View metadata, citation and similar papers at core.ac.uk
brought to you by CORE
provided by Loughborough University Institutional Repository

The following version is the one that was accepted for publication in *Perspectives on Degas*, edited by Kathryn Brown. London and New York: Routledge, 2016.

Intimacy and Exclusion:
Degas's Illustrations for Ludovic Halévy's *La Famille Cardinal*

Kathryn Brown

In the 1870s Edgar Degas produced a series of monotypes that illustrated stories by Ludovic Halévy known under the generic title of *La Famille Cardinal.*[1] The author's lively accounts of backstage intrigue at the Paris Opera suited Degas's interests of the period and can be read as a cynical, but light-hearted complement to the depictions of repetitious, physical labour that figured in many of the painter's ballet scenes from the 1870s to the end of the century. Degas's illustrations have typically been interpreted by scholars as evidence of the social dynamic that characterized nineteenth-century theatre life and, in particular, of the sexual encounters that took place between female dancers and wealthy, male subscribers (*abonnés*).[2]

The aim of this chapter is to provide a fresh perspective on this part of Degas's output. I shall argue that the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes are characterized by an aesthetic strategy of exclusion that was at odds with Halévy's narrative ambitions and that overturned conventions associated with the sexualized portrayal of women in much nineteenth-century painting. My reading of the theme of exclusion will also show a way in which these monotypes anticipate the adventurous experiments that Degas undertook in his works on paper during the 1880s and 90s and thus form part of a longer creative trajectory within his œuvre.

I shall also discuss the *Famille Cardinal* stories and images against the background of the French publishing environment of the latter decades of the nineteenth century and, in particular, within the genre of the *livre de peintre* as it emerged during this period. As Anna Sigrídur Arnar has argued, this style of book production represented an innovative and independent publishing strategy for vanguard artists and writers such as Édouard Manet and Stéphane Mallarmé who sought an outlet for their works that was not bound by the

decision-making of official juries.[3] Having regard to the fact that Mallarmé and Manet's deluxe editions of *Le Corbeau* and *L'Après-midi d'un faune* were published in 1875 and 1876 respectively, Degas's interest in illustrating Halévy's stories can be understood as an attempt to capitalize on a new genre that was being developed and exploited by some of his closest peers.[4]

In his studies of Degas's engagement with literature of the period, Theodore Reff has demonstrated different ways in which the artist responded to writers and their works, whether in the form of portraits, shared motifs, or through the 'illustration' of fictional scenes.[5] While Degas is shown to have had strong views about the expressive potential of word and image (predictably favouring the latter), Reff shows how literature acted as a spur to Degas's pictorial imagination, particularly as he and his literary counterparts engaged with themes from contemporary life.[6] Reff's framework provides an important backdrop for the following discussion; this is complemented by recent research that has examined the importance of Degas's long relationship with Halévy, both socially and artistically, prior to the collapse of their friendship during the Dreyfus affair.[7] On the one hand, the images that Degas created in response to Halévy's *Famille Cardinal* stories ventured beyond the conventions of nineteenth-century book illustration and were well suited to the more complex intermedial adventures with which the *livre de peintre* was to become associated. On the other hand, the style of Degas's images demonstrated tensions between the representational potential of graphic art and literature and, as I shall argue, diverged significantly from the conversational idiom of Halévy's narratives.

While the collaboration between writer and painter on this project ultimately foundered, Degas's illustrations were included in an edition of *La Famille Cardinal* published by Auguste Blaizot & fils in 1938.[8] Comprising a selection of Halévy's stories and 33 heliogravures (some in colour) by Maurice Potin after Degas's monotypes, the book is not the realization of any specific plan laid out by Degas or Halévy. Nevertheless, these – and other books into which the artist's prints were incorporated after his death – reveal the burgeoning market for the *livre de peintre* during the early decades of the twentieth century and demonstrate the use to which Degas's posthumous reputation was put by dealers and publishers who were keen to exploit bibliophilia for commercial advantage in the art market.

The Theatre on the Page

In her discussion of French illustrated books of the 1840s, Keri Yousif examines the role played by newspapers in the transformation of narrative genres and the stimulation of a new, industrial publishing model: in addition to encouraging the fragmentation of narratives for the purposes of serial publication, the *feuilleton* became, she argues, an important means of generating advance publicity for a novel prior to its appearance in book form.[9] The 'dual' style of publishing described by Yousif remained relevant to book production in later decades of the century and is pertinent to the history of Halévy's *Famille Cardinal* stories. These entertaining fictions – featuring as their protagonists, Monsieur and Madame Cardinal and their two daughters, Pauline and Virginie – first appeared in the weekly journal, *La Vie parisienne*, in 1870 and 71. Their success prompted Halévy to revise the narratives for book publication in 1872 and, with further revisions (and with differing illustrators), in editions published to the year before his death in 1908.[10] By the time that Degas turned his attention to the project during the late 1870s, the stories had already garnered a strong public following. Indeed, when Halévy drew selected stories into his 1880 volume, *Les Petites Cardinal*, the book sold 3,500 copies on the first day (according to the author) and prompted an almost 'suffocating' success.[11]

Degas's pictorial engagement with Halévy's texts came at an important time in the history of French publishing and printmaking. Anticipating Ambroise Vollard's innovative approach to, and concerted marketing of, *livres de peintre* from the 1890s onwards, Manet and Mallarmé had, as mentioned above, already sought to exploit the market for luxury, illustrated books during the mid 1870s.[12] As Arnar shows in her discussion of the evolution of nineteenth-century artists' books, the etching revival of the late 1860s had served as a spur to the pairing of 'original prints' with literary texts, and Manet recognized the potential advantage of communicating his work to a wider audience by contributing to publications such as Philippe Burty's *Sonnets et eaux-fortes* (1869), Jules Champfleury's *Les Chats* (1868), Charles Cros's *Le Fleuve* (1874) and Charles Asselineau's proposed biography of Charles Baudelaire.[13] Similarly, Michel Melot notes the existence of strong overlaps between print and book acquisition during the latter decades of the nineteenth century, the two markets catering to similar styles of collecting within established social

networks.[14] Yet despite congruence between the tastes of the *amateur d'art* and the *amateur du livre*, early attempts to develop a market for books that brought avant-garde painters and writers into partnership met with uneven success. Manet and Mallarmé's co-produced works were commercially unsuccessful, and publishers remained wary of compromising their established lists with untried formats or with the work of artists whose stylistic innovations strayed beyond the conventions of the illustrated book.[15]

During the 1870s Degas was searching for ways in which to publicize his experiments in the medium of print. While various of his etchings, lithographs, and monotypes (including some of the illustrations for *La Famille Cardinal*) were included in the Impressionist exhibitions, his project for a journal dedicated to prints – *Le Jour et la nuit* – remained unrealized for various financial and logistical reasons.[16] The format of the *livre de peintre* was capable of offering him an alternative publishing venue for his prints, and Halévy's stories were likely to have guaranteed an enthusiastic audience.

For reasons that remain unclear, however, the proposed volume did not proceed. One reason often cited for the failure of the project is that the protagonist of Degas's images resembled Halévy too closely, thus giving the stories (and their sexual intrigues) an autobiographical slant that they did not actually possess.[17] Another suggestion is that the two men simply could not agree on the aesthetic of the proposed book.[18] In support of the latter argument, the remainder of this section considers which aspects of Halévy's stories Degas chose to illustrate, what creative possibilities the text presented to him, and how his pictorial engagement with the narratives diverged from the style of imagery that Halévy preferred for his book.

Critical discussions of the *livre de peintre* typically identify the printed page as a space of productive tension between the creative ambitions of artist and writer.[19] For Georges Rivière, writing about Degas in 1938, however, such tensions were viewed less as a stimulus to innovation and, rather, as a reason why the artist was unwilling to venture into this genre:

> Perhaps Degas was tempted to illustrate *Les Combats de Françoise Du Quesnoy* published by Duranty in 1873? A canvas by Degas entitled *Interior*, which dates from 1874 or 1875, might have been inspired by this novel. In any case, Degas had

> too much imagination and independence to restrict himself to following an author in the typical manner of illustrators and submitting to the demands of reader and writer.[20]

Rivière uses Degas's apparent lack of interest in the production of bookworks to support an image of the artist's creative independence and of his unwillingness to subordinate his imagery to a predetermined textual framework. His remark also suggests the reputational damage that could arise from accepting the (seemingly) subordinate role of 'illustrator'. There were, however, many features of Halévy's *Famille Cardinal* stories that suited Degas's interests of the 1870s.

