoff family at San Donato. In addition to owning a vast collection of works by French artists from the first

¹¹⁵ Filippo Palizzi, *Una Contadina coricata sull'erba – Costume di arpino (Napoli)*, 1853, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Rome; Gustave Courbet, *Young Ladies on the Banks of the Seine*, 1856-57, Oil on canvas, Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris

half of the nineteenth century, the family also commissioned works by Lorenzo Bartolini and Giuseppe Bezzouli, the major figures of Tuscan Romanticism. Demidoff's collection included: Ingres' *Stratonice*, seven works by Delacroix, eight by Bonington, two large Salon paintings by Corot, 'a good representation of paintings from the Barbizon group', Decamps' *Sampson* along with twelve of his oriental and genre subjects, fifteen history paintings in oil and five watercolors by Delaroche, some Granets, some costume pictures of Leopold Robert and some artist-reporter sketches by Denis-August-Marie Raffet.¹¹⁶

The French works inspired much heated dialogue around the tables of the Caffè Michelangiolo, as the artists struggled to find their own voice in the novel artistic milieu. In his *Caricaturisti e Caricaturati*, Signorelli gives an account of the dialogues prompted by a visit by members of the Macchiaioli to the Demidoff collection:

It can be said that this might be the one big reason why a large number of friends had to leave our society, because one evening, when the Caffè overflowed as usual from the infinite number of artists, there entered others who in that same day had visited the villa at San Donato, and then opened a rapid fire of really Italian exaggerations from the sublime to the horrible, the exaggerations of censure bringing into opposition those of praise.

A small painting of the famous French artist Meissonier, the *Halberdier*, while it made some fanatic, was judged by a professor friend to be a playing card, and the author a painter of Queets of Hearts and Jacks of Spades... Naturally it became impossible to enter into a calm and profitable discussion, when an opinion, which could really be debated, since this as a rather poor work of the distinguished French artist, became so exaggerated, even though the work presented a serious study that should later give the author fame which, today, he rightly enjoys for his painting *The Retreat: Napoleon on the Return from Russia*, and for a thousand other distinctive works.

Ingres was less mistreated, not because the great merits of his painting *Stratonice* were understood, but because it was known that he was academic, classical and authoritative, and because he had been the intimate friend of our great Bartolini. I

¹¹⁶ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 36. For a partial list of the Demidoff Collection, see Appendix E. See also Ettore Spalletti, "La Collezione Moderna Di Anatolio Demidoff: Quale 'Aria Di Parigi'?", in *Aria Di Parigi Nella Pittura Italiana Del Secondo Ottocento*, ed. Giuliano Matteucci (Livorno: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1998).

will not say what was said of Decamps, Troyons [sic], Delacroix, Isaby, Marillat. Pardon was given to Delaroche because he was born at Nice... Oh love of fatherland!... And here the exaggerations brought insolence and insolence would have brought something else, if the intervention of the Florentine joke had not been ready to show up the ridiculousness of these excesses, momentarily calming those who had picked up a stool, or brandished a glass! But the next evening the Caffè had some deserted tables, and those who were there pretended to be able to discuss less emotionally and more profitably the merits of the artists in question, but found themselves among those who thought like themselves, and so a discussion did not take place.¹¹⁷

This frustration with the Academic system, and the Macchiaioli's attempts to create art outside of the confines of the present systems of aesthetics can be further exemplified in an excerpt of a letter from Desboutin to Signorini, published in

Gazzettino:

Credo per esperienza che le masse concepiscano il bene e il male solo sotto forma di una certa regolarità metodica che dispensa gran sforzo di chi crea ed esegue e di chi giudica e critica. L'arte vera in tutto e per tutto si fa invece solo tramite una certa audacia di eccentrici, che per esser seguita e compresa dalle masse (anche intelligenti intendiamoci) suppone che le masse stesse siano passate attraverso stati eccentrici che le rendono accessibili al sentimento della grandezza... In effetti è proprio il vostro vedere la natura (o il naturale) nella maniera più semplice e rudimentale che ci sia, che dovrebbe presentarsi chiara allo spirito. Ma un ignorante concepisce un lavoro d'arte come un lavoro di composizione molto difficile e spesso impossibile da rettificare... Per preparare la scomposizione ricomponibile alla quale voi mirate è necessaria all'Italia una preparazione che necessita dei cataclismi attraverso i quali non la credo ancora pronta a passare.¹¹⁸

It is crucial to note the hesitancy by which the Macchiaioli approached the idea of influence at this time. It was crucial for the artists to establish a style that not only gave nod to the strong Italian traditions of the past, but also established their work as a novel approach to the complexities of contemporaneous life – and these biases are quite

¹¹⁷ Telemaco Signorini, "Il Caffè Michelangiolo", *Gazzettino delle arti del disegno*, 15 June 1867, 174-76. Quoted from Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 35-36.

¹¹⁸ Letter from Desboutin to Signorini, 10 February 1867. Quoted from Laura Lombardi, "Un Circolo Parigino Sull'arno. Marcellin Desboutin a Bellosguardo," in *Aria Di Parigi Nella Pittura Italiana Del Secondo Ottocento*, ed. Giuliano Matteucci (Livorno: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1998), 57.

obvious in their discussions of the French works in the Demidoff collections. The blinders that nationalism at times forced on the Macchiaioli at times was an impediment to progress. As Broude notes:

The Italian artists, steeped in their own traditions without entirely understanding them, had certain cultural reservations about innovation, which, if too sharply challenged, tended to put into crisis the structure and images of those traditions. Perhaps for this reason the Macchiaioli did not take full advantage of some of the more exciting possibilities in the choices available to them. It is clear from the literature that those of the group who travelled the most widely, for example Telemaco Signorini, were criticized for adhering to and imitating foreign, especially French, art. Thus, their own culture limited them in some tangible ways.¹¹⁹

Perhaps because he saw himself as the main recorder of the history of the movement, Signorini was particularly sensitive to such matters as evidence in his *Critica Quotidiana*. (Figure A152) The composition includes a group of older gentleman gathered around a painting taking part in a critique. The viewer is unable to see the painting on the easel, instead he snoops on the critique by means of the poem that Signorini has written in the bottom right corner of the composition. The poem details the strains of influence seen by the critics, Rembrandt, Titian, Fra Angelico and others and concludes by noting that while the painting owes much to the past, it is nothing in itself. It is this sort of reaction that is the result of the artist finding himself overtaken by the forces of influence, the source of the anxiety that pervades the constant battle with the canon and the exact art that the Macchiaioli were trying to avoid: rote repetition of past or concurrent stylistic solutions to the conundrums of the production of art.

Concurrent Influence: Genre Studies

¹¹⁹ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 188.

While some art historians, such as Broude, conclude that the Italian artists' engagement with the aesthetics of the Barbizon school would have had little impact on Degas' oeuvre, there is suggestion that the Italian filter of Barbizon aesthetics found resonance in Degas' maturation as an artist.¹²⁰ Most overt of these examples is Degas' attention to the genre of Italian peasants, clearly stemming from an interest in Corot that began before his travels across the Alps. Corot's *Italiene assise* was among the works owned by Degas at the time of his death, and suggests interest in the genre by the French painter, and in particular sustained attention in how artists such as Corot approached the subject matter. (Figure A153) The work, clearly a study by Corot, focuses on the relaxed pose of the female sitter in traditional peasant dress. It is clear that the subject matter did sustain the artist's attention and Corot's compositions did find resonance in Degas' oeuvre. Such sentiment is echoed in an article on the collection of Henri Rouart, by Arsène Alexandre who compares the works of Degas in the collection to those of Corot, noting, "le réalisme lyrique de Degas fait fort bon effet à proximité de la candeur souriante de Corot."¹²¹

Genre scenes of peasant life, popular amongst the Barbizon school, became a favored subject matter of Italian artists, intent on recording their sense of nationalism through artists such as Giuseppe Palizzi's contacts with the artists at Fontainebleau. The Barbizon-Italian filter can be seen in works by Vincenzo Cabianca, a frequent visitor to

¹²⁰ Broude, *The Macchiaioli: Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 256.

Elsewhere Broude contends that French art did not have much effect on ottocento aesthetic developments, but such statements, while understandably attempting to allow for the Italian artists to have a place of their own in the canon is overly reductive. In addition, the suggestion of influence, as discussed elsewhere does not preclude advancement beyond the touchstone for influence. See Norma Broude, "Italian Painting During the Impressionist Era," in *World Impressionism: The International Movement 1860-1920*, ed. Norma Broude (New York: Harry N. Abrams Inc., 1990).

¹²¹ Alexandre Arsene, "La Collection De M. Henri Rouart," *Les Arts: revue mensuelle des musées, collections exposition* 1, no. 3 (April 1902): 16.

Caffè Michelangiolo who gradually abandoned his academic training and fell under the influence of Altamura and De Tivoli and the techniques brought back from Paris and the work of Morelli. In 1858-59 he began to experiment with the techniques of the Macchiaioli, and in 1860-62 spent time researching issues of Realism in his studio at Montemurlo, between Prato and Pistoia, in the countryside, often in the company of Christiano Banti. His *Studio di Donna a Montemurlo* finds resonance in works such as Corot's *Italiene assise* in its focus on the simplicity of the peasant woman in a neutral setting. (Figure A154) In Cabianca's work the woman's face is unimportant, emphasizing the painting's function as a genre study of the costume and speaks to the Macchiaioli's concurrent interest in the nuances of light and the creation of a national Italian art.

While the repercussions of the Macchiaioli's interest in photography on Degas' development will be discussed presently, it is also essential to mention here the attention that Italian photographers also paid to Italian peasant women. The compositions functioned independently in their own right, as seen in Caneva's *Model in Pose*, whose undulating organic lines of the model's pose are echoed in the jar balanced upon her head and are contrasted with the imposing horizontals of her costume. (Figure A155) The photographs also functioned as touchstones for compositions in other media, as evidenced by the grid pattern superimposed on the photograph *Acquaiola*. (Figure A156) The particular composition of a standing peasant woman with some sort of object balanced on her head became a trope of the genre, and like Caneva's photograph, the work does not convey any sort of message through its composition, instead it functions as a study of line and contour through the sustained mediation upon the organic undulations of the woman's costume and an amphora atop her head.

These genre studies were often worked up into larger compositions that record the daily life in small towns in the Italian countryside. The favored pose of the female peasant balancing an object on her head is resituated within its appropriate context of transport of materials, as seen in Signorini's *Pesciendole a Lerici*. (Figure A157) Signorini depicts a mundane moment in the woman's life, a stop to peruse the fishmonger's offerings along the walls of the city on the way home. In *Lavandaie* Filippo Palizzi examines another aspect of the daily life of Italian peasants, their work as laundresses along a stream in an Italian town, paralleling the interests of Degas in this subject matter. (Figure A158) As Degas would later do in his oeuvre, Palizzi and Signorini are appropriating the concepts of Realism through their investigations of the everyday activities of the lower classes, creating a commentary on contemporary society while concurrently creating an aesthetically pleasing and provocative composition.

While in Italy, Degas did a number of studies and finished works of peasants in the Italian towns and countryside which find strong resonance in the composition and palette of his Italian contemporaries, who were in turn influenced by the realist overtures of French art of the mid nineteenth century.¹²² The gamut of studies of Italian women ranged from detailed pen and ink studies, to nuanced studies of color and form, to quick watercolor sketches in the manner of Palizzi of women seen from behind inserted into an appropriate landscape backdrop.¹²³ (Figures A159-161) In addition to studies of women, Degas also attended to other characters of small town Italy, such as his *Seated Monk*,

¹²² Examples include Nb 8 p 53V, 54: Sketches of a butcher's shop; Nb 10 p 16: sketches made at Fondi of figures and figural groups; Nb 10 p 18-21: sketches made at Mola di Gaeta of figures and figural groups. Nb 9 p 21: 2 sketches of women in Italian peasant costume, reworked in watercolor. Color notations on upper figure which are closely related to 3 watercolors (Lem 16-18), inscribed 'Rome' and dated c. 1856.

¹²³ Degas also continued this tradition in France. Nb 4, p 78-75 (used backwards): sketched of Provençal women, which are similar in subject to his Italian Women.

which, in the manner of the studies by Cabianca or the photographs of Caneva, studies the gradations of light and tonality through the drapery of the religious figure. (Figure A162) In addition to looking at what they observed in their surroundings and in contemporaneous traditions for source material, Degas and his Italian contemporaries also looked to the compositional trope in the art historical canon. An example of Degas' attention can be seen in his fragmentary copy of a young woman carrying an amphora on her head, framed by an arch that is a fragment of a Raphael fresco in the Salle Borgia in the Vatican. (Figure A163)

At times these studies were worked up to full scale compositions, such as his *Old Italian Woman* which is an oil study, focusing on the tonal qualities of the woman's head covering and dress while simultaneously inserting her into the tradition of this genre study through the placement of the amphora and townscape in the background. (Figure A164) *Young Woman with Ibis* combines this tradition with the flat, dry planes of color and the sumptuous red seen in Roman wall paintings. (Figure A165) The work begins with the trope of genre studies of Italian women and nuances it into a more complex composition of a woman flanked by two ibises standing on a terrace overlooking an oriental townscape.¹²⁴ The work, created out of Degas' traditional working method, has a number of preparatory studies that he worked on while in Italy.¹²⁵

It is of import to note that the genre of the Italian peasant woman as inspiration in the latter half of the nineteenth century found resonance beyond Degas' collection of Corot's *Italienne Assise* and ottocento artists continued interpretations of nationalism. An

¹²⁴ The ibises were added later (c. 1860-62), when he also briefly considered adding them to the composition of *Semiramis Building Babylon*.

¹²⁵ Nb 11 p 4, 39; Nb 18 p 24.

example can be seen in Vincent van Gogh's portrait of Agostina Segateri, the owner of the Parisian cabaret 'Le Tambourin', in the guise of an Italian peasant.¹²⁶ Here the artist utilizes the costume as a means to examine of pattern through paint application. Whereas Degas and the Macchiaioli used the genre as a means for examining the nuances of light, van Gogh investigates the detailed patterns of the contrasting fabrics through his heavy brush stroke, conveying the variations of texture through paint. The subject is also favored in Carlo Levi's 1947 text, *Christ Stopped at Eboli*, which utilizes text to paint an honest picture of the South that had not changed much in decades. His words echo the paintings of Signorini and Palizzi:

This fountain, which provided water for all of Lower Gagliano and a good part of the upper village, was surrounded, as I was to see it at every hour of the day, by a crowd of women. They were grouped around the fountain, old and young, some standing and others sitting, all of them with small wooden barrels balanced on their heads and carrying terra cotta jars of the Ferrandina make.

One by one they approached the fountain and waited patiently for the slender stream of water to fill the receptacles. Their wait was a long one; the wind stirred the white veils that fell over their backs, which were straight and taught as they balanced the jars on their heads with an easy grace. They stood motionless in the sunlight like a flock of animals at pasture and even smelled like them.¹²⁷

Caricature

Another influence that greatly affected Degas' mature aesthetic was the genre of caricature. Caricature's exaggeration of physiognomy, expression and gesture allowed Degas to master the nuances of these components in his portraiture. An example can be seen in the expressions of Ellen Andrée and Marcellin Desboutin in *The Absinthe Drinker*. (Figure A166) The emotional detachment that pervades the scene is emphasized

¹²⁶ Vincent van Gogh, *L'Italienne*, 1887, Musée d'Orsay

¹²⁷ Carlo Levi, *Christ Stopped at Eboli* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2006), 49.

not only through the compositional placement and pose of the figures, but also through their relative expressions. It is clear that Degas had a strong command over the depiction of the range of human emotion, and one way that he mastered such traits in his translations of contemporary life was through an examination of them in the heightened genre of caricature.

Reverberations of the genre can also be seen in many of Degas' preparatory studies, in which he seems to be following Ingres' exhortation that the initial drawing when preparing to create a portrait should be a caricature.¹²⁸ In preparation for his *Portrait of Victoria Dubourg*, the wife of Henri Fantin-Latour, Degas made a study of Victoria which emphasizes her face, only giving the barest notational markers of her shoulders.¹²⁹ (Figure A167) An eye sketched in the upper right corner of the composition belies the focus of the visage and it is through this sketch that Degas captures the intensity of her expression, which is translated into the final work. Such sketches emphasize his own notation in his notebook: "Do portraits of people in their familiar, typical postures, above all give their face the same range of expressions as one gives their body. So if the smile is typical of the person, make them smile."¹³⁰

Another example of the role of caricature in Degas' portraiture can be seen in a preparatory sketch of Diego Martelli in which the emphasis is on recording Martelli's expression, and like Dubourg, the face is highly finished while the body is only roughly sketched in. (Figure A168) There is a parallel here in Degas' approach to preparatory sketches for portraits with his approach to copying, and even in the influence of

¹²⁸ Richard Thomson, *The Private Degas* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987).

¹²⁹ Edgar Degas, *Victoria Dubourg*, 1866, Oil on canvas, Toledo Museum of Art

¹³⁰ Nb 23, p 46-47.

caricature in his more mature drawings. In each mode he focuses on a specific quality – be it the pose of a figure in a Raphael fresco to capturing the expression of a sitter – which he methodically assembles into a cohesive whole. Linda Nochlin comments on Degas’ use of gesture as a means of communicating content in his *At the Bourse*.¹³¹ In this composition, Nochlin muses:

...at this point in Degas’ career, gesture and the vantage point from which gesture was recorded were everything in his creation of an accurate, seemingly unmediated, imagery of modern life. Duranty notes, ‘A back should reveal temperament, age and social position, a pair of hands should reveal the magistrate or the merchant, and a gesture should reveal an entire range of feelings.’¹³²

Of course Degas was first exposed to the genre of caricature long before he travelled across the Alps, in the form of Daumier’s works, both his lithographs and sculpted busts. In the sales of the contents of his studio we know that Degas owned over 330 Daumier prints cut from *Le Charivari* and over 400 others. He also owned over 1000 prints by Gavarni.¹³³ As Reff notes, Degas “[s]hared with Daumier an interest in physiognomic expression...Unlike his predecessor, however, Degas eventually found the inherent expressiveness of his graphic formulas more important than their topical significance.”¹³⁴ Armstrong characterizes Degas’ ‘entire project’ as a formal and conceptual privatization of Daumier’s Realism. Degas depoliticized and aestheticized the latter’s caricature enterprise that was undergoing a process of neutralization and

¹³¹ Edgar Degas, *At the Bourse*, c.1879, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay

¹³² Linda Nochlin, "Degas and the Dreyfus Affair: A Portrait of the Artist as an Anti-Semite," in *The Dreyfus Affair : Art, Truth, and Justice*, ed. Norman L. Kleeblat (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

¹³³ See Jean Sutherland Boggs, *Portraits by Degas, California Studies in the History of Art*, 2 (Berkeley,: University of California Press, 1962), 94, n 31-32.

¹³⁴ Theodore Reff, "Three Great Draftsmen," in *Degas, the Artist's Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987).

canonization by the 1880s.¹³⁵ In addition, the fact that Degas created sculpture and saw it as a locus of modern innovation suggests a conceptual link with Daumier, particularly the Durand-Ruel show of Daumier's busts in 1878.

Many scholars have pointed out the direct correlations between Degas' works and those of Daumier which can be seen in a comparison between Degas' *The Orchestra of the Opera* and Daumier's *The Orchestra during the Performance of a Tragedy* and Degas' *The Café-Concert at Les Ambassadeurs* with Daumier's *At the Champs Elysées*.¹³⁶ (Figures A169-170) In each of these compositions, Degas borrows the format and flat planar space from Daumier, and he further gives nod to the master of caricature through the abbreviated, yet exaggerated faces. Particular attention should be paid to the figure of the orchestra in *Café-Concert*. The profile of the man's head, complete with his bulbous nose and receding hairline is a caricatural homage to the influence of Daumier on Degas' oeuvre.

In his seminal work, *Modern Art Being a Contribution to a New System of Aesthetics*, Meier-Graefe also comments upon the parallels between Degas' command over the translation of gesture and expression into paint and Daumier's biting lithographs:

Degas is not so rich as the slayer of lawyers, but harder. He seems to be combating the classic tradition which transfigures Daumier's most biting caricatures; his chagrin vents itself even upon Ingres. Out of the faces of courtesans, out of defiled flesh that rages in silence, out of the smiles of meager ballet-dancers, out of the pain that is almost pleasure again, he creates a new and grandiose world of form, which follows its codex as strenuously as the doctrine of Ingres... There is not a stroke that is not inevitable. It is hardly permissible to speak of correctness in this connection; it is all more exact than Nature; her most

¹³⁵ Carol M. Armstrong, *Odd Man Out: Readings of the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), 133-50.

¹³⁶ Edgar Degas, *The Orchestra at the Opera House*, c. 1870, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay, Paris; Honoré Daumier, *L'orchestre pendant qu'on joue une tragédie*, 1845, Lithograph, Published in *Le Charivari* 25 Novembre 1845, LD 2243

secret essence, movement, as it arises in manner before the brain directs it, is reflected in frigid visions.¹³⁷

For Meier-Graefe, Degas' successful struggle to move beyond the modes of Daumier and Ingres provide a methodical, traditional approach to the depiction of the modes of contemporary life.

Like his renewed attention to the works of Corot and the concepts of Realism through the lens of the Italian interest in the genre, and of Daumier, Degas was probably first exposed to caricature in Italy while in Naples in the form of works by Melchiorre Delfico, whose work appeared in a variety of journals including *Arlecchino* (Naples) and later *Punch* (London). His satirical caricatures focused on the political, social, and musical circles of Naples and created a typically nineteenth-century Neapolitan mood and sense of humor. He created eighty-four caricatures relating to Verdi's trips to Naples in 1858, 1859, and 1888. A caricature of Anatolio Demidoff suggests the ties between the artistic circles of Naples and Florence during this time and also provide an avenue of direct connection between the Macchiaioli and Delfico, the former were very influenced by the latter's aesthetics, as will be discussed below. (Figure A171) It seems that the genre of caricature was a favored mode by many Italian artists in Naples and beyond. It was a trope that they could turn to in order to poke good-humored fun at the facial quirks of themselves and their friends, as clearly evidenced by an autocaricature by Filippo Palizzi. (Figure A172) The artist sketches himself twice on the page, once in three

¹³⁷ Julius Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art Being a Contribution to a New System of Aesthetics*, trans. Florence Simmonds and George W. Chrystal, 2 vols., vol. 1 (New York; London: G.P. Putnam's Sons; William Heinemann, 1908), 278.

quarters view and again in profile, and both times he uses a loose line emphasizing his heavy brow and nose.¹³⁸

Delfico's influence was strong amongst Italian artists, and as a result had an impact on Degas' oeuvre, even if the two never formally met. The resonances can be most clearly seen in a comparison of four works that emphasize not only Delfico's sustained importance, but also the enduring tropes of caricature. The clearest correlation is between Carlo Pellegrini's caricature *Conservative Conversation* and Delfico's autocaricature. (Figures A173-174) In both works, a bearded male is shown in full or three-quarter profile with a hand in his pants pocket, set in a neutral background. The rotund bellies of both men are emphasized through an arching of the back and their weight resting on their heels. It is clear that Pellegrini, who worked for *Vanity Fair* and other publications was paying homage to the style of the older caricaturist. In a similar manner, Degas plays off of this tradition in his portrait of Pellegrini created in exchange for one of himself created by Pellegrini. (Figure A175) Like his approach to the canon, Degas modifies the concept of the caricature and its common arched profile pose by placing Pellegrini's feet in a modified fourth position and bringing his arm up, to catch him in the midst of bringing a cigarette to his mouth. A hat in his left hand also modifies the arches contours of the traditional pose. Degas is clearly playing of tradition to provide a sense of meaning to his portrait, while concurrently providing the opportunity for an informal portrait of a close friend. The pose's continued importance as a caricatural trope is exemplified by Cappiello's *Polaire Dans le Petit Jeune Homme de Willy & Luvet*, a

¹³⁸ Italian artists were also most assuredly aware of issues of physiognomy and how they related to caricature. See Anthea Callen, *The Spectacular Body: Science, Method, and Meaning in the Work of Degas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). and Jan Goldstein, *The Post-Revolutionary Self: Politics and Psyche in France 1750-1850* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

turn of the century composition, which depicts what seems to be a woman in man's dress in a similar profile pose and neutral background, again emphasizing the linear contours of the figure.¹³⁹ (Figure A176)

The work of Delfico had a strong impact upon the Macchiaioli, as did the work of Daumier, and both strains of influence were filtered through the Macchiaioli to Degas' oeuvre at the Caffè Michelangiolo. As colorfully described in an exhibition catalogue devoted to ottocento Tuscan caricature, Florence was ripe with the genre:

A Firenze, città in cui persino le cose fanno sorridere, la Caricatura circola nel sangue sottobraccio ai globuli rossi, si succhia col lattedimamma, si respira con la brezza delle Cascine. Il Fiorentino possiede uno spirito spontaneo, arguto, un caustico umorismo, personale, meno 'non sense' ma più scanzonato e più mordace, dell'humour britannico.¹⁴⁰

The city was home to a number of caricatural based journals, along the lines of *Charivari* or *Punch*, such as *Lampione* which was started by Alessandro Ademollo, *Vespa*, founded by Paganelli, as well as *Zanzara*, *Birichino*, *Lanterna magica*, *Il lume a gas*, *Lo Stenterello*, and *Lo Charivari del Popolano*.

The most well known of the Florentines to practice the genre of caricature was Angiolo Tricca, whose patronage and depictions of members of the Caffè Michelangiolo brought on the humorous nickname 'Caffè Tricangiolo'. Tricca's caricature of Michelangiolo regular and friend of Degas, Giovanni Boldini, illustrates the common practice of creating caricatures of easy models, fellow patrons at the café and friends. (Figure A177)

Tricca's interest in the genre of caricature was quickly shared by many regulars at the café and members of the Macchiaioli. It seems that it was a common mode of creative

¹³⁹ Another example of this pose can be seen in William Nicholson, *J.M. Whistler*, Woodcut and watercolor, 1897, National Gallery of Art, Australia.

¹⁴⁰ *Tricca Caricaturista: Caricaturisti E Caricaturati Al Caffè Michelangiolo*, (Arezzo: Galleria Comunale d'Arte Contemporanea, 1966), n.p.

expression to create caricatures of one's self and others, as exemplified in the autocaricature of Signorini. (Figure A178) The pervasiveness of the genre by the Macchiaioli is most clearly exemplified in a group-portrait caricature Cecioni and the frontispiece of Signorini's *Caricaturisti e Caricaturati* which includes caricatures of a number of regulars, including Signorini himself.¹⁴¹ (Figures A179-180) All three works suggest that the café was a jovial atmosphere in which the regulars were very comfortable with each other, so much so that the most common means of expressing friendship between the patrons was an exchange of caricatures.

During his time in Florence, Degas was affected by the interest in the genre of caricature and produced a number of his own works, and would continue to dabble in the genre throughout his notebooks. Reff notes that the drawings created by Degas during this period, including one showing James Tissot from the rear, are 'quasi-caricatural' in their design, but differ from those of his companions in their aloof nature. (Figure A181) A clear distinction between the interests of Degas and the Macchiaioli can be identified when Degas' sketch is compared to a caricature of Signorini, drawn by Boldini and published in 1877. (Figure A182) While Boldini's caricature of Signorini suggests an underlying humor and camaraderie as the function of the work, Degas' is much more serious in tone. Like his copies after the canon, it seems that Degas is using the genre here to advance his command over the nuances of pose and composition. Broude and Reff note that the Macchiaioli's enthusiasm for caricatures underscored the particular physical characteristics of a model. In contrast, Degas' caricatures emphasize a

¹⁴¹ Identification of the figures on the frontispiece, clockwise from top left: M. Gordigiani, Signorini, Tricca, Moricci. Moricci's visage looks suspiciously like Degas. Signorini's *Caricaturisti e Caricaturati* contained a total of 48 reproductions of caricatures of various familiar faces at the caffè Michelangiolo. Many of these are reproduced in color.

preoccupation with the psychological expression of his subjects, which would have later repercussions on Degas' approach to the genre of portraiture.¹⁴²

Degas' caricature of Tissot is telling because it also speaks to a drawing mode seen in another work in his notebooks which depicts a figure seen from behind in historiated dress, again caught in mid step, which in turn is echoed in a later sketch by Boldini. (Figure A183-184) The loose sketchy style of the drawings, as well as the figures' pose and costume are reminiscent of Degas' drawing of Tissot undertaken while the two were in Florence. An examination of a notebook owned by Chapu allows for the possibility that the interest in the genre of caricature extended beyond the walls of the café, and perhaps the city of Florence. (Figure A185) Chapu's lighthearted composition again finds resonance in the works by Degas, depicting a figure in a hat astride a cow or bull. The notebook is undated, but its presence suggests that either the interest in the genre spread to Rome and had repercussions on the pensionnaires in the Eternal City, or perhaps that Chapu took some time to visit Florence, perhaps calling upon Degas and the Macchiaioli at the Caffè Michelangiolo.

While some of Degas' caricatures were more serious in nature, focusing on the carriage of the figures and its repercussions on composition and meaning, he also created many caricatures that were lighthearted in their intent. The humorous qualities of caricature were something that fascinated Degas throughout his career. A notebook used between 1875-78 includes a copy of the composer Ernst Reyer's signature, with the flourish ending in a phallus. (Figure A186) The tables were turned in an 1877 notebook

¹⁴² *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 26-28, Broude, *The Macchiaioli: Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century*, 256.

in which Reyer drew two caricatures of Degas.¹⁴³ (Figure A187) It is most likely that such an event probably took place after dinner at the Halévy's where Degas would often pull out this sketchbook to draw, often allowing others to contribute caricatures to its pages. The notebook, owned by the Halévys, also included a number of other compositions that contained the composer, clearly establishing the camaraderie between the two artists. One composition finds the composer seated near a table at which three laundresses are at work and includes the notation, "Reyer proposit pendant longtemps une troisième loge/ à une blanchisseuse", while the other finds the composer looking forlornly over the shoulder of a man seated in profile, holding opera glasses.¹⁴⁴

The most overt allusions to the coarse side of Degas' humor can be seen through his caricatures, which provided an overt avenue for the oft-vulgar themes. Notebook 23 includes a sketch of a man's head seen in profile in which his nose has been transformed into a drooping, oversized detumescent phallus. (Figure A188) Notebook 26 finds even more graphic caricatural representations, including sketches of a phallus transformed into a man seen from behind, a phallus transformed into a bird and an overt reference to the female anatomy through the simple drawing of a cat's rear end. (Figures A189-190) While these sketches are simplistic in comparison to many of his more nuanced caricatures, Degas did inject coarse humor into some of his more complex caricatures. Examples include a sketch of a half-man half-weasel creature that crouching and defecating and another of an Asian man zoomorphized into a dog that sniffs a column while another dog's head sniffs his rear end. (Figures A191-192) The zoomorphication of

¹⁴³ Other caricature of Degas by Reyer: Nb 28 p 59.

¹⁴⁴ Edgar Degas, Nb 28 p 4-5, 1877, Graphite, Getty; Edgar Degas, Nb 28 p 53, 1877, Graphite, Getty

figures in Degas' caricatures also takes the form of a caricature of an insect-like man, a dog with an x-shaped muzzle wearing a bowler hat, as well as a caricature of a man in evening dress, with a bulldog's face and feet, his face 'washed out' - perhaps because Degas felt remorse and deemed it too personal of an attack. (Figures A193-195)

At times Degas seemed to develop an almost borderline graphomania with a series of simplified caricatures of the political figures Otto von Bismarck, Napoleon III and Adolphe Thiers. This fascination is the most overt political commentary that one can find in Degas' oeuvre, and perhaps it is almost unconscious in the manner in which he constantly returns to the simplified forms. Degas' fascination with Otto von Bismarck began in a notebook used in Italy between 1859-60 and emphasizes the Prussian statesman's military attire, including headgear and high collar, as well as his upturned nose and walrus-like moustache.¹⁴⁵ (Figures A196-197) The simplified caricature is repeated six times in this notebook and appears repeatedly in notebooks that Degas used throughout his career.¹⁴⁶ His interest in the Prussian can also be seen in a list of books on the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune in notebook 24.¹⁴⁷ His caricature of Napoleon III emphasizes the tripartite beard for which the French Emperor was known and can be seen in Meissonier's equestrian portrait. (Figures A198-199) Like his caricatures of von Bismarck, Degas returned to the line drawing throughout his

¹⁴⁵ Reff suggests that it is tenuous to identify the figure as Otto von Bismarck because he was little known in France in 1860, but it is more probable that Degas became aware of the Prussian statesman while in Italy. *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas: A Catalogue of the Thirty-Eight Notebooks in the Bibliothèque Nationale and Other Collections* 85.

¹⁴⁶ Other examples of the Otto von Bismarck caricature: Nb 14A p 5, 58, Nb 23 p 32, 84, 149, 151-53, Nb 21 p 20v, Nb 24 p 109, Nb 28 p 72, Nb 31 p 84, Nb 34 p 228, 224. Bismarck was also skewered via caricature a number of times in the popular press. These caricatures are presented in John Grand-Carteret, *Crispi, Bismarck Et La Triple Alliance En Caricatures* (Paris: Librairie Ch. Delagrave, 1891).

¹⁴⁷ Nb 24 p 107-106 (used in reverse)

notebooks.¹⁴⁸ Degas' caricatures of Adolphe Theirs focuses on the politician's round face, spiked hairstyle, round spectacles and facial hair, as emphasized in Bonnat's portrait. (Figure A200) The components, like the others, are simplified into geometric shapes that were easily repeated in a manner that almost seems to flow into unconscious doodles. An example in notebook 34 finds a caricature of Theirs directly above an example of von Bismarck, as well as two caricatures of an unknown man with a square head, widow's peak and heavy moustache.¹⁴⁹ (Figure A201)

As mentioned above, Degas' attention to the genre scenes of Italian women, his exposure to the genre of caricature began before he crossed the Alps and he continued to be influenced by French sources while in Italy, sources that were reemphasized through his dialogues with his contemporaries. An example of this Italian filter for caricature can be seen in a notebook used in Italy that includes a sketch of a man standing in profile that echoes Daumier's *Ratapoil* sculpture. (Figures A202-203) In both compositions, the figure is wearing a top hat and a long overcoat, with a leg jutting forward. Degas' sketch finds echo in the fluidity of the sculpture through his loose sketch quality to the contour. This fascination with Daumier did continue beyond his formative years, as seen in caricatures in a notebook used between 1865-68 which focus on a female's head that is very pear-like in its shape, similar to Daumier's caricatures of Louis-Philippe, for example, *Le Passé – Le Présent – L'Avenir*. (Figures A204-205) I do not mean to suggest that the 1834 lithograph had a direct influence on the quick sketch, but rather that Degas'

¹⁴⁸ Other examples of the Napoleon III caricature: Nb 23 84, 148, 150, Nb 21 p 20, 38V, Nb 24 p 109, Nb 28 p 72, Nb 31 p 96, Nb 34 p 227, 226, 224

¹⁴⁹ Other examples of the Adolphe Theirs caricature: Nb 24 p 110, Nb 34 p227, 224

exposure to Daumier's oeuvre – while in France and Italy – finds resonance in his oeuvre throughout his career.

Degas approached caricature as a means of understanding the human figure. Like Ingres suggested, he used caricature to begin the process of creating a portrait through understanding the complex relationship between physical appearance and emotional character. Throughout his notebooks he returns to this manner of sketching that we find in some of his earliest notebooks from his Italian years.¹⁵⁰ It is these spontaneous sketches that allowed the methodical artist to begin to understand how to capture the transience of time and emotional reaction that he became so adept at in his mature works. These caricatures often investigated the essence of the figure's character through facial features, as exemplified in a page of twenty-four sketches of individuals in a manner deriving from the genre of caricature. (Figure A206) Another example in the same notebook contrasts another ten similar sketches with a more studied sketch of a woman in profile, giving the viewer an opportunity to examine the differences in Degas' draftsmanship on the same page. (Figure A207)

Degas' experiences in Italy with the Macchiaioli allowed him to evaluate the genre of caricature with a novel eye, from the perspective of Italian artists, and this experience was one of extreme import in his career as the lessons learned through the quick studies of caricature and even the more drawn-out studies of physiognomy allowed Degas to understand certain characteristics of gesture, spontaneity and pose that would continue to aid him throughout his career. The genre itself became a comfortable friend,

¹⁵⁰ For example Nb 12 p 77-80, Nb 17 p 1-18.

and something to which he would return to throughout his notebooks as a means of conveying emotive content, humorous or otherwise.¹⁵¹

Photography

The Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1855 was the first official occasion for Italian painters and photographers to confront the artistic expression of artists of other nationalities.¹⁵² In addition, as Benjamin points out, the it was the first to include a special exhibit entitled 'Photography.' In the same year, Antoine Joseph Wiertz published an article in which he described photography as the enlightenment of painting, providing a medium for an increased level of informational communication conveyed through the two-dimensional medium.¹⁵³ It is clear that 1855 was a decisive year for the formation of the new medium, and the Italians had a unique opportunity to be exposed to photography through the Universal Exhibition, providing access to novel concepts at their genesis.¹⁵⁴

While in the City of Light, Altamura discovered the *ton gris*, sometimes called a Claude glass, an eighteenth century optical device that reflected in black and white,

¹⁵¹ Other Caricatures: Nb 12 p 87, Nb 12 p 80, Nb 15 p 5A, Nb 13 p 36-38, Nb 13 p 26, Nb 13 p 77bis, Nb 19 p 98, 99, Nb 23 p 153, Nb 31 p 87-86, Nb 18 p 22 (According to Reff this page is blank), Nb 34 p 228, Nb 14A fol 599, Nb 23 p 1-8.

¹⁵² Monica Maffioli, "I Macchiaioli E La Fotografia: Personaggi, Luoghi E Modelli Visivi," in *I Macchiaioli E La Fotografia*, ed. Monica Maffioli (Florence: Museo Nazionale Alinari della Fotografia, 2008), 38.

¹⁵³ Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the 19th Century," *New Left Review*, no. 48 (March-April 1968): 81. Antoine Joseph Wiertz, "Photography (1855)," in *Art in Theory 1815-1900*, ed. Charles Harrison, Paul Wood, and Jason Gaiger (New York: Wiley-Blackwell, 1998).

¹⁵⁴ The incorporation of novel technology into the artistic process has a long history in the canon of art. Contemporary examples abound, and include David Hockney's use of digital imaging software to create his 40' x 15' *Bigger Trees Near Water* in 2007 or his use of the iPhone application *Brushes* to create self-portraits, sunrises and still lifes. See Lawrence Weschler, "David Hockney's Iphone Passion," *The New York Review of Books*, 22 October 2009. For the self-portraits, the darkened screen functions much like the *ton gris*, which is discussed below.

which in turn would accentuate tonal value, light and shade.¹⁵⁵ Often taking the shape of a subtly convex mirror, the best quality mirrors were not black behind glass, but rather made of metal or polished minerals such as carbon or obsidian. Besides black, the mirrors could also be dark grey or green. The mirrors were often sized for portability, sometimes housed in a protective case.¹⁵⁶

The mirror was mentioned by Pliny the Elder, who noted, “The stone is very dark in color and sometimes translucent, but has a cloudier appearance than glass, so that when it is used for mirrors attached to walls it reflects shadows rather than images.”¹⁵⁷ For Pliny, shadows are the origin of art: “The question as to the origin of art is uncertain..., but all agree that it began with tracing an outline round a man’s shadow and consequently that pictures were originally done in this way.”¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ While the mirror is named after Claude Lorrain, it is unknown whether the painter used the optical device. The object was called a *ton gris* after Thomas Gray, an eighteenth century poet who used the object. As popularly evoked in *Snow White*, in which the mirror changes from grey to black, the black mirror had connections to the occult, specifically catoptromancy, or divination by means of mirror, and enabled necromancers to conjure and communicate with the dead. For more information see Arnaud Maillet, *The Claude Glass* (New York: Zone Books, 2004).

¹⁵⁶ Examples can be found in the Collection Yves Rifaux, Musée l'art de l'enfance and the Scientific Instrument Collection, Department of Physics, Middlebury College, Vermont.

¹⁵⁷ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. E. Eichholtz, vol. 10 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 36.67.196.

Continuing in this tradition, pieces of obsidian were embedded into the peristyle walls of the House of the Gilded Cupids, Pompeii. They are basically at eye level, and so probably functioned as mirrors.

¹⁵⁸ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham, vol. 9 (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1969), 35.5.

In another section of *Natural History* Pliny relates a more specific story involving the shadow and the origins of art – the story of the Maid of Corinth:

...modeling portraits from clay was first invented by Butades, a potter of Sicyon, at Corinth. He did this owing to his daughter, who was in love with a young man; and she, when he was going abroad, drew in outline on the wall the shadow of his face thrown by a lamp. Her father pressed the clay on this and made a relief, which he hardened by exposure to fire with the rest of his pottery...

Elder, *Natural History*, 35.143.51.

The story became a wellspring for paintings in the eighteenth century, including works by Giordet and Joseph Wright of Derby. For a discussion of the subject and its repercussions in eighteenth-century art, see Robert Rosenblum, "The Origin of Painting: A Problem in the Iconography of Romantic Classicism," *The Art Bulletin* 39, no. 4 (1957).

In his theories on optics, Helmholtz worked to define brightness through an infinite number of tonal values for each color, but admitted that the artist's palette is limited because the substrate could never equal the luminosity of the sun. Therefore the artist seeks a "translation of his impression into another scale of sensitiveness, which belongs to a different degree of impressibility of the observing eye."¹⁵⁹ It is through such theoretical searches that such a device was of extreme importance to Altamura and his Italian compatriots to whom he introduced the object on his return to Italy.¹⁶⁰ The *ton gris* would have a fundamental impact on the burgeoning aesthetics of the Macchiaioli, and lead to experimentations with photography, which allowed for more precise macchia.¹⁶¹ The resurgence in the *ton gris* was closely tied to the medium of photography, as Gombrich, echoing the theoretical inquiries of Helmholtz, in *Art and Illusion*, "The black and white photography only reproduces gradations of tone between a very narrow range of greys."¹⁶² Like photography the black mirror was used as an aid for painters "in this transcription of local color into a narrower range of tones."¹⁶³

Ever in the role of recorder, Martelli writes of Altamura's return from Paris with the *ton gris*:

Returned from Paris was Altamura, who in a mysterious and prophetic way began to speak of the *ton gris*, at that time fashionable in Paris, everyone open-mouthed to hear him, first, and then eager to follow him, later, in the way he had indicated, helping themselves with a black mirror, which decolorized the multicolored aspects

¹⁵⁹ Helmholtz, "The Relation of Optics to Painting". Quoted from Maillet, *The Claude Glass*, 118.

¹⁶⁰ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 1.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 138.

¹⁶² Ernst Hans Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1961), 36.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 46.

of nature, permitting a more profound grasp of the whole of the *chiaroscuro*, the *macchia*.¹⁶⁴

Martelli is far from the first to mention the optical device, as it was described by Goethe almost a half-century before:

Every art and nature lover who has observed landscapes by blackening one side of a reducing convex mirror conversion lens has noticed that the sky as object appears significantly darker, and if the upper mirror is removed from the double device even the brightest atmosphere is not a lovely blue but gloomy...¹⁶⁵

The object had a history in Parisian art circles as well. The optical device was used by members of the Barbizon school as a means of understanding *chiaroscuro*.¹⁶⁶

According to Proust, Manet used a 'little black looking glass' to evaluate the structural composition of his paintings, for example his *Guitar Player*. The optical device had, as

Gregory Galligan notes:

...by the time Manet took up painting in the middle of the nineteenth century, the mirror had acquired the status of a thinking painter's paradigm. That is, by Manet's day the mirror had long surpassed both its original function as a mechanical tool for realizing the painter's self-portrait and its common figurative use as a metaphor for mimesis itself as a painter's means of 'reflecting' reality. In addition, the mirror had acquired the status of a sign for the paradoxical premise of all realist representation.¹⁶⁷

Manet also directly engages with these concepts in a conversation with Proust that was later published in *Souvenirs* and appeared in serial form in *La Revue Blanche*:

¹⁶⁴ Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 204. Quoted from Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 133.

¹⁶⁵ Goethe, *Die Farbenlehre*, vol. II (1810). Quoted from Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 135.

¹⁶⁶ Silvio Balloni, "Teorie Della Visione a Fondamento Delle Ricerche Unificate Di Pittura E Fotografia Nell'italia Dei Macchiaioli," in *I Macchiaioli E La Fotografia*, ed. Monica Maffioli (Florence: Museo Nazionale Alinari della Fotografia, 2008), 17.

¹⁶⁷ Gregory Galligan, "The Self Pictured: Manet, the Mirror, and the Occupation of Realist Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 80, no. 1 (1998): 140.

Yesterday, Renaud de Villbac came by. He only saw one thing, that my *Guitarero* was left handed on a guitar strung to be played with the right hand. What is there to say? Just think, I painted the head in one go. After working for two hours, I looked at it in my little black mirror, and it was all right. I never added another stroke.¹⁶⁸

In a conversation with Halévy, Degas speaks of Proust's passage, and his remarks suggest an understanding emanating from experience with the object and embodied the frustration that he saw permeating the understanding of art aided by optical devices, "You have read how Manet used a black mirror to gage values. All that is very complicated. What can they [those looking at his canvas] understand about it? Nothing!"¹⁶⁹

For the Macchiaioli, the *ton gris* provided a means for the prolonged examination of the nuances of chiaroscuro, which in turn provided the means for more thoroughly developing the precepts of *macchia*. The mirror emphasized grey scale and tonal values and their compositional relationships, and as such became an object of immense fascination for the Macchiaioli. Christiano Banti procured a *ton gris*, of which Cecioni speaks:

Once, in the company of Signorini, Pointeau, and Borrani, he went to Montelupo in order to make some studies, and, every once in a while, he would place that mirror in front of a motif, saying empathetically to his friends: 'Look! Look at how clear the silhouettes are! Look at the shadows!' ...Every now and then, a cry went up to communicate enthusiasm over an observed motif, and occasionally they gathered and stopped to not the passage of a cart upon the street, white with dust, exclaiming: 'Look, Banti, at the beauty of that white against the ground.' – 'Look, Signorini, at the tone of the wheels against the white of the street.' – 'Look at the strength of the shadows!'¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁸ Proust, *Edouard Manet/Souvenirs*. Quoted from Maillet, *The Claude Glass*, 120.

¹⁶⁹ Daniel Halevy, *My Friend Degas*, 1st American ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1964), 94.

¹⁷⁰ Cecioni, *Scritti E Ricordi*, 316-17.

Signorini echoes these sentiments while reflecting on the movement in 1870, “those artists who...thanks to studies of photographs...were the first to accentuate the chiaroscuro of their pictures to achieve the solidity and as a result the optical allusion of the bodies.”¹⁷¹

In addition to the *ton gris*, the Macchiaioli were students of the evolving theories of optics coming out of France. The theory of ‘pure visibility’ put forth by Jules Jamin in “L’optique et la peinture” was translated into Italian in the *Rivista di Firenze e Bullettino delle Arti del Disegno* in 1859.¹⁷² Jamin’s emphasis on conveying the nuances of light and shadow taking precedent over the object would have found resonance amongst members of the Macchiaioli.¹⁷³ He encourages the incorporation of the aesthetics of photography in painting, but stresses that it must be balanced by the intelligence of the artist.¹⁷⁴ He continues:

...la peinture n’est pas, comme on le suppose souvent, une reproduction de la nature, mais une fiction admise, dont les procédés sont conventionnels, et qui produit des œuvres sans réalité physique... Il en découle une autre vérité, tout aussi incontestable : c’est que si l’on tenait de donner à la peinture ce caractère de réalité qui lui manque, on rencontrerait une impossibilité matérielle contre laquelle il est inutile de lutter. Ces conclusions ne son pas des idées préconçues ou l’expression d’une opinion personnelle : ce sont des vérités de fait, des résultats d’observations précises, attentives et prolongées, et qui, obtenus par la méthode expérimentale des sciences, ont le même degré de certitude que les lois de la physique.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷¹ Wall text, *Macchiaioli and Photography* at Museo Nazionale Alinari della Forografia, 3 January 2009.

¹⁷² Silvestra Bietoletti, *I Macchiaioli: La Storia, Gli Artisti, Le Opere* (Florence: Giunti Editore, 2001), 15.

¹⁷³ Jules Jamin, "L'optique Et La Peinture," *Revue des Deux Mondes* (1 February 1857): 627.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*: 641.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

Also influential were the works of Helmholtz, whose book *L'optique de la peinture* (1873) was owned by Martelli.¹⁷⁶ Like the works of Jamin, the Macchiaioli would have responded to the precedence of the qualities of light over formal structures. Helmholtz writes: “Encore une fois, je vous prie de remarquer que ces modifications dans les couleurs ne seraient pas nécessaires, si l’artiste avait à sa disposition des couleurs aussi brillantes ou aussi ternes que celles que la réalité nous montre dans les corps éclairés par le soleil ou par la lune.”¹⁷⁷

Michel Eugène Chevreul’s theories of simultaneous contrast of colors, published in *The Principles of Harmony and Contrast of Colors, and Their Applications to the Arts*, allowed the Macchiaioli access to theories that reinforced their experiments, and sanctioned the juxtaposition of flat tints on the substrate. He emphasizes the importance of such considerations in order to provide for a complex painting:

In *simultaneous contrast* of two flat colors, each color will produce its complement in the eye, which will then affect the appearance of the other color, so that neither of the two original colors are seen in their particular tint. If these two original colors are not of the same tone (i.e. lightness or darkness), the lightest tone will seem darker, and the darker tone lighter.

In *mixed contrast* the eye, after looking at one color, soon creates the complement of that color in order to bring repose and balance to itself, so that, in fixing upon a second color, it will bring to that color sensations of the complement previously created, and this will mix with the new color, and eventually with the new color’s complement, in a series of *successive contrasts*. If the sizes or shapes of the successive colored images are dissimilar, their overlapping parts will be seen differently mixed in contrast to those parts which do not overlap.

...

I should greatly err, if the difficulty in faithfully representing the image of the model encountered by painters ignorant of the law of contrast, has not been with

¹⁷⁶ E. Brücke and H. Helmholtz, *Principes Scientifiques Des Beaux Arts. Essais Et Fragments De Théorie/L'optique Et La Peinture* (Paris: Librairie Germer Baillère et Cie, 1878). Biblioteca Marucelliana – Firenze, B° 1/367

¹⁷⁷ H. Helmholtz, *L'optique et la peinture*. Quoted from Balloni, "Teorie Della Visione a Fondamento Delle Ricerche Unificate Di Pittura E Fotografia Nell'italia Dei Macchiaioli," 23.

many the cause of a coloring dull and inferior to that of artists who, less careful than they in the fidelity of imitation, or not so well organized for seizing all the modifications of light, have given way to their first impressions. Or, in other words, viewing the model more rapidly, their eyes have not had time to become fatigued.¹⁷⁸

Forty years prior, Goethe recorded a similar reflection in his work *Beitrage zur Optik*:

It has been noted that certain colors set next to each other have as great an effect as deep shadow next to the brightest light. Furthermore, that these colors undergo as many gradations as shadow caused by light reflection. It was found that by purely juxtaposing color, complete paintings can be created and without shadow...¹⁷⁹

While they attended to similar optical theories, it is essential to reemphasize the differences between the Macchiaioli and the Impressionist aesthetic attention. The Macchiaioli's sole purpose was to examine the nuances of chiaroscuro in their works, while in the aesthetics of the Impressionists this took a secondary role to a more instinctive use of color as a means for self-expression.¹⁸⁰

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Florence was home to a number of photographers including Anton Hautmann, Alphonse Bernoud, Pietro Semplicini, John Brompton Philpot, Enrico Van Lint and Fratelli Alinari.¹⁸¹ A number of these photographers realized the potential in the similarities of approach between the two media. Hautmann's studio was often visited by painters, for his emphasis on light and shadow in nature. Giacomo Caneva and Carlo Baldassarre Simelli's photos were used as starting points for compositions. Their photos focused on views, nature, buildings and

¹⁷⁸ Michèl Eugène Chevreul, *De la loi du contraste simultané des couleurs* (Paris, 1839). Quoted from Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 120.

¹⁷⁹ Goethe, *Beitrage zur Optik*, vol. I (1791). Quoted from Ibid., 119.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 188.

¹⁸¹ For a history of the Macchiaioli and photography see Monica Maffioli, ed., *I Macchiaioli E La Fotografia* (Florence: Museo Nazionale Alinari della Fotografia, 2008).

figures in a very pictorial compositional framework. In 1868 the painter-cum-photographer, Federico Faruffini, attempted to create compositional touchstones for painters, but not commercially successful.

There are many examples of the Italian interest in photography as a touchstone or impetus for compositional considerations. Landscapes such as Fratelli Alinari's *Florence, View of San Miniato*, whose three-quarter composition, looking up at the church and surrounding grounds was used seven years later in Altamura's bombastically nationalistic composition, *La prima bandiera italiana portata a Firenze nel 1859*. (Figures A208-209) Interior views also found greater nuance due to the medium. The quality of light and tonal range of Philpot's *Firenze, Interior of S. Miniato* finds echo in Signorini's tangential view of the left stairway up to the raised choir and down into the crypt. (Figures A210-211)

Even portraiture of close friends, such as the portrait of Cristiano Banti by Boldini locates its source in a Fratelli Alinari portrait of Banti, perhaps because it freed the sitter from tedious sessions in favor of a comparatively shorter exposure time to create the photograph.¹⁸² The two works find resonance in the Banti's pose of standing while leaning on a cane, feet crossed as well as a similar suit and pocket watch. (Figures A212-213) In a similar manner Fattori used photographs as an aid for portraits. As I have discovered, his *Portrait of Diego Martelli on horseback* finds its inspiration in an Alinari photograph of strikingly similar composition.¹⁸³ (Figures A214-215)

¹⁸² The composition and handling of Boldini's portrait of Banti is also similar to his *Portrait of Lionetto Banti* (Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Pitti). Again Lionetto is shown leaning on the back of a chair, perhaps to steady himself for a preparatory photograph's long exposure time.

¹⁸³ It is interesting to note that Fattori's last work bears a striking thematic similarity to these photographs. Unfinished, the work includes a hay barn and a horse overlooking the ocean. Perhaps Fattori, aware of his

Banti's interest in perhaps forgoing traditional portrait sitting sessions, in favor of a photograph is not surprising considering his own fascination with the medium which began eight years prior, in 1858, when he began to experiment with Cabianca, Borroni and Signorini at his estate in Montemurlo with the ton gris, camera obscura, photographic negatives and tableaux vivants. His tableaux vivants, produced as stereoscopic images to further elucidate the depth of the composition, were used not only as studies of the medium, but also as catalysts for painted compositions, as seen in his *The Death of Lorenzo Medici*. (Figures A216-217) The photograph, instead of functioning as a record of details, records for Banti the spatial and tonal relationships of the composition, which provided him an aid in the production of the macchia-inspired composition. Banti also experimented with circular use of the two media, often reverting back and forth between the media in a modified process of preparing a composition. An example can be seen in a reproduction of a one of Banti's drawings that was made by Fratelli Alinari. (Figure A218) The reproductions of the highly finished preparatory drawing provided a standardized substrate upon which Banti could experiment with color, volume and tonal relationships, as seen in a version on which Banti painted. (Figure A219)

Like Banti and Boldini, Cabianca also used photography in the process of preparing compositions. A series of photographs of nuns, probably taken by Cabianca were used in later painted compositions. His photograph *Conversazione fra religiosi* focuses on the compositional relationships of the poses of the figures, which he inserted into a larger composition of the same name. (Figures A220-221) The architectural masonry that surrounds the two nuns and priest echo the nuances of tonality and

own mortality was reminiscing upon the most agreeable time in his life, at Castiglioncello. The work is in the Museo Civico Giovanni Fattori, Livorno.

chiaroscuro seen in their contrasting costumes, providing Cabianca with the opportunity to further experiment with the aesthetics of the *macchia* throughout the composition.

Reflecting upon the trajectory of the Macchiaioli, Signorini notes the importance placed on photography, and the care by which artists needed to approach the medium as an aid in painting:

Ma ahimè! Tutto ciò che nasce è destinato a morire e la *macchia* che nacque nel 1855... coadiuvata dalla fotografia, invenzione che non disonora poi il nostro secolo e non ha colpa nessuna se qualcuno decade in arte abusandone, giunse alla verità nel 1858....¹⁸⁴

Such commentary echoes comments made by Signorini a few years earlier:

Il pubblico progredì e quel suo progresso fu una sanzione per quegli artisti che... condotti da studi fatti sulla fotografia... spinsero primi il chiaroscuro dei loro quadri onde ottenere la solidità e per conseguenza l'illusione ottica dei corpi; così... la così detta *macchia* ebbe una sapiente sanzione.¹⁸⁵

Signorini did not often use photography as a procedural means as often as his Macchiaioli contemporaries, instead he used it as a touchstone for memories connected with his oeuvre.¹⁸⁶ Unlike Banti and Cabianca who took their own photographs, Signorini would collaborate with his pupil and friend Giulio de Gori in the composition and choice of the significant moment of the photographic shot while he would leave the technical aspects to Gori.¹⁸⁷ The complexity of the collaboration makes the boundaries between the conception and execution hard to define. Photographs such as the two

¹⁸⁴ T. Signorini, "Cose d'arte" in *Il Rinnovamento* 12-13 June 1874. Quoted from Balloni, "Teorie Della Visione a Fondamento Delle Ricerche Unificate Di Pittura E Fotografia Nell'italia Dei Macchiaioli," 19.

¹⁸⁵ T. Signorini, "Della soppressione d'un convento di Cappuccini, recente quadro del Prof. Fraschiere e di altri lavori" in *La Rivista Europa*, 1 October 1870. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 20.

¹⁸⁶ Troyer suggests that it was Degas' interest in photography that helped interest Signorini, but perhaps it was a mutual discovery. See Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 174.

¹⁸⁷ Lamberto Vitali, *La Fotografia E I Pittori* (Florence: Edizioni Sansoni Antiquariato, 1960), 13.

versions of *L'Omino nel Bosco*, one of which is squared for transfer, resonated within Signorini's oeuvre, inspiring works including a painting of the same name. (Figures A222-224) The painted composition is not a direct quotation of the photograph, but rather they function as aides de memoire, allowing Signorini to set up the path meandering through the dense forest, on which walks a solitary figure. Such ideas are compounded in the one photograph which is squared for transfer, which suggests that Signorini was breaking down the composition into its component parts, to fully investigate how the various parts of the composition related to each other. Works such as *November* or *Cattle Market* suggest that while Signorini might not have utilized the medium of photography as direct part of his process of creation, he was influenced by the genre all the same. These two images strongly suggest the compositional ratios of figure to landscape seen in his photographs with De Gori: large landscapes or imposing vertical elements enveloping the figures. (Figures A225-226)

The importance of photography, the Fratelli Alinari in particular, for the Macchiaioli circle can be summed up in Martelli's eulogic essay written in 1890.¹⁸⁸ The Fratelli Alinari began taking photographs of monuments around Italy in 1850, and circa 1863 Archduke Albert of Austria commissioned reproductive photographs of drawings in the Uffizi collection. The Galleria di Venezia soon followed suit, ordering its own set of reproductive images of its collection. The quality of these reproductions, and their portraits and genre scenes are summed by Martelli in his essay:

¹⁸⁸ In a curious cycle, the aesthetics of the Macchiaioli have come full circle and have influenced contemporary photography. Such constructs were investigated in a recent exhibition entitled *L'arte della macchia una riflessione fotografica* held at the Centro per l'arte Diego Martelli, 11 August-27 September 2009.

Ma sarà egli facile delineare un quadro dalle tinte così delicate e gentili? Descrivere, con uno stilo modesto ed efficace, la vita di tre uomini dabbene? È ella questa una opera d'arte che non richieda magistero di forma e si possa gettar giù come vien viene?

La tavolozza manca di tinte, il linguaggio di tropi e di figure, allorché si tratta di gente dello stampo dei nostri amici. La moltitudine, se non sempre vile, il più delle volte imbecille, ha creato un arsenale di fasi e di periodi per magnificare le imprese, non sempre lodevoli, dei paladini, e lascia derelitte le modeste virtù, né di quelle si innamora mai, e poco se ne commuove; come se lavorare producendo, produrre senza soverchiare, ed arricchire senza ruberie e senza prepotenze, fosse cosa più facile che conquistare un ducato nell'ebbrezza del campo di battaglia, dove l'audacia tenuta per mano della fortuna, fa di un mariuolo un eroe, o carpire una corna di conte navigando fra il codice e la borsa, in modo da scontare col cento per cento di interesse i sedicenti servizi res'allo stato.¹⁸⁹

As noted in the exhibition text for an exhibition focusing on the relationship between the Macchiaioli and photography:

...the photographer's lens was favoring the process of a dilation of knowledge towards an encyclopedic diorama, per contra, thanks to the contribution of the 'amateur' photographers, it was focused on the private sphere of daily life, subjecting the rooms and gardens of the bourgeois family to close scrutiny in an effort to capture the dramatic poetics of the poses, looks, sentiments of family members, creating a parallel repository of images.¹⁹⁰

It is possible that this side of photography, the propensity towards cataloguing the mundane, had an effect on Degas' subject matter. In addition, an examination of the process itself could have had repercussions on the developing artist's oeuvre. As Troyer points out, photographs had an aura that was:

...[a] peculiar quality of the early photograph, often found transferred to the painted facsimile...that surrounded figures and objects as a result of the vibrations of light caused by contrasting tones and colors. In portraits this aura lent an almost supernatural emphasis to the individuality and uniqueness of the image, creating a 'presence', very nearly in the iconic sense.¹⁹¹

¹⁸⁹ Diego Martelli, *In Memoria Dei Fratelli Alinari* (Florence: 1890), 6.

¹⁹⁰ Wall text, *Macchiaioli and Photography* at Museo Nazionale Alinari della Fotografia, 3 January 2009.

¹⁹¹ Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900", 162.

In addition, the medium could have had specific influence on the intensity of his portraiture. Troyer continues:

The long exposures necessary with the first photographic emulsions called for intense concentration on the part of the sitter in maintaining the pose. This heightening of awareness of process, and of the seeing power of the lens, made the camera seem capable of some power of interaction with the sitter, obliging him to participate in a 'dialogue' brought about by the photographic process.¹⁹²

As previously mentioned, we know that Degas saw Alinari photography so it is possible that such issues of sustained interaction with the camera could have influenced Degas' portraiture.

Photography was far from a francocentric tradition; interest and experimentation in the new medium also took place throughout the world, and the fascination with the genre in Italy fundamentally effected Degas' burgeoning aesthetics. Degas clearly entertained an interest in French photography, even while in Italy, as evidenced in his and Fattori's interest in Disderi which resulted in Degas' *Portrait of Princess Metternich* and Fattori's *Portrait of Cousin Argia*. (Figures A114, A138) A double portrait by Disderi sketched by Degas finds echo in a group of Degas' portraits of sisters including the Montejasi sisters, the Bellelli sisters and the Beauregard sisters. It is also resonant of the copy Degas made of Cariani's *Double Portrait* between 1858-60. (Figures A50-51) The sustained attention to this type of figural grouping of familial portraits clearly suggests that the portrayal of the interrelationship between the two figures in a dual portrait was something of great interest to the artist.¹⁹³ His attention was drawn to the trope at a number of occasions throughout his early career, regardless of media, and he utilized the

¹⁹² Ibid., 163.

¹⁹³ Giorgio Cortenova, "Il Terzo Occhio Di Edgar Degas," in *Degas Scultore*, ed. Ettore Camesasca (Milan: Mazzotta, 1986), 68.

lessons gleaned from these copies and sketches in his own productions. His interest in the French photographer continued into the 1870s when Degas requested from M erante a series of cartes-de-visite taken by Disderi showing M erante, Coralli, Terraris and Louis Fiocre in costumes of the ballet *Pierre de M edecis*, c. 1876.¹⁹⁴

While in Italy, Degas would again be exposed to discussions of the medium that so fascinated the Macchiaioli and this exposure would allow the artist to contemplate the aesthetic possibilities of photography in a situation such as the Caff  Michelangiolo where the ideas were teeming and experimentation abounded. While there is no extant evidence of Degas' experimentation in the medium from this period, the pictorial conventions did not escape him and found resonance in his constructions of contemporary life.¹⁹⁵

It was not until later in his career that Degas turned to the medium. Kodak released the first Kodak hand held camera in 1888. Degas purchased either a Kodak no. 1 or a Kodak no. 2 (released in 1889), and he began to experiment in the media himself, creating compositions that are aesthetically reminiscent of his sketched compositions, as if he was utilizing the camera as a novel medium for the production of the sketch, as exemplified in *Seated Nude*. (Figure A227) Like the Macchiaioli's experimentation a few decades prior, Degas utilized the photographs as examinations of thematic compositions such as that of a woman drying herself, as seen in a photograph from 1896 that finds echo in an oil painting of the year prior. (Figures A228-229) The photograph provides a unique sense of the forced fiction of the scene, the sofa and towel functioning only as props in

¹⁹⁴ Disderi, *Pierre de Medicis (M erante, Coralli, Terraris and Louis Fiocre in costumes from the ballet)*, c. 1876

¹⁹⁵ For further discussion of the effects of photography on Degas' oeuvre, see Aaron Scharf, "Degas and the Instantaneous Image," in *Art and Photography* (London: Penguin Books, 1986), 183.

the artist's studio rather than as objects in the ritual of the bath, as the bottom of the model's foot is dirty, clear evidence that she has not bathed recently. Such examples also illustrate that Degas also began to use photography in tandem with other media as a means of exploring the implications of pose as it was translated through media. The pose of his photograph *Ballerina che si accomoda la bretella* was revisited a few years later through the medium of sculpture in *Ballerina che si aggiusta la spallina del corpetto*. (Figures A230-231) The two experimental sketches allow Degas to understand how a similar pose is translated to a variety of media, giving evidence of his interest in the medium and its repercussions on aesthetics.

Like Banti, Degas took part in the practice of creating tableaux vivants, and it was not until 1885 that he began to document the scenes through means of the photograph. His *Apotheosis of Degas* is one of his earliest documented involvements with the medium. Echoing Signorini's relationship with de Gori, Degas collaborated with a local photographer named Walter Barnes who made the negative and print to Degas' exacting specifications. The aggrandized portrait of Degas gives nod to one of the major influences in his aesthetic development, Ingres, specifically through the latter's *Apotheosis of Homer*.¹⁹⁶ (Figure A232) The work held specific import in Degas' mind as he owned a study for the image, whose fragmented nature speaks directly to Degas' working processes. (Figure A56) Such a grandiose self portrait is a overt example of Degas' self-placement in the canon and reiterates his role as a contemporary history painter.

¹⁹⁶ Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, *Apotheosis of Homer*, 1827, Oil on canvas, Louvre

The exploratory nature of Degas' attention to the medium is typical of compositional sketch strategies across all of his media: pastels, pen and ink to sculpture. In addition it harkens back to the Macchiaioli's experimental attention to photography, specifically the use of the medium in Signorini's oeuvre as a touchstone for exploration. Degas' photographs taken in his apartment which focus on combining an interesting atmosphere with the mediocrity of life have a similarity to Signorini and De Gori's interior shots. Writing on making photographs, Degas is to have said to Halévy, "Daylight is too easy. What I want is difficult--the atmosphere of lamps or moonlight,"¹⁹⁷ and a comparison of Degas' *Louise Halévy Reading to Degas* with Signorini and de Gori's *Telemaco Signorini nella sala da gioco della villa de Gori* illustrates both works' clear attention to the nuances of light and atmosphere conveyed through the photographic print. (Figures A233-234) In Degas' composition, the two figures are rendered sketchily probably owing to slight movements on their part during exposure, their forms fading into the dark background while the static lamp is exposed in minute detail. Louise Halévy's shadow over her newspaper suggests that the light source is placed behind her. Signorini and de Gori's composition takes in a greater scene and utilizes the natural light streaming in the windows to examine the way light and shadow interact with various objects and surfaces in the interior scene.

Valéry wrote that Degas, "...lived and appreciated photography at a time when artists despised it or did not dare admit that they made use of it." He quotes Rouart as saying that he had once gone to Degas' studio where he was shown a canvas, "which he had sketched out in pastel, in monochrome, after a photograph." He was one of the few

¹⁹⁷ Halévy, *My Friend Degas*.

artists, according to Valéry, “to see what photography could teach the painter – and what the painter must be careful not to learn from it.”¹⁹⁸ Blanche noted:

His system of composition was new: Perhaps he will one day be reproached with having anticipated the cinema and the snapshot and of having, above all between 1870 and 1885, come close to ‘*the genre picture*’. The instantaneous photograph with its unexpected cutting-off, its shocking differences in scale, has become so familiar to us that the easel-paintings of that period no longer astonish us...no one before Degas ever thought of doing them, no one since has put such ‘gravity’...into the kind of composition which utilizes to advantage the accidents of the camera.¹⁹⁹

His peers recognized the import that the medium had on his work, and this interest in experimentation found a filter through the experiments of the Macchiaioli a few decades prior, although it wasn’t until the advent of the hand held camera and its comparative ease that Degas decided to fully experiment with photography.²⁰⁰ His actual experimentation with the medium did not happen until the 1880s, his attention to the essential characteristics of photography, particularly its ability to capture the insignificant moment and its translation of the polychromatic world into a study of light and tone had repercussions on Degas’ oeuvre found repercussions in his oeuvre long before.

Conclusion

Degas used his Italian sojourn as a means to garner a parallel experience from his contemporaries functioning within the structure of the École.²⁰¹ An overt follower of

¹⁹⁸ Paul Valéry, *Degas Dance Dessin* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965), 50.

¹⁹⁹ Quoted from Scharf, "Degas and the Instantaneous Image," 184.

²⁰⁰ Dorothy Kosinski, "Habits of the Eye: Degas, Photography, and Modes of Vision," in *The Artist and the Camera: Degas to Picasso*, ed. Dorothy Kosinski (Dallas: Dallas Museum of Art, 1999). Malcolm R. Daniel, ed., *Edgar Degas, Photographer* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998). Kirk Varnedoe, "The Ideology of Time: Degas and Photography," *Art in America* 68, no. 6 (1988).

²⁰¹ It is interesting to note that Degas did not travel to Venice at any point during his travels in Italy. In the late 1870s, Venice took on the role of the artistic capital of Italy. At the time the most overt presence of expatriots in the city were English. Signorini and Abbati went to Venice as well as a number of French artists including Manet (1875), Renoir (1881), Boudin (three visits between 1895-95), Monet (1908), Redon

Ingres, who also revered Italy, Degas approached his time on the peninsula as an opportunity to study the great masters and garner further understanding of the nuances of composition, contour and process that would allow him to return to France and establish himself within the Salon-based structure as a history painter. His Italian heritage and command over the language gave him access to the contemporaneous worlds of ottocento painting in a manner that was inaccessible to his French contemporaries.

His more traditional experiences at the French Academy in Rome and less mainstream artistic conversations at the Italian cafés provided Degas an opportunity to evaluate a number of topics, from basic tenants of draftsmanship and chiaroscuro to the import of caricature and photography, in a manner that would have been impossible had he remained in Paris, or only interacted with French artists while in Italy. His Italian filters provided the opportunity to examine French artistic tradition through Italian eyes, as well as novel approaches to caricature and photography. These experiences and experiments found repercussion in his developing oeuvre, particularly in his approach to portraiture that captured the intense identity of the sitter, as well as sowing the seeds of experimentation in media that found full fruition in his photographic experiments of the last decades of his life.

A comparison of Degas' *Portrait of the Artist*, painted before his travels to Italy and his unfinished *Marguerite de Gas*, painted during his travels and after his return, allows for a straightforward understanding of how the trip fundamentally changed his oeuvre. (Figures A235-236) His self portrait has overt warmth in the skin tone, influenced by French artists such as Bonnat, and the three-quarter length composition in

(1900, 1908), and Signac (1904, 1908). See Warren Adelson, *Sargent's Venice* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2006).

front of a neutral background, and tight brushwork clearly speaks to the French tradition of portraiture. His portrait of Marguerite is unfinished in her flesh tones, but the green undertone suggests that he began to build up flesh tones in a cinquecento manner, beginning with a blue-green undertone.²⁰² In addition, the more painterly quality of the composition suggests a greater attention to nuances of tonality, her intense gaze perhaps owes something to his interest in caricature and the cropped composition speaks to an influence of photography – all characteristics that he would have been exposed to in the course of his relationships with contemporary Italian artists.

²⁰² This method of utilizing the green undertones of the cinquecento can also be seen in a more overt manner in his *Frieze of Dancers*, c. 1895, Oil on fabric, The Cleveland Museum of Art

CHAPTER IV
DEGAS AND THE ITALIAN EXPATRIATE COMMUNITY IN PARIS

...the fundamental theme of Degas' art taken as a whole – an analysis of the act of looking and its consequences.

Charles Stuckey, *Degas: Form and Space*

Upon his return to Paris in 1860, Degas settled into a routine that included interactions with the Italian community in the city. For a number of Italian artists who wanted to position themselves within the evolving international art market, Paris was an obvious choice for relocation. As a result, a large expatriate community developed that was actively represented by dealers such as Goupil and Reitlinger, exhibiting in the Salons and International Expositions¹, as well as the evolving non-traditional venues such as the Impressionist exhibitions, and taking part in the evolving aesthetic dialogues in the contemporaneous Parisian art community at locales such as the Café de la Nouvelle-Athènes.² It was here that Degas mingled with De Nittis, Zandomenighi, Martelli, and Marcellin Desboutin – who provided another link with the Italians. Degas would often dine at Santariero on Avenue MacMahon which was frequented by Forain, Boldini and Zandomenighi.³ Joined by Zola and Edmond de Goncourt, Degas took part in the revels of the 'polentani,' the members of the Circolo della Polenta – a club for expatriate

¹ For a compilation of Italian sculptors and painters who participated in the Salons and International Expositions in Paris between the years 1855-1889, organized both by event and artist, see Giuliano Matteucci, ed., *Aria Di Parigi Nella Pittura Italiana Del Secondo Ottocento* (Livorno: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1998), 97-98. A similar study can be found in Gianna Piantoni and Anne Pingeot, eds., *Italie 1880-1910: Arte Della Prova Della Modernità* (Torino: Umberto Allemandi & c. , 2000), 51 which organizes the information in a graphical manner.

² The Italian consulate in Paris was located at rue Boissy-d'Anglais, 45. The Italian embassy was located at rue des Champs-Élysées, 9. The latter charged a 5 F admission fee. Alb. Montemont, *Guide Universel Et Complet De L'étranger Dans Paris* (Paris: Garnier freres).

³ Madeleine Zillhardt, *Louise-Catherine Breslau Et Ses Amis* (Paris: Éditions des Portiques, 1932), 69.

Italians – where they would sing operatic arias, read poetry, dance, design menus and cook Italian dishes.⁴

Success as an Italian artist in Paris meant succumbing to the particular fancies of the art scene of the City of Light. The ever-rising role of the critic was taken into consideration, and in order to find success in the city, the Italian artists needed to fully comprehend the various mechanisms that made up the Parisian art market, as well as how to use them to their advantage. A letter between Abbati and Cabianca comments upon the importance of critics in the Parisian art world:

In Francia il progresso è dovuto in parte ai critici; questi chiamano l'attenzione del pubblico sulle nuove manifestazioni artistiche e fanno l'effetto della quarta pagina dei giornali per i cavadenti e i possessai della vera tintura dei capelli. In una parola costituiscono la *Réclame*. Ecco di che cosa abbiamo veramente bisogno.⁵

In addition to the critics, they also had to successfully navigate the Parisian galleries, especially the dealers Goupil and Reitlinger whose rolls included the majority of the represented Italian artists in the city. In a letter to Banti, Cabianca mentions the frustration of many artists – Italian or otherwise – with the gallery system: the cultivation of a particular aesthetic known to garner success in the market. He speaks of the difficulty had by De Nittis, Boldini and Signorini in selling paintings through Goupil:

De Nittis a Parigi se ne v`a a poco a poco... Boldini mi ha scritto che gli mandi qualcosa per Goupil ed egli stesso quest'anno decorso... Ridi se non vuoi ridere! Pan i chi a Parigi, sculture!! Si è messo a dipingere quadri piccolissimi che gli ha

⁴ For a better understanding of the layout of Degas' Paris, see Appendix I.

⁵ Letter from Giuseppe Abbati to Vincenzo Cabianca, 26 January 1867. Quoted in Marion Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire," *Histoire de l'art*, no. 52 (June 2003): 130 n13.

preso Goupil [sic] Signorini che ha fatto sforzi per vedere se egli stesso avesse potuto vendere non ha piaciuto ed è rimasto con tanto di naso!⁶

The attempt to follow international trends also evoked hostile criticism in Italy, where the artists were accused of forsaking their nationalism. In contrast these same artists were criticized as being too provincial in the cosmopolitan environment of Paris. Such a critical conundrum is clearly elucidated in a disparaging letter sent by Signorini to the critic Enrico Panzacchi in response to his recent review of an 1880 exhibition of Signorini's work in Turin. He writes:

...I have read the *capitan Francassa* in which, speaking of me and my painting at Turin, [you say] they will have to remove me from the Tuscan group in order to align me with cosmopolitan French art, and as a good shepherd you call me a lost sheep...hoping I will produce in the future a Tuscan painting like the one of Ravenna that I exhibited at Naples.

You, too, dear Enrico, are with the majority that sanctions the accomplished fact; if my painting had been purchased you would have talked differently...

Goupil saw my painting when it was finished and do you know why he didn't buy it? Because it seemed to him that it had too much local character and the figure of the woman on the picture plane wasn't as elegant as Florentine woman would be, who, according to him, dresses *almost* as well as they do in Paris. I, who presume to be a better observer than Goupil, see in that *almost* the great difference between our art and French art, and it is precisely the seeing of this difference that gives to my painting a greater local imprint of Florence than the painting of Ravenna exhibited at Naples had of the imprint of Romagna...if anyone comes asking about me, you can tell him that I am more Florentine than Farinata...⁷

The Italian artists were not the only members of the artistic community struggling with the state of the Parisian art world. In 1870, Degas wrote a letter to the newspaper

⁶ Letter from Banti to Cabianca, 17 October 1873. Ibid.: 130 n50.

⁷ Letter from Signorini to Enrico Panzacchi, 28 July 1880. Quoted in Nancy Gray Troyer, "Telemaco Signorini and Macchiaioli Giapponismo: A Report of Research in Progress," *The Art Bulletin* 66, no. 1 (1984): 145.

Paris-Journal, describing what was wrong with the Salon and his suggestions for fixing it. Degas aimed his modest reforms at adapting the public forum of the Salon to the needs of the exhibitors, and he assumed that the primary concept determining installation should be the integrity of the individual artist and individual work. He suggested that just as authorship should override distinctions in medium, so too should the autonomy of the work, the particular requirements of a single piece, override the desires of the installer for decorative ensembles.⁸ Some of his proposals included a minimum of twenty to thirty centimeters between works, mixing drawings in with paintings (which sprung from his pastel *Scène de guerre au moyen âge* being relegated to a gallery of drawings in 1865), and taking into consideration whether paintings should be shown high, or low, depending on the composition of the work, not the hierarchical practices of the Salon (the result of a portrait of his being skied in 1864.)⁹ Degas' frustration with the Salon system encouraged him, in part, to take part in the establishment of the Société Anonyme Coopérative des Artistes, Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs and their first exhibition in Nadar's studio in 1874.

As a major organizer of the exhibitions, aside from 1882 in which he did not participate, Degas was a driving force behind the inclusion of a number of Italian artists in the exhibitions. De Nittis participated in the 1874 exhibition, while Zandomenighi took a more active role, participating in the 1879, 1880, 1881 and 1886 exhibitions. There is also evidence of the extended invitation of other Italian artists, who ended up not exhibiting in the exhibition. A list of artists to be included in the 1879 exhibition was

⁸ Martha Ward, "Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions," in *Critical Readings in Impressionism & Post-Impressionism*, ed. Mary Tompkins Lewis (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007).

⁹ Letter from Degas to Salon Jury 1870, reproduced in Theodore Reff, "Some Unpublished Letters of Degas," *The Art Bulletin* 50, no. 1 (1968): 87.

drawn up by Degas in his notebook and included Federico Rossano, but he did not participate.¹⁰ Similarly, De Nittis was included in a list of probable exhibitors in the 1875 exhibition, but his name was cancelled.¹¹ While Degas was in Naples in March 1875, he visited Marco De Gregorio, a painter of picturesque scenes and one of the major players, with De Nittis and Rossano, in the Resina School in the 1860s. Impressed by his work, Degas invited him to participate in the 1876 exhibition.¹² He writes to Signorini of the possibility:

In questi giorni mi venne a trovare De Gas e parlammo molto di te e delle sventure di Adriano. Ti verrà a trovare passando per Firenze verso la fine del mese; lui è fortemente entusiasta dell'esposizione realista che deve fare pure quest'anno a Parigi, ci ha invitati a noi pure per l'altro anno, e così inviterà tutti gli altri appartenenti al nostro principio in senso il più radicale possibile.¹³

Unfortunately, De Gregorio died soon after Degas' visit and Degas was unable to have his work exhibited in Paris. In addition, Degas' Italian connections found their way into the exhibition in the subject matter of his works, through the inclusion of his *Portrait of Diego Martelli* in the 1878 exhibition.¹⁴

In addition to their social and exhibition interactions, Degas' emerging aesthetics, and their focus on the fragment and gesture, caught the eye of the Italian artistic

¹⁰ Nb 31 p 93

¹¹ Nb 26 p 99

¹² Henri Loyrette, *Degas* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 420.

¹³ Letter from Marco De Gregorio to Signorini, 23 March 1875. Reproduced in Piero Dini and Giuseppe Luigi Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 2 vols., vol. 1, *Archivi Dell'ottocento*; (Torino [Italy]: U. Allemandi, 1990), 317 n 2.

¹⁴ Nb 31 p 68 includes list of works by Degas, drawn up in preparation for 4th exhibition, including *Portrait of Martelli*.

community, as evidenced in a 1873 letter from ‘Gnorri’ to Enrico Cecioni, published as a reaction to that year’s Salon:

...ha successo di stima Degasez (sic) che fa dei quadri come Champfleury fa dei libri – piuttosto che opere frammenti di osservazioni importantissimi della natura, elaborazioni di una nuova società in gestione, elementi di un’arte avvenire destinata forse a divorziare con tutte le tradizioni del passato e a perdere nell’oblio gli ignobili commerci dell’ignobile prostituzione dell’arte presente.¹⁵

Diego Martelli

One the members of Degas’ Italian circle was Diego Martelli, with whom Degas reunited after their acquaintance in Florence. After Martelli’s participation in the Italian campaign of 1859, as a volunteer for the Tuscan division, he journeyed to Paris in 1860 and 1868. He made an extended stay in the city from 1878-79, prompted by the Exposition Universelle of 1878, during which time he resided at 52, rue de Doubai. It had originally been Martelli’s intention to remain in Paris and join the group of expatriates already in the city, but financial difficulties connected to his properties in Tuscany, including Castlioncello, forced his return to Italy.¹⁶ Martelli descended upon Paris as the official correspondent for several Italian publications, but in his articles that he began to send back to Italy covered, in addition to the Exposition, a number of unofficial events taking place in the art community of Paris.¹⁷ Martelli’s taste, as reflected in his criticism of 1878, was still very Barbizon-oriented, attracted to the works of painters such as

¹⁵ Letter written from ‘Gnorri’ to Enrico Cecioni dated 15 June 1873. “Corrispondenze: Esposizione del Salon” 1 July 1873, no. 9. Fernando Tempesti, ed., *Il Giornale Artistico* (Florence: Studio per Edizioni Scelte).

¹⁶ Letter from Martelli to M. Gioli, 28 March 1879, letter from Martelli to A. Sebatesti, 5 August 1878, and letter from Ernest Martelli to Diego Martelli, 13 October 1878. Diego Martelli, *Diego Martelli : Corrispondenza Inedita*, ed. A. Marabottini and Quercioli E.V. (Roma: De Luca, 1978).

¹⁷ Norma Broude, "The Macchiaioli As "Proto-Impressionists": Realism, Popular Science and the Reshaping of Macchia Romanticism, 1862-1886," *The Art Bulletin* 52, no. 4 (1970).

Delacroix, Millet, Rousseau, Courbet and Corot. The work of Manet, which Martelli had deemed 'ugly' in 1863, had not risen in his estimation in the intervening fifteen years, suggesting in his criticism that Manet's paintings functioned as "affirmations of modern realism", but were an inept bungling in terms of aesthetic value.¹⁸

Towards the end of his stay in Paris, perhaps the result of his close social relations with contemporaneous Parisian artists including Degas, Manet and Pissarro, Martelli's artistic interests shift radically. Perhaps rekindling a friendship with Degas, borne out of the latter's formative years in Florence, Martelli was also introduced to the artistic circle of the Impressionists and Manet through the networks of the Café Nouvelle Athènes, and through friends Desboutin and Zandomeneghi. Desboutin, in particular, was quite fond of the Italian critic. In a letter to Signorini, he writes very kindly of Martelli, begging Signorini to pass along his greetings:

Our dear friend Diego, in particular, is for me the most amiable representative of what I would call (if you will allow me) the Gallic spirit of Italy. There truly is underneath (better yet, on the surface of) all peoples an essence of everything that is good about the eclectic and sensitive life, which gives to the experience of an elite man and class the charm of compassionate good will and decent ill will; all of this is for me fully epitomized in that good head which I beg you to bless in my name.¹⁹

Through these social relationships, Martelli begins to reexamine the principles of modernity prevalent in contemporaneous Parisian painting. His criticisms shift to a greater understanding of the nuances of modernity as well, and an ability to distinguish between the particular aesthetics of Manet and Degas and those of the other

¹⁸ Quoted from *Ibid.*: 408.

¹⁹ Letter from Desboutin to Signorini. Quoted in Piero Dini, "Diego Martelli, the Macchiaioli, and the Impressionists," in *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting*, ed. Roberta Olson (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1992), 73-74.

Impressionists. Turning away from discussions of art as a mirror of nature or as a means of social protest, Martelli's criticism now focused on formal and aesthetic concerns, as well as explorations into the value of the immediacy of visual sensation.

Another source of Martelli's shift in artistic interest can be traced to his friendship with Paul Duranty. A copy of *La Nouvelle Peinture* was given to Martelli as a gift from Duranty in 1878, complete with handwritten notations in the margins, identifying the artists included in the discussion. The frontispiece includes an inscription: "a mon ami Diego Martelli/Duranty". The last page includes the following notation: "Les noms en marge tout écrit de ma main/Duranty/Le 5 Septembre 1878."²⁰ It is worth considering Martelli's interests in French art writing for a moment, as his collection included Proudhon's *Du Principe d'Art* (1865), as well as Zola's pamphlet on Manet (further suggesting a shift in attitude towards the French painter).²¹ Martelli's library, made up of somewhere between 10,000-13,000 volumes, features works written in Italian, French and even a few in English.²² It encompasses a wide range of subject matter, including French-Italian dictionaries, French-English dictionaries, works by Dickens, Proudhon, Brillat-Savarin and Verdi, as well as *The Communist Manifesto* and the *Necrologia*. His collection of art writing is rather small in comparison to the larger body of the collection,

²⁰ Edmond Duranty, *La Nouvelle Peinture a Propos Du Groupe D'artistes Qui Espose Dans Les Galeries Durand-Ruel* (Paris: E. Dentu, 1876). Biblioteca Marucelliana – Firenze, Misc. 1201/4. Duranty also personally inscribed a copy of *Les combats de Françoise du Quesnoy*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1873 to Martelli. Biblioteca Marucelliana – Firenze, B° 2 196.

²¹ Zola, Emile. *Edouard Manet*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1867. Biblioteca Marucelliana – Firenze, Misc 1201/28

²² The contents of Martelli's library are now housed in the Biblioteca Marucelliana – Firenze. The books are now encompassed in the general collection, but the Salone di Consultazione contains thirteen volumes that include the original contents of the collection. In addition, the Salone di Consultazione also contains many of Martelli's original correspondence and manuscripts.

numbering some fifty-two works, mostly on French art or the 1878 exposition, clearly stemming from his Parisian experiences.²³

Back in Italy, Martelli concentrated his efforts towards sharing his enthusiasm for Impressionism with his fellow Florentines. In a description of the differences between the Macchiaioli aesthetics and those of the Impressionists, Martelli describes to Fattori the importance of the Tuscan attention to this novel technique:

I want you to see that while all the Impressionists seek to attain their effects by the juxtaposition of tones and not by outlines, they do not use the *macchia* per se, as was used in Florence at the time of Serafino De Tivoli. Impressionist painting is pursued in a light a serene color-range; we sought the *macchia* for chiaroscuro.²⁴

Going further in his attempts to bring the concepts of Impressionism to the peninsula, Martelli convinced Pissarro to send two paintings, *Nell'orto* and *Paesaggio: dintorni di Potoise*, to the Promotrice Fiorentina of 1878, certain that it will be useful for Florentine artists to “see the strange way these artists attempt to achieve their effect, which will trigger many discussions.”²⁵ Martelli’s intense respect for the work of Pissarro was even hard for the painter himself to understand. In one of his letters, Pissarro writes of Martelli: “il a une si haute estime pour mon art que j’en suis confus et n’ose vraiment y croire.”²⁶ The critical tone of the resulting discussions in Italy was probably not what Martelli had in mind, as exemplified in the words of Francesco Gioli who proclaimed, “I

²³ For a summary of important volumes in Martelli’s library, see Appendix L.

²⁴ Quoted from Roberta Olson, *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1992), 74.

²⁵ Camille Pissarro, *Nell'orto (La tosatura della siepe)*, 1878, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti; Camille Pissarro, *Paesaggio: dintorni di Pointoise*, 1877, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti. The works were owned by Martelli and now are housed in the GAM, Pitti, as part of his donation to the city of Florence.

Letter from Diego Martelli to Francesco Gioli. Quoted in Francesca Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence: Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 1. ed. (Milano: Electa, 2007), 37.

²⁶ Camille Pissarro, *Correspondance De Camille Pissarro* vol. 1: 1865-1885 (Paris: PUF, 1980), 116.

don't like Pissarro at all", which was echoed by Fattori, whose paintings Martelli thought resembled the French master.²⁷ He wrote in a letter to Fattori:

Dear Gianni, I was taken completely by surprise when I read your appraisal of Pissarro's works since, if there is anyone at all among us whose work in certain paintings is similar to his more than all of the Impressionists, that person is you. As a matter of fact, your studies are in very in very good company here alongside works by Pissarro and others of this same kind...you, who have painted such beautiful things...in which everything is rendered by splashes of color, I fail to understand how you of all people can see nothing in Pissarro's paintings.²⁸

He continued in his attempts to convince Fattori of the importance of the Impressionists, even five years later, writing:

I have here, in my collection, a study done in a wood, by Luigi Gioli, which is precisely an impression of color undefined by any surround and is in fact extremely vague by reason of this quality. I agree that if you are short-sighted and put your nose right on top of a painting done by any of the Impressionists, you will not understand anything and will be as surprised as I was that a crust of that kind can actually generate an effect. But although I may be surprised by this mystery of creation, I do not find it in the least bit funny. It actually sets me thinking, so much so that I shall signoff on this one point, with a recommendation, which is this one: go back and look at paintings by Pissarro often, without the preconceived idea that the aim was to jest...and you will see that, little by little, your admittedly unfavorable impression will change and that in the midst of the false work that in the main assails the exhibitions, those paintings will open a window through which the light will flood.²⁹

Even after repeated dismissals of French art by Fattori, Martelli continued to keep him abreast of the changing trends across the Alps:

²⁷ Quoted in Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence : Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 37.

²⁸ Letter from Martelli to Fattori, 1873. Quoted in Carlo Sisi, "Diego Martelli and Nouvelle Peinture," in *Luce E Pittura in Italia/Light and Painting in Italy 1850-1914*, ed. Renato Miracco (Milan: Edizioni Gabriele Mazzotta, 2002), 26.

²⁹ Letter from Martelli to Fattori, 1878. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 25.

Impressionism as you knew it has become old hat. Now there are neo-Impressionists who paint in dots, without any outlines, and make painting into an embroidery. In this way, they decompose the color better and avoid the uniformity of tone. What guides them in this new research is Science, which will one day tell us how we should really be coloring paintings and make the way towards painting easier for everyone, so that we (critics, scholars and painters) have become old slippers.³⁰

It is clear, however, that the introduction of Pissarro's paintings did have some positive repercussions in Italy, the ideas infiltrating the works of artists such as Lega and Signorini, who began to create sketches from life which they entitled 'impressions', modifying the Impressionist construct and incorporating it into the Macchiaioli aesthetic.³¹

The friendship between Degas and Martelli most likely began while the former was in Florence between 1858-59 and again in 1860, and renewed during the latter's visits to Paris in the following two decades. It was most likely during Martelli's extended visit to the City of Light that the two struck up the intense bond, exemplified through a letter that Martelli wrote to Mathilde Gioli at the end of that year in which he writes of Degas : "Poi Degas col quale risico di diventare anche amico, uomo di spirito ed artista di merito minacciato sul serio di cecità... e che ha in conseguenza delle ore di umore tetro e disperato analogo alle circostanze."³² Martelli becomes smitten with the oeuvre of

³⁰ Letter from Martelli to Fattori, March 1888. Quoted in Renato Miracco, "From the Conquest of Light to Its Decomposition," in *Luce E Pittura in Italia/Light and Painting in Italy 1850-1914*, ed. Renato Miracco (Milan: Edizioni Gabriele Mazzotta, 2002), 11.

³¹ Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence : Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 38. See also Raffaele Monti, *Le Mutazioni Della "Macchia"* (Rome: De Luca, 1985).

³² Letter from Martelli to Mathilde Gioli, 25 December 1878. Quoted from Piero Dini, *Diego Martelli E Gli Impressionisti* (Florence: Edizioni il Torchio, 1979), 19.

Degas, and shares such sentiments in letters written to Signorini in 1878. In the first he writes:

Farò la tua ambasciata a Degas che vedo molto di sovente e spesso ti rammentiamo. È un uomo piacevolissimo col quale passo delle ore veramente beate. Ora ha un grande studio arruffatissimo e non elegante, che non arriverà mai e poi mai e metter all'ordine. Alcune cose sue sono moderne, tanto è il sentimento della forma e della realtà.³³

He continues his praise in another letter to Signorini, "Io leggo molto Degas che ha un vero talento ed una finezza osservazione stupenda."³⁴

There is no record of any written correspondence between Degas and Martelli, nor does Degas ever mention the Italian critic in writing, nor in an anecdotal manner later recorded by Degas' friends. Rather, evidence of their friendship lies in letters from Zandomeneghi to Martelli, written while Zandomeneghi was in Paris from 1886-88, which frequently mention Degas. A letter from Zandomeneghi in October 1887 specifically states that Degas has recently enquired after Martelli to Zandomeneghi.³⁵ In another letter dated 22 October 1888, Zandomeneghi mentions that he will be seeing Degas on the following evening and would send Degas the regards of Martelli.³⁶

The felicitous nature of Degas and Martelli's friendship is best examined tangentially through Martelli's letters to other members of the Italian expatriate in Paris. In a letter from Zandomeneghi, written after Martelli's final return to Florence, he writes:

Degas and I often speak of you...He is very fond of you, he admires you, and he was hoping to see you when you spoke to me about coming to Paris in the spring. When he tells me some witty story he has read or heard, he always adds: Martelli

³³ Letter from Martelli to Signorini, 1878. Quoted from Ibid.

³⁴ Letter from Martelli to Signorini, 1878. Quoted from Ibid.

³⁵ Martelli, *Diego Martelli : Corrispondenza Inedita*, 189-91.

³⁶ Ibid., 194-95.

would like this, wouldn't he? The other day, talking to him about your letter, I let him know that your business is not going well enough for you to be able to take the trip you had planned. He answered laughingly that he would take up a collection.³⁷

Such sentiments are echoed, and it is clear that Martelli harbored good impressions of the Impressionist, long after his return to Italy, confirmed in his memories of Degas, conveyed to Signorini:

Je transmettrai ton bon souvenir à Degas que je vois beaucoup et avec lequel je parle souvent de toi. C'est un homme très agréable avec lequel je passé des heures vraiment heureuses. Maintenant il a un grand atelier très fouillis et pas élégant qu'il n'arrivera jamais, vraiment jamais, à mettre en ordre.³⁸

The most overt reference to the relationship between Degas and Martelli, during the latter's 1878-79 stay in Paris are the two finished portraits and a collection of preparatory drawings that Degas made of the Italian critic. (Figures A237-238) On one level, the portraits clearly elucidate the methodical working process of Degas, as intimated in Herbert's description of the painting:

Degas wanted to suggest spontaneity in his Portrait of Martelli, but four major drawings and a variant in oil suggest otherwise. The key features of the portrait were not spotted suddenly in Martelli's room and then introduced to the composition. They grew instead from a complicated process of invention, rearrangement, and decision and were the result of a studio procedure by which Degas exploited his cunning as a master of pictorial intrigue.³⁹

At the same time, the work also exemplifies the heart of the import of Degas' approach to modernity – his methodical process, firmly grounded in the processes of the canon, paired with his interest in contemporary life. In this work seen specifically through the

³⁷ Letter from Zandomenighi to Martelli. Quoted from Dini, "Diego Martelli, the Macchiaioli, and the Impressionists," 74.

³⁸ Quoted in Loyrette, *Degas*, 426.

³⁹ Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism : Art, Leisure and Parisian Society* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press, 1988), 40.

setting which reflects, as Calingaert deftly points out, the shared intellectual interests of Martelli and Degas: “the new and experimental in art, science, photography and art collecting.”⁴⁰

The portraits also reflect Martelli’s aforementioned financial difficulties, which weighed heavily on his mind. One can feel the despair in his words, “...I feel very clearly that my real life is finished and that I have no more part in that lively activity which made me accomplish something in my own eyes. From now on I will do absolutely nothing.”⁴¹ Calingaert writes that Degas might have picked up on this sense of resignation and unhappiness in his portrayal of Martelli, conveying through the portrait, “...the compact, almost clenched quality of the body, and the downward gaze of the eyes in a face caught at a moment of expressionless repose unusual for this man of boundless energy and animation.”⁴² Such a reading strongly contrasts with the carefree portrait of Martelli at Castiglioncello by Fattori, a decade prior.⁴³ (Figure A239) In contrast to the compact, almost claustrophobic space of Degas’ composition, Fattori’s portrait finds the writer in a relaxed pose, taking a moment of repose from his portable writing desk to enjoy his cigar and the afternoon sunshine. Thankfully Martelli’s worries about the end of his creativity were for naught, as seen in a portrait from a decade later by Francesco Gioli. (Figure A240) The portrait, more conventional than the previous examples, finds Martelli making

⁴⁰ Efrem Gisella Calingaert, "More Pictures-within-Pictures: Degas' Portraits of Diego Martelli," *Arts Magazine* (June 1988): 41.

⁴¹ Letter from Martelli to A. Serbatesti, 5 August 1878. See also letters from Martelli to M. Gioli 28 March 1879 and Ernesta Martelli to Diego Martelli 13 October 1878. Martelli, *Diego Martelli : Corrispondenza Inedita*.

⁴² Calingaert, "More Pictures-within-Pictures: Degas' Portraits of Diego Martelli," 41.

⁴³ Fattori also painted a pendant to this portrait, *Portrait of Signora Martelli at Castiglioncello*, 1867, Oil on board, Museo civico Giovanni Fattori, Livorno.

eye contact with the viewer while standing , holding his ever-present cigar in his right hand and surrounded by books and papers falling out of the compartments and scattered over the surface of the desk.

Regardless of his disposition, both of Degas' portraits speak to Martelli's esteemed position as a Italian intellectual. The Savonarola chair on which he is seated specifically emphasizes his Italian, specifically Florentine, heritage. The two portraits find genesis in a number of sketches, both in his notebooks and loose studies. The notebook studies were most likely the first preparatory sketches, as they focus on the contours of pose and composition of Martelli's head⁴⁴, general pose (Figure A241), and arrangement of the still life of papers and inkwell.⁴⁵ The loose leaf sketches build from these foundations and range from another quick sketch, focusing on the entire compositional relationships, similar to the notebook sketch, a detailed shading study in pastel of Martelli's face, to two larger nuanced drawings, squared for transfer. (Figures A242-245) The quick study, as well as the notebook sketches, seem to relate most closely to the horizontal format of the earlier, unfinished Buenos Aires version, while the squared studies, and their vertical emphasis seem to find completion in the Scotland version.

The Buenos Aires version, horizontal in format, is very claustrophobic in its character, trapping Martelli in the compressed, abstracted space between his desk, its trappings of scattered papers and writing implements and the abstracted painting on the posterior wall. This convention is similar to the obstructed space explored in the earlier

⁴⁴ Nb 31 p 1,3

⁴⁵ Nb 31 p 27

work by Morisot, *Sister and Mother of the Artist*.⁴⁶ The work is unfinished, and is believed to be an earlier version of the completed Scotland version. The framed patches of color are, according to Calingaert, a loose, abstracted paraphrase of a number of landscape sketches that hung on the walls of Martelli's Paris apartment.⁴⁷ Two letters by Martelli shed light on this prospect:

I have put on the walls almost all the things by Fattori; and I placed them next to two very pretty French pictures, one by Pissarro and one by Moreau [Alphonse Maureau]. The thought that Gianni's [Fattori] things as well as a small study by Nappa *cane* [Zandomeneghi] look good next to them pleases me; and they are evidence that Fattori is the true stuff artists are made of. From this point I got the idea of putting together a small international collection of Impressionists and I have written to Fattori to send me some canvases or panels painted from nature by Cannicci, Signorini and Ferroni; and the same I will say to you and to Eugenio [Cecconi]. And thus I will benefit from the contrast and comparison. I forgot Gigi [Luigi Gioli], but I should like very much to have something of his as well.⁴⁸

He continues in a letter from the following month, "...My thanks to you for the two sketches [studietti]⁴⁹, happily arrived, which are very beautiful. I have them on the same wall. Fattori⁵⁰, Moreau [Maureau]⁵¹, Zandomeneghi, Pissarro, You, and Gigi⁵²: and you make a good family all together."⁵³

⁴⁶ Berthe Morisot, *Mother and Sister of the Artist*, 1869-70, Oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC

⁴⁷ Calingaert, "More Pictures-within-Pictures: Degas' Portraits of Diego Martelli," 41.

⁴⁸ Letter from Martelli to F. Gioli, 13 October 1878. Quoted from Ibid.

⁴⁹ Gioli, *Landscape*, c. 1878, Florence, Galleria d'Arte Moderna and F. Gioli, *On the Beach*, n.d., Florence, Galleria d'Arte Moderna

⁵⁰ Fattori, *Why not Say It?*, ca. 1870-80, Florence, Galleria d'Arte Moderna

⁵¹ Maureau, *Bord de la Seine*, exhibited in the third Impressionist exhibition.

⁵² Most likely Luigi Gioli, *Landscape*, 1878, Florence, Galleria d'Arte Moderna

⁵³ Letter from Martelli to F. Gioli, 29 November 1878. Quoted from Calingaert, "More Pictures-within-Pictures: Degas' Portraits of Diego Martelli," 41.

The Scotland version is less claustrophobic in its composition, giving equal space to the pensive Martelli and the objects of his trade. The objects in the background of the Scotland version continued to mystify art historians. Boggs has proposed that the segmented colors suggest a “framed fan on the wall”⁵⁴, while Reff rejected the idea of a fan, pointing out that a fan would be ‘much smaller.’ Instead he noted that “the background painting should probably be seen as an allusion to the sitter’s professional activities rather than as a work he actually owned”, concluding that the work is an “abstract design...without special significance” rather used to “reinforce a compositional element.”⁵⁵ Calingaert takes this idea to a further level, convincingly suggesting that it functions as a “metaphor of the sitter’s concerns as art critic...built on a reference to the [chromatic circles] of...Michel Eugene Chevreul.”⁵⁶ She sees the chromatic circles as a more overt reference to Chevreul’s color theory, first suggested in the background of Degas’ *Portrait of Duranty*, through the books which echo Chevreul’s color scales. An interest in Chevreul was shared by Degas, Martelli and Duranty.⁵⁷

The two portraits remained in the possession of Degas until his death, and in 1894, many years after they had been painted, when Martelli was near the end of his own life, he asked Degas through Zandomenighi to give him one of them as a present. The request failed, for in September 1894, Zandomenighi wrote to Martelli:

⁵⁴ Jean Sutherland Boggs, *Portraits by Degas, California Studies in the History of Art*, 2 (Berkeley,: University of California Press, 1962), 57.

⁵⁵ Theodore Reff, *Degas, the Artist's Mind* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1987), 131, 45.

⁵⁶ Calingaert, "More Pictures-within-Pictures: Degas' Portraits of Diego Martelli," 40.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*: 43. See Edmond Duranty, "The New Painting," in *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874-1886 : An Exhibition Organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco with the National Gallery of Art, Washington*, ed. Charles S. Moffett (San Francisco: The Museums, 1986), 42-43.

Ti avverto che molto tempo fa domandai a Degas con molta cautela il tuo ritratto per spedirtelo insieme a quello che ti feci io. Naturalmente Degas me lo rifiutò prima per rifiutarmelo, poi perché si ricordò che Duranty non approvava lo scorcio delle gambe. Io spero di poterti mandare il mio alla fine del mese ma prima vorrei levarci la vecchia vernice che è diventata rancida e vorrei nello stesso tempo mandarti un disegno.⁵⁸

Another letter followed the following month from Zandomeneghi, the status had not changed:

Ti avverto che molto tempo fa domandai a Degas con molta cautela il tuo ritratto per spedirtelo insieme con quello che ti feci io. Naturalmente Degas me lo rifiutò prima per rifiutarmelo, poi perché si ricordò che Duranty non approvava lo scorcio della gambe.⁵⁹

Martelli did not accept defeat, however, as is clear from the fact that, on 31 August 1895, Zandomeneghi told him, “Quanto all’indirizzo di Degas te lo mando volentieri, ma non sperar nulla. Sta di casa 22 rue Ballu, e di studio 36 rue Victor Massé. Scrivi e vedrai.”⁶⁰

Another work of Degas’ that may have connections to Martelli is his *Young Spartans*, which Nochlin discusses as an exercise in the examination of gender roles in France in the latter decades of the nineteenth century.⁶¹ (Figure A246) The work evokes David’s *Oath of the Horatii* which also utilizes classical history to make commentary on gender roles, but in comparison to David’s work, Degas’ composition reverses the placement of the male and female figures, as well as makes an effort to subvert traditional gender roles in its subject matter.⁶² Degas originally began the composition as a means to

⁵⁸ Letter from Zandomeneghi to Martelli, September 1894. Reproduced in Lamberto Vitali, ed., *Lettere Dei Macchiaioli* (Turin: 1953), 301.

⁵⁹ Letter from Zandomeneghi to Martelli, October 1894. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 304.

⁶⁰ Letter from Zandomeneghi, 31 August 1895. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 310.

⁶¹ Norma Broude, "Edgar Degas and French Feminism, Ca. 1880: "The Young Spartans," The Brothel Monotypes, and the Bathers Revisited," *The Art Bulletin* 70, no. 4 (1988).

⁶² Jacques-Louis David, *Oath of the Horatii*, 1784-85, Oil on canvas, Louvre

dialogue with the canon of history painting; specifically Neoclassical works such as David's. The final version emerged as an outlet for his dialogues with the canon, its shallow compositional space and inverted figural groupings finding an altered aesthetic and social basis from which Degas draws that is vastly different from his Neoclassical predecessors.

Martelli's 1879 description of the *Young Spartans* suggests that the action taking place in the painting was a challenge that would result in an athletic competition, he explicates, "the Spartan girls who challenge the boys to the race which decided, in accordance with the law of those people, their submission."⁶³ Broude comments upon Degas' possible relationship with the issues of feminism in Paris in the 1870s:

We do not know what Degas thought about feminism, and we have no evidence, beyond what may be inferred from his works, that might permit us to speculate on where he stood in relation to the feminist movement of his period. It can be said, however, that during the 1870s, the increasingly middle-class and republican orientation of that movement would not have been antithetical to Degas's own political position, which had clearly emerged as liberal and republican during the period of the Franco-Prussian War and the siege of Paris...It can also be said with some assurance that Degas would have been exposed to contemporary feminism, and that he must have become aware, at least by the late 1870s, of the debate that it was generating.

In addition to general knowledge about the intellectual ideas of feminism, Degas could also have been influenced in his ideas through Martelli, whom, as Broude points out, had a long interest in the social issues of prostitution. Martelli's library included at least six books on the subject published in France and Italy. In addition, Martelli's common-law marriage to a former prostitute would have brought the issue to a personal level that

⁶³ Quoted from Lamberto Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas," *The Burlington Magazine* 105, no. 723 (1963): 270. See also, Diego Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, ed. Boschetto Antonio (Firenze: Sansoni, 1952), 105-06.

might have been communicated to Degas, and in turn influenced the artists' thoughts on the manner and found repercussion in *Young Spartans*.

Martelli's writings from his extended stay in France clearly elucidate his shifting opinions on contemporaneous French art, and also clearly elucidate his hopes that there would be a similar resurgence in Tuscan tradition.⁶⁴ He first writes of the Impressionists in an 1877 article entitled "Dell'arte Antica e Moderna". In the article he singles out Monet, Pissarro, Caillebotte and Renoir as the major proponents of the new Impressionist aesthetic, but also points out the work of Degas (misspelled Degaze) and Manet as noteworthy contributors to the modern aesthetic:

Les Impressionnistes mio caro sono e non sono, viceversa poi non provano proprio nulla. Non ti negherò che in questo gruppo di insorti manchino gli ingegni, ma siccome il *progetto* prende troppo posto nei loro quadri così all'arte restano gli avanzi. La base dei loro difetti comuni è l'aver essi formata una chiesuola, piccola monarchia, che fa la guerra alla monarchia più grande dell'Istituto e la loro divisa come quella degli Accademici è quella di sempre: chi non mi segue non godrà il regno de' celi. Monet (non Manet), Pissarro, Caillebotte, Renoir sono i principali campioni della nuova religione e mostrano realmente di possedere la facoltà di fare qualche cosa di nuovo; ma nessuna base di sapere li sostiene e quello che poi li rende insopportabili si è l'identità di meriti e di difetti che esiste fra loro. Il quadro di uno può essere preso comodamente per quello di un altro. Degaze ci espose delle cose assai belle e molto individuali non curandosi de' suoi amici, Manet non fu accettato perché esponente al Salon. Vedi camorra.⁶⁵

In his 1879 review of the fourth Impressionist exhibition, Martelli again commends the work of the Impressionists, especially in their aesthetic steps beyond Academic tradition. He takes this opportunity to ponder his hopes for ottocento art:

⁶⁴ Only annotated copy of *La Nouvelle Peinture* is the one owned by Martelli. It was annotated by Duranty and dedicated to Martelli. (Collection Biblioteca Marcelina, Florence)

⁶⁵ Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 49.

L'Italia che per quanto male se ne dica, non è mai ultima nel cammino del progresso, produsse pure una esposizione analoga che ebbe nascita a Firenze, questa capitale delle buone intenzioni, che speriamo avrà vita come quella di Parigi. Benché gli elementi che compongono queste riunioni di coraggiosi artisti sieno differenti, perché frutto di altri climi e di altre tradizioni, pure nel fondo si assomigliano eccessivamente, giacché ad essi dà vita uno stesso principio, lo studio indefesso del vero, la guerra a morte a tutti i sistemi accademici.⁶⁶

In the same review, Martelli expounds on the artistic bravado of Degas:

Degas è un tipo affatto opposto a questi due (Monet and Pissarro), come agli altri esponenti. Antico e moderno ad un tempo, non so se potrei qualificarlo col titolo di temperamento artistico nel senso che si attribuisce in oggi a questa parola. Educato a Firenze, dove s'innamorò della semplicità sublime del disegno dei cinquecentisti, vide quei grandi maestri con l'occhio di un francese e di un parigino, e ritornato poi in Francia, modificò più che mai questo suo modo di tradurre il vero, attraverso il sentimento degli antichi, applicandovi una ricerca di colorazione tutta moderna.

Le produzioni di Degas che datano da molti anni sono forse più inferiori delle presenti, sebbene artisticamente più logiche. Tutto un contorno serrato, il colore sta modesto in seconda linea, e non serve quasi che per dar nome di pittura al disegno. Cogli immensi progressi fatti nell'osservazione del movimento, nel gioco della luce, nella varietà degli aspetti, sotto cui si presenta la natura, il Degas, diventando un grandissimo artista, modificò forse la sua natura, e studiandolo minutamente si scorgono le varie fasi per cui è passato, prima di arrivare al risultato sempre ammirabile, sotto cui si presenta ora completamente.

Strana è, per esempio, una mezza figura di cantante di *Café-Concert*⁶⁷ immaginata in un senso tutto moderno, e colorita egualmente; ma il cui disegno è improntato ai quadri del Mantegna e del Pollaiuolo. Quest'opera è pertanto una delle più belle e tipiche del Degas.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Diego Martelli, "I pittori impressionisti francesi" (Continuazione: V. num. precedente) *Roma artistica* 5 July 1879, 178-179. Reproduced in Ruth Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, vol. 1: Reviews (San Francisco, CA; Seattle: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco ; distributed by the University of Washington Press, 1996), 232.

⁶⁷ Edgar Degas, *Chanteuse de café (Chanteuse au gant)*, 1878, Pastel and liquid medium on canvas, Fogg Art Museum.

⁶⁸ Diego Martelli, "I pittori impressionisti francesi" *Roma artistica* 27 June 1879, 170. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 231.

