

Making Love / Making Work
The Sculpture Practice of Sarah Bernhardt

Volume II

Miranda Eve Mason

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others.

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3 Making Work: The Sculpture Practice of Sarah Bernhardt



N° 17 — UN COIN DE L'ATELIER DE SARAH BERNHARDT

C'est en effet un coin de cet atelier célèbre, rigoureusement reproduit, grâce à l'obligeance de la grande artiste, qui a bien voulu permettre d'en copier les moindres détails, que cette scène représente. SARAH BERNHARDT est en tenue d'atelier, vêtue de cette longue robe blanche que la gravure et la photographie ont rendue fameuse, et qui ne saurait être plus authentique, puisque c'est elle-même qui en a gracieusement fait don au Musée.

Assise dans sa grande chaise, l'ébauchoir à la main, la tragédienne sculpte et considère l'œuvre qu'elle vient de commencer. C'est le buste d'ÉMILE DE GIRARDIN en terre glaise, qui est placé sur une sellette à côté d'elle, et qui est le dernier ouvrage de l'artiste.

On 5 June 1882 the musée Grévin opened to the public on the boulevard Montmartre in the 9th arrondissement of Paris. The Grévin was (and still is) a waxwork museum whose defining display format was the placement of figures in elaborately reconstructed settings from 'real life' – the tableau.¹ The use of the tableau was not unprecedented but did allow the Grévin to stand out from other contemporary waxwork museums, notably Madame Tussaud's in London. In its first four years the sole function of the new museum was to represent news of

¹ The archivist at the musée Grévin uses 'scène' in French but I wish to retain the use of the Anglicized 'tableau' instead of 'scene' in order to avoid confusion with a theatrical staging.

contemporary Parisian celebrities. This was announced to its visiting public by a tableau exhibited in the first room entitled 'Le tout-Paris chez Grévin' which included famous journalists, painters, and composers. Conceived of as both an artistic institution and a commercial enterprise, the musée Grévin was set up during 1881-82 by the journalist and newspaper director Arthur Meyer in collaboration with the caricaturist Alfred Grévin.² All

² Arthur Meyer (1844/46-1924) was a friend of Bernhardt and Abbéma. Bernhardt's autobiography and Lysiane Bernhardt's biography locate her first meeting with Meyer in late 1869. The latest mention of him I have found is in the 1920s when Maurice Rostand recorded seeing him at boulevard Pereire and Bernhardt addressed him by the affectionate name 'Tutur'; *Sarah Bernhardt* (1950) cited in Joanna Richardson, *Sarah Bernhardt and Her World* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1977), 209-10. Meyer was a complex socio-political subject: he was Jewish, became a Catholic in 1904 when he married late in life, was at times a royalist and a Boulangist, and received comments on the amount of make-up he wore. I do not have the space here to investigate in more depth his life, politics, or sexuality, nor his relationship with Bernhardt and others around her. However, he is principally accounted for as the director of the royalist daily newspaper, *Le Gaulois*, from 1882 onwards. *Le Gaulois* featured articles on Bernhardt from at least 1879 until 1900 and she may have written for it. This relationship has received relatively little attention in biography of Bernhardt despite its longevity. At some point the friendship became three-way by including Abbéma, but I have been unable to establish exactly when. Meyer is mentioned in an undated letter from Abbéma to Bernhardt (c. 1882 because she sends greetings to Bernhardt's husband). The letter included a watercolour drawing which Abbéma describes: 'Loulou frissait à la fois la tête de son amie [Sarah] et le ridicule, sous l'œil vigilant d'Arthur [Meyer...]' She continues, '[t]a commission est faite [...] Mille tendresses à toi. Mille amitiés a Monsieur Damala. Je t'embrasse et t'aime. Loulou.' I have not located the original version of the letter nor the date of its sale by Emmanuel Fabius, 55 rue de Châteaudun, Paris, IXe; cutting from unidentified sale catalogue, AMBA Pau. Vanessa R. Schwartz provides a detailed account of the involvement of various individuals and institutions in setting up and running the musée Grévin until the First World War. Here I consult both versions of Schwartz's essays on the museum in: 'Museums and Mass Spectacle: The Musée Grévin as a Monument to Modern Life', *French Historical Studies*, 19: 1 (1995), 7-26 and its revised version, 'The Musée Grévin: Museum and Newspaper in One' in *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998), 89-148. Schwartz writes that Meyer 'left the direction of the project in 1883 after many battles with Grévin'; (1998), 99. My concern is only with the first two years of the museum's existence because this is when Bernhardt's studio scene was on display. The closeness of Bernhardt's friendship with Meyer may have had some bearing on the choice of a scene from her studio at home (rather than a public stage scene) being the subject of the tableau installed under his directorship. Alfred Grévin (1827-92) worked from 1859 onwards as a caricaturist, both independently and for *Le Gaulois*, *Le Journal amusant*, *Le Petit journal pour rire*, and *Le Charivari*. He was also a set designer and painter for the theatre (Bénézit 1999, VI, 432; Thieme-Becker, XV, 17; DBF, XVI, 1199; Marcus Osterwalder, *Dictionnaire des illustrateurs 1800-1914* (Paris: Hubschmid and Bouret, 1983), 459. Jacques Lethève situates him as 'the great specialist in feminine habits [le grand spécialiste des moeurs féminines]' from 1858, but especially during 1870-85; *La Caricature et la presse sous la IIIe république* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1961), 38. He was the artistic director for the museum and retired due to ill-health in 1891 but his involvement in the museum, once up and

the historical information I provide here regarding the inception and ethos of the museum is drawn from Vanessa R. Schwartz's excellent and detailed historical and critical analysis in 'Museums and Mass Spectacle: The Musée Grévin as a Monument to Modern Life' (1995), revised for inclusion in her book, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (1998) as well as from personal communication with Professor Schwartz.³

The two images and catalogue entry reproduced above all represented a tableau situated at the 'heart of the museum'. The subject was, according to the catalogue, 'a corner of Sarah Bernhardt's studio' that had been 'rigorously reproduced' down to the 'smallest detail'.⁴

running, was 'as a mere figurehead'; Schwartz (1995), 12. Instead the team of theatre set designers was managed by businessman Gabriel Thomas; email from Vanessa Schwartz, 15 February 2007. Thomas (b. 1854) was the museum's accountant at its inception and became its chief administrator in 1883, artistic director in 1887, and president in 1914 (Schwartz 1998, 115, note 97). Given the size and extent of detail in the tableaux it is likely that a substantial team were employed to make them. A workshop scene where a head is being made is illustrated in Jean Noutous, 'Histoire anecdotique de la semaine: gros et menus faits', *La Vie moderne: journal hebdomadaire illustré*, 4e année, no. 23 (10 June 1882), 354-55 (354). A separate team of sculptors was employed by the museum in 1882 under the foremanship of Le Bourg and consisted of: Caniez, Carion, Cordier, Daillon, Frère, Longepied, Ludovic Durand (becomes major sculptor), Matabon, Pépin, Ringel Schroeder, Jumelin and Ledio (both listed under 'cire'), Bernstamm, Engrand, and Colombo. An additional member of the team was Talrich who was probably a wax anatomy sculptor. These invaluable details on the sculpting team were sent me by Vanessa Schwartz, email, 8 March 2007. I am greatly indebted to Professor Schwartz, University of Southern California for her work and her prompt and thoughtful response to my queries which came rather late in the day during the writing of this thesis.

³ Schartz places the musée Grévin at the 'crossroads of museum culture and modern spectacle'. She cites Meyer and Grévin's aim to provide the public with a 'living newspaper' and 'journal plastique' by means of the carefully researched and constructed tableaux. Meyer and Grévin were also concerned that the museum would be a 'unique artistic institution', unlike Madame Tussaud's waxwork museum in London, which, according to Grévin, was only an example of 'vastness and bad taste'. Schwartz's nuanced discussion of the vicissitudes of late nineteenth-century art and commercial cultural display is exemplary. Her analysis of issues of naturalism, realism, and verisimilitude in the detailed reproductions is instructive and resonates with my own reading of the possibilities that this particular tableau offers for writing the history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice; Schwartz (1995), 8-11.

⁴ Anon., *Almanach Grévin: catalogue illustré du musée Grévin*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Chaix, 1882), 53, exh. no. 17. The excerpt from the catalogue was kindly emailed to me in the first instance as a scanned image by the archivist at the musée Grévin who also informed me where the tableau had been sited in the museum and that it remained *in situ* until 1884 when it was replaced by another, entitled 'Sarah Bernhardt dans McBeth [*sic*]'. She also added that the waxwork model, the dress and other elements in the tableau were no longer owned by the museum, nor did they have an image of it; email from

'Bernhardt' is shown seated next to her life-size bust of Emile de Girardin (Salon details: *Portrait de M. E. de G.*, bronze, 1878) and, according to the catalogue entry, holds a modelling tool in her hand. Of the two studios at avenue de Villiers this is far more likely to be the atelier-salon than the sculpture studio.⁵ The image on the left above was drawn for a regular news column in *La Vie moderne* by the illustrators Gros and/or Delbos and published in the 10 June 1882 issue when the opening of the museum was reported; that on the right is an undated cartoon from an unknown publication by the caricaturist known as 'Stop'.⁶

Marie Vercambre, 5 February 2007. I am extremely grateful for the hard work and charm (required to obtain books 'en reserve' on Saturdays) of Richard Jacques for ascertaining the publication details and content of the catalogue itself. Richard also informed me that the sculpture studio exhibit was listed in the 3rd edition of the catalogue in 1883 (exh. no. 19). With regard to the Macbeth tableau, Bernhardt debuted as Lady Macbeth in a French translation of the play by Jean Richepin at the Porte Saint-Martin Theatre in Paris on 21 May 1884. The captions of both images reproduced here refer to Bernhardt as 'Mme Damala' and 'Dame a la [sic]' rather than 'Sarah Bernhardt', which the catalogue text entry uses. Bernhardt married another actor in April that year. During 1882 she was referred to as 'Mme Sarah Bernhardt-Damala' in the programme for Victorien Sardou's play *Fédora* in which she debuted on 11 December 1882; *Foedora [sic]*, scrapbook of cuttings from the programme, BNFDAS, fol. ICO PER Sarah Bernhardt. She also signed her name 'Sarah Bernhardt Damala' the same year in a letter to the director of the Kongelige Teater [Royal Theatre] in Copenhagen; Kongelige Bibliothek, Copenhagen, Nye Breve Udenlansk, Sarah Bernhardt to Fallesen, [22 June] 1882 [hereafter KBC]. I have not conducted an extensive analysis of when Bernhardt used or was referred to by her husband's name, either on its own or in conjunction with 'Bernhardt'. However, it is notable that the text retains her exhibiting name, which in the Salon guides always remained 'Sarah Bernhardt'.

⁵ Because of the constricted space represented – a 'corner' – no architectural features indicate if this was the atelier-salon. However, the high-backed chair on which Bernhardt is seated, visible only in the *Vie moderne* drawing and roughly drawn, is similar to a chair in some photographs of Bernhardt in role by Melandri (fig. 1: 35) most likely taken in the atelier-salon and not the sculpture studio. Other images of the sculpture studio do not show this item of furniture whereas a 'haute chaise gothique' is mentioned in Pierre Loti's account of a visit to the atelier-salon, 'Vendredi 29 mai', *Journal intime: 1878-1881* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1925), 85. Because this heavy wooden chair would have been the most difficult of the objects seen in the representation of the Grévin tableau to move from the atelier-salon across the courtyard to the sculpture studio, this scene is likely to be a reproduction of the atelier-salon.

⁶ Noutous, *La Vie moderne* (10 June 1882), 355. Noutous wrote only a few lines on the opening stating that it was a great success for 'street sellers [vendeuses]' and the museum. He added that a 'colleague' had told him that until now one only spoke of the *little women* of Grévin, now one will speak of *great men* [on n'avait parlé jusqu'ici, me dit un confrère, que des *petites femmes* de Grévin, désormais on parlera des ses *grands homme*'], referring to Grévin's reputation as a caricaturist of society women; Noutous, 355. The article included three further illustrations of the museum: a wax statue of the actor Coquelin cadet, another of Grévin himself in which the hands of the figure had yet to be fixed to the otherwise complete body, and a third entitled 'La toilette de Gounod' in which a studio worker is

All three representations of the tableau at the museum have been reproduced here at four removes – scanning, cropping, reducing, and printing – from the state in which I currently own and study them in order to write about them.⁷ The catalogue entry is a digitally scanned

seen working on Gounod's wax bust at a bench in (presumably) the museum's waxwork atelier. 'Stop' (legible as 'TOP' with a larger, lightening-flash grapheme above to represent the 'S') had already caricatured Bernhardt in scenes from an earlier stage production in 'L'Étrangère à la Comédie-Française'; Stop, *Journal amusant* (4 March 1876), n.p. The same year he produced a series of caricatures of artworks at the Salon, including Bernhardt's *Après la tempête*, Abbéma and Clairin's painted portraits of Bernhardt, and Jean Ringel d'Illzach's statuette of Bernhardt in *La Fille de Roland*, Stop, 'Visite au Salon de 1876', *Journal amusant*, no. 1035 (1 July 1876), 4. He also lampooned Abbéma's painted portrait of Bernhardt's niece exhibited at the Salon in 1888 (*Portrait de Mlle Saryta*) in *Le Salon humoristique illustré* (Paris: Journal amusant, 1888), 46. Stop was the pseudonym for Pierre Gabriel B. L. Morel-Retz (1825-99), a pupil of Gleyre and a watercolorist but principally a caricaturist and seemed to specialize in caricature of artworks. See *Dictionnaire des illustrateurs 1800-1914*, 1020. Morel-Retz wrote a letter to Bernhardt dated 30 January 1894 in which he mentioned that he had not seen her for some time. His tone was familiar and friendly, he wrote: 'vous êtes une vagabonde – moi aussi je suis un peu nomade', Stop, Louis Pierre Gabriel Bernard, Morel-Retz, dit (1825-1899) to Sarah Bernhardt, INFC (coll. F. Lugt), *Autographes d'artistes français du XVe au XIXe siècle*, 1973 – A.1173. There is no indication of when this relationship may have begun. I am not aware of a detailed survey of caricature of artists and artworks and the periodicals in which they appeared in this period. For a brief treatment covering mainly the 1890-1910s, see Lethève (1961), 147-49, who also provides an excellent index of journals and caricaturists, as well as a bibliography, 241-63. I will be researching this further for a paper at the Nineteenth-Century French studies Colloquium, University of Southern Alabama, Mobile, AL, 18-20 October 2007 in which I will consider the gendering of women artists and their work using Bernhardt and Abbéma as case studies.

⁷ I am very grateful to my former student, and now my teacher, Ruth Wilbur, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds for scanning and reproducing the images within this text for me when time and skill were of the essence. Based on her work on the contemporary artist Claude Heath, Ruth also raised the issue with me of 'translation' into two dimensions when drawing sculpture and therefore this display at the musée Grévin because of its three-dimensionality. Although I have considered the photography of sculpture in these terms in Chapter 1, I do not discuss drawing of sculpture as illustration in the same depth in this thesis. Abbéma's drawing of her portrait bust at the time of its exhibition at the Salon indicates how drawing can change the work substantively: the pose of the drawn bust is almost half profile, not quarter profile, and the gaze is horizontal, not downwards; *L'Art*, vol. 17, 5e année, no. 2 (1879), 274. It is impossible to say here if the *Vie moderne* drawing involved any substantial changes to the Grévin tableau. What is identifiable is that the extent of translation by drawing is evident in cartoons or caricatures, especially of artworks. Here this can only be determined by comparison with the drawing from the *Vie moderne*, which I have to assume to be a more reliable representation of the tableau. In Stop's drawing the chair back is smaller than the chair this was likely to represent and he includes a skull and plant not present in the *Vie moderne* drawing. The theorization of drawing of sculpture and other three-dimensional objects or scenes in various publication contexts is a topic for further

and printed image; the *Vie moderne* drawing is a print-out from microfilm; and the cartoon by Stop is a photocopy taken from a newspaper cutting which was made for me by library assistants at the département des Arts du spectacle (BNF).⁸ There has been no further, conscious intervention on my part in order to enhance 'quality', namely by centring, rotating, or 'cleaning up' the images, as is the case with the other illustrations for this thesis provided in the separate bound volume. Resources are limited or limiting: the tableau at the musée Grévin was a temporary exhibit and no elements of it remain in the museum's collection so I cannot view it in 'real life'. Obtaining these three scraps of historical record and making sense of them was fairly arbitrary.⁹ The *Vie moderne* drawing is difficult to study closely in microfilm format. I have found no literature specifically about this tableau other than the short catalogue entry: neither image had any explanatory text about it apart from the caption, or at least none

research. For a discussion of drawing for sculpture, i.e. as a preliminary exercise before modelling and how this was taught to sculptors, see below, 328, 367-71.

⁸ I am very grateful to the library assistants who provided this and many other very helpful services in an efficient and calm manner when I was very short of time. Unfortunately, I do not know their names to make this thanks more personal.

⁹ I first came across the cartoon by Stop in October 2005 as a cutting in the archive on Bernhardt in BNF DAS. No annotation was provided. This is very typical of the archives on Bernhardt (and Abbéma and Clairin). It seems that contemporaries who were not professional archivists created scrapbook (or scrapbook-like) collections of press cuttings. In this case, at first I recognized this only as a studio space occupied by Bernhardt. I did not identify its location until I came across the drawing from *La Vie moderne* when searching for something else through microfilm reels of *La Vie moderne* (generously lent through the Inter-Library Loans scheme by the Sterling and Francine Clark Institute, Williamstown, MA). I only recently followed up the musée Grévin lead provided by the *Vie moderne* caption (in February 2007). Insufficient time to return to Paris meant this investigation was done by post and email. Lack of time and money compromise what might be regarded as the 'necessary' quality of images for study or reproduction: ordering slides from the BNF, for instance, (as I have done for many images in my archive) takes time and costs 12 euros each, plus postage. I am not even certain that the BNF would allow the *Vie moderne* to be photographed. Perhaps even more important, and this is vital for work on Bernhardt, reproduction difficulties should not, they *cannot* determine what is seen outside the confines of the institutional archive. Working on this sculpture practice makes that abundantly clear. Again, this is a compromised issue. Obtaining images from institutions other than government funded ones (e. g. BNF, RMN, and PMVP) can be even more costly and difficult: the Comédie-Française charges 61 euros for one slide if a work has not yet been photographed by their reproduction service and scholars are not allowed to photograph works themselves. This is not unique to France. Such archival gate-keeping skews the public (published) view of 'Sarah Bernhardt' and particularly her sculpture practice. It can also engender scholarly habits that reinforce these limitations: see my discussion about the reproduction of some and not other images of Bernhardt's studio.

was available in the same place as the image.¹⁰ Such are the conditions of (some) research that has to, at least for the time being, come to an end.

Frustration at the limitations of resources is not the only aspect of how I have lived this experience of research. It has been hugely exciting at times. This musée Grévin tableau event is one example. Unfulfilled scholarly desire doubles back as the motor of that desire. Finding the second, and seeking out the third, of these ‘scraps of historical record’ meant I could make sense of the first. The cartoon’s function was not clear when I encountered it, for two reasons. The caption did not situate the image as a representation of an artwork or tableau display and might therefore have been a ‘direct’ representation of Bernhardt’s studio (as were all the images illustrated in Chapter 2). How it is stored in the archive – as a cutting with no annotation – meant that its date and place of publication were not immediately evident. Finding the second scrap of historical record – the *Vie moderne* drawing – led me to then assume that both drawings represented a painting: I did not yet know that the musée Grévin was a waxwork museum until I followed up this lead. Once I was aware of this, the idea that the Grévin’s ‘reproduction’ of Bernhardt in her studio was closer to being a ‘real’ studio occupied by a ‘life-like’ representation of the sculptor than the other, two-dimensional representations of her studio that I had studied was really exciting.

This is where the joy (to be followed by the consequent pathos) of scholarly (lesbian) desire really kicks in. According to the catalogue, Bernhardt donated her own dress for the wax figure. My initial response to this was to ask: Does this mean the model maker worked from the sculptor’s body, measuring it, and that this was a ‘portrait’? The first catalogue of the museum gave a description of how the figures were made. The subject sat for a bust, modelled by ‘an artist of talent’. This was cast in plaster, then translated into wax. Colour was added by a painter and a close study of the eyes and hair was made before the hair, eyebrows (beard if appropriate) and eyes were added at the end. The catalogue of the

¹⁰ The news article in *La Vie moderne* was very brief and only explained the illustrations by the captions.

museum explained that the body should not be made from a 'mannequin of approximate size because the result would be 'mediocre'. Instead, 'all the proportions of the body had to be observed' because these were 'important considerations when one wanted to reproduce exactly an individuality copied, in every regard, from the truth' Finally, the catalogue explained, the 'hands of the figures were moulded from nature'.¹¹ The explanation of the process of making the body does not record if the wax figure of Bernhardt was made in this way, but does make it likely. Also, if Bernhardt did donate her own dress to the museum, then some measurement process of her body must have been performed.¹² As for the objects in the tableau, what if the scene setter had used Bernhardt's actual clay or plaster model of the bust of Girardin that appears in these images and is identified as such in the catalogue text?¹³ What if the waxwork figure had actually held one of Bernhardt's own modelling tools in its hand?¹⁴ The writer of the catalogue entry did not deem it necessary to specify the authenticity

¹¹ 'Un artiste de talent'; 'Si on la plantait sur un mannequin de fantaisie de la taille approximative de l'original, le résultat serait médiocre; il faut que toutes les proportions du corps soient observées [...] ce sont là autant de considérations importantes quand on veut reproduire une individualité calquée à tous les égards sur la vérité'; 'toutes les mains des figures de cire ont été moulées sur nature', *Almanach Grévin* (1882), 4-5. I am, again, indebted to Vanessa Schwartz for sending me her notes from the catalogue. This is a particularly crucial piece of information for this chapter.

¹² But how? Is taking *exact* measurements a sculptural process? Did the model makers use callipers and other tools or some kind of pointing machine suitable for use on the human body? Or was it more like dress-making and, if so, did a male model maker do this or was a female employed? How was a level of precision achieved in order for the sculptor's body to be translated into a wax figure that fitted into her own dress? These are questions I cannot answer at the moment without further research in the Grévin archive and more generally on the making of wax figures.

¹³ The object used in the tableau may also have been moulded from Bernhardt's bronze version of the bust, or from her clay or plaster versions, if these still existed.

¹⁴ I have still to conduct research on this subject, particularly to ascertain if other sculptors were represented in tableaux in the museum in 1882 and other years. I am, however, extremely grateful to Vanessa Schwartz for supplying me with two excerpts from later catalogues about the display of sculpture. The first, representing *Le Monument de l'Amiral Courbet* (inaugurated 1890, Abbeville) by Falguière and Mercié (teacher and student) used a quarter-sized 'final model of the monument erected at Abbeville [le projet définitif du monument élevé, à Abbeville]'. This could mean that the two sculptors lent their plaster working model for the monument to the museum, but this is not entirely clear. Wax models of the two sculptors stood in front of their work with that of Antonin Proust (Ministre de Beaux-arts, from 14 November 1881 until c. 2 February 1882). In addition to these three figures, eight other cultural luminaries were present, seated on benches 'like simple visitors [assis comme de simples visiteurs]' and included Victorien Sardou, Ludovic Halévy and Émile Zola; Anon., *Almanach Grévin: catalogue illustré du musée Grévin*, (Paris: Chaix, ?1893), n.p. The second

of the sculptor's work or tools, showing interest only in her 'famous' long white dress.¹⁵ Other tableaux in the museum used authentic elements: a historical tableau of the death of Marat that opened in 1886 included, according to Schwartz, 'the actual tub in which Marat had been murdered [...] a real map of France from 1791', and so on.¹⁶ But scholarly wishful thinking – the concretization of desire – aside, these three scraps are important because they are legible as historical records of a specific and unique event in the history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice. A (presumably realist) representation of Bernhardt in the process of making sculpture in her studio was made available to its largest ever public audience who paid

tableau concerning sculpture was that representing the *Monument à Général Faidherbe* by Antonin Mercié and included, again, a quarter-sized definitive model of the work. Standing in front of the model were the figures of Mercié and the sculptor Paul Dubois, and, again several luminaries were present including Rodin and Zola; Anon., *Almanach Grévin: catalogue illustré du musée Grévin*, 115th ed. (Paris: Chaix, c. late 1890s), 9.

¹⁵ The 'famous' dress with its long train, front fringed trim, and fur trim around the bottom hem represents a generic rather than a single, specific item of clothing. Bernhardt is represented wearing this type of dress in other images from c. 1876-80 in which the material of the trims and the length of train differ. Of these images, some represent Bernhardt in role (Mrs Clarkson from *L'Étrangère* in Clairin's 1876 painted portrait), whereas others appear to be Bernhardt at home and in her own clothes (Abbéma's *Le Déjeuner dans la Serre* [1877]; Bourgoïn's 1879 watercolour of the atelier-salon at avenue de Villiers with reduced version of *Après la tempête*). Sometimes it is uncertain whether Bernhardt is in role or not. Some photographs in Melandri's series were of roles, but I cannot identify all the costumes, for instance where Bernhardt is seated in the gothic chair (fig. 1: 35). The Roger-Viollet photographic service documents this as Bernhardt in *La Dame aux camélias* but I am not convinced of this, because of the likely date of Melandri's session being 1878-79. It is possible that Bernhardt is represented in costume as Doña Sol in Hugo's *Hernani* (1877), but this would require further costume history research. I do not know if Bernhardt wore her stage costumes other than to be represented in role, i.e. as 'her own clothes'. There is some confusion in posthumous literature (for instance when providing captions for photographs or discussing Clairin's 1876 portrait) as to the identity of clothing in images of Bernhardt. It is notable that Bernhardt is not shown in the tableau in her white trouser suit. Although Melandri's photographs probably did not have the wide circulation some recent literature suggests, the suit was represented in three caricatures from 1878-82 where Bernhardt is associated as a sculptor. The generic dress appeared in another three (1880, 1883, and undated). For a more in-depth discussion of Bernhardt's attire in *Déjeuner* and her favouring of this type of dress in the 1870s, see Griselda Pollock, 'Louise Abbéma's *Lunch* and Alfred Stevens's *Studio*: theatricality, feminine subjectivity and space around Sarah Bernhardt, Paris, 1877-1888' in *Local/Global: Women Artists in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Deborah Cherry and Janice Helland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 99-120 (104).

¹⁶ The Marat tableau was the first historical one to be built by the museum. Grévin also requested a suit from Émile Zola for a wax model of the writer; Schwartz (1998), 120-22.

only a small fee.¹⁷ Discovering this was really, *really* exciting, not least because of when this event took place and what else it marked.¹⁸

¹⁷ Schwartz cites the report of the Conseil d'administration to the General Assembly of the musée Grévin (30 March 1883) that in the first year the museum received half a million visitors; (1995), 7-8. The entry fee during this period was 2 francs Monday-Saturday and 1 franc on Sundays. Package deals including a train journey from the provinces for those who did not live in Paris included an even cheaper ticket. Schwartz argues that the ethos of the museum was to seek bourgeois legitimacy for a form that had previously been consumed as spectacle by the lower classes and therefore 'associated with mediocre standards and an unsophisticated audience'; (1998), 98. Yet the museum's aspirations were to be an art institution, demonstrated, Schwartz argues, in an interior decorative scheme that included 'blue mosaic from Venice inlaid with gold [and] busts of Michelangelo, Benvenuto Cellini, Germain Pilon, and Jean Goujon'. Therefore the museum 'created a bourgeois tone but actually cultivated an audience much broader than the Parisian bourgeoisie'; Schwartz (1998), 103, 106. Given the number and range of press reviews of the opening of the museum (Schwartz has traced and read sixty), the Grévin had, or at least had the potential for, an audience of broad social composition. Given the visitor numbers in the first year, it is possible that up to half a million visitors saw this tableau of Bernhardt. In view of the difficulty in establishing the exact extent of the public circulation of other images of Bernhardt as a sculptor, this is probably the highpoint (in terms of numbers) of Bernhardt's public profile as a serious sculptor because she is actually represented making work. Abbéma's 1875 painting was in a private collection, the circulation of Bourgoïn's watercolours is unknown, and caricature of Bernhardt sculpting was not serious. Apart from publication in the London periodical *The Theatre* (1 June 1879) of one photograph by Melandri, it is not clear what the circulation of these photographs was. See Chapter 2 for the circulation of images of Bernhardt as a sculptor in Bourgoïn's watercolours; Melandri's photographs; caricature of Bernhardt as a sculptor; and drawings of Bernhardt as a sculptor by Lucas and Liphart. During her tour to London with the Comédie-Française in 1879 Bernhardt gave a performance of sculpting a bust. This was conducted in private homes for additional earnings and would therefore not have had a large audience. See Anon., 'En Passant', *The Theatre* (1 July 1879), 390 and Montezuma [Montegue Laurence Marks, b. 1847], 'My Notebook', *Art Amateur: A Monthly Journal Devoted to the Cultivation of Art in the Household* [hereafter *Art Amateur*], vol. 3, no. 6 (November 1880), 113. There is a slight ambiguity in Montezuma's description of Bernhardt 'modelling on stage' suggesting that it may refer to an additional performance that took place in a theatre during her tour of the United States which opened at Booth's Theatre in New York on 8 November 1880. This would constitute a well attended public display of the activity of Bernhardt's sculpture practice. I cannot establish when the November issue of *Art Amateur* was ready for publication in order to confirm one way or the other if such an event also took place in New York. If Montezuma is referring to the London performance(s), it is inaccurate to describe this as 'on stage'. For a discussion of Bernhardt's self-portrait statuette with supporting objects signifying 'sculptor', see below 295-306.

¹⁸ Jacques Thullier discusses the excitement and reward that nineteenth-century sculpture scholarship brings. He writes that the historian of nineteenth-century sculpture is not one who stays sitting down at her or his desk. 'Au rebours', he writes, 'l'historien de la sculpture du siècle passé est contraint d'aller à la découverte, une découverte qui ne se fait pas seulement à coup de livres et d'archives (même si les archives sont indispensables et si les livres peuvent être utiles), mais aussi à coup de visites et de voyages qui demeurent presque toujours des aventures'; Thullier, 'A propos de l'histoire de la sculpture du XIXe siècle: réflexions sur le bonheur de l'historien', in *La Sculpture du XIXe siècle*:

The period of the museum's inception, 1881-82, coincided with the high point of a seven-year period in the history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice which spanned in total from c. 1869-72 until c. 1919-23. During this short time Bernhardt produced her greatest number of works in sculpture: 60 percent of those works which I can confirm (by inspection or from cross-referencing reliable sources) were made and completed by her.¹⁹ 1874 – seven years before – had not been a busy year for Bernhardt's work in the theatre and was the time, according to her autobiography, when she effectively launched her sculpture practice as a career. Bernhardt made between five and eight works that year and it was the first time she exhibited sculpture – at the Paris Salon. In order to mark the beginning of this significant period, I also reproduce Bernhardt's entry in the Salon guide for 1874. This time the task was easy: the text has been scanned (actual size) from a copy of the 1977 Garland reprint of the guide which is shelved moments away from the scanner in my home institution's library.²⁰

une mémoire retrouvée. les fonds de sculpture [rencontres de l'école du Louvre], no ed. (Paris: Documentation française, 1986), 9-16 (10). I agree: my encounter with the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* was one kind of adventure; another was a long-haul road trip around France in the summer of 2005 in search of painting and sculpture by the artists considered in this thesis. But adventure can also happen at home. My investigation of the musée Grévin tableau has been desk-bound, working in my home institution's library, relying on the Inter-Library Loans scheme, using the internet, and contacting the museum and other individuals by post and email. Given that the tableau no longer exists, this remove from the 'real thing' is unavoidable. But this work is no less exciting than travelling to, say, Bernhardt's former holiday home in Belle-Île-en-Mer off the coast of Brittany by boat.

¹⁹ This figure is a safe minimum. The total number of works made in 1874-81 was thirty. Six of these were produced in other media or reproduced in different sizes and of these three may have been distinct versions of the same basic model. Another nine works in this period were made but are untraced or were only mooted as possible projects. A further four works are suggested by other sources to have been underway or made by Bernhardt in this seven-year period but I doubt these to be distinct works made by her.

²⁰ H. W. Janson's editorship of a sixty-volume reprint of the Salon guides (1673 to 1881) is an invaluable resource for scholars who do not live within easy reach of libraries that own copies of the original print runs.

**BERNHARDT (M^{me} SARAH), née à Paris, élève
de MM. Mathieu-Mousnier et Franceschi.**

Rue de Rome, 4.

**2672 — Portrait de M^{me} B. G...; — buste,
marbre.**

The Salon regulations required the information given above as mandatory: the artist's name, place of birth, her address (studio or home), her teacher or teachers, the title of the work (or works), form, and medium.²¹ 'Sculpture' was one of seven categories of artwork shown at the Salon and works were listed therein according to the alphabeticization of exhibiting artists' names and allocated numbers accordingly. This entry in the Salon guide marks the first time Bernhardt's work was situated in the public domain as a serious art practice.²²

²¹ A signed declaration was required on submission of work. Any prizes from prior Salons as well as nomination for, and class of, the Prix de Rome were to be noted. Neither criteria applied to Bernhardt who had not exhibited at the Salon before and, because she was a woman, was ineligible for the Prix de Rome.

²² Patricia Mainardi discusses the practice and politics of the Paris Salon in its closing years. It was the focus of attention by both the state, which sponsored it until 1881, and artists in a debate over the hierarchy of painting and the commodification of art in which the Salon's credibility as a viable exhibiting institution was hotly debated; *The End of the Salon: Art and the State in the Early Third Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). For the period 1870-78, see Chapter 2: 'Moral Order in the Fine Arts', 37-55. Mainardi's focus is principally, or by default, on painting. For an account of the contemporary debates by the supporters of women artists on their secondary position (to men) at the Salon in the 1870-90s, see Tamar Garb, *Sisters of the Brush: Women's Artistic Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 26-32. For further discussion of Bernhardt's exhibiting choices and strategies, see below 385-99. Some accounts of Bernhardt's general art practice state that she began to paint before training as an actress and had planned this as a career. An account of Bernhardt's early work as a painter and review of an exhibited work is cited by biographer Thérèse Berton from the Parisian newspaper *Mercure de Paris* of October 1860. The article states that Bernhardt, aged sixteen, won first prize in her class at the Colombier School for her painting *Les Champs Elysées en hiver*. I have not yet located the original article nor investigated the school and Bernhardt's studentship there, which is not mentioned in any other source. Although much of Berton's biography is inaccurate, she does refer to the same newspaper clippings collection owned by Bernhardt and used by biographers, Jules Huret and Lysiane Bernhardt. On this basis, I accept this citation (provisionally) as an accurate record; Berton, *Sarah Bernhardt as I Knew Her: The Memoirs of Madame Pierre Berton*, ed. Basil Woon (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1923), 68-69. All other sources that refer to Bernhardt's earlier painting practice (without repeating the citation from Berton) are more general than the article cited by Berton and were written over thirty-five years later. The earliest of these that I have located is an interview with Bernhardt where she declared that 'my dream was to become a great painter and that was well before I thought of the

In the previous two chapters I considered two aspects of Bernhardt's sculpture practice in depth: the making of a single work (*Bust of Louise Abbéma*) and the places where Bernhardt made sculpture. The tableau at the musée Grévin and the excerpt from the Salon guide allow me to relate and discuss a broader history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice: her other works of sculpture, her training, her exhibiting strategies, and, therefore, her place in the world of later nineteenth-century French sculpture production. How?

The excerpt from the Salon guide in 1874 demonstrates that Bernhardt fulfilled the criteria for being a sculptor: she had trained with other, senior sculptors; she had a studio or access to a studio; she had made a work; and she was exhibiting her work in public, potentially for sale. The bust of 'Mlle B. G.' had satisfied a Salon jury composed of nine elected members and three appointed by the government and it took its place among a total of 3197 works in sculpture.²³

theatre. I began painting very young and I followed my dream for a long time [mon rêve était de devenir un grand peintre, et cela bien avant de penser au théâtre. J'ai commence ainsi la peinture toute jeune et j'ai poursuivi mon rêve pendant très longtemps]; Anon., 'Sarah Bernhardt: peintre et sculpteur', *Le Gaulois* (6 December 1896), 1.

²³ I have not yet identified the sitter nor located this bust. According to the Salon regulations, the government body responsible for the Salon was the ministère de l'Instruction publique, des cultes et des beaux-arts, direction des Beaux-arts. That year those eligible to vote the jury in were: members of the Institut, artists decorated with the Légion d'honneur for their work, medal winners from previous Salons, and winners of the Prix de Rome. The directeur des Beaux-arts in January-May 1874 when the guide was printed and the jury made its choice was the Marquis Philippe de Chennevières who was president of the jury overall. However, each section elected an internal president and vice-president. Elected members of the sculpture jury from a total of sixty-one voters were: Guillaume (president), P. Dubois (secretary), Cabet, Jouffroy (vice-president), Chapu, Mathurin-Moreau (who replaced Carpeaux), Soitoux, Perraud, and Falguière. Appointed members were the curator of modern sculpture at the Louvre, the directeur des Beaux-arts in the préfecture de la Seine, and a member of the Assemblée nationale; Salon guide 1874, cxxv-cxxxix. A total of 3261 works were exhibited in the combined categories of sculpture, engraving on medals and semi-precious stones, and public monuments (sculpture completed in the last year already fixed to existing buildings). There are no records of the total works submitted to the jury in any of the years Bernhardt exhibited, nor of any years in which she may have been rejected, which would allow me to discuss how her work may have measured up to the criteria for selection. I am very grateful to Laure de Margerie and Dominique Lobstein of the Documentation service at the musée d'Orsay for answering my query on this. They informed me that once the Salon moved to the palais de l'Industrie from the Louvre (or near the

The tableau from the musée Grévin also represented Bernhardt in more than one register that signified ‘sculptor’. As I stated above, the wax ‘Sarah Bernhardt’ is seated and, according to the catalogue entry, holds a modelling tool in her left hand. The *Vie moderne* drawing confirms this; the tool is seen as a single black pen stroke. The catalogue qualifies the activity in the tableau thus: ‘the actress is sculpting and contemplating the work she has just begun’, adding that this was ‘the latest work by the artist’. Given the completed state of the bust, the claim that this was ‘just begun’ – even though said to be in raw clay – is unlikely. Furthermore, the work in question had been shown in bronze at the Salon four years before and was not her latest work (Bernhardt made a further eleven works in 1879-81). As such the tableau was not as true to life as the museum claimed. But there may have been good reasons for bending the rules a little. Perhaps Bernhardt still had the clay or plaster model of this bust. Or, failing that, she could have lent the bronze version, which she did own, to be copied for the tableau. Moreover, if this tableau was made during 1882 for the opening of the museum in June, then Bernhardt did not have a recent work to offer. If made earlier, in 1881, she did have a work that had been made that year – a marble bust of fellow actor Coquelin cadet but it is not clear if she owned the finished bust or its clay and plaster models in order to lend any of them for display or copying.²⁴ The most likely reason for the choice of this bust was that Girardin (1806-81), who had only recently died, was a journalist and celebrity in his own right. This

Louvre) in 1855, no such records were kept; email from Laure de Margerie, 23 February 2007. For an analysis of a period when records do survive (1824-55), see Isabelle Leroy-Jay Lemaistre, ‘Les anti-fonds: les sculpteurs refusés à partir de 1831’, in *La Sculpture du XIXe siècle*, 169-78. I am also not aware of any other records which might demonstrate if Bernhardt submitted work to the Salon in years other than when she exhibited there. So far I have found no studio diaries, accounts books or receipts, nor any correspondence that would indicate this.

²⁴ ‘Master Fish’ proclaimed, when describing the atelier-salon at avenue de Villiers, ‘here is Coquelin cadet with his big smile [voici Coquelin cadet et son large sourire]’. He also wrote that he saw Bernhardt’s bust of William Busnach (bronze, 1878) there and a bust of Félicien David in progress in the sculpture studio; Master Fish, ‘Les Grandes petites dames: Sarah Bernhard [sic]’ [Part 1], *Le Boudoir: gazette galante*, 1e année, no 7 (11 July 1880), 74-75 (75). There is no other evidence that Bernhardt kept the bust of Busnach or that she ever made a bust of Félicien David. A photograph of the sculpture studio at boulevard Pereire includes a bust stored on a shelf that may be the ‘smiling’ portrait of Coquelin cadet but this is tenuous. A reason for not including the bust of Coquelin cadet may have been that the museum included a separate display with a full wax figure of him in role, illustrated in Noutous, *La Vie moderne* (10 June 1882), 354.

has earned him nearly four columns in his recent, 1985 entry in the *DBF* (Bernhardt had just over two columns in her entry in 1954, only thirty-one years after her death). Girardin is described as 'indefatigable, working almost as much as Balzac' and responsible for 'revolutionising the daily press by lowering the price of subscription, raising the print runs and increasing income from advertising.' One of Girardin's most noted achievements was to inaugurate the Parisian daily newspaper *La Presse* in July 1836 whose writers included 'a constellation of talents', among them Honoré de Balzac, Alexandre Dumas, Théophile Gautier, and Victor Hugo.²⁵ In a museum planned as a 'living newspaper' of celebrities, representing an existing portrait bust of the recently deceased Girardin was a clever move by the curators because the tableau provided a news story within a news story. It informed museum visitors that Bernhardt was a working sculptor with her own studio and an oeuvre. At the same time, by showing Bernhardt's portrait bust of Girardin shortly after his death, the tableau also acted as a timely commemoration on the part of the museum's curators to a key figure in Parisian journalism.²⁶

Bernhardt is represented in the tableau working *and* thinking, in a way in which working and thinking are inextricably bound. Still holding a modelling tool, the figure is seen to have just

²⁵ 'Émile est infatigable, il travaille presque autant que Balzac'; 'révolutionner l'information quotidienne par l'abaissement du prix de l'abonnement, l'élévation consécutive du tirage et des revenus provenant de la publicité'; 'une constellation de talents'; A. d'Esneval, 'Emile de Girardin', *DBF*, XVI (1985), 195-98.

²⁶ This complicates even further Schwartz's notion of the tableau as a 'representation of a representation of reality' (Schwartz 1998, 130). As a portrait bust it is already several degrees removed from the referent because of the processes of sculpture (clay modelling, plaster casting and bronze casting). Furthermore, this was significant for Bernhardt's practice: using this bust changed the status of the *Bust of Émile de Girardin* from the portrait of her associate which she kept in her private collection to a work recognizable as a public commemoration. With regard to the bounds of who was celebrated, I am grateful to Vanessa Schwartz for informing me that the museum was not only for the living. This might be implied in Jules Claretie's interpellation in a review of the museum opening when he exclaimed: '[c]elebrities of the day! Pantheon of the moment!', *La Vie à Paris* (1883), 275 (cited in Schwartz 1998, 110). Professor Schwartz referred me to another writer on the museum who argues that the museum enjoyed representing 'people on the border between life and death'. See Mark Sandberg, *Living Pictures, Missing Persons: Mannequins, Museums and Modernity* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2003); email from Vanessa Schwartz, 8 March 2007.

broken off from the task of clay modelling and to be absorbed in thought. Positioning and posture of the figure suggest contemplative concentration aided by its stable, three-point anchoring. The right forearm, wedged between the arm of the chair and the face, supports the head atop a body leaning to the figure's right; three fingers are tucked under her right jaw bone, the index finger breaches the jaw line pointing upwards against the cheek.²⁷ The left wrist is hooked around the other arm of the chair to counterbalance the slight rightward movement of the upper body. The feet are placed centrally, resting together, one over the other, on a shallow foot cushion. The catalogue got it wrong about when the bust of Girardin had been made, but a precise *history* of Bernhardt's sculpture practice was not the purpose of this tableau. Rather it aimed to show Bernhardt in the here and now. In this respect it did its job: she is seen next to a work known to be her own – a contentious issue in earlier treatment of Bernhardt's sculpture practice – thinking about (and) making sculpture.²⁸

My *modus operandi* in the remainder of this chapter is similar to, but not the same as, that in Chapter 2. There I scoured the archive in order to collect stuff. I also do this here. In Chapter 2 I configured the material evidence (text and image) I found into a form that allowed me to represent a chronology and topography of the places where Bernhardt made sculpture. Here the 'archive' is different because the material evidence consists of Bernhardt's surviving works in sculpture *and* documents (text and image) that affirm or suggest the existence of these and other works, their making, and even their incompleteness or destruction. Unlike the previous chapter, I also use recent text and image as evidence because the history of a sculpture practice also exists after the works were made. The distinct events of having one's work exhibited during one's lifetime, that work being bought, and museums and galleries

²⁷ I am grateful to a discussion in 2000 with Dr Nancy Proctor for enabling me to think about Bernhardt's pose here. Dr Proctor commented that in the work of the American sculptor, William Wetmore Story, 'he showed women thinking'.

²⁸ I discuss disputes over Bernhardt's authorship of her sculpture below. She was known as the author of this work in the Salon guide for 1878, by discussion and illustration of the bust in the press, and because it was reproduced in reduced editions. Four reduced busts are currently in the public domain (two in bronze, two in terracotta) suggesting they were sold commercially or at least owned by people other than Bernhardt during her lifetime and therefore might have been well-known. See below for further discussion of editions.

exhibiting or selling it after one's lifetime acknowledge one as a sculptor, then or now, because these events establish that a practice existed and affirm reputation and status before and after death. Catalogues of permanent collections, temporary exhibitions, and sales are a record of these events (Salon guides were also a record of one's teaching). They reveal just how relative (and fragile) status and reputation are according to how much work by a sculptor is in public collections (but, unfortunately, not whether a work is on view), how frequently, in what quantity, or where a sculptor's work is exhibited in temporary exhibitions, and how much it is valued in monetary terms on the art market. To be a sculptor one has to be 'known'. Art history surveys, discursive texts, the proceedings of conferences, dictionaries of art or artists, and biography all contribute to the reputation of any one sculptor and the knowledge available on them and their work in published form at some point down the line. Visual images, for instance of a sculptor in her or his studio with artworks, tools, materials, and equipment are also a means of recording a practice and establishing reputation as a sculptor, as demonstrated in Chapter 2 and by the representations of the musée Grévin tableau.

My approach to this material evidence is therefore also different to that of Chapter 2. I do attend, again, to chronology, but this time it is to Bernhardt's activity as a sculptor: her daily practice and output. I have done two things. The first is to produce a catalogue, chronologically ordered, of Bernhardt's works in sculpture. This is ongoing. The second is to re-configure the other material evidence for Bernhardt's sculpture practice (text and image) in the order it entered the public domain. This other chronology allows me to consider how and when a story of that practice emerged, became known, and to whom.

I do not re-present a 'complete' story of Bernhardt's oeuvre or of her critical reception here in strict chronological order, as I attempted to do with regard to her studios in Chapter 2. Some of the history of Bernhardt's activity as a sculptor has already been covered there, for instance when she began to make sculpture, and in Chapter 1 by a detailed history of the making of the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*. It would take too long to tell all I 'know'. Instead I

provide a mixture of in-depth historical analysis and synopses of aspects of her practice and output. One final caveat: I repeat the method I called in Chapter 2 'screening off' when presenting documentary material evidence (text and image). There I did not discuss elements within Bernhardt's domestic interiors that I deemed 'not relevant to her sculpture practice'. Here I screen off activities other than those directly related to the production and promotion of sculpture.

Together the representations of the musée Grévin tableau and the 1874 Salon entry act as a guide to writing the history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice because, however slight they may be, these scraps of historical record demonstrate sufficient criteria according to which one qualified to be a sculptor in the second half of the nineteenth century in France. In this next section of this chapter I provide an analysis of Bernhardt's practice according to four general aspects of these criteria. First, I consider Bernhardt's output as a whole and from this select representative works to discuss. Then, I assess her period of training with Roland Mathieu-Meusnier and Jules Franceschi, adding to the material I presented in Chapter 2 by asking *how* (in addition to *where*) she learnt to make sculpture. I also consider some aspects of her teachers' production and activities as working sculptors. Exhibiting was the key to providing a sculptor with a public profile in the art world and its markets. Aside from the Salon, Bernhardt also showed her work elsewhere in Paris and abroad. Bernhardt's exhibiting strategies, including organizing exhibitions herself, are the subject of this third aspect of being a sculptor. Lastly, I consider the ownership of Bernhardt's works in sculpture during and after her lifetime.

Producing a monographic text on Bernhardt's sculpture practice allows me to ask: Is there anything particular about this sculpture? How is *what* Bernhardt produced the same as, or different from, the work of her sculptor peers? Using this form of art historical writing also has a historiographic function. In claiming the historical existence of 'Sarah Bernhardt, sculptor' as primary, I can assess the usefulness of this specific, art historical intervention into two broader discourses in which Bernhardt is positioned either as central (the cultural history

of celebrity and its manifestation in feminine theatricality) or as marginal (nineteenth-century French sculpture production).

3.1 A Body of Work

The Catalogue of Works

The fact that my catalogue of the works Bernhardt produced in sculpture is currently still a provisional working document, so much so that I do not include it in the bound volume of this thesis, is instructive.²⁹ Compiling a catalogue of works involves a mix of working from existing documentary archives on Bernhardt and her artist associates, reading secondary literature, and arranging to view, photograph, measure, and inspect works by her once located.³⁰ Both elements constitute 'the archive' on any sculptor. Although I have probably tracked the vast majority of works that Bernhardt either proposed to make or actually did make and include both in the catalogue, much of the required data for this form is still missing.³¹ My archive on Bernhardt is therefore compromised despite the luxury of over four years of full-time, funded research. Why?

²⁹ I am also wary of including a working document in the thesis that I cannot protect: University of Leeds and British Library regulations only allow an entire thesis to be protected from copying, not a part of it. I have been witness to a dramatic set of events in the course of my research: the unpublished work of one scholar on Bernhardt has been claimed by a different individual and deposited as their own work in a public archive.

³⁰ The documentation service (and its library) at the musée d'Orsay is the first port of call. The service houses dossiers on French artists working after 1850 which consist mostly of photocopies and cuttings compiled by permanent museum staff and volunteer students. A number of sources are used: Salon guides, art periodicals, and sale catalogues in order to provide descriptive and illustrative material on an artist's work. If the museum owns a work, some documentation on its purchase and exhibition history is also provided. An ongoing photographic project at the museum carried out by Anne Pingeot and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain ensures that original black and white images of sculpture in the public domain and private collections are available for study. There are also archives in other museums, galleries, and institutions that own works by Bernhardt or her associates, in sales galleries and auction houses, and libraries and museums that hold material on Bernhardt's theatre career or her public life as a celebrity. Some private collectors own archival material and may convey historical information orally.

³¹ The catalogue is currently compiled in table form in Microsoft Word as a document that can be consulted 'at a glance' and sorted according to the criteria of each column for analysis of Bernhardt's practice and output as a sculptor. This will not be the finished form I use when I publish the catalogue of Bernhardt's works in sculpture. I intend to use the software programme for museum cataloguing,

Some works referred to in the documentary material on Bernhardt never existed beyond her proposing to make them. For instance, in August 1877 Bernhardt wrote to a future member of the committee for a monument to the painter Claude Gellée (1600-82, known as Claude Lorrain) in Nancy asking to be considered for the project.³² In January 1881 during her tour of the US she requested, indirectly, a sitting from the American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-82).³³ Neither project materialized. Other works probably never progressed beyond the initial stages of a small clay or plaster maquette: Bernhardt entered a one-fifth sized maquette for another competition in 1879 (*Monument à la Défense de Paris en 1870*), which was included in a public exhibition in November that year along with entries by one hundred other sculptors at the *École des beaux-arts* in Paris. Bernhardt's entry was not selected for the monument and there is no record of the maquette having survived.³⁴

SPECTRUM, in order to compile the finished version of my catalogue of works. The form of the catalogue has changed over time due both to my 'control' over the data and the data's control over the form. Working on an artist whose production as a whole has not yet been charted means that the data itself requires adjustments and the form has required modifying. For instance, at first I simply included a column for sources. Now I distinguish whether or not a work was illustrated and in what context; was it the same as a textual reference (a periodical) or was it a separate image circulated in another context to periodical print material. And so it goes on. I am grateful to Claude Levacher, a descendant of Mathieu-Meusnier, who, as I am, is compiling a text and image catalogue of Mathieu-Meusnier's works in sculpture, for sharing his knowledge and resources with me including his comprehensive method of collating Mathieu-Meusnier's works. I am grateful to Victoria Worsley, Henry Moore Institute, Leeds for her advice on SPECTRUM; email from Victoria Worsley, 10 April 2007.

³² The planning group for this committee was not held until 26 November 1877. Bernhardt to J. Casse, 21 August 1877, cited in Thérèse Charpentier, 'Notes sur le Claude Gellée de Rodin, à Nancy', *Bulletin de la société de l'histoire de l'art français: année 1968* (Paris: Nobelet, 1970), 149-57 (155).

³³ Bernhardt's request for a sitting with Longfellow is recorded from a conversation in Boston with Lillie de Hegermann-Lindencrone (Mrs. Lillie Moulton, mother of the sitter for the *Bust of Miss Moulton* [1876]) in the latter's *The Sunny Side of Diplomatic Life* (1914), cited in Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, *The Divine Sarah: A Life of Sarah Bernhardt* (New York: Knopf, 1991), 177.

³⁴ The maquettes were deposited on 24 November having originally been due at the palais du Luxembourg on 5 November in order to be exhibited for eight days. It is likely that the exhibition at the *École des beaux-arts* lasted this time. I do not know the composition of the visiting public or if an entrance-fee was charged. According to Denis Lavalley this site was 'at the heart of one of the most prestigious locations of artistic creation, and not in a Parisian public administration building [au sein d'un des hauts-lieux de la création artistique, et non dans un bâtiment de l'administration

Several works in the next stages of making sculpture (full-size clay and plaster models) in both completed and incomplete form are illustrated in contemporary photographs, drawings, and paintings or referred to in texts. Most have since been destroyed or, if they have survived, are currently unlocated. For instance, a life-size statue, *Médée* (clay or plaster), was incomplete when it first appeared in Bourgoïn's 1877 watercolour of the sculpture studio at avenue de Villiers (fig. 2: 7) and had progressed, but not to completion, in a photograph of the sculpture studio at boulevard Pereire published in *La Plume* in 1900 (fig. 2: 16). Several completed works, evidently in clay or plaster, also appear in photographs and texts, but are also not located. Notable amongst these are the life-size plaster model for Bernhardt's group *Après la tempête* (Salon 1876) photographed by Lagraine (fig. 3: 1) and a rare self-portrait bust (1878-79) photographed with Bernhardt in the atelier-salon at avenue de Villiers by Melandri (figs 2:13-15).³⁵ These are now 'lost', at least for the time being.

parisienne]'; 'Le Monument de la Défense et la statuaire du XIXe siècle' in, *La Perspective de la Défense dans l'art et l'histoire*, ed. Georges Weill (Nanterre: Archives départementales des Hauts-de-Seine, 1983), 132-53 (135, 134). It is interesting (ironic) that Bernhardt exhibited sculpture in an institution where she was not allowed to study how to make sculpture. Some sources claim that Bernhardt destroyed works: she herself claimed that dissatisfaction with a bust of Adolphe de Rothschild caused her to twice 'dash the bust [...] on the ground' and give up after a third attempt; *MDL* 257 and later, in c. 1889, Graham Robertson claimed to help destroy a clay model he called 'Love and Death'; *Time Was: The Reminiscences of W. Graham Robertson* (London, Melbourne and New York, Quartet, 1981), 110. Another source describes possibly the same work in clay as 'un amour' et 'la mort' but there is no extant work matching its description; Maurice Guillemot, 'Chez Sarah Bernhardt', *Revue Illustré*, 3e année, vol. 5 (15 January 1888), 74-81 (78).

³⁵ For information on Lagraine, see Chapter 2. The bust in the Melandri photograph may be the one that, in an interview twenty-eight years later in *Le Gaulois*, Bernhardt claimed she had sold to the Grand Duke Constantine of Russia for 20,000 francs [according to an average exchange rate for 1879-96, this works out at \$3846 and £792]. She referred to it as the 'only example' ['l'unique exemplaire'] of 'my own bust' ['mon propre buste']. This could either mean that the bust was not copied or that no other self-portrait bust was made by the time of the interview. Given Bernhardt's friendship with Meyer, it is likely that this interview took place; Anon., 'Sarah Bernhardt: peintre et sculpteur', *Le Gaulois* (6 December 1896), 1. This is the earliest reference I have found to this transaction. For the prices earned by Mathieu-Meusnier from state commissions, see note 74. This seems a very high price for a bust, even if sold as late as 1896. There is no other evidence of this sale that I am aware of. Bernhardt produced a terracotta self-portrait in 1876 (Jewish Museum, New York) but this was in role (Berthe in *La Fille de Roland*, Comédie-Française, opened 15 February 1875). Later in 1880 she also made a self-portrait but again this was not a conventional self-portrait, but integral to a fantastical decorative object (*Encrier fantastique*, 1880, one plaster version in musée

Not all Bernhardt's early-stage sculpture has been destroyed or lost. Some clay models and plaster casts may have survived because they were finished for display. The plaster cast of the bust of Georges Clairin (1876, musée du Petit Palais) has a dark reddish brown, probably shellac, patina that simulates bronze.³⁶ A reduced bust of Emile de Girardin in terracotta

Carnalet; one bronze example in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; reduced bronze version dedicated to Louise Abbéma in musée d'Étampes; another plaster and further bronze versions or copies in various private collections). Other sources claim that more self-portraits exist, for instance there are two copies of an undated half-relief mask. The copy in ceramic (Victor and Greta Arwas Collection, London) is listed, when exhibited as a self-portrait. However, a patinated plaster version of this is owned by the Garrick Club, London which they date c. 1885 and attribute to Friedrich Goldscheider (1845-1897). I agree that this is unlikely to be Bernhardt's work. I also doubt the authorship of a 'self-portrait' bust variously dated 1891, 1892, and 1897. Sometimes attributed as a joint venture with Goldscheider, this has appeared in polychrome terracotta, patinated plaster, and bronze versions in sales and commercial exhibitions from 1976-2001. I have not seen this work but a photograph of the signature indicates that it does not resemble either Bernhardt's usual signature on sculpture or her handwriting in letters. Three other 'self-portraits' are listed but not illustrated in further sources. I have not had the resources to follow these up. There is insufficient evidence to suggest that any are works by Bernhardt and I do not include them in the catalogue as her work.

³⁶ I am grateful to Amélie Simier, sculpture curator at the musée du Petit Palais, for confirming (in the absence of scientific analysis) that this was shellac [gomme lacque]; email from Amélie Simier, 27 March 2007. A version of the Clairin bust is seen in two photographs of the sculpture studio at boulevard Pereire published shortly after Bernhardt's death (figs 2: 23-24). Bernhardt owned the plaster version until 1914 and the bronze version until her death (sold at the second sale of her estate; *Succession de Sarah Bernhardt*, commissaire-priseur unidentified, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 3-6 July 1923, no. 333). In addition to the six plaster and terracotta works mentioned here, I know of another nine (or ten if I include the untraced plaster *Bust of Edmond Rostand*) that might have survived beyond acting purely as models. Of these, I have seen one of two plaster versions of the *Encrier fantastique*, that in the musée Carnavalet. This differs in some details from a bronze version in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (*Fantastic Inkwell [Self-Portrait as a Sphinx]*, 1880). The plaster version is the same height as the bronze (plaster: 32 cm; bronze: 31.75 cm). However, they differ in width (plaster: 32 cm; bronze: 35 cm). This could mean that Carnavalet's plaster cast was a separate work rather than the actual model for the bronze casts. There are also differences in form; for instance, there are more indentations and higher definition to the wings in the bronze version at Boston and another copy of it first owned by Albert Edward, Prince of Wales (Sandringham House). I am very grateful to Meg Galsworthy for offering to help me with this aspect of my research, and to her and her sister, Vicky, for taking the time to measure the inkwell for me when in Paris together in April 2007. At the time of viewing it myself I was not fully conversant with all the procedures for recording sculpture. I am also grateful that their kindness, and that of so many others involved in this project, reminds me of my enthusiasm and love for this work. I am also grateful to Rebecca Tilles, curatorial assistant at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston for her help with this query; email from Rebecca Tilles, 26 April 2007. Without seeing all Bernhardt's works in plaster and terracotta alongside their bronze or marble counterparts, it is difficult to assess how many were preparatory works or always intended as a

(1878, musée d'Orsay and citadelle Vauban, musée de l'art et de l'histoire de Belle-Île-en-Mer) may have been modelled directly in terracotta quality clay or cast in clay from a plaster mould taken from a plaster cast of the original (modelling only) clay model.³⁷ The bust has

finished product. I am grateful to Philippe Sorel, curator of sculpture at the musée Carnavalet for our discussion about the plaster version at the museum and the question of models or finished works. M. Sorel also queried whether the patina on this work was original or not: the use of patina in the first instance would imply that the work was made for display in its own right; applied later suggests it may have been co-opted from being only a plaster model to be used for bronze casting in order to become a work for display in its own right; meeting with Philippe Sorel, 4 March 2004. Another plaster version exists in a private collection in London, but, as yet, I have not been able to gain access to view it, nor is it illustrated in any of the catalogues for exhibitions where it has been shown. It is listed in *Sarah Bernhardt 1844-1923*, exh. cat. (London: Ferrers Gallery, 1973) as 'the plaster model for the bronze' and 'an early version of the work'. Its measurements are given elsewhere as 32 x 29.7 x 19.5 cm; *Theatergöttinnen: Inszenierte Weiblichkeit Clara Ziegler, Sarah Bernhardt, Eleonora Duse*, ed. Claudia Balk, exh. cat. (Berlin: Gesellschaft für Theatergeschichte, 1995), 224-33 (232). Without being able to see all these versions together, any further comparisons are, as yet, difficult to explain.

³⁷ For differences between modelled and cast terracotta (usually only visible by inspecting the interior or rear of a work) in a modern text, see 'Les oeuvres modelées définitives: Les terre cuites' and for the qualities of terracotta sculpture and the constituents and consistency of clay for its production, as well as the processes of chemical change and its results depending on the temperatures at which it is baked, see 'L'argile', both in *Inventaire général des monuments et des richesses artistiques de la France: Principes d'analyse scientifique, la sculpture, méthode et vocabulaire*, ed. Marie-Thérèse Baudry (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1978), 90-93; 95-96. Although a work in English, Roscoe Mullins's discussion of the use of terracotta for sculpture is relevant as the methods were likely to be largely the same in France and England in the nineteenth century. In fact, Mullins recommended clay bought from Paris for terracotta sculpture to his student readers; *A Primer of Sculpture* (London, Paris, New York and Melbourne: Cassell, 1890), 64-70 (68). For further details on the constituents, consistency and casting of terracotta (for building purposes, but the material is the same or similar), see both Charles F. Mitchell, *Brickwork and Masonry: A Practical Text Book for Students and those Engaged in the Design and Execution of Structures in Brick and Stone* (London: Batsford, 1908), 404-6; and John and Nicola Ashurst, 'Manufacture of terracotta and faience', *Brick Terracotta and Earth* (Aldershot: Gower, 1988), 69. Although I have seen the bust in the musée d'Orsay and photographed it, I have not seen that at the citadelle Vauban. Given that the photographs I work from in order to compare these two works are taken at different angles and in different lighting conditions, it is difficult to ascertain if these are casts from the mould. For different methods of casting clay (slip-casting and press-moulding), see 'Arthur Beale, 'A Technical View of Nineteenth-Century Sculpture', Jeanne L. Wasserman, ed., *Metamorphoses in Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, exh. cat. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 29-55 (35). According to Ben Read, it is possible to state that the two reduced terracotta busts emanate from the 'same idea' and that 'variations, whether in material or size [the measurements given by both museums for height differ by 2 cm], are almost certainly due to the circumstances of production rather than representing two distinct works.' With regard to the substantial structural differences between the reduced versions of this bust (terracotta or bronze) and the life-size work, namely that the reduced version has a chest, neck, and clothing, whereas the life-size version is cut off at the neck, these additions (or subtractions) are, again according to Ben Read, 'standard practice' in

been fixed, in both examples, to a dark wood (probably ebony) cylindrical socle for display. It may be that Bernhardt's terracotta *Le Bouffon* (1877) was fired from the model, as I have located only one copy of this (musée Despiauw-Wlérick, Mont-de-Marsan). The extent of the overall loss of Bernhardt's preparatory works in sculpture can be measured by comparing this archive of objects to that of her second teacher, Jules Franceschi. The musée des beaux-arts de Troyes (Aube, the département where Franceschi was born) owns thirty-two plaster maquettes and casts donated by Emma Franceschi (née Fleury, former actress at the Comédie-Française and Franceschi's widow) in 1900.³⁸ Having said that, the Franceschi bequest is not typical. Only one work in the preparatory stages by Bernhardt's principal teacher, Mathieu-

the nineteenth century and would have occurred when replicas were made from an original plaster model because format can be adjusted during the copying process. With only (currently) a photocopy of a reproduced black and white photograph of the full-size bronze bust of Girardin in left profile (Anon., *The Home of Sarah Bernhardt in Paris* [s.l.: Taber bas relief, n.d.], n.p.) and a right-profile drawing [unidentified publication, Conway Library, Courtauld Institute, Sarah Bernhardt box] and because I do not know the current location of the life-size bust, it is difficult to make conclusive statements on this set of objects. According to Ben Read, it is 'impossible to say' if these different sized works are exactly the same work, nonetheless, they 'almost certainly derive from a single source model'. It is very unlikely that Bernhardt made a bust of Emile de Girardin twice. I am extremely grateful for the time and insight Ben has provided me and for our fascinating conversations on sculpture and its material processes. None of the reduced versions (and copies) is dated. If they are simple reductions from the life-size bust and have been added to during the production process, these are dated according to when the life-size version was exhibited, at the Salon in 1878. This is the method of dating currently followed in French museums; according to Laure de Margerie, an edition is dated when it was 'inventé' [Latin] which means when the idea was given form'; email from Laure de Margerie, 23 March 2007. The second copy (or version) of this reduced terracotta bust is also dated 1878, not on the object, but according to the same rule as that at the musée d'Orsay. For a historical study of terracotta sculptures, see Nicholas Penny, *The Materials of Sculpture* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 201-14. The reduced editions in bronze bear the names of the founders Dagrín & Casse (galerie Tourbillon, Paris, seen March 2004) and Casse & Delphy (musée de la Vie romantique). I have no information on these bronze editors as they are not listed in Bernard Metman, 'La Petite sculpture au XIXe siècle: les éditeurs', in *Documents sur la sculpture française et répertoire des fondateurs du XIXe siècle* (Paris: Société de l'histoire de l'art français, 1989), 175-218. This covers 1818-67 and mostly Paris but was an unfinished project. They are also not in Élisabeth Lebon, *Dictionnaire des fondateurs de bronze d'art: France 1890-1950* (Perth: Marjon, 2003). These founders are still to be checked for in the Parisian commercial directories published by Didot Bottin.

³⁸ Jean-Pierre Sainte-Marie, 'Les Sculpteurs du XIXe siècle dans l'Aube', *La Vie en Champagne*, 30e année, no. 324 (1982), 9-11. Franceschi's output was far greater than that of Bernhardt, nonetheless, this is, relatively speaking, a substantially fuller archive of objects than exists in her case. The plasters at Troyes are also more easily accessible because held together in a public museum.

Meusnier, is extant, a plaster maquette for *La Mort de Laïs* (c. 1849, musée des beaux-arts de Limoges). However, the collection at Troyes does bring home the differences in how any sculptor's oeuvre can be exhibited, studied and written about now, depending on the care given to a sculptor's preparatory works during her or his lifetime and thereafter.

The technical information I am able to include on a work (medium, form, measurements, condition of the material) may depend on whether I have seen it and this relies on ease of access. This is determined by a number of factors, not necessarily to do with 'public' or 'private' ownership. I have not had enough time or funds to contact and/or visit all the known owners (institutional or individual) of Bernhardt's works in order to view them. Nor have I pursued any possible, but undocumented, owners of unlocated works.³⁹ I have not received a response from all the contacts I have made and this requires dutiful persistence. At times I have been denied access to works in both individuals' and institutional collections. In the latter case this has been because works are in storage and not made accessible to scholars. In both cases some appointments have gone awry. Even seeing a work is not always a passport to accurate recording of its vital statistics. Lighting may be poor and the use of flash is not permitted in institutional collections. The work may be placed in such a way that measurement and inspection is difficult, or the time allowed to view may be short. With regard to the ownership and exhibition history of Bernhardt's works, which I discuss below, the owner (a museum or a private individual) may or may not have documentary evidence that charts either history. Wherever possible, I use other reliable sources to provide these details.⁴⁰

³⁹ For instance, I have not yet contacted any of Bernhardt's descendents, the likely owners of several unlocated works. Some unlocated works may be in institutional collections: the self-portrait bust (1878-79) might now be in a public collection in Russia having once belonged to an aristocrat. I am grateful to the work of Anne Jamault for directing me to the collection of the citadelle Vauban in Belle-Île-en-Mer as this work is not recorded elsewhere; 'Sarah Bernhardt et le monde de l'art', 4 vols (unpublished doctoral thesis, université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 2000), Appendix 5, 771-72. I am also grateful to Nicolas Tafoiry, curator of the museum for his generous response to my query about the collection.

⁴⁰ The reliability of textual sources on Bernhardt's sculpture is fraught. Inaccuracies in date, size, medium, location, and so on are common or at least inconsistent between different sources despite

Overview of Bernhardt's Oeuvre

Nonetheless, some broad analysis of Bernhardt's sculpture production and her practice can be extracted from the catalogue of works as it stands. I have already stated that her most prolific and dedicated period of making and exhibiting sculpture was during 1874-81 when she produced 60 percent of the total works established as her own. These number fifty-three separate works in total with a further thirteen incomplete or destroyed projects and another twenty-three that are mentioned in other sources but which I cannot confirm are by Bernhardt.⁴¹ If Bernhardt did begin to make sculpture in 1869, then hers was a career that spanned upwards of fifty years: her last known and completed work is the *Bust of Edmond Rostand* (1900, not located).⁴² As with any sculptor, the first years of her practice were

their scholarly or connoisseurial repute. As a rule of thumb, I follow, in order of assumed accuracy, museum catalogues, temporary exhibition catalogues, and sales catalogues, but prefer to view a work and check details myself. Other literature, such as artists' and other dictionaries, contemporary art critical texts, society periodicals, and biography are of use but thorough technical accuracy is not a priority in these texts. I am not claiming that my own technical information is any more reliable: the physical circumstances when viewing some sculpture often makes this difficult. A systematic approach and the correct equipment are required and both take time to learn or acquire.

⁴¹ The total of fifty-three includes three works that may be duplicates with different titles. This figure also counts several copies of a work with the same title as a single work because, although reproduced in different media and sizes or in bronze editions or marble copies, they are substantially the same in form. Counting each version as a single work would bring the total works produced by Bernhardt to sixty-five. In some cases, I cannot confirm exactly how many multiple copies were made, for instance there may have been three copies of the marble bas relief *Ophélie* (1880, one copy Royal Theatre, Copenhagen). Tracking the number of copies of bronze editions is difficult given where and how frequently they appear on the art market. Jane Abdy estimates that 'an edition of perhaps ten was cast by Thiébaud Frères' of the *Encrier fantastique*; 'Sarah Bernhardt: French actress, sculptor and painter, 1844-1923', *Dictionary of Women Artists*, ed. Delia Gaze, 2 vols (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), I, 250-51 (250). I know of twenty sales at which either the full-size or the reduced version of this work has appeared since 1982.

⁴² According to one biography, 'when in a wheelchair [Bernhardt] started to model statues of Maurice [son], his wife, Simone and Lysiane [granddaughters] for her tomb' but these were not completed. No specific date or source is given for this information; Cornelia Otis Skinner, *Madame Sarah* (London: Michael Joseph, 1967), 246. Bernhardt's tomb at Père-Lachaise has no embellishment beyond its own vaulted granite architecture other than a stone or concrete coffin and her name and birth and death dates incised in the granite. If Skinner is accurate, this work may have been carried out from 1914 onwards. Bernhardt wrote to her surgeon in February 1915 that she had been 'confined to a chair [...] for six months'. Sarah Bernhardt to Dr Pozzi, 4 February 1915, cited in Gold and Fildale, 316.

(probably) taken up with training and works from this time would not be likely or expected to survive. From the distribution of her activity and the type of work produced, it is clear that Bernhardt began to exhibit once she had gained a level of competence beyond small-scale medallions and began to make busts. The *Bust of Mlle B. G.* was her first exhibited work and she also made, or attempted to make, another three busts that same year (1874).⁴³ 1874-81 coincided largely with Bernhardt's second period of employment at the Comédie-Française (1872-80) and, by comparison to later in her career, was a time when she had less work in the theatre.⁴⁴

Aside from having a sculpture studio, another major factor in rendering this period one of dedicated artistic activity for Bernhardt was that she remained at home in Paris where her studio was located. Although she travelled to London in June-July 1879 with the Comédie-Française (taking her sculpture and painting with her to exhibit along with work by Abbéma) she did not undertake any further professional tours until the summer of 1880. Having produced thirty works from 1874-80 and only one in 1881, it seems that touring was a major

According to biographers Gold and Fildale her leg was amputated that year and she used a sedan chair to get about thereafter; 318.

⁴³ The *Bust of Mlle Hocquigny* was completed in marble. The bust of Adolphe de Rothschild was destroyed and I have not identified the bust of 'Mlle Emmy de ...' or the sitter.

