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LITERATURE AND ART

PAUL SMITH

In an essay of this title published in 1910 the American critic, James QI Huneker, gave a short account of ‘art in fiction’ that could sum up received wisdom on the subject today. ‘Fiction about art and artists is rare’, Huneker began, adding: ‘this is good fiction, not the stuff ground out daily by the publishing mills for the gallery-gods’.¹ He continued: ‘It is to France that we must look for the classic novel dealing with painters and their painting, *Manette Salomon*, by Goncourt’.² Huneker did acknowledge, though only grudgingly, that other writers — Thackeray, Ouida, Disraeli, Bernard Shaw and Maupassant among others — had produced significant fiction on the subject of art. He also mentioned several works by Henry James, but argued dismissively that ‘it is the particular psychological problem involved rather than theories of art or personalities that steer Mr James’s cunning pen’. Huneker no less summarily dispatched the ‘facile, febrile skill’ Daudet had demonstrated in a description of a Salon opening, in *Le Nabab* of 1877,³ with the quip: ‘you feel that it comes from Goncourt and Zola’. However, as this comment indicates, Huneker did approve of *L’Œuvre*,⁴ which he regarded as ‘one of the better written books of Zola’. He also acknowledged Balzac’s *Le Chef-d’ Œuvre inconnu* (first published in 1831) as ‘the matrix of modern fiction’ concerned with art.⁶

By singling out these two works, along with *Manette Salomon* (1867), Huneker effectively enunciated his own canon of French art fiction,

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¹*Promenades of an Impressionist* (New York, Scribner, 1910), pp. 27790 (this quotation pp. 285-86).

²Jules and Edmond de Goncourt, *Manette Salomon*, 2 vols (Paris, Lacroix — Verboeckhoven, 1867).

³See Alphonse Daudet, *Le Nabab: mœurs parisiennes* (Paris, Charpentier, 1877), ch. 14.

⁴Émile Zola, *L’Œuvre* (Paris, Charpentier, 1886).

⁵Honoré de Balzac, ‘Le Chef-d’œuvre inconnu: conte fantastique’, *L’Artiste*, 1(1) (31 July 1831), 319-23 (‘Maitre Frenhofer’) and 1(2) (7 August 1831), 7-11 (‘Catherine Lescault’). The story was first published in book form in *Romans et contes philosophiques*, 2nd edn, volume III (Paris, Gosselin, 1832).

⁶The number of distinguished scholars who have written about this novella suggests this view is still widely shared today. See, for instance, Hubert Damisch, *Fenêtre jaune cadmium; ou, les dessous de la peinture* (Paris, Seuil, 1984); Georges Didi-Huberman, *La Peinture incarnée suivi de ‘Le Chef-d’œuvre inconnu’ de Balzac* (Paris, Minuit, 1985); P. Marot, ‘Le Chef d’œuvre inconnu ou l’irreprésentabilité de la représentation’, in *De la palette à l’écritoire*, ed. by Monique Chéfdor (Nantes, Éditions Joca Seria, 1997), I, 140-50; Arthur Danto, Introduction to *The Unknown Masterpiece*, trans. by Richard Howard (New York Review of Books, 2001), pp. vii–xxvii; and Hans Belting, *The Invisible Masterpiece*, trans. by Helen Atkins (London, Reaktion Books, 2001). *Le Chef-d’œuvre inconnu* was not without its precedents, however. See, for instance, Max Milner, ‘L’artiste comme personnage fantastique’, in *L’Artiste en représentation*, ed. By René De moris (Paris, Desjonquères, 1993), pp. 93–105, for Balzac’s debt to Hoffmann.

which he then reiterated by describing *L'Œuvre* as 'an enormously clever book' that derives 'in the main, from Manette Salomon and Balzac's Frenhofer'.⁷ It may seem inconsistent that Huneker lavished praise on the 'half forgotten trilogy' of art novels George Moore published in the 1880s,⁸ but Moore himself acknowledged that the first of these — *A Modern Lover* of 1883 — was an 'uncouth text [devised] out of his memories of Balzac, Zola, and Goncourt'.⁹ By the beginning of the twentieth century, therefore, it would seem that the now familiar trio of texts produced by these writers was already firmly established as the pick of the crop.

Huneker's other opinions suggest that his judgment was highly questionable, as does his assertion: 'you cannot find a Mildred Lawson [a woman painter from Moore's *Celibates* of 1895 whose friends meet 'the Impressionists'] in Goncourt or Flaubert'.¹⁰ He thus reminds us that no canon is uncontentious, while at the same time alerting us to the fact that the status enjoyed by the 'big three' has resulted in innumerable novels and stories (and plays) about French art from the period 1820–1900 (written in English as well as French) being consigned to oblivion. This special issue of *French Studies* will therefore seek to look afresh at the canon, and outside it, with the aim of finding new contexts for familiar works, and with a view to identifying texts whose intrinsic interest or historical significance is yet to be exhausted, or even examined at all.¹¹

⁷On the relationship between *L'Œuvre*, and *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* and *Manette Salomon*, see Theodore Bowie, *The Painter in French Fiction* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina, 1950), pp. 5–30; Patrick Brady, 'Les sources littéraires de *L'Œuvre* de Zola', *Revue de l'Université de Bruxelles*, 16 (1964), 413–25; and Robert J. Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet: A Study of 'L'Œuvre'* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1968), pp. 6–14. On *L'Œuvre*'s relation to Balzac's 'La fille aux yeux d'or', see Jeannine Guichardet, 'Un artiste à l'œuvre: Claude Lantier', in *L'Artiste en représentation*, pp. 107–23 (p. 110).

