

**The spatial aspects of connoisseurship: Agnew's  
and the National Gallery, 1874-1916**

Volume I: Text

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University  
of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by Alison Victoria  
Clarke

School of Histories, Languages, and Cultures, University of Liverpool  
December 2017

# Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Abstract</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Introduction: The spatial aspects of connoisseurship</b> .....	<b>8</b>
The aims and scope of this thesis .....	9
Sources and methodology .....	16
Theoretical framework .....	18
Literature overview.....	21
Thesis outline .....	26
<b>SECTION I: SPATIAL ASPECTS OF CONNOISSEURIAL PRACTICE</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>Chapter 1: The criteria of connoisseurship</b> .....	<b>28</b>
The triumvirate of connoisseurship: Three key criteria.....	32
Attribution.....	32
Copies.....	37
Condition.....	40
Losses .....	42
Flaking and cracking.....	43
Pigments and colour .....	45
Varnishes and dirt .....	46
Restoration and cleaning .....	48
Beauty .....	52
Portraiture.....	58
Further criteria of connoisseurship.....	60
Representativeness and importance .....	60
Saleability.....	63
Conclusion.....	65
<b>Chapter 2: The spatial inputs of connoisseurship</b> .....	<b>66</b>
Where did Agnew’s and the National Gallery staff carry out their connoisseurship? .....	69
Mobility: Artworks and connoisseurs .....	69
The spaces of connoisseurship .....	78
Private spaces under institutional control.....	78
Private spaces outside institutional control .....	84
Public and semi-public spaces .....	86
Dealers and auction houses .....	86
Public galleries .....	89

The effects of space on connoisseurship .....	92
Access to the spaces in which works were displayed .....	92
Visual examination: Lighting .....	96
Visual examination: Proximity .....	99
Physical examination and handling.....	100
The time taken for connoisseurship .....	103
Conclusion.....	106
<b>Chapter 3: Practical methods of connoisseurship .....</b>	<b>107</b>
A model for perceptual expertise .....	107
The strongly visual nature of connoisseurship .....	110
Categorisation and comparison as connoisseurial technique .....	111
The evidence used for connoisseurial comparison.....	113
Travel for comparison: Viewing artworks in person.....	113
Comparison from reproductions: Photography.....	117
Memory: The ‘mental canon’ .....	127
Archives and libraries: Alternative spaces of connoisseurship? .....	129
Technical testing of paintings .....	136
Conclusion.....	138
<b>SECTION II: SPATIAL ASPECTS OF CONNOISSEURIAL DISPLAY .....</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>Chapter 4: Spaces of connoisseurial discourse I: .....</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>The National Gallery.....</b>	<b>140</b>
Why did the National Gallery need to convince others of the trustworthiness of its connoisseurship? .....	143
The spatial structure of the building.....	147
Location and exterior .....	147
Size and extensions .....	148
Works in storage .....	149
The spatial arrangement of displays .....	151
Rooms .....	151
Hang .....	153
Grouping .....	154
Layout.....	158
The aesthetics of display .....	160
Décor .....	161
Lighting.....	162
Disruptions to the display of connoisseurship.....	166
Limited display capacity .....	166

New acquisitions .....	168
Variety of works .....	171
Loans .....	172
Conservation of the collection .....	174
Conclusion .....	179
<b>Chapter 5: Spaces of connoisseurial discourse II: Agnew's .....</b>	<b>181</b>
Why did Agnew's need to convince others of its connoisseurship? .....	188
Spaces of connoisseurial discourse .....	190
Exhibition catalogues .....	190
The Agnew's galleries .....	191
Building investment in the 1870s .....	191
Geographic locations and exteriors .....	193
Interior and décor .....	196
Semi-private spaces within the Agnew's galleries .....	200
What artworks were displayed in the Agnew's exhibitions? .....	201
Specialist exhibitions .....	202
Selectivity .....	207
The exhibition room .....	209
Proximity and hang .....	209
Watercolours .....	210
Old Masters .....	213
Lighting .....	216
Conclusion .....	219
<b>Conclusion: The spatial aspects of connoisseurship .....</b>	<b>220</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>231</b>
Primary sources .....	231
Archival material .....	231
Published material .....	231
Newspapers, magazines and periodicals .....	236
Secondary sources .....	237
Unpublished .....	237
Published .....	238

# Acknowledgements

My thanks go out to everyone who has helped to make this thesis possible.

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) generously provided funding not only for my PhD but also for the MA that preceded it, as well as the International Placement Scheme that sent me to Austin, Texas, for two months in my second year. The National Gallery was a partner in my Collaborative Doctoral Partnership (CDP) award and the staff at the Research Centre there have provided key support for my research. The training run by the AHRC at various national museums has also been invaluable. I have received further funding for national and international travel and research from the British Association for Victorian Studies, the Economic History Society, the Getty Research Institute, the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, the University of Liverpool's Postgraduate Research Fund and LiNK Partnership scheme, the Samuel H. Kress Foundation and the Yale Center for British Art, for which I am very appreciative.

The staff in the History Department and beyond at the University of Liverpool have offered a helpful forum for the discussion and development of my work. I have been the grateful recipient of further academic kindness and support from those at multiple research institutions, including the Archive of the New Carlsberg Foundation, Copenhagen; the British Library; Castle Howard; Christie's; the Dulwich Picture Gallery; the Fitzwilliam Museum; the Fondation Custodia, Paris; the Getty Research Institute; the Harry Ransom Center, the University of Texas at Austin; Historic England; the John Rylands Library; the Liverpool City Archive; the Manchester Art Gallery; the National Archives; the National Art Library; the National Portrait Gallery; the Royal Archives; the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA); the Victoria Gallery & Museum (VG&M), Liverpool; the Yale Center for British Art; and the Zentralarchiv der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin. I would also like to thank those who have generously given their permission for me to reproduce images in this thesis.

Thank you to all those who invited me to be involved in conferences, seminars and workshops, as well as everyone who generously shared their time, research and opinions at these events. Particular thanks is due to Julian Agnew and the current staff at Agnew's for access to their photograph library, as well as to the private collector who discussed his library with me.

My supervisors Alexandrina Buchanan (University of Liverpool), Alan Crookham (National Gallery), Dmitri van den Bersselaar (formerly of the University of Liverpool) and Andrew Popp (University of Liverpool) have been unfailingly patient and encouraging. My fellow PhD students at Liverpool and the National Gallery, as well as others on the CDP scheme and across my Twitter network, have frequently offered help and advice, both academic and emotional, during what can often be a tough process. An especial thank you to everyone who has offered a place to stay in London for my frequent archival visits.

My family, particularly my parents, have learnt more about art dealing than they ever expected, having frequently lent me a sympathetic ear. Finally, my partner—and now husband—Rob has supported me throughout with a consistent supply of crumpets, crosswords and cartes de visite, and can now unerringly distinguish between van Eyck and van Dyck. I could not have done this without you. Thank you.

## Abbreviations

APL	Thos. Agnew & Sons Photograph Library, 6 St. James's Place, London
DPG	Dulwich Picture Gallery
GRI	Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles
HRC	Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin
JRL	John Rylands Library, University of Manchester
NAL	National Art Library, Victoria & Albert Museum
NG	National Gallery, London
TNA	The National Archives
SMB-ZA	Zentralarchiv der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

# Abstract

The spatial aspects of connoisseurship: The National Gallery and Agnew's, 1874-1916

Alison Victoria Clarke

This thesis develops and applies a new spatial approach to the study of Old Master connoisseurship, analysing the activities of British art dealers Agnew's and the National Gallery, London, as comparative case studies in the period 1874-1916. By considering connoisseurship as a located practice, my work adds a new dimension to existing historical analyses of connoisseurship, expertise and professionalization, as well as bringing a new strand of socio-economic understanding to the study of gallery architecture.

The first section of this thesis concentrates on the spatial aspects of connoisseurship as practised by the staff at the National Gallery and Agnew's. Using textual, particularly archival, sources, connoisseurship is defined more broadly than has been traditional. A key 'triumvirate' of connoisseurship is identified, suggesting that the three most important criteria assessed in the artworks under consideration were attribution, condition and beauty. Beyond this triumvirate, the differing acquisitional priorities of the two institutions led to additional judgements of categories such as importance, representativeness and saleability. Having established a definition for connoisseurship, the spaces in which connoisseurship was carried out are then considered, with the increased mobility of both connoisseurs and artworks in this period highlighted as a particular factor. These spaces of connoisseurship are broadly categorised into private spaces under institutional control; private spaces outside institutional control; and public and semi-public spaces. These categories are each discussed for their differing effect upon connoisseurship; however, various attributes with a particular impact on the connoisseurial process—such as lighting, or access to paintings—are also identified across these categories. Drawing together these identified criteria of connoisseurship with the spaces of connoisseurship, this section closes with the characterisation of a practical model of analysis applied by the Agnew's and National Gallery staff in this period. In particular, it is argued that their judgments were heavily reliant upon visual analysis, to the exclusion of provenance research and technical testing, for largely spatial reasons. In particular, each connoisseur depended upon a large, individual 'mental canon' of comparative images, encountered either in person or in reproduction.

The second section of this thesis discusses the approaches adopted by the National Gallery and Agnew's with regard to display, arguing that the type of connoisseurship adopted by the staff at these institutions was reflected in their exhibition spaces. Here, the fruits of their connoisseurial practice were promoted with a view to encouraging connoisseurship, in turn, on the part of the visiting public. The National Gallery's exhibition rooms were used to highlight a strong narrative of the chronological development of Western art in tandem with the hierarchy of schools. This aim was facilitated by the various expansions to the Trafalgar Square site erected over the period in question, but hampered by a consistent lack of capacity and the need to protect its collection for posterity. Agnew's, meanwhile, invested in new, purpose-built premises in Liverpool and London in the 1870s, featuring dedicated exhibition rooms along with the type of architecture and interior design that would appeal to its middle and upper-class clientele. Here and in the firm's home city of Manchester, Agnew's launched an annual series of exhibitions, showcasing the firm's particular expertise in the connoisseurship of watercolours and Old Master oil paintings.

## Introduction: The spatial aspects of connoisseurship

In early June 1845, the National Gallery invested in a painting that was to have far-reaching repercussions for the institution's management and reputation. The so-called 'mock Holbein' (NG195) was bought as an autograph work by the master but was within weeks stripped of this over-optimistic attribution.<sup>1</sup> When the picture was put on display, hung well above eye-line, visitors to the Gallery became sceptical of the reliability of the connoisseurship that had led to this purchase. The *Athenaeum* wrote that:

Respecting its condition, we can furnish no precise details; for the Committee have, with suspicious prudence, hung it much too high. New acquisitions, we submit, should at first obtain place on the lowermost line, or eye-level, where their veritable qualities might challenge examination; otherwise, it will be thought they cannot bear the test of criticism.<sup>2</sup>

The *Morning Post* went as far as to argue that 'if, from limited space in the building, and the comparative excellence of the painting, a permanent place of first-rate quality could not have been afforded it, the new works should at least have had six months' enjoyment of the sight-line'.<sup>3</sup> Within the month, the scandal had spread to Parliament, where National Gallery Trustee Sir Robert Peel was forced to admit to uncertainties regarding the work:

It is difficult to say, in the case of a picture of the age of two or three hundred years, whether it can be justly attributed to the master or not. The picture in question was bought as a Holbein; and though there is no doubt that it is a contemporary painting, yet, as there had arisen a doubt as to its being a Holbein, it was withdrawn. [...] No guarantee had been received as to the authenticity of the picture; but, indeed, in such cases, it was difficult to obtain a guarantee. In cases of doubt, he should recommend that eminent artists and dealers be consulted.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> 'P.', 'The National Gallery', *The Times* (2 July 1845); S. Avery-Quash and J. Sheldon, *Art for the Nation: The Eastlakes and the Victorian Art World* (London: National Gallery Company, 2011), p. 46; M. E. Wieseman, *A Closer Look: Deceptions and Discoveries* (London; New Haven, CT: National Gallery Company, 2010), pp. 50–51; C. Whitehead, 'Architectures of Display at the National Gallery: The Barry Rooms as Art Historiography and the Problems of Reconstructing Historical Gallery Space', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 17.2 (2005), p. 193; D. Robertson, *Sir Charles Eastlake and the Victorian Art World* (Princeton, NJ; Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1978), pp. 85–87.

<sup>2</sup> 'A Holbein...', *The Athenaeum* (7 June 1845).

<sup>3</sup> 'Fine Arts', *The Morning Post* (12 June 1845).

<sup>4</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 27 June 1845, Vol. 81, col. 1337.

The bad publicity generated by the revelation that this painting was, indeed, not by Holbein, is thought to have had a hand in the resignation of Charles Lock Eastlake (1793-1856) from his position as Keeper of the National Gallery in November 1847.<sup>5</sup> It was to continue to haunt Eastlake during his subsequent Directorship a decade later, when in 1857 MP and art collector William Coningham could still refer in a House of Commons speech to ‘this daub, a libel upon the great artist whose work it pretended to be’ as part of his ongoing criticism of the National Gallery.<sup>6</sup> This episode highlights the importance of reliable connoisseurship, performed both by the National Gallery staff at the point of acquisition, and by visitors to the Trafalgar Square site where the painting was put on display. In addition, it demonstrates that the space in which a picture was assessed could—and did—have a significant impact on the practice and conclusions of connoisseurial judgement. In the longer term, this misguided acquisition had a profound effect on the National Gallery, spurring the institution on to ensure greater scrutiny and transparency regarding the connoisseurship that led to new acquisitions being made.

## **The aims and scope of this thesis**

This thesis aims to answer the questions of whether—and, if so, how—a spatial approach can better help to understand the practice of connoisseurship. Connoisseurship itself, following a fallow period during which it became unfashionable as the object of scholarly interest, is now once again the subject of critical discussion.<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, there has also been a recent build-up of interest in the spaces and topographies of display.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, the link has not yet been drawn between these two related areas of study. While Charlotte Guichard rightly argues that expertise in art is rooted in the specific space of the collection, little critical attention has previously been given to the spaces in which this expertise is built

---

<sup>5</sup> Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, p. 47. Charles Locke Eastlake (1836-1906), the nephew of the Gallery’s first Director and himself Keeper of the Gallery between 1878 and 1898, can be distinguished from his uncle by the spelling of his middle name: ‘Lock’ for Eastlake senior, and ‘Locke’ for Eastlake junior.

<sup>6</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 2 July 1857, Vol. 146, col. 828; F. Haskell, ‘William Coningham and His Collection of Old Masters’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 133.1063 (1991), pp. 676–681.

<sup>7</sup> As well as the papers and books cited throughout this thesis, connoisseurship has also recently been the subject of recent conferences and exhibitions including ‘CODART NEGENTIEN: Connoisseurship: Between Intuition and Science’ (CODART, Madrid, 2016); ‘The Educated Eye? Connoisseurship Now’ (The Paul Mellon Centre, London, 2014); ‘Close Examination: Fakes, Mistakes and Discoveries’ (National Gallery, London, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> J. Bonehill, ‘Art History: Re-Viewing Recent Studies’, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 34.4 (2011), pp. 461–470.

up or applied in the form of connoisseurship.<sup>9</sup> Here, an attempt will be made to determine whether place is a legitimate analytical method for the historical study of connoisseurship. This will be addressed through the comparison of two case studies—Thos. Agnew & Sons (“Agnew’s”), one of the foremost British fine art dealers of the past two hundred years, and the National Gallery, London, one of the ‘great public museums of Europe’—in the period between 1874 and 1916.<sup>10</sup> The thesis will initially seek to establish which artistic criteria were expected to be judged through the practice of connoisseurship, before discussing where and how connoisseurship took place. In the second section of the thesis, the display practices of Agnew’s and the National Gallery will be outlined in order to argue that these exhibitions were specifically designed to encourage connoisseurship, and particularly visual analysis, among visitors to their galleries.

These two institutions have been selected for close analysis because art dealers and museum staff were, and indeed are, heavily involved in the selection and acquisition of artworks throughout their professional careers. As Chapters 4 and 5 will discuss, both organisations had high stakes in the reliability of the connoisseurship practised in their name. This translated into the display of artworks in a way that aimed to convince others of their expertise. Despite this, both dealers and museum staff in Britain have frequently been historically marginalised with regard to the practice of connoisseurship: for example, their connoisseurial contributions—when acknowledged—have often been portrayed as relying heavily on the support of an external ‘expert’.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, although several histories of Agnew’s have been published, the volume relating to the era under study here was produced by a family member and partner in the firm, and lacks engagement with secondary discussion.<sup>12</sup> However, an impressive range and depth of sources survive that relate to connoisseurship as practised at Agnew’s and the National Gallery. This combination of

---

<sup>9</sup> C. Guichard, ‘Connoisseurship and Artistic Expertise. London and Paris, 1600-1800’, in C. Rabier (ed.), *Fields of Expertise: A Comparative History of Expert Procedures in Paris and London, 1600 to Present* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), p. 176.

<sup>10</sup> D. G. de Silva, M. Gertsberg and R. Pownall, ‘Market Evolution of Art Dealers’, SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, 2017), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2866949> [accessed 27 November 2017]; E. Langmuir, *The National Gallery Companion Guide* (London: National Gallery Company, 2006), p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> For an exception focusing on the German context, see C. B. Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> G. Agnew, *Agnew’s: 1817-1967* (London: Bradbury Agnew Press, 1967). For a discussion of the potential biases inherent in company-sponsored business histories, see M. Rowlinson and J. Hassard, ‘The Invention of Corporate Culture: A History of the Histories of Cadbury’, *Human Relations*, 46.3 (1993): pp. 299–326.

untapped source material, central importance in the practice of connoisseurship and the dissemination of connoisseurial ideas in the physical form of exhibitions, makes the two organisations the ideal subjects for this study.

Connoisseurship was one of the key markers of expertise for all in the art world at what has been identified as a transitional point between the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>13</sup> During this period, new theories of connoisseurship were beginning to emerge, traditionally seen as marking a shift from the mid-century, documentary-based approach of Joseph Crowe and Giovanni Battista Cavalcaselle to the self-proclaimed 'scientific' approach of Giovanni Morelli or Bernard Berenson.<sup>14</sup> More broadly, art history was starting to take on a disciplinary identity, supported by the launch of new critical periodicals such as *The Connoisseur* and *The Burlington Magazine* and the development of art history courses in the academy.<sup>15</sup> However, despite this context of change, and despite the evident differences between Agnew's and the National Gallery in terms of structure, purpose and outlook, this thesis will argue that the practical attributional methods applied by each institution were essentially similar in their heavy reliance on visual analysis. That this remained the case

---

<sup>13</sup> H. S. Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 2008). On the concept of the 'art world' in a broader sense compared to the contemporary art world described by Becker, this thesis also draws on the work of Niklas Luhmann as interpreted by Hans van Maanen: namely, that the art world consists of a system of people and objects, each of which can utter and react to communications: H. van Maanen, *How to Study Art Worlds: On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009); N. Luhmann, *Art as a Social System*, trans. by E. M. Knodt (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000). Luhmann's theory is not dissimilar to Bruno Latour's Actor Network Theory, which will be further discussed in Chapter 2.

<sup>14</sup> M. Hatt and C. Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), Chap. 4.

<sup>15</sup> On periodicals and the art market, see K. Haskins, *The Art-Journal and Fine Art Publishing in Victorian England, 1850-1880* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016); B. Pezzini, 'The Burlington Magazine, The Burlington Gazette, and The Connoisseur: The Art Periodical and the Market for Old Master Paintings in Edwardian London', *Visual Resources*, 29.3 (2013), pp. 154–183; P. Fletcher and A. Helmreich, 'The Periodical and the Art Market: Investigating the "Dealer-Critic System" in Victorian England', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 41.4 (2008), pp. 323–351; J. F. Codell, 'Marion Harry Spielmann and the Role of the Press in the Professionalization of Artists', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 22.1 (1989), pp. 7–15. Despite the nineteenth-century introduction of the Slade Professorships of Art, Britain was notably slow to adopt an academy-based approach to art history pedagogy compared to Germany and America in particular: see J. Summerson, *What Is a Professor of Fine Art? An Inaugural Lecture Delivered in the University of Hull on 17 November 1960* (Hull: University of Hull Publications, 1961), discussed in D. Preziosi, 'The Question of Art History', in J. K. Chandler, A. I. Davidson and H. D. Harootunian (eds), *Questions of Evidence: Proof, Practice, and Persuasion across the Disciplines* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 203–226. On the enduring separation between art history theory and practice at the higher education level, see M. Quinn, 'The Pedagogy of Capital: Art History and Art School Knowledge', in M. C. Potter (ed.), *The Concept of the 'Master' in Art Education in Britain and Ireland, 1770 to the Present* (London: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 215–233.

throughout the forty-year period under scrutiny demonstrates that such theoretical changes had little immediate impact upon the practice of connoisseurship. Indeed, as this thesis will show, the spatial aspects of connoisseurship for the staff at these institutions at this period in history precluded any major change in its practice. Furthermore, in the early twentieth century, formalism began to grow in importance as a method of visual analysis in tandem with the growth of modernism. Although a contested concept, to a certain extent formalism can be understood as the expectation that an artist should be able to communicate aesthetic emotion and dramatic expression through the medium of the artwork alone, without any external considerations needing to be taken into account.<sup>16</sup> It has previously been argued that the type of formalist criticism adopted by Clive Bell and Roger Fry grew out of the scholarship of Heinrich Wölfflin and Bernard Berenson.<sup>17</sup> This argument can be expanded to encompass the type of connoisseurship that will be described in this thesis: with their emphasis on visual analysis and lesser regard for documentary and other external evidence, the staff both at Agnew's and the National Gallery were practising connoisseurship in a way that would later become codified as the theory of formalism.

The scope and subject matter of this thesis has necessarily had to be restricted in order to ensure the manageability of the project. Firstly, the reception and criticism of contemporary Victorian and Edwardian art has been dealt with in some detail elsewhere.<sup>18</sup> In addition, the judgement of contemporary art is often quite different from the type of connoisseurship outlined here: for example, when a dealer represents an artist directly, the issue of attribution is entirely circumvented.<sup>19</sup> As a result, this study will focus predominantly on the connoisseurship of Old Master paintings. In itself, 'Old Masters' is a slippery term: while today the works of eighteenth and even nineteenth-century British painters such as Reynolds, Lawrence and Constable are included in this category, during the period under discussion here 'Old Master' works were frequently separated from those of 'Deceased

---

<sup>16</sup> M. Fried, 'Roger Fry's Formalism', in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 2011), [https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/\\_documents/a-to-z/f/fried\\_2001.pdf](https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_documents/a-to-z/f/fried_2001.pdf) [accessed 27 November 2017].

<sup>17</sup> H. B. J. Maginnis, 'Reflections on Formalism: The Post-Impressionists and the Early Italians', *Art History*, 19.2 (1996), pp. 191–207.

<sup>18</sup> In particular, see T. M. Bayer and J. R. Page, *The Development of the Art Market in England: Money as Muse, 1730-1900* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011); D. S. Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class: Money and the Making of Cultural Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

<sup>19</sup> M. Findlay, *The Value of Art: Money, Power, Beauty* (Munich; London; New York: Prestel, 2012).

Masters of the British School'.<sup>20</sup> However, even then this distinction was understood to be relatively artificial—even 'tautological'.<sup>21</sup> Because of the similar connoisseurial approaches adopted for both foreign and British works, here the term 'Old Masters' will be broadly applied to all of the non-contemporary works judged and acquired by Agnew's and the National Gallery. Secondly, the type of artworks considered are largely oils and watercolours, these being the media in which the National Gallery and Agnew's were most interested. The connoisseurship of different types of art, such as Old Master drawings or sculpture, should also be seen as subtly different skills and analysed as such.<sup>22</sup> As will be argued in this thesis, the connoisseurship of paintings required a long experience and visual familiarity with such works, and the same was no less true for other media; it was therefore perfectly possible to be a connoisseur for one particular medium, but not for another. Finally, although Agnew's opened branches in Paris and Berlin in the early twentieth century, this study is nevertheless limited to the British context in order to maintain a more direct comparison between the display practices of the dealer and the National Gallery.

The early history of the National Gallery has received much critical attention in recent years, while a steadily increasing amount of work has been produced on the institution under its first Director, Charles Lock Eastlake (Director 1855-1865).<sup>23</sup> This includes the publication of primary sources from the National Gallery archive, such as Eastlake's 1857 report to Trustees following his continental tour; Eastlake's 36 extant travel diaries, dating from between 1830 and 1865; and the travel diaries of Travelling Agent Otto Mündler, kept between 1855 and 1858.<sup>24</sup> A number of studies have focused on the administration of the Gallery under Eastlake, and—to a lesser extent—his successor, William Boxall (Director 1865-1874). Particular interest has been shown in the figure of Eastlake as overseeing 'the transformation of a few rooms of exemplary masterpieces into a great collection in which the evolution of

---

<sup>20</sup> F. Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> 'The Old Masters at the Royal Academy', *Illustrated London News*, 6 January 1872.

<sup>22</sup> E. Marlowe, *Shaky Ground: Context, Connoisseurship and the History of Roman Art* (London; New Delhi; New York; Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015); P. Joannides, *The Drawings of Michelangelo and His Followers in the Ashmolean Museum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. ix–xi.

<sup>23</sup> A useful bibliography on the founding and early history of the Gallery is provided in C. Saumarez Smith, *The National Gallery: A Short History* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2009), pp. 173–174.

<sup>24</sup> C. Hodkinson, *A Question of Attribution: Art Connoisseurship in the Nineteenth Century* (Wrightington: Hunger Hill Press, 2014), Appendix 4; S. Avery-Quash, *The Travel Notebooks of Sir Charles Eastlake*, II vols (London: The Walpole Society, 2011); C. Klonk, 'Mounting Vision: Charles Eastlake and the National Gallery of London', *The Art Bulletin*, 82.2 (2000), pp. 331–347.

European painting can be properly studied'.<sup>25</sup> However, as Charles Saumarez-Smith has highlighted, the history of the Gallery under the Directors who followed Boxall but preceded Kenneth Clark (in post, 1934-1945) has been rather overlooked.<sup>26</sup> In order to fill this gap in the literature on the National Gallery's history, this thesis will therefore focus on the period 1874-1916, during which three successive Directors were in charge of the National Gallery: Frederic Burton (1874-1894); Edward Poynter (1894-1904); and Charles Holroyd (1906-1916).<sup>27</sup>

These dates also map well onto the analysis of Agnew's business activities. While the company was originally established in Manchester in 1817, the archival material relating to the history of the firm until the 1860s is relatively scanty.<sup>28</sup> However, from the 1870s onwards the company experienced significant expansion, and there is a corresponding growth in breadth in the archival records. In a context in which the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 had been strongly responsible for pushing the centre of the European art market trade away from Paris and towards London, Agnew's was also establishing a strong foothold in the latter city.<sup>29</sup> The firm had been strongly built up under the second-generation partnership of William Agnew (junior) and his brother Thomas Agnew (junior), who joined the firm in 1840 and 1842 respectively.<sup>30</sup> While Thomas died in 1883, William continued to have a strong influence on the firm until his retirement in 1895. Meanwhile, the third generation of the Agnew family was also becoming more prominent: William's sons George and [Charles] Morland Agnew were taken on by the firm in 1874 and 1878 respectively, while Thomas's son [William] Lockett Agnew joined in 1881. George, Morland and Lockett Agnew became joint partners of the firm on William's retirement in 1895. Many of the archival sources that engage on a

---

<sup>25</sup> Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, vii; Hodkinson, *A Question of Attribution*; C. Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Development of the National Gallery* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

<sup>26</sup> Saumarez Smith, *The National Gallery*, pp. 176–177. Although Elena Greer has been working on a PhD examining the role of the Gallery's third Director, Frederic Burton, this has been completed too late for inclusion in this thesis. For a further exception see A. Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation's Art: Contested Cultural Authority, 1890-1939* (Toronto; Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press, 2010). However, this study focuses largely on matters of bureaucracy and administration, and the tension between the various museum boards and the Treasury, rather than on issues of connoisseurship.

<sup>27</sup> The National Gallery was without an official Director between 31 December 1904 and 11 June 1906; during this interim period, several of the Trustees filled the role as acting Directors.

<sup>28</sup> The early development of the firm will be outlined in more detail in Chapter 5.

<sup>29</sup> A. Penot, *La maison Goupil: Galerie d'art internationale au XIXe siècle* (Paris: mare & martin, 2017), p. 121.

<sup>30</sup> D. Farr, 'Agnew Family (per. 1817–1986), Art Dealers', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/65633>.

personal level with issues of connoisseurship are associated with Morland, particularly his diaries and collector notebooks, which date from the 1880s onwards.<sup>31</sup> The 1898 report by David Croal Thomson, an associate and then partner in Agnew's between 1898 and 1908, on his visit to the United States and Canada has also provided much valuable material.<sup>32</sup> Towards the end of the period under scrutiny here, the momentum was beginning to shift again toward the next generation: George retired in 1902, while Morland's son Gerald joined as partner in 1904, Lockett's adopted son Charles Romer Williams in 1905 and George's son Colin in 1906.<sup>33</sup> Gerald and Colin were both initially based in the Manchester and Liverpool branches of the firm, although Colin headed up the Berlin branch between 1908 and 1913. Morland himself retired in 1913, while Lockett died in 1918.

To continue the thesis much beyond this point would require a change in approach. By the end of this forty-year period, the political and art historical climates had undergone significant changes that included the outbreak of the Great War, the birth of modernism and the increasing financial dominance of American collectors.<sup>34</sup> As will be discussed in Chapter 3, new technologies were also starting to be developed and adopted that would have a strong impact on the ways in which connoisseurship was carried out. These global shifts in the art market had a profound effect on the activities of the National Gallery and Agnew's.<sup>35</sup> Both institutions were notably slow to react to avant-garde art movements: the first Agnew's exhibition to feature Impressionist works appears to have taken place in 1923, while the National Gallery did not truly feature a modern foreign collection until after the First World War.<sup>36</sup> This was also an especially difficult period for Agnew's, which was struggling with

---

<sup>31</sup> Personal Diaries 1852-2001, NG, NGA27/27 and Private Collector Books, NG, NGA27/29.

<sup>32</sup> 'Passing Events', *The Art Journal*, February 1909, p. 61. On Croal Thomson, see A. Helmreich, 'David Croal Thomson: The Professionalization of Art Dealing in an Expanding Field', *Getty Research Journal*, 5 (2013), pp. 89–100; A. Helmreich, 'The Art Dealer and Taste: The Case of David Croal Thomson and the Goupil Gallery, 1885-1897', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 6.2 (2005), pp. 31–49.

<sup>33</sup> On Romer Williams, see the notes and letters in NG, NGA27/23/4/15 and NGA27/32/1/279; B. Pezzini, 'Making a Market for Art: Agnew's and the National Gallery, 1850-1944' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester, forthcoming), p. 172.

<sup>34</sup> D. W. Galenson, *Conceptual Revolutions in Twentieth-Century Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), Chap. 1; F. Gennari Santori, *The Melancholy of Masterpieces: Old Master Paintings in America 1900-1914* (Milan: 5 Continents Editions, 2003); R. Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

<sup>35</sup> Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*, Chap. 5.

<sup>36</sup> *Loan Exhibition of Masterpieces of French Art of the 19th Century in Aid of the Lord Mayor's Appeal for the Hospitals* [exhibition catalogue] (Manchester: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1923); A. Crookham and A. Robbins, 'Im Angesicht der Moderne: Die Gründung der Britischen Nationalsammlung moderner ausländischer Gemälde 1914-1918', in C. Kott and B. Savoy (eds), *Mars und Museum: Europäische Museen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Cologne; Weimar; Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2016), pp. 99–116.

heavy debts and the post-war changes to the art market, and had to be saved by the financial intervention of Morland in 1918.<sup>37</sup> This thesis therefore focuses on what can be framed as the company's previous golden era, during which revenues (and profits) were high, and the firm developed its particular specialism in Old Master works. It also encompasses the period during which the National Gallery gradually switched from making many of its purchases overseas to making the majority of new acquisitions from within Britain: as will be shown in Chapters 2 and 3, this necessarily had an impact on the spaces in which connoisseurship was carried out.<sup>38</sup>

## Sources and methodology

This thesis adopts a mixture of methods that will be described in more detail in the appropriate chapters. However, here a brief overview will be provided of the sources adopted and the ways in which these have been approached. A strongly archival approach has been taken in this project, which was originally conceived to make use of the Agnew's business archive, sold to the National Gallery when the firm passed out of family control in 2013-2014.<sup>39</sup> This extensive and previously uncatalogued archive had previously been used for research to a limited extent.<sup>40</sup> However, it had never been made fully available, presumably to protect potentially sensitive business information: corporate archives are intended to serve the needs of the company, rather than those of historical researchers.<sup>41</sup> Much of what the archive contained was therefore unpublished material. Equally, while the National Gallery's own archives have been mined by a number of scholars, notably Jonathan Conlin, much more material remains to be studied in any consistent fashion.<sup>42</sup> Both the Agnew's and National Gallery archives contain a range of items such as manuscripts, printed texts, press cuttings, building plans, drawings and photographs. In addition, the Agnew's archive contains business records including stock-books, ledgers and daybooks, as well as personal items such as diaries, particularly relating to the activities of William and his son Morland. Unfortunately, as is often the case with business archives, much of the correspondence appears to have been destroyed throughout the firm's history. The National

---

<sup>37</sup> G. W. Agnew to C. M. Agnew, 29 February 1924, NG, NGA27/23/7/6.

<sup>38</sup> Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*, Appendix 1.

<sup>39</sup> 'New Owners for Agnew's as National Gallery Buy Archive', *Antiques Trade Gazette*, 10 March 2014.

<sup>40</sup> M. J. Ripps, 'Bond Street Picture Dealers and the International Trade in Dutch Old Masters, 1882-1914' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 2010).

<sup>41</sup> I. Deserno, 'The Value of International Business Archives: The Importance of the Archives of Multinational Companies in Shaping Cultural Identity', *Archival Science*, 9.3-4 (2009), p. 218.

<sup>42</sup> J. Conlin, *The Nation's Mantelpiece: A History of the National Gallery* (London: Pallas Athene, 2006).

Gallery archive, meanwhile, also holds materials relating to the administration and management of the institution: conservation records, Board Minutes, reports, registers and letters both from and to Gallery staff. The Board Minutes, which formed my initial route of inquiry into the National Gallery archive, were created as a matter of public record and act as a summary of the verbal discussions held between the Director and the Trustees. As a result, these volumes contain valuable information relating to the decisions to acquire or reject artworks offered for acquisition. The reasoning behind the decisions noted in the Board Minutes often remains obscure, with the artwork simply being recorded as accepted or rejected. In many other cases, however, extended discussions took place between Director and Trustees, giving a fuller insight into the connoisseurial process. Additional information has been gleaned from associated letters and reports, such as the Director's reports from purchasing and informational trips abroad. These frequently go into extensive detail on the reasoning behind the Director's decisions to accept or reject various paintings. Despite being largely ignored by previous scholars, rejections have been a particularly useful field of study for this thesis because of the need to explain the decisions taken. These two main archives have been supplemented by material held in other archives, particularly the letters from Frederic Burton to dealer and art agent Charles Fairfax Murray that are held at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin.<sup>43</sup>

In addition to these archival sources, this study draws on published primary sources such as newspapers and specialist journals, as well as books and exhibition catalogues. Newspaper and periodical articles written by those outside Agnew's and the National Gallery, as well as the plans contained in various exhibition catalogues, have proved particularly useful for the chapters on display and the reception of connoisseurship. While extant buildings were potentially a fruitful source of information, my access to the Bond Street branch of Agnew's was limited to the public areas of the shop that now occupies the premises, while very little of the original Liverpool building remains except for the façade. As a result, this thesis relies largely on representations of these structures. Visual sources, including drawings, paintings and photographs, have therefore assumed a greater importance in the recreation of the spaces of display. Photographs are also used as a material source of investigation in their

---

<sup>43</sup> On Fairfax Murray, see P. Tucker, 'Eyesight, Knowledge, Argument: Charles Fairfax Murray on «Scientific» Connoisseurship', *Studi di Memofonte*, 12 (2014), pp. 106–142; P. Tucker, "'Responsible Outsider': Charles Fairfax Murray and the South Kensington Museum', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 14.1 (2002), pp. 115–137.

own right, with the Agnew's photo library—now in the possession of the new owners of the company—particularly useful in this regard.

During the analysis and interpretation of these sources, it has been important to bear in mind the different audiences and purposes for which they were written. This has involved particular awareness of the 'layered identities' of the Victorian bourgeois, as discussed by Howard Malchow.<sup>44</sup> For example, the official Annual Reports produced by the National Gallery for the Treasury were also widely circulated in the press, and so represented a public forum for the Gallery's administration to justify decisions or defend themselves against criticism. In contrast, Morland's diaries were personal documents, still not entirely private but created to be read by only a select few: for example, in the diary started in December 1882, he wrote 'Perhaps our son may some time be interested to learn what was being done by his parents & himself during his early years'.<sup>45</sup> In addition to this range of audiences, it is also important to consider the selective nature of archives: because of the limited storage space available, Agnew's is likely to have destroyed records as the business operated, while the firm may have held back sensitive items when completing the sale of the archive to the National Gallery.<sup>46</sup> Nevertheless, the current extent and scope of the Agnew's archive makes this a valuable fount of information on the activities of a particularly prominent dealer, especially given that so many other art dealers' records have been lost.<sup>47</sup>

## Theoretical framework

Previously, connoisseurship has overwhelmingly been studied either through the analysis of written theories, rather than through its practice, or by the comparison of historical with

---

<sup>44</sup> H. L. Malchow, *Gentlemen Capitalists: The Social and Political World of the Victorian Businessmen* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 8.

<sup>45</sup> Diary entry for 12 December 1882, C. M. Agnew diary, NG, NGA27/27/7. This explicit address to the family—generally, to the son—appears to have been a common feature of middle-class male diaries in this period: R. Gray, 'Self-Made Men, Self-Narrated Lives: Male Autobiographical Writing and the Victorian Middle Class', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 6.2 (2001), pp. 294–297.

<sup>46</sup> M. Gasson, 'Business Archives: Some Principles and Practices', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 18.2 (1997), pp. 142–143; A. Turpin (ed.), *The International Business Archives Handbook: Understanding and Managing the Historical Records of Business* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>47</sup> E. Bergvelt, review of C. Sebag Montefiore, *A Dynasty of Dealers: John Smith and Successors, 1801–1924. A Study of the Art Market in Nineteenth-Century London* (Arundel: Roxburghe Club, 2013) in *Journal of the History of Collections*, 26.1 (2014), pp. 123–125.

modern attributions.<sup>48</sup> However, as will be outlined in Chapter 2, the first of these approaches is, by its very nature, unreliable, because it assumes that the connoisseur both understands the process by which a judgement is reached, and is truthful when committing this process to paper. The weakness in the second, comparative approach lies in the fact that attributions are always the subject of an ongoing discussion between connoisseurs, rather than being indisputable truths. What might seem, to one scholar, a solid attribution, vindicated by the test of time, might seem a glaring error to another: as German curator and art historian Max Friedländer suggested, ‘Even if attention deservedly goes to all the criteria which, with more or less justification, are described as the ‘objective’, seemingly scientific ones, and occupy a space disproportionately large in writings on art, decision ultimately rests with something which cannot be discussed’.<sup>49</sup> In addition, it would be unrealistic to attempt a statistical analysis of the reliability of Agnew’s attributions because there is no existing corpus of rigorously studied paintings to compare with the works that passed through the company’s hands as documented in their stock-books.<sup>50</sup> Finally, given that the definition adopted here for connoisseurship as practised in the period under scrutiny—as outlined in Chapter 1 below—goes far beyond the mere judgement of connoisseurship to encompass such indefinable characteristics as beauty and condition, it would be impractical to apply such a quantitative method.

Instead, this thesis adopts as an alternative a qualitative, spatial approach to these sources, treating the activities of staff at Agnew’s and the National Gallery as comparative case studies. Although the ‘spatial turn’ has been pivotal to a range of disciplines in the past few decades, space remains conceptually unstable. Leif Jerram has highlighted the confusing plethora of terms applied and the variety of historical methodologies adopted under the

---

<sup>48</sup> For an illustrative example of the first approach, see L. Uglow, ‘Giovanni Morelli and His Friend Giorgione: Connoisseurship, Science and Irony’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 11 (2011), pp. 1–30; for the second approach, see V. Locatelli, ‘Italian Painters, Critical Studies of Their Works: The Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden. An Overview of Giovanni Morelli’s Attributions’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 13 (2015), pp. 1–22.

<sup>49</sup> M. J. Friedländer, *On Art and Connoisseurship*, trans. by T. Borenius (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1960), p. 172.

<sup>50</sup> For an attempt to implement such a method, see M. J. Ripps, ‘A Faustian Bargain? Charles Sedelmeyer, Wilhelm Bode, and the Expansion of Rembrandt’s Painted Corpus, 1883–1914’, in *Cultural Clearings: The Object Transformed by the Art Market/Schnittstelle Kunsthandel: Das Objekt im Auge des Marktes* (Nuremberg: CIHA, 2015), pp. 745–747. This analysis remains flawed, however, because of the assumption that none of the attributions accepted in the paper will in future be challenged.

umbrella concepts of space and place.<sup>51</sup> In an attempt to avoid such confusion, this thesis will adopt the definitions and terminology suggested in Michel de Certeau's *The Practice of Everyday Life*: 'place' is defined as a distinct, geometric location, while 'space' can be described as a 'practised place', activated by an actor within that place.<sup>52</sup> This distinction between space and place allows for the importance of temporality and change within a place, as well as the multitude of functions that a place may perform for a variety of actors. In addition, it accounts for the way in which space can be used by actors for the creation of status and the reinforcement of expertise. Thus, as John Brewer has suggested, in galleries the artworks on display can be viewed with the confidence that their authenticity and importance is underwritten by the people who have chosen to display them.<sup>53</sup> This will be particularly stressed in Chapters 4 and 5, which will discuss the display practices adopted by the Agnew's and the National Gallery staff in order to promote connoisseurship on the part of visitors to their galleries. In addition, although it will not form a major part of this thesis, non-geographic spaces such as newspapers and exhibition catalogues can also be considered spaces of connoisseurship.

Although it will not form an explicit part of the discussion here, it is inherent to spatial analysis that there are power relationships involved. For example, it will be emphasised in Chapter 5 that Agnew's encouraged clients to discuss sales with them in a private room in order to engender feelings of trust between salesperson and customer. However, with regard to museums this power dynamic has often been overstated: de Certeau's work allows for the re-establishment of the balance of power further towards neutrality and allows for the agency of visitor-connoisseurs. While the work of Michel Foucault on space has frequently been interpreted to frame the museum as a tool of control, through the lens of de Certeau the museum can be seen as a space of practice, giving the actors within this space the capacity for independent action, thought and interpretation.<sup>54</sup> Section II of this thesis is

---

<sup>51</sup> L. Jerram, 'Space: A Useless Category for Historical Analysis?', *History and Theory*, 52.3 (2013), pp. 400–419.

<sup>52</sup> M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by S. Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011), p. 117.

<sup>53</sup> J. Brewer, *The American Leonardo: A 20th-Century Tale of Obsession, Art and Money* (London: Constable, 2009), p. 2.

<sup>54</sup> Highly influential in the field of Foucauldian museology, Tony Bennett has recently revisited his theory of the museum as exhibitionary complex from a critical perspective: T. Bennett, 'Thinking (with) Museums: From Exhibitionary Complex to Governmental Assemblage', in A. Witcomb and K. Message (eds), *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Theory* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), pp. 3-20; see also E. Hooper-Greenhill, *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992). This reading of Foucault is discussed—and challenged—in C. Trodd, 'The

thus entitled ‘Spatial aspects of connoisseurial discourse’ in order to highlight the power of visitor connoisseurship in display spaces. Similarly influential to this study have been the work of sociologist Anthony Giddens and geographer David Harvey: Giddens’s structuration theory sees spaces (or ‘locales’) as active milieu that both influence and are influenced by the interactions of actors, while Harvey conceives of space as a material form that is an active movement in human affairs.<sup>55</sup> In turn, Bruno Latour’s Actor Network Theory draws on such ideas to argue that both people and objects—artworks in particular, in the case of this thesis—activate the spaces in which these human and non-human actors are present.<sup>56</sup> The mobility of such actors will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 2. Finally, Pierre Bourdieu’s writings on power relations and cultural capital map well onto a spatial approach.<sup>57</sup>

It must be stressed that, despite its strong focus on space, this thesis will not suggest that spatial analysis is the only means of determining methods of connoisseurship or of analysing display with regard to connoisseurship. Indeed, in some cases—such as paintings for which the spaces of acquisition are unknown—it may not be possible to apply spatial analysis. It is, instead, an alternative method that can reveal different or additional information from the traditional textual approach. To a certain extent, however, space can be seen as instrumental to the study of methods of connoisseurship, as the consideration of space allows for a clearer determination of which connoisseurial methods could, or could not, have been applied in practice. This will be demonstrated in particular throughout the first section of this thesis.

## Literature overview

Beyond the large-scale operations of the art market, the activities of individual art dealers have only recently begun to attract serious critical attention: as noted in the catalogue for the National Gallery’s 2015 exhibition on Parisian dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, dealers have

---

Discipline of Pleasure; or, How Art History Looks at the Art Museum’, *Museum and Society*, 1.1 (2003), pp. 17–29; B. Lord, ‘Foucault’s Museum: Difference, Representation, and Genealogy’, *Museum and Society*, 4.1 (2006), pp. 1–14.

<sup>55</sup> B. Warf, ‘Anthony Giddens’, in P. Hubbard and R. Kitchin (eds), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London; Thousand Oaks, CA; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2011), pp. 178–84; N. Castree, ‘David Harvey’, in Hubbard and Kitchin (eds), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place*, pp. 234–241.

<sup>56</sup> B. Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>57</sup> M. Grenfell and C. Hardy, *Art Rules: Pierre Bourdieu and the Visual Arts* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007).

been 'long viewed in anecdotal terms or with a financial fascination'.<sup>58</sup> However, interest is now rapidly increasing in the subject.<sup>59</sup> In particular, this has been facilitated by the acquisition for research—and, frequently, the digitisation—of the archives of dealers such as Knoedler & Co, Duveen Brothers and Goupil & Cie by the Getty Research Institute.<sup>60</sup> The Agnew's archive, meanwhile, is the subject of not only this thesis but also that of Barbara Pezzini.<sup>61</sup> Despite this increased scholarly focus on art dealing, however, very little has been written on dealers and the practice of connoisseurship. Much of the scholarly literature produced to date on connoisseurship in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries has focused heavily on the writings of emerging art historians such as Morelli and Bernard and Mary Berenson. This research has traditionally taken a strongly biographical approach: Rachel Cohen's *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trade* is merely the latest in a series of biographies of Berenson.<sup>62</sup> Such work often focuses strongly on the 'scandal' of the hidden financial relationship between Berenson and dealer Joseph Duveen, rather than delving more deeply into connoisseurial methodology.<sup>63</sup> Dealers have been similarly treated. Meryle Secrest's biography of Duveen, for example, largely skates over his practical approach to paintings beyond noting that he was 'breath-takingly confident in his ability to pronounce on the authenticity of a work [...] Duveen's eye was [...] exceptionally keen, and years of daily exposure were bound to have refined his ability to perceive an artist's signature; braggadocio did the rest'.<sup>64</sup> This is not a particularly helpful analysis of Duveen's connoisseurial practice. However, a more thematic approach is starting to emerge and, more recently, particular interest has been growing in the practical methods used by such figures to arrive at their

---

<sup>58</sup> S. Patry et al. (eds), *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market* (London: National Gallery Company, 2015), p. 14.

<sup>59</sup> For useful bibliographies, see M. J. Ripps, 'The London Picture Trade and Knoedler & Co.: Supplying Dutch Old Masters to America, 1900-1914', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 163–180; Patry et al., *Inventing Impressionism*; Penot, *La maison Goupil*.

<sup>60</sup> For a useful overview of the current locations of dealers' records, see Getty Research Institute, *Selected Dealer Archives & Locations*,

[http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/guides\\_bibliographies/provenance/dealer\\_archives.html](http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/guides_bibliographies/provenance/dealer_archives.html) [accessed 14 November 2017]; The Frick Collection Center for the History of Collecting, *Archives Directory for the History of Collecting*, <http://research.frick.org/directoryweb/home.php> [accessed 14 November 2017]. The P & D Colnaghi archive has also been made available for research on long-term loan to the Waddesdon Archive at Windmill Hill.

<sup>61</sup> Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*.

<sup>62</sup> R. Cohen, *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trade* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

<sup>63</sup> E. Samuels, *Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Connoisseur* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979); C. Simpson, *The artful partners: The secret association of Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988).

<sup>64</sup> M. Secrest, *Duveen: A Life in Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), pp. 130–131.

conclusions.<sup>65</sup> Such research typically takes the form of a comparison between the ‘new’ art historians—understood to be applying a newly developed, more ‘scientific’ method—and earlier or more traditional connoisseurs such as Gustav Waagen or Cavalcaselle.<sup>66</sup> Given that this approach has not yet been extended to dealers—a surprising omission, given the need for dealers to engage with issues of connoisseurship on a daily basis—such studies can offer a useful basis for comparisons between dealers and those more traditionally regarded as connoisseurs.

A further problem to be addressed is that of the artificial categorisation of connoisseurs: the scholarly literature has tended to place connoisseurs other than art critics and historians into discrete, competing categories—such as artist versus aristocrat—in terms of their experience and background, often based on the nineteenth-century distinctions among such groups.<sup>67</sup> For example, the clashes between Edward Poynter in his role as Director of the National Gallery and the more aristocratic of the National Gallery’s Trustees have been attributed to ‘the differences between the art-loving, gentleman amateur and the professional who has made a career in art’.<sup>68</sup> Such a dichotomy can result in the somewhat forced framing of the aristocratic parties as dilettantes in the modern, pejorative sense of the term; in addition, it fails to take into account the actual connoisseurial practices used, which were often remarkably consistent with those of the museum professionals.<sup>69</sup> As a result, such distinctions can feel overly artificial, ignoring the overlapping of many roles in the nineteenth and early twentieth-century art world.<sup>70</sup> Any discussion of the connoisseurship of Poynter, for example, must take into account his multiple identities as a practising artist, illustrator, designer, educator, National Gallery Director and President of the Royal Academy.

Equally, dealers do not fit neatly into any of the existing models of connoisseurship and often fail to be acknowledged as connoisseurs. Francis Haskell stressed in his highly influential

---

<sup>65</sup> A. A. Provo, ‘Notions of Method: Text and Photograph in Methods of Connoisseurship’ (unpublished Honors thesis, Wesleyan University, 2010).

<sup>66</sup> Uglow, ‘Giovanni Morelli’.

<sup>67</sup> The perceived association between ‘a sophisticated appreciation of art’ and ‘social distinction’ in the eighteenth century is explored in H. Mount, ‘The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass: Constructions of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Britain’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 29.2 (2006), pp. 167-184.

<sup>68</sup> Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation’s Art*, p. 141.

<sup>69</sup> Tucker, ‘Eyesight, Knowledge, Argument’, p. 112; Conlin, *The Nation’s Mantelpiece*, p. 279.

<sup>70</sup> D. Levi, ‘Connoisseurs français du milieu du XIXe siècle: Tradition nationale et apports extérieurs’, in R. Recht (ed.), *Histoire de l’histoire de l’art en France au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Documentation française, 2008), p. 197; Pezzini, ‘The Burlington Magazine, The Burlington Gazette, and The Connoisseur’, pp. 155–156.

*Rediscoveries of Art* that ‘dealing plays a much larger role’ in issues of taste and connoisseurship ‘than is usually admitted’.<sup>71</sup> However, even Haskell seemed reluctant to equate dealing fully with connoisseurship, describing Jean-Baptiste Pierre Lebrun (1748-1813) as not only ‘a very perceptive connoisseur, but also [...] a very astute dealer’. More frequently, however, dealers are simply portrayed as being entirely external to the connoisseurial sphere. Catherine Scallen, for example, frames connoisseurship in the context of determining the attribution of Rembrandt paintings as ‘one branch of the newly arisen institutional discipline of art history, based in the university and the art museum’. This denies the attributional agency of the dealer, who is specifically described as being ‘served’ by ‘the practice of connoisseurship as an art-historical method’.<sup>72</sup> Pamela Guerdat, meanwhile, acknowledges that French dealer René Gimpel ‘took over the practice of connoisseurship’, and describes his attributional method for a single painting in some detail, comparing this with various art historians and museum professionals throughout the twentieth century. However, Guerdat sees Gimpel’s connoisseurship as a deliberate strategy aimed at responding to market forces, rather than a process integral to the profession of dealing.<sup>73</sup> Some commentators have, nevertheless, been willing to see dealers as involved in connoisseurship. Ivan Gaskell, for example, acknowledges—albeit in qualified language—that dealers can be, and are, involved in the connoisseurial process, arguing that ‘certain types of art history can be informed or even driven by the trade’s commercial imperatives’.<sup>74</sup> He praises John Smith’s *Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French Painters* as an example of disinterested scholarship by a dealer that was aimed at promoting ‘reliability and integrity in the art trade’.<sup>75</sup> Such scholarly attention on dealers as connoisseurs has not always been so positive. Other commentators have framed certain dealers as ‘meddling’ in the connoisseurship carried out by scholars for the sake of commercial compromise.<sup>76</sup> While attempts at ‘a more nuanced reading of the enmeshment of scholarship and commerce’ have recently been made, such a re-reading of the landscape

---

<sup>71</sup> F. Haskell, *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion, and Collecting in England and France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976), p. 18.

<sup>72</sup> Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, pp. 15–17.

<sup>73</sup> P. Guerdat, ‘Through the Appraisal Process: René Gimpel (1881-1945) and Nicolas Poussin’s Self-Portrait, from Rediscovery to De-Attribution’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 16 (2017), pp. 1–45.

<sup>74</sup> I. Gaskell, ‘Tradesmen as Scholars: Interdependencies in the Study and Exchange of Art’, in E. Mansfield (ed.), *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 147.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 152–153.

<sup>76</sup> Ripps, ‘A Faustian Bargain?’, p. 746.

of commercial connoisseurship is still in its early stages.<sup>77</sup> This is an oversight that this thesis aims, in part, to address.

In contrast, the existing literature relating to attribution and museums in the late nineteenth century does acknowledge the importance of key personalities as connoisseurs.<sup>78</sup> As mentioned above with regard to the National Gallery, over the past two decades there has been renewed interest in the connoisseurship of its first Director, Charles Lock Eastlake. Such work tends to foreground Eastlake's individuality and personal connoisseurship, although there has been some discussion of the network surrounding him in the form of figures such as his wife Lady Elizabeth Eastlake (née Rigby) and Travelling Agent Otto Mündler (described by Jaynie Anderson as 'one of the founding fathers of connoisseurship').<sup>79</sup> As will be shown throughout, this thesis subscribes to Jonathan Richardson's 'radical assertion' that anyone who devoted themselves to study could learn to determine 'who painted a picture and how good it was'.<sup>80</sup> This has been an attempt to move away from the overly hagiographic portrayals of museums that have painted these institutions as the products of individual, 'great men' — a portrayal recently contested in Geddes Poole's in-depth discussion of the bureaucratic systems that made up the administrations of major London museums at the fin-de-siècle.<sup>81</sup> Nevertheless, it has not been possible to take into account the connoisseurial practices of all those associated with Agnew's and the National Gallery during this period. The National Gallery, in addition to the three Directors named above, was administered by four Keepers: Ralph Wornum (served 1855-1877), Charles Locke Eastlake (1878-1898),

---

<sup>77</sup> B. Pezzini, 'The Value and Price of the Renaissance: Robert Ross and the Satire of Connoisseurship', in L. Carletti (ed.), *La Storia e La Critica: Atti Della Giornata Di Studi per Festeggiare Antonino Caleca* (Pisa: Pacini, 2016), p. 169.

<sup>78</sup> See, for example, M. L. Caygill and J. F. Cherry (eds), *A. W. Franks: Nineteenth-Century Collecting and the British Museum* (London: British Museum Press, 1997).

<sup>79</sup> Lady Eastlake's role is problematised and her supposed assistance with matters of National Gallery connoisseurship downplayed in J. Sheldon, "'His Best Successor": Lady Eastlake and the National Gallery', in K. Hill (ed.), *Museums and Biographies: Stories, Objects, Identities* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2012), pp. 61–74. On Mündler, see also D. Levi, 'Let Agents Be Sent to All the Cities of Italy': British Public Museums and the Italian Art Market in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', in J. E. Law and L. Østermark-Johansen (eds), *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance* (Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), p. 37; J. Anderson, 'Otto Mündler and His Travel Diary', in C. Togneri Dowd (ed.), *The Fifty-First Volume of the Walpole Society 1985* (Leeds: Printed for the Walpole Society by W. S. Maney & Son Ltd, 1985), p. 7; Robertson, *Sir Charles Eastlake*, Chaps VII–IX.

<sup>80</sup> C. Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson: Art Theorist of the English Enlightenment* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 184.

<sup>81</sup> Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation's Art*, p. 5.

Hawes Harison Turner (1898-1914) and Charles Henry Collins Baker (1914-1934).<sup>82</sup> Over the years, the Board also featured some 26 Trustees, all involved with connoisseurship to a greater or lesser extent because of their accountability for the Gallery's acquisitions. Because of the large number of people involved, the Directors' ultimate responsibility for purchases and the fact that much of the archival material relating to connoisseurial practice was authored by the Directors, the focus here will largely be on the Directors' connoisseurial practice. However, where possible sources will also be used that relate to judgements by a number of particularly engaged Trustees, such as John Postle Heseltine (Trustee 1893-1929), and the Keepers.<sup>83</sup> Indeed, the spatial approach adopted here and the visual sources under scrutiny potentially broaden the scope of the enquiry to provide insights into connoisseurial practice by a wider range of participants than traditionally acknowledged. For example, the expertise of the National Gallery Keepers was often particularly useful with regard to hanging and display, and this will be highlighted where possible.<sup>84</sup> With regard to Agnew's, the picture is made somewhat clearer by the smaller number of people involved, and the clearer hierarchy of decision-making. This study therefore largely focuses on the connoisseurial practices of the previously named partners: while salesmen may well have carried out connoisseurship, little definite evidence of this remains and the decision for buying or selling works ultimately rested with the partners.<sup>85</sup>

## **Thesis outline**

This thesis can be broadly separated into two sections: the first focusing on the connoisseurship carried out by Agnew's and National Gallery staff, the second on connoisseurship as practised by their audiences. In the initial section, Chapter 1 will establish a definition of the term 'connoisseurship' by discussing the criteria on which a painting was judged. This definition extends beyond the standard focus on attribution to argue that a 'triumvirate of connoisseurship' was of paramount importance for the staff at both institutions. This consisted of the criteria of attribution, condition and beauty; a painting considered to be notably lacking in any of these criteria was unlikely to be acquired by either Agnew's or the National Gallery. In addition, certain other criteria, such as historical

---

<sup>82</sup> For the differing responsibilities borne by the Director and Keeper, see the 1895 Treasury Circular, NG, NG8/18/1.

<sup>83</sup> L. Campbell, 'Drawing Attention: John Postle Heseltine, the Etching Revival and Dutch Art of the Age of Rembrandt', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 26.1 (2013), pp. 103–115.

<sup>84</sup> For example, the connoisseurship of Charles Locke Eastlake has been emphasised in Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, pp. 207–216.

<sup>85</sup> On 'Some past members of the firm', including salesmen, see Agnew, *Agnew's*, p. 89.

significance, were of varying importance to both organisations. Chapter 2 will outline the spaces in which these criteria were judged, stressing the mobility of both artworks and connoisseurs, and introducing specific spatial factors such as access and lighting that affected the analysis of art. Chapter 3 will draw on the material discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 to draw out the practical methods of connoisseurship applied by the National Gallery and Agnew's personnel. It will argue that decisions regarding paintings were made swiftly and on a largely visual basis, drawing on the individual experience of the connoisseur. Both archival research and technical examination will be shown to have had a far smaller role in connoisseurial judgement than has previously been thought. The second section, consisting of Chapters 4 and 5, will focus on the exhibition spaces managed by the National Gallery and Agnew's, comparing these to argue that both institutions displayed the artworks that they owned in such a fashion as to encourage connoisseurship—particularly visual analysis—on the part of the visitors who came to the galleries. The structure of treating the National Gallery in a single chapter, followed by a chapter on Agnew's, should not be understood as implying the National Gallery's display model as being necessarily imitated or appropriated by Agnew's; indeed, while the historiography establishes the National Gallery as the normative space of connoisseurship, my research challenges this received idea. While the material in Chapters 4 and 5 would therefore ideally have been treated in parallel, this structure was not feasible in practice, as there was so much information to be covered.

# SECTION I: SPATIAL ASPECTS OF CONNOISSEURIAL PRACTICE

## Chapter 1: The criteria of connoisseurship

For my part, I am of [the] opinion that if a good & genuine work of the 15<sup>th</sup>, or early 16<sup>th</sup>, century is also a pleasing picture & to be had at a reasonable price, it should be added to the National Collection.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Edward Poynter, 1902

This chapter will work towards a definition of the practice of connoisseurship as the art or skill of judging pictures based on a range of criteria. For both the National Gallery and Agnew's, the ultimate aim of connoisseurship was to select suitable artworks for acquisition, although on a personal level—as will be demonstrated throughout this chapter—individual preferences did affect the connoisseurial process. On comparing the two institutions, it is also clear that artworks were being acquired for different purposes, resulting in some differing connoisseurial criteria between the public gallery and private firm. Nevertheless, this chapter will argue that connoisseurship can be broken down into a number of categories, with a 'triumvirate of connoisseurship' identified as the three major criteria that were key for both Agnew's and the National Gallery: attribution, condition and beauty. These categories will, in turn, be further broken down in order to isolate particular considerations for each. The analysis of these three categories will then be followed by the discussion of two further categories, each of which was of greater importance for the National Gallery and Agnew's staff respectively: the linked concepts of representativeness and importance, and saleability. This discussion of these five categories will lead into Chapters 2 and 3 of the thesis, which will consider the spaces in which these criteria were determined in order to move closer to an understanding of the practice of connoisseurship.

There is a vast and ever-expanding literature on connoisseurship, although, some decades after the publication of Carol Gibson-Wood's seminal PhD thesis on the topic, the field still lacks a single, cohesive historiography.<sup>2</sup> It is generally accepted that the term is difficult to

---

<sup>1</sup> Director's report of his journey to Italy, 9 February 1902, NG, NG7/261/1.

<sup>2</sup> C. J. Gibson-Wood, 'Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship from Vasari to Morelli' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Warburg Institute, University of London, 1982); C. Gibson-Wood, *Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship from Vasari to Morelli* (New York; London: Garland, 1988).

define: Christopher Whitehead, for example, has characterised connoisseurship as ‘a constantly shifting synthesis [...] of various techniques, discourses and practices’.<sup>3</sup> Indeed, the very concept of connoisseurship has been hotly debated ever since its eighteenth-century emergence. As Harry Mount has convincingly argued in regard to its early use, the term ‘connoisseur’ has remained intrinsically resistant to a precise definition, both in the eighteenth century and in modern discourse.<sup>4</sup> This resistance to definition can be equally applied to the nineteenth century and beyond, when the word continued to carry a range of meanings. During this period, there was a certain tension between the term’s wider (and older) use as a marker of discernment and sensibility, and its later use for someone who was able to distinguish between genuine and fraudulent works, or to determine the correct attribution for a given painting.<sup>5</sup> While the nebulous nature of connoisseurship will act as an underlying motif throughout this thesis, this chapter will, nonetheless, aim to define a number of criteria by which paintings were subject to connoisseurial judgement by dealers and museum professionals at the end of the nineteenth century and into the twentieth.

Many modern writers on connoisseurship use the term to refer solely to the determination of attribution, frequently associated with the visual judgement of an artwork: Donata Levi, for example, describes expert connoisseurs in nineteenth-century France as possessing the ability to ascribe a work of art to a particular artist, or to distinguish an original from a copy, by means of a largely visual analysis.<sup>6</sup> Issues of attribution are certainly central to the concept, with much recent scholarship focusing on the growing importance of attribution during the eighteenth century, especially in France.<sup>7</sup> In her important thesis on the history of connoisseurship, Gibson-Wood specifically used the terms ‘connoisseurship’ and ‘attribution’ interchangeably throughout, despite conceding that in some historic periods connoisseurship has had a wider meaning.<sup>8</sup> Michael Hatt and Charlotte Klonk have argued that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the core activity of a connoisseur was to pass judgement on the authenticity and authorship through the close, repeated

---

<sup>3</sup> Whitehead, ‘Architectures of Display’, p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> Mount, ‘The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass’, p. 169.

<sup>5</sup> Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, p. 151.

<sup>6</sup> Levi, ‘Connaisseurs français’, p. 198.

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, C. Guichard, ‘Le marché au coeur de l’invention muséale? Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Lebrun au Louvre (1792-1802)’, *Revue Synthèse*, 132.1 (2011), pp. 93-117; K. Smentek, *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), p. 2; D. Pullins, ‘The Individual’s Triumph: The Eighteenth-Century Consolidation of Authorship and Art Historiography’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 16 (2017), pp. 1–26.

<sup>8</sup> Gibson-Wood, ‘Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship’, p. 288.

observation of the formal traits of artworks.<sup>9</sup> This chapter will acknowledge that attribution is certainly one of the key criteria that are judged through connoisseurship. However, limiting the meaning of connoisseurship to attributional judgment alone—especially while insisting on connoisseurship as a purely visual practice—effectively excludes potentially important considerations such as the condition of paintings, and practices such as documentary research, from the discussion of connoisseurial practice. While it does appear that close visual observation of artworks was one of the key practices of connoisseurship in this period—as will be further discussed in Chapters 2 and 3—the determination of attribution was far from being the only aim of connoisseurial practice.

This chapter will therefore pursue a broader definition of connoisseurship that covers a number of judgements of artworks beyond the basic determination of attribution. This approach does have some precedents in the secondary literature: Gibson-Wood, for example, has gone on to characterise the handbooks offering guidelines for would-be connoisseurs and collectors, available from the early seventeenth century onwards, as concentrating largely on three types of knowledge about artworks: quality, authorship and originality.<sup>10</sup> However, even this separation into three categories is somewhat woolly: Gibson-Wood defines the first as ‘competence in judging a picture’s excellence or deficiencies’ and the second as ‘recognizing authorship’. The third, meanwhile, overlaps with the second, as it appears to be based on the ability to distinguish copies from original pictures.<sup>11</sup> As a result, these three categories are not sufficient in this case because—as will be demonstrated below—a wider range of considerations were taken into account during the practice of connoisseurship by the staff at both Agnew’s and the National Gallery. While it is therefore inappropriate to apply Gibson-Wood’s specific categories to the sources under scrutiny in this thesis, her method of categorising connoisseurial judgements into a range of specific criteria will nevertheless be useful here.

This chapter will now analyse the criteria by which Agnew’s and the National Gallery carried out connoisseurship by breaking these criteria down into five main categories. These categories were determined through a close analysis of written sources, particularly archival material, as outlined in the introduction to this thesis. In order to avoid imposing modern categorisation onto nineteenth and twentieth-century sources—as far as this is possible—

---

<sup>9</sup> Hatt and Klonk, *Art History*, pp. 40–41.

<sup>10</sup> Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, p. 180.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 195–196.

the initial approach taken was to read through these sources and note down individual words and phrases that were frequently used with respect to the judgement of paintings. The aim of this initial foray was to attempt to understand the meanings of these terms in their original contexts. Raymond Williams has highlighted how his apparently arbitrary selection of words to be discussed in the influential *Keywords* was justified in their use in what he felt to be interesting or difficult ways.<sup>12</sup> As in *Keywords*, the terms relating to connoisseurship that recurred throughout the source texts here were also often vague and difficult to define. This is further compounded by the attempts of connoisseurs to translate their response to an artwork into words, which can be compared to the efforts of art writing to translate a visual into a verbal medium: as Jaś Elsner has argued in his framing of art history as *ekphrasis*, this descriptive act is an inevitable betrayal that is 'not merely selective; it is (at its best) a parallel work of art [...] however good the approximation in words of the object described, it can never fully be or fully replace the object'.<sup>13</sup> William Agnew himself acknowledged the problems relating to writing about art, remarking that 'It is difficult to write generalizations on pictures, stupid to write down comparisons inevitable [sic], but odious always'.<sup>14</sup> One of the major problems with this type of textual analysis is also its generality: in the sources surveyed here, paintings were frequently given only a very brief description, using only such general words as 'good', 'satisfactory', 'good quality' or 'fine'.<sup>15</sup> One particularly succinct and damning description in Morland's private notes of a portrait (unfortunately unidentified) in the collection of the Duke of Abercorn simply reads 'Vandyck [sic] ½ length man a duffer'.<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, because of the sheer number of paintings passing through the hands of the firm, pictures acquired by Agnew's were often simply entered in the stock-books under their title, attribution, seller and price, with no information provided as to how these details were determined. This ambiguity and lack of detail suggest that texts alone should not be used as a basis for the analysis of the practice of connoisseurship, an issue that will be addressed in more depth in the conclusion to this chapter.

Despite these difficulties, and the variations in the terminology adopted, however, it is striking that a number of similar considerations consistently recur as significant in the

---

<sup>12</sup> R. Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana Press, 1983), p. 14.

<sup>13</sup> J. Elsner, 'Art History as Ekphrasis', *Art History*, 33.1 (2010), p. 12.

<sup>14</sup> W. Agnew, *Holiday Jottings* (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1886), p. 58. NG, NGA27/27/6.

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, the descriptions in David Croal Thomson's report of his business trip to North America in 1898: D. Croal Thomson, Report re. visit to Canada & USA, February-March 1898, NG, NGA27/27/3.

<sup>16</sup> C. M. Agnew: Collections, Volume I and Index, [1878-1932], NG, NGA27/29/1, p. 1.

writings of National Gallery and Agnew's staff. During the course of this analysis, it additionally became clear that these terms fell into wider groupings, in which synonyms were frequently adopted to refer to similar concepts. Instead of concentrating on particular terms, this chapter will therefore focus on a number of broader connoisseurial concepts that encompass the concerns of both institutions. The discussion will be split into the five categories of attribution, condition, beauty, representativeness and importance (considered together as being near synonyms), and saleability. In particular, the first three of these categories appear to have represented a 'triumvirate of connoisseurship': for both institutions, if a painting was felt to be deficient in regard to either attribution, condition or beauty, it was unlikely to be acquired. The fourth category was specific to the National Gallery, which, because of its aim to represent the development of Western art, had to determine the extent to which paintings were representative of a particular artist, school or evolution in art. Finally, the fifth category of saleability was not at all a consideration for the National Gallery, but was a major concern for Agnew's. Before beginning this discussion, it is worth highlighting that the terms 'quality' and 'merit' seem to have been used more or less interchangeably by both the Agnew's and National Gallery staff as an overall recommendation for the acquisition of a work, covering a broad range of criteria. In general, they tended to cover any and all of the other terms discussed below, particularly issues of condition and beauty, and representing the outcome of a decision as to whether or not a painting was worth acquiring.

## **The triumvirate of connoisseurship: Three key criteria**

### **Attribution**

As suggested by its prominence in the secondary literature, the concept of attribution was a particularly important facet of connoisseurship for both Agnew's and the National Gallery. A range of terms were used by both institutions to indicate that an artwork was painted by the hand of a specific painter, including attribution, authenticity, authorship and genuineness.<sup>17</sup> This question of attribution had been paramount for art collectors and dealers since the idea

---

<sup>17</sup> The term 'autograph' to refer a work entirely by the hand of a particular artist—presumably borrowed from its earlier use to describe a manuscript in the author's own handwriting—was certainly in use by the late nineteenth century: 'Art Gossip', *The Art Journal*, June 1890, p. 223. However, it has not appeared in the sources under review here.

of the artist as individual genius had begun to develop during the Renaissance.<sup>18</sup> Giorgio Vasari, in particular, was the first modern writer of note to discuss attribution and his own connoisseurial eye in detail, although Karel van Mander was also key in the canonisation of Northern Renaissance painters.<sup>19</sup> Many significant writers on British and foreign art collections during the mid-nineteenth century, such as Waagen, Crowe and Cavalcaselle, placed a strong emphasis on attribution and had a distinct influence on the earlier development of the National Gallery collection in particular.<sup>20</sup> This historic prominence of attribution was reflected in the connoisseurial priorities of the National Gallery and Agnew's from the 1870s onwards. Notably, the sources show that staff at both institutions would regularly refer to a particular painting simply by the name of the artist to whom it was attributed, discussing 'the Botticelli' or 'a Velazquez'. In addition, as mentioned above, Agnew's included the attribution of each painting in the limited amount of information entered into its stock-books. The notes made in Morland's annotated exhibition catalogues, which will be discussed in more detail in later chapters, also reveal a particular preoccupation with determining the correct attribution for a work.

Attribution was often the first criterion mentioned in a discussion of a work, or the one that was given the most weight when reaching a connoisseurial judgement. For example, alongside their 'condition' and general 'merit', the 'genuineness' of six paintings attributed to Frans Hals and offered for sale by Countess Isabelle Mnischek in 1906 received a particularly favourable mention in a letter from National Gallery Trustee J. P. Heseltine written to support their acquisition.<sup>21</sup> Heseltine had been sent to view the works in person

---

<sup>18</sup> E. Barker, N. Webb and K. Woods (eds), *The Changing Status of the Artist* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1999).

<sup>19</sup> W. S. Melion, *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's Schilder-Boeck* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Gibson-Wood, 'Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship', Chaps 1–2.

<sup>20</sup> G. Waterfield and F. Illies, 'Waagen in England', *Jahrbuch Der Berliner Museen*, 37 (1995), pp. 56–58; surprisingly little has been written on Crowe and Cavalcaselle, considering their influence, although see L. Uglow, "'New" Giorgione: Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Pater, and Morelli' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2012); J. Graham, 'Crowe, Sir Joseph Archer (1825–1896)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6824>; D. Levi, *Cavalcaselle: il pioniere della conservazione dell'arte italiana* (Turin: Einaudi, 1988); D. Sutton, 'Aspects of British Collecting: Part IV: Crowe and Cavalcaselle', *Apollo*, 122 (1985), pp. 11–17. The use of works by authors such as Waagen for reference by the National Gallery and Agnew's will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>21</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1 June 1897–14 December 1909, NG, NG1/7, p. 262. These paintings are now respectively: missing since World War II (*Michiel Jansz. van Middelhoven*); at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Portugal (*Sara Andriesdr. Hessix, wife of Michiel Jansz. van Middelhoven*, inv. no. 214); on the art market (*Catherina Brugman, wife of Tieleman Roosterman*); at

in Paris, where he viewed them ‘in an excellent light in the studio of the late Count. They were not hung on the wall but each one was on an easel’; he was left in no doubt that ‘they are all the work of Franz [sic] Hals’.<sup>22</sup> As Heseltine felt that the paintings were ‘all excellent specimens of [Hals’s] work’, he recommended that ‘all or any of them would be most desirable acquisitions for the National Gallery’. In this case, Mniszech refused either to sell the works separately or to drop the price for all six paintings below 1.8 million francs, putting the acquisition out of question considering the National Gallery’s limited resources at this date. Nevertheless, it was the fact that Heseltine attributed these paintings so securely to Hals that had made them such a desirable investment for the Gallery. In other cases, considerations such as condition and even beauty would sometimes play second fiddle to the perceived importance of a solid attribution to a specific artist. In the case of NG1872—a *Virgin and Child* both then and now attributed to Alvis Vivarini—the Board Minutes for 1898 record that:

The Director having submitted the picture to the Board expressed his opinion that although the work was not of sufficient excellence to be hung in the National Gallery Collection, it was interesting on account of the painter's signature which he believed to be authentic. Resolved that if Mr. [Charles] Loeser be willing to present the picture without making it a condition that it shall be publicly exhibited, his offer be accepted with thanks.<sup>23</sup>

For this painting, the authenticity conferred by the painter’s signature made the work a valuable acquisition, even if the picture was not necessarily intended for public display; it must therefore have been seen as useful for artistic study and public education.

Given this strong historic focus on individual artists, in general the National Gallery preferred to acquire paintings attributed with certainty to a particular artist, rather than to an unknown painter, and pictures without a concrete attribution were frequently turned down for acquisition. For example, Poynter wrote in his 1901 report of an acquisitions trip to Italy that ‘A small picture attributed to Mantegna I shd. have liked to acquire if I could have identified it with any known painter. It appeared to me of the school of Ferrara or Modena, but as

---

the Baltimore Museum of Art (inv. no. 51.107); and at Yale University Art Gallery (*Portrait of a Man [so-called Herr Bodolphe]* and *Portrait of a Woman [so-called Mevrouw Bodolphe]*, inv. nos 1961.18.23 and 1961.18.24). S. Slive, *Frans Hals*, Vol. III (London; New York: Phaidon Press, 1974), cat. nos 38, 39, 94, 96, 149 and 150; RKD, *Frans Hals (I) Portrait of Catharina Brugman*, <https://rkd.nl/en/explore/images/108092> [accessed 24 November 2017].

<sup>22</sup> J. P. Heseltine to H. Harrison Turner, 25 January 1906, NG, NG7/306/8.

<sup>23</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1 June 1897-14 December 1909, NG, NG1/7, pp. 34-35.

Simonetti asked a high price, & being unable to identify it I thought it better not to purchase it'.<sup>24</sup> While the Director disagreed with the existing attribution to Mantegna, he did not feel confident in suggesting an alternative; despite the evident appeal of the painting, whether for aesthetic or historic reasons, it was therefore judged not suitable for the National Gallery collection. It is possible that Poynter felt that without a solid attribution, the painting would not be well received by visitors to the Gallery and by the general public. As will be further discussed in Chapter 4, the National Gallery's educational remit meant that it needed solid attributions for its paintings in order for them to act as good 'specimens' for public learning, while its national status exposed it to criticism in the case of an uncertain or mistaken attribution.<sup>25</sup> In particular, as seen with the 'mock Holbein' discussed in the introduction to this thesis, the public reactions to a perceived mistake in attribution reveal just what pressure was being placed on the National Gallery to ensure that its connoisseurship was correct. Scott Nethersole and Helen Howard have discussed the scandal relating to *The Baptism of Christ* (NG1431) following its acquisition under Poynter in 1894: various criticisms of the painting, attributed to Perugino on its purchase but then widely dismissed as a later copy, appeared in print before the picture was downgraded to 'after Perugino' in the 1913 National Gallery catalogue.<sup>26</sup> An anonymous writer in the *Saturday Review* argued in 1898 that the painting's purchase was 'a gross scandal to the administration of the Gallery, and the sooner it is consigned to the limbo of mistaken acquisitions the better for every one [sic] concerned. Its monetary value is nearer four shillings than £400'.<sup>27</sup> This public spat over the attribution of the work particularly highlights the strong public interest in a well-grounded attribution for National Gallery paintings.

---

<sup>24</sup> Director's report of his visit to Italy, 4 Jul 1901, NG, NG7/257/1. 'Simonetti' was perhaps Attilio Simonetti (1843-1925), a painter and antiquarian based in Rome.

<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of borrowed scientific terminology such as 'specimen' in a museum context, see C. Whitehead, *Museums and the Construction of Disciplines: Art and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Duckworth, 2009), p. 67.

<sup>26</sup> H. Howard and S. Nethersole, 'Perugino, Sassoferrato and a "Beautiful Little Work" in the National Gallery, London', *The Burlington Magazine*, 152.1287 (2010), pp. 376–384. Based on recent technical and stylistic analysis, this picture is now thought to be an early copy after Perugino by Sassoferrato: H. Howard and S. Nethersole, 'Two Copies of Perugino's "Baptism of Christ"', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 31 (2010), pp. 78–95.

<sup>27</sup> 'The State of the National Gallery', *Saturday Review*, 26 February 1898. This article has been tentatively ascribed to Herbert Horne: Tucker, 'Eyesight, Knowledge, Argument', p. 111.