⁴⁴ Only one contemporary text credited Bernhardt's productivity as a sculptor to her employment at the Comédie-Française. The writer states that it was Bernhardt's 'engagement at the Théâtre Français [that] permitted the artist to begin the work [*Après la tempête*]' supporting the same claim in her autobiography; Anon., 'The Paris Salon from a French correspondent. Paris, 1 May 1876', *The Times* (2 May 1876). According to a comprehensive list of Bernhardt's theatre productions at the Comédie-Française compiled by Ernest Pronier, she worked in the following number of new or restaged productions during the period of overlap before resigning again in April 1880: 1874 (five); 1875 (two); 1876 (three); 1877 (one); 1878 (two); 1879 (two); 1880 (one). I am not aware how long each run lasted; Pronier, *Une Vie au théâtre: Sarah Bernhardt* (Geneva: Jullien, 1942), 335-48. Pronier is Bernhardt's most competent biographer providing proper referencing for his citations, an excellent bibliography, and a comprehensive list of theatre performances. I am grateful to Jane Abdy for directing me to this text.

reason for Bernhardt's diminished production in the 1880s.⁴⁵ During this decade Bernhardt undertook sixteen tours outside Paris varying in length from a few weeks to thirteen months. She was therefore away from her studio and completed only four or five (known) works in sculpture.⁴⁶ In the 1890s Bernhardt toured less (eleven times for periods of a few weeks up to six months). Having previously leased theatres in the 1880s (Théâtre de l'Ambigu in 1882; Théâtre de la Porte Saint-Martin in 1883; Théâtre des Variétés in 1889), Bernhardt now bought, and managed, two further theatres: the Théâtre de la Renaissance from 1893-98 and the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt from 1899 until her death.⁴⁷ Again, this had an effect on the volume of her sculpture production and she made only four or five works dated that decade.

The period around 1900 appears, from how works have been dated and reported in contemporary and posthumous literature, to be another intense period of sculpture production. According to Bernhardt, she had her own vitrine at the Exposition universelle in Paris that year.⁴⁸ The Exposition jury singled out Bernhardt for special mention in its report, noting that 'next to the bust of Victorien Sardou which has a great truth of expression, she has a series of strange algae and fish sculptures of which the casting and patina have all the qualities of some marvellous Japanese work'.⁴⁹ I have not located any precise list of the bronze

⁴⁵ Bernhardt returned to London independently in May 1880 following her resignation from the Comédie-Française for around four weeks and later that summer toured to Brussels, Copenhagen, and the French regions before setting off for the US in October for seven months.

⁴⁶ Of these, one exhibited at the Salon as *Mars enfant* (marble bust, 1885) may have been exhibited as *Bellone enfant* in London in 1879. A further bust exhibited at the Salon in 1888, *Henriette*, had already been shown in plaster three years before. A fifth work, called 'Love and Death' by Robertson, may have been destroyed.

⁴⁷ I have compiled details of Bernhardt's travels and her management of theatres from a combination of biographical works which are listed in the bibliography.

⁴⁸ Cited in Henry Fouquier, 'Mme Sarah Bernhardt – M. Coquelin', *Le Théâtre* [no. exc.], ed. Maurice Grau (Paris and New York: Manzi, Joyant and Co., [1900]), n.p.

⁴⁹ '[A] côté d'un buste de Victorien Sardou d'une grande vérité d'expression, elle a toute une série d'algues et de poissons étranges dont les fontes et les patines ont toutes les qualités des meilleures œuvres japonaises', M. H. Vian, 'Bronzes, fonte et ferronnerie d'art, zinc d'art, métaux repoussés', in *Exposition universelle internationale de 1900 à Paris: rapports du jury international, groupe XV, industries*

algae and fish sculptures thus commended by the jury which would indicate the exact number of works exhibited and their original titles. However, I can identify a total of ten distinct marine sculptures from illustrations or reliable textual sources and have seen one from this group of work ('Grande coupe-papier en forme d'algue marine', maison de retraite des Artistes, Couilly-pont-aux-dames).⁵⁰ Dated 1900, this is signed with Bernhardt's signature as identified from her hand-writing and not the usual majuscule inscription she used in earlier works. This is also the case for another marine sculpture signed and dated 1900, 'Poisson, bronze par Mme Sarah Bernhardt' (illus. *Gazette des beaux-arts* 1900). Other works that possibly also date from 1900 are two bronze and polychrome sculptures both entitled *Orchidées* and two ceramic sculptures because they were illustrated in *La Plume* that year.⁵¹

It is possible that not all these sculptures were made in 1900 and that Bernhardt's apparent resurgence of intense sculpture production was more consistently spread out over a longer

diverses, première partie, classes 92-97 (Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1902), 501. Bernhardt had exhibited her plaster bust of Sardou at the Salon in 1897.

⁵⁰ Individual works that could be identified, according to the jury report's description of a 'series of algae and strange fish [une série d'algues et de poissons étranges]' are either listed or illustrated in the following: *Succession de Madame Sarah Bernhardt*, F. Lair-Dubreuil and André Benoist, galerie Georges Petit, 11-13 June 1923, 35; René Thorel, 'Les passe-temps d'été de Sarah Bernhardt', *Annales politiques et littéraires* (25 July 1909), n.p.; Maurice Rheims, 'The Unusual, the Bizarre', *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture* [1972], trans. Robert E. Wolf (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), fig. 20, n.p.; unidentified sale Paris, 5 November 1973, MOSD, dossier Bernhardt; *Nineteenth-Century French and Western European Sculpture in Bronze and Other Media*, ed. Marie Busco, exh. and sale cat. (New York: Shepherd Gallery, 1985), 168-70; Bénézit 1999; Claudette Joannis, *Sarah Bernhardt: L'enchanteresse* (Rueil Malmaison: musée national de Malmaison des Bois-Préau 2003), n.p.

⁵¹ Both *Orchidées* were exhibited and listed as belonging to the collection of Jean-Pierre Strauss in Jean-Pierre Camard et al, *Pierre Cardin présente Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Pierre Cardin, 1976), 63. The catalogue lists them as signed and dated but they are not illustrated. I have not yet contacted M. Strauss and therefore cannot confirm these as separate from the group of marine sculptures given the possibility that the 'orchids' may be sea flora. The sculptures illustrated in *La Plume* were captioned 'Cornets décorants' but are both of cockerels; Gustave Kahn, 'Sarah Bernhardt', *La Plume*, 12e année, no. 274 [no. exc.] (15 September 1900), 577-92 (584). I am grateful to Ben Read for helping me identify these figures and to Philip Ward-Jackson for discussing the possibility that as 'cornets' they were containers, or that *La Plume* simply misread a poor image provided by Bernhardt or another person to illustrate her work (i.e. the objects were not photographed by *La Plume*), which I think the most likely explanation; email from Philip Ward-Jackson, 20 March 2007. These works are ceramic, unidentified source, BNFDAS, 4^o ICO PER 2369, Sarah Bernhardt (boxes 1-14), box 2.

time (either before or after 1900 itself). According to René Thorel's account in 1909 in *Annales politiques et littéraires* of Bernhardt's 'summer pastimes', she had 'momentarily abandoned busts and groups and for several years had been interested in an essentially decorative form of sculpture [my emphasis]'. Thorel's account, rather typically, was keen to convey to readers that, even on holiday, Bernhardt kept herself busy. The narrative was similar to that of Bernhardt's fast-track beginnings as a sculptor in that her creative and productive sculptural activity was presented as the result of a whim and as if executed with little planning (and by implication, little thought). Thorel writes: '[o]ne day, during one of those excursions on the seashore, having picked up some strangely shaped seaweed, Mme Sarah Bernhardt suddenly had the idea: "What if I tried to mould this in plaster; how much fun that would be!' The story continues in the usual fashion: Bernhardt immediately telegraphed her plaster caster in Paris who arrived a few days later, a studio was set up, the plaster delivered and 'the results were satisfactory'.⁵² Thorel does not specify when this event

⁵² 'Madame Sarah [...] délaissant momentanément les bustes et les groupes, se passionne, depuis plusieurs années, pour un genre de sculpture essentiellement décorative, d'une conception toute nouvelle'; '[u]n jour, donc, au cours d'une de ces excursions sur la grève, Mme Sarah Bernhardt ayant ramassé une algue d'une forme étrange eut, soudain, une idée: "Si jessayais de la mouler dans du plâtre; ce serait peut-être amusant!"; "les resultants furent satisfaisants'; Thorel, *Annales politiques et littéraires* (25 July 1909), n.p. Compare this to Charles Garnier's account of Carpeaux's conception and execution of *La Danse* (1865-69) for the Paris Opéra. In an undated, but probably retrospective, letter to Ernest Chesneau, Garnier recounts the process followed by Carpeaux once the instructions for the work had been given by the architect: the idea, a lightening quick drawing (medium not specified here), a clay sketch, the working (clay) model. Garnier also notes: 'How many letters we wrote each other about this subject! [Que de lettres nous nous sommes écrites à ce sujet!]' but adds that, although he found Carpeaux's group too wide and often too flamboyant in the number of figures and its decoration, he 'would let him have his own way [le laisser aller à sa guise]' because the 'models [were] superb' [je trouvais son modèle superbe]' and this was a 'powerful, personal creation [...] a masterpiece [une création puissante, personnelle ... un chef-d'oeuvre]'; Charles Garnier to Ernest Chesneau, n.d., reprinted and translated in 'Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, 1827-1875: The Evolution of "The Dance"', *Realism and Tradition in Art: 1848-1900, Sources and Documents*, ed. Linda Nochlin (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 25-27 (26, 27) from Ernest Chesneau, *Le Statuaire J. -B. Carpeaux: sa vie et son œuvre* (Paris: n.publ., 1880), 110-112 (111-12). For an extensive account of Carpeaux and Garnier's complex dealings over *La Danse*, see Anne Middleton Wagner, *Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux: Sculptor of the Second Empire* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), 215-31. Wagner illustrates two drawings by Garnier for the general composition of the façade groups (of which *La Danse* was one) and one by Carpeaux, entitled *Study for an Opéra group*, dated 1865 of pencil heightened with white which may be the drawing referred to in the letter to Chesneau (figs 225-26, 230). My interest here is in how the processes described as undertaken by Carpeaux (a

took place (i.e. in 1900 or before), only that it occurred 'during a stay at the Poulains' (the location of Bernhardt's summer home on the island which she occupied from 1896) and that 'since then, every year, Sarah continues the series of casts'.⁵³ *Annales* is described by the Institut Mémoires de l'édition contemporaine as a 'revue' (*Le Petit Robert* [2004] translates this as a 'magazine' or a 'review, journal', if 'erudite'), aimed at a 'lower and median middle-class provincial readership [petite et moyenne bourgeoisie de province]'.⁵⁴ This was (also typically) a retrospective account of Bernhardt's quotidian practice and given the literary bent of the periodical, art historical accuracy was not the purpose of Thorel's feature article on Bernhardt as a primarily stage celebrity.⁵⁵ Nonetheless, the article does recount a sustained period of sculpture production during which Bernhardt made several objects within the same typology. Thorel photographed four of these (belonging to Georges Clairin) as illustration for his article and described the full range of work she produced as bronze 'seaweed shapes and fish [...] spider crab paper weights, jardinières formed from fish, all twisted round, vases for flowers made from a mullet or a conger eel, etc, works about which the glass maker [René] Lalique was very enthusiastic'. He added to this list 'a very original fountain which looked quite Japanese, made from an enormous fish with its mouth open and from which water spurted into a basin formed by an enormous shell.'⁵⁶

male sculptor) attune to his solidly grounded artistic ability and involve a series of events which are not given in the case of Bernhardt.

⁵³ '[P]endant tout un séjour aux Poulains. Depuis, chaque année, Sarah continue la série des ses moulages', Thorel, *Annales politiques et littéraires* (25 July 1909), n.p. For the history of Bernhardt's holiday residences on Belle-Île-en-Mer, see Jamault, 180-88.

⁵⁴ Anon., 'Les Annales politiques et littéraires', 'Revue et presse', l'Institut mémoires de l'édition contemporaine, 1999 <<http://www.imec-archives.com/fonds/fiche.php?ind=APL>> [3 April 2007].

⁵⁵ This periodical is not listed in Gustave Lebel, 'Bibliographie des revues d'art parues de 1746 à 1914', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 6e pér., 93e année, vol. 38 (1951), 5-47.

⁵⁶ 'Ces algues et ces poissons [...] araignées de mer, des jardinières formées par des poissons enchevêtrés, des vases à fleurs faits d'un rouget ou d'un congre, etc, autant d'oeuvres d'art qui enthousiasmèrent au plus haut point le grand Lalique'; 'une fontaine extrêmement originale, faite d'un énorme poisson, à l'aspect quelque peu japonais, dont la bouche ouverte servait à déverser l'eau tombant dans une vasque formée d'un coquillage énorme'; Thorel, *Annales politiques et littéraires* (25 July 1909), n.p. Other accounts relate something of Bernhardt's sculpture practice at Belle-Île-en-mer but these tend to be even sketchier than Thorel's and say very little about any studio space. After a visit in autumn 1897 S. Veyrac described the 'Salon, or better put, the Hall which serves as a salon,

Given that Thorel describes the work carried out at Belle-Île as ‘of a completely new type’, what constituted Bernhardt’s usual sculpture production? Analysis of her output including these fourteen ‘decorative’ sculptures (probably all small-scale) is seen as follows:⁵⁷

Table 1: Analysis of Bernhardt’s sculpture production by form

| Type of work (any medium) | Number of works (completed and not completed) | Percentage |
|--|---|------------|
| Medallions | 9 | 11% |
| Bas and high reliefs (no size distinction) | 2 | 2% |
| Busts (life-size and reduced) | 43 | 52% |
| Statuettes and small groups (no single dimension more | 10 | 12% |

a dining room, a studio and, when necessary, a bedroom, [and] is nothing less than luxurious [le salon ou, pour mieux dire, le hall qui sert à la fois de salon, de salle à manger, d’atelier et, dans les moments de besoin, de chambre à coucher, est rien moins que luxueux]. Decorative objects were listed, but no sculpture, tools or materials mentioned; S. Veyrac, ‘Une heure chez Sarah Bernhardt’, *La Chronique médicale: revue bimensuelle de médecine*, 4e année, no. 19 (1 October 1897), 609-16 (610). In ‘Une lettre de Madame Sarah Bernhardt’ which constituted the bulk of an article published in 1904, Bernhardt mentioned that ‘I make sculpture [je fais de la sculpture]’ amongst other activities (reading scripts, practising and learning roles) in the ‘studio she had had built [dans l’atelier que j’ai fait construire]’, but no details of the space or her practice were given; Georges Gourdon, ‘Sarah Bernhardt à Belle-Île-en-mer’, *Fémina*, 4e année, no. 85 (1 August 1904), 234-35 (234). Like Thorel, Gourdon was unlikely to have as his purpose art historical accuracy. I am grateful to Dr Francesca Berry, University of Birmingham who informed me that *Fémina* was ‘a luxury and expensive magazine aimed at promoting a luxury lifestyle’, although it ‘could be progressive in its attitudes towards women’s independence and their domestic roles’; email from Francesca Berry, 19 April 2007. This, perhaps, explains why Bernhardt’s work as a sculptor was featured. Bernhardt bought and renovated several properties on Belle-Île-en-mer from c. 1893 and retained a holiday home there until c. 1922. She also had new units built including studios but sources differ as to whether these were for herself, Clairin or Abbéma, or any combination of the three. Although Bernhardt’s sculpture activity at Belle-Île-en-mer is important, I cannot pursue it any further for now.

⁵⁷ The largest known single dimension of any sculptural decorative object is the length of the work described as a ‘grande coupe-papier’ (49cm).

| | | |
|---|----|------|
| than 75 cm) | | |
| Statues, large groups and monuments (including proposals) | 5 | 6% |
| Decorative objects (marine and other sculptures) | 14 | 17% |
| Completed works | 77 | 93% |
| Total number of works | 83 | 100% |

Included in these total figures, are works by Bernhardt reproduced in different sizes and media, for instance, when the same original work was produced in bronze or marble versions. However, I do not count multiple copies of the same version as more than one work. For example, *Le Bouffon* (1877) was produced in more than one copy each of a bronze and marble version and one terracotta version still exists (musée Despiau-Wléricq, Mont-de-Marsan). Some later works were reproduced from marble originals in collaboration with the ceramicist Edmond Lachenal (1855-c. 1930) and attributed jointly to him and Bernhardt, for instance, the 'tête d'enfant' exhibited in his one-person show at the galerie Georges Petit in 1897.⁵⁸

3.2 The Labour and Love of Writing Art History

⁵⁸ This is a ceramic version of the 'Buste d'une petite fille' at the musée Carnavalet and is probably a portrait of Bernhardt's granddaughter, Simone Bernhardt (1891-1982). See Anon., 'Petites expositions: Exposition Lachenal (chez Georges Petit)', *La Plume*, no. 207 (1 December 1897), 791. I have not yet investigated in depth Bernhardt's relationship with Lachenal, the ceramicist Goldscheider, nor any of the bronze founders she used. Lachenal was known for reproducing works by several sculptors in ceramic, for instance, that of Falguière, Saint-Marceaux, and Rodin, see Roman d'Amat, 'Edmond Lachenal', *DBF*, XVIII, 1506. A letter to Rodin from Lachenal concerning an exhibition of the ceramicist's casts of sculptors' works mentions two busts by Bernhardt, Edmond Lachenal to Auguste Rodin, 7 May 1901, AMR, Lachenal, Edmond, L1. The foundry stamps on various bronzes indicate that Bernhardt's work was cast by: [G. and/or S.] Martin (no information currently located), Casse & Delphy (no information currently located), Dagrín & Casse (no information currently located), Thiébault frères (Paris, est. c. 1849) and Hébrard (Paris, est. 1902). These founders are still to be checked for in the Parisian commercial directories published by Didot Bottin for the years these sculptures were cast.

The labour conditions of my research determine absolutely *how* I can write about any one work by Bernhardt. Viewing the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* at the musée d'Orsay set a gold standard for my scholarly investigations. I could discuss it at length because I could view it at length. It is in a French national and publicly funded collection (RMN) and on display in a gallery well-endowed with natural light.⁵⁹ I was able to spend as long as I wanted with it (opening hours and strike permitting), photography is allowed, and neither flash (this is not allowed) nor tripod were needed in its current location in order to obtain good working images of it. The bust is in a room barely frequented by the large number of visitors in search of work by better known artists; I therefore had the space and quiet to carry out my looking, thinking, recording, and loving, of this object. Laure de Margerie, curator and archivist at the musée d'Orsay was kind enough to arrange for the bust to be taken out of its vitrine and patient enough to allow me as long as I wanted to look at it, take slides, and write notes. There is a substantial archive on the bust in the museum's documentation service and I have been fortunate enough to locate further, crucial material on it.⁶⁰ But, as I have already said, 'seeing' a work does not always make writing about it so easy. In other situations, access and viewing conditions are less favourable. Each viewing I have carried out of work by Bernhardt, Abbéma, Mathieu-Meusnier, Franceschi, and Clairin has its own story. I do not want to dwell on the difficulties that sometimes (and only sometimes) occurred. Circumstances of ownership (institutional or individual) and display do vary and this can affect the regard with which an artist and her work is viewed retrospectively. One thing is for sure: if works in storage are badly lit and awkwardly placed, this should never be taken as demonstrating the

⁵⁹ Some artificial lighting is used and the external windows may be slightly tinted. Nonetheless, the conditions at Orsay are excellent. I am very grateful to Claire Harbottle, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds for her extensive and considered advice on my photographic practice with regard to different lighting and conditions of space. Claire's help has greatly enhanced my experience of this research.

⁶⁰ For instance, the images in which it appears illustrated in Chapters 1 and 2 (and others besides) and the catalogue of Abbéma's studio sale at her death where it also appears; *Succession de Mlle Louise Abbéma, artiste peintre, Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur*, Henri Gabriel, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 14-15 and 19 December 1927.

character of the work represented. Bad slides by an amateur photographer do not mean a work is 'mediocre', even if this were a useful frame of reference in the first place.⁶¹

Constrained or difficult research conditions do not determine *if* I write about Bernhardt's sculpture. Writing is still possible in the absence of seeing the 'real thing' and is necessary in the case of works that are particularly significant in the history of Bernhardt's practice. The only difference is that I cannot write about form or finish in the same amount of detail. Falling back on illustration and description by others is not so sinful. Bernhardt's artworks also exist in nineteenth-century and later discourses: art criticism, art history, cultural history.

Selecting particular works that are significant in the history of her practice is as much to do with the place she is allocated in these discourses by means of her work as the place she herself sought in them by producing sculpture.⁶² I will now consider three works in chronological

⁶¹ Two reviews of the most comprehensive exhibition yet on nineteenth-century French sculpture (*La Sculpture française au dix-neuvième siècle*, Anne Pingeot and Philippe Durey, galeries nationales du Grand Palais, Paris, 10 April – 28 July 1986) demonstrate how the placement of work in a temporary exhibition and its lighting affects analysis of the work. Gerald M. Ackerman recounts his dismay with a sloping platform that placed some works 'high and far away' as almost 'los[ing] two masterpieces from consideration'; 'Paris, French Nineteenth-Century Sculpture', *Burlington Magazine*, 128:999 (1986), 450-51 (451). Despite a more engaged and lengthier consideration of the exhibition, Neil McWilliam nevertheless demonstrates how viewing conditions produce judgements on the work that might otherwise be different. He claims that the 'exhibition's decor – all pedimented post-modern in pastel and neon, a sort of 'Miami Vice' classicism – further suggested doubts about the inherent saleability of the subject, the insistent modishness of the setting compensating for the reticence of the objects it contained.' This is a complex statement concerned with questioning if the decor chosen by the exhibition's organizers was 'possibly indicative of the ambiguous aesthetic status accorded to their material'; McWilliam, 'Objets Retrouvés', *Art History*, 10:1 (1987), 109-21 (110). Both reviews demonstrate, by default, that presentation affects readings of work.

⁶² Perhaps the most crucial aspect of being considered a sculptor was to receive positive (or indeed any) coverage in Salon and other exhibition reviews. Abbéma's correspondence indicates the import of this. In 1880, 1887, and 1888 she wrote to her friend Paul Mantz, art critic for *Le Temps* during these years, thanking him for his favourable reviews of her paintings shown at the Salon in each of these years. In 1887 she thanked him in particular for his 'mot si charmant' about her Salon exhibit, a portrait of her father (unlocated), saying that '[l]e père en vous serrant cordialement la main, la fille en vous embrassant de tout son coeur, le chien en faisant la voix d'or et en vous donnant la patte. / Merci, merci, merci ! et bien affectueusement votre, Loulou'; Louise Abbéma to Paul Mantz, 1887, INHA (coll. Gabriel Ferrier), Autographes d'Artistes, papiers Paul Mantz [copies], dossier Louise Abbéma, peintre, Carton 1, 88. In another letter to Mantz, Abbéma asked him to put in a good word in for her with Charles Yriarte, critic for *Le Figaro*, whom she did not know personally, in order that

order of when they were produced. The questions that guide me are: What is the history of this work? How were the work and sculptor known when it was made and thereafter? What was the work's critical reception? How did Bernhardt make it and why did she make *this* work? I cannot answer all these questions in full, that would require much more research and for me to be able to view each of the works I discuss at all (which has not been possible for two out of the three) or for a longer time in a more concentrated manner (the third). Writing on each of them could then occupy a chapter of its own. But what I can offer are the 'preliminaries to a possible treatment', no, one *actual* treatment – even if compromised – of 'Sarah Bernhardt, sculptor'.

3.3 Representing Works

Après la tempête (1876)

he write a favourable review of her exhibition at the galerie Georges Petit in Paris; Louise Abbéma to Paul Mantz, 29 March 1892, as above. The support of art critics helped secure commissions. During a sustained campaign from 1889-92 to get the state to buy a life-size stone statue of *Chalcographie* for the Cour carrée at the Louvre, Mathieu-Meusnier gained the support of his friend, Auguste Vitu, critic for *Le Figaro*; Auguste Vitu to ministre de l'Instruction publique et des beaux-arts, 16 May 1891, AN, série F 21 4326 (miscellaneous works 1883-92), dossier 'Chalcographie'. Earlier in his career, Mathieu-Meusnier was also supported by the writer Marie de l'Épinay (1805-64) who was a tenant in a building owned by his father. De l'Épinay wrote (in an undated letter) to Théophile Thoré asking that he speak favourably of Mathieu-Meusnier's Salon exhibit in his review for *Le Constitutionnel*; papiers Thoré, BNF Arsenal, Ms 7913/51, referenced in Neil McWilliam, 'Opinions professionnelles: critique d'art et économie de la culture sous la Monarchie de juillet', *Romantisme*, no. 71 (1991), 19-30 (29). I have been unable to conduct a full survey of Bernhardt's treatment by art critics in France and elsewhere throughout her career. The dossier on Bernhardt at the documentation service at the musée d'Orsay provides a very comprehensive, but still ongoing, range of coverage of her art work (mainly art critical rather than 'art news' or social). The material in the dossier suggests that, as well as there being fluctuations in Bernhardt's sculpture production, that interest in it waxed and waned according to other factors. Any in-depth analysis of this coverage is a future project once I have conducted a fuller survey of the literature for all the years Bernhardt exhibited. Beyond the provision in existing archives (Orsay and others), most of my further research on art criticism of Bernhardt's work concerns the 1879 Salon (for the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*) and her exhibitions in London (1879) and the United States (1880-81). According to Laure de Margerie, photocopies were taken from original art journals, chosen for relevance by Anne Pingeot and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain. These were then re-copied for inclusion in an artist's dossier. This was mostly done during the late 1970s and early 1980s but is still ongoing; email from Laure de Margerie, 23 March 2007. Other sources for the dossiers, which are constantly updated, are: exhibition catalogues, sales catalogues, academic literature, biography. I do not currently have the full list of art journals consulted by the staff at the musée d'Orsay.

Two versions of this work have recently circulated in the public domain, both reductions of the original life-size plaster cast (height c. 122.5 cm, estimated from Lagraine's photograph) that Bernhardt exhibited at the Salon in 1876. The most recent is a marble reduction (height 77 cm), one of probably two that Bernhardt had carved.⁶³ The second is a bronze reduction (height 73.7 cm) which came up for sale at Sotheby's in New York in 1994 as part of the Joseph and Toby Tanenbaum collection but was not sold (fig. 3: 2). I have been unable to secure either a viewing of the work or contact with the current owner.⁶⁴ Prior to that, it had been sold as part of the collection of the Osborn Foundation, The World Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma by Christie's on 24 September 1981.⁶⁵

According to Bernhardt's autobiography, she sold this sculpture in c. 1878 for 10,000 francs to the former London-based print publisher and art dealer, Ernest Gambart, who by that time had a sizeable art collection at his home, 'les Palmiers' in Nice. Gambart, she related, paid this amount and therefore outbid the price she claimed had been offered by the founders Susse frères (6000 francs). This might suggest that Bernhardt sold Gambart the object and its casting rights, but in the absence of any documentation, the conditions of the transaction are difficult to ascertain, nor am I aware of how this would have worked because Gambart was not,

⁶³ This is recorded on the sales database, Artprice, as follows: May-Duhamel, Roubaix, 19 March 2006, lot 207
<<http://web.artprice.com/CartItems.aspx?pdtype=PS&idpdt=ODEINTQwNDI0MjMzNTM4NzMt>>. The size, signature, and inscribed date are all recorded, but the outcome of the sale is 'not communicated'. Without an individual or institutional (University of Leeds or Henry Moore Institute) paid subscription to this site, I am unable to ascertain any further details at the time of writing.

⁶⁴ *Nineteenth- and Twentieth Century Sculpture*, Sotheby's, New York, 26 May 1994, lot 47. My letter to the owner sent via Sotheby's and requesting a viewing or information on the work received a reply only from Sotheby's that the work had not been consigned at the sale; correspondence from Jennifer Peterson, Sotheby's, New York, 23 August 2005.

⁶⁵ *Après la tempête* was illustrated and wrongly described as 'a Bronze Group of a Mother and her Drowned Son'. The height was given as 75cm; *The World Museum, Tulsa, Oklahoma: The Property of the Osborn Foundation*, Christie, Manson and Woods, New York, 21-23 September 1981, lot 212. The photograph of the sculpture is cropped around the margins of the group and does not include any background information of location. I am very grateful to Amparo Martinez-Russotto of Christie, Manson and Wood, London for sending me the excerpt from the Oklahoma catalogue.

directly, a bronze founder.⁶⁶ I have not been able to trace any further history of the making or ownership of the existing bronze version (fig. 3: 2) or ascertain if multiple bronze copies were made. Other than for the purposes of the Sotheby's and Christie's sales, this bronze *Après la tempête* (or a possible further copy of it) has been shown only once – by the commercial gallery Wildenstein and Co. in New York at their exhibition, *Sarah Bernhardt and her Times* (November-December 1984).⁶⁷

Bernhardt was brief in her account of this sale to Gambart, even blithe, adding only that she 'was often invited to the house of this original person'. Nor does she mention the sale or gift of another work, *Le Bouffon* (1877), to him.⁶⁸ However, the inventory of les Palmiers

⁶⁶ MDL, 289-90. The transaction is also related in Jeremy Maas's detailed monograph on Gambart's career as a print publisher and art dealer but in this instance relies on citing Bernhardt's autobiography. This suggests that there is no documentation on the transaction in Gambart's surviving and accessible papers; Maas, *Gambart: Prince of the Victorian Art World* (London: Barrie and Jenkins, 1975), 256-57. Until I conduct further research into the Gambart archive, I am not able to state with any certainty if Gambart bought the casting rights, kept the full-size plaster model, was actually responsible for arranging for the extant reduced version to be cast, or if more than one copy was made. I would also need to investigate the prices mentioned by Bernhardt in order to ascertain if these were standard for the market in c. 1878 and if prices varied according to the sale of just the work or the work and its casting rights. I have had insufficient time to do this for now, but intend to investigate it in the future. There are no references to any other sculptors in the index to Maas's book and therefore it is difficult to confirm if this transaction with Bernhardt was actually for commercial purposes or if he was adding to his private art collection. I have contacted Jeremy Maas's son, Rupert Maas, at the Maas Gallery in London to enquire if there is any further archival material on this matter and need to follow this up for a response.

⁶⁷ Although Wildenstein and Co. no longer operates in the art market and I have therefore been unable to contact those responsible for this exhibition directly, it is likely that his was a loan and sales exhibition as was the case with the exhibition on Bernhardt at Ferrers Art Gallery, London in 1973. I am grateful to David Wojciechowski, Shepherd Gallery Associates, New York for his advice on this matter; email from David Wojciechowski, 16 May 2007.

⁶⁸ For a virtual tour of les Palmiers, which now houses Nice's municipal archives, see 'Villa «les Palmiers»', Archives municipales, Nice culture, <http://www.nice.fr/mairie_nice_5613.html> [14 April 2007]. Gambart was cited as the owner of *Le Bouffon* (medium not stated) when it was exhibited at *Exposition de peinture et sculpture, société des beaux-arts, Nice*, in 1879 (month not known). 'Le pêcheur mourant' appeared in 'Inventaire après décès d'Ernest Gambart (Courtrai 12 October 1814 to Nice 12 April 1902), dressé a Nice, villa les Palmiers, le 17 April 1902', notes taken by Monique Nonne, 9 November 1993 chez Maître Gilletta à Nice'; MOSD, dossier Sarah Bernhardt. The valuation provided in the inventory was 500 francs (this was not a sale price). I am grateful, as always, to Laure de Margerie, musée d'Orsay, for checking this document for me and explaining aspects of it about which I was uncertain; email from Laure de Margerie, 25 May 2007. Maas gives further

compiled after Gambart's death in 1902 lists a terracotta sculpture in the hallway described as 'le pêcheur mourant', suggesting that this was *Après la tempête*. It may be that either Bernhardt's original life-size plaster, or a reduced plaster version of it, was mistakenly identified as terracotta. The inventory does not record dimensions in order to ascertain which of these 'le pêcheur mourant' might have been. Although retired when the two confirmed transactions took place (1878 for *Après la tempête*; after 1877 for *Le Bouffon*), Gambart had been one of the top three art dealers and print publishers in London, working internationally, and his continued involvement in the art world was pivotal, if largely social rather than directly commercial. Because 'le pêcheur mourant' was located in the hallway, given accounts of Gambart's lavish entertaining, it would have been seen by other artists as well as by a European social elite of politicians, aristocrats, and royalty who attended his weekly parties at les Palmiers that had begun around 1876.⁶⁹ These transactions with Gambart meant that Bernhardt and her work took their place alongside work by other, saleable, and collectable artists of her time. In this respect Bernhardt was, as much as any artist whose work Gambart owned and displayed, part of a significant social and exhibiting aspect of nineteenth-century art, the private ownership of works of art that were effectively on permanent public display to potential admirers and even buyers.

It is likely from her account that Bernhardt relinquished ownership of the original life-size plaster cast. If Gambart did buy the bronze casting rights in order to produce a reduced bronze version, he would also have arranged for a reduced plaster cast to be made as the model for it.⁷⁰ The original life-size plaster cast is now unlocated and therefore only available for study in Lagraine's photograph of Bernhardt with it, probably taken in her studio at boulevard de Clichy (fig. 3:1). One further image may also show the life-size plaster but this is difficult to ascertain as it is a very poor reproduction of an original photograph from an

information on the compilation of the inventory and Gambart's will but there is no reference in his text to either work in sculpture by Bernhardt; 284; 295-96. *Le Bouffon* was cast in bronze by the founders Martin.

⁶⁹ Maas, 252-55.

⁷⁰ It is not certain that this reduced bronze was cast or arranged to be cast by Gambart.

unknown publication and there is nothing within the frame to indicate size (fig. 3: 4). There are apparent differences in form between the work in this image and that in Lagraine's photograph, which may indicate a different medium or simply be a consequence of the poor quality image.⁷¹ The reduced plaster cast for the bronze version and that (if different) for the carved marble version are both also unlocated, possibly destroyed. Finally, according to the writer from *Zigzags à la plume à travers l'art*, who visited the studio in early May 1876, Bernhardt stored the maquette for the group in one of the rooms there.⁷² The fate of this is also unknown. Bourgoïn's 1879 watercolour of the atelier-salon shows Bernhardt next to a small version of the group (height c. 40 cm). This may be the maquette, another version of the work, or have been represented this size by Bourgoïn only for the purposes of his painting. The medium is not obvious: the dark, green-brown colouring could indicate bronze or tinted plaster but either would rely on Bourgoïn having approximated the colour of the object he 'saw'.

⁷¹ Fig. 3: 4 could feasibly represent a clay, terracotta, or plaster version of the work but judging the material is difficult. My slide was taken from a reproduced photograph that was already poor, possibly because it was printed in a newspaper using cheap, absorbent paper or because I took it from a photocopy of a reproduced photograph in a newspaper or periodical. Lagraine's photograph and fig. 3: 4 could therefore represent different objects in terms of size, different objects in terms of medium because of apparent differences in surface texture, or completely different versions of the work because of apparent differences in form, such as the degree of detail in certain areas. I doubt that Bernhardt did make this work 'twice'. It is more likely that the model for the reduced version was modified and that the translation from one medium to another produced differences in form in certain details. Another possibility is that apparent differences (apart from the size) may simply be due to the conditions of producing the photograph in the first instance or even reproducing it (especially several times over). The angle of the shot in fig. 3: 4 is c. 5-10 degrees different to that in Lagraine's photograph and lighting also makes a difference to the level of detail visible in a photograph. So too does how it is reproduced for print material, for instance by photogravure. I am very grateful to Ben Read for discussing in depth all these images of *Après la tempête* with me regarding the different materials and sizes of sculpture and the changes that occur in translation between media and of size, as well as the different modes of representing sculpture in photographs and reproductions of photographs in print material. This has helped me greatly to understand and make suggestions about the number of possible versions and copies of this work. Another photograph by Charles Marville (1816-79), photographer of artworks at the Louvre and of Parisian architecture, which may be the original for either fig. 3: 3 or fig. 3: 4 or a different image altogether, came up for sale in 1997 in Paris but I have not seen or located this image; *Sarah Bernhardt et son époque*, Chayette & Cheval, Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, 23 April 1997, lot 120.

⁷² Anon., 'Intérieurs d'ateliers: L'atelier de Mlle Sarah Bernhardt', *Zigzags à la plume à travers l'art*, no. 3 (14 May 1876), 7, 10 (10).

Bernhardt had two, possibly more, reduced copies of the work carved in marble. Again, I can only view this in a reproduced photograph from the past (fig. 3: 3).⁷³ One copy of the marble was exhibited in London in 1879 and, according to Bernhardt's autobiography, was sold to 'Lady Ethel H' for £400.⁷⁴ Another was shown at her solo exhibitions in Vienna and (possibly)

⁷³ I have not located a recent photograph of this work, which may be illustrated in the catalogue of its recent sale. The photograph probably taken in 1876 was reproduced in a Japanese journal (*Art Nouveau, Art Deco*, no. 23 [26 December 1998]) and copyrighted to both Philippe Joffre and the PMVP [photothèque de la Ville de Paris]. According to Bruno Pouchin of the Agence Roger-Viollet (which took over the PMVP service), this is an incorrect credit, as the PMVP did not own copyright of this photograph. I am grateful to Bruno Pouchin for his interest and promptness in replying to my query. It is likely that Philippe Joffre re-photographed an image from a published source, but I have not yet identified this. Inspection of the photograph reveals veining in the work which would indicate a marble version. I have a photocopy of a reproduced photograph by [?]Dabey of the marble version which is signed and dated but the periodical given in the annotation by the archive that holds this as a photocopy ('*Revue de l'art ancien et moderne*', 1908') does not contain this reproduction, nor have I located the correct one. A photograph by Goupil et Cie of the life-size plaster model is in BNFDEP with the following further details: negative by Marcelle, 75 rue d'Enfer; H 23 x W 18cm. This has the Salon number 3075 and 'Sarah Bernhardt [sic]' as the title of the photograph. The plaster model is placed on a box covered in black cloth and the background is blacked out. The number '343' in crayon and the stencilled title 'Après la tempête' are both inscribed on the plaster plinth; BNFDEP, Ne 101, Portraits Sarah Bernhardt.

⁷⁴ According to Bernhardt she had 'wanted to sell it for £160', *MDL*, 315. I have found no record of the other prices Bernhardt charged at her London exhibition nor the number of works she sold. In 1910 Bernhardt claimed that *Après la tempête* 'belong[ed] to a rich art lover' but it is not at all clear which version or copy she was referring to; Jacques Daurelle, 'Les Violons d'Ingres: Sarah Bernhardt', *Le Figaro* (22 September 1897), 4. In 1879 £160 was the equivalent of 4041 francs (or \$775), although Bernhardt claimed that she was actually paid £400 (10,103 francs; \$1938). I am very grateful to Professor J. Lawrence Broz, University of California, San Diego for providing me with a spreadsheet of exchange rates for all world currencies throughout this period sourced from the website of 'Global Financial Data' <<http://www.globalfinancialdata.com>> [subscription access only]; email from Lawrence Broz, 21 March 2007. Hereafter all currency figures are rounded up to two decimal figures in French francs [francs], British pounds [£], and US dollars [\$]. During 1854-76 Mathieu-Meusnier received the standard price from the direction des Beaux-arts for a marble bust of 2400 francs, which only went up to 2800 francs in 1877. Marble was provided by the state and it is not clear if other materials (clay and plaster) were also given to the commissioned sculptors or if they were required to buy this out of their money payment. Mathieu-Meusnier also received 8000 francs in total for, first a plaster (3000 francs), and then a marble version (5000 francs) of his life-size statue *l'Orfèvrerie* for the Cour carrée in the Louvre completed in marble in 1866. He was provided with a marble block measuring 1m 054d m³. From the (limited) figures available in the Archives nationales on the size of blocks provided to Mathieu-Meusnier for his state-purchased sculpture, I would estimate that a generous wastage allowance was accounted for of 50%. Therefore, (also) a generous estimate would size the marble block required for *Après la tempête* at 0.5m³. I do not have access to the

Budapest in November 1881 and may be the copy that Bernhardt kept until her death (H 77cm).⁷⁵ Once again, this work has disappeared from current history: Bernhardt's copy was sold to Max Dearly (comic actor, 1874-1943) at the sale of her estate in 1923 but neither this nor 'Ethel H's' copies are located now.⁷⁶ The sculptor Louise Clément-Carpeaux (dates unknown, first Salon 1899) mentions seeing, in her youth, Bernhardt's '*Groupe de naufragés* [sic ...] crumbling away in the jardin d'Acclimatation', at that time located in the bois de Boulogne. This was in the context of claiming that Bernhardt visited her father, the sculptor Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux's (1827-75), studio in order to 'fiddle about with clay' ['tripoter la glaise'] and that 'a sketch by Carpeaux [was] very much like the great artiste's composition'.⁷⁷ At the moment I cannot confirm the siting of a version (presumably plaster or marble if

price of marble in this period in Paris and it is therefore difficult to assess how much of Bernhardt's asking price in 1879 of £160 (4041 francs) was to cover the cost of this material. Compared to the amount paid Mathieu-Meusnier for *Orfèvrerie* and based on a lack of increase in prices for state purchases, this seems a reasonable amount to ask (roughly half the price for half the volume in marble). However, I am unable to make a definitive statement on this in the absence of market prices for sculpture in this period as a whole (1860-70s) in either Paris or London. This is the subject of future research. It is fair to say, however, that the price Bernhardt claims she actually received (more than twice her asking price) was considerable. In 1879 £400 was, according to one source, the equivalent to £25,857 in 2006 (equivalents for the current year are not available until the next); Lawrence H. Officer, 'Exchange rate between the United States dollar and the British pound, 1791-2005', *Economic History Services*, EH.Net, 2006. <<http://eh.net/hmit/exchangerates/pound.php>> [14 March 2007].

⁷⁵ The Vienna exhibition was hosted by the 'Viennese Friends of Art' [Wiener Kunstfreunde]; Anon., 'Sammlungen und Ausstellungen', *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst mit dem Beiblatt Kunstchronik*, vol. 17 (17 November 1881), 75 [hereafter *Kunstchronik*].

⁷⁶ *Succession de Sarah Bernhardt*, 1923, lot 223. An anonymous report on the sale of Bernhardt's estate claimed that Dearly bought *Après la tempête* for 5100 francs, *Le Petit parisien*, n.d.; BNFDAS, 4° ICO PER 2369 Sarah Bernhardt 1-14 (3). According to the National Portrait Gallery, Dearly might have been born in 1874; P. Leguay, 'Max Dearly', *DBF*, X, 407.

⁷⁷ 'Une esquisse de Carpeaux a des rapports directs avec la composition de la grande tragédienne'. Clément-Carpeaux is probably referring to a maquette entitled *Corps d'une naufragée échouée*, c. 1874, terracotta, H 9 x W 27 cm listed as belonging to the Louvre in Stanislaw Lami, *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'école française au dix-neuvième siècle* [1914], 4 vols (Nendeln, Lichtenstein: Krauss, 1970), I, 274. I have not seen this work to ascertain the similarities, nor is the direction of the influence clear. See Louise Clément-Carpeaux, *La Vérité sur l'oeuvre et la vie de J. -B. Carpeaux (1827-1875)*, 2 vols (Nemours: Lesot, 1935), II, 53. Clément-Carpeaux's birth-date is not published in any source I have consulted and therefore it is difficult to ascertain when and how she defines the period she calls 'in her youth'. I have not yet come across any other source that claims that Bernhardt visited Carpeaux and worked in his studio. I do not rule this out but further investigation is required to substantiate or refute this claim.

crumbling) of *Après la tempête* in this location nor that Bernhardt did actually visit and work in Carpeaux's studio. Neither occurrence is mentioned in any other source that I know of.

Able only to discuss this work from photographic images of a frontal view (often of poor print quality), rather than write as if I have seen it (i.e. in the same register as the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*), I use this opportunity to discuss how *Après la tempête* came into being at the time of its making because of, but beyond, having a physical presence as an artwork whether at the Salon or on exhibition in London (1879) and Vienna and Budapest (1881), in other words as an object in art history. *Après la tempête* was not Bernhardt's most exhibited work in Paris or elsewhere (shown four times compared to *Ophélie's* six, see Appendix 3), but, of all her works, it received the most coverage in the press, both prior to and during its exhibition at the Salon. It is also the work most frequently referred to in retrospective accounts of Bernhardt's career as a sculptor published during her lifetime.⁷⁸ In addition to being provided (in most cases) with a textual description, the group was illustrated in contemporary French and foreign periodicals, both serious art critical (*L'Art* and unknown publication) and humorous (*Zigzags* [twice] and *Journal amusant*).⁷⁹ It was made available to a US audience through a drawing in the catalogue for the exhibitions held in New York and Boston in 1880-81.⁸⁰ Bernhardt also produced a drawing of the work but I have not yet established where this

⁷⁸ Although only shown in bronze three times since her death, it is also probably the work most referred to in posthumous literature on Bernhardt because of the quantity of contemporary press coverage. I have not carried out an exhaustive study of the posthumous literature in order to establish this.

⁷⁹ *Zigzags*, which was a *fumiste* (and therefore not entirely serious) publication, lampooned Bernhardt about *Après la tempête* in the article on the visit to her studio and elsewhere in the journal. However, the Salon review in *Zigzags* did provide a serious, in-depth art critical account of the work, D'Enfance, 'Salon 1876' *Zigzags*, no. 3 (14 May 1876), 1-6 (3). I am unable to establish if this was copied from another periodical, as some articles were. The review in the *Gazette des beaux-arts* was the most dismissive of all those I have consulted, but because it was the least informed. The writer was not aware of, or chose not to convey, the events that informed this sculpture and spent considerable time discussing whether or not the adult figure represented *should be* a mother or a grandmother, rather than the fact that she was a grandmother; Charles Yriarte, 'Le Salon de 1876: La Sculpture', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 2e pér., vol. 14, 121-37 (136). Other reviewers knew she was a grandmother, for example, René Delorme, *Le Gaulois*, May 1876 [no further details], cited in Pronier, 300-01.

⁸⁰ Anon., *Sarah Bernhardt Souvenir Including the Authorized Catalogue of her Paintings and Sculpture* (New York: prob. Art Amateur, 1880).

was published (fig. 3: 5)⁸¹ Given that the circulation of photographs of *Après la tempête* cannot be established, textual description and illustration in periodicals was the most likely means by which those who did not see the work exhibited could know what it looked like.⁸²

Interest in the work had begun before it was exhibited and it was therefore discussed at length once it appeared at the Salon, again in serious and humorous periodicals.⁸³ One reviewer of the opening of the Salon (published in *The Times* but copied from an unidentified French periodical) stated that:

[t]he work produced considerable sensation before its appearance in public, and the sculptors desired to see the artist as she worked upon this group whose realism is so overwhelming. I myself wished to see this strange phenomenon, and I followed its progress to its completion [...]. Since yesterday this work has been one of the great preoccupations of artistic Paris.⁸⁴

The reviewer explained that the sensation caused had to do with how Bernhardt had managed to complete the work in a period of time 'not yet two years'. Moreover, this was a 'challenge thrown at the world of sculptors' because they had a 'problem', which was how to explain 'the strange caprice of nature which permits a slim and pallid woman to be at the same time a great sculptor and a great actress'.⁸⁵ This was despite those same sculptors allegedly wanting to see Bernhardt at work on the group and possibly doing so. Just how widespread this early interest was is difficult to establish, but the scale and complexity of this work and the disbelief that Bernhardt could execute it or had executed it was the likely prompt for those early visits

⁸¹ Unidentified publication, MOSD, dossier Bernhardt.

⁸² I have seen an original photographic print of the image by Lagraine, but have never seen it reproduced. Given Lagraine's friendship with Clairin, this was probably a one-off, private image for Bernhardt or a friend. Figs 3: 3-4 are undated and I cannot establish their circulation or audience. I am not aware either of the circulation of Marville's photograph nor what it looks like.

⁸³ An announcement in *L'Art* alerted readers that Bernhardt would be exhibiting the group at the forthcoming Salon and gave a description of it; Eugène Véron, 'Chronique française', *L'Art*, vol. 4, 2e année, no. 1 (1876), 122.

⁸⁴ 'The Paris Salon', *The Times* (2 May 1876), 10.

⁸⁵ This was the only contemporary text that specified the length of time Bernhardt took to make *Après la tempête*.

to her studio in boulevard de Clichy in 1876 by journalists and writers who wished to publish their findings (anonymous journalist from *Zigzags*, Pierre Véron, Francisque Sarcey).

Rather than produce a thematic survey of all the reviews of *Après la tempête* at the Salon that I have consulted, I want to cite, in full, one review, by Paul Mantz, critic for the daily newspaper *Le Temps*.⁸⁶ Mantz wrote extensively on the Salon in a 'feuilleton' (series)

⁸⁶ Mantz (1821-95) began to write art criticism in 1846 for *L'Artiste*. He also wrote for *L'Événement*, *Revue de Paris*, *Revue française*, and *Gazette des beaux-arts* and published books on painting and decorative arts. For a short period he was the directeur général des Beaux-arts (February to November 1882). Recent art historical views on Mantz differ. According to Joseph Sloane, as a critic, he was 'highly individual, and often differed pointedly from others of a more or less conservative persuasion', admiring Millet and Courbet in his early years and he was 'very hard on the academics because they lacked real power'. Sloane's definition of the 'conservative' art critical position is as follows: '[i]n one way it represented the challenge of the past to the present, and in another it was the foil for the arguments and practices which eventually created what we think of as modern art'; *French Painting Between the Past and the Present* [1951], repr. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 170, 42. Patricia Mainardi classes him as a 'progressive' given his opposite allegiance to what she calls the quality of 'timeless and eternal [...] invoked by monarchists when referring to the aristocratic. She also situates Mantz as the 'political and aesthetic opposite' of critic Eugène Loudun because the qualities Mantz referred to in discussing Belgian art, 'truth in observation, dramatic contrasts of light and shade, broad execution, intensity of colour- had more in common with his favourites Delacroix and Courbet than with Loudun's vision of the perpetuation of an exhausted tradition'; Mainardi, *Art and Politics of the Second Empire: The Universal Expositions of 1855 and 1867* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), 77, 98. However, according to Linda Nochlin, Mantz's (political) affiliations are more complex, evident in his treatment of Courbet in a book-length, three-part article in the *Gazette des beaux-arts* published in 1878. Mantz, she writes, gets round his ambivalence towards Courbet because of the artist's involvement in political movement, such as the Commune, by being figured as an artist capable of the poetic only by default, through unconscious effort; Nochlin, 'The Depoliticisation of Gustave Courbet: Transformation and Rehabilitation under the Third Republic', in *Art Criticism and its Institutions in Nineteenth-Century France*, ed. Michael R. Orwicz (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994), 109-21 (112-13). With regard to criticism of Manet's *Olympia* (Salon 1865), T. J. Clark categorizes Mantz as a 'connoisseur' and an 'expert and progressive', despite his having 'attempted no systematic description of the politics or even the general aesthetic commitments of the journals in which [...] criticisms [of *Olympia*] appear'. That year Mantz's Salon review was in the *Gazette des beaux-arts*; Clark, *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985), 99, 282, note 8. Although Mantz is clearly important to this project because of his critique of *Après la tempête* and his relationship with Abbéma, I am unable to pursue any detailed analysis of his practice as a critic other than in these two specific instances. I cannot, therefore, claim either to adhere to how he was been classified by these art historians, or to differ from them. For an interesting discussion of typologies of art criticism, that includes Mantz, see Dario Gamboni, 'The Relative Autonomy of Art Criticism', in Orwicz, ed., 182-94 (183). Gamboni situates Mantz within a 'tripolar typology' that was 'scientific' – i.e. it produced

published at the bottom of the front and second pages of the paper during May and June each year. He was a friend of Abbéma and may or may not have known either her or Bernhardt at this time.⁸⁷ I cite his review in full because it covers, in a single passage, the following: aspects of Bernhardt's training and skill as a sculptor, those of any sculptor working in realist and naturalist modes, and mention of Bernhardt's perceived capabilities as a sculptor because she was a woman who had another job (acting). It is therefore typical of the topics covered by other reviewers, even though each differed to varying degrees in their conclusions.⁸⁸ It is a long passage but, again, typical of treatment of this work; 1876 was the first time that Bernhardt's sculpture received (to the best of my current knowledge) any more than two sentences in a Salon review. Mantz wrote:

I touch now on modern tragedy, on the drama which does not wear heroic clothing but can be poignant if it is spoken of in the language of human grief. Mlle Sarah Bernhardt's group *Après la tempête* belongs to that order of sentiments: it is not classical, neither because of the subject matter, nor the style, it provokes all sorts of objections; but it is singularly interesting because it reveals a character, a particular ideal. An old woman, a poor woman "old and of the people", like the one Didier talks of in *Marion Delorme* has on her knees the body of her child, a young fisherboy who has sunk down in the depths

art criticism and art history that called for 'objectivity and precision' – rather than 'literary'. Gamboni regards these as 'poles' rather than 'models' adding a third pole, the 'journalistic' (art criticism in daily newspapers). Gamboni works from Catherine Lepdor's conception of the scientific and literary, found in her unpublished bachelor's dissertation, 'Ekphrasis 1890: Fonctions et formes de la description dans le commentaire d'art' (unpublished bachelor's dissertation [mémoire de licence], University of Lausanne, 1989), n.p. He argues that particularly in the latter half of the nineteenth century, art criticism became increasingly more professionalized, when the journalistic pole 'gained dominance' and the other two poles developed into art history (scientific) and a marginalized form of pure literature (literary pole) respectively. Gamboni also, usefully, adds that the 'political aspect is particularly important in the press, but also particularly complex, and has often been oversimplified; 191, note 9.

⁸⁷ The first correspondence from Abbéma to Mantz is dated 1880.

⁸⁸ Bernhardt exhibited the reduced marble version of *Après la tempête* in London in June 1879. Reviews dealt very briefly with the work and only one referred specifically to how Bernhardt had produced it, stating that it was 'an innocent plagiarism from Michelangelo's "Pietà" [but] still the group shows great technical dexterity in its modelling'; *The London World* cited in *Art Amateur*, vol. 1, no. 3 (August 1879), 45-46 (45). Both periodicals got the material wrong, claiming that this was a large group in bronze, when, according to Bernhardt, it was a reduced version in marble. I cannot explain this discrepancy easily but if Bernhardt did not sell the bronze casting rights until 1878, her description is more likely to be correct.

and whom the tide has just washed up on the shore. This is a subject which has been inspirational since the Middle Ages, the Pieta, but here the motif is translated into a modern idiom and presented in prose as indicated by the clothing and the supporting objects. The old woman is grieving, she leans over the beloved body, she is looking, without much hope, for a flicker of life on the face of the the dead child. The author has pursued with a persistent determination the expression of intense grief at the same time as conveying the realities of the situation. Mlle Sarah Bernhardt has made no sacrifices to worldly niceties; she has carved out the exaggerated wrinkles on the brow of her old woman, she has bored out the cheeks; from this point of view her group is excessive; but certain details, notably the bare legs of the child, reveal a truly sincere study of nature. The inexperience that one notices in this composition is quite touching. One feels the enthusiasm of the pupil placed in front of the model who, fired up, wishes to say everything. The work is strange and imperfect: moved by emotion. It is made by a frail hand, still unversed in all the exigencies of the practice but comes from an intelligence open to the poetic.⁸⁹

This passage is extensive in its analysis of Bernhardt's working methods and complex in terms of nineteenth-century art production. It covers the state of sculpture practice at a moment of confluence in the history of nineteenth-century French art production in general and in its reception in art critical literature (individual and periodical publications). This can be discerned from certain guiding principles that determine Mantz's discussion of the work:

⁸⁹ 'Nous touchons à la tragédie moderne, au drame qui ne porte pas de vêtement héroïque, mais qui peut devenir poignant s'il parle avec sincérité le langage des douleurs humaines. Le groupe de Mlle Sarah Bernhardt, *Après la tempête*, appartient à cet ordre de sentiments: il n'est classique ni par la donnée, ni par le style, il provoquerait toutes sortes d'objections; mais il est singulièrement intéressant parce qu'il révèle un caractère, un idéal particulier. Une aïeule, une pauvre femme «vieille et du peuple», comme celle dont parle Didier dans *Marion Delorme*, tient sur ses genoux le corps de son enfant, un jeune pêcheur qui a sombré dans l'abîme et que le flot vient de ramener sur la grève. C'est, ainsi qu'on l'a remarqué, le sujet qui a si souvent inspiré le moyen âge, la *Pieta*, mais ici le motif est traduit à la moderne et remis en prose par les indications du costume et du décor. La vieille femme se lamente, elle se penche sur le cher cadavre, elle cherche, sans trop y croire, un réveil de al vie sur le visage de l'enfant mort. L'auteur a poursuivi avec une volonté persistante l'expression d'une douleur intense, en même temps que l'exacte traduction des réalités. Mlle Sarah Bernhardt n'a fait aucun sacrifice aux exigences mondaines: elle a sillonné de rides exagérées le front de sa vieille femme, elle a démesurément creusé ses joues; à ce point de vue, son groupe est excessif; mais certains détails, notamment les jambes nues de l'enfant, révèlent une étude très sincère de la nature. Les inexpériences qu'on remarque dans cette composition ont quelque chose de touchant. On y sent l'enthousiasme de l'élève qui, placé devant le modèle, se passionne et veut tout dire. L'œuvre est étrange et imparfaite: elle est imue. Elle sort d'une main frêle qui ignore encore bien les choses de métier: elle vient d'une intelligence ouverte à toutes les poésies'; Paul Mantz, 'Feuilleton du Temps: Salon IX', *Le Temps* (18 June 1876), 1.

classicism vs. realism and the perceived use of ‘modern idiom’ or ‘prose’; the notion of ‘inspiration’, particularly by forms from a non-classical past (medieval *Pietàs*); the function and execution of sculpture as ‘poetic’.⁹⁰ What I want to extract from this passage for now is

⁹⁰ Mantz wrote about both painting and sculpture in his Salon reviews. For a survey of writers who specialised in the criticism of sculpture throughout the nineteenth century, see Charles W. Millard, ‘Sculpture and Theory in Nineteenth Century France’, *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 34:1 (1975), 15-20. Millard argues that there were three ‘streams’ in nineteenth-century sculpture production in the century; the ‘grand tradition in sculpture’, ‘the academic neoclassical’ and the ‘Romantic’. Of these, he continues to argue, it was academic neoclassicism that was ‘supported by a huge body of theory and critical justification and was far and away the most prominent and powerful sculptural influence throughout the century’ (15). Millard traces a genealogy of this writing from Winckelmann, though Quatremère de Quincy, Éméréc David, down to ‘the principal writer on sculpture of the second half of the century, Henry Jouin’. Jouin, he argues was ‘wholly devoted to an orthodox academic position’. The importance of this position for Millard is that ‘the theories derived from Winckelmann [...] had an immense formative influence on all public instruction in sculpture and were behind the choices made by juries for the Salon’ (16). Millard charts a dialectic of writing (both purely didactic and critical) that supported either ‘academic’ or ‘Romantic’ sculpture (also figured by Millard as the century progressed as ‘modern’, ‘independent’, ‘liberal’ or ‘avant-garde’) in which one or the other held sway at various moments in the second half of the century. I have compiled two lists of writers working after 1850 determined by Millard’s observations. Publications included didactic works, collected Salon reviews, and reviews or articles in periodicals. Because I am concerned in this instance with the terms under which Mantz discussed Bernhardt’s practice and therefore its results (*Après la tempête*) in a periodical, I have inserted the periodical affiliations only, where known, of each writer. This is based on Millard’s footnotes, cross-referencing the ‘Index of Authors’ in Christopher Ward and Martha Parsons, *A Bibliography of Salon Criticism in Second Empire Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 258-76; biographical dictionaries; the *Grande dictionnaire*; and my own research. A bibliography of Salon criticism after 1870 is sorely needed. For now, therefore, this is one preliminary to a full assessment of Bernhardt’s presence in French nineteenth-century art criticism. As far as I know at this stage, she did not feature in didactic writing. Producing lists of two separate ‘camps’ lacks complexity, but attending to the contradictions and detail of each position would require both a full survey of all the possible art critical literature in which Bernhardt’s sculpture was discussed and comprehensive comparison of her treatment to that of other sculptors. This is a future project. I do not support Millard’s argument based as it is on the notion of a dialectic, nor his system of classification, but I do benefit greatly from his scholarship. His essay is the only one I know of which deals solely and specifically with nineteenth-century writing on sculpture. Those marked with an asterisk are those that I am aware of who wrote on Bernhardt. Pro-‘academic’: Henry Jouin [*Journal des beaux-arts et de la littérature* and book-length publications]; Charles Blanc [*Bon sens*, *Courrier français*, *L’Artiste*, founder of *Gazette des beaux-arts*]; Henry Houssaye [*L’Artiste*, *Revue française*, *La Presse*]; Jules-Antoine Castagnary [*Revue moderne*, *Monde illustré* etc]. Pro-‘Romantic’ (‘modern’, ‘liberal’ etc): *Eugène Guillaume [sculptor and Salon jury member; *Revue des deux mondes*]; Paolo Emiliani-Giudici [*Gazette des beaux-arts*]; Gustave Planche [*L’Artiste*, *Revue des deux mondes*, *Journal des débats*], Théophile Thoré (pseud. W. Bürger) [*L’Artiste*, *Revue de Paris*, *Le Temps*]; Charles Baudelaire [*Revue française*, *Le Pays*]; *Eugène Véron [*L’Art*]; Edmond and Jules de Goncourt [*L’Éclair*]; Edmond About; Ernest Chesneau [*Opinion nationale*, *L’Artiste*, *Revue des deux mondes*]; Auguste Ottin [sculptor;

Bernhardt's position within this history and how she is accorded status within it depending on what she demonstrated she was capable of. In other words, what does Mantz's critique reveal about Bernhardt's practice, because of, or even despite, his assumptions about sculpture practice at this time and his (or others') perception of her ability to perform according to the requirements of that practice?

Mantz represented Bernhardt as having actually executed this work, unlike some of her detractors mentioned in *The Times* or elsewhere.⁹¹ She had 'carved out' and 'bored out' the old woman's features, presumably with the appropriate modelling tools. The boy's legs revealed 'a truly sincere study of nature' only possible from a sustained study of anatomy and (either in his experience as a witness of her working studio practice, if this had been the case, or in an imagined re-enactment of the event of making this work) Bernhardt had been 'placed in front of the model' and therefore in a studio. Mantz qualified Bernhardt as a 'pupil [élève]', as yet, in 1876, still lacking experience of 'all the exigencies of the practice'. Given that Bernhardt had only begun to make sculpture between four and seven years before, this is not the slight on her ability that it might first appear. The training period for a sculptor could last for many years, consisting of a preliminary education first at school and then in an art and design college (*école gratuite de dessin*), followed by the *École des beaux-arts*, and for *Prix*

Presse scientifique des deux mondes]; Félix Fénéon [no periodicals listed]. Some of the above published their Salon reviews independently, notably Henry Jouin. Sloane's work is constructed as a history of French painting, although the writers he considers also reviewed sculpture.

⁹¹ Mantz does not specify any of the 'incredulous' sculptors by name. Bernhardt recounted a similar story in her autobiography: the journalist, novelist and playwright Jules Claretie (1840-1913) accused her of 'having got some one else to make this group [*Après la tempête*] for me'. On challenging him, Claretie apologised; *MDL*, 278. I have not yet located Claretie's original article (from 1862 he wrote for *la France*, *Diogène*, *Figaro*, and *L'Illustration*) and therefore cannot comment on his actual text in its entirety. It would appear that Bernhardt maintained a relationship with Claretie hereafter or some time later as because she wrote him three letters dating from between 1897 and 1912; *Lettres, autographes, documents, dessins*, Laurin, Gouilloux, Buffetaud, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 7 May 1981, lots 487-88. This is probably because he was director of the Comédie-Française from 1885 until 1913. See also *DBF*, VIII (1959), 1362. G. G. Geller claims that Bernhardt 'began an action against Jules Claretie'; Geller, *Sarah Bernhardt*, trans. E. S. G Potter (London: Duckworth, 1933), 121. I have not pursued this further at this point and doubt its validity.

de Rome prize-winners, a long stint at the Académie française in the city.⁹² Mantz's greatest praise for the sculptor of *Après la tempête*, pupil or not, was reserved for his closing remark that she had made this work 'from an intelligence open to the poetic'. Implicit in this claim was that Bernhardt had demonstrated, in his view, the intellectual disposition required to make sculpture thus overcoming both the fact of not yet being fully trained and the physical disadvantage of being a woman (having 'a frail hand'). Mantz thus protected her from the possible accusation that she might be a mere praticien (assistant, such as a carver) or a lesser sculptor (given that praticiens were unlikely to be women). With both 'intelligence' and 'frail hand', Bernhardt could not be cordoned off into one or other side of the usual, nineteenth-century division of labour between the labouring body of the praticien and the thinking mind of the artist.⁹³ Instead, Bernhardt was established as a *sculptor* because she had made this work according to protocol even if she was still in training.

⁹² Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827-75) may have attended his local Académie des beaux-arts in Valenciennes briefly in 1838, then, having moved to Paris, he attended the École gratuite de Dessin (1840-43), the École des beaux-arts (1844 as Rude's pupil for six years and Duret's for another two) before finally winning the Prix de Rome in 1854 (then valid for five years). His first Salon exhibit was in 1852. Carpeaux supported himself with student grants and earnings from commercial work from 1846; Wagner (1986), 273. Reforms of the École des beaux-arts shortened this lengthy training period but even Henri Regnault was still a 'pupil' when he died aged twenty-seven in 1871 because he still enrolled as a Prix de Rome pensionnaire (now valid for four years). Bernhardt was thirty-one when she exhibited *Après la tempête* and had not begun her training as early as Regnault.

⁹³ For a history of this division in the nineteenth century, see Wagner (1986), 1-28 (esp. 4, 6, 7). For a discussion of how sculptors who were women were placed according to this division and with regard to their perceived physical and intellectual abilities, see Anastasia Louise Easterday, 'Labour, Honour, Douleur: Establishing Early Professional Models', 'Charting a Course in an Intractable Profession: Women Sculptors in 19th-Century France' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1997), 70-118. Easterday discusses how women became sculptors in the nineteenth century as being determined by two overriding factors: an artisanal background in which one learnt in the workshop of a family member or because of personal, class determined wealth which allowed the time and facilities to study. This is a very thorough and useful survey and analysis of the practice and production of women sculptors in the century in France. However, it is based on a binary model which Bernhardt, as my case study, does not fit. She was not wealthy because of her class background (she grew up in the 'demi-monde' as the child of a courtesan) nor had she received training from a family member. Easterday claims Bernhardt as an 'exception' to her model of how women became sculptors in the nineteenth-century in terms of her personal and professional eccentricity and a 'decadent' artistic vision. Because Bernhardt was a sculptor who did not fit this model, I question the usefulness of such categorization, whether based on a sculptor's class history or only some of her works and some tales about her daily practice (Easterday gives 'Le Baisier de la mer'

Bernhardt was awarded an 'honourable mention' for *Après la tempête* by the Salon jury (one of seventeen that year), a 'fourth prize' that came after the first, second, and third class medals awarded (three, seven, and eight respectively) in the joint category of 'sculpture and engraving on medallions and precious stones'. All awards were given after a majority vote by the jury and distributed at a ceremony on 12 August 1876 but had been announced some time before.⁹⁴ *Zigzags* provided a list of award winners on 4 June 1876 but consigned Bernhardt's honourable mention to a captioned image, a satirical representation of the figure of the old woman walking off stage-right from the picture carrying the dead boy and a sack, one under each arm. Explaining the departing figure, no longer seated as in the work itself, the caption read: 'Mlle Sarah Bernhardt condemned to an honourable mention along with M. Clairin'.⁹⁵ Despite the dubious status assigned this award by *Zigzags* (it did not entitle exhibitors to any exemptions in following years unlike higher awards), if later interviews are to be credited, Bernhardt was proud of this, her highest institutional achievement as a sculptor, mentioning it in interviews about the history of her practice in 1897 and 1910.⁹⁶

Stories of how Bernhardt had actually made *Après la tempête* substantiate Mantz's claim that she could be positioned as an enthusiastic student following the correct procedures for becoming

as a representative work, but this may not have been completed, the title is not confirmed, and its description comes from a musician [Reynaldo Hahn] and not an artist). My method is not opposed to the survey formula- Easterday's work is invaluable and unprecedented – it works the other way round, from microcosm to macrocosm, i.e. by using Bernhardt as a case study and focussing on the detail of her practice and works and how both have or have not been recorded, this allows me to make a different commentary on the practice of women and men sculptors in nineteenth-century France.

⁹⁴ 'Distribution des récompenses aux artistes exposants du Salon de 1876', Salon guide (1877), v-xiii (xii). Only two reviews actually referred to the award: that in the *Gazette des beaux-arts* and another which I cannot yet identify. Unusually, the writer praised Bernhardt as an 'expert sculptor' and the article included a drawing by her of the work, suggesting that she was either employed by this periodical as an illustrator, or was at least on good terms with its editor.

⁹⁵ 'Mlle Sarah Bernhardt condamnée à la mention honorable ainsi que M. Clairin', *Zigzags* (4 June 1876), 8-9 (centrefold illustration).

⁹⁶ See Daurelle, *Le Figaro* (22 September 1897), 4 and Anon., 'Violons d'Ingres! Comment Sarah Bernhardt devint sculpteur', *Lecture pour tous* (1910), 118-124 (119). Full details of *Lecture pour tous* are not available on BNF Opaline-plus catalogue.

and being a sculptor. These stories have to be gleaned from several sources (as was the case with Bernhardt's studios). The first mention of Bernhardt in the process of making *Après la tempête* was published in Pierre Véron's account of his visit to the studio, probably at some point early in 1876. He wrote that he saw Bernhardt 'battling away with the group which will be exhibited at the 1876 Salon'. This gives little clue as to what Bernhardt was actually doing at the time, although he had already mentioned her 'grabbing a modelling tool [...] digging her dainty little hands into a big pile of clay', and using access equipment. Véron was at a loss when accounting for this, other than gendering both Bernhardt and her work as male or masculine: she was a 'Monsieur' and there was no 'trace of feminine precociousness in this work of vigorous audacity whose subject is as virile as its execution'.⁹⁷ Despite giving her credit with one hand and taking it away with the other, Véron nevertheless did describe Bernhardt in the process of making work.

It was also evident from Mantz's appraisal of Bernhardt's work that she had some knowledge and skill in anatomy: he wrote that the boy's legs were 'a truly sincere study of nature'. Information on this aspect of Bernhardt's practice is perhaps the most scanty of all. Clément Clément's scurrilous biography published in 1879 admitted that *Après la tempête* had required anatomical knowledge, asking '[w]here did she learn ideas about the structure of the human body?' His response was far from enlightening about *how* Bernhardt had acquired such knowledge specifically in order to produce the weathered face of the old woman and the dying or dead body of the boy. He answered his question thus: 'Goodness me! A bit everywhere ... A carriage arrives in front of the École pratique de médecine, Sarah gets out, giving her arm to a young doctor. A word to the caretaker and they are in the dissecting room [...] she is curious, stopping in front of the mutilated scraps of the cadavers, poking a green-

⁹⁷ '[S]aisir l'ébauchoir et [...] ses mains mignonnes en pleine terre glaise'; 'une trace de précocité féminine dans cette œuvre d'une vigueur audacieuse, dont le sujet même est viril comme l'exécution', Pierre Véron, 'Feyen-Perrin' and 'Monsieur Sarah Bernhardt', *Les Coulisses artistiques* (Paris: Dentu, 1876), 47; 131-40 (137).

coloured amputated arm with her umbrella'.⁹⁸ There are no other records of Bernhardt having attended this school (Bernhardt never referred to it), but Clament, despite his utterly disparaging account, did claim that she had attended an institution of learning relevant to building up her practice as a sculptor.⁹⁹

Of all the works mentioned in Bernhardt's autobiography, *Après la tempête* is the one to which she devotes the most attention. Read in parallel with Mantz's formulaic assessment of her work as practice, Bernhardt's narrative conveys all the necessary conditions and activities required to execute a group of this scale and complexity from start to finish. First, she establishes that, having taken on a studio (boulevard de Clichy) in c. 1874, she had sufficient time to 'devote [her]self to sculpture', working daily from ten o'clock in the morning and only going to the theatre 'when obliged by my duties there' (251). Further on, having presented a substantial roll call of busts made or begun during 1874-75, Bernhardt presented the steps she took in order to make this group. These ran as follows. She saw an old woman on the shore in Brittany and learnt her 'sad history' (the loss of her sons and grandson at sea) – this was her artistic 'inspiration' (275). Having made 'several designs' [maquettes] which she destroyed, she was persuaded by the advice and encouragement of Clairin and Mathieu-Meusnier to retain one and continue with the project (276). Next she asked Mathieu-

⁹⁸ 'Où donc avait-elle appris les notions de la structure du corps humain? Mon Dieu! Un peu partout ... Un fiacre arrive devant l'École pratique de médecine, Sarah en descend, donnant le bras à un jeune docteur. Un mot au gardien et les voilà dans la sale de dissection [...] elle curieuse, s'arrêtant devant les debris déchiquetés des cadavers, poussant de son ombrelle un bras ballant et verdâtre.' He continues: It was not due to an unhealthy boastfulness that caused her to attend the school, she really did ask questions and listen to the answers, lingering over the answers that really brought home to her the marvelous organization of the human machine [Ce n'est point une idée de forfanterie malsaine qui la conduit là, non! Elle questionne et elle écoute, s'attardant devant les explications qui lui font toucher du doigt la merveilleuse organisation de la machine humaine'; Clément Clament, *Esquisses d'aujourd'hui: Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Derveaux, 1879), 46-47. Clearly, this is a complex statement in which Clament implies precisely that Bernhardt's motivation was not simply educational. He also uses a phrase 'toucher du doigt' which is an anatomical play on words and has possible sexual connotations. I am, as always, grateful to Claudine Mitchell for her help in getting to grips with Clament's phraseology.