Set in the first decade of the Third Republic, Halévy's stories trace the adventures of Monsieur and Madame Cardinal and their two daughters. Madame Cardinal is the primary storyteller (with scene-setting provided by a male narrative perspective) and she describes either directly to her male interlocutor or in letters to her friend, Madame Canivet, the eventful love lives of her daughters, their coterie of admirers at the Opera, and the social consequences of having two young, female dancers in the family. The latter point (including Pauline and Virginie's subsequent affairs with members of the aristocracy) assumes increasing significance in the narratives as Monsieur Cardinal embarks on a career in public office. Through the figure of Monsieur Cardinal and his thwarted political aspirations, Halévy moved his narrative beyond the world of the Opera and ultimately offered his readership a satire on the values of the Third Republic and, in particular, its anti-clericalism.

Degas's monotypes illustrate Halévy's earliest *Famille Cardinal* stories and focus largely on backstage intrigue and life in the family home. One of the most striking aspects of the images is their spatial composition and their portrayal of the network of corridors, staircases, and passageways that comprise the Opera. The intricacy of the compositions mirrors Halévy's description of an uncertain, convoluted backstage space: 'On the 22nd November 1871, at nine o'clock in the evening, I was following one of the sixty corridors that intersect and wind throughout the labyrinthine buildings of the Opera'.[21] In keeping with this account, Degas's monotypes depict a space that is not easily defined: curved or angular staircases create intersecting planes that facilitate the placement of figures at

different heights or that collapse depth within a single image. Complementing the repeated bisection of scenes, long corridors permit the elaboration of diagonals that generate unbalanced structures and destabilize any firm relation between floor, wall, and ceiling. Reminiscent of Giovanni Battista Piranesi's *Carceri d'invenzioni* (c. 1749–60), the architectural space envisaged by Degas is one that suggests a multitude of intersecting sub-spaces that defy the imposition of a single, organizing principle.

These spaces are also shown to extend beyond the frame of the image by virtue of the movement of individual figures. Reflecting the rhythms of performance, Degas's scenes are either eerily deserted or crammed with action as dancers proceed to, or return from, the stage. *Pauline and Virginie Cardinal Conversing with Admirers* (fig. 9.1) is a good example of the oblique angles and asymmetrical structures that dominate the series. The focal point of the image is a spatial junction, a corner created by two intersecting corridors. The left-hand side of the image is overloaded with figures that seal the space – Pauline, Virginie, and a group of admirers – while the right hand side depicts a solitary Madame Cardinal disappearing down an empty passageway. The two young dancers have attracted the backstage activity towards them, and their mother has no role in the ensuing exchanges. Enhancing the extension of space beyond the visible parameters of the image, Degas figures the existence of rooms below the scene by revealing the head and shoulders of a dancer as she descends a staircase in the foreground. The rigorous vertical lines of the bannister draw the viewer's eye towards the base of the image to ensure that the departing figure is followed. The result is a dispersal of bodies and action, a strategy that empties the image of a single focal point.

[Insert fig. 9.1 here]

Degas's imaginative construal of architectural space in the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes contrasts with the detailed and precise rendering of the circus roof in *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando* (1879, National Gallery, London). In contrast to the latter's unusual perspective on a single figure and detailed elaboration of interlocking pillars and girders as discussed by Marilyn Brown in Chapter 5 of the present volume, the convoluted Opera building remains loosely worked in the monotypes. Consistent with the treatment of the sketchily drawn ballerinas and their admirers, ink has been lightly brushed on to the plate or wiped and smudged with a rag for the purpose of enhancing disorientation within

the warren of dressing rooms and corridors. This feature of the prints illustrates Eugenia Parry Janis's point that the 'degree of finish is lower in the monotypes than in any of Degas's other media'.[22] While this leads Janis to examine the transitional role of the monotype in Degas's longer compositional processes (notably through the reworking of both light and dark field monotypes in pastel), the lack of finish in the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes is crucial to theme of the work in so far as it reinforces the sense of backstage movement and generates uncertainties as to what, exactly, is transpiring in the various encounters.

In *La Nouvelle Peinture* of 1876, Edmond Duranty famously described ways in which the pictorial compositions of avant-garde painters reflected the unpredictable presence of objects within the field of vision: 'Aspects of things and people can be perceived in a thousand unexpected ways in reality. Our point of view is not always centre stage with two parallel walls that converge towards one at the back; it does not always gather together all of the lines and angles of cornices with mathematical regularity and symmetry…'.[23] While the improvisatory style and spatial construction of Degas's *Famille Cardinal* monotypes provide ample evidence of this point, the depiction of incomplete figures (particularly the dancers) enhances the idea that the images capture the uncertainties of a fleeting moment: a fragment of conversation, a woman hurrying into her dressing room, or a group of ballerinas rushing down a staircase (fig. 9.2).

[Insert fig. 9.2 here]

Unlike many of Degas's theatre scenes, however, the monotypes depict neither performance nor rehearsal. Instead, the images convey interstitial moments – the swift transition from off-stage to on-stage, from private preparation to public performance. In consequence, even the dancers' communication with their admirers is haphazard and overspills into corridors, a process that is described by Halévy as an eruption of uncontrolled energy:

> I saw about fifteen young people leave the dressing room of the chorus, chatting, laughing, crying, arguing and pushing, descending like an avalanche. I pressed myself against the wall and was greeted, in passing, with fifteen or so: "Hello, you… Fancy, you here… What are you up to here?". Respectfully, I allowed the

> pleasing whirlwind to pass, and this smart, frisky, little troupe – semi-naked and dressed in silk and satin – rushed agilely down the staircase.[24]

The portrayal of fragments of conversation and transient instants on the brink of change is a topic that suited Degas's style of print production. As Clifford Ackley has noted: 'One of the most fascinating aspects of Degas's printmaking is his restlessness and irresolution, his ambivalence about the "finished" image'.[25] In contrast to Janis's focus on the role of the monotype as part of compositional process that is finally 'resolved' by the application of pastel, Ackley discusses different ways in which Degas exploited multiplicity by transferring his monotypes to lithographic stone or reusing figures in different compositions, consistently denying the image a settled state. In a similar vein, Peter Parshall describes the 'deep-seated resistance to aesthetic closure' that was manifested by Degas's emphasis on 'process' rather than 'product' in printmaking, a point that is developed further by Jonas Beyer in chapter 8 of the present volume.[26]

The fleeting encounters described in Halévy's portrayal of backstage life at the Opera appealed to Degas's handling of the monotype format. Specifically, the rendering of interstitial moments and the depiction of ad hoc meetings are matched by visual uncertainties created by the use of unconventional perspectives, the smudging of figures, and a compositional style that eschews a fixed point of interest.[27] In this regard, Halévy's stories furnished Degas with an opportunity to exploit and develop the association of the print medium with 'the transient, fugitive beauty of present life' that Charles Baudelaire had lauded as the hallmark of modern art in his discussion of the caricatures of Constantin Guys in 1863.[28]

Identification and Exclusion

The idea that the thematic and stylistic irresolution of Degas's *Famille Cardinal* monotypes echoes Baudelaire's praise of transience should not be viewed as anachronistic. It is important to keep in mind that the Opera setting described by Halévy is not that of the Palais Garnier (inaugurated on 5 January, 1875), but of the theatre that preceded it, the Salle Le Peletier. The latter was destroyed in a fire in October 1873, and the Opera was housed temporarily in the Salle Ventadour until construction work on the Palais Garnier

was completed around 14 months later.[29] Halévy's image of the Opera is, therefore, tinged with nostalgia for a pre-Haussmann Paris, the intersecting corridors of the old theatre serving as a reminder of the winding medieval streets that had been swept away in the redesigned city. Halévy reinforces this point by positing France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian war as a point of social rupture that ended the heyday of the Cardinal sisters. The narrator laments the passing of an era and describes the reopening of the theatre in despairing terms: 'The response was the same everywhere: "Virginie Cardinal didn't return to the Opera after the war, and Pauline Cardinal hasn't been seen since the fire". No more young Cardinals! No more Madame Cardinal! The chain had been broken'.[30]