An attribution to a particular, named artist was also of especial commercial importance to dealers during the period in question.<sup>28</sup> The fact that very few paintings were entered into the Agnew's stock-books under the attribution 'Anonymous' or 'Unknown' suggests that the firm was very unwilling to invest in a painting without a specific attribution. However, changes in attribution were not infrequent, with the painter's name being crossed out and replaced by another. For example, a *Virgin and Child* purchased from George Salting and then sold to George Donaldson in 1897 was initially entered under an attribution to Filippo Lippi, but this was then changed to Pesellino.<sup>29</sup> This indicates that paintings could be bought even if there was a level of uncertainty regarding their attribution: the Agnew's staff evidently felt confident in making reattributions either during the acquisition process, or once paintings had been bought. Such changes in attribution would attract far less public scrutiny than those performed by the National Gallery. Similarly, the organisation of the Agnew's photograph library—which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3—reflects the importance of authorship, with photographs arranged by artist and then by subject.<sup>30</sup> Agnew's placed such a strong emphasis on works with a specific attribution because of the market demand for such pictures: as Eric van Sluijter has suggested, the loss of a work's 'aura' through reattribution results in a loss of both identity and value for the painting.<sup>31</sup>

Both Agnew's and the National Gallery used specific terms to communicate connoisseurial doubts regarding an attribution, or to highlight a belief that an existing attribution might be mistaken. In the case of the National Gallery, this was a particularly useful way to foreground attributional uncertainties that could prevent the acquisition of a painting. The word 'doubtful'—even without a specific reference to attribution—was adopted by both institutions to suggest that an attribution was uncertain, as in Croal Thomson's description of a purported Constable sketch of Salisbury Cathedral as 'not very good and perhaps doubtful'.<sup>32</sup> The phrases 'ascribed to' or 'attributed to' could also be used as distancing

---

<sup>28</sup> The market appears to have become much more accepting of gradations in attribution as the twentieth century progressed, although this subject is deserving of further study: D. Phillips, *Exhibiting Authenticity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997), p. 74.

<sup>29</sup> Picture stock book 6, 1891-1898, NGA27/1/1/8, NG, p. 116.

<sup>30</sup> Some photographs of works by unknown painters have been sorted into broad categories such as 'Austrian School', 'Italo Byzantine school' or 'North Italian 16th century portraits'; however, these sections are relatively few in number, and contain not only photographs of the Agnew's stock but also reference images of works from other collections or sales. APL.

<sup>31</sup> E. J. Sluijter, 'Determining Value on the Art Market in the Golden Age: An Introduction', in A. Tummers and K. Jonckheere (eds), *Art Market and Connoisseurship: A Closer Look at Paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens and Their Contemporaries* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3, p. 85.

language to suggest misgivings over the attribution of a work offered for acquisition.<sup>33</sup> For example, the National Gallery Board Minutes for 1883 record that a letter was read 'from Miss de Crespigny of St. George's Rd Pimlico & offering for sale to the National Gallery certain pictures of which three were inspected by the Trustees. One of them a painting of the Lombard School representing the Virgin & Child and attributed *by the owner* to Leonardo da Vinci' [emphasis mine].<sup>34</sup> This suggests that the Director and Trustees had already made up their minds that the existing attribution was incorrect; the painting was eventually refused by the National Gallery.<sup>35</sup> Such doubt over the correct attribution of a work to a specific, named artist was frequently a reason for both institutions to reject a work for acquisition.

### *Copies*

As suggested by Levi above, attribution was also concerned with determining whether a painting was a copy or an original work.<sup>36</sup> From the eighteenth century onwards, there appears to have been an understanding and an associated hierarchy of different types of copy: from the most to least well-regarded, these were copies made by the artist who had painted the original work; copies originating from that artist's studio or workshop, but not by the hand of the master; copies by an associate or contemporary of the original artist; more modern copies by an anonymous hand; or copies by well-known modern artists, who often specialised in such work.<sup>37</sup> In all cases, the original was overwhelmingly prioritised over any type of copy by both Agnew's and the National Gallery. Before assuming the role of Director, Burton wrote to George Scharf, Secretary of the National Portrait Gallery since 1857, to caution him regarding a potential Cranach offered for purchase:

A priori, portraits of Luther & Catherina v. Bora, attributed to Cranach, are doubtful - as I need not tell you - They exist in great numbers - since of course such portraits were in great request amongst the Reformers, & Cranach's originals must have been frequently copied by various hands.<sup>38</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> On the use of the term 'ascription' to suggest doubt regarding an attribution, see I. Chilvers (ed.), 'Attribution', *The Oxford Dictionary of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 40.

<sup>34</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 15 March 1871-1 February 1886, NG, NG1/5, p. 248.

<sup>35</sup> Letter to Mrs Montgomerie, 5 July 1883, NG, NG6/9/91.

<sup>36</sup> Levi, 'Connaisseurs français', 198; a useful discussion of the evolution of the concept of 'originality' with regard to copies can be found in M. Dalivalle, "'Borrowed Complinesse": Copying from Pictures in Seventeenth-Century England' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 2011), Chap. 3.

<sup>37</sup> B. Küster, 'Copies on the Market in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in C. Gould and S. Mesplède (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), pp. 179–193.

<sup>38</sup> F. Burton to G. Scharf, 26 March 1872, JRL, MS ENG 1282/13.

In addition to Burton's emphasis on the importance of the original work, as opposed to copies, this correspondence also reveals an awareness of historic copying practice and what types of work should therefore be treated with caution. The National Gallery had a duty to ensure that it invested in only the very best works for display; as a result, copies made by other artists—even contemporaries of the original artist—were less attractive for purchase. Meanwhile, modern or relatively recent copies were generally dismissed out-of-hand by both Agnew's and the National Gallery. Holroyd wrote on his 1907 visit to Perugia that he had been 'offered the Annunciation by Perugino? but I think it is an early 19<sup>th</sup> cent: picture so declined it'.<sup>39</sup> Copies or alternative versions seem to have sometimes been acceptable, however, when they were understood to have been painted solely by the original master.<sup>40</sup> Croal Thomson wrote from Montreal in 1898 of concluding a sale of a portrait of Mariana of Austria, attributed to Velazquez, that 'I enclose Mr [George A.] Drummond's final note deciding. He speaks of hesitating after what I said. This simply that there were other well known portraits by Velazquez of the Princess. I said this to prevent future questions and he buys the present work knowing this'.<sup>41</sup> This suggests that the client was not himself capable of determining whether the work was by Velazquez, but was happy to rely on the connoisseurial reassurances of Agnew's that the painting was an original or copy by the master, rather than being by another artist. It was only under such specific circumstances, however, that copies were generally acquired; by and large, original works were more attractive to both the National Gallery and Agnew's than copies.

In an unusual turn of events, the National Gallery did accept a number of sets of copies after Old Masters in the late nineteenth century. In 1886 a Dr Longton of Southport presented to the Gallery a set of watercolours after various paintings in the Prado, while in 1888 John Savile Lumley gifted a set of reduced-size oil copies after Velazquez paintings in the Prado and

---

<sup>39</sup> Letter from D. S. MacColl, 27 March 1907, NG, NG7/322/1.

<sup>40</sup> A stronger awareness of workshop practice has now led to an understanding of the potential for the simultaneous production of multiple versions of the same painting, where no individual artwork can be truly described as the original or 'prime version': S. Plender and P. Saltmarsh, 'Calling Authenticity into Question: Investigating the Production of Versions and Copies in Tudor Portraiture', in R. Gordon, E. Hermens and F. Lennard (eds), *Authenticity and Replication: The Real Thing in Art and Conservation* (London: Archetype Publications, 2014), pp. 140–147. However, as this research has only recently become possible through the development of new analysis techniques, such a concept was not current during the period under scrutiny here.

<sup>41</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3, p. 96. This picture is now in Lisbon's Museu de Arte Antiga and has been attributed by José López-Rey to the Velazquez workshop: J. López-Rey, *Velázquez: A Catalogue Raisonné of his Oeuvre* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963), p. 243 (cat. no. 361).

another set after the Rembrandts in the Hermitage collection.<sup>42</sup> The two sets of copies given by Savile Lumley were by 1889 on display in one room of the newly opened 'East Basement' and were welcomed as being 'very useful to the student, for purposes of reference, and to the traveller by way of refreshing his recollections of the originals'.<sup>43</sup> These were supplemented by a collection of watercolour copies of early Italian paintings, on loan from the Arundel Society; this collection was passed to the National Gallery on the dissolution of the Arundel Society in 1897, and was still on display at the National Gallery until at least 1909 before eventually passing to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1951.<sup>44</sup> Burton, along with Trustees Austen Henry Layard and William Gregory, appears to have been cautiously optimistic that these works, despite their reduced size and status as copies, would nevertheless be useful to art students regarding both technique and colouring.<sup>45</sup> To a minor extent, this echoes the eighteenth-century practice of the collecting and selling of copies of oil paintings, when many high-status private collections included specially commissioned copies of famous Old Master works.<sup>46</sup> One of the functions of such copies was to improve public education and taste by widening access to such works: an aim that was to be extended with the founding of the National Gallery in the early nineteenth century.<sup>47</sup> However, this acceptance of three sets of copies does not appear to have been an experiment that was repeated by the National Gallery, and throughout its history the institution was generally firm in its refusal not to purchase copies.<sup>48</sup> Given that Savile Lumley had strong links with the National Gallery—he had already donated a Velázquez (NG1148) to the Gallery in 1883, and was to become a Trustee in 1890—it is possible that the acceptance of these sets of copies

---

<sup>42</sup> E. T. Cook, *A Popular Handbook to the National Gallery*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed., Vol. I (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922), pp. 752–757; P. McEvansoneya, 'John Savile Lumley and the Copies after Velázquez in the National Gallery, London', *Hispanic Research Journal*, 9.5 (2008), pp. 437–457.

<sup>43</sup> 'The Nation's New Pictures II', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 7 September 1889.

<sup>44</sup> 'The National Gallery', *The Times*, 19 June 1909; L. Ward, 'A Translation of a Translation: Dissemination of the Arundel Society's Chromolithographs' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, The Australian National University, 2016), p. 12.

<sup>45</sup> McEvansoneya, 'John Savile Lumley and the Copies after Velázquez', pp. 442–443.

<sup>46</sup> Küster, 'Marketing Art in the British Isles', pp. 182–183.

<sup>47</sup> B. Taylor, 'National Gallery, London: For "All Ranks and Degrees of Men"', in C. Paul (ed.), *The First Modern Museums of Art: The Birth of an Institution in 18th- and Early-19th-Century Europe* (Los Angeles, CA: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012), pp. 261–284.

<sup>48</sup> Letter to C. Parcell Taylor, 24 May 1890, NG, NG6/15/208. For exceptions, however, see *The Company of Captain Banning Cocq ('The Nightwatch')* (NG289), a seventeenth-century copy of the famous Rembrandt work that was accepted as a bequest in 1857; and *The Madonna and Child* (NG929), which was accepted as part of the Wynn Ellis bequest in 1876 and is an early copy after Raphael's *Bridgewater Madonna* in the Duke of Sutherland collection (itself currently on loan to the National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh [inv. no. NGL 065.46]).

had a strong diplomatic component.<sup>49</sup> This seems more likely when it is also considered that the Longton copies appear never to have gone on display.<sup>50</sup> Apart from this isolated incident, therefore, the interest of the National Gallery in acquiring copies after the Old Masters was muted at best; the Gallery was overwhelmingly interested only in original, strongly attributed works and its staff therefore needed to be able to distinguish copy from original through the practice of connoisseurship.<sup>51</sup>

## Condition

Despite the demonstrated interest of both the National Gallery and Agnew's in attribution, however, this was by far from being the only category of connoisseurial assessment: it was not necessarily the case that a 'genuine' work was well regarded or understood to be worthy of acquisition. Condition and beauty, the next two categories to be discussed here, also fed strongly into the connoisseurial assessment. In his report from Italy of 1898, Poynter wrote that:

I went to Venice where I had been told of a picture by Marco Basaiti, said to be the only one which is likely to be in the market: it is a picture of a "sacra conversazione" Madonna & Child, & two saints, and is undoubtedly a genuine picture: it had however been so re-painted that very little of the original work remains, & is not therefore desirable to the Gallery.<sup>52</sup>

Despite the evident appeal of a rare work with an attribution to Basaiti, therefore, the National Gallery was not interested in acquiring the painting. Meanwhile, in a private letter that was later made public as part of a court case, Lockett is said to have described a Gainsborough portrait as 'a smudgy, ugly, genuine work of the master'.<sup>53</sup> While Agnew's did eventually buy the work for a reported £10,250, this was far below the original price demanded for the painting, suggesting a reluctance to invest in a work that was seen to be

---

<sup>49</sup> P. McEvansoneya, 'John Savile Lumley and Velázquez's 'Christ after the Flagellation Contemplated by the Christian Soul'', *The Burlington Magazine*, 152.1291 (2010), pp. 660–664.

<sup>50</sup> 'Occasional Notes', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 5 May 1888. The current whereabouts of these pictures is unknown.

<sup>51</sup> For a contrasting attitude towards the collection and display of replica artworks, see B. Lasic, 'Acquiring and Displaying Replicas at the South Kensington Museum: "The Next Best Thing"', in M. Aldrich and J. Hackforth-Jones (eds), *Art and Authenticity* (Farnham; Burlington, VT; London; New York: Lund Humphries; Sotheby's Institute of Art, 2012), pp. 72–86.

<sup>52</sup> Director's report of his continental journey, 29 November 1898, NG, NG7/228/19.

<sup>53</sup> 'King's Bench Division', *The Times*, 1 March 1916. This portrait is now in the collection of the National Gallery of Ireland (inv. no. NGI.795), and is still attributed to Gainsborough.

genuine but not beautiful.<sup>54</sup> This balancing act between the various aspects of connoisseurship, which resulted in every painting having to be examined and judged on its own individual merits, will be highlighted throughout the remainder of this chapter.

In addition to attribution, it will be shown below that condition was a further significant connoisseurial consideration for both the National Gallery and Agnew's. As collector and art historian R. C. Witt—whose photograph library will be discussed in Chapter 3—wrote in 1903,

It is wonderful how much ill-usage a soundly painted picture can stand, without complete deterioration. Who would believe that Jan van Eyck's portrait of his wife was discovered in the fish market of Bruges, completely concealed by dirt? Michelangelo's unfinished *Entombment* [NG790] in the National Gallery was rescued from a somewhat similar situation and sold in Rome for a mere song.<sup>55</sup>

The assessment of condition was therefore a vital factor in the acquisition of a work, and staff at both institutions needed to be able to judge the extent to which a painting's history had affected its physical state — its appearance in particular. As the concept of condition can encompass a wide range of issues, this study will draw on Paul Taylor's recent *The Ageing of Art* as a comprehensive overview of the various changes that can affect paintings once they have left the painter's studio. While Taylor's work goes into much more detail than is possible here, in brief he categorises the types of damage to which paintings are subject as losses; cracking and flaking; impermanent pigments; darkening; and issues associated with 'cleaning' and unsuitable conservation practices.<sup>56</sup> As will be shown here, all of these categories of damage were, to a certain extent, of concern to both institutions: if the connoisseurial assessment suggested that the damage was so severe that it could not be repaired, then a painting was unlikely to be acquired. As will be shown, the ideal state of preservation was considered to be a picture which had suffered minimal paint losses, on which the colours of the paint and varnish remained true, and which had not undergone any extensive restoration that could not be removed or painted over. It was particularly important for the National Gallery that its artworks should be in adequate condition for them

---

<sup>54</sup> 'A Gainsborough Portrait', *The Times*, 2 March 1916.

<sup>55</sup> R. C. Witt, *How to Look at Pictures* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1903), p. 155. On *The Entombment*, see P. McCouat, 'Michelangelo's Disputed Entombment', *Journal of Art in Society* (2014), <http://www.artinsociety.com/michelangelos-disputed-entombment.html> [accessed 1 December 2017].

<sup>56</sup> Paul Taylor, *Condition: The Ageing of Art* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2015).

to be exhibited to the public, necessitating connoisseurial inspection of works both at the point of purchase and on a continuing basis following acquisition. This is borne out by the Gallery's manuscript catalogues, which contain details of the condition on acquisition and conservation work carried out on each painting.<sup>57</sup> This concern for the preservation of its collection, held in perpetual trust for the nation, will be discussed in more detail when the National Gallery's display practices are considered in Chapter 4. However, as demonstrated below, the poor condition of many works also prevented their initial acquisition by the National Gallery. Equally, while the Agnew's archive contains less detailed information on the subject of condition than those of the National Gallery, it remains apparent that Agnew's specifically sought to acquire paintings in good condition that would be as appealing as possible to their customers.

### ***Losses***

Short of the total destruction of a work, loss in the context of connoisseurship can be defined as the cutting down of paintings, or separating them into pieces. Entire artworks would obviously have been preferable in most cases to works that had suffered such losses. However, it was also true that in many cases such artworks were simply not available for acquisition: altarpieces, for example, had often been dismantled centuries or decades earlier on their removal from a religious context, while wall paintings had to be cut from the wall if they were to be transported.<sup>58</sup> Given its strong emphasis on a full representation of the development of the history of art, the National Gallery therefore had to be content with accepting such losses to works. It consequently invested on numerous occasions in small panels such as Domenico Morone's depictions of the rape of the Sabines (NG1211 and NG1212), now thought to have been cut from a *cassone* or marriage chest.<sup>59</sup> In the case of altarpieces, the National Gallery did attempt to acquire as many panels as possible from a

---

<sup>57</sup> National Gallery Manuscript Catalogue, 1855-1954, NG, NG10. The manuscript catalogue was introduced under the Eastlake Directorship in 1856: S. Avery-Quash, 'The Art of Conservation II: Sir Charles Eastlake and Conservation at the National Gallery, London', *The Burlington Magazine*, 157.1353 (2015), p. 854.

<sup>58</sup> C. B. Strehlke, 'Carpentry and Connoisseurship: The Disassembly of Altarpieces and the Rise in Interest in Early Italian Art', in C. Dean (ed.), *Rediscovering Fra Angelico: A Fragmentary History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Art Gallery, 2001), pp. 41-58; U. Procacci, 'Introduction: The Technique of Mural Paintings and Their Detachment', in *The Great Age of Fresco: Giotto to Pontormo. An Exhibition of Mural Paintings and Monumental Drawings* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1968), pp. 18-44.

<sup>59</sup> T. Henry, 'The Subject of Domenico Morone's "Tournament" Panels in the National Gallery, London', *The Burlington Magazine*, 136.1019 (1994), pp. 21-22.

specific polyptych; however, the minutes from a Board meeting in 1898 reveal how impractical this often was because panels were likely to have ended up in both private and public collections:

Discussion as to whether two panel pictures from the same altarpiece as NG597 [Francesco del Cossa's *Saint Vincent Ferrer*, acquired in 1858] might be purchased from the Brera Collection in Milan, and the Pope then persuaded to part with the predella from the same altarpiece: The Board briefly discussed this proposal but in view of the difficulties which were likely to surround it allowed the subject to drop.<sup>60</sup>

There is less evidence for the attitude of Agnew's staff to paintings that had undergone losses, perhaps because of the lesser reliance of the firm on religious artworks that tended to have been subject to this kind of alteration. This is therefore the only one of the categories of condition to be discussed here that appears to have had significantly more impact on the connoisseurial decisions made by the National Gallery personnel than those of Agnew's.

### ***Flaking and cracking***

The flaking and cracking of paint were of great concern, presumably because they necessitated large areas of repaint. Poynter wrote on a trip to Italy in 1899 of an unidentified work by the Sienese painter Sano di Pietro that 'I shd. recommend its purchase but that the blue drapery of the Virgin's mantle, that is to say by far the larger part of the central panel is virtually ruined, all the shadow colour having disappeared & the colour being everywhere flaking away from the ground'.<sup>61</sup> While a photograph of this work was inspected by the Board back in London, the painting was ultimately not acquired as the damage was evidently felt to be too extensive.<sup>62</sup> Even if it were potentially possible for this type of damage to be restored, this was often considered a reason for a painting to be refused. In July 1908, Holroyd and restorer Ayerst Horace BATTERY together viewed a purported Filippo Lippi offered to the National Gallery.<sup>63</sup> In a subsequent letter to Holroyd that was laid before the

---

<sup>60</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1897-1909, NG, NG1/7, p. 29. A reconstruction of the altarpiece has been suggested in A. Smith, A. Reeve and A. Roy, 'Francesco del Cossa's 'S. Vincent Ferrer'', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 5 (1981), pp. 47-54.

<sup>61</sup> Report of the Director's continental journey, 29 November 1899, NG, NG7/238/2.

<sup>62</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1897-1909, NG, NG1/7, p. 86.

<sup>63</sup> The BATTERY family of restorers and dealers are the subject of an uncatalogued National Gallery information file compiled by Lorne Campbell; the restorers used by the National Gallery will be further discussed below.

Board as evidence regarding the proposed acquisition, Buttery stated that, because of the ‘large number of great “fractures” & “shakes” in the panel’, he ‘would hesitate’ before undertaking or recommending its restoration.<sup>64</sup> The painting was refused on the basis of this connoisseurial examination—by both the Director of the National Gallery and a professional restorer—which had focused overwhelmingly on the conservation aspects of the inspection.<sup>65</sup>

Despite this general aversion to severe cracking of the paint, the specific appearance of a fine craquelure was in many cases held to improve the appearance of Old Master paintings.<sup>66</sup> Burton wrote to Fairfax Murray of Antonello da Messina’s *Christ Crucified* (NG1166), bought in 1884, that:

you must have gone before the Antonello was hung up. You would hardly know it now. I am sure the old “restorations” must have been the work of a man who was painting the window-sashes at the time, and touched up the Antonello as part of the job – This abominable yellow ochre all came away from the sky under [restorer] Dyer’s hands – showing the clear white Van Eyckish sky with all its fine crackle. The light side of this was intact. The left has been a little abraded, discovering some of the light brown ground through it. But Dyer mended this without obliterating the crackle.<sup>67</sup>

This description reveals that, while the overpaint was seen as an unnecessary and injurious addition to the original work—as will be discussed below—the painting’s craquelure was considered a desirable aspect of its history. The aim of the restorer in this case was therefore to remove the additions and repair the losses without sacrificing the craquelure of the original paintwork. However, craquelure was only desirable in older works.<sup>68</sup> On a visit to a private collection in Paris in 1910, Charles Holroyd wrote that ‘I looked very carefully at the

---

<sup>64</sup> A. H. Buttery’s condition report, 7 July 1908, NG, NG7/342/4.

<sup>65</sup> While it was also revealed in March 1909 that the painting was likely to be a modern forgery, this information only came to light after the Board had made the decision to refuse the work: memorandum from A. de Rothschild, 2 March 1909, NG, NG7/354/3.

<sup>66</sup> Taylor, *Condition*, pp. 92–100.

<sup>67</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 11 Sept 1884, HRC, Manuscript Collection MS-0627.

<sup>68</sup> While the ideas of ‘patina’ and ‘mellowness’ had also been seen as desirable criteria for Old Master paintings in the eighteenth century, these appear to have become less significant as the nineteenth century progressed; my research has revealed no reference to these terms by either Agnew’s or the National Gallery during the period in question. S. Gritt, ‘The Removal of Patina’, in M. F. Mecklenburg, A. E. Charola and R. J. Koestler (eds), *New Insights Into the Cleaning of Paintings: Proceedings from the Cleaning 2010 International Conference, Universidad Politecnica de Valencia and Museum Conservation Institute* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 2013), pp. 1–4.

French pictures as I am so anxious to improve our French collection'. However, he concluded that 'One of the most beautiful things there was a small head by Prud'hon. Bust head. but [sic] it was badly crinckled [sic] all over & we could hardly purchase it'.<sup>69</sup> Assuming that this mention of 'crinkling' refers to the wrinkling of the drying paint and the associated craquelure, rather than to the condition of the support, it shows that cracked paintwork was seen as a fault in modern works instead of the desirable quality it was in older works. Despite its beauty and desirability as a painting from a school of art under-represented in the National Gallery, the Prud'hon was understood as being in too poor a condition to be bought.

### ***Pigments and colour***

Changes to the colour of a painting, such as the fading of light-sensitive lake pigments or the darkening of varnishes and oils, were common but often felt to detract strongly from an artwork. Restorer Henry Mogford wrote in the mid-nineteenth century of the Italian Old Masters that 'it would be a gross absurdity to imagine that these great artists ever painted the shades of the flesh of the intense brown and black in which we now find them. Some pictures even have lost all colour'.<sup>70</sup> It was highly preferable for a picture to have remained 'rich and juicy' in colour, as Croal Thomson wrote approvingly in 1898 of a Rembrandt belonging to James Ross of Montreal.<sup>71</sup> The darkening of oil paintings was particularly frowned upon: in 1891, Morland wrote of the picture gallery in Seville that the paintings were exhibited

in a disused convent,— a lofty dampy, & badly rusticated & lighted, room. No wonder they are so black and in such bad condition. There was a foot of water in the room during the floods a few years ago! [...] Pitable to see valuable pictures so badly cared for.<sup>72</sup>

Morland thus placed a strong emphasis on the link between the preservation of the paintings and the conditions in which they were kept, implicitly contrasting the Spanish gallery with

---

<sup>69</sup> Report of the Director's journeys to Paris and Brussels, 13 December 1910, NG, NG7/383/10; Pierre-Paul Prud'hon (1758–1823).

<sup>70</sup> H. Mogford, *Hand-Book for the Preservation of Pictures; Containing Practical Instructions for Cleaning, Lining, Repairing and Restoring Oil Paintings* (London: Windsor and Newton, 1851), p. 7.

<sup>71</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3. This painting was in fact bought by Agnew's in 1927 on the sale of Ross's collection: The Rembrandt Database, *Provenance, Rembrandt, Man in a Fur Lined Coat, c. 1655-1660, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo (Ohio), Inv./Cat. 1977.50* (2017), <http://www.rembrandtdatabase.org/Rembrandt/painting/39164/man-in-a-fur-lined-coat/provenance> [accessed 19 October 2017].

<sup>72</sup> C. M. Agnew, Spain travel diary, 24 March-12 April 1891, NG, NGA27/27/4.

the well-lit (and weather-proof) Agnew's premises. Such problems with the deterioration of media did not apply exclusively to Old Masters, however, but also to more modern and contemporary works. In a letter to *The Times* in 1894, Poynter referred to William Hilton's *Editha and the Monks Searching for the Body of Harold* (exhibited 1834) as being in 'a hopeless condition from the reckless use of asphaltum'.<sup>73</sup> He continued that

it was a stock joke in my student-days, as far back as 1854, that the picture had at intervals to be turned upside down to allow the features of Edith to slip back into their proper place; the picture, in fact, is a complete wreck, and is useless for purpose of exhibition, except as a warning against the use of dangerous pigments.

This example further suggests that works in the national collection sometimes had to be permanently removed from display if their condition deteriorated to the point to which they could no longer be restored.

### ***Varnishes and dirt***

In addition to the types of permanent damage outlined above, dirt and discoloured or darkened varnish were frequently considered an obstructive layer that prevented connoisseurship from being carried out. Lockett Agnew recounted in a 1901 letter to German gallery director Wilhelm von Bode how he had, some eight years previously, been to view a Rembrandt at the country seat of Lord Ashburnham.<sup>74</sup> 'The picture was covered with dirt and grime, and I myself could not recognise the qualities of the picture', Lockett wrote.<sup>75</sup> However, in July 1900 Lockett was invited to inspect the same picture at the house of an unnamed National Gallery Trustee: 'in the meantime the dirt had been removed and the picture came out what - to my mind - is a very fine work of Rembrandt'. Lockett suggested that perhaps Bode's own 'doubts' about the picture had been influenced by the 'bad light' at Ashburnham Place, which could have left the museum director—like Lockett himself—unable to 'judge of its qualities'. As well as forming a physical barrier to connoisseurship, old varnish was also thought to affect the aesthetic qualities of a picture. For example, Burton wrote in 1884 of the cleaning of the da Messina *Christ Crucified* newly acquired by the

---

<sup>73</sup> Now N00333, Tate. Edward J. Poynter, 'The Vernon Collection', *The Times*, 25 August 1894.

<sup>74</sup> On Bode as a connoisseur, see Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*. This picture has not been identified.

<sup>75</sup> W. L. Agnew to W. von Bode, 8 October 1901, SMB-ZA, IV/ NL Bode 6148.

National Gallery—in addition to the previously mentioned praise of its craquelure—that ‘The rest of the picture only required the removal of the loads of varnish and oil – and now the perspective effect is wonderful’.<sup>76</sup> Burton had evidently felt the perspective to have been reduced or flattened by the additional layers above the paintwork, and this debate on the aesthetic role of varnishes in Old Master paintings remains current among contemporary scholars.<sup>77</sup>

It was not always the case that dirt or varnish prevented connoisseurship, however: connoisseurs could also pride themselves on being able to penetrate such layers to see the ‘true’ painting hidden beneath. In 1883, having viewed the paintings in the collection of Fairfax Murray, Burton asked Murray to send him a small panel painting ascribed to Andrea del Castagno, so that ‘I could put it into [restorer] Dyer’s hands, & under my own eye, at the Gallery’.<sup>78</sup> Based on his initial inspection, Burton intended to recommend the picture for purchase by the Gallery, but felt it better for the painting to undergo restoration before exhibiting it to the Trustees. He later wrote again to Murray that Dyer had ‘[put] out a few black specks that were scattered over it, [and] has enormously added to its clearness’.<sup>79</sup> Burton clearly felt that while he was capable of seeing past the dirt on the picture to the true quality hidden beneath, not all of his Trustees would be as perceptive. This strategy was ultimately successful, as the Trustees agreed to the acquisition of the work.<sup>80</sup> The restorer is most likely to have adopted one of the most common techniques used for the removal of varnish in this period, which were a combination of rubbing with the fingers and the application of solvents such as alcohol and turpentine.<sup>81</sup> It seems likely that Agnew’s took a similar attitude to ‘dirty’ pictures. Although no specific reference to the use of such techniques by Agnew’s has been found for this period, it can be assumed from a letter sent in December 1924 that such restoration practices were also adopted in the company’s earlier history:

---

<sup>76</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 11 September 1884, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>77</sup> P. Pfister and M. Favre-Félix, ‘The Pictorial Role of Old Varnishes and the Principle of Their Preservation’, trans. by A. Clarke, *ARIPA Nuances* (2015), <http://www.aripa-revue-nuances.org/articles-revue-nuances/39-etudes-critiques/186-old-varnishes-preservation.html> [accessed 16 January 2017].

<sup>78</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 5 January 1883, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>79</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 28 February 1883, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>80</sup> NG1138. It now bears the attribution ‘Possibly by Francesco Botticini’.

<sup>81</sup> Taylor, *Condition*, pp. 203-205.

Freezor has done all he can to the Lucas. The background is as firm as a rock, and all that we have been able to do is clear up the surface a little bit by taking by means of friction some of the messy varnish. [...] We tried a corner with very strong solvent, and it had practically no effect. After all this, the picture looks very attractive, and I do not think can be improved any more.<sup>82</sup>

The aim for Agnew's when cleaning a picture was evidently to make the work as attractive as possible to prospective buyers.

### ***Restoration and cleaning***

Restoration was generally unwelcome if it had been carried out by someone other than a restorer approved by Agnew's or the National Gallery. The term 'pure' was particularly applied to unrestored works: in 1886, William Agnew wrote that the 'Vandykes, Rembrandts, and Rubens' in the collection of the Prince von Liechtenstein were 'pure and untouched, *not* relined, [...] simply magnificent'.<sup>83</sup> Such 'untouched' paintings were rare, however, and the majority of paintings coming onto the market had undergone some level of restoration, particularly lining.<sup>84</sup> Obvious or clumsy repaint was a particular bugbear, and frowned upon by professionals and amateurs alike. As Sir James Yoxall warned the aspiring amateur connoisseurs who were the target audience of his 1910 volume *The ABC about Collecting*, "Re-touched" usually means re-painted, though "re-touched" is usually supposed to mean merely "restored", mended, worn portions painted over, to renew and brighten up'.<sup>85</sup> Accusatory and inflammatory language was frequently used against the perpetrators of poor restoration: Morland, writing in 1891 about a Titian in the Prado collection, complained that it had been 'much painted on & spoilt by some vandal'.<sup>86</sup> In this case, it was obviously felt that the changes wrought by the restorer were irreversible. Similarly, paintings could also be ruined through over-zealous cleaning: in 1901, Poynter rejected a 'well-known' Botticelli

---

<sup>82</sup> Letter to C. Agnew, 2 December 1924, Letterbook 1, NG, NGA27/11/1. Freezor was presumably a restorer, but I have been unable to trace the name.

<sup>83</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*, p. 34. The paintings in the Liechtenstein Collection are discussed in J. P. O'Neill (ed.), *Liechtenstein: The Princely Collections* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985), Chap. 3.

<sup>84</sup> According to Taylor, despite the associated risks, lining was for a long time considered a 'routine, essential restoration job', carried out on almost all paintings between c.1670 and c.1970: Taylor, *Condition*, pp. 108-109. For a description of the nineteenth-century lining process, see Mogford, *Hand-Book*, pp. 39-48.

<sup>85</sup> J. Yoxall, *The ABC about Collecting* (London: Stanley Paul & Co., 1910), p. 304.

<sup>86</sup> C. M. Agnew, Spain travel diary, 1891, NG, NGA27/27/4.

owned by artist John Rodham Spencer Stanhope and offered for purchase on the basis that 'The composition is a very beautiful one & the painting appears to be by Botticelli's own hand. but there is no doubt that it has suffered by over-cleaning considerably the flesh-tones have virtually disappeared; only the fine design remaining'.<sup>87</sup> The poor condition of this painting therefore superseded its authenticity and beauty. However, overpaint was also sometimes accepted as long as there was no pretence that it was part of the original artwork: Holroyd wrote in his Director's Note on the condition of Masaccio's *Virgin and Child* (NG3046) that 'The picture appears to be in fairly good condition. There are, of course, a great many small repairs that have been rather clumsily touched in, but they are evident and do not deceive'. Despite this and some other issues with the condition of the artwork, Holroyd recommended it as a 'most desirable acquisition', being an example of a 'master [...] very much wanted for the Gallery'.<sup>88</sup> Again, as with dirt or varnish above, here the assumption was that the overpaint could be removed to reveal the 'pure' work of the master beneath.

Given that the connoisseurial assessment of condition appears to have largely depended on whether a picture could or could not be restored, it is worth briefly discussing the practicalities of restoration on works in the ownership of both the National Gallery and Agnew's. Under Eastlake's Directorship, following a series of scandals relating to cleaning practices at the National Gallery while Eastlake had been Keeper, various paintings were restored in Italy directly after acquisition and before display in order to avoid direct public scrutiny.<sup>89</sup> As Director Philip Hendy suggested in the catalogue for the 1947 National Gallery 'Cleaned Pictures' exhibition, 'Cleaning does not provoke criticism unless the public has become fond of the picture in its dirty state'.<sup>90</sup> In London, Eastlake also favoured well-established family firms of restorers, who would work either at the restorers' own premises or in what was sometimes called a 'restoring room' on the ground floor of the

---

<sup>87</sup> Director's report of his visit to Italy, 4 Jul 1901, NG, NG7/257/1.

<sup>88</sup> NG painting dossier for NG3046.

<sup>89</sup> Avery-Quash, 'The Art of Conservation'; G. Bonsanti, 'The Art of Conservation VIII: From Guizzardi to Cavenaghi: Nineteenth-Century Italian Conservators', *The Burlington Magazine*, 158.1365 (2016), pp. 970–972; J. Anderson, 'The First Cleaning Controversy at the National Gallery, 1846–1853', in D. Bomford and M. Leonard (eds), *Issues in the Conservation of Paintings II* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Conservation Institute, 2004), pp. 441–453; S. Keck, 'Some Picture Cleaning Controversies: Past and Present', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 23.2 (1984), pp. 75–79; C. Gould, 'Eastlake and Molteni: The Ethics of Restoration', *The Burlington Magazine*, 116.858 (1974), pp. 530–534.

<sup>90</sup> *An Exhibition of Cleaned Pictures (1936–1947)* ([London]: Printed for the Trustees: The National Gallery, 1947), p. xvi.

National Gallery.<sup>91</sup> During the period under scrutiny in this thesis, it appears that there was a further push for the National Gallery to keep restoration in-house if possible, in order to exercise a greater amount of control over the process.<sup>92</sup> Former Keeper Charles Locke Eastlake specified in an article in 1903 that the most recent policy adopted at the National Gallery under his tenure between 1878 and 1898 had been for ‘the pictures which required attention [to] have been taken down one by one and cleaned at leisure in a studio within the building’.<sup>93</sup> Burton’s 1889 edition of the National Gallery catalogue specified that the 1885-1887 extension of the building included the provision of ‘two large studios or repairing rooms’ on ground-floor level.<sup>94</sup> These rooms appear to have been used by restorers and ‘picture cleaners’ including William Dyer, William Morrill, Ayerst and Horace Buttery, and John and Edward Bentley.<sup>95</sup> Burton wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1883 of Ridolfo Ghirlandaio’s *The Procession to Calvary* (NG1143), recently purchased in Italy and delivered to the National Gallery, that

The picture is in a much worse condition than I had thought, and I shall have it transferred to canvas. Our Morrill performs that operation with surprising skill. He has lately transferred the Ortolano [NG669], which gave him a most difficult job, costing some seven months. But the result was quite triumphant. I am extremely glad I rejected the proposal to have the Ridolfo transferred at Bergamo & restored at Milan, I should not have known what the picture had been.<sup>96</sup>

This suggests that while the National Gallery did still consider using Italian restorers at this point in its history, Burton felt it important to know as much as possible of the conservation history of the paintings being added to the collection.

---

<sup>91</sup> M. Hayes, ‘What Burckhardt Saw: Restoration and the Invention of the Renaissance, c.1840-1904’ (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New York University, 2017), pp. 63–69.

<sup>92</sup> The conservation records in the National Gallery archives become much less comprehensive under Poynter and Holroyd, making it harder to determine conservation practices in this period.

<sup>93</sup> C. L. Eastlake, ‘The Administration of the National Gallery: A Retrospect’, *Nineteenth Century and After*, December 1903, p. 929.

<sup>94</sup> *Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of the Pictures in the National Gallery: With Biographical Notices of the Painters: Foreign Schools*, 74th ed. (London: Printed for Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1889), p. xii.

<sup>95</sup> N. Penny, *The Sixteenth-Century Italian Paintings. Volume II: Venice 1540-1600* (London: National Gallery Company, 2004), pp. xiv–xv. For the bills for restoration work carried out by Buttery, Morrill and Dyer between 1882 and 1923, see Registry files: Conservation, 1882-1923, NG, NG16/338/2. On Bentley’s work at the Gallery, see letter to C. L. Ryan, 30 November 1872, NG, NG6/3/803.

<sup>96</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 18 September 1883, HRC, MS-0627.

It is less clear what restoration practices were employed at Agnew's and how these were carried out, as less detailed records were kept beyond regular references to payments made for 'cleaning', 'polishing' and 'repair' in the company's daybooks and ledgers. A 'Mr Vallance' suggested of Agnew's restoration practice in the early twentieth century that for portraits, it was Lockett's 'almost invariable practice [...] to have the mouth made smaller, with a slight turn up to the corners of the mouth, a dimple & blue shadow', as well as having any cracks or canvas grain on the face removed 'so that when finished the face looked almost quite smooth'.<sup>97</sup> If this anecdote is true, it would seem that Lockett employed restorers to adjust portraits to suit his personal taste and ideas of what was saleable. However, the firm does not appear to have left any consistent records of the restoration carried out on individual paintings. Agnew's certainly did make use of external restorers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: in 1916 Lockett recommended the firm W. Holder and Sons to rival dealer Joseph Duveen, stating that 'I called in Holder, who has been for forty years our principal restorer in England, whose father was restorer to my father, and who has a judgement in the restoration of English Pictures second to none in the work'.<sup>98</sup> In addition, it seems that Agnew's had either always carried out some restoration work in-house, or that at some point chose to dispense with the services of external restorers, as a photograph from 1937 shows that by this date the Bond St gallery featured a workshop where conservation work was presumably carried out (Fig. 1). Given that the firm had advertised itself as a framers since the very earliest years of its operation, both framing and restoration must have been carried out at least partly at the Agnew's premises throughout the company's history.

Given this accepting attitude towards restoration, therefore, it becomes clearer why both the National Gallery and Agnew's would sometimes invest in works that appeared not to be in the best condition. Out of the categories just discussed, it appears that the flaking and cracking of paint was considered one of the most serious issues to affect a painting's condition, presumably because this necessitated more extensive repainting and less of the original artwork remained. On the other hand, dirt and discoloured varnish was a problem

---

<sup>97</sup> Memorandum, 23 March 1943, National Portrait Gallery Archive, NPG 12/1/2. Cited in J. Simon, 'William Holder & Sons', in *British Picture Restorers, 1600-1950* (2015), <http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-british-picture-restorers/british-picture-restorers-1600-1950-d.php#DY> [accessed 20 October 2017].

<sup>98</sup> E. Walmsley, 'Italian Renaissance Paintings Restored in Paris by Duveen Brothers Inc., c.1927-1929', *Facture: Conservation, Science, Art History* 1 (2013), p. 74, note 14; cited in Simon, 'William Holder & Sons'.

that could be relatively easily addressed.<sup>99</sup> As the *Strand Magazine* wrote in 1904, ‘connoisseurship has latterly reached such a pitch of perfection that the prospective bidder [at Christie’s] is able to penetrate the layers of dirt on the surface of a Gainsborough and offer sums for its acquisition sufficient to astonish the frugal householder who has dragged it out of some long disused garret or lumber-room’.<sup>100</sup> The connoisseurship of condition therefore generally hinged upon whether it would be possible to restore the painting to an acceptable state, or whether it was seen as ‘ruined’. Once again, however—as discussed for attribution—there were certain circumstances in which poor condition could be overlooked, such as if a painting had a particularly strong attribution or was seen as especially important. This was the case for Raphael’s *Madonna and Child* (the ‘*Mackintosh Madonna*’) (NG2069), which was presented to the National Gallery by Eva Mackintosh as a gift in 1906. The painting, which was reported to be damaged as early as the eighteenth century, was described by *The Times* on its acquisition by the Gallery as being ‘in poor condition, having evidently been over-cleaned a long time ago’ by a ‘clumsy restorer’.<sup>101</sup> Despite this, because of the work’s attribution to Raphael, Orléans Collection provenance and perceived beauty, the newspaper urged that ‘We must accept it as a damaged Raphael, but a genuine one, and with a sympathetic softness in the forms that is not always present in the master’s panel pictures’. Thus, the condition of the painting was even suggested to add to its aesthetic appeal through its ‘softness’. In addition to attribution, the perceived beauty of the work was therefore key to the acquisition of this painting. This issue of beauty, the third of the key categories of connoisseurship identified for Agnew’s and the National Gallery, will now be discussed.

## Beauty

As in the case of the *Mackintosh Madonna*, aesthetic beauty was often intimately bound up in a circular relationship with the attribution of a painting: a painting attributed to a great master was more likely to be understood as beautiful, while a painting perceived as being

---

<sup>99</sup> That such cleaning was not always successful is revealed by a note in one of the Agnew’s letterbooks: ‘Mr. Humphry Ward – Will not take Mrs B. “Rembrandt” as its cleaning revealed no quality’. Letter to W. L. Agnew, 8 February 1908, NG, NGA27/11/4.

<sup>100</sup> E. S. Valentine, ‘Christie’s’, *Strand Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly*, June 1904, p. 649.

<sup>101</sup> ‘The Nation’s New Raphael’, *The Times*, 3 April 1906; C. Gould, *The Sixteenth Century Italian Schools (Excluding the Venetian)* (London: National Gallery, 1962), p. 154.

beautiful was more likely to be attributed to a master.<sup>102</sup> However, while the theoretical attitudes to beauty of Victorian art critics such as Ruskin and Pater have received much scholarly attention, much less has been written on beauty as a criterion for commercial and museological acquisitions.<sup>103</sup> Of course, the concepts of beauty and taste in art are subjective and notoriously difficult to define.<sup>104</sup> Drawing on the ideas of Nelson Goodman, Aaron Kozbelt and James C. Kaufman have argued that artworks are ‘replete’, in the sense that virtually any aspect of their formal qualities can be relevant and important for their aesthetic assessment.<sup>105</sup> Yet the beauty and aesthetic merit of a painting was an important connoisseurial consideration, with repeated references to such considerations throughout the sources surveyed. In general, it will be demonstrated that both institutions—particularly Agnew’s, which relied on its stock being visually appealing to clients—preferred, where possible, to acquire paintings that were felt to be beautiful rather than ugly.

There had been many attempts to define beauty in art throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Because of its strong connoisseurial perspective and long-lasting impact, one of the most relevant here is Jonathan Richardson’s discussion ‘Of the Goodness of a Picture, &c.’, in which he attempted to impose a framework on the judgement of beauty.<sup>106</sup> Richardson listed, in order of importance, the considerations ‘Grace and Greatness, Invention, Expression, Composition, Colouring, Drawing, Handling’, advising that the connoisseur should score each of these categories on the basis of advantage, pleasure and the sublime. Each of these categories was given a definition, although the concepts of ‘grace and greatness’ and the ‘sublime’ were left the most open, appealing largely to the

---

<sup>102</sup> This phenomenon has previously been discussed in the context of Gilded Age American collecting: J. Brewer, ‘Evaluating Valuation: Connoisseurship, Technology and Art Attribution in an American Court of Law’, in A. Berthoin Antal, M. Hutter and D. Stark (eds), *Moments of Valuation: Exploring Sites of Dissonance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), p. 93.

<sup>103</sup> See, for example, E. Prettejohn, *Beauty and Art 1750-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Chap. 3. The related but ‘vague entity’ of ‘style’ is touched upon by Whitehead in relation to the earlier history of the National Gallery: Whitehead, ‘Architectures of Display’, pp. 190-194.

<sup>104</sup> P. C. Hogan, ‘The Idiosyncrasy of Beauty: Aesthetic Universals and the Diversity of Taste’, in P. F. Bundgaard and F. Stjernfelt (eds), *Investigations Into the Phenomenology and the Ontology of the Work of Art* (Cham: Springer, 2015), pp. 109–127.

<sup>105</sup> A. Kozbelt and J. C. Kaufman, ‘Aesthetics Assessment’, in P. P. L. Tinio and J. K. Smith (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Psychology of Aesthetics and the Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 90.

<sup>106</sup> Here I refer to the 1792 corrected edition of Richardson’s collected works: J. Richardson, *The Works of Jonathan Richardson. Containing I. The Theory of Painting. II. Essay on the Art of Criticism (So Far as It Relates to Painting). III. The Science of a Connoisseur* (London: Strawberry Hill, 1792), pp. 19-95; 106-29. These distinctions are discussed, with especial reference to the influence of Roger de Piles, in Gibson-Wood, *Jonathan Richardson*, pp. 187–192.

emotional and spiritual responses of the viewer.<sup>107</sup> However, having roughly defined these categories, even Richardson admitted that they are to be judged ‘more or less as my fancy, judgement, or other circumstances happen to be; these considerations are purely personal, and every man must judge for himself’.<sup>108</sup> He also emphasised that a picture might be judged as

excellent [...] though the drawing be as incorrect as that of Correggio, Titian, or Rubens; the colouring as disagreeable as that of Polydore [Polidoro], Baptista [Battista] Franco, or Michelangelo. Nay, though there is no other good than that of the colouring, and the pencil, I will dare to pronounce it a good picture; that is, that it is good in those respects.<sup>109</sup>

Both of these statements highlight to what extent a painting was judged on its individual merits, according to the individual tastes and preferences of the connoisseur. Judgements relating to Richardson’s categories, as well as the caveats regarding subjectivity, are frequently found throughout the sources relating to both the National Gallery and Agnew’s. The discussion of beauty here will therefore include such aspects often deemed commensurate with the concept, including artistic skill such as drawing, composition, colouration and paint handling.

With Richardson’s categories of beauty in mind, it is clear that the aesthetic appeal of a painting was often expressed by the staff at Agnew’s and the National Gallery in similarly technical, artistic terms, and could have a strong impact upon whether or not an artwork was acquired. In 1910, for example, Holroyd explained why he did not recommend the purchase of two portraits by seventeenth-century Flemish painter Pieter Meert that he had travelled to Brussels to examine.<sup>110</sup> ‘The pictures were full of character and a nice impasto of paint, but were not quite well drawn’, wrote Holroyd. In addition, ‘they were flat faced. The noses did not project properly from the face & chin. It is a frequent fault and always annoys me

---

<sup>107</sup> L. Hamlett and H. Bonett, ‘Sublime Portraiture: Jonathan Richardson’s Portrait of the Artist’s Son, Jonathan Richardson Junior, in His Study and Anthony van Dyck’s Portrait of Mary Hill, Lady Killigrew’, in N. Llewellyn and C. Riding (eds), *The Art of the Sublime* ([online publication]: Tate Research, 2013), <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/the-sublime/lydia-hamlett-and-helena-bonett-sublime-portraiture-jonathan-richardsons-portrait-of-the-r1138671> [accessed 21 October 2017].

<sup>108</sup> Richardson, *The Works of Jonathan Richardson*, p. 127.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

<sup>110</sup> Report of the Director’s journeys to Paris and Brussels, 13 December 1910, NG, NG7/383/10. These paintings were presumably exhibits 256, *Portrait d’homme*, and 257, *Portrait de femme*, at the 1910 Exposition d’art ancien, although I have been unable to trace them any further: *Exposition d’art ancien. L’art belge au XVIIe siècle. Bruxelles — 1910 juin-novembre* (Brussels: G. van Oest & Cie., 1912), p. 85.

particularly. They were not good colour'. In this case, therefore, while the expression and paint handling were good, the problems with the drawing and colour were deemed too severe for the works to be worthy of the National Gallery collection. Similarly, while evidently not available for purchase, Morland wrote extensively of his impressions of the paintings that he saw on his visit to the 'Madrid Gallery' (the Prado) in 1891.<sup>111</sup> In Velazquez, Morland saw 'plenty of imaginative power' and, although 'his pictures are inclined to be dark and black', 'he could use colour when so disposed'. However, the painter's composition was occasionally felt wanting: 'The large family group, called "Las Meninas", very celebrated, did not fetch me, but rather struck me as a bad composition & uninteresting, & it is very dull'. Both of these examples show how multiple factors fed into the connoisseurship of beauty for the staff at both institutions, with each consideration being weighed against each other to determine the overall impression of a work.

In particular, the priority placed on realism as a facet of beauty—discussed by Richardson under the category of 'Grace and Greatness'—is difficult to determine, given that differing standards appear to have been applied for different schools and genres of painting.<sup>112</sup> In his *Ten Lectures on Art*, first published in 1879 before he had become National Gallery Director, Poynter stressed the importance of realism, or fidelity to nature and natural subjects: 'the highest Beauty is attained by the highest application of the realistic or imitative faculty. Truth I have affirmed to be the essential of Beauty; how is truth in art to be arrived at but by the power of realising the beauties of Nature to the utmost?'.<sup>113</sup> On the other hand, by this later point in the nineteenth century interest was also growing in the historical importance of the Italian, Netherlandish and—to a lesser extent—German 'primitives'.<sup>114</sup> Somewhat paradoxically, Poynter thus emphasised that the

---

<sup>111</sup> C. M. Agnew, Spain travel diary, 1891, NG, NGA27/27/4.

<sup>112</sup> Richardson, *The Works of Jonathan Richardson*, pp. 72–73.

<sup>113</sup> E. J. Poynter, *Ten Lectures on Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1880), p. 39. The link between beauty, truth and nature is discussed more fully, with particular regard to nineteenth-century French art theory, in C. Lindey, *Keywords of Nineteenth-Century Art* (Bristol: Art Dictionaries, 2006), pp. 37–44.

<sup>114</sup> To a certain extent, the attitudes of the National Gallery in particular were still coloured by prejudice against the aesthetic qualities of earlier art: S. Avery-Quash, 'The Growth of Interest in Early Italian Painting in Britain', in D. Gordon (ed.), *The Fifteenth-Century Italian Paintings. Volume 1* (London: National Gallery Company, 2003), pp. xxiv–xliv; it has also been argued that the dismissive attitudes of Charles Lock Eastlake and the Directors who followed him towards earlier German art were a direct result of their aesthetic judgments of such works: J. Nuechterlein, 'German Renaissance Art through the Eyes of the NG', *The Burlington Magazine*, 156.1331 (2014): pp. 76–84.

whole of the best art of Europe from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries shows one continuous struggle to get nearer to the realization of the splendid effects of roundness and solidity of Nature; the beauty and grandeur of the work of those early masters depending on something quite different from the fact that their pictures are painted with flat colours and without perspective.<sup>115</sup>

Beauty in these earlier works therefore seems to have been judged on a different set of criteria from those of the High Renaissance and later, suggesting an understanding of the historical context of such objects. This seeming double standard was often applied when carrying out connoisseurial assessments of works being considered for acquisition. For example, Burton wrote in 1876 of his admiration for the earlier 'Italian & old German' works in the large bequest made to the Gallery by art collector Wynn[e] Ellis:

These old fellows are certainly masters in composition beyond compare - & that respect may be studied with advantage by anybody. For it [...] is perhaps the quality in which the moderns are least often successful – Being indeed in my opinion, the highest quality of all that is more technical, & the most intimately connected with the higher aesthetic demands of art.<sup>116</sup>

In the same letter, Burton also praised a Mantegna in the collection of Lord Elcho for its beauty but for vastly different reasons, calling it 'So noble & sweet in character – beautiful in design, & harmonious & original in colouring'.<sup>117</sup> This shows that while Burton felt it possible to see beauty in such differing schools of art, the foundations for these judgements were very different in either case. The National Gallery's interest in acquiring a range of paintings will be discussed more fully below in the section on representativeness and importance.

Meanwhile, the writings of William and Morland frequently display a moral, spiritual and religious response to artistic beauty that is largely lacking from the National Gallery sources. This can perhaps be attributed to the official nature of many of these texts: while the Directors and Trustees may well have experienced such responses, they may have been

---

<sup>115</sup> Poynter, *Ten Lectures*, pp. 28–29.

<sup>116</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 19 February 1876, HRC, MS-0627. The Board Minutes record that 'Out of the 403 pictures bequeathed by the late Mr Wynn Ellis, the Trustees and Director selected ninety four works, by 56 masters': Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1871-1886, NG, NG1/5, p. 76; G. C. Boase and A. McConnell, 'Ellis, Wynne (1790–1875)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8722>.

<sup>117</sup> This was presumably the *Virgin and Child* now attributed to Francesco Bonsignori, acquired at the May 1872 Prince Napoleon sale at Christie's and still in the Gosford House collection: S. Wemyss, 'Francis, Lord Elcho (10th Earl of Wemyss) as a Collector of Italian Old Masters', *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History*, 8 (2003), p. 75.

perceived as private feelings rather than official justifications for the acquisition of a work for the national collection. In addition, Poynter's *Ten Lectures* stated that 'the moral nature of beauty is of a kind that cannot be expressed in painting or sculpture; that therefore, as far as art is concerned, ideas of beauty are and must be purely aesthetic'.<sup>118</sup> Conversely, William Agnew wrote on a visit to Dresden in 1886 that

For forty years I have longed to see *the* Raffaele [the *Sistine Madonna*].<sup>119</sup> Strange as it may seem, I scarcely dared to look at it on Sunday, and when at last I sat before it, I felt as though my brain were shaken, and that I might under its influence turn to Rome; and I said to the Mother, that if anything could bend or break my Protesting spirit, that picture could. To attempt its literal description were as hopeless as to attempt an analysis of the mystery of life.<sup>120</sup>

This type of aesthetic experience, blurring the lines between religious and museum space, has been framed by Michelle Henning as a quasi-religious experience; equally, the idea that Catholic works could tempt Protestants towards the Church of Rome had been a concern throughout the later nineteenth century.<sup>121</sup> Despite Poynter's rejection of the moral nature of beauty in art, Agnew's effusion seems closer to the earlier nineteenth-century spiritual discourse on artists such as the Italian 'primitives', prevalent in writers like John Ruskin and Anna Jameson, than to the newly developing, 'scientific' ideals of connoisseurship.<sup>122</sup> However, it is extremely difficult to determine to what extent these intense responses to art affected connoisseurial decisions relating to the company: while it is hard to imagine that they did not have some bearing on the types of painting that were or were not selected for purchase, it is also probable that the Agnew's staff were able to distinguish between their personal tastes or responses to a painting, and the hard-nosed business decisions of what was likely to sell well.

---

<sup>118</sup> Poynter, *Ten Lectures*, p. 84.

<sup>119</sup> Inv. no. Gal.-Nr. 93, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden.

<sup>120</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*, p. 47; Agnew's comments form part of an extensive historiography of the admiration of Raphael, and the Sistine Madonna in particular. Over a century before, in 1756, Johann Joachim Winckelmann had written movingly of his emotional involvement with the work as encountered in Dresden: M. Rosenberg, *Raphael and France: The Artist as Paradigm and Symbol* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), pp. 120-122.

<sup>121</sup> M. Henning, 'With and without Walls: Photographic Reproduction and the Art Museum', in M. Henning (ed.), *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies, Volume 3: Museum Media* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), p. 585; T. Ledger, 'A Study of the Arundel Society 1848-1897' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1979), p. 41.

<sup>122</sup> M. T. W. Plampin, 'From Rio to Romola: Morality and Didacticism in the English Appreciation of Early Italian Art 1836-1863' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2001); A. Clarke, 'The Rediscovery of Fra Angelico in Nineteenth-Century Britain' (unpublished MA thesis, Warburg Institute, University of London, 2014), pp. 11-23.

Meanwhile, the National Gallery might have been expected to consider moral issues in relation to the connoisseurship of pictures depicting nudity or other 'immoral' subject matter. Earlier in the Gallery's history, under Eastlake's Directorship, paintings such as Bronzino's *Allegory with Venus and Cupid* (NG651) were overpainted to censor Venus' erogenous zones and render the works suitable for display, while various pictures featuring overt nudity were apparently refused for acquisition as unsuitable for public display.<sup>123</sup> However, little evidence has surfaced to suggest that such considerations were taken into account under Burton and the Directors who followed him when considering whether to acquire works. The issue occasionally surfaced in the public arena: for example, a 'Member of the National Art-Collections Fund' wrote to *The Times* in 1905 to protest that the National Gallery would be failing in its duty to elevate public taste by placing on its walls 'this highly realistic study of a nude Spanish dancer'.<sup>124</sup> The National Gallery's subsequent acquisition of the Velazquez *Rokeby Venus* (NG2057), however, shows its disregard of this viewpoint. None of the reasons found for rejecting a picture, either in private correspondence or official documentation, mention issues of moral unsuitability; the only reference to moral considerations that has been found is a passing mention by Fairfax Murray of 'a very fine Flemish picture of the "garden of love" in the manner of Cranach too naked for the Gallery but the most perfect Flemish made picture'.<sup>125</sup> There is therefore little suggestion that such factors played a large part in the National Gallery's connoisseurial decisions to acquire or reject works in either the late nineteenth or the early twentieth centuries.<sup>126</sup>

### ***Portraiture***

Finally, a specific aspect of the connoisseurship of beauty often considered important by both the National Gallery and Agnew's—although absent from the precepts laid down by Richardson—was the perceived physical attractiveness of portrait sitters. Fairfax Murray wrote of a sale held at Christie's in 1888 that two 'genuine' portraits by Gainsborough 'sold one for over £2000 & the other for about £1000 although both were much damaged it is

---

<sup>123</sup> Avery-Quash, 'The Art of Conservation', p. 852; A. Smith, *The Victorian Nude: Sexuality, Morality and Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp. 77–83.

<sup>124</sup> 'A Member of the National Art-Collections Fund', 'The Rokeby Venus', *The Times*, 25 November 1905.

<sup>125</sup> C. Fairfax Murray to F. Burton, 6 December 1877, NG, NG54/9.

<sup>126</sup> The display of such works is a slightly more complicated matter, and will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 4.

needless to say they were young & pretty women'.<sup>127</sup> Notably, the second of these works fell to Agnew's: the beauty of portrait sitters was a particular consideration for Agnew's, as portraits made up an important part of the firm's business and it was felt that buyers would be more interested in portraits of attractive sitters.<sup>128</sup> For example, Morland wrote in his valuation notes of a Reynolds portrait of the Hon. Mrs Beckford in the Hamilton Collection: 'Very unattractive woman, but quality good. Should think not saleable'.<sup>129</sup> Here, Morland specifically linked the unsaleability of the works to the unattractiveness of the sitter, which overrode the overall 'quality' of the picture. The beauty of portrait subjects was also a factor for the National Gallery: for example, Trustee Alfred de Rothschild felt that only portraits that featured attractive sitters—particularly if female—were worth acquiring by the Gallery.<sup>130</sup> This attitude is exemplified in an 1897 discussion over a Bronzino offered for sale to the Gallery, and examined in direct comparison with a portrait of a lady already in the collection and then attributed to Bronzino.<sup>131</sup> While Poynter held the potential acquisition to be 'the best portrait by Bronzino which he knew and thoroughly representative of the Master', Rothschild argued that the 'features and expression of the person represented were plain and uninteresting'.<sup>132</sup> On this and other grounds he considered it a very unattractive and indeed ugly picture and was decidedly opposed to its purchase'; as a result of this split in attitudes, the painting was ultimately not purchased.

This episode highlights one of the major problems caused by the subjective nature of the connoisseurial assessment of beauty: the difficulty in convincing others in the event of a

---

<sup>127</sup> C. Fairfax Murray to W. Spanton, 15 May 1888, DPG. 'Art Sales', *The Times*, 14 May 1888.

<sup>128</sup> The portrait bought by Agnew's is now in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, still attributed to Gainsborough: Google Cultural Institute, *Elizabeth Wrottesley, Later Duchess of Grafton - Thomas Gainsborough - Google Arts & Culture*,

<https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/asset/elizabeth-wrottesley-later-duchess-of-grafton/9QFI9xAAcwoJMw> [accessed 10 November 2017]. Portraits featured heavily in the firm's annual 'masterpieces' shows after 1895, a topic that will be addressed in more detail in Chapter 5.

<sup>129</sup> C. M. Agnew, *Collections*, Volume I, NG, NGA27/29/1, p. 32. Now LL3125, Lady Lever Gallery.

<sup>130</sup> On Rothchild's collecting taste, see J. Conlin, 'Butlers and Boardrooms: Alfred de Rothschild as Collector and Connoisseur', *The Rothschild Archive Review of the Year April 2005 to March 2006* (n.d.), p. 29 in particular.

<sup>131</sup> The comparative portrait was NG650, now accepted as 'Italian, Florentine'.

<sup>132</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1 March 1886-1 June 1897, NG, NG1/6, p. 345. The portrait offered for acquisition by dealers Messrs. Laurie & Co. was reportedly from the collection of Prince Sciarra and may well be the 'unknown portrait' ['ritratto incognito'] depicted in a photograph in this catalogue: F. P. Michetti and L. Vicchi, *Dieci quadri della Galleria Sciarra* (Rome: Stab. tipografico della "Tribuna": 1889). However, I have been unable to access a copy to confirm this. On Laurie & Co., see P. Fletcher and D. Israel, 'Lawrie's Gallery', *London Gallery Project* (2012), <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/fletcher/london-gallery/data/pages/as565.html> [accessed 8 December 2016].

disagreement. For the National Gallery, purchasing decisions had been a relatively nominal process until the 1890s, with Andrea Geddes Poole characterising the Board of Trustees under Burton as ‘a rubber stamp’, there largely to approve his own connoisseurial judgements.<sup>133</sup> However, the implementation of the so-called ‘Rosebery Minute’ in 1894 broadened responsibility for purchasing decisions from the Director alone to the whole of the Board of Trustees. Following this change in the rules, Poynter and Holroyd had to convince the Board to agree unanimously with the Director’s opinion. This resulted in an increasingly acrimonious relationship between Director and Board, the result of which was the failure to acquire many paintings which just the Director or some of the Trustees had believed to be worthy of the national collection.<sup>134</sup> From this point onwards, the subjective nature of connoisseurship sat even less easily with the bureaucratic management of the National Gallery.

## **Further criteria of connoisseurship**

### ***Representativeness and importance***

Having emphasised the importance of the ‘triumvirate’ of connoisseurship—*attribution, condition and beauty*—it is notable that there were cases in which even these criteria were not the most significant. For the National Gallery, the issues of representativeness and historical importance were also key. These were related but subtly different concepts, both stemming from the National Gallery’s mandate to trace the history of the development of Western art and to continue to fill any ‘gaps’ in this history. This aim had first been clearly defined in a 1853 Select Committee report, which stated that:

in order to understand or profit by the great works, either of the ancient or modern schools of art, it is necessary to contemplate the genius which produced them, not merely in its final results, but in the mode of its operation, in its rise and progress, as well as in its perfection.<sup>135</sup>

The resultant criteria of importance and representativeness were emphasised in the 1914 report of the committee convened by Lord Curzon to address the issue of paintings from

---

<sup>133</sup> Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation’s Art*, p. 80.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 79-91; 118-120.

<sup>135</sup> Select Committee on the National Gallery, *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery* (HC 1853, 867), p. xvi; the complicated nature of this mandate, and the practical difficulties in fulfilling it, are explored more fully in Conlin, *The Nation’s Mantelpiece*, Chap. 5.

British collections being sold overseas, particularly to America.<sup>136</sup> Appendix VII of the report listed painters ‘unrepresented in the National Gallery’, and therefore of prime importance for acquisition. Appendix VIII, meanwhile, listed artists who:

though represented in the National Gallery, are quite imperfectly represented there. The cause of this inadequate representation may be that only as comparatively unimportant, or by no means characteristic, picture alone appears in the collection, or, in cases where the importance of the artist or the variety of his subjects is such, and the changes of style in the course of his development have been so great, that to represent him adequately examples of the chief subjects and periods of his artistic activity should be available.<sup>137</sup>

‘Importance’, sometimes also referred to as ‘interest’, therefore related to the fact that the National Gallery collection should represent both major, well-established artists in the canon, and less well-known painters whose pictures were demonstrative of the links between schools or chronologies.<sup>138</sup> Meanwhile, ‘representativeness’ related to the extent to which an artwork was ‘representative’ or ‘characteristic’ within a particular artist’s oeuvre or a general school of painting. These were significant considerations because the National Gallery collection was supposed to be an overview that only had space for a limited number of works by each artist — although, as will be shown below, this did not always apply in practice.

Paintings that were felt to be of lesser overall quality—with regard to attribution, condition or beauty—could in some cases be accepted by the National Gallery on the basis of their importance or representativeness.<sup>139</sup> For example, a sixteenth-century Italian painting of

---

<sup>136</sup> H. Rees, ‘Art Exports and the Construction of National Heritage in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Great Britain’, in N. de Marchi and C. D. W. Goodwin (eds), *Economic Engagements with Art* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. 187–208; Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation’s Art*, Chap. 6.

<sup>137</sup> *Report of the Committee of Trustees of the National Gallery, Appointed by the Trustees to Enquire into the Retention of Important Pictures in This Country and Other Matters Connected with the National Art Collections* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1914), p. 4.

<sup>138</sup> Although the term ‘canon’ has only relatively recently come into usage with regard to art, hierarchical categorisation by schools and artists stretches back at least as far as Vasari: H. Locher, ‘The Idea of the Canon and Canon Formation in Art History’, in Matthew Rampley et al. (eds), *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), pp. 29–40; on the further development of the Old Master canon in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, see M. McCue, *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793–1840* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), Chap. 3.

<sup>139</sup> C. Whitehead, ‘Establishing the Manifesto: Art Histories in the Nineteenth-Century Museum’, in S. J. Knell, S. MacLeod and S. Watson (eds), *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), p. 54.

three women making music (NG2903) was inspected by the Board and accepted for the collection in 1912.<sup>140</sup> Regarding this acquisition, Trustee R. H. Benson stated in his 1914 memorandum on the gaps in the National Gallery's collection that 'We recently accepted a triple portrait by bequest from Lady Lindsay – not by Palma but by his Protean pupil Cariani – sorely damaged by time, cleaning and restoration, but which, hung high and in the half light, would serve to show another phase of this great colourist'.<sup>141</sup> There were evidently serious concerns regarding the condition of this painting, as Benson wrote privately to Holroyd that although Dyer could attempt to 'remove some of the repaint [...] It may be such a wreck underneath that we may want to do no more than remove the smudges & let only some of the damage of time appear'.<sup>142</sup> The identity of the donor may well have played a part in the decision to accept the work, given that the collection had been inherited from the well-respected aristocratic art collector Alexander Lindsay, the 25th Earl of Crawford.<sup>143</sup> However, the bequest was also evidently accepted—despite its poor condition, and the downgrade in attribution from Palma Vecchio to Cariani—because of the importance of the painting to the narrative being told by the National Gallery about the development of Western art. The exposition of this narrative through display will be further expounded in Chapter 4.

As mentioned above, however, the National Gallery's emphasis on under-represented schools and artists was not always upheld in practice, as the institution often acquired multiple paintings by artists who ranked highly in the canon or who were already represented in the collection. In his 1914 memorandum, Benson recommended the purchase of 'better' examples of various masters, even where these were as well-represented in the National Gallery as Jacob van Ruisdael — by whom the National Gallery already owned 21 works. Benson held that for the 'greatest masters whose work can hardly be over-

---

<sup>140</sup> Attributed to Palma Vecchio while in the Lindsays' collection, the painting has since been variously attributed to Lotto, Pordenone and Bonifazio, and now goes by the attribution of 'Italian, Venetian': NG, Dossier for NG2903. It is not clear at what date the reattribution away from Palma Vecchio was officially made by the National Gallery.

<sup>141</sup> R. H. Benson, memorandum entitled 'A Sketch of Deficiencies in the National Gallery Collections', 5 May 1914, NG, NG7/445/1 (i), p. 18. On Benson's personal collecting, see C. Sebag-Montefiore, 'R. H. Benson as a Collector', in J. Wake, *Kleinwort Benson: The History of Two Families in Banking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), Appendix 3; N. Harris, 'The Long Good-Bye: Heritage and Threat in Anglo-America', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections across the Pond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 205-6.

<sup>142</sup> R. H. Benson to C. Holroyd, 13 November 1912, NG, NG7/410/9.

<sup>143</sup> H. Brigstocke, 'Lord Lindsay as a Collector', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 64.2 (1982), pp. 287–333.

represented in the Gallery, the only question is to determine the quality of the execution in relation to the subject'.<sup>144</sup> This shows that although Benson's report was ostensibly couched at improving the National Gallery's collection from the point of view of the representation of a broad range of artists and periods, in reality the institution's collecting policy continued to rely heavily on judgements of attribution, condition and beauty.

### ***Saleability***

Compared to the National Gallery, Agnew's was less concerned about whether a painting offered for purchase was particularly representative or important from an art historical perspective. However, the firm did have the added consideration—vital to its continued survival—of whether pictures would sell; as a result, the terms 'saleable' and 'unsaleable' were frequently used throughout the sources scrutinised. On the surface, 'saleability' appears to be relatively easy to define as 'the [...] facility with which [goods or wares] can be disposed of at a market at any convenient time at current purchasing prices'.<sup>145</sup> However, saleability is also a highly unstable concept for the secondary art market, particularly given the fluctuations in both the supply of and demand for various artworks throughout this period.<sup>146</sup> The staff at Agnew's therefore had to work hard to build up an in-depth knowledge of clients' tastes and requirements, as well as staying abreast of what pictures were being offered for sale or might in future come onto the market, in order to ensure that the firm invested in suitable pictures for its clients. Morland, for example, kept four volumes of indexed notes on private collectors, a habit that he passed on to his son Gerald.<sup>147</sup> This customer-oriented approach exploited the nature of the artworks in which Agnew's dealt as unique products that elicited a personal and subjective response in their clients.<sup>148</sup> Once an understanding had been built up of the artistic interests of a particular client, Agnew's could then start to prioritise the company's own acquisitions in a particular area. This is exemplified by the tactics of Croal Thomson on his 1898 tour around the United States and Canada: he wrote of J. Montgomery Sears of Boston, for example, that:

---

<sup>144</sup> R. H. Benson, memorandum entitled 'A Sketch of Deficiencies', 1914, NG, NG7/445/1 (i), pp. 1-3.

<sup>145</sup> K. Menger, 'On the Origin of Money', *The Economic Journal*, 2.6 (1892), p. 244.

<sup>146</sup> These aspects of the art market will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5.

<sup>147</sup> Morland's collection books can be found at NG, NGA27/29/1-4; those of Gerald at NG, NGA27/29/5-10.

<sup>148</sup> S. Botti, 'What Role for Marketing in the Arts? An Analysis of Arts Consumption and Artistic Value', *International Journal of Arts Management*, 2.3 (2000), pp. 19–20.

He is a buyer of Clouet, Vandyke [sic] and Rubens and also Rossetti and Whistler, and promises to let us hear when he comes to London, during the season, and if we have anything that will suit him he will call. He is very rich and his house could contain many more pictures.<sup>149</sup>

Based on this assessment, Agnew's could invest in works by these artists with a renewed confidence that there was an audience of (rich) American buyers for such pictures. Saleability was therefore, at least to a certain extent, related to individual clients.

However, Agnew's did not always buy with a particular client in mind, and the firm therefore had to keep track of current market trends to ensure that the works in which it invested would be likely to sell easily and at a good price. Morland's notes on private collectors made frequent references to pictures being 'saleable' or 'unsaleable', drawing strongly on the three major criteria of attribution, condition and beauty. For other paintings, factors in addition to attribution, condition and beauty fed into saleability. As mentioned above, for the Reynolds portrait of the Hon. Mrs Beckford the obstacle to acquisition was the perceived unattractiveness of the sitter. In addition, artworks needed to be of a suitable size to be displayed in the domestic environment for which a private client would probably intend them.<sup>150</sup> Such issues were noted by contemporaries: as the *Times* wrote of the Grant sale in April 1877, 'Several of the finest pictures fell in price in consequence of being of such large dimensions that few houses could possibly find rooms large enough to hang them, especially when those who would like to possess them have already crowded their walls with fine things'.<sup>151</sup> Morland noted of a Raeburn portrait of the 10th Duke of Hamilton, again in the Hamilton collection, that it was

Standing, with his horse, in landscape Should be worth 4000 to 4500 [£]

Man good quality, but too much of the horse

About 96 x 72 [inches] – should think unsaleable, owing to unwieldy size.<sup>152</sup>

The large size of the canvas was therefore the major factor in Morland's assessment of the painting as probably unsaleable. Strangely enough, in 1919 this same 'unsaleable' portrait of the Duke of Hamilton was sold to Agnew's at auction.<sup>153</sup> Given that Morland had by this point

---

<sup>149</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3, p. 68.

<sup>150</sup> Findlay, *The Value of Art*, 16. While Agnew's did sell works to museum clients such as the National Gallery and the Kaiser Friedrich Museum in Berlin, which would have had the space to display larger works, from a purely numerical perspective these sales appear to have been relatively negligible.

<sup>151</sup> 'Art Sales', *The Times*, 30 April 1877.

<sup>152</sup> C. M. Agnew, Collections, Volume I, NG, NGA27/29/1, p. 32.

<sup>153</sup> 'Hamilton Palace Pictures', *The Times*, 7 November 1919.

retired from the firm, this highlights the subjective nature of the concept of saleability: what might have seemed unsaleable to one partner at a particular point in time, had become saleable to another some decades later. The assessment of saleability by the Agnew's staff was therefore a complex connoisseurial process that required detailed knowledge not only of artworks but also of the market for art.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has drawn on a range of published and unpublished sources in an attempt to determine what criteria the staff of the National Gallery and Agnew's were seeking to judge through the practice of connoisseurship. It has demonstrated that the three key criteria—the 'triumvirate of connoisseurship'—for both institutions were attribution, condition and beauty. While each of these criteria can be further broken down into multiple aspects, if a painting was severely deficient in any of these three key areas then it was unlikely to be acquired by either Agnew's or the National Gallery. In addition, because of their differing remits as public and private enterprises, the National Gallery had to consider the additional connoisseurial issues of representativeness and importance, while Agnew's was also concerned with the saleability of the pictures bought by the firm. Having now established the 'what' of connoisseurship, this thesis has not yet gone as far as to discuss the 'where' and the 'how': the spaces and practice of connoisseurship will form the basis of Chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

## Chapter 2: The spatial inputs of connoisseurship

Chapter 1 has established a broad definition of connoisseurship by drawing on available textual descriptions of what the practice was intended to judge. However, as will be demonstrated below, such sources are less reliable when it comes to the analysis of the practice itself: reconstructing how connoisseurship was carried out. This chapter will therefore propose an alternative, spatial, approach to this traditional, textual method of analysis. It will begin by discussing the increased mobility of both artworks and people towards the end of the nineteenth century, arguing that this facilitated the particular methods of connoisseurship to be outlined in Chapter 3. It will then break down the spaces in which Agnew's and the National Gallery carried out connoisseurship into a range of categories, largely based around the private or public nature of these spaces. Finally, it will identify a number of common factors across these spaces that affected connoisseurship and thus contributed to the application of a strongly visual style of analysis.

As mentioned in the overall introduction to this thesis, the spaces in which connoisseurship was carried out have largely been overlooked to date, with much literature on connoisseurship considering at face value the theoretical approaches set out by self-professed connoisseurs such as Morelli or Berenson.<sup>1</sup> An alternative, but equally non-spatial, approach has been to judge the outcome of connoisseurship by comparing former and current attributions.<sup>2</sup> However, as already mentioned, attribution is treated here as conceptually unstable and subject to ongoing discussion and debate. As argued in Chapter 1, the criteria of condition and beauty are also largely ignored by the literature on connoisseurship. Meanwhile, most spatial research in the art field exhibits an overwhelming focus on display techniques within public museums or purpose-built domestic galleries, while tending to ignore the actors and the role of the connoisseurship that took place within these spaces. For example, while Julia Noordegraaf argues that 'the museum was first and foremost designed for the production and dissemination of knowledge among a specialised audience of scholars, artists, craftsmen and connoisseurs', she largely fails to unpick how

---

<sup>1</sup> Hatt and Klonk, *Art History*, Chap. 5. For a rare exception, see Tucker, 'Eyesight, Knowledge, Argument', p. 127, where Tucker deals briefly with the 'visual scrutiny and analysis' practised by Fairfax Murray.

<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Locatelli, 'Italian Painters'.

these connoisseurs would have interacted with, and judged, the works on display.<sup>3</sup> This approach results in the consideration of connoisseurship as a sterile, unsituated practice, which appears to take place entirely within the brain of the connoisseur. In contrast, this chapter will stress the physical aspects of the spaces in which connoisseurship was practised, alongside the common factors affecting connoisseurship across these spaces. Chapter 3 will go on to consider how these spaces affected the methodologies of applied—as opposed to theoretical—connoisseurship, thus highlighting the gap between them.

The textual sources used in Chapter 1 were invaluable for the definition of connoisseurship as practised by staff at Agnew’s and the National Gallery, particularly in broadening the reach of the term beyond its usual narrow remit of determining attribution to encompass judgements on a range of criteria such as beauty, condition, importance and saleability. However, it is when such sources are used as a basis for the discussion of the practice of connoisseurship—in order to determine how such judgements were reached—that they start to become inadequate. Friedländer, a strong critic of Morelli, argued that the latter did not in fact apply the strict method that he expounded in his writings: ‘He points to the individual forms in order to convince the reader of the justness of his attributions: but he, like every successful expert, has formed his opinion from the “accidental” impression of the whole picture’.<sup>4</sup> Building on such arguments, Maurizio Lorber has convincingly posited that the theories of connoisseurship expounded by nineteenth and early twentieth-century connoisseurs such as Morelli and Berenson do not reflect connoisseurship as it was practised, but instead offer *a posteriori* reflections on a practice which is impossible to explain in words.<sup>5</sup> In particular, Lorber holds that the Morellian theory of the comparison of details, or ‘clues’—as explored in Carlo Ginzburg’s famous essay—is in fact a rhetorical artifice widely employed across a range of disciplines, including connoisseurship, since the seventeenth century.<sup>6</sup> In assuming that connoisseurship was indeed carried out on the basis of Morellian

---

<sup>3</sup> J. Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display: Museum Presentation in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Visual Culture* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 2004), p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> Friedländer, *On Art and Connoisseurship*, p. 167.

