

© Malcolm Park – Excerpt from 2001 PhD Dissertation:  
*Ambiguity, and the engagement of spatial illusion within the surface of Manet's paintings*

## **5F. A BAR AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE: Text**

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The painterly brilliance and evocation of the artificial world of the Folies-Bergère theatre reveal little of the complex and singular artifice used by Manet in the creation of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. As stated in the Introduction, since the painting's first showing at the Paris Salon in 1882, the concerns underlying the speculations and interpretations of critics and scholars have been the painting's uncertain spatial organisation and the apparent discrepancies of the mirror reflection. A caricature of the time by Stop (Fig.F9) presented a witty confirmation of the perceived problem of the painting, by indicating that "Nous croyons devoir réparer cette omission" of the *monsieur* who "n'existe pas dans le tableau" and drawing him directly in front of the barmaid.<sup>1</sup> Such a tongue-in-cheek proposal in fact sets out the spatial arrangement which has been considered by most scholars to the present day to be the only, although impossible, outcome of the reflection. T.J.Clark's assertion "that *we* must be where *he* is. But we cannot be"<sup>2</sup> echoes the similar claims of many others. Whereas the critics in Manet's time saw the problems in pictorial or narrative terms, the more recent scholarship, as also discussed in Chapter 3, has seen the discrepancies and inherent ambiguities of the work in more speculative, theoretical, and abstruse terms.

It has been suggested by Bradford Collins, for example, that "the key problematic... the barmaid's unexplained refusal or inability to respond positively to the male spectator's intense gaze, upends one of the crucial features of the Venetian tradition: the returned gaze".<sup>3</sup> Jack Flam has proposed that "it is part of Manet's more general strategy, through the use of *mise en abyme*, to transform what at first appears to be straightforward physical description into a kind of elliptical, metaphysical narrative".<sup>4</sup> Penny Florence has theorised that "Several readings are suggested, left incomplete and mutually incompatible, as long as the painting is assumed to be a unitary sign. If... it is read as complex and tending towards iconicity, this structure is comprehensible in cognitive terms".<sup>5</sup> Claiming knowledge of what Manet had in mind, George Mauner has

asserted that "The reflected bottles do not correspond in any way to the actual ones, either in configuration or location, a phenomenon that leaves no doubt as to the artist's intention",<sup>6</sup> and in countering readings of class, prostitution, and the "male gaze", Carol Armstrong has claimed that the painting

uses the devices of modern painting precisely to destabilize the structure of gender positionality pertaining to the commodity culture it depicts: its disjunctive mirror unfixes the place of the viewer in front of the painting, such that no identity can be assumed between the spectator of the painting and the male customer depicted within it, and neither can the folded-out barmaid be firmly secured as a safely othered object of the gaze – instead the *Bar* suggests a constant oscillation between the same and the other. Not only that, it argues against its own absolute collapse with the structures of commodity culture that it celebrates by everywhere insisting on its critical *difference* from the world it depicts – by insisting on its status as a *painting* rather than a reflection.<sup>7</sup>

And Paul Smith, in seeing the anomalies of the painting's reflections in terms of Richard Wollheim's intentional theory and as a development of Baudelaire's strategies of reader identity, has claimed that "the *Bar* is a 'real allegory' of the intractability of the social aporia generated by the class and gender relations it represents".<sup>8</sup>

Nevertheless, in the midst of such approaches there have been attempts to grapple with the reality of the apparent discrepancies in terms of picture-making or examine those aspects of spatial manipulation that are involved in the proposals made here. Carol Armstrong has also concluded that, in addition to the painting's functions involving gender and identity

the zone of the mirror represents a very special fascination with opticality which was by no means Manet's only specular option, not the only way to represent the optical space of the mirror, but which also cannot be reduced to explanation according to the social and sexual circumstances of the place represented, the Folies-Bergère; rather I'm inclined to think that Manet chose the Folies-Bergère because it offered him something illusionistically complex to paint.<sup>9</sup>

And in describing the work as a series of interruptions, Armstrong explained that

with each successive interruption the spatial reading of the canvas is confounded and the separate planes of its illusion are complexly and inextricably woven together, so that they are shown to be indivisible into separate planes. Their layers of illusionistic depth are shown to be collapsed and paper thin – like a series of flat collage elements glued on top of each other on a flat surface, thickening that surface into a slightly thicker thin-ness, declaring its two-dimensionality to be a very thin three-dimensionality that belongs both here in the world of real objects and there in the world of representations.<sup>10</sup>

Such layering, illusionistic or otherwise, is nevertheless related to the visible surface. Scientific examination of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* [henceforth also referred to as the Final Painting] has established a layering of a different kind, beneath that surface. The most thorough and objective investigation of the painting to date was carried out as part of the research for the *Hidden Face of Manet* exhibition and catalogue in 1986<sup>11</sup> by Juliet Wilson-Bareau, the exhibition's curator, and Robert Bruce-Gardner.<sup>12</sup> By means of an examination of X-radiographs (Fig.F2<sup>13</sup> and Fig.F4) of both the Final Painting and an earlier oil sketch (*Oil Sketch for A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1881, Fig.F3) [henceforth also referred to as the Oil Sketch], Wilson-Bareau was able to demonstrate that the posture and central position of the barmaid's reflection as seen in the Oil Sketch was initially used in the Final Painting but then adjusted and moved, at transitional intervals, to its final position to the right. Wilson-Bareau also suggested that the initial painting of the reflected image of the barmaid in its final position showed her "waist and hips were much slimmer, and she was leaning forward, with her arms still bent at the elbow, just like the 'real' girl in the sketch" and that the "decision to straighten the barmaid's arms and give her a more upright pose in the Courtauld picture was therefore made at a late stage in the development of the composition".<sup>14</sup> Wilson-Bareau's examination, which took into account preliminary sketches and relevant contemporary documents, was augmented with extensive background information, set in the wider context of the examination of other *café-concert* paintings and drawings of Manet, and celebrated, moreover, the painterly qualities of the two works, noting that "Manet gave free rein to his wit and invention".<sup>15</sup>

Other aspects of the scientific examination of the Final Painting carried out for that exhibition were also later published by Robert Bruce-Gardner in Impressionist & Post-Impressionist Masterpieces: The Courtauld Collection.<sup>16</sup> Importantly, Bruce-Gardner confirmed that the *Hidden Face of Manet* exhibition had shown that "For Manet the process of constructing an image began with a record of things seen... but the evolution of the final image has been shown to take place on the canvas during painting."<sup>17</sup> In describing the changes that had been made to the arm positions of the barmaid, from one

with "her left hand resting on her right forearm... first sketchily painted, perhaps only broadly blocked in"<sup>18</sup> to that as seen in the painting, Bruce-Gardner explained that

The decision to change the position of the arms inevitably entailed some reworking of the rest of the figure, the X-radiograph shows how Manet broadened the shoulders, redefined the waist with dense opaque paint and corrected the contours of the figure. The X-radiograph also indicates that the foreground still life had been at least partially painted before the change. The paint is very thick in the area of the right forearm, this is particularly clear in a raking light, and the extreme opacity of the X-radiograph here suggests that the edge of the the glass bowl of mandarins originally underlay it. On the left, a painted reflection of a champagne bottle can be seen continuing under the upper arm.<sup>19</sup>

In these identifications of prior states of the canvas, Wilson-Bareau and Bruce-Gardner provided more background knowledge to the apparent spatial disjunctions in the Final Painting than had until then been established, but did not allow their descriptions to project beyond the available information to make speculative spatial proposals.

The other technique which has the potential to investigate the spatial structure of a work from information both in its visible surface and as revealed by scientific examination, is that of perspectival analysis. But to this writer's knowledge, the only such analysis to have been made of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* has been that carried out by Professor William Conger and presented by Mary Mathews Gedo in her consideration of the artist and the painting in her 1994 Looking at Art from the Inside Out: The Psychoiconographic Approach to Modern Art.<sup>20</sup> Without any presented evidence, Conger's quoted analysis suggested that

Although Manet probably did not employ formal perspective constructions in his *Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, his composition *seems* to be organized according to the logic of one-point linear perspective, except for the mirrored images of Suzon and her customer, positioned at the extreme right.<sup>21</sup>

Nonetheless, Conger seemed able to recognise that a strategy of ambiguity was involved when he suggested that "*The composition subverts perspectival logic so consistently as to suggest that Manet deliberately followed a pictorial strategy that exploited perspective for the sake of maintaining ambiguity* [Gedo's emphasis]".<sup>22</sup> With that statement this writer can agree, but the evidence of Conger's analysis suggests that it was hardly an analysis at all. The space of the theatre as indicated in the plan<sup>23</sup> is undocumented and

incorrect, and detail aspects of the analysis,<sup>24</sup> such as the choice of the vanishing point at the intersection point (4) for the perspectival framework around the fruit bowl, are given no explanation. In spite of such obvious problems, Gedo felt able to conclude that

As the results of the researches... demonstrate, no matter how one struggles to reconcile Manet's final vision with observed reality, no matter how many theoretical positions one assumes vis-à-vis the *Bar*, in the end, his pictorial puzzle resists rational solution.<sup>25</sup>

Other scholars have been far more emphatic without evidence of any analysis. "Historians have attacked the problem like sleuths expecting to find some key to a logical and naturalistic explanation. There is none." Anne Coffin Hanson has asserted.<sup>26</sup> The painting was hardly presented by Manet as a puzzle waiting for a solution, but the continued acceptance by scholars of assumptions without confirming evidence or explanation, or even without examination, is in itself perplexing. To date, it has been accepted by all scholars that the mirror's reflection cannot be reconciled with what is seen in front of it, that the barmaid is facing directly across the bar, and that the reflected image of the barmaid is looking at and engaging, in some manner, with the gentleman seen in the upper right corner. The implication of this last assumption, that it places the gentleman in front of the barmaid in real space and therefore in the position of the viewer, has also been seen by many as the painting's very ambiguity, as something other than its incorrect handling of the reflection.<sup>27</sup> As a result of these assumptions it has been generally thought that the background setting seen reflected in the mirror in the Final Painting was not a direct depiction of what was able to be seen inside the theatre of the Folies-Bergère, but rather, was a free and inventive description of Manet's own making, even if possibly based on his observations or sketches. "It now seems fairly certain" Jack Flam has claimed "that the setting evokes a bar on the first floor balcony of the folies, although Manet largely reinvented the place in his picture".<sup>28</sup>

An analysis of the Final Painting has shown that all of these assumptions are incorrect and that it is a composite of actual views, with the reflected view of the theatre space in the mirror behind the barmaid a reasonably accurate one from a specific viewpoint in the theatre, and the combined view of the barmaid, the bar and its collection

of bottles, bowl of fruit and flowers, together with their reflections in the mirror, is a reasonably accurate one from a viewpoint which is different to the first and unconnected with the space of the theatre. The geometry of the perspective and reflections shows that the barmaid is facing towards the artist, at an angle across the bar, and that the gentleman is not looking at the barmaid at all but, rather, at the reflected view of the theatre in the mirror. Although the apparent spatial disjunctions can thus be explained, in terms of ambiguous spatial shaping, such an explanation neither discounts the way in which the painting is read nor provides answers to questions about Manet's intentions in creating such ambiguity. It does, however, explain how the ambiguity was created. The background to the analysis of the Final Painting involved the subject itself, documentary evidence of the painting's production, evidence from preliminary or related images, and the development of Manet's art to that stage.

