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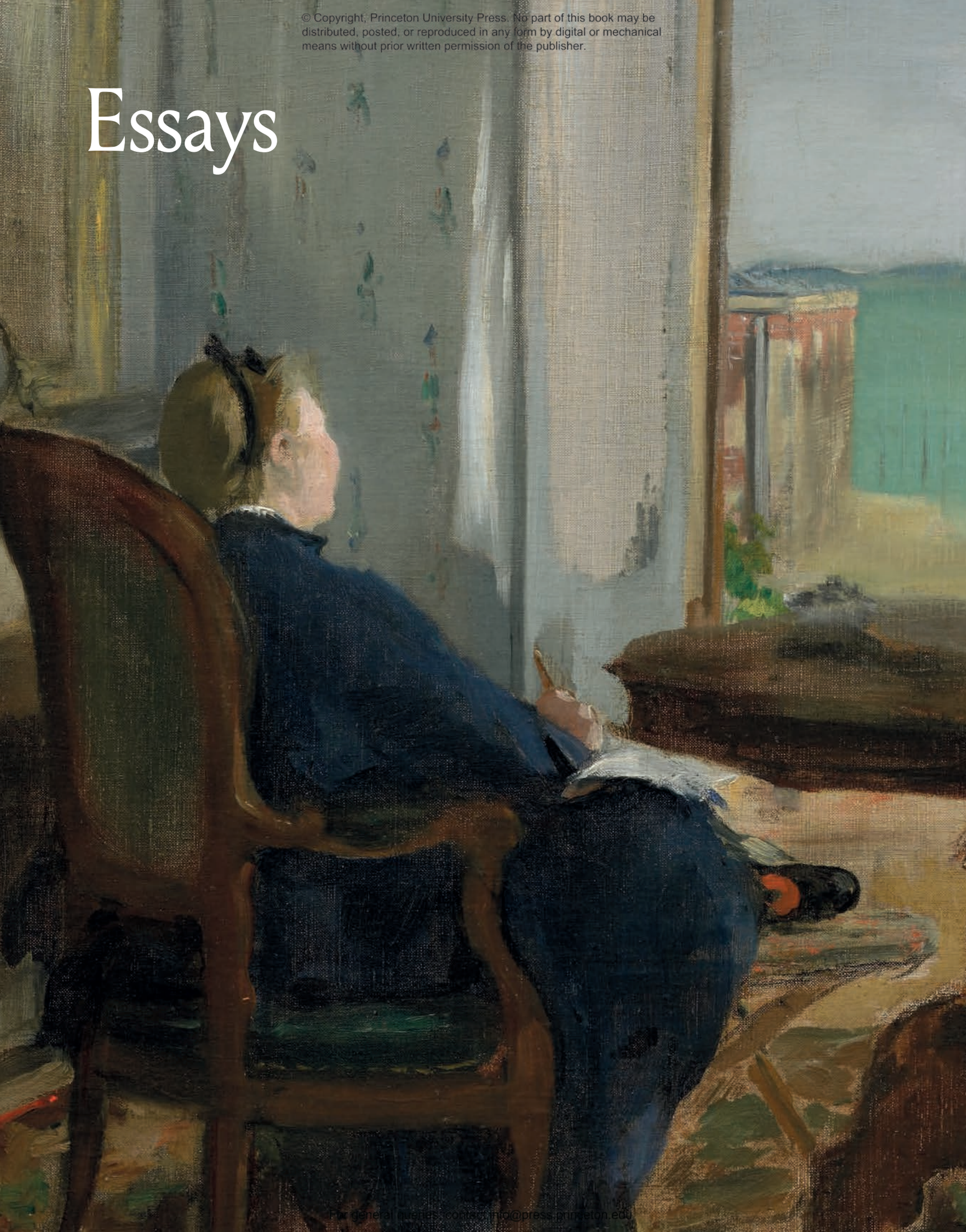

Édouard Manet: A Family Story

DIANA SEAVE GREENWALD

Families are complicated. The family of Édouard Manet (1832–1883) was no different. It was, in fact, more complicated than most. Despite these complexities, family members—from his mother, to a son of indeterminate legitimacy, to an extraordinarily talented sister-in-law—inspired and supported this groundbreaking artist. The principal source of this complication relates to the birth of Léon-Édouard Koëlla (1852–1927), known as Léon Leenhoff for much of his life. Léon, the son of Manet's future wife, Suzanne Leenhoff (1829–1906), was born out of wedlock. He was presented as Suzanne's younger brother in public, and in private he called Suzanne and Édouard his godmother and his godfather. His paternity remains speculative. Édouard was long assumed to be his biological father, but more recent scholarship suggests it could be either a traveling musician or Édouard's own father, Auguste. This latter situation would make Léon both Édouard's stepson and half-brother.

Suzanne's initial position within the Manet family added another layer of complexity: a Dutchwoman who immigrated to France, she met the family when they employed her as a piano teacher. Therefore, not only was she a single mother of an illegitimate child when she married Édouard in 1863, but she was also a foreigner and of a lower social class than the bourgeois Manets. Add to this mix that Manet's father, a government official, died of syphilis (as would Édouard). His mother, Eugénie, was a strong matriarch who oversaw the financial and social life of the family long into widowhood. Manet's brother Eugène married the Impressionist painter Berthe Morisot (1841–1895)—Édouard's close friend, colleague, and frequent model. In surviving correspondence, the bourgeois Parisian Morisots were not always kind to Suzanne. From the outside, this web of relationships looks like it could be a recipe for drama and familial instability. Yet the opposite was true.

Crucially, the family seems to have been both happy and central to a seismic change in art over which Édouard presided. They served as his frequent models and provided him with a stable home life and—essentially—independent financial resources that allowed him to pursue an avant-garde art career in which sales were few and far between. After his death, they took responsibility for inventorying his work and shepherding his legacy. Suzanne, Léon, Eugénie, and many other members of the family—including Berthe and Eugène—deserve long-overdue credit for their role in Édouard's career.[1]

Detail of *Luncheon in the Studio* (fig. 7)

There are many reasons that the Manet family has never been the subject of a dedicated exhibition and catalogue. Some of this neglect is perhaps related to the fact that biographical approaches to art history have, for the past few decades, been out of scholarly fashion. With one notable exception—Nancy Locke's *Manet and the Family Romance* (2001)—the art historical research about the Manets has been spread across disparate sources, mentioned primarily when a painting showing a family member is presented in a broader thematic or theoretical context.[2] This catalogue presents new research about the family, returns to a biographical approach that can deliver scholarly insights, and brings information about the family together in one cohesive work.