<sup>5</sup> M. Lorber, ‘Ipotesi visive: “paradigma indiziario” versus “paradigma ipotetico” nella connoisseurship ottocentesca’, *Arte in Friuli, Arte a Trieste*, 24 (2005), pp. 119–144; for a useful outline of the connoisseurial theories and methods of both Morelli and Berenson, and the critical reaction to their writings, as well as particular discussion of Berenson’s use of photographs, see Provo, ‘Notions of Method’.

<sup>6</sup> C. Ginzburg, ‘Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm’, in C. Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. by J. Tedeschi and A. C. Tedeschi (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 96–125.

'clues' such as the comparison of hands and ears, Ginzburg falls into the trap of relying too heavily on documentary evidence and taking the explanations offered therein at face value. With this argument in mind, Catherine Scallen thinks it doubtful whether self-described connoisseurs such as Morelli and Berenson in fact followed their own methods, as outlined in their writings, whenever they ascribed an attribution to a specific work.<sup>7</sup> Even if this were to have been the case, Levi has persuasively argued with reference to French museum directors in the nineteenth century that the theories of connoisseurship developed by thinkers like Morelli did not necessarily translate into connoisseurial practice by other art world professionals in spaces such as the museum and the auction room.<sup>8</sup> Even had the staff at Agnew's or the National Gallery left detailed descriptions of their connoisseurial theory, therefore, it would be difficult to rely on this as a faithful interpretation of their connoisseurship in practice.<sup>9</sup> This gap between connoisseurial theory and the practical analysis of artworks will be clearly demonstrated in the remainder of this thesis for both Agnew's and the National Gallery. As a result, the spatial approach to determining connoisseurial practice becomes much more important in attempting to fill this gap in our understanding.

This chapter will therefore interrogate the sources in a different fashion from Chapter 1. Many of the same, unpublished texts will be used, but they will be analysed for the information that they provide about the spaces in which connoisseurship was practised, rather than examining the criteria on which connoisseurship was based. Instead of focusing so strongly on the terms and descriptions used by the Agnew's and National Gallery staff that relate directly to artworks, this chapter will draw out the places in which the interactions took place between people and pictures. In addition, these texts will be supplemented by visual sources such as building plans, illustrations and photographs, as well as, where possible, evidence from extant buildings. This broadened methodology should help to circumvent some of the pitfalls outlined in the literature above with regard to the dematerialisation of connoisseurship.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, p. 33.

<sup>8</sup> Levi, 'Connoisseurs français'.

<sup>9</sup> The only in-depth description of connoisseurial methods uncovered to date, though unpublished, was written by Agnew's associate Charles Fairfax Murray and has been discussed in Tucker, 'Eyesight, Knowledge, Argument'.

<sup>10</sup> This term is used with deliberate reference to L. Lippard and J. Chandler, 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, 12.2 (1968), pp. 31–36. This landmark paper described the rise of an 'ultra-conceptual art that emphasizes the thinking process almost exclusively', a charge that can be laid against much discussion of connoisseurship.

Through these sources, this chapter will attempt to reconstruct and analyse the various spaces in which staff at the National Gallery and Agnew's would have reached their connoisseurial decisions on artworks offered to them for acquisition. This approach emphasises the diverse spatial aspects of interaction with artworks, drawing particular attention to the private spaces—including the boardrooms and offices of the National Gallery and Agnew's, and the houses of potential sellers—which have tended to be ignored in previous studies of gallery architecture. The analysis draws upon aspects of Latour's Actor Network Theory, accepting the important role of object agency in the practice of connoisseurship.<sup>11</sup> Meanwhile, it is also important to stress the way in which different actors perceived the same spaces of connoisseurship: as Susan Kent has highlighted with regard to archaeology and space, the same public spaces can be used by different groups for functionally discrete activities.<sup>12</sup> For example, the Agnew's personnel did not practise connoisseurship in their own exhibition rooms; instead, these exhibitions represented the output of their connoisseurship, or spaces in which artworks were put on display for analysis by others. This flexibility can also be extended to private spaces: while domestic displays of paintings were not necessarily directly intended to facilitate connoisseurship, staff from both Agnew's and the National Gallery visited these private spaces for the specific purpose of analysing these artworks.

## **Where did Agnew's and the National Gallery staff carry out their connoisseurship?**

### ***Mobility: Artworks and connoisseurs***

Mobility is an important consideration in any spatial approach to connoisseurship. As well as facilitating the inspection of specific works of art with a view to their purchase, the increasing mobility of both artworks and people in this era also necessarily had an effect on the practice of connoisseurship. In particular, the ability to inspect a wide range of artworks in person made it easier to perform connoisseurial comparison—across artists, schools, geographies

---

<sup>11</sup> Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, pp. 236–238; the application of Actor Network Theory to art objects is usefully discussed in M. Zell, 'Rembrandt's Gifts: A Case Study of Actor-Network-Theory', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, 3.2 (2011).

<sup>12</sup> S. Kent (ed.), *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space: An Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 3.

and eras—as one of the major tools of connoisseurship. Before the early to mid-nineteenth century, it had been extremely difficult to view such a geographically disparate corpus of artworks in person because of the high costs and dedicated time required.<sup>13</sup> While reproductive prints had, to a certain extent, acted as a substitute for original artworks, prints were far from being fully reliable sources for connoisseurship because of their interpretative nature.<sup>14</sup> However, from the 1840s onwards the rapid growth of the railway network brought about a shrinkage in the perception of geographical distance and travel time.<sup>15</sup> By the end of the nineteenth century, the railway network within Britain was at its most extensive in history, delivering travellers to within just a few miles of even the most far-flung destinations.<sup>16</sup> In Europe, meanwhile, from an already established core in 1870, the rail network had increased in density by an average of 130% by 1900.<sup>17</sup> The speed of rail travel also roughly doubled between 1840 and 1890, making it possible to travel from London to Edinburgh in just ten hours by the 1880s.<sup>18</sup> The evolution of the steamship, meanwhile, revolutionised transatlantic travel from the 1850s onwards, with both travel costs and travel times falling dramatically: from up to 48 days westbound and 36 days eastbound in the 1830s, to a normal crossing of just 14 days by the period under scrutiny here.<sup>19</sup> These advances had an acknowledged impact on the practice of connoisseurship: in 1893, Bernard Berenson lauded the railways as having helped connoisseurship to overcome its previous status as ‘more or less of a quack science’.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Guichard characterises ‘artistic expertise’ in the eighteenth century as ‘confined to the expert’s office’, although she also singles out Horace Walpole and François Tronchin as eighteenth-century connoisseurs with the means to travel, taking notes and comparing collections: Guichard, ‘Connoisseurship and Artistic Expertise’, pp. 178; 180-182.

<sup>14</sup> The use of reproductions in connoisseurship will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

<sup>15</sup> W. Schivelbusch, *The Railway Journey: The Industrialisation of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Leamington Spa; Hamburg; New York: Berg, 1986), p. 11; Chap. 3. Although there is little space to discuss the issue here, it has also been argued that emerging communications technologies in the Victorian period, such as the telegraph, played an equal part in altering perceptions of time and space: R. Wenzlhuemer, *Connecting the Nineteen-Century World: The Telegraph and Globalization* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Chap. 2.

<sup>16</sup> C. G. Pooley, J. Turnbull and M. Adams, *A Mobile Century? Changes in Everyday Mobility in Britain in the Twentieth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 18–19.

<sup>17</sup> P. Caruana-Galizia and J. Martí-Henneberg, ‘European Regional Railways and Real Income, 1870–1910: A Preliminary Report’, *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 61.2 (2013), pp. 178–180.

<sup>18</sup> D. Aldcroft, ‘The Railway Age’, in A. Digby, C. Feinstein and D. Jenkins (eds), *New Directions in Economic and Social History* (London: Palgrave, 1992), p. 69.

<sup>19</sup> P. J. Huggill, *World Trade since 1431: Geography, Technology, and Capitalism* (Baltimore, MD; London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995), p. 127.

<sup>20</sup> H. E. Roberts, ‘Documents in the History of Visual Documentation: Bernard Berenson on Isochromatic Film’, in H. E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History Through the Camera’s Lens* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 68.

With regard to the mobility of artworks, these new travel technologies made it far quicker and safer for paintings to travel.<sup>21</sup> The railway had played a pivotal role in the facilitation of the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857, described by Elizabeth Pergam as the first blockbuster exhibition because of the number of works travelling on loan from private collections.<sup>22</sup> By the late nineteenth century, it had become the norm for paintings to be sent and received in this way. The practicalities were described in a breakdown of expenses in an Agnew's letterbook from 1897:

To foremans [sic] & assistants' time travelling to Brighton, going to 11 Queens Gardens, taking down 90 various pictures, Drawings, & Engravings, & preparing same for conveyance to London. Carefully packing in van and paid travelling van & conveying to London. Unloading and delivering at the Pantechnicon, Belgravia, & storing same, including cash paid mens [sic] railway fares and expenses, hire of road and rail travelling van, leasing same at Brighton & London, assistance at Stations & other ex's.<sup>23</sup>

The transport of paintings was not without its associated dangers, particularly with regard to their condition: in 1892, Agnew's sent a lengthy letter to Robert Hall McCormick of Chicago, disputing his claim that a Rubens portrait bought from the company had arrived in America in a damaged state. The painting had been sent back to Bond Street by McCormick, and examined there by the firm's staff. Citing the evidence of National Gallery restorer William Dyer, Agnew's acknowledged that 'There is undoubtedly a mark running across the face, but this mark was certainly upon the picture when you purchased it, and when we sent it to you'.<sup>24</sup> In addition, Agnew's countered, a new crack had appeared on the picture, the back panel was split and 'a considerable piece of the wood is broken off one of the corners'. The company argued that this damage must have occurred on the painting's return journey to London due to improper packing and exposure to heat. This episode illustrates the difficulties of transporting fragile artworks over long distances.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, in general it remained

---

<sup>21</sup> On the mobility of art, see K. Manthorne, 'Remapping American Art', *American Art*, 22.3 (2008), pp. 112–117.

<sup>22</sup> E. A. Pergam, *The Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857: Entrepreneurs, Connoisseurs and the Public* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011), p. 21; A. M. von Lintel, 'Art History as Spectacle: Blockbuster Exhibitions in 1850s England', in A. Graciano (ed.), *Exhibiting Outside the Academy, Salon and Biennial, 1775-1999: Alternative Venues for Display* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), p. 138.

<sup>23</sup> London day book 17, 1897-1899, NG, NGA27/13/3/17, p. 24.

<sup>24</sup> Letter to R. H. McCormick, 15 February 1892, Valuations book, 1888-1898, NG, NGA27/12/1.

<sup>25</sup> An issue that is still current today: see the controversy surrounding the bill passed to allow items from the Burrell Collection to travel overseas. 'Burrell Collection (Lending and Borrowing) (Scotland) Bill', SP Bill 33 (2013); M. Daley, 'Betraying Burrell – Shame on Glasgow', *Artwatch* [blog], <http://artwatch.org.uk/betraying-burrell-shame-on-glasgow/> [accessed 27 October 2017].

far easier and quicker than it had been earlier in the nineteenth century for paintings to be sent for exhibition or for connoisseurial examination prior to purchase. As will be shown below, this was particularly important in the case of the National Gallery because of the strong emphasis that the institution placed on having works sent to London for inspection by the Director and Trustees. In addition, artworks could also travel in reproduction: the rapid improvement in photographic technologies from the mid-nineteenth century onwards meant that photographs of works could be quickly and easily exchanged between connoisseurs, or collected for comparison. This aspect of mobility will be considered more thoroughly in Chapter 3.

Perhaps even more importantly, this high-speed transport boom also facilitated travel for the connoisseurs themselves. National Gallery personnel did not often travel within Britain for the purposes of acquiring new works for the collection, although exceptions were sometimes made for particularly major collections or sales. In 1884, following rumours that the Blenheim Collection was to come up for sale, Burton received an 'assurance from the Duke of Marlborough's Agent that no steps would be taken towards effecting the sale in question until the Director had had an opportunity of examining the pictures – with one or more of the Trustees'.<sup>26</sup> In contrast, the partners in Agnew's travelled regularly and extensively across Britain, and not only between their branches in Manchester, Liverpool and London. Morland's diaries reveal that he frequently travelled on business: for example, in 1900 alone, although based in London, Morland visited Bournemouth, Newcastle, Colchester, Herne Bay, Birmingham, Paris and Leipzig for business purposes.<sup>27</sup> On these visits, Morland would have visited private collections in particular, appraising works to be sold through Agnew's and examining artworks to be bought directly by the company. Such exposure to a range of artworks, even if they were not at that point for sale, would have helped to expand his visual experience; this would, in turn, have fed directly into his connoisseurial practice, as will be discussed in Chapter 3. Staff at both institutions, meanwhile, regularly undertook foreign travel during the period under analysis here. This is worth discussing in some detail here, because of the impact of this travel on both specific acquisitions and broader connoisseurial knowledge.

---

<sup>26</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1871-1886, NG, NG1/5, p. 266.

<sup>27</sup> C. M. Agnew diary, 1900, NG, NGA27/27/10.

A precedent for foreign travel had already been set in the twenty years prior to the period under scrutiny. On behalf of the National Gallery, Charles Lock Eastlake and Otto Mündler had travelled throughout Europe—Italy in particular—to buy works not only from dealers and private collections, but also directly from the churches and convents for which they had been originally painted. Eastlake spent at least six weeks abroad every year from 1855, keeping detailed notebooks in which he detailed the eligibility of potential acquisitions.<sup>28</sup> Following Eastlake’s lead, Boxall visited Italy in 1866, 1867 and 1869 in the company of private secretary Federico Sacchi, although the Director was also concerned about the restrictions starting to be introduced on art exports by the Italian government.<sup>29</sup> Keeper Wornum also travelled extensively under Eastlake and Boxall, both in Britain and abroad, and continued to travel on behalf of Burton until his death in 1877.<sup>30</sup> This strong emphasis on travel highlights the importance placed on seeking out acquisitions in person, rather than relying too heavily on the connoisseurship of an intermediary.<sup>31</sup> Such foreign travel for the purpose of examining artworks remained important for the National Gallery throughout Burton and Poynter’s Directorships, although its importance appears to have declined under Holroyd. Letters and reports in the National Gallery archives reveal that Burton made at least 12 Continental journeys on National Gallery business in the twenty years of his Directorship, while Poynter travelled abroad at least 13 times in ten years. Holroyd, in contrast, seems to have made only three foreign trips to inspect works during his ten-year tenure. It is difficult to determine to what extent such trips resulted directly in acquisitions, but Burton, at least, was freer to make acquisitions without the direct consent of the Trustees. As a result, he could for example report at a Board Meeting in January 1890 that he had bought five pictures during his recent official tour in Italy.<sup>32</sup> All five of these pictures were bought from dealers: as these paintings are not mentioned in the archival records before their purchase, it seems likely that Burton visited these dealers speculatively to see if they had any works of interest, rather than being directly invited to see a particular painting. To a certain extent, therefore,

---

<sup>28</sup> Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, p. 139–143; these notebooks have been published in full in Avery-Quash, *Travel Notebooks of Sir Charles Eastlake*.

<sup>29</sup> S. Avery-Quash and S. Davoli, “Boxall Is Interested Only in the Great Masters... Well, We’ll See about That!” William Boxall, Federico Sacchi and Cremonese Art at the National Gallery’, *Journal of the History of Collections*, 28.2 (2016), pp. 225–241; Saumarez Smith, *The National Gallery: A Short History*, p. 82; Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, p. 178.

<sup>30</sup> R. N. Wornum’s diary, 13 August 1855–21 November 1877, NG, NGA2/3/2/13.

<sup>31</sup> It was also thought that paintings could often be acquired more cheaply abroad: Conlin, *The Nation’s Mantelpiece*, p. 76.

<sup>32</sup> NG1295–NG1299; Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1 June 1897–14 December 1909, NG, NG1/7, p. 112.

Burton enjoyed the same purchasing freedom—based on his own connoisseurial judgement—that had been open to Eastlake and Boxall.

As the nineteenth century progressed, however, there were an increasing number of constraints on the freedom of the National Gallery Directors to travel and acquire works abroad. Firstly, one type of space appears to have been unavailable for acquisitions to Burton and the dealers who followed him: a thorough examination of the Board Minutes suggests that no artworks were bought directly from religious institutions. This was presumably largely the result of a clamp-down by the Italian government on the export of artworks, following a twenty-year period in which it had been relatively easy to obtain export permissions.<sup>33</sup> For example, the National Gallery entered into negotiations with dealer Colnaghi's in 1905 to purchase the Tintoretto *Assumption of the Virgin* from the Jesuit Church in Venice: Colnaghi's suggested that 'the Minister of Cult. will have to be approached & asked to authorize the sale, then much influence & the customary ... etc. etc. will have to be used'.<sup>34</sup> Given that the coy ellipsis presumably referred to bribes, the purchase would have put the Gallery in an uncomfortable position; regarding these negotiations, Trustee de Rothschild wrote in a memorandum that 'it was questionable whether it is dignified or in agreement with the amenities of International Courtesy to commission an agent to attempt to smuggle a picture out of Italy or induce others to do so'.<sup>35</sup> The painting was not acquired, and remains in situ in Venice. As a result of this tightening of the export rules, Burton and the Directors who followed him had far fewer opportunities than Eastlake or Boxall to buy directly from the churches or religious organisations for which paintings such as altarpieces had originally been commissioned. This would have had a necessary effect on the connoisseurial methods adopted, as paintings that had always remained in situ could have been assumed to have a solid provenance and, therefore, attribution.

Secondly, there were financial barriers to foreign travel by the Directors, as the uncertain reward of such journeys had never sat particularly easily with the Treasury. The Director had to apply for permission to go abroad, usually with a specific aim in mind: for example, in 1879 Burton applied for, and was granted, permission to visit Paris to attend the auction of the

---

<sup>33</sup> A. F. Moskowitz, *Stefano Bardini 'Principe degli Antiquari': Prolegomenon to a Biography* (Florence: Centro Di, 2015), Chap. 5.

<sup>34</sup> Letter from P. & D. Colnaghi, 6 November 1905, NG, NG7/299/3.

<sup>35</sup> Memorandum of a conversation between Keeper H. H. Turner and A. de Rothschild, 15 August 1905, NG, NG7/299/2.

collection of Frédéric Reiset at the Hôtel Drouot.<sup>36</sup> It was by no means certain that the Treasury would approve such outlay, however: as Burton had written to Fairfax Murray in 1877, 'It is never worth my while to go to Italy after one picture, unless it is something of special importance. nor [sic] is it worth going on some mere chance'.<sup>37</sup> In 1886, the Director's foreign travel was halted altogether, following the National Gallery's heavy expenditure on the pictures purchased from Blenheim Palace. The Treasury wrote that 'as the grant for purchases is suspended for the present, it is extremely undesirable that the Director should go abroad officially'.<sup>38</sup> Burton does not appear to have resumed his trips abroad until visiting Italy in late 1889.<sup>39</sup>

Finally, as mentioned at the end of Chapter 1, the Rosebery Minute of 1894 made it impossible for the Director to make unilateral decisions regarding acquisitions; as the whole Board could not travel overseas to view works, the tendency was therefore for the Director to examine works and to recommend their purchase when he had returned to London. This was not always a successful strategy. Poynter's report of a visit abroad in 1895 reveals that:

The Director also laid before the Trustees a photograph of a portrait by Franz [sic] Pourbus which was offered at a price of £800, and which he had seen at Brussels, and urged the purchase of this picture as there is no specimen of that painter's work in the National Gallery and the picture was in excellent preservation, proposing at the same time to offer a lower sum.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, following a discussion with the Trustees, the decision was taken not to purchase the work — presumably because it did not meet with their approval.<sup>41</sup> The National Gallery was therefore constrained by external considerations, such as bureaucratic issues and its duty to the Treasury, to which a private company such as Agnew's was not answerable. However, wider political and financial developments did affect travel by representatives of both institutions. The outbreak of the First World War had an especially great effect upon travel, halting most foreign movement altogether and putting a significant

---

<sup>36</sup> Letter to the Secretary, H. M. Treasury, 20 March 1879, NG, NG6/5/993; Letter from the Treasury, 29 March 1879, NG, NG7/9/8. This sanctioned visit in fact never went ahead, as M. Reiset's collection was instead sold en bloc to the duc d'Aumale: 'Events in France', *The Standard*, 9 April 1879.

<sup>37</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 3 December 1877, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>38</sup> Letter from the Treasury, 26 July 1886, NG, NG7/89/19.

<sup>39</sup> Letter to Sir C. Robinson, 11 November 1889, NG, NG6/14/628.

<sup>40</sup> Report of the Director's journey on the continent during the Autumn of 1895, 10 December 1895, NG, NG7/188/1.

<sup>41</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1 March 1886-1 June 1897, NG, NG1/6, pp. 328; 337.

brake on the international art market.<sup>42</sup> For example, in August 1914 the Board authorised Holroyd to bid up to £5,000 for a Petrus Christus at the Albert Oppenheimer sale in Berlin later that year.<sup>43</sup> However, this plan was almost immediately dropped on the grounds of illegality following concerns raised by de Rothschild.<sup>44</sup> The prevailing political situation also directly impacted on Agnew's business abroad, as the firm's Berlin branch closed permanently in 1913 and the Paris premises shut in 1914, reopening in 1919. All of these developments had an effect on connoisseurship, as the levels of access to foreign spaces for the inspection of artworks fluctuated over time.

Like the National Gallery, by the 1870s Agnew's had already established a pattern of foreign travel for the purposes of connoisseurship, acquisition and networking. Of course, Agnew's were certainly not the first dealers to be involved in the direct purchase of foreign paintings, particularly in Italy: Hugh Brigstocke, for example, has recently outlined the complex network of imports surrounding the activities of dealer William Buchanan and Rome-based artist James Irvine in the early nineteenth century.<sup>45</sup> However, it is important from a spatial perspective that the partners in Agnew's were personally willing to travel overseas to inspect potential purchases, rather than relying on the services of intermediaries. For example, Thomas Agnew, a member of the second generation of the family and a partner in the firm since 1850, travelled to Italy in September-October 1852. His travel diary for this journey reveals that he was heavily involved in the purchase of works overseas, making notes on the prices and quality of artworks he viewed.<sup>46</sup> Such first-hand inspection of pictures reveals the importance of individual connoisseurship for the company, and this emphasis on business travel in order to undertake personal connoisseurial inspection was passed on through the

---

<sup>42</sup> As has recently been shown, however, the war in fact resulted in the formation of the National Gallery's collection of modern French art, with Holmes travelling to Paris to bid at the Degas sale in March 1918: Crookham and Robbins, 'Mars und Museum', pp. 108–111.

<sup>43</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 25 January 1910–8 January 1918, NG, NG1/8, pp. 199; 207. This picture is now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art: The Met, 'A Goldsmith in his Shop', <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/459052> [accessed 1 December 2017].

<sup>44</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1910–1918, NG, NG1/8, p. 207; letters from A. de Rothschild, 20 and 22 August 1914, NG, NG7/455/1–2. While there will not be room to discuss this issue in Chapter 4, at the same Board Meeting it was also announced that 50 of the most important pictures in the collection had been placed in the cellars 'for security' against bomb damage. The political situation therefore affected the display at the National Gallery, as well as the ability of the staff to carry out connoisseurship and make acquisitions.

<sup>45</sup> H. Brigstocke, 'James Irvine: Picture Buying in Italy for William Buchanan and Arthur Champenowne', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 61–72; see also Gaskell, 'Tradesmen as Scholars', p. 156.

<sup>46</sup> T. Agnew travel diary: Italy, September-October 1852, NG, NGA27/27/74.

generations. William Agnew's *Holiday Jottings* consists of a privately printed collection of letters written to his family, and contains detailed descriptions of the paintings seen in a range of Continental galleries in 1886.<sup>47</sup> William's son Morland—first taken to Paris in 1871 at the age of 15—was probably the most active traveller as a partner in the firm, and continued to detail his foreign travels in his diaries for the rest of his life.<sup>48</sup> These trips resulted in some spectacular purchases, such as the Velazquez portrait of Philip IV purchased in 1911 directly from the collection of Elias, Duke of Parma and Piacenza, in Austria.<sup>49</sup> Morland's diaries also attest to the fact that he made a point of visiting local public galleries while on the continent: in Madrid in 1891, he wrote that he had spent 'A hard day's work at the [Prado] picture gallery [...] I could visit the museum profitably every day for a week. There is much to see'.<sup>50</sup> As they could not have been for the purposes of acquisition, these trips must have been made for personal interest or in order to improve his knowledge of artists and schools for the sake of future connoisseurship. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Agnew's staff member Croal Thomson also made an extended journey across the Atlantic in February and March 1898, visiting a large number of private collections throughout the US and Canada. There is no evidence that the National Gallery Directors ever visited North America during this period, but the region was presumably seen as a more important destination for Agnew's staff because of the growing market significance of American collectors as buyers.<sup>51</sup> During his trip, Croal Thomson sent back frequent and detailed descriptions of the paintings he saw, giving frank connoisseurial appraisals of existing collections as well as advising what other works the collectors might be persuaded to buy.<sup>52</sup> Croal Thomson also visited numerous North American public art museums, publishing a series of articles in the *Art Journal* on the galleries that he had visited. 'In all I examined about forty private collections', he wrote, 'together with the Public Galleries and Museums of New York, Boston, Chicago, Pittsburg [sic], Washington, and Philadelphia', as well as the galleries of art dealers including Knoedler, Tooth, Goupil, Schaus and Cottier.<sup>53</sup> As with Morland, Croal Thomson visited both private

---

<sup>47</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*.

<sup>48</sup> Morland's extensive continental travel is detailed in his travel diaries: NG, NGA27/27.

<sup>49</sup> 'A Newly-Discovered Velasquez', *The Times*, 17 December 1910. This portrait is now in the Frick Collection: J. L. Colomer, 'Competing for a Velázquez: New York Collectors after the Spanish Master', in J. L. Colomer and I. Reist (eds), *Collecting Spanish Art: Spain's Golden Age and America's Gilded Age* (New York: Frick Collection in association with Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, Madrid, and Center for Spain in America, 2012), pp. 264-268.

<sup>50</sup> C. M. Agnew, Spain travel diary, 1891, NG, NGA27/27/4.

<sup>51</sup> Santori, *The Melancholy of Masterpieces*; I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

<sup>52</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3.

<sup>53</sup> D. Croal Thomson, 'The Art Movement in the United States and Canada', *The Art Journal*, May 1898, p. 157.

and public collections for the sake of commercial acquisition and his own visual education. As shown above with regard to the National Gallery, the fact that multiple members of the Agnew's staff embarked upon frequent and extensive travel once again indicates the strong importance of personal, connoisseurial interaction with art.

### ***The spaces of connoisseurship***

Having stressed the mobility of both paintings and people, the spaces in which both the National Gallery and Agnew's staff carried out their connoisseurship will now be outlined. While these spaces varied according to circumstance, they can be roughly grouped into three categories that draw on the ideas of private and public space developed in the social syntax theory of Bill Hillier and Juliette Hanson.<sup>54</sup> These categories consist of the private spaces under institutional control (the National Gallery offices and boardroom; the Agnew's offices at their three branches); private and semi-private spaces outside organisational jurisdiction (particularly the private homes and galleries of collectors looking to sell paintings, or simply opening up their collections to selected guests); and the public spaces of other galleries and art institutions, including public collections, auction houses and the galleries of art dealers. While each space in which connoisseurship was practised can be examined on the basis of its own individual characteristics, certain parallels can be drawn between the spaces in each one of these three categories, showing that each had a different impact on connoisseurship. However, across these three types of space, various spatial factors were also consistently highlighted by the Agnew's and National Gallery staff as having a significant impact on the practice of connoisseurship, especially in relation to visual analysis. Within this framework, the spaces in which both the National Gallery and Agnew's frequently judged pictures were often designed to facilitate such visual analysis. The final section of this chapter will therefore explore such spatial issues as lighting, proximity and handling.

#### ***Private spaces under institutional control***

The central importance of space in connoisseurial practice is particularly notable in the strong emphasis placed by the National Gallery on having paintings sent to the Trafalgar Square building for inspection prior to acquisition. This was almost inevitably the case for offers from private sellers within Britain; offers from abroad, as will be discussed below,

---

<sup>54</sup> B. Hillier and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), Chap. 5.

often necessitated foreign travel because of the practical difficulties of having pictures sent overseas for inspection. Because of its international prominence and its remit to continue to build an outstanding collection of historic art, as discussed in Chapter 1, the National Gallery received frequent offers of paintings both for sale and as donations or bequests. From the archived correspondence and registers of offers (see, for example, Fig. 2), it is clear that many of these works were declined without being seen, especially if the description or photograph supplied did not meet the National Gallery's connoisseurial standards. For example, a picture 'bought at a small shop in Clerkenwell' by a Mrs Yates of St Albans and 'believed to be by Ludovico Carraci [sic]', was rejected without inspection in 1894 'in view of the probability that the picture was only a copy'.<sup>55</sup> Such decisions were also presumably based to a certain extent on the social standing of the seller or donor: Poynter wrote to Canon Francis Holland in 1902 that 'there is really no reason why I sh. go to see the picture which you are so kind as to offer to bequeath to us. The Trustees gratefully accept your bequest which, from the account you give of the picture, will they are sure be a valuable addition to the National Collection'.<sup>56</sup> While this suggests that Poynter was happy to accept the work without having examined it, this may well also have been a question of tact: the proffered portrait by Raeburn was in fact refused after Holland's death in 1907.<sup>57</sup>

In general, however, once a painting had piqued the interest of the National Gallery staff, the institution made frequent use of its own premises for the judgement of potential acquisitions. The Gallery strongly preferred paintings to be sent to the Trafalgar Square site for assessment if possible, rather than sending a representative to view the painting in its current location. To a certain extent, this insistence was at least partly likely to have been due to practical reasons: for example, it saved time and inconvenience for paintings to travel, rather than for staff to have to do so. In 1879, a letter to a Mr Rogerson offering a work to the National Gallery suggested that the weather was so poor that it would be impossible for Burton to visit the picture, and that it should instead be delivered to London for inspection.<sup>58</sup> A similar letter of 1886 reveals that such potential acquisitions were forwarded to the National Gallery at the expense and risk of the applicant.<sup>59</sup> The Director simply did not have

---

<sup>55</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1 March 1886-1 June 1897, NG, NG1/6, p. 271.

<sup>56</sup> E. J. Poynter to Canon F. Holland, 17 May 1902, GRI, Edward John Poynter letters, 1870-1913, 850917.

<sup>57</sup> Letter from B. Holland, 12 February 1907, NG, NG7/322/2.

<sup>58</sup> Letter to H. Rogerson, 9 December 1879, NG, NG6/6/158. This particular work has not been identified.

<sup>59</sup> Letter to F. Sellar, 11 November 1886, NG, NG6/12/246.

the time available to spend in constant travel when many of the paintings being offered were likely to be unsuitable for acquisition. It could also be that the presence of the owner was felt to be a barrier to open discussions regarding the quality of a work, or the price to be offered. However, paintings were frequently brought to the National Gallery for inspection even if they were part of a bequest. For example, of the 99 oil paintings left to the Gallery by John Henderson, 13 were selected by the Director following examination in Trafalgar Square (this number being reduced to eight after 'further examination').<sup>60</sup> Given that Henderson's house in Russell Square was readily accessible if the Director and Trustees had wished to visit, the decision to send the paintings to the National Gallery once again foregrounds the importance of this space in the decision-making process.

There were a number of reasons why paintings needed to be examined at the National Gallery if at all possible. It offered a convenient space for the Director and Trustees to hold the Board Meetings at which paintings could be inspected and discussed and, from a practical perspective, the Boardroom was physically large enough to accommodate the whole Board: while the number of Trustees had previously been limited to six, this number was raised to eight in 1897 and then to ten in 1909.<sup>61</sup> This would have made it harder to coordinate painting inspections outside the National Gallery, with the domestic spaces in which many pictures were displayed simply being too small for convenient inspection. In addition, the rooms at the National Gallery were felt to offer the right conditions for the examination of artworks; this can be seen as a control factor, whereby paintings were easier to judge if they were all examined under the same conditions. Keeper Charles Locke Eastlake wrote to a Mr Macandrew in 1880 to ask whether 'you will kindly allow your picture to be sent to the National Gallery, where [Burton] can examine it more conveniently & by a better light than in its present place'.<sup>62</sup> 'More conveniently' can be interpreted in a number of ways: for example, sending the picture to the Gallery could have made it easier to find time in the Director's busy schedule to examine it. However, the phrase is just as likely to have referred to spatial aspects of connoisseurship, such as the option of repeat viewings, or the ability to examine the work in closer physical proximity. The fact that the 'better light' of the National Gallery was specifically mentioned emphasises the particular importance of the visual

---

<sup>60</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1871-1886, NG, NG1/5, p.123; letter to H. Critchfield, 10 March 1879, NG, NG6/5/960. The paintings selected for the collection were NG1054-NG1061.

<sup>61</sup> Letter from the Treasury, 14 June 1897, NG, NG7/209/1; Letter from the Treasury enclosing a Treasury Minute dated 17 July 1909, 27 July 1909, NG, NG7/365/1.

<sup>62</sup> Letter to J. Macandrew, 22 March 1880, NG, NG6/6/428.

aspects of connoisseurship, and this will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Meanwhile, the Boardroom also became a much more important space for connoisseurial examination and judgement at the end of the nineteenth century. Before 1894, the Minutes show that the tendency was for the Director to reach a decision over a painting, before submitting it for inspection at a Board meeting for the Trustees' (assumed) approval. However, after the passing of the Rosebery Minute, connoisseurship was no longer the sole responsibility of the Director, and works were examined by the Directors and Trustees together in the Boardroom. As the Trustees now had to be involved in connoisseurial decision-making, it became near impossible for the Director to make an acquisition outside the National Gallery without Board approval. As a result, some purchasing opportunities were missed: Poynter wrote in a report from Paris in 1903 that, while he approved of a picture by Boilly as 'a very favourable example for our collection', the owner 'could not send it to England for inspection by the Trustees. It was therefore useless to consider the question of its purchase'.<sup>63</sup> The Boardroom thus grew in importance as a place of connoisseurship as the balance of power shifted among the National Gallery administration. Finally, as will be further discussed in Chapter 3, examining paintings in the Boardroom allowed for easy access to library resources, comparative photographs or—as in the case of the Bronzino portrait so disliked by de Rothschild—comparative artworks from the Gallery's own collection.

Given this strong emphasis on inspecting potential artworks at the National Gallery itself, it would be useful to determine the particular aspects of the room or rooms used for connoisseurship there. However, it has been difficult to distinguish the specific places in which paintings were examined once they had arrived at the Gallery. From the Board Minutes, it seems likely that paintings would first have been delivered to the Director's Office for his personal inspection; as shown in Chapter 1, they would sometimes then undergo restoration or repair before being presented to the Trustees at Boardroom meetings. It has been difficult to determine exactly where the Director's Office or Boardroom were located in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, a 1906 plan of the National Gallery drawn up by the Office of Works states that the Eastlake Library, Boardroom and

---

<sup>63</sup> Director's report of his continental journey, 8 June 1903, NG, NG7/273/1. L. Dubreuil and G. Sortais, *Catalogue de deux importants tableaux par Boilly (Louis-Léopold), appartenant à Madame la Comtesse Robert de Fitz James et Nattier (Jean-Marc), appartenant à M. le Comte J. le Marois* (1903); it is possible that this was the version of *A Painter's Studio* owned by Henri de Rothschild that was destroyed during the Second World War: National Gallery of Art, *A Painter's Studio*, <https://www.nga.gov/Collection/art-object-page.12199.html#provenance> [accessed 29 October 2017].

Keeper's Room were by this date on the ground floor of the west wing of the original Wilkins building (Fig. 3), although the exact location of the Boardroom is not stated.<sup>64</sup> It is possible that the Director's Office was at this point in the location marked on Figure 3 with a red square and close to the labelled 'Director's Entrance': this room features large windows on two elevations, providing excellent daylight for the examination of paintings. Despite the paucity of recorded evidence regarding the Boardroom and Director's Office, they remain important spaces of connoisseurship because of the significant connoisseurial discussions that took place there.

Like the National Gallery, Agnew's also rated its own galleries highly for connoisseurial examination. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in 1902 Morland wrote to Lady Raglan regarding the evaluation of several works in her possession, stating that 'The portrait of Admiral Forbes I took at first to be an early work by Romney: but on seeing it in the good light of our Gallery, I at once perceived that it was not so'.<sup>65</sup> In particular, the space in which Morland examined this work had a direct bearing on his judgement of the painting: although he appears to have examined it previously, perhaps at the Raglan country seat of Cefntilla Court, he was not able to make a definitive decision as to the authorship of the work until he had seen it 'in the good light of our Gallery'. This is strikingly similar to the 'better light' argument offered by the National Gallery to persuade potential sellers to send their paintings to Trafalgar Square. Bringing the work to Bond Street also meant that Morland had a chance to discuss the work with other experienced connoisseurs, such as his father, William; Morland emphasised this dialogue in his letter, writing that 'I asked my father to call & look at them & his opinion exactly coincides with mine'. In this case, Agnew's was able to play on its existing reputation for connoisseurship to convince the potential seller that it was worth sending the paintings for examination. As for the National Gallery, it has been difficult to find much evidence of the specific places in which paintings were examined at the Agnew's premises, and a confusing picture emerges from the various sources. The plans for the Liverpool branch, constructed for Agnew's in 1877, feature offices on the first floor (Fig. 4); the plans for the (leased) Manchester branch show a private office and receiving office to the rear of the building on the ground floor, as well as additional offices in the basement (Fig. 5). However, a 1937 photograph of 'The Office' at the Bond Street premises suggests that these offices could well have been spaces used purely for clerical work, rather than connoisseurship (Fig.

---

<sup>64</sup> Office of Works, *National Gallery. Detail sections through floors showing construction*, 1906, TNA, WORK 33/1930.

<sup>65</sup> M. Agnew to Lady Raglan, 20 Oct 1902, Letterbook 1, 1902-1928, NG, NGA27/11/1.

6). Instead, the Boardroom at Bond Street (Fig. 7)—with pictures to be seen at the left of the photograph, placed prominently on a chair for inspection—seems a more likely place in which partners could examine and discuss paintings, although I have found no mention of this room prior to this photograph.

In addition to this difficulty in identifying the spaces of connoisseurship at the Agnew's premises, there is also far less evidence than for the National Gallery to suggest that it was particularly common practice for Agnew's to ask its clients to forward works to its own premises. Instead, the overwhelming tendency was for the partners themselves to travel to inspect works in situ at collectors' homes or in the galleries of other dealers. Within their own premises, the partners largely seem to have occupied themselves with receiving clients and with sales, rather than assessing works for purchase.<sup>66</sup> There are several potential reasons why Agnew's might have been less likely than the National Gallery to ask for paintings to be sent for them for inspection. Firstly, Agnew's needed to establish long-lasting relationships with its customers in order to secure repeat business; this was much less of a concern for the National Gallery, except where dealers themselves were concerned. As a result, Agnew's had to exert itself to offer good customer service. Lockett wrote to one of the company's salesmen in Liverpool in 1904 to congratulate him on the first sale to a new client: 'After nearly thirty years [sic] experience in this business I have found that when I have sold really good Pictures to my clients I always pleased them and did credit to myself and I think in the course of a few years not only will Mr. Davis be extremely pleased with what he has bought from you but you will look back with pleasure upon having started a good client with such good property'.<sup>67</sup> Part of this customer service consisted of the social aspect of visiting a client's home, as well as examining their picture collection. Secondly, Agnew's may also have been in a less powerful negotiating position than the National Gallery when collectors were looking to sell works. A decision to sell or donate to the National Gallery might well have been made firstly for ideological reasons, because it was felt that the national collection would benefit from the work; secondly, for the purposes of self-aggrandisement (in the case of gifts or bequests, where the name of the donor would appear on the frame); or, thirdly, for profit and immediate financial gain.<sup>68</sup> The first two of

---

<sup>66</sup> See, for example, Letterbook 2, 1902-1904, NG, NGA27/11/2.

<sup>67</sup> Letter from W. L. Agnew, 16 April 1904, Letterbook 1, 1902-1928, NG, NGA27/11/1.

<sup>68</sup> On the politics of museum donation, see K. Hill, *Culture and Class in English Public Museums* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016); P. van der Grijp, 'The Sacred Gift: Donations from Private Collectors to Public Museums', *Museum Anthropology Review*, 8.1 (2014), pp. 22-44.

these reasons were likely to influence the collector to treat the National Gallery with more leniency and understanding than Agnew's. On the contrary, if Agnew's was slow to view a work or made it too difficult for the seller, it was easy for the latter simply to approach a rival dealer. Finally, as discussed above, the National Gallery was particularly reliant on the Boardroom as a space of connoisseurship following the implementation of the Rosebery Minute. In contrast, the individual partners in Agnew's were fully trusted to make connoisseurial decisions and go ahead with acquisitions on their own initiative, in whatever space paintings were being examined. As will now be discussed, Agnew's were therefore perhaps more vulnerable than the National Gallery to the variations in connoisseurial space outside the company's own premises; however, this was justified in terms of the firm's business model and its reliance on strong customer relations.

### ***Private spaces outside institutional control***

Private collections in Britain were particularly important to Agnew's, while both Agnew's and National Gallery staff visited private collections abroad. Such spaces varied widely but were not primarily designed to suit the needs of the connoisseur: inherited pictures might have been hung in the same position for decades, while collectors would often rearrange their collections to accommodate a new purchase.<sup>69</sup> Displays did not therefore necessarily facilitate the close inspection of individual artworks. Purpose-built galleries were not uncommon: for example, the long gallery at Doughty House, 142, Richmond Hill was built around 1880 for collector Sir Frederick Cook and extended in 1915. This gallery initially featured large skylights, and, later, both skylights and side-lighting, as well as the electric lighting installed during the 1915 renovation.<sup>70</sup> Equally, top-lighting was available throughout Doughty House in many rooms used for the display of paintings, such as the Octagon Room (Figs 8-10). While every care was thus taken to ensure an adequate supply of light—as will be discussed in more detail below—these images show that works were still hung in several rows, with many well above the line of sight. While this perhaps reflected the original design of over-door pictures, it also made it difficult to scrutinise the works at close range. Meanwhile, the vastly wealthy Cook was at the very top end of picture collecting and

---

<sup>69</sup> F. Russell, 'The Hanging and Display of Pictures, 1700-1850', *Studies in the History of Art*, 25 (1989), p. 133.

<sup>70</sup> 'Illustrations: New Picture-Gallery and Loggia, Doughty House, Richmond Hill', *The Builder*, 8 October 1915; Historic England, *The Gallery at Number 142 Doughty House, Richmond upon Thames - 1387232*, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1387232> [accessed 30 October 2017].

display.<sup>71</sup> Outside the houses of aristocrats and the very rich bourgeoisie, dedicated picture galleries were much less common in the home and paintings might be hung throughout a range of rooms such as corridors or bedrooms; even where picture galleries did exist, additional pictures could still be scattered throughout the house.<sup>72</sup> Charles Locke Eastlake suggested in his 1869 *Hints and Tips on Household Taste* that the ‘practice of hanging up oil and water-colour paintings, engravings, and photographs in our sitting-rooms [...] contributes greatly to that appearance of comfort which is the especial characteristic of an English house’, while family portraits were well suited to the dining-room, as ‘especially devoted to hospitality or family gatherings’.<sup>73</sup> Easels could also be used to draw attention to individual works, and grew popular in reception rooms in the 1880s and 1890s.<sup>74</sup> Such a mix of approaches to display in the domestic interior reflects the major use of paintings for day-to-day decoration—‘wall-furniture’, to use Eastlake’s phrase—rather than for the benefit of eventual connoisseurs.<sup>75</sup>

As a result, private collections were often a particularly challenging environment in which to carry out connoisseurship. The ‘Collections’ books kept by Morland are an important record of the dozens of private collections that Morland visited, and his judgements of the artworks there.<sup>76</sup> In several cases, the descriptions can be cross-referenced with surviving records of the houses in which the paintings were displayed, giving a fuller understanding of the types of spaces in which Morland would have performed his connoisseurship. Shobdon Court, Herefordshire—although no longer extant—is an important example because of the extent of the surviving records, and the fact that Morland specifically recorded the paintings by the rooms in which they were hung. At the Court, Morland made notes on paintings hung on the staircase, in the salon, drawing room, library and dining room, and on the landing. Comparing these notes to the plan of Shobdon Court’s ground floor (Fig. 11), we can see that Morland was likely to have been escorted through the porch and entrance corridor, then through the hall (or ‘salon’) to the library and one of the drawing rooms, before coming round into the dining room. Photographs of the salon reveal the specific hang of the paintings in this room

---

<sup>71</sup> Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation’s Art*, pp. 195–198.

<sup>72</sup> Russell, ‘Hanging and Display of Pictures’.

<sup>73</sup> C. L. Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and Other Details*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1869), pp. 166–168.

<sup>74</sup> P. Thornton, *Authentic Decor: The Domestic Interior, 1620-1920* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985), pp. 323; 338-339.

<sup>75</sup> Eastlake, *Hints on Household Taste*, Chap. VII.

<sup>76</sup> C. M. Agnew, *Collections*, [1878-1932], NG, NGA27/29/1-4.

(Fig. 12); however, Morland does not mention the higher paintings and focuses only on the portrait displayed on the chimney breast, describing this as ‘Fulllength [sic] Portrait of a man; lace collar, red coat and breeches, cloak over left arm, riding boots. Wrongly attributed to Vandyck. Very good piece of decoration. Probably fetch £750 at Christies’.<sup>77</sup> This strongly suggests that Morland was not aiming to assess the whole collection, but rather making notes on paintings that would be of particular interest to the firm and its clients. These had a distinct slant towards British works and portraits, in line with the firm’s specialisms (to be discussed in Chapter 5). Alternatively, he may simply not have been able to get close enough to the more remote works to reach a reliable connoisseurial judgement. As no catalogue for the collection has been found, and no mention is made in Morland’s notes of additional information such as provenance details, it is likely that he was relying overwhelmingly on his visual impression of the works. As will be discussed in more detail below, Morland was evidently confident in his ability to dismiss a painting’s attribution through visual examination alone.

### ***Public and semi-public spaces***

#### *Dealers and auction houses*

Both Agnew’s and the National Gallery purchased through dealers and auction houses, particularly Christie’s.<sup>78</sup> There was a perception among contemporary observers that the National Gallery was reluctant to visit and buy from British art dealers: in the early twentieth century, as fears grew that artworks were being drained from British aristocratic collections by American collectors and foreign galleries, the National Gallery was openly criticised for a perceived failure to be proactive in seeking out acquisitions. An editorial in the *Burlington Magazine* of 1905 accused the institution of failing in its duty by neglecting to examine pictures in the showrooms of the London dealers, and thus losing works to the more dedicated German museums: ‘London dealers have learned by bitter experience that, while the authorities of our own National Gallery will hardly take the trouble to go round the corner to look at a picture, a telegram to Berlin will bring over an official of that Museum at a few hours’ notice’.<sup>79</sup> The reality, however, was more complicated than this, and the National

---

<sup>77</sup> C. M. Agnew, *Collections*, Volume I, NG, NGA27/29/1, p. 32. The current location of this painting is unknown.

<sup>78</sup> de Silva, Gertsberg and Pownall, ‘Market Evolution of Art Dealers’; Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*, Appendix 1.

<sup>79</sup> ‘German Art and the German Character’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 8.32 (1905), p. 77.

Gallery certainly did visit dealers to examine works throughout the period under scrutiny. For example, Messrs. Dowdeswell wrote to the Director in 1910 to offer for sale a work by the Master of the Female Half-Lengths, described by the firm as ‘the best picture he ever painted, an opinion which is shared by Dr. Max Friedlander who is now engaged on a complete list of the painter’s works’.<sup>80</sup> Dowdeswell’s further suggested that ‘We shall be happy to show it to you when you are next in Bond Street’; in fact, the Board visited the company’s premises the very next day to view the work, although it was not acquired. This willingness to inspect a potential acquisition at a dealer’s premises, rather than requiring the work to be sent to Trafalgar Square, as in the case of private sellers, suggests that these spaces could be understood to be as suitable for connoisseurship as the National Gallery Boardroom. It was not a lack of connoisseurial inspection that was causing the loss of pictures, as the *Burlington Magazine* had suggested: instead, it was an increasing financial inability to compete with spiralling art market prices, coupled, following the introduction of the Rosebery Minute, with the recurrent inability of Director and Trustees to reach an agreement over acquisitions.<sup>81</sup>

Auction houses were often another space of connoisseurship: both Agnew’s and the National Gallery regularly visited Christie’s to examine the works on display in the days before a sale. In 1906, Morland described his plans for a forthcoming auction, having visited Christie’s to view the works: ‘You may rely upon my exercising great caution in what I buy on our own account. I shall certainly avoid all Pictures of the Norwich School: they are all of a dubious character, or nearly all’.<sup>82</sup> Morland was evidently confident of his ability to judge works exhibited at Christie’s, whether or not he had been able to examine them previously. The *Graphic* described in 1887 how ‘some thousands of persons pass before the pictures’ during the ‘exhibitions before the sale day [which] are the most interesting and the most instructive of any in London, or anywhere else in the world’.<sup>83</sup> In particular, the spatial aspects of these displays added to their attraction: ‘as the gallery is the best lighted, and best adapted in form for exhibiting pictures, they always look their very best’. The spatial aspects of Christie’s are therefore pertinent to this discussion: on entering the premises at 8 King Street, visitors

---

<sup>80</sup> Letter from Messrs Dowdeswell, 23 June 1910, NG, NG7/377/10.

<sup>81</sup> P. Rubin, ‘“The Outcry” Despoilers, Donors, and the National Gallery in London, 1909’, *Journal of the History of Collections*, 25.2 (2012), pp. 266–269; H. Rees Leahy, ‘Desiring Holbein: Presence and Absence in the National Gallery’, *Journal of the History of Collections*, 19.1 (2007), pp. 79–82.

<sup>82</sup> Letter from C. M. Agnew, 19 May 1908, Letterbook 1, 1902-1928, NG, NGA27/11/1. It is not clear of which particular sale Morland was writing.

<sup>83</sup> ‘A Picture Sale at Christie’s’, *The Graphic*, 10 September 1887.

would have ascended a large, grand staircase to the first-floor 'Great Rooms' that were used both for viewings and the subsequent sales (Fig. 13).<sup>84</sup> As will be discussed in more depth in Chapters 4 and 5 with regard to the National Gallery and Agnew's, this imposing architecture would have impressed visitors with the grandeur and taste of the interior even before the art had been encountered, and predisposed them to experience an exhibition of the highest quality artworks. Although slightly later than the period in question, photographs of the sales viewings in 1928 and 1931 show how these upstairs galleries would have been arranged (Figs 14-15). In particular, Figure 14 shows the skylight allowing natural light into the display room, while Figure 15 includes numerous visitors inspecting the works with the assistance of the catalogue. The Christie's sale attended by Morland in 1906 would probably have been laid out in similar fashion, giving Morland an opportunity to examine works close at hand.

The additional, social aspects of the auction house space should not be overlooked, as these provided an extra incentive for Agnew's in particular to visit such pre-auction views. George Agnew reinforced the importance of such social contact—actively visiting the places where potential customers would congregate—in a letter of 1924 to Morland, long after both had retired from the business: 'I sometimes wonder whether the staff realise that they should go out into the highways — and especially Christie's and Sotheby's, to look for possible customers. You can never trust to chance callers for business in pictures. Christie's rooms form the Exchange, where all meet, who care for pictures'.<sup>85</sup> As well as Agnew's, representatives of the National Gallery were also highly visible at Christie's during the pre-sale. In 1904, *The Strand* described the build-up to a typical sale at Christie's, emphasising both the display of objects and the social aspects of the space:

The place is already crowded with prospective bidders, for the walls are lined with pictures and tapestries and several groups of carved and inlaid objects are exposed to view. In the well-dressed throng many familiar faces may be recognised [...] yonder is the Marquis of Lansdowne; while in one or other of the three large galleries there move peers and statesmen, Park Lane magnates, celebrated art dealers, and connoisseurs and collectors from all over the world.<sup>86</sup>

Singled out for a particular mention was the Marquess of Lansdowne, who had been a National Gallery Trustee since 1894: this was not a private space in which to examine works, but a public arena in which it was possible to see exactly who was interested in which

---

<sup>84</sup> My thanks to Lynda MacLeod, Librarian at Christie's Archives, for this information.

<sup>85</sup> G. W. Agnew to C. M. Agnew, 29 February 1924, NG, NGA27/23/7/6.

<sup>86</sup> Valentine, 'Christie's', p. 644.

pictures. This public aspect was in fact a danger for the National Gallery, as the presence of the Director, bidding at auction as the representative of a high-profile London museum and with a pre-determined budget, could significantly push up prices or lead to the loss of a work to another bidder.<sup>87</sup> One of the disadvantages of developing a reliable reputation for connoisseurship was that others would be interested in purchasing similar works as a marker of quality.<sup>88</sup> As a result, the National Gallery used bidding agents at auctions throughout the period in question, particularly acting in partnership with Agnew's.<sup>89</sup> However—and no matter who would be bidding in the sale itself—it remained important from a connoisseurial perspective for the Director, and often the Trustees, to view paintings in person before the auction, in order to determine whether they were worthy of acquisition.

### *Public galleries*

The permanent collections of institutions such as the National Gallery, the South Kensington Museum and, later, the Tate, were for the most part always available for connoisseurial reference and comparison. Morland's diaries show that he used these galleries as leisure destinations as well as business purposes, taking his son Hugh [Tim] Agnew to visit the National Gallery on a day out in 1913.<sup>90</sup> At temporary public exhibitions, however, only a short amount of time could be spent in front of each picture because of the large number of artworks on display. Judgements had to be made relatively swiftly on the basis of a largely visual examination, with little access to information other than that provided by experience or laid out in the catalogue. For Agnew's, the type of connoisseurship adopted at such exhibitions can be best illustrated using the example of Morland's annotated exhibition catalogues. Between 1885 and 1913, Morland visited the Royal Academy Old Masters exhibition on a nearly annual basis, building up a collection of annotated copies of the catalogue as a record of his thoughts on the paintings seen there.<sup>91</sup> Morland took particular notice of the attribution and condition of works, as well as recording his personal aesthetic responses — once again reflecting the overwhelming importance of the triumvirate of

---

<sup>87</sup> Hodkinson, *A Question of Attribution*, p. 118.

<sup>88</sup> A. Harrison Moore, *Fraud, Fakery and False Business: Rethinking the Shrager versus Dighton 'Old Furniture Case'* (London; New York: Continuum International, 2011), p. 137.

<sup>89</sup> Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*, Chap. 3.

<sup>90</sup> 14 May 1913, C. M. Agnew diary, 1913, NG, NGA27/27/23.

<sup>91</sup> C. M. Agnew annotated exhibition catalogues, 1885-1907, NG, NGA27/21/1. Morland also kept similar records for Old Master exhibitions at the Grosvenor and New Galleries in the 1880s and 1890s, reflecting the importance of large-scale Old Master shows mounted by dealers.

connoisseurship established in Chapter 1. ‘Don’t care greatly for this’, he wrote of a Terburg in the 1885 Winter Exhibition, while a portrait of Miss Kitty Calcott by Romney, part of the 1895 exhibition, was in ‘very fair condition. Not tip-top. Lady not very beautiful’.<sup>92</sup> As with private collections, as discussed above, he was obviously confident of challenging existing attributions by eye, adding comments such as ‘school picture’ or ‘very little of it by V.’ against works attributed to Velazquez at the 1895-6 Exhibition of Spanish Art at the New Gallery (Fig. 16).<sup>93</sup> For a ‘Velazquez’ lent from the collection of Sir Francis Cook, Morland felt sure enough to suggest an alternative attribution to Juan Carreño de Miranda.<sup>94</sup> While some of the works in these exhibitions would have been familiar to him from previous visits to private collections or exposure on the art market (of a Murillo, numbered 112 in the 1895 Royal Academy Winter Exhibition, Morland wrote ‘repainted entirely. This has been kicking about some time’), many were being seen for the first time.<sup>95</sup> However, in the case of the Exhibition of Spanish Art in particular, Morland would have been able to draw on his experience from his 1891 journey to Spain, where he spent some time touring a number of art galleries.<sup>96</sup> Such exhibitions were important for Agnew’s from a connoisseurial perspective as it was highly likely that many of these pictures would later come onto the market: as Haskell has highlighted, ‘then, as now, many people thought of Old Master exhibitions as a convenient way of attracting publicity for pictures they wished to sell – nor were they wrong in making that assumption’.<sup>97</sup> It appears that works were being informally advertised for sale even while still on the walls of the RA, as the *Examiner* complained in 1879 that by accepting works with a ‘spurious’ attribution, that institution was allowing ‘pedigrees to pictures [to be] manufactured, greatly to the delight of picture-dealers and millionaires who buy rubbish at their instigation’.<sup>98</sup> Such a practice is confirmed in Morland’s notes: for example, for a

---

<sup>92</sup> C. M. Agnew annotated exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy Winter Exhibition 1885, NG, NGA27/21/1/1; C. M. Agnew annotated exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy Winter Exhibition 1895, NG, NGA27/21/1/10.

<sup>93</sup> C. M. Agnew annotated exhibition catalogue, the New Gallery Exhibition, 1895-1896, NG, NGA27/21/1/34.

<sup>94</sup> Now at the de Young Museum in San Francisco, this portrait is listed as ‘Manner of Velazquez’: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, *Dona Mariana of Austria, Queen of Spain*, <https://art.famsf.org/diego-rodriguez-de-silva-y-velasquez/dona-mariana-austria-queen-spain-614425> [accessed 24 November 2017]. As early as 1915, in the Doughty House catalogue compiled by Herbert Cook, the painting was ‘listed as certainly not by Velázquez’s hand’, while the attribution to Carreño has since been put forward as an alternative: López-Rey, *Velázquez: A Catalogue Raisonné*, pp. 247–248.

<sup>95</sup> C. M. Agnew annotated exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy Winter Exhibition 1895, NG, NGA27/21/1/10.

<sup>96</sup> C. M. Agnew, Spain travel diary, 1891, NG, NGA27/27/4.

<sup>97</sup> Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum*, pp. 76–77.

<sup>98</sup> ‘Fine Arts’, *The Examiner*, 25 January 1879.

Romney portrait, numbered 50 in the 1885 Royal Academy Winter Exhibition, Morland noted that owner J. C. Musters ‘wants *tee* [£700]’.<sup>99</sup> The buyers of certain works were also sometimes noted, even when not sold to Agnew’s, presumably as potentially useful provenance information; this shows that Morland did on occasion take such information into account in addition to his visual judgements. Taken as a whole, these pencilled catalogue notes—made in front of each work as Morland walked round the exhibition—reveal a dealer’s immediate reactions to a work. They are therefore important evidence of the ways in which connoisseurship was carried out, as will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3.

The National Gallery staff also frequently attended such public exhibitions, both in Britain and, where it was felt that an acquisition might be possible, abroad. Visual inspection once again seems to have been a major concern: Burton wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1883 that ‘I have been only once at the R. Acady. for the weather is infamously dark – and even then it was too late in the day to discern much [...] Amongst the Old Masters there are some fine things. But it was impossible in the murky light to form any proper judgement on any of them’.<sup>100</sup> In contrast, Trustee J. P. Heseltine submitted a favourable report in 1905 of his inspection in Amsterdam of the collection formed by Dutch collector Jean Charles Joseph Drucker: ‘there are a considerable number of desirable pictures as to which I can now give the Trustees detailed information: they are shown together in a good room with a top light at the Riks Museum [sic]: none of the galleries at the Riks Museum are very good but this one seems to me to be as good as any’.<sup>101</sup> In addition, however, Heseltine recommended the purchase of the illustrated catalogue containing information on the Drucker collection; a pencil note on his report states that ‘A copy is in the Board Room at N. G.’.<sup>102</sup> Once again, as with Morland’s Royal Academy notes, this suggests that connoisseurship by National Gallery personnel was not based purely on visual examination, but on as much available information on potential purchases as was possible to collect.

---

<sup>99</sup> C. M. Agnew annotated exhibition catalogue, Royal Academy Winter Exhibition 1885, NG, NGA27/21/1/1. My thanks to Barbara Pezzini for sharing her interpretation of the financial codes used in the Agnew’s archive.

<sup>100</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 5 January 1883, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>101</sup> J. P. Heseltine’s report of the Drucker Collection in Amsterdam, 11 June 1905, NG, NG7/297/6. RKD, *Explore Jean Charles Joseph Drucker*, <https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/artists/428829> [accessed 30 October 2017].

<sup>102</sup> A copy of the catalogue with some pencil annotations, presumably made by Heseltine himself, is in the National Gallery Library under the shelfmark NC30 AMSTERDAM Rij. 1904. Although they were not all acquired immediately, the paintings in the National Gallery with a Drucker collection provenance are NG2709, NG2712-NG2715, NG2727 and NG2874-NG2876.

## **The effects of space on connoisseurship**

Having thus established the extent to which the mobility of both artworks and people was important for personal, first-hand connoisseurship, and outlined the places in which connoisseurship took place, this chapter will now consider in more detail how the various spaces encountered had an effect upon the ways in which it was performed. As has been highlighted above, the spatial experience varied depending on the type of space in which the artwork was being viewed: for example, connoisseurs would have been able to interact with a work very differently in the private space of the National Gallery boardroom as compared to a crowded public gallery. However, as will be demonstrated, a range of considerations remained remarkably consistent across the different types of space, such as the requirement for good lighting for the sake of visual analysis, and the need to be able to examine an artwork in close proximity.

### ***Access to the spaces in which works were displayed***

One of the most basic ways in which space affected connoisseurship was that of access to the works: if it was not possible to examine pictures, either in person or via reproductions, then connoisseurship could not be employed. The range of access varied widely, with public exhibitions generally easier to access (although the issue of over-crowding and visibility will be addressed in Chapters 4 and 5) and entry to private buildings often requiring the permission of the owner. The level of access varied even within individual buildings, where paintings might be hung in both more public rooms, such as the drawing room, and more private rooms like the bedroom or study.<sup>103</sup> As Hanson has suggested, the depth to which people are allowed to penetrate into the private spaces of the domestic dwelling reflects their status as visitor or inhabitant of that dwelling.<sup>104</sup> If a connoisseur was not in an existing position of authority, or personally acquainted with the owner of a private collection, it was much more difficult to gain access to private spaces. Charles Holmes noted ruefully in his autobiography that he had found when researching his book on Constable—before his elevation to National Gallery Director in 1916—that ‘I could not do all that I wanted to do. It

---

<sup>103</sup> The notions of ‘private’ and ‘public’ in the interior should nevertheless be treated with caution as representing fluid points on a spectrum rather than concrete opposites: L. Davidoff, ‘Gender and the “Great Divide”: Public and Private in British Gender History’, *Journal of Women’s History*, 15.1 (2003), p. 18.

<sup>104</sup> J. Hanson, *Decoding Homes and Houses* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 6–8.

was not easy for a totally unknown clerk to get access to pictures in private collections'.<sup>105</sup> Even Burton, as Director, occasionally encountered such issues: he wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1879 that:

Your last letter, with the sketch of the Lotto, very much interests me – and I too, should like to compare it with the picture in the Bridgewater Collect which I do not recollect at all – But it is difficult to get into Bridgewater Ho: without knowing the owner, who is a man who cares for nothing but horses.<sup>106</sup>

Equally, works in more public collections were sometimes unavailable because they had been temporarily removed from display. Morland visited the Liechtenstein Gallery more than once on an 1895 trip to Austria, writing on his second visit that 'The full-length F. Hals not there today. Lucky I saw it on Sunday. The Prince has taken it away, "to show to a friend in the country"'.<sup>107</sup> In general, however, the Agnew's and the National Gallery staff were able to play on their established positions in the art world, their networks of personal connections and their cultural capital in order to gain invitations or consent to view works in such restricted spaces, enjoying privileged access to places that were otherwise off-limits to the less well-connected.<sup>108</sup>

For the National Gallery, this was the case not just for the examination of potential acquisitions, but also for the sake of research into the existing collection. For example, in 1912 Holroyd was invited by Lionel Cust, Director of the National Portrait Gallery and Surveyor of the King's Pictures, to view the Canalettos in the Royal Collection.<sup>109</sup> 'I do not feel sure, if you have ever really seen the Windsor Castle's [Canalettos]', Cust wrote.<sup>110</sup> 'So many are in different rooms, that it is not likely. I should greatly like to go over them some day with you, and could ask the King for special permission to take you into these rooms.' Cust suggested that this comparison would be useful in determining whether several of the

---

<sup>105</sup> C. Holmes, *Self & Partners (Mostly Self): Being the Reminiscences of C. J. Holmes* (London: Rivington & Co, 1936), p. 207.

<sup>106</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 18 December 1879, HRC, MS-0627. The owner of Bridgewater House was peer and racehorse enthusiast Francis Egerton, 3rd Earl of Ellesmere.

<sup>107</sup> C. M. Agnew, Austria travel diary, 29 September-19 October 1895, NGA27/27/73, entry for 8 October 1895. This was presumably the portrait of Willem van Heythuysen now in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich: RKD, *Frans Hals (I) Portrait of Willem van Heythuysen (1585-1650), Standing Full Length*, <https://rkd.nl/en/explore/portraits/181785> [accessed 24 November 2017].

<sup>108</sup> P. Bourdieu, 'The Forms of Capital (1986)', in I. Szeman and T. Kaposy (eds), *Cultural Theory: An Anthology* (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), pp. 82–84.

<sup>109</sup> L. Binyon and C. Lloyd, 'Cust, Sir Lionel Henry (1859-1929)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32684>.

<sup>110</sup> L. Cust to C. Holroyd with draft response from Holroyd to Cust, 7 July 1912, NG, NG68/34/3.

National Gallery's Canalettos were truly deserving of that attribution. Cust's own catalogue of the Royal Collection at Windsor, printed in 1906, contained illustrations of only three of its Canalettos; Cust also highlighted in his 1911 *Notes* on the collection that 'a considerable number of paintings' in the collection remained 'practically unknown', despite being of 'not inconsiderable [interest] for students and connoisseurs'.<sup>111</sup> Holroyd would therefore have had little or no opportunity to examine these works without this explicit invitation. The visit did in fact give Holroyd the chance to exercise his connoisseurial skills on paintings that he had not previously seen: 'I enjoyed them very much indeed and saw very many which were quite new to me', he wrote to Cust.<sup>112</sup> 'I beg you to thank the King for me for the kind privilege granted to me and which I appreciated and valued most highly'. In particular, the opportunity for comparison led Holroyd to change his connoisseurial opinion of the National Gallery works: 'the thing I did not know was the series of small views of Venice by Antonio Canale which you had hung together. They were very beautiful & gave me a new idea of Canale. I shall have to revise the National Gallery catalogue accordingly'.<sup>113</sup> Without such special access, granted both to the building and particular rooms within it, Holroyd would not have been able to make these comparisons in support of his judgement. This episode highlights the fact that even paintings in well-known collections were often not available in reproduction—let alone works in smaller, less high-profile collections—and once again underscores the importance of being able to travel to view pictures in person.

In comparison, Agnew's personnel had to work harder than the National Gallery's to gain entrance to private collections, the company lacking some of the Gallery's authority and legitimacy. Nevertheless, Agnew's certainly was granted access to royal and aristocratic collections: Morland noted in his diary for 1891 that 'The father [has] been to Osborne lately, to value Her Majesty's pictures'.<sup>114</sup> This was an honoured task for the firm, which would have been selected from a wide number of rival dealers because of its reputation for connoisseurial reliability and honesty. Social and political connections undoubtedly also

---

<sup>111</sup> L. Cust, *The Royal Collection of Paintings at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle. Vol II: Windsor Castle* (London; New York: William Heinemann; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906); L. Cust (ed.), *Notes on Pictures in the Royal Collections* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1911), p. v.

<sup>112</sup> L. Cust to C. Holroyd with draft response from Holroyd to Cust, 7 July 1912, NG, NG68/34/3.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Diary entry for 25 October 1891, C. M. Agnew diary, NG, NGA27/27/7. See also a letter from the Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, J. C. Robinson, to W. Agnew, 9 September 1891, NG, NGA27/32/2/75. However, there appears to be no archival material held by the Royal Archives or the Paintings Department in the Royal Collection Trust relating to this valuation: my thanks to Julie Crocker for this information.

played a part in the selection process: William Agnew was an MP from 1880 to 1886, and Prime Minister William Gladstone stayed at his house in Salford in summer 1886.<sup>115</sup> Such privileged access into private collections also helped the firm to increase its connoisseurial knowledge by permitting comparison with known works, and by allowing staff to examine works that were not necessarily for sale but could potentially come onto the market at a later date. This was also the case for paintings off display in public galleries. William Agnew described in an 1886 letter to his family how he had managed to obtain access to two rooms in the Dresden Gemäldegalerie that were closed for cleaning but held Rembrandts and Vermeers that he particularly wished to see:

It was hard fate not to see these pictures, for I am no longer young, and may never see Dresden again. I determined therefore to call upon the director, Herr Woermann. I sent in my card, was courteously received, and told in excellent English, that it was quite impossible to gratify my wish this time. I opened my second battery, explained my position in the Art world, and said that I was writing much on the Dresden pictures; that to omit all reference to the Rembrandts would be a *bêtise*; so the Herr most politely took me in charge. [...] the Rembrandts, etc., were in half-an-hour arranged for my delectation and my criticism.<sup>116</sup>

While written to highlight the humour of the situation, William's account shows that in some cases—perhaps particularly when abroad—the name of Agnew was not in itself necessarily sufficient to open doors, unless supported by an additional explanation of the firm's standing. However, William was able to give a persuasive enough account of his 'position in the Art world' to convince gallery director Karl Woermann to allow him access to these off-display paintings. In other cases, Agnew's was able to exploit its existing network of client relationships, as Croal Thomson found on his visit to America, where he received invitations to visit the collections of numerous wealthy collectors. In particular, Croal Thomson wrote of John G. Johnson of Philadelphia that 'he is adviser to all the buyers in the country and very much our friend'.<sup>117</sup> However, Croal Thomson also warned the partners in Agnew's of the need to work to maintain such relationships: 'I wish to speak with you very seriously about

---

<sup>115</sup> Diary entry for 30 June 1886, C. M. Agnew diary, NG, NGA27/27/7. On Gladstone himself as a collector and connoisseur, see M. Pointon, 'W. E. Gladstone as an Art Patron and Collector', *Victorian Studies*, 19.1 (1975), pp. 73–98. For more on the relationship between Gladstone and Agnew's, see Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*, Chap. 3.

<sup>116</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*, p. 57.

<sup>117</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3, p. 47.

the American plan of handling customers, as the general impression exists that we do not care for Americans and treat them shabbily. The other dealers, of course, foster this notion'.<sup>118</sup> As mentioned above, for Agnew's—perhaps more so than for the National Gallery—access to places such as auction houses and collectors' homes had multiple functions, not only for the practice of connoisseurship but also the creation and reinforcement of business relationships.

The first spatial stage of connoisseurship was therefore that of gaining access into a particular space of connoisseurship to inspect the works therein. Once granted access, other factors then came into play that could have a significant impact on the connoisseurial process. Visual aspects of connoisseurship were of particular concern: both the lighting of the works and their proximity to the observer could either facilitate or impede the practice of connoisseurship. However, the ability to handle a work and the amount of time permitted for inspection were also important considerations.

### ***Visual examination: Lighting***

Good lighting was of particular importance when passing connoisseurial judgement: without sufficient light, it was impossible to carry out the requisite visual examination of a work. Burton highlighted this issue when he wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1877 that 'Here we have the very severest winter weather I can recollect - with every variety of wretchedness that a winter can bring with it – and no light at all. Whichever way the wind blows – There is little use in going to the two Great Exhibitions'.<sup>119</sup> As seen above, 'good lighting' was a strong basis for both the National Gallery—and Agnew's, on occasion—to request that paintings were sent to their own premises for inspection. Outside the controlled premises of the National Gallery and Agnew's, however, lighting was much more variable. The difficulties of viewing paintings in their original display location, particularly if this was a church or convent, had been frequently noted throughout the nineteenth century. The writings of Charles Lock Eastlake and other travellers to Italy viewing art in religious spaces in the mid-nineteenth century reveal the spatial aspects of connoisseurship in such environments. Much was made of the difficulty in viewing artworks in the dim light available: Lord Lindsay wrote of his European travels in 1841-1842 that a Perugino fresco in an Italian church could 'only be seen

---

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>119</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 24 January 1877, HRC, MS-0627.

(and partially seen) by torchlight, being concealed by the substructions of a newly built gallery', while in Assisi the church was 'so dark that frescogazing is hard work for the eyes, even with the assistance of an excellent spyglass which I bought in Rome'.<sup>120</sup> While, as has been discussed above, far fewer paintings were bought directly from religious institutions from the 1870s onwards, they were still visited for the purposes of comparative connoisseurship and general interest. In 1905, Morland compared the 'injured & difficult to see' frescos at the Duomo in Florence with those in Santa Croce: 'Giotto's [sic] frescoes: excellent light'.<sup>121</sup> However, the original context of such works appears to have had relatively little importance for connoisseurs in this period, outside the spiritual experience of beauty alluded to by William Agnew as cited in Chapter 1.

Good lighting meant not only the strength of light available, but also the type of lighting: whether it was natural or artificial, and from which direction it was cast onto the painting. In particular, daylight was generally understood to be best for the purposes of connoisseurship. Burton wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1876 that 'As soon as I can get up to [Edward Burne-Jones' house] the Grange for daylight I will ask to see the old pictures you left there. It was no use looking at them last night'.<sup>122</sup> The previous evening, Burton had admired a 'superb' Mantegna at the house, although the need for artificial lighting had somewhat impaired his judgement: 'It seemed to me (by candle light at least) to leave nothing to be wished for'. Artificial light was often seen as untrustworthy or misleading: the *Daily News* wrote in 1885 in regard to an exhibition by Messrs. Vicars Brothers of Walbrook that 'Honest daylight is the best for seeing pictures, and the most trustworthy for forming an accurate judgement of their merit. As "Good wine needs no bush" so does a good picture no more need an artificial reflected light than an organ performance to ensure its appreciation'.<sup>123</sup> Electric light in particular was initially mistrusted. Although the *Times* welcomed the replacement of gas lighting by electric at Christie's in 1889 as a 'very agreeable change', the paper still argued that 'The pictures require to be seen by daylight to be appreciated as an expert would desire, for although the electric light may be pronounced a becoming light, it is not of sufficiently searching quality'.<sup>124</sup> This was partly attributed to the high placement of the lights, away from

---

<sup>120</sup> H. Brigstocke, 'Lord Lindsay: Travel in Italy and Northern Europe, 1841-42, for "Sketches of the History of Christian Art"', in *The Sixty-Fifth Volume of the Walpole Society* (Leeds; Cambridge, MA: Produced for the Walpole Society by Maney Publishing, 2003), pp. 184; 189.

<sup>121</sup> Diary entry for 29 March 1905, C. M. Agnew, 1905 diary, NG, NGA27/27/15.

<sup>122</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 19 February 1876, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>123</sup> "'The White Slave'", *Daily News*, 6 March 1885.

<sup>124</sup> 'Art Sales', *The Times*, 3 December 1889.

the walls on which the paintings were hung. However, it is possible that electric lighting grew more acceptable for the purposes of connoisseurship as it became more commonplace and the technology improved, given that such issues seem to be less frequently referenced from the early twentieth century onwards. The attitudes of both the National Gallery and Agnew's towards the installation of artificial lighting at their own premises will be explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

Good lighting was particularly vital to the connoisseurial judgement of condition, as T. J. Clark has asserted in his in-depth observation of two Poussin works at the Getty Center.<sup>125</sup> In particular, he argues that the 'gray varnish' on Poussin's *Landscape with a Man killed by a Snake* (NG5763) gives the painting an 'extreme sensitivity to different lighting conditions [...] sometimes the combination of lamps and top light cut through the varnish and truly brought the painting out of its hiding'.<sup>126</sup> This issue was already recognised during the period in question: for example, Poynter visited Italy in 1902 to view a panel offered to the National Gallery for purchase. The Director was confident enough after his first viewing to state that 'There can be no doubt as to the genuiness [sic] & the correct attribution to Lorenzo Monaco of the picture belonging to Mr. Galli-Dunn'.<sup>127</sup> However, Poynter wanted to examine the painting again, and, returning the next day, 'had the picture placed in a good light: it seemed to me, beyond a little rubbing of the old background at the borders, to be in an almost untouched condition'. The comparatively poor light in which the picture had first been viewed was therefore deemed sufficient to determine the attribution of the painting, but a better light was needed in order to judge its condition.

In private collections, the quality of the available light was particularly varied. As mentioned above with respect to Doughty House (Figs 8-10), purpose-built galleries might feature top-lighting similar to that of contemporary art galleries (as will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5).<sup>128</sup> This was particularly appreciated from a connoisseurial perspective. As Croal

---

<sup>125</sup> For a similar discussion of the effects of lighting on the connoisseurship of sculpture, see M. Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2004), pp. 189–90.

<sup>126</sup> T. J. Clark, *The Sight of Death: An Experiment in Art Writing* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 186.

<sup>127</sup> Director's report of his journey to Italy, 9 February 1902, NG, NG7/261/1. The picture was acquired as NG1897 and still bears the attribution to Lorenzo Monaco.

<sup>128</sup> G. Waterfield (ed.), *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790-1990* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991), pp. 135–44.

Thomson remarked approvingly on the picture-hanging arrangements in the ‘immense mansion’ built for public transit tycoon Peter A. B. Widener at the corner of Broad Street and Girard Avenue, Philadelphia: ‘He has the finest collection I have seen from Rembrandt to Whistler and the Primitives to Cazin and Dagnan-Bouvert. He had come from Washington to see me and we had a delightful time in his fine rooms and top lighted gallery’.<sup>129</sup> In such dedicated galleries, therefore, the lighting was specifically designed to enhance the potential for connoisseurship and appreciation on the part of the owner and among specialists invited to view the pictures. Throughout older or smaller houses, however, or in rooms such as corridors or bedrooms, there might be little natural light available. Burton wrote in 1884 of Pisanello’s *Vision of Saint Eustace*, delivered from Ashburnham House to the National Gallery for the purposes of being photographed, that

I have never properly seen it at its home. For it hangs in a bad light. But on getting it at the Gallery all its wonderful details came out. [...] The picture is in a perfect state – and I am not acquainted with any easel work of Pisano’s so fine as this one. It is crammed with birds, large & small, a bear, a hare & several deer – besides dogs of various breeds.<sup>130</sup>

In this case, the ‘bad light’ of the room where the painting usually hung had given Burton an erroneous impression of the work, which was modified on seeing it in the better light of the National Gallery.

### ***Visual examination: Proximity***

In addition to access and lighting problems, proximity could also be an issue for connoisseurs, particularly if there was not enough physical space to get close enough to the works. In Florence, Lindsay had written of ‘crawling and making notes on my knees’ in Orsanmichele, while on the frescoes in the Brancacci Chapel, he stated that ‘the light is so bad and the fresco so injured that it is impossible to see it sufficiently from below, we intend going there again on Monday morning and if possible procuring a ladder, so as to obtain a nearer view and ascertain the point’.<sup>131</sup> It was not only in religious institutions that it was difficult to view paintings, however, particularly when paintings were ‘skied’ and hung far above the viewer. In an 1877 letter to Burton describing a painting attributed to Filippo Lippi and previously

---

<sup>129</sup> D. Croal Thomson to W. L. Agnew, 24 August 1906, NG, NGA27/11/1/49.

<sup>130</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 11 September 1884, HRC, MS-0627. This painting, previously understood to depict the legend of St Hubert, was acquired for the National Gallery by Poynter in 1895 as NG1436.