### Background

At the time of the painting around 1881 and 1882, the Folies-Bergère in Rue Richer (Fig.F21) was a famous night-life locale in Paris, well known for its variety theatre entertainment and as a place for prostitutes to freely mix with prospective clientele.<sup>29</sup> It comprised two large spaces, with one an awning-covered entry *jardin* with large balconies at the sides and through which one gained access, at ground and first-floor levels, to the second space, the theatre. Seating in the theatre was arranged at the ground floor level with loges set at one level in a horseshoe configuration, and within which seating, in rows on a sloping floor, was set directly facing the stage. At the first floor level the seating, both in stepped levels and as loges, was set as an overlooking balcony in a horseshoe configuration similar to that on the ground floor (Fig.F22) The spaces behind the curved seating at both levels were the famous *promenoirs* where customers were served drinks by *serveuses* from behind a series of *comptoirs* and where the prostitutes gathered. As J.-K. Huysmans had noted: "Ce qui est vraiment admirable, vraiment unique, c'est le cachet boulevardier de ce théâtre".<sup>30</sup> The overall atmosphere and

appeal of the establishment was evoked with a description published in La Vie Parisienne in 1878:

Que demande l'étranger en arrivant à Paris?

*Les Folies-Bergère.*

C'est que là surtout se trouve condensé l'esprit du crû. On y voit les habitudes parisiennes comme en déshabillé; on y vit de la vie de ce monde léger, aimable, prime-sautier, charmant, poli, étincelant de brio et finement moqueur, dont M. Sari a si heureusement saisi les goûts,... L'esprit parisien se condense et se respire dans cette atmosphère tiède et parfumée; mais on comprend aussi que ce lieu de délices, tout à la fois théâtre, concert, café, jardin, est également créé en vue de la foule comospolite [sic]....

Partout des comptoirs tenus par de charmantes vendeuses, dont les yeux espiègles et les gracieux sourires attirent une foule de clients.

L'enchanteur, M. Sari, a semé dans son jardin fantastique toutes les séductions. – La troupe des Hanlon Lees, des pantomimes, des ballets, une musique entraînante... rien n'est négligé pour varier les plaisirs.

Le regard est ravi, l'oreille charmée. Tout vous séduit, vous éblouit.<sup>31</sup>

Visual information about the detailed configuration and appearance of the theatre interior at that period is limited to seating plans, posters, illustrations of varying accuracy, and a gouache painting by Jean-Louis Forain. A pictorial Seating Plan of 1875 by Barclay (Fig.F13).clearly illustrates the elements in the theatre space and the seating arrangement as described above. At the *rez-de-chaussée* level are seen the *loges* set behind the columns supporting the upper balcony, and with the *fauteuils d'orchestre* seating and *stalles* area behind set in rows facing the stage on the sloping floor. At the *galerie* level is seen the curved balcony and its seating mixture of *loges* and *fauteuils*, the columns at the side walls supporting the exposed roof trusses, a decorative frieze at the top of the wall, and the suspended chandeliers. Large mirrors were set between the columns at the side walls. Behind the curved seating areas at both levels are the *promenoirs*. Although inaccurate both in scale and perspective two posters of the 1870s provide further insights into the character of the theatre's interior. In the 1874 *Folies-Bergère* poster by Lévy (Fig.F10) the view of the theatre in the background is from the opposite direction of the Barclay seating plan and the foreground depiction of the bars and stairs does not relate to the background scene. Although it is of interest to see the depiction of a bar in the background at the balcony level to the right of the stage as a possible indicator of a position of a bar, the actual seating arrangement and the space that was available between the balcony front and the side wall made such a position for a bar

and customers unlikely.<sup>32</sup> The view of the theatre in Jules Chéret's 1875 colour lithograph poster, *Aux Folies-Bergère* (Fig.F11), is from the left side (facing the stage) of the theatre looking to the mirrored wall opposite. In addition to those elements visible in the Barclay seating plan can be seen the aerialists in action suspended from the roof structure. Although for graphical purposes the bar in the foreground is similarly unrelated to the background, the depictions of the barmaids and customers at a bar in both posters provide some sense of how these small facilities were used.

Most of the available illustrations of the theatre at that time convey the entertainment and activities rather than any accurate details of the surrounds. A published illustration of a political meeting in 1871 after a drawing by Vierge (Fig.F12), is one of the few that conveys with reasonable accuracy the ceiling profile which still existed in 1881, the chandeliers, and the upper balcony seating, but its dating of a decade earlier and lack of spatial accuracy has allowed it to be only used here for guidance. The men standing at the right are on the stairs at the side of the tiered seating and the men seated directly in front and to the left are in the loges. Jean-Louis Forain's *Le Bar aux Folies-Bergère* of 1878 (Fig.F8) provides the closest chronological evidence to Manet's two paintings of the theatre's interior and shows a surprisingly similar use of pictorial elements. A bar, with details of finish not unlike those shown in Manet's Oil Sketch, has a similar display of bottles and bowl of fruit as seen in Manet's Final Painting. The mirror and its gold-finished frame can be seen set against the reveal of the engaged column at the left of the painting, with its lower edge seen at a similar height to that in Manet's Final Painting. The reflected image in the mirror includes the barmaid, her chair, the bar, and a vase of flowers which are in reality outside the depicted scene to the left, the balcony opposite, and the wall mirrors set against the column behind the crowd. And although not an original one, the technique of showing only the reflected image of the flowers and not the flowers themselves provides a possible influence on the way Manet developed his imagery in the same space. The uncertain dating of Forain's work leaves, however, such a possibility open.<sup>33</sup> An examination of Forain's work suggests that its angled view could indeed be of the very same bar depicted by Manet, with the elements

correctly positioned laterally, but the perspective and relative heights of the balcony fronts make such a proposal unresolved.

Apart from its surrounds, and although generally considered to have been set within the theatre, the exact position of the bar depicted in Manet's Oil Sketch has always been in some doubt. As noted above, it has always been known that, for the development of the Final Painting, Manet had set-up a bar in his studio as a reconstruction of one in the theatre. Léon Leenhoff's description of the Oil Sketch as "C'est le bar au premier étage à droite de la scène et d'avant-scène"<sup>34</sup> clearly sets the bar on the first floor level in the theatre, on the right-hand side, and in the proximity of the *avant-scène* as seen in the Lévy poster. Notwithstanding that description, others have proposed very different locations, with Novelene Ross proposing that "The bars were located in mirrored alcoves in an artificial garden area on the Folies ground floor",<sup>35</sup> and Kathleen Adler seeing the painting as "a barmaid presiding over one of the many small bars that lined the walls of the great winter garden".<sup>36</sup> William Conger's proposal, as the only one which has previously specified an exact position, placed the bar in the general area implied by Leenhoff,<sup>37</sup> but in contrast, the proposal made here sets the bar much further from the stage, towards the *promenoir*.<sup>38</sup>

The period during which Manet produced the preparatory works and the Final Painting is thought to have been from the spring of 1881 until its showing in the Paris Salon on 1 May, 1882,<sup>39</sup> but interrupted by a stay at Versailles from July to October, 1881, due to his declining health. A chronological sequence of a kind can be developed from annotations made by Léon Leenhoff, memoirs of friends and colleagues, a letter from his brother Eugène to Berthe Morisot, and the uncertain chronologies presented by biographers and cataloguers such as Adolphe Tabarant. The annotations of Léon Leenhoff appear in a posthumous Register of Manet works made in 1883 and hand-written on a series of card-mounted photographs of Manet's works taken by Fernand Lochard.<sup>40</sup> Leenhoff's descriptions suggest that Manet made sketches at the Folies-Bergère, and from those the wash drawings and Oil Sketch were developed, with annotations on a Lochard photograph card of a wash drawing explaining it to be a

"Dessin à la plume fait d'après des croquis pris aux Folies-Bergère",<sup>41</sup> the Oil Sketch noted in the Register to be an "Esquisse du Bar aux Folies-Bergère. Première idée du tableau. C'est le bar au premier étage à droite de la scène et d'avant-scène. Portrait de Dupray. A été peint dans l'été 1881",<sup>42</sup> and the same work noted on the Lochard photograph card to be "Peint d'après des croquis pris aux Folies-Bergère. Henry du Pray cause avec la fille du comptoir dans l'atelier de la rue d'Amsterdam".<sup>43</sup> But interestingly, of a pastel portrait of Méry Laurent, whose highlighted figure is seen in the reflected balcony in the Final Painting, Leenhoff wrote on the Lochard photograph card "pastel fait d'après une photographie",<sup>44</sup> suggesting that its development was also based upon photographic images.