Fondness for the architectural and social environment of the closing years of the Second Empire was thought to have united the interests and personalities of Halévy and Degas. In his memoir, *Degas parle*, Daniel Halévy (Ludovic's son) describes his father and Degas as being embedded in the artistic world of the late 1860s (they were both 30 years of age in 1864) rather than that of the Third Republic and romanticizes that earlier period in the following terms:

> Paris of the Second Empire was a place of intense and fruitful work: Paris was the city of Sainte-Beuve and Baudelaire, perhaps the place in Europe where reality was seized most forcefully. Conversation was certainly never better than at those dinners in the Restaurant Magny where Sainte-Beuve, Flaubert, Renan and Berthelot used to meet. Now, the things I heard in the intimacy of my home were an echo of those dinners at Magny.[31]

In Daniel Halévy's albeit subjective account, the 'brilliance and glory' of the closing years of the Second Empire were epitomized not just by the works of artists active during this period, but by the private exchanges that took place between those individuals. He describes this conversational model as the construction of a world apart, an elite and secretive environment inhabited by a select few and that was 'foreign to the ostentatious brilliance of Second Empire public life'.[32] For Daniel Halévy, Degas was 'one of those children of the secret Second Empire', and the Opera was imagined as one of the primary

places in which (male) members of that elite could socialize with each other.[33] I shall return to this point below.

Degas treated the theme of secrecy and private exchange between friends in works in a range of media around the time he was working on the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes. From the small drawing *At the Café Châteaudun* (1869–71, National Gallery, London) to his large-scale canvas *Portraits at the Stock Exchange* (c. 1878/9, Musée d'Orsay), and the elaborately worked pastel *At the Milliner's* (1882–4, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), Degas exploited the physical strategies that individuals use to withdraw temporarily from their surroundings for the purpose of holding private conversations in public. Halévy's description of ways in which the architecture of the old Opera heightened the possibilities for clandestine exchanges became a hallmark of the *Famille Cardinal* stories and Degas's monotypes.[34]

Halévy sets the scene for one of the narratives as follows: 'We were at the Opera one evening, at the poor old Opera of the rue Drouot that burnt down. […] the old Opera house was full of wonderful old corridors with loads of little corners barely illuminated by smoky oil lamps'.[35] Throughout the stories, the reader overhears conversations between the narrator and Madame Cardinal (fig. 9.3) or is granted access to Madame Cardinal's private correspondence. The narratives are thus designed to make the reader complicit with this secretive world and to draw him or her into its otherwise closed conversational networks.

[Insert fig. 9.3 here]

As commentators have noted, Degas's *Famille Cardinal* images are characterized by covert glances and private conversations.[36] While this aspect of the monotypes clearly appealed to a vision of elite leisure associated with the closing years of the Second Empire, it also contributed to an ambitious visual strategy developed by Degas that clashed with the style of both Halévy's stories and the journal in which they had been published. In order to understand this, it is necessary to consider further the links between Halévy's narrative technique and the publishing history of the stories.

I mentioned above that the *Famille Cardinal* stories first appeared in the weekly periodical *La Vie parisienne*. The journal itself was a product of the Second Empire, having been founded in 1863 by Émile Marcelin, a theatrical costume designer, illustrator, and publisher. Three years later, Halévy and his collaborator, Henri Meilhac, dedicated their

libretto for Jacques Offenbach's operetta, *La Vie parisienne*, to Marcelin in a musical homage to the journal. Clara Sadoun-Édouard has examined the vibrant and confident image of Paris conveyed by *La Vie parisienne*, noting close stylistic affinities between the content of the journal and the theatre.[37] This theatrical bias took the form not just of Marcelin's own predilection for theatre reviews and gossip, but also influenced the editor's choice of fiction (*romans de mœurs*), the journal's visual style, and the fostering of reportage that sought vividly to convey 'the noise of the wings, the costumes, the atmosphere of the auditorium'.[38] The result, she argues, is a publication that gave readers the illusion of being at the theatre and of participating in the social circle described in the journal. I have argued elsewhere that the burgeoning newspaper culture of the early Third Republic – in particular the daily reports of the *chroniqueur* – sought to provide readers with a narrative perspective with which they could identify in order to experience vicariously the most recent events that had taken place in the metropolis.[39] Sadoun-Édouard makes a similar point in connection with the reporting style of *La Vie parisienne* in her argument that the journal invited the reader to imagine him or herself as a spectator in the theatre *loges* with opera glasses in hand (and, hence, ready to spy on other members of the audience).[40]

If the secretive world of the Second Empire described by Daniel Halévy was propelled by conversation, the *Famille Cardinal* stories and *La Vie parisienne* gave readers the impression of belonging to that world by celebrating the verbal dynamic that sustained it. The opening paragraph of 'Les Petites Cardinal' emphasizes the value of gossip over on-stage performance. We are told that, during the duet between Zerlina and Masetto in a performance of *Don Giovanni*, 'We chatted… We talked… We discussed the good old days of the old theatre on the rue Le Peletier, of the Opera as it was before the war and the fire'.[41] In a later story, the narrator explains that 'between the second and third acts of *Aida*, I had gone to chat with my old friend Madame de X***'.[42] The opera is satirically invoked by Halévy as little more than a framing device that supports conversations wholly unrelated to events on stage. In imitation of the activities of the characters, members of Halévy's readership are invited to become listeners (to off-stage dialogue rather than to music).

This style of appealing to the reader was discussed by Hippolyte Taine in the preface he contributed to Marcelin's memoirs, *Souvenirs de la vie parisienne,* published in

1888. Taine describes the journal as a form of conversation (*une causerie*) in which contributors were encouraged to write as they would speak: 'as one would speak at the club between men, as one would speak in a salon before ladies of society or of the *demi-monde*; that is to say, in a lively way, freely – perhaps too freely – without authorial pretentions and without any other aim than to amuse'.[43] *La Vie parisienne* was not the only journal to adopt this style, and it may be said to have developed the intentions of the aptly named *La Causerie* published during the early 1860s. Advertising a drop in price, the editor of the latter described his ambition of producing a truly 'popular' journal that would furnish its readership with the latest news about literature and about 'this other thing that it adores fanatically: the theatre'.[44]

Halévy's use of a conversational model to develop links between journalism, the theatre, and literary narrative set his writing apart from the ambitions of Naturalism as it developed in the latter decades of the century. As Sylvie Jouanny notes, Émile Zola's *Nana* (1880) was, in part, a satire of cultural production associated with the final years of the Second Empire, a novel designed to 'denounce Second Empire society, eroded by sex and greed and incapable of producing anything other than a Meilhac or Halévy adapted by Offenbach'.[45] For some critics of the period, however, Halévy's work served as an antidote to that of Zola. One reviewer of Halévy's novel, *Criquette* of 1883 (also set in the last decade of the Second Empire) described the work as a 'breath of fresh air' after reading Zola and 'a hard blow' to adherents of Naturalism.[46] Adopting a similar tone, Georges Rivière concluded his discussion of Duranty's novel, *Les Combats de Françoise Du Quenoy,* with the observation that the narrative was 'appropriately written, well structured, and very boring, in conformity with the principles of Realism'.[47]

The promise of granting audiences admission to the gossip that fuelled an elite world of leisure and gaiety marked a crucial point of stylistic divergence between Halévy's stories and Degas's monotypes. Whereas *La Vie parisienne* and Halévy's narratives invited the audience into the world of the theatre, Degas's monotypes produced the opposite effect. Through the juxtaposition of crowded passageways and blank spaces, the depiction of figures with their backs to the viewer, the fragmentation of bodies, and the favouring of unbalanced compositions, Degas empties his images of narrative content and excludes the viewer from the depicted scenes.