⁹⁹ For anatomy training for artists in general in nineteenth-century France and Bernhardt's relationship to this, see Anthea Callen, 'The Body and Difference: Anatomy Training at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris in the Later Nineteenth Century', *Art History*, 20:1 (1997), 23-57.

Meusnier to send her a female model for the grandmother, finally settling on 'a charwoman who was about sixty years old'. She pointedly describes the woman's neck as 'long, emaciated, terrible [...] the bones literally stood out almost bare of flesh; the sterno-cleido-mastoid was remarkable' (276). Bernhardt employed the woman for three months, paying in this transaction, she claimed, considerably more than the woman was used to earning (276). She then selected a seven-year-old Italian boy from a modeling family to pose for the child (277) and worked from the hands and feet of her friend 'Martel' for the adult figure because these were more suited to her 'ideal' (277-78). Workmen constructed the armature according to her design for the life-size model in clay (277) and, once finished, she 'had the work moulded [in plaster]' before submitting it to the Salon (278). Pointing out that in the press '[n]early all the criticisms referred to the neck of my old Breton woman', Bernhardt substantiates her previously stated knowledge of anatomy by informing her reader that she received anatomy lessons from her friend, Dr Parrot, 'had continually with me a book of anatomical designs', and used her own reflected image in the mirror to teach herself the parts of the body and musculature (278).

As was the case with all Bernhardt's accounts of her sculpture practice, this was retrospective, written possibly in the late 1880s or early 1890s, and with the benefit of art criticism of the work to guide her.¹⁰⁰ Including the key elements of training, skill, facilities, studio assistance, models, and money, there is nothing to suggest that this was any more, or less, than a usual account of someone taking on an ambitious project early in their career. Bernhardt's account of her schedule (sometimes working until midnight or four in the morning) and her use of a special device worn on the head and adorned with candles because the gas light was inadequate at night, are often the two elements of her narrative foregrounded in its subsequent re-telling. But these are only a small part of the entire set of procedures she

¹⁰⁰ She could therefore construct her narrative to contest the claim that she did not make the work herself, as well as specifically answer the charge in René Delorme's review in *Le Gaulois* (May 1876) that she paid excessive attention to the anatomy of the female figure's neck ['Je reprocherai seulement à l'artiste d'avoir donné trop de relief au réseau des nerfs qui tranchent sur le cou décharné de l'aïeule']; Delorme, cited in Pronier, 301.

outlines in order to produce this work. As such they need ‘screening off’, or at least corraling, in order that they do not diminish the larger narrative of consistent and planned labour that took place over a two-year period, even if figured by Bernhardt as, sometimes, feverish nocturnal activity.¹⁰¹

Why did Bernhardt choose to prioritize this work in particular in her autobiography and some other retrospective accounts of her sculpture practice? Had she published her autobiography earlier, the memory of a prize-winning work at the Salon that claimed several column inches in Salon reviews might have lived on uninterrupted in public consciousness. Had this been the case, Bernhardt would have been foolish not to showcase a narrative of her competence: art production in the second half of the nineteenth century in France was a highly competitive business as the letter-writing solicitations for commissions and favourable reviews by Mathieu-Meusnier and Abbéma demonstrate. This did not happen and Bernhardt’s account in her autobiography was nearly thirty years old when it first emerged (serialized in the British magazine *The Strand* in 1904). Once Bernhardt had sold the life-size plaster version to Gambart in c. 1878, exhibited the marble version of *Après la tempête* in London (1879) and then Vienna and Budapest (1881), and included a drawing of it in the catalogue for her New York and Boston exhibitions (1880-81), the presence of this work as ‘known’ diminished during the 1880 and 90s to mentions in dictionary entries and inclusion in short, retrospective accounts of her practice in periodicals. When Bernhardt told the story of *Après la tempête* in such accounts, she did not include details of its making. This did not appear until her full-length autobiography was first published in 1904. Why did she resurrect it then?

¹⁰¹ One example of this is in the catalogue entry for the sale of the bronze *Après la tempête* which is précised from *MDL* and includes details of the sighting of the woman, making the maquettes, learning anatomy, choosing the models, and the following: ‘Sarah worked at her plaster with immense enthusiasm. She even had a system of special candelabra fitted on her head, so she could work at night, and sometimes continued until the early hours of the morning.’ This is couched as ‘Sarah [going] to great lengths in the preparation of this work’ and does not include her assistant labour; Sotheby’s, ‘Sarah Rosine Bernard Bernhardt (French, 1844-1923): *Après la Tempête (After the Storm)*’, *Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Sculpture from the Collection of Joey and Toby Tanenbaum*, Sotheby’s, New York, 26 May 1994, lot 47.

Maybe it was precisely because of, as Mantz phrased it, the ‘enthusiasm of the pupil [...] who, fired up, wishes to say everything’, that this account was suitable to represent a particular, but suitably distant, moment in Bernhardt’s sculpture career. If she could demonstrate that, in 1876, she had *done* everything or had *known how to go about doing* everything that a sculptor needed to do – receive training; work on a large scale; have knowledge of anatomy; execute sculpture on a daily basis for a living; work according to new and current trends in sculpture production; liaise with models, praticiens, bronze casters, and buyers; exhibit her work at the Salon and abroad; receive an award; and field criticism – then this could count as her ‘masterpiece’, a work that marked the end of her apprenticeship and a shift in her production from small scale medallions and busts towards more ambitious projects and a full commitment to being a sculptor in history.¹⁰² The size and complexity of *Après la tempête* made it the approximate equivalent of an envoi to the Salon from a Prix de Rome student in his third or fourth year (out of five).¹⁰³ Once *Après la tempête* had burst onto the art scene in 1876,

¹⁰² The question arises of how this story might ‘count’ if it is only told ‘in full’ so much later. Is it viable to claim that ‘as she told the story years later, so was it at the time’? Admittedly, it is quite hard to read this story as the history of an art practice: the sensationalist elements of the working all-nighters and candelabra hat act as distractions from the ‘real’, i.e. mundane, practice of making sculpture. As I have already stated, this work probably took two years to make and therefore I am reading this story differently to most other scholarship (art historical, biographical, the texts of sales catalogues) which cherry-picks the sensationalist elements of this narrative and does not convey Bernhardt’s story as an account of a *daily* practice, insofar as daily practice was necessary for a work of this size and complexity. The sensationalist elements of this story (which are clearly not the whole story as told by Bernhardt) act to make this set of activities seem out of the ordinary rather than the story of a daily practice that lasted over a considerable period of time and was probably, most of the time quite mundane. Bernhardt’s sculpture practice did not, of course, ‘last’ consistently throughout her life: she did not produce sculpture with the same level of intensity beyond 1881. But, *Après la tempête* was made during the overall period of 1874–81 and this *was* an intense period of sculpture production for Bernhardt during which she produced at least thirty completed works. As such the work she carried out during this period must have consisted of more than a few occasions of staying up all night, which she probably only did in order to finish the work for the Salon submission deadline.

¹⁰³ Prior to the École des beaux-arts reforms the Prix de Rome lasted five years and the envois were as follows. Year one: a copy after the antique in marble; year two: a bas relief in plaster of a life-size figure or a figure in the round in plaster at least half-size; year three: the one not completed the year before; year four a maquette of a group in the round and the model of a life-size figure; year five: marble version of the fourth year’s life-size figure. See Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, ‘L’Académie de France à Rome: les envois de Rome’, *La Sculpture française au dix-neuvième siècle*, ed. Anne Pinget and Philippe Durey, exh. cat. (Paris: RMN, 1986), 53–57 (53).

Bernhardt began to solicit more ambitious works in the public domain: the monument to Claude Lorraine in Nancy (c. 1877), a colossal statue, *La Musique*, for the Opera House at Monte Carlo (installed c. 1878-79) and the *Monument allégorique à la Défense de Paris en 1870* (competition maquette, 1879). Bernhardt did not send *Après la tempête* to Chicago in 1893, her last international exhibition and one where she represented France, but chose instead to send later works, the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* (1878), *Ophélie* (1880), and a bust of a young girl, c. 1893. It was more difficult for Bernhardt's viewers and commentators to figure these, in the way that *Après la tempête* was in 1876 and 1879 (because made in 1876), as the work of someone still only an enthusiastic pupil. Therefore, choosing to exhibit these from her existing collection made more sense if she was to construct a history of her practice, to show works that had not previously been figured, at the time they were exhibited, as the work of an enthusiastic pupil.¹⁰⁴

Statuette de Sarah Bernhardt (c. 1880)

¹⁰⁴ It may be that Bernhardt made her choice of works to send to Chicago on this basis and that her collection of press cuttings included reviews of all her exhibited works in which case this would have been a reminder to her of how her work and she as sculptor were treated. This is impossible to do more than speculate upon. However, although Bernhardt's competence and originality were questioned three years later in 1879, she was no longer treated in the press as an ambitious student. For instance, Arthur Baignères in the *Gazette des beaux-arts* wrote that Bernhardt's *Bust of Louise Abbéma* and *Bust of Mlle H.* were 'just like any other busts [ressemblent à d'autres bustes]'; 'Le Salon de 1879: La Sculpture (troisième et dernier article)', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 2e sér. vol. 20 (1879), 146-54 (152); and the sculptor and Salon jury member, Eugène Guillaume wrote that they had 'a life of their own [ont une vie particulière]' and that one [*Bust of Miss H...*] was 'theatrical [a quelque chose de scénique]'; 'Le Salon de 1879: La Sculpture (troisième article, deuxième partie)', *Revue des deux mondes*, 3e pér., vol. 33 (15 June 1879), 915-31 (927). For further criticism of the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*, see Chapter 1. I have yet to find any Salon reviews of *Ophélie* but reviews of this work in other exhibitions also did not treat Bernhardt as a student any longer. The bust of the young girl was not exhibited and therefore received no press criticism. For the purposes of comparison, Mathieu-Meusnier, who first attended the *École des beaux-arts* in 1841, exhibited his first work at the Salon, *Bust of Azaïs*, in 1843 (under the name Meusnier) when he had just turned nineteen and showed a larger scale work in 1847, the statue, *La Mort du jeune Viala*. Franceschi first exhibited at the Salon in 1848 at the age of nineteen with a bust and in 1850 showed his first large-scale work, *Jeune berger soignant son chien*. It is opportune to point to the need here for a comparative study of male sculptors and to ask if they were also treated as students in the first six to seven years of their careers as sculptors.

Unlike in the case of *Après la tempête* there is apparently no narrative whatsoever that tells the story of how this work was made. Nor does the statuette have any history, that I know of, in published or archival sources other than two moments one hundred and twenty-five years apart. The most recent of these, which lasted only twelve days, was when the statuette came up for sale under the title inscribed on the pedestal ‘Sarah Bernhardt par elle-même 1885’ in Paris on 18 May 2005.¹⁰⁵ My contact with this work was not as remote – removed in time and place – as that with *Après la tempête*; it appeared on the market during this research process and was closer to hand (Paris, not New York). I also bid for it by telephone at the auction. However, having seen only two small colour photographs of it reproduced on relatively poor quality magazine paper (compared to the glossy print of *Après la tempête* in Sotheby’s catalogue) in advance of the sale in the *La Gazette de l’hôtel Drouot* (figs 3: 6-7), this contact, like that with Bernhardt’s 1876 group, remained ‘virtual’: the possibility of contact ever becoming ‘real’ was snatched away by a bidder who secured the statuette that afternoon for 14,000 euros. I had not travelled to Paris to see the statuette ‘for real’ in the pre-sale exhibition. I was, however, very fortunate that Stéphane Ferrand, having informed me of the sale, visited the pre-sale exhibition to view its condition; he described the statuette as a ‘very beautiful work’ and pointed out that ‘it could benefit from cleaning and has a small chip on the pedestal under the word ‘MÊME’; apart from that it is in excellent condition’.¹⁰⁶ Disappointment at not being able to buy a work by Bernhardt, especially one so significant to her sculpture practice (the estimated price had been 2000-3000 euros, making this seem possible with a loan), was tempered by relief at not having the responsibility of owning a

¹⁰⁵ *Mobilier, objets d’art*, Gjafferi, Drouot-Richelieu, Paris, 18 May 2005, lot number unidentified. I was kindly informed of this sale by Stéphane Ferrand (formerly curator at the musée de la vie romantique, now of the musée Bourdelle, Paris), email Stéphane Ferrand, 6 May 2005. I am very grateful to M. Ferrand for his interest in my research and particularly for his kind involvement in this event. He also sent me a scanned copy from the advertisement for the auction, *Gazette de l’hôtel Drouot* (6 May 2005), 71. I subsequently bought a copy of the *Gazette*. No catalogue was published for this sale. My efforts – phone calls, a visit to Gjafferi’s offices and a subsequent auction, and a formal letter to the buyer via Gjafferi – in order to view the work and request copies of the original photograph published in the *Gazette* have proved unforthcoming.

¹⁰⁶ Email from Stéphane Ferrand, 17 May 2005.

valuable work of art. ‘Tant pis!’ I decided; it would have been a ‘bugger to dust’, never mind insure.¹⁰⁷

The earliest moment of the work’s recorded history occurred in 1880-81 when Bernhardt took the statuette abroad, on two separate occasions. The first was on her first US theatre tour when she exhibited it in New York in November 1880 and possibly in Boston, probably in January 1881; the second was on another tour during which she exhibited it at the Ringtheater in Vienna (and possibly in Budapest) in November 1881. In the US it was listed in the souvenir catalogue for the exhibition as ‘Statuette de Sarah Bernhardt’ and described only as ‘in marble’. Unlike other exhibits, to which relevant sections from the report of the private view in the *New York Herald* (14 November 1880) were appended, nothing was added to the statuette’s listing in the catalogue.¹⁰⁸ The New York exhibition received considerable coverage in the New York daily press and two newspapers, including the *Herald*, gave brief descriptions of the statuette in their accounts of the private view.¹⁰⁹ In addition, it featured in a front cover drawing of all Bernhardt’s exhibited sculptures published in the monthly periodical *Art Amateur* in January 1881 (figs. 3: 8-9).¹¹⁰ When Bernhardt took the statuette (or

¹⁰⁷ Stéphane Ferrand also informed me of this estimated price; email from Stéphane Ferrand, 11 May 2005. I contacted the musée Carnavalet at the time of the sale in order to suggest they buy this work but had left it too late in the day. ‘Bugger to dust’ comes from a story in *The Times* about the discovery of a nineteenth-century Italian marble bust in the Firth of Clyde. The wife of the fisherman who found it said that she did not plan to keep it because ‘[w]e have a coal fire and she would be a bugger to dust’, Will Pavia, ‘Fishermen find bust worth a fortune at bottom of sea’, *The Times* (3 February 2007), cited in Jo Darke, ed., *Circumspice: Newsletter of the Public Monuments and Sculpture Association*, no. 33 (2007), 11.

¹⁰⁸ *Sarah Bernhardt Souvenir*, exh. no. 19. The *New York Herald* also mentioned works exhibited by Émile Saintin and Georges Clairin which were not listed in the catalogue; Anon., ‘The Private View of Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt’s Paintings and Sculpture’, *New York Herald* (14 November 1880).

¹⁰⁹ The *Herald* called it ‘graceful’ and described it as ‘show[ing] the figure very fully through the tight fitting robe’ adding that ‘[Bernhardt] leans on a fluted column, hung with flowers, and holds in one hand a mallet and in the other a mask’, *New York Herald* (14 November 1880). The *New York Times* gave a more critical account (see below, 306). The work was listed but not described in Anon., ‘Sarah Bernhardt: Her Exhibition of Paintings and Sculpture – A Crowded Reception’, *New York Tribune* (14 November 1880).

¹¹⁰ *Art Amateur* was aimed at non-professional artists. It provided news of the professional and commercial art world as well as essays on studio practice and exercises for the ‘art amateur’ to complete in drawing and colouring of objects. Bernhardt’s sculpture was illustrated in *Art Amateur*,

another copy of it) to Vienna in November 1881, it was described in slightly more detail than in the American press, but not illustrated.

As far as I have been able to establish, the statuette had no profile in France. It was not exhibited at the Salon and I have found no mention of it in any publications.¹¹¹ Any published history of it therefore has to be gleaned from the American and German-language press and is sparse. Montezuma, in the art news column 'My Notebook' in *Art Amateur*, mentioned that 'the little statuette of the sculptress herself will be sold as soon as the exhibition is over, Messers Knoedler & Co. having received an offer of a thousand dollars for it' but no further description was given.¹¹² Again, according to *Art Amateur*, the New York photographer Napoleon Sarony sold photographs of the works in sculpture, but only that of *Ophélie* was mentioned by title.¹¹³ The account in the weekly art review and news supplement of, and included in, the German-language publication, *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst mit dem Beiblatt Kunstchronik* (published in Leipzig under the editorship of Prof. Dr. Carl von Lützgow, Bibliothekar der K. K. Akademie der Künste in Vienna) [hereafter *Kunstchronik*], was the most thorough in describing the form of the work itself when it was exhibited in Vienna in November 1881:

The artist likes to portray herself. We find her in an oil painting, in a statuette and in an inkwell. [...] The statuette shows Sarah Bernhardt as a sculptor. She has her right arm resting on a flat-topped column, on which hang a palette and a mask, two emblems of

vol. 4, no. 2 (January 1881), front page. It had also been mentioned in a news item the month before, Montezuma, 'My Notebook', *Art Amateur*, vol. 4, no. 1 (December 1880), 2-3 (3).

¹¹¹ Work by Bernhardt not exhibited at the Salon received some attention in the French art press, although I am not certain to what extent. For instance, *Le Bouffon* (1877) was reported as having been ordered by Princess Alexandra (married to Albert, Prince of Wales) in the summer of 1878; Eugène Véron, 'Chronique française et étrangère', *L'Art*, vol. 19, 5e année, no. 4 (1879), 142. I have not fully analyzed press coverage of Bernhardt's sculpture not exhibited by her because I am still undertaking a full survey of all periodicals that reported art matters in order to record coverage of all her work in sculpture in my catalogue of works. I am not aware if Bernhardt fulfilled this order as there is no further record of the transaction.

¹¹² Montezuma, *Art Amateur* (December 1880), 3.

¹¹³ Montezuma, 'My Notebook', *Art Amateur*, vol. 4, no. 2 (January 1881), 25.

two artistic activities of the lady and on which the hammer is resting that she holds in her right hand. A long, clinging dress is draped around the slender figure.¹¹⁴

Where has this statuette been all these years? I have not found a single scrap of primary archival material that might answer this question and my efforts to contact the new owner and the auctioneer for evidence either might hold, or have held, have so far come to nothing.¹¹⁵ Because the inscription was added to the socle in French, probably in 1885 (compare figs 3: 6 and 3: 9) and well after the US and Austrian exhibitions, and because the work also came up for sale in Paris, this could mean that it was first sold in France in 1885, treated then as a new work, and that it remained in private ownership there ever since. But the missing history of this self-portrait statuette is impossible to second-guess: there may have been several copies

¹¹⁴ 'Die Künstlerin stellt sich mit Vorliebe selbst dar. Wir finden sie in einem Ölgemälde, in einer Statuette und auf einem Schreibzeuge. [...] Die Statuette zeigt Sarah Bernhardt als Bildhauerin. Sie hat den rechten Arm auf einem Säulenstumpf gestützt, welcher in Palette und Maske die Embleme zweier Kunstrichtungen der Dame trägt, woran sich noch der Hammer anschliesst, den sie mit der Rechten halt. Ein langes, anliegendes Kleid fließt an der schlaken Gestalt hinab.' The article concluded that '[a]s reported, the works will be packed up on 8 November and moved to Budapest [Wie verlautet, wurden die Werke der Künstlerin schon am 8. Nov. verpackt, um weiter nach Budapest zu wandern'; Anon., 'Sammlungen und Ausstellungen', *Kunstchronik* (17 November 1881), 75. This news and review supplement to the longer, academic articles included in the *Zeitschrift* was also subtitled 'Wochenschrift für Kunst und Kunstgewerbe'. The only other contemporary source I have consulted is an anti-Semitic spoof letter from Bernhardt to Hans Makart. This mentions how Bernhardt's sculptures were rescued from a fire in the Ringtheater and is dated 15 November and located in Marseilles. I have no information on this fire, nor precise details of her stay in Marseilles; 'Brief XXII' [Bernhardt to Makart], Marseille, 15 November [1880], Kikeriki, *Sarah's Reisebriefe aus drei Weltteilen: Amerika, Europa und – Stobeleffia* (Würzburg: Kressner, n.d.), 176-77. I am very grateful to Professor Sander Gilman, University of Illinois, Chicago for providing this reference and advising me how to access it and to Marion Neiss of the Zentrum für Antisemitismusforschung, Bibliothek, Technische Universität, Berlin for sending me a copy of this letter. Bernhardt's exhibition in Vienna is mentioned briefly by Jules Huret, but he does not mention Budapest, writing that after Vienna she 'next entered Russia'; *Sarah Bernhardt*, trans. G. A. Raper (London: Chapman and Hall, 1899), 92. However, Pronier writes that she reached Moscow on 10 December 1881 which would allow time for the visit to Budapest; 76. I have not found any other contemporary sources that confirm whether or not the exhibition in Budapest took place and I have not yet consulted the appropriate Austro-Hungarian press for November 1881. Nor have I located a catalogue for either event.

¹¹⁵ The exhibition in New York was held first at the Union League Theatre as a combined exhibition and reception for Bernhardt (on Saturday, 13 November) and then at Sarony's (photographic) gallery. See Montezuma, *Art Amateur* (December 1880), 3.

made and sold, and, even if bought outside France, an inscription in French would not be out of the question.

In the absence of being able to view this work or consult any historical documentation concerning it, an 'object based' analysis of it is difficult to conduct and present. But this is the only portrait of Bernhardt as a sculptor *in sculpture*, and this fact alone makes it too important to pass by.

Given the work was not exhibited in London in June 1879, it seems likely that it was made after this and before Bernhardt left for the US on 15 October 1880. There are no records of Salon submissions and rejections by the jury and it is therefore impossible to say if she had tried to exhibit it in Paris in May 1880.¹¹⁶ It may be that this work was made specifically for sale to an American audience, at least in the first instance. Bernhardt did not own a copy of the statuette, as she did many other works, nor did she give this (or any other self-portrait) as a gift to friends or colleagues, as far as I know.¹¹⁷ By all accounts (i.e. the New York dailies and *Art Amateur*), Bernhardt's exhibitions in New York and Boston were a huge success: 500 attended the private view at the Union League Theatre in New York (*New York Times*, 14 November 1880); 'hundreds of visitors crowd[ed] the Salon daily' once it moved to Sarony's Gallery (*Art Amateur*, December 1880); and the exhibition was 'even more successful in Boston than it was in New York' (*Art Amateur*, January 1881). This exhibition cannot possibly have occurred without considerable planning: to book the exhibition space, transport the sculptures from France, print and dispatch invitations for the private view including to the press, arrange for Sarony to produce photographs of the works in sculpture (which sold 'very well' according to *Art Amateur*), and produce the souvenir catalogue which included several drawings, some already published, by Bernhardt, Clairin, and others. Perhaps most significant

¹¹⁶ Bernhardt holidayed in Venice with Abbéma and Clairin in the winter of 1879 (i.e. 1878-79) and toured in 1880 as follows: 24 May to 19 June, London; June or July to August, Brussels and Copenhagen; September, French regions, before setting off for the US in October. Clairin's paintings (three in total) of Abbéma and Bernhardt in a gondola and another 'Italian' scene, possibly of Abbéma and Bernhardt as 'pageboy' and 'lady', are the subject of further study.

¹¹⁷ Instead, she sat for portraits by friends.

was that some arrangement had been established with the New York art dealer Knoedler (successor to the New York branch of the Maison Goupil, which retained the Goupil name under his ownership) prior to Bernhardt's arrival in the city on 27 October 1880. According to Bernhardt she was met by 'M. Knoedler' on her arrival, an offer made to him for the statuette was reported, and there was, at least, anticipation that there would be 'a lively competition for the possession of the beautiful medallion in high relief of Ophelia', presumably through Knoedler's dealership (*Art Amateur*, December 1880).¹¹⁸ Plans for the theatre tour had begun in April 1880 and, given the positive response to Bernhardt's London exhibition (visitor numbers and at least one buyer), there was no reason to suppose that she would have any less success in terms of numbers of potential exhibition goers and buyers for her work in the US. The London exhibition had already been reported in *Art Amateur* in August 1879 thus forewarning its readers, in advance of Bernhardt's arrival the following year, of her work as a sculptor, that was then to be presented to a US audience in October 1880.¹¹⁹ These arrangements are unlikely to have been Bernhardt's work alone, but a

¹¹⁸ Bernhardt mentions meeting Knoedler at her hotel in New York (the Albemarle) and claims that he had arranged for the drawing room of her suite to be decorated with busts, flowers, sofas laden with cushions and [...] tall palms in order to 'remind me of my home in Paris'; *MDL*, 367. She does not discuss any commercial arrangement with regard to the sale of her sculpture. I have yet to establish the identity of 'Knoedler' in Bernhardt's autobiography. The German Michael Knoedler became manager of the New York branch of the Maison Goupil (print and art dealers) in December 1852 and bought the company in 1857, which became 'Goupil and Company, M. Knoedler Successor' or in the vernacular as 'Goupil's Gallery'. Michael Knoedler died in 1878 and I am uncertain if a descendant took over ownership at this point. For a history of the currently named Knoedler Gallery up to the 1870s, see Decourcy E. McIntosh, 'New York's Favorite Pictures in the 1870s', *Magazine Antiques* (April 2004),

<http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1026/is_4_165/ai_n6077617> [8 April 2007]. McIntosh does not remark on any descendant of Michael Knoedler. I have contacted the Knoedler Gallery archives several times but have yet to receive a response to my query.

¹¹⁹ Anon., 'A Remarkable Amateur', *Art Amateur*, vol. 1, no. 3 (August 1879), 45-46. For the advance warning of her exhibitions in New York and Boston, see Anon., no title, *Art Amateur*, vol. 3, no. 5 (October 1880), 90. It is notable that *Art Amateur* chose to reproduce a disparaging report of Bernhardt's London exhibition (from *The London World*). Some American art journals published reviews of the Paris Salon and this may have been another form of access for an American audience to her work as a sculptor prior to her exhibitions in the US. Before 1879 Salons at which Bernhardt exhibited were reviewed, as far as I know, only in *Art Journal* by Lucy H. Hopper (1876 and 1878). In 1879, the Salon was reviewed again in *Art Journal* and by Cicerone in *Art Amateur*, 'Private Galleries [sic]', *Art Amateur*, vol. 1, no. 4 (1879), 74-75. In 1880 coverage of the Salon in American art

collaboration with her British-based agent Edward Jarrett and Henry Abbey (her American manager for the tour). Because Abbey owned copyright of her drawings reproduced in the catalogue, this suggests that he too had a hand in the arrangements.¹²⁰

The statuette is a small – 49 cm in height – and thus a ‘table-top’ work probably intended for the domestic interior of a wealthy buyer, given the suggested offer of one thousand dollars.¹²¹

periodicals increased; additional reviews were published in *American Art Review* and *Magazine of Arts*. I have not consulted or analyzed these reports in depth; however, this increased coverage appears to be connected to the greater number of American artists exhibiting at the Paris Salon. I am therefore not aware if Bernhardt’s work was mentioned, but can only suggest it as a possibility here.

¹²⁰ Bernhardt met Jarrett while she was performing *Hernani* at the Comédie-Française (opened 4 April 1879) and, according to her autobiography, he immediately proposed a tour of the US which she refused. On his third request, she agreed and signed a contract with him in April 1880, giving them six months to make arrangements for the exhibitions; *MDL*, 292, 334.

¹²¹ I have not carried out extensive comparative studies of the sizes of marble statuettes produced in this period (c. 1850-1900) in order to establish how frequently they were produced (and sold). As precedents for work of this approximate size in marble, Bernhardt will have known of small versions of larger works by both her teachers. Mathieu-Meusnier’s reduced marble *Mort de Laïs* (plaster statue, Salon 1849) measures 36.2 x 48.2 x 18.7 cm to the extremities of the semi-recumbent figure (hinged at the hip); *Shepherd Gallery Spring Exhibition*, Shepherd Gallery, New York, 1985, lot 35. Franceschi’s reduced marble version of *Hébé* (plaster group, Salon 1866), which is almost fully upright, measures 67 cm in height; *Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Sculpture*, Sotheby’s, London, 23 November 1990, lot 117. For the virtue of buying marble sculpture for domestic interiors, see Théophile Gautier, ‘La Question du marbre et des statues dans le luxe Parisien’, *L’Artiste*, 9e sér., (14 July 1870), 96-104. Gautier discusses a recent sale of Clésinger’s ideal works in marble at the hôtel Drouot. He argues that, unlike the Italians, Russians, and English, the French have a ‘terror of marble [terreur du marbre]’ and claims that marble statues for the home are cheaper than much interior decoration; Gautier, 97-98. He does not specify the actual size of works but does refer to reduced groups that can sit on a mantelpiece or a pedestal. Nor does he mention any prices charged. Bernhardt’s *Statuette* is different because it was a one-off and is a portrait. I am unaware of any study that discusses the purchase of marble statuettes for domestic interiors in any depth in any country. For an essay on reduced sculpture in general with some reference to reduced marble works, see ‘L’exécution des reproductions’, *La sculpture, méthode et vocabulaire*, 38-43. For the history and a discussion on the production and sale of marble statuettes (of ideal and allegorical figures) by the American sculptor, Emma Stebbins (1815-82) for wealthy American clients both commissioned and purchased at dealer exhibitions, see my ‘Joining the Dots: Emma Stebbins, Life, Love and Work (unpublished masters dissertation, University of Leeds, 2001), 1; 14-21; 33-35. Further analysis of this as a general topic, in France or elsewhere, would require research into published works on the history of art dealers in the period, their archives and particularly their catalogues. Other than contacting the Knoedler Gallery for specific information on the sale of works by Bernhardt, I am unable to pursue this now. Wagner’s monograph on Carpeaux refers to his atelier as a source of reduced ideal and allegorical works and busts and she illustrates a photograph of Carpeaux atelier display in the salle des

The recent photograph in the *Gazette de l'hôtel Drouot* and *Art Amateur's* drawing from 1881 situate the statuette at slightly different angles: the former is frontal, the latter gives a three-quarter view. Together these allow views from two sides of the entire figure and the head in full, half-profile. Other elements in the composition are therefore also visible; the column on which the figure of Bernhardt leans, the garlanding and train of her dress that wind around it, and four supporting objects: a painter's palette, the masks of Comedy and Tragedy, and a sculptor's hammer. The last object is in the figure's right hand resting on top of the column and partially supports the body's weight. As such, Bernhardt is shown as 'sculptor', 'painter', and 'actress', something the title in the American catalogue did not convey in its simplicity, *Statuette de Sarah Bernhardt*. But, as cited above, *Kunstchronik's* art critic read this as a portrait of Bernhardt as a sculptor. Why?

Of all the objects in the scene, the hammer is the closest to being an 'active' object. It is in Bernhardt's right hand (other images of her as an artist indicate she was primarily right-

Céramiques, Exposition universelle, 1878 which includes reduced statuettes, 180-85; fig. 180. These are probably plasters but I am not clear whether they were available in materials other than ceramic. Much more work has been carried out on the production of reduced bronzes and their display in domestic interiors in France and England. For instance, on France, but mainly England, see Martina Droth, 'Small Sculpture c. 1900: the "New Statuette" in English Sculptural Aesthetics', *Sculpture and the Pursuit of a Modern Ideal in Britain, c. 1880-1930*, ed. David Getsy (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 142-66. Droth cites work by Cathérine Chevillot, Pierre Cadet, and Jacques de Caso on the production and purchase of statuettes in France; 142, note 10. She discusses reduced sculpture in plaster, Parianware, carton pierre, and marble, but is principally concerned with works in bronze, as are the French texts she cites. Bernhardt owned bronze reductions of Mercié's *David* (after 1872) and *Gloria Victis* (plaster, Salon 1874). *Gloria Victis* editions were produced by the founders Barbidiennne in several sizes, including 93cm and 110cm, executed from 1877 to 1900) and Bernhardt's copy was bronze with some gilding but no size was recorded; *Succession de Sarah Bernhardt* (1923), lot 273. *David* is shown in Félix Lucas's illustration of the 'atelier de peinture' (fig. 2: 19). According to the exchange rate for 1880, one thousand US dollars translates as £207 and 5236 francs. The price asked by Bernhardt for *Après la tempête* in 1879 had been £160 (\$775; 4041 francs), Given that exchange rates were fixed and changed little in the period 1876-81, the difference in price between the two works (*Après la tempête* and the *Statuette de Sarah Bernhardt*) may be due to differentials in the London and New York art markets. It may also be that Bernhardt's reputation as a sculptor had increased as the exhibition in London was her first independent one, or, that her reputation generally was also more international and therefore her work would command higher prices, although this is difficult to gauge and qualify. In any case, \$1000 was a reported *offer*, and I do not know either the asking price for the statuette or the final price paid, if it was actually sold in the US. Bernhardt did not own or give away a copy of this work suggesting it was made only for commercial sale.

handed) whereas the mask of Tragedy hangs more loosely from her left hand and is not easily in her line of vision, if she were to be attentive to her own presence in the scene (she is posed to appear as if contemplating the middle distance in a moment of repose from using the hammer). The figure leaning on a fluted column (which can be read both as architectural structural element and sculptural pedestal) lends a classical bent to this work – in two registers – not seen in other portraits of Bernhardt as a sculptor.¹²² Because this was a work in sculpture and not a two-dimensional image, Bernhardt's contraposto pose and the use of the column are redolent of the classicism of antique works and their echo in nineteenth-century neoclassicism respectively; for example, the 'Faun of Praxiteles' (Roman copy of Greek original, c. 340 BCE, Capitoline Museum, Rome) and, based on this precedent, Emma Stebbins, *Commerce [Sailor]* (1860, Hecksher Museum, Huntington, NY). Moreover, this had been seen in a previous self-portrait by a sculptor: 'Bertel Thorvaldsen leaning on the statue of Hope' (1839, plaster; 1859, marble; Thorvaldsen Museum, Copenhagen. Bertel Thorvaldsen, 1770-1844).¹²³ The differences between Bernhardt and Thorvaldsen hardly need pointing out: Thorvaldsen died the year Bernhardt was born, and the extent and type of work both produced was inevitably not the same. Thorvaldsen's was a prolific, industrial, late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century neoclassicist production based mainly in Rome and

¹²² Although not self-portraits, these nonetheless required her participation: Abbéma's small 1875 painting (fig. 1: 22); Bourgoin's 1879 watercolour (fig. 2: 3); Melandri's photographs (figs 1: 34-35; 2: 2: 13-17).

¹²³ For a discussion of the work by Stebbins in terms of its 'structural classicism' as distinct from its 'surface' neoclassicism, see John S. Crawford, 'The Classical Tradition in American Sculpture: Structure and Surface', *American Art Journal*, 11:3 (1979), 38-52. Of other sculptural portraits of sculptors in this period, I know of only the following: Louis-Henri Bouchard (1875-1960), *Claus Sluter* [sculptor, c. 1350-1406], (1911) which is not classical; Amalia Duprè, *Giovanni Duprè* (1882), in which her father and teacher is represented in a 'realist' manner but one that is idealized and he is seated. Rodin's *Le Sculpteur et sa muse* (1894-95, musée Rodin) is listed in *An Iconographic Index to Stanislas Lami's Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'École française au dix-neuvième siècle*, ed. H. W. Janson and Judith Herschman (New York and London: Garland, 1983), 193. However, Rodin's work does not represent studio practice, or at least not that concerned with the making of work. Janson's huge project was conducted with the help of student volunteers and is, again, an invaluable resource. There were a number of allegorical figures of sculpture produced in this period (see *Iconographic Index to Lami*, 193). A figure by Aimé Millet entitled *La Sculpture* (1891, Jardin du Luxembourg, Paris) representing Phidias, stands in front of a column supporting a statue but does not lean as Bernhardt does in order to accentuate the figure's contraposto.

Bernhardt's work was a late nineteenth-century, French, more naturalistic and beaux-arts eclecticism. Moreover, what claims did Bernhardt have on a classical tradition of sculpture production? She was a woman and therefore denied the opportunity to train in classicism's precepts and processes because she could not attend the *École des beaux-arts*, and, to make matters worse, she was only a part-timer.

Or at least this is how her treatment in the New York dailies represented her because, unlike *Kunstchronik*, the main attention paid in reviewing the statuette was to Bernhardt's clothing and not her oeuvre or its composition. Having mistaken the statuette for Bernhardt's bust *Primavera* the journalist from the *New York Times* had this, and only this, to say:

"Primavera" is a statuette representing the star of the Comédie Française in a singularly imprudent position, especially as the name would indicate that it is Spring-time. She is wrapped in a wet sheet. The statuette must be taken with a grain of allowance, in view of the conscientiousness with which Mlle. Bernhardt cares for her silvery voice, and may only be a modest way of showing that she is not so thin as she has been painted.¹²⁴

Why might Bernhardt have chosen this pose and this clothing to represent herself as a sculptor? If the work was made for an American audience, sculpting herself in the trouser suit in which she appeared in Melandri's photographs might have been unacceptable to an American audience. In order to be taken seriously, earlier, American women sculptors either dressed 'conservatively' in public (Emma Stebbins) or received criticism for transgressing feminine dress codes (Harriet Hosmer).¹²⁵ Statistically, in images of herself as a sculptor up to

¹²⁴ Anon., 'Art à la Bernhardt', *New York Times* (14 November 1880), 1.

¹²⁵ Nathaniel Hawthorne took some interest in Hosmer's clothing: he described her as wearing a 'male shirt collar, and cravat, with a brooch of Etruscan gold' and commented that 'she was indeed very queer' but claimed that 'for my part I give her full leave to wear what may suit her best, and to behave as the inner woman prompts'; '3 April, Saturday, Rome'. Later that year he described her in 'a neat little jacket, a man's shirt-bosom, and a cravat with a brooch in it' and claimed that he could no more imagine that she 'terminated in a petticoat, any more than a fish's tail'; 'Rome, May 23d, Sunday'. Both occasions were visits to Hosmer's studio; Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, ed. Thomas Woodson (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1980), 153-59 (158); 228-30 (229). Hosmer's own thoughts on her studio clothing concerned, on one occasion, wearing a 'Zoave costume' and therefore trousers [loose and long], which she explained to a friend as necessary because

1880 in whose making Bernhardt participated, she had appeared in the trouser suit in five versions of one photograph (Melandri series, 1878-79) and in a dress in two paintings (Abbéma, 1875; Bourgoïn, 1879). Caricature had lampooned her in both. I am not aware of the circulation of any of these images in the US, however, the *Art Amateur* had warned its female readership in August 1879 against following Bernhardt's example in the studio when it claimed that it could not recommend to 'the lady art amateur who reads these columns to follow the practices of this eccentric young woman to the extent of wearing white satin trousers in the studio, apostrophising a grinning skull while painting, or keeping a coffin in the room for inspiration'.¹²⁶ This might be why Bernhardt produced a work so different to how she was represented in Melandri's photographs with the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* and her self-portrait bust (figs 2: 1 and 2: 13). The trouser suit had allowed her to demonstrate the agility required for studio practice but in the statuette it was her corporeal 'femininity' that was foregrounded and therefore so acutely noticed, as demonstrated by the *New York Times's* comment that the 'wet sheet' rendered the work 'imprudent'. If the recent photograph in the *Gazette de l'hôtel Drouot* is a reasonably accurate representation (even if a poor quality print), Bernhardt was certainly taking a risk: her body's 'feminine' curves (breasts, waist, hips, belly, calves) and hollows (navel, where her thighs meet at the juncture of her contraposto) are clearly visible. So what was she up to? Perhaps she was simply tired of the lampooning that her white studio trouser suit had provoked and wary of the response already received in the US if the warning in *Art Amateur* the year before was typical.¹²⁷ But this sculpture adds

she was 'not intending to break my neck upon the scaffolding, by remaining in petticoats'; Harriet Hosmer to Cornelia Crow Carr, 'Rome, Mar. 8, 1858', *Harriet Hosmer: Letters and Memories*, ed. Cornelia Crow Carr (New York: Moffatt Ladd, 1912), 122. In the absence of any mention of Hosmer in the literature on Bernhardt or the public circulation of such knowledge of her, it is impossible to say if Bernhardt's 'justification' for wearing trousers in her studio was linked to Hosmer by precedent. Nonetheless, given the physical movement and agility required in using access equipment, both women's claims made, and still make, sense.

¹²⁶ *Art Amateur* (August 1879), 45.

¹²⁷ This is an educated guess, as I do not know if Bernhardt was aware of her treatment in *Art Amateur* nor do I know of any further treatment in the American press prior to her tour there in October 1880. Bernhardt's treatment in some of the London press was less severe: *The Theatre* described her wearing 'her trousers and pea-jacket without any loss of womanly grace' and illustrated one of the Melandri series. Anon., 'Portraits: Mdlle. Bernhardt', *The Theatre*, (1 June 1879), 283-85 (285). I

something else to the vocabulary of Bernhardt as a sculptor: the most demonstrably mechanical, and the largest and heaviest, attribute of a sculptor's skill was her hammer and this is the object Bernhardt holds, most securely of all the supporting objects in this work, as if in repose. This is the 'exclamation mark' of this work. But what of her body wrapped in a 'wet sheet'? The surface effects of this see-through garment enabled Bernhardt, as was the case with any sculptor at this time, to demonstrate either experience or understanding of training in anatomy and in classical modelling techniques. Both the composition of the body's pose and its surface effects – its curves and hollows – was how one represented the female body just short of nudity, and nudity was precisely how one demonstrated that one was a sculptor. As a work *in sculpture* of a sculptor, allusions to classicism and modelling female anatomy could make the lasting impression one wanted of these key elements in a sculptor's training and her practice. On this occasion, therefore, Bernhardt risked not wearing the trousers, at least not in this marble self-image as a sculptor.

Ophélie (1880)

Of the works Bernhardt made in sculpture of theatre subjects, *Ophélie* was her most ambitious in scope and size. It is a bas relief of the drowned Ophelia with the head and partial upper torso floating above water, its long hair loosely garlanded with flowers and merging with the simulated waves. It measures 70 x 60cm. The depth of the relief work is 8cm from the mean frontal plane of the surface of the water on the front side of the marble slab. The skill Bernhardt had demonstrated in making this work is probably the reason she exhibited it so extensively: at the Salon (May to June 1881) and on three to five other occasions, all abroad – in New York and (probably) Boston in late 1880 and early 1881, Vienna and (possibly) Budapest in November 1881 and, representing France, in the Woman's Building of the

have not consulted other press coverage, for instance, that which prompted the *Figaro* episode and, therefore, cannot assess if this was typical. Caricature and satirical and fumiste literature suggest that Bernhardt was treated negatively in France because of her studio clothing but this is a complex issue because of the tradition of this type of publishing as poking 'fun' at all those depicted. How treatment of artists in caricature is determined by gender requires further investigation into case studies of both female and male artists.

World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in September 1893.¹²⁸ Despite the elaborate and virtuoso 'carving' of the figure's hair, the flowers, and the simulated moving water (i.e. modelling specifically for effect in marble rather than bronze), *Ophélie* received scant attention in the art press when it was exhibited in these locations. Bernhardt also showed a marble bust at the Salon in 1881 (*Bust of Coquelin cadet*) and it was this that was noted, not *Ophélie*.¹²⁹ In the US during 1880-81 *Art Amateur* mentioned that the relief would be sought after by buyers, gave it pride of place in the centre of its front cover illustration (fig. 3: 8), and reported healthy sales of photographs of it. Of the coverage in the New York daily newspapers, the *New York Times* dismissed it along with all but one of the works in the exhibition, the *Bust of Emile de Girardin*, which it claimed to be 'by another hand than that of the distinguished tragedienne'. The *New York Tribune* only provided it in a list of all the works shown, mentioning briefly its placement in the centre of the room where the sculpture was displayed.¹³⁰ Perhaps this cursory treatment (positive or negative) was due to the quick turnaround required of newspaper reports on an event such as this – a joint private view of her artworks and reception held shortly after Bernhardt had begun a series of performances in the city as the start of her US tour. Such a time limit for copy would not have allowed sufficiently considered art criticism and, in any case, the crowded conditions of the event (commented on by all the newspapers) were not conducive to contemplation of the works at

¹²⁸ Bernhardt made three other theatre subjects: a self-portrait as Berthe in *La Fille de Roland*, 1876 (from her 1875 stage performance in the play by Henri de Bornier); *Le Bouffon*, 1877 (Triboulet, the jester from Victor Hugo's *Le Roi s'amuse* [1832], often listed as 'Le Fou et la mort' or mistaken for Yorrick); and *Médée*, c. 1878-79 (also a mythological figure). A bust, signed by Bernhardt and the ceramicist, Edmond Lachenal is listed as 'L'Aiglon' (from the play by Edmond Rostand, 1900) but described only as a 'tête d'enfant casqué', and may therefore not be this subject as the character Bernhardt played, Franz, the Duke of Reichstadt, was a young adult aged seventeen and no images of Bernhardt in this role show her wearing a helmet; *Art Nouveau – Art Deco*, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 26 November 1976, lot 66. This is more likely, therefore to be, *Bellone enfant* (London 1879) or *Mars enfant* (Salon 1885), which themselves may be the same work with different titles. According to this catalogue, this bust is only inscribed 'Sarah Bernhardt Spteur. Lachenal Céramiste' on the pedestal and does not bear a title which may therefore have been assigned by the auctioneer's expert.

¹²⁹ See René Ménard, 'Le Salon de 1881', *L'Art*, vol. 26, 7e année, no. 3 (1881), 49-61 (61) and Henry Jouin, *La Sculpture aux Salons de 1881, 1882, 1883 et à l'Exposition nationale de 1883* (Paris, n.publ., 1884), 37. Again, I am relying on MOSD, dossier Bernhardt to make this claim.

¹³⁰ *New York Times* (14 November 1880) and *New York Tribune* (14 November 1880).

length.¹³¹ Having said that, the *Herald* journalist did write at greater length on the artworks. He or she declared that *Ophélie* was a work ‘of which any sculptor might be proud’ and wrote of its composition and execution that ‘the action of the shoulders as they are lost in the ripples is very naturalistic; the modelling of the head and neck fine, and the long hair floating on the surface admirably given. It is a fine work’.¹³² In Vienna *Ophélie* received less attention than the *Statuette* and was described only as ‘of some artistic worth’.¹³³ I have not conducted extensive research on the press coverage of the Chicago Exposition, but, in the publications I have consulted, the work was illustrated but not discussed.¹³⁴

Bernhardt’s confidence in *Ophélie* is demonstrated by the fact that she arranged for Sarony to photograph it and copies of this were sold. This constitutes a ‘portrait’ of the work which

¹³¹ A conclusive statement on this would require analysis of reviews of private views by other artists, and in publications other than newspapers. It does seem from the selection of reviews I have read on Bernhardt’s exhibitions in London, New York, and Vienna, that reporting on an exhibition private view as an event was the domain of periodicals published on a daily or weekly basis or of the news sections of art journals, in other words of journalism rather than art criticism. In the case of Bernhardt’s London exhibition, the private view was reported in columns titled ‘Scraps’ (*Graphic*); ‘Fine Art Gossip’ (*Athenaeum*); and ‘Notes on Art and Archaeology’ (*Academy*). Both the *Athenaeum* and the *Academy* included other news on exhibitions, the Salon medals, Royal Academy elections, and forthcoming publications – anything not included in a standard main article (e.g. a full review of the Salon or RA). I have not conducted extensive research on how exhibitions other than the Salon (or in England the Royal Academy) were reported in this period and whether this was the remit of journalism or art criticism or both. However, prior to 1879 when Bernhardt exhibited in London, solo or joint exhibitions between two artists were not common.

¹³² *New York Herald* (14 November 1880). Anonymous authorship is a problem in assessing journalistic reports on exhibitions in this period. I therefore refer to these reviews and reports as authored by the newspaper. I have not yet investigated who the authors of the London and New York exhibitions reviews might have been. For the need for investigation of criticism as a journalistic activity in France, see Parsons and Ward, ‘Preface’, vii-x (ix).

¹³³ ‘Ist von einigem Kunstwerte’, ‘Sammlungen und Ausstellungen’, *Kunstchronik* (17 November 1881), 75.

¹³⁴ *Ophélie* was illustrated (medium to confirm) in *Art and Handicraft in the Woman’s Building of the World’s Columbian Exposition Chicago 1893*, ed. Maud Howe Elliott (Paris and New York: Goupil, Boussod, Valadon and Co., successors, 1893), 235. *Art Amateur* illustrated a drawing of *Ophélie* on specially prepared, lined cardboard reproduced by photoengraving in order to demonstrate to readers how to draw for illustration; Ernest Knauff, ‘Drawing for Illustration’, *Art Amateur*, vol. 29, no. 4 (September 1893), 88-90, illus. 99.

could double up as an aide to selling the sculpture itself.¹³⁵ In 1907 Bernhardt chose to illustrate her book-length autobiography with a photograph of *Ophélie* (fig. 3: 10). Of all the contemporary photographs of her works which I can reasonably assume Bernhardt was directly responsible for, only this and one other show the work without the sculptor.¹³⁶ There is no attribution for the photographer in either the French or English language version of the autobiography and this could be the Sarony photograph. However, it is more likely to be a

¹³⁵ The photographs were probably for sale while the exhibition in Boston was still up and running because of when this was reported in the monthly periodical *Art Amateur* in January 1881. I have found no records of actual sales of the photographs or the sculpture. I have contacted Knoedler Gallery in New York to request information on possible sales of Bernhardt's sculpture but this has not yet proved forthcoming and requires chasing up. Although Sarony material is held in some university archives (notably the Ekstrom Library, University of Louisville, KY), online catalogues do not list any photographs of works in sculpture. I am grateful to Ben Bassham (author of *The Theatrical Photographs of Napoleon Sarony* [Kent, OH: Kent State University, 1978]) who informed me that he never encountered photographs of Bernhardt's sculpture during his research; email from Ben Bassham, 4 April 2007. It is possible that Bernhardt did sell her sculpture in the US. *Primavera*, one of the busts exhibited was shown at the Southern Exposition in Louisville in September 1883. There are no records of Bernhardt having sent this to the exhibition which appears to be drawn from (probably local) private collectors; C. M. K., 'Art at the Southern Exposition', *The Studio, devoted to Art, Artists and their Friends* [New York], vol. 2, no. 36 (September 1883), 112-20 (114). This has only recently re-appeared, in a sale; *Dessins, sculptures, peintures: XIXe-XXe*, Rossini, Salle Rossini, Paris, 19 March 2002, lot 37.

¹³⁶ The second is also a photographic 'portrait' of the *Bust of Victorien Sardou* (1897-1900, bronze), illus. *MDL*, 440. Photographs of her sculpture studio in boulevard Pereire published in *La Plume* (September 1900) did include her work, but were made as views of the studio and only showed the work in storage (figs 2: 20-24). I cannot confirm that the photographs of *Après la tempête* without her as illustrated above (figs 3: 3-4) were ordered by Bernhardt. For the production of photographs of sculpture for sale by firms such as Alinari (Rome) and Goupil (Paris) from the 1850s onwards, see Hélène Pinet, 'Le Musée idéal: les bibliothèques photographiques', *Photographie/Sculpture*, ed. Dominique Païni and Michel Frizot, (Paris: Centre national de la photographie, 1991), 48-55. Pinet uses Rodin as a case study. More research is required on other sculptors who had their works photographed in the same period in order to comment on Bernhardt's activity in this area. A comparable effort to record (and possibly promote) work is demonstrated by Stebbins who had most of her sculptures photographed, usually in the plaster versions. These images were collected either during or after her lifetime in a scrapbook. The photographer is unknown but it is likely that the works were photographed in her studios in Rome (where she lived and worked 1857-70); Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Emma Stebbins Papers, Roll 2082, 'Emma Stebbins Scrapbook'. For an essay on the (self-produced) photography of the slightly later, British sculptor, Paul Raphael Montford (1868-1938), see Catherine Moriarty, 'The Place of Photography in the Life and Work of Paul Montford', *Sculpture Journal*, 15:2 (2006), 239-56.

photograph of the plaster version of the work taken in her studio in Paris.¹³⁷ The oblique angle of the shot accentuates the depth of the relief, especially in the head, shoulder, and breast of the figure of Ophelia, an aspect of the work not conveyed in the drawing published in *Art Amateur* (fig. 3: 11), nor in photographs taken from a fully frontal and level position.¹³⁸

A word on *Ophélie*'s general history. During the course of my research it has become clear that Bernhardt had two, possibly three, copies made in marble. One was a gift to the Royal Theatre [Det Kongelige Teater], Copenhagen in June 1881 which I have seen and will discuss here.¹³⁹ Another was also a gift, to the Austrian painter Hans Makart (1840-84).¹⁴⁰ *Ophélie*

¹³⁷ 'List of Plates', *MDL*, vii-viii (vii), fig. 24 and *Ma Double vie: mémoires de Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1907), fig. 15. I am, again, indebted to Ben Read for pointing out the appearance of distinct sculptural materials in photographs. The relief in the photograph in *MDL* does not appear to have a signature, as does the marble copy of the work I have seen. This suggests that it is the sculptor's plaster cast used for copying into marble onto which the signature and date were directly inscribed. It could also be that the photograph was manipulated in such a way as to erase it, or simply that it is too difficult to see (signature and date are small in the marble version). In any case, it is not a bronze version.

¹³⁸ A frontal photograph is reproduced in Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-Siècle Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), fig. 2:19. This has been re-photographed by Elizabeth Sisco from Ripley Hitchcock, H. C. Ives et al, *The Art of the World at the World's Columbian Exposition* (New York, n.publ., 1894), 141, which I have not consulted. Dijkstra claims this is a 'bronze bas relief' but there is no indication that *Ophélie* was ever cast in bronze. A drawing of the sculpture in an open timber packing case is illustrated in Ole Nørlyng, *Apollons Mange Masker: Det Kongelige Teaters Udsmykning og Kunstsamlung* (Copenhagen: Nordisk, 1998), 145. This is sourced from a guidebook to Copenhagen, Anon., *Kjøbenhavn paa kryds og tværs*, 3 vols (1888) and the illustrations in this were in turn reproduced from two periodicals, *Illustreret Tidende* and *Ude og Hjemme*. The exact date of publication is not indicated by Nørlyng and I currently have insufficient resources to pursue this. For discussion of a photograph made for the periodical, *Illustreret Tidende*, which was published by Forlagshuset. The photograph was probably produced around the time the letter was written (24 June 1881).

¹³⁹ In a letter to Fallesen concerning the photographing of *Ophélie* by the Copenhagen photographer, Budtz Müller, and its use by the press agency Forlagshuset (which published *Illustreret Tidende*), the writer [indecipherable signature] referred to the sculpture in the Royal Theatre as a 'copy' stating that it 'could not compare to the original'. This could be referring to either the sculpture as a copy, or, the photograph as a copy of the sculpture. This is not clear. See, Forlagshuset to Morten Edvard Fallesen (Kammenherren, Royal Theatre), RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret, 1881, Box 241, 118/1881. According to Lilo Skaarup, archivist, Royal Theatre Archive and Library, there is no record of *Ophélie* ever being moved or loaned; email from Lilo Skaarup, 7 May 2007. I also think this highly unlikely which makes it even more probable that there were three copies made of this work (unless Bernhardt bought Makart's copy back, which is improbable). I am extremely

appeared in his posthumous studio sale held in 1885, but the history of it as a gift, Makart's ownership of the work, and its subsequent whereabouts are unknown.¹⁴¹ *Ophélie* was also exhibited at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893. Bernhardt may have therefore owned a third copy which she lent along with her *Bust of Louise Abbéma* and a marble portrait bust known as 'Buste d'une petite fille' (c. 1893, musée Carnavalet).¹⁴²

In this section I want to consider the history of the copy of *Ophélie* in Copenhagen. It is the only work by Bernhardt that has been in a public collection since shortly after it was made

grateful to Anne Mikel Jensen for her diligent translation of all the material in Danish (and Old Norwegian!) in the Copenhagen archives and to the generosity of the Henry Moore Foundation in funding the translation which was a cost over and above standard research requirements.

¹⁴⁰ A portrait of Bernhardt which appears to be signed 'H. Makart 869' (oil on board, 34.9 x 26.7 cm) is catalogued and illustrated in Gerbert Frodl, *Hans Makart: Monographie und Werkverzeichnis* (Salzburg: Residenz Verlag, 1974), fig. 109. Frodl suggests it was commissioned. Bernhardt is placed in a fantasmatic Gothic interior next to an open coffin, her left hand resting on a skull. However, because there is a copy of the text of *Hernani* in the foreground, I date this work later, after Bernhardt's debut in the play on 21 November 1877. Makart painted a portrait of Bernhardt in 1882, suggesting that they may have met during her performances or exhibition in Vienna in 1881. A painting of Makart's large studio just before the sale does not show *Ophélie* (Rudolf von Alt, 'Das grosse Atelier Makarts', c. 1885, Historisches Museum der Stadt Wien). A painting of his smaller studio by Julius Berger is dated 1875. Both are illustrated in Frodl, figs 24 and 13).

¹⁴¹ *Kunstchronik* reported the auction at the Hause Makart, Vienna in May 1885 and listed the fifth lot as including 'no. 617 *Ophelia*, high relief in Carrara marble in a red peluche-covered frame by Sarah Bernhardt, a present from the actress to the deceased Master [*Ophelia*, Hochrelief aus carrarischem Marmor in roter Pelucheumrahmung, von Sarah Bernhardt, ein Geschenk der Tragödin an den verstorbenen Meister]' recording the reserve price of 2710 Fl[orins]; Anon., 'Der auktion Makart (Schluss)', *Kunstchronik*, 20 Jahrgang, no. 33 (28 May 1885), 557-64 (559). Schillings, not florins, are listed as the official currency of Austria in the spreadsheet of world exchange rates published by 'Global Financial Data'. However, according to the *Grande dictionnaire* Austria adopted the florin in 1857 and at the time of writing it translated as 2.45 francs, making this reserve price 6662 francs; VIII. I am, however, uncertain when this volume of the *Grande dictionnaire* was published, although it can be placed between 1865 and 1876. According to Lawrence Broz, exchange rates did not fluctuate greatly in this period; email from Lawrence Broz, 21 March 2007. Because this was probably not the price raised by this work, it is difficult to comment either on the market value of Bernhardt's work in Austria or when it was not sold directly by her.

¹⁴² This bust is probably of Bernhardt's granddaughter, Simone, b. 1891. There are other possibilities that explain the relief's parallel histories: the Copenhagen copy could have been removed from its frame and lent to the exhibition; Bernhardt could have bought back the Makart copy in or after 1885; the Chicago exhibit could be another copy altogether, perhaps the one exhibited in the US in 1880-81.

until the present. As such it has a continuous history from 1881.¹⁴³ Furthermore, gaining access to this work as a scholar was, relative to some others by Bernhardt, even in public collections, easy. I was able to view it and photograph it at length (figs 3: 12-16).¹⁴⁴ Some aspects of the viewing conditions were awkward, but the results are as much to do with my experience as a scholar and photographer at the time (December 2004) as anything else. For instance, the height at which the work is fixed (above mantel level) meant I could not inspect all of it at close range because I lacked access equipment (and failed to request any). The lighting in the theatre's audience reception room, the Golden Foyer [Tilskuerfoyer], where it is housed was poor; daylight was limited in order to protect the furnishings in the room, and the artificial light was diffuse and dim.¹⁴⁵ That aside, seeing this work in the room where it has been since the 1880s was a real treat.

Because *Ophélie* was presented as a gift by Bernhardt to the theatre and it was subsequently fixed in a purpose-built, wall-mounted, black marble frame, it is the subject of correspondence produced and recorded during the period from its acquisition until the completion of the fixing, roughly two years later. Although this is not an archive about the making of the work, but is at one remove because it concerns its exchange as a gift and its installation once given, it is more substantial than any collection of primary documentary evidence on a work by Bernhardt or indeed any aspect of her sculpture practice. Moreover, like *Ophélie* itself, the archive is easily accessible. Because the Theatre was state-funded (by the Ministry of Church and Education Services [Ministeriet Kirke- og Underviisningsvæsenet]), correspondence concerning the gift and installation of the sculpture is kept in the Danish

¹⁴³ Other works by Bernhardt that have a continuous history are: the allegorical, colossal stone statue, *La Musique*, fixed in situ 1878 or 79, Théâtre de Monte Carlo; *Miss Moulton*, 1875, terracotta bust, private collection; one copy of the *Encrier fantastique*, 1880, bronze inkwell, Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, then Sandringham House; and *Bust of Georges Clairin*, c. 1876, plaster, Bernhardt, Clairin family, then musée du Petit Palais (although the provenance of *Clairin* is not absolutely certain).

¹⁴⁴ I am very grateful to Lilo Skaarup, archivist, Royal Theatre Archive and Library, Copenhagen for making this a stress-free visit, for directing me to further reading about *Ophélie*, and for her further help with my queries.

¹⁴⁵ My photographs were taken before I learnt from Claire Harbottle about the use of lens filters for tungsten lighting.

Royal Archive [Rigsarkivet] in Copenhagen. Tragically, no history of the work's making is recorded anywhere that I know of: it is only illustrated, not discussed in Bernhardt's autobiography and is not given any substantial mention in other accounts of her practice. As already stated, I have found no studio journals or other records of her practice.¹⁴⁶ Only the possibility that the photograph in Bernhardt's autobiography *My Double Life* [MDL] was a plaster version adds to the available knowledge on how this work might have been made. Given that all work was cast in plaster before being carved, this is not earth-shattering. But it is exciting for a feminist scholar trying to find out about the history of nineteenth-century sculpture made by women.¹⁴⁷

Something can be gleaned from viewing this work about how Bernhardt might have proceeded. The relief is currently moderately dirty and has a large crack running through the left of the slab traversing the exposed breast for about one third of its height. This is undoubtedly smoke and heat damage due to its location on a chimney breast.¹⁴⁸ The marble slab may also be rather thin, making it more vulnerable to heat damage. The relief is signed

¹⁴⁶ William Emboden claims that the model for the figure of Ophelia was the painter Madeleine Lemaire (1846-1928); *Sarah Bernhardt* (London: Studio Vista, 1874), 28. This is a misreading of an earlier biography by Reynaldo Hahn. Hahn wrote in August 1900 that, having just seen Bernhardt at work, she was sculpting 'a fair woman whom I recognise, having seen her at Mme. Lemaire's (when she posed as Ophelia)'; *Sarah Bernhardt: Impressions* [1928], ed. and trans. Ethel Thompson (London: Mathews and Marrot, 1932), 18. Hahn's memoirs were first published in serial form in *Les Annales politiques et littéraires* (15 October to 1 December 1928).

¹⁴⁷ I do not discuss *Ophélie*, as does Dijkstra, in terms of Bernhardt's awareness of the contemporary 'fascination with the theme of the weak-witted, expiring woman exerted over the males of her time', nor do I wish to relate it to her 'eccentric image' or the story of her sleeping in a coffin. Dijkstra, 44-46. For a discussion of Bernhardt in the coffin photograph by Melandri as parodic, see Carol Ockman, 'Women, Icons and Power', *Self and History: A Tribute to Linda Nochlin*, ed. Aruna D'Souza (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001), 103-115 (108-10); and Ockman, 'Was She Magnificent? Sarah Bernhardt's Reach', *Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama*, ed. Carol Ockman and Kenneth E. Silver (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), 23-73 (51-54).

¹⁴⁸ I am grateful to Jonathan Drake, my companion when visiting Copenhagen, for discussing the cause of the damage with me. The correspondence regarding the fixing of the bas relief in situ makes no mention of it being placed on a chimney breast, as it is in its current location, but instead describes only a doorway being blocked off to create a suitable wall space. Having made enquiries with the Theatre, there are no further records that the sculpture was ever moved and this remains a bit of a mystery; email from Lilo Skaarup, 7 May 2007.

and dated 'Sarah Bernhardt 1880' in the extreme bottom right corner. Without knowing who the model was, it is difficult to say if this work is a portrait or a generic type fitting Bernhardt's notion of Ophelia, a role she did not play until 1886 or opposite (as Hamlet) until 1899. Unlike the female figure in *Après la tempête* it is Ophelia's youth that is tantamount in the story of her suicide and in this sculpture. The journalist in the *New York Herald* had called the figure's modelling 'fine' and praised the naturalism of the 'shoulders as they are lost in the ripples'. But what did he or she mean by fine? And why ignore one shoulder, a full right breast and a partial left breast clearly not 'lost'? In order to make *Ophélie* Bernhardt would have required a nude model, even if the extent of what counts for nudity is minimal (the breasts and shoulder together). She had already sculpted the uncovered heads, necks, and upper chests of female models by 1880 having made numerous busts and *Après la tempête*. Also by 1880 she had sculpted the naked breasts of two adult female models: the allegorical *La Musique* [also referred to as *Le Chant*; hereafter *La Musique*] (finished by 1879), and the fully nude *Médée* in progress in 1878-79 (fig. 2: 16). But both these works must have lacked the delicacy of finish evident in *Ophélie*. The first, a colossal statue erected at least two metres above ground level did not require such detailed definition of body parts or the extent of polish in the finished surface. It is not clear if Bernhardt got beyond the rough and unfinished clay or plaster version of *Médée* before she began to make *Ophélie*. Bernhardt's knowledge and experience of anatomy, and how she had hitherto demonstrated this, warranted this more concentrated and adventurous attempt at female nudity, one that drew attention to itself *as nudity* because of how the head is flung back and because of the body's placement in, and movement through, water. In the absence of studio records one can only assume that Bernhardt took measures for her model to simulate this action, either in water itself or perhaps in sand. How she made this *as a relief* is unknown. The usual practice was to work on a timber backing with nails embedded in it to hold the clay, but no such apparatus is visible in any image of her studio.

Ophélie was given pride of place in the foyer at the Royal Theatre and considerable effort was made and funds spent on installing it. Crucially, and this is a vital moment in the archive on

Bernhardt's history as a sculptor, the purchase of works in sculpture by Bernhardt had been discussed as early as February 1880 in a letter from the Danish brewer and future founder of the Glyptothek in Copenhagen, Carl Jakobsen, to the director of the Royal Theatre, Morten Edvard Fallesen. Jakobsen wrote under the auspices of the Carlsberg Trust [Ny Carlsberg], a charitable fund that he directed and which purchased artworks from 1879 onwards that were to form the basis of the collection at the Glyptothek.¹⁴⁹ He discussed the availability of funds to buy plaster casts of modern French sculpture. It may be that these were for the future Glyptothek collection, but the possibility that he wished to buy works for the Theatre also cannot be ruled out. The sculpture at the 1878 Salon had had a significant effect on Jakobsen who wrote in an article in the Danish periodical *Ude og Hjemme* that 'the sculpture of France is a vigorous affirmation of life: it can no longer be ignored' in an effort to open up Danish collecting policies beyond its own national art.¹⁵⁰ In his letter to Fallesen about the 1878 Salon, he immediately praised Bernhardt's 'excellent busts' exhibited that year (*Bust of Emile de Girardin* and *Bust of William Busnach*), thence continuing that 'wishing to purchase works by her seems a natural thing to do'. This would imply that he is recommending to Fallesen that the funding formerly set aside for 'plaster casts of modern French art' be spent on Bernhardt's work. He also comments that, as the person responsible for spending this money, he ought to contact her about the possibility of buying her work quickly, before she 'has flown too far away'. There is no record that such a meeting was ever held between Jakobsen and Bernhardt to negotiate purchase of her work, whether in finished form or as plaster casts themselves. However, the significance of this event is that it marks the first, established link between Bernhardt and the Royal Theatre, via Jakobsen. This was concerned, not with her work as an actress, that came later, but with the desire to own work by her in sculpture and secure its

¹⁴⁹ For the history of Jakobsen's involvement in buying art for the Glyptothek and also, under the auspices of the Albertina Trust (established in 1879), for public works to be sited in Copenhagen, see Flemming Friborg, 'Behind the Looking Glass: Carl Jacobsen's Ideals in Sculpture' in *Gloria Victis!*, ed. Flemming Fribourg, exh. cat. (Milan: Skira, 2001), 122-45.

¹⁵⁰ Carl Jakobsen, 'La Musique [by Delaplanche, Salon 1878]', *Ude og Hjemme*, vol. 65, no. 1 (1878), 142, cited in Friborg, 128. I have not consulted the original article by Jakobsen and therefore cannot say if he also mentions Bernhardt's sculpture here as he does in the letter to Fallesen about the 1878 Salon.

purchase forthwith, and furthermore by the most significant collector of sculpture in the last three decades of the century in Copenhagen.¹⁵¹

It was later in the year or possibly even the following year that Bernhardt's theatre performances prompted a *gift* from her. These performances lasted only from 17 to 21 August 1880 and Bernhardt was part of an illustrious Parisian troupe that included her sister, Jeanne Bernhardt, and actors from the Odéon and Vaudeville Theatres and the Comédie-Française.¹⁵² If Bernhardt's subsequent letter to the director of the Royal Theatre is anything to go by, then the trip to the Danish capital had been a success: she wrote to Fallesen, on 3 September 1880 thanking him profusely.¹⁵³ Exactly when and how Bernhardt decided to give

¹⁵¹ Carl Jakobsen to Morten Edvard Fallesen, 25 February 1880, Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen, Privatarkiv 2581: Morten Edvard Fallesen, offiser, d. 1894 [letter incomplete]. I would not have been able to write this section at all had it not been for both Henrik Stissing Jensen, assistant archivist at the Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen who drew the letter to my attention after my visit to the archive and Anne Mikél Jensen for making sense of its incompleteness (first page only) and difficult prose, a persuasive and yet indirect rhetoric; letter from Henrik Stissing Jensen, 17 April 2007 and email from Anne Mikél Jensen, 29 April 2007. Anne also found out about Jakobsen and the Carlsberg Trust for me and directed me to the following website: < <http://www.ny-carlsbergfondet.dk/english.asp> >.

¹⁵² Correspondence for the Royal Theatre, Copenhagen [Det Kongelige Teater] is held in the Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen and filed according to three components: a copybook of outgoing correspondence [Teatret Kopibog]; incoming and outgoing correspondence in fair and rough copy [E. Korrespondance]; an indexed logbook [Journal] of incoming correspondence with brief résumé of content. The codes for the incoming correspondence and the Journal records are the same. The codes for the outgoing correspondence and the copybook are not the same. For the sake of elegance in referencing, citations for incoming correspondence include the relevant Journal entry. Copybook citations are kept to a minimum unless they provide information not found in the final copy letter in the correspondence file. Correspondence regarding the arrangements for the trip, the programme, distribution of takings including payment of the actors, and tickets dates from 13 July to 20 August 1880. The agent for the company was Bertha Straube who negotiated with Fallesen; Rigsarkivet [Copenhagen] 220, Det Kongelige Teater og Kapel, 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret (1880), Box [pakke] 240, nos 136/1880, 147/1880, 152/1880, 153/1880, 156/1880, 159/1880 [hereafter RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret with dates and box, folder, and letter numbers].

¹⁵³ Bernhardt wrote to Fallesen: 'Ah, how happy I was during those five days and how I am fond of you and grateful to you. Let me embrace you and tell you for the hundredth time, but not for the last, that I love you and that I am your friend [Ah, que j'ai été heureuse pendant ces cinq jours et que je vous aime et que je vous remercie. Voulez vous me laisser vous embrasser et vous repeater pour la centième fois mais pour la dernière que je vous aime et que je suis votre amie]'. Bernhardt did not specify quite how Fallesen had solicited this praise, and it may be that this was a usual writing style for her with theatre directors, particularly if she was thinking of working there in the future. She did

Ophélie to the theatre is not known. Records of it and the fact that it was a gift begin on 17 June 1881 once the work had arrived in Copenhagen; these concern the payment and reimbursement of import duty.¹⁵⁴ Aside from one letter (and the Journal record of it) in which producing a photograph of the bas relief and the options for then reproducing it were discussed, the rest of the archive concerns the installation of *Ophélie* and the building works and masonry carried out for this purpose.¹⁵⁵ As well as the Customs Inspectorate, the correspondents in this archive are: Fallesen and unnamed members of the Theatre staff including the Decoration Committee; the Ministry; a building inspector called Dr. Phil. Herholdt; an architect, Professor Dahlerup from the University; and a mason, Dantner. In the first instance, the funding for the preparatory building work for the installation of *Ophélie* came from the Theatre's annual maintenance fund granted by the Ministry who set a maximum sum on the expenditure for this work. The actual frame and fixing, however, required additional funding which, at first, was not agreed upon and only eventually granted.¹⁵⁶ I include a table outlining all the costs incurred and discussed in the gift and its installation with references to specific correspondence (Appendix 1: *Ophélie* Installation Costs, Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, 1881-83).

mention 'his gracious majesty paying her compliments [votre gracieux souverain me complimenter]' and referred to him as 'that perfect gentleman and charming man [ce parfait gentleman et ce charmant homme]' and Copenhagen as 'charming [charmant]'; Bernhardt to Fallesen [copy], 3 September 1880, RAC, Privatarkiv 2581: Morten Edvard Fallesen, offiser, d. 1894.

¹⁵⁴ The Theatre was entitled to reimbursement of import duty because it was an artwork. See RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret 1881-1883, Box 241, nos. 121-122/1881 (17, 25 and 28 June 1881). This all concerns correspondence by and from Customs Inspectorate, Fallesen, and Ministry of Church and Education.

¹⁵⁵ The letter in which the photograph is discussed is: RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret (1881 – 1883), Box 241, no. 118/1881 (24 June 1881).