Record of Manet actually working on the Final Painting had also been made by others. Gaston La Touche recalled in 1884 that "L'hiver se passa... Il travaillait à son *Bar* des Folies-Bergère. J'allais souvent le voir; je posai même le monsieur qui est reflété dans la glace".<sup>45</sup> Georges Jeannot, in recounting in 1907 his experiences of visiting Manet, wrote "Lorsque je revins à Paris en janvier 1882, ma première visite fut pour Manet. Il peignait alors le *Bar aux Folies-Bergère*, et le modèle, une jolie fille, posait derrière une table chargée de bouteilles et de victuailles".<sup>46</sup> And Manet's brother Eugène wrote of him in a letter to Berthe Morisot in early March, 1882,<sup>47</sup> that "Il se prépare un four pénible à l'Exposition. Il refait toujours le même tableau: une femme dans un café".<sup>48</sup>

Less reliable datings have been made by Adolphe Tabarant for the preparatory and final works, including: *Le modèle du "Bar aux Folies-Bergère"*,<sup>49</sup> of which he wrote "C'est là le portrait du modèle qui posa pour le motif définitif de la serveuse du *Bar aux Folies-Bergère*. Il fut exécuté au cours de l'automne de 1881, à l'atelier de la rue d'Amsterdam.";<sup>50</sup> the *Etude pour le "Bar aux Folies-Bergère"* [the Oil Sketch], of which he wrote "C'est le peintre Henri Dupray qui joue ici le rôle du monsieur causant avec la serveuse du bar. L'étude fut peinte à l'atelier de la rue d'Amsterdam dans les derniers mois de 1881, d'après des croquis pris par Manet aux Folies-Bergère";<sup>51</sup> and the Final Painting which he claimed "fut peint dans les derniers mois de 1881 à l'atelier de la rue

d'Amsterdam, d'après un modèle qui vint y poser et des croquis pris par Manet aux Folies-Bergère".<sup>52</sup>

If the datings and sequence suggested by Leenhoff are accepted, then the initial sketches made by Manet at the Folies-Bergère would have been made before the summer of 1881, the date given for the Oil Sketch. Ronald Pickvance has noted that such a dating was a surprising one, and has suggested it to be more probably October, 1881, at the earliest.<sup>53</sup> But the existence of other drawings, some of questionable authenticity, which touch upon the subject or locale of the Final Painting and have been dated prior to 1881, confuses the issue, as such works can be seen as either part of a wider recording by Manet of theatres and cafés-concerts, or part of a longer-term project leading towards the final image.

One of these earlier images, *Au paradis* (Fig.F6), appeared as a transfer lithograph after a wash drawing in the spring of 1877 in *Revue de la Semaine*, and has been seen by Juliet Wilson-Bareau to show "spectators in the upper balcony of a variety theatre, looking down towards the action out of sight on the stage".<sup>54</sup> For this writer, and in spite of the implications of the work's title, the setting suggests the specific locale of the Folies-Bergère theatre, in the loges at the lower level beneath the upper balcony, and to be much more indicative of the Folies-Bergère than the drawing specifically noted by Leenhoff as "Dessin à la plume fait d'après des croquis pris aux Folies-Bergère" (Fig.F7). This latter work, titled differently by Adolphe Tabarant, Alain de Leiris, and Juliet Wilson-Bareau,<sup>55</sup> contains no details, either in the decorative relief to the upper balcony front, its balcony seating, or background detail which, for this writer, would particularly place the scene at the Folies-Bergère.

Of the numerous other works of Manet which have been connected with *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*,<sup>56</sup> many with uncertain provenances and in unknown locations, the possible existence of the preliminary sketches is tantalising and the details of a wash drawing is of particular interest here. Although no *in situ* pencil sketches have been published or documented, the catalogue for a sale of *Dessins et Aquarelles d'Edouard Manet* from the Pellerin collection at the Galerie Charpentier, Paris, in 1954, made

reference to "Quarante dessins é la mine de plomb et à la sanguine d'après les maîtres et d'après nature: *le bar des Folies Bergères* [sic], *personnages, études de navires, de voiliers et de barques*" in its description of Album No.5.<sup>57</sup> None of the five drawings reproduced in the sale catalogue relates to the Folies-Bergère, and the present location of the drawing(s) which depict "le bar des Folies Bergères" is unknown. A wash drawing, *Study for Un Bar aux Folies-Bergère* (c.1881, Fig.F5) [henceforth also referred to as the Wash Drawing] had been noted by Charles Sterling in the catalogue to the 1932 retrospective exhibition, writing that "Manet a exécuté divers croquis sur place, dont un aquarellé [sic], qui a figuré dans une vente anonyme à Paris, le 1<sup>er</sup> avril 1914, sous le n<sup>o</sup> 68"<sup>58</sup> and by Tabarant, when writing of Manet in 1947, "Il lava d'aquarelle un plus grand croquis (23 x 20), qu'il offrit à Antonin Proust".<sup>59</sup> Although the work in question has an uncertain provenance<sup>60</sup> and, apart from a discussion by Bradford R. Collins in 1996,<sup>61</sup> has received little scholarly attention, it presents for this writer a probable link in the Final Painting's development and is used in the analysis below as an authentic work of Manet.

Such a background of dates, comments and memoirs provides little real understanding, however, of the circumstances of Manet's translation of the motif in the Folies-Bergère theatre. If the project had been in gestation for some years, then the earlier images of audiences in balconies and of orchestras may have been involved in the development. Manet would have typically made small pencil sketches directly from the motif, but they could have been produced much earlier than the summer of 1881, or, alternatively, as more usually considered, after October, 1881. And although the Oil Sketch is generally thought, influenced by Leenhoff's notation, to have been painted by Manet in his studio using his sketches, the reasonable accuracy of its perspective and the immediacy of its technique raise the question of whether a secondary source such as a photograph or illustration had been used, or if it had also been produced in the theatre, during closing hours with no customers moving between the bar and the balcony seating. When Leenhoff's note about Manet using photographs to create his imagery as well as the results of the other case studies in this dissertation are taken into account, it seems completely feasible that Manet used photographs to create the composite juxtapositions

and the detailed perspectival arrangement of the Final Painting. The nature of these spatial manipulations, as explained below, confirms that this was not a straightforward work, and in that period from January to April, 1882, when it is known that Manet, severely restricted by his illness, was working on the painting in his studio in Rue d'Amsterdam and driving his brother to distraction with his constant reworking of the painting's surface, photography would have provided the means to bring the painting to its complex, ambiguous resolution.

With their use of spatial interplay and mirror devices, the works of other artists, such as Velázquez' *Las Meninas* (Fig.86) and Gustave Caillebotte's *Dans un café* (1880, Fig.H1), have been seen as possible influences on the Folies-Bergère project. As stated in Chapter 2, the ambiguity of Velázquez' *Las Meninas* had been achieved with spatial uncertainty apparently within the conventions of perspective, whereas Manet's work achieved its ambiguity with an apparent disregard of those conventions. Although *Las Meninas* makes use of a mirror in the most minimalist way, the uncertainty about its reflection, or indeed if it is a mirror at all, established the painting's ambiguity. Manet, in contrast, used the mirror to its fullest extent with it being the wall surface, the reflected image and the painted surface at one and the same time. But rather than creating Manet's ambiguity, it is shown in the proposal that the mirror is the means by which he applies his strategy of ambiguous spatial shaping. The painting *Dans un café* by Gustave Caillebotte, a contemporary of Manet in the 1870s, also provided, in terms of spatial manipulation and mirror reflection, interesting points of comparison with *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. The nature of a previous spatial proposal for *Dans un café*, and a new proposal by this writer are discussed in detail in Appendix 2, and it is shown that the spatial interplay involving an offset viewpoint and photography is very similar to that used by Manet in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. Such a similarity also raises the question of Manet's use of mirrors. In an unprecedented way, Caillebotte had used the mirrored reflections to interweave fact, ambiguity and artifice, and Manet, who would have recognised a good device for ambiguity when he saw one, may have realised that the use of mirrors and angles could not only satisfy his wish to cover his tracks but, if not used literally, could

also layer the inherent artifice of a work and add an uncertain refraction to its surface. With the results of the research for this dissertation indicating that many of Manet's works were composites of interlocked or overlaid views, it is clear that Manet would have recognised the potential of Caillebotte's painting for his own approach. At one and the same time the painting could be a composite of seemingly unrelated parts which were also interconnected by the spatial relationships of the mirrored images. Novelene Ross has proposed that a work of Mary Cassatt, *Lydia in a Loge, Wearing a Pearl Necklace* (1879) may have also been an influence on Manet.<sup>62</sup> Although a mirror reflecting the audience at the Opéra in tiered balconies is seen behind the woman, the fact that mirrors had not not existed at the back of the loges allowed Ross to equate such an arbitrary use of the mirror device with her claim that Manet had similarly used a mirror to combine impossible multiple views from the entry *jardin* at the Folies-Bergère.<sup>63</sup> In this instance, the incorrect reading of Manet's work makes the proposed connection a very tenuous one.

Although Manet had rarely used the mirror prior to *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* as a device of disjunction, two works, the pastel *A Café on the Place du Théâtre Français* (1876-78, Fig. 70), and *Café-concert* give evidence that Manet had been experimenting in the late 1870s with the ambiguity of mirrored reflections in the milieu of cafés and cafés-concerts. The mirrors in *A Café on the Place du Théâtre Français* are not defined, but the reflections, with suggestions of chandeliers, add a false sense of shimmer to an otherwise cheerless interior,<sup>64</sup> and although most of the elements seen in *Café-concert* resurface later in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, their handling in the former work does not involve the ambiguity so evident in the latter. The space in *Café-concert* is literal, the spatial interplay involved in the positioning of the reflected image of the singer at the left of the work and the implication that the male customer is looking at her outside the painting to the right seem obvious, and the vignettes of the woman in the lower left corner and the waitress quaffing a beer are replete with narrative and, as such, counter any potential for spatial ambiguity. In terms of being seen as preparatory steps in Manet's handling of mirrors and reflections, there is nothing exceptional in either of these works.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the development of those spatial strategies used by Manet in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, other than those involving mirror reflection, had been evident in many earlier works. Two of these were important for very different reasons. The balance between literalness and ambiguity had obviously been less than successful in the *Café-concert de Reichshoffen*, with the dominant perspective of the marbled table top signalling the use of the offset viewpoint, and thus eliminating any potential for ambiguity. The adjustments made by Manet in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* are clear, with the dominant spatial shaping apparently set parallel to the picture plane but, as shown in the proposal below, actually constructed within the angled space from an offset viewpoint. In *La Prune*, a single figure of a woman is seated behind a horizontal, marble surface which is set parallel to the picture plane. It appears that the view is a frontal one and the woman is turned to her left. It has been shown in Chapter 4 that the work can also be seen as a view from an offset viewpoint to the left with the woman facing directly in front of her. In *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* a single figure of a woman stands behind a horizontal, marble surface set parallel to the picture plane. Notwithstanding the discrepancy of the reflection, it appears that the view is a frontal one and the woman is facing directly to the front. As is shown in the proposal below, the woman is actually turned to her left and the view is from an offset viewpoint to the right. Manet has applied the same basic strategy in each painting but has reinforced the ambiguity in *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* by aligning the apparent view and direction in which the barmaid looks. Additionally, and importantly, whereas the apparent space of *La Prune* can exist without the alternative reading, that of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* was actually created with the alternative reading. A potent difference indeed.