Importantly, the marginalization of Manet's family in studies about the artist can also be traced to events in his own life. In October 1863 his friend Charles Baudelaire reported, "Manet has just announced . . . the most unexpected news. He is leaving this evening for Holland, when he will bring back *his wife*. He does, however, have some excuses for it would seem that she is very beautiful, very kind, and a very fine musician, so many treasures in a single female individual, isn't that monstrous?"[3] It is surprising that Baudelaire would not have known the woman Édouard was about to marry. His family's own commentary sometimes reinforces the image that Manet kept his creative and family lives separate. In a letter to the painter Henri Fantin-Latour, Manet's mother complained that her son spent so much time in a *villain* (horrible) café alongside fellow artists.[4] Yet, Eugénie's correspondence with Fantin indicates that Manet's artistic life outside of the home and his family life could sometimes overlap. The artist's mother was writing to invite Fantin to a gathering of creatives at the family's apartment. The line between private family and public friends, between the drawing room and the cafes, was not as impenetrable as one might think.

Turning to the visual evidence, we find Manet's family members—most often Léon and Suzanne—at the very center of his artwork. Léon appears in eighteen canvases and frequently features in prints and drawings; Suzanne may have posed for as many as twenty oils, one beautiful pastel, a range of drawings, and at least one print; Berthe Morisot is in eleven canvases, as well as additional works on paper.[5] Thus each of these family members appears in more canvases than Victorine Meurent, perhaps Manet's best-known model, who appeared in his landmark paintings *Olympia* (1863, see fig. 54) and *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (1863, see fig. 84). Quantity of depiction is, of course, not the only metric of the importance of a model or a subject to an artist's practice. Nonetheless, the volume of visual evidence gathered in this exhibition is compelling: Manet's family helped fuel his creativity. This essay introduces the Manet family story and his family-related oeuvre. It is, however, just an overview of the topic that the contributors to the rest of this volume delve into in greater, moving, and revelatory detail.

Bourgeois Beginnings

For more than a century, the Manet family were prosperous landowners in Gennevilliers, a then-rural and now-suburban town six miles north of Paris. Édouard's grandfather, a former judge, was a major property holder in the town and its mayor.[6] Auguste (1797–1862), the artist's father, had followed a predictable path: he studied the law and later worked for the Ministry of Justice. He was awarded the Légion d'Honneur and became a judge on a lower-level civil court.[7]

Édouard's mother, Eugénie-Désirée Fournier (1811–1885), came from a French family that made its fortune in Sweden and played a role installing a Frenchman on the Swedish throne (cat. no. 1).[8] She married Auguste Manet on January 18, 1831; she was nineteen and

he was thirty-three. With Fournier family money, income derived from landholdings in Gennevilliers, and Auguste's salary from the Ministry of Justice, the couple started a comfortable life together. On January 23, 1832, almost exactly a year after his parents' marriage, Édouard Manet was born in the couple's large Paris home at 5, rue des Petits-Augustins (now rue Bonaparte). He would be the eldest of three brothers, with Eugène born in November 1833 and Gustave in the spring of 1835.[9]

Being the firstborn son came with expectations; Édouard fell short of these early in life. He struggled with the academic subjects necessary for him to become a lawyer, as his father expected. However, he quickly discovered his passion for art. As a boy, his maternal uncle Edmond Fournier took him to the Louvre and other Parisian museums.[10] Manet developed an enthusiasm for sketching and told his family he wanted to be an artist. This was distressing and unacceptable to Auguste.[11]

After months of wrangling over his future, Édouard agreed to pursue a naval career to appease his father. In the summer of 1847 he failed his first attempt at the naval officers' corps entrance exam; a candidate only had two attempts.[12] His family decided to take advantage of a newly created loophole to ease his admission to the navy: there was a lower bar for admission for candidates who had sailed on a vessel across the equator. Alongside other bourgeois young men, teenage Édouard sailed for Rio de Janeiro from the port of Le Havre in December 1848 on the merchant ship *Havre et Guadeloupe*.[13]

Letters sent to his mother, father, brothers, and cousin during this journey are early evidence of his love for family.[14] Just before his departure, he wrote to his mother: "If I hadn't been afraid of another separation and the goodbyes which are always so upsetting, I would regret your not having come with me to Le Havre."[15] Despite disputes about his future, Édouard clearly loved and respected Auguste. "Papa will . . . say goodbye to me tomorrow; I'm happy he has been here until my departure, he's been so good to me throughout our stay."[16] Nevertheless, Édouard understood which of his parents most appreciated his artistic talents. Evocative, descriptive letters to Eugénie recount how he created drawings of his shipmates, while those addressed to Auguste focus on geographic detail and an extensive description of the "baptism" held for the boys on board when the ship crossed the equator.[17] Manet would not, however, excel at sea. He wrote to his mother, "A sailor's life is so boring!"[18]

With political upheaval in France during Manet's trip—the Republic established after the 1848 revolutions was chaotic and unstable, ultimately yielding to the Second Empire—there was a change in the naval admission rules. Édouard did not make a second attempt at the entrance exam, and upon returning home in June 1849 he announced he was going to be a painter. This time, his father apparently grudgingly accepted the decision, and Manet became a student of the painter Thomas Couture.[19] From this point forward, the most compelling records of his love for his family were visual. It was also at this moment that he met Suzanne Leenhoff, his future wife, who would become a critical inspiration.

Old Masters, New Family

Suzanne was born in Delft, in the Netherlands, in 1829. Her family soon moved to Zaltbommel in the country's south, where her father was appointed the city's music master.[20] The eldest of seven siblings (six of whom survived to adulthood), she was a gifted pianist.[21] She likely performed for Franz Liszt when he visited the Netherlands in 1842, and the famed composer may have suggested she move to Paris to continue her musical training. In 1847 Suzanne, her mother, and five younger siblings moved to the French capital.[22] Presumably,

Suzanne continued to study the piano in Paris, though where she studied is unclear—she was not admitted to the famed Paris Conservatory.[23] What is certain is that in 1849 she was hired by the Manet family to teach the piano to all or some of the boys—probably Eugène and Gustave, considering Édouard was at sea for much of the year.[24] Some have suggested that Liszt himself recommended her for the job, though definitive proof is lacking.[25] Her employment presumably lasted until 1852, when she gave birth to her son, Léon, or at least until she was visibly pregnant and could therefore no longer work.