Martelli's most important critical writing regarding the Impressionists was a lecture entitled "Gli Impressionisti" given at the Circolo filologico in Livorno in 1879, and published in an expanded version, dedicated to his 'amici di Francia,' in 1880.⁶⁹ The lecture was a continuation of his efforts to invigorate the Florentine art tradition through exposure to the Impressionists, first attempted in his brokering of two paintings by Pissarro to be included in the 1878 Promotrice Fiorentina. Martelli begins by naming Degas, Monet, Pissarro, Caillebotte, Cassatt, Forain and 'il nostro italiano Zandomeneghi' as the major artists within the movement of Impressionism, on which he will focus his words.⁷⁰ The lecture focuses on the larger picture, noting that while these artists took different approaches, they worked together in what he saw as the death of Academic art:

Benché gli elementi che compongono queste riunioni di coraggiosi artisti sieno differenti perché frutto di altri climi e di altre tradizioni, pure nel fondo si assomigliano eccessivamente, giacché ad essi dà vita uno stesso principio, lo studio indefesso del vero, la guerra a morte a tutti i sistemi accademici.⁷¹

Martelli also uses the lecture to make clear his purpose for supporting the Impressionists: his hope that their manner of deconstructing the canon would find resonance in the Italian peninsula and incite resurgence in its aesthetic discourse: "L'Italia, che per quanto male se ne dica non è mai ultima nel cammino del progresso, ne produsse un'altra che ebbe

⁶⁹ Manuscript: Diego Martelli, "Gli Impressionisti," (Biblioteca Marucelliana D 14 III 41, 1879). The manuscript is written on twenty-three small sheets of paper, roughly 4" x 6", appropriate for use as prompts during his speech at the Circolo filologico in Livorno. Published essay: Diego Martelli, *Gli Impressionisti* (Pisa: Tipografia Vannucchi, 1880).

⁷⁰ Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 111.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 115.

nascita a Firenze, questa capitale delle buone intenzioni, e che avrà vita, speriamo, come quella di Parigi.”⁷²

In “Gli Impressionisti”, Martelli also spent a great deal of time expounding on the import of Degas’ oeuvre. First in the text of his lecture:

Degas è un tipo affatto opposto a questi due come agli altri esponenti. Antico e moderno ad un tempo, non so se potrei qualificarlo col titolo di *temperamento artistico* [Martelli’s emphasis], nel senso che si attribuisce in oggi a questa parola. Educato a Firenze dove s’innamorò della semplicità sublime del disegno dei cinquecentisti, vide quei grandi maestri coll’occhio di un francese e ritornato poi in Francia modificò più che mai questo suo modo di tradurre il vero attraverso il sentimento degli antichi applicandovi una ricerca di colorazione tutta moderna. Le produzioni di Degas che datano da molti anni sono forse inferiori, ma artisticamente più coerenti delle recenti. Entro un contorno serrato il colore sta modesto in seconda linea e non serve quasi che per dar nome di pittura al disegno.

Cogli’immensi progressi fatti nell’osservazione del movimenta, nel gioco della luce, nel variare degli aspetti sotto cui si presenta la natura, il Degas diventando pure grandissimo artista perse però secondo noi molto della propria natura e studiandolo bene a fondo ci si accorge delle varie fasi ed ineguali per cui è passato prima d’arrivare al risultato, sempre ammirabile, sotto cui si presenta ora completamente.

Ci pare strano p.es. il vedere una mezza figura di cantante di café-concert immaginata in un senso talmente moderno, colorita egualmente, ma il cui disegno è improntato ai quadri degli antichi maestri. Quest’opera pertanto à una delle più belle e più tipiche di Degas.⁷³

And then in a more prolonged manner in the published version:

In the same period in which Manet traversed Italy, another, Edgar Degas, set to work in our country's museums. Scarcely had he begun his first studies, than he was wooing, in the magnificent Louvre collection, the elegant and slender beauties of the Quattrocentisti. And when, for family reasons, and at his own wish, he came to Tuscany, he found himself in his own milieu, among his artistic

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 113. See also Martelli, "Gli Impressionisti."

forebears, Masaccio, Botticelli, Gozzoli and Ghirlandaio. His worship became intense and a mass of drawings bears witness to his conscientious study, in order to make their beauty and their lessons his own. Believing that he had found the right path, he began, I do not know whether in Italy or France, a picture as classical as one could imagine. "The young Spartan women who encourage the young men to race, which decided, as was that people's rule, their submission." This picture was begun with sincerity, but, after reaching a certain stage, was abandoned and remained unfinished, because of the same sincerity which had actuated its beginning. Degas, a man of great education, modern in every aspect of his life, could not fossilize himself in a past of a composite order, which by being put together from fragments can never become what was, nor what is; a Chinese puzzle game which can produce accomplished artists like Gérôme, but not artists who feel the pulse of real life.

Degas, who studied more for his own satisfaction than to exhibit canvases to stimulate public admiration, was struck by the force and particular form of movement of women when ironing and by the play of light in their shops produced by the multiplicity of whites, which are hung everywhere. Those white low-cut blouses, a glimpse of neck with the reflection of all the surrounding white, the design and color of the arms in the singular motion of holding the iron, these, after an initial study, became the point of departure for acute and beautiful studies which constituted a major part of his work.

Just as the ironing women were his subject by day, so, by night, were the ballerinas of the Foyer de l'Opéra, and we find in the artist's portfolios a series of admirable studies, which have served, and still serve, his graceful compositions.

Nor must we forget that the great Leonardo da Vinci, when traveling through the countryside, ceaselessly studied human deformity and drew witty caricatures. The ties between the study of the beautiful and the ugly are close; and Degas, because of his nature, was to fuse these two in his own original way, where the truthful representation of the primitives was invested with the light and phosphorescent glow of our own times.⁷⁴

In *Gli Impressionisti*, Martelli uses Degas as segue between his discussion of artists of previous generations (e.g. Millet and Manet) and the Impressionists proper. It is in Martelli's words that one finds the import of Degas' aesthetic: his success in fully

⁷⁴ Reproduced in Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas," 270. See also, Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 105-06.

understanding the nuances of the canon through his Italian experiences and his use of these experiences in the creation of his own unique, yet grounded, approach to the depiction of modernity through the visual arts. Martelli's experiences within Degas studio had a significant impact upon the Italian critic. His experiences, exemplified in "Gli Impressionisti" find resonance in a similar experience had by Degas, many years before in the studio of Ingres. Speaking to Halévy, Degas notes, "There were paintings in that studio that are fixed in my memory as if on a photographic plate."⁷⁵

Telemaco Signorini

Telemaco Signorini befriended Degas during the latter's visit to Florence and recorded his presence at the Caffè Michelangiolo. While no evidence has been found to pinpoint the date of their reunion, the two renewed their friendship on Signorini's trips to Paris.⁷⁶ Signorini's first trip to the city was in 1861, where in a letter written the next year to the President of the Florence Academy of Fine Arts, Signorelli states that in 1861 he worked with Troyon and knew Corot.⁷⁷ In another letter to the Minister of Public Instruction states that he spent a year with Troyon and knew Rousseau.⁷⁸ Signorini was also in Paris in May 1873, and was represented by the galleries of Goupil and Reitlinger. He visited the city again in 1883-84.

⁷⁵ Quoted from Daniel Halevy, *My Friend Degas*, 1st American ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1964), 57.

⁷⁶ Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas."

⁷⁷ Letter from Signorini to the President of the Florence Academy of Fine Arts, 1892. Reproduced in Vitali, ed., *Lettere Dei Macchiaioli*, 113. As scholars have rightly pointed out, these references to Troyon and Corot do not negate the possibility of knowing Degas and other 'non-Academic' artists, but rather that Signorini was rightly speaking the language of Academicians, and in doing so, referencing appropriate artists in his letter.

⁷⁸ Letter from Signorini to Guido Baccelli, Minister of Public Instruction, 1895. Reproduced in Piero Dini, ed., *Lettere Inedite Dei Macchiaioli* (Florence: Il Torchio, 1975), 274-77. The lack of mention of Degas does not discount a renewed relationship, instead it speaks only to the interests and pertinent artists to the letters' designees.

While the majority of Signorini's oeuvre focuses on examinations of perspective rooted in Renaissance compositional techniques and a palette stemming from attention to the Romantic and Realist canon, he did experiment with other aesthetic systems, exemplified in his support of Martelli's efforts to introduce Impressionism to Italy through Pissarro's works at the 1878 Promotrice in Florence. His support of Impressionism focused on the aesthetic deconstructions of light, and he was very aware of the misappropriation of the concept. He writes, "...it is incredible just how much the artistic world abuses the word *impression*. The youngster on the academy benches goes out into the countryside and produces an impression; the amateur employee, as well, finds the time to make one; and the copyist, another one; and the dilettante grocer, another one..."⁷⁹ Troyer calls Signorini a "moving catalyst, absorbing what he could of new trends and passing information on to others."⁸⁰ Martelli echoes this in a contemporaneous letter, he writes that he has "...returned to being the usual Signorini who in good faith fills himself with the ideas of someone else and makes them his own like a traveling merchant sells objects bought from a wholesaler..."⁸¹

In a 1873 letter, written in Paris, Signorini writes to Enrico Cecioni that Degas:

...makes paintings in the same way that Champfleury writes books... fragments of extremely important observations of nature, elaborations of a new idea for a new society in the making, elements of an avant-garde art destined perhaps to break with all past traditions and send to oblivion all the ignoble commerce of the ignoble prostitution of present art.⁸²

⁷⁹ T. Signorini, under the pseudonym Labienus, in *La Domenica Fiorentina* 12 February 1888. Quoted in Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence : Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 38.

⁸⁰ Troyer, "Telemaco Signorini and Macchiaioli Giapponismo: A Report of Research in Progress," 137.

⁸¹ Letter from Martelli to Matilda Gioli, 1 June 1878. Quoted from *Ibid.*: 137 n 11.

⁸² Letter from Telemaco Signorini to Enrico Cecioni, 18 June 1873. Reproduced in Vitali, ed., *Lettere Dei Macchiaioli*, 107-08. The ideas were echoed in a review of the Salon written the same day: Signorini, "Esposizione del Salon" in *Il Giornale Artistico*, 18 June 1873. Quoted from Elena Lazzarini, "La

Degas' renewal of his friendship with Signorini resulted in a March 1875 visit by Degas to Signorini's Florence studio where he particularly admired *La sala delle Agitate al San Bonifazio in Firenze*. (Figure A247) A letter from Desboutin to Signorini recounts that Degas was quite taken with the work:

Mon cher Signorini...Degas a eu bien de la chance de pouvoir retourner dans la votre brillante Italie...Je sais par Degas que vous travaillez fructueusement et originalement. Il a été frappé de votre tendance artistique, et votre tableau des Volles l'a tout à fait enthousiasmé comme une œuvre forte et originale.⁸³

A notation, "Signorini – Florence Piazza Sta Croce 12", in a notebook used between 1877-1883 suggests that even after this visit, Degas and Signorini kept in contact.⁸⁴

Signorini kept a journal, listing detailed notes of his social engagements, during his visit to London and Paris in 1883-84.⁸⁵ The journal sheds light on Signorini's established familiarity with the Impressionist social circles. He arrived in Paris at 6 pm on Friday, 29 July 1884. Shortly after his arrival, he visited Boldini's studio at place Pigalle and by 10 p.m. he was situated at café Nouvelle Athènes, pausing only to marvel at the boulevard illuminated with electric light on his way back to the hotel.⁸⁶ His commitment to experiencing the contemporaneous art of the city is also clearly expressed

'Rivoluzione Fisiologica Nell'occhio Umano' Riflessi Di Edgar Degas Nella Pittura Toscana Dell'ottocento," in *In Toscana, Dopo Degas: Dal Sogno Medioevale Alla Città Moderna*, ed. Francesca Cagianelli and Elena Lazzarini (Crespina: Comune di Crespina, 1999), 135. See also Troyer, "Telemaco Signorini and Macchiaioli Giapponismo: A Report of Research in Progress," 139-40.

⁸³ Letter from Desboutin to Signorini, 16 April 1875. Quoted from Dini, *Diego Martelli E Gli Impressionisti*, 18.

⁸⁴ Nb 30 p 216

⁸⁵ See Alberto Maria, "Telemaco Signorini. Notes Dei Viaggi a Londra E a Parigi 1881-1883-1884 Ed Altri Documenti Inediti," in *L'800 Dei Macchiaioli E Diego Martelli*, ed. Baccio Maria Bacci (Florence: L. Gonnelli & Figli Editori, 1969).

⁸⁶ Carta 38v, *Ibid.*, 189.

in the journal through his attendance at a number of exhibitions in the city; the following day he visited a Courbet exhibition.⁸⁷

His return to the city in June of 1884 finds his calendar filled with social engagements involving Degas. On 4 June, he met Boldini, Degas and Pissarro at la Rouchefoucauld⁸⁸, after which they stopped by the École to visit a drawing show, visited the Exposition Internationale at Galerie Georges Petit, and then finally to a Sisley exhibition at the Maddallena. They returned to la Rouchefoucauld that evening with Pissarro, De Tivoli, Fichel, Degas, Boldini, a painter named Detti, and a writer named Caprone.⁸⁹ On 5 June, Signorini visited with Boldini, Gerveux and Degas, after which they returned to Degas' studio.⁹⁰ Signorini also gives us the earliest evidence of the relationship between Degas and Michel Manzi, noting that the trio met at Mère Morel, along with Boldini and Deleu, and that the following day another lunch at Rouchefoucauld with Boldini and Degas was followed by a visit to Degas' studio with Michel Manzi where Degas presented Signorini with a pastel of a ballerina.⁹¹

⁸⁷ Carta 39r, Ibid.

⁸⁸ La Rouchefoucauld was a popular locale for Signorini and Degas. The two also met there on 6 June with Boldini, Detti and Spiridion (Carta 18v), 7 June after a visit to Boldini's studio (Carta 19r), 8 June with Detti and Spiridion, after which they returned to Degas' studio (Carta 19v). It is also listed as a locale of a number of undated visits including one with Tivoli and Zandomenighi (Carta 36r), and another after attending the Opera Comedique with Degas, they retired to Rouchefoucauld with Tivoli, Zandomenighi, and "puttane e modelle briache" (Carta 35r). Ibid., 198.

⁸⁹ Signorini takes the time to point out the careers of the last two members of the party, suggesting that he was familiar with the other members. Carta 17v, Ibid., 196.

⁹⁰ Carta 18r, Ibid.

⁹¹ The work was given to Signorini in June 1883. The work was shown in *Prima monstra italiana dell'Impressionismo* held at the Lyceum on via Riasoli in April-May 1910 in Florence, presented by the newspaper *La Voce*. It was listed in the estate of Signorini, and inscribed "à Signorini/Degas". Signorini, in turn, gave Degas a gift of a work entitled *Il Sorgere della luna Ravenna*. See "Michel Manzi," in *Inventaire Du Fonds Francais Apres 1800*, ed. Madeleine Barbin and Claude Bouret (Paris: M. Le Garrec, 1930), no. 110., Baccio Maria Bacci, *L'800 Dei Maccioli E Diego Martelli* (Florence: L. Gonnelli & Figli Editori, 1969), 125, Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas," 269. And Carta 36v, 37r, Maria, "Telemaco Signorini. Notes Dei Viaggi a Londra E a Parigi 1881-1883-1884 Ed Altri Documenti Inediti," 199.

Troyer suggests that it was Degas who first introduced Signorini to Japanese prints.⁹² This shared interest in the medium, paired with their dialogues, perhaps points to the compositional similarity of Degas' *The Collector of Prints* and Signorini's work *L'Amatore di Stampe*, created four years later.⁹³ (Figure A248, A112) Both works surround the central figure with framed works while he examines loose prints. While the background of Degas' work features what seems to be a collage, Signorini tips his hat to the Macchiaioli and the Risorgimento through the inclusion of Altamura's *La prima bandiera Italiana Porata a Firenze nel 1859*. (Figure A209) The inclusion of Altamura's work might also refer to the acknowledgment of the importance of other media on the process of painting, as discussed in Altamura's use of photography in the creation of the work.

A further example of their sustained friendship throughout the latter decades of the nineteenth century was a letter of introduction that Degas wrote on behalf of Mary Cassatt, who planned a trip to Florence in order to draw and paint.⁹⁴ Degas wrote, requesting his kindness in receiving the American Impressionist. Degas notes that she would like the counsel of someone "qui ne soit pas comme tout le monde." Degas says

⁹² For a summary of Japonisme's influence on the Italians see Troyer, "Telemaco Signorini and Macchiaioli Giapponismo: A Report of Research in Progress," 139-41. See also Nancy Jane Gray Troyer, "The Macchiaioli: Effects of Modern Color Theory, Photography and Japanese Prints on a Group of Italian Painters, 1855-1900" (Ph.D., Northwestern University, 1978).T

⁹³ The works also resonate with Boldini's *L'Amatore delle Arti* (GAM, Pitti) in composition and subject matter.

⁹⁴ A few years later, Cassatt planned another trip to the peninsula, and Degas wrote to his sister Therese, in order to announce the possibility of Cassatt's upcoming visit to Naples: "Il y a projet d'aller avec Mlle Cassatt et sa belle-sœur et le dit Bartholomé faire un tour à Florence et à Venise. Il est plus que probable qu'avec mon fidèle ami nous pousserons une pointe sur Naples pour te voir. Il denaro décidera..." Letter from Degas to Therese Morbilli, 11 March 1892. Quoted from M Pantazzi, "Lettres De Degas À Therese Morbilli Conservées Au Musée Des Beaux-Arts Du Canada," *RACAR. Canadian Art Review* 15, no. 2 (1988): 127.

that he immediately thought of Signorini, and hopes that he would give Cassatt a tour of Florence.⁹⁵ The letter is undated but it refers to an exhibition at which both Degas and Cassatt exhibited, clearly the fourth Impressionist Exhibition of 1879.

A final example of their sustained exchange, through a network of mutual friends, can be seen in an undated letter to Signorini from Martelli who writes:

...Farò la tua ambasciata a Degas che vedo molto di sovente e spesso ti rammentiamo. È un uomo piacevolissimo col quale passo delle ore veramente beate. Ora ha un grande studio arruffatissimo e non elegante che non arriverà mai e poi mai a mettere all'ordine. Alcune cose sue sono moderne, tanto è il sentimento della forma e della realtà... Io veggo molto Degas che ha un vero talento ed una finezza di osservazione stupenda....⁹⁶

Giuseppe De Nittis

After his relocation to Paris in 1873, Giuseppe De Nittis, born in southern Italy, was quite taken with the pictorial effects of the Parisian winter – snow in particular. In a passage of *Notes et Souvenirs* he speaks of a stroll during one such Parisian winter with his wife Léontine and son Jacques as they come upon a Japanese man contemplating the landscape. De Nittis identifies with this man, and in the process speaks volumes about his perceived role as a painter in Paris: “For me he is a vision of Japan, an image of that sweet life of a dreamer for whom an expanse of white, a shower of snow or a shower of flowers, is enough. It is the life for which I was born: to paint, to admire, to dream.”⁹⁷

De Nittis was born to the son of an architect, and received his earliest training in Barletta from the draftsman Giambattista Calò. (Figure A249) In 1860, he moved to

⁹⁵ Letter from Degas to Signorini. Reproduced in Vitali, "Three Italian Friends of Degas," 269.

⁹⁶ Letter from Martelli to Signorini, undated. Quoted from Piero Dini, ed., *Dal Caffè Michelangiolo Al Caffè Nouvelle Athènes* (Torino: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1986), 59.

⁹⁷ Giuseppe De Nittis, *Notes Et Souvenirs Du Peintre Joseph De Nittis* (Paris: Librairies-Imprimeries Réunies, 1895).

Naples with his brother Vincenzo, and in 1861 enrolled in classes at the Istituto di Belle Arti di Napoli. In June 1863, De Nittis requested a two month leave of absence from the Institute, with the intention “di fare studi dal vero in campagna”, he would never return to classes at the Academy.⁹⁸ In 1864, he met Adriano Cecioni, who first introduced him to the concepts of the Macchiaioli, and soon after also befriended Marco de Gregorio and Federico Rossano.⁹⁹

In his memoirs, De Nittis speaks highly of the southern Italian city, so full of passion: “The Naples that I loved was naïve and picturesque, with an incomparable poetic nature, and I loved everything about Naples, her passions, violence and even wild explosions of anger.”¹⁰⁰ De Nittis’ interest in the genre of landscape, particularly its direct study through *all’aperto* sketches, provided the foundation for a shared interest between Rossano, De Gregorio and De Nittis, who together founded the Scuola di Resina. De Nittis reminisces of the time:

In the morning before dawn, I would leave the house and run to find my painting companions, who were much older than me, Rossano and Marco de Gregorio. What beautiful times! With so much liberty, such an air of freedom, so many endless races! And the sea, great sky and vast horizons!¹⁰¹

Their main aim was to counter the Academic traditions espoused by Morelli, instead favoring the analytic style of landscape painting formulated by Filippo Palizzi and combining it with the theoretical foundations of the Macchiaioli, garnered through Cecioni. Channeling the Macchiaioli, the Resina school focused on the contemplation of

⁹⁸ Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 154.

⁹⁹ Cecioni was in Naples from 1863-67. Cecioni and his family moved to Paris under the hospitality of De Nittis in 1870.

¹⁰⁰ De Nittis, *Notes Et Souvenirs Du Peintre Joseph De Nittis*.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*

light in their compositions, emphasizing strong transitions between lights and darks, accentuating contrast and eliminating half-tones.

In the latter part of the decade the Resina school began to decline, when the founding members scattered to pursue their own work. Cecioni returned to Florence in 1867. That same year De Nittis visited Paris the first time, and Rossano moved to France to study Corot's works around 1870. Regardless of the transience of the Resina school, such experiences had a foundational role in De Nittis' oeuvre. A Parisian critic of his work in the 1872 Salon saw in De Nittis' work:

...formattato riotto e in motivi tematici 'minori', appare piuttosto legato agli effetti risoluti di un colore corposo, capace di diffondersi in dettagli di sagace realismo del tutto tipico dei pittori Macchiaioli. D'altronde sono queste qualità 'meridionali' – il 'sentimento profondo della luce' piuttosto che 'la resa esatta, meticolosa della natura' di un occhio 'mirabilmente organizzato'....¹⁰²

The ideas of the Macchiaioli that were instilled in De Nittis through his friendship with Cecioni were furthered in the fall of 1867 during his first trip to Florence, where he met Signorini. The friendship between these two artists was sustained through the remainder of De Nittis' life, exemplified by their frequent correspondence.

In July of 1867 De Nittis visited Paris for the first time, with a number of other Italian artists to visit the Exposition Universelle. While in the city, he met Goupil at the studio of Meissonier, a relationship that would soon prove to be, at times frustrating yet fruitful for both members. He wrote to Cecioni with the news that he sold two paintings

¹⁰² Quoted from Francesca Castellani, "'Italiens De Paris'?", in *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi*, ed. Ann Dumas (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 72.

to Goupil for one hundred francs each, and was invited to dine with the gallery owner.¹⁰³

He writes to Cecioni of the luncheon:

I miei quadri visiti dal Goupil furono comprati ed al di là di quel che speravo... insomma siamo restati d'accordo che quelli non erano che delle semplici carte da vista, ma che giungere dei miei lavori allora poi sarebbe stato ben differente... Ha preso il mio indirizzo in Italia; ma io a marzo rivengo costà. Fu dato un déjeuner [sic] per la mia presentazione, e si bevve per i miei futuri successi.¹⁰⁴

In June of 1868 De Nittis returned to Paris, and was working in a studio at rue de Versailles on studies for works destined for another gallery owner, Frédéric Reitlinger, under whom he exhibited in the Salons of 1869 and 1870. It was at these Salons where De Nittis achieved his first successes with *Road from Barletta to Brindisi* and several views of Vesuvius. Regardless of his growing love for the City of Light, he still maintained close ties to his Italian artistic brethren, as exemplified in Martelli's brief visit to Paris in June 1868, during which he delivered to De Nittis some photos of Cecioni's recent work.

De Nittis settled in Paris for good in 1873, quite poor and still unable to properly speak the language. Goncourt later romanticizes this final act of expatriation in the name of artistic pursuits of modernity in his subsequent *Journal* entry, describing De Nittis as he set foot on the Boulevard des Italiens as a resident of the city:

There, in this coming and going of men and women, in this movement, in this life of the Parisian crowd, under the gas lights, the sudden darkness that the artist felt

¹⁰³ Letters from De Nittis to Cecioni, 5 August 1867. Excerpted in Marina Ferretti Bocquillon, "Cronologia 1867-1917," in *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi*, ed. Ann Dumas (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 407. There is also some suggestion that three landscapes were purchased at this time. See Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire."

¹⁰⁴ Letter from De Nittis to Cecioni, 26 August 1867. Quoted in Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire," 131 n18.

inside, that darkness disappeared, and he was transported, enthused by the modernity of the spectacle.¹⁰⁵

Working under Reitlinger from 1868-1872, De Nittis often executed genre scenes in the manner of Meissonier in order to meet the demands of the Parisian market, but continued to work in the genre of landscapes and contemporaneous urban scenes. De Nittis' conscious bifurcation of his oeuvre, between Rococo style themes for sale in the gallery and his explorations of land and cityscapes continued when he began working under an exclusive contract with Adolphe Goupil in 1872.¹⁰⁶ De Nittis was encouraged to emphasize the picturesque in his paintings, particularly in those destined for reproduction, as noted in a letter from Goupil:

Espérez-vous travailler à votre grand Vésuve?...C'est du neuf, jamais on n'a représenté le Vésuve de manière à en donner une idée exacte et si vous le faites ça aura le double avantage d'être un objet d'art et en même temps un souvenir tel qu'on n'en jamais vu. Nous pourrons peut-être en faire une reproduction par la chromolithographie [sic], ce serait une réclame excellente.¹⁰⁷

He continues in another letter later that year:

Si au lieu de nous envoyer (peut-être pour nous faire patience) des tableaux qui sont peu intéressants vous nous aviez envoyé de ces choses comme la *Descente des Touristes* avec ce coup de soleil sur la mer et tant de choses intéressantes que je vous sais en train, oh alors que nous n'hésiterions pas ;...c'est des choses

¹⁰⁵ Saturday 11 June 1881, Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 12 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956).

¹⁰⁶ As of 3 January 1872, De Nittis was represented exclusively by Goupil, as per a contract that put in writing a verbal agreement from November 1871. This was the same time that Boldini also entered into an exclusive contract with Goupil, perhaps indicative of a falling out with Reitlinger. The contract arranged an annual salary of 18,000 francs Fabio Fiorani, "De Nittis and Etching in Italy in the Second Half of the Xx Century," in *De Nittis Incisore/De Nittis the Printmaker*, ed. Fabio Fiorani and Rosalba Dinoia (Rome: Artemide Edizioni, 1999), 33.

¹⁰⁷ Letter from Goupil to De Nittis, 10 February 1872. Quoted in Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'Italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire," 128.

capitales de vous que de montrer des tableaux inférieurs (comme intérêt bien entendu) à ce qu'a le Reitlinger.¹⁰⁸

Typical of the *vedutisti*, he created a number of picturesque views such *Rain of Ashes*, while concurrently working on compositions focusing on simplified geometry and intense palette such as his many *Impressions of Vesuvius* of which he made around one hundred variations. (Figure A250, A354) A dichotomy in his oeuvre might have contributed to De Nittis' critical fortune as the heir-apparent of the tradition of Italian *veduta*, albeit modernized through the emphasis on modern vistas in his compositions.

Most likely introduced via Marcellin Desboutin, De Nittis and Degas had a strong friendship that began somewhere around the 1869, that was sustained until his death in 1884. De Nittis and Signorini even briefly considered a visit to New Orleans while Degas was there in 1872-73.¹⁰⁹ De Nittis held Degas in high esteem, as can be clearly ascertained in his memoirs, written a year before his death:

Nella stessa serata Daudet mi chiamò per farmi vedere D., che a lunghi passi misurava il mio studio a vetrate dove io dipingo le figure in piena luce. Era una notte di plenilunio e una luminescenza azzurrognola delineava la figura di D. che camminava saltellando e gesticolava come una marionetta. Era così assorto da non accorgersi che tutti noi, uno dopo l'altro, andavamo a vederlo.

Quell'animosità mi addolorò e non era la prima volta che vedevo D., che pure mi è caro, indispettirsi per il mio successo. Eppure gli voglio bene e lo stimo lo stesso; è un artista di grande valore e il pubblico non lo comprende affatto. Lui poi si vendica con quel suo aspro disprezzo da superuomo che ostenta in ogni occasione.

Ma anche se non ha mai dissimulato la sua stizza per i miei successi, mai, dico mai egli si è abbassato a colpirmi con una di quelle meschinità così facili a

¹⁰⁸ Letter from Adolphe Goupil to De Nittis, 27 July 1872. Quoted from *Ibid.*: 124.

¹⁰⁹ See Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 157. See also Letter from De Nittis to Signorini, 17 February 1874. Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 292.

riscontrarsi nel nostro ambiente e alle quali purtroppo ci si deve abituare. Ormai sono tanti anni che lo conosco: anche a lui, come a Manet, hanno fatto la fama di uomo maligno. Nulla di vero in tutto ciò; è un uomo di una sincerità e di una lealtà veramente fuori del comune. Che valore può avere una battuta di spirito, una passeggera irritazione di fronte a tutta una vita ispirata alla bontà? Dopo tutto è un uomo, e vorrei che ve ne fossero tanti come lui.¹¹⁰

Further evidence of his friendship with Degas and Manet is seen in a 1873 letter to Signorini, in which he speaks of their four-year camaraderie:

Ebbene, queste persone le ho viste di tanto in tanto, per occasioni, senza mai legarmi – fino al momento che la combinazione mi ha portato, senza sforzo, a delle relazioni di persone che scambievolmente avevano delle simpatie da quattro anni sono.¹¹¹

In 1874 Degas invited De Nittis to participate in the first Impressionist exhibition partly because he hoped that the participation of an artist who received official recognition at the Salon would confer recognition on the fringe group. De Nittis writes to Cecioni of Degas' offer:

...veduto lo strombettio fatto dalla società di opposizione realista il giorno che Degas è venuto ad offrirmi di entrarci [here he includes a footnote with a brief explanation of the group and names of other participants], qualificandomi come un appoggio alla società e facendo comparire la sera stessa il mio nome in capo lista.¹¹²

It was the only Impressionist exhibition in which De Nittis participated. His five submissions, not hung until some days after the opening, were skied, perhaps at the

¹¹⁰ De Nittis, *Taccuino* (1883). Quoted from Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 106.

¹¹¹ Letter from De Nittis to Telemaco Signorini, 7 April 1873. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 290-91. This letter also roughly gives us a timeline of their friendship, suggesting that they met at some point in 1869.

¹¹² Letter from De Nittis to Cecioni, 5 April 1874. Reproduced in 16 April 1874, no. 24 Tempesti, ed., *Il Giornale Artistico*, 190.

request of Renoir who looked down on him as a commercial and conservative artist.¹¹³ Degas' staunch support of artists that others saw as too conservative caused rifts in the 'Impressionist' group and eventually caused its demise, as exemplified in Gauguin's 1882 threats to resign in protest at Degas' support of his friends and protégés including De Nittis and Zandomeneghi. These difficulties might shed light on why he did not participate in any further exhibitions.

While he perhaps considered briefly participating in the second exhibition, his name was cancelled on a list in one of Degas' notebooks of possible participants.¹¹⁴ It is also possible, that while De Nittis did not actively show in the exhibitions after 1874, that he did have some form of input into their marketing and installation. Evidence of De Nittis' involvement in the 1880 exhibition can be seen in a letter from Degas to Bracquemond. Degas writes:

The posters will be up tomorrow or Monday. They are in bright red letters on a green ground. There was a big fight with Caillebotte as to whether or not to put the names. I had to give in and let him put them up. When on earth will they stop the headlines?...In view of the frenzied advertisement made by de Nittis and Monet (in *La Vie Moderne*) our exhibition promises to be quite inglorious. Next year I promise you, I shall take steps to see that this does not continue. I am miserable about it, humiliated.¹¹⁵

De Nittis was absent from Paris for the 15 April 1874 opening of the exhibition of the Société anonyme des artistes-peintures, sculpteurs, graveurs in Nadar's on the Boulevard des Capucines, as he was on his way to London. Writing to Enrico Cecioni, the brother of Adriano, from London, De Nittis writes of his impressions of the works

¹¹³ De Nittis' works in the first Impressionist Exhibition: *Paesaggio presso Blois, Vesuvio sotto la luna, Campagna vesuviana, Studio di donna, Strada d'Italia*.

¹¹⁴ Nb 26 p 99. It might also be wishful thinking on Degas' part.

¹¹⁵ Letter from Degas to Braquemond, 1880. Edgar Degas and Marcel Guerin, *Letters*, trans. Marguerite Kay (Oxford: B. Cassirer, 1947), 56.

submitted by Degas to the exhibition that year. The letter was reproduced as a critical preview to the exhibition in Florence's *Il Giornale Artistico* on 5 April 1874:

Quanto ai quadri di Degas sono l'espressione più completa dell'osservazione del vero, nel gesto, nella forma e nel colore. Sfortunatamente, come quasi sempre, arriva a tante qualità rimarcabili e di primo ordine e vi si riscontra l'impotenza della mano; egli ha l'occhio osservatore, e la mano che risponde a metà; l'agilità della mano che tanti artisti meno forti di lui, e spessissimo mediocri posseggono a mera-viglia, a lui è completamente negata. I suoi disegni sono di un gesto meraviglioso come osservazione di verità; le sue blanchisseuses sono talmente osservate nei movimenti del loro lavoro che il mestiere è completamente reso. Come pure nei suoi quadri di ballerine, e soprattutto in una di esse il colore è talmente delicato e di una mezza tinta generale che spiccatamente fa sentire la differenza delle tendenze dell'arte con tutto quello che è stato fatto finora. Le gonnelline di velo bianco sono bellissime. E giacché sono a passare in rivista colla mia mente le sue opere per scrivertene, mi ricordo di un disegno che doveva essere una ripetizione di danza sul palco scenico che è illuminato dal di sotto, e ti assicuro che è bellissimo. Le gonnelle di velo sono così diafane ed i movimenti così giusti che solamente vedendolo si può farsene una idea; renderle in iscritto è impossibile.¹¹⁶

Aside from Degas, De Nittis was also close with a number of other members of the contemporaneous Parisian art scene. He was a friend of Caillebotte, whom he met while the latter was in Naples, and while in the city, both shared an interested in the relationships of spatial depth of landscape painting. Another example of De Nittis' interactions with other members of the Parisian art scene is exemplified in a letter from Monet to De Nittis, 28 May 1877.¹¹⁷ Tissot, a mutual friend of De Nittis and Degas included the former in his composition *Silenzio! (il concerto)*.¹¹⁸ De Nittis also took part

¹¹⁶ 1 July 1874, no. 4 Reproduced in Tempesti, ed., *Il Giornale Artistico*, 25-26. In the letter, De Nittis also briefly mentions Morisot's submissions to the exhibition.

¹¹⁷ Letter from Claude Monet to De Nittis, 28 May 1877. Claude Monet letters sent, 1864-1925. Getty Special Collections. Monet's letter is mostly illegible, but there is some reference to Rome.

¹¹⁸ James Tissot, *Silenzio! (Il Concerto)*, c. 1875, Manchester Art Gallery
An exhibition put on in Barletta in 2006 highlights the similarities in subject matter and general aesthetics

in artistic dialogues in the city of Paris, as exemplified in a 11 January 1874 letter written by a group of artists including De Nittis to Philippe de Chennevières which was published in the *Journal officiel*.

I contend that another artist with which De Nittis' work finds resonance is Berthe Morisot. De Nittis' work *Nei Campi (Ditorni di Londra)* is similar in its composition to Morisot's *La Lecture*, a work that features Morisot's sister, which was shown in the first Impressionist exhibition in 1874. (Figures A251-252) While Morisot's work features a solitary woman in the countryside, bounded in by a distance fence, De Nittis' composition resonates through his similar depiction of a group of leisured women and children, relaxing in a similar setting. While De Nittis was in London at the time of the opening, it is entirely possible that he encountered Morisot's work in the preparations, or perhaps even in her studio, as the two had a common friend in Degas. Further evidence of De Nittis' awareness of Morisot's oeuvre comes in the form of a letter written by De Nittis to Cecioni in 187. He writes of Degas' comments on a portrait by Morisot, most likely *Portrait of Mme. Pontillon*, the artist's sister.¹¹⁹

De Nittis wrote in 1870 to Manet, as means of introduction: "Mio caro Manet, perdonate questo povero straniero che non sa dirvi quanto piacere gli avete procurato e che vorrebbe tanto ricambiarvi."¹²⁰ Manet's oeuvre made an impression on the painter

between De Nittis and Tissot. See Emanuela Angiuli and Katy Spurrell, eds., *De Nittis E Tissot: Pittori Della Vita Moderna* (Milan: Skira, 2006).

¹¹⁹ Berthe Morisot, *Portrait of of Mme. Pontillon*, 1871, Pastel on paper, Musée d'Orsay. The work bears a compositional similarity to Edgar Degas, *Stefanina Primitice Carafa, Marchioness of Cicerale and Duchess of Montejasi*, c. 1875, Oil on fabric, Cleveland Museum of Art
Letter from De Nittis to Cecioni, 10 June 1874. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 286-87.

¹²⁰ Letter from De Nittis to Manet, 1870. Quoted in Ferretti Bocquillon, "Cronologia 1867-1917," 408. Bocquillon believes that De Nittis gave Manet a pastel entitled *Giovane donna*.

from Barletta, particularly in his *Lunch in the Garden*, which depicts Léontine and Jacques' attention diverted from the painter, as they attempt to get the attention of the nearby ducks with scraps from the table. (Figure A253) De Nittis' presence is suggested through the empty place setting, as if he finished lunch and decided to paint the resulting scene. The work was painted just before De Nittis' death, and his absence from the table acts as an eerie premonition of the future familial structure. The work is similar to Manet's *In the Garden*, 1870, which was formerly owned by De Nittis, and also recalls Monet's *The Lunch*, from 1872-74.¹²¹

Between 1875 and 1882, De Nittis would spend several months of each year in London, working for an enthusiastic clientele including the art dealer A.M. Marsden and banker Kaye Knowles. Knowles commissioned him to paint ten street views of London, as well as two portraits. While in London, De Nittis met a number of artists in the community there, including Pellegrini and Tissot, both mutual acquaintances of Degas. Tissot and De Nittis got on very well, sharing a mutual admiration for the works of Whistler. Degas expresses concern for his friend's well being in the English city, as clearly elucidated in an undated letter to Tissot: "How is De Nittis getting on over there? Tell me something about it."¹²² It is most likely that Degas refers to one of De Nittis' early trips to London, perhaps in 1874 or 1875. Degas also kept a note of De Nittis'

¹²¹ Edouard Manet, *Au Jardin*, 1870, Oil on canvas, Mr. and Mrs. Dunbar W. Bostwick, New York; Claude Monet, *Le Déjeuner*, 1873, Oil on canvas, Louvre
Olson, *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting*, 220.

¹²² Letter from Degas to Tissot, undated. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 41.

London address, as he would be in the city in 1875, and would most likely look up De Nittis.¹²³

Degas and De Nittis' relationship had evolved into a close friendship, evidenced by a number of examples in the correspondence that suggest a constant attention to the other's whereabouts, as well as social interactions. In April of 1875, Desboutin writes to De Nittis, expressing concern over the lack of news regarding Degas' whereabouts. He writes, "che ne è di Degas? Del quale nessuno, nemmeno suo fratello, ha notizie – c'è chi lo dice ancora a Napoli – altri invece pretende sia ai festeggiamenti di Venezia – la sua signora ipotizza che forse si trova ancora a Londra?"¹²⁴ At this time, Degas was dealing with the financial issues of his family. Degas was probably in Naples to attend the funeral of his uncle Achille, who had recently passed away.

The two also kept in touch via mutual acquaintances. In a letter to Charles W. Deschamps from 1876 regarding his finances and works sent to London after the second Impressionist exhibition, Degas asks Deschamps to give his regards to De Nittis.¹²⁵ A letter from 1879-81, suggests an active social repartee between the two, as Degas writes to Léontine, noting that he respectfully declines her dinner invitation, as he already is engaged that evening attending a Gauguin exhibition at fond de Vaugirard.¹²⁶ Degas also had a strong interest in seeing the success of his Italian friend. In an 1881 letter from

¹²³ Nb 27 p 98: "59 Wellington Road/St Johns Wood [London]/ De Nittis". Degas would also look up Pellegrini while in London.

¹²⁴ Letter from Marcellin Desboutin to Giuseppe and Léontine De Nittis, 13 April 1875. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 316-17.

¹²⁵ Letter from Degas to Charles W. Deschamps, 15 Mai 1876. Reproduced in Reff, "Some Unpublished Letters of Degas," 90.

¹²⁶ Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, c. 1879-1881. Reproduced in *Degas Inédit : Actes Du Colloque Degas, Musée D'orsay, 18-21 Avril 1988*, (Paris: Documentation française, 1989).

Degas to Alfred-Robert Fregoult de Liesville, a collector, he points out the glaring omission in the latter's collection, "Votre libraire n'est pas allé débarrasser les de Nittis! Ce matin j'avais envoyé mon commissionnaire qui n'a rapporté que fort peu de chose. Ayez la bonté de secouer votre homme."¹²⁷

In addition to evidence in the written correspondence, there are visual examples of the friendship in the oeuvres of the two artists in the form of the most personal of genres: portraiture, as well as in their own art collections. At the time of his death, Degas owned seven works by his Italian compatriot, and De Nittis owned two portraits of Manet etched by Degas.¹²⁸ These two works had important meaning for De Nittis, as they were bestowed upon him during 1875, at the time of their collaboration on etchings at Alfred Cadart's printing house, along with Lepic, Legros, and Hirsch. During these collaborations, De Nittis also created a portrait of Degas. Degas also created a number of portraits of De Nittis' family, including his wife and son. The endearing 1878-80 portrait of De Nittis' son Jacques finds the boy oblivious to the presence of the artist, perhaps owing to his past experiences as a model for his father. (Figure A254) He exemplifies the essence of childhood creativity and imagination, as he is depicted at his own drafting table, hard at work on a creation while his playful nature is emphasized through the tiger's tail that sticks out underneath his jacket. One can imagine that Degas witnessed this lighthearted scene of the son emulating his father in the act of creating, and that it spurred him to make an enduring portrait of the moment.

¹²⁷ Letter from Degas to Alfred-Robert Fregoult de Liesville, 19 January 1881. Reproduced in *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ There is also some suggestion that Degas owned De Nittis' first attempt at etching. See Rosalba Dinoia, "Degas, De Nittis, Boldini E L'incisione," in *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi*, ed. Ann Dumas (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 176.

Like Degas, De Nittis experimented in a number of different media. Aside from his paintings, pastels and the aforementioned experiments in intaglio printing, De Nittis also illustrated covers of *La Vie Moderne*, including its first issue, as well as perhaps some envoys into the medium of sculpture. An 1884 engraving by Marius Borrel depicts a bust of Edmond de Goncourt with a medallion of Jules de Goncourt that is listed as sculpted by De Nittis, the gesso head also still exists.¹²⁹

While in Paris, De Nittis actively participated in exhibitions, focusing most of his efforts towards civically-sponsored venues. He participated in nine Salons: 1869, 1870, 1872, 1873, 1874, 1875, 1876, 1877, 1884.¹³⁰ Degas wrote to Léontine about his impressions of De Nittis' work in the Salon of 1877:

Il Salon, è sempre il Salon. I due acquarelli del nostro pittore sono due pezzi da Maestro, senza adulazione. Mi piace meno il quadro, mi sembra un po' pesante, soprattutto se confrontato ai due quadri del Cercle che sono così pieni di mordente. È collocato molto bene. Mi piacerebbe parlarne a voce con l'autore, per lettera non si riesce a dire tutto quello che si vuole. Quello che per esempio è chiaro è l'atteggiamento innovatore che ha nel mondo dei pittori che rappresentano strade e Parigi in generale.

¹²⁹ Marius Borrel, *Bust of Edmond de Goncourt, medallion of Jules de Goncourt*, 1884, Etching, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Giuseppe De Nittis, *Head of Edmond de Goncourt*, Gesso, C.A. Michelangiolo, Trani

¹³⁰ De Nittis' Salon exhibition history: 1869: *La Signora dei Pappagalli* (Dini 243), *Una Visita dall'Antiquario* (Dini 263); 1872: *Strada da Brindisi a Barletta* (Dini 344); 1873: *La Discesa dal Vesuvio* (Dini 366); 1874: *Tra le Spieghie del Grano* (Dini 463), *Che Freddo!* (Dini 484); 1875: *La Place de la Concorde dopo la Pioggia* (Dini 538); 1876: *Sulla Strada di Castellamare* (Dini 608), *Place des Pyramides* (Dini 611); 1877: *Boulevard Haussmann* (Dini 649); 1884: *Colazione in Giardino* (Dini 937), *Fiori d'Autunno* (Dini 960), *La Guardiana di Oche* (Dini 990)

He continues in his praise of the watercolors, “Gli acquarelli non hanno pari. C’è una sala speciale dedicata agli acquarelli e sfido a poter opporre qualcosa a queste due meraviglie.”¹³¹

As mentioned above, De Nittis also briefly experimented with exhibition opportunities outside the traditional avenues, exhibiting with the Impressionists in 1874 at their first exhibition. Of the five works exhibited¹³², two were singled out in the contemporaneous critical reviews: *Paysage près de Blois*¹³³ and *Route en Italie*.¹³⁴ That same year, De Nittis also participated, with Boldini, in the ninth Exhibition of the Society of French Artists in London. In 1875 he participated in an exhibition at Cercle des Mirlitons, Paris, exhibiting *L’Arco di Trionfo a Parigi*.¹³⁵

At the 1878 Exposition Universelle, De Nittis was chosen to represent Italy, and did so with seven paintings.¹³⁶ The international quality of his submissions suggests the

¹³¹ The two watercolors referred to are: *Le Boulevard Haussmann* and *La Place Saint Augustin*. Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, 21 May 1877. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 326.

¹³² De Nittis’ works exhibited in the 1874 Impressionist Exhibition, listed with their original catalogue numbers: *Paysage près de Blois* (cat. 115); *Lever de lune. Vésuve* (cat. 116) ; *Champagne du Vésuve* (cat. 117) ; *Études de femme* (cat. 118) (Dini 491); *Route en Italie* (cat. 118 bis)

¹³³ Mentioned by E. Drumont, “L’Exposition du boulevard des Capucines”, *Le Petit Journal* 19 April 1874, 2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 21. Le Père Siffleur, “Coups de sifflet”, *Le Sifflet* 26 April 1874, 3. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 38.

¹³⁴ Mentioned as *Vues d’Italie* by de Lora, Léon, “Petites Nouvelles artistiques: Exposition libre des peintres”, *Le Gaulois* 18 April 1874, 3. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 26. Mentioned as *Vues d’Italie* by Lepelletier, E., “Chronique parisienne: L’Exposition libre du boulevard des Capucines” *Le Patriote français* 19 April 1874, 2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 24.

¹³⁵ Dini 574

¹³⁶ De Nittis’ exhibited works at the 1878 Exposition Universelle: *La Strada da Brindisi a Barletta* (Dini 345); *Piccadilly (Giornata Invernale a Londra)* (Dini 541); *Place des Pyramides* (Dini 611); *La National Gallery a Londra* (Dini 641); *Westminster* (Dini 717); *La Signora col Cana (Il Ritorno dale Corse)* (Dini 722); *Trafalgar Square (Studio)* (Dini 725)

particular tastes of the moment. Of the seven works, only one depicts an Italian scene, while four are London cityscapes, and two depict contemporaneous Parisian life. His increased popularity, the result of exposure at locales such as the Exposition the year prior, is clearly evidenced in an 1879 show at La Vie Moderne, where 2000-3000 people came to see his work daily. In 1881, he held a private exhibition at the Cercle de la Place Vendôme, accompanied by a nine page review in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts*. In the article, De Nittis states that he intended to become the La Tour of his time.¹³⁷

De Nittis took part in the 1882 and 1883 Exposition Universelle, exhibiting at the Gallery Georges Petit. Such a relationship was fruitful, for in 1882, De Nittis joined gallery owner Georges Petit and the painters Raimundo Madrazo y Garreta and Alfred Stevens in the founding and organization of Exposition Internationale de Peinture to assist and promote foreign artists in Paris. The following year, the French government purchased *La Place du Carrousel: Ruins of the Tuileries in 1882* for the Musée du Luxembourg, the first time a contemporary Italian painting had been bought for a Parisian museum, creating further strides for the international art community in the Parisian art scene.¹³⁸

Even after his death in 1884, De Nittis' work continued to have an active exhibition history, owing mainly to the efforts of Léontine. An 1886 exhibition at the Galerie Bernheim Jeune in Paris included eight works¹³⁹, and during the same year *Bois*

¹³⁷ Alfred De Lostalot, "Les Pastels De M. De Nittis Au Cercle De L'union Artistique," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* 24, no. 2 (1881): 168.

¹³⁸ Efreem Gisella Calingaert. "De Nittis, Giuseppe." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T022153> (accessed January 25, 2009).

¹³⁹ De Nittis's works exhibited at Galerie Bernheim Jeune, Paris: *Tra le Spieghe del Grano* (Dini 463); *I Covoni* (Dini 558); *Il Foro di Pompei* (Dini 599); *Place des*

de Boulogne (cat. no. 61) was shown in an exhibition entitled *Celebrated Paintings, Brought from Paris, For Exhibition Only* at the Durand-Ruel Gallery in New York from 25 May-30 June 1887.¹⁴⁰ An exhibition in 1889 at the Hotel Drouot, Paris included *Riva Della Senna*¹⁴¹ and an exhibition in 1912 at Gallery Georges Petit contained *L'Organetto*.¹⁴²

Throughout his career, De Nittis found a predilection for the motif of the road – whether that road ran through a small town in southern Italy, or the busiest squares of Paris and London. This compositional fondness was noticed by Duranty in his discussion of the new Realist school, where he notes, “We must include as well that young Neapolitan painter who loves to depict the street life of London and Paris.”¹⁴³ Aside from his overtly commercial works, intended for sale at the Goupil galleries, De Nittis was seen by his contemporaries as working in a similar manner to Degas – methodical yet progressive. Such sentiments are expressed in an 1875 letter from Desboutin to Léontine in which he writes, “Benedetto il nostro caro Peppino che, almeno lui, segue in arte una via regolare e progressive e appunto produttiva.”¹⁴⁴ A similar notion is conveyed in a letter from Degas to Léontine, who writes, “Burty è tornato incantato dai lavori del vostro

Pyramides (Dini 612) ; *Passa il Treno* (Dini 730) ; *Place des Invalides* (Dini 852) ; *Le Corse a Auteuil* (Dini 862-864); *Colazione in Giardino* (Dini 937)

¹⁴⁰ Personal correspondence with Flavie Durand-Ruel, January 2009

¹⁴¹ Dini 253

¹⁴² Dini 255

¹⁴³ Duranty, "The New Painting," 42.

¹⁴⁴ Letter from Desboutin to Léontine, 17 July 1876. Quoted from Barbara Cinelli, "Giuseppe De Nittis: 'Paysagiste De La Rue Parisienne'," in *De Nittis E La Pittura Della Vita Moderna in Europa*, ed. Pier Giovanni Castagnoli, Barbara Cinelli, and Maria Mimita Lamberti (Torino: GAM, Galleria civica d'arte moderna e contemporanea, 2002), 25.

pittore. Si potrà vedere tutto questo, sopporterà un po' di quello che ci ha detto, oppure il blocco, quadri e cornici, resterà al piede del [p.i]? Tornate da noi."¹⁴⁵

De Nittis' critical fortune finds many struggling with exactly where to place this Italian expatriate who found fame in the markets of Paris and London. Much like the struggle to place Degas in a clearly demarcated box, De Nittis defies succinct classification. Claretie suggests that De Nittis' work was 'recensione tardiva', but called the painter an 'impressionista italiano.' He continues to state that he "...non solo è impressionista benché il suo occhio fotografico afferri con una rapidità dagherriana l'impressione di una scena o di un paesaggio, ma sa rifinire le immagini da cogliere."¹⁴⁶

Tullio Massarani suggests Baudelarian intentions to De Nittis' take on modernity:

...il pittore avvezzo a guardare in faccia la realtà e a tradurla senza ombra di pregiudizi ha fermato sulla tela il dramma vivente della piazza, l'immagine esteriore più completa che forse esista della società moderna, il solo poema, forse possibile, della democrazia. Il De Nittis può rivendicare a sé il vanto d'aver fatto una cosa sola dell'aspetto materiale dei luoghi, con la fisionomia dei ceti, con la storia delle consuetudini, con la ricerca dei tipi che tutti insieme ne costituiscono l'aspetto morale: d'averci dato insomma non l'urbis solamente, ma la civitas dell'era moderna.¹⁴⁷

Other art historians rightfully reject such attempts at forcing the Italian artist into a French framework. Fabio Fiorani dismisses discussions of whether or not De Nittis was an Impressionist and notes that focusing solely on De Nittis' critical fortune as a "interpreter of worldly atmospheres, aiming at catching the most superficial and ephemeral aspects of contemporary life" as selling his oeuvre short. He dismisses the

¹⁴⁵ Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, May-June 1875. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 326.

¹⁴⁶ Claretie, "De Nittis". Quoted from Renato Miracco, "De Nittis Impressionista Italiano. Le Ragioni Della Mostra," in *De Nittis: Impressionista Italiano*, ed. Renato Miracco (Milan: Mazzotta, 2004), 19.

¹⁴⁷ Tullio Massarani, "L'arte a Parigi," *La Nuova Antologia* 44 (15 March 1879).

discussion of De Nittis' 'Impressionism' as "wasting hundreds of words on a false problem," as it suggests an attempt to renationalize the Italian artist, to distance himself from the Francocentric discussion of Impressionism.¹⁴⁸ Instead of attempting to place De Nittis – or Degas for that matter – into a neat box, it is more productive to simply attempt to understand the dialogues between these varied artists and their approaches to the creation of art and how these dialogues affected their respective artistic output.

By 1880 De Nittis and other Italians in Paris had arranged the 'Circolo della Polenta', made up of Italian expatriates who preferred to live in the City of Light, but carry on Italian traditions. It was frequented also by a number of Italians passing through the city and Parisians such as Edmond de Goncourt¹⁴⁹, Jules Claretie and Émile Zola. Their motto was P.P.P.P.P.: "Per Patria Prima, Per Polenta Poi." They also frequented the Café Corazza at the Palais Royal and Santarsiero.¹⁵⁰ Degas and De Nittis would often socialize in through this club, as well as through social interactions with other Italian expatriates and their extended social circles within the city, which included the actress Ellen Andrée and the Goncourts.¹⁵¹ In addition, De Nittis was also a frequent fixture in the more traditional haunts of the Impressionists, including the café Nouvelle Athènes and the café Guerbois.

The De Nittis home at 3, Ave de Villiers was a gathering place for Italians who lived in Paris and those who traveled there, including Adriano Cecioni, Signorini,

¹⁴⁸ Fiorani, "De Nittis and Etching in Italy in the Second Half of the Xx Century," 22.

¹⁴⁹ Sunday, 15 January 1882. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, 143.

¹⁵⁰ Marina Ferretti Bocquillon, "De Nittis, Boldini E Zandomenighi a Parigi (1867-1917)," in *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi*, ed. Ann Dumas (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 119.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 120.

Martelli and Mancini, as well as members of the French community who became honorary members of the community.¹⁵² Martelli reflected on these dinner parties, a setting ripe for transnational artistic dialogue and exchange:

You ring the doorbell around five in the evening and enter a vestibule which is furnished with stools of carved wood, a large painting by the Impressionist Monet, and, on the floor, simple Japanese mats.¹⁵³ From this vestibule, you pass on into an elegant, regency-style drawing room, where you can see on the walls an unfinished landscape by Corot, an oil painting by Manet, and a work in pastel and tempera by Degas. There, the master of the house receives you with warm affability, introduces you to his other guests, and then leaves you with Emile Zola, Duranty, Edmond de Goncourt, the painters Manet, Rossano, Degas, De Tivoli, and other very accomplished gentlemen and charming ladies; everyone greets you without moving and the murmur of the interrupted conversation continues. You speak when you wish and as much as you wish in this tournament where one jousts politely with the weapons of sarcasm and wit, and each man is measured in grams and millimeters.¹⁵⁴

Similar to Martelli's description of the De Nittis home, Goncourt relates a typical Saturday evening dinner at the De Nittis':

Ces dîners du samedi chez de Nittis sont vraiment charmants.

Quand on entre, on voit, dans l'entrebâillement de la port du vestibule, le maître de la maison qui vous dit, avec un clappement de langue de Pierrot-cuisinier dans une pantomime et avec une main qu'il n'ose pas vous donner : 'Je fais un plat!'

¹⁵² Location rebuilt in 1898. Financial difficulties after De Nittis' death in 1884, brought on by the expenses of maintaining the home, forced Léontine to sell his collection of works by his friends, including Degas, Manet, Morisot and Caillebotte

¹⁵³ De Nittis shared in the late nineteenth-century fascination with Japonisme. The most overt references to this are three fans that De Nittis painted (now in Pinocoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta), as well as two works that show Japanese influence. *Still Life*, 1882, oil on canvas, Pinocoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta: painted in the manner of that resonates with Japanese aesthetics, particularly in its flattened perspective. The still life includes a scroll with hieroglyphics, fans, an umbrella, hat, mirror, jewelry boxes, decorative gold borders around two white panels and further abstracted décor at bottom. Another work having resonance with Japonisme is his *Figura di Donna*, 1880, oil on canvas, Pinocoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta: In this work Léontine is painted in front of a Japanese screen.

¹⁵⁴ Quoted from Norma Broude, *The Macchiaioli : Italian Painters of the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 272.

On le retrouve dans le salle à manger, debout, remuant la grande platée de macaronis ou de soupe au poisson. On se met à table et c'est, chez chacun, une verve venant de la sympathie intelligente et la compréhension à demi-mot des autres ; et bientôt d'aimables folies et des bêtises et des enfantillages et des gaîtés dans de jolies libertés de langage. *Il fait heureux* dans la maison.

Puis on passe dans l'atelier et les yeux amusés par les japonaiseries des murs et la cigarette à la lèvre, on entend quelque belle musique d'artiste, quelque sonate de Beethoven, vous remuant les dedans immatériels de votre être.¹⁵⁵

De Nittis and the Goncourt brothers became close friends, particularly Edmond, and wrote often about De Nittis in their *Journals*, providing important information about De Nittis' social circles in Paris, particularly his friendship with Degas. In addition, De Nittis owned a number of the Goncourt books in his library.¹⁵⁶ Goncourt records a number of evenings spent at the home of the De Nittis', at which Degas was a guest.¹⁵⁷ An 1881 entry relates a rather interesting monologue by Degas to De Nittis, who went to visit the former while sick. Degas confides in De Nittis, "A votre âge, quand on n'a pas fait l'amour, qu'on est encore fille, on est une brute. Vous m'insupportez avec votre tatillon nage. De Nittis, allez la coucher."¹⁵⁸ In addition to recording brotherly advice on aggressiveness in the bedroom, Goncourt also relates an interesting passage on the

¹⁵⁵ Saturday, 11 June 1881. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, 117.

¹⁵⁶ Goncourt works owned by De Nittis: Goncourt, Edmond Huot de. *La Faustine*. Paris : G. Charpentier, 1882; *La maison d'un artiste*. Paris : Charpentier, 1881; *Manette Salomon*. Paris : Charpentier et C.ie, 1876; *Gavarni: l'homme et l'oeuvre*. Paris: G. Charpentier, 1879; *Theatre*. Paris : G. Charpentier, 1879; *Les frères Zemganno*. Paris : G. Charpentier, 1879; *La Du Barry*. Paris: G. Charpentier, 1878; *Germinie Lacerteux*. Paris : Alphonse Lemerre, 1876; *Sophie Arnould: d'après sa correspondance et ses mémoires inédits*. Paris : E. Dentu, 1877. Other books written by the Goncourt were included in the collection, but came into it after De Nittis' death. De Nittis' library is now in the Pinocoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.

¹⁵⁷ See Saturday, 25 September 1880; Saturday, 29 January 1881. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*.

¹⁵⁸ Sunday, 15 May 1881. *Ibid.*, 114.

perceived cultural differences between the French and Italian attitudes in a passage speaking of De Nittis' reaction to the death of his brother Vincenzo:

Ils sont très particuliers, ces Italiens, très différents de nous. Je trouve ces jours-ci de Nittis dans des transes affreuses, parce qu'il lui faut porter le deuil d'un frère mort à Naples. Toutes les choses qui leur rappellent la mort, ça leur fait une horreur qu'ils commencent à porter le deuil, c'est être condamné à le porter longtemps : 'Je me rappelle, me dit-il, que, quand j'étais tout petit, une fois, on m'a mis en noir. Ce noir, je l'ai porté toute mon enfance.'¹⁵⁹

Social interactions aside, Edmond de Goncourt was also very taken with the works of the Italian painter. When *La Place des Pyramides* was purchased by the French Government, Goncourt wrote:

De Nittis, c'est le vrai et le *talentueux* paysagiste de la rue parisienne. Ce soir, dans son atelier, je regardais *La Place des Pyramides*, qu'il vient de racheter à Goupil pour la donner au Luxembourg, le ciel de Paris avec ses bleus délavés, la pierre des maisons et sa touche grise, l'affiche en ses coloriations tirant l'œil dans le camaïeu général, c'est merveilleux. Et dans ce tableau encore, les figures ont le format qu'il faut au talent du peintre napolitain, le format de grandes taches spirituelles.¹⁶⁰

The artist so inspired Goncourt that he considered basing a character on him in a possible follow up *Manette Salomon*:

Ah ! si j'étais plus jeune, le beau roman à recommencer sur le monde de l'art et à faire tout dissemblable de *Manette Salomon*, avec un peintre dans le genre de Nittis et un bohème comme Forain, le bohème du grand monde et de la *high life*. [note :] un raisonneur d'art, à la façon de Degas, et toutes les variétés de l'artiste impressionniste.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Sunday, 10 December 1882. *Ibid.*, 212.

¹⁶⁰ Saturday, 2 June 1883. Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 13 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956), 38-39.

¹⁶¹ Thursday, 4 May 1882. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, 171.

Writing of De Nittis' biography, Goncourt sets up a similar construction of origin to Degas in De Nittis' struggle to reconcile the aesthetics of the Academy and his own developing style:

Il a commencé à dessiner à l'École des Beaux-arts de Naples, mais s'est refusé à faire des études au Musée. Il trouvait les tableaux anciens tout noirs et l'atmosphère du dehors toute claire, toute blonde, toute gaie. Alors, il est parti pour la campagne, pour une propriété de sa famille, - et il est parti avec sept vessies de couleur, emportant sur lui, suivant une expression de son frère, toutes les couleurs de l'arc-en-ciel. Puis, sans maître, sans guide, sans conseil, il s'est mis à peindre avec bonheur et rage.

The letter continues to detail De Nittis' departure from Naples and relocation to Paris, where he arrived with one hundred fifty francs in his pocket, knowing no one, having no letters of recommendation, and unable to speak the language.¹⁶²

In addition to the aforementioned gesso bust of Edmond, De Nittis also created two pastel portraits of the French writer. The first functions as a bust-length portrait study of Goncourt. His dark hair suggests that it was created early on in their friendship, before Goncourt began writing about De Nittis in his *Journal*, or perhaps it is an idealized version of the writer, looking back towards his youth.¹⁶³ The second portrait is in the tradition of Manet's *Portrait of Zola* or Degas' *Portrait of Diego Martelli*, depicting the much older the writer at his desk, surrounded by the tools of his craft. Goncourt stares off into the lower left of the composition, insulated from the dreary winter Paris is framed by the window. (Figure A255) Goncourt was quite taken with the portrait, noting: "Mon portrait de Nittis, il faut le voir aux heures crépusculaires, éclairé par les braises de la

¹⁶² Wednesday, 25 February 1880. Ibid., 66-67.

¹⁶³ Giuseppe De Nittis, *Portrait of Goncourt*, Pastel, Private collection, Reproduced in *De Nittis Impressionista italiano*

cheminée et reflété dans la glace: comme cela, il prend une vie fantastique tout à fait extraordinaire.”¹⁶⁴

De Nittis suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and passed away 21 August 1884.¹⁶⁵ He was buried in Père Lachaise, and his epitaph was written by Alexandre Dumas fils: “Cigit/ Le peintre/ Joseph de Nittis/ 1846-1884/ Mort à trente huit ans/ en pleine jeunesse/ en pleine gloire/ comme les héros/ et les demi-dieux.”¹⁶⁶ De Nittis was buried in Paris because it was the city that stole his heart. From the beginning he was smitten with the city of light. In a letter to Cecioni, written soon after his relocation to the city, he writes in wonder of the modern city:

Let’s speak of Paris... Yes, Adriano, here there’s progress; and these people are fanatic about it, and precisely for this reason they do many, many things. They love primacy, but with sacrifice. There is work and reward; otherwise this state of things could not last. And speaking of this, I’ve seen that the middle class Parisian loves the republic, while he is the man best suited for the present state of things; that, you understand, comes from wealth: for example, life here is such a very interesting thing... The idea of pleasure is understood so elegantly! The science of life, how it is generally desired and excited as many was as possible!¹⁶⁷

In his memoirs, he writes of his wholehearted passion for the city, while still remaining true to his Italian roots:

...I love France passionately and disinterestedly, more than any ordinary French person. I have attributed all my successes to France, even if, and I say this in all sincerity, it has been English hospitality, England itself, that has given me the means to live. In any case, it was France that encouraged me and that formed me from the beginning: and I do not believe that my love for France signifies a betrayal of something or someone... I do not believe that a total community of

¹⁶⁴ 13 October 1883. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, 57.

¹⁶⁵ After his death, Léontine bequeathed to the city of Barletta 146 paintings, 25 drawings, his books and correspondence. The donation is now housed in the Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Palazzo della Marra, Barletta.

¹⁶⁶ Gravestone replaced 30 November 1971 by the Sezione di Storia Patria di Barletta.

¹⁶⁷ Quoted from wall text, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta, September 2009

feelings, interest, aspirations with the woman that one marries is a betrayal towards one's family. Well in a certain sense France is the country that I've married.¹⁶⁸

Degas was shaken at the sudden loss of his friend. His sentiments are clearly conveyed in a letter to Ludovic Halévy dated 1884 from Ménil-Hubert:

You saw how de Nittis died, how quickly one dies! I managed to arrive in time for the funeral. There is nothing one can say to his wife. She is with the Groults at Vitry. I have news of her from Mr. Groult. As soon as I get back to Paris I shall go and see her. She loved her husband well, but she fussed over him too much. We shall have a talk about this unhappy woman and this strange and intelligent friend.¹⁶⁹

Some sense of Degas' inability to deal with the mounting losses of his friends and their inevitable decline can be seen in his letter to Bartholomé in December of that year:

...It is because, at bottom, I have not got much heart. And what I once had has not been increased by the sorrows of my family and others; I have been left only with what could not be removed, comparatively little, which is sufficient for myself but which is not sufficient for my good friends.

You two have always been so full of goodness and tenderness towards me. You are both, the one in illness, the other in the pain of incertitude and I chose this moment for not returning to you what you gave to me. Thus acts a man who wishes to end his days and die all alone without any happiness whatever.¹⁷⁰

Degas was particularly struck by the heartbreak caused by De Nittis' sudden death on his widow, Léontine. Léontine (née Gruvelle) De Nittis was French woman whose intelligence and ambition largely contributed to the success of her husband. Goncourt described her as, "une petite femme à la tenue modeste, réservée, avec quelque chose de fin, de futé, de scrutateur dans la physionomie et de délicatement souffreteux, qu'elle doit

¹⁶⁸ Quoted from wall text, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta, September 2009

¹⁶⁹ Letter from Degas to Ludovic Halévy, 1884. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 83.

¹⁷⁰ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 19 December 1884. *Ibid.*, 99.

à une fièvre intermittente, gagnée, dit-elle, en posant pour son mari près du Vésuve.”¹⁷¹

Léontine published a number of books under the pseudonym Olivier Chantal and after the death of De Nittis, focused on the organization and publication of *Notes et Souvenirs*.

Before the death of De Nittis, Degas and Léontine had a steady correspondence, giving further evidence of Degas' import in the De Nittis social circles. In 1883, Degas wrote to Léontine, informing her that Robert de Bonnières, journalist for *Figaro*, wanted to have dinner with her, because, “vi avrò scritto della nostra indiscrezione.”¹⁷² In another undated letter, Degas seems to write of a composition that he is working on for Léontine, perhaps her portrait:

Vi avevo detto, mi pare, gentile Signora, che nella mia dannata casa di via Ballu le impugnazioni mi davano un respiro delle scadenze per 9 mesi, ma un sequestro improvviso mi aveva preso alla gola. Ho dovuto pagare e non ho potuto lavorare che per questo. Adesso, da settembre, lavoro per voi, e capiterò da voi una delle prossime mattine. Datemi tempo, vi prego, fino alla fine delle settimana.

Durand-Ruel non è più così facile a dare anticipi com'era prima e bisogna dare la merce per incassare. Sono davvero dispiaciuto di sapervi così in difficoltà e di non poter al momento esservi utile. Ahimè! Non ho mai saputo in vita mia mettermi del danaro da parte, sono sempre sul chi vive, non mi riuscirà mai cambiare.

A presto, dunque, gentile Signora, e vi assicuro che sto sforzandomi per quanto possibile per accorciare questo difficile momento.¹⁷³

In addition to correspondence, Degas finds mention in Léontine's journal, in which she records a conversation between Bonnières and Degas:

¹⁷¹ Saturday, 23 February 1878. Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 11 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956), 183.

¹⁷² The light tone of this letter suggests that it was written before the death of De Nittis. Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, summer 1883?. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis : La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 327.

¹⁷³ Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, no date. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 328.

Confessate, dice Bonnières, che qualche volta avete voglia di distruggere la tela di qualche vostro collega, quando è molta buona?

Degas – No, ma certe volte mi viene voglia di stenderci una bella mano di blu di Prussia.

- Oh! Questa poi! Voi siete... voi...

Degas – Io sono così...¹⁷⁴

Degas began a more steady correspondence with the widow in 1884, beginning with a letter written two months after De Nittis' death:

I don't like to write and, as you will see, dear Madame, I don't know what to say. Every day I think of him and you and your poor Jacques. In what depths of grief you must be living! And how can one bear something like this! Close to my bedroom here there is an engraving after a painting by my poor friend, the painting *How Cold it is!* and every day I stand for a long time in front of it. The two young woman to the right, how like they are! And I remember the time when he painted it, and the studio in the Avenue de l'Impératrice and of all the fun we had. Every day, I look at it for a long time and all my thoughts and memories are good and affectionate. He was happy and understood in the world. But it didn't last long. I need to talk to you about this. I have no taste for writing.

He continues,

Sto per rientrare a Parigi. Mi sono eterizzato qui dal mio vecchio Valpinion [Valpinçon], che da sempre, ormai da quarant'anni siamo amici, mi ha amato e coccolato più di quanto non lo ricambiassi. Diventando vecchi si cerca di ripagare alle persone il bene che vi hanno fatto amandole di ricambio. Ho voluto fare il ritratto di sua figlia! Ho voluto lasciare nella sua casa qualcosa di mio che gli tocchi il cuore e che in seguito duri per la sua famiglia. Il signor Groult non mi ha più dato notizie. Mi dispiaceva, volevo chiederne a lei ma avevo paura di affaticarla.

A presto, lunedì sarò a Parigi e correrò ad abbracciarla, cara Signora e amica.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁴ Journal of Léontine De Nittis. Reproduced in Ibid., 362.

¹⁷⁵ Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, 21 October 1884. Ibid., 327.

In January 1886 while he is in Naples, he is reminded of De Nittis and writes again to Léontine:

Quante cose qui mi ricordano il mio povero amico. Lo incontro dappertutto. L'altro giorno, sono andato a Portici e ho ritrovato pezzo per pezzo tutto ciò che dipingeva, gli orticelli, quegli asinelli graziosi, quei personaggi mordere e il cielo che cambiava tutti i momenti con delle forme sempre molto nette. Come gli individui s'imprimono sulle cose!¹⁷⁶

He continued by speaking briefly of issues of familial money matters, suggesting that Naples by this time had grown dull and alien for Degas. In addition, there are a number of letters in which Degas writes to decline invitations to visit Léontine because of other social commitments (such as his sister Teresa and cousin visiting from Naples and a visit to the Louvre with Hugues-Desiré-Marie Bouffé). These suggest that Degas and Léontine continued to visit with each other socially on a relatively regular basis, even after the death of Giuseppe.¹⁷⁷

In addition to corresponding with his widow, Degas also revisited his attention to the artist's works. Due to his interest in the Neapolitan landscape cultivated in his formative years, Degas was particularly receptive to his friend's mountain views. After De Nittis' death, Degas purchased two of his mountain views – *Vesuvius from Torre Annunziata*, 1872 in 1884 and *Mountainous Landscape in Italy (Vesuvius)*, c. 1872 in 1894.¹⁷⁸

The untimely death of the artist provided impetus for a number of critics to eulogize on behalf of the artist. The most thoughtful written retrospective of De Nittis'

¹⁷⁶ Letter from Degas to Léontine De Nittis, 8 January 1886. Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ See letters from Degas to Léontine, no date. Reproduced in Ibid., 327-28.

¹⁷⁸ He might have also had De Nittis' views of Vesuvius in mind when he produced his own monotype and pastel images of the mountain.

oeuvre stems from a *Gazette des Beaux Arts* article written by Ary Renan in November 1884. Writing about De Nittis' art in 1884, Renan notes that his 'eclectic' style derives, in part, from De Nittis' ability to quickly flit from Naples, to Paris, to London and back again – taking in the various artistic climates:

Enfin, si De Nittis subit à Paris quelques heureuses influences, il a lui-même exercé sur une partie de l'école moderne une certaine action, et chacun a pensé plus d'une fois à lui devant des peintures qui, sans valoir les siennes, en étaient dérivées. Mais il arriva surtout au succès, - la part faite de ses dons très personnels, - par la voie d'un éclectisme délicat et rassis. Ceux qui l'ont connu savent, en effet, combien l'éclectisme intelligent faisait le fond de toutes ses idées. Éclectique, ne fallait-il pas l'être pour se transporter si facilement de Naples à Paris, puis de Paris à Londres, et revenir à Paris encore et à Naples, sans perdre de temps à s'acclimater dans ces atmosphères artistiques si différents?¹⁷⁹

Writing of the character of De Nittis' work, Renan notes:

Un peintre comme De Nittis n'a-t-il pas un peu, dans son art. la place d'un romancier dans le sien,...faisant vivre d'une vie à chaque fois nouvelle des types en apparence identiques, et, pour ce faire, choisissant dans l'espace un cadre et dans le temps une année, un jour, - que dis-je ! une heure, le cadre et l'heure où ses personnages ont tout le caractère et rien que le caractère qui leur appartient proprement?¹⁸⁰

Giovanni Boldini

Giovanni Boldini was born in Ferrara and received his earliest artistic training from his father Antonio Boldini. (Figure A256) In addition to being involved in the artistic community of Ferrara, Boldini's family was active both in the military and political arenas. Beginning in 1858, Boldini most likely attended courses given by

¹⁷⁹ Ary Renan, "Joseph De Nittis," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (Novembre 1884): 398.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*: 406.

Girolamo Domenichini and Giovanni Pagliarini at the Civico Ateneo di Palazzo dei Diamanti in Ferrara, studying in the Academic tradition.¹⁸¹

In 1862, Boldini moved to Florence and enrolled at the Accademia di Belle Arti and the Scuola del Nudo. He also began to frequent the Caffè Michelangiolo, where he became close with Signorini, Lega, and Banti. Boldini's interests in portraiture, particularly of the upper classes, brought him into contact with the portrait painter Michele Gordigiani, who introduced Boldini into the appropriate social circles, and helped him secure a number of commissions from his established clients. In addition, he became very close with Cristiano Banti, with whom he travelled in 1866.

Boldini was affected by the Macchiaioli aesthetic, and began to experiment in landscapes, but still preferred the genre of portraiture. Experiments at this time in the genre included his Alinari influenced *Cristiano Banti with Cane* and *Diego Martelli*. (Figures A212, A257) Structured according to the macchia aesthetic, the portraits feature broad areas of tone and color, as well as extended studies of chiaroscuro. Boldini begins to experiment with his darker palette of greys and browns, which will become a signature of his oeuvre. In a similar manner to Manet's roughly contemporaneous portrait of Zola, Boldini begins to insert the sitter into a familiar environment, surrounded by his or her attributes.¹⁸²

Between the years 1866-68, Boldini was under the patronage of Walter and Isabella Falconer, two American expatriates living in Florence. The Falconers were introduced to Boldini by Signorini, and Isabella took painting lessons from the Emilia-

¹⁸¹ Efreem Gisella Calingaert. "Boldini, Giovanni." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T009680> (accessed January 25, 2009).

¹⁸² Edouard Manet, *Portrait of Émile Zola*, 1868, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay

Romagnan painter. In 1867, Boldini accompanied the Falconers to the Exposition Universelle in Paris where he met Degas, and at which time the seeds were sown that would result in his eventual relocation to the city.¹⁸³

In 1871 Boldini relocated to Paris, taking up residence at a studio at 12, Avenue Frochot. The following year he moved to 11 Place Pigalle, where he remained until 1885. The ninth arrondissement building, which also was home to Puvis de Chavannes from 1865-90, was close to Degas' home. From 1886 until his death in 1931 Boldini lived at 41, Boulevard Berthier, the former home of his friend and mentor Sargent.¹⁸⁴ He moved into the fashionable address on the advice of his mistress Countess Gabrielle de Rasty.

During this time, Boldini was creating works for the galleries of Reitlinger and Goupil. *Gossip*, painted in 1873 exemplifies the works produced for the Parisian art market during this period. (Figure A258) As alluded to in the title, the work focuses on an opulent interior in which three bourgeois women partake in a conversation, most likely gossip in tone and subject. The work is small in scale, bright in its palette and is reminiscent of eighteenth-century costume pieces such as those in the oeuvres of Jean-Louis-Ernest Meissonier and Mariano José Bernardo Fortuny y Marsal. Boldini also began actively taking part in the official exhibition opportunities in Paris. He made his debut at the Salon in 1874 and in 1879 he was elected to the Société Nationale des Artistes Français. In 1889, he was awarded a Grand Prix at the Exposition Universelle and that same year he was appointed commissioner of the Italian art section of the exposition. Aside from the official exhibitions and his work for the galleries, Boldini's

¹⁸³ *15 Paintings by Giovanni Boldini Collected by the Late Baron Maurice De Rothschild*, (New York: Christie's, 1 November 1995), 16.

¹⁸⁴ Boldini took a brief respite from Paris during WWI. In 1914 he moved first to Nice and then to London at outbreak of the war. He did not return to Paris until 1918.

work was also often reproduced in Manzi's journal in *Les Arts*. An exhibition of Boldini's works in London in 1874 caught the eye of Vincent Van Gogh, who wrote to his brother, "We have many beautiful things here, including a spirited painting by Jacquet, and a beautiful Boldini."¹⁸⁵

A relentless traveler, Boldini visited London in 1870-71 as a guest of an English patron William Cornwallis-West, a friend of the Falconers. While there, he was influenced by the swaggering portrait traditions of Van Dyck, Gainsborough and Reynolds, as well as the work of Turner, whose work would become a particular influence during Boldini's travels to Venice in the 1880s and 90s. After his relocation to Paris, Boldini continued to travel on a regular basis. In 1873, 1876 and 1878 he travelled to Germany and the Netherlands in order to study the work of Frans Hals. In addition to travels with Degas to Spain and Morocco, he also travelled to New York City in 1897.

¹⁸⁵ Letter from Vincent Van Gogh to Theo Van Gogh, 16 June 1874.

Van Gogh's opinion of Boldini changed over time. Bemoaning the state of painting in a letter written to Theo on the 4-6 December 1882, Van Gogh writes:

Yet I believe you'll admit (the more so since it's a question here of something that isn't your own sphere, although it does concern you somewhat) that it's a fact that if many a landscape painter who is now highly rated knew half what you know of sound ideas about the outdoors, with which you're naturally familiar, he would produce much better and sounder work. Think this over, and put this and many more things besides in the balance when, weighing yourself, you say things like, 'I would only be something mediocre'. Unless you mean mediocre in its good, noble sense. Stalwartness, as people say here, they make great play of this word – for my part I don't know the true meaning of it, and have heard it applied to very insignificant things – stalwartness, is that what must save art? I would be more hopeful that things were going well if there were more people like E. Frère or Emile Breton, for example, rather than stalwarts like Boldini or Fortuny coming. Frère, Breton, will be missed and mourned; Boldini, Fortuny, one may respect them in themselves, but the influence they exercised is fatal.

A chap like Gustave Brion has left something good, Degroux, for instance, too. If there were many more like them the world would be a better place; art would be a blessing. But Boldini, but Fortuny, but Regnault even, what good does it do us, what progress have we made? What you say is absolutely true, 'Seriousness is better than raillery, however sharp and witty it is'. In other words, I would say, loving-kindness is better than mockery, that goes without saying, but many say, no, there's good in that mocking. Well, they must reap as they sow.

He changes his opinion again in a letter to Theo dated 3 January 1883, in which he admits that he has come across an etching by Fortuny that he finds beautiful, and that the same goes for recent works seen by Boldini.

Letters quoted from Van Gogh et al., *Vincent Van Gogh: The Letters* (Van Gogh Museum; Huygens Institute-KNAW, 17 December 2009 2009); available from <http://vangoghletters.org/vg/>.

During the latter part of the 1870s, Boldini began to experiment in the aesthetic approach to portraiture that would later define his oeuvre. The works contrasted a carefully detailed face, strongly illuminated, with undefined surroundings, loosely painted, as exemplified in the portrait of his close friend, sometime mistress and frequent model *Comtesse Gabrielle de Rasty Seated in an Armchair*. (Figure A259) During this time Boldini also befriended other society portraitists including James McNeill Whistler, Paul César Helleu and John Singer Sargent. The latter's *Madame X* would later influence some of Boldini's later portraits.¹⁸⁶ The group also frequently exchanged sitters. Whistler painted Lady Colin Campbell in *Harmony in White and Ivory: Portrait of Lady Colin Campbell* (now lost) and Boldini painted the countess around 1897. (Figure A260) The composition is very similar to that of De Rasty, Boldini clearly illuminates the detailed face, which is contrasted with the loose brushwork of the surrounding locale.

By the end of the nineteenth century Boldini was, with Sargent, one of the most sought after portraitists in Paris. Building upon his aesthetic approach to portraiture that focused on the contrast of detailed and highly luminescent faces with the loose brushwork of their surroundings, he began mine his exposure to the Emilian Mannerist traditions to further elongate the curves of his figures, settling into a renaissance of the *figura serpentinata* and grey palette that harkens back to Parmigianino and combines it with the organic lines of Art Nouveau. The resultant portraits hum with movement, potential energy and subtle eroticism, as exemplified in his 1896 *Mme Charles Max*. (Figure A261) Boldini's influences also came from his adopted home, as seen in a comparison between his *Portrait of Cecilia de Madrazo Fortuny* and Manet's portraits of

¹⁸⁶ John Singer Sargent, *Madame X*, 1884, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art

Berthe Morisot, such as the version at the Cleveland Museum of Art. (Figures A262-263) Boldini, taking cues from Manet's loose brushwork and Velázquez-inspired neutral backgrounds, depicts Fortuny in a similar pose to Morisot, composing the portrait in a three-quarter length view and a three-quarter frontal pose.¹⁸⁷ Both figures are clothed in dark costume which is rendered in loose brushstrokes in contrast to their pale skin and more detailed visage. Boldini's portraits of society women as femme fatales recorded fin-de-siècle Paris, the world of Marcel Proust and Oscar Wilde in a manner that reflected the artificial luxury of this fleeting moment in France's history.

It seems from comments by his contemporaries that Boldini was not the easiest person with whom to socialize. Writing to Signorini, De Nittis notes his dislike of his Italian compatriot, calling him "peccato che sia un uomo intrattabile."¹⁸⁸ Even Degas, who can be considered a close friend of the Ferranese painter, referred to Boldini as "ce diable d'homme de Ferrare".¹⁸⁹ The clearest allusion to Boldini's overtly difficult personality can be seen in the multiple caricatures of him as Napoleon, drawn by Michel Manzi.¹⁹⁰ (Figure A264)

Their at-times equally difficult behavior most likely had a strong impact on the friendship between Degas and Boldini. The two met during Boldini's first visit to Paris, in the company of the Falconers in 1867. He admired the French painter and considered

¹⁸⁷ The interest in a Velázquez might also derive from his interest in the Spanish painter, an interest he shared with Degas that culminated in their trip to Madrid to see the master's paintings firsthand. This will be discussed presently.

¹⁸⁸ Letter from De Nittis to Signorini, 27 November 1873. Quoted in Ferretti Bocquillon, "Cronologia 1867-1917," 410.

¹⁸⁹ Quoted from Raffaele De Grada, *Boldini: Un Parigino Di Ferrara* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale d'Arte, 1963), 22.

¹⁹⁰ See also Michel Manzi, *Boldini as Napoleon*, Location unknown, sold in Paris, Rossini, 11 April 2008.

him a friend, bestowing a grand compliment to his esteemed friend, “Il primo è Corot, dopo viene subito il mio amico Degas.”¹⁹¹ By 1880, the two had established a close friendship that included regular social engagements. In his memoirs, Paul Paulin remembers that Boldini, Degas, Helleu, Forain, père Beugniet, Lafond, and de Pau would frequent the restaurant, Chez la Mere Morel on the rue Favart in Montmartre.¹⁹² In addition it is clear that Boldini was a member of the Parisian art circles; Paul Lafond includes Boldini in a list of regulars at the Café Nouvelle-Athènes.¹⁹³ Despite their close relationship, a sense of friendly competition remained between the two artists, as suggested in Daniel Halévy’s *Notes on Degas*, where he recounts a lunch with Degas at which Degas was as ‘jolly as a sand-boy.’ He elucidates, “He was delighted at the show of discord amongst the painters which always followed after the Salon. The misery of Boldini, the pride of Helleu because Mirbeau mentioned the one and not the other delighted him.”¹⁹⁴

Examples of Degas and Boldini’s social relationship abound in their respective correspondence. In an undated letter to M. Heymann, Degas writes, “Let me go once more with the Italian and French dancers for lunch on Sunday at Boldini’s.”¹⁹⁵ In a telegram dated 8 March 1894, Degas writes to Boldini, inviting him to dinner at 23 rue Ballu with Guillaume and Cécile Dubufe (née Woog), Bartholomé and himself.¹⁹⁶ They

¹⁹¹ Quoted from Ferretti Bocquillon, "De Nittis, Boldini E Zandomenighi a Parigi (1867-1917)," 130.

¹⁹² Referenced in Loyrette, *Degas*, 507-08.

¹⁹³ Paul Lafond, *Degas*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Paris,: Flourey, 1918), 89.

¹⁹⁴ Daniel Halévy, “Notes on Degas” Monday 27 Février 1892. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 249.

¹⁹⁵ Letter from Degas to Heymann, undated. *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁹⁶ Telegram from Degas to Boldini, 8 March 1894?. Reproduced in *Degas Inédit : Actes Du Colloque Degas, Musée D'orsay, 18-21 Avril 1988*.

also kept mutual acquaintances abreast of the other's activities, as Boldini writes to Signorini, "Degas ha esposto nella sala di Durand Ruel ventiquattro quadri tutti di paesaggi generalmente montagne fiumi campi con dei bovi tagliati che non si vede che un pezzo di schiena."¹⁹⁷ Other members of the social circle reinforce their relationship, as in the biography of Louise-Catherine Breslau by Madeleine Zillhardt who writes that she visited the 1900 Exposition with Boldini, Bartholomé, Manzi and Degas.¹⁹⁸

One of the most important and most interesting consequences of their friendship was a trip that the two took in September 1889 to Spain, Tangiers and Morocco. In the nascent stages of the trip planning, Degas belies his uncertainty of travelling with Boldini, again perhaps making reference to the Italian's oft-difficult personality. In a letter to Bartholomé, Degas writes of his planned journey to Spain and his hopes to take in a real bullfight. He writes, "Should I get that flashy dago Boldini to come? Lafond, will he follow?" He also gives his regards to Fleury and to Bartholomé's 'Italians.'¹⁹⁹ Once the preparations were prepared, however, Degas dove into preparing Boldini for their upcoming adventure. The passages give insight into Degas' own preparations in the process of travel.

While staying in Caunterets, Degas wrote to Boldini in preparation for their trip to Spain to study Velázquez. He notes that he will give instructions after he has spoken with his friends the Cherfils, whom he calls "great experts on journeys to Spain." In preparation for the journey, where he is sure that they will be "roasted in the planes of

¹⁹⁷ Letter from Boldini to Signorini, 15 November 1892. Reproduced in Dini, ed., *Lettere Inedite Dei Macchiaioli*, 78.

¹⁹⁸ Zillhardt, *Louise-Catherine Breslau Et Ses Amis*, 123.

¹⁹⁹ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 19 August 1889. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 136-37.

Castille” but notes that “the museums are always cool,” he has been “stuffing [himself] with Spanish ideas by reading the guide, the Journey of de Amicis, and a handbook of bullfighting that Lafond sent [him]....” The letter notes that Boldini was to leave Paris on Thursday evening and Degas would leave Pau (where he was heading after Caunterets) on Friday, and they were to meet at Bayonne and set off immediately for Spain. Degas encouraged Boldini to wait in Paris until they were to leave, and to meet with Bartholomé to see if he has any advice for their trip.²⁰⁰ In another letter to Boldini from the same month, Degas notes that the journey to Spain would begin on 5 September 1889. He also requests that the trip be low-key, asking Boldini, “You will travel incognito, will you not?” Degas also makes mention of the possibility of seeing a small bullfight while they were in Madrid, noting that Boldini would “complete [his] education, begun academically [at the Grand Plaza on the] rue Pergolèse...if [he was] really coming.”²⁰¹

In another letter in preparation for their voyage to Spain in 1889, Degas writes to Boldini with directions for his assistance with a ‘question *grave*’ – the procurement of condoms:

Allez rue Beaujolais, 21 au coin de Théâtre du Palais Royal, dans cette maison sûre, avec pan coupe, où les portes peuvent se refermer sur un acheteur qui rougit, où tout inspire et doit inspirer la confiance. Le nom traditionnel de cette maison est Milan, comme vous devez imaginer. Achetez dans une *bonne proportion*. Il peut y avoir séduction, pour vous d’abord, puis même pour moi, en Andalouse. Et nous ne devons rapporter de ce voyage que du bien! A bon entendeur, suffit.²⁰²

²⁰⁰ Letter from Degas to Boldini, Thursday Auguste 1889. Ibid., 134-35.

Edmondo de Amicis wrote a number of works both on Spanish and Moroccan culture. Perhaps the work referenced was Edmondo De Amicis, *L’Espagne*, trans. J. Colomb (Paris: Hachette et Cie., 1878).

²⁰¹ Letter from Degas to Boldini, Sunday, August 1889. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 135-36. The Grand Palais was opened in August of 1889, see “Bullfighting in Paris,” *The New York Times*, September 2 1889.

²⁰² Letter from Degas to Boldini, August 1889. Reproduced in *Degas Inédit : Actes Du Colloque Degas, Musée D’orsay, 18-21 Avril 1988*, 418.

This passage is particularly interesting because it is only one of two instances in the entirety of Degas' writings and recorded recollections that make any mention of his sexuality, and perhaps this instance was warranted because of the comfort that Degas felt in discussing with such matters with such a confirmed womanizer and close friend. The only other instance where refers to his sex life was in a conversation in 1910 in which Degas acknowledged, "J'ai eu la maladie comme tous les jeunes gens, mais je n'ai jamais fait beaucoup la noce."²⁰³

They arrived in Madrid on 8 September 1889, and regardless of their extracurricular activities, Degas and Boldini had a strongly positive reaction to their visit to the Prado to examine the large collection of Velázquez works housed in the museum.²⁰⁴ In a letter to Bartholomé from Madrid, Degas recounts his experiences at the museum that morning with Boldini, "Nothing, no nothing can give the right idea of Velásquez. We shall speak of it all the same on my return, with the other things."²⁰⁵ A lack of a nuanced written response about his and Boldini's reaction to seeing Velázquez appropriately fits into the lacuna in Degas' written correspondence regarding any sustained discussion of art. It seems that he was more comfortable discussing his reactions to art through a verbal dialogue, something that he and Boldini were sure to have taken part in – both in Madrid and upon their return to Paris.

In addition to influences from the canon such as Van Dyck and Velázquez, Boldini took much inspiration and created an artistic dialogue with his Parisian

²⁰³ Alice Michel, "Degas Et Son Modèle," *Mercure de France* (16 février 1919): 470.

²⁰⁴ Paul-Andre Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 5 vols., vol. 1 (New York: Garland Pub., 1984), 255 n 193.

²⁰⁵ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 8 Septembre 1889. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 138-39. See also Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 152.

counterparts. Aside from the aforementioned similarities in the genre of portraiture, there is also resonance between Boldini's focus in the subject matter in his depiction of social spaces with that of Manet, particularly in their shared interests in the Folies-Bergère. In *Alle Folies-Bergère* Boldini focuses on the interactions of the barmaid with her male customers, their interactions are overtly flirtations and good humored, suggesting that the barmaid enjoys her role in the interaction.²⁰⁶ (Figure A265) The subject is taken up again a few years later in Manet's *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, which depicts a different sort of reaction on the part of the barmaid at the man's overtures – a reaction of indifference and ennui.²⁰⁷ Comparing the two artists' representations of a similar scene suggest a variety of experiences available in Parisian cafés, and their resultant visual representations, and perhaps speak to the strongly contrasted personalities of Boldini, a known cad, and Manet, who was more cynical and appraising of modernity.

Another example of Boldini's dialogue with French painting is his *In angolo della mensa del pittore*, which resonates with Fantin-Latour's *Still Life: Corner of a Table*.²⁰⁸ (Figure A266) The dialogue between these two works is particularly interesting when one considers the relationship between Fantin's still life with another of his works, *Around the Table*, a group portrait of writers including Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud.²⁰⁹ The still life is meant to function as a reminder of the group portrait, toeing the line between the genres. Boldini would have been drawn to these two works because of his own strong interest in the genre of portraiture, coupled with his interest in creating still lifes of his

²⁰⁶ See also Giovanni Boldini, *Il Caffè Folies-Bergère*, Location unknown, Doria no. 124

²⁰⁷ Edouard Manet, *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1882, Oil on canvas, Courtauld Institute of Art, London

²⁰⁸ Henri Fantin-Latour, *Still Life: Corner of a Table*, 1873, Oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago

²⁰⁹ Henri Fantin-Latour, *Around the Table*, 1872, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay

studio space which function as self portraits. Examples of this practice abound in Boldini's oeuvre and this practice can be summarized in his *Inside studio with 'Cardinale' Bernini and Portrait of Piccolo Subercaseuse*. (Figure A267) The work, as suggested, is a depiction of the interior of his studio and includes the aforementioned portrait of the young Subercaseuse boy, as well as a plaster cast of Bernini's bust of Scipione Borghese. His interest in the genre of still life also drew him to the works of Cézanne, as seen in his work *Le mele Calville* which echoes Cézanne's still lifes such as his *Still Life with Peaches and Pears* in its use of the subject matter as means for explorations in planes of color, palette and brushstroke.²¹⁰ (Figure A268)

There are a variety of resonances between Degas and Boldini's oeuvres.²¹¹

Boldini's composition *Woman in Black Looking at the Pastel of Emiliana Concha de Ossa* is another of his series of works that focus on his studio as subject matter. (Figure A269) The work features a woman dressed in black in Boldini's studio examining a portrait of Emiliana Concha de Ossa known as 'The White Pastel'; in the background one can see the piano in Boldini's studio, as well as another portrait that is unfinished. (Figure A270) The work was likely inspired by a series of intaglio prints that Degas was working on in the 1880s that focused on Mary Cassatt examining art at the Louvre, particularly *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre* and *At the Louvre: Museum of Antiquities*. (Figures A271-272) Both prints feature the American painter seen from the back in a dark dress and hat, resting her weight on an umbrella as she is absorbed in the examination of the work in front of her. Degas' works were in turn influenced by sketches seen in Hokusai's *Manga*.

²¹⁰ Paul Cézanne, *Still Life with Peaches and Pears*, 1888-90, Oil on canvas, The Pushkin Museum of Fine Art, Moscow

²¹¹ The broader categories of the dialogues between Degas and Boldini will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Five.

(Figure A273) At this time the French painter was quite taken with Hokusai's sketches of daily life in Japan, and these studies influenced his own approaches to the work, specifically in his studies of bathers. The construct of a figure seen from behind, absorbed in the contemplation of art was one that intrigued Boldini, he returned to it in a quick sketch made at the Esposizione di Venezia, this time focusing on a male viewer. (Figure A274)

While the composition derives from the tradition of the rückenfigur, so beloved by artists including Caspar David Friedrich, the figures here do not exist in order for the viewer to step into the composition.²¹² Instead, the figure's back is turned to allow the viewer an opportunity for an unembarrassed gaze on the female form. Another possible source for these compositions is Celentano's *Modella travestita* from ca. 1860. (Figure A275) In this work, instead of functioning as a model in the act of looking, the model functions purely traditionally. The interesting component of this image, however, is the fact that the woman has shed her dress over a chair and is modeling in the pants and shirt of a man. The clothes are large on the small framed figure, but the cinched waist and tucked in shirt emphasize, rather than cloak the female form.

Unlike many of their contemporaries, Degas and Boldini shared in a disinterest in the direct depiction in the natural world on canvas, instead they turned their attentions to representations of the modern urban artifice of Parisian life. Boldini never exhibited with the Impressionists, and had little interest or respect for their work. After viewing an 1892 exhibition of Degas' monotypes at the Galerie Durand-Ruel, Boldini praised them for avoiding the 'manufactured banality' of Impressionism. Such a response suggests that

²¹² For example Caspar David Friedrich, *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, 1818, Oil on canvas, Kunsthalle Hamburg

Boldini found the aesthetic constructs of the translation of the effects of light too restrictive, repetitive and therefore banal. Like Degas, Boldini's examinations were not spontaneous executions, no matter how accurately they captured the whirl of modernity. Some of his later works, such as his *Marchesa Luisa Casati*, vibrate with frenetic energy and act as precursors to Futurism, but these works, regardless of the motion implied in the canvas, are far from spontaneous executions on canvas, instead they derive from many studies of the subject and explorations of movement. (Figure A276) It is important to point out, however, that while the two were very fond of each other, and even had many similar approaches to the process of creation and subject matter, Degas was not fond of Boldini's overtures towards a modernist variation of Mannerism. He found Boldini's serpentine linearity, typical of later works in his oeuvre, excessive.²¹³ He was often critical of Boldini's painterly depictions, once going as far as to say, "Mon cher Boldini, quel grand talent vous avez, mais quelle drôle idée vous avez de l'humanité: quand vous faites un homme, vous le ridiculisez et quand vous faites une femme vous la déshonorez!"²¹⁴

Federico Zandomeneghi

Another artist with whom Degas had a close friendship was the Venetian painter Federico Zandomeneghi. (Figure A277) His grandfather, Luigi Zandomeneghi, was a professor of sculpture at l'Accademia di Belle Arti di Venezia from 1819 until his death in 1850, and along with his uncle were commissioned to create the monument of Titian in

²¹³ Carlo Lega, *Giovanni Boldini: L'uomo, Il Pittore E I Rapporti Con I Familiari* (Ferrara: Gabriele Corbo, 1994), 43.

²¹⁴ Quoted from *Ibid.*, 49.

S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari in Venice.²¹⁵ From the beginning, both his father Pietro and his grandfather attempted to interest him in the plastic arts, but Zandomeneghi was drawn to two-dimensional media from the beginning of his artistic explorations.

Born an Austrian subject, he fled Venice in 1859 to escape conscription, ending up in Pavia where he enrolled at the Università degli Studi di Pavia. In 1860, he joined Garibaldi in the Expedition of the Thousand, but was convicted of desertion soon afterwards. Unable to return to Venice as a result of his conviction, he moved to Florence where he remained from 1862-66. He quickly became a familiar face in the Macchiaioli circles, and with some of them took part in the Third Italian War of Independence in 1866. He became close friends with Signorini and Martelli, the latter becoming a close confidant for the remainder of his life.

After brief stays in Genoa and Rome, Zandomeneghi returned to Venice in 1872. Although he was still wavering in his own place in the artistic spectrum, he befriended Michele Cammarano, Guglielmo Ciardi, Mosè di Giosue Bianchi and Giacomo Favretto. Zandomeneghi struggled because he did not fully subscribe to the academic strains of historical Romanticism, the Macchiaioli or the social Realism espoused by Cammarano and his followers; this wavering between artistic camps was something that would continue to occur after his move to Paris and his relationships with the Impressionists. A result of this was a feeling of isolation, restlessness and dissatisfaction with the *Serenissima*, but he continued to paint according to his own interests.

²¹⁵ Francesca Dini, "Il Mondo Di Zandomeneghi," in *Dai Macchiaioli Agli Impressionisti Il Mondo Di Zandomeneghi*, ed. Francesca Dini (Florence: Polistampa, 2004), 11. Enrico Piveni, "Federico Zandomeneghi," in *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, ed. Camilla Testi, Maria Grazia Piveni, and Enrico Piveni (Milan: Libri Scheiwiller, 2006), 59.

In 1874 Zandomeneghi returned to Florence, but then left for Paris, where he was situated by May of 1875. He had intended originally to visit the city only for a short time, but instead decided to settle there, most likely encouraged by Martelli who had recently returned to Italy from the French capital. He found that establishing himself in France was very difficult, as he was unknown to the market and excluded from the expatriate social circles of Boldini and De Nittis, perhaps on the account of his notoriously melancholy personality. Eventually he became friendly with Degas, Renoir, Manet and Toulouse-Lautrec, becoming a regular in the Impressionist social circles. Zandò, as he was called by his French friends, eventually broke into the Italian expatriate community as well, often frequenting the restaurant Santarsiero, beloved by the Italian expatriates. He established residence first at 25 rue du Passage de l'Elysée des Beaux-Arts (now Rue André Antoine), in Montmartre and later on rue Tourlaque, in the same building as Toulouse-Lautrec.²¹⁶ During this period, he created works that attempted to find a compromise between his aesthetics and those popular in France. Examples of this struggle can be seen in a comparison between *A Letto* and *Lungo la Senna*, both created around 1878. (Figures A278-279) *A Letto*, while dealing with the constructs of Impressionism through its cropped composition and domestic subject matter still finds a unique sense purpose in Zandomeneghi's honest and private composition. *Lungo la Senna*, by comparison panders to the Impressionist aesthetic by paying overt homage to the compositions of De Nittis, Caillebotte and Degas.

Sales of Italian art in Paris were often difficult. Zandomeneghi writes of this in a letter to Martelli, noting that Boldini, “ha confessato a Degas di non vendere più niente.

²¹⁶ Seurat and Modigliani also lived on rue du Passage de l'Elysée des Beaux-Arts.

Grande gioia di Degas e compagni.”²¹⁷ For Zandomeneghi, things were particularly difficult, as he never found any significant commercial success during his lifetime, despite representation by Durand-Ruel, who organized a number of exhibitions, including his first one man show in Paris in 1893, and purchased a number of works by Zandomeneghi.²¹⁸ As a result, Zandomeneghi often had to resort to supplementing his income through drawings for fashion magazines. Further professional disappointment awaited the Venetian through the lukewarm reception of his works at the Esposizione Internazionale del Sempione in Milan in 1906. He finally began to see some honest critical recognition in the first decades of the twentieth century. A result of his friendship with Angelo Sommaruga and Vittorio Pica, he was given room for exhibition at the Venice Biennale of 1914.²¹⁹

Commercial success aside, Zandomeneghi participated in four Impressionist exhibitions, in 1879, 1880, 1881 and 1886, more than any of his Italian contemporaries, and most likely at the bequest of Degas and Renoir. Zandomeneghi submitted five works to the fourth exhibition in 1879: *Portrait de M. Diego Martelli* (no. 242)²²⁰, *Portrait de*

²¹⁷ Letter from Zandomenighi to Martelli, 16 April 1883. Quoted in Ferretti Bocquillon, "De Nittis, Boldini E Zandomeneghi a Parigi (1867-1917)," 131.

²¹⁸ Zandomeneghi also had two more solo exhibitions at Durand-Ruel in 1898, 1903. Personal correspondence with Flavie Durand-Ruel, January 2009.

²¹⁹ Silvia Lucchesi. "Zandomeneghi, Federico." In Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online, <http://www.oxfordartonline.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T093229> (accessed January 25, 2009).

²²⁰ The numbers in the text refer to the catalogue numbers in the various Impressionist exhibition catalogues. See Charles S. Moffett, *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874-1886 : An Exhibition Organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco with the National Gallery of Art, Washington*, 2nd ed. (San Francisco: The Museums, 1986). Camilla Testi, Maria Grazia Piceni, and Enrico Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale* (Milan: Libri Scheiwiller, 2006), no. 35. Critical mention not included in Ruth Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, vol. 2: Exhibited Works (San Francisco, CA; Seattle: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco ; distributed by the University of Washington Press, 1996).

M.C. (no. 243), *Un Canal de Venise* (no. 244), *Une industrie vénitienne* (no. 245) and *Violettes d'Hiver*²²¹ (no. 246). Reviews of Zandomeneghi's paintings were generally favorable, with some rightly placed hesitation in the outcomes of his painterly endeavors; the reviewer for *Le Soir* called Zandomeneghi "...un talent qui, dirigé dans ne autre voie, pourrait donner de meilleurs résultats."²²² Another reviewer placed Zandomeneghi's process closer to that of his close friend and colleague, Degas, noting that, "Des peintures d'une tonalité fraîche, opulente et soutenue, ses brossées hardiment par M. Zandomenighi (sic)... M. Zandomenighi (sic) est un moderne appelé à devenir un ancien."²²³

Martelli's review of the Impressionist exhibition does not mention Zandomeneghi's portrait of himself, but rather champions Zandomeneghi for his participation in the independent exhibition. He suggests that the Paris art market's particular aesthetic preferences have caused the various national styles to become assimilated, he praises Zandomeneghi for, despite his lack of commercial success, his commitment to his own aesthetic pursuits, regardless of market taste:

Lo Zandomeneghi va lodato immensamente, e sparattutto, perché è il solo fra gli Italiani che si sia aggruppato a questa falange di indipendenti. Ora che Parigi è il mercato centrale dell'arte vernereccia, ora che Belgi, Tedeschi, Svizzeri, Spagnoli ed Italiani calano al gran mercato per rizzar banco e camorra ci onora il vedere un

²²¹ Testi, Piceni, and Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, no. 37. Mentioned by Armand Silvestre, "Les Expositions: Des Indépendants" *L'Estafette* 16 April 1879, 3. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 239. Mentioned by Henry Havard, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants" *Le Siècle* 27 April 1879, 3. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 223. Mentioned by J. de Tarade, "L'Exposition des peintres, indépendants" *L'Europe artiste* 27 April 1879, 1-2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 244. Mentioned by Bertall, "Exposition des indépendants: Ex-Impressionnistes, demain intentionistes" *L'Artiste* 1 June 1879, 396-398. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 212.

²²² *Le Soir*, "Exposition des impressionnistes" 12 April 1879, 1. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 241.

²²³ F.-C. de Syène, "Salon de 1879" 1 May 1879, 289-293. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 243.

robusto ingegno, che si assimila e si associa alla gente per bene, che fa l'arte per l'amore del vero e non per conio.²²⁴

The reviews of Zandomeneghi's portrait of Martelli were mostly favorable, with one reviewer giving an overtly backhanded compliment: "...je crains bien que le portrait de M. Diego Martelli, par exemple, ne fasse passer son auteur, M. Zandomeneghi, pour un philistin."²²⁵ (Figure A280) Like Degas' portraits of the critic, painted in the same year, Zandomeneghi makes use of a cropped composition. Zandomeneghi's portrays a relaxed Martelli, a depiction that is far removed from Degas' perturbed image of Martelli. Martelli is even more jovial than Zandomeneghi's first portrait of him, painted in Italy some eight years prior. In the earlier portrait, he depicts Martelli in the tradition of scholar-portraits, a methodical scholar, writing at his desk at Martelli's home on via del Melarancio in Florence. (Figure A281)

Zandomeneghi's participation in the fifth exhibition in 1880 included eight works: *Mère et fille* (no. 225)²²⁶, *Portrait de M. Lanciani* (no. 226)²²⁷, *Portrait de M. Paul Alexis* (no. 227), *Étude* (no. 228), and four fans, or *Éventail* (nos. 229-232).²²⁸ Critics were quite taken with his *Mère et fille*, a work which portrays an intimate moment during

²²⁴ Diego Martelli, "I pittori impressionisti francesi" (Continuazione: V. num. precedente) *Roma artistica* 5 July 1879, 178-179. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 232.

²²⁵ Louis Besson, "MM. les impressionnistes", *L'Événement* 11 April 1879, 2. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 213.

²²⁶ Testi, Piceni, and Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, no. 40. Mentioned by J.L. "L'Exposition des impressionnistes" *L'Ordre* 6 April 1880, 2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886: Documentation*, 295. Mentioned by Bertall, "Les Indépendants: Exposition des ex-impressionnistes, ex-naturalistes, ex-nihilistes, etc., etc.: Rue des Pyramides" *Paris-Journal* 7 April 1880, 2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886: Documentation*, 268.

²²⁷ Testi, Piceni, and Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, no. 42. Mentioned by Bertall, "Les Indépendants: Exposition des ex-impressionnistes, ex-naturalistes, ex-nihilistes, etc., etc.: Rue des Pyramides" *Paris-Journal* 7 April 1880, 2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886: Documentation*, 268.

²²⁸ Mentioned by Aug. Dallingy, "L'Exposition de la rue des Pyramides" *Le Journal des Arts* 16 April 1880, 1. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874-1886: Documentation*, 275.

the toilette where a mother helps her daughter adjust her coiffure. (Figure A282) The work is reminiscent of works by Cassatt in its intimate and honest depiction of familial love through domestic scenes. In the tone of Martelli, Armand Silvestre praises Zandomeneghi's adherence to his personal style and hopes that Zandomeneghi's particular aesthetic investigations will find followers, "Parlez-moi de M. Zandomeneghi. Celui-là est dans la vraie tradition des intransigeants. Dans cette donnée particulière, *Mère et fille* est un tableau qui doit être estimé des adeptes."²²⁹ Huysmans, remembering Zandomeneghi's contributions to the exhibition the year prior, waxes poetic about *Mère et fille*, praising its tonality and lack of weighty meticulousness that often weakens similar works:

En 1879, à l'exhibition de la rue Lepeletier, j'avais été frappé par l'apparition d'un nouveau peintre, M. Zandomeneghi. Sous l'intitulé un peu fade de *Violette d'hiver* (IV-246), il exposait un très joli portrait de femme ; cette année, il nous montre quelques toiles, dont une, appelée *Mère et fille* (225), représente une vieille maman, une bonne tête de femme de ménage qui coiffe madame sa fille, assise devant la fenêtre, en peignoir, et se regardant, avec un mouvement de femme bien observé, dans un miroir. Il faut voir les attentives précautions de la mère dont les gros doigts, à la peau dindonne usé et grenue, déformés par le travail, osent à peine tenir les boules d'or du peigne, et le joli sourire de la petite Parisienne, levant son bras orné d'un bracelet de corail ou plutôt d'un serpent de celluloid rose! C'est piqué sur place, exécuté sans ces grimaces si chères aux barbouilleurs ordinaires du genre, et c'est peint dans une tonalité un peu liliacée, sans minuties et sans négligences...C'est une précieuse recrue que les indépendants ont faite avec le consciencieux artiste qu'est M. Zandomeneghi.²³⁰

²²⁹ Armand Silvestre, "Le Monde des arts: Exposition de la rue des Pyramides (suite et fin)" *La Vie moderne* 1 May 1880, 275-76. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 308.

²³⁰ J.-K. Huysmans, "L'Exposition des indépendants en 1880" *L'Arte moderne*, Paris: G. Charpentier, 1883, 85-123. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 289.

Now somewhat a regular to the exhibitions, Zandomeneghi contributed five works to the sixth exhibition in 1881: *La Place d'Anvers* (no. 166)²³¹, *Etude* (no. 167)²³², *Portrait, dessin* (no. 168), *Panneau pour une salle à manger* (no. 169), and *Portrait de M.L.* (no. 170). In his *La Place d'Anvers*, Zandomeneghi seems to combine the strong compositional diagonals seen in the works of Caillebotte with the more attentive, delicate treatment of the female figures, akin to the oeuvre of Renoir. (Figure A283) Huysmans again picks up his conversational strain from the previous exhibition, this time finding that the work lacks the qualities that set *Mère et fille* apart, "...M. Zandomeneghi a envoyé deux toiles et un dessin où je ne retrouve aucune des qualités de son tableau de *Mère et fille* de l'an dernier. Sa *Vue de la place d'Anvers* n'est qu'ordinaire ..."²³³ Another review is only slightly more positive, giving a vague nod towards the work, "On regarde avec intérêt les tableaux de M. Zandomeneghi, - la place d'Anvers (166), surtout..."²³⁴ Such mediocre reviews suggest a turning point in the critical reception of Zandomeneghi's works. Instead of being lauded for his independent approaches, Zandomeneghi is reproached for losing the spark of originality, perhaps beginning to channel too much of the aesthetics seen in Degas, Caillebotte and Renoir.

²³¹ Testi, Piceni, and Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, no. 44. Mentioned by Gonzague-Privat, "L'Exposition des artistes indépendants" *L'Événement* 5 April 1881, 2-3. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 346.

²³² Testi, Piceni, and Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, no. 285. Mentioned by Nina de Villars [Villard], "Variétés: Exposition des artistes indépendants" *Le Courrier du soir* 23 April 1881, 2. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 371.

²³³ J.-K. Huysmans, "L'Exposition des indépendants en 1881" *L'Art moderne*, 225-257. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 354.

²³⁴ "Beaux-Arts: Sixième Exposition des artistes 'indépendants'" *Le Petit Parsien* 8 April 1881, 3. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 363.