As noted above in Chapter 3, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* had been reasonably well received by the critics and the public on its first showing at the 1882 Paris Salon. But the mythologies about the problems of the reflection and the barmaid and the gentleman facing each other were created at that time, and although some were open-minded about the disjunctions, others used the problems as evidence of Manet's limitations. J.-K. Huysmans had noted the response and the cause, writing that:

*Le Bar des Folies-Bergère* de M. Manet stupéfie les assistants qui se pressent, en échangeant des observations désorientées, sur le mirage de cette toile.

...Derrière elle s'étend une glace qui nous montre, en même temps que le dos réverbéré de la femme, un monsieur vu de face, en train de causer avec elle;<sup>65</sup>

Emile Bergerat had agreed that "l'effet de reflet dans la glace ne se comprend pas du premier coup. Mais quelle loi en art décreta que les effets doivent être saisis et perçus dès l'abord?";<sup>66</sup> Paul Alexis wrote of a "glace, dans un coin de laquelle on voit encore reflété, le visage à favoris d'un client, d'un adorateur sérieux peut-être, qui parle de près à la jolie vendeuse";<sup>67</sup> Dubosc de Pesquidoux noted "l'excentricité de la facture et les bizarreries de l'exécution. Sa dame de comptoir... se reflète dans la glace posée derrière son dos et cause avec un interlocuteur qu'on ne voit, lui, que dans le miroir";<sup>68</sup> and Saint-Juirs wrote of "La jeune personne qui tient galamment ce bar, fait face au public. Elle a derrière elle une grande glace, où se reflète sa personne d'abord, puis celle du monsieur avec lequel elle flirte".<sup>69</sup> But Jules Comte in his Salon review dwelt on the problems of the reflection more than others, noting that

Une jeune femme debout au comptoir d'un *bar*; devant elle les divers flacons et bouteilles qui attendent le consommateur; derrière, une glace dans laquelle se reflète la salle, et au premier plan, la figure d'un habitué qu'on aperçoit causant avec la même femme vue de dos, voilà le sujet, que nous prenons tel qu'il nous est donné, sans le discuter. Mais ce qui nous frappe tout d'abord, c'est que cette fameuse glace, indispensable à l'intelligence de tous ces reflets et de toutes ces perspectives, n'existe pas: M. Manet n'a-t-il pas su la faire, ou bien a-t-il trouvé que l'*impression* était suffisante? Nous n'aurons garde de répondre à cette question; nous notons seulement ce fait, que tout le tableau se passe dans une glace, et qu'il n'y a pas de glace. Quant aux incorrections de dessin, quant à l'insuffisance absolue de la figure de la femme qui est, en somme, le seul personnage, quant au manque de correspondance entre les objets reflétés et leur image, nous n'insisterons pas; ce sont lacunes familières à MM. les impressionnistes, qui ont d'excellentes raisons pour traiter de haut le dessin, le modelé et la perspective.<sup>70</sup>

As discussed in Chapter 3 and above, the critical responses to the painting have changed with time but the perceptions about the disjunctions of its mirror reflection and its problematic spatial organisation have remained constants and have been seen as the primary indicators of the painting's ambiguity.<sup>71</sup> The analysis and proposals made here demonstrate that the painting is, in fact, spatially explainable, and that its ambiguity is

based on a devised spatial interplay which was far more complex and nuanced than has been previously imagined.

### Analysis and Proposal

With the research of others demonstrating that the composition of the Final Painting had been initially based upon that of the Oil Sketch, and the perception that the depiction of the space was more literal in the Oil Sketch, it meant that any attempt to address and understand the construction of the spatial ambiguities in the Final Painting firstly required an understanding of the earlier painting. The only doubts which have been raised previously about the authenticity of this preliminary painting have involved the painting of the bar, with Tabarant noting in 1931 that "sur la photo Lochard le comptoir n'apparaît pas. Reproduit notamment (sans le comptoir) dans l'*Edouard Manet* de Julius Meier-Graefe... et (avec le comptoir), dans le *Manet* de J.-E. Blanche".<sup>72</sup> Such a situation implied that the lower section of the bar had been painted by another hand. The Lochard image is not of the complete canvas with only the bar top visible, the Meier-Graefe reproduction is an image trimmed on all four sides with the area in which the bar may or may not exist completely removed at the bottom edge,<sup>73</sup> and the Blanche reproduction has slight trimming at the top and side edges but with the bar essentially as it exists today.<sup>74</sup> When Ronald Pickvance claimed in 1996 that "an untrimmed Lochard photograph among the duplicate albums in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, clearly shows the bar as it always existed in the painting"<sup>75</sup> it seemed to confirm that the bar had always existed in that form. A clear resolution of this aspect is important in any full understanding of the Oil Sketch, as the lack of a reflected image of the bar can only be analysed when those objects in front of the mirror are fully understood.

The analysis of the Oil Sketch was based upon the belief that the different heights and sizes of the chandeliers were not arbitrary depictions of unrelated objects but seemed to be parts of a consistent perspective view, from one viewpoint, of their first- and second-reflected images in the mirrors set to the side walls of the Folies-Bergère theatre. The fact that a flat mirror dictates the perspectival relationship between an object and its

reflected image suggested that a cohesive geometry was more, rather than less, likely. And it was considered that the perspectival geometry for the chandeliers was also the same as for the barmaid and her reflected image. As seen in Fig.F27, a vanishing point can be reasonably established to the right for the perspective of these elements, and when it is combined with the horizontal frieze above the reflected image of the mirrors and the slightly angled bar front, the geometry of the depicted space can be seen to be either a two-point frontal perspective with one plane almost parallel to the picture plane or a one-point perspective with an offset viewpoint. But as the existence of a probable vanishing point gave no guarantee that Manet had not arbitrarily used it to falsely suggest a space with diminishing dimensions, a virtual reconstruction of the forms and space of the theatre interior was needed for analytical purposes.

Such a reconstruction of the interior was computer-modelled using calculated dimensions from archival photographs, site measurements, and dimensional information gathered from archival documents, which included translated dimensional information from architectural drawings of renovations to the Folies-Bergère establishment in 1926. These renovations were made under the authority of the then Director, Paul Derval, and although the aesthetic of the establishment was completely transformed and many changes made for increased seating, crowd circulation and access, architectural drawings (Figs.F16–F20, inclusive) which were prepared for that project contained invaluable information. These previously unpublished drawings provided an accurate physical framework, including enclosing wall and structural grid positions as a basis for developing the form of the theatre interior in 1881, and revealed, for example, the important fact for the mirror reflections that the side walls of the theatre were not parallel.<sup>76</sup> But they didn't provide details of what the profile of the seating levels in the upper balcony may have been. Nevertheless, the framework established from them was the means by which all the data gleaned from archival photographs and illustrations could be co-ordinated.

Typical of these archival images are two photographs (Figs.F14 and F15) of unknown date (although certainly before 1926 and probably in the early 1900s), but both

clearly from the same period. They confirmed that the theatre had undergone many changes during its life and that any clear understanding of its exact form at an earlier date without photographic evidence may, in fact, be impossible. It could be seen that changes had been made to the profile of the roof structure, the shape of the upper balcony and its seating arrangement, and canopied structures to the loges closest to the stage. And a mezzanine seating floor to the rear of the theatre above the balcony level had also been added. Nevertheless such images as these have provided invaluable information for cross-referencing, and the revelatory reflections seen in the mirrors to the side walls in the view from the balcony towards the stage confirmed all that had been previously imagined.

Notwithstanding a detailed examination of many documents, the profile of the balcony seating has been the most problematic aspect during the reconstruction. And part of this problem has been to accurately establish the First Floor level in 1881. Although the underside of the existing balcony front seems basically to be at the height it existed in 1881, the interim adjustments to the seating arrangements and floor levels have made it, as yet, impossible to establish with certainty the depth, rise, and number of the seating levels within the balcony. The proposed sectional form, as seen in Figs. F23 and F24, and the apparent one depicted in the background of the Oil Sketch, shows one intermediate seating level between the main floor level and the lowest level of seating in the balcony. Although the form has been based upon extensive research and examination, and is not guesswork, neither is it presented as historically exact. It is also known that Manet had worked from a set-up of a bar in his own studio, and thus the possible connections, spatial or otherwise, between the bar in the theatre and that in the studio needed to be understood. An examination of the Oil Sketch, the X-radiographs of the Oil Sketch, the Wash Drawing, other drawings which had been proposed by scholars to be related works, the Final Painting, and the X-radiographs of the Final Painting, provided the imagery around which the analysis of the bar in the theatre and that of the bar set-up in Manet's studio were undertaken.

Initial testing of hypotheses had been, as usual, carried out with hand-drawn geometries, but the computer-generated modelling proved invaluable in accurately

plotting the single- and double-reflections in the mirrors to the non-parallel side walls of the theatre, in providing comparative perspectives for analysis at both sites, and forming the proposed composite image of the final painting. The three-dimensional arrangement of the theatre which was the basis for the analysis is shown in the first floor plan (Fig.F22), longitudinal section (Fig.F23), cross-section (Fig.F24), and an isometric view (Fig.F25). This latter view shows: the actual space of the theatre *AS* with its side wall mirrors at planes *w1* and *w2*; the first-reflected space of the theatre *RS1* set behind the mirrors at *w1* with the actual mirrors at *w2* seen in reflection at *w2'*; and the second-reflected space of the theatre *RS2* set behind the mirrors at *w2'* with the actual mirrors at *w1* seen in second-reflection at *w1''*. The components within the theatre, including the proposed bar, the balcony and its seating, the chandeliers, and the stage with its proscenium arch can be seen in the actual space and correctly reflected in the first- and second-reflected spaces. For reasons of clarity, roof trusses and ceiling profiles are not fully shown in this pictorial view. A sense of the space of the theatre interior can also be seen in Fig.F26, with a computer-generated perspective view taken from the *promenoir* on the first floor level, showing the balcony, stage, and chandeliers, and the proposed bar in front of the wall mirrors, with their single- and double-reflections of the balcony and its seating levels.