Suzanne's introduction to the Manet family coincided with the beginning of Édouard's formal artistic education in Couture's studio, where he remained from 1850 until 1856. During this time, he also began to study paintings by the Old Masters, including Titian, Veronese, and Velázquez, both through publications and on frequent outings to sketch and copy at the Louvre. These studies of historical painters continued during his first trips to the Netherlands and Italy, in 1852–53.[26] He also had access to the many reproductive prints circulating in nineteenth-century Paris, including those in the collection of the Bibliothèque Nationale (then the Bibliothèque Imperiale).[27]

Suzanne's relationship with the Manet family in general—and with Édouard in particular—in the years following Léon's birth is unclear. Suzanne and Léon did not have a permanent address but lived in different places around Paris with her siblings, their significant others, and her paternal grandmother. The only formal evidence of the continued relationship between her and the artist is that in 1855 Suzanne named Édouard as Léon's godfather even though Léon was baptized in the protestant Dutch Reformed church and Manet was Catholic.[28] In his written recollections from the first decade of the twentieth century, Léon implies that he and Suzanne lived with Édouard for a period before the couple's marriage and that Eugène visited them frequently.[29] Given that this sole account relies on the memories of a very young child, the relationship between Suzanne, Léon, and the Manets during this time will likely remain a mystery.

In 1856 Manet left Couture's studio frustrated with what he viewed as the artificiality of history painting.[30] His own preoccupations were veering toward the depiction of living, breathing, and present-day subjects, and he sought to fuse his interest in the present with a deep engagement with the art of the past. Suzanne was a catalyst for this fusion. In both drawings and paintings from the period, Suzanne was a frequent model often cast in poses that echo those found in works by Titian, Veronese, and other Italian Renaissance painters. These drawings, oil sketches, and fragments of oil paintings (see cat. nos. 4, 5) featuring Suzanne document Édouard's struggle to create a significant composition for submission to the Paris Salon, a juried public art exhibition at the center of the nineteenth-century art world.[31]

During this period of artistic flourishing in the wake of the artist's departure from Couture's studio, Édouard created two works of art featuring family members that were intended for the Salon. The first, and the only one accepted by the jury, was *Monsieur and Madame Auguste Manet* (cat. no. 3). Executed between 1859 and 1860, it was shown at the Salon of 1861, where it received some negative critical reactions.[32] Simply titled *M. and Mme M . . .* , it was painted when his father was suffering from tertiary syphilis. Already seriously ill and partly paralyzed, Auguste is presented with a grizzled dignity. Eugénie appears behind him in a position of support and care.[33]

If Édouard depicted his parents as an aging bourgeois couple, his effort to show Suzanne in a work intended for the Salon—but that was never exhibited there—is radically different.[34] A nude Suzanne sits by a river in *Surprised Nymph* (fig. 1).[35] This is the only time Édouard painted a large oil of Suzanne in the nude—in later works she is portrayed as a

Fig. 1. Édouard Manet, *Surprised Nymph*, 1861. Oil on canvas, 144.5 × 112.5 cm. Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires

Fig. 2. Rembrandt van Rijn, *Susanna*, 1636. Oil on panel, 47.4 × 38.6 cm. Mauritshaus, The Hague

fully clothed bourgeois wife.[36] Scholars have linked this painting to sources ranging from prints after Giulio Romano's sixteenth-century fresco in Mantua's Palazzo del Te showing the *toilette* of Bathsheba to eighteenth-century French nudes like François Boucher's *Diana Leaving Her Bath* (1742, Louvre.) X-radiographs reveal extensive revision and complexity beneath the painting's surface.[37] Considering that scholars can locate so many art historical influences in one painting—as well as the fact that the surface masks another composition—it is one of Manet's most intriguing canvases.

Some of the obvious art historical references in *Surprised Nymph* are the works of two Dutch masters: Rembrandt's and Rubens's interpretations of the story of Susanna and the Elders (figs. 2, 3). Both were reproduced in prints (the Rubens is now lost), and

Fig. 3. Lucas Vorsterman after Peter Paul Rubens, *Susanna and the Elders*, 1620. Engraving, 38.2 × 27.7 cm. The Art Institute of Chicago

Édouard may have seen the Rembrandt in person during his first trip to Holland, in 1852. With allusions to paintings from his model's home country that feature a biblical character with her same name, Édouard could be making a personal reference to her true identity. Beyond these subtle associations with Suzanne's name and nationality, casting her in the story of the Susanna and the Elders feels weighted with meaning. The biblical story revolves around two old men spying on Susanna, a young married woman bathing in her garden. Lusting after her, the men try to force her to have sex with them. When she refuses, they falsely accuse her of adultery, a crime punishable by death. The intervention of the young hero Daniel and the exposure of the old men's lies save Susanna from condemnation; instead, the spying old men are sentenced to death.[38]

Fig. 4. Édouard Manet, *Music in the Tuileries*, 1862. Oil on canvas, 76.2 × 118.1 cm. National Gallery, London. Sir Hugh Lane Bequest, 1917, The National Gallery, London. In partnership with Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin

Fig. 5. Annibale Carracci, *Fishing*, 1575–1600. Oil on canvas, 136 × 155 cm. Musée du Louvre, Paris

Considering Auguste may have fathered Léon, Édouard's choice to feature a story where older men make unwanted sexual advances toward a young woman is poignant. The intervention of a young hero also carries weight considering the artist's impending marriage to Suzanne and the formalized family role he would take on to ensure her future and that of her son. Édouard could be considered Suzanne's Daniel, ensuring her social respectability and, of course, financial security. The couple married on October 28, 1863, in Zaltbommel in the Netherlands, just one year after Édouard's father died. Auguste's death seemingly cleared the way for the marriage. It also allowed the artist to become financially independent, as he and his brothers sold several properties they had inherited.[39]