Neither Zandomeneghi nor Degas participated in the seventh exhibition in 1882, but both again took part in the eighth and final exhibition, held in 1886. Zandomeneghi submitted twelve works, including a number of pastels: *Scène de Café (Alla 'Novelle Athènes)* (no. 235)²³⁵, *Jeune Fille aux Oeillents* (no. 236)²³⁶, *Portrait d'homme (Ritratto del dottore)* (no. 237)²³⁷, *Jeune Homme au Piano* (no. 238), *Petite Fille qui Étudie* – unclear if pastel or painting (no. 239), *Une Femme Abattue sur des oreillers* – pastel (no. 240), *La Toilette* (no. 241)²³⁸, *Femme à sa Toilette* – pastel (no. 242), *Femme à sa Toilette* – pastel (no. 243), *Femme se chauffant* (no. 244)²³⁹, *Femme devant une cheminée* – pastel (no. 245) and *Une Gamine chauffant sa Chemisette* – pastel (no. 246). Reviews of the works were mixed, some commended Zandomeneghi for his sensual depictions of women:

M. Zandomeneghi, lui, est naturellement séduit par la grâce, et les mollesses et les nonchalances. Il aime de la femme la chair savoureuse, la bouche sensuelle, les yeux profonds, les cuisses sculpturales ; il la veut nue. Oh ! ce n'est plus le canaille des corsets géométriques, le montant des yeux cernés, les gommeux étriques de Forain ! mais des femmes amples, en des poses orientales. On a là toute la morbidesse qu'on peut attendre d'un Vénitien.²⁴⁰

²³⁵ Testi, Piceni, and Piceni, *Federico Zandomeneghi: Catalogo Generale*, n 17.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, n 270.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, n 46.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, n 307.

²³⁹ *Ibid.*, n 92.

²⁴⁰ Jean Ajalbert, "Le Salon des impressionnistes" *La Revue moderne* [Marseille] 20 June 1886, 385-393. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 431.

Others began to see his artistic dialogues with Degas as too blatant and one sided. One critic notes, “Le voisinage de M. Degas fait grand tort à M. Sandomeneghi (sic)”²⁴¹,

while another goes even further:

M. Zandomeneghi imite M. Degas. Je m’empresse de dire que je ne crois pas à une intention de ‘copie’ mais que c’est à son insu que cet artiste s’inspire d’un des maîtres de son école.

L’habileté, le ‘faire’, est la qualité dominante de M. Zandomeneghi. Un peu de personnalité, et ce serait un peintre charmant.²⁴²

Another writes with dismay of Zandomeneghi’s reliance on Degas, noting that he has the skills, but somewhere along the way got swept up into another’s aesthetic – a dramatic shift from the criticism of 1879:

M. Zandomeneghi s’inspire beaucoup de M. Degas, hormis qu’il le gracieuse et l’enjolive. Il a beaucoup d’habileté, trop d’habileté, j’aimerais mieux une personnalité plus nette. Et puis, à force de vouloir chercher le gracieux, on tombe bien vite dans le mièvre. Pourtant M. Zandomeneghi possède du talent, du métier, une facture souple. Mais il ne sera vraiment quelqu’un que lorsqu’il se décidera à être lui-même. Trop de main, en vérité, et pas assez d’œil.²⁴³

Other critics saw the similarities between the two artists’ works, particularly their pastels, but preferred Zandomeneghi, noting that perhaps his experience in illustrating fashion magazines helped him in attention to the female form:

Combien je préfère les très exquis pastels de M. Zandomeneghi, la femme accroupie (244 ?) et la femme qui se lave à l’éponge (241), chlorose, chairs

²⁴¹ Maurice Hermel, “L’Exposition de peinture de la rue Laffitte” *La France libre* 28 May 1886, 1-2. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 457.

²⁴² Labruyère, “Les Impressionnistes” *Le Cri du peuple* 28 May 1886, 1-2. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 460.

²⁴³ Octave Mirbeau, “Exposition de peinture (1, rue Laffitte)” *La France* 21 May 1886, 1-2. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 466. The criticism of Zandomeneghi’s reliance on both Degas and Renoir has carried on in his critical history into the twentieth century. Piceni extolled his work: “Zandomeneghi’s art unfolds between Degas...and Renoir, but with original characteristics that set him apart from both.” The comment was made in 1930 in response to Carrà who considered him merely derivative of the Impressionists. See Miracco, “From the Conquest of Light to Its Decomposition,” 11.

bleuies, chairs au sang pauvre, lignes grêles, d'une délicatesse si parisienne, coin d'observation profondément humain et que ne soupçonne guère Madame Marie Bracquemond, une dame qui doit exceller dans la broderie des pantoufles et qui perd son temps à copier des images de journaux illustrés.²⁴⁴

Of the twelve works submitted, critics were particularly interested in his *Scène de Café* (*Alla 'Nouvelle Athènes*), a work that borrows heavily from the Impressionist aesthetic concepts. (Figure A284) The work, deconstructing skin tonality in the manner of Renoir, depicts two figures seated at a table at the Café Nouvelle Athènes. Its depiction of the favored social condenser of the Impressionists provides an overt reference to the group, while the still life of bottles and fruit on the table and use of the mirror give a nod to Manet's *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. Caillebotte's *In a Café* from 1880 might have influenced both Zandomeneghi and Manet's depictions of the famous café.²⁴⁵ (Figure A285) The male figure seen from behind references other works by Caillebotte such as his *Man at his Window*.²⁴⁶ The man is Zandomeneghi himself, accompanied by the model Suzanne Valadon, whose beauty the composition favors. Most critics found fault his Renoir-esque application of paint, his attempt to capture the flickering gas lamps on the skin:

M. Zandomeneghi qui montre beaucoup de talent devrait prendre garde à fuir le mièvre et le bleu. D'ailleurs ce lui coûtera un certain travail, car les toiles où il veut éviter cette tendance sombrent dans une violence outrée et fausse. Ainsi les

²⁴⁴ Of Degas, Vidal writes: "M. Degas, également, ne brille pas par la sincérité; à part ses modistes, d'une tonalité précise, logique, il nous donne une demi douzaine de rebus aux tons fumeux et lourds." Jules Vidal, "Les Impressionnistes" *Lutèce* 29 May 1886, 1. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 473.

²⁴⁵ Olson, *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting*, 255.

²⁴⁶ Gustave Caillebotte, *Man at his Window*, 1875, Oil on canvas, Private collection

visage lie-de-vin des trois personnages soupant sous la réverbération des globes à gaz. Effet trop facile.²⁴⁷

Another continues in the same vein:

M. Zandomeneghi, d'un talent plus mièvre et moins personnel... Un cabinet particulier donne une forte impression d'avachissement et d'apoplexie, à voir les figures violacées et lie de vin dans les fumées des cigarettes et la vaporisation de la chartreuse, dans l'incandescence des globes de gaz, opaques, qui flambent au ras des têtes, reflétés et doublés dans une glace. La tête de la femme est typique, une tête carrée et plate, en lanterne de voiture, avec de l'insolence dans la gueule.²⁴⁸

After cessation of the Impressionist exhibitions, there remained strong corollaries between the oeuvres of Degas and Zandomeneghi. Zandomeneghi even went so far as to make exact copies after two of Degas' works: *Four Ballerinas* and *Waiting*, the latter was most likely commissioned by Degas after he sold the original to the Havermeyers in 1895. Even when there were no overt resonances between the compositions, there remained a shared interest in an exploration of subject matter, as seen in a comparison between Degas' *Dalla modista* and Zandomeneghi's *Il ricciolo*. (Figures A286-287) In both works there is an interest in the depiction of a woman as she is lost in her reflection, for Degas it is in the process of shopping for a hat, while Zandomeneghi's depicts a moment of the toilette. In both compositions, the women are focused on their reflections – and by proxy their style – and are oblivious to the other objects and figures around them. Such a trend towards narcissism is intensified through the sparse settings. Signac comments upon this tendency in Zandomeneghi's oeuvre in a journal entry:

²⁴⁷ Paul Adam, "Peintres impressionnistes" *La Revue contemporaine: Littéraire, politique et philosophique* v. 4, April 1886, 541-551. Reproduced in Berson, *The New Painting : Impressionism, 1874-1886 : Documentation*, 428.

²⁴⁸ Henry Fèvre, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes" *La Revue de demain* May-June 1886, 148-156. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 446-47.

Come ho già avuto modo di rilevare egli cerca e cercherà sempre di salvaguardare la bellezza e la convenienza delle sue figure, attraverso l'eleganza del segno che evita sia l'insistita indagine fisionomica di Jean François Raffaelli che l'aspro gioco di linee caratteristico di Degas, nell'istintiva osservanza di un referente classico di bellezza, connaturato alla sua cultura e alla sua indole.²⁴⁹

He continues in another entry from 1898 after seeing exhibition of Zandomeneghi's works at Durand-Ruel:

Chez Durand-Ruel une exposition de Zandomeneghi. Du lisse, de la pommade, du cold-cream, des petites femmes. – C'est de la peinture de vieux cochon. Et dire que ce pauvre Zandomeneghi voudrait à tout prix faire laid. Il se donne du mal pour y arriver, mais il ne peut pas. Le plus canaille là-dedans c'est Degas, qui trouve cela très bien. Zandomeneghi, qui tremble devant lui, n'oserait jamais faire cette peinture de bidet, si le maître l'engueulait...Mais non, devant lui, Degas trouve cela très bien et, par derrière, blague ce 'pauvre Zandomeneghi.'²⁵⁰

While Zandomeneghi was friendly with a number of the Impressionists and their circle, even living in the same building as Toulouse-Lautrec and Renoir, his ever-present melancholy must have been taxing on social occasions.²⁵¹ Julie Manet's description of a conversation with Renoir at a dinner party which gives some suggestion of the reputation of Zandomeneghi amongst the Impressionists:

After dinner M. Renoir told us that M. Zandomeneghi was at loggerheads with him because, although M. Renoir often visited him, as he lived in the same building, he never bothered to return his calls. Monsieur Renoir did a marvelous imitation of him, with his Italian accent, showing him his paintings. Monsieur Renoir, still finding them frightful, said: 'It's very nice, but there's a blue in the background that I think is a bit bright.'

²⁴⁹ Quoted from Dini, "Il Mondo Di Zandomeneghi," 39.

²⁵⁰ Paul Signac, Journal entry 8 March 1898. Paul Signac, "Journal Inédit," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (Avril 1952): 278.

²⁵¹ Zandomeneghi created a homage to Toulouse-Lautrec. It is a three-quarter length portrait of a woman standing in front of *Divan Japonais*. Federico Zandomeneghi, *Homage to Toulouse-Lautrec*, 1917, Oil on canvas, Fondazione Enrico Piveni, Milan

‘It’s precisely because of that blue’ replied M. Zandomeneghi, ‘that I did this picture’, and promptly took it to Durand-Ruel’s. There, all the staff made fun of his blue and he was obliged to go home and cover it up. Monsieur Renoir told us lots of other stories about him, but they wouldn’t have the same charm if told other than by M. Renoir with the Italian painter’s nasal accent.²⁵²

Perhaps their grating personalities, however different, might have drawn Degas and Zandomeneghi together. The two seem to have been particularly close in the 1890s, and Degas referred to Zandomeneghi as ‘the Venetian’.²⁵³ He records Zandomeneghi’s first address in a notebook used during 1878-79, suggesting that the two were acquainted by at least this time.²⁵⁴ In addition, Zandomeneghi’s drawing, *Two Dancers*, has an inscription in the bottom right corner: "A mon ami Degas", suggesting that the work was most likely a gift to Parisian artist. (Figure A288)

Primary source material such as correspondence and memoirs also provide glimpses into the friendship between the two. In a letter to Bartholomé, written from the Cabinet de Manzi on the rue Forest, Degas notes that Manzi had “sold the head of a woman by Zandomeneghi....”²⁵⁵ Lemoisne notes that it was through Toulouse-Lautrec, Bartholomé and Zandomeneghi that Suzanne Valadon was introduced to Degas.²⁵⁶ In a letter to Suzanne Valadon, Degas writes to apologize for not visiting, noting that his health prevents him from climbing the stairs to her apartment in order to pay her a visit.

²⁵² Julie Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, ed. Rosalind de Boland Roberts and Jane Roberts (London: Sotheby's Publications, 1987), 72.

²⁵³ Thérèse Burolet, "Degas, Bartholomé, Manzi, Au Coeur D'un Cercle D'amis Fidèles," in *Degas, Boldini, Toulouse-Lautrec...Portraits Inédits Par Michel Manzi*, ed. Sabine Du Vignau (Bordeaux; Paris: Musée Goupil, 1997), 40.

²⁵⁴ Nb 31 p 94: 25 Pass[age de l']Elysée des Beaux Arts/Zandomeneghi.

²⁵⁵ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 1890. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 141.

²⁵⁶ Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 193.

He does note that Zandomeneghi gave him news of her.²⁵⁷ In another letter, Degas mentions that he has heard again from Zandomeneghi that Suzanne took ill.²⁵⁸ In another selection from his *Notes on Degas*, Daniel Halévy recounts a time when Degas was at the Champs de Mars with Zandomeneghi, whom he called the Prince, as well as Mangin, Cammondo and Mlle Salles. Zandomeneghi had just heard the *Secret Marriage* by Cimarosa in Bologna with Manzi. Degas recounts how they all began to sing Cimarosa, while others looked on with dismay, as Italian music was looked down upon at the time.²⁵⁹ In addition, Lemoisne notes that Degas used to frequent a restaurant on rue de La Tour d’Auvergne with Dihau, Bonnat, Cheyman, Piot-Normand, Many-Benner, Jean Benner, Zandomeneghi and Judic.²⁶⁰

A letter written from Zandomeneghi to Martelli speaks highly of both Degas and Paul Bartholomé:

Vedo spesso Degas al quale perdono tutti gli odi che matura verso i popoli riuniti dell’universo ed altri siti, perché è un grande artista. Da un anno frequento con lui un certo Bartholomé uomo amabilissimo che ha qualche soldo che dà in casa sua degli eccellenti desinari che faceva della pittura mediocre fino all’anno scorso e che dal giorno in cui perse la moglie fa lo scultore per innalzarle un monumento.²⁶¹

Bartholomé created a bust of the Venetian in 1890.²⁶² Their friendship, and perhaps the experience of Zandomeneghi modeling for the bust portrait, caused Bartholomé to briefly

²⁵⁷ Letter from Degas to Suzanne Valadon, 30 Mars 1895. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 193.

²⁵⁸ Letter from Degas to Suzanne Valadon, Tuesday [undated]. *Ibid.*, 204.

²⁵⁹ Daniel Halévy, “Notes on Degas”, Avril 1893. *Ibid.*, 253.

²⁶⁰ Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 59.

²⁶¹ Letter from Zandomeneghi to Martelli, 18 October 1888. Reproduced in Vitali, ed., *Lettere Dei Macchiaioli*, 296.

²⁶² Albert Bartholomé, *Federico Zandomeneghi*, 1890, Plaster, Musée d’Orsay

consider Zandomeneghi as the model for Adam in his *Adam and Eve*.²⁶³ Degas wrote to Bartholomé in 1897 on the subject of the sculpted group and he writes that Bartholomé would not want to take Zandomeneghi for Cain.²⁶⁴ In a letter dated the next day, Degas continues, "...I am continuing to think of the Adam and curious to see what you say. Is it far or near? Is it a savage or an Italian? It is his ingeniousness, for which I cannot think of the form..."²⁶⁵

Perhaps Degas was projecting his own experiences with Zandomeneghi as a model when he wrote to Bartholomé. Julie Manet, the daughter of Morisot, noted in her diary on 20 November 1895 at a dinner at Degas' home with Renoir, Mallarmé, Bartholomé that Degas remarked that he was working on a portrait of Zandomeneghi for which he would only sit for two hours a week. She noted that "everyone remarked on his disagreeable personality."²⁶⁶ She continues on a similar subject in an entry dated 29 November 1895. She writes that Renoir had taken her to Degas' studio where they found him modeling a nude in wax and working on a bust of Zandomeneghi (now lost.)²⁶⁷ He noted that Zandomeneghi never came to sit anymore, and was becoming ever more disagreeable. He conveyed his feelings with the following comment: "That swine Zandomeneghi complained once to me: 'Everyone does Degas' bidding; Bartholomé takes orders from him, but not me – I'll never give in to him!'"²⁶⁸ Lemoisne speaks of the

²⁶³ Paul Bartholomé, *Adam and Eve*, early 1900s, Marble, Hermitage, St. Petersburg

²⁶⁴ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 12 August 1897. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 200.

²⁶⁵ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 13 August 1897. *Ibid.*, 201-02.

²⁶⁶ Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, 74.

²⁶⁷ It is reasonable to consider the possibility that the idea for this bust of Zandomeneghi by Degas was brought about by Bartholomé's bust of the Venetian.

²⁶⁸ Manet, *Growing up with the Impressionists: The Diary of Julie Manet*, 76.

bust, noting that, Degas hid it jealously and undoubtedly never finished it. Zandomeneghi was ruffled when, after not posing for some time Degas said that he had “rien à faire.”

This strained their relationship for some time.²⁶⁹

In the winter of 1895, Degas created four small photographic portraits (now lost) which he ironically named ‘le Vénitien’ after Zandomeneghi.²⁷⁰ Zandomeneghi writes to Martelli of them:

Al mio ritorno a Parigi mi farò far la riproduzione di quattro ritrattini che Degas mi fece in una terribile giornata dello scorso inverno nel suo studio. Te li manderò e potrai così apprezzare la valentia del fotografo e ammirare le canizie del tuo vecchio Ghigo non che il suo naso. Quanto all’indirizzo di Degas te lo mando volentieri, ma non sperar nulla.²⁷¹

Two months later, Zandomeneghi writes again to Martelli, further describing the photographic exploits of Degas and himself, this time the photographs were taken in August:

Ti mando una piccola fotografia fatta dal noioso Degas rappresentante Bartholomé ed io in posa di fiumi e il château di Dampierre nello sfondo. Due mesi fa questi signori vennero una mattina a trovarmi a Gif ed io li condussi a Dampierre dove si trova il palazzo dei duchi di Luynes... In quel giorno Degas si abbandonò tutto alla sua nuova libidine fotografica.

...

Dopo averti spedita questa lettera ti manderò fra due cartoni un mio ritratto che ho fatto ingrandire da una piccola negativa fattami dal sempre sullodato Degas nel marzo scorso nel suo studio. Non solo potrai ammirare la mia effige ma la bellezza della fotografia che si distingue dalle solite fatte dai mestieranti fotografi. Ti parrà di vedere un Velàsquez.²⁷²

²⁶⁹ Lemoisne et al., *Degas Et Son Oeuvre*, 129.

²⁷⁰ Loyrette, *Degas*, 582. See also Martelli, *Scritti D'arte*, 127.

²⁷¹ Letter from Zandomeneghi to Martelli, 31 August 1895. Reproduced in Vitali, ed., *Lettere Dei Macchiaioli*, 310.

²⁷² Letter from Zandomeneghi to Martelli, October 1895. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 313-14.

Regardless of personal squabbles, the two remained close socially and artistically until Degas' death in 1917. Zandomeneghi was overcome with grief at the death of his friend. Writing to the critic Vittorio Pica three months before his own death in December of that year, he reminisces:

Degas è morto e probabilmente anche voi l'avrete saputo. Da qualche tempo la sua bella intelligenza era quasi svanita e morì senza soffrire nella notte fra il giovedì e il venerdì scorso di una congestione cerebrale. L'abbiamo condotto ieri semplicemente senza pompa senza fiori ma altamente commossi al Cimitero Montmartre che è vicino a casa mia. Fu l'artista il più nobile e il più indipendente dell'epoca nostra; fu un grandissimo artista e non dimenticherò finché vivo la grande amicizia che il legò durante molti anni. Le sue opere resteranno.²⁷³

Michel Manzi

Michel Manzi was born in Naples in 1849 and began his career as an officer in the Italian army, studying at the military academies of Naples and Turin. From 1870 to 1875 he was associated with the Military Geography Institute in Florence where, in studying the reproduction methods of maps through typogravure, he began his lifelong interest in photomechanical processes. He returned to Turin, was promoted to captain and became a professor of topography and geometry at the Scuola di Guerra in Turin, all the while studying the process of typogravure.²⁷⁴ An autocaricature from the period shows Manzi dressed in an Italian military uniform, astride an origami horse, with a fountain pen slung over his back, clear references to his military career and topographical specialization.

(Figure A289)

²⁷³ Letter from Zandomeneghi to Vittorio Pica, 30 September 1917. Quoted in *Ibid.*, 299 n2.

²⁷⁴ Sabine Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," in *Degas, Boldini, Toulouse-Lautrec...Portraits Inédits Par Michel Manzi*, ed. Sabine Du Vignau (Bordeaux; Paris: Musée Goupil, 1997), 10.

Manzi immigrated to Paris, joining the heliogravure workshop of Adolphe Goupil and Vincent Van Gogh (the painter's uncle) in 1881. He quickly found himself surrounded by a number of Italian expatriates including Zandomeneghi, Boldini and De Nittis and a member of the social and professional circles of Degas, Manet and Toulouse-Lautrec. Like many of his Italian brethren, Manzi enjoyed a relatively close friendship with Degas, often meeting up with him and Boldini at a restaurant Mère Morel. Halévy recounts a humorous musical exchange between Degas, Manzi and Zandomeneghi:

Degas : J'ai été aujourd'hui au Champ de Mars avec Zandomeneghi dit le prince, Mangin, Camondo et Mlle Salle, Bartholomé.

-Et la *Walkyrie* ? ont-ils parlé de la répétition de la *Walkerie* ?

Oh, oh ! ils l'ont voulu, à déjeuner. Mais il y avait là Zandomeneghi dit le Prince qui venait d'entendre le *Mariage secret* à Bologne. Il y avait là Manzi, et nous avons dit : "C'est pas tout ça." Et nous nous sommes mis à chanter ; les autres nous injuriaient, mais nous allions toujours : La La La – La La La – Lalalalala. Et ils nous tombaient sur le poêle.²⁷⁵

In addition to a social relationship, Manzi was an active collector of a number of Degas' works, owning twenty-three works either personally or his later role as a dealer for Manzi, Joyant et Cie.²⁷⁶ Upon Manzi's death, however, increasing financial difficulties forced Joyant to sell Manzi's estate in 1919 in three separate sales in order to pay the gallery's creditors. In a 1919 review of Manzi's collection in *Les Arts*, written to drum up interest in the upcoming sale, Alexandre Arsene takes a moment to utilize Manzi's collection of Degas drawings to comment upon the easy rapport between the Frenchman and Italian:

Mais tous ces morceaux, ainsi que les divers dessins qui les accompagnent ont pour moi le mérite, et de présenter les principaux aspects de Degas, et de me

²⁷⁵ Guérin, *Les lettres de Degas*, 279. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 82.

²⁷⁶ For a list of Degas' works owned by Manzi, see Appendix M.

rappeler les quelques heures pendant lesquelles j'ai vu ensemble Degas et Manzi, si bien faits pour se comprendre et s'escrimer l'un contre l'autre. Éblouissants entretiens, où faisaient merveille la fuire française du peintre et le souple jeu napolitain du dilettante ! Et je me souviens aussi que Degas, à qui tous les choses d'Italie étaient chères, avait pour Manzi une espèce d'affection amusée très curieuse, où entraît un imperceptible sentiment qui n'était pas tout à fait de la crainte envers ce conquérant de Paris, ni de la considération pour ce redouté connaisseur en hommes et un œuvres, mais qui était cependant un mélange de tout cela.²⁷⁷

Arsene also points out that Manzi also collected non-French artists, particularly noting his penchant for "l'esthétique de ses compatriots", particularly Boldini, Antonio Mancini, and Vincenzo Gemito.²⁷⁸ These works were also included in the three sales of Manzi's estate.²⁷⁹

As mentioned above, Manzi became involved in reproductions through the Goupil Gallery in 1881, moving up the ranks to become a partner in the firm's many iterations. In addition, Goupil was one of the two galleries in Paris (Reitlinger being the other) to have a major stake in Italian artists in the city, and as such it is of worth to take a moment and understand the gallery's history. In 1829 Adolphe Goupil opened a business specializing in the trade of reproductive intaglio prints, and between 1841 and 1877 he expanded his offices from their original location in Paris to include branches in Berlin, Brussels, London, The Hague, Vienna and New York, and warehouses were established throughout the world: Alexandria, Dresden, Geneva, Zurich, Athens, Barcelona,

²⁷⁷ Alexandre Arsene, "Les Collections Manzi," in *Collection Manzi Tableaux, Pastels, Dessins Et Sculptures Modernes Première Vente*, ed. Galerie Manzi-Joyant (Paris: 13-14 March 1919), ix. Arsene also wrote an article on Degas that was published in *Le Figaro Salon*, 30 April 1899

²⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, xi.

²⁷⁹ For a list of relevant items sold in the dispersion of Manzi's estate, see Appendix N.

Copenhagen, Florence, Havana, Melbourne, Sydney, Warsaw and Johannesburg. A review from 1860 comments on the public's interest in the new reproductive medium:

Every day, people crowd round the shop window of the print publishers Messrs Goupil in the boulevard Montmartre to look at engravings or photographic reproductions of the masterpieces of modern and ancient painting...Our modern painters exhibit their works alongside those of the old masters. Horace Vernet stands Murillo, Devéria, Paul Veronese; Raphaël is flanked by a court of modern admirers: Papety, Gleyre, Jalabert, Landelle, H. Muller, Robert-Fleury, Jacquand, Johannot, Steuben, Lawrence, Wilhie, Martin.²⁸⁰

A summary submitted to the jury of the Universal Exhibition of 1855 defines the mission of Goupil & Cie.:

Indépendamment des reproductions des chefs-d'œuvre de l'art moderne, MM. Goupil et Cie, publient annuellement pour les besoins d'un commerce qui embrasse le monde entier, des œuvres de moindre importance, de tous genres, de tous formats et tous prix : sujets religieux, sujets d'histoire générale ou locale, sujets de genre, actualités, paysages, vues et panoramas, fleurs, études pour tous les genres de dessins, recueils spéciaux pour l'architecture et l'industrie, etc, etc. Quels que soient le genre, le format et le prix de ces publications, gravures ou lithographies, noires ou coloriées, de 50 c. ou de 50 fr. la feuille, les efforts de MM. Goupil et Cie tendent toujours à ce que, sous quelque forme qu'il se produise, l'art véritable y tienne sa place.²⁸¹

Generally the works that firm gravitated towards had a tendency to be more academic in nature, particularly in their handling of paint and subject matter, focusing on history, religious, myth, genre scenes, etc. Goupil's catalogues were broken down by type of reproduction. The new publications were issued biannually in April and October.

Engravings and photogravure could be purchased with or without lettering, on white or

²⁸⁰ Quoted from Hélène Lafont-Couturier, *Gérôme & Goupil : Art and Enterprise : [Exhibition] Bordeaux, Musée Goupil, October 12, 2000-January 14, 2001; New York, Dahesh Museum of Art, February 6-May 5, 2001; Pittsburgh, the Frick Art & Historical Center, June 7-August 12, 2001* (Paris : Réunion des musées nationaux: Bordeaux, 2000), 13-14.

²⁸¹ Quoted from Hélène Lafont-Couturier, "'Le Bon Livre' Ou La Portée Éducative Des Images Éditées Et Publiées Par La Maison Goupil," in *État Des Lieux* (Bordeaux: Musée Goupil, 1994), 14.

‘chine’ paper, as artist’s proof or in color. Such options ranged in price from roughly 30-160 F. Etchings again could come in a variety of forms. An example can be seen in Millet’s *Angelus*, which was engraved by F. Jacque and published by Goupil in 1894. An artist’s proof on parchment was priced at 150 F, on japon was 100 F, ‘avant la lettre sur hollande’ was 75 F and with lettering was 25 F. Photogravures in color ranged in price from 40-80 F, while chromotypogravures ran only 2 F.²⁸²

In 1846, Goupil opened a gallery in Paris that would sell original works of art, in addition to the reproductive prints. These processes were closely linked, as Goupil would often purchase original artworks, have them reproduced at his print house in Asnières and then sell the original and its reproductions upon completion of the process at his network of branches and warehouses across Europe and North America. The purchase guaranteed Goupil the exclusive rights to reproduce the images. Between 1861 and 1872, his partner was Théodore van Gogh, the uncle of the painter, and from 1872-1878 the firm was known simply as Goupil & Cie. The process of purchasing, reproducing and disseminating the works through reproduction not only produced revenue for Goupil, but the sales of the reproductions also drove up the price of the original – a practice that would come into play in Manzi’s later interactions with Degas.

Maurice Joyant was the nephew of the painter Jules-Romain Joyant and a close friend of Toulouse-Lautrec, whom he met at the Lycée Fontanes in 1872-73. In 1872 Joyant replaced Théo as a director of the firm and when Adolphe retired in 1884 and the firm renamed Boussod, Valadon & Cie.²⁸³ Manzi was an associate of Jean, Boussod,

²⁸² *Publications nouvelles de la Goupil & Cie.*, October 1894. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

²⁸³ For a complete history of the Goupil firm and all its incarnations, see *État Des Lieux*, vol. 1 (Bordeaux: Musée Goupil, 1994).

Manzi, Joyant & Cie, successors de Goupil & Cie. éditeurs-imprimeurs from 1897-99, and an associate at Manzi, Joyant & Cie, successeurs de Goupil & Cie éditeurs-imprimeurs from 1900-1915. Upon Boussod's death in 1907, Manzi and Joyant opened their own gallery at 15 rue de la Ville-l'Evêque and took on an increasing role as dealers in modern paintings, Japanese objects of interest and even represented Degas in the last decades of his life. The firm also held important auctions, such as the collection of Henri Rouart in 1912, and published a number of artist books utilizing photogravure and chromogravure processes. The two also published the periodical *Les Arts*, which replaced Goupil's *Figaro illustré* when Manzi, Joyant took over the business after Étienne Boussod's death. *Les Arts, Revue Mensuelle des Musées, Collections, Expositions*, Its full title, was published between 1902-1915 and 1916-1920. An announcement of the upcoming publication highlights its mission:

Les Arts...ont fait leurs preuves et montré pour la première fois en France un journal d'art français qui est vivant, moderne, compétent et impartial ; qui, par le prix minime de son abonnement, par le luxe et par le nombre de ses gravures, ouvre la plus populaire et la plus enseignante des écoles d'art ; qui, par son éclectisme, par la façon dont il s'inspire des goûts et des tendances contemporaines, par la recherche qu'il porte à les satisfaire en les dirigeant par d'admirables modèles, se rend aussi nécessaire aux amateurs qu'aux artistes, aux professeurs qu'aux écoliers, aux marchands qu'aux acheteurs.²⁸⁴

The articles published also included discussion of Italian art.²⁸⁵ As mentioned above,

Manzi's own collection was featured in the 1919 edition.²⁸⁶ In addition to a gallery and

²⁸⁴ "Announcement for *Les Arts*", *Publications nouvelles de la maison Goupil & Cie, éditeurs-imprimeurs, Manzi, Joyant & Cie, éditeurs-imprimeurs successeurs*, April 1902, 13. Quoted from Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," 155.

²⁸⁵ For example: Gabriel Mourey, "Exposition D'art Italien Moderne À Paris," *Les Arts: revue mensuelle des musées, collections exposition 6*, no. 69 (September 1907).

²⁸⁶ Alexandre Arsene, "Les Collections Manzi," *Les Arts: revue mensuelle des musées, collections exposition 5* (1919).

Les Arts, Manzi and Joyant also published about a half dozen portfolios that included prints and photomechanical reproductions of paintings and watercolors of past and contemporaneous artists, edited between the years of 1890-1920.²⁸⁷

Between the years 1861-1911, Goupil & Cie. (and its successors) had as part of its records over one hundred Italian painters who sold at least one work, a total of over 1400 paintings. Twenty-six Italian artists' work was reproduced in different formats, over two-hundred and fifty-eight works.²⁸⁸ The Italian artists working for Goupil included Costa, De Nittis, Gemito, Mancini, Morelli, Rossano, Signorini, Toma and Zandomeneghi.²⁸⁹ De Nittis, Boldini, Mancini, Rossano, G. Palizzi show up in the stock books of works sold in the galleries of Goupil & Cie., and its iterations.²⁹⁰ It is perhaps Manzi's involvement with the firm that solidified Goupil's involvement with Italian artists. In addition, the business relationship and friendship between De Nittis and Goupil allowed for greater relations between the firm and Italian artists, as evidenced in a letter from Léontine to Signorini:

Mon mari a donné votre adresse à Mons. Boussod associé de la maison Goupil. Je vous prie de vouloir bien avec votre gentillesse ordinaire le conduire dans les ateliers des artistes que vous connaissez et lui donner d'autres à Turin, Gênes,

²⁸⁷ "Manzi-Joyant," in *Inventaire Du Fonds Francais Apres 1800*, ed. Madeleine Barbin and Claude Bouret (Paris: M. Le Garrec, 1930).

²⁸⁸ Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire," 122. For a table of purchases/reproductions of Italian painters at Goupil & Cie. between 1861-1913, see Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire," 133. A book-length study of the interactions between Goupil and the Italians is forthcoming by Lagrange.

²⁸⁹ Maria Mimita Lamberti, "La Maison Goupil E Gli Artisti Italiani," in *Aria Di Parigi Nella Pittura Italiana Del Secondo Ottocento*, ed. Giuliano Matteucci (Livorno: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1998), 65.

²⁹⁰ See Goupil & Cie. and Valadon & Cie. Boussod, "Stock Books," (Getty Research Insititute, 1846-1919).

Venise en envoyant une lettre à Mons. Zandomenigo [sic] pour les artistes qui sont là, car Mr. Boussod doit aller à Venise.²⁹¹

De Nittis works reproduced by Goupil included *Dans les bles*²⁹², *La Place de la Concorde*²⁹³, *Fait-il Froid!* and *Place des Pyramides*, which was published in Paris, Berlin and New York, suggesting a wide market for the print.²⁹⁴ Boldini's reproductions included *Portrait (etude)*²⁹⁵, *Portrait de Femme*²⁹⁶, reproduced as a 451 x 353 mm photogravure in an edition of 200, *Femme assise sur canapé*²⁹⁷, *Femme au chapeau*²⁹⁸, produced as a 676 x 550 mm photogravure in an edition of 200 and retailed at 200 F²⁹⁹, and *Femme à la turquoise*³⁰⁰, also produced as a 676 x 550 mm photogravure in an edition of 200.

Other Italians whose work was sold in reproduction by Goupil included works by Eduardo Tofano, whose works included *Crépuscle*³⁰¹, *Prisienne*³⁰², *Parure Printanière*³⁰³

²⁹¹ Letter from Léontine to Sigorini, 1 November 1872. Quoted in Lagrange, "Entre La Maison Goupil Et L'Italie, Un Axe Commercial Porteur D'une Image Identitaire," 127.

²⁹² Goupil and his successors kept a book of photographic reproductions by type, with numeric keys and artists marking each photo. See "Carte Album," (Musée Goupil, Bordeaux), no. 791.

²⁹³ Ibid., no. 760.

²⁹⁴ A number of Goupil reproductions of De Nittis works, as well as those by other Italian artists are reproduced in Annie-Paule Quinsac, ed., *La Borghesia Allo Specchio Il Culto Dell'immagine Dal 1860 Al 1920* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004).

²⁹⁵ "Carte Album," no. 1906.

²⁹⁶ Ibid., no. 1901.

²⁹⁷ Ibid., no. 1902.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., no. 1903.

²⁹⁹ *Publications nouvelles de la Goupil & Cie.*, April 1902. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

³⁰⁰ "Carte Album," no. 1904.

³⁰¹ Ibid., no. 1892.

³⁰² Ibid., no. 1880.

and *Enfin...seuls!*³⁰⁴. This final composition which romantically depicts the first moments alone after marriage was a very popular image, created in a number of formats with slight variations in the composition a result of the medium of reproduction.³⁰⁵ An additional work by Tofano, *Nouveau Lien* (1890) was reproduced as a 559 x 336 mm engraving with optional watercolors, engraved by Eugene Varin. The cost of an engraving with lettering was 15 F, while the addition of watercolor increased the price to 30 F.³⁰⁶

Vittorio Corcos' works included a pair of prints, meant to be purchased together as part of a narrative: *Nous verrons!*³⁰⁷ and *Dis moi tout!*³⁰⁸. Giuseppe Castiglione provided *La terrasse du Palazzo Real, à Naples*³⁰⁹, *Promenade des Anglais, à Nice*³¹⁰, *Villa Torlonia à Frascati (près de Rome)*³¹¹, shown in the 1874 Salon, *Le Château de Haddon-Hall*³¹², a work depicting the home in Derbyshire, Great Britain at the moment when Cromwell's soldiers advanced, exhibited in the 1875 Salon, *Une Visite chez l'Oncle Cardinal*

³⁰³ Ibid., no. 1891.

³⁰⁴ Ibid., no. 1707 - black and white photograph; no. 327 - carte de visite.

³⁰⁵ Types of reproductions available:

Photomechanical reproduction of etching; 161 x 262 mm, b/w; Photomechanical reproduction of etching, mounted on black board, 161 x 625 mm, b/w, less contrast because of mounting; Carte de visite from etching on black mounting, title in German, less contrast because of mounting, loose some detail – lighter than other 'black mount'; Photogravure with color, not cropped, 161 x 262; Engraving with watercolors, 1881, 336 x 547 mm, engraved by AMedee and Eugene Varin, cropped composition emphasizes central figures

³⁰⁶ *Catalogue Generale de la maison Goupil & Cie, successeurs Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Cie*, 1894. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

³⁰⁷ "Carte Album," no. 1884.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., no. 1884 bis.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., no. 1878.

³¹⁰ Ibid., no. 1879.

³¹¹ Ibid., no. 1347.

³¹² Ibid., no. 1493.

(*frascati près Rome*)³¹³, also exhibited in the 1875 Salon, and *À Naples*, a work from 1890.

Domenico Morelli had a short, difficult relationship with Goupil. Where De Nittis found a Parisian aesthetic, Morelli resisted Goupil's requests.³¹⁴ The difficult relationship between the two is clearly stated in an offhand remark that Morelli made to his friend Vetri: "mandando al diavolo Goupil," in reference to Goupil's promise to sell *Ossessi* but wrote to the artist that it was not in the appropriate aesthetic style.³¹⁵ Further evidence of the strong representation of Italian artists in the Goupil stock house can be seen when the entire stock of the New York branch of Manzi, Joyant & Co. were auctioned at the American Art Galleries in New York. A final source of evidence can be seen in a series of Galerie Boussod Valadon photograph albums, now housed in the Getty Institute.³¹⁶

While Goupil and its iterations are of immense importance in their role of supporting and disseminating works by Italian artists, they are not the only gallery to take an active interest. Frédéric Reitlinger also worked with a number of talented Italian artists, especially between the years 1870-72. In November 1870, he made a trip to

³¹³ Ibid., no. 1493 bis.

³¹⁴ Illaria Bonacossa, "Pittori Italiani Della Scuderia Goupil," in *La Borghesia Allo Specchio Il Culto Dell'immagine Dal 1860 Al 1920*, ed. Annie-Paule Quinsac (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2004), 57.

³¹⁵ See Ibid., 61 n 10.

³¹⁶ Dieterle Family. Records of French art galleries, 1846-1986, Research Library, The Getty Research Institute, Accession no. 900239. Series VIII: Galerie Boussod Valadon photograph albums, n.d.

Photographies de Tableaux

Box 61:

Boldini, 'Place Clichy', no. 9566; 'Two women gathering fruit', no. 9618

Box 59:

De Nittis, *Place de la Concorde after the Rain*, no. 3128; 'Boat on water', no. Naples 1872 3129; 'Genre scene/portrait of a man', no. 1872 4660; 'Portrait of a woman walking', no. 4648; 'Cityscape with scaffolding/square', no. 3130; *Che Freddo*, no. 1350

Pasini, Forty-two works, including *Circassian Cavalry Awaiting their Commanding Officer at the Door of a Byzantine Monument*; *Memory of the Orient*, 1880, Oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago.

Florence and Rome to find Italian talent. At some point in late 1871, Reitlinger's business relations with the Italian soured. A letter from Boldini to Banti alludes to the downward turn, and Goupil stepping in to fill the void:

Qui ho uno studio magnifico...e poi ho mandato al diavolo Reitlinger perché un mercante troppo meschino per me; ho preso Goupil il quale mi dà danaro quanto ne voglio e poi questo ha la bellissima qualità che fa mussare gli artisti a tutta oltranza, per cui impossibile con lui essere sconosciuti.³¹⁷

De Nittis also stopped working with Reitlinger in 1871, and began working exclusively with Goupil, mediated through a contract drawn up in 1872. This transition was clearly not a smooth one. A letter from Goupil to De Nittis details a recent sale by Reitlinger of one of De Nittis' Vesuvius compositions: "Sapete che Rutlinger [sic] sta tenendo in questo momento una mostra dei vostri quadri e di quelli di un certo Firmin-Girard?"³¹⁸

Goupil's interest in Italian artists might have encouraged him to hire Manzi at the Asnières facility in 1881, and his climb up the corporate ladder in turn probably further encouraged Italian-Goupil relations. In 1884, Manzi became the director of the Asnières branch of Goupil & Cie., where they had been experimenting with the photogravure process in 1882. In 1884, under the guidance of Manzi, they were able to refine the process of closely reproducing an original work of art. A certificate from the Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale, presented to Manzi in 1886 makes it clear that he was instrumental in perfecting the specifics of the process.³¹⁹

³¹⁷ Letter from Boldini to Banti, 17 November 1871. Quoted in Ferretti Bocquillon, "Cronologia 1867-1917," 409.

³¹⁸ Letter from Goupil to De Nittis, 10 February 1872. Quoted in *Ibid.*

³¹⁹ See Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," 11.

The April 1884 issue of *Bulletin de la Société française de photographie*, contained an announcement praising the photogravure process perfected by Goupil & Cie., noting that the remarkable method made great strides in the mechanical reproduction of photographs. Accompanied by a reproduction of a drawing by Edouard Detaille, the review functioned as propaganda for the new reproductive process:

Aujourd'hui nous mettons sous les yeux de nos lecteurs un procédé nouveau, de la maison Goupil & Cie, dont tout le monde connaît les admirables photogravures en taille-douce. Ce procédé, croyons-nous, est un très grand progrès sur ce qui a été fait jusqu'à ce jour. Nous disons croyons-nous, parce que nous ne pouvons juger que d'après le résultat, qui est en tous points remarquable, comme on peut le voir par le spécimen que nous présentons aujourd'hui...³²⁰

A year later, Léon Vidal, writing for the *Moniteur de la photographie*, reviewed the addition of color to the image in chromogravures, noting:

Rien n'est sacrifié, ni la pureté du dessin, ni la grande vigueur des ombres les plus intenses, ni les douces demi-teintes des transparences les plus diaphanes ou des fonds les plus vaporeux...L'on a de la peine à ne pas égratigner de l'ongle ces épaisseurs de couleur pour s'assurer qu'elles ne sont que l'effet d'une reproduction parfaite en dépit du réseau de lignes parallèles don il a fallu recouvrir toute l'image.³²¹

This method, perfected by Manzi in the 1880s became the preferred technique of mechanically reproducing a variety of two-dimensional works in *La Revue des lettres et des arts*, *Le Figaro illustré* and many Goupil publications which necessitated images.

In his studio, Manzi created a number of original works in homage to his friend, colleague and collaborator, Degas. In a humorous caricature, Manzi recast Degas as a dancer in 1885. (Figure A290) His expression finds parallel in the dance instructor in

³²⁰ "La photogravure typographique", *Bulletin de la Société française de photographie*, avril 1884, p. 96. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 10.

³²¹ Léon Vidal. "Phototypographie, Boussod, Valadon Cie (ancienne maison Goupil & Cie). (Procédé Manzi)", *Moniteur de la photographie*, 15 Mars 1885, 43-46. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 13.

Degas' *The Dance Class*. (Figure A291) Degas' comportment is similar to his often-painted dancers, which Edmond de Goncourt noticed in his behavior as early as 1874, remarking:

Le peintre vous exhibe ses tableaux, commentant de temps en temps son explication par la mimique d'un développement chorégraphique, par l'imitation, selon l'expression des danseuses, d'une de leurs arabesques. Et c'est vraiment très amusant de le voir, sur le haut de ses points, les bras arrondis.³²²

This pose and facial expression are further emphasized in Manzi's two versions of *Edgar Degas and the Dancers at the Barre*, which again find Degas in an exaggerated dancer's pose. (Figures A292-293) The works take on almost a pastiche quality in relation to Degas' oeuvre, referencing works such as *Dancers at the Barre*, in the watering can, and *The Orchestra of the Opera House*, in the shadow of the bass player in the foreground.³²³ (Figure A294) The bass almost becomes a trope in a number of Degas works, showing up in *Rehearsal of Ballet on Stage*, *The Rehearsal on Stage* and *Dancers in the Rehearsal Room with a Double Bass* as well as in a detailed study in one of his notebooks of a double bass, seen from behind.³²⁴ The work also functions as a caricature of the dancers themselves. Upon a close inspection, the dancers' expressions are quite humorous, some slyly look at Degas, while others grimace or stare off into the distance. (Figure A295) While they are expected to be moving in unison, the dancers are all

³²² Quoted from *Ibid.*, 86.

³²³ Edgar Degas, *Dancers at the Barre*, 1877, Mixed media on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art

³²⁴ Edgar Degas, *Dancers in the Rehearsal Room with a Double Bass*, c. 1882-85, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Edgar Degas, *The Rehearsal of the Ballet Onstage*, c. 1874, Oil colors freely mixed with turpentine, with traces of watercolor and pastel over pen-and-ink drawing on cream-colored wove paper, laid down on bristol board and mounted on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art; Edgar Degas, Nb 25 p 29; Edgar Degas, *The Rehearsal Onstage*, c. 1874, Pastel over brush-and-ink drawing on thin cream-colored wove paper, laid down on bristol board and mounted on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Of course, this trope is also played upon in Toulouse-Lautrec's oeuvre, particularly *Jane Avril at the Jardin de Paris*, 1893, Lithograph.

striking different poses, hair slightly disheveled, legs awry, and some are uncharacteristically rotund and with large bosoms. None of them are paying the slightest attention to practice. Manzi uses the composition to playfully mock Degas, pointing out that his presence was not as invisible as one would think from his own compositions, and perhaps actually disrupted the situations in which he painted.

Limiting his subjects in portraiture to his close friends and family, Degas gives a nod to his colleague's skill as a printmaker in his portrait of Manzi. (Figure A146) He represents the artist, dealer and entrepreneur in his studio on the rue Forest. Degas describes the portrait to their mutual friend, sculptor Albert Bartholomé in 1890, in lighthearted tone, describing Manzi masquerading as a Hussar, in a Basque beret. He continues, "Manzi que je quitte a une redingote avec des revers de soie. Tout, dans ce monde, tout a un sacré sens"³²⁵

Manzi, Degas and Albert Bartholomé, a French sculptor, formed a trio that collaborated together on a variety of humorous works that illustrate their close friendship. Bartholomé was a French sculptor. Degas and Bartholomé would often work together, collaborating in the experimentation of media, as exemplified in a bust created by Degas as a study for a portrait of Mlle Salle, Bartholomé's mistress. The work was created alongside Bartholomé who was working on a more ambitious seated portrait of her.³²⁶ Other evidence of their friendship includes an etched self portrait of Degas in the

³²⁵ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 29 April 1890. Quoted from Burollet, "Degas, Bartholomé, Manzi, Au Coeur D'un Cercle D'amis Fidèles," 37.

³²⁶ Edgar Degas, *Study for the Portrait of Mlle Salle*, 1893, Bronze, Fridart Foundation

collection of the Cleveland Museum of Art that includes the inscription: “À Bartholomé/Degas”.³²⁷

Another member of their circle was Paul Lafond, an art historian critic and curator at the Musée des Beaux-Arts de Pau. With the help of Alphonse Cherfils, Lafond purchased *The Cotton Exchange in New Orleans* for the museum in Pau, Degas’ first museum purchase. As a gesture of gratitude, Degas painted *Paul Lafond and Alphonse Cherfils Examining a Painting*.³²⁸ In his memoirs, Lafond mentions that Degas would often dine at Manzi’s home with Carrière and Bartholomé.³²⁹ A humorous caricatural drawing by Manzi solidifies the evidence of their friendship: *Manzi, Degas, Bartholomé et Manzi regardant le buste de Paul Lafond*. (Figure A296) In 1892 Bartholomé created a bust of Lafond, which is no longer extant. It is logical to assume that this lost work is the bust depicted in the caricature. Bartholomé stands at the front of the sculpture, examining his own work. The bust of Lafond seems to inquisitively surmise its creator. Degas and Manzi stand behind Bartholomé, each slightly less engaged with the sculpture, as seen in their successively more straight posture. Similar in conception to the quadruple portrait, another caricature finds the three posed in front a male bronze figure. (Figure A297) This time Manzi makes clear that the figures are completely uninterested in the bronze, as all three’s attention is drawn elsewhere, outside of the composition. The two works are

³²⁷ Edgar Degas, *Self Portrait*, Etching, 1857. The Cleveland Museum of Art, 2004.87

³²⁸ Edgar Degas, *Paul Lafond and Alphonse Cherfils Examining a Painting*, 1878-80, Oil on wood panel, The Cleveland Museum of Art

³²⁹ Lafond, *Degas*, 90.

undated, but a preparatory drawing of Bartholomé dates to 1889, in addition, correspondence between Bartholomé and Lafond regarding the bust date to 1892.³³⁰

As mentioned above, beginning in 1893 Manzi and Joyant started to dabble in careers as art dealers, beginning with the sale of a number of Japanese paintings and antiques via dealer Tadamasa Hayashi and a study of *Danseuse* by Degas to Marris & Whitmore in New York. This was followed by the sale of Degas' works *Foyer de la danse à l'Opéra*, *La classe de danse* and *La femme à la potiche*. Hayashi was a strong proponent of Bartholomé's *Monuments aux Morts* and when a plaster maquette of the monument was shown at the Salon de la nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1895 and the city of Paris declined commissioning a full-scale monument, Hayashi toyed with the idea of commissioning the monument for Tokyo.³³¹ In the Edo tradition of masks, Bartholomé also created a mask of Hayashi.³³²

There is a plentitude of pictorial evidence of the close circle of friends. Bartholomé created a bust of Manzi's second wife, Jeanne in 1889-90, one of the sittings Manzi commemorated in a pastel. (Figures A298-299) Manzi owned fragments of Bartholomé's *Monument aux Morts* (fragments of which are now in the Musée de Pau), originally intended for Père-Lachaise. Many of Bartholomé's friends owned portions of the monument, he offered Degas a plaster cast of la *Petite Fille pleurant* and a plaster maquette of l'*Ange de la mort*. The former is pictured in a photograph of Degas in his salon from 1895. (Figure A300) Further evidence is seen in a photo of Jeannot, his wife, Henriette (whom Bartholomé created a bust of and exhibited in the Salon de la nationale

³³⁰ Burollet, "Degas, Bartholomé, Manzi, Au Coeur D'un Cercle D'amis Fidèles," 34.

³³¹ Ibid., 38.

³³² Albert Bartholomé, *Mask of Tadamasa Hayashi*, 1892, Bronze, Musée d'Orsay

des Beaux-Arts in 1890), Manzi, and the sculptor Alfred Lenoir and his wife outside of Bartholomé's studio, around 1890. (Figure A301) Evidence also abounds in the written correspondence. In 1889 Degas wrote to Bartholomé, "Avez-vous été avec l'ingénieur Manzi, le riche amateur, voir aux Invalides le chemin de fer à eau? Tâchez d'y aller et d'm'en narrer."³³³

The close friendship between Manzi and Degas is further exemplified in a trip to the Burgundy region undertaken by Degas and Bartholomé in October 1890. Manzi joined the pair in Melun. Writing to Daniel Halévy, Degas recounts a humorous tale regarding a coupe that advanced upon the tilbury in which Degas and Bartholomé rode. Degas, who was ever-vigilant, had his gun drawn until he realized that the interloper was Manzi.³³⁴ A pastel of Degas and Bartholomé in their tilbury, by Manzi, commemorated the group's adventure and was found in Degas' collection upon his death. (Figure A302) The voyage was also commemorated in a number of photographs of Degas and Bartholomé in their tilbury, most likely taken by Manzi. (Figures A303-305) The photographs were also assembled into a collage, including a map that outlines their escapade. (Figure A306)

In 1889-90, Manzi, Boussod, Valadon & Cie published *Quinze lithographies*, a book of fifteen lithographs by George William Thornley after Degas.³³⁵ (Figure A307) Thornley was a student of the reproductive lithography Achille Sirouy who had distinguished himself in 1881 with a series of twenty-five color drawings after Boucher,

³³³ Letter from Degas to Bartholomé, 19 August 1889, Quoted from Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," 82.

³³⁴ Letter from Degas to Ludovic Halévy, 18 Octobre 1890. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 167.

³³⁵ G.W. Thornley and Edgar Degas, *Quinze Lithographies D'après Degas* (Paris: Chez Manzi, Boussod, Valadon & Cie, c. 1889-90).

followed by lithographs after Puvis de Chavannes which appeared in the Salons of 1884, 1885 and 1888. The Degas lithographs were either in black and white or in color after Degas originals. This publication marks the first collaborative effort between Degas and the publishing house managed by Manzi.

Thornley's lithographs were not the only attempt to translate Degas' works into a reproductive format. In 1881, Auguste Lauzet converted two of Degas' works into etchings for inclusion into *L'Art impressionniste d'après la collection privée de M. Durand-Ruel*, written by Georges Lecompte. Lecompte was also a contributor for Durand-Ruel's short-lived journal, *L'Art dans les deux mondes* published between November 1890 and May 1891. The reproductions in the journal were reproduced via a photomechanical process patented by Michalet, but the mediocre quality incited Degas. (Figure A308-309) Pissarro reported that the perfectionist was 'furious' over the quality of the reproductions in the 20 December 1890 issue. Lauzet was noted for his lithographs, but this skill did not translate into intaglio printing, and Degas ended up redoing the etchings himself, but not before a number of issues were produced containing Lauzet's reproductions.³³⁶ The two works, *Horses in the Meadow* (originally a painting) and *Dancer on Stage* (originally a pastel) seem to be created by tracing Lauzet's image and the compositions are the reverse of the originals. They function as advanced lithographs in their own right, straying from pure reproductions. (Figures A310-311) Two other prints by Lauzet, *Avant la course* and *Ballet de Don Juan*, were included in the book.

³³⁶ Douglas Druick and Peter Zegers, "Degas and the Printed Image, 1856-1914," in *Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker*, ed. Sue Welsh Reed and Barbara Stern Shapiro (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1984), lviii.

Thornley's *Quinze Lithographies* was not published until 1889, but four of the lithographs were exhibited in Manzi's gallery on boulevard Montmartre in April 1888. The works were seen here by Félix Fénéon, who wrote in a critical review that the lithographs, "through their sparse and essential eloquence, evoke the originals." He refers to the lithographs as 'Thornley-Degas', which suggests that their creation was a collaborative effort.³³⁷ He continues in a later review, when more of the lithographs were exhibited in September of the same year:

The sagacity he displays here is truly disconcerting: it is Mr. Degas' very spirit, at its most intimate, that he has imprinted on these plates. In order to achieve this secondary reality, he has freely treated his text, and has found remarkable equivalences when it would have been a disservice to translate the idiom of painting too literally.³³⁸

Echoing Fénéon, Druick and Zegers point out in their catalogue *Edgar Degas: Painter as Printmaker* that the fifteen lithographs:

...marked a new level of achievement both for the lithographer and for his art...while Thornley did not seek to imitate the surfaces of the works he reproduced, he did try to capture the artist's 'touch,' that personal quality usually lost by the printmaker when translating a painter's syntax into that of his own medium.³³⁹

Quinze Lithographies d'Après Degas was published as a series of loose sheets, measuring roughly 16" x 24", enclosed between two boards, secured by a ribbon clasp. While the reproductions themselves are printed with various inks and on various colored paper, all are mounted on green cotton rag paper. The bottom of each print has a

³³⁷ Félix Fénéon, "Calendrier d'avril: Expositions: VII. Aux vitrines dans la rue – chez Van Gogh," *La Revue indépendante*, May 1888. Quoted from *Ibid.*, lvii.

³³⁸ Félix Fénéon, "Calendrier de septembre: les Expositions. Chez M. Van Gogh," *La Revue indépendante*, Oct. 1888. Quoted from *Ibid.*, lviii.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, lvii.

standardized footer: the left gave information about the publishers, “Chez Mrs Boussod & Valadon/19 bd Montmartre”, the middle detailed the printer, “Imp. Becquet frères à Paris” and on the right was a signature, “G. W. Thornley.” It is probable that the lithographs were printed after the paper was mounted on its green backing, as some of the prints are slightly off registration in places, and ink bleeds onto mounting. In addition, the signature and information is printed on mount in the same color. The works were not titled, but are described in order by description:

Quinze Lithographies:

1. Dancer with fan; paper: cream, ink: black
2. Dancer reading paper near water heater with jug; paper: white, ink: brown-grey
3. Nude woman getting hair combed on chaise lounge (original: Met 29.100.35); paper: lt. brown, ink: brown-orange
4. Jockeys in field; orient horiz; paper: white, ink: brown
5. Dancers at the Barre (original: Met 29.100.34); orient horiz; paper: white, ink: brown-orange
6. Man & woman standing, reading paper, looking out to left of composition; paper: med. brown, ink: deep brown
7. Nude woman crouching out of tub, grabbing towel; orient horiz; paper: white, ink: green
8. Chez la Modiste (title); orient horiz; printed directly on mounting paper, ink: blue (Figure A312)
9. Dancers in triangular composition, in front of others waiting; paper: white, ink: blue-black
10. Three Dancers rehearsing, standing dancer adjusts shoe in front of window; paper: white, ink: black
11. *Sur la Page*; orient horiz; paper: white, ink: black (Figure A313)
12. Dancer in doorway, conductor in background; paper: lt. purple, ink: green
13. *La chanson du Chien* (title); paper: white, ink: black (Figure A314)
14. Three dancers rehearse in front of window with violinist; orient horiz; paper: white, ink: brown-orange
15. Bather in circular tub, leaning over; orient horiz.; paper: lt. brown, ink: brown-orange³⁴⁰

The drawing used in *Quinze Lithographies*, *Chez la modiste*, as well as at least ten of the fifteen other works were owned by Manzi, which alludes to the possibility of Manzi's

³⁴⁰ Similar, if not same as Metropolitan 29.100.41.

hand in the process choosing the works reproduced in *Quinze Lithographies*, perhaps to increase the value of his own collection, or perhaps with the intention of later selling the originals at an increased value.

Produced in a limited edition of one hundred, the set of lithographs were advertised in a number of Goupil's catalogues including the October 1890 edition of new publications and the 1894 general catalogue. The advertisement notes that the lithographs are available, as a set only, for one-hundred francs.³⁴¹ The lithographic series of Degas' works was a wise investment for Goupil, as the artist was beginning to be very popular, and his production lagged behind demand. In 1886 in a review of the last Impressionist exhibition, critic Roger Marx wrote, "No reputation has a more solid foundation than Mr. Degas' and the collectors seek his work all the more eagerly since the artist has very high standards and produces very little."³⁴² Such an environment was ripe for the introduction of lithographic reproductions.

Also listed below Degas' edition of lithographs is another series by Adolphe Monticelli, transformed into lithographs by the aforementioned A.M. Lauzet, with a biographical and critical essay by Paul Guigou. This series was published in an edition of twenty-five on Japan paper for two-hundred francs or in an edition of seventy-five on Chine paper for one-hundred francs. Lithographs were a recent addition to the Goupil catalogue. The first time they were offered by Goupil & Cie. (under the direction of Manzi) was in the catalogue of October 1890, with a lithograph entitled *Au Moulin-*

³⁴¹ *Publications Nouvelles de la maison Goupil & Cie, successeurs Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Cie*, October 1890. *Catalogue Generale de la maison Goupil & Cie, successeurs Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Cie*, 1894. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

³⁴² Quoted from Druick and Zegers, "Degas and the Printed Image, 1856-1914," lvii.

Rouge, by Ancourt which was offered for twenty francs, in an edition of one-hundred.³⁴³

In an addition of the Goupil catalogue, advertising books in 1889, there were a number of categories available: illustrated novels, such as Guy de Maupassant's *Pierre et Jean*, illustrated by Ernest Duez and Albert Lynch, illustrated catalogues of the past Salons, Goya's *Los Caprichios*, compendiums of military illustrations, photographic reproductions of the oeuvre of Paul Baudry, as well as more classical artists such as Rembrandt, Dürer, and Schoengauer.³⁴⁴

It is clear that Degas kept a close watch over the production of the reproductive lithographs, touching them up as he saw fit. On the 28 of August 1888 he wrote to M. Thornley. Congratulating Thornley on his recent marriage and bemoaning a recent bout of bronchitis, Degas quickly segued into a reprisal of the state of affairs of the lithographs since Thornley was away on his honeymoon. He relates that he was shown two proofs of *Chez la modiste* and was displeased with the results. As a consequence, Degas immediately ordered the cessation of their production. In Thornley's absence he has taken it upon himself to correct the proofs, and does not hesitate to point out what he believes to be the locus of the errors in the reproductive process: Thornley's haste in creating the lithographs.³⁴⁵

³⁴³ Sabine Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi Et Goupil & Cie: 1882-1915," in *État Des Lieux* (Bordeaux: Musée Goupil, 1994), 121.

³⁴⁴ *Catalogue des oeuvres de luxe publiées par Boussod, Valadon & Cie*, 1889. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

³⁴⁵ "J'ai été repris de bronchite et après avoir un peu gardé la maison à Paris on m'a envoyé ici, mon cher Mr. Thornley

Avant de vous persécuter à propos des pierres, je vous ferai compliment de votre mariage, vous voilà un heureux garçon. Vous alliez du reste d'un tel train qu'il fallait bien se douter de quelque chose d'aussi important.

Peu de jours après votre fuite, on m'avait apporté deux épreuves de chez Becquet (femmes essayant des chapeaux). J'ai dit de l'arrêter le tirage et prévenu que j'irais à l'imprimerie. Il m'a été impossible d'y aller, ainsi que de retourner chez Rouart avec votre dessin sur papier à report. Je voulais faire des retouches sur

A consideration of Degas' propensity of overworking his canvases sheds light on his tendencies towards micromanagement in the reproduction of his works. Lifelong friend and art collector, Henri Rouart notes that whenever Degas came across an earlier work by his hand, he always wanted to return to his studio with it, and rework it. He relayed the following anecdote to the writer Paul Valéry:

One day, I happened to be with him at an exhibition where a pastel of his, a nude dating from several years earlier, was shown. After examining it carefully, he said to me: 'It's flabby! *Not enough emphasis!*' And in spite of all I could say in defense of the nude, which was certainly a lovely thing, he refused to change his mind.³⁴⁶

Valéry's comments were echoed a few years later by Desboutin, who noted, "Degas est un homme qui voudrait bien avoir son portrait chez un photographe, mais il faudrait qu'il fût stipulé qu'il aurait le droit d'entrer tous les jours chez lui et de lui faire un scène."³⁴⁷

Degas was also particular about the production of his image in the works of his friends. Manzi created a portrait of Degas, which is mentioned by Edmond de Goncourt in his *Journal* in 1891:

Il m'a apporté une petite merveille, une impression en couleur qu'il a faite du profil de Degas en chapeau noir, - une impression tirée à 6 exemplaires. Et à ce propos, il me conte que ce portrait a rendu Degas très froid à son égard pendant deux ans, où le Chinois de bonhomme qu'est l'artiste répandait dans la société que Manzi était fou, qu'il se ruinait, qu'il payait à des prix fous ses plus

ce dernier ; et je ne regrette guère de ne les avoir point faites, vous n'étant pas là. Vers le 15 septembre je serai à Paris et on en finira.

Vous étiez trop pressé, mon cher Mr. Thornley. Il faut faire les choses d'art plus à son aise. Mais votre impatience me paraît à présent éclaircie.

Bien à vous/ Degas"

Letter from Degas to G.W. Thornley, 29 August 1888. Quoted from Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," 89-90.

³⁴⁶ Paul Valéry, *Degas Manet Morisot*, vol. 12, *The Collected Works of Paul Valery* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1956), 91-92.

³⁴⁷ Quoted from Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris."

mauvaises œuvres. Et cela se terminait par la demande de Degas à Manzi de lui confier la planche pour retouche le dessin du nez, qu'il ne trouvait pas juste, et oncques depuis Manzi n'a pu ravoïr la planche.³⁴⁸

Goncourt writes that Degas was very unhappy with the depiction, and requested that Manzi loan him the print in order to correct the nose. (Figure A315) Manzi refused, but did end up modifying the work in 1886 and later presented Degas with a variation of the print in 1912, and created a photogravure of the original which became part of Degas' collection; the version in the Musée Goupil has the following inscription: "Degas/pl. reçue de la rue d'Anjou le/20 juin 1912."³⁴⁹ (Figure A316) Such evidence lends credence to the belief that Degas took much pride in his work and his image, and valued issues of quality, even when his works were translated into a variety of media via reproductive processes.

In 1897, Boussod Manzi, Joyant & Cie published *Degas: Vingt Dessins 1861-1896*, a selection of drawings chosen by Degas and Manzi to encapsulate his career as a draftsman.³⁵⁰ Highly sought after by bibliophiles today, the work measures roughly 16" x 20" x 2" and was published as a box containing the twenty reproductive prints of varying sizes, each mounted and framed on an individual folio page. Notes in the Musée Goupil dating from October 1897, suggest that the reproductions were originally intended to be displayed and bound more traditionally; it was only later in the process that the decision was made to mount them as if they were original drawings, creating the impression of a

³⁴⁸ Wednesday, 1 July 1891. Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 18 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956), 50.

³⁴⁹ Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," 83.

³⁵⁰ Edgar Degas, *Vingt Dessins: 1861-1896* (Paris: Goupil, 1898).

perfect reproduction.³⁵¹ The book was produced in an edition one hundred, each priced at one thousand francs. Degas received 33% of the profits, which was well above the norm; as many artists received compensation along the order of 10% if their work was reproduced. Due to its high price, only seventy books were sold between its publication in 1898 and 1916, with less than forty of those sold in its first ten years of publication.³⁵²

Each of the drawings was stamped with the impression: “Copyright 1897 by Jean Boussod Manzi, Joyant & Cie Paris” which surrounds a seal. The title page includes information:

Goupil & Cie: éditeurs imprimeurs
Jean Boussod Manzi, Joyant & Cie: éditeurs imprimeurs successeurs
24 Boulevard des Capucines, Paris

Also included is informative text about the role of the artist in the creation of these reproductions, particularly emphasizing his reproduced signature on each work. The import of the portfolio is increased by the pencil signature by Degas under the text:

Les vingt Dessins fac-similie/ de/ Degas/ ont été tirés cent Exemplaires/ et chaque Exemplaire est signé par l’Artiste/(Signature)/[Degas’ signature]

Such wording emphasizes that *Vingt Dessins* was never meant to be seen as simply a reproduction. The twenty images were arranged into a portfolio that was created in a set edition, and each was signed by the artist – in pencil. The choice of a different material in which to create his signature emphasizes the hands-on process of the application of the signature to the page. If Degas had signed in pen, the media would be too similar to the inks used in the chromogravure process. The use of pencil underscores

³⁵¹ Conversation with Hélène du Mesnil, Musée Goupil. December 2008.

³⁵² Du Vignau, "Michel Manzi, Un Ingénieur Italien À Paris," 96.

the importance of each edition as a work of art in its own right. Highlighting this idea was the advertisement for *Vingt Dessins* in Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Cie.'s new publications catalogue in October 1898. The advertisement noted the edition of one hundred, and emphasized how each was each signed by the artist.³⁵³ *Vingt Dessins* was exhibited in the spring of 1898 at the gallery of Boussod, Manzi, Joyant et Cie. This decision to exhibit the series, coupled with the fact that they were not bound in the volume, but remained on separate folio pages further stresses the artistic nature of the prints.

The included works spanned Degas' entire career, as well as his forays into a variety of media and approach to draftsmanship. What each had in common was its place as a standard in the draftsman's oeuvre³⁵⁴:

1. Nu de femme accroupie: (croquis pour un tableau inachevé *Semiramis construisant Babylone*) 1861³⁵⁵ (Figure A317)
2. Draperie: (pour ladite)³⁵⁶ (Figure A318)
3. Nu de femme de dos montant dans un char: (croquis pour le même tableau)³⁵⁷ (Figure A319)
4. Draperie pour une variante du même mouvement³⁵⁸ (Figure A320)
5. Draperie pour une femme conduisant un cheval: (même tableau)³⁵⁹ (Figure A321)
6. Portrait de jeune personne, 1865³⁶⁰ (Figure A322)
7. Étude de quatre jockeys de dos: (croquis à l'essence), 1866³⁶¹ (Figure A323)

³⁵³ Underneath is an advertisement for individual lithographs after Toulouse-Lautrec. Publications *Nouvelles de la maison Goupil & Cie, successeurs Manzi, Joyant & Cie*, October 1898. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

³⁵⁴ The following table includes the originals for those that have been identified.

³⁵⁵ Original: Edgar Degas, *Femme accroupie, et études de manches*, Louvre

³⁵⁶ Original: Edgar Degas, *Etude de draperie pour une femme agenouillée*, The Louvre, Paris

³⁵⁷ Original: Edgar Degas, *Femme nue, de dos, montant dans un char*, Pencil on paper, Louvre

³⁵⁸ Original: Edgar Degas, *Etude de draperie pour une femme de dos, montant dans un char*, The Louvre, Paris

³⁵⁹ Original: Edgar Degas, *Etude d'une femme drapée, de profil*, Louvre

³⁶⁰ Original: Edgar Degas, *Portrait de Mademoiselle Hélène Hertel*, 1861, Pencil on paper, Louvre

8. Blanchisseuse, 1869³⁶² (Figure A324)
9. Danseuse en position, 1872 (Figure A325)
10. Danseuse en position, de trois quarts, 1872 (Figure A326)
11. Jeune femme en costume de ville, 1872 (Figure A327)
12. Danseuse (battements à la seconde), 1874 (Figure A328)
13. Danseuse à la barre, 1876³⁶³ (Figure A329)
14. Danseuse (battements à la seconde), 1880 (Figure A330)
15. Étude de jamba et de mouvements de bras pour une danseuse avec un tambourin, 1882³⁶⁴ (Figure A331)
16. Danseuse baissée, nouant son chausson, 1887³⁶⁵ (Figure A332)
17. Étude de nu pour le mouvement ci-dessus, 1887 (Figure A333)
18. Femme se frottant les reins avec une serviette (ébauche de pastel), 1895 (Figure A334)
19. Femme renversée sur le dossier d'une longue et se frottant les reins avec une serviette enroulée, 1896 (Figure A335)
20. Femme dans le bain, se grattant le bras, 1896 (Figure A336)

Vingt Dessins was advertised in Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Cie.'s new publications catalogue from October 1898. The advertisement noted the edition of one-hundred, and emphasized how each was each signed by the artist. Underneath is an advertisement for individual lithographs after Toulouse-Lautrec.³⁶⁶ Such a pairing clearly belies the strong alliances of Manzi and Joyant to both Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec.

Like *Quinze Lithographies*, *Vingt Dessins* was exhibited in the spring of 1898 at the gallery of Boussod, Manzi, Joyant et Cie., where it was seen by many. In a letter to his daughter-in-law, Camille Pissarro wrote: "J'ai vu hier chez Joyant un album de

³⁶¹ Original: Edgar Degas, *Four Studies of a Jockey*, 1866, Brush with black ink, oil paint, and white gouache, on tan wove paper discolored with brown essence, laid down on cream laid board, Art Institute of Chicago

³⁶² Original: Edgar Degas, *La repasseuse*, 1869, Charcoal, white chalk and pastel on tan paper, Musée d'Orsay

³⁶³ Original: Edgar Degas, *Dancers Practicing at the Barre*, 1876-77, Oil on green paper, British Museum

³⁶⁴ Original: Edgar Degas, *Danseuse Espagnole et Etudes de Jambes*, Pastel, Musée d'Orsay

³⁶⁵ Original: Edgar Degas, *Dancer adjusting her shoe*, c. 1880-85, Pastel and black chalk on buff paper, Private Collection

³⁶⁶ Publications *Nouvelles de la maison Goupil & Cie, successeurs Manzi, Joyant & Cie*, October 1898. Musée Goupil, Bordeaux.

reproductions des dessins de Degas, procédé Manzi, c'est épatant. C'est là où l'on voit que Degas est vraiment maître, c'est plus beau que du Ingres, et fichtre, c'est moderne! On ne sent pas le côté pompier qui m'offusque, même dans Watts."³⁶⁷ The portfolio used Manzi's techniques of chromogravure to reproduce Degas' drawings in exquisite detail. In a contemporaneous review of the book of drawings, André Mellerio compliments Degas' draftsmanship, praising the natural postures of the figures, in all their complication. Mellerio commends Degas for allowing the reality of pose to shine through, regardless of preconceived conventions of beauty or tradition. Admiring the process of chromogravure and the resultant high quality of the reproductions, he perceives the complicated nature of the process and the perfection in the result. Furthermore, he references the rapidly rising cost of owning an original work by Degas, even a drawing, and that this pageant of draftsmanship in its curatorial breadth and quality will only add fuel to the collectors' fire:

Enfin ne retrouve-t-on pas chez l'artiste cette prédilection marquée vers le dessin pur, cet exercice des puissants et des solides d'autrefois, dont les traces de toutes les écoles restent au Louvre... Toutes ces caractéristiques que nous indiquons peuvent être vérifiées dans le choix de ces dessins qui sont des révélations immédiates de l'esprit de Degas... Les postures naturelles des corps dans toutes leurs complications, sans être arrêté jamais par aucun obstacle, non plus que sans viser à des formes ni à une beauté de convention, voilà le fondement solide et personnel de l'œuvre de Degas... Le procédé employé par M. Manzi dans ces reproductions mérite une réelle curiosité. Il ne semble pas qu'un simple manœuvre, à moins d'être dirigé par une intelligence compréhensive de l'œuvre à fac-similer, puisse parvenir à un aussi parfait résultat. Les œuvres de M. Degas atteignent de plus en plus des prix fabuleux, jusqu'à ses moindres dessins. Certes

³⁶⁷ Letter from Pissarro to Esther, 23 January 1898. Reproduced in Camille Pissarro, *Correspondance De Camille Pissarro*, ed. Janine Bailly-Herzberg, vol. 4 (Paris: Editions du Valhermeil, 1980-1991), 439.

une telle publication, par son haut intérêt intellectuel, contribuera à perpétuer et à répandre davantage, ce qui est l'essence, la moelle même de cet artiste.³⁶⁸

Much of what Mellerio praised was due to the efforts of Manzi, who took an active role in the process of image reproduction and as co-curator to Degas' drawing retrospective. The works chosen vary in drawing media, ranging from pen and ink, watercolor, charcoal to pastel, oftentimes mixing media within the composition when necessary. Subject matter also speaks to the retrospective-mindset: studies for early history paintings are found alongside jockeys, bathers, laundresses and dancers. The order of the drawings was clearly conceived, demonstrated through their titles (reproduced in the captions of the slides), which give basic formal information and prompts a dialogue, relating one image to the next.

Between Thornley and Manzi's reproductions, we see a shift from handmade reproductive prints to mechanical processes. Druick and Zegers sum up the reality of the situation through Mellerio's review:

By so warmly praising photomechanical reproductions, however good, in the midst of an acknowledged print revival. Mellerio indicated two changes in attitude regarding the relationship of new processes to traditional printmaking. It was clear that the original print had become so firmly established in its own right that it had nothing to fear from such processes; on the other hand, then handcrafted reproductive print had finally succumbed.³⁶⁹

Thornley and Manzi's reproductive albums were followed in 1914 with the publication of *Quarante vingt dix huit reproductions signées par Degas*.³⁷⁰ Kendall notes, "Vollard's

³⁶⁸ André Mellerio, "Expositions: Un Album De Vingt Reproductions D'après Des Dessin De M. Degas," *L'estampe et l'affiche* 2 (15 April 1898): 81-82.

³⁶⁹ Druick and Zegers, "Degas and the Printed Image, 1856-1914," lxx.

³⁷⁰ *Degas: Quarante-Vingt-Dix-Huit Reproductions Signées Par Degas (Peintures, Pastels, Dessins Et Estampes)*, (Paris: Galerie A. Vollard, 1914).

1914 album...extended a well-established studio practice of advertising Degas's past and current achievement to the world at large, while simultaneously advancing the interests of the participating dealer."³⁷¹

Chronologically the works are pulled evenly from the thirty-five year span of the artist's career. They neglect to include any drawings from Degas' fertile student years, but instead choose to begin with five studies for the unfinished historical canvas, *Semiramis building Babylon* which remained in the Degas' studio until his death in 1917. Such a curatorial decision emphasizes Degas' and Manzi's intention to underline the artist's Academically-derived painstaking process, echoing the artist's own words, "... no art is less spontaneous than mine. What I do is the result of reflection and the study of the great masters..."³⁷² He reiterates this in the first four plates, focusing on the traditional craft of working from a nude figure and then building upon the pose, incorporating drapery into the composition. Derived from drawing principles that predate the Renaissance, Degas' inclusion of these plates illustrates a clear intention to dialogue and emulate the tradition of the great draftsmen, such as Leonardo, whose works are rife with similar drawings which begin with a study of a nude figure, to which drapery is later added.³⁷³ The fifth plate, another study for the composition, reaffirms the methodical process of Degas' art production.

Degas and Manzi create a conversation with the viewer, who is clearly expected to be learned in the nuances of the craft of drawing, with the intention that upon viewing

³⁷¹ Richard Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism* (London: National Gallery Publications Ltd. , 1996), 51.

³⁷² George Moore, "Degas: The Painter of Modern Life," *Magazine of Art* 13 (1890): 423.

³⁷³ For example Leonardo da Vinci, *Study of Drapery for a Kneeling Figure*, Musée du Louvre, Dabinet des Dessins, inv. 2256 or Andrea del Verrocchio, *Standing Figure (Study for Christ)*, Uffizi, Gabinetto dei Disegni.

the compilation, the viewer will further comprehend and respect Degas' mastery of the medium. The first five plates emphasize his mastery of drapery, pose and volume, while the sixth plate features drapery that is only sketched in. Instead, the intention is to emphasize Degas' mastery of expression.

Plate seven, like the *Semiramis* studies, emphasizes process. As its title suggests, it is a study of the essence of the figure. The focus is on the jockey and his pose astride the horse, which is only sketched in, functioning as a compositional marker. The black and white highlights help accent the volumetric form of the pose.

Plate eight is the most finished drawing in the collection, but illustrates a different side of the pair's curatorial license. Perhaps finding the blue of the laundresses' skirt too distracting in the original drawing, Degas and Manzi decided to print the image on pink paper in only two colors: brown and white.³⁷⁴ Such a choice allows for the work to distance itself from nuances of subject matter, and instead focus the viewer's attention on the quality of draftsmanship. (Figure A337) Such a decision is clearly authorial in intent, stemming from the input of both Degas and Manzi and their co-interest in emphasizing the craft of drawing through the reproductions. The purpose becomes more lucid when one compares the original and reproduction of plate thirteen, *Dancers at the Barre*, which, aside from a slight diminution of the white highlight, is simulacral in comparison to the original. (Figure A338)

³⁷⁴ An interesting parallel can be drawn between Degas' use of colored papers and inks in *Vingt Dessins* and Gauguin's use of yellow paper and in one instance red ink in his *Volpini Suite*, 1889. The series of lithographic prints was created over the winter and exhibited in a folio at the 'Volpini Show' at the Café des Arts in the 1889 Exposition Universelle. The lithographs were printed on yellow sheets of paper measuring roughly 50 cm x 65cm, and were gathered in a portfolio that was kept behind the bar during the exhibition, and available for viewing upon request. The series was given away or sold during the exhibition. The *Volpini Suite* is considered in great detail in the exhibition *Gauguin, Paris, 1889*. See Heather Lemonedes, Belinda Thomson, and Agnieszka Juszcak, eds., *Paul Gauguin: Paris, 1889* (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 2009).

A wash around the exterior of the figure in plate nine emphasizes a proficient working method, simultaneously accentuating the Ingresque outline of form and creating a convincing sense of space. Such a treatment emphasizes Degas' debt to the draftsmanship tradition of Ingres.

Plates ten and twelve are squared for transfer, again evoking the craft. In addition, plate ten is a study for a work which in its final form was owned by Manzi, and perhaps, for reasons of self interest, speaks to its inclusion in the collection.

In addition to issues of process, there seems to be a secondary conversation culled from the plates: growth and discourse within Degas' oeuvre. Plate eleven is reminiscent of the early drapery studies, which themselves rest on the shoulders of tradition. Such a comparison allows the viewer to ascertain a sense of growth and development in Degas' draftsmanship. Plate seventeen can be seen in the same light. Here Degas utilizes thicker lines, a stronger emphasis towards the planar effects of tonality, and much more assurance in his own skill.

Plates fourteen and fifteen delve deeper into issues of color and draftsmanship. Plate fourteen includes notations on color choice, while plate fifteen moves beyond mere notation to a full study in color, its implications on composition and specific nuances of pose in the dancer's feet.

Plate eighteen elevates the study of color, pairing Degas' command over the aspects of draftsmanship and color with his proficiency in a range of media, exemplified in his faculty with pastels. In addition, it, more so than any other reproduction in the series, fully epitomizes the exact nature of a chromogravure reproduction so extolled by the critic Mellerio. The texture and gradation of color created by the pastel is perfectly

reproduced in the print. The process itself becomes transparent, allowing the essence of the original medium to shine.

Plate nineteen nods to Degas' emulation of tradition in the elongated nude female form, in direct dialogue with Ingres works including *The Valpinçon Bather*, while at the same time showing his mastery of media, combining charcoal, white highlights and pastels to establish a convincing sense of depth. (Figure A339) Adding credence to this was a study of the *Bather* that Degas copied at the Universal Exhibition of 1855.³⁷⁵

Plate twenty is used by Degas and Manzi to segue into contemporaneous constructs of a minimal approach to a composition. Structurally cropped, it emphasizes the linear Ingresque quality of line. It stands as a bookend, to plate one, demonstrating the growth of Degas' style. While in the beginning Degas was still mastering tradition and finding a way to insert himself into the canon, the final plate illustrates the work of a draftsman who has emulated tradition, ingested it and moved beyond basic concepts into his own style, which finds relevancy in contemporaneous times.

Plates sixteen and seventeen again reiterate Degas' debt to tradition in respect to building up a composition. Additionally, plate sixteen belies the closest ties between Degas and Manzi's respective oeuvres. The pose of the pastel was one that was recycled in a number of Degas' works including *Danseuse Assise ou Danseuse Nouant son Brodequin*, *Waiting* and *Frieze of Dancers*. (Figures A340-342) In addition is in a direct compositional exchange with a work created by Manzi, *Dancer adjusting her Shoe*.³⁷⁶ (Figure A343) Manzi's borrowing of a compositional construct beloved of Degas clearly

³⁷⁵ Nb 2, p 59

³⁷⁶ Manzi created a number of different states of this work, see also Michel Manzi, *Dancer readjusting her Shoe*, Photogravure in black, retouched with charcoal, 2nd State; Michel Manzi, *Dancer readjusting her Shoe*, Copper photogravure, retouched and 'stepped', 3rd State, Musée Goupil.

underlines the influential relationship that the Impressionist had upon the printmaker. Like Degas' early emulations of artists such as Ingres, Manzi utilizes familiar constructions to work out his own place within the artistic sphere of Paris in the latter decades of the nineteenth century. Goncourt relates a conversation with Manzi about the process of borrowing, acknowledging this process of building upon the foundations through one's oeuvre:

En feuilletant les grands planches *Fouzi-Yama* d'Hokousai, Manzi me disait : 'Tenez, voici les grandes étendues jaunes de Monet.' Et il disait vrai. Car on ne sait pas assez ce que nos paysagistes contemporains ont emprunté à ces images, et surtout Monet, que je rencontre souvent chez Bing, dans le petit grenier aux estampes japonaises où se tient Lévy.³⁷⁷

The social and artistic relationship between Manzi and Degas in the 1880s and 90s clearly set a tone of mutual respect and artistic dialogue that culminated in their collaboration in *Vingt Dessins* at the end of the century. Manzi's perfection of the process of chromogravure enabled Degas, one who classically was wary of criticism and explication of his work, to join with Manzi within the reproductive medium to accurately reproduce a fundamental part of his oeuvre and in doing so, create a visual discourse with the viewer on his mastery of the craft of drawing. The result, *Vingt Dessins*, was a retrospective of draftsmanship, co-curated by two individuals who respected each others' talents, and who utilized these talents to collaborate on a unique product. In the end, *Vingt Dessins* speaks to Manzi and Degas' mastery of process: Manzi in the reproduction of images and Degas in the craft of drawing.

Other Italians

Giovanni Fattori

³⁷⁷ Wednesday, 17 February 1892. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, 131.

There is no evidence of Fattori and Degas' relationship continuing after the latter's departure from Italy in 1875, but regardless Fattori did visit Paris in May 1875, and was immediately struck by its immensity and its full embrace of modernity brought on by the Industrial Revolution:

...Della Città non dirò che la prima impressione mi fece un grande effetto p[er] il movimento p[er] le grandi botteghe – grandi cartelli l'insieme il tutto mi dette idea di una Firenze in un grande giorno di festa – e poi mi fa l'effetto di una gran Milano ma molto o 3 volte più grande – Popolo allegro, ma che sotto nasconde tutte le miserie – i Caffè industriosa p[er] immense fabbriche che ha – e p[er] i gran fumi che vedeva a perdita d'occhio dei mulini a vapore.³⁷⁸

Regardless of their relationship after Degas' return to Italy, Fattori was kept upon news of the French painter, as well as the work of his compatriots through letters from Martelli. In a letter from 1879, Martelli writes of a planned exhibition of his portrait by Degas, as well as the inclusion of a number of other Impressionists. Such plans are a clear continuation of his attempts to introduce the Impressionist aesthetic to Italy, begun through the inclusion of two Pissarros 1878 Promotrice Fiorentina, and continued in his lecture "Gli Impressionisti":

Vedrete ben presto a Firenze il mio ritratto fatto da Degas, e se l'anno prossimo fate la vostra esposizione privata e lo volete accettare bene, egli ne sarà assai contento. Fra i nostri espositori di qui i più in punta sono Monet, Caillebotte e Pissarro. Il primo dei tre ha delle cose luminosissime straordinarie.

The letter continues with an introduction of Cassatt, who will soon travel to Florence:

Ieri sera ho avuto una cortese lettera della signora Mathilde nella quale mi dice che ha esposto anche lei. A Parigi abbiamo Miss Mary Cassatt e Madame

³⁷⁸ Letter from Giovanni Fattori to unknown, 20 May 1875. Quoted from Maria Mimita Lamberti, "Mitografie Parigine Nel Secondo Ottocento," in *De Nittis E La Pittura Della Vita Moderna in Europa*, ed. Pier Giovanni Castagnoli, Barbara Cinelli, and Maria Mimita Lamberti (Torino: GAM, Galleria civica d'arte moderna e contemporanea, 2002), 45.

Bracquemond. La prima con dei bei ritratti, la seconda con degli immensi cartoni di figure allegoriche disegnate per delle maioliche.³⁷⁹

Regardless of Fattori's relationship with Martelli, he did not share in his infatuation with the Impressionist aesthetic. Instead Fattori disdained the next generation of Italian artists' interest in the group. Feeling betrayed by the uniformity in the works of Muller, Gordigiani, Enrico Banti and others, he writes, I love realism and I have brought you to love it...At one time I told you to do something in art that would clash against us oldsters...,³⁸⁰ taking them to task for creating derivative works based too closely upon the Impressionists. He later warned, "history will classify you as the servile followers of Pissarro, Manet, etc. and finally of Sig. Müller."³⁸¹ An example can be seen in Muller's *The Pancaldi Baths at Livorno*, which closely echoes the palette and brushstroke of Monet's oeuvre. (Figure A344) Contrary to the Macchiaioli's concurrent attention to form and light, Muller sacrifices the nuances of composition in favor of an extended study of light and its effects. Francesca Bardazzi summarizes Fattori's frustration:

Fattori could not accept these 'Muller-cules', the lack of structural solidity, that rendering of the visible into a surface that apparently had been undone under the light, that producing of a painting out of color alone, without evaluating the underlying form, the abandonment, or better, the searching for the real in accordance with the rules of Italian art as proposed by the Macchiaioli synthesis,

³⁷⁹ Letter from Martelli to Fattori, 10 April 1879. Reproduced in Piero Dini and Francesca Dini, eds., *Giovanni Fattori: Epistolario Edito E Inedito* (Florence: Edizioni il Torchio, 1997), 89. Note that this introduction is similar to the one made to Signorini. Other letters from Martelli to Fattori that mention Degas' works include: Letter from Martelli to Fattori, 19 October 1880. Reproduced in Dini and Dini, eds., *Giovanni Fattori: Epistolario Edito E Inedito*, 108. and Letter from Martelli to Fattori, 18 March 1888. Reproduced in Dini and Dini, eds., *Giovanni Fattori: Epistolario Edito E Inedito*, 351-52.

³⁸⁰ Letter of Giovanni Fattori to a group of students, February 1891. Quoted in Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence : Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 39.

³⁸¹ Sandra Berresford, "Italy. Divisionism: Its Origins, Its Aims and Its Relationship to French Post-Impressionist Painting," in *Post-Impressionism: Cross-Currents in European Painting*, ed. John House and Mary Anne Stevens (London; New York: Royal Academy of Arts; Harper & Row, 1979), 223.

to pursue the transitoriness and the continual becoming, understood as an essence characteristic of modern life.³⁸²

Fattori's frustration is understandable because Florence was quickly becoming known, not for art springing from *macchia* aesthetics, but rather from the Impressionists. In 1892, Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo, wrote that he wanted to go to Florence because, "now that the Impressionists exhibit principally in that town alone." He was referencing the pupils of Fattori, a group of artists that he considered 'Italian Impressionists' who exhibited at the Florentine Promotrici from 1890-92, including Enrico Banti, Eduardo Gordigiani, Giovanni Lessi, and others.

Federico Rossano

Rossano first visited Paris in the 1860s and then returned to paint pastoral scenes with great success, his *Campo di Grano*, with its strong influences of Millet and Courbet, was purchased by Victor-Emmanuel II.³⁸³ (Figure A345) Living in Naples, he created works for Reitlinger and Goupil, who was particularly taken with the painter's work. In a letter to Léontine, Goupil writes:

Quanto al quadretto di Rossano l'abbiamo trovato molto delicato, molto bene realizzato e molto maturo. Fore sarebbe auspicabile un motivo di maggiore interesse, Napoli ne offre così tanti, ma a parte questo il quadretto resta affascinante e noi lo impegniamo a inviarne altri.³⁸⁴

After the death of his close friend De Gregorio, he returned to Paris in 1876 to join De Nittis. His grief was inconsolable, and the formerly charming man became quickly

³⁸² Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence : Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 39.

³⁸³ Loyrette, *Degas*, 421.

³⁸⁴ Letter from Goupil to Léontine De Nittis, 11 July 1872. Quoted from Chiara Tartaglia, "Federico Rossano," in *Otto Novecento Rivista Di Storia Dell'arte*, 17 n 7. Located in "Curatorial File for Federico Rossano," (Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples).

despondent and depressed. Degas and Jules Claretie attempted to encourage Rossano in his work, but his landscapes seemed retarditaire when compared to similar Impressionist works.³⁸⁵ Even while living in Paris, he remained connected to the Neapolitan art scene, participating yearly in the Società Promotrice di Belli Arti di Napoli.

A sense of Degas' kindness can be seen in his attempts to find the struggling painter a steady income. In a letter to Bracquemond, Degas inquired as to whether he could find Rossano work at Havilland, describing Rossano as a "homme de beaucoup de talent, paysagiste et animalier, très délicat, devant faire des fleurs délicieusement, des herbes, etc."³⁸⁶ He is insistent in his attempts, writing another letter to Bracquemond on the same subject:

I am going to ask you if you could employ in the Havilland house a decent man who has been well recommended to me. But he is also a man who from his childhood has been associated with pottery. Would you like me to send him to you? You must not tell him that I delayed at least a week before mentioning him to you.³⁸⁷

French Connection: Marcellin Desboutin

Marcellin Desboutin was born into a wealthy, aristocratic Parisian family. He showed early promise in his drawing skills, but went to law school, never actually practicing as a lawyer. In 1845 he enrolled in the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, studying under Louis-Jules Etex and Thomas Couture. Between the years 1849-54 he travelled to England, Belgium, the Netherlands and to Italy where he purchased Villa dell'Ombrellino in Bellosguardo in 1857, just outside Florence, where he lived until his

³⁸⁵ Loyrette, *Degas*, 421.

³⁸⁶ Letter from Degas to Bracquemond, late 1879-early 1880. Edgar Degas, *Lettres De Degas* (Paris: Grasset, 1945), 49.

³⁸⁷ Letter from Degas to Bracquemond, 1879?. Reproduced in Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 48.

return to Paris in August 1872, after exhausting his inheritance. Like Martelli's Castiglioncello, Desboutin entertained many fellow artists at Ombrellino, including Chapu, Gordiani, Henner, Delaunay, Martelli, Signorini, Boldini and De Nittis.³⁸⁸ If Degas did not know Desboutin before his Italian sojourn, he met the fellow Frenchman during his visits to the villa during his stay in Italy. He also amassed a large collection while at Ombrellino, which included Venetian and Dutch works, a Veronese, a Giorgione, a Rembrandt print, two Rubens studies, three Tintoretos, and a work by Boldini.³⁸⁹

Upon his return to Paris, Desboutin was forced to work as a printmaker for a living, and soon renewed his friendship with Degas and the other Impressionists who met at the Café Guerbois and the Café de la Nouvelle Athènes. His friendship with Degas intensified, and Degas included him in a number of his works, including *L'Absinthe* and *Desboutin, le graveur avec le compte Lepic*. (Figures A116, A346) Degas' depiction of Desboutin is very similar to a series of self portraits that are similar in self conception. (Figure A347) Desboutin returned the favor through a number of portraits of Degas including *Degas Lisant* and *Degas in a Hat*, as well as the portrait of Degas created as part of the experimental etching group with De Nittis. (Figures A348-349) Desboutin also owned 'un monotype au caractère goguenard et caricatural' by Degas, that is now seemingly lost.³⁹⁰

³⁸⁸ His journal mentions Signorini and Boldini in particular. Janin Clément, *La Curieuse Vie De Marcellin Desboutin, Peintre, Graveur, Poète, [Par] Clément-Janin* (Paris H. Floury, 1922), 27.

³⁸⁹ Laura Lombardi, "Un Circolo Parigino Sull'arno. Marcellin Desboutin a Bellosguardo," in *Aria Di Parigi Nella Pittura Italiana Del Secondo Ottocento*, ed. Giuliano Matteucci (Livorno: Umberto Allemandi & C., 1998).

³⁹⁰ Clément, *La Curieuse Vie De Marcellin Desboutin, Peintre, Graveur, Poète, [Par] Clément-Janin*, 101.

Even after his return to Paris, he still kept up relations with his Italian companions, as evidenced in a number of letters between Fattori, Martelli and Desboutin in 1877.³⁹¹ In addition, he fostered continued friendships with those Italians who had relocated to Paris, particularly with De Nittis, whom he visited in London.³⁹² Like his artistic rapport with Degas, he created portraits of Boldini, De Nittis and Mme de Nittis (*Sortie de Bal*).³⁹³ An 1872 visit to Desboutin's studio was recorded by Jean Béraud, Degas and De Nittis.³⁹⁴ In 1873, with Philippe Burty, De Nittis prepared "Saison de Londres", a biographical and artistic notice on Desboutin, destined for an English review, but it was never published.³⁹⁵ Most interesting is a passage in a letter from Léontine to Desboutin, in which she writes, "suscitata in Degas dal quadro delle pazze di Signorini è apertamente confessata." She goes on to discuss formal rapports between Degas' works *Bellelli Family*, *Une Malade*, *Dance Class*, *Voiture aux Courses*, *Diego Martelli* and Borrani's *Scena Familiare*, Signorini's *Giovane Convalescente* and *La Sala delle agitate*, and Fattori's *L'Avanscoperta* and *Portrait of Diego Martelli*.³⁹⁶

Conclusion

As exemplified in this section, Degas' camaraderie with Italian artists did not end upon his return to Paris. Rather, his friendships with some whom he met in Italy intensified, while others that he made the acquaintance of upon their arrival in the City of

³⁹¹ See Dini and Dini, eds., *Giovanni Fattori: Epistolario Editto E Inedito*, 40-43.

³⁹² Clément, *La Curieuse Vie De Marcellin Desboutin, Peintre, Graveur, Poète, [Par] Clément-Janin*, 110.

³⁹³ *Ibid.*, 114.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 201.

³⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 113-14.

³⁹⁶ Enrico Somarè, *Storia Dei Pittori Italiani Dell'ottocento*, vol. 1 (Milan: Edizioni d'arte Moderna, 1928), 26.

Light resulted in lifelong friendships. These Italian artists became a vital part of Degas' social circle, with whom he travelled, dined, and participated in a variety of artistic exchanges. These exchanges are particularly important when one examines their mutual thematic interest in a variety of modern subject matter, as well as their shared exploration of a variety of media. Now that the complexity of the social relationships between Degas and the Parisian-Italian expatriates has been firmly established, the next chapter will intensely delve into the artistic repercussions of these friendships.

CHAPTER V
DEGAS' RESONANCES WITH THE OTTOCENTO: GENRE AND MEDIA

...I have read the *capitan Francassa* in which, speaking of me and my painting at Turin...they will have to remove me from the Tuscan group in order to align me with cosmopolitan French art, and as a good shepherd you call me a lost sheep...hoping I will produce in the future a Tuscan painting like the one of Ravenna that I exhibited at Naples.

...

Goupil saw my painting when it was finished and do you know why he didn't buy it? Because it seemed to him that it had too much local character and the figure of the woman on the picture plane wasn't as elegant as Florentine woman would be, who, according to him, dresses *almost* as well as they do in Paris. I, who presume to be a better observer than Goupil, see in that *almost* the great difference between our art and French art, and it is precisely the seeing of this difference that gives to my painting a greater local imprint of Florence than the painting of Ravenna exhibited at Naples had of the imprint of Romagna...if anyone comes asking about me, you can tell him that I am more Florentine than Farinata...

Letter from Telemaco Signorini to Enrico Panzacchi, 28 July 1880

For Degas, as well as many of the Italian expatriates, the modern urban experience provided the opportunity for vast experimentation, a questioning of the academic significant moment, and an opportunity to revisit subject matter and media a number of times, each procedure coming out with a different result. In some ways they prefigured the post-modernist concept of process and art production that was promoted by twentieth century Italian artists Francesco Clemente and Enzo Cucchi, the idea that the work of art exists only during its process of production, that it exists only to allow the artist to grapple with, and once it is finished, it becomes something else – part of the larger culture. The process of art-making provides the opportunity for the artist to begin anew, to further examine and nuance the concepts at hand – be they abstract variations on

reality, in the case of Clemente and Cucchi, or a bather or café scene, in the case of Degas and his contemporaries.

Of course they were not the only modern artists experimenting with such ideas. Like Degas, Giacometti, Monet and Cézanne continued to return to the same subject matter, addressing it each time they started from the previous point. For Giacometti it was his brother Diego, for Cézanne it was Mount Sainte-Victoire and for Monet it was haystacks and the façade of Rouen cathedral, among other things. Each prior work functioned as a non-committal starting point for the next, and none of the artists accepted one as the final solution. Even artists such as Ingres utilized repetition as a means of progress in his oeuvre. Bryson speaks of Ingres' compulsion to repeat themes as a manner in which to control the production of images, to move past the weight of tradition:

Where, before, the competing images had come from tradition, now they come from Ingres' own production, and one way to understand Ingres' compulsion to repeat his designs is as the forging of a private or personal tradition to which the same displacing function can be ascribed, which had formerly been ascribed to the precursors. Repletion creates a body of provisional images which, like those of the past, bear in upon each particular work and shift it out of presence; but now Ingres controls the pressure himself.¹

For Degas and his contemporaries, the focus of the process was on the act of looking and its translation into a pictorial image. The images simultaneously function as records of quotidian aspects of modernity, while they also function solely as exercises in the process of art production, examinations of media.² Stemming from the academic

¹ Norman Bryson, *Tradition and Desire from David to Delacroix* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 144.

² See also Richard Thomson, *The Private Degas* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987), 69.

tradition of close study and methodical preparation, Degas utilized these concepts in a manner that allowed for an equally methodical depiction of the anti-Academic insignificant moments of daily routine in nineteenth-century Paris. Concurrent with this meticulous study of the composition itself was the meticulous study of the work surrounding him – both that of the past, and that of his contemporaries, as well as the opportunity to discuss these issues. The result is a shared exploration of theme and media between Degas and his Italian contemporaries.

Outdoor Vistas

Images such as De Gregorio's *Veduta di Casacalenda* capture the essence of Francesco Netti's insistence that "la sua pittura è così: la realtà crudamente tradotta, senza grazie, ma fedele e sincera."³ (Figure A350) The work successfully captures the sharp quality of light that prevails in southern Italy, especially around the Neapolitan region, as well as a sense of awareness of the tradition that De Nittis both hailed from and added to in terms of depictions of contemporaneous urban scenes. In his essay on De Nittis, Renato Miracco notes that growing up in Barletta gave De Nittis a heightened sense of urban space, a keen sense of spatial awareness, and this sense was something that provided the inspiration for further exploration upon his relocation to Paris.⁴

Long before this, however, De Nittis was taken with the genre of landscape, and its translation into paint, and early works such as *Studi vari* provide evidence of this

³ Raffaella Resch, *Capolavori Dell'800 Napoletano Dal Romanticismo Al Verismo* (Milan: Edizioni Gabriele Mazzotta, 1997), 157.

⁴ Renato Miracco, "De Nittis Impressionista Italiano. Le Ragioni Della Mostra," in *De Nittis: Impressionista Italiano*, ed. Renato Miracco (Milan: Mazzotta, 2004), 19.

preoccupation, even before his association with the Scuola di Resina.⁵ (Figure A351) The work gives the feel of a sketchbook in that the canvas is broken up into eight distinct studies of landscapes and townscapes. Each part of the canvas functions as its own independent study, the canvas being utilized as a whole gives the viewer the suggestion that canvas might have been expensive for the young painter at this point, and that the precious stretched material was utilized to its maximum in the process of understanding the translation of nature into the two dimensional. In his memoirs, De Nittis gives some perspective on this period:

Far from the islands of Ischia and Procida; Sorrento and Castellamare in a rose-colored fog that, little by little, is dissolved by the sun. And from everywhere comes the scent of wild mint and orange groves that I adore. We chatted fraternally with the sailors, peasants, women and beautiful girls.

Sometimes, happy, I remained under the sudden downpours. Because, believe me, I know the atmosphere well, and I've painted it so many times. I know all the colors, all the secrets of the air and the sky in their intimate nature. Oh, the sky! I've painted pictures of it! Skies, only skies, and beautiful clouds. Nature, I am close to it. I love it! How many joys it has given me.⁶

His surroundings in Barletta were characterized by harsh sunlight and the strong linearity of the urban landscape, and perhaps his preoccupation with the ever-shifting nature of the sky and clouds probably hailed from their opposition to these atmospheric constructs.

The sky and clouds allowed the painter to experiment with the nuances of vapor and its repercussions on canvas, as evidenced in his many studies of clouds, including *Studio di Nubi I*. (Figure A352)

⁵ Sperken also discusses the importance of light and atmosphere in De Nittis' oeuvre. See Christine Farese Sperken, "De Nittis: Concealed Poetry," in *Luce E Pittura in Italia/Light and Painting in Italy 1850-1914*, ed. Renato Miracco (Milan: Edizioni Gabriele Mazzotta, 2002).

⁶ De Nittis, *Taccuino*. Quoted from wall text, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta, September 2009.

This preoccupation with the transient aspects of nature lasted throughout his career. Journeying back and forth between Paris and Italy, De Nittis favored the route through Switzerland that would take him to Lake Lucerne. Such travels provided him the opportunity to take a break from urban compositions in order to contemplate his favored transient subject: the weather, exemplified in *Mist in the Mountains, Afternoon*, which depicts Lake Lucerne from Mt. Rigi, with Mt. Burgenstock in the distance on the left and Mt. Pilatus in the center right.(Figure A353)

This passion for the transient aspects of nature soon translated into a focus on another unstable and unpredictable event: recording the eruptions of Vesuvius, as exemplified in *Impression of Vesuvius III*.⁷ (Figure A354) The ominous volcano was a constant muse for De Nittis. While Vesuvius garnered him much interest in the Parisian art world, the fascination with the geographical wonder stemmed from his interest in the shifting nature of the steam that issued forth from its active crater. It was no easy task to climb Vesuvius to record such activity, as he relates in his memoirs:

I climbed Vesuvius every day to work. And every day it would take six hours on horseback to go, return and climb up to the cone on the back of my guides, but I was 26 years old then, even though I had already been married for 3 years, and I was unaware of what tiredness was.⁸

It is not surprising that this interest in volcanic steam and the endless variations it provided, coupled with De Nittis' intense awareness of urban spaces, derived from his formative periods spent in Barletta and Naples, coalesced into a heightened awareness of

⁷ With an eruption in December 1631 Vesuvius entered a destructive phase of volcanic activity. The eruption buried a number of surrounding towns under lava flows and killed around 3000 people. Volcanic activity after this eruption became a continuous part of life in the Neapolitan region, with more severe eruptions occurring in 1660, 1682, 1694, 1698, 1707, 1737, 1760, 1767, 1779, 1794, 1822, 1834, 1839, 1850, 1855, 1861, 1868, 1872, 1906, 1926, 1929, and 1944.

⁸ Quoted from wall text, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta, September 2009.

the transient nature of the modern urban landscape he found in Paris – particularly in its novel invention of the steam locomotive. Images such as *Passa il Treno* evoke a Turner-esque preoccupation with the transience of the rail system.⁹ (Figure A355) Unlike Turner, however, De Nittis is not interested in the speed of the steam engine, rather its effect on the landscape. Here the steam drifts into the foreground as figures gather in the fields. Another obvious source of comparison is between works such as De Nittis' *Cappannoni di una stazione Ferroviaria* and Monet's *Arrival of the Normandy Train, Gare Saint-Lazare*.¹⁰ (Figure A356) In both canvases, the painters work simultaneously to capture the transience of the moment, while concurrently experimenting with the translation of steam and its effects on the environment into paint. In his eulogic essay, Gustave Jefferory comments upon the transition from Neapolitan landscape, to a preoccupation with steam, fog and related novelties of modernity that would preoccupy the last decades of the painter's life:

After the days passed in his homeland, days cracked by the burning heat of the sun, after the contemplation of clean cut evenly lit horizons, he fell in love with the palaces, the bridges, the stations that appear faint in the London fog, after the harsh beauty of Italian landscape, he devoted himself with passion to more complex works, inspired by the civilization of the metropolises; he identified their beauty with sharp intelligence, in front of the frameworks, the cast iron arcades, the locomotives; with the same passion he painted *Strada di Castellamare* and *Charing Cross tunnel*. And with the same fervor and passion, his interest passed without pause from the iron covering of a machine to the light materials covering the body of a woman; the promenade of the *Rosen-Row* and the stroll around the lake of Bois de Boulogne, the woman hidden in the warmth of a fur coat, who

⁹ See for example, J.M.W. Turner, *Rain, Steam and Speed - The Great Western Railway*, 1844, Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London

¹⁰ Claude Monet, *Arrival of the Normandy Train, Gare Saint-Lazare*, 1877, Oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago

crosses the street, and the woman with shoulders and chest bared who holds sway over a Salon.¹¹

Following along with this interest in the transformation of landscape as a result of steam, was De Nittis' interest in how a landscape became transformed after a rain. His *La Traversata degli Appennini*, combines the receding front with the fog that has settled over the town after a rain. (Figure A357) The warm light of the sun gives a glow to the clouds and mist, as well as emphasizing the ruts in the road through its reflection in the water collected there. The work was shown in the 1866 Promotrice Napoletana, and was then purchased by Vittorio Emmanuele II for his collection of contemporary art. Writing on the work in 1905, Cecioni echoes this nuance of the depiction of air in De Nittis's oeuvre:

Si vedeva una strada fangosa con una diligenza, tinta di giallo dalla metà in su che andava verso l'orizzonte, un muro fradicio, un cielo cupo con dei nuvoloni scuri e quasi neri sull'orizzonte, di dove sembrava venire un temporale; uno strappo nell'aria che lasciava vedere un po' di chiaro, ciò che radeva tanto bene l'agitazione di un cielo burrascoso, e aumentava la tristezza dell'effetto. Tutto questo eseguito in modo tale da fare rimanere studio chiunque specialmente gli artisti che sanno quanta difficoltà costi per rendere per forma e per color il fango, i ciottoli, la massicciata, le rotaie nella mota, i monti di spazzatura; tutte cose della più grande difficoltà e che il De Nittis faceva a perfezione.¹²

The palette is the inverse of his early landscapes depicting the Neapolitan region, seen for example in *Farmhouse near Naples*. One of his earliest Resina works, it was exhibited in the 1866 Promotrice Napoletana, and, like *Apennines* would be the following year, purchased by Vittorio Emmanuele II.¹³ (Figure A358) The telescoped point of view that

¹¹ Gustave Jeffroy, *La Justice*, 28 August 1884. Quoted from wall text, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta, September 2009.

¹² Adriano Cecioni, *Opere E Scritti*, ed. Enrico Somaré (Milan: Edizioni d'Arte Moderna, 1932), 364.

¹³ Roberta Olson, *Ottocento: Romanticism and Revolution in 19th-Century Italian Painting* (New York: American Federation of Arts, 1992), 180.

epitomized De Nittis' landscapes, both during his Neapolitan years and later in Paris, was derivative of eighteenth century *veduta* paintings, and also in its emphasis on colors and light finds resonance in the oeuvre of Filippo Palizzi.

Degas and De Nittis shared an interest in translating these transient qualities of Neapolitan light to canvas, often gravitating towards similar subject matter. Like De Nittis' numerous variations on his early muse of Vesuvius, Degas also turned to the unpredictable volcano in a number of pastels and monotypes in the 1890s. (Figure A359) While Degas did not visit Naples during this time, the volcanic activity that he must of have witnessed during his travels to the region stuck with him, and like De Nittis he was drawn to attempt to capture their evanescent qualities.¹⁴ Another parallel between the landscape components of De Nittis' and Degas' oeuvres can be seen in their depictions of Castel dell'Ovo in Naples. A contemporary photograph of the fifteenth century Aragonese defensive structure allows the viewer to understand how the broad planes of the walls and their abrupt tonal transitions would provoke the interest of the artists, intent upon understanding the nuances of light. (Figure A360) Degas work in particular speaks to this fascination, and his handling of tonality finds resonance in Macchiaioli works such as Abbati's *Cloister*. (Figures A361, A128) Such compositional cognates suggest that Degas' artistic interests were ripe for the artistic climate of the Caffè Michelangiolo, where he would soon travel. De Nittis' work, by contrast, also examines the nuances of light, but sets the fortification into a larger composition of an exploration of the effects of light upon the water, sky and mountainous background. (Figure A362)

¹⁴ In a letter from Degas to Hortense Valpinçon, January 1906, he writes on the topic of a recent eruption of Vesuvius: "The news from Italy overwhelms me. They write me nothing from over there, which means that we are not affected at our place. What a date this disaster will represent in history." Edgar Degas and Marcel Guerin, *Letters*, trans. Marguerite Kay (Oxford: B. Cassirer, 1947), 224.

De Nittis' interest in cityscapes can be seen in the examination of Haussmann's novel urban spaces and the resultant pedestrian negotiation of these locations in his *Place de la Concorde after the Rain*, which was shown in the Salon of 1875. (Figure A363) The work possibly prompted Degas to paint his own version, *Place de la Concorde* in the same year. (Figure A364) Degas' composition functions as an inverse of De Nittis' in that De Nittis focuses on the novel space, giving second billing to the figures in that space, Degas begins to explore the rise of the flâneur, using the space as a backdrop. The artistic dialogue was volleyed back by De Nittis through his *La Place du Carrousel: The Ruins of the Tuileries in 1882*. (Figure A365) This time De Nittis places more emphasis on the figures, particularly examining the manner in which different classes navigate the space. Another obvious example of this pictorial exploration of Haussmann's Paris can be seen in Caillebotte's *Paris Street, A Rainy Day* from 1877, which balances an investigation of the urban landscape and its resultant foot traffic.¹⁵ These works share a telescoping construction of perspective, as well as a careful attention to the figures in that space and how they navigate and interact with Haussmann's innovative urban setting. They represent a shared sense of investigation of the rapidly changing environment through the lenses of contemporary aesthetic inquiry.

