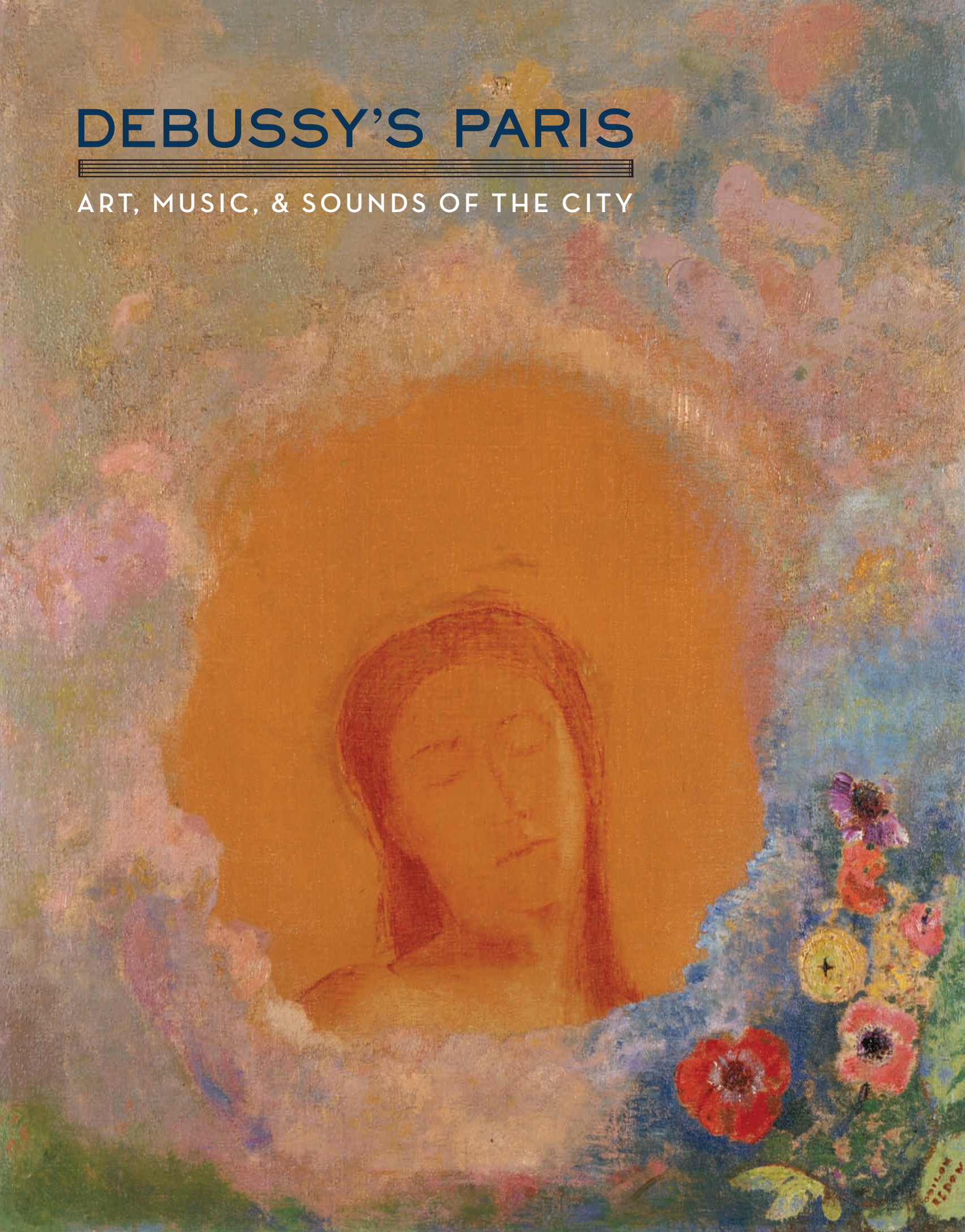
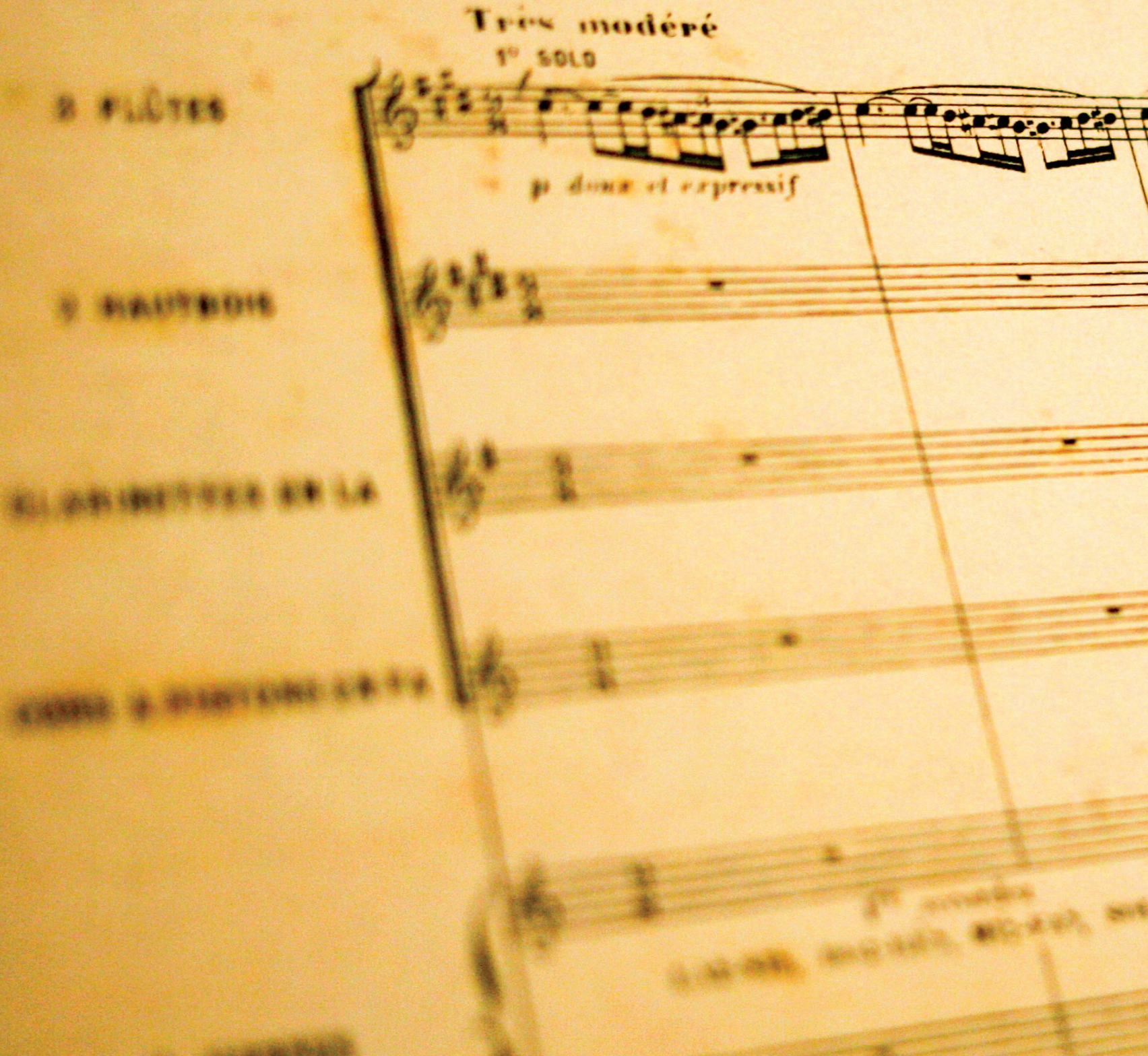
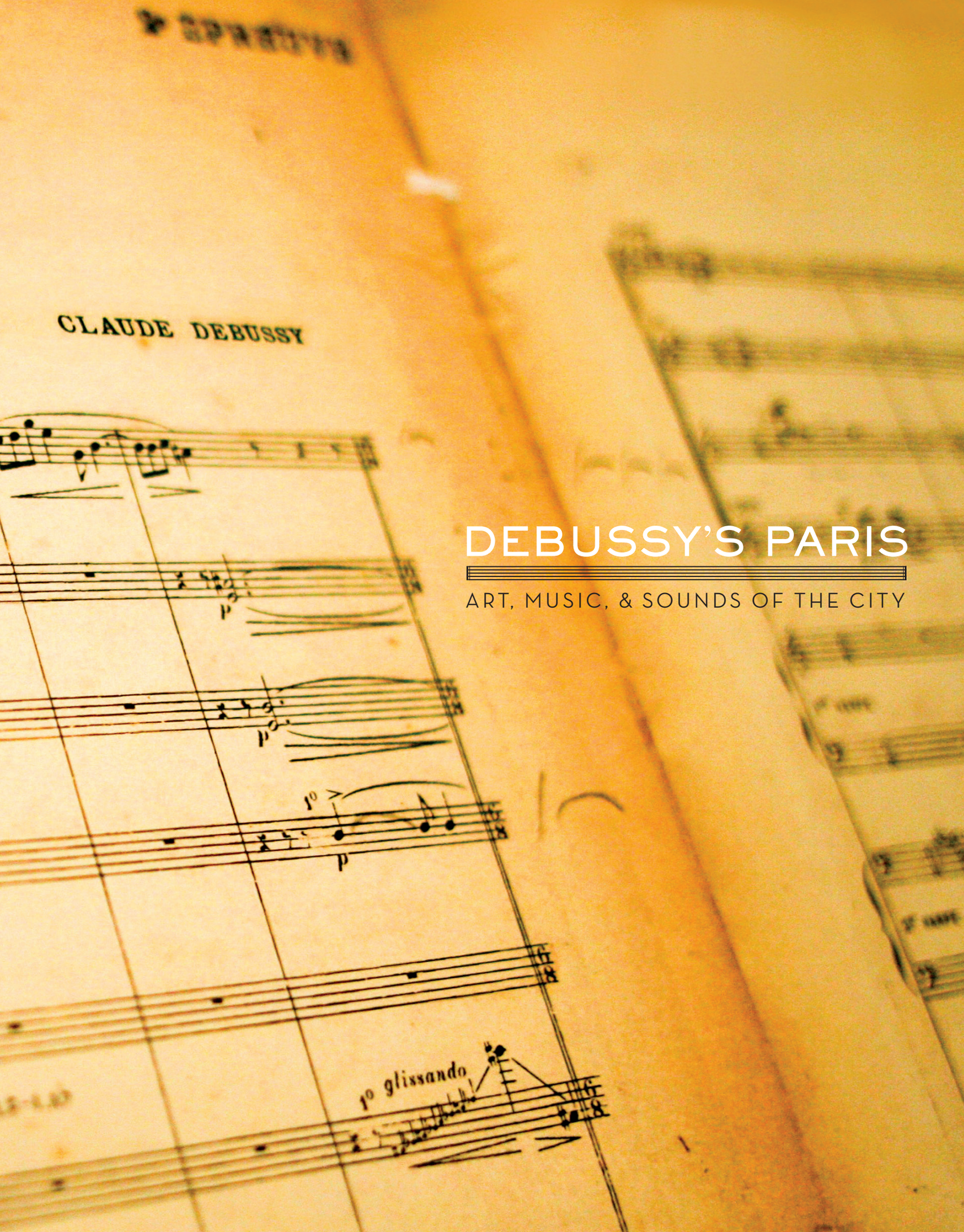
DEBUSSY'S PARIS

ART, MUSIC, & SOUNDS OF THE CITY



PRÉLUDE
à
l'après midi d'un faune.





DEBUSSY'S PARIS

ART, MUSIC, & SOUNDS OF THE CITY

DEBUSSY'S PARIS

ART, MUSIC, & SOUNDS OF THE CITY

SMITH COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART, NORTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Published to accompany the exhibition
Debussy's Paris: Art, Music, and Sounds of the City
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FRONT COVER

Odilon Redon. *With Closed Eyes* (*Les Yeux clos*), ca. 1895–1905.
Oil on canvas, SCMA (cat. 35) Photograph by Petegorsky / Gipe

BACK COVER

Jacques Villon (Gaston Duchamp). *The Cake-Walk of the Little Girls* (*Le Cake-Walk des petites filles*), 1904.
Aquatint and etching. SCMA (cat. 60) Photograph by Petegorsky / Gipe

ENDPAPERS

Claude Debussy. *Prélude à l'Aprés-midi d'un faune*. Orchestral score, second proof.
Courtesy of Peter Bloom

OPPOSITE TITLE PAGE

Jules Chéret. *Élysée Montmartre* (detail),1890. Lithograph. SCMA (cat. 8). Photograph by Matthew Hamilton

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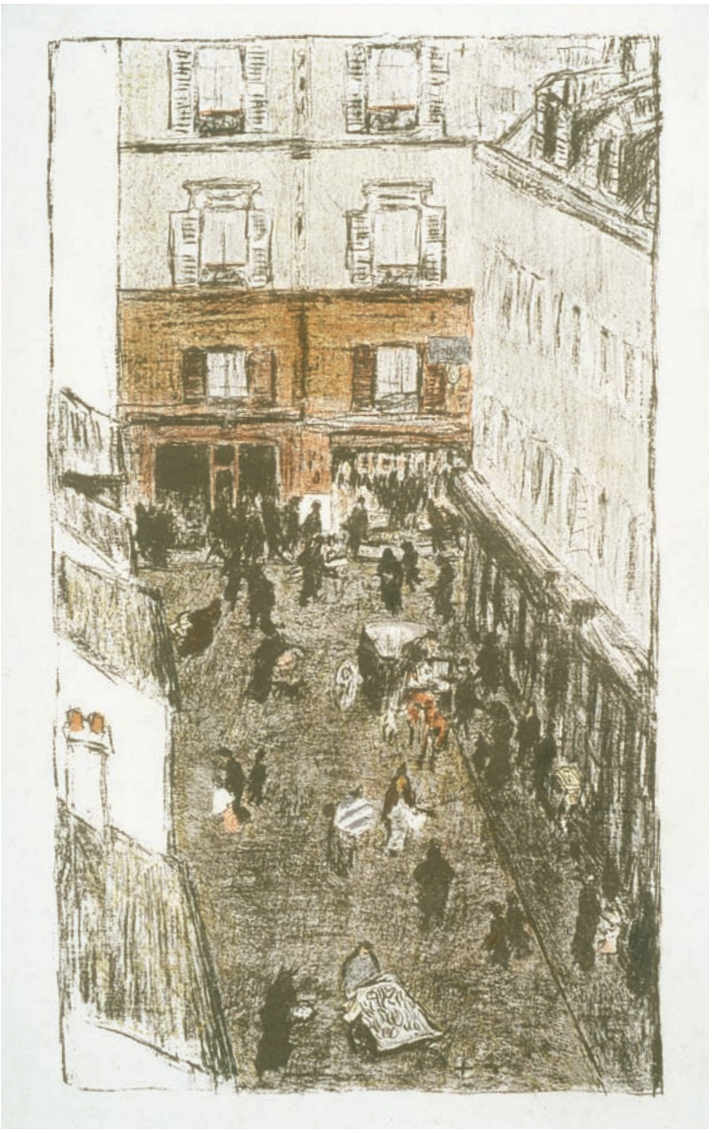
PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WHEN PETER BLOOM, Grace Jarcho Ross 1933 Professor of Humanities at Smith College, first approached the Museum about his plans for celebrating the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Claude Debussy (fig. 1) with performances and events in March 2012, we wondered how we could marry his project to the our rich holdings in French nineteenth-century art. An obvious option was to arrange for a masterworks exhibition, eminently possible from our paintings and works on paper collection. But Laura Kalba, Assistant Professor of Art at Smith, put forward a more intriguing idea: to create an exhibition that would explore the *soundscape* of Paris during Claude Debussy's lifetime (1862–1918). The term "soundscape," coined by the Canadian composer Murray Schaeffer and taken up by French historian Alain Corbin in his 1994 book, *Village Bells*, refers both to sound-as-noise and sound-as-music. In the context of the exhibition Professor Kalba has envisioned, "soundscape" encompasses "the music French men and women heard at the opera, ballet, concert halls, and cabarets, as well as the raucous, continuous noise that came to characterize modern Paris."

Professor Kalba has conceived the exhibition in three sections, allowing for the interplay of themes: "Noise and Popular Music"; "Correspondences: Art and Music"; and "Dance." Four "listening stations" are provided in the gallery: one devoted to Debussy's music and three associated with section themes. Featured in "Noise and Popular Music" are lithographic prints by Jules Chéret (cats. 7 and 8, figs. 4 and 5) and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec of music halls and popular entertainers such as Yvette Guilbert and Aristide Bruant, whose voices may be heard singing the songs "Le Fiacre" and "À la Bastille" in the adjacent listening station. Noises and city sounds are visually suggested by Pierre Bonnard's lithographs of the bustling streets of Paris from his series *Some Aspects of the Life of Paris (Quelques Aspects de la vie de Paris)* (cat. 6, fig. 2), and aurally conveyed by the listening station in the cries of the singing street vendors from Act II, scene 4, of Gustave Charpentier's popular opera, *Louise*, and by Jean Péheu's imitations of the cries of street vendors recorded in the early twentieth century. Two paintings by Claude Monet from the Museum's collection—*The Seine at Bougival*, *Evening* (cat. 32, fig. 32) and *Cathedral at Rouen* (cat.33, fig. 33)—the Museum's Georges Seurat study for *A Sunday Afternoon*

[**FIGURE 1**] Pierre Louÿs. French, 1870–1925. *Claude Debussy and Pierre Louÿs*, 1894. Photograph. Bibliothèque François-Lang, abbaye de Royaumont. Courtesy of Denis Herlin



[FIGURE 2]
Pierre Bonnard. *Street Corner Seen from Above* (*Coin de rue vue d'en haut*), from *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris*, 1899. Transfer lithograph. SCMA (cat. 6). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

on the Island of La Grande Jatte (cat. 38, fig. 36), and Édouard Vuillard's intimist *Interior with Work Table* (cat. 41, fig. 37) are among the works in the "Correspondences: Art and Music" section, whose listening station features readings in French and English of Stéphane Mallarmé's poem "The Afternoon of a Faun" ("L'Après-midi d'un faune"). Debussy responded to the Mallarmé poem with his *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun*, which Vaslav Nijinsky famously choreographed for performance in Paris in 1912. Photographs of the great Russian dancer in costume and in the hieratic movements he created for the ballet (cat. 59, fig. 26) are included in the "Dance" section of the exhibition, which also highlights the Museum's Edgar Degas painting *Dancer on the Stage* (cat. 46, fig. 20), Toulouse-Lautrec's poster of Jane Avril dancing the can-can (cat. 55, fig. 41), and Lautrec's gold-dusted lithograph of the swirling skirts of Miss Loïe Fuller (cat. 57, fig. 25).

This exhibition and the research reflected in the essays by Professor Kalba, by art historian Juliet Bellow, and by Jean-Michel Nectoux, curator of the forthcoming Debussy anniversary exhibition at the Museé de l'Orangerie in Paris, participate in wider scholarly discussions of the "rival sisters" of art and music in the modern period. These investigations, the subject of recent symposia and academic conferences, have led to new ways of considering and contextualizing visual art in relation to music. *Debussy's Paris* therefore invites visitors not only to see but to hear the City of Light.

We are grateful to the lenders to the exhibition for generously providing key works to realize the conceptual framework of *Debussy's Paris*. Among our institutional colleagues who must be particularly thanked are: at the Museum of fine Arts, Boston, Stephanie Loeb Stepanek, Curator of Prints and Drawings; at the New York Public Library, Deborah Straussman, Assistant Registrar for Outgoing Loans and Temporary Exhibitions, Barbara Goldsmith Preservation Division; at the Wadsworth Atheneum, Eric Zafran, Hilles Curator of European Art; at the Jane Vorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, Rutgers University, Marilyn Symmes, Director, Morse Research Center for Graphic Arts and Curator of Prints and Drawings; Christine Giviskos, Associate Curator; Leslie Kriff, Registrar; and Margaret Molnar, Associate Registrar.

Our campus colleagues and project contributors here and abroad are gratefully acknowledged. Professor Bloom provided not only the impetus for the exhibition, but obtained and translated the essay in this catalogue by Jean-Michel Nectoux, to whom we express our thanks for allowing us to publish his original paper on Debussy as a connoisseur of paintings. Professor Bloom is also thanked for selecting excerpts from Debussy's music, writing the spoken introductions for the listening station devoted to the composer, for collaborating with Professor Kalba on the introduction to the catalogue, and for providing information and assistance at every turn. We are, of course, grateful to Professor Kalba for serving as curatorial consultant for *Debussy's Paris* and for working with Museum staff to realize the exhibition while shouldering the demands of her teaching schedule. We thank her for her excellent essay, "Hearing Voices," for co-authoring the catalogue introduction, and for selecting the works of art and sounds for the exhibition. Juliet Bellow, Assistant Professor in the Department of Art History at American University, Washington, DC, is thanked for her elegant essay, "Dance in Debussy's Paris." Professor Mary Ellen Birkett of the Smith College French Department is thanked for lending her voice to the exhibition and for introducing the Debussy musical selections and reciting Mallarmé's poem "L'Après-midi d'un faune" for the listening stations.

Nancy Haffner of RBH Multimedia, Inc., which designed and executed the sound programs for *Debussy's Paris*, is thanked for working with Museum staff to create the gallery's *soundscape*. I salute my fellow exhibition team members for their work: Kelly Holbert, Exhibition Coordinator, who masterminded logistics; Maggie Lind, Associate Curator for Education, who provided valuable assistance throughout the course of the project, especially with its sound programs; and Amanda Shubert, Brown Post-Baccalaureate Curatorial Fellow, who assembled the exhibition checklist. Museum staff, from the installation crew to budget and finance, from collection management to security, are thanked for their hard work and professionalism. I am pleased for the chance to thank Jessica Nicoll, Director and Louise Ines Doyle '34 Chief Curator, for her leadership of the Museum and her advocacy of this project.