Two paintings created during this period and often considered pendants exemplify Édouard's ability to fuse his artistic and family lives: *Music in the Tuileries* (fig. 4) and *Fishing* (cat. no. 6). The first, *Music in the Tuileries,* is an early manifesto of his interest in painting modern Parisian life. Although its composition and brushwork speak to his fascination with Velázquez, the cast of characters is a who's who of creative colleagues—a roster of the intellectual energy gathering in Parisian cafés at the time, including a self-portrait in the left side of the canvas.[40] Amid this bohemian mélange, Édouard positioned his own family. Eugène is a central standing figure.[41] To the left of the composer Jacques Offenbach is a veiled woman in black. A faceless blonde child leans against her lap. This duo could be Eugénie and Léon. After Auguste's death, Eugénie wore black for the rest of her life, making her easily recognizable.[42] Suzanne, who often wore gray, seems to be nearby.[43]

The pendant to *Music*, the canvas best known as *Fishing* (1862), is an unequivocal if enigmatic tribute to Suzanne and the inauguration of married life. Filled with references to the Old Masters, the landscape depicted has been identified as the area near the Manet family landholdings in Gennevilliers.[44] In the bottom right corner, in period dress, Édouard casts himself as Peter Paul Rubens. Suzanne appears by his side dressed as Rubens's

wife and muse, Helena Fourment.[45] Manet's aspiration is clear: he is the future Rubens, supported by his Helena. The rest of the composition, however, muddies the waters. Referencing Annibale Carracci's *Fishing* (fig. 5), the center of his composition shows two fishermen maneuvering nets on a boat. On the far bank, separated from the happy couple, is a faceless blonde figure holding a fishing rod: Léon.[46] Édouard's painting places Suzanne clearly by the painter's side as he discovers an artistic landscape. Yet, Manet seemingly equivocates about the boy's position in that same landscape. Even though Léon is Suzanne's biological son, Édouard has separated him from the betrothed couple. Not totally edited out of the picture, he is almost a prop—a faceless formal element less clearly resolved than even the anonymous fishermen. This composition is a poignant summary of Léon's position within Édouard's oeuvre and within the family in general: frequently present but never clearly identified.

We Need to Talk About Léon

Léon was one of Édouard's most frequent models.[47] From childhood in the 1850s until young adulthood in the early 1870s, he was a consistent presence in the artist's works. In many instances—*Music in the Tuileries, Fishing, Spanish Cavaliers* (cat. no. 2) and *The Balcony* (fig. 6)—he is faceless or marginal. In other works, he migrated to the center, as in *Boy with a Sword* (see fig. 34), *Luncheon in the Studio* (fig. 7), *Boy Blowing Bubbles* (cat. no. 7), and *Young Boy Peeling a Pear* (cat. no. 8). Whatever his position, Léon is consistently presented in a scene reminiscent of an Old Master painting or as the quintessential Parisian dandy. In contrast to other family members, he was never the subject of an unambiguous solo portrait. This creates a tension between his status as an identified member of the family and the artist's use of him as a studio model in ways one would associate with someone intended to be anonymous or at least unrelated to the painter. Léon's mutability under Édouard's brush and across media heightens this tension. He ages radically from one painting to another, and his features oscillate between anonymity and specificity. His figure is often cropped and isolated in drawings and prints.[48]

Juxtaposing two paintings that feature teenage Léon—*Boy Blowing Bubbles* and *Young Boy Peeling a Pear*—exemplifies this mutability. The two paintings are dated roughly a year apart, about 1867 and about 1868, respectively.[49] In *Boy Blowing Bubbles,* Léon looks younger than his fifteen years. In *Young Boy Peeling a Pear,* he appears older than sixteen, with a small mustache, broad shoulders, and a square jawline. Adolescent boys can, of course, change rapidly from one year to the next. Both paintings, of similar size, include details—a delicate soap bubble and a perishable pear—associated with themes of *vanitas,* the fleeting nature of worldly pleasures.[50] If considered as pendants, they could be Manet's attempt—one that feels parental and sentimental—to record and pay homage to Léon's fleeting youth. This dramatic shift in appearance can, however, be seen in another way. The lack of resolve in his features and chameleon-like presence seems to make Léon's physical attributes respond at will to Manet's own artistic needs. The Old Master source related to *Boy Blowing Bubbles,* a work by Jean Baptiste Chardin, features children, and Manet presents Léon in a way that mirrors the youthful eighteenth-century subjects that inspired him.[51] In contrast, the inspiration for *Young Boy Peeling a Pear* is likely a Jusepe de Ribera image featuring an old man.[52] The age of Ribera's subject seems to rub off on Léon's suddenly much more mature appearance. He is a strikingly flexible—almost unrealistically flexible—model.

The lack of resolution around Léon's features across Manet's oeuvre presages scholars' evolving and fluid understanding of the boy's status within the Manet family. Just as scholarship about the Manet family has, in the past, often been scattered across disparate sources—the same is true of scholarship about Léon's paternity and familial position. This

research often appears in connection with a single painting in which he features or has been the subject of scholarly articles that propose to have discovered the "secret" of his birth. Most importantly, new scholarship has appeared since Locke wrote her account of the family story twenty years ago. In many ways, the complexity of the Manet family swirls around Léon, so it is useful to survey the current arguments in one place. Rather than clearly privilege one theory over another, this survey aims to present the arguments for and against each scenario.

There have been three proposed candidates for Léon's father: one of four Swiss musicians with the last name Koëlla; Édouard Manet himself; and Auguste Manet. Koëlla, the single name listed as Léon's father on his birth certificate, was long thought to be a fabrication or bastardization of a generic Dutch name. Scholars have, however, since identified the musical Koëlla brothers, who performed around Europe and could have crossed paths with Suzanne. One of them—Giovanni—is the most likely candidate based on age and resemblance to a figure in *The Old Musicians* (1862; National Gallery of Art, Washington). The declaration of Koëlla's occupation as an "artiste-musicien" on Léon's birth certificate supports this identification.[53] This theory, however, does not address one critical question: why would Édouard and his family continue to engage with and support Suzanne, their hired piano teacher, after she had given birth out of wedlock to a son fathered by a traveling musician?[54] Was the artist's connection to her already strong enough to overcome this scandal? Possibly. However, Giovanni Koëlla (or another brother) could also have sold or volunteered his surname to provide Léon with at least some legitimacy. A vague name listed as father was more respectable than no name at all.[55]