¹⁵⁶ The refurbishment of the foyer was first discussed in March, May, and June 1881 but it was not until after *Ophélie* had arrived that specific arrangements for the installation were mentioned. This correspondence continued until November 1883 when the additional funds were granted. The correspondents are Fallesen and others involved in the management of the Theatre, the Ministry, a building inspector, architect, and mason. All this correspondence is found in RAC 220, KTK, 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret 1881-1883, Box 241. I am grateful to Henrik Stissing Jensen for his very kind assistance with referencing matters concerning this collection.

Fallesen and an unknown colleague argued in a brainstorm draft letter that *Ophélie* deserved a 'space fitting its value and artistic significance' and that funding ought to be provided for it to be set in a 'beautiful and honoured way suiting the work'.¹⁵⁷ For this reason an architect (Professor Dahlerup) was commissioned by the Theatre's artistic decoration committee to design this arrangement, a doorway in the foyer was bricked up, and a mason (Dantner) was commissioned to carve the black marble surround, transport this to the site, and fix the frame and relief in situ (fig. 3: 12). This was overseen by a building inspector (Dr Phil. Herholdt) who controlled the funding budget.¹⁵⁸ Two further doors were cut through the existing wall to compensate for the loss of the one which was bricked up to house the relief, all of which caused considerable expense: the allocated amount for this extra building work (which began at some point between July and October 1881) was an additional 1000 krone on top of the theatre's annual maintenance budget of 10,000 krone. In the end, the work exceeded the amount allocated by a further 120 krone. The black marble frame was almost ready in September and transported to the Theatre and fixed in situ along with the bas relief at sometime between February and April 1883. Together with the architect's drawings this aspect of the work cost 2158 krone but it was not until November 1883 that the Ministry agreed to pay these extra costs having previously refused to do so. Although not all Fallesen's negotiations with the Ministry to provide the funding for the installation are recorded directly, the Ministry did eventually give in to his pleas.¹⁵⁹

How owning this work paid off in increased takings, if it did at all, is unknown. But the sculpture's artistic worth was pitched extremely high by the Royal Theatre management. The Theatre clearly wanted to demonstrate the importance of their ownership of this work in sculpture by Bernhardt. Having already planned to buy work by her in February 1880, Bernhardt pre-empted this by presenting *Ophélie* as a gift. The purpose of the photograph must therefore have been to announce this acquisition in as wide a public forum as possible, in this case, the periodical *Illustreret Tidende*. This merits even further attention given the

¹⁵⁷ RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret (1881), 125/1881.

¹⁵⁸ RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret (1881), 93/1881, 100/1881.

¹⁵⁹ See Appendix 1.

contents of the letter in which this was discussed. Forlagshuset arranged for the work to be photographed by Budtz Müller having obtained permission to do so from the Theatre management. This presumably took place some time shortly before the date of this letter (24 June 1881) because the glass plate already exists. Forlagshuset either had or were about to reproduce the photograph in the periodical *Illustreret Tidende*, which they published. However, in the same letter Forlagshuset also agreed that were they to reproduce this photograph again (from the glass plate, which they owned, but not its reproduction rights), they would pay a fine of 1000 krone.¹⁶⁰ This was a huge amount of money; the same as the amount allocated for the all the building work in the foyer. For the sake of comparison, an agricultural labourer earned 1-1.10 krone per day in 1880. This was more than a monetary, exchange value, simply because it was so large and the purpose of the fine was to demonstrate ownership of the photograph but effectively the ownership of the sculpture itself. As such, the Theatre carved a place for *Ophélie* within its own collection of artworks setting the value of this very high.

¹⁶⁰ The photograph is discussed in Forlagshuset to Morten Edvard Fallesen (Kammenherren, Royal Theatre), RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret, 1881, Box 241, 118/1881 and recorded in RAC 220, KTK 1794-1912, Journal 1872-1882, Box 111, 118 (24 June 1881). C. Lose to Fallesen. The glass plate for the photograph belonged to the Forlagshuset who had obtained permission from the Theatre to make this photograph. The fine of 1000 krone would be payable, to the Royal Theatre, if they published it other than in the first instance and without the permission of the Theatre. I am very grateful, again, to the enthusiasm and diligence of Anne Mikél Jensen, and to the kindness of Henrik Stissing Jensen for tackling this very difficult (and incomplete) text; email from Anne Mikél Jensen, 19 April 2007; email from Henrik Stissing Jensen, 23 April 2007. I am also grateful to Dr Kerry Bristol, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds for helping me be clear about the meaning of this letter, which was tricky even in English; personal communication, 25 April 2007. According to exchange rates for 1881, this would translate as just under \$270 or between £50-60. In addition to the figures for the agricultural day labourer, a teacher in a village school earned 108 krone in a three-month period (and was provided with free accommodation and some land). I am extremely grateful to Anne Mikel Jensen for finding this information out for me and providing me with the website where this information is held; email from Anne Mikel Jensen, 11 April 2007 and 'Købekraft og lønninger efter møntreformen 1873 [Purchasing power of wages after the monetary reform in 1873]', in *Ordbog for slægtsforskere* [Dictionary for genealogists], Esbjerg Byhistoriske Arkiv [Esbjerg Historical Archive], 43; <<http://www.esbjergbyhistoriskearkiv.dk/Ordbog%20for%20sl%20forskere.pdf>> [12 April 2007]. For a comparative example in England, George Hardie, the marble carver for the sculptor Hamo Thornycroft and an elite artisan working in another capital city (London) was earning £4 per week for 42 hours work in 1886-87, see my, 'Work, work, work!: The *Building* frieze at the Chartered Accountants' Hall (1889-93) in London by Hamo Thornycroft ... and others' (unpublished bachelor's dissertation, Department of Fine Art, University of Leeds, 2000), 25.

Deciding to publicise this new acquisition, and to protect it quite so heavily, means that the Theatre was also carving a place for Bernhardt's work in sculpture as desirable in the greater context of nineteenth-century European sculpture production. As such, the Theatre's actions, prompted by this gift from Bernhardt, also carved a place for the sculptor in the history of art, imparting a sense of worth and international repute to her and her work.

3. 4 Sculpture Training in Nineteenth-Century France: A Brief Synopsis

There are contemporary (nineteenth-century) texts and recent histories on how one became a sculptor in the period in which Bernhardt began to learn the skills and acquire the kind of knowledge that would enable her to produce the body of work outlined and discussed above. Being a sculptor (becoming, having become, remaining a sculptor once an initial period of training as novice and improver was completed), also has a literature and the two (becoming and being) are implicated one with the other in terms of practice and output, as is evident in how I discussed Mantz's treatment of Bernhardt as a student in transition in his review of *Après la tempête* at the Salon. Contemporary nineteenth-century French writing on the training of artists, including sculptors in particular, is found in such texts as the entry on sculpture in Larousse's *Grand dictionnaire* and a number of discursive, instruction, and biographical texts.¹⁶¹

¹⁶¹ The literature listed in the notes that follow is not an exhaustive survey of texts on the education of sculptors, however, it is representative and further reading can be found in the bibliographies of the texts I list. The purpose of this thesis is not to provide a general history of nineteenth-century sculpture training in France but to consider Bernhardt as a case study because her experience of learning sculpture produced a body of work that belonged to the larger field on nineteenth-century French sculpture production. The recent literature listed below covers this general history and Easterday's thesis in particular is an excellent survey of contemporary literature as a whole. I also include here literature that concerned both sculptors and painters, where it is clear that both were being considered or addressed. Useful contemporary texts are as follows: Anon., 'La Sculpture', *Grand dictionnaire universel du XIXe siècle*, ed. Administration du Grand dictionnaire universel, 17 vols (Paris: Larousse, 1865-90), XIV, 432-37; Charles Blanc, *Grammaire des arts du dessin: la sculpture* (Paris: Bibliothèque d'histoire de l'art, 1888); Ernest Chesneau, *The Education of the Artist* [1880], trans. Clara Bell (London, Paris, New York and Melbourne: Cassell, 1886); Jules Salmson, *Entre deux coups de ciseau: souvenirs d'un sculpteur* (Paris: Lemerre, 1892); Karl Robert [pseud. Georges Meusnier], *Traité pratique du modelage et de la sculpture* (Paris: Laurens, 1889). Karl Robert wrote a number of instruction texts on art practice and exhibited as a painter at the Salon from 1875. He was Mathieu-Meusnier's son. Although published in England as an instruction book for students, Édouard Lanteri,

Recent literature has also outlined the history of art education in general in France, which is relevant to sculptors because much of the preliminary stages of learning (drawing and anatomy) were the same. Often, the generic 'artist' or 'student' in this literature is, by default, a painter, and examples of actual sculptors are few.¹⁶²

Since the 1980s there has been a body of literature specifically on sculpture training, mostly found as essays in catalogues of exhibitions on French nineteenth-century sculpture. Aside from work on Rodin and Claudel, the major, book-length monograph on a French nineteenth-century sculptor is Anne Wagner's *Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux: Sculptor of the Second Empire* (1986), exceptional in the extent and depth of its social historical analysis of sculpture education in the second half of the century.¹⁶³ Nonetheless, whether in the case of the 'artist'

Modelling and Sculpting the Human Figure [1902-04], repr. (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1985) was based on his own sculpture education in France. See Millard for theoretical and didactic literature on sculpture.

¹⁶² A good starting point which does consider sculptors is: Jacques Lethève, *The Daily Life of French Artists* [1968], trans. Hilary E. Paddon (London: Allen and Unwin, 1972), esp. Chapter 2. Other work on general training from which one can infer certain activities as shared by sculptors and painters are: Albert Boime, 'The Teaching of Fine Arts and the Avant-Garde in France during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Arts Magazine*, 60:1 (1985), 46-57 and Fronia E. Wissman, 'The Art Institutions of Nineteenth-Century Paris', in *The Paris Salon* (Christie's: New York, 1997), 13-21 (includes teaching as well as discussion of the Salon).

¹⁶³ Recent literature (that I have consulted) has three notable examples in catalogue essays from the 1980s: Anne M. Wagner, 'Learning to Sculpt in the Nineteenth Century', in *The Romantics to Rodin: French Nineteenth-Century Sculpture from North American Collections*, ed. Peter Fusco and H. W. Janson, exh. cat. Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum, 1980), 9-20; Anne Pinget, 'Introduction à l'histoire de la sculpture du XIXe siècle: Formation et apprentissage', in *De Carpeaux à Matisse: la sculpture française de 1850-1914 dans les musées et les collections publiques du nord de la France*, ed. Françoise Maison et al, exh. cat. (Lille: Association des conservateurs de la région Nord-Pas-de-Calais, 1982), 23-31; Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, 'Formation: les écoles' and 'Formation: les ateliers privés', in *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*, 28-31 and 32-41. The other major text on training is Wagner (1986), esp. Chapters 1-3. For Rodin's relevant schooling and training as a sculptor and his work as a *pratien*, included in a general, but artist's, biography, see Part 1 (Chapters I- XI) of Ruth Butler, *Rodin: The Shape of Genius* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993). For Claudel, see *Camille Claudel: catalogue raisonné*, ed. Anne Rivière, Bruno Gaudichon and Danielle Ghanassia (Paris: Biro, 2000), esp. Bruno Gaudichon, '«Tu vois que ce n'est pas plus du tout du Rodin ...»', 27-42; and *Claudel and Rodin: Fateful Encounter*, ed. John R. Porter and Jacques Vilain, trans. David Wharry, exh. cat. (Paris and Quebec: Hazan; musée nationale des beaux-arts du Québec; musée Rodin, 2005). There is, of course, a substantial body of literature on both sculptors, but these are the texts I found the most useful for outlining each one's sculpture training. I am very grateful to Gina Alexander Granger for giving me the above catalogue as one response to my query

or 'sculptor', neither were openly acknowledged as gendered until feminist histories of art produced another co-present and intervening body of literature based upon examining the general situation of women as artists and by using individual case studies. These tend, as with studies of the generic (male) 'artist', to favour painters. Sculptors are only sometimes considered, although similarities in the necessary educational facilities can be assumed (for example, being able to – or not – work from a live, nude model).¹⁶⁴ Poor archival resources and fundamental unfamiliarity with the production of sculpture by women (there is still so much work to do), means that it is not always clear, for instance, even when classes were open to women (as they were at the Académie Julian from 1868), if women actually attended, how many did so, precisely when, and if those that did were painters, sculptors, or both. The private studios of individual artists are cited as places where women could gain an art education but, again, these are almost always those of painters, most famously Charles Chaplin (1825-91) with whom Abbéma trained briefly 1873.¹⁶⁵ I know of no recent in-depth

regarding her essay 'Sarah Bernhardt', in *Encyclopedia of Sculpture*, ed. Antonia Boström, 3 vols (New York and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 2004), I, 151-53.

¹⁶⁴ Charlotte Yeldham, 'Art Education: France', *Women Artists in Nineteenth-Century France and England: Their Art Education, Exhibition Opportunities and Membership of Exhibiting Societies and Academies with an Assessment of the Subject Matter of their work and summary biographies*, 3 vols (New York and London: Garland, 1984), I, 40-62; J. Diane Radycki, 'The Life of Lady Art Students: Changing Art Education at the Turn of the Century', *Art Journal*, 42:1 (1982), 9-13; Christine Havice, 'In a Class by Herself: 19th Century Images of the Woman Artist as Student', *Woman's Art Journal*, 11:1 (1989), 35-40; Paul Duro, 'The "Demoiselles à copier" in the Second Empire', *Woman's Art Journal*, 7:1 (1986), 1-7; Catherine Fehrer, 'New Light on the Académie Julian and its Founder (Rodolphe Julian)', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 6e pér., 126e année, vol. 103 (1984), 207-216; Catherine Fehrer, 'Women at the Académie Julian in Paris', *Burlington Magazine*, 136:1100 (1994), 752-57; Kirsten Swinth, 'Illustrious Men and True Companionship: Parisian Study', *Painting Professionals: Women Artists and the Development of Modern American Art, 1870-1930* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 37-62; Nancy Mowll Mathews, 'Training and Professionalism: France', in *Dictionary of Women Artists*, 2 vols (London and Chicago: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), I, 88-92; Garb (1994). Garb's study focuses on the work of Hélène Bertaux in the Union des femmes peintres et sculpteurs and its campaign to exhibit art by women and gain entry to the École des beaux-arts and is therefore does not concentrate on her sculpture practice as such. See instead, Garb, 'Mme Léon Bertaux', in *Dictionary of Women Artists*, I, 251-54.

¹⁶⁵ With regard to Chaplin, Abbéma's early biographer, Georges Lecocq, wrote that she had 'pledged him her friendship out of gratitude for the fact that she had not wasted her time, as so many others did, those eternal Chaplinades, painting on porcelain!' ['lui voue une amitié reconnaissante pour n'avoir pas, comme tant d'autres, perdu son temps à faire, sur porcelaine, d'éternelles chaplinades!'], *Peintres et sculpteurs: Louise Abbéma* (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1879), 10. This was, however, not

study specifically on a sculptor's atelier that took on women students, including that of Hélène Bertaux (1825-1909) who taught from 1873 and opened a school especially for the study of sculpture in 1879 (on the avenue de Villiers).¹⁶⁶ However, again, during and since the 1980s the different opportunities available to women to learn sculpture in nineteenth-century France have been the subject of general inquiry. For instance, Charlotte Yeldham's systematic investigation of the field in her survey of women artists in England and France (1984), case studies of individual sculptors in encyclopaedic works (*The Dictionary of Women Artists*, ed. Delia Gaze, 1997; *The Encyclopedia of Sculpture*, ed. Antonia Boström, 2005) and catalogues of exhibitions where work by women is shown (for example: *La Femme artiste d'Elisabeth Vigée-Lebrun à Rosa Bonheur*, Donjon Lacataye, Mont-de-Marsan, November 1981 to February 1982) all provide some insight into training histories. All are, by virtue of their form, cursory. The first full-length survey of women sculptors that specifically analyzes sculpture training opportunities for women in France in any depth is an unpublished doctoral thesis by Anastasia Easterday (University of California, Los Angeles, 1997), but again her case studies are by necessity short, because this is a survey of the entire century.¹⁶⁷

a uniform view on Abbéma. Although in general she was 'rescued' from being a 'Chaplinade', other critics did categorize her as such. The critic for *L'Art*'s 1878 Salon review described her as 'like Chaplin, a friend of light tones [comme M. Chaplin, amie des teintes claires'; *L'Art*, vol. 14, 4e année (1878), 293. For further discussion of the implications of Abbéma's pupilage in Chaplin's studio, see Chapter 4, note 5. For private studios, such as Chaplin's, where women were taught painting, see Garb (1994), 79-81.

¹⁶⁶ In 1879 Arthur Baignères wrote that 'the studio of Mme Bertaux plays the same role on the ground floor [of the palais de l'Industrie where the sculpture was exhibited] as does the studio of Chaplin in the painting rooms [l'atelier de Mme Bertaux joue au rez-de-chaussée le rôle de l'atelier Chaplin dans les salles de la peinture]', *Gazette des beaux-arts* (1879), 152. I have been unable to establish if there was any contact between Bernhardt and Bertaux, despite the fact that they lived and worked close by each other on the avenue de Villiers in the mid-1870s. Bertaux had been a student of Dumont, as was Mathieu-Meusnier, and their pupilage may or may not have overlapped (Bertaux first exhibited at the Salon in 1849, six years after Mathieu-Meusnier). For a text on teaching students in general, and women in particular, in Rodin's studio, see Butler, 180-88 and the literature on Claudel.

¹⁶⁷ Easterday argues that '[t]hrough often considered according to a model of repression and victimization, a closer consideration of the history of women artists at this time reveals far greater agency on their part, as well as a more fluid system, albeit still unequal, of power relations.' Her method is not to add women to the modernist canon, as she argues has been done (in some cases) by work on Camille Claudel, but to 'disrupt the sanctity of the canon into which she has been inscribed'; Easterday, 14. This is because 'though held up as "significant" Claudel was not "typical"'. As a survey

Work of all kinds (surveys, catalogues, genre- and object based analysis) on nineteenth-century French sculpture production (perhaps with the exception of Rodin), and particularly the conditions of production for women who made sculpture, has a long way to go before any aspect of the field can match the extent and depth of scholarship on painting in the same period. One way this can be tackled is through detailed case study, so difficult in the absence of substantial archives, but necessary in order to go beyond the general models produced so far that are determined only by the gender of the sculptor, their class, or their 'genius', and less often by detailed scrutiny of the work they actually produced and how they produced it (not to mention how both are represented). Exceptional and exemplary in this respect, is Claudine Mitchell's work on Camille Claudel in which the sculpture Claudel produced (in the 1890s), her working methods, and the critical reception both received are situated in relation to social, intellectual, and artistic convention rather than the artist's biography. Because Mitchell presents Claudel as a sculptor who *thinks*, and who is a woman, she is able to argue

Easterday's work is foundational and does allow my thesis to avoid having to cover the necessary ground of the general context for sculpture production in nineteenth-century France, such as how one trained to be a sculptor as a woman. Where I differ from her is in ascertaining that there can be a notion of the 'typical', either in the case of the sculptors or the artworks they produced. This is because Easterday presents Claudel and Bernhardt as 'exceptions' to a rule about women sculptors, namely that they 'chose to work in a conservative vein, and to conduct themselves according to a successfully established model of "appropriate feminine behaviour"'; Abstract, viii. This I cannot contest, having not studied any other French women sculptors in the century in depth. But I have studied the practice and work of the American neoclassical sculptor Emma Stebbins, who by all accounts adhered to neoclassical convention, but who cannot, as nor can her work, be categorized as 'conventional' once one establishes that 'we art historians', are invested intellectually, politically, and psychically in writing about the work we have viewed. I therefore have to refute Easterday's categorization, however ironic and based on contemporary and later views of Bernhardt as 'The decadent genius' (the sub-heading of her section on Bernhardt's practice) or her statement that '[l]ike everything Bernhardt undertook, her pursuit of sculpture was dramatic and well-publicised'; 321, 325. If this is the case, how is so little known about the genesis of any work Bernhardt made other than *Après la tempête* or written about now? What I attempt to do differently in this thesis is to scrutinize the archival material on Bernhardt's sculpture practice far more carefully, and (here I *am* being ironic) allow this and the work she made to 'speak'.

that Claudel's practice informs as much as it derives from the production of sculpture as a whole in in 1890s France, a privilege normally reserved for sculptors who were men.¹⁶⁸

This is a very general introductory statement about the state of current scholarship on training and practice in nineteenth-century French sculpture production for women and men. But generalizing about this field reflects the state of the field and is therefore instructive in terms of how one might situate Bernhardt's particular history as a sculptor in its period and place. Read as a whole, all this literature (or at least that which I have consulted) indicates that there were pedagogical principles and procedures in operation during the century. These operated in the different kinds of teaching establishments where one could (or could not) learn sculpture, whether sculpture was classified as 'grand' or 'decorative' art. Included in this are those institutions where, for some students, prior knowledge and skills that would enable them to take up the study of sculpture were possible. In all these institutions the educational curriculum was gendered either because certain activities were available only to boys or because some of these institutions were only open to boys or men. I list the institutions where some level of sculpture or pre-sculpture training was available accordingly: at school (boys); at regional art institutions (boys); and in Paris, at the *École gratuite de dessin* which became the *École spéciale de dessin et de mathématique appliqués aux arts industriels* in 1850 and the *École nationale des arts décoratifs* in 1877 (boys and young men); at the *École spéciale de dessin* (girls; joined with *École nationale des arts décoratifs* in 1891); and in the private studios of individual and experienced sculptors (both young women and men, but this depended on the admissions policy of the teaching sculptor). The principles and procedures for learning sculpture were not the same in each institution, nor were they constant

¹⁶⁸ Mitchell writes: '[t]he sculptures of Claudel acquired significance, in the context of an artistic movement which recognized intellectuality in the artist's ability to stage-manage moments of private experience purporting to represent those of a collective "ours". The emotional, sexual, narrative qualities of her work exemplified the conviction that art should embody the anxious questioning of the individual's relationship with existence, the mode of consciousness of the 1890s [...] Her work always reveals an attempt to generalize by transposing the personal into mythology or poetical images; formal language had to be modified to let the personal filter into the public discourse on culture'; Claudine Mitchell, 'Intellectuality and Sexuality: Camille Claudel, the Fin-de-Siècle Sculptress', *Art History*, 12:4 (1989), 419-47 (441-42).

throughout the century, even within the same institution. For instance, until 1863 when the *École des beaux-arts* underwent structural and teaching reform, as a general rule, methods of drawing – regarded as an essential preliminary skill for any art education – differed between the *École des beaux-arts* and the *École gratuite de dessin*. The *École des beaux-arts* emphasized direct copying from antique casts, then the live model, whereas the *École gratuite de dessin* promoted the practice of drawing from memory. Although the *École des beaux-arts* did undergo substantial reform to its curriculum and structure in 1863, many changes were rescinded in 1864.¹⁶⁹

What is obvious from an analysis of primary texts and secondary scholarship – but not too obvious to ignore because it is relevant here – is that not all the same opportunities were open to female students as were to their male counterparts at the time Bernhardt began her training in c. 1869-72. Making sculpture was, quite simply, ‘different for girls’. But, approaching sculpture training in nineteenth-century France as a bifurcated activity is only useful up to a point, and the case of Bernhardt demonstrates the limits of this approach. To put it another way, I do not describe a ‘usual’ model of learning sculpture (with some variations) to which Bernhardt either did or did not measure up as a ‘proper’ sculptor. Categories of gender, perceived class background, and a notion of professionalism (to which amateur is the ‘Other’) are all factors in writing about her practice, but are not the primary purpose of my doing so.¹⁷⁰ Easterday has argued that even as a woman who learnt sculpture, Bernhardt was doubly

¹⁶⁹ For more detail on both the distinct teaching methods at the *École des beaux-arts* and the *École gratuite de dessin*, see Pingeot (1982), 23-32; and Le Normand-Romain, ‘Les écoles’, 28-31. In particular, on the 1863 *École des beaux-arts* reforms, see Pingeot (1982), 23-27. One fundamental, and lasting, change was the introduction of in-house studios led by continuous teacher rather than the previous system of monthly rotation. This now mirrored the private atelier system in which sculpture apprentices learnt the three-dimensional procedures of sculpture production.

¹⁷⁰ Wagner (1986) frames her treatment of what it was to be a sculptor in nineteenth-century France by discussing texts written by his contemporaries (art collectors and diarists, Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, architect, Charles Garnier, and art critic and writer, Charles Blanc) where knowledge of Carpeaux’s individual social history was brought to bear as evidence of humble, ‘working class’ origins and yet he was still able to pursue the noble purpose of art. This writing, she argues, is the ‘lore, fact and fiction alike’ that constituted being a sculptor in this period; Wagner (1986), 3. In my reading of Wagner, class difference for the sculptor (Carpeaux) constitutes a conflicted ‘self’ played

out as a division of labour inscribed across the sculptor's (labouring) body – that of a 'worker' – and his mind, which could house and enact the function of an 'artist' – not that of a worker. According to Wagner, Carpeaux's career therefore 'can stand for – and has been taken for – a kind of paradigm of the biography of the nineteenth-century French sculptor'; 6. Drawing attention to writings on Carpeaux's class origins and his physical appearance (both of which denoted 'working class') means for Wagner that the issue of 'being a sculptor' (in Second Empire France) can be touselled with. Carpeaux is paradigmatic but 'paradoxically so'. Within the gap between paradigm and paradox lies, for Wagner, her greatest interest: 'the clichés and controversies that surrounded [Carpeaux's] art'; 7. The archive on Bernhardt is also punctuated with 'clichés and controversies' but these occur in a different register and context to those that concern Carpeaux. Bernhardt's circumstances were not the same, either in terms of the extent of her practice and activity as a sculptor, or of class and gender, and therefore neither was her treatment by those who discussed, and still discuss, her as an artist (sculptor). Bernhardt was not 'working class', 'bourgeoise', or 'aristocratic'. Her mother was a courtesan and Bernhardt herself started to train as an actress at the age of sixteen and was employed in the theatre for the far greater part of her adult life. She worked in the prestigious Comédie-Française, but also in other, less eminent theatres, and eventually ran her own theatres. Her social world as a child included aristocrats and politicians because they were probably her mother's clients. In her adult life she moved in a varied social circle. She owned domestic property from 1876 to 1886 and commercial property (theatre) from 1893 until her death. She possibly inherited money from her father (who was not married to her mother) and maybe from an aunt. She had a private education in a convent school and with a governess. At the time she started learnt sculpture she was not poor, as many sculptors were said to be in their beginnings, but nor was she a wealthy aristocrat pursuing a hobby. In January 1875 she was elected a sociétaire of the Comédie-Française, which although gave greater status, did not always mean greater earnings as these were now paid as proportions of a performance's takings. Bernhardt's family background and her principal profession locate her, because she cannot be placed anywhere else, in the 'demi-monde'. According to the *Grand dictionnaire*, this was a neologism used in the title of a play by Alexandre Dumas fils which opened on 20 March 1855 at the Théâtre Gymnase. The *Grand dictionnaire* defines 'demi-monde' as a 'certain class of amorous women [certainne classe de femmes galantes]'. As such Bernhardt's 'class' is determined by her mother's profession and her own as an actress (although this is conflicted) and was therefore 'gendered' because the demi-monde was defined by the working sexual practice of a group of women, not those for whom they worked (clients). The *Grand dictionnaire* is keen to elaborate on its definition for the sake of 'future dictionaries', adding that 'le demi-monde ne représente pas, comme on le croit, comme on l'imprime, la cohue des courtisanes, mais la classe des déclassées ... Il est séparé des honnêtes femmes par le scandale public, des courtisanes par l'argent'; *Grand dictionnaire*, VI, 401. If Bernhardt can be placed in the demi-monde, she does not fit the class definition of a sculptor which frames Carpeaux in Wagner's account, 'clichés and controversies' notwithstanding. Wagner's model of writing about Carpeaux in the class terms she uses can, therefore, only guide my work on Bernhardt, not determine its outcome, as I think is the case in Easterday's work on women sculptors (where women who became sculptors were either from artisanal backgrounds or leisured aristocrats, and if neither, as was Bernhardt, 'eccentric'). I am grateful to Alex Parigoris for impressing the importance of the demi-monde on me with regard to Bernhardt's class and for her lively and enlightening discussion on a matter about which I knew very little. For literature on the demi-monde, see Joanna Richardson, *The Courtesans: The Demi-monde in Nineteenth-Century France* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967). The history of actresses, actresses as courtesans, and the social interchange between actresses and courtesans is discussed in F.

exceptional because her character was 'eccentric' (323). When discussing her work, this translates as: '[t]hough much of her portraiture could easily have been understood in such terms [beauty and morality], she also had a taste for the sordid and the bizarre', giving as an example a work referred to in an exhibition held in London in 1973 that included some sculpture by Bernhardt (*Sarah Bernhardt 1844-1923*, Ferrer's Gallery). This work is only mentioned in one contemporary source – Reynaldo Hahn's memoirs of his relationship with Bernhardt – almost certainly written during the period they cover because they appear as diary entries (1896-1904), but not published until 1928. Hahn writes that he saw Bernhardt working in her studio at boulevard Pereire on a work he describes as 'the head of a girl in a crab's claws', which he gives the title 'Le Baiser de la Mer'. Later references to this work are almost definitely sourced only from Hahn. I have yet to locate a work fitting this description. If it did exist, which is possible, it may never have been completed. Finished or not, the existence of this work (in the history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice) relies entirely on Hahn's memoirs, and therefore his description and accurate recall, as well as the assumption that his record of the event and the work was not changed before the memoirs were published twenty-eight years later. Because it is not located either as an object or in any other document (text or image), I am reluctant to regard this as a reliable example of a representative work in sculpture by Bernhardt.¹⁷¹

3.5 Becoming *This* Sculptor: Bernhardt's Training and Daily Studio Practice

W. J. Hemmings, *The Theatre Industry in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), esp. 202-08 and in Lenard R. Berlanstein, *Daughters of Eve: A Cultural History of French Theater Women from the Old Régime to the Fin de Siècle* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), esp. 95-102; 105-115. Berlanstein provides a more complex than usual argument about the conflicted class and social workings of the theatre in the nineteenth century in France: he argues that the theatre was both an 'institution of refined libertinism' and a 'school of morality'. Berlanstein also discusses Bernhardt in some depth asserting that gender not sexuality was the principal concern with regard to her perceived impact in social consciousness. However, he does refer to Félicien Champsaur's *Dinah Samuel* (1882) as a fictional account of Bernhardt's life in which 'all her [Bernhardt's] notorious exploits (including her lesbian relationship with the painter Louise Abbéma) were recounted in great detail' and therefore does allude to the question of sexuality after all. As I explained in the Introduction, I do not consider fictional accounts in this thesis in any depth.

¹⁷¹ Hahn, 'August 2nd [1900]', 62.

Bernhardt made sculpture; she had and used, consecutively, three well-equipped and spacious sculpture studios; she exhibited her sculpture; and she sold her work. She was a sculptor. What I want to establish here, despite so little record, is *how* this happened. What did she have to do, and what can be found out about what she did do, in order to make this happen? Instead of asking ‘was Sarah Bernhardt a “proper” sculptor?’ (according to a set of criteria by which others became sculptors), I ask how did Bernhardt conduct the necessary activities required to train and remain as a sculptor and in so doing keep alive, and keep living, her desire to make work? I will therefore track through, in sequence, the series of necessary activities required for full competence in this art and its practice aside from keeping a studio: drawing from casts and the life model, learning anatomical structures, working with models and sitters, modelling in clay, plaster casting, marble carving, dealing with full-time praticiens (plaster casters, marble carvers, bronze founders, terracotta manufacturers), buying materials, tools and other equipment, as well as, briefly, the ‘intellectual’ activities of reading, thinking, and speaking about sculpture, its principles and methods, the work of others, and wider issues of aesthetics. This involves thinking about Bernhardt’s relationship to each activity and thinking about the ways in which the practice and artworks of her teachers may have functioned to guide her.

Bernhardt’s Teachers: Roland Mathieu-Meusnier and Jules Franceschi

Therefore I recall where and with whom Bernhardt learnt sculpture in order to figure her relationship with her teachers. Including the Salon catalogue entry for Bernhardt in 1876 above has the function (amongst others) of naming those teachers as Roland Mathieu Meusnier (figs 3: 17-18) and Jules Franceschi (fig. 3: 19). Aspects of Bernhardt’s relationship with both have already been discussed in Chapter 2, for instance, when she began to train with either, or both, and if this might have taken place in the studio of either, or both, men. It is unlikely, as was the case with some sculptors who were in training, that she worked *for* them, i.e. as a praticien. The further question to ask is under what circumstances she first met both men. According to the story told, Bernhardt encountered Mathieu-Meusnier in 1869 when she sat for a portrait bust in a current, or recent, role, as Zanetto, the (male) Florentine troubadour

in François Coppée's play *Le Passant* (Salon 1870, plaster bust; not located). She sat again for one further portrait by Mathieu-Meusnier (*Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt, rôle de la reine dans Ruy Blas*, Salon 1872, silvered bronze medallion; not located) and he also made a marble bust of her son Maurice (Salon 1872; not located), often mistaken in subsequent literature, for instance, artist dictionaries, as a portrait of Bernhardt herself. There are no records of how Bernhardt first met Jules Franceschi nor of the daily conduct of this teaching relationship. The only record of any interaction between the two is a social one: a press report in *La Vie moderne* in March 1880 listed Franceschi as a guest at Bernhardt's son Maurice's sixteenth birthday party held at their home in avenue de Villiers.

Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, nineteenth-century French sculpture historian and curator (musée Rodin), writes that '[i]f the Salon guides, in the nineteenth century, almost always indicate, for each artist whose pupil they were, one needs to see this not as a simple mark of deference, but as a very strong link.' What exactly does Le Normand-Romain mean by this? She continues: 'a master had the role of educating [a young artist], but also of furnishing him with support, material and moral'.¹⁷² Furthermore, it was the reputation of the master's studio and his membership of powerful bodies in the art world (such as the Institut) that determined, in addition to exactly what a 'young artist' produced, and how, if they might further their training and career through winning prizes awarded at the École des beaux-arts, and, ultimately, the prix de Rome. Bernhardt was neither a 'young artist' nor eligible for any of these pedagogical reward systems. She was between twenty-four and twenty-eight when she began her training with both masters and, as has already been stated (but one always needs reminding), she could not attend the École des beaux-arts or the Académie française in Rome because she was female.

¹⁷² 'Si les livrets de Salon, au XIXe siècle, indiquent presque toujours en regard de chaque artiste de qui il a été l'élève, il ne faut pas y voir une simple marque de déférence mais l'expression d'un lien très fort'; 'son maître ayant pour rôle de le former, mais aussi de lui fournir un appui, matériel et moral', Le Normand-Romain, 'Les ateliers privés', *La Sculpture française au dix-neuvième siècle*, 32.

In Bernhardt's case, then, what was particular about the 'strong link' between her and Mathieu-Meusnier (for all the years she exhibited at the Salon) and Franceschi (only in 1874)? Both 'educated' her in the sense of providing her with training; but did they give her 'support, material and moral'? Did Bernhardt need this support? She was not young, was living independently in 1869-72 (rue de Rome), and already earning a living as a professional in a different line of work. It was not long, having begun her training as a sculptor, before she rented her own, purpose-built studio (boulevard de Clichy), probably in 1874. But she did not make sculpture instinctively, she was taught it. Therefore some level of support, material and moral, must have been offered by Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi, and gratefully received.

I want to consider Bernhardt's training with these two men neither as a question of 'influence', nor one of 'education'. Both imply, from their etymology, flow, but only in one direction. According to the *OED*, 'influence' is 'the action or fact of flowing in' from the Latin past participle of the verb *influerē*. This has several contexts: the 'human' which is defined as the 'exercise of personal power by human beings' [fifteenth to early nineteenth centuries] and the 'cosmic' or 'astrological', which is given as 'the supposed flowing or streaming from the stars or heavens of an ethereal fluid acting upon the character and destiny of men' [fourteenth to end of nineteenth century]. This then becomes 'the exertion of action of which the operation is unseen or insensible'. If, as has been argued, and argued about, a teacher (an artist) 'influenced' his pupil, causing her to work in a certain way, how, in the case of sculpture, could this be immaterial?¹⁷³ Or was the teacher's job something of the order

¹⁷³ Michael Baxandall argues that an active/passive formula: X influences Y (which here could read Mathieu-Meusnier [X] influenced his student Sarah Bernhardt [Y]), is, effectively, boring for art historians. Or as he puts it: 'it is right against the energy of the lexicon'; the vocabulary applicable to Y as the active force in an artistic relationship (I read this to include teaching) is 'much richer and more attractively diversified'. This lexicon runs, for him, as follows: 'draw on, resort to, avail oneself of, appropriate from, have recourse to, adapt, misunderstand, refer to, pick up, take on, engage with, react to, quote, differentiat oneself from, assimilate oneself to, assimilate, align oneself with, copy, address, paraphrase, absorb, make a variation on, revive, continue, remodel, ape, emulate, travesty, parody, extract from, distort, attend to, resist, simplify, reconstitute, elaborate on, develop, face up to, master, subvert, perpetuate, reduce, promote, resond to, transform, tackle ...'.

of 'influence's Other', because of the opposite directional flow, namely 'education'? This, where 'education' is defined as 'to bring out, elicit, develop, from a condition of latent, rudimentary, or merely potential existence', deriving from the Latin *educare* 'to lead out'. Is this what happened in the studios of Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi when Bernhardt went there and picked up and worked clay with her hands and modelling tool?

Due to space restriction, and because this is preliminary work on Bernhardt and training in sculpture in general in this period, I am unable to discuss 'influence' and 'education' as concepts in any greater depth with regard to how one (anyone) learnt the skill and skills required to make art. But rather than see either the flowing in or the flowing out of knowledge, skill, skills and so on, each as a singular or sole option with regard to how Bernhardt learnt to make sculpture, I want to suggest that, perhaps, what happened in Bernhardt's training situation was something else. Because she was older, because she could already paint and therefore draw, and because her employment in the theatre was itself a physical and 'expressive' occupation, her training as a sculptor might have been a question of *confluence*, a flowing in and out, at different moments, at the same moment, here and there, between her and her teachers. Whatever the answer in particular terms, in the quotidian details of how she learnt sculpture, and because there is virtually no archive on this period of her career, there are few 'answers', nevertheless, skill, knowledge, and practice (doing something again and again) were acquired, developed, no doubt discussed, and sustained. Work got made, and finished. As her teachers, Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi supported this, contributed towards making it happen.

Phew! But, I agree with Baxandall's repositioning of both participants and the wealth and breadth of activity he suggests occurs. See Michael Baxandall, 'Excursus against influence', in *Patterns of Intention: On the Historical Explanation of Pictures* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1985), 58-62. This is a huge topic and one that Baxandall does not specify as possible student-teacher relationship. He chooses as examples two painters (X = Cézanne; Y = Picasso) who did not interact personally but it was the work of one (Cézanne) that 'influenced' the work of the other (Picasso). This might imply that it is harder to argue against the 'influence' of Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi upon Bernhardt, but Baxandall's long lexicon and the fact that he suggests 'everyone will be able to think of other [vocabulary]' opens up the student-teacher relationship that I do consider here.

Why did Bernhardt chose these artists as her teachers? What exactly did they teach her, how were they able to teach her, how long did this go on for, did it change over time? These are the questions one wishes to ask of a student-teacher relationship. They cannot always be answered adequately, more so in the case of an artist whose archive is so scanty in respect of her training. But, I *can* ask, in order to get some result, other questions, and hope for a better answer: what did Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi *do* that could be construed as teaching Bernhardt how to make sculpture? How might Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi's practice and output have determined what Bernhardt thought was possible for her to achieve in her work as a sculptor? What did they *make* at the time Bernhardt chose them as her teachers? Why did she name both in 1874 and then only Mathieu-Meusnier thereafter? These questions 'flow' in towards, and meet, converge with the questions: what did Bernhardt *do* to learn, and therefore to make, sculpture?

Asking questions of the work of Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi as sculptors and as teachers requires some sense of their respective practices and oeuvres and the space and time to write this. I cannot, in any way, do justice, for now, to the long careers of both men, either in terms of their production as a whole or how they conducted their practice on a daily basis over time.¹⁷⁴ This is quite painful because one of the guiding principles (protocols) of this thesis is that, as nineteenth-century French sculpture historians, we really ought to consider – in terms of production and practice – the many individuals and works that make up what we call 'nineteenth-century French sculpture' and to strive to do so no longer in terms of a hierarchy of major/minor.¹⁷⁵ Instead, we should (yes, should) acknowledge the existence of a

¹⁷⁴ Another caveat is required: I include lists and illustrations of works by Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi but do not do close historical or analytical readings of these works. I also illustrate portrait photographs of both men, but, again, do not discuss these in depth. Both exercises are for future work.

¹⁷⁵ This has also turned out to be the case with the work of Louise Abbéma as a painter, and, slightly less significantly, with Georges Clairin. A further history of both artists, and therefore of painting itself, is prompted by this work on Bernhardt but I am unable to provide either in any depth because it would require far more space than I have left. In any case, for now, Bernhardt is and should remain in the centre of the spotlight because it is her sculpture practice that I discuss. So, this too is difficult because, despite having carried out extensive (but, I admit, not exhaustive) research on Abbéma's

huge amount of work by many artists and wonder how this work came into material form and, having done so, what its effect is in the history of nineteenth-century French art. This project has already been started and has its solid foundation in the huge amount of data collection and discursive processing carried out over the last thirty years by the curatorial staff in French museums, and the further work of other scholars. But it remains an abundant field for yet more study, even at the most 'basic' fact-finding level. It is a worthy one because sculpture produced in the nineteenth century still remains (for the most part) in its absolute material form, in museums, parks, streets, on buildings, in private homes, for us to see, and, so often, to admire, even love. This, I have learnt from seeking out and studying the work of Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi, as well as that of Bernhardt. Only some of what I have found, recorded, and thought about can be included here.¹⁷⁶

Under the terms of twentieth-century and (in the field of historical sculpture studies) still prevalent art historical hierarchy, Mathieu-Meusnier is the more 'ordinary' of Bernhardt's two teachers: overall he produced less work and had trained in the studio of a less well-known (now) sculptor, Augustin-Alexandre Dumont (1801-84).¹⁷⁷ Franceschi is a little less

practice, I am only able to consider a handful of her works and, for a brief time place her in the spotlight in 'A Pair of Vignettes on the Painting Practice of Louise Abbéma'. The same approach and process applies to Clairin, whose practice I considered in Chapter 2.

¹⁷⁶ I have also produced working catalogue raisonnés of the work of both men which indicate the extent and content of their work. For now, I do not include these documents but I do outline their content below.

¹⁷⁷ Gustave Vapereau claims that Mathieu-Meusnier also trained in sculpture with Charles François Nanteuil (known as Nanteuil-Leboeuf, 1792-1865); *Dictionnaire universel des contemporains: contenant toutes les personnes notables de la France et des pays étrangers* (Paris: Hachette, 1880), 1254. If Mathieu-Meusnier's entries in the Salon guides from 1843-are typical, providing teachers' names was not required until after 1850. Thereafter, apart from Dumont, he only ever included his former painting teacher, Charles Desains, and this on only one occasion, in 1857. This does not rule Nanteuil out as an advisor, but he is not listed as a teacher when this did become Salon regulations. Bellier and Auvray include mention of Desains; Bellier de la Chavignerie, Emile Auvray, and Louis Auvray, *Dictionnaire général des artistes de l'école française depuis l'origine des arts du dessin jusqu'en 1882 inclusivement peintres, sculpteurs, architectes, graveurs et lithographes*, 2 vols (Paris: Renouard, 1885), II, 53. Jules Salmson was also a student of Dumont and wrote in his autobiography that 'one of the most distinctive and precious qualities amongst all those of Augustin Dumont was that he was more proud of the successes of his students than of his own; he did not marry until he was eighty, he lived through his students, of which there were a considerable number, as if they were his own offspring [une des

‘ordinary’ because he learnt sculpture with the better known (now) sculptor François Rude (1784-1855). This is demonstrated quite simply by how often a sculptor is exhibited or their work (in private collections) circulated on the market. In choosing these two men as her teachers, Bernhardt entered into, and was offered, a nineteenth-century genealogy of sculpture making tracked through these named ateliers in Paris. This was one that dated back to the early century when Dumont and Rude themselves trained as sculptors.¹⁷⁸ Therefore, although she did not, could not, attend the ‘right’ school (École des beaux-arts), she learnt with people who had, and she learnt in a way (by attending an independent teaching studio) that was standard for her time.

Why Mathieu-Meusnier?

Only a few of the contemporary texts that cover Bernhardt’s sculpture practice (other than the Salon guides) mention that she was a pupil of Mathieu-Meusnier. All are retrospective. The earliest (that I have found so far) is the article in *Zigzags* (14 May 1876) when during a (probable) visit to Bernhardt’s studio the anonymous writer claims that ‘her teacher M.

qualities distinctives et rares entre toutes d’Augustin Dumont, c’était d’être plus fier des succès de ses élèves des siens propres; ne s’étant marié qu’à l’âge de quatre-vingts ans, il revivait en eux comme comme en sa progéniture et leur nombre est considerable]’. Salmson also mentions Mathieu-Meusnier as his fellow student in Dumont’s studio as someone who ‘used to be the master of Sarah Bernhardt [qui depuis était le maître de Sarah Bernhardt]’; 17, 16.

¹⁷⁸ For details of both training studios, see Le Normand-Romain, ‘L’Atelier Rude (1842-1852) and ‘L’Atelier Ramey-Dumont (1837-1847), in ‘Les ateliers privés’, *La Sculpture française au dix-neuvième siècle*, 32-40. LeNormand-Romain describes Ramey-Dumont’s studio as one that ‘contributed to training a large number of sculptors whose talent was solid and of whom the majority remained true to a neoclassicism which they made the ruling force in their lives [leur atelier ... avait contribué à former un grand nombre de sculpteurs au talent solide et dont la plupart resteraient fidèles à ce néo-classicisme dont ils avaient fait la règle de leur vie]’. Rude’s teaching methods are explained by a critique of Franceschi’s *Andromède* (Salon 1863) by Charles Yriarte in which Franceschi is praised for the work’s form as ‘a beautiful body of a woman in a beautiful movement [un beau corps de femme dans un beau mouvement]’ but not for his thinking, which would have provided instead a ‘sublime allegory of Antiquity, the symbol of superfluous effort and unsatisfied desires [l’allégorie sublime de l’Antiquité, le symbole des efforts superflus et des desires inapaisés]’; ‘Exposition des beaux-arts. Danaïde, sculpture de M. Franceschi’, *Le Monde illustré*, vol. 2 (96); cited in Le Normand-Romain, 38. According to Le Normand-Romain, Rude’s emphasis was heavily on anatomy and therefore ‘form’ (i.e. the body). In turn, both Dumont and Rude were students of Pierre Cartellier (1757-1831), of whom Mathieu-Meusnier made a marble bust in 1859, ordered by the State for the museum at Versailles.

Mathieu-Meusnier was there when I was shown in: it is he who now calls her “maestra”.¹⁷⁹

Further accounts that mention Mathieu-Meusnier as Bernhardt’s teacher (and none mention Franceschi) are infrequent and all tell the story in the same form with only slight variations.

This form is followed by Bernhardt herself in her first published account of her studentship in sculpture, which did not appear until 1897, as an interview. I reproduce her account as follows:

‘I was posing’, she said, ‘at the studio of Mathieu Meusnier. That excellent artist had to make my bust. He was modeling the clay, working it and reworking it without ever stopping. But that wasn’t it! I cheekily allowed myself to offer him some advice! He was immediately struck by the pertinence of my suggestions. “You would make a marvelous sculptor”, he assured me.

A new horizon had just opened up to me! That evening, coming back from the theatre, I went into my aunt’s room and woke the poor woman up just to let her know that I wanted to make sculpture. The very next day I made a medallion of her with which Mathieu Meusnier was both surprised and enchanted. Soon (in 1875) I sent something to the Salon’.¹⁸⁰

Needless to say the date given was not Bernhardt’s first Salon. Nor does this account substantiate any details of how, and how often, she attended lessons with Mathieu-Meusnier

¹⁷⁹ ‘Son professeur, M. Mathieu-Meusnier [sic], était là quand nous nous sommes présentés chez elle: il l’appelle maintenant: *maëstra*’, ‘L’Atelier de Sarah Bernhardt’, *Zigzags* (14 May 1876), 10. The most frequent term for a sculpture teacher in the nineteenth-century in France was ‘maître’ to complement the equivalent of ‘pupil [élève]’. In January 1876 the theatre critic Francisque Sarcey wrote of Bernhardt that ‘one fine day she woke up with the idea that she was in the wrong vocation, that she had been born a sculptor. She ordered some clay, took a dozen lessons and began to model busts and statues [Un beau jour, elle s’est éveillée avec cette idée qu’elle avait manqué sa vocation, i était née statuaire. Elle a demandé de la terre glaise, a pris une douzaine de leçons, et s’est mise à pétrir des bustes et des statues]’. He does not mention the teacher involved in giving the twelve lessons; Francisque Sarcey, ‘Sarah Bernhardt’, *Comédiens et comédiennes: la Comédie-Française* (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1876), 1-27 (24-25).

¹⁸⁰ ‘Je posais, dit-elle, chez Mathieu-Meusnier. Cet excellent artiste tenait à faire mon buste. Il pétrissait, touchait, retouchait sans cesse. Et ce n’était pas cela ! Je me permis effrontément de lui donner des conseils! Tout aussitôt il fut frappé de la justesse de mes observations. «Vous feriez un merveilleux sculpteur», m’assura-t-il. Un horizon nouveau venait de s’ouvrir ! Le soir, en rentrant du théâtre, j’allai dans la chambre de ma tante et réveillai la malheureuse femme pour lui déclarer que je voulais sculpter. Le lendemain même je fis son médaillon, dont Mathieu-Meusnier se montra surpris et enchanté. Bientôt (en 1875) j’envoyai quelque chose au Salon’, Daurelle, *Le Figaro* (22 September 1897), 4.

thereafter. It does not elaborate on the actual event taking place, namely the sitting for the bust and whether or not Bernhardt returned to Mathieu-Meusnier's studio for this purpose. In terms of deciding to 'be or become a sculptor', it does not explain 'why Mathieu-Meusnier'. This may or may not be an 'interview with Sarah Bernhardt' but it is the same, basic story told elsewhere. In a previous account of this encounter, in the English periodical *The Theatre* (1 June 1879), a different slant is added whereby Mathieu-Meusnier 'induced' Bernhardt to sit for him in 1869.¹⁸¹ But, again, this is not helpful (even if 'true') because it also does not explain why, if the impetus did come from Mathieu-Meusnier, he wanted to make Bernhardt's bust at this very early stage in her acting career (six years before Abbéma, who was an intimate, made a pendant medallion of Bernhardt's portrait of her). The scanty exchange reported by 'Sarah Bernhardt' in this interview (and others who tell the story elsewhere) is not a satisfying explanation of a relationship Le Normand-Romain called 'a strong link', even if this was only the student and teacher's first encounter.¹⁸²

This leaves the (desiring) scholar of sculpture history with a lack: how to explain the beginnings of such an important relationship. With little choice, and given such poor archival

¹⁸¹ The account in *The Theatre* is the earliest version I have so far tracked of this story. A later American monograph 'compiled from the most authentic sources' told the same version of the story almost word-for-word and claimed Francisque Sarcey, critic of *Le Temps* as the source; F. Ridgway Griffith, *The Authorised Edition of the Life of Sarah Bernhardt* (New York: Carleton, 1880), 17-18. Sarcey is not acknowledged in *The Theatre* but it is likely that the article there was copied from Sarcey given its similarities to Griffith's. Having consulted Sarcey 1876 account of Bernhardt, it is likely that the Mathieu-Meusnier story comes from another source. Pronier's biography provides the only reference to another text by Sarcey which would contain this type of biographical information, *Sarah Bernhardt: une plaquette* (Paris: Jouaust, 1878). Despite the stalwart efforts of the Document Supply Team, Brotherton Library, University of Leeds, and the instigation of a world-wide search on my behalf, as yet no international library has been located that holds this text. It is not held in the BNF. Nor is it available through the second-hand book market.

¹⁸² Versions of the same story are told in Clement, obtained through a questionnaire from Bernhardt, and another biographical account; Clara Erksine Clement, 'Sarah Bernhardt', *Women in the Fine Arts: From the Seventh Century BC to the Twentieth Century AD* [New York and Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1904], 41-43; and Henry Lapauze, 'Sarah Bernhardt en images', *Revue encyclopédique*, no. 73 (15 December 1893), 1241-68 (1264). Lapauze claims that Bernhardt went to thank Mathieu-Meusnier for having made a medallion of her, she asked him some questions, took her first lesson that same day, and so on. Having consulted all the references cited in Lapauze's bibliography, there is no obvious source for this variation on the story.

content, it is only by inference that other suggestions can be made as to why Bernhardt chose Mathieu-Meusnier as her teacher, and why he chose her as his student. Mathieu-Meusnier began his training in 1841 and first exhibited at the Salon in 1843.¹⁸³ Already in 1844, he won a third class medal (and because of this earned a state commission) for his ideal work *La Mort du jeune Viola* (marble, destroyed WWII). According to a document that he enclosed with a letter to the direction des Beaux-arts on 15 February 1879, Mathieu-Meusnier had begun to teach sculpture in his studio in 1848 where he had (had) 'a large number of pupils'.¹⁸⁴ None

¹⁸³ General biographical information on Mathieu-Meusnier provided here comes from his entry in Lami's *Dictionnaire des sculpteurs de l'école française au dix-neuvième siècle*, III, 410-16, which is, on the whole, the most reliable contemporary dictionary because it uses documentary material: the Archives nationales, Archives du Seine, and Salon guides. Bellier and Auvray (1885) is fairly reliable, but is probably only compiled from Salon guides. Other dictionaries, such as Vapereau (1880) are less reliable. He first exhibited at the Salon with the last name Meusnier in 1843, from 1844-49 as Mathieu-Meusnier, back to Meusnier until 1857 and from then on as Mathieu-Meusnier (with the exception of 1863 (back to Meusnier). When given, his first name varied, as Roland-Mathieu, Roland, Mathieu-R, Mathieu-Roland, and Rolland, not in itself that confusing but these variations in a name indicate how delicate the balance might be for a lesser known sculptor if her or his name is disrupted in this way. It seems likely from Mathieu-Meusnier's correspondence and signed works that he was consistent with the use of the hyphenated last name, 'Mathieu-Meusnier', although he signed his name 'MathieuMeusnier' with no obvious space nor a hyphen. These discrepancies may simply be bad copying on the part of the Salon guide publishers. I adopt the hyphenated form throughout. In his letters (as in his pre-printed business card) Mathieu-Meusnier almost always added 'statuaire' to his signature.

¹⁸⁴ 'Mr. Mathieu-Meusnier a eu un Atelier d'Elèves en 1848. Quantité d'élèves particuliers'. The document is a shorter version of another included in a letter Mathieu-Meusnier wrote to the direction des Beaux-arts (personal name of addressee illegible) aimed at promoting his work. In both he lists his principal works and where they are located; his 1844 medal and other awards; the number of Salons he has exhibited at and location of other exhibitions; his artistic affiliations (former elected vice-president of the Association d'artistes and former elected president of the Société libre des beaux-arts); in addition to his teaching studio. He also adds that he has donated works to the musée du Louvre, musée de Cluny, and the musée céramique de Sèvres. The letter that this accompanies is one soliciting work from the State-run ministre des Beaux-arts. In it Mathieu-Meusnier refers to himself as 'very unfavoured by the administration' and 'an outsider according to the regulations, not being a former student at the Académie in Rome and also because of his large output being composed of works not for the Administration [Je suis donc un irrégulier au point de vue réglementaire, n'étant pas d'une part Elève de l'académie de Rome et d'autre part mon grand bagage étant composé de travaux importants en dehors de l'Administration', emphasis in original]. Mathieu-Meusnier argues that the few busts the state has commissioned from him have earned him no more than 'scraps of bread [le strict morceau de pain]'. He also points out that he paid for all the preliminary work on his two earlier, ideal works that were eventually bought by the state (*Laïs* and *Viala*), out of his own pocket and that the marble versions as sold to the state were done so at 'more than modest prices

are named in this or any other archival document that I have located. I have not been able, yet, to conduct a full survey of the Salon guides from 1848 in order to establish such a list. However, Mathieu-Meusnier did teach another female pupil in 1857 and again in the 1880s (she lived in England in the interim). Known latterly as Gustave Haller, she too was a sculptor

[des prix plus que modesties]'; 'Mathieu-Meusnier to Mon cher Monsieur [name illegible, direction des Beaux-arts]', 15 February 1879, AN F21 238, dossier 35, 'Louis', Académie de musique (Opéra). This letter and the list of works and achievements is included in the dossier on *Louis* commissioned in July 1879 and paid for in full by April 1880. It is difficult to tell if Mathieu-Meusnier was as unfavoured as he claims without analyzing a number of folders for other artists, for which I have insufficient resources. Mathieu-Meusnier had used this tactic before to solicit work from the fine arts administration. In c. March-April 1873 he included a similar list of his major works and achievements as a sculptor but does not refer to his teaching; AN, F 21 238, dossier 28: M. Mathieu-Meusnier, 84 rue d'Assas - / 73, buste en marbre, 'Geoffroy St Hilaire' / 1872: 30 avril. 2400F (École normale), 'Mathieu Meusnier / Statuaire / né à Paris en 1824'. The archive on Mathieu-Meusnier in the artists files at the Archives Nationales (series F21) which concerns state purchases of works by sculptors (and painters) has several such solicitations for work, which appear to the modern eye as 'begging letters'. Similar letters from Abbéma soliciting good reviews of her work at exhibition in order to secure sales are found in other archives. See, for instance, INFC, Autographes d'artistes français du XVe au XIX siècle and this might be reason to credit Mathieu-Meusnier with the need to solicit work in the first place. Given that prices for busts commissioned by the state did not rise during 1854-76 (according to the records of his commissions), it seems that Mathieu-Meusnier's reasons for complaining and his plea for work were justified. His need to solicit work from the State in this way also indicates that his was a small-scale studio despite his private commissions. There are many such letters with similar requests in the dossiers on Mathieu-Meusnier's work in the Archives Nationales in Paris: the first is dated July 1852, and the last October 1895, when he had clearly been in poor health for some years, visible from the deterioration in his handwriting in 1890-91, and months before his death on 31 January 1896. Without comparative study, it is hard to say if Mathieu-Meusnier was as hard done by as he seems to claim or whether this was the rhetoric deployed to solicit work. His was not one of the large-scale studios of the nineteenth century, as was that of Rude, Carpeaux, or Rodin, who had commercially successful studios, and therefore it is possible that he really struggled to make a living. Again, this would require economic analysis of his output and comparison to other sculptors. I have not yet located another archive on Mathieu-Meusnier that would give a fuller picture of his output because, as he states in his letter to the fine arts administration in February 1879 which is evident from analysis of his collected works, his work for the State was matched by a substantial number of private transactions. I have recorded 159 separate works by Mathieu-Meusnier (including plaster models of a later marble or bronze work, but not multiple copies of reduced works). Of these, fifteen were definitely private commissions, thirty-seven were probably private commissions, and a further three (all busts) may have been either speculative works or private commissions (35% of his output). The remainder of his works was commissioned or bought later by the State, commissioned by other institutions, or funded by subscription (65%). I have viewed thirty-three works by Mathieu-Meusnier in Paris and other locations in France.

and actress (working as 'Mlle Valérie' at the Comédie-Française 1853-58).¹⁸⁵ Mathieu-Meusnier made her bust in marble, possibly as a private commission from the sitter or as a gift (it is not in the collection of the Comédie-Française), which was exhibited at the Salon in 1855 as *Mlle. Valérie de la Comédie-Française, rôle de Marinette du Dépit amoureux*. This is highly significant for Bernhardt because not all teaching studios in Paris in 1869-72, when she began her training, took on women. Access to a studio that did, is one reason, although so far never stated openly, why Bernhardt must have chosen, indeed, had to choose, Mathieu-Meusnier. Perhaps (and this is pure conjecture, as I have yet to establish a known link between Bernhardt and Haller), given that both women had worked in the theatre before learning sculpture, Haller recommended the studio of Mathieu-Meusnier to Bernhardt, or, someone who knew that she had trained with him in the 1850s informed Bernhardt that he took on women students.¹⁸⁶ I think it unlikely that Bernhardt's interest in making sculpture would have sprung up from only one sitting in 1869, despite the story that circulated later. To substantiate my suggestion would require much further investigation and involve disputing the assertion that the sitting was either a one-off, chance encounter or one only 'induced' by Mathieu-Meusnier, and I have currently not located any documentation that would support it. For

¹⁸⁵ Gustave Haller was born Wilhemine-Joséphine Simonin in 1836 and her first exhibit at the Salon was shown under the name 'Valérie-Simonin' (no first name) in 1857, when she was listed Mathieu-Meusnier as her teacher. This was a marble medallion entitled 'tête de bacchante'. After some time spent in England, she returned to Paris and exhibited again at the Salon from 1880, still giving Mathieu-Meusnier as her teacher. She continued to exhibit at the Salon until 1888. She also wrote art historical and art critical texts on painting. Both her daughters trained as painters and the elder, Consuelo Fould (b. 1865), exhibited a portrait entitled 'Mme Mathieu-Meusnier' at the Salon in 1885. Her younger daughter, Georges Achille Fould (b. 1868), exhibited a portrait of Rosa Bonheur (with whom both sisters were friends) in 1893 and continued to show her work at the Salon until 1914; Thieme Becker, 247-48. Her second husband, Prince Georges Stirbey bought Mathieu-Meusnier's marble statue *La Littérature satirique* (Salon 1873) which was later ordered by the State in plaster (1883) and then marble (1885) for the Cour carrée at the Louvre. I am very grateful to the work of Anastasia Easterday for providing me with the initial information about Haller as Mathieu-Meusnier's student. I am aware of one further student, Pierre Caron, for whom Mathieu-Meusnier requested a 'student card', presumably for entry to the Louvre, in 1868; INFC, *Autographes d'artistes français du XVe au XIXe siècle*, 1972 – A. 160, Mathieu-Meusnier to le comte de Nieuwerkerke, *supérieur des Beaux-arts, directeur du musées Impériaux*, 2 April 1868.

¹⁸⁶ Another conjecture is that it may have been Franceschi who made such a recommendation.

now, however, it is a possibility that Bernhardt already had it in mind to learn sculpture when she sat for Mathieu-Meusnier for her first portrait in sculpture at some point during 1869.¹⁸⁷

If not through Gustave Haller, then other shared social and professional contacts in Parisian theatres may have existed between Bernhardt and her teacher. This too could be the route by which they were introduced and from which the portrait bust and the teaching arrangement evolved. Mathieu-Meusnier had by 1869 already produced eleven busts of theatre professionals (actors, dramatists, composers), including that of Haller. Of these, five were public commissions and one a funerary monument. By the time Bernhardt began working at the Comédie-Française in 1862 (debut in *Iphigénie*, 11 August), Mathieu-Meusnier's substantial portrait bust of the eighteenth-century dramatist, Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-99), had been installed in the foyer of the Theatre where it is currently available for viewing by the public. Mathieu-Meusnier made this bust, perhaps speculatively, in 1853 and donated it to the theatre the following year.¹⁸⁸ In 1859 the Théâtre Gymnase commissioned a bronze bust of one of their major actors, Jean-Marie-Joseph Geoffroy (1813-83), and Bernhardt also worked there in 1863-64. This is tenuous link, but does make it possible, either that Bernhardt was aware of Mathieu-Meusnier's work because she had the opportunity to see it when she went to work at either theatre, or that an introduction was made by a mutual colleague, friend, or acquaintance in any of these institutional or social theatre-based environments.¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁷ The other question that this story raises is, did Bernhardt really only attend one sitting for her bust as Zanetto? This seems highly unlikely.

¹⁸⁸ His reasons for donating the bust are not explained in any source I have found. Another portrait of a dramatist, *Bust of Jean-Bernard Rosier* (1844, bronze), may also have been in the Comédie-Française, but this is not certain. According to an annotated photocopy of a photograph of a bronze version of this bust, it was 'rescued from a fire at the Comédie-Française in 1900'. I have yet to pursue this line of enquiry.

¹⁸⁹ Mathieu-Meusnier also made a bust of the poet and dramatist, Louis Bouilhet (1822-69) for the Odéon at some point before 1879 when he listed it in his 'Principaux travaux', but I have not been able to determine if this work is still in place in the theatre and whether it was originally marble or terracotta. Bernhardt worked at the Odéon from c. August 1866 to c. October 1872. A terracotta version of Bouilhet's bust was donated to the musée des beaux-arts in Rouen by Mathieu-Meusnier's

What did Mathieu-Meusnier do?

What did Bernhardt see when she walked into Mathieu-Meusnier's studio at 54 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs in the Montparnasse quartier of Paris at some point in 1869?¹⁹⁰ Was she already aware of his existing work in the theatres where she had been working (Comédie-Française and Gymnase)? Did she know of his work in the musée de Versailles or in and outside the Louvre, for instance *La Mort de Laïs* in the jardin des Tuileries or *L'Orfèvrerie* in one of the niches in the Cour carrée – all spaces that she had access to?¹⁹¹ Had she seen his work at the Salon? There are no records of Bernhardt's early viewing of, or thoughts on, sculpture, prior to the Salon review she wrote for the Saturday edition of the Parisian daily, *Le Globe*, in May 1879.¹⁹² But, even if Bernhardt did chose Mathieu-Meusnier as her teacher solely on a

son, Georges Meusnier, in 1892, but when I visited the museum in July 2005 the curators were unable to locate it and it appears as if it may have been destroyed or stolen.

¹⁹⁰ Analysis of the Salon guides and Mathieu-Meusnier's correspondence in the Archives Nationales reveals that he provided a number of addresses from 1843 until 1895, the year before his death. All were located in Montparnasse, an area favoured by sculptors, and were referred to him in his correspondence as his studio, although he may also have lived at these addresses. The following list is given using year and month as available from both the Salon guides and correspondence with the Beaux-arts administration, and are as follows: May 1843 – 35 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs; May 1848 to May 1853 – 63 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs; May 1855 to June 1869 – 54 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs; January 1870 to c. October 1872 – 83 rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs; March 1873 to May 1888 – 84 rue d'Assas (with, on some occasions, 2 avenue Vavin, 6 avenue Vavin, or 6 passage Vavin added [this is a cross-street with rue d'Assas]; May 1889 to May 1890 – 87 rue d'Assas; May 1891 – 84 rue d'Assas; May 1893 to May 1894 – 10 rue du Regard; May 1895 – 7 rue du Bagueux; October 1895 – 10 rue du Regard. Falguière had his studio from c. 1870 until his death not far from Mathieu-Meusnier in the rue d'Assas at number 68.

¹⁹¹ For a history of the statues installed in the Cour carrée, see Anne Pinget, 'Le décor de la Cour carrée du Louvre: le statues des niches 1851-1901', in *La Scultura nel XIX secolo* [Comité international d'histoire de l'art: atti del XXIV congresso internazionale di storia dell'arte], ed. Horst W. Janson (Bologna: CLUEB, 1984), 119-42. This volume as a whole is an excellent resource on the field.

¹⁹² Bernhardt's alleged method of viewing in order to write this review is related, again in a very disparaging way, by Clément. A later article about the Comédie-Française's visit to London in June 1879 appeared in *Le Globe* allegedly written by Bernhardt under the pseudonym 'Raoul Mosca' [mosca = 'fly' in Spanish, i.e. someone who 'buzzes' around] which conveys in a sardonic, but fairly light-hearted tone the poor facilities of the Gaiety Theatre in London and the inadequate payment to the actors. There is one reference to Bernhardt in the terms in which she was categorized in fumiste writing (*Les Hydropathes* etc), as being very thin, however, this was not unknown in other texts authored or collaborated on by Bernhardt. The text is illustrated by nine drawings by Abbéma, which would suggest that this may have been a collaborative effort by both women; articles on Bernhardt

whim, or overnight, as the story claims (but which is very unlikely), she would still have had to think through what this sculptor could offer her in terms of training. How better to judge this than to look around his studio?

There are also no records of the topography and contents of this or any other studio that Mathieu-Meusnier occupied during his career: no photographs, no descriptions by Mathieu-Meusnier himself or a visitor. I do not know if he had more than one room, if the walls were splashed with plaster, like those described by Edmond de Goncourt in Rodin's studio on the nearby boulevard de Vaugirard in 1886.¹⁹³ Did he have plaster casts for his students to draw from? Did he keep anatomical models? Did he store his past works on shelves as Bernhardt was to do in boulevard Pereire? When she went there were there works in progress on modelling stools and trestles as one sees in images of other sculptors' studios? What tools did Mathieu-Meusnier have, what kind of access equipment – ladders, movable platforms, old crates? Where did he store clay to keep it moist? All this I cannot know in the absence of such records. But I can suggest that, because he had made a considerable number of works by 1869 (fifty-eight), the evidence of these might have been present in the form of drawings, maquettes, plaster casts, and works in progress. This must have been the case because Mathieu-Meusnier had worked continuously (even if sporadically, by his own account) as a sculptor since at least 1841.

Hypothetically, then, the existence and sight of representative elements of his sculpture practice might have prompted Bernhardt into making the sculpture she did. Not because Mathieu-Meusnier made a bust of X, and therefore Bernhardt made a bust of Y, 'copying'

(but not by her) were often illustrated by Abbéma, e.g. in *La Vie moderne*. It is difficult to confirm one way or the other if Bernhardt did write this text, but, in any case, the author does not write about art; Raoul Mosca, 'La Comédie-Française à Londres', *Le Globe: édition littéraire du samedi*, no. 8 (5 July 1879), 113-23. For Bernhardt's review of the 1879 Salon, see below 385-86. I am, again, so grateful to Richard Jacques who went to the BNF on my behalf and very kindly copied down both articles by hand on his day off.

¹⁹³ Edmond de Goncourt, journal entry '17 March 1886', cited in Albert E. Elsen, *In Rodin's Studio: A Photographic Record of Sculpture in the Making* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1980). Jules Salmson described his first studio as a 'simple grenier' that he shared with two other sculptors; 30.

what her teacher had made, but because she ‘copied’ *how* her teacher had made work. The techniques and skills that Mathieu-Meusnier had already mastered in his twenty-eight years as a sculptor could, and were to be, passed on to her. In 1869 Mathieu-Meusnier made a plaster bust of Bernhardt in *Le Passant* (not located). For this to happen, an exchange of time took place, the sitter remained in one place and was observed, a portrait was begun, finished, and exhibited the following year at the Salon. But this sitting alone was not the fundamental basis for the teaching relationship that Bernhardt recorded in the Salon guide in 1874 and every year she exhibited thereafter. Bernhardt wanted to make sculpture, Mathieu-Meusnier, as a mature, practising sculptor and experienced teacher of sculpture, wanted to and knew how to instruct her. Compromised by the almost complete absence of any records of the teaching process, the chief resources I have in order to discuss this are the material products of Mathieu-Meusnier’s knowledge and skill, his works in sculpture. This is supported by documentary evidence in which his teaching is mentioned very briefly but which mainly concerns works commissioned by the Beaux-arts administration (Imperial or Republican) and aspects of their execution, for instance the provision of marble blocks from the state ‘dépôt de marbres’ and Mathieu-Meusnier’s employment of a praticien (marble carver) named Milan.

I have therefore selected a group of representative works by Mathieu-Meusnier, made mostly before, or by 1869 (and one later example), of which there may have been evidence (in the forms outlined above) in his studio and from which Bernhardt could learn about and how to make sculpture. I have organized this within a table providing the titles, dates, form, medium, destination, current location (all if known) of each work, and brief notes on their significance within the history of Mathieu-Meusnier’s practice and for the purposes of Bernhardt learning sculpture from him. I have assumed, from reading Bernhardt’s (admittedly slim) account of making the model for *Après la tempête* in 1874, that she continued to seek advice from Mathieu Meusnier for some time once she rented and worked in her own studio from c. 1874.

However, in order to answer the question, what did Bernhardt see when she walked into Mathieu-Meusnier’s studio of the sitting for her bust, I emphasize the period up to 1869.

Within the notes section I reference the archival evidence of his dealings (commissions and

requests for commissions) with the Beaux-arts administration in order to indicate how the daily life and work of this, 'ordinary', sculptor might have figured within the larger field of nineteenth-century French sculpture and the significance of this for Bernhardt as his student. At times appearing to be successful (winning a medal at the Salon in 1844, having several works on his order books in a single year), at others hard-pressed, the evidence of this archival material suggests, quite simply, that Mathieu-Meusnier was 'making a living' doing a job for which he himself had spent some time training and to which he was committed because of the creative opportunities it provided.¹⁹⁴

I have discovered the following information rather late in the day (21 May 2007), namely that the author of a practical guide to making sculpture, Karl Robert (*Traité pratique du modelage et de la sculpture*, 1889) was Georges Meusnier (b. 1848), the son of Mathieu-Meusnier. Georges Meusnier trained as a painter and exhibited at the Salon under the pseudonyms Georges Karl-Robert and Karl Robert from 1875. His text is a thorough and straightforward guide through method, material, and history and he provided practical advice on setting up a studio and the different forms of sculpture. He also includes a chapter on 'La Nature' which is sub-titled 'Enseignement de F. Rude' suggesting that the teaching methods deployed by Rude may have been familiar to him, perhaps through his father's teaching methods, which he must have observed. The likelihood that this text was informed by Mathieu-Meusnier's teaching methods and his practice is very high, especially given that Robert dedicates the book thus: 'A mon père, Mathieu-Meusnier, statuaire'. This text is an absolutely vital link to Bernhardt's experience as a student of sculpture. Georges Meusnier may have carried out some sculpture training in his father's studio but he did not follow this as a career and therefore this book is likely to have been written from observations made in Mathieu-Meusnier's studio and by seeking advice from his father. This means that this book might well be an outline of exactly how Bernhardt had learnt sculpture in the studio of Mathieu-Meusnier twenty years before it

¹⁹⁴ Another means of making a living was through studio sales. Mathieu-Meusnier organized a studio sale in December 1864, exhibiting at Arondel when he included five works in sculpture (unspecified); Frits Lugt, *Répertoire des catalogues de ventes publiques, intéressant l'art ou la curiosité, tableaux, dessins, estampes, miniatures, sculptures, bronzes* etc, 4 vols (La Haye : Nijhoff, 1938-87), III, 49.

was published. The text includes some illustrations but none are of Mathieu-Meusnier's studio. This handbook text requires further and extensive analysis.

