H-France Review Vol. 9 (June 2009), No. 81

Marie-Claude Chaudonneret, Ed., *Les artistes étrangers à Paris: De la fin du Moyen Âge aux années 1920: Actes des journées d'études organisées par le Centre André Chastel les 15 et 16 décembre 2005.* Bern: Peter Lang, 2007. xii + 288 pp. Illustrations and Author Notes. $81.95 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-3-03911-192-3.

Review by Heidi A. Strobel, University of Evansville.

Les artistes étrangers à Paris: De la fin du Moyen Âge aux années 1920 (2007), contains fourteen essays originally presented in 2005 at the Centre André Chastel. The essays address three main themes: the circulation of artistic models, ateliers as artistic melting pots, and the role of official institutions in the formation and recognition of individual artists.

In the introduction, Chaudonneret presents the first *bête noire*—namely, how does one define an "outsider" or non-Parisian artist? This term is particularly hard to assess in remote historical eras such as the medieval period. Her necessarily broad definition includes those born outside of Paris and those no longer living in their native city or province. As these essays demonstrate, throughout seven centuries, artists of many nationalities continued to flock to the French capital. But did the city function in the same way for all of these artists? Many of the authors conclude that even when artists came from a common area, their adjustment to Paris was anything but uniform. Like most conference proceedings, these essays cover a broad chronological span and vary in quality. Most of them display sound scholarship, contribute to the existing literature, and suggest future areas of inquiry.

Philippe Lorentz outlines Paris' attraction to thirteenth-, fourteenth-, and early fifteenth-century artists. Its university, founded in the twelfth century, beckoned students and artists alike to the expanding city, creating an intellectual melting pot. Illuminated- manuscript painters from around Europe moved to Paris to meet the demand for texts at the new university, and the presence of Italian and Netherlandish artists was particularly strong. Despite the constant influx of foreign artists during these centuries, a homogenous Parisian painting style emerged. Lorentz refutes the meager assessment of fifteenth-century Parisian painting by Charles Sterling in *La Peinture médiévale à Paris, 1300-1500* (Paris: Bibliothèque des arts, 1990). His broad temporal and thematic approach provides important background information for the more specific essays that follow.

 tienne Hamon examines foreign artists in Paris from 1430 to 1500. In his essay, he cogently discusses some of the methodological issues that plague most of the authors in this volume, such as a lack of consistent record-keeping, noting that while one bureaucrat might record an artist's city of origin, another might not (pp. 35-6). Furthermore, does a definition of Paris exclude or include its suburbs and surrounding small towns? Hamon scrutinizes Parisian guilds, which increasingly employed protectionist measures against the surge of foreign artists arriving from Flanders, Italy, and the Germanic regions. Highly regulated and hierarchical, the painting and sculpture professions proved very unwelcoming to foreigners. Hamon's essay provides a much-needed focus on the understudied fields of architectural carpentry, masonry, metalworking, rug-making, and window making and glazing. Guy-Michel Leproux, who corroborates some of Hamon's findings, investigates how Parisian workshops assimilated the knowledge of new artistic techniques from Italy during the sixteenth century. Like Hamon, Leproux is interested in the less studied fields of large scale terracotta sculpture,

damasquinage (metal inlay), and wood carving. The infusion of new knowledge encouraged Parisian *damasquineurs* and wood carvers to form their own guilds between 1580 and 1590. By contrast, artists who specialized in large-scale terra cotta statues were seamlessly integrated into pre-existing painting and sculpture guilds.

Mickaël Szanto continues the examination of Flemish artists, a large number of whom fled their chaotic homeland during the first half of the seventeenth century. By tracing immigration and integration patterns, Szanto creates a "social geography" of the Flemish community, many of whom were from the city of Anvers, where an arts academy had been founded in 1620. The *émigrés* from Anvers encouraged the rest of their *confrères* to support and participate in the creation of the Parisian Académie Royale. Szanto also challenges the assumption that a majority of these artists moved to the suburb of Saint-Germain-de-Près, home to many of the city's *hôtels*. Both of these compelling topics require further research.

Rather than assimilate, some foreign artists in Paris, such as Venetian painter Gianantonio Pelligrini, refused to modify their style to adapt to local taste. Valentine Toutain-Quittelier describes Pellegini's ceiling for the Banque Royale's Mississippi Gallery, which extolled the virtues of a banking system based on paper money, one of the changes that Parisian banker John Law instituted during the Regency of Louis XV (1715-1723). Pelligrini's sister-in-law, Rosalba Carriera, did modify her style of pastel portraiture to suit her Parisian patrons and excelled at networking, two factors that contributed to her election to the Académie Royale. Toutain-Quittelier provides a nuanced discussion of the variety of possible artistic responses to a Parisian sojourn.