Jonas Beyer has discussed the significance of depicting top-hatted men from behind throughout the monotypes and notes the perspective of the 'outsider' that is thereby forced on the viewer.[48] In his interpretation of the series, however, he suggests that any resulting exclusion is tempered by the viewer's attempted identification with the *abonnés* for the purpose of satisfying any lingering curiosity.[49] In contrast to Beyer's view, I suggest that while Halévy's texts permit readers to participate in the secrets of the *coulisses* by allowing them to overhear conversations, Degas's images exclude viewers from those secrets by refusing to function as a convivial space and by failing to provide the 'insider' information offered by the narratives. This marks a divergence in the communicational aims of text and image and contributes to an aesthetic strategy that would become increasingly central to Degas's works on paper.

In her discussion of Degas's pastel nudes of the 1880s, Carol Armstrong examines ways in which female bodies are turned on themselves or brought towards the front of the picture plane in a way that seems to 'oust' the viewer from the scene.[50] The result, she argues, is that these works 'close in and down on the sociability of viewing', thereby reducing the potential for voyeurism.[51] While this refusal to accommodate a position for the viewer is created by compositional choices, it is also connected to the kind of information conveyed about the central subject. As Joris-Karl Huysmans suggested in *Certains* in his response to Degas's pastels exhibited in 1886, it was the artist's ability to figure the 'unseen' ('*l'invu*') that gave the works their special potency; this was an art, he argued, that could express 'an expansive or compressed upsurge of the soul within living bodies in perfect accord with their environment' – yet with none of the trite visual signifiers that would typically determine the identity of that body or its surroundings.[52] This was a point taken up by Julius Meier-Graefe in 1917 when he argued that Degas's use of colour was 'determined not to stimulate the appearance of reality'.[53] As Armstrong rightly notes, both Huysmans's and Meier-Graefe's comments were, in themselves, a rejection of Realist criticism of the 1870s, marking a transition in critical thinking about Degas and his depiction of the female body.[54]

With their focus on the abstract articulation of the body in Degas's works, both Huysmans and Meier-Graefe hint at an emptying of narrative from the images and a rejection of any commonplace role for the viewer in relation to their content. This draws

attention to a strategy that was explored to even more dramatic effect in Degas's dark field monotypes of the 1880s and 90s. With their blatant rejection of mimesis, flattening of pictorial space, and celebration of anatomical distortion, these works called into question the role of vision in structuring and interpreting a two dimensional work.[55] In Charles Harrison's reading of the dark field monotypes, it is the absence of an 'outward regard' of the depicted subject that denies any psychological engagement between subject and viewer and that, in consequence, contributes to the self-absorption of the depicted figure.[56] Like Armstrong, Harrison stresses the exclusionary effect of refusing to provide a role for the viewer in either a visual transaction with the image or within the fictional world depicted in it.[57]

My suggestion is that in their experimentation with strategies of exclusion, the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes anticipate these developments in Degas's works on paper. As Armstrong rightly notes, the kind of closure found in the artist's later works 'had been a long time in preparation – a potential in Degas's works from the beginning, and from the opening of the first impressionist show, with the inclusion of his first image of the closed-off *coulisses* spaces of seeing and making'.[58] I am arguing that the monotypes produced in response to the *Famille Cardinal* stories mark a crucial step in the trajectory to these later works on paper.

This was, however, also a feature of the images that made them a provocative counterpoint to Halévy's stories, for their style ran contrary to both the communicative aim of the narratives and the publishing style of *La Vie parisienne*.[59] I have argued that although Halévy *narrates* various backstage secrets, he does so with the aim of making the reader party to the closed world of the Opera, thereby drawing him or her into fictional conversations. By contrast, Degas's images *perform* the theme of secrecy by failing to grant the viewer access to the exchanges that take place. In so doing, they undermine the inclusive style favoured by Halévy and his various publishers. While this was a pictorial strategy that suited the portrayal of solitary intimacy in Degas's bather series and dark field monotypes, it was one that repudiated the narrative promise of the *Famille Cardinal* stories.

In contrast to Degas's monotypes, the images by professional illustrators that accompanied the stories into book format in the 1880s – such as those by Émile Mas for the 1883 edition published by Calmann Lévy (fig. 9.4) – are similar in style to the kind of

imagery found in *La Vie parisienne*. They are small vignettes that give visual form to specific characters or scenes of the narratives. In addition to their consistency with the journal's tone, such imagery suited the brand developed by Calmann Lévy, a publishing house that set out to cultivate, according to Élisabeth Parinet, '*les gens du monde*'.[60] In contrast to Degas's exclusionary aesthetic, the works of professional illustrators fulfilled a narrative function in their own right by inviting the viewer to draw parallels with particular moments in the plot. Unlike Degas's monotypes, therefore, such images operate within a familiar framework of illustration by functioning as a visual tautology of the written word.

[Insert fig. 9.4 here]

This section has argued that Halévy's stories and Degas's monotypes have contrasting links to the theatre. Whereas the *Famille Cardinal* stories invited their audience into the conversational fabric of the *coulisses*, Degas's images excluded the reader/viewer from those very exchanges. While word and image pursue contrasting aesthetic trajectories, there is a further way in which Degas's visual style broke the narrative promise of Halévy's stories. This concerns the disruption of gendered pictorial viewpoints on life at the Opera.

Dancers and their Admirers

Daniel Halévy noted the importance of the Opera to the Parisian social elite, describing it as 'a meeting place as much as a theatre'.[61] Much scholarship has focused on the fact that the *coulisses* offered an opportunity for both sexual traffic with dancers and homosocial bonding between upper class men; yet it is also the case that the Opera facilitated the mixing of genders and social classes. This occurred not just between Opera patrons and dancers, but between the former and other employees of, and visitors to, the theatre, including, for example, concierges, ushers (*ouvreuses*), stage hands (*machinistes*), dressers (*habilleuses*), stage managers (*avertisseurs de la danse*) and – perhaps most famously – the dancers' mothers.[62]

Degas's images of the ballet have often been used to illustrate a means by which nineteenth-century women were depicted in visual art for their display value and to show how the theatre offered audiences glimpses of the female body in costumes that revealed far more than was typical for everyday dress of the period. As Tamar Garb notes: 'It was only at the opera that a proliferation of exposed legs, conventionally draped or covered, were on

public view. The tightly clad calves and orchestrated turnouts and points of the female dancers' satin-slippered feet were as much the attraction of the ballet as the performance itself'.[63] Garb's elaboration of the ways in which Degas's paintings and pastels exploited the theme of ballet performance to explore complex intersections of labour, femininity, and voyeurism draws attention to the Opera as a microcosm of sexual politics of the period.

Halévy's *Famille Cardinal* stories were, of course, knowingly predicated on these very ideas. Throughout the narratives, the Opera is portrayed as a sexual hunting ground for wealthy, heterosexual men, a point that is enhanced by the architecture of the old theatre: 'We *had caught* the two young Cardinal sisters in one of the corridors…' (emphasis added).[64] Members of the typically anonymous crowd of admirers described in the stories are united by their search for impromptu sexual encounters and by their interest in 'capturing' their prey. This feature of the stories leads Marilyn Brown to suggest that Degas's illustrations depict women who are 'cornered' and 'ogled' in ways that link these works to the artist's brothel monotypes.[65]

The theme of sexual predation is apparent in Degas's *Famille Cardinal* images and is clearly reflected in, for example, *Pauline and Virginie Cardinal Conversing with their Admirers* discussed above (fig. 9.1). Here, as in other of the images, the young women are pinned against a wall and hemmed in by their backstage visitors. It would, however, be wrong to impose this framework on all of the images in the series. Rather, the way in which Degas's compositions disturb this sexual economy creates further tension between the imagery and Halévy's stories. In contrast to Garb's argument that the theatre offered the possibility of depicting women for their display value, Degas's *Famille Cardinal* images typically conceal the dancers' bodies. Throughout the images, the young women's presence is reduced to the tulle of a fleeting costume, the glimpse of a fragmented body (fig. 9.1), or a crowd of figures within which the contours of individual bodies are indistinguishable (fig. 9.2).

