INDUSTRY AND THE IDEAL

Ideal Sculpture and reproduction at the early International Exhibitions

TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME 1

GABRIEL WILLIAMS

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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers a period when ideal sculptures were increasingly reproduced by new technologies, different materials and by various artists or manufacturers and for new markets. Ideal sculptures increasingly represented links between sculptors' workshops and the realm of modern industry beyond them. Ideal sculpture criticism was meanwhile greatly expanded by industrial and international exhibitions, exemplified by the Great Exhibition of 1851, where the reproduction of sculpture and its links with industry formed both the subject and form of that discourse. This thesis considers how ideal sculpture and its discourses reflected, incorporated and were mediated by this new environment of reproduction and industrial display. In particular, it concentrates on how and where sculptors and their critics drew the line between the sculptors' creative authorship and reproductive skill, in a situation in which reproduction of various kinds utterly permeated the production and display of sculpture. To highlight the complex and multifaceted ways in which reproduction was implicated in ideal sculpture and its discourse, the thesis revolves around three central case studies of sculptors whose work acquired especial prominence at the Great Exhibition and other exhibitions that followed it. These sculptors are John Bell (1811-1895), Raffaele Monti (1818-1881) and Hiram Powers (1805-1873). Each case shows how the link between ideal sculpture and industrial display provided sculptors with new opportunities to raise the profile of their art, but also new challenges for describing and thinking about sculpture.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation is the result of my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree at the University of York or any other Institution. Parts of Chapter 2 have been published in an article entitled "Italian Tricks for London Shows: Raffaele Monti at the Royal Panopticon," *Sculpture Journal* 23, no. 2 (2014).

INTRODUCTION

That the Fine Arts are an intellectual pursuit, and not a mechanical employment, might be shown, if necessary, by the simplicity of the processes used in them, and by the little change that has taken place in those processes, during the ages in which they have been practiced. Even the few novel inventions that have been brought to bear on them, have tended in no way to improve their quality; some, on the contrary, have been found rather to detract from their excellence than otherwise. The only change which new discoveries have created in the Fine Arts, has been the saving of time and labour, the multiplying of copies with great facility, and the consequent cheapening of cost.

—Henry Weekes, *The Prize Treatise on the Fine Arts Section of the Great Exhibition of 1851*.[1]

Thus the sculptor Henry Weekes described the character of his art in the context of the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations, an event understood in its day and subsequently as a spectacular, if hubristic, celebration of technological ingenuity and economic progress. Sculpture had been placed in the show on account of its connections with modern industry, and was surrounded there by instances of those connections, such as statues and statuettes made via new metallurgic or ceramic techniques, new machines for carving and reproducing shapes, and new collaborations between sculptors and manufacturers of other kinds of product. Weekes's essay complemented the event by going on to describe the technical processes of sculpture in great detail, flaunting such technical knowledge as a stamp of art-critical authority. At the same time, as shown in the quote above, Weekes used the occasion to emphasise sculpture's distinction as a 'Fine Art' from technical skill and notions of progress or change. The reality and rhetoric of such a distinction is the subject of this thesis. The thesis investigates links that sculpture had with industry and mechanical reproduction in Britain during the mid-nineteenth century, and the way in which aesthetic dialogues about sculpture reflected, occluded, or were challenged by these links. In particular, it looks at how sculptors and critics defined sculptural creativity and sculpture as a fine art, in

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[1] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 98.

relation to the different forms of reproduction and technical skill that increasingly surrounded and permeated the creation and display of physical sculptures.

'Ideal' sculpture

In accordance with its concentration on questions of sculptural creativity and sculpture as a fine art, this thesis focuses on a contemporary category of artworks called 'ideal sculpture', used by sculptors and critics in Britain throughout the nineteenth century to denote the apogee of sculpture as an imaginative and intellectual practice. In a doctoral thesis on 'Victorian Ideal Sculpture', Martin Greenwood distinguishes various different, though interrelated, senses of the term in common use from the 1830s till the 1880s.[2] The simplest sense of 'ideal sculpture', as tracked by Greenwood in period sources such as exhibition catalogues or competition notices, was essentially taxonomic: It distinguished works that were neither portraits nor funerary or commemorative monuments, but instead represented scenes or characters imagined, invented or chosen by the sculptor.[3] In its widest interpretations, 'Ideal sculpture' could encompass works showing subjects from scripture, history, classical mythology and modern literature or 'genre' scenes of common life, with titles ranging from *Hagar and Ishmael* or *Hercules and Lycas* to *A Girl Fishing*.[4] Of course, as the notion of inventive or imaginative subject matter was inherently rather slippery, the category of 'ideal sculpture' was applied quite variously. Nonetheless, the distinction had a firm relation to material practice. Portraits and monuments were generally instigated through commissions, with a patron giving an up-front payment for the work and prescribing the subject before any sculpting was done. An alternative way to produce sculpture, however, was for the sculptor to speculatively exhibit a full-size model (usually in plaster), in the hope of securing a patron to pay for its production in marble or metal. Such works by definition exhibited a sculptor's own initiative in relation to subject matter and treatment, and in turn tended to represent fictional, religious or historical subjects that were neither portraits nor commemorations. These works were rarely the most lucrative outputs of a sculptor's career (in Britain at least, most sculptors earned their bread principally through portraits and

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[2] Greenwood, "Victorian Ideal Sculpture," 19-35.
[3] Ibid.,19-22.
[4] Ibid. On the range of subjects encompassed by 'Ideal sculpture', see also Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 199-212.

monuments), but they often gained the most fame or critical prestige, as embodiments of a sculptor's imaginative impulse and creative control.

Along with taxonomic use of the term 'ideal' there was a related but different, normative one, prescribing a particular style or approach that represented the pinnacle of sculptural art, and was embodied in the finest works of sculpture ever produced. This stylistic 'ideal' was invoked in Winckelmann's seminal writings on Greek art in the late eighteenth century, and became thereafter a cornerstone of art criticism and pedagogy in Britain for around a century, featuring in lectures on sculpture by Royal Academicians from Joshua Reynolds (the Academy's first President, who delivered his 'discourse' on sculpture in 1780) through to Henry Weekes (the Academy's Professor of Sculpture 1868-76).[5] Common to such writings was the idea that the inherent physical limitations of sculpture as a medium set natural constraints on what it could successfully represent and how it could do so, that sculpture was, unlike painting, compelled to follow 'but one style', though this was the 'highest and most dignified' of styles possible.[6] Interpretations of what this 'ideal' involved varied from writer to writer across the period, but at least two fundamental associations persisted: Firstly was classical figurative sculpture in general, exemplified by celebrated antiques such as the Medici Venus and Apollo Belvedere. Secondly, there was a distinction of the 'ideal' from observable reality in all its individuality, particularity or temporal contingency, as something that had an irreducible component belonging to the realm of thought or feeling rather than brute matter.[7]

The central implications that theories of the 'ideal' had for contemporary art concerned practices of copying or imitating. Nineteenth-century writers on art commonly contrasted an 'ideal' style, for example, with empiricist approaches to sculpting figures, characterising it as a quasi-Platonic notion of bodily beauty or *beau ideal* that could not be found in nature's individual specimens but only though some process of imaginative abstraction or selective combination. John Flaxman's lectures as the Royal Academy's first Professor of Sculpture defined the ideal in this way:

[5] Greenwood, "Victorian Ideal Sculpture," 19-22. See for example, Winckelmann, *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, 1-22; Reynolds, *Discourses*, 161; Flaxman, *Lectures*, 325 and Weekes, *Lectures*, 75-85. For more detailed accounts concerning the 'ideal' see Honour, *Neo-Classicism*, 101-39 and Potts, *Flesh and the Ideal*.

[6] Reynolds, *Discourses*, 155. Reynolds's point was reiterated in Flaxman, *Lectures*, 191-2; Eastlake, *Contributions*, 61; Eastlake, "The Crystal Palace," 312-5; Weekes, *Lectures*, 15.

[7] Greenwood, "Victorian Ideal Sculpture," 23-9.

The characters of style may be properly arranged under two heads, the Natural and the Ideal. The Natural Style may be defined thus: a representation of the human form, according to the distinctions of sex and age, in action or repose, expressing the affections of the soul. The same words may be used to define the Ideal Style, but they must be followed by this addition—"selected from such perfect examples as may excite in our minds a conception of the supernatural." By these definitions will be understood, that the natural style is peculiar to humanity, and the ideal to spirituality and divinity.[8]

This sense of the 'ideal' persisted well into the nineteenth century, being propounded for example in the connoisseur Gustav Waagen's official guide to sculpture at the Great Exhibition, which divided the sculptures on show (almost all of which could have counted as 'ideal sculptures' in the taxonomic sense detailed above) into 'Ideal' and 'Realistic' ones, the former showing the parts of an individual human model adapted according to the artist's 'own feeling for its inner significance and outward beauty of form'.[9] Yet notions of the ideal, and of that 'nature' in terms of which it was defined, were multiple and malleable. As Hugh Honour notes, the contrast that late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century artists and connoisseurs often drew between the 'ideal' and individual nature was often paralleled by an equation between the 'ideal' and a higher sense of 'Nature' in terms of universal and eternal laws, as opposed to accidental occurrences or arbitrary customs.[10] Such a stratification of 'natures' is witnessed in the sculptor Sir Francis Chantrey's comment of 1819, that he kept in his studio casts of the Apollo Belvedere, the 'Antinous' (whether the Belvedere or Capitoline 'Antinous' was not specified) and the 'Germanicus', [t]he first as ideal or divine nature, the second as human nature refined—& the last as real, every-day nature'.[11] Chantrey's description of the Apollo's 'ideal nature' echoed Reynolds, who had justified certain anatomical licenses in the Apollo as all the more 'correct' expressions of the subject's divinity, whilst also dismissing Gianlorenzo Bernini's illusionistic departures from 'ideal beauty' as a capricious breach of sculpture's eternal conditions for the sake of novelty.[12] Theoretical discourses of the ideal, then, enabled artistic convention to be framed as 'Nature'

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[8] Flaxman, *Lectures*, 200-1.
[9] *Reports by the Juries*, 692.
[10] Honour, *Neo-Classicism*, 104-7.
[11] Moore, *Journal of Thomas Moore*, 229.
[12] Reynolds, *Discourses*, 158-61.

and certain forms of 'naturalism' as affectation and artifice.[13] Yet by the same token, even the imitation of antiques like the Apollo could fall out of concert with the 'ideal'. Some such reconfiguration famously accompanied the acquisition of the so-called Elgin Marbles for the British Museum in 1816. For various prominent artists and connoisseurs, the Elgin Marbles' apparent combination of ancient Greek provenance with lifelikeness and anatomical knowledge shone a new and less flattering light on the conventionality of later Greco-Roman statues such as the Apollo by contrast.[14] As Alex Potts puts it, the 'supposedly timeless idea prized by previous generations of art lover was now exposed as inadequate, as infected by artificial convention, and, if not quite the relic of an outmoded rococo taste, as dangerously close to being so.'[15] In turn, the Elgin marbles usurped the place of the Greco-Roman antiques in Italy as the preeminent go-to reference for sculptural artistry within British art criticism, and retained it well into the late nineteenth century. Importantly, however, this did not mean that the 'ideal' was dropped in critical discourse, but rather that its associations and implications evolved; indeed, according to some historians it entailed a goal of artistry-beyond-artifice that was even more abstract, immaterial and fugitive than the *beau ideal* of previous generations.[16]

The complex relations between the 'ideal' and naturalism or imitation at the level of style or sculptural form in general are beyond the remit of this thesis. Such issues are relevant, however, insofar as they implicate the imitation of artworks or the perception of imitation in artworks, the reproduction or re-use of sculptural forms in studios, and the kinds of artistry or labour associated with such activities. Such implications will become clearer further on; at present, we must turn from this briefly survey of aesthetic theory to survey the realm of material production that forms the other side of this thesis's subject.