Of course, in order to fully comprehend the nuances of modern society and their interactions in the urban space, De Nittis must have, like Degas, practiced the novel art of looking, so extolled in the idea of the flâneur. Benjamin reaffirms this sentiment, that Paris alone could produce this steady attention to modernity that encapsulates the flâneur:

Paris created the type of the flâneur. What is remarkable is that it wasn't Rome. And the reason? Does not dreaming itself take the high road in Rome? And isn't

¹⁵ Gustave Caillebotte, *Paris Street, A Rainy Day*, 1877, Oil on canvas, Art Institute of Chicago

that city too full of temples, enclosed squares, national shrines, to be able to enter *tout entière* – with every cobblestone, every shop sign, every step, and every gateway – into the passerby’s dream? The national character of the Italians may also have much to do with this. For it is not the foreigners but they themselves, the Parisians, who have made Paris the promised land of the flâneur – the ‘landscape built of sheer life,’ as Hofmannsthal once put it. Landscape – that, in fact, is what Paris becomes for the flâneur. Or, more precisely: the city splits for him into its dialectical poles. It opens up to him as a landscape, even as it closes around him as a room.¹⁶

In his preparations for his *Arcades Project*, Benjamin collected a number of written passages that related to various topics, the idea of the flâneur included. The following related passage discusses the import of idle looking towards crafting the specific point of view of the flâneur. Benjamin writes, prompted by a passage in Larousse’s *Grand*

Dictionnaire universel:

Basic to flânerie, among other things, is the idea that the fruits of idleness are more precious than the fruits of labor. The flâneur, is well known, makes ‘studies.’ On this subject, the nineteenth-century Larousse has the following to say: ‘His eyes open, his ear ready, searching for something entirely different than what the crowd gathers to see. A word dropped by chance will reveal to him one of those character traits that cannot be invented and that must be drawn directly from life; those physiognomies so naively attentive will furnish the painter with the expression he was dreaming of; a noise, insignificant to every other ear, will strike that of the musician and give him the cue for a harmonic combination; even for the thinker, the philosopher lost in his reverie, this external agitation is profitable: it stirs up his ideas as the storm stirs the waves of the sea...most men of genius were great flâneurs – but industrious, productive flâneurs...Often it is when the artist and poet seem least occupied with their work that they are most profoundly absorbed in it.’¹⁷

It is from just these experiences on the streets of Paris, and later London, Florence and beyond that provide for Degas and De Nittis the opportunity to fully comprehend the

¹⁶ Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999), M1,4 417.

¹⁷ Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire universel* (Paris, 1872). Ibid., M20a,1 453.

way modern city dwellers live in their streets, and translate this understanding onto canvas. Quoting from an 1857 article from Germany, Benjamin also touches upon the object of the flâneur's gaze, the Parisian public and their interactions with their urban environment; the way in which they seem to reside in the streets themselves:

Returning by the Rue Saint-Honoré, we met with an eloquent example of that Parisian street industry which can make use of anything. Men were at work repairing the pavement and laying pipeline, and, as a result, in the middle of the street there was an area which was blocked off but which was embanked and covered with stones. On this spot street vendors had immediately installed themselves, and five or six were selling writing implements and notebooks, cutlery, lampshades, garters, embroidered collars, and all sorts of trinkets. Even a dealer in secondhand goods had opened a branch office here and was displaying on the stones his bric-à-brac of old cups, plates, glasses, and so forth, so that business was profiting, instead of suffering, from the brief disturbance. They are simply wizards at making a virtue of necessity.¹⁸

Benjamin follows this passage with an affirmation from his own life, “Seventy years later, I had the same experience at the corner of the Boulevard Saint-Germain and the Boulevard Raspail. Parisians make the street an interior.”¹⁹ One only needs to examine the works of Degas and De Nittis to understand that both came to understand Paris in the way that Benjamin would some fifty years later and attempted to commit such experiences to canvas.

While works such as his *Place de la Concorde after the Rain* and *La Place du Carrousel: The Ruins of the Tuileries in 1882* focus on the urban space, De Nittis did share in Degas' fascination of the flâneur, seen in works such as *I Passeri delle Tuileries* that, like Degas' *Place de la Concorde*, place the viewer into a voyeuristic role. (Figure A366) The figure is placed in a central position in a setting that strongly emphasizes the

¹⁸ Adolf Stahr, *Nach fünf Jahren* (Oldenburg, 1857), vol.1, 29. Quoted from *Ibid.*, M3, 1 421.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, M3,1 421.

concise linearity of the urban environment. The result is that the viewer becomes the flâneur, examining the urban scene – be it a man stooping to feed the birds or a pair of women walking with a child. The compositional framework is carried into other works that are more traditional in De Nittis' oeuvre such as *Westminster*, giving equal footing to the figures in the urban landscape. Again the composition, like Degas' arrangements, emphasizes a strong diagonal composition and allows the figures to recede into space along these diagonals. (Figure A367)

Another artist to experiment with the telescoping perspective of urban vistas and insights of the flâneur was Boldini. His works such as *Place Pigalle* echoes those of De Nittis, particularly in its emphasis on a large urban space and a prolonged investigation of how a number of inhabitants utilize that space. (Figure A368) Moving beyond this, by incorporating his loose brushwork, Boldini suggests the hustle and bustle of the modern city in compositions such as *Place Pigalle con l'omnibus*. (Figure A369) Like his portraits of society women, Boldini combines tight brushwork with loose, but this time in the inverse of his portraits. In the street scenes, Boldini creates a sense of solidity of urban environment through a concise description of the building facades, but he emphasizes the rush of modern life through loose brushwork in the foreground, suggesting fast movement and anonymity in the urban space. Sketches such as *Figure a cavallo*, which suggest only the barest outline of forms, while emphasizing the vectors of motion give further clue to Boldini's intention in such works. (Figure A370)

It is in his urban vistas that one sees the greatest example of this process of dialogue – in particular the coalescence of photography, Japonisme and modern approaches to composition – through which Signorini was both a participant and a

conduit. Signorini's time in Paris, close friendship with Degas, Caillebotte and De Nittis, and their particular investigations into the rapidly changing urban landscape found resonance within his oeuvre. Urban cityscapes such as those by Degas, De Nittis, Caillebotte and Signorini emphasize flattened compositional techniques influenced by Japonisme, while concurrently channeling the strong diagonals of contemporaneous photographic aesthetics. The latter was derived from the translated aesthetics of photography into the works of their fellow painters, as well as their own experiments in the medium.

In paintings such as *Piazza in Settignano* while not as cosmopolitan as the aforementioned vistas of Paris, Signorini applies these aesthetic choices, appropriating the strong perspectives of the urban vistas to a small Italian town, conveying a parallel component of the investigation of the modernist impulse. (Figure A371) The majority of Signorini's works, exemplified *Leith*, are views of towns and landscapes rendered in an illustrative, topographical manner and are descriptive of a life that was changing even as it was being recorded. (Figure A372) In this, he truly seems to have followed his father's example, even though his energies were bent on helping to restore Italian art to the level of importance it had once had in Europe.

His application of these compositional traits provided inspiration for his Italian contemporaries in their search to fulfill the proscription to become history painters of contemporaneous life. Such traits find their way into later works such as Luigi Gioli's *Via del Passeggio a Livorno* (1885), allowing Italian experimentation with aesthetics of modernity, while still functioning within the familiar auspices of urban life in the newly formed peninsular nation. (Figure A373) Ruggero Focardi's *Piazza a Settignano* and

Ruggero Panerai's *Artiglieria in Marcia* exemplify the confluence of the ideas of Japonisme, photography, macchia and the rapidly changing modern landscape – in all its permutations from city to town, from ghetto to boulevard.²⁰ (Figures A374-375)

Signorini's frequent trips between Paris and Italy allowed for the permeability that furthered aesthetic concepts, such as photography, discussed on the peninsula itself. At this time of change and unification, Italian artists were searching for a way to document their aesthetics and become, in the Baudelairan sense, recorders of their own history. Signorini is only one example of this greater movement of ideas, aesthetics and modernist principles that would find permutation on the peninsula as they strove to define their own newly formed nationalist identity.

Caricature to Portraiture

Another avenue of exploration was the genre of portraiture. Carlos Pellegrini was born in Capua in 1839 and in his youth socialized in the upper echelons of Neapolitan society. His role in society was to provide them with witty portraits charg , a highly sophisticated form of satirical caricature. The portrait charg  was introduced by Daumier in 1830 in the anti-Republican journalism of Charles Philipon. The genre was strengthened in the 1860s by Andr  Gill and became an important component of French political satire. The genre was picked up, with less biting ferocity, in Naples by Melchiorre Delfico who utilized the genre to create caricatures of Verdi and other Neapolitan celebrities in a satirical yet polite and elegant manner.²¹ Delfico's caricatures

²⁰ Focardi's composition is set in the same piazza in *Settignano* as Signorini's earlier composition.

²¹ Eileen Harris and Richard Ormond, eds., *Vanity Fair an Exhibition of Original Cartoons* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 1976), 7.

were published in various Neapolitan satirical journals, *Omnibus Pittoresco* (from 1855) and *L'Arlecchino* (from 1860), and were also sold as separate albums.²²

Pellegrini's caricatures, inspired by Delfico, were an immediate hit and when he left Naples in November 1864, finally arriving in London, he took the genre with him. In London he was a friend of the Prince of Wales, Edward VII, and through social channels, was hired as a caricaturist for *Vanity Fair*. His first *Vanity Fair* work, a caricature of Disraeli, created under the pseudonym 'Singe' was printed by Vincent Brooks and published on 30 January 1869. The image was immensely popular and soon established the reputations of both journal and Pellegrini. Soon afterward, his pseudonym 'Singe' became 'Ape' and the *portrait chargé*, which was derived from Daumier became a British institution. His caricatures in *Vanity Fair* were soon joined by the works of Tissot, Alfred Thompson, Adriano Cecioni, Charles August-Loye, Thomas Nast, Theobald Chartran, Francois Verheyden and Delfico himself.²³ An example of Pellegrini's craft can be seen in his translation of a dapper Oscar Wilde into a caricature in 1884. (Figure A376)

Pellegrini was smitten with Whistler's work and encouraged by the artist, Pellegrini temporarily abandoned caricature in favor of painting portraits in 1876. He did not abandon the genre of caricature all together, creating a caricature of his mentor in 1883. (Figure A377) A self portrait created in 1882 echoes works by Degas, particularly his portraits of Manzi and Martelli, in its bold palette and its inclusion in the genre of portraits depicting the artist at work. (Figures A146, A237-238, A378) Here Pellegrini

²² Eileen Harris, "Carlo Pellegrini: Man and 'Ape'," *Apollo* (January 1976): 53.

²³ *Ibid.*: 56.

works at a desk near an open window on one of his caricatures. The sharply tiled table in the foreground holds the implements of his trade.

Degas and Pellegrini were probably introduced via De Nittis, during the former's September 1875 trip to London. A number of references to Pellegrini's address in London, written in notebooks used in the years 1875-78 suggest that the two kept in contact after this initial introduction.²⁴ A reference to a book of caricatures entitled *Our People* by Charles Keene Bradbury also suggests that perhaps Pellegrini drew Degas' attention to the tome, suggesting continued dialogue about the genre that Degas was introduced to and influenced by during his formative experiences in Florence.²⁵

In the tradition of artists such as Celentano and Morelli, Degas and Pellegrini exchanged portraits and these portraits play into the tradition of caricature of which the two were so aware. As mentioned previously, Degas' portrait of Pellegrini, inscribed "à lui/Degas", touches upon the tradition of caricature for which Pellegrini was famous, particularly works such as *Conservative Conversation*, which in turn refers back to works by the Neapolitan caricaturist Delifco.²⁶ (Figures A173-175) The work concurrently references Degas' own interests as he depicts Pellegrini's feet in the fourth position. Pellegrini's portrait of Degas, however is an overt reverence to the tradition of caricature stemming back to Naples and Florence. (Figure A379) The work, inscribed "à

²⁴ Nb 27 p 18: "Pellegrini/ 8 Georges St [London]"

Nb 27 p 28: "Pellegrini/ 8 Georges St/ Hanover Square"

Nb 26 p 4: "Pellegrini/ 8 George St/ Hanover Square/ London W" with a plan of St. George street and adjacent streets.

²⁵ Nb 32 p 5: "Our People/Charles Keene/Bradbury"

²⁶ Ronald Alley, "Notes on Some Works by Degas, Utrillo and Chagall in the Tate Gallery," *The Burlington Magazine* 100, no. 662 (1958): 171.

vous/Pellegrini”, elongates Degas’ narrow face, placing emphasis on his high forehead and arched eyebrows. There is no background, and Degas wears an absurdly large polka dotted bow tie and a three piece suit. There is another portrait of Degas by Pellegrini, wearing the same suit, this time the artist is shown in profile. The work was owned by Manzi, but its whereabouts today are unknown. (Figure A380) One of these portraits by Pellegrini of Degas is mentioned in a letter that probably accompanied the portrait, written by Degas to an unknown source, perhaps Paul Lafond. He writes:

Perhaps you are still in Paris so this little roll which contains the caricature of me by Pellegrini, found at last, may have some prospect of reaching you. I had given up all hope of being able to return it to you, it was stuffed away where, by right, I ought never to have found it. In a word here is your little treasure.²⁷

Portraiture

Stemming from the aforementioned influences of caricature, as well as building upon the conventions in portraiture so nuanced by Ingres and articulated by Tuscan portraitists such as Antonio Ciseri, both Degas and De Nittis worked in the genre through the modernist impulse articulated by Duranty in his *La Nouvelle peinture*, stressing pose, gesture, and physical setting in order to convey character.²⁸ The shared interest in the genre, as well as that of the medium of etching, is conveyed in two etched portraits of Manet, *Bust Portrait of Manet* and *Portrait of Manet Seated*. (Figures A381-382) The two works were created during Degas’ early exploratory period of intaglio printmaking and owned by De Nittis,²⁹ and are stylistically and chronologically consistent with

²⁷ Letter from Degas to unknown, undated. Degas and Guerin, *Letters*, 67-68.

²⁸ Edmond Duranty, "The New Painting," in *The New Painting, Impressionism, 1874-1886 : An Exhibition Organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco with the National Gallery of Art, Washington*, ed. Charles S. Moffett (San Francisco: The Museums, 1986), 43-44.

²⁹ Rosalba Dinoia, "Degas, De Nittis, Boldini E L'incisione," in *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi*, ed. Ann Dumas (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 210.

Degas' other tentative forays into the medium, particularly his 'Rembrandt-esque' etchings. (Figures A31-40) But unlike Degas' *Self Portrait* or *Joseph Tourney*, which show a tentative exploration of the use of line and inking of the plate to create chiaroscuro, in the portraits of Manet he is more assured in his handling of the medium, utilizing a sure-handed hatching to convey depth and nuance to the composition.

The shared interest in the medium of intaglio printing will be discussed below, but it is clear that the two spent at least one session working from De Nittis' favorite model and muse, Léontine. De Nittis worked in dry point, creating *Donna con parasole*, while Degas worked in oil. (Figures A383-384) In both works, Léontine sits in a chair, with her hair drawn up, wearing a high collared dress. De Nittis' effort, with its awkward handling of the chair and sketchy overall composition suggests that this was an early effort, perhaps even his first. Léontine is depicted in profile, perhaps to simplify the composition, so that De Nittis could forego issues of foreshortening, and instead focus on the nuances of dry point. One of the prints from this session ended up in Degas' collection – perhaps a memento of the day and De Nittis' early efforts in the medium.³⁰ Degas' composition, however, depicts Léontine from the opposite site, showing her in three-quarter view. Her gaze, one surmises, is pointed towards her husband, hard at work on her left. The work is interesting because it evolved from a modeling session in which Degas' work was secondary to De Nittis' efforts in dry point. Léontine is distracted, and completely unaware of Degas' presence or the creation of this work. It is almost as if Degas has successfully captured the insignificant moment in portraiture, something that he has perfected in his works of bathers, dancers and other moments of modern life.

³⁰ Dinoia, "Degas, De Nittis, Boldini E L'incisione," 176.

Léontine was De Nittis' favorite model, friend, lover, and personal champion. After his untimely death, she worked hard to ensure that his memoirs were published, took a large role in organizing a number of retrospective exhibitions, and organized the donation of his work, correspondence and library to the city of Barletta. De Nittis' devotion to Léontine can be seen in his many portraits of her, particularly in two large pastels, *Giornata d'inverno* and *Portrait of Mme De Nittis*. The two works function almost as pendants to each other, created a year apart, they are both pastels, have similar dimensions and focus on Léontine dressed in white and black respectively. (Figures A385-386) Goncourt was particularly taken by the first image, which evokes De Nittis' aforementioned preoccupation with Parisian winters:

De Nittis has recently begun a large pastel portrait of his wife, which is the grandest symphony of white. Against the background of a winter landscape, completely covered in snow, Madame De Nittis stands out in a dress the color 'gloire de Dijon', with her shoulders and arms bare, brushed with lace, whose transparent pleating seems to be in flight, in this poem of cold white and tepid white, in the foreground only the black spot of an enamel plate on which is resting a china blue cup. I have not seen in painting anything so softly luminous and never have I seen a quality of pastel so new, so removed from the methods of traditional pastels.³¹

While Degas and De Nittis' mastery of portraiture embodied the spirit of Duranty's call for works that used intense studies of gesture and pose to convey character, Boldini's works moved beyond this to embody the speed and movement of the period. Early works like his *Portrait of Giulia Tempestini Kennedy Lawrie* speaks to the fact that Boldini emerged from this same tradition, derived from the Academic world of Tuscan portraiture, and finds echo in the early works of Degas and Fattori. (Figure A387)

³¹ Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 12 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956).

His *L'Amatore delle Arti* speaks to a commitment to the impulse, like Manet would with his *Zola* two years later, to create a sense of place through the placement of the figure within his or her surroundings. (Figure A388) The work was exhibited in the Promotrice Fiorentina of 1866, and Signorini commented upon the image in his critical essay on the exhibition:

Egli ha esposto tre piccoli ritratti di merito non comune... I ritratti si sono fin qui fatti con una massima sola, cioè dovevano avere un fondo unito il più possibilmente per far staccare e non disturbare la testa del ritratto; precetto ridicolo e lo dice il sig. Boldini con i suoi ritratti che hanno per fondo ciò che presenta lo studio di quadri, stampe ed altri oggetti attaccati al muro, senza che per questo la testa del ritratto ne scapiti per nulla.³²

Even after he settled into his particular style of depicting society women, Boldini still utilized the trope in works such as the 1882 work *The Maestro Emanuele Muzio on the Podium*. (Figure A389) Emanuele Muzio was a close friend of Boldini and the musical director at the Théâtre Italien in Paris from 1870-1876. The work follows in the tradition that Degas also took part in, depicting the sitter in his (or her) working environment, exemplified in his similar work, *The Musicians at the Opera House*.³³

Boldini and Degas also utilized the trope of the off-balance group portrait and sparse settings to create an interesting composition that focused attention on the interrelationships of the figures. Degas' work, *The Duchess of Montejasi with her Daughters*, like some of his double portraits, suggests a sense of psychological distance in the space between the two daughters and the countess. (Figure A390) Boldini's work, *John Lewis Brown with his Wife and Daughter*, created the year after the two journeyed

³² Signorini, 1867. Quoted from Elena Di Maio and Matteo Lafranconi, *Galleria Nazionale D'arte Moderna: Le Collezioni: Il Xix Secolo* (Milan: Electa, 2006), 117.

³³ Edgar Degas, *The Orchestra at the Opera House*, c. 1870, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay, Paris

to Spain, shows overt references to Velázquez in its neutral background. (Figure A391) In addition, his figural grouping conveys the opposite, suggesting a close paternal bond between the daughter and John Lewis Brown, as well as a well-balanced relationship between him and his more composed wife. The expressions of the figures are also an inversion of the mourning melancholic visages of Degas' family. Degas was quite taken with Boldini's work, perhaps because it embodied so well the traits they both admired in the works seen in the Prado. The dealer Ambroise Vollard recalled Degas running his hands admiringly over the work.

Works such as Boldini's portrait of Marchesa Luisa Casati (Figure A276) speak to his preoccupation in society portraits in particular, of this conveyance of the speed and constant-motion that made up life in Paris in the later decades of the nineteenth-century. He also explored the notion in other works such as his *Bracchio femminile con fiori* which echoes in subject matter and application of paint, Degas' *Portrait of Estelle* painted while he was visiting family in New Orleans. (Figures A392-393) Works such as Boldini's self portrait, with its sharp, precise strokes of the etching needle, or his highly finished *Portrait of Giuseppe Verdi*, suggest that he took into consideration not only the sitter but the sitter's countenance and purpose of the portrait in its production. (Figures A394-395) His portraits of society women emphasize this movement of fabric and modernity because that is exactly how they wanted to be depicted – novel women, absorbed in the moment and all its trappings.

Like other previously mentioned examples, Degas and Boldini acted as each other's models on a number of occasions. Boldini's portraits of Degas are both sketches, the first depicts the artist in profile, deeply engaged in conversation. The crinkles around

his eyes and animated gesture suggest that he enjoys the repartee. (Figure A396) The work, in its profile view, is related to an undated caricatural sketch of Degas, also by Boldini. (Figure A397) The second portrait of Degas by Boldini directly references Degas' portrait of Martelli. (Figure A398) Here the painter is depicted as pensive, head resting upon his chin, his elbow resting on his knee. The flattened composition depicts Degas over his left shoulder, and seen from above – echoing Martelli's pose in Degas' portrait. Dinoia identifies another work by Boldini, *Portrait of a Man*, but an examination of the physiological characteristics of the sitter do not conform with other depictions of Degas.³⁴ (Figure A399) A final reference to Degas in Boldini's oeuvre is possibly presented in a work entitled *Degas e Ochoa nello studio del pittore (nell'atelier)*, included in Boldini's catalogue raisonné. (Figure A400) Unfortunately the work is now lost, and the reproduction's dimensions are too small to come to any adequate conclusion. The question of veracity of the identification remains unanswered.

Degas created two portraits of Boldini, both in the Ferranese painter's collection on his death, and now housed in the Museo Boldini in Ferrara. The first is an unfinished bust portrait of Boldini, where Degas has only sketched in Boldini's coat, given a slight more attention to the face, but finished his tie in a strong black that dominates the sketch. (Figure A401) The second portrait's pose is similar to the well-worn pose of Pellegrini in both his caricatures and in Degas' portrait of the caricaturist. (Figure A402) The studies of dancer's feet on the right of the page suggest that perhaps it was during Boldini's attendance at a dance lesson that this portrait was created. If so, his pose finds

³⁴ Dinoia, "Degas, De Nittis, Boldini E L'incisione," 183.

explanation in his role as a voyeur of the scene, much in the manner of the ballet teacher or Degas in Degas and Manzi's respective compositions.

Modern Subject Matter³⁵

Operas

Degas' *The Orchestra at the Opera House* combines genres and aesthetic systems to create an image of the Garnier Opera house that epitomizes late nineteenth-century Paris. (Figure A294) Responding to similar cues, and most likely each other's oeuvres, Boldini, Zandomeneghi and De Nittis also incorporated scenes of the opera into their pictorial explorations of the age, echoing the works not only of Degas, but Cassatt and Renoir as well.³⁶ It is not meant to suggest that there is a directionality of the influence of subject matter and its handling at this time rather that this group of artists were responding to the same cultural stimuli, and showed an awareness of each other's oeuvres. Works such as Boldini's *A Teatro* and *L'Orchestra* deal with a similar compositional arrangement to that of Degas' handling of the orchestra pit. (Figures A403-404) In the former, Boldini, like Degas, utilizes a low viewpoint, looking up and the musicians, and cropping off just a blurred hint of the stage. Also hinted at is the audience on the floor adjacent to the orchestra pit. The action on the stage is a blur, its

³⁵ There is not time for a sustained discussion of all overlaps of subject matter, but attention should be drawn, even in passing, to the resonances between the theme of the circus in De Nittis, *La Cirque*, private collection, Rome and Degas, *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando*, 1879, Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London. On the theme of the omnibus, a similarity is noted between De Nittis, *In fiacre*, 1883, pastel, Pinocoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta and Degas, *Sull' omnibus*, 1877-78, monotype, Musée Picasso, Paris.

³⁶ Zandomeneghi, *À l'Opera*, Location unknown, Sold at master Drawings, Sotheby Parke Bernet, 21 Nov 1980, Lot 144 and Zandomeneghi, *A teatro (Nel palco)*, 1885-95, Oil on canvas, Istituto Matteucci, Viareggio find particular resonance with the works of Renoir. De Nittis, *Dans le monde*, 1883, oil on board, Pinocoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta has a affinity with Cassatt works, particularly *At the Opera*, 1879, Oil on canvas, The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

dancers and stage sets only hinted at through loose brushstrokes. This depiction of dancers, utilizing Boldini's characteristic painterly blur will be taken up again in his depictions of dancers. Degas' favored trope of a cropped double bass, seen in *The Orchestra at the Opera House*, as well as in *Rehearsal of Ballet on Stage* and *The Rehearsal on Stage* is picked up by Boldini in *A Teatro* to suggest the orchestra pit, situating the view of the audience, whose attention is rapt at the events transpiring on the stage.

Like Degas, Boldini did not create the finished work while at the opera, rather he created sketches that functioned as aides de memoire upon his return to his studio. An example of such a study for *A Teatro* can be seen in a sketch that details the nuances of the top of a double bass, while using vague placeholders for the audience seated behind. (Figure A405) Another pastel of a similar scene emphasizes the audience's almost caricatural qualities. (Figure A406) Boldini's other studies range from methodical studies of the compositional arrangements of the orchestra pit to the dancers onstage to faster vector studies of the movement and placement of a series of violinists. (Figure A407) Such materials would return to the studio with Boldini for use in the creation of finished studio works.

While at times depicting the audience's rapt attention towards the stage, Boldini realized that the reality of the theater was that it functioned as a social condenser, a spectacle of seeing and being seen, a blur of expensive dresses and tailored tuxedos on show for each other. He captures this blur in his characteristic painterly style in works such as *Serata all'Opéra*.³⁷ (Figure A408) The work negates the presence of the stage

³⁷ See also Giovanni Boldini, *Spettatori all'Opera*, Doria no. 202

and orchestra pit all together and instead focuses on the actions of the audience. The social spectacle is particularly driven home in the foreground, herself a rush of moving fabric, turns away from the proper stage to garner a better perspective on the social one.

Dancers

Degas' close friend Zandomeneghi went a few steps further in along the road of inspiration, making direct copies after two of Degas' works on Dancers. First he created *Danseuses*, a direct copy after Degas' *Four Ballerinas*.³⁸ (Figures A409-410) Degas probably commissioned Zandomeneghi to create a copy of *Waiting* when he sold the original to the Havermeyers in 1895. (Figures A341, A411) The two images are remarkably similar, but Degas seems to have a harder surface quality to the pastel, while Zandomeneghi's seems to have a slight preoccupation with creating a convincing sense of spatial depth.

Taking a different tack, it is probable that Boldini accompanied Degas to sketch from dance classes, the probable setting of the standing portrait of the Ferranese painter. Regardless, the girls captured Boldini's attention and are the subject of a number of works and sketches by the artist. Works such as Boldini's *Ballerina e schizzo di gamba* echo Degas' *Danseuse Espagnole et Etudes de Jambes* in the larger study of the dancer, alongside a more nuanced study of her leg on point. (Figures A331, A412) Other works, such as *Dance Step* more directly channel works by Degas, such as *The Green Dancer*.³⁹ (Figures A413-414) Regardless of the source of inspiration, be it through Degas, or of his own volition, Boldini made unique works featuring the ballerinas, works such as

³⁸ In the bottom left of the Zandomeneghi composition is the notation: "Z d'après Degas"

³⁹ Ann Dumas, ed., *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi* (Ferrara: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 294.

Ballerine in tutu in which he utilizes his loose brushwork, favored in his society portraiture, to create a sense of the frilled sumptuousness of their costumes, as they wait backstage before a performance. (Figure A415)

Boldini was drawn to dancers as subject matter because they provided him the opportunity to explore costumes and movement in a more pronounced manner than did society portraits. Studies such as *Figure di Ballerini* provide for him a study of the vectors of movement, these vectors are so pronounced that the image itself becomes an abstracted analogy of the dance. (Figure A416) Sketches such as this were translated into full scale works that teem with potential energy, ready to spill outside the confines of the canvas. (Figure A417) *Scena di ballo* gives the barest hint of its subject matter, this time a pair of elegant dancers in eveningwear on the dance floor. Boldini chooses to focus on the tangential lines created by the moving evening dress as she dances with her partner. The concept of depicting women in the moment of dance is taken up again the following year in his *Ballo alla colonnade di Versailles*, here a group of women dance together near the colonnade of Versailles. (Figure A418) The background is alluded to, while the women are lost in the swirls of their rapidly shifting dresses. This idea is transformed into a frieze, reminiscent of Degas' *Frieze of Dancers*, in Boldini's *Interno elegante con figure in movimento (Studio per l'Opera)*. (Figure A419) Here the loose brushwork functions as a study for a larger work, but the subject matter and dimensions is compositionally similar to Degas' work. While Degas focuses on the contours of the dancers form, freezing them in a moment of preparation, Boldini shifts his attention to capturing on canvas the motions of movement itself.

Horses and Races

Another area of overlap was in the depiction of another modern spectacle: the horse race. Similar to the impulse to record the crowds at the opera house and the social discourse taking place around the event, works such as De Nittis' *Racetrack at Longchamps*, and its study, *Racing at Longchamp* ignore the minutiae of the jockeys, favoring instead the larger spectacle of the races. (Figures A420-421) Echoing the style of Renoir's *Moulin de la Galette*, De Nittis continues this interest in the spectators and their social maneuvers in his *Return from the Races*, which depicts the leisured voyeurism practiced by the bourgeois as they slowly make their way back from Longchamp, stopping to converse and at shaded tables along the way, as others pass ahead in carriages. (Figure A422) The work is similar in its subject matter to Degas' *Carriage at the Races*, but where Degas utilizes the setting as an exercise in composition, cropping the carriage in the foreground, while quickly telescoping to the comparatively small figures in the background, De Nittis takes a more even-handed view of a similar scene. (Figure A423) It is clear that a record of the social maneuverings was the intent of De Nittis, while Degas was utilizing the subject matter as an excuse to investigate more process-based ideas of composition.

De Nittis was particularly interested, like Degas, in translating the transient moment into a polished work, as exemplified in his large triptych devoted to the subject, *At the Races, Auteuil*. (Figure A424) Like his other works on the subject, the focus is directed away from the central action to the spectacle surrounding the action. In the left panel, the woman climbs upon the chair, a very unladylike behavior, on order to garner a better glimpse of the horses as they pass. In the central panel there is a sense of moment, the recording of a transient moment, as the woman kicks out her right foot to regain

balance after the chair on which she leans bends backwards too quickly. The right panel finds genesis in works such as Caillebotte's *A Balcony*, focusing on the figures themselves voyeurs, removed above the commotion of the spectacle on a balcony, silently witnessing the scene.⁴⁰ De Nittis makes other references to his Impressionist contemporaries in the masterpiece, the veiled figure in the center looks much like figure drinking from glass in Renoir's *Luncheon of the Boating Party*, creating a dialogue with the viewer, as the paper and umbrella on the chair lead the eye into the scene, much in the same manner as the newspaper in Degas' *Absinthe Drinker*.⁴¹

De Nittis's *Return from the Races* finds a similarity to Boldini's *Highway of Combes-La Ville* from the same period. (Figure A425) The grouping of birch trees speaks to the influence of the Barbizon school while the emphasis on the passengers on the road speaks to a similar construct as De Nittis' work. Its strong use of perspectival orthogonals also gives a compositional nod to the contemporaneous urban street tradition favored by De Nittis and Signorini. Boldini was not as interested as Degas and De Nittis in the spectacle of the race, rather he was drawn to repeatedly sketch horses in another vital part of modern life, their role as a mode of transportation, pulling carriages.⁴² In his well practiced manner, Boldini was particularly drawn to study the tangential component of motion, exemplified in works such as *Hansom Cabs*, a sketch that he created while in New York City. (Figure A426) The work is similar to a sketch in one of Degas' notebooks. (Figure A427) Taking his cues from a number of studies, and the cropped

⁴⁰ Gustave Caillebotte, *A Balcony*, 1880, Oil on canvas, Private Collection

⁴¹ Auguste Renoir, *Luncheon of the Boating Party*, 1880-81, Oil on canvas, The Phillips Collection, Washington DC; Edgar Degas, *The Absinthe Drinker*, 1875-76, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay

⁴² Exemplified in the plethora of sketches devoted to the topic, such as Giovanni Boldini, *Studio di cavalli*, Pencil on paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara

aesthetics of Japonisme and photography, Boldini created *Figure e due cavallo bianci (le pont saints-pères)*. (Figure A428) Like Degas and De Nittis' volley of images depicting the novel urban space, Boldini throws his hat into the ring with this work, focusing on the harried movement of the city, even in its cropped composition, it does not stand still.

Bathers

Zandomeneghi's *The Tub* was directly influenced by Degas' pastels of women at their toilette. (Figure A429) This particular composition, with its crouching pose, high viewpoint, circular tub and flattened composition, specifically recalls Degas' *The Tub* from the same period. (Figure A430) The subject and composition may have been inspired by Degas' pastels, but where Degas was depicting female bathers in an unflattering light, Zandomeneghi was more akin to Renoir in relishing the curvaceous and sensual female form, particularly exemplified in his *Woman Drying Herself*. (Figure A431)

Other artists were also influenced by Degas' forays into the intimacy of the toilette and its translation into two dimensions. De Nittis' *Studio di donna con busto* resonates with Degas' images of bathers in the emphasis on the informality of intimacy. (Figure A432) Signorini's *La toilette del mattino* plays on this tradition by creating a larger genre scene of the concept. (Figures A433-434) Other works by Boldini also draw on this vein, but instead of depicting an unknown girl, he pushes the envelope by portraying a known member of society in her toilette. Exemplified in images such as *La Contessa de Rasty intent ad asciugarsi*, Boldini not only creates a portrait of the intimate genre scene, but he imbues these images with an overt sexuality not seen in Degas' works. (Figure A435) Boldini's canvases provide the opportunity for unimpeded

voyeurism on the part of the viewer, and Boldini in the process of creation. This voyeurism is more restrained at in Degas' oeuvre, but the references to female sexuality are never as overt as in Boldini's. Highly sexually charged sketches such as Boldini's *Solitary Pleasure*, depicting an intimate moment of self-pleasure, may have been in the mind of Degas, but never made it to paper.⁴³ (Figure A436)

Experimentation in Media

In his later years, Degas would often lament what he saw as a gradual loss of knowledge of the fundamental techniques of painting, stating, "This difficult trade of ours, the one we ply unwittingly...these techniques that David knew, he who was a student of Vien, dean of the Académie des Beaux-Arts, techniques forgotten by painters at the outset of the century."⁴⁴ Such a statement belies a fundamental part of Degas' oeuvre, a fascination with the technical aspects of the process – understanding how and why a medium works the way that it does. Of course such an attitude was at times contradictory because Degas also, in the name of experimentation, irreverently mixed media, which in some cases brought about their quick disintegration.⁴⁵ It should not surprise the reader that Degas approached process with such contradictory impulses, as he approached his art in the same manner – playing off academic tradition while experimenting with contemporaneous themes. Reff points out that the experimental method was considered a sign of intellectual achievement, exemplified in the critical essays of Taine, the novels of the Goncourts, Zola and others whom Degas knew, and Rouart was an engineer and one of his closest friends, thus it would not be surprising to

⁴³ At least not to any images that survived.

⁴⁴ Georges Jeannot, "Souvenirs Sur Degas," *La Revue Universelle* LV (15 October 1933): 167.

⁴⁵ Anne F. Maheux, *Degas Pastels* (Ottawa: National Gallery of Canada, 1988), 78-79 n20.

see Degas apply empirical concepts to his own oeuvre.⁴⁶ Reff develops this train of thought, emphasizing the commitment to the exploration of media, both in the traditional and non-traditional manners:

Underlying these contradictions in Degas's attitude was a more fundamental contradiction in his creative personality. In addition to the artist and the writer, there was in him something of the amateur scientist and inventor, who drew on the progressive currents in his culture to achieve some remarkable innovations in artistic technique. Yet there was also something of the disenchanting dreamer and reactionary, who regretted the disappearance of time-honored methods and who, despite the expert advice of friends, allowed many of his works to be disfigured by a curious indifference to material requirements.⁴⁷

This bivalent attitude of reverence and irreverence is expressed by Degas himself in a comment to Rouart in which he asserted that there was, “à propos de certaine anarchie actuelle et de la technique admirable des anciens, ‘Il faudra redevenir esclaves.’”⁴⁸ Degas' attention to process and experimentation captured the attention of the younger generation of Parisian artists, as Vollard confirms, “If the impressionists did not easily find favor with Degas, the younger artists, on the other hand, interested him on account of their experiments in design.”⁴⁹ An investigation into Degas' oeuvre today often creates problems for the curator in the attempt to identify each technique applied to a particular work, as he often interwove media as he saw fit, often also experimenting in lesser known, or completely novel uses and nuances of established media. Examples include his use of peinture à la colle, or distemper made of pigment, water and glue,

⁴⁶ See Theodore Reff, "Degas and the Literature of His Time - I," *The Burlington Magazine* 112, no. 810 (1970).

⁴⁷ Theodore Reff, "The Technical Aspects of Degas's Art," *Metropolitan Museum Journal* 4 (1971): 141.

⁴⁸ G. Rouault, *Souvenirs intimes* (Paris, 1927), 99. Quoted from Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ambroise Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, trans. Violet M. MacDonald (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), 90.

which prior to Degas' adaptation, was often associated with stage sets. The medium is often distinguished today by the 'tidemark' around the area, perhaps the glue medium haloing around the pigment. Another example is his use of a medium he calls *peinture à l'essence*, in which he would soak oil out of paint, and then dilute the pigment with turpentine. The process creates a matte, chalky appearance to the finished product.⁵⁰

Sculpture

In his seminal 1908 treatise on Modernism, Julius Meier-Graefe writes that Medardo Rosso:

represents a great intelligence; he is a man who has been able to free himself from all those hereditary conceptions which are wont to be sources of unconscious inspiration – perhaps because he never felt them as strongly as others – whose perceptions have perhaps been keener than those of any of his predecessors, and who has had the courage to act upon them; the only artist in our time who has not been depressed by compromise, and who deserves all reverence because he has perhaps sacrificed himself for others.⁵¹

Taking the opposite tack to Degas, Rosso's oeuvre works to concurrently overturn and undermine the sense of tradition of the canon. He was said to have referred to Greek and Roman sculpture as 'nothing but paperweights' and the beard on Michelangelo's *Moses* as 'Neapolitan spaghetti.'⁵² Concurrently, the oeuvre, according to at least one turn of the century critic, speaks to the nationalistic tradition of Italian sculpture, a ponderous emphasis of the ideals and pedestals of genius:

Rosso is Italian....All the fresh and endearing vivacity of his lovely race can be found in the expressions of certain of his heads, and the savagery of the affections

⁵⁰ For more on Degas' experiments in process see Maheux, *Degas Pastels*.

⁵¹ Julius Meier-Graefe, *Modern Art Being a Contribution to a New System of Aesthetics*, trans. Florence Simmonds and George W. Chrystal, 2 vols., vol. 2 (New York; London: G.P. Putnam's Sons; William Heinemann, 1908), 22-23.

⁵² "Rosso Re-Evaluated," *Time*, 11 October 1963.

of a warm-climate and tortuous country is rendered with an ancient force, in the kiss of this mother who holds her bambino within her arms, so lifelike that one has to go back to Donatello to find something to compare it with...It is all Italy, and all the Italian sculpture, going all the way back from Gemitto to Michelangelo, to Jacopo della Quercia, on back to Rome.⁵³

Born in Turin in 1858, Rosso moved to Milan in 1870 with his family, when his father – a station master – was transferred to the city. (Figure A437) Between 1875 and 1879 he attended the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, and after military service, reenrolled in the program in 1882. He also became involved with the Lombard cultural movement of Scapigliatura which opposed components of the prevailing modes of Academicism, both in directness of technique and an emphasis on Realism in subject matter.

The following year he was expelled from the Academy, but not because of the infamous petition that critiqued the Academic system, as has become part of the art historical myth. Rather his expulsion was the result of repeated disciplinary infractions, including fighting with other students, which were not instituted because the students refused to sign the petition, as per previous literature. In the petition, Rosso and his compatriots make three requests, including that the cardboard models used in the Scuola di Anatomia be replaced with ‘il vero, come si pratica nelle Accademie [di Roma e di Firenze]’ – i.e. real body parts, not live models. The Academy at Brera suspended the practice in 1875 after eight students were infected with small pox due to a poorly-prepared corpse. The Academy replaced the cadavers with papier-mâché models. Hecker clarifies an important point: in his petition, Rosso did not request anything anti-

⁵³ Ardengo Soffici, Review of the 1904 Salon d’Autome published in *Europe Artiste* October-November 1904. Quoted in Francesca Bardazzi, *Cezanne in Florence : Two Collectors and the 1910 Exhibition of Impressionism*, 1. ed. (Milano: Electa, 2007), 157.

Academic, instead he wanted a return to Academic practices common at other Italian schools. In another part of the petition Rosso requests live models of both sexes and ages at the Scuola del Nudo for a large number of hours each day ('modelli di uomo, donna e ragazzi, retta coi Regolamenti in corso a Roma e Firenze'). Rosso was a bit confused on the details of the Academies in Rome and Florence. In fact, the Florentine Academy confined itself to male models that sat for two hours daily. In Rome they were available for six hours and models were members of both sexes.⁵⁴ Thus, like Degas, Rosso was working from the model of the Academic system, but approaching it on his own terms.

In 1884 Rosso made his first trip to Paris. It is not documented, but scholarship suggests that perhaps during this trip that Rosso worked in Jacques Dalou's studio and met Rodin for the first time.⁵⁵ His mother passed away in November and as a result Rosso returned home to Milan and attempted to set roots in Italy. Even after his return to Milan, he continued to exhibit in Paris, showing *Il Bersagliere* in the 1885 Salon, and taking part in the 1886 Salon and the Salon des Indépendants. In 1889 he left his wife and child in Italy and established himself permanently in Paris. That same year he exhibited five bronzes in the Exposition Universelle. In 1890 he established relations with the dealer Georges Petit, at whose gallery he exhibited three works, including *Il Malato all'ospedale*. In 1902 Rosso was naturalized as a French citizen.

Rosso would build up figures first in clay, then either cast in bronze or plaster. The plaster would then be covered with translucent wax that he could further edit. The process was almost performative in its nature, often created in the presence of writer,

⁵⁴ See Sharon Hecker, "Ambivalent Bodies: Medardo Rosso's Brera Petition," *The Burlington Magazine* 142, no. 1173 (December 2000).

⁵⁵ Camille de Sainte-Croix, "Medardo Rosso," *Mercure de France* 75 (March 1896).

poets, artists, critics and potential clients in a mini-foundry in his Montmartre studio. His working methods were very radical, giving new status to the medium of wax, he concurrently circumvented many held rules about the process of casting, including abolishing the maquette, exploring systems of polychromy, adding or leaving molding material on the finished works, and suppressing authorship through an avoidance of signing or dating his works.⁵⁶

Wax was not considered to be a medium worthy of high art; it was utilized in crèches, religious ex-votos, anatomical and botanical models, small portrait medallions, preparatory maquettes, as an intermediary material in the lost-wax technique and museums such as Madame Tussaud's. In her discussion of the use of the material in Rosso's oeuvre, Hecker points to the Pygmalion myth, specifically the point when the sculptor touches the statue noting that it does not evoke ivory, but instead warm wax:

yielded, submitting to his caress as wax softens
when it is warmed by the sun, and handled by fingers,
takes on many forms, and being used, becomes useful.⁵⁷

Hecker notes that:

Ovid's observation that wax becomes 'more pliant as one plies it' suggests wax's capacity for *reciprocity* and the ease with which the softened material can *enter into a relationship, a responsive dialogue*, with the artist or viewer with whom it engages via touch or sign, physically or visually. Wax can take an impression and is easily *receptive* to form.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Harry Cooper and Sharon Hecker, *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), viii

⁵⁷ Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Charles Martin (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., Inc., 2004), 351. lines 358-60.

⁵⁸ Sharon Hecker, "Fleeting Revelations: The Demise of Duration in Medardo Rosso's Wax Sculpture," in *Ephemeral Bodies: Wax Sculpture and the Human Figure*, ed. Roberta Panzanelli (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2008), 136.

Rosso utilized “wax’s mobility to signal indeterminate, evanescent visual conditions,”⁵⁹ providing the opportunity to create a quality of softness in his works that was hitherto untapped in the medium, as if the works were modeled out of light itself. The trait was emphasized by the fact that he barely modeled his subjects, creating fleeting ‘impressions’, as he called them.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Rosso emphasizes issues of process through his use of the material. As Licht points out, Rosso’s use of wax:

...interrupted the customary elaboration of sculpture just before [the] final decision [casting it into bronze], and thus introduced an element of suspense. At this stage, the sculpture is still capable of growth and change...all options remain open. This sense of latency is underscored by the deliberately vague and fluent modeling.⁶¹

Rosso’s intention, with his use of wax and his process of creation, was hypocritical in its attempt to reconcile the intellectual and material realities of his oeuvre. Writing once, “for me the most important thing is to make the spectator forget the material of a work of art.”⁶² Of course this idea of ‘fait oublier la matière,’ was not one of his own invention. As Hecker points out, he instead took it from Charles Morice’s review of his work: “By force of mastery, he forgets and makes us forget the material, the form itself, in order to give us, more clearly, more intensely, *more solely*, the expression! To put into the work nothing but *the essential*.”⁶³ In studies of Rosso’s oeuvre such

⁵⁹ Ibid., 137.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 134.

⁶¹ Fred Licht, "Origins of Modern Sculpture," in *Chiseled with a Brush: Italian Sculpture 1860-1925 from the Gilgore Collection*, ed. Ian Wardropper (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1994), 24.

⁶² Quoted from an exhibition pamphlet from *Medardo Rosso*, a National Touring Exhibition from South Bank Centre London, 1994. Medardo Rosso, "Artist File : Miscellaneous Uncataloged Material," (Museum of Modern Art, New York).

⁶³ Charles Morice, “Les passants: Medardo Rosso,” *Le Soir*, 25 September 1895. Quoted from Hecker, "Fleeting Revelations: The Demise of Duration in Medardo Rosso's Wax Sculpture," 150 n23.

intentions are often misconceived, as scholars take the statement to mean that “the artist struggled to overcome the limits of materiality and representational form and that by doing so he realized sculpture to a higher, abstract level.” Rather, as Hecker suggests, “Rosso drove materiality to such a low point that in his sculptures wax could be *seen through and not act like a material at all*. Wax, as an inferior material, could almost disappear from the viewer’s perception.”⁶⁴ Rosso created this opportunity for a dematerialized presence of material by subverting the traditional primary signifiers of sculpture: particularly the articulation of the human form and the emphasis on a well modeled process.⁶⁵

Rosso declared, on multiple occasions that his entire sculptural effort was inspired by Baudelaire’s complaint in “The Salon of 1846”:

[Sculpture] exhibits too many surfaces at once. It is in vain that the sculptor forces himself to take up a unique point of view, for the spectator who moves around the figure can choose a hundred different points of view, except for the right one...A picture, however, is only what it means to be; there is no other way of looking at it than on its own terms.⁶⁶

Heeding Baudelaire’s call, Rosso intended for his sculptures to be viewed from a particular side, oftentimes a specific viewpoint, but as soon as this pictorial quality was achieved, Rosso grew ambivalent towards it. For the last twenty years of his life, Rosso became so obsessed with this idea of the process of reproduction and viewpoint, that he modeled no new subjects, rather he focused his creative attention towards recasting old

⁶⁴ Ibid., 140.

⁶⁵ Sharon Haya Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture" (University of California, Berkeley, 1999), 37.

⁶⁶ Quoted from Harry Cooper, "Ecce Rosso!," in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*, ed. Harry Cooper and Sharon Hecker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 4

motifs in novel ways. Like his Impressionist contemporaries, Becker emphasizes that Rosso's sculptures 'evoke movement' and 'stress the passage of time', evoking an activated space in use of light and composition, reworking the same themes again and again.⁶⁷

Such a focus is consistent with Degas' working method, returning again and again to the same subjects, studying them to create novel ways of seeing through a thorough study of the mundane. Degas' *Portrait of Martelli* and its associated sketches correspond to a passage written in one of Degas' notebooks from the period: "Studio projects: install tiers all around the room to get used to drawing things from below and above."⁶⁸ As Charles Stuckey notes:

...observations made from these viewpoints unfamiliar from everyday life helped Degas avoid the 'blindness' that comes from routine and thus helped him maintain his originality. Just as important, Degas realized that familiar objects represented from unfamiliar viewpoints can reveal abstract patterns of form and color and transcend mere Realism.⁶⁹

Issues of nationalism played a role in Rosso's critical fortunes, even during his lifetime, especially after his naturalization as a French citizen and his return to Milan in the last years of his life. Giuseppe Prezzolini mused, "Allora che cosa sarà domain se morisse il Rosso? Che cosa sarebbe? Un francese o un italiano?"⁷⁰ Because of the strong tendency towards 'Rodin-ophilia' in French art historical literature, there has never been an interest in the artist on the part of French scholars. In addition, his works are often

⁶⁷ Jane R. Becker, "'Only One Art': The Interaction of Painting and Sculpture in the Work of Medardo Rosso, Auguste Rodin, and Eugene Carriere, 1884-1906" (Ph.D., New York University, 1998), 1.

⁶⁸ Nb. 30, p. 210

⁶⁹ Charles Stuckey, "Degas as an Artist; Revised and Still Unfinished," in *Degas : Form and Space*, ed. Maurice Guillaud (Paris ; New York: Centre culturel du Marais, 1984), 45.

⁷⁰ Quoted from Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 8.

termed ‘impressionistic sculpture’, which Rosso cultivated by calling his sculptures ‘impressions’ both in Italy and in France without specifying his exact meaning of the term. Further complicating the issue was that he used the term that was often associated with painting in order to describe a sculpture, perhaps proving his point of moving beyond the medium.⁷¹ Hecker attempts to simplify the complicated relationship between Rosso and his adopted France in her discussion of his use of the term, which according to her:

...raises practical and intellectual question about the role of national identity in visual representation in the late nineteenth-century. His move to Paris decenters the idea of cultural boundaries and renders fluid the notion of ‘homeland’ and ‘place’ as the site of meaning for the construction of an artistic self. His use of the French-identified word ‘impression’ contrasts with the habits of foreign artists in Paris who flaunted the signs of their homeland (Diego Rivera is one noted example) to gain the status of exotic outsiders.⁷²

His reputation in Paris was exacerbated, at least according to Knud Verlow, who knew Rosso during World War One, by his social inabilities in the appropriate Parisian social circles. He reminisces that Rosso, “lacked worldliness, polish, and quick wit or the extreme originality of manner and conduct that were then necessary to overcome the Parisian xenophobia. Talent was not enough. Rosso was a rough diamond...”⁷³

In Italy, there was an attempt to reclaim the artist at Italian in 1910 by Ardengo Soffici, but as Hecker points out, “in order to position Italy in the larger European modernist movement, Soffici promoted Rosso as a French-inspired and internationally

⁷¹ Sharon Hecker, "Reflections on Repetition in Rosso's Art," in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*, ed. Harry Cooper and Sharon Hecker (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 27

⁷² Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 149.

⁷³ Margaret Scolari Barr, ed., *Medardo Rosso* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1963), 30.

oriented artist, a claim that has caused much uneasiness for Italian art history ever since.” Soffici saw no contradiction in this positioning of Rosso, but was attacked by Ugo Ojetti for his Francophile orientation of the sculptor. Boccioni buttressed Soffici’s claims through his *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* (1923), in which he characterized Rosso as the “only great modern sculptor who tried to expand the horizons of sculpture by rendering in plastic form the effects of the environment upon the subject, as well as the ties that bind it to the surrounding atmosphere.”⁷⁴ This endorsement by the Futurists this has never sat well with Rosso scholars because Rosso opposed the entirety of the Futurist endeavor.⁷⁵ She concludes that Rosso, “gleaned the major problems of sculpture through his knowledge of avant-garde developments in Paris, but the new framework he proposed ultimately remained independent of either French or Italian art.”⁷⁶

Upon his arrival in Paris, Rosso was befriended by Henri Rouart, who purchased two works by the sculptor, *Gavroche* and *Enfant juif*.⁷⁷ Louis Rouart, Henri’s son and husband of Julie Manet, sheds light upon this fortunate crossing of paths:

Every day my father passed by the shop of a little picture dealer named Thomas opposite the church of St.-Augustin. One day, attracted by a sculpture, he went in to ask the name of its author. Thomas told him that it was by a poor Italian sculptor named Rosso, now sick in the hospital.

My father went to see him, had him cared for, and when he was cured, took him to his workshop on the Boulevard Voltaire.

⁷⁴Quoted from exhibition pamphlet from *Medardo Rosso*, a National Touring Exhibition from South Bank Centre London, 1994. Rosso, "Artist File : Miscellaneous Uncataloged Material."

⁷⁵ Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 8.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

⁷⁷ An article for *Les Arts* on the collections of Henri Rouart mentions that his sculptures are present in the collection. See: Alexandre Arsene, "La Collection De M. Henri Rouart," *Les Arts: revue mensuelle des musées, collections exposition* 1, no. 3 (April 1902): 16.

There he was able to cast and had every facility to use a furnace to pour his bronzes. He had him do some portraits, he executed some very nice waxes now much sought after in Italy.”⁷⁸

Building on this relationship, and supposedly on the advice of Degas, Rouart commissioned Rosso to create his portrait in 1889-90. This action created a seal of approval on the artist and reaffirmed his ‘discovery’ of the young talent.⁷⁹ Rosso commented on Rouart’s reaction to the portrait: “Rouart aime son portrait. Un peu tard mais enfin – il veut pas me le lever”⁸⁰ A comparison of Rosso’s and Degas’ portraits of Rouart provide the opportunity, not to see how each artist approached the sitter, but rather investigate how each approached the genre of portraiture through his chosen medium. (Figures A438-439) Degas’ work sets his friend in front of one of his factories. Rouart is seen in profile, clearly occupying a different pictorial space from the factory, which functions almost as a stage set, in order to establish the tone: somber and studied. Rosso’s portrait, by contrast, utilizes the commission as an opportunity to further his studies on the deconstruction of media in sculpture, creating a planar sculpture.⁸¹

Hecker points out that little is really known about the relationship between Degas and Rosso, but adds that Degas was “an artist who also played with codes of privacy in his professional persona, [and] would have greatly appealed to Rosso’s sensibilities as

⁷⁸ Reproduced in Barr, ed., *Medardo Rosso*, 30.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Quoted from Di Maio and Lafranconi, *Galleria Nazionale D'arte Moderna: Le Collezioni: Il XIX Secolo*, 295.

⁸¹ Another related work is Rosso’s *Bookmaker (L’Homme de Courses)*, a portrait of Eugène Marin, who succeeded Rouart as director of the foundry where Rosso cast his sculptures. Marin was also passionate about horseracing and would often be found at Auteuil where he would meet up with Degas and Rosso. The work, intended to only be seen from the planar frontal view, depicts Marin seated atop a rock, leaning on a cane wearing a top hat. Ibid., 291.

well as his anxieties about public exposure.”⁸² What is known, is that Degas’ and Rosso’s relationship was not one that was composed of polite conversation, perhaps fuelled by artistic difference, Rosso was to have said that Degas, “fu tra I suoi primi incoraggiatori”⁸³ But regardless of the disagreements, each had a respect for the other’s work, as noted in an Italian review of Rosso’s work, commending Degas for his early identification of talent in the oeuvre of Rosso: “...Degas, che primo a Parigi ammirò e sostenne il nostro Rosso.”⁸⁴

An anecdotal story is often repeated to simultaneously epitomize their relationship and Rosso’s attempts at achieving formal ‘dematerialization’ by means of light through Degas’ reaction to Rosso’s *Impression of an Omnibus*, the iconography of which recalls Daumier's *Third-class Railway Carriage* and that which is discussed in Gourdon’s *Physiologie de l’omnibus*.⁸⁵ (Figure A440) The work depicted five half length figures that are fused together with no formal demarcations between them. The work was a private experiment, but Rosso intended to show the work at a national exhibition. The plaster version of the work was destroyed in transit to Venice in 1887, and the only evidence that remains is the photograph that Rosso took, which he showed to Zola and Edmond de Goncourt in 1889, Degas in the early 1890s and to Meier-Graefe at the turn of the century. According to the story, when Degas saw the photograph, he mistook it for a photograph of a painting. Rosso felt he had finally been understood. As Hecker points out

⁸² Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 147.

⁸³ Placci, *Journal*, 1907. Quoted from Anne Pinget, "Degas E Medardo Rosso," in *Degas E Gli Italiani a Parigi*, ed. Ann Dumas (Ferrara, Italy: Ferrara Arte, 2003), 110.

⁸⁴ Editorial in *La Voce*, 28 April 1910. Quoted from Ibid.

⁸⁵ Honoré Daumier, *Third-class Railway Carriage*, 1864, Lithograph, Printed in *Le Charivari*, University of California, San Diego; Édouard Gourdon, *Physiologie De L’omnibus* (Paris: Terry, 1841-42).

this “new portable form of exhibiting his elusive sculptural ‘monuments’ as re-embodied, two dimensional photographs played an integral role in shutting out the general public and instead generating a highly selective, privileged audience for his large-scale ‘public’ art.” In addition, crucial to the modernization of the medium, “through this gesture Rosso intimated that sculpture could exist and be significant without the object itself.”⁸⁶

In his *Petite danseuse de 14 ans*, Degas also created strides in modernizing the genre through the subversion of the idea that sculpture had to embody a large, highly visible physical space, made of traditional materials and be created by an established sculptor in order to be considered relevant to the medium. (Figure A441) The work, while its public life was short-lived - only exhibited once at the sixth Impressionist exhibition – is an example of private sculpture, which heeded Baudelaire and Zola’s cries to revolutionize the medium. Also like Rosso, Degas’ sculpture also uses a work of Daumier as its cognate: *Ratapoil*. (Figure A442) Through an exaggerated contrapposto that subverts traditional human pose, Daumier blurs the boundaries between humans and animals to evoke the political state. This diagonal posture was utilized by Degas in his *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, as well as in his pastels and prints of Mary Cassatt at the Louvre, and *Ludovic Halévy and Albert Boulanger-Cave in the Wings of the Opera* in the pose of Halévy.⁸⁷ In the latter two works, Degas balances the pose by the use of an umbrella, in the same manner as Daumier’s use of the cane in *Ratapoil*. Both Degas and Daumier, perhaps, utilize the pose in sculpture to create a negative connotation regarding the individual being presented.

⁸⁶ Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 97-98.

⁸⁷ Edgar Degas, *Ludovic Halévy and Albert Boulanger-Cave in the Wings of the Opera*, Pastel and distemper on paper, Musée d'Orsay

Rosso's *Après la visite* also toys with this idea of decentralized axes that emphasize the diagonal. (Figure A443) This work was created during the period when Rosso met Degas, and the former undertook a period of intense drawing activity, cropping and framing his drawings with an emphasis towards strong diagonals and their decentralized axes. The idea was later picked up in works including *Bookmaker*, *Uomo che legge*, *Bambino malato* and *Impression de Boulevard*. These works abandon the idea of a counterbalancing element to the pose, such as umbrellas and canes. Hecker proposes that these experiments by Daumier, Degas and Rosso should be considered:

...the first modern sculptures, because they challenged the concept of erectness, the basic anthropological stance of human beings, thereby questioning sculpture's age-old mimesis of the human body's notions of gravity. In thwarting gravity unrealistically, these works created a new, decentered relationship between the object and its surrounding space.⁸⁸

As mentioned previously, another procedural concept that drew the two together was the shared respect for the medium of sculpture while concurrently trying to undermine its boundaries. An interesting counterpoint to Rosso's interest in medium and process comes from Vollard's recollections of a conversation with Degas regarding bronze. He relates that one day he suggested that Degas have one of his sculptures cast, to which the artist responded: "Have it cast! Bronze is all right for those who work for eternity. My pleasure consists in beginning over and over again. Like this...Look!' He took an almost finished *Danseuse* from his modeling stand and rolled her into a ball of clay."⁸⁹ For Degas, sculpture became increasingly important as he progressed in age. At some point towards the end of the century, Degas singled out three of his wax or clay

⁸⁸ Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 165.

⁸⁹ Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, 251.

models, *Dancer looking at the sole of her right foot*, *Spanish dance*, and *Woman rubbing her back with a sponge*, torso, and had them professionally translated into plaster and installed next to his Barye bronzes and Bartholomé plasters in his home.⁹⁰ Durand-Ruel summed up Degas' fascination with the medium in 1919 when he remembered that "whenever I called on Degas, I was almost as sure to find him modeling clay as painting."⁹¹

Degas and Rosso both shared in an interest of the transience of materials and their translation beyond the medium through other means.⁹² For Rosso it was the translation of his works into photographic tableaux, while Degas moved beyond this, experimenting with the transient effects of light installations. Walter Sickert elucidates: "I remember the last time I was in the studio upstairs in Rue Victor Massé, he showed me a little statuette of a dancer he had on the stocks, and – it was night – he held a candle up, and turned the statuette to show me the succession of shadows cast by its silhouettes on a white sheet."⁹³ This effect was recreated by John Sillevs in the exhibition *De tijd von Degas* in 2002.⁹⁴ (Figure A444)

An additional point of overlap is Rosso's shift to the use of wax as a medium in the 1880s. A tentative exploration in works such as *Carne altrui* or *Portinaia* is traditionally linked to the influence of the sculptures of Giuseppe Grandi and the

⁹⁰ For a discussion of these see Richard Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism* (London: National Gallery Publications Ltd. , 1996), 33-35.

⁹¹ Quoted from *Ibid.*, 35.

⁹² Pingeot, "Degas E Medardo Rosso," 107.

⁹³ Walter Sickert, "Degas," *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* 31, no. 176 (1917): 185.

⁹⁴ John Sillevs, *De tijd van Degas*, Gemeentemuseum de l'Aia, 2002. Reproduced in Pingeot, "Degas E Medardo Rosso," 108.

atmospheric paintings of Cremona and Ranzoni, but Hecker suggests that it is equally probable that the shift can be pinpointed to 1883 when Rosso became aware of Impressionist painting in France. The sculptures share a similar interest in the impressionistic, fleeting qualities of modern life. Word of Martelli's lectures given in Livorno in 1881, certainly would have reached Milan two years later, through articles published in Northern Italian journals and newspapers and friendships with individuals including Camillo Boito, Praga and the politician Felice Cavallotti. Hecker also points to Degas' *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, shown in the Sixth Impressionist Exhibition of 1881. The exhibition and Degas' *Dancer* in particular were covered in an extensive section in Huysmans' *L'Art moderne* (1883). The publication was reviewed in detail in the Milanese *La Domenica Letteraria* in December of 1883 by Vittorio Pica. Hecker is clear to point out that this shift, while perhaps inspired by French currents, was an independent one, dealing with different aesthetic concepts and "part of his search for further ways to question sculpture's material presence." She points out that the "personal nature of Rosso's decision to privilege wax is evident in his marked divergence from Degas' way of using it. By making his works appear as hazily-wrought forms, Rosso gave them a new visual unreadability that was not a concern of Degas in his sculpture (although interestingly it *was* an issue in his pastels)." Rosso emphasized the idea of illegibility through the erasure of all contextual information and visual markers of identity. She concludes that:

...in *L'Allucinato* Rosso had described a figure's hallucinatory experience in literal terms and in *La Riconoscenza* he had represented the same idea as a figure meditating on a void, now the works *themselves* began to look like the vaporous embodiments – or disembodied presences – of Rosso's imagination. Through his images of introversion, his removal of the human body in sculpture, his shift to wax, and his new modeling style, Rosso found a formula for 'entering' the

creative spaces of his earlier artistic hallucination that now could be represented in material form.⁹⁵

A final note of resonance between the oeuvres of Degas and Rosso can be seen in their parallel use of photography. While Degas' attention and exploration of the media will be discussed presently, Rosso utilized photography to present the 'correct' view of his work to the viewer, as well as forays into manipulating the background of his works in order to blur the boundaries between documentation of the sculpture through photography, and photography in its own right, exemplified in three sets of photographs of *The Bookmaker*.⁹⁶ (Figures A445-447) In the first trio of images, the sculpture is cropped in a close range composition, and seems to float in front of a nebulously neutral background. The work is cropped without its base, removing the sculptural context from the image, allowing the viewer to focus on formal aesthetics, without a consideration of medium. In addition, Rosso manipulates the exposure of each image, manipulating the focus and tonality in order to emphasize the medium of photography at the expense of the sculpture. In the second, the sculpture is more traditionally set up upon a pedestal inside Rosso's studio. As Hecker notes, the placement of the keys and various other objects on the shelf in the background has the exact opposite purpose of the previous images, the 'thingness' of the sculpture is emphasized and its materiality underlined.⁹⁷ The final image is the most interesting because of Rosso's use of the medium of paint to overtly

⁹⁵ Hecker, "Sculpture's Private Self: Medardo Rosso and the Role of the Imagination in Nineteenth-Century European Sculpture", 90-91.

⁹⁶ Quoted from exhibition pamphlet from *An Exhibition of Lifetime Sculpture and Photography by Medardo Rosso from the Years 1884 to 1928*, Kent, New York, 3 May-18 June 1997. Rosso, "Artist File : Miscellaneous Uncataloged Material." See also Exhibition pamphlet from *Medardo Rosso*, a National Touring Exhibition from South Bank Centre London, Rosso, "Artist File : Miscellaneous Uncataloged Material."1994.

⁹⁷ Hecker, "Reflections on Repetition in Rosso's Art," 46.

negate the sculpture. The highly underexposed, dark image of the sculpture is dematerialized by the contrasting thick frame of white paint, hastily painted around the image. Its off-center placement further destabilizes the composition and therefore creates a further sense of negation of the medium traditionally associated with permanence and stability.

Photography

Count Giuseppe Primoli was an Italian photographer born into a family with Bonaparte connections. He was born in Paris and lived there until 1870 when the fall of Napoleon III caused him to move to Rome. He and his brother Luigi became very proficient in recording contemporaneous life through the freedom of the hand held camera in a style that was unposed and reportorial in style. In Paris his work included many members of intelligentsia including Théophile Gautier and Alexandre Dumas, fils. This group also includes six snapshots that include Degas.⁹⁸ (Figure A448) The photographs, which include between two and four other figures in the social group, find Degas strolling the streets of Paris, stepping outside of a building to have a cigarette, or entering and leaving doorways along the street. The moments themselves are insignificant and, as such capture mundane moments similar to a number of Degas' own works.

⁹⁸ See also: Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Edgar Degas, Jacques Normand, M.me J. Normand*, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 86; Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Gabrielle Réju detta Réjane alcuni gentiluomini in rue de Rougemont, nei pressi del Boulevard du Conservatoire . Dietro si scorge Edgar Degas*, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 88; Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Degas esce in strada nei pressi del Boulevard du Conservatoire*, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 4338; Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Gabrielle Réju detta Réjane in rue de Rougemont, nei pressi del Boulevard du Conservatoire. Nel vano della porta, sulla destra, Edgar Degas*, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 92; Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi Gabrielle Réju detta Réjane in rue de Rougemont, nei pressi del Boulevard du Conservatoire. Nel vano della porta, sulla destra, Edgar Degas*, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 112

Primioli's works were formal cognates of a number of other contemporaneous modes of aesthetics and subject matter, particularly Impressionist works, which of course were in turn dialoguing with the medium of photography. Works such as his *Parigi un viale con il via vai quotidiano* echoes works such as Caillebotte's *Paris, A Rainy Day* in its use of Haussmann's façades to emphasize the recessional orthogonals, while *Parigi. Gabrielle Réju detta Réjane (al centro , nel palco di prima fila) assiste nella sala dell'Ancien Conservatoire de Musique ai concorsi del Conservatorio* picks up on the aforementioned Impressionist impetus to record the spectacle of the Opera. (Figures A449-450) Some works were even more overt, such as his *La Nana romana* which overtly references both the Manet painting and the Zola novel that share its name.⁹⁹ (Figure A451) *Parigi. A passeggio sul Pont de la Concorde. Sullo sfondo Place de la Concorde*, like Degas' *Place de la Concorde* plays on the tradition of noticing the flâneur, who wanders through the streets normally unseen. (Figure A452) A particular resonance is seen between De Nittis' *Racetrack at Longchamp* and *At the Races at Auteuil* and Primioli's images of Longchamp, suggestive of the veracity attained by both artists in their compositions. (Figures A453-455)

Primoli also created images in the tradition of the tableaux vivant, such as his *Roma. Tableau vivant a Villa Medici: l'Annunciazione* which echoes Degas and Barnes' *Apotheosis of Degas*, both images finding cognates in the tradition of Academic compositions. (Figures A232, A456) As mentioned before, Degas also dabbled in photography as a means of documentation, in a similar manner to Primoli in the series of snapshots of him and Bartholomé on their Burgundian voyage, works that were later

⁹⁹ Edouard Manet, *Nana*, 1877, Oil on canvas, Hamburger Kunsthalle

incorporated into a collage acting as a souvenir and record of their travels. (Figures A303-306) Degas' works such as *Degas in his salon* or *Degas and Bartholomé at rue Victor-Masse* have a similar snapshot quality to the photographs of Primoli, or for that matter, those of Signorini and Gioli. They also function like much of Degas' oeuvre, recording the mundane – figures sitting around in a salon passing the time. (Figures A300, A457) The former, in its placement of Degas' philosophical pose adjacent to Bartholomé's sculpture, finds cognate in Steichen's later work that places Rodin in near proximity to his thoughtful masterpiece, each seeming to ponder the other. (Figure A458)

Pastel

Pastels appeared in the fifteenth century in France and Italy, and their original role was one of accompaniment - to give extra color, but it gradually increased in importance, as artists began to experiment with the medium realized that through the combination of hatching, crushing, layering, blending basically any effect was possible. The downside to the medium is that pastels, which need a slightly rough, textured support, are very fragile when completed. There were two pastel revivals in the nineteenth century, in the 1830s and again in the 1880s. In 1835 the Salon, for the first time, designated the category of "Les aquarelles, pastels, dessins, etc." The 1830s also saw a proliferation of treatises that underscored how the medium involved working with an almost pure pigment and very little binder, which freed the user from the complications and alterations of pigment and tone through the use of colors bounded in oil. This resurgence in interest in the medium was only short-lived, however, because of the association with "le divertissement des demoiselles de bonne maison."¹⁰⁰ The second revival was spurred by an interest in

¹⁰⁰ Maheux, *Degas Pastels*, 18. See for example, Camille Flers, "Du pastel: de son application au paysage en particulier", *L'Artiste*, 23 August 1846, 113-116.

process and the flexibility of the medium, and the contemporaneous overlapping aesthetics of drawing and painting.¹⁰¹

Degas was drawn to the medium, which unites drawing with color, and began using them in early studies in the 1850s and 60s – at this point he utilized the medium in the ‘classic’ production sense, utilizing it in quick sketches and compositional studies. He returned to the medium in the 1880s, and used it almost exclusively from 1895 onwards. He also collected pastels by other artists, including works by Millet, created after 1865. Degas’ experimentation in the medium was an inspiration to his peers, as Manet was moved to create four pastels of women taking part in their morning toilette after seeing Degas’ pastels in the 1877 Impressionist exhibition. Degas created over seven hundred works in pastel. The freedom that the medium allowed the artist, allowing him to constantly rethink and rework his compositions, provided an answer to his perpetual dissatisfaction.¹⁰² Between his return from New Orleans in 1873 and 1881, over three-quarters of his oeuvre focused on a variety of media and experimentation. Through this process, pastel quickly became his favored medium, with 70% of his color work during this time at least partially completed with pastels. During the span he completed seventy-five paintings and over two-hundred and fifty works in pastel, gouache, distemper, mixed media and monotypes.¹⁰³ Degas’ pastels were quick and often small in scale – which provided easy income in his time of financial need. Other factors for his favoring of the medium included their immediacy and speed of execution, especially in relation to the

¹⁰¹ Christopher Thomson Richard Lloyd, *Impressionist Drawings: From British Public and Private Collections* (Oxford: Phaidon Press and the Arts Council, 1986), 15.

¹⁰² Maheux, *Degas Pastels*, 23.

¹⁰³ Anne Roquebert, "Edgar Degas Reinvents Pastel," in *Mystery and Glitter : Pastels in the Musée D'orsay* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux : Musée d'Orsay, 2008).

laborious and time consuming nature of oil painting, and the direct, bright tonalities would be easier for him to distinguish in his failing eyesight.¹⁰⁴

Degas would often experiment with the medium, pushing it to its limits, and often utilizing multiple techniques in a single composition. One example is when Degas would spray boiling water over pastel, which would turn the areas into a paste, which could then be spread with a paintbrush. The process created an intensification of the local color, and therefore was only used in areas that he wanted to highlight. Exemplified in the composition *Dancers in the Wings* in the pink tutu, the work also exhibits the possible use of distemper in floor and stage sets suggests a merging of media and subject matter, as distemper was commonly used in the production of theatrical materials.¹⁰⁵ (Figure A83) Rouart comments on Degas' combination of boiling water with pastel:

Naturally he was careful not to project the water vapour over the entire picture but rather reserved the original pastel in some places, which gave him a different facture for the various elements creating his work. The flesh of one dancer was not treated in the same manner as her tutu, and the scenery was of a different substance than the stage floor.¹⁰⁶

Other evidence of his constant interest in experimentation can be seen in a notebook reference to a 'pastel-savon' – pigments dispersed in water, glycerin and soda (sodium bicarbonate).¹⁰⁷ No evidence survives of use, but the very notation speaks volumes of his sustained interest in the process of art production and studio technique.¹⁰⁸ Other examples

¹⁰⁴ David Bomford, "Degas at Work," in *Degas, Art in the Making* (London: National Gallery Distributed by Yale University Press, 2004), 27.

¹⁰⁵ Maheux, *Degas Pastels*, 29.

¹⁰⁶ Denis Rouart, *Degas in Search of His Technique*, trans. Pia C. De Santis, Sarah L. Fisher, and Shelley Fletcher (New York: Rizzoli, 1988), 51.

¹⁰⁷ Nb 33 p 3, verso

¹⁰⁸ Maheux, *Degas Pastels*, 29.

of this experimentation in media include his use of pastel à l'eau, or pastel paste which is crushed and thinned with water, or gouache which contains slightly more binder than traditional pastels.

There is some disagreement as to who first took up the medium – Degas or De Nittis – but both are known for their use of the medium through an ambitious use of color, composition and large dimensions, combining academic techniques with modern subject matter and experimentation.¹⁰⁹ It is more likely that De Nittis took up the medium after being encouraged by Degas, as he began studying pastels in 1878 and his attempts were first shown in the Salon of 1880, where Renan notes that they held their own against watercolor and oil paintings.¹¹⁰ Regardless, De Nittis was very successful in his use of the medium; in his *La Vie à Paris*, Jules Claretie calls him “un Carpaccio moderne.”¹¹¹ Goncourt was particularly taken with De Nittis’ large scale pastels, writing, “De Nittis has in his studio some Parisian views, done in pastels, that bewitch me. There is a misty air of Paris the grey of the pavement, the diffuse silhouettes of passers-by.”¹¹² Such sentiments are echoed in a review of an exhibition of De Nittis’ pastels, after his death:

Vers 1880, De Nittis fut amené à se servir d’un nouveau moyen d’expression: le pastel ; et on serait tenté de dire qu’il aurait inventé le pastel, si la chose n’eût pas été connue déjà, comme d’autres auraient inventé la cire et la détrempe. Au point de vue de cet art délibérément moderne, en effet, le pastel offre une adaptation naturelle du moyen mis en œuvre avec le caractère de l’œuvre projetée. Le pastel

¹⁰⁹ The idea that De Nittis was the first to commit to a full exploration of the medium was put forward by Léontine De Nittis after her husband’s death.

¹¹⁰ Ary Renan, "Joseph De Nittis," *Gazette des Beaux Arts* (Novembre 1884): 402-03.

¹¹¹ Daniel Halévy, *My Friend Degas*, 1st American ed. (Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1964), 108.

¹¹² 23 February 1878. Edmond de Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal : Mémoires De La Vie Littéraire*, trans. Robert Ricatte, 22 vols., vol. 11 (Monaco: Éditions de l'imprimerie nationale de Monaco, 1956).

– impalpable poussière. – ne se prête pas au style ; il s’offre lui-même à qui cherche la simple grâce et la parfum des choses. Là, c’est plus que la main de l’artiste, c’est son doigt, c’est son épiderme le plus sensible qui est en contact avec l’œuvre. Un coup de pouce, - et tout est juste, les contrastes se pacifient, les plans lointains reculent, les saillies se modèlent : - un autre coup de pouce, - et tout disparaît on demeure à jamais fixé, si l’on peut dire à jamais en parlant de cet art fragile, de cet art à *fleur de peau*. D’ailleurs, le pastel n’a pas de prétentions ; il se prête à de *petits chefs-d’œuvre*, et vaut quelquefois par le négligé même avec lequel on l’a traité.¹¹³

Renan continues, discussing the debt owed by De Nittis to Degas in his mastery over the medium of pastel:

Mais je me trompe peut-être : Degas, dont le pense à parler depuis quelque temps déjà, Degas, l’adversaire de la grâce, poursuivant les grands silhouettes modernes d’une course impitoyable, Degas a trouvé dans le pastel les ressources d’un art primesautier. Sans doute, De Nittis lui doit beaucoup ; quoique, à côté des impérieuses et absolues tendances de Degas, qui ne sont pas encore pleinement justifiées devant le public, l’art de De Nittis se soit renfermé dans une sorte d’opportunisme spécieux et séduisant.¹¹⁴

This debt to Degas is often mentioned in the contemporaneous critical literature. Armand Silvestre writes, “Gli effetti di luce serale, così ricercati, oggi, particolarmente da Degas e de Jean Béraud.” He concludes that De Nittis is, “talento potentemente originale, superbo temperamento di colorista, meraviglioso disegnatore... Ecco che è compito suo regalarci, forse, un robusto rinnovamento.”¹¹⁵ Another example is in a review of an 1885 exhibition of Société des Pastellistes Français in Galerie Georges Petit. Octave Mirbeau on De Nittis: “M. de Nittis borrowed a great deal from Manet and especially Degas, but being

¹¹³ Renan, "Joseph De Nittis," 402.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Silvestre. Quoted in Piero Dini and Giuseppe Luigi Marini, *De Nittis: La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 2 vols., vol. 1, *Archivi Dell'ottocento*; (Torino: U. Allemandi, 1990), 184.

typically Italian, he dolled up with ribbons, and gentrified the abstract art and unflinching logic these stern artists put into their paintings.”¹¹⁶

Many sources suggest that Degas’ shift to using tracing paper in both a corrective and then innovative manner can be traced to Luigi Chialiva’s studio.¹¹⁷ Chialiva, an Italian by descent, was born in Caslano, Switzerland, just over the border from Italy. It was in his studio where Degas saw the architectural drawings of Chialiva’s son, where Chialiva had made corrections using tracing paper, c. 1895-97.¹¹⁸ This story comes from Chialiva’s son’s reminiscences, and as such seems to suggest a bit of ‘ancestor worship.’¹¹⁹ It is perhaps true that Chialiva’s corrections did have an effect on Degas’ oeuvre, but it is difficult to believe that such an experience lead to such a radical shift. Furthermore, such a blanket statement is problematic because Degas was using tracing paper in his notebooks from an early point in his career. Regardless of the genesis of its introduction into his oeuvre, the use of tracing paper had significant repercussions on his process, particularly in the way that it allowed Degas to consistently revisit a composition, tracing and retracing the contours. As Vollard notes:

Because of the many tracings that Degas did of his drawings, the public accused him of repeating himself. But his passion for perfection was responsible for his continual research. Tracing-paper proved to be one of the best means of ‘correcting’ himself. He would usually make the correction by beginning the new

¹¹⁶ Quoted from Stéphane Guégan, "The Return to Favor," in *Mystery and Glitter : Pastels in the Musée D'orsay* (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux : Musée d'Orsay, 2008), 24.

¹¹⁷ Chialiva was a commanditaire at Jean Boussod, Manzi, Joyant & Cie., successeurs de Goupil & Cie éditeurs-imprimeurs from 1897-1899, and at Manzi, Joyant & Cie, successeurs de Goupil & Cie. éditeurs-imprimeurs from 1900-?. See *État Des Lieux*, vol. 1 (Bordeaux: Musée Goupil, 1994), 146. Lafond also mentions Chialiva among the frequent visitors to Degas’ studio. Paul Lafond, *Degas*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Paris,: Floury, 1918), 90.

¹¹⁸ Roquebert, "Edgar Degas Reinvents Pastel," 67. See also Maheux, *Degas Pastels*, 44.

¹¹⁹ J Chialiva, "Comment Degas a Changé Sa Technique Du Dessin," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art Français* 24 (1932).

figure outside of the original outlines, the drawing growing larger and larger until a nude no bigger than a hand became life-size – only to be abandoned in the end.¹²⁰

He reiterates this in a different section: “He took great pains with the composition of the paper he used for pastel; however, by the very method of his work (tracing after tracing), most of his pastels were of necessity done on tracing paper.”¹²¹ He again brings up the subject in *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, noting that he was “in the habit of improving his work by corrections on tracing-paper outside the original lines...”¹²² Rouart also reiterates Degas’ reliance on the substrate, which he calls “a working method rather than a technical procedure.”¹²³

Tracing paper is smooth and as such is a difficult support for pastel, because of the difficulty in getting the pastel to adhere to the surface, without the use of a fixative. Renoir tells of a story when Degas, desperate, placed a drawing on the ground, covered it with a board and stomped on it.¹²⁴ When not taking such drastic measures, Degas would often begin a pastel composition on tracing paper Degas, when he wanted to continue with a composition, he would take the paper to someone, such as Lézin, to be mounted on laid paper in order to work on it further.

¹²⁰ Ambroise Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, trans. Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Greenberg Publisher, Inc., 1927), 102.

¹²¹ Ambroise Vollard, *Degas, an Intimate Portrait* (New York: Crown, 1937), 68.

¹²² Vollard, *Recollections of a Picture Dealer*, 236.

¹²³ Rouart, *Degas in Search of His Technique*.

¹²⁴ See Jeanne Baudot, *Renoir: ses amis, ses modèles* (1949). See also Maheux, *Degas Pastels*, 44.

Degas, like many pastellistes before him, searched for a fixative that would not “detract from the matte, luminous quality that he sought with pastel.”¹²⁵ As Vollard notes,

According to Vollard, Degas:

...used a fixative specially prepared for him by Chialiva, an Italian painter of sheep, and it must be said that it is to him that posterity is indebted for having been an important aid in preserving Degas’ work. Unfortunately, Chialiva died without revealing his secret. It was the more important for Degas to have a good fixative, because of the manner in which he did his pastels; they were worked over and over again, and hence it was imperative to obtain perfect adherence between each successive layer of color.¹²⁶

While the actual formula is unknown, it is speculated that it is based on casein, which altered the surface very little – which was preferable to commercial fixatives, which would create sheen on the surface of the pastel. Degas would have to wait patiently for the fixative to dry before adding another layer – but the process allowed him to go back and rework compositions, and add layers of translucent color. As Rouart notes, Degas’ layering of colors necessitated an appropriate fixative:

Degas unquestionably invented this application of successive layers of pastel in which each one is fixed before it is covered with the next. Apparently it occurred to him that pastel could be adapted to serve a technique in which different colors act upon each other by superposition and transparency as much as by the opposition of juxtaposed tones. Since the requisite transparency is not inherent to the pastel medium as it is to oil paint used in glazes, Degas could only produce an analogous effect by not entirely covering the under layers, thereby leaving some openings through which the under layer could be seen.

The greatest difficulty posed by this technique is not to spoil the under layers. A fixative of the first order is required, and Degas, after having tried a number of them only to find them unsatisfactory was greatly assisted in this search by Luigi

¹²⁵ Ibid., 15.

¹²⁶ Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, 112-13.

Chialiva. The idea for this technique was nonetheless conceived by Degas alone.¹²⁷

As pastels often had issues with fugitive colors, Chialiva also aided Degas in his creation of pastels by giving him a set that were 'both vivid and lightfast.'¹²⁸

Monotype

Of the seven hundred pastels Degas created, around one hundred have monotype bases.¹²⁹ The process was invented by G.B. Castiglione in the seventeenth century, but was not widely used. Degas further developed the process with Baron Lepic, to the point that he could get multiple prints from the same plate – each one a bit lighter – to which he often added pastels or other media to surface. Degas' experimentation with the medium was discussed in a letter Claretie wrote to De Nittis dated 4 July 1876, "Ho incontrato proprio ieri Degas, di ritorno da Napoli... Mi ha parlato di un nuovo metodo d'incisione da lui scoperto! Gli ho detto ciò che pensavo di queste piccole e inutili punture d'amor proprio."¹³⁰ De Nittis responds two weeks later:

Degas era il solo che vedessi tutti i giorni, solo che quello lì non è più un amico, non è più un uomo, non è più un artista! Bensì è una lastra di zinco o di rame annerita dall'inchiostro di stampa e quest'uomo e questa lastra sono laminati per pressione nell'ingranaggio nel quale è stato interamente inghiottito! – Le pazzie di quest'uomo sono fenomenali! – Adesso si trova nella fase metallurgica della riproduzione dei suoi disegni al rullo inchiostatore e corre avanti e indietro per tutta Parigi con questi caldi! Alla ricerca del settore industriale corrispondente alla sua idea fissa! – È tutto un poema! – La sua conversazione non si sposta mai da metallurgici, piombasti, litografi, spianatori, niligrafi! – ecc. Ecco che cosa vi

¹²⁷ Rouart, *Degas in Search of His Technique*, 66-67.

¹²⁸ Ernest Rouart, "Degas," *Le Point* 2 1 (February 1937): 22.

¹²⁹ Bomford, "Degas at Work," 28.

¹³⁰ Letter from Claretie to De Nittis, 4 July 1876. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis: La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 308.

attende al vostro rientro. Io resto in attesa – così mi darete finalmente il cambio!
Grazie a Dio!¹³¹

Etching

Degas' attention to the medium of etching extended beyond his exploratory works under the tutelage of Joseph Tourney while in Rome in 1856. At some point after 1880, Degas speaks to Vollard regarding a renewed interest in the medium while examining Cassatt's *The Little Girl on the Blue Sofa* by Cassatt:

She has infinite talent...I remember the time we started a little magazine called *Le Jour et La Nuit* together. I was very much interested in process then, and had made countless experiments...You can get extraordinary results with copper; but the trouble is that there are never enough buyers to encourage you to go on with it.¹³²

Beyond this, Degas inspired both De Nittis and Boldini to experiment in printmaking.¹³³

De Nittis experiment with *La Société des Aquafortistes* (founded in 1862) at Alfred Cadart's printing house with Degas, Lepic, Legros, and Hirsch.¹³⁴

Echoing the tradition of the night life drawing classes of so many years prior, Degas, De Nittis, Desboutin and Alphonse Hirsch gathered at least once at the home of De Nittis to etch portraits of each other. The evening of 20 February 1875 was one such event.¹³⁵ A result of that evening are two portraits of Hirsch by Degas and De Nittis, and

¹³¹ Letter from De Nittis to Claretie, July 1876. The same wording is found in a letter from Desboutin to Léontine De Nittis, 17 July 1876. Perhaps one is recycling the other's words. Reproduced in *Ibid.*, 320. Dinoia, "Degas, De Nittis, Boldini E L'incisione," 189 n 17.

¹³² Vollard, *Degas an Intimate Portrait*, 72.

¹³³ See Dinoia, "Degas, De Nittis, Boldini E L'incisione."

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 178.

¹³⁵ Another possible example of a collaborative sitting was De Nittis' and Degas' portraits of Léontine.

two portraits of Degas by De Nittis and one by Desboutin.¹³⁶ (Figures A469-462) All four portraits focus solely on the head of the figure and rely heavily on hatching in order to convey a sense of depth and shadow to the compositions. They strike the viewer as preliminary attempts – on most accounts – to translate the medium of draftsmanship to the intaglio plate. De Nittis and Degas’ portraits of Hirsch are difficult to equate, as each took a different tack in response to the medium. Degas’ work focuses on heavy chiaroscuro while De Nittis works to nuance the gradations of tone through cross-hatching. The portraits of Degas depict the artist in a thoughtful pose, head resting on his hand. Desboutin’s portrait addresses the sitter from a three-quarter view, while De Nittis’ portrait, focuses on a view over the artist’s shoulder.¹³⁷ An extant version of a mirror composition of De Nittis’ portrait suggests that De Nittis transferred the design to another plate at some point.¹³⁸

Degas speaks of this evening in a letter dated 12 March 1892 to George Aloysius Lucas:

Un soir chez de Nittis, il y a bien dix ans, lui et Desboutin ont fait en pointe sèche un petit croquis de moi. Je ne puis vous dire du quel est votre pièce. Mais, quand je serai retourné à l’atelier (je suis encore un peu malade à la maison), je pourrai, en mesurant les épreuves que je dois avoir, vous répondre plus exactement. Il se pourrait bien aussi que les plaques, trouvées ce soir là chez De Nittis soient pareilles. Alors il faudrait voir la pièce même.¹³⁹

¹³⁶ There is some question of attribution to Desboutin’s portrait of Degas. The British Museum identifies it as Giuseppe de Nittis, *Portrait of Degas*, 1875, Drypoint

¹³⁷ There is another version of Desboutin’s portrait of Degas that was for sale at the Galerie Paul Prouté, Catalogue Guercino, 1999, Lot 56.

¹³⁸ Giuseppe De Nittis, *Degas*, Drypoint, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta

¹³⁹ Letter from Degas to George Aloysius Lucas, 12 March 1892. Reproduced in *Degas Inédit : Actes Du Colloque Degas, Musée D’orsay, 18-21 Avril 1988*, (Paris: Documentation française, 1989).

Lucas was an American art agent who worked as a middle man between his American clients and the Parisian art scene. His diaries detail purchases of works by De Nittis and Boldini.¹⁴⁰ It is possible that Aloysius came across these plate in the De Nittis home and inquired after them in order to reprint an edition, it is even possible that the inversions of De Nittis' portrait of Degas is the result of this inquiry. Further proof of the artistic dialogue between the group of nascent etchers extended beyond this evening comes from a letter from Desboutin to Léontine, in which he mentions that he had recently worked in Degas' studio.¹⁴¹

Conclusion

Degas and the Italian artists that lived in or passed through Paris shared in a sense of exploration of medium and theme. They shared a common formative background – all spending time in the Academic system and all passing through the walls of the Caffè Michelangiolo, all having the same conversations regarding caricature, chiaroscuro, and photography that shaped the way they approached their artistic creations in their mature careers. While their oeuvres had matured, they still shared in this interest to constantly reevaluate, examine and investigate their world – be it through modern spectacles of the opera or the horse races or through a shared exploration of the medium of sculpture, pastels or intaglio printing. It is these collective dialogues and constant interest in discovery that formed their modern aesthetics.

¹⁴⁰ See George A. Lucas, *The Diary of George A. Lucas, an American Art Agent in Paris, 1857-1909*, ed. Lilian M. C. Randall, 2 vols. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1979).

¹⁴¹ Letter from Desboutin to Léontine De Nittis, 18 May 1875. Reproduced in Dini and Marini, *De Nittis: La Vita, I Documenti, Le Opere Dipinte*, 355.

CHAPTER VI
CODA

...in the Risorgimento...new likes and new passions were being awakened in the hearts of the Italians. The old rules of neo-Classicism came tumbling down, making way for the birth of movements great and small (the Macchiaioli, Scapigliatura, Divisionism)

Carrà, *L'opera completa di Carrà*

Nationalism: Definitions and Concepts

Underlying this discussion of Degas' oeuvre and that of his Italian contemporaries is the problematic concept (then, as well as now) of nationalism and its repercussions on the arts. Specifically, where does each artist's work fit into the larger scope of art, seen from a nationalist perspective? Does Degas truly fit solely into the realm of French artists? How does the work of De Nittis or Signorini fit into the evolving nationalist aesthetics of Italy? The concepts of nationalism are weighty topics in scholarly realms, taken up by a variety of disciplines as varied as art history, sociology, psychology, history and political science. The term is rooted in the Latin word *nationis*, which denotes one's community of birth, and derives from Johann Gottfried Herder's term *nationalismus* in the late 1770s. Its constructs derive both from Enlightenment principles and their Romantic reactions. As with many fraught terms in academic literature, the concepts of nationalism are often blurred and utilized to fit one's own purpose.

Nationalism:

...can be defined in a broad and a narrow sense. In its broadest sense it refers to the sum of those beliefs, idioms, and practices oriented to a territorially delineated "nation," and embodied in the political demands of a people who collectively identify with a nation. This may or may not entail the existence of or demand for a separate national state, or be realized in a self-conscious nationalist movement, though historically this is often the eventual outcome of national identification. In

its narrower meaning, nationalism refers to a political ideology or doctrine whose object is an existing or envisaged nation-state wherein cultural and political boundaries coincide.¹

In 1907 Friedrich Meinecke elaborated on this distinction, focusing on the differences between the ideas of a *Staatsnation* and the *Kulturnation*.² The idea of a *Staatsnation* focuses on the political or geographical conceptions of a nation, formed either through the voluntary association of individuals within a territory, claiming citizenship, or around a preexisting state. The idea of a *Kulturnation* is similar to the construct of the Italian identity before the Risorgimento and unification, a pre-political cultural entity where the spirit of solidarity derives from shared customs, languages, heritages and a collective memory. Of course there is no dividing line between Meinecke's two constructions of nationalism. Furthermore, in discussion of such constructs, one must take care to not suggest that there is a hierarchy to the varieties of nationalism, which would lead to ethnocentric fallacies. Furthermore, the realities of nationalism are much more hybridized, and instead of a single identity, most individuals find that his or her cultural identity is made up of more of a patchwork of cultural identities.³

One of the concepts associated with nationalism that is of particular importance to the discussion of ottocento Italy is the idea of state-led cultural homogenizations of people within that state. In this role, the state becomes the protector of culture and an educator of its people regarding that culture as it builds the cultural heritage of the nation.

Examples of this process include the standardization of language, which was first

¹ Lloyd Cox, "Nation-State and Nationalism," in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, ed. George Ritzer, *Blackwell Reference Online* (Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

² See Friedrich Meinecke, *Cosmopolitanism and the National State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).

³ See Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

introduced to Europe through Louis XIV's founding of the French Academy in 1635. The ideas of cultural homogenization can have positive implications, including the incorporation of the periphery into the mass population, exemplified in Eugene Weber's study *Peasants into Frenchmen*.⁴ In addition, the process creates a common cultural ground, across the varieties of classes and people that make up a nation, providing unifying ideas and purpose. Of course there can be negative implications of such attempts at cultural homogenization, including but not limited to conflicts over the nature of national culture, forced solidarity, ethnic cleansing of minorities, forced assimilation and loss of personal freedoms.⁵

Scholars who focus on the examination of cultural homogenization within the constructs of nationalism include the work of Ernest Gellner, particularly his work *Nations and Nationalism*.⁶ For Gellner, the idea of cultural homogenization is specifically associated with the concept of the modern state and is oriented towards the goals of economic growth and general prosperity through state-sponsored movements of education and literacy. John Hutchinson deals with more traditionalist aspects of the creation of a national identity in his *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism*.⁷ He investigates the revivals of traditional cultures and the idea of a 'golden age' of a specific ethnic cultural heritage – in Hutchinson's work, the Irish culture. Such investigations

⁴ Eugene Joseph Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1976).

⁵ Athena S. Leoussi, "Nationalism," in *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, ed. George Ritzer, *Blackwell Reference Online* (Blackwell Publishing, 2007).

⁶ Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2008).

⁷ John Hutchinson, *The Dynamics of Cultural Nationalism : The Gaelic Revival and the Creation of the Irish Nation State* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

look at collective identities, origin stories and values through language, territory, history, myth, symbol and tradition.

Center and Periphery

Any society, including ottocento Italy, is a complex organism, comprised of a variety of components, as Edward Shils so adeptly writes:

Society, even an apparently orderly and internally relatively peaceful society, is a great motley of activities, a tangled skein of an infinity of ties which, in ways difficult to formulate, constitute a whole. It had boundaries of which those within it and outside it are generally aware. It is an inchoate sprawling mass constantly spilling over its boundaries and receiving ideas, works, and person from outside them, but whatever comes within its boundaries becomes different in consequence of being there.⁸

Such a complexity does, when viewed in its entirety, find loci of focused culture, in the case of Italy these exist in the central cities, including Naples, Rome, and Florence.

Therefore, concomitant with more general issues of nationalism and its repercussions is the concept of center and periphery:

Center...belongs to the sphere of values. It is a metaphor which stands for what is of core importance in the value system of a society, the irreducible, critical elements of this system. Another term for 'center' in this sense is 'central value system.' It is *center* understood in this sense that plays the crucial role in the integration of society. It refers to the irreducible values and beliefs that establish the identity of individuals and bind them into a common universe.

This meaning of the term 'center' implies a corresponding idea of 'periphery.' The *periphery* refers to the elements that need to be integrated, the material on which the creative, the society-generative function of the center is performed. The expansion of the center into the periphery, a process...characteristic of the

⁸ Edward Shils, *Center and Periphery: Essays in Macrosociology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), xii.

modern society, means in this context, therefore, the increasing pervasiveness of social integration, the growing cohesiveness of society.⁹

Shils points out that the mechanism for dissemination of ideas and information from center to periphery is the idea of consensus. In the conception of the Italian nation after unification, the society functioned as inverse diaspora, meaning that while they shared some sense of while sharing a sense of national identity, the regional identities (*piccola patria*) were of more consequence, and the process of creating a sense of nation was to find a way to meld these two convergent, yet related ideals into a central sense of nationalistic identity.

Of course, this concept is not novel – even on the peninsula – as scholars have been arguing for a number of decades regarding the mechanism and meaning behind the idea on which the ottocento nation was attempting to build its identity: the Roman Empire and the concepts of Romanization. In *Becoming Roman*, Greg Woolf rejects the concepts of Romanization, or blatant directionality of the center-to-periphery argument, and instead considers a more fluid continuum between the Gaul's native culture and the more homogenous Roman civilization.¹⁰ In particular, it examines the concept of cultural relativism and nuances between culture and power – specifically in the aristocratic Gauls who needed to seem not wholly Gallic to the Romans and not wholly Roman to the Gallic lower classes. As he points out:

Cultural relativists...start from the premise that all cultural systems are equally valid. Roman civilization was no better, in other words, than the culture of La

⁹ Liah Greenfeld and Michel Martin, "The Idea of the 'Center': An Introduction," in *Center: Ideas and Institutions*, ed. Liah Greenfeld and Michel Martin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), ix.

¹⁰ Greg Woolf, *Becoming Roman: The Origins of Provincial Civilization in Gaul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Tène Gaul, but simply different, and we cannot explain cultural change in terms of intelligent savages recognizing the superiority of classical civilization.¹¹

Furthermore, as Woolf points out:

Romanization may have been ‘the process by which the inhabitants come to be, and to think of themselves as, Romans,’ but there was more than one kind of Roman, and studies of provincial culture need to account for the cultural diversity, as well as the unity of the empire.¹²

Echoing Shils in his discussion of the construction of a definition of Roman culture,

Woolf points out that it is inherently difficult to pin down, as it is never static, nor was

“its composition...a matter of consensus.”¹³

Complicating the matter is, as Woolf points out, is the concept that for culture to have any sense of meaning, it must be disseminated, but “what is shared is a set of associations or conventions, not rules, and individuals are free to conform, ignore or even change these conventions.”¹⁴ Like a cookbook, or the passage of recipes in general – they function as constructs to make of as one wishes, or modify as his or her system allows. This process is exemplified in the birth of Creole cuisine, which utilizes European – mainly French – and African cooking processes, melded with the foodstuffs of North America. Just because it is derived from other cultures does not take away from its importance to Creole culture, or to those who enjoy a hearty bowl of gumbo.¹⁵ Similarly, just because the Macchiaioli found their inspiration in the tenants of the Barbizon school

¹¹ Ibid., 5.

¹² Ibid., 7.

¹³ Ibid., 11.

¹⁴ Ibid., 12.

¹⁵ As a side note, the shift of the artistic center from Rome to Paris in the nineteenth century mirrors what many Italians see as a shift in the gastronomical universe when Catherine de’Medici left Italy for France in 1533. By many accounts she took with her many of the secrets of the renaissance of Italian cooking, as well as many of the best chefs. Of course, this particular chain of events is up for debate.

or in the experimentation in photography, catalyzed by their attendance at the 1855 Exposition Universelle, it does not detract from the creative impulses derived from these exploratory endeavors. Therefore, as another scholar of Roman history, J.C. Barrett concludes, "...apparently homogenous cultural systems are in reality unstable internally and multifaceted in terms of their meanings."¹⁶

Folded into this discourse on the ottocento search for a national identity for the newly formed peninsular nation is the conception of a national artistic identity. Like this search for a nationalist aesthetic, Hayden White describes a historical work as "a verbal structure in the form of a narrative prose discourse that purports to be a model, or icon, of past structures and processes in the interest of *explaining what they were by representing them*."¹⁷ Even Signorini was said to have complained: "All the examples of love of country in painting have come to bore me somewhat, because I do not find great merit in making liberal pictures when there is no danger and when even the reactionaries are liberals."¹⁸ The converse point of view was expressed by an artist of the next generation, Giorgio Morandi, whose minimalist still lifes were recently given a retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. His comments belie this sense of necessity in finding a source of national aesthetic identity, still in force in the twentieth century:

When most Italian artists of my own generation were afraid to be too 'modern,' too 'international' in their style, not 'national' or 'imperial' enough. I was still left

¹⁶ J.C. Barrett, "Romanization: A Critical Comment," in *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism: Power, Discourse, and Discrepant Experience in the Roman Empire*, ed. D. Mattingly (Portsmouth, RI: Journal of Roman Archeology, 1997), 51.

¹⁷ Hayden White. *Metahistory: the Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*. (London, 1973), 2. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁸ Quoted from Adrian Lyttelton, "Creating a National Past: History, Myth and Image in the Risorgimento," in *Making and Remaking Italy: The Cultivation of National Identity around the Risorgimento*, ed. Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg (New York: Berg, 2001), 70 n 54.

in peace, perhaps because I demanded so little recognition. My privacy was thus my protection, and in the eyes of the Grand Inquisitors of Italian Art, I remained but a provincial professor of etching at the Fine Arts Academy of Bologna.¹⁹

For the art world, the center contingent upon time and place, and the issues of boundaries between the concepts of center and periphery were further blurred through issues of travel, cosmopolitanism and the recent shift of the artistic capital from Rome to Paris.²⁰

After a discussion of the inescapable biases that one experiences when constructing narratives from the outside, Barrett poses the following important thinking points:

Whenever we hear the term ‘Roman’, we can now ask: how was it possible to recognize and to embody that ideal, what did it mean at this time and in this place to make oneself Roman? This is not the mere question of legal status but one of bodily dispositions, movement, appearance, the occupation of places, relations of domination, and the submission of the self to other authorities.²¹

The important question, for this discussion, is to consider how does one reconcile this knowledge with a group that was using this construct of the Roman Empire to build its own identity? What happens when such a group attempts to retroactively emulate such constructs? Barrett continues:

In each case the body responds in a different way to both the demands made upon it and the understanding it has of its own powers. It is the body which make itself ‘Roman’, as it also makes itself female or male, young or old: it recognizes its legitimacy and genealogy. None of these embodied identities are ever simply given by nature. They must be lived as a narrative of mortal experience in which the body’s understanding of its own destiny, of its time and place, can be

¹⁹ "Giorgio Morandi, 1890–1964 (Exhibition Wall Text)," (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008).

²⁰ Such constructs were touch upon by Joan Greer, “Discussant Remarks” from the panel “Centering the margins of Nineteenth-Century Art” at the 2009 Universities Art Association of Canada Conference.

²¹ Barrett, "Romanization: A Critical Comment," 60.

expressed in relation to grander narratives of religious, political or moral certainties.²²

He concludes, "It is the material practicality of living that narrative that we should investigate, tracing the ways it was constructed and understood locally. Such narratives were never finished: they had no final form."²³

Ottocento Italy

For Italy in the ottocento, there was a sense of a combination of linguistic, geographic unity and a sense of cultural superiority over the remainder of Europe.²⁴

These sentiments are echoed by Luigi Pomba in his *Dizionario politico nuoamente compilato ad uso della gioventù italiana* (1849):

Of all the nations of the world, the Italian is perhaps that which most conspicuously combines all the characteristics of the Nation, except the political. It is thus for its history, on account of its marvelously defined natural frontiers, on account of its language, its origins, its uniformity of conventions and customs, its tastes, and its shared attitude to the practice of fine arts which are its ancient heritage.²⁵

The opposite side of the coin is evoked by André Vieusseux in 1821:

I think the Italians are but imperfectly known, and often unjustly abused and are generally included by foreigners in one common description of character, while in fact the inhabitants of the various states of that much divided country form so

²² Ibid., 61.

²³ Ibid., 62.

²⁴ Von Henneberg and Ascoli point out the import of seeing Italy's struggle with fractionalism is only an exceptional concept when compared to western nations, and that its unsteady nationalism finds echo in the Balkan nations, Poland and Turkey. See Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg, "Introduction: Nationalism and the Uses of Risorgimento Culture," in *Making and Remaking Italy: The Cultivation of National Identity around the Risorgimento*, ed. Albert Russell Ascoli and Krystyna von Henneberg (New York: Berg, 2001), 4.

²⁵ Quoted from David Laven, "Italy: The Idea of the Nation in the Risorgimento and Liberal Eras," in *What Is a Nation? Europe 1789-1914*, ed. Timothy Baycroft and Mark Hewitson (London: Oxford University Press, 2006), 261.

many distinct nations. A Tuscan and a Neapolitan, a Lombard and a Genoese, a Venetian and a Roman, are as different from one another, as the Germans are from the English, or the Dutch from the French.²⁶

As Ascoli and von Henneberg point out it is precisely this, “contrast between the fragility of the political nation on the one hand, and the cultural conviction of ‘Italian-ness’ on the other, that makes Italian history useful to scholars re-evaluating the impact and reception of other nation-building projects.”²⁷

The traditional dates of the Risorgimento are 1815-1870, ending with the establishment of Rome as the capital of the new Kingdom of Italy in 1871. The term Risorgimento or ‘resurgence’ suggests that the reestablishment of the Italian nation was inevitable, as its foundations lay in the Roman Republic and Empire, and was reaffirmed by a shared language and culture (*italianità*) in the upper classes which stemmed from Dante’s evocation of the vernacular in the thirteenth century. Of course there was an overt diversity, both culturally and linguistically that existed alongside these unifying systems. The difficulty lay in unifying these two divergent agendas, culturally and politically.²⁸ David Laven points to the attempts at creating a sense of nationalism between the Risorgimento and the Great War was mainly attempted through the use of language - still too fragmented into dialects and reliance on French, and too great of a percentage of the population was illiterate, Rome - too closely associated with the Pontificate, and Medieval narratives, such that published by Sismonde de Simondi: *Histoire des républiques italiennes du moyen âge* (16 vols. 1809-16) - yet the sense of

²⁶ Quoted from *Ibid.*, 262.

²⁷ Ascoli and von Henneberg, "Introduction: Nationalism and the Uses of Risorgimento Culture," 5.

²⁸ See *Ibid.*

heroicism found in the pages of his historical narrative was even more fragmented than nineteenth-century Italy.²⁹

Evolving Nationalism: Italy after the Risorgimento

Observing Napoleon's triumphal entry into Milan on 15 May 1796, the economist noted a 'raw energy' in the troops that he sourced from their sense of belonging to a Nation and that this sense of purpose made up for their meager equipment and comparative lack of discipline, when compared to the Austrian troops. He notes:

They marched in disorderly fashion, and were dressed in tattered uniforms of different colours. Some had no arms, and there was very little artillery. Their horses were weak and scrawny. When mounting guard, they sat down. They looked not so much like an army as a population that has brazenly sallied out from its town to invade the surrounding neighborhood. Tactics, discipline and skill were constantly subordinate to the national commitment of a people fighting for themselves [the Austrian] automata, who were fighting from fear of punishment.³⁰

It was this sense of purpose that Napoleon hoped would bring the Italian people to rally under his banner. In his proclamation to the Army of Italy on 26 April 1796, he reminded his troops, "I promise you this conquest; but...you must respect the people you are delivering...People of Italy, the French army is coming to break your chains. Meet it with confidence."³¹ Regardless of his propagandistic speeches, on the eve of Napoleon's invasion of the Italian peninsula, its people were concerned that the French government might be looking to pursue conquest, rather than liberation. In order to forestall this danger, individuals such as Filippo Buonarroti encouraged Italian patriots to prepare

²⁹ Laven, "Italy: The Idea of the Nation in the Risorgimento and Liberal Eras."

³⁰ Quoted in Christopher Duggan, *The Force of Destiny : A History of Italy since 1796* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2008), 4.

³¹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 3.

insurrections in the name of the freedom of Italy. His words echo the hope of a unified Italy:

We cannot wait to see that joyful moment when our fatherland shall be free. And above all we want the frivolous distinctions of having been born in Naples, Milan or Turin to disappear among patriots. We all belong to the same country and the same fatherland. Italians are all brothers...and must make common cause and consult one another about the best course of action.³²

Of course the brief overthrow of the Bourbons, and the establishment of Joseph Bonaparte as King did little to help establish an identity. In fact, according to Vincenzo Cuoco, in the waning years of the eighteenth century places such as Naples had lost its cultural distinctiveness, “We became by turns French, or Germans, or English; we were no longer anything.”³³ Such frustration with the seemingly overwhelming foreign cultures provided the impetus for the creation of work such as Vincenzo Gioberti’s *Del primato morale e civile degli italiani*, published in 1843. The work was written while Vincenzo Gioberti, a Catholic priest, was exiled in Brussels, and focuses on the need to emancipate Italian thought from French influence, in other words the intellectual and political independence of Italy from France. The major theme of *Primato* was the moral and civil supremacy of the Italians, which he believed was proven by the existence of the Papacy in Rome. The condition of Italy in the nineteenth century was, in Gioberti’s mind, an aberration that needed to end. Its central recommendation was the formation of a confederation of Italian states under the rule of the Pope.³⁴ The work itself became a

³² A. Saitta, *Filippo Buonarroti. Contributi alla storia della sua vita e del suo pensiero*, Vol. 2 (Rome, 1950-51), 1-2. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 8.

³³ Vincenzo Cuoco, *Saggio storico sulla rivoluzione napoletana dell 1799*, ed. F. Nicolini (Bari, 1929), 28. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 26.

³⁴ See Vincenzo Gioberti, *Del Primato Morale E Civile Degli Italiani*, 3 vols., *Collezione Di Classici Italiani Con Note*; V. 24-26 (Torino: Unione Tipografico-Editrice Torinese, 1920). While Gioberti claimed

work of propagandistic brilliance and was the catalyst for the foundation of the Neo-Guelph movement, the school of Italian moderate nationalism.

A similar strain of thought is seen in the North through the writings of Alessandro Manzoni, a dominant figure in Milanese literary circles. Manzoni wrote an ode in 1821 when he thought that the Piedmontese revolution might spread to Lombardy which called upon the Austrians to depart from a land “that did not bear them” and called upon Italy’s sons, a people “one in arms, language and faith, memories, blood and heart” to fight for their freedom, sharing their sense of pain, united around the “holy colors” of their flag.³⁵ Duggan points out that the only true commonality in 1821 was ‘faith’, ironic in the sense that it was faith that was removed from the national equation when unity was finally achieved.³⁶ Unfortunately Manzoni, like many of his northern intellectual brethren, knew nothing of the population of central and southern Italy, where illiteracy and ignorance reigned. His poem is rife with northern allegorical imagery – much like his vision of Italy. In 1848, Manzoni acknowledges the difficulties that are complicit in the attempts to create a nation out of a region suffering from factionalism, lack of patriotism and division: “Have you not heard, my great and good Lamartine, that no harsher insult could have been hurled at [Italy] than *diversity*...a word that sums up a long history of misfortune and humiliation?”³⁷

an aversion to French ideas, his own work bears a clear resemblance to Saint Simonian ideas and his later political thinking would be moderated by French Socialists, including Proudhon.

³⁵ Alessandro Manzoni, “Marzo 1821”, in *Tutte le opera di Alessandro Manzoni*. Vol. I: *Poesie e tragedie*, eds. A. Chiari and F. Ghisalberti (Milan, 1957), 115-118. Quoted in Duggan, *The Force of Destiny : A History of Italy since 1796*, 93.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Quoted from Ibid., 100.

This fractured past had a substantial impact on the budding nation imagined during the Risorgimento, and on politics after 1860 – especially in attempts to create a sense of moral unity and integration as safeguards against the slide back into chaos. The new Italy must be one where there was a specific unity of purpose, suggested in the 1847 verses of Goffredo Mameli, which began as a marching song and became the official anthem of the new Italy in 1946:

Brothers of Italy
Italy has awoken
And has placed on its head
The helmet of Scipio...
For centuries we have been
Downtrodden and derided
Since we are not a people
Because we are divided;
Let us gather round one flag
United in one hope
For now the hour struck
For us to come together...
Let us unite, let us love;
For union and love
Reveal to the peoples
The ways of the Lord.
Let us swear to make free
Our native soil:
And united in God
Who can ever defeat us?...
From the Alps to Sicily
Every place is Legnano
Every man has the heart
And the hand of Ferruccio...
The sound of every bell
Has sounded the Vespers.
Let us form a tight cohort,
We are ready for death:

Italy has called!³⁸

Manzoni's emphasis on the nature of faith as a unifier for the Italian peninsula was echoed by Stendhal during his trip around northern and central Italy in 1816-1817. Taking part in the spectacle of the ritualized pomp and circumstance of the Church, Stendhal observed Pope Pius VII triumphantly carried through the streets of Rome on 18 August 1817 before a sea of adoring faces, "stamped with the profound belief that the Pontiff...is the sovereign arbiter of their eternal felicity or damnation." Following a passage describing the hierarchy of the spectacle, Stendhal continues:

Then, all at once, the multitude made genuflection, and there, mounted upon his advancing dais swathed in draperies fashioned of the richest and rarest stuffs, I beheld a figure, pale, inanimate and proud, likewise shrouded in vestments reaching high above the shoulders – a figure which seemed to me to merge into a single entity, a whole, one and indivisible, together with the altar, the swaying dais and the golden sun, before whose orb the figure was bowed down, as though in adoration. 'You never told me that the Pope was dead,' complained a child who stood beside me to its mother. And no words can better convey the utter motionless fixity of this unearthly apparition. At that instant, amongst the multitude which encompassed me on every side, there was not a single unbeliever, and even I was to be numbered among the faithful, if beauty be counted a religion.³⁹

The concept of Italy as a nation is a complex one. The concept of a unified geographical region is further convoluted by the concurrent issues of cultural nationalism. The intellectual concept of an 'Italian Nation' became more prevalent beginning in the eighteenth century, but it was mainly cultural in its content – its proponents were not yet ready to abandon their regional political allegiances. Such sentiments are conveyed in an

³⁸ *Goffredo Mameli. La vita e gli scritti. Vol. 2: Gli scritti*, ed. A. Codignola (Venice, 1927), 76-77. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 101.