<sup>131</sup> Brigstocke, ‘Lord Lindsay: Travel in Italy’, pp. 201; 205.

part of the Manfrin Collection, Fairfax Murray specifically linked the poor positioning of the work to his inability to judge its condition: 'Casting a glance at it is sufficient to put [Lippi] out of the question but it is either a Verrocchio or Pollajuolo [sic] of the finest quality hung rather above the eye & not in a good light I could only see that it was dirty with varnish but cannot speak as to its general preservation'.<sup>132</sup> Approaching a painting near enough to carry out connoisseurship was a particular difficulty in private houses: in his notes on the Shobdon Court collection, Morland wrote of a portrait on the landing that 'It is said to be by Gainsborough; if so it is early, but from the distance it looked to me a doubtful attribution'.<sup>133</sup> Morland evidently felt that he needed to be within a certain proximity in order to make a definitive judgement on attribution. However, it was occasionally possible to overcome this problem: in 1884, Burton justified the outlay of a £1 gratuity to the butler at Blenheim Palace as being 'in consideration of services rendered during six hours, including the provision of two men with a stepladder to facilitate the examination of several large pictures, which could not have been accomplished without such assistance'.<sup>134</sup>

### ***Physical examination and handling***

While close visual inspection of the front surface of a painting was evidently of paramount importance, it is still important to consider alternative means of examining a work. In particular, the handling of artworks can be considered as a spatially determined issue, permitted in some spaces but not in others. This aspect of connoisseurship has historically been overlooked in the secondary literature, but has recently begun to garner more critical attention as part of a wider scholarly interest in materiality.<sup>135</sup> In particular, through a series of interviews Sally MacDonald has highlighted the ways in which touch underpins the

---

<sup>132</sup> G. Nicoletti, *Pinacoteca Manfrin a Venezia* (Venezia: Marco Visentini, 1872), p. 33 (cat. no. 162); the collection was at this point in the ownership of Marchesa Bartolina Plattis. On the Manfrin Collection, see F. Haskell, *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1980), pp. 379–381.

<sup>133</sup> C. M. Agnew, *Collections*, Volume I, NG, NGA27/29/1, p. 65. I have been unable to trace these works.

<sup>134</sup> Letter to the Exchequer, 19 November 1884, NG, NG6/10/367.

<sup>135</sup> Much of this research focuses on modern museum handling practices and access to collections, for the purposes of visitor experience rather than connoisseurship per se. See, for example, A. C. Woodall, 'Sensory Engagements with Objects in Art Galleries: Material Interpretation and Theological Metaphor' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leicester, 2016); A. G. Walker, 'Beyond the Looking Glass: Object Handling and Access to Museum Collections' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Southampton, 2013), Chap. 1; F. Candlin, *Art, Museums and Touch* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), Chap. 4. Candlin focuses largely on the curatorial training schemes introduced from the 1920s onwards.

knowledge held by modern-day object experts such as collectors, curators and dealers.<sup>136</sup> The need to consider the additional evidence offered by the reverse of a work, which could only be accessed by handling a work, was already recognised in this period in the case of attribution. In 1875, *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* published a detailed article defending the 'indubitable' attribution to Raphael of a painting owned by American banker James Clinton Hooker.<sup>137</sup> The pseudonymous author suggested that reports doubting the authenticity of the work had been made without having 'the picture in one's hands', but that on 'close examination in a good light', the writer had been able to determine on the reverse of the panel two inscriptions 'in all probability written when the picture was painted'. Without the 'opportunity of examining the inscription at the back of the picture for themselves', the dissenting connoisseurs 'consequently got all astray in the interpretation of it'. Although this information fed into a widespread debate on the subject, other connoisseurs appear to have remained sceptical of the painting—which was exhibited at the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition in 1879—with Burton refusing to buy the work and Poynter reportedly telling Hooker's wife that it should instead be attributed to Pinturicchio.<sup>138</sup> This suggests that although additional physical information, such as inscriptions on the reverse of a work, might be taken into account, such evidence was still unlikely to be prioritised over a visual judgement.

It has also been difficult to determine to what extent the Agnew's and National Gallery staff were engaged in the physical connoisseurial examination of an object beyond a basic visual inspection.<sup>139</sup> It is possible that artworks were commonly handled by the National Gallery and Agnew's personnel when being inspected in the private spaces under institutional control, or in the semi-private spaces offered in art dealers' premises, but that no records of such informal handling were kept. It was certainly harder to handle artworks outside these private spaces. Museums moved from a relatively open handling policy in the eighteenth century to 'an absence of touch except for a certain elite' during the nineteenth and early

---

<sup>136</sup> S. MacDonald, 'Exploring the Role of Touch in Connoisseurship and the Identification of Objects', in E. Pye (ed.), *The Power of Touch: Handling Objects in Museums and Heritage Contexts* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 107–120.

<sup>137</sup> 'T. A. T.', 'Mr Hooker's Picture', *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, August 1875.

<sup>138</sup> 'Fine Arts', *The Examiner*, 25 January 1879; F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 30 January 1884, HRC, MS-0627; *Fogg Art Museum Harvard University: Collection of Mediaeval and Renaissance Paintings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1919), p. 173. The painting is now in the Fogg Museum (inv. no. 1900.6) where it is attributed to Antonio da Viterbo.

<sup>139</sup> Candlin has noted the difficulties inherent in studying the use of touch to examine objects, ascribing this to the tacit knowledge of curatorial practice: Candlin, *Art, Museums and Touch*, p. 91.

twentieth centuries.<sup>140</sup> As with the privileged access to private collections, as discussed above, it was therefore a special privilege to be permitted to handle paintings in public collections, and one that was not extended to the general public. Burton described in early 1880 how he had been able to pin down the attribution of a painting already in the National Gallery collection to ‘a Dutchman “Marrinus van Romerswale”’, through comparison with signed works in collections across Europe and reference to early art historians such as Vasari.<sup>141</sup> In particular, when visiting Dresden in 1879, Burton had ‘had [the ‘conspicuously signed & dated’ painting] down to examine’, although his letter does not mention his exact findings. This privilege of handling gallery pictures was not necessarily restricted to museum directors, however, as Burton had previously mentioned in a letter to Fairfax Murray that ‘You told me you meant to have 366 [in the gallery in Siena] taken down. & I shall be curious as to what comes out of it’.<sup>142</sup> While it is therefore clear that such handling of works in public collections was both desirable and useful, there is little further information to suggest exactly how these paintings were examined once taken down. One example that does stand out because of its physicality is the use of breath to examine a work, as Burton explained in his 1874 report of the inspection of a purported Michelangelo: ‘I contented myself with inspecting the picture as it stands, merely breathing upon it here & there in order to bring out the contours and colours a little more distinctly’.<sup>143</sup> This shows how physically close Burton must have been able to get to the surface of the painting. However, this physical interaction with the painting was once again most important from the visual perspective, rather than from a tactile angle, because the breath was being used to enhance the colours of the work. In fact, Burton would have preferred to wet the work, but because it was ‘considerably cracked, & in some part scaled’, it would have been ‘very hazardous to moisten it with water’. He also hinted that tests were available for the distinguishing of different media, as the painting was ‘as far as I could judge without testing it, in tempera’. It is not clear what type of test would have been employed, but it is likely that it would have involved removing a sample from the painting for analysis. Such analysis will be discussed in more detail in the section on ‘Technical testing’ in Chapter 3.

---

<sup>140</sup> Walker, ‘Beyond the Looking Glass’, p. 9.

<sup>141</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 24 February 1880, HRC, MS-0627. The painting, NG944, is now attributed to the Workshop of Marinus van Reymerswale.

<sup>142</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 14 October 1875, HRC, MS-0627. This was presumably the *Ascension* by Benvenuto di Giovanni, still in the collection of the Pinacoteca di Siena: *Catalogo della Galleria del R. Istituto Provinciale di Belle Arti di Siena* (Siena: Sordo-muti di L. Lazzeri, 1872), p. 64. Burton wanted a comparison between the picture in Siena and a painting bought at the Barker sale in 1874 (NG909.1), which was itself attributed to Benvenuto di Siena by 1877.

<sup>143</sup> Director's report of a journey to ‘Mayence’ [Mainz], 4 May 1874, NG, NG5/191/1.

### ***The time taken for connoisseurship***

The amount of time available to inspect a work also had a significant impact on the way in which connoisseurship was carried out, and even on the outcomes of the process. Taking more time to examine a work, and having the opportunity to carry out additional research such as checking archives and printed sources, could lead to a more in-depth understanding of the painting, the circumstances of its production and its provenance. However, the space in which the painting was subject to inspection to a large extent dictated whether such a lengthy consideration process was possible. This is one of the major ways in which connoisseurship differed across a range of private and public spaces: in the private confines of the National Gallery Boardroom, for example, the Director and Trustees could take as long as reasonably required to examine a work, or carry out repeat inspections over multiple days. This allowed for the benefit of discussion (or, alternatively, could further entrench disagreements). If the work being sent to the Gallery was a known one, and had been previously written up by scholars, it would also be possible to carry out research before the picture itself arrived in Trafalgar Square. Such research is likely to have taken place largely in the National Gallery library, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter. It was also possible to spend an extended amount of time with a single work in the permanent displays at public galleries, always assuming that the connoisseur had this time to spare. For example, William Agnew, on visiting the Dresden gallery, was particularly struck by Raphael's *Sistine Madonna* and Titian's *Tribute Money*, advising his family that 'When you come to Dresden, look at no other picture on one day. Take first the Sistine Madonna, and another day the Titian, and then ask yourselves what these pictures say to you'.<sup>144</sup> Such sustained looking appears to have been largely linked with the connoisseurship of beauty, as mentioned in Chapter 1, and can be associated with the kind of sustained looking more recently practised by T. J. Clark. In Clark's case, the repeated viewing of two works by Poussin over a period of several months led both to an extended aesthetic and philosophical analysis, and to Clark's certainty in being able to attribute other works to the artist: 'It is by Poussin, I'm convinced [...] Yes, it is a Poussin. The set-up and lighting cannot be anyone else's'.<sup>145</sup> However, these are isolated, unusual circumstances: in general, because of business and personal commitments, staff at neither the National Gallery nor Agnew's would generally have had the time to indulge in such extended observation. It is also likely that in many other

---

<sup>144</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*, p. 48.

<sup>145</sup> Clark, *The Sight of Death*, pp. 229–232.

spaces, such as private residences and dealers' premises, such sustained looking would not have been permitted or practical.

More usually, therefore, connoisseurship was a time-bound process. This was seen above in the example of Morland visiting the Royal Academy Winter Exhibitions, where he had little time to judge each work on display because of the sheer number of paintings in each exhibition. Time was especially limited when travelling: Morland's 1895 diary of his trip to Austria records his determination to 'get some galleries done', as well as more than one mention of a 'hasty run' through collections in an attempt to see as many works as possible.<sup>146</sup> Attempts were made by both institutions to circumvent this constraint. Given that the National Gallery was under particular pressure to ensure that it invested public money in the best works, its Directors tried to view potential acquisitions on more than one occasion if possible. Poynter, for example, on visiting Madrid in 1899 to inspect a Murillo, wrote in his report to the Trustee that he had made 'one or two visits to make sure that I was not mistaken in my first impression' to advise against its purchase because of over-cleaning and the poor condition of the head in the portrait.<sup>147</sup> The gap between examinations could also be used to make further investigations into a work, such as viewing comparative paintings in local galleries. Poynter, when negotiating for the purchase of Lorenzo Monaco's *Coronation of the Virgin* in Florence in 1902, was impressed with the work on his first viewing but 'arranged to return the next day after I had been to the Uffizi to look at the examples of Lorenzo Monaco in that gallery'.<sup>148</sup> In this case, the comparison reinforced Poynter's positive opinion of the painting—acquired as NG1897—but it was also possible for repeat viewings to lead to a change in judgement. In 1914, Holroyd and Trustee Heseltine travelled to Paris to assess whether the paintings bequeathed by Sir John Murray Scott to the National Gallery should be accepted. Holroyd wrote in his report that 'When I first saw the collection in Paris I was inclined to recommend that all these pictures should be declined – but I afterwards modified that view'; although he did not think the works suitable for the main Gallery display, six paintings were ultimately accepted from the bequest.<sup>149</sup> Equally, connoisseurship in private collections was constrained by the amount of time permitted in

---

<sup>146</sup> C. M. Agnew, Austria travel diary, 29 September-19 October 1895, NGA27/27/73, entry for 6 October 1895.

<sup>147</sup> Director's report of his recent journey to Madrid, 3 July 1899, NG, NG7/236/1. This work is now in the collection of the Denver Art Museum (inv. no. 1961.67): Denver Art Museum, *Portrait of Don Diego Félix de Esquivel y Aldama*, <http://denverartmuseum.org/object/1961.67> [accessed 30 October 2017].

<sup>148</sup> Director's report of his journey to Italy, 9 February 1902, NG, NG7/261/1.

<sup>149</sup> NG2962-NG2967.

front of the work by the owner. This was particularly the case for foreign visits, where word of mouth could lead to unplanned visits and the inspection of completely unfamiliar works in the homes of collectors with whom the visitor was not personally acquainted. In 1898, Croal Thomson wrote of his visit to the house of George Hale Morgan in New York that the collector 'was coldly civil and wondered what I wanted. He thawed after a while as we went round his pictures'; such a reception presumably made it harder to linger over individual works.<sup>150</sup> Where acquisitions were concerned, time pressure was also particularly pertinent because of issues regarding competition: in many cases, if an immediate decision was not reached the work could be lost to another buyer. Fairfax Murray wrote to warn Burton of this risk in 1887:

Italy is dangerous in these money matters. Do you know the story of the Giorgione sold from the Manfrini Palace to Prince Fioranelli? It was bought I heard by the Berlin Gallery people only they had to get the money from Berlin failed to get it at the exact hour & the picture was lost.<sup>151</sup>

As a result, both institutions needed to be confident of the reliability of their connoisseurship, potentially based on no more than the briefest of inspections, and not necessarily under the ideal conditions, with regard to lighting and proximity. In addition to the spatial aspects of connoisseurship, the chronological aspects—themselves frequently dictated by space—should also be considered as having a significant impact upon connoisseurial methods and decisions.

---

<sup>150</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3.

<sup>151</sup> C. Fairfax Murray to F. Burton, 13 August 1877, NG, NG54/3. This was presumably Giorgione's *The Tempest*, now in the Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia: FRESCO The Frick Art Reference Library. Frick Research Catalogue Online, *Giorgione, 1477-1511, The Tempest*, <http://arcade.nyarc.org/record=b1124784~S7> [accessed 30 October 2017].

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has adopted a spatial approach to the analysis of the historical practice of connoisseurship by considering the various spaces in which Agnew's and the National Gallery examined works. It has suggested that connoisseurship was highly reliant on the mobility of both artworks and people in this period, as well as categorising the spaces in which works were encountered for connoisseurship, outlining the similarities and differences between private and public spaces. In particular, the spaces in which artworks were examined could have a significant impact on the process and outcomes of connoisseurship through factors such as access, lighting, proximity and the amount of time taken to examine a painting. This thesis will now apply these spatial findings to draw out a model of practical connoisseurship in Chapter 3. In Chapters 4 and 5, it will go on to argue that such spatial considerations were highly prioritised in the displays mounted by Agnew's and the National Gallery themselves, with a view to facilitating connoisseurship among their visitors and cementing their own connoisseurial reputations.

## Chapter 3: Practical methods of connoisseurship

This acquaintance with the examples of painting is generally acquired — more or less accurately, and never completely — by long experience only, and certainly cannot be acquired without experience; but it always has to be learnt afresh by every new student, with very little assistance from previous investigators.<sup>1</sup>

The National Gallery Reconstitution, 1855

Chapter 2 discussed the spaces in which connoisseurship was practised by Agnew's and National Gallery staff, highlighting factors such as access to, and lighting of, artworks as being particularly important for their judgement. This chapter will draw on both Chapters 1 and 2, bringing into dialogue textual descriptions of connoisseurship—usually produced after the event—and the spaces in which the connoisseurial assessment itself took place, in order to determine more clearly how connoisseurship was practised. It will discuss what kinds of evidence were used to reach a decision, and how this evidence was assessed. This approach reveals an overwhelming reliance on visual inspection and comparison, to an extent that has previously been overlooked or under-evidenced by scholars of connoisseurship. It was not necessarily the case that visual evidence of the artwork itself was preferred over other forms, although this did frequently happen; often the space in which the examination of the work took place simply precluded any other sort of research from being carried out.

### A model for perceptual expertise

The methods of connoisseurship that will be outlined in this chapter—in particular, the reliance on a swift, visual judgement—map well onto the model of perceptual expertise developed by cognitive psychologists Thomas J. Palmeri and Michael J. Tarr. As they outline, 'hybrid' image-based/structural-description theories describe how information is stored in long-term memory—thus allowing visual objects to be recognised, identified and categorised—by suggesting that these objects are broken down into parts: 'We can remember an object's color, position, orientation, or size, and can use such dimensions to determine an object's identity or category if those dimensions prove diagnostic for those perceptual decisions'.<sup>2</sup> Accepting this ability to separate visually perceived objects into

---

<sup>1</sup> Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, Appendix: National Gallery Reconstitution, 1855, p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> T. J. Palmeri and M. J. Tarr, 'Visual Object Perception and Long-Term Memory', in S. J. Luck and A. Hollingworth (eds), *Visual Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 179.

categorizable parts, expertise is thus characterised as making ‘fine perceptual discriminations with speeds that can astonish the novice observer’: experts are able to reach decisions more quickly than the novice, and to distinguish between a greater number of narrow categories.<sup>3</sup> Given that expert perception is more highly developed than that of the novice, it is therefore important to determine how the status of perceptual expert can be achieved. Palmeri and Tarr suggest that this development centres on achieving an understanding of the relevance of particular aspects of an object class for perceptual identification. However, this is made more difficult in the case of art history because ‘verbal labels cannot adequately convey the diagnostic perceptual qualities for the novice’. This problem has been recognised with specific respect to connoisseurship by Levi, who has discussed the problems inherent in translating a visual experience into a verbal description.<sup>4</sup> Such perceptual expertise, meanwhile, can be considered as the natural result of the normal learning trajectory, leading to the acquisition of vast perceptual memories over a long period of time.<sup>5</sup> In other words, as Lorber has argued, connoisseurship—which he defines as the methodology of attribution—is based on visual evidence as determined by the eye of the connoisseur.<sup>6</sup> For Lorber, connoisseurship is the skill of learning how to recognise forms and separate these into discrete categories. Connoisseurial expertise can be built up through the repeated exposure to a wide range of paintings, and in learning to identify and classify such works. As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis with regard to the writings of Jonathan Richardson, it is possible for almost anyone to learn the skill of connoisseurship, rather than it being restricted to a privileged few. Amongst others, both dealers and museum professionals can be considered as expert connoisseurs, as long as they have garnered the relevant visual experience.

Lorber has also suggested that connoisseurs are capable of extraordinary attributional performance without necessarily being able to articulate how such attributional judgements

---

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 193.

<sup>4</sup> Levi, ‘Connoisseurs français’, p. 206.

<sup>5</sup> The classic experiment into memory capacity and retrieval for multiple images is L. Standing, ‘Learning 10,000 Pictures’, *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 25.2 (1973), p. 207–222. More recently, studies have confirmed the extent to which long-term memory is capable of storing a massive number of objects in detail: T. F. Brady et al., ‘Visual Long-Term Memory Has a Massive Storage Capacity for Object Details’, *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 105.38 (2008), pp. 14325–14329; T. Konkle et al., ‘Scene Memory Is More Detailed Than You Think: The Role of Categories in Visual Long-Term Memory’, *Psychological Science*, 21.11 (2010), pp. 1551–1556.

<sup>6</sup> Lorber, ‘Ipotesi Visive’.

have been reached.<sup>7</sup> The practice of connoisseurship is therefore likely to contain a high proportion of performative or ritualistic aspects, parts of which may be vital to the judgement process — although unconsciously so.<sup>8</sup> For example, a connoisseur might request a painting to be taken down from the wall for closer inspection, despite already at first glance having made a firm judgment as to the attribution or overall quality of the work. This performative aspect would have the added effect of impressing the (novice) observer, increasing trust in the reliability of the connoisseurship as performed by the expert dealer or museum professional.<sup>9</sup> This once again highlights the fact that textual accounts of connoisseurship should be treated with caution, as connoisseurs may not be able to articulate the precise basis for a particular judgement. Equally, the person of the connoisseur becomes ever more important as issues of reputation and trust come into play. As Eric Ash has argued, expertise exists within a socio-political content, requiring public legitimation, affirmation and acknowledgement for its sanction.<sup>10</sup> Because connoisseurial expertise is by its nature especially hard to verbalise, it could appear to the layperson as being divorced from objective reasoning; without trust, therefore, the belief in a connoisseur's judgement would be lost. This would have been catastrophic for both Agnew's commercial success and the reputation of the National Gallery, as will be explored in Chapters 4 and 5.

My proposed model for connoisseurial expertise therefore centres on a strongly visual analysis, characterised by its speed and reliance on comparison with previous visual knowledge, gleaned from repeated and long-term exposure to numerous artworks. The skill of connoisseurship is not applied in isolation, however: it is supported by a complex trust network in which the connoisseur needs to be recognised as possessing the requisite expertise. The ways in which Agnew's and the National Gallery attempted to demonstrate such connoisseurial expertise to those outside these organisations will be discussed in the final two chapters of this thesis. This chapter, however, will argue that the textual and spatial evidence gathered in Chapters 1 and 2 supports the application of this connoisseurial model

---

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 123.

<sup>8</sup> My thanks to Daniel Glaser of Science Gallery, King's College London, for sharing his thoughts on this subject with me.

<sup>9</sup> D. Freedberg, 'Why Connoisseurship Matters', in K. van der Stighelen (ed.), *Munuscula Amicorum: Contributions on Rubens and His Colleagues in Honour of Hans Vlieghe*, Vol. I (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), p. 34.

<sup>10</sup> E. H. Ash, 'Introduction: Expertise and the Early Modern State', *Osiris*, 25.1 (2010), p. 9; for an extended discussion of the links between trust, networks and authority in the early modern period, see S. Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

for the period and the actors under discussion. In particular, it will focus on the primacy of visual connoisseurship; the categorisation of artworks, and their comparison through the examination of works both in person and through reproductions; and the speed with which a connoisseurial decision was frequently reached.

### **The strongly visual nature of connoisseurship**

The spatial aspects of connoisseurship, as explored in Chapter 2, suggest that much of the connoisseurship as practised by both Agnew's and the National Gallery was overwhelmingly visual in nature. Indeed, visual inspection was frequently the main basis for connoisseurship decisions: Morland, for instance, was evidently confident in his ability to judge by eye the paintings on display in the Royal Academy's Winter Exhibition or at a private home like Shobdon Court. To a considerable extent, this emphasis on visual examination was dictated by the places in which either institution had access to works offered for sale. As discussed above, the National Gallery preferred works from within Britain to be sent to Trafalgar Square for inspection, but had little control over where the Director or Trustees could examine works if on display in a public gallery or offered for purchase abroad. The Agnew's staff were more likely to visit private homes and public galleries to examine artworks, both in Britain and overseas. When examining works outside their own premises, both Agnew's and the National Gallery personnel were frequently limited in their physical and temporal access to these paintings. However, wherever they had to inspect pictures, the staff of both the National Gallery and Agnew's needed to carry out connoisseurship to the best of their abilities — despite such limitations. This meant that visual analysis became ever more important, as it was often the only basis for connoisseurial judgements. As Chapter 2 showed, a strong emphasis was therefore placed on aspects such as good lighting and proximity for visual analysis: paintings needed to be seen as clearly as possible in order to be properly judged.

The prominence of visual inspection contradicts some previous research into the nature of connoisseurship: for example, Christopher Hodkinson has argued that earlier in the nineteenth century, Director Charles Lock Eastlake carried out 'meticulous research into the provenance of his acquisitions', being 'entirely dependent on his eye, scholarship, and skill as a connoisseur'.<sup>11</sup> Hodkinson thus maintains that both visual and documentary evidence

---

<sup>11</sup> Hodkinson, *A Question of Attribution*, p. 118.

were taken into equal consideration by Eastlake when making a purchase for the National Gallery. However, he fails to explain from a spatial perspective just how such ‘meticulous research’ was carried out, given that the majority of Eastlake’s purchases were made in France or, in particular, Italy.<sup>12</sup> In contrast, the evidence under review here suggests that the visual examination of the work frequently took precedence over any other type of connoisseurial investigation during the acquisition process. As will be discussed later in this chapter, while documentary provenance information was accepted as important, it was not always possible to access such information until after the purchase had been made. Furthermore, it was frequently the case that a proto-formalist analysis of the visual qualities of the artwork had to take precedence over the search for documentary evidence because the latter was simply not available. As mentioned in Chapter 2 with regard to religious institutions, it can however be argued that the physical space in which an artwork was encountered itself acted as an indicator of provenance, and this idea will be discussed in more depth below.

### ***Categorisation and comparison as connoisseurial technique***

Given that the visual examination of paintings appears to have been so vital for connoisseurship, it is important to determine how exactly such inspections helped a connoisseur to determine attribution, condition, beauty and the other categories of connoisseurship as defined in Chapter 1. In particular, one of the major techniques of connoisseurship for both Agnew’s and the National Gallery personnel during the period under scrutiny was the visual comparison of artworks. When a previously unknown artwork was encountered, it would be ranked against other paintings understood to be comparable in terms of attribution, beauty and so forth, in order to reach a qualitative judgement of these categories. This section of the present chapter will discuss how the evidence for such comparisons was collected, stored and accessed by connoisseurs.

Scholars of connoisseurship have long recognised the comparative method as a connoisseurial technique. For example, Hayden Maginnis has argued that Morelli’s method could be summed up by the theory of the creation of a ‘storehouse of memory’, consisting of ‘slightly faded copies of the original experience’, so that, on encountering a new work, the connoisseur ‘simply summoned up the memory image and compared it with his [sic] new

---

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, Appendix 3.

experience'.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, modern-day connoisseurs have also highlighted the importance of the 'educated eye': curators at the Victoria and Albert Museum, interviewed for an oral history project, emphasised the need to develop an excellent visual memory and cultivate the connoisseurial eye by practising the close observation of objects.<sup>14</sup> This familiarity with comparable objects would result in a response to a newly encountered work described by one anonymous curator as "'Zap! That's quality!'" . Such examples highlight the importance of direct visual contact with a range of objects in the development of visual expertise — a vital connoisseurial skill across the last three centuries. However, the spatial aspects relating to the comparison of artworks have received insufficient critical attention, with much secondary work concentrating on theoretical writings rather than practical methods of connoisseurship.<sup>15</sup> For example, Donatella Bleichmar has argued, drawing parallels between natural history and art collecting, that in the eighteenth century 'a concern with visual expertise [...] with outlining and deploying practices of specialized diagnostic looking' was built up through spaces such as the sales auction, the sales catalogue and 'the cabinet or the collection as a space for learning to look'.<sup>16</sup> However, Bleichmar fails to go further in order to examine exactly how these widely varying spaces affected connoisseurship. Of course, when assessing historic theories of connoisseurship, we once again encounter the problem of an over-reliance on textual descriptions of how a connoisseur has reached a particular judgement: as Ivan Gaskell has highlighted in his discussion of the comparative method, both the practice and description of connoisseurship are notoriously difficult to analyse.<sup>17</sup> Brewer has rightly highlighted the similarities between the connoisseurial methods adopted by Morelli and his predecessors such as Cavalcaselle, drawing out the continued importance of the comparative method whether or not this was explicitly alluded to in the writings of the connoisseur.<sup>18</sup> However, the adoption of a spatial approach sidesteps some of these

---

<sup>13</sup> H. B. J. Maginnis, 'The Role of Perceptual Learning in Connoisseurship: Morelli, Berenson, and Beyond', *Art History*, 13.1 (1990), p. 107; D. Ebitz, 'Connoisseurship as Practice', *Artibus et Historiae*, 18.9 (1988), p. 208.

<sup>14</sup> L. Sandino, 'A Curatocracy: Who and What Is a V&A Curator?', in K. Hill (ed.), *Museums and Biographies* (Martlesham: Boydell and Brewer, 2012), p. 95.

<sup>15</sup> This reluctance to consider questions of space contrasts with a growing interest in the geographies of science: see, for example, D. N. Livingstone, *Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003); although it was published too recently to have much impact on this thesis, see also H. Jöns, P. Meusburger and M. Heffernan (eds), *Mobilities of Knowledge* (Cham: Springer, 2017).

<sup>16</sup> D. Bleichmar, 'Learning to Look: Visual Expertise across Art and Science in Eighteenth-Century France', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 46.1 (2012), p. 87.

<sup>17</sup> I. Gaskell, *Vermeer's Wager: Speculations on Art History, Theory, and Art Museums* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), p. 103.

<sup>18</sup> Brewer, *The American Leonardo*, Chap. 2.

problems by highlighting which paintings and reproductions were available to connoisseurs. In fact, the spaces of connoisseurship had a direct impact on the ways in which connoisseurship was carried out, ensuring that visual comparison was prioritised over alternative methods. This chapter will now consider the various types of evidence used for connoisseurial judgements from a spatial perspective, and how this supports the visual, comparative model of connoisseurship as outlined above.

### ***The evidence used for connoisseurial comparison***

#### ***Travel for comparison: Viewing artworks in person***

As emphasised in Chapter 2, improved transport links from the mid-nineteenth century onwards made it easier for artworks to be moved, and for connoisseurs to travel to inspect them. As critic Robert Langton Douglas wrote, 'I am confident that the only way to progress in connoisseurship is by seeing fine pictures, of all schools – every week, every day if possible. This is the only way to train the eye'.<sup>19</sup> While not necessarily free to travel 'every week', let alone every day, the National Gallery's Directors actively visited public galleries in particular to examine comparative works, as previously shown in the case of Poynter's visit to the Uffizi before his decision to acquire Lorenzo Monaco's *Coronation of the Virgin* (NG1897). A diary kept by Keeper Wornum offers further insight into this comparative process for a work already in the National Gallery's collection: *Christ blessing the little children* (NG757).<sup>20</sup> Bought as a Rembrandt under Boxall in 1866, this attribution was regularly challenged in the public forum; behind the scenes, meanwhile, the National Gallery worked hard to find a named painter for the work. Presumably prompted by a recent letter to *The Times* in which South Kensington Museum curator J. C. Robinson had attributed the painting to 'Gerard van Eckhout' [sic], Wornum visited a range of galleries in Germany in July 1874 to view comparable paintings.<sup>21</sup> He wrote to Burton from Munich that 'My journey has not been in vain', having taken the opportunity to compare securely attributed works by Rembrandt, van den Eckhout, Bernard Fabritius and 'Van Gherwett' (Reynier van Gherwen), whom Wornum

---

<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Brewer, *The American Leonardo*, 73; D. Sutton, *Robert Langton Douglas: Connoisseur of Art and Life* (London: Apollo Magazine Ltd, 1979).

<sup>20</sup> J. Egerton, *National Gallery Catalogues: The British School* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1998), p 22.

<sup>21</sup> J. C. Robinson, 'The National Gallery', *The Times*, 6 July 1874. On Robinson as a connoisseur, see J. Conlin, 'Collecting and Connoisseurship in England, 1840-1900: The Case of J. C. Robinson', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond*, ed. (Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), pp. 133–143.

concluded was 'clearly the painter' of NG757.<sup>22</sup> Despite the geographical distance between these works, Wornum evidently felt confident enough in his memory of the pictures to make this attribution on a comparative basis.

As well as looking for specific comparisons with potential acquisitions or works already owned, connoisseurs could also travel simply to build up a better working knowledge of a range of works, artists and schools. This can be understood as connoisseurship for the purpose of general rather than specific knowledge. For example, Holroyd undertook an extensive European tour in autumn 1907, taking in the cities of Bruges, Vienna, Budapest, Venice, Florence, Pisa, Bologna, Ancona and Paris.<sup>23</sup> He visited temporary exhibitions, such as the 'Exposition de la Toison d'Or' (Exhibition of the Golden Fleece) at Bruges and the 'Mostra di Antica Arte Umbra' (Exhibition of Antique Umbrian Art) at Perugia, as well as numerous private collections and public galleries. These named exhibitions were particularly important for the reception of the Flemish and Italian 'primitives', offering Holroyd the chance to see schools and works that were particularly under-represented in British collections. While the Director did consider various paintings for acquisition during this journey, he also saw the trip as affording a general improvement of his connoisseurial knowledge. In at least one case, he was able to apply this newly acquired knowledge immediately: 'A Rafael [sic] was offered to me. It was similar to the Budapeste [sic] Raphael which I had just seen so I was able all at once to refuse it although it was a fine piece and perhaps from the Masters [sic] Studio'.<sup>24</sup> Such connoisseurial comparison was facilitated by the fact that by this point in the nineteenth century, public art galleries were frequently arranged by artist, genre or school.<sup>25</sup> This was complemented by a growing trend both in Britain and abroad towards Old Master loan exhibitions, often centred on a particular theme such as Spanish art.<sup>26</sup> Within these exhibitions, the spatial arrangement of artworks within a collection actively affected the perception of how artworks might or might not relate to each other, suggesting particular comparisons between paintings to the viewer.<sup>27</sup> This use of

---

<sup>22</sup> Letter from R. Wornum to F. Burton, 27 July 1874, enclosed in R. N. Wornum's diary, 13 August 1855-21 November 1877, NG, NGA2/3/2/13. This painting is now attributed to Nicolaes Maes.

<sup>23</sup> Director's report of his continental journey, 1907, NG, NG7/332/1.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> C. Klonk, *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 21–23; Whitehead, *Museums and the Construction of Disciplines*, pp. 66–68. This didactic approach will be discussed in greater detail with reference to the National Gallery in Chapter 4.

<sup>26</sup> Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum*, Chap. 4.

<sup>27</sup> Preziosi, 'Questions of Evidence', pp. 220–221.

display to facilitate connoisseurship will be discussed in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 5, but is also pertinent here. The visits of Agnew's and National Gallery staff to both private and public galleries fed directly into their connoisseurial judgements on specific works, whether offered for purchase or already in their ownership.

A further advantage of viewing a work in person, as opposed to in reproduction, was that the spatial aspects of viewing paintings on display in museums or other collections help to impress the pictures more strongly in the viewer's memory.<sup>28</sup> Mattias Elkman has specifically linked museum space and memory, suggesting that museum buildings give rise to corresponding spatial constructs in the minds of visitors and staff: these constructs are then employed to help organise, find and remember objects, collections and classifications.<sup>29</sup> This link between space and memory has been confirmed by a recent exploratory experiment into the influence of the gallery's spatial layout on visitor memories of an exhibition.<sup>30</sup> In this way, museums and other spaces of artistic display can be understood as the physical embodiment of the mnemonic device of the mind palace or memory theatre.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, the *Daily News* emphasised this aspect of the National Gallery's own collection following an 1887 re-hang:

the object now gained is that of a new arrangement, by means of which a more perfect classification of the pictures has been made. This is a very valuable result, as it gives the National collection a greater use as a teaching power [...] the visitor by seeing the names of the painters of each school grouped in the same gallery

---

<sup>28</sup> The neurological processes and consequences of a visit to the museum are explored in F. Zisch, S. Gage and H. Spiers, 'Navigating the Museum', in N. Levent and A. Pascual-Leone, *The Multisensory Museum: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Touch, Sound, Smell, Memory, and Space* (Lanham, MD; Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), pp. 215–237.

<sup>29</sup> M. Ekman, 'Edifices of Memory. Topical Ordering in Cabinets and Museums', in J. Hegardt (ed.), *The Museums beyond the Nation* (Växjö: Davidsons tryckeri, 2012), p. 61.

<sup>30</sup> J. Krukar, 'Walk, Look, Remember: The Influence of the Gallery's Spatial Layout on Human Memory for an Art Exhibition', *Behavioral Sciences*, 4.3 (2014), pp. 181–201.

<sup>31</sup> F. Yates, *The Art of Memory* (London; Beccles: William Clowes and Sons, 1966); D. J. Meijers, 'The Places of Painting: The Survival of Mnemotechnics in Christian von Mechel's Gallery Arrangement in Vienna (1778–1781)', in A.W. Reinink and J. Stumpel (eds), *Memory & Oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art held in Amsterdam, 1–7 September 1996* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1999), pp. 205–211; D. Carrier, 'Remembering the Past: Art Museums as Memory Theaters', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 61.1 (2003), pp. 61–65. For a similar discussion on the associations between space, classification and memory in libraries, see E. Garberson, 'Libraries, Memory and the Space of Knowledge', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 18.2 (2006), pp. 105–136. In particular, Garberson emphasises the 'slippage between the conceptual and the physical, between the visualisation of items distributed in space and distribution in actual physical space'.

learns, by the natural mnemonic system of location, to remember the classification to which each belongs.<sup>32</sup>

This association between space and memory was also explicitly acknowledged by Burton, who wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1883 of a painting that he remembered seeing in the collection of the Antinori family and which was being newly offered for sale:

As to the Albertinelli, it may be a tondo which I think I have a dim recollection of seeing somewhere towards the further end of the room but which I felt no desire to look at closely. You will know its state & its worth at once when you see it. A poor Mariotto [Albertinelli] would be no great catch.<sup>33</sup>

In this case, Burton remembered the picture not just from a previous visit to the collection (presumably at the Palazzo Antinori in Florence), but also from its physical placing in the room and his associated negative opinion of the work. From a spatial perspective, therefore, memory and connoisseurship were strongly linked.

It was also recognised, however, that memory could be unreliable and could fade over time. As Lindsay had written earlier in the nineteenth century, ‘what an advantage it is seeing and comparing the productions of the different schools so immediately one after the other, while all the different impressions are fresh in the memory’.<sup>34</sup> In his letters to Fairfax Murray, Burton more than once alluded specifically to his own ‘treacherous memory’, and accepted that details were prone to being forgotten.<sup>35</sup> For example, the painting *Combat of Love and Chastity* (NG1196) had been sent from Genoa for inspection and accepted for acquisition by the National Gallery in August 1885 under an attribution to Botticelli. While passing through Turin later the same year, the Director viewed a ‘little “Triumph of Chastity” [...] which I felt sure was by the same painter, whoever he was’.<sup>36</sup> Accepting from the start that the National Gallery’s painting was probably not by Botticelli, Burton found that ‘I now find even closer resemblances between the two pictures than my memory had supplied me with’, picking out

---

<sup>32</sup> ‘The National Gallery’, *The Daily News*, 5 July 1887.

<sup>33</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 22 March 1883, HRC, MS-0627. The identity of this painting has not been determined; it was not purchased by the National Gallery when Ridolfo Ghirlandaio’s *Procession to Calvary* (NG1143) was bought from the Antinori family through Fairfax Murray in 1883.

<sup>34</sup> Brigstocke, ‘Lord Lindsay: Travel in Italy’, p. 201.

<sup>35</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 24 January 1877 and 10 July 1889, HRC, MS-0627.

<sup>36</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 10 November 1885, HRC, MS-0627. This was presumably at the Galleria Sabauda in Turin: Fondazione Federico Zeri, Università di Bologna, *Cataloghi Online* › *Catalogo Fototeca*, [http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/ricerca.v2.jsp?locale=it&decorator=layout\\_resp&apply=true&percorso\\_ricerca=OA&RSEC=Gherardo+di+Giovanni%2C+pannelli+di+cassone+con+il+Trionfo+della+Castit%C3%A0](http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/ricerca.v2.jsp?locale=it&decorator=layout_resp&apply=true&percorso_ricerca=OA&RSEC=Gherardo+di+Giovanni%2C+pannelli+di+cassone+con+il+Trionfo+della+Castit%C3%A0) [accessed 11 July 2017]. NG1196 is now attributed to Gherardo di Giovanni del Fora.

subject details such as the shield and golden chains featured in both works. In some cases, particular aspects of connoisseurship could be recalled to memory, but others needed refreshing. In 1907, Holroyd visited Ancona to determine whether a proffered Lorenzo Lotto painting should be recommended for purchase for the National Gallery at a cost of £14,000.<sup>37</sup> He wrote in his report of the trip that ‘I remember liking the picture very much 15 years ago. but [sic] had to inspect it again’.<sup>38</sup> Ultimately, however, despite this previous good impression, the decision was taken to reject the work, described as being overall a ‘large fine picture very original in effect’ but in parts ‘bad & ugly’. Either Holroyd’s tastes had changed in the meantime, or his memory had proved faulty as to the merits of the work. In the event that memory itself was lacking, reproductions of an artwork could be particularly useful as an aide-mémoire. In 1883, Burton thanked Murray for sending him a number of photographs: ‘That from the Naples “V[irgin] of the Rocks” is particularly welcome to me, because I had greatly wished to get one as I do not at all recollect the picture, although I must have seen it at Naples 14 years ago’.<sup>39</sup> Here, the photograph acted as a connection across both time and space to bring the painting back to Burton’s mind. Given the importance of photographs as tools for connoisseurial comparison, this chapter will now discuss this subject in more detail.

### ***Comparison from reproductions: Photography***

Reproductions of artworks can be considered as an alternative or additional space of connoisseurship, either reducing the need to analyse the original artwork or offering extra evidence to support a connoisseurial decision. From the 1860s onwards, when technological improvements led to the growing availability of photographic reproductions, there began to be a much stronger reliance on photographs in the practice of connoisseurship.<sup>40</sup> Photography has long been recognised by art historians as a key tool for ‘analytical study, taxonomic ordering, and the creation of historical and genealogical narratives’, while the photograph as reproduction of, and substitute for, the original artwork has been widely

---

<sup>37</sup> This was presumably Lotto’s so-called *Altarpiece of the Halberd*, still in the Ancona Pinacoteca: P. Humfrey, *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 127–129.

<sup>38</sup> Director’s report of his continental journey, 1907, NG, NG7/332/1.

<sup>39</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 18 September 1883, HRC, MS-0627. It is unclear to which version of this Leonardo painting Burton was referring: F. Zöllner and J. Nathan, *Leonardo Da Vinci 1452-1519: The Complete Paintings and Drawings* (Cologne: TASCHEN, 2012), p. 224.

<sup>40</sup> D. Peters, ‘From Prince Albert’s Raphael Collection to Giovanni Morelli: Photography and the Scientific Debates on Raphael in the Nineteenth Century’, in C. Caraffa, *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), pp. 129–144.

theorised.<sup>41</sup> The photograph library has, in particular, received much recent interest.<sup>42</sup> The body of work is also growing on the various practical ways in which photographs were implemented by those in the nineteenth-century art world.<sup>43</sup> In particular, Dan Karlholm has discussed how Swiss art historian Heinrich Wölfflin used comparative slide images in his art historical pedagogy, linking this to contemporary ideas about the assistance to memory offered by the association of word and image in the lecture format.<sup>44</sup> Wölfflin's practice is important evidence for the use of photographs specifically for connoisseurial comparison in the context of the development of formalism, although it has been argued that the use of comparative slides for the teaching of connoisseurship was introduced much later in Britain than in Germany and the United States, being largely confined to public lectures until the 1920s.<sup>45</sup> A distinction should also be drawn between the use of comparative images for pedagogy and connoisseurial assessment.

Previously available methods of reproduction such as engravings had been problematic substitutes for the artwork in the practice of connoisseurial comparison, because the artistic intervention of the engraver was recognised (and even fêted) as placing an additional layer of interpretation between the viewer and the original painting.<sup>46</sup> As William Mills Irvin noted in his influential work on prints and reproductions, engravings were frequently produced by a chain of copyists, at the end of which stood an engraver who might never have seen the original painting but rarely hesitated to correct any perceived deficiencies in the image to be

---

<sup>41</sup> D. Preziosi, *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), p. 72; Gaskell, *Vermeer's Wager*, Chap. 6. On reproductions, see for example J. F. Codell, "'Second Hand Images": On Art's Surrogate Means and Media—Introduction', *Visual Resources*, 26.3 (2010), pp. 214–225.

<sup>42</sup> See, in particular, the six 'Photo Archives' conferences organised by the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Photothek, and the resultant publications: C. Caraffa and T. Serena (eds), *Photo Archives and the Idea of Nation* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2015); C. Caraffa (ed.), *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011).

<sup>43</sup> The seminal work on this subject is A. J. Hamber, *'A Higher Branch of the Art': Photographing the Fine Arts in England, 1839-1880* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1996), although Hamber's survey ends in 1880. More recently, see Provo, 'Notions of Method'; F. Gioffredi Superbi, 'The Photograph and Bernard Berenson: The Story of a Collection', *Visual Resources*, 26.3 (2010), pp. 289–303.

<sup>44</sup> D. Karlholm, 'Developing the Picture: Wölfflin's Performance Art', *Photography and Culture*, 3.2 (2010), pp. 207–215.

<sup>45</sup> K. Miyahara, 'The Impact of the Lantern Slide on Art-History Lecturing in Britain', *The British Art Journal*, 8.2 (2007), pp. 67–71.

<sup>46</sup> Gaskell, *Vermeer's Wager*, pp. 125–126; for a discussion of the artistic virtues of etching in particular, see J. Anderson Rose, *Liverpool Art Club. Collection, Illustrative of the History and Practice of Etching, Lent and Catalogued by James Anderson Rose, Esq., of London*. (Liverpool: Lee and Nightingale, 1874), pp. 3–13.

engraved.<sup>47</sup> While engravings could still be used for broad comparisons in terms of composition, they were therefore less widely used for the assessment of details such as brushwork or handling. Even at this broad level, engravings could still be unreliable: regarding a potential Michelangelo offered for acquisition in 1874, Burton wrote that although the composition corresponded with that of a well-known engraving after the painter, it was not clear whether this engraving had been done from a painting or a sculpture.<sup>48</sup> In contrast, the photograph apparently offered images uncontaminated by interpretation, although it was still recognised that photographs could be subject to manipulation: as pioneering art photograph collector—and three-time Trustee of the National Gallery—Sir Robert C. Witt wrote in 1920, ‘A photograph, even the best, may be misleading at least as to the artistic qualities of the original. It may libel, but it may also flatter’.<sup>49</sup> In the specific case of art photography, there were also many technical issues to be overcome, such as the spatial challenges of ensuring that there was enough light available for the long exposures needed, and the need to remove reflective glass from pictures.<sup>50</sup> The introduction to the 1885 illustrated catalogue of the renowned Northbrook collection stated that ‘Science has not yet taught us how to reproduce all paintings by aid of the camera with equal success [...] the photographer is at present unable to render the rich warm tones, mellowed by age, of a painting such as the “Madonna and Child” by Sebastiano del Piombo, in the Northbrook Gallery’.<sup>51</sup> This work was therefore omitted from the catalogue’s illustrations, echoing the point made in Chapter 2 regarding the far from comprehensive coverage of photography even for celebrated collections. ‘Notwithstanding this drawback’, the catalogue introduction continued, ‘and the fact that photography often reverses the relative importance of different colours in a picture—it is certainly the most perfect means at present at command for the reproduction of paintings in a convenient form’.<sup>52</sup> Such technical problems—particularly the reproduction of colour—continued to plague photography well into the twentieth century. Nevertheless, by the 1880s prints were largely

---

<sup>47</sup> W. M. Irvin Jr, *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press, 1969), p. 97.

<sup>48</sup> Director's report of a journey to 'Mayence' [Mainz], 4 May 1874, NG, NG5/191/1.

<sup>49</sup> L. Daston and P. Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2015), p. 139; H. Macartney, 'Faith in Facsimile? The Invention of Photography and the Reproduction of Spanish Art', *Art in Translation*, 7.1 (2015), pp. 95–122; *Catalogue of Painters and Draughtsmen Represented in the Library of Reproductions of Pictures & Drawings Formed by Robert and Mary Witt* (London: Privately printed, 1920), p. ix.

<sup>50</sup> Hamber, *A Higher Branch of the Art*, Chap. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Acquired for the National Gallery in 1895 as NG1450.

<sup>52</sup> R. Gower, *The Northbrook Gallery: An Illustrated Descriptive and Historic Account of the Collection of the Earl of Northbrook, G.C.S.I* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1885), p. 1.

understood to have been superseded by photographs for the purposes of connoisseurship: in the introduction to the 1887 photograph catalogue produced by famed company Braun & Cie., J. C. Robinson emphasised that, of the Old Master photographs published by the firm, ‘a very great proportion [...] represent master works of which no engraved copies previously existed’.<sup>53</sup> As a result, photographs came to be widely accepted as a reliable basis for connoisseurship in the absence of the artwork itself.<sup>54</sup>

However, the spatial aspects of the use of photographs as a connoisseurial tool have been largely overlooked, despite offering valuable evidence for the ways in which photographs were used by connoisseurs. While occasional references are made within the literature to a metaphorical ‘art historian’s desk’ on which photographs of paintings were assembled for inspection, deeper enquiry needs to be made into how such collections were assembled and pressed into the service of connoisseurship.<sup>55</sup> Dorothea Peters has, however, highlighted the spatial possibilities of the photographic catalogue in transcending ‘the limitations of gallery walls’ in the 1850s and 1860s.<sup>56</sup> As with the artworks encountered through travel, in the period under examination in this thesis photographs were used both to examine a specific work with a view to acquisition, and to build up a canon of comparative images. However, photographs comprised a physical rather than a mental canon, where pictures could be laid side-by-side for detailed comparison. In particular, connoisseurial comparison was facilitated through collections of photographs of paintings, both individually and in catalogues of private and public collections.<sup>57</sup> The physical space of the photograph collection, as with the

---

<sup>53</sup> *Catalogue général des photographies inaltérables au charbon et héliogravures faites d’après les originaux* (Paris; Dornach: A. D. Braun & Cie., 1887); N. Rosenblum, ‘Braun, Adolphe (1812-1877)’, in John Hannavy (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography: A-I, Index*, Vol. I (New York; London: Taylor & Francis, 2008), pp. 203–205.

<sup>54</sup> A. Hamber, ‘The Use of Photography by Nineteenth-Century Art Historians’, in H. E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History through the Camera’s Lens* (New York: Routledge, 1995), p. 101; T. Fawcett, ‘Graphic versus Photographic in the Nineteenth-Century Reproduction’, *Art History*, 9.2 (1986), pp. 185–212. It has also been argued, meanwhile, that photographs should be seen as having a special ‘pragmatic’ epistemic value, because they can be used ‘in situations where other [sources of visual information] are unavailable’: J. Cohen and A. Meskin, ‘On the Epistemic Value of Photographs’, *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 62.2 (2004), pp. 197–210.

<sup>55</sup> C. Caraffa, ‘From Photo Libraries to Photo Archives: On the Epistemological Potential of Art-Historical Photo Collections’, in C. Caraffa (ed.), *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), p. 15; M. Bergstein, ‘Freud’s “Moses of Michelangelo”: Vasari, Photography, and Art Historical Practice’, *The Art Bulletin*, 88.1 (2006), p. 161.

<sup>56</sup> D. Peters, ‘Reproduced Art. Early Photographic Campaigns in European Collections’, in A. Meyer and B. Savoy (eds), *The Museum Is Open: Towards a Transnational History of Museums 1750-1940* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), p. 45.

<sup>57</sup> In response to the continual difficulties in accessing original artworks, and following the demise of the Arundel Society, a new society, the Arundel Club, was formed in 1904 with the explicit purpose of

library, is another space in which connoisseurship was practised away from direct exposure to the physical object of the artwork. Indeed, the photograph itself has recently been framed as a space for connoisseurship in its own right, being used both as a surrogate for a painting and an item for exchange between connoisseurs.<sup>58</sup>

The National Gallery and Agnew's placed a strong emphasis on assembling photographs of paintings, showing their importance as a connoisseurial tool. While the National Gallery does not appear to have had a dedicated photograph library of the kind to be found at the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard from 1895 onwards, the Gallery nevertheless worked to collect images of important private and public collections.<sup>59</sup> In 1883, Keeper Charles Locke Eastlake wrote to the Treasury to request that part of the annual £100 grant for the augmentation of the National Gallery's library might be spent on the 'purchase of photographs from pictures in the principal Foreign Galleries':

The art of reproducing pictures by means of photography has now been brought to a degree of perfection which has caused it to supersede the labours of the Engraver in the same direction and for the purposes of the study of art the efforts of the photographer are now indispensable, inasmuch as they render not merely the composition of pictures, but also the very touch of the master, and are therefore of the utmost consequence in facilitating comparison. They are, in fact, in many respects as necessary as, and of more practical importance than books in respect of an art which addresses itself directly to the eye. This fact is fully understood and acknowledged in Foreign Galleries where photographs are [illeg.] collected, as supplementary to their Libraries, stores of prints & original drawings.<sup>60</sup>

---

'photographing pictures and other works of art in private collections or galleries not easy of access': 'The Arundel Club', *The Burlington Magazine*, 4.12 (1904), p. 203.

<sup>58</sup> A. A. Provo, 'Surrogates and Intermediaries: The Informational Role of Photographs in the Art Market', in L. Catterson (ed.), *Dealing Art on Both Sides of the Atlantic, 1860-1940* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 269–288; see also F. N. Bohrer, 'Photographic Perspectives: Photography and the Institutional Formation of Art History', in E. Mansfield (ed.), *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 247.

<sup>59</sup> Preziosi, 'Questions of Evidence', pp. 204–210; a similar photograph collection was founded at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1910: W. Clifford, 'The Study Collection of Photographs', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 5.12 (1910), pp. 280–282. It is also possible that National Gallery personnel had access to their own personal collections of photographs, as the 1870 catalogue of the library amassed by William Boxall at his home reveals that this included photographs of pictures in the 'Milan Gallery' and Braun's photographs of the Michelangelo works in the Sistine Chapel: Catalogue of William Boxall's library, 1868-1870, NG, NGA1/1/51/20.

<sup>60</sup> Letter to Secretary of H. M. Treasury, 14 July 1883, NG, NG6/9/122.

Eastlake's letter, in suggesting that images were as integral—or even more important—to the art library as texts, once again reinforces the significance of visual comparison to connoisseurship. His request was duly granted by the Treasury, and the National Gallery began to invest in such reproductions.<sup>61</sup> It has not previously been noted that uncatalogued portfolios survive in the National Gallery Library of large-scale photographs of paintings in the Hermitage, Prado, Uffizi and Pitti galleries, as well as the private collection of Robert Stayner Holford.<sup>62</sup> These portfolios, which do not contain text other than the attributions and titles of the paintings, were evidently used purely for the purposes of visual comparison. The photographs do not appear to have been kept in a dedicated image library, but were instead integrated into the main library at the National Gallery; from here, they could have been physically transferred to the Boardroom or other offices if necessary for comparison. It is also possible that they were available for public consultation, at least for those with a strong connection with the National Gallery: Fairfax Murray wrote to a friend in 1886 that 'I saw the last batch of Brauns [sic] photos at the Nat Gallery Library'.<sup>63</sup> By collecting such photographs, pictures in geographically distant locations—which may or may not have been previously encountered in person—could be used by the Director and Trustees for the practice of connoisseurship.

In addition to the images owned by the National Gallery itself, the institution also drew on other collections of comparative reproductions where possible. A 1912 report from Trustee J. P. Heseltine reveals that a picture initially ascribed by him to Quentin Matsys, and described as being 'in remarkably fine condition', was exhibited for potential acquisition in the National Gallery Boardroom.<sup>64</sup> However, noting that 'Mr R. C. Witt has placed his valuable collections of reproductions at the disposal of the Director', Heseltine described how doubt had been cast on this attribution by the revelation that the composition was based on a work by Dürer; the Director and Trustees ultimately made the decision to reject the painting on this basis.

---

<sup>61</sup> Letter from the Treasury, 31 July 1883, NG, NG7/48/2; Letter to H. M. Stationery Office, 13 August 1883, NG, NG6/9/188.

<sup>62</sup> My thanks to Alan Crookham for bringing these portfolios to my attention. On the nineteenth-century reproduction of paintings from the Prado, see H. Macartney, 'The Reproduction of Spanish Art', in N. Glendinning and H. Macartney (eds), *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1920: Studies in Reception* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis Books, 2010), p. 127.

<sup>63</sup> C. Fairfax Murray to W. Spanton, 4 January 1886, DPG. The *Art Journal* suggested in 1883 that 'by the courtesy of the Director permission can be obtained to consult the library; this, however, is necessarily only a special and exceptional favour': Henry Wallis, 'The National Gallery - Recent Acquisitions', *The Art Journal*, 45.1 (1883), p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> J. P. Heseltine's report on a picture of St. Jerome, 14 May 1912, NG, NG7/404/2.

Witt's large and ever-expanding collection of reproductions of artworks was presumably consulted at his flat in Connaught Square, making this an alternative space of connoisseurship for the National Gallery alongside other collections such as the National Art Library (NAL).<sup>65</sup> Indeed, until 1932—when the Courtauld Institute of Art was founded—Witt had intended to bequeath his collection to the National Gallery, making it even more likely that National Gallery staff would have had ready access to the images there.<sup>66</sup> It is also possible to draw links between the organisation of the reproductions in these collections and the physical layout of paintings on the walls of the gallery. The quasi-scientific classification of such image libraries, which has been compared variously to the fields of lexicography, anthropology and antiquarianism, mirrors the claim of an ever more 'scientific' display of artworks as developed at the National Gallery from the 1870s onwards: this aspect of display will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.<sup>67</sup>

Agnew's also worked to build up its own reference library of images for the purposes of connoisseurship. The extensive photograph and image library at Agnew's—which is still in the possession of the firm under its new ownership—was added to and reorganised throughout the twentieth century. As a consequence, it is difficult to date its origins with any certainty, but it seems definite that the company was already collecting photographs by the end of the nineteenth century. For example, a photograph of Vermeer's *Geographer*—a painting acquired by the Städelches Kunstinstitut, Frankfurt am Main, in 1885—is marked on the recto with the photographer's name and the date of 1899 (Fig. 17).<sup>68</sup> It is also hard to determine where such photographs were sourced, although some were certainly obtained

---

<sup>65</sup> A. Martin and D. Farr, 'Witt, Sir Robert Clermont (1872–1952), Art Collector', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/36985>. In 1915, the Witts moved to 32 Portman Square, and the reproductions library remained here until Robert Witt's death in 1952. The Witt library seems to have been more widely and actively used for the purposes of connoisseurship from the early 1920s onwards: L. Fernandes, 'The Witt Library, Photograph Collections and Art History in the Early Twentieth Century' (unpublished MA thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2009). While no positive evidence has been found to confirm that other image libraries were used by either Agnew's or the National Gallery, this does not mean that such exchanges of visual information were not taking place. This is especially likely given the scope of the NAL collections, and the library's links with Keeper Ralph Wornum: see E. Esteve-Coll, 'Image and Reality: The National Art Library', *Art Libraries Journal*, 11.2 (1986), pp. 33–34.

<sup>66</sup> Fernandes, 'The Witt Library', p. 20.

<sup>67</sup> Fernandes, 'The Witt Library'; on the collecting and dispersal of anthropological photographs in the nineteenth century, see E. Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

<sup>68</sup> J. Jansen, 'The *Geographer* by Johannes Vermeer'

<http://www.essentialvermeer.com/catalogue/geographer.html#.WWi1xem1vIU> [accessed 14 July 2017].

by the partners themselves: William Agnew's *Holiday Jottings* reveal that he purchased photographs of at least two paintings at the Dresden Gemäldegalerie in 1886, while Morland bought a 'fine' photograph of a 'marvellous' Mantegna fresco that had impressed him at the Uffizi in 1905.<sup>69</sup> Photographs of pictures in private collections were also added to the library: on his visit to America, Croal Thomson listed the eight Rembrandts hanging in the dining room of the Havemeyer mansion in New York, noting that 'I hope to obtain photographs of all of these'.<sup>70</sup> The resultant photograph collection therefore acts as strong evidence of the use of photographs by the Agnew's staff for comparison. The extensive Agnew's photograph library deserves more in-depth study and analysis than is possible here, as do the negatives of the photographs that Agnew's took of their own stock.<sup>71</sup> However, taken together, they reflect the importance placed by the firm on reproductions of artworks and the use of photographs for sales purposes.

Given this ready access to photographic reproductions for both the National Gallery and Agnew's, photographs were frequently used as a substitute for the artwork itself during the connoisseurial process. By the early twentieth century, owners looking to sell their paintings to the National Gallery would be asked to send a photograph for inspection: the letter from the Keeper stressed that without this information 'no offer can be considered' (Fig. 18). In rare cases, in fact, a photograph was regarded in itself as being sufficient evidence for connoisseurship, as at least one work was bought for the National Gallery without the original apparently having been inspected by the Director or a representative: the portrait of Mary Magdalene by Giovanni Girolamo Savoldo (NG1031). This work was brought to the attention of Burton in 1877 by Milanese dealer Giuseppe Baslini, who was presumably seen as trustworthy because he had previously sold paintings to the National Gallery; it may also have been familiar to the Director from its brief mention in Crowe and Cavalcaselle's 1871 *History of Painting in North Italy* as belonging to the Fenaroli collection at Brescia.<sup>72</sup> Having acquired the painting from this collection, Baslini had photographs taken of the work and sent these to Burton along with his assurances that the picture was intact except for some

---

<sup>69</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*, pp. 61–2; diary entry for 28 March 1905, C. M. Agnew diary, 1905, NG, NGA27/27/15. Morland may have been referring to the Uffizi Triptych, although this is not a fresco.

<sup>70</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3, p. 16.

<sup>71</sup> The negatives are currently undergoing conservation at the National Gallery, and so are unavailable for research.

<sup>72</sup> J. A. Crowe and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy*, Vol. 2 (London: John Murray, 1871), pp. 428–9; Avery-Quash and Davoli, "'Boxall Is Interested Only in the Great Masters'".

minor damage.<sup>73</sup> This opinion on the condition of the work was supported by artist Girolamo Bertini, who also wrote to Burton that ‘Sig. Baslini brought the half-figure by Savoldo to my studio so that my pupil [Emilio] Cavenaghi could remove several marks from the painting. Apart from this, I can guarantee the painting to be extremely sound and still in possession of its original patina’.<sup>74</sup> Burton wrote in response to Baslini, basing his opinion on the evidence of the received photographs, that the work was perhaps not as beautiful as the signed version by Savoldo in the Berlin gallery; however, because of differences in the details and background, both had merits as not being direct copies of each other.<sup>75</sup> This photographic evidence of the work’s similarity with the signed Berlin version was enough to convince Burton of the need to acquire the picture, and the Trustees left the matter to the Director’s discretion after viewing the photograph at a Board Meeting on 26 November 1877.<sup>76</sup> The key details taken into account for the purposes of connoisseurship here seem to have been the existence of another signed version of the work, to which this picture was sufficiently directly comparable; the reassurances of Baslini and Bertini regarding the condition of the work; and the visual evidence offered by the photograph itself. These considerations must have been sufficient to negate the need to view the work in person, elsewhere considered such an important aspect of connoisseurship.

The Salvoldo was a relatively isolated case, however: certainly not all connoisseurial decisions could rely so heavily on photographs. Instead, photographs were usually used as an additional examination tool before a visit was made or the painting sent to the National Gallery. In 1898 Poynter, for example, made the decision not to view a painting in Italy based solely on the evidence of a photograph:

From Venice I went to Bologna having been told of a large fresco transferred to canvas by Giotto in the possession of a gentleman there. The picture however turned out to be in Rome, but I saw the owner who showed me a photograph of it: it is a large work evidently in excellent condition, & of great beauty, but as it is certainly not by Giotto but of his school I did not think it worth while to go to Rome purposely to see it.<sup>77</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> G. Baslini to F. Burton, 3 November 1877, NG, NG5/499/4.

<sup>74</sup> G. Bertini to F. Burton, 26 November 1887, NG, NG5/499/8. Translation mine.

<sup>75</sup> F. Burton to G. Baslini, 21 November 1887, NG, NG5/499/6.

<sup>76</sup> Minutes of the Board of Trustees, 1871-1886, NG, NG1/5, p. 88.

<sup>77</sup> Director’s report of his continental journey, 29 November 1898, NG, NG7/228/19.

Poynter was evidently confident in his ability to attribute the work to a painter other than Giotto simply by examining the photograph. However, an opinion reached on the basis of a photograph was also subject to change: having viewed a photograph of a Murillo offered for purchase in 1899, the Board sent Poynter to Madrid to view the painting. Upon seeing the work in person, Poynter advised against acquisition based on the condition and quality of the head in the portrait.<sup>78</sup> This confirms that only on rare occasions, and when additional supporting evidence was available, were photographs seen as being a secure basis for connoisseurial decisions.

It was not always possible to use photographs for connoisseurship, however, as physical access to these reproductions was frequently a problem. Given that the photograph collections built up by both Agnew's and the National Gallery were located in London, they were not always accessible when travelling to view potential acquisitions, particularly on the Continent. Burton obviously felt this lack when he wrote to Charles Locke Eastlake from Milan in 1882 that 'You would greatly oblige me by telling Morelli to send me a set of all the photographs he had made from the Hamilton pictures [...] I have need of them in order to make certain comparisons'.<sup>79</sup> The best way to overcome this problem was either to request photographs to be sent abroad, as Burton did, or to carry reproductions: this latter option did assume that the connoisseur would know in advance which paintings were going to be viewed before leaving London. For example, Anthony Hamber has highlighted how in 1869 Boxall and Trustee Austen Henry Layard travelled to Florence with a specially commissioned photograph of Michelangelo's *Entombment* (NG790) in order to compare this with the *Doni Tondo* at the Uffizi.<sup>80</sup> This is a particularly early example of photography being used for such direct and immediate comparison, but no evidence has arisen to suggest that this experiment was repeated under Burton or the Directors who followed. In addition, if the photographs were not owned by the connoisseur— as in the case of the Witt collection—then it would not be possible to take the reproduction abroad for direct comparison; under these circumstances, the connoisseur would once again have to fall back on a memory of the viewed photograph. Having several times mentioned the importance of memory to connoisseurship, it is now time to explore this in more detail.

---

<sup>78</sup> Director's report of his recent journey to Madrid, 3 July 1899, NG. This painting is now in the Denver Art Museum, inv. no. 1961.67.

<sup>79</sup> F. Burton to C. L. Eastlake, 24 October 1883, NG, NG7/39/12.

<sup>80</sup> Hamber, 'The Use of Photography', pp. 103-104.

## ***Memory: The ‘mental canon’***

The visual experience built up through travel and the study of photographs was vital to the practice of connoisseurship. As explored above, connoisseurs frequently had to carry out connoisseurship of a newly encountered work without access to comparable works, either in person or as reproductions, and visual connoisseurship therefore had to be based on the personal expertise of the connoisseur. Viewing artworks, both in person and in reproduction, assisted in the creation of what can be characterised as a ‘mental canon’, using Ernst Gombrich’s definition of a canon as a set of practices and norms and shared by groups of artists.<sup>81</sup> In this way, memories of specific, previously viewed artworks could be consulted, as if part of a mental database to which comparisons could be made. Astrid Erll, drawing on the work of Aleida Assmann, frames a particular aspect of memory as *ars*—art or technology—and thus as a storehouse of knowledge, in which deposited information could later be recalled in the same form.<sup>82</sup> Applying this framework to the practice of connoisseurship, paintings being seen for the first time could therefore be judged against the other pictures in this memory ‘storehouse’ that were understood to be securely attributed to a particular artist or school. This understanding of connoisseurship recurs frequently in the writings of connoisseurs themselves from Jonathan Richardson to Max Friedländer, the latter suggesting that ‘The expert’s weapon and possession are less photographs, books, or a dictionary of characteristics, than concepts of visual imagination, gained in pleasurable contemplation and retained by a vigorous visual memory’.<sup>83</sup> It is also reflected in the practices of the staff at Agnew’s and the National Gallery: William Agnew, for example, wrote of his 1886 visit to the gallery in Dresden that ‘Three of the Rembrandts are photographed on my memory as long as that remains’; his specific use of the word ‘photographed’ points to the peculiarly visual nature of such memories.<sup>84</sup> Relating to the various criteria of connoisseurship as outlined in Chapter 1, Pascal Griener has drawn on John Locke’s idea of the mind as cabinet to theorise the memory of the connoisseur as an ‘incorporeal gallery’, in which memory pictures are held that simultaneously incorporate ‘the

---

<sup>81</sup> Discussed in J. Gorak, *The Making of the Modern Canon: Genesis and Crisis of a Literary Idea* (London: Athlone Press, 1991), Chap. 3.

<sup>82</sup> A. Assmann, *Cultural Memory and Western Civilisation: Functions, Media, Archives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), Chaps 1 and 6; A. Erll, *Memory in Culture*, trans. by S. B. Young (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 34–25.

<sup>83</sup> Küster, ‘Marketing Art in the British Isles’, p. 187; Friedlander, *On Art and Connoisseurship*, p. 176.

<sup>84</sup> Agnew, *Holiday Jottings*, pp. 58–59.

mental representation of an artwork, the memory of its faults and of its intrinsic qualities'.<sup>85</sup> Importantly, this approach suggests not only that the basic visual aspects of an artwork can be recalled, but also subjective judgements on the qualitative categories of connoisseurship; this dovetails well with the vast perceptual memory of the expert as discussed in the introduction to this chapter.

The mental canon is also highly individual to each connoisseur, consisting of the works seen in person or in reproduction. Visual memory training, through repeated exposure to a wide range of paintings, results in an improved ability to remember works seen years previously in some detail, and to be able to compare this memory with a newly encountered painting. For example, Burton wrote to Fairfax Murray in 1878 regarding a painting attributed to Botticelli, and which Burton had seen in a photograph sent to him by Murray. 'It is one of the many replicas of the subject known to me – all differing very slightly in the details', Burton stated, going on to mention paintings in the Louvre, Frankfurt, and the private collections of Alexander Barker and Alexander Fitzmaurice, along with 'a poor thing' in the National Gallery, 'only taken with some more important work & in order to get the latter'.<sup>86</sup> His conclusion, based on this comparison between multiple works, was that the painting bought by Fairfax Murray 'as far as the two figures are concerned, resembles the Frankfurt & Fitzmaurice pictures – Most of them were evidently traced with a stock outline - & probably only finished by Botticelli himself'. For Burton, the attribution was therefore on shaky ground, as was the aesthetic appeal of the work: 'I can't say it looks attractive – however genuine'. This episode demonstrates the importance of both the detail and breadth of Burton's mental canon: he would have been unable to implement such a comparison as a method of connoisseurship if he had not known of the existence of the other versions of the work, and been able to judge their various connoisseurial criteria through the medium of memory.

---

<sup>85</sup> J. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), ed. J. Yolton (London: Dent, 1971), Book II, Chaps XXXI-XXXIII; cited and discussed in P. Griener, *La République de l'œil: l'expérience de l'art au siècle des Lumières* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2010), pp. 65–71.

<sup>86</sup> F. Burton to C. Fairfax Murray, 4 January 1878, HRC, MS-0627. The 'poor thing' was NG782, now attributed to Workshop of Sandro Botticelli.

## Archives and libraries: Alternative spaces of connoisseurship?

This chapter has so far concentrated on the visual assessment of paintings; it is, however, also important to consider alternative methods of connoisseurship, and to evaluate to what extent these were adopted by Agnew's and the National Gallery.<sup>87</sup> In particular, it appears that although provenance was important to both institutions—as supporting or negating the conclusions reached by a visual inspection, or providing the initial impetus for a journey to view a particular work—the modern, documentary approach to provenance research was much less widely implemented than might have been expected. Provenance research is a particularly important modern method of attribution, and dealers, auction houses and museums have invested heavily in such research because of the dramatic associations between provenance and price.<sup>88</sup> It is recognised from a current English legal perspective that the provenance of a work includes the determination of its 'known location at key periods', ideally building up an understanding of the artwork's custodial and exhibition history from the artist's studio to the present owner.<sup>89</sup> Nowadays this object history is largely constructed through research into documentary sources, as well as the evidence offered by the painting itself, such as seals or notes on the reverse.<sup>90</sup> Even so, it is frequently impossible to construct a gap-free provenance: in particular, as Victoria Reed has noted, the family inheritance of artworks can mean that a documented succession of ownership is lacking.<sup>91</sup>

This difficulty in constructing a documented provenance was even more acute during the period in question. Provenance research from documents can be split into two categories: archival and bibliographic. Archival research was obviously resource-heavy—particularly if dealing with handwritten documents or those in a foreign language—and relied on the uncovering of previously unknown sources of information. In a British context, while the

---

<sup>87</sup> Although now somewhat dated, a good overview of the application of documentary and technical evidence to the puzzle of connoisseurship is given in Phillips, *Exhibiting Authenticity*, Chap. 3.

<sup>88</sup> A. Higonnet, 'Afterword: The Social Life of Provenance', in G. Feigenbaum and I. Reist (eds), *Provenance: An Alternate History of Art* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2012), p. 200. Provenance research is also vital in addressing legal claims regarding the ownership of potentially looted or stolen artworks: M. E. Jones, *Art Law: A Concise Guide for Artists, Curators, and Art Educators* (Lanham, MD; London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), Chap. 5.

<sup>89</sup> J. Holland, 'The Approach of the English Court to Connoisseurship, Provenance and Technical Analysis', *Art Antiquity & Law*, 17.4 (2012), pp. 365–376.

<sup>90</sup> S. Flescher, 'A Brief Guide to Provenance Research', in J. Courtney (ed.), *The Legal Guide for Museum Professionals* (Lanham; Boulder; New York; London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), pp. 55–72.

<sup>91</sup> V. Reed, 'Due Diligence, Provenance Research, and the Acquisition Process at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston', *DePaul Journal of Art, Technology and Intellectual Property Law*, 23.2 (2013), p. 347.

Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts had been established in 1869 to report on the extent and contents of privately held manuscripts, this was relatively slow to produce results, while such collections also tended to be uncatalogued and therefore unavailable for research.<sup>92</sup> Meanwhile, while documents such as wills were theoretically available for public consultation, in practice the staff at Agnew's and the National Gallery would rarely have had the time to spare for such in-depth research into individual paintings.<sup>93</sup> As Avery-Quash and Davoli have recently shown, as Directors both Eastlake and Boxall used archival research to support their connoisseurship, with Boxall's secretary Sacchi carrying out research in Italian archives on potential purchases for the National Gallery.<sup>94</sup> However, no evidence has yet come to light to suggest that Burton, Poynter or Holroyd used archival material for research, either themselves or through an agent; equally, Agnew's do not seem to have relied on archival sources, perhaps because of the sheer number of artworks passing through the firm's hands and the costs that this would have entailed. Some scattered mentions suggest that intermediaries such as Fairfax Murray, who sold paintings both to Agnew's and the National Gallery, carried out research in the archives in Siena: for example, in 1889—a year when Murray corresponded regularly with both Agnew's and Burton—his diary entry for 29 July reads 'Siena Archivio in the morning'.<sup>95</sup> However, the exact nature of his archival work is unclear, making it difficult to associate this with provenance research for specific artworks. In particular, one significant modern line of enquiry was also effectively closed to the National Gallery: no evidence has surfaced to suggest that staff at the National Gallery made use of dealers' records and archives when researching a work. By the 1870s, Agnew's, in contrast, already had some fifty years' of their own business records for reference, and continued to add to these records as time passed. They could have been useful for certain types of provenance information, such as determining if and when a painting had already passed through the firm's hands, and from whom it had been acquired. The records of rival dealers, however, were highly likely to have been jealously guarded and just as unavailable to Agnew's and the National Gallery alike. In general, therefore, the evidence suggests that archives were a less important space of connoisseurship for both institutions than is the case for dealers and galleries today.

---

<sup>92</sup> E. Shepherd, *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 23-5; 71-75; R. H. Ellis, 'The Historical Manuscripts Commission 1869–1969', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 2.6 (1962), pp. 233–242.

<sup>93</sup> J. D. Cantwell, *The Public Record Office, 1838-1958* (London: HMSO, 1991).

<sup>94</sup> Avery-Quash and Davoli, "Boxall Is Interested Only in the Great Masters".

<sup>95</sup> Diary entry for 29 July 1889, C. F. Murray diary, 1889, Fondation Custodia, Paris, 1983-A.27/33.

In contrast, libraries were a significant space of connoisseurial research for both the National Gallery and Agnew's. Printed works, often based on significant previous work in the archives, were much more easily accessible to both organisations than archival material. Charlotte Guichard has described how, from the early eighteenth century onwards, what she characterises as the 'paper museums' of illustrated auction catalogues and catalogues raisonnés began to be used as tools for finding artworks and determining their provenances.<sup>96</sup> From the 1870s onwards, the library at the National Gallery became particularly important in this respect, and was in fact moved into the Boardroom in 1906.<sup>97</sup> The Eastlake Library, a large collection of art books and manuscripts built up by former Director Charles Lock Eastlake, had been acquired from Eastlake's widow in 1870, and continued to be built up under Burton and the Directors who followed him.<sup>98</sup> From 1879 onwards, the Treasury authorised an annual budget of £100 for the purchase of books, although as seen above this was later partly diverted into the acquisition of photographs.<sup>99</sup> As well as purchasing books and catalogues for exhibitions such as the Royal Academy Old Master shows, the National Gallery also invested its library funds in contemporary arts periodicals, such as the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* and *Zeitschrift für Bildende Kunst*, in which much of the most up-to-date artistic research was being published.<sup>100</sup> From 1881, the Gallery also began to collect priced catalogues for 'important sales of pictures' held at Christie's, suggesting an interest in price, provenance and the art market in general.<sup>101</sup> A strong engagement with such printed sources is confirmed by Burton's copious footnotes in his newly revised 1889 National Gallery catalogue (Fig. 19). However, as in the case of the photograph collection, it would have been impossible to consult library items if offered a painting for acquisition when travelling abroad: for this reason, it seems most likely that the National Gallery library was largely used to research paintings sent to the National Gallery for inspection, works already belonging to the nation or paintings in other collections.

---

<sup>96</sup> Guichard, 'Connoisseurship and Artistic Expertise', p. 175.

<sup>97</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 5 March 1907; - for, Copy 'of the Report of the Trustees of the National Gallery, for the Year 1906, with Appendices'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1907), p. 7.

<sup>98</sup> G. M. Green, *Catalogue of the Eastlake Library in the National Gallery* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1872); S. Avery-Quash, 'The Eastlake Library: Origins, History and Importance', *Studi di Memofonte*, 10 (2013), pp. 3–45.

<sup>99</sup> Letter from the Stationery Office, 27 February 1879, NG, NG7/8/3; letter to J. S. Lewis, Stationery Office, 14 February 1885, NG, NG6/10/562.

<sup>100</sup> Letter to F. Eaton, Secretary of the RA, 10 December 1879, NG, NG6/6/162; Letter to H.G. Reid, H. M. Stationery Office, 23 April 1880, NG, NG6/6/496; letter to H. G. Reid, 16 September 1881, NG, NG6/7/495.

<sup>101</sup> Letter to the Secretary, H. M. Treasury, 27 July 1881, NG, NG6/7/421.

From the mid-nineteenth century onwards, Agnew's also appears to have built up a substantial library of catalogues of private collections and auction house sales.<sup>102</sup> However, it has been harder to garner information on the Agnew's library because it does not appear to have been catalogued and is no longer extant, having been broken up when the company was sold in 2013. On this sale, some of the library's contents were sold to a private collector (who has asked to remain anonymous in this thesis); having examined these volumes, several of which are annotated in a nineteenth-century hand, it appears that this library was kept at the firm's Bond Street offices for reference use (Fig. 20). The exact location of the library within the building is unclear, and it may have been maintained alongside the photograph collection. While it is also difficult to determine the exact application of the library for the purposes of connoisseurship, a stock-book from the 1930s reveals that by this point books and periodicals were being added to the library on a regular basis (Fig. 21). The library was therefore important to the firm at least by the mid-twentieth century, and presumably earlier. Where provenance information was determined and noted in the catalogues for the Agnew's exhibitions, this may well have been the result of bibliographic research. Former owners are also likely to have been particularly useful in this regard: a note in one of the Agnew's letterbook from 1903 states that 'Mr [Reginald] Vaile would like Lockett to go through the catalogue of his pictures at Christie's with him. He says that he has the pedigrees of many of the pictures and this information you will probably not have'.<sup>103</sup> However, given the unknown extent of the Agnew's library and the current location of many of its volumes, it is difficult to draw any definite conclusions as to its use for connoisseurial research by the company.

Given the strong modern emphasis on provenance, it might seem surprising that more evidence of provenance research—carried out before the act of acquisition—has not been uncovered for the period in question. Indeed, a lack of provenance does not seem to have been a particular problem for either institution, as many paintings were acquired by both organisations without a detailed knowledge of their background. To a large extent, this appears to have been because such documentary information simply did not exist: Morland wrote of a visit to the Liechtenstein Gallery in 1895 that 'I wish we could get a catalogue:

---

<sup>102</sup> The size of this library is unknown, but for comparative purposes, Brewer has put the size of the Duveen library at '14,000 art books'. Brewer, *The American Leonardo*, 123.