⁸*A Modern Lover*, 3 vols (London, Tinsley, 1883). The others were *Spring Days* (London, Vizetelly, 1888) and *Mike Fletcher* (London, Ward & Downey, 1889).

⁹*Lewis Seymour and Some Women* (London, Heineman, 1917), p. v. This reference is cited in Milton 70 Chaikin, 'The Composition of George Moore's *A Modern Lover*', *Comparative Literature*, 7 (1955), 259–64 (p. 259).

¹⁰See George Moore, *Celibates: Three Tales* (London, Walter Scott, 1895), pp. 1–312, and especially pp. 99–100, 175, and 184. Huneker had in mind Gustave Flaubert, *L'Éducation sentimentale: histoire d'un jeune homme*, 2 vols (Paris, Lévy, 1870). See *Promenades*, p. 288. On this novel, see Maurice Z. Shroeder, *Icarus: The Image of the Artist in French Romanticism* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1961), pp. 160–62, and Maurice Beebe, *Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts: The Artist as Hero in Fiction from Goethe to Joyce* (New York University Press, 1964), p. 60.

¹¹In addition to the sources already cited, several other works have also undertaken this kind of investigation, including: *Artistic Relations: Literature and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-century France*, ed. by Peter Collier and Robert Lethbridge (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1994); *Text into Image: Image into Text*, ed. by Jeff Morrison and Florian Krobb (Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1997); *L'Image de l'artiste*, ed. by Pascal Griener and Peter J. Schneemann (Bern, Peter Lang, 1998); and *Le Dialogue des arts*, ed. by Jean-Pierre Landry and Pierre Servet (Lyon, CEDIC, 2001). See also Joy Newton, 'The Atelier Novel: Painters as Fictions', in *Impressions of French Modernity*, ed. by Richard Hobbs (Manchester University Press, 1998), pp. 173–89; Philippe Hamon, 'Le topos de l'atelier', in *L'Artiste en représentation*, pp. 125–44; and Jean-Didier Wagneur, 'Quand le roman porte clefs', in J.-J.L. [Jean-Jacques Lefrèrere], M.P. [Michel Pierssens] et al., *Les Romans à clefs: troisième colloque des Invalides* (Paris, Du Lérot, 1999), pp. 47–50 (which mentions novels touching on art, and literature, by Murger, Harry Alis, Joseph Caraguel, Émile Goudeau, Georges Duval, Léo Trézénik and Raymond Maygrier).

One way of explaining how some art fictions (rather than others) have risen to prominence is that, at the time of their appearance, they addressed concerns that had particular significance. By this account, Balzac's novella did not serve as the prototype for much subsequent art-fiction simply because it gave shape to a new conception of the artist as someone poised between the conditions of genius and *raté*. Rather, as Marc Gotlieb argues in his essay, 'Pedagogical Disaster in Romantic Art Fiction', the poignancy of the Frenhofer type was also a function of how it dramatized (albeit in historical guise) the relatively novel predicament of a lone, individual painter working at the margins of traditional institutional structures, who enjoyed freedom only at the risk of meeting with incomprehension.

If the Romantic conception of the artist as misunderstood genius was in fact a sublimation of the very real alienation experienced by his real counter-part — especially as *laissez-faire* economics increasingly decided the structure of artistic practice and the market as the century wore on — this would make sense of the lasting success the type enjoyed, and of Frenhofer's touchstone status among avant-garde painters and theorists in particular. The version of Castagnary's 'Salon' of 1860 published in the *Almanach parisien*, for example, ends with the revelation that the critic's interlocutor, who is as disenchanted with the formulaic art of the Salon as he is himself, is none other than 'Maître Frenhofer'.¹² 'Frenhofer' (as he called him) also served Cézanne as a model, along with other literary seers whose steadfast individualism brought them only incomprehension, ostracism, and ultimately, death.¹³

By analogy, the success of *Manette Salomon* rested to a considerable extent on its ability to revitalize the *topos* of the isolated genius by characterizing its protagonist, Coriolis, as a hypersensitive 'temperament' whose idiosyncratic colour 'sensations' made his work unique, and hence potentially marketable, but at the same time placed it on the borderline of comprehensibility.¹⁴ Huneker described *Manette Salomon* as 'that breviary for painters which so far back as 1867 anticipated . . . the discoveries, the experiments, the practice of the naturalistic-impressionistic groups from Courbet to Cézanne'.¹⁵ Although this teleological conception of its significance is

¹²See Jules Antoine Castagnary, 'Salon en raccourci', *L'Almanach parisien pour l'année 1860* (Paris, Pick, 1860), pp. 111-23. I am grateful to Leah Kharibian for alerting me to this version of Castagnary's text, which does not appear in his collected Salons.