This de-eroticizing of the dancers further distinguishes the monotypes from the professional illustrations of Halévy's stories that included full length images of appropriately costumed characters, the social coding of their dress and postures clearly laid out for the benefit of the viewer. Whereas Armstrong argues that the young dancers in Degas's images are portrayed as 'ugly', 'vulgar', 'stocky girls of the street', my suggestion

is that deviation from glamourized depictions of the ‘*danseuse étoile*’ constitutes a challenge to the construal of backstage space – and the women who worked there – by an implied heterosexual male gaze.[66] Furthermore, in contrast to prurient depictions of backstage life created during the 1870s and 80s, the viewer of Degas’s monotypes is denied any voyeuristic glimpse of dancers readying themselves in their dressing rooms.[67]

I am suggesting, therefore, that Degas’s monotypes disturb the social legibility of the female body – and the underlying sexual economy of the *coulisses* – by undermining the amount and quality of visual information provided to the viewer. While this is a compositional feature of the images, it is enhanced by the portrayal of isolated and disoriented individuals. *An Admirer in the Corridor* (fig. 9.5) depicts a top-hatted man in one of the backstage corridors. Seen from behind, he stoops forward and scratches the back of his head; a door next to him is closed, and a flash of light tulle is seen in the lower right-hand section of the image as a ballerina disappears from the scene. Just as the man is abandoned and confused, so too the viewer has come upon the scene too late to know what has passed.[68]

[Insert fig. 9.5 here]

The contrast between single, male figures and groups of dancers challenges the conventional power relations that underpinned the display of fashionable young women for the pleasure of an admiring gaze. Throughout Halévy’s stories, the narrator confronts ‘fifteen young women’, an ‘army’, and ‘a cavalcade of pretty little fillies’.[69] Writing in a different context, Kate Flint has noted that the sexualized portrayal of women in nineteenth-century painting may be diminished in scenes that foreground group ‘solidarity’.[70] A similar point can be made about the dancers in Degas’s *Famille Cardinal* imagery. In contrast to the theme of male sexual conquest, the ballerinas – when united into a ‘peloton’ – control their environment and manipulate their backstage visitors. Degas gives this point visual force by undermining the authority of the male protagonists and staging a contrast between the latters’ solitary vulnerability and control of the *coulisses* by a female collective (a theme that also anticipates the structure of many of Degas’s brothel monotypes).

The overturning of male sexual predation is further enhanced by the manipulative acts of Pauline and Virginie Cardinal. While, in Halévy’s stories, the former entertains

numerous aristocratic lovers after her retirement from the Opera, Virginie decides to marry the Marquis de Cavalcanti. Her choice of husband is expressed in unsentimental terms: 'He is ugly, he his ridiculous… I'm sure I'll never love him… He's the one for me!'.[71] Virginie's decision to marry a man for whom she has little regard contrasts with her attraction to the actor, Crochard, who performs at the Porte-Saint-Martin theatre.

As Eugenia Parry Janis notes, Degas depicts Virginie's feelings for Crochard by incorporating a different style of image into the suite of prints, namely, a portrait of the actor (fig. 9.6).[72] I mentioned above a contrast between the functioning of word and image in *La Famille Cardinal*: while Halévy's stories *describe* certain events, Degas's monotypes *perform* those events by excluding the viewer from conversations or by diminishing his or her ability to ascertain the visual detail of characters and their actions. The inclusion of a portrait of Crochard develops this feature of the series. Instead of depicting Virginie's relationship to Crochard, the viewer is invited to hold a visual keepsake, to use an image in the same way that one of the protagonists receives and cherishes a memento from her lover.

[Insert fig. 9.6 here]

Degas's use of the monotype form (particularly the dark field monotype) has been associated with the private sharing of erotic imagery between men, a tendency that supports links between the artist's works in this medium and the theme of secrecy discussed above.[73] The portrait of Crochard offers a different perspective on this connection by 'quoting' a style of image production associated with amorous tokens and thus signalling the viewing perspective of a female character, Virginie Cardinal. Here too, therefore, an image within the suite diverges from the typical (male) viewing perspective thought to typify Degas's monotypes. While Halévy's image of the Opera depicts possibilities for homosocial bonding and for flirtation with women of different social classes, Degas's images disturb clichés found in the narratives by portraying the confusion of Opera *habitués*, excluding the viewer from secretive exchanges, and unsettling a visual tradition that involves the portrayal of women for the enjoyment of a heterosexual male gaze. While these aspects of the images diverge from the inclusive 'conversational' tone of Halévy's stories, twentieth-century publishers sought to capitalize on the opportunity that had been missed in connection with Degas's images.

Inventing a *livre de peintre*

As mentioned above, illustrated versions of Halévy's *Famille Cardinal* stories featured the work of various professional illustrators.[74] In their examination of the sale of prints from Degas's estate at auction in 1928, Druick and Zegers discuss the acquisition of certain of the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes by a consortium of investors and the subsequent granting of reproduction rights to the Parisian publisher, Auguste Blaizot & fils.[75] In 1939, Blaizot issued a book that united 8 of Halévy's stories with 33 of Degas's monotypes (some reworked in pastel by Maurice Potin) and an introduction by Marcel Guérin.

The decision to create a book from existing (and previously unpaired) works was not unusual in the publishing environment of the period. Rebecca Rabinow notes that Vollard had already published three books that posthumously incorporated works by Degas: an edition of Guy de Maupassant's *La Maison Tellier* in 1934, Pierre Louÿs's *Mimes des courtisanes* in 1935 (a translation of Lucian's *Chattering Courtisans*), and Paul Valéry's *Degas Danse Dessin* in 1936.[76] These books reinforced two core themes that came to be closely associated with Degas in the twentieth century: the brothel and the dance. Blaizot's realization of the *Famille Cardinal* project thus complemented these background themes, and Rabinow suggests that Vollard himself had also been keen to acquire the rights to the *Famille Cardinal* stories and monotypes for the purpose of producing a luxury edition.[77]

Throughout this chapter, I have considered the opportunities that the Opera offered for homosocial bonding. This aspect of the Parisian theatre found an easy counterpart in bibliophilia which, as Willa Silverman has shown, was a recognizably gendered form of collecting during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[78] By the 1930s, the *livre de peintre* (or *livre d'artiste*) had become an established art genre in France, with many leading members of the modernist avant-garde testing the aesthetic possibilities that were offered by the publishing industry.[79] Seeking to enhance his position in this market, Vollard priced his publications featuring Degas's images competitively. Rabinow points out that the books were listed with prices of 2,500 francs each, amounts that matched the publisher's list of *livres d'artiste* that had actually been conceived of as such by their makers.[80] On the basis of this pricing strategy alone, it would have been easy to think that Degas had actually knowingly contributed to or designed the books in question.

The Blaizot edition of *La Famille Cardinal* was produced in a limited edition of 350 numbered copies on *vélin de rives* paper (25 of which were *hors commerce*). Owing to the timing of the publication around the outbreak of the Second World War, there is no Blaizot catalogue that provides information as to price or subscription for the book.[81] The introduction by Guérin clarifies, however, the genesis of the work and the failed collaboration between Halévy and Degas. Although the two men had, as I noted above, strong psychological ties to the Second Empire, Degas's imagery was recognized as belonging to a radically different pictorial idiom, and Guérin highlights the extent to which Degas's works diverged 'from the tradition of insipid elegance of the Second Empire according to which the vignettes of Edmond Morin had been conceived…'.[82]

This chapter has located Degas's *Famille Cardinal* monotypes in the context of the publishing environment in which Halévy's stories were produced in order to highlight a major aesthetic divergence between the aims of writer and painter. While the reasons for Halévy's rejection of Degas's imagery remain uncertain, I have argued that the style of the monotypes risked undermining the conversational tone and complicity that the writer and his publishers offered their audience. Paradoxically, however, this uneasy relationship between image and text made their pairing commercially desirable as the *livre de peintre* became an established genre in the early decades of the twentieth century. Appealing to a style of production that privileged the work of artists unassociated with textual 'illustration', the posthumous engineering of *livres de peintre* from Degas's prints was both a sound publishing strategy and a way of giving risqué works such as the brothel monotypes a literary foundation that could facilitate their circulation.