³⁹ Marie-Henri Beyle Stendhal, *Rome, Naples and Florence*, trans. R. Coe (London: 1959), 453-54.

essay entitled “Of the fatherland of the Italians by Pietro Verri, published in *Il Caffè* in 1765. The work relates an imaginary conversation in a caffè in Milan between the regulars and a stranger, who upon entering is asked whether he is a ‘foreigner’. The stranger replies that he is Italian, “and in Italy an Italian is never a foreigner.” The regulars reply that this claim has little meaning, because in Italy it is “the universal practice to call anyone who has not been born but who lives within the precincts of a city wall a foreigner.”⁴⁰

The construction of an Italian cultural identity is bivalent in that they find a sense of unity through their shared historical past, the greatness of the Roman Empire, but simultaneously the centuries of city states has created a sense of regional identity that was difficult to put aside. The former is touched upon in Madame de Staël’s *Corinne*:

... ‘I am an Italian,’ interrupted Corinne—‘pardon me, my lord, but I think I discover in you that national pride which often characterizes your countrymen. In this country we are more modest; we are neither pleased with ourselves like the French, nor proud of ourselves like the English: we only ask a little indulgence of foreigners, and as we have long ceased to be considered a nation, we are guilty of sometimes being wanting, as individuals, in that dignity which is not allowed us as a people. But when you are acquainted with the Italians, you will see that they possess in their character, some traces of ancient greatness, some rare traces which, though now effaced, may appear again in happier times. I will speak English to you sometimes, but not always: Italian is dear to me; for I have endured much,’ added she, ‘to reside in Italy.’⁴¹

The novel was the product of an 1805 trip to Italy by de Staël, which served to only further emphasize her fascination with issues of national identity, particularly the environmental and institutional forces that cultivated national character. The imagery and

⁴⁰ Pietro Verri, “Of the fatherland of the Italians”, *Il Caffè* (1765). Quoted in Duggan, *The Force of Destiny : A History of Italy since 1796*, 7.

⁴¹ Madame de Staël, *Corinne* (J.M. Dent and Company, 1807 1)); available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/16896/16896-h/16896-h.htm>.

plot of *Corinne* was highly informed by the dialogues taking place in her intellectual circles, focusing on the issues of nations and nationality, a word that was used for the first time in European literature in *Corinne*.⁴² The heroine, Corinne, is de Staël's attempt at capturing the soul of Italy, regardless of issues of regionalism. In a soliloquy, Prince Castel-Forte, the quintessential embodiment of Italian masculinity, says of Corinne:

Behold her! She is the image of our beautiful Italy; she is what we should be without the ignorance, the envy, the discord and the indolence to which our fate has condemned us. We take pleasure in contemplating her as an admirable production of our climate and of our fine arts,—as a scion shooting out of the past, as a prophecy of the future. When foreigners insult this country, whence has issued that intelligence which has shed its light over Europe; when they are without pity for our defects, which arise out of our misfortunes, we will say to them: 'Behold Corinne!'⁴³

Lord Nevil, on the other hand, embodies the rational Northern soul, and much of the book is dedicated to pondering how the marriage of the two – Italy and Liberty – could be successfully achieved.

A few years later, in his *Révolutions d'Italie* (1848-51), Edgar Quinet again examines the issue of Italian nationalism. In his work he again finds a conundrum in the regional/national divide, noting:

The fundamental and radical difficulty facing Italy is that it does not exist...It is not question of simply resurrecting a nation but rather of creating one...I have spent many years searching through the past for an Italy; I have found towns, glorious communes, splendid atoms, but nowhere anything that resembles that organism we call a people.⁴⁴

⁴² Duggan, *The Force of Destiny : A History of Italy since 1796*, 41.

⁴³ Staël, *Corinne*.

⁴⁴ Quoted from Duggan, *The Force of Destiny : A History of Italy since 1796*, 90.

His sentiments are echoed by the Neapolitan scholar and future Minister of Public Instruction, Pasquale Villari in 1849: “The history of Italy is the history of a single nation composed of a mass of separate states.”⁴⁵ He hoped that a detailed examination of these individual states would lead to a common thread in the national fabric. Taking a more cynical note, Milanese Republican and Federalist advocate Giuseppe Ferrari mused in 1858:

Where then is Italy? What does it consist of? What bond is there that links the republics, the signori, the popes, the emperors, and the invasions? What connection is there between the individuals and the masses, secretaries and wars, wars and revolutions? Scholarship does not help shed any light. Indeed, far from instructing us, it simply underlines the chaos.⁴⁶

After the unification in 1860, many newly-christened ‘Italians’ had little idea what the term meant. A French observer in the streets of Naples in 1860 was listening to cheers of ‘Viva l’Italia’ in the streets and heard an observer turn to his neighbor and ask, ‘What is Italy?’ In Sicily, it was widely maintained that ‘La Talia’ was the new king’s (Victor Emmanuel) wife.⁴⁷ Even though geographical concord had been attained in 1860, there was still the question of seeking a shared sense of nationalism, as elucidated by Carlo Tivaroni in his narrative history of the peninsula since the French Revolution:

Once material unity had been achieved, it remained to complete moral unity, without which there is no nation, but simply a collection of individuals, easily dissolved... This is a serious issue, as moral unity is a matter not of the form of the government... but of its very substance, and is essential to a modern state... When the conscience of the ruling classes is shared by everyone, when a sense of patriotism pervades the rural masses, when all the provinces of Italy have these attributes in equal measure, then, and only then, will Italy be able to look ahead

⁴⁵ Quoted from *Ibid.*, 91.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 211.

with confidence and faith. Otherwise the work of the Risorgimento will have been in vain and will have served no other purpose than to demonstrate the physiological inability of Italy to be a nation.⁴⁸

Such a foreboding task was echoed by the Piedmontese politician Massimo d'Azeglio's infamous words, "Italy had been made but the task of making Italians had still to be accomplished."⁴⁹ The Church did not recognize the unification of the Italian state until 1929, and the emergence of revolutionary socialism in the 1870s created an ever-widening division between the 'real' and 'legal' Italy.

Francesco De Sanctis, a literary scholar and figure in Italian cultural life in the 1860s and 1870s, served as Minister of Education under Garibaldi and four separate Italian governments between 1861 and 1881. His dream was to teach Italians to be free, something that was not only political in its construct, but created through beliefs, attitudes and practices evolved through the education of intellect and emotion. Duggan notes that De Sanctis was influenced by German Romantics in his thought that:

...true freedom entailed the expansion of the self and a spontaneous identification with the broader collectivity, so that personal, family or local interests were willingly sacrificed to the greater needs of the nation. It meant shaking off the corrupt habits of the past, dissolving the old municipal and regional loyalties and becoming morally united as Italians.⁵⁰

Encouraging the inhabitants of Avellino in October of 1860 in the forthcoming plebiscite, he ponders:

What have we been until now? A people divided into small states, incapable of defending ourselves, invaded and trampled underfoot by the French, the Spanish and the Germans... We will be a nation of twenty-six million people, one in

⁴⁸ C. Tivaroni, *L'Italia degli italiani*, vol. 3 (Turin, 1897), 136, 207. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 212-13.

⁴⁹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, xvii.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 230.

language, religion, memories, culture, intellect and kind. We will be masters in our own home. We will be able to proclaim with Roman pride: 'We are Italians.' And foreigners who have ordered us around and despised us will say: 'This is a strong race. Twice it has been great, and when after so many centuries of oppression we had thought it dead and buried, look how it raises its head again, and is even greater than before.'⁵¹

In the summer of 1870 De Sanctis had turned away from political life in favor of academic studies. Instead of escapist in spirit, De Sanctis thought that scholarship should be political in its method, seeking to educate the citizenry of the modern Italian state. Working on a history of Italian literature, he identified two archetypes of national character – one to avoid and one to emulate. The first was the sixteenth century historian Francesco Guicciardi, who viewed the world through lenses of skepticism and detachment. Guicciardi was aware of what was morally desirable but was unwilling to do anything to work toward this higher goal if it required any sort of personal inconvenience or suffering. It was this 'Guicciardi spirit' that De Sanctis believed had pervaded the Italian society since the Counterrevolution and was to blame for the country's decline. De Sanctis placed Niccolò Machiavelli in stark contrast to Guicciardi. Machiavelli analyzed his world and believed that the deficiencies of his people could be rectified.⁵²

As the bells rang out in Naples on 20 September 1870 to celebrate the taking of Rome, De Sanctis sat writing in his home, urging his fellow countrymen to undergo a comprehensive process of self-examination in order to fully join the ranks of the modern world:

[Italy] now has to look into its heart and search for itself...Its life is still too external and superficial. It must search with unclouded gaze, free of all filters and

⁵¹ F. de Sanctis. *Il Mezzogiorno e lo Stato unitario*, ed. F. Ferri (Turin, 1960), 80-81. Quoted from *Ibid.*

⁵² See *Ibid.*, 260.

distortions, exploring reality in the spirit of Galileo and Machiavelli... We must examine...our ways of behaving, our ideas, our prejudices, and our qualities, both good and bad, and make the modern world our world, studying it, adapting to it, and molding it... We live to a large extent in the past and rely heavily on the achievements of others: we have yet to fashion our own life and our own achievements. And in our boastful claims can be glimpsed a sense of our inferiority...⁵³

In De Sanctis' words one can also read the sense of inferiority grappled with by the Macchiaioli in their search for modernity in the face of history. The Italian struggle for a sense of identity and history in the face of rapid political change echoes the sense of purpose in their work, functioning to capture the contemporaneous historical moment, which was changing as it was being recorded. In addition, this sense of fractured identity begins to shine a light onto Degas' own sense of fracture, as his identities as a Parisian, Frenchman, Creole, American, Neapolitan and Italian coalesced into his own unique identity and location in the modern fabric of the global construct.

Such difficulties of nationalism have not changed much in the century-plus since the unification of Italy as a nation, and the modern Italian diasporas have only exacerbated these issues of regional versus national identity. The term 'diaspora' derives from the Greek word *διασπείρω* (diaspeiro), meaning "to sow", "to disperse" or "to scatter."⁵⁴ Such terminology can refer to forced emigration, such as that of the Jewish peoples from Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar II in 597 BC, as

⁵³ F. de Sanctis. *Storia della letteratura italiana*. vol. 2. ed. N. Gallo (Turin, 1962), 974-75. Quoted from *Ibid.*, 261.

⁵⁴ "Diaspora" *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. 17 October 2009 <<http://dictionary.oed.com.proxy.lib.uiowa.edu/cgi/entry/50063322>>.

referred to in the Book of Deuteronomy (28:25).⁵⁵ It can also refer to the repercussions of political exile, for instance the diasporas of Polonia in France and America after the late eighteenth century partitions of Poland. It can even result from severe financial destitution, exemplified in the mass emigrations of the early decades of the twentieth century, particularly from the malaria-infested, impoverished, rural regions of the South whose diasporatic existence in America forms the basis for what is known as ‘Italian-American culture.’ As Donna Gabaccia aptly notes:

The modern diasporas of Italy were webs of social connections and channels of communication between the wider world and a particular paese (village) or patria (hometown). They rested on migrants’ close identification with the face-to-face communities of family, neighborhood, and native town. This combination of loyalties left but little space for a nationalism that put identity with a nation or with a national state above all others. It is no accident that the modern Italian word for country is the same as its word for village (paese). Nor is it accidental that the modern Italian words for citizenship (cittadinanza) and citizen (cittadino) originally defined loyalty to a city, not to a nation (nazione or nazione), people (popolo), or race (stirpe or razza). Patriotism (love of the patria or birthplace) continues to give Italian loyalties today a localism that distinguishes them from other modern forms of nationalism.⁵⁶

The pervasiveness of this mindset is exemplified in a Genoese popular rhyme:

E tanti sun li Zeonexi
e più lo mondo si’destexi
che und’lei van e stan
un’altra Zeno age fan.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ See R.J. Zwi Werblowsky, "Tribulations without a Center: A Note on the Shifting Center of Jewish History," in *Center: Ideas and Institutions*, ed. Liah Greenfeld and Michel Martin (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988).

⁵⁶ Donna R. Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000), 3-5.

⁵⁷ "So many are the Genoese, scattered worldwide, that they build other Genoas wherever they reside." Luciana Cocito (ed.), *Le rime volgari dell'Anonimo Genovese* (Genoa: M. Bozzi, 1966). Quoted from *Ibid.*, 14.

Of particular import in this search for nationalism is a topic that is returned to time and again in this dissertation: the issue of creating a unified national art for Italy and the repercussions of that search. The arts, both the historical past and present, were of the essence in creating a foundational sense of national identity. In a De Staël article on translation for the *Bibliotheca italiana*, she cautions, “If the arts languished, Italians would sink into a deep sleep from which not even the sun would wake them.”⁵⁸ A similar tack is taken in a tract written by the poet Giovanni Berchet in 1816 in defense of the ever-increasing Romantic nature of the arts. He wrote that art must endeavor “to improve the behavior of men” and reach beyond the aristocratic audience, whose culture had lost “every trace of a national imprint” and address the people.⁵⁹ Such sentiments of a loss of identity are exemplified in Francesco Hayez’s *La Meditazione*. (Figure A109) The figure embodies the disappointment experienced throughout the peninsula after the revolutions of 1848-49. She is disheveled, bruised and her face betrays feelings of accusation. When the work was exhibited in Brera in 1850 it was entitled *Meditation on the Old a New Testament*, but the book in her lap is not a Bible, but a *History of Italy*. Such a juxtaposition between the historical book in place of a religious text and the cross in her left hand suggests that the cause for Italian independence was one of divine providence, and the current state of affairs was a fundamental failure and disappointment. Writing of modern Italian painting, Mazzini mused:

Perché l'Arte del Popolo, della Nazione Italiana possa esistere, bisogna che la Nazione sia. Oggi non vi sono che artisti, come non vi sono che martiri: cosa può esservi di più, sino a quando l'ora del trionfo non giunga? Ma questi uomini sono i

⁵⁸ Madame de Staël, “Sulla maniera e le utilità delle traduzioni”, *Biblioteca italiana* (Milan), January 1816, 16-18. Quoted from Duggan, *The Force of Destiny : A History of Italy since 1796*, 80.

⁵⁹ Quoted from *Ibid.*

Precursori della Pittura Nazionale, come quei martiri sono i Precursori della Nazione. Ci sembra che valgano la pena di essere studiati. La caratteristica della scuola che seguono è di essere eminentemente storica: è infatti nella continuità della tradizione storica che l'Italia deve attingere le ispirazioni e le sue forze per fondare la sua Nazionalità; ma è la verità, non la semplice e scarna realtà, che costituisce per essi la storia. Attraverso i fatti, essi perseguono l'ideale. Hayez è alla loro testa ... La sua ispirazione emana direttamente dal Popolo; la sua potenza direttamente dal proprio Genio: non è settario nella sostanza; non è imitatore nella forma. Il secolo gli dà l'idea, e l'idea la forma.⁶⁰

The unification of Italy also had other, less overt, generally positive repercussions.

Baedeker published its first guide to Italy in 1863, claiming that unification had simplified and cheapened the business of travel. The greatest freedom that the unification provided for foreigners was the freedom to travel.⁶¹ In addition, towns saw great bursts of modernism, particularly in the most heavily-touristed areas. An example can be seen in San Remo, the Italian extension of the Riviera which tripled in population between 1871 and 1915, the modernization of the tourist quarter saw the introduction of drains, street lights, rubbish collection and leisure outlets.

The nineteenth century still saw a continuation of the construct of the Grand Tour, popularized in the eighteenth century. For Italy, this status as a Mecca of tourism helped establish a national-based identity. As Donna Gabaccia notes:

Even in 1789, after almost 300 years of economic stagnation, the term 'Italian' signified something quite concrete and positive in the west. Italian was not yet a noun for a human identity, people or nation. But it was an adjective that described a distinctive range of cultural products – both secular and religious – that the rest of the world found valuable.⁶²

⁶⁰ Giuseppe Mazzini, "Pittura Moderna Italiana," in *Scritti Editi E Inediti* (Imola Galeati, 1915).

⁶¹ R.J.B. Bosworth, "Visiting Italy: Tourism and Leisure 1860-1960," in *Italy and the Wider World 1860-1960* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 162.

⁶² Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 22.

In France there were a number of written works available for perusal by the tourist – either of the arm chair or more traditional variety. The *Grand Dictionnaire Universel* includes a list of the most popular works published on the topic, including Goethe's *Voyage en Italie* (1816-1817), Chateaubriand's *Voyage en Italie* (1804), Jules Janin's *Voyage en Italie* (1838), Fulchiron's seven volume set *Voyage en Italie méridionale, l'Italie centrale et l'Italie septentrionale* (1847-48), and Taine's *Voyage en Italie* (1866).⁶³

In a reciprocal relationship, France, with its revolutionary past, was highly fascinating to Italy's nationalists. One in five exiles of the Risorgimento spent some time in the City of Light. First came the soldiers and political activists, fleeing the revolts of the 1790s, then supporters of Napoleon's Italian monarchy, and finally organizers and conspiratorialists behind constitutionalist revolts. These exiles lived apart from the labor migrants in Paris, often finding respectable employment with Italian banks, French universities, newspaper houses, or teaching Italian to middle-class Parisians.⁶⁴

Opening up the Field: Antonio Mancini

An example of this melding of concepts of nationalism and art, combined with a hearty dose of the repercussions of the Parisian art market is the oeuvre of Antonio Mancini. In many ways, Mancini's artistic development perfectly embodies a struggle similar to that of Degas, but situated fully in the Italian struggle for a nationalist style.

⁶³ All of these works, aside from Taine's were available to Degas in preparation for his travels to the peninsula. Taine's work, while published after Degas' early travels speaks most to the zeitgeist. "Italie - Peinture," in *Grand Dictionnaire Universel Du XIXe Siècle: Français, Historique, Géographique, Mythologique, Bibliographique, Littéraire, Artistique, Scientifique, Etc*, ed. Pierre Larousse (Genève: Slatkine, 1982), 837. Also to be included in this discussion are Stendhal's three voyages and their resultant publication.

⁶⁴ Gabaccia, *Italy's Many Diasporas*, 47.

Mancini was born in Rome, orphaned at a young age, and spent his formative years in Naples. Entering the Istituto di Belle Arti at age twelve, his teachers included Filippo Palizzi, Morelli and the sculptor Stanislao Lista. Upon graduating in 1873, he, along with Francesco Paolo Michetti and Gemitto, was at the forefront of the Verismo movement in Neapolitan art. This first phase of his art, created while he was sharing a studio with Gemitto, focused on realistic depictions of Neapolitan street urchins (scugnizzi) and focused on anti-academic themes of poverty. Works such as *The Vow* emphasize the overt lack of any intellectual or philosophical agenda in his works, nor any sense of voyeuristic exploitation, rather a personal sense of a local culture from a firsthand perspective. (Figure A463)

In 1871, Mancini met Count Albert Cahen d'Anvers, the scion of a wealthy Belgian banking family lived in Paris and was the patron of members of the Impressionists, including Renoir, who painted his portrait in 1881.⁶⁵ Encouraged by the count, Mancini sent a sample of five paintings to d'Anvers in Paris: *The Singer (Il cantore)*, *The Dead Boy (Il ragazzo morto)*, *The Neapolitan Fisherman (Il pescatore napoletano)*, *Woman with Cape (Donna con la mantelletta)*, and *Figure of a woman (Figura di donna)*. D'Anvers wrote to Mancini, telling him that a well-known French painter (unnamed but someone whose advice had been solicited by Cahen) had seen the paintings and agreed that the young painter had enough talent to succeed.⁶⁶ He visited the city in 1875, at which point he met Manet and Degas through the social channels of the Italian expatriate community, facilitated by De Nittis. After a second visit in 1877, he

⁶⁵ Auguste Renoir, *Count Albert Cahen d'Anvers*, 1881, Oil on canvas, J. Paul Getty Museum

⁶⁶ Ulrich W. Hiesinger, *Antonio Mancini: Nineteenth-Century Italian Master* (Philadelphia; New Haven: Philadelphia Museum of Art in association with Yale University Press, 2007), 9.

lightened his previously somber palette and his style moved away from sensual modeling to become more decorative, most likely to conform to the requests of Goupil, under whom Mancini began working. Examples of Mancini's work from this period include *The Saltimbanco*, exhibited in the 1877 Salon and at the 1878 Exposition Universelle.⁶⁷ (Figure A464) A Letter from Mancini to Gemito, who remained in Paris on the topic of the Exposition Universelle, hints at his dissatisfaction with the City of Light, "...valse ad accrescermi una confusione orribile ed uno scoraggiamento irritante." He continues, "ripensando al tempo di Parigi dico che era l'aria o tante altre cose che io mi ero gustato la mia organizzazione di giovane che studia."⁶⁸

Mancini produced a work entitled *Adieu Paris*, one of his last works delivered to Goupil in April of 1878, before his departure for Rome.⁶⁹ (Figure A465) The style and subject matter are not only a nod to the city's fashionable audience, but also a clear homage to Degas' psychologically penetrating portraiture and narrative paintings such as *The Interior*. (Figure A116) *Adieu Paris* is particularly interesting because it symbolizes the conflict that Mancini faced between reconciling his own burgeoning style, particularly his emphasis on *il vero* (i.e. capturing exactly what he saw, specifically in tone and value), and the concessions he needed to make in style and subject while working for the French dealers. In discussing his departure after the submission of the

⁶⁷ Interestingly, Mancini's signature includes the denotation of 'Napoli.' Not typical of his signatures of the period, perhaps this was included to emphasize his nationality in the exhibitions, and keep a tenuous hold on his identity.

⁶⁸ Letter from Mancini to Gemito, undated. Quoted from Raffaella Resch, *Capolavori Dell'800 Napoletano Dal Romanticismo Al Verismo* (Milan: Edizioni Gabriele Mazzotta, 1997), 168.

⁶⁹ The model is Mathilde Duffaud, the mistress of Gemito.

painting, Mancini was to have said, “I had to flee from working for the French dealers.”⁷⁰ Such a reaction suggests that Mancini’s relationship with the French style is similar to the very dialogue that Degas had with the quattrocento masters earlier in his career – a conversation in which the student ingests the style of the master and quickly adapts it for something all his own.

A mental breakdown, precipitated by lead poisoning, led to Mancini’s hospitalization in 1881-82. After his release, Mancini relocated to Rome in 1883, and began experimenting with new themes and techniques including the *graticola* (a perspective grid), which will become the foundation stone of his mature oeuvre. (Figure A466) Through the 1880s and 1890s Mancini’s work became increasingly flamboyant in the use of both color and impasto. Works such as *La Corallia* exemplify this push.⁷¹ The work is a tour-de-force in painting, including a reflection of the painter/studio in the mirrored ball. It incorporates fantastical and out-of-place elements, including hot air balloon/mask, a crow, a hand, a cross, the Virgin and a cityscape, created by using impasto made up of both dry and wet layers.

In his later career, his output was dominated by society portraits, although he often returned to the genre subjects of his youth and also painted many self-portraits. His double portrait, *Elizabeth and Charles Hedworth Williamson* is a striking example of his mature work, and his transformation of scugnizzi transformed into an interest in society children. (Figure A467) In its surface one can see the remnants of his use of the *graticola*. In his late paintings Mancini was preoccupied with surface texture, using thick impasto

⁷⁰ Quoted in wall text for *Antonio Mancini: Nineteenth-Century Italian Master*, Philadelphia Museum of Art, October 20, 2007 - January 20, 2008.

⁷¹ Antonio Mancini, *La Corallia*, Oil on canvas, Galleria d’Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.

and adding materials such as colored glass and foil to enhance the luminous colors of his canvases.

The influence that Degas has on Mancini can be clearly ascertained through the examination of the highly insightful *Self Portrait with Autobiographical Script*, painted a year before his death. (Figure A468) In keeping a running tab of his reflections on the influential moments and individuals in his life, Mancini includes his teachers (Domenico Morelli and Stanislao Lista), friends (Giuseppe De Nittis, Jean-Léon Gérôme and J. S. Sargent) and patrons (Hugh Lane, Marquis del Grillo, Hendrik Mesdag and Otto Messinger). Included in this list Mancini wrote, “Degas pastels seen in his atelier/Ballerina.” Carrying this memory for over fifty years, it is clear that his experiences in Paris, in Degas’ studio in particular, had a profound effect on Mancini’s later work and dialogue in his own penchant for the medium of pastels. His short exchange with Degas regarding the latter’s pastels was similar to Degas’ short exchange with Ingres, in that such a short exchange with a revered master stayed with the artist, and effected their oeuvre throughout their career. And in this recollection, it brings us full circle to ideas of influence and collaboration, and opens up the discussion again for the next generation.

APPENDIX A
FIGURES

Figure A1. Museum visitors to *Degas Scultore*, an exhibition held in Verona in 1986.
Photo source: *L'Arena*, 7 September 1986.



Figure A2. De Gas Family Coat of Arms, reproduced in Raimondi, *Degas e sua Famiglia in Napoli*.



Figure A3. A. Barrère, *M. Degas: peintre Diogénial*, 1911, Color print, Private collection; reproduced in *Degas beyond Impressionism*.



Figure A4. Edgar Degas, *Sheet of Studies*, 1858, Graphite, pen and brown ink, brush and brown wash, and watercolor, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A5. Daniele da Volterra, *Deposition*, 1541, Fresco, Trinità dei Monti, Rome.

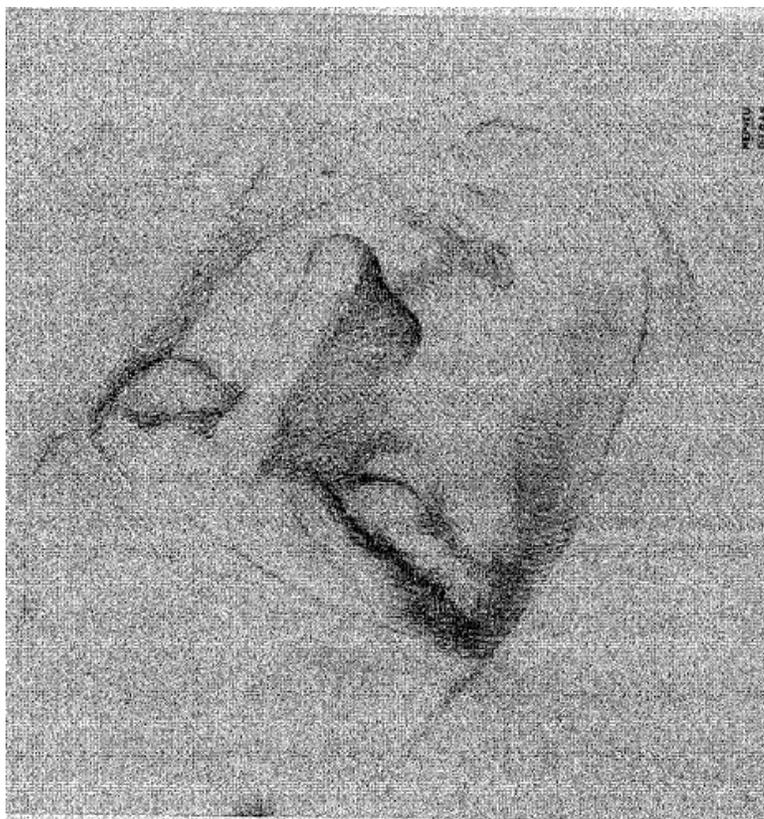


Figure A6. Edgar Degas, Copy after Daniele da Volterra, *Deposition*, 1857-58, Black chalk on green-grey paper, Private Collection, Paris.

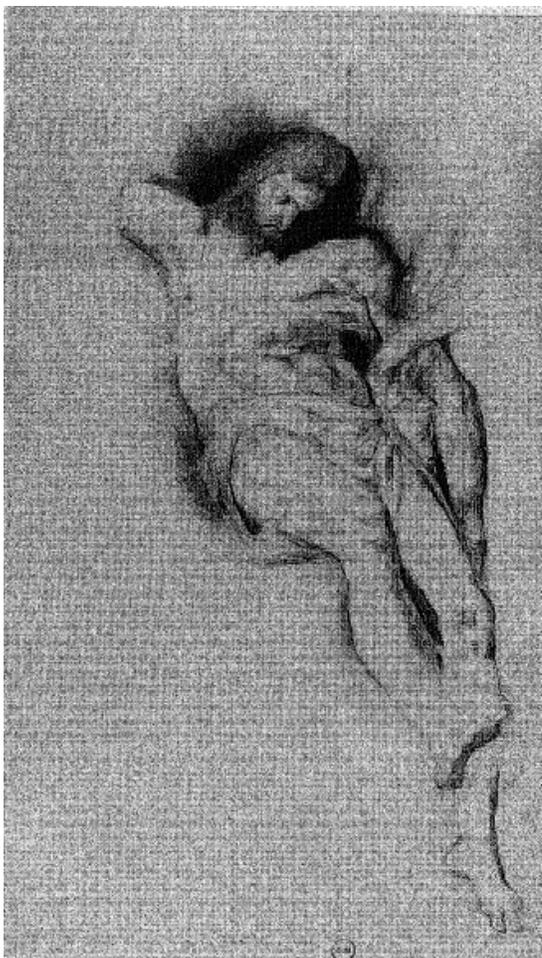


Figure A7. Gustave Moreau, Copy after Daniele da Volterra, *Deposition*, 1858, Black chalk, Musée Gustave Moreau.



Figure A8. Agasias of Ephesus, *Borghese Gladiator*, c. 100 BC after a 3rd c. BC original; Found Anzio, Italy c. 1610, Marble, Louvre

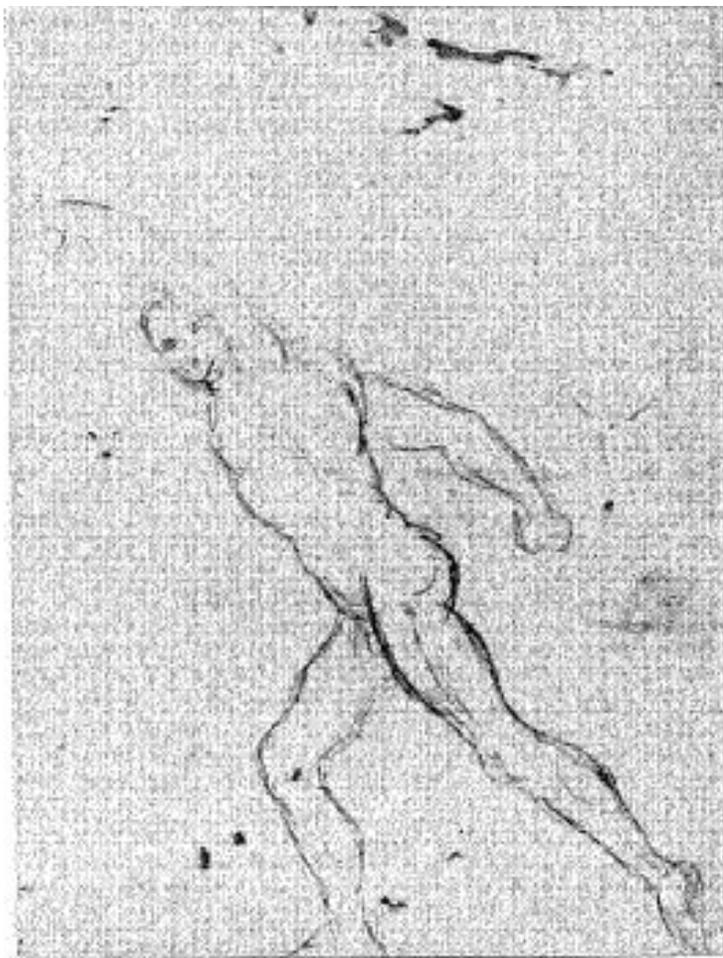


Figure A9. Auguste Rodin, Copy after *Borghese Gladiator*, 1855-60, Pencil, Musée Rodin.

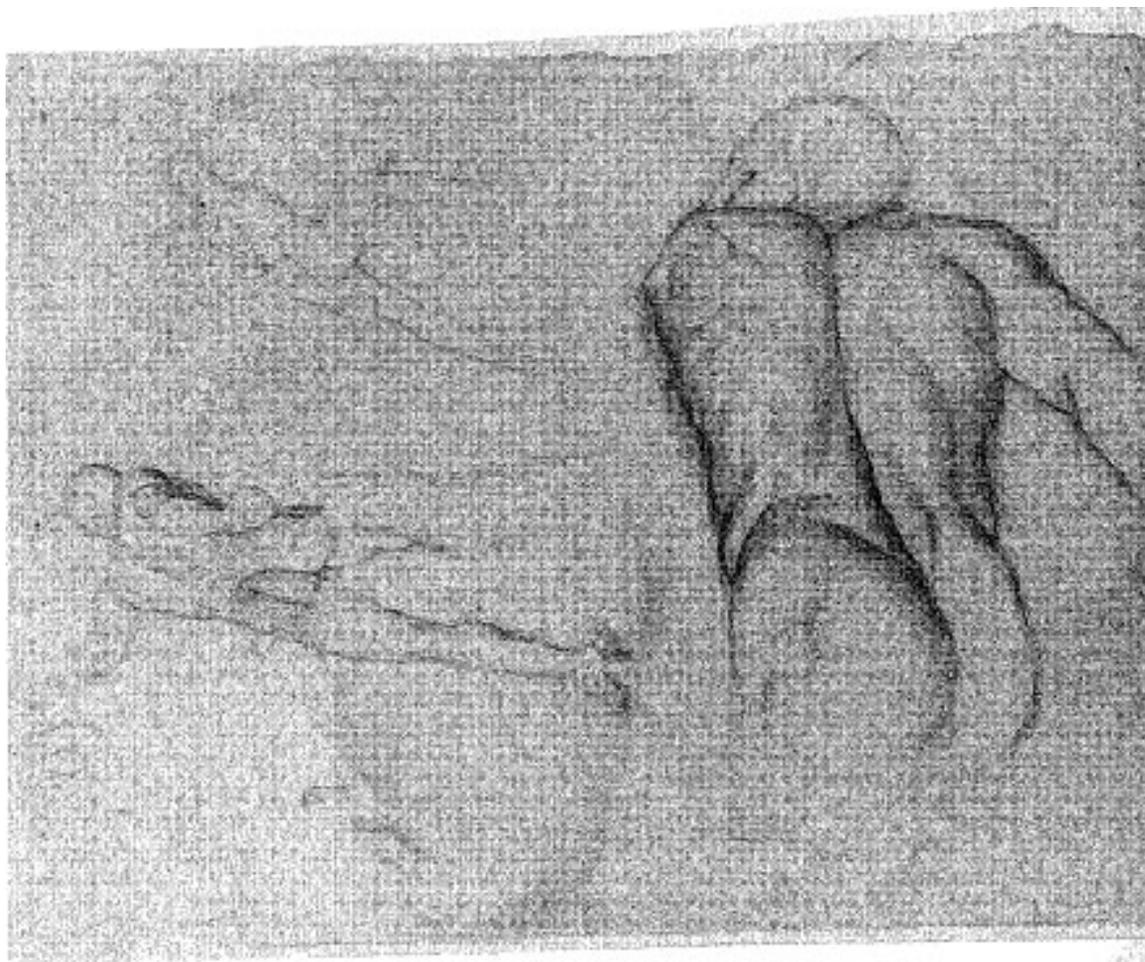


Figure A10. Edgar Degas, Copy after *Borghese Gladiator*, 1854-56, Black and red chalk on grey paper, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, VA.

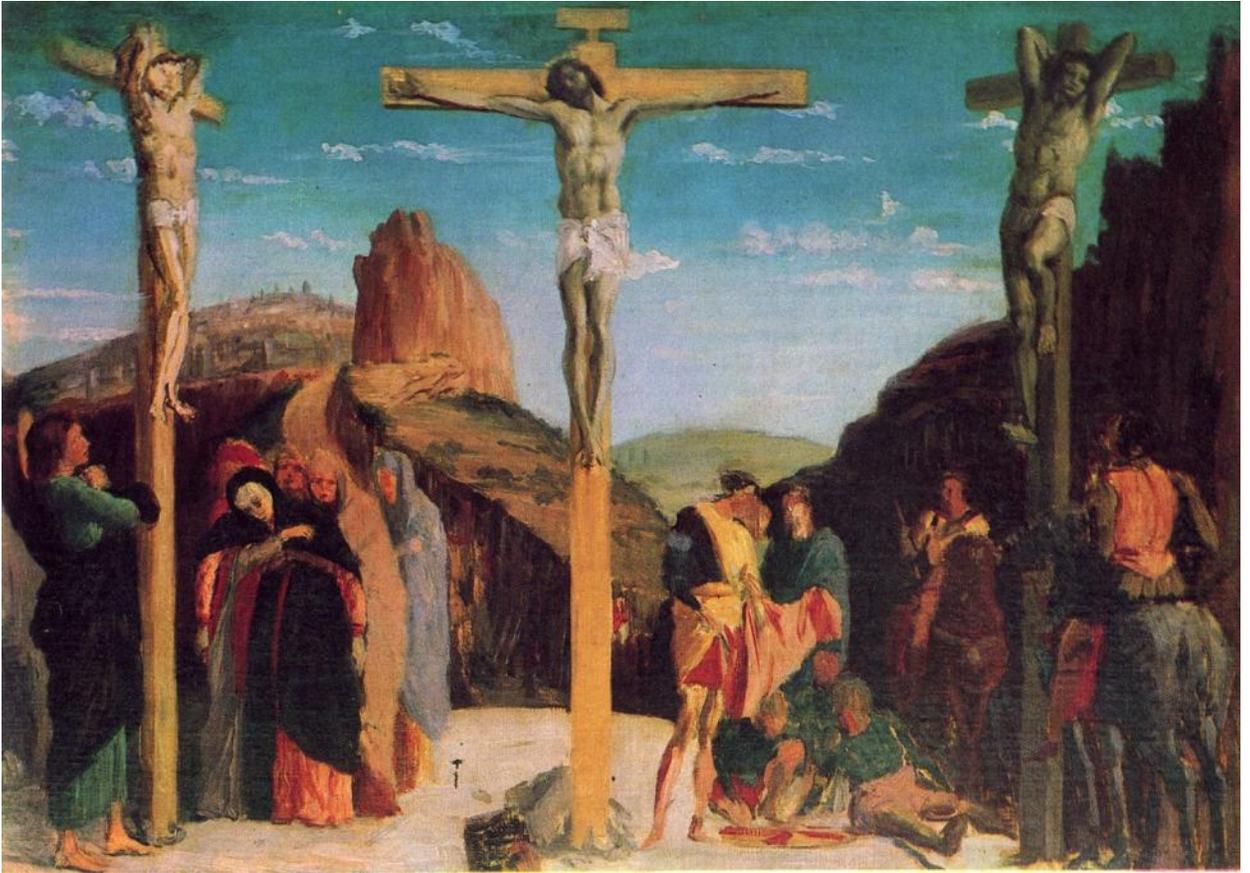


Figure A11. Edgar Degas, *Copy after Andrea Mantegna, Crucifixion*, 1853?, Oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Tours.

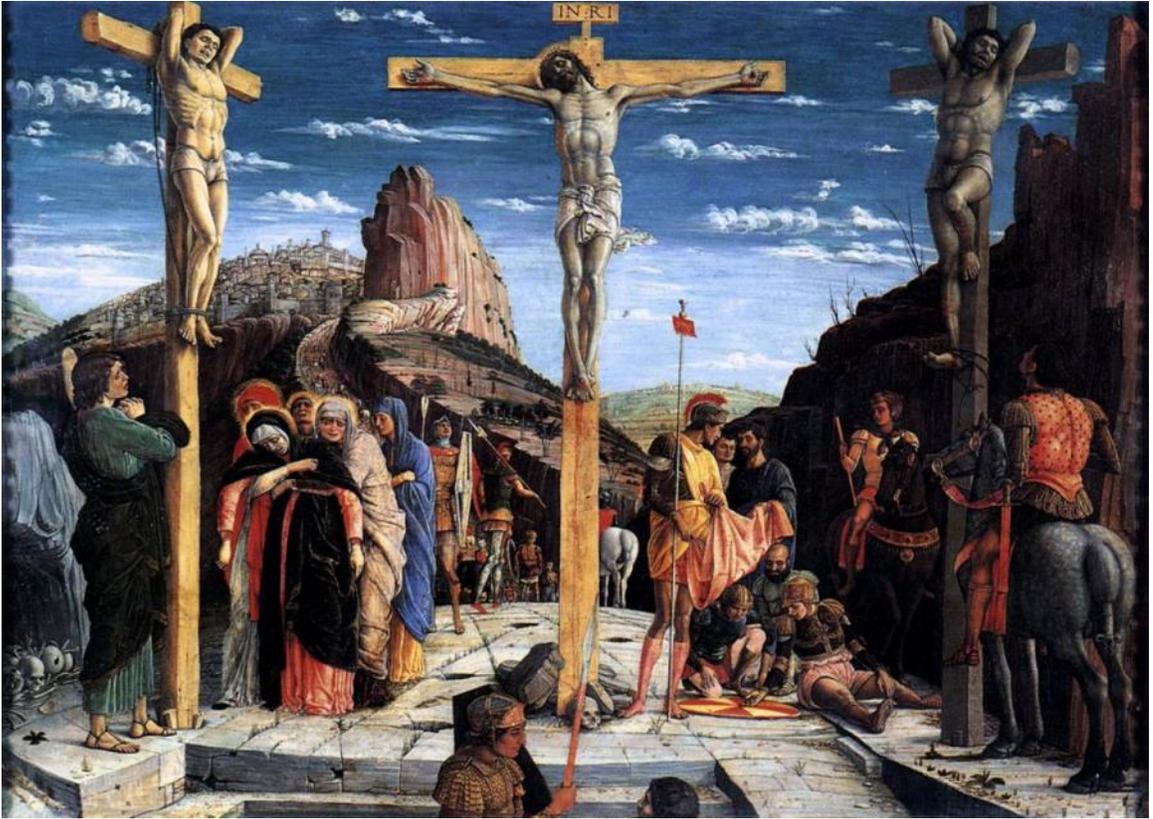


Figure A12. Andrea Mantegna, *Crucifixion*, 1457-59, Tempera on wood, The Louvre, Paris.



Figure A13. Edgar Degas, *Répétition de ballet sur la scène*, 1874, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A14. Edgar Degas, Study after Poussin, *The Triumph of Flora*, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.80c.



Figure A15. Nicolas Poussin, *The Triumph of Flora*, 1631, Oil on canvas, The Louvre, Paris.



Figure A16. Annibale Carracci, *Triumph of Bacchus and Ariadne*, 1597-1602, Fresco, Palazzo Farnese, Rome.



Figure A17. Edgar Degas, Copy of *Rape of the Sabine Women*, Poussin, Oil on canvas, Norton Simon Museum.



Figure A18. Nicolas Poussin, *Rape of the Sabine Women*, 1637-38, Oil on canvas, The Louvre, Paris.



Figure A19. Edgar Degas, Study after Paolo Uccello, *Bernardino della Ciarda Thrown Off His Horse*, IVe vente de l'atelier Degas, cat. no. 92b.



Figure A20. Paolo Uccello, *Bernardino della Ciarda Thrown off his Horse*, 1450s, Tempera on wood, Galleria degli Uffizi.



Figure A21. Domenichino, *Flagellation of St. Andrew*, 1608, Rome, S. Gregorio Magno, Oratory of St. Andrew.

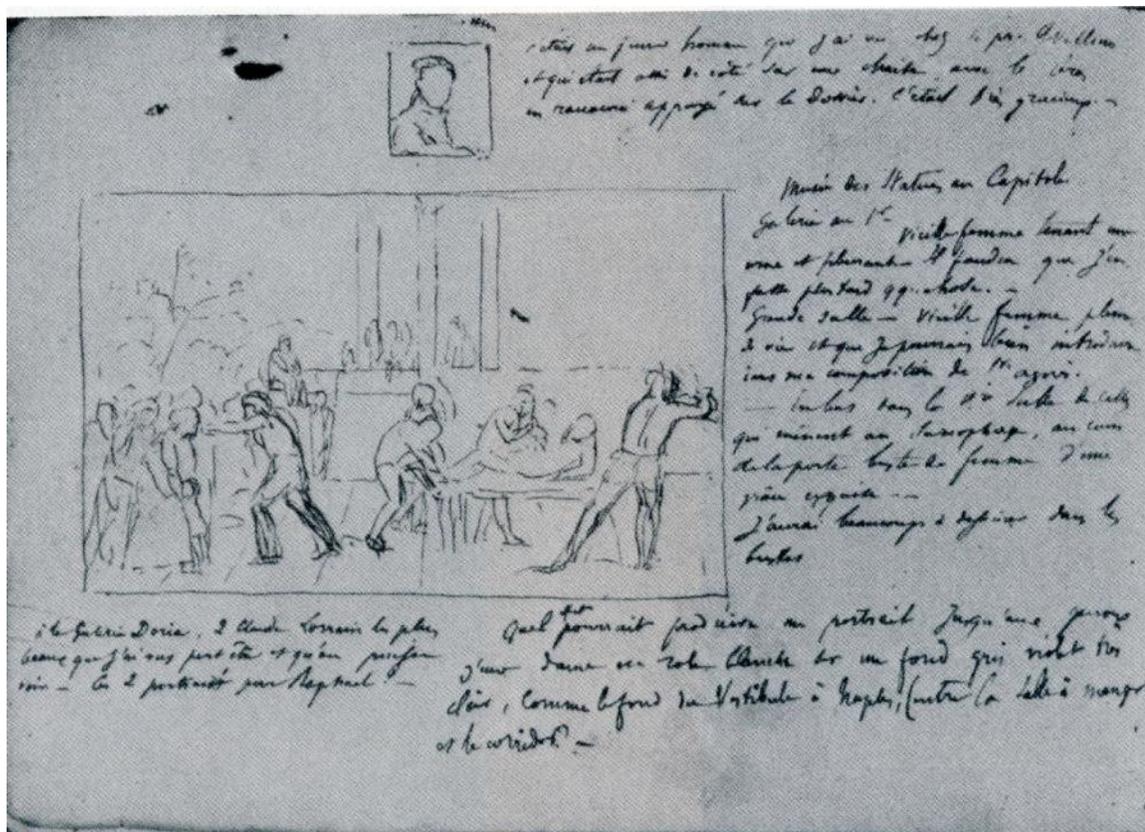


Figure A22. Edgar Degas, Copy of *Flagellation of St. Andrew*, after Domenichino, Nb 7 p iv, 1856.



Figure A23. Edgar Degas, *Study of Portrait of a Young Man*, attr. to Domenichino (Montpelier Museum 132), ca. September 1855, Nb 4 p 97.



Figure A24. Edgar Degas, Study after *Atof de Wignacourt* , Caravaggio, 1860-62, Nb 19 p 22.

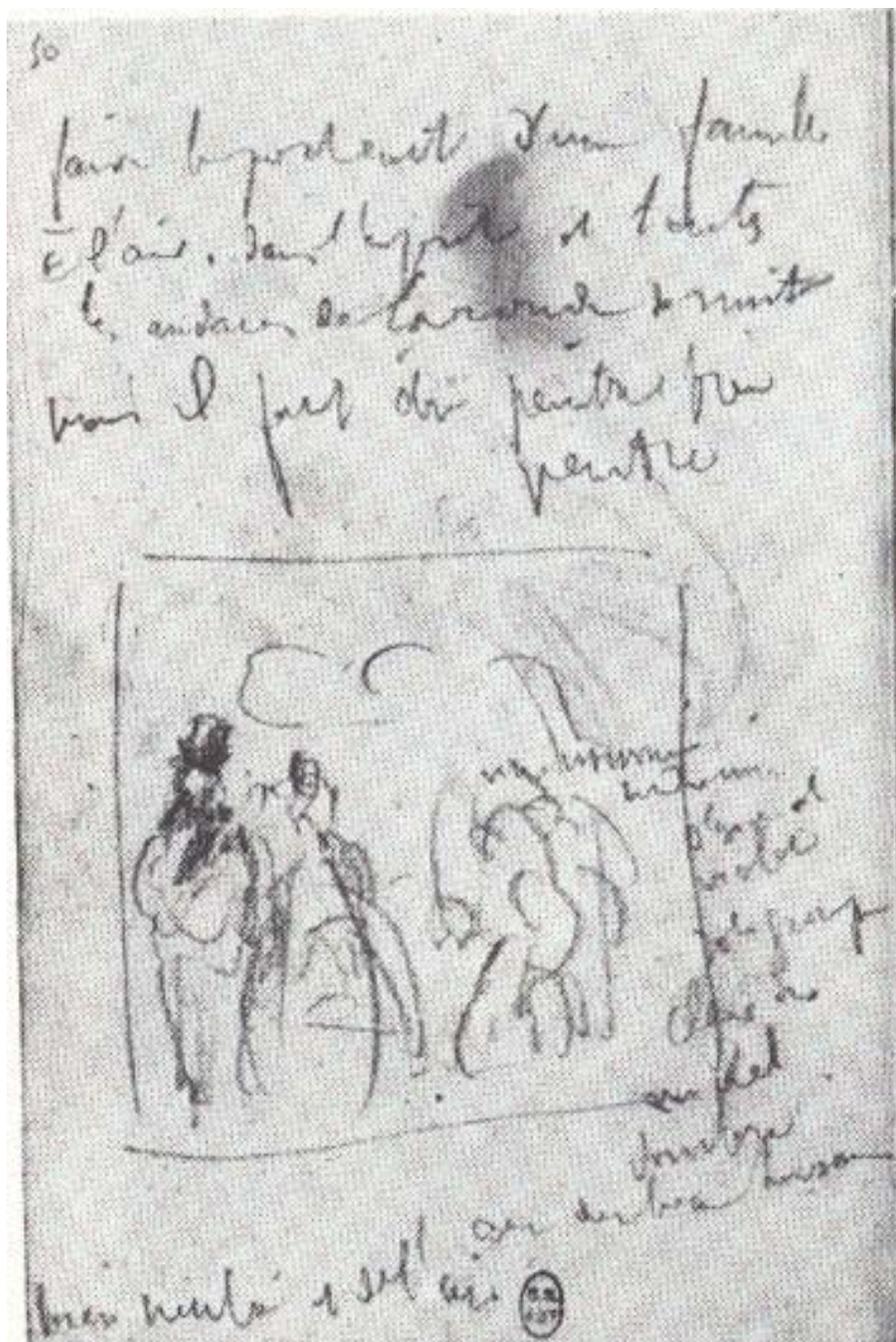


Figure A25. Edgar Degas, *Study for projected group portrait and notes*, 1858-60, Nb 13 p 50.



Figure A26. Edgar Degas, Study after *The Death of the Virgin*, Rembrandt and study for projected composition of *Tintoretto Painting his Dead Daughter*, 1856-57, Nb 8, p 86.



Figure A27. Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Death of the Virgin*, 1639, Etching with drypoint, Bartsch 99.



Figure A28. Léon Cogniet, *Tintoretto Painting his Dead Daughter*, 1843, Oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux.



Figure A29. Edgar Degas, *Study for Tintoretto Painting his Dead Daughter*, 1856-57, Nb 8, p 86V.



Figure A30. Edgar Degas, *Study for Tintoretto Painting his Dead Daughter*, 1856-57, Pen and wash, Collection R. Nepveu-Degas, Paris.



Figure A31. Edgar Degas, *Young man seated in a beret*, after Rembrandt, 1860 (Met dates their print to 1857), Etching, Delteil 13.



Figure A32. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Young Man in a Velvet Cap*, 1637, Etching, Bartsch 268.

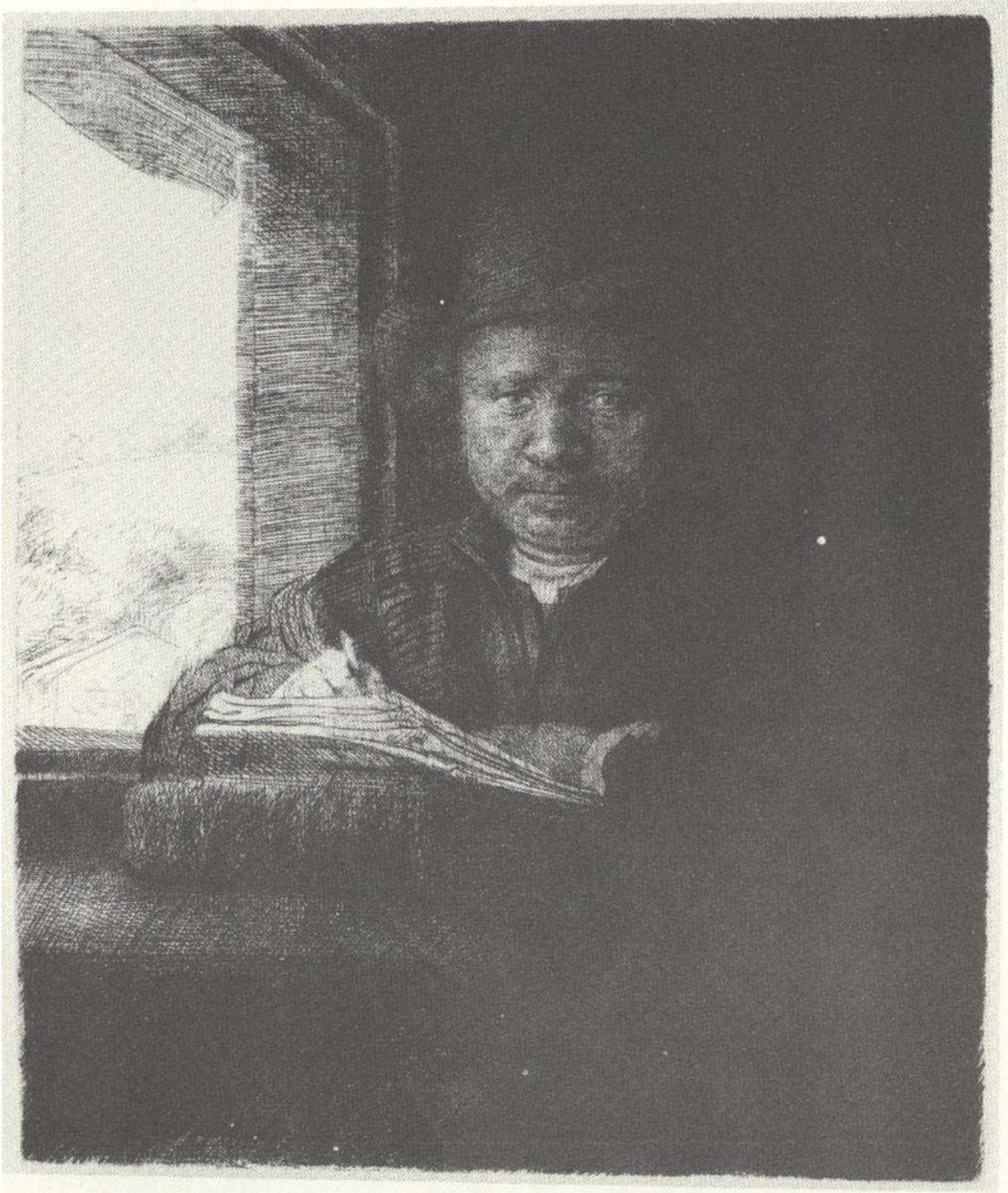


Figure A33. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Rembrandt Drawing at a Window*, 1648, Etching, Bartsch 22 IV.



Figure A34. Edgar Degas, *The Engraver Joseph Tourny*, ca. 1856, Etching, Delteil 4.

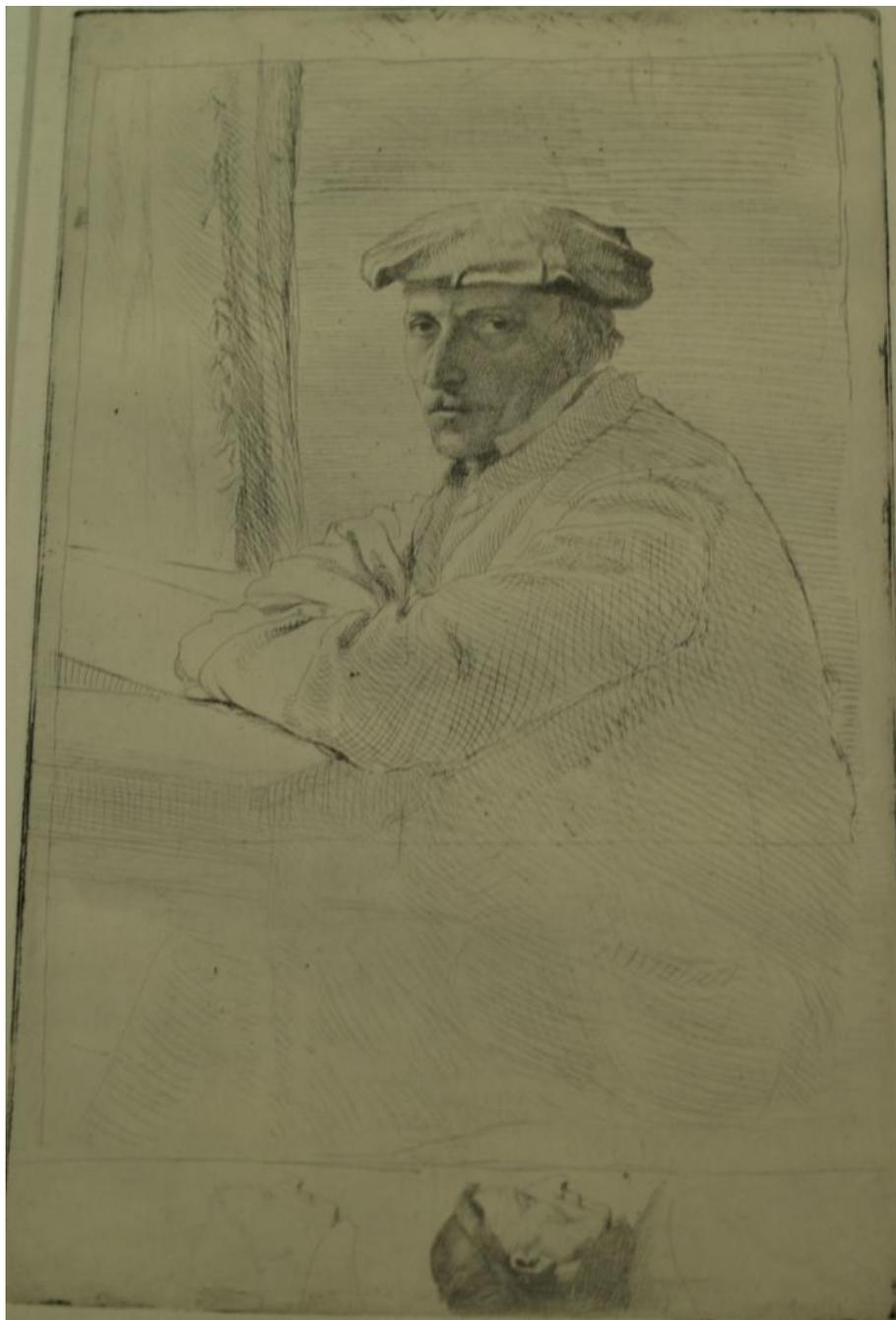


Figure A35. Edgar Degas, *The Engraver Joseph Tourny*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 29.107.55.



Figure A36. Edgar Degas, *The Engraver Joseph Tourny*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 29.107.56.



Figure A37. Edgar Degas, *The Engraver Joseph Tourny*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 27.5.5.



Figure A38. Edgar Degas, *Self-Portrait*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1972.625.



Figure A39. Edgar Degas, *Self-Portrait*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 22.63.31.



Figure A40. Edgar Degas, *Self-Portrait*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 29.107.53.



Figure A41. Edgar Degas, *Dante and Virgil*, 1857, Engraving, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 49.127.6.



Figure A42. Colantonio, *St. Jerome in his Study*, c. 1445, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Napoli.



Figure A43. Colantonio, *Deposition*, 1455-60, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Napoli.



Figure A44. Master of St. Severino, *St. Severino and St. Sossio Polyptych*, c. 1472, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte, Napoli.



Figure A45. Edgar Degas, *Study for Projected Portrait of Albert de Musset*, 1859-60, Pencil, Nb 27 p 7.

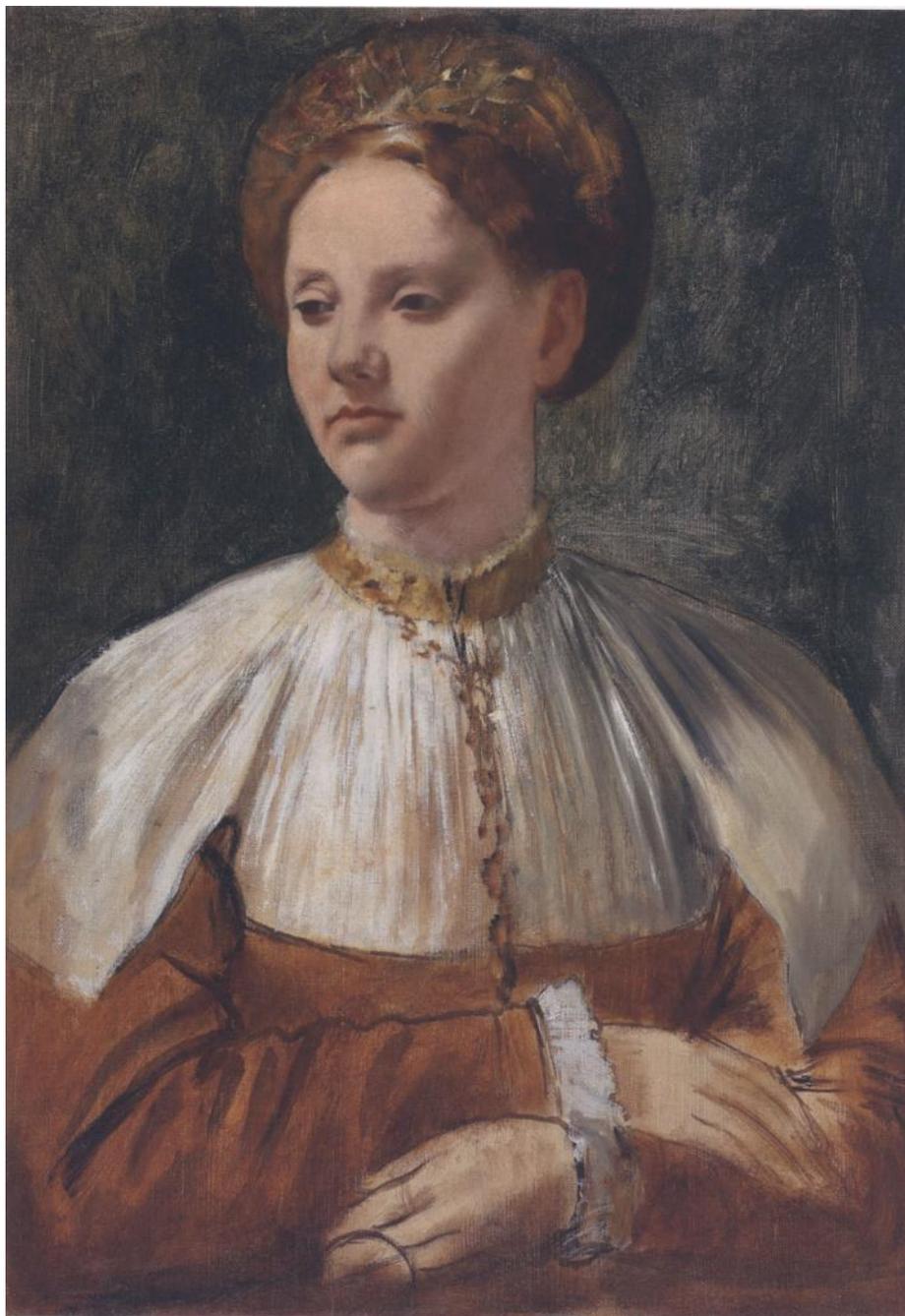


Figure A46. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of a Young Woman*, 1858-59, Oil on canvas, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



Figure A47. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of a Young Woman*, c. 1858, Museum of Modern Art.



Figure A48. Pontormo (or Bacciacca?), *Portrait of a Young Woman*, Museo dei Offices, Florence.



Figure A49. Edgar Degas, *The Bellelli Family*, 1858-67, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A50. Edgar Degas, *Double Portrait*, after Giovanni Cariani, 1858-60, Oil on canvas, The Clark Family Collection, Saltwood Castle, United Kingdom.



Figure A51. Giovanni Cariani, *Portrait of Two Young Men*, Oil on canvas, The Louvre, Paris.



Figure A52. Edgar Degas, *Gabrielle and Angèle Beauregard*, 1857-59, Oil on canvas, Lemoisne II 45.



Figure A53. Edgar Degas, *Giovanna and Giulia Bellelli*, 1865-66, Oil on canvas, LACMA.



Figure A54. Edgar Degas, *Double Portrait of the Montejasi Sisters*, c. 1865-68, The Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT.



Figure A55. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Italienne assise (Rome)*, Robaut, No. 113.



Figure A56. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Study for the Apotheosis of Homer*, 1826-27, Oil on paper, The Louvre, Paris.



Figure A57. Edgar Degas, *Study of Hands (Bellelli Family)*, c. 1860-67, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.

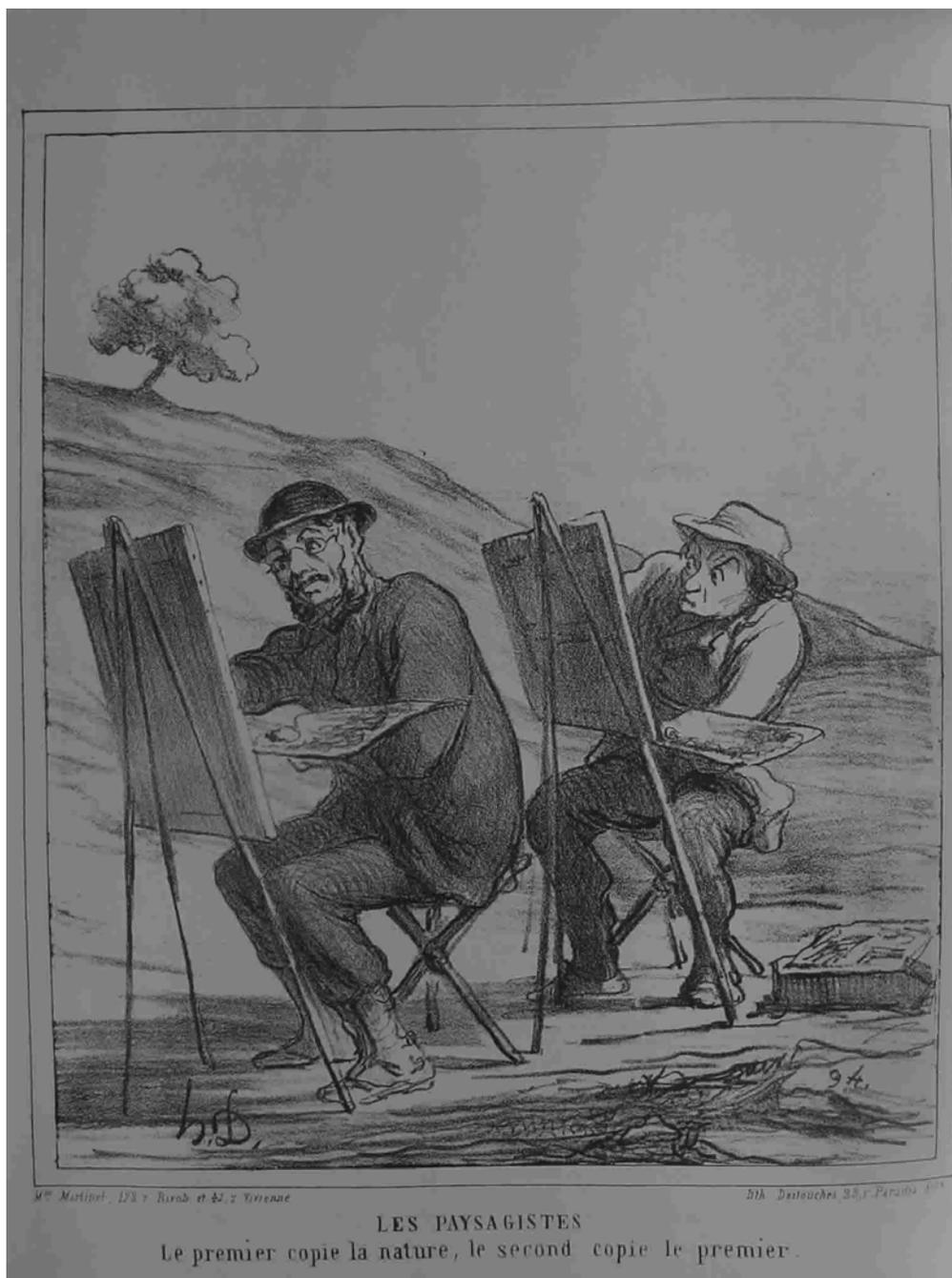


Figure A58. Honoré Daumier, *Les Paysagistes*, 1865, Lithograph, Published in *Le Charivari* 12 Mai 1865; LD 3439.



Figure A59. Jean-Victor Schnetz, *La diseuse de bonne aventure*, Clermont-Ferrand, Musée d'art Roger-Quilliot.



Figure A60. Théodore Géricault, *Vieille Italienne*, Le Havre, Musée André-Malraux.



Figure A61. Edgar Degas, *Mediante Romaine*, 1857, Oil on canvas, Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.



Figure A62. Edgar Degas, *Study of a Draped Figure*, 1857-58, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A63. Edgar Degas, *Danseuse assise, tournée vers la droite*, Blue paper, oil paint, essence, pinceau(?), Louvre RF 16723.

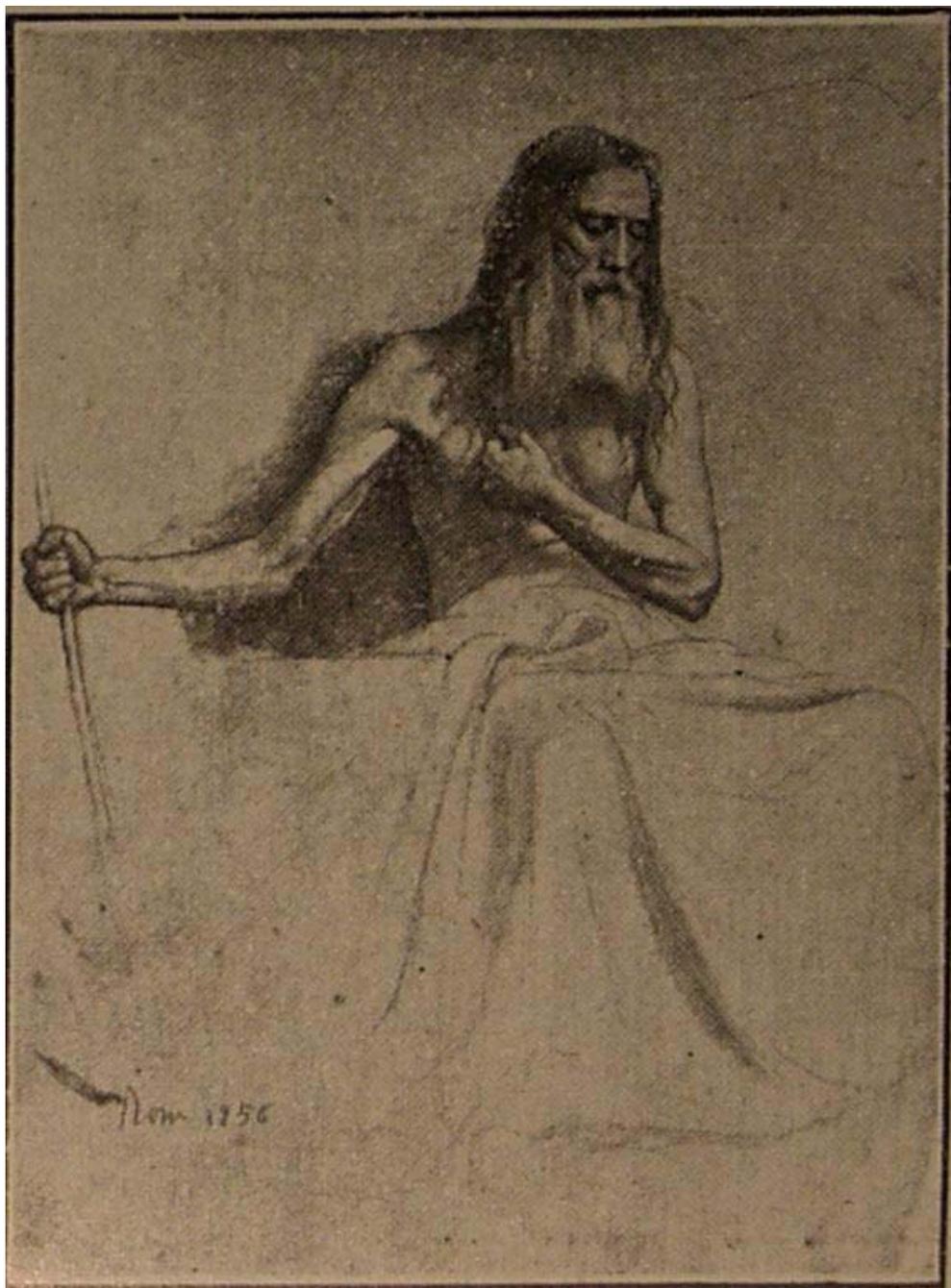


Figure A64. Edgar Degas, *Study of a Seated Old Man*, 1856, Black pencil, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.97e.



Figure A65. Edgar Degas, *Study of a Female Nude*, 1856, Black crayon, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.108b.



Figure A66. Edgar Degas, *Study of a Man Seen from the Back*, 1856, Black pencil, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.84d.



Figure A67. Edgar Degas, *Study of a Nude - right arm raised*, 1856, Black crayon, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.108a.

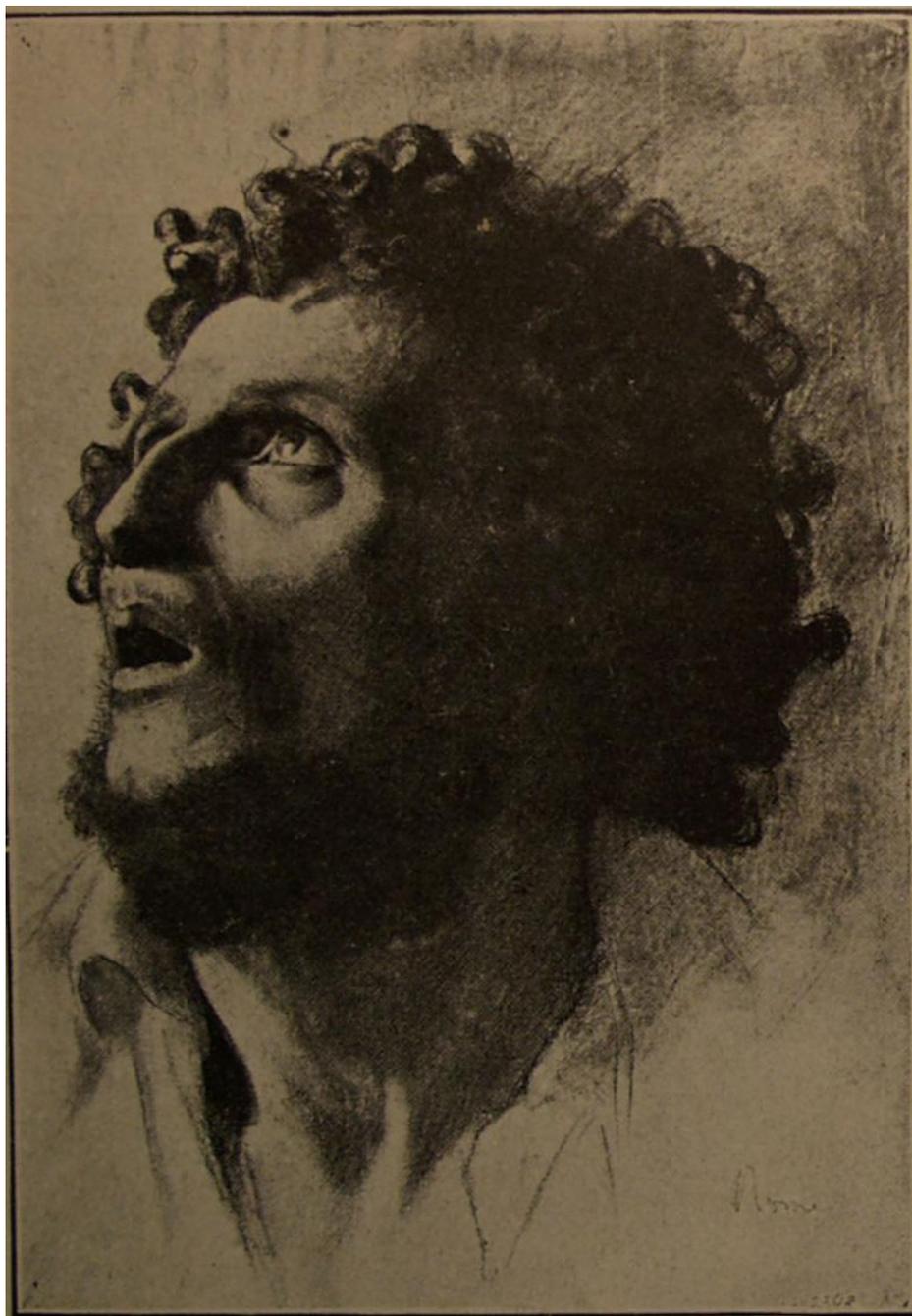


Figure A68. Edgar Degas, *Expressive Head*, Charcoal and crayon, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.94a.

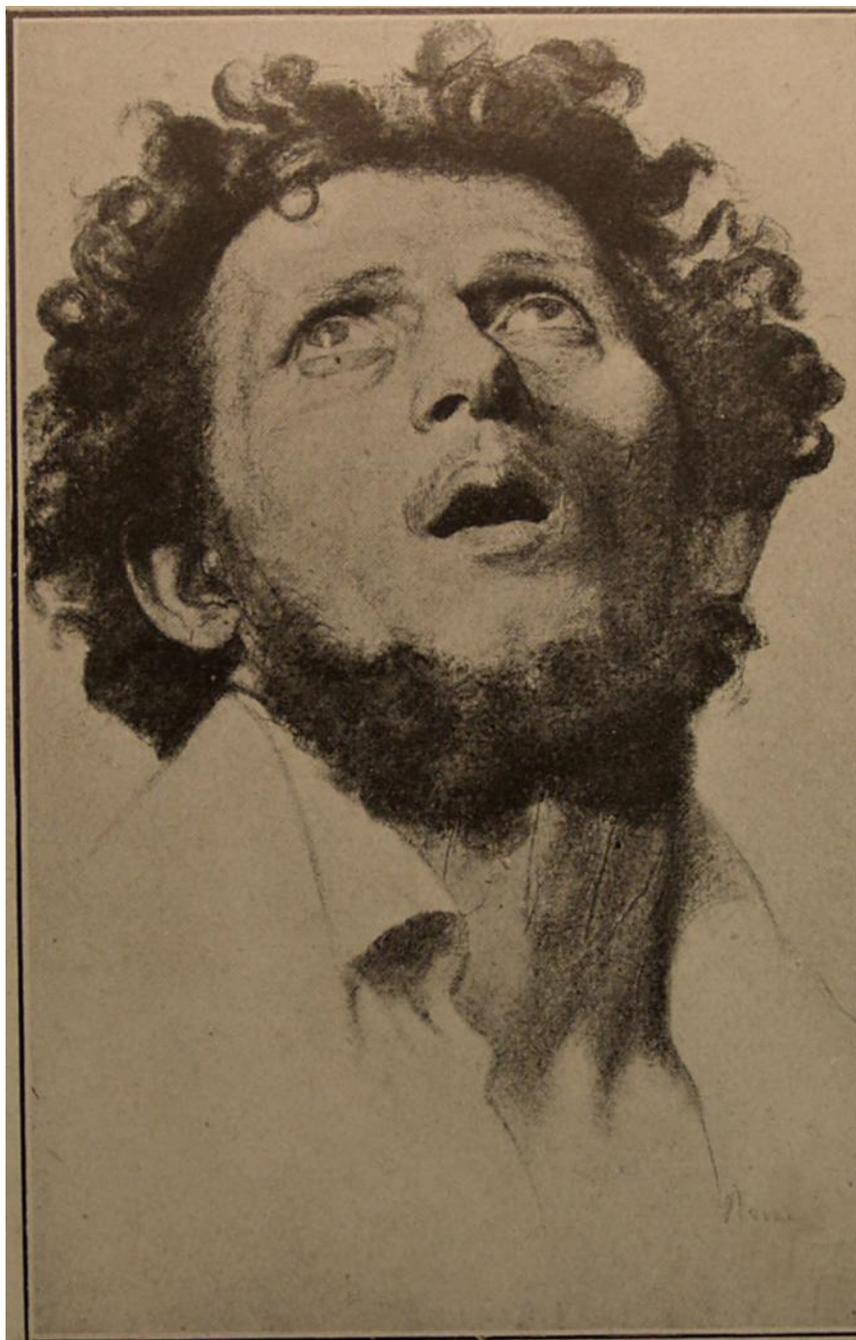


Figure A69. Edgar Degas, *Expressive Head*, Charcoal and crayon, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.94b.

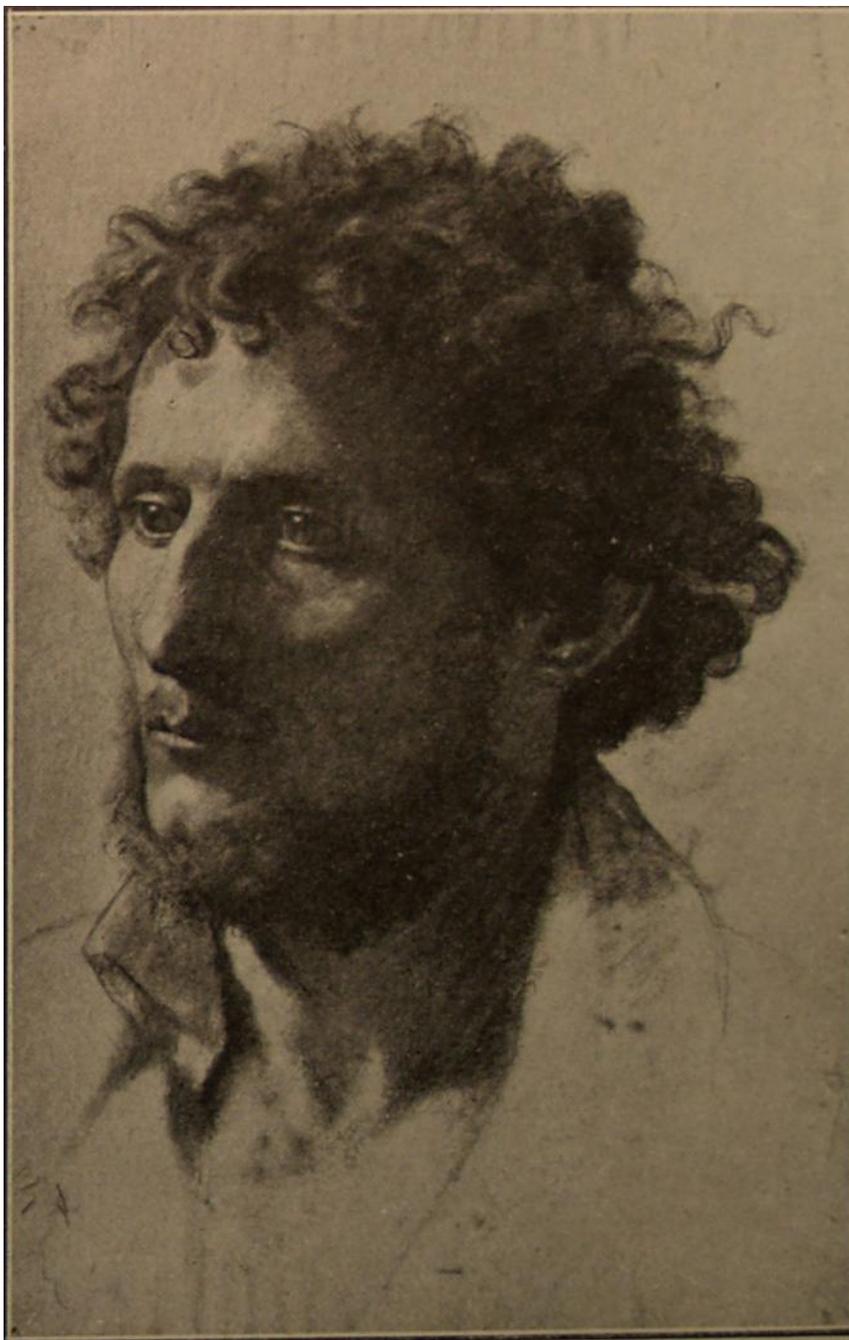


Figure A70. Edgar Degas, *Expressive Head*, Charcoal and crayon, Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins - Sale 4, no.94c.



Figure A71. Léon Bonnat, *Interior of the Sistine Chapel*, 1875-1880, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A72. Gustave Moreau, *Degas at the Uffizi*, 1858, Musée Gustave Moreau.



Figure A73. Gustave Moreau, *Edgar Degas in Florence*, 1858, Pencil on paper, Musée Gustave Moreau.

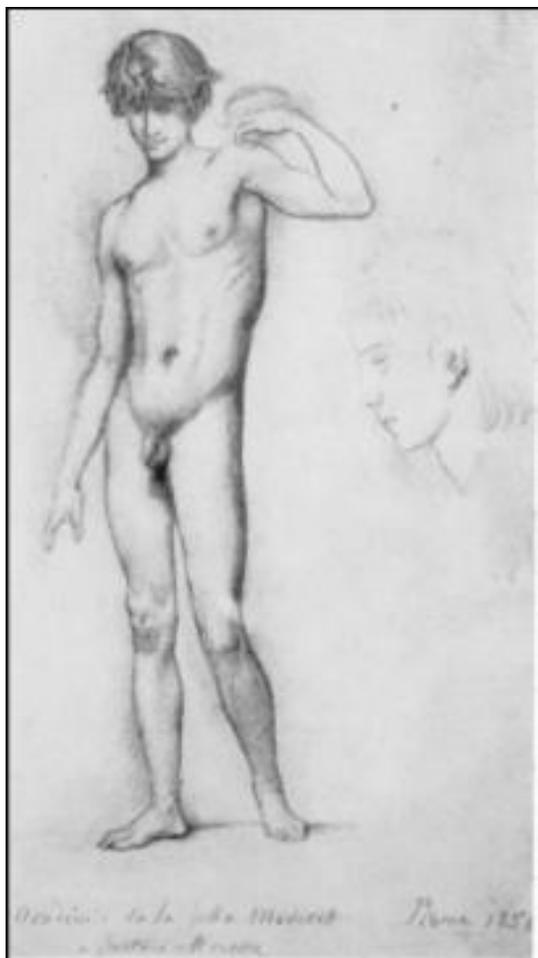


Figure A74. Gustave Moreau, *Study of a Boy*, 1858, Pencil, Musée Gustave Moreau.



Figure A75. Edgar Degas, *Study of a Boy*, 1858, Pencil.



Figure A76. Gustave Moreau, *L'enlèvement d'Europe*, 1869, Oil on wood, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A77. Edgar Degas, *Scène de guerre au Moyen Age*, c. 1865, Oil and essence on paper, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A78. Edgar Degas, *Bonnat*, c. 1863, Oil on canvas, Lemoisne II 111.



Figure A79. Edgar Degas, *Waiting* (2nd version), c.1879-80, Monotype, Musée Picasso, Paris.



Figure A80. Edgar Degas, *Danseuse au bouquet, saluant*, c. 1877, Pastel (and gouache?) on paper mounted on fabric, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A81. Edgar Degas, *Anne of Cleves*, after Holbein, c. 1860-62, Oil on canvas, Formerly in Collection Durand-Ruel, Lemoisne no. 80.



Figure A82. Edgar Degas, *Le souper au bal*, 1878, Oil on wood, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A83. Edgar Degas, *Dancers in the Wings*, 1880, Pastel and tempera on paper, mounted to paperboard, Norton Simon Museum.



Figure A84. Edgar Degas, Copy of *Wisdom Victorious over the Vices*, after Mantegna, 1897, Charcoal and pastel on toned canvas, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins.



Figure A85. Edgar Degas, *Two Figures standing on a Flight of Steps, after Raphael*, Graphite on fine-textured white paper, The Ashmolean Museum.

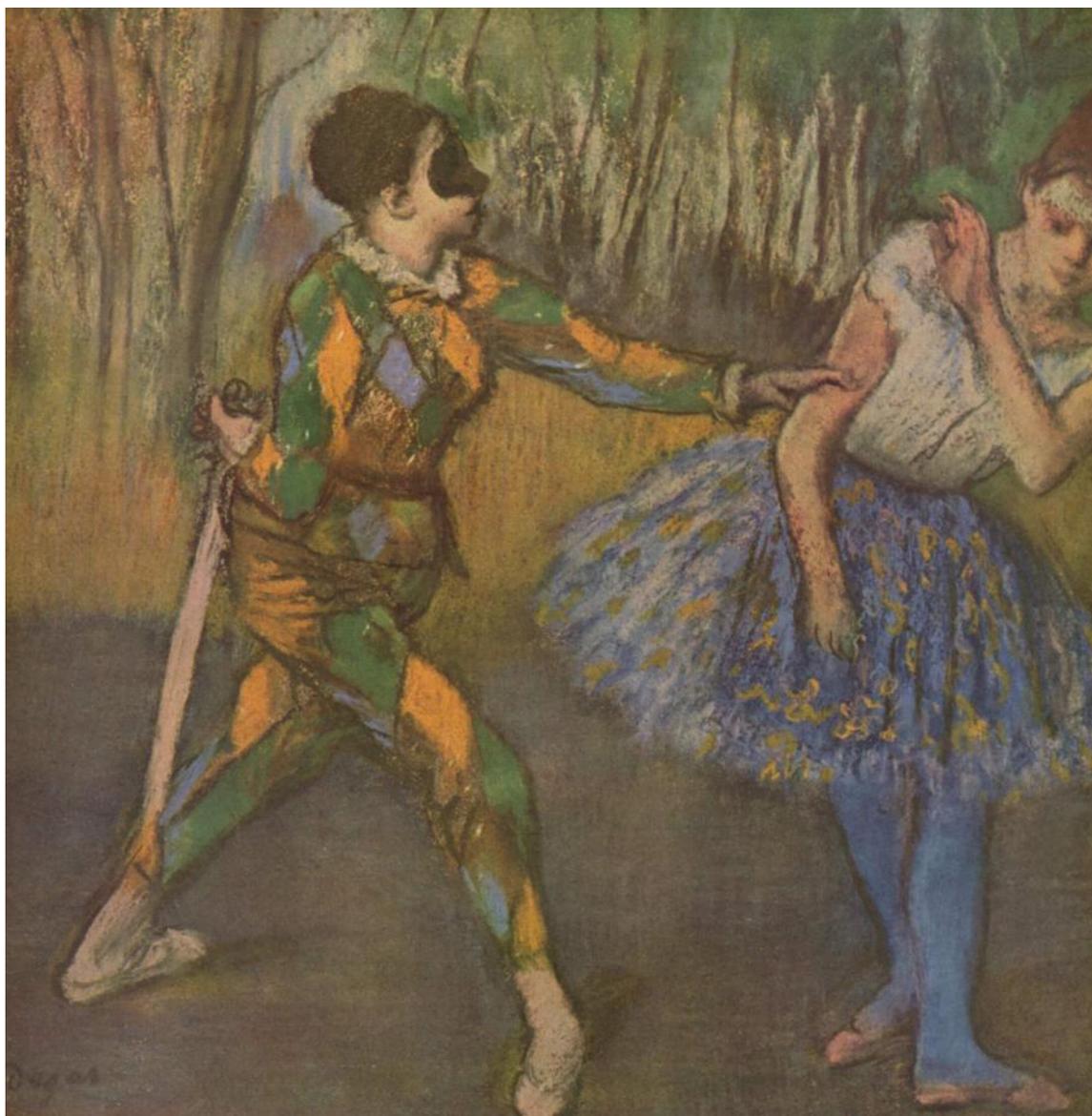


Figure A86, Edgar Degas, *Harlequin and Columbine*, c. 1884, Pastel on paper, Österreichische Galerie, Vienna.



Figure A87. Edgar Degas, *Mlle Fiocre dans le Ballet de la Scene*, 1867-68, Oil on canvas, Brooklyn Museum.



Figure A88. Edgar Degas, *Semiramis Building Babylon*, 1861, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A89. Salletti, *Portrait of Degas*, from *Lettres de Degas*, 1945, plate x.



Figure A90. Amos Cassioli, *Portrait of Edgar Degas*, 1857, Charcoal and watercolor on paper, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi, Florence.



Figure A91. L'Omnibus in Caffè Greco, c. 1895, from *Le Cronache del Caffè Greco*.

Including Vincenzo Cabianca (third from right)

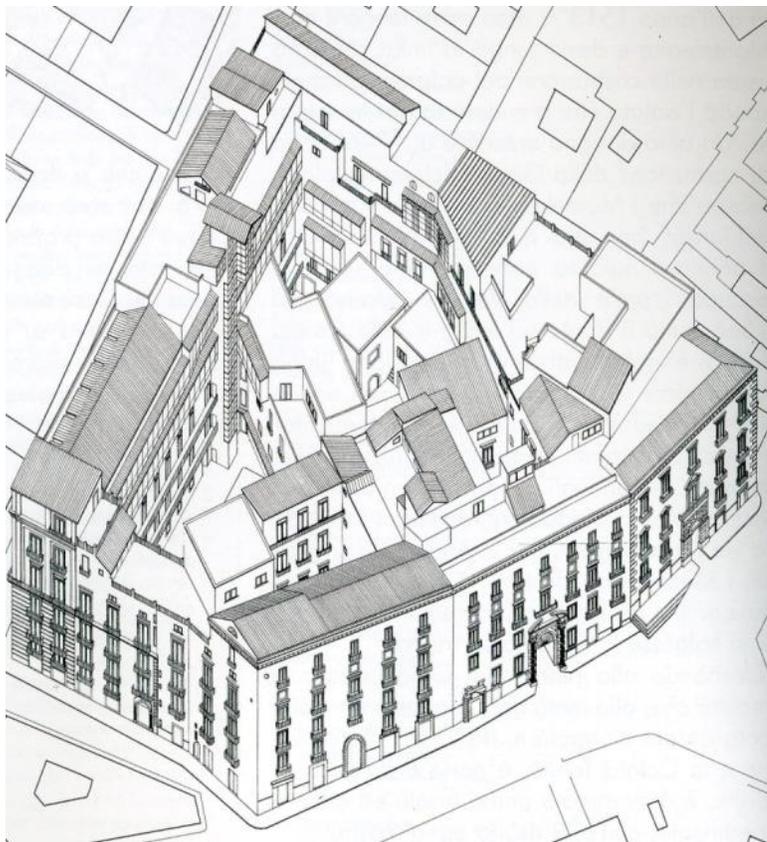


Figure A92. Monteleone - axonometric view, from *Napoli Atlanta della Città Storica*.



Figure A93. Palazzo Pignatelli di Monteleone, Photo taken by the author, February 2009.



Figure A94. Piazza Gesù Nuovo, Photo taken by the author, February 2009.



Figure A95. Edgar Degas, *René-Hilaire De Gas*, 1857, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A96. Edgar Degas, Nb 19 p 11, 1860, Watercolor, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A97. Edgar Degas, *Thérèse De Gas*, c. 1863, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A98. Edgar Degas, *Italian Landscape seen through an Arch*, 1856, Oil on paper, Private Collection.

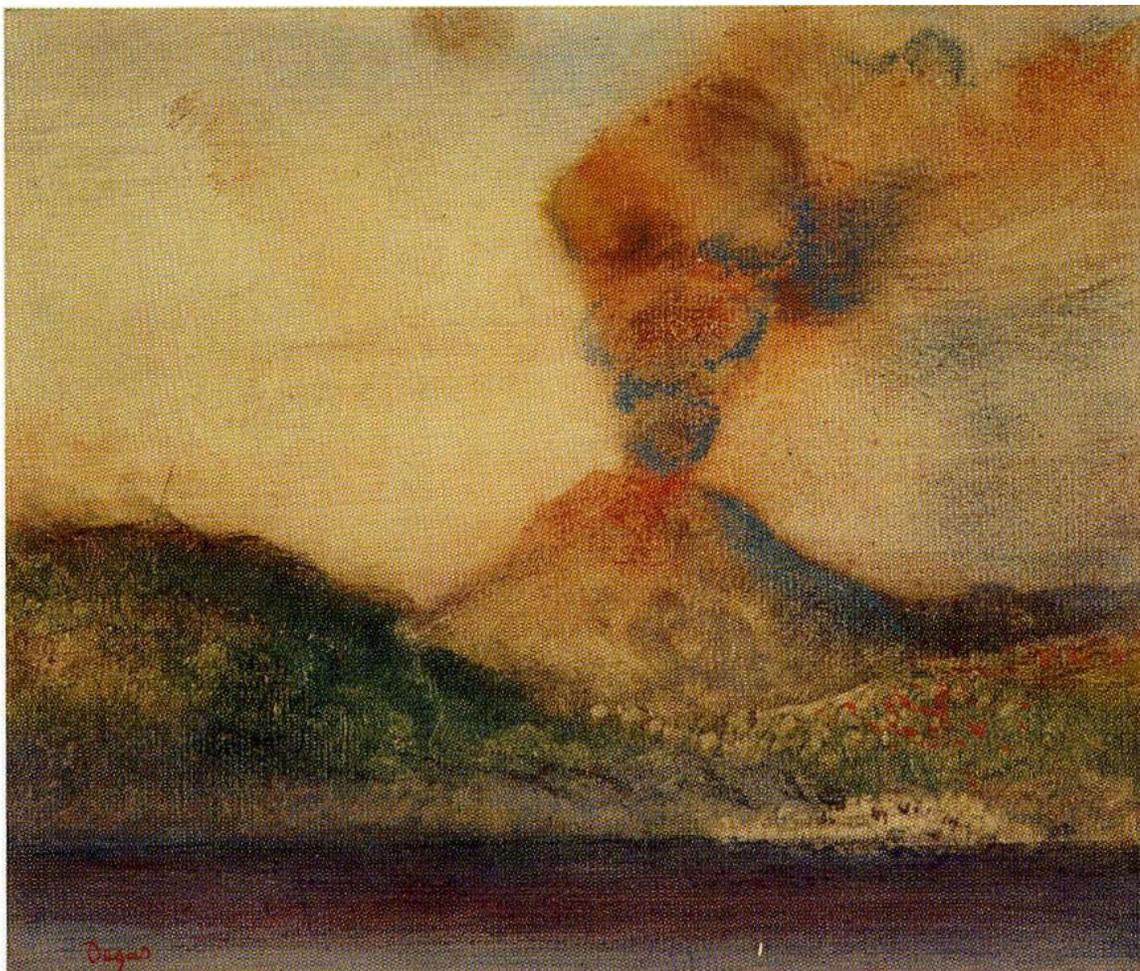


Figure A99. Edgar Degas, *Vesuvius*, 1892, Private Collection.



Figure A100. Filippo Palizzi, c. 1880, Reproduced in *Lettere inedite dei Macchiaioli*.



Figure A101. Filippo Palizzi, *La Sera del 18 Febbraio 1848 a Napoli*, Napoli, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte.

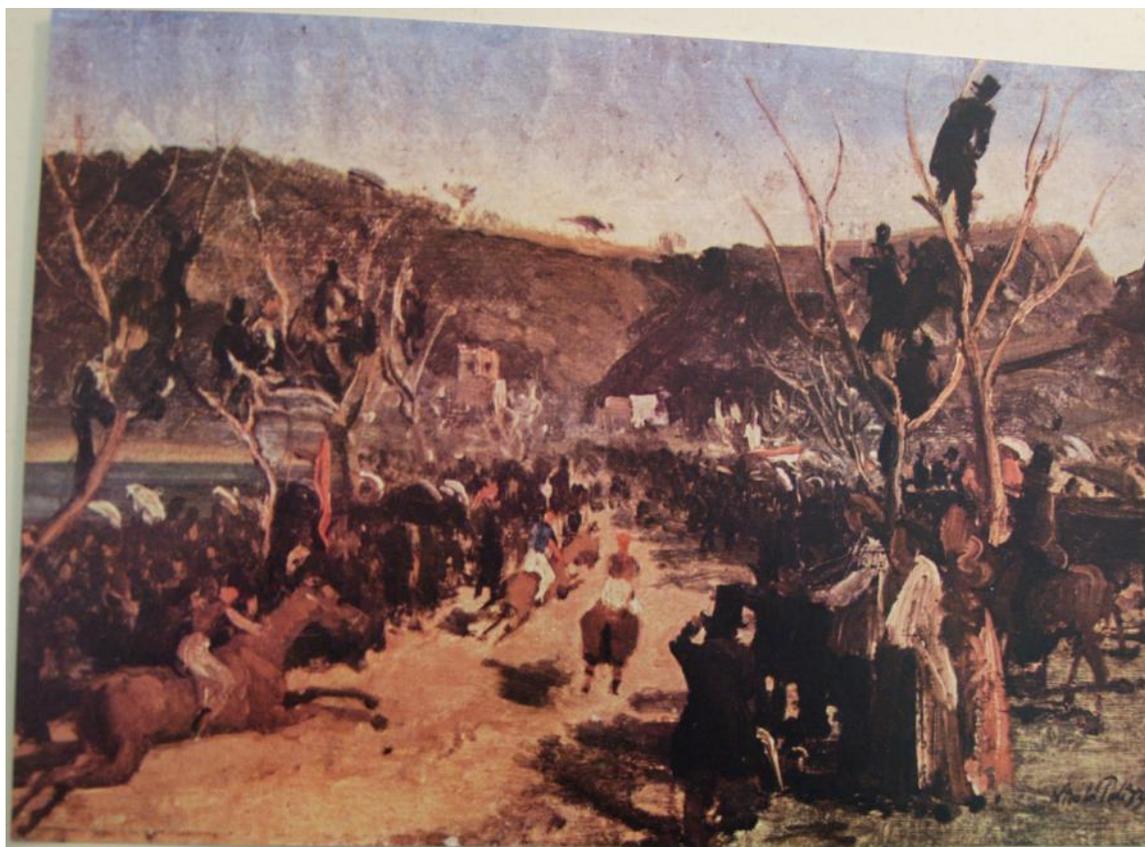


Figure A102 Nicola Palizzi, *Le Corse ad Agnano*, Napoli, Galleria Nazionale di Capodimonte.



Figure A103. Filippo Palizzi, *Caccia alla Volpe*, c. 1850, Valdagno, Collezione Marzotto.



Figure A104. Filippo Palizzi, *Study for Caccia alla Volpe*, c. 1850, Naples, Accademia di Belle Arti.



Figure A105. Edgar Degas, *Four Studies of a Jockey*, 1866, Brush with black ink, oil paint, and white gouache, on tan wove paper discolored with brown essence, laid down on cream laid board, Art Institute of Chicago.



Figure A106. Domenico Morelli, c. 1870, Reproduced in *Lettere inedite dei Macchiaioli*.



Figure A107. Domenico Morelli, *Portrait of Teresa*, ca. 1850-52, Oil on canvas, Collection Carlo Virgilio.



Figure A108. Domenico Morelli, *I Iconoclasti* (*The Iconoclasts*), 1855, Oil on canvas, Museo Nazionale Capodimonte.

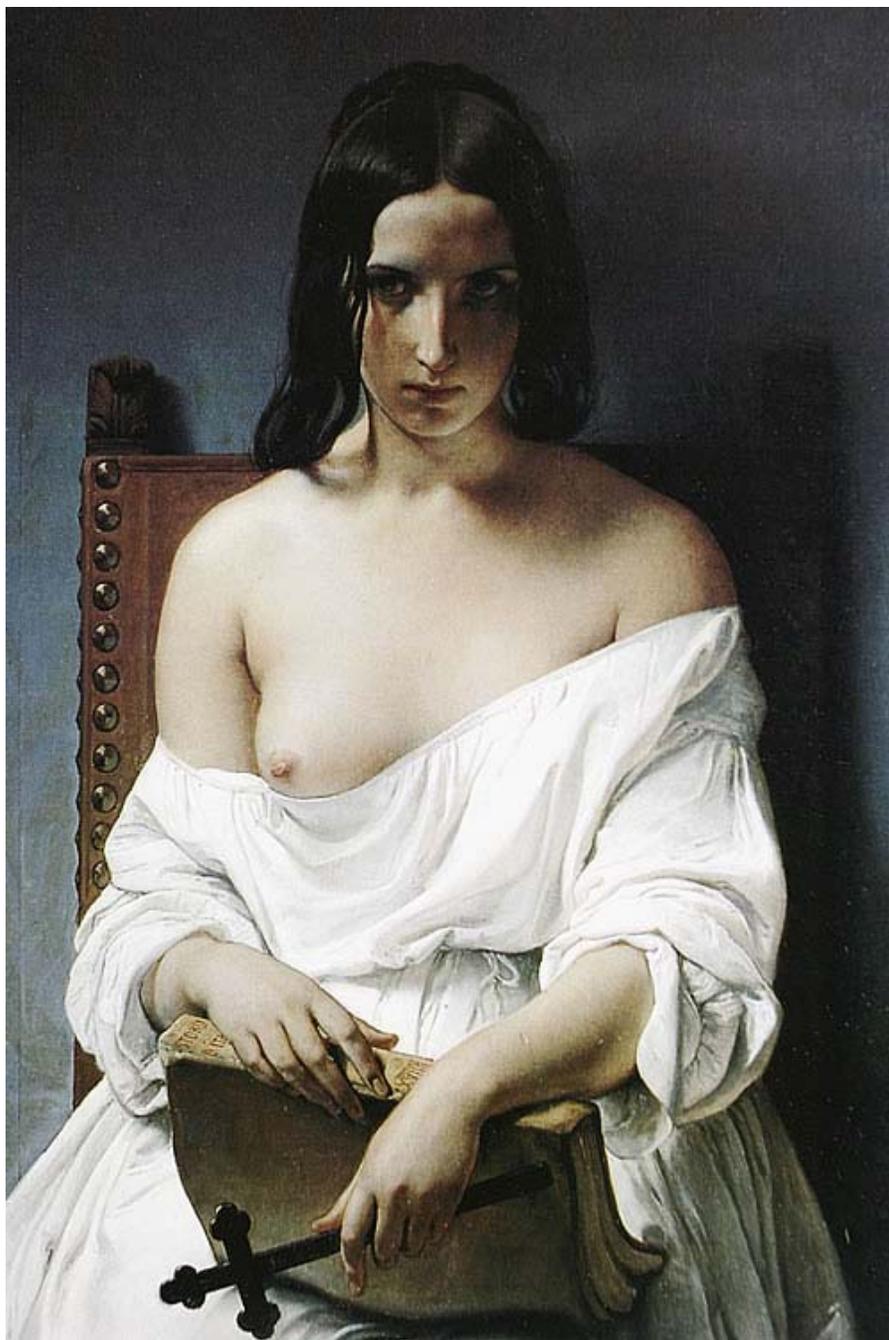


Figure A109. Francesco Hayez, *La Meditazione*, 1851, Oil on canvas, Verona, Civica Galleria di Arte Moderna.

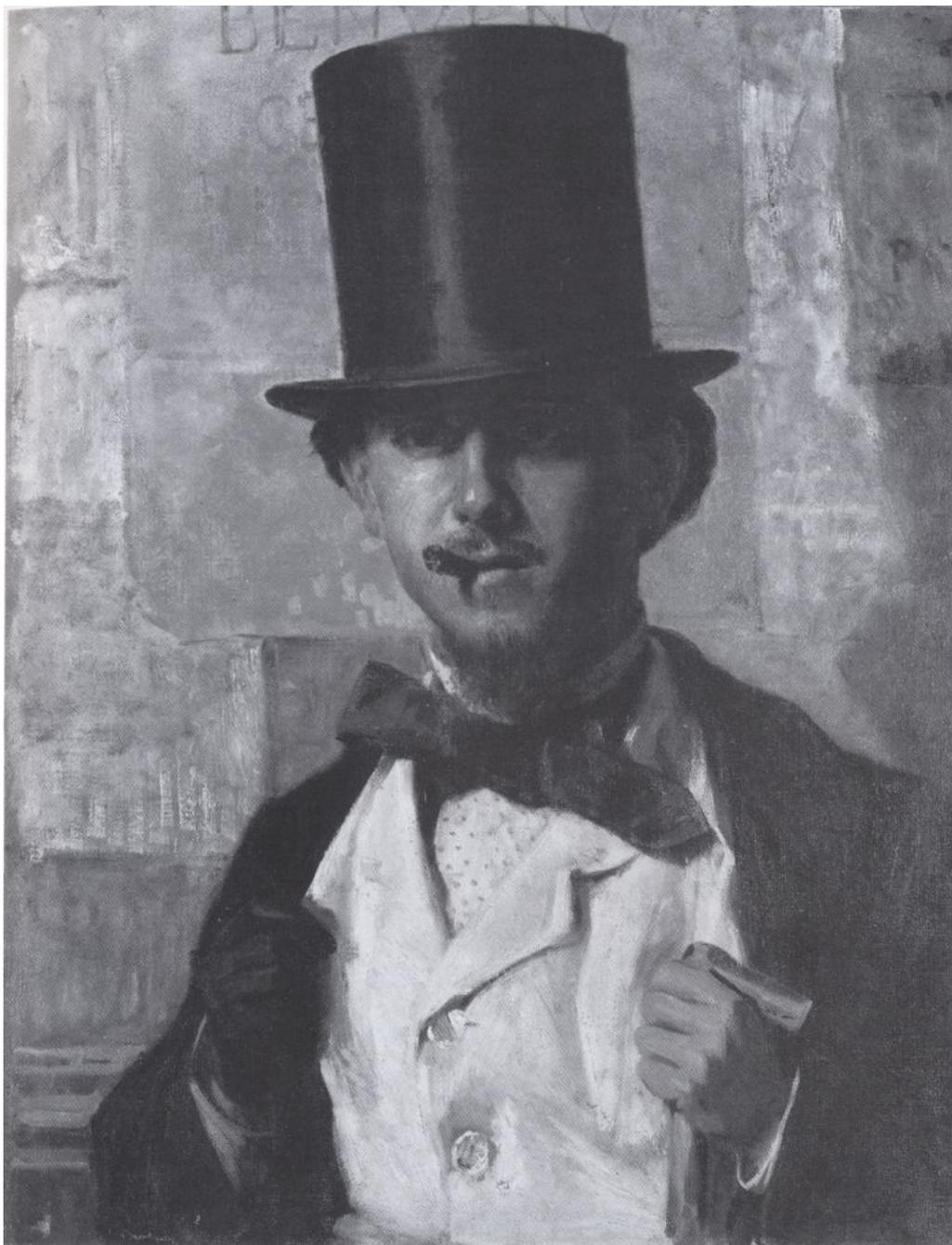


Figure A110. Domenico Morelli, *Portrait of Bernardo Celentano*, 1859, Oil on canvas, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.



Figure A111. Bernardo Celentano, *Portrait of Domenico Morelli*, 1859, Oil on canvas, Collezione Trinca, Milan.

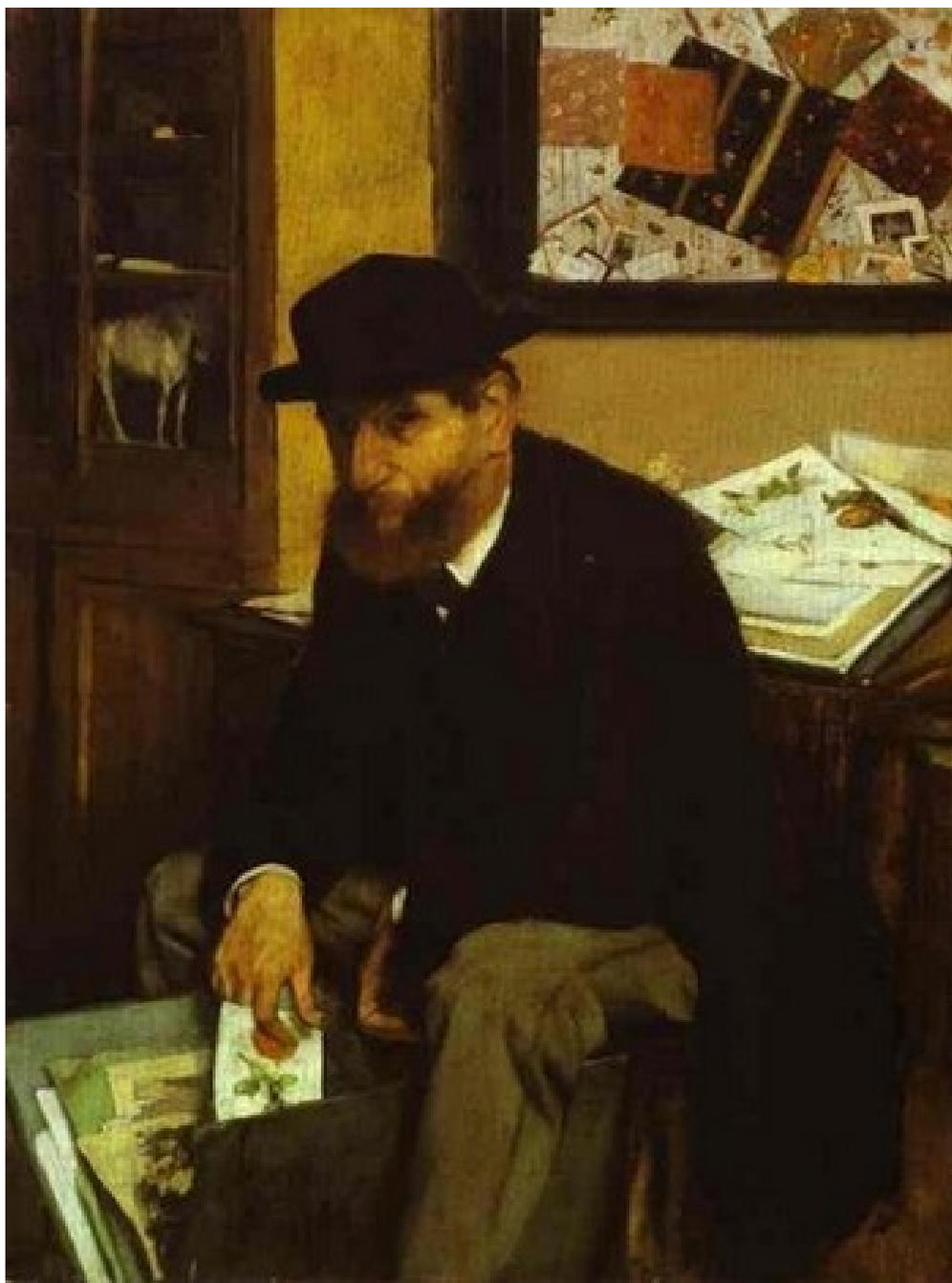


Figure A112. Edgar Degas, *The Collector of Prints*, 1866, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A113. Bernardo Celentano, *Portrait of the Painter Ruggiero*, 1859, Oil on canvas, Galleria di Accademia di Belli Arti, Naples.