<sup>103</sup> Letterbook 2, NG, NGA27/11/2, p. 215. This note refers to the sale held at Christie's on 23 May 1903.

custodian says there are none. Murray & Baedeker of little use'.<sup>104</sup> In this case, the generalist travel guides that Morland carried with him were not helpful, while no specialist catalogue had been produced; he was therefore forced to rely purely on his visual judgement of the works. However, provenance could also sometimes be judged from a spatial perspective. The place in which a painting was viewed was itself often treated as proof of provenance, even if the history of a work had not been documented on paper. In the case of private collections, paintings had often been passed down through the family: the fact that it was displayed in a particular building or room was therefore treated as proof of its provenance. A particularly striking example is the case of Agnew's and the Frick Fragonards.<sup>105</sup> The series of Fragonard paintings known as the *Progress of Love*, acquired by Agnew's in 1898, had been commissioned by Jeanne Bécu, comtesse du Barry and mistress of Louis XV, in the 1770s.<sup>106</sup> However, they failed to meet with her approval and so remained in the possession of the artist. When he temporarily moved back to Grasse in 1790, Fragonard took the panels with him, and installed them in the house of a cousin living in the town. Here, the artist supplemented the four original works with additional, smaller panels to fill the room in which they were on display; and here they remained in situ until 1898. At this point, they were acquired by London dealer Charles Wertheimer, and swiftly passed into the possession of Agnew's. The firm then went on to use the provenance of the paintings—as determined via their location and family history, rather than through documentation—as a specific sales tool. The style of display adopted when the paintings were twice exhibited in Bond Street, in 1898 and 1900, was intended to remind the observer of the eighteenth-century house for which the paintings had originally been commissioned: the *Art Journal* wrote that 'The Fragonard Room at the galleries of Messrs. Agnew will long be remembered. The room in which the panels hang has been transformed to make the proper setting, and it is hard to keep from rubbing one's eyes after leaving nineteenth-century Bond Street'.<sup>107</sup> Similarly, the catalogue, in its introduction by art critic Claude Phillips, stressed that the house in Grasse from which they were purchased was 'the very same in which the artist had himself arranged, and, as we may guess, completed and supplemented them'.<sup>108</sup> The spatial aspects of the

---

<sup>104</sup> C. M. Agnew, Austria travel diary, 29 September-19 October 1895, NGA27/27/73, entry for 8 October 1895. While the latest catalogue for the collection had been produced in 1885, this was in German and was unlikely to have been available for casual visitors to the gallery: O'Neill (ed.), *Liechtenstein: The Princely Collections*, p. 362.

<sup>105</sup> The Frick Collection, inv. nos 1915.1.45-55.

<sup>106</sup> C. B. Bailey, *Fragonard's Progress of Love at the Frick Collection* (New York: Frick Collection, 2011).

<sup>107</sup> 'Passing Events', *The Art Journal*, January 1899, p. 30.

<sup>108</sup> *Roman d'Amour de La Jeunesse. Jean-Honoré Fragonard. [The Catalogue of an Exhibition, with an Essay by Sir C. Phillips.]* (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1898), p. 5.

discovery and purchase of these paintings were to prove attractive to buyers, and the paintings were shortly sold to American millionaire J. P. Morgan. This spatial aspect of provenance—particularly in the case of well-known or aristocratic collectors—will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4 with regard to the National Gallery’s foregrounding of works such as the Panshanger van Dycks, and in Chapter 5 with respect to the Agnew’s Old Master exhibitions.

Meanwhile, at least some of the partners in Agnew’s felt that provenance was a less legitimate basis for connoisseurship than visual analysis. For Lockett, his ability to judge a painting by eye was sufficient basis for a connoisseurial judgement, and he expected buyers to respect this. In 1903, Lockett wrote to American art dealer Theron J. Blakeslee regarding a Botticelli school work that Agnew’s had sold to Blakeslee, but which Blakeslee had had trouble offloading to his own clients:

I have always regarded a ‘Boomerang’ as some beastly thing which when put out comes back quick and hits you on the head: now the Botticelli could not do that so I imagine the two purchasers have hurled the picture back at you adding a few insults and some considerable abuse. If you have sold this picture as a fine Botticelli you well deserve to be Boomeranged.<sup>109</sup>

Lockett maintained that he had made perfectly clear when selling the painting to Blakeslee ‘that it was a studio picture, touched up by the Master, that the head of the Virgin was by Botticelli; that it came from a very celebrated collection formed over 150 years ago & in the collection had always been ascribed to Botticelli &c. &c.’. Lockett evidently felt that he was personally capable of determining which sections of the painting were by the hand of the master. However, learning that Blakeslee was demanding his money back from Agnew’s for the picture, Lockett stated that ‘never again will I sell you anything which requires explanation: I saw the picture to be a good one: your countrymen wanted something more’. Lockett therefore expected his word as a dealer, based on his visual connoisseurship (albeit supported by the mention of the painting’s provenance from a ‘very celebrated collection’), to be sufficient guarantee of the painting’s attribution for his clients. However, this letter shows that this was evidently not enough evidence of his connoisseurial judgements for some customers.

---

<sup>109</sup> Letter from W. L. Agnew to T. J. Blakeslee, 13 February 1903, NG, NGA27/23/8/5.

It is therefore tempting to conclude that the Agnew's staff placed less emphasis on research into the history and provenance of a work for the sake of their own connoisseurship, than on its subsequent application as a sales tool. Elizabeth Pergam has discussed how dealers such as Duveen and Knoedler's highlighted the provenance of portraits in particular to highlight the links between these paintings and their aristocratic origins; in similar vein, Agnew's customers also appear to have been frequently interested in 'pedigree' and provenance.<sup>110</sup> This was particularly the case for American clients by the early twentieth century: Croal Thomson mentioned in his report after visiting the house of George Jay Gould in Lakewood, New Jersey, that 'He likes to know where a picture comes from, and he called Mr. Glaenzer [dealer] a d ----d fool, (those were the words) because he always made a mystery about the provenance of his pictures.'<sup>111</sup> If provenance was important to Agnew's clients, then provenance was important to Agnew's. As a result, Agnew's did occasionally also use provenance details as a direct sales tool when approaching clients. A letter of January 1889 to American collector Henry G. Marquand offered for sale 'two perfect pictures by Velazquez, which, for the last 74 years, have hung at Lansdowne House', once again foregrounding the spatial aspects of provenance.<sup>112</sup> As well as including the relevant passage on the works as copied from Anna Jameson's 1844 handbook, Agnew's also supplied Marquand with Jameson's provenance information—that the works had been bought from Manuel Godoy, 'Prince of Peace', in 1814—as well as adding that they had previously been exhibited at the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition in 1877.<sup>113</sup> The inclusion of exhibition histories in the catalogues for Agnew's own exhibitions will be explored in more detail in Chapter 5. All of this evidence suggests that while archival and bibliographic evidence was to

---

<sup>110</sup> E. A. Pergam, 'Provenance as Pedigree: The Marketing of British Portraits in Gilded Age America', in G. Feigenbaum and I. Reist (eds), *Provenance: An Alternate History of Art* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2012), pp. 104–122.

<sup>111</sup> Thomson, Report, NG, NGA27/27/3, p. 58.

<sup>112</sup> Valuations book, 1888-1898, NG, NGA27/12/1, p. 112. These paintings were bought by Marquand and then gifted to the Metropolitan Museum of Art: *Portrait of a Man*, now attributed to the Velazquez workshop (inv. no. 89.15.29) and a portrait of Don Gaspar de Guzman, once inv. no. 89.15.30 but since deaccessioned. The Met, 'Portrait of a Man', <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437875> [accessed 1 December 2017]; J. L. Allen and E. E. Gardner, *A Concise Catalogue of the European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1954), p. 98; P. Jeromack, 'Velázquez Rediscovered', <http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/jeromack/velazquez-rediscovered12-16-09.asp> [accessed 1 December 2017]; Colomer, 'Competing for a Velázquez', pp. 253-253. On Marquand, see E. Quodbach, 'Collecting Old Masters for New York: Henry Gurdon Marquand and the Metropolitan Museum of Art', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, 9:1 (2017), DOI: 10.5092/jhna.2017.9.1.2.

<sup>113</sup> A. Jameson, *Companion to the Most Celebrated Private Galleries of Art in London* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1844), p. 312.

a certain extent important to Agnew's and the National Gallery, visual analysis remained key to the connoisseurship practised by their staff.

## Technical testing of paintings

In addition to provenance, the technical testing of artworks is also an important technique of modern connoisseurship.<sup>114</sup> As Jilleen Nadolny has highlighted, there was indeed a growing interest in the scientific examination of artworks in the nineteenth century.<sup>115</sup> However, there is little evidence to suggest that such chemical or technical tests were carried out on potential acquisitions by either the National Gallery or Agnew's during the period in question. Brewer has argued in his analysis of the 1929 Hahn v. Duveen legal case, which centred on the disputed attribution of a painting ascribed by Hahn to Leonardo, that dealer Duveen and art historian Berenson were openly sceptical of and even hostile to 'scientific' evidence.<sup>116</sup> Although more technical methods, such as x-ray and pigment analysis, were theoretically available for the purposes of connoisseurship by the 1920s, Brewer maintains that the connoisseurial world was actively clinging on to what he characterises as the 'old-fashioned' connoisseurship of the eye.<sup>117</sup> The National Gallery's Scientific Department was not established until 1934, so any technical examination before this date must have been carried out on a much more ad hoc basis.<sup>118</sup> However, it does not seem that there was active resistance to this type of connoisseurial evidence at the National Gallery. In 1925, Charles Holmes, the Director who followed Holroyd, acted as expert witness in a legal case regarding a forged Frans Hals; the newspapers reported that 'many methods were

---

<sup>114</sup> M. Spring (ed.), *Studying Old Master Paintings: Technology and Practice: The National Gallery Technical Bulletin 30th Anniversary Conference Postprints* (London: Archetype Publications, 2011).

<sup>115</sup> Nadolny's is one of the most thorough examinations of the subject to date, although her study focuses only on published material and ends in 1880: J. Nadolny, 'The First Century of Published Scientific Analyses of the Materials of Historical Painting and Polychromy, circa 1780-1880', *Studies in Conservation*, 48.1 (2003), pp. 39–51. My thanks to Marika Spring for bringing this paper to my attention.

<sup>116</sup> Brewer, *The American Leonardo*, p. 6.

<sup>117</sup> For a brief history of early technical intervention, see G. Vanpaemel, 'X-Rays and Old Masters. The Art of the Scientific Connoisseur', *Endeavour*, 34.2 (2010), pp. 69–74; J. Hill Stoner, 'Vignettes of Interdisciplinary Technical Art History Investigation', *CeROArt. Conservation, Exposition, Restauration d'Objets d'Art*, HS: Tribute to Roger Marijnissen (June 2015), <https://ceroart.revues.org/4508> [accessed 5 December 2017]; a more detailed analysis, although in an American context, appears in F. G. Bewer, *A Laboratory for Art: Harvard's Fogg Museum and the Emergence of Conservation in America, 1900-1950* (New Haven, CT; London: Harvard Art Museum; Yale University Press, 2010).

<sup>118</sup> W. Bragg and I. Rawlins, *From the National Gallery Laboratory* (London: Printed for the Trustees: The National Gallery, 1940); G. Thomson, J. Mills and J. Plesters, 'The Scientific Department of the National Gallery', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 1 (1977), p. 18.

employed, including microscopic, chemical, and photographic tests'.<sup>119</sup> Indeed, the numerous technical volumes in the Eastlake Library, and Charles Lock Eastlake's own work on the materials of oil painting, point to a strong interest in the chemical and technical properties of artworks.<sup>120</sup> Avery-Quash and Sheldon have also highlighted Eastlake's enthusiasm for the employment of chemists to analyse pigment structure and use, although there is no evidence to suggest that such an approach was ever put into practice on National Gallery paintings or potential acquisitions during Eastlake's tenure as Director.<sup>121</sup> In contrast, very little evidence has come to light regarding the attitudes of the Agnew's staff towards such technical tests, but the firm does not seem to have spoken out in public against them as Duveen did.

Instead, as with provenance research, it appears that for both institutions it was the spatial practicalities of carrying out such tests that prevented their implementation until much later in the twentieth century.<sup>122</sup> Before acquisition, there was very little opportunity to perform technical tests such as chemical testing or imaging analysis on a privately owned work. While pigment tests had been discussed in works such as A. H. Church's 1890 *Chemistry of paints and painting*, Church himself highlighted the practical difficulties with building up a scientific corpus of data: 'our materials, though in some directions most abundant, are in great measure inaccessible. We must confine our attention to such specimens as are shown in our public galleries. Even then we find ourselves hampered by the impossibility of making the thorough investigation which is desirable'.<sup>123</sup> This difficulty was due to the fact that much technical analysis relied on invasive methods such as wiping, scraping or detaching a piece from the surface of a work — a process that was unlikely to be permitted by the vast majority of collectors or dealers offering a painting for sale.<sup>124</sup> Instead, it was much more likely that

---

<sup>119</sup> 'A Forged Franz Hals', *The Times*, 4 May 1925; Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, p. 303.

<sup>120</sup> J. Franklin, 'The Eastlake Library and the Sources for *Materials for a History of Oil Painting, 1847*', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 38 (forthcoming).

<sup>121</sup> C. L. Eastlake, *Observations on the Unfitness of the Present Building for Its Purposes in a Letter to the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart.* (London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1845), p. 18; cited in Avery-Quash and Sheldon, *Art for the Nation*, p. 153.

<sup>122</sup> Even later in the twentieth century and today, it remains to be explored how extensively technical tests were and are employed for the connoisseurial examination of paintings before their acquisition by a dealer or museum.

<sup>123</sup> A. H. Church, *The Chemistry of Paints and Painting* (London: Seeley and Co., 1890), p. 255.

<sup>124</sup> Nadolny, 'The First Century', pp. 40–41; getting permission to sample from a museum object is still difficult—and sometimes impossible—today: F. Carò, E. Basso and M. Leona, 'The Earth Sciences from the Perspective of an Art Museum', *Elements*, 12.1 (2016), p. 34.

such investigation would take place after an artwork had been acquired; even so, little concrete evidence has arisen for the application of such tests by either Agnew's or the National Gallery on its own collections in this period. Imaging techniques, meanwhile, were even more difficult—if not impossible—to carry out on potential acquisitions. X-ray machines only began to appear in museums and art galleries in Britain from 1919 onwards, when the British Museum's Research Laboratory was founded, and the National Gallery did not acquire its own x-ray equipment until 1935.<sup>125</sup> Before this point, the logistics of finding sufficiently large imaging machines for bigger paintings, and acquiring permission to use such equipment, coupled with the risks of removing works from the Trafalgar Square site, appear to have effectively precluded the use of x-ray or infra-red analysis.<sup>126</sup> It seems equally unlikely that Agnew's would have been granted access to this type of expensive and specialised machinery for the purposes of testing potential acquisitions, or even works already owned by the firm.<sup>127</sup> In the case of x-rays and other specialised imaging techniques, therefore, spatial restrictions were presumably the major bar to carrying out such procedures.

## Conclusion

Chapter 1 of this thesis set out the 'what' of connoisseurship by determining, via the analysis of traditional textual sources, the qualities that connoisseurs were looking to judge in an artwork, while Chapter 2 discussed the 'where': the spaces in which this connoisseurship took place. Chapter 3 has outlined the 'how', bringing together the gathered evidence to argue for a particular model of expert connoisseurship, characterised by a strong reliance on visual analysis over other means of enquiry. The practice of connoisseurship as demonstrated by Agnew's and the National Gallery personnel in this period was based on a wide-ranging mental canon of images, built up through repeated exposure to paintings viewed both in person and in reproduction. Paintings being considered for acquisition would be compared with the memory of these images to determine their merit in a range of connoisseurial categories including beauty, condition and attribution. Meanwhile, the

---

<sup>125</sup> R. J. Gettens, 'Teaching and Research in Art Conservation', *Science*, 133.3460 (1961), pp. 1212-1216; H. J. Plenderleith, 'A History of Conservation', *Studies in Conservation*, 43.3 (1998), pp. 129-143. The National Gallery's early imaging equipment is illustrated in Bragg and Rawlins, *From the National Gallery Laboratory*, p. 50.

<sup>126</sup> On the logistics of the use of early hospital x-ray machines, see J. D. Howell, 'Early Clinical Use of the X-Ray', *Transactions of the American Clinical and Climatological Association*, 127 (2016), pp. 341-349.

<sup>127</sup> The daunting technicalities of the x-ray process, even much later in the technology's development, are outlined in D. Graham and T. Eddie, *X-Ray Techniques in Art Galleries and Museums* (Bristol; Boston: Adam Hilger, 1985).

admission of evidence other than the visual—such as research using printed or unpublished sources, and technical investigation—was frequently precluded by the space in which connoisseurship had to take place. As a result, a lesser role was played by provenance research than is the case today, while technical examination was made problematic, not necessarily by a reluctance to adopt such techniques, but by the practicalities of examining artworks belonging to someone else. Above all, a dichotomy should not be drawn between the ideas of careful, measured judgement based on years of experience and exposure to comparable images, and swift, intuitive decision-making: these seemingly opposed concepts in fact go hand in hand.<sup>128</sup> Chapters 4 and 5 will now examine the ways in which the National Gallery and Agnew’s facilitated connoisseurship by others on their own premises by promoting the close visual examination and comparison of the works on display.

---

<sup>128</sup> A. Styhre, *Professionals Making Judgments: The Professional Skill of Valuing and Assessing* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 3.

## **SECTION II: SPATIAL ASPECTS OF CONNOISSEURIAL DISPLAY**

### **Chapter 4: Spaces of connoisseurial discourse I: The National Gallery**

‘Every picture in a national collection should, perhaps, be assumed to be fit to challenge inspection, and to be worthy of being well displayed.’<sup>1</sup>

Charles Lock Eastlake, 1845

The next two chapters will discuss the main exhibition spaces used by the National Gallery and Agnew’s to display the fruits of their own connoisseurial practice and encourage visual analysis among those from outside the organisations. The first section of this thesis has outlined how staff at the two institutions practised their connoisseurship in a range of private and public spaces, as well as discussing the aspects of these spaces that particularly affected the connoisseurial process. As this section will now show, once these judgements had resulted in acquisitions, the National Gallery and the Agnew’s galleries then acted as the physical manifestation of this connoisseurship. Paintings displayed in a domestic context were often intended for very different purposes: for example, as decoration, or to stress the wealth or traditions and family history of their owners. As a result, as shown in Chapter 2, artworks were frequently hung in domestic spaces in a way that impeded connoisseurship. In contrast, the exhibition spaces at the National Gallery and Agnew’s were designed to facilitate visitor connoisseurship, while also asserting control over connoisseurship and aiming to convince others of the veracity of the judgements reached by their staff. This chapter will centre on the National Gallery, first discussing the building in terms of its location, exterior and the extensions added over the forty-year period covered by this thesis. It will then focus more strongly on the individual rooms at the Gallery and the display tactics adopted within them, including aspects such as décor and lighting. It will emphasise the ways in which building, rooms and display combined to encourage connoisseurship on the part of visitors, with a special emphasis on the type of visual, comparative analysis as adopted by the institution’s own staff. The chapter will conclude with a consideration of the spatial factors that restricted connoisseurship by the National Gallery’s visitors, such as the limited wall space available and the preventative conservation needed to protect the collection.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eastlake, *Observations on the Unfitness of the Present Building*, p. 7.

Chapter 5 will act as a direct comparison, outlining the Agnew's approach to display and highlighting the major similarities with the National Gallery, despite the differing aims of the two institutions.

As Kali Tzortzi has emphasised, the awareness of space in the literature of museum studies has increased to such an extent in recent years that space can now be considered one of its major themes.<sup>2</sup> As a major London museum, the space of the National Gallery has received much critical attention, particularly in the work of Christopher Whitehead.<sup>3</sup> However, as Colin Trodd has outlined, and as mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, much museological analysis has drawn on Foucauldian theory to paint a rather bleak picture of the Victorian art museum as a repressive tool of the State. This thesis instead agrees with Trodd's assertion that the art gallery acts as a space that both generates and incites social, discursive vision among the general public.<sup>4</sup> More specifically, Tzortzi, drawing on space syntax theory, has described how museum architecture affects visitor experience as a system of spatial relations, both between objects and between rooms, the latter affecting the ways in which visitors explore and use galleries.<sup>5</sup> Tzortzi separates these spatial relationships into three morphologies; given the historical context of this thesis, it is not feasible to study the 'spatial behaviour of visitors' by tracking visitor movements to analyse their interaction with the museum space, nor will a strict space syntax analysis be adopted because of the associated need for in-depth digital analysis.<sup>6</sup> However, this chapter will certainly address Tzortzi's morphologies of the 'spatial structure of the building itself' and the 'spatial arrangement of displays'. In particular, it will draw heavily on Hillier and Tzortzi's assertion that museums and galleries act as a pedagogical device — in this case, for the communication of connoisseurial knowledge.<sup>7</sup> Recent neuroaesthetic research has also emphasised the role of

---

<sup>2</sup> K. Tzortzi, 'Spatial Concepts in Museum Theory and Practice', in K. Karimi et al. (eds), *Proceedings of the 10th International Space Syntax Symposium* (London: Space Syntax Laboratory, The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, 2015), pp. 37:1-14. Tzortzi's review provides a useful overview of the spatial approaches adopted in museology, including the consideration of the museum as a script or map.

<sup>3</sup> Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*; Whitehead, 'Architectures of Display'; Whitehead, 'Museum Revolutions'; Whitehead, *Museums and the Construction of Disciplines*; C. Whitehead, 'Institutional Autobiography and the Architecture of the Art Museum: Restoration and Remembering at the National Gallery in the 1980s', in K. Hill (ed.), *Museums and Biographies: Stories, Objects, Identities* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2012), pp. 157–170.

<sup>4</sup> Trodd, 'The Discipline of Pleasure'.

<sup>5</sup> Hillier and Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space*; K. Tzortzi, *Museum Space: Where Architecture Meets Museology* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), p. 2.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> B. Hillier and K. Tzortzi, 'Space Syntax: The Language of Museum Space', in S. Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 282–301.

context in aesthetic perception, with some studies suggesting that artworks are perceived as more ‘pleasant’ and interesting in a museum as opposed to a laboratory setting.<sup>8</sup> In particular, Leder et al. have suggested that the physical presentation of an artwork in the environment of a gallery, museum or exhibition acts as a strong contextual clue that this object should be processed from an aesthetic perspective.<sup>9</sup> Given this premise, it can be argued that visitors to the National Gallery arrived ready primed to view and interact with the artworks on display in a particular connoisseurial fashion. Finally, drawing on the writings of Jonathan Crary and Kate Flint, who both see the nineteenth century as a peculiarly visual age, this chapter will emphasise the overwhelmingly visual appreciation of the paintings on display at the National Gallery.<sup>10</sup> Julius Bryant has suggested a ‘dichotomy of display’ between the presentation of museum objects in a context provided by complementary decoration, or in neutral isolation for aesthetic contemplation.<sup>11</sup> From this perspective, the National Gallery can be seen as steadily moving towards the latter approach throughout the period being discussed here.

Chapters 4 and 5 will draw on a wider range of sources for analysis than previously in this thesis. In addition to the largely unpublished textual and visual sources previously considered, these two chapters will make extensive use of published sources, particularly the general press and specialist art periodicals. Both the National Gallery and Agnew’s received much attention in print regarding the works that the institutions chose to display and the spaces in which these exhibitions were mounted. As a result, press articles have been a valuable source for revealing the details and day-to-day workings of the two organisations, as well as offering a range of reactions, positive and negative, to such displays. This has additionally helped to highlight the agency embedded in the visual, as discussed with regard to eighteenth-century viewing by Peter de Bolla.<sup>12</sup> Chapter 5 will also consider the exhibition catalogues produced by Agnew’s—specifically intended to be carried around the exhibition for reference by visitors—as spaces of connoisseurship in their own right. This approach is

---

<sup>8</sup> J. van Paasschen, F. Bacci and D. P. Melcher, ‘The Influence of Art Expertise and Training on Emotion and Preference Ratings for Representational and Abstract Artworks’, *PLoS ONE*, 10.8 (2015), pp. 4–5.

<sup>9</sup> H. Leder et al., ‘A Model of Aesthetic Appreciation and Aesthetic Judgments’, *British Journal of Psychology*, 95.4 (2004), pp. 493–494.

<sup>10</sup> J. Crary, *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1992); K. Flint, *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

<sup>11</sup> J. Bryant, *Designing the V&A: The Museum as a Work of Art (1857-1909)* (London: Lund Humphries; V&A Publishing, 2017), p. 24.

<sup>12</sup> P. de Bolla, *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape, and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003), p. 2.

less applicable to the National Gallery because of the different format of the official catalogue in this period: arranged by school, and then alphabetically by artist, this was expected to be used more as a general reference work than within the National Gallery's exhibition rooms themselves.

### **Why did the National Gallery need to convince others of the trustworthiness of its connoisseurship?**

The National Gallery showed a strong interest in its reputation, particularly with regard to the public reception of its collection. Starting in 1879, the institution began to keep books of press cuttings collated from major newspapers such as *The Times*, the *Illustrated London News* and the *Pall Mall Gazette*.<sup>13</sup> By 1890, the specialist Newspaper Extract and Special Information Agency was being used to supply the Gallery with such articles.<sup>14</sup> These covered a range of subjects relating to the institution, such as acquisitions, opening hours, catalogues, the conservation of the collection and debates over attribution, as well as forming a record of Parliamentary mentions of the National Gallery. This strongly suggests that public opinion was taken into account by the Director, Keeper and Trustees when considering the current and future management of the institution. In addition, both Director and Trustees wrote not infrequently to the newspapers themselves in order to correct or argue a particular point of contention. For example, Burton wrote to the *Times* in 1886, in response to a previous letter from Lord Thurlow, to clarify the National Gallery's purchasing strategy and argue that 'eligible pictures should be purchased, whenever obtainable, so as to increase the worth and usefulness of the collection'.<sup>15</sup> Although 'a great work by a great master is like nothing else, and can never be a redundancy in a great public gallery', Burton stressed, the Gallery also aimed to fill 'gaps in our series of schools and masters'. This reflected the Gallery's overarching aim, as discussed in Chapter 1, to offer a narrative of the 'rise and progress' of the development of Western art. Such internal monitoring of press coverage, as well as a willingness to respond publicly to criticism, highlights the importance placed by the National Gallery's administration on its public reputation. Indeed, the otherwise privileged, high-profile position of the National Gallery—which helped its staff to access works for connoisseurship—also made the institution particularly vulnerable to public criticism.

---

<sup>13</sup> Press cuttings, 1879-present, NG, NG24.

<sup>14</sup> Photocopy in NG dossier for NG1314, Holbein's *Ambassadors*.

<sup>15</sup> F. W. Burton, 'The National Gallery', *The Times*, 31 July 1886.

With specific regard to connoisseurship, the organisation was exposed to censure on three main fronts if it was felt that the judgment of its staff was lacking: the education of the public, the Gallery's public ownership and funding status, and a wider nationalism and patriotism. One of the main issues at stake was the Gallery's status as an educational institution, with a duty to provide moral improvement through the medium of art and visual instruction for art students and artists alike.<sup>16</sup> If the pictures on display, or the way in which they had been arranged, were felt to have fallen below the expected connoisseurial standards, then, as a result, the public would suffer in its education. Writing in the *Art Journal* in 1883, artist Henry Wallis acknowledged that the National Gallery was certainly popular, offering 'the means of intellectual cultivation' and 'the taste for Art' to 'large classes' who 'in eighteen hundred and twenty-four would have been absolutely illiterate'.<sup>17</sup> However, he added, 'It is no use possessing masterpieces of genius if they are placed out of reach of the eye, and it was certainly not the intention of the painters that the products of their brush should be packed together like mineralogical specimens in a crowded museum'. Such a criticism demonstrates the importance of visual connoisseurship for visitors to the National Gallery, and the extent to which the institution was felt to have failed if it did not ensure that its collection was adequately available for connoisseurial viewing.

As well as being responsible for educating the public, the National Gallery also had to justify its use of public funds. The institution was exposed to particular criticism when it was felt that a purchase did not represent value for money, particularly if it was thought that the painting could have been bought at a lower price, or if the overall sum laid out was seen as excessive. This was particularly the case if the connoisseurship of the Gallery staff was felt to have been lacking in some way. Such criticism became more heated—and the National Gallery's purchase budget twice suspended—following the outlay of special Treasury grants for the purchase of pictures from the Peel collection in 1871, and two works from the Blenheim Palace sale in 1885 (Raphael's *Ansidei Madonna*, NG1171, and van Dyck's *Equestrian Portrait of Charles I*, NG1172).<sup>18</sup> The issue was much discussed in Parliament as

---

<sup>16</sup> On education in the Victorian gallery, see G. Waterfield, *The People's Galleries: Art Museums and Exhibitions in Britain, 1800-1914* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), Chap. 10; A. Burton, 'The Uses of the South Kensington Art Collections', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 14.1 (2002), pp. 79–95; on the National Gallery and moral improvement, see Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, Chap. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Wallis, 'The National Gallery - Recent Acquisitions'.

<sup>18</sup> For more on the background to and negotiations for the purchase of the Blenheim pictures, see Pezzini, *Making a Market for Art*, Chap. 3.

well as in the press. An 1890 speech by MP George Cavendish-Bentinck, a frequent critic of the National Gallery, stated that:

He should have been glad to have pointed out how much money had been wasted by buying questionable pictures which ought not to appear in the National Gallery at all [...] The principle he had always maintained was that their National Gallery ought to have no pictures except well-authenticated works of the highest class; but instead of these, whenever there was a sensational sale, like the Hamilton sale, the Director rushed in and bought pictures, some of which had afterwards to be re-christened. No less than five pictures bought under certain names had had to be re-christened, and now had to make their appearance in the catalogue of the National Gallery under different names, or under no names at all.<sup>19</sup>

Especially with regard to attribution, the correct judgement of paintings was understood to be particularly important where public spending was concerned: the increased visibility engendered by their display was supposed to boost public trust that purchase funds had been well invested. This was evident in a way not seen with Agnew's because of the sense of public—and even personal—ownership of works in the national collection. As Director Philip Hendy wrote later in the Gallery's history regarding restoration, 'However safe the method, however correct the principle, there will still be a margin for legitimate discussion concerning the finished product. Much of the criticism comes from those who best know and most love the pictures, in the ownership of which they have a share'.<sup>20</sup> This sense of ownership also affected display practice because of concerns, to be discussed below, that publicly owned works were not being made sufficiently accessible for public viewing.

The final major consideration regarding the reception of connoisseurship at the National Gallery was that of nationalism. Since its inception, the institution and its collection had been understood as an important patriotic symbol, and this was no less the case in the period under discussion here.<sup>21</sup> *The Times* argued in 1884, for instance, that no expense should be spared in the acquisition of masterpieces:

---

<sup>19</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 16 August 1883, Vol. 283, col. 892.

<sup>20</sup> *An Exhibition of Cleaned Pictures*, p. xxiv.

<sup>21</sup> C. Duncan, 'From the Princely Gallery to the Public Art Museum: The Louvre Museum and the National Gallery', in J. Evans and D. Boswell (eds), *Representing the Nation: A Reader: Histories, Heritage and Museums* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 304–331.

We may make [the National Gallery] something of which the country will be proud. We may extend its renown beyond our own shores. It may be made one of the bonds of the English race settled in all parts of the globe. Schools of painting will some day arise in our most distant colonies. It is to our National Gallery their students will direct their steps.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the National Gallery was frequently seen as a metonym for Britain itself: as Simon Knell has argued, the ‘national gallery’ as a very concept can be understood as a possession of, representation of, and service to the nation. The strength of Britain as a nation was therefore judged through the quality of the National Gallery’s collection and the institution’s connoisseurial capabilities.<sup>23</sup> Knell’s further assertions that the National Gallery’s focus was kept on ‘uncontested masterpieces’ and that the institution ‘holds nothing contentious’ are much more debatable, however.<sup>24</sup> In fact, when the National Gallery did make mistakes in connoisseurship—particularly regarding attribution—these were understood to reflect poorly on the capabilities of Britain itself. Such failures in connoisseurship could either be the purchase of a painting not thought to be up to the standards of the institution, or the missing of an opportunity to acquire an important work; the latter was felt to be particularly galling if the painting had passed into foreign ownership. For example, in 1893 a question was raised in Parliament regarding concerns that ‘an important picture’ by Dürer offered for sale in London had been allowed to fall into the hands of the Berlin Museum.<sup>25</sup> The response emphasised that Burton and Trustee the Earl of Carlisle had inspected the work, but that Burton had ‘always considered, and still considers, the evidence in favour of its attribution to Albert [sic] Dürer insufficient [...] as he regarded the authorship of the picture as by no means a settled question, he forbore to outbid the offer already made in another quarter’. In this case, connoisseurship was specifically required to determine whether or not a particular artwork would add to the political and national prestige of the National Gallery — and the nation as a whole.

---

<sup>22</sup> ‘Recent Acquisitions of the National Gallery’, *The Times*, 14 April 1884.

<sup>23</sup> S. Knell, *National Galleries: The Art of Making Nations* (New York: Routledge, 2016), p. 17.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>25</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 15 May 1893, Vol. 12, col. 914. This painting is presumably the *Bildnis einer jungen Frau* listed as inv. no. 557G in the Kaiser-Friedrichs-Museum picture gallery in 1911 and mentioned as having been bought in 1893 from an unnamed London picture dealer: H. Posse, *Die Gemäldegalerie des Kaiser-Friedrich-Museums: Vollständiger beschreibender Katalog, mit Abbildungen sämtlicher Gemälde* (Berlin: Julius Bard, 1911), p. 37.

## The spatial structure of the building

### *Location and exterior*

One of the main purposes of the National Gallery's architecture as viewed from the exterior was to create a suitably receptive frame of mind for viewing art, preparing the visitor for an encounter with a collection of masterpieces.<sup>26</sup> Originally housed between 1824 and 1834 in the former residence of John Julius Angerstein at 100 Pall Mall, then relocated for four years to 105 Pall Mall, the National Gallery moved to Trafalgar Square in 1838.<sup>27</sup> Here, the institution shared the building designed by architect William Wilkins with the Royal Academy until 1869, when the National Gallery also took over the east wing (see the two earliest plans in Appendix 1). Brandon Taylor has highlighted how the original decision to locate the National Gallery in a newly redeveloped Trafalgar Square was intended to reinforce the idea of this square as a celebration of the nation and, indirectly, the empire.<sup>28</sup> While the building itself was intended to be just as imposing, drawing on the neo-classical museum design codified earlier in the nineteenth century by the Munich Glyptothek and Berlin Altes Museum, Wilkins had to work within strict financial and spatial constraints, and the resulting structure was widely criticised.<sup>29</sup> Although much discussion took place throughout the nineteenth century on the possibilities of replacing the Wilkins building, or of moving the National Gallery to a new location—partly for reasons of space, and partly over concerns that the poor quality of the air was damaging to the pictures—such drastic changes never took place.<sup>30</sup> Despite this criticism, however, the National Gallery building remained a striking structure, and one that impressed visitors with the weight of learning contained inside before the threshold had even been crossed.<sup>31</sup>

---

<sup>26</sup> Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, p. 189.

<sup>27</sup> H. M. Cundall, 'The Original National Gallery', *The Art Journal*, October 1910, p. 292.

<sup>28</sup> B. Taylor, *Art for the Nation: Exhibitions and the London Public, 1747-2001* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 40–41.

<sup>29</sup> M. Giebelhausen, 'Museum Architecture: A Brief History', in S. Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 223–244; J. Merkel, 'The Museum as Artifact', *The Wilson Quarterly*, 26.1 (2002), pp. 66–79; G. Tyack, "'A Gallery Worthy of the British People': James Pennethorne's Designs for the National Gallery, 1845-1867', *Architectural History* 33 (1990), pp. 120–134; Tzortzi, *Museum Space*, pp. 20–22.

<sup>30</sup> D. Saunders, 'Pollution and the National Gallery', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin* 21 (2000), pp. 77–79; Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, pp. 188–199.

<sup>31</sup> Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display*, pp. 49–50.

## ***Size and extensions***

The original Wilkins building has undergone substantial expansion throughout its history, allowing for significant re-displays of the collection. As a result of the building's central London location, however, the extensions and refurbishments that were carried out in this period (and since) have had to work within the framework of the National Gallery's existing building and the limited extension space available to the north and west. Three major extensions were carried out between 1874 and 1916, nearly trebling the number of rooms available on the main exhibition floor for display (Appendix 1).<sup>32</sup> In 1876, eight rooms (the 'Barry Rooms') were added on the north-east corner of the National Gallery to a design by Edward M. Barry.<sup>33</sup> In 1887, to plans by Sir John Taylor, works took place that included the destruction of the 1861 Pennethorne Gallery to form a new entrance hall with vestibules to the west, north and east, as well as the addition of five new rooms to the north.<sup>34</sup> In 1911, a further extension of five rooms, designed by Henry N. Hawks, opened to the west of the Central Hall.<sup>35</sup> As a result of these alterations, the number of rooms available for the exhibition of pictures increased steadily, although it failed to keep up with the rapidly rising size of the collection. In 1838, when the Gallery moved into the building shared with the Royal Academy, it had boasted merely 'two little holes, each like a servant's pantry, and [...] two or three rooms, all inconvenient, ill-shaped, and as worthy of being called a picture gallery as so many of the stalls in Covent Garden market' for the hanging of some 163 paintings.<sup>36</sup> By 1911, following the latest extension, the institution's main exhibition floor featured 29 numbered rooms, the dome in the Barry Rooms and the east and west vestibules in the entrance hall. To this can be added an uncertain number of ground floor rooms for the display of watercolours and other works (as discussed in the Chapter 1 section on 'Copies'). By 1913, the collection numbered 'about 2,880 works of art', of which 'around 820 pictures, sculptures and drawings, exclusive of the Turner Collection' were on display at the National Gallery of British Art at Millbank (now Tate Britain), and an unknown number were on loan

---

<sup>32</sup> Useful visual guides to these changes can also be found in A. Crookham, *The National Gallery: An Illustrated History* (London: National Gallery, 2009), p. 123; and Conlin, *The Nation's Mantelpiece*, pp. 467–72.

<sup>33</sup> Now Rooms 32–38 and 40.

<sup>34</sup> Now Rooms 30, 31 and 39; the Central Hall; and the east end of the Sunley Room.

<sup>35</sup> Now Rooms 5 and 9–12.

<sup>36</sup> 'The National Gallery', *The Morning Post*, 19 April 1838; 'The National Gallery', *Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety*, 5 May 1838; 'The National Gallery', 19 April 1838; E. Edwards, *The Administrative Economy of the Fine Arts in England* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1840), p. 118.

to provincial galleries.<sup>37</sup> Each of the extensions and alterations to the fabric of the building therefore allowed for the display of the National Gallery's collection to be adjusted and refined to a certain extent. This was particularly the case regarding hang, which will be discussed in more detail below. Further capacity was also obtained through the means of transfers and loans. For example, some 90 modern British works were transferred from the Trafalgar Square site to the new National Gallery of British Art in 1897.<sup>38</sup> This freed up room for the re-hang of the National Gallery's remaining British works, which critic M. H. Spielmann saw as permitting both 'an improvement in the present classification' and the disposal 'of many of the screens which militate against the appearance of the galleries and interfere with the pleasure of the viewer'.<sup>39</sup> Given the size of the collection and the limited space available, however, it was inevitable that some works would still have to be kept in storage and off display.<sup>40</sup>

### ***Works in storage***

The decision whether or not to display works in the public rooms was primarily based on the ongoing connoisseurship as carried out by the National Gallery staff, with paintings deemed 'inferior' for any reason relegated to storage or sent out for loan.<sup>41</sup> Equally, paintings would also be moved into storage if a 'better quality' example of the work of a particular artist was acquired, or if the attribution of a work was downgraded from a master to a school work. This strategy was appreciated by art critic Lionel G. Robinson, who wrote in 1881 that 'There are in the vaults of the building in Trafalgar Square a certain number, not very many, of paintings which have from time to time been presented or bequeathed as the works of great masters, but which on examination have proved to be copies, often so inferior as to threaten to bring into contempt the reputation of the master to whom they are ascribed'.<sup>42</sup> Once again, the National Gallery was felt to have a responsibility to ensure that its superior connoisseurship was correctly communicated in order to teach the wider public about art and to improve national tastes. In fact, the institution tended to err on the side of exhibiting

---

<sup>37</sup> *National Gallery: Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of the British and Foreign Pictures*, 81st ed. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1913), p. xii.

<sup>38</sup> F. Spalding, *The Tate: A History* (London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1998), p. 23.

<sup>39</sup> M. H. Spielmann, 'An Artistic Causerie', *The Graphic*, 26 June 1897.

<sup>40</sup> A. Crookham and S. Avery-Quash, 'Upstairs, Downstairs. The National Gallery's Dual Collections', in M. Brusius and K. Singh (eds), *Museum Storage and Meaning: Tales from the Crypt* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 204-217.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> L. G. Robinson, 'The State and Art', *The Art Journal*, February 1881, p. 46.

as many pictures as possible: a *Burlington Magazine* editorial of 1906 suggested that in Trafalgar Square ‘little accommodation is provided for students, and instead of showing the public only a limited number of select examples, the gallery exhibits almost all its wealth, trusting to the public to distinguish between what is first-rate and what is mediocre’.<sup>43</sup>

In addition, those works not on display in the main exhibition galleries—whether in ground-floor storage, or hanging in the private offices of National Gallery staff—could be made available for connoisseurial examination if a specific request was made by a member of the public. A note by C. H. Collins Baker, private secretary to Holroyd, appeared in the *Burlington Magazine* in 1912, inviting ‘specialists on Palma Giovine [sic]’ to see whether they agreed with Collins Baker’s and Holroyd’s assessment that a painting of *Mars and Venus* (NG1866), traditionally attributed to Tintoretto, ‘is really Palma’s’.<sup>44</sup> While the painting was then hung ‘in the seclusion of the Director’s Office’, ‘it will be shown to students of art on application on week-days when the office is open’. This painting, along with the depiction of *Leda and the Swan* now understood to be a copy after Michelangelo (NG1868), was presumably kept off public display because of its salacious subject matter. Although, as discussed in Chapter 1, moral considerations do not appear to have affected the National Gallery’s acquisition strategy in the period under review, certain depictions of sexual acts appear to have been off limits for public exhibition.<sup>45</sup> It was not only such risqué works that could be viewed by appointment, however: the Gallery only appears to have turned down applications to view paintings off display if these pictures were in the hands of the restorer.<sup>46</sup> Such examples refute sensationalist newspaper reports such as the 1915 claim by *The Sunday Times* that ‘large number of valuable and interesting paintings, the property of the nation, are kept hidden away and are quite inaccessible to the public’.<sup>47</sup> They also support the idea that the National Gallery aimed to make its collection as open as possible for connoisseurial judgement through display.

---

<sup>43</sup> ‘The Purpose and Policy of National Museums’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 9.37 (1906), p. 4.

<sup>44</sup> C. H. Collin Baker, ‘A Palma Giovine in the National Gallery?’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 21.112 (1912), p. 235. This painting is now given to Palma Giovane.

<sup>45</sup> Intriguingly, the *Tribune* suggested in 1906 that ‘between thirty and forty years ago [...] the “Leda” used to be in the Gallery. In those days a curtain was placed in front of it so that the casual visitor might not see it’: ‘Art in a Cellar’, *The Tribune*, 14 February 1906, NG, NG24/1906/6. No mention of this display practice has been found in the National Gallery archives, however. For a brief discussion of the treatment of ‘objectionable’ works under Eastlake’s Directorship, see Robertson, *Sir Charles Eastlake and the Victorian Art World*, pp. 191–192.

<sup>46</sup> See, for example, letter to C. Pisoaro, 6 June 1890, NG, NG6/15/236.

<sup>47</sup> ‘Our National Picture Galleries’, *The Sunday Times*, 2 May 1915.

## The spatial arrangement of displays

### *Rooms*

While hang will be considered below in reference to the grouping and layout of works within individual rooms, it is also possible to map the relative importance accorded to particular paintings, artists and schools through the spatial layout of the rooms in the National Gallery, and the ways in which these changed over time.<sup>48</sup> The nature of the room layout at the National Gallery largely precluded a strongly suggested route for the visitor to follow: while originally laid out on a single axis, requiring visitors to retrace their steps in order to visit both wings, each extension offered new choices of circular loops to be explored, resulting in multiple potential routes.<sup>49</sup> To a certain extent, museum visitors have also always been able to exert individual agency in the choice of which rooms to visit, objects to engage with and for how long.<sup>50</sup> Nevertheless, a comparison of the different rooms chosen for the display of particular schools as the National Gallery building was extended suggests that the Italian and British schools were especially favoured in their spatial positioning, with the Dutch and Flemish schools also being prioritised to a lesser extent. Sophie Psarra has employed space syntax theory to analyse the level of integration—defined as accessibility and the likelihood of use by visitors—of the rooms in four British museums.<sup>51</sup> She found that the most integrated areas in all of the museums studied were the main halls and the axes linking this space with the main entrance and galleries. Although it is not possible in this historical context to perform a quantitative computer analysis like that of Psarra, her findings would suggest that the rooms most frequented by visitors at the National Gallery would have been the entrance hall and the two (later, three) axes of galleries leading off. An overview of the types of paintings hung in these central areas suggests that Italian and British works predominated here throughout the period in question (Appendix 1). In particular, following the 1887 re-hang, the Italian galleries were made even more prominent by relocating them

---

<sup>48</sup> S. Forgan, 'The Architecture of Display: Museums, Universities and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *History of Science*, 32.2 (1994), pp. 147–151.

<sup>49</sup> S. Psarra, 'Spatial Culture, Way-Finding and the Educational Message: The Impact of Layout on the Spatial, Social and Educational Experiences of Visitors to Museums and Galleries', in S. MacLeod (ed.), *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 81–85.

<sup>50</sup> For a convincing critique of both the semiotic and Foucauldian approaches to the interpretation of museum display, see A. Whitcomb, *Re-Imagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 11–12.

<sup>51</sup> Psarra, 'Spatial Culture'.

to the suite of rooms entered by mounting the entrance steps and continuing directly forwards. In addition, both of these schools were consistently displayed in a greater number of rooms than other geographic schools: in 1877, the Italian school boasted five dedicated rooms and British works eight, while the French and Spanish schools were each grudgingly accorded a whole room for the first time. Admittedly, there were far fewer works belonging to the latter schools in the collection, although this perhaps created a self-perpetuating situation, where less wall space was set aside for these latter schools and their paintings were less prioritised for acquisition.<sup>52</sup> By 1913, there were 11 rooms dedicated to the Italian school, as well as the dome in the Barry Rooms; five rooms for British works (despite the removal of much of the school to the National Gallery of British Art); five for Dutch and Flemish; two for French; one for Spanish; and one for German. This again implies that Italian and British works were being heavily prioritised as subjects for visitor connoisseurship, as part of the reinforcement of the canon as briefly discussed in Chapter 1.<sup>53</sup>

While there had previously been little possibility of offering much in the way of chronological, narrative flow between rooms, the 1887 extension dramatically increased the number of rooms available for each particular school (Appendix 1). As almost all of the newly built rooms were allocated for Italian paintings, the emphasis could now be further placed on prioritising the narrative of the growth of Italian painting to its peak in the Renaissance. The visitor would enter the North Vestibule containing the earliest Italian schools, continue chronologically forward through the Tuscan school in Room I and arrive at the height of the Umbrian school in Room VI, where—as discussed in more detail below—Raphael’s *Ansidei Madonna* was clearly visible from a distance. The work of Titian and Veronese was then accessible in the long gallery to the right (Room VII), while the later, ‘decadent’ Italian paintings were physically separated from this route and placed in a sort of limbo between the early Flemish and French rooms (Room XIII). With the 1911 extension, this narrative approach could also be extended to the British and Dutch-Flemish schools. The chronology,

---

<sup>52</sup> M. Trusted, ‘Access to Collections of Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries’, in N. Glendinning and H. Macartney (eds), *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1920* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis, 2010), pp. 77–78; H. Wine, ‘The National Gallery in the Nineteenth Century and French Eighteenth-Century Painting’, in C. M. Vogtherr, M. Preti and G. Faroult (eds), *Delicious Decadence: The Rediscovery of French Eighteenth-Century Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 121–140.

<sup>53</sup> On Joshua Reynolds’s and Waagen’s ideas on the hierarchy of schools, and the way in which these influenced display at the National Gallery, see respectively Klonk, ‘Mounting Vision’, p. 332 and Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, p. 239.

and the opportunities that it offered for a greater understanding of and comparison between paintings, was not only offered between rooms but also emphasised within them, as will be now be shown in greater detail.

## ***Hang***

Hang was a particularly important means of facilitating connoisseurship in the National Gallery's exhibition rooms.<sup>54</sup> As Charles Saumarez Smith wrote in his overview of the National Gallery's approach to display since the 1930s, the decisions made by galleries regarding hang and décor can be characterised as 'a language based on modest differences of curatorial approach, on how pictures are hung, on the use of fabric and wall surface, and the relationship of pictures to one another'.<sup>55</sup> In order to further define this 'language', it is important to note that the hanging of pictures covers two distinct but overlapping considerations: the 'grouping' by which pictures are linked through proximity, either within a group or a clearly defined architectural space such as a room, and the 'layout' in which pictures are hung on a wall.<sup>56</sup> These two issues are frequently confused: Waterfield, for example, defines four major styles of picture hanging, described as the Picturesque, or decorative; the 'didactic historical arrangement'; the 'cluttered hang'; and the 'single row of paintings'.<sup>57</sup> Given that it is perfectly possible, however, to group pictures into a didactic historical arrangement but in an 'on-the-line' layout, for the purposes of this thesis these two categories of 'grouping' and 'layout' will be dealt with consecutively. This distinction was also made by contemporary observers, with the *Pall Mall Gazette* declaring the 1887 re-hang 'most satisfactory [...] in the matter both of grouping and hanging'.<sup>58</sup> Both of these categories relate directly to the spatial aspects of connoisseurship. The grouping of works encourages the viewer to see certain paintings as related and to consider them as both a physical and metaphorical group; in the case of the National Gallery, as will be shown below, the decision to group by school or artist pushed the visitor towards the technique of connoisseurship through comparison. Layout also affects connoisseurship because the physical proximity of

---

<sup>54</sup> Although the Director took ultimate responsibility for the hang, the Keeper could also be involved in the arrangement of the pictures, thereby stamping his own curatorial decisions on the display: Eastlake, 'The Administration of the National Gallery: A Retrospect'.

<sup>55</sup> C. Saumarez Smith, 'Narratives of Display at the National Gallery, London', *Art History*, 30.4 (2007), pp. 611–627.

<sup>56</sup> For a useful summary of approaches to picture hanging prior to 1870, see T. Clifford, 'The Historical Approach to the Display of Paintings', *International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, 1.2 (1982), pp. 93–106.

<sup>57</sup> G. Waterfield, 'Picture Hanging and Gallery Decoration', in G. Waterfield (ed.), *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790-1990* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991), p. 49.

<sup>58</sup> 'The New National Gallery', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 July 1887.

an artwork to a viewer has a strong impact on the connoisseurial process, as seen in Chapters 2 and 3. The visual analysis of a work is encouraged by its placement at or close to the viewer's eye-level: as will be demonstrated, this was a tactic increasingly adopted by the National Gallery in this period.

### **Grouping**

One of the potential approaches to grouping is to hang all of the most highly regarded works in a collection together, regardless of artist, school, chronology or subject matter. However, perhaps because it did not grow from a royal collection, the National Gallery has never had an official room of masterpieces along the lines of the Uffizi's Tribuna or the Louvre's Salon Carré.<sup>59</sup> Artist Henry Bishop criticised the institution on this front in 1898, arguing that in such collections of masterpieces in the space of a single room:

The styles are various; the painters represent different nationalities, different modes of feeling; the common bond of a high excellence unites them. Dissimilar in style, they are still equals. Accordingly we meet with nothing to disturb our sense of supreme art and of a pure and sustained pleasure [...] We also in England might pass into an inner shrine and sanctuary of art.<sup>60</sup>

However, in 1876 the administration did choose to draw attention to particular 'gems of the collection', as the *Times* described the paintings placed in Room XV after the 1876 extension and re-hang.<sup>61</sup> In this 'small vestibule' were displayed 'without regard to school or period, the choicest of the national Art-possession': works then ascribed to Titian, Raphael, Giorgione, Michelangelo, Bellini, Andrea del Sarto, van Eyck, Schongauer and Masaccio.<sup>62</sup> This selection highlights the relative importance placed on the Italian masters in particular;

---

<sup>59</sup> A. Turpin, 'The Display of Exotica in the Uffizi Tribuna', in S. Bracken, A. M. Gáldy and A. Turpin (eds), *Collecting East and West* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 83–118; F.-A. Gruyer, *Voyage autour du Salon Carré au Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie., 1891).

<sup>60</sup> H. Bishop, 'The State of the National Gallery', *The Saturday Review*, 20 August 1898.

<sup>61</sup> 'The National Gallery', *The Times*, 15 August 1876.

<sup>62</sup> B. D. N., 'The New National Gallery, London', *The Art Journal*, November 1876, p. 350. As listed in the *Art Journal* article, the works on display in this room included Titian's *Bacchus and Ariadne* (NG35); Palma Vecchio's *Portrait of a Poet* (NG636) (then thought to be Titian's portrait of Ariosto); Raphael's *St Catherine of Alexandria* (NG168), *Garvagh Madonna* (NG744) and '*Vision of a Knight*' (NG213); *A Man in Armour* (NG269), long thought to be the only Giorgione in the collection but now attributed to an imitator; Michelangelo's *Entombment* (NG790) and '*Manchester Madonna*' (NG809); *St Jerome in his Study*, then attributed to Bellini and now to Vincenzo Catena (NG694); Bellini's portrait of Doge Loredan (NG189); an Andrea del Sarto portrait, then thought to be a self-portrait (NG690); van Eyck's *Arnolfini Portrait* (NG186); *The Death of the Virgin* (NG658), then thought to be by Martin Schongauer; Bassano's *Good Samaritan* (NG277); and NG626, then described as a Masaccio self-portrait but now thought to be a Botticelli portrait of an unknown sitter. See also H. Blackburn, *Illustrated Catalogue to the National Gallery [Foreign Schools]* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1878), pp. 82–89.

it is not clear whether the van Eyck and 'Schongauer' were placed in this room because of their importance relative to the Italian works or for lack of space, as by 1878 they had been moved to screens in the Dutch-Flemish room (then Room XII).<sup>63</sup> It also perhaps seems odd that this smaller, 'ill-lighted' vestibule was chosen for such an experiment, rather than a grander room: 'If we are to have a select cabinet', suggested the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1885, 'it should be the one room in the whole gallery in which the light is most excellent, and its contents should be decided upon with due consideration at once to excellence and variety'.<sup>64</sup> In the 1887 re-hang these paintings were, in any case, 'turned out' of Room XV (re-numbered as Room 8); the National Gallery appears to have abandoned its experiment with the 'tribune' and instead moved ever more strictly towards a hang separated by geography and chronology.<sup>65</sup> Instead, attention was generally drawn to those paintings felt to be the masterpieces of the collection through the exploitation of the architectural features of the galleries, as discussed above, or by prioritising them for hanging on the line, as will be described below.

The National Gallery has never adopted a purely chronological hang, in which works by masters from across Europe would be displayed together by period rather than by school. Instead, from the mid-nineteenth century, paintings had been roughly grouped by a combination of chronology and school.<sup>66</sup> Given the educational aims of the National Gallery, this type of grouping was seen as more appropriate than, for example, a decorative hang in which pictures were grouped by colour or subject, as had been popular in private collections in the earlier nineteenth century.<sup>67</sup> Earlier in the Gallery's history, this approach to grouping by school or artist had been hampered both by the lack of space available, and by large gaps in the chronology and coverage of the collection. On Boxall's rearrangement of the collection following the takeover of the east wing of the Wilkins building in 1869, the *Illustrated London News* wrote that:

The pictures are now grouped in schools; but we could have wished for still stricter conformity to chronological sequence. It must be allowed, however, that there were peculiar difficulties in the way of effecting that arrangement, arising

---

<sup>63</sup> Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, p. 240.

<sup>64</sup> T. Tomlinson, 'The National Gallery', *The Times*, 30 January 1883; 'Occasional Notes', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 April 1885.

<sup>65</sup> 'The New National Gallery'.

<sup>66</sup> Klouk, *Spaces of Experience*, pp. 20–21; Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, pp. 5–8.

<sup>67</sup> Waterfield, 'Picture Hanging and Gallery Decoration', p. 49.

chiefly from the awkward disposition of the rooms. For instance, the early Flemish and the French pictures were, separately, not numerous enough to fill a room, and, in consequence, they are placed in the same apartment.<sup>68</sup>

Equally, the Spanish and southern Italian works had to share a room, while two of the rooms in the west wing were dedicated to Turner alone (see Appendix 1).<sup>69</sup> Though the grouping by schools was appreciated, it was recognised that this was not possible because of the constraints of architecture and collection. With each additional extension in 1876, 1887 and 1911, however—as well as the removal of some of the British paintings to the Tate, as mentioned above—the additional capacity meant that it was possible to further refine the grouping. The *Athenaeum* suggested in 1876 that the rehang occasioned by the opening of the Barry Rooms and the addition of the 94 works in the Wynn Ellis bequest offered ‘for the first time in the history of the gallery—or in fact, in the history of any other gallery—a reasonably exact chronological sequence in the arrangements’, paying ‘a justly deserved tribute to the skill, learning, and patience with which the classification and grouping of the pictures have been effected’.<sup>70</sup> In addition to the educational benefits of grouping pictures in this manner, the same article also suggested aesthetic advantages to such an approach: ‘The effectiveness of the different galleries has been duly and happily studied; each important room possesses a distinctive character proper to the school of art which it illustrates’, suggesting in a long list that, for example, ‘The Grand Gallery is magnificent in the superb efforts of the great Italians, where repose and grace of design, the richest and most “restful” colours, the most subtle characterization and broadest lighting, meet on canvas after canvas’. Visitors were therefore more able to appreciate the particular beauties of each artist or school by seeing them thus selected and hung together in this way.

Schools and artists were ever more strictly separated as time went on. Notably, as the number of rooms available for the display of ‘Foreign School’ paintings increased from just seven in 1874 to 22 in 1913, this allowed for much greater distinction between regions and periods. On the opening of the 1887 extension, the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote:

Nowhere else, north at least of the Alps, is the whole development of Italian painting displayed in such various, and such standard specimens as at Trafalgar-

---

<sup>68</sup> ‘Fine Arts’, *Illustrated London News*, 24 April 1869.

<sup>69</sup> For the display complications caused by Turner’s will, see A. Crookham, ‘The Turner Bequest at the National Gallery’, in I. Warrell (ed.), *Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude* (London: National Gallery Company, 2012), pp. 51–65.

<sup>70</sup> ‘The National Gallery’, *The Athenaeum*, 17 June 1876.

square. That the pre-eminence of the National Gallery in this respect has not been sooner and more generally recognized has been solely due to the want of wall space. [...] Hitherto there has been no space to hang the pictures anyhow, and much less to hang them decently, and in order of their schools. It is this which the present "extension" has at last rendered possible.<sup>71</sup>

The increase in wall space engendered by the extension was explicitly tied to the ability to display additional works brought out of storage, as well as arranging them more carefully in a didactic order; in the words of the *British Architect*, this led to a 'very distinct gain as regards study of the pictures'.<sup>72</sup> The change was reinforced by Burton's decision to have wall labels made up for the first time, specifying the school housed in each room in order to assist visitors in understanding how works related to each other.<sup>73</sup> In 1907, Holroyd undertook a fresh re-hang 'so as to carry further the arrangement of the pictures in Schools, and to place related Schools in adjacent galleries [...] As far as space allowed the pictures have been arranged in chronological order in Schools; and each master's works have been hung, if not actually together, at least near enough to be easily referred to by the student'.<sup>74</sup> This made possible comparison not just between paintings or artists of the same school, but also within the oeuvre of a particular painter. The *Times* congratulated Holroyd on 'a comprehensive rehanging of the pictures, to the great advantage both of the Gallery as an educator and of the visitor who asks to see its treasures in the best light and in the positions that best suit them'.<sup>75</sup> The newspaper especially praised the removal of the 'unscientific', 'palpable blemish' which had 'lumped together under one heading—and one roof—the Dutch and Flemish schools'.<sup>76</sup> The new juxtaposition of associated artists was felt to assist in the comparison and thus appreciation of their works: 'we have the Gallery's splendid portraits by Rembrandt separated by the landscapes of men who felt his influence, and the effect is astonishing [...] [this] enables us to appreciate both painters more highly than before, and for the first time in this gallery to see Koning as he ought to be seen'. As time went on,

---

<sup>71</sup> 'The New National Gallery'.

<sup>72</sup> 'New Rooms and Entrance at the National Gallery', *The British Architect*, 8 July 1887.

<sup>73</sup> Letter to J. Taylor, 29 February 1888, NG, NG6/13/248.

<sup>74</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 27 February 1908; - for, Copy 'of Report of the Director of the National Gallery, for the Year 1907, with Appendices.'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1908), p. 7.

<sup>75</sup> Now Room 43.

<sup>76</sup> On the use of the word 'scientific' in relation to connoisseurship, especially as claimed by Giovanni Morelli, see Griener, *La République de l'oeil*, pp. 80–92; J. Vakkari, 'Giovanni Morelli's "Scientific" Method of Attribution and Its Reinterpretations from the 1960's until the 1990's', *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift*, 70.1–2 (2001), pp. 46–54.

therefore, and particularly as more space was made available, the National Gallery strove further towards a more thoroughly classified collection, demonstrated through the grouping of works; as will be discussed below, however, there were always problems with the application of such an approach.<sup>77</sup>

### ***Layout***

In addition to this trend towards chronological and geographic grouping for the purposes of comparison, there was also a distinct move during the period under scrutiny towards a more spacious layout of the paintings at the National Gallery. Pictures were brought ever closer to the eyeline, in line with the previously identified emphasis on visual connoisseurship. In general, the dense salon hang was going out of fashion towards the end of the nineteenth century, being understood as overwhelming to the eye and an impediment to the proper appreciation of the artworks. John Ruskin had called in 1847 for paintings to be hung 'in one line, side by side' for the sake of proper appreciation.<sup>78</sup> By 1870 the issue of skying at Trafalgar Square was being debated in Parliament: MP Alexander Beresford Hope, suggesting that extra space needed to be found for the collection, argued that 'The existing Gallery is so full that if additional pictures are to be hung in it, they must be "skied," as the artists term it, in which case the visitor must mount on a ladder to see them, or they must be hung so close to the floor that the student must break his neck in stooping to look at them'.<sup>79</sup> As well as forcing the pictures to be unsuitably grouped, the lack of room for the display of the collection therefore also had an adverse effect on the layout of the works.

Despite the issue of overcrowding, as Directors both Eastlake and Boxall had made some effort to bring paintings closer to the viewer.<sup>80</sup> When the collection was re-hung under Boxall in 1869, the *Illustrated London News* praised the decision to lower the works: 'The gain which has accrued simply from re-hanging all the finer pictures as nearly as possible on a level with the eye, and generally with a small margin of wall between them, so that the effect of one

---

<sup>77</sup> For example, there was some debate over where modern foreign paintings would fit into the hanging scheme: Crookham and Robbins, 'Mars und Museum'.

<sup>78</sup> H. Rees Leahy, *Museum Bodies: The Politics and Practices of Visiting and Viewing* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016). Rees Leahy has also characterised the interaction of the viewer with a single line of work as analogous to the reading of a text: H. Rees Leahy, 'Incorporating the Period Eye: Spectators at Exhibitions of Exhibitions', *The Senses and Society*, 9.3 (2014), p. 286; see also Tzortzi, 'Spatial Concepts in Museum Theory and Practice', pp. 2–3.

<sup>79</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 20 May 1870, Vol. 201, col. 1066.

<sup>80</sup> Klonk, *Spaces of Experience*, p. 31.

may not be injurious to that of another, amounts virtually to a reacquisition of nearly half the collection'.<sup>81</sup> Particularly able to be re-appraised were the Venetian pictures, re-hung in the long central gallery: 'many a masterpiece which had been *perdu* [lost] near the ceiling may now be gloated over to one's heart's content'. However, contemporary drawings of the layout suggest that even after the opening of the Barry Rooms in 1876, many pictures were still hung in several rows (Figs 22-23). As the nineteenth century progressed, the National Gallery Directors made a more concerted effort to hang the collection closer to the eye. Following Burton's 1887 re-hang, *The Times* wrote that 'Hung as they are now hung, almost entirely in a single line, the masterpieces of the great Italian schools can for the first time be properly seen and studied'.<sup>82</sup> By 1911, Roger Fry was able to state approvingly that Holroyd had 'quite rightly refused to sky pictures' in his hang of the new extension, as can be seen from a photograph taken on the opening of the new rooms (Fig. 24).<sup>83</sup> This shows the strong emphasis on close-up examination required by visual connoisseurship.

The decision as to which works to hang at eye level also revealed to the public the connoisseurial ranking adopted by the National Gallery staff. While smaller or more intricately painted works needed to be hung at eye level in order to be properly admired, it was generally also the works that were understood to be of best overall quality that were thus foregrounded. In a letter to the *Times* in 1903, Poynter argued that in the most recent re-hang of the five central rooms of the National Gallery, 'one of my objects was to place "on the line" certain fine examples [of the Early Flemish school] which had hitherto been hung too high'.<sup>84</sup> His justification for removing part of the frame on a landscape then attributed to Joachim Patinir (NG1298) was that due to its reduced size, it could be brought 'nearly a foot lower down than before, and consequently near enough to the eye for its delicate and beautiful qualities to be appreciated'. This reasoning emphasised the importance of close examination and proximity to the act of connoisseurship. Poynter also acknowledged, however, that it was not always possible to hang all of the works in the collection as he would wish: 'all the pictures cannot be put in the best places, and [...] some sacrifice has to be made'. The pictures hung on the line, closer to the viewer, were therefore understood to be the best and most important in the collection. If hung in a single line, this strongly suggested that all of the National Gallery's paintings were of good quality and that the institution had

---

<sup>81</sup> 'Fine Arts', 24 April 1869.

<sup>82</sup> 'The New Rooms at the National Gallery', *The Times*, 4 July 1887.

<sup>83</sup> R. Fry, 'The Extension of the National Gallery', *The Nation*, 18 March 1911.

<sup>84</sup> E. Poynter, 'The National Gallery', *The Times*, 21 July 1903.

no reason to 'hide' paintings by hanging them high on the wall — as insinuated in the press reports on the 'mock Holbein' discussed in the introduction to this thesis.

### *The aesthetics of display*

Aesthetic considerations were also important when hanging paintings, and the placement of paintings within a room or series of galleries was used to draw attention to works considered especially beautiful or of exceptional overall quality.<sup>85</sup> This tactic can be seen, for example, in the placement of Raphael's *Ansidei Madonna* (NG1171) in the 1887 re-hang: 'The architectural background and throne and canopy on which the Virgin sits, has appropriately suggested a centre position for this fine picture in the centre axis of the new galleries; it is therefore visible from the north vestibule through the doorways'.<sup>86</sup> The *Times* suggested that this 'long vista' towards the painting ensured that it looked 'ten times more stately and beautiful than it has ever looked before': 'From the very entrance to the gallery it can be seen, as it were, framed in the doorway and shining like a star, and those who enter the room in which it hangs can now judge and value it as they could not when it was placed on its screen in the crowded room close by or when it hung over the fireplace in the drawing-room at Blenheim'.<sup>87</sup> As Rees Leahy has discussed, this positioning cemented Raphael's axial position within what was becoming a more rigidly classified matrix of display.<sup>88</sup> As outlined above, the *Ansidei Madonna* was approached through the rooms representing the development of Italian art; having viewed the painting, the visitor could then turn the corner to the right and walk through a suite of rooms featuring paintings from the High Renaissance. The architectural aspects framing the hang drew attention to the perceived relative importance of the painting within the National Gallery's collection: not only was Raphael an important artist, but this was one of his particularly significant works. The placing of this painting acted to draw in viewers, encouraging them to pay particular connoisseurial attention to this picture.

---

<sup>85</sup> This use of the 'line of sight' to draw attention to specific exhibits has been discussed in F. Monti and S. Keene, *Museums and Silent Objects: Designing Effective Exhibitions* (London: Routledge, 2013), p. 244.

<sup>86</sup> 'Addition to the National Gallery', *The Building News*, 53 (July 1887), pp. 45–46.

<sup>87</sup> 'The New Rooms at the National Gallery'.

<sup>88</sup> H. Rees Leahy, 'New Labour, Old Masters', *Cultural Studies*, 21.4–5 (2007), p. 700–704.

## *Décor*

With further regard to aesthetics, there was a certain tension at the National Gallery regarding décor: while on the one hand the interior of the Gallery needed to be a suitably magnificent setting for the national collection, on the other an overly opulent decorative scheme was felt to distract from the appreciation of the artworks themselves. Waterfield has discussed this dichotomy with regard to the Barry Rooms at the National Gallery, suggesting that towards the end of the nineteenth century the taste for elaborate decoration in both private and public interiors was beginning to give way to a more austere aesthetic.<sup>89</sup> No evidence has arisen here to suggest—unlike for hang, for example—that wall colour affected fundamental connoisseurial decisions regarding the important criteria of attribution or condition. Importantly, Charlotte Klonk has suggested that the reds and greens adopted for the walls of the National Gallery throughout this period were in fact understood as neutral backgrounds for Old Master artworks.<sup>90</sup> This would suggest that visitors there would have been able to ignore the wallcoverings while making connoisseurial judgements on the paintings. The judgement of beauty, however, does appear to have been affected to a certain extent by wallcoverings: an 1898 *Saturday Review* article drew an unfavourable contrast between the dark red wallpaper previously employed in the Umbrian room, ‘which [had] formed a serviceable and inoffensive background to the pictures’, and the new wallcovering ‘embossed with a mean pattern, shiny, and in strips of an uneven tone [...] of a hot, mustardy, green colour’.<sup>91</sup> This was felt to detract strongly from the ‘tender’ and ‘exquisite’ colours of Piero della Francesca’s *Nativity* (NG908). If correctly chosen, however, wall colours could complement the appearance of a work. When the new extension was opened in 1911, the ‘rich Cordova red’, green and ‘dull gold’ of the walls were praised by the *Architectural Review*, which wrote that ‘it will be generally agreed that the painted embossed Morris canvas which has been selected forms a most effective background to pictures. It is unobtrusive in effect without being dull’.<sup>92</sup> The aesthetic experience of viewing Old Masters in particular was therefore understood to be enhanced, rather than detracted from, by a complementary colour background. Nevertheless, although Klonk has emphasised wall colour as an important museological consideration, it appears that décor did not have a particularly

---

<sup>89</sup> Waterfield, *The People’s Galleries*, pp. 143–7; a similar trend towards subtle décor has been identified by Bryant at the V&A over a roughly comparable time period to that covered by this thesis, again suggesting that the National Gallery’s approach was part of a wider trend: Bryant, *Designing the V&A*, p. 29.

<sup>90</sup> Klonk, ‘Mounting Vision’, pp. 337–40.

<sup>91</sup> ‘The State of the National Gallery’.

<sup>92</sup> ‘National Gallery Extension’, *The Architectural Review*, 29 (April 1911), p. 229.

strong impact on the visitor's overall judgement of a work, merely leading to suggestions that a particular painting would look better if displayed on a different background. From the point of view of connoisseurial reception of the works, décor was intended to make it as easy as possible to appreciate the works; as will now be shown, the same applies to lighting.

## ***Lighting***

At the most basic level, gallery lighting is intended to ensure that artworks can be seen by the viewer.<sup>93</sup> However, this bald statement encompasses a raft of possibilities. Christopher Cuttle has characterised the two extremes of lighting design: the first, a 'well-lit room', as 'a room in which illumination is plentiful and of good colour rendering, shadows are soft, and there are no spots of glare or areas of gloom'; the second, a gallery in which individual artworks—or even particular aspects of these works—are picked out with directed light in order to focus the viewer's attention without distractions. In between these two extremes, there are many possibilities of balancing ambient and display lighting.<sup>94</sup> However, before the adoption of artificial lighting it was much more difficult to ensure targeted lighting for a particular work. As previously discussed in Chapters 2 and 3, good lighting was understood by both Agnew's and the National Gallery to be central to the connoisseurial process: without a strong enough source of light, it was difficult to commit to a solid judgement of a painting. As a result, the National Gallery needed to offer its visitors a good enough light for them to be equally capable of connoisseurship within its exhibition rooms. Especially given that the Gallery did not introduce artificial lighting until the 1930s, for reasons that will be discussed below, the institution fell closer on Cuttle's continuum to the extreme of a 'well-lit room': offering general, diffuse lighting, ensuring as far as possible that all artworks in a room were equally illuminated.

There has been much discussion over the previous two centuries as to the best method of lighting artworks, and no real consensus has yet been reached. Nevertheless, commentators throughout the nineteenth century recognised the importance of good natural lighting in a gallery space.<sup>95</sup> Top-lighting via skylights was generally favoured because it minimised reflections on varnished or glazed works, although side lighting was also considered

---

<sup>93</sup> D. Garside et al., 'How Is Museum Lighting Selected? An Insight into Current Practice in UK Museums', *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*, 40.1 (2017), p. 3.

<sup>94</sup> C. Cuttle, *Light for Art's Sake: Lighting for Artworks and Museum Displays* (Oxford; Burlington, MA: Elsevier, 2007), pp. 213–216.

<sup>95</sup> Whitehead, 'Architectures of Display', pp. 11–14.

acceptable for smaller paintings in a cabinet setting.<sup>96</sup> Klonk has highlighted how, as Director, Eastlake took inspiration from the design of the Munich Pinakothek, constructed between 1826 and 1836, to argue for a mixture of top-lighting and side-lighting depending on the size, school and character of the paintings on display.<sup>97</sup> As with Cuttle's 'well-lit room' above, Eastlake particularly praised skylights as offering the advantage that viewers were 'not dazzled by the source of the light; the picture is illumined, but the light itself is unseen'.<sup>98</sup> However, even before the construction of the Barry Rooms, it had been recognised that lighting at the National Gallery needed to be improved for the sake of connoisseurship. In particular, Pennethorne's alterations to the National Gallery, completed in 1861 and including a new gallery constructed across the original entrance (Fig. 25), had divided opinion: former Keeper Charles Locke Eastlake complained in 1903 that the room had had 'walls, enormously high in proportion to the plan, [that] were surmounted by a deep and gloomy cove. The skylight was small and trabeated in such a fashion that except on a bright day few of the pictures could be properly examined'.<sup>99</sup> In 1881, the National Gallery applied to the Office of Works to 'remodel the roof and enlarge the skylight over [Pennethorne's] Turner Gallery (Room VI). At present the amount of light admitted is quite insufficient for the examination and study of the paintings hung in this Room'.<sup>100</sup> There was therefore an understanding that the design for any new extensions to the National Gallery under the tenure of Burton and his successors as Director should treat lighting as a high priority in order to facilitate the examination and study of the works.

The three extensions built between 1876 and 1911 relied largely on top-lighting. While, as seen above, side-lighting was to be encouraged in theory for its connoisseurial possibilities, its limited adoption at the National Gallery was not a success. When side-lighting was introduced to one of the smallest rooms in the Gallery in 1911, *The Times* lamented that this room was 'badly lighted by two windows, in front and at the side. Among other defects, this

---

<sup>96</sup> M. Compton, 'The Architecture of Daylight', in G. Waterfield (ed.), *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790-1990* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991), pp. 37-47. The types of possible top-lighting have been thoroughly described by Cuttle, alongside a discussion of the advantages and disadvantages of each design: Cuttle, *Light for Art's Sake*, Chap. 4.

<sup>97</sup> Klonk, 'Mounting Vision', pp. 340-341; Klonk, *Spaces of Experience*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>98</sup> Eastlake, *Observations on the Unfitness of the Present Building*, p. 10.

<sup>99</sup> Eastlake, 'The Administration of the National Gallery: A Retrospect', p. 933.

<sup>100</sup> Letter to the Secretary, H. M. Office of Works, 27 September 1881, NG, NG6/7/517. While plans were drawn up for such alterations in 1882 (Office of Works, *National Gallery: New Galleries. Longitudinal section and transverse section of proposed alterations to roof, 1882*, TNA, WORK 33/1510-11), it appears that this renovation did not go ahead before the Pennethorne gallery was destroyed during the 1887 extension.

lighting shows in a disagreeable way the inequalities in the copper on which Terburg painted his “Congress of Münster”; and one of the Vermeers and the fine de Keyser can hardly be seen at all’.<sup>101</sup> Different methods of top-lighting were meanwhile adopted for the various extensions, each of which received a varied response from the visiting public in terms of the opportunities offered to view and judge the paintings. In the 1876 Barry Rooms extension, a glazed dome was adopted for the Octagon Hall.<sup>102</sup> The four rooms radiating off from this featured curved central skylights (Figs 22; 26), while the two long galleries had large, flat central skylights (Figs 27-28).<sup>103</sup> While there were initially issues of ‘glare of sunshine from parts of the glass roof’, this impediment was said to have been removed and to have caused no delay in carrying out the rehang of the collection.<sup>104</sup> However, there were further problems with maintenance: Charles Locke Eastlake wrote that ‘for the display of pictures [the Barry Rooms] are unnecessarily high, while their flat glass ceilings introduced under an external skylight, necessarily become receptacles for dust, and on dark days are anything but translucent’.<sup>105</sup> The effects of the lighting upon the appreciation of the paintings was also criticised: the *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote that

the new method of lighting the galleries with a flat glass roof seems to us distinctly inferior to the old, and its inferiority is particularly noticeable at the extremities of the rooms, where the wall is carried up to the roof without an arch, and where in consequence the light beats down with unpleasant force upon the pictures.<sup>106</sup>

Presumably in response to such criticisms, a different style of top-lighting was adopted for the 1887 extension designed by Sir John Taylor. In this case, monitor skylights (also known as ‘lantern lights’ in contemporary descriptions) were installed (Figs 29-30) in new rooms I and VI.<sup>107</sup> The entrance hall, meanwhile, featured a glazed central dome—as in Barry’s Octagon Hall—with a skylight over the north vestibule (Figs 31-34). Although the east and west vestibules to either side of this central dome do not appear to have had top-lighting, no contemporary commentator seems to have understood this as a problem, with the *Times*

---

<sup>101</sup> ‘The National Gallery’, *The Times*, 27 June 1911. This was presumably Room XXIII, now 7.

<sup>102</sup> Now Room 36.

<sup>103</sup> The former suite was then Rooms XV-XVIII, now 35, 37, 38 and 40; the latter was then Rooms XII and XIV, now 32 and 34.

<sup>104</sup> ‘The National Gallery’, *The Builder*, 8 July 1876.

<sup>105</sup> Eastlake, ‘The Administration of the National Gallery: A Retrospect’, p. 937.

<sup>106</sup> ‘The National Gallery’, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 17 August 1876.