There are two other hypotheses. The first is that Édouard was Léon's biological father. Evidence supporting this theory includes Léon's second name being Édouard and the artist being named his godfather.[56] Finally, Manet's marriage to Suzanne after his father's death suggests the artist had an enduring attachment to her and possibly Léon as well. Some scholars simply ask a sexist rhetorical question to support this scenario: Why else would Manet marry this quiet, average-looking Dutch musician below his social standing if she were *not* the mother of his child?[57]

There is, however, also evidence against Édouard being Léon's biological father. The first is that he and Suzanne never officially recognized him as their legitimate son after their marriage. This process was relatively straightforward under the laws of the Second Empire, which emphasized the protection and preservation of traditional nuclear families.[58] Furthermore, many of Manet's fellow artist friends, including Paul Cézanne and Claude Monet, *did* recognize their natural children after marrying the children's mothers.[59] In contrast, it would have been difficult—and possibly illegal—for Manet to recognize Léon as his son if he were not his biological father.[60]

Further evidence that Léon was not Édouard's son comes from a letter that the artist wrote to Zacharie Astruc in 1865. Manet congratulates his friend on the news of his wife's pregnancy: "Give Mme Astruc all our good wishes for the arrival of your heir. We would love the same thing to happen to us."[61] The implication is, of course, that he and Suzanne want but cannot have children. While he could be referring to additional children, this comment implies they have no children together—Léon was Suzanne's son, not Édouard's, and therefore not his heir. In a letter sent after the artist's death, his brother Gustave recounts Eugénie's anger at Suzanne's refusal to reimburse 10,000 francs she gave to the couple upon their marriage. The marriage contract had a condition that the money should be returned if Édouard predeceased his mother and left behind no natural heirs. Gustave quotes Eugénie as saying: "There are some things about which I will not change my mind,

Fig. 6. Édouard Manet, *The Balcony*, 1868–69. Oil on canvas, 170 × 125 cm. Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Fig. 7. Édouard Manet, *Luncheon in the Studio*, 1868. Oil on canvas, 118.3 × 154 cm. Neue Pinakothek, Munich

namely the crime she committed out of affection for that dear boy who is merely a victim of his unhappy birth. . . . That is the punishment for her crime, let her suffer it."[62] Her words make clear she did not think "that dear boy" was her legitimate grandson.

The final theory about Léon's paternity is that he is Auguste Manet's biological son. This would make him both Édouard Manet's half-brother and stepson. Auguste's paternity explains the paradox of the Manet family's continued engagement with Suzanne after she gave birth—concluding in her marriage to Édouard—but failure to officially recognize Léon as a legitimate son and official family member.[63] If Auguste fathered Léon while Suzanne was employed in his household, it would be a serious crime made even more disgraceful by his position as a judge.[64] To openly admit Léon's true paternity would admit the patriarch's breach of both family expectation and the law. Édouard's will suggests a family understanding that Léon, despite not having official recognition, deserved his portion of the Manet family wealth. It states: "I appoint Suzanne Leenhoff . . . my universal legatee. In her last will, she will leave everything I have left to her to Léon Koëlla, called Leenhoff . . . I believe my brothers will find these arrangements perfectly natural." In an addendum, he reiterates that Suzanne's inheritance should pass to Léon upon her death.[65]

Ultimately, we will never know who fathered Léon. Léon himself did not seem to know—he may have only discovered Suzanne was his mother and not his sister when his uncle Ferdinand Leenhoff helped him obtain a replacement birth certificate in 1871.[66] Despite the shock of learning Suzanne was his mother, he had positive memories about his upbringing. He wrote: "In the Manet and Leenhoff families, I always said 'godmother' and 'godfather' . . . in society, they were my brother-in-law and sister. A family secret of which I never learned the last word, having been pampered and spoiled by both of them, who indulged all my whims. We lived happily, the three of us; above all I lived happily with no concerns. Therefore, I had no need to question my birth."[67] This happiness is apparent in a small group of works and a wonderful cache of letters from the early 1870s.

"We Lived Happily"

The Franco-Prussian War (July 1870–January 1871) and the Paris Commune (March–May 1871) exploded the Manets' Parisian world. With the capital under siege, Édouard and his brothers stayed to defend Paris while he sent his mother, Suzanne, and Léon to the southwest of France for safety.[68] This separation was the longest from his mother since his trip to Brazil, and he had never been far from Suzanne and Léon for so long. This physical distance prompted an extensive and moving stream of letters that provide real-time evidence of how Léon, Édouard, and Suzanne lived happily.

Filled with lines that worry about everything from Léon having forgotten a woolen shirt to reassuring his mother that he is looking after his brothers, they reveal the artist's genuine and touchingly quotidian concern for his family.[69] After several months apart, Manet wrote to Suzanne: "I woke up last night thinking I heard you calling me."[70] This is just one of many similarly emotional letters sent to his wife, which also hint at his desire for a compelling visual record. He wrote in November 1870, "I think of you all the time and have filled the bedroom with your portraits."[71]

Manet would soon produce a handful of new images of Suzanne and Léon together that serve as tender double portraits. The complicated *Reading* (cat. no. 11) is an adaptation of a painting that previously featured only Suzanne; the artist almost certainly added Léon at a later date, likely in the early 1870s.[72] Two others—the watercolor and painting, both titled *Interior at Arcachon*—are a visual complement to the stream of Siege letters

(cat. no. 10). They were completed when Manet rejoined his family in the southwest of France. While Suzanne is the star of *Reading*, in the two *Interior at Arcachon* works, Léon takes center stage and—particularly in the watercolor—has an air of maturity distinct from earlier depictions (see fig. 93). During the war, Léon had become a man and would soon begin his professional life in Paris in earnest.[73] These were among the last depictions of Léon; with manhood came a lack of visual interest from Manet.