¹³See Adrien Chappuis, *The Drawings of Paul Cézanne: a Catalogue Raisonné* (Greenwich, CT, New York Graphic Society, 1973), I, pp. 5051; Joachim Gasquet, *Cézanne* (1921; repr. Paris, BernheimJeune, 1926), pp. 39, 67 and 152; and Émile Bernard, 'Souvenirs sur Paul Cézanne', *Mercure de France*, 69(247) (1 October 1907), 385-404 (p. 403).

¹⁴See *Manette Salomon*, II, pp. 175-78 and pp. 265-66.

¹⁵*Promenades*, p. 289. Cf. p. 290: 'No such psychologic manual of the painter's art has ever appeared before or since Manette Salomon. It was the Goncourts who . . . foresaw the future of painting as well as of fiction.'

misleading, *Manette Salomon* was a mandatory read for any 1860s art student with avant-garde aspirations — at least according to Frantz Jourdain's semi-autobiographical novel, *L'Atelier Chantorel* of 1893, where the student, Dorsner, describes it as: 'Un beau livre Une vraie revelation.'¹⁶

(Cézanne also seems to have emulated Coriolis, since the phrase — 'optique personnelle' — that Goncourt used to describe his character's way of seeing turns up in Emile Bernard's account of the real painter's sense of his own vision.¹⁷) *L'Œuvre*, of course, rehearses many of the same themes as its two illustrious predecessors, but it was perhaps this rather derivative character that made it one of Zola's least popular novels.¹⁸ By 1886, in other words, the topos of the marginalized artist poised on the knife-edge between genius and insanity had become a little stale — as had its stereotypically misogynistic characterization of the artist's female partner.

A more old-fashioned view of the canon is that it enshrines those works that informed opinion has held in high esteem for good reason, and which have stood the test of time because of qualities they actually possess.¹⁹ Even a cursory reading of many a piece of art-literary detritus lends credence to this view (as does more sustained attention), but there are 'half-forgotten' art novels that display genuine literary qualities (as opposed to curiosity value) whose obscurity seems unwarranted. This is true of the book discussed in Joy Newton's essay, 'Cézanne's Literary Incarnations', that was also a likely source for *L'Œuvre*: Marius Roux's witty, acerbic, and compassionate *La Proie et l'ombre*, of 1878²⁰ — if the judgement of Huysmans and Mallarmé, both of whom complimented Roux on his novel, is to be trusted.²¹ According to Anna Gruetzner Robins as well as Huneker, the same applies to the novel featured in her essay, 'George Moore's *A Modern Lover*: Introducing the French Impressionists to London'. Moore was, as Huneker rightly claims, 'the critical pioneer of the impressionistic movement [who] first told London about Manet, Monet, Degas', and he has enjoyed some status on this account. However, as Gruetzner Robins demonstrates, Moore also developed a highly personal style in *A Modern*

¹⁶*L'Atelier Chantorel: mœurs d'artistes* (Paris, Charpentier, 1893), pp. 216–17. Jourdain's novel is dedicated 'Au précurseur génial de l'art moderne, à Edmond de Goncourt'.

¹⁷See *Manette Salomon*, II, p. 265, and Emile Bernard, 'Paul Cézanne', *L'Occident*, July 1904, p. 22.

Cézanne's several expressions of enthusiasm for *Manette Salomon* are recorded in Robert Ratcliffe, 'Cézanne's Working Methods', unpublished doctoral thesis, University of London, 1950, p. 372.

¹⁸See Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet*, pp. 1 and 251, n. 1.

¹⁹The argument is from David Hume, 'On the Standard of Taste' (1757), in *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*, ed. by Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis, Liberty Classics, 1985), pp. 226–44.

²⁰Marius Roux, *La Proie et l'ombre* (Paris, Dentu, 1878). See Paul Smith, 'Paul Cézanne's Primitive Self and Related Fictions', in *The Life and the Work: Art and Biography*, ed. by Charles G. Salas (Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2007), pp. 56–86. The present author will also publish a critical edition of this novel, in a translation by Richard Collins and Fiona Cox, with Penn State University Press in 2007. Roux was Zola's oldest friend, and a companion of Cézanne's in the 1860s.

²¹See Joris Karl Huysmans, '*La Proie et l'ombre* de Marius Roux', *L'Artiste* (Brussels), 20 April 1878, and Mallarmé's letter to Roux of 30 April 1878, cited in Stéphane Mallarmé, *Correspondence*, ed. by Henri Mondor and Lloyd James Austin, vol. 2 (Paris, Gallimard, 1965), pp. 174–75.