<sup>107</sup> Now the Central Hall and Room 30.

describing these spaces as ‘well-lighted landings’ in 1909.<sup>108</sup> The lighting arrangements in the new rooms were generally praised, being described as ‘excellent’ by *The Times* and ‘very well lighted’ by *The Builder*.<sup>109</sup>

The lighting was further refined for the 1911 extension, by which time newly developed building methods offered additional possibilities. At this point, five more top-lit rooms were added, with sloped skylights occupying the majority of the ceiling space in Room XXV and another glazed dome in Room XXVII (Figs 24; 35).<sup>110</sup> The reaction to this new approach was mixed. The *Architectural Review* offered high praise, writing that ‘In passing from the old galleries to the new a great difference is observable, the new galleries being much better lighted’ via ‘a long range of top-lights carried by reinforced concrete ribs, enriched with decorative plasterwork, the effect of which arrangement is a refutation of the old heresy that picture galleries need to be lighted with a flat glass roof’.<sup>111</sup> In fact, the lighting arrangement was seen as improving appreciation of some familiar works in the collection: ‘So good, indeed, is the lighting of the new galleries that many of the new galleries that many of the old favourites—Gainsborough and Wilson landscapes especially—seem to come out with quite a new effect’. *The Architects’ and Builders’ Journal*, meanwhile, suggested that ‘the lighting is in one sense too good’ as the reflections were intensified ‘to an annoying extent’, but argued that ‘if the National Gallery pictures were not glazed the new galleries would probably be recognised to be as well lighted as could be desired’.<sup>112</sup> The various exchanges of views regarding the National Gallery’s lighting over the years also highlight the diversity of opinions to be found regarding museum lighting and its place in visitor connoisseurship. However, the fact remained that the National Gallery, through the application of architectural design, consistently aimed for its paintings to be as clearly visible as possible for the sake of public connoisseurship. In the case of the 1911 extension, the problem appears to have lain largely not with the lighting itself but with the practical necessity of glazing the paintings — a consideration that will be discussed in more detail below.

---

<sup>108</sup> ‘The Panshanger Vandycks’, *The Times*, 26 February 1909.

<sup>109</sup> ‘The New Work at the National Gallery’, *The Builder*, 9 July 1887; ‘The Latest Acquisitions of the National Gallery’, *The Times*, 19 September 1887.

<sup>110</sup> Room XXV is now Room 9, while XXVII is now Room 11.

<sup>111</sup> ‘National Gallery Extension’, p. 226.

<sup>112</sup> ‘The Lighting of the National Gallery’, *The Architects’ & Builders’ Journal*, 22 November 1911.

## Disruptions to the display of connoisseurship

This chapter has thus far outlined the ideal display as envisaged by the National Gallery in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries: a display that encouraged visitor connoisseurship of its collection by hanging paintings in a good light, close to the eye and near to comparable works by the same artist or school. However, it is also important to note that there were a number of significant disruptions to the institution's capability to offer this model display.

### *Limited display capacity*

As mentioned above, three major extensions were made to the National Gallery in 1876, 1887 and 1911 in response to the perceived over-crowding of the hang in Trafalgar Square. While each extension offered a temporary respite from the problem, the ever-expanding collection continued to suffer from a lack of hanging capacity throughout this period. The issue of limited space arose frequently in official Gallery reports, correspondence with the Treasury, Parliamentary discussions and the discourse of commentators and critics. The *Illustrated London News* suggested that the 1876 extension had nearly doubled the available wall space: 'Reckoning the old galleries as containing proper accommodation for 600 pictures, it has been estimated that the new galleries give room for 500 more, within suitable range of the eye'.<sup>113</sup> However, the fact remained that 'the whole gallery, even with these additions, falls short of the demands for space made by the trustees in 1867'. Given that the National Gallery was also actively adding to the collection, this put further pressure on the display. The size of the extensions continually failed to keep up with the growth of the collection: even as the 1887 extension opened, the Gallery's *Annual Report* warned that the 'influx of fresh acquisitions, for which space must be found, may at any time interrupt and disorganise the classification just adopted' and called for 'a further extension of the building'.<sup>114</sup> The trend towards exhibiting single pictures on the line was also in direct conflict with the National Gallery's aims regarding grouping, because it meant that fewer pictures could be shown in the same room. As a result of the spacious layout of paintings, even more space was therefore needed for the sake of grouping works by school. In 1887, the *Builder*

---

<sup>113</sup> 'The National Gallery', *Illustrated London News*, 18 November 1876.

<sup>114</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 2 July 1888;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1887'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888), p. 4.

drew explicit attention to the problems that a lack of capacity created for the hanging of the paintings by school:

We may premise [...] that considerable difficulty has been experienced in coming to anything like a system of classification, from the fact of the size of the apartments not necessarily fitting in with the precise space required for pictures of a special family, artistically or nationally. This, of course, is an inevitable difficulty in a case of this kind, because even if the rooms had been built for the pictures now in hand, a few new purchases would have disturbed the arrangements.<sup>115</sup>

In addition, the lack of space also resulted in paintings being hung too high above the eye: the *Annual Report* for 1894 highlighted that 'in many of the rooms, the early Flemish room especially, it is necessary to hang valuable pictures in places where they cannot be properly seen, still less studied'.<sup>116</sup> For two decades, the Directors and Trustees frequently pressed the Treasury for additional space but were refused, until permission was finally granted in 1907 for the extension that opened in 1911.<sup>117</sup>

As a direct result of the lack of display space, hanging screens were frequently adopted in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, presumably because it was felt better to crowd the rooms with pictures than keep too many off display (Fig. 27). As *The Times* wrote in 1882 when describing the latest additions, 'Seeing the crowded state of the National Gallery it will be asked where can these pictures be hung? For to encumber the rooms with screens can be but a temporary arrangement'.<sup>118</sup> Screens were not seen by the National Gallery administration as an acceptable alternative to the provision of additional wall space because of their negative impact on visitor connoisseurship, as well as having 'the unfortunate effect of crowding the Galleries and impeding the circulation of visitors'.<sup>119</sup>

---

<sup>115</sup> 'The New Work at the National Gallery', p. 188.

<sup>116</sup> 'The National Gallery', *The British Architect*, 10 May 1895.

<sup>117</sup> 'Changes At The National Gallery', *The Times*, 26 April 1907. The 1911 extension was, of course, not the most recent addition to the National Gallery, but the twentieth-century extensions have received remarkably little critical attention apart from the 1991 Sainsbury Wing: on this, see in particular C. Amery, *A Celebration of Art and Architecture: The National Gallery Sainsbury Wing* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1991); E. Barker and A. Thomas, 'The Sainsbury Wing and Beyond: The National Gallery Today', in E. Barker (ed.), *Contemporary Cultures of Display* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 73–102.

<sup>118</sup> 'The Last Additions to the National Gallery', *The Times*, 26 July 1882.

<sup>119</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 21 March 1892;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1891.'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1892), p. 4.

Paintings hung on screens were harder to view properly than those on the walls because of their typical placement directly underneath the skylights: the *Annual Report* suggested in 1906 that ‘the light upon [the screens] is almost always too vertical for the pictures upon them to be properly seen’.<sup>120</sup> However, screens were also occasionally adopted to give extra prominence to an important new acquisition, as will now be discussed.

### ***New acquisitions***

Every time a new work was acquired by the Gallery, space needed to be found to hang it. The National Gallery would frequently acquire more than one work at once, especially in the case of bequests or the bulk sale of collections, and so the rearrangements to the hang were a complicated logistical process. As seen in the case of the ‘mock Holbein’, there was also strong public pressure for new acquisitions to be displayed as soon as possible. For many paintings, particularly those purchased from collections not open to the public or from abroad, this initial exhibition would be the first chance that the public would have to examine the work and reach their own decisions regarding the National Gallery’s connoisseurship. As a result, the unveiling of a new acquisition was impatiently awaited, particularly if the acquisition had garnered high-profile coverage in the newspapers: *John Bull* wrote in 1885 following the acquisition of Raphael’s *Ansidei Madonna* (NG1171) and the van Dyck portrait of King Charles I (NG1172) that ‘The two pictures from Blenheim have now been put up in the National Gallery; so that all who wish [...] to see whether the “articles” for which we have given £87,500 are worth the money can do so’.<sup>121</sup> In this particular case, the high price paid for the paintings added an extra dimension to public scrutiny and to connoisseurial judgements of monetary value. New acquisitions were generally absorbed into the chronological and geographic hang to form part of the intended narrative of the development of art. However, such paintings could also be exhibited apart from the main display in a way that highlighted their newness or status, and invited particular attention on the part of visitors. Alan Crookham has discussed this tactic with reference to the display of the portrait of Sultan Mehmet II attributed to Gentile Bellini (NG3099): the provenance of the work was highlighted in a display that echoed how the picture had been exhibited in Venice by its late owner Lord Layard, prior to its 1916 acquisition.<sup>122</sup> In particular, during the

---

<sup>120</sup> *Report of the Trustees of the National Gallery, for the Year 1906*, p. 6.

<sup>121</sup> ‘The Blenheim Pictures’, *John Bull*, 4 April 1885.

<sup>122</sup> A. Crookham, ‘Art or Document? Layard’s Legacy and Bellini’s Sultan’, *Museum History Journal*, 8.1 (2015), pp. 28–40.

period under review here, newly acquired works from the same collection were frequently displayed together independent of artist or school. In the case of bequests such as the Peel collection or the Wynn Ellis collection, these had been specifically accepted on the understanding that they would be displayed together for a certain period of time.<sup>123</sup>

Such a display policy was adopted not only for bequests, but also to draw attention to newly acquired works seen as being particularly important or significant for the collection. The three works bought from the Earl of Radnor's collection at Longford Castle in 1890, for example, were initially displayed together on screens in the Umbrian room.<sup>124</sup> This helped to highlight the importance of *The Ambassadors* in particular: previously described by former Keeper Wornum in 1867 as 'Holbein's most important work in England', the painting was welcomed by *The Times* on its acquisition by the National Gallery as 'one of the ten or twelve great pictures in the world, and perhaps the most precious possession of the National Gallery'.<sup>125</sup> Public interest in these works was especially high because of their purchase price of £55,000, supported partly by private backers.<sup>126</sup> While there is no evidence to suggest that the contrast with the Umbrian school was a deliberate strategy, curator and art critic Sidney Colvin nonetheless argued that this juxtaposition heightened the visual appreciation of the works: 'The characteristic qualities of the new pictures [...] have been oddly enhanced by their strong contrast with the primitive and ideal Madonnas and saints of Perugino, Raphael, and the rest, around them'.<sup>127</sup> The works also had 'an advantage in being hung for the present nearly on the floor, a position which always helps the effect of a full-length portrait'. The illustration to Colvin's article (Fig. 36), though presumably exaggerated to a certain extent, offers an idea of how the Longford Castle pictures were arranged. Drawn as if looking out of *The Ambassadors* canvas, it shows the 'Velazquez' and Moroni at the opposite end of the room, on screens that partially obscure the view of the earlier Italian works and thus emphasise the importance of the new acquisitions. *The Ambassadors* was not finally moved

---

<sup>123</sup> Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, p. 239; I. Gaskell, *National Gallery Paintings from the Collection of Wynn Ellis of Whitstable* [exhibition catalogue] (Canterbury: Royal Museum, Canterbury, 1990).

<sup>124</sup> A. Smith, *Longford Castle: The Treasures & the Collectors* (London: Unicorn, 2017), pp. 165–167. Then Room VI, now 30. These paintings were Holbein's *The Ambassadors* (NG1314); Moroni's *Portrait of a Gentleman* (NG1316); and *Don Adrián Pulido Pareja*, now accepted to be possibly by Juan Bautista Martínez del Mazo, but then attributed to Velazquez (NG1315).

<sup>125</sup> R. Wornum, *Some Account of the Life and Works of Hans Holbein* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1867), p. 275; 'The Longford Holbein', *The Times*, 7 August 1891.

<sup>126</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 13 February 1891; - for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1890.'* (London: Hansard Publishing Union, 1891), p. 5.

<sup>127</sup> S. Colvin, 'The Longford Castle Pictures at the National Gallery', *The Art Journal*, January 1891, p. 1.

from its screen on the Umbrian room until 1894, when it was integrated into a display of Flemish works in Room IV; the two other Longford works had previously already been moved to within their respective schools, once again highlighting the particular importance of the Holbein work.<sup>128</sup>

In contrast, less highly vaunted works were more quickly integrated into the narrative of the collection display. As highlighted in Chapter 3, comparison with the existing canon was one of the major methods used in the practice of connoisseurship in this period. By integrating its new acquisitions with other works by the same artist or from the same school, the National Gallery was able to highlight where these paintings lay within the story that the overall display was intended to describe of the development of Western art. For example, following the acquisition of various early Sieneese paintings in 1884, the *Times* compared their display at the National Gallery favourably with access to such works in Italy:

[The] beauties [of the Sieneese school] can scarcely be appreciated in the passing glance of a hasty scamper through the gallery at Siena, where, besides, the visitor receives scant assistance in his study of the pictures. Their arrangement is of the most rudimentary character. A chronological order seems to have been begun and then abandoned, the lighting is unequal and deficient, and catalogue there is none. In the churches the pictures are often placed so high as to be practically out of sight.<sup>129</sup>

As the work of the Italian ‘primitives’ was often perceived as difficult to appreciate compared to the other Italian schools, the visiting public appreciated the additional context offered by its integrated display.<sup>130</sup> The same *Times* article suggested that ‘Viewed under any condition, an art of this nature could never become generally popular’, while equally highlighting the importance of the works as ‘links in the chain of the history of painting’.<sup>131</sup> These new pictures, because of their challenging nature, were therefore understood to benefit from their unified display within the Sieneese school at the National Gallery, which offered greater opportunities for accessibility, inspection and connoisseurship by the public.

---

<sup>128</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 1 April 1895;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1894.'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1895), p. 5.

<sup>129</sup> ‘Recent Acquisitions of the National Gallery’. NG1139 and NG1149, both by Duccio; NG1147, by Ambrogio Lorenzetti; and NG1155, by Matteo di Giovanni.

<sup>130</sup> C. Hoeniger, ‘The Restoration of the Early Italian “Primitives” During the 20th Century: Valuing Art and Its Consequences’, *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 38.2 (1999), pp. 144–161.

<sup>131</sup> ‘Recent Acquisitions of the National Gallery’.

## *Variety of works*

Sieneese works—often small, individual panels detached from a larger altarpiece—serve well to illustrate another display complication: that of the wide variety of sizes of works in the national collection. As well as suffering from a lack of capacity, the National Gallery was not necessarily furnished with rooms of the correct size and shape for its Directors and Keepers to hang the pictures as desired. The height of the rooms was a particular issue: Boxall had written in his private notes that ‘the height of a Gallery should be nearly equal to its width’, as in ‘rooms 50 feet high there is an immense waste of space which if left void is bald & mean & if decorated destroys the effect of the works exhibited’.<sup>132</sup> While not quite this high, the National Gallery rooms were still lofty: for example, the Pennethorne Gallery added in 1861 measured 70 ft by 30 ft, and was 32 ft high (presumably floor to cornice).<sup>133</sup> The height of the walls provided enough space to exhibit what was then the tallest picture in the collection, Sebastiano del Piombo’s *The Raising of Lazarus* (NG1), at the end of the room, with plenty of clearance above (Fig. 25).<sup>134</sup> It also allowed for paintings to be hung in multiple rows, as was still common at this point. Subsequent extensions were lower in height, however: floor to cornice, the Barry Rooms measured 25 ft, while the 1887 extension measured 21 ft.<sup>135</sup> This lowering of the cornice was therefore consistent with the trend towards a single, on-the-line hang. Figure 24 shows that the single-row hang adopted for the new rooms in 1911 was helped by the lower cornice, without the expanse of wall above the paintings seeming excessively ‘bald and mean’ as Boxall had described it.

It was also generally agreed, however, that smaller, more delicate works required much smaller rooms with lower ceilings in order to not be swamped by an expanse of surrounding wall. This was particularly the case for watercolours and drawings, which were separately displayed in the ground floor rooms of the Gallery (and will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 5 with regard to Agnew’s), but also applied to small-scale works in oils. Far fewer rooms were available for the display of these latter works, as cabinet rooms were never introduced at the National Gallery: a series of small rooms originally planned by Barry to be

---

<sup>132</sup> Notes by W. Boxall regarding Gallery architecture, [c1866-1874], NG, NGA1/10/119.

<sup>133</sup> ‘The New Room at the National Gallery’, *The Building News*, 8 March 1861.

<sup>134</sup> NG1 measures 381 x 289.6 cm (12.5 x 9.5 ft).

<sup>135</sup> ‘The National Gallery’, *The British Architect and Northern Engineer*, 9 June 1876; ‘The National Gallery Extension’, *The British Architect*, 15 April 1887. The height of the rooms in the 1911 extension has not been determined.

included in the 1876 extension was never brought to fruition.<sup>136</sup> This issue was noted by contemporary commentators: the *Builder* reported in 1876 that ‘It may be a question whether some of the smaller pictures of this collection do not require a small room and a side light to do them justice: such a position for small pictures has been highly recommended on high authority and experience; and it is certainly a deficiency in the National Gallery buildings, as at present carried out, that there is not even the opportunity for trying it’.<sup>137</sup> In general, therefore, smaller paintings such as Dutch cabinet pictures tended to be hung in smaller rooms, while the huge Italian altarpieces had to be displayed in the bigger galleries — regardless of other display considerations such as the chronological flow of rooms. As discussed in Chapter 1, Agnew’s did not normally invest in such large-scale works because of their perceived unsaleability, and so the wide variation in format was less of a problem for the dealers than it was for the National Gallery.

### ***Loans***

Loans of individual works or small groups of paintings were regularly put on display at the National Gallery in this period, disrupting the display of the Gallery’s own collection. While loans from private owners had been generally discouraged under Burton, they became much more common from the late nineteenth century onwards.<sup>138</sup> Earlier in the Gallery’s history, Boxall had argued for the creation of two dedicated loans rooms so that ‘the principal works in the private galleries of the Kingdom, might be made better known to artists and to the public. Such exhibitions might also lead to important acquisitions’.<sup>139</sup> This ambitious plan was never brought to fruition, presumably because the space could not be spared from the

---

<sup>136</sup> Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, p. 243.

<sup>137</sup> ‘The National Gallery Pictures’, *The Builder*, 19 August 1876.

<sup>138</sup> The National Gallery did not hold specialist exhibitions of works loaned from other institutions or private owners at any point during this period. While a ‘National Loan Exhibition of Old Masters’ was staged in 1909-10 to raise funds for the National Gallery, this was held at the Grafton Gallery rather than at Trafalgar Square: *A Catalogue of the Pictures and Drawings in the National Loan Exhibition, in Aid of National Gallery Funds, Held in the Grafton Galleries, London (1909-1910)* (London: William Heinemann, 1909). A new exhibition room for temporary exhibitions was opened just prior to the Second World War under Director Kenneth Clark, but such displays did not become commonplace at the National Gallery until the 1960s: Saumarez Smith, *The National Gallery: A Short History*, p. 127. The first true loan exhibition at the National Gallery appears to have been the ‘From van Eyck to Tiepolo’ show of 1961, featuring 118 paintings lent from the Thyssen-Bornemisza collection: ‘From Van Eyck To Tiepolo’, *The Times*, 2 March 1961. On the earlier loan in 1936 of 36 paintings owned by Calouste Gulbenkian, however, see Conlin, *The Nation’s Mantelpiece*, pp. 156, 169–74; J. Conlin, ‘Oil and Old Masters’, *The Times Literary Supplement*, 31 October 2003, p. 14.

<sup>139</sup> Extract from a report of the Trustees and the Director of the National Gallery, 1867, NG, NGA1/1/17/3.

display of the permanent collection. However, by displaying loan works scattered throughout its display rooms, the National Gallery nevertheless hoped to encourage acquisitions. Long-term loans to the Gallery were often expected to be donated or bequeathed to the national collection — although, as seen in the case of Holbein’s *Christina of Denmark, Duchess of Milan* (NG2475) and Raphael’s *Colonna Altarpiece*, this was far from being a foregone conclusion.<sup>140</sup> Particularly important from a spatial perspective was the loan of the ‘Panshanger van Dycks’: *The Times* reported in 1909 that Lord Lucas had ‘placed the country under a great obligation’ by loaning nine full-length portraits then attributed to van Dyck for display at the National Gallery for ‘a period of not less than two years’.<sup>141</sup> Holroyd, ‘by a little ingenious rearrangement’, was ‘able to find room for them on the well-lighted landings to right and left of the staircase, where every visitor as he passes in or out must see them. This meant the displacing of a few pictures of secondary importance’ (Fig. 37). The available hanging space for these works is illustrated in an 1888 photograph of the newly constructed entrance hall and staircases at the Gallery (Fig. 38). In this case, therefore, the loan items were prioritised for display over the permanent collection—in terms of being placed in a particularly well-lighted and well-visited location—because of their perceived quality and importance. In particular, the *Times* expressed the wish that Lucas would bequeath van Dyck’s painting of the Balbi children to the nation: ‘Let us hope that it will never leave his possession, unless to find a permanent home in the gallery in which he has now so kindly placed it’. The National Gallery presumably shared this hope—which, as in the case of the *Colonna Raphael*, also proved to be unfounded—and emphasised the perceived importance of the works with the prominence of their display in order to promote the national claim to the works.<sup>142</sup>

Some high-profile works were also given short-term exhibition space in an attempt to drum up public support and Treasury funding for urgent purchases, at a point at which the National Gallery was struggling to compete financially amid rising market prices. For example, the ‘enormous fame’ of Rembrandt’s *The Mill* was actively stoked by the National Gallery, which took the then unusual step of placing the loaned painting on display during the campaign to

---

<sup>140</sup> Rubin, “‘The Outcry’”; Rees Leahy, ‘New Labour, Old Masters’; L. Wolk-Simon, *Raphael at the Metropolitan: The Colonna Altarpiece* (New York; New Haven, CT: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2006).

<sup>141</sup> ‘The Panshanger Vandycks’.

<sup>142</sup> *The Balbi Children*, NG6502, was ultimately acquired by the National Gallery in 1985. NG3605, also in the group of nine portraits, was bought in 1922 but is now considered merely to be in the style of van Dyck.

raise the money for its acquisition.<sup>143</sup> The picture was exhibited between 10 and 21 March 1911 as the Gallery attempted to attract the £95,000 needed to purchase it from Trustee Lord Lansdowne. The *Sunday Times* highlighted the serious difficulties posed by the fact that ‘the matter has arisen so suddenly and the sum required to keep the picture is so large’.<sup>144</sup> The decision to exhibit the painting in this manner was an attempt to circumvent the restrictions that made it impossible for Holroyd and the Trustees to issue an appeal for funds in their official capacity as members of a public department, while the display of the picture was actively exploited to highlight its importance and uniqueness within Rembrandt’s oeuvre. Hung ‘alone at one end’ of Room V in ‘an excellent light’, the *Times* wrote that the painting’s ‘isolated position behind a row of barriers enables it to be comfortably viewed by a large number of people’; this popularity can also be seen in a drawing in the *Illustrated London News* (Fig. 39), the accompanying article for which described queues forming and visits ‘from that of the King and Queen to that of some of his Majesty’s humblest subjects’.<sup>145</sup> This desperate display tactic was nonetheless unsuccessful in raising the requisite funds, and the picture passed into the hands of American millionaire P. A. B. Widener. Such long-term and short-term loans took up space in the National Gallery’s exhibition rooms that would otherwise have been available for permanent collection items. They were evidently accepted on the calculated assumption that they would result in either a temporary improvement to the collection, by filling perceived gaps, or in further acquisitions.

### ***Conservation of the collection***

The National Gallery’s duty to preserve and conserve its collection for the sake of future generations often limited its ability to display the collection as openly as possible for the benefit of public connoisseurship. For example, given the strong emphasis on lighting as an aide to the connoisseurial process, as discussed above, it is pertinent to ask why the Gallery did not adopt artificial lighting until the 1930s. Although gas lighting had been installed in the Royal Academy wing of the Wilkins buildings, this was removed when the National Gallery took over the east wing.<sup>146</sup> Indeed, the institution missed out on gas lighting entirely

---

<sup>143</sup> Now National Gallery of Art, Washington DC, Widener Collection inv. no. 1942.9.62. A. K. Wheelock Jr, *Rembrandt van Rijn/The Mill/1645/1648*, NGA Online Editions, Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century, <https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/1201> [accessed 10 April 2017].

<sup>144</sup> ‘“The Mill.” Appeal to the Public’, *The Sunday Times*, 5 March 1911.

<sup>145</sup> ‘Rembrandt’s “The Mill”’, *The Times*, 11 March 1911; ‘“Right Be’ind for ‘The Mill”’: Looking at the £100,000 Picture’, *Illustrated London News*, 25 March 1911.

<sup>146</sup> Letter to George A. Hamilton, Secretary, H.M. Treasury, 18 December 1868, NG, NG6/3/485. Avery-Quash, ‘The Art of Conservation’, p. 853.

and moved directly to the installation of electric light in the public galleries in 1935.<sup>147</sup> This mistrust of artificial lighting should be compared with the early adoption of the Royal Academy and British Museum, both of which introduced electric lighting in the early 1880s.<sup>148</sup> There certainly was public appetite for the introduction of artificial light at the National Gallery, and questions regarding evening opening were frequently raised in Parliament. It has previously been argued that the National Gallery's refusal to install artificial lighting, and thus to restrict the entry of working-class people who were unable to visit during the day, is evidence of the institution's 'patrician' attitude towards reserving the nation's cultural assets for genteel public appreciation.<sup>149</sup> However, given the commitment to connoisseurial display as outlined throughout this chapter, it seems more likely that the concern for the welfare of the collection overrode the desire to make the collection visible in the evenings or days with poor visibility. Gas lighting was known to corrode furnishings and leave dirty deposits on surfaces, as well as leading to the 'vitiating' of the air in overcrowded rooms.<sup>150</sup> In addition, gas was understood to cause permanent, physical damage to artworks: Burton wrote to *The Times* in 1881 that paintings from the national collection by Reynolds, Lawrence and Hilton had suffered through being hung 'in another institution' where they were exposed 'to strong changes of temperature, and, what was far worse, to the pernicious influence of gas'.<sup>151</sup> As well as the degradation of paintings caused by gas, fire had been a particular concern throughout the National Gallery's history. As the Commissioner of Works George Shaw-Lefevre stated in Parliament in 1881, 'It would certainly not be desirable to light [the National Gallery] with gas. The Collection is far too

---

<sup>147</sup> Press releases relating to the new lighting system at the National Gallery, 28 March-29 March 1935, NG, NG68/53/10.

<sup>148</sup> G. Gooday, *Domesticating Electricity: Technology, Uncertainty and Gender, 1880-1914* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), p. 32. The British Museum had introduced electric lights in its reading room in 1879: O. Prizeman, *Philanthropy and Light: Carnegie Libraries and the Advent of Transatlantic Standards for Public Space* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), p. 53.

<sup>149</sup> A. Barnaby, 'Lighting Practices in Art Galleries and Exhibition Spaces, 1750-1850', in M. Henning (ed.), *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Media* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), p. 192.

<sup>150</sup> J. P. Brown and W. B. Rose, 'Humidity and Moisture in Historic Buildings: The Origins of Building and Object Conservation', *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology*, 27.3 (1996), p. 13; N. S. Brommelle, 'The Russell and Abney Report on the Action of Light on Water Colours', *Studies in Conservation*, 9.4 (1964), pp. 140-152.

<sup>151</sup> F.W. Burton, 'The Ansidei Raphael', *The Times*, 3 June 1885. Burton was presumably referring to the South Kensington Museum: G. N. Swinney, 'Gas Lighting in British Museums and Galleries, with Particular Reference to the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 18.2 (1999), pp. 113-143; see also G. N. Swinney, 'The Evil of Vitiating and Heating the Air: Artificial Lighting and Public Access to the National Gallery, London, with Particular Reference to the Turner and Vernon Collections', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 15.1 (2003), pp. 83-112.

valuable to justify the Trustees in exposing the pictures to any damage from the vitiated atmosphere, or from the risk of fire'.<sup>152</sup> In 1910, a special committee was appointed to report on the alterations needed to fireproof the National Gallery building, which resulted in the temporary closure of five rooms while the necessary works were being carried out.<sup>153</sup> During these works and the associated construction of the 1911 extension, the *Architectural Review* wrote that 'When the reconstruction is entirely completed it will enable a far better arrangement of pictures to be adopted, and at the same time the art treasures of the nation will be housed in a building as fire-resisting as modern construction can make it'.<sup>154</sup> The protection of the pictures was therefore seen as being as least as important as their correct display.

Similar reasons regarding the safety of the collection were given for the National Gallery's further reluctance to install electric light. Trustee and MP George Howard stated to the Commons in 1883 that the institution had 'made enquiries as to the safety and efficiency of electric lighting & they are informed that in both these respects improvements will probably be made'.<sup>155</sup> Howard ended his speech with the pointed statement that the Director and Trustees of National Gallery were 'most anxious to make the Gallery as available as possible to the general public [...] and they are most willing to entertain any suggestion that does not entail danger or deterioration to the treasures under their charge'.<sup>156</sup> The inclusion of a *Standard* article on a two-day electric lighting failure in Timișoara, Hungary—'the first European town where the electric light had totally superseded gas light'—in the National Gallery newspaper clippings for 1884 suggests that the Director and Trustees were actively following the development of this technology and wished to be particularly cautious in this respect.<sup>157</sup> While the Tate was in fact wired for electricity when it was built in 1897, electric light was deliberately not used in the galleries in accordance with National Gallery policy.<sup>158</sup> Even a decade later, it was still being argued in Parliament in 1908 that the installation of electric light at the National Gallery would bring with it the 'consequent increased risk of fire'.<sup>159</sup> The concerns over the damage caused by gas lighting, coupled with the risks of a gas

---

<sup>152</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 23 February 1881, Vol. 258, col. 1605.

<sup>153</sup> A. C. R. Carter, *The Year's Art 1911* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1911), p. 12.

<sup>154</sup> 'National Gallery Extension', p. 231.

<sup>155</sup> *Hansard*, HC Deb, 31 July 1883, Vol. 282, col. 1158.

<sup>156</sup> Press cuttings, 31 July 1883, NG, NG24/1883/2.

<sup>157</sup> Press cuttings, 21 November–31 December 1884, NG, NG24/1884/14.

<sup>158</sup> Letter from the Office of Works, 21 February 1896, NG, NG7/192/3. Spalding, *The Tate: A History*, pp. 28–9.

<sup>159</sup> *Hansard*, HL Deb, 31 March 1908, Vol 187, col. 260.

or electrical fire—and the associated dangers to the collection—seem to have won out over the need to make the artworks as accessible as possible for the connoisseurship of those who were unable to visit the Gallery during daylight hours.

The National Gallery's unwillingness to install artificial light was not the only preventive conservation measure that made it harder for visitors to examine the artworks as closely as they might have liked: in Julia Noordegraaf's seemingly paradoxical phrasing, 'in order to make the objects more visible, the distance between them and the observer was increased'.<sup>160</sup> For example, at this point in its history the National Gallery also embarked on a dedicated campaign to glaze the oil paintings in its collection: by 1891, the organisation was able to report that 'With the exception of a few works which, owing to their large size or position, cannot at present be conveniently subjected to the process, the glazing of the whole collection is now virtually complete'.<sup>161</sup> Similarly, the metal railings installed in front of the paintings are clearly visible in an 1883 depiction of three sailors in front of Turner's *The Battle of Trafalgar...* (Fig. 40).<sup>162</sup> These rails, while intended to stop the paintings from being accidentally or deliberately touched, were not always appreciated by visitors from a visual point of view: the *Globe* wrote in 1911 that a 'graver fault' than the lighting issues in the new extension was the 'bright gilt rail' that was 'reflected in almost every picture in a maddening way. Moreover the rail constantly catches the visitor's eye, which it dazzles and renders quite insensible to delicate colours'.<sup>163</sup> While such measures as glazing, railings and the employment of room attendants may have been distracting or irritating to visitors, as with the caution regarding artificial lighting, these 'barriers' were in fact largely practical measures put in place for the protection of the paintings. Nick Prior goes too far in his assertion that the use of guards at the Louvre was 'clearly part of the attempt to mark off the gallery space, like its relatives in the bourgeois public sphere, as a realm of cultural distinction and contemplation'.<sup>164</sup> Such arguments ignore the real and practical considerations of protecting the artworks from both accidental and deliberate damage.

---

<sup>160</sup> Noordegraaf, *Strategies of Display*, p. 49.

<sup>161</sup> *Copy of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1891*, p. 6.

<sup>162</sup> Now Tate, N00480.

<sup>163</sup> 'Lighting the Gallery', *The Globe*, 8 November 1911, NG, NG24/1911/1. On the other hand, as also visible in Fig. 40, rails were also comfortable to lean against when viewing works: M. Ward, 'Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions', *The Art Bulletin*, 73.4 (1991), p. 606.

<sup>164</sup> N. Prior, 'The Art of Space in the Space of Art: Edinburgh and Its Gallery, 1780-1860', *Museum and Society*, 1.2 (2003), p. 68; see also N. Prior, *Museums and Modernity: Art Galleries and the Making of Modern Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2002), p. 53.

Glazing was a necessary evil required to protect works from dirt and harmful atmospheric pollutants, and many commentators accepted this: the *Art Journal* wrote in 1873 that, although in general it did not approve of the glazing of oil paintings, ‘The protection thus afforded to certain invaluable paintings in the National Gallery can be understood’.<sup>165</sup> The issue of conservation was explicitly linked to display by the *British Architect* in 1880, which wrote that ‘It is quite pitiful to see the effect of “a fine central position” in some of the masters’, particularly in relation to the British school: ‘It is an English artist whom the English climate tries most critically and most cruelly’. Given the effects of ‘dust, dirt, and soot’, the journal wrote, although ‘the pictures look better without a glass than with one [...] it is better that [Reynold’s portrait of] Abraham Hume should look through a window pane than that he should get small-pox’.<sup>166</sup> In addition, the National Gallery’s high-profile collection was not infrequently the subject of physical attacks, most famously in the case of the attack by suffragette Mary Richardson on Velazquez’s *Rokeby Venus* (NG2057) in 1914.<sup>167</sup> While the glazing did not prevent this painting from being slashed, it is probable that it would have been much more badly damaged without the protection of the glass. Following the assault on the *Rokeby Venus* and a further attack on five Venetian paintings just two months later, the Gallery administration even considered the installation of large-scale glass screens to protect its collection (Fig. 41).<sup>168</sup> However, it was ultimately decided that to extend the experiment to the whole Gallery would, as well as being prohibitively expensive, ‘render impossible any expert examination of the pictures’.<sup>169</sup>

This consideration for the connoisseurial capabilities of visitors shows that the National Gallery authorities were not unaware of the hindrance caused by barriers such as railings and glazing, and worked to overcome this where possible. The *Annual Report* for 1898 stated that:

---

<sup>165</sup> ‘Society of British Artists: Winter Exhibition’, *The Art Journal*, 35.1 (1873), p. 16.

<sup>166</sup> ‘Notes on Current Events’, *The British Architect*, 23 June 1880. This painting is now N00305, Tate.

<sup>167</sup> H. E. Scott, *Confronting Nightmares: Responding to Iconoclasm in Western Museums and Art Galleries* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of St Andrews, 2009), Chap. 2; S. MacLeod, ‘Civil Disobedience and Political Agitation: The Art Museum as a Site of Protest in the Early Twentieth Century’, *Museum and Society*, 5.1 (2007), p. 44–57. Earlier in the Gallery’s history, a picture of *Leda and the Swan* (NG151.1) had been hit with a crutch in 1844, while Turner’s *Regulus Leaving Rome* (NG519) was slashed with a knife in 1863: ‘Law and Police’, *John Bull*, 27 January 1844; ‘Wilful Damage to One of Turner’s Pictures in the National Gallery’, *Daily News*, 18 December 1863; Robertson, *Sir Charles Eastlake and the Victorian Art World*, pp. 79–80.

<sup>168</sup> ‘Attack on Old Masters’, *Daily Mail*, 23 May 1914.

<sup>169</sup> Treasury Papers, *National Gallery, Wallace Collection, Tate Gallery. Protection of contents against damage*, 1914, TNA, T 1/11680/22503.

The experiment having been tried of removing the railing in front of the pictures in one of the rooms, it was found to be so greatly to the advantage of the pictures, that the railings were taken away throughout all the rooms containing the Foreign Schools; it has thus been possible to place some of the larger pictures in a better position by lowering them to the dado, and the ugly reflection of the rail in the glasses is avoided [...] As all the pictures are now glazed, there is no longer risk of injury.<sup>170</sup>

In addition, the National Gallery authorities tried to offset the problem of the limited visibility caused by glazing by fitting paintings with movable 'glass doors', which could 'easily be removed when closer inspection of the works is desired, and meanwhile the latter are protected from injury'.<sup>171</sup> This helped to facilitate connoisseurial access for scholars such as August Zigon, who applied in 1904 to make 'a minute technical examination' of the Leonardo *Virgin of the Rocks* (NG1093) for the purpose of determining whether this or the version in the Louvre were the original. His request was granted, with a note from Poynter on the letter stating that 'I believe the frame is made with a door-glass. If so it may be taken off for Dr. Zigon to study the picture'.<sup>172</sup> For the National Gallery, as the custodian of the national collection, a balance always had to be struck between allowing visitors to examine the works and protecting the pictures for future generations.

## Conclusion

This chapter has considered the display spaces used by the National Gallery to facilitate connoisseurship, particularly visual analysis, among its visitors. It has outlined the reasons why it was important for the institution to protect its reputation for reliable connoisseurship, and the ways in which visitors were reminded of this reputation before they had even crossed the threshold of the Trafalgar Square building. Within the confines of the building, the display approach adopted both across and within the spaces of individual rooms acted to reinforce the sense of a hierarchical collection, clearly classified by artist, school and period. However, while the National Gallery aimed as far as possible to facilitate connoisseurship among its visitors, this ambition was often frustrated by the practicalities of

---

<sup>170</sup> *Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 14 February 1898;- for, Copy 'of the Report of the Director of the National Gallery, for the Year 1898, with Appendices'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1899), pp. 5–6.

<sup>171</sup> Eastlake, 'The Administration of the National Gallery: A Retrospect', p. 942.

<sup>172</sup> S. Colvin to E. Poynter, 12 August 1904, NG, NG68/26/30.

hanging a large and diverse collection within a limited space, and by the need to protect the paintings from various kinds of damage.

## Chapter 5: Spaces of connoisseurial discourse II: Agnew's

'By such exhibitions as these, held not only in London, but in Liverpool and Manchester, Messrs. Agnew are spreading Art-knowledge broadcast throughout the land, and richly deserve a large share of the harvest which must follow it.'<sup>1</sup>

*Art Journal*, 1873

Having discussed in Chapter 4 the ways in which the National Gallery designed and used its display spaces to facilitate connoisseurship among its visitors, this chapter will now consider Agnew's from the same perspective. As emphasised throughout this thesis, the aims of Agnew's as a business were very different from those of the publicly funded National Gallery; indeed, the major purpose of encouraging connoisseurship amongst the firm's visitors was to generate profit through sales. This commercial motivation was no less clear to contemporary commentators: in an article from April 1883 on the forthcoming exhibition season, *The Times* argued that interest in the arts had undergone an 'enormous increase' over the previous quarter-century.<sup>2</sup> The paper attributed the explosion to an increase in artistic output, but also issued a dark warning to contemporary artists against the 'real danger' of being tempted by the money offered by dealers into churning out poor-quality pictures. 'Nowadays,' the article emphasised, 'every picture dealer has a gallery at the back of his shop in which twice or thrice a year he makes a choice little exhibition of showy and saleable pictures'. Agnew's was, indeed, only one of many dealers offering public access to its stock of artworks. However, given its size, history and influence, the firm sat firmly at the centre of the growing trend towards the public exhibition of art. As a result, in 1899 the *Manchester Times* argued against any perception of Agnew's as a mere shopkeeper:

The Messrs. Agnews' [sic] first exhibition in their new [refurbished] gallery in Exchange-street cannot be merely treated as a tradesman's laudable effort to dispose of his wares. Such a representative and remarkable collection of the work of the early masters of English water-colour art could hardly be brought together for sale by any other firm in the country, and could certainly be seen nowhere else save on the walls of public institutions. Therefore Messrs. Agnew are not merely traffickers in art, but contributors to our aesthetic

---

<sup>1</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings', *The Art Journal*, April 1873, p. 104.

<sup>2</sup> 'To every one whose pleasure, habit, or duty...', *The Times*, 25 April 1883.

enlightenment.<sup>3</sup>

This attitude—contrasting the ‘trafficking’ of art with connoisseurial ‘enlightenment’—articulated contemporary uneasiness over the extent to which art dealers could be seen as both practising and facilitating connoisseurship. The connoisseurial motives of dealers were often not thought to be as ‘pure’ as those carrying out connoisseurship for scholarly purposes or for the building up of a private collection.<sup>4</sup> The commercial aspect was not necessarily seen as a bar to the exercise of connoisseurship by dealers, however; in fact, Agnew’s well-established name helped to support the company’s reputation for reliable connoisseurship. Reviewing the Agnew’s 1894 watercolour exhibition, the *Illustrated London News* wrote that it had ‘the merit of being frankly a “dealer’s” show. All the pictures are for sale—and some of them at very high prices—testifying to a merit which has stood the test of many decades’.<sup>5</sup> The high prices attached to the works on display acted as a statement that the firm’s connoisseurship could be trusted, given that it was regularly put to the test as paintings changed ownership and passed through the market. The subtleties of such potential tension between commercialism and connoisseurship will act as a theme throughout this chapter. However, the chapter will also emphasise the similarity between the approaches adopted by the Agnew’s and the National Gallery in putting the fruits of their connoisseurship on display for public judgement, despite the evident differences in their motives for doing so.

While there has been an active scholarly interest in artistic exhibitions for many years, this has had an overwhelming focus on displays arranged by museums, artists or private collectors.<sup>6</sup> Outside the work done on contemporary galleries, it is only more recently that

---

<sup>3</sup> ‘The Weekly Times’, *Manchester Times*, 10 November 1899.

<sup>4</sup> For a representative discussion of how von Bode’s connoisseurial judgement was understood to be ‘tainted’ by his associations with dealer Charles Sedelmeyer, see C. Huemer, ‘Mascarades de désintéressement: Connoisseurship et les instruments de la salle des ventes’, in P. Michel (ed.), *Connoisseurship: L’œil, la raison, l’instrument* (Paris: Rencontres de l’école du Louvre, 2014), pp. 103–115.

<sup>5</sup> ‘Art Notes’, *Illustrated London News*, 24 February 1894.

<sup>6</sup> A classic series of essays on the display of contemporary art is collected in B. O’Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1999); for a more recent discussion of modern galleries, particularly with respect to space and form, see U. Grosenick and R. Stange (eds), *International Art Galleries: Post-War to Post-Millennium: A Chronology of the Dealers, Places and Personalities of Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005); D. Carrier and D. Jones, *The Contemporary Art Gallery: Display, Power and Privilege* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016), Chap. 3. On display in museums and non-commercial galleries, in addition to the works cited in Chapter 4, see the essays in H. Perry Chapman, F. Scholten and J. Woodall (eds), *Arts of Display/Het Vertoon van de Kunst* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2015).

the literature has also expanded to encompass historic commercial premises.<sup>7</sup> Few scholars, in short, have acknowledged that:

a particular physical venue generates specific values and associations, maintained through certain modes of display, selection of artistic goods and related activities, and patterns of critical reception and consumption, all relying on an extensive social network involving artists, critics, dealers, and patrons.<sup>8</sup>

In particular, the important role played by dealers' exhibitions in offering connoisseurial development opportunities to the general public has received little critical attention from scholars: for example, in her sustained discussion of connoisseurship towards the end of the nineteenth century, Lynne Hinojosa makes no mention of commercial exhibition spaces at all.<sup>9</sup> Instead, much more attention has been paid to the exhibition catalogues or catalogues raisonnés produced by dealers as a sales tool for emphasising attribution or provenance.<sup>10</sup> Scholars have tended to view the rhetorics of art markets, aesthetics and public information as being essentially antithetical, when they were in fact mutually interdependent.<sup>11</sup> An important exception can be found in the work of Pamela Fletcher, who, although focusing on the display of contemporary works rather than Old Masters, has highlighted the importance of dealer exhibitions in Bond Street in promoting 'cosmopolitan connoisseurship'.<sup>12</sup> The wider deficit in work on dealers and connoisseurial display can perhaps be attributed to the relatively impermanent nature of many dealer displays: it is frequently difficult to reconstruct how a particular gallery or exhibition may have looked,

---

<sup>7</sup> For an early exception, see Waterfield, *Palaces of Art*; this important work has been followed by C. Denney, 'The Grosvenor Gallery as Palace of Art: An Exhibition Model', in S. P. Casteras and C. Denney (ed.), *The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 9–37; C. Huemer, 'Charles Sedelmeyer's Theatricality: Art and Speculation in Late 19th-Century Paris', in J. Bakoš (ed.), *Artwork through the Market: The Past and the Present* (Bratislava: VEDA, 2004), pp. 109–123; University of Glasgow, *Exhibition Culture in London 1878–1908* (2006), <http://www.exhibitionculture.arts.gla.ac.uk/> [accessed 12 September 2017]; P. Fletcher, 'Creating the French Gallery: Ernest Gambart and the Rise of the Commercial Art Gallery in Mid-Victorian London', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 6.1 (2007), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/46-spring07/spring07article/143-creating-the-french-gallery-ernest-gambart-and-the-rise-of-the-commercial-art-gallery-in-mid-victorian-london> [accessed 5 December 2017]. For more recent notable studies, albeit outside the British context, see Moskowitz, *Stefano Bardini*; Patry et al., *Inventing Impressionism*.

<sup>8</sup> A. Helmreich and Y. Holt, 'Marketing Bohemia: The Chenil Gallery in Chelsea, 1905–1926', *Oxford Art Journal*, 33.1 (2010), pp. 43–61.

<sup>9</sup> L. Walhout Hinojosa, *The Renaissance, English Cultural Nationalism, and Modernism, 1860–1920* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), Chap. 5.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, Gaskell, 'Tradesmen as Scholars'.

<sup>11</sup> Haskins, *The Art-Journal and Fine Art Publishing*, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> P. Fletcher, 'The Grand Tour on Bond Street: Cosmopolitanism and the Commercial Art Gallery in Victorian London', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 12.2 (2011), pp. 139–153.

with a view to interpreting the visitor experience. The literature on display at other commercial premises, such as department stores, to a certain extent fills this gap, in addition to suggesting that it is possible to discuss display in the context of equally transitory historic spaces.<sup>13</sup> However, in addition to the unstable definition of a ‘department store’, as recently highlighted by Jon Stobart, art dealers are difficult to compare directly with other types of retailer: as will be discussed below, traders in the art market had to work much harder than other retailers to establish the trust of their clients because of the inherent financial unreliability of the products that they bought and sold.<sup>14</sup> Outside their regular exhibitions, Agnew’s clients also had much more restricted access to the firm’s stock than would be the case in a department store, simply because Agnew’s did not offer a permanent display of its ever-changing wares. The issue of display with regard to connoisseurial judgement therefore becomes much more important for the field of art dealing.

There has been some limited acknowledgement regarding the importance of commercial galleries in the development and diffusion of connoisseurship. For instance, Daniela Bleichmar has noted that in the eighteenth century dealers were vital in the creation and shaping of markets, achieved in part by the training of collectors’ eyes; the dealer’s shop is characterised not only as a space for selling art, but also as a classroom for the development of visual expertise.<sup>15</sup> Although she explicitly separates dealers from connoisseurs, Bleichmar nevertheless makes a valid point about imparting connoisseurial knowledge through the use of space, and does not confine this knowledge exchange solely to the museum or private collection. The commercial exchange of connoisseurial knowledge became ever more significant throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the number of commercial galleries open to the public increased dramatically.<sup>16</sup> Without regular exposure to a range of artworks—whether in the context of the art museum, as discussed in Chapter

---

<sup>13</sup> K. A. Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping: An Architectural History* (New Haven, CT; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2003), Chap. 7; J. Whitaker, *The Department Store: History, Design, Display* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> J. Stobart, ‘Cathedrals of Consumption? Provincial Department Stores in England, c.1880–1930’, *Enterprise & Society*, 18.4 (2017), pp. 2–4.

<sup>15</sup> Bleichmar, ‘Learning to Look’, pp. 97–101.

<sup>16</sup> While two large-scale projects have demonstrated this for London, much more quantitative and mapping work remains to be done for the remainder of Britain: P. Fletcher and D. Israel, *London Gallery Project* (2012), <http://learn.bowdoin.edu/fletcher/london-gallery/> [accessed 12 August 2016]; University of Glasgow, *Exhibition Culture in London 1878-1908*. See also Bayer and Page, *The Development of the Art Market*, for a more economic approach, although this study is also overly London-centric in its data selection. For a relevant recent mapping project focusing on Parisian art dealers, see L. Saint-Raymond, F. de Maupeou and J. Cavero, ‘Les Rues Des Tableaux: The Geography of the Parisian Art Market 1815-1955’, *Artl@s Bulletin*, 5.1 (2016), pp. 121–159.

4, or in the hands of private collectors and dealers—the public would have been far less able to make informed connoisseurial judgments. Like the staff at both the National Gallery and Agnew’s, private collectors also needed to build up a mental canon of images for the sake of connoisseurial comparison. This was particularly the case in the early years of the period in question, when photographic reproductions were much less widely available, but also remained true even when photographs became more widespread. While many—if not the majority—of the works put on display by Agnew’s had not been previously photographed, as demonstrated in Chapters 2 and 3 the staff at both Agnew’s and the National Gallery also emphasised through their connoisseurial practice the importance of examining the original object in preference to a reproduction. This was particularly facilitated by retrospective exhibitions or those offering a range of comparable images, such as the Agnew’s watercolour and Old Master shows; the latter were frequently commended by critics for exhibiting ‘fine old English pictures that shall be new to the London public [...] things that are unknown to the present generation’.<sup>17</sup> While far from all visitors to the Agnew’s premises and exhibitions would invest their money in an artwork there—indeed, as will be discussed below, many of the Old Masters put on display were loans and thus not for immediate sale—these displays still acted to bring artworks into the public arena for judgement.

Because of Agnew’s commercial bent and its need to advertise, the firm’s spaces of connoisseurial discourse can be considered as being much more varied than those of the National Gallery. As in Chapter 4, there is insufficient space here to discuss many of the wider spaces that could be interpreted as spaces of connoisseurial discourse for Agnew’s, such as their high-revenue sales of etchings and engravings; the sale of picture reproduction rights to periodicals and newspapers; advertising in various media outlets; and the general discussion of the firm in printed media. To a certain extent, as for the National Gallery, such topics are beginning to attract scholarly interest with regard to art dealing.<sup>18</sup> However, for Agnew’s, spaces of connoisseurship encompassed not only the gallery space and the printed page or reproduction, but also the homes of clients and, indeed, any space in which dealer and client met. In addition to specialist spaces such as the auction house, more generalised

---

<sup>17</sup> ‘Messrs. Agnew’s Gallery’, *The Times*, 11 November 1903.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, Pezzini, ‘The Burlington Magazine, The Burlington Gazette, and The Connoisseur’; B. Pezzini, ‘Towards a Network Analysis of Art Writers in Edwardian London: The Art Journal, Connoisseur and Burlington Magazine in 1903’, *Art Libraries Journal*, 38.1 (2013), pp. 12–19; Fletcher and Helmreich, ‘The Periodical and the Art Market’; R. Verhoogt, *Art in Reproduction: Nineteenth-Century Prints After Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Jozef Israels and Ary Scheffer* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007); A. Helmreich, ‘The Art Dealer and Taste’.

social spaces were also vital in strengthening social links and building up the company's reputation for connoisseurial expertise. Well-established or particularly wealthy clients were often able to demand business meetings wherever they pleased. Geoffrey Agnew's 1967 history of the firm refers to collector George Salting as concluding his deals with Agnew's 'on neutral ground [...] on an island in Piccadilly'.<sup>19</sup> This suggests that Salting was well aware of the unequal power dynamic at play within Agnew's own premises that gave the firm the upper hand in the negotiation of business deals.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, partners such as Morland often socialised with clients, for instance visiting Sir Charles Tennant at his seat in Byfleet, Surrey, where he 'played golf with him, lunched &c'.<sup>21</sup> However, while these locations can certainly be understood as spaces of connoisseurial discourse—given that artworks and their merits or otherwise were almost unquestionably discussed at such meetings—they are difficult to analyse because of the lack of recorded detail. It is also difficult to draw the line between social contact and business discussion, particularly in the latter example.

The concept of a space of connoisseurial discourse can even be extended to cover printed assurances such as guarantees and certificates. In at least one case, Agnew's offered a written guarantee of a painting's attribution: in 1906, on the sale of a portrait of the Countess of Bristol to a Mrs W. W. Kimball of Chicago, the invoice from Agnew's included the statement that 'We guarantee this picture to be the genuine work of Thos. Gainsborough'.<sup>22</sup> It is not clear how common such practices were, but it is possible that dealer guarantees became more prevalent in the early twentieth century, as 'experts' such as Bernard Berenson or Wilhelm von Bode themselves began to issue certificates supporting the authenticity of a work.<sup>23</sup> Agnew's also appear to have offered certificates, employing art critic and former museum director Sir Walter Armstrong from 1916, amongst other duties, to provide

---

<sup>19</sup> Agnew, *Agnew's, 1817-1967*, p. 43.

<sup>20</sup> For more on Salting's purchasing tactics, see Rubin, "'The Outcry'", p. 256.

<sup>21</sup> Diary entry for 13 July 1903, C. M. diary, 1903, NG, NGA27/27/13.

<sup>22</sup> Thos. Agnew & Sons to W. W. Kimball, 27 April 1906, Letterbook 1, 1902-1928, NG, NGA27/11/1.

<sup>23</sup> B. Berenson and K. Clark, *My Dear BB...: The Letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, ed. R. Cumming (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), p. 482. These certificates of authenticity are commonly mentioned in the literature on art forgery and authenticity but in fact have received very little detailed scrutiny, perhaps because of the scarcity of primary sources: certificates were lost or destroyed, remain in private hands or exist in the form of a (rarely catalogued) annotation on the reverse of a photograph. See Provo, 'Surrogates and Intermediaries'; R. D. Spencer (ed.), *The Expert versus the Object: Judging Fakes and False Attributions in the Visual Arts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. xi; E. P. Alexander, *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence* (Nashville, TN: Rowman Altamira, 1995), p. 212.

certificates on ‘what you believe to be right’.<sup>24</sup> Such guarantees and certificates, however, seem to have been used relatively rarely — or at least to have left little trace in the Agnew’s archive, perhaps because they would have survived in the archive of the buyer, if at all. They would also have been employed at the point of sale, presumably after the client had already been shown the artwork. As a result, much of the impact of Agnew’s connoisseurship would have been felt at an earlier stage, when visiting the exhibitions and displays at the firm’s galleries. The majority of the discussion here will therefore focus on the Agnew’s galleries in Manchester, London and Liverpool as the places where the largest numbers of artworks were put on display, and where the majority of the firm’s sales business was carried out.

Although it will not form a major part of this thesis, it is nevertheless important to note briefly that the Agnew’s staff did occasionally take part in organising the display of artworks outside the sphere of their own galleries. This was an opportunity for the firm’s connoisseurial abilities to become more widely known on a national and international scale, particularly as a number of these exhibitions focused specifically on British art. In 1908, for example, a selection of Old Masters from British collections were sent for exhibition at the Königliche Akademie der Künste, Berlin and then the Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek, Copenhagen.<sup>25</sup> The catalogue for the Copenhagen exhibition reveals that Agnew’s were specifically involved in organising the selection of works, as well as lending portraits by Gainsborough and Raeburn.<sup>26</sup> The hang was an important consideration, even though these paintings were not being displayed in the firm’s own galleries: a letter from the company stated that ‘Mr. [Croal] Thomson has also prepared a little sketch of a plan of how the Pictures may be hung. It will probably be necessary to put them in two groups, as they do not otherwise hang easily together, but this is simply a suggestion for Mr. Henningeen’s [sic] consideration’.<sup>27</sup> Such attention to detail strongly suggests that Agnew’s were aware of the importance of displaying their connoisseurial skills on an international scale, and recognised the effect that considerations such as hang would have upon their reputation.

---

<sup>24</sup> Thos. Agnew & Sons to Sir Walter Armstrong, 9 October 1916, Letterbook 1, 1902-1928, NG, NGA27/11/1; K. Garlick, ‘Armstrong, Sir Walter (1849–1918), Museum Director and Art Historian’, in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/39439>.

<sup>25</sup> *Ausstellung Aelterer Englischer Kunst* [exhibition catalogue] (Berlin; Stuttgart; Leipzig: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1908).

<sup>26</sup> *Udstilling Af Ældre Engelsk Kunst i Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* [exhibition catalogue] (Copenhagen: F. E. Bording, 1908), National Gallery Library.

<sup>27</sup> Thos. Agnew & Sons to A[ndreas] P[eter] Weis, 3 March 1908, Archive of the New Carlsberg Foundation, Copenhagen. My thanks to Archivist Claus Grønne for bringing this uncatalogued correspondence to my attention.

This chapter will now consider the reasons why Agnew's needed to convince others of the reliability of its connoisseurship, arguing that without its exhibitions the firm would have had a much weaker reputation for connoisseurial expertise. It will then explore how the ways in which artworks were displayed in the Agnew's galleries reflected the specific ways in which the firm's staff themselves carried out connoisseurship, as laid out in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. The exhibition catalogue will be considered as an extension of the exhibition space, given the way in which these texts extended the connoisseurship carried out by visitors and clients inside the Agnew's galleries. In particular, it will be demonstrated that the visual inspection and comparison of the works by visitors was encouraged through carefully chosen aspects such as the lighting and hang of pictures. In this way, Agnew's was able to highlight its own connoisseurial expertise and to offer its customers an opportunity to practise their own connoisseurship. This chapter will also attempt to reconcile the apparently very distinct styles of display adopted for the firm's watercolour and Old Master exhibitions with the argument that both attempted to encourage visitor connoisseurship, albeit in different ways.

### **Why did Agnew's need to convince others of its connoisseurship?**

There is strong evidence that the Agnew's staff took a keen interest in the ways in which the firm was perceived by its customers and by the general public. William Agnew, throughout the course of his long tenure as a partner in the firm, was especially prominent in the public eye. Following his death in 1910, *The Times* wrote that he 'may almost be called the founder [...] for forty years the most prominent representative, of that modern commerce in art which is so marked a feature of our time'.<sup>28</sup> Like the National Gallery, the company monitored its press coverage: the Agnew's archive contains books of press clippings dating from the 1870s onwards, covering subjects such as their Waterloo Place and Bond Street exhibitions, the reception of their reproductive prints and particularly newsworthy events, such as the 1876 theft of Gainsborough's *Duchess of Devonshire* and its 1901 recovery.<sup>29</sup> By 1903, Agnew's was using press cutting agency Romeike & Curtis to ensure that the firm did not overlook articles in which the Agnew's name was mentioned.<sup>30</sup> The collecting of press

---

<sup>28</sup> '1910', *The Times*, 31 December 1910.

<sup>29</sup> Press cuttings, NG, NGA27/22/1/1-12; NGA27/22/2/1; NGA27/22/2/6.

<sup>30</sup> The orange Romeike & Curtis slips appear several times from 1903 onwards: Press cuttings, 1897-1904, NG, NGA27/22/1/2. By 1917, Agnew's was supplementing this information or had switched to rival cuttings agency Durrant's Press Cuttings: Press cuttings, 1913-1919, NG, NGA27/22/1/11.

cuttings appears to have been a relatively common practice among art dealers, judging by similar volumes in the Duveen archive that cover the years from 1869 onwards.<sup>31</sup> This interest in the reputation of the company as perceived by those outside the organisation is similar to the idea of ‘non-controllable’ communicated identity as outlined by John Balmer and Stephen Greyser.<sup>32</sup> According to this model, companies need to monitor external opinions—manifested particularly in newspapers and periodicals during the period in question—in order to be able to respond via a second category of ‘controllable’ corporate communication. This can be understood as the ways in which an institution works to influence the public via channels such as advertising and reputation management. One of the major communication outlets over which Agnew’s had most control was the display spaces located within the firm’s own galleries, and the firm worked hard to control its connoisseurial reputation through this channel.

Given, then, that reputation was important to Agnew’s, the reasons for this concern are relatively straightforward. Much of the scholarly work in this field relates to contemporary business practice, but can be equally translated into the historic context of Old Master dealing. In particular, the art market is characterised—perhaps to a greater extent than any other retail business—by ‘great uncertainty and risk’ because of the difficulty in determining the quality and value of an artwork: a difficulty that underpins this thesis.<sup>33</sup> Bonus and Ronte have gone as far as to argue that it is impossible to establish the quality of a particular picture or oeuvre, with the trust of buyers instead placed in cultural quality as judged by a credible and trustworthy art world expert.<sup>34</sup> Dealers therefore have to work actively to convince their clients of the durable artistic and economic value of the works offered for sale, with Agnew’s selling the guarantee provided by their name as much as the physical objects acquired by their clients.<sup>35</sup> Agnew’s, as with any other fine art dealer, had established its reputation based upon the reliability of the connoisseurial decisions made by its partners. Frequent

---

<sup>31</sup> Scrapbooks, 1869-1962, GRI, 2007.D.1, Series III.

<sup>32</sup> J. M. T. Balmer and S. A. Greyser, ‘Managing the Multiple Identities of the Corporation’, in J. M. T. Balmer and S. A. Greyser (eds), *Revealing the Corporation: Perspectives on Identity, Image, Reputation, Corporate Branding, and Corporate-Level Marketing: An Anthology* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 16–29.

<sup>33</sup> P. Arora and F. Vermeylen, ‘The End of the Art Connoisseur? Experts and Knowledge Production in the Visual Arts in the Digital Age’, *Information, Communication & Society*, 16.2 (2013), p. 195; A. M. Dempster (ed.), *Risk and Uncertainty in the Art World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

<sup>34</sup> H. Bonus and D. Ronte, ‘Credibility and Economic Value in the Visual Arts’, *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 21.2 (1997), pp. 103–118.

<sup>35</sup> O. Velthuis, ‘Art Dealers’, in R. Towse (ed.), *A Handbook of Cultural Economics* (Cheltenham; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011), p. 30.

mistakes in connoisseurship, such as incorrect attributions, could—if made public—have had a substantial negative impact on the trust of collectors and their subsequent willingness to buy from Agnew’s, as opposed to a rival dealer. As a result, the staff at Agnew’s needed not only to be able to make correct attributions and carry out reliable connoisseurship, but also to advertise this fact to the art world and the general public alike.

## **Spaces of connoisseurial discourse**

### ***Exhibition catalogues***

As mentioned above, it has already been noted by scholars that catalogues have historically been used by dealers to establish claims regarding connoisseurship. However, catalogues are of particular relevance in this case because of the fact that the Agnew’s exhibition catalogues were specifically designed to be used within the display space: as for many of the firm’s rivals, catalogues were integral to the exhibition presentation for Agnew’s.<sup>36</sup> These catalogues were only made available as part of the exhibition experience, being included in the one-shilling fee charged for admission, and were designed to be carried around the exhibition. In the absence of wall labels, they would provide visitors with their main source of information on the works on display: a photograph album of the 1907 watercolour exhibition shows both the display and the corresponding catalogue entries, pasted in below (Fig. 42). Agnew’s did occasionally produce catalogues with more substantial art historical comment or an introduction by a well-known writer, such as Claude Phillips’s essay in the catalogues for the 1898 and 1900 Fragonard exhibitions discussed in Chapter 3. This allowed the firm to capitalise by association on Phillips’s own connoisseurial reputation, particularly built up through his positions as the first Keeper of the Wallace Collection and art critic for the *Daily Telegraph*.<sup>37</sup> However, the firm did not regularly adopt such tactics to boost its scholarly credentials, in contrast to rivals such as the Fine Art Society.<sup>38</sup> Instead, the Agnew’s exhibition catalogues provided a limited amount of information such as the title and attribution of each work, as well as occasionally including an exhibition history and details of any reproductions made (Fig. 43). Whereas the National Gallery catalogues featured additional information

---

<sup>36</sup> P. de Montfort, ‘The Fine Art Society and the Rise of the Solo Exhibition’, in C. Gould and S. Mesplède (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), pp. 154–155.

<sup>37</sup> D. S. MacColl and C. Lloyd, ‘Phillips, Sir Claude (1846-1926)’, in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/35512>.

<sup>38</sup> de Montfort, ‘The Fine Art Society’.

and, later on, illustrations that made them potential reference guides outside the gallery space, the Agnew's catalogues were of little use without the physical presence of the artwork.<sup>39</sup> In particular, the restrictions on the amount of information given in the catalogues drew attention to, and established Agnew's interpretation, of the attribution of each work, printed in black and white. However—as highlighted in the discussion on agency in the introduction to this study—visitors were then free to decide for themselves whether or not they agreed with the connoisseurial judgements of the Agnew's staff. This interaction between artwork, viewer and catalogue recalls the way in which, as discussed in Chapter 2, Morland himself annotated catalogues at the Royal Academy's Old Master exhibitions to challenge established attributions or quality judgements. As discussed above, while Agnew's could control the information that was printed in the catalogue, they could not control how visitors would reconcile this with the visual evidence of the artworks themselves. Having thus established the importance of the catalogue as used within the exhibition galleries, the discussion will now move onto the exhibition spaces themselves.

## ***The Agnew's galleries***

### ***Building investment in the 1870s***

Prior to the period under scrutiny in this thesis, Agnew's had already established a strong trading presence in Manchester, Liverpool and London. The firm began trading in Manchester in 1817, and was based at 14 Exchange St between 1826 and 1932, when the company finally left Manchester.<sup>40</sup> In 1858, Agnew's opened a branch in the 'London and Liverpool-buildings' near the Exchange in Liverpool, whilst the firm expanded to London by engaging premises at 5 Waterloo Place in 1860.<sup>41</sup> None of these buildings is extant, while few sources have come to light regarding any of these early branches, despite the long occupancy of the Manchester branch in particular; this makes it difficult to compare them with the new

---

<sup>39</sup> The National Gallery catalogues also formed part of the institution's accountability to Parliament, as the 1855 Treasury Minute reconstituting the establishment of the National Gallery specifically requested the preparation of a descriptive art historical catalogue: Whitehead, *The Public Art Museum*, p. 250.

<sup>40</sup> The obituary of Thomas Agnew senior, who died in 1871, confirms that the premises had opened in Exchange Street in 1826: 'The Late Mr. T. Agnew', *The Manchester Guardian*, 30 March 1871. The company was known as Zanetti & Agnew until 1835, when the partnership was dissolved and Thomas Agnew became sole proprietor; Zanetti & Agnew had traded out of 94 Market Street prior to the firm's 1826 move to Exchange Street.

<sup>41</sup> 'Advertisements & Notices', *Liverpool Mercury Etc.*, 27 October 1858; 'Fine Arts', *Daily News*, 15 November 1860.

buildings erected by Agnew's in the 1870s. All three of these earlier premises were rented property; by the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, however, it had become common for art dealers in the capital and beyond to require a dedicated gallery space customised to their own specifications and requirements. *The Times* wrote on the opening of the new Colnaghi gallery in 1913 that 'the highest class of dealers now handle such costly things in such numbers, and for such wealthy clients, that no luxury of organization seems too great [...] why stint oneself, a leading dealer may say, in making the theatre of those transactions as perfect as it can be made?'.<sup>42</sup> Within this crowded marketplace, it was more important than ever for firms to distinguish themselves from the competition through their exhibition space. The fact that Agnew's had already built up a strong reputation over the decades, by staging exhibitions in the three cities in which it operated, worked strongly in the company's favour. The *Standard* wrote in 1882 that:

Among the more knowing sections of the picture-seeing public there is something of a reaction in favour of exhibitions organised avowedly by dealers of repute. Galleries with high-sounding titles, from which any recognition of personal ownership is banished, abound everywhere, and are apt to be disappointing, particularly, perhaps, when it transpires that [...] that the Cosmopolitan Exhibition is but an enterprise of plain Mr. Brown. But at Messrs. Agnew's rooms, which open this morning with a large collection of modern water colours, there is always sure to be a sufficient display of excellent work.<sup>43</sup>

In order to capitalise on its existing reputation, Agnew's invested in new display spaces in the 1870s, commissioning new, 'specially designed and erected' buildings in both Liverpool and London (Fig. 44).<sup>44</sup> The firm's account books suggest that the premises erected at 39 (now 43) Old Bond Street in London in 1877 cost a total of £72,645 for the land and building combined, while the Liverpool property at the corner of Dale Street and Castle Street, which opened in 1878, cost a total of £51,647.<sup>45</sup> This can be compared to the cost of the privately funded Grosvenor Gallery, erected at 135-37 New Bond Street for an estimated £100,000-£150,000 in 1877.<sup>46</sup> Agnew's were not in the very top flight of building investment,

---

<sup>42</sup> 'Exhibition in New London Gallery', *The Times*, 29 November 1913.

<sup>43</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Gallery', *The Standard*, 13 February 1882.

<sup>44</sup> Further branches were opened at Place Vendome 22, Paris, in 1907 (closing in 1931), and Unter den Linden 31, Berlin, in 1908 (open until 1913). However, as these branches fall outside the British context of this thesis, they will not be discussed here.

<sup>45</sup> Accounts notebook, 1873-1901, NG, NGA27/18/1.

<sup>46</sup> C. Denney, *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-1890* (Cranbury, NJ; London; Mississauga: Associated University Presses, 2000), p. 27.

but had certainly made a significant monetary investment in these building projects. From a practical point of view, the decision to move premises within London certainly provided the firm with more exhibition space than the ‘comparatively small gallery’ in Waterloo Place.<sup>47</sup> This had been only able to hold around 150 drawings, whereas the ‘spacious’ new Bond Street property could accommodate over 220 watercolours on display at once.<sup>48</sup> Compared to larger outfits such as the Grosvenor, Agnew’s was unusual in only having a single main exhibition room in Bond Street. However—particularly considering the importance of selectivity in display, as will be discussed later in this chapter—the newly built Agnew’s buildings afforded many more advantages for the display of connoisseurship than simply increased space.

### ***Geographic locations and exteriors***

The urban networks of art dealing have received sustained scholarly attention over the last decade, particularly in London; much of the work to date on dealing has focused on London as the key site of exchange, where aesthetic and financial value was created through the dealers and art press operating within the context of an international art market.<sup>49</sup> It certainly was important for Agnew’s to have a London presence, as shown by the firm’s decision to extend to the capital in the 1860s and the fact that the company’s partners largely operated from this base from that point onwards. Furthermore, the 1877 move from Waterloo Place to Old Bond Street, although only just over half a mile in distance, placed Agnew’s squarely at the centre of a newly burgeoning arts trade; as Fletcher and Anne Helmreich have argued, this geographical shift can be seen as a spatial and physical ‘manifestation of the changes in the art trade from an earlier association with print selling and the sale of antiquities to the definition of art as part of luxury retail trade’.<sup>50</sup> As mapped by the London Gallery Project, from the 1870s onwards the number of art dealers operating from Bond Street or its environs exploded, and this trend located fine art viewing and

---

<sup>47</sup> ‘Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings’, *Morning Advertiser*, 17 February 1874, NG, NGA27/22/2/1.

<sup>48</sup> ‘Mr. Agnew’s Gallery’, *Daily News*, 8 February 1879; ‘The Fine Arts. Messrs. Agnew’s Gallery’, *Morning Advertiser*, 27 January 1879, NG, NGA27/22/2/1.

<sup>49</sup> A. Helmreich, ‘Traversing Objects: The London Art Market at the Turn of the Twentieth Century’, in C. Gould and S. Mesplede (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), p. 140.

<sup>50</sup> P. Fletcher and A. Helmreich, ‘Local/Global: Mapping Nineteenth-Century London’s Art Market’, *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 11.3 (2012), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn12/fletcher-helmreich-mapping-the-london-art-market> [accessed 5 December 2017]; for more on the earlier development of fashionable Bond Street, see F. Allibone, ‘Bond Street Style’, *Antique Collector*, 57.5 (1986), pp. 88-93.

purchasing squarely within London's luxury shopping district.<sup>51</sup> The location of the new Agnew's gallery therefore helped to confirm the centrality of the firm in this field. However, while the importance of London should not be underestimated, the example of Agnew's shows that regional branches also had a vital part to play. In Manchester and Liverpool, too, Agnew's operated from a carefully chosen location that would associate the company with the rapidly growing local art trade. The Manchester branch—described in 1881 as 'that pleasantest of provincial galleries'—was close to the Exchange, the trading hub of the city.<sup>52</sup> The premises of rival art dealer John Clowes Grundy were nearby at 4 Exchange Street, so there may well have been a local cluster of such businesses.<sup>53</sup> Although there does not appear to have been such a concentrated nucleus of art dealers in a particular street or area of Liverpool, here the new Agnew's gallery was located in the central business and retail district that catered in luxury goods for wealthy merchants.<sup>54</sup> Liverpool itself was a thriving town with a strong artistic scene: an annual Autumn Exhibition of contemporary painting and sculpture had been established in 1871, while the municipal Walker Art Gallery opened in 1873.<sup>55</sup> The exhibitions held by Agnew's at the new branch thus fitted into a range of artistic activities that 'formed a focus for the city's social life, often aimed at the upper-middle classes'.<sup>56</sup> While the Liverpool location seems to have been a success for the firm for many years, by 1911 the decision was taken to close the branch and sell off all remaining stock.<sup>57</sup> It is not clear why this move was made, although Agnew's perhaps planned to focus its

---

<sup>51</sup> Fletcher and Israel, 'London Gallery Project'; P. Fletcher and A. Helmreich, 'Introduction. The State of the Field', in *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2011), p. 10; for more on the geographical concentration of art businesses in London's West End, see also Helmreich, 'The Art Dealer and Taste'.

<sup>52</sup> T. Raffles Davison, 'Rambling Sketches No. 20', *The British Architect*, 11 November 1881.

<sup>53</sup> On the earlier rivalry between Agnew's and Grundy, see J. Seed, "'Commerce and the Liberal Arts': The Political Economy of Art in Manchester, 1775-1860", in J. Wolff and J. Seed (eds), *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 53–55; see also L. Peltz, 'Grundy, John Clowes (1806–1867), Printseller, Publisher, and Art Patron', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11703>; J. Simon, 'Grundy & Fox 1827-1831...', in *British Picture Framemakers, 1600-1950* (2012), <http://www.npg.org.uk/research/conservation/directory-of-british-framemakers/g.php> [accessed 5 October 2017].

<sup>54</sup> J. Sharples and J. Stonard, *Built on Commerce: Liverpool's Central Business District* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2008), 72–73.

<sup>55</sup> University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, *Liverpool Autumn Exhibition of Modern Pictures, 1871, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool*, Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951 (2011), [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/reference.php?id=msib4\\_1278321502](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/reference.php?id=msib4_1278321502) [accessed 23 August 2016]; S. MacLeod, *Museum Architecture: A New Biography* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>56</sup> Waterfield, *The People's Galleries*, p. 179.

<sup>57</sup> *Sale by Auction of the Entire Stock of Messrs. Thos. Agnew & Sons' Liverpool Branch* (Liverpool: Auctioneers Messrs. Brown & Rose, 1909), Liverpool Central Library & Archive, 708.051/SAL.

business more strongly on the London and international markets.

In addition to their carefully selected locations, the exterior designs of the new buildings in Liverpool and London were also intended to impress potential clients with the weight of the firm's reputation—and thereby its connoisseurship—before the threshold had even been crossed. As Kathryn Morrison has highlighted, shopkeepers have always had to consider the social and economic profile of their target customers when planning the appearance of a new building in conjunction with the architect.<sup>58</sup> Morrison suggests that subliminal cultural messages on the outside of the shop, as contained in the building design, shopfront style and window display arrangement, ensure that 'the right sort of customer steps over the threshold and the wrong sort passes by'. Although less striking in size and design than the National Gallery, the type of building adopted by Agnew's shows that the firm was aiming its business squarely at the middle and upper-class markets. Architects Solomons, Wornum and Ely of Manchester were responsible for the design of both buildings, for which the same carved red brickwork 'of the best kind' was employed in a Queen Anne style (Figs 45-46).<sup>59</sup> The architectural design of the new buildings was generally praised, in both the specialist and general press: the Bond Street building was described as 'an excellent red-brick building [...] with a handsome and commodious entrance', while the Liverpool building was welcomed as 'quite a conspicuous object by contrast with all the erections by which it is surrounded', boasting 'a very finished and artistic appearance'.<sup>60</sup> The intended—and apparently successful—impression was therefore one of gravitas, taste and aesthetic judgement. The window displays at each branch would have also acted as an important draw for customers: as Giles Waterfield has highlighted, since the eighteenth century the printshop display had formed an important centre for public congregation and discussion both in Paris and London.<sup>61</sup> The Exchange Street branch in Manchester featured a large plate-glass window where artworks would be displayed (Fig. 47), while a picture can just be glimpsed on display in the window of the Liverpool branch in 1895 (Fig. 48). The established reputation of their name, and the location and design of their galleries therefore combined to ensure that, from

---

<sup>58</sup> Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping*, p. 308.

<sup>59</sup> R. Pollard, J. Sharples and N. Pevsner, *Lancashire: Liverpool and the South-West* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), p. 311; the upper floor of the Bond Street gallery as shown in Fig. 45 was never built as 'it was objected to by the shopkeepers opposite': 'Messrs. Agnew's New Premises, Old Bond-Street', *The Building News*, 19 October 1877; 'Our Lithographic Illustrations. The Exchange Art Galleries, Liverpool', *The Building News*, 20 September 1878.

<sup>60</sup> 'Studies of Street Architecture.-XV. The New Entrance to the New Gallery', *The British Architect*, 17 October 1890; 'Messrs. Agnew's Fine Art Exhibition', *Liverpool Mercury*, 4 March 1878.

<sup>61</sup> Waterfield, *The People's Galleries*, pp. 18–20; Penot, *La maison Goupil*, pp. 184–185.

the outside, Agnew's was already recognisable as a commercial art dealers catering to the higher levels of society.

### ***Interior and décor***

Once over the threshold, visitors to the Agnew's galleries would have then encountered a space that was carefully judged to evoke the reception rooms of a middle-class domestic interior.<sup>62</sup> This was a change in approach for Agnew's in the 1870s, compared with the interior depicted in an image of the firm's Manchester branch published in 1861 (Fig. 49). This drawing is possibly an idealised depiction of the branch, bearing a strong resemblance to depictions of shop interiors such as those featured in *Ackermann's Repository of Arts* earlier in the nineteenth century (Fig. 50); nevertheless, in the 1860s the premises appear to have had a strongly commercial atmosphere, with customers being served by a sales assistant behind a counter.<sup>63</sup> However, with the company's commercial role and position in the market firmly established from the exterior of the new London and Liverpool buildings, there was greater scope for Agnew's to import spatial cues from the domestic sphere in order to evoke the settings in which their private clients felt comfortable and in which the paintings sold would eventually be displayed. This deliberately chosen style gave its visitors—or 'callers,' in the company jargon used to refer to visiting customers—the opportunity and confidence to carry out their own connoisseurship.<sup>64</sup> Stacey J. Pierson has highlighted the fluid and hybrid nature of the exhibitions hosted by the Burlington Fine Arts Club: at the club's headquarters at 17 Savile Row, the domestic intersected with the professional, and the private with public; this helped to bring largely privately collected artworks together, with a striking resultant impact on connoisseurship.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, Agnew's worked to blend the domestic with the commercial: many of the artworks featured in its Old Masters exhibitions, for example, were in fact loans from private collections, put on display in a commercial environment that aped the domestic.

---

<sup>62</sup> On the blurring of the lines between domestic and commercial space, see M. Ponsonby, *Stories from Home: English Domestic Interiors, 1750–1850* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), Chap. 4.

<sup>63</sup> On Ackermann's images of shops, see Morrison, *English Shops and Shopping*, pp. 37–39; A. O'Byrne, 'George Scharf's London Scenes', *London Journal*, 37.3 (2012), pp. 226–228.

<sup>64</sup> The firm's letterbooks record daily lists of 'callers', along with the name of the partner with whom the caller spoke: see, for example, Letter book 2, 1902–1904, NG, NGA27/11/2.

<sup>65</sup> S. J. Pierson, *Private Collecting, Exhibitions, and the Shaping of Art History in London* (New York; Abingdon: Routledge, 2017), p. 10.