Another Madame Manet

While Léon stopped modeling in the 1870s, Suzanne did not, and another soon-to-be Madame Manet also captured Édouard's attention. He first met Berthe Morisot (1841–1895) in 1868. She had already been painting for a decade and had exhibited at the Paris Salon.[74] Soon after they met, Berthe started modeling for Manet—first in *The Balcony* (1868–69). Manet and Morisot developed a friendship, mentorship, and artist-model relationship. The surviving correspondence between Berthe; her mother, Marie-Joséphine; and her sisters, Edma and Yves, demonstrates a clear admiration for Manet. As Marie-Joséphine wrote to Edma in 1869, "He naively said that Berthe [as his model] was bringing him luck. He seems to me very nice because he is interested in Berthe."[75] The Morisot family—also part of the Parisian bourgeoisie—started socializing regularly with the Manets. Berthe ultimately appeared in eleven oils and numerous prints and drawings. This visual engagement was intense but relatively short compared to that of Suzanne and Léon. Morisot started modeling for the artist in 1868 and stopped in 1874, when she married Eugène Manet, becoming Édouard's sister-in-law.[76]

In her correspondence, it is clear Berthe saw Manet both as a friend and mentor. In one account from 1870, she describes how the Morisot family "spent Thursday evening at Manet's. He was bubbling over with good spirits, spinning a hundred nonsensical yarns, one funnier than another."[77] Manet's alternating praise and critiques of her paintings seem to have been both encouraging and frustrating. In one typical account, she wrote to Edma: "Manet exhorted me so strongly to do a little retouching on my painting of you that when you come here, I shall ask you to let me draw the head again and add some touches at the bottom of the dress, and that is all. He says the success of exhibition [at the Salon] is assured and that I do not need to worry; the next instant he adds that I shall be rejected. I wish I were not concerned with all this."[78] Some have theorized that there was a romantic element—or at least a yearning—in Manet and Morisot's connection to one another.[79]

For his part, Manet seriously engaged with Berthe's art, though he clearly saw that her career could be limited by the fact that she was a woman. In an exchange not long after their initial meeting, Manet wrote in a letter to Fantin-Latour: "I agree with you: *les demoiselles* Morisot [Berthe and her sister Edma] are charming. What a pity they are not men. However, they could, as women serve the cause of painting by each marrying an Academician and bringing discord into the camp of those old fogies."[80] Of course, Berthe would not marry an establishment academic painter and influence his painting. Instead, in marrying Eugène, she found a partner who was dedicated to supporting her artistic career—perhaps in ways that mirrored how he had long been his brother's travel partner, frequent companion, and sometime model. Eugène was already accustomed to supporting a great artist, and he brought this skill to his relationship with Berthe.[81] Unlike her sister Edma, Berthe continued her career as a painter after her marriage. As a married woman and Manet's sister-in-law, she showed her paintings in the Impressionist exhibitions alongside those of many of Édouard's closest friends and colleagues.[82]

Fig. 8. Édouard Manet, *Repose*, about 1871. Oil on canvas, 150.2 × 114 cm. RISD Museum, Providence. Bequest of Mrs. Edith Stuyvesant Vanderbilt Gerry

In many ways, Berthe seems like a foil to Suzanne. French, upper class, and an innovative visual artist, she successfully straddled a bourgeois family life and the bohemian artistic world—just like Édouard. The Manet family and their friends do not seem to have viewed Suzanne as an artistic and social peer in the same way that they viewed Berthe. Although a talented piano player, the foreign and lower-class Suzanne has often been relegated to a secondary role within the Manet story. She was not Édouard's primary hostess—Eugénie, who lived with the couple starting in 1867, retained that responsibility after their marriage. She contributed to the family's social life mostly by providing musical entertainment at their gatherings. This apparent contrast between Suzanne and Berthe has been heightened by the surviving correspondence between the Morisot women. Before her marriage to Eugène, Berthe, her sisters, and their mother often describe Suzanne in less than flattering terms—perhaps tinged with a touch of jealousy and indignation.[83]

These surface-level contrasts, however, mask the striking similarities in Manet's depictions of the women—whether it is painting them reclining (see figs. 8 and 28) or casting them in works inspired by the Old Masters. *Berthe Morisot* (cat. no. 13) and *Madame Édouard Manet (Suzanne Leenhoff)* (cat. no. 14) demonstrate the similarities of some of these pictorial schemes. Both appearing in profile with elaborate hats, these images of Suzanne and Berthe are sketchy, particularly around the hands. Suzanne—like in many other images of her—is in gray, a trait that makes her recognizable across Manet's canvases. In this painting, Morisot does not have the gaunt appearance that she has in many other pictures; instead, her figure is filled out with a fur coat and muff. So dressed, her silhouette resembles Suzanne's. While Suzanne sold the painting of herself to a dealer in the 1890s, she kept the portrait of Berthe until her death; it then went to Léon, who sold it in 1910.[84] This provenance points to an understudied yet essential role that the family played: shepherding Manet's works and legacy after he died. The two women, in fact, sometimes worked together in this shared project. The wealthier Berthe helped to support her financially struggling sister-in-law after Édouard's death, likely to help her to survive without selling off works of art.[85] Rather than being foils, they had become family.

Keepers of the Manet Legacy

By the late 1870s Édouard was suffering from progressively debilitating symptoms of advanced syphilis—the same disease that had killed his father. He continued to paint and produce important works like the portrait of his cousin Jules Dejouy (cat. no. 15) and the Salon-medal-winning *Monsieur Pertuiset: the Lion Hunter* (1881; Museu de Arte de São Paulo). However, as Manet's condition deteriorated, he needed more care, which was provided by Léon, Suzanne, and his brothers. In his will, dated September 1882, the artist specifically says Léon "has given me the most devoted care." Édouard Manet died of an infection related to syphilis on April 30, 1883. His family was by his side.[86]

Manet's will dictated that "the pictures, sketches, and drawings remaining in my studio after my death are to be sold at auction," specifically charging his friend Théodore Duret to manage the sale and decide what was saleable and what should be destroyed. The proceeds would support Léon and Suzanne. The family helped Duret arrange both a posthumous exhibition and the sale (fig. 9).[87] Léon created a comprehensive inventory of works in the studio and hired a photographer to document every piece (see fig. 44).[88] The family also retained certain works. Suzanne held back some things from sale, and Eugène and Berthe bought eight works; in the following years Berthe continued to purchase additional pieces.[89]