The ideal sculptor and reproduction

Whilst associated with abstract and intellectual notions of artistic genius, ideal sculpture was also inexorably tied to heavy physical exertion, divided labour, mechanical skills and

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[13] Antique 'conventions' are defended in just such terms, as instruments of 'illusion' even, in Eastlake, "The Same Subject Considered with Reference to the Nature and Various Styles of the Formative Arts," 31-44.
[14] See Potts, "The Impossible Ideal," 101-22 and Jenkins, *Archaeologists and Aesthetes*, 24-9.
[15] Potts, "The Impossible Ideal," 102.
[16] Ibid, 102-15; Jenkins, *Archaeologists and Aesthetes*, 28-9.

reproduction. Indeed, though collaborative and reproductive processes such as casting and pointing have accompanied sculpture throughout history, reproduction was an especially prominent and public feature of nineteenth-century practice.[17] As a natural concomitant of the grand tour, casts and carved copies of antiquities in two and three dimensions spread the fashion for classical sculpture across Europe, whilst providing collectors with antique substitutes as that fashion used up the corpus of extant 'originals'.[18] In turn, as the fashion for antiquity influenced the patronage of contemporary artists, these artists increasingly invested the technical procedures used for making accurate copies of antiques in the production of their own, new compositions.[19]

The artist best known for establishing the template for ideal sculpture production was Antonio Canova (1857-1822). In basic terms, Canova's fully developed system worked as follows.[20] After working out the composition through small clay sketches, Canova would provide a full-size clay model. Assistants or subcontracted craftsmen would then cast this model in plaster and after this transfer it from plaster to marble. This latter transfer involved skilled and semi-skilled carvers using drills and pointing 'machines' (which operated effectively as three-dimensional callipers) to translate contours of the plaster model into a marble block as accurately as possible. Canova would only work on the marble to finish the uppermost surface, which then received a final polish or tonal wash. The division of labour and use of pointing 'machines' in Canova's workshop did not necessarily save the time or physical labour spent (whether by the master or assistants) producing single statues.[21] What the system did was offer the degree of control and accuracy in reproduction Canova needed to assert authorship across the divided work of many assistants, and thereby handle an increasing number of commissions for marble statues as his own physical strength deteriorated.[22]

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[17] See Hughes and Ranfft, eds., *Sculpture and its Reproductions*, 1-5; Wittkower, *Sculpture*, 222-30.

[18] See Haskell and Penny, *Taste and the Antique*, 79-98.

[19] Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice—I," 153; Janson, *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, 13-14.

[20] For more detailed accounts of the processes in Canova's studio and its development, see Wittkower, *Sculpture*, 222-30; Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice—I," 146-159; Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice—II," 214-229. On the workshop practices of Victorian sculptors specifically, see Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 49-65.

[21] Honour notes how the extensive pointing method adopted by Canova would, insofar as it was developed to provide accurate facsimiles of antiques, have taken longer per statue than previous practices for producing original works. Honour, "Canova's Studio Practice—I," 153

[22] Wittkower, *Sculpture*, 225-30.

Influential as it was, Canova's workshop system should not be taken as a straightforward template for ideal sculpture production in Britain, where the sculpture market was distinct from that in Rome and where techniques would have varied from studio to studio. Nonetheless, the basic cornerstone of this system, that is, the use of delegated labour in combination with plaster 'originals' and pointing devices to facilitate the extension of a sculptor's authorship over a multitude of physical objects, became common practice amongst sculptors in Britain throughout the first half of the nineteenth-century.[23] As in the case of the ageing Canova, supply-side pressures on artists' labour stimulated such developments in workshop practice: After the Napoleonic wars, an increased demand for military memorials, busts and civic statuary faced a relatively small number of adequately-skilled sculptors in Britain, who responded by expanding their assistant workforce and streamlining production techniques.[24] One of the most prominent sculptors in this respect was Sir Francis Chantrey, whose professional success between the 1810s and 1840s corresponded with an expanding studio of trained assistants, using pointing machines like those already introduced in Britain by John Bacon I and James Watt,[25] which sustained both the high volume and quality of Chantrey's output.[26] Looking back at the past half-century in the 1860s, the critic Francis Turner Palgrave blamed Chantrey for spreading a prolific but deleterious system of 'manufacturing' sculpture in Britain, and noted that since Chantrey's heyday any notion of a sculpture actually emanating from the chisel of the sculptor whose name it bore had become largely metaphorical.[27] As Benedict Read points out, Palgrave's attack on Chantrey was in some ways idiosyncratic and unfair, but it voiced a truth in one respect: by the early to mid-Victorian period, British sculpture 'could be said to have ranked virtually as an industry.'[28]

How did the reproductive and increasingly industrial realities of sculptural production feature in public discussions of sculpture and sculptural aesthetics, and in the ostensibly anti-materialistic notions of the 'ideal' noted above? As sculpture widened its audience during the

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[23] Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain*, 155, 183.

[24] Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain*, 154-6, 197-210; Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 67.

[25] According to Chantrey, such devices differed a little from those in Roman studios. Whilst he toured Rome in Chantrey's company in 1819, the poet Thomas Moore recorded, 'Went with Chauntrey [*sic*] to the Studio of Massimiliano—explained to me the progress of a statue—the taking of the points—the working down to them &c. &. It is here done by a wooden square, with plumb lines from it, & different sizes compasses—managed quite otherwise in England, as he promises to show me...' Moore, *Journal of Thomas Moore*, 299. For more on Chantrey's engagement with Rome, Canova and ideal sculpture, see Yarrington, "Anglo-Italian Attitudes."

[26] Roscoe, "Sir Francis Legatt Chantrey RA"; Dunkerley, *Francis Chantrey, Sculptor*, 131-4; Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain*, 225.

[27] Palgrave, *Essays on Art,* 223.

[28] Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 67.

century through exhibitions and public statuary, many accounts of sculptural processes appeared in books and periodicals to clarify what the 'art' of sculpture consisted of, and therefore how sculpture should or should not be evaluated. As Angela Dunstan has explained with regard to a famous essay on studio practice by the American sculptor Harriet Hosmer in 1864, such accounts were partly a means of defending sculptors' claims to artistry and authorship in spite of the collaborative nature of their works, by dispelling the misconception that sculptures were carved out of marble or cast in metal by a single pair of hands from start to finish.[29] Public disclosures or accounts of sculptors' practice did not necessarily clear things up. The facts of who actually did what in sculptors' studios remained more variable and complex than most critics suggested, or were even clandestine, ensuring that disputes about authorship or the boundary between creative and non-creative labour in sculpture rumbled on late into the nineteenth century.[30] In the meantime, publications on sculptural process often perpetuated their own 'mythology' of sculptural authorship and creative labour, contrasting with that of the lone carver though cleaving to a similarly individualistic notion of creativity, and often based upon caricatures of the Canova system sketched above. Yes, it was claimed, sculptors routinely delegated most of their casting and carving work to unnamed assistants, but then all this work was reproductive, physical and therefore un-creative merely 'mechanical' anyway.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, published commentaries on sculpture had established a dominant narrative about the subdivided, collaborative and reproductive labour in sculptor's studios, one that characterised this latter as utterly distinct from the creative or ideal work of sculptors themselves. Charles Babbage's account of the Great Exhibition, for example, distinguished between the 'Fine and Industrial Arts' by referring to sculpture and lacemaking, both of which involved each kind of art, defined as modes of production.[31] Babbage separated out the 'fine' and 'industrial' parts of sculpture production by breaking down the latter's cost into four simple factors: '1.—The remuneration to the artist who makes the model. 2.—The cost of the raw material. 3.—The cost of the labour by assistants in cutting the block to the pattern of the model. 4.—Finishing the statue by the artist himself.'[32] Only the first and last factors constituted 'fine art', because they required 'the taste and judgment of the artist' and created products (the model and finished statue) that were

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[29] Dunstan, "Nineteenth-Century Sculpture and the Imprint of Authenticity," 6-8.
[30] See Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 66-67; Sankey, "The Sculptor's Ghost," 84-9.
[31] Babbage, *The Exposition of 1851*, 48-53.
[32] Ibid., 50.