Jérôme de la Gorce discusses how the spectacles of theatrical designer and architect Giovanni Niccolò Servandoni (also known as Jean-Nicolas Servan) influenced eighteenth-century stage design and painting. An agent of continuity and innovation, his Parisian performances featured various inventions, such as sound effects and irregular views that he had observed during his travels in Rome and London. While de la Gorce's essay provides an important reassessment of Servandoni's role in theatrical design, a more in-depth discussion of his influence on younger artists, such as his student, neoclassical artist Charles de Wailly, is needed to assess Servandoni's contribution to eighteenth-century visual culture. France is the point of departure, rather than arrival, for E. Ulrich Leben, who discusses Huguenot artists who fled after Louis XIV's 1685 revocation of the Edict of Nantes. Emmigrant French rug makers, in particular, helped to create the German carpet industry. Leben examines how Francophile patrons welcomed the new style and the modification of French prototypes by local artists. Artistic influence went both ways, however, for rulers such as Frederick II also brought German artists with them to France. While the larger courts at Berlin and Munich are discussed in this essay, it would be helpful to learn more about the migration of artists to the smaller Germanic courts.

Many of the remaining essays in this collection concentrate on artists of a particular nationality. Dominique Marechal considers the role of Belgian artists in Parisian ateliers in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. This region, which did not become a country until 1830, was under French rule between 1798 and 1815, an affiliation that eased their adjustment to Paris. Belgian painters were particularly attracted to the studio of Jacques-Louis David, who relocated to Brussels after Napoleon's final exile. Marechal describes the exceptional career of Joseph Suvée, who defeated David in 1771 to win the prestigious Prix de Rome. Suvée's success and that of his students, many of whom returned home, contributed to the creation of a national artistic identity in the nineteenth century. Bénédicte Savoy suggests some of the same conclusions in her essay on Berlin artists. Unlike many of her fellow contributors, Savoy frequently refers to the artists' descriptions of their time in Paris. These late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century accounts indicate a growing national pride that was confirmed by the study of older German masters in the Louvre, as well as the successes of the Berliners in the Prix de Rome *concurs*, David's workshop, and their participation in numerous smaller artistic and scientific Parisian salons. Like the Belgians, the Prussian artists often returned to Berlin, where they opened

ateliers based on David's example and instituted a Prix de Rome at the Berlin Arts Academy. Savoy thus contextualizes the successes of subsequent German painters, such as Caspar David Friedrich and Philipp Otto Runge, who did not travel extensively but benefited from these educational exchanges.

Valentine von Fellenberg and Laurent Langer analyze the experiences of Swiss artists at the Parisian École des Beaux Arts during the last decade of the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth centuries. The lack of an artistic center among the cantons encouraged many younger artists to travel to the French capital, where they either enrolled at the École, sketched at the Louvre, or joined a workshop, such as one run by the Swiss artist Charles Gleyre, who took over Paul Delaroche's atelier in 1843. Von Fellenberg and Langer propose a methodological model of emulation rather than influence, for many of the *émigré* Swiss artists transformed rather than merely copied what they saw in Paris. This model acknowledges the possibility of a two-way interchange between the artistic center in Paris and peripheral regions such as the Swiss cantons. Like their Belgian and Prussian contemporaries, many of these Swiss artists combined their Parisian knowledge with local artistic traditions.

Barthélémy Jobert discusses nineteenth-century British artists who contributed to Salon exhibitions and the Universal Expositions of 1855, 1867, and 1878. The 1824 Salon notably included the paintings of Thomas Lawrence, John Constable, and *Richard Parkes* Bonington. Jobert points out, however, that these successes were mitigated by the harsh words of French art critics. Constable's popularity and influence on French landscape artists eventually eroded this criticism, but the Universal Exposition of 1855 marked the first real success of English artists across the Channel. Jobert surveys the participation of these artists, yet more analysis is needed. Did this participation confirm a feeling of nationalism as it did for artists from Belgium, Berlin, and the Swiss cantons?

For Madeleine Fidell-Beaufort, the weekly journal *American Register* furnishes a great deal of information about the nineteenth-century American artistic community in Paris—its artists, patrons, dealers, and critics. Following the end of the American Civil War, the number of American artists in Paris, especially women, dramatically increased. It is refreshing to see gender addressed in this essay, for this topic is otherwise neglected in *Les artistes étrangers à Paris*. The *American Register* also became a forum for the discussion of a substantial protectionist import tax that the United States Congress levied on works by American expatriate artists. Fidell-Beaufort's essay, with its themes of gender, patronage, and taxation (among others) provides a launching pad for more studies to follow. In particular, Fidell-Beaufort discusses the need for further research on relationships between American and French artists, which the *American Register* neglects.