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Figure A114. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Princess de Metternich*, c.1861, Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London.



Figure A115. Gioacchino Toma, *Luisa Sanfelice*, 1874, Oil on canvas, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.



Figure A116. Edgar Degas, *The Interior*, c. 1868-69, Oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Figure A117. Edgar Degas, *Interior*, 1856, Oil on paper, Louvre.



Figure A118. Gioacchino Toma, *L'Orfana*, 1862, Oil on canvas, Private Collection.



Figure A119. Domenico Morelli, *The Terrace*, Oil on canvas, Banco di Napoli, Villa Pignatelli.



Figure A120. Adriano Cecioni, *Interior with Figure*, c. 1867, Oil on canvas, National Gallery of Modern Art, Rome.



Figure A 121. Unidentified Photographer, *Genre scene*, c. 1860-70, Fratelli Alinari Museum of the History of Photography-Malandrini Collection, Florence.



Figure A122. Piazza Indipendenza, Florence, Photo taken by author, January 2009.

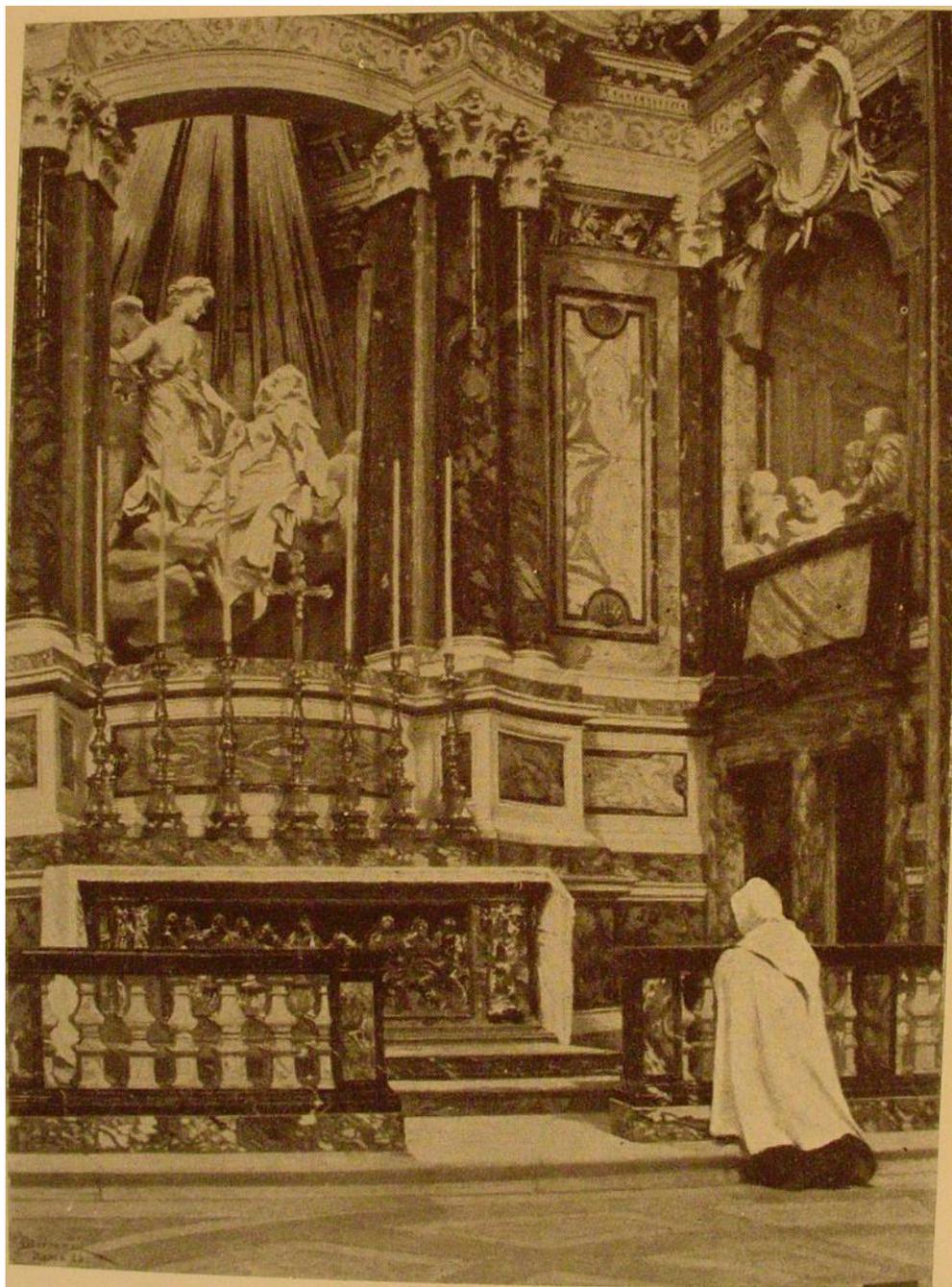


Figure A123. Odoardo Borrani, *The Ecstasy of St. Theresa*, 1883, Oil on board, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



Figure A124. Macchiaioli group portrait, Collezione Aldo Gonnelli.
First row (L to R): Serafino de Tivoli , Saverio Altamura, Silvestro Lega, Ferdinando Bonamici
Second Row (L to R): Giuseppe Bianchi, Ignoto, Christiano Banti, Odoardo Borrani.
Names recorded on photo by Signorini

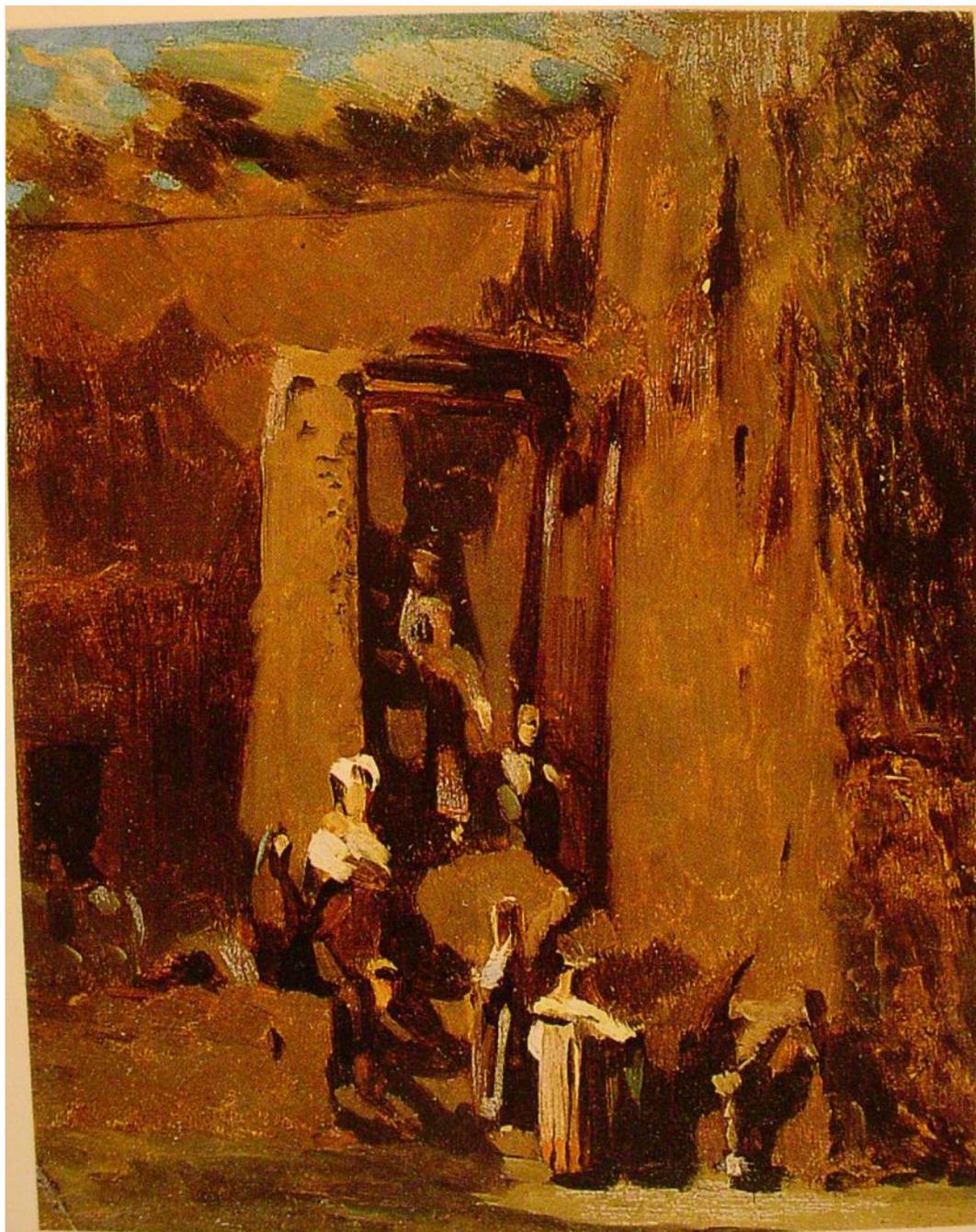


Figure A125. Telemaco Signorini, *Study for Il merciaio di La Spezia*, ca. 1858, Oil on paper, Private collection, Milan / Reproduced in *Telemaco Signorini una retrospettiva*.



Figure A126. Telemaco Signorini, *Il merciaio di La Spezia*, 1859, Oil on canvas, Private collection, Torino / Reproduced in *Telemaco Signorini una retrospettiva*.



Figure A127. Vincenzo Cabianca. *Study for Pia de'Tolomei condotta al Castello di Maremma*, 1860-70, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.

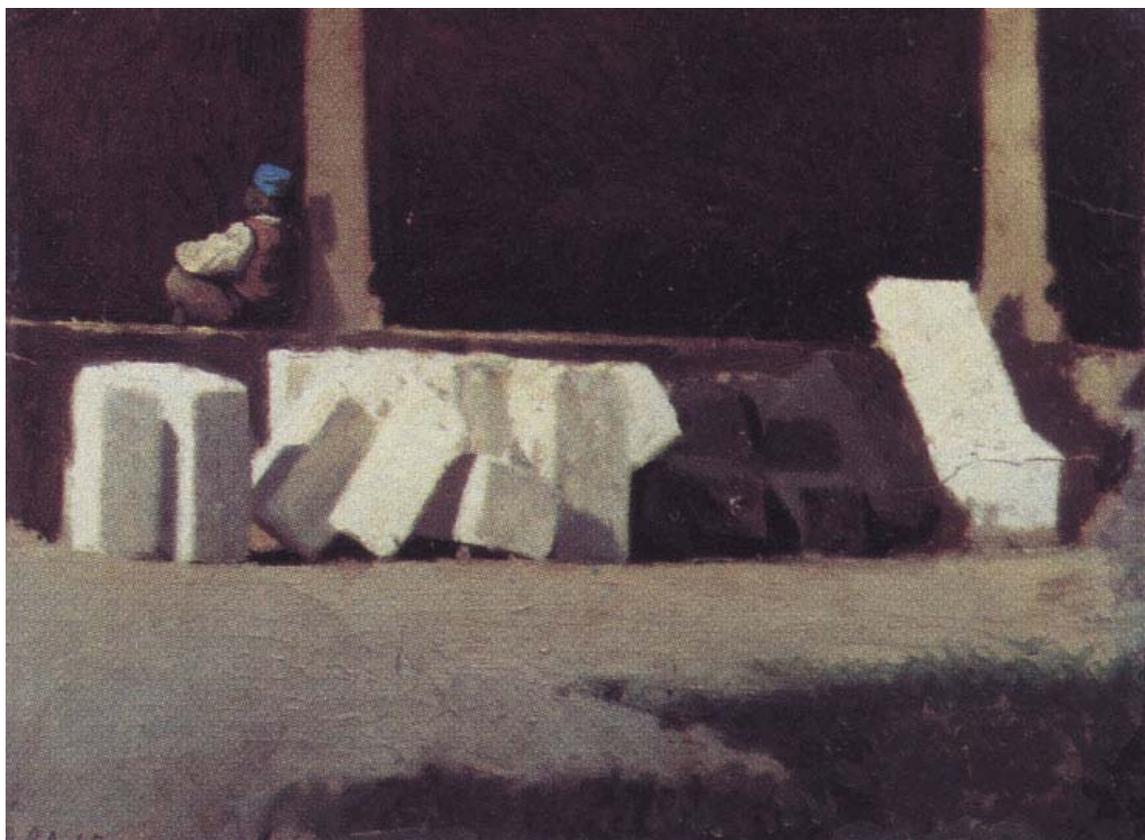


Figure A128. Giuseppe Abbati, *The Cloister*, 1861-62, Oil on cardboard, Gallery of Modern Art in the Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

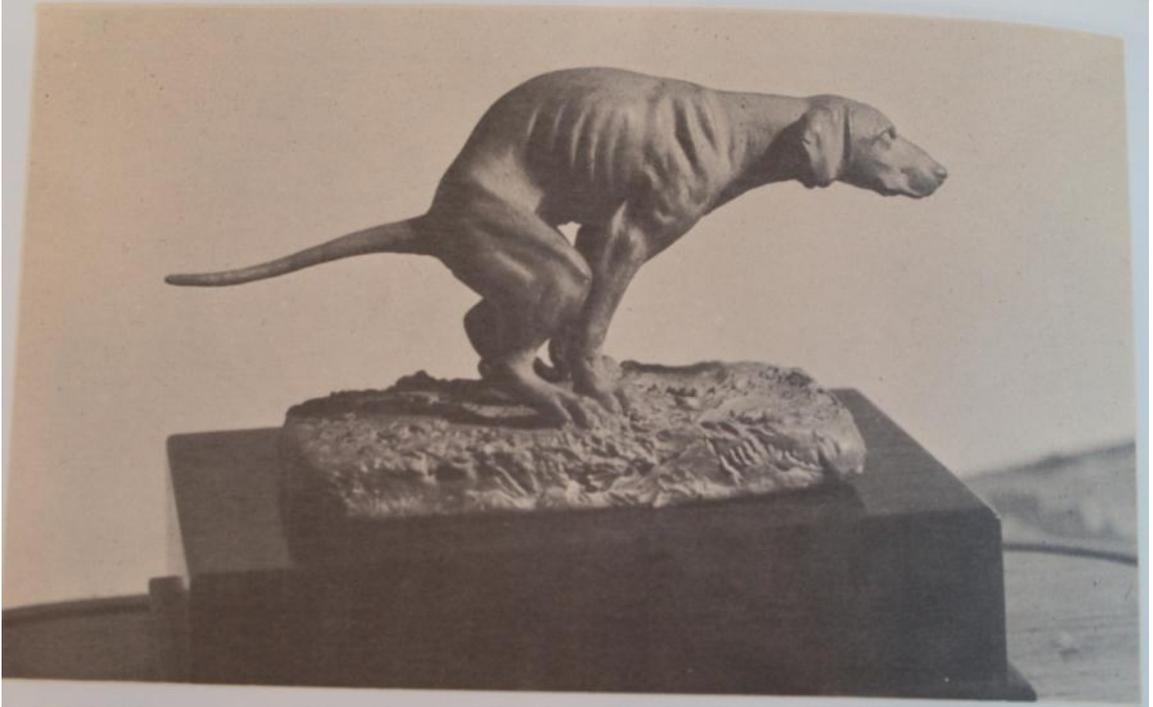


Figure A129. Adriano Cecioni, *Il cane indelicate*, Aldo Gonnelli, Florence.



Figure A130. Diego Martelli at Castiglioncello, c. 1865, Foto Tempesti, Livorno.



Figure A131. Telemaco Signorini, ca. 1875, Reproduced in Dini, *De Nittis* (Archivo Dini).

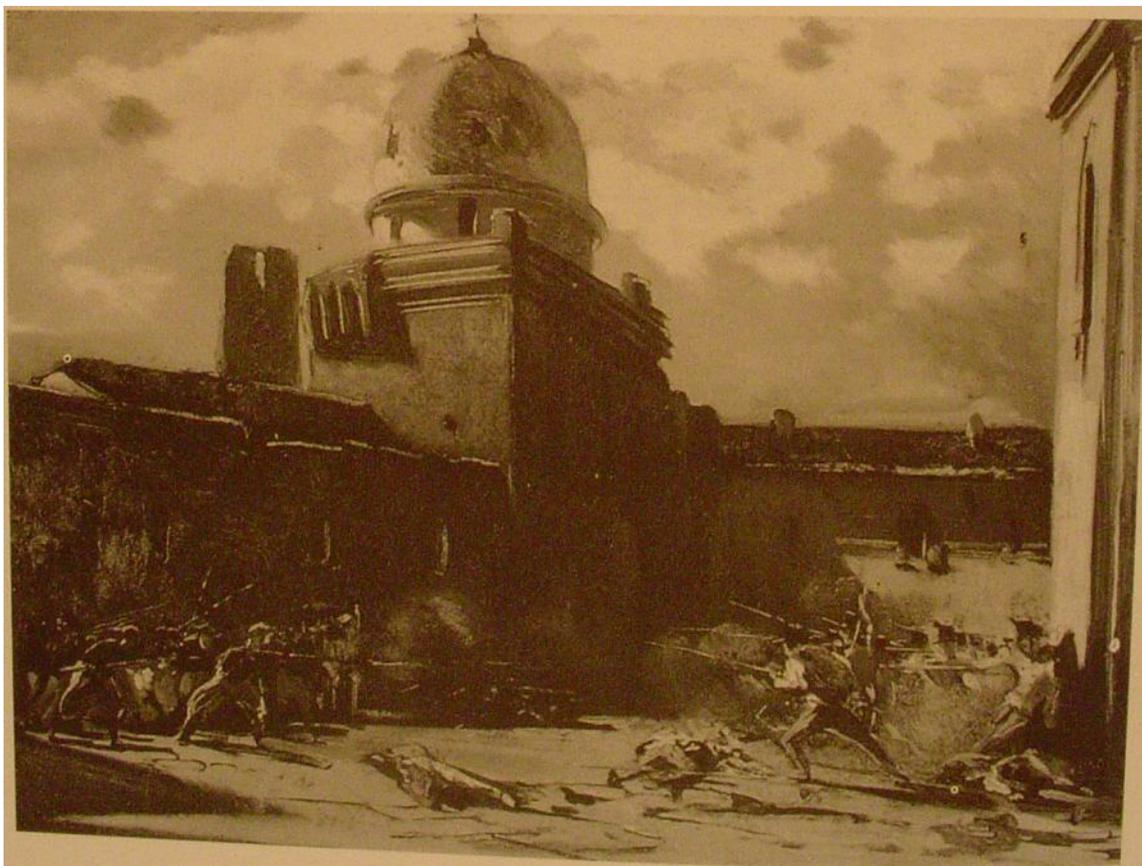


Figure A132. Telemaco Signorini, *Un episodio della battaglia di Solferino*, Private collection / Reproduced in *Telemaco Signorini*.

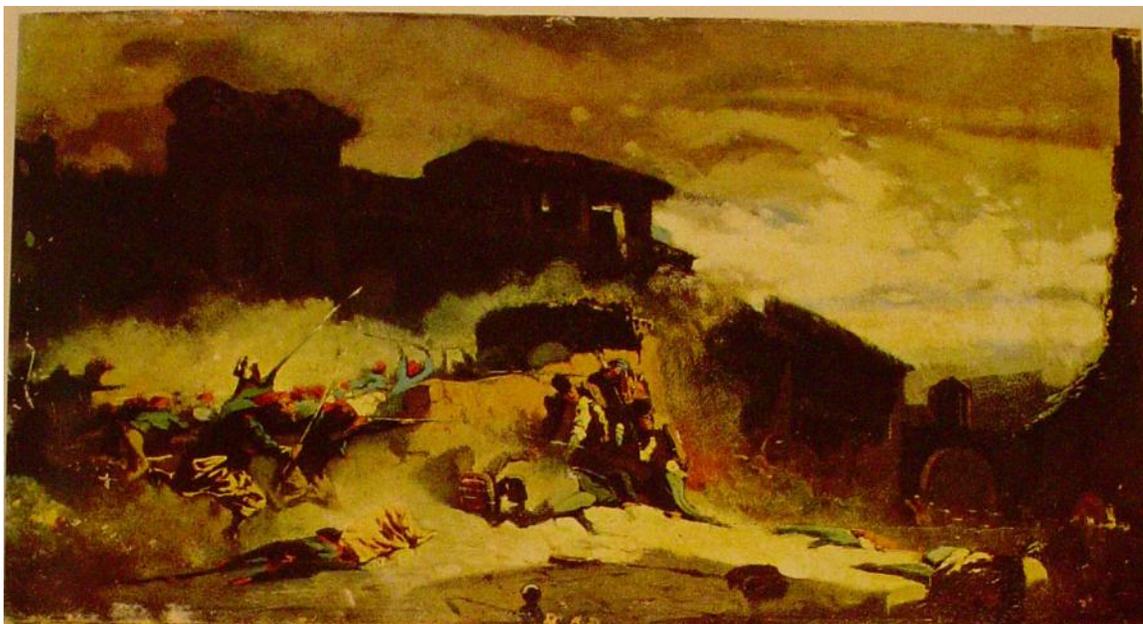


Figure A133. Telemaco Signorini, *La caccia degli austriaci da Solferino (La carica degli zuavi)*, 1861, Oil on canvas, Private collection, Milan / Reproduced in *Telemaco Signorini*.

LIV



IA v'era fra i maestri incliti e rari,
professore in disegno ed in pennello,
un tal, che correggendo agli scolari,
tirava i piombi col suo vecchio ombrello.



Uno scolar, che avea perso il cervello
a cercar delle pieghe in modi vari,
il professore vide entrar bel bello,
solenne, pettoruto e pari pari.

— Con questo — disse e trasse il fazzoletto —
tante pieghe le fo su questa mano
che di vestir gli apostoli scommetto. —

E disse a un tal, che chiese in modo urbano
se avria dipinta Venere sul letto:

— Non son quel pittor porco del Tiziano.



Figure A134. Telemaco Signorini, "Un Professore", *Le 99 Discussioni Artistiche*, Biblioteca Marucilliana, Firenze.

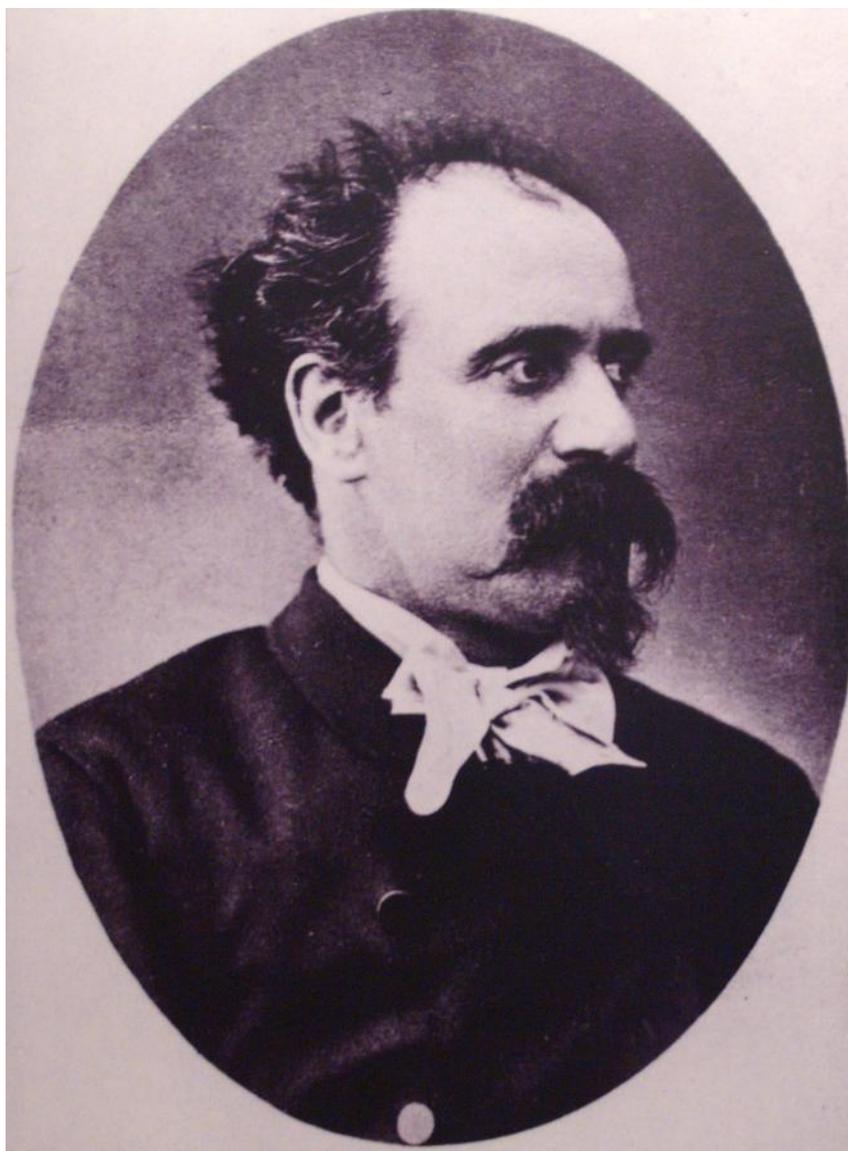


Figure A135. Giovanni Fattori, 1865.

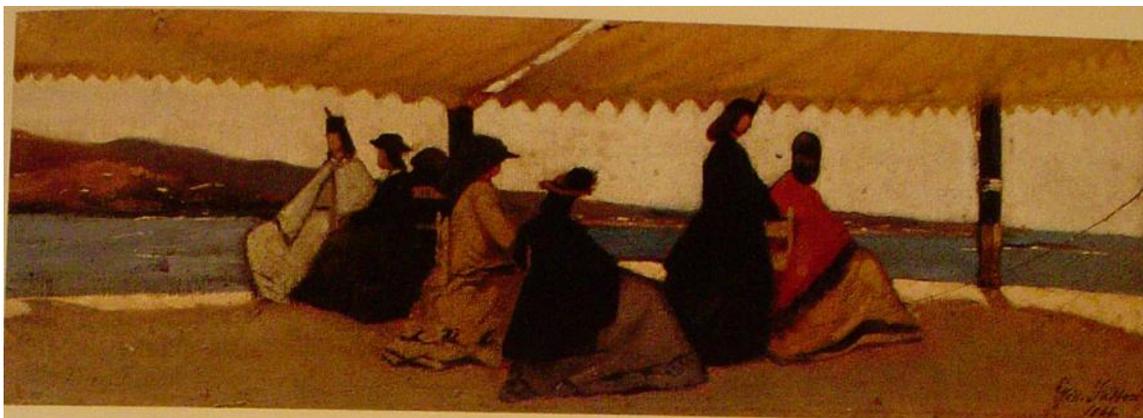


Figure A136. Giovanni Fattori, *La Rotonda di Palmieri*, 1866, Oil on board, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



Figure A137. Giovanni Fattori, *Sketch of Edgar Degas*, c.1860, Pencil on paper, Museo Civico Fattori, Livorno.

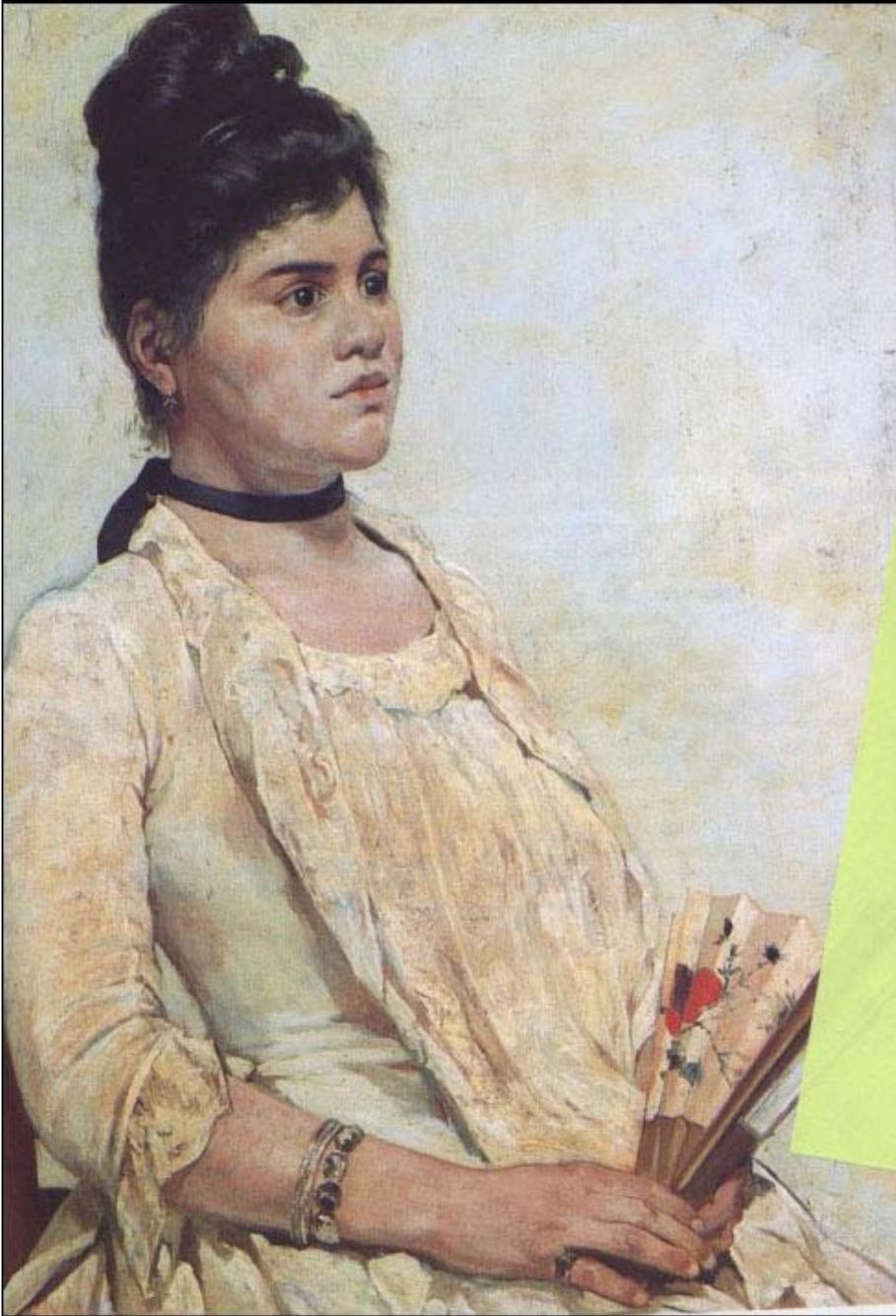


Figure A138. Giovanni Fattori, *Portrait of Cousin Argia*, 1861, Oil on cardboard, Gallery of Modern Art in Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



Figure A139. Disderi & Co., *Portrait of Prince Richard Metternich and his wife*, c. 1860-70, Fratelli Alinari Museum of the History of Photography, Florence.



Figure A140. Edgar Degas, Nb 18 p 31, 1859-64, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A141. Edgar Degas, *La Savoiarde*, c. 1860, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence.



Figure A142. Giovanni Fattori, *Portrait of the First Wife*, c. 1865, Oil on canvas, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.



Figure A143. Giovanni Fattori, *Portrait of the Second Wife*, 1889, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti, Florence.

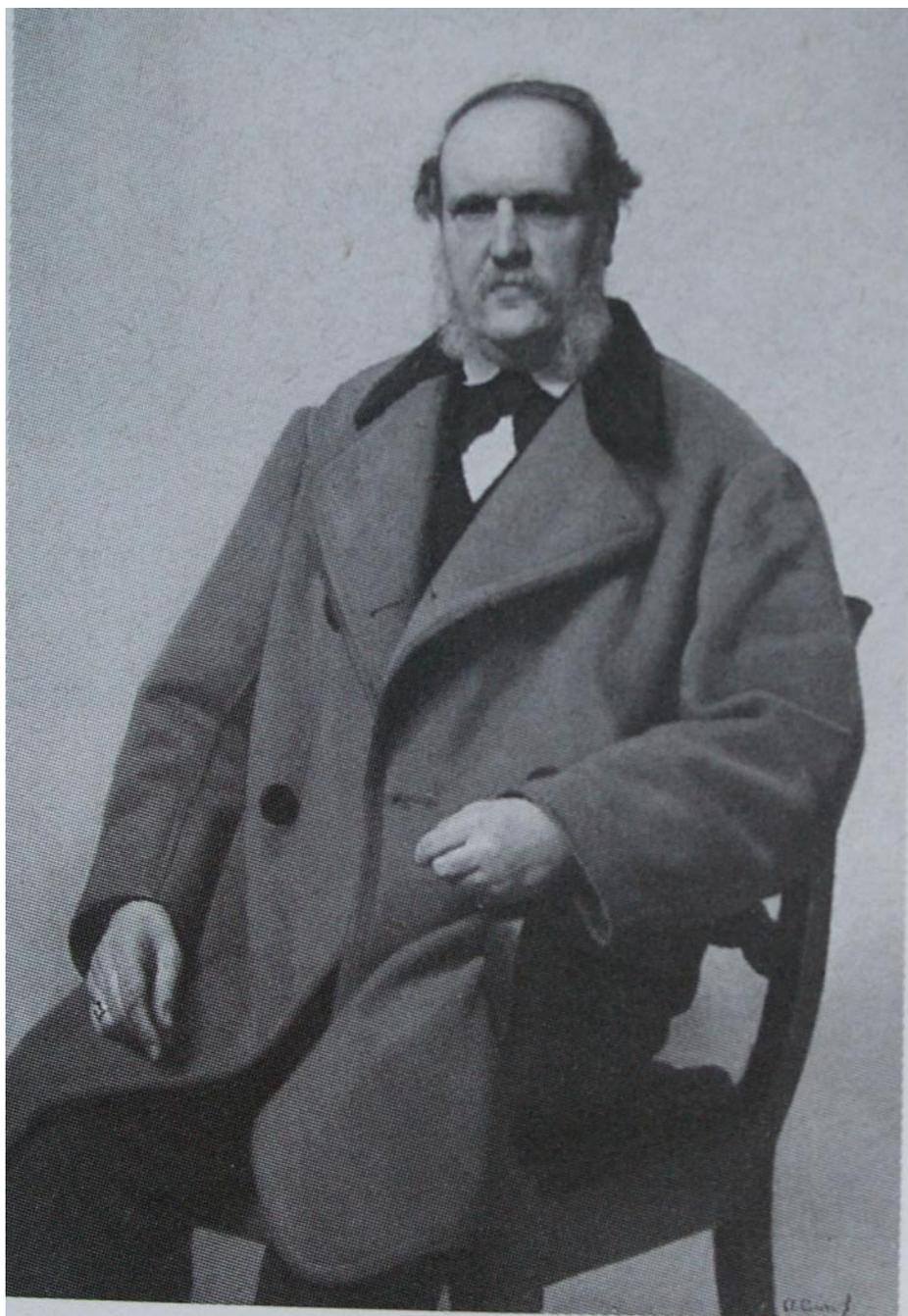


Figure A144. Antonio Ciseri, *Portrait of Antonio Tommasi*, c. 1872, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.

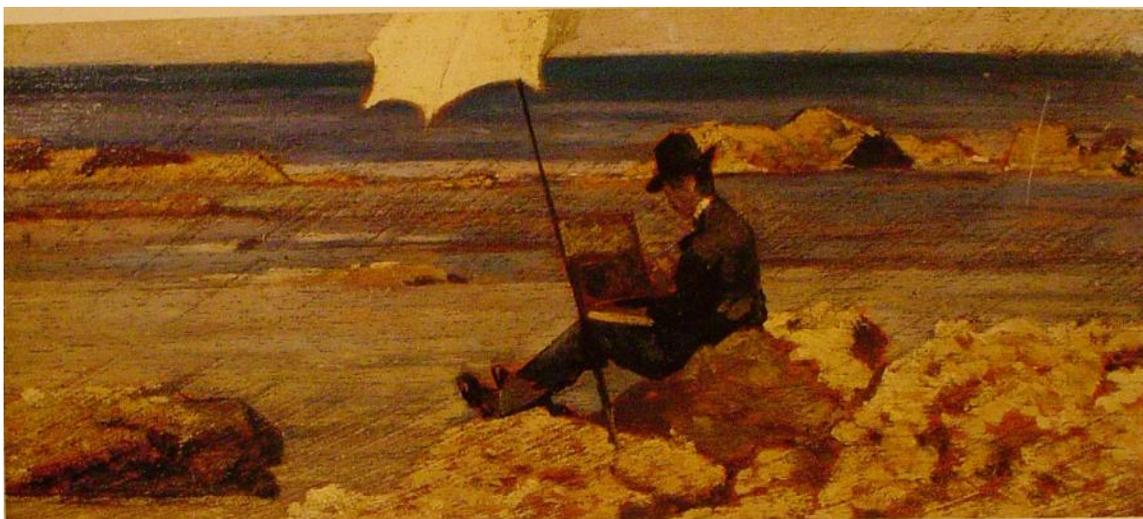


Figure A145. Giovanni Fattori, *Silvestro Lega che dipinge sugli scogli*, 1866, Oil on board, Private Collection, Milan / Reproduced in *Giovanni Fattori Dipinti*.



Figure A146. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Michel Manzi*, c. 1889, Pastel on paper, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A147. Giovanni Fattori, *The Stirrup*, c. 1880-82, Oil on canvas, Gallery of Modern Art in Palazzo Pitti, Florence.



Figure A148. Giuseppe Palizzi, *Bosco di Fontainebleau*, 1874, Oil on canvas, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.



Figure A149. Théodore Rousseau, *The Large Oak Tree, Forest of Fontainebleau*, 1839, Oil on paper mounted on canvas, Saint Louis Art Museum.

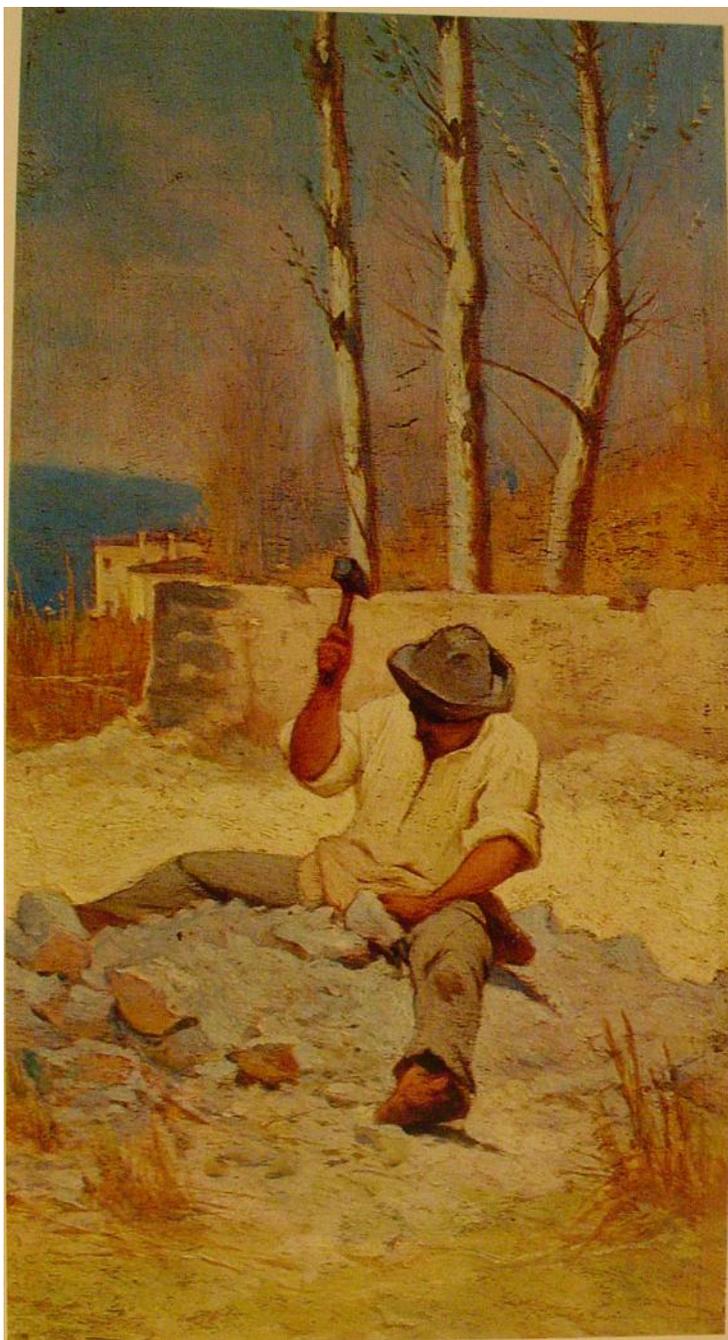


Figure A150. Odoardo Borrani, *Lo Spaccapietre*, Oil on board, Tirelli Collection, Carpi.



Figure A151. Gustave Courbet, *The Stonebreakers*, 1849, Oil on canvas, Destroyed in 1945.

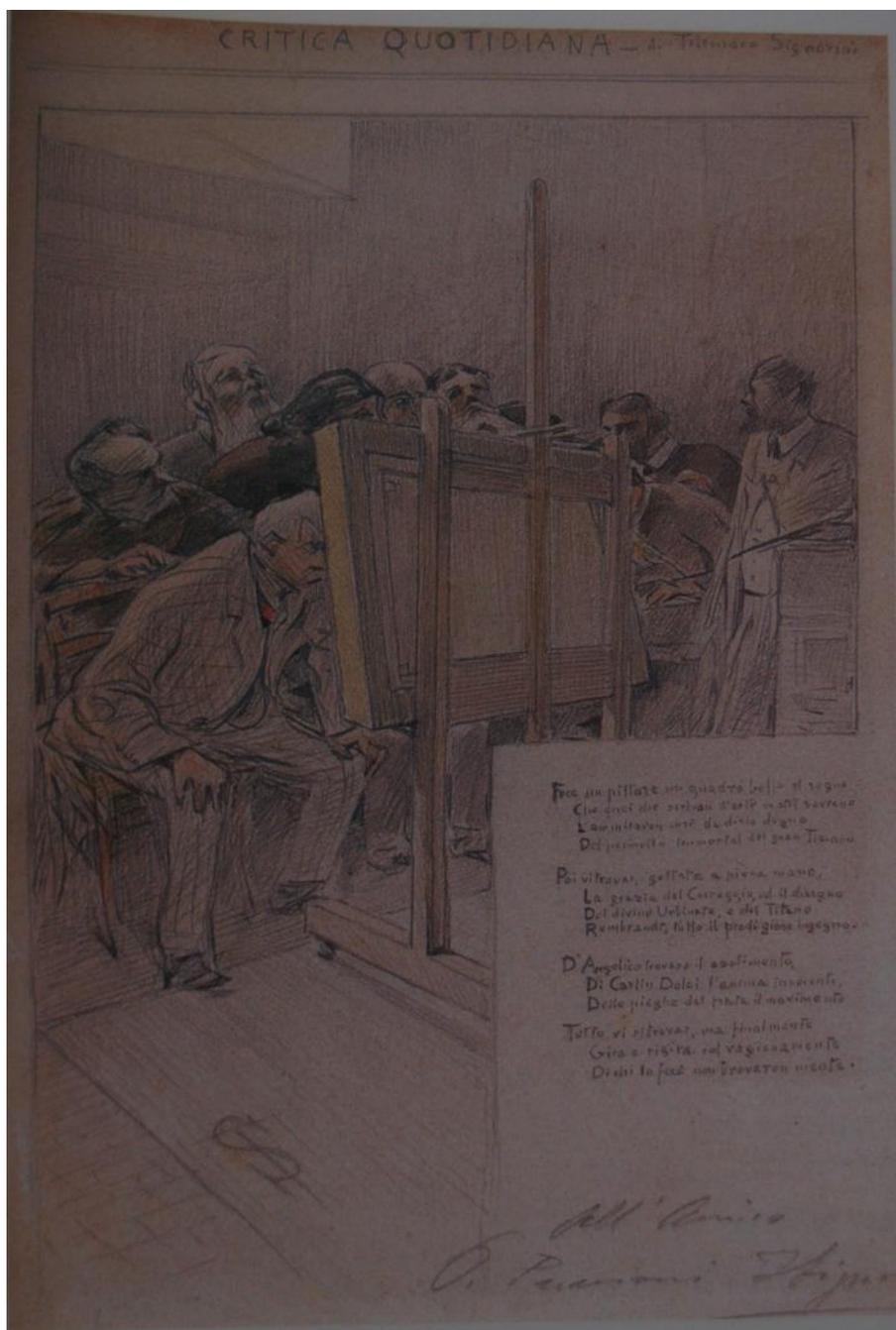


Figure A152. Telemaco Signorini, *Critica quotidiana*, Mixed media on cardboard, Collection Carlo Pepi.



Figure A153. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Italienne assise (Rome)*, Robaut, No. 113.



Figure A154. Vincenzo Cabianca, *Studio di donna a montemurlo*, c. 1862, Oil on canvas applied to cardboard, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.



Figure A155. Giacomo Caneva, *Model in Pose*, c. 1852, Photograph, Raccolte Museali Fratelli Alinari-fondo Caneva - collezione Ortolani, Florence.



Figure A156. Unknown, *Acquaiola*, Carteggio Signorini, Archivio della Biblioteca nazionale Centrale di Firenze.



Figure A157. Telemaco Signorini, *Pescivendole a Lerici*, 1874, Oil on board, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.



Figure A158. Filippo Palizzi, *Lavandaie*, Roma, Galleria d'Arte Moderna.



Figure A159. Edgar Degas, *Italian Woman – Abruzzes*, Black pencil, *Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins* - Sale 4, no.68a.



Figure A160. Edgar Degas, *Italian Woman*, Watercolor, *Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins* - Sale 4, no.64b.



Figure A161. Edgar Degas, Nb 7 p 4, 1856, Louvre.



Figure A162. Edgar Degas, *Seated Monk*, Watercolor, *Catalogue des Tableaux, Pastels et Dessins* - Sale 4, no.63c.



Figure A163. Edgar Degas, *Young Woman at the Fountain (after Raphael)*, 1857-59, Oil on canvas, Lemoisne II 46.



Figure A164. Edgar Degas, *Old Italian Woman*, 1857, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A165. Edgar Degas, *Young Woman with Ibis*, 1860-62, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

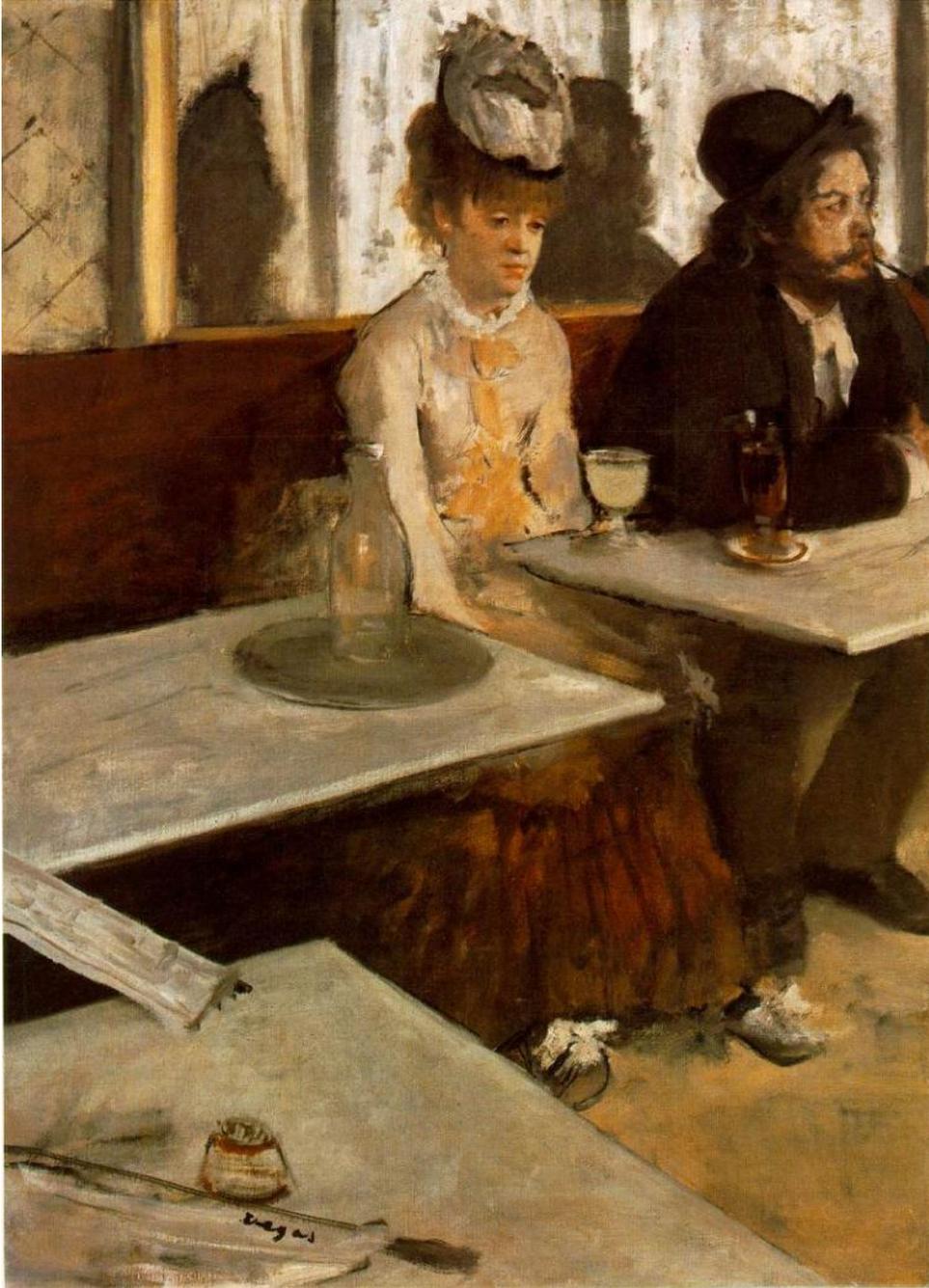


Figure A166. Edgar Degas, *The Absinthe Drinker*, 1875-76, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A167. Edgar Degas, *Victoria Dubourg*, c. 1866, Graphite, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A168. Edgar Degas, *Study for Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Charcoal and white chalk, Cleveland Museum of Art inv.no. 1953.268.



Figure A169. Edgar Degas, *Café Concert at les Ambassadeurs*, 1876-77, Pastel over monotype, Musée des Beaux Arts, Lyon.



Figure A170. Honoré Daumier, *Aux Champs Élysées*, 1852, Lithograph, Published in *Le Charivari* 12 Feb 1852, LD 2231.

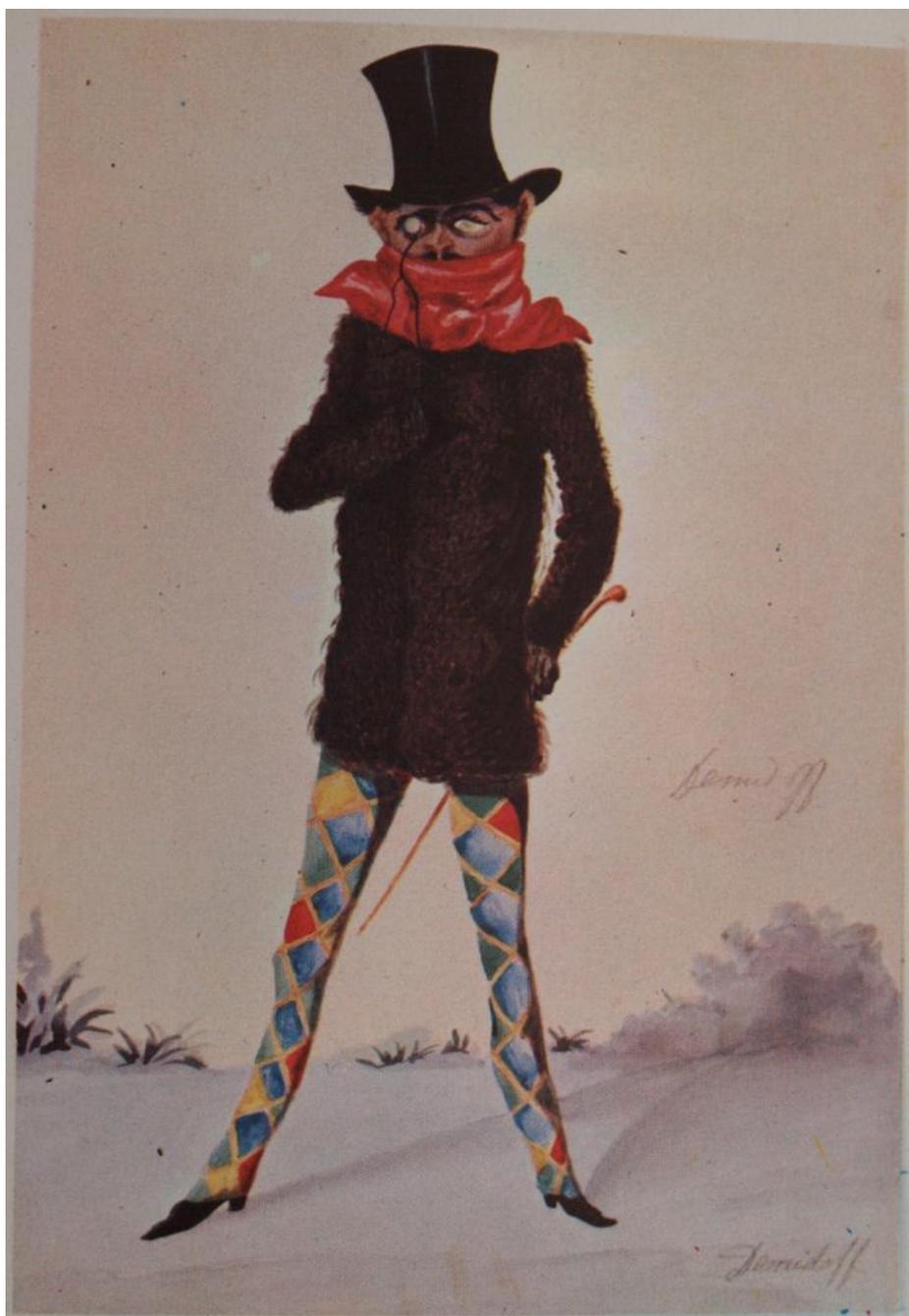


Figure A171. Melchiorre Delfico, *Anatolio Demidoff*, Natale Gallini, Milan.

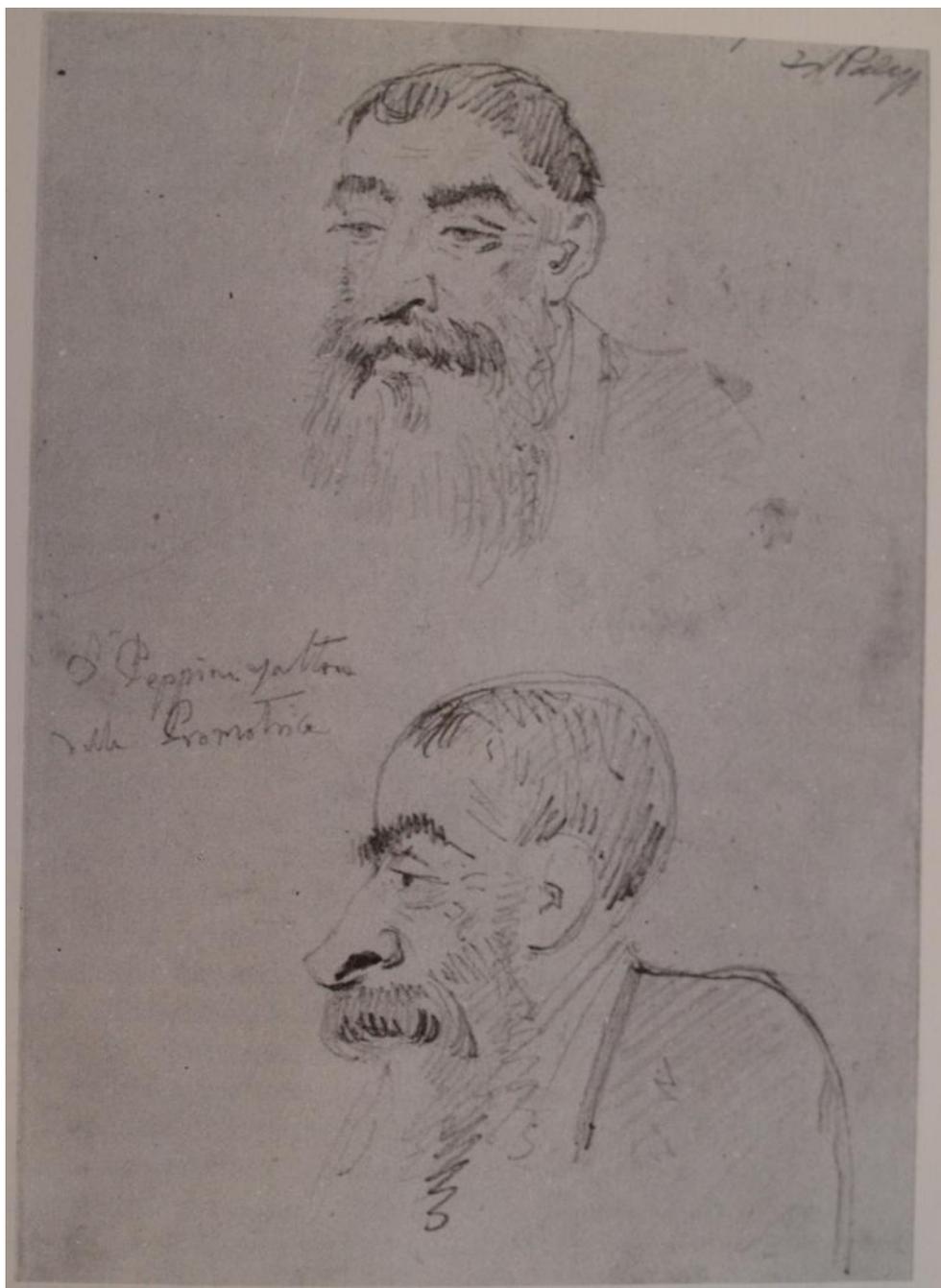


Figure A172. Filippo Palizzi, *Autocaricatura*, Aldo Gonnelli, Florence.



Figure A173. Melchiorre Delfico, *Autocaricatura*, Natale Gallini, Milan.



Figure A174. Carlo Pellegrini as 'Ape', *Conservative Conversion* (a portrait of Lord Wharncliffe), 1875, *Vanity Fair* 14 August 1875.



Figure A175. Edgar Degas, *Carlo Pellegrini*, 1876-77, Oil on laid paper, Tate Gallery, London.



Figure A176. Leonetto Cappiello, *Polaire Dans le Petit Jeune Homme de Willy & Luvet*, c. 1900, Lithograph, Museum of Modern Art.

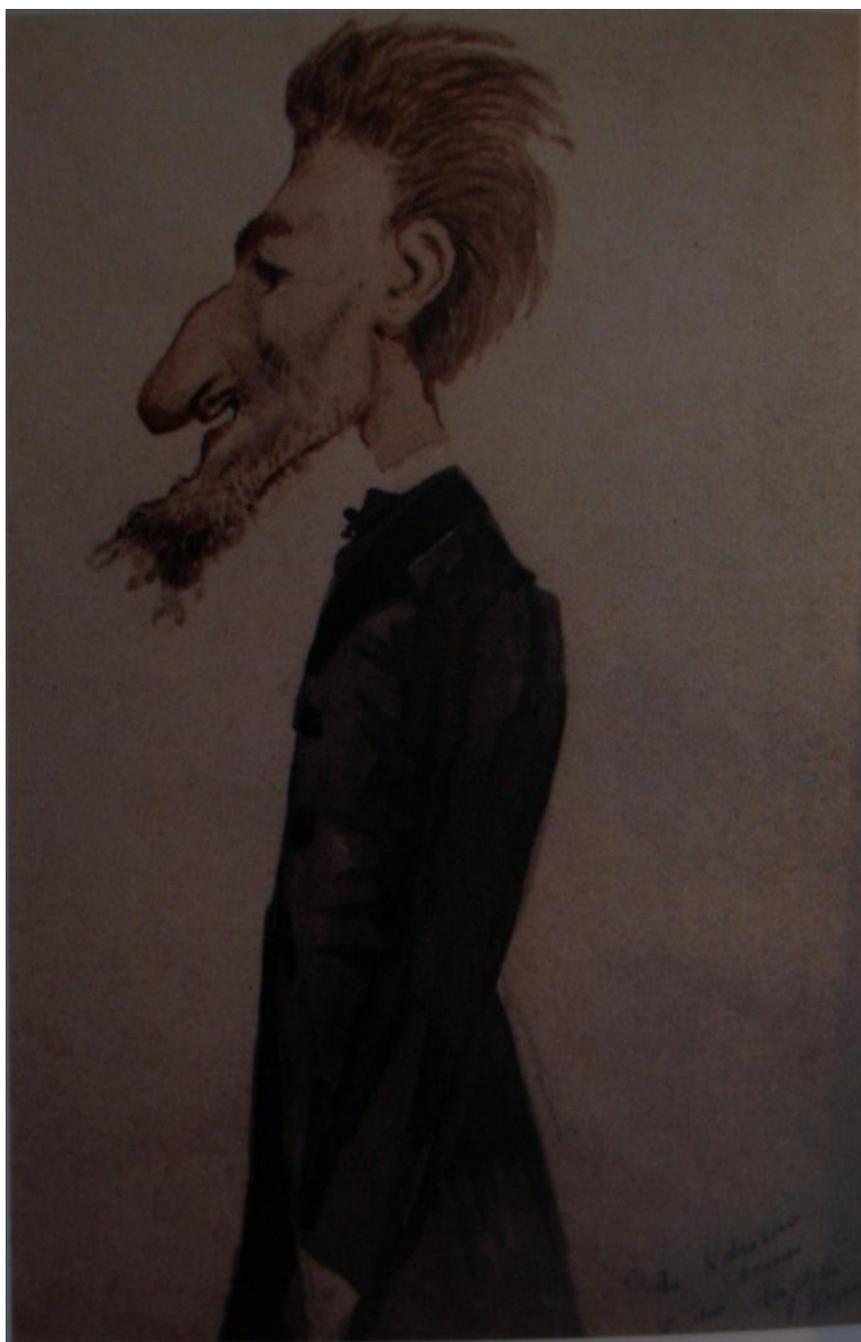


Figure A177. Angelo Tricca, *Caricature of Boldini*, Watercolor on paper, Collection Carlo Pepi.



Figure A178. Telemaco Signorini, *Autocaricatura*, Natale Gallini, Milan.

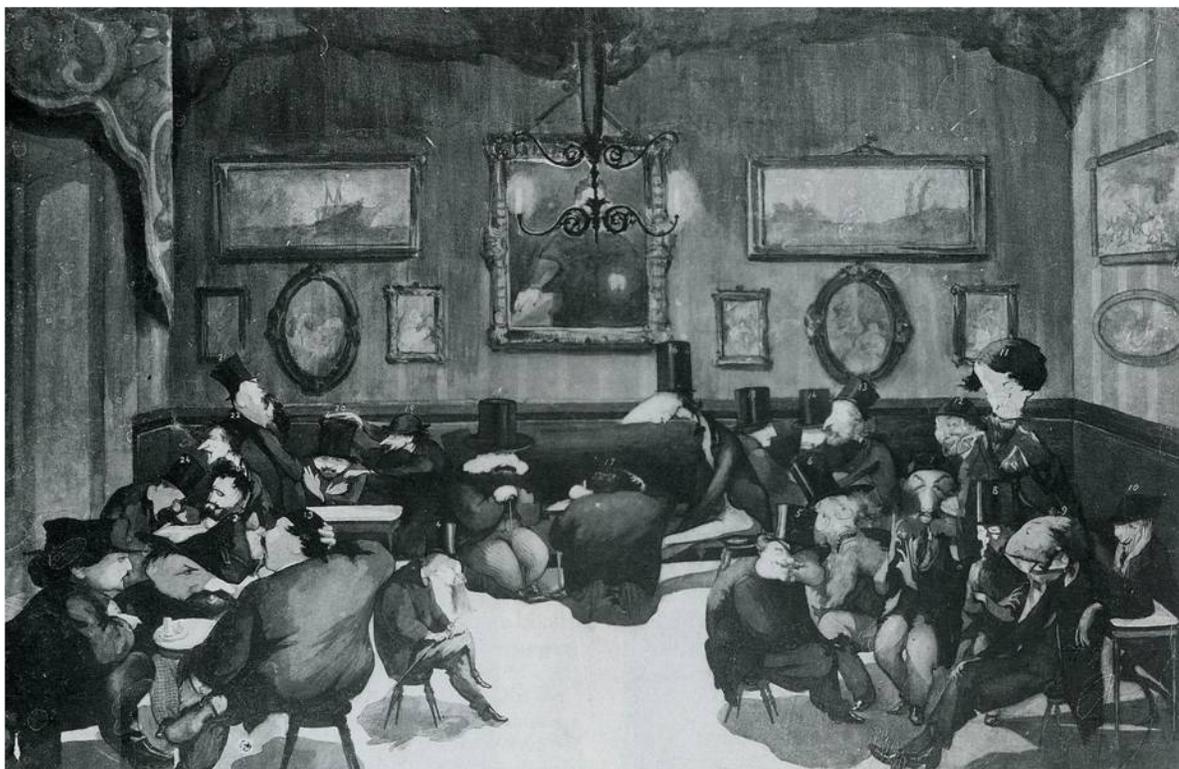


Figure A179. Adriano Cecioni, *The Caffè Michelangiolo*, c. 1860s, Watercolor on paper, Private Collection, Montecatini.

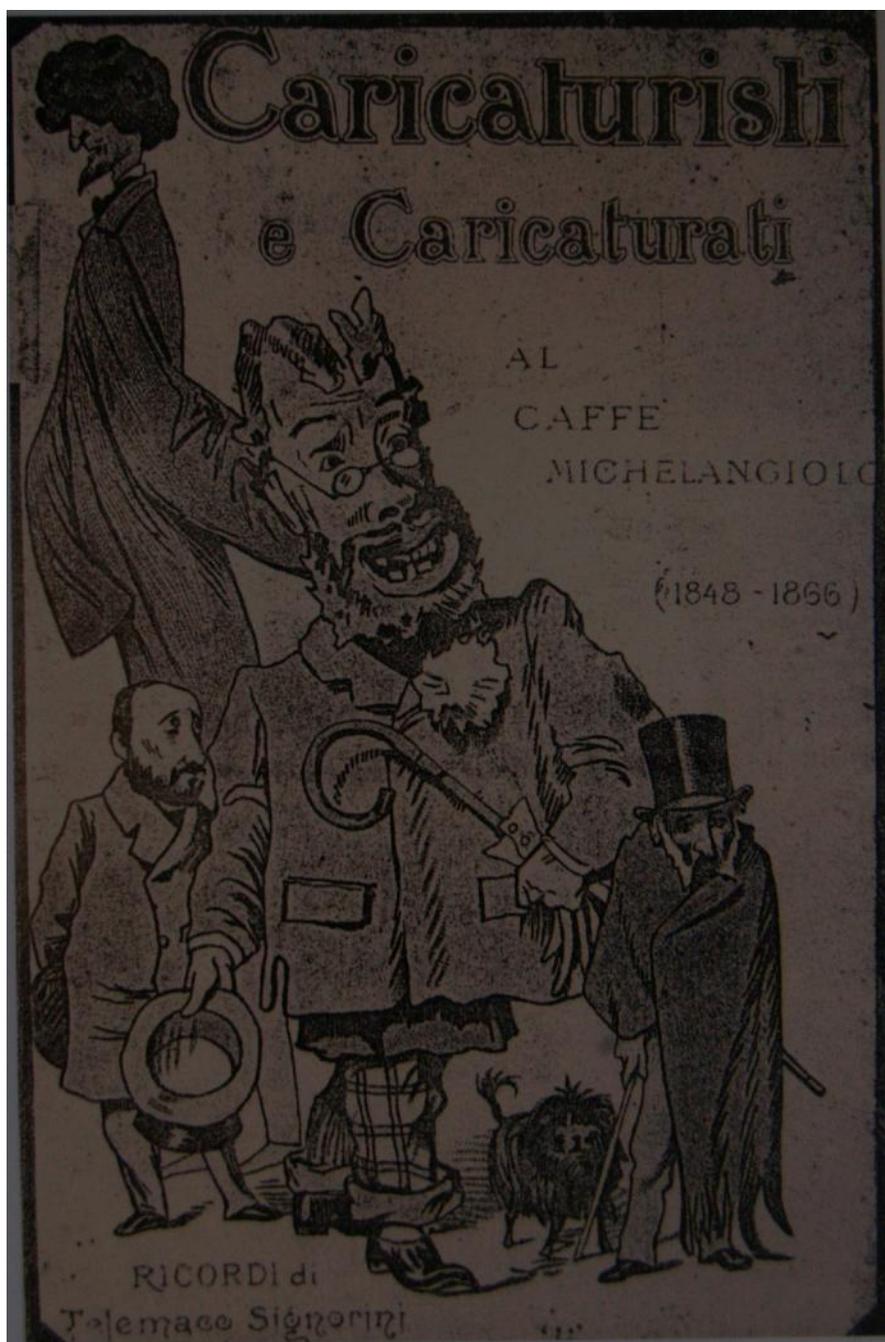


Figure A180. Frontispiece to *Caricaturisti e caricaturati al Caffè Michelangiolo*, Collection Carlo Pepi.



Figure A181. Edgar Degas, Nb 12 p 58, c.1858-59, Pencil on paper, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A182. Giovanni Boldini, *Caricature of Telemaco Signorini*, 1877, Published in Enrico Gasi Molteni [pseudonym of Telemaco Signorini], *Le 99 Discussioni artistiche*, Florence, 1877.



Figure A183. Edgar Degas, Nb Louvre p 17, Louvre RF 43125.



Figure A184. Giovanni Boldini , *L'Elegant*, 1875, Watercolor, Unknown; sold at vente galerie Charpentier, March 1952, Lot 2.



Figure A185. Henri Chapu, Nb p 43 verso, Louvre RF 23009, 79.

45
 Dⁿⁱ Bourguin W.D. Gode
 Eug Delaunay Dⁿⁱ Gode
 Emman Reyers E
 Degas

Figure A186. Edgar Degas, Nb 27 p 43, 1875-78, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A187. Edgar Degas, Nb 28 p 61, 1877, Graphite, Getty.



Figure A188. Edgar Degas, Nb 23 p 149, 1868-72, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

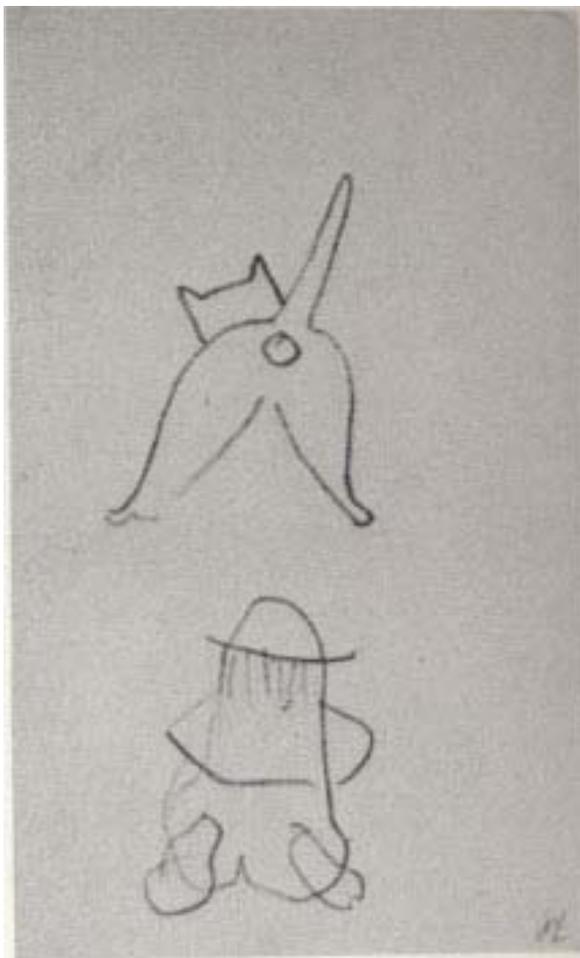


Figure A189. Edgar Degas, Nb 26 p 75, 1875-77, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

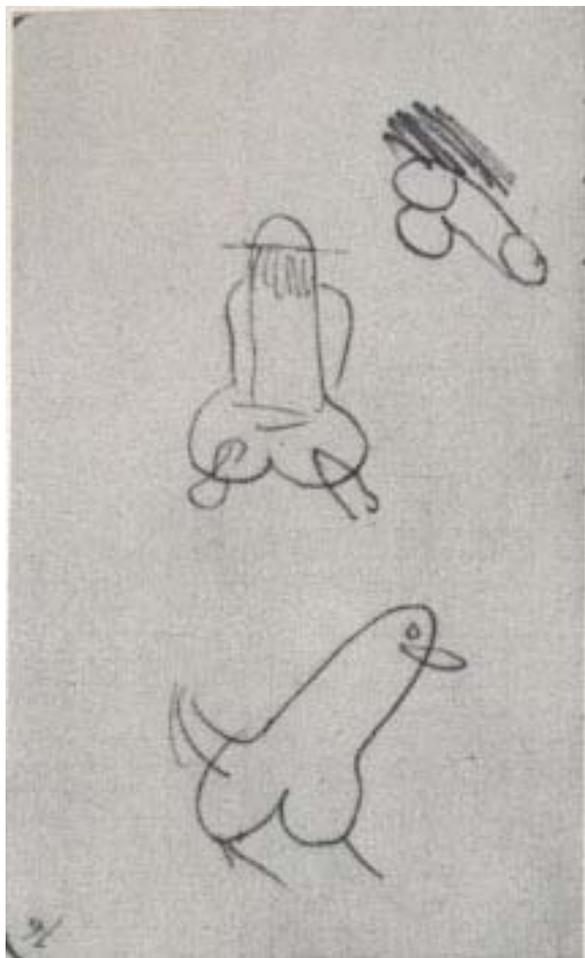


Figure A190. Edgar Degas, Nb 26 p 76, 1875-77, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

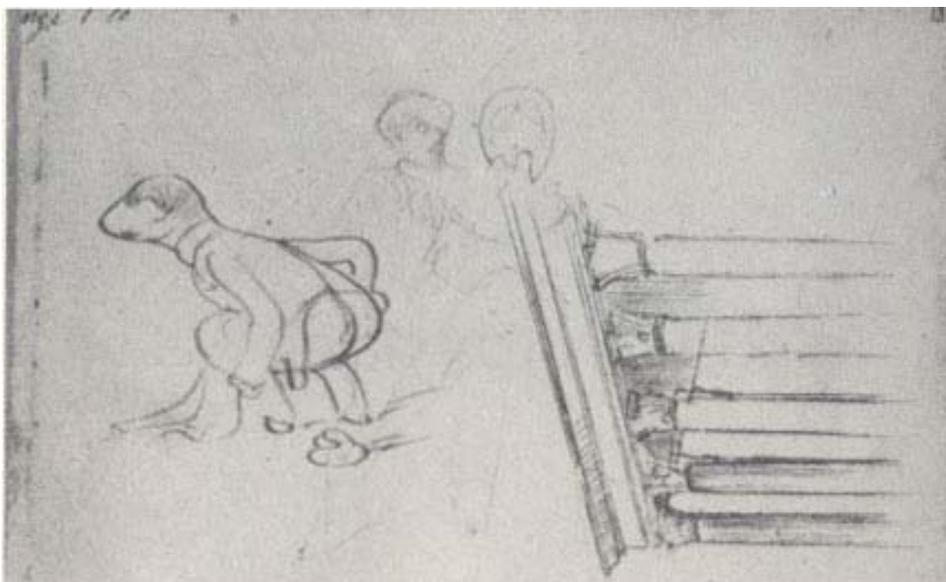


Figure A191. Edgar Degas, Nb 20 p 13, c. 1864-67, Ex coll. Guérin.



Figure A192. Edgar Degas, Nb Louvre p 13, Louvre RF 43125.



Figure A193. Edgar Degas, Nb 13 p 113, 1858-60, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

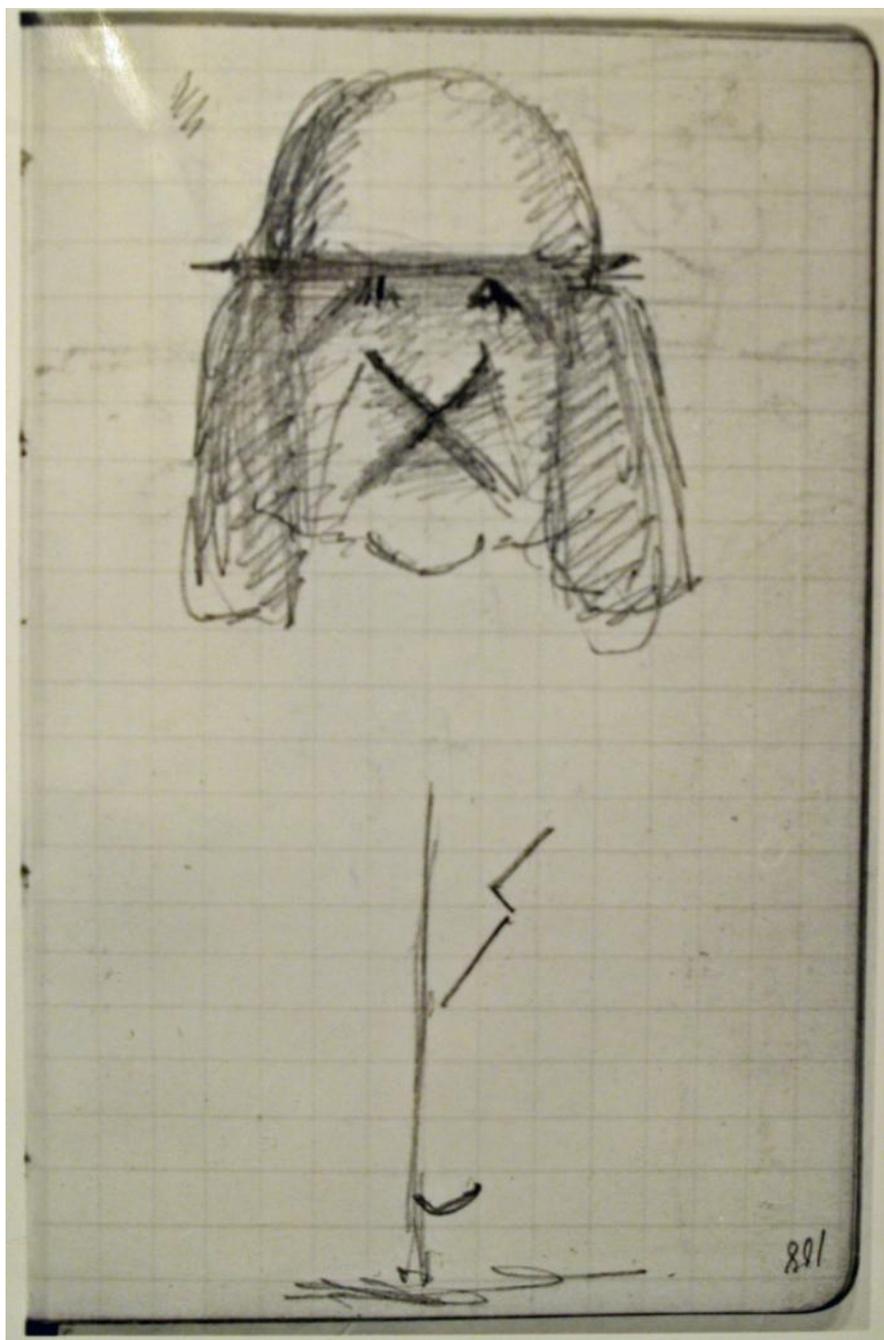


Figure A194. Edgar Degas, Nb 24 p 108, 1868-73, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A195. Edgar Degas, Nb 23 p 147, 1868-72, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A196. Loeschner and Petsch, *Otto von Bismarck*, 1877.

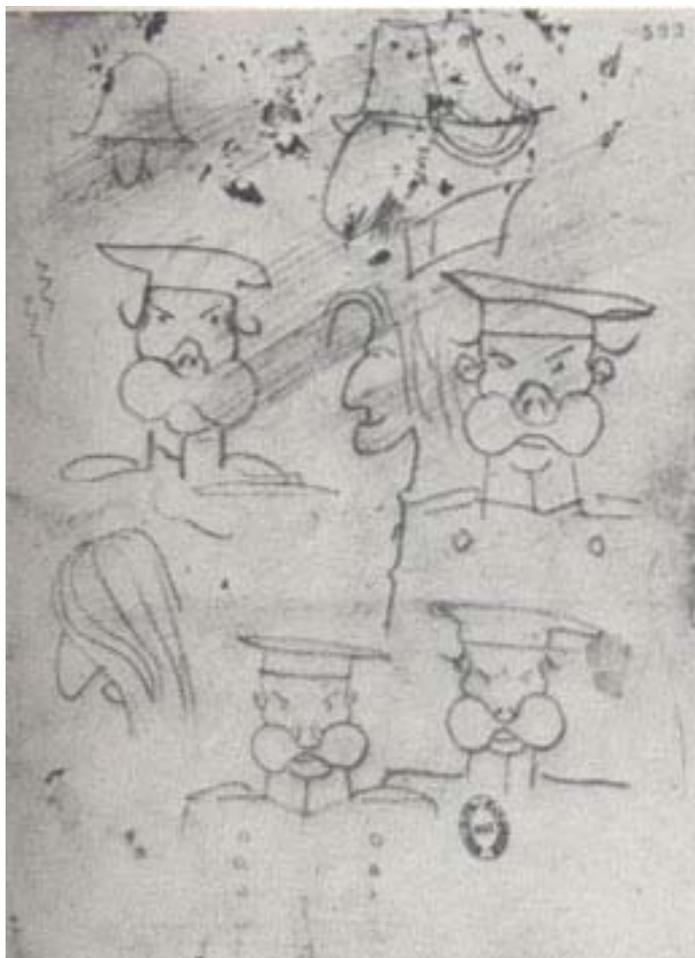


Figure A197. Edgar Degas, Nb 14A fol 599, 1859-60, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

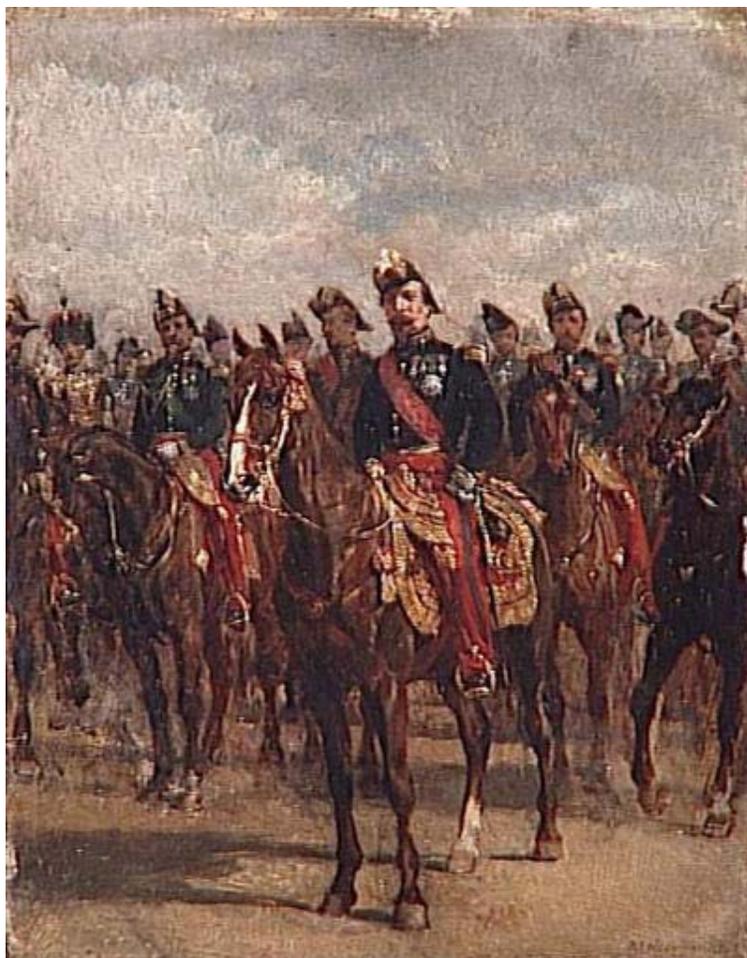


Figure A198. Ernest Messonier, *Napoléon III à cheval entouré de son état-major*, 1864, oil on wood, Musée du Luxembourg.

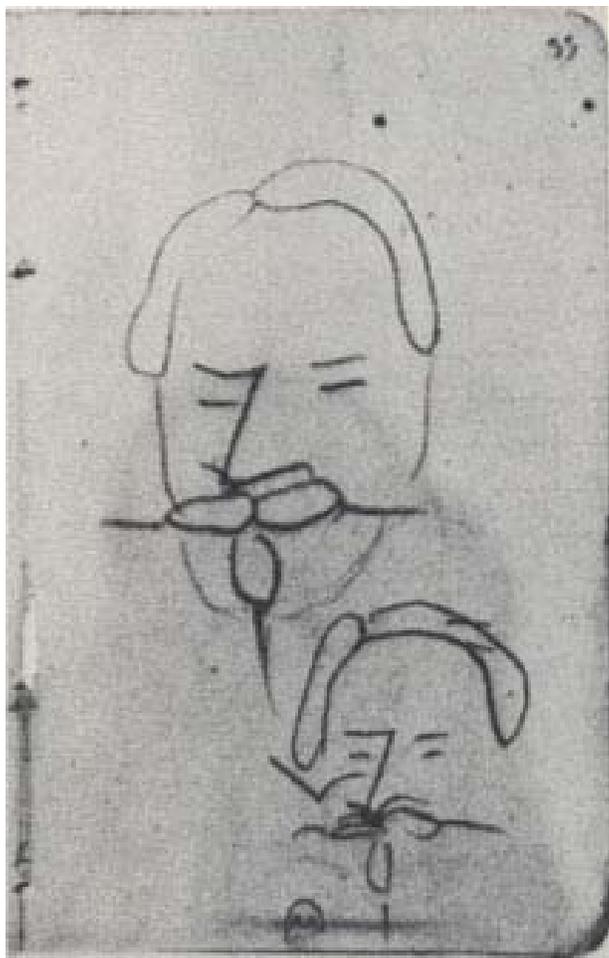


Figure A199. Edgar Degas, Nb 23 p 33, 1868-73, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

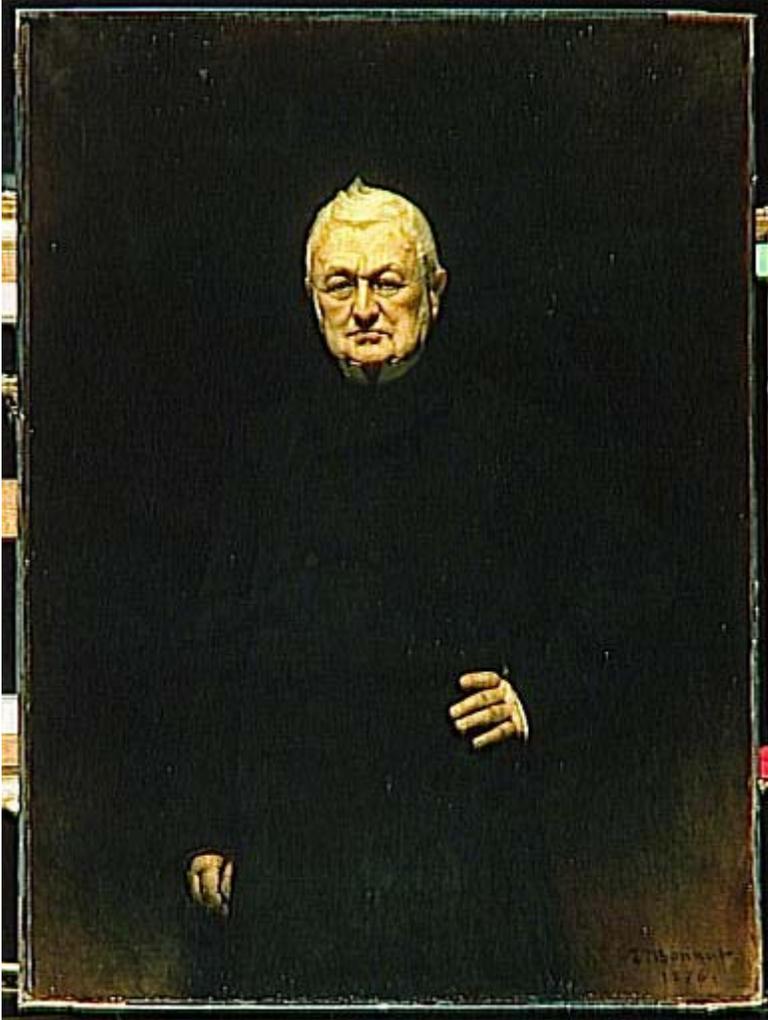


Figure A200. Léon Bonnat, Adolphe Thiers, 1876, Oil on canvas, Louvre.

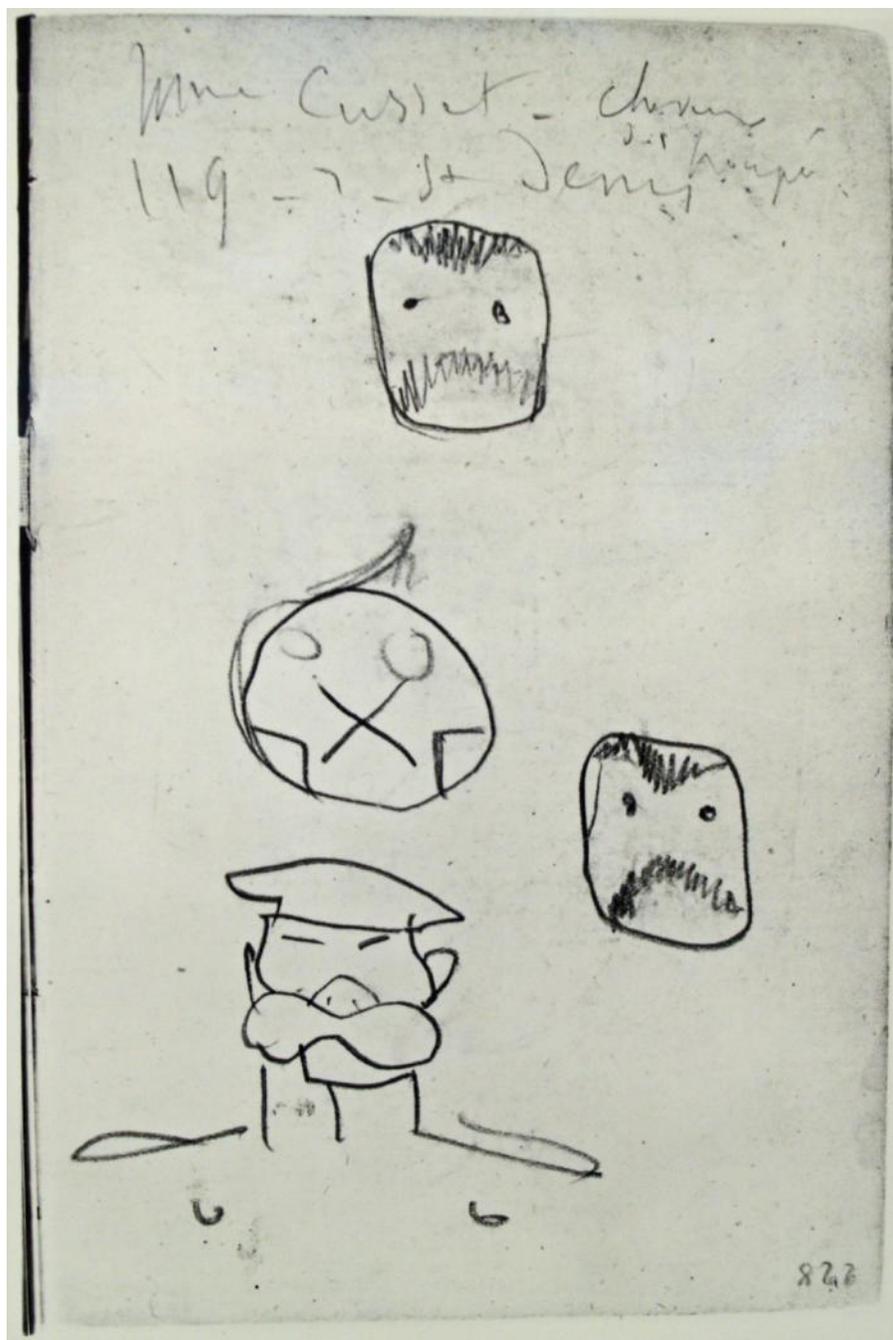


Figure A201. Edgar Degas, Nb 34 p 228, 1880-84, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A202. Edgar Degas, Nb 18 p 22, 1859-64, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A203. Honoré Daumier, *Ratapoil*, model 1851, cast 1891, Bronze, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

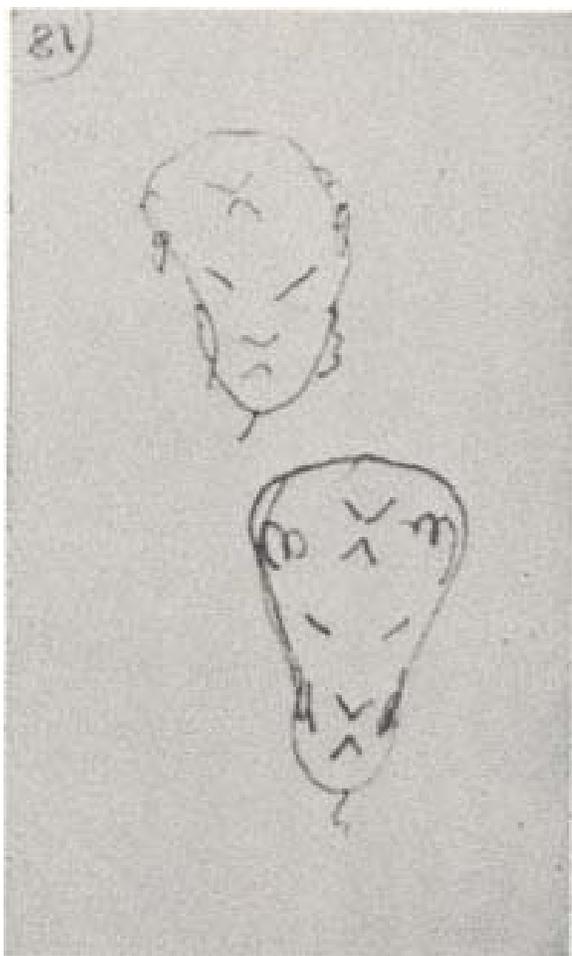


Figure A204. Edgar Degas, Nb 21 p 18, 1865-68, Louvre.

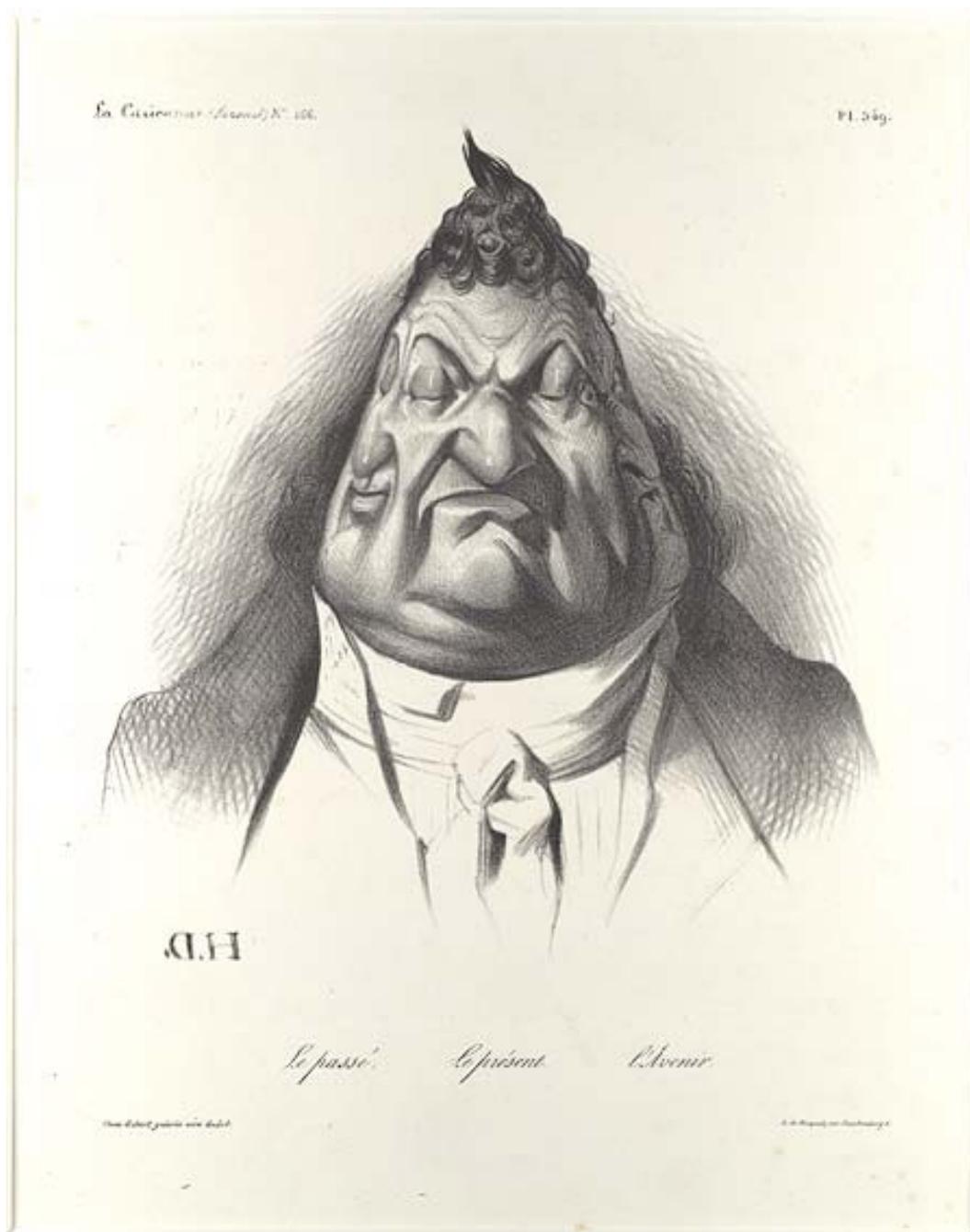


Figure A205. Honoré Daumier, *Le Passé—Le Présent—L'Avenir*, 9 January 1834, Lithograph, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A206. Edgar Degas, Nb 18 p 187, 1859-64, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A207. Edgar Degas, Nb 18 p 194, 1859-64, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A208. Fratelli Alinari, *View of San Miniato*, c. 1852, Albumen Photograph, Raccolte Museali Fratelli Alinari-fondo Fratelli Alinari, Florence.



Figure A209. Saverio Altamura, *La prima bandiera Italiana Porata a Firenze nel 1859*, 1859, Oil on canvas, Museo nazionale del Risorgimento Italiano, Torino.



Figure A210. John Brampton Philpot, *Interior of San Miniato*, c. 1855, Albumen Photograph, Raccolte Museali Fratelli Alinari-fondo Philpot, Florence.



Figure A211. Telemaco Signorini, *Interior of San Miniato*, c. 1861, Oil on canvas, Private collection, courtesy Galleria Parronchi, Florence.



Figure A212. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Cristiano Banti*, 1866, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Florence.



Figure A213. Fratelli Alinari, *Cristiano Banti*, c. 1860, Albumen Photograph, Archivio Eredi Cabianca.



Figure A214. Giovanni Fattori, *Diego Martelli on Horseback*, c. 1867, Oil on canvas, applied to cardboard, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A215. Fratelli Alinari, *Diego Martelli on Horseback*, 1866, Photograph, Archivio Eredi Rusconi.



Figure A216. Cristiano Banti, *Models in Historical Poses*, c. 1858, Albumen Photograph, Collezione Eredi Banti.



Figure A217. Cristiano Banti, *The Death of Lorenzo de' Medici*, n.d., Oil on canvas, Private collection, reproduced in *I Macchiaioli e Photographie*.



Figure A218. Fratelli Alinari, *Study of Cristiano Banti for a Historical Painting*, c. 1858, Albumen photograph, Collezione Eredi Banti.



Figure A219. Cristiano Banti and Fratelli Alinari, *Study for a Historical painting*, c. 1858, Albumen Photograph and oil paint, Collezione Eredi Banti.



Figure A220. Vincenzo Cabianca (attr.), *Conversazione fra religiosi*, c. 1870, Albumen photograph, Archivio Eredi Cabianca.



Figure A221. Vincenzo Cabianca, *Conversazione fra religiosi*, n.d., Watercolor on paper, Private collection, reproduced in *I Macchiaioli e Photographie*.



Figure A222. Giulio de Gori, *L'Omino nel Bosco*, Photograph, Reproduced in *La fotografia e I Pittori*.
Signorini at left.



Figure A223. Giulio de Gori, *L'Omino nel Bosco*, squared for transfer, Photograph, Reproduced in *La fotografia e I Pittori*.

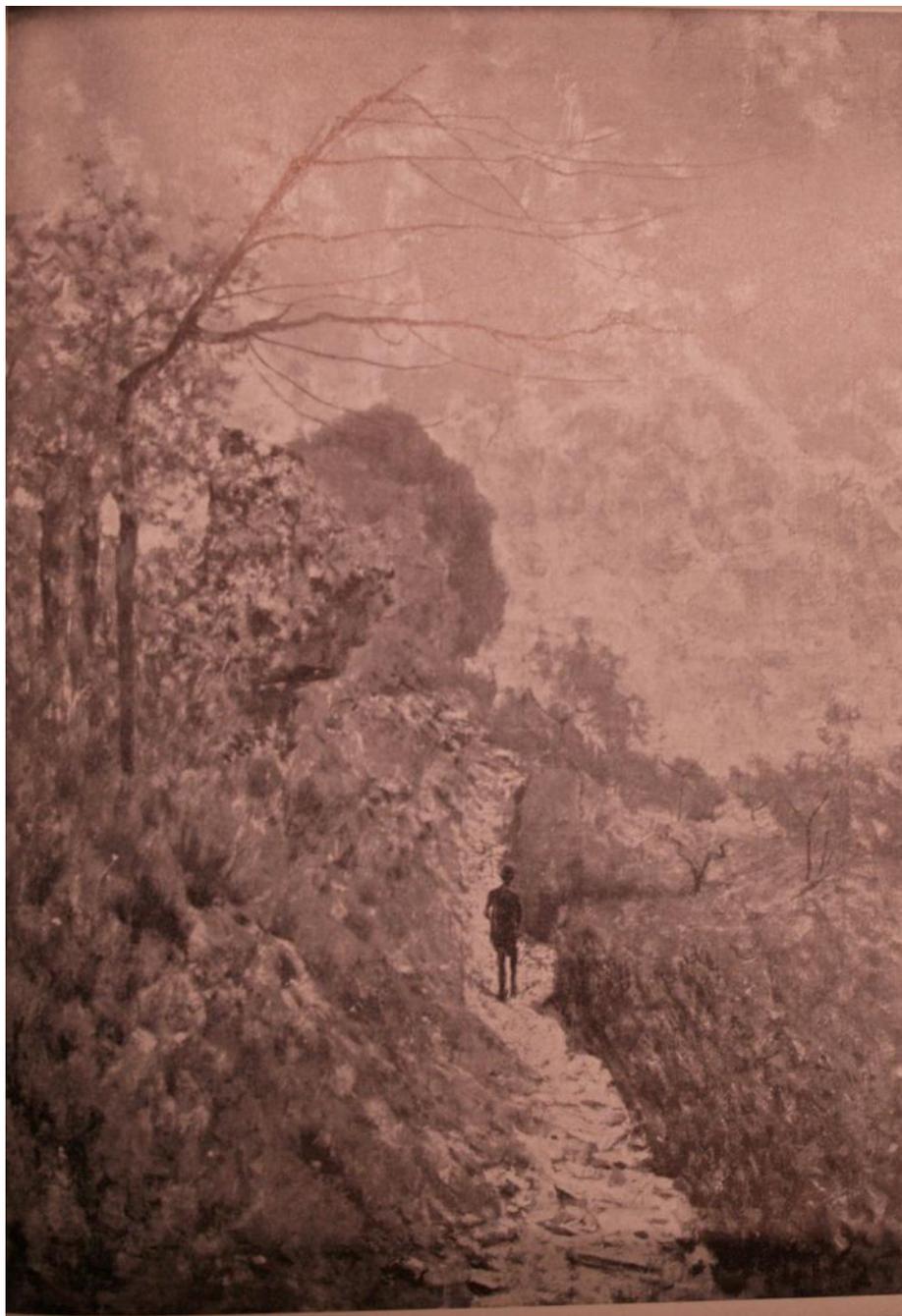


Figure A224. Telemaco Signorini, *L'Omino nel Bosco*, Formerly in Collezione Stramezzi, Crema.



Figure A225. Telemaco Signorini, *November*, Museo d'arte moderna Ca' Pesaro.



Figure A226. Telemaco Signorini, *Mercato del Bestiame*, Oil on board, Museo della Scienza e Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci, Milano.



Figure A227. Edgar Degas, *Seated Nude*, 1895, Gelatin silver print, The J. Paul Getty Museum.



Figure A228. Edgar Degas, *After the Bath, Woman Drying her Back*, 1896, Gelatin silver print, The J. Paul Getty Museum.

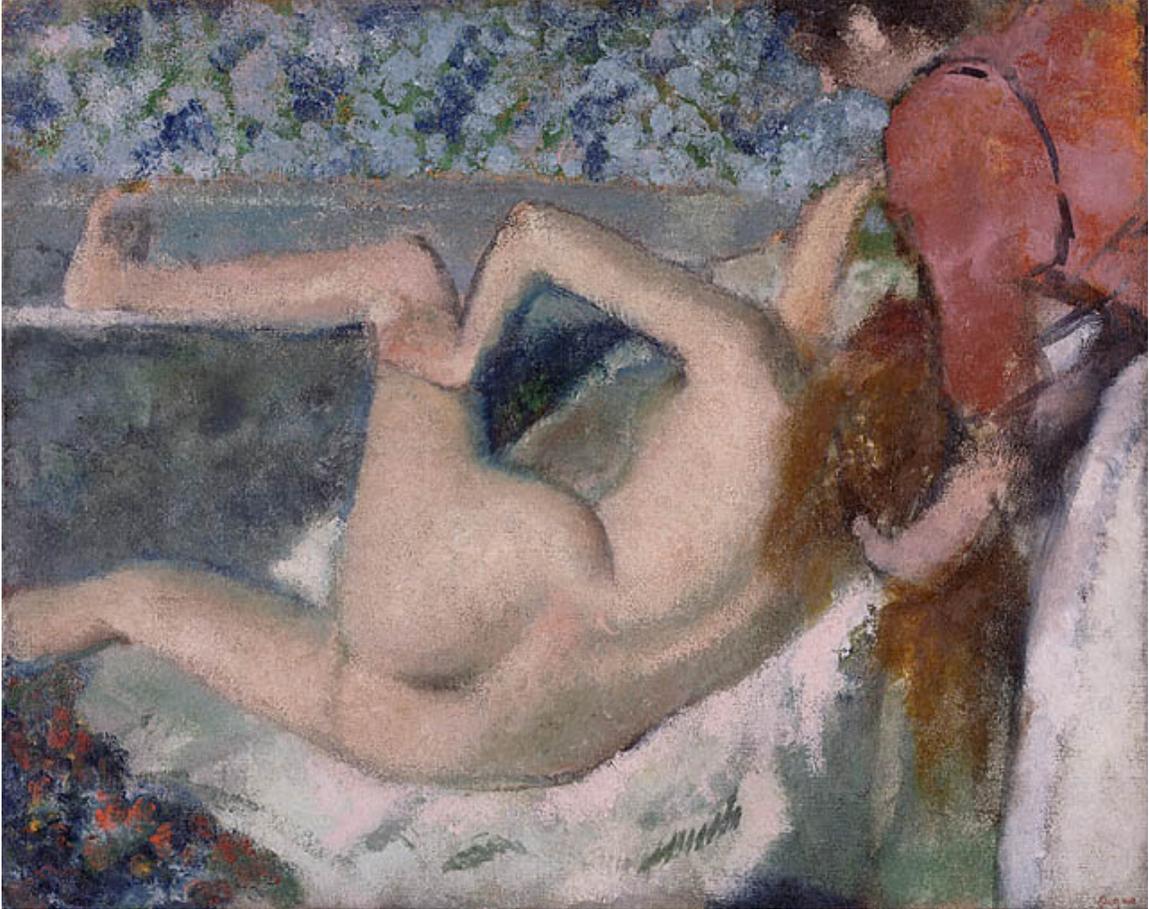


Figure A229. Edgar Degas, *After the Bath*, c. 1895, Oil on canvas, The J. Paul Getty Museum.



Figure A230. Edgar Degas, *Ballerina che si accomoda la bretella*, c. 1895-96, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A231. Edgar Degas, *Dancer Adjusting the Shoulder Strap of her Bodice*, 1880s-90s, Yellow brown wax and plastiline, National Gallery of Art, Washington DC.

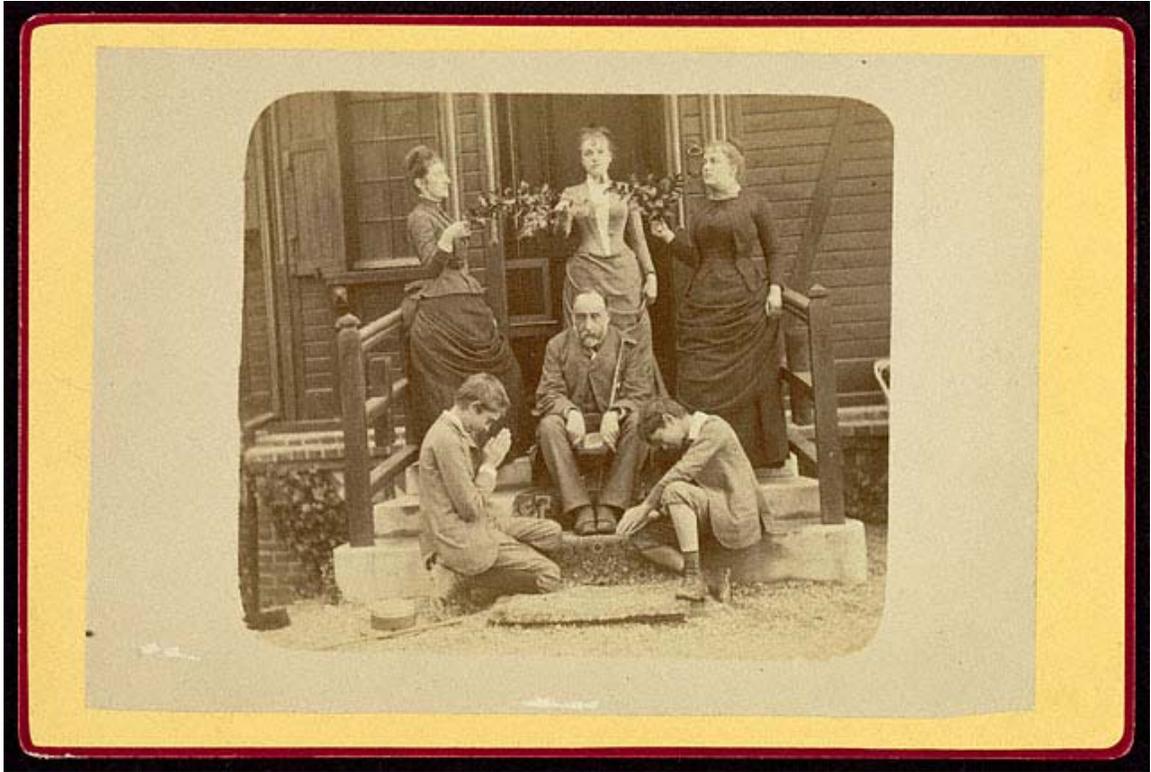


Figure A232. Edgar Degas and Walter Barnes, *Apotheosis of Degas*, 1885, Albumen print, The J. Paul Getty Museum.