Table 2 Representative works by Mathieu-Meusnier

| Fig. no. | Exhibition date or /and date of work form and medium | Title of work dimensions original location | Significance for Bernhardt's production | Current location other relevant history |
|--------------|--|--|--|--|
| figs 3:20-21 | Salon 1843 [1842] marble bust | <i>Bust of Pierre Hyacinthe Azais</i> 80 x 50 x 41 cm Musée de Versailles | Mathieu-Meusnier entered the École des beaux-arts and Dumont's studio in 1841. <i>Azais</i> was his Salon debut, giving him twenty-six years of exhibiting experience when Bernhardt sat for him in 1869. | Musée national du château de Versailles (in storage) |
| fig. 3:22 | Salon 1844 bronze bust | <i>Bust of Jean-Bernard Rosier</i> H 26 cm Founder: not known ?Comédie-Française until 1900 | First established link between Mathieu-Meusnier and theatre sitters. | Private collection, Béziers |
| fig. 3:23-24 | Salon 1849 plaster model Salon 1850 marble statue | <i>La Mort de Laïs</i> 120 x 164 x 66 cm Jardin des Tuileries, Installed 1853 | A large-scale, ideal work ordered from the Salon by the State Knowledge of this might have encouraged Bernhardt to produce work of this ambition and size and think about approaching the State for commissions. She could learn that exhibiting at the Salon not only established reputation as a sculptor, it was a means to sell one's work. | Still in jardin des Tuileries; but may not be in its original site |

| | | | | |
|-----------|---------------------------|--|---|---|
| No image | 1853 [not exhibited] | <i>Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais</i> , (1732-99) H 80 cm Foyer of Comédie-Française | Retrospective portrait of dramatist. Donated by Mathieu-Meusnier to the Comédie-Française in 1854 (reason unknown). Bernhardt likely to know of him as a sculptor because she worked at the Comédie-Française in 1862-63. | Just inside entrance doors to Comédie-Française |
| No image | Salon 1855 marble bust | <i>Mlle. Valérie de la Comédie Française, rôle de Marinette du Dépit amoureux</i> dimensions not known Original location not known | Portrait of another actress and sculpture student of Mathieu-Meusnier. Sets a precedent for him to teach Bernhardt. | Not located |
| fig. 3:25 | Salon 1859 marble bust | <i>Pierre Cartellier</i> (1757-1831) 85 x 72 x 44 cm Musée du Louvre | Mathieu-Meusnier solicited this work from the Administration on the basis that 'Cartellier was, with Chaudet, the greatest sculptor of the First Empire and his bust is not in the museum [Louvre]' (AN F21 97, dossier 55, 'Cartellier musée du Louvre', Mathieu-Meusnier to directeur des Beaux-arts, 15 December 1856). Ordered by the State: 18 May 1857, completed 5 January 1859, paid 2400 francs. Bernhardt would be aware of the need to solicit work and market her work. Cartellier was Dumont's teacher who was Mathieu-Meusnier's teacher. Demonstrates the importance of a genealogy of sculptors as teachers and students. | Musée national du château de Versailles |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|---|--|
| figs 3:26- 27 | Salon 1859 bronze statuette reduction(s) made for sale to domestic market | <i>La Mort de Laïs</i> 25.4 x 47 x 37 cm Founder not known Prob. for domestic market; prices not known | Reductions in bronze and marble made for commercial sale or as gifts This encourages Bernhardt to think in terms of wider markets than State commissions or purchases, especially useful for a woman sculptor who did not have access to the same art market networks as a male sculptor. | Different sized copies have appeared at auction in July 1997 and May 2000 |
| fig. 3:28 | Salon 1868 [1867] marble statue of female allegorical figure | <i>l'Orfèverie</i> H 195 cm Niche in Cour carrée, Louvre | Mathieu-Meusnier had exhibited a plaster version of this work at the Salon in 1861 which was ordered by the State on 15 March 1866, completed 17 August 1867, paid 5000 francs. Mathieu-Meusnier had this work photographed in situ by professional photographer and neighbour, Lambert-Thibouast, jne The carving was executed by his praticien, Milan, at two addresses: boulevard de Sèvres ancient 37 [now boulevard Garibaldi] and 65 boulevard de Grenelle. It was conducted in two stages, 'mise au point' [pointing] and 'épannelage' [blocking out]; Mathieu-Meusnier requested payment subject to inspection of the work at each stage. He used the services of Milan (who continued at boulevard de Grenelle) for statues and busts until 1880 for his last work bought by the State. He appears to have finished the carving himself at Milan's studio, rather than his own. He employed another praticien on one occasion (1876): Fouquert, 90 boulevard de Vaugirard. Bernhardt also employed a praticien for marble carving, Ernest Bouillot on boulevard de Vaugirard. | Still in situ; in reasonable condition |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|---|---|--|--|
| fig. 3:29- 32 | 1868 [not exhibited] stone monument with allegorical figures and marble portrait medallion | <i>Monument à Lambert Thibouost</i> [d. 10 July 1867], inc. <i>La Comédie et La Littérature</i> 208.5 x 146 cm; medallion Ø 40, D 7 from frontal plane Montmartre cemetery, div. 27 | Dramatist, recently deceased. Ordered 30 November 1867, completed 1 year later. Funds raised by subscription. Mathieu-Meusnier designed the entire monument. This was a recent work in 1869 and therefore the models or plaster casts may have still been in the studio and used as teaching aides when Bernhardt attended lessons. Funerary monuments of this complexity were good experience for a sculptor and an alternative source of income to State purchases and commercial sales. | Still in situ and in good condition |
| fig. 3:33 | 1880 marble | <i>Bust of Félicitien David</i> 86 x 62 x 43 cm Musée de Versailles | Ordered by the State 2 March 1880 and completed and paid for on 7 December 1880 for 2800 francs. This work is significant for the fineness of the marble carving and was executed in the same year at Bernhardt's <i>Ophélie</i> . | Musée national du château de Versailles (in storage) |

Why Franceschi?

Bernhardt only once recorded Jules Franceschi (1825-93) as her teacher in the Salon guide, at her debut exhibition in 1874. There are no other contemporary records of this teaching relationship, including in Bernhardt's own retrospective accounts of her sculpture practice (1897 interview and autobiography). Franceschi's absence from the Salon guides after 1874 mean that it is reasonable to figure him as a secondary teacher to Mathieu-Meusnier, although the exact conditions of Bernhardt's teaching relationship with him are difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain. Because of this, and the additional lack of any narrative concerning Franceschi, I cannot devote the same level of attention to his oeuvre and his studio practice. Nevertheless, Bernhardt did chose him as a teacher and it is necessary to consider why, and how this brief teaching relationship might have been conducted. Absence in the archive works against what it is possible to state with certainty about why Bernhardt chose Franceschi, and why he offered her sculpture lessons. I have to resort, even more so in this instance, to circumstantial evidence in order to make suggestions about this.¹⁹⁵

Like Mathieu-Meusnier, Franceschi took on female students, including his daughters, Marie Jeanne Franceshi (1864-1944, later Marie-Jeanne Cranney-Franceschi) who exhibited at the Salon from 1883-1907 and Marguerite Franceschi (no dates; later Marguerite Poiré) who exhibited at the Salon 1883-85. Cranney-Franceschi won an honourable mention in 1889. In c. 1890 the sculptor Anne de Charonnet (1869-1926) was also a student of Franceschi: she either worked in, or rented a studio near to his at 17 rue de la Rochefoucauld in the north of

¹⁹⁵ Franceschi is listed in some contemporary dictionaries as one of Bernhardt's sculpture teachers but this information is most likely gained only from the Salon guides.

the city, the street where Franceschi was based from 1866.¹⁹⁶ This was about half a kilometre from Bernhardt's first studio on the boulevard de Clichy (c. 1874-76).¹⁹⁷

What did Franceschi do?

Franceschi appears to have produced a greater volume of work than Mathieu-Meusnier; certainly his surviving works far outnumber those of Mathieu-Meusnier, but this may be due to the fact that many more of his plaster maquettes and full-size casts survive.¹⁹⁸ This is thanks to the foresight of his wife, Emma Fleury, who donated a number of these to the musée des beaux-arts in Troyes in 1900 (they currently own thirty-two, see above, 264). Another factor may be the possibility that Franceschi employed studio assistants, which Mathieu-Meusnier did not. Franceschi had received two Salon awards: a third class medal in 1861 for his funerary bronze statue, [Miecislav] *Kamienski tué à Magenta* (figs 3: 35-37; still in situ, the tomb

¹⁹⁶ Franceschi had a number of other studios listed with dates here. In 1848: 12 rue du Battoir-Saint-André; 1849: 14, bis, rue de Seine-Saint-Germain; 1850-52: 10 rue de Laferrière; 1853-59: 21 rue de Bréda; 1861-63: 11 chemin de ronde des Martyrs [also given as 11 boulevard des Martyrs, chemin de ronde]; 1866-68: 32 rue de La Rochefoucauld [also given as rue de Larocheffoucauld]; 1869 onwards: 17 rue de La Rochefoucauld.

¹⁹⁷ For Anne de Charonnet, see: *Hommage à quatre sculpteurs oubliés: Marguerite Syamour, 1857-1945, Anne de Chardonnet, 1869-1926, René de Chateaubrun, 1875-1942, Georges Laëthier, 1875-1955*, exh. cat. (Besançon: musée des beaux-arts et d'archéologie de Besançon, 1996), 39; and Christiane Dotal, 'Anne de Chardonnet (1869-1926): sculpteur dauphinois oublié', in *La Pierre et l'état: patrimoine de l'Isère, évocations* (Grenoble: Presse universitaire de Grenoble, 1995), 23-31.

¹⁹⁸ I have identified 282 separate works by Franceschi from documentary sources. Another reason for such a large figure is that a list was supplied to the Documentation service at the musée d'Orsay by Franceschi's granddaughter in 1985 and this gives ninety-one works not identified elsewhere. Some may be duplicates (for instance because full names are supplied whereas private commissions exhibited at the Salon often only included the initials of the subject of a portrait). Duplicates are also difficult to identify because so many works are undated in these records and I have not yet sought the Franceschi family archive which may explain more. Although I have compiled a catalogue of works for Franceschi in order to reach this figure, I have not subjected it to the same level of scrutiny as I have that of Mathieu-Meusnier (and obviously Bernhardt). It is, of course, possible that Franceschi did produce this number of works, given a career that lasted fifty-two years and considerable success with sales. As an indicator of the market value of Franceschi's work in the nineteenth century, in the sale of the contents of his studio after death his works apparently fetched the same prices as those of Carrier-Belleuse; Anon., 'Atelier Franceschi', *Le Bulletin de l'art*, no. 39 (23 December 1899), 316. More works by Franceschi than Mathieu-Meusnier come on the market now, suggesting that he was more able to benefit from a demand for reduced versions of public works, given he had produced more than Mathieu-Meusnier in the first place. I have viewed twenty works by Franceschi in Paris and other locations in France.

monument in Montmartre cemetery also includes a stele, cushion and head of Christ signed 'P. Miglioretti, Milan') and an unspecified medal in 1864. By 1870 he was exempt from Salon jury selection. Franceschi began his training with Rude at the *École des beaux-arts* in c. 1841 and exhibited at the Salon from 1848, giving him thirty-three years experience as a sculptor in 1874. Franceschi had also, by this time, produced a number of public works for churches, the gare du Nord, and the exterior of the new Louvre, again sites that Bernhardt had access to if she wished to assess his oeuvre before negotiating lessons in sculpture from him.

In 1862 Franceschi and the Comédie-Française actress Emma Fleury (1836/37-1917) were married. Fleury (whose mother or aunt was a painter) worked at the theatre from 1856-78 thus overlapping with both Bernhardt's spells there (1862-63 and 1872-80).¹⁹⁹ In 1874 the Comédie-Française owned at least two busts by Franceschi (the dramatist, *Bust of François Ponsard*, marble, 1869 and the actor and Bernhardt's teacher, *Bust of Regnier*, marble, 1874). Therefore, as with Mathieu-Meusnier, Bernhardt would again have been exposed to her teacher's work in this distinct professional environment. It may be that, as a colleague at the theatre, Fleury recommended her husband to Bernhardt had she shown an interest in training as a sculptor. Franceschi made further portrait busts of Bernhardt's colleagues at the Comédie-Française (*Busts of Julia Bartet, Sophie Croizette, Mlle Reichenberg, Gustave Worms*) and of others whom Bernhardt knew, or may have known, (the *Busts of Henriette [or Collette] Dumas* and *Marie Dumas*, wife and daughter respectively of Alexandre Dumas, fils, *Mme Escalier*, possibly the wife of Félix Escalier, architect of her home at avenue de Villiers; and the child, *Jean Coquelin*, possibly the son of her colleague Coquelin cadet. Unfortunately, no dates are

¹⁹⁹ According to her entry in the *DBF*, Fleury was born in 1837 of 'creole' parents, orphaned at the age of four, and brought up by her aunt who was a painter. She studied acting in London in 1852 and on her return to Paris, played at the Odéon, toured to Holland with Régnier [never cited with first name], and, again, back in Paris played at the Gymnase and entered the Comédie-Française on 13 May 1856. This is sourced from 'Gallois, *Biogr. contemp. des artistes*, 100', which I have not consulted. See Roman d'Amat, 'Emma Fleury', *DBF*, XIV, 39-40. Her birth date of 1836 and the claim that it was her mother (Catherine Augustine Fleury, 1810-86) who was a painter is found in Anon., 'Jacqueline J. Duché' [Franceschi's granddaughter and a graphic artist], *Biblioteca dei miei ragazzi* <<http://www.bibliothequedesuzette.com/BMR/DUCHE.htm>> [11 May 2007], paras 3-5 of 21.

recorded for any of these works, therefore it is difficult to say if she had seen them before 1874 and these works themselves were the recommendation to choose Franceschi as a teacher, or if his abilities as a sculptor were conveyed to Bernhardt by the sitters, or those who commissioned the busts.

Again, why Franceschi? What did he do to recommend himself to Bernhardt? I have already illustrated the tomb that included his medal-winning *Kamienski tué à Magenta* (1861) (fig. 3: 35-37) and add to this a further work in order to represent his oeuvre, *Le Réveil* (plaster, 1869; marble, 1873) (fig. 3: 38). *Le Réveil* was received favourably by two major art critics, Paul Mantz (whose review is of the plaster version) and Georges Lafenestre who discusses the later marble version. Recalling that Mantz was to admire Bernhardt's work in *Après la tempête* in 1876 for its 'motif [...] translated into a modern idiom and presented in prose' (the Pietà) and that 'certain details [...] reveal a truly sincere study of nature', Mantz's earlier praise of Franceschi's statue is now pertinent. On reviewing *Le Réveil* in 1869 he wrote that Franceschi 'was not a pure academic and that, always retaining a certain respect for tradition, he also thinks of the eloquence of nature'.²⁰⁰ In 1873 Lafenestre called the marble version 'a very elegant statue, but a very modern one', a similar typology of praise Mantz reserved for the 'idiom' of *Après la tempête* three years later.²⁰¹ Looking in detail at a detail of one of Franceschi's works, the left foot of the figure of Kamienski (fig. 3: 37), it is possible to suggest that some of Bernhardt's 'modern-ness' might have been learnt from Franceschi precisely when she learnt to, as Mantz was to put it, 'carve[...] out the exaggerated wrinkles on the brow of her old woman, [...] bore[...] out the cheeks', just as Franceschi has done in effecting the deep folds of the fabric of Kamienski's boot.

How Did Bernhardt Not Learn Sculpture? Tall Tales, Silly Rumours, Misreadings

²⁰⁰ '[I]l n'est pas un pur académique, et [...] tout en gardant un certain respect pour la tradition, il croit aussi à l'éloquence de la nature', Paul Mantz, 'Le Salon de 1869, deuxième article', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, vol. 3 (1869), 5-23 (21).

²⁰¹ '[S]tatue d'un style plus élégant, mais plus moderne', Georges Lafenestre, 'Le Salon de 1873, première article', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, vol. 1 (1873), 473-500 (498).

So often, and despairingly, a formula for writing about Bernhardt's life and work (in general), is: SB + man = lover. When this concerns her art practice (painting or sculpture), and certain men are acknowledged or claimed as her teachers, this, also often, becomes SB + man named as teacher = lovers. This is the case with Alfred Stevens who taught Bernhardt painting and Gustave Doré (1832-83) who did not teach Bernhardt sculpture. There are two things going on here that somehow seem entwined: that Bernhardt would become 'lovers' with a teacher (Stevens) and that by being 'lovers' with a man (Doré) she could learn how to make art. In Chapter 2 I argued how Bernhardt's association with an artist friend and peer, the painter Georges Clairin, has been claimed as one between 'lovers' but that this was extremely unlikely, or simply not true. By studying the evidence of Clairin's work and life, I argued that he belonged in a same-sex desiring affiliation with fellow painter and friend, Henri Regnault, and less so, but no less significantly for Clairin's queer history, with a handsome uniformed guardsman delivering him a letter on horseback.

Another problematic formula is: SB + male sculptor = he is her teacher. In this case, sex is not involved, at least not explicitly. Some of the entire gamut of these stories about Bernhardt in combination with notions of 'sex' and 'work', either or both, have appeared in recorded narrative only once, others are more persistent. The purpose of raising this problem here is that none of these stories have yet been adequately contested.²⁰² Because such claims are distractions from Bernhardt's actual sculpture training and her actual sculpture teachers (the only ones to be named as such in the Salon guides), I will deal with this problem now. I can then dismiss them as the garbage they are, not because I am interested in claiming that Bernhardt was *not* lovers with, say, Gustave Doré or Alfred Stevens, but because if she was,

²⁰² Ockman (2005) does discuss Clairin's possible homosexuality: she writes that the 'deliberately homoerotic inversion of Orientalist paradigms [in a photograph of Bernhardt and Abbéma, fig. 2:12] might be extended to the work of Georges Clairin and Henri Regnault' describing their relationship, appropriately, as a 'close friendship and amorous liaison'; 51, note 30. Ockman directs her readers to Hollis Clayson, 'Henri Regnault: Wartime Orientalism', *Paris in Despair: Art and Everyday Life under Siege (1870-71)* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002), 234-72. I am very grateful to Professor Ockman, Williams College, MA for pointing out Clayson's work to me prior to the publication of her essay in the catalogue for the exhibition on Bernhardt at the Jewish Museum in New York; personal communication with Carol Ockman, 24 July 2005.

this is utterly irrelevant to how she learnt sculpture and did not initiate or sustain the fundamental requirements of her studio practice.

Is this tricky because I claim that Bernhardt's *Bust of Louise Abbéma* was the finished material substance of a set of acts and practices, erotic and working, that I called in Chapter 1 'making love'? No. What I am saying here is that whosoever may have been Bernhardt's 'lovers' during c. 1869-76 when she was in training as a sculptor, or even after this, has no bearing on whether she could construct an armature, knead clay, model it, or even go to a merchant to buy it. Nonetheless, in 1877 when she was in the process of making the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*, because of loving Abbéma she could make this particular portrait bust *in the manner* that she did. This does mean that she might have *wanted* to buy clay or do her utmost to secure transportation of the bust to the Salon for exhibition in 1879 when it was finally completed and ready to be shown to the world. But Bernhardt had *already* learnt the necessary skills and gained a reasonable level of experience in doing them, and this did not come from Louise Abbéma, but from Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi. I am not ruling out the strong possibility that Bernhardt received additional tips on how to make sculpture from a friend/lover/neighbour/whoever, one who may or may not have been a sculptor themselves. Not to do so would be strange given that Bernhardt affiliated herself within a visual art practice milieu. But I am arguing that this form of exchange is not how she acquired the basic range of skills and knowledge in the first place, only how she augmented an existing knowledge. Moreover, as a sculptor, painter, and graphic illustrator herself, she was in a position to offer such support to a friend/lover/neighbour/whoever, and, indeed Bernhardt did teach the painter Marie Besson (b. 1860).²⁰³

²⁰³ Besson started painting around 1882 and her teachers were Bernhardt and Desclauzas. The author of a short biography of Besson cites her as saying 'I will always love and adore my Sarah and I am very proud of being her pupil [j'aime et j'adore toujours ma Sarah et suis toujours fière d'être son élève]'; Armand Bourgeois, *Flânerie artistique chez Marie Besson: artiste peintre, élève de Mme Sarah Bernhardt* [from *Revue de l'Est*] (Paris: Bibliothèque des modernes, 1894), 7, 12.

I provide one specific example of these (unhelpful) claims that Bernhardt ‘learnt’ sculpture from a ‘lover’. It is important to recognize how they come about and how easy they are to absorb or glide over and not contest. Respected Bernhardt biographers, Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, tell the story of a lover/teacher relationship with Gustave Doré, and do so in fairly extensive detail (insofar as this is their remit). They write that in 1875 Bernhardt ‘turned more and more to sculpture and the studio life. Her teacher until then had been Mathieu-Meusnier, a reputable artist [...]. Now she found a far more interesting master in Gustave Doré.’ Gold and Fizdale go on to tell how Doré and Bernhardt met, became lovers and began their association as artists. The two are described as sharing (allegedly in the sculpture studio, although whose studio is not stated) ‘many happy moments when [...] they worked side by side: Bernhardt absorbed in the artist’s instruction; Doré, touched by her eagerness to excel’.²⁰⁴

Doré began to sculpt in 1871 and first exhibited at the Salon in 1876.²⁰⁵ As has already been discussed here, Bernhardt may have begun her training as early as 1869. Her first known works are dated 1872 and she first exhibited at the Salon in 1874. Therefore, the claim that she was ‘absorbed in the artist’s [Doré’s] instruction’ in 1875 does not fit too well as a viable chronology, given that she may have begun to learn sculpture before Doré and certainly exhibited at the Salon first. It is highly unlikely that Bernhardt dispensed with Mathieu-Meusnier in favour of any other teacher: she named him as her teacher in the Salon guides until she last exhibited in 1897, he was (probably) seen in her studio in the first half of 1876 (*Zigzags*, 14 May 1876), and continued contact between the two is evident from the gift of the reduced marble version of *La Mort de Laïs* that appeared in the mid-1890s in Bernhardt’s library. But is it at all possible that Doré taught Bernhardt sculpture? Several sources claim that Doré instructed Bernhardt in painting, although, again, he was never named as such in the Salon guides, this being the role of Alfred Stevens. Doré might have given Bernhardt advice in painting and graphic techniques: I cannot pursue these claims here, but do not rule

²⁰⁴ Gold and Fizdale, 118-31

²⁰⁵ For a synopsis of Doré’s sculpture career, see Henri Leblanc, *Catalogue de l’oeuvre complet de Gustave Doré : illustrations, peintures, dessins, sculptures, eaux-fortes, lithographies* (Paris: Bosse, 1931).

this out anymore than I do the possibility that they shared tips on making sculpture. Indeed, it is more likely that this occurred in the case of two-dimensional art as Doré had more experience in this form than Bernhardt in the mid-1870s.

Stories like this do not satisfy my curiosity as an art historian because they do not even attempt to explain how Bernhardt knew how to produce the eighty-three distinct works in sculpture that I have tracked and recorded as her own. Perhaps this is the curse of biography, but these stories cannot simply be ignored and are often relied on by art history, especially in the case of Bernhardt whose very 'full' life takes some getting to grips with. Therefore these stories really do require some attention. And there are other claims, unsubstantiated, and worse, uncontested, for a number of other contenders for the role of having taught Sarah Bernhardt sculpture.²⁰⁶ But to give Gold and Fildale their due, for this is a well-researched book that

²⁰⁶ Other claims regarding Bernhardt's sculpture teachers, which are erroneous, are: Héléne Bertaux (1825-1909), Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (1827-75), Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), and François Pompon (1855-1933). Yeldham claims Bernhardt as a pupil of Bertaux on the basis of Baignères's 1879 Salon review in the *Gazette des beaux-arts*. The critic outlined the importance of Bertaux's atelier as a training facility for women sculptors, lists works by women in the exhibition, and ends with an anecdote about Bernhardt's use of marble in two portrait busts she exhibited that year. This is simply an error in reading one review in which all the women sculptors in the exhibition are dealt with, at the end, and quickly; thur Baignères, *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 152; cited in Yeldham, I, 68. Carpeaux's daughter and biographer claims that Bernhardt went to his studio to 'fiddle about with clay [tripoter la glaise]' but gives no information on when; Clément-Carpeaux, II, 53. It is, of course, possible that Bernhardt knew Carpeaux but there is no other record of their interaction. The editors of Rodin's correspondence, in a note, conflate his mention of an artwork of Bernhardt ('tête de Sarah Bernhardt', as yet unidentified) with a reference to his pupil, Camille Claudel, thereby claiming Bernhardt as his pupil too. This is confusion caused simply by finding the names of two women sculptors in one letter by Rodin, but for different reasons; 'Rodin to Roger Marx, end of April 1898, *Correspondance de Rodin*, ed. Alain Beausire and Hélène Pinet, 3 vols (Paris: Musée Rodin, 1985-86), I, letter 266. Pierre Kjellberg claims that the animalist Pompon 'must have helped' to make the marine sculptures she exhibited at the Exposition Universelle in 1900. There is no evidence of this, although Pompon did work as a praticien on Bernhardt's *Bust of Victorien Sardou* (see below); Kjellberg, *Les Bronzes du XIXème siècle* (Paris: Éditions de l'Amateur, 1987). Whilst on the subject a purported claim by Rodin that Bernhardt's work (sometimes specified as that exhibited at the Salon in 1874 or 1875) was 'saloperie' is also unsubstantiated. Again, I have tracked this statement through various recent texts, reaching only as far back as the biography by Geller (1933). The purpose of this diversion is to indicate how easy it is to repeat what others have said based on the idea that theirs is adequate, or even, good scholarship, when some investigation clearly indicates that it is not, because no original source or evidence is provided. Because of Bernhardt's celebrity status it may be that this situation is

makes ample use of primary sources that are not easy to access, why do they *insist* on claiming that Doré was Bernhardt's teacher and lover? What is their evidence? This story is not a figment of these writers' imagination; they have consulted a number of letters from Bernhardt to Doré. Nor are they alone: a previous French biographer, Philippe Jullian, made the same claim in 1977. Jullian writes that '[a] masculine side to [Bernhardt's] temperament pushed her towards sculpting and she had as her teacher, Gustave Doré'. He continues to drive home his point over the next three pages by adding that Bernhardt 'asked her lover to teach her sculpture', 'her works were astonishingly similar to those of her master' and, finally (thankfully), that when she exhibited at the Salon in 1876, she was 'the pupil of Doré'.²⁰⁷

Gold and Fizdale, and Jullian cite a number of letters (all undated in the citations and not referenced in notes) from Bernhardt to Doré. Three concern a joint commission for two colossal allegorical figures for the Theatre at Monte Carlo (Bernhardt: *La Musique* and Doré: *La Danse*) and were probably written two to three years before the inauguration of the Theatre in 1879 given the time required to make work of this size; others appear to refer only to a personal and non-working relationship. As such, these biographers use 'authentic' source material but they fail to double-check their claims against the Salon guides for this period where Bernhardt continued to name Mathieu-Meusnier as her teacher.²⁰⁸ The content of the three letters that discuss the commission makes it clear that Bernhardt was consigned the

worse in her case, but it is worth bearing in mind when approaching the history of any sculptor by relying on secondary sources for information about something as vital as a sculptor's training.

²⁰⁷ 'Un côté masculin de son tempérament la poussa à sculpter et elle eut pour maître Gustave Doré'; 'elle demanda donc à son amant de lui apprendre à sculpter'; 'ses oeuvres ressemblent étonnamment à celles du maître'; 'l'élève de Doré', Philippe Jullian, *Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: Ballard, 1977), 81, 82, 83.

²⁰⁸ The three letters that concern the Monte Carlo commission are all cited in Gold and Fizdale, 131-32. Jullian's discussion of a 'teaching' relationship with Doré cites only one of these (the first) and is found on 81-84 (83). When both biographies were published (1977 and 1991) two of the letters concerning the sculpture commission were in the private collection of Alain Lesieutre in Paris, which I have yet to follow up in order to consult them in their original form. However, the first chronological letter is reproduced as a facsimile in the exhibition catalogue for *Pierre Cardin présente Sarah Bernhardt* and I have seen the third letter (a very short note written by Bernhardt on her visiting card) in another private collection in Paris. This means that I rely on Gold and Fizdale for the accurate reproduction (and translation) of the second letter and on Jullian for several excerpts from letters that do not discuss sculpture.

duty, by the Theatre's architect, Charles Garnier, of securing Doré's participation in the sculptural scheme. Bernhardt's first letter to Doré explains this quite clearly: she states that she had already been asked to provide one of the statues for the façade and requested that Doré provide the other ('il y a deux groupes de façade [;] il m'en confie un et m'a dit qu'il aurait un grand désir de vous demander votre concours'). The letter is to the point, but affectionate; Bernhardt opens the letter by addressing Doré as 'ami' and in the letter as 'ami chéri', and she signs off 'tendrement'. Any replies from Doré presently not located. The second letter in the sequence (for which I rely on a partial citation and therefore also a translation into English in Gold and Fizdale's text) is now addressed to Doré, in its translated form, as 'my beloved master'. Bernhardt explains, presumably in response to Doré, that she had not informed the press about the possible joint commission, but rather that 'the newspapers invent stories' and that 'I would never do anything without letting you know beforehand'. Gold and Fizdale interpret this letter as follows: '[w]ithout consulting Doré, she forced his hand by hinting to the press that they had both agreed to decorate the casino [Theatre]'.²⁰⁹ They provide no evidence of any press reports. This ties in to some complicated and oft discussed issues about Bernhardt as self-publicist which I do not wish to go into here. Rather, I am concerned with how this positions her as a sculptor. It seems very likely that Bernhardt would not have jeopardised such an important commission had her participation in the scheme been hanging on Doré's agreement to contribute, as Gold and Fizdale claim (again, dubiously). Also, given Bernhardt's previous harsh and over-imaginative treatment by journalists, it is highly likely that stories were invented, or that any correct information did not come directly from her. The final component of the negotiation for the joint commission is a short note written by Bernhardt on her visiting card. This, I have seen. It reads: 'You have made two people happy, Garnier and SARAH BERNHARDT [as pre-printed on the card] who embraces you. Garnier will come to your house, I think tomorrow or just after'.²¹⁰ None of this correspondence mentions a teaching situation. I have not seen the letter addressed to

²⁰⁹ Gold and Fizdale, 131-32.

²¹⁰ 'Vous faites deux heureux, Garnier et SARAH BERNHARDT qui vous embrasse, SB. Garnier ira chez vous, je crois demain ou après.' Visiting card, c. 1876, private collection, Paris. Gold and Fizdale translate the phrase 'qui vous embrasse' as 'who sends you a kiss'; 132.

Doré as ‘my beloved master’ but presume this to be a translation of the French form of address ‘mon cher maître’, and, despite some ellipses, I think it likely that most of the letter is actually cited in Gold and Fizdale’s text. Had any other correspondence been available that did specifically mention a teaching situation (for instance, which might explain Bernhardt ‘being absorbed in the artist’s [Doré’s] instruction’), then I would expect even these biographers to provide it, but they do not. It therefore seems that the form of address, ‘mon cher maître’ is the basis on which Gold and Fizdale (and presumably Jullian before them; he does not cite this letter but has seen the others to Doré in the same private archive) claim that Doré taught Bernhardt sculpture. ‘Mon cher maître’ consists of even less graphemes than the always concise entry naming her teacher(s) in the Salon guides that Bernhardt provided each year she submitted a work, namely, ‘élève de M. Mathieu-Meusnier’ (in 1874: ‘élève de MM. Mathieu-Meusnier et M. Franceschi’). How can ‘mon cher maître’ possibly be adequate evidence that Bernhardt learnt to make sculpture from Gustave Doré? This is a polite form of address, which should translate as ‘my dear Sir’, deployed (perhaps playfully because Doré was already an ‘ami chéri’) by Bernhardt, *on Garnier’s behalf*, to persuade a resistant sculptor to provide a pendant statue for a joint commission on a new public building.²¹¹

I am not arguing that Bernhardt learnt nothing about sculpture from Doré or any other sculptors, such as those for whom she sat for portraits or met socially. But the letters from Bernhardt to Doré, such as I have seen them, or they have been referenced, concern a joint commission for a public work, and do not even allude to time spent together in a studio. Bernhardt may have had as much experience in the studio, if not more than Doré in 1875 (he

²¹¹ That this is a polite form of address only is reinforced by an undated letter from Abbéma thanking an art critic, and probably not one of her teachers, for reviewing her work at an exhibition. She uses the same form as Bernhardt does in addressing Doré in the second letter. Abbéma’s letter runs as follows: ‘Mon cher Maître / Je vous suis d’autant plus reconnaissante des quelques lignes que vous avez bien voulu me consacrer à propos de l’Exposition de la fleur, qu’ayant pour votre talent la plus profonde admiration et m’est particulièrement agréable de voir mes tableaux décrits par votre plume. Agréez dans je vous prie avec tous mes remerciements l’assurance de mon affectueuse admiration / Louise Abbéma’; INFC (coll. F. Lugts), *Autographes d’artistes français du XV^e au XIX^e siècle*, 1971 – A. 340.

too was a 'part-time' sculptor). After all, it was Bernhardt whom Garnier approached first about producing one of the colossal allegorical figures for the outside of the Theatre.

With regard to Bernhardt's relationships with sculptors for whom she sat for (later) portraits, I do not track these here in order to determine, or suggest, whether she, they, or both parties 'learnt' something from the studio encounter. All these options are possible but each studio encounter would have to be considered in its historical specificity according to the circumstances of the event, and this I cannot do.²¹² But I do want to establish, in more general terms perhaps, but ones prompted by how Bernhardt has been treated as a student of sculpture in recent literature and having considered her actual relationship with her teachers, this. Anyone's teachers retain a privileged position in the history of an individual's present and future working life because it is they who have been sought out and asked for instruction by the student. Most often, this is a relationship that is sustained over a number of years, if agreeable to and convenient for both parties. In Bernhardt's case this was something she maintained, or recorded as having maintained, with Mathieu-Meusnier and not Franceschi. Both these men taught her sculpture, no-one else.

²¹² The concept of Bernhardt as 'muse' or concerned with her self-image in portraits of her in sculpture, painting, or graphic art (which takes up a lot of word count in recent Bernhardt studies) has not proved useful here, and is often prohibitive in writing a history of her sculpture practice. She too was an artist when taking part in any studio sitting (after that with Mathieu-Meusnier in 1869) and this must be taken into consideration when thinking about portraiture of Bernhardt by others. I have identified, by viewing or from documentary evidence, eighty-six possible portraits in sculpture (including medallions and plaquettes) of Bernhardt. Twenty-five percent are versions or copies of the same original work. Of those I can date, the earliest is Mathieu-Meusnier's bust of Bernhardt as Zanetto (Salon 1870), followed by Abbéma's bronze medallion in 1875. From 1876 sculptural portraits of Bernhardt were made and exhibited frequently. Given that Bernhardt exhibited *Après la tempête* at the Salon in 1876, it would be sheer art historical blindness to claim that she was not somehow implicated as a sculptor in the making of works of herself if she actually sat for the artist. The concept of 'muse' relies on a model of making art rooted in a heterosexual matrix of male artist and female model in which the male artist's heterosexual desire is situated as the (only) creative and productive force the result of which is the artwork. I have already argued extensively in Chapter 1 that there are other ways of making portraiture that do not force the female sitter into the position of muse and that are not the result of opposite- but one-way, sexual desire by a male artist. The *Bust of Louise Abbéma* is the evidence. This means that there are other possibilities for thinking through the making of portraiture, even when the sitter is a famous actress, than that this was only about surface 'image'.

In conclusion, neither ‘lover = teacher’, nor ‘teacher = lover’ is in any way useful to understanding how Bernhardt’s sitting with Mathieu-Meusnier in 1869 developed into a teaching relationship, nor how a relationship with Franceschi was first established. How this actually happened on a day-to-day basis can only be suggested because of a real lack of substantial evidence (I have not located any studio diaries for Mathieu-Meusnier or Franceschi either). In the case of Mathieu-Meusnier there is evidence that this was a lengthy relationship and I suggest, therefore, that Bernhardt probably continued to discuss her work with her teacher and that they became, and remained, friends. How *can* a ‘day-to-day’ student-teacher relationship be claimed in the absence of documentary evidence? Only on the basis that, although aptitude, application, and practice were all required from the student, the skills and knowledge required to make the body of work in sculpture that Bernhardt produced, *must be* first learnt and, therefore, *had to have been* taught.

3.6 What Does a Sculptor Do?

It could be argued that the evidence of Bernhardt’s practice, what she did as a sculptor, can simply be found out by presenting some of her works, tracking how these were made, even producing close readings of them, and having these ‘stand in’ for her entire oeuvre and the practice required to produce it. On a small scale, this is how Bernhardt’s work is written about in exhibition or sale catalogues. Another method of accounting for her practice is to give a chronological account of works that are tied to ‘key’ procedural moments. For instance, the argument of a recent dictionary essay on Bernhardt is written along these lines and runs as follows: because Bernhardt ‘took as teachers two staid, successful Salon sculptors, Mathieu Meusnier and Franceschi’ this means that her earliest works ‘tend to be unadventurous and correct’ (portrait busts ‘of her friends’ are mentioned immediately after this statement, but are, confusingly, not all early works). Suddenly, with the *Encrier fantastique* in 1880, her work becomes ‘extraordinary [...] amazing and compelling’.²¹³

²¹³ Abdy (1997), 250-251.

From my study of the literature on Bernhardt's sculpture practice thus far, both art historical methods often 'miss something', mixing up chronology, confusing or conflating studios, even getting dates and dimensions of works wrong. What is important to state here, is that whichever way the/a history of Bernhardt's sculpture practice has been told, her reputation as a sculptor has not impressed itself sufficiently within the history of nineteenth-century French art, or of cultural studies, to stand out either from her career as an actress or her status as a female, Jewish, and French celebrity. This is despite how much has been written about her and how widely her image, or images of her work, have been reproduced and disseminated. As I have already argued in Chapter 2, with regard to her studio as the space of making art, perhaps it is because of this proliferation of legend. Bernhardt is scarcely 'known' as a sculptor except to specialist nineteenth-century French sculpture historians and curators, historians of art by women, private collectors, and auctioneers. How she has been chronicled as 'Sarah Bernhardt', actress and icon, has not yet provided a history of her sculpture practice.²¹⁴

Given the difficulty in establishing her reputation as a sculptor thus far, what she learnt to do and continued to do in the studio – the daily activities of making sculpture – needs a section of its own to add to both my exegesis of the individual works (and how she made them) and my analysis of how she trained to be a sculptor. Only by foregrounding the work (as practice) that was required, learned, and sustained by Bernhardt in order for the work (as object) to be made, can such a 'reputation' be assumed. Consolidating the archival material on Bernhardt's sculpture practice as a series of activities (normally taken for granted in the histories of other sculptors) demonstrates in its own materiality – a fairly rapid succession of headings with short entries – just how compromised this archive is.

²¹⁴ Although biography and even exhibitions claim to explain that Bernhardt was a sculptor, this is often phrased as if it should be a surprise. This is not a useful vantage point from which to write a thorough and serious history of any sculptor's practice and oeuvre and therefore these texts shoot themselves in the foot before they even begin to tell their tales. Such incidences are too numerous to cite.

An 'Aptitude for Sculpture'

In Wagner's discussion of sculpture training in general in nineteenth-century France she raises the question of how some thought that a future sculptor had to be, or was at an advantage, if he had been 'predisposed' to the occupation as a child or youth. Wagner paraphrases the argument of the sculptor Antoine Etex (1808-88) as that the 'the budding sculptor should be mentally suited to taking up the chisel, a disposition best demonstrated by a taste for modelling and whittling or an interest in *forme* [and] have a robust constitution and the energy to sustain the daily struggle with matter, tangible stuff, [and] a form of work which is physically tiring, if not mentally arduous.'²¹⁵ Whether Bernhardt ever showed a 'taste for modelling and whittling' is a moot point but the question is, did she have the opportunity to show this disposition at an early age? Bernhardt was among the approximately two-thirds of girls who attended elementary school in France in the 1850s.²¹⁶ The prospectus for her second primary school, the Augustine convent of Grandchamps near Versailles, which she attended until the age of fifteen, promised 'to form the students by inspiring them to a solid, enlightened piety; to develop their intelligence and good judgement; to embellish their minds with all useful knowledge; to contribute, as much as possible, toward making their company agreeable and their virtues sweet.'²¹⁷ No modelling, whittling, or robust constitution for her there, then.

Drawing

²¹⁵ Antoine Etex, in *Guide pour le choix d'un état; ou, dictionnaire des professions*, ed. E. Charton, 2nd ed. (Paris, n. publ., 1851), 548 ; cited in Wagner (1986), 9.

²¹⁶ See Linda L. Clark, *Schooling the Daughters of Marianne: Textbooks and the Socialization of Girls in Modern French Primary Schools* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984), 6. For further literature on the schooling of girls, see: Theodore Zeldin, *France 1848-1945*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977): Volume I, *Ambition, Love and Politics*, 344; and Volume II, *Intellect, Taste and Anxiety*; Raymond Grew and Patrick J. Harrigan, *School, State and Society: The Growth of Elementary Schooling in Nineteenth-Century France – A Quantitative Analysis* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1991); Françoise Mayeur, 'The Secular Model of Girl's Education', in *A History of Women in the West: Emerging Feminism from Revolution to World War*, ed. Genéviève Fraisse and Michelle Perrot (Cambridge, MA and London: Belknap, 1993), 228-45; Sandra Ann Horvath, 'Victor Duruy and the Row over Secondary Education for Girls', *French Historical Studies*, 9:1 (1975), 83-104.

²¹⁷ Cited Gold and Fizdale, 20.

There are no stories or documentary records of how Bernhardt might have learnt to make preparatory drawings for works in sculpture. Before attending the *École gratuite de dessin* and/or the *École des beaux-arts* in Paris, some students had learnt to draw at elementary school and in local art institutions.²¹⁸ Once sculpture training was fully embarked upon, drawing was of primary importance in the curriculum in both institutions in Paris and involved repeated copying from prints, followed by drawing casts, cadavers, and then live models, although methods differed between the two *Écoles*, particularly prior to the reforms of the *École des beaux-arts* in 1863.²¹⁹ One alternative, if neither school accepted one as a student, was to go to the Louvre and copy from casts and sculpture there, but this may have lacked the necessary correction by a teacher.

Does this mean that, before being able to model clay, Bernhardt either must have been able to, or had to be able to draw? She probably did receive some drawing lessons both in school

²¹⁸ However, Pingeot (1982) writes that ‘although drawing was taught in secondary schools [...], sculptors, often those from poor backgrounds, did not learn this way [l’enseignement du dessin était assuré dans les lycées [...] mais les sculpteurs souvent issus de milieux pauvres, n’arrivaient pas par cette voie]’; 23.

²¹⁹ I am not aware of any specific, full-length study of sculptor’s drawings as preliminary models for three-dimensional works in nineteenth-century teaching institutions in Paris or elsewhere in France. For essays on drawing and preparatory three-dimensional sketch models for sculpture, see the following texts. In *La sculpture, méthode et vocabulaire*: ‘Les Stades de la création: genèse des oeuvres’, 16-20; ‘L’exécution des œuvres achevées originales’, 35-37; ‘Le modelage’, 55-77; ‘Les œuvres préparatoires: esquisses, études, modèles, maquettes’, 85. The *Inventaire* was written by its editors in consultation with a number of experts in sculpture. In *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*, see: Anne Pingeot, ‘Genèse d’une œuvre’, 60-66; Le Normand-Romain, ‘Les écoles’, 28-29. Additional work on drawing is found in Wagner (1980), 10. Given that sculptors and painters probably attended the same lessons at the *École des beaux-arts*, at least in the first instance, the following are useful: René Huyghe ed., *Le Dessin français au XIXe siècle* (Lausanne: Mermod, 1948) which includes drawing by Carpeaux and Barye but not preparatory work; Philippe Grunchev, *Le Grand prix de peinture: les concours des Prix de Rome de 1797 à 1863* (Paris: ENSBA, 1983), which includes illustrations of students’ drawing, including from casts, anatomical aids, and the life model; Susan Waller, ‘Professional Poseurs: The Male Model in the *École des beaux-arts* and the Popular Imagination’, *Oxford Art Journal*, 25:2 (2002), 41-64, which includes illustrations of figure studies. Monographs provide some indication of sculptors’ practice of drawing, see for example, Léonce Bénédite, *Alexandre Falguière* (Paris: Librairie de l’art ancien et moderne, 1902), which illustrates two preparatory drawings for sculpture, including *Galathée surprise for Acis et Galathée*, 6. This subject requires much further, specific study that I can allow for here. I am grateful to Philip Ward-Jackson for his advice on reading material for drawing; email from Philip Ward-Jackson, 3 April 2007.

and from a governess.²²⁰ But how far such lessons contributed to her awareness of three-dimensional form, which was the purpose, for instance, of drawing casts prior to the live model, is not known. One biography cites a newspaper article from 1860 which states that Bernhardt attended painting classes at the 'Colombier School'.²²¹ This would have meant having lessons in drawing, but I have yet to verify this claim about her early art education. According to Christiane Dotal, writing on the sculptor Anne de Chardonnet (Franceschi's student in 1890), exclusion from the *École des beaux-arts* with its curriculum heavily weighted towards drawing, meant that Chardonnet 'gave precedence to modelling after nature', i.e. the life model.²²² Dotal is right to point out that girls and women who wanted to be sculptors were subject to prohibition in their educational opportunities given the status and resources of the *École des beaux-arts* and its virtual domination of 'grand' art training throughout the first three-quarters of the century. Girls and women thereby lacked adequate facilities for learning sculpture thoroughly. This is demonstrated by what male students of sculpture *did* have, for instance, the cast collection used for study at the *École* numbered 900 objects in 1855.²²³ A glance at the recently published catalogue of sculpture held by the *École* (2003) indicates, by the historical range and visual complexity of the collection's original and copied works acquired by, or during, the nineteenth century, just how much more difficult it was for female students of sculpture to gain the knowledge and skill required to produce work in the same way, and to the same extent, as their male counterparts.²²⁴

There is, however, evidence that Bernhardt could draw. As well as sculptor and painter, she was also an illustrator, although the techniques for illustrative drawing were different to the

²²⁰ I rely here on Gold and Fildale's biography probably based on their research into Bernhardt's descendants' family archive and possibly those of her school at Grandchamp. They claim that, at Grandchamp, 'Sarah had a gift for drawing' and that once she left this school, her mother 'provided her with drawing lessons'; Gold and Fildale, 21; 26.

²²¹ Berton, 1.

²²² 'Anne de Chardonnet privilégie sans doute le modelage', Dotal, 27.

²²³ Wagner (1986), 10.

²²⁴ The collection includes the work produced for the Prix de Rome competition indicating the opportunities open to students who could attend throughout the century (men until 1897, women and men thereafter); Emmanuel Schwartz, *Les Sculptures de l'École des beaux-arts de Paris* (Paris: ENSBA, 2003).

preparation required for learning sculpture, as they were based on line drawing rather than the shading necessary to comprehend volume.²²⁵ There is no direct evidence that Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi, or her painting teacher, Alfred Stevens, taught Bernhardt to draw, although it is likely. Maybe she went to the Louvre and copied the casts there. The only record of Bernhardt ever attending the Louvre in an educational context is found in an imaginary conversation between 'Mlle Sarah Bernhardt' and 'Mlle Louise Abbéma' as 'overheard' by the art journalist Louis Leroy and a companion, which was included in an article entitled 'Les Pensionnaires du Louvre: Classe de Dames' published in the weekly periodical *L'Art*. The main purpose of this reporting this spoof conversation was not to discuss Bernhardt's artistic ability or diligence, but, on the contrary, to undermine it, and to use both Abbéma as a foil (because she *is* working in the Louvre) and the fact that Bernhardt was Jewish to do so. During the conversation 'Sarah Bernhardt' declares to her friend that she wishes to become the architect of a huge cathedral, but admits this might be difficult because 'the clergy will never allow a Catholic church to come from the hands of a Jewess'. Figured as Bernhardt's Other, 'Louise Abbéma' is diligent, focussed, feminized even (in the illustrated drawing of her working at her easel – she is wearing a long coat and not her customary, short tailored jacket), modest enough to still be learning in 1880, and, according to the opinions of her observers, the producer of a 'sketch [that] was really pretty'.²²⁶ 'Sarah Bernhardt' on the other hand is not represented working in the Louvre, nor does she even take an interest in what 'Louise Abbéma' is doing there.

²²⁵ The illustrations in the catalogue for Bernhardt's exhibition of sculpture and painting in New York and Boston in 1880-81 were either of theatrical scenes or sculpture after it had been made. Bernhardt was also an illustrator (although infrequently) for *La Vie moderne* in the early 1880s. Other drawings by her are found in random publications and I am not aware of any collection of Bernhardt's drawings, least of all one that includes preparatory work for her sculpture making.

²²⁶ 'Jamais le clergé ne consentira à recevoir un temple catholique des mains d'une juive'; 'l'esquisse était fort jolie', Louis Leroy, 'Les Pensionnaires du Louvre: Classe de Dames', *L'Art*, vol. 20, 6e année, no. 1 (1880), 158-64 (164, 163). This article does have one redeeming feature: despite ridiculing Bernhardt, she is at least placed in an *artistic* dialogue of some sort with Abbéma who gives amused but friendly advice.

Bernhardt's illustrative works are therefore the only evidence that she could draw at all. Published in the catalogue for her exhibition in New York and *La Vie moderne*, these drawings (as well as others randomly reproduced since her death) are hardly substantial when compared to those of (some) other sculptors which were specifically produced as preparation for making sculpture. Bernhardt's extant drawings are not this, but they are evidence, nevertheless, that she could use a pencil and inkpen, and therefore by implication, chalk or charcoal. As such these drawings act by proxy as a trace of Bernhardt's preliminary training as a sculptor. However thin this trace is, it is important because drawing and its correction was regarded, at the time Bernhardt began to train, as the foundation of learning how to make sculpture, especially of the human body.

Anatomy

I have already discussed, with regard to the critical reception of *Après la tempête*, texts that relate how Bernhardt might have been schooled in anatomy. The 1879 biography by Clament is the only one to mention her attendance at the *École de médecine* and may not be that reliable, but at least Clament does suggest that Bernhardt had a history of learning anatomy in an appropriate setting. Histories of the attendance by women artists at medical schools in nineteenth-century Paris are not comprehensive and it is difficult to say for sure if Clament was conveying a real possibility for Bernhardt. However, according to Claudine Mitchell, although access to education in anatomy was not straightforward or consistent, Paris was one of the first centres in Europe to open the faculty of medicine to women and the first woman to graduate from it was 'Mme Brès' in 1875. This falls within the period when *Après la tempête* was made (c. 1874-76).²²⁷ Therefore, it is possible, on this occasion, that Clament was reporting fact.²²⁸ Bernhardt discussed in detail her choice of model for the older woman in the

²²⁷ Emails from Claudine Mitchell, 11 April 2007 and 15 May 2007. See also Mitchell, 'Madeleine Pelletier', 1874-1939', *Feminist Review*, 33 (1989), 72-92; and Mitchell, 'Facing Horror: Women's Work, Sculptural Practice and the Great War', in *Work and the Image*, ed. Valerie Mainz and Griselda Pollock, 2 vols (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2000), II, 33-60. Theodore Zeldin writes that women were excluded from the faculty of medicine until 1868; *Ambition, Love and Politics*, 344.

²²⁸ For art education in anatomy for male sculptors at the *Ecole des beaux-arts*, the *École gratuite de dessin*, and in the private ateliers of artists such as David d'Angers and François Rude (1784-1855),

work and did so using the specialist vocabulary of anatomy (276). She also wrote that she had received anatomy lessons from Dr. Parrott, her physician since childhood, and taught herself the components of physiology from a text book (278-79). According to some visitors Bernhardt owned a skeleton, which would have been useful for study, although this was not their purpose in conveying this information.²²⁹ The final piece of evidence that Bernhardt had experience of learning this vital aspect making figural sculpture is the view of the experienced art critic Paul Mantz. Mantz declared that how Bernhardt had worked the clay in order to represent old age in the neck of the female figure in *Après la tempête* was 'exaggerated'. But this is acceptance by Mantz that Bernhardt had been properly schooled in the practicalities of her art. By adding that the child's legs displayed a 'truly sincere study of nature', he made it clear that he recognised Bernhardt's acquired knowledge of the structure of the human body and her ability to apply that knowledge to good effect.

Working from the Life Model

In her autobiography Bernhardt discusses in detail her choice and employment of the models for *Après la tempête* describing why she chose the model for the figure of the older woman and

see as follows: Wagner (1980), 10; 16; Le Normand-Romain on Rude's emphasis on anatomy (1986), 28-31 (29) and 32-41 (34-38). I am uncertain as to the provision of anatomy training at the equivalents of the *École gratuite de dessin* for young women (*École gratuite de dessin pour jeunes filles*) and will pursue this. For a thorough and insightful history of anatomy training at the *École des beaux-arts* from the late eighteenth-century until the early twentieth century, see Callen. As there appears to be no distinction between students of painting and of sculpture in drawing, then I assume this to be the case for anatomy lessons. With regard to teachers who emphasized anatomy training, I am not aware if David d'Angers had female students (Rude continued his teaching studio), however, according to Yeldham, Rude did advise women and therefore this instruction may have been available to women students; ,1, 47. For anatomy classes at the *Académie Julian*, which opened in 1868 and admitted women, see Fehrer (1994), 752-57. Fehrer writes that women students were first recorded there in 1873 and that in the later, women-only studios, anatomy classes were witnessed in 1885. This does not rule out the possibility that anatomy was available to women before this in mixed or women-only classes. For an excellent study of anatomy training for artists in mixed classes in an earlier period and how this has dropped out of view, see Margaret A. Oppenheimer, "The Charming Spectacle of a Cadaver": Anatomical and Life Study by Women Artists in Paris, 1775-1815', *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*, 6:1 (2007), <http://19thc-artworldwide.org/spring_07/articles/oppe.shtml> [6 April 2007].

²²⁹ Although not in the context of the study of anatomy; see, for example, Pierre Loti's journal entry for 25 March 1880; 120.

how: she inspected the physiognomy of several women sent to her by Mathieu-Meunsier. She also added that the sessions continued for three months adding that the hands and feet were modelled from a male colleague, Martel, who worked with her in the theatre. The child was selected from various modelling families of Italian origin working in Paris and was a seven-year-old 'who took on all the favourable poses for displaying the development of his muscles and torso' (277). Elsewhere, Bernhardt made reference to working from a well-known model named Émilie for her colossal statue, *La Musique*, installed on the façade of the Opéra Monte Carlo in 1878-79.²³⁰

In addition to this there are several stories about working from sitters for portrait busts. In Bernhardt's autobiography she outlines the following: long sessions for the *Bust of Mlle Emmy de **** (c. 1874, not located); an unfruitful sitting for the *Bust of Adolphe de Rothschild* (c. 1874-76, destroyed); that for the *Bust of Miss Moulton* (1875, private collection), a 'ravishing child'; the *Bust of Mlle Hocquigny* (marble 1874, private collection, London); and the *Bust of Régina* (marble 1875, not located), her eighteen-year-old sister. Elsewhere Bernhardt told a tale (also conveyed by Clairin in his memoirs) of the sitting for the *Bust of Emile de Girardin* (bronze 1877, not located; terracotta and bronze reduced editions in various locations) and the *Bust of Victorien Sardou* (plaster 1897; bronze 1900).²³¹ Two extant letters also refer to sittings for two additional busts: that of fellow-actor, Ernest Coquelin cadet (Salon 1881) and the comtesse de Najac.²³²

²³⁰ Bernhardt told an interviewer that Émilie was very well known in the world of sculptors and because she loved music Bernhardt arranged to have the violin played during the sessions 'in order that she better take on an ecstatic pose [qu'elle pût mieux prendre une physionomie extatique]'; Daurelle, *Le Figaro* (22 September 1897), 4.

²³¹ For the sessions with Girardin, see 'Sarah Bernhardt: peintre et sculpteur', *Le Gaulois* (6 December 1896), 1; and for Sardou, see Daurelle, *Le Figaro* (22 September 1897), 4. Clairin describes the sessions as long sessions in his memoirs; *Les Souvenirs d'un peintre*, ed. André Beaunier (Paris: Charpentier, 1906), 305. Bernhardt mentions making other busts in these sources, for instance those of *Louise Abbéma*, *Henry de la Pommeraye*, *Clairin*, *Busnach*, *Damala* (and her self-portrait), but does not provide any details of the sittings.

²³² Coquelin cadet discusses whether or not Bernhardt will exhibit his bust at the Salon that year and adds that 'je reposerai quand tu voudras' suggesting that the sittings had been interrupted; Ernest Coquelin cadet to Sarah Bernhardt, unidentified sale, hôtel Drouot, 7 May 1981, lot 494, MOSD,

Modelling Clay

The evidence that Bernhardt could model clay ought to be so obvious that it does not need stating (she made sculpture). But because this thesis is about ‘Sarah Bernhardt’, it does need explaining because in the early years of her exhibiting career (until c. 1878) Bernhardt was accused of not carrying out her own work. Exactly what this meant in the nineteenth century, and in France, is debatable. In the case of the American sculptor, Harriet Hosmer, a similar accusation in 1863 – that her monumental *Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra* (1859) was ‘said to be by Miss Hosmer, but really executed by an Italian workman at Rome’ – was countered by her with a detailed explanation of the different stages in producing a work of sculpture and her insistence on a ‘distinction [...] between the labor of the hand and the labor of the brain’.²³³ Fellow American Emma Stebbins specified this distinction further, as one between the artist’s ‘first creation’ and ‘all the labour of finish’, where the creative work was the clay model and the finished work in marble or bronze a version of this original.²³⁴ Such a distinction, however debatable now in view of social history of art readings of works of art and their making, did not seem to interest those who were doing the accusing. This is clear from how vague such accusations were and therefore how ignorant those who made them were of the activities involved in making a work in sculpture. This was, and was not, the case with Bernhardt. In her autobiography she reported that the journalist, playwright, and future director of the Comédie-Française, Jules Claretie (1840-1913) had accused her of ‘having got some one else

dossier Bernhardt. In a letter to comtesse de Najac Bernhardt writes: ‘Croyez moi votre dévoué sculpteur un peu malade mais bien amical’; ‘L. A. S. à la comtesse de Najac, 1878 pour une séance à propos du buste qu’elle fait de la comtesse’, unidentified sale, hôtel Drouot, 19 March 1986, lot 18, MOSD, dossier Sarah Bernhardt. Because of the date of Bernhardt’s letter to the comtesse de Najac, and provided this bust was finished that year, that this may be the marble ‘Buste d’une femme’ dated 1878 in the musée Carnavalet.

²³³ The accusation against Hosmer appeared as an aside referring to rumour in the obituary of another (British) sculptor who had lived in Rome; Anon., ‘Obituary: Mr. Alfred Gatley’, *Art Journal*, n.s., vol. 2 (1863), 181. Hosmer’s response was ‘The Process of Sculpture’ in ‘Miss Hosmer’s Zenobia’, *Art Journal*, n.s. vol. 3 (1864), 27.

²³⁴ Wellesley College Archives, Anne Whitney Papers, Emma Stebbins to Anne Whitney, 5 August 1879, ES Letters 10.

to make this group [*Après la tempête*] for me'.²³⁵ If this is what Claretie said, then he too showed little understanding of making sculpture. But this was not the case with another accusation against Bernhardt by the fumiste writer (and sculptor) Georges Lorin.

Lorin presented his accusation in a rather convoluted manner, but one that, perhaps ironically, assists in clarifying the question of clay modelling as the most significant activity, not just in 'executing' or 'making' sculpture, but in enabling one to claim authorship of a work. In his article, 'Sarah Bernhardt & la Calomnie' (*Revue moderne et naturaliste*, February 1879), Lorin opened with the claim, heard '*sotto voce*' ['tout bas'], that Bernhardt was 'not the author of her own works.' Lorin elucidated on this by considering four 'hypotheses': that Bernhardt 'does not make her sculptures herself' but that they were made by others; that she 'moulds from nature'; that she 'receives advice'; or that 'the actress's sculptures [...] make themselves'. Lorin expends considerable effort in appearing to discount each hypothesis but it is his parting shot that states his position: he declares that it would be an 'interesting job' to be 'a sculptor for women' [i.e. someone who makes sculpture on behalf of women].²³⁶ Lorin's route to this conclusion is interesting here because of what can be deduced from his list of negatives. Each reason that 'others' gave for Bernhardt not being the author of the works she signed, can become, whilst reading Lorin's list of negatives and his provocative discussion of them, possible to think as the 'positives', for Bernhardt, of making sculpture and claiming rightful authorship. Thus 'not making her sculptures herself' becomes 'making sculpture'; 'moulding from nature' becomes modelling in clay; 'receiving advice' (i.e. being told what to do) becomes thinking for herself; and doing nothing at all (the sculptures make themselves),

²³⁵ MDL, 278. See note 91 above for discussion of this point.

²³⁶ 'Sarah Bernhardt comme n'étant pas l'auteur des ses œuvres'; 'Mlle Sarah ne fait pas ses sculptures elle-même!'; 'Mademoiselle Sarah moule sur nature'; 'Mlle Sarah reçoit des conseils'; 'les sculptures de l'actrice se fassent toutes seules'; 'ce doit être un amusant métier que d'être SCULPTEUR POUR LES FEMMES', G. L. [Georges Lorin], 'Sarah Bernhardt & la Calomnie', *Revue moderne et naturaliste*, 2e année, no. 3 (15 February 1879), 94-96. I am very grateful to Dr Claudine Mitchell for her help with translation in order to make sense of Lorin's (difficult) article. Lorin functions thus: he repeats rumour; elaborates greatly on it thus giving it substance and ends by exclaiming, 'as if that could be true!' thereby implying, because of his overly dramatic repudiation, that the rumour is, indeed, 'true'.

becomes application and diligence. Inadvertently, Lorin provides just the criteria for Bernhardt to become a sculptor, and this is based primarily, from his account of what that meant, on the fundamental task of modelling clay.²³⁷

So, did Bernhardt model clay? The images I presented in Chapters 1 and 2 of Bernhardt's studio indicate that she had buckets of clay (figs 1: 22; 2: 3, 18), that she had modelling tools (figs 2:13-16), and that she used these tools to work clay (figs 1: 24; 2: 3). Of all the representations of Bernhardt as a sculptor, Abbéma's 1875 painting is the one that shows her most actively involved in the process of modelling clay. The painting demonstrates this not only by Bernhardt's concentration on the task she performs, with her intense face-to-face positioning in relation to the bust she is making, but in how Abbéma represents this as a work in progress in clay through the facture of her own work as a painter, using a thick and loose layering on of paint in order to represent, in her image, a bust being formed (fig. 1: 24). A further image that provides evidence of Bernhardt modelling, having modelled, and being about to model clay is the photograph by Melandri of her unfinished statue, *Médée*, in which part of the armature is not yet covered by clay (fig. 2:16). There are also eyewitness accounts of Bernhardt working on clay models. Graham Robertson claimed in c. 1889 to have helped Bernhardt to destroy a work in progress, turning it from 'a huge mass of clay' to 'an innocent-looking mud-pie'.²³⁸ To give Bernhardt the final word on this, she told a journalist from the

²³⁷ For technical and historical analysis of producing finished models in clay (and plaster), see Isabelle Leroy-Jay Lemaistre, 'Terre et plâtre', in *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*, 125-39.

²³⁸ Robertson, 109-10. An account in Reynaldo Hahn's diary memoirs of Bernhardt also mentions her working on a sculpture he called 'Le Baiser de la mer' (not located, perhaps not completed) but he does not specify how she was working on it, although his description does imply clay modeling; 16. An undated photograph in the collection of the agency Sirot-Angel shows Bernhardt working with a modeling tool on the clay bust of Edmond Rostand with the sitter present; illus. *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*, 23. A film entitled *Sarah Bernhardt à Belle-Isle* (dir. Louis Mercanton, 1912. Cinémathèque française, Bois d'Arcy), made at her summer home has a short section in which Bernhardt moves around the same work making adjustments to it, although this is unconvincing as the actual modeling process because the bust appears finished; shown at *Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama*, Jewish Museum, New York, 2 December 2005 to 2 April 2006. Without the intent of demonstrating that Bernhardt modeled clay, Joseph-Napoléon Primoli gives a second-hand account from an earlier, but unidentified, eye-witness in the 1870-80s claiming that Bernhardt was watched by her guests 'sculpting'. Given the lack of plaster-casting and marble carving facilities in the atelier-

magazine *Lecture pour Tous* in 1910 that her second (i.e. sculpture) studio, located across the courtyard from the main building in her home on the boulevard Pereire, was where 'in a simple smock [...] I model my clay and mix plaster.'²³⁹

Casting Plaster

Photographs of this studio across the courtyard (figs 2: 20-24) do not demonstrate any direct evidence of plaster-casting, as there appear to be no dry material in sacks, water supply, mixing vats and tools, or indeed any finished or broken moulds.²⁴⁰ This could be because when the photographs were taken plaster-casting (a much quicker job than clay modelling or carving) was not being carried out at the time and all this equipment was tidied away. Or it could be because these are views of one side of the studio only. Bernhardt probably did do some plaster casting herself, but I think it far more likely that she contracted most of it out, just as she did with making armatures, roughing out for her marble sculptures, as well as terracotta and bronze casting. Such a division of labour is implied in her commentary later in the same article about how she went about casting the marine sculptures (exhibited: Exposition universelle, 1900; Salon de la société des artistes décorateurs, Union centrale des arts décoratifs, 1904; Exposition des arts de la mer, hôtel Continental, exact location not known, 1905). She told the interviewer this: 'at Belle-Île I made some plaster moulds of fish which the fishermen brought me or which I caught myself and then when I got back to Paris I had them "cast" in these moulds.'²⁴¹ The only other account of plaster casting was another

salon where this took place, this can only imply clay modelling; Primoli, 'Journal 1893: Rome, 13 February 1893', *Pages inédites: recueillies, présentées et annotées* (Rome: Edizioni Storia e Letteratura, 1959), 30-31. Bernhardt's performance of making sculpture in private homes in London whilst on tour there with the Comédie-Française in June 1879, although disparaged by the reporter who described it as fraudulent, nevertheless was the performance of modelling in clay and required her to handle tools with confidence; Montezuma, *Art Amateur* (November 1880), 113.

²³⁹ 'Comment Sarah Bernhardt devint sculpteur', *Lecture pour tous*, (1910), 119.

²⁴⁰ For technical and historical analysis of casting, see 'Le moulage', *La sculpture, méthode et vocabulaire*, 103-43; and Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, 'Moulage', in *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*, 67-71.

²⁴¹ 'A Belle-Ile, je moule en plâtre des poissons, que m'apportent les pêcheurs, ou que je pêche moi-même; puis, de retour à Paris, je fais «couler» à fonte perdue dans ces empreintes', 'Comment Sarah Bernhardt devint sculpteur', *Lecture pour tous* (1910), 120.

interview embedded in a narrative written by René Thorel for the weekly review *Les Annales politiques et littéraires* (25 July 1909), again about the marine sculptures. In this account, Bernhardt requested that her plaster caster come from Paris to work with her and proceeded as follows:

When he arrived several days later in Belle-Ile, Sarah immediately set to work. A workshop was set up, they imported some plaster and the operation began: the results were satisfactory. Mme Sarah Bernhardt also wanted to cast some fish to use as decorative objects. This is how she did it: putting the fish on a thin base, she gave it the form she wanted. In order to make the fish remain in place she used hairpins. Then the caster covered it all with plaster and let it set.

These experiments lasted during an entire visit to the Poulains. Then, every year subsequently, Sarah continued her series of plaster casts and nothing is more entertaining than seeing her mix the plaster herself, getting bits of it in her wiry hair and on her face.

Having thus reproduced these seaweed shapes and fish, they were cast in bronze [...].²⁴²

Given that the marine sculptures are the only works where plaster casting is mentioned, it would appear that Bernhardt did not consistently produce her own plaster models – she had a plaster caster in Paris to do that for her – and probably only did so when the works were small. In the case of *Après la tempête*, she wrote in her autobiography that she ‘had it moulded’ (278). Plaster casting was a specialist job in its own right and one that Bernhardt does not appear to have had the facilities to sustain beyond these small-scale works mostly dated 1900; the largest of which is probably a large decorative bronze dagger currently described as a

²⁴² ‘Celui-ci étant arrivé à Belle-Isle quelques jours après, Sarah se mit immédiatement à l’œuvre. On installa un atelier, on fit venir du plâtre et l’opération commença: les résultats furent satisfaisants; aussi Mme Sarah Bernhardt voulut-elle alors mouler des poissons, afin d’en faire des objets décoratifs. Voici comment elle procéda: Le poisson une fois posé sur une mince planchette, elle lui donna la forme qu’elle rêvait. Pour fixer le poisson, Sarah se servit de ses épingles à cheveux. Puis, le mouleur revouvrit le tout de plâtre et on laissa sécher. Ces expériences durèrent pendant tout un séjour aux Poulains. Depuis, chaque année, Sarah continua la série des ses moulages, et rien n’est amusant comme de la voir gâcher elle-même le plâtre, s’envoyant des éclaboussures dans ses cheveux ébroués, et sur son visage. Ces algues et poissons avant été reproduits ainsi, on les coula en bronze’, Thorel, *Annales politiques et littéraires* (25 July 1909), n.p.

‘grande coupe-papier en forme d’algue marine’ measuring 10 x 49 cm (maison de retraites des Artistes, Couilly-Pont-aux-Dames).²⁴³

Carving Marble

Bernhardt stated in her autobiography (but blink and you will miss it) with regard to the reduced marble version of *Après la tempête* that she ‘had worked at it with the greatest care’ (315).²⁴⁴ That is it as far as any mention of carving is concerned, at least in textual documentary evidence. Other than this, all that confirms that Bernhardt did her own carving (or at least, as was customary, the final stages after pointing, roughing out, and possibly some finishing work had been done by a praticien) are the photographs of her with the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* (fig. 1: 34-35) and her self-portrait statuette (fig. 3: 6). In both she holds a hammer, in the photograph with the bust she also has a small chisel, probably used for the lettering work (date and signature). The conclusion one can draw from this is that if she owned these tools, it is likely that she used them. The full extent of Bernhardt’s carving work, for instance if she finished off all her works in marble, is not known.²⁴⁵

Praticiens, Founders, Merchants, Transportation

In order for work to be ready for the sculptor to carry out this finishing process, she had to send it to be ‘pointed’ (transfer of the dimensions of the model onto stone) and roughed out by an experienced carver. This was standard practice, demonstrated amply in the archive on State commissions carried out and sought by Mathieu-Meusnier. Mathieu-Meusnier

²⁴³ Having viewed and measured only this work, I make this assumption on the basis of comparison with photographs, which is not wholly reliable. I doubt this was made as a paper-knife; it is very large and unwieldy.

²⁴⁴ For technical and historical analysis of transferring plaster casts into stone, roughing out, and finishing, see in *La sculpture, méthode et vocabulaire*: ‘La taille: procédés de la taille avec mise-aux-points’, 170-184; ‘La taille: Le travail de finition et les outils’, 184-210; and in *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*: Anne Pinget, ‘La mise aux points et l’agrandissement’, 115-18; Antoinette Le Normand-Romain, ‘La taille direct’, 119-24.

²⁴⁵ Hermann Billung in the German-language publication *Kunstchronik* claimed that the *Busts of Louise Abbéma* and *Miss H...* were ‘mostly the work of the assistant who carved the finished product’ but did not provide any evidence for this claim, nor did he clarify ‘mostly’; ‘Der Pariser Salon’ (part IV), *Kunstchronik*, vol 14 (2 October 1879), 751.

contracted his work out to the same praticien, M. Milan, from 1866 to 1880 with a brief interlude in 1876 when he either employed another praticien named M. Fouquert or worked in this man's studio himself.²⁴⁶ The only letter from Bernhardt concerning this aspect of her sculpture practice is a short note to a sculptor-praticien, Jules-Ernest Bouillot. I cite this in full because this letter really is a precious piece of evidence; it situates Bernhardt historically in the same mode of production as her sculptor teachers and peers. The letter reads:

Here, my dear Monsieur Bouillot is the sum of money for the marble for my group. Start it quickly and work well, I beg you. It's urgent. I will come and see you in a week's time to pay you the two hundred and some francs which are outstanding on the small bust. Sarah Bernhardt'.²⁴⁷

According to the 1994 catalogue of an exhibition on the work of François Pompon (1855-1933) held at the musée d'Orsay, he worked as a praticien for Bernhardt in 1897 on her *Bust of Victorien Sardou* (plaster, Salon 1897; bronze, Exposition universelle, 1900), on an unspecified work in 1898-99, and again on her *Bust of Edmond Rostand* in 1900 (possibly plaster only, not exhibited).²⁴⁸ It is, however, not clear exactly what Pompon did for Bernhardt. Given that the *Bust of Victorien Sardou* was cast in bronze later, in 1900, and that Pompon was not known as a bronze founder, this would not have been his task. In addition, according to Cathérine Chevillot (curator, musée d'Orsay) it is unlikely that Pompon made the plaster

²⁴⁶ In May 1876 Mathieu-Meusnier wrote that 'l'atelier où j'exécute mon statue est chez Monsieur Fouquet 90 bd de Vaugirard', Mathieu-Meusnier to directeur des Beaux-arts, 23 May 1876; AN, F 21 238, dossier 31: M. Mathieu Meusnier, Statue en pierre, «Herman», 1874 (cathédrale de Coutances). The work concerned, which was ready for collection, was stone, not marble. Its full title is *Herman, fils de Tancrède de Hauteville* (cathédrale de Coutances, north front).