A consideration of the Oil Sketch in the context of the space of the theatre required a number of pictorial aspects to be noted and addressed. Although the frieze was horizontal and the bar front angled slightly upwards to the left as if in perspective, the balcony front was clearly more angled and could not have been set across the width of the canvas as the horizontal element evident in the Final Painting. There also seemed to be no reflected image of the bar, and the figure of the gentleman, as modelled by Henry Dupray seemed spatially uncertain, apparently real as his figure is seen in front of the lower mirror frame although seemingly not in the same space as the barmaid, but also possibly a reflected image looking up at the reflected image of the barmaid. In the latter situation his figure in real space would be seen, however, somewhere in the real space, although not necessarily within the pyramid of vision of the canvas from a single

viewpoint. And if the position in real space required the figure to be set in front of the barmaid with the understanding that Manet had eliminated the figure, not only would that echo the concerns made about the Final Painting, but in the opinion of this writer it is not consistent with Manet's artistic practice. What was seen was painted, even if adjusted and re-contextualised, not wilfully eliminated. But if the figure of Dupray was seen to be in real space, standing behind the bar and beside the barmaid, then parts of the barmaid's reflected image, such as the cuff to her sleeve, would not be painted over his figure and his reflected image would be apparent, to some extent at least at the right-hand edge of the canvas. Although as can be seen in the later analyses of the Wash Drawing and the bar in the Final Painting solutions for the gentleman and his reflected image are a direct result of understanding those particular reflections, such is not the case with the Oil Sketch.

Even though the situation of Dupray, then, is not fully resolved, the evidence from the analysis suggests that Manet painted the figures of the barmaid and Dupray at different times, with the painting of the barmaid at the bar with the mirrors behind her in the setting of the theatre, and that of Dupray as a later addition in the studio, without a mirror behind him. Such a proposal would partly take into account Leenhoff's note about it being painted in Manet's studio, explain the accuracy of its rendering of the reflected interior of the theatre, and confirm that Dupray had been painted in a position as if behind the real bar but without an apparent reflection. With such a proposal, the figure of Dupray is seen as an addition to experiment with the potential for reflections to be incorporated into his program using the spatial shaping of offset viewpoints. And the fact of being painted at different times without any real connection between the barmaid and Dupray may have set in place that evident sense of disconnected gazing that carried through into the Final Painting.

In the context of these considerations and the perspectival analysis of the work, the bar was found to be positioned where shown in the first floor plan (Fig.F22), adjacent to the right-hand wall as noted by Leenhoff but much closer to the promenoir area. With the awareness and confirmation from the computer modelling that in a two-point perspective

the front of the bar would be angled upwards and to the left much more than is evident in the Oil Sketch, the arrangement of a one-point perspective with an offset viewpoint to the right provided the geometry as required to illustrate that the Oil Sketch is a cohesive perspectival view from a single viewpoint. Such an offset view also raises the possibility that the overall view, with or without the figures of the barmaid and Dupray, had been recorded as a photograph from a *chambre photographique*.

A detailed arrangement of the bar with the positioning of the viewpoint (SP1) and the barmaid and Dupray is shown on the detail plan and section (Fig.F29), with the reflected images shown in their perceived positions behind the mirror. The mannequin part-figures for the barmaid and the gentleman were used to make the essential verifications of reflection displacements, but it can be noted that the position of the reflected image of Dupray in the perspective has no clear equivalent in the painting. The offset one-point perspective view from SP1, as seen in Fig.F30 with the Oil Sketch format positioned, provides a new understanding that the shape of the reflected balcony is part of its continuation back around behind the bar and not as a horizontal element as in the Final Painting. The accuracy of the view is confirmed with the overlay line drawing made from the Oil Sketch (Fig.F28), as seen in Fig.F31, with the shapes, sizes, and relative positions of many of the reflected elements reasonably coincident, including: the first-reflected images of the columns with attached gas lamps *c9'* and *c10'*, the frieze *fr2'* above, chandelier *ch5'*, the balcony front *bf'*, and the sloping line of the end loge partition at *p'*; and the second-reflected images of the chandeliers *ch1''*, *ch7''*, *ch5''*, and *ch2''*. While the part of the second-reflected image of chandelier *ch4''* has not been shown in the painting, the light seen on the second-reflected column *c1''* seems to have been enlarged as a combination of the two sources. Notwithstanding the level of detail considered, the vagueness of the form and grouping of the bottles on the bar and their possible reflected images precluded any attempt to analyse their actual or reflected positions.

Complexities involved with the reflected images of the balcony and its seating also need some detailed clarification. The reflected image of the top edge of the balcony

closest to the actual bar is shown at *bt'*, in a position almost coincident with the bottom edge of the visible balcony front *bf'* but angled slightly in the opposite direction. The painted area beneath this line is proposed to be the inside face of the balcony front, but such an assessment is complicated by the actual divisions in the theatre between the *promenoir* and the balcony seating and between the seating levels within the balcony. Without certainty, but based upon the visual evidence in the 1871 illustration (Fig.F12), the seating plan (Fig.F13), and the confirmed extent of the *loges* in the interior photograph (Fig.F14), the dividers at the sides of the balcony have been determined to be open grilles of some kind rather than solid ones as seen around the loges. In the perspective, only the top rails of these dividers have been depicted to illustrate their form. Either the viewpoint is a different one or Manet had chosen to not show an open railing, a proposition which in itself contradicts what this writer has assessed to be Manet's practice of not wilfully eliminating elements. These details nevertheless address, in part, the aspect of the Final Painting noted by many scholars, of an accentuation of the apparent separation between the reflected bar and crowd in the balcony opposite with the reflected *promenoir* space between the bar and the balcony not conveyed by any aspect of the near seating. Any possible uncertainties in the balcony details are not seen as a contradiction of the confirmation of the Oil Sketch as a reasonably accurate view of the Folies-Bergère interior.

Manet had generally developed his paintings in his studio, with many reworkings, and the evidence indicates that the same procedure was used for the Final Painting. As noted above, Jeannot had described how Manet had recreated a bar and its accoutrements in his studio, but made no mention of a mirror. A different model to the one used for the Oil Sketch was employed and, on Gaston la Touche's own evidence, he posed as the gentleman. As noted above, it has been previously established from an examination of the X-radiograph of the Final Painting that Manet first transferred the composition of the Oil Sketch to the canvas of the Final Painting without major alterations. The transformation of the image from that of the Oil Sketch to that of the Final Painting is partly explained by the moving, at intervals, of the reflected image of

the barmaid towards the right and its final position, as discussed above. Seemingly undertaken to make the relationship between the barmaid and her reflected image less spatially obvious than in the Oil Sketch, this adjustment raises the question about Manet's use of a mirror in his studio and of any intermediate assessments between the Oil Sketch and the Final Painting. As it must be assumed that no large mirror was being used in the studio, it can be asked to what extent was Manet aware of the spatial and perspectival implications of this transposition of the barmaid's reflected image to the right? Although the perspectival geometry for the Final Painting can be shown to use, as for the Oil Sketch, the offset viewpoint, the number of moves of the barmaid's reflected image suggest some uncertainty by Manet of the implications of the changes in the context of his wider agenda of spatial ambiguity. The existence of the Wash Drawing provides evidence that he returned to the Folies-Bergère to experiment with, or to confirm, the potential for ambiguity with an increased separation between the barmaid and her reflection, and in the process to confirm that the reflected image of the gentleman could be incorporated in the view without including him in the depicted real space. Whether the actual Wash Drawing was created on site at the theatre or was later developed as a more finished image from sketches is uncertain, but working in front of the mirror would have confirmed for Manet what it is here claimed he had already understood from the *chambre photographique*, that is, the potential to create an apparent frontal view with an angled view from an offset viewpoint. Although the proposals presented here for the Final Painting are able to be made without reference to the Wash Drawing as an intermediate step in Manet's process, a number of aspects of its composition provide evidence that he used it for that purpose. If it had been a preliminary sketch before the Oil Sketch, then it would not have the disjunction of the reflection, and if it had been produced, as had been his normal practice, after the Final Painting for publication purposes, then it would have related more to the final image, and as explained below, it would not have indicated the frieze set at the top of the mirrors.

The Wash Drawing presents a view of the interior of the theatre different to that seen in the Oil Sketch, but of the very same bar. Its provenance by no means ensures its

certainty by Manet's hand, and, as mentioned above, it has received minimal scholarly attention. But with its particular qualities of bold and confident, yet subtle, brushwork, and its vivid shorthand in capturing the essence of things, as seen for example in the face of the gentleman, it exhibits characteristic touches of Manet. Bradford Collins has proposed that "Manet seems to have made the Proust sketch while at work on the final painting" and that, in terms of those changes made to the position of the reflected figure of the barmaid, it was "probably instrumental in those changes, that is, made to test and develop his changing thoughts on the subject".<sup>77</sup> With Collins' proposal that Manet made the Wash Drawing while working on the Final Painting this writer agrees, but it is proposed that it was created with the specific intention to resolve a physical arrangement that could achieve the pictorial requirement. Such an arrangement not only separated the figure of the barmaid and her reflected figure as is seen in the Final Painting, but unlike the Oil Sketch, it also allowed the reflected image of the gentleman to be seen without seeing his actual figure.

The arrangement that is proposed to have produced the Wash Drawing used the same bar as for the Oil Sketch, a different offset viewpoint SP2, and the barmaid and gentleman as shown on the plan and section (Fig.F33). Their reflected images are indicated in their perceived positions behind the mirror, with that of the gentleman seen within the angle of view to the right, and his actual figure outside the angle of view to the left, not directly in front of, or looking at, the barmaid. And the barmaid is seen to be turned to her left facing the artist in his offset position, and not facing directly across the bar. Because of the lack of detail, no attempt has been made to plot the positions of the actual bottles on the bar top and their reflected images. An offset one-point perspective view from SP2 is seen in Fig.F34 with the Wash Drawing format positioned and the spatial shaping indicated with the parallel lines set on the bar top. If nothing else, the demonstration of the spatial arrangement underlying the Wash Drawing provides an important transitional insight into the supposed relationship between the barmaid and the gentleman in the Final Painting. In the Wash Drawing the position of the gentleman is far less ambiguous than in the Final Painting, with his size enabling it to be sensed that he is

not directly in front of the barmaid but offset to the side. And rather than gazing at the barmaid, it could just as easily be claimed that he is looking at the artist by way of the mirror, that is, looking at the artist's reflected image, as the plan arrangement confirms. The figure of the barmaid indicates all the spatial implications evident in the Final Painting, with different alignments for her torso, head, and gaze, but with the interesting difference being that in the Wash Drawing her slightly offset gaze is to her left rather than to her right as in the Final Painting. In the possibility that the Wash Drawing is not an authentic Manet, the detailed description of these aspects is set out in the analysis of the Final Painting, but all of these noted nuanced differences and similarities provide further evidence that the Wash Drawing is from Manet's hand.