Carolyn Eckert designed the exhibition logo and catalogue, beautifully, and *molto allegro*. The exhibition is supported by a gift from the Selma Seltzer, class of 1919, estate and the Publications and Research Fund of the Museum. The program and schedule for the Music Department's "Debussy Days at Smith College" (March 10-11, 2012), including a lecture on Debussy by the editor of Debussy's complete works and correspondence Denis Herlin, a lecture-demonstration by the scholar and pianist Roy Howat, and a recital by mezzo-soprano Kate Lindsey of the Metropolitan Opera, may be found at http://www.smith.edu/music/calendar.php.

The grace note for this project is the opportunity to showcase some of the Museum's finest works of art but also to join an ensemble of colleagues, whose expertise informs this project. *Bon anniversaire*, Monsieur Debussy!

LINDA MUEHLIG

CURATOR OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

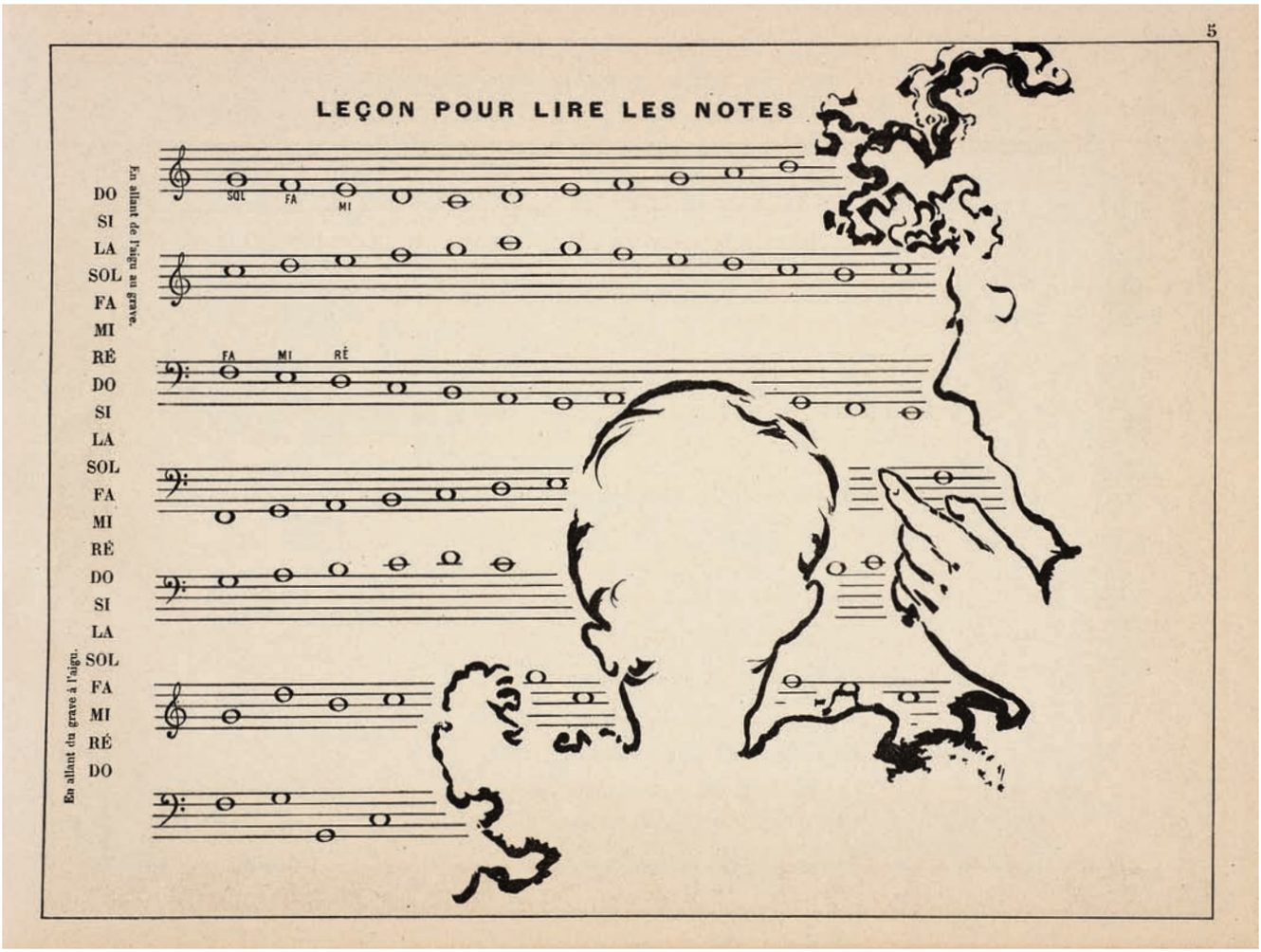
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR CURATORIAL AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

Peter Bloom and Laura Anne Kalba

THE PURPOSE OF THIS exhibition and catalogue is ambitious: to commemorate the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of the birth of Claude Debussy by examining the larger auditory environment—the music, sound, and noise of turn-of-the-century Paris—in which the French composer lived and worked. Like recent scholarship on Debussy, which has profited from new editions of his music and letters, research on the larger role of sound in shaping our experience of the world has increased steadily over the past two decades. With the notions of *landscape* and *cityscape*, which draw attention to the visual appearance of the physical environment, the concept of *soundscape* has emerged as an important critical category of analysis in work that deals with the rich and overlapping sonic phenomena that define modern urban life and the historically-constructed nature of auditory sense experience. Indeed, as this scholarship has revealed, distinctions among sound, noise, and music, like those between hearing and listening, are culturally and historically constructed. In other words, auditory theory and practices change from one historical period to the next. In fact, such change has been observed during the course of Debussy's own lifetime—a period marked by rapid and intense economic, social, and political transformation.

Despite the appearance of this new and exciting field of study, it remains no less a challenge to chronicle the *soundscape* of Belle Époque Paris within the physical and cultural confines of an institution such as a museum of art, traditionally associated, of course, with the display of *visual* culture, and to do so in such a way as to elucidate meaningfully the career of Debussy, a composer known for the intimacy and refinement of his music and the intensity of his criticism of mass culture. As he wrote to his friend Ernest Hébert, director of the French Academy in Rome, "To seek praise from the popularizers, the posh, and the pooh-bas—my god how awful that must be!" At first glance, then, it would seem odd to see Debussy in the company of the popular singers of Montmartre, Yvette Guilbert and Aristide Bruant, and of the celebrity-composer Gustave Charpentier. A firm line needed to be traced, Debussy insisted, between art and entertainment, between legitimate glory and mere success.



[**FIGURE 3**]
Pierre Bonnard.
Small Illustrated Solfège (*Petit solfège illustré*), 1893. Lithograph. SCMA (cat. 2). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

Debussy received an extensive classical musical education at what was then the leading music school in the world, the Paris Conservatoire. Indeed, he literally grew up in the halls of that institution, entering in the fall of 1872 at the age of ten, and exiting twelve long years later, in the summer of 1884, not as an intellectual but as an extraordinarily knowledgeable musician, an accomplished pianist, and an inventive composer who—despite his teachers' judgment of his work as "strange" and "irregular"—was about to win the celebrated Prix de Rome sponsored since 1803 by the Académie des Beaux-Arts of the Institut de France. That "consecration," even if the prize was a blessing for all composers who won it, led immediately to neither fame nor fortune. What eventually moved Debussy to the upper echelons of art were, first, his gradually increasing curiosity about the artistic and literary developments of the eighteen-eighties and nineties, too often imprecisely subsumed under the headings of Impressionism and Symbolism, and second, his exquisitely meditated reworking of Maurice Maeterlinck's play *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

The first performance of the opera took place on April 30, 1902. Its eight-year genesis stretched from 1893–1894, the period of the *Quatuor à cordes* and the *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un faune*, through the later eighteen-nineties, the period of the *Chansons de Bilitis* and the orchestral *Nocturnes*. After the première, Debussy's patron Marguerite Baugnies de Saint-Marceaux noted in her journal: "The musical work is an absolute masterpiece. The public understands nothing." But the public eventually did understand; Debussy became "the composer of *Pelléas*," and his place in history, despite financial vicissitudes that endured until the end, was secured.

Debussy died on March 25, 1918, in the midst of a new German aggression that put in doubt the outcome of the first World War until the allied counter-offensive later that year effectively ended the conflict. In the nine decades since his death, "Claude de France" appears not only as the man who constructed an iridescent musical bridge from the nineteenth to the twentieth century, but as the composer who decisively influenced the course of twentieth-century music. Debussy had particular impact on the sonic world of his younger contemporary Igor Stravinsky and upon the modernist imagination of that master of twentieth-century music who is Pierre Boulez.

Debussy's intervention and influence was not limited, however, to elite and fashionable Parisian salons and to revered European concert halls. While hobnobbing with the Impressionists and Symbolists, the writers and the professors, Debussy also played the piano in the crowded cafés of Montmartre—to the delight, apparently, of both the motley public that frequented such bohemian establishments and of such popular entertainers and artists as the daring dancer Jane Avril and the artist Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, who painted her portrait. "The composer of *Pelléas*" became intimately familiar with the repertory of the cabaret singer Paul Delmet; he met other writers and poets in such cafés as Chez Pousset, Chez Thommen, the Café Vachette, where he befriended the Symbolist Jean Moréas, and the famous Chat Noir, where he grew close to the iconoclastic and eccentric Erik Satie. One of his favorite pastimes was going to the circus, where Debussy marveled at the trapeze artists and the tonguing of the trombonists: "The fellow is able to triple-tongue in a way I have simply

never heard! He plays like someone who really knows what he's doing."

Debussy's music criticism was published in the pages of the now celebrated literary magazine *La Revue Blanche*, which featured Marcel Proust and André Gide and Toulouse-Lautrec, and the daily newspaper *Gil Blas*. It shows his deep attention to the sounds of his surroundings, to the relationships among the arts, and to the hierarchies within them. Paris' buoyant consumer culture, Debussy suggested, both altered the definition of "high" art and modified its relationship to "popular" art. By juxtaposing the posters of Jules Chéret (cats. 7 and 8, figs. 4 and 5) and Odilon Redon's *With Closed Eyes* (cat. 35, cover image), Whistler's portrait of Mallarmé (cat. 42), and Pierre Bonnard's *Petit Solfège Illustré* (cat. 2, fig. 3) with recordings of the cries of street sellers and Debussy's *La Mer*, this exhibition suggests not that these artifacts are in some sense equivalent, but rather that they reflect the very debate about art, taste, and class that seems to have preoccupied the impeccable composer—perhaps, in part, because his background was humble and his financial exigencies real.

The exhibition and catalogue attempt to do so, first (as detailed in Laura Anne Kalba's essay), by focusing attention on the significance of sound and speech in the musical and visual culture of Debussy's Paris; second, by reviewing Debussy's links to the visual arts (as examined in Jean-Michel Nectoux's essay, which speaks in particular to the composer's admiration of J. M. W. Turner, James McNeill Whistler, Edgar Degas, and Henry Lerolle, and to the facile but highly questionable characterization of his music as "Impressionist"); and, finally (as explained in the essay by Juliet Bellow), by highlighting the essential role of dance as a mediation between auditory and visual experience or, more precisely, between the musical and visual arts. Together, the works of art and musical selections in the exhibition, the essays in this catalogue, and some carefully-chosen dissonant notes, produce what we hope is an original, yet balanced, interpretation of Debussy's Paris.

HEARING VOICES:
A Study of the Soundscape and Visual Culture of Debussy's Paris

Laura Anne Kalba

I love images almost as much as music.

—CLAUDE DEBUSSY[1]

Color, which is vibration just as music is, is able to attain what is most universal yet at the same time most elusive in nature: its inner force.

—PAUL GAUGUIN[2]

THE NOTION THAT late nineteenth-century French artists idealized music as a paragon of pure emotional expression free from the strictures of realist depiction and narrative content has become something of an art historical cliché. And, in turn, this proposition about a new and more intimate correspondence between music and art has provided a powerful context for understanding Claude Debussy's efforts to develop musical forms that aimed not at descriptive mimesis or story-telling but at evoking atmospheres or moods. Blurring the lines between media and artistic labels such as "Impressionist" and "Symbolist," critics wrote enthusiastically of the abstract musicality of late nineteenth-century French painting and, often in the same breath, of the chromatic *vagueness* of Debussy's compositions.[3] "For Mr. Monet and Mr. Debussy, a color, a sound is a feeling," wrote critic Camille Mauclair. "The feeling does not come from the association of sound or color with a specific idea, a chanted or descriptive melody, [or] facial expression: in their view, the feeling is included in the violet or D major."[4] We know that many avant-garde artists were intensely interested in synaesthesia, a rare perceptual condition characterized by the involuntary combination of information from one sense with that of another. They regarded color-hearing, in particular, as a blessed sign of artistic genius.[5] The experimental poems of Charles Baudelaire and Arthur Rimbaud and the growing medical literature on the subject served to buttress artists' belief that color was audible, sound was colored, and that it was possible for artists, like musicians, to convey subjective emotional states and powerful truths about the world while forgoing figuration, allegory, and even symbolism. Looking forward to the advent of non-figurative art in the early twentieth century and its theorizations in expressly

musical terms—"Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand which plays, touching one key or another, to cause vibrations in the soul," Russian artist Wassily Kandinsky famously wrote—scholars have largely interpreted the confluence of art and music in the late nineteenth century as evidence of the efflorescence of an anti-realist program in the visual arts.[6] Artists, the story goes, now privileged abstract evocation of dream and subjective emotional states over the depiction of surface appearances; they shifted their allegiance from drawing as the primary vehicle of meaning to color and tone; and, finally, they abandoned literature (and language) as a model for the visual arts in favor of music, celebrating, more specifically, its ineffable qualities.

While hardly inaccurate, this interpretation of the relationship between art and music in the late nineteenth century remains insufficient, not least because it limits its analysis of "art" to avant-garde painting and "music" to what was heard in prestigious concert halls and private salons of the Parisian elite. This exhibition seeks to provide not only a more detailed picture of the city in which Debussy lived and worked but also a new understanding of the relationship between art and music during this much-romanticized historical period. It does so, first and foremost, by expanding the definition of art to include a broader range of visual media, from posters and illustrated sheet music covers to original art prints and illustrated books, and by expanding the definition of music to encompass the songs that were performed in cabarets and *cafés-concerts* as well as the tuneful cries of street vendors that were incorporated into box-office hits such as Gustave Charpentier's *Louise*. One effect of considering this broader *visual culture* and *soundscape* of Belle Époque Paris and their relationship to one another is to redirect attention to the centrality of language—in particular, the sounds and silences of the spoken language—and persistent relevance of literary modes of representation, including realist depiction and modernized allegory.[7] Indeed, as we shall see, artists and musicians, from Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen and Aristide Bruant to Maurice Denis and Claude Debussy, aimed not so much at transcending language as capturing its minute inflections and celebrating its voice, be it the voice of the common people, of the subversive cabaret singer, or idealized lyrical expressions emanating from more other-worldly realms.

From the time I started thinking of making posters, I knew they had to be in color; the poster, in my opinion, was a call, a bugle call, a smile, the Parisienne's smile that brings happiness to the street.

—JULES CHÉRET[8]

The posters of Jules Chéret played an important role in stimulating artists' interest in color lithography as a medium for original artistic creation.[9] Rather than representing radically distinct artistic undertakings, the categories of caricature, advertising, and original artistic prints overlapped and intersected in important ways in the late nineteenth century. This intersection was both social and stylistic.

A significant number of the artists involved in this expansion of French printmaking, from Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec to Alexandre Charpentier, were aligned with the heterogeneous, creative environment that flourished in the cabarets of Montmartre, the working-class neighborhood of Paris where students, artists, and bohemians congregated.[10] Known as a hotspot of political radicalism and artistic experimentation, the Chat Noir cabaret actively stimulated the collaboration of artists, writers, musicians, and composers.[11] The most common ways in which artists and musicians worked together were not, however, unique to the Chat Noir, the performances staged there, or the journal it published. A critical apparatus for thinking about and the material means of supporting the collaboration between musicians and artists were already well established in popular commercial culture.

Published in 1876, the Folies Bergère poster featured in the exhibition represents one of Jules Chéret's earlier commercial works (cat. 7, fig. 4). The figure in the center of the poster, whose orange and yellow outfit contrasts sharply with the poster's blue and black background, confirms that the music performed at this famous music hall was not meant for idle or casual listening. Seductively dressed, the performer marches forward, lifting her baton to the rhythm of the music performed by Olivier Métra's orchestra—to which she adds the sound of the jingle bells affixed to her costume. In comparison, in Chéret's poster design for the masked ball at the Élysée Montmartre, published in 1891, explicit references to music are minimal, yet the entire poster seems to holler and resonate (cat. 8, fig. 5). The assemblage of dancing legs and pointed feet in the bottom right hand corner of the poster underlines the rhythm and joyous tone of the evening's musical program. Their suspension in mid-air, like the juxtaposition of clown heads above the two central figures, reinforces the general impression produced by the poster that reality, gravity included, was not welcome at the Élysée.[12]

Chéret's comparison of his posters to the call of a human voice—*un appel*—and the call of the bugle—*coup de clarion*—demonstrate how the use of aural analogies to describe colors was not limited to high art. "A manic joy, a frenzy of harmony and movement, a brass band of brilliant Japanese-like colors in the dull grayness of the modern street: that is the skill and artistry of Chéret," noted one critic.[13] These descriptions remind us also that in the late nineteenth century, advertising was still frequently imagined in auditory terms despite the rapid expansion of visual media. Often personified as a trumpet-playing woman, print advertising continued to be associated with the cries and other attention-grabbing strategies of street vendors and musical performers.[14]

> One could write the entire history of France, especially the history of Paris, through song; by this I mean real plebeian songs, born or raised in the carrefours, under the bow of a cheap violin. . . . I repeat: the history of song thus understood would be the history of France itself.
>
> — VICTOR FOURNEL[15]

[FIGURE 4]
Jules Chéret. *Folies-Bergère / O. Métra*, 1876. Lithograph. Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University (cat. 7). Photograph by Peter Jacobs

Tous les Soirs à 8 Heures
FOLIES BERGÈRE
O. MÉTRA
32, R. Richer
PANTOMIMES
OPÉRETTES
TRAVAUX DE VOLTIGE
BALLETS
J. Chéret
76
PRIX UNIQUE 2F.
à toutes places non-louées
IMP. J. CHÉRET, 18, RUE BRUNEL, PARIS. 15

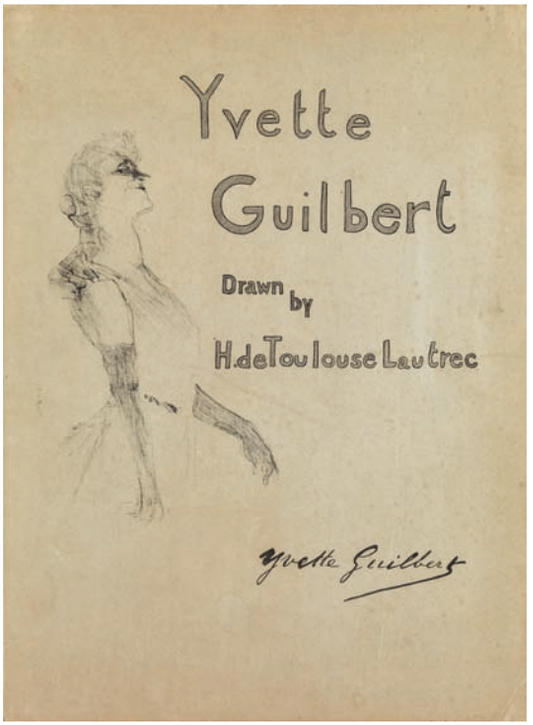
[FIGURE 5]
Jules Chéret. *Élysée Montmartre*, 1890. Lithograph. SCMA (cat. 8). Photograph by Matthew Hamilton

[FIGURE 6]
Eugène Atget. *Organ Grinder* (*Joueur d'orgue*), 1898, printed later. Gelatin silver print. SCMA (cat. 1). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

Parisian streets were not only thoroughfares facilitating the quick circulation of goods and people but also catalysts for the development of a popular public culture, as evidenced by Eugène Atget's photographic series depicting the *métiers de Paris*, including the *Organ Grinder* (cat. 1, fig. 6), and the *Types de Paris* album (cat. 10), including an eponymous poem by Stéphane Mallarmé and illustration of a clothes seller by Jean-François Raffaëlli. These and other sources show how music, sounds, and noises profoundly shaped inhabitants' and visitors' experiences of the city. These aural stimuli constituted, as historian David Garrioch has argued, a "semiotic system," which "formed part of people's way of navigating in time, space and in the social world of the city."[16]

Street sellers used pitch, projection, and repetition to achieve maximum audibility. Their cries, contemporary observers remarked, possessed a distinct musicality. In his novel *La Prisonnière*, Marcel Proust, for instance, compared these street noises to a morning symphony: "Outside, popular themes skilfully transposed for various instruments, from the horn of the china repairer, or the trumpet of the chair mender, to the flute of the goatherd who seemed, on a fine morning, to be a Sicilian drover, were lightly orchestrating the matinal air with an 'Overture for a Public Holiday.'"[17]

The conspicuous musicality of the spoken French language and the confluence of elite and popular linguistic registers was a topic that preoccupied a growing number of specialists. In his 1887 publication *Les Sons du Français*, linguist Paul Passy, for example, suggestively charted the vowels of the French language using a musical staff. Meanwhile,



[FIGURE 7]
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Cover for *Yvette Guilbert*, 1898. Lithograph. SCMA (cat. 17). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

[FIGURE 8]
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *Ambassadeurs: Aristide Bruant*, ca. 1892. Brush and spatter lithograph. SCMA (cat. 14). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

French language historian Ferdinand Brunot pointed out how popular patois had gradually infiltrated the language of the bourgeoisie.[18] In the cabarets and *cafés-concerts* of Montmartre, the musicality of the French language and the melding of elite and popular linguistic forms were given nightly expression in the performances of Aristide Bruant, Yvette Guilbert, Paul Delmet, and others (cat. 17, fig. 7). While the talent and style of performers may have varied, the primacy of poetry remained a constant. Vocal shortcomings of *chansonniers* were generally overlooked or welcomed as part of the performer's unique style.[19] Bruant rose to fame on the stage of the Chat Noir and, later, the *café-concert* Ambassadeurs with simple, almost monotonous songs (cat. 14, fig. 8). The main attraction of his songs was their lyrics, which principally gave voice to society's outcasts: ragpickers, prostitutes, thieves, and down-and-out types of Paris. Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen's cover illustration for Bruant's *Dans la rue*, an anthology of songs and monologues, speaks to the singer's and the artist's efforts to capture the voices of Montmartre's marginalized inhabitants (cat. 13, fig. 9). Depicted with their mouths wide open in song, chests thrust forward, Steinlen's figures are engaged in an act of vigorous and candid lyrical expression—the type that is normally associated with climates of political urgency.

