

5. CRAFTED AMBIGUITY – CASE STUDIES: Text

Each of the six paintings examined in these case studies has either been noted by other scholars or seen by this writer to be spatially problematic. They are considered to be critical works in developing an understanding of the form and means of Manet's strategies for spatial ambiguity. One of the canvases, *Incident in a Bullfight* of 1864 (Section A), has not existed in its original form for over one hundred and thirty years and is examined in its absence by means of two existing fragments. Two of the works, *View of the 1867 Exposition Universelle* of 1867 (Section B) and *The Burial* of 1867? (Section C), were not exhibited by Manet during his lifetime, may be considered incomplete, and provide important insights into the less than straightforward processes that Manet was using in the 1860s. *The Railway* (Section D) and *Masked Ball at the Opera* (Section E) represent the artistic development and sophistication that Manet had achieved by the mid-1870s, and *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (Section F) provides the most problematic or, depending on the viewpoint, the most successful culmination of the artist's endeavours to create works which were both direct and ambiguous.

The analyses for these case studies involved virtual reconstructions of locales where possible, the determination of spatial geometries and viewpoints used, a confirmation of views, and the identification of what was depicted. Usually hand-drawn geometries were employed for the initial analysis and development of hypotheses, but the more detailed considerations were made with computer-generated modelling. Aspects of the techniques involved in these spatial analyses, with particular reference to those for *View of the 1867 Exposition Universelle* and *The Burial* which involved extensive and detailed processing of the topography of Paris and a range of its buildings and landmarks, are provided in Appendix 4. A perspective overview of Paris (Fig.103) and a related plan (Fig.104), with the topography and relevant buildings and landmarks generated from this modelling, illustrate the physical context of Paris within which the

analysed paintings, with the exception of *Incident in a Bullfight*, were set. And a selection of contemporary photographs (Figs.105-108, inclusive) and an illustration (Fig.109) provide both a general reference for those areas of Paris seen within the images of *View of the 1867 Exposition Universelle* and *The Burial* and a record of the physical fabric of Paris in Manet's time.