There is, however, a practical problem involved with such a proposal for an offset one-point perspective. An artist standing at viewpoint SP2 is not going to look directly ahead, as the geometry requires, to sketch the motif actually positioned to the left. The most practical technique would be to look in the direction of the angle of view, rather than the theoretical direction of view straight ahead, and to attempt to record the overlapping relationships of the objects seen within a mental concept of a one-point perspective. The difficulties in such a process would reinforce a notion that a photograph had been taken for all of the images on which Manet had worked in order to more easily apply the spatial shaping, but those same difficulties may also explain the inconsistencies in the Wash Drawing, with the bar top at the bottom edge shown horizontal as if part of a one-point perspective, and the frieze at the upper edge shown at an angle as if part of a two-point perspective.

Notwithstanding these problems or the inherent approximate translation of detail with a brush technique, the perspective view can be confirmed to relate, although somewhat loosely, to the Wash Drawing as seen with the overlay line drawing (Fig.F32) in Fig.F35. Although the reflected image of the bar top is set much higher than in the Wash Drawing the lateral positions of the the barmaid and her reflected image importantly confirm the underlying geometry to achieve the spatial disjunction. Elements of the reflected theatre in the background, such as the first-reflected images of the column

*c9'* with its lamp, the frieze *fr2'*, and the line of the balcony *bf'* set straight across the drawing on both sides of the barmaid, and the second-reflected images of the proscenium arch *pa''*, and the corner junction between the side and front wall at *r''*, also provide points of relative coincidence. Below the reflected balcony front the round columns, *cg*, can be seen at the ground floor level supporting the balcony. The absence of chandeliers from the Wash Drawing can be explained, or at least speculated, with circumstantial evidence. If the chandeliers as seen in the Oil Sketch had been included in the perspective view, they would have appeared in the upper part of the image. The forest of vertical lines set across the image, possibly seen as a graphic device to suggest the wall mirrors, could also be seen as the suspension cables used to raise and lower the chandeliers, either for the requirements of the theatre performances or for maintenance. In the perspective these cables, *ch.c*, are shown as if the chandeliers had been lowered. Such a speculation reinforces what Manet's images convey, and that is that he had made his notations at the theatre at times when the establishment was closed to the public. In terms of recording the physical details of the locale, such an arrangement would have certainly been the most practical.

As determined for the Oil Sketch, the uncertainty of the forms of the bottles on the bar top precluded any analysis of their spatial organisation, but the similarity in composition of the bottle groupings and the fruit-bowl, and the reflected images of the bottles with that as seen in the Final Painting suggests three possibilities. First, it could be further evidence that Manet was experimenting with the disjunction of actual and reflected images; second, it could confirm that the Wash Drawing was created by Manet after the Final Painting; or third, another hand could have created it after seeing the Final Painting. That the Wash Drawing is by Manet's hand prior to the Final Painting can be shown with the inclusion in its image, even if only with the use of two angled lines, of the frieze at the top of the wall mirrors. The implication of its inclusion is explained in detail in the analysis of the Final Painting below, but it is important in that, apart from those family members and colleagues who may have seen the Oil Sketch with the frieze included, anyone other than Manet would have only seen the more public Final Painting

with the frieze excluded and thus would have had neither a visual source nor a reason to include it.

The increased angle of view with the offset viewpoint for the Wash Drawing confirmed for Manet the means to achieve the potential suggested by the Oil Sketch. Not only did it create that unsettling disjunction between the barmaid and her reflection, but more importantly it enabled him to have only the reflected image of the gentleman in an arrangement which could actually be choreographed, not imagined. This suggests that in the Oil Sketch, Manet had wanted the only image of Henry Dupray to be within the reflected space of the mirror, not in real space, but at that stage had not known how to achieve it. His tentative moves of the reflected image of the barmaid away from her real self in his development of the Final Painting in his studio, together with the confirmation of the required choreography with the Wash Drawing in the theatre at the Folies-Bergère give certain evidence that he had resolved the problem.

The most obvious changes from the Oil Sketch to the Final Painting include: the apparent change of view of the artist from an angled position to one that seems to be frontal with the barmaid facing directly across the bar; the displacement, as noted above, of the reflected image of the barmaid to the right; the different pictorial size and position of the reflected image of the gentleman and his apparent spatial relationship with the barmaid; the more visible top of the bar; and the more horizontal depiction of the reflected balcony front and its appearance to the right between the figures of the barmaid and her reflection. Other incidental changes involved the displacement of the bottles, fruit-bowl and flowers across the bar, the details of the crowd in the reflected balcony, and the addition of the legs of the aerialist in the upper left corner. Notwithstanding these changes it can be seen that, seen in isolation, the configuration of the reflected chandeliers is little different to that in the Oil Sketch. There is, however, one important change between the two paintings that, to the knowledge of this writer, has not been commented upon previously by scholars, but it is the one that reveals Manet's agenda of spatial ambiguity for the Final Painting. In the Oil Sketch, the reflected frieze *fr*2' seen at

the top of the mirrors in the first-reflected space, allows one to understand in which mirror each chandelier is reflected. Chandelier *ch5* is visible in the first-reflected space as *ch5'* and the existence of the frieze makes it pictorially clear that all the other visible chandeliers are seen in the second-reflected space. If the frieze were not visible as seen in the cropped painting in Fig.F37, then the positions in space of the reflected chandeliers could not be easily assessed and the means to make perspectival sense of the arrangement would be removed. The ambiguity of it all would thus be enhanced. Manet's quite conscious removal of the frieze from the Final Painting, and precisely no more than the frieze, achieved that very effect. It is also this change which provides further evidence that the Wash Drawing is from Manet's hand. Anyone else other than Manet, without knowledge of the Oil Sketch and its frieze, would not have had a reason to produce a drawing in which the frieze is indicated. Only Manet himself was in such a position.

The apparent changes in the position and stance of the barmaid also require detailed explanation. In the Oil Sketch the barmaid is set at an angle to the bar and to her left, with her figure set almost frontally to the artist's angled view but with slightly more of her right shoulder seen than her left. Her head is turned further to her left, and her hands are held together in front of her, with the right held over the left. In comparison, the barmaid in the Final Painting provides an intriguingly different set of observations. The head is almost frontal to the artist's position, but her figure is turned slightly to her right as more of her left shoulder is seen than her right, her bust covers more of her right arm, more of the left side of her waist is seen than the right, and if her hips were fully seen without the covering arms then more of the left hip would be seen than the right. The relationship of the barmaid's figure to the bar is influenced by the positions of her hands and the articulation of her arms. Both of the hands are set on the back edge of the bar approximately equidistant from the centre line of her figure in space (not the centre of her figure as seen in the painting), with the wrists turned outwards away from the figure. From these hand positions the barmaid's left arm is clearly held straight and is seen to cover her left hip whereas her right arm appears bent and does not cover her right hip at all. To create such a pose the model would have stood slightly away from the bar with

her hands set symmetrically on the bar's back edge and then, with her hands held in the same position, rotated her figure to her left towards the artist standing at her left, with her right hip moving towards the bar and her left hip away from the bar. Although the figure is not turned fully to be facing the artist (i.e. the artist sees more of the barmaid's left side than her right), her head is turned further to be frontal to the artist. Such intricacies of pose show an intentional, thoroughly considered, and quite consistent depiction of the figure set in a particular position from a particular viewpoint, the arrangement for which is different to that used for the Oil Sketch at the bar inside the Folies-Bergère theatre. Manet's assessments for the Wash Drawing and its lateral displacement of the barmaid's reflected figure had influenced the required physical arrangement and to be able to work directly with the spatial geometry he created the bar set-up in his studio in Rue d'Amsterdam.

An analysis of the foreground of the Final Painting has established this arrangement of the bar, the viewpoint SP3, and a direction of view for a one-point offset perspective, as shown in the plan and section (Fig.F38) and an isometric view (Fig.F39). It provides the key to the problem of the reflections, with the positions of the bar and its arrangement of bottles, fruit-bowl and vase, the barmaid, and the gentleman shown in actual space in front of the mirror, and their reflected images as if existing behind the mirror, are shown. The bar is set parallel to the mirror, the barmaid is in the centre of the view, and the gentleman, as for the Wash Drawing, stands unseen outside the angle of view to the left with his reflected image seen within the angle of view to the right. It shows that the bar is much longer than in the Oil Sketch, and even though the barmaid appears to be looking directly across the bar, the arrangement shows her to be turned to her left, as in the Wash Drawing, to the extent required to produce the detail aspects described above. This is confirmed by the angled perspective of the series of parallel lines set directly across the bar top. And contrary to all previous opinion, the gentleman is not in front of the barmaid and, rather than being engaged with her in some kind of conversation, is in fact looking past her into the mirror in front of him. The arrangement also demonstrates, with the width of the painting image indicated by the angle of view,

the means by which the reflections work. The group of bottles *bg3*, for example, are not seen in the field of view but are seen as reflected images *bg3'* and conversely the fruit-bowl *fb* and the group of bottles *bg1* are seen in actual space, but their reflected images, *fb'* and *bg1'*, are not seen. And from the plan alone it can be seen how only a half of one of the roses which are seen in actual space is visible as a reflected image. It is this very play between, on the one hand, setting up a pictorial space which is clearly ambiguous and apparently incomprehensible, and on the other, almost giving the game away with an explanation of the spatial shaping that makes quite clear that all aspects of the painting's complex construction, as well as its ambiguity, were consciously crafted by Manet. If a reflected image of all the roses in the vase had been included in the painting, then the whole perspectival geometry would have been obvious and the ambiguity achieved with the apparent discrepancies in the reflection would have been negated. Interestingly, and not surprisingly, Manet has taken the ambiguity to the brink of exposure and thereby given an edge to it all.