'individual—the production of individual taste, and executed by individual hands', by contrast with the productions of industrial art, of which 'each example is but one of a multitude,—generated according to the same law, by tools or machines, (in the largest sense of those terms,) and moved with unerring precision by the application of physical force.'[33] Importantly, Babbage's distinction was not ultimately about what labour actually was done by machines rather than hands (neither the reproduction of sculptors' models nor all lacemaking was truly mechanised at this point), but what theoretically *could* be, based on its supposedly mechanical character. The economic definition of 'fine art' was itself underpinned by presumptions about creative thinking. So whilst the *inherent* individuality of the artists' work put it beyond modernisation and cost-reduction, the *inherent* reproducibility of 'industrial' art implied it could be indefinitely cheapened and disseminated via mechanical innovation or outsourcing, without fear of debasement or externalities.[34] Various other texts published during the Great Exhibition echoed this idea, as the royal road to spreading art more widely throughout the populace.[35] 'It is generally admitted', the *Illustrated London News* said in 1851, '…that [rough carving]…is invariably performed for artists by less practiced hands, and is entirely unconnected with the beauty of design or excellence of finish; it might, consequently, as well be effected by machinery as by unskilled manipulation— indeed, machinery of a primitive character is almost universally used.'[36] Not all commentaries of the period were so simplistic. Harriet Hosmer, for example, evoked a great diversity in the ways labour was divided in different studios, whilst characterising assistant carvers as skilful, though subordinate, translators rather than replaceable automatons.[37] Nonetheless, having divulged the striking extent to which some sculptors delegated physical processes—even that of modelling the entirety of a full-size clay model—Hosmer defends the right of those sculptors to authorship on grounds provided that they supervised the work and originated the first idea or *modello* from nothing, and declared it 'high time that some distinction should be made between the labor of the hand and the labor of the brain.'[38]

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[33] Ibid., 48-9.
[34] Ibid., 50-2.
[35] "The Application of Machinery to Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, July 30, 1851, 117; "Jordan's patent machinery for carving wood," *Illustrated Exhibitor*, 1852, vol. 1, 45; Tallis's *History and Description of the Crystal Palace and the Exhibition of the Worlds Industry*, quoted in Janson, *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, 10.
[36] "The Application of Machinery to Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, July 30, 1851, 117.
[37] Hosmer, "The Process of Sculpture," 735-7.
[38] Ibid., 737

Notions of reproductive or mechanical studio work echoed the notions discussed above regarding sculptors copying or following 'nature', both in their polarisation of material and 'ideal' practice and in their malleability. Indeed, in the context of sculpture criticism, references to 'mechanical' or 'industrial' were usually metaphorical, extending beyond technical fact not just to caricature the craft involved in reproducing designs in the studio, but also to conflate this with different styles or commercial strategies seen attributed to named sculptors themselves. Thus Babbage gave a stylistic extension to his economic definition of industrial art in terms of reproduction, declaring, 'the fine arts idealize nature by generalising from its individual objects; the industrial arts realise identity by the unbounded use of the principle of copying.'[39] In another commentary on manufactures and sculpture at the Great Exhibition, the architect Matthew Digby Wyatt drew the same association from the other direction, equating unfettered naturalism in ornamental design with gelatine moulding and the indiscriminate casting of designs in different materials.[40] An 1844 guide to sculpture in Rome by Count Hawks le Grice, meanwhile, having counselled that to 'copy nature is not a mechanical art', nonetheless then equated the process of rendering detailed accessories on statues with that of transcribing fully rendered models into marble, as work that involved no 'reference to the standard of beauty established by the beau ideal':[41]

> The process of this imitation is entirely mechanical, and is effected by measurement until the work is chiselled neatly to the form of the original one in plaster. The workman is then dismissed from his mechanical labour; and the master hand of the sculptor is now employed to impart fidelity, life and spirit to the mechanical imitation. The accessories introduced merely to embellish are executed by the scarpellino or carver, for they require nothing but servile imitation and the work of the chisel. … An untutored eye may be led to admire the embellishments more than the figures, altho' the former are the work of the mechanic, the latter the sculptor.[42]

In this last point about eye-catching accessory details, the sense of 'mechanical' work widens to encompass not only the skill necessary to re-create sculptor's models or other forms of object, but also the indulgence of capricious and uneducated tastes through this skill.

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[39] Babbage, *The Exposition of 1851*, 49.
[40] Wyatt, "An Attempt to define the Principle which should determine Form in the Decorative Arts," 232-4.
[41] Le Grice, *Walks through the Studii of the Sculptors at Rome* 87-8.
[42] Ibid., 88.

Accessory embellishments, that is, are held to be un-ideal and ignoble not only in production but also in reception.

In spite of the hard and stark dichotomy that sculpture criticism drew between the 'ideal' and merely physical or mechanical sides of the art, then, its connection to the particularities of sculptures and sculptural production was at points very loose. Of course, the idealist dichotomy ostensibly complemented the reproductive and many-handed production of sculpture insofar as it figured the sculptor's product as a kind of design, which might be indefinitely re-invested in many concrete objects whilst remaining reducible to none (even if the master's 'touch' still retained currency in some cases).[43] Yet the trope also served to simplify or discount the complexities of collaborative art creation, and to reference the creative or cultural merit of sculptors' work in an extra-technical and quite contingent sense. This thesis probes the implications of this aesthetic discourse, and does so by looking at its use in the face of a great and swift proliferation in the connection between sculpture, industry and new technologies that occurred during the middle of the century, a situation to which we now turn.

The expanding field of ideal sculpture, 1830s-1851

Whilst Canova developed his proto-'industrial' system of marble statue production, other sculptors were deeply involved with commercial manufacturers, some of whom were leading developers of new materials or factory systems to mass-produce design. Particularly prominent were John Bacon I (1740-1799) and John Flaxman (1755-1826), who both founded their careers on modelling work for manufacturers such as Eleanor Coade, Josiah Wedgwood and Matthew Boulton.[44] Indeed, as David Irwin has shown, the adoption of antique forms by such luminaries of the industrial revolution is one of the most significant threads in the history of 'neo-classicism' from the mid-eighteenth century onwards.[45] This was greatly stimulated by the inter-national circulation of antique designs in two-dimensional

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[43] Hosmer likened the sculptor's role in this respect to that of an architect. Hosmer, "The Process of Sculpture," 737. On the open relationship between ideal sculpture designs and particular objects, see Janson, *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, 1-14.
[44] See Clifford, "John Bacon and the Manufacturers": 287-304; "Art and Industry" in Irwin, *John Flaxman*; Bindman, *John Flaxman, R. A.*, 25-9.
[45] Irwin, "Neo-Classical Design," 288-97.

formats through antiquarian publications, trade catalogues and pattern-books, contributing to the demand for and supply of a general 'antique' aesthetic.[46]

During the first decade or so of Victoria's reign, a number of new technologies appeared simultaneously that greatly expanded the material platforms for sculptural authorship and reach of ideal sculpture. Among such technologies were pantographic or lathe-based machines for repeating, re-sizing or otherwise translating the proportions of statues in different materials and formats, following the basic principle of the 'pointing' devices noted above. Whilst engineers in Britain, France and America had been developing such machines since the turn of the century, the second quarter of the century (the 1830s especially) saw them rapidly refined, diversified and widely applied to sculptural industry.[47] Intersecting with these mechanical technologies were chemical developments, which supplied new, often more affordable, materials for copying sculptures. In around 1838, electrotyping emerged as a new, more economical and reliable means of casting sculptures, as well as plating base metals in bronze or silver. Following this, 'Statuary porcelain' or 'Parian ware', a form of biscuit porcelain that imitated marble in a mass-reproducible form, was invented between 1842 and 1845. Other materials harnessed for sculptural casting in the period included iron, zinc and vulcanised rubber.

The 'paper circulation of knowledge' (to use a term coined by the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures in 1836) had probably as significant an impact on the experience of sculpture as developments in three-dimensional reproduction.[48] Electrotyped printing plates, steam powered printing presses, railways, photographic prints, cheap paper and the revival of wood engraving all combined during the late 1830s and 1840s to fire a dramatic expansion of print media generally. This wave of paper carried art imagery and commentary farther and wider than ever before. One seminal publication was Charles Knight's *Penny Magazine* (1832-1845), a magazine offering highly rendered wood engravings of antique statuary at a low price, under the ostensive policy of diffusing cultural education amongst the working classes.[49] Then came the more expensive *Art-Journal* of 1839, which included metal-plate engravings of artworks and articles by prominent experts on the fine and decorative arts, and

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[46] Irwin, "Neo-Classical Design," 288-97; Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain*, 155.
[47] Bogart, "In Art the Ends Just Don't Always Justify the Means," 104-10; Shedd, "A Mania for Statuettes," 36-48; Sobieszek, "Sculpture as the Sum of Its Profiles," 624-5; Taylor, "Sculpture, Science and Society," 2-13; Williams, "Art, Accuracy and the Anaglyptograph".
[48] *Report from the Select Committee on Arts and Their Connexion with Manufactures*, 50.
[49] On the *Penny Magazine* and art, Anderson, "Pictures for the People".

became the first art periodical to establish a secure foothold and wide market in Britain, going on to dominate the field of art criticism for the next forty years.[50] By the 1850s, more people than ever before were encountering images and descriptions of sculpture on the printed page, as well as in different three-dimensional forms off of the page.

In tandem with the above developments came a bifurcated sense of sculptural authorship, between the large-scale and expensive products of sculptors' own studios, and the statuettes that manufacturers produced after sculptor's work. Jacques de Caso describes such a bifurcation in relation to French sculpture, as a pivotal development spurred by technologies like reducing machines, new markets for artistic goods, and by industrial exhibitions.[51] Before the 1840s, he suggests, sculptors had tended to permit the limited reproduction of statuettes after their designs as direct extensions of their own authorship and workshop practice. Afterwards however, they increasingly regarded serial statuettes more as 'reminders, reflections almost' of their own work, 'coexisting with the originals on different artistic and commercial levels.'[52]

One of the most significant catalysts for relations between ideal sculpture and industry was the increase in industrial exhibitions. Regular industrial exhibitions began in earnest in France in 1798, as state-sponsored national trade shows designed to boost domestic industries and generate new markets for artistic manufactures in lieu of royal patronage. These exhibitions placed sculpture alongside machinery, scientific instruments, furnishings, agricultural and horticultural exhibits and all kinds of manufacture.

Many other European states imitated the French industrial exhibitions throughout the first half of the nineteenth century but from the 1830s particularly.[53] The British, with their pre-eminent industrial strength, were never as firmly convinced of industrial exhibitions as their Continental neighbours. [54] Nonetheless, the 1835-36 Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures did urge the extension of public exhibitions showing casts of sculpture, in tandem with the greater reproduction and dissemination of art in two and three dimensions, as

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[50] Haskins, *The* Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*, 65-88; Roberts, "British Art Periodicals of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 3; Burton, "Nineteenth-Century Periodicals," 5-7.
[51] Caso, "Serial Sculpture in Nineteenth-Century France," 1-12.
[52] Ibid., 4.
[53] On the early exhibitions across Europe, see Carpenter, "European Exhibitions before 1851 and Their Publications," 465-486.
[54] On British perspectives on industrial exhibition pre-1851, see Davis, *The Great Exhibition*, 1-31.

a vital part of the project to improve Britain's artistic manufactures. In the meantime, shows at regional Mechanics Institutes from the 1830s and exhibitions held by the Society of Arts in 1847, 1848 and 1849 represented Britain's principal equivalents to the Continental exhibitions of industry.[55]

Exhibitions encouraged the joint development of the new forms of sculptural reproduction noted above. They staged statuette reductions or other three-dimensional copies alongside their originals, and in turn generated a market for printed commentary and two-dimensional reproductions of statues, statuettes and sculptural manufacture. Exhibitions both displayed and encouraged relations between sculpture and industry, creating a space where different arts or forms of reproduction could connect with, enfold and publicise each other.