At a time when the integrity of the visual and linguistic sign was increasingly being called into question and faith in realistic representation was waning among avant-garde artists and intellectuals, it is remarkable how the human voice continued to be valued as a vehicle for truthful expression by a broad range of social and cultural actors. The history and culture of France, Victor Fournel suggested,

was perhaps most directly discernible in its vernacular speech patterns and popular songs.[20] It was in this context that a growing number of mainstream composers, catering to a primarily bourgeois clientele, created musical adaptations of cries of street vendors and urban folk songs.[21] Philologists, meanwhile, scoured the French countryside to record regional dialects and accents, preserving them for posterity with the help of their newly minted phonographs.[22]

It is important to note that the expansion of cultural interest in vernacular speech, music, and speech-as-music, including the cries of street vendors, coincided with the gradual disappearance of these sounds from everyday life.[23] Artistic and learned projects such as the musical adaptations of street cries and Brunot's recording project were fundamentally conservationist and nostalgic in spirit. "[W]e have only one musician who is truly French, and that's Paul Delmet; he alone has set down the melancholy of the *faubourgs*, and that sentimentality that laughs and weeps upon the reddened sword of the fortifications," noted Debussy.[24] As Adolphe Willette's cover illustration for Delmet's

[FIGURE 9]
Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen. *In the Street (Dans la rue: gigolots et gigolettes)*, 1895. Lithograph. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (cat. 13)

[**FIGURE 10**]
Adolphe Willette. French, 1857–1926. Cover of *Nouvelles Chansons de Paul Delmet*, 1895. Color photomechanical print. 12⅞ x 9¹⁵⁄₁₆ in.; 32.7 x 25.2 cm. Image courtesy of the Sibley Music Library, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester

Nouvelles chansons warned, however, the life of the *faubourg* captured in these songs was gravely imperiled, perhaps even on the verge of extinction (fig. 10). Based on his design for a stained glass window at the Chat Noir, Willette's cover allegorizes the threat posed to artistic and human values by financial greed, symbolized by the golden calf. In the scene depicted by the artist, pleas of the poor are left unanswered and art compromises herself for the sake of pecuniary gain; in this world turned upside down, it comes as no surprise that a skeleton should conduct the orchestra. This was not an uncommon view. "Bohemia," Charles Rearick explains, "had entered a new phase of commercial self-promotion and a popular, ambiguous, but ultimately not leftist politics was one of its characteristics that appealed to a rapidly growing market of rising *couches sociales* below the old notables."[25] The Chat Noir and other bastions of subversion attracted a growing number of well-established clients in search of piquant, but ultimately more sanitized diversions. By the same token, Delmet's and other cabaret singers' "popular" melodies were quickly integrated into the repertoire of the city's more mainstream *cafés-concerts* and music-halls.[26] Lastly, Toulouse-Lautrec's attractively illustrated scores for Désiré Dihau's musical adaptations of poems by Jean Richepin, many of which addressed the experiences of the city's most destitute inhabitants, bring to light the fact that *popularity*—poverty even—was itself a commodified entity in late nineteenth-century Paris (cat. 20, fig. 11).

Debussy was an especially keen observer of Parisian street life and the music it fostered. And, his assessment of this popular culture, one suspects, goes a long way toward explaining his hostile reception of Gustave Charpentier's opera *Louise*, which, set in the neighborhood of Montmartre, famously incorporates the cries of street vendors, meant to symbolize "the voice of the city."[27] On the one hand, Debussy contested the idea that working-class life, in all its mundane detail, had any business being addressed in the form of an opera. Indeed, mere rumors of the characters and setting of Charpentier's opera were enough to send the composer into an epistolary uproar.

> It's the triumph of beer-hall music in the opera house. It's full of tricks and is altogether out of place [*Ça sent la pipe et il y a comme des cheveux sur la musique*.] A small example is the closing scene at the Moulin Rouge where of course the poet finally ends up. Here there is even a prostitute screaming out in ecstasy.

[**FIGURE 11**] Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *Floréal*, from *Quatorze lithographies originales de Toulouse-Lautrec pour illustrer des chansons*, ca. 1920. Lithograph. SCMA (cat. 20). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

THÉATRE NATIONAL DE L'OPÉRA COMIQUE
ROMAN MUSICAL EN 4 ACTES ET 5 TABLEAUX
LOUISE
DE GUSTAVE CHARPENTIER
G. Rochegrosse
Paris. Ed. DELANCHY & Cie. 57 & 53. Faub.g St. Denis.

Our poor music! How it has been dragged into the mud! . . . It's hard, I tell you, to see such things going on; it's as if a beautiful, adored woman were at your arm and some hooligan came along and grabbed her. I really feel this to be almost a personal insult.[28]

In addition, Debussy contested the idea that the opera's naturalistic strategies, notably the street cries, were anything more than deceitful fakeries. In his view, Charpentier had taken the fabled sounds and spirit of the city and turned them into something absolutely false: "It's the same type of sentimentality that a man, returning home at 4 a.m., feels for street sweepers and ragpickers.—And [Charpentier] thinks that he'll be able to capture the soul of simple folk!!! It's so stupid that it's almost endearing."[29]

Excessive sentimentality expressed in recycled forms also aptly describes Henri Rochegrosse's poster for the opera, which expressly references the libretto (cat. 11, fig. 12).[30] In this case, however, the strategy can hardly be condemned; in order to catch passersby's attention, posters depended on the use of easily and quickly recognizable images. Rochegrosse depicts the end of the third act, when Louise joins Julien in defiance of her parents' wishes. The couple embraces in a pose reminiscent of a thousand other similar scenes, visible in both elite and popular commercial culture. The "voice" of the city is symbolized by the glowing buildings at the foot of the hill. Meanwhile, the stylized flame motif in the foreground alludes to feelings of passion engulfing the couple, in direct reference to Julien's declaration, in the same scene: "We are all souls that are fired by the holy flame of Desire."[31]

[**FIGURE 12**] Georges Antoine Rochegrosse. *Louise*, 1900. Lithograph. Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University (cat. 11). Photograph by Peter Jacobs

Remember that a painting—before being a battle horse, a nude woman, or an anecdote of some sort—is essentially a flat surface covered with colors, put together in a certain order

—MAURICE DENIS[32]

In comparison to Rochegrosse, it would seem that Maurice Denis would be far less likely to lend his skills to the illustration of texts or music. The surprising formal innovations that characterized his early works of art presupposed a close attention to what defined painting *qua* painting; illustration, in contrast, generally involves the translation of one medium into another. And yet, in the 1890s, Denis completed several such projects, including the illustration of Debussy's *La Damoiselle élue*, published by La Librairie de l'art indépendant in 1893 (fig. 13). In "Définition du néo-traditionnisme," the same text that contains his famous theorization of painting as an arrangement of colors on a flat surface, Denis also wrote about his hopes for more intimate collaboration between artists, musicians, and writers.[33] Academic paintings' *trompe-l'oeil* effects, he noted, were evidence of the misguided appropriation by visual artists of "literary" effects. Illustration, properly understood, he added, consisted in the "decoration" of literature, as opposed to its servile translation into visual form. "Invent a form of illustration that is not a slave to the text, without exact correspondence to the subject of the writing; rather, an embroidery of arabesques on the pages, an accompaniment of expressive lines."[34] Nevertheless,

La damoiselle élue

more remarkable than the ornamental lines of Denis' design is how closely its iconography conforms to the lyrics of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's original poem "The Blessed Damozel." The lyrics of Debussy's cantata read, for instance: "She had three lilies in her hand / And the stars in her hair were seven. [*Elle avait trois lys à la main / Et sept* étoiles *dans les cheveux*]."[35] Denis' illustration, in contrast, shows the female figure holding a book, and the stars—now more than seven—are in the sky. Yet, overall, the discrepancies remain minor.

Her hair that lay along her back
Was yellow like ripe corn.
. . .
And the souls mounting up to God
Went by her like thin flames.

And still she bowed herself and stooped
Until her bosom must have made
The bar she leaned on warm,
. . .

[*Ses cheveux qui tombaient le long de ses épaules,*
Étaient jaunes come le blé mûr.
. . .
Et les âmes qui montaient à Dieu, Passaient près d'elle comme de fines flammes.

Alors, elle s'inclina de nouveau et se pencha en dehors du charme encerclant, Jusqu'à ce que son sein eut échauffé la barrière sur laquelle elle s'appuyait,. . .][36]

Similarly, Denis' illustration shows a woman with long flowing hair, leaning against a railing. In the upper left hand corner, one also notices lightly drawn human figures—the souls ascending to the heavens. Clearly, while Denis' style can hardly be described as naturalistic, he neither limited himself to decorative stylizations nor abandoned the literary, suggesting that his childhood friend Véber might, indeed, have been correct when he wrote to the artist in 1887: "While you might indeed be a painter, you'll always have a touch of literary hack in you, and you'll end your days unrepentant."[37]

Completed in 1899, Denis' print series *Amour* clarifies the artist's complex approach to the auditory realm, including music and speech (cat. 24, fig. 14). Music, as Jean-David Jumean-Lafond convincingly demonstrates, played a fundamental role in Denis' art and life, in particular in his courtship of his first wife Marthe Meunier, whom he married in

[**FIGURE 13**]
Maurice Denis. French, 1870–1943. *Claude Debussy, La Damoiselle élue: poème lyrique d'après D. G. Rossetti,* trad. by Gabriel Sarrazin; arr. by author (Paris: Librairie de l'art indépendant, 1893). Vocal score, height 14½ in.; 37 cm. Pierpont Morgan Library, Department of Music, Manuscripts, and Books, acc. no. PMC 104. Photograph by Graham S. Haber, 2011

[**FIGURE 14**]
Maurice Denis. *On the Pale Silver Sofa* (*Sur le canapé d'argent pale*), plate X from *Amour*, 1899. Transfer lithograph. SCMA (cat. 24). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

1893.[38] In the print series, which concerns the evolution of his relationship with Marthe, the subject of music is addressed most explicitly in plate IX *Our Souls, with Langorous Gestures* (*Nos âmes, en des gestes lents,* cat. 23, fig. 15). The title (as well as those of the other prints in the series) is taken from Denis' journal and together, form a poem—yet another reference to literature.[39] Rigorously horizontal in its composition, the print conveys an impression of stillness. The woman on the right holds a rose over the piano her head tilted downwards. Her mouth is covered with the back of her hand and her eyes are closed, further reinforcing the sense of silence and deep introspection. Indeed, despite the score clearly displayed on the left, in front of the seated figure, music is first and foremost noticeable for its absence and by contrast to the muteness of the scene.

The absence of any formal or iconographic allusions to sound, aside from the clearly marked score, hints that the women were privilege to a unique kind of music, possibly a wondrous music that bordered on silence. As Katherine Bergeron suggests, the notion of an idealized poetic or musical expression, which manifests itself in absolute silence, gained widespread currency among Symbolist

[**FIGURE 15**]
Maurice Denis. *Our Souls, with Langorous Gestures* (*Nos* âmes *en des gestes lents*), plate IX from *Amour*, 1899. Transfer lithograph. SCMA (cat. 23). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

writers and composers. In their efforts to conform more closely to the patterns of natural speech, composers such as Debussy, Bergeron notes, "learned to tone down melody, making their song a dying breath, and their singers virtually mute: 'almost voiceless,' as Debussy would write. And it was in this act of silence that they, like the poets, dare to set song free."[40] Indeed, one could argue that it is this other-worldly form of music, also pursued by Debussy, that Denis' image most successfully approximates.

I wanted to grant music freedom that she possesses [inherently], perhaps more than any other art, not being constrained to the more or less precise reproduction of nature, but rather to the mysterious correspondences between Nature and Imagination

—DEBUSSY[41]

From the sound of street sellers hawking their wares to Paul Delmet's musical interpretations of city life, from Atget's photographs to Debussy's anti-naturalistic compositions, the choir of voices and images that made up Belle Époque Paris was decidedly not harmonious. Chéret's posters shouted, while Denis' prints, featuring much more muted tones, quietly confessed. Bruant declaimed, as did Steinlen's illustration, while Debussy suggested. The discrepancies between these contrapuntal interventions in the auditory and visual culture of Debussy's Paris are not, however, as great as they might seem at first glance. Indeed, as we have seen, the avant-garde of Montmartre created an atmosphere where popular and elite culture converged and redefined one another. By the same token, faced with troubling levels of political, social, and economic uncertainty, including the emergence of a new mass culture, artists and musicians shared a similar preoccupation with literary modes of representation and human speech as a vehicle for authentic self-expression. This should come as no surprise for a culture known, in Debussy's time as it is today, for valuing heated discussion and debate and where being a little *gueulard*—loudmouthed—is rarely cause for concern.

ENDNOTES

1 Quoted in Edward Lockspeiser, *Debussy, his life and mind* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 113.

2 Paul Gauguin, "Letter to Monsieur Fontainas, Tahiti, March 1899," in *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, 1874–1904*, ed. by Linda Nochlin (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1966), 178.

3 On the rhetoric of the musical vague and vagueness in late nineteenth-century art and music, see Corrine Chong, "Invoking the Language of the Musical Vague in the Art and Critical Reception of Henri Fantin-Latour," in *Music and Modernism, 1849–1950*, ed. Charlotte De Mille (Newcastel on Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 119–57.

4 Camille Mauclair, "La Peinture musicienne et la fusion des arts," *La Revue bleue. Revue politique et littéraire,* no. 10 (September 6, 1902): 300.

5 Kevin T. Dann, *Bright Colors Falsely Seen: Synaesthesia and the Search for Transcendental Knowledge* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1998), chap. 1.

6 Quoted in Philip Ball, *Bright Earth: Art and the Invention of Color* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2001), 22. On anti-naturalism, specifically in the context of late-nineteenth century art, see Debora Silverman, "Transcending the Word?: Religion and Music in Gauguin's Quest for Abstraction," in *French Music, Culture, and National Identity*, ed. Barbara Kelly (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2008), 149–71.

7 On the significance of Symbolist literature and literary modes of representation in Symbolist art, see Dario Gamboni, "Le Symbolisme en peinture et la littérature," *Revue de l'Art*, no. 96 (1992): 13–23.

8 Quoted in Pierre Borel, "Au Musée du Luxembourg: Jules Chéret. Peintre de la joie"(n.d.), in Jules Chéret Correspondence, 1878–1939, J. P. Getty Research Institute (Los Angeles, CA).

9 Phillip Dennis Cate, *Color Revolution: Color Lithography in France 1890-1900* (Santa Barbara and Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1978).

10 Phillip Dennis Cate, "L'Estampe originale: An Overview of Fin-de-Siècle Artistic Concerns," in Patricia Boyer and Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum; Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh., *L'Estampe originale: artistic printmaking in France, 1893–1895* (Zwolle [Netherlands]; Amsterdam: Waanders; Van Gogh Museum, 1991), 19.

11 *Ibid.,* 17, and Phillip Dennis Cate and Patricia Eckert-Boyer, *The Circle of Toulouse-Lautrec: An Exhibition of the Work of the Artist and of His Close Associates* (New Brunswick: The Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, 1985), 12–19.

12 Although Chéret was primarily known for his posters, he also illustrated numerous sheet music covers. According to Henri Beraldi, by 1886, the artist had already completed at least fourteen such covers. Henri Beraldi, *Les Graveurs du XIXe siècle*, vol. IV (Paris: L. Conquet, 1886), 168–203. Published in 1886, *España: suite de valses d'après la célèbre rapsodie d'Emmanuel Chabrier* by Emile Waldteufel (probably the best known nineteenth-century composer of waltzes next to members of the Strauss family) features a lively illustration by Chéret. It shows a "Spanish" performer, dancing on a table with a fan and tamborine in her hands. The artist's quick sketchy style and the composition of the scene successfully bring to mind the ebullience of Waldteufel's music.

13 Jean Lorrain, "Chéret," *Le Courrier Français*, 7e année, no. 6 (February 9, 1896): 5.

14 Jeffrey Aaron Segal, "The Republic of Goods: Advertising and National Identity in France, 1875–1918" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1995). See also Karen Lynn Carter, *L'Âge de l' affiche: The Reception, Display and Collection of Posters in Fin-de-siècle Paris* (Ph.D. diss., The University of Chicago, 2001), 39.

15 Victor Fournel, *Les cris de Paris: types et physionomies d'autrefois* (1887; repr., Paris & Montpellier: Éditions de Paris; Max Chaleil, 2003), 221.

16 David Garrioch, "Sounds of the City: The Soundscape of Early Modern European Towns," *Urban History,* vol. 30, no. 1 (2003): 6. Although focusing on cities in the early modern period, many aspects of Garrioch's argument apply equally well to nineteenth-century Paris.

17 Quoted in Martine Gantrel, "Albertine ou l'Étrangère: Une Nouvelle Interprétation des 'cris de Paris' dans *La Prisonnière*," *RHLF*, no. 1 (2000): 7. I owe a special debt of gratitude to Martine for sharing her research with me. The English translation of the text provided here comes from the Random House edition: Marcel Proust, *Remembrance of Things*

Past, vol. 3, trans. by C. K. Scott Moncrieff, Terence Kilmartin and Andreas Mayor (New York: Random House, 1981), 111.

18 On Paul Passy, Ferdinand Brunot, and the significance of vocal expression in turn-of-the-century France, see Katherine Bergeron, *Voice Lessons: French Mélodie in the Belle Époque* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), esp. chap. 2.

19 Steven Moore Whiting, "Music on Montmartre," in *The Spirit of Montmartre: Cabarets, Humor, and the Avant-Garde, 1875–1905*, ed. Phillip Cate and Mary Shaw, n.d., 159–60.

20 Victor Fournel, *Les Cris de Paris*. See also Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, esp. chap. 3

21 Martine Gantrel, "Entre réalisme et poésie: les petits métiers de Paris et leurs cris au dix-neuvième siècle" (paper presented at the 2005 Nineteenth-Century French Studies Conference [Austin, TX]).

22 These recordings resulted in the founding in 1911 of the Archives de la Parole by Ferdinand Brunot. On the history of this institution and Brunot's monumental *Histoire de la langue française* (1905–1938), see Jean-Claude Chevalier, "*L'Histoire de la Langue Française* de Ferdinand Brunot," in *Lieux de Mémoire*, III, vol. 2 (Traditions), ed. by Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), 421–59.

23 Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 113–6.; Steven Huebner, "Between Anarchism and the Box Office: Gustave Charpentier's 'Louise,'" *19th-Century Music,* vol. 19, no. 2 (October 1, 1995): 156.

24 Moore Whiting, "Music on Montmartre," 163.

25 Charles Rearick, "Song and Society in Turn-Of-The-Century France," *Journal of Social History*, vol. 22, no. 1 (Fall 1988): 47.

26 Moore Whiting, "Music on Montmartre," 166.

27 Huebner, "Between Anarchism and the Box Office: Gustave Charpentier's 'Louise,'" 156.

28 Debussy, Letter to André Poniatowski (February 1893) quoted in Lockspeiser, *Debussy, his life and mind*, 171.

29 Debussy, Letter to Pierre Louÿs (Tuesday, February 6, 1900), in Claude Debussy, *Correspondance, 1872–1918*, ed. by François Lesure and Denis Herlin (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 539.

30 A French decorative and historical painter, Rochegrosse attracted attention at the Paris Salons with his vibrantly colored historical and Orientalist paintings.

31 Huebner, "Between Anarchism and the Box Office," 146.

32 Maurice Denis, "Définition du néo-traditionnisme," *Theories, 1890–1910*, 4th edition (1890, Paris: L. Rouart et J. Watelin éditeurs, 1920), 1.

33 Gerard Vaughan, "André Gide and Maurice Denis: 'Le Voyage d'Urien,'" *Print Quarterly*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1984): 178.

34 Maurice Denis, "Définition du néo-traditionnisme," 11.

35 Claude Debussy, *La Damoiselle élue*: poème lyrique d'après D.G. Rossetti, trans. by Gabriel Sarrazin; arr. by author (Paris: Librarie de l'art indépendant, 1893). English translation provided here is, in fact, Rossetti's original poem. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, "The Blessed Damozel," *Collected Poetry and Prose*, ed. by Jerome McGann (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2003), 3.

36 *Ibid*.

37 Quoted in Vaughan, "André Gide and Maurice Denis," 178.

38 Jean-David Jumeau-Lafond, "Denis et la musique," *Maurice Denis, 1870–1943,* Exh. cat. (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux; Montréal: Musée des Beaux-Arts de Montréal, 2006), 51–57. Evidence of the central role played by music in Denis' courtship and then marriage includes *Le Menuet de la Princesse Maleine ou Marthe au piano* (1891). In the collection of the Musée d'Orsay, the painting depicts Denis' then fiancée in three-quarter profile in front of a piano with fingers lightly poised on the keyboard. A score is clearly visible in the background.