The workshop of nineteenth-century artist Paul Delaroche notably welcomed foreign students who sought to emulate his "international style." Although somewhat sterile to the modern eye, Delaroche's paintings elicited a strong emotional response from nineteenth-century viewers, according to Sébastien Allard. He delineates the various reasons for Delaroche's international pedagogical and artistic success. The exile and death of David, and the suicide of his talented student Gros, who was Delaroche's teacher, created a void that was filled by Delaroche's atelier. His *juste milieu* style provided an alternative to Ingres' petrified classicism and Delacroix's excessive emotionality. While many nineteenth-century artists depicted historical subjects, Delaroche often chose figures who captured the public imagination, like Lady Jane Grey, the Princes in the Tower, and Joan of Arc. These heroic martyrs, who almost transcended their nationalities, inspired Delaroche's foreign students, many of whom were from fledgling nations. Allard's essay provides an intriguing reassessment of an artist who is too often dismissed by today's art historians.

Finally, during the nineteenth century, the staid institutions of the École des Beaux Arts and Salon became less attractive to foreign and French artists alike, who increasingly opted for more intimate milieus like Delaroche's studio and individual galleries, such as Léonce Rosenberg's cosmopolitan *L'Effort moderne*. Marianne Jakobi's informative essay describes the opening of his gallery, which

became a gathering spot for foreign artists, as well as Rosenberg's support of the Cubist movement in the face of attacks from the nationalistic École de Paris. In the wake of the First World War, Cubism came under fire because of its international character. Jakobi persuasively argues that foreign artists in Paris were increasingly pulled between the poles of assimilation and nationalism during the 1920s.

As befits a conference, these essays ask more questions than they can initially answer. For example, did expatriate artistic communities become more or less nationalistic the longer they were away from their homelands? Once artists were settled in Paris, did they tend to form stronger associations with their countrymen or with their fellow artists? Were there native Parisian artistic motifs? A greater examination of artists' personal accounts might yield some fruitful findings. Rather surprisingly, the issue of gender is only addressed by Fidell-Beaufort, and twentieth-century topics are also similarly underrepresented.

The essays presented at the Centre André Chastel address a variety of topics that will intrigue both specialists and those reading outside of their area of expertise. A majority of the essays address eighteenth and nineteenth-century topics, a concentration that is particularly imperative, since the nineteenth century is often called the age of nationalism. Most of these papers conclude that, for foreign artists, Paris was as much a cultural as a geographical frontier.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Marie-Claude Chaudonneret, "Introduction. Paris creuset et carrefour artistiques."

Philippe Lorentz, "Pour une évaluation de Paris comme foyer artistique aux derniers siècles du Moyen Âge (XIIIe-XVe siècles)."

Etienne Hamon, "Un aspect du renouveau de la production dans le Paris de l'époque flamboyante. Les artistes étrangers entre « gothique international » et seconde Renaissance (vers 1430-vers 1520)."

Guy-Michel Leproux, "L'introduction de nouveaux savoir-faire par les artistes italiens au XVIe siècle et leur assimilation par les métiers parisiens."

Mickaël Szanto, "Les peintres flamands à Paris dans la première moitié du XVIIe siècle. Géographies d'une communauté."

Valentine Toutain-Quittelier, "Les peintres vénitiens à Paris sous la régence de Philippe d'Orléans. Nouvelle contribution à l'étude des relations artistiques entre Paris et Venise."

E. Ulrich Leben, "Assimilation des modèles français dans les arts décoratifs en Allemagne au XVIIIe siècle."

Jérôme de La Gorce, "Une initiative originale d'un artiste italien au XVIIIe siècle: les spectacles de Servandoni dans la salle des machines des Tuileries."

Dominique Marechal, "Les peintres « belges » dans les ateliers parisiens, de la fin du XVIIIe siècle au début du XIXe siècle."

Bénédicte Savoy, "Peintres berlinois à Paris 1800-1820."

Valentine von Fellenberg/Laurent Langer, "La formation des artistes suisses à l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris de 1793 à 1863. Enjeux et methods."

Sébastien Allard, “Quelques réflexions sur Paul Delaroche et son influence en Europe.”

Barthélémy Jobert, “Les artistes anglais au Salon, 1802-1878.”

Madeleine Fidell-Beaufort, “L'*American Register*. Miroir des artistes américains à Paris entre 1868 et 1898.”

Marianne Jakobi, “La question du cosmopolitisme artistique à Paris dans les années 1920. Léonce Rosenberg et la galerie *L'Effort moderne*.”

Heidi A. Strobel
University of Evansville
hs40@evansville.edu

Copyright © 2009 by the Society for French Historical Studies, all rights reserved. The Society for French Historical Studies permits the electronic distribution of individual reviews for nonprofit educational purposes, provided that full and accurate credit is given to the author, the date of publication, and the location of the review on the H-France website. The Society for French Historical Studies reserves the right to withdraw the license for redistribution/republication of individual reviews at any time and for any specific case. Neither bulk redistribution/republication in electronic form of more than five percent of the contents of H-France Review nor re-publication of any amount in print form will be permitted without permission. For any other proposed uses, contact the Editor-in-Chief of H-France. The views posted on H-France Review are not necessarily the views of the Society for French Historical Studies. ISSN 1553-9172