Despite a shared love for and loyalty to Édouard and his art, growing tension was evident between Suzanne, Léon, and the other members of the Manet family. As Léon wrote to Eugène shortly after the artist's death, "Your brother raised me like his own son; I have always lived in your family, and it would be a great wrench to leave you."[90] Eugénie's letter to Gustave, in which she complains about Suzanne and Léon's claims to Édouard's family money, followed a few months later. Tensions increased between "Leenhoff world"—as Eugénie referred to them—and the legitimate Manets. Suzanne and Léon fell into financial hardship.[91] The mother-son pair started to sell the paintings they had retained, which Suzanne recorded in a notebook (fig. 10).[92] As time went on, these sales were not necessarily kosher—they sold parts of sketchbooks, unfinished works that were "completed" by another hand, and Léon likely sold a handful of copies originally made as keepsakes for Suzanne when she had to part with her favorite paintings (see figs. 11 and 33).[93] Julie Manet (1878–1966), Berthe and Eugène's daughter, was deeply concerned about this practice.[94]

While Léon's handling of the sale of Manet's works is questionable, what is beyond contention is the critical role he played in preserving Manet's legacy through his collaborations with scholars, notably Adolphe Tabarant and Étienne Moreau-Nélaton. By the time

Fig. 9. Anatole Godet, Retrospective exhibition of the work of Édouard Manet, École des Beaux-Arts, January 6–8, 1884. Photograph, fol. 5. Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

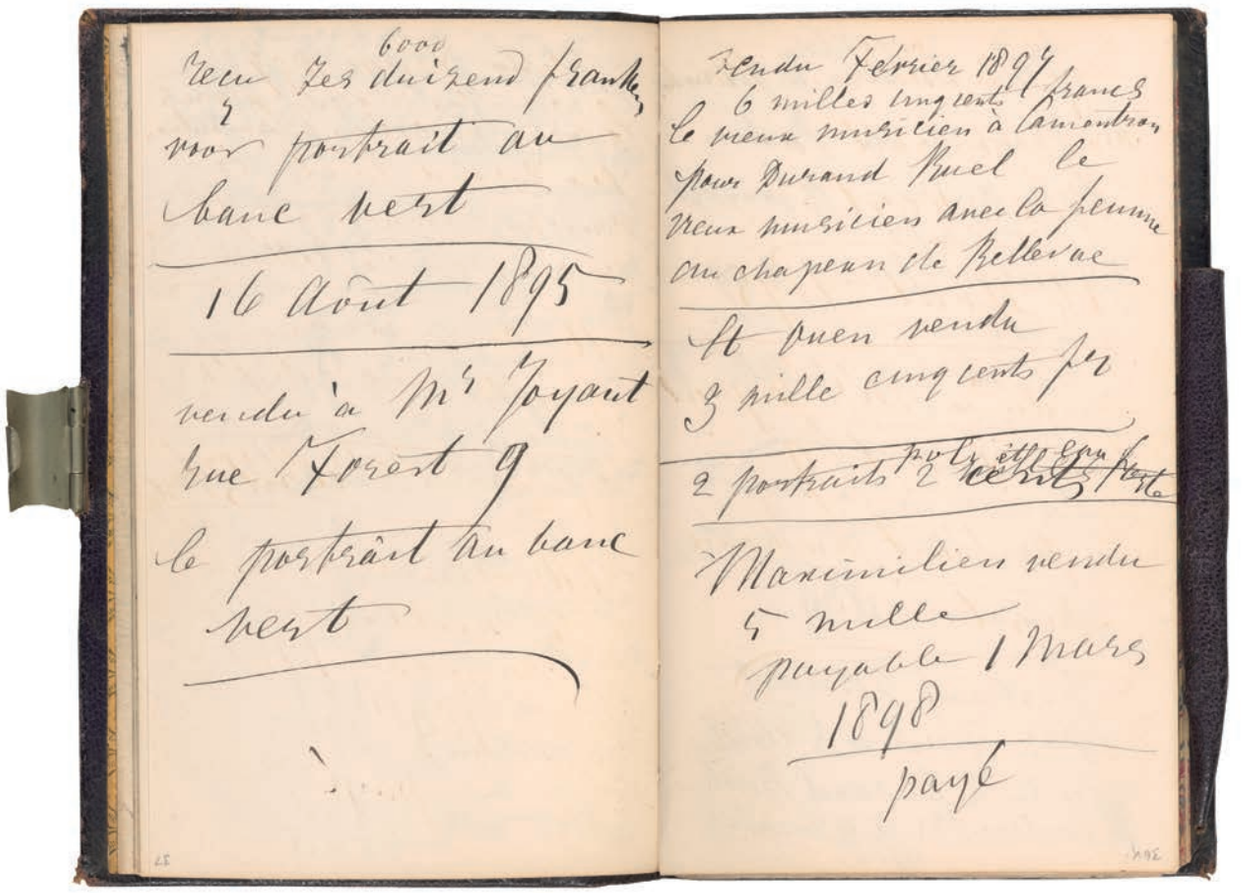

Fig. 10. Suzanne Manet, Carnet de comptes, fol. 36v–37r, 1892–1900. The Morgan Library & Museum, New York (MA 3950.2:2). Purchased as the gift of Mrs. Charles Engelhard and children in memory of Mr. Charles Engelhard, 1974

they were working on their landmark monographs, Léon was the last surviving family member to have known Manet. Julie was only four when her uncle died. The archives he inherited, notes he made on Manet's life, his inventory of the studio, and personal recollections shared with scholars still form a core part of primary source material available about the artist.[95] Though never a recognized member of the Manet family, Léon and the archives he held and created were essential to telling the story of Manet's artistic greatness and centrality to art history.

As with all things related to the Manet family, their keeping of Édouard's legacy is full of things left said and unsaid—unknown facts and true behaviors that will never be known. Yet, despite this, the family ultimately succeeded in supporting and celebrating Édouard's art. Manet was extraordinarily famous by the time of Léon's death in 1927 and firmly canonical by the time Julie died in 1966. Images of Eugénie, Gustave, Eugène, Suzanne, Berthe, and Léon are part of the canon of modern art. With this exhibition and catalogue, their roles will now be understood as more than just models or relatives, but rather as the providers of a powerful catalytic mixture of inspiration, support, and love.