²⁴⁷ 'Voici Cher Monsieur Bouillot la somme de marbre pour mon groupe. Commencez vite et travaillez bien je vous en prie. C'est pressé. J'irai vous voir d'ici une huitaine pour les deux cents et quelques francs qui restent sur le petit buste'; Sarah Bernhardt', Til Bouillot, udat. (1 br.), KBC Copenhagen (coll. Palsbo Ec). I am very grateful to Cathérine Chevillot for her assistance in deciphering and transcribing elements of this letter and again to Claudine Mitchell for her assistance in confirming the English translation.

²⁴⁸ The work on *Sardou* lasted from 30 October to 26 November 1897 and cost 280 francs; the work on the unspecified sculpture took place between 25 October 1898 to 25 June 1899 but only lasted eight days and cost 155 francs; and the work on *Rostand* only lasted two days in July 1900 and a price is not supplied; *François Pompon (1855-1933)*, ed. Cathérine Chevillot, Liliane Colas, Anne Pinget and Laure de Margerie, exh. cat. (Paris: RMN, 1994), 117.

casts of these works (the *Bust of Edmond Rostand* is not located and is seen only in clay and/or plaster versions in photographs and a film). In January 1897 Pompon had left the studio of Rodin and that year he also worked for Gaston Leroux, Antonin Mercié and, eventually became the full-time praticien of René de Saint-Marceaux moving to his studio in Moires at Jouy-en-Josas in April 1898, although he did not work exclusively for Saint-Marceaux after this.²⁴⁹ Pompon's work for Rodin and Camille Claudel (1864-1943) had involved marble-carving and for another sculptor, Elisa Bloch (1848-1905), he made 'amendments to a marble bust', but there is no record that either of Bernhardt's busts was carved in marble. The short amount of time spent in each of the three sessions (*Sardou*, sixteen days; unspecified sculpture, eight and a half days; *Rostand* only two) would rule out marble carving (although not making amendments). Nor is it clear where Pompon carried out the work for Bernhardt and both matters require further research.²⁵⁰

Bernhardt's bust of her granddaughter (probably Simone Bernhardt; 1893, marble, musée Carnavalet) was transferred into ceramic by Edmond Lachenal (1855-[?]1930) in c. 1897. The bust was signed by both artists and exhibited with other works by Lachenal at the galerie Georges Petit in 1897, but it is likely that Bernhardt had little practical involvement in this process other than supplying the model.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ *François Pompon (1855-1933)*, 76.

²⁵⁰ Having enquired with Anne Pingeot, director of the sculpture department, curator and sculpture historian at musée d'Orsay, I have been advised to consult the archive at the musée Rodin; emails from Cathérine Chevillot and Anne Pingeot, 10 May 2007. One clue, or slight mystery, as to where Pompon may have worked, namely that he may have continued to use Rodin's studio is the mention in a letter from Rodin to Roger Marx that 'Raoul Pictet prendra la tête de Sarah Bernhardt demain', Rodin to Roger Marx, end of April 1898, *Correspondance de Rodin*, I, letter 266. I am unaware of any sculpture by Rodin of Bernhardt and therefore this may refer to her bust that Pompon was working on. This entry is footnoted as follows: 'L'actrice Sarah Bernhardt fût eleve dilettante de Rodin' and sourced from Edouard Rod, 'L'Atelier de Rodin', *Gazette des beaux-arts* (May 1895) but Rod was mistaken on this matter.

²⁵¹ See Anon., 'Edmond Lachenal', in *Du Second Empire à l'art Nouveau: la création céramique dans les musées du Nord-Pas-de-Calais*, ed. Geneviève Becquart, Dominique Szymusiak and Patrick Le Nouène, exh. cat. (Lille: Association des conservateurs de la région Nord-Pas-de-Calais, 1986).

Bernhardt's involvement with bronze founders has been discussed above.²⁵²

There are no records of where Bernhardt bought her materials, such as clay, plaster (when appropriate), or marble, although the letter from Bouillot indicates that she paid him for the marble ['la somme de marbre'] as well as the carving of it that he carried out for her.

Bernhardt sold her house on avenue de Villiers to Léonie Cathérine Dervillé, widow of the marble merchant Cyr Adolphe Dervillé, in 1886.²⁵³ This may mean Bernhardt already knew the Dervillés in the context of buying marble from this merchant, but this is almost impossible to confirm. There are also no records of where Bernhardt bought her tools and studio equipment.²⁵⁴

An object such as the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* weighs around 45-50 kg and therefore required specialist transportation services to the Salon and other exhibitions.²⁵⁵ One entrance to Bernhardt's sculpture studio on the avenue de Villiers with its high doorway directly onto the street would have facilitated the movement of works of sculpture for transportation or the delivery of materials and equipment (fig. 2: 6). There are no images of the access to the

²⁵² For technical and historical analysis of bronze founding, see in *La sculpture, méthode et vocabulaire*, 'La technique de la fonte', 239-335; and in *La Sculpture française au XIXe siècle*, Cathérine Chevillot, 'Edition et fonte au sable', 80-94. Anne Lajoux claims with regard to Lachenal that Bernhardt 'sometimes came to sculpt with him [venait parfois sculpter chez lui]' but there is no evidence of this and it is not likely; Lajoux, 'Auguste Rodin et les arts du feu', *Revue de l'art*, 116:2 (1997), 76-88 (81). A possible self-portrait bust by Bernhardt was made in ceramic by the Czech artist Friedrich Goldscheider (1845-97) or his workshop in the 1890s and in polychrome terracotta in 1891 and patinated plaster in 1892. I am not entirely convinced this is a work by Bernhardt. Another half-relief mask claimed to be a self-portrait by Bernhardt and executed in ceramic by Goldscheider (c. 1885, Collection of Victor and Greta Arwas, London; plaster version not attributed to Bernhardt, Garrick Club, London) is almost definitely not a work by her. Therefore I do not investigate this relationship in any depth. For Bernhardt's work with the jeweler René Lalique (who made a medallion and plaquette of her), see Jane Abdy, 'Sarah Bernhardt and Lalique: A Confusion of Evidence', *Apollo*, 125:303 (1987), 325-30.

²⁵³ AVP, cadastre de 1876, rue Fortuny, D1P4, carton 460.

²⁵⁴ I have yet to carry out a proper survey of the merchants for these items by consulting the commercial directories published by Didot Bottin.

²⁵⁵ I am grateful to the two gallery assistants at the musée d'Orsay (both of whom were required to physically move the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* to a suitable viewing position outside the vitrine) who informed me of its approximate weight.

equivalent studio at boulevard Pereire but, as I discussed in Chapter 2, this may have been a 'grenier' and was reached by means of a courtyard, suggesting that it too was accessible for the removal and transportation of works of sculpture, as well as deliveries. There are no records of the transportation of Bernhardt's works to exhibition or purchasers other than her mention in *MDL* that she arranged for Gambart to collect *Après la tempête* from her studio (avenue de Villiers) himself.

Domestic Labour, Studio Assistance, Taking Care of the Sculptor

Who lit the fires in the stove or fireplace of Bernhardt's studios? Who swept up after her? Who cooked for her so she could work all night on *Après la tempête*? Who arranged for her work to be transported to the Salon? Was she driven to Bouillot's studio to inspect her carving work? Who saw to her accounts when she sold work? Who let the many visitors to Bernhardt's homes and studios through the front door and asked them to wait in the antechamber to the atelier-salon at avenue de Villiers until she came to greet them herself?²⁵⁶

²⁵⁶ There are some possible answers to these and the many further questions required to establish exactly how Bernhardt was able to use her studio as the place to make her sculpture, how she was enabled physically to get her work done, and how she arranged for it to be presented in finished form to the world. This requires two forms of further research: an extensive analysis of all the biographical literature for references to such labour and further enquiries as to whether there are studio diaries, domestic journals, accounts books, records of transactions with servants, providers of transportation etc that outline the domestic labour in Bernhardt's homes and other necessary forms of labour that contributed to the making and presentation of her work in sculpture. I have only conducted a brief survey of the biographical literature and still need to pursue the enquiries necessary to establish if documents still exist that outline how Bernhardt's households were run and the other labour she relied upon. There is mention in the section where she writes of working all night on *Après la tempête* in which she refers to a maid who came to call for her on the days when she was scheduled to work in the theatre; *MDL* 277. Writing that concerns visits to avenue de Villiers also mentions being admitted to the house by domestic staff, such as a 'chambermaid [femme de chambre]', for example, the journal entry for 29 May 1879 in *Loti*, 83. Gold and Fizdale refer to man called only 'Pitou' who provided Bernhardt with administrative and domestic support, that includes taking 'charge of the servants' and paying 'the household bills'; 234. They do not include their source for this information and I have yet to pursue this. One of Bernhardt's sculptures is titled 'Négresse de Mme Guérard' (1875, terracotta medallion, citadelle Vauban, Belle-Île-en-Mer) which indicates by the particle 'de' that the sitter was a servant who may or may not have also worked for Bernhardt but certainly signifies the existence of such labour.

There is some coverage of the domestic labour that Bernhardt required in order to sustain her working life in general and her studio practice in particular. The history of those who looked after Bernhardt in the domestic and working environment of 4 rue de Rome, 11 boulevard de Clichy, 41 avenue de Villiers, and 56 boulevard de Pereire is one that has still to be properly researched and written. I am reluctant to make suggestions about the possible deployment of domestic labour in running her studio (and home) simply by providing the names or roles of servants as they have been recorded in biographies. But it is true to say that a sculptor cannot work without keeping her studio in some kind of order, or without eating (and sleeping). Given that it was extremely unlikely that Bernhardt carried out all the housekeeping tasks in the studio and at home, investigating this domestic labour should be part of this project. This requires much further analysis of existing and accessible material (biographies) as well as of material that I have not yet located (family archives). For now, I can only state, as I have done in previous work on the running of the studios of Thornycroft and Stebbins, that sculpture production is not the work of one individual, and that the people who supported the running of a studio and home must be assigned their rightful place in the history of Sarah Bernhardt's sculpture practice.

Reading about Sculpture, Thinking about Sculpture, Speaking about Sculpture

The contents of Bernhardt's library as sold in June 1923 are one means of ascertaining how and what Bernhardt thought about sculpture. She had owned literature that discussed both the history and practice of sculpture, including the *Grande dictionnaire*, volumes of the periodicals *L'Art* and *Art et décoration*, monographs on individual artists, an illustrated survey of antique sculpture, and a first edition eighteenth-century text on self-taught drawing methods.²⁵⁷ It

²⁵⁷ The volumes on antique sculpture were outlined as follows: *Chefs-d'Oeuvre de l'art antique*, 3 vols; M. Robiou, *Monuments de la vie des anciens*; and *Monuments de la peinture et de la sculpture*, 3 vols; all published in Paris by Lévy in 1867 with 732 plates. The instruction manual on drawing was: Ch-Ant. Jombert, *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre à dessiner sans maître* (Paris: Jombert, 1740) and had 120 plates. Bernhardt also owned a copy of Abbéma's drypoint portraits of herself, Bernhardt, Blanche Baretta, Charles Chaplin, Carolus Duran, Charles Garnier, Paul Mantz, and Alexandre Falguière in Alfred Levasseur, *Croquis contemporains* (Paris: Cadart, 1880); *Bibliothèque de Mme Sarah Bernhardt* (première partie), 25-27 June 1923.

may be that the library as sold in June 1923 did not contain Bernhardt's entire collection of books, as was certainly the case with her other belongings, many of which were bequeathed to friends and family (although exactly what and to whom is, as yet, not established). In keeping with French law, Bernhardt's estate documents are not available to the public until 150 years after death. To consult these would require permission from her descendents. This, I intend to pursue.

There are published sources in which Bernhardt directly discussed her analysis of contemporary art practice and sculpture making in particular. The first of these was a review of the Salon she wrote for the Saturday literary supplement of the daily Parisian paper, *Le Globe; journal des intérêts économiques* in May 1879. Another is an interview with Bernhardt published by Jacques Daurelle in *Le Figaro* in September 1897, which also gives a brief history of her practice.

Bernhardt's Salon review of May 1879 is written in two parts, and typically, she first considers painting, then sculpture. Having made the general comment that the Salon is 'not a conservatoire, it is a theatre; the artists are responsible for putting on a show and the public is admitted in order to judge them', she works through a select number of paintings by artists whom she may have known as friends or associates. Abbéma has the last word in this section, in which Bernhardt declares this to be her 'best exhibition' that has won her 'the true success that she deserves' from the public. Bernhardt then moves on to discuss the work of sculptors in the exhibition, and has praise for all but one of the sculptors she discusses, who are: Guillaume, Buloz, Mercié, Falguiere, and Saint-Marceaux. Bernhardt praises the work of all these sculptors and her only negative criticism is reserved for Ringel [d'Illzach].²⁵⁸

²⁵⁸ 'Le Salon n'est pas un conservatoire, c'est un theatre; les artistes sont responsables de leurs actes et le public est admis à les juger'; 'c'est la meilleure exposition de Mlle Abbéma; le public qui lui gardait sa bienveillance lui accorde cette année le vrai succès qu'elle mérite', Sarah Bernhardt, 'Le Salon de 1879', *Le Globe: édition littéraire du samedi*, no. 1 (17 May 1879), n.p. Ringel produced a portrait statuette of Bernhardt in plaster in 1876 and in 1880 also made her terracotta bust. Given the negative criticism of his work in this Salon, it may be that she had not established a personal relationship with him and that she did not sit for either portrait.

What Bernhardt had to say in this review about the sculpture was not in the same league as the detailed exegesis given a large number of works by a critic such as Mantz. But then this was Bernhardt's first piece of published writing and she may have had no previous experience of writing about art in any other arena. The tone of her article is also less serious, but this might be expected of a Saturday supplement in a periodical that was not art critical which also affected the length of her contribution (in two parts only compared to Mantz's eight or nine in *Le Temps*). Nevertheless, Bernhardt does comment on the principal aspects of contemporary discourse on sculpture: composition (which in the case of Mercié's monument to Michelet had 'noble simplicity [noblesse simple]'); expression (the face of Falguière's Saint Vincent incorporated all the 'life of the man [la vie de l'homme]' and was 'truly beautiful [vraiment beau]'); and execution. This latter area solicited the most thought from Bernhardt. In the case of a work she praised, Saint-Marceaux's Saint Vincent de Paul, the 'torso is modelled from flesh not marble; the arms were of a tight and powerful design; the legs firm and fine, with feet that were real but not executed with realism'.²⁵⁹ In the case of a work, or elements of a work she clearly objected to, Ringel's 'wax statue' (she does not name this work), the 'legs are heavy, the ankles swollen, the feet common, too flat, and ruined by the footwear'. For Bernhardt 'all this was shocking to see' and 'it was not artistic, but industrial' and the place of this statue and where it should be sent was the Tussaud waxwork museum. This work had no appeal to the public, she claimed, other than of 'unhealthy curiosity'.²⁶⁰ Harsh words following on from high praise, Bernhardt adopted and adapted typical discourse of her time and at the same time managed to demonstrate that if a work was or was not 'art' she had the knowledge and experience to make this judgement.

²⁵⁹ '[L]e torse est modelé dans de la chair et non dans du marbre; les bras sont d'un dessin serré et puissant; les jambes sont fines et fermes, avec des pieds reels, mais sans réalisme', Bernhardt, *Le Globe* (17 May 1879), n.p.

²⁶⁰ 'Les jambes sont Lourdes, les chevilles engorges, les pieds communs, plats et abîmés par la chaussure, et puis, tout cela est choquant à voir. Ce n'est pas de l'art, c'est de l'industrie; la place de cette statue est au musée Tussaud, qu'elle y aille! C'est un appel à la curiosité malsaine du public', Bernhardt, *Le Globe* (17 May 1879), n.p.

The only other article in which Bernhardt's views on contemporary sculpture practice were recorded was the much later interview in *Le Figaro*. Asking the reader 'what does Mme Sarah Bernhardt think of her colleagues in sculpture?', Daurelle replied that 'I have to say that she thinks well of all of them' and cites Bernhardt as saying of Mercié, Falguière, Dubois, Guillaume, Saint-Marceaux and Puech (all except Puech considered by Bernhardt in *Le Globe* nearly twenty years earlier) that 'their work is made after nature, their work is beautiful'. Precisely what this might have meant in terms of application is only gauged by Bernhardt's comments, solicited by Daurelle, on Rodin. She comments as follows:

He has a lot of talent, there's no doubt about that, but Rodin exaggerates, he makes things ugly, grimacing. His art is fumiste; looking at it one thinks of caricature. Well, it is more difficult to represent beauty than ugliness.²⁶¹

In opening his article Daurelle described the hustle-bustle of members of a household just returned from the summer spent at Bernhardt's holiday home in Belle-Île-en-mer and the fact that he claimed the interview took place away from this in the quietness of the small library suggests that this interview did take place. In this case, the opinions given by Bernhardt indicate that she adhered to principles of making sculpture (that beauty in art achieved in a naturalist mode) consistent with the views expressed in her Salon review nearly twenty years earlier and, importantly, that she aligned herself with those she saw as the proponents of this method of producing sculpture.

3.7 A Sculptors' World: Bernhardt and her Peers

In Chapter 2 I considered how Bernhardt's sculpture practice was informed by the two artists who were closest to her, the painters Louise Abbéma and Georges Clairin. But apart from her teachers and praticiens, did Bernhardt have physical and intellectual contact with any other artists, particularly other sculptors? In the report of the visit to her studio in *Zigzags* (May 1876), the author claimed that as well as Mathieu-Meusnier, the sculptor Aimé Millet was

²⁶¹ 'Beaucoup de talent sans doute, mais Rodin exagère; il fait laid; il fait grimaçant. Son art a quelque chose de fumiste: à le voir, on songe un peu à de la caricature. Or, il est plus difficile de rendre la beauté que la laideur', Daurelle, *Le Figaro* (22 September 1897), 4.

also present. In my discussion of who did not teach Bernhardt to make sculpture I also suggested that she may have exchanged ideas and tips on making sculpture with Gustave Doré. She also received a visit from the British sculptor Lord Ronald Gower, went to the Salon with him and visited his studio in one day in May 1876.²⁶²

This leaves only suggestion and inference as to who Bernhardt may have considered her peers and with whom she actually associated. I considered, briefly, in Chapter 2 that, as her neighbour for a short time on the avenue de Villiers and because he was a friend of Clairin, she may have associated with the sculptor Ernest Barrias. This may also have been the case with Falguière who was probably a friend of Abbéma (he made a life mask of her and she a dry point drawing of him).²⁶³ I have already suggested that Bernhardt may have known the sculptor Gustave Haller as both were students of Mathieu-Meusnier and this is also possibly the case with Franceschi's daughters, Marguerite Poiré and Marie-Jeanne Franceschi-Cranney, provided contact was maintained with Francheschi after 1880 (the last recorded association between Bernhardt and Franceschi). It may also be that the claim by Carpeaux's daughter that Bernhardt worked in his studio was based on some contact, even if not teaching. If Bernhardt did know Haller, her husband, Prince George B. Stirbey may have been a link to Carpeaux because they knew each other, and Stirbey also bought a significant work by Mathieu-Meusnier in 1873, his marble statue of *La Littérature satirique*, copied as a State purchase ten years later for the Cour carrée in the Louvre. Hélène Bertaux, a renowned Salon exhibitor and important sculpture teacher (she set up her own school of sculpture in 1879) also lived or worked on the avenue de Villiers overlapping with Bernhardt's residency there, but as yet I have established no direct and evidence-based contact between the two women.

3.8 Showing Work to the World: Exhibiting Sculpture Exhibitions during Bernhardt's Lifetime

²⁶² Journal entry for 5 May 1880, 'Lord Ronald's Diaries, 1880' (unpublished manuscript, archive of the Sutherland estate), transcribed by Philip Ward-Jackson.

²⁶³ Alexandre Falguière, 'Masque de Louise Abbéma', n.d., terracotta (musée Magnin, Dijon).

Even if firm contacts cannot be established between Bernhardt and her sculptor peers, it can be ascertained that she took part in the wider, social world of sculpture production by exhibiting her work in a number of public arenas. In this section I provide a table (Appendix 3: 'Exhibitions with Works by Bernhardt During her Lifetime') documenting all the known exhibitions in which Bernhardt took part, some of which she organized herself.²⁶⁴ This includes, where possible, all the works shown and provides a work in progress list of where these exhibitions were documented in contemporary text and image; for instance, in a catalogue, newspaper, art journal, print illustration, or photograph.²⁶⁵ This resource demonstrates how Bernhardt's sculpture practice was situated in a larger art world context beyond the walls of her studio and her day-to-day practice. In this section of the text I therefore make general observations about this aspect of Bernhardt's practice and how this constituted the presentation to the world of actual, concrete objects rather than representations of them in verbal description or images. I have already made some commentary on issues surrounding the significance of exhibiting: by reproducing Bernhardt's entry in the 1874 Salon guide, I noted that the Salon was a place where Bernhardt's sculpture production could be considered within the public domain as a serious art practice. Exhibiting at the Salon was essential for artists seeking recognition, status, and sales. This opportunity was particularly significant if others were denied, for instance entering competitions at the *École des beaux-arts* after which one's work was publicly exhibited and discussed.²⁶⁶ I have

²⁶⁴ Two exhibitions included works by Bernhardt when these probably did not belong to her: the *Exposition de peinture et sculpture de 1879*, Société des beaux-arts, ville de Nice, 1879 (a copy of *Le Bouffon*, 1877, medium not specified in catalogue; and the *Southern Exposition, Louisville, Kentucky (Primavera, c. 1880*, possibly sold during Bernhardt's exhibitions in New York and Boston). If Bernhardt did not own these works at this time, then she was probably not responsible for exhibiting them, but I include these as this is intended as a means of analyzing one way in which Bernhardt's work as sculptor was known to her contemporaries.

²⁶⁵ I include the public monument, *La Musique* (Théâtre de Monte Carlo) because the building was inaugurated publicly (January 1879) thus situating it as a work consciously on display for a particular audience within a certain time span. If I am uncertain as to how many or which works were shown, notes are provided in Column 5. A key to textual and image sources is provided at the end. I only use contemporary sources.

²⁶⁶ Jules Salmson discusses his and his colleagues' decorative work as that of 'mere bronze casters [vulgaires bronziers]', comparing to it a 'true Salon work [un vrai travail de Salon]'. This demonstrates an operable hierarchy in nineteenth-century sculpture production and the desire for

also already presented some analysis of Bernhardt's exhibiting history: for example, by noting that *Ophélie* was her most exhibited work and considering why. But a concentrated summary of Bernhardt's exhibiting history is necessary now in order to ascertain if she pursued a coherent exhibiting strategy, to determine the trajectory of this strategy and its history, and to ask how this strategy might be qualified. The table provides a chronology in tandem with my analysis here and I therefore elucidate on general matters but do not discuss each exhibition in depth.

My first observation is based on a question: in 1874, when she first exhibited, what were the opportunities for a newcomer and an artist who was a woman in France? Why was her first port of call the Salon? Any other exhibiting opportunities for someone qualified in this way (and thus for Bernhardt before she gained more experience as a practising artist later in the decade), were unprecedented in 1874 and, therefore, unlikely. According to a survey produced by Charlotte Yeldham in *Women Artists in Nineteenth-Century France and England* (1984), the first solo exhibition by a woman artist in France was in 1885 (Eva Gonzalès, Salons de la Vie moderne), although in fact Louise Abbéma had already exhibited at the gallery premises of *La Vie moderne* earlier, in 1879, when the periodical was newly established.²⁶⁷ Apart from Abbéma's, I know of no other solo or joint exhibitions by women in France before Gonzalès showed her work in 1885.²⁶⁸

recognition of a 'higher' form of sculpture demonstrated in acceptance by the Salon jury; Salmson, 230.

²⁶⁷ Yeldham, Appendix IX: 'One-Woman Exhibitions in France', II, 180-91; and Ed. Renoir, 'Notre exposition', *La Vie moderne*, 1e année, no. 7 (22 May 1879). According to Yeldham, exhibitions of more than one woman in France did not begin until 1906. In England opportunities were greater: the first solo exhibition by a woman was held in 1798, but nevertheless, only a further fourteen were held before Bernhardt's was held in London in June-July (actually a joint exhibition with Abbéma); Yeldham, Appendix VIII: 'One Woman Exhibitions in England', II, 152-79. In any case, in 1874 Bernhardt had yet to go to England for another five years. The only publication which indicates that the exhibition in London lasted beyond June (until July) is Marcus B. Huish, *The Year's Art: A Concise Epitome of all Matters Relating to the Arts of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture, which have Occurred during the Year 1879, together with Information Respecting the events of the Year* (London: Macmillan, 1880), 53. The precise finish date is not specified.

²⁶⁸ None are provided in a list of all exhibitions of nineteenth-century French art held from 1850-1978 in Europe and the US in the exhibition catalogue of a show of the same name held in Paris in 1979;

The next concern is whether, and how, Bernhardt's exhibitions were presented in print media, listed in column 6 of Appendix 3. Bernhardt's sculpture at the Salon and in independent exhibitions was sometimes reviewed and sometimes illustrated in the art press as well as in general cultural and social periodicals (both 'serious' and 'humorous'), as well as in those daily newspapers that covered art world matters. Such interest occurred in the French, English, German-language, and US press.²⁶⁹ Private views of her exhibitions were treated (appropriately) as social events and reported as such in the relevant news sections of daily newspapers and weekly periodicals. When art journals (published less frequently) covered these events, they often cited from these sources. Bernhardt's work in progress was also, occasionally, reported in the news sections of art periodicals.²⁷⁰

Was Bernhardt's exhibiting history treated differently in print media to that of other artists? Yes and no. Did this treatment depend upon the typology of the publication or section in which Bernhardt's work was considered, where it was published (i.e. Paris, London, New

'Expositions', in *L'art en France sous le Second Empire*, ed. Victor Beyer and Jean-Marie Moulin, exh. cat. (Paris: RMN, 1979), 521-26. Recent scholarship has considered in depth several exhibiting situations outside the Salon, see for instance, *Saloni, gallerie, musei et loro influenza sullo sviluppo dell'arte dei secoli XIX e XX [Atti del XXIV Congresso Internazionale de Storia dell'Arte, 1979]*, ed. Patricia Mainardi and Francis Haskell (Bologna: CLUEB, 1981), esp. Pierre Vaisse, 'Salons, Expositions, et Sociétés d'artistes en France 1871-1914', 141-55. For the Salons des femmes, organized by the Union de femmes peintres et sculpteurs from January 1882 and the increase in independent [non-Salon] exhibitions from this year onwards, see Garb (1994), esp. 9-10, 19-41. For a discussion of the 'exhibitionality' of painting and exhibition venues in Paris from the 1870-80s (Impressionist, cercles, artists' societies and dealers' exhibitions), see Martha Ward, 'Impressionist Installations and Private Exhibitions', *Art Bulletin*, 73:4 (1991), 599-622. The exhibiting specifically of sculpture requires much further study: the entry on the sculptor Auguste Ottin (b. 1811) in the *Grande dictionnaire* reveals that Ottin set up a 'society with the aim of exhibiting its members' work' and that this took place in the former studio of Nadar on the boulevard des Capucines, opening on 25 April; XVII, 1557. I have not identified this exhibition from other sources, nor what was the membership of this society, or even its name. This hints that the frequency and constitutions of exhibitions of sculpture or that included sculpture in this period have yet to be fully assessed.

²⁶⁹ I have not consulted print material in other languages.

²⁷⁰ For instance news that the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* would be exhibited in 1877; Eugène Véron, 'Chronique française', *L'Art*, vol. 8, 3e année, no. 1 (1877), 264; and that she would be sending busts of Girardin and Busnach in 1878; Véron, 'Chronique française', *L'Art*, vol. 13, 4e année, no. 2 (1878), 168.

York etc), who the writer was, and what the perceived constitution of the audience was? Yes. The news sections of art periodicals and the social sections of newspapers included reports on other artists and events. Therefore, reporting on her activities in these contexts meant that Bernhardt was treated like any other artist deemed of interest to any given readership because, like them, she showed her work and continued to produce new work for upcoming exhibitions, existing or future clients, herself, and her friends. *How* she was treated was, though, often different. Her gender, acting activity, celebrity, and Jewishness were frequently the focus of overt or implicit attention and almost always to the detriment of any meaningful discussion of the work or of the structure and content of the exhibition as a whole. For instance, when she exhibited with friends (Abbéma in London in 1879; Clairin and Jules-Émile Saintin in New York in 1880), these other artists and their work were largely ignored.²⁷¹ One significant difference (in her favour) between Bernhardt and her peers was that news or discussion of her exhibitions was presented in a wider range of publications, for instance the exhibition in London in 1879 was reported in the monthly magazine *The Theatre*.²⁷²

Exhibitions were conducted in a number of ways. Sometimes Bernhardt's work was exhibited for sale, sometimes not. Exhibitions specifically aimed at selling work tended to be those she had organized alone or possibly in collaboration with her theatrical agent (London 1879, New York 1880, Boston 1881). Work may have been for sale at exhibitions either organized for her by others, or at least hosted by others (Wiener Kunstfreunde, Vienna, 1881). Bernhardt also exhibited in independent, group shows, an increasingly common activity for artists in

²⁷¹ Abbéma's 'Un médaillon de Madlle. Sarah Bernhardt' (1875, bronze, copies in musée d'Orsay and Comédie-Française) and her paintings, *Lilas blanc* (1878) and *En bateau* (1879 or before) were exhibited in London and included in the catalogue; Anon., *Catalogue des oeuvres de Mlle Sarah Bernhardt (de la Comédie Française): peinture – sculpture* (London: Miles, 1879), exh. nos. 17, 18, 28. Abbéma's participation was noted only in Anon., 'Notes on Art and Archaeology', *The Academy: A weekly Review of Literature, Science and Art*, n.s., no. 372 (21 June 1879), 550. The works by Clairin and Saintin (1829-94) were not listed in the US catalogue (*Sarah Bernhardt Souvenir*), although Clairin was credited for the 'original frontispiece'.

²⁷² *The Theatre* (1 July 1879), 390. I can establish no other links between Saintin and Bernhardt but, as he was a student of Picot (as well as Drölling and Leboucher), it is likely he was a friend of Clairin.

France from the 1870s onwards. For instance, she showed the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* at the *cercle des Arts libéraux* in the rue Vivienne in June 1880, along with works by Abbéma, Clairin, her painting teacher Alfred Stevens, and others. This *cercle* was set up in late 1879 to early 1880. Run under the presidency of the painter Berne-Bellecour, *Kunstchronik* called the exhibition a 'small-scale Salon'.²⁷³ Tamar Garb charts the social and economic history and function of *cercles* as exclusive to the bourgeois male: they were, she writes, 'environments in which women would not be welcome as members' and, although not 'overtly commercial', they were nonetheless 'where future buyers and artists could inhabit the same space'.²⁷⁴ It may be, however, that this *cercle* did admit women members given that

²⁷³ Armand Silvestre, 'Le Monde des arts: expositions, musées, galeries, ateliers, ventes célèbres, découvertes artistiques', *La Vie moderne*, 2e année, no. 24 (12 June 1880), 373-75. This was probably Étienne-Prosper Berne-Bellecour (1838-1910). The committee president was M. le vicomte Henri de Bornier; *Kunstchronik*, Jahrgang 15 (29 July 1881), 650. This news item in *Kunstchronik* may have been taken from a French source but I am not aware which one.

²⁷⁴ Garb (1994), 32-41 (36). Garb notes the proliferation of *cercles* in the 1870s. She cites H. Gourdon de Genouillac on the alleged potential for the masculinization of women if they attended the *cercles* because they would, he writes, 'contract without a doubt deplorable habits that we have when we go there; they would certainly play cards and perhaps smoke large cigars as expensive as they are detestable'; 'Les Cercles des dames', *Gazette de femmes*, no. 19 (10 October 1882), 148; cited in Garb (1994), 35, note 63. Genouillac does not contemplate the possibility that women might or did exhibit in *cercles*, as Bernhardt and Abbéma clearly did at the very *cercle* he was writing about. Garb writes that the *cercle des Arts libéraux* was 'for men only' (35) but, again, this appears not to be the case and this publishing incident is worth noting as a record of desired masculine exclusivity rather than historical fact, one only apparent because Bernhardt and Abbéma are my case studies for this project. For alternatives to the Salon generally, see Mainardi, who writes that 'during these years [1878-83] private gallery exhibitions had become viable, even preferable alternatives to the crowded, badly installed official Salons.' She cites the *Exposition internationale de peinture* at the galerie Georges Petit in 1883; Mainardi (1993), 93. She also lists a range of alternative exhibiting venues, including the *cercles*; Mainardi (1993), 143-44. For more exclusively commercial exhibiting venues and the dealership system in this period, see Nicholas Green, 'Dealing in Temperaments: Economic Transformation of the Artistic Field in France during the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century', *Art History*, 10:1 (1987), 590-78. For discussion of 'retrospective' exhibitions, particularly the one-person show, see Robert Jensen, *Marketing Modernism in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 107-37. Dealers shops and galleries were also a site of exhibition because artworks were displayed, for sale, and often in the window, see Nicholas Green, 'Circuits of Production, Circuits of Consumption: The Case of Mid-Nineteenth-Century French Art Dealing', *Art Journal*, 48:1 (1989), 29-34. Green opens his essay with a citation from Théophile Gautier in *L'Artiste* (3 January 1858) who wrote that the rue Lafitte was a 'permanent Salon, an exhibition of painting that lasts the whole year round', cited from Lethève (1972; 144), 29. Here I only consider

Bernhardt and Abbéma exhibited there. But neither the (gendered) ethos of the group, nor the function for Bernhardt of this particular exhibition in terms of how her work there was intended to impact upon the consciousness of the Parisian art world, is evident in the texts I have consulted.²⁷⁵

What is clear is that Bernhardt showed her work at a variety of venues: theatres (New York, Vienna); a photographer's gallery (New York); the private gallery of the cercle; a (possible) commercial gallery (London); and a museum gallery (pavillon de Marsan, musée de l'Union centrale des Arts décoratifs).²⁷⁶ She exhibited with her artist peers in their hundreds at the Paris Salon, the World's Columbian Exposition (Chicago, 1893) and the Exposition Universelle (Paris, 1900); in exhibitions with one or more friends (Abbéma in London, Clairin and Saintin in New York); in group exhibitions (cercle des Arts libéraux and société des Artistes décorateurs); and (probably) alone (Vienna). According to Robert Jensen, outside the artist's studio, 'self-arranged' exhibitions in the 1860-80s 'were more unique than is often allowed, because of the wide-spread reservations held by artists, dealers, and critics

exhibitions in dealer galleries by Abbéma because of her association with Bernhardt and, even then, only briefly.

²⁷⁵ The *Bust of Louise Abbéma* is only mentioned by *Kunstchronik* and not Silvestre. Garb notes that the cercle des Arts libéraux hired out its premises for the first exhibition of the Union des femmes peintres et sculpteurs in 1882; 35. This suggests that the cercle was sympathetic to women artists and probably did admit women as members despite the exclusivity implied by de Genouillac.

²⁷⁶ The gallery where the exhibition in London was held was that of 'Messrs. Thomas Russell and Sons' Gallery' at 33 Piccadilly; see Anon., 'Mdlle Sarah Bernhardt's Exhibition', *The Graphic* (14 June 1879), 599. This was listed in Kelly's trade directory for the city as 'Thomas Russell and Son, watch and chronometer manufacturers', which had won a gold medal at the Paris Exposition universelle in 1878. These premises were presumably the showroom rather than the factory thus explaining the 'gallery' space for the display of their watches and clocks; *Post Office London Directory*, ed. Kelly & Co. (London: Kelly & Co., 1879), 1197. The directory was published twice a year (December and Spring). The current building at the street number is recent. I have not yet identified the venue for the exhibition in Boston. I also have no records that the exhibition in Budapest took place, but it may have been held in the theatre where she performed. The event at UCAD was the annual exhibition of the Société des artistes décorateurs in 1906 where Bernhardt also exhibited in 1904. For women's membership of societies of artists and their exhibitions, see Garb (1994), 37-38. For a general essay on these organizations, see Jean-Paul Bouillon, 'Sociétés d'artistes et institutions officielles dans la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle', *Romantisme: revue de la société des études romantiques*, 16:54 (1986), 89-113.

alike that shows of individual, living artists, regardless of whether they were merely collections or “retrospectives”, lacked propriety, revealing the unseemly appearance of self-promotion’.²⁷⁷

Bernhardt became subject to accusations of self-promotion – often driven by anti-Semitism – when she went to London in 1879.²⁷⁸ Previously, when she had made and exhibited sculpture at the Salon this had not been written about as an act of self-promotion.²⁷⁹ Aspects of Bernhardt’s life and work experience that were picked up on in the discourse that fielded these accusations – her work as an actress, her gender and her Jewishness – complicate further Jensen’s statement with regard only to the gender-unspecified ‘artist’. For Bernhardt, such accusations folded into an existing mode of discussing her sculpture practice that became established in print media in 1876, which was that she simply did too many different things. Because she exhibited in the highly public arena of the Salon and was successful there in 1876, Bernhardt’s sculpture practice and the works she produced were, by 1879, the subject of intense scrutiny. Although a few writers admired her capacious energy, most disparaged a perceived inability to focus on any one thing and do it well.²⁸⁰ She was variously configured as

²⁷⁷ Jensen is discussing those by Courbet (1855 and 1867) and Manet (1867 and 1876) but his observations are in the context of what was usual or not during this entire period; 114.

²⁷⁸ For analysis of anti-Semitic treatment of Bernhardt, see Sander Gilman, ‘Salome, Syphilis, Sarah Bernhardt and the “Modern Jewess”’, in *German Quarterly*, 66:2 (Spring 1993), 195-211; Carol Ockman, ‘When is a Jewish Star just a Star? Interpreting Images of Sarah Bernhardt,’ in *The Jew and the Text: Modernity and the Construction of Identity*, ed. Linda Nochlin and Tamar Garb (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), who discusses the stereotype of the publicity-seeking ‘Jew’; Janis Bergman-Carton, ‘Negotiating the Categories: Sarah Bernhardt and the Possibilities of Jewishness,’ in *Art Journal*, 55:2 (1996), 55-64; Mary Louise Roberts, *Disruptive Acts: The New Woman in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 165-220 and for her discussion of Bernhardt as a ‘pioneer of marketing and publicity’, 225.

²⁷⁹ Although there is a hint that it might happen: one reviewer of the Salon in 1876 referred to the crowd moving towards the ‘starring group’ (*Après la tempête*) but this may be because Bernhardt was a well-known Comédie-Française actress and that the work had an honourable mention. Unidentified publication, c. May-June 1876, MOSD, dossier Bernhardt.

²⁸⁰ It is difficult to generalise on the general history of Bernhardt’s sculpture practice without knowing if I have consulted every text that refers to it. There are, however, key moments and modes of representation. Initially, in 1874-75 there was limited, cursory response to the works she exhibited at the Salon. In 1876 coverage of Bernhardt’s sculpture practice took off: she featured in full-length articles (satirical and biographical) prior to and during the Salon at which *Après la tempête* produced a

an amateur, or only able to produce sculpture (as well as act) because of a nervous temperament and excess energy that needed expending but, in this treatment, never because she had talent, or the time, opportunity, and facilities to develop her skills in the two years before this.²⁸¹

flurry of art critical reviews. From 1877 to 1882, when Bernhardt exhibited most often, her sculpture received coverage in general news items (but most concerned primarily with her work in the theatre and or her as celebrity); in specific art contexts, such as news items and exhibition reviews; and in biography and feature-length articles based on visits (or claimed visits) to her home and studio, including some interview material. Bernhardt's sculpture practice was discussed in newspaper commentary and the letters she wrote in response, which I discuss here. How her sculpture practice was regarded, varied according to the type and provenance of the publication, attitudes to women and/or actresses, understanding of the principles of art production, or whether Bernhardt was connected in some way to the publication or author. After 1882 reviews were less frequent because Bernhardt exhibited less often. Biography and reported visits to her home and studio increased in number and length. This did not mean that her practice and works were covered in depth; both often received only brief attention. By the 1890s and thereafter, most accounts (including interviews) were retrospective. A watershed occurred in c. 1888 once Bernhardt established herself in boulevard Pereire. According to Anastasia Easterday, although she is not named directly, Bernhardt was very likely to be the woman sculptor represented in Paul Dollfuss's, 'La Vertu des modèles', *Modèles d'artistes* (Paris: Marpon et Flammarion, 1888), 195-99. The sculptor seduces a female model, destroying her health and her (healthy) relationship with a man. I agree with Dr Easterday, Texas State University and am grateful to her scholarship for citing this work (344-48) and her helpful response to my query; email from Anastasia Easterday, 31 January 2007. The identification of Bernhardt is compounded by the following story by Dollfuss about a woman painter reputed to be of indeterminate gender, almost definitely modelled on perceptions of Abbéma (and who often followed in Bernhardt's wake in published material); 199-200. Assuming that the identity of these figures is correct and was understood as Bernhardt and Abbéma at the time, Dollfuss's book marks the end of a period of virulently negative treatment that specifically deployed Bernhardt's sculpture practice as a means to disparage her. After the mid- to late 1880s, Bernhardt was no longer subject to the same level of vicious attack that she had been in the second half of the 1870s and early 1880s. Around her death, obituary and posthumous biography gave brief accounts of her sculpture practice. Accuracy in all literature on Bernhardt's sculpture practice is a problem: chronological error and other anomalies abound because, for the most part, the story of Bernhardt's sculpture practice is anecdotal even when told by her (if one can believe that she was interviewed and trust that an interview was reproduced reasonably accurately). But this literature is most of what the modern scholar has to work with.

²⁸¹ See, for instance, Leroy, *L'Art*, (1880), 163 in which he invents a conversation between 'Louise Abbéma' and 'Sarah Bernhardt' when they meet in a gallery in the Louvre. Bernhardt's dilettantism and her Jewishness (she wants to become a cathedral architect but might not be allowed because she is Jewish) is pitched against Abbéma's non-secular dedication as a professional artist. For the notion of Bernhardt's 'nervous temperament [tempérament nerveux]', see 'L'Atelier de Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt', *Zigzags* (14 May 1876), 10.

When she went to London with the Comédie-Française in June 1879, Bernhardt's distinct interests and activities (apart from acting) were now seen to be pursued, not because she enjoyed or was good at them, but as a means of drawing attention to herself. A journalist from the magazine, *Life*, projected this onto her actor colleagues when he wrote that '[t]he exhibition of her clever paintings and sculptures in Piccadilly the other day, is, not unnaturally, regarded by them as a device for securing notoriety'.²⁸² Bernhardt was not only a sculptor: her principal occupation was acting, she also painted (first extant work, *La Mer*, 1875, musée du Touquet), and in July 1879 she published her first writing, although neither of the last two activities received the same level of dedicated attention she gave to making sculpture in the 1870s and well into the 1880s. Bernhardt was therefore figured, by the middle of 1879, not only as prone to multiple activities, but as needing to be publicly admonished for it.

Of all the punishing print coverage afforded Bernhardt by those who considered her self-promoting and who claimed that she only exhibited her sculpture and painting for this reason, the most virulent was the *Figaro* episode in 1879. As a prelude to the full onslaught, on 19 June *Figaro* published a spoof letter which, the paper alleged, Bernhardt had sent to the editor of an unidentified Parisian newspaper and *Figaro* had intercepted. Printed in the theatre news section, and not the letters page, 'Sarah Bernhardt' declared that she was the 'idol of Londoners [l'idole des Londoniens]' and repeated three times in the letter 'I have so much to do [j'ai tant à faire]', mentioning how, in between making a bust and performing in the theatre, she managed to 'devote herself to science, geography and history'.²⁸³ The exhibition in London, and its success (measured by the press in terms of the numbers and status of visitors at the private view and by Bernhardt in the response received to her work and the sales she secured), as well as Bernhardt's extra-curricular performances sculpting a bust in private homes in the city, provided the excuse for *Figaro* to launch a barrage of negative

²⁸² Anon., 'The True Story of Sarah-Bernhardt', *Life*, no. 1 (12 July 1879), 5. I have found no records of what her colleagues at the Comédie-Française thought of her exhibition in London.

²⁸³ 'Entre un buste ou une représentation dramatique, je me consacre à la science, à la géographie et à l'histoire', Anon., 'La Soirée théâtrale: une lettre de Sarah Bernhardt', *Le Figaro* (19 June 1879), 3.

coverage in which the reason for the exhibition became lost. On 27 June, Albert Wolff (b.1835) wrote a long front-page article under the title, 'Courrier de Paris', in which he accused Bernhardt of exhibiting herself in a white jacket and charging money for it (claiming to have learned this elsewhere). Wolff expounded that, because of the 'ridicule due the sculptor dressed in a jacket, the actress is tarred with the same brush', ignoring completely the fact that this was an exhibition of her works in sculpture and painting. Moreover, the responsibility laid at Bernhardt's door was that her actions would end up by causing foreigners to 'confuse French art with charlatanism'; this without having discussed *her* (or Abbéma's) French art in any way whatsoever.²⁸⁴ I have not been able to track the entire corpus of Wolff's art critical writing career and therefore cannot gauge the level of his experience in this area in 1879, although, according to the *Grande dictionnaire* his first job on moving to Paris c. 1857-58 was to write a Salon review.²⁸⁵ However, in the mid-1880s he did publish on the history of painting and produced the collected biographies of contemporary artists, including those of the sculptors Rude and Carpeaux. It is therefore likely that in 1879 he was sufficiently versed in the method and the language of writing about art, but chose not to deploy his skills and knowledge when dealing with Bernhardt's art practice. Bernhardt, who seldom responded to such ignominious treatment, did so in this case. She replied that she had 'not worn men's clothes here in London; I did not even bring my [studio] costume with me' and that she had attended her exhibition only once, on the day of the private view for invited guests, and, therefore, 'no-one had paid a shilling to see her'. She added: 'I am exhibiting sixteen paintings and eight sculptures, this is true; but since I brought them to sell, it is a good idea to show them'.²⁸⁶ Exhibiting strategy was a well-sounded debate and one that had been circulating for

²⁸⁴ 'La ridicule venant au sculpteur en vareuse, éclabousse toujours un peu l'artiste dramatique' ; 'finira par confondre l'art français avec le charlatanisme', Albert Wolff, 'Courrier de Paris', *Le Figaro* (27 June 1879), 1.

²⁸⁵ Wolff began as a fictional writer and on moving to Paris in c. 1857-58 wrote for *Le Gaulois*, *Charivari* (as editor), *Le Figaro*, and a number of other journals, eventually becoming editor-in-chief of *Figaro*. He wrote Salon reviews for *Figaro* in 1885-88. He published on the history of painting in 1884 and his collection of artists' biographies was entitled *La Capitale de l'art* (Paris: Havard, 1886).

²⁸⁶ '[J]e ne me suis jamais vêtue en home, ici, à Londres; je n'ai jamais même pas emporté mon costume [...]. Je n'ai été qu'une seule fois à la petite exposition que j'ai faite; une seule fois, et c'était le jour où je n'avais fait que quelques invitations privées; personne n'a donc payé un schelling pour

some time: in this instance Émile Zola stepped into the fray in the literary journal, *Voltaire*. His main line of defence was a reasoned one: he wrote that Bernhardt was ‘reproached for not devoting herself to the dramatic art, because of making sculpture and painting’ and added that ‘she is not denied the right to paint or sculpt but one declares simply that she should not exhibit her works’, commenting finally that it was up to her what she did with her time.²⁸⁷ Zola had previously written of the need for artists to exhibit outside the Salon when Edouard Manet exhibited in a temporary building on the place de l’Alma, opening on 24 May 1867. The preface to the catalogue – according to Linda Nochlin, probably written jointly by Manet and Zola – argued that ‘one must be able also to exhibit what one has done’ and that so doing would mean that an artist would ‘find friends and allies’ and ‘gain[...] the goodwill of the public’.²⁸⁸ The legacy of the *Figaro* episode lives on: as a general rule, exhibitions since Bernhardt’s death continue to be organized around her as spectacle or icon at the expense of

me voir. [...] J’expose seize tableaux et huit sculptures; c’est donc encore vrai; mais puisque je les ai apportés pour les vendre, il faut cependant bien que je les montre’, Sarah Bernhardt to Albert Wolff, in ‘Sarah Bernhardt à Londres’, *Le Figaro* (29 June 1879), 1. Huret reports an earlier incident with *Figaro* in which Bernhardt replied to an article by a journalist named Albert Millaud in mid-1878 contesting his claims that she skinned dogs, burnt cats alive, dyed her hair etc; 58. This incident is not referred to in *MDL* but Bernhardt does mention that when she performed in *L’Étrangère* (opened 14 February 1876) *Figaro* ‘was in a very bad humour with me just then’; *MDL*, 312. The *Figaro* episode is recounted in Huret; 72-73, and *MDL*, 321-22.

²⁸⁷ ‘On lui reproche surtout de ne pass’en être tenu à l’art dramatique, d’avoir abordé la sculpture, la peinture [...] on ne lui nie pas le droit de peindre ni de sculpter, on declare simplement qu’elle ne devrait pas exposer ses oeuvres’, reprinted in Émile Zola, *Le Naturalisme au théâtre* [c. 1881], ed. Maurice le Blond (Paris: Bernouard, 1928), 126-37 (128-29). It seems likely, for the very reason that Bernhardt was famous, that she did not organize a sale in her own studio as was customary for sculptors and painters in this period (see Jensen), but, if anything, was obliged to exhibit elsewhere. Bernhardt claimed that 1200 came to her exhibition, which may be exaggerated; *MDL*, 314. No figures are available elsewhere, but some London newspaper reports did focus on listing the names of dignitaries and did imply that the event was crowded. This was also the case with the exhibition in New York, which suggests that, for Bernhardt, a studio sale would have been difficult to manage in the confines of her home.

²⁸⁸ Reprinted under the section and sub-section titles ‘Realism and Naturalism in France: Reasons for a Private Exhibition’ according to its title in Hamilton, *Manet and his Critics* and given as ‘Preface to Catalogue of Manet’s Private Exposition at the Place de l’Alma, May 24, 1867’, in Nochlin, ed. (1966), 80-81 (80, 81). I am uncertain as to whether this was a commercial exhibition by Manet because the preface does not discuss another reason for exhibiting, as Bernhardt did, which is to sell one’s work.

any in-depth consideration of her ability as an artist, even when her sculpture (and less often, painting) is there to be seen.²⁸⁹

The final general observation I wish to make regarding Bernhardt's exhibiting history is how this was recorded in catalogues. The reproduction of her entry in the 1874 Salon guide demonstrated that Bernhardt fulfilled certain criteria for being a sculptor: giving an address that was (probably) a studio, providing the names of one's teachers, and, of course, listing and describing the works shown. The significance, at the time and for posterity, of being recorded in art catalogues in the 1870-90s is best understood when one cannot locate the catalogue for an exhibition because it did not exist, it is held by few libraries which may not lend material, or it is not held by a library (all possibilities for the exhibition in Vienna). Understanding how the catalogues in which Bernhardt's work was recorded were produced therefore situates her practice in the history of art history. Although not of equal status, her inclusion in the Salon guides or catalogues for group exhibitions in which she participated (UCAD) located and locates Bernhardt on the same footing as her peers because they record that she was an exhibiting artist. Catalogues were often produced as standard procedure and according to a known formula by the organizers of an exhibition. Variables within the format could indicate difference: for example in the Salon guide, 'H. C. [hors concours]' or 'Exempt' marked out an elite who were members of l'Institut [Académie de France], had been decorated with the Légion d'honneur for their works, were medal winners at previous Salons (first, second, or third prizes, but not honourable mentions), or Prix de Rome winners. All were unlikely for Bernhardt, a woman and novice in 1874.²⁹⁰ Catalogues that did exist (or are extant) for exhibitions that predominantly featured Bernhardt's work were specifically produced by her

²⁸⁹ These exhibitions are listed in Appendix 3. The most attentive exhibition to Bernhardt's sculpture practice that was not a sale is the exhibition, *Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama*, held at the Jewish Museum in New York (2 December 2005 to 2 April 2006) where six sculptures were shown. Carol Ockman's catalogue essay also devotes considerable attention to this matter; Ockman (2005), esp. 43-51.

²⁹⁰ Article 22, Règlement, Salon guide (1874), cxxxi.

and/or her associates (London; New York/Boston).²⁹¹ I have not conducted an extensive survey of similar catalogues for either group or one-person exhibitions in the 1870s and 80s in France. I can therefore only suggest that recording these two exhibitions as events and the works in them as objects might have been a pioneering move on Bernhardt's part, particularly as both publications were made more attractive than usual because they were illustrated with drawings and thus, in themselves, became collectable items.²⁹² Bernhardt's necessary 'self-promotion' in producing these catalogues situates them as valuable documentary evidence of a number of things: the works shown, Bernhardt's collaboration with artist friends as co-exhibitors or illustrators (Abbéma, Clairin, and Saintin), her involvement with publishers, and the fruit of negotiations with the providers of premises in which to exhibit.²⁹³ Both catalogues are indices of how Bernhardt situated herself as a worthy contender in the world of nineteenth-century French sculpture (and painting) production and its markets in the absence of being taken seriously in some other art critical forums. One means of demonstrating how significant these catalogues were and are is by comparison with Abbéma's early exhibition of her painting at the gallery of *La Vie moderne* in May 1879, which appears not to have had a catalogue. If nothing else, this lack of archival material makes a full list of works in Abbéma's

²⁹¹ I have not yet researched the production of catalogues of independent exhibitions in the late 1870s to early 80s and I am not aware of any comprehensive study on this subject.

²⁹² The frontispiece of the London catalogue is of an escutcheon that includes sculptor's and painter's equipment, theatrical masks, laurels and an allegorical putto and is inscribed with the title of the exhibition. This is probably by Bernhardt herself. The New York/Boston catalogue includes several drawings; a front cover and internal frontispiece, both by Clairin, which include a modelling stool and, again, artist's equipment and Bernhardt's dog. There are thirteen further illustrations within the catalogue: Bernhardt's holiday home in Normandy (by Henry Mauzaise or Henry Maupert), Abbéma's medallion of Bernhardt (copyright *Art Amateur*); *Après la tempête* (Camille Piton); 'Young Girl and Death' (engraving of Bernhardt's 1880 Salon painting and copyrighted to *Art Amateur*); 'The Jester and the Mask' (Camille Piton, after a drawing by Bernhardt, copyright *Art Amateur*); and eight scenes from 'Camille' [*La Dame aux camélias*] from original drawings by Bernhardt, copyright Henry Abbey). For another example of a one-person exhibition catalogue available as commodity, see Émile Zola et Édouard Manet, *Étude biographique et critique, accompagnée d'un portrait d'Édouard Manet par Bracquemond et d'une eau-forte d'Édouard Manet d'après Olympia* (Paris: Dentu, 1867).

²⁹³ Presumably Bernhardt paid for the hire of Russell's gallery in London. In New York she exhibited in the Union League Theatre (but did not perform there) and at Sarony's gallery. The exhibition in Boston was held in the 'Studio Building' which I have not identified. In Vienna she exhibited in the Ringtheater where she was performing. I am not aware how arrangements were made for each of these venues.

exhibition difficult to establish. The history of both the event and the works exhibited is therefore compromised.²⁹⁴ Later, as a mature and by now established artist, Abbéma exhibited from 1888 until 1911 a total of sixteen times at the sale gallery of the dealer Georges Petit in rue Godot de Mauroy, sending out facsimile hand-written invitations to her guests as well as individual letters of thanks to critics who reviewed her exhibitions.²⁹⁵ At Petit's gallery, simple sales catalogues were produced for (some of) her exhibitions and had little embellishment. Whether or not Bernhardt made a pioneering move remains a moot point, but in producing substantial catalogues for the London and New York/Boston exhibitions, she certainly made a smart move, both for the purposes of making public her activity as a sculptor and for selling the work exhibited. *Art Amateur*, for instance, reported that the US catalogue was 'bought eagerly' for twenty-five cents and in the 'thousands'.²⁹⁶ Not only that, Bernhardt did future scholarship a huge favour: both publications are vital to making sense of her practice and how this can take its place now in the history of nineteenth-century French sculpture: as constituted by the efforts and achievements of many.

Exhibitions after Bernhardt's Lifetime

I attach a table listing posthumous exhibitions and the works exhibited at museums and galleries and any major sales that include Bernhardt's sculpture and provided public viewing prior to the auction (Appendix 3: 'Exhibitions and Major Sales of Bernhardt's Works in

²⁹⁴ Abbéma's exhibition was reported in the journal but only seven from a total of twenty works were listed; Renoir, *La Vie moderne* (22 May 1879). Another source added another six named works (all portraits); Félix Jahyer, 'Louise Abbéma: artiste peintre', *Camées artistiques: théâtre, littérature, musique, beaux-arts, sport, finance, journal hebdomadaire paraissant le samedi*, 2e année, no. 52 (30 April 1881), 1-2. This still leaves fourteen works unaccounted for. According to both Olivia Droin and Anne Jamault, Abbéma exhibited in 1889 and/or 1899 at an exhibition entitled 'La Vie moderne' (probably the premises of the journal, as in 1879) and both list works in either show. I have not located a catalogue for either exhibition nor is it mentioned in *La Vie moderne* in 1889 and 1899. See Olivia Droin, 'Louise Abbéma' (unpublished master's thesis, université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1993), n.p. and Jamault, n.p.

²⁹⁵ This information is gleaned from Yeldham, Appendix IX, and my analysis of Abbéma's correspondence, notably in the Paul Mantz papers held as copies in INHA.

²⁹⁶ This may, of course, have been an advertising ploy on the part of the journal from which one could purchase the catalogue, indicating that it may have been the publisher. See Montezuma, *Art Amateur* (January 1881), 25.

Sculpture, 1923 onwards'). I also include some other exhibitions about Bernhardt even when sculpture is not shown in order to indicate the extent to which 'Sarah Bernhardt' has been available for public consumption and in what manner.

I do not discuss the currency of Bernhardt's work in the period since her death but this table indicates how frequently her works have been exhibited in commercial and non-commercial exhibitions since her death and which works are favoured. I also do not produce an analysis of the overall contents of the general exhibitions on 'Sarah Bernhardt' nor do I give an overall view of the treatment of her sculpture practice. Nor do I discuss, in the case of auctions, if works were sold, how much for, to whom, and how the hammer price exceeded the reserve price. This analysis is crucial in order to assess the economic and art historical evaluation of 'Sarah Bernhardt' as a sculptor since her death in March 1923 but is a future project. Such matters vary according to the ethos of the exhibition, who organized it, when it occurred, and where.

My table also raises the question of scholarly accessibility to Bernhardt's oeuvre and how this might be determined by the frequency and accessibility of exhibitions, as well as ownership of works.

3.9 The Exchange of Sculpture: Selling and Gift-Giving

The sale of Bernhardt's sculpture from exhibitions has already been discussed, in part, during the course of this chapter. Apart from *Après la tempête* and the possible sales of the *Statuette*, *Ophélie*, and *Primavera*, I cannot confirm that any further sales were secured as the result of exhibitions.²⁹⁷ Other methods of selling work are less clear. Bernhardt claimed, in an

²⁹⁷ Only one sale of a painting during Bernhardt's lifetime is documented: *La Marchande des palmes* (1870s) sold in London to Prince Leopold (1853-84, a son of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert), *MDL*, 314. Another work, 'Figure étude', also known as 'Tête d'étude de femme' was sold by Hagermann in 1880 (listed in Bénézit 1976). This could be an oil or pastel sketch but may be a drawing or a sculpture maquette. An article published in conjunction with the Ferrers exhibition in London claims that in her 1879 London exhibition 'everything was sold' but I have found no evidence to confirm this; Jane Abdy, 'Divine Sarah on Show', *Observer Magazine* (11 March 1973), 34-39 (34).

interview in 1896, that she had sold a self-portrait bust to the Grand Duke Constantine of Russia, but no other records of this transaction are extant.²⁹⁸ The sale of *Après la tempête* to Gambart is recorded but whether this was for casting in bronze and how many copies might have been made remains unclear. Other works were cast in bronze by several founders, but again, I have found no records of these transactions and cannot comment on the amount of money that changed hands, nor the number of editions produced.

Another means of ownership of Bernhardt's works in sculpture was as a result of gift-giving. Bernhardt gave several works to friends and associates and I provide a table that summarizes these transactions during her lifetime (Appendix 4: 'Ownership and Sales of Bernhardt's Works in Sculpture, 1875-June 1923'). The ownership of the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* during this period and its function in transaction has been highly significant for this project. The *Bust's* visibility in images of Bernhardt's home on the avenue de Villiers prompted my analysis of her working studios. But the last such image dates from 1881 (fig. 2: 5) and the *Bust* is not seen again until it appears in a drawing by Jean-Pierre Poitevin (1889-1933) of Abbéma's studio dated 1927 (fig. 1: 36).²⁹⁹ Such sources give the *Bust* a history, albeit a patchy one, which can and cannot be filled in. It is likely that Bernhardt owned the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* until her death and that she probably left it to Abbéma in her will as a testimony to the intimacy of their relationship.³⁰⁰ However, in terms of 'hard' evidence, the *Bust* does not reappear until the sale of Abbéma's studio in December 1927 when its sitter had died.³⁰¹

²⁹⁸ 'Sarah Bernhardt: peintre et sculpteur', *Le Gaulois* (6 December 1896), 1.

²⁹⁹ Poitevin worked for *Le Petit parisien* and *L'Illustration* but I have not yet traced the drawing in either of these or any other publication. I am extremely grateful to Armand Roulleau for sending me a digital photograph of this drawing and informing me of the Poitevin's history; email from Armand Roulleau, 8 September 2006. For this and further information on Poitevin, see <<http://www.armandroulleau.com/pjpdpr.html>>.

³⁰⁰ A letter from Bernhardt to her son Maurice Bernhardt is listed in the Ferrers Gallery catalogue and was sold (buyer not identified); *Sarah Bernhardt, 1844-1923*, no. 43. I am grateful to Jane Abdy (owner of the former Ferrers Gallery) for informing me as follows: that no objects were specified in the letter but that it read something along the lines of 'donnez quelque chose à chère Louise pour mémoire'; personal communication with Jane Abdy, 3 January 2007. Bernhardt's will is, according to convention in France, held by the descendants' lawyers for 125 years after death after which it can be deposited in the Archives Nationales (for Paris and the département de la Seine; Archives

A full history, insofar as that can be known, of the location and ownership since Bernhardt's death in 1923 belongs in a catalogue raisonné. More research is required before I can produce the required catalogue raisonné in order to present this history of a readership. However, because ownership is such a vital aspect of any sculptor's history, I provide figures below of the current location and ownership of Bernhardt's sculpture insofar as this can be determined. Works in public and accessible collections are fairly straightforward. The second category – 'private collections' includes works that can be located. The third is of works for which there are no records of provenance nor if they still exist. Each individual object is counted even though it may be a copy. For example, I count each of the known copies of the bronze *Encrier fantastique* here as a separate work, even though I did not do this when assessing the total number of works Bernhardt made. Works where the titles are different but have a high probability of being duplicates, are not counted.

Table 3: Location by numbers and percentages of Bernhardt's works in sculpture (2007)

| Current location of work (2007) | No. of works | Percentage of total works by Bernhardt |
|--|--------------|--|
| Public collections | 20 | 26% |
| Private collections (inc. sales galleries) | 31 | 40% |
| Completely unknown location | 26 | 34% |

départementales (for other departments) and is therefore only accessible either at her lawyers or through her descendants. I have yet to pursue this. I am grateful to Anne Gérard, université de Paris I Sorbonne and University of Sydney for informing me of this procedure; email from Anne Gérard, 25 September 2006.

³⁰¹ 'Buste de Louise Abbéma par Sarah Bernhardt', *Succession de Mlle. Louise Abbéma, artiste peintre, Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur*, Henri Gabriel, hôtel Drouot, 14-15 and 19 December 1927, no lot numbers.

3. 10 Being a Sculptor, Then and Now

The distinct events of having work exhibited during a sculptor's lifetime, that work being bought, and museums and galleries exhibiting or selling it after death become the means to assess the reputation, and therefore status, of a sculptor, during the nineteenth century and now. Catalogues of permanent collections and temporary exhibitions and sales are a record of these events. They reveal just how relative reputation and status are according to how much work by a sculptor is currently held in public collections (but, unfortunately, not whether or not a work is on view or in storage), how frequently a sculptor's work is exhibited in temporary exhibitions and by how many works, and how often a sculptor's work comes up for sale and how much it fetches. This is as relevant for Bernhardt's teachers as it is for her.

Using Bernhardt's teachers, rather than her, as an example of who represents nineteenth-century French sculpture in the exhibitions of nineteenth-century French sculpture held during the last forty years (principally in France and the US) is revealing. Mathieu-Meusnier is not represented in any of these survey exhibitions by an actual object. Franceschi is represented by one work in the 1980 exhibition *Romantics to Rodin: French Nineteenth-Century Sculpture from North American Collections*, curated by Peter Fusco and H. W. Janson and held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art from 4 March to 25 May 1980 before a tour until April 1981. The work shown was *Hébé* ['Hebe and the Eagle of Jupiter'] (Salon 1868), a bronze life-size group in the collection of Jacques de Caso, also a nineteenth-century sculpture historian.³⁰²

Work by both sculptors has appeared in other museum exhibitions since their deaths. These were not specifically concerned with sculpture per se, but were organized around a theme, for instance the life and work of historical figures or the history of an institution (Goncourt

³⁰² The plaster version of this work was shown first at the Salon in 1865.

brothers and the Comédie Française). Mathieu-Meusnier has had two works shown and Franceschi four.³⁰³

The only other arena for exhibiting works is the art market. Some have longer exhibition periods than others and produce catalogues with reproductions of the works (for example Shepherd Gallery Associates, New York or Robert Bowman Ltd, London). As far as records permit an analysis, Mathieu-Meusnier has been exhibited in this way probably twice since his death and Franceschi seven times.³⁰⁴ Other sales events also constitute an exhibition in that the public may view works before the sale and attend the sale itself, however, this tends to attract an audience limited to collectors and scholars. This is not to argue that all work by 'lesser known' sculptors of the nineteenth century is kept from view. Both Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi have a number of sculptures that are in the public domain and accessible to a greater or lesser degree, for instance in museums, in or on buildings accessible to the public or by appointment to scholars, and in graveyards. However, in these public sites it is often not

³⁰³ Mathieu-Meusnier: *Bust of Charles-Augustin Sainte-Beuve*, 1878, marble, in *Les Goncourt et leur temps*, musée des Arts décoratifs, Palais de Marsan, Paris, 1946; and *Bust of Mlle. Pauline B...*, 1883, marble, in *Le Post-impressionnisme: peintures, sculptures, dessins, objets d'art des collections nationales*, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 1977. Franceschi: *Bust of Blanche Marie Rose Barretta*, 1885, marble; and *Bust of Julia Bartet*, n.d., marble both in *La Comédie Française 1680-1962*, Versailles, 1962; and *Bust of Edouard Dubufe*, n.d., bronze, in *Portraits d'un siècle d'élégance parisienne: Edouard Claude et Guillaume Dubufe*, Maire du IXe, Paris, 14 April – 8 June 1988.

³⁰⁴ Mathieu-Meusnier sales with exhibitions and reproductions published in hard-copy catalogues: *La Mort de Laïs*, c. 1850, reduced marble, *Shepherd Gallery Spring Exhibition*, New York, 1985; poss. *Biskris, portefais algérien*, 1844, bronze statuette, *Orientalisme-africanisme*, Gros-Delettrez, Paris, 7 December 1992. Jules Franceschi sales: 'Girl in a Chair' [*Le Réveil*], c. 1873, Bruton Gallery, *French Sculpture 1780-1940*, 14 November 1981- 2 January 1982; 'Hébé and Jupiter', 1868, marble reduction, Sotheby's, London, 23 November 1990; 'Buste de jeune Femme', 1873, marble, Christie's, *The Nineteenth Century*, London, 19 October 1995; *La Belle Egyptienne*, n.d., bronze statuette [founder: Delesalles], Christie's, New York, *Nineteenth-Century European Paintings, Drawings, Watercolours, Sculpture*, 14 February 1996; *Le Réveil*, c. 1873, reduced marble, Robert Bowman Ltd., *Revival of the Romantics*, London 1996-97; 'Fallen Angel', n.d., Robert Bowman Ltd, *Myths and Legends*, London 1998-99 [10 copies cast by Bowman from plaster statuette]; 'Bust of a Woman', n.d., marble, at *European sculpture and works of art 900-1900*, Sotheby's, London, 5 July 2000. Mathieu-Meusnier's work has never appeared for sale at Christie's or Sotheby's and has been sold only twice at hôtel Drouot in Paris.

clear who the author of any given work is, and viewing them requires, on the whole, prior knowledge of this, as well as considerable self-directed planning.

As a general rule, many works by Mathieu-Meusnier and Franceschi, even though in the public domain, are not 'exhibited' in the same way that those in a specialist nineteenth-century sculpture exhibition are. Nineteenth-century sculpture historians face the claim that their subject of study is 'unknown' or 'lesser known'. The only solution is to challenge this 'lack' in knowledge with the kind of labour-intensive, foundational work carried out, for example, by the curatorial and art historical team at the musée d'Orsay. In facing these claims it becomes clear that a binary is in operation and this is one of judgement, namely that there is good art and not so good art and the 'not so good art' just so happens to coincide with being 'unknown' or 'lesser known'. All these are favourite epitaphs for work by nineteenth-century sculptors, not least that by a/any woman. This has to be challenged in a material, even 'physical' way by searching the archive, trekking to see works of art and in a 'theoretical' way by analyzing what one finds, *and* one's own relationship to what one finds and how one chooses to discuss this material. Having carried out such investigations I am forced to ask, *what* exactly is 'unknown' or 'lesser known'? Can it not be found out? Surely this depends on if the deployer of such a phrase *wants* to know something about this work, this sculptor? Even recognizing the absence of archival material is knowledge. These are questions to bear in mind when conducting historical study on this vast field and, more importantly, when trying to bring the 'knowledge' one does gain to the attention of others.

The second complex issue is the notion of works of art being 'representative'. Two portrait busts of actresses by Jules Franceschi were shown at an exhibition about the Comédie-Française in Versailles in 1962.³⁰⁵ The portrait busts of Blanche Baretta (dates not identified) and Julia Bartet (1854-1941) are shown primarily in order to 'represent' the history of the theatre and act as object-biographies of individual players within that history. However these

³⁰⁵ *La Comédie Française 1680-1962*, Sylvie Chevalley and Jean Coural, eds, (Paris: Ministère des affaires culturelles, 1962).

busts were made, whatever their character as marble portraits, they are far less 'representative' of the sculptor who (happened to) make them. This mode of themed exhibiting produces far less kudos for the sculptor than exhibitions where the works 'represent' the sculptor her- or himself, for instance in a solo exhibition or in those themed according to aspects of sculpture practice and history. Simply put, 'Jules Franceschi' is less important than 'Blanche Baretta' or 'Julia Bartet' and a great deal less important than the doyenne of one-man shows, 'Auguste Rodin', a nineteenth-century sculptor who is so frequently exhibited and re-exhibited.

Is this also the case with Bernhardt, that her works in sculpture when exhibited represent something other than the skill and experience required to make them? I have already discussed how, in exhibitions, her work – both as practice and object – is subsumed to generalized narratives of 'Sarah Bernhardt' as icon, muse, Woman, Jew etc. (this can often be judged from the title alone without even having to study the contents of the exhibition or its stated ethos). This method of presenting Bernhardt's work in exhibition has not established reputation or status for her as a sculptor. It still surprises others when I say I am working on sculpture by Bernhardt. Neither has this imbalance in her general history been redressed in the vast majority of literature that concerns her, and is still produced, even though it is frequently mentioned (and illustrated) that she made sculpture.

How can this imbalance be rectified in order that this, one, nineteenth-century sculptor can be properly considered as such and that the history of nineteenth-century French sculpture will accommodate her for being this? In doing this work on Bernhardt I have provided a model and a method whereby to say 'Sarah Bernhardt, sculptor' demonstrates how this can be done. In this thesis a work of portraiture is referred to (as is customary) by the name of its maker and of its sitter. The difference is that both are discussed in such a manner that the maker, sitter *and* the work itself are thought in a dynamic, productive, and historical relationship one to the other and beyond that internal relationship of making and being made to the larger field

of nineteenth-century French sculpture production and cultural and social history. As a reminder, I give one example of how this is signified: Sarah Bernhardt, *Bust of Louise Abbéma*.