I have argued that Degas's engagement with Halévy's light-hearted texts contributed to the artist's wider use of exclusion as an aesthetic strategy and provided him with a means of testing the viewer's expectations as to what kind of information a 'realist' image should properly convey. I have also shown that, in an important divergence from the stories, Degas's imagery disrupts conventions relating to the sexual power structure of the *coulisses* and, instead, reveals opportunities for the exercise of female agency. Although unauthorized by the artist, the Blaizot edition has the merit of bringing these innovative features of the imagery into relief by setting them against the conversational tone and character-driven plot of Halévy's texts. Rather than viewing the *Famille Cardinal*

monotypes as an isolated aspect of Degas's output or as a reflection of social life at the Opera, these images anticipate Degas's more radical experiments with techniques of exclusion in the pastels and monotypes that would occupy him in the final decades of the century.

---

[1] Degas's monotypes were initially thought to have been produced in the early 1880s (see Jean Adhémar and Françoise Cachin, *Degas: The Complete Etchings, Lithographs and Monotypes* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1986), 274 and Eugenia Parry Janis, *Degas Monotypes: Essay, Catalogue & Checklist*, exh. cat. (Greenwich, Conn: Fogg Art Museum and Harvard University, 1968), catalogue entries 195–231, np. More recent research dates production of the works in the late 1870s. This is based on the exhibition of some of the monotypes at the third Impressionist exhibition in 1877 (see Jules Clarétie's review of the exhibition, 'Le mouvement parisien, l'exposition des impressionnistes', *L'Indépendance belge*, 15 April, 1877) and on preliminary drawings in Degas's notebooks (see Theodore Reff, *The Notebooks of Edgar Degas*, 2 vols (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976), I, 126–7). See also Michael Pantazzi, 'Degas, Halévy, and the Cardinals' in Jean Sutherland Boggs, Douglas W. Druick, Henri Loyrette, Michael Pantazzi, and Gary Tinterow, *Degas*, exh. cat. (New York and Ottawa: The Metropolitan Museum of Art and the National Gallery of Canada, 1988), 280–4 (280).

[2] See, for example, Linda Nochlin, 'A House is not a Home: Degas and the Subversion of the Family' in *Dealing with Degas: Representations of Women and the Politics of Vision* (eds) Richard Kendall and Griselda Pollock (New York: Universe, 1992), 43–62; Carol Armstrong, *Odd Man Out: Readings of the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991, 62–72. Jill DeVonyar and Richard Kendall provide an excellent overview of this subject in *Degas and the Dance* exh. cat. (New York: Harry R. Abrams), 2002.

[3] Anna Sigrídur Arnar, *The Book as Instrument: Stéphane Mallarmé, the Artist's Book, and the Transformation of Print Culture* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2011), 108.

[4] *Le Corbeau, Poème par Edgar Poe, traduction française de Stéphane Mallarmé avec illustrations par Édouard Manet* (Paris: Richard Lesclide, 1875); Stéphane Mallarmé,

L'Après-midi d'un faune, avec frontispiece, fleurons et cul-de-lampe par Manet (Paris: Alphone Derenne, 1876).

[5] Theodore Reff, 'Degas and the Literature of his Time – I', *The Burlington Magazine*, 112:810 (Setp, 1970), 575–87 and 89; 'Degas and the Literature of his Time II', *The Burlington Magazine*, 112:811 (October, 1970), 674, 677–88.

[6] In this context, Reff focuses on Degas's response to Zola's naturalism, noting a comment by Degas reported by Daniel Halévy, 'En un trait, nous [peintres] en disons plus long qu'un littérateur en un volume'. Reff, 'Degas and the Literature of his Time', I, 585.

[7] See Henri Loyrette, 'Portrait d'amis sur la scène: Degas et Ludovic Halévy' in Henri Loyrette (ed.), *Entre le théâtre et l'histoire: La Famille Halévy (1760–1960)*, exh. cat. (Paris: Fayard and Réunion des musées nationaux, 1996), 178–95. On Degas's anti-semitism and the break-up of his friendship with Halévy see Linda Nochlin, 'Degas and the Dreyfus Affair: A Portrait of the Artist as an Anti-Semite' in Nochlin, *The Politics of Vision: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Art and Society* (Boulder, Colorado: Perseus, 1989), 141–69.

[8] Ludovic Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal, avant-propos de Marcel Guérin.* Édition illustrée d'un portrait de l'auteur et de 33 monotypes en noir et en couleurs par Edgar Degas (Paris: Blaizot & fils, 1938). The book was published in an edition of 350 copies on *papier vélin de Rives*. The book appeared in 1939, but the colophon states the date of printing as 1938.

[9] Keri Yousif, *Balzac, Grandville, and the Rise of Book Illustration* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 10.

[10] Ludovic Halévy, *Madame et Monsieur Cardinal,* vignettes by Edmond Morin (Paris, Michel-Levy, 1872); *Les Petites Cardinal*, douze vignettes par Henry Maigrot (Paris, Calmann Lévy, 1880); *La Famille Cardinal*, illustrations by Émile Mas (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1883); *La Famille Cardinal*, illustrations by Charles Léandre (Paris: Émile Testard, 1893), *La Famille Cardinal* illustrated by Albert Guillaume (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1907). For further detail on the publishing history of the stories, see Pantazzi, 'Degas, Halévy, and the Cardinals' in Boggs et.al., 280–4; Jonas Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck: Edgar Degas und die Wiederentdeckung der Monotypie im 19. Jahrhundert* (Paderborn: Wilhelm Fink, 2014), 189–203.

[11] See Jean-Pierre Halévy, 'Ludovic Halévy par lui-même' in Loyrette (ed.), *Entre le théâtre et l'histoire*, 136–61. Unless otherwise noted, translations are by the author.

[12] Vollard describes his own innovations in this field in *Souvenirs d'un marchand de tableaux* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2007), 277: 'De tout temps, j'ai aimé les estampes. A peine installé rue Lafitte, vers 1895, mon plus grand désir fut d'en éditer, mais en les demandant à des peintres. […] Mon idée, à moi, était de demander des gravures à des artistes qui n'étaient pas graveurs de profession. Ce qui pouvait être pris pour une gageure fut une grande réussite d'art'.

[13] Arnar, *The Book as Instrument*, 99 and 108–9. On the etching revival and its relation to reproducible works in other media see Eugenia Parry Janis, 'Setting the Tone – The Revival of Etching, The Importance of Ink' in Sue Welsh Reed, Eugenia Parry Janis, Barbara Stern Shapiro, David W. Kiehl, Colta Ives and Michael Mazur, *The Painterly Print: Monotypes from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, exh. cat. (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1980), 9–28; Stephen Bann, *Distinguished Images: Prints in the Visual Economy of Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), ch. 5.

[14] Michel Melot, *L'Estampe impressionniste* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale, 1974), 139–44.

[15] See for example Michèle Hannoosh's discussion of the reasons given by Alphonse Lemerre for rejecting Manet and Mallarmé's *Le Corbeau,* Hannoosh, 'From Nevermore to Eternity: Mallarmé, Manet and "The Raven"' in (ed.) Jean Khalfa, *The Dialogue between Painting and Poetry: Livres d'artistes 1874–1999* (Cambridge: Black Apollo Press, 2001), 37–58 (37). See also Arnar, *The Book as Instrument*, 105.

[16] For details of the project see Douglas Druick and Peter Zegers, 'Degas and the Printed Image 1856–1914' in Sue Welsh Reed and Barbara Stern Shapiro with contributions by Clifford S. Ackley and Roy L. Perkinson, Douglas Druick and Peter Zegers, *Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker*, exh. cat. (Boston, Mass.: Museum of the Fine Arts, 1984), xv–lxxii. See also Pantazzi, 'Degas, Halévy, and the Cardinals' in Boggs et. al, *Degas*, 280–4; Markus Müller 'Camille Pissarro, « fast so etwas wie der liebe Gott des Impressionismus » in (ed.) Markus Müller*, Camille Pissarro: Mit den Augen eines Impressionisten*, with

contributions by Alexander Gaude, Valérie Sueur-Hermel and Ann-Katrin Hahn (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 2013), 6–67 (12–14).