All of these aspects are evident and confirmed in pictorial terms in the computer-generated perspective view using the viewpoint SP3 as shown in Fig.F40 with the Final Painting format indicated, and with its accuracy confirmed with an overlay of the line drawing made from the Final Painting (Fig.F36) as seen in Fig.F41. The perspective makes clear how some of the bottles in group *bg3* are partly visible as reflected images *bg3'* between the barmaid's actual waist and right arm, and how the bottles in group *bg2* are basically concealed by both the barmaid's actual figure *bm2* and her reflected image *bm2'*. Importantly, the perspective also shows that the gentleman *g2* is not seen in actual space, outside the angle of view to the left, neither in front of nor looking at the barmaid, but nevertheless with the reflected image of his face seen adjacent to the barmaid's head

within the angle of view. Even without an explanation, the spatial shaping is evident when the more extensive view is seen beyond the limits of the painting's format and is reinforced with parallel lines set to the bar top. When seen in perspective these lines act as surface indicators of the shaping of the space, as described in Appendix 1. Without that contextual information the barmaid in the perspective view would appear in a somewhat similar way as in the painting, apparently facing directly across the bar.

Although Manet hinted at the underlying spatial structure with the reflected half-flower, he also did his best to cover his tracks and to confuse. Both the angle of the reflected bar end at the left and the visibility of the inside faces to the two engaged wall columns indicate a space of a centre-point perspective, but they are simply used to enhance a perception of a frontal view. The required shape of the bar to provide such an illusion is shown in the plan and the isometric view, and although it cannot be seriously suggested that the prop that Manet used for the bar top actually had an angled end that prompted the use of such a false indicator of the perspective, far too many tongue-in-cheek manipulations have become evident in the research for such a suggestion to be completely ruled out. But the most subtle subterfuge that Manet used actually confirms, when understood within the context of the spatial shaping, the very strategy that it had been introduced to negate. In the bar top, the veins of the marble have been set in an angled direction which is exactly the opposite to that of the actual shaping of the space, with the intention to counteract such a reading. If set in the other direction the effect would have been similar to that seen in Fig.F40 with its parallel lines set across the bar top seen in perspective in the direction of the actual shaping.

The perspective view confirms that the foreground composition of the Final Painting was based on the underlying geometry of an offset viewpoint. In order to confirm the proposals in terms of real space, rather than the virtual space of the computer, photographs of a bar re-construction have been taken to demonstrate that the artifice of the painting's pictorial space was not one invented by Manet but was one based upon actual space and objects. The re-construction of the bar and its still-life, together

with the modelled 'barmaid' and 'gentleman', would have been little different to Manet's set-up in his studio, and although prepared before final adjustments were made in the computer modelling, the photographs nonetheless are very close to the perspective views. Rather than attempting to match the appearance of Manet's work with authentic dress and detail, the purpose was to demonstrate its spatial arrangement and in doing so to present a rebuttal of the claims made for well over a century of the painting's impossible spatial organisation. David Carrier's assertion that "Unless doctored, a photograph could not show the barmaid and her reflection as they appear in the painting"<sup>78</sup> may be dispelled by these undoctored photographs.

Taken with a 'large-format', or 'view' camera, which in principle is little different to the *chambre photographique* of Manet's time, the production setting is evident in Fig.F48, with the temporary nature of the bar reconstruction very evident and the camera recording its own image at the offset viewpoint to the right. Within that overall image to the camera's left, the area in the photograph not included in the painting's format has been subsequently screened to demonstrate the context from which the final image has been taken. The isolated image equivalent to the painting's format is shown, for purposes of comparison, in Fig.F49 with marble figuring to the bar top as seen in the Final Painting, and in Fig.F50 with the parallel lines set to the bar top as seen in perspective in Fig.F40.

In summary, the proposal for the process used by Manet in developing the work from the Oil Sketch to the Final Painting, after making initial sketches on site, is that the Oil Sketch was initially a view of the barmaid at a bar in the theatre of the Folies-Bergère, with the barmaid, bar, and their reflections painted on site but with the possibility that the accuracy of the overall setting had been developed from a photograph. In either situation there had been a preconception that the spatial shaping of the work(s) was to be from an offset viewpoint. The figure of Henri Dupray, as the customer, had been added in isolation in Manet's studio in Rue d'Amsterdam, either as part of a preconceived composition or as an experiment in the potential for spatial ambiguity, but not in front of a mirror. After the transfer of this composition to the canvas for the Final

Painting, and with a bar set-up in his studio, Manet experimented by increasing the displacement between the barmaid and her reflected image and transforming the uncertain image of Dupray into one which was firmly set within the mirrored reflections and pictorially close to the figure of the barmaid, but which was spatially ambiguous and in real space not connected. Implications of these changes needed to be tested within the context of the theatre and were confirmed with the Wash Drawing made at the same bar but from a different viewpoint.

The Final Painting progressed to fruition in the studio as a composite, in a continuation of Manet's cut-and-paste technique. The background has two components, one from the Oil Sketch with its reflected image of the crowd in the balcony seating and the chandeliers from the theatre interior at the Folies-Bergère (part-image 1 from SP1 as seen in Fig.F42), and the other of the balcony front from the Wash Drawing stretched horizontally across the image and below it a partial view of the ground floor columns supporting the balcony (part-image 2 from SP2 as seen in Fig.43). And the foreground is the view of the bar, barmaid and gentleman, together with their reflected images as composed by Manet in his studio (part-image 3 from SP3 as seen in Fig.F44). Such a composite image is shown in Fig.F45, and confirmed with an overlay of the line drawing from the Final Painting (Fig.F36) as seen in Fig.F46.

Interestingly, such a composite provides additional information about Manet's picture-making process. As can be seen in Fig.F46, some elements in the computer-generated part-images oddly seem to relate more accurately to the image of the Final Painting than to the preliminary work. In the background view from SP3, for example, the lights to the reflected images of columns  $C9'$ ,  $C10'$ , and  $C2''$ , relate more accurately than in the Oil Sketch and it can be seen that the combined widths of the reflected columns  $C10'$  and  $C3''$  exactly fit the depicted width of the column  $C10'$  in the Final Painting. Additionally, the supporting columns beneath the balcony as seen from SP2 relate more accurately to their depiction in the Final Painting than in the Wash Drawing. The only possible explanation for such an unexpected conjunction is that, whereas his eye had been used to initially assess and transfer the imagery in the Oil Sketch and the

Wash Drawing, photographs of the theatre's interior were used when Manet was constructing the final image in his studio. Consequently, it can be seen that photographs, as a record and confirmation of offset views from within the theatre, as confirmation of an offset view in his studio, were involved in the creation of *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* from its conception to the final brushstroke.

From the three depictions of barmaids, bars, and gentleman customers in the Oil Sketch, the Wash Drawing and from the re-construction in his studio, Manet's program to produce a work which was spatially ambiguous, to be seen as a frontal view but actually constructed with the geometry of an offset viewpoint, becomes clear. Physically and metaphorically held, framed and modulated by the reflections of the mirror, and with the figure of the barmaid nuanced with subtle detail adjustments of posture and articulation, the two players in the painting present a complex choreography that inflects upon their relationship. Established in the analysis above to be neither facing nor looking at each other, their gazes can be assessed with the integration of Manet's studio bar arrangement within the reflected interior of the theatre. The detached gaze of the barmaid can be confirmed to be to nowhere in particular, somewhere just to the left of the the artist's position, but certainly not to the figure of the gentleman, and he is seen to be looking past the barmaid to something reflected in the mirror and, in the process of such an activity, presenting a much more telling and subtle inflection on the relationship between the two than the sexual commodification reading that has been so often made.<sup>79</sup> The absence of contact in such close proximity is far more suggestive. But what is he looking at? The reflected figure of the aerialist seen in the upper left corner?<sup>80</sup> The reflected seated figure of the woman identified as Méry Laurent in the opposite balcony?<sup>81</sup> Or nothing in particular? Whichever is the case, if this proposal for *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* is considered to be valid, then previous interpretations need to be re-assessed.

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*Ambiguity, and the engagement of spatial illusion within the surface of Manet's paintings*

## 5F. *A BAR AT THE FOLIES-BERGÈRE*: Notes

DISSERTATION: Volume 2, pp.29–32

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### [2013 Note](#)

A later essay, 'The spatial ambiguity of Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*', which developed spatial aspects of the painting and explained its offset spatial shaping within the concepts involved, is also included on this website in *Unpublished writings*.

In the dissertation, it was felt that an unauthenticated drawing (referred to in the text as Wash Drawing) may have been part of the process used by Manet towards the image of the final painting. A later reassessment of the drawing made it unlikely to be by Manet's hand and that is explained in the later essay.

The literature search at the time of the dissertation did not identify an earlier, but very different, proposal for the disjunction of the reflected mirror image made by Thierry de Duve in 1998. That is noted in the later essay, together with De Duve's related online article of 2012.

### NOTES

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1. The full caption reads: "UNE MARCHANDE DE CONSOLATION AUX FOLIES-BERGÈRE. – (Son dos se reflète dans une glace; mais, sans doute par suite d'une distraction du peintre, un monsieur avec lequel elle cause et dont on voit l'image dans la glace, n'existe pas dans le tableau. – Nous croyons devoir réparer cette omission.)".
2. T.J. Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1985, p.250.
3. Bradford R. Collins, 'The Dialectics of Desire, the Narcissism of Authorship: A Male Interpretation of the Psychological Origins of Manet's *Bar*', in *12 Views of Manet's Bar*, ed. Bradford R. Collins, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996, p.129.
4. Jack Flam, 'Looking into the Abyss: The Poetics of Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*', in *12 Views of Manet's Bar*, ed. Bradford R. Collins, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996, p.183.
5. Penny Florence, *Mallarmé, Manet and Redon: Visual and Aural Signs and the Generation of Meaning*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1986, p.53.
6. George Mauner, *Manet, Peintre-Philosophe: A Study of the Painter's Themes*, The Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, Penn., and London, 1975, p.161.
7. Carol Armstrong, 'Facturing Femininity: Manet's *Before the Mirror*', *October*, no.74, Fall, 1995, pp.100–01.
8. Paul Smith, 'Manet Bits', joint book review of: 'Manet and the Painters of Contemporary Life', Alan Krell; 'Manet by Himself', ed. Juliet Wilson-Bareau; 'Manet's Modernism or, The Face of Painting in the 1860s', Michael Fried; and '12 Views of Manet's Bar', ed. Bradford Collins, *Art History*, v.20, no.3, September, 1997, pp.481–82.