Figure A233. Edgar Degas, *Louise Halévy Reading to Degas*, c. 1895, Gelatin silver print, The J. Paul Getty Museum.



Figure A234. Giulio de Gori (attr.), *Telemaco Signorini nella sala da gioco della villa de Gori*, c. 1868, Albumen photograph, Collezione Murray.



Figure A235. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of the Artist*, 1855, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A236. Edgar Degas, *Marguerite De Gas*, c. 1858-60, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A237. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Oil on canvas, Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires.



Figure A238. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Oil on canvas, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.



Figure A239. Giovanni Fattori, *Diego Martelli at Castiglioncello*, 1867-70, Oil on wood, Giacomo and Ida Jucker Collection, Milan.

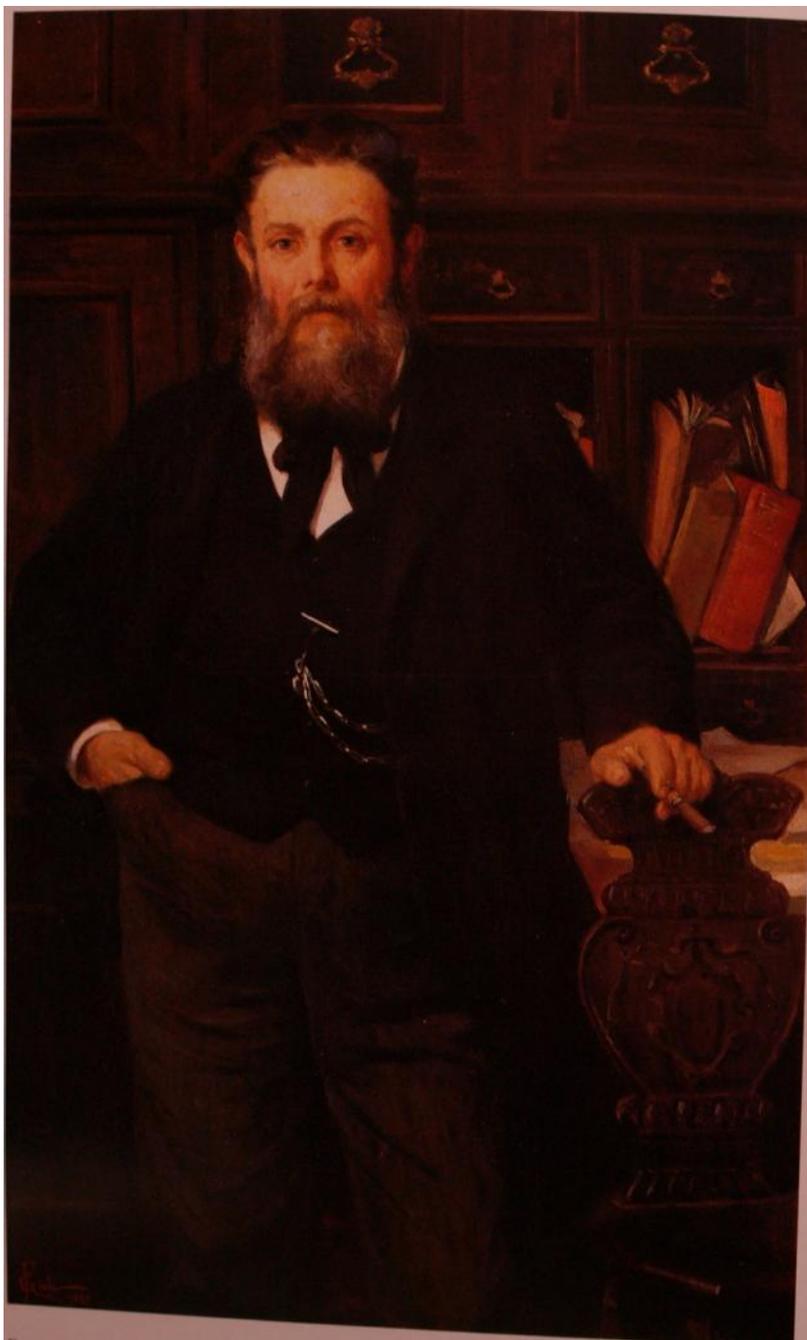


Figure A240. Francesco Gioli, *Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1888, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A241. Edgar Degas, Nb 31 p 24-25, 1878-79, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A242. Edgar Degas, *Study for Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Prepared black chalk heightened with white chalk, traces of white gouache, on green-gray wove paper, discolored to tan, squared in black chalk, Fogg Art Museum.



Figure A243. Edgar Degas, *Study for Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Charcoal heightened with white chalk on blue-gray wove paper, discolored to tan, squared in charcoal, Fogg Art Museum.



Figure A244. Edgar Degas, *Study for Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Pencil on paper, National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.



Figure A245. Edgar Degas, *Study for Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Charcoal and white chalk, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A246. Edgar Degas, *Young Spartans*, c. 1860, reworked until 1880, Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London.



Figure A247. Telemaco Signorini, *La sala delle agitate al San Bonifazio in Firenze*, 1865, Oil on canvas, Galleria Internazionale d'Arte Moderna di Ca'Pesaro, Venice.



Figure A248. Telemaco Signorini, *L'Amatore di Stampe*, c. 1870, Oil on cardboard, Private Collection, Bologna.



Figure A249. Giuseppe De Nittis, Reproduced in Dini, *De Nittis* (Archivo Dini).



Figure A250. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Pioggia di cenere (eruzione del Vesuvio)*, 1872, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.

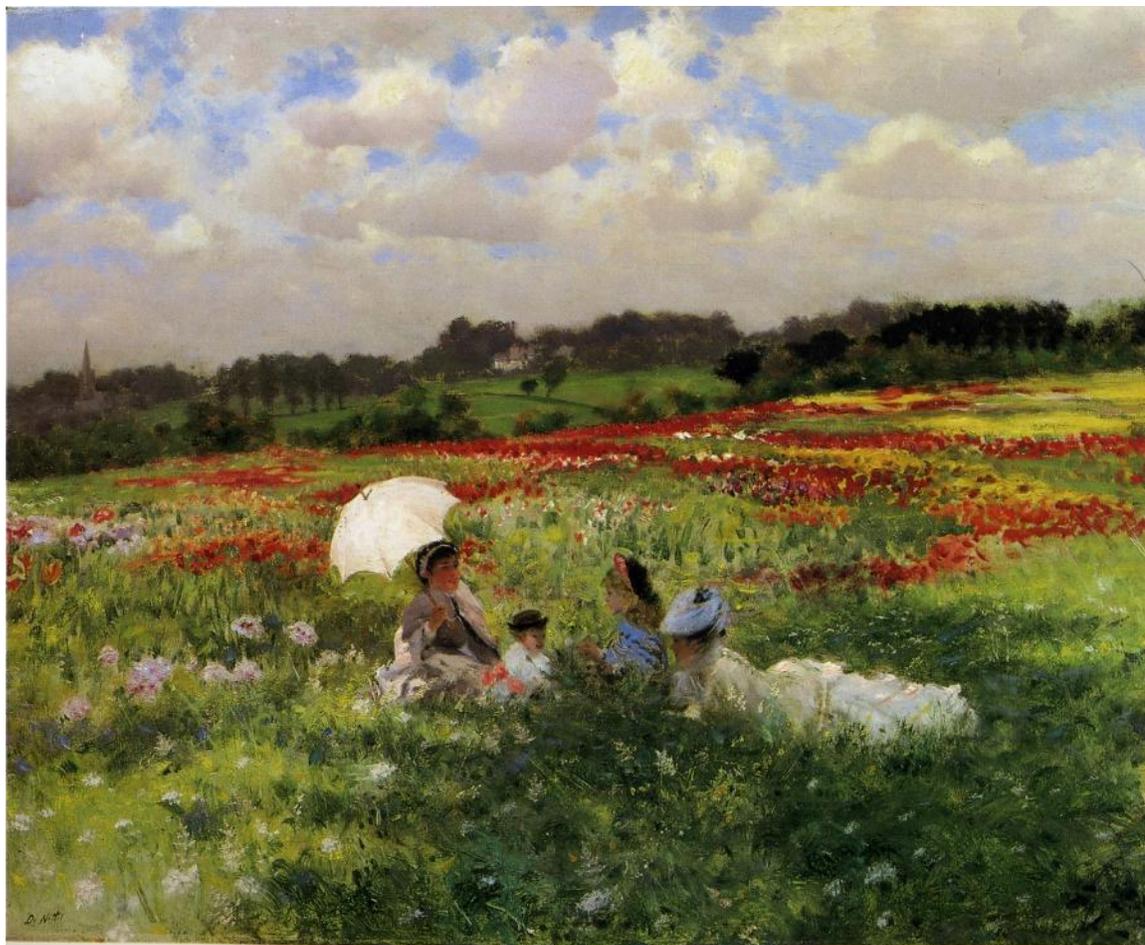


Figure A251. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Nei Campi (Dintorni di Londra)*,
Private Collection, Milan.

Oil on canvas,



Figure A252. Berthe Morisot, *La Lecture*, 1873, Oil on canvas, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A253. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Lunch in the Garden*, 1884, Oil on canvas, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A254. Edgar Degas, *Young Jacques De Nittis*, 1878-80, Pastel on canvas, Lemoisne II 508.

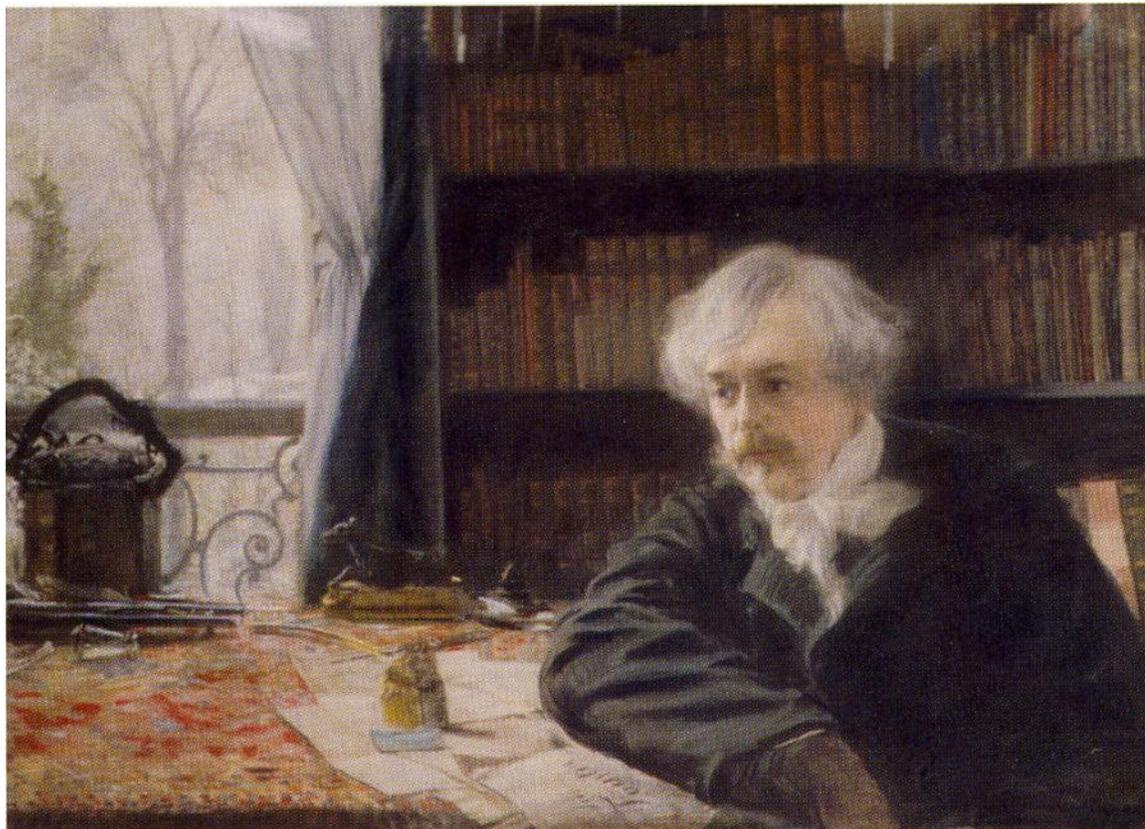


Figure A255. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Portrait of Edmond de Goncourt*, c. 1880-81, Goncourt Archives, Nancy.



Figure A256. Giovanni Boldini, 1880, Reproduced in Dini, *De Nittis*.



Figure A257. Giovanni Boldini, *Diego Martelli*, 1865, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A258. Giovanni Boldini, *Gossip*, 1873, Oil on wood, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A259. Giovanni Boldini, *Comtesse Gabrielle de Rasty Seated in an Armchair*, c. 1878, Stair Sainty Matthiesen, New York.



Figure A260. Giovanni Boldini, *Gertrude Elizabeth (née Blood), Lady Colin Campbell*, c. 1897, Oil on canvas, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Figure A261. Giovanni Boldini, *Mme Charles Max*, 1896, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A262. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Cecilia de Madrazo Fortuny*, 1882, Oil on canvas, Musée des Beaux-Arts , Bordeaux.



Figure A263. Edouard Manet, *Berthe Morisot*, c. 1869, Oil on fabric, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A264. Michel Manzi, *Boldini as Napoleon*, 1893, Musée Goupil.



Figure A265. Giovanni Boldini, *Alle Folies-Bergère*, Location unknown, Doria no. 125.



Figure A266. Giovanni Boldini, *Angolo della mensa del pittore*, Oil on panel, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.

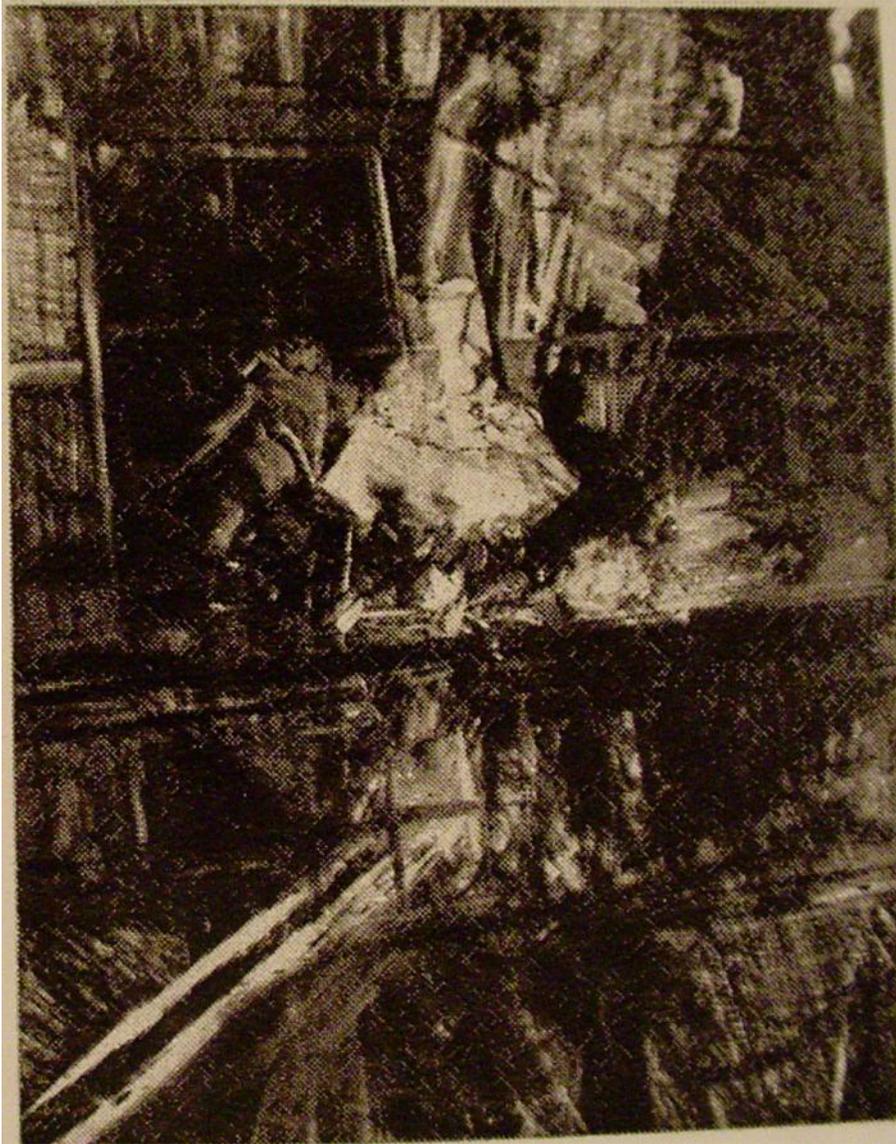


Figure A267. Giovanni Boldini, *Interno dello studio del pittore con il "Cardinale" del Bernini e il "Ritratto del piccolo Subercaseuse"*, 1900, Oil on board, Private collection.



Figure A268. Giovanni Boldini, *Le mele Calville*, Oil on cardboard, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.

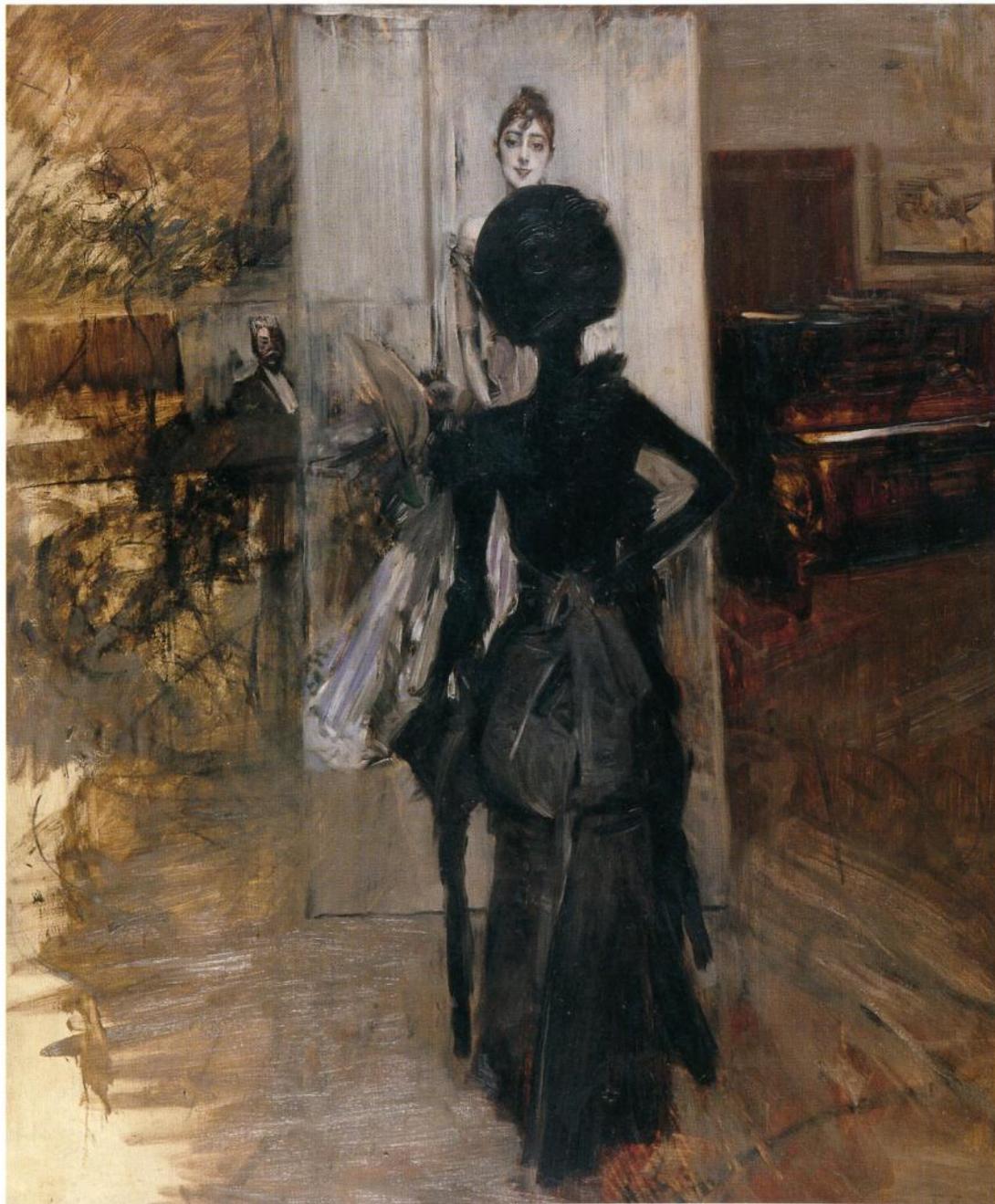


Figure A269. Giovanni Boldini, *Woman in Black Looking at the Pastel of Emiliana Concha de Ossa*, c. 1888, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A270. Giovanni Boldini, *Il pastello bianco*, 1888, Pastel, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan.



Figure A271. Edgar Degas, *Mary Cassatt at the Louvre: The Paintings Gallery*, c. 1870-80, Etching, acquatint, drypoint and electric crayon, The University of Iowa Museum of Art.



Figure A272. Edgar Degas, *At the Louvre: Museum of Antiquities*, 1879, 4th state, Softground etching, drypoint, aquatint and etching, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A273. Hokusai Katsushika, Sketch Book vol. 1 p 80.

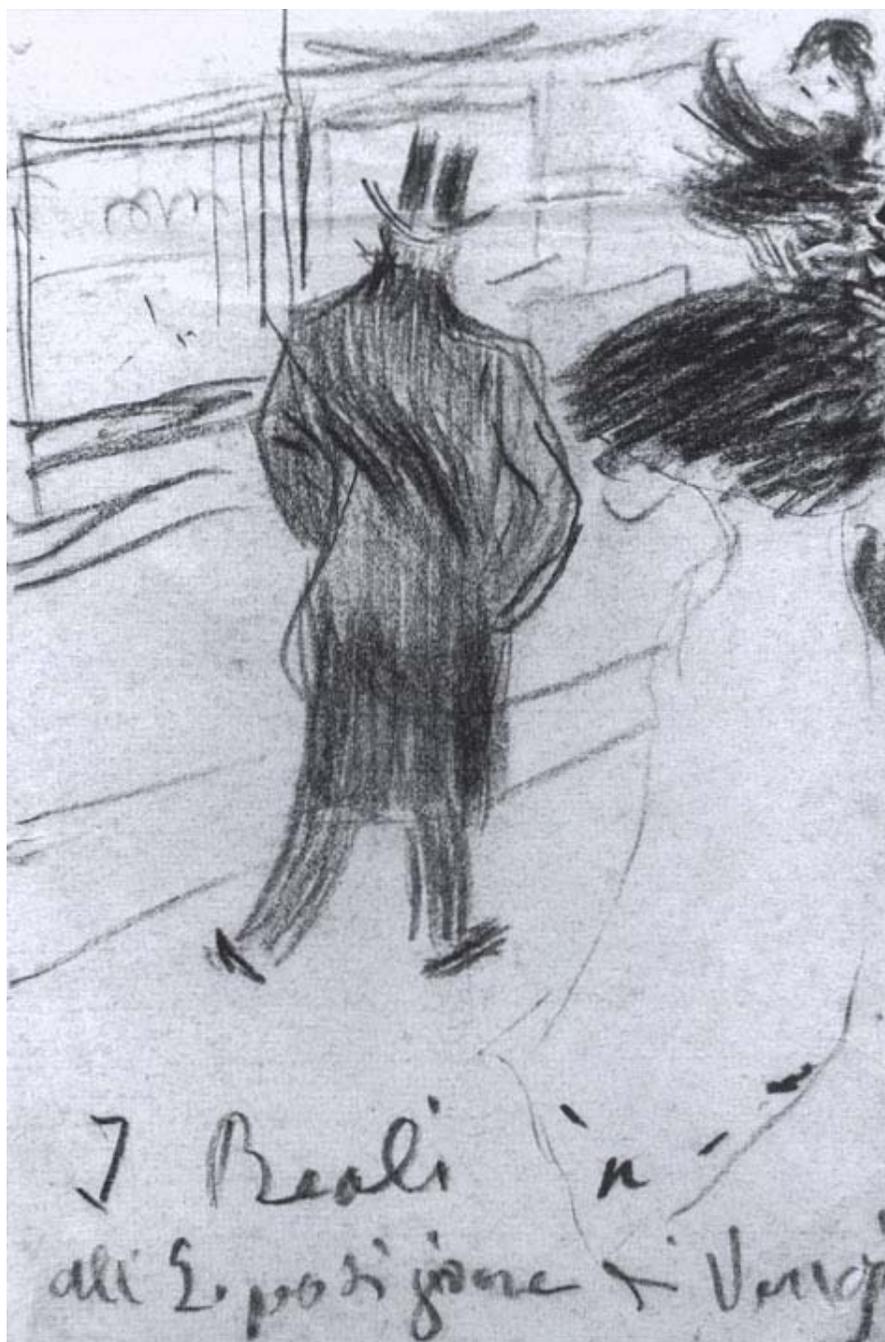


Figure A274. Giovanni Boldini, *I Reali all'Esposizione di Venezia*, Pencil on paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A275. Bernardo Celentano, *Modella travestita*, c. 1860, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.

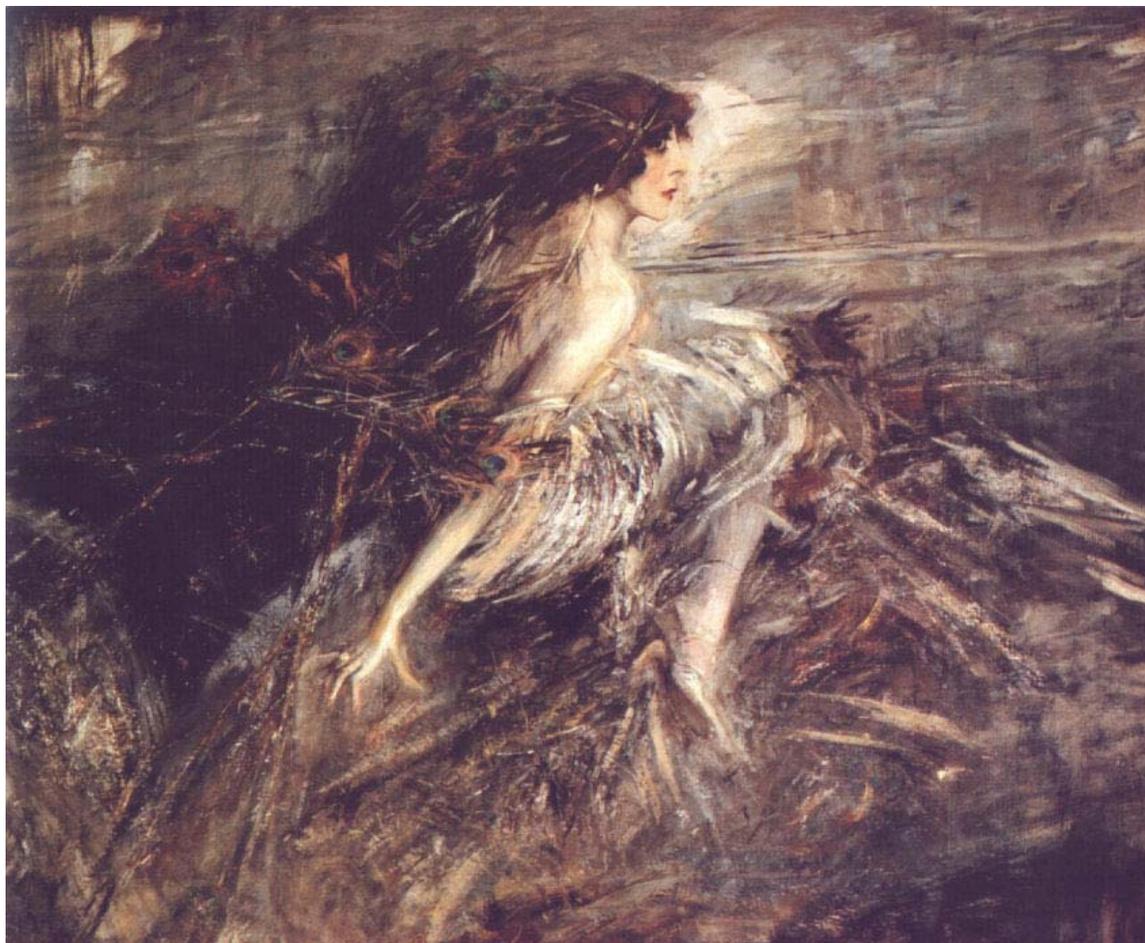


Figure A276. Giovanni Boldini, *Marchesa Luisa Casati*, 1914, Oil on canvas, Galleria Nazionale d'Art Moderna, Rome.

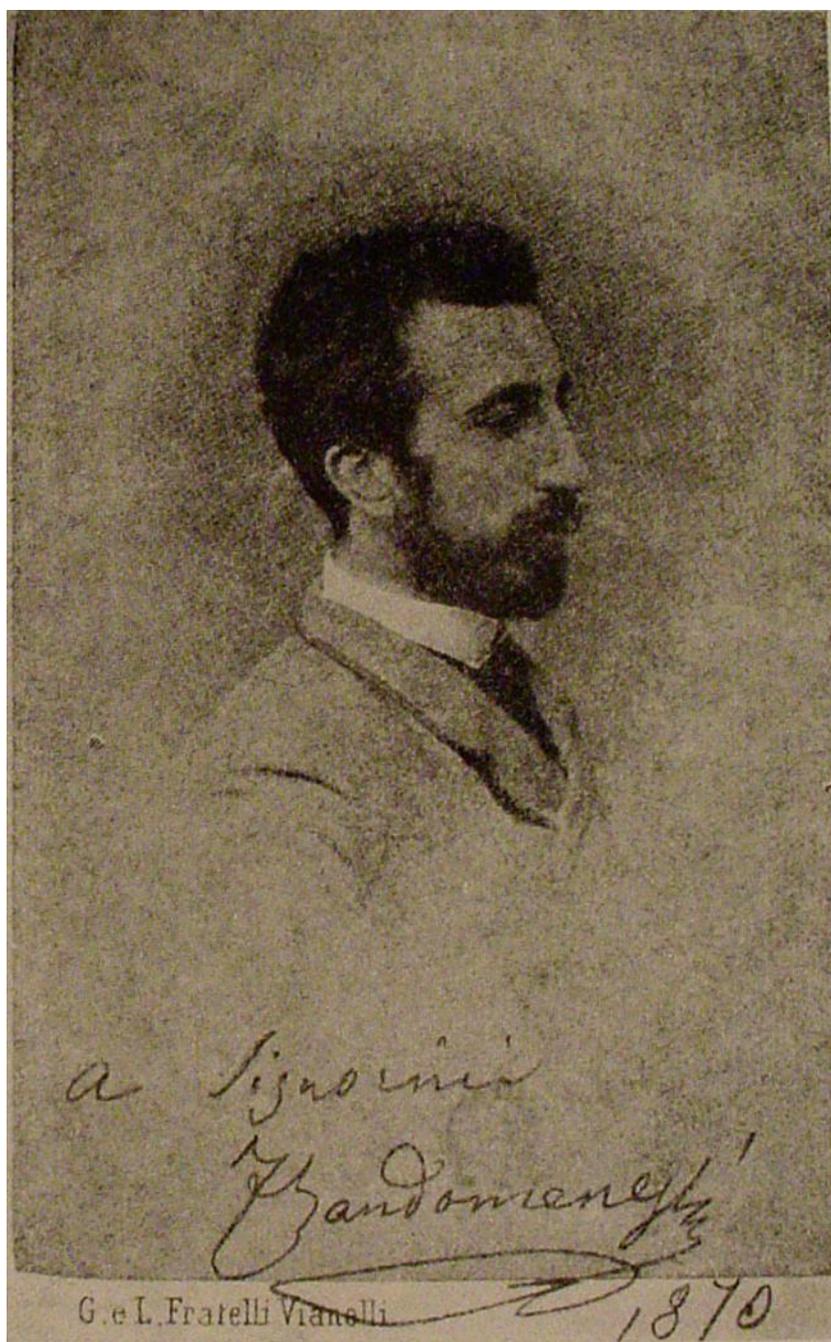


Figure A277. Federico Zandomenighi, 1870, Reproduced in Dini, *Diego Martelli*.



Figure A278. Federico Zandomenighi, *Fanciulla dormiente (A letto)*, 1878, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A279. Federico Zandomenighi, *Lungo la Senna*, c. 1878, Oil on board, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A280. Federico Zandomenighi, *Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1879, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A281. Federico Zandomenighi, *Portrait of Diego Martelli*, 1870, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A282. Federico Zandomenighi, *Mère et fille*, 1879, Oil on canvas, Giuliano Matteucci, Milan.



Figure A283. Federico Zandomenighi, *La Place d'Anvers*, 1880, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'arte moderna Ricci Oddi, Piacenza.

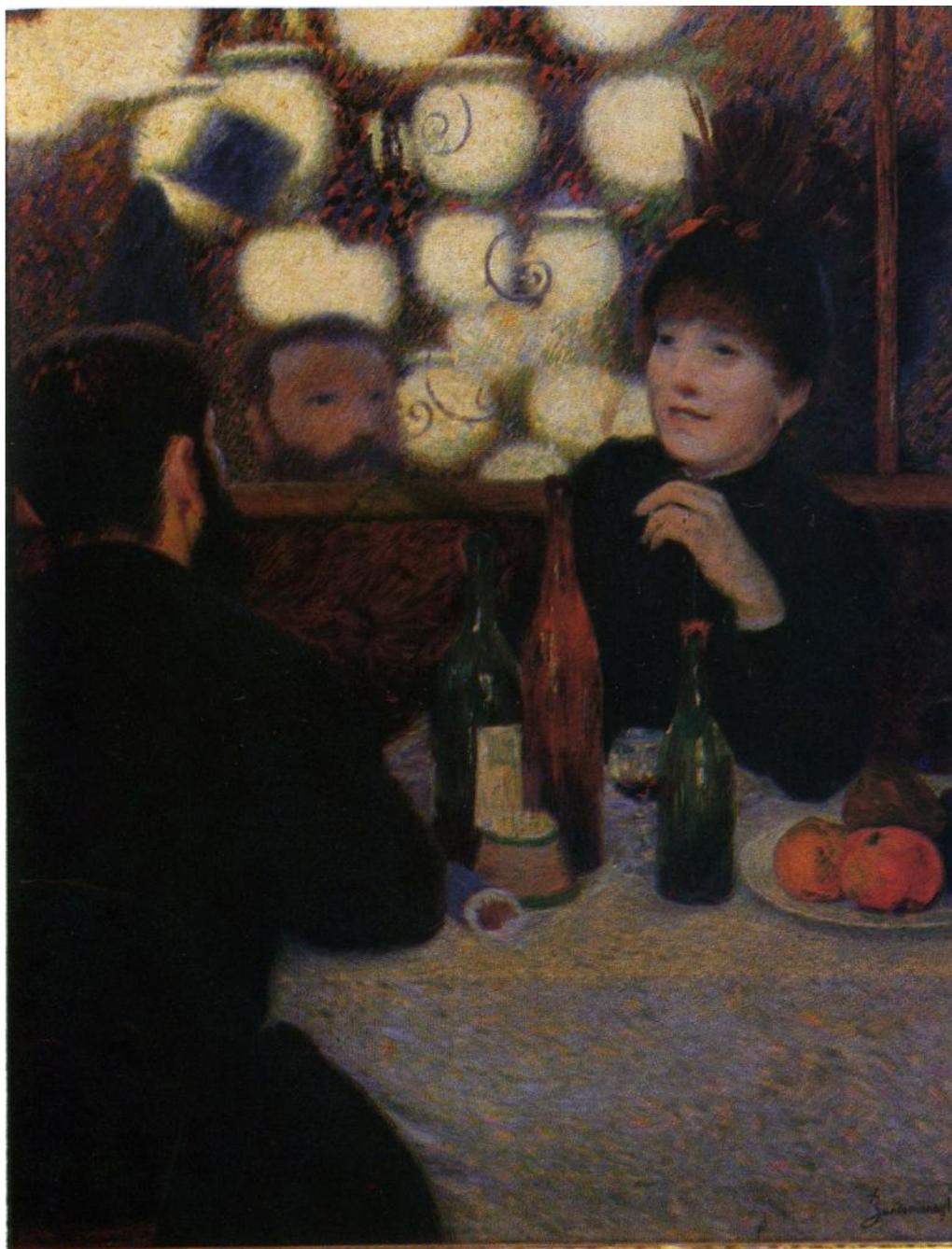


Figure A284. Federico Zandomenighi, *Scène de café (Alla 'Nouvelle Athènes')*, 1885, Oil on canvas, Private Collection, Montecatini Terme.



Figure A285. Gustave Caillebotte, *In a Café*, 1880, Rouen, Musée des Beaux Arts.



Figure A286. Edgar Degas, *Dalla Modista*, 1882, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A287. Federico Zandomenighi, *Il Ricciolo*, c. 1890-1910, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan.



Figure A288. Federico Zandomenighi, *Two Dancers*, Pencil on paper, Private collection, Milan.



Figure A289. Michel Manzi, *Autocaricature*, Ink and wash on paper, Private collection, Naples.

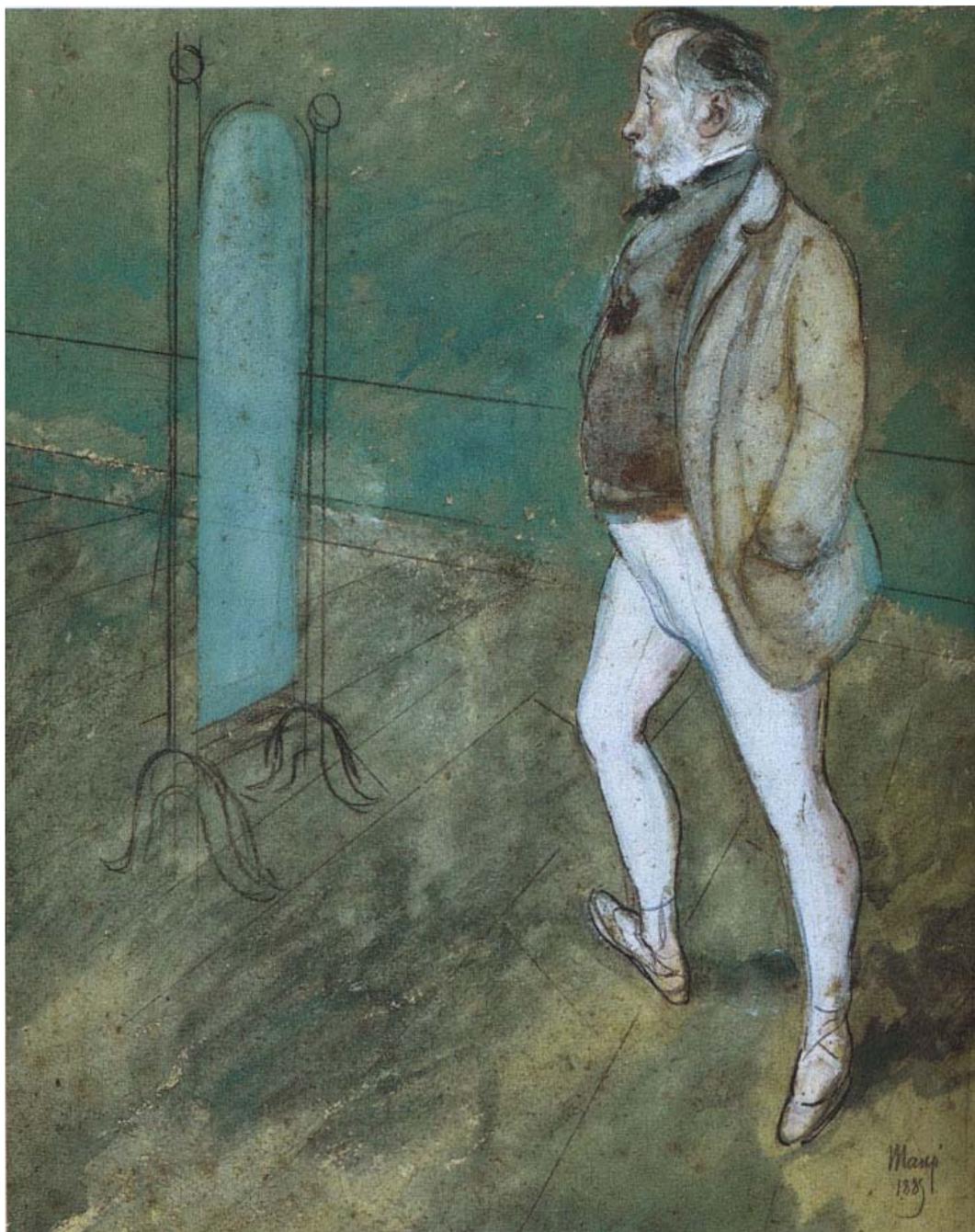


Figure A290. Michel Manzi, *Caricature of Degas as a Dancer*, 1885, Pencil and ink heightened with gouache and watercolor, Private Collection.



Figure A291. Edgar Degas, *The Dance Class*, ca. 1874, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A292. Michel Manzi, *Edgar Degas and Dancers at the Barre*, Pencil and watercolor on paper.



Figure A293. Michel Manzi, *Edgar Degas and Dancers at the Barre*, Photo-acquatinte.



Figure A294. Edgar Degas, *The Orchestra at the Opera House*, c. 1870, Oil on canvas, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.



Figure A295. Michel Manzi, Detail of *Edgar Degas and Dancers at the Barre*, Photo-acquatinte.



Figure A296. Michel Manzi, *Bartholomé, Degas and Manzi in front of a bust of Paul Lafond*, Charcoal and pastel on paper, Musée d'Orsay.



Figure A297. Michel Manzi, *Bartholomé, Degas and Manzi in front of a sculpture*, Pencil, charcoal and watercolor on paper.



Figure A298. Albert Bartholomé, *Bust of Jeanne Manzi*, 1889-90, Terracotta, Private collection.

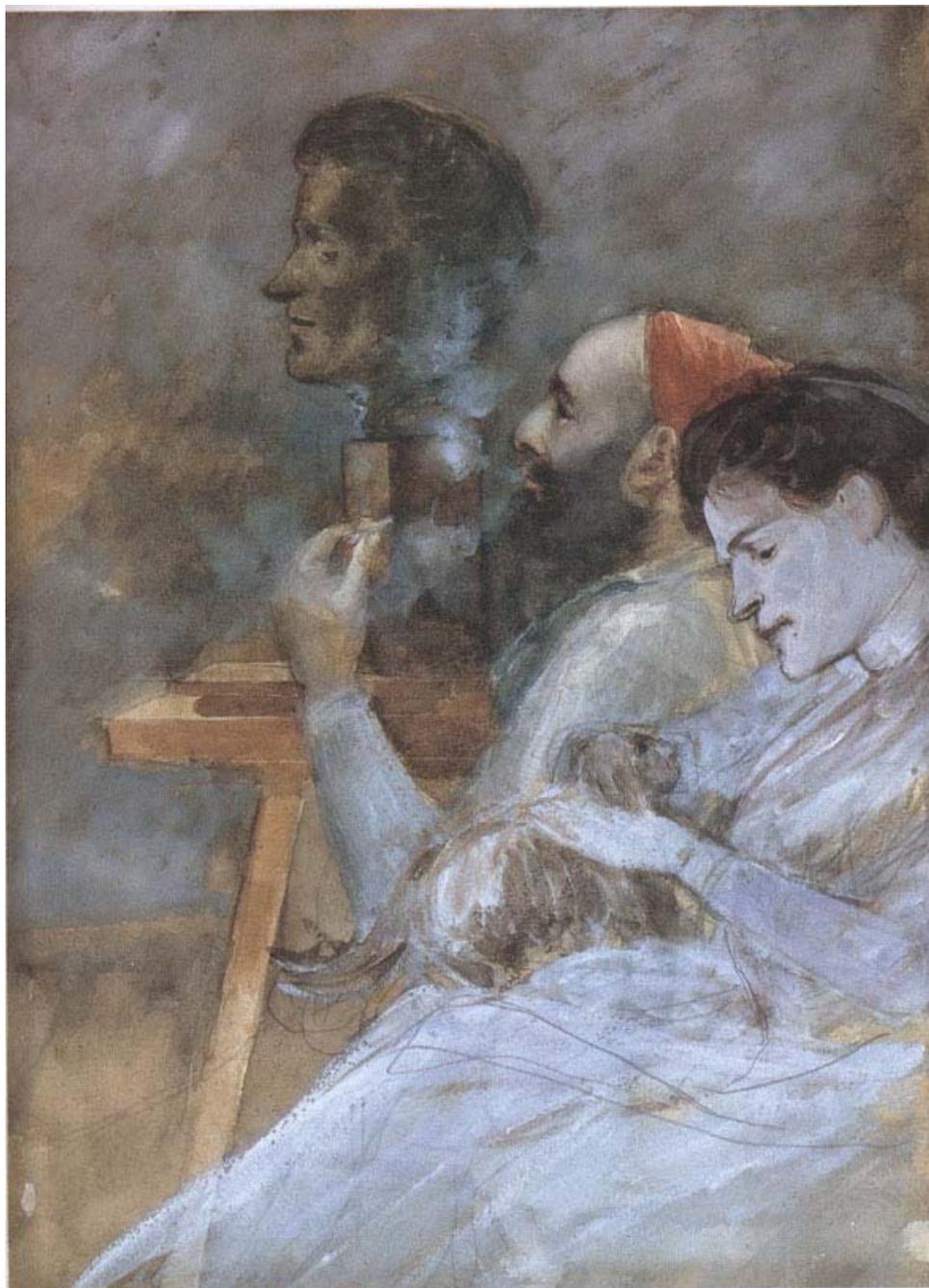


Figure A299. Michel Manzi, *Jeanne Manzi (posing) and Bartholomé*, 1889-90, Pencil and watercolor on paper.



Figure A300. Degas in his salon, ca. 1895, Reproduced in *Degas, Boldini, Toulouse-Lautrec...Portraits inédits par Michel Manzi*.



Figure A301. Bartholomé, Degas, Manzi at the Studio of Bartholmé, Reproduced in *Degas, Boldini, Toulouse-Lautrec... Portraits inédits par Michel Manzi*.



Figure A302. Michel Manzi, *Bartholomé and Degas in a Tilbury during their voyage to Burgandy*, 1890, Pastel, Location unknown.



Figure A303. Degas and Bartholome en Voyage, BNF 87A58583.



Figure A304. Degas and Bartholome en Voyage, BNF 87A58594.



Figure A305. Degas and Bartholome en Voyage, BNF 87A58596.

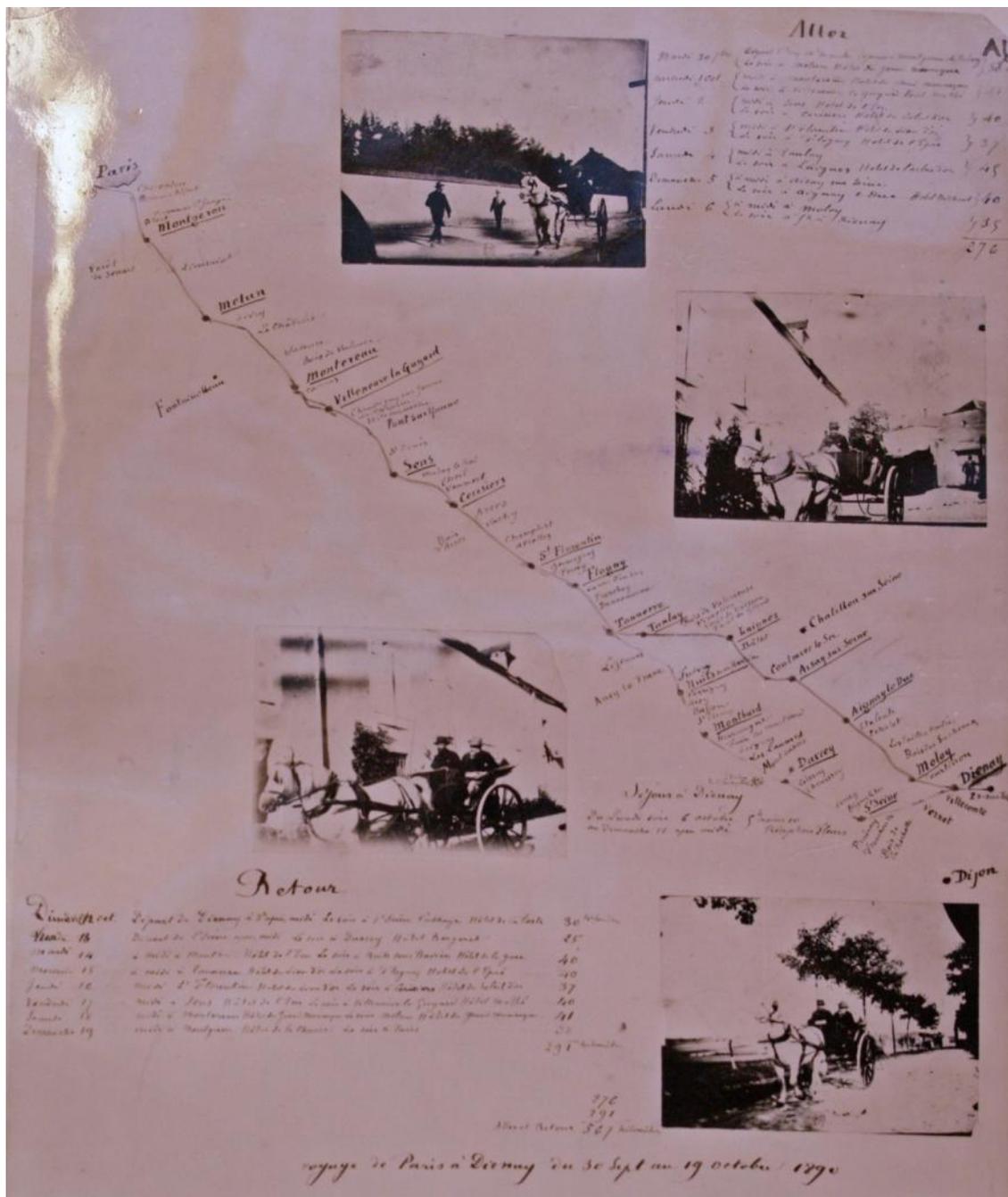


Figure A306. Edgar Degas Voyage de Paris a Dienay, BNF 87B109812.

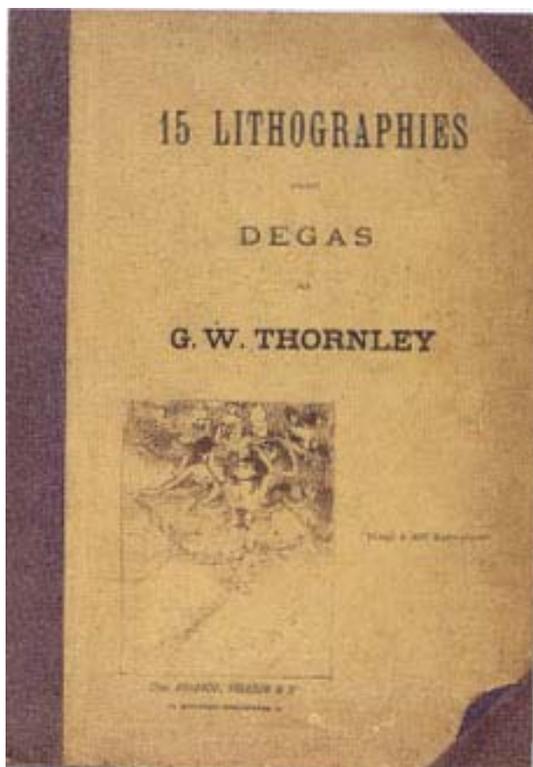


Figure A307. *Quinze Lithographies* frontispiece, 1889-90.



Figure A308. Auguste M. Lauzet, *Dancer on Stage*, 1892, Drypoint, In Georges Lecompte, *L'Art impressionniste*.

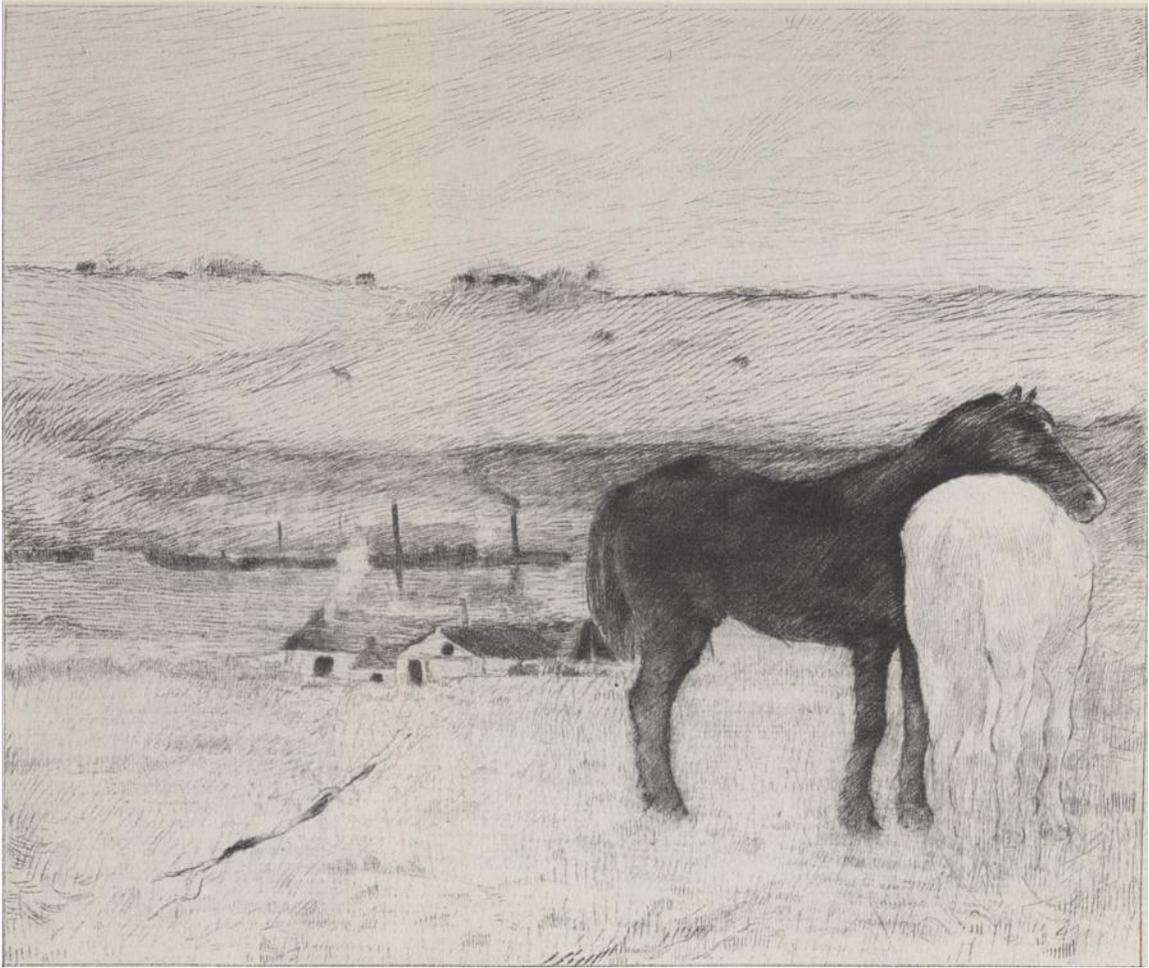


Figure A309. Auguste M. Lauzet, *Horses in the Meadow*, 1891-92, Etching and drypoint, In Georges Lecomte, *L'Art impressionniste*.



Figure A310. Edgar Degas, *Dancer on Stage*, third state, 1891-92, Etching, aquatint and drypoint, Dallas Museum of Fine Art.

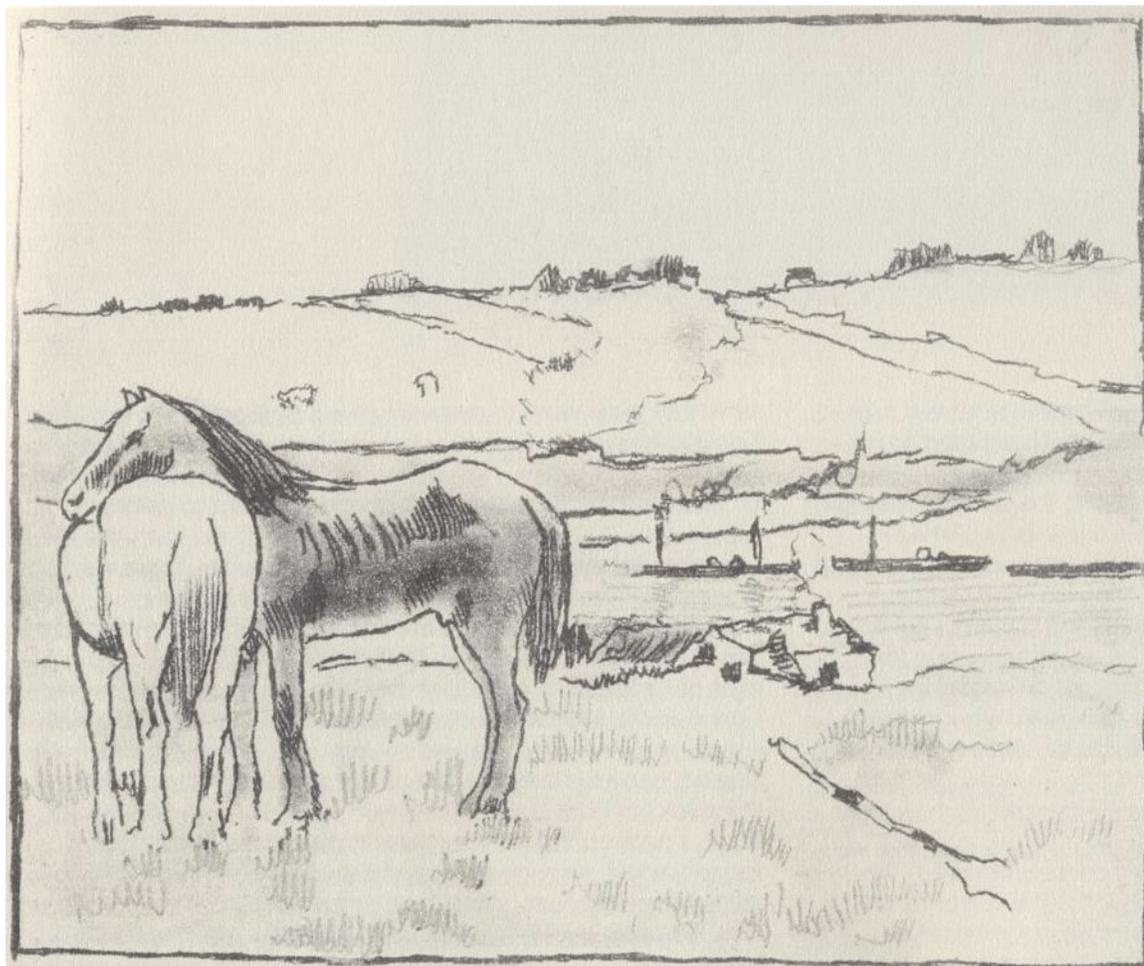


Figure A311. Edgar Degas, *Horses in the Meadow*, second state, 1891-92, Etching, aquatint and drypoint, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A312. Pl. 9: Chez la modiste, *Quinze Lithographies*.



Figure A313. Pl.11: Sur la page, *Quinze Lithographies*.



Figure A314. Pl. 13: La chanson du chien, *Quinze Lithographies*.



Figure A315. Michel Manzi, *Portrait of Edgar Degas*, 1886, Engraving with watercolor, 'roulette' and drypoint.



Figure A316. Michel Manzi, *Edgar Degas Walking*, Engraving with watercolor, 'roulette' and drypoint, Musée Goupil.



Figure A317. *Vingt Dessins Plate 1: Nu de femme accroupie: (croquis pour un tableau inachevé Semiramis construisant Babylone), 1861.*



Figure A318. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 2: Draperie: (pour ladite).



Figure A319. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 3: Nu de femme de dos montant dans un char: (croquis pour le même tableau).



Figure A320. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 4: Draperie pour une variante du même mouvement.



Figure A321. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 5: Draperie pour une femme conduisant un cheval: (même tableau).



Figure A322. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 6: Portrait de jeune personne.



Figure A323. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 7: Étude de quatre jockeys de dos: (croquis à l'essence).



Figure A324. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 8: Blanchisseuse.



Figure A325. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 9: Danseuse en position



Figure A326. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 10: Danseuse en position, de trois quarts.



Figure A327. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 11: Jeune femme en costume de ville.



Figure A328. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 12: Danseuse (battements à la seconde).



Figure A329. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 13: Danseuse à la barre.



Figure A330. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 14: Danseuse (battements à la seconde).

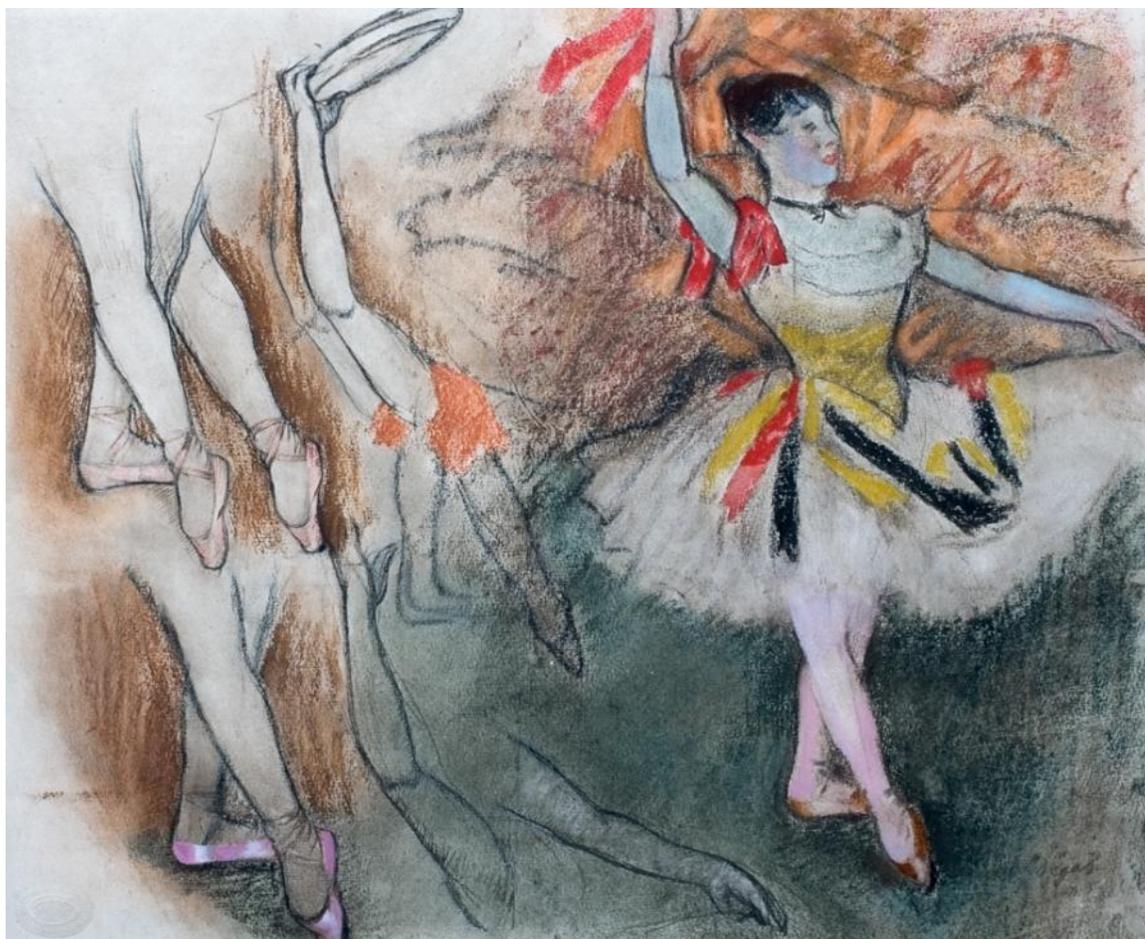


Figure A331. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 15: Étude de jambes et de mouvements de bras pour une danseuse avec un tambourin.



Figure A332. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 16: Danseuse baissée, nouant son chausson.

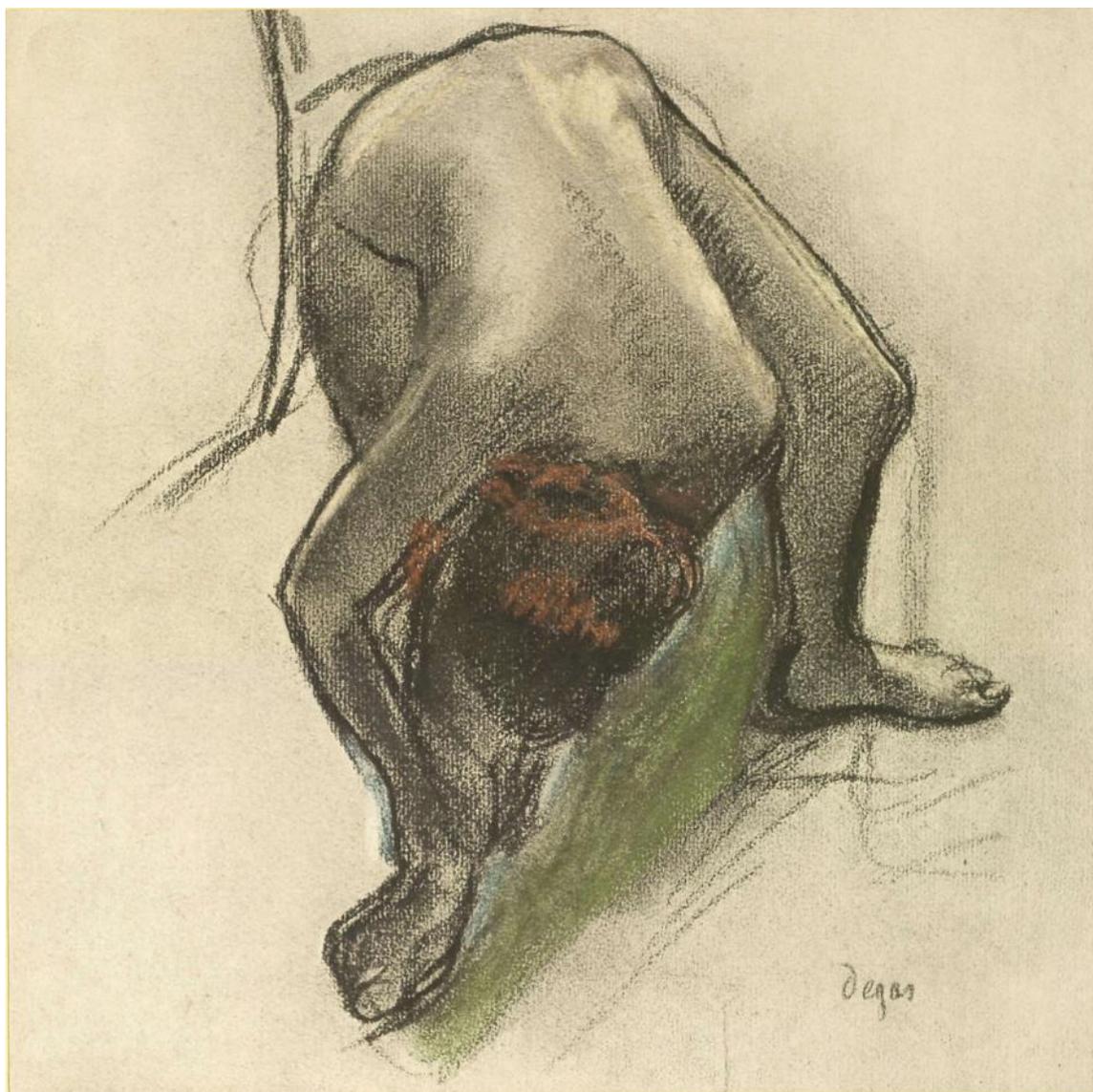


Figure A333. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 17: Étude de nu pour le mouvement ci-dessus.

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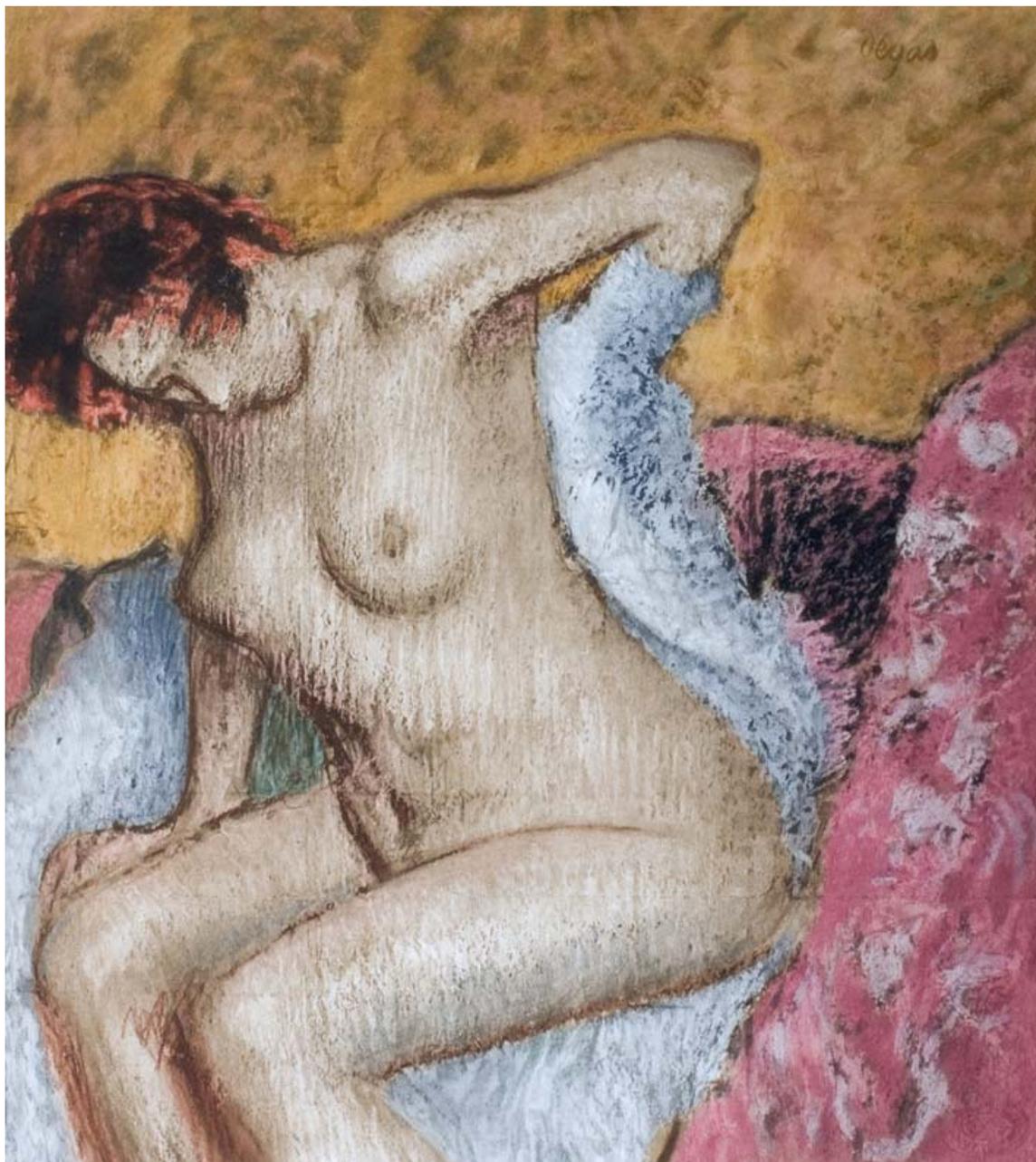


Figure A334. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 18: Femme se frottant les reins avec une serviette (ébauche de pastel).



Figure A335. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 19: Femme renversée sur le dossier d'une longue et se frottant les reins avec une serviette enroulée.



Figure A336. *Vingt Dessins* Plate 20: Femme dans le bain, se grattant le bras.



Figure A337. Edgar Degas, *La repasseuse*, 1869, Charcoal, white chalk and pastel on tan paper, Musée d'Orsay.

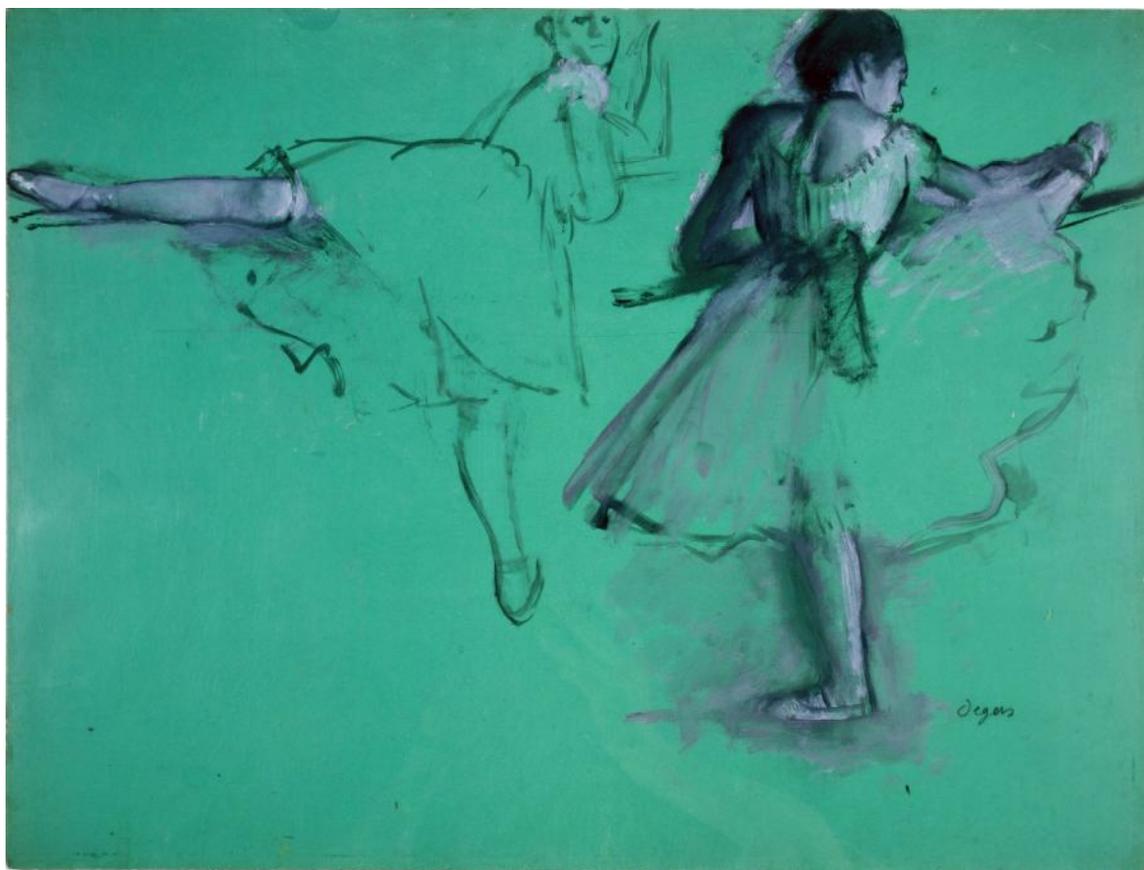


Figure A338. Edgar Degas, *Dancers Practicing at the Barre*, 1876-77, Oil on green paper, British Museum.



Figure A339. Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Valpinçon Bather* , 1808, Oil on canvas, Louvre.



Figure A340. Edgar Degas, *Danseuse Assise ou Danseuse Nouant son Brodequin*, Pastel, Musée d'Orsay.

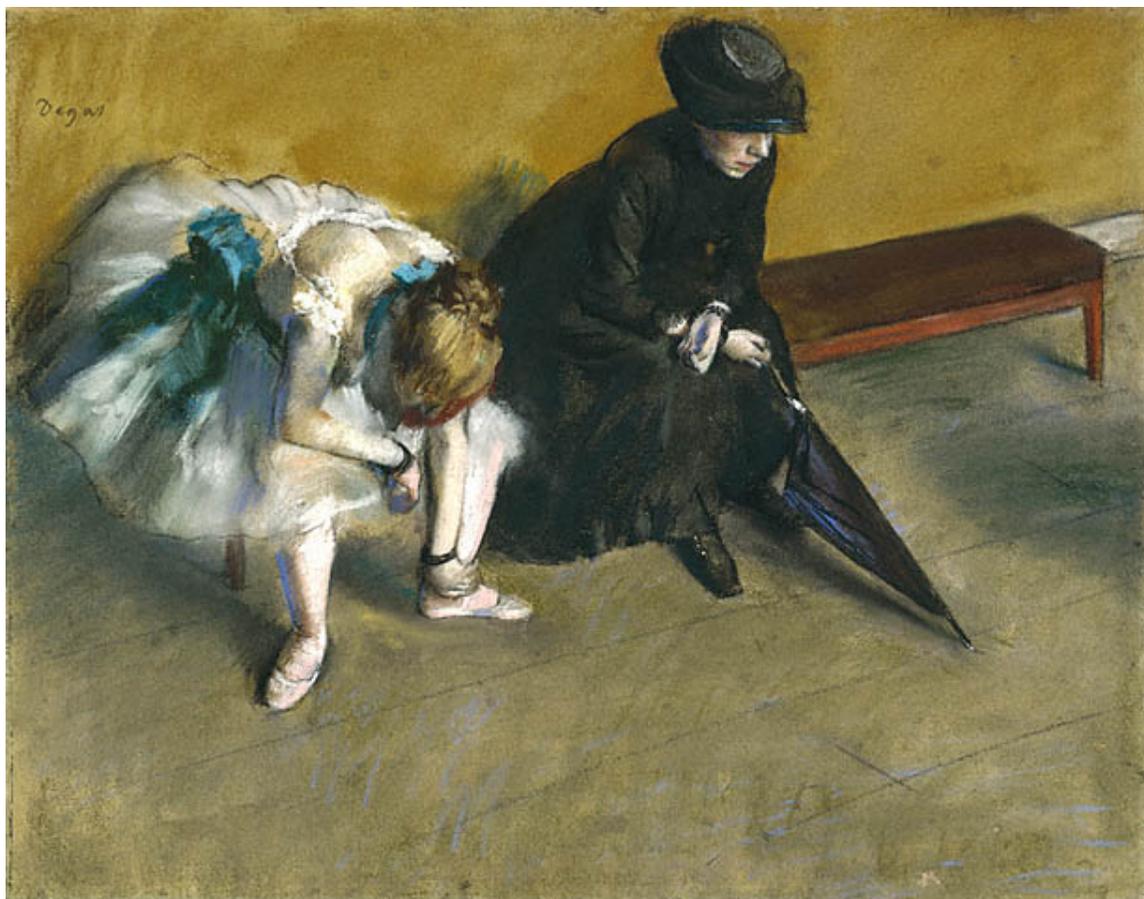


Figure A341. Edgar Degas, *Waiting*, 1892, Pastel, The J. Paul Getty Museum and the Norton Simon Art Foundation, California.



Figure A342. Edgar Degas, *Frieze of Dancers*, c. 1895, Oil on fabric, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A343. Michel Manzi, *Dancer readjusting her Shoe*, Photogravure in black, 1st State.



Figure A344. Alfredo Muller, *The Pancaldi Baths at Livorno*, 1890, Oil on canvas, Private Collection.



Figure A345. Federico Rossano, *Campo di Grano*, Oil on canvas, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.



Figure A346. Edgar Degas, *Double Portrait of Marcellin Desboutin and Ludovic Leric*, c. 1875-76, Musée des Beaux-arts Jules Chéret.



Figure A347. Marcellin Gilbert Desboutin, *Self Portrait*, 1879, Etching on paper, Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute. Dept. of Prints, Drawings and Photographs.

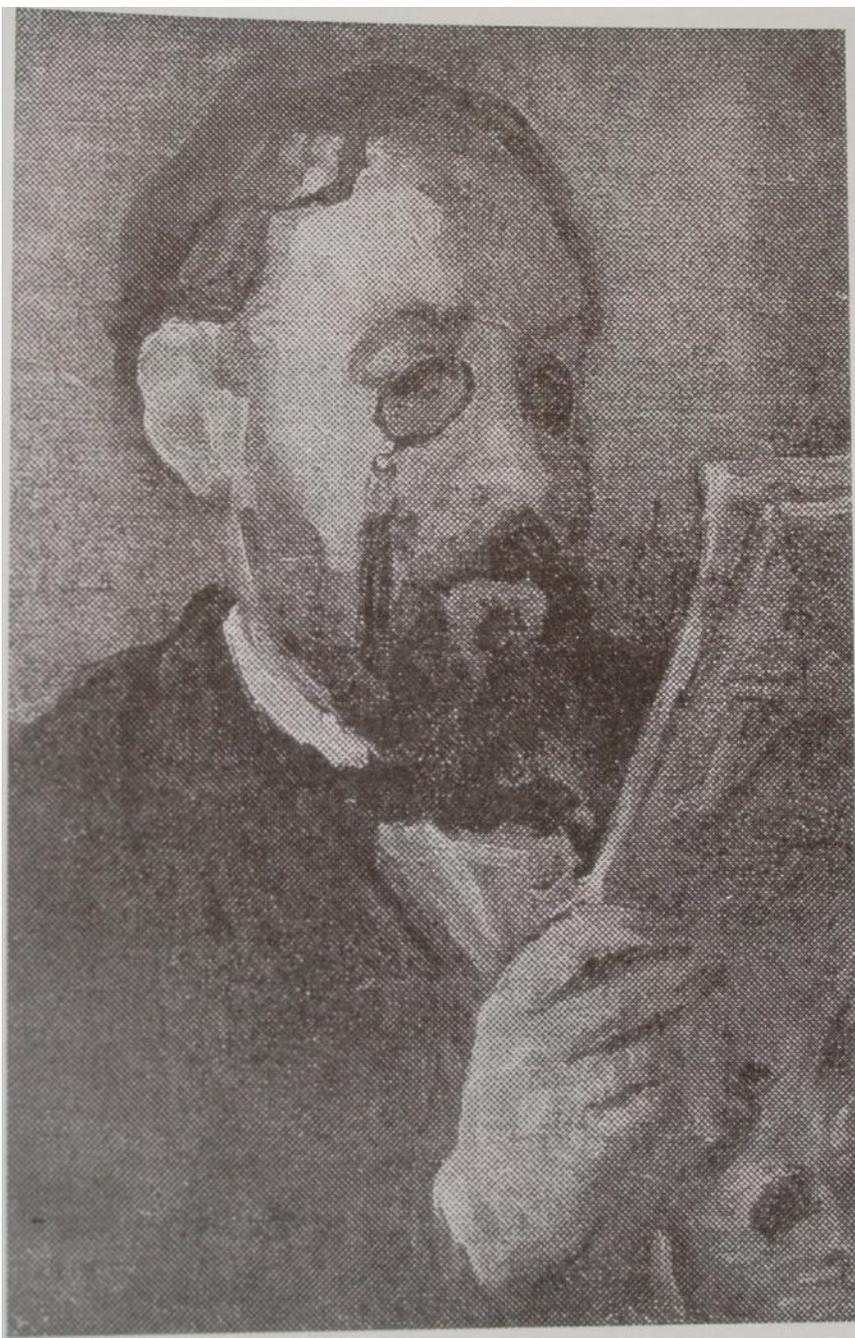


Figure A348. Marcellin Gilbert Desboutin, *Degas lisant*, Reproduced in *De Nittis incisore*.



Figure A349. Marcellin Gilbert Desboutin, *Portrait of Degas*, 1876, Etching and drypoint, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A350. Marco De Gregorio, *Veduta di Casacalenda*, c. 1867, Oil on canvas, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.

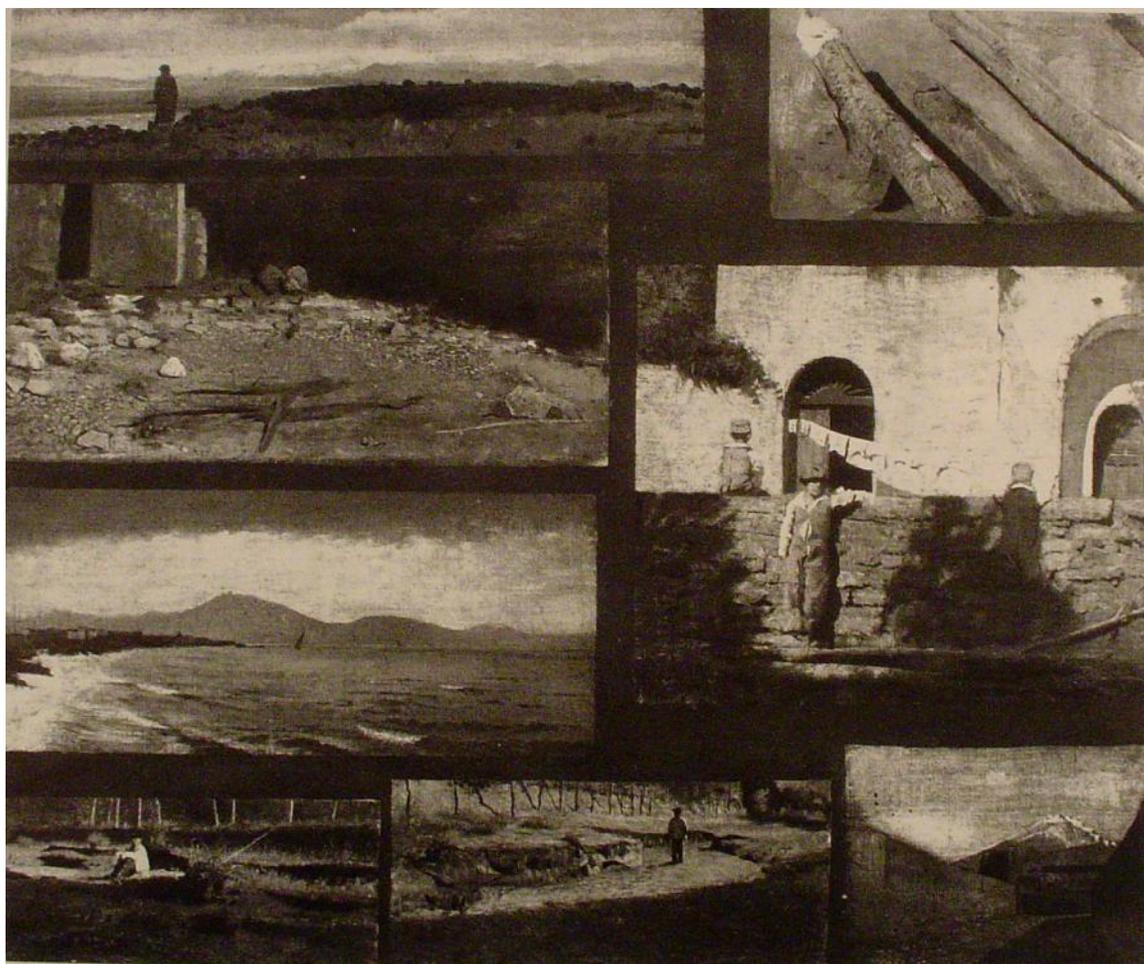


Figure A351. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Studi Vari*, 1864, Oil on board, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A352. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Studio di Nubi I*, 1868, Oil on board, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A353. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Mist in the Mountains, Afternoon*, 1881, Oil on canvas, Ex. Berger collection, St. Helier, Jersey, C.I.



Figure A354. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Impressione del Vesuvio III*, 1872, Oil on board, S. Colongo, Biella.



Figure A355. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Passa il Treno*, Oil on canvas, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A356. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Capannoni di una stazione Ferroviaria (Cantiere)*, 1879, Oil on canvas, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A357. Giuseppe De Nittis, *La Traversata degli Appennini*, c. 1867, Oil on canvas, Museo di Capodimonte, Naples.



Figure A358. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Farmhouse near Naples*, 1866, Oil on canvas, Museo Nazionale di Capodimonte, Naples.

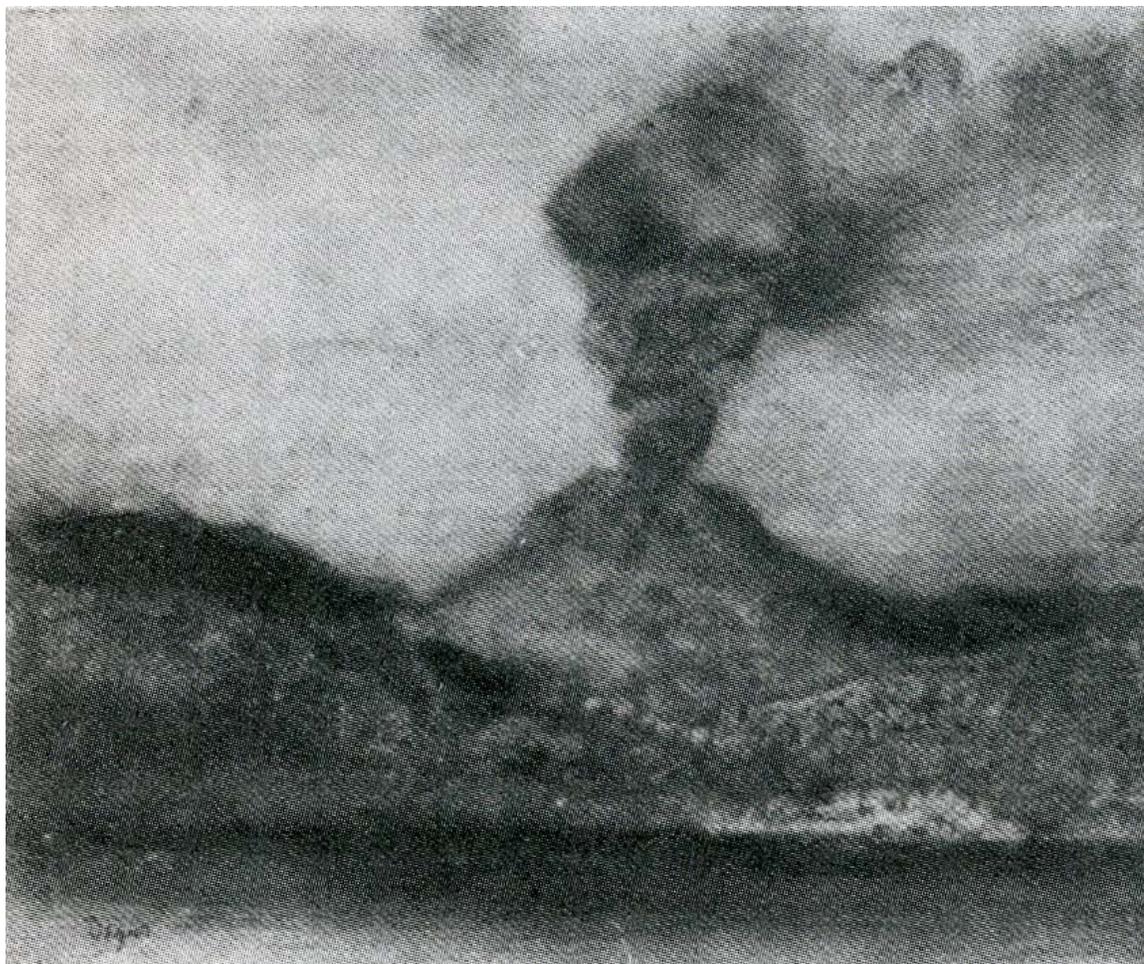


Figure A359. Edgar Degas, *Vesuvius*, 1890-93, Pastel over monotype, Lemoisne III 1052.



Figure A360. Castel dell'Ovo, February 2009, Photograph courtesy of the author.



Figure A361. Edgar Degas, *Castel dell'Ovo*, c. 1858-59, Oil on cardboard, Museum Langmatt, Baden.

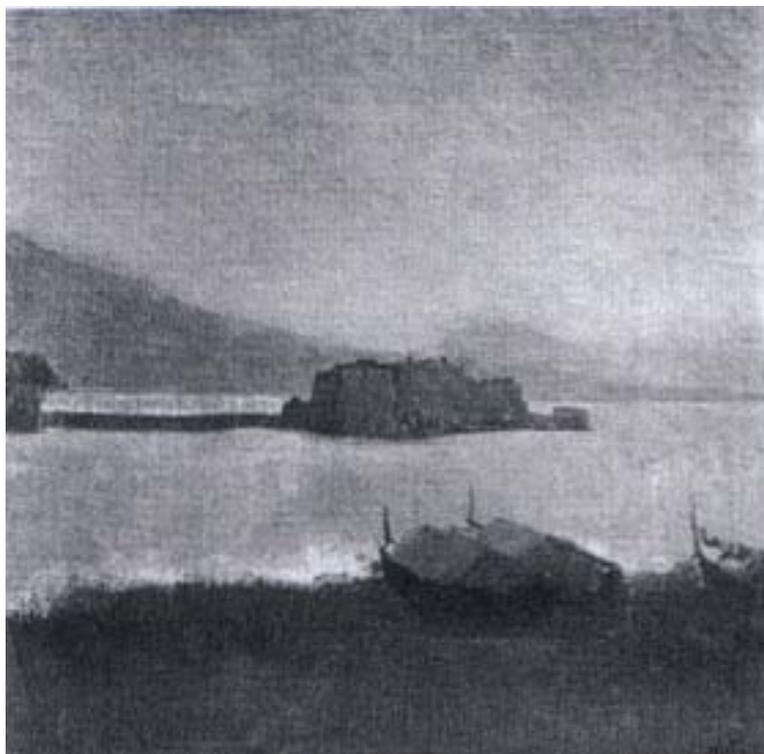


Figure A362. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Castel dell'Ovo II*, Private collection, Reproduced in *Degas e gli Italiani a Parigi*.



Figure A363. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Place de la Concorde after the Rain*, 1875, Oil on canvas, Government Palace, Istanbul.



Figure A364. Edgar Degas, *Place de la Concorde*, 1875, Oil on canvas, The Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg.



Figure A365. Giuseppe De Nittis, *La Place du Carrousel: the Ruins of the Tuileries in 1882*, 1882, Oil on wood, The Louvre, Paris.

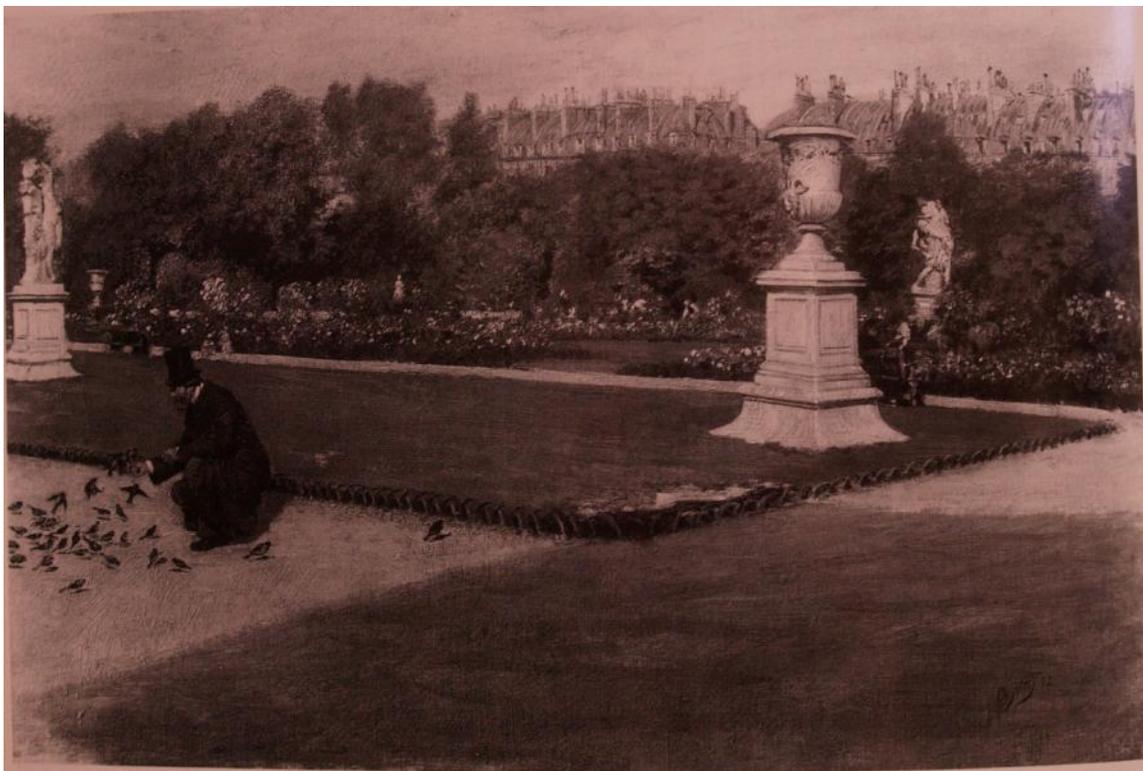


Figure A366. Giuseppe De Nittis, *I Passeri delle Tuileries*, Oil on canvas, M. Crespi, Milan.



Figure A367. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Westminster*, Oil on canvas, G. Marzotto, Valdagno.



Figure A368. Giovanni Boldini, *Place Pigalle*, Doria no. 70.



Figure A369. Giovanni Boldini, *Place Pigalle con l'Omnibus*, 1874, Private collection, Doria no. 73.

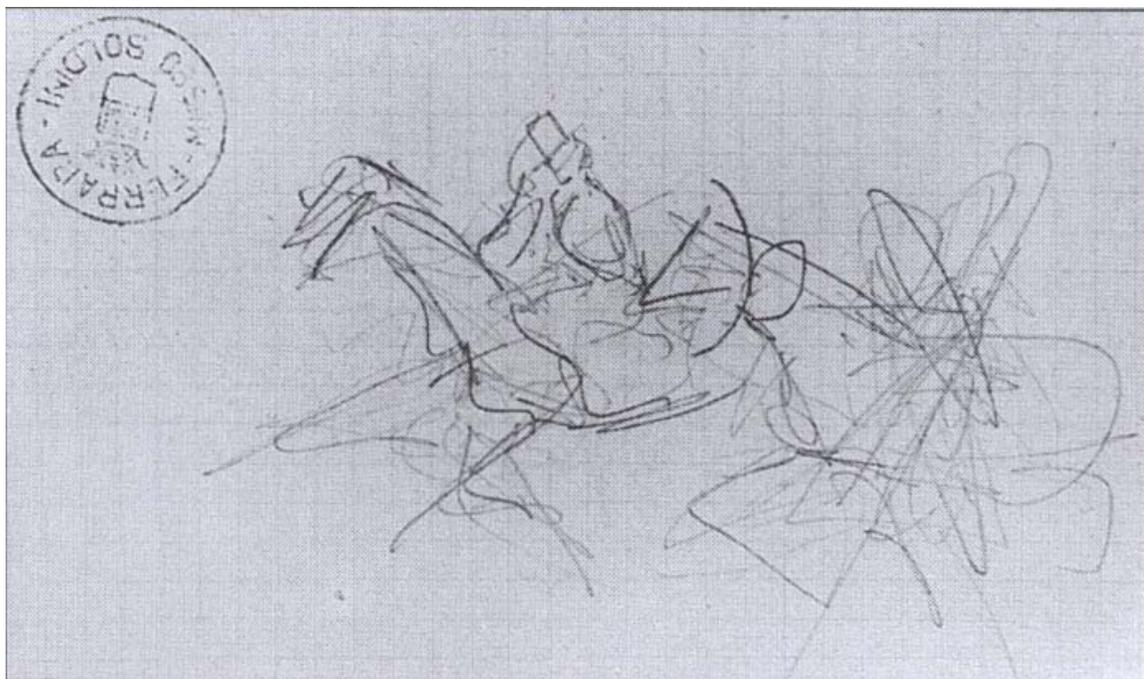


Figure A370. Giovanni Boldini, *Figure a cavallo*, Pencil on paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A371. Telemaco Signorini, *Piazza di Settignano*, c. 1880, Oil on canvas.

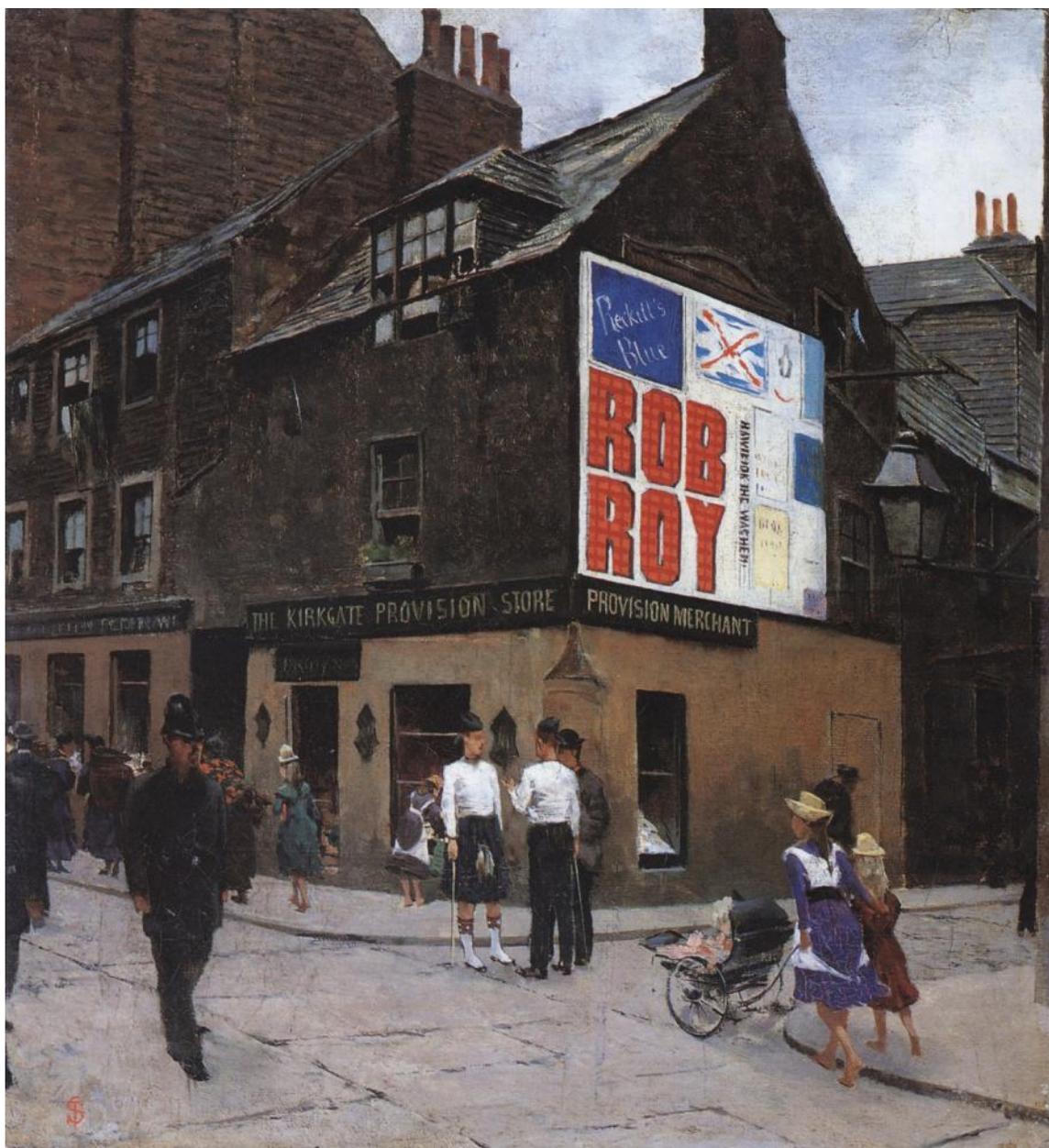


Figure A372. Telemaco Signorini, *Leith*, 1881, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A373. Luigi Gioli, *Via del passeggio a Livorno*, 1885, Oil on canvas, Private collection, reproduced in *Toscana dopo Degas*.



Figure A374. Ruggero Focardi, *Piazza a Settignano*, Oil on canvas, Private collection, exhibited in *Il Nuovo dopo la Macchia*.



Figure A375. Ruggero Panerai, *Artiglieria in Marcia*, Oil on canvas, Private collection, exhibited in *Il Nuovo dopo la Macchia*.



Figure A376. Carlo Pellegrini, *Oscar Wilde*, published 24 May 1884 in *Vanity Fair*.



Figure A377. Carlo Pellegrini, *Caricature of Whistler*, 1883, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

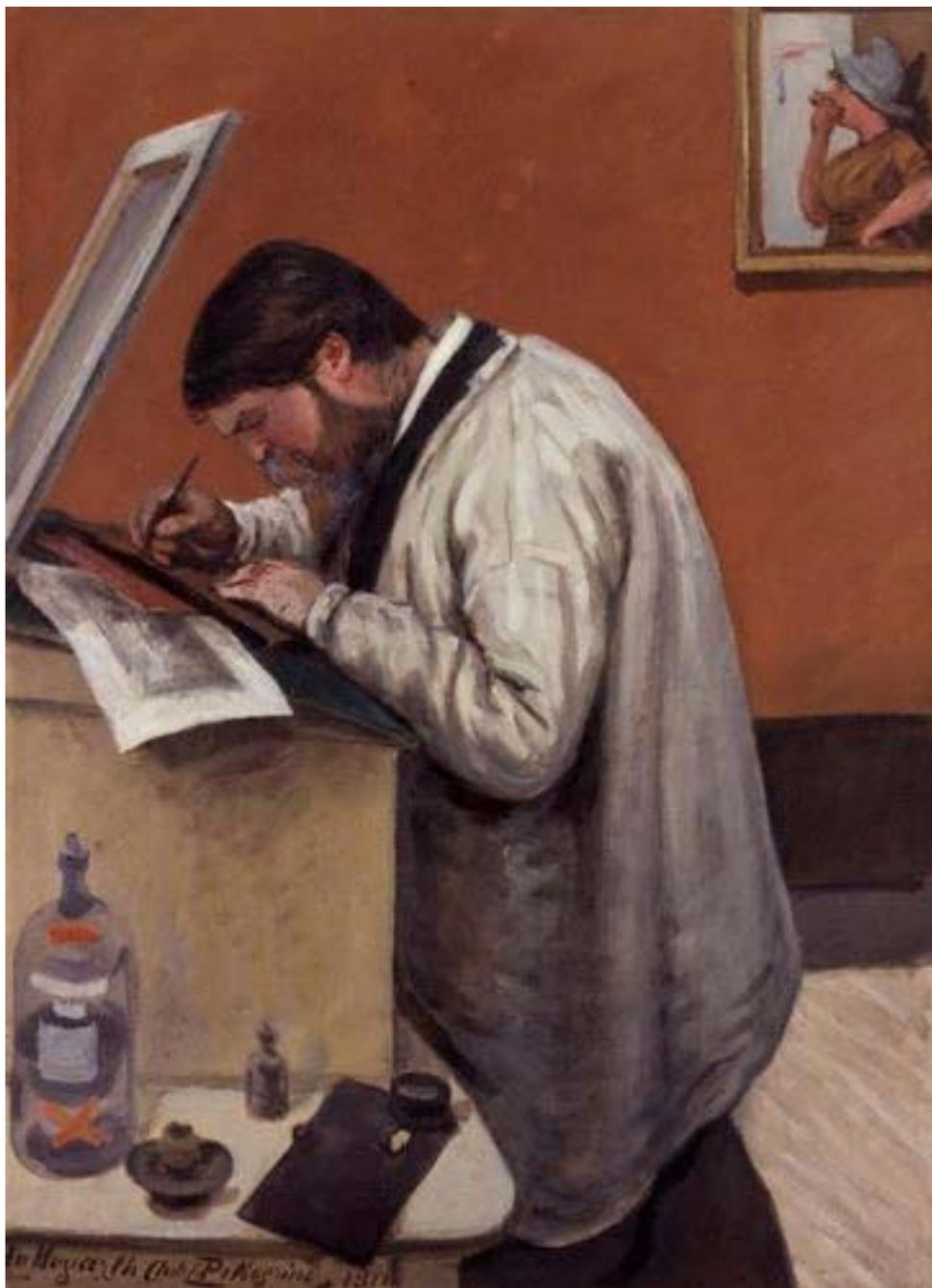


Figure A378. Carlo Pellegrini, *Self Portrait*, 1877, Watercolor, National Portrait Gallery, London.



Figure A379. Carlo Pellegrini, *Edgar Degas*, Oil on millboard?, Formerly Paul Lafond Collection, Paris. Reproduced in Alley, *Notes on Some Works*.



Figure A380. Carlo Pellegrini, *Portrait of Degas*, 1876, Formerly Manzi collection, location unknown.



Figure A381. Edgar Degas, *Bust of Manet*, c. 1864-68, Etching, 3rd state, Museo Pinacoteca Comunale, Barletta.



Figure A382. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Manet Seated*, c. 1864-68, Etching, 1st state, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa.



Figure A383. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Donna con Parasole*, c. 1872, Drypoint, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A384. Edgar Degas, *Mme De Nittis*, 1872, Oil, Portland Art Museum, Oregon.



Figure A385. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Giornata d'inverno (Ritratto della Signora De Nittis)*, 1882, Pastel, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A386. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Ritratto della Signora De Nittis*, 1883, Pastel, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.

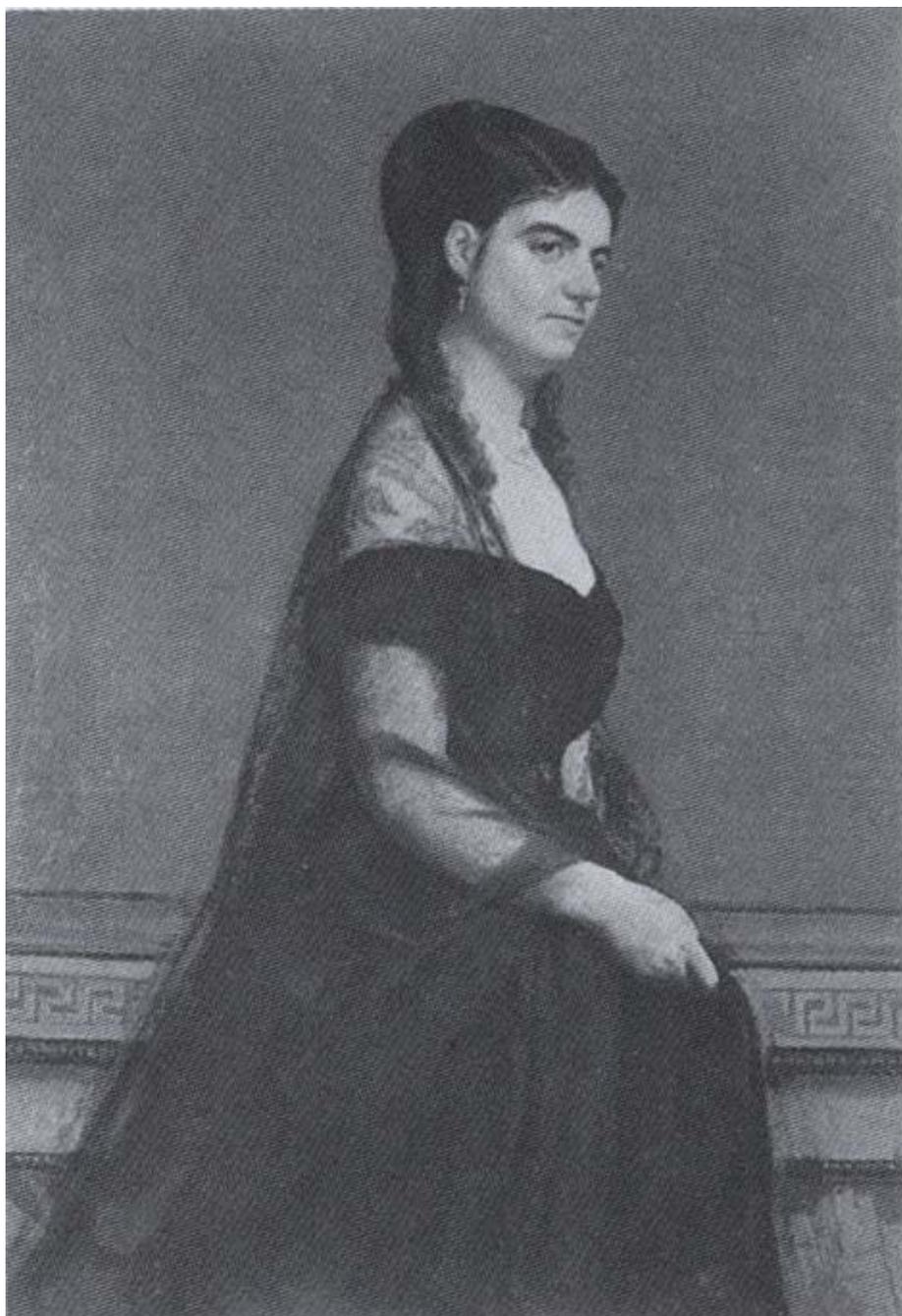


Figure A387. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Giulia Tempestini Kennedy Laurie*, 1862-70, Oil on canvas, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Palazzo Pitti.



Figure A388. Giovanni Boldini, *L'Amatore delle Arti*, 1866, Oil on canvas, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.



Figure A389. Giovanni Boldini, *The Maestro Emanuele Muzio on the Podium*, 1882, Casa di Riposo per Musicisti, Giuseppe Verdi Foundation, Milan.



Figure A390. Edgar Degas, *The Dutchess of Montejasi with her Daughters*, 1876, Private Collection.



Figure A391. Giovanni Boldini, *John Lewis Brown with his Wife and Daughter*, 1890, Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, Lisbon.