Lover, which could capture in language the kinds of effects the Impressionists had rendered in paint. It stands by itself, in other words, irrespective of any virtue it accrues vicariously. Peter Read pursues a similar line of thought in his essay, 'Pierre Louÿs, Rodin and *Aphrodite*: Sculpture in Fiction and on the Stage, 1895 to 1914', suggesting that Louÿs's best-seller, although largely overlooked as literature nowadays, nevertheless remains significant for its morality, and its musical, transparent and 'pure' (Mallarmé an) language.

Of course, attempts have been made periodically to revise the canon of 'the literature of art', but one major obstacle to these efforts is the persistent belief, dating from Huneker's time at least, that Balzac's *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* is the origin and paradigm of all subsequent art fiction of any value. It is probably the case that *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* did serve as a model for *Manette Salomon*, and for *L'Œuvre*, as well as influencing Moore's *Celibates* (a 'very Balzacian title' for Huneker), and Henry James's 'The Madonna of the Future' (in which one character even refers to 'that terrible little tale of Balzac's').²² However, as Gotlieb demonstrates, it was far from unique among fictions of the period addressing the lone artist's changing status. In 1833, only two years after it first appeared, O. Charlet published an anthology of stories about beleaguered artists, *Coups de pinceaux*, and in the same year, Charpentier published the novel that forms the subject of Stephen Bann's essay, 'The Studio as a Scene of Emulation: Marceline Desbordes-Valmore's *L'Atelier d'un peintre*', which is set largely in the studio of the author's uncle, Constant Desbordes, an important figure for a generation of artists aiming to steer a path between emulation and (imaginary) parricide in the attempt to emancipate itself from the legacy of David.

Many texts belonging to 'the literature of art' do undoubtedly issue from the 'matrix' provided by Balzac's novella, but many do not — for the simple reason that the family resemblances constituting the genre are neither finite nor fixed forever, but are instead manifold and historically contingent. *L'Œuvre*, for example, does indeed share something of the 'philosophical' dimension of its predecessor,²³ but it has something in common too with more recent *romans à clef*, which signal their topicality by employing subtitles like *roman parisien*, or *roman contemporain*, and thereby solicit a particular mode of attention.

Traditional conceptions of genre are hierarchical, and so help bolster the canon by implicitly ranking the different literary forms. By corollary, the vast majority of the innumerable (and admittedly often trivial) plays relating to art performed in nineteenth-century France have been ignored

²²Cited in Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet*, pp. 9, and 253, n. 31. See also Beebe, *Ivory Towers*, pp. 197 and 201.

²³See Wagner, 'Quand le roman porte clefs'.

— even though some of these works sometimes rehearse similar themes, or employ comparable narrative strategies, to their novelistic counterparts. *La Cigale* (1877) by Meilhac and Halévy,²⁴ for example, along with *Les Impressionnistes, comédie-vaudeville en un acte* (1879) by Eugène Grangé and Victor Bernard, strive to normalize the marginal Impressionist by representing him as a devoted lover, free of venal motivations. To this extent they have something in common with Philippe Burty's *Grave imprudence* of 1880,²⁵ which tells of the Impressionist artist, Brissot's, attempts to achieve success and social legitimacy by capitalizing on the affection of a Countess with whom he is also infatuated. All three texts, in other words, seem concerned with the morally complex effects that laissez-faire economics had on the independent painter. So too, according to Anna Gruetzner Robins, does *A Modern Lover*, although here the protagonist, Lewis Seymour, exploits the affection of his admirer, Mrs Bethan, with cynical venality, thus echoing on a grander scale how Germain Rambert in *La Proie et l'ombre* takes merciless advantage of his less affluent mistress, the hapless Caroline Duhamel. At any event, it evidently impoverishes the novel and short story to read them in isolation from popular dramatic works such as those mentioned, just as much as it does to see any of these texts as unconnected to a common social and economic context.

It could also appear natural that the more serious examples of narrative fiction have enjoyed the most acute scholarly attention. However, as Joy Newton amply demonstrates in her essay on Cézanne's literary incarnations, it is necessary in order to understand *L'Œuvre* fully to consider it in the context of a whole series of related works whose tone varies from outright caricature to high seriousness, and which characterize their own 'Cézannes' accordingly as a buffoon, a maniac and an exponent of an esoteric and metaphysical Provençal nationalism. Much the same applies to literary representations of Courbet. Before Bongrand in *L'Œuvre*, for example, there was a character named 'Bécourt' who is abandoned by two prospective students — after one of them has a bizarre dream of reigning amongst 'savages' on a desert island in Germain Picard's zany and wholly inappropriate (given Courbet's opposition to forming a school) fantasy of pedagogic disaster, 'Un peintre sur le throne, ou le réalisme triomphant' of 1876.²⁶ A character named 'Courbet' also appeared in Étienne Baudry's series of imaginary discussions, *Le Camp des bourgeois* of 1868 (which was illustrated by the real Courbet). Here he is a proponent of the scandalous (but remarkably prescient) idea that modern railway

²⁴The play was first performed on 6 October. See John Rewald, *The History of Impressionism* (1946 Revised edition London, Secker & Warburg, 1973), pp. 408, and 435, n. 18, which mentions an account by Sacha Guitry suggesting that Monet and Renoir painted sets for the third act.