[17] Reff reads the images as portrayals of Halévy in 'Degas and the Literature of his Time II', 678; see also Nochlin, 'A House is not a Home', 53–4 and Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 200.

[18] See Baraba Stern Shapiro, catalogue entry on *Pauline and Virginie Conversing with Admirers*, in Reed et. al., *The Painterly Print*, 109; Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 178.

[19] See, for example, Yousif's discussion of the illustrated book as a space of rivalry in *Balzac, Grandville, and the Rise of Book Illustration,* 2–4 and Richard M. Berrong's account of an illustrator's ability to derive new meaning from literary texts in 'When art and literature unite: illustrations that create a new art form', *Word & Image*, 23:3 (July–September), 2007, 362–75.

[20] Georges Rivière, *Mr. Degas: Bourgeois de Paris* (Paris: Floury, 1938), 97: 'Peut-être Degas a-t-il été tenté d'illustrer les Combats de Françoise Duquesnoy que Duranty publia en 1873? Une toile de Degas, intitulée Intérieur, qui date de 1874 ou 1875, parait avoir été inspirée par ce roman. Toutefois, Degas avait trop d'imagination et d'indépendance pour s'astreindre à suivre un auteur à la manière ordinaire des illustrateurs et selon les exigences du lecteur et de l'écrivain'. Unless otherwise noted, translations are by the author.

[21] Ludovic Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal* (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1883), 36: 'Le 22 novembre 1871, à neuf heures du soir, je suivais un des soixante couloirs qui se mêlent et s'entortillent dans le dédale des bâtiments de l'Opéra'.

[22] Eugenia Parry Janis, 'The Role of the Monotype in the Working Method of Degas – I', *The Burlington Magazine*, 109:766 (Jan. 1967), 20–9 (21). See also Janis's discussion of the technical features of Degas's work on these images in production in Janis, *Degas Monotypes*, catalogue entries 46–50, n.p.

[23] Edmond Duranty, *La Nouvelle Peinture: A propos du groupe d'artistes qui expose dans les Galeries Durand-Ruel* [1876], introduction and notes by Marcel Guérin (Paris: Floury, 1946), 46: 'Les aspects des choses et des gens ont mille manières d'être imprévues, dans la réalité. Notre point de vue n'est pas toujours au centre d'une pièce avec ses deux parois

latérales qui fuient vers celle du fond; il ne ramène pas toujours les lignes et les angles des corniches avec une régularité et une symétrie mathématiques…'.

[24] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 36: 'De la loge des coryphées, je vis sortir une quinzaine de jeunes personnes qui, bavardant, riant, criant, se disputant et se bouscoulant, se précipitèrent comme une avalanche. Je me plaquai contre le mur et fus salué au passage d'une quinzaine de: «Bonjour, vous… Tiens, vous voilà… Qu'est-ce que vous venez faire ici?» Je laissai passer respectueusement cette agréable trombe, et tout ce petit monde pimpant, fringant, décolleté, vêtu de soie et de satin, dégringola lestement des escaliers'.

[25] Clifford Ackley, 'The Painter as Printmaker' in *Edgar Degas: The Painter as Printmaker*, Sue Welsh Reed and Barbara Stern Shapiro with contributions by Clifford S. Ackley and Roy L. Perkinson. Essay by Douglas Druick and Peter Zegers (Boston, Mass.: Museum of the Fine Arts, 1984), exh. cat., ix–xiv (xiii).

[26] Peter Parshall, 'Unfinished Business: The Problem of Resolution in Printmaking' in Peter Parshall, Stacey Sell and Judith Brodie, *The Unfinished Print*, exh. cat., (Washington: The National Gallery of Art Washington in association with Lund Humphries, 2001), 11–54 (45).

[27] See also Richard Thomson on the role of composition in the figuring of temporality in the *Famille Cardinal* monotypes in *Waiting*, 66.

[28] Charles Baudelaire, 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne', *Œuvres complètes*, edited by Claude Pichois, vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, Éditions de la pléiade, 1976), 683–724 (724): 'la beauté passagère, fugace, de la vie présente'.

[29] For further discussion of the 'old' Opera house and its backstage life see DeVonyar and Kendall, *Degas and the Dance*, 64–5. On the construction and inauguration of the Palais Garnier see Gérard Fontaine, *L'Opéra de Charles Garnier: Architecture et décor intérieur* (Paris: Éditions du patrimoine, 2000), 13–21. On the dismissal of Haussmann from office in 1870 and the subsequent completion of the Avenue de l'Opéra see David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (New York and London: Routledge, 2003), 99–101.

[30] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 65: 'La réponse est partout la même: « Virginie Cardinal n'est pas rentrée à l'Opéra après la guerre, et Pauline Cardinal n'a pas reparu après l'incendie. » Plus de petites Cardinal! plus de Madame Cardinal! La chaîne était brisée'.

Degas had also depicted rehearsals at the old Opera. See, for example, *Dance Studio at the Opera on the Rue Le Peletier* (1872, Musée d'Orsay).

[31] Daniel Halévy, *Degas parle* (Paris: Éditions de Fallois, 1995), 31: 'Le Paris du Second Empire avait été le lieu d'un ardent et fécond travail: Paris était la ville de Sainte-Beuve et de Baudelaire, le lieu d'Europe peut-être où la réalité était saisie avec le plus de force. La conversation n'a certes jamais été meilleure qu'en ces dîners Magny où se rencontraient Sainte-Beuve, Flaubert, Renan et Berthelot. Or, ce que j'entendais dans l'intime de ma maison, c'était un echo des dîners Magny'.

[32] Daniel Halévy, *Degas parle*, 32: 'étranger à l'éclat tapageur du Second Empire public'.

[33] Daniel Halévy, *Degas parle*, 32 and 34: 'un de ces enfants de ce Second Empire secret'.

[34] See Armstrong, Odd man Out, 69–70; Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 178–9.

[35] Halévy, La *Famille Cardinal*, 69: 'Nous étions un soir à l'Opéra, dans le pauvre vieil Opéra brûlé de la rue Drouot. […] il y avait dans l'ancien Opéra de vieux couloirs délicieux avec un tas de petits coins et recoins mal éclairé par des quinquets fumeux'.

[36] Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, 66; Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 178–9.

[37] Clara Sadoun-Édouard, '*La Vie parisienne* ou la mise en scène de la mondanité', *Médias 19* [on-line], 'Théâtralisation des écritures de presse', (eds) Olivier Bara et Marie-Ève Thérenty, *Presse et scène au XIXe siècle*, Publications: 19 October, 2012, URL. Accessed 5 August, 2014.

[38] Sadoun-Édouard, '*La Vie parisienne* ou la mise en scène de la mondanité', para. 8.

[39] Kathryn Brown, *Women Readers in French Painting 1870–1890: A Space for the Imagination* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012), 50–64.

[40] Sadoun-Édouard, '*La Vie parisienne* ou la mise en scène de la mondanité', para. 9.

[41] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 64: 'Nous causions… Nous bavardions… Nous parlions du temps passé, de la vieille sale de la rue Le Peletier, de l'Opéra d'avant guerre et d'avant l'incendie…'.

[42] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 97: 'j'étais allé, entre le second et le troisième acte d'Aïda, bavarder un peu avec ma vieille amie Madame de X***'.

[43] Hippolyte Taine, 'Préface', in Émile Marcelin, *Souvenirs de la vie parisienne*, 3rd edn (Paris: Victor-Havard, 1888), xvii–iii: 'comme on cause au cercle entre hommes, comme

on cause dans un salon devant des femmes du monde ou du demi-monde, c'est-à-dire vivement, librement, parfois trop librement, sans prétentions d'auteur, sans autre objet que d'amuser'.

[44] Victor Cochinat, 'La Causerie populaire', *La Causerie*, May 24, 1862, 1–2: 'cette autre chose qu'il adore avec fanatisme: le théâtre'.