The London Great Exhibition of Works of Industry of All Nations of 1851, the world's first international exhibition, staged the relations between sculpture and industry on a whole new scale. Like the French industrial exhibitions noted above, it juxtaposed sculptural reproductions and *objets d'art* with general machinery, furniture, agricultural produce, weaponry, and all manner of other articles offering touchstones for weaving narrative connections between the work of sculptors and industrial society at large. At the same time, it probably constituted the most extensive temporary display of sculpture seen in history till that point, and certainly did so if we count the number of artefacts beyond statuary and the 'Fine Art' courts that were decorated with sculpture, such as ornamented furniture or tableware. Subsequent international exhibitions, fired by international rivalry to match the triumphant spectacle of 1851 (which in real terms meant besting it), were even bigger. Moreover, the Great Exhibition offered an unprecedented stimulus to the publication of illustrations and comparative descriptions of sculpture and sculptural wares. The range of literature, from official and quasi-official texts such as catalogues, jury reports and society of arts lectures, to the unofficial reports and supplements in periodicals (including several periodicals established especially for the Exhibition), circulated thoughts on sculpture to an extremely wide and varied populace. This expansion of the exhibition-press relationship in 1851 is exemplified in the *Illustrated London News*, which topped a circulation of 100,000 during the

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[55] Kusamitsu, "Great Exhibitions before 1851," 70-89: Displays of sculpture at the Mechanics' Institute exhibitions and Polytechnic Institution are referenced at 81-2 and 73.

Exhibition to become the foremost weekly periodical of its day, its many Great Exhibition supplements crammed full of engravings after sculptures and other exhibits.[56]

The Great Exhibition not only furnished a gargantuan stage for both ideal sculpture and the products of modern industry, but also staged their relationship in an especially acute and ambiguous fashion. The exhibition taxonomy was divided into four rough categories following a teleology of material production or economic progress: The first category was 'Raw Materials', followed by 'Machinery' and 'Manufactures', and lastly by 'Fine Art', which included the sub-class of 'Sculpture, Models and Plastic Art' and was the category that included most sculptures sent by modern artists.[57] (This system, including its further subdivisions, was broadly speaking upheld in nineteenth-century international exhibitions after 1851.)[58] As an adjunct to the countless ornamented objects submitted by artisans or manufacturing firms, the commissioners invited sculptors to represent themselves with 'ideal' works of their own design, though not portrait busts.[59] As Mainardi points out, this inclusion of sculpture as the 'creative' work of individual artists, rather than foundries or ateliers, was a significant break from the previous industrial exhibitions in France: 'Considered half-art, half-métier, sculpture would occupy an ambiguous position throughout the nineteenth century, but here, for the first time in an industrial exposition, its creative aspect was recognised.'[60] At the same time, however, the Great Exhibition catalogue maintained that all exhibits in the 'Fine Art' category, which included sculpture, were to be judged according to their connection with so-called 'mechanical processes' and the working of different materials.[61] Indeed, it was precisely because of its close interconnections with industry that sculpture had ostensibly been admitted to the show, whilst easel painting was excluded.[62] In the absence of painting, sculpture thus represented fine art's principal emissary to the international festival of industry. Sculpture in 1851 was positioned as the crown or flower of industrial civilisation, as well as a 'school of form' that instantiated or propounded the principles of three-dimensional design relevant to the other artistic or ornamental manufactures submitted by each nation. This privileged and focal position was not to last

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[56] Leary, "A Brief History of the *The Illustrated London News*".
[57] On the exhibition taxonomy, see *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 4, 22-6.
[58] Allen, *Stained Glassworlds*, 66.
[59] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 15.
[60] Mainardi, *The Art and Politics of the Second Empire*, 25.
[61] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 15, 819-20.
[62] Ibid.

long, however, as subsequent international exhibitions admitted easel painting with sculpture and separated both from industry, into more Salon-like fine art galleries.

At the Great Exhibition, connections between ideal sculpture and industry were staged not merely through spatial or rhetorical dialogues between statues in the 'Fine Art' category and exhibits outside it, but also in the reproduction of ideal statues amongst those latter exhibits. Various plaster and marble statues in the 'Fine Art' court re-appeared on manufacturer's stands in the form of metal or porcelain statuettes. In some cases different firms displayed versions of the same statue (referred to as such through its title and the original sculptor's name), in different materials, colours or scales. These meanwhile appeared alongside reproductions of antique or renaissance sculptures, notwithstanding the fact that the Exhibition was intended as a show of progress and contemporary industry, with only works by living or recently deceased exhibitors accepted in the 'Fine Art' category.[63] These exhibits tended to deploy the fame of antiques as hooks for publicising new processes of reproduction, thereby rendering them in unfamiliar forms. Elkington & Co.'s statuettes in the 'Precious Metals' division of 'Manufactures', for example, included (alongside an electro-bronzed statuette modelled by John Bell) an electro-bronzed copy of the marble 'Theseus' 'reduced by Mr. Cheverton from the original in the British Museum', and a Medici Venus, 'exhibited as a specimen of fine casting.'[64]

Whilst the reproduction of statuary showcased connections between the realm of 'Fine Art' and those outside it, it showcased distinctions by the same token. The double exhibition of a statue across these realms, on the one hand by manufacturing firms, and on the other by sculptors (who may have had as little a 'hand' in the final execution of their exhibits as those of the manufacturer), explicitly displayed that bifurcation of statue design across different trades and markets noted above. The display of these different artistic and commercial levels in statue reproduction could imply different things. The division of marble statues from their Parian iterations in terms of 'Fine Art' and 'Manufacture: Ceramics', for example, might be read as an extension of that rhetorical division of labour in sculptors' studios between 'creative' inception and 'mechanical' reproduction. After all, even though a Parian statuette after a marble statue by John Gibson, say, had to be delicately re-modelled, cast, pieced

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[63] Exhibits by artists deceased after 1 January 1847 were permitted, which conveniently for Britain included statues by Musgrave Lewthwaite Watson and Richard James Wyatt. The latter posthumously won one of the four first-place Council Medals awarded for sculpture. Ibid.,15.
[64] Ibid., 672.

together and finished by the hands of potters at the Copeland factory, it was the names of Gibson and Copeland, proprietors of the design in its full-scale and statuette form respectively, that appeared on the exhibition label, and not those of individual potters. But even if the skill of artistic translation was granted, or when manufacturers' reproduction or statuary were understood as fully-fledged artistic unities of design and form in their own right, comparisons of the same design in different parts of the Exhibition would have underlined distinctions between the purposes, functions or markets of those unities, and between the fine and decorative arts as such. This is the case, for example, where manufacturers displayed variants on a sculptor's design that would not have been countenanced for the marble or plaster versions in a fine art gallery, such as Minton & Co.'s iterations of John Bell's statues in alternate polychrome finishes.

Historical perspectives on the industrial ideal

Historians' responses to the relation between ideal sculpture and modern mechanics in the mid-nineteenth century have typically ranged from ambivalence to outright disdain. Centennial retrospectives on the Great Exhibition from the 1950s offer some caustic examples. Voicing a high modernist suspicion of mid-Victorian design culture in general, both Pevsner's *High Victorian Design* and Ffrench's *The Great Exhibition* called up works like Bell's *Dorothea* and *Babes in the Wood* and Kiss's *Amazon* as a shooting gallery of 'effective sentimentality', hypocritical eroticism, poor design and stylistic confusion.[65] Pevsner in particular focussed on how these sculptures failed or deliberately neglected to give any bold or coherent expression of their own age, the age of industrial progress surrounding them in the Crystal Palace. Figures like the *Amazon*, for example, were 'neither wholly classical nor wholly romantic, not wholly Victorian', and all the worse for it.[66] For Pevsner, however, even the eclectic incoherence and anachronism of the artwork on show bore witness, paradoxically, to an underlying historical coherence with the modernity they inhabited. It spoke a modern design culture that was *essentially* vexed and self-deluding. Epitomising this essential absence of aesthetic principle was the way historical designs were liberally adopted for modern purposes and through modern processes, reproduced by modern

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[65] Pevsner, *High Victorian Design*, 129; Ffrench, *The Great Exhibition of 1851*, 223-40.
[66] Pevsner, *High Victorian Design*, 126-7.

machines and even *on* modern machines, and generally appropriated as a veneer or cloak by a mechanical culture to which they did not belong:

> An age which frankly applied art to objects instead of thinking in terms of aesthetic value from the beginning of the designing process, could hardly find fault more readily with the Elizabethan piano than with the Egyptian steam engine or Gothic railway station.
>
> If congruity had been demanded, then for such new purposes a wholly new style would have been needed, and most of the mid-Victorians were frightened of that.[67]

Art was generally disengaged with the modern, industrial world around it at the level of aesthetics, but precisely insofar as it was engaged on the plane of market economics. The human face and motor behind this malaise was 'the big man with heavy purses in 1851', a product of new money without liberal education, whose child-like sensibilities could easily appreciate technical feats of reproduction (whether of period details or minute natural forms), or value the cultural capital of possessing art, but were blind to aesthetics or genuine craft.[68] Pevsner's notion of this rotten design culture, it is important to grasp, was not about machinery and mechanics *per se*. It was a more abstract and flexible idea of a hollow, market-driven and utilitarian attitude to art production—in short, about the commodification of art and design.

Pevsner's picture of a mechanistic 'High Victorian' design culture in general was echoed in accounts focusing on sculptural production. One deliciously jaundiced example is Albert TenEyck Gardner's 1945 *Yankee Stonecutters*, the founding text of modern research on American 'ideal' sculptors. Gardner's account turned the nineteenth-century ideal sculptors' disavowal of 'mechanical' labour on its head, pejoratively describing as 'mechanical' the very disengagement between ideals and industry in their practice. Gardner narrated everything he disliked in the sculpture he studied—its conventional use of classical forms, its substitution of busy surface detail for 'plastic' expression, its reliance on streamlined workshops and 'the thoughtless virtuosity of stonecutters and marble polishers', its preoccupation with literature and melodrama ahead of form, its sentimentality—as

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[67] Ibid., 72-3.
[68] Ibid., 114-16.

symptomatic of 'mechanical' practice. This description doubtless owed much to the legacy of 'direct carving' ideology and its idea that *genuine* sculptors should not be so aloof from their materials as to use pointing machines. But as with Pevsner, Gardner's point was more fundamentally about the wider 'machine' of the international sculpture market, and the way this engaged both the natural resourcefulness and aesthetic ignorance of new American artists and patrons. Technically gifted or enterprising young sculptors were bankrolled by rich philistines to train in Italy and 'move like automata' towards fame, before feeding back '"machines" of marble' that were calibrated to elicit sentimental responses from 'art lovers conditioned to react in a certain way to a compound of white marble and classical mythology'.[69] Gardner thus equated the 'ideal' style and its associations with the hollow status that veneers or silver-plating gave to mass-manufactured furniture or cutlery:

> The sculptors assembled artful machines, that in turn manufactured an aura of "art-culture" in many a cluttered Victorian parlour. These works of art could bring a heaving sigh to the bosom, a tear to the eye of a generation given to easy emotional responses. The art lovers were conditioned to react in a certain way to a compound of white marble and classical mythology, just like Dr. Pavlov's dogs that drooled at the sound of a bell.[70]

For Gardner, the imaginative, emotional and intellectual aspirations of ideal sculptors intersected perfectly with the drills and tracers of pointing machines, as tools for reproducing generic art-effects and responses. Both the ideal and the physical practices it distanced itself from disengaged sculptural aesthetics from the specificities of material craft, but in doing so entrenched an underlying 'bondage to materialism'.