²⁵On this novel, see Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet*, pp. 15-16.

²⁶See Germain Picard, *Artistes et bourgeois* (Paris, Derenne, 1876), pp. 1-107.

stations, being ‘vastes, hauts, aérés et pleins de lumière’, should be used for exhibiting modern paintings, especially ambitious, social-relevant, examples of ‘la vraie peinture’.²⁷ Before that, a Courbet of sorts had turned up in the shape of Lavertujeon in Champfleury’s eccentric account of F. C. Denecourt’s activities in the forest of Fontainebleau, *Les Amis de la nature* of 1859, as the author of a still life of a ‘séditieux’ and ‘démagogique’ cheese rejected by the Salon Jury.²⁸

Fragments like these suggests that the ‘archaeology’ of nineteenth-century French art fiction is far from complete, but over and above any imperative imposed by the wish for completeness, there are several specific and compelling reasons for attempting such a project. For one thing, many texts aside from Huneker’s three favourites had an impact on artistic practice, not least because, in dramatizing the predicament of the *maître*, genius, or *raté*, they allowed artists an imaginative space in which they could experiment with assuming different creative and professional roles. Cézanne, for one, not only identified with the artists pictured in *Le Chef d’oeuvre inconnu* and *Manette Salomon*, but both emulated and repudiated the different representations of his own artistic and personal ‘impotence’ offered by Duranty, Roux, Zola and others.²⁹ Indeed, the fact that Cézanne appeared in so many stories as the *enfant terrible* of the avant-garde, rather as Courbet had, may even indicate that he aspired to assume personalities or personae he had encountered in fiction.

Novels, of course, did not just empower their male readers. They also contributed to restricting the roles deemed acceptable for women by continually defining them in opposition to masculine creativity.³⁰ This conception takes an extreme form in Edmond de Goncourt’s *Les Frères Zemganno* of 1879, where the creative male symbolized by Gianni Zemganno is incapacitated by his jealous (and unnatural)rival, la Tompkins.³¹ As Gotlieb points out, other works including *Le Chef-d’oeuvre inconnu*, *Manette Salomon* and *L’Œuvre*, treat the legitimate claims of the

²⁷ *Le Camp des bourgeois* (Paris, Dentu, 1868), pp. 273-91 (these citations from pp. 280-82).

²⁸ Cited in Rewald, *The History of Impressionism*, p. 42. See Champfleury, *Œuvres nouvelles: Les Amis de la nature, avec un frontispice d’après un dessin de Gustave Courbet, et précédés d’une caractéristique des œuvres de l’auteur par Edmond Duranty* (Paris, Poulet Malassis et de Broise, 1859). This citation, for which I am grateful to Ed Lilley, is from *Le Violon de faïence. L’Avocat qui trompe son client, Les Amis de la nature, Les Enfants du professeur Turck* (Paris, Hetzel, 1862), p. 136.

²⁹ Duranty represented Cézanne as a paranoid and hapless lover in the unpublished story unearthed in Mario Péroche, ‘La double vie de Louis Séguin’ par Duranty’, *Gazette des beaux-arts*, sixth series, 88 (1976), 235-39. The word ‘impuissance’ of its cognates are used in Roux, *La Proie et l’ombre*, pp. 35 and 326, and numerous times in *L’Œuvre*, notably on the last page, where Sandoz states of Claude: ‘Il a avoué son impuissance et il s’est tué’ (p. 491).

³⁰ See, for instance, Lynda Nead, ‘Seductive Canvases: Visual Mythologies of the Artist and Artistic Creativity’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 18 (1995), 59-69. See also Alphonse Daudet, *Les Femmes d’artistes* (Paris, Lemerre, 1874).

³¹ See Shroeder, *Icarus*, pp. 222-23.

artist's partner on his affection as deeply incompatible with his devotion to art, and so she becomes a rival to art itself.

Fictional representations of art can also be valuable documents for understanding artistic practices and debates. Stephen Bann argues, for example, that Marceline Desbordes-Valmore's *L'Atelier d'un peintre* provides a unique insight into the artistic values of the period. Bann, however, is careful to emphasize the irreducibility of the narrative to a 'punctual' representation of the goings-on in Constant Desbordes's studio, not least because the author's experience of this space was restricted, and her book written with considerable hindsight. Bann's approach is to be contrasted therefore with that of art historians such as John Rewald, who despite his robust advocacy of historical 'truth' saw no problem in directly transposing content from Zola's novels and stories into his biography of Cézanne (although this is only apparent in the two earliest editions of 1936 and 1939, which have footnotes).³² Zola's work is, of course, a special case: the voluminous preparatory notes to *L'Œuvre* testify to the extent to which it incorporated real characters and events. It nevertheless remains disingenuous to assume that this text is straightforwardly veridical, since even when it characterizes Lantier or describes an event in the same way as another text, this does not necessarily imply anything more than a dependence on its prototype, or their common dependence on yet another. (Although correspondences do sometimes imply triangulation.³³) It would therefore be unwise to concur with Rewald's methodology or with Huneker either, who described the 'fifth chapter' of *L'Œuvre* as 'a faithful transcription' of the 1863 *Salon des refusés* and Claude Lantier's 'fight for artistic veracity' as a 'replica of what occurred in Manet's lifetime'.