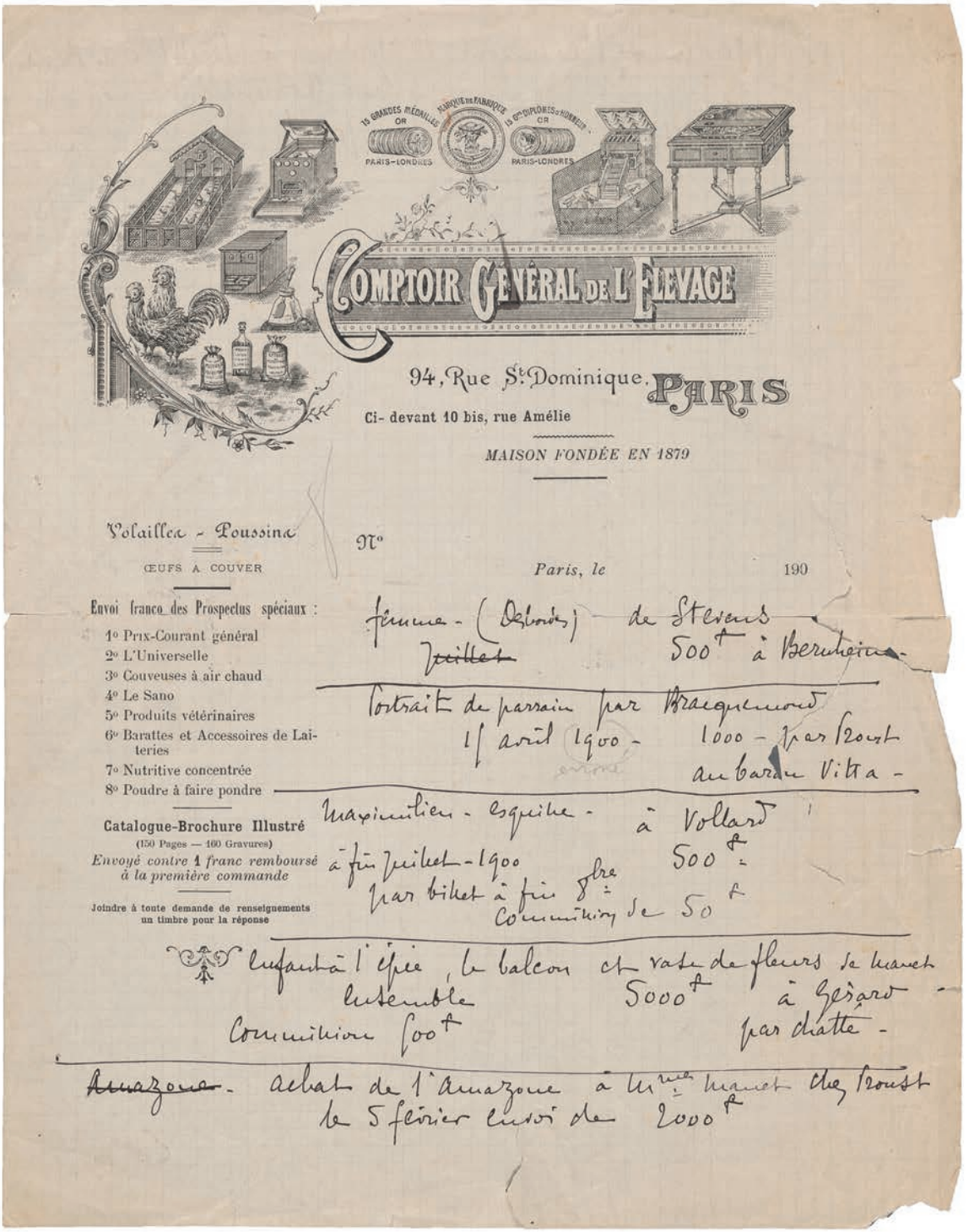

Fig. 11. Léon-Édouard Koëlla, known as Léon Leenhoff, Receipt for the sale of Manet paintings that likely includes forgeries, about 1905–10. The Morgan Library & Museum, New York (MA 3950)

Paris is A Mother

HILTON ALS

The story goes that Auguste Manet, a lawyer who lived by the clock and not in dreams, was fed up with his teenage son Édouard, born in 1832, who had no interest at all in the law, despite the fact that a number of men on Auguste's side of the family had made great careers for themselves supporting Justice.

Édouard (fig. 12) had other things on his mind; often he went with his maternal uncle to the Louvre, that arsenal of dreams, where he could stock up on fantasies made real by the artist's hand. Maybe he would be an artist, too. But Auguste had other plans, made other plans. A career in the navy, a career as a European colonizer—that would set Édouard right. So, in 1848 or so, Auguste packed Édouard off to Brazil on a boat called *Havre et Guadeloupe*, and just imagine that son of the haute bourgeoisie with his foulard in the damp air having no clear idea of what he had done to deserve being sent away, but internal journeys are always worth it: how could he not think of home living so far away, and of course some of those memories must have been of his art-loving mother, Mme Manet—Eugénie-Désirée Fournier Manet—because for so many sons memory is a mother anyway.

Born in 1811 to a French family that had recently returned to Paris after making its fortune in Sweden, Eugénie was named after a queen of Sweden; the youngest of four, and the only girl, Eugénie was the goddaughter of a royal ascendant couple, her godfather being Charles Bernadotte, the French Napoleonic maréchal who became the crown prince of Sweden a year before Eugénie's birth. (Bernadotte never learned to speak Swedish, even after taking the throne in 1818; he ruled Norway and Sweden until his death in 1844). That detail about Eugénie's early life has always struck me as interesting—her proximity to pomp and circumstance, but all slightly off-kilter because of Charles's obstinacy, his refusal to learn a language that would take him away from his native France even as he lived and ruled elsewhere. Édouard's parents, like parents everywhere, had their own reality in the world of one another. Even though Auguste seems to have taken no pleasure in social life, he likely allowed receptions to be hosted at his home twice a week because it was expected of a well-salaried civil servant; that was part of the job. Eugénie, on the other hand, delighted in parties, receptions; a lover of music, she had a fine voice, and part of what makes Édouard's portrait of his mother so extraordinary is that you can hear her silence in it and her watchfulness in all that black—Manet black, which stirs the soul to reflection (fig. 13).

Opposite: Fig. 12. Carolus-Duran, *Édouard Manet*, 1876. Oil on canvas, 63.5 × 45.4 cm. RISD Museum of Art, Providence

Overleaf: Fig. 13. Detail of Édouard Manet, *Madame Auguste Manet* (cat. no. 1)

(continued...)

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