Major histories of nineteenth-century ideal sculpture written since the mid-twentieth century have generally adopted more revisionist or sympathetic perspectives on the subject than those typified by Pevsner or Gardner. Nonetheless, various such histories have also recorded a relative disconnection between aesthetic ideals and material processes in British sculpture of the mid-nineteenth-century, by comparison with more integrated, craft-based approaches in other periods. Margaret Whinney's *Sculpture in Britain 1530-1830*, for example, read the style of early nineteenth-century 'neoclassicism' in terms of the departure from a more

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[69] Gardner, *Yankee Stonecutters*, 20, 52-6.
[70] Ibid., 52.

traditional, small-scale workshop system of the mid-eighteenth century. Sculptors' education, Whinney argued, had been re-centred in the new Academy, which endowed formal rules rather than an organic workshop tradition, whilst the physical practice of sculpting marble was taken over by assistants in tandem with John Bacon's improved pointing devices. These factors encouraged staid and insipid sculptures of 'tedious symmetry' and exchanged earlier sculptors' lively and sensitive shaping of surface forms for the values of outline and continuous contour, whilst a kind of 'smooth, highly finished and somewhat soapy surface' became universally admired.[71] Attending to the other end of the century, Susan Beattie argued that a re-integration of sculptor's education and ideals with material craft and contemporary life was the foundation of the so-called 'New Sculpture' style that appeared after c. 1875. To set off the new style, Beattie depicted mid-century British sculpture as limply cocooned in moral and academic conventions, 'surviving in a kind of vacuum, static in form, increasingly limited in function and irrelevant to human experience.'[72] According to Beattie, this 'stranglehold' was broken when, largely through the new government schools of design, the education of sculptors was connected up with stonemasonry, architectural carving and the world of craft and decorative art beyond 'ideal' Salon statues.[73] Such developments gradually led, for example, to an idea that learning to model clay with life and vigour had to be based on an experience of carving. This Beattie sees as an early statement of 'direct carving' ideas, and thereby a riposte to the gap that pointing devices and reproductive processes had opened up since the eighteenth century, between the sculptor's 'design' process and the physical properties or haptic challenges of that design's final material.[74]

The comparison between mid-century ideal sculpture and later 'New Sculpture' in relation to questions of material practice and modernity has been interrogated more recently in Martina Droth's 2004 essay entitled 'The Ethics of Making'.[75] Droth's essay merits especial attention in the context of this thesis, as it focuses specifically on the significance of new technologies and exhibitions in the mid-nineteenth century to changing conceptions of sculptural authorship. The change in question involved an increasing incorporation of materiality and material conditions into the fold of sculptural aesthetics. On the one hand, Droth describes how the 'neoclassical school', whose conception of sculptural creativity prevailed prior to the

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[71] Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain*, 153-5.
[72] Beattie, *The New Sculpture*, 1-2.
[73] Ibid., 1-29.
[74] Ibid., 27.
[75] Droth, "The Ethics of Making," 221-235

Great Exhibition, was predicated on production systems like those of Canova, and was accordingly typified by the sculptor's physical and symbolic detachment from heavy labour or questions of materiality beyond the finishing of marble surfaces. The second half of the century, by contrast, saw the rise of the 'New Sculpture' in Britain, which ended up 'reconstituting sculpture as a vital, material presence in the modern world' by engaging sculptors' studio work more actively and directly with modern materials and markets, and thus 'addressing, rather than staying aloof from, contemporaneous political and critical issues affecting art practice.[76] The Great Exhibition, according to Droth, precipitated this transition in sculptural aesthetics. White marble envoys of the prevailing 'neoclasssical school' there met with auguries of the styles to come, in the many forms of technically experimental, mixed media or polychrome statuary beyond the 'Fine Art: Sculpture' category:

> The wide-ranging scope of the Exhibition, representing works of art that stood well outside of the neoclassical paradigm, demonstrated that sculpture could be popular, pleasurable and accessible, and forced a radical re-evaluation of the parameters that defined sculpture as a discipline. Moreover, it unwittingly comprised an act of reconstituting sculpture as a physically-grounded, materially-informed art.[77]

The Exhibition's juxtaposition of old and new, Droth argues, tore the 'neoclassical school…between its commitment to intellectual principles…and a desire to take a share in emergent aesthetics and new commercial opportunities'.[78] Various exhibits showed sculptors already well known for classicised ideal sculptures in marble getting involved with new or mixed materials and new markets, such as a chryselephantine *Leda* after James Pradier or Copeland's Parian *Narcissus* after John Gibson (see fig. 3). At the same time, however, the report of the Exhibition's 'Fine Art' jury passed over such collaborations as specimens of technique or novelty, whilst circumscribing the place of experimentation in the realm of sculpture *qua* fine art. 'The sculptor,' the report urged, for example, 'must have so treated the solid material, such as stone, metal, wood, with which he has to deal, as not to remind the spectator of the nature of the substance employed.'[79] The jury meanwhile attempted to contain the impulse to innovation within an overarching classicism, reporting to have 'looked for originality of invention, less or more happily expressed in that style which has for twenty-

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[76] Ibid., 223-9.
[77] Ibid., 229.
[78] Ibid., 226.
[79] *Reports by the Juries*, 692.

three centuries been the wonder of every civilized people, and the standard of excellence to which artists of the highest order have endeavoured to attain.'[80] According to Droth, the 'paradoxical' nature of these prescriptions in the context of an Exhibition devoted to mechanical conditions, progress and modernity, evinces a 'profound anxiety about the disintegration of sculpture's special artistic position in a realm separate from ordinary material things'; the last, ironic gasp of an aesthetics swiftly becoming 'shell-like, a stylistic convention'. [81]

Droth's observations in many ways formed the starting point for the research in this thesis, and may be taken by its reader as a prelude to the investigations that follow. Aside from her general interest in relations between aesthetic ideals and material culture, Droth's argument is particularly significant because it foregrounds the Great Exhibition (and by extension, international exhibitions in general) as a ripe ground for studying such relations in their full complexity. Such exhibitions not only gathered together the physical results of sculptors' involvement with different forms of product or audience, but at the same time caused these results to be categorised, taxonomised, judged and ranked according to concepts of artistic creativity and technical skill. The exhibitions asked their audiences both to draw connections and to make distinctions. Whilst some connections made in the Exhibition between different arts or media presented new opportunities to sculptors, Droth suggests, they did so by challenging the status of certain sculptors and notions of ideal sculpture *per se*, the resultant tensions making the Exhibitions a dynamic motor for changes in aesthetics. Following Droth's lead, this thesis takes the early international exhibitions and their multiple layers of sculptural display, commentary and re-presentation as the test-bed for its further investigation into how sculpture's new relations with industry, reproductive technology and new audiences informed the notions of ideal sculpture was, and what kind of artist the ideal sculptor was supposed to be.

Sculpture in international exhibitions scholarship

Before proceeding to use the international exhibitions to analyse sculptural practice and aesthetics, we should attend to the growing corpus of literature on the international

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[80] Ibid., 684.
[81] Droth, "The Ethics of Making," 227-8.

exhibitions themselves, much of which uses fine art as lens for understanding the events. This literature is vast and still growing, though a general trend can be discerned within it, towards emphasising the multiplicity and complexity of such relations at the Exhibition. Exhibition scholarship really got rolling with the crop of centennial reflections on the Great Exhibition published alongside the Festival of Britain in 1951, such as Pevsner's *High Victorian Design: A Study of the Exhibits of 1851* (1951), Ffrench's *Great Exhibition: 1851* (1950) and C. R. Fay's *Palace of Industry: A Study of the Great Exhibition and its Exhibits* (1951). Following the centennial accounts, from the mid-1970s onwards, there came a number of pioneering studies of international exhibitions after the Great Exhibition, all articulating significant differences and complications in the art-industry relation from exhibition to exhibition, nation to nation. The most significant of these studies were John Allwood's chronological *Great Exhibitions: 150 Years* (1977), Patricia Mainardi's *Art and Politics of the Second Empire: The universal expositions of 1855 and 1867* (1988) and Paul Greenhalgh's *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and World's Fairs* (1988), later re-published as *Fair World: A History of World's Fairs from London to Shanghai 1851-2010* (2011). The 150-year anniversary of the Great Exhibition, meanwhile, produced a host of new reflections on the original show. Three new monographs on the Great Exhibition, by John R. Davis (1999), Jeffrey A. Auerbach (1999) and Hermione Hobhouse (2002) have firmly established the Exhibition's administrative history and wider political, diplomatic and economic context. A series of interdisciplinary collections also emerged, each underscoring the plural and contested nature of meaning in the Great Exhibition: *The Great Exhibition of 1851: New interdisciplinary essays* (2001) edited by Louise Purbrick; *Victorian Prism: Refractions of the Crystal Palace* (2007) edited by James Buzard, Joseph W. Childers and Eileen Gillooly; *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851* (2008), edited by Jeffrey A. Auerbach and Peter H. Hoffenberg. Each of these collections provide vastly more pluralistic and fractured pictures of the Great Exhibition and the meaning of its exhibits than those of Pevsner and Ffrench, by emphasising the ways in which both the physical displays in the Crystal Palace and the media of their interpretation were sites of compromise and contest between different interests and social groups.