[45] Sylvie Jouanny, *L'Actrice et ses doubles: Figures et représentations de la femme de spéctacle à la fin du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Droz, 2002), 24: 'dénoncer la sociéte du Second Empire, rongée par le sexe et la cupidité et incapable de produire autre chose que du Meilhac et Halévy revus par Offenbach'.

[46] Anon., '*Criquette*, par Ludovic Halévy', book review, *Le Livre*, 10 June, 1883, 380: 'un rude coup à l'école naturaliste'.

[47] Georges Rivière, *Mr Degas*, 98: 'C'est correctement écrit, bien construit et très ennuyeux, conformément aux principes du réalisme'.

[48] Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 178–9. The implications of withholding information from the viewer (and compositional techniques used to achieve this) are discussed by Beyer at 198–9.

[49] Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 202. It seems arbitrary, however, to select the *abonnés* as charcters with whom the viewer should identify. Beyer also discusses the relationship between image and text in terms of the production of a 'storyboard' that offers 'ein Äquivalent gegenüber der vom Text selbst entwickelten Dynamik der Erzählung' (178). While such an interpretation makes sense of the variations of certain scenes, in my view it underestimates the degree of aesthetic divergence between Halévy's texts and Degas's images.

[50] Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, 166.

[51] Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, 166–7 and 184.

[52] Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Certains*, 27. See also Richard Thomson's discussion of Degas's production of 'sparser, more economical images' in the late 1890s and a shift in the 'naturalism' of his work in *Waiting*, 31.

[53] Julius Meier-Graefe, *Degas*, trans. J. Hobroyd–Reece (London: E. Benn, 1923), 79.

[54] See Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, Ch. 4.

[55] See Kathryn Brown, 'Touch and Vision in Edgar Degas's Darkfield Monotypes', *Print Quarterly*, XXXI: 4 (Dec. 2014), 395–405.

[56] Charles Harrison, *Painting the Difference: Sex and Spectator in Modern Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 115.

[57] Harrison, *Painting the Difference*, 87–115.

[58] Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, 167. One can also link this to the increasing self-containment of Degas's art in the 1890s as discussed by Richard Kendall. See Richard Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism*, exh. cat. (London and Chicago: National Gallery Publications in Association with the Art Institute of Chicago, 1996), 82.

[59] Armstrong discusses the *Famille Cardinal* stories as representing the narrative perspective of the *gros monsieur*. This is interpreted as a 'mocking' style, an example of the narrator's social power, and an address to the reader as an 'upper class confidantes' (See Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, 65–6). I take a different view by drawing attention to the complicity that the narratives foster with a much broader readership.

[60] Élisabeth Parinet, *Une histoire de l'édition à l'époque contemporaine* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2004), 198.

[61] Daniel Halévy, *Degas parle*, 34: 'un lieu de rencontre autant qu'un lieu de spectacles'.

[62] For a detailed consideration of the images of dancers' mothers see Thomson, *Waiting,* 37–41; Nochlin, 'A House is not a Home', 54–6. For a contemporary account see Jules Clarétie, *La Vie à Paris 1881*, Année 2, 4th edn (Paris: V. Havard, 1881), 308–11.

[63] Tamar Garb, *The Body in Time: Figures of Femininity in Late Nineteenth-Century France*, Murphy Lecture Series (Seattle WA: Spencer Museum of Art and University of Washington Press, 2008), 22–5. See also Laura Mulvey's famous account of 'scopophilia' in *Visual and Other Pleasures* (Houndmills: Palgrave, 1989), 16–24.

[64] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 69: 'Nous avions attrapé les deux petites Cardinal dans un de ces couloirs…'.

[65] Marilyn R. Brown, 'An Entrepreneur in Spite of Himself: Edgar Degas and the market' in (eds) Thomas L. Haskell and Richard F. Teichgraeber III, *The Culture of the Market: Historical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 261–92 (285–6).

[66] Armstrong, *Odd Man Out*, 69.

[67] Consider, for example, works by Jean Béraud, Jean-Louis Forain, Fernand Pelez, and Léon Comerre. This style of genre painting is discussed by Carol Armstrong in *Odd Man Out: Readings of the Work and Reputation of Edgar Degas* (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2003), 62–5 and by Richard Thomson, *Waiting* (Malibu, California: Getty Museum Studies on Art, 1995), 31–7 and 42–7.

[68] See also Beyer's discussion of the ways in which Degas's imagery depicts and generates confusion through the portrayal of disoriented individuals, the inclusion of gaps within the depicted scenes, and contrasts between light and darkness in the images. Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 198–9.

[69] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 36 ('une quinzaine de jeunes personnes') and 65–6 ('un peloton de jolis petits chevaux'). A similar description is found in Halévy's memoirs entitled *Notes et Souvenirs 1871–1872*, 14th edn (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1889), 107

[70] Flint's comments are made with reference to Auguste Toulmouche's depiction of a group of attractive and fashionably dressed women readers searching through books that have been deliberately hidden from them in *Forbidden Fruit* of 1865. See Kate Flint, *The Woman Reader 1837–1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 253.

[71] Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal*, 15: 'Il est laid, il est ridicule… Je suis sûre de ne pas l'aimer… C'est celui-là que je veux!'

[72] Janis, *Degas Monotypes*, catalogue entry 47, n.p.

[73] See Richard Thompson, *Degas: The Nudes*, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1988) 87; Parshall, 'The Darker Side of Light' in Peter Parshall with H. Clayson, C. Hertel, and N. Penny, *The Darker Side of Light: Arts of Privacy, 1850–1900* (Washington and Burlington: Lund Humphries and the National Gallery of Art, 2009), 27l; Charles Harrison, *Painting the Difference: Sex and Spectator in Modern Art* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2005), 94; Brown, *Women Readers in French Painting*, 174–6.

[74] Ludovic Halévy, Monsieur et Madame Cardinal, 9th edn, douze vignettes par Edmond Morin (Paris: Michel Lévy, 1873), *Les Petites Cardinal,* douze vignettes par Henry Maigrot (Paris: Calmann Lévy, 1880), and *La Famille Cardinal* with illustrations by Émile Mas (Paris: Calmann, Lévy, 1883).

[75] Pantazzi, 'Degas, Halévy, and the Cardinals' in Boggs et. al, *Degas*, 280. See also Beyer, *Zwischen Zeichnung und Druck*, 202–03.

[76] Rebecca A Rabinow, 'Vollard's Livres d'Artiste' in *Cézanne to Picasso: Ambroise Vollard, Patron of the Avant-Garde*, ed. Rebecca A. Rabinow (Metropolitan Museum of Art New York, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2006), 197–212 (212, n. 69). Guy de Maupassant, *La Maison Tellier*. Illustrations d'Edgar Degas (Paris: Ambroise Vollard, 1934); Pierre Louÿs, *Mimes des courtisanes de Lucien*. Illustrations d'Edgar Degas (Paris: Ambroise Vollard, 1935); Paul Valéry, *Degas Danse Dessin*. Illustrations d'Edgar Degas (Paris: Ambroise Vollard, 1936). Vollard had already worked with Degas in 1914 on the publication of a book that included signed reproductions of the artist's works: *Quatre-vingt-dix-huit reproductions signées par Degas* (Paris: Vollard, 1914).

[77] Rabinow, 'Vollard's Livres d'Artiste', 212, n. 69.

[78] Willa Z. Silverman, *The New Bibliopolis: French Book Collectors and the Culture of Print 1880–1914* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2008).

[79] Kathryn Brown, 'Introduction', (ed.) Kathryn Brown, *The Art Book Tradition in Twentieth-Century Europe*: *Picturing Language*; Elza Adamowicz, 'The Livre d'artiste in Twentieth-Century France', *French Studies*, LXIII: 2, 189–98.

[80] Rabinow, 'Vollard's Livres d'Artiste', 212, n. 69.

[81] According to information kindly provided by Claude Blaizot, the book was listed as 'in preparation' in the last catalogue produced by the publisher in 1939 (June, no. 294). Email from Claude Blaizot to the author, 4 September, 2014.

[82] Marcel Guérin, 'Introduction', Halévy, *La Famille Cardinal* (Blaizot edition).