39 "Van Gogh Museum - Amour - Nos âmes en des gestes lents," n.d., http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/vgm/index.jsp?page=4376&collection=paginas.vastecollectie&lang=en (accessed October 21, 2011). Maurice Denis, *Journal,* vol. 1 (Paris: La Colombe, 1957), 8 (Journal entry for October 25, 1891).

40 Bergeron, *Voice Lessons*, 177.

41 Debussy, "Pourquoi j'ai écrit Pelléas," in Claude Debussy, *Monsieur Croche et autres écrits.*, éd. complète de son œuvre critique (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), 61.

TOWARDS A PORTRAIT OF DEBUSSY AS A CONNOISSEUR OF PAINTING:
Turner, Whistler, Lerolle, Degas

Jean-Michel Nectoux

> I dared to say to him than many had tried, some in poetry, others in painting, and some, albeit pitifully few, in music, to shake away the dust of tradition—something that merely led to their being called "Symbolists' or "Impressionists," those appellations being highly useful in order to debunk their efforts.
>
> —CLAUDE DEBUSSY[1]

DEBUSSY'S IRONIC DECLARATION, in his "Conversation with Monsieur Croche" (the literary persona he invented to serve as an alter ego), may appropriately serve here as both an epigraph and an admonition. Like other critics, Émile Vuillermoz, too, pursued this long-held notion of Debussy as the leading light of "musical Impressionism" (fig. 16). But in a thoughtfully conceived and well-documented study, Stefan Jarocínski rather astutely proposed to situate Debussy's œuvre in the suggestive aesthetic that is closer to Symbolism.[2] The 1984 Debussy exhibition in Rome and the 2003 book by François Lesure, as well as other, more recent studies, have further broadened and deepened Jarocínski's proposition.[3]

It is not my intention here to reopen a debate that will in my view never be closed because of the total impossibility of giving precise definitions of "Impressionism" and "Symbolism" as they might pertain to music. I should like simply to speak about a certain number of works of art by four masters—Joseph Mallord William Turner, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Henry Lerolle, and Edgar Degas—by whom Debussy was particularly fascinated and for whom he felt genuine personal affinity.

References to the fine arts are relatively rare in Debussy's correspondence: he generally preferred to keep to himself the lucubrations of his intellectual life. For elucidation we must therefore look to the testimony of other privileged witnesses, in particular the journalist and composer Robert Godet, the music historian and critic Louis Laloy, Debussy's piano student Madame Gérard de Romilly, the doctor Louis Pasteur Vallery-Radot (the great scientist's grandson), and the playwright René Peter, all of whom were close to

[FIGURE 16] Félix Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon). French, 1820–1910. *Claude Debussy*, 1905. Photograph. Courtesy Lebrecht Music & Arts

the musician at various moments during his life and whose reflections trace, in the area that concerns us here, a number of paths that have as yet been little explored.
From his earliest years, the visual arts played an essential role in Debussy's life. The daughter of Marie-Blanche Vasnier (an amateur soprano, a supporter, and the mistress of the young composer) remarked that when he had barely reached twenty, Claude-Achille "manifested an innate sensitivity to everything having to do with the fine arts, even for paintings and engravings which, at least in those days, he did not particularly care for. When my father, a true connoisseur, engaged him in conversation, he found in Debussy's words both confident assessments and appreciations that were remarkable and unique."[4]
Claude-Achille—the composer was christened "Achille-Claude," changed his name to "Claude-Achille" in 1889, then dropped "Achille" in 1892—was already a regular visitor to print and antique dealers, into whose coffers he dropped the meek results of his teaching, to the great disappointment of his mother, who would always show to the young man's friends how his bureau drawers were stuffed with engravings.[5] His enthusiasms, which sometimes became tyrannical, led him in highly eclectic directions, some of which he would later renounce. Madame Gérard de Romilly describes her youthful teacher's sudden passion, for example, for a Louis XV sofa, which he stared at for hours in the show window of an antique shop, and his attraction to a particular engraved copper platter, which he so fervently admired at the home of her parents that they eventually gave it to him.[6]
In an 1893 letter to the businessman André Poniatowski, we find a passage in which the young musician sketches a kind of physiology of aesthetic pleasure, or of what he called "the cult of desire": "Desire is everything: we sometimes feel a desire for a work of art that is sincere and insane and desperately needy, for a Velásquez, a Japanese Satsuma vase, or even for a new kind of cravat. What happiness when one finally possesses it? It is really true love! Then, after a week has gone by, nothing: the object is there, you've gone by six or seven times without even looking at it. Only after an absence of several months can you look at it again with that initial passion."[7]

We see, then, that for this particular collector it was necessary to let go of a certain object fallen from grace in order to acquire some new object of desire. Gabriel Pierné, the composer who was Debussy's contemporary at the Conservatoire, reports that Debussy convinced him to cut out from his family's collection of *Le Monde illustré* a certain number of reproductions with small images and wide margins in order to decorate the walls of his bedroom. He mentions specifically the paintings of Juste-Aurèle Meissonnier, the eighteenth-century artist who was then considered the academic painter par excellence.[8]

Along the same lines, we note this declaration that Debussy made in 1886 concerning the death in January 1886 of Paul Baudry, who did happen to be the author of the portrait of Debussy's beloved mistress, Marie-Blanche Vasnier: "In my view [Baudry] was the representative of great art in the most modern sense of the word; he will not easily be replaced, especially in this day and age when, with only a few exceptions, artists are preoccupied by minutia, something that prohibits them from thinking on the grand scale."[9]

While in Italy (Debussy stayed there from 1885 to 1887 as winner of the Prix de Rome),

the composer seems to have been little moved by the paintings of the Italian Renaissance. If he was impressed by Michelangelo's audacity—"This is modernism pushed to its extreme limit," he wrote—he nonetheless thought in terms opposite to those of traditional academic circles in believing that earlier artists could never serve as models for contemporary creators: "we are far too much like little boys for us to attempt to pursue paths such as theirs."[10] He quite lucidly admits that he was crushed by the grandeur of Rome, and that to so many magnificent splendors he preferred the aesthetics of the latest Parisian artists: "I am sick and tired of the 'Eternal City'! I am sick and tired of music, and of this unchangingly eternal landscape. I want to see some Manet!"[11]

Debussy left Rome for the last time in 1887, and returned to a Paris that was inundated by a wave of Symbolism, the Symbolist manifesto of Jean Moréas having been published in *Le Figaro* in 1886, the very year of the last Impressionist exhibition. And it was indeed during these years of triumphant Symbolism that Debussy's personal tastes and preferences were fixed and refined. In a questionnaire that he filled out in 1889, he indicated that his favorite painters were Botticelli (a souvenir of his sojourn in Italy) and Gustave Moreau, an artist whom, curiously enough, he will never mention again. It was during these years that he also became a regular museumgoer, visiting the Louvre, of course, where, in the company of his friend, the poet Pierre Louÿs, he was stunned by Titian's *Jupiter and Antiope*.[12] We may suppose that he more frequently visited the Musée du Luxembourg, where the works of contemporary artists were on view, and that he rarely missed the annual salons of the newly established Société nationale des Beaux-Arts, now the rival of the old Société des Artistes français. He haunted the boutiques of the antique dealers and the booksellers, in particular the shop owned by Edmond Bailly, the Librairie de l'Art indépendant, which had become a well-known meeting place for poets and artists; and he regularly visited the painting galleries owned by such figures as Georges Petit and Durand-Ruel, where he could admire Whistler's *Nocturnes*, in and around 1890, or Monet's earliest *Nymphéas*, in and around 1900.

In precious recollections of her meetings with Debussy, towards the turn of the century, Madame Gérard de Romilly writes: "Debussy was greatly attracted to painting. He loved to visit museums and exhibitions of paintings, and he had a special predilection for the landscapes of the Norwegian painter Frits Thaulow and for Claude Monet. Debussy always regretted not having pursued painting instead of music."[13]

Debussy's attitude towards Impressionist painting seems to have been considerably less enthusiastic than the proponents of parallelisms between Debussy and Monet have always believed (without, however, offering much substantive evidence). Robert Godet never hestitated to speak of Debussy's "indifference towards the 'conquests' of the Impressionist technique, something that does not imply real hostility towards the movement, of course, but rather certain reasonable doubts about it that became exacerbated when such 'conquests' were serially repeated."[14] What this affirmation means is not entirely clear, but the words *en série* (serially) do suggest an implicit criticism of the celebrated series of cathedrals, haystacks, and poplars undertaken by Monet

in the mid-eighteen-nineties. And yet, by giving the title of "*De l'aube à midi sur la mer*" ("From dawn to noon on the sea") to the second part of his symphonic triptych *La Mer*, Debussy seems nonetheless to pay homage, at least indirectly, to those very paintings of Monet, all set down in luminosities and atmospheres particular to certain skies and to certain times of day.

Debussy's predilection for Monet, attested to by Madame de Romilly, is furthermore supported by a passage in a letter to the music critic and historian Émile Vuillermoz, where one finds this unequivocal sentence: "You do me great honor by calling me a student of Claude Monet."[15] This letter comes late in the composer's life, in 1916, and, in all of his correspondence, it remains the sole allusion to the great Impressionist painter. It is somewhat puzzling, however, that Vuillermoz's original remark, to which the composer was obviously responding, has in fact never been found.

Nonetheless, the composer's irritation, caused by the critical success of the notion of "musical Impressionism," was real, as was his horror of all such labels, as he clearly explained in an interview with the *New York Times*: "Here you hit upon what I think is the greatest mistake of the present day, the desire to classify all music. How can you do that? You speak of German music, Italian music, impressionistic music, and various other kinds. What is the difference? I mean, if you are speaking of a work of art, you cannot say definitely that it belongs to any great group. It is a work of art, and that is enough."[16]

We also have an important letter that the composer wrote to the publisher Jacques Durand about the second book of *Images* for piano: "I always try to do something different, to create 'realities,' as it were, which some idiots call 'Impressionism,' a term usually employed very poorly, especially by art critics who do not hesitate to saddle it upon Turner, the greatest creator of mystery in all of art!"[17]

This predilection for Turner is something that Debussy exhibited as early as 1891, when he was twenty-nine, in a letter to Robert Godet, in which he agreed with his friend's preferences for Turner and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, among the painters then exhibiting in London, and suggested with irony that he was counting on those two painters to keep Godet from seeing all the others![18]

In this period Debussy could have known Turner only via books and reproductions lent to him by his friend Gabriel Mourey, who would include a study of the great painter in his *Passé le détroit* of 1895. In point of fact Turner was long absent from French national collections: the first important French exhibition devoted to him was held at the Sedelmeyer Gallery in 1894.

Debussy's devotion to Turner (fig. 17) would continue throughout his life. In 1903, the pianist Ricardo Viñes noted in his diary, apropos of Debussy's *Estampes*, that he had gone to see the composer, "who once again let me hear his new works for piano. [...] By chance, I said to him that his music reminded me of paintings by Turner, to which he replied that, before composing them, he had in fact spent a great deal of time in the Turner rooms in London."[19]

Thus do we learn that, as from his very first stay in London, in July 1902, Debussy went to admire the extraordinary collection of Turners

[FIGURE 17]
Figure 17. Joseph Mallord William Turner. English, 1775–1851. *Light and Colour (Goethe's Theory)—the Morning after the Deluge, Moses Writing the Book of Genesis*, 1843. Oil on canvas. 31 x 31 in.; 78.7 x 78.7 cm. © Tate, London, 2011

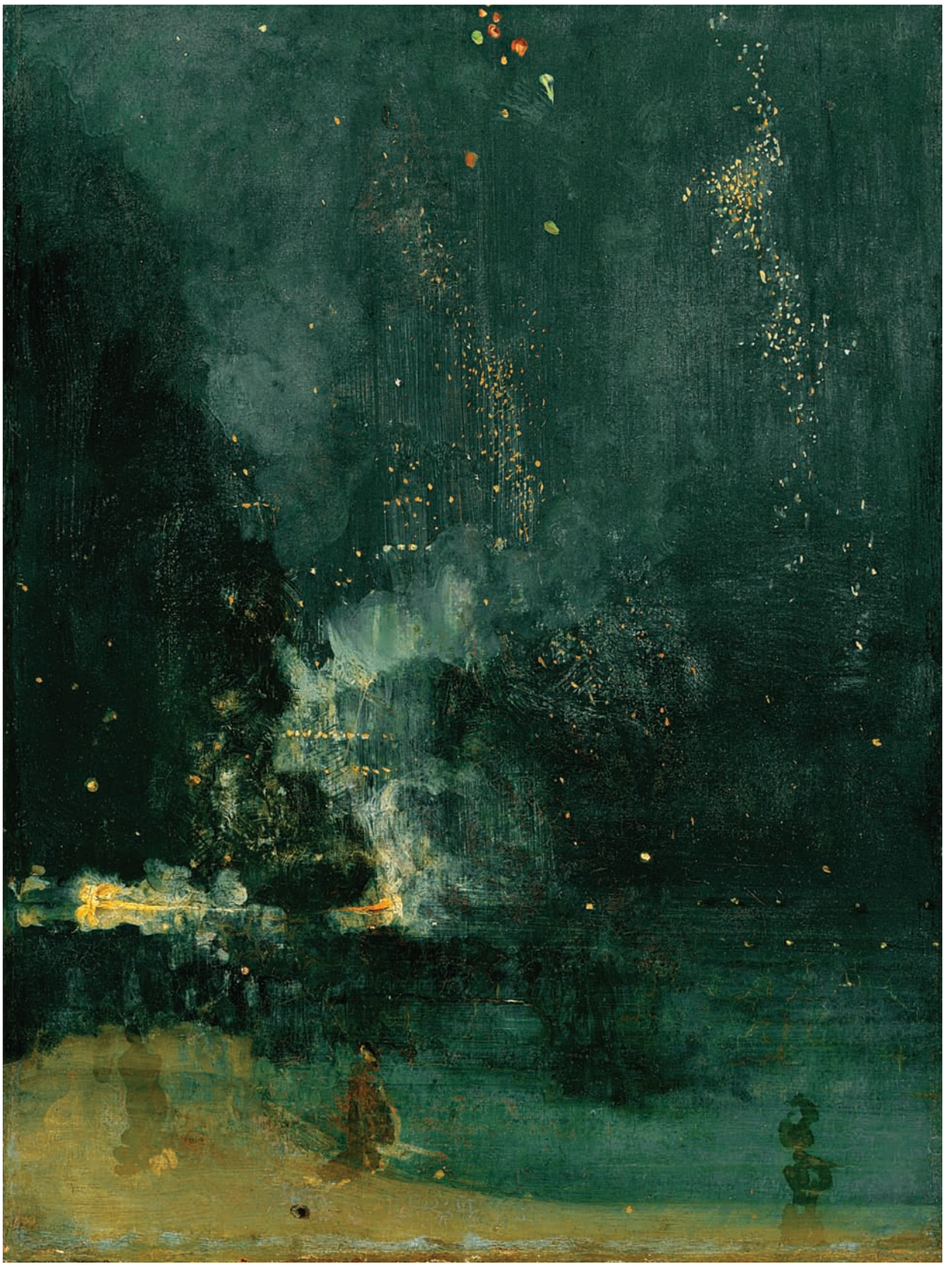
bequeathed by the painter to the National Gallery.[20] There the composer could see a number of the Englishman's grand and visionary tableaux, painted during the high romantic period but totally misunderstood by contemporary observers, among them *Light and Color* and *Shade and Darkness*—abstract titles that foreshadow those of Whistler. Indeed, Turner and Whistler, along with the pre-Raphaelite Dante Gabriel Rossetti, were the central figures of Debussy's pantheon of painters. Louis Pasteur Vallery-Radot mentions the color reproductions of works by Turner and Whistler that he saw in Debussy's comfortable apartment in the Avenue du Bois in 1910, a sign that the musician continued even then to be faithful to the painters whom he had begun to admire some twenty years earlier.[21]

According to the testimony of Louis Laloy, it was at Stéphane Mallarmé's apartment that Debussy saw "Whistler pick up a sketch by Odilon Redon and ask which way it was supposed to be looked at."[22] In the earlier eighteen-nineties, Whistler was an habitué of Mallarmé's Tuesday evening salons: barely understood and often maligned in England, the great American artist was always warmly welcomed in Paris, where he came to stay in January 1892. Debussy, introduced in early 1891 to Mallarmé's circle by the playwright André-Ferdinand Hérold (grandson of composer Ferdinand Hérold), had many opportunities to admire, on the dining room wall of Mallarmé's apartment in the Rue de Rome, Whistler's subtle lithograph, *The Dancing Girl,* a present from the artist to the poet.

In the autumn of 1892, Mallarmé was very proud to show his visitors the first printings of Whistler's admirable lithographic portrait of him that served as the frontispiece of his anthology, *Vers et prose*. There is no doubt that Debussy often heard Mallarmé speak of Whistler, whom he very much loved. It is clear that Whistler's extraordinary elegance attracted Debussy's attention, as did the refined colors of his palette. Indeed, the composer would have frequent occasion to admire the portraits and landscapes that Whistler exhibited in various Parisian painting salons and well-known art galleries in and around 1890. In the autumn of 1891 it was Mallarmé himself who carried out the delicate negotiations for the purchase by the administration of the *Portrait de ma mère*, which we know as *Whistler's Mother* (the painting was entered into the collections of the Musée du Luxembourg). It is important to underline the exact title of this oil painting from 1872—*Arrangement in Grey and Black. Portrait of the Painter's Mother*—which is now housed in Paris in the Musée d'Orsay. We learn very clearly of the composer's tender affection for this highly subtle painting in a letter that Debussy wrote to the great violinist Eugène Ysaÿe on September 22, 1894: "I am working on three *Nocturnes* for solo violin and orchestra that are designed for you. The orchestra of the first is composed of strings alone; the orchestra of the second, of three flutes, four horns, three trumpets, and two harps; the orchestra of the third, of the two groups together. As a whole it is an inquiry into the different ways in which one might arrange a single color, as for example what in painting would be a study of shades of grey."[23]

And how can we not think of Debussy's *Feux d'artifice* (the twelfth of the second book of *Préludes*) as we stand before Whistler's magnificent *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket* (fig. 18), completed in 1875 and

[FIGURE 18] James Abbott McNeill Whistler. American, 1834–1903. *Nocturne in Black and Gold/The Falling Rocket*, 1875. Oil on panel. 23¾ x 18⅜ in.; 60.2 x 46.7 cm. Detroit Institute of Arts, Gift of Dexter M. Ferry, Jr., 46.309



now housed in the Detroit Institute of Arts, "where the exploded fireworks turn to bloody baguettes," as Huysmans put it, "and scatter stars through the impenetrable darkness of the night."[24]

It is highly likely that Debussy saw and admired this work, among Whistler's most famous *Nocturnes*, because it was exhibited in Paris on five different occasions between 1883 and 1905, most notably at the Salon of 1890. It would appear that Debussy was enchanted by Whistler's purified style, "with nothing in it that weighs or settles in," as Verlaine puts it in his *Art poétique*. And if he was seduced by this aesthetic of illusion, in which the exquisite becomes the evanescent, it was by the very refinement of its effects. Perhaps he even heard Mallarmé say, of the painter, that "Whistler still paints in the classic manner, but with what hands!"[25]

In the last years of the century, evoking the small apartment where Debussy and his wife lived in the Rue Cardinet, at no. 58, Madame Gérard de Romilly remarked that "there was also a sofa, some oriental rugs hanging on the walls, paintings by Lerolle, Jacques Blanche, Thaulow, and some sketches of Lilo Debussy [Marie-Rosalie Texier, whom Debussy married in October 1899] in the fullness of her beauty."[26]

In the early eighteen-nineties, Debussy's friendship with Henry Lerolle (1848–1929) was of capital importance to the composer. Lerolle was one of the first and one of the most enthusiastic devotees of *Pelléas*, at the time still incomplete, and he was the dedicatee of *De Soir* (1893) from the *Proses lyriques*. "Debussy told me that there was only one painter who had genuine knowledge of music, and that that painter was I," Lerolle wrote to his brother-in-law, the composer Ernest Chausson. And in the same letter he writes: "These days I see only Debussy and sometimes [Raymond] Bonheur. And while the artistic ideas I cherish the most are those of musicians, they appear to me to be not quite painters enough for me to have full confidence in them."[27]

Lerolle, like Chausson, is representative of the typically bourgeois artist at the end of the nineteenth century: well removed from disheveled, bohemian surroundings, he was living comfortably in the Avenue Duquesne, near Les Invalides, and cultivating with a refined literary taste both music and the fine arts. Quite different both from the commonplaces of the academic tradition and from the radical experiments of the avant-garde, Lerolle's painting, delicate and sensitive, gives us an example of what we might call "well-tempered modernism." As Maurice Denis wrote, "the innovations of the great creators, still controversial, were propagated by the artists of the official Salon." Lerolle was among those who contributed to this transformation of French painting while remaining perfectly accessible to the public that admired [Jean-Léon] Gérome and [Alexandre] Cabanel."[28]

We find Lerolle's most outstanding qualities in the lovely portrait of his mother exhibited at the Société nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1895 (it is now in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris): a polished technique, a delicate touch, drawing of an almost excessive precision, and an overall distinction that links his constructions, albeit distantly, to those of both Whistler and the young Degas. An excellent designer and an even more exceptional

engraver, Lerolle, like Degas before him, had been a student of Louis Lamothe, himself a disciple of Ingres.