4 A Pair of Vignettes on the Painting Practice of Louise Abbéma

In a letter dated only 22 August to the singer Alice Ducasse (born c. 1846) Louise Abbéma feigned complaint, telling Ducasse this: 'your pornographic letters have deeply outraged me!' Abbéma's response to Ducasse's letters (which are not located) was humorous and flirtatious.¹ She declared that, in order to finish reading them, she had been obliged to buy two vine leaves and on the page of her own letter she drew the vine leaves composed as a pair of pince-nez spectacles. Having asked Ducasse to deliver some enclosed missives on her behalf to a mutual friend's household in the holiday resort where the singer was spending her summer, Abbéma also drew a three-quarter length left profile portrait of herself as a uniformed postwoman, letter in hand (fig. 4: 1). Wearing her customary short and tight-fitting jacket that accentuated the curves of her upper body and hips, this was buttoned up on her left side. With peaked cap set jauntily atop her, also customary, fringe and hair drawn back to expose her ears, Abbéma's cartoon figure of herself in uniform looks sideways, and cheekily so, out from the page towards the letter's reader.²

Was Ducasse Abbéma's lover? I would cherish being able say something definitive about this one way or the other, but it is impossible to be certain. Given the tone and content of Abbéma's letter, with its erotic playfulness, it is not impossible to guess that Abbéma and Ducasse may have been lovers.³ The letter is a joyful piece of writing, and drawing; it is also a joy to read and it ought to be permissible to comment upon it as evidence in the way that one

¹ 'Vos lettres pornographiques mon profondément revolté!', Louise Abbéma to Alice Ducasse, 22 August [no year], INFC (coll. F. Lugt), *Autographes d'artistes français du XVe au XIXe siècle*, C-1970–A. 163. Abbéma's response suggests that there may have been another correspondent as she refers to 'vos lettres' whilst earlier addressing Ducasse as 'tu'.

² Postal delivery was an eroticized issue for Georges Clairin in the 1880s – was this an in-joke between all these friends? See, Chapter 2, fig. 2: 37. I am grateful to Professor Griselda Pollock for a preliminary discussion about the lesbian aesthetic of exposed ears.

³ I came across this letter in the following essay: Petra Ten-Doeschate Chu, 'Unsuspected Pleasures in Artists' Letters', *Apollo*, 104:176 (1976), 298-305. Ten-Doeschate Chu interprets the portrait as Abbéma representing Ducasse 'as a quite racy-looking postman' and cites Abbéma on the 'pornographic' content of the letter she had received but does not discuss the vine-leaf spectacles. I am grateful for this reference: no other scholarship mentions this letter.

chooses. But such claims have not been the purpose of this thesis and the letter's usefulness is to provide the means to write this last section on the painting practice of Louise Abbéma, or rather to present a quick romp through two significant works in the greater painting practice of Louise Abbéma.

I cannot possibly do justice to Abbéma's work, least of all as an afterthought to a lengthy thesis about Bernhardt's sculpture practice. Abbéma was an enormously hard-working and prolific artist who exhibited at the Salon from 1874 at the age of twenty until 1926 and, as the drawing by Poitevin demonstrates (1927; private collection; fig. 1: 36), continued painting until the last year of her life.⁴ From 1888 until 1911 she exhibited sixteen times in one-person shows at Georges Petit's commercial gallery in the city. She also exhibited elsewhere in Paris and France, with Bernhardt in London in 1879, and at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893 (representing France in the Woman's Building). Abbéma's artistic output was phenomenal: as well as a painter she was also a print-maker, illustrator, and an occasional sculptor. Her market was in both the private and public sectors. She produced portraits of artists, actresses, writers, publishers, architects, and other contemporaries from the vibrant artistic and social milieu of Third Republic France. She received commissions for the decoration of the private hôtels of the wealthy (including Bernhardt), the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, for new town halls being built in the outer arrondissements of Paris, and other public buildings. Like her 'avant-garde' counterparts, such as Édouard Manet, Abbéma painted interior scenes, notably of Bernhardt's studio home in the avenue de Villiers and of her own studio space in the rue Lafitte.⁵ She also produced exterior scenes, usually with

⁴ Abbéma's birth date is mostly given in contemporary publications as 1858 and it is this date that appears on her death certificate. It is not clear if Abbéma lied about her age or whether an early printing error was either inadvertently or conveniently not corrected. I am grateful to Bernard Gineste for his scholarship on this question in the website devoted to Abbéma's work linked to the musée d'Étampes, Abbéma's birthplace <www.corpusetampois.com>. I am also grateful to Sylvain Duchêne, curator of the museum for affirming this and showing me a photocopy of the birth certificate.

⁵ Griselda Pollock analyzes the similarities and distinctions between Abbéma's interior scene and those of Manet arguing that scenes by Manet of the studio and domestic interior refused the 'novelistic insight' of his Salonier contemporaries in 'the modernist turn at the surface of

portraits of women in well known Parisian locations.⁶ Her work as an illustrator is found in publicity material for commemorative national events, advertisements, books, and journals.

materialization rather than in the narrative space of representation.’ In her analysis of Abbéma’s *Le Déjeuner dans la serre* (1877, musée des beaux-arts de Pau) and in continuation of her notion of the ‘spaces of femininity’ (*Vision and Difference* [1988] 2003), Pollock also argues that a different set of criteria are at play when the artist is a woman. Pollock argues that this painting, as a studio space in Bernhardt’s home on the avenue Villiers, is related to those (by women artists) that ‘allowed the representation of modern spaces to suggest aspects of modern subjectivity through the non-allegorical invocation of psychological interiority’; Griselda Pollock, ‘Louise Abbéma’s *Lunch* and Alfred Stevens’s *Studio*: theatricality, feminine subjectivity and space around Sarah Bernhardt, Paris, 1877-1888’, in *Local/Global: Women Artists in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Deborah Cherry and Janice Helland (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006), 103. See also Pollock, ‘Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity’, *Vision and Difference: Feminism, Femininity and the Histories of Art* [1988] (London and New York, 2003), 70-127. Contemporary texts discuss Abbéma’s similarity, or not, to Manet. For instance, Chaplin is cited in an interview with Abbéma as telling her, ‘[m]y child, that is the work of Manet’ and stating, when addressing the other pupils in his studio, that ‘she will not paint, like you, those “Chaplineries”, endless young women in pink with blue ribbons [mais c’est du Manet, ça, mon enfant! ... elle ne peindra pas comme vous, j’en suis certain, des “Chaplineries”, des éternelles demoiselles en rose avec des rubans bleus]’; Anon., ‘Nos Peintres peints par eux-mêmes: Louise Abbéma, Champs-Élysées’, unidentified publication, c. 1890, INHA (coll. Gabriel Ferrier), Autographes d’artistes, dossier Louise Abbéma, peintre, Carton 1, 88. This may be the source for a similar citation in a later feature article where Chaplin was said to have declared to Abbéma: ‘My child, that is like Manet. You are far from being one of the “Chaplinades” [Mon enfant, ceci c’est du Manet. Vous êtes loin des “Chaplinades”]’, Renée d’Anjou, ‘Les femmes légionnaires: Mme Louise Abbéma’, *Le Petit écho de la mode* (1913), n.p.; BNFDEP, Ne 63 fol., Collection Laruelle, vol. 123, D040701.

⁶ Examples of paintings in identifiable Parisian locations are: ‘Élégante, place de la Concorde’ (n.d., musée Carnavalet); *Matin d’avril, place de la Concorde* (1894; not located, for sale at *La Belle Époque: Paintings and Sculpture*, Sotheby’s, New York, 23 May 1997, lot 304); *L’Hiver aux Tuileries* (1895, not located, used as menu illustration for Renault & Co. Cognac; illustrated in Anon., ‘La femme moderne: Louise Abbéma’, *Revue encyclopédique*, no. 169 [28 November 1896], 842); ‘L’avenue du bois de Boulogne in the snow’ (n.d., not located; for sale at *Nineteenth-Century European Paintings, Drawings and Watercolours*, Sotheby’s, London, 22 March 1984, lot 455). Another painting listed as ‘Jeune femme dans le parc’ may be the bois de Boulogne (n.d., not located, for sale at *Tableaux du XIXe siècle*, Francis, Briest, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 29 November 1989, lot 14); and a further exterior scene, but as yet unidentified, also appeared at auction under the title ‘Élégante dans le parc avec un caniche (Lady in a Park with a Poodle)’ at *La Belle Époque: Paintings and Sculpture*, Sotheby’s, New York, 23 May 1997, lot 305. Abbéma’s choice of Parisian exteriors for her work is discussed in an article in the women’s periodical *Fémina* in which she refers to Paris as ‘mon cher “chez moi”’ and to her ‘beloved Parisian landscapes [mes chers *Paysages parisiens*]’. Several locations are referred to lovingly by Abbéma, including the ‘sun caressing [...] the golden sands of the Bois [ce soleil caresse [...] irradie le sable des avenues du Bois]’. The article is illustrated by photographs of Abbéma on location with her ‘faithful poodle [fidèle caniche]’ (not named) as follows: sketching in an open carriage with the Arc de Triomphe in the rear; in front of the pond in the Tuileries; at the flower market in the Madeleine; sketching from the terrace of the jeu de Paume facing the place de la Concorde; Anon., ‘Visions de Paris par Louise Abbéma’, *Fémina* (c. 1904-05), 715-16. Another

No book-length art historical study has been published on Abbéma since her death. The most comprehensive work on her oeuvre is an unpublished master's thesis by Olivia Droin (1993).⁷ Other than this, there are a handful of shorter texts: an entry in the *Dictionary of Women Artists* by Dominique Lobstein; an on-line article on her fan painting by Anne Ferette; a limited number of entries in surveys on nineteenth-century French painting, as well as entries in sales catalogues. Entries in general artists' dictionaries are even shorter.⁸ In biographical literature on Bernhardt, Abbéma most often appears as satellite to Bernhardt the star. In this and most of the recent literature of visual culture analysis on Bernhardt little is said on Abbéma (apart from discussing her 'masculine' appearance), and even less said on her work unless she is configured as an 'official portraitist' of Bernhardt. Even then, little analysis or history of this portraiture is provided. The only nuanced, in-depth, art historical analysis of any *work of art* by Abbéma since her death that I am aware of is Pollock's on *Déjeuner dans la serre* (1877).⁹

Abbéma's work usually received attention from the Salon critics. Other contemporary literature on her painting practice is gathered in feature articles, often themed around women artists, and is reasonably substantial. In most cases this literature considers her painting a

photograph (Boissonnas et Taponnier) shows Abbéma, possibly in her studio or that of the photographer, in a half-length portrait. The article only discusses Abbéma's work as a painter of Parisian 'landscapes' and not the portraits of women which appear in each of the paintings listed above. In the first five paintings, a black dog – almost definitely a poodle – accompanies the female figure or runs around in the background, but not far away. I have not yet identified which of the dogs Abbéma owned might be making her or his appearance in these artworks. According to Julien Chevalier in 'Inversion sexuelle' (1893), the poodle was the 'Tribade's badge'; cited in Catherine van Casselaer, *Lot's Wife: Lesbian Paris 1890-1914* (Liverpool: Janus, 1986), 12. See below for a discussion of Abbéma's lesbian dog-walking flânerie and the identity of some of her 'beloved Parisian landscapes' as publicly known lesbian gathering places, 428-33.

⁷ Olivia Droin, 'Louise Abbéma' (unpublished master's thesis, université de Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, 1993).

⁸ Dominique Lobstein, 'Louise Abbéma', *Dictionary of Women Artists*, 2 vols, ed. Delia Gaze (Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1997), I, 163-65; and Anne Ferette, 'La Bénédictine de Fécamp', <<http://www.corpusetampois.com/cae-19-abbema007.html>>.

⁹ Pollock (2006), 99-120.

serious pursuit worthy of discussion.¹⁰ Moreover, some texts do so in a mode that is suggestive of a history of an art practice in which living, loving, and working are implicated one with the other. In an interview with Abbéma, which was conducted in the dressing room of the actress Félicia Mallet and published in *Le Figaro* in December 1901, the artist declared her love for her work. In response to the journalist's question, 'Is the woman artist happy?' she was reported to have replied, 'Am I happy? Of course! I'm like Sarah Bernhardt. It's twenty-five years since we've known each other and we both think the same about the joy of being a woman artist'. Abbéma added, in a letter also in reply to this query, that '[a]doring painting with nothing to reproach this vocation for, I have never wished for any other pleasures apart from those which art gives me'. Moreover, in answer to a second question from the journalist Maurice de Waleffe, she declared: 'if I had a daughter, I would make myself be for her what my mother was to me and I would also give her as much freedom to decide what to do with her life as I was given with mine'.¹¹ 'Joy', 'pleasure', 'adoring': heady words indeed about how one makes a living.

In this penultimate section of the thesis I present evidence that the inscription of 'the conscious presence of desire in one woman for another' (de Lauretis 1994), which I have already written about at length in the form and facture of the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*, was reciprocated in (at least) two paintings by Abbéma of Bernhardt.¹² To reiterate what I said about that: an eroticized exchange existed between the two women in the processes of

¹⁰ Abbéma was also the subject of much satirical literature and illustration. Although disparaging, this nevertheless constitutes coverage of her practice. I am developing a paper on the theme of caricature of women artists and their artworks using Abbéma and Bernhardt as case studies for the Nineteenth-Century French Studies Colloquium, University of South Alabama, Mobile, AL in October 2007.

¹¹ 'Si je suis heureuse? Certainement! Je suis comme Sarah Bernhardt. Voilà vingt-cinq ans que nous sommes amies et que nous pensons de même sur le bonheur d'être une femme artiste'; 'Adorant la peinture et nullement contraire dans cette vocation, je n'ai jamais souhaité d'autres joies que celles que l'art peuvent me donner'; 'Si j'avais une fille, je m'efforcerais d'être pour elle ce que ma mère a été pour moi, et je la laisserais aussi libre de décider de sa vie qu'on m'a laissé libre de décider de la mienne'; Maurice de Waleffe, 'La Femme artiste, est-elle heureuse?', *Le Figaro* (9 December 1901), 1.

¹² Abbéma produced many portraits of Bernhardt in a number of settings: domestic, civic, and professional.

making portraiture and this was manifest, and therefore is discernable, in the work made.¹³

The first painting by Abbéma is her 1876 'coming out' work at the Salon, the *Portrait de Sarah Bernhardt, sociétaire de la Comédie-Française* (fig. 4: 2); the second, her 1881 Salon painting, *Le Sommeil de Diane* (figs 4: 3-4), a nude portrait of Bernhardt in the guise of the hunter-goddess and Sapphic favourite, Diana.¹⁴ There the goddess lies, on a cloud, in active repose, blue eyes half-closed, her mass of curly red hair fanning out beneath her. More later.

¹³ I am not the first art historian to suggest in print that some kind of exchange existed between the two. Anne Pingeot and Laure de Margerie write concerning the display of the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* and Gérôme's painted marble portrait of Bernhardt, as follows: '[a]round Sarah Bernhardt [...] there was a node of relations reflecting the diverse facets of her personality and illustrating the different tendencies of portrait sculpture at the turn of the century. Whilst Gérôme (1824-1904) sought to reconcile a striking image with the evocation of the actress's talent, the close friendship which united her with Louise Abbéma (1858-1927) and her vocation as a sculptor appeared in the intimate portraits that these two women exchanged with one another [Autour de Sarah Bernhardt, en revanche, se tisse un noeud de relations reflétant les diverses facettes de sa personnalité et illustrant les différentes tendances du portrait sculpté au tournant du siècle. Tandis que Gérôme cherche à concilier une image frappante et l'évocation du talent de la tragédienne, l'amitié étroite qui unissait celle-ci à Louise Abbéma et sa vocation de sculpteur apparaissent dans les portraits de caractère intime que les deux femmes échangèrent l'une de l'autre]'; Pingeot and de Margerie, 'Vie Parisienne', *Le Musée d'Orsay*, ed. Michel Laclotte (Paris: RMN, 1986), 150-51 (151). Ockman also writes of the exchange of bronze medallion portraits between the two, stating that 'the personal relationship between Bernhardt and Abbéma is as compelling as their artistic dialogue' where 'Abbéma was the masculine foil to Bernhardt's carefully orchestrated femininity'. Ockman discusses the erroneous attribution of Bernhardt's medallion of Abbéma as a self-portrait on the part of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, having been made aware of this by my unpublished paper 'Is there Room in Queer for Me? Reading Sarah Bernhardt's Bust of Louise Abbéma (1878) with Scholarly Lesbian Desire' presented at the conference *InterseXions*, sponsored by the Queer Caucus for Art and the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, City University of New York and delivered at CUNY on 13 November 2004. Ockman also discusses the women's 'inversion of heterosexual norms' in the Pasha Odalisque photograph (fig. 2: 12). It is from Ockman that I borrow this apt description; Ockman (2005), 44-51. See also, Ockman, 'Sarah Bernhardt on Stage and in the Studio', conference paper delivered at *Demanding Attention: Women and Artistic Training in the 19th Century*, Dahesh Museum, New York, 29 April 2000. I am grateful to Professor Ockman, William's College, MA for supplying me with a copy of her paper and discussing these matters with me. My purpose in this thesis is to foreground how Bernhardt and Abbéma's relationship produced an erotics of art production grounded in reciprocal desire and love. One of the shorter dictionary entries on Abbéma attests to the erotic significance of Abbéma and Bernhardt's relationship. Penny Dunford writes that they 'had a long-lasting and passionate relationship'; *A Biographical Dictionary of Women Artists in Europe and America since 1850* (New York and London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990), 1.

¹⁴ According to the Salon guide this work belonged to Marie Samary, the sister of Comédie-Française actress, Jeanne Samary, who was a friend and the subject of a portrait by Abbéma (1879, musée Carnavalet). For the female same-sex connotations of the Diana myth, primarily in relation to her all-

Going back to Abbéma's letter, vine leaves are what one uses when wanting to cover something up, a form of pudica, like Venus's hand, but lacking the same density as the stone. Yet, at the same time, vine leaves draw attention to what lies behind; they ask for something to be uncovered. Vine-leaf spectacles therefore beckon a two-way revelatory moment (seeing out, seeing in), in a way that the stone of Venus's hand, in its dense geological materiality, cannot. By drawing these spectacles in her letter to Ducasse, Abbéma's comment that she needed to cover her eyes with vine-leaf spectacles *in order to continue reading* only implies that this was necessary because of the same-sex nature of what could be found there. Moreover, surely this was an invitation to Ducasse to know something about the effect her words had already had, or continued to have, on her correspondent?

This section is an invitation to look at Abbéma's two paintings wearing vine-leaf spectacles. To see them for what they reveal: Abbéma's desire and the transcription of her desire by means of a painting practice in portraiture. Abbéma clearly enjoyed painting pictures of women: she produced many portraits of actresses and others both as commissions and speculative works, as well as to give away or keep for herself.¹⁵ Art historical rumour, some written down, published even, credits Abbéma with having affairs with many of her female models.¹⁶ In a cartoon of Abbéma's 1879 Salon portrait of Jeanne Samary (1857-90, musée

female group of nymphs and representations of the goddess in physical intimacy with Callisto in particular, see Patricia Simons, 'Lesbian (In)visibility in Italian Renaissance Culture: Diana and Other Cases of Donna con Donna', *Journal of Homosexuality*, 27:1-2 (1994), 81-122. I have yet to investigate this myth in more depth or the implications of Diana in repose in this manner. Two of her attributes, a crescent moon and a bow and arrows, are visible in Abbéma's painting.

¹⁵ I have also compiled a catalogue of works by Abbéma which is a work in progress.

¹⁶ Cécile Ritzenhaler writes that 'she has been credited with liaisons with the majority of the models who posed for her and an all-out Sapphic liaison with the actress Sarah Bernhardt. Even if these rumours were only rumours, it is well established that Louise Abbéma led the life of a liberated woman, in the sense in which one understood it at the time [On lui prête des liaisons avec la plupart des modèles qui posèrent pour elle et une liaison tout à fait sapphique avec l'actrice Sarah Bernhardt. Quand bien même ces rumeurs ne seraient que rumeurs, il est bien établi que Louise Abbéma mena la vie d'une femme libre, au sens où on l'entendait à l'époque]'. Ritzenhaler provides a biographical exegesis of Abbéma as 'liberated woman' in which she notes a 'forward character [caractère effronté]' at a young age and the fact that she attended studios where few women were seen but 'won over the

Carnaulet), the caption read as follows: '[t]rès-joli portrait de Mademoiselle Samary, de la Comédie-Française, rôle de Minerve. — On mentirait si l'on disait que l'artiste *abbéma* son modèle.' A play on the verb 'abîmer' (also used by Montesquiou), which means 'to damage, spoil, ruin', or even, 'to beat someone up', an appropriate translation in this context might be as follows: '[o]ne would be lying if one said of this work that the artist had ruined her model'. But what does this mean? The cartoon showed Samary in the breastplate and helmet of Minerva. Was she too masculinized by her attire and thereby 'ruined' as a 'Woman'? Or was the implication that having her portrait painted by Abbéma in itself 'ruined' her; that the association with a perceived 'masculine' and predatory Sapphic figure might be reason for the 'ruin' of her reputation?¹⁷

lads simply because she was not shocked by their escapades and because she knew how to answer them back in the same bawdy language that they used [réussit à conqueror ses camarades rapins, simplement parce qu'elle n'est pas choquée de leurs blagues et parce qu'elle sait leur répondre sur un ton aussi gaulois]; Ritzenhaler, 'Louise Abbéma, 1858-1927', *L'École des beaux-arts du XIXe siècle; Les Pompiers* (Paris: Mayer, 1987), 12-13 (12). I have found no evidence of such behaviour in any studio by Abbéma. She is also credited by Giovanni Lista, a recent biographer of Loïe Fuller, with possibly being the dancer's first 'important homosexual relationship [sa première relation homosexuelle importante]', the two having met in 1893 in Paris. According, to Lista she then painted Fuller 'in one of her most original poses [dans une de ses attitudes les plus originales]' (cited from unidentified American journal, 1893). Lista adds that it is impossible to know if it was Abbéma who was the "grande dame" who introduced Loïe to the refinements of Parisienisme. But she entered the Sapphic milieux in the capital's beau monde from that date [Il est impossible de savoir si c'est elle cette "grande dame" qui initia Loïe aux raffinements du parisianisme. Mais cela indique au moins que c'est à cette date que la danseuse américaine entra en contact avec les milieux saphiques du beau monde de la capitale]. Fuller apparently referred to this unidentified woman in her biography only as a 'grande dame' because the details of the affair were censored by the book's editor. Lista cites Fuller's description of the relationship as one where this unidentified woman 'protected her, took her to museums and the opera, and introduced her into the salons of high society in Paris [la protégée, l'éduqua, l'amena dans les musées et à l'Opéra. Grâce à elle, Loïe put s'introduire dans les salons de la haute société parisienne]'. He adds that Fuller claimed that the woman developed a jealous 'amour fou' for her to the extent that she felt 'suffocated [étouffé]' by it and 'the end of this strongly passionate relationship became inevitable [la fin de cette relation fort passionnelle devint inéluctable]'; Lista, *Loïe Fuller: danseuse de la Belle Époque* (Paris: Somogy, 1994), 169-70 (169, 170). I have yet to consult Fuller's autobiography.

¹⁷ I have not yet established if 'abîmer' might connote a sex act. The portrait shows no identifiable attributes of Minerva as represented in the cartoon. Samary wears a metallic belt and brooch but, other than this, is in a contemporary two-piece suit of skirt and jacket. Abbéma's biographer, Georges Lecocq, wrote of this portrait that the friendship between the two women had 'come to the aid of talent [l'amitié est venue en aide du talent]'. He also praised Samary's figure for being 'very agreeable to see [est très agréable à voir]' and that the 'warm and joyful tones could not have

Disappointingly, in no instance is the posthumous claim that Abbéma had affairs with many of her female models substantiated, or even argued for; it is simply placed there on the page and left. My concern, as when discussing the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*, is not to claim that Abbéma or Bernhardt were 'lesbians', but to consider Abbéma's paintings in the same manner, as manifesting the inscription of her same-sex *lesbian* desire for Sarah Bernhardt, who, in the erotically charged space of making portraiture, in her turn, becomes a desiring sitter. This was not a question of one woman returning a favour to the other in a disjointed set of events and, in fact, Abbéma's 1876 painting comes first in the works I consider, then the *Bust* (1878), then the *Diane* (1881). Rather, it is a question of situating these portraits as a series that enacted favour's reciprocity: one woman painted the portrait of her desired Other, the Other made a single, singular, and beautiful sculptural object – the *Bust* – of her desired Other. This inscribed desire is what has found its way to my attention, looking at these works, thinking about them, reading about them. The purpose of *scholarly* lesbian desire is to share this discovery by writing art history differently.

An Amorous Liaison

In 1988 a large oil painting by Abbéma was donated to the Comédie-Française. One of the terms under which the painting was donated was that its subject-matter be made clear and this the donor explained in a letter to the curator of the theatre's art collection: she wrote that the painting represented Abbéma and Bernhardt in the bois de Boulogne 'on the day of the

expressed better the vivacious and lively physiognomy of the model [ces tons chauds et joyeux, rien qui exprime mieux la physionomie éveillée et remuante du modèle]' thereby situating the model firmly in the camp of dominant modes of nineteenth-century feminine decorum and appearance; Lecocq, *Peintres et sculpteurs: Louise Abbéma* (Paris: Librairie des bibliophiles, 1879), 18-19 (19, 18). For a contemporary, semi-fictional account – almost definitely modelled on Abbéma – of a woman painter who aroused curiosity about whether she might be a 'man', enough for the tale's protagonist to become her model in order to find out, see Paul Dollfuss, 'La vertu des modèles', *Modèles d'artiste* (Paris: Marpon et Flammarion, 1888) [reprinted from *La Vie moderne*], 199-200.

anniversary of their amorous *liaison*'.¹⁸ I deal with this painting in more depth in the Epilogue. Here I want to inquire as to whether this two-way amorous *liaison*, given that it was worthy of an anniversary and a large and ambitious painting, is legible in the documentary sources and artworks I discuss, despite the vagaries of the historical record, and if so, what was the character and practice of this *liaison*. In its etymology and modern definition, '*liaison*' has a productive dimension which I pick up here. Derived from the Latin *ligare* meaning 'to bind', the substantive '*liaison*' in nineteenth-century French usage, according to the *Grande dictionnaire*, signified 'the action of binding' and 'the result of that action'.¹⁹ This is then transposed into ways of intimate relating: friendship, a love relationship, or one of commerce or business. In the most recent *Robert dictionnaire de la langue française* (2001) to be '*en liaison*' denotes both a mode of working and of 'feeling in an intimate relationship'.²⁰

Reading contemporary literature on Abbéma is quite fruitful in terms of garnering material that hints at an amorous *liaison* with Bernhardt. My concern is to substantiate such hints and ground this in the material practice of Abbéma's (and Bernhardt's) art practice and production. Many contemporary texts referred to the relationship between the two women and did so frequently under the terms of art practice; in the *Revue illustrée* in 1907 Harispe described Bernhardt as Abbéma's 'sister in art [la soeur dans l'art]' and the portrait Abbéma was working on at the time was of 'Sarah as her friend has conceived her [c'est Sarah telle que l'amie l'a conçue]'.²¹ Lecocq's early short monograph on Abbéma published in 1879 also referred at length to the relationship, but rather coyly. He wrote of a series of photographs of

¹⁸ '[L]e sujet du tableau de Louise Abbéma représente Sarah Bernhardt et elle-même au Bois de Boulogne, le jour anniversaire de leur *liaison* amoureuse [emphasis in original]', Josiane Ayoub to Noëlle Guibert, 18 March 1990, BMCF, dossier Sarah Bernhardt.

¹⁹ See *Grande dictionnaire*: 'action de lier, résultat de cette action [...] rapports de sentiment, d'affection: Une *liaison* d'amitié. Une *liaison* amoureuse [...]',

²⁰ 'Travailler en *liaison* avec quelqu'un' and 'se sentir en *liaison* intime avec quelqu'un'. The use of '*liaison*' in masonry given in *Petit Robert* and translated in English as 'bonding' is useful here. Bonding is both the action of assembling units of masonry (in a wall) in order that gravity can then provide the stabilizing force. However, it is also used to denote the resultant stability achieved from assembling the units of masonry in a particular 'bond', usually overlapping in two directions. As such, it denotes a dynamic and dialectic reciprocity of function and effect.

²¹ Harispe, 'Louise Abbéma', *Revue illustrée*, vol. 1 (1907), 113-121 (117).

Bernhardt owned by Abbéma that she displayed in her studio, writing that ‘all bore the modest dedication “To Louise Abbéma, the greatest artist, [from] Sarah Bernhardt, the other greatest artist”’. Lecocq’s response to Bernhardt’s dedication, despite seeming to miss the irony, was an acknowledgment of the productivity of this liaison. He wrote: ‘what is exaggerated about this slightly bombastic declaration of friendship could make you smile; but certainly we should sincerely rejoice in the affection which unites these two young women because we owe to it some remarkable works which, without it, would not have seen the light of day.’²² There is a danger with reading Lecocq’s analysis of slipping into the configuration of this relationship as one of ‘female friendship’ and its de-eroticized modes of representation and production. This is not what I am arguing happened in Abbéma’s studio.

Chez Mademoiselle Abbéma: the Painter’s Studio

Because Abbéma’s portraits of Bernhardt enact the transcription of lesbian desire, it is necessary to situate Abbéma’s painting practice, first and foremost, as both material and social and to locate it in the history of art-making in Paris in the 1870-80s. From 1875 her painting studio was situated on the rue Lafitte and she remained there until her death in 1927.²³ This

²² “A Louise Abbéma, la plus grande artiste, Sarah Bernhardt, l’autre plus grande artiste”; ‘Ce qu’il y a d’exagéré dans la manifestation un peu bruyante de cette amitié peut faire sourire; mais, à coup sûr, nous devons nous réjouir sincèrement de l’affection qui unit les deux jeunes femmes, car nous lui sommes redevables d’œuvres remarquables qui, sans elle, n’auraient pas vu le jour’; Lecocq, 7-8. What Lecocq failed to notice in Bernhardt’s dedications (or seemed not to notice) by missing her humour, was that as artists who were women it was precisely ‘great’ and ‘artist’ that were rarely allowed to coexist on the art critical page. The painter Marie Bashkirtseff wrote in 1881: ‘We asked with an indulgent irony how many great women artists there have been. Ah, gentlemen, there have been some and that is surprising given the enormous difficulties that they have encountered’; Pauline Orelle [pseud.], *La Citoyenne* no. 4 (6 March 1881), 3-4, cited in Tamar Garb, *Sisters of the Brush: Women’s Artistic Culture in Late Nineteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1994), 85. The inscriptions on these photographs are part of a larger series, usually from Bernhardt to Abbéma, on artworks made by her and/or given as gifts. I have not, as yet, considered these in depth but I have accounted for eight so far. There is one similar dedication by Abbéma to Bernhardt on an undated letter with a drawing of both of them where Abbéma (as she explains) is ruffling Bernhardt’s hair while Arthur Meyer looks on. The message to Bernhardt reads: ‘I kiss you and love you, Loulou [Je t’embrasse et t’aime]’; Louise Abbéma to Sarah Bernhardt, n.d., notice of sale at Emmanuel Fabius, n.d., lot 6838, AMBA Pau, dossier Louise Abbéma.

²³ The name ‘Abbéma’ is recorded in the land registries from 1862 to 1900 and for both 47 and 49 rue Lafitte. In the 1862 registry for no. 47 ‘Abbéma’ is recorded as occupying a fifth-floor apartment

street was in a neighbourhood popular with painters and was a short walk from lesbian social gathering places such as La Souris on the rue Henri Monnier (formerly rue Bréda) run by the renowned Palmyre, or Le Rat mort on the place Pigalle.²⁴ Abbéma lived at this address with

numbered '16' in a separate block on the far side of the courtyard and this entry is first dated '76'. The registry for no. 49 is dated 1875 and reads '[?]De Abbéma'. This dwelling is described as an 'atelier de peinture' with an entrance and a darkroom. The month residency began is not recorded. Given that Abbéma registered at the Salon under her previous studio's address in 1875 (91 rue Blanche), she probably moved to rue Lafitte after March when registration for the Salon took place. In the 1876 land registry the dwelling occupied at no. 47 was renumbered as '17' and the name of the occupant specified as 'Léon[ie?] Abbéma'. In another column was: 'La fille Abbéma, Louise, artiste peintre' and a note added about her occupancy of two studio rooms in a separate property. Again, in the 1876 registry for no. 49, the painting studio with darkroom was listed under 'Abbéma' and a further explanatory note described it as a 'studio leading to the dwelling number 16 [actually now 17] of the registry for 47 [rue Lafitte]'. In the 1900 registry apartment no. 17 at 47 rue Lafitte was again registered to 'Abbéma' and an additional note explained that this was comprised of apartment no. 17 and 18 at no. 49 as well'. The registry for 49 rue Lafitte confirmed this. Both properties belonged to the Duchess de Mouchy. These documents suggest that Abbéma was the tenant; AVP, cadastres de 1862, 1876 and 1900, 47 and 49 rue Lafitte. It seems likely, therefore, that Abbéma first occupied a studio at no. 49 in 1875 and then moved in to the neighbouring building to live there with her parents in 1876. The de Najacs (Émile and the comtesse de Najac) are recorded as occupying apartment no. 14 on the third floor of no. 49 from 1862. In the 1876 registry the comte de Najac is recorded as the occupier and in 1879 and again from 1884 the comtesse de Najac becomes the sole occupier as 'Comtesse de Najac, veuve Émile'. She was registered there in 1896. 'Goupil' had also lived in no. 47 from 1867-74, but which member of the family this is, is not recorded. The de Najacs were important friends of both Abbéma and Bernhardt: Émile de Najac has been identified as the seated male figure on the extreme left of *Le Déjeuner dans la serre* and the comtesse de Najac was a sitter for a bust by Bernhardt and a long-term friend, see Ludovic Bron, 'La comtesse de Najac', *Sarah Bernhardt* (Paris: La Pensée française, 1925), 81-82. Bron dedicates the biography to Abbéma, addressing her with the words that Bernhardt's 'heart [...] now lives on in you [ce coeur ... s'est prolongé en vous]'. There are several indications that Abbéma collaborated with Bron to produce this book, for instance, she provides the illustrations, such as a watercolour of Bernhardt entitled 'Sarah Bernhardt à son chevalet' (1879), presumably reproduced from her own collection. Bron's opening words on the chapter on Abbéma are 'She is the Ever-Faithful, the sister of her soul for always [elle est la Très-Fidèle, la soeur d'âme de toujours]', 77-81 (77). Another account discusses Abbéma's grieving process after the death of Bernhardt by calling the latter 'the sister whom life gave her, her other self [la soeur que la vie lui donna, l'autre elle-même]'; René Bruyez, 'Mme Louise Abbéma', *Le Théâtre et commoedia illustré* (June 1923), n.p.

²⁴ Both operated and were recorded during the Second Empire. Another establishment, a table d'hôte, run by the famous Louise Taillander at 17 rue des Martyrs (also just up the road) operated from 1867-78. I have no evidence that Abbéma visited any of these establishments, but given her reputation as openly 'masculine', a 'gougnotte' etc it is important to locate a potential public social milieu in which, even if she did not take part, she may not have been amiss. For excellent histories of the lesbian sociality lived in public in Paris in the 1870-90s (unlike the private parties of Natalie Barney and Renée Vivien later), see Leslie Choquette, 'Paris-Lesbos: Lesbian Social Space in the

her parents, but in a separate apartment, until their deaths (Mme Emile Abbéma, née Henriette Anne Sophie Léonie D'Astoin, died 1905 and M. Émile Abbéma died later at the age of eighty-eight but I have yet to establish exactly when).²⁵ Abbéma's studio was on the fifth floor. Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), a friend of Henri Regnault in the 1860s (and therefore possibly of Clairin and perhaps Bernhardt and Abbéma), wrote the following quatrain (date not identified) having either visited the studio or heard sufficient to make this brief description:

Missive en sourires confites
 Pars du doux coin vert qu'elle aima
 Quarante-sept rue, oui, Lafitte,
 Chez Mademoiselle Abbéma.²⁶

There are a number of paintings by Abbéma of her studio. The first I illustrate is Abbéma's 1885 Salon exhibit, *La Chanson de l'après-midi* (private collection, not located) in which, from left to right, gathered in socially intimate and relaxed proximity, the following individuals appear: Bernhardt; Abbéma's mother, her father, an unidentified standing male figure; and an unidentified female figure seated at the piano (fig. 4: 5). All appear to enjoy each other's company at the end of Abbéma's working day, an activity described by Louis Énault in a

Modern City, 1870-1940', in *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History: Selected Papers of the 1998 Annual Meeting*, ed. Barry Rothaus (Denver: University of Colorado Press, 1998), XXVI, 122-32 and 'Homosexuals in the City', in *Homosexuality in French History and Culture*, ed. Jeffrey Merrick and Michael Sibal (New York: Harrington Park, 2001), 149-67; Nicole Albert, 'Books on Trial: Prosecutions for Representing Sapphism in fin-de-siècle France', in *Disorder in the Court: Trials and Sexual Conflict at the Turn of the Century*, ed. George Robb and Nancy Erber (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999) and Albert, 'De la topographie invisible à l'espace public et littéraire: les lieux de plaisir lesbien dans le Paris de la Belle Époque', *Revue d'histoire moderne et contemporaine*, 53:4, 87-105. For a general, but nonetheless very useful, survey of a later period, see Catherine van Casselaer, *Lot's Wife: Lesbian Paris, 1890-1914* (Liverpool: Janus, 1986).

²⁵ The funeral notice for Abbéma's mother is in AME or MOSD dossier Abbéma. The notice of her father's death is a small newspaper cutting appended to obituary notices of Abbéma in the same source.

²⁶ A rough translation, keeping the same rhythm, but lacking an exact rhyme, would be: 'A missive of smiles so sweet / Leaves the soft green corner she loves / Forty-seven, rue Lafitte / Home to Mademoiselle Abbéma', Stéphane Mallarmé, '[Autres quatrains-adresses]', *Stéphane Mallarmé: oeuvres complètes*, ed. Henri Mondor and G. Jean-Aubry [1945] (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), 265.

review of the painting: 'it is she who hosts her friends, like a young Muse, courteous and smiling; the studio of Mlle Louise Abbéma is, every day from four to six, one of those agreeable little corners of our great Paris'.²⁷ A preparatory oil sketch for this painting, which can therefore be dated c. 1884-85 (private collection, not located; wrongly identified in a 2002 sale catalogue as 'Une soirée chez Sarah Bernhardt') includes the painter in the centre of the image, semi-recumbent, head on hand, on cushions on the floor (fig. 4: 6).²⁸ A further undated painting of her studio by Abbéma, recently given the title 'Louise Abbéma et ses amis' (c. 1884-85, private collection, not located) is also painted from the same view (fig. 4: 7). This view of the studio shows the painter, again in a relaxed pose, but this time at the table and on the far left of the frame. Prominently displayed on the table are her palette and brushes and a framed photograph of Bernhardt. Three unidentified guests, one female, two male on the right of the image are engrossed in discussing what may be sheet music. Meanwhile the hostess is lost in thought.²⁹

There are also several photographs of Abbéma's studio in which she is represented either seated and resting from her work, or standing next to works in progress, often with painting tools in or to hand. I do not illustrate these here; they are available in recent publications or easily accessible archives. I do, however, illustrate three carte-de-visite photographs, which have never been reproduced. They are private images by a photographer named Léo de Leymarie (as yet unidentified any further) and were dated on the reverse as October and November 1884 and taken in the studio and another room in the Abbéma family home. They are individual portraits of Abbéma's mother, her father, and Abbéma with her dog (figs 4: 8-

²⁷ 'Celle qui en fait les honneurs à ses amis comme une jeune Muse courtoise et souriante, l'atelier de Mlle. Louise Abbéma est chaque jour, de quatre à six heures, un des petits coins les plus agréables de notre grand Paris'; Louis Énault, 'La Chanson de l'après-midi', *Paris-Salon 1885* (Paris: Bernard, 1885), 71-72 (71). According to one later source, Abbéma's grandmother also took part in the studio gatherings; Anon., 'Mlle Louise Abbéma', unidentified publication (23 April 1892), n.p., BNFDEP, Ne 63, Collection Laruelle, D040684-5.

²⁸ *Dessins, tableaux et sculptures des XIXe et XXe siècles*, Piasa, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 13 December 2002, lot 1.

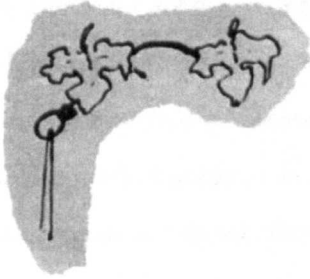
²⁹ Another work by Abbéma showing an unidentified female figure from behind at the piano in her studio was exhibited as *L'Heure de l'étude* at the Salon in 1881.

10). In the portrait of her father, taken in the studio, *La Chanson de l'après-midi* is clearly visible in the right background, as yet unfinished because still to be exhibited at the Salon in May of the following year.

The final image of Abbéma's studio that I illustrate here is a small, undated photograph of her seated at the piano. Framed together with four small watercolours, this ensemble was donated to the musée de la Vie romantique as part of the Jacques Chazot bequest in 1995 (fig. 4: 11). The frame is stamped on the reverse with the sale of Abbéma's studio on December 1927 and the name of one of the experts, Victor le Masle, is also inscribed. Le Masle may have bought this, and other works, at the sale. The stamp dates the framing prior to 1927 indicating that it was either Abbéma who made this ensemble for herself or that it was made as a gift to her from someone else. The four small watercolours are portraits of an, as yet, unidentified woman; three show her enjoying a day out at the beach, in the fourth she is back home, in Abbéma's studio, seated at the piano. If this combination of a photographic portrait of Abbéma and four paintings of another woman by her can be read as the record of a possible love relationship, or at the very least the record of Abbéma's love of other women, then this is the studio that sustained her painting practice in a place that was the space of work, but also of familial, social, and erotic intimacy.³⁰ This is the studio where Abbéma made the two

³⁰ Contemporary accounts of Abbéma's studio and her painting practice are often keen to point out her primary interest in women. For instance, Maurice Guillemot wrote that her studio at rue Lafitte was 'where pretty women from the theatre and society meet [où se réunissent de jolies femmes de théâtre et du monde]'; 'Le Puits-au-Loup', *Villégiatures d'artistes* (Paris: Flammarion, 1897), 251-58 (257). An unidentified journalist who visited her studio on the fifth floor of 47 rue Lafitte wrote that the studio was 'very charming [coquet]' and that Abbéma was there 'in the company of some ladies who were smoking cigarettes [quelques dames qui fument la cigarette]'; Anon., 'Louise Abbéma chez elle', unidentified publication, c. 1891, INHA (coll. Gabriel Ferrier), *Autographes d'artistes*, dossier Louise Abbéma, peintre, Carton 1, 88. With regard to her actual paintings, one writer qualified her method of producing portraits of women as follows: she painted 'portraits without number of a slightly creole femininity or of a being undulating with harmonious curvaceousness, but with such charm and tender attitude or reverie, who on earth would ask her not to! [des portraits sans nombre, d'une féminité un peu créole, où l'être ondule en d'harmonieuses souplesses, mais avec quel charme et quelle attitude de caresse ou de rêverie qui demande à ne pas être troublée!]' . The author also called Abbéma's work a 'poem to womanhood [ce poème de la femme]'. This article appears in identical form in two sources: Yveling Rambaud, *Silhouettes d'artistes: Louise Abbéma* (c. 1893), INHA (coll. Gabriel Ferrier), *Autographes d'artistes*, dossier Louise Abbéma, peintre, Carton 1, 88; and

portraits I turn to now; the first of Bernhardt with clothes on, in the riding costume of the Amazone, the second of Bernhardt with clothes off, in the guise of the nude goddess Diana.³¹



One Vignette: Clothes On, *Portrait de Sarah*

Bernhardt, sociétaire de la Comédie-Française (1876)

This large (230 x 140 m) full-length, standing oil portrait received considerable attention in the press when it was exhibited at the Salon in 1876, sharing the limelight with Clairin's portrait of Bernhardt with the same title. Critics

compared the two on the basis of knowledge known or assumed, but not conveyed in the title, namely that Clairin's painting showed Bernhardt in the role of Mrs Clarkson in Alexandre Dumas *filis*'s play *L'Étrangère* (opened May 1876), whereas that by Abbéma was a portrait of Bernhardt in her own clothes.³² Bernhardt owned Abbéma's painting and hung it in

Anon., 'Silhouettes d'artistes: Louise Abbéma', no publication details, BNFDEP, Coll. Laruelle, Ne 63, t. 123, Louise Abbéma, D040679. Harispe's article in *La Revue illustrée*, in which he claimed that Abbéma had painted Bernhardt 'as her friend had conceived her' discussed the portrait of Bernhardt in role from *La Sorcière*. Harispe continued that Abbéma 'was inspired by her [and Bernhardt's] profound and intimate friendship [son amitié profonde et intime]' and that because of this 'she had draped her subject in a lascivious and undulating grace' and that 'the flimsy cloth of her dress revealed more than it hid [elle a drapé son sujet dans la grâce lascive et onduleuse ... la vêtue légère de sa robe les révèle plus qu'elle ne les cache]', adding that 'the artist had involved herself in her chosen art in a way that the heart no less than art was implicated [l'artiste s'y est complue comme dans son oeuvre choisie, où le coeur ne présidait pas moins que l'art]'; Harispe, *Revue illustrée* (1907), 117. The purpose of these texts is difficult to decipher but they contain sufficient direct or euphemistic references to same-sex erotic desire on the part of Abbéma with regard to her models as well as to a female-only and lesbian social circle. The connotations of Abbéma's relationships with the subjects of her paintings in her work are not just evident from these critical accounts denoting erotic interest, signifiers of 'lesbian' (or at least masculinizing) demeanour appeared in the (usually fumiste) press. For instance, see the association above with cigarette-smoking, also attributed to Abbéma in a poem by Georges Lorin entitled 'La Cigarette: à Louise Abbéma', *Les Hydropaths: journal littéraire illustré*, 1:12 (25 June 1879) and to her 'masculine' appearance with added male facial hair in figs. 1: 8-9.

³¹ Abbéma must have already worked on the 1876 portrait at her previous studio at 91 rue Blanche, which she listed in the Salon guides for 1874 and 1875. Given the date of exhibition (May 1876), it is likely that she finished the work at rue Lafitte because she moved there during 1875.

³² Bernhardt's biographer, Jules Huret, wrote in 1899 that Abbéma 'painted her sitter in a black cashmere bodice with an iron-grey skirt, black *guipure* chemisette, black hat and black feathers – the

the hallway (or antechamber) to the atelier-salon in avenue de Villiers where it was remarked upon by visiting (or plagiarizing) journalists writing of Bernhardt's home and studio.³³

Abbéma's painting is not currently located and only available for study in a black and white photogravure published in Bernhardt's memoirs (1907) and a reproduced photograph in an exhibition catalogue from 1934.³⁴ In all photographs of Bernhardt 'à la ville' (not in role or at home), Bernhardt is – as she is in this painting – represented in smart, fashionable clothes for the purposes of public, civic display.³⁵ This painting also exists in copies or reproductions: a watercolour and an ink drawing by Abbéma, both for reproduction (figs 4: 13-16); a three-quarter gouache on canvas painting by Fernand Ochsé, *Sarah Bernhardt d'après Louise Abbéma* (n.d.; collection of the Comédie-Française); and three ink drawing caricatures published in

costume worn by her as Mrs. Clarkson in *L'Étrangère*; Huret, *Sarah Bernhardt*, trans. G. A. Raper (London: Chapman and Hall, 1899), 47. It is likely that Huret was mistaken about this being a portrait in role given that descriptions in Salon criticism do not mention this. The costume in Abbéma's painting is different to another portrait specified in the title as 'Sarah Bernhardt dans l'Étrangère' by Pierre Sokolov (n.d., coll. Comédie-Française). The costume in Sokolov is the same as that in photographs of Bernhardt as Mrs Clarkson in the play.

³³ Félicien Champsaur, 'Sarah Bernhardt', *Les Hommes d'aujourd'hui*, no. 7 (25 October 1878), n.p.; Edmond Hodgson Yates, 'Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt in the Avenue de Villiers', reprinted from *The World in Celebrities at Home*, 3 series (London: The World, 1877-79 [1879]), III, 159-69 (159); F. Ridgway Griffith and A. J. Marrin, *Authorised Edition of the Life of Sarah Bernhardt* (New York: Carleton, 1880) [copied from Yates and other unidentified sources], 23; Antoinette Le Normand-Romain makes a reference to a text in which the painting is described as by 'Louise la Pâle', 'Hôtel Sarah Bernhardt puis Derville', in *Champs-élysées, faubourg Saint-Honoré, plaine Monceau*, ed. Yvan Christ (Paris: Veyrier, 1982), 275-80 (276); the original source may be *La Vie parisienne*, which I intend to investigate.

³⁴ There are no records on who chose this image for the autobiography. I think it likely that Bernhardt still owned this painting in 1907 and that she or the publisher arranged for it to be photographed for a photogravure reproduction in the book. The 1934 catalogue cited the owner as Mlle Gabrielle Lorie whom I have yet to identify; *Les Étapes de l'art contemporain III: le Salon entre 1880 et 1900*, exh. cat. (Paris: Gazette des beaux-arts, 1934), 1.

³⁵ Some images are difficult to place, for instance, some of those by Melandri (1878-79) taken at avenue de Villiers. Usually shown in the atelier-salon (with some shots taken on the doorstep), Bernhardt is either dressed in the white trouser suit which identifies her as sculptor or painter or in the costumes of her roles. Melandri's photographs raise a complex set of issues around the notion of 'public' and 'private' images: some of the images in role appear to promote Bernhardt's stage career, but those with Montesquieu where both are dressed in a version of the costume of Zanetto in *Le Passant* have a different function, rendering 'public' their 'private' lives, in a mode of performance that can be designated 'camp'.

satirical journals in 1876, of which I illustrate two.³⁶ Another version of the painting, probably in oil, is illustrated in a catalogue entitled *Scènes et figures parisiennes*, galerie Charpentier, Paris, 16 April 1943. This is available as a photocopy in the MOSD, dossier Clairin and has been annotated by hand with the title and name of artist (presumably from elsewhere in the catalogue) only as 'Portrait d'une comédienne' by '[Jules]. V[ictor]. Clairin' (Clairin's first names as well as Georges). Although not an easy reproduction to scrutinize, the work is almost definitely not signed. It has two notable differences from Abbéma's 1876 Salon exhibit (as illustrated in Bernhardt's memoirs): the pose is a left and fully half-profile, and the brushwork is far less consolidated than in the finished painting (insofar as this is possible to judge from the photogravure or reproduced photograph). It also bears the hallmarks of Abbéma's application of paint to denote glints of light in the thick, loose strokes of white on the train of the dress, seen before in her painting of Bernhardt in the studio at boulevard de Clichy. Bernhardt's profile and the physiognomy of her face are also remarkably similar to the 1875 painting. It is possible that Clairin copied Abbéma's work and did so with both consistency and variation. However, I think it far more likely that this is Abbéma's own oil sketch for her finished Salon exhibit.

A story about how this painting came about circulates freely in current art historical accounts of Abbéma's practice and derives from Lecocq's short monograph written after a studio visit and published in April 1879. Lecocq's text is extremely valuable for the history of Abbéma's painting practice because, uncharacteristically for nineteenth-century writing on women artists, he is thorough when relating two vital aspects of her working life: a description of the studio and art critical reception of her work. He cites at length from critical reviews of this

³⁶ Abbéma's watercolour may have been for illustration in the serialization of Bernhardt's memoirs in *The Strand* (1904) or in *Je sais tout: magazine encyclopédique illustré* (1905). Both this and her drawing after her own work maintain the same three-quarter profile of the body and half-profile of the face. The other caricature was by Stop, illustrated in 'Visite au Salon par Stop', *Journal amusant*, no. 1035 (1 July 1876), 4. Stop reproduced the work in the same pose as Abbéma's but with her face hidden by an exaggerated ruff. Both the drawing by Zag and by the anonymous illustrator showed Bernhardt in left half-profile.

painting and gives proper attention to the relationship with Bernhardt, about which he is rather intriguingly ambiguous when relating the story of the genesis of this work as follows:

[...] if Clairin has provided us with the seductress, Mrs Clarkson, it is the woman who supplied the subject of this painting. In 1871 in the same exhibition hall when the future exhibitor was only there as a visitor, she met Sarah Bernhardt and straightaway had the idea of wanting to paint Sarah Bernhardt's portrait. She made a rapid sketch, and when she returned home she started to paint with furious energy. This lasted three years. When she felt ready, she arranged to be introduced to Bernhardt and made her portrait in the same pose as the sketch of 1871. Since then a deep friendship was established between the two artists and the most sincere affection joined the most intense admiration between them without damaging the friendship. On the contrary!³⁷

Lecocq's story about the genesis of this work is a spur to track the beginnings of the relationship between Abbéma and Bernhardt in the early 1870s, one that, according to his account, was several years in the making. The relationship can be mapped by identifying possible preparatory work for this portrait and through other artworks made by both artists before 1876.³⁸ Establishing the women's relationship through the shared arena of their interwoven art practices and their artistic gift-giving is the only way to do this in the absence of documentary records. But it is also a useful methodological foil to the persistent troping of the relationship as one where Abbéma, allegedly the far younger partner, was the devoted admirer of the older stage actress. Abbéma's correct birth date is 1853 and she was therefore

³⁷ '[S]i M. Clairin nous a montré une séduisante mistriss [sic] Clarkson, c'est la femme qui a fourni seule le sujet du tableau dont nous nous occupons en ce moment. Remontons de cinq ans en arrière, et reportons-nous à l'année 1871, en ce même palais de l'Industrie où la future exposante ne vient encore qu'en curieuse. Elle s'y croise un jour avec Mlle Sarah Bernhardt, et aussitôt une idée se fixe en son esprit si tenace: faire le portrait de la célèbre comédienne. Elle dessine, séance tenante, un rapide croquis, puis, rentrée chez elle, se remet à la peinture avec une nouvelle ardeur, un réel acharnement. Cela dure trois ans. Alors, se sentant suffisamment préparée pour cette œuvre à laquelle elle attache tant de prix, Mlle Abbéma obtient d'être présentée à Mlle Sarah Bernhardt, et fait son portrait absolument dans le croquis de 1871. Dès cette époque, - ceci se termine presque comme un conte de fées, - une profonde amitié s'établit entre les deux artistes, et l'affection la plus sincère vient se joindre chez elles à l'admiration la plus vive, sans la détruire. Au contraire!'; Lecocq, 13-14.

³⁸ For instance their bronze pendant portrait medallions of 1875. Bernhardt's first extant painting, *La Mer* (1875; musée du Touquet) is dedicated to Abbéma as follows: 'Affectueusement à Louise Abbéma, Sarah Bernhardt .|. 1875' (the symbol, used elsewhere by Bernhardt, represents a smiling face).

aged eighteen to twenty-two when this painting was in preparation and finished.³⁹ Bernhardt was aged twenty-seven to thirty-two.

What exactly did Abbéma paint in this portrait, and why? Contemporary art criticism offers a number of possibilities. Charles Yriate of the *Gazette des beaux-arts* called Bernhardt 'a sort of Amazon about town'; Jules Castagnary described her as wearing a 'costume de ville'; Henry James a 'black walking dress'.⁴⁰ The critic from *The Times* wrote that Abbéma had 'not painted the actress, but the woman artist in all her distinction' adding, 'it is, in reality, the work of two women, in which one has inspired the other.'⁴¹ The character of such intra-female relations is never specified in these texts, which only hint by their complex use of double-entendre that these relations may have been desiring and erotic. Lecocq's *raison d'être* for the

³⁹ This is typified, and repeated thereafter, by the following explication of their relationship from Gustave Kahn who, despite offering the tantalizing description that follows, resorts to categorizing Abbéma as a fan of Bernhardt the celebrity. Kahn writes, interestingly, that Abbéma's notoriety (he does not explain this directly) was compounded by how she dressed at the Salon when she was seen there (date not specified) with Bernhardt. He describes Abbéma in a 'tight jacket and tricorne next to Sarah Bernhardt with violets in her hair and dressed in pale saffron [Elle eut son heure de notoriété, et, au vernissage des Salons des Artistes français, on la remarquait vêtue d'une jaquette stricte et coiffée d'un tricorne noir, auprès de Sarah Bernhardt, coiffée de violettes, et habillée de safran pale]'. Disappointingly, he does not consider the two women as a couple, but insists on categorizing Abbéma as a 'fan' of Bernhardt as follows: 'Louise Abbéma was always attentive to Sarah Bernhardt and happy for the praise she received from her great friend [Louise Abbéma, attentive aux propos de Sarah, et heureuse des hommages que recevait sa grande amie'. How Bernhardt might have enjoyed being with, and being seen with, Abbéma, in her tight jacket and unusual hat, is not considered; Gustave Kahn, 'Louise Abbéma est morte', unidentified publication (30 July 1927), MOSD, dossier Abbéma.

⁴⁰ '[U]ne sorte d'amazone à la ville', Charles Yriate, 'Le Salon de 1876', *Gazette des beaux-arts*, 2e pér. (1 July 1879), 6-49 (40); Jules Castagnary, *Salons (1872-1879)* (Paris: Charpentier Fasquelle, 1892), 242; Henry James, 'Art in Paris, 6 May 1879 [publ. in *New York Tribune*, 5 June 1879]', in *Henry James: Parisian Sketches, Letters to the New York Tribune, 1875-1876* (London: Hart-Davis, 1958), 150.

⁴¹ '[C]e n'est pas l'actrice qu'elle a peinte, mais la femme artiste dans toute sa distinction [...] c'est, en réalité l'oeuvre de deux femmes, dont l'une a inspire l'autre', *The Times* (1 May 1876), cited in Lecocq, 13. This may be because the journalist was aware that this was an 'à la ville' portrait. There are other suggestive implications in this statement, for instance that 'inspiration' may have some erotic connotations. Equally, situating two women in relation to one another could be read as non-erotic female friendship and link into the trope of women artists making portraits of their friends, both de-eroticising the subject matter and diminishing the form as a lesser form of art. My concern is to read such statements, and the works themselves, in order to establish artistic competence and worth for the artists concerned as well as the possibility that portraiture was the site of the inscription of erotic lesbian desire.

work based, not on a stage appearance, but on a sighting in a gallery, this adds to the more complex character of the encounter, lasting as it did (according to Lecocq), three years.

Verbal representations of this painting qualify it as a portrait 'à la ville' but add that a specific feminine identification was involved, namely that of the Amazone whose dress, pose, and riding cane all signified movement, either as horse-rider or walker, and therefore as a mobile, motivated, active, female figure, dressed up to go out and about in Paris.

The painting is unusual in the iconography of Bernhardt for its viewpoint from the rear showing the body of its model in three-quarter profile and the face in half-profile, both left sided. The lower half of Bernhardt's costume with its elaborate and voluminous bow and over-length, fringed train, both designed to capture the eye as the wearer is in motion, is the primary element in the pictorial foreground. With her face in half profile, as the Clichy studio painting, this is Bernhardt according to how Abbéma represented her in the mid-seventies, with slight and contrastingly dark and light facial features (hair against skin), only roughly painted in. An early drawing by Abbéma given the title 'Silhouette de Femme' (c. 1871-76, National Museum of Art, Bucharest, fig. 4: 12) shows the figure of a woman whose body is fully in rear view with the profiled head and right arm barely sketched in, as if mere props for the elaborate spiralling fold of the dress in full display as the model is represented climbing stairs.⁴² Although not identified as a sketch of Bernhardt, nor dated, Abbéma's acute attention to this type of dress, whose focal point is its emphatically elaborate arrangement of falling drapery best viewed from the rear, suggests a link to the 1876 portrait. Even if not specifically a preparatory sketch, the drawing demonstrates the artist's interest in representing a fashionably dressed woman whose attraction lies in how she wears her clothes when

⁴² Another early, dated drawing by Abbéma of 1875 (black chalk on paper with brown and grey pastel, 15 x 11 cm; collection of the *Gazette des beaux-arts*). This is in left profile and was probably a sketch of Bernhardt in the role of the Queen in Hugo's *Ruy Blas* (opened 1872). Although not the same subject matter in terms of the role or costume, it shows that Abbéma's choice to represent Bernhardt in the 1876 painting standing and almost entirely (in terms of her body) from the rear was a conscious one. I am aware that Colette wrote of viewing women in fashionable dresses in her Claudine series. I have yet to consult this source. I am grateful to Dr Alex Parigoris, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds for directing me to this literature.

standing.⁴³ In the 1876 painting Abbéma's choice of pose and her attentiveness to the opulent folds of material give *The Times*'s claim that 'it is, in reality, the work of two women, in which one has inspired the other' a further significance and an erotic charge.

Viewing from the rear as erotically charged is usually the acknowledged preserve of male homoeroticism. For instance Katie Scott argues this convincingly in the case of looking at sculpture, specifically Edmé Bouchardon's *L'Amour se faisant un arc de la massue d'Hercule* [a statue of Cupid] (1750; musée du Louvre). She writes that:

⁴³ Abbéma also made several other preliminary pencil or ink sketches of women, both nudes and clothed in dresses; Abbéma sketchbooks, n.d., musée d'Étampes; sold at her studio dispersal in 1927. Abbéma sometimes added colour wash to the studies of women in dresses, and the focus is on the clothing of the models, and to a lesser extent the hair, rather than the facial features or hands (the only exposed parts of the body). All are standing and are represented at a variety of angles: three-quarter frontal, profile, and from the rear. Three other standing portraits where the model is seen from the rear or in profile that were painted in this period are: Eva Gonzales, *Self-portrait*, n.d., (private collection); James Abbot McNeill Whistler, *Mrs Frederick R. Leyland*, 1872-73 (Frick Collection); and Claude Monet, *Madame Gaudibert*, 1868 (musée d'Orsay), all illustrated in Marie Simon, *Fashion in Art The Second Empire and Impressionism* (London: Zwemmer, 1995), 19, 119, 184. None are shown in the outdoor costume of the Amazone and the dresses (in the case of Gonzales and Monet) have copious amounts of drapery at the rear. Two portraits of Amazones (in the exterior) are: Pierre-Auguste Renoir, *Allée cavalière au bois de Boulogne* (1872-13, Hamburger Kunsthalle) and Édouard Manet, *L'Amazone de face* (c. 1882, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, Madrid), both illustrated in *Women and Impressionism: From Mythical Feminine to Modern Woman*, ed. Sidsel Maria Søndergaard, exh. cat. (Milan: Skira, 2006). In these, the view is frontal and the full length of the body of the model is not visible, as it is in Abbéma's work. For a survey of dress in the last thirty years of the century see, J. Anderson Black and Madge Garland, rev. Frances Kennett, 'Fin de siècle: from 1870 to 1900', in *A History of Fashion* [1975] (London: Orbis, 1980), 207-17. For illustrations of riding dress in the eighteenth- to nineteenth centuries, see Doreen Yarwood, *The Encyclopaedia of World Costume* (London: Batsford, 1978), 335. Simon also illustrates riding or walking costumes in photography and painting, for instance, Giuseppe de Nittis, 'Return from the bois de Boulogne' (1878, Museo Civico Revoltella, Galleria dell'arte moderna, Trieste) in which the model has been walking her dog and wears a knee-length coat as opposed to a short jacket for riding. For a social and cultural analysis of riding clothes for wear in the bois de Boulogne, see Valerie Steele, *Paris Fashion A Cultural History* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 170-73. None of the illustrations nor the descriptions in any of these texts indicate that the costume of the Amazone was quite so elaborate as Bernhardt's in this painting, although in some cases the models are viewed frontally or only in the upper body. Also, Steele writes that 'the general fashion trend of the 1870s, toward a highly decorated and self-consciously "feminine" look, temporarily affected some riding habits, but this was not usually considered to be in good form'; 172. Although vague, this might explain Bernhardt's elaborate drapery and bow in a riding costume (if such a trend did occur).

[the] narrative is articulated round about the figure thus requiring of the spectator a mazy, turning motion in search of meaning and satisfaction. Head, arms, torso, and legs present the graduated angles of a gently twisting curve. This semi-circular movement is reinforced tightened and completed by the more or less even distribution of significant detail.⁴⁴

Viewing in the round is also solicited by the even distribution of formal elements in this work. Scott argues that 'the circularity which on the one hand yokes the attention of the viewer to the work, on the other withholds a fixed viewing point' and that this 'instability [...] far from being simply a by-product of *L'Amour's* formal composition, partook of the character of desire'.⁴⁵ Importantly, for my reading of Abbéma's portrait of Bernhardt, this begins with a 'rear view', one that 'encourages a "behind the scenes" account of the gestation of the work with particular attention to the discourses of love alive in the studio', namely Bouchardon's love of his work and his (possible) love for young male models.⁴⁶

Abbéma's painting is not a sculpture, and this passage from Scott might better fit my reading of the *Bust of Louise Abbéma* with the attention given to the wisps of hair falling in and outside of the collar at the nape. But Abbéma's portrait of Bernhardt is large, the figure is statuesque, and the different profiles of body and head (three-quarter from the rear, and half from the left) caused by lumbar and cervical twisting, are suggestive of sculptural form soliciting a viewer's circumambulation around a three-dimensional object. The fullness of the drapery is also rendered sculpturally because of the length and spread of the train, the bend of Bernhardt's knee to move the fabric leftward, and the voluminous knot of the bow. Abbéma's portrait is erotic, not because Bernhardt's body is in a serpentine pose or because she is semi-recumbent (as in Clairin's portrait), but because of how the model holds her pose and the effect that is created of volume, curve, and movement in the clothes she wears. The pose of

⁴⁴ Katie Scott, 'Under the Sign of Venus: the Making and Meaning of Bouchardon's *L'Amour* in the Age of the French Rococo', in *Manifestations of Venus: Art and Sexuality*, ed. Caroline Arscott and Katie Scott (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2000), 69-89 (69).

⁴⁵ Scott, 72.

⁴⁶ Scott, 73-78.

the portrait's subject, of necessity represented from behind by the painter, configures this work as a means to manage an erotics of same-sex, lesbian desire in painting.

In 1880 Abbéma painted a work actually entitled *L'Amazone*, which she later sold to the Grand Duc de Saxe Coburg Gotha in 1883 (fig. 4: 17). How does this compare to her work of Bernhardt? This too is a large portrait (229 x 137 cm) but shows its subject outdoors. To any visitor, the scene was a familiar one; the front doorstep to Bernhardt's home on the avenue de Villiers.⁴⁷ The identity of the model is not given, but *L'Amazone* is part self-portrait, part generic portrait of self because it represents both the 'Amazone', with which Abbéma was typically identified, and some of the features of her body and clothing. The figure does not render Abbéma's more solidly built body of 1880 but a slimmer woman. Nonetheless, there are several elements of the figure's physicality that are signifiers of Abbéma's corporeality. This portrait has the characteristic curvaceous flow of accentuated breasts, waist and hips that Abbéma cultivated in her own attire, especially with her very tightly fitting jackets and close-fitting skirts in the upper part (fig. 1: 7). The fringe, tied back hair, uncovered ears, wisps of hair falling over the upturned collar are, by 1880, familiar signifiers of Abbéma's self-presentation, maintained in only slightly varied form throughout her life (see for example the photograph from the c. 1890s, fig. 4: 11). Given that Abbéma appeared to wear the same costume for working as she did in other situations, I now turn, not to her riding pursuits (which she is never represented as doing) but to her walking, which is mentioned frequently in accounts of her.

Heart on her Sleeve: Louise Abbéma, a Parisian Dog-walking Lesbian Flâneuse

If biographical and obituary accounts of Abbéma are to be believed, she took her dog out for a walk twice a day.⁴⁸ One such account was published in a collection of illustrated

⁴⁷ This has been ascertained by comparing the painting to the photographs in the Melandri series taken on the doorstep, namely of Bernhardt and her son Maurice, Bernhardt alone, and Bernhardt with Montesquiou.

⁴⁸ The earliest representation of Abbéma's dogs in image or text is *Le Déjeuner dans la serre* which has a small black dog in the centre of the image (fig. 2: 8).

endorsements (advertisements) by well-known French public for Mariani wines, entitled *Figures contemporaines* (1896-1908). The text described how, every morning, Abbéma went out in the Bois [de Boulogne] ‘escorted by her beautiful poodle Fatma’. The outfit she wore was both ‘elegant and simple’ and is described in (almost loving) detail as follows:

A woollen skirt with narrow pleats fitting tightly around the hips and letting the feet show, small, finely arched and always beautifully shod, a morning coat and waistcoat with a masculine cut, narrowly-cut, defining well the bust and figure of harmonious and firm contours, a cravat with tiepin above which there is a narrow collar, cut at the front, widening with good proportions, a felt hat with a small brim, sitting proudly on the black hair with flashes of golden brown.⁴⁹

Several other accounts comment on the ‘masculine’ character of Abbéma’s costume as she was seen (or claimed to be seen) out of doors in Paris. For one writer of an earlier article (1888) she was a ‘woman of small build, wearing a hat that one could almost call masculine, her brown-toned figure recalling the Orient.’ Importantly, Abbéma was figured by this writer as someone whom it was ‘impossible not to take notice of and ask who she was’.⁵⁰ Judging from photographs (usually undated can be roughly dated according to signs of her aging), as in her hairstyle, Abbéma did not stray from this basic ‘costume-tailleur’ throughout her adult life, maintaining the same elements, and only adapting rather than replacing these according to occasion and possibly the availability of different items of clothing (types of shirt, for example). In 1904 she did appear to add a new element to the ensemble; she was photographed buying flowers and wearing a tricorne hat. This appeared again in a late

⁴⁹ ‘Fatma, sa belle caniche noire’; ‘Le costume est élégant et simple: une jupe de drap à plis droits, moulant la hanche et laissant à découvert le pied, petit, cambré finement et toujours irréprochablement chaussé; une jaquette et un gilet de coupe masculine, étroitement ajustés, dessinant bien le buste et la taille aux harmonieux et fermes contours; une cravate à épingle au-dessus de laquelle un col droit, cassé par devant, s’évase avec correction; un chapeau de feutre à petits bords, posé crânement sur la chevelure noire aux reflets d’or bruni’; Anon. [?]. Uzanne], ‘Louise Abbéma’, *Figures contemporaines, tirées de l’album Mariani*, ed. Angelo Mariani, 11 vols (Paris: Fleury, 1896-1908), I, n.p.

⁵⁰ ‘Une femme petite de taille, coiffée d’un chapeau presque masculin, à la figure d’un ton brun, qui rappelle l’Orient. Impossible de ne pas la regarder, de ne pas demander qui elle est’, Anon., ‘Variétés: Mademoiselle Abbéma’, *L’Avenir de Seine et Oise*, no. 125 (7 April 1888), n.p.; copied from *Le Soleil* (25 March 1888).

photograph where Abbéma was also wearing, uncharacteristically, a military double-breasted jacket.⁵¹

Where did Abbéma go in Paris with her dogs? Apart from the bois de Boulogne, she was also noted to have a regular morning route from her home in the rue Lafitte to a street near the Opéra, rue Daunou. According to Charles Akar in her obituary in the *Écho de Paris* she 'liked to go to a small café on the rue Daunou [near the Opéra] where she knew she would meet some good friends.'⁵² This account was supplemented by more details of her route as the 'grand boulevards, rue Daunou and rue de la Paix', still in the vicinity of the Opéra.⁵³ In another obituary the author placed Abbéma's dog-walking firmly in a noticed social context. He asked: 'Who on the boulevards does not know that silhouette of the Amazone, which she never changes, often accompanied by her faithful dog Flambeau?'⁵⁴

Given that Abbéma was not out riding, but walking, the generic description of her as an 'Amazone' is only partially useful. In *Figures contemporaines* she was also described as an 'alert and courageous walker'. As 'promeneuse' Abbéma was figured as the looked-at 'other' of the flâneur because it was he – the flâneur – who 'seeing her pass, this elegant Parisienne with a

⁵¹ The hat received considerable comment in her obituaries.

⁵² 'Deux fois par jour, accompagnée de son chien fidèle, elle aimait à se rendre en un petit café de la rue Daunou, où elle savait rencontrer quelques bons amis', Charles Akar, 'Louise Abbéma est morte', *Écho de Paris* (30 July 1927), n.p., BNFDEP, Ne 63, collection Laruelle, t. 123. According to Professor Leslie Choquette, Assumption College, Worcester, MA there were no identifiable cafés with lesbian clientele on the rue Daunou, although this can often only be gauged by whether a premises was under surveillance by the police who were more interested in homosexual men and prostitutes; email from Leslie Choquette.

⁵³ M. S., 'Louise Abbéma est morte', unidentified publication, 1927, MOSD, dossier Abbéma.

⁵⁴ 'Et qui sur les boulevards ne connaissait sa silhouette d'amazone qu'elle ne changea jamais, souvent accompagnée de son fidèle chien, Flambeau?', Charles Desmoulins, 'Louise Abbéma', *Le Nord Littéraire et artistique* (1928); MOSD, dossier Abbéma. I have yet to conduct a thorough survey of Abbéma's dogs, their names, and breeds. The most frequently mentioned breed is the poodle, although photographs and drawings indicate she may have had terriers. Apart from Fatma and Flambeau, Abbéma also had a dog called Paf, see Harispe, *Revue illustrée* (1907), 121. For pet history in Paris, see Kathleen Kete, *The Beast in the Boudoir: Petkeeping in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). I am, again, grateful to Leslie Choquette for this reference and for a discussion about the distinction between a notion of 'ownership' with cats and dogs in this period.

decided allure, had no difficulty in discerning that it was “someone” who was going by, someone whose personality was self-assured, a person who knew what they wanted’.⁵⁵ But is being figured a ‘promeneuse’ adequate to accounting for Abbéma’s activity on the street or in the Bois? (It is not clear if that is where the ‘flâneur’ sees her and makes his judgement).