Historians have been interested in the fine art displays at international exhibitions, partly on account of how such displays functioned to represent or legitimise the guiding narratives or ideologies of the events, and partly because of the impact those events had on fine art display more generally. Greenhalgh has emphasised, for example, that the symbolic currency and

cultural status of the fine arts remained pivotal to the success of international exhibitions, whilst these exhibitions in turn laid much of the foundation for Britain's modern museum systems.[82] Yet whilst historians generally admit that the exhibitions interwove practices of viewing fine art with broader social forces at institutional, political or economic levels, they often observe a disconnection at the 'surface' level of aesthetics, in a way that echoes the narratives of Pevsner or Gardner noted above. Those historians who have plotted the changing position of 'fine art' as a general category of exhibits at the international exhibitions, such as Greenhalgh, Mainardi and Frank Trapp, have variously narrated a 'certain discomfort' or awkwardness in the very place of fine art within what were supposed to be festivals of modern industry and progress.[83] This is particularly highlighted in relation to the ostensibly conservative, pre-modernist or historicist character of many of the artworks or fine art displays. As Mainardi comments, the 'Great Exhibition of 1851 established a precedent for subsequent Universal Expositions, for it articulated the contradiction of industry that looked to the future and of art that looked to the past.'[84] Grounding this view of the fine art displays as slightly anachronistic byways, historians also note that they pulled less attention than the industrial or scientific displays, at least where this can be extrapolated from the gate receipts of separated courts of art and industry.[85] Trapp, for example, largely attributes the greater pull of industrial displays in the 1855 Paris Exposition Universelle to the fact that 'art had begun to grow increasingly apart from Life [*sic*] and ever more exempt from the otherwise prevailing conditions of the age.'[86]

Amongst them, the above-noted scholars have broadly established a history of international exhibition displays according to which the fine arts gained in stature at the events, though at the expense of certain dialogues with industry and the themes of progress. Crucial to this was the early alternation and competition between British and French exhibitions. After the Great Exhibition outflanked the French national exhibitions and showcased Britain's international pre-eminence in industry, the French responded at their 1855 Exposition Universelle by amplifying their international pre-eminence in the field of fine art.[87] In a crucial departure from the Great Exhibition, this meant re-combining sculptors' works with easel painting and providing a separate, Salon-like 'palace' for both. The 1862 London International Exhibition

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[82] Greenhalgh, *Fair World*, 237-69; Greenhalgh, "The Art and Industry of Mammon," 274-7.
[83] Trapp, "The London International Exhibition of Art and Industry, 1874," 274.
[84] Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 26.
[85] Trapp, "The Universal Exhibition of 1855," 302; Greenhalgh, *Fair World*, 237.
[86] Trapp, "The Universal Exhibition of 1855," 302-5.
[87] Mainardi, *The Art and Politics of the Second Empire*, 30.

followed suit with its own huge, separate fine art galleries, whilst also including artworks from the past century and thereby constructing retrospective 'national schools' of painting and sculpture as was done in museums like the National Gallery. Greenhalgh, Trapp and Allwood each record how the course of exhibiting art and industry took a distinct turn in Britain after the 1862 exhibition, as the show's financial failure and the gargantuan 1867 Paris Exposition Universelle soured Britain's taste for such extravaganzas.[88] In various ways the South Kensington annual international exhibitions of 1871-1874 returned to the Great Exhibition idea of making didactic connections between fine art and industrial design. Yet these exhibitions were crippled by this move, as well as by increased competition from other shows, and their demise closes the chapter of major British international exhibitions till the great Scottish shows of the late 1880s.

Much of the scholarship on international exhibitions during the 1990s and early 2000s was characterised by ideas of 'spectacle', commodity culture and the 'exhibitionary complex'— terms from the titles of two founding texts of this discourse, by Thomas Richards and Tony Bennett, respectively.[89] In a loosely Foucauldian vein, this line of scholarship frames the Great Exhibition and the museum institutions it precipitated as part of a 'technology of vision' through which power was enacted.[90] The norms of display, observation and knowledge acquisition these exhibitions inculcated, it is claimed, were means of regulating exhibition visitors as subjects ('subjects', that is, both in terms of their relation to the state and as loci of sensory experience and volition). As Lara Kriegel has noted, this approach may be considered as a theory of nineteenth-century social control *via* cultural institutions, and as such provides both a socio-economic and distinctly 'epistemological' turn to the history of museums and material collections.[91] Underpinning the approach is a sense of the Great Exhibition as a milestone in the interrelation between art display, education and the modern state.[92] A further premise is that the Crystal Palace provided a vast template for the modern department store and for the commodification of material produce.[93] International exhibition

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[88] Allwood "International Exhibitions and the Classification of Their Exhibits," 454; Trapp, "The London Exhibition of Art and Industry, 1874," 276-7; Greenhalgh, *Fair World*, 246-7.
[89] Richards, *The Commodity Culture of Victorian England*; Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," 73-102. A third principle text is Crary's *Techniques of the Observer*.
[90] Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," 81.
[91] Lara Kriegel, "After the Exhibitionary Complex," 681-704.
[92] Bennett, The Exhibitionary Complex," 79-87.
[93] Ibid., 81-2; 94.

buildings, their exhibits, catalogues, taxonomies and attendant ideologies such as 'rational recreation', are thus framed as active arms of both the state and capital.

Some scholars have turned the 'exhibitionary complex' lens onto sculptural exhibits at the Great Exhibition, looking at how disciplines for viewing and 'reading' sculpture were prescribed as means to regulate the socially pluralistic Exhibition public. Andrea Hibbard, for example, argues that the 'pathology of information' and the clash of different, class-specific leisure practices in the Crystal Palace gave urgency to the notion of 'rational recreation', of 'disciplining the promiscuous, roving eye and imposing system and method on Exhibition-going.'[94] Catalogue entries for art or *objet d'art* exhibits, such as papier-mâché chairs encrusted with sculptural ornament, gave object lessons in 'rational recreation' by using extended iconographic and symbolic narratives to abstract away certain associations and invest new ones. These narratives worked, Hibbard says, to give the display the 'the "moral and intellectual coherence" of the ideal', as part of 'a strenuous effort to accommodate the ideal to the real.'[95] Like Hibbard, Rachel Teukolsky argues that the way critical descriptions of sculpture abstracted or invested thematic associations represented a class-inflected struggle over the Exhibition display. She identifies a conflict in the exhibition between two modes of describing art in the exhibition literature: On the one hand there was 'the amateur eye' (typified for Teukolsky by commentaries in *Punch*), which was popularist and concentrated more on sculptures' associations with contemporary moral and political issues or material circumstances, than on aesthetic connoisseurship. On the other hand, there was the more formalist 'expert eye' of Exhibition officials and jurors, which assumed a crucial distance from the object, both literally and metaphorically: seeing the object in itself; "for its own sake",'[96] and urged the 'rational appreciation of form rather than…an immediate, sensational, or emotional response.'[97] 'The expert eye was didactic in spirit, instructing working-class visitors to look but not to touch.'[98] It addressed itself to artworks that 'threatened to rupture the structuring ideologies of the Exhibition' by abstracting aesthetic perception from contemporary, extra-formal concerns that surrounded them in the Crystal Palace—such as the contentious issues of nudity and American slavery that attached to Powers's *Greek Slave*.[99] Teukolsky moreover argues that this 'pedestal effect' in expert descriptions helped prime art

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[94] Andrea Hibbard, "Distracting Impressions and Rational Recreation at the Great Exhibition," 161-2.
[95] Hibbard, "Distracting Impressions and Rational Recreation at the Great Exhibition," 155.
[96] Teukolsky, "This Sublime Museum," 88.
[97] Ibid., 91.
[98] Ibid., 87-8.
[99] Ibid., 88-91.

and its audiences for commodification: The detached, primarily visual and non-haptic mode of viewing material objects prefigured not just art galleries but department store displays.[100] Meanwhile, by taking a formalist, de-historicised approach to the use of historical styles and means of production in works of art, the expert eye complemented the gathering forces of mass-production, mechanisation and kitsch.[101] Here, as also in Hibbard's thesis, 'idealist' or formalist commentaries on sculpture in the Exhibition context represented forms of bad faith, abstracting sculptural art from material conditions and concrete concerns, only to better wed it with materialism.

Alongside and in tandem with accounts of ideal sculpture in commodity culture, various scholars have examined the two-dimensional (or, more accurately, 'flat') representations of sculpture as material vestiges of the modes of looking that characterised the exhibitions. Historians have been concerned with how and whether these representations, in saying things about ideal sculpture, also tell stories about their own production or the production of that sculpture, and whether these stories are compatible. On one hand, there has been increasing interest in the graphic images in exhibition-related publications—wood engravings and chromolithographs especially—led by Gerry Beegan, Brian Maidment and Thomas Prasch, among others. [102] This scholarship has provided invaluable accounts of how such representations were often deep palimpsests of different sources, acts of translation and extensively divided, though skilled, labour. It has also detailed how many such images were framed by text, the audiences they were framed for, and ways in which the reality and status of labour were invested in Great Exhibition objects as a consequence. Photography has also been the subject of similar examination. At least three important essays, for example, have addressed the photography of sculpture at the 1862 international exhibition, by Britt Salveson (1997), Joanna Lukitsh (2004) and Patrizia Di Bello (2013) respectively. Each author considers how relations and distinctions between 'fine art' and reproduction were represented in the position of these photographs *vis-à-vis* the sculptures they depicted, as framed within the photographs themselves and by their physical placement within the exhibition itself. Echoing an argument made by Maidment with regard to wood engravings after statuary, Lukitsh highlights ways in which sculptors and photographers each found in the art of the

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[100] Ibid., 88.
[101] Ibid., 86.
[102] Beegan, "The Mechanization of the Image," 257-74; Maidment, "Entrepreneurship and the artisans," 79-113; Prasch, "The *ILN* and International Exhibitions".

other the means to construct and promote creative authorship in a reciprocal fashion.[103] Salveson and Di Bello both outline a slightly different, less reciprocal situation. Considering photos in conjunction with other modes of reproduction, such as chromolithography and Parian, both historians hold that photographs were framed and marketed as mechanical portals on the sculptural exhibits, and as such were instrumental in amplifying and perpetuating the "aura" of sculpture.[104] This alliance between sculptural artistry and reproductive technology, Di Bello argues, was forged by disavowing the artistic labour involved in reproducing sculpture, by abstracting the sensory experience of sculpture from its 'cumbersome materiality', and by generally making a commodity fetish of sculptural authorship.[105] According to this argument, the authorship of marble sculptors became something of a 'free rider' on media like photography and Parian, extending itself through reproductive labour precisely by distinguishing itself from it, by characterising that labour as 'merely mechanical' and therefore transparent.

Scholarship on international exhibitions of the 2000s has witnessed something of a 'global' turn, introducing new contingencies and questions to the meaning of sculpture and sculptural labour in those environments. The approach is epitomised by the collection, *Britain, the Empire, and the World at the Great Exhibition of 1851* (2008), edited by Jeffrey A. Auerbach and Peter H. Hoffenberg, which considers how objects and their particular relations in the Crystal Palace were used to construct national narratives or represent relations in the wider world beyond them. Underpinning all such scholarship is the history of the Great Exhibition display taxonomy and the way it was compromised. The initial taxonomy was conceived as a border-less evaluation of goods by type and function. But this was put through the mill of logistics and vested interests and came out interwoven with a system of physical display that divided exhibits by nations of origin. This, as Buzard notes, made exhibits less the representatives of individual producers or firms than the emissaries of nations, and presented them as more meaningfully related to each other through geography than through similarity of form or function.[106] Yet this compromise, as various scholars have noted, did not so much erase exhibits' industrial associations as stimulate new, more far-reaching and macroeconomic ones. A border-less technical audit and comparison of goods from different

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[103] Lukitsh, "Thomas Woolner," 2-15.
[104] Salvesen, "The Most Magnificent, Useful, and Interesting Souvenir," 19-27; Di Bello, "'Multiplying Statues by Machinery'," 415-17.
[105] Di Bello, "'Multiplying Statues by Machinery'," 416-19.
[106] Buzard, "Conflicting Cartographies," 40-52.

sectors of the economy gave way to one that framed goods in the context of national economies as wholes. This in turn enabled an ostensibly contemporary display of goods to be refigured in historical or evolutionary narratives about industrial progress, and the comparative development or decline of different nations and peoples.[107] Disparate items like jewellery, hand-carved furniture, handmade lace, machine-aided linen, honey, mineral samples and marble sculptures, even the *emptiness* of certain national courts, could be related as signs of population's industriousness, degree of 'civilisation' or creativity.