"We used to see Degas at Lerolle's place," Maurice Denis tells us, "standing before one of his most beautiful canvases, nudes, dancers, women doing up their hair, jockeys."[29] Lerolle possessed about a dozen of Degas' works, acquired from Paul Durand-Ruel's gallery or perhaps from the artist himself. In 1883, Lerolle had captured the imagination of Degas, who (according to a letter he sent to Madame Bartholomé) described Lerolle as "always in the process of seeing himself receiving awards in the space available between the annual Salon and the Triennial or National Exhibition."[30] Having become an habitué of Lerolle's gatherings in the Avenue Duquesne, Degas made a *confident* of this young painter who, in the end, seemed nothing at all like an "official" artist, despite his contributions to the decoration of the new Parisian temples of the French Republic: the Sorbonne and the Hôtel de Ville. The collection of works by Degas that Lerolle amassed in only a few years was remarkable: its most exceptional items were eventually acquired by such internationally celebrated museums as the Phillips Collection, in Washington, D.C. (*Femmes se poignant*, of 1875, employing the technique Degas invented of "painting with solvent"); the Musée d'Orsay (*Baigneuse, allongée au sol,* of 1886–1888, pastel on paper); and the Tate Gallery, London (*Femme au tub*, of 1883, also pastel on paper).

This kind of consummate art, according to Robert Godet, is something that Debussy admired "for its uniquely graceful rhythms in representations of the dance, for its intense accuracy in representations of manual work, and for its embodiment, in representations of figures, of the inevitability of their fate as inscribed on the faces of the models."[31] In Degas there is a certain originality of point of view, a sense of just proportion, a delicate progression of tonal intensity, an audacity of placement on the page that is often asymmetrical or foreshortened, and most of all a sense of arabesque, of serpentine and linear motifs, that the composer sought out in his own creations. Debussy's encounter with Degas seems to me to have been every bit as powerful as the encounters, more frequently commented on, with Turner and Whistler. Indeed, the encounter with Degas was all the more crucial in that, at the time, the painter exhibited his work on only rare occasion. In the autumn of 1892, then again in the autumn of 1894, he did nonetheless accept Durand-Ruel's invitation to present some twenty landscapes painted on monotypes, that is, from plates, which number among those of his most attractive and daring pieces that suggest the path to abstraction.

Debussy was very enthusiastic about these highly radical works, in which he no doubt found the same plastic imagination and mystery that he found in certain paintings by Turner joined to the tonal delicacy characteristic of Japanese art. They were imaginary landscapes and, more than *états d'âme* or "states of mind," they were rather, as Degas put it in a transformation of the cliché, *états d'yeux*, or "states of the eyes." We are thus not surprised to read, from the pen of Debussy's faithful friend Robert Godet, that "the sole artist constantly mentioned at this time was [...] Degas, even the Degas of the rare pastel landscapes, by whose technique and determination he was simply fascinated."[32] And we may thus deduce with some certitude

[FIGURE 19]
Pierre-Auguste Renoir. French, 1841–1919. *Yvonne and Christine Lerolle at the Piano*, ca. 1897–98. Oil on canvas. 28⅝ x 36⅛ in.; 73 x 92 cm. © RMN, Musée de l'Orangerie/Franck Raux

that Debussy visited at least one of the Degas exhibitions that were clearly the subject of impassioned discussions in the circles around Lerolle and Chausson.

Debussy was profoundly impressed by the men and women of the *grande bourgeoisie* who were sufficiently affluent such that artistic preoccupations could be prime subjects of conversation. Thus did it come about, in October 1893, that at a soirée at Lerolle's apartment, Debussy played the scene in the opera, in its first version, of the death of Pelléas. Maurice Denis described the highly refined circumstances in which this hearing took place: "The setting was neither sentimental, with antiquarian bric-à-brac, nor was it sterile, as in operating room; it was rather marked by a harmonious ensemble of traditional family furniture and modern furnishings; in addition to canvases by Degas, there were some by Fantin Latour, Puvis de Chavannes, Besnard, Corot, Renoir, some lovely old paintings, and rooms done up in

wallpapers designed by William Morris."[33] We see in *Yvonne et Christine Lerolle au piano* (fig. 19), the celebrated 1897 oil painting by Renoir, now at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris, a fine representation of the music rooms that so warmly welcomed the young Debussy. To Yvonne the composer dedicated the three *Images* for piano of 1894, which included a mysterious piece from February 1894 titled *Souvenir du Louvre*.[34] He also copied out for her one of the most graceful passages of *Pelléas et Mélisande*, in which Mélisande appears on the terrace, at the seashore, at the very end of act I, saying, "Voyez, j'ai les mains pleines de fleurs"—"look, my hands are full of flowers"—and he dedicated it: "To Mademoiselle Yvonne Lerolle, a recollection of her little sister, Mélisande." Debussy surely modeled this gallant gesture on one of those of Mallarmé, who was a virtuoso of setting down poetic dedications on hand-held fans. The composer's dedication, with the text and the music elegantly calligraphed on a fan made from Japanese paper imprinted with flowers, leaves, and birds, forms an exquisite object that seems in itself entirely to resume the originality, delicacy, and sensitivity of that connoisseur of the arts whom we know as Claude Debussy.

—Translated by Peter Bloom

This text was originally a lecture given by Jean-Michel Nectoux in 2007 at the conference "Musique et les arts au temps de la princesse de Polignac" (Paris), sponsored by the Association pour la Connaissance littéraire et musicale. It has been edited and translated by Peter Bloom for this catalogue. Jean-Michel Nectoux is a specialist in nineteenth- and twentieth-century music widely known for his authoritative biography of Gabriel Fauré, and as the author of *Nocturne en bleu et or: Debussy, la musique, et les arts* (Paris: Fayard, 2010). He was curator for concerts and music exhibitions at the Musée d'Orsay, then *conseiller scientifique* at the Institut national d'histoire de l'art, in Paris, now affiliated with the Centre national de la recherche scientifique. He is currently the curator of a major exhibition, *Debussy, Music, and the Arts*, which will be shown in Paris at the Musée de l'Orangerie, under the aegis of the Musée d'Orsay (February 21–June 11, 2012), and in Tokyo at the Bridgestone Museum (July 13–October 14, 2012).

ENDNOTES

1 The "Conversation" appeared in *La Revue blanche* on July 1,1901; it is reprinted in *M. Croche et autres écrits*, ed. François Lesure (Paris: Gallimard, 1987), 48.

2 Stefan Jarocínski, *Debussy, impressionnisme et symbolisme* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1970), with a preface by Vladimir Jankélévitch.

3 See François Lesure and Guy Cogeval, *Debussy e il simbolismo* (Rome: F. Palombi, 1984); François Lesure, *Claude Debussy avant 'Pelléas,' ou les années symbolistes* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1992); and François Lesure, *Claude Debussy* (Paris: Fayard, 2003).

4 Marguerite Vasnier, "Debussy à dix-huit ans," *La Revue musicale*, special number on "La Jeunesse de Claude Debussy" (May 1, 1926): 20.

5 Letter from Paul Vidal to Henriette Fuchs, July 12, 1884, in *Revue de musicologie*, special number on Debussy, ed. François Lesure (1962): 99-100.

6 See "Debussy professeur par une de ses élèves (1898-1909)," *Cahiers Debussy*, nouvelle série, no. 2 (1978): 5.

7 Claude Debussy, *Correspondance 1872-1918*, ed. François Lesure and Denis Herlin (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 114.

8 "Souvenirs d'Achille Debussy," in "La Jeunesse de Claude Debussy," 10.

9 Letter from Debussy, in Rome, to Henri Vasnier, January 29, 1886, in Debussy, *Correspondance*, 48.

10 Letter from Debussy to Henri Vasnier, February–March 1885, in Debussy, *Correspondance*, 25.

11 Letter to Émile Baron, September 1886, in Debussy, *Correspondance*, 51.

12 Also called the *Pardo Venus*.

13 See "Debussy professeur par une de ses élèves (1898–1909)," 5, 10.

14 Robert Godet, "Entretien préliminaire" with Georges Jean-Aubry, in Claude Debussy, *Lettres à deux amis* (Paris: José Corti, 1942), 44.

15 Letter of January 16, 1916, in Debussy, *Correspondance*, 366.

16 Cited by David Grayson, in "Debussy Discusses Music and His Work (*The New York Times*, June 26, 1910)," *Cahiers Debussy*, no. 16 (1992): 29.

17 Letter of late March, early April 1908, in Debussy, *Correspondance*, 1080.

18 Letter to Robert Godet, February 12,1891, in Debussy, *Correspondance*, 96.

19 Fragment dated July 4, 1903, in "Le Journal inédit de Ricardo Viñes," ed. Nina Gubisch, *Revue internationale de musique française*, I (June 1980): 226.

20 One hundred completed paintings, one hundred eighty paintings considered incomplete, and nearly twenty thousand drawings and sketches were officially entered into the British collection in 1856. The Tate Gallery, which opened in 1897, exhibited Turner's works only after 1906. A "Turner Wing" opened in 1910.

21 See the Introduction to *Lettres de Claude Debussy à sa femme Emma* (Paris: Flammarion, 1957), 35. One would like to know which works he actually possessed, because very few objects from Debussy's personal collection have come down to us. The recently discovered inventory of his possessions, the "inventaire après décès," is all but mute on this subject.

22 Louis Laloy, *La Musique retrouvée* (Paris: Plon, 1928), 121.

23 Debussy, *Correspondance*, 222.

24 Joris-Karl Huysmans, *Certains* (Paris: Union générale d'éditions, 1975), 283–84.

25 Edmond Bonniot, "Mardis soirs, rue de Rome," *Les Marges* (January 10, 1936): 12–13.

26 See "Debussy professeur par une de ses élèves (1898–1909)," 5, 10.

27 Letter of March 13,1894, in Ernest Chausson, *Écrits inédits*, ed. Jean Gallois (Monaco: Éditions du Rocher, 1999), 382.

28 Maurice Denis, *Henry Lerolle et ses amis* (Paris: Duranton, 1932), 14.

29 *Ibid*., 5.

30 Cited by Henri Loyrette, *Degas* (Paris: Fayard, 1991), 481.

31 Robert Godet, "Entretien préliminaire," with Georges Jean-Aubry, 43.

32 Robert Godet, "En marge de la marge," in "La Jeunesse de Claude Debussy," 71. Godet believed that Debussy had never met Degas, but we have recently found proof of at least one encounter that took place at the dinner table of their common friend Henry Lerolle.

33 Denis, *Henry Lerolle et ses amis*, 5.

34 In 1901, when he published the "Sarabande" in the suite *Pour le piano*—already a component of the *Images* of 1894—Debussy would dedicate this piece "À Mme E. Rouart," that is, to Yvonne Lerolle, now married to Eugène Rouart.

DANCE IN DEBUSSY'S PARIS:
Re-figuring Art and Music

Juliet Bellow

IN AN ESSAY entitled "La Peinture musicienne et la fusion des arts" ("Musical Painting and the Fusion of the Arts"), published in *La Revue bleue* in 1902, the critic Camille Mauclair compared the musical compositions of Claude Debussy with landscape paintings by Claude Monet and his Impressionist colleagues. "The landscapes of Claude Monet are in fact symphonies of luminous waves," Mauclair wrote, relating Impressionist painters' use of colored shadows to the thematic development of musical material. In turn, Debussy's music, "based not on a succession of themes but on the relative values of sounds in themselves, bears a striking resemblance to these pictures," Mauclair argued. "It is Impressionism consisting of sonorous patches."[1] Music and painting converged—became "Impressionist"—for Mauclair when the artist concentrated on internal relations within the work rather than external motifs or structures. The critic then drew his readers' attention to the "commonality of certain expressions as suitable to painting as to music." "Tone, scale, note, study, chromaticism, harmony, value, theme, motif," he claimed, are "employed equally by musicians and painters, in nearly identical meanings."[2]

We may, or may not, be willing to accept Mauclair's assertion of a fundamental similarity between touches of sound and color in Debussy's and Monet's work.[3] Clearly, though, the broader concept upon which Mauclair's argument hinged—the belief that the abstracting tendencies in painting of this period paralleled the inherently non-objective character of musical form—had become something of a truism within the Parisian art world around 1900.[4] This idea gained currency in France during the Romantic era: in her influential treatise *De l'Allemagne (On Germany*, 1810), Anne-Louise Germaine de Staël described music as the "foremost of the arts" because, as a non-imitative medium, it corresponded most closely to the ineffable qualities of the human imagination.[5] Charles Baudelaire, in his "Salon of 1846," applied this concept to painting, arguing that the latter medium approximated music through the affective properties of color. "In color," Baudelaire wrote, "we find harmony, melody and counterpoint."[6] He connected melody

to what he called the "unity of color" in a picture. The best way to assess this quality would be to "look at [the canvas] from far enough away to make it impossible for us to see what it is about or appreciate its lines"—to force oneself, in other words, to see the image in a quasi-abstract manner.[7] Echoes of these ideas pervaded art theory and criticism of the late nineteenth century, informing Téodor de Wyzéwa's assertion that the "free play" of color and line produces in the spectator "an impression like that of a symphony," for example, and Paul Gauguin's claim to "obtain symphonies, harmonies that express nothing absolutely real" through "arrangements of lines and colors...without the help of ideas or images."[8]

Such perceived analogies among the arts of painting and music were invented rather than found. This critical discourse naturalized the assumption, articulated so potently by de Staël, that music is the least representational of all the arts. As Marsha Morton points out, this belief at once stemmed from, and was reinforced by, a network of historical factors during the nineteenth century: the rise of non-narrative or "absolute" concert music; the dimming of lights in concert halls to foster a contemplative listening environment; and technical changes to keyboard, brass, and wind instruments that allowed for enhanced tonal "color" and timbral variety.[9] Moreover, in order to sustain this concept of music as a fundamentally immaterial, abstract medium,

[FIGURE 20]
Edgar Degas.
Dancer on the Stage,
ca. 1877–1880.
Oil on canvas.
SCMA (cat. 46).
Photograph by
Petegorsky/Gipe

critics and artists had to downplay its links to the concrete, physical world. Musical compositions—like painterly ones—may seem ethereal, but they are produced by material objects, through physical actions, and are perceived by bodies that exist in (social) space. The conceptualization of music and painting as "pure" art forms, that is to say, necessitated a repression of the roles played in these media by figuration, empathy, and embodiment.[10]

Given the evident resistance to acknowledging the corporeal aspects of music and painting, it is not surprising to find the medium of dance almost entirely absent from the critical conversation about the relationship between these two media that took shape in late nineteenth-century France. An art form strongly associated with the body, with tangible experience, and with the "feminine," dance would seem to be excluded by definition from the rise of abstraction in visual art around the turn of the twentieth century.[11] So, for example, dance serves as a prime example of Edgar Degas' "art of renunciation" in Richard Kendall's account of the artist's late career.[12] If Degas' early images of ballerinas at the Paris Opéra, such as *Dancer on the Stage* (cat. 46, fig. 20) tended toward naturalism, providing legible indications of scenery, costuming, and choreography, later renderings such as *The Dancers* (fig. 21) moved away from such a referential mode. Citing the critic Gustave Geffroy's 1894 description of Degas' "girls at the Opéra" as "passage[s] of color and form," Kendall argues that for Degas "ballet was hardly a subject at all, but [rather] a convenient means of expressing 'power, rhythm and life.'"[13]

Both Geffroy and Kendall have a point. The 1898 pastel treats four ballerinas in highly summary, fragmentary form.[14] The overlapping of stage flats, the wild sprays of green tulle skirts, the infamously ungainly poses and radical cropping of the image render the ballerinas in bits and pieces. The facture of the pastel, *pentimenti*, and broken outlines, and the rhyming of color among flesh, costume, and background make the dancers appear malleable, even molten. Degas apparently sacrificed bodily coherence for a greater pictorial good, shifting from mere genre painting to "something infinitely more powerful."[15] Thus following Geffroy, Théodore Duret, and other nineteenth-century critics, Kendall presents Degas' ballet pictures as the story of modernist abstraction in capsule form. Transforming these "girls at the Opéra," Degas heroically overcame the stubborn materiality of the female body, so closely linked to the tradition of naturalistic representation, and turned toward a seemingly purer, more abstract style.[16]

And yet the ballerina's body did not go away quietly. For even as Degas progressively removed conventional figuration from these ballet pictures, he drew upon the dancer's corporeality to supply his images with their "power, rhythm and life." We should not, then, take literally Degas' insistence that the dancer is "only a pretext for drawing"—something that, in Kendall's words, "stands for something other than itself, for color and movement, for energy or human exertion."[17] Instead, we might read Degas' attempt to relegate dance to mere pretext as evincing considerable ambivalence about his dependence upon those "girls at the Opéra" and the aesthetic power that they wielded. What would Degas' picture be without color, movement, energy, traces of exertion—and how could he obtain those effects without the

[FIGURE 21]
Edgar Degas. French, 1834–1917. *The Dancers*, 1898. Pastel on paper on board. 29 x 24 in.; 73.66 x 60.96 cm. Partial fractional and promised gift of Janice and Henri Lazarof (M.2005.70.21). Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles. Digital Image © 2011 Museum Associates/ LACMA. Licensed by Art Resource, NY

[FIGURE 22]
Henri Fantin-Latour. French, 1836–1904. *Around the Piano*,1885. From left: Adolphe Jullien, Arthur Boisseau, Emmanuel Chabrier (seated at the keyboard), Camille Benoît, Edmond Maître, Antoine Lascoux, Vincent d'Indy, and Amédée Pigeon. Musée d'Orsay, Paris, France. Image courtesy of Erich Lessing/ Art Resource, NY

[FIGURE 23]
Henri Fantin-Latour. *Dances* (*Danses*), 1898. Lithograph. SCMA (cat. 27). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

ballerinas? Here Richard Leppert's argument that the "connection between music and the body throughout Western history is highly problematic and contradictory, the product of deep socio-cultural anxieties and antagonisms" provides a helpful interpretive model.[18] Leppert's formulation gives us license to consider the increasing hegemony of the concept *ut pictura musica* ("as is music, so is painting") within the Parisian vanguard of this period as driven in part by painting's fraught relation to the body and its attendant values, meanings, and associations.[19]

Ut pictura musica—or, to put it in Mauclair's terms, "musical painting"—thus seems an insufficient conceptual framework for understanding the complex interrelationships of the arts in Debussy's Paris. Consider a work such as Henri Fantin-Latour's *Around the Piano* (fig. 22). One of several group portraits by Fantin that make a meta-commentary about art and artists, *Around the Piano* depicts the composer Emmanuel Chabrier playing the titular instrument, surrounded by other prominent composers, performers, and music critics of the day, including Edmond Maître, Adolphe Jullien, and Vincent d'Indy.[20] How—or, perhaps we should ask, how successfully—does Fantin "make music visible" in this painting?[21] The critic Octave Maus (writing as "Mozart") claimed that when looking at the picture "one hears the distant resonance of harmonies that unite the souls, like beautiful chords."[22] Even if we accept this characterization of the painting, we must admit that music appears here more as absence than as presence. The musicality that Maus describes, in fact, exceeds the visual: the picture's "harmonies" exist only in the viewer's imagination. Contrast this manner of "making music visible" with the method Fantin took up in *Dances* (cat. 27, fig. 23). We see

Fantin
1898.

two draped female dancers watched by three more women at the right of the image. One dancer, at center, strides or leaps forward, her outstretched arms carrying drapery that trails behind in her wake; the second, at left, pivots away from the viewer, leading with the left shoulder as she turns her body around. Filmy fabric cascades across and around these women's bodies, at times becoming one with the print's obscure, hazy atmosphere. Fantin here uses the dancing figure in a manner that conveys a range of musical qualities. Some of the terms on Mauclair's list come to mind: harmony, value, theme, motif. So do others that Mauclair omitted: movement, rhythm, arabesque.

Dance, as Fantin and many other artists of this period realized, stands at the crossroads between the arts of music and painting. The medium partakes both of the visual and the aural; it gives sonority concrete form and activates static images. And just as both music and painting bear traces of the body, dance shares several qualities with its purportedly purer sister arts. Dance can be at once figurative and abstract, material and ineffable, visual and tactile; it can combine whole and fragment, line and volume, the geometric and the organic.[23] Indeed, the capacity of this medium to resolve such dualities, hold them in tension, or draw them into productive play made dance a crucial interlocutor in the dialogue between music and painting. At a moment when painting still hovered between figural and abstract modes, dance directly participated in *ut pictura musica*, helping plastic artists to envision ways of translating musical values and stimuli into visual form.

Dance came to play a critical role in shaping abstraction in the plastic arts in part because

[**FIGURE 24**]
Taber (Isaiah West Taber). American, 1830–1912. *Loïe Fuller* in *La danse blanche*, ca. 1898. Photograph. 6⅝ x 5 in.; 17 x 13 cm. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts/ Jerome Robbins Dance Division

of the medium's rising status among the arts around the turn of the twentieth century. This period witnessed the invention of new modes of dance explicitly conceived as "high art" rather than mass entertainment, a shift signaled by the use of concert pieces by Debussy and other well-known composers as musical accompaniment. The American-born performer Loïe Fuller, whose manipulations of silk drapery and electric stage lights made her a celebrity in 1890s Paris, pioneered such a form of modern dance.[24] Though Fuller originally staged her dance spectacles at the Folies-Bergère—a setting known more for "skirt dances" like the can-can—her choreography provided an alternative both to such popular dances and to the balletic tradition. Fuller's performance involved billowing silk robes that she manipulated with long wands, slightly curved at the ends, which she held underneath her drapery (fig. 24). The dance itself involved minimal movement of the feet: instead, she undulated her torso while using her arms to sweep swirling folds of fabric

into the air. Through this technique, Fuller created constantly shifting, asymmetrical patterns of drapery around the core of her body, which she further transformed with a complex stage system that projected colored electric lights from beneath the floor.