Chapter 4 argued that the décor at the National Gallery was not only designed to impress the visitor with the quality and breadth of the national collection, but also to create a relatively neutral background for the in-depth viewing of paintings. Agnew's intended its galleries to be even more calming and appealing to the visitor. Although, as mentioned above, the Bond Street gallery could display more paintings than the company's former Waterloo Place premises, the Agnew's branch in London was still much smaller than those of many of its rivals. For example, the Grosvenor Gallery featured two large rooms for oil paintings, as well as dedicated smaller spaces for watercolours and sculpture, and attracted some 7,000 visitors on its opening day in 1877.<sup>66</sup> However, while crowding at a private view or exhibition was seen as a sign of social success, it was often also felt to detract from the artworks themselves: one 1885 gossip columnist sniffed that 'The crush at the Grosvenor Gallery private view on Saturday recalled the palmy days of Sir Coutts's institution [...] The collection of celebrities [...] was much more interesting than the collection of pictures'.<sup>67</sup> Agnew's was generally understood to be an exception to such 'crushes', with a greater focus on the artworks and better opportunities for visitors to appreciate them. 'Penelope' wrote in an edition of the *Our Ladies Column*, printed in various provincial newspapers, that

The distractions of large picture galleries, the multitudes of pictures which crowd on one's attention, and the impossibility of forming a correct judgement of any, placed as they are in the midst of others, with no space for the eye to rest itself upon, when colours become confusing, makes me much prefer to see any pictures which interest me in one of the smaller galleries rather than in the Academy, the Grosvenor, or the New, and I think most persons who think about it will find that they retain a more vivid and permanent impression of a painting seen alone than when it is crowded out of mind by its surroundings.<sup>68</sup>

Large, crowded or overly busy galleries were thus understood to be a distraction from the connoisseurial judgement of the artworks, both during the visit and afterwards when recalled to memory. As an example, the columnist specifically recommended visiting the exhibition of Edward Burne-Jones's *Briar Rose* series at Agnew's: 'All who can should see these beautiful and most suggestive pictures, and in Mr. Agnew's pleasant gallery they can do so undisturbed and quietly'. This impression of peace and calmness was maintained

---

<sup>66</sup> H. Blackburn, *Grosvenor Notes 1878: An Illustrated Catalogue of the Summer Exhibition* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1878); 'The Grosvenor Gallery', *Illustrated London News*, 12 May 1877.

<sup>67</sup> 'The Man about Town', *The Country Gentleman: A Sporting Gazette and Agricultural Journal*, 2 May 1885.

<sup>68</sup> 'Penelope', 'Our Ladies' Column', *Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury*, 10 May 1890.

despite the fact that Burne-Jones's paintings were very popular, attracting some 500 visitors a day and returning for an unusual repeat exhibition 'in compliance with a widely-expressed desire'.<sup>69</sup> The contrast between the number of visitors and the perceived quiet of the gallery may seem surprising, but was in fact part of the carefully curated experience within the Agnew's galleries.

As well as being achieved through a restricted selection of pictures and a generally spacious hang, as will be discussed below, this peaceful and comfortable atmosphere at Agnew's was created through the judicious use of refined décor: the *Graphic* called the Bond Street gallery 'one of the best lighted and most tastefully appointed in London'.<sup>70</sup> The air of quality was suggested throughout the firm's premises, from the 'wood-lined passage' through which the visitor entered at Bond Street, to the installation of a 'marble mosaic floor' and the use of "'real" woods, including American walnut and French black wood' for all of the woodwork at the Liverpool branch.<sup>71</sup> The careful placement of furniture and plants acted as a welcoming signal, inviting customers to sit or stand while examining drawings or prints (Figs 51-52). The heavily patterned wallpaper was a particular feature: as discussed in Chapter 4, red was seen as a neutral colour for the contemplation of paintings, and a deep plum was duly adopted by Agnew's when decorating the Bond Street gallery.<sup>72</sup> This choice may have been influenced by the decorative scheme adopted in the recently opened Barry Rooms at the National Gallery, helping to draw some of the respectability and reliability of museum connoisseurship into this commercial space. In addition, however, the deep crimson colour and flock patterning (Fig. 53)—in combination with the plants and furnishings—also helped to evoke the feel of the domestic dining room, a classic location for the display of pictures in private homes not sufficiently grand to boast a separate picture gallery. *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, popular among the burgeoning middle classes that made up much of the Agnew's customer base, wrote in 1879 that 'Our grandfathers were, as a rule, fond of crimson for their dining-room walls—those old flock papers which are again coming into use

---

<sup>69</sup> 'Art Notes', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 14 May 1890; 'The Legend of the Briar Rose...', *The Morning Post*, 12 December 1890.

<sup>70</sup> 'Water-Colours at Messrs. Agnew's Gallery, Old Bond Street', *The Graphic*, 8 February 1879.

<sup>71</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's New Premises, Old Bond-Street'; 'Our Lithographic Illustrations. The Exchange Art Galleries, Liverpool'.

<sup>72</sup> A scrap of the original material was found during restoration of the Bond Street branch in the 1980s: S. Moore, 'Continuity in Collecting: The Restoration and Early History of Agnew's', *Country Life*, 26 January 1984, pp. 246-247.

[...] it forms, too, an excellent background for pictures'.<sup>73</sup> The use of such wallpaper had not always been the preserve of the middle classes, of course, and the print adopted by Agnew's bears a remarkable resemblance to that used in such grand houses as Audley End in Essex (Fig. 54). The firm was at the forefront of adopting this quasi-domestic approach to decoration, as can be seen from the upholstered sofas, heavy fabric swagging and sculptures on plinths featured in later images of rival dealers such as Dowdeswell's (Fig. 55).<sup>74</sup> In time, this combination of 'red flock wallpaper and upholstery' would in fact come to embody the 'traditional, comfortable, bourgeois gallery interior'.<sup>75</sup> Dealers abroad made especial use of domestic or quasi-domestic environments as a sales tool: Paul Durand-Ruel, for example, invited visitors to his Parisian apartment to demonstrate how avant-garde Impressionist works could work in a domestic setting.<sup>76</sup> While William Agnew, in particular, certainly socialised widely with artists and collectors, as a firm Agnew's appears to have pioneered the use of a domestic aesthetic in a commercial space rather than extending business affairs to the homes of its staff.<sup>77</sup> However, Agnew's did not go as far as some British commercial galleries in emulating a domestic environment: at the most luxurious end of the market, the Grosvenor Gallery was specifically intended 'to emulate the spatial flow, opulence, and elegant [...] scale of an aristocrat's palatial home', while the Grosvenor's spiritual successor, the New Gallery, featured a fountain and real platinum detailing on the columns in its central hall (Fig. 56).<sup>78</sup> Agnew's certainly did not aspire to this level of grandeur. The Grosvenor was a different style of institution from Agnew's, however, given that it was not run for commercial profit and was (at least initially) financially backed by the wealthy Blanche and

---

<sup>73</sup> 'Houses, and How to Furnish Them. IV.—The Dining-Room', *The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, 1 June 1879; M. Beetham, *A Magazine Of Her Own?: Domesticity And Desire In The Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (London: Routledge, 1996), Chap. 5.

<sup>74</sup> Reproduced in A. Helmreich, 'The Socio-Geography of Art Dealers and Commercial Galleries in Early Twentieth-Century London', in H. Bonett, Y. Holt and J. Mundy (eds), *The Camden Town Group in Context* ([online publication]: Tate Research, 2012), <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/camden-town-group/anne-helmreich-the-socio-geography-of-art-dealers-and-commercial-galleries-in-early-r1105658> [accessed 27 September 2017]; de Montfort, 'The Fine Art Society', pp. 155-156.

<sup>75</sup> T. Flynn, *The A-Z of the International Art Market: The Essential Guide to Customs, Conventions and Practice* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), p. 114.

<sup>76</sup> P.-L. Durand-Ruel and F. Durand-Ruel, 'Paul Durand-Ruel (1831-1922): A Portrait', in S. Patry (ed.), *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market* (London: National Gallery Company, 2015), pp. 33; 47-50.

<sup>77</sup> D. Chun, 'Art Dealing in Nineteenth-Century England: The Case of Thomas Agnew', *Horizons: The Seoul Journal of the Humanities*, 2.2 (2011), p. 270.

<sup>78</sup> Denney, 'The Grosvenor Gallery as Palace of Art', p. 9.

Coutts Lindsay.<sup>79</sup> The very fact that the Grosvenor closed as a financial failure a mere twelve years after opening, despite its heavy investment in both the building and the artists on display, reflects the scale of the challenge facing Agnew's to achieve profitability through its connoisseurship.

### ***Semi-private spaces within the Agnew's galleries***

In addition to the public reception rooms already mentioned and the dedicated gallery spaces to be discussed below, both the Manchester and London branches featured private rooms where clients could meet with Agnew's staff to discuss their particular requirements. This tactic, widely adopted in the luxury market today, helps the customer to stay longer in the store—thus spending more money—and creates an emotional connection with the consumer by suggesting layers of exclusivity for the firm's most important clients.<sup>80</sup> In the lease for its Manchester premises, this space is marked as a 'Private Sales Room' (Fig. 57), while two small rooms with skylights still exist on the ground floor of what is now 43 Old Bond Street (Fig. 58). The Agnew's letterbooks record that 'callers' could make appointments to speak to the company's salesmen or partners: a representative list of callers on 7 January 1907 reveals a mixture of private clients and fellow dealers such as Arthur Tooth and Frank Robert Heaton, visiting from Montreal (Fig. 59). It seems most likely that these callers would have been taken into the private sales rooms and shown a range of paintings that might appeal to their specific tastes. Here, they could examine a work in close proximity, perhaps by seeing it propped on a chair, as in a later photograph of the Bond Street boardroom (Fig. 7). A note in the same letterbook gives a further insight into the sales process:

Mr. de Hitroff [sic] called today. He wanted specially to see a fine portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds. [Salesman] Mr [E. G.] Cundall showed him 'Countess Cardigan', Mrs. Fortescue, & Mr. Bordieu [sic] but he did not care for these. He was, however, greatly taken with Gainsborough's Mrs Montagu [...] and is coming in again tomorrow to see it again. He saw also Romney's 'Lady May', which he admired, and is going to speak about it to a friend.<sup>81</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Denney, 'The Grosvenor Gallery as Palace of Art'; J. F. Codell, 'On the Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-90', *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History* (n.d), [http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps\\_articles=julie-codell-on-the-grosvenor-gallery-1877](http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=julie-codell-on-the-grosvenor-gallery-1877) [accessed 13 March 2017].

<sup>80</sup> K. Nobbs, C. M. Moore and M. Sheridan, 'The Flagship Format within the Luxury Fashion Market', *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 40.12 (2012), p. 926.

<sup>81</sup> Letterbook 4, 1906-1909, NG, NGA27/11/4, p. 249.

This example clearly demonstrates how, in this semi-private environment, the staff could respond to a client's reaction to a work, and bring out other pictures from their stock as necessary. The use of this private space within the Agnew's galleries allowed clients to examine works in detail and close proximity, and gave the Agnew's staff a chance to explain in person the connoisseurial merits of a painting. At the same time, these private spaces allowed for discretion and the establishment of trust and power relationships between tradesman and client. Much of the firm's business was evidently concluded outside its official exhibitions; while these shows were important for communicating the company's connoisseurial expertise to the wider world, the use of these private salesrooms as a sales space should not be overlooked. In particular, many of the spatial aspects of these salesrooms—such as the prominent skylights—are mirrored in those of the exhibition gallery as discussed below.

### **What artworks were displayed in the Agnew's exhibitions?**

Unlike the National Gallery, Agnew's was not answerable to the public with regard to how the firm's capital was invested. In theory, this meant that the company was freer to invest in, and put on display, as eclectic a selection of artworks as were available for purchase and as its partners desired. However, in reality Agnew's was constrained by the concept of saleability, as discussed in Chapter 1: it was in the company's interests to buy artworks that would either appeal to the existing preferences of its clients, or persuade them that they should expand their tastes. Because of the increasingly crowded nature of the British art market, it also made good business sense to cultivate a reputation for connoisseurship in specific artists, genres or media in order to stand out from the competition. This strategy was recognised by observers at the beginning of the period under scrutiny here: in the early 1870s, the *Daily News* suggested that 'The practice of exhibiting occasionally very choice selections, adopted by late by those whose business it is simply to buy and sell works of art of the highest excellence, whenever and wherever the opportunity occurs, is very conducive to the encouragement of good taste amongst the wealthy amateurs'.<sup>82</sup> As the art market grew throughout the course of the late nineteenth century, the London commercial gallery system became ever more specialist, and Agnew's was no exception to this trend.<sup>83</sup> The

---

<sup>82</sup> 'Fine Arts', *Daily News*, 30 March 1872.

<sup>83</sup> C. Gould and S. Mesplède, 'Introduction: From Hogarth to Hirst: Three Hundred Years of Buying and Selling British Art', in C. Gould and S. Mesplède (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 13–14.

development of a connoisseurial specialism was seen as a strong market strategy for the firm: as *The Standard* wrote in 1892, ‘The Messrs. Agnew are among the dealers who wisely spare the public a fortnightly or monthly summons to their rooms; and on the rare occasions when we are bidden there, there is generally a show of real importance’.<sup>84</sup> Throughout the period in question, Agnew’s mounted numerous temporary exhibitions at its three branches. Because of the commercial nature of the firm and the high number of paintings passing through its hands, long-term displays such as those at the National Gallery were simply not a viable strategy. Instead, Agnew’s needed to demonstrate that it could respond to the market and offer its clients what they wanted. Catering to its local audiences, the firm’s exhibitions in Manchester and Liverpool had a particularly strong emphasis on contemporary, eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century art, as well as a broader selection of shows of decorative arts such as ‘Nankin china’.<sup>85</sup> While this reflected the wider range of artworks sold by Agnew’s earlier in the firm’s history, this exhibition trend continued in Liverpool and Manchester—though not in London—throughout the period being studied here. Exhibitions of modern and contemporary artworks were held throughout the period in question at all three branches, while individual paintings such as Millais’s *Caller Herrin* were occasionally displayed alongside their print reproduction in order to encourage print sales.<sup>86</sup> However, the focus in the rest of this chapter will be on two specific, long-running series of exhibitions, because of the ways in which they were used to develop and demonstrate connoisseurial specialisms on the part of the firm’s partners.

### ***Specialist exhibitions***

The first series of specialist exhibitions to be scrutinised will be the Agnew’s watercolour shows. By the early 1870s, at all three of its branches Agnew’s had established an annual exhibition of watercolours, a medium described by George Agnew as ‘an art so thoroughly English in its character’.<sup>87</sup> These exhibitions showcased works by deceased artists such as Peter de Wint and Turner alongside new, often specially commissioned drawings, and

---

<sup>84</sup> ‘Two Exhibitions’, *The Standard*, 15 February 1892.

<sup>85</sup> Sachko Macleod has suggested that Agnew’s influence explains ‘the relative uniformity of Manchester collections’: Macleod, *Art and the Victorian Middle Class*, p. 99.

<sup>86</sup> ‘Art Notes’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 24 August 1882.

<sup>87</sup> ‘Public Amusements, &c.’, *Liverpool Mercury Etc.*, 20 April 1870; ‘Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings’, *The Manchester Guardian*, 24 October 1872; ‘Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings’, *Morning Advertiser*, 17 February 1874; ‘Southport Centenary Celebration’, *Liverpool Mercury*, 11 June 1892.

frequently received detailed and enthusiastic reviews in both the general and specialised press. This praise was often linked to the reliability of the firm's connoisseurship: '[t]he judgement of the Messrs Agnew does not often play them false', suggested the *Standard* in 1896, 'even when they are dealing with work upon which time had not yet set any seal of approval'.<sup>88</sup> It therefore appears that the strategy of developing a particular specialism in the exhibition of watercolours was also successful in convincing the public of the firm's expertise in this medium. As time wore on, however, this specialist emphasis became a riskier strategy, as Agnew's ran the risk of being perceived as overly conservative in its choice of exhibits.<sup>89</sup> The *Saturday Review*, for example, suggested in 1892 that 'An attempt is given at Messrs. Agnew's gallery to brighten up these poor old classic water-colours by an admixture of very modern drawings. The experiment is not a success'.<sup>90</sup> However, this was not the opinion in all quarters: in 1907, the *Illustrated London News* wrote that 'Good water-colours cannot become old-fashioned, and we do not complain that the Agnew Galleries now display a collection of water-colours which is in all essentials just such an exhibition as they presented to a public of some fifty years ago'.<sup>91</sup> The company evidently decided that a solid reputation for watercolour expertise was worth the risk of seeming staid, as its watercolour exhibitions continued to be held at Bond Street for over a century until the final, 131<sup>st</sup>, show in 2004.<sup>92</sup>

The second exhibition series to be studied here is the Agnew's annual Old Masters series, which began in 1895 with 'Twenty masterpieces of the English school', and expanded to foreign artists with the 1899 exhibition 'Twenty selected pictures by Italian masters'. Market interest in the Old Masters had steadily increased in the 1880s, both because of the decision by the Royal Academy to launch an annual Winter Exhibition of Old Master paintings in 1870—following the demise of the British Institution exhibitions in 1866—and because the flow of artworks being sold off by the English aristocracy had by this point become a flood.<sup>93</sup> In response to these developments and in addition to its existing specialisms, by the mid-

---

<sup>88</sup> 'Two Picture Galleries', *The Standard*, 8 February 1896.

<sup>89</sup> The apparent paradox regarding the need to balance innovation with the status quo is discussed in D. Leonard-Barton, 'Core Capabilities and Core Rigidities: A Paradox in Managing New Product Development', *Strategic Management Journal*, 13.S1 (1992), pp. 111–125.

<sup>90</sup> 'Exhibitions', *Saturday Review*, 20 February 1892, NG, NGA27/22/2/1.

<sup>91</sup> 'Art Notes', *Illustrated London News*, 2 March 1907.

<sup>92</sup> S. Sloman, *Watercolours & Drawings: Agnew's 131st Annual Exhibition, 25 February-19 March 2004* (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 2004).

<sup>93</sup> Ripps, 'The London Picture Trade', pp. 164–166; Helmreich, 'Traversing Objects', p. 139; Bayer and Page, *The Development of the Art Market*, pp. 201–202; on the British Institution exhibitions, see Haskell, *The Ephemeral Museum*, Chap. 2; 'The British Institution', *The Art Journal*, September 1866, pp. 263–264.

1890s Agnew's had also begun to deal more heavily in the Old Masters. As Spielmann wrote in *The Graphic*,

It is said that on, at least, one occasion Mr. Agnew has been able to stand in Room III.—the great room of the Academy—and to say as he looked round: “I have bought every picture upon the line.” But now—he has followed his clients and the fashion in the patronage of deceased masters.<sup>94</sup>

The decision was taken by Agnew's to highlight the firm's connoisseurial expertise in the older English school and continental Old Masters, supplementing its spring watercolour exhibitions with an annual winter Old Masters exhibition in Bond Street. Throughout the series, a strong focus remained on eighteenth-century British works, supplemented by various Dutch, Italian, French or occasionally Spanish pictures. The paintings on display belonged to a range of owners: some 'lent from various great houses' among the company's extensive network of clients and contacts, others that had 'passed recently through the firm's hands' or still belonged to Agnew's.<sup>95</sup> Two photographs of the 1899 exhibition, rediscovered in the Agnew's archive, reveal just what type of approach was adopted towards display (Figs 60-61), as will be explored in more detail below. These Old Master exhibitions were generally well received by visitors and critics: the *Art Journal* wrote of the 1898 show, which included works by Constable, Turner, Lawrence and Gainsborough, that 'The pictures were selected with admirable judgment, and the artists represented could, in all cases, be studied to the very best advantage'.<sup>96</sup> Through these exhibitions, Agnew's could not only bring its existing stock to public attention, but also advertise successful sales. This strategy had the direct result that works that had been held in private collections, and were thus often relatively inaccessible, were made available for public connoisseurial comparison and judgement.

In particular, the Agnew's Old Master exhibitions sparked engagement and debate regarding connoisseurial issues such as the attribution and merits of the works on display. The 1899 exhibition 'Twenty selected pictures by Italian masters' attracted particular press attention due to a painting that *The Times* described as 'a newly discovered and perfectly genuine portrait by Raphael':

Messrs. Agnew's picture [...] which until lately occupied a modest place in a private Italian gallery under the name of Ridolfo Ghirlandajo [sic], was no sooner

---

<sup>94</sup> M. H. Spielmann, 'An Artistic Causerie', *The Graphic*, 8 July 1893.

<sup>95</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Gallery', *The Times*, 29 October 1908.

<sup>96</sup> 'Some Winter Shows', *The Art Journal*, January 1898, p. 31.

seen by one or two of the leading authorities than they acclaimed it as a certain work of Raphael's, and probably as the picture which tradition declared him to have painted of the brother of Angelo Doni.<sup>97</sup>

However, the catalogue produced by Agnew's for the exhibition merely stated the artist's name, his life dates and the title of the picture: *Portrait of the Elder Doni* (Fig. 62). Notably sparing in detail, it gave no information as to provenance or current ownership; in particular, it neglected to say by whom, or on what grounds, the change in attribution from Ghirlandaio to Raphael had been made.<sup>98</sup> As a result, visitors to the exhibition could only base their connoisseurship on the visual examination of the portrait and its formalist attributes, as compared with their personal 'mental canon'. On this basis, art critic Robert Alan Mowbray Stevenson agreed with the attribution as made by Agnew's:

The Raphael is a really fine portrait, looked at from every point of view: indeed, it soon became the centre of the exhibition in my eyes [...] No careful student of the real [...] has shown us a man with a more intimate modelling of structure than Raphael has in this portrait [...] But this careful, closely studied face also looks alive, fleshy and animated by the subtle varieties of hard and soft in the definitions. The quality of paint, more over [sic], is delicate and lovely, especially in the shadows and edges of the shadows. The cap and dress are quite simple, and one's eye rests upon the features until one seems hypnotized by the keen, enigmatic expression of a portrait worthy of Leonardo da Vinci himself.<sup>99</sup>

Stevenson appears to have based his connoisseurial judgement here on formal aesthetic qualities such as the modelling, the character and expression of the face in the portrait, and the refinement of the paint handling. However, because the painting was labelled as Raphael in the exhibition catalogue, the critic would have already been predisposed to consider the attribution of the work to Raphael. For Stevenson, the authority of Agnew's connoisseurship as stated in the catalogue, in addition to his interpretation of the visual evidence provided by the display of the artwork, was enough to support the attribution of this painting to Raphael.

---

<sup>97</sup> 'Old Italian Pictures', *The Times*, 21 June 1899. The portrait is now in the Hyde Collection, Glens Falls, NY (inv. no. 1971.36) and is still attributed to Raphael.

<sup>98</sup> If, indeed, the story reported by *The Times* regarding the change of attribution was true. Bernard Berenson reported in a private letter that he had seen a similar work in the possession of Italian dealer Elia Volpi, who had attributed it to Raphael, but Berenson does not appear to have viewed the painting when on display at Agnew's to confirm that the two works were the same. J. Sammer, 'Portrait of a Man in the Hyde Collection: Raphael or Ridolfo Ghirlandaio?' [unpublished paper] (n.d.), pp. 3–4.

<sup>99</sup> R. A. M. Stevenson, 'Japanese Arrangements and Italian Masterpieces', *The Art Journal*, July 1899, p. 253.

In particular, no criticism seems to have been made of the lack of provenance information provided by the firm. In this case, this demonstration of Agnew's connoisseurship was also sufficiently convincing to clinch a sale: the painting was sold to New York collector William Collins Whitney on 4 July 1899, while the exhibition was still ongoing.<sup>100</sup> Of course, given the freedom of visitors to the Agnew's exhibitions to reach their own connoisseurial judgements, it was far from the case that they always agreed with the decisions made by Agnew's; for instance, the *Athenaeum* wrote in 1903 of a painting attributed to John Sell Cotman in the Agnew's exhibition that 'Cotman's manner from childhood to old age is consistently striking and individual; [...] it bears no resemblance at any period to the loose, scattered, and conventional treatment of this picture'.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, this judgement was still based on the visual inspection of the work on display, while the example of the Raphael portrait demonstrates how the display of connoisseurship by Agnew's was frequently an effective sales technique.

Although not directly offered for sale, the pictures loaned to these Old Master exhibitions by private collectors also boosted the reputation of Agnew's staff for reliable connoisseurship. The selection of pictures on display acted to advertise the quality of the works that had passed through the firm's hands, prompting customers to approach the company if they were interested in purchasing similar paintings. From the start, these exhibitions were held for the benefit of the Artists' General Benevolent Institution, a fact that bolstered the company's philanthropic reputation and was also used by Agnew's to persuade owners to loan their works. For instance, Croal Thomson wrote to Sir George Donaldson, art collector and retired dealer, on his purchase of two Gainsborough portraits from the firm in 1907, in order to convince him to loan the paintings back to Agnew's for their winter exhibition.<sup>102</sup> 'We make nothing out of this business but kudos,' Croal Thomson wrote, '& we do want them – the finest Gainsboroughs ever passed through our hands – very badly indeed for the show.'

---

<sup>100</sup> Picture book 7, 1898-1904, NG, NGA27/1/1/9, p. 187.

<sup>101</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Winter Exhibition', *The Athenaeum*, 28 November 1903.

<sup>102</sup> These two portraits of Lord and Lady Dunstanville had passed down through the Basset family before being acquired by Agnew's. They are now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC (inv. nos 2014.79.705 and 2014.79.706). National Gallery of Art, *Francis Basset, Lord de Dunstanville*, <https://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/art-object-page.166447.html> [accessed 1 December 2017]; National Gallery of Art, *Frances Susanna, Lady de Dunstanville*, <https://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/art-object-page.166448.html> [accessed 1 December 2017].

It will be the best collection we ever had'.<sup>103</sup> Croal Thomson evidently succeeded in his persuasion, and the 'kudos' achieved by Agnew's through this particular exhibition was indeed worthwhile. *The Times* wrote that:

in some respects it is the finest of the series, for we have never seen four such Gainsboroughs [...] the pair of portraits, though their reputation is immense, have been seen by comparatively few [...] the pictures as pictures stand in the very highest rank among the works not of English artists, but of the world's great portrait painters.<sup>104</sup>

The 'reputation' of these two portraits thereby served to enhance Agnew's prestige by association. In addition, the Old Master shows advertised the quality of the works in which Agnew's dealt by bringing into public view transactions that might otherwise have remained strictly private. The kudos of the exhibition was not only restricted to Agnew's, but also added to the standing of the loaned works and their potential resale value (as mentioned in Chapter 2).<sup>105</sup> The press reviews of these exhibitions frequently referred not only to the current owners of the paintings, but also to their provenance, thus increasing the prestige of the works and of Agnew's connoisseurship in the eyes of the general public. While not directly advertised by Agnew's, this indirect dissemination of provenance information can be compared to the way in which the National Gallery often highlighted the aristocratic provenance of its new acquisitions through its display practice, as discussed in Chapter 4.

### ***Selectivity***

For both the watercolour and Old Master exhibition series, it was especially important for visitors to the Agnew's exhibitions to understand that each of the works on display had been carefully chosen on its own merits. In particular, rather than being constrained by the relatively small size of its galleries, Agnew's made the active decision to display a smaller number of works than many of its competitors: the *Liverpool Mercury* specifically drew attention to Agnew's decision to limit the display at its 1883 annual exhibition of

---

<sup>103</sup> D. Croal Thomson to G. Donaldson. 24 September 1907, Letterbook 1, 1902-1928, NG, NGA27/11/1.

<sup>104</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Exhibition', *The Times*, 31 October 1907.

<sup>105</sup> This was also a key consideration for the National Gallery when deciding whether to accept loans for display: in 1907, the Trustees refused to accept the proposed loan of the modern collection of collector and dealer Hugh Lane—despite the support of Holroyd for the loan—both because of the 'radical' qualities of the pictures and because they did not want to be seen as facilitating Lane's business interests. Crookham and Robbins, 'Mars und Museum', pp. 102-105.

contemporary art to a 'small but choice' selection of 150 works, 'with the pleasing result to the intelligent visitor that grains of wheat are not lost in bushels of chaff'.<sup>106</sup> As Martha Ward has highlighted with regard to Parisian art dealers at this time, this decision to show a smaller, more exclusive selection of works is also likely to have been linked to the desire to distance Agnew's from the 'glut' of paintings on display at the Royal Academy or the huge International Exhibitions so popular in the late nineteenth century, and in order to distinguish the firm further from its competitors.<sup>107</sup> With regard to its Old Master shows, although Agnew's chose to exhibit similar artists to those shown at the Royal Academy, as a commercial outfit and with its galleries much smaller than the multi-room Burlington House (Fig. 63), the firm could not hope to compete directly with the Academy in terms of the range of artworks on display. Instead, the decision was taken to exhibit an extremely reduced number of paintings, limited to between twenty and thirty works: this selectivity received praise from the critics, who often saw the selection on display as representing the very best on the market. In 1904, *The Art Journal* suggested that:

Inevitably, among Exhibitions opened during November, the finest array of pictures was that arranged by Messrs. Agnew. Hardly any of the twenty-five works, all save one by British artists, had been publicly exhibited during the present generation; indeed, 'Twenty Unknown Masterpieces' would as title have had some justification.<sup>108</sup>

Any paintings that had not reached Agnew's exacting connoisseurial standards would not be put on display, with the firm's watercolour shows being described as 'models of thoughtful elimination'.<sup>109</sup> In addition to its reliable connoisseurship, such selectivity also highlighted the company's reputation for knowing how and where to acquire the best works. *The Art Journal* described the 1873 watercolour exhibition at the firm's Waterloo Place gallery as 'a gathering of the rarest treasures that British Art can supply in that department', ascribing this to Agnew's 'peculiar facilities for bringing such specimens together—a large connection, long experience, unlimited capital, a thorough power to appreciate excellence, and, especially, the knowledge as to what artists are, and ought to be, most in favour with collectors'.<sup>110</sup> Such selectivity also demonstrated Agnew's connoisseurship to be as good as—if not better than—non-commercial enterprises: the firm's 'judicious purchase' strategy

---

<sup>106</sup> 'Exchange Art Gallery. Messrs. Agnew's Annual Exhibition', *Liverpool Mercury*, 23 November 1883.

<sup>107</sup> Ward, 'Impressionist Installations', p. 599.

<sup>108</sup> Frank Rinder, 'London Exhibitions', *The Art Journal*, January 1904, p. 27.

<sup>109</sup> 'Passing Events', *The Art Journal*, April 1911, p. 128.

<sup>110</sup> 'Minor Topics of the Month', *The Art Journal*, March 1873, p. 95.

being 'at least as trustworthy as the choice of any committee'.<sup>111</sup> The fastidiously chosen works displayed by Agnew's were therefore representative of the firm's connoisseurship as a whole, helping to cement its 'trustworthy' reputation. In short, it was generally understood by critics that Agnew's would not display a work in which the firm's staff did not have strong connoisseurial confidence.

## **The exhibition room**

### ***Proximity and hang***

Within the rooms in which these specialist, temporary exhibitions were held, Agnew's needed to consider carefully how the artworks were displayed in order to show them as well as possible. Given that the success of the Agnew's business rested on their ability to convince their customers of the trustworthiness of their connoisseurship, the firm's galleries had to be designed to show off their wares in the best possible fashion. In particular, the places in which Agnew's exhibited artworks reflected the type of connoisseurship practised by the firm's staff, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 3: prioritising visual examination over other types of information about the work. Chapter 4 demonstrated that while the National Gallery moved ever closer to a single-row, eye-level hang for its main collection of oils during the period under scrutiny, some of the practical measures needed for the protection of its collection—such as the railings depicted in Fig. 40—were also a barrier to connoisseurship by its visitors. Agnew's also prioritised the easily visible and accessible display of its works; in many cases, this was made easier for the firm than for the National Gallery because of the company's greater choice over which works to display and straightforward ownership of many of the works in its exhibitions. If works were damaged at Agnew's because of the lack of railings, then Agnew's partners would only be responsible to themselves and to the other members of the firm, as compared to the National Gallery being responsible for damage to the Treasury and the public at large. It is also probable that the middle-class visitors to Agnew's were seen as more likely to behave in the expected fashion in such spaces, and thus less likely to cause damage to the pictures, than the wide range of visitors to the National Gallery who, as shown in Chapter 4, were occasionally moved to carry out deliberate attacks on the collection. The Agnew's exhibitions did not need to be encumbered by railings or glazing in front of the pictures. To an even greater extent than the National Gallery, Agnew's could therefore prioritise encouraging its visitors to carry out a close visual inspection of the

---

<sup>111</sup> 'Water-Colours at Messrs. Agnew's Gallery, Old Bond Street'.

displayed artworks. While the company adopted a different type of hang for its two major annual shows of watercolours and Old Masters, both approaches were intended to make it as easy as possible for visitors to examine the artworks from close quarters.

### ***Watercolours***

For the watercolour exhibition, a relatively dense layout was chosen that respected the peculiarities of the medium, and in particular the small average size of the pictures (Fig. 42). While the layout of these drawings may seem crowded to modern eyes, it reflects the ‘dense, evenly-spaced hang’ typical of the approach to the medium in the late nineteenth century.<sup>112</sup> Indeed, Agnew’s approach was not dissimilar to that adopted by the National Gallery in the display of Turner’s watercolours in the ground-floor rooms at Trafalgar Square from 1879 onwards, which allowed the drawings to be closely approached for detailed scrutiny.<sup>113</sup> Even though a dense hang was acceptable, it was recognised at the time that ‘delicate hanging’ was still required for this particular medium: early watercolours should not be ‘plastered closely on the wall in quantities like slates on a roof’, argued the *Pall Mall Gazette* in 1896, as this made the drawings ‘dull, prosy and indistinguishable’.<sup>114</sup> An 1891 newspaper illustration demonstrates the hang adopted for that year’s watercolour exhibition in the top-lit, first-floor gallery of Agnew’s Bond Street branch, with the drawings hung on the walls and on screens, at eye level or slightly above or below (Fig. 64). Even though the ceiling was much lower than at the National Gallery, a notable gap was still left below the frieze in order to ensure that the artworks were close to the viewer. While visitors may have had to bend down to look at some pictures, none were hung so high that they could not be properly seen; that visitors to Agnew’s appreciated this is suggested by the woman on the right of the image, who is able to inspect a particular drawing more closely simply by leaning forward. This contrasts with complaints on the layout of works at the rival Dudley Gallery, itself a specialist in watercolour exhibitions: ‘it behoves the authorities’, wrote *The Art Journal* in 1873, ‘to exercise greater discrimination in the hanging, as some of the most carefully finished drawings are placed too high or too low for analysis’.<sup>115</sup>

While Agnew’s worked within the accepted parameters for the layout of watercolours, the firm also used the grouping aspect of hang to encourage comparison on the part of visitors

---

<sup>112</sup> Waterfield, *The People’s Galleries*, p. 221; private correspondence with Freya Spoor.

<sup>113</sup> Crookham, ‘The Turner Bequest’, pp. 56–57.

<sup>114</sup> ‘Exhibitions of Water-Colour Art’, *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 25 February 1896.

<sup>115</sup> ‘Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings at the Dudley Gallery’, *The Art Journal*, March 1873, p. 87.

to its watercolour exhibitions. Given the importance placed by the staff at Agnew's on the comparative, visual method of connoisseurship, as determined in Chapter 3, it is understandable that Agnew's own exhibitions should be arranged along similar lines. Just as the National Gallery aimed to facilitate connoisseurial comparison between schools and artists through the means of its hang, so Agnew's aimed—although on a much reduced scale—to offer a comparative selection of old and new watercolours in its annual exhibition. Drawings were hung in chronological order to demonstrate the perceived development of the genre, although works by prominent artists such as Turner were often grouped together on a screen in order to aid comparison within a single painter's oeuvre. The resultant comparative possibilities led to these exhibitions being praised by critics as 'as much a treat for the connoisseur as an opportunity for the collector [...] they are able to offer for study specimens of English water-colour painting from its brilliant dawn until it reached the full zenith of its power'.<sup>116</sup> Commentators also encouraged repeated trips to the exhibitions for the sake of the visitor's connoisseurial eye: 'An exhibition of high-class works is most instructive, and visitors who are unlearned in the creations of deceased and living artists can learn more by actual comparison in two or three visits than they would in as many months by merely reading lectures and books'.<sup>117</sup> In regard to the quality and comparative range of works on display, positive comparisons were even explicitly drawn in the press between the exhibitions at Agnew's and those at national institutions or grand private collections. Spielmann argued in 1897 that:

In these annual exhibitions the whole range of work of the old and modern masters of the English School of water-colour painters is summarised [...] Not even in the South Kensington Museum can a better notion be formed of the English love of landscape and the power to render it; in no collection can you appreciate more the ability to paint light and atmosphere with a perfection approachable by no other school, by no other nation.<sup>118</sup>

Nowhere in this effusive review is there any mention of the commercial aspects of the exhibition; indeed, it might seem from Spielmann's prose that Agnew's had organised the show merely for the 'pilgrimage' of the visiting connoisseur. Meanwhile, the *Pall Mall Gazette* particularly praised Agnew's for the potential of its watercolour hang, again in comparison to public institutions: 'Nowhere perhaps outside the national collections is the art of the English

---

<sup>116</sup> 'Art Exhibitions', *Illustrated London News*, 1 March 1890.

<sup>117</sup> 'Exchange Art Gallery. Messrs. Agnew's Annual Exhibition'.

<sup>118</sup> M. H. Spielmann, 'The Exhibitions of the Week', *The Graphic*, 20 February 1897.

water-colour school displayed in chronological order so well as it is at Messrs. Agnew's annual exhibition'.<sup>119</sup> The comparative hang of the annual watercolour exhibition therefore increased Agnew's scholarly and educational cultural capital through its flattering comparison with renowned public collections.

Within the watercolour exhibition, Agnew's was also able to highlight its connoisseurial expertise in the work of specific artists, and Turner in particular.<sup>120</sup> This was achieved through the exclusive display of Turner drawings on one or more screens, drawing attention to Turner's artworks as the pinnacle of this medium, as well as to the Agnew's ability to acquire the best Turners on the market.<sup>121</sup> In the context of the ongoing, high-profile discussions over the display of the Turner bequest at the National Gallery and then the Tate, the artist's posthumous reputation had endured to the point that in 1890 one newspaper critic wrote of his watercolours: 'There is only one branch of art in which England has any claim to originality or supremacy, and in this one branch Turner is our greatest name'.<sup>122</sup> Agnew's focus on Turner once again elevated the reputation of the firm from the status of a 'mere' dealer and closer to that of a specialist collector or public institution: the *Manchester Guardian* suggested of the firm's 1902 watercolour exhibition in that city that 'Outside the National Gallery and the Whitworth Institute one rarely sees such a collection of Turner drawings as are brought together here, ranging over almost the whole of his artistic life'.<sup>123</sup> The selection again offered visitors the chance to carry out their own visual connoisseurship, but this time focusing on the oeuvre of a single painter. The display of Turners at the ongoing watercolour exhibitions was complemented by specialist publications and exhibitions outside the Agnew's galleries. The 1899 Turner exhibition at the Guildhall, organised by the Corporation of London, was welcomed by the *Art Journal* as offering 'high instructive lessons and [...] the interesting opportunity' of comparing works in public ownership with those that had been sold by the painter.<sup>124</sup> The journal specifically noted that in bringing together the loan works, Corporation Art Director A. G. Temple 'was aided by the house of Messrs. Agnew, through

---

<sup>119</sup> 'Art Notes', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 4 February 1891.

<sup>120</sup> For more on the earlier associations between the firm and Turner's works, see Agnew, *Agnew's, 1817-1967*, pp. 25–27.

<sup>121</sup> In contrast to the criticism of their use at the National Gallery, visitors do not seem to have had any particularly negative response to the adoption of screens in the Agnew's galleries. This can perhaps be attributed to the small scale of the watercolours displayed thereon.

<sup>122</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Annual Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings', *The Manchester Guardian*, 24 October 1883; 'The Sale of the Farnley Turners', *The Leeds Mercury*, 28 June 1890.

<sup>123</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Water-Colour Exhibition', *The Manchester Guardian*, 5 November 1902.

<sup>124</sup> 'The Turner Exhibition at the Guildhall', *The Art Journal*, May 1899, p. 129.

whose hands all the grand Turners of high value and great artistic merit have passed in recent years'. Meanwhile, in 1902 the firm commissioned and published a Turner monograph by Sir Walter Armstrong, a comprehensive work that was praised for exploiting Agnew's market contacts to 'get access to the best Turners in private collections, and reproduce them in the most perfect way'.<sup>125</sup> Armstrong's work drew strong links between Turner and the Impressionists, ensuring that it was highly influential in maintaining Turner's reputation among modernist critics and feeding back into the popularity of Agnew's watercolour shows.<sup>126</sup> Finally, Agnew's connoisseurial specialism in Turner was further boosted by its 1913 one-man Turner show of 122 drawings. This exhibition highlighted the firm's *en bloc* purchase of the Farnley Hall collection and was welcomed by *The Times* as 'a truly astonishing exhibition of Turner's water-colour drawings, the like of which we shall probably never see again'.<sup>127</sup> Thus established, Agnew's developing reputation for specialist Turner connoisseurship was maintained throughout the twentieth century through the medium of exhibitions and scholarly publications.<sup>128</sup>

### **Old Masters**

Compared to the watercolour shows, Agnew's adopted quite a different approach to layout for its annual Old Master oils exhibitions. Like the National Gallery, the firm moved away from the crowded hang as the nineteenth century progressed and this approach to display began to fall out of fashion. An early illustration of 'Zanetti's Gallery'—presumably produced in the period between 1817 and 1835, when Thomas Agnew (senior) was still in partnership with Vittore Zanetti—shows oil paintings hung close together and in multiple rows above each other (Fig. 65). Some of the pictures hung near the ceiling are tilted forwards for better visibility, and at least one gentleman appears to be using a spyglass to be able to examine a work hung well above his eyeline.<sup>129</sup> This layout is strongly reminiscent of depictions of the dense 'salon hang' of the late eighteenth century (Fig. 66). In contrast, the hang adopted for

---

<sup>125</sup> W. Armstrong, *Turner* (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1902); T. Humphry Ward, 'Turner', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 24 October 1902.

<sup>126</sup> S. Smiles, *J. M. W. Turner: The Making of a Modern Artist* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007), pp. 89–91.

<sup>127</sup> 'A Turner Exhibition', *The Times*, 10 April 1913.

<sup>128</sup> M. Butlin and E. Joll, *The Paintings of J. M. W. Turner* (New Haven, CT; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; Tate Gallery; Yale University Press, 1977); J. Egerton, 'Obituaries: Evelyn Joll', *The Guardian*, 11 April 2001.

<sup>129</sup> For a discussion of the iconography of the spyglass in eighteenth-century depictions of the connoisseur, see Mount, 'The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass', pp. 172–174.

the annual Old Masters exhibition at the end of the nineteenth century represented a new approach for Agnew's. This development was facilitated by the larger average size and bolder colours of oil paintings, which seemed less incongruous when hung in relative isolation than the smaller, more delicate watercolour drawings. The first of the Agnew's Old Master shows in 1895 was highly recommended by *The Times*, which wrote that the 'pictures are but 20 in all, but perhaps for that reason the room is 20 times as well worth seeing as many a crowded gallery [...] to the world in general they will all be new, and even to the connoisseur three or four of the very finest pictures here will come as pleasant surprises'.<sup>130</sup> The reviewer's praise was particularly focused on the restricted selection of works, which allowed them to be hung separately for individual inspection. This hang was presumably similar to that of the 1899 exhibition 'Twenty masterpieces of the English school', in which the pictures were hung in a single row at eye level (Figs 60-61); in this case, the *Daily Mail* praised the firm for hanging these works 'so carefully and separately that each one can be adequately examined on its own merits'.<sup>131</sup>

From the critical response to these exhibitions, and from comparable images of competitors, such as Dowdeswell's (Fig. 55), it appears that Agnew's was one of the first dealers to adopt such a spacious hang for Old Master works, well before such an approach could be implemented at the National Gallery. To a certain extent, Agnew's was assisted in this regard by being able to show a much smaller range of works than the National Gallery, which—as discussed in Chapter 4—was under pressure to display as many paintings from its collection as possible and consistently struggled with a lack of display space. However, the firm was presumably also influenced by the approach taken by the Royal Academy for its own Winter Exhibitions of Old Master paintings: a painting by Henry Jermyn Brooks of the 1888 exhibition clearly shows the spacious, single-line hang (Fig. 67). William Agnew can even be seen to the far left of the image, highlighting the dealer's position in artistic society and his presence at such private view events.<sup>132</sup> The *Daily News* suggested at an Agnew's exhibition in 1900 that 'we see the advantage of good hanging, of margins of wall room round each picture, and of the absence of challenge and glare. It is like a miniature Academy [...] but free from that

---

<sup>130</sup> 'Twenty English Masterpieces', *The Times*, 30 November 1895.

<sup>131</sup> '...Notes on Art', *Daily Mail*, 20 November 1899.

<sup>132</sup> National Portrait Gallery, *Private View of the Old Masters Exhibition, Royal Academy, 1888: Extended Catalogue Entry*, <http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw00049/Private-View-of-the-Old-Masters-Exhibition-Royal-Academy-1888> [accessed 2 October 2017].

screaming Academy pitch which produces depressing Academy headache'.<sup>133</sup> By adopting a similar hang to that of the Royal Academy, Agnew's could assume some of the intellectual and connoisseurial 'authority of an institution which can plead age, wealth, repute, and the high character of its members'.<sup>134</sup> The spacious layout of Old Master works, in which Agnew's can be seen as an innovator among commercial firms, further encouraged the formalist type of connoisseurship where an artwork was considered largely on the strength of its visual merits.

A formalist approach was additionally encouraged by a strong attention to the aesthetic considerations of display in the Agnew's Old Master exhibitions. Because there was only one exhibition room at the Bond Street gallery, the firm could not take advantage of the framing effect as demonstrated with Raphael's *Ansidei Madonna* in the National Gallery (see Chapter 4). However, as at the National Gallery, Agnew's could ensure that paintings that were hung together complemented each other by size, colour, genre and symmetry where possible.<sup>135</sup> Agnew's was also more likely than the National Gallery to deal in consistently smaller paintings, particularly portraits suitable for sale to private clients that were easier to hang together without significant incongruity. Simon Knell has described the symmetry of hang as 'an observed or felt effect which exploits similarities in palette, the distribution of colour and tone, subject matter, framing, weight and so on'.<sup>136</sup> Knell sees one of the most harmonious and natural layouts as being pairs of portraits opposite each other so that they appear 'to be in conversation [...] turning each work into a lens through which the view the other and observe its similarities and contrasts'. This was an aesthetic approach adopted by Agnew's: for example, the two Gainsborough portraits mentioned above as being lent to the Agnew's 1907 exhibition were hung facing each other, either side of a Gainsborough landscape (Fig. 68). In this way, as well as being valued as individual works, the grouping of these three Gainsboroughs allowed for a greater appreciation and comparison of the hand of the master in both portrait and landscape. Mark Hallett has additionally suggested that in the case of temporary exhibitions, such as those at the Royal Academy, pictures could also act in dialogue chronologically with other works hung in previous exhibitions in the same space.<sup>137</sup>

---

<sup>133</sup> 'English Art in 1900', *Daily News*, 12 November 1900.

<sup>134</sup> 'Exhibition of Works of the Old Painters at Burlington House', *The Standard*, 31 December 1870.

<sup>135</sup> This subject has been surprisingly neglected in the secondary literature, although see J. Cornforth, 'Symmetry and Shapes: Patterns of Picture-Hanging II', *Country Life*, 11 June 1981, pp. 1698-1699.

<sup>136</sup> Knell, *National Galleries*, pp. 151-152.

<sup>137</sup> M. Hallett, 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the Eighteenth-Century Royal Academy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37.4 (2004), p. 597.

This was the case for both the Agnew's watercolour and Old Master series: once established, these exhibitions were constantly compared by the critics with those that had gone before, forcing Agnew's to try ever harder to maintain a high connoisseurial standard of display.

## ***Lighting***

Given that visual connoisseurship was so important to the Agnew's display, lighting was key at all three of the firm's branches. As with the skylights at the National Gallery, the emphasis placed by the staff of Agnew's on lighting when carrying out connoisseurship was reflected in the installation of the lighting schemes for their new galleries in Liverpool and London. As discussed in Chapter 2, 'good' lighting was understood to be particularly important for the connoisseurial appreciation of paintings: a categorisation that encompassed both the type of light and the means by which it was supplied. Michael Compton's overview of gallery lighting highlights the extent to which dealers had historically considered lighting to be an integral feature of gallery design.<sup>138</sup> This was no less true for Agnew's, with all three of the company's branches featuring top-lighting. In Liverpool, the glazing in the ceiling can just be glimpsed in a 1902 photograph that is the only interior view found to date of the branch (Fig. 51).<sup>139</sup> In Manchester, although rented premises, the lease plans show that the firm specifically chose a building with top-lit galleries for both engravings and paintings (Fig. 57). In Bond Street, not only was the main upstairs gallery fitted with a skylight that is still in situ, albeit with some alterations (Fig. 69), but there were also two smaller skylights in separate ground-floor rooms that were, as mentioned above, presumably used for private meetings with clients (Fig. 58). This evidence for all three of the firm's branches shows how important Agnew's felt natural lighting to be for its visitors. It also appears that this approach was welcomed by visitors to the premises: the new Bond Street branch was variously described as 'spacious and well-lighted' and 'well proportioned and beautifully lighted' on its opening.<sup>140</sup>

However, in stark contrast to the conservative attitude of the National Gallery, Agnew's was also quick to take advantage of the latest developments in artificial lighting technology. This can be attributed to the company's need to continue its commercial activities even when the quality of natural light was poor. As paintings were on display at Agnew's for a much shorter

---

<sup>138</sup> Compton, 'The Architecture of Daylight'.

<sup>139</sup> I gained access to the Liverpool building interior and roof in June 2017, but found that only the façade remains of the building as it was when built.

<sup>140</sup> 'Fine Arts', *The Morning Post*, 23 April 1877; 'Our Picture Galleries', *Fun*, 2 May 1877.

period of time than at the National Gallery, the company could also afford to be less concerned with the potentially damaging effects of artificial lighting methods. Agnew's was therefore an early adopter of both gas and electric lighting technologies, even compared with rival art dealers. From December 1875, the firm's newspaper advertisements for the watercolour exhibition at its Manchester branch began to specifically state that 'In dark weather the Galleries are illuminated by gas'.<sup>141</sup> This suggests both that gas lighting had been newly installed, and that its use was still relatively unusual among dealers at this time. The Liverpool branch in Dale Street, meanwhile, opened in 1876 with gas lighting already fitted. On its inauguration, the *Liverpool Mercury* wrote that of the upstairs suite of rooms, the 'gallery proper', that

The chamber is somewhat differently arranged to ordinary picture galleries. Instead of the whole of the skylight being filled with glass, the centre is composed of panelling in wood, the light being derived from wide sashes round the entire outer spaces. The glass roof is double, and the jets of gas used for the artificial lighting of the room are placed between the two ceilings, so as to thoroughly illuminate the room without the flames being perceptible. The effect of this mode of lighting the gallery is to place all the pictures in an equally favourable position for being seen.<sup>142</sup>

Both with the use of the skylights and with gas lighting, it appears that Agnew's was at this point still aiming for Cuttle's 'well-lit room' as described in Chapter 4, with its premises offering a diffuse lighting that did not highlight any work in particular.<sup>143</sup>

However, with the introduction of electric lighting, the firm's attitude towards lighting changed, given the possibilities that this technology offered for directing lighting to focus on individual works. As mentioned in Chapter 2, not all observers appreciated electrical lighting in galleries, particularly when first introduced. However, visitors were also obviously concerned by their inability to inspect artworks properly when both daylight and gaslight did not suffice. The *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote in 1891 that 'In this distressing weather [...] it is well nigh impossible to see these pictures which are now on view in the galleries of the picture dealers. Such light as there is—a weakly combination of fog and gaslight—makes it impossible to form accurate judgements. So that we can only give an indication of what the visitor may

---

<sup>141</sup> 'The Annual Exhibition...', *The Manchester Guardian*, 4 December 1875.

<sup>142</sup> 'Messrs. Agnew's Fine Art Exhibition'.

<sup>143</sup> Cuttle, *Light for Art's Sake*, pp. 213–216.

find when these benighted days have passed away'.<sup>144</sup> Such attitudes must have spurred dealers on to adopt electric lighting, in the fear that visitors would not come to their galleries in bad weather and that they would therefore miss out on sales. It is also possible that art dealers were encouraged by reports that electric lighting did not carry with it the risk of the 'tarry deposits' left by gas installations.<sup>145</sup> While Agnew's did not install electric lighting as early as the pioneering Grosvenor Gallery, which had installed its own generator to supply its electricity in 1882, the firm had certainly installed electric lights at its Bond Street gallery by 1888.<sup>146</sup> A complaint letter sent from Agnew's to the London Electric Company in that year reveals to what extent the firm had already come to rely on this new method of illumination:

for the [last] two months we have been so troubled by the bad light supplied – our 20 CP lamps not burning half what they ought to do, occasionally just when a good light was wanted, failing altogether, with consequent loss of business to us [...] Relying on your power and contract to supply the light, we removed all our gas-fittings, and hardly care to return to them, if we can help it.<sup>147</sup>

In particular, the loss of 'good light' meant the loss of business — a critical issue for any commercial outfit. Photographs of the 1899 exhibition 'Twenty Masterpieces of the English School' (Figs 60-61) give an idea of just how electric lights were used and directed within the exhibition space at Bond Street. In addition to the circular electrified chandeliers hung along the centre of the ceiling, the exhibition room also featured downlights along the edges of the room to provide a targeted light on individual paintings. These spotlights can be seen as a forerunner of the 'swan lights' that later became popular for domestic painting display.<sup>148</sup> As a supplement to the spacious hang of the 1899 exhibition, this type of focused lighting once again encouraged a strongly visual, even formalist approach to connoisseurship by directing attention to a specific, individual artwork. Meanwhile, the adoption of the new technologies of electric lighting, despite their teething problems, shows the firm's commitment to illuminating its works as clearly as possible for the visual connoisseurship practised by its clients.

---

<sup>144</sup> 'In the Picture Galleries', *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 12 February 1891.

<sup>145</sup> J. Rutherford, *Country House Lighting: 1660-1890* (Leeds: Leeds City Art Galleries, 1992), p. 105.

<sup>146</sup> The Electricity Council, *Electricity Supply in the United Kingdom: A Chronology* (London: The Electricity Council, 1987), pp. 21-24.

<sup>147</sup> Thos. Agnew & Sons to the London Electricity Supply Corporation, 7 December 1888, Valuations book, 1888-1898, NG, NGA27/12/1.

<sup>148</sup> Rutherford, *Country House Lighting*, p. 127.

## Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that, both inside and out, the Agnew's galleries were designed to impress visitors with the weight of the company's connoisseurial reputation, expertise and reliability. The location and design of the buildings, two of which were purpose-built in close collaboration with the architect, were carefully chosen to appeal to an exclusive section of the market. The types of material used, from carved brickwork to wooden panelling and upholstered furnishings, suggested not only a discreet luxury but also a domestic atmosphere in which clients would feel comfortable in taking their time to examine a range of artworks before buying. This welcoming environment was heightened by semi-private rooms in which customers could make appointments to discuss their particular needs directly with a salesman or partner in the firm. Of the regular temporary exhibitions staged in the dedicated exhibition spaces at all three branches, the annual watercolour and Old Master shows were particularly intended to draw attention to Agnew's specialisms. While a different hang was adopted for these two series, both layout and grouping encouraged a strongly visual, formalist analysis of the artworks. This was supplemented by the latest lighting technologies, and catalogues that offered a deliberately pared-down range of information relating to the pictures. These strategies can be attributed to the company's *raison d'être*: ensuring the trust of their customers in order to develop long-lasting business relationships. Unlike the National Gallery, Agnew's needed to negotiate the tension between the commercial aspects of its business and the type of impartial, independent connoisseurship that was beginning to be claimed by the self-described 'experts' in the art world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>149</sup> Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, p. 323.

## **Conclusion: The spatial aspects of connoisseurship**

This thesis aimed to determine the connoisseurial methods adopted by historical art world actors engaged in the professional judgement of Old Master paintings. It has outlined and adopted a spatial approach to the study of connoisseurship as practised in the period 1874 to 1916, using the activities of staff at art dealers Agnew's and the National Gallery as comparative case studies. In doing so, it has highlighted an alternative methodology to the traditional textual analysis that has, to date, been overwhelmingly adopted by scholars of connoisseurship. It has broadened the definition of connoisseurship beyond attribution to include considerations such as beauty and condition, as well as demonstrating that such judgements could be reached by individuals with the requisite time and networks to build up the necessary mental canon for comparison. It has suggested that visual analysis was largely prioritised over alternative methods, such as technical testing, because of spatial considerations. Finally, it has explored how display techniques at the two institutions mirrored the type of connoisseurship carried out by their staff, highlighting factors such as lighting and hang that assisted visitors in reaching their own conclusions on the exhibited artworks.

The first section of the thesis, which dealt with the spatial aspects of connoisseurial practice, opened by using textual, mainly archival, sources to define connoisseurship more broadly than has been traditional, arguing that this body of practice encompassed the judgement not only of attribution but also—to varying degrees—of condition, beauty, historic importance or representativeness, and saleability. Chapter 2 moved beyond these written sources to outline the spaces in which connoisseurship was practised by the National Gallery and Agnew's staff, classifying these spaces as private, semi-private or public, and exploring the ways in which their different attributes, such as lighting and the physical access to artworks, affected the ways in which connoisseurship could be applied. Chapter 3 then brought together the criteria of connoisseurship with the spaces of connoisseurship to suggest a practical model of analysis. This appears to have been largely focused on visual expertise, implemented through the creation of a considerable 'mental canon' of comparative images, specific to the memory of each individual connoisseur and based on the works encountered over a lifetime of study. As such, photograph collections and libraries were posited as additional spaces of connoisseurship; however, the techniques of archival provenance

research and the technical testing of paintings were revealed as being less important in this period than previously thought.

The second section of the thesis focused on the spatial aspects of connoisseurial display, exploring the ways in which both institutions used their public exhibition spaces to promote the results of their own connoisseurial practice and invite others to carry out their own connoisseurship in turn. The National Gallery, although to a certain extent limited by its capacity and responsibility to protect the collection from damage, used its rooms to highlight a narrative of the hierarchy of schools and the chronological development of western art. Over the course of the period under study, thanks to the various expansions to its Trafalgar Square building, the Gallery was able to work towards an ever more strictly classified display, while also adopting a more spacious layout with pictures closer to the eye of the observer. Meanwhile, as shown in Chapter 5, Agnew's invested heavily in its premises in the 1870s, erecting new buildings in London and Liverpool for a middle and upper-class clientele who would feel at home in the sumptuous, domestic-influenced interiors. Here, the firm introduced new annual watercolour and Old Master exhibitions to promote its particular connoisseurial specialisms, offering a dense, chronologically comparative display for watercolours and, contrastingly, a sparse Old Master hang that encouraged the individual perusal of each particular work by visitors.

Despite the differing remits and approaches of the two organisations, it is possible to draw significant comparisons between both the connoisseurial methods adopted by their respective staff and their display techniques. In terms of connoisseurial practice, the staff at Agnew's and the National Gallery appear to have prioritised similar criteria when making acquisitions, and to have carried out connoisseurship in a broadly similar fashion. This connoisseurial method was to a large extent dictated by the spaces in which potential purchases were viewed: while in the National Gallery Boardroom paintings could be viewed in good light, by multiple members of the Board and over an extended period of time if necessary, there were much tighter restrictions on the types of analysis that could be carried out on artworks encountered in public galleries or private homes. This resulted in the prioritisation of a comparative, visual analysis, as the staff at both institutions needed to be able to reach a reliable judgment on paintings even when this was the only possible method of examination. Similarly, the displays at both the National Gallery and Agnew's strongly promoted a visual examination of the exhibited artworks by visitors: little or no information

was provided in the form of wall labels, while exhibition catalogues were either not particularly adapted for use in the galleries—in the case of the National Gallery—or tended to provide little information beyond title and attribution — in the case of Agnew’s.

This thesis has developed an original approach to the study of the practice of connoisseurship, as well as demonstrating how this approach can be applied. This spatial approach offers a fresh and alternative method for the study of connoisseurship, drawing more broadly on a range of sources to expand beyond the traditional textual analysis almost exclusively adopted by previous scholars. These textual sources have the disadvantage that they might be written some time after a connoisseurial decision had been reached, or—as has been suggested in the case of Morelli—offer false justification in order to support the supposed implementation of a particular method. The new methodology adopted here has therefore allowed for the expansion of our understanding of connoisseurship beyond a sterile and disembodied theory into a practice strongly affected and determined by the spaces in which it was performed. The remainder of this conclusion will discuss the implications of the consideration of connoisseurship as a spatially situated practice, before ending with a final discussion of the vagaries of its application.

In particular, this study has led to the fundamental redefinition of connoisseurship as an analytical category. While connoisseurship has often been used as a direct synonym for attribution or authorship, as demonstrated here it is in fact a much broader concept that should not be reduced to the mere determination of attribution. Authorship was certainly a key consideration for both Agnew’s and the National Gallery, but, as has been revealed, the aspects of condition and beauty were equally as important, frequently leading to the rejection of a work offered for acquisition if felt to be deficient in one of these areas. Further aspects of a work, such as its perceived importance, representativeness or saleability, could also be taken into account depending on the purpose or purposes for which the painting was being acquired. These individual categories of connoisseurship are deserving of further research that could link investigation into connoisseurship with both the recent growth of interest in the history of artistic conservation and restoration, and with the study of aesthetics. Moreover, the categories of connoisseurship defined here are not necessarily definitive but could be expanded upon, for example in the case of collectors or with regard to artworks other than Old Master paintings. This is likely to deepen our understanding of

connoisseurship as a flexible practice with divergent aims and methods for different stakeholder groups, each adopting its own particular connoisseurial lens.

Meanwhile, connoisseurship was practised not just by a small band of self-professed 'experts', but by a wide range of practitioners throughout the art world and beyond. Previous scholars of connoisseurship have tended to exclude commercial practice, frequently seeing dealers as being somehow compromised by their activities in the art market. However, as this thesis has shown, the commercial aspects of the art world cannot be disentangled from its academic or educational facets. Connoisseurship was not a rarefied and mystical technique available only to those born into a particular stratum of society or a particular profession, but a skill that could be learnt and applied through the frequent exposure to artworks and reproductions. Future research could therefore go beyond the case studies illustrated here to encompass not only other dealers and museum or gallery professionals, but also other interested parties such as art critics, collectors and the newly emerging figure of the academic art historian. Furthermore, the spatial approach also allows connoisseurship to be studied even when practised by those outside the art world who have left little or no written evidence of their analytical methods. This is particularly important in the case of nineteenth-century women, who may not necessarily have considered themselves as connoisseurs but nevertheless worked to reach the judgements that have here been defined as connoisseurship.<sup>1</sup> As Elaine Chalus has argued, a range of factors such as gender, social status, race and occupation have frequently affected the historical experience and understanding of urban space.<sup>2</sup> The ability to gain access to private spaces to view artworks, as discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, was heavily reliant on male permissions and networks. The National Gallery Boardroom itself is likely to have been an exclusively male space until historian Veronica Wedgwood was appointed as the first female Trustee in 1962.<sup>3</sup> Even the 'public' spaces of the nineteenth-century British city, such as shops, streets and galleries, remained highly gendered, thereby conditioning women's experiences and practice of connoisseurship. Both within and without the specific building spaces analysed in this thesis, there would therefore have been additional spatial barriers to the development of

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Clarke and F. Ventrella, 'Women's Expertise and the Culture of Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources*, 33.1–2 (2017), pp. 1–10.

<sup>2</sup> E. Chalus, 'Space, Place and Environment: Introduction', in D. Simonton (ed.), *The Routledge History Handbook of Gender and the Urban Experience* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 85–89.

<sup>3</sup> Geddes Poole, *Stewards of the Nation's Art*, p. 107, note 17; G. R. Batho, 'Wedgwood, Dame (Cicely) Veronica (1910–1997)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/65195>.

connoisseurial skills for art world outsiders such as women or members of the working class. Herein lies a potential explanation for the traditionally rarefied view of connoisseurship: that those operating outside the upper echelons of society, or born into the wrong gender, were not permitted to build up the mental canon of images needed to perform it.

Another of the most significant findings from this thesis is that both technical testing and archival research had a far smaller impact on connoisseurial practice in the period than had previously been thought, placing the emphasis firmly on the visual judgement of works via the comparative method. The connoisseurs studied here were not necessarily opposed to the adoption of new connoisseurial methods or technologies, but were often prevented from applying them because of the logistical difficulties involved. While the prevalence of visual analysis and comparison had already been widely noted by scholars of connoisseurship, the spatial approach has helped to suggest the reasons behind what might otherwise seem to be an automatic rejection of newly emerging technologies. In particular, the mobility of both connoisseurs and artworks had a direct and vital impact on connoisseurship, by permitting or restricting the personal examination of paintings. Because of the spaces in which paintings were displayed or the attitudes of their owners, in many cases it would have been impossible for connoisseurs to handle works, remove samples for testing, or even to approach them at particularly close range. Connoisseurs frequently had to be able to make swift decisions regarding paintings that they had not previously encountered or been able to research. In addition, the space in which a painting was displayed could itself act as a marker of provenance and therefore attribution. If it could be inferred that a work had remained in situ for some time, from its continued presence in a country house drawing room or a religious establishment, then this was valuable additional information to suggest that, at the very least, the work was unlikely to be a modern copy. This latter factor appears to have received little attention in the existing literature, but this study suggests that it was particularly key in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This can perhaps be attributed to the frequency with which connoisseurs were forced to analyse artworks for which there was no extant information beyond the evidence of the painting itself. As this thesis has shown, spatial aspects therefore both limited the application of certain connoisseurial methods, and prompted the use of others.

Another important finding has been the connoisseurial association between memory and space, although there has not been enough room in this thesis to explore this concept fully.

Memory has been shown to be essential to the connoisseurial process in the period: even given the growing trend towards large-scale loan exhibitions centring on the art of a particular school or painter, it was never possible to gather together all of the paintings required for comparison in a single space. In order to be able to assess a newly encountered painting, connoisseurs therefore needed to be able to store and recall specific aspects of previously seen works. It has been suggested here that the spatial aspects of the display of a work helped to impress it more strongly in the memory of the connoisseur, with paintings being recalled based on their position in the room or height above the viewer's eyeline. This offers scope for the further development of this theme: for example, exploring whether works were less likely to be recalled in detail if seen in reproduction, or in a poorly lit space. The use of photographic reproductions of works, whether as an aide-mémoire or as a direct substitute for the artwork under analysis, is also deserving of further study that can build upon the important works cited in this thesis.

With regard to display, a strong link has been revealed between the type of visual connoisseurship practised by the National Gallery and Agnew's and the display practices adopted by these institutions, which tended to encourage visitors to prioritise the visual over other forms of analysis. The scope of the present study could be broadened further to explore whether this association between connoisseurial practice and display is to be found in other contexts. For example, there was a growing trend through the early twentieth century onwards towards a minimalist single-line hang, and the associated development of the 'white cube' approach that was intended to focus the attention of the visitor on the formal qualities of a single artwork. From the 1980s onwards, this approach began to be superseded by the restoration of the Victorian buildings now seen as the original setting for many public collections, and the reintegration of period room displays into museums.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, throughout the twentieth century many galleries and museums began to offer more information on objects, especially in the form of wall labels and catalogues, in line with a more overtly pedagogical message.<sup>5</sup> It might thus be possible in future research to track a correlated change in approach to connoisseurship over this period, reflecting the increased emphasis on the original function and context of an object in line with the social historical

---

<sup>4</sup> Whitehead, 'Institutional Autobiography'.

<sup>5</sup> G. E. Hein, 'Museum Architecture: A Brief History', in S. Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 340–352.

approach of scholars such as Michael Baxandall.<sup>6</sup> Within the space of particular buildings, such as the National Gallery, it could also be possible to build on the work of Psarra, as discussed in Chapter 4, implementing quantitative space syntax methodology to analyse the movements of modern-day visitors and their interactions with the works on display. It would be further enlightening to examine whether any associated change in approach to display could be isolated in the commercial sector, in order to determine whether there has been a consistent tendency towards a hang that assists viewers to appreciate the artworks on display through the implementation of a particular kind of visual connoisseurship.

The spatial methodology adopted in this thesis can, in principle, be equally applied to the study of historical and contemporary connoisseurial practice. From a historical perspective, the spatial method offers potential for the determination of how connoisseurship was practised even when no textual records survive as evidence. If it is possible to pin down where particular connoisseurs might have travelled, or what resources were available to them, then it is possible to extrapolate the type of visual comparisons made or provenance research carried out. This suggests that the methodology used in this thesis could be applied for periods prior to the nineteenth century, particularly given the growing interest in connoisseurship and collecting in the early modern period.<sup>7</sup> It could also be useful for the study of connoisseurship outside Britain, in order to determine whether practices differed substantially in distinct geographical and cultural contexts. It seems likely that familiarity with particular public or private collections, and the works within them, shaped the ways in which local connoisseurs carried out comparison or the connoisseurial conclusions that were reached, but more research needs to be carried out in this area to establish a direct link.

In the context of contemporary connoisseurship, the spatial method must take into account new spaces, such as the Internet and other digital research resources: it becomes harder to determine which particular images could have been used for comparison when so much visual information is now available at the click of a mouse or the swipe of a finger. However, the points raised throughout this thesis regarding access to and the technical examination of

---

<sup>6</sup> P. Mack and R. Williams (eds), *Michael Baxandall, Vision and the Work of Words* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016); A. Rifkin (ed.), *About Michael Baxandall* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

<sup>7</sup> H. Jacobson, *Luxury and Power: The Material World of the Stuart Diplomat, 1660-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); F. Haskell, *The King's Pictures: The Formation and Dispersal of the Collections of Charles I and His Courtiers*, ed. K. Serres (London; New Haven, CT: Published for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2013). See also the forthcoming exhibition at the Royal Academy, 'Charles I: King and Collector' (27 January-15 April 2018).

works, particularly in private collections or in geographically disparate locations, still stand. In comparison to the period scrutinised in this thesis, Old Master paintings have in modern times become even more widely scattered in collections throughout the globe, and with a growing interest in art investment throughout Russia, Asia (particularly China) and the Middle East, this trend may well continue.<sup>8</sup> As Matthew Lincoln has noted, drawing on the 1999 Clark Art Institute symposium and subsequent 2002 publication *The Two Art Histories*, modern connoisseurship still requires extensive (and expensive) travel:

To become an expert on differentiating one artist's hand from their workshop or family members, you must see as many works as possible in person. This is *phenomenally* expensive. You simply cannot do that kind of research unless you are independently rich (or have an interested patron) and have enough social connections to get into private collections.<sup>9</sup>

Given this continuing emphasis on connoisseurial travel and personal access to artworks, there is scope for the application of the spatial method to the study of modern connoisseurship, albeit in an altered form.

Just as this thesis opened with an event from early in the National Gallery's history that demonstrated the relevance of display as a spatial aspect of connoisseurship, so it will end with an example from the early twentieth century that highlights the ultimate individuality and subjectivity of connoisseurship, even within the same space. In 1912, following the death in the previous year of her husband and National Gallery Trustee the Earl of Carlisle, Lady Rosalind Carlisle invited the serving Trustees to visit her seat of Castle Howard and name 'six pictures, which they think it would be desirable for the nation to possess'.<sup>10</sup> These lists were then intended to inform her choice of which works to gift to the Gallery. Lady Carlisle was interested largely in the personal opinions of each Trustee, specifically stating in her letter that 'I do not want a general verdict of the Trustees, boiled down after consultation with each other. That may come afterwards, when perhaps it would be expedient for me to meet them;

---

<sup>8</sup> V. Elmer, 'The Global Art Industry', *SAGE Business Researcher*, 4 July 2016, <http://businessresearcher.sagepub.com/sbr-1775-100231-2737665> [accessed 24 November 2017]; I. Robertson (ed.), *Understanding International Art Markets and Management* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> M. D. Lincoln, 'Privilege and Connoisseurship', *Matthew Lincoln, PhD* (blog), 16 November 2015, <https://matthewlincoln.net/2015/11/16/privilege-and-connoisseurship.html>. For a further discussion of the travel difficulties and expenses associated with connoisseurship as a curator or academic, see C. W. Haxthausen, 'Beyond "The Two Art Histories"', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 11 (2014), pp. 1–11.

<sup>10</sup> Lady Carlisle to C. Holroyd, 14 August 1912, NG, NG7/410/2.

but in the meantime, I do not want them to speak with a united voice, but to let me know their individual choices'. It might have been assumed that a group of connoisseurs with the same aim in mind and viewing the paintings in the same private home would have been able to reach the same conclusions as to which pictures were worthy of acquisition. However, this would be to ignore the realities of the situation. Not all of the Trustees could even find the time to visit Castle Howard: de Rothschild apparently based his selection on existing knowledge (adding the caveat that he would like to see these paintings acquired by the Gallery if they had 'not been parted with in Lord Carlisle's lifetime') while Lord Redesdale simply picked the most promising sounding works from a list sent to him by Holroyd.<sup>11</sup>

Even those Trustees who did go to Castle Howard to view its collection produced very differing lists of desirable works, despite the identical space in which the works were on display. There was an overwhelming selection of works to choose from, as the collection featured over 900 pictures in various media.<sup>12</sup> There also appears to have been confusion regarding the categories of connoisseurship that should be applied to the Trustees' judgements, and the differing priorities that should be afforded to these categories: Lord Curzon wrote to Lady Carlisle that 'It is very difficult to choose between pictures so varied; and the pictures one might like best for oneself are not necessarily those most needed by the National Gallery'.<sup>13</sup> For some Trustees, historical importance and representativeness seem to have been key, while others focused on the main issues of attribution, condition and beauty. For example, Benson implied that his selections were based on a pragmatic judgment of the works that were most needed to fill the lacunae in the National Gallery's collection, stating that 'I did not say anything about the Reynolds or Gainsboroughs (much as I shd. like to have e.g. the [portrait of Mrs Graham dressed as a] housemaid) because those painters are already well represented in the N.G'.<sup>14</sup> In contrast, Lord Ribblesdale appeared to prioritise his aesthetic assessment of the works, suggesting that 'I believe we have a good many reliable examples of A[elbert] Cuyp in the Gallery, but the technique of this little picture is surely of exceptional quality & refinement'.<sup>15</sup> Although the Trustees were largely united in their application of the various criteria outlined in Chapter 1 of this thesis, they disagreed amongst

---

<sup>11</sup> Copies of letters from A. de Rothschild, Lord Redesdale and J. P. Heseltine, August 1912, NG, NG7/410/3.

<sup>12</sup> Lord Hawkesbury, *Catalogue of the Portraits, Miniatures, &c., at Castle Howard* (Hull: Browns' Savile Press, [c.1904]).

<sup>13</sup> Copy of letter from Lord Curzon to Lady Carlisle, 28 September 1912, NG, NG7/410/5.

<sup>14</sup> R. H. Benson to C. Holroyd, 13 November 1912, NG, NG7/410/9. Now Tate N02928.

<sup>15</sup> Lord Ribblesdale to C. Holroyd, 7 October 1912, NG, NG7/410/6. I have been unable to identify this picture.

themselves as to which of these criteria should take precedence when selecting works for the national collection. Even when judging particular criteria for the same artwork in the same space, very different verdicts could be reached because of the individual eye, personal preference and ‘mental canon’ of each individual connoisseur.

In any case, the choices made by the Trustees—however these were reached—do not appear to have a particularly strong bearing on the selection of works ultimately bestowed on the Gallery by Lady Carlisle. Benson was shrewd in his assessment when he wrote to Holroyd that:

I feel sure however that Lady Carlisle does not intend to let the choice rest with the Trustees. She has to consider the interest of the Estate as well as that of the Nation & I doubt whether the Estate can afford to part with pictures of great value. It is possible that 2 or 3 of the above mentioned might prove to be of greater saleability & value than she can afford to give us.

For example, despite the lukewarm reception by the Trustees of a painting attributed to Mignard, it still formed part of the eventual gift to the National Gallery. Curzon cautiously recommended ‘an interesting Mignard – of Descartes I think’, but noted that ‘it was hung rather high, and it did not seem to me a very characteristic picture tho I believe we have not so much as a single Mignard’.<sup>16</sup> Ribblesdale agreed, adding in a separate note that ‘I noticed a Mignard of Descartes – unluckily this picture was hung so high that I cd. not make much of it. It appears to be a well painted picture – and highly interesting as a portrait’.<sup>17</sup> None of the other Trustees mentioned the painting in their reports.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, Lady Carlisle sent the picture to Trafalgar Square in May 1913 along with the other paintings that she intended to gift, writing somewhat unenthusiastically that ‘This portrait does not interest me much & I have only sent it on the chance that as two trustees have mentioned it, others might value it more highly than I do & if so, the Gallery is welcome to it, but I do not advise you to have it’.<sup>19</sup> She also donated a Cranach *Charity* and a set of panels by Barnaba da Modena, none of which had been mentioned by any of the Trustees.<sup>20</sup> The Rubens, Annibale Carracci and del Mazo

---

<sup>16</sup> Copy of letter from Lord Curzon to Lady Carlisle, 28 September 1912, NG, NG7/410/5.

<sup>17</sup> Lord Ribblesdale to C. Holroyd, October 1912, NG, NG7/410/7.

<sup>18</sup> NG2929. This portrait is now attributed to Gabriel Revel and has also been stripped of its association with Descartes, merely bearing the title *Portrait of an Astronomer*: H. Wine, *The Seventeenth-Century French Paintings* (London: National Gallery Company, 2001), pp. 387-389.

<sup>19</sup> Lady Carlisle to C. Holroyd, 3 June 1913, NG, NG7/426/6.

<sup>20</sup> NG2925; NG2927.

works that completed the gift had been highly praised by various Trustees.<sup>21</sup> Even so, while Carracci's *Three Maries* had been particularly lauded by critics throughout the nineteenth century, Benson felt that the work was more 'a piece of dexterity' than a masterpiece, suggesting that 'I think it is the sort of picture Lady Carlisle can just afford to give away, & we to accept'.<sup>22</sup> This shows that the connoisseurial judgements reached by its Trustees by no means always resulted in the desired outcome for the Gallery. When negotiating acquisitions, the National Gallery staff therefore had to be mindful not only of their own connoisseurial judgements but of wider market forces and the intentions of the seller or donor: the tact needed for negotiations with associates outside the organisation was a crucial skill for both the National Gallery and Agnew's. While the spatial approach outlined in this thesis offers a new way to understand connoisseurship, the intricacies, complications and peculiarities of this hard-won skill should never be underestimated.

---

<sup>21</sup> Annibale Carracci, *The Dead Christ Mourned ('The Three Maries')* (NG2923); Rubens, *A Shepherd with his Flock in a Woody Landscape* (NG2924); del Mazo, *Queen Mariana of Spain in Mourning* (NG2926).

<sup>22</sup> R. H. Benson to C. Holroyd, 13 November 1912, NG, NG7/410/9.

# Bibliography

## Primary sources

### *Archival material*

Bedford Lemere & Co. architectural photographs. RIBA Library Photographs Collection, 66 Portland Place, London.

Charles Fairfax Murray diaries, 1983-A.27/33. Fondation Custodia, Paris.

Duveen Brothers scrapbooks, 1869-1962, 2007.D.1, Series III. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California.

Edward John Poynter letters (1870-1913), 850917. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California.

Frederic William Burton Collection, Manuscript Collection MS-0627. Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, Texas.

Letters between Thos. Agnew & Sons and Wilhelm von Bode (1891-1927), SMB –ZA; IV/ NL Bode 6148 Thos. Agnew & Sons, Kunsthandel, London. Zentralarchiv der Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Berlin.

Letters from Charles Fairfax Murray to William Spanton (uncatalogued). Dulwich Picture Gallery, London.

Letters between Thos. Agnew & Sons and Andreas Peter Weis (uncatalogued). Archive of the New Carlsberg Foundation, Copenhagen.

HM Treasury: Treasury Board Papers and In-Letters, T 1/11680/22503. The National Archives, London.

National Gallery archive. National Gallery, London.

Office of Works and successors: Art and Science Buildings: Plans and Drawings, WORK 33. The National Archives, London.

Thos. Agnew & Sons archive. National Gallery, London.

### *Published material*

Ackermann, R., *A Complete Set of Hand-Coloured Aquatint Views of London from The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, Fashions and Politic* (London: Rudolph Ackermann, 1809).