A number of scholars have recently studied the position of sculptures as touchstones of nationhood in this field of representation. Kate Flint, Debbie Challis and Louise Purbrick, for example, have all looked at the national and geopolitical symbolism of marble sculptures in the Great Exhibition, in the United States court, in the Greek Court, and in the Irish section of the British courts, respectively.[108] Alison Yarrington, meanwhile, has also analysed marble statues as representations of Italian work throughout the 1862 International Exhibition.[109] In 1862, as Alison Yarrington demonstrates, nationalised displays and commentaries on stylistic issues like 'idealism' and 'realism' were shot through with national caricatures of industriousness and associations with contemporary political conflicts. Yet such associations with concrete sculptures, Yarrington emphasises, were essentially contingent or even arbitrary, given how the boundaries of national courts overwrote the international labour of sculpture production and the cosmopolitan career paths of exhibiting sculptors.

The primary interest of analyses of sculpture and national symbolism at the exhibitions has been with how sculptures offered materials for narratives about colonial relations or issues of mastery and subjugation more generally. Projection screens for such narrative are seen, for example, in Panormo's *Caractacus Unbound* in the Irish display in 1851, Stephenson's *Wounded Indian* and Powers's *Greek Slave* in the American court, and Hosmer's *Zenobia in chains* in the Roman displays in 1862, by Purbrick, Flint, Challis and Yarrington respectively. In each of these cases, classical narratives (*Caractacus*, *Zenobia*) or formal associations with classical statues (*The Wounded Indian*, *The Greek Slave*) forge parallels between antiquity and the mid-nineteenth-century in terms of imperial conquest, slavery and

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[107] Bennett, "The Exhibitionary Complex," 94-6; Buzard, "Conflicting Cartographies," 40-52; Purbrick, "Defining Nation," 55-7;
[108] Flint, "The Native American and the Crystal Palace," 171-185; Purbrick, "Defining Nation," 47-76; Challis, "Modern to Ancient,"173-190
[109] Yarrington, "'Made in Italy'," 75-99.

the spread of 'civilisation'. In each case it is noted that the statues in their context could sustain alternative, often conflicting, identifications with such themes. In the vexed geopolitical status of the Irish displays in the courts of Britain and her colonies at the Great Exhibition, for example, Panormo's *Caractacus* invited Irish, British, Roman, Celtic and Anglo-Saxon identities to be variously projected onto its figure of the ancient king and the subjugator-turned-servant unchaining him. As Purbrick says, therefore, the statue should be read as 'a distorting mirror, fracturing and shifting the identifications between nation and its representation…an attempt to summarize the relationship between Britain and Ireland without fixing the place of either within the work.'[110]

A key theme in the readings of Purbrick, Flint and Challis is the extent to which the 'classical' or 'neoclassical' conventions of statuary reflected modern concerns or allowed different meanings to be invested in them. The authors highlight the central role of romantic and other literature in this process, in giving exhibition visitors or critics templates for interpreting, narrating and equating sculptures, from Byron's philhellenism and musings on the *Dying Gaul*, to the popular writings of James Fenimore Cooper and George Catlin on native Americans.[111] The interpretations that scholars extrapolate have a marked tendency towards the associative and iconographic, which recognises the important fact that most exhibition visitors were not schooled in more 'formal' or academic modes of sculpture criticism and would have depended heavily on print-based media in responding to it. At the same time, nonetheless, it is variously asserted that the 'classicism' of sculptures enabled associations not just in the singular and 'positive' sense (i.e. determinate references to this or that antique sculpture, person or event) but also in a plural and 'negative' sense, i.e. that the relatively 'abstract' or trans-historical nature of classicist, as opposed to 'realist', conventions made sculptures more porous vessels of meaning. As Purbrick says of Panormo's *Caractacus*:

> Thus the success of Caractacus the British hero became dependent upon some visual and historical ambiguity, if not abstraction. The transformation of an historical figure into an allegory of nation is fairly routinely enacted through the conventions of

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[110] Purbrick, "Defining Nation," 52.
[111] Flint, "The Native American," 176-182; Challis, "Modern to Ancient," pp. 175-6; Purbrick, "Defining Nation," 50-1. On the importance of popular novels, plays and reports about modern slavery in Turkey and America in increasing the popularity of Powers's *Greek Slave*, see also Green, "Hiram Powers's 'Greek Slave'," 31-39.

classical sculpture, a de-historicizing practice that smoothes over specific details in order to make a figurative subject work at a symbolic level.[112]

The notion of classicism as 'smoothing over' tends to imply not just a kind of vagueness, ambiguity or invitation to symbolic appropriation, but also that such aspects were won through an active denial of concrete physical realities or particular contemporary concerns. The nakedness, unblemished forms, and whiteness (both in terms of the marble and the racially inflected physiognomy) of Hiram Powers's famous *Greek Slave*, for example, may be said to have been channels for the exchange of meaning between its modern Greek narrative and the general cult of Greek antiquity. Yet these same qualities are read by Challis, Teukolsky, as also by Charmaine Nelson, as a disavowal of contemporary black slavery that foregrounds racial blind spots in neoclassical sculptural aesthetics.[113]

Thesis methodology and outline

This study of the relation between sculpture's ideals and its material conditions builds upon the scholarship on international exhibitions outlined above, and would be impossible without it. Nonetheless, it also addresses certain shortcomings in that scholarship. Several of the more synoptic accounts of fine art in relation to industry at international exhibitions are hampered by their apparent equation of 'fine art' almost entirely with easel painting, and their odd heedlessness of sculpture and its special significance. Though mentioned by Mainardi, sculpture's particularly equivocal status in the exhibitions as 'half art, half métier', as a fine art that actually was practically and directly engaged with modern industry, has received almost no sustained attention. One result is the common, not completely untruthful but exaggerated and quite misleading, assertion that fine art was effectively only included in international exhibitions after the Paris exposition of 1855, with the inclusion of easel paintings and separate, Salon-like galleries.[114] Meanwhile, any descriptions of particular sculptures that do occur in these exhibition histories tend to fall back on negative, modernist diminutions of their style as derivative, sentimental, hypocritically erotic or generally non-*avant-garde*. As Mainardi says in relation to the Great Exhibition sculpture display: 'The art

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[112] Purbrick, "Defining Nation," 50.
[113] Challis, "Modern to Ancient," 178-81; Teukolsky, "This Sublime Museum," 93.
[114] Trapp, "The London International Exhibition, 1874," 274; Greenhalgh, *Fair World*, 238-40.

exhibitions at these international events would be retrospective at best, reactionary at worst.'[115] Perhaps the very wide-ranging and multidisciplinary remits of much Exhibition scholarship inevitably dictate slightly simplified or even anachronistic descriptions of the artworks exhibited, but this has the knock-on effect of encouraging a picture like that painted by Pevsner and discussed above, of aesthetics and technics in these contexts being in inexorable conflict or unholy alliance. Similar effects occur in the 'exhibitionary complex' strand of scholarship. These analyses frequently rest on quite superficial and static perspectives on the sculptures at hand or the aesthetic discourse attached to them, deploying unhelpfully vague or retrospective terms like 'neoclassical' (a term which, as Honour points out, only gained currency in the late nineteenth century, as a primarily derogatory and therefore reductive label)[116] and then counting on the attendant associations of abstraction and aloofness to complete the argument. Meanwhile, the particular conditions of those different media for reproducing or representing sculpture at the exhibitions, such as mass-circulation periodicals, wood engravings, marble, Parian porcelain and so on, are often ignored or *looked through* uncritically. Rather than being read amongst this diverse and multi-layered field of representation, scraps of sculptural discourse are instead cherry-picked from them, then artificially re-united using holistic theories like those of 'commodity culture' or the 'exhibitionary complex'. This process often entails distorting the sense of those scraps, in order that art critics can be lined up perfectly with the nefarious imperatives of the state and capital. For the historian of sculpture, the 'commodity culture' or 'exhibitionary complex' narratives do not offer significantly more insight into the artworks at hand than Gardner's machinic model of sculptural patronage and reception.

Partly to redress some of the above shortcomings in scholarship, this thesis gives particular attention to the specific conditions that mediated ideal sculptures and period commentaries about them. On the mediation of sculptures and their appearances, the thesis follows recent scholarship that has placed questions of reproduction and material back at the heart of sculpture history. Standout examples are the two essay collections, *Sculpture and its Reproductions* (1997) edited by Anthony Hughes and Erich Ranfft, and *Revival and Invention: Sculpture through its Material Histories* (2010), edited by Sébastien Clerbois and Martina Droth. Michael Cole's introductory essay in the latter, for example, notes how the material history of sculpture naturally prompts us to reconsider the significance of art objects'

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[115] Mainardi, *The Art and Politics of the Second Empire*, 26.
[116] Honour, *Neo-Classicism*, 14.

physical individuality or aesthetic particularities in light of the way those objects were reproduced—to consider what meaning was lost, acquired or re-invested through reproduction. [117] In a similar vein, the editors and contributors to *Sculpture and its Reproductions* have questioned modernist dichotomies between 'original' or 'unique' objects and reproduction, by showing the extensive, varied and often creative role that reproductions have almost always played in the practice of sculptors.[118] This emphasis on the constructive and creative nature of reproduction has been central to much recent scholarship on reproductive media in the nineteenth-century, even that which contends (as does Di Bello's above-noted argument regarding Parian and photography) that what these media often helped to construct or embroider was, paradoxically, the 'aura' of unmediated individual creativity.[119] The way such scholarship has highlighted the active role that reproduction played, not only in creating sculptures but also in creating and circulating ideas about sculptural creation, is central to this thesis, which builds on that scholarship by examining what features or associations of ideal sculpture were communicated, lost or reformulated in the material technologies used to reproduce them and the tropes used to describe them. In doing so, this thesis looks not only at the effect of 'reproduction' *per se*, but also at how different forms of reproduction overlapped and supplemented each other, how they facilitated, occluded or constructed the perception of each other. In order to do so, it draws also on a rich train of scholarship focussed on the technical and industrial implications of different media or technologies for reproducing sculpture in the period, such as cast iron,[120] Parian ware,[121] sculpture translation machinery,[122] and reproductive printmaking.[123]

This thesis also rests on the growing scholarship on Victorian art journalism and print media generally, which deals directly with the way in which reproductive processes were not only

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[117] Cole, "The Cult of Materials," 6-10.