There are cases, however, where fact and fiction — and their different voices are more closely confounded. This is true in a small but indicative way of Auguste Lepage's *La Vie d'un artiste* of 1882, which describes an artists' café in the rue de Buci that also appears in the author's exactly contemporary journalistic survey of such establishments in Paris.³⁴ The demarcation between fiction and reportage in the novels and stories about art written by Félicien Champsaur is even hazier. Champsaur, for example, based a whole chapter of his 1882 blockbuster, *Dinah Samuel*, on two of

³²See John Rewald, *Cézanne et Zola* (Paris, Sedrowski, 1936) and *Cézanne: sa vie, son œuvre, son amitié pour Zola* (Paris, Albin Michel, 1939). Rewald also quotes from p. 50 of George Moore, *Confessions of a Young Man* (London, Swann Sonnenschein Lowrey, 1888) in his *Seurat* (Paris, Albin Michel, 1939), p. 71.

³³In *La Proie et l'ombre*, pp. 134–35, Roux describes a sculpture by Père Godet, *Démoc-Soc*, which is evidently related to the *Baigneuse couchée* by Mahoudeau described in *L'Œuvre*, pp. 296–98. Both are modelled, it would seem, on Philippe Solari's *La Guerre de sécession*, identified in Franck Baille, *Les Petits Maîtres d'Aix à la Belle Époque: 1870-1914* (Aix-en-Provence, Roubaud, 1981), pp. 90 and 92, and described in Gasquet, *Cézanne*, pp. 47–48 under another title. See also Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet*, p. 43.

³⁴See Auguste Lepage, *La Vie d'un artiste*, pp. 102–05, and *Les Cafés artistiques et littéraires de Paris* (Paris, Boursin, 1882), pp. 43–60.

his own 'chroniques' about the café, Le Rat Mort, and even recycled whole passages in all three.³⁵ *Dinah Samuel* also employs tell-tale descriptions to identify several of its characters with their real prototypes, along with cryptonyms of varying degrees of transparency,³⁶ including Paul Corydon (Paul Alexis), Edmond de Génicourt (Goncourt) and Jean Pauvrepin (Richepin). Comparison between the novel and the *chroniques* also shows that the enthusiasm shown by the Impressionist painter, Paul Albreux, for the poetry of Arthur Rimbaud represents Renoir's for Rimbaud,³⁷ and that the identities of Norbert Goeneutte, Henri Detouche and Jean Béraud are disguised under the sobriquets of Robert Galtoine, Henri Tymel and Nino May. Other evidence suggests that the character, Blaise Verdet, an 'impressionniste' *antiphysique* who dresses as a woman and prostitutes himself when hit by hard times, might have been modelled on Giuseppe de Nittis.³⁸ With *Miss America* (1885), and *L'Amant des danseuses* (1888), *Dinah Samuel* forms a trilogy, in which Galtoine and Verdet drift in and out of the action,³⁹ as does the character Georges Decroix, who bears some similarity to Albert Besnard.⁴⁰ Yet, for all the light they may cast on the 'forgotten' Impressionists, and despite the fascinating possibility of a queer Impressionist, nothing sanctions the wholesale assimilation of Champsaur's novels to reportage.

Dinah Samuel in fact provides a forceful *caveat* against doing so, because in some places characters' names were changed between one edition and another (especially those of 1882, 1889 and 1905). While these changes could indicate a growing frankness on the author's part as the likelihood of scandal faded with time, they could equally well represent authorial

³⁵Félicien Champsaur, *Dinah Samuel* (Paris, Ollendorff, 1882). For the section on the Rat Mort, see the edition by Jean de Palacio (Paris, Séguier, 1999), pp. 288–307, and the 'clef', pp. 544–45. The two *chroniques* are Félicien Champsaur, 'Le rat mort', *L'Étoile française*, 21 December 1880, and 'Le rat mort', *Revue moderne et naturaliste*, 1880, 435–41, for which references I am indebted to Michael Pakenham. On *Dinah Samuel*, see Fernand Drujon, *Les Livres à clef: étude de bibliographie critique et analytique pour servir à l'histoire littéraire* (Paris, Rouveyre, 1885–1888), II, pp. 278–79; and on Champsaur, see Salvador Delaville, *Félicien Champsaur: étude littéraire* (Paris, Bibliothèque artistique et littéraire, 1897).

³⁶Cf. Wagneur, 'Quand le roman porte clefs', p. 48.

³⁷See Jean-Jacques Lefrère, 'Du rat mort aux poux: Champsaur et Rimbaud', *Parade sauvage*, 17–18 (August 2001), pp. 103–105. In the *Étoile française* article, 'Renoir' declares that 'le plus grand poète de la terre est son ami Arthur Rimbaud'. 'Alb' implies the Latin 'albis', the opposite of *noir*; while 'reux' is the 'Re' from Renoir.