Figure A392. Giovanni Boldini, *Braccio con vaso di fiori*, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A393. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Mme René De Gas, née Musson*, 1872-73, Oil on canvas, New Orleans Museum of Art.



Figure A394. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of the Artist*, 1884, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Figure A395. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Giuseppe Verdi*, 1886, Pastel on paper, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome.

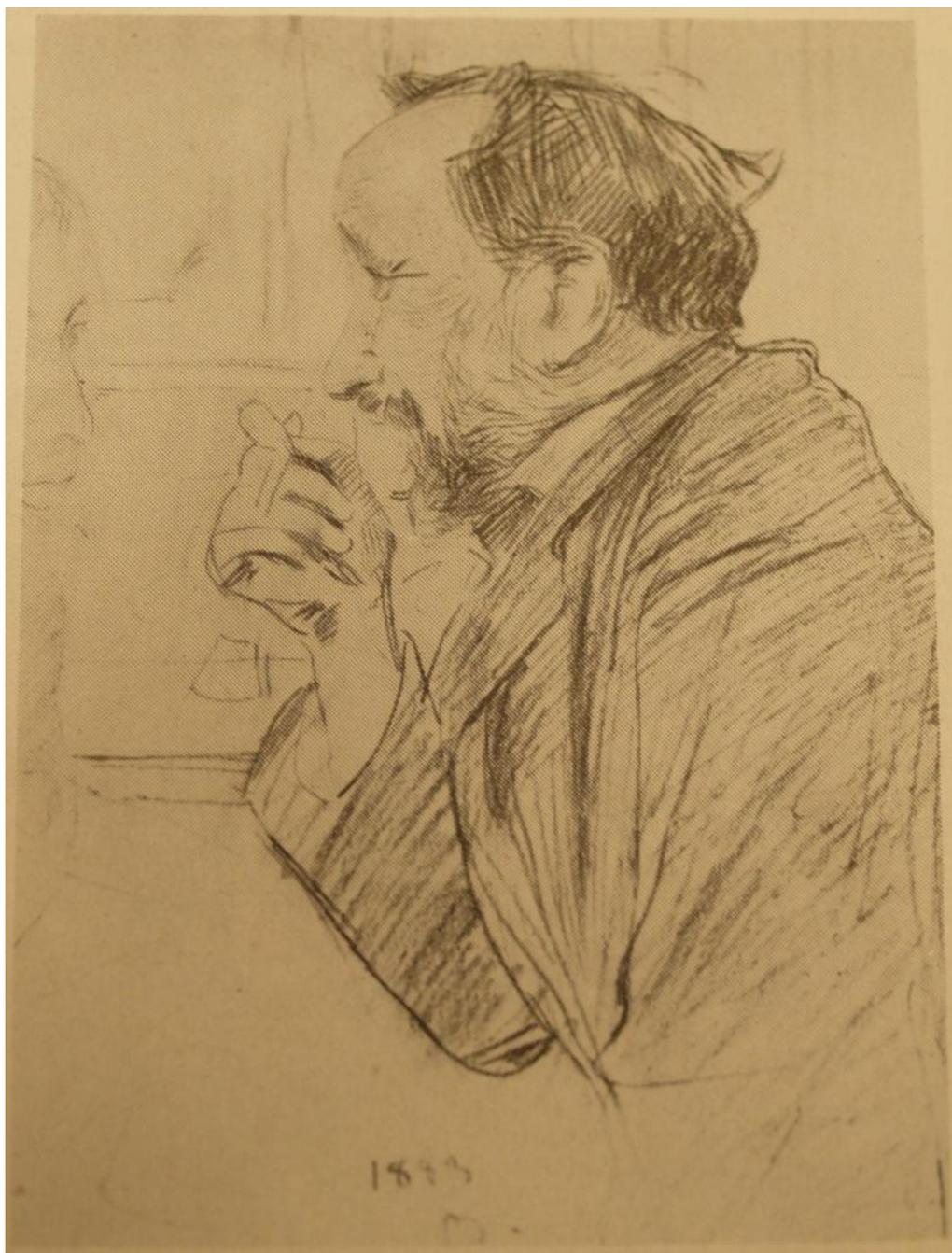


Figure A396. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Degas*, 1883, Mr and Mrs Benjamin Sonnenberg; Reproduced in *Art Journal* 1951.

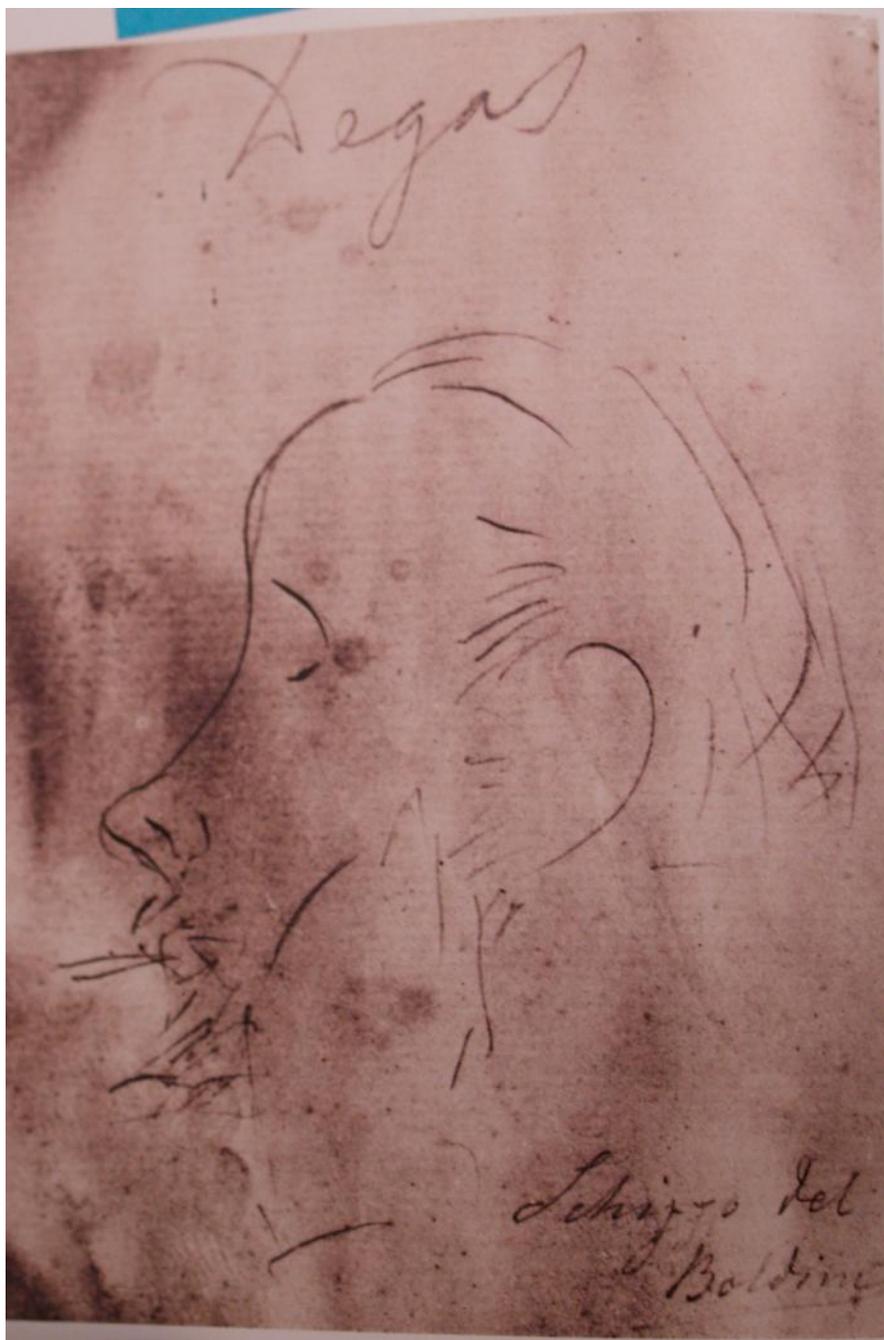


Figure A397. Giovanni Boldini, *Caricature of Edgar Degas*, Private Collection, Published in *Boldini Mon Amour*.



Figure A398. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of Edgar Degas*, c. 1895, Museo Boldini, Ferrara.

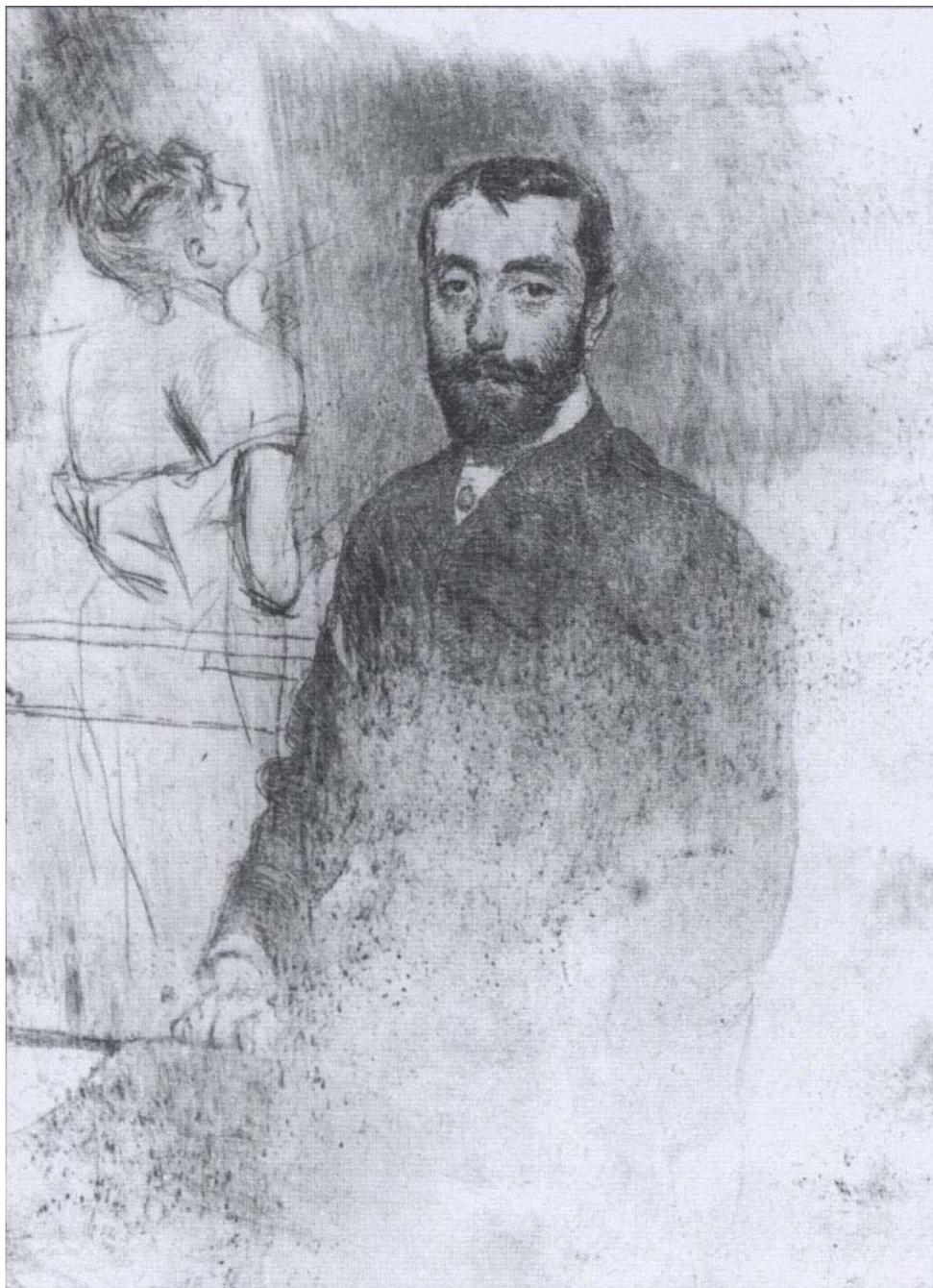


Figure A399. Giovanni Boldini, *Portrait of a Man*, Etching and drypoint, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara, Dini 1304.



Figure A400. Giovanni Boldini, *Degas e Ochoa nello studio del pittore (nell'atelier)*, c. 1887, Tempera on canvas, Location unknown.



Figure A401. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Boldini*, Pastel, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A402. Edgar Degas, *Giovanni Boldini*, Museo Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A403. Giovanni Boldini, *A Teatro*, Pastel on paper, Private Collection, published in *Boldini Mon Amour*.

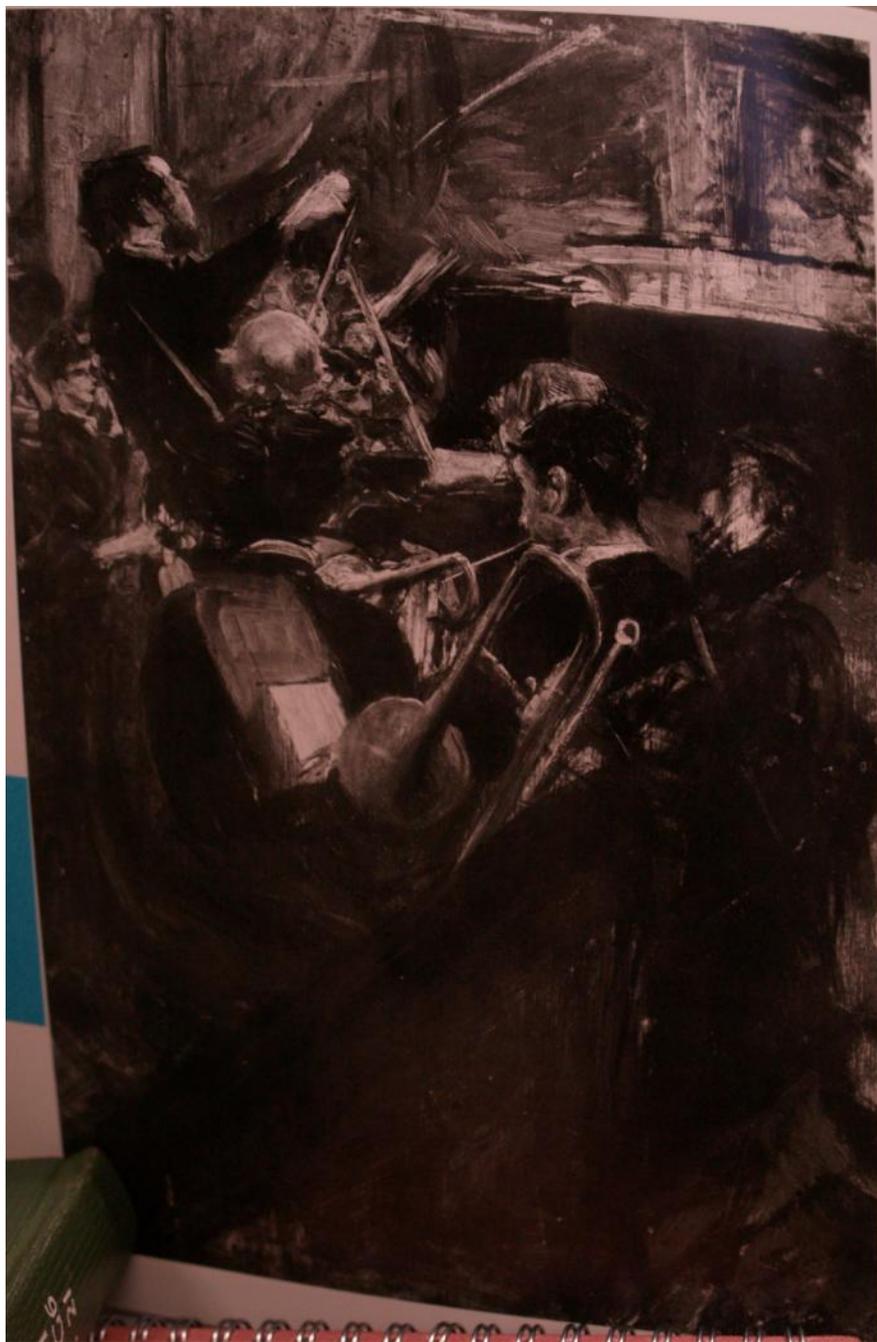


Figure A404. Giovanni Boldini, *L'Orchestra*, Doria no. 174.

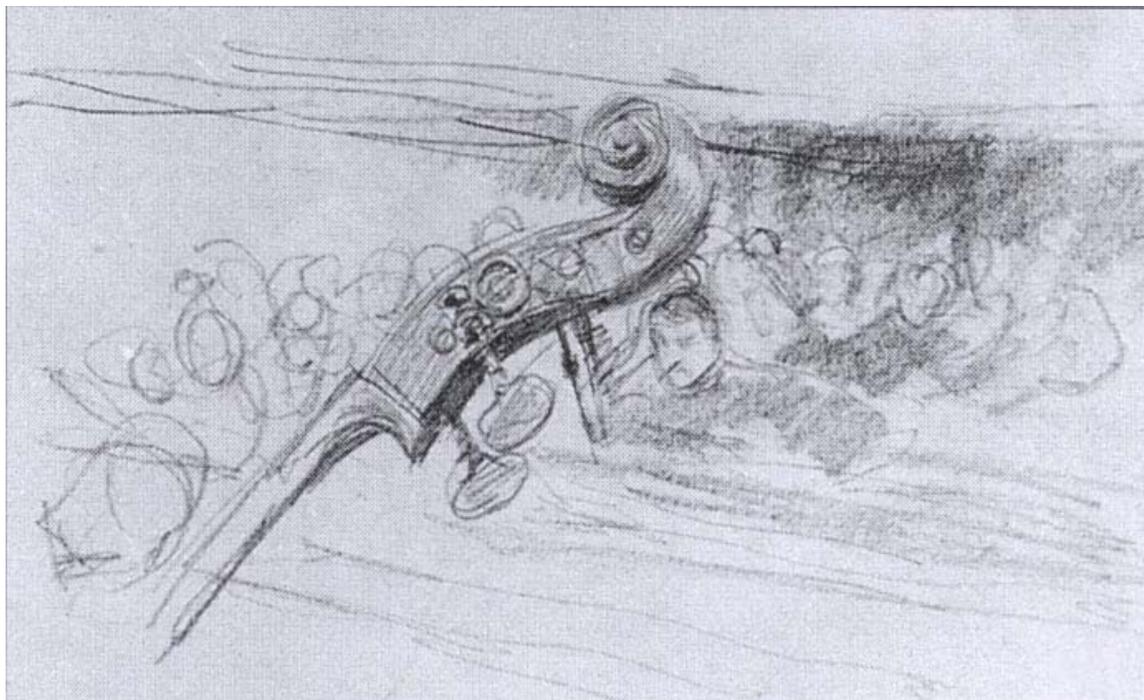


Figure A405. Giovanni Boldini, *L'Orchestra*, Pencil on paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A406. Giovanni Boldini, *Spettatori a teatro*, Pastel and pencil on paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A407. Giovanni Boldini, *L'Orchestra*, Pencil on paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A408. Giovanni Boldini, *Serata all'Opera*, Doria no. 203.



Figure A409. Federico Zandomenighi, *Dancers*, Pastel, Private collection.

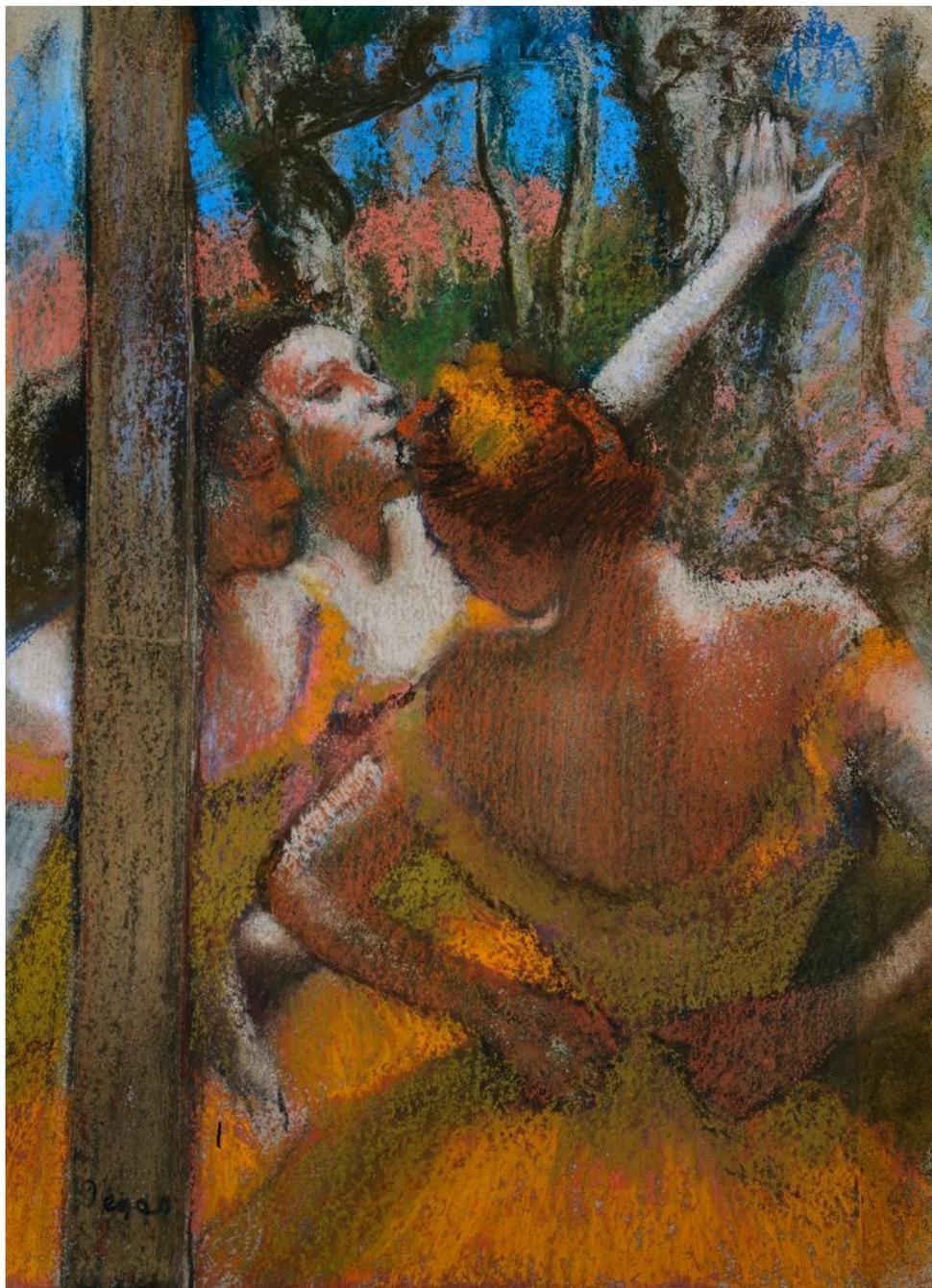


Figure A410. Edgar Degas, *Dancers*, c. 1896, Pastel, Cleveland Museum of Art.

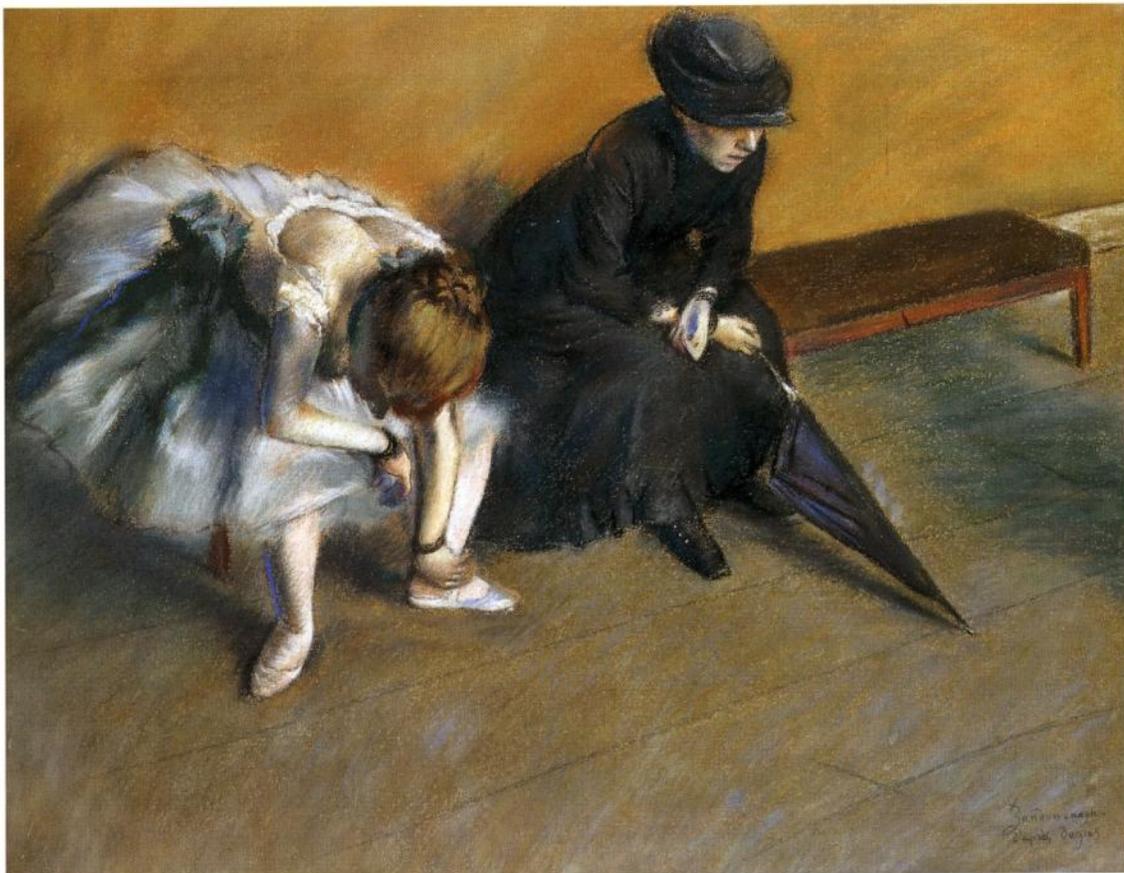


Figure A411. Federico Zandomenighi, *Waiting*, 1893-94, Durand-Ruel et Cie, Paris.



Figure A412. Giovanni Boldini, *Ballerina e schizzo di gamba*, Pencil on grid paper, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A413. Giovanni Boldini, *Dance Step*, c. 1880-90, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A414. Edgar Degas, *The Green Dancer*, 1877-79, Pastel and gouache on paper, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid.



Figure A415. Giovanni Boldini, *Ballerine in Tutù*, Doria no. 236.



Figure A416. Giovanni Boldini, *Figure di Ballerini*, Doria no. 389.



Figure A417. Giovanni Boldini, *Scena di Ballo*, Doria no. 387.



Figure A418. Giovanni Boldini, *Ballo alla Colonnade di Versailles*, Doria no. 259.



Figure A419. Giovanni Boldini, *Interno elegante con figure in movimento (Studio per l'Opera)*, Oil on panel, Museo Giovanni Boldini, Ferrara.



Figure A420. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Racetrack at Longchamp*, 1883, Oil on canvas, H. Black, Montreal.



Figure A421. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Racing at Longchamp*, 1883, Museo Pinacoteca Comunale, Barletta.



Figure A422. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Return from the Races*, 1875, Oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Figure A423. Edgar Degas, *Carriage at the Races*, 1869, Oil on canvas, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.



Figure A424. Giuseppe De Nittis, *At the Races, Auteuil*, 1881, National Gallery of Modern Art, Rome.



Figure A425. Giovanni Boldini, *Highway of Combes-La Ville*, 1873, Oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Figure A426. Giovanni Boldini, *Handsom Cabs, New York*, ca. 1897, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

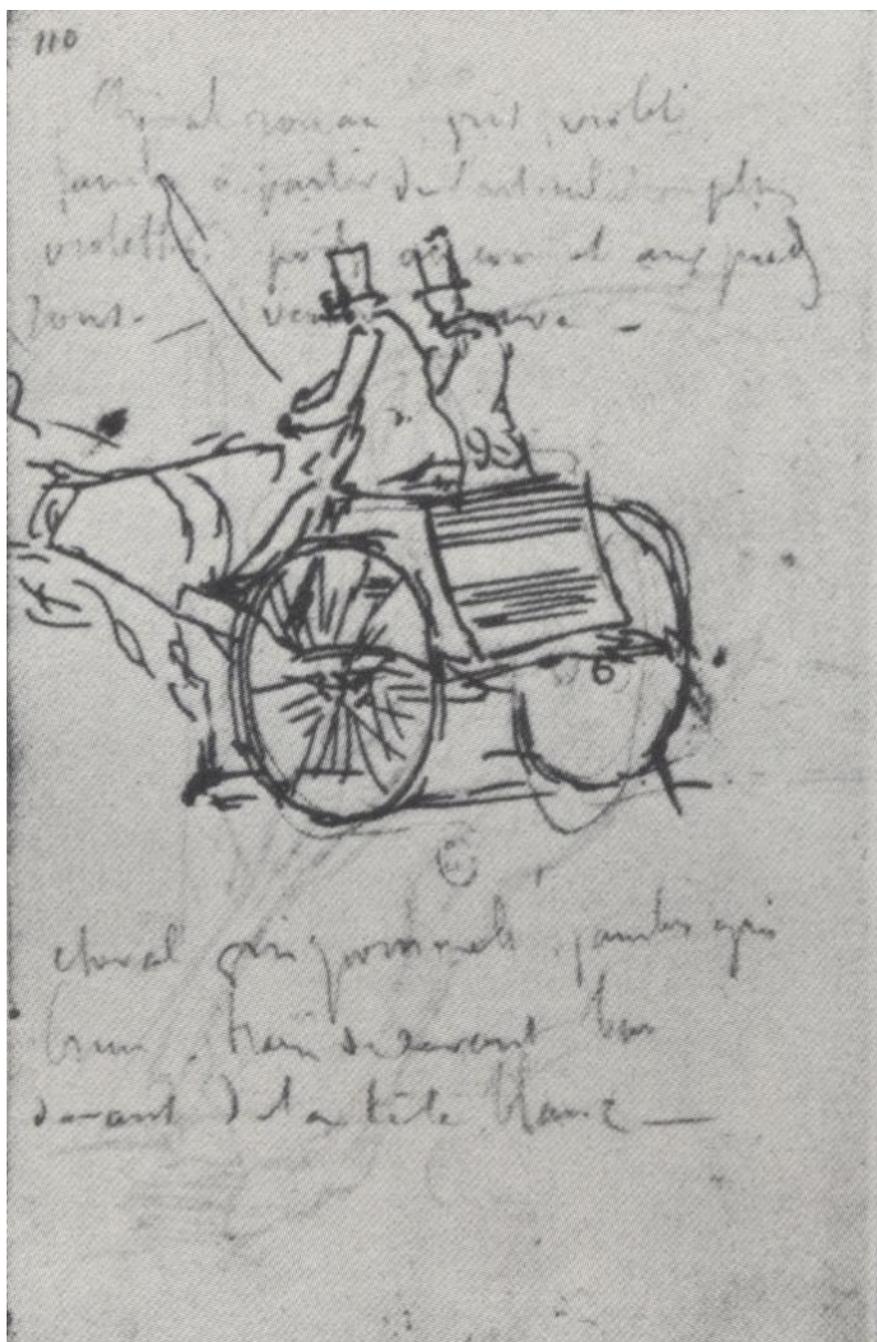


Figure A427. Edgar Degas, Nb 13 p 110, 1858-60, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

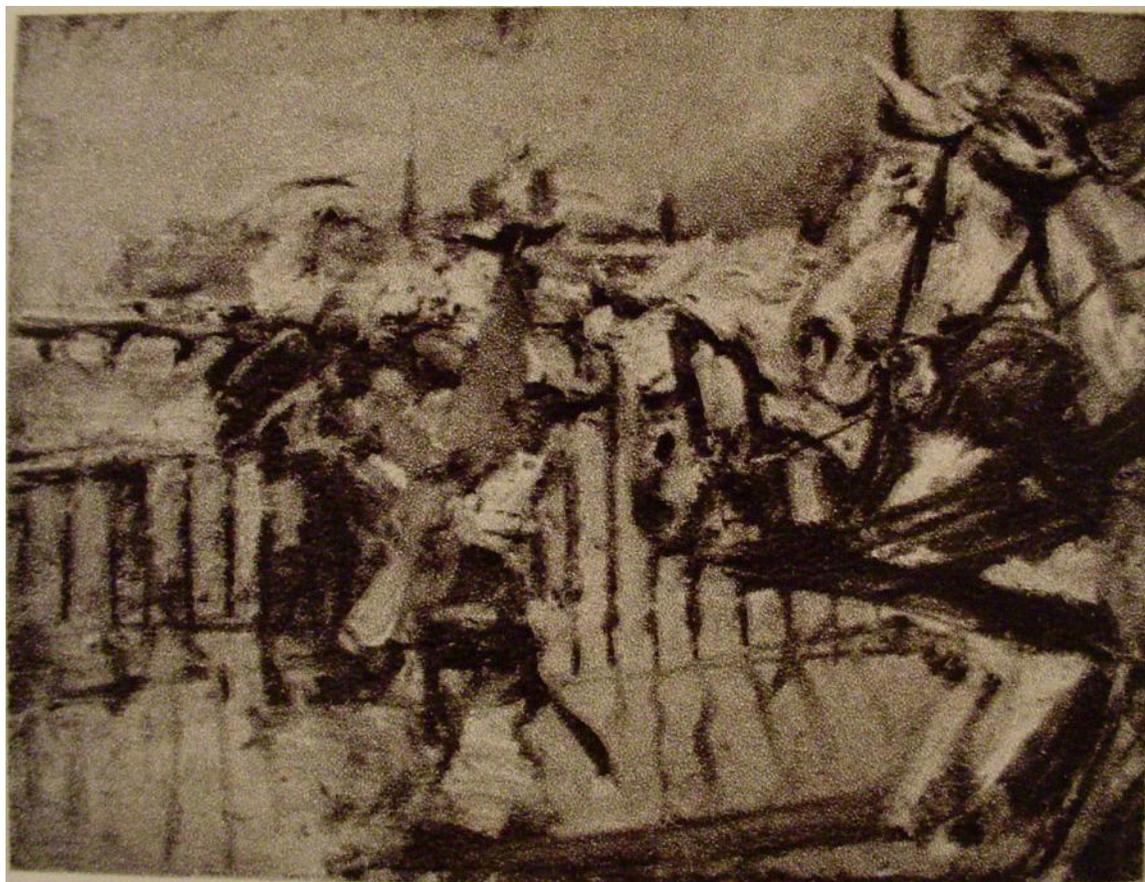


Figure A428. Giovanni Boldini, *Figure e due cavalli bianchi (Le Pont des Saints-Pères)*, 1874, Oil on board, Private collection.



Figure A429. Federico Zandomenighi, *The Tub*, c. 1886-1900, Edmondo Sacerdoti, Milan.



Figure A430. Edgar Degas, *The Tub*, 1886, Musée d'Orsay.

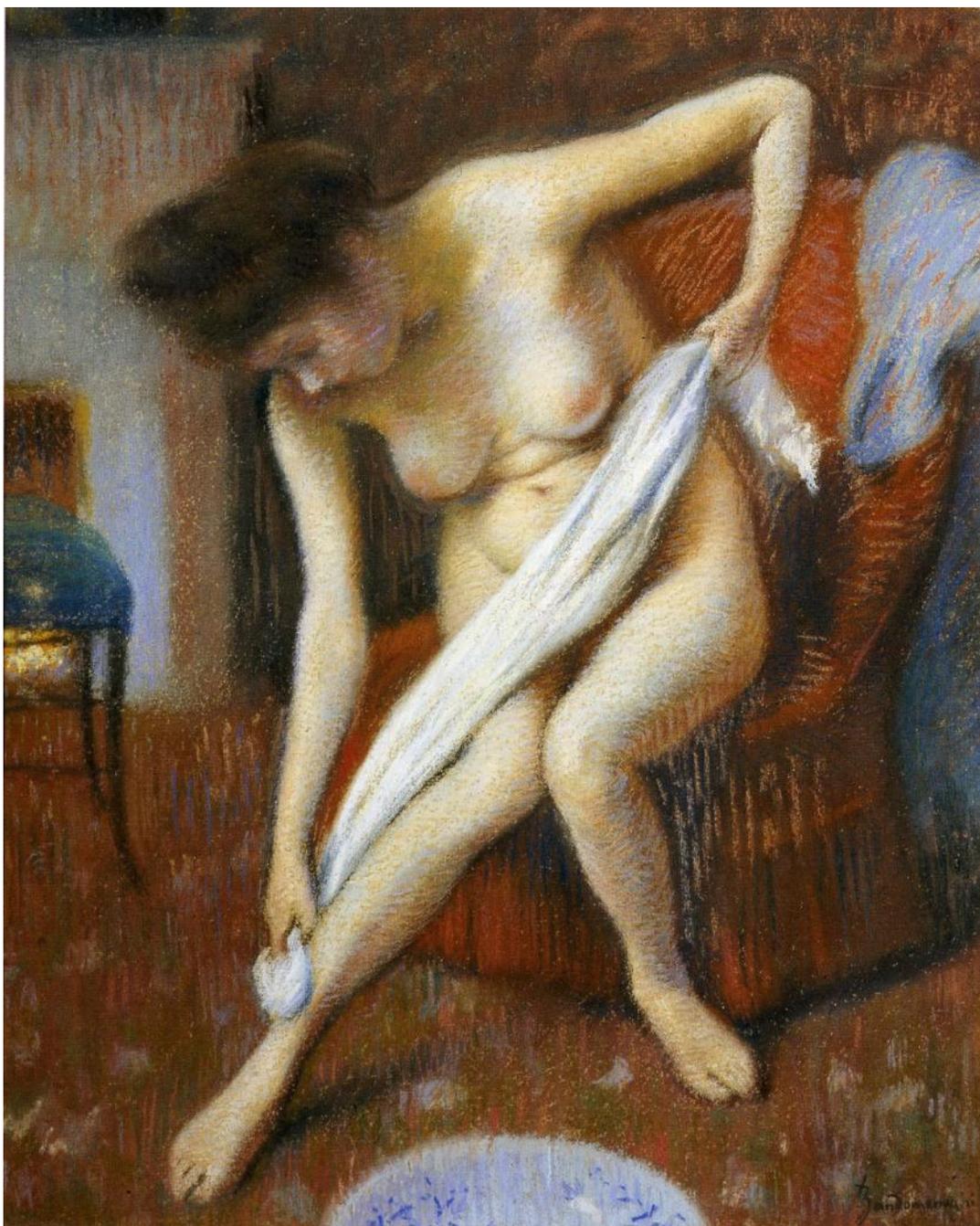


Figure A431. Federico Zandomenighi, *Woman Drying Herself*, c. 1886-98, Edmondo Sacerdoti, Milan.



Figure A432. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Studio di donna con busto*, 1884, Oil on board, Pinacoteca Giuseppe De Nittis, Barletta.



Figure A433. Telemaco Signorini, *La Toilette del mattino*, 1898, Oil on canvas, Private collection, reproduced in *Signorini una retrospettiva*.

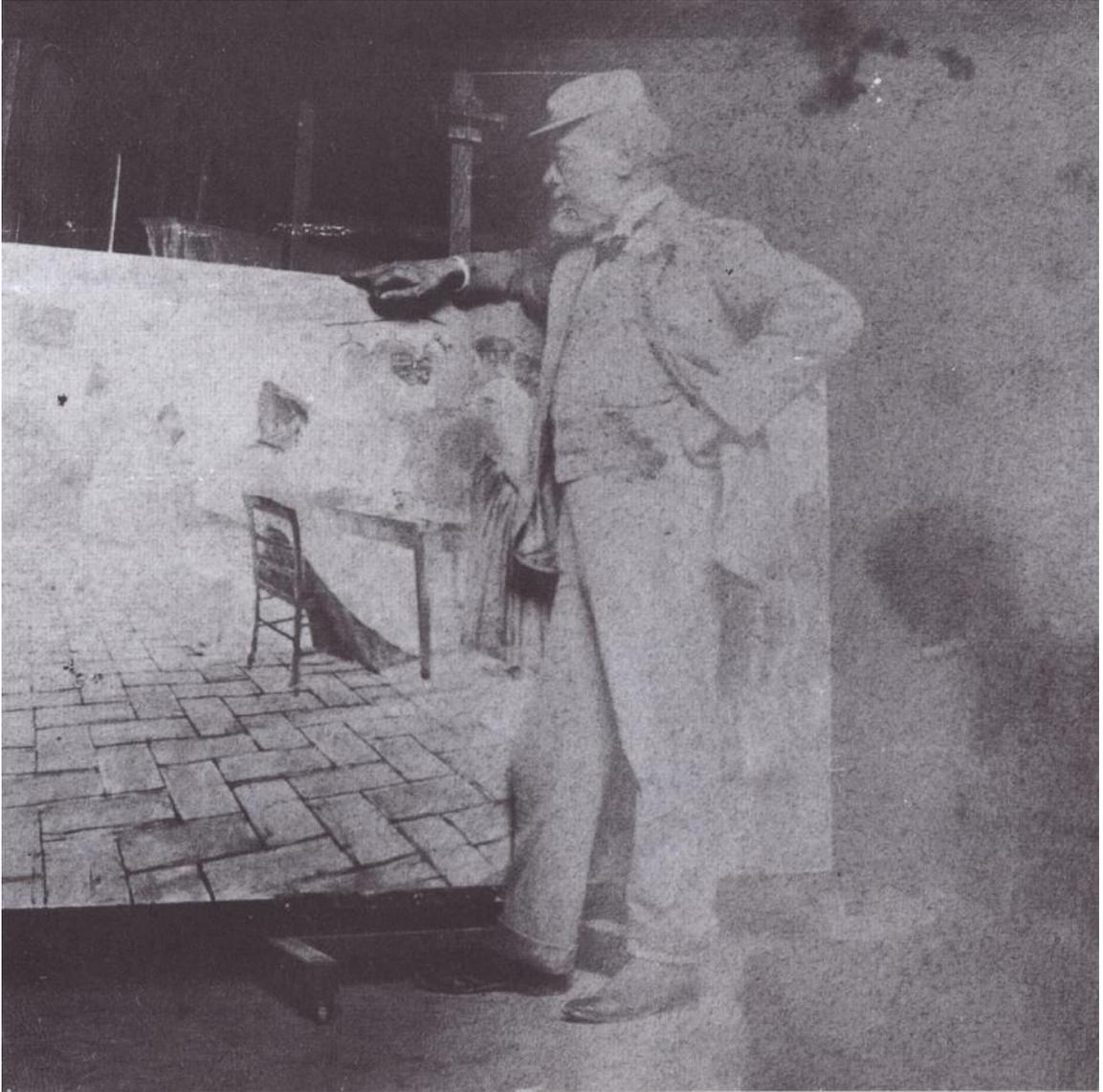


Figure A434. Signorini in front of *La Toilette del mattino*, c. 1895, Reproduced in *Signorini una retrospettiva*.



Figure A435. Giovanni Boldini, *La Contessa de Rasty Intenta ad Asciugarsi*, Doria no. 132.

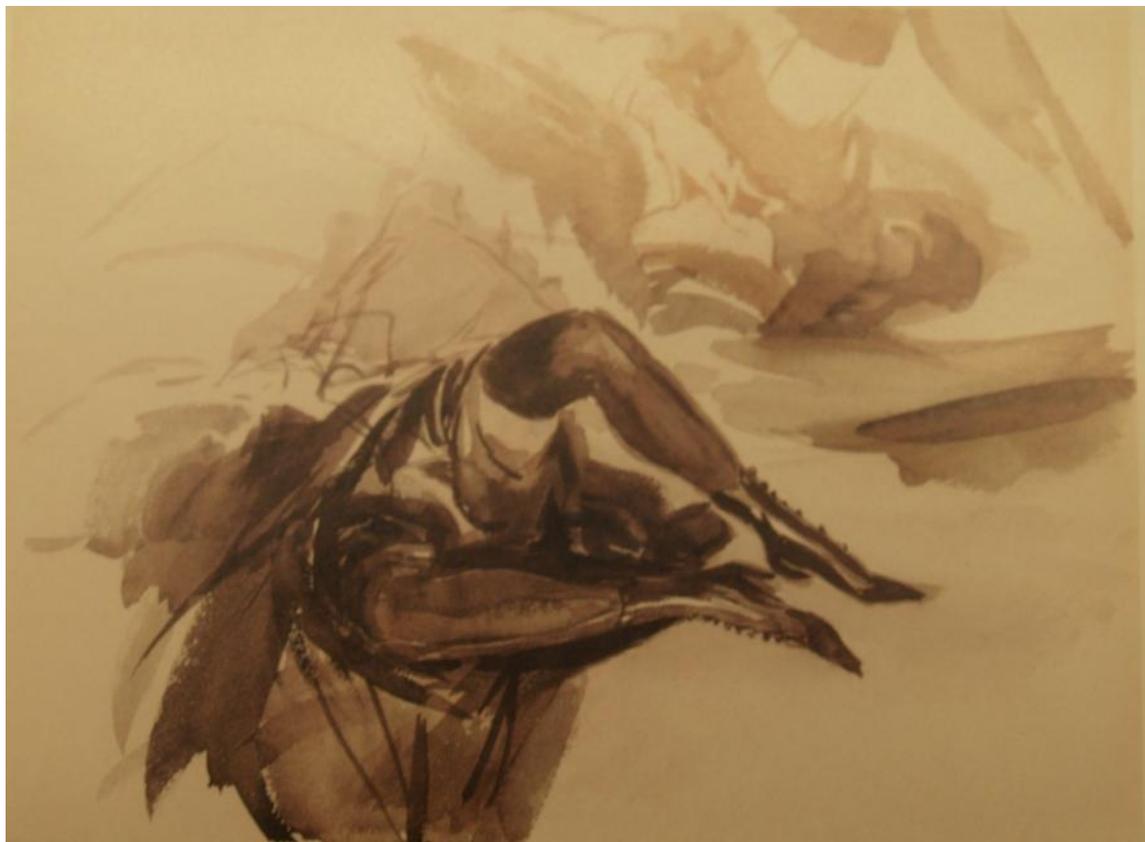


Figure A436. Giovanni Boldini, *Solitary Pleasure*, Ink wash, Location unknown, sold at Hôtel des ventes de Neuilly, 14 Dec 1999, no. 39.



Figure A437. Medardo Rosso in his Studio, n.d.. Museo Medardo Rosso, Barzio.
Portrait of Henri Rouart in bottom right corner.



Figure A438. Medardo Rosso, *Portrait of Rouart*, c. 1890, Black wax, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Milan.



Figure A439. Edgar Degas, *Henri Rouart in front of his Factory*, c. 1875, Carnegie Mellon Museum of Art.



Figure A440. Medardo Rosso, *Photograph of Impression d'omnibus*, Photograph, Reproduced in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*.



Figure A441. Edgar Degas, *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*, 1878-81, Yellow wax, hair, ribbon, linen bodice, satin shoes, muslin tutu, wood base, National Gallery of Art, Washington.



Figure A442. Honoré Daumier, *Ratapoil*, model 1851; cast 1891, Bronze, National Gallery of Art, Washington.

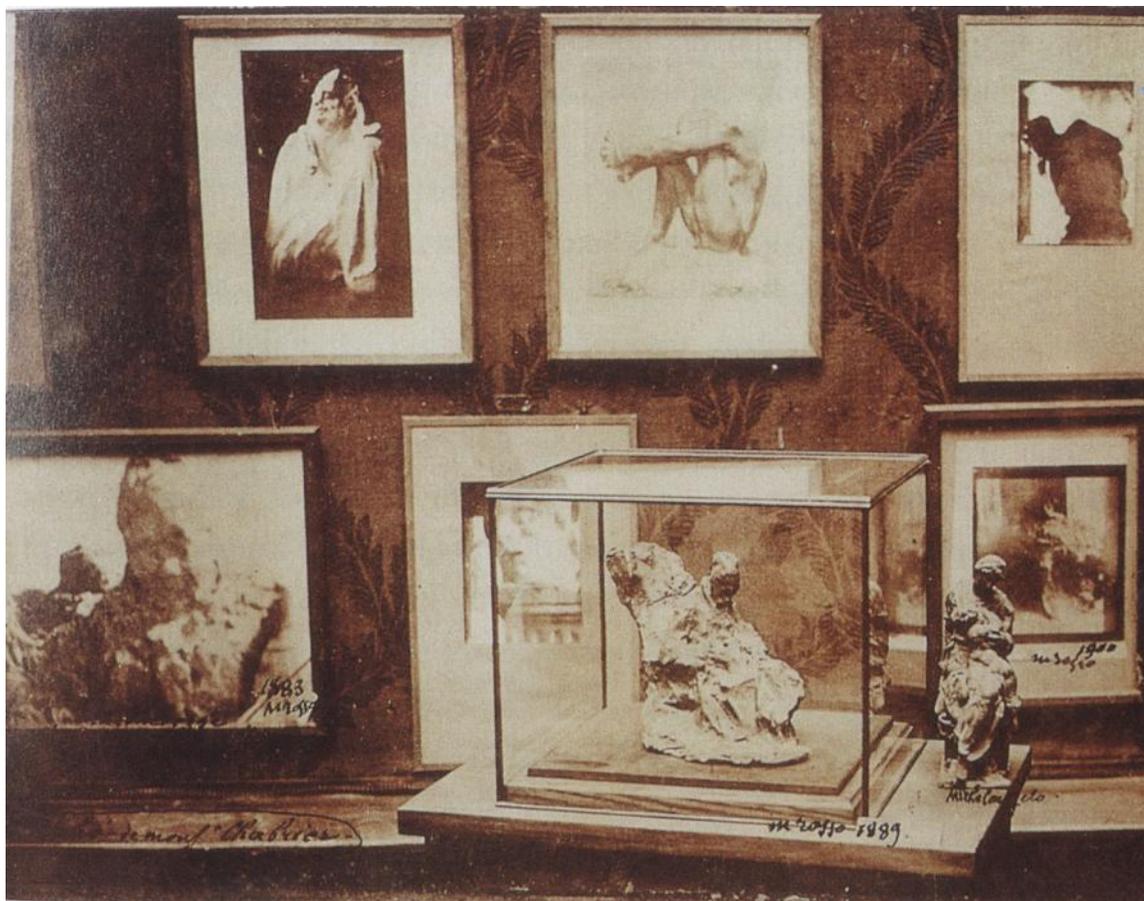


Figure A443. Medardo Rosso, *Installation at the Salon d'Automne, Paris, 1904*, Photograph, Reproduced in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*. Rosso, *Après la visite*, 1889 is in the vitrine.



Figure A444. Exhibition photo of *De tijd von Degas*, 2002, Reproduced in *Degas e gli Italiani a Parigi*.



Figure A445. Medardo Rosso, *Photographs of Bookmaker*, Photograph, Reproduced in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*.



Figure A446. Medardo Rosso, *Photographs of Bookmaker*, Photograph, Reproduced in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*.

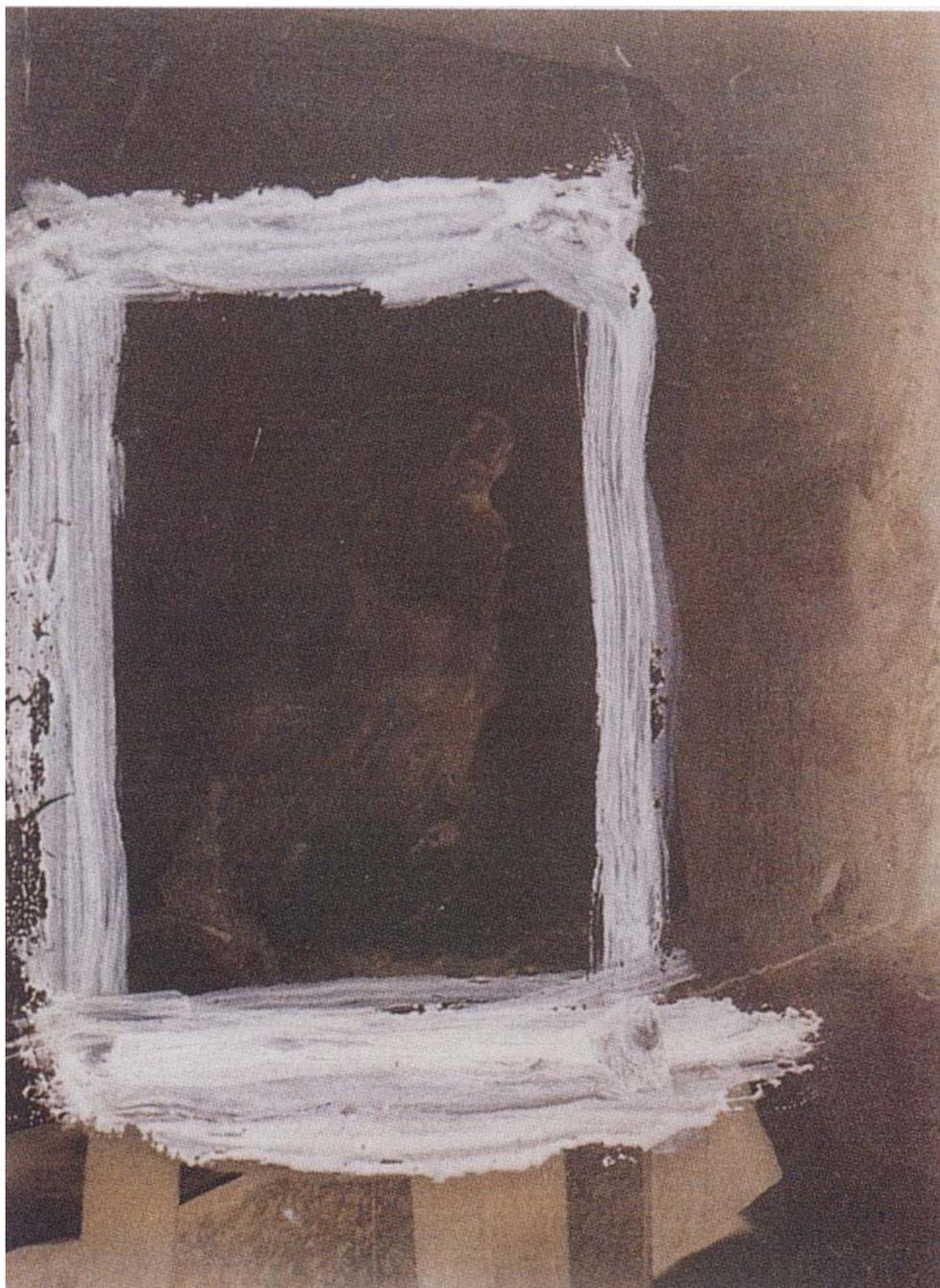


Figure A447. Medardo Rosso, *Photographs of Bookmaker*, Photograph, Reproduced in *Medardo Rosso: Second Impressions*.



Figure A448. Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Degas esce in strada nei pressi del Boulevard du Conservatoire*, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 4338.



Figure A449. Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Un viale con il via vai quotidiano*, 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 8392.



Figure A450. Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi*. Gabrielle Réju detta Réjane (al centro , nel palco di prima fila) assiste nella sala dell'Ancien Conservatoire de Musique ai concorsi del Conservatorio, 25/26 July 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 8357.



Figure A451. Giuseppe Primoli, *La 'Nanà' romana*, c. 1895, Photograph, Reproduced in *Un fotografo fin de siècle*.



Figure A452. Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. A passeggio sul Pont de la Concorde. Sullo sfondo Place de la Concorde*, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 91.



Figure A453. Giuseppe Primoli, *Longchamp*, 16 June 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 18391 (digital).



Figure A454. Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. Le tribune dell'ippodromo di Longchamp durante un concorso ippico*, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 8290.



Figure A455. Giuseppe Primoli, *Parigi. La giornata del Grand Prix de Paris all'ippodromo di Longchamp : il pubblico del Peso durante la corsa*, 16 June 1889, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 8527.



Figure A456. Giuseppe Primoli, *Roma. Tableau vivant a Villa Medici: l' Annunciazione*, c. 1890, Photograph, Fondazione Primoli, no. 9030.



Figure A457. Degas and Bartholomé at rue Victor-Massé, 1910, Reproduced in *Degas Dessin Dance*.

Also pictured on the wall are two works by Manet that were owned by Degas: *Le Jambon* and *Le Polichinelle*.



Figure A458. Edward Steichen, *Rodin - the Thinker*, 1902, Carbon print, toned, Cleveland Museum of Art.



Figure A459. Edgar Degas, *Portrait of Alphonse Hirsch*, 1875, Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archeologie, Collections Jacques Doucet.

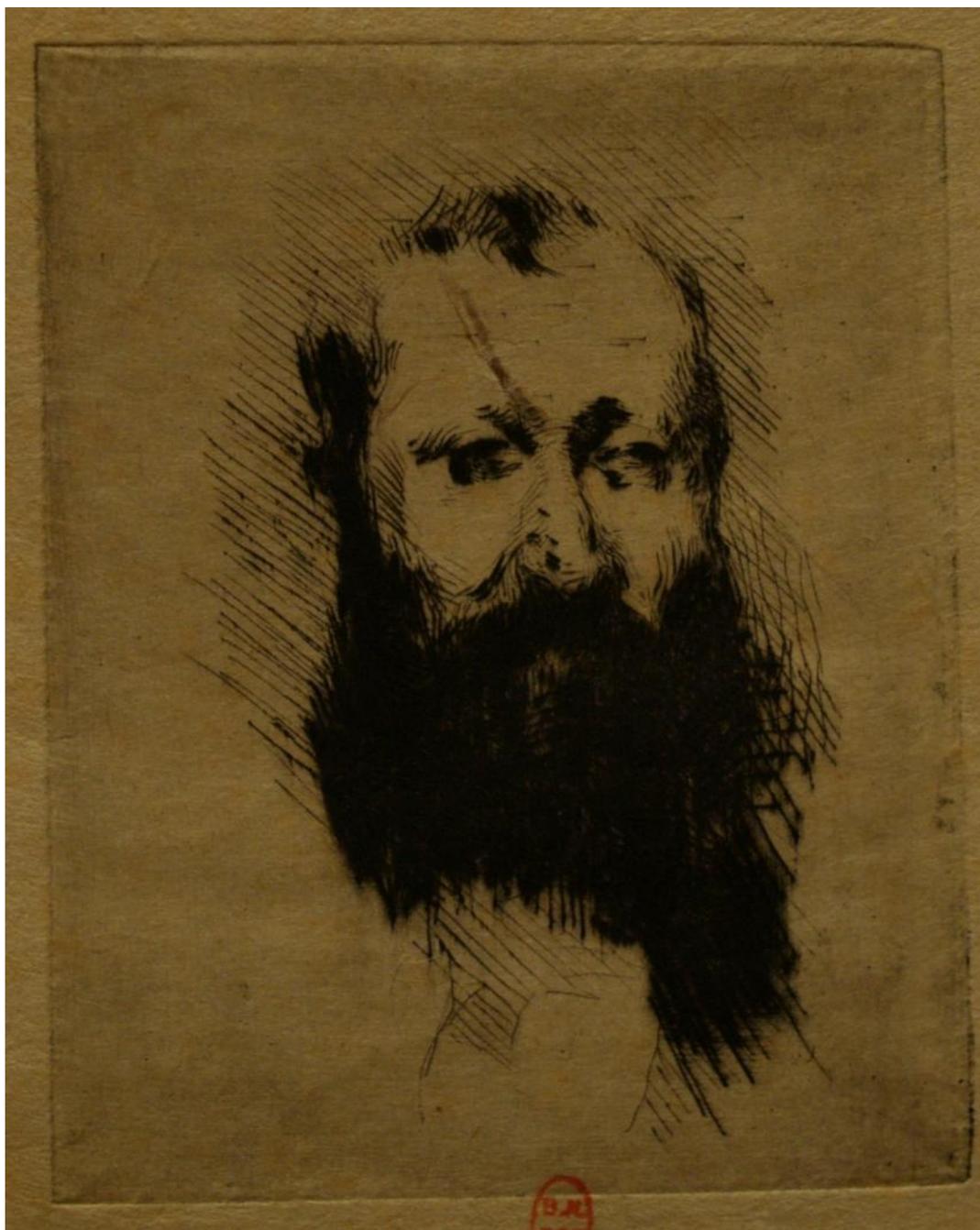


Figure A460. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Portrait of Alphonse Hirsch*, 1875, Etching, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A461. Giuseppe De Nittis, *Portrait of Degas*, 1875, Etching, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

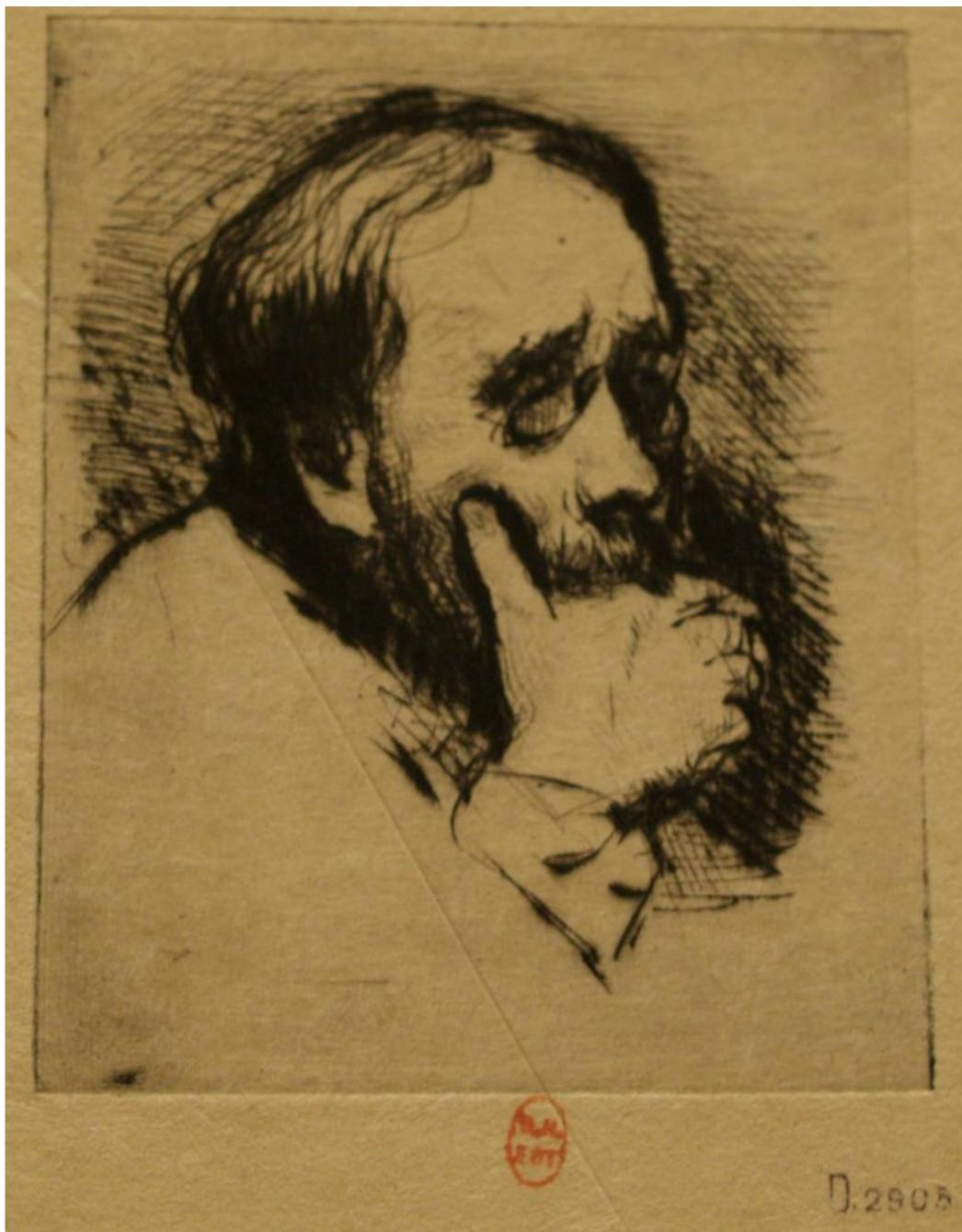


Figure A462. Marcellin Gilbert Desboutin, *Portrait of Degas*, 1875, Etching, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.



Figure A463. Antonio Mancini, *The Vow*, c. 1875, Oil on canvas, exhibited in *Antonio Mancini: 19th Century Italian Master*.



Figure A464. Antonio Mancini, *Il Saltimbanco*, 1877-78, Oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art.



Figure A465. Antonio Mancini, *Adieu Paris*, 1878, Oil on canvas, National Gallery, London.

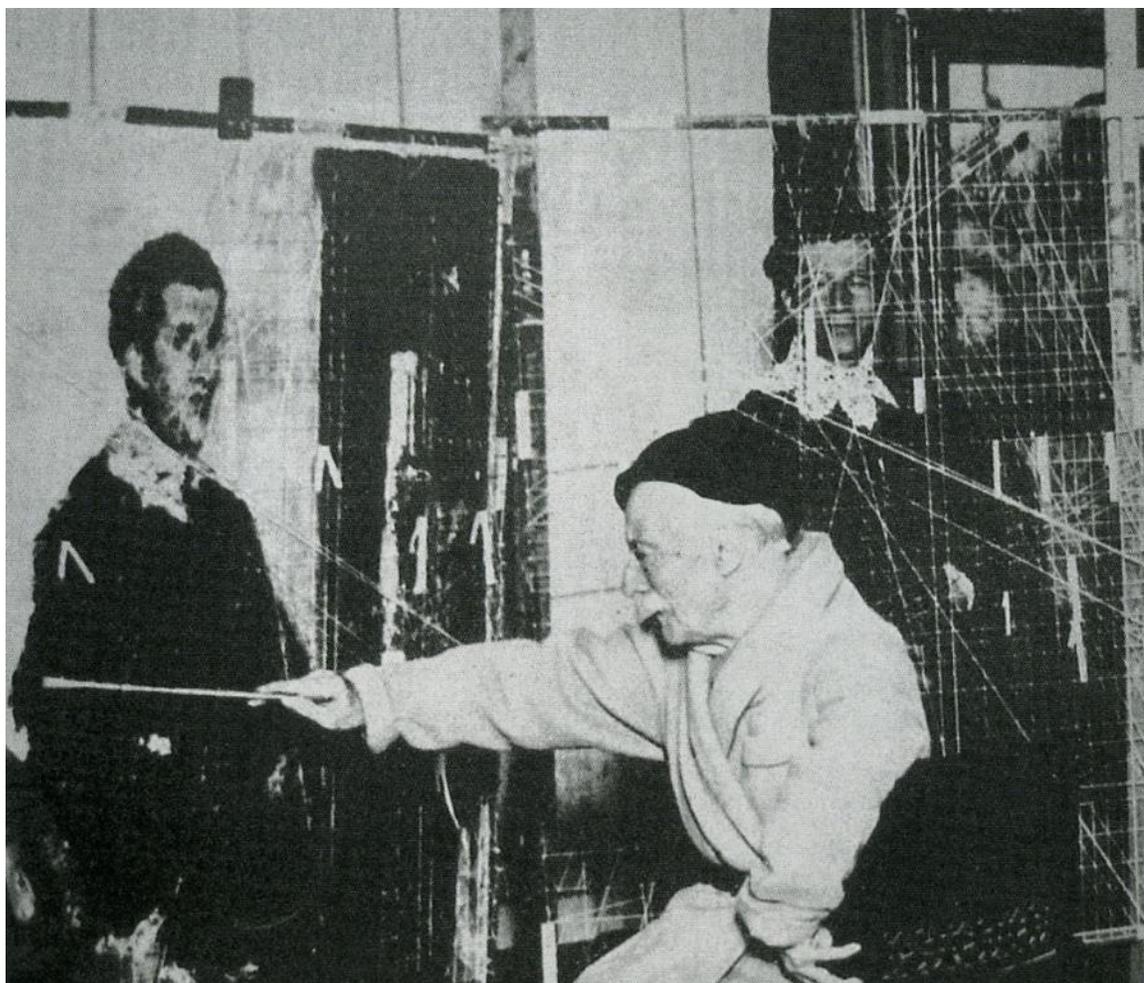


Figure A466. Mancini with Graticola, c. 1920s, Reproduced in *Antonio Mancini: Nineteenth-Century Italian Master*.



Figure A467. Antonio Mancini, *Elizabeth and Charles Hedworth Williamson with Dog*, c. 1907, Oil on canvas, Philadelphia Museum of Art.

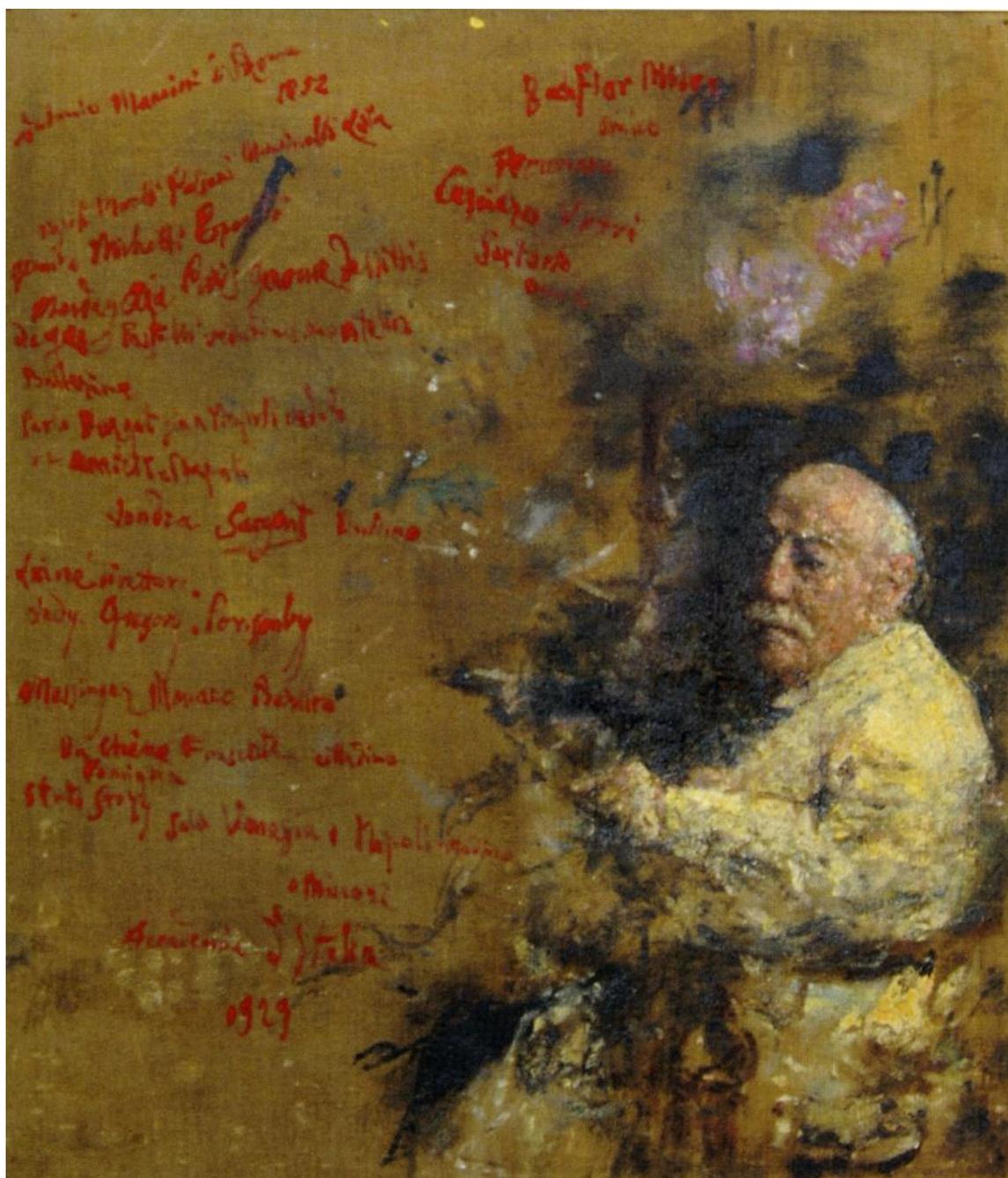


Figure A468. Antonio Mancini, *Self-Portrait with Autobiographical Script*, 1929, Oil on canvas, Pesci-Mancini Collection, Rome.

APPENDIX B
DEGAS' NOTEBOOKS

Notebook No.	Date	Owner
1	c. 1853	BNF ¹
2	1854-55	BNF
3	1855	BNF
4	1855-56; 1859-60	BNF
5	1855-56	BNF
6	1856	BNF
7	1856	Louvre
8	1856-57	Ex coll. Guérin
9	1856-57	BNF
10	1857	BNF
11	1857-58	BNF
12	1858-59	BNF
13	1858-60	BNF
14	1859-60	BNF
14A	1859-60	BNF
15	1859-60	BNF
16	1859-60	BNF
17	1859-60	Ex coll. Guérin
18	1859-64	BNF

¹ Bibliothèque Nationale Française

Notebook No.	Date	Owner
19	1860-62	BNF
20	1864-67	Ex coll. Guérin
21	1865-68	Louvre
22	1867-74	Ex coll. Guérin
23	1868-72	BNF
24	1868-73	BNF
25	1869-72	BNF
26	1875-77	BNF
27	1875-78	BNF
28	1877	Getty
29	1879-80	Ex coll. Halévy
30	1877-83	BNF
31	1878-79	BNF
32	1879-82	BNF
33	1879-82	Ex coll. Guérin
34	1880-84	BNF
35	1881-84	BNF
36	1882-1885	Metropolitan
37	1882-1886	BNF
Louvre Nb ²		Louvre RF 43125

² Not listed in Reff.

APPENDIX C
DEGAS' TRAVELS – GENERAL

Date	Destination	References
1854	Naples	Raimondi, 252
July-September 1855	Lyons	Notebook 3, <i>passim</i>
September 1855	Arles, Montpellier, Sète, Nîmes, Avignon	Notebook 4, pp. 60, 78, 80, 94, 108, 132
July-October 1856	Naples; Sorrento	Notebook 4, p. 17; Notebook 7, p. 1v, 4
October 1856-July 1857	Rome	Notebook 8, pp. 3, 36v-37, 57v, 90v
July 1857	Terracina, Fondi, Mola di Gaeta	Notebook 10, pp. 14, 16, 18
July-October 1857	Naples	Notebook 10, pp. 14, 31, 32
November 1857 - July 1858	Rome	Notebook 10, pp. 46, 50; Notebook 11, pp. 49, 50
July 1858	Viterbo, Orvieto, Perugia, Assisi, Spello, Arezzo	Notebook 11, pp. 53, 56, 66, 76, 92, 97
August 1858 - March 1859	Florence, Siena	Notebook 12, pp. 4, 27; Notebook 13, p. 41
February - March 1859	Pisa, Siena	Notebook 13, p. 142
April 1858	Pisa, Genoa, Turin	Notebook 13, pp. 41, 142
March - April 1860	Marseilles, Naples, Florence	Notebook 18, p. 107; Notebook 19, p. 1
September-October 1861	Ménil-Hubert, Haras du Pin	Lemoisne, pp. 39-40; Notebook 18, p. 161
June 1863, January 1864, January 1865	Bourg-en-Bresse	Lemoisne, p. 73; Boggs, p. 21
February 1869	Brussels	Lemoisne, p. 63
July-August 1869	Etretat, Villers-sur-Mer	Notebook 23, pp. 58-59, 149-151
March-May 1871	Ménil-Hubert	Rewald, <i>Impressionism</i> , p. 260; Notebook 23, p. 37
October 1871	London	Notebook 23, pp. 48-49
October 1872-March 1873	Liverpool, New York, New Orleans	Notebook 25, p. 166; Lemoisne, p. 81; Letters 17-32

December 1873	Turin	<i>Lettres</i> , pp. 33-38
February 1874	Torino	Dini 1979, p. 18
March - April 1875	Naples, Florence, Pisa, Genoa	Notebook 26, pp. 73, 79
September 1875	London	Notebook 26, pp. 4, 78, 98
June-July 1876	Naples	Pittaluga and Piceni, <i>De Nittis</i> , p. 339
September 1877	Ménil-Hubert	Notebook 26, p. 7
July 1882	Etretat	Notebook 35, p. A
September 1882	Geneva	Notebook 35, p. 107; Letters p. 71
August-October 1884	Ménil-Hubert, Dieppe	<i>Lettres</i> , pp. 78-95
August 1885	Paramé, St-Malo	<i>Lettres</i> , pp. 101-102
September 1885	Le Havre, Dieppe	<i>Lettres</i> , pp. 107-112
January 1886	Naples	<i>Letters</i> , pp. 111-117
1889	Madrid, Tangiers Cádiz, Granada	
September-October 1890	Burgandy	<i>Letters</i> , pp. 152-168
August 1892	Ménil-Hubert, Carpentras, Grenoble, Chambery, Geneva, Saint-James	<i>Letters</i> , p. 181
August 1893	Interlaken	<i>Letters</i> , p. 186
August 1895	Mont-Dore	<i>Letters</i> , p. 194
August 1897	Mont-Dore	<i>Letters</i> , p. 199-202

August 1898	Saint-Valéry-sur Somme	<i>Letters</i> , p. 210-11
August 1904	Ménil-Hubert	<i>Letters</i> , p. 220
September 1904	Pontarlier, Epinal, Gerardmer, La Schluchte (sic), Alsace, Munster Turkeim (sic), Colmar, Belfort, Besançon, Ornans, Nancy	<i>Letters</i> , p. 222-223
October-December 1906	Naples	<i>Letters</i> , p. 225

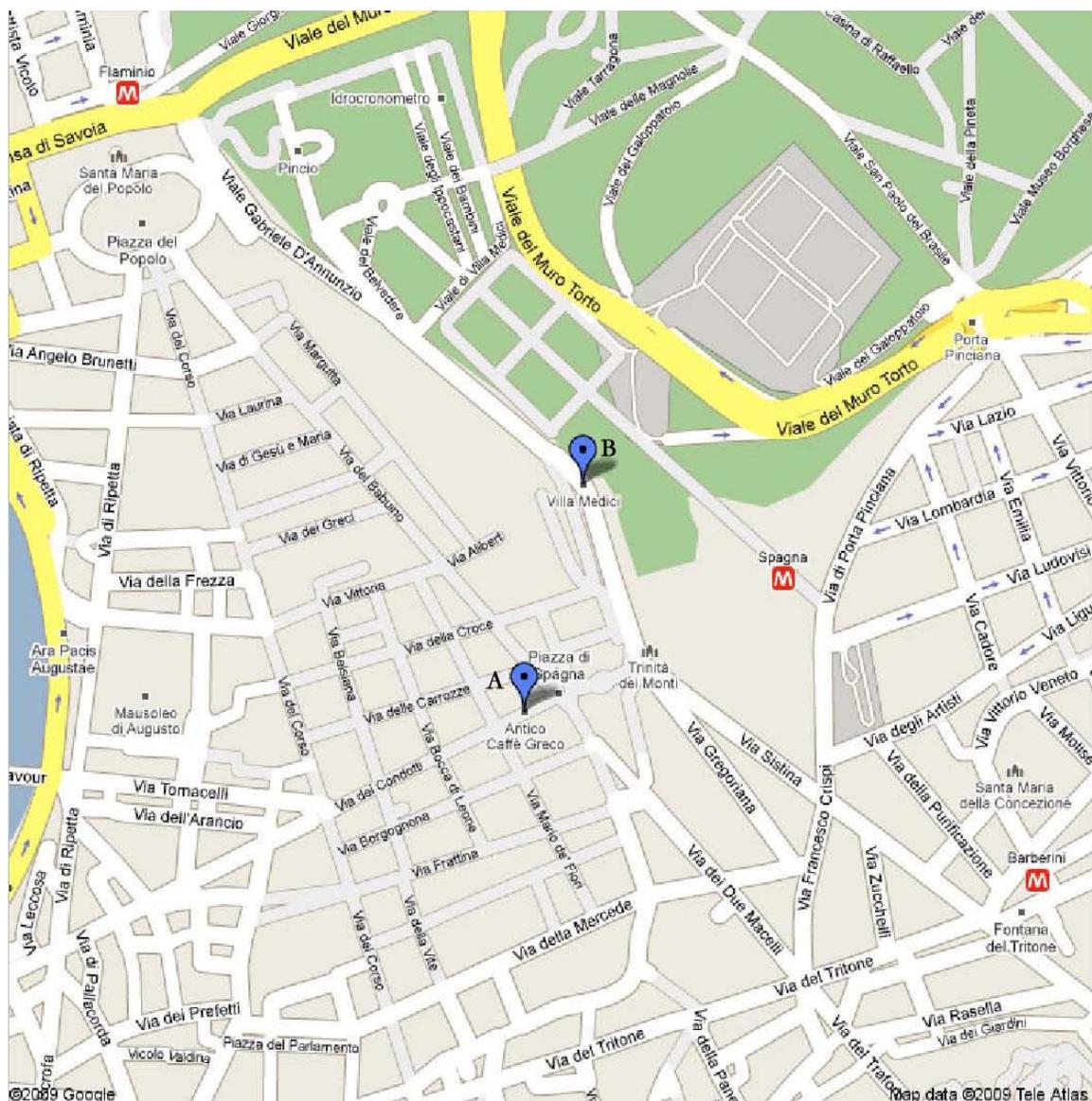
APPENDIX D
DEGAS TRAVELS – ITALY

Date	Destination	References
1854	Naples	Raimondi, 252
July-October 1856	Naples	Notebook 4, p. 17; Notebook 7, p. 1v
October 1856-July 1857	Rome	Notebook 8, pp. 3, 36v-37, 57v, 90v
July 1857	Terracina, Fondi, Mola di Gaeta	Notebook 10, pp. 14, 16, 18
July-October 1857	Naples	Notebook 10, pp. 14, 31, 32
November 1857 - July 1858	Rome	Notebook 10, pp. 46, 50; Notebook 11, pp. 49, 50
July 1858	Viterbo, Orvieto, Perugia, Assisi, Spello, Arezzo, Pomposa	Notebook 11, pp. 53, 56, 66, 76, 92, 97; Fevre 43
August 1858 - March 1859	Florence, Siena	Notebook 12, pp. 4, 27; Notebook 13, p. 41
February - March 1859	Pisa, Siena	Notebook 13, p. 142
April 1858	Pisa, Genoa, Turin	Notebook 13, pp. 41, 142
March - April 1860	Marseilles, Naples, Florence	Notebook 18, p. 107; Notebook 19, p. 1
December 1873	Turin	<i>Lettres</i> , pp. 31-33
February 1874	Torino	Dini 1979, p 18
March - April 1875	Naples, Florence, Pisa, Genoa	Notebook 26, pp. 73, 79
June-July 1876	Naples	Pittaluga and Piceni, <i>De Nittis</i> , p. 339
January 1886	Naples	<i>Lettres</i> , pp. 112-119
October-December 1906	Naples	<i>Lettres</i> , p. 225

APPENDIX E
PARTIAL LIST OF THE DEMIDOFF COLLECTION

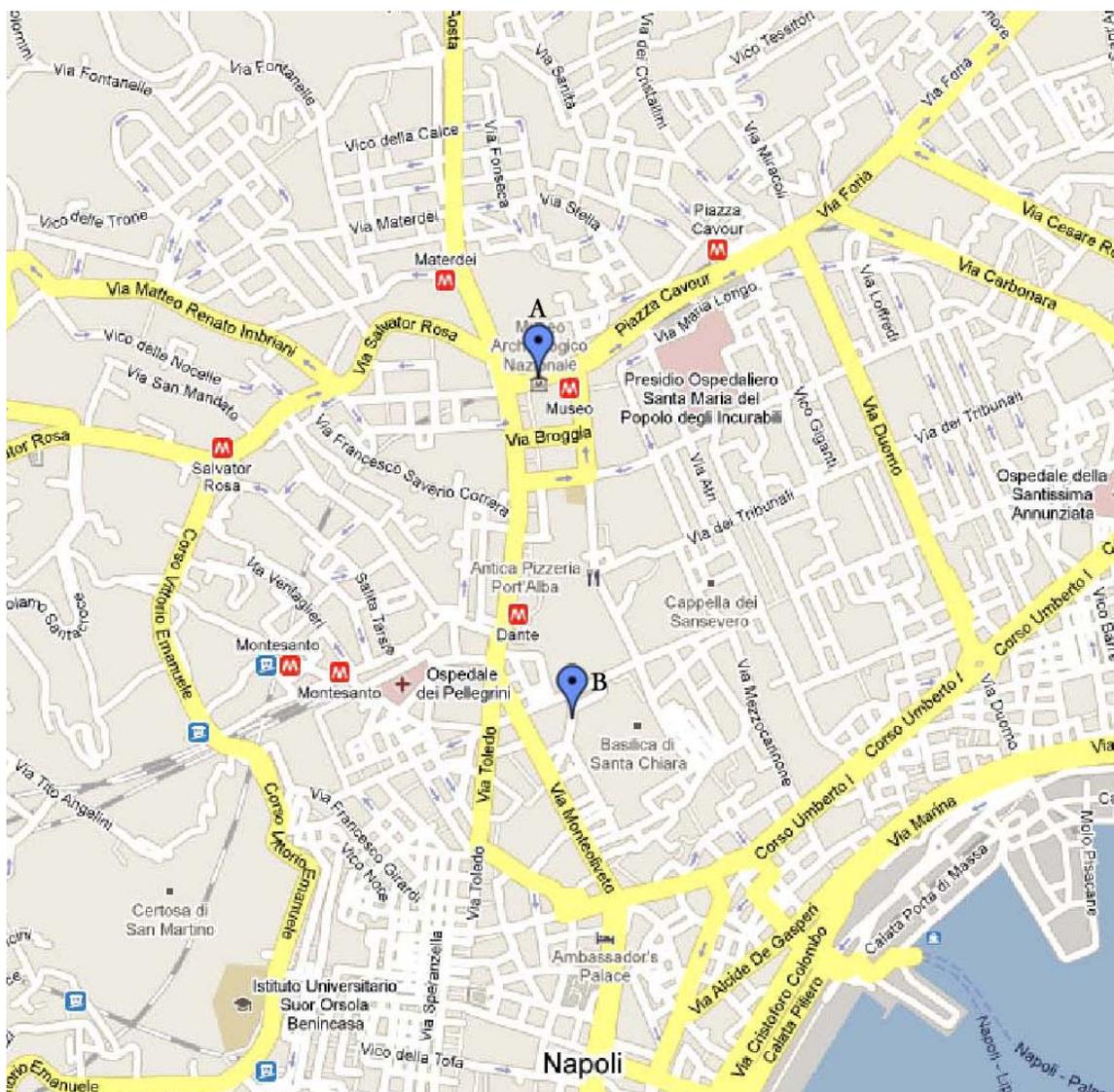
- Delacroix, *Portrait of Demidoff and Conte De Mornay*, 1833 (destroyed in 1914 reproduced in *Aria di Parigi*)
- Delacroix, *Colombo al convent della rabida*, 1838, National Gallery, Washington
- Delacroix, *Colombo reduce dall'America davanti ai regnati di Spagna*, 1839, Toledo Museum of Art
- Delaroche, *Decaptiation of Jane Gray*
- Delaroche, *Cromwell contemplating the ody of Carlo I*
- Granet, *Morte di Poussin*, Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet
- Gudin, *Naufragio*, 1837
- L. Robert, *Donna di Sezze*, 1831, Museo di la Chaux de Fonds
- Bartolini, *Elisa Napoleona Bachiocchi fanciulla*, 1809, Musée des Beaux Arts, Paris
- Bezzuoli, *Ritrovamento del cadaver di Manfredi dopo la battaglia di Benevento*, Muso del Sannito
- Scheffer, *Ritratto della principessa Matilde Bonaparte*, 1844, GModerna, Palazzo Pitti
- Bartolini, *Tavola degli Amori*, 1845, Metropolitan Museum of Art
- H. Powers, *Schiava greca*, Yale University Art Gallery
- Pradier, *Satiro e Baccante*, Musée d'Orsay
- Delacroix, *fantasia in Marocco*, Francoforte
- Delacroix, *Guado in Marocco*, Louvre
- Decamps, *Donna algerina*, c. 1840, London, Wallace Collection
- Schieffer, *Paolo e Francesca*, Wallace Collection
- Ingres, *Antioco e Stratonice*, Chantilly, Musée Condé
- Flandrin, *Rêverie*, 1848, Mantes, Musée des Beaux Arts

APPENDIX F DEGAS' ROME



	Address	Description
A	Via dei Condotti, 86	Caffè Greco
B	Viale Trinità dei Monti, 1	Académie de France à Rome - Villa Medici

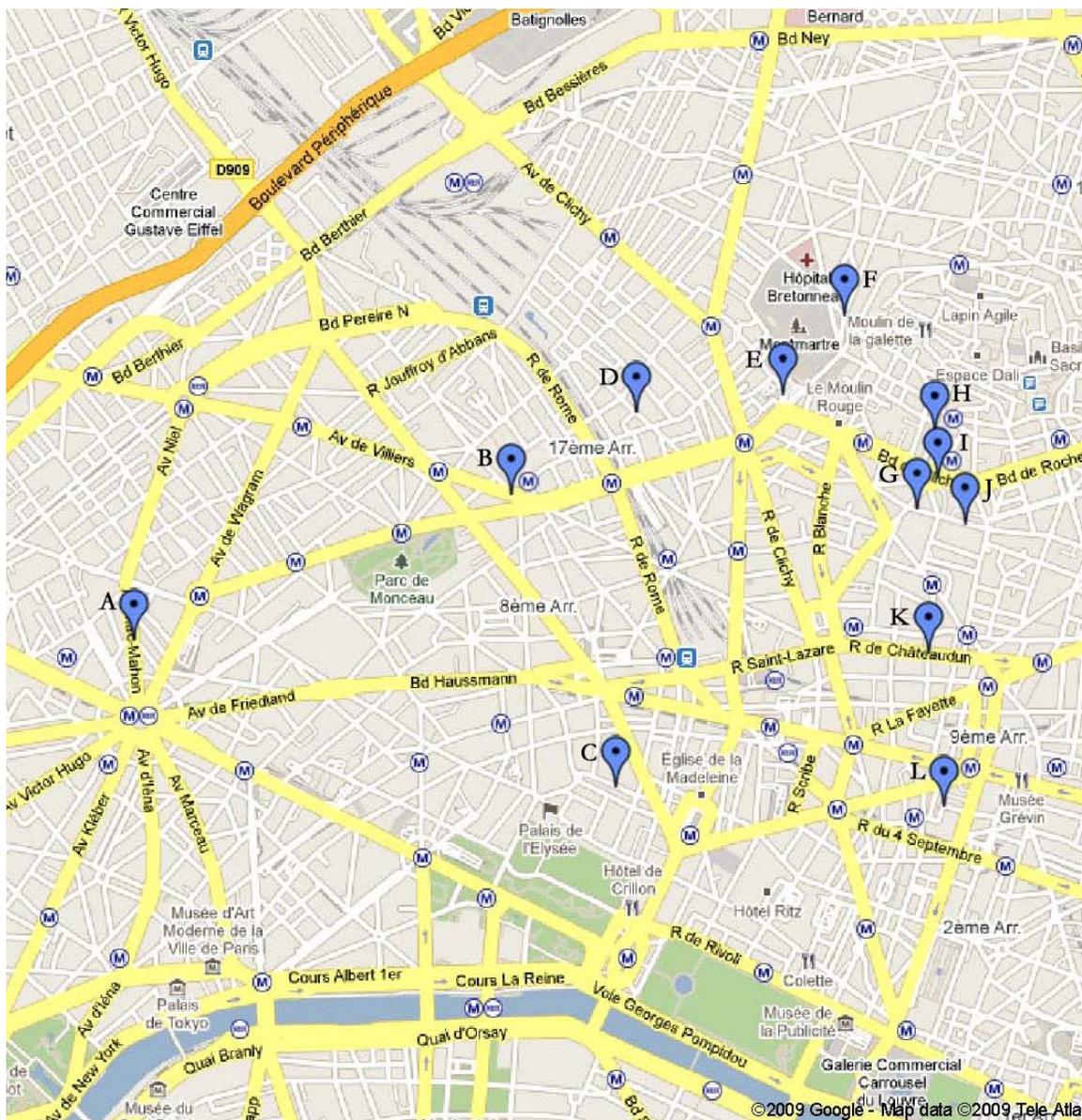
APPENDIX G
DEGAS' NAPLES



	Address	Description
A	Piazza Museo Nazionale, 19	Museo Archeologico Nazionale (Museo Borbonico/Accademia degli Belli Arti di Napoli in Degas' time)
B	Calata Trinità Maggiore, 53	Palazzo Pignatelli (home of Hilaire De Gas)

	Address	Description
A	Piazza dell'Indipendenza, 12	Home of Laura and Gennaro Bellelli
B	Piazzale degli Uffizi	Uffizi
C	Via Camillo Cavour, 21 (old old via Largo)	Caffè Michelangiolo
D	Via Ricasoli, 66 rosso	Galleria dell'Accademia di Belli Arti

APPENDIX I
DEGAS' PARIS

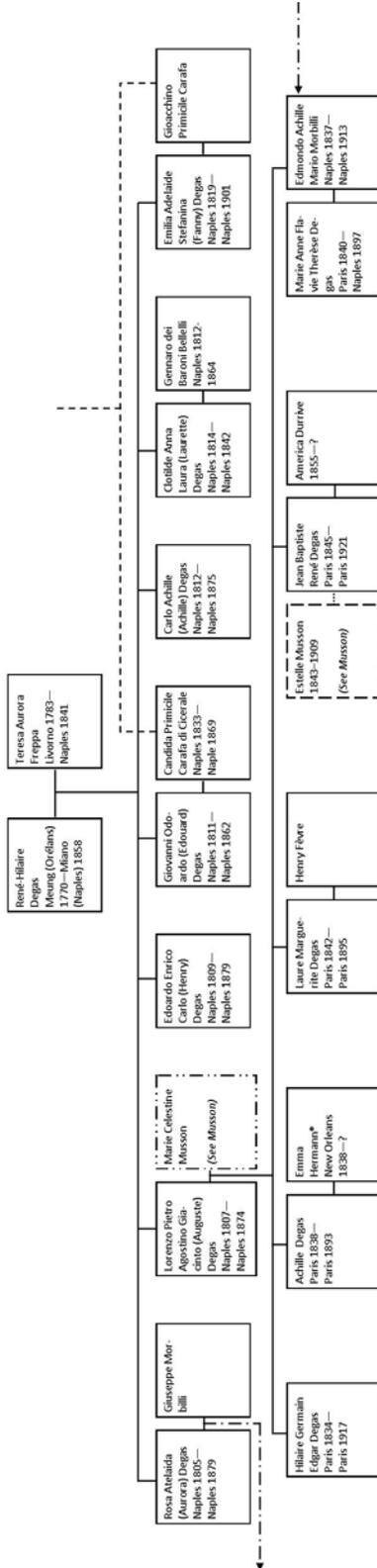


	Address	Description
A	Avenue Mac-Mahon	Santario (restaurant)
B	3 Avenue de Villiers	De Nittis' home (location rebuilt in 1898)
C	15 Rue de la Ville- l'Evêque	Galerie Manzi-Joyant
D	Rue des Batignolles	Cafe Guerbois
E	Rue Forest	Manzi's studio
F	Rue Tourlaque	Zandomenighi's second studio; same building as Toulouse- Lautrec
G	37 Rue Victor Massé	Degas studio 1897-1917
H	25 Rue André Antoine	Zandomenighi's first studio
I	Place Pigalle	Cafe Nouvelle-Athenes
J	13 Rue Victor Massé	Degas' studio: 1859-1897
K	Rue Saint-Georges	Street where Degas was born/family lived
L	Rue Favart	Chez la mere Morel (restaurant)

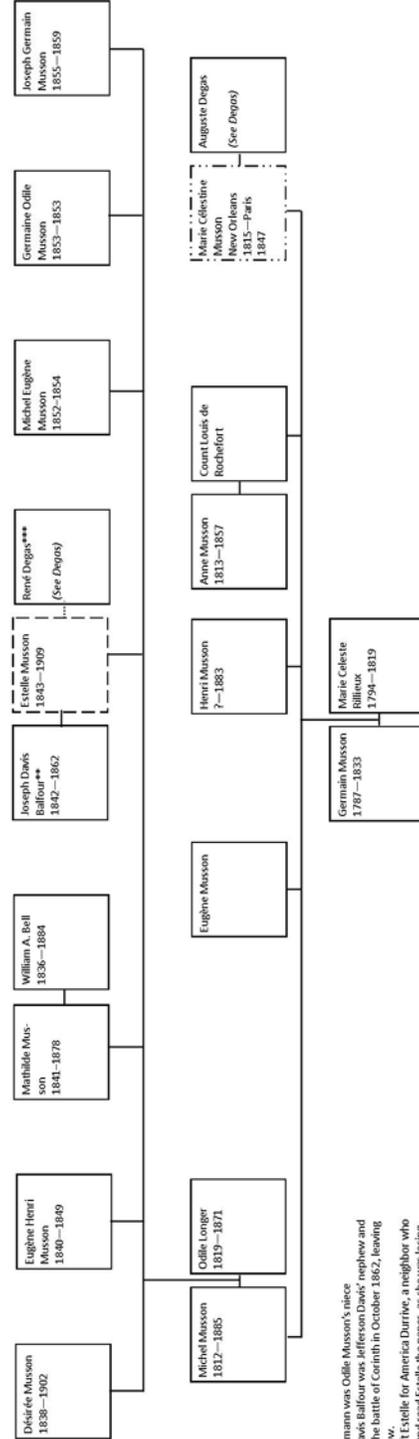
APPENDIX J
DEGAS FAMILY TREE¹

¹ Much of the information for this family tree comes from Riccardo Raimondi, *Degas E La Sua Famiglia in Napoli, 1793-1917* (Napoli: SAV, 1958). and Gail Feigenbaum and Jean Sutherland Boggs, *Degas and New Orleans: A French Impressionist in America* (New Orleans : New Orleans Museum of Art ; Copenhagen : Ordrupgaard, 1999). Both sources list extended family on the paternal and maternal sides respectively.

Degas Family Tree



Musson Family Tree



* Emma Hermann was Odile Musson's niece
 ** Joseph Davis Balfour was Jefferson Davis' mother-in-law and was killed in the battle of Gettysburg in October 1862, leaving Estelle a widow.
 *** René left Estelle for America Durrive, a neighbor who would come and read Estelle the paper, as she was losing her sight. The two were illegally married in Cleveland, Ohio (as both were still legally married to partners in New Orleans) and then married again in Paris. It was the source of much familial discord.

APPENDIX K
DEGAS' COLLECTION OF CONTEMPORARIES

Italian Artists :

Zandomeneghi, *Jeune fille écrivant*, dessin rehaussé, 0.53 x 0.46m¹

Zandomeneghi, *Jeune femme au bouquet de fleurs (buste)*, pastel, 0.41 x 0.33m

De Nittis, *Effet de neige*, 1875, Oil on canvas, 0.42 x 0.32m – Perhaps the same as *Sulla nege*, 1875?

De Nittis, *Site monagneux, Italie*, Oil on panel, 0.14 x 0.25m¹

De Nittis, *Site d'Italie, paysage montagneux*, 1872, Oil on panel, 0.185 x 0.31m

De Nittis, *Jeune femme en robe blanche et chapeau de paille garni de plumes*, Oil on canvas, 0.26 x 0.17m (Degas coll. Sale II , lot 74). The work was included in the exhibition: *Private Collection of Edgar Degas* (cat. no. 912)

De Nittis, *Buste de femme, chapeau rose*, Oil on canvas, 0.185 x 0.13m

De Nittis, *Buste de femme, chapeau rose*, Oil on canvas, 0.185 x 0.13m

De Nittis, *Tête d'homme*, Pastel, 0.65 x 0.5m

Other contemporaries included in Degas' collection:

Fragments of Manet's *Execution of Maximilian*

Manet, *Departure of the Folkstone Boat*, c. 1871-72, Philadelphia

Van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin, lithographs by Daumier and Gavarni, almost the complete graphic work of Manet, experimental prints by Pissarro, Cassatt, Gauguin, Whistler and Japanese prints.

Degas also bid unsuccessfully in 1897 for Courbet's *The Painter's Studio*.

APPENDIX L
SELECTED WORKS FROM DIEGO MARTELLI'S LIBRARY¹

- Airoli, G.B. *Zola e Bovio*. Florence : Minoreum, 1884
- D'Aloé, Staninslaus. *Nouveau Guide du Musée Royal Bourbon*. Naples, 1854
- Baedeker, K., *Paris et la France du Nord*. 1867
- Catalogue des tableaux modernes et des tableaux au nues composant la collection Laurant-Richard*. Paris 1878
- Cercle artistique et littéraire rue Saint Arnaud 7, Exposition de peinture, sculpture, aquarelle, dessin...de 1879*. Paris, 1879
- Champfleury. *Exposition des peintures et dessins de Honoré Daumier. Notice bibliographique par Champfleury*. Paris, 1878
- Lemonnier, C. *Courbet. La vie et son œuvre avec son portrait et cinq eau-forte*. Paris, 1868
- Demidoff, Anatole de. *Voyage dans la Russie méridonale et la Crimée*. Paris : Bourdin, 1884
- Duranty, Edmond, *La Nouvelle Peinture a Propos du Groupe d'Artistes Qui Exposé Dans Les Galeries Durand-Ruel*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1876
- Les combats de Françoise du Quesnoy*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1873
- Catalogue d'Aquarelles et Études par L. Piette, artiste peinture, Hôtel Druot, 20-21 February 1879*
- Emeric, J.B. David. *Histoire de la peinture au moyen age...* Paris, 1863
- Explication des ouvrages de peintures, sculpture, architecture, gravure et bibliographie des artistes vivant exposés au Palais des Champs-Elysées le 1 Mai 1869*, Paris, 1869
- Explication des ouvrages de peintures, sculpture, architecture, gravure et bibliographie des artistes vivant exposés au Palais des Champs-Elysées le 1 Mai 1870*, Paris, 1870
- Catalogue des Beaux-arts Exposition Universelle de Paris, 1878, Italie*
- Exposition Universelle international de 1878 à Paris. Catalogue officiel publié par la commissariat général. Vol. vii: Concours d'animaux vivants, Paris, 1878*
- Exposition Universelle de Paris 1878: Section Belge: catalogue officiel des œuvres arts, des produits de l'industrie et de l'agriculture, Paris, 1878*
- Queensland, Australie. Exposition Universelle 1878 Guide de la colonie et catalogue del exposition. Paris, 1878*
- République Argentine Exposition Universelle de Paris 1878 catalogue générale détaillé. Paris : Gugnois, 1878*
- 101st Exhibition of the Royal Academy of the Arts, MDCCCLXIX, 1869*

¹ Martelli's library was donated to the Biblioteca Marcuelliiana, and its contents are listed in thirteen volumes housed at the library. See "Biblioteca Martelli Catalogo," (Biblioteca Marcuelliiana, Firenze).

- Gabelle, Martial. *Procédé simple pour cuire chez soi moufle les peintures vit ri fiable sur porcelaine*. Paris, 1876
- Grand Carteret, John. *Crispi, Bismark et la triple alliance – en caricatures, avec 140 reproduction de caricatures italiennes, françaises et autres dont 2 colores*. Paris : Delagrove, 1891
- Guides Pratiques Conty* (collection), Paris, 1878
- Rénier, E. *Le clé des omnibus et tramways*, Paris, 1878
- Brüke, E. *Principes scientifiques des beaux-arts. Essais et fragmetns de théorie*. Helmholtz, *L'Optique et la peinture*. Paris: Librairie Germer Baillère et Cie, 1878
- Gazzettino delle arti del disegno gionale settimanale*. 1867, Florence
- Martelli, Diego. *Formicazione di fra mazzapicchio, illustrate da Telemaco Signorini*. Pisa, 1875
- Comizio artistico fiorentino : adunansa del 30 gennaio 1876*. Florence, 1876
- Dell'ordinamenuto de gli studi artisici in Italia. Pensori e proposte*.Pisa, 1877
- L'esplosizione internazionale del 1878, confronti, pensieri ed appunti*
- Gli Impresionisti*, Pisa : Tipografia Vannucchi, 1880
- In memoria dei Fratelli Alinari*, Florence, 1890
- Agli amici del circolo artistico fiorentino questo ricordo del nostro compagno Emilio Marcucci dedica l'autore*. Florence, 1891
- Per Slivestro Lega*. Florence, 1896
- La seconda esposizione nazionale di Belle Arti a Milano*. Venice, 1872
- Montemont, Alb. *Guide universel et complet de l'étranger à Paris*. Paris, Garnier Frères
- Catalogue des tableaux de la nouvelle pinacothèque royale à Munich*. Munich, 1868
- Pitture delle che adornano la cappela de sacro cingolo di M. Vergiue nella cattedrale Prato*. Prato, 1831
- Prudhon, *Du Principe de l'Art*, Paris, 1865
- Signorini, Telemaco. *Caricaturisti e caricaturati a caffè Michelangiolo*. Florence, 1893
- . Le 99 Discussionisti Artistiche*. Florence [Inscribed on the frontispiece: "All'amico Diego Martelli/Signorini"]
- Società delle Belle Arti in Firenze anno sociale 45 adunauga generale del 14 giugno 1891. Discourse vari*. Florence, 1891
- Società promotrice della Belli Arti in Torino : catalogo degli oggetti d'art ammesi alla XXIX Esposizione del 30 April 1870*
- Società promotricedella Belli Arti statuo della Società di Promotrice di Belli Arti costituita in seno della fratellanza artigiana di Firenze*. Florence, 1863
- Société d'aquarellistes Français. Cinqième exposition catalogue*. Paris, 1883
- Trattato della Litogromia, ovvero l'arte di dipingere senza mestro. Traduzione dal Francese con vari e correzioni*. Paris, 1829

- Uzielli. *Ricordi in Firenze a Leonardo da Vinci e a Paolo Toscanelli. Le armi della famiglia da Vinci. Un fratello di Leonardo Lanaiolo in Firenze e il suo confessionale*. Florence, 1895
- Leonardo da Vinci e la gentildonna milanese del sec. XV*. Pinesolo, 1890
- Sopra alcune osservazioni bol am che di Leonardo di Vinci*. Florence, 1869
- Vast-Ricouard et Gros-Kost. *La salon Réaliste*. Paris : Paul Ollendorff, 1880
- Zola, Emile. *l'Assommoir*. Paris : G. Charpetier, 1879
- Edouard Manet*. Paris: E. Dentu, 1867
- La Débâcle – lei Leine mille*. Paris : Charpentier, 1892
- Duranty, *Catalogue d'Aquarelles et Études par L. Piette Artiste e Peinture*, Hotel Druot, 20-21 Febuary 1879 (Biblioteca Marucelliana – Firenze, Misc 1202/27)

APPENDIX M
DEGAS WORKS OWNED BY MICHEL MANZI, WITH NOTATIONAL
INFORMATION¹

Julie Bellelli, 1859-60, Essence on ochre paper, Private collection? (L II 69; Manzi 1st sale, no. 32)

Course de Gentlemen. Avant le depart, 1862, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L II 101)

Mme Gaugelin, 1867, Oil on canvas, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (L II 165)

Mme Henri Fèvre (Marguerite De Gas), c. 1868, Oil on canvas, Private collection? (L II 185)

Was exhibited by Manzi with the title *Portrait of the sister of the artist*, in reality Mme Fèvre

Le Violoncelliste Pillet, c. 1868-69, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L II 188; Manzi 1919 Sale no. 29)

Mme. Gobillard (Mlle Morisot), 1869, Oil on canvas, Metropolitan Museum of Art (L II 213)

Sister of Berthe Morisot

Le Foyer, 1872, Oil on panel, Metropolitan Museum of Art (L II 297)

Study for this work included in *Vingt dessins*, p. 10

Le Foyer de la danse a l'Opéra de la rue le Pelletier (L'examen de danse), 1872, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L II 298)

16 July 1889, Manzi acquired *Danseuses* for 1800 francs.²

Mme de Nittis, 1872, Oil on canvas?, Private collection? (L II 302; Manzi 1919 Sale, no. 30)

Last owned by Durand-Ruel

La femme a la potiche (Estelle Musson, Mme René de Gas), 1872, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L II 305)

Classe de danse, 1874, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L II 341)

Brandon, c. 1874-78, Oil on canvas?, Private collection? (L II 360)

Femme sur un divan, 1875, Oil on pink paper, Metropolitan Museum of Art (L II 363)

Jérôme Ottoz, c. 1875-76, Oil on canvas, Private collection? (L II 378; Manzi 1919 Sale, no. 33)

École de danse, c. 1876, Oil on canvas, Corcoran Gallery, Washington DC (L II 398)

Duranty, 1879, Pastel on canvas, Private collection? (L II 518; Manzi 1919 sale, no. 126)

Chez la modiste, c. 1882, Pastel, Private collection? (L II 693; Manzi 1st sale, no. 125)

Femme dans son bain s'épongeant la jambe, c. 1883, Pastel, Louvre (L III 728)

¹ Alexandre Arsene, "Les Collections Manzi," in *Collection Manzi Tableaux, Pastels, Dessins Et Sculptures Modernes Première Vente*, ed. Galerie Manzi-Joyant (Paris: 13-14 March 1919).

² Paris, Archives Durand-Ruel. Referenced in Henri Loyrette, *Degas* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 765 n 241.

La toilette, c. 1883, Pastel, Private collection? (L III 749)

Les repasseuses, c. 1884, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L III 785)

Danseuses se baissant (Les ballerines), 1885, Pastel, Private collection? (L III 830)

Danseuses montant un escalier, c. 1886-90, Oil on canvas, Louvre (L III 894)

Aux Tuileries (La femme à l'ombrelle), c. 1887-90, Private collection? (L III 920)

APPENDIX N
WORKS OF NOTE SOLD IN DISPERSION OF MANZI'S ESTATE IN 1919

1st sale: 13-14 March 1919¹

Paintings:

- Boldini, *Le peintre j.-L. Brown et sa famille* - no. 8 (reproduced in catalogue)
(also a number of works by J.-L. Brown in sale – nos. 10-12)
- Boldini, *Les deux Amies* – “dans un jardin d’hiver, deux jeunes femmes, assises dans des fauteuils d’osier, se livrent à des travaux d’aiguille” – no. 9
- Degas, *Portrait d’un Musicien* - no. 29 (reproduced in catalogue)
- Degas, *Portrait de Madame de N.* – no. 30 (reproduced in catalogue)
- Degas, *Portrait de Femme* – no. 31 (Not listed in L) – grisaille, signed bottom, right – 0.32 x 0.24 m – no. 31
- Degas, *Portrait de jeune fille* – no. 32 (reproduced in catalogue)
- Degas, *Portrait d’homme* – no. 33
- Degas, *Saint Symphorien* (copy after Ingres) – (Not listed in L) – 0.30 x 0.23 m – no. 34
- Mancini, *Lendemain de fête* – “Un enfant à l’allure misérable est dans une pièce où des vêtements de carnaval sont éparés sur une table, sur le sol, des bouteilles vides sont renversées pêle-mêle” – no. 76
- Mancini, *Le Repos du modèle* – “Un petit Italien est assis dans un fauteuil; près de lui une table sur laquelle se trouvent une carafe, un verre, des papiers éparés” – no. 77
- Mancini, *L’Étude* – “Un enfant, assis devant une table, lit dans un livre placé à sa gauche” – no. 78
- Mancini, *Portrait de femme* – “elle est vue de profil, la poitrine légèrement découverte” – no. 79
- Mancini, *La Prière* – “Un enfant est agenouillé sur un prie-Dieu, les main jointes” – no. 80
- Pellegrini, *Portrait de Degas* – no. 82

Watercolors, Pastels, Drawings

- Boldini, *Portrait de femme* – “une jeune femme coiffée d’un chapeau noir et rose est vue de face. Elle est vêtue d’une robe noire légèrement ouverte sur la poitrine.” – Pastel – no. 113
- Boldini, *Femme vue de dos* – “En buste, le bras appuyé sur le dossier de sa chaise, elle regarde vers la gauche” – dessin sur étoffe – no. 114

¹ Galerie Manzi-Joyant, *Collection Manzi Tableaux, Pastels, Dessins Et Sculptures Modernes Première Vente* (Paris: 13-14 March 1919). Sale prices handwritten into the catalogue copy at the Cleveland Museum of Art.

Degas, *Chez la Modiste* – no. 125 (reproduced in catalogue; utilized in *Quinze Lithographs*)

Degas, *Portrait de Duranty* – no. 126 (reproduced in catalogue)

Degas, *Danseuse se chaussant* – “Elle est assise la tête penchée vers le sol pour ajuster le ruban de son chausson” (seated) – Dessin rehaussé – no. 127 (reproduced in catalogue)

Degas, *Sortant du bain* – “Une femme sortant de sa baignoire se sèche à l’aide d’un peignoir” – no. 128

Degas, *Portrait de Femme* – “Elle est vue de face la figure appuyée sur sa main droite. Devant elle un manchon” – drypoint – no. 129

Degas, *Portrait d’homme vu de face* – drypoint – no. 130

De Nittis, *Portrait de femme* – “Elle est représentée en buste, les épaules couvertes de tulle” – pastel – no. 163

Zandomeneghi, *Portrait de femme* – “Elle est vue de profil à gauche et coiffée d’un chapeau” – pastel – no. 200

Bronzes

Gemito, *Narcisse* – épreuve numérotée 19 – no. 240 (reproduced in catalogue)

Gemito, *Aqua fresco* - épreuve numérotée – no. 241 (reproduced in catalogue)

Gemito, *Tête d’homme* – no. 242

2nd sale: 20-22 March 1919: Focus on ceramics (Ancient, French, Italian, Spanish Moors, and Oriental faïence, Chinese porcelain)

3rd sale: 15-16 December 1919: Focus on sculpture, paintings and tapestry from the middle ages and the Renaissance

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