According to Nancy Forgione, the history of writing about walking focussed almost exclusively on the flâneur, ‘needs broadening with regard not just to the range of issues but also to the cast of characters involved’. In a reading of one quintessential example of work by an artist-flâneur, Edgar Degas’s *Place de la Concorde* (1875; Hermitage Museum St. Petersburg), Forgione argues convincingly that the Viscount Lepic, identified by others as a flâneur despite being accompanied by his two daughters and their dog, in terms of how the painting is composed, has no greater claim to the flâneurial gaze than his daughters.⁵⁶

The impossibility of a female flâneur was argued by Janet Wolff in a thought- and discussion-provoking essay, ‘The Invisible Flâneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity’ (1985) where she argued that ‘the central figure of the flâneur in the literature of modernity can only be male.’⁵⁷ Revisiting the flâneur in a recent collection of essays on the subject, Wolff and the other contributors seek to ask if this was such an impossibility after all. Wolff’s essay suggests that ‘a newly feminized urban theory’ will displace the already semi-redundant flâneur and ‘instead of bemoaning women’s lack of access to flânerie and to the public sphere more generally [...] we adopt the rather different aim of exploring women’s (and men’s) actual lives in the modern city’.⁵⁸ According to Wolff, the flâneur remains irreducibly male and she asks, citing James Donald, ‘why on earth should any woman *want* to be a flâneur?’ Why

⁵⁵ ‘Promeneuse alerte et vaillante’; ‘Le flâneur qui la voit passer, parisienne élégante à l’allure décidée, n’a pas grand peine à deviner que c’est “quelqu’un” qui passe, quelqu’un dont la personnalité s’est affirmée et qui veut bien ce qu’il veut’, *Figures contemporaines*, I, n.p. The article continues by noting Abbéma’s motto (inscribed on her writing paper) ‘Je veux’. Can this be translated as ‘I desire’?

⁵⁶ Nancy Forgione, ‘Everyday Life in Motion: The Art of Walking in Late-Nineteenth-Century Paris’, *Art Bulletin*, 87:4 (2005), 664-87 (664-65).

⁵⁷ Janet Wolff, ‘The Invisible Flâneuse: Women and the Literature of Modernity’, *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2:3 (1985), 37-46.

⁵⁸ Janet Wolff, ‘Gender and the Haunting of Cities (or, the Retirement of the flâneur)’, in *The Invisible Flâneuse? Gender, Public Space, and Visual Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris*, ed. Aruna d’Souza and Tom McDonough (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2006), 18-31.

indeed. Her reasoning is that in the nineteenth-century in Paris it was impossible for women to go unnoticed in the street and the ‘problem for women was their automatic identification with this “streetwalker” whenever they walked in the street’. At the same time the ‘account of urban experience [...] seen through the eyes of the flâneur and his cohorts, instantly renders women invisible or marginal.’ Despite sociological study, Wolff argues, the flâneuse remains an impossible subject position because ‘central to the definition of the flâneur are both the *aimlessness* of the strolling, and the *reflectiveness* of the gaze’ [original emphasis]. Therefore shopping, for example, as an activity with aim cannot constitute a context for flânerie.

But if ‘aimlessness’ and ‘reflectiveness’ were mainstays of this activity, as claimed by the flâneurs in question – male modernist writers (and painters) – should we take their word for it? After all, none (presumably) were homeless and therefore their eventual ‘aim’ was to finish their promenading, go back home or to their workspace, and process the reflections they had made on the streets in their creative activity.

In view of Abbéma’s daily dog-walking, I am inclined to hang on to the notion of flânerie, if only as a way to conceive of how as an *artist* she did have a presence on the street, noticed in one way, but not in another. This is particularly important because when she painted her version of those ‘landscapes of Paris’ so dear to ‘modernist’ painters such as Degas, she included portraits of women, and her dog. Wolff’s call to examine ‘actual lives’ is seemingly straightforward and without question, and yet it is striking that after more than twenty years of discussing the flâneur/flâneuse, the work of scholars on lesbian public space in Paris remains unexplored or even uncited in a feminist collection of essays on public life in Paris such as this, which, in terms of the physical space rather than representational space of nineteenth-century Paris, includes essays on the city’s parks, streets, and department stores.⁵⁹ This absence occurs despite the careful scholarship of historians such as Leslie Choquette and Nicole G. Albert which demonstrates that there is ample evidence to indicate that the

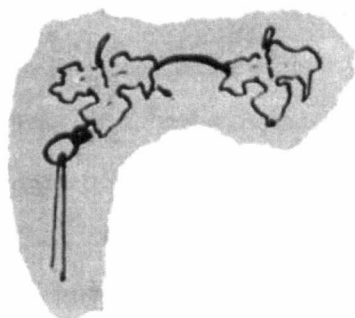
⁵⁹ There are also essays on posters, magazines, the flâneur in Asia, a contemporary exegesis of male homosexual sex in urinals in response to an excerpt from Proust, and what it is to be a flâneuse in current-day London.

following were lesbian gathering places, social and sexual: the bois de Boulogne, the Champs Élysées, the streets of Pigalle, department stores, millinery shops, even the sacred domains of heterosexual representation, the Grande Jatte, and Asnières. These locations were sought out by desiring female subjects in order to pursue amorous liaisons with other women or just to meet with friends.⁶⁰

Abbéma did walk the streets of Paris, and some of the time she did so for the business of painting. She did so flamboyantly, as an ‘Amazone’ with an added touch (the tricorne hat, for instance) and yet she remains unspoken of now. Because of this, and because here Abbéma is synecdochal for ‘the lesbian subject’, I want to reclaim *flânerie* for her as a painter, as a Parisian, and as a lesbian dog-owner. Her appearance as the ‘dog-walking lesbian *flâneuse*’ was deemed ‘masculine’, yet she clearly emphasized her curvaceous body. In walking around Paris, she observed in order to paint her beloved city, and she was noticed with her poodles, the ‘badge of the Tribade’, which she inserted noticeably into every identifiable scene of Paris that she painted. How can Abbéma be conceived as an ‘invisible’ *flâneuse*? She was not perceived as a prostitute in contemporary accounts of her, so what was she, and, more importantly for art history, what is she? Not assigned visibility in accounts of the Parisian exterior spaces considered in this volume, Abbéma – the ‘lesbian’ and her pursuit of erotic exchange with others of the same sex – is left up for grabs. Ironically, it is in a much ‘cruder’ version of the *flâneur* that I find an appropriate denomination for Abbéma’s activity. According to fashion historian, Valerie Steele, the *flâneur* was the ‘observer of the Parisian scene – a *girl-watcher naturally* [...] who had to be attuned to every shift of fashion [my emphasis]’.⁶¹ Abbéma did not have to walk around Paris in order to see Bernhardt in the dress she painted her in 1876. Nonetheless, this is what she did do, every day, in her ‘actual’ life, admittedly with some un*flâneurial* aimfulness (to give her and her dog exercise), but with the time and opportunity to pursue fieldwork for her painting practice, at least for portraits of fashionably dressed and attractive Amazones and others, who were not herself.

⁶⁰ It is therefore ironic that a book discussing the *flâneuse* as a female subject includes an essay on same-sex activity but this is about anonymous male same-sex encounters in toilets in modern Paris!

⁶¹ Steele, 90.



**Other Vignette: Clothes Off, *Le Sommeil de Diane*
(1881)**

This oil on panel painting by Abbéma came up at auction in June 2005 at Christie's in London when it was given the title 'Allegory of Love'.⁶² As far as I am aware, Abbéma produced only female semi-nudes, mostly as allegorical figures for advertisements or decorative panels in private

homes. *Diane* and a pastel sketch for a fan are the two exceptions. The latter is illustrated in William Emboden's *Sarah Bernhardt: Artist and Icon* (1992) as a 'free study' nude of Bernhardt. The caption to the illustration of the nude adds, speculatively: '[i]t was likely done from life as they were the most intimate friends.'⁶³

This is a necessarily brief epitaph to Abbéma's painting practice. I have been unable to view this work and therefore cannot consider it in terms of the materiality of painting having gained an awareness of its size, scrutinized its surface, or studied its details. Nor have I been able to do justice to its subject matter. This would require a whole other labour on Abbéma's practice and her access to the requisite training, and models, in order to paint female nudes. It would also require investigating in greater depth the lesbian connotations of the Diana myth in French painting and literature, in the nineteenth century or before. In my brief research for this painting I have found no reference to Diana in repose on a cloud, other than an

⁶² This is the second work for which I have bid at auction during the course of the thesis, again unsuccessfully. However, I am very grateful to Victoria Wolcough and Edward Plackett, Christie's, South Kensington, London for supplying me with scanned images of this work and a catalogue for the sale. I have sent a letter to the buyer via Christie's in order to view the work firsthand but this has not produced a result. As with the 1876 portrait of Bernhardt, I therefore say less on the facture of this work than I would be able to if I had the opportunity to view it at length.

⁶³ William Emboden, *Sarah Bernhardt: Artist and Icon* (Irvine, CA: Severin Wunderman Museum, 1992), 87. This was published in conjunction with a donation to the Severin Wunderman Museum, Irvine, CA of iconographic and documentary material on Bernhardt. I am not clear if it constituted a form of exhibition catalogue and although I have contacted the museum, I have yet to receive a response (I am not entirely certain that it still functions).

illustration of a work by a painter named H. de Callias in which the caricatured goddess is also in the same pose. Bringing this work into view is, however, important. It is an effort to further recuperate how, as artists, Bernhardt the sculptor and Abbéma the painter inscribed their reciprocal desire in their work and that this materialized in the space of the studio as a lesbian artistic space, because that is where they made work. This reading of *Le Sommeil de Diane* is possible because I consider this work a portrait by Abbéma of Bernhardt.

It is some claim to declare that *Diane* is not only Abbéma's only nude but the only nude portrait of Bernhardt (other than the fan sketch). What is my evidence? There is one nude photograph claimed to be of Bernhardt (n.d.) and illustrated as 'Nadar, 'Sarah Bernhardt nue' in the book that accompanied the *Portrait(s)* exhibition at the Bibliothèque nationale in Paris (2000-01). This is an upper-body shot produced as a mono print and the face is almost fully covered by a fan, leaving only the possible characteristic wiry hair of Bernhardt to give a clue as to the figure's identity. This is not possible to ascertain in the absence of any other images of Bernhardt's nude body (the part of it that can be seen). The lack of a reliable date for this photograph also makes the identification difficult.

Similarly, the fan drawing is difficult to use for comparative purposes and Emboden's book does not substantiate his claim with documentary evidence, even if it is only the same as the 'rumour' or 'gossip' that elsewhere I do take seriously. The size of this image and the fact that it is only available to me as a reproduction are prohibiting factors. However, the two works do share a common feature: the voluminous, flame-red hair of the model. I have discussed how the 1876 portrait was a portrait typical for Abbéma of Bernhardt in the mid-1870s. *Diane* was painted in 1881 and there are a number of portraits by Abbéma of Bernhardt after 1876 in which her dark hair is now a redder colour, for example in *Le Déjeuner dans la serre*. In *Déjeuner*, the purpose of the image according to the critic Paul Mantz was to 'render [...] the penetration of daylight coming through glass, falling from above on the figures and objects

and which, thinning out a bit, casts light everywhere'.⁶⁴ Given that Bernhardt is within the middle third of the painting and that as a conservatory light is indeed falling from above, her hair is well-lit although shaded to a certain extent by the surrounding foliage. In *Diane* the hair of the figure (as in the fan painting) is even redder. Rather than suppose that Bernhardt dyed her hair, I think this is far more likely to be a painterly move on Abbéma's part. Diana and the fan nude are both represented at height: Diana on a cloud, the fan nude on a rocky precipice. As such, they are 'closer to heaven' in that the hair will be well-lit by natural light and its colour is therefore lighter than that in the conservatory with some shadow.⁶⁵

Abbéma's training in the female nude is as yet an unexplored aspect of her history as a painter and the only text that mentioned *Le Sommeil de Diane* had nothing to say about the work or how she had made it. Given that she did produce a number of semi-nudes, it seems likely that she did have access to models.⁶⁶ However, this is a full nude and one of only two and it was

⁶⁴ 'L'effet que l'artiste a voulu rendre, c'est l'invasion du jour qui pénètre largement par un vitrage, tomba d'en haut sur les figures et sur les choses, et va en s'adouçissant un peu, mettre de la lumière partout', Paul Mantz, 'Feuilleton du Temps: Le Salon', *Le Temps* (27 May 1877).

⁶⁵ The luminous blue of Diana's eyes also compares to other portraits of Bernhardt by Abbéma, for instance, a work titled 'Portrait de Sarah Bernhardt (c. 1880, musée d'Étampes) in which the hair is also of the same red as the *Diane*. The issue of whether all images by Abbéma that are claimed to be of Bernhardt are actual portraits has been raised with me by Dominique Lobstein, musée d'Orsay. Ascertaining this can only be verified by scrutinizing each work in question and the documentary material that concerns it.

⁶⁶ For a comment on Abbéma's nudes as 'of an utterly despairing poverty and feebleness [une pauvreté et d'une faiblesse nettement désolantes]' (none are specified), see Francis Carco, *Le Nu dans la peinture moderne (1863-1920)* (Paris: Crès, 1924), 140. I am grateful to Jo Heath, School of Fine Art, History of Art and Cultural Studies, University of Leeds for supplying me a copy of the relevant section of this text. For discussion of women and the female nude and the work of the female art critic, Marc de Montifaud (pseud.), see Heather Dawkins, *The Nude in French Art and Culture: 1870-1910* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), esp. 115-33, 134-171. Dawkins raises the fascinating question of women who 'love to look at the nude' and cites a letter from 'Raymonde' titled 'Opinions des femmes sur le "nu"', *Courrier française* (9 September 1888), 2. In the letter 'Raymonde' declared that 'we look at [your nudes] with pleasure and feel an artistic jouissance of high taste, because we love the Beautiful everywhere it is found, even amongst other women, so far are our hearts from petty rivalry. [...] However, [...] we are not at all those monstrous exceptions who cultivate unnatural passions on Lesbos. Thus we find no sensual titillations, unwholesome fantasies of the imagination, or neuro-cerebral debauches in the pleasant and prolonged contemplation of these vigorous, full-bloomed nudities'; cited in Dawkins, 51. Dawkins discusses the authenticity of this letter (claimed by the periodical to be authenticated by 'L. Perrin-Dandin'). I agree that this needs

painted in 1880-81 ready for the Salon in 1881. It is therefore likely that Abbéma no longer relied on her teachers for advice on her work, except perhaps on the odd occasion. This brings me back, therefore to the painter's studio where this work would have been made (figs 4: 5-7, 9-11). Where did Abbéma's models pose? Where did Bernhardt pose for this work (assuming it was painted from the live model and not a photograph which would itself have needed at least some initial sittings)? The spatial allocation of Abbéma's studio in 1880-81 was, according to the land registry, an 'atelier de peinture, au fond entrée et cabinet noir [one room]; chambre à feu divisée [two rooms]'. In the paintings and photographs of her studio, only two views are given; that towards the couch and window behind and the other towards the piano against a wall at ninety degrees to the window wall. This leaves the space from which the painter or photographer worked unrepresented, as is that of the 'chambre à feu divisée' [presumably domestic space such as sleeping quarters]. Given that Abbéma did not discuss any of her nudes or semi-nudes and how she worked with her models, how the sessions for *Le Sommeil de Diane* took place, can only ever be speculative. It is likely that they took place in the room designated her studio but whether Bernhardt modelled for the painter on the couch as seen in *La Chanson de l'après-midi* is, for now, impossible to say. She did leave her mark on this space: represented as a visitor to Abbéma's studio in this painting, by her image in photographs, and by her gift to Abbéma of her first recorded and extant painting, *La Mer*, 1875.

On this basis, it is possible to say that the sessions for this work took place, probably in private, chez Mademoiselle Abbéma.

much further work particularly in view of the editorial policy of this paper which published Jean Lorrain's disparaging article on lesbians. The issues raised in this passage are particularly important because *Diane* was painted for a female client, Marie Samary. For de Montifaud's series of articles on the nude, see Marc de Montifaud, 'Du Style dans les figures nues', 3 parts, *L'Art moderne* (July to September 1875). In Abbéma's painting, the figure of Diana is not completely supine as is common in nudes. Rather she has her legs up as does H. Callias's Diana. Iconography of a sleeping or resting Diana requires much further investigation. Also, further work on Abbéma's training in the nude would require analysis of the work of her teachers, Chaplin, Carolus Duran, and Henner. I do not have the space to pursue either issue yet.

Conclusion

The outcome of this thesis is historical and methodological. This project on Bernhardt adds to the existing and continuing scholarship in the field of nineteenth-century French sculpture studies. The questions raised in this case study of one sculptor ask that the production of nineteenth-century French sculpture be rethought in terms of how it should be approached; with diligence, in detail, and without prejudice. The questions asked here of Bernhardt – did she make a work, did she have a studio, how did she conduct her practice, with whom did she associate in order to make art, what benefits did her collaboration with others (intimate associates, teachers, or peers) provide in terms of the work that we now know she made – are the questions we can ask of any artist rather than lauding them either as a ‘genius’ or producers of work that is ‘mediocre’. This is the excitement of working on nineteenth-century French sculpture, coming to recognize how to value the work (and the sculptors who made it) that is left to us, now.

I have demonstrated how this is useful to art history, and cultural history, in a number of ways. The history of Bernhardt’s sculpture practice, by steadfastly avoiding the questions that arise in existing scholarship on Bernhardt, such as matters of celebrity, iconicity, and feminine theatricality, works to regard her contribution to nineteenth-century French (and European) culture and history in terms of a concrete art form, sculpture. This is a form present now as the body of work she produced.

As one sculptor in nineteenth-century France, the required methods for writing Bernhardt’s history have been detailed scrutiny and analysis of her works in sculpture and the work of sculpture making. If this approach is required in order to make sense of the archive on Bernhardt, that is at once culturally ‘full’ but ‘sculpture poor’, then it can act as a guide for how to ‘do’ any sculpture history: to never believe what you read, to read through, and for, the various socio-cultural and historical filters of knowledge production and dissemination that deny, obviate, and distort the creative production of some historical figures and their modes of living, loving, and working.

I have not 'differenced the canon' in this thesis. Nor have I 'queered' the archive and the discipline of art history. Bernhardt's work, both the objects she produced and her methods of practice, as well as her desire to make work and her desire for the painter Louise Abbéma, are already 'different' or 'queer' enough. What I have done is to produce a model for dealing with something already fragile – the history of nineteenth-century French sculpture – because the work produced in that century, in such abundance, has not been fully canonized.

The thesis is a contribution to the history of 'Sarah Bernhardt' and her circle in terms of finding a place in Parisian social history because I have looked at this circle, particularly the painters Louise Abbéma and Georges Clairin, more carefully and with acute attention to the relations of reciprocal same-sex desire and love in the case of Bernhardt and Abbéma, and shared interest in (different) same-sex desires with Clairin.

I have, therefore, offered a model of how the social and historical study of the material processes of making sculpture can be conjoined with feminist interventions and a reading of works in sculpture and the archive. Scholarly lesbian desire – which is how and why I have done this – enables me, and can enable others, to keep writing those histories that others ignore.

Making Love Work

A Tableau Vivant on the Lesbian Love Boat

Bois de Boulogne, Paris

8 juillet 1883 ~ 1 July 2006



Acknowledgements

I wish to offer my thanks to Richard Jacques for his collaboration in the tableau vivant by taking the photographs that day in the bois de Boulogne. I was introduced to Richard by Jonathan Walz; this work could not have been made without Richard, his enthusiasm and zest, or without Jonathan's friendship and the introduction. I am also very grateful for the thoughtful contributions of Francesco Ventrella, Jo Heath, Griselda Pollock, and Claire Harbottle in discussing the selection of images. And thank you, to Amanda Newham, for making the final selection with me because we had done the tableau vivant together, which would not have happened otherwise. I am especially grateful to Claire for her advice on how this might be the work of an 'artist'. I also thank Judith Tucker for the loan of her (perfectly fitting) dressage jacket and the lady at the costume hire service of the West Yorkshire Playhouse for her helpful comments on Bernhardt's dress. And a huge thank-you to Michael Haag who, literally, came bounding in to this very piece of writing as it was being done and offered his interest, his enthusiasm, and his crucial knowledge to help me with the bit I had almost lost sight of – the social history of Abbéma's artwork. For this is one sure way to continue with this work and for this piece of writing to have its own future. A big 'Nice one!' to Fiona Callow and Beverley Chambers for their, as always, witty response: a chalk drawing on slate of the event to be, with the caption 'Make Love Not War', and for having me believe, if only for a moment, that this emanated from 'the spirit of Sarah Bernhardt'. I am, as so often, indebted to Anna Johnson, and also to Bev, Griselda, and Francesco, for helping me to think about why to include the tableau vivant in my thesis, and what I could actually say about it. I am grateful to the thoughtfulness of Richard Smith for understanding why I needed to do this. I hope you all see some of your warm words reflected back to you here. Finally, and crucially, I am again grateful to Griselda and Anna for our productive and exciting discussions about how I could do this, the finished product. As seen here, it owes its integrity to many forms and acts of collaboration; and its particular form, of image and text, on these pages, to the effort, so appreciated, and so constant of Anna. The labour, and love, acknowledged on this page are the basis upon which I am able to present the tableau vivant here, now, as my effort to make a love work.

I first saw Abbéma's painting in 2002. It was reproduced in the book, *Portrait/s de Sarah Bernhardt* (ed. Noëlle Guibert, 2000), that accompanied an exhibition held at the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris from October 2000 to January 2001. This has remained the only mention or reproduction of this work, until I began my thesis. There is only one art historical document in the archive concerning the painting: a letter clarifying the terms of the painting's donation to the Comédie-Française and its history, written in 1990 by the donor. The caption in *Portrait/s* reads: 'Sarah Bernhardt et Louise Abbéma sur le lac au bois de Boulogne, par Louise Abbéma'. A short section of notes adds: '[d]ans la lettre accompagnant le don de cette toile à la Comédie-Française en 1990, figure la mention: «Peint par Louise Abbéma, le jour anniversaire de leur liaison amoureuse».' Despite this intriguing information, no discussion is included in the book. I do not yet know if the painting was displayed in the exhibition (title: *Sarah Bernhardt ou le divin mensonge*) with this information. The painting is large, measuring 200 x 150 cm. Although the reproduction and notes take up one full page of the book, being a small publication, the image measures only 10.2 x 13.4 cm. For comparison: Clairin's frequently exhibited 1876 'femme fatale' portrait of Bernhardt in the musée du Petit Palais, also a large work (250 x 201 cm), is reproduced in most texts on Bernhardt. Often in big, glossy catalogues. What does this tell you?

I arranged to see this work with the curator at the Comédie-Française and viewed it with him on 5 March 2004. It is stuck in a dimly lit corridor somewhere in the administrative section of the theatre building. I almost fell onto it, the space is very narrow, and, as I say, dimly lit. I was allowed a short time to view the work and take notes. I was, however, able to read the signature and date, 'Louise Abbéma, 8 juillet 1883', not visible in the reproduction. Unfortunately, due to Collection regulations, I was not allowed to photograph the painting myself in order to record its details, as I usually like to do. Then came a confusing set of events: as I remember, I asked if the Theatre had a reproduction of this work and the curator said, no. He also informed me (concerning another work) that ordering a slide would cost 61 euros. The painting, as I have said, is reproduced in *Portrait/s* as a copyrighted reproduction belonging to the Comédie-Française. Did he really say that there was no reproduction? Did I

mishear? Not understand because I was nervous about being in such a prestigious institution at an early stage of my research proceedings? Was my French not good enough yet to hear what he was saying correctly? Was it not this man's job to know about the existence of reproductions? Given that I dealt subsequently with the person whose job it was, why did I not ask her? Did I put two and two together and make 'rejection', 'denial', 'repression' (of the lesbian archive, of *me*)? I am not sure. But I do know, now, what it is to learn to become and be a desiring lesbian scholar. If this exchange (and others like it) felt like refusal at the time, what was needed was to keep going, to have, as the French say, some 'bon courage'. To keep doing *this*. To never give up.

'Refusal', or 'lack of courage' have not been the outcome of every scholarly lesbian desiring archival encounter I have had. There have been many, many fruitful dealings with all sorts of people during the course of this thesis. And, now, with this episode, I have learnt, after the event, to take the knocks, and carry on 'quand-même'. Difficulty in finding things or finding things out is not the prerogative of scholarship for which lesbian desire is the motivation to want to know. Scholars in all sorts of fields have a difficult time of it in many situations and contexts for their work. Now, I refuse, in my turn, to consign this scholarship to the realm of pathos. Seeing this work and the caption in *Portrait/s*, I had immediately recognized that Abbéma's painting is a particularly precious representation of precisely this: an 'amorous liaison' between herself and Bernhardt, one she clearly wanted to celebrate and record, and that Bernhardt took her place in: they are *both* on the boat. On that day in June 2004 at the Comédie-Française, I was able to read the letter of donation in the Theatre archive and therefore to learn something of, as the donor so aptly put it, its 'aesthetic and history'. The letter is different to the caption in *Portrait/s*: the donor states that she wishes to underline two things; the first that it should be made clear who has given this work, and in whose memory; the second, which I transcribe here, that: 'le sujet du tableau de Louise Abbéma représente Sarah Bernhardt et elle-même au Bois de Boulogne, le jour anniversaire de leur liaison amoureuse [emphasis in original]'. Small editorial changes: the donor's text is split – into

'title' and 'art historical explanation'; in the process the 'herself [elle-même]' of the painter, emphasized in the original, is excised. Nor was this work painted in one day.

However subtle, such editorial interventions and the like are not just frustrating, they are heart-breaking. This is painful and personal. And, therefore, of course, political. Is this the 'lesbian' archive, like it or not? Should I learn to live with it? No way. I, eventually, did think to ask the right person if the Theatre had a reproduction of this painting. They do; and she sent it to me, very kindly, immediately, and gratis. My subsequent investigations to the donor in June 2004 had received a friendly response, but, sadly, could not shed much further light on the specific question of Abbéma and Bernhardt's anniversary of their amorous liaison. She wished me luck in my thesis and wrote that the person who had bequeathed the painting to her was now dead, but had been 'a distant friend of S. Bernhardt and had bought the painting in Paris at that time'. She continued that the information about the work being made for the anniversary of their amorous liaison 'came from her [the previous owner's] mouth. It is therefore an oral tradition that has not been written down' (email, 19 June 2004). The viewing conditions for this work, the fragility of this scrap of information, and the bon courage required to pursue any of this, bring home to me just how scholarly my lesbian desire needs to be.

The tale continues. Whilst writing this, now, in May 2007, I have finally followed up the one lead I let fall: the ownership of this painting – its history before it was given to the Comédie-Française. Why? Because I had been stopped in my tracks by 'refusal'? Because I diverted my attention to a creative way of dealing with the history of this work instead? Both. Partly. The donor had informed me that the friend who had given her the painting was dead (she had bequeathed it to the donor and her husband, I now know in 1979). So was this lady's son, dead, who might have had information on its purchase and display since it was bought in Paris. At that time I did not wish to approach people I did not know and ask them to root around for documents in the belongings of their deceased relatives or loved one. All these things are

reasons why it has taken me until now to 'do my job properly', to write art history in one of the ways I want to, using such 'traditional' forms as 'provenance'.

Having made this decision, the floodgates opened, the boat got pushed out. A Jewish family website, a former teacher, and a new-found friend (an expert on the history of the community of Alexandrian Jews to which the previous owner of the boat painting belonged) provided me with the information I need to continue to write the history of this painting. I do not yet know exactly when the friend of the donor had bought the boat painting in Paris before she took it back home to Alexandria, where it stayed until it reached the Comédie-Française in 1988. But I do now know that this woman lived from 1897 to 1979 and was in a position, as an adult with some money of her own, to buy artworks from around the end of the First World War. And I certainly 'know', despite, as yet, no 'hard evidence', that this painting did not come on the market until after 1927 when Abbéma died. There is no mention of this work in any contemporary account of the life, love, and work of Sarah Bernhardt or of Louise Abbéma. It does not match other boat paintings that Abbéma made. It is not referred to or described in any account of their homes and studios. But why should it be? This was an anniversary painting, a gift, in its making, from one woman to the other, and back again. It is, in this sense, an utterly 'private' work, a work of love, their love. Perhaps it hung in Abbéma's bedroom; or in Bernhardt's after those who described this room in the late 1870s had been, said their piece about its supposed decor, and gone. Who knows? It does not appear in the estate sale of either woman. Given the history of the bust, I would expect it to have been for sale as part of Abbéma's studio contents, but then the bust is the only named artwork in this brief catalogue.

If the past of this painting is uncertain, so be it. Finding all this out gives me something to look forward to: the important thing is that the boat painting now has a future.

My scholarly lesbian desire did not begin with Bernhardt. I have already worked on the 'life, love, and work' of the American sculptor Emma Stebbins (1815-82). Before this, before

'becoming' an art historian, I have had this longing to 'see something' in work from the past: in art, in writing. I am not alone in this, it is a shared fascination. Becoming an art historian has meant that I have sought this out (largely) in sculpture. But sculpture and painting have also 'come to me'. Seeking and finding are difficult to separate. But what is this 'something' I have longed for? Doing *this* work, on Bernhardt and Abbéma, has taught me what this 'something' is, this 'je ne sais quoi' of art making. Because of the work that *they* made, Bernhardt and Abbéma, of each other, I now figure that 'something' as desire: the desire of the maker, the maker's desire of the Other whom she represents in her work, the Other's desire to be represented, in this way, because of *their* desire. Such desire is grounded in a fundamental set of acts, making work, and in the wish, and the fulfilment of that wish, to *create* something in order to mark the desire of both parties as *this* desire, *this lesbian* desire. It is there in the Bust, I know this now. I have looked at the *Bust of Louise Abbéma*, thought about it, written about it for long enough. It is there in the boat painting and I have seen it denied, felt it refused, because the painting is shoved away in the closet of a darkened corridor in the most elite of all world theatres (a theatre, for goodness sake!) or because in the book where the reproduction and its caption float, they are there isolated, alone, on their own page. Not discussed.

The *Bust of Louise Abbéma* by Sarah Bernhardt has now been called an 'exquisite piece of sculpture'; it had already been exhibited, reproduced, even discussed fairly frequently. But not enough. Not enough to recognize its erotic power and its historical significance. This is therefore the job of scholarly lesbian desire. *To do something about all of this.*









This event, 'A Tableau Vivant on the Lesbian Love Boat', was performed by Amanda Newham and myself on 1 July 2006 in the bois de Boulogne in Paris.

Bust But, Miranda Mason, who do you think you are, trying to bring a piece of sculpture to life by loving it? Who do you think you are by re-staging a nineteenth-century painting? What's past is past, you can't re-live it. Who *do* you think you are; some kind of lesbian-scholar-Pygmalion? I'm just a piece of sculpture, you must know that. *Aside*: Like I said, no-one, and I mean no-one ... well, okay, there's a wee bit in our catalogue ... has said a single interesting thing about me before now! I'm not sure if she's gone too far ... how *could* I go back to being on the bottom shelf after this ... might have been better to stay there, not reach for the stars, surely? Maybe that pedestal she was talking about would be good though ...

MM You are not just 'a piece of sculpture'. But, well, it's funny you should say that because when I first saw Gérôme's painting of Pygmalion and Galatea back in 1991 on my first visit to New York, for *Gay Pride*, I honestly thought it was two women kissing ... and I bought the print because of it!

Bust Okay, I see how you got it wrong; men wore skirts in those days. The story of Pygmalion is a famous one, but it's not your fault; you have to know the story and its history and you weren't an art historian then, right?

MM No, I wasn't. But I don't think it's about being an art historian. I think, then as now, it was more that I *wanted* it to be two women kissing. To see a picture of that happening in a big museum in a big city. But, hey, fat chance! And yet now that I have seen you, I know that kissing, or being seen to be kissing, or anything like that (if you know what I mean), is not the be-all-and-end-all, it's not what it's *all* about. Look at Courbet's *Sleepers*, is that about lesbian *love*? Is it the erotic manifestation of 'the conscious presence of desire in one woman for another'? No. They're both asleep for starters. But the boat painting is about love. Not just 'romantic friendship'. Bernhardt is wearing a red rose, she is odalisquing it up with her arm dangling alluringly over the edge of the boat. Abbéma is just there, stood upright with her, also red, don't you know, parasol, saying, - it seems to me: 'Out, Loud and Proud, baby'. The letter of donation to the Comédie-Française said that the subject of this painting by

Louise Abbéma was Sarah Bernhardt *and herself* on the day of the anniversary of their amorous liaison. Anniversary. How many 'friends' do that? Some, but not many, and certainly not on a boat, on the lesbian love boat. Amorous liaison, remember. I believe that letter. I have to believe it. I want to believe it. But I also had to take action, and the tableau vivant was thought of, planned, we did it, people helped. It's there now, done, and no-one can take that experience away from me. I've got *my* 'evidence'. There, in those seven images.

Bust Okay, but *why* did you do this? And who is that woman in the boat with you?

MM I wanted to think about the idea of making love and making work but also living both together, for me as well as for Abbéma and Bernhardt when they made artworks of each other. So I came up with the idea of the tableau vivant. It was later that I thought I could think this as 'making love work'; making work that is about love; about a past love using a present love, and now, speaking to you, I also realize that this is about making love work out, as in working at making it last, because that's also what I was doing at the time. And it's about living that love, living one's work, and seeing if both are possible at the same time, because that's what I am implying Bernhardt and Abbéma did in their relationship. And the outcome seemed to have a good effect, far wider than I expected, others took part too, and responded well. And this was offered up on the basis of friendship, old and new: from Bev and Fiona, Richard in Paris, Jonathan in the States, Claire, Jo, Griselda, Anna, Francesco, Richard here, Laure, Michael ...

Bust Yes, but *who is that woman in the boat with you?* What is her name? Who is she?

MM She's Amanda.

Bust Oh?

MM She's the woman I loved and who loved me, at that time. It's funny because now that we are no longer together, I can look back and see that as one of the last times we both made each other happy ... when we did the tableau vivant, it was fun. She likes dressing up, so do I. She sent me this hand-written letter on beautiful paper, in French, asking to meet me at the bois de Boulogne to celebrate the anniversary of our amorous liaison, celebrate *our* amorous liaison; it was addressed to *me* not SB or LA. And I guess that's what we did: celebrate. We both got changed on the shore of the island in the middle of the lake (I chose that spot because I was trying to get the most similar background to the painting), and not a single passer-by batted an eyelid the whole time. Richard helped Amanda with her frock; he'd brought champagne – which we saved for the end! – Richard and I positioned the boat, and off we went. Mind you, the ducks didn't turn up until the end ... The pictures tell the story but it was one we invented as we went along and the result can only partly be because of my planning, my ideas, my desire to re-stage a past love with one in the present, my desire to challenge the hollow emptiness of the archive. I guess, on that day, Amanda and I did this together, we loved each other in that beautiful moment. And we created something for my thesis because of knowing *how* to love each other, then. And just from knowing each other, which, I guess, looking back now, is the greatest gift we gave each other. Not always by telling, sometimes just by showing each other: here I am. It's not always easy to know that ... to understand it as that ... I have thought that the tableau vivant was me, trying -- and doing it -- to make love work, and it was. But it was also both of us on that day who were making love work. I was so happy that it worked out so well. It didn't rain. We both looked great and Richard was a treasure, he took some beautiful shots. I guess I was saying, in that event, here I am, Amanda, this is my work, my thesis; I want you to be part of it. And she was. Because I now realize that I could not have made this tableau vivant if this love had not existed, and had already existed before that day, for the years before it. It wasn't enough just to love *you*, my dear – which of course I do very much and still do and think I always will – I had to be more than a lesbian Pygmalion and love and be loved by a flesh and blood, full figure of a woman. So, that's what we achieved that day, for me. Yes, I see, I know that the Bust -- sorry -- you represent the inscription of love, erotic love, desire, lesbian desire, and all of this

reciprocated. Anyone can see that, if they choose to. But that was someone else's love. I know now what it feels like to do that too, to be 'making love work'. And I know that, in many other ways, I also tried my best to do that for us. I made mistakes. But this event I can look back on and be proud of.

Bust And it's over now?

MM Yes. Things change. And because, I guess, this work – the thesis, scholarly lesbian desire – is about every day, every single day ... and each day is not always as exciting as the lesbian love boat in the bois de Boulogne. Some are though ... finding the painting by Abbéma of Bernhardt in her studio in boulevard de Clichy was a huge thrill; I was in a good mood for days after that! But most of the time it is pretty much like Yourcenar says: 'once you've been excited by a project, then inspiration comes from concentration, hard work, organization and an alarm clock'. I think the tableau vivant or falling in love with you means she hasn't got it completely right ... inspiration, like passion, comes back at you ... but, it is true as well, that 'making love work' is hard work, and hard work was never easy ...

Bust Umm ... Bernhardt had to put a bit of effort in to make me, that's for sure ... it took her much longer than she thought ...

MM I think something worth doing does, and so that kind of makes me think that if this is what I am going to do from now on, which I finally think is the case, that I would like to share that with ... well, it's obvious that I want to be ... I suppose I would like to be loved for the work I do! That sounds so ... strange! But because I care about this so much, which is why I fell in love with you ... apart from the fact that you are drop-dead gorgeous, of course! All this makes me hope ... that loving my work as I do ... and yet it ... I felt it had me ... at one time ... by the throat or ... imprisoned somehow ... and yet having done it, having done the tableau vivant *and* the endless filing, re-filing, list-making, and all the rest, having done all

that, I was wondering if anyone else is out ... if anyone else ... really gives ... really cares?!
... about ... about this sort of thing ... ?

Bust I care.

MM Sorry?

Bust I care. And I love you.

MM What? Say that again, I didn't quite catch what you said ...

Bust I love you.

MM [*Looks at the bust*]

Appendix 1: *Ophélie* Installation Costs, Royal Theatre, Copenhagen, 1881-83

| Item | Amount | Dollars/Pounds | Reference |
|--|---|--------------------------------------|---|
| Tax on <i>Ophélie</i> and applying for a refund because an art object authorised as such by Professor Dahlerup | 65.33 krone [67.17 krone includes tax administration cost] | \$17.44 / £3.60 [\$17.93 / £3.70] | Korrespondance, Box 241, 121/1881 (25 June 1881), Customs inspectorate to Fallesen. Journal, Box 111, 121 (25 June 1881) Korrespondance, Box 241, 122/1881 (28 June 1881) Ministeret to Fallesen. Korrespondance, Box 241, 122/1881 (17 June 1881), Fallesen to Ministeret Kopibog, Box 78, 233 (17 June 1881) |
| Copyright fee for photograph of <i>Ophélie</i> | 100 krone | \$26.69 / £5.50 | Journal, Box 111, 118 (24 June 1881) Korrespondance, Box 241, 118/1881 (24 June 1881) |
| Overall annual maintenance grant | 10,000 krone | \$2679.38 / £552.25 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 47/1883 (1 March 1883), Herholdt to Director of the Royal Theatre [Fallesen] Korrespondance, Box 241, 216/1883 (1 October 1883), Heholdt to Fallesen Journal, Box 111, 216 (no day or month 1883) |
| Additional grant for bricking up two doors in the foyer and cutting out two new ones | 1000 krone Must not exceed this amount. | \$266.92 / £55.04 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 100/1881 (17 June 1881) Korrespondance, Box 241, 125/1881 (27 June 1881), Fallesen and unknown draft letter Korrespondance, Box 241, 125/1881 (5 July 1881), Ministry to who? |

| Item | Amount | Dollars/Pounds | Reference |
|---|---|-----------------------|---|
| | | | <p>Korrespondance, Box 241, 125/1881 (9 July 1881), receipt from Dr Phil. Herholdt for 1000 krone received from Ministreret</p> <p>Kopibog, Box 78, 255/1881 (27 June 1881)</p> <p>Kopibog, Box 79, 273/1881 (9 July 1881, report of letter dated 5 July 1881)</p> <p>Korrespondance, Box 241, 47/1883 (1 March 1883), Herholdt to Director of the Royal Theatre [Fallesen]</p> |
| Cost of new doors exceed budget | 120 krone | \$32.17 / £6.63 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 8/1882 (18 January 1882), Ministry to who? |
| First instalment for cost of making marble frame for Ophelie | 1500 krone | \$402.12 / £82.84 | Korrespondance, Box 241, no number (5 September 1882), invoice from Dantner, stone carver and mason |
| Total cost of making marble frame, transporting and fixing it with the the bas relief in situ | 2700 krone 2500 krone (marble) + 100 krone (transport and fixing) + 100 krone (arch. drawings) | \$723.43 / £149.11 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 43/1883 (February 1883), Arch. Prof. Dahlerup to Royal Theatre administrator |
| Additional cost of setting up Ophélie refused | 2150 krone | \$576.07 / £118.73 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 47/1883 (1 March 1883), Herholdt to Director of the Royal Theatre [Fallesen] |

| Item | Amount | Dollars/Pounds | Reference |
|--|---|-----------------------|--|
| Grant for setting up Ophélie | 2167 krone (+ 560 krone for another aspect of decoration) = total 2727 krone (2158 krone 60 ore + 568 krone 40 ore) is Fallesen's more exact figure) | \$580.62 / £119.67 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 93/1883 (21 April 1883), Herholdt to Director of the Royal Theatre [Fallesen] Journal, Box 111, 93 (no day no month 1883) Journal, Box 111, 255 (no day, no month 1883) |
| Installation of Ophélie cannot be financed from the annual maintenance grant | | | Korrespondance, Box 241, 216/1883 (1 October 1883), Herholdt to Fallesen |
| Plea for extra grant for Ophélie | | | Fallesen to Ministreret. Referred to in letter below |
| Grant for setting up Ophélie approved | 2158 krone | \$578.21 / £119.18 | Korrespondance, Box 241, 255/1883 (9 November 1883), Ministreret to Fallesen |

Note: All correspondence is found in Copenhagen in Rigsarkivet 220, Det Kongelige Teater og Kapel, 1794-1912, E. Korrespondance, Teatret

Appendix 2 Exhibitions with Works in Sculpture by Bernhardt, 1874-1923

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|
| 1874 1 May to 20 June | <i>Salon de 1874</i> | Direction des Beaux-arts, ministère de l'Instruction publique, des cultes et des beaux-arts | Palais des Champs-Élysées [also known as palais de l'Industrie] | <i>Portrait de Mlle B. G...</i> | Nestor Paturot, <i>Salon de 1874</i> |
| 1875 1 May to 20 June | <i>Salon de 1875</i> | Direction des Beaux-arts, ministère de l'Instruction publique, des cultes et des beaux-arts | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Portrait de Mlle. R. Bernhardt</i> | <i>Art 2, 375; Illustration 45, 386</i> |
| 1876 1 May to 29 June | <i>Salon de 1876</i> | Direction des Beaux-arts, ministère de l'Instruction publique et des beaux-arts | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Portrait de M. D...</i> <i>Après la tempête</i> | <i>Art 5, 28 [ALT illus.]; Gaulois May; GBA 135; Revue des deux mondes 1 July; Temps 18 June, 2; Unident. publ. [ALT illus. Bernhardt]; Zigzags 14 May, 3 [ALT illus.]; Times 2 May, 5; Kunstchronik 15 Sept, 790; New York Tribune 5 June. Photo [ALT]: Lagraine; Marville; Unident. publ. [Goupil?];</i> |

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1878 15 May to 5 July | <i>Salon de 1878</i> | Direction des Beaux-arts, ministère de l'Instruction publique et des beaux-arts | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Portrait de M. E. de G.</i> [Émile de Girardin] <i>Portrait de M. W. B</i> [William Busnach] | Unident. publ. <i>Art</i> 13, 168, 14, 255 |
| 1879 Saturday, 28 January | <i>Inauguration du Théâtre de Monte-Carlo</i> | Charles Garnier, architect | Théâtre de Monte Carlo | <i>La Musique [Le Chant]</i> | <i>Art</i> 16, 208; [?] <i>L'univers illustré</i> 1880 [engraving]; Maurice de Seigneur, <i>Théâtre de Monte Carlo</i> (1880) |
| 1879 12 May to 30 June | <i>Salon de 1879</i> | Sous-secrétaire d'État, ministère de l'Instruction publique et des beaux-arts | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Portrait de Mlle L. Abbéma</i> <i>Portrait de Miss H...</i> | <i>Art</i> 8, 264 (1877), 17, 274, 18, 11; <i>GBA</i> 20, 152; <i>Revue des deux mondes</i> 33, 927; <i>Vie moderne</i> 10 July, 214; <i>Kunstchronik</i> 11, 789 |
| 1879 14 June to 21 June, or July | <i>Les Œuvres de Mlle Sarah Bernhardt (de la Comédie Française): peinture, sculpture</i> | Bernhardt | Thomas Russell and Sons' Gallery, 33 Piccadilly, London (Watch and clockmakers) | <i>Après la Tempête</i> [marble reduction]; <i>Emile de Girardin</i> ; <i>William Busnach</i> ; <i>Regina Bernhardt</i> ; <i>Madlle G</i> ; <i>M. Dugas</i> ; <i>Bellone Enfant</i> ; <i>L'Art couronnant Shakespeare et Molière</i> ; <i>Bouffon</i> ; <i>Abbéma, Medaillon de</i> | Exh. cat. <i>Academy</i> 14 June, 528; 21 June, 550; <i>Athenaeum</i> 14 June, 768, 21 June, 800; <i>Graphic</i> 14 June, 599; <i>Illustrated London News</i> 21 June, 583; <i>Life</i> 12 July, 5; <i>Theatre</i> 1 July, 390; <i>Times</i> 16 June, 10; <i>The Year's Art</i> |

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1879 | <i>Exposition de peinture et sculpture de 1879</i> | | | <i>Madlle Sarah Bernhardt</i> | (1880) 53; <i>Art</i> 18, 24; <i>Figaro</i> 18 June, 3; 27 June, 1; <i>Gaulois</i> 18 June; <i>Art Amateur</i> [citing <i>London World</i>] 1:3, 45-46 |
| 1879 24 November [one week] | <i>Concours pour l'érection au rond-point de Courbevoie d'un monument allégorique de la Défense de Paris en 1870</i> | Société des Beaux-arts de la ville de Nice Conseil général du département de la Seine | Nice [venue not identified] École des beaux-arts | <i>Le Fou</i> [Le Bouffon, belonged to Gambart] Maquette for monument | Exh. cat. None located [see AVP] |
| 1880 1 May to 20 June | <i>Salon de 1880</i> | Sous-sécretariat d'état des Beaux-arts, ministère de l'Instruction publique et des beaux-arts | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Portrait de M. de L...</i> [Pierre Henri Victor de Lapommeraye] <i>Le sergent Hoff</i> | <i>Tout-Paris</i> 23 May [Hoff illus.]; <i>Vie moderne</i> 3 July, 421 |
| 1880 29 July | <i>Exposition du cercle des Arts libéraux</i> [first exhibition] | Cercle des Arts libéraux | rue Vivienne | <i>Portrait de Mlle L. Abbéma</i> | <i>Kunstchronik</i> 15, 650 |

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| 1880 13 November | <i>Mlle Sarah Bernhardt's Paintings and Sculpture</i> Catalogue title: <i>Sarah Bernhardt Souvenir including the authorized catalogue of her Paintings and Sculptures</i> | Bernhardt prob. with Jarrett and/or Abbey Dealer: Knoedler Gallery | Union League Theatre, New York | <i>Buste de M. de Girardin; Primavera; Encrier Fantastique; Statuette de Sarah Bernhardt; Buste de Regina Bernhardt; Ophélie</i> | Exh. cat. [ALT illus.] <i>American Art Review</i> 2:83-85; <i>Art Amateur</i> 4:2-3; [all illus.]; <i>New York Herald</i> 14 Nov; <i>New York Times</i> 13 Nov, 1; 14 Nov, 1; <i>New York Tribune</i> 14 Nov |
| 1880 after 13 November | As above | Bernhardt prob. with Jarrett and/or Abbey Dealer: Knoedler Gallery | Sarony's Gallery [photographer], New York | Same as above | As above |
| 1880/1881 | As above | Bernhardt prob. with Jarrett and/or Abbey | 'Studio Building', Boston | Same as above [?] | <i>Art Amateur</i> 4:2 |
| 1881 2 May to 20 June | <i>Salon de 1881</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Ophélie</i> <i>Portrait de M. Coquelin cadet</i> | Henry Jouin, <i>Sculpture aux Salons de 1881, 1882, 1883, Exposition nationale de 1883</i> (1884; Coquelin), 37; <i>Art</i> 26, 61 (Coquelin); <i>Vie moderne</i> 28 May, 341 (Coquelin) |

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| 1881 6-8 November | Sarah Bernhardt's painting and sculpture | Bernhardt and possibly Wiener Kunstfreunde | Ringtheater, Vienna | <i>Ophélie</i> ; <i>Après la Tempête</i> ; [reduction]; self portrait statuette; inkwell; 'some portrait busts' | <i>Kunstchronik</i> 17, 75; Kikeriki, Sarah's <i>Reisebriefe</i> (n.d.), 177 |
| 1881 after 8 November | Sarah Bernhardt's painting and sculpture | Bernhardt | Budapest [no record it actually went ahead] | Some or all of the above | <i>Kunstchronik</i> [advance news], 17, 75 |
| 1883 1 August to 8 November | <i>Southern Exposition, Louisville, Kentucky</i> | Art department for Southern Exposition | Louisville, KY | <i>Primavera</i> [poss. sold during 1880-81, therefore not Bernhardt's] | <i>Studio</i> [New York] 2:36, 114 |
| 1885 | <i>Salon de 1885</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Mars enfant</i> <i>Henriette</i> | None located |
| 1886 | <i>Salon de 1886</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Portrait de Mlle de ***</i> | None located |
| 1888 | <i>Salon de 1888</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Henriette</i> | None located |
| 1890 | <i>Salon de 1890</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Bellone</i> | None located |
| 1891 | <i>Salon de 1891</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | <i>Souvenir</i> | None located |

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|---|---|--|
| 1893 | 'France', <i>Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition Chicago 1893</i> | World's Columbian Exposition and French government sponsored 'committee of ladies' | Woman's Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago | Bust of Louise Abbéma; <i>Ophélie</i> ; Bust of a child [prob. bust of Simone Bernhardt, b. 1891] | Maud Howe Elliot, <i>Woman's Building Chicago 1893</i> [photo: <i>Ophélie</i>], 235; <i>Art Amateur</i> 29:4, 99 [illus.] |
| 1897 | <i>Salon de 1897</i> | Société des Artistes français | Palais des Champs-Élysées | 'Buste plâtre' [Victorien Sardou] | <i>Revue des deux mondes</i> 142, 189 |
| 1897 December | <i>Exposition Lachenal</i> | | Galerie Georges Petit, rue Godot de Mauroy | 'Tête d'enfant' [prob. a bust of Simone Bernhardt, b. 1891] | <i>Plume</i> 207, 791 |
| 1900 15 April to 12 November | 'Bronzes, Fonte et Ferronnerie d'art, Zinc d'art, Métaux repoussés', <i>Exposition Universelle de 1900</i> | Exposition universelle | Champs-Élysées, Invalides, Champ de Mars, palais Étrangers, Trocadéro | <i>Buste de Victorien Sardou</i> ; 'algues et poissons' | GBA, 63-64 [photo: 'Poisson']; <i>Le Théâtre</i> (c. 1900), M. H. Vian, <i>Rapports du jury international</i> (1902), 501; <i>Annales politiques et littéraires</i> , 25 July 1909 [photo: 4 works]; <i>Harper's New Monthly Magazine</i> , 102:607, 63-72 |
| 1904 | <i>Salon de la société des Artistes décorateurs</i> | Société des Artistes décorateurs | [?]Union centrale des Arts décoratifs | <i>Algues Poissons</i> | Exh. cat. |
| 1905 | <i>Exposition des arts de la mer</i> | | Hôtel Continental, location not identified | Marine sculptures | <i>Annales politiques et littéraires</i> , 25 July 1909 [photo: 4 works] |

| Date | Title of exhibition or public work | Organizer | Location | Works in sculpture exhibited | Published Text and image sources |
|---|---|----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| 1906 16 November to 31 December | <i>Salon de la société des Artistes décorateurs</i> | Société des Artistes décorateurs | Pavillon de Marsan, musée de l'union centrale des Arts décoratifs | Not recorded | Exh. cat. |
| 1910 | 'A recent exhibition', possibly titled <i>Violons d'Ingres!</i> | Not identified | Not identified | No details of the exhibition or confirmation that Bernhardt exhibited there. Article may only have been prompted by the exhibition and covered artists not exhibited. Author visited boulevard Pereire | <i>Lecture pour tous</i> , 118-20 [photo: <i>Busts of Régina and Edmond Rosand</i>] |

Notes:

1. Titles of exhibitions in italics are from catalogues or periodical reports, indicated as 'exh. cat' when the title is the same as the exhibition. Titles of sections of exhibitions are written in roman and quotation marks. Where no obvious title is given, a description is written in roman.
2. If not stated otherwise, geographical and institutional locations are in Paris
3. Only works concerning the exhibition as a current event are cited
4. All published works cited were produced the same year as the exhibition; volume (and number where known) or day and month are given, then page numbers. The year is only given if different to that of the exhibition. Salon guides are not included
5. 'illus.' (drawing or painting) and 'photo' in the publication cited are given in square brackets after the title with the name of artist or photographer when identified. Illustrations published under separate cover are cited as a distinct source.

Appendix 3 Exhibitions and Major Sales of Bernhardt's Works in Sculpture, 1923 onwards

| Exhibition details | Works exhibited with dates, lender as listed in catalogue, and illustration |
|---|---|
| <p><i>Succession de Mme Sarah Bernhardt</i>, F. Lair-Dubreuil and André Benoist, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 10 June 1923 <i>Catalogue des tableaux modernes, aquarelles, pastels, dessins, sculptures par Sarah Bernhardt etc.</i> (Estate sale)</p> | <p><i>Bust of Regina Bernhardt</i>, 1875 <i>Après la Tempête</i>, 1876, marble reduction 'Masque de Jacques Damala mort' [c. 1889]</p> |
| <p><i>Succession de Mme Sarah Bernhardt</i>, comm. pris. not identified, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 3-6 July 1923. (Estate sale)</p> | <p><i>Bust of Georges Clairin</i>, [1876], bronze</p> |
| <p><i>Succession de Mlle Louise Abbéma, artiste peintre, chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur</i>, Henri Gabriel, hôtel Drouot, 13 and 18 December 1927. (Estate sale)</p> | <p><i>Bust of Louise Abbéma</i>, 1878</p> |
| <p><i>Le Décor de la vie sous la IIIe république de 1870 à 1900</i>, musée des arts décoratifs [curator not identified], Pavillon de Marsan, Palais de Louvre, Paris, April to July 1933</p> | <p><i>Bust of Victorien Sardou</i>, 1900, bronze. Collection of Pierre Sardou.</p> |
| <p><i>La Comédie-Française 1680-1962</i>, G. Van der Kemp, Musée de Versailles et des Trianons, Versailles, 27 April 1962 to ?</p> | <p>Theatrical and personal iconography, objects and documents only</p> |
| <p><i>Sarah Bernhardt 1844-1923</i>, Jane Abdy, Ferrers Art Gallery, London, March to April 1973 (Loan and sale)</p> | <p>'Self Portrait of Sarah as a Sphinx' [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], 1880, bronze. Photo. 'Sarah as a Sphinx', plaster model for the bronze. Private collection, London.</p> |
| <p><i>Western European Bronzes of the Nineteenth Century: A Survey</i>, Robert Kashey and Martin L. H. Reymert, Shepherd Gallery, New York, Fall 1973. (Sale)</p> | <p>Inkwell: Self-portrait as a Chimera' [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], after 1880, bronze. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>Sarah Bernhardt</i>, Andernos, 1 -15 May 1974 Purpose and content of exhibition not identified. No catalogue located.</p> | <p>Not identified</p> |
| <p><i>Pierre Cardin présente Sarah Bernhardt</i>, Jean-Pierre Camard, Espace Pierre Cardin, Paris, 31 March to 30 May 1976 (Loan and sale)</p> | <p>'Médaille en terre cuite' ['Édouard VII'], 1874. Coll. Michel de Bry. Photo Plaster medallion of Mme Guérard, 1874. Coll. Michel de Bry. Photo</p> |

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| | <p><i>La Nègresse de Madame Guérard</i>, 1875, terracotta medallion. Coll. Michel de Bry. Photo</p> <p>'Buste de Sarah Bernhardt dans 'La Fille de Roland', 1876, terracotta bust. Coll. Michel de Bry. Photo</p> <p>'Buste de E. de Girardin en terre cuite', [1878], reduction. Coll. Michel de Bry</p> <p>'Encrier « Sarah en chimère », 1880, bronze. Photo. Coll. Michel de Bry. Photo</p> <p>'Autoportrait' bust, 1892, patinated plaster</p> <p>'Médaillon circulaire en terre cuite orné du portrait de Mme Guérard, de profil', 1894. Coll. Michel de Bry. Photo</p> <p>'Buste de Victorien Sardou', 1900, bronze.</p> <p>'Coll. de la Ville de Paris' [Musée du Petit Palais] ; loaned, not for sale</p> <p>'Orchidées' [1], 1900, polychrome bronze. Coll. Jean-Pierre Strauss</p> <p>'Orchidées' [2], 1900, polychrome bronze. Coll. Jean-Pierre Strauss</p> |
| <p><i>Romantics to Rodin : French Nineteenth-Century Sculpture from North American Collections</i>, Peter Fusco and H. W. Janson, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 4 March to 25 May 1980, tour until April 1981</p> | <p>'Inkwell, Self-Portrait as a Sphinx (<i>Encrier fantastique</i>), 1880, bronze with new ostrich feather plume. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>La Femme Artiste d'Elisabeth Vigée Lebrun à Rosa Bonheur</i>, A. H. A. Amann et al, Donjon Lacataye, Mont-de-Marsan, November 1981 to February 1982</p> | <p>'Le Fou et la mort' [<i>Le Bouffon</i>], 1877, terracotta. Musée Municipal, Mont-de-Marsan. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>Sarah Bernhardt and her Times</i>, Wildenstein & Co. Inc., New York, 13 November to 28 December 1984 (Prob. loan and sale)</p> | <p><i>Après la Tempête</i>, 1876, bronze reduction. Private collection. Photo.</p> <p>'Portrait of Louise Abbéma' [<i>Bust of Louise Abbéma</i>], 1878, white marble on silver plated bronze. Collection of Michel Perinet, Paris. Photo.</p> <p>'Inkwell, Self-Portrait as a Sphinx [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], 1880, bronze. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Photo.</p> |

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| <p><i>Nineteenth-Century French and Western European Sculpture in Bronze and Other Media</i>, Elisabeth Kashey and Robert Kashey, Shepherd Gallery, New York, Spring 1985 (Sale)</p> | <p><i>Poisson sautant</i>, 1900, bronze. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>Stars et Monstres Sacres</i>, Jean-Michel Nectoux, Musée d'Orsay, Paris, 19 December 1986 to 1 March 1987</p> | <p><i>Bust of Louise Abbéma</i>, 1878. Musée d'Orsay, Paris. <i>Encrier fantastique</i>, 1880, bronze inkwell. Collection of Michel de Bry. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>Sarah Bernhardt</i>, Evelyne-Dorothee Allemand, Musée des beaux-arts, Tourcoing, 1987</p> | <p>Iconography of Bernhardt by Clairin and others. Iconography of Clairin</p> |
| <p><i>Violons d'Ingres</i>, Veronique Moreau-Miltgen, Musée des Beaux Arts, Tours, 19 June to 4 September 1988</p> | <p><i>Bust of Louise Abbéma</i>, 1878. Musée d'Orsay, Paris.</p> |
| <p><i>Arts et Spectacles</i>, hôtel Drouot, Paris, 9 May 1988 (Sale)</p> | <p>Large amount of Bernhardt iconography and documentation, including letters</p> |
| <p>Bury Street Gallery, May 1989 Purpose and content of exhibition not identified. No catalogue located. (Sale)</p> | <p>Not identified</p> |
| <p><i>Sarah Bernhardt : Artist and Icon</i>, William Emboden [Severin Wunderman Museum, Irvine, CA], Maryhill Museum of Art, Goldendale, Washington, 28 May to 21 August 1994</p> | <p>'Self-portrait in bronze bas-relief with a halo of gold doré' [<i>L'Art couronnant Molière et Shakespeare</i>], [c.1879]. Owner not identified. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>Le Souvenir de Sarah Bernhardt à Fontainebleau</i>, Collection of Daniel Ladeuille, Fontainebleau, 7 to 12 1994 No catalogue located.</p> | <p>Prob. 'Sarah en chimère' [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>]; 'Autoportrait' bust (with Goldscheider), polychrome terracotta. Both Collection of Daniel Ladeuille. Illus. not ascertained.</p> |
| <p><i>Femme fatale: Sarah Bernhardt</i> [one of three in <i>Theatergöttinnen: Inszenierte Weiblichkeit</i>], Claudia Balk, Deutsches Theatermuseum, Munich, 23 October 1994 to 8 January 1995</p> | <p>'Sarah Bernhardt als Sphinx. Selbstportrait von Sarah Bernhardt [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], c. 1880 [1880], plaster inkwell. Collection of Lady Jane Abdy, London. Photo of bronze version (not exhib.) 'Büste, Portrait Victorien Sardous von Sarah Bernhardt' [<i>Bust of Victorien Sardou</i>], c. 1882 [1897-1900], bronze. Musée du Petit Palais. Photo.</p> |
| <p><i>Jacques Chazot: Souvenirs d'un Parisien</i>, Musée de la Vie Romantique, Paris, June to August 1995</p> | <p>'Buste d'une Femme', 1878 <i>Bust of Émile de Girardin</i>, 1878, bronze reduction. Both new acquisitions.</p> |

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| <p><i>Sarah Bernhardt et son Époque</i>, Coll. of Michel de Bry, Chayette et Cheval, Drouot-Richelieu, 22-23 April 1997</p> | <p>'La Gouvernante Madame Guérard' [plaster medallion of Mme Guérard], 1872 'Edouard VII' [terracotta medallion of a man], 1874 'Portrait de Madame Guérard de profil' [plaster medallion of Mme Guérard], 1874 'La Nègresse de Madame Guérard' [terracotta medallion of a woman], 1915 [1875] 'Sarah Bernhardt dans la Fille de Roland' [original title not identified], 1876 'Yorrick, le bouffon d'Hamlet' [<i>Le Bouffon</i>], 1877, bronze. Photo 'Sarah en chimère' [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], 1880, bronze. Photo 'Buste d'Émile de Girardin', 1878, terracotta reduction 'Sarah couronnant Molière et Shakespeare' [<i>L'Art couronnant Molière et Shakespeare</i>], [c. 1879], silvered bronze relief 'Autoportrait' bust, c. 1897, bronze With Edmond Lachenal, 'Portrait d'une petite-fille de Sarah Bernhardt' [portrait bust of [?]Simone Bernhardt], [1893], enameled terracotta bust 'Portrait de Madame Guérard de profil à gauche' [terracotta medallion of Mme Guérard], [?]1894</p> |
| <p><i>Théophile Gautier, la critique en liberté</i>, Stéphane Guégan, Musée d'Orsay, 18 February to 18 May 1997</p> | <p><i>Bust of Émile de Girardin</i>, 1878, bronze reduction, Lender not ascertained.</p> |
| <p><i>D'Ingres à Cézanne: le XIXe siècle dans les collections du musée du Petit Palais</i>, Gilles Chazal, musée du Petit Palais, Paris and Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bonn, 29 May to 27 September 1998</p> | <p><i>Bust of Victorien Sardou</i>, 1900, bronze. Musée du Petit Palais, Paris. Photo</p> |
| <p><i>Princes as Patrons: The Art Collections of the Princes of Wales from the Renaissance to the Present Day</i>, Mark L. Evans, The National Museum & Gallery, Cardiff, 25 July to 8 November 1998</p> | <p>'Inkwell (Autoportrait en chimère/ Autoportrait en Chauve-Souris)' [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], 1880, bronze inkwell. Collection of Sandringham House. Photo.</p> |

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| Exhibition on the press, Oct – Dec 1998. Location and further details not identified. Source: MOSD dossier Bernhardt | <i>Bust of Émile de Girardin</i> , 1878, bronze reduction. Lender not identified |
| <i>Sarah Bernhardt</i> , ?curator, Espace Claude Monet, Sainte Adresse, 2 to 17 October 1999. Purpose and content of exhibition not identified. No catalogue located | Not identified |
| <i>Sculptures de Carpeaux à Rodin</i> , Christophe Richard, Musée Despiau-Wlérick, Mont-de-Marsan, 23 June – 8 October 2000 | 'Le Fou et la mort' [<i>Le Bouffon</i>], 1877, terracotta. Musée Despiau-Wlerick, Mont-de-Marsan. Photo. |
| <i>Paris 1900 dans les collections du Petit Palais</i> , Maryline Assante di Panzillo et al, Centro Cultural Banco de Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, 1 August to 1 October 2002 and tour to November 2002 | <i>Bust of Victorien Sardou</i> , 1900, bronze. Musée du Petit Palais. Photo |
| <i>Sarah Bernhardt ou le divin mensonge</i> , Noëlle Guibert, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 3 October 2000 to 4 February 2001 | No catalogue listing provided. No sculpture illustrated. |
| <i>La Belle Époque de Sarah Bernhardt</i> , Coll. Daniel Ladeuille, Binoche, Théâtre de la Renaissance, 24-26 April 2001 (Sale) | 'Sarah en chimère' [<i>Encrier fantastique</i>], reduced bronze version (H 15cm). Collection of Daniel Ladeuille. |
| <i>Sarah Bernhardt: L'enchanteresse</i> , Claudette Joannis, Rueil Malmaison, 4 March to 5 April 2003 | <i>Coupe-papier avec animales fantastiques</i> , 1900, painted wooden paper knife <i>Grande coupe-papier en forme d'algue marine</i> , 1900, bronze decorative object. Both Maison de retraite des artistes, Couilly-Pont-aux-Dames |
| <i>Paris 1900: Brilliance de la Belle Époque</i> , Maryline Assante di Panzillo et al, Toyota Municipal Museum of Art, Toyota, Japan, 1 November to 28 December 2003 and tour to November 2004 | <i>Bust of Victorien Sardou</i> , 1897-1900, bronze. Musée du Petit Palais. Photo |
| <i>Sarah Bernhardt: The Art of High Drama</i> , Carol Ockman, Kenneth E. Silver and Karen Leitov, Jewish Museum, New York, 2 December 2005 to 2 April 2006 | <i>Portrait of Louise Abbéma</i> , 1875, bronze medallion. Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Photo. Autoportrait dans <i>La Fille de Roland</i> , 1876, terracotta bust. Jewish Museum, New York. Photo.. <i>Bust of Louise Abbéma</i> , 1878. Musée d'Orsay. Photo. |

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|---|--|
| | <p><i>Encrier fantastique</i>, 1880, bronze inkwell. Boston Museum of Fine Arts. Photo.</p> <p><i>Bust of Victorien Sardou</i>, 1897-1900, bronze. Musée du Petit Palais. Photo.</p> <p><i>Grande coupe-papier en forme d'algue marine</i>, 1900, bronze decorative object. Maison des artistes, Couilly. Photo.</p> |
| <i>Age of Tiffany</i> [no details identified] | <i>Poisson sautant</i> , 1900, bronze decorative object |
| Shepherd Gallery Associates, New York [no details identified] (Sale) | <i>Bust of Mlle. Hocquigny</i> , 1874, marble. Photo. |

Notes:

1. Catalogues are the same title as the exhibition unless otherwise indicated after the details of the exhibition as an event
2. Exhibitions without catalogues or those I have not yet traced are indicated
3. Titles of works are given in italics if they correspond to the original title and if this is identified. I maintain my Anglicization and re-phrasing of the titles of busts of identified individuals, see Chapter One, note 1). Different titles given by the curators are written in roman in quotation marks. The date is given as provided in the catalogue. The medium is not given unless it is a work in several different materials. I provide the original title and the correct date in square brackets when necessary.
4. I do not include works that are attributed to Bernhardt but this attribution is unlikely
5. The lender is given if there is more than one copy or version of the work and if this information is provided
6. Photographic illustrations in a catalogue are indicated at the end of the entry
7. I provide information on exhibitions where Bernhardt's sculpture is illustrated in the catalogue or accompanying book and where the exhibits are not identified but may include her sculpture.

Appendix 4: Ownership and Sales of Bernhardt's Works in Sculpture, 1875-June 1923

| Title and medium | Date | Date and place of sale or exchange | Owner | Price |
|---|------|---|---|----------------------------|
| <i>Miss Moulton</i> , terracotta bust | 1875 | 1875 Private sitting: gift or sale ? | Nina Moulton (later Raben-Levetzan) | Not identified |
| <i>Louise Abbéma</i> , bronze medallion | 1875 | 1875 Gift | Louise Abbéma | N/A |
| <i>Régina</i> , marble bust | 1875 | Kept <i>Succession 1923</i> | Bernhardt Not identified | N/A 1400 francs |
| <i>Autoportrait dans la Fille de Roland</i> | 1876 | Gift? Kept ? | Charles Haas Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>Après la Tempête</i> , reduced marble group | 1876 | 1879 London exhibition | Ethel H. | £400 |
| <i>Après la Tempête</i> , reduced marble group | 1876 | Kept <i>Succession 1923</i> | Bernhardt Max Dearly | N/A 5100 francs |
| <i>Après la Tempête</i> life-size plaster group | 1876 | 1878 | Ernest Gambart | 10,000 francs |
| <i>Après la Tempête</i> reduced bronze group | 1876 | 1878 Editions or one-off ? | Ernest Gambart ? | Not identified or N/A |
| <i>Georges Clairin</i> , plaster bust [prob] | 1876 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>Le Bouffon [Le Fou]</i> , ?medium | 1877 | Before 1879 Sale or gift ? | M. Gambart | Not identified |
| <i>Le Bouffon [Le Fou]</i> , medium ? | 1877 | Kept | Bernhardt (Spindler photo) | N/A |
| <i>Le Bouffon [Le Fou]</i> | 1877 | Editions by Martin | Poss. Princess Alexandra Others not identified | Not identified |
| Offer to execute statue of Claude Lorrain | 1877 | N/A | N/A | Competition [not accepted] |
| <i>Louise Abbéma</i> , marble bust | 1878 | Kept Gift [1923 ?] | Bernhardt Abbéma | N/A |

| Title and medium | Date | Date and place of sale or exchange | Owner | Price |
|---|---------|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <i>Buste d'une femme</i> , ?plaster or marble bust | 1878 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>Emile de Girardin</i> , bronze bust | 1878 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>Emile de Girardin</i> , reduced terracotta bust | 1878 | Not identified | Not identified | Not identified |
| <i>Emile de Girardin</i> , reduced bronze busts | 1878 | Editions by Casse & Delphy; Dagrin & Casse | Not identified | Not identified |
| <i>Médée</i> , plaster statue | 1878 + | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>La Musique [Le Chant]</i> Théâtre de Monte Carlo | 1879 | 1879 | Charles Garnier, architect | Public commission |
| <i>Autoportrait</i> , bust in unknown medium | 1878-79 | Not identified | Grand Duke Constantine of Russia | 20,000F [£1000] |
| Maquette for <i>Monument de la Défense de Paris</i> | 1879 | N/A | Bernhardt | Competition |
| <i>Encrier fantastique</i> , bronze inkwell | 1880 | Editions by Thiébaud frères | Albert Edward, Prince of Wales; Mrs Patrick Campbell Poss. Laura Bathurst; Anne de Lagre | Not identified |
| <i>Encrier fantastique</i> , reduced bronze inkwell | 1880 | Gift. Date '30 octobre', year not identified | Abbéma | N/A |
| <i>Primavera</i> , marble bust | 1880 | poss. 1880-81 | Not identified [exhib. Louisville 1883] | |
| <i>Ophélie</i> | 1880 | 1881 1885 | Hans Makart Not identified | Gift Reserve price 2710 fl. |
| <i>Ophélie</i> | 1880 | 1881 | Royal Theatre, Copenhagen | Gift |

| Title and medium | Date | Date and place of sale or exchange | Owner | Price |
|--|-------------|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <i>Damala</i> , marble bust | 1889 | Kept <i>Succession 1923</i> | Bernhardt Not identified | N/A 500 francs |
| <i>Petite fille</i> , marble bust | 1893 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>Portrait d'une petite fille</i> , plaster or ceramic bust | 1897 c. | Gift | Willie Clarkson, wigmaker, London | N/A |
| <i>Victorien Sardou</i> , plaster bust | 1897 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| <i>Victorien Sardou</i> , bronze bust | 1900 | Not identified | Poss. Hôtel de Ville de Paris | Not identified |
| <i>Grande coupe papier en forme d'alque marine</i> | 1900 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |
| Marine sculptures, 4 no. | 1900 | before 1909 prob. gift | Georges Clairin | Not identified |
| Marine sculptures | 1900 | Not identified | Not identified | 1000 francs each |
| <i>Edmond Rostand</i> , plaster bust | 1900 | Kept | Bernhardt | N/A |

Archives

Archives nationales, Paris

Bibliothèque historique de la Ville de Paris

Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des arts du spectacle

Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des estampes et de la photographie

Bibliothèque nationale de France, département des manuscrits

Caisse nationale des monuments historiques

Citadelle Vauban, musée de Belle-Île-en-Mer

Garrick Club, London

Institut national de l'histoire de l'art

Institut néerlandais, fondation Custodia

Kongelige Bibliothek, Copenhagen

Musée Carnavalet, Paris

Musée d'Étampes

Musée d'Orsay, Paris

Musée de la Vie romantique, Paris

Musée des beaux-arts de Dijon

Musée des beaux-arts de Nîmes

Musée des beaux-arts de Pau

Musée des beaux-arts de Rouen

Musée des beaux-arts de Tourcoing

Musée Despiau-Wlérick, Mont-de-Marsan

Musée du Petit Palais, Paris

Photothèque des musées de la Ville de Paris

Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen, Kongelige Teater og Kapel

Theatre Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Ville de Paris

Wellesley College Archives, Wellesley College, MA

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