³⁸See *Dinah Samuel* (1882/1999), pp. 304–305, and *Miss America* (Paris, Ollendorff), p. 82. In the 1905 edition of *Dinah Samuel* (Paris, Douville, 1905), Verdet paints a scene set on the Champs Élysées that closely recalls Nittis's *Sous les marronniers*, exhibited at the galleries of the magazine *L'Art* in 1880 (private collection).

³⁹Galtoine is absent from the later novel, but does turn up in Champsaur's collection of short stories, *Entrée des clowns* (Paris, Lévy, 1886).

⁴⁰Decroix is the eponymous 'amant des danseuses'. His identification with Besnard is suggested by how 'Degas' says of him in the 1905 edition of *Dinah Samuel*: 'Il vole maintenant de "mes" propres ailes' (p. 255), which recalls how Degas said of Besnard, 'il vole avec nos propres ailes', according to George Moore, 'Memories of Degas', *The Burlington for Connoisseurs*, 32(178–79) (1918), pp. 22–23, 26–29 and 63–65 (p. 63). Octave Mirbeau also cited a similar phrase used by a fellow artist about Besnard in an article of 1892: see *Combats esthétiques* (Paris, Séguier, 1993), I, p. 481.

concerns about the coherence of the plot. The situation is made even murkier by the use of similar devices and forms — innuendo and zany humour in particular — across both low-brow fiction like Champsaur's and contemporary documentary writing. This is especially the case with stories about artists' models. Champsaur's story, 'Le toux',⁴¹ for example, revels in exposing the mythical disinterestedness of the male painter's gaze in the same salaciously suggestive manner as several factual counterparts.⁴² Of course many fictions, and not just those belonging to the literature of art, compared so closely to their documentary relatives that publishers occasionally felt it necessary to add the word 'roman' below their titles. Yet in the case of Charles Moreau-Vauthier's *Les Rapins: roman* (1896), the addition almost certainly betrays an anxiety that the cross-over between genres towards the end of the century had created a grey area that the reader needed help navigating.

A fruitful way of appreciating the difficulties involved by novels and stories incorporating factual material is provided by a remark of Wittgenstein's where he argues that reality sometimes appears in fiction as it does in 'dreams'.⁴³ This suggests that, as in dreams, facts turn up in fictions under disguises, in displaced locations and time-frames, dispersed among different characters and situations, or condensed, and always in aesthetically revised form. Identifying them would therefore require a laborious technique which, like dream-analysis, demanded close and extensive familiarity with the material concerned. Such a technique might nevertheless make it possible to cajole working hypotheses from the archive that could suggest new avenues of research. Certainly, when other sources are meagre, sparse or scattered allusions in fictions can assume exponential interest. Zacharie Astruc's *Les Dieux en voyage* (Figure 1), for example, although published some twenty years afterwards, nevertheless casts a unique light on one section of the Batignolles group of the 1860s by staging a discussion about art theory between Fantin-Latour, Whistler, Alphonse Legros and Félix Regamy in an episode set in the forest of Fontainebleau.⁴⁴ Victor Joze's *L'Homme à femmes: roman parisien* (1890)⁴⁵ and

⁴¹*Entrée des clowns*, pp. 105-25 (the story features Galtoine). See also Joseph Gayda, 'A l'atelier', in *Ce Brigand d'amour* (Paris, Monnier, 1885), pp. 51-54.

⁴²See, for instance, Émile Blavet, 'Les modè les femmes', in *La Vie parisienne: la ville et le théâtre* (1884) (Paris, Boulangier, 1885), pp. 119-232; and Adrien Marx, 'Le modè le à Paris', in *Les Petites mémoires de Paris* (Paris, Levy, 1888), pp. 143-53. See also Paul Dollfus, *Modèles d'artistes* (Paris, Marpon et Flammarion, 1888).

⁴³Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Culture and Value* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1977), p. 89e: 'if Shakespeare is great . . . then we must be able to say of him: Everything is wrong, things *aren't like that* & is all the same completely right according to a law of its own. . . . If Shakespeare is great, then he can be so only in the whole *corpus* of his plays, which create their own language & world. So he is completely unrealistic. (Like the dream.)'

⁴⁴*Les Dieux en voyage* (Paris, Bachelin Lecat, 1889), pp. 153-55. On this episode, see Sharon Flescher, *Zacharie Astruc: Critic, Artist and Japoniste* (New York, Garland, 1978), p. 81.

⁴⁵See Richard Thomson, *Seurat* (Oxford, Phaidon, 1985), pp. 212-14.

Figure 1:

Zacharie Astruc, drawing for the cover of *Les Dieux en voyage* (Bachelin Lecat, 1889). Pen-and-ink and body-colour.