Fuller's innovative art form presented viewers with a live spectacle of shifting color and shape: hers was a spectacle motivated by the body in which the dancing figure, paradoxically, was almost entirely occluded.[25] Like many plastic artists of this period, Fuller dispensed with narrative and concrete reference, opting instead to emphasize the formal relationships she obtained with her technique. Moreover, Fuller (again, like many painters) saw parallels between music and her form of "luminous art." In a 1903 interview, she gave as an example of her creative process the production of a "green melody" with light that could express the principal theme in a piece of musical accompaniment, with the other projected colors serving as a form of complementary orchestration.[26] The critic Léo Clarétie echoed these ideas in a 1914 essay in which he claimed that Fuller's performance "makes music pictorial." "She materializes the elusive," Clarétie wrote, and "brings to the eyes what ought to escape them."[27] Clarétie's comments show how dance linked music with painting by giving sound visual form. At the same time, this passage, which jumps straight from the musical to the pictorial, indicates how easily dance as a medium in its own right can be written out of this complex interchange among art forms. For, as Nell Andrew reminds us, Fuller's dance brought not only visual but also kinetic dimensions to bear on viewers' experience of music.[28]

[FIGURE 25]
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *Miss Loïe Fuller*, 1893. Brush and spatter lithograph. SCMA (cat. 57). Photograph by Petegorsky/ Gipe

The numerous paintings, prints, and sculptures representing Fuller indicate that her dance served as a potent model for many visual artists in their experimentation with abstraction. Yet the extreme variety among these representations also points to the difficulties that artists faced in their attempts to capture the multisensory experience her performances offered. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec's 1893 lithographic series entitled *Miss Loïe Fuller* (cat. 57, fig. 25) exemplifies this complex dynamic. As Sarah Kennel notes, this group of fourteen prints shows how Fuller's "shifting and evanescent" performance prompted Lautrec "to explore new possibilities of shape, color and surface."[29] Lautrec's lithographs, each one individually hand-colored, depict Fuller in mid-movement. The foreshortening of her facial features indicates that the dancer's head is thrown back, creating an arch in her (invisible) back. This implied bodily torque throws

her drapery into its characteristic abstract patterns as its spins around her. Lautrec depicts Fuller as if hovering in an undefined space, providing only minimal indications of a theatrical setting: the diagonal line below her figure suggesting the edge of the stage, the barely-visible neck of a cello or bass shooting up from the lower left of the composition. The artist approximates Fuller's light spectacle with sprinkled gold and silver dust that conjure the theater's atmosphere, thick with smoke, and the patches of color that change from one iteration of the print to the next.[30] And, as several scholars note, the serial form helps Lautrec to convey the temporal, sequential aspects of her performance.[31] Yet we also must attend to those aspects of Fuller's dance that Lautrec cannot, or will not, document: most strikingly, the obstinate stillness of the shape made by her drapery and the insistent flatness of her form, made surprisingly more palpable by the indication of a fold on the left side. In this way, Lautrec's lithographs show how visual artists' fascination with the bodily resonances of dance conflicted with their hesitation to reproduce the body itself—a dynamic also paralleled in Fuller's performances. Both visual and choreographic artists at this moment, it seems, saw in dance a musicality that coexisted uncomfortably with the medium's concrete, bodily aspects.

In his 1914 essay on Fuller, Clarétie went out of his way to link her work with that of Debussy, whose *Nocturnes* (1899) she used to accompany a portion of her dances during that year. Debussy "is translated, he is not betrayed" in Fuller's performance, Clarétie stridently opined.[32] In mentioning a possible "betrayal" of Debussy's music, the critic almost certainly referenced the choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky's use of Debussy scores for two works produced by Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes troupe: *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (*Afternoon of a Faun*, cat. 58, fig. 26) and *Jeux* (*Games*, cat. 49, fig. 27). As Clarétie implied, those works obtained a far different relationship to musical form than Fuller's spectacles: if Nijinsky's ballets explored the concept of *ut pictura musica*, they did so against the grain. His choreography pitted diverse forms of musical, pictorial, and choreographic abstraction against one another in ways that Parisian audiences found jarring.

In staging a ballet entitled *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, Nijinsky and the Ballets Russes explicitly referenced the concept of a correspondence of art forms. This eight-minute *choreo-poème* (as it was termed in the souvenir program) was set to Debussy's *Prélude à l'Après-midi d'un faune* (1892–94), a score in turn inspired by Stéphane Mallarmé's poem

[FIGURE 26] Unknown photographer. *Vaslav Nijinsky and Lubov Tchernicheva* in *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, 1912. Photograph. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (cat. 58)

[FIGURE 27] Charles Gerschel. *Vaslav Nijinsky, Tamara Karsavina, and* in *Jeux,* 1913. Photograph. The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts (cat. 49) Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

L'Après-midi d'un faune (published 1876). Nijinsky's *L'Après-midi d'un faune* did not tell a story but instead presented a series of loosely-connected vignettes in something of an analogy to Mallarmé's Symbolist text and Debussy's sinuous, evocative musical fabric.[33] The ballet featured Nijinsky as a faun or satyr who attempts to seduce a group of nymphs gamboling in a forest. He dances with one nymph, steals a scarf from her, and, in a shocking ending, simulates masturbation with it as the curtain drops. Nijinsky's choreography, however, contrasted markedly with the lyrical scenario and score furnished by Mallarmé and Debussy (even, arguably, with drawings of Nijinsky by the production's designer, Léon Bakst (cat. 44, fig. 28). As the Ballets Russes' *regisseur* Serge Grigoriev recalled, this composition "was not choreography as we then understood the term. The dancers merely moved rhythmically to the music and then stopped in attitudes, which they held."[34] Nijinsky limited his "choreography" to extremely simple, elemental movements, and imposed upon himself and the other dancers a stilted posture: they arranged their knees and elbows in a permanently bent position, and held their feet in inverted *pointe*, allowing their heels to strike the ground before their toes. Nijinsky also positioned the dancers in a stylized profile that made their bodies appear almost two-dimensional. Their heads and legs faced the wings of the stage, while their torsos faced the audience.

As several critics noted, Nijinsky's choreography constituted a form of abstraction patently at odds with Debussy's musical "Impressionism." The music critic Gustave Samazeuilh argued that Nijinsky's "contorted and deliberate" choreography suited neither Mallarmé's eclogue nor "the lively, undulating, and intertwining line" of Debussy's music.[35] While he found Nijinsky's choreography "original and interesting," music critic René Chalupt likewise asserted that it bore "no relationship with the art of Mallarmé or Debussy, both so supple, so unbroken, so 'rounded.'"[36] Nijinsky's angular, "square" ballet, which several observers compared with Cubist painting, not only contravened viewers' association of the dancing body with organic, "round" forms.[37] This *choreo-poème* also upended dance's conventional relationship to music. Rather than corporeally "translating" Debussy's music, as Fuller seemed to do, Nijinsky created a form of choreographic counterpoint that asserted the independence of dance from its sonoric accompaniment. The stylized technique that Nijinsky invented for *L'Après-midi d'un faune* forced the ballet's audience to see dance as an art in its own right—a medium with a wide range of expressive possibilities and relationships to its sister arts.

In May 1913, Nijinsky rekindled this debate over the proper relationship between music, visual art, and choreography with *Jeux*, a work again set to a musical composition by Debussy. The choreographer described the ballet's scenario, a love triangle played out on a tennis court in the year 1920, in an interview published just prior to its premiere. The ballet begins "in a park, at dusk, a tennis ball goes astray; two young women and a young man rush to find it," as Nijinsky described it. The three characters play "childish games"—"they look for each other, lose each other, pursue each other, quarrel with each other." This reverie breaks when another tennis ball drops from the sky. "Surprised and frightened, the children disappear into

the darkness of the nocturnal park," and the ballet abruptly ends.[38] The subject of games "should have given [Nijinsky] a pretext for pretty movements on stage, for elegant play," Adolphe Jullien asserted in a review of the ballet published in the *Journal des débats*. Instead, the choreographer "renounce[d]... every impulse of undulating grace or of supple elegance" suggested in the score.[39] All three performers—Nijinsky, Tamara Karsavina, and Ludmilla Schollar—danced on three-quarter *pointe*, with their legs parallel, their elbows slightly bent, wrists harshly flexed, and hands balled into fists.

Several critics immediately recognized in *Jeux* "the principle of [Nijinsky's] admirable faun," as Jean Chantavoine described it: "the pursuit of the profile, the angular gestures, and the knocked-down necks that suddenly incline the heads to the shoulders."[40] "Pursuing the attempt at stylization that he had inaugurated in *L'Après-midi d'un faune*," Victor Debay wrote in *Le Courrier musical*, "Nijinsky and his companions execute, with an automatic rigidity...a series of poses, rather than dances."[41] Similarly, the composer and critic Alexis Roland-Manuel saw in Nijinsky's technique an "alternation between movement and still life" that "conveys a certain mechanical appearance"—an aesthetic that contrasted strongly with the "uninterrupted curve" of Debussy's score.[42] Again these commentaries emphasize the disparity between Nijinsky's "mechanical," "angular" choreography and Debussy's seemingly "round" music. Even more intriguing is Roland-Manuel's invocation of the genre of still life painting to describe Nijinsky's dance. The static or "still life" moments in Nijinsky's choreography drove a wedge between visual art and music, making these two media seem inharmonious. In *Jeux*, we could say, Nijinsky used dance to reverse the convention of *ut pictura musica*.

Nijinsky's "Cubist" choreography claimed for dance and the body a central role in the development of abstraction around the turn of the century. His technique made it impossible to ignore dance's participation in, and contribution to, the conversation between music and painting that had taken place over the past several decades. And Nijinsky's ballets also remind us that the concept of "musical painting" articulated by Mauclair as well as by so many other critics and artists of the time focused narrowly on one way of envisioning a "fusion of the arts" at the expense of alternate models. As Nijinsky demonstrated, Debussy's "Impressionism" could give rise to myriad forms and relations of the musical, the pictorial, and the corporeal.

[**FIGURE 28**]
Léon Bakst.
Nijinsky as the Faun,
cover of the theater
program for the
7th season of
the Ballets Russes,
1912. Color
mechanical print.
Zimmerli Art
Museum at Rutgers
University (cat. 44).
Photograph
by Peter Jacobs

PROGRAMME
7me Saison
des
Ballets
Russes
BAKST
NIJINSKI, dans l'"Après-Midi d'un Faune"
Aquarelle originale de Léon Bakst.

ENDNOTES

1 Camille Mauclair, "La Peinture musicienne et la fusion des arts," *La Revue bleue* tome 18, 4e série, no. 10 (September 6, 1902): 300. Edward Lockspeiser discusses this passage in *Claude Debussy: His Life and Mind*, vol. II: 1902–1918 (New York: MacMillan, 1965), 18.

2 *Ibid*, p. 300.

3 Leon Botstein discusses the association of Debussy with Impressionism in "Beyond the Illusion of Realism: Painting and Debussy's Break with Tradition," in Jane F. Fulcher, ed., *Debussy and His World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 141–79.

4 The present essay focuses specifically on French art theory and criticism. The concept of an integral link between painting and music was, however, a commonplace in artistic circles throughout Europe at this time. The relevant literature on this topic includes several broad histories of the relationship of music to art—and especially painting—in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: Edward Lockspeiser, *Music and Painting: A Study in Comparative Ideas from Turner to Schoenberg* (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); Simon Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music: Art and Music from Wagner to Cage* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Peter Vergo, *The Music of Painting: Music, Modernism and the Visual Arts from the Romantics to John Cage* (London: Phaidon, 2010). Focused studies on nineteenth-century French art in relation to music include Gerard Vaughan, "Maurice Denis and the Sense of Music," *Oxford Art Journal* 7, no. 1 (1984): 38–48; Kermit Champa, "Painted Responses to Music: The Landscapes of Corot and Monet," in Marsha L. Morton and Peter L. Schmunk, eds., *The Arts Entwined: Music and Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 2000), 101–18; and Champa, "Concert Music: The Master Model for Radical Painting in France, 1830–1890," *Imago Musicae* 16–17 (1999-2000): 207–21. On the British and Austrian contexts, see Suzanne Fagence Cooper, "Playing the Organ in Pre-Raphaelite Paintings," *Music in Art* 29, nos. 1–2 (Spring–Fall 2004): 151–70, 274; Ellen Keck Stauder, "Aspiring Towards the Condition of Music: Pater's Revisionary Reading of Hegel in 'The School of Giorgione,'" *Nineteenth-Century Contexts* 19, no. 1 (1995): 1–17; Clare A. P. Willsdon, "Klimt's Beethoven Frieze: Goethe, Tempelkunst and the Fulfilment of Wishes," *Art History* 19, no. 1 (March 1996): 44–73; and Scott Messing, "Klimt's Schubert and the Fin-de-Siècle Imagination," in James Leggio, ed., *Music and Modern Art* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 1–35.

5 Anne-Louise-Germaine de Staël, *De L'Allemagne* [1810] in Peter le Huray and James Day, eds., *Music and Aesthetics in the Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 300. This passage is discussed in Vergo, *The Music of Painting*, 64.

6 Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," excerpted in *Baudelaire: Selected Writings on Art and Literature*, P.E. Charvet, trans. [1972] (London: Penguin Books, 1992), 55.

7 *Ibid*, 57.

8 Téodor de Wyzéwa, "Notes sur la peinture Wagérienne et le salon de 1886," *Revue wagnérienne,* 2e année, no. 4 (May 8, 1886): 106 (see also Wyzéwa, "Peinture Wagnérienne: Le Salon de 1885," *Revue wagnérienne,* 1er année, no. 5 [June 8, 1885], 154–55); Paul Gauguin's comments are recorded in an interview with George Tardieu, "La Peinture et les peintres: M. Paul Gauguin," *L'Écho de Paris* (May 13, 1895); cited in Daniel Guérin, ed., *Oviri: écrits d'un sauvage* (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), 138. This passage is discussed in Vergo, *The Music of Painting*, 161. On Wyzéwa's criticism, see Katherine M. Kuenzli, *The Nabis and Intimate Modernism: Painting and the Decorative at the Fin-de-Siècle* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 91–94, and Vergo, *The Music of Painting*, pp. 45–50; on Gauguin and music, see also Nicoletta Scalabrin, "Dal wagnérisme a Paul Gauguin," *Critica d'arte* 51, no. 10 (July-September 1986): 62–74.

9 Marsha L. Morton, "'From the Other Side': An Introduction," in Morton and Schmunk, eds., *The Arts Entwined*, 4–5.

10 Richard Leppert discusses the complexities of the body's relationship to music in *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993).

11 In my discussion of the relationship between abstraction, dance, and the visual arts, I draw on

Nell Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde: Modern Dance and the Plastic Arts, 1890–1930" (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2007) and Susan Funkenstein, "Engendering Abstraction: Wassily Kandinsky, Gret Palucca, and 'Dance Curves,'" *Modernism/Modernity* 14, no. 3 (September 2007): 389–403.

12 Kendall's chapter is entitled "An Art of Renunciation: Degas's Changing Subject Matter": see Richard Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism* (London: National Gallery Publications/New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 125–57.

13 Gustave Geffroy, *La Vie artistique* (Paris: 1894); cited and translated in Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism*, 131–32, 134.

14 Degas' charcoal drawing *Group of Dancers*, ca. 1897–1901, currently in the collection of the Arkansas Arts Center, Little Rock, shows the dancers nude and makes clear what is so obscure in the pastel.

15 Théodore Duret, "Degas," *Art Journal* 1894: 205; cited in Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism*, 132.

16 Issues of gender enter into this art-historical account in significant ways: Kendall's chapter on Degas' "art of renunciation" (in *Degas Beyond Impressionism*) is split between a discussion of the artist's ballerinas and his series of nude bathers. On Degas' ballerinas and his nudes, see Carol M. Armstrong, "Edgar Degas and the Representation of the Female Body," in Susan Rubin Suleiman, ed., *The Female Body in Western Culture: Contemporary Perspectives* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 223–42; Eunice Lipton, *Looking Into Degas: Uneasy Images of Women and Modern Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); and Anthea Callen, *The Spectacular Body: Science, Method and Meaning in the Work of Degas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995). On the avant-garde's treatment of the female body in general, see Carol Duncan's foundational essay "Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting," in Norma Broude and Mary Garrard, eds., *Feminism and Art History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), 292–313.

17 Degas is quoted in George Moore's "Memories of Degas," *Burlington Magazine* (February 1918): 64; this passage is cited by Kendall (in *Degas Beyond Impressionism*) and elaborated with the latter's analysis on page 134 of Kendall's text.

18 Leppert, *The Sight of Sound*.

19 On the concept of *ut pictura musica* see the first chapter of Shaw-Miller, *Visible Deeds of Music*.

20 This print series, as Lisa Norris observes, "heralded the artist's allegiance to Wagnerism," or a fusion of art forms, inspired by Richard Wagner. Lisa Norris, "Painting *Around the Piano*: Fantin-Latour, Wagnerism, and the Musical in Art," in Morton and Schmunk, eds., 144. Norris discusses Fantin-Latour's trip to Bayreuth on page 149. For an analysis of another painting depicting players at a piano, see Charlotte N. Eyerman, "Playing the Market: Renoir's *Young Girls at the Piano* series of 1892," in Leggio, ed., *Music and Modern Art*, 37–60. My thoughts on Fantin-Latour's work are indebted to Anne Leonard's presentation "The Musical Imagination of Fantin-Latour," given at the conference "Rival Sisters: Art and Music at the Birth of Modernism," organized by James Rubin at the Humanities Institute at Stony Brook, March 25–26, 2011.

21 Norris (in "Painting *Around the Piano*") argues that Fantin-Latour's work was "increasingly referred to as 'painted music' and his reputation grew as 'the painter who made music visible'" after the mid-1880s. The two passages she cites come from Germain Hédiard, *Fantin-Latour: Catalogue de l'oeuvre lithographique du Maître* (Paris: Librairie de l'art ancien et moderne, 1906), 24, and Anonymous, "Modern French Pastellists: Fantin-Latour," *The Studio* (October 1904): 43.

22 "Mozart" (Octave Maus), "Le Salon de Paris," *L'Art moderne* (May 24, 1885), 163. This passage is cited and translated in Norris, "Painting *Around the Piano*," 154.

23 For an elaboration of these ideas, see Juliet Bellow, *Modernism on Stage: The Ballets Russes and the Parisian Avant-Garde*, forthcoming from Ashgate Press.

24 On Fuller, see Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde"; Sarah Kennel, "Across the Veil: Symbolism, Dance, and the Body" (M.A. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1995); Richard Nelson Current and Marcia Ewing Current, *Loïe Fuller: Goddess of Light* (Boston: Northwestern University Press, 1997); Bud Coleman, "The Electric Fairy: The Woman Behind the Apparition of Loïe Fuller," in Kim Marra and Robert

A. Schanke, eds., *Staging Desire: Queer Readings of American Theater History* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), 311–37; Rhonda K. Garelick, *Electric Salomé: Loïe Fuller's Performance of Modernism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); and Ann Cooper Albright, *Traces of Light: Absence and Presence in the Work of Loïe Fuller* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007).

25 On this point, see Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde," especially page 52, and Kennel, "Across the Veil."

26 André Charlot, "Une Loïe Fuller qu'on ne connaît pas," *Le Monde illustré* (1903); clipping in the Archives Rondel, Bibliothèque Nationale de France [Ro 12.116]; this passage is cited and translated in Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde, " 62–63.

27 Clarétie's statement on Fuller was published in a program for her performances on May 7, 1914 (a copy of which can be found in the Archives Rondel [Ro 2113]; this essay is cited and translated in Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde," 63–64, and also is discussed in Albright, *Traces of Light*, 82.

28 Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde," 63.

29 Kennel, "Across the Veil," 14.

30 On Lautrec's use of dust, see Kennel, "Across the Veil," 19; on the smoky, dusty ambiance of the Folies-Bergère in Fuller's time, see Albright, *Traces of Light*, 55.

31 Mary Weaver Chapin, "Stars of the Café-Concert," in Richard Thomson, Phillip Dennis Cate, and Mary Weaver Chapin, eds., *Toulouse-Lautrec and Montmartre* (Washington: National Gallery of Art/ Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 141.

32 Clarétie, in Andrew, "Bodies of the Avant-Garde," 63–64.

33 The program for the Ballets Russes' 1912 season stated that the production was "not Mallarmé's poem, but a short scene that precedes it: a Faun sleeps; Nymphs trick him; a forgotten scarf satisfies his dream; the curtain drops so that the poem may begin in the audience's memory." A copy of the 1912 souvenir program is located in the Harvard Theater Collection. On Debussy's *Faune*, see James R. Briscoe, ed., *Debussy in Performance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) and Robert Orledge, *Debussy and the Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982). There is evidence that Mallarmé originally envisioned his poem as a dramatic performance, and a production was planned, but never realized, at Paul Fort's Théâtre d'Art in 1891. On this subject see Patricia Eckert Boyer, *Artists and the Avant-Garde Theater in Paris 1887–1900* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1998), 89, and Frantisek Deak, *Symbolist Theater: The Formation of an Avant-Garde* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 61–63.

34 Serge L. Grigoriev, *The Diaghilev Ballet 1909–1929*, Vera Bowen, trans. (London: Constable, 1953), 65–66. For in-depth discussions of this ballet, see Jean-Michel Nectoux, ed., *Afternoon of a Faun: Mallarmé, Debussy, Nijinsky* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1989/New York: Vendome Press, 1990); Stephanie Jordan, "Debussy, the Dance, and the Faune," in Briscoe, ed., *Debussy in Performance*, 119–34; Bellow, "Reforming Dance: Auguste Rodin's *Nijinsky* and Vaslav Nijinsky's *L'Après-Midi d'un Faune*," *Cantor Arts Center Journal* 3 (2002–03): 172–85; Bellow, *Modernism on Stage*; and Sarah Kennel, "Bodies, Statues, Machines: Dance and the Visual Arts in France, 1900–1925" (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Berkeley, 2003).