Agnew, W., *Holiday Jottings* (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1886).

Anderson Rose, J., *Liverpool Art Club. Collection, Illustrative of the History and Practice of Etching, Lent and Catalogued by James Anderson Rose, Esq., of London.* (Liverpool: Lee and Nightingale, 1874).

Armstrong, W., *Turner* (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1902).

*Ausstellung Aelterer Englischer Kunst* [exhibition catalogue] (Berlin; Stuttgart; Leipzig: Union Deutsche Verlagsgesellschaft, 1908).

Berenson, B., and K. Clark, *My Dear BB...: The Letters of Bernard Berenson and Kenneth Clark, 1925-1959*, ed. R. Cumming (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

Blackburn, H., *Pictorial Notes in the National Gallery [British School]* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1877).

— — —, *Grosvenor Notes 1878: An Illustrated Catalogue of the Summer Exhibition* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1878).

— — —, *Illustrated Catalogue to the National Gallery [Foreign Schools]* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1878).

— — —, *New Gallery Notes. 1888. An Illustrated Catalogue with Facsimiles of Sketches by the Artists* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1888).

Bragg, W., and I. Rawlins, *From the National Gallery Laboratory* (London: Printed for the Trustees: The National Gallery, 1940).

‘Burrell Collection (Lending and Borrowing) (Scotland) Bill’, SP Bill 33 (2013).

Carter, A. C. R., *The Year’s Art 1911* (London: Hutchinson and Co., 1911).

*Catalogo della Galleria del R. Istituto Provinciale di Belle Arti di Siena* (Siena: Sordo-muti di L. Lazzeri, 1872).

*Catalogue général des photographies inaltérables au charbon et héliogravures faites d’après les originaux* (Paris; Dornach: A. D. Braun & Cie., 1887).

*Catalogue of Painters and Draughtsmen Represented in the Library of Reproductions of Pictures & Drawings Formed by Robert and Mary Witt* (London: Privately printed, 1920).

*A Catalogue of the Pictures and Drawings in the National Loan Exhibition, in Aid of National Gallery Funds, Held in the Grafton Galleries, London (1909-1910)* (London: William Heinemann, 1909).

Church, A. H., *The Chemistry of Paints and Painting* (London: Seeley and Co., 1890).

Clifford, W., ‘The Study Collection of Photographs’, *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin*, 5.12 (1910), pp. 280–282.

Cook, E. T., *A Popular Handbook to the National Gallery*, 8<sup>th</sup> ed., 2 vols (London: Macmillan and Co., 1922).

'Country Homes & Gardens: Old & New: Shobdon Court, Herefordshire', *Country Life*, 10 November 1906, pp. 666-674.

Crowe, J. A., and G. B. Cavalcaselle, *A History of Painting in North Italy*, 3 vols (London: John Murray, 1871).

Cust, L., *The Royal Collection of Paintings at Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle. Vol II: Windsor Castle* (London; New York: William Heinemann; Charles Scribner's Sons, 1906).

———, (ed.), *Notes on Pictures in the Royal Collections* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1911).

*Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of the Pictures in the National Gallery: With Biographical Notices of the Painters: Foreign Schools*, 74th ed. (London: Printed for Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1889).

Dubreuil, L., and G. Sortais, *Catalogue de deux importants tableaux par Boilly (Louis-Léopold), appartenant à Madame la Comtesse Robert de Fitz James et Nattier (Jean-Marc), appartenant à M. le Comte J. le Marois* ([Paris]: 1903).

Eastlake, C. L[ock], *Observations on the Unfitness of the Present Building for Its Purposes in a Letter to the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart.* (London: W. Clowes and Sons, 1845).

Eastlake, C. L[ocke], *Hints on Household Taste in Furniture, Upholstery and Other Details*, 2nd ed. (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1869).

———, 'The Administration of the National Gallery: A Retrospect', *Nineteenth Century and After*, December 1903, pp. 926-946.

Edwards, E., *The Administrative Economy of the Fine Arts in England* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1840).

*An Exhibition of Cleaned Pictures (1936-1947)* ([London]: Printed for the Trustees: The National Gallery, 1947).

*Exhibition of Twenty Pictures by Masters of the Early English School on behalf of the Liverpool Royal Infirmary* [exhibition catalogue] (Liverpool: Thos. Agnew and Sons Ltd., 1902).

*Exhibition of Works by the Old Masters and by Deceased Masters of the British School* [exhibition catalogue] (London: Wm. Clowes & Sons, 1895).

*Exposition d'art ancien. L'art belge au XVIIe siècle. Bruxelles — 1910 juin-novembre* (Brussels: G. van Oest & Cie., 1912).

*Fogg Art Museum Harvard University: Collection of Mediaeval and Renaissance Paintings* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1919).

Fry, R., 'The Extension of the National Gallery', *The Nation*, 18 March 1911, pp. 1000-1001.

Gower, R., *The Northbrook Gallery: An Illustrated Descriptive and Historic Account of the Collection of the Earl of Northbrook, G.C.S.I* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1885).

Green, G. M., *Catalogue of the Eastlake Library in the National Gallery* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1872).

Gruyer, F.-A., *Voyage autour du Salon Carré au Musée du Louvre* (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie., 1891).

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 27 June 1845, Vol. 81.

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 2 July 1857, Vol. 146.

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 20 May 1870, Vol. 201.

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 23 February 1881, Vol. 258.

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 31 July 1883, Vol. 282.

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 16 August 1883, Vol. 283.

*Hansard*, HC Deb, 15 May 1893, Vol. 12.

*Hansard*, HL Deb, 31 March 1908, Vol 187.

Lord Hawkesbury, *Catalogue of the Portraits, Miniatures, &c., at Castle Howard* (Hull: Browns' Savile Press, [c. 1904]).

Holmes, C., *Self & Partners (Mostly Self): Being the Reminiscences of C. J. Holmes* (London: Rivington & Co, 1936).

Humphry Ward, T., 'Turner', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 24 October 1902, p. 316.

Jameson, A., *Companion to the Most Celebrated Private Galleries of Art in London* (London: Saunders and Otley, 1844).

*Loan Exhibition of Masterpieces of French Art of the 19th Century in Aid of the Lord Mayor's Appeal for the Hospitals* [exhibition catalogue] (Manchester: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1923).

Locke, J., *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding (1690)*, ed. J. Yolton (London: Dent, 1971).

Measom, G., *The Official Illustrated Guide to the Great Northern Railway, Including the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire, and Midland Railways, with Descriptions of the Most Important Manufactories in the Large Towns on the Lines* (London: Griffin, Bohn & Co, [1861]).

Menger, K., 'On the Origin of Money', *The Economic Journal*, 2.6 (1892), pp. 239–255.

Mogford, H., *Hand-Book for the Preservation of Pictures; Containing Practical Instructions for Cleaning, Lining, Repairing, and Restoring Oil Paintings* (London: Windsor and Newton, 1851).

*National Gallery: Descriptive and Historical Catalogue of the British and Foreign Pictures*, 81st ed. (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1913).

Nicoletti, G., *Pinacoteca Manfrin a Venezia* (Venezia: Marco Visentini, 1872).

*Pictures and Drawings forming the Collection of Daniel Thwaites, Esq., Addison Lodge, Kensington* (London: Bradbury, Agnew, & Co, 1888).

Posse, H., *Die Gemäldegalerie des Kaiser-Friedrich-Museums: Vollständiger beschreibender Katalog, mit Abbildungen sämtlicher Gemälde* (Berlin: Julius Bard, 1911).

Poynter, E. J., *Ten Lectures on Art*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1880).

*Report of the Committee of Trustees of the National Gallery, Appointed by the Trustees to Enquire into the Retention of Important Pictures in This Country and Other Matters Connected with the National Art Collections* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1914).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 21 March 1892;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1891.'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1892).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 2 July 1888;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1887'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1888).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 13 February 1891;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1890.'* (London: Hansard Publishing Union, 1891).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 1 April 1895;- for, Copy 'of the Annual Report of the Director of the National Gallery to the Treasury, for the Year 1894.'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1895).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 14 February 1898;- for, Copy 'of the Report of the Director of the National Gallery, for the Year 1898, with Appendices'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1899).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 5 March 1907;- for, Copy 'of the Report of the Trustees of the National Gallery, for the Year 1906, with Appendices'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1907).

*Return to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons, Dated 27 February 1908;- for, Copy 'of Report of the Director of the National Gallery, for the Year 1907, with Appendices'* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1908).

Richardson, J., *The Works of Jonathan Richardson. Containing I. The Theory of Painting. II. Essay on the Art of Criticism (So Far as It Relates to Painting). III. The Science of a Connoisseur* (London: Strawberry Hill, 1792).

*Roman d'Amour de La Jeunesse. Jean-Honoré Fragonard. [The Catalogue of an Exhibition, with an Essay by Sir C. Phillips.]* (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 1898).

*Sale by Auction of the Entire Stock of Messrs. Thos. Agnew & Sons' Liverpool Branch* (Liverpool: Auctioneers Messrs. Brown & Rose, 1909).

Select Committee on the National Gallery, *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery* (HC 1853, 867).

Slovan, S., *Watercolours & Drawings: Agnew's 131st Annual Exhibition, 25 February-19 March 2004* (London: Thos. Agnew & Sons, 2004).

'The National Gallery', *Monthly Supplement of the Penny Magazine of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge*, 299 (31 October to 30 November 1836), pp. 465-472.

*Twenty selected pictures by Italian masters: on exhibition at the galleries of Thos. Agnew & Sons...* [exhibition catalogue] (London: Bradbury, Agnew & Co., 1899).

*Udstilling Af Ældre Engelsk Kunst i Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek* [exhibition catalogue] (Copenhagen: F. E. Bording, 1908).

Witt, R. C., *How to Look at Pictures* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1903).

Wornum, R., *Some Account of the Life and Works of Hans Holbein* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1867).

Valentine, E. S., 'Christie's', *Strand Magazine: An Illustrated Monthly*, June 1904, pp. 641-649.

Yoxall, J., *The ABC about Collecting* (London: Stanley Paul & Co., 1910).

## ***Newspapers, magazines and periodicals***

*Antiques Trade Gazette*

*The Architects' & Builders' Journal*

*The Architectural Review*

*The Art Journal*

*The Athenaeum*

*Cleave's Penny Gazette of Variety*

*The British Architect*

*The British Architect and Northern Engineer*

*The Builder*

*The Building News*

*The Burlington Magazine*

*The Country Gentleman: A Sporting Gazette and Agricultural Journal*

*The Daily Graphic*

*The Daily News*

*Daily Mail*  
*The Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*  
*The Examiner*  
*Fun*  
*The Globe*  
*The Graphic*  
*The Guardian*  
*The Illustrated London News*  
*John Bull*  
*The Leeds Mercury*  
*Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury*  
*Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*  
*Liverpool Mercury*  
*The Manchester Guardian*  
*The Manchester Times*  
*The Morning Post*  
*Morning Advertiser*  
*The Pall Mall Gazette*  
*The Saturday Review*  
*The Standard*  
*The Sunday Times*  
*The Times*  
*The Tribune*

## **Secondary sources**

### ***Unpublished***

Clarke, A., 'The Rediscovery of Fra Angelico in Nineteenth-Century Britain', unpublished MA thesis, Warburg Institute, University of London, 2014.

Dalivalle, M., "'Borrowed Comeliness": Copying from Pictures in Seventeenth-Century England', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 2011.

Fernandes, L., 'The Witt Library, Photograph Collections and Art History in the Early Twentieth Century', unpublished MA thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2009.

Gibson-Wood, C. J., 'Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship from Vasari to Morelli', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Warburg Institute, University of London, 1982.

Hayes, M., 'What Burckhardt Saw: Restoration and the Invention of the Renaissance, c.1840-1904', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, New York University, 2017.

Ledger, T., 'A Study of the Arundel Society 1848-1897', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 1979.

Pezzini, B., 'Making a Market for Art: Agnew's and the National Gallery, 1850-1944', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester, forthcoming.

Plampin, M. T. W., 'From Rio to Romola: Morality and Didacticism in the English Appreciation of Early Italian Art 1836-1863', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, 2001.

Provo, A. A., 'Notions of Method: Text and Photograph in Methods of Connoisseurship', unpublished Honors thesis, Wesleyan University, 2010.

Ripps, M. J., 'Bond Street Picture Dealers and the International Trade in Dutch Old Masters, 1882-1914', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Oxford, 2010.

Sammer, J., 'Portrait of a Man in the Hyde Collection: Raphael or Ridolfo Ghirlandaio?', unpublished paper, n.d.

Uglow, L., "'New" Giorgione: Crowe and Cavalcaselle, Pater, and Morelli', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2012.

Walker, A. G., 'Beyond the Looking Glass: Object Handling and Access to Museum Collections' unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Southampton, 2013.

Ward, L., 'A Translation of a Translation: Dissemination of the Arundel Society's Chromolithographs', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, The Australian National University, 2016.

Woodall, A. C., 'Sensory Engagements with Objects in Art Galleries: Material Interpretation and Theological Metaphor', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Leicester, 2016.

## ***Published***

Agnew, G., *Agnew's, 1817-1967* (London: Bradbury Agnew Press, 1967).

Aldcroft, D., 'The Railway Age', in A. Digby, C. Feinstein and D. Jenkins (eds), *New Directions in Economic and Social History* (London: Palgrave, 1992), pp. 64-80.

Alexander, E. P., *Museum Masters: Their Museums and Their Influence* (Nashville, TN: Rowman Altamira, 1995).

Allen, J. L., and E. E. Gardner, *A Concise Catalogue of the European Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1954).

Allibone, F., 'Bond Street Style', *Antique Collector*, 57.5 (1986), pp. 88-93.

Amery, C., *A Celebration of Art and Architecture: The National Gallery Sainsbury Wing* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1991).

Anderson, J., 'Otto Mündler and His Travel Diary', in C. Togneri Dowd (ed.), *The Fifty-First Volume of the Walpole Society 1985* (Leeds: Printed for the Walpole Society by W. S. Maney & Son Ltd, 1985), pp. 7–60.

———, 'The First Cleaning Controversy at the National Gallery, 1846-1853', in D. Bomford and M. Leonard (eds), *Issues in the Conservation of Paintings II* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Conservation Institute, 2004), pp. 441–453.

Arora, P., and F. Vermeulen, 'The End of the Art Connoisseur? Experts and Knowledge Production in the Visual Arts in the Digital Age', *Information, Communication & Society*, 16.2 (2013), pp. 194–214.

Ash, E. H., 'Introduction: Expertise and the Early Modern State', *Osiris*, 25.1 (2010), pp. 1-24.

Assmann, A., *Cultural Memory and Western Civilisation: Functions, Media, Archives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Avery-Quash, S., 'The Growth of Interest in Early Italian Painting in Britain', in D. Gordon (ed.), *The Fifteenth-Century Italian Paintings. Volume I* (London: National Gallery Company, 2003), pp. xxiv–xliv.

———, *The Travel Notebooks of Sir Charles Eastlake*, 2 vols (London: The Walpole Society, 2011).

———, 'The Eastlake Library: Origins, History and Importance', *Studi di Memofonte*, 10 (2013), pp. 3-45.

———, 'The Art of Conservation II: Sir Charles Eastlake and Conservation at the National Gallery, London', *The Burlington Magazine*, 157.1353 (2015), pp. 846–854.

Avery-Quash, S., and S. Davoli, "'Boxall Is Interested Only in the Great Masters... Well, We'll See about That!'" William Boxall, Federico Sacchi and Cremonese Art at the National Gallery', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 28.2 (2016), pp. 225–241.

Avery-Quash, S., and J. Sheldon, *Art for the Nation: The Eastlakes and the Victorian Art World* (London: National Gallery Company, 2011).

Bailey, C. B., *Fragonard's Progress of Love at the Frick Collection* (New York: Frick Collection, 2011).

Balmer, J. M. T., and S. A. Greyser, 'Managing the Multiple Identities of the Corporation', in J. M. T. Balmer and S. A. Greyser (eds), *Revealing the Corporation: Perspectives on Identity, Image, Reputation, Corporate Branding, and Corporate-Level Marketing: An Anthology* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2003), pp. 16–29.

Barker, E., and A. Thomas, 'The Sainsbury Wing and Beyond: The National Gallery Today', in E. Barker (ed.), *Contemporary Cultures of Display* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 73–102.

Barker, E., N. Webb and K. Woods (eds), *The Changing Status of the Artist* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1999).

Barnaby, A., 'Lighting Practices in Art Galleries and Exhibition Spaces, 1750-1850', in M. Henning (ed.), *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Media* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), pp. 191-213.

Batho, G. R., 'Wedgwood, Dame (Cicely) Veronica (1910–1997)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/65195>.

Baxandall, M., *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2004).

Bayer, T. M., and J. R. Page, *The Development of the Art Market in England: Money as Muse, 1730-1900* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011).

Becker, H. S., *Art Worlds* (Berkeley, CA; London: University of California Press, 2008).

Beetham, M., *A Magazine Of Her Own?: Domesticity And Desire In The Woman's Magazine, 1800-1914* (London: Routledge, 1996).

Bennett, T., 'Thinking (with) Museums: From Exhibitionary Complex to Governmental Assemblage', in A. Witcomb and K. Message (eds), *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies: Museum Theory* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), pp. 3-20.

Bergstein, M., 'Freud's "Moses of Michelangelo:" Vasari, Photography, and Art Historical Practice', *The Art Bulletin*, 88.1 (2006), pp. 158-176.

Bergvelt, E., review of C. Sebag Montefiore, *A Dynasty of Dealers: John Smith and Successors, 1801–1924. A Study of the Art Market in Nineteenth-Century London* (Arundel: Roxburghe Club, 2013), in *Journal of the History of Collections*, 26.1 (2014), pp. 123–125.

Bewer, F. G., *A Laboratory for Art: Harvard's Fogg Museum and the Emergence of Conservation in America, 1900-1950* (New Haven, CT; London: Harvard Art Museum; Yale University Press, 2010).

Binyon, L., and C. Lloyd, 'Cust, Sir Lionel Henry (1859-1929)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/32684>.

Bleichmar, D., 'Learning to Look: Visual Expertise across Art and Science in Eighteenth-Century France', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 46.1 (2012), pp. 85-111.

Boase, G. C., and A. McConnell, 'Ellis, Wynne (1790–1875)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/8722>.

Bohrer, F. N., 'Photographic Perspectives: Photography and the Institutional Formation of Art History', in E. Mansfield (ed.), *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 246-259.

de Bolla, P., *The Education of the Eye: Painting, Landscape, and Architecture in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003).

Bonehill, J., 'Art History: Re-Viewing Recent Studies', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 34.4 (2011), pp. 461–470.

Bonsanti, G., 'The Art of Conservation VIII: From Guizzardi to Cavenaghi: Nineteenth-Century Italian Conservators', *The Burlington Magazine*, 158.1365 (2016), pp. 968-978.

Bonus, H., and D. Ronte, 'Credibility and Economic Value in the Visual Arts', *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 21.2 (1997), pp. 103–118.

Botti, S., 'What Role for Marketing in the Arts? An Analysis of Arts Consumption and Artistic Value', *International Journal of Arts Management*, 2.3 (2000), pp. 14-27.

Bourdieu, P., 'The Forms of Capital (1986)', in I. Szeman and T. Kaposy (eds), *Cultural Theory: An Anthology* (Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), pp. 81-93.

Brady, T. F., T. Konkle, G. A. Alvarez and A. Oliva, 'Visual Long-Term Memory Has a Massive Storage Capacity for Object Details', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 105.38 (2008), pp. 14325–14329.

Brewer, J., 'Evaluating Valuation: Connoisseurship, Technology and Art Attribution in an American Court of Law', in A. Berthoin Antal, M. Hutter and D. Stark, *Moments of Valuation: Exploring Sites of Dissonance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 89–107.

———, *The American Leonardo: A 20th-Century Tale of Obsession, Art and Money* (London: Constable, 2009).

Brigstocke, H., 'Lord Lindsay as a Collector', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 64.2 (1982), pp. 287-333.

———, 'Lord Lindsay: Travel in Italy and Northern Europe, 1841-42, for "Sketches of the History of Christian Art"', in *The Sixty-Fifth Volume of the Walpole Society* (Leeds; Cambridge, MA: Produced for the Walpole Society by Maney Publishing, 2003).

———, 'James Irvine: Picture Buying in Italy for William Buchanan and Arthur Champernowne', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 61–72.

Brommelle, N. S., 'The Russell and Abney Report on the Action of Light on Water Colours', *Studies in Conservation*, 9.4 (1964), pp. 140–152.

Brown, J. P., and W. B. Rose, 'Humidity and Moisture in Historic Buildings: The Origins of Building and Object Conservation', *APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology*, 27.3 (1996), pp. 12-23.

Bryant, J., *Designing the V&A: The Museum as a Work of Art (1857-1909)* (London: Lund Humphries; V&A Publishing, 2017).

Burton, A., 'The Uses of the South Kensington Art Collections', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 14.1 (2002), pp. 79–95.

Butlin, M., and E. Joll, *The Paintings of J. M. W. Turner* (New Haven, CT; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art; Tate Gallery; Yale University Press, 1977).

Campbell, L., 'Drawing Attention: John Postle Heseltine, the Etching Revival and Dutch Art of the Age of Rembrandt', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 26.1 (2013), pp. 103–115.

Candlin, F., *Art, Museums and Touch* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

Cantwell, J. D., *The Public Record Office, 1838-1958* (London: HMSO, 1991).

Caraffa, C., 'From Photo Libraries to Photo Archives: On the Epistemological Potential of Art-Historical Photo Collections', in C. Caraffa (ed.), *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), pp. 11–44.

Caraffa, C. (ed.), *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011).

Caraffa, C., and T. Serena (eds), *Photo Archives and the Idea of Nation* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2015).

Carò, F., E. Basso and M. Leona, 'The Earth Sciences from the Perspective of an Art Museum', *Elements*, 12.1 (2016), pp. 33–38.

Carrier, D., 'Remembering the Past: Art Museums as Memory Theaters', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 61.1 (2003), pp. 61–65.

Carrier, D., and D. Jones, *The Contemporary Art Gallery: Display, Power and Privilege* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2016).

Caruana-Galizia, P., and J. Martí-Henneberg, 'European Regional Railways and Real Income, 1870–1910: A Preliminary Report', *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 61.2 (2013), pp. 167-196.

Castree, N., 'David Harvey', in P. Hubbard and R. Kitchin (eds), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London; Thousand Oaks, CA; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2011), pp. 234–241.

Caygill, M. L. and J. F. Cherry (eds), *A. W. Franks: Nineteenth-Century Collecting and the British Museum* (London: British Museum Press, 1997).

de Certeau, M., *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. by S. Rendall (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2011).

Chalus, E., 'Space, Place and Environment: Introduction', in D. Simonton (ed.), *The Routledge History Handbook of Gender and the Urban Experience* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 85–89.

Chilvers, I. (ed.), 'Attribution', *The Oxford Dictionary of Art* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), pp. 39–40.

Chun, D., 'Art Dealing in Nineteenth-Century England: The Case of Thomas Agnew', *Horizons: The Seoul Journal of the Humanities*, 2.2 (2011), pp. 255-277.

Clark, T. J., *The Sight of Death: An Experiment in Art Writing* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2006).

Clarke, M., and F. Ventrella, 'Women's Expertise and the Culture of Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources*, 33.1–2 (2017), pp. 1–10.

Clifford, T., 'The Historical Approach to the Display of Paintings', *International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship*, 1.2 (1982), pp. 93–106.

Codell, J. F., 'Marion Harry Spielmann and the Role of the Press in the Professionalization of Artists'. *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 22.1 (1989), pp. 7–15.

———, "'Second Hand Images": On Art's Surrogate Means and Media—Introduction', *Visual Resources*, 26.3 (2010), pp. 214–225.

———, 'On the Grosvenor Gallery, 1877-90', *BRANCH: Britain, Representation and Nineteenth-Century History* (n.d.), [http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps\\_articles=julie-codell-on-the-grosvenor-gallery-1877](http://www.branchcollective.org/?ps_articles=julie-codell-on-the-grosvenor-gallery-1877) [accessed 13 March 2017]

Cohen, J., and A. Meskin, 'On the Epistemic Value of Photographs', *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 62.2 (2004), pp. 197–210.

Cohen, R., *Bernard Berenson: A Life in the Picture Trade* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2013).

Colomer, J. L., 'Competing for a Velázquez: New York Collectors after the Spanish Master', in J. L. Colomer and I. Reist (eds), *Collecting Spanish Art: Spain's Golden Age and America's Gilded Age* (New York: Frick Collection in association with Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica, Madrid, and Center for Spain in America, 2012), pp. 251-277.

Compton, M., 'The Architecture of Daylight', in G. Waterfield (ed.), *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790-1990* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991), pp. 37-47.

Conlin, J., 'Oil and Old Masters', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 31 October 2003, p. 14.

———, 'Butlers and Boardrooms: Alfred de Rothschild as Collector and Connoisseur', *The Rothschild Archive Review of the Year April 2005 to March 2006* (n.d.), pp. 26–33.

———, *The Nation's Mantelpiece: A History of the National Gallery* (London: Pallas Athene, 2006).

———, 'Collecting and Connoisseurship in England, 1840-1900: The Case of J. C. Robinson', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond*, ed. (Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2014), pp. 133–143.

Cornforth, J., 'Symmetry and Shapes: Patterns of Picture-Hanging II', *Country Life*, 11 June 1981, pp. 1698-1699.

Crary, J., *Techniques of the Observer: On Vision and Modernity in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, MA; London: MIT Press, 1992).

Crookham, A., *The National Gallery: An Illustrated History* (London: National Gallery, 2009).

———, 'The Turner Bequest at the National Gallery', in I. Warrell (ed.), *Turner Inspired: In the Light of Claude* (London: National Gallery Company, 2012), pp. 51–65.

———, 'Art or Document? Layard's Legacy and Bellini's Sultan', *Museum History Journal*, 8.1 (2015), pp. 28–40.

Crookham, A., and S. Avery-Quash, 'Upstairs, Downstairs. The National Gallery's Dual Collections', in M. Brusius and K. Singh (eds), *Museum Storage and Meaning: Tales from the Crypt* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 204–217.

Crookham, A., and A. Robbins, 'Im Angesicht der Moderne: Die Gründung der Britischen Nationalsammlung moderner ausländischer Gemälde 1914–1918', in C. Kott and B. Savoy (eds), *Mars und Museum: Europäische Museen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Cologne; Weimar; Vienna: Böhlau Verlag, 2016), pp. 99–116.

Cuttle, C., *Light for Art's Sake: Lighting for Artworks and Museum Displays* (Oxford; Burlington, MA: Elsevier, 2007).

Daley, M., 'Betraying Burrell – Shame on Glasgow', *Artwatch* [blog], <http://artwatch.org.uk/betraying-burrell-shame-on-glasgow/> [accessed 27 October 2017].

Daston, L., and P. Galison, *Objectivity* (New York: Zone Books, 2015).

Davidoff, L., 'Gender and the "Great Divide": Public and Private in British Gender History', *Journal of Women's History*, 15.1 (2003), pp. 11–27.

Dempster, A. M., (ed.), *Risk and Uncertainty in the Art World* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014).

Denney, C., 'The Grosvenor Gallery as Palace of Art: An Exhibition Model', in S. P. Casteras and C. Denney (eds), *The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996), pp. 9–37.

Denney, C., *At the Temple of Art: The Grosvenor Gallery, 1877–1890* (Cranbury, NJ; London; Mississauga: Associated University Presses, 2000).

Denver Art Museum, *Portrait of Don Diego Félix de Esquivel y Aldama*, <http://denverartmuseum.org/object/1961.67> [accessed 30 October 2017].

Deserno, I., 'The Value of International Business Archives: The Importance of the Archives of Multinational Companies in Shaping Cultural Identity', *Archival Science*, 9.3–4 (2009), pp. 215–225.

Duncan, C., 'From the Princely Gallery to the Public Art Museum: The Louvre Museum and the National Gallery', in J. Evans and D. Boswell (eds), *Representing the Nation: A Reader: Histories, Heritage and Museums* (London; New York: Routledge, 1999), pp. 304–331.

Durand-Ruel, P.-L., and F. Durand-Ruel, 'Paul Durand-Ruel (1831–1922): A Portrait', in Patry, S., A. Robbins, C. Riopelle, J. J. Rishel and J. A. Thompson (eds), *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market* (London: National Gallery Company, 2015), pp. 54–75.

- Ebitz, D., 'Connoisseurship as Practice', *Artibus et Historiae*, 18.9 (1988), pp. 207-212.
- Egerton, J., *National Gallery Catalogues: The British School* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1998).
- Ekman, M., 'Edifices of Memory. Topical Ordering in Cabinets and Museums', in J. Hegardt (ed.), *The Museum beyond the Nation* (Växjö: Davidsons tryckeri, 2012), pp. 61-86.
- The Electricity Council, *Electricity Supply in the United Kingdom: A Chronology* (London: The Electricity Council, 1987).
- Ellis, R. H., 'The Historical Manuscripts Commission 1869–1969', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 2.6 (1962), pp. 233–242.
- Elmer, V., 'The Global Art Industry', *SAGE Business Researcher*, 4 July 2016, <http://businessresearcher.sagepub.com/sbr-1775-100231-2737665> [accessed 24 November 2017].
- Elsner, J., 'Art History as Ekphrasis', *Art History*, 33.1 (2010), pp. 10–27.
- Erll, A., *Memory in Culture*, trans. by S. B. Young (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).
- Esteve-Coll, E., 'Image and Reality: The National Art Library', *Art Libraries Journal*, 11.2 (1986), pp. 33–39.
- Farr, D., 'Agnew Family (per. 1817–1986), Art Dealers', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004) <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/65633>.
- Fawcett, T., 'Graphic versus Photographic in the Nineteenth-Century Reproduction', *Art History*, 9.2 (1986), pp. 185–212.
- Findlay, M., *The Value of Art: Money, Power, Beauty* (Munich; London; New York: Prestel, 2012).
- Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, *Dona Mariana of Austria, Queen of Spain*, <https://art.famsf.org/diego-rodriguez-de-silva-y-velasquez/dona-mariana-austria-queen-spain-614425> [accessed 24 November 2017].
- Flescher, S., 'A Brief Guide to Provenance Research', in J. Courtney (ed.), *The Legal Guide for Museum Professionals* (Lanham; Boulder; New York; London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), pp. 55–72.
- Fletcher, P., 'Creating the French Gallery: Ernest Gambart and the Rise of the Commercial Art Gallery in Mid-Victorian London', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 6.1 (2007), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/46-spring07/spring07article/143-creating-the-french-gallery-ernest-gambart-and-the-rise-of-the-commercial-art-gallery-in-mid-victorian-london> [accessed 5 December 2017].
- — —, 'The Grand Tour on Bond Street: Cosmopolitanism and the Commercial Art Gallery in Victorian London', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 12.2 (2011), pp. 139–153.

Fletcher, P., and A. Helmreich, 'The Periodical and the Art Market: Investigating the "Dealer-Critic System" in Victorian England', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 41.4 (2008), pp. 323–351.

———, 'Introduction. The State of the Field', in *The Rise of the Modern Art Market in London* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2011), pp. 1–24.

———, 'Local/Global: Mapping Nineteenth-Century London's Art Market', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 11.3 (2012),  
<http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/autumn12/fletcher-helmreich-mapping-the-london-art-market> [accessed 5 December 2017].

Fletcher, P., and D. Israel, *London Gallery Project* (2012),  
<http://learn.bowdoin.edu/fletcher/london-gallery/> [accessed 12 August 2016].

Flint, K., *The Victorians and the Visual Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

Flynn, T., *The A-Z of the International Art Market: The Essential Guide to Customs, Conventions and Practice* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017).

Fondazione Federico Zeri, Università di Bologna, *Cataloghi Online* › *Catalogo Fototeca*,  
[http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/ricerca.v2.jsp?locale=it&decorator=layout\\_resp&applied=true&percorso\\_ricerca=OA&RSEC=Gherardo+di+Giovanni%2C+pannelli+di+cassone+con+il+Trionfo+della+Castit%C3%A0](http://catalogo.fondazionezeri.unibo.it/ricerca.v2.jsp?locale=it&decorator=layout_resp&applied=true&percorso_ricerca=OA&RSEC=Gherardo+di+Giovanni%2C+pannelli+di+cassone+con+il+Trionfo+della+Castit%C3%A0) [accessed 11 July 2017].

Forgan, S., 'The Architecture of Display: Museums, Universities and Objects in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *History of Science*, 32.2 (1994), pp. 139–162.

Franklin, J., 'The Eastlake Library and the Sources for *Materials for a History of Oil Painting, 1847*', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 38 (forthcoming).

Freedberg, D., 'Why Connoisseurship Matters', in K. van der Stighelen (ed.), *Munuscula Amicorum: Contributions on Rubens and His Colleagues in Honour of Hans Vlieghe*, Vol. I (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006), pp. 29–42.

FRESCO The Frick Art Reference Library. Frick Research Catalogue Online, *Giorgione, 1477–1511, The Tempest*, <http://arcade.nyarc.org/record=b1124784~S7> [accessed 30 October 2017].

The Frick Collection Center for the History of Collecting, *Archives Directory for the History of Collecting*, <http://research.frick.org/directoryweb/home.php> [accessed 14 November 2017].

Fried, M., 'Roger Fry's Formalism', in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 2011), [https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/\\_documents/a-to-z/f/fried\\_2001.pdf](https://tannerlectures.utah.edu/_documents/a-to-z/f/fried_2001.pdf) [accessed 27 November 2017].

Friedländer, M. J., *On Art and Connoisseurship*, trans. by T. Borenius (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1960).

Galenson, D. W., *Conceptual Revolutions in Twentieth-Century Art* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

Garberson, E., 'Libraries, Memory and the Space of Knowledge', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 18.2 (2006), pp. 105–136.

Garlick, K., 'Armstrong, Sir Walter (1849–1918), Museum Director and Art Historian', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/39439>.

Garside, D., K. Curran, K. Capucine, L. MacDonald, K. Teunissen and S. Robson, 'How Is Museum Lighting Selected? An Insight into Current Practice in UK Museums', *Journal of the Institute of Conservation*, 40.1 (2017), pp. 3–14.

Gaskell, I., *National Gallery Paintings from the Collection of Wynn Ellis of Whitstable* [exhibition catalogue] (Canterbury: Royal Museum, Canterbury, 1990).

———, *Vermeer's Wager: Speculations on Art History, Theory, and Art Museums* (London: Reaktion Books, 2000).

———, 'Tradesmen as Scholars: Interdependencies in the Study and Exchange of Art', in E. Mansfield (ed.), *Art History and Its Institutions: Foundations of a Discipline* (London: Routledge, 2002), pp. 146–162.

Gasson, M., 'Business Archives: Some Principles and Practices', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 18.2 (1997), pp. 141–149.

Geddes Poole, A., *Stewards of the Nation's Art: Contested Cultural Authority, 1890–1939* (Toronto; Buffalo, NY: University of Toronto Press, 2010).

Gennari Santori, F., *The Melancholy of Masterpieces: Old Master Paintings in America 1900–1914* (Milan: 5 Continents Editions, 2003).

Gettens, R. J., 'Teaching and Research in Art Conservation', *Science*, 133.3460 (1961), pp. 1212–1216.

Getty Research Institute, *Selected Dealer Archives & Locations*, [http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/guides\\_bibliographies/provenance/dealer\\_archives.html](http://www.getty.edu/research/tools/guides_bibliographies/provenance/dealer_archives.html) [accessed 14 November 2017].

Gibson-Wood, C., *Studies in the Theory of Connoisseurship from Vasari to Morelli* (New York; London: Garland, 1988).

———, *Jonathan Richardson: Art Theorist of the English Enlightenment* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2000).

Giebelhausen, M., 'Museum Architecture: A Brief History', in S. Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 223–244.

Gioffredi Superbi, F., 'The Photograph and Bernard Berenson: The Story of a Collection', *Visual Resources*, 26.3 (2010), pp. 289–303.

Ginzburg, C., 'Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm', in C. Ginzburg, *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method*, trans. by J. Tedeschi and A. C. Tedeschi (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 96–125.

Gooday, G., *Domesticating Electricity: Technology, Uncertainty and Gender, 1880-1914* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008).

Google Cultural Institute, *Elizabeth Wrottesley, Later Duchess of Grafton - Thomas Gainsborough - Google Arts & Culture*, <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/asset/elizabeth-wrottesley-later-duchess-of-grafton/9QFI9xAAcwoJMw> [accessed 10 November 2017].

Gorak, J., *The Making of the Modern Canon: Genesis and Crisis of a Literary Idea* (London: Athlone Press, 1991).

Gould, C[ecil], 'Eastlake and Molteni: The Ethics of Restoration', *The Burlington Magazine*, 116.858 (1974), pp. 530–534.

———, *The Sixteenth Century Italian Schools (Excluding the Venetian)* (London: National Gallery, 1962).

Gould, C[harlotte], and S. Mesplède, 'Introduction: From Hogarth to Hirst: Three Hundred Years of Buying and Selling British Art', in C. Gould and S. Mesplède (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 1-35.

Graham, D., and T. Eddie, *X-Ray Techniques in Art Galleries and Museums* (Bristol; Boston: Adam Hilger, 1985).

Graham, J., 'Crowe, Sir Joseph Archer (1825–1896)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/6824>.

Gray, R., 'Self-Made Men, Self-Narrated Lives: Male Autobiographical Writing and the Victorian Middle Class', *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 6.2 (2001), pp. 288–312.

Grenfell, M. and C. Hardy, *Art Rules: Pierre Bourdieu and the Visual Arts* (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2007).

Griener, P., *La République de l'œil: l'expérience de l'art au siècle des Lumières* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2010).

van der Grijp, P., 'The Sacred Gift: Donations from Private Collectors to Public Museums', *Museum Anthropology Review*, 8.1 (2014), pp. 22–44.

Gritt, S., 'The Removal of Patina', in M. F. Mecklenburg, A. E. Charola and R. J. Koestler (eds), *New Insights Into the Cleaning of Paintings: Proceedings from the Cleaning 2010 International Conference, Universidad Politecnica de Valencia and Museum Conservation Institute* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 2013), pp. 1–6.

Grosenick, U., and R. Stange (eds), *International Art Galleries: Post-War to Post-Millennium: A Chronology of the Dealers, Places and Personalities of Modern Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2005).

Guerdat, P., 'Through the Appraisal Process: René Gimpel (1881-1945) and Nicolas Poussin's Self-Portrait, from Rediscovery to De-Attribution', *Journal of Art Historiography* 16 (2017), pp. 1–45.

Guichard, C., 'Connoisseurship and Artistic Expertise. London and Paris, 1600-1800', in C. Rabier (ed.), *Fields of Expertise: A Comparative History of Expert Procedures in Paris and London, 1600 to Present* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), pp. 173–191.

———, 'Le marché au coeur de l'invention muséale? Jean-Baptiste-Pierre Lebrun au Louvre (1792-1802)', *Revue Synthèse*, 132.1 (2011), pp. 93-117.

Hallett, M., 'Reading the Walls: Pictorial Dialogue at the Eighteenth-Century Royal Academy', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 37.4 (2004), pp. 581–604.

Hamber, A. J., 'The Use of Photography by Nineteenth-Century Art Historians', in H. E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History through the Camera's Lens* (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 89-122.

———, *'A Higher Branch of the Art': Photographing the Fine Arts in England, 1839-1880* (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1996).

Hamlett, L., and H. Bonett, 'Sublime Portraiture: Jonathan Richardson's Portrait of the Artist's Son, Jonathan Richardson Junior, in His Study and Anthony van Dyck's Portrait of Mary Hill, Lady Killigrew', in N. Llewellyn and C. Riding (eds), *The Art of the Sublime* ([online publication]: Tate Research, 2013), <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/the-sublime/lydia-hamlett-and-helena-bonett-sublime-portraiture-jonathan-richardsons-portrait-of-the-r1138671> [accessed 21 October 2017].

Hanson, J., *Decoding Homes and Houses* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

Harris, N., 'The Long Good-Bye: Heritage and Threat in Anglo-America', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections across the Pond* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 195-208.

Harrison Moore, A., *Fraud, Fakery and False Business: Rethinking the Shrager versus Dighton 'Old Furniture Case'* (London; New York: Continuum International, 2011).

Haskell, F., *Rediscoveries in Art: Some Aspects of Taste, Fashion, and Collecting in England and France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1976).

———, *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1980)

———, 'William Coningham and His Collection of Old Masters', *The Burlington Magazine*, 133.1063 (1991), pp. 676–681.

———, *The Ephemeral Museum: Old Master Paintings and the Rise of the Art Exhibition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000).

———, *The King's Pictures: The Formation and Dispersal of the Collections of Charles I and His Courtiers*, ed. K. Serres (London; New Haven, CT: Published for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2013).

Haskins, K., *The Art-Journal and Fine Art Publishing in Victorian England, 1850-1880* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).

Hatt, M., and C. Klonk, *Art History: A Critical Introduction to Its Methods* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006).

Haxthausen, C. W., 'Beyond "The Two Art Histories"', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 11 (2014), pp. 1-11.

Hein, G. E., 'Museum Architecture: A Brief History', in S. Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), pp. 340–352.

Helmreich, A., 'The Art Dealer and Taste: The Case of David Croal Thomson and the Goupil Gallery, 1885-1897', *Visual Culture in Britain*, 6.2 (2005), pp. 31–49.

———, 'The Socio-Geography of Art Dealers and Commercial Galleries in Early Twentieth-Century London', in H. Bonett, Y. Holt and J. Mundy (eds), *The Camden Town Group in Context* ([online publication]: Tate Research, 2012), <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/research-publications/camden-town-group/anne-helmreich-the-socio-geography-of-art-dealers-and-commercial-galleries-in-early-r1105658> [accessed 27 September 2017].

———, 'Traversing Objects: The London Art Market at the Turn of the Twentieth Century', in C. Gould and S. Mesplede (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), pp. 135-146.

———, 'David Croal Thomson: The Professionalization of Art Dealing in an Expanding Field', *Getty Research Journal*, 5 (2013), pp. 89–100.

Helmreich, A., and Y. Holt, 'Marketing Bohemia: The Chenil Gallery in Chelsea, 1905–1926', *Oxford Art Journal*, 33.1 (2010), pp. 43–61.

Henning, M., 'With and without Walls: Photographic Reproduction and the Art Museum', in M. Henning (ed.), *The International Handbooks of Museum Studies, Volume 3: Museum Media* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2015).

Henry, T., 'The Subject of Domenico Morone's "Tournament" Panels in the National Gallery, London', *The Burlington Magazine*, 136.1019 (1994), pp. 21–22.

Higonnet, A., 'Afterword: The Social Life of Provenance', in G. Feigenbaum and I. Reist (eds), *Provenance: An Alternate History of Art* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2012), pp. 195-209.

Hill, K., *Culture and Class in English Public Museums* (London; New York: Routledge, 2016).

Hill Stoner, J., 'Vignettes of Interdisciplinary Technical Art History Investigation', *CeROArt. Conservation, Exposition, Restauration d'Objets d'Art*, HS: Tribute to Roger Marijnissen (June 2015), <https://ceroart.revues.org/4508> [accessed 5 December 2017].

Hillier, B., and J. Hanson, *The Social Logic of Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

Hillier, B., and K. Tzortzi, 'Space Syntax: The Language of Museum Space', in S. Macdonald (ed.), *A Companion to Museum Studies* (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), pp. 282–301.

Historic England, *The Gallery at Number 142 Doughty House, Richmond upon Thames - 1387232*, <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1387232> [accessed 30 October 2017].

Hoeniger, C., 'The Restoration of the Early Italian "Primitives" During the 20th Century: Valuing Art and Its Consequences', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 38.2 (1999), pp. 144–161.

Holland, J., 'The Approach of the English Court to Connoisseurship, Provenance and Technical Analysis', *Art Antiquity & Law*, 17.4 (2012), pp. 365–376.

Hodkinson, C., *A Question of Attribution: Art Connoisseurship in the Nineteenth Century* (Wrightington: Hunger Hill Press, 2014).

Hogan, P. C., 'The Idiosyncrasy of Beauty: Aesthetic Universals and the Diversity of Taste', in P. F. Bundgaard and F. Stjernfelt (eds), *Investigations Into the Phenomenology and the Ontology of the Work of Art* (Cham: Springer, 2015), pp. 109–127.

Hooper-Greenhill, E., *Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge* (London; New York: Routledge, 1992).

Howard, H., and S. Nethersole, 'Perugino, Sassoferrato and a "Beautiful Little Work" in the National Gallery, London', *The Burlington Magazine*, 152. 1287 (2010), pp. 376–384.

———, 'Two Copies of Perugino's "Baptism of Christ"', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 31 (2010), pp. 78–95.

Howell, J. D., 'Early Clinical Use of the X-Ray', *Transactions of the American Clinical and Climatological Association*, 127 (2016), pp. 341–349.

Huemer, C., 'Charles Sedelmeyer's Theatricality: Art and Speculation in Late 19th-Century Paris', in J. Bakoš (ed.), *Artwork through the Market: The Past and the Present* (Bratislava: VEDA, 2004), pp. 109–123.

———, 'Mascardes de désintéressement: Connoisseurship et les instruments de la salle des ventes', in P. Michel (ed.), *Connoisseurship: L'œil, la raison, l'instrument* (Paris: Rencontres de l'école du Louvre, 2014), pp. 103–115.

Hugill, P. J., *World Trade since 1431: Geography, Technology, and Capitalism* (Baltimore, MD; London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1995).

- Humfrey, P., *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 1997).
- Irvin Jr, W. M., *Prints and Visual Communication* (Cambridge, MA; London: The MIT Press, 1969).
- Jacobson, H., *Luxury and Power: The Material World of the Stuart Diplomat, 1660-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012).
- Jansen, J., 'The Geographer by Johannes Vermeer', <http://www.essentialvermeer.com/catalogue/geographer.html#.WWi1xem1vIU> [accessed 14 July 2017].
- Jensen, R., *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
- Jeromack, P., 'Velázquez Rediscovered', <http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/features/jeromack/velazquez-rediscovered12-16-09.asp> [accessed 1 December 2017].
- Jerram, L., 'Space: A Useless Category for Historical Analysis?', *History and Theory*, 52.3 (2013), pp. 400–419.
- Joannides, P., *The Drawings of Michelangelo and His Followers in the Ashmolean Museum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).
- Jones, M. E., *Art Law: A Concise Guide for Artists, Curators, and Art Educators* (Lanham, MD; London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016).
- Jöns, H., P. Meusburger and M. Heffernan (eds), *Mobilities of Knowledge* (Cham: Springer, 2017).
- Karlholm, D., 'Developing the Picture: Wölfflin's Performance Art', *Photography and Culture*, 3.2 (2010), pp. 207–215.
- Keck, S., 'Some Picture Cleaning Controversies: Past and Present', *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 23.2 (1984), pp. 73–87.
- Kent, S. (ed.), *Domestic Architecture and the Use of Space: An Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- Klonk, C., 'Mounting Vision: Charles Eastlake and the National Gallery of London', *The Art Bulletin*, 82.2 (2000), pp. 331–347.
- , *Spaces of Experience: Art Gallery Interiors from 1800 to 2000* (New Haven, CT; London: Yale University Press, 2009).
- Knell, S., *National Galleries: The Art of Making Nations* (New York: Routledge, 2016).

Konkle, T., T. F. Brady, G. A. Alvarez and A. Oliva, 'Scene Memory Is More Detailed Than You Think: The Role of Categories in Visual Long-Term Memory', *Psychological Science*, 21.11 (2010), pp. 1551–1556.

Kozbelt, A., and J. C. Kaufman, 'Aesthetics Assessment', in P. P. L. Tinio and J. K. Smith (eds), *The Cambridge Handbook of the Psychology of Aesthetics and the Arts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 86–112.

Krukar, J., 'Walk, Look, Remember: The Influence of the Gallery's Spatial Layout on Human Memory for an Art Exhibition', *Behavioral Sciences*, 4.3 (2014), pp. 181–201.

Küster, B., 'Copies on the Market in Eighteenth-Century Britain', in C. Gould and S. Mesplède (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), pp. 179–193.

Langmuir, E., *The National Gallery Companion Guide* (London: National Gallery Company, 2006).

Lasic, B., 'Acquiring and Displaying Replicas at the South Kensington Museum: "The Next Best Thing"', in M. Aldrich and J. Hackforth-Jones (eds), *Art and Authenticity* (Farnham; Burlington, VT; London; New York: Lund Humphries; Sotheby's Institute of Art, 2012), pp. 72–86.

Latour, B., *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Leder, H., B. Belke, A. Oeberst and D. Augustin, 'A Model of Aesthetic Appreciation and Aesthetic Judgments', *British Journal of Psychology*, 95.4 (2004), pp. 489–508.

Leonard-Barton, D., 'Core Capabilities and Core Rigidities: A Paradox in Managing New Product Development', *Strategic Management Journal*, 13.S1 (1992), pp. 111–125.

Levi, D., *Cavalcaselle: il pioniere della conservazione dell'arte italiana* (Turin: Einaudi, 1988).

———, 'Connoisseurs français du milieu du XIXe siècle : tradition nationale et apports extérieurs', in R. Recht (ed.), *Histoire de l'histoire de l'art en France au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Documentation française, 2008), pp. 197–214.

———, 'Let Agents Be Sent to All the Cities of Italy': British Public Museums and the Italian Art Market in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', in J. E. Law and L. Østermark-Johansen (eds), *Victorian and Edwardian Responses to the Italian Renaissance* (Aldershot; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 33–54.

Locatelli, V., 'Italian Painters, Critical Studies of Their Works: The Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister in Dresden. An Overview of Giovanni Morelli's Attributions', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 13 (2015), pp. 1–22.

Lincoln, M. D., 'Privilege and Connoisseurship', *Matthew Lincoln, PhD* (blog), 16 November 2015, <https://matthewlincoln.net/2015/11/16/privilege-and-connoisseurship.html> [accessed 1 December 2017].

- Lindey, C., *Keywords of Nineteenth-Century Art* (Bristol: Art Dictionaries, 2006).
- von Lintel, A. M., 'Art History as Spectacle: Blockbuster Exhibitions in 1850s England', in A. Graciano (ed.), *Exhibiting Outside the Academy, Salon and Biennial, 1775-1999: Alternative Venues for Display* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015), pp. 131-168.
- Lippard, L., and J. Chandler, 'The Dematerialization of Art', *Art International*, 12.2 (1968), pp. 31-36.
- Livingstone, D. N., *Putting Science in Its Place: Geographies of Scientific Knowledge* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2003).
- Locher, H., 'The Idea of the Canon and Canon Formation in Art History', in M. Rampley, T. Lenain, H. Locher, A. Pinotti, C. Schoell-Glass and K. Zijlmans (eds), *Art History and Visual Studies in Europe: Transnational Discourses and National Frameworks* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2012), pp. 29-40.
- López-Rey, J., *Velázquez: A Catalogue Raisonné of his Oeuvre* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963).
- Lorber, M., 'Ipotesi visive: "paradigma indiziario" versus "paradigma ipotetico" nella connoisseurship ottocentesca', *Arte in Friuli, Arte a Trieste*, 24 (2005), pp. 119-144.
- Lord, B., 'Foucault's Museum: Difference, Representation, and Genealogy', *Museum and Society*, 4.1 (2006), pp. 1-14.
- Luhmann, N., *Art as a Social System*, trans. by E. M. Knodt (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2000).
- MacColl, D. S., and C. Lloyd, 'Phillips, Sir Claude (1846-1926)', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/35512>.
- McCouat, P., 'Michelangelo's Disputed Entombment', *Journal of Art in Society* (2014), <http://www.artinsociety.com/michelangelos-disputed-entombment.html> [accessed 1 December 2017].
- McCue, M., *British Romanticism and the Reception of Italian Old Master Art, 1793-1840* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).
- MacDonald, S., 'Exploring the Role of Touch in Connoisseurship and the Identification of Objects', in E. Pye (ed.), *The Power of Touch: Handling Objects in Museums and Heritage Contexts* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016), pp. 107-120.
- McEvansoneya, P., 'John Savile Lumley and the Copies after Velázquez in the National Gallery, London', *Hispanic Research Journal*, 9.5 (2008), pp. 437-457.
- — —, 'John Savile Lumley and Velázquez's 'Christ after the Flagellation Contemplated by the Christian Soul'', *The Burlington Magazine*, 152.1291 (2010), pp. 660-664.
- MacLeod, S., 'Civil Disobedience and Political Agitation: The Art Museum as a Site of Protest in the Early Twentieth Century', *Museum and Society*, 5.1 (2007), p. 44-57.

- , *Museum Architecture: A New Biography* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2013).
- van Maanen, H., *How to Study Art Worlds: On the Societal Functioning of Aesthetic Values* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009).
- Macartney, H., 'The Reproduction of Spanish Art', in N. Glendinning and H. Macartney (eds), *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1920: Studies in Reception* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis Books, 2010), pp. 103-129.
- , 'Faith in Facsimile? The Invention of Photography and the Reproduction of Spanish Art', *Art in Translation*, 7.1 (2015), pp. 95–122.
- Mack, P., and R. Williams (eds), *Michael Baxandall, Vision and the Work of Words* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).
- Macleod, D. S., *Art and the Victorian Middle Class: Money and the Making of Cultural Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Maginnis, H. B. J., 'The Role of Perceptual Learning in Connoisseurship: Morelli, Berenson, and Beyond', *Art History*, 13.1 (1990), pp. 104-117.
- Manthorne, K., 'Remapping American Art', *American Art*, 22.3 (2008), pp. 112–117.
- Maginnis, H. B. J., 'Reflections on Formalism: The Post-Impressionists and the Early Italians', *Art History*, 19.2 (1996), pp. 191–207.
- Malchow, H. L., *Gentlemen Capitalists: The Social and Political World of the Victorian Businessmen* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992).
- Marlowe, E., *Shaky Ground: Context, Connoisseurship and the History of Roman Art* (London; New Delhi; New York; Sydney: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).
- Martin, A., and D. Farr, 'Witt, Sir Robert Clermont (1872–1952), Art Collector', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/36985>.
- Meijers, D. J., 'The Places of Painting: The Survival of Mnemotechnics in Christian von Mechel's Gallery Arrangement in Vienna (1778–1781)', in A.W. Reinink and J. Stumpel (eds), *Memory & Oblivion: Proceedings of the XXIXth International Congress of the History of Art held in Amsterdam, 1–7 September 1996* (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1999), pp. 205–211.
- Melion, W. S., *Shaping the Netherlandish Canon: Karel van Mander's Schilder-Boeck* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991).
- Merkel, J., 'The Museum as Artifact', *The Wilson Quarterly*, 26.1 (2002), pp. 66-79.
- The Met, 'A Goldsmith in his Shop', <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/459052> [accessed 1 December 2017].
- The Met, 'Portrait of a Man', <https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/437875> [accessed 1 December 2017].

Miyahara, K., 'The Impact of the Lantern Slide on Art-History Lecturing in Britain', *The British Art Journal*, 8.2 (2007), pp. 67-71.

de Montfort, P., 'The Fine Art Society and the Rise of the Solo Exhibition', in C. Gould and S. Mesplède (eds), *Marketing Art in the British Isles, 1700 to the Present: A Cultural History* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), pp. 147-163.

Monti, F., and S. Keene, *Museums and Silent Objects: Designing Effective Exhibitions* (London: Routledge, 2013).

Moore, S., 'Continuity in Collecting: The Restoration and Early History of Agnew's', *Country Life*, 26 January 1984, pp. 246-247.

Morrison, K. A., *English Shops and Shopping: An Architectural History* (New Haven, CT; London: Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, 2003).

Moskowitz, A. F., *Stefano Bardini 'Principe degli Antiquari': Prolegomenon to a Biography* (Florence: Centro Di, 2015).

Mount, H., 'The Monkey with the Magnifying Glass: Constructions of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Oxford Art Journal*, 29.2 (2006), pp. 167-184.

Nadolny, J., 'The First Century of Published Scientific Analyses of the Materials of Historical Painting and Polychromy, circa 1780-1880', *Studies in Conservation*, 48.1 (2003), pp. 39-51.

National Gallery of Art, *A Painter's Studio*,  
<https://www.nga.gov/Collection/art-object-page.12199.html#provenance> [accessed 29 October 2017].

National Gallery of Art, *Frances Susanna, Lady de Dunstanville*,  
<https://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/art-object-page.166448.html> [accessed 1 December 2017].

National Gallery of Art, *Francis Basset, Lord de Dunstanville*,  
<https://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/Collection/art-object-page.166447.html> [accessed 1 December 2017].

National Portrait Gallery, *Private View of the Old Masters Exhibition, Royal Academy, 1888: Extended Catalogue Entry*,  
<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw00049/Private-View-of-the-Old-Masters-Exhibition-Royal-Academy-1888> [accessed 2 October 2017].

Nobbs, K., C. M. Moore and M. Sheridan, 'The Flagship Format within the Luxury Fashion Market', *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 40.12 (2012), pp. 920-934.

Noordegraaf, J., *Strategies of Display: Museum Presentation in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Visual Culture* (Rotterdam: Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 2004).

Nuechterlein, J., 'German Renaissance Art through the Eyes of the National Gallery', *The Burlington Magazine*, 156.1331 (2014), pp. 76-84.

O'Byrne, A., 'George Scharf's London Scenes', *London Journal*, 37.3 (2012), pp. 215-233.

O'Doherty, B., *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 1999).

O'Neill, J. P., (ed.), *Liechtenstein: The Princely Collections* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1985).

van Paasschen, J., F. Bacci and D. P. Melcher, 'The Influence of Art Expertise and Training on Emotion and Preference Ratings for Representational and Abstract Artworks', *PLoS ONE*, 10.8 (2015), pp. 1-21.

Palmeri, T. J., and M. J. Tarr, 'Visual Object Perception and Long-Term Memory', in S. J. Luck and A. Hollingworth (eds), *Visual Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 163-208.

Patry, S., A. Robbins, C. Riopelle, J. J. Rishel and J. A. Thompson (eds), *Inventing Impressionism: Paul Durand-Ruel and the Modern Art Market* (London: National Gallery Company, 2015).

Peltz, L., 'Grundy, John Clowes (1806–1867), Printseller, Publisher, and Art Patron', in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004), <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/11703>.

Penny, N., *The Sixteenth-Century Italian Paintings. Volume II: Venice 1540-1600* (London: National Gallery Company, 2004).

Penot, A., *La maison Goupil: galerie d'art internationale au XIXe siècle* (Paris: mare & martin, 2017).

Pergam, E. A., *The Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857: Entrepreneurs, Connoisseurs and the Public* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2011).

— — —, 'Provenance as Pedigree: The Marketing of British Portraits in Gilded Age America', in G. Feigenbaum and I. Reist (eds), *Provenance: An Alternate History of Art* (Los Angeles, CA: Getty Research Institute, 2012), pp. 104–122.

Perry Chapman, H., F. Scholten and J. Woodall (eds), *Arts of Display/Het Vertoon van de Kunst* (Leiden; Boston, MA: Brill, 2015).

Peters, D., 'From Prince Albert's Raphael Collection to Giovanni Morelli: Photography and the Scientific Debates on Raphael in the Nineteenth Century', in C. Caraffa, *Photo Archives and the Photographic Memory of Art History* (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2011), pp. 129–144.

— — —, 'Reproduced Art. Early Photographic Campaigns in European Collections', in A. Meyer and B. Savoy (eds), *The Museum Is Open: Towards a Transnational History of Museums 1750-1940* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), pp. 45-58.

Pezzini, B., 'The Burlington Magazine, The Burlington Gazette, and The Connoisseur: The Art Periodical and the Market for Old Master Paintings in Edwardian London', *Visual Resources*, 29.3 (2013), pp. 154–183.

———, 'Towards a Network Analysis of Art Writers in Edwardian London: The Art Journal, Connoisseur and Burlington Magazine in 1903', *Art Libraries Journal*, 38.1 (2013), pp. 12-19.

———, 'The Value and Price of the Renaissance: Robert Ross and the Satire of Connoisseurship', in L. Carletti (ed.), *La Storia e La Critica: Atti Della Giornata Di Studi per Festeggiare Antonino Caleca* (Pisa: Pacini, 2016), pp. 169–175.

Pfister, P., and M. Favre-Félix, 'The Pictorial Role of Old Varnishes and the Principle of Their Preservation', trans. by A. Clarke, *ARIPA Nuances* (2015), <http://www.aripa-revue-nuances.org/articles-revue-nuances/39-etudes-critiques/186-old-varnishes-preservation.html> [accessed 16 January 2017].

Phillips, D., *Exhibiting Authenticity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1997).

Pierson, S. J., *Private Collecting, Exhibitions, and the Shaping of Art History in London* (New York; Abingdon: Routledge, 2017).

Plender, S., and P. Saltmarsh, 'Calling Authenticity into Question: Investigating the Production of Versions and Copies in Tudor Portraiture', in R. Gordon, E. Hermens and F. Lennard (eds), *Authenticity and Replication: The Real Thing in Art and Conservation* (London: Archetype Publications, 2014), pp. 140–147.

Plenderleith, H. J., 'A History of Conservation', *Studies in Conservation*, 43.3 (1998), pp. 129-143.

Pointon, M., 'W. E. Gladstone as an Art Patron and Collector', *Victorian Studies*, 19.1 (1975), pp. 73-98.

Pollard, R., J. Sharples and N. Pevsner, *Lancashire: Liverpool and the South-West* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006).

Pooley, C. G., J. Turnbull and M. Adams, *A Mobile Century? Changes in Everyday Mobility in Britain in the Twentieth Century* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

Ponsonby, M., *Stories from Home: English Domestic Interiors, 1750–1850* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).

Prettejohn, E., *Beauty and Art 1750-2000* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

Preziosi, D., *Rethinking Art History: Meditations on a Coy Science* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989).

———, 'The Question of Art History', in J. K. Chandler, A. I. Davidson and H. D. Harootunian (eds), *Questions of Evidence: Proof, Practice, and Persuasion across the Disciplines* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 203–226.

Prior, N., *Museums and Modernity: Art Galleries and the Making of Modern Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2002).

———, 'The Art of Space in the Space of Art: Edinburgh and Its Gallery, 1780-1860', *Museum and Society*, 1.2 (2003), pp. 63-74.

Prizeman, O., *Philanthropy and Light: Carnegie Libraries and the Advent of Transatlantic Standards for Public Space* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).

Procacci, U., 'Introduction: The Technique of Mural Paintings and Their Detachment', in *The Great Age of Fresco: Giotto to Pontormo. An Exhibition of Mural Paintings and Monumental Drawings* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1968), pp. 18–44.

Provo, A. A., 'Surrogates and Intermediaries: The Informational Role of Photographs in the Art Market', in L. Catterson (ed.), *Dealing Art on Both Sides of the Atlantic, 1860-1940* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 269–288.

Psarra, S., 'Spatial Culture, Way-Finding and the Educational Message: The Impact of Layout on the Spatial, Social and Educational Experiences of Visitors to Museums and Galleries', in S. MacLeod (ed.), *Reshaping Museum Space: Architecture, Design, Exhibitions* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 78-94.

Pullins, D., 'The Individual's Triumph: The Eighteenth-Century Consolidation of Authorship and Art Historiography', *Journal of Art Historiography*, 16 (2017), pp. 1–26.

Quinn, M., 'The Pedagogy of Capital: Art History and Art School Knowledge', in M. C. Potter (ed.), *The Concept of the 'Master' in Art Education in Britain and Ireland, 1770 to the Present* (London: Ashgate, 2013), pp. 215–233.

Quodbach, E., 'Collecting Old Masters for New York: Henry Gurdon Marquand and the Metropolitan Museum of Art', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, 9:1 (2017), DOI: 10.5092/jhna.2017.9.1.2.

Reed, V., 'Due Diligence, Provenance Research, and the Acquisition Process at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston', *DePaul Journal of Art, Technology and Intellectual Property Law*, 23.2 (2013), pp. 363-374.

Rees, H., 'Art Exports and the Construction of National Heritage in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Great Britain', in N. de Marchi and C. D. W. Goodwin (eds), *Economic Engagements with Art* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1999), pp. 187–208.

Rees Leahy, H., 'Desiring Holbein: Presence and Absence in the National Gallery', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 19.1 (2007), pp. 75-87.

———, 'New Labour, Old Masters', *Cultural Studies*, 21.4–5 (2007), pp. 695-717.

———, 'Incorporating the Period Eye: Spectators at Exhibitions of Exhibitions', *The Senses and Society*, 9.3 (2014), pp. 284–295.

———, *Museum Bodies: The Politics and Practices of Visiting and Viewing* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).

Reist, I., (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

The Rembrandt Database, *Provenance, Rembrandt, Man in a Fur Lined Coat, c. 1655-1660, Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo (Ohio), Inv./Cat. 1977.50* (2017),

<http://www.rembrandtdatabase.org/Rembrandt/painting/39164/man-in-a-fur-lined-coat/provenance> [accessed 19 October 2017].

Rifkin, A., (ed.), *About Michael Baxandall* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

Ripps, M. J., 'The London Picture Trade and Knoedler & Co.: Supplying Dutch Old Masters to America, 1900-1914', in I. Reist (ed.), *British Models of Art Collecting and the American Response: Reflections Across the Pond* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 163–180.

———, 'A Faustian Bargain? Charles Sedelmeyer, Wilhelm Bode, and the Expansion of Rembrandt's Painted Corpus, 1883–1914', in *Cultural Clearings: The Object Transformed by the Art Market/Schnittstelle Kunsthandel: Das Objekt im Auge des Marktes* (Nuremberg: CIHA, 2015), pp. 745–747.

RKD, *Explore Jean Charles Joseph Drucker*, <https://rkd.nl/nl/explore/artists/428829> [accessed 30 October 2017].

RKD, *Frans Hals (I) Portrait of Catharina Brugman*, <https://rkd.nl/en/explore/images/108092> [accessed 24 November 2017].

RKD, *Frans Hals (I) Portrait of Willem van Heythuysen (1585-1650), Standing Full Length*, <https://rkd.nl/en/explore/portraits/181785> [accessed 24 November 2017].

Roberts, H. E., 'Documents in the History of Visual Documentation: Bernard Berenson on Isochromatic Film', in H. E. Roberts (ed.), *Art History Through the Camera's Lens* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 123-131.

Robertson, D., *Sir Charles Eastlake and the Victorian Art World* (Princeton, NJ; Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1978).

Robertson, I. (ed.), *Understanding International Art Markets and Management* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2005).

Rosenberg, M., *Raphael and France: The Artist as Paradigm and Symbol* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995).

Rosenblum, N., 'Braun, Adolphe (1812-1877)', in John Hannavy (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Nineteenth-Century Photography: A-I, Index*, Vol. 1, 2 vols (New York; London: Taylor & Francis, 2008), pp. 203-205.

Rowlinson, M., and J. Hassard, 'The Invention of Corporate Culture: A History of the Histories of Cadbury', *Human Relations*, 46.3 (1993), pp. 299–326.

Rubin, P., "'The Outcry' Despoilers, Donors, and the National Gallery in London, 1909', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 25.2 (2012), pp. 253-275.

Russell, F., 'The Hanging and Display of Pictures, 1700-1850', *Studies in the History of Art*, 25 (1989), pp. 133-153.

Rutherford, J., *Country House Lighting: 1660-1890* (Leeds: Leeds City Art Galleries, 1992).

Saint-Raymond, L., F. de Maupeou and J. Cavero, 'Les Rues Des Tableaux: The Geography of the Parisian Art Market 1815-1955', *Artl@s Bulletin*, 5.1 (2016), pp. 121–159.

Samuels, E., *Bernard Berenson: The Making of a Connoisseur* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

Sandino, L., 'A Curatocracy: Who and What is a V&A Curator?', in K. Hill (ed.), *Museums and Biographies* (Martlesham: Boydell and Brewer, 2012), pp. 87-100.

Saumarez Smith, C., 'Narratives of Display at the National Gallery, London', *Art History*, 30.4 (2007), pp. 611–627.

———, *The National Gallery: A Short History* (London: Frances Lincoln, 2009).

Saunders, D., 'Pollution and the National Gallery', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 21 (2000), pp. 77–79.

Scallen, C. B., *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2004).

Schivelbusch, W., *The Railway Journey: The Industrialisation of Time and Space in the 19th Century* (Leamington Spa; Hamburg; New York: Berg, 1986).

Sebag-Montefiore, C., 'R. H. Benson as a Collector', in J. Wake, *Kleinwort Benson: The History of Two Families in Banking* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), Appendix 3.

Seed, J., "'Commerce and the Liberal Arts": The Political Economy of Art in Manchester, 1775-1860', in J. Wolff and J. Seed (eds), *The Culture of Capital: Art, Power and the Nineteenth-Century Middle Class* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 45–81.

Shapin, S., *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

Sharples, J., and J. Stonard, *Built on Commerce: Liverpool's Central Business District* (Swindon: English Heritage, 2008).

Sheldon, J., "'His Best Successor": Lady Eastlake and the National Gallery' in K. Hill (ed.), *Museums and Biographies: Stories, Objects, Identities* (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2012), pp. 61–74.

Shepherd, E., *Archives and Archivists in 20th Century England* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2016).

de Silva, D. G., M. Gertsberg and R. Pownall, 'Market Evolution of Art Dealers', SSRN Scholarly Paper (Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network, 2017), <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=2866949> [accessed 27 November 2017].

Simon, J., 'William Holder & Sons', in *British Picture Restorers, 1600-1950* (2015), <http://www.npg.org.uk/research/programmes/directory-of-british-picture-restorers/british-picture-restorers-1600-1950-d.php#DY> [accessed 20 October 2017].

———, 'Grundy & Fox 1827-1831...', in *British Picture Framemakers, 1600-1950* (2012), <http://www.npg.org.uk/research/conservation/directory-of-british-framemakers/g.php> [accessed 5 October 2017].

Simpson, C., *The artful partners: The secret association of Bernard Berenson and Joseph Duveen* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1988).

Slive, S., *Frans Hals*, 3 vols (London; New York: Phaidon Press, 1974).

Sluijter, E. J., 'Determining Value on the Art Market in the Golden Age: An Introduction', in A. Tummers and K. Jonckheere (eds), *Art Market and Connoisseurship: A Closer Look at Paintings by Rembrandt, Rubens and Their Contemporaries* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2008), pp. 7–28.

Smentek, K., *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

Smiles, S., *J. M. W. Turner: The Making of a Modern Artist* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007).

Smith, A[lison], *The Victorian Nude: Sexuality, Morality and Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996).

Smith, A[listair], A. Reeve and A. Roy, 'Francesco del Cossa's 'S. Vincent Ferrer'', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 5 (1981), pp. 47–54.

Smith, A. [Amelia], *Longford Castle: The Treasures & the Collectors* (London: Unicorn, 2017).

Spalding, F., *The Tate: A History* (London: Tate Gallery Publishing, 1998).

Spencer, R. D., (ed.), *The Expert versus the Object: Judging Fakes and False Attributions in the Visual Arts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Spring, M., (ed.), *Studying Old Master Paintings: Technology and Practice: The National Gallery Technical Bulletin 30th Anniversary Conference Postprints* (London: Archetype Publications, 2011).

Standing, L., 'Learning 10,000 Pictures', *The Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 25.2 (1973), p. 207–222.

Stobart, J., 'Cathedrals of Consumption? Provincial Department Stores in England, c.1880–1930', *Enterprise & Society*, 18.4 (2017), pp. 1-36.

Strehlke, C. B., 'Carpentry and Connoisseurship: The Disassembly of Altarpieces and the Rise in Interest in Early Italian Art', in C. Dean (ed.), *Rediscovering Fra Angelico: A Fragmentary History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Art Gallery, 2001), pp. 41–58.

Styhre, A., *Professionals Making Judgments: The Professional Skill of Valuing and Assessing* (Basingstoke; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Summerson, J., *What Is a Professor of Fine Art? An Inaugural Lecture Delivered in the University of Hull on 17 November 1960* (Hull: University of Hull Publications, 1961).

Sutton, D., *Robert Langton Douglas: Connoisseur of Art and Life* (London: Apollo Magazine Ltd, 1979).

———, 'Aspects of British Collecting: Part IV: Crowe and Cavalcaselle', *Apollo*, 122 (1985), pp. 11–17.

Swinney, G. N., 'Gas Lighting in British Museums and Galleries, with Particular Reference to the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 18.2 (1999), pp. 113–143.

———, 'The Evil of Vitiating and Heating the Air: Artificial Lighting and Public Access to the National Gallery, London, with Particular Reference to the Turner and Vernon Collections', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 15.1 (2003), pp. 83–112.

Taylor, B., *Art for the Nation: Exhibitions and the London Public, 1747-2001* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999).

———, 'National Gallery, London: For "All Ranks and Degrees of Men"', in C. Paul (ed.), *The First Modern Museums of Art: The Birth of an Institution in 18th- and Early-19th-Century Europe* (Los Angeles, CA: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2012), pp. 261–284.

Taylor, P., *Condition: The Ageing of Art* (London: Paul Holberton Publishing, 2015).

Thomson, G., J. Mills and J. Plesters, 'The Scientific Department of the National Gallery', *National Gallery Technical Bulletin*, 1 (1977), pp. 18–28.

Thornton, P., *Authentic Decor: The Domestic Interior, 1620-1920* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985).

Trodd, C., 'The Discipline of Pleasure; or, How Art History Looks at the Art Museum', *Museum and Society*, 1.1 (2003), pp. 17–29.

Trusted, M., 'Access to Collections of Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', in N. Glendinning and H. Macartney (eds), *Spanish Art in Britain and Ireland, 1750-1920* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis, 2010), pp. 73-85.

Tucker, P., "'Responsible Outsider": Charles Fairfax Murray and the South Kensington Museum'. *Journal of the History of Collections*, 14.1 (2002), pp. 115–137.

———, 'Eyesight, Knowledge, Argument: Charles Fairfax Murray on «Scientific» Connoisseurship', *Studi di Memofonte*, 12 (2014), pp. 106–142.

Turpin, A[driana], 'The Display of Exotica in the Uffizi Tribuna', in S. Bracken, A. M. Gáldy and A. Turpin (eds), *Collecting East and West* (Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2013), pp. 83–118.

Turpin, A[lison] (ed.), *The International Business Archives Handbook: Understanding and Managing the Historical Records of Business* (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017).

Tyack, G., '“A Gallery Worthy of the British People”: James Pennethorne’s Designs for the National Gallery, 1845-1867’, *Architectural History* 33 (1990), pp. 120–134.

Tzortzi, K., *Museum Space: Where Architecture Meets Museology* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2015).

— — —, ‘Spatial Concepts in Museum Theory and Practice’, in K. Karimi, L. Vaughan, K. Sailer, G. Palaiologou and T. Bolton (eds), *Proceedings of the 10th International Space Syntax Symposium* (London: Space Syntax Laboratory, The Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL, 2015), pp. 37:1-14.

Uglow, L., ‘Giovanni Morelli and His Friend Giorgione: Connoisseurship, Science and Irony’, *Journal of Art Historiography*, 11 (2011), pp. 1-30.

University of Glasgow, *Exhibition Culture in London 1878-1908* (2006), <http://www.exhibitionculture.arts.gla.ac.uk/> [accessed 12 September 2017].

University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, *Liverpool Autumn Exhibition of Modern Pictures, 1871, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool*, Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951 (2011), [http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/reference.php?id=msib4\\_1278321502](http://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/reference.php?id=msib4_1278321502) [accessed 23 August 2016].

Vakkari, J., ‘Giovanni Morelli’s “Scientific” Method of Attribution and Its Reinterpretations from the 1960’s until the 1990’s’, *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift*, 70.1–2 (2001), pp. 46–54.

Vanpaemel, G., ‘X-Rays and Old Masters. The Art of the Scientific Connoisseur’, *Endeavour*, 34.2 (2010), pp. 69–74.

Velthuis, O., ‘Art Dealers’, in R. Towse (ed.), *A Handbook of Cultural Economics* (Cheltenham; Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2011), pp. 28-32.

Verhoogt, R., *Art in Reproduction: Nineteenth-Century Prints After Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Jozef Israels and Ary Scheffer* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007).

Walhout Hinojosa, L., *The Renaissance, English Cultural Nationalism, and Modernism, 1860–1920* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Walmsley, E., ‘Italian Renaissance Paintings Restored in Paris by Duveen Brothers Inc., c.1927-1929’, *Facture: Conservation, Science, Art History* 1 (2013), pp. 58–77.

Ward, M., ‘Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions’, *The Art Bulletin*, 73.4 (1991), pp. 599–622.

Warf, B., ‘Anthony Giddens’, in P. Hubbard and R. Kitchin (eds), *Key Thinkers on Space and Place* (London; Thousand Oaks, CA; New Delhi; Singapore: SAGE, 2011), pp. 178–184.

Waterfield, G., ‘Picture Hanging and Gallery Decoration’, in G. Waterfield (ed.), *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790-1990* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991), pp. 49-65.

———, *The People's Galleries: Art Museums and Exhibitions in Britain, 1800-1914* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015).

Waterfield, G., (ed.), *Palaces of Art: Art Galleries in Britain, 1790-1990* (London: Dulwich Picture Gallery, 1991).

Waterfield, G., and F. Illies, 'Waagen in England', *Jahrbuch Der Berliner Museen* 37 (1995), pp. 47–59.

Wemyss, S., 'Francis, Lord Elcho (10th Earl of Wemyss) as a Collector of Italian Old Masters', *Journal of the Scottish Society for Art History*, 8 (2003), pp. 73–76.

Wheelock Jr, A. K., *Rembrandt van Rijn/The Mill/1645/1648*, NGA Online Editions, Dutch Paintings of the Seventeenth Century, <https://purl.org/nga/collection/artobject/1201> [accessed 10 April 2017].

Wenzlhuemer, R., *Connecting the Nineteen-Century World: The Telegraph and Globalization* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Whitaker, J., *The Department Store: History, Design, Display* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2011).

Whitcomb, A., *Re-Imagining the Museum: Beyond the Mausoleum* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003).

Whitehead, C., 'Architectures of Display at the National Gallery The Barry Rooms as Art Historiography and the Problems of Reconstructing Historical Gallery Space', *Journal of the History of Collections*, 17.2 (2005), pp. 189–211.

———, *The Public Art Museum in Nineteenth Century Britain: The Development of the National Gallery* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

———, 'Establishing the Manifesto: Art Histories in the Nineteenth-Century Museum', in S. J. Knell, S. MacLeod and S. Watson (eds), *Museum Revolutions: How Museums Change and Are Changed* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2007), pp. 48-60.

———, *Museums and the Construction of Disciplines: Art and Archaeology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: Duckworth, 2009).

———, 'Institutional Autobiography and the Architecture of the Art Museum: Restoration and Remembering at the National Gallery in the 1980s', in K. Hill (ed.), *Museums and Biographies: Stories, Objects, Identities* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2012), pp. 157–170.

Wieseman, M. E., *A Closer Look: Deceptions and Discoveries*. (London; New Haven, CT: National Gallery London, 2010).

Williams, R., *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana Press, 1983).

Wine, H., *The Seventeenth-Century French Paintings* (London: National Gallery Company, 2001).

———, 'The National Gallery in the Nineteenth Century and French Eighteenth-Century Painting', in C. M. Vogtherr, M. Preti and G. Faroult (eds), *Delicious Decadence: The Rediscovery of French Eighteenth-Century Painting in the Nineteenth Century* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014), pp. 121–140.

Wolk-Simon, L., *Raphael at the Metropolitan: The Colonna Altarpiece* (New York; New Haven, CT: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Yale University Press, 2006).

Yates, F., *The Art of Memory* (London; Beccles: William Clowes and Sons, 1966).

Zell, M., 'Rembrandt's Gifts: A Case Study of Actor-Network-Theory', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art*, 3.2 (2011).

Zisch, F., S. Gage and H. Spiers, 'Navigating the Museum', in N. Levent and A. Pascual-Leone, *The Multisensory Museum: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Touch, Sound, Smell, Memory, and Space* (Lanham, MD; Plymouth: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), pp. 215–237.

Zöllner, F., and J. Nathan, *Leonardo Da Vinci 1452-1519: The Complete Paintings and Drawings* (Cologne: TASCHEN, 2012).