Image can be found at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/fs/knl214>

Hugues Rebell's *La Câlineuse* (1900)⁴⁶ are equally suggestive about the activities and views of Seurat and Toulouse-Lautrec, who provide the models for their subsidiary characters, Georges Legrand and Jacques de Tavannes. Paul Adam's story of 1887, 'Au jour', is noteworthy because it

⁴⁶See Hubert Juin, 'Redécouvrons Hugues Rebell', *Magazine littéraire*, no. 31 (juillet-août 1969).

features the obscure scientific aesthete, Charles Henry, under the guise of Marc Sapeline.⁴⁷ Perhaps the main interest of Armand Charpentier's *Le Roman d'un singe* of 1895 is that it personifies the elusive critic, Félix Fénéon, as Félix Yvonne. In a different vein, two novels of the second half of the 1880s, Robert Caze's *La Semaine d'Ursule* and Eugène Murer's *Pauline Lavinia*, provide extensive and fascinating descriptions of their authors' collections of Impressionist paintings, which not only help identify individual works, but shed light on the authors' display policies and tastes as well.⁴⁸

While each of these narratives is to some extent a representation of the real world, each also creates what Wittgenstein called a 'world' of its own, inside which art makes particular and unusually cogent sense, and comes alive with especial vividness.⁴⁹ Others are openly polemical. Jean Richepin's *Braves gens* of 1886, for example, whose narrative draws on the bohemian existence the author shared with Rimbaud and the obscure composer Cabaner, folds Impressionism into its world under the rubric of 'une peinture psychologique' developed by painters 'ne voulant traduire que l'impression des choses' by means of 'la lumière infiniment décomposée au plein air' or (more interestingly) 'la synthèse d'un dessin initial et primitif'.⁵⁰ Moreover, it draws on Impressionism as an ally in its defence of bohemianism, which it offers as a direct, dialogical riposte to the crass and venal cynicism of *Dinah Samuel*, and of (the author's enemy) Champsaur's 'moderniste' writings in general.⁵¹ Paul Adam's novel, *Soi*, of 1886 depicts a different world in which the nascent Neo-Impressionism of the author's friends (Dubois-Pillet, Pissarro, Signac and Seurat) gradually finds favour with its protagonist, Marthe Grellou, as she lapses over the course of the novel into a solipsism consistent with Adam's Symbolist aesthetic.⁵² So too, in 'Au jour', Adam assimilates the painting of his Neo-Impressionist colleagues to his own position in a dense but none the less illuminating passage describing Sapeline's subjectivity in a third-person voice that slips imperceptibly now and again into a first-person description of the world in his mind:

Sapeline voudrait dormir, n'était cette faim. Dans le sommeil il ensevelirait sa mémoire raisonnable et morose. Se lever, c'est entreprendre encore; puis l'aveugle chevauchée de

⁴⁷'Au jour', *La Revue indépendante*, 10 (1887), 194-215.

⁴⁸See 'Samedi', in Robert Caze, *La Semaine d'Ursule* (Paris, Tresse, 1885), pp. 262-90, and Eugène Murer, *Pauline Lavinia* (Paris, Le'vy, 1887), pp. 231-36. Murer exhibited his collection in 1884 at his home in Rouen.

⁴⁹See note 43 above.

⁵⁰*Braves gens: roman parisien* (Paris, Charpentier, 1886), p. 53.

⁵¹The second edition of *Dinah Samuel* (Paris, Ollendorff, 1889) contains the preface, 'Le modernisme', which term denotes especially the sexually titillating aspects of modern Parisian life that Champsaur featured in his novels, and plays. The word, 'moderniste(s)', is also used in the preface to *Entrée des clowns*.

⁵²*Soi* (Paris, Tresse Stock, 1886). On this see Paul Smith, 'Paul Adam, *Soi* et les "Peintres impressionnistes"', *Revue de l'art*, 82 (décembre 1988), 39-50.

ses tentatives illusoire le heurta aux indifférences, aux haines. Les membres s'affaissent heureusement dans la tiédeur des draps! . . . Le lit: un trône culminant la pièce tapissée de moquettes où s'entrebattent de grosses fleurs innommables, échevelées et joufflues, par la nuit des fonds. Là s'ouvrent des paysages que recula l'art des peintres nouveaux. Le fleuve reflète les maisons mornes jusqu'au fond des ondes clapotantes. Il les berce vers l'ombre des ponts, vers la forte cathédrale accroupie entre ses béquilles de pierre et ses tours d'oraison, qui darde l'œil unique de sa rosace sur la grouillante salute de la rue. La ville. ... Sapeline trône sous l'ivoire du crucifix, dans la soyeuse richesse des courtines, en face ces images qui gardent la réalité du monde.⁵³

By setting art coherently within a fictional world, Adam's texts vividly dramatize his values and beliefs and those he shared with his artist friends. *L'Atelier d'un peintre* and *A Modern Lover* do something closely comparable in several places. *Aphrodite* was also written in a similar spirit, expressing what Peter Read calls the 'symbiosis' that existed between Rodin and Louÿs. Such examples are important, because like many of the texts represented in this issue, they demonstrate how 'the literature of art' is especially worthy of the name when it is genetically inseparable from the art that it is the literature of —and hence exegetically inseparable too. Perhaps then, many neglected works of this kind have a claim to being counted among its *central* cases — Huneker notwithstanding.

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⁵³'Au jour', pp. 207-08.