35 Gustave Samazeuilh, "Les Ballets Russes," *Le Courrier musical* 15, no. 11 (June 15,1912): 364.

36 René Chalupt, "Chronique Musicale: Les Ballets russes," *L'Occident* 115 (June 1912): 230-31. It would have been better, he opined, to have chosen a "squarer" score for the ballet, such as Erik Satie's *Gymnopédies* (1888).

37 On the critical discussion of Cubism in relation to Nijinsky's choreography, see Bellow, *Modernism on Stage*, and Kennel, "Bodies, Statues, Machines."

38 Hector Cahusac, "La Vie de Paris. Debussy et Nijinsky," *Le Figaro* (May 14, 1913): 1; Archives Rondel [Ro 12526(2)-12532(1)].

39 Adolphe Jullien, "Revue Musicale," Feuilleton du *Journal des Débats* (May 25, 1913); Archives Rondel [Ro12526(2)-12532(1)]. Several critics mentioned the distance between Nijinsky's technique and Debussy's "deliciously quivering and leaping score" (as Vuillermoz wrote), which "well[s] up from

the dancers' feet with the gurgling freshness of a spring." Vuillermoz, "La Saison Russe au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées," *Revue musicale S.I.M.* 9, no. 6 (June 1913): 51–52.

40 Jean Chantavoine, "Les ballets russes au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées" (May 17, 1913); Archives Rondel [Ro12526(2)-12532(1)].

41 Victor Débay, "Les Ballets Russes au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées," *Le Courrier musicale* 16, no. 12 (June 15, 1913): 341.

42 Alexis Roland-Manuel, "Le Mois musical," *La Petite revue* 3, no. 11 (June 1, 1913): 394–96.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Unless otherwise indicated in the credit line, works are from the collection of the Smith College Museum of Art.

I. NOISE AND POPULAR MUSIC

1. Eugène Atget. French, 1857–1927
Organ Grinder (*Joueur d'orgue*), 1898 (printed later)
Gelatin silver print
Sheet: 9⅞ x 8 in.; 25.08 x 20.32 cm
Printed by Berenice Abbott ca. 1910
Purchased, SC 1977:10-1
(Fig. 6)

2. Pierre Bonnard. French, 1867–1947
Small Illustrated Solfège (*Petit solfège illustré*), 1893
Text and music by Claude Terrasse
Bound book, cover lithograph printed in black, interior lithographs printed in black and color
Bound book: 8½ x 11¼ in.; 21.59 x 28.57 cm
Printed by Allier Père et Fils, Grenoble
Published by Librairies-Imprimeries Réunies, Paris
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1976:18–91
(Fig. 3)

3. Pierre Bonnard. French, 1867–1947
Small Familiar Scenes for Piano (*Petites scènes familières pour piano*), published ca. 1893
Music by Claude Terrasse
Lyrics by Franc-Nohain
Bound book, cover and interior lithographs printed in black
Each page: 13¾ x 10¾ in.; 34.92 x 27.30 cm
Printed by Crevel Frères, Paris
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1976:18-90

4. Pierre Bonnard. French, 1867–1947
The Square at Evening (*Place le Soir*), from *Quelques Aspects de la Vie de Paris*, 1899
Transfer lithograph printed in four colors on paper
Sheet: 15⅞ x 21 in.; 40.32 x 53.34 cm; image: 10⅞ x 15 in.; 27.62 x 38.1 cm
Printed by Auguste Clot
Published by Ambroise Vollard
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1978:1-10

5. Pierre Bonnard. French, 1867–1947
The Street at Evening in the Rain (*Rue, le soir, sous la pluie*) from *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris*, 1899
Transfer lithograph printed in four colors on paper
Sheet: 16 x 21 in.; 40.64 x 53.34 cm; image: 10⅛ x 14 in.; 25.71 x 35.56 cm
Printed by Auguste Clot
Published by Ambroise Vollard
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1978:1-14
(Fig. 29)

[FIGURE 29] Pierre Bonnard. *The Street at Evening in the Rain* (*Rue, le soir, sous la pluie*) from *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris*, 1899. Transfer lithograph. SCMA (cat. 5). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

6. Pierre Bonnard. French, 1867–1947
Street Corner Seen from Above (*Coin de rue vue d'en haut*), from *Quelques aspects de la vie de Paris*, 1899
Transfer lithograph printed in four colors on paper
Sheet: 21 x 16⅛ in.; 53.34 x 40.95 cm; image: 14⅝ x 8⅜ in.; 37.14 x 21.27 cm
Printed by Auguste Clot
Published by Ambroise Vollard
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1978:1-16
(Fig. 2)

7. Jules Chéret. French, 1836-1932
Folies-Bergère / O. Métra, 1876
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 22¹¹/₁₆ x 16 in.; 57.6 x 40.7 cm; image: 21⅞ x 15⁵/₁₆ in.; 55.5 x 38.9 cm
Collection of the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, Museum Purchase, 2001.1495
(Fig. 4)

8. Jules Chéret. French, 1836–1932
Elysée Montmartre, 1890
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 29⅜ x 31⅝ in.; 74.61 x 80.32 cm
Purchased, SC 1929:6-4
(Fig. 5)

9. Camille Pissaro. French, 1830–1903
Place du Havre, 1897
Lithograph printed in black on mauve paper
Sheet: 10¹³/₁₆ x 14⅜ in.; 27.46 x 36.51 cm; image: 5⅝ x 8⅜ in.; 14.28 x 21.27 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1972:50-84

Imp. Edw. Ancourt à Paris.

10. Jean-François Rafaëlli. French, 1850–1924
The Clothes Seller (La Marchande d'habits), in *Les Types de Paris (Édition du Figaro)*, no. 7, 1889
Color photomechanical print
Sheet: 11 5/16 x 9 1/4 in.; 28.7 x 23.5 cm
Collection of the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, Herbert D. and Ruth Schimmel Museum Library Fund, 1990.0688

11. Georges Antoine Rochegrosse. French, 1859–1938
Louise, 1900
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 32 15/16 x 24 3/4 in.; 83.7 x 62.8 cm; image: 30 3/4 x 22 13/16 in.; 78.1 x 57.9 cm
Collection of the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Littman, 85.109.010
(Fig. 12)

12. T. Frantisek Simon. Czech, 1877–1942
Morning Hour in Paris, 1911
Etching and aquatint printed in color on paper
Sheet: 15 x 19 7/8 in.; 38.1 x 50.4825 cm; plate: 9 3/4 x 10 5/8 in.; 24.76 x 26.98 cm
Gift of Mrs. William A. Small Jr. (Susan Spencer, class of 1948), SC 1984:21-20

13. Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen. French (born Switzerland), 1859–1923
In the Street (Dans la rue : gigolots et gigolettes), 1895
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 13 1/4 x 14 1/8 in.; 33.7 x 35.8 cm; image: 8 1/2 x 10 7/8 in.; 21.6 x 27.6 cm
Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Bequest of W. G. Russell Allen, 60.743
(Fig. 9)

14. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Ambassadeurs: Aristide Bruant, ca. 1892
Brush and spatter lithograph printed in color on two sheets of paper
Sheet/image: 54 1/2 x 37 in.; 138.43 x 93.98 cm
Purchased, SC 1958:75
(Fig. 8)

15. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
The Englishman Warner at the Moulin Rouge (*L'Anglais Warner au Moulin Rouge*), ca. 1892
Brush and spatter lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 23 3/16 x 17 3/8 in.; 58.89 x 44.13 cm; image: 18 9/16 x 14 11/16 in.; 47.14 x 37.30 cm
Gift of Thomas A. Kelly, SC 1983:27
(Fig. 30)

16. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Yvette Guilbert, 1894
Bound book; Cover transfer lithograph printed in black on Japan paper mounted on paperboard; interior lithographs printed in olive green on paper
Printed by Edw. Ancourt, Paris
Published by L'Estampe originale (André Marty), Paris
16 1/16 x 15 15/16 in.; 40.79 cm x 40.481 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1972:50-109(16)

17. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Cover for *Yvette Guilbert*, 1898
Lithograph printed on paper mounted on board
Mount/sheet: 21 1/4 x 15 1/4 in.; 53.97 x 38.73 cm
Published by Bliss and Sands, London
Purchased, SC 1952:5
(Fig. 7)

[FIGURE 30]
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *The Englishman Warner at the Moulin Rouge* (*L'Anglais Warner au Moulin Rouge*), ca. 1892. Brush and spatter lithograph. SCMA (cat. 15). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

18. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
May Belfort, ca. 1895
Crayon, brush, and spatter lithograph printed in color on paper mounted on fabric
Sheet: 31¾ x 24⅛ in.; 80.64 x 61.27 cm; image: 31¾ x 23⅞ in.; 80.64 x 60.64 cm
Purchased, SC 1958:82
(Fig. 31)

[FIGURE 31]
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *May Belfort*, ca. 1895. Crayon, brush and spatter lithograph. SCMA (cat. 18). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

19. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
What the Rain Says (*Ce que dit la pluie*), from *Quatorze lithographies originales de Toulouse-Lautrec pour illustrer des chansons*, ca. 1920
Lithograph printed in black on wove paper
Sheet: 12¾ x 9⅞ in.; 32.38 x 25.08 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1976:18-142(3)

20. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Floréal, from *Quatorze lithographies originales de Toulouse-Lautrec pour illustrer des chansons*, ca. 1920
Lithograph printed in black on wove paper
Sheet: 12¾ x 9⅞ in.; 32.38 x 25.08 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1976:18-142(11)
(Fig. 11)

II. CORRESPONDENCES: ART AND MUSIC

21. Alexandre-Louis-Marie Charpentier. French, 1856–1909
Girl with a Violin (*La Fille au violon*), 1894
Embossed lithograph printed in color on paper
Image: 10¼ x 15⅝ in.; 26.03 x 39.66 cm
Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Azita Bina-Seibel and Elmar W. Seibel 1991.835

22. Henri-Edmond Cross. French, 1856–1910
On the Champs-Elysées (*Sur les Champs-Elysées*), 1898
Lithograph printed in color on China paper
Sheet: 10⅞ x 14½ in.; 27.62 x 36.83 cm; image: 8 x 10⅜ in.; 20.32 x 26.35 cm
Printed by Auguste Clot
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1976:18-20

23. Maurice Denis. French, 1870–1943
Our Souls, with Langorous Gestures (*Nos âmes en des gestes lents*), plate IX from *Amour*, 1899
Transfer lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 16⅛ x 20⅞ in.; 40.95 x 53.02 cm;
image: 11 x 15¾ in.; 27.94 x 40.00 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927,
SC 1972:50-31
(Fig. 14)

24. Maurice Denis. French, 1870–1943
On the Pale Silver Sofa (*Sur le canapé d'argent pale*), plate X from *Amour*, 1899
Transfer lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 20⅞ x 15¹⁵⁄₁₆ in.; 53.02 x 40.48 cm;
image: 15¾ x 11¼ in.; 40.00 x 28.57 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927,
SC 1972:50-32
(Fig. 15)

25. Henri Fantin-Latour. French, 1836–1904
Immortality (*L'Immortalité*), illustration for *Richard Wagner, sa vie et ses oeuvres*, 1886
Lithograph printed in black on paper
Sheet: 12⅝ x 9⅞ in.; 32.06 x 25.08 cm;
image: 9⅛ x 5¹⁵⁄₁₆ in.; 23.17 x 15.08 cm
Purchased, SC 1964:50-1

26. Henri Fantin-Latour. French, 1836–1904
The Apotheosis of Berlioz (*L'Apothéose de Berlioz*), 1888
Lithograph printed in black on paper
Sheet: 12⅞ x 9¼ in.; 32.70 x 23.49 cm;
image: 8⅞ x 6¼ in.; 22.54 x 15.87 cm
Purchased, SC 1964:50-11

27. Henri Fantin-Latour. French, 1836–1904
Dances (*Danses*), 1898
Lithograph printed in black on paper
Sheet: 23¾ x 19¼ in.; 60.325 x 48.89 cm;
image: 17 x 12½ in.; 43.18 x 31.75 cm
Bequest of Charles L. Freer, SC 1920:53-10
(Fig. 23)

28. Katsushika Hokusai. Japanese, 1760–1849
Kirifuri Waterfall on Kurogami Mountain in Shimotsuke Province, from *A Tour of Waterfalls of the Provinces*, 1833–34
Woodcut printed in color on paper
Sheet: 15 x 10¼ in.; 38.1 x 26.03 cm
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. James Barker (Margaret Clark Rankin, class of 1908), SC 1968:522

29. Alexandre Lunois. French, 1863–1916
The Light (*L'Illumination*), from the album *L'Estampe originale*, album III, 1893
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 23⅜ x 16¾ in.; 59.4 x 42.6 cm; image: 12¹⁵⁄₁₆ x 10¹¹⁄₁₆ in.; 32.9 x 27.1 cm
Collection of the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, David A. and Mildred H. Morse Art Acquisition Fund, 83.010.065

30. Édouard Manet. French, 1832–1883
Hat and Guitar (*Chapeau et guitare*), cover for portfolio *Edouard Manet eaux-fortes*, 1874
Etching and aquatint printed in black on blue paper
Sheet (folded): 18 x 15¾ in.;
45.72 x 40.00 cm;
image: 9⅛ x 8⁹⁄₁₆ in.; 23.01 x 21.74 cm
Printed by Alfred Cadart
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927,
SC 1972:50-62

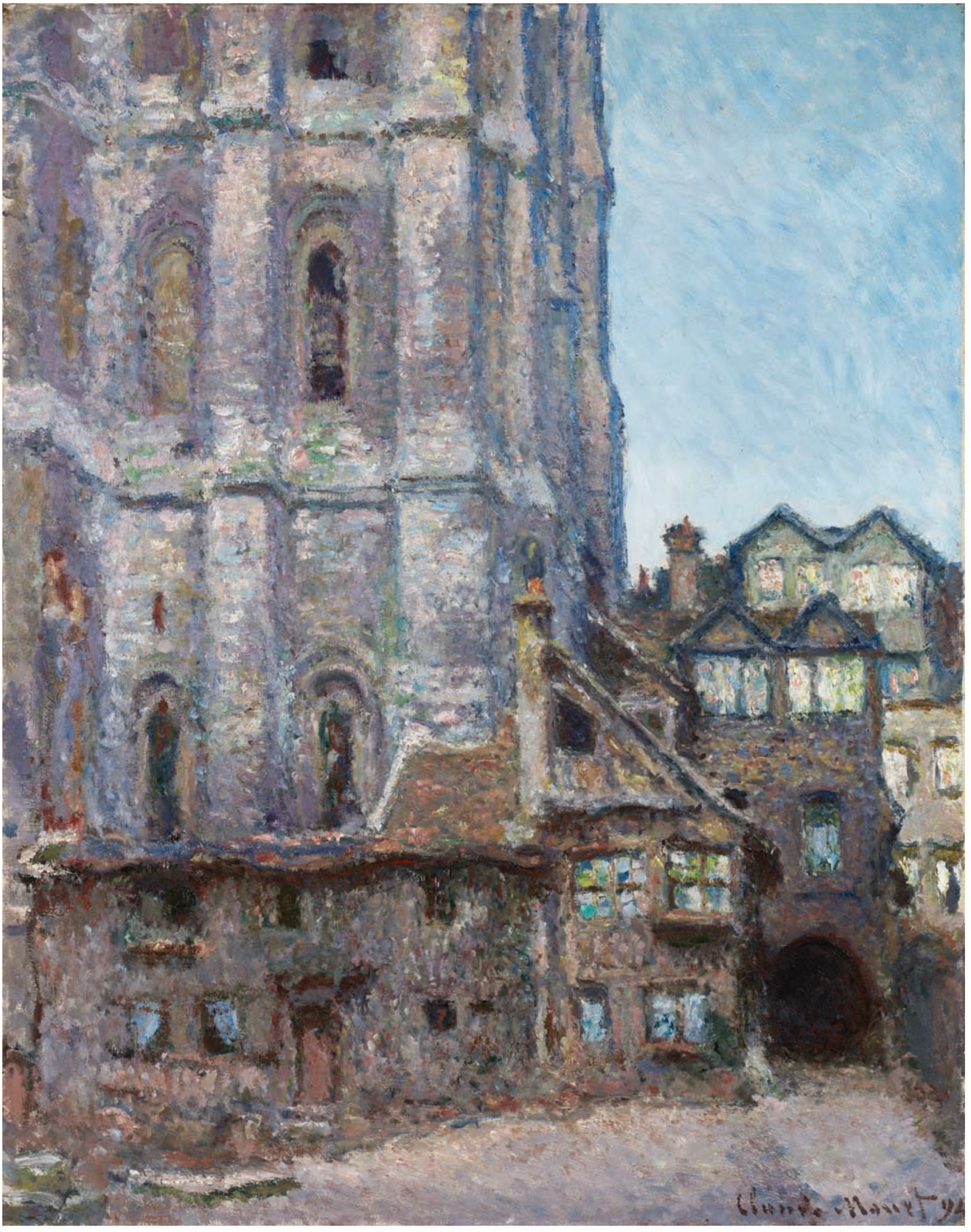
31. Édouard Manet. French, 1832–1883
Seated Faun, illustration for Mallarmé's *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, 1876
Wood engraving printed in black on Japan paper
Sheet: 8⅜ x 10 in.; 21.27 x 25.4 cm
Purchased with the Eleanor Lamont Cunningham, class of 1932, Fund, SC 1959:8

[FIGURE 32]
Claude Monet. *The Seine at Bougival, Evening* (*La Seine au Bougival, le soir*), 1869. Oil on canvas. SCMA (cat. 32). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

[FIGURE 33]
Claude Monet, *Cathedral at Rouen (La Cour d'Albane)*, 1892–1894. Oil on canvas. SCMA (cat. 33). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

32. Claude Monet. French, 1840–1926
The Seine at Bougival, Evening (*La Seine au Bougival, le soir*), 1869
Oil on canvas
Stretcher: 23⅝ x 28⅞ in.; 60.01 x 73.34 cm
Purchased, SC 1946:4
(Fig. 32)

33. Claude Monet. French, 1840–1926
Cathedral at Rouen (La Cour d'Albane), 1892–1894
Oil on canvas
Stretcher: 36½ x 29 1/16 in.; 92.71 x 73.81 cm
Gift of Adeline Flint Wing, class of 1898, and Caroline Roberta Wing, class of 1896, SC 1956:24
(Fig. 33)



[FIGURE 34]
Berthe Morisot. *The Mozart Sonata* (*La Sonate de Mozart*), 1894. Oil on canvas. SCMA (cat. 34). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

34. Berthe Morisot. French, 1841–1895
The Mozart Sonata (*La Sonate de Mozart*),1894
Oil on canvas
Stretcher: 18⅛ x 21 15/16 in.; 46.03 x 55.72 cm
Bequest of Mrs. Robert S. Tangeman (E. Clementine Miller, class of 1927), SC 1996:24-2
(Fig. 34)

35. Odilon Redon. French, 1840–1916
With Closed Eyes (*Les Yeux clos*), ca. 1895–1905
Oil on canvas
Stretcher: 25¾ x 20 in.; 65.40 x 50.8 cm
Gift of Mrs. Charles Inslee (Marguerite Tuthill, class of 1915), SC 1956:16
(Cover image)

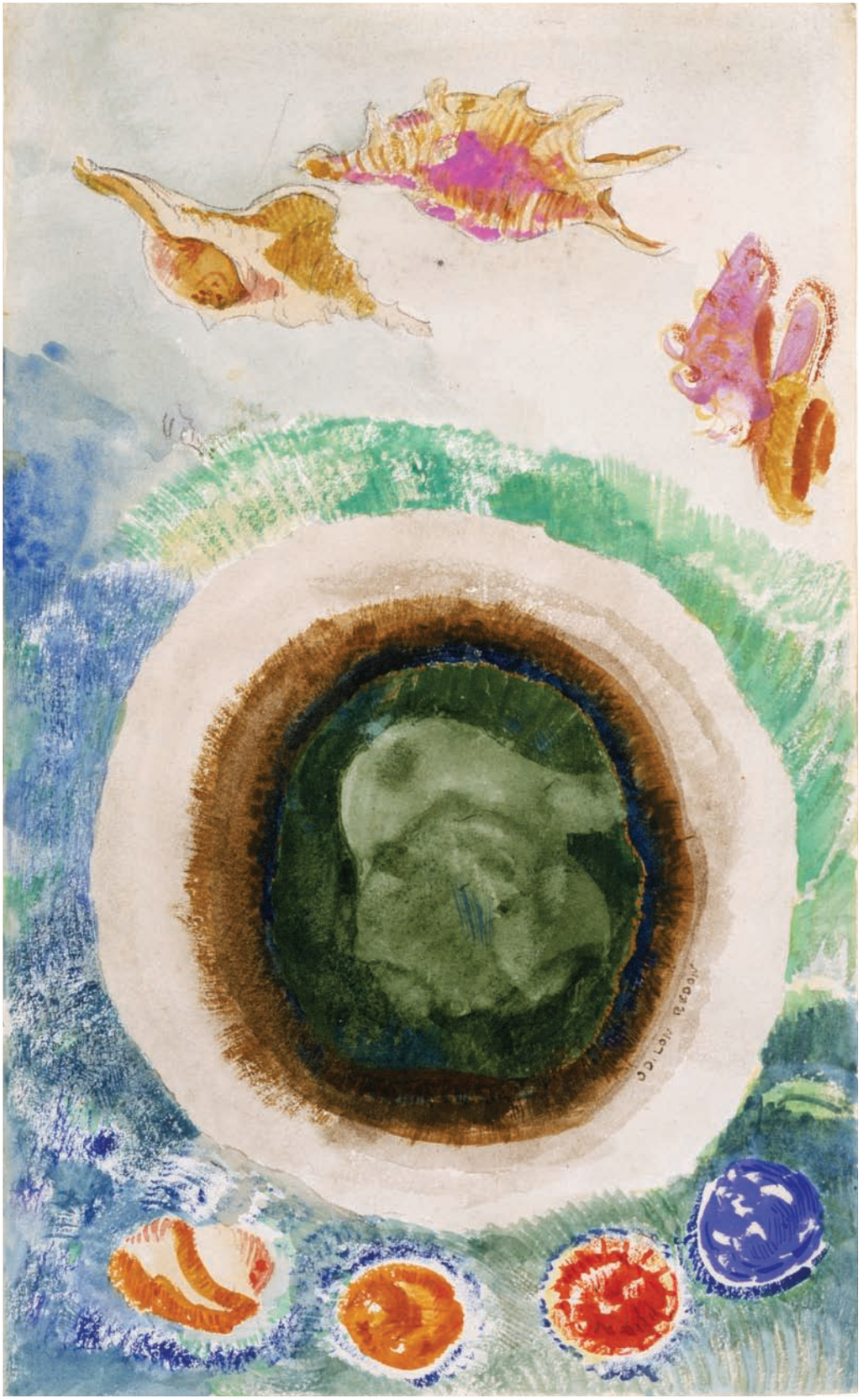
36. Odilon Redon. French, 1840–1916
Oyster (*Huitre*), ca. 1900–1910
Brush with transparent and opaque watercolor over black chalk on paper, the sheet trimmed to a graphite line faintly visible at left
Sheet: 8 15/16 x 5½ in.; 22.7013 x 13.97 cm
Purchased, SC 1954:36
(Fig. 35)