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9. Carol Armstrong, 'Counter, Mirror, Maid: Some Infra-thin Notes on *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*', in 12 Views of Manet's Bar, ed. Bradford R. Collins, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1996, p.35.
10. *ibid.*, p.41.
11. Juliet Wilson-Bareau, 'The Hidden Face of Manet: An investigation of the artist's working processes', exh. cat., The Burlington Magazine, v.128, no.997, April, 1986, pp.i–xii, 1–96.
12. Robert Bruce-Gardner, Director of Conservation, Courtauld Institute of Art, London.
13. Produced by Robert Bruce-Gardner in the Technology Department of the Courtauld Institute of Art, London.
14. Wilson-Bareau 1986 (as in n.11), p.79.
15. *ibid.*, p.72.
16. Robert Bruce-Gardner, et al., 'Impressions of Change', in John House, et al., Impressionist & Post-Impressionist Masterpieces: The Courtauld Collection, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1987, pp.21–34.
17. *ibid.*, p.30.
18. *id.*
19. *id.*
20. Mary Mathews Gedo, 'Final Reflections: *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* as Manet's Adieu to Art and Life', in Looking at Art from the Inside Out: The Psychoiconographic Approach to Modern Art, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, Mass., New York, and Melbourne, 1994, pp.1–55, 247–246.
21. *ibid.*, p.38.
22. *id.*
23. *ibid.*, Figure 10, p.25.
24. *ibid.*, Figure 15, p.39, and 'Appendix: Key to Figure 15', pp.53–55.
25. *ibid.*, p.38.
26. Anne Coffin Hanson, Edouard Manet: 1832–1883, exh. cat., Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, and The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, 1966, p.185.
27. See Clark's rich discussion on the uncertainties, contradictions, paradoxes, and ambiguities which are raised in the assessments of the physical relationships between viewer, barmaid and customer in: Clark 1985 (as in n.2), pp.249–54.
28. Jack Flam 1996 (as in n.4), p.178.
29. For details of the theatre's history, see: two articles by Auguste Vitu, 'Les Folies-Bergère', Le Figaro, 26 June, 1877, pp.1–2, and, 'Premières Représentations: Folies-Bergère – Les Hanlon – Ouverture du Jardin d'Été', Le Figaro, 29 June, 1878, p.4; Paul Derval, The Folies-Bergère, trans. Lucienne Hill, Methuen, London, 1955; Kathleen Adler, Manet, Phaidon Press, Oxford, 1986, p.224; Robert L. Herbert, Impressionism: Art, Leisure & Parisian Society, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1988, pp.79–80.
30. J.-K. Huysmans, 'Les Folies-Bergère en 1879', in Croquis Parisiens, H. Vatou, Paris, 1880, p.23.
31. 'Le Jardin des Folies-Bergère', La Vie Parisienne, 24 August, 1878, p.500.
32. There may have also been an exit staircase to the ground floor behind the seating as existed in 1926 (Fig.F18) and as exists at present.
33. In 1991 Barbara Stern Shapiro had written that "Recent research has proved that this small but informative gouache is a particular view of the Folies-Bergère", but unfortunately provided neither evidence nor reference (Barbara Stern Shapiro, Pleasures of Paris : Daumier to Picasso, exh. cat., Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, in assoc. with David R. Godine, Boston, 1991, p.133). Contact has been made by this writer with Barbara Stern Shapiro to establish the source of the research, but her notes used at the time of writing the catalogue do not clarify the situation.

34. Recorded in the Register of works, No.265. Quoted from: Wilson-Bareau 1986, p.89-n.109.  
For a full description of, and reference information on, the collections of the Leenhoff documents, including the Register of works of 1883 and the Lochard photographs, see: Wilson-Bareau 1986, 'Documents', p.97.
35. Novelene Ross, Manet's Bar at the Folies-Bergère : And the Myths of Popular Illustration, UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1982, p.6.
36. Adler 1986 (as in n.29), p.225.
37. Gedo 1994 (as in n.20), Figure 10, p.25.
38. In the initial analysis it had been a preconception of this writer that the bar would have been set centrally in front of a mirror between a pair of columns. The offset position of the bar in the proposal provided the required geometry, and was determined by the complex relationships of the roof truss centres to the stage, and the positions of the chandeliers to the roof truss centres and the theatre space, particularly the first floor balcony and *promenoir*. Although the offset position cannot be confirmed or contradicted by Forain's gouache, the viewpoint for such a position, be it Manet's or a photographer's, interestingly is directly in front of the column. In other words, the column was used to ensure the viewpoint was not seen as a reflected position. Certainly, if the proposed bar were moved to the centre of the mirror in front of which it is placed, that is towards the stage end of the theatre, it would have been positioned too close to the balcony seating. If the position of the other bars at the first floor level were known then the position of the proposed bar could also be

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assessed in terms of their relationship. Presumably, there would have been another bar set in front of the mirror on the opposite wall in the theatre, as indicated.

39. No.1753 – *Un bar aux Folies-Bergère*.
40. See n.35.
41. Register of works, No.247. Quoted from: Wilson-Bareau 1986, p.89-n.108.
42. *ibid.*, p.89-n.109.
43. *ibid.*, p.89-n.110.
44. *ibid.*, Figure 98, p.78, and p.89-n.116.
45. Gaston La Touche, 'Édouard Manet. Souvenirs intimes', Le journal des arts, 15 January, 1884, p.2.
46. Georges Jeannot, 'En Souvenir de Manet', La Grande Revue, v.46, no.15, 10 August, 1907, pp.844–60. Quoted from Étienne Moreau-Nélaton, Manet raconté par lui-même, 2 vols., Henri Laurens, Paris, 1926, v.2, p.95.
47. Ronald Pickvance, Manet, exh. cat., Fondation Pierre Gianadda, Martigny, Switz., 1996, p.245.
48. Quoted from: Pickvance 1996 (as in n.47), p.245.
49. Denis Rouart, and Daniel Wildenstein, Edouard Manet: Catalogue raisonné, 2 vols., La Bibliothèque des Arts, Lausanne and Paris, 1975, cat. no.65, v.2, p.26.
50. A. Tabarant, Manet: Histoire catalographique, Montaigne, Paris, 1931, p.414.
51. *ibid.*, pp.413–14.
52. *ibid.*, p.411.
53. Pickvance 1996, p.245.
54. Wilson-Bareau 1986, Figure 96, p.78.
55. Tabarant 1931 (as in n.50), Aquarelle No.73. – *Au Café-Concert (Le Paradis)*, 1879, lavis d'encre de Chine, p.546; Alain de Leiris, The Drawings of Edouard Manet, University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1969, cat.no.517.– *Au théâtre*, Figure 390, p.132; and, Wilson-Bareau 1986, Figure 97. – *Aux Folies-Bergère*, c.1878–80, p.78.
56. e.g. A. Tabarant, Manet et ses œuvres, Gallimard, Paris, 1947, pp.371, 376.

57. 'Album No.5', in Dessins et Aquarelles d'Edouard Manet. Réunis en cinq albums par Auguste Pellerin. Vente Galerie Charpentier, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, 1954 (Sale date, 10 June, 1954), (unpag.).
58. Charles Sterling, Exposition Manet, 1832–1883, exh. cat. (Musée de l'Orangerie), Éditions des Musées Nationaux, Paris, 1932, p.65.
59. Tabarant 1947 (as in n.56), p.423.
60. Rouart and Wildenstein 1975 (as in n.49), v.2, cat.no.57 – *Le Bar*, p.186, not illustrated; illustrated in a sale notice for "Galerie Motte, Genève, Samedi 18 novembre 1961", Connaissance des Arts, October, 1961; noted in an exhibition at the O'Hana Galleries in London in 1962, The Connoisseur, no.149:270, April, 1962, text p.270, illus. p.271, and, Apollo, June, 1962, text p.296, illus. p.297. Location unknown.
61. Collins 1996 (as in n.3), pp.118, 121, Figure 14 (unpag.). Another wash drawing also discussed by Collins (ibid., pp.117, 136-n.13, Figure 13 (unpag.)), and first noted as a preliminary sketch for the painting by Jacques Mathey in 1961, is discounted by this writer to be from Manet's hand.
62. Ross 1982 (as in n.35), p.7.
63. id.
64. Novelene Ross has suggested that this pastel "parallels the spatial ambiguity of the Bar" but her ambiguity is that of the blurred reflections in the "café window glass and/or mirror" (Ross 1982, p.5)
65. Written in 1882 but not published until 1883: J.-K. Huysmans, 'Appendice - Salon de 1882, part II – Autres artistes', L'Art Moderne, Charpentier, Paris, 1883, p.271.
66. Émile Bergerat, 'Salon de 1882 – III', Le Voltaire, 10 May, 1882, p.2.
67. Paul Alexis, 'Avant le salon', Le Réveil, 1 April, 1882. Quoted from: Clark 1985, p.311-n.66.
68. Dubosc de Pesquidoux, L'Union, 15 June, 1882. Quoted from: Clark 1985, p.312-n.69.
69. Saint-Juirs (pseud. of René Delorme), 'Guide critique du Salon de 1882' (supplement to Le Clairon, n.d.), Paris, 1882, p.9.
70. Jules Comte, 'Salon de 1882', L'Illustration, 20 May, 1882, p.335.
71. For surveys of scholarship on *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* relevant at their time of publication, see: Ross 1982, pp.10–14; and, David Carrier, 'Manet and His Interpreters', Art History, v.8, n.3, September, 1985, pp.324–25. In the context of introducing twelve essays on the painting, Richard Shiff also takes a wider view on different responses to the work in 'Introduction: Ascribing to Manet, Declaring the Author', Collins 1996, pp.1–24.
72. Tabarant 1931, p.413.
73. Julius Meier-Graefe, Edouard Manet, R.Piper & Co., Munich, 1912, illus.165, p.279.
74. J.-E. Blanche, Manet, trans. F.C. de Sumichrast, John Lane, The Bodley Head, London, 1925, p.37.
75. Pickvance 1996, p.246. An unsuccessful search has been made at the Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, to find such an image, and an attempt to contact Ronald Pickvance has, to date, also been unsuccessful.
76. A fact confirmed with measurements taken on site.
77. Collins 1996, p.119.
78. Carrier 1985 (as in n.71), p.326.
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79. For this writer, such a reading has always seemed a wholly inappropriate and one-dimensional narrative overlay to a gender representation that was much more complex, and indeed more ambiguous, in both spatial and relational terms.
80. As speculated by this writer.

81. As speculated by Juliet Wilson-Bareau in discussing the implications. Tabarant had noted that "Manet fait figurer dans ce tableau la belle Méry Laurent, accoudée sur le bord de la rampe." (Tabarant 1931, p.412).
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