37. Henri Rivière. French, 1864–1951
Wave Hitting the Rocks (*Vague frappant les rochers*), from *La Mer: Études de vagues*, 1892
Woodcut printed in color on laid paper
Sheet: 13⅝ x 20½ in.; 34.60 x 52.07 cm; image: 9¾ x 14 in.; 24.76 x 35.56 cm
Purchased with the gift of Mrs. Myron Rothschild (Carol Weil, class of 1933), SC 2000:3

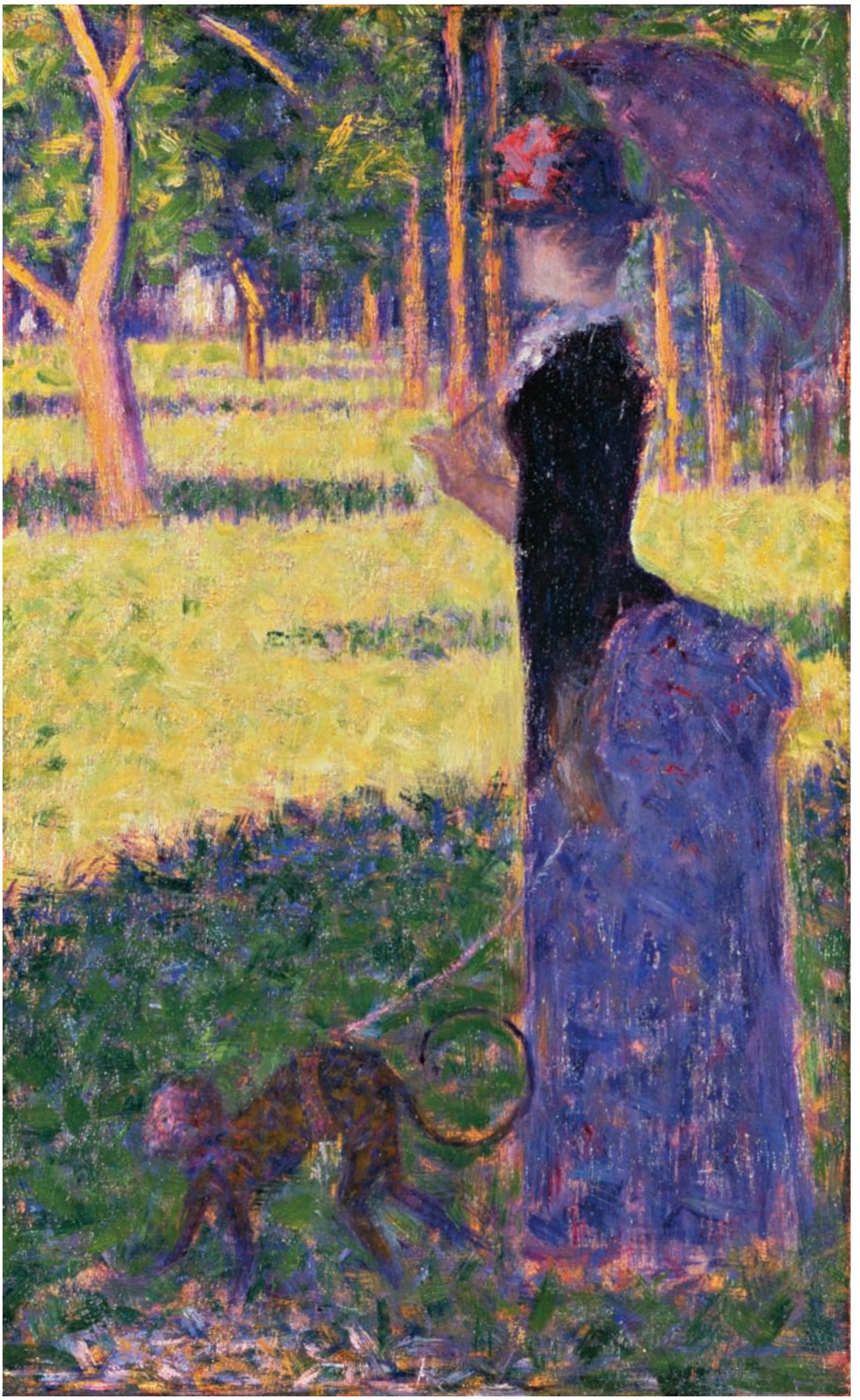
38. Georges Pierre Seurat. French, 1859–1891
Woman with a Monkey (*Femme avec un singe*), study for *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884
Oil on wood panel
Panel: 9¾ x 6¼ in.; 24.76 x 15.87 cm
Purchased with the Tryon Fund, SC 1934:2-1
(Fig. 36)

39. Paul Signac. French, 1863–1935
Théâtre Libre program and advertisement for The Chromatic Circle, 1889
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 6 5/16 x 7 5/16 in.; 16 x 18.5 cm
Collection of the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, Museum Purchase, 74.036.001

40. Paul Signac. French, 1863–1935
The Boats (Les Bateaux), 1895
Lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 15⅜ x 20⅞ in.; 39.05 x 53.02 cm; image: 9¼ x 15⅝ in.; 23.49 x 39.68 cm
Published by Gustave Pellet
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1972:50-98



[**FIGURE 35**]
Odilon Redon.
Oyster (*Huitre*),
ca. 1900–1910.
Watercolor.
SCMA (cat. 36).
Photograph by
Petegorsky/Gipe



41. Edouard Vuillard. French, 1868–1940
Interior with Work Table, also known as *The Suitor* (*Intérieur à la table à ouvrage* ou *Le Prétendant*), 1893
Oil on millboard panel: 12½ x 14⁵⁄₁₆ in.; 31.75 x 36.35 cm
Purchased with the Drayton Hillyer Fund, SC 1938:15
(Fig. 37)

42. James Abbott McNeill Whistler. American (active in England), 1834–1903
Portrait of Stéphane Mallarmé, 1892
Transfer lithograph on paper
Sheet: 9¾ x 6½ in.; 24.7 x 16.5 cm; image: 3¹³⁄₁₆ x 2 3/4 in.; 9.7 x 7.0 cm
Collection of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Gift of Francis Bullard, M21090

[FIGURE 36] Georges Pierre Seurat. *Woman with a Monkey* (*Femme avec un singe*), study for *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*, 1884. Oil on wood panel. SCMA (cat. 38). Photograph by Petegorsky/ Gipe

[FIGURE 37] Édouard Vuillard. *Interior with Work Table,* also known as *The Suitor* (*Intérieur à la table à ouvrage* ou *Le Prétendant*), 1893. Oil on millboard panel. SCMA (cat. 41). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

III. DANCE

43. Léon Bakst. Russian, 1866–1924
Costume design for Vaslav Nijinsky as the Rose, 1911
Graphite, watercolor and/or tempera, silver paint, and purple glaze on paper
Sheet: 15½ x 10³⁄₁₆ in.; 39.5 x 25.8 cm
Collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1933.394

44. Léon Bakst. Russian, 1866–1924
Nijinsky as the Faun, cover of the theater program for the 7th season of the Ballets Russes, 1912
Color photomechanical print
Sheet: 12⅝ x 9¹³⁄₁₆ x 5/16 in; 32 x 25 x 0.8 cm
Collection of the Zimmerli Art Museum at Rutgers University, Gift of Herbert D. and Ruth Schimmel, 2003.0856.517
(Fig. 28)

45. Alexandre Benois. Russian, 1870–1960
Set design for the Butter Week Fair, scenes 1 and 4, 1911
Graphite, tempera and/or watercolor, and crayon on paper
Sheet: 17¹¹⁄₁₆ x 24³⁄₁₆ in.; 44.8 x 61.5 cm
Collection of the Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1933.402

46. Edgar Degas. French, 1834–1917
Dancer on the Stage, ca. 1877–1880
Oil on canvas
Stretcher: 36 x 46½ in.; 91.44 x 118.11 cm
Gift of Paul Rosenberg and Company, SC 1955:14
(Fig. 20)

47. Edgar Degas. French, 1834–1917
Dancer Moving Forward, Arms Raised, Right Leg Forward, modeled 1882–1895 (cast posthumously)
Bronze
Overall with base: 25 x 12⅝ x 8¼ in.; 63.5 x 32.06 x 20.95 cm
Purchased, SC 1965:29
(Fig. 38)

48. Jean Louis Forain. French, 1852–1931
Fan (L'Éventail) for *Le Bal Gavarni*, 1903
Transfer lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 12½ x 19⅞ in.; 31.75 x 50.48 cm;
Image (height & width of fan): 10 x 19½ in.; 25.4 x 49.53 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1976:18-24
(Fig. 39)

49. Charles Gerschel. French, 1871–1930
Vaslav Nijinsky, Tamara Karsavina, and Ludmilla Shollar in *Jeux,* 1913
Photograph
5¾ x 7⅛ in.; 14.6 x 18 cm
Roger Pryor Dodge Collection, Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations
(Fig. 27)

[FIGURE 38]
Edgar Degas. *Dancer Moving Forward, Arms Raised, Right Leg Forward*, modeled 1882–1895, cast posthumously. Bronze. SCMA (cat. 47). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

50. Charles Gerschel. French, 1871–1930
Vaslav Nijinsky, Tamara Karsavina, and Ludmilla Shollar in *Jeux*, 1913
Photograph
6½ x 4⅛ in.; 16.5 x 10.4 cm
Roger Pryor Dodge Collection, Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

51. Charles Gerschel. French, 1871–1930
Vaslav Nijinsky with a Tennis Racquet in Hand in *Jeux*, 1913
Photograph
5⅞ x 3½ in.; 15 x 8.9 cm
Roger Pryor Dodge Collection, Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

52. Winslow Homer. American, 1826–1910
A Parisian Ball—Dancing at the Casino from *Harper's Weekly*, November 23, 1867
Wood engraving printed in black on paper
Sheet: 11 x 15½ in.; 27.94 x 39.37 cm
Purchased, SC 1950:77-93

53. Édouard Manet. French, 1832–1883
Lola de Valence, no. 67 from *Eaux-Fortes Modernes*, 1863
Etching on paper
Sheet: 9 1/16 x 6 3/16 in.; 23.018 x 15.71 cm
Bequest of Charles L. Freer, SC 1920:53-94(8)

54. Alfred Henry Maurer. American, 1868–1932
Le Bal Bullier, ca. 1900–1901
Oil on canvas
Stretcher: 28 13/16 x 36 5/16 in.; 73.18 x 92.23 cm
Purchased, SC 1951:283
(Fig. 40)

[FIGURE 39]
Jean-Louis Forain. *Fan (L'Éventail)* for *Le Bal Gavarni*, 1903. Transfer lithograph. SCMA (cat. 48). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

[FIGURE 40]
Alfred Henry Maurer. *Le Bal Bullier*, ca. 1900–1901. Oil on canvas. SCMA (cat. 54). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

55. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Jane Avril, ca. 1893
Brush and spatter lithograph printed in color on paper
Sheet: 51¼ x 37¼ in.; 130.17 x 94.61 cm; image: 49 x 36 in.; 124.46 x 91.44 cm
Purchased, SC 1958:74
(Fig. 41)

56. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Jane Avril, from *Le Café Concert*, 1893
Brush and spatter lithograph in black on paper
Sheet: 17 1/16 x 12½ in.; 43.33 x 31.75 cm; image: 10½ x 8¼ in.; 26.67 x 20.95 cm
Gift of Priscilla Paine Van der Poel, class of 1928, SC 1977:32-232

57. Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. French, 1864–1901
Miss Loïe Fuller, 1893
Brush and spatter lithograph with keystone in olive green, color stone in various colors, and gold powder on paper
Sheet: 15 x 11⅛ in.; 38.1 x 28.25 cm; image: 14 15/16 x 10¼ in.; 37.94 x 26.03 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1978:1-45
(Fig. 25)

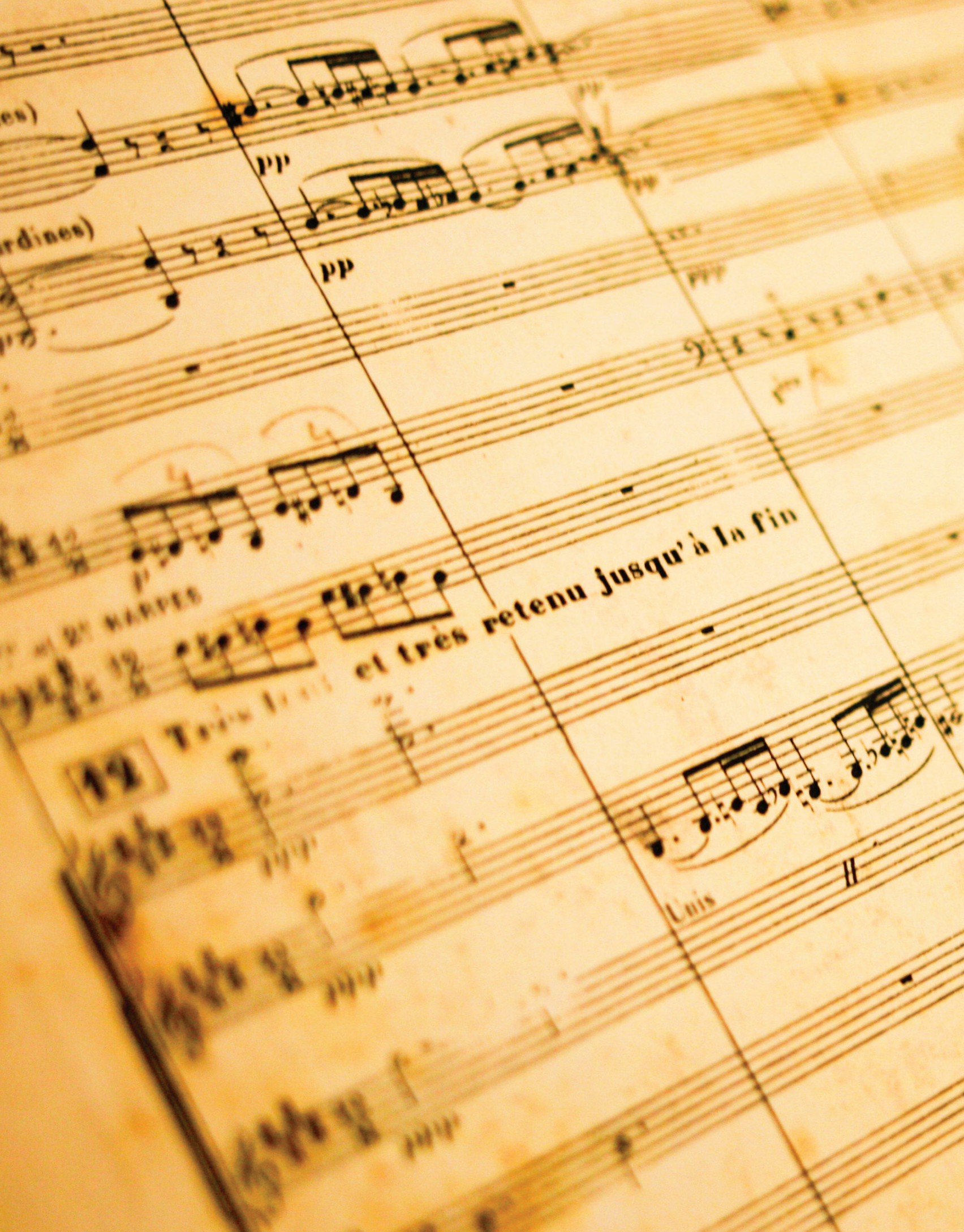
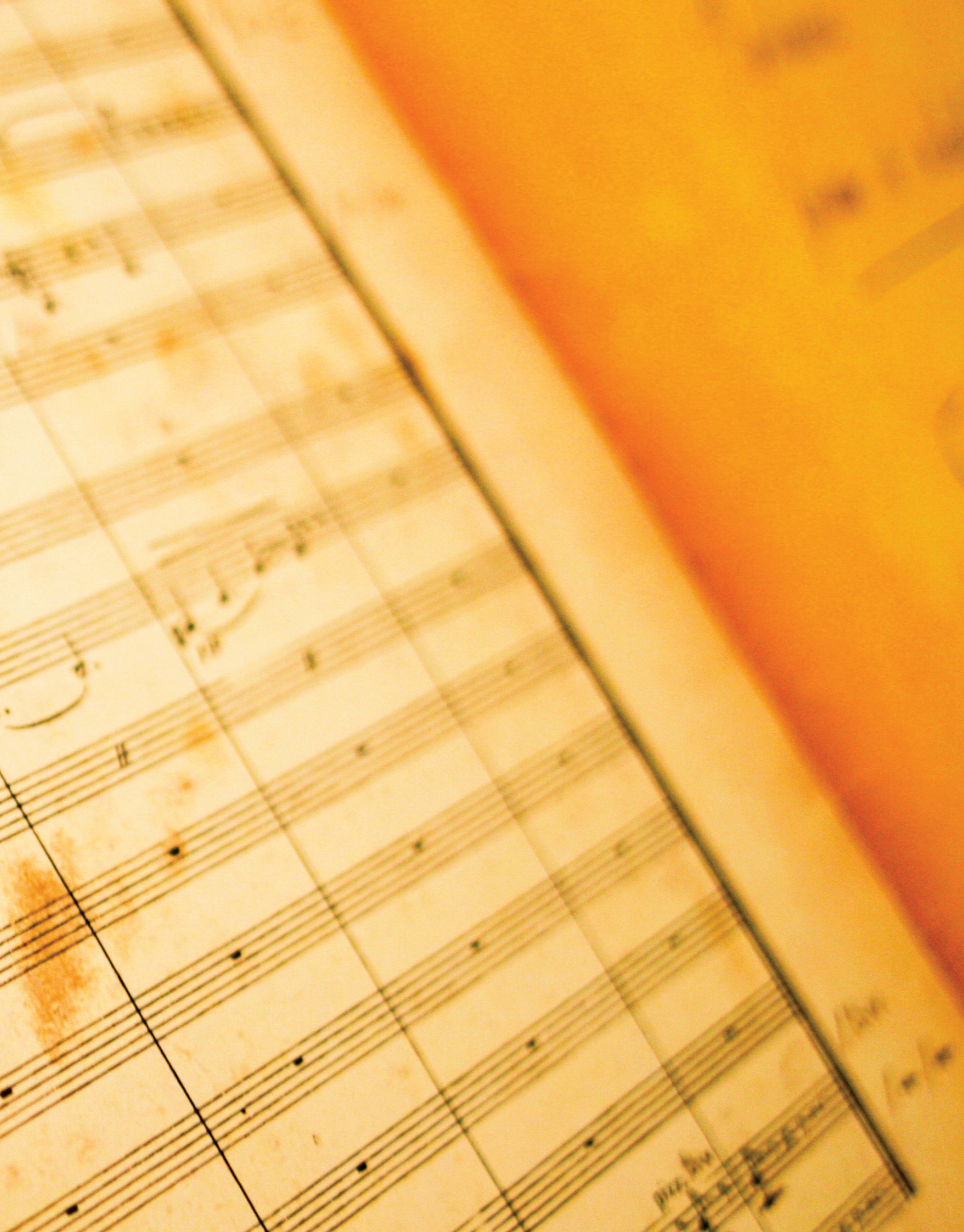
58. Unknown photographer. 20th century
Vaslav Nijinsky and Lubov Tchernicheva in *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, 1912
Photograph
7 x 5½ in.; 17.8 x 14 cm
Roger Pryor Dodge Collection, Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations
(Fig. 26)

59. Unknown photographer. 20th century
Vaslav Nijinsky in *L'Après-midi d'un faune*, 1912
Photograph
7¼ x 4 in.; 18.4 x 10.2 cm
Roger Pryor Dodge Collection, Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

60. Jacques Villon (Gaston Duchamp). French, 1875–1963
The Cake-Walk of the Little Girls (*Le Cake-Walk des petites filles*), 1904
Aquatint and etching printed in color on paper
Sheet: 16⅝ x 23 5/16 in.; 42.22 x 59.21 cm; plate: 12 15/16 x 16 9/16 in.; 32.86 x 42.06 cm
Gift of Selma Erving, class of 1927, SC 1972:50-137
(Back cover image)

[FIGURE 41]
Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. *Jane Avril*, ca. 1893. Brush and spatter lithograph. SCMA (cat. 55). Photograph by Petegorsky/Gipe

Jane Avril
Jardin
de Paris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et très retenu jusqu'à la fin