[118] Hughes and Ranfft, eds., *Sculpture and its Reproductions*, 3-6.

[119] Di Bello, "'Multiplying Statues by Machinery'," 415-19. For a further analysis of the way in which reproductive images have helped invest aura in the sculptures they depict, see Hughes, "Authority, Authenticity and Aura."

[120] Lister, *Decorative Cast Ironwork in Great Britain*; Roberts, "John Bell and the Coalbrookdale Company"; Wosk, *Breaking Frame*, 145-177; Forschler-Tarrasch, *European Cast Iron in the Birmingham Museum of Art*; Robertson and Robertson, *Cast Iron Decoration*.

[121] Atterbury, ed., *The Parian Phenomenon*; Copeland, *Parian*; Dickinson, "An analysis of the success and cultural significance of Parian ware sculpture in Victorian England"; Atterbury, Batkin and Lockett, *The Dictionary of Minton*.

[122] Bogart, "In Art the Ends Just Don't Always Justify the Means," 104-10; Fawcett, "Plane Surfaces and Solid Bodies," pp. 59-85; Sobieszek, "Sculpture as the Sum of Its Profiles," 617-30; Shedd, "A Mania for Statuettes," 36-48; Taylor, "Sculpture, Science and Society".

[123] Ivins, William M., *Prints and Visual Communication*; Gascoigne, *How to Identify Prints*, Codell, "The Aura of Mechanical Reproduction," 4-10; Alexander, "'After Images'," 11-17.

the subjects but also the media of sculptural discourse and reception. Katherine Haskins emphasises that in Victorian England 'one learned about art more often from reading about it and from perusing reproductions than from viewing original works directly'.[124] This generates an historical obligation for studies of Victorian art reception to think seriously about print media, but there is also a practical reason: Beyond the now partial, scattered and battered corpus of exhibits shown at temporary display contexts like the Great Exhibition, the object of Victorian responses in those contexts exists now only amongst the responses, recorded in print. Like scholars of sculptural reproduction noted above, scholars of Victorian journalism have responded to a longstanding neglect by many art historians of certain conditions through which art was mediated, such as the readerships, editorial policies and subtexts, and economic relations that have determined art criticism in Victorian periodicals. Art historians, it is contented, have too frequently treated instances of art criticism as unmediated records of facts or aesthetic tastes held either by the writer or by audiences at large, being content, in the words of Tom Gretton, to investigate such sources 'as miners rather than as geologists'.[125] This thesis is not entirely guilt-free in this respect. As is elaborated below, the practical scope of the thesis precludes any systematic account of the media of sculpture criticism, whilst compelling it at many points to look *through* period journalism for information as much as it looks *at* that journalism. Nonetheless, the thesis tries to offset idiosyncrasy in the reading of sources in various ways. Wherever possible, for example, it attempts wherever possible to foreground the particularity of art criticism in primary sources by focusing on conflicts and tensions in those sources. In general, meanwhile, the thesis sees such sources in light of pioneering and painstaking work done since the 1970s by authors such as Julie Codell, Helene Roberts and many others, and through the *Victorian Periodicals Review* generally, to map the character and markets of art journalism across the nineteenth century.[126] The lesson of these studies most pertinent to this thesis is that of the sheer opacity and prismatic character of British art journalism between the

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[124] Haskins, The Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*, 3.

[125] Gretton, "The Pragmatics of Page Design," 706. See also Codell, "When Art Historians Use Periodicals," 285-9.

[126] See, for example, Burton, "Nineteenth-Century Periodicals" 3-10; Codell, "When Art Historians Use Periodicals," 284-9; Codell, "'The Fine Arts Quarterly Review' and Artpolitics in the 1860s," 91-7; Haskins, The Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*; Mancoff, "Samuel Carter Hall," 11-21; Roberts, "British Art Periodicals of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," 1-10; Roberts, "Art Reviewing in the Early Nineteenth-Century Art Periodicals," 9-20; Royle, "Newspapers and Periodicals in Historical Research," 48-59; Weiner, Joel H. "Sources for the Study of Newspapers," 155-65. On the intersection of art and journalism specifically through illustrations, rather than copy, see: Beegan, "The Mechanization of the Image," 257-74; Brake and Demoor, "The Lure of Illustration," 1-13; Gretton, "The Pragmatics of Page Design," 681-709; Maidment, "Entrepreneurship and the artisans," 79-113.

1840s and 1870s, as a medium for communicating facts about concrete artworks. This was a pivotal period, when art journalism *per se* finally established a secure and commercially viable foothold in Britain through the *Art-Journal* but when the 'professionalisation' of art criticism was only just beginning, a period in which reporting art was as much about rehearsing literary or moral narrative for general readerships as about giving technical visual descriptions to more specialist or connoisseurial audiences.[127] This is also the period in which the quantity and availability of graphic reproductions of artworks increases exponentially, though before photomechanical printing offers any semblance of 'transparency' or reliability to those images. The consequence was a culture of creative cribbing, one in which criticisms and images of sculptures generally owed far more to their own media and markets than to the sculptures they referred to. This thesis approaches this print culture as another layer of reproduction through which the ideal sculpture was repackaged or re-presented, and in turn adds to the general scholarship on Victorian art journalism by detailing this process in specific instances, especially in the analysis of graphic imagery that concludes chapter 3.

'Industry and the Ideal' does not offer a synoptic overview of sculpture at the international exhibitions, but instead focuses on selected case studies. The choice between these two alternatives was enforced by practicalities of the field of research. The huge scope of the international exhibitions, whilst it tends to invite synoptic or wide-ranging histories of their administrative processes, social contexts or contents, also prohibits such histories from dealing in any depth with particular exhibits, displays, artistic processes or audience responses. Enough studies of the synoptic kind now exist, however, to furnish a solid enough diachronic and synchronic background for the exhibitions referenced in this thesis, should the reader require it. The present study is based on the premise that what is most needed for sculpture studies is less a general survey or resource on sculpture at the international exhibitions, than a study of the dynamic, contingent, overlapping and conflicting ways in which sculpture and sculptural production were represented at these events. To this end, the thesis deals primarily with only three sculptors and only a limited range of 'original' designs or compositions by them, but encompasses a large number of mediations of those 'originals', whether in the form of three-dimensional reproductions, two-dimensional depictions or

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[127] Burton, "Nineteenth-Century Periodicals," 7; Codell, "Marion Harry Spielmann and the Role of the Press in the Professionalization of Artists," 7-11; Haskins, *The* Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*, 4-6, 68-90; Codell, "'The Fine Arts Quarterly Review' and Artpolitics in the 1860s"; Greiman, "William Ernest Henley and 'The Magazine of Art'," Prettejohn, "Aesthetic Value and the Professionalization of Victorian Art Criticism," Roberts, "'Trains of Fascinating and of Endless Imagery'".

textual descriptions and criticisms. Unlike most existing studies of Victorian sculpture or the international exhibitions, then, the thesis uses the 'original' work of sculptors more as a pivot or lens for analysing the work of reproduction, re-use and reception, than *vice versa*. These analyses are concertedly sensitive to the constraints of different materials or physical environments on the appearance of sculpture, under a working assumption that no sculptural reproduction is ever really *just* reproduction, but always involves some degree of translation or re-thinking. This thesis's 'close-up' perspective attempts to identify or gauge such acts of translation or re-thinking as may be lost to more broad studies of 'reproduction *per se*'. It thereby hopes to weigh up what was referred to or omitted in contemporary discussions about sculptural aesthetics or rhetoric about 'mechanical' or 'industrial' art.

The three sculptors this thesis focuses on are John Bell (1811-1895), Raffaele Monti (1818-1881), and Hiram Powers (1805-1873). The career histories of these three, besides being roughly contemporary, have parallels that make them especially fertile subjects for this investigation. Each acquired particular prominence and publicity at industrial exhibitions over the same period, their early careers and paths to fame being founded in each case on an interplay of reproduction and exhibition that peaked with the Great Exhibition of 1851 and subsisted at least until London's second international exhibition in 1862. Each received patronage not only from private individuals or committees interested in sculpture *qua* fine art, but also from businesses that used their sculptures as loss-leading tools for marketing other, cheaper or mass-producible products, such as Parian statuettes and tableware, iron hardware, photographic prints, lottery subscriptions and exhibition tickets. Each produced ideal sculptures in the mid-1840s that they or others then reproduced, re-adapted and re-exhibited throughout the 1850s and into the 1860s, and which through this process became the 'signature works' of each sculptor's career. As a result, each sculptor became particularly associated in writings of the period with industrial manufacture or 'mechanical' skills of some kind, whilst their 'signature works' became touchstones for the contemporary relationship between such skills and the 'ideal' of sculpture as a fine art. Each of these case studies is therefore attractive for two complementary reasons. Firstly, each sculptor's career has left us a rich seam of extant objects united by a single design or compositional motif, though executed in various different media and for different markets, through which we can compare and assess the visual or physical impacts of reproduction and industrial manufacture on the sculptor's 'ideal' conceptions. Secondly, the large corpus of contemporary writing or art criticism that was produced about each sculptor and their output in turn allows us to delve

at length into the way these reproductive or industrial relations were registered by contemporary aesthetics. Each chapter accordingly deals with its case study, broadly speaking, from two angles (though for the sake of narrative cogency these were are not completely separated at every point). It gives a 'material' history or account of the production, reproduction and exhibition of extant objects, whilst juxtaposing this with the contemporary written responses or rhetoric that surrounded those objects. Through this juxtaposition, the thesis hopes to see where the commercial and cultural associations of the sculptors' work responded to or diverged from each other.

Whilst the three sculptors have been selected because their works and reputations were founded on industrial exhibitions or associations with modern industry, this is not to claim that they were typical or atypical of sculptural success in mid-nineteenth-century Britain. For a sculptor of the period to have had associations with industry or manufacturers beyond fine art was, in itself, neither uncommon nor particularly controversial. Successful sculptors often cut their teeth in artisanal trades (John Gibson had been initially apprenticed to a cabinet maker, Patrick Macdowell to a coach-maker; William Behnes was the son of a pianoforte maker, and so on), or had an output beyond the realms of marble and bronze statuary well into their careers (John Henry Foley, for instance, had his sculptures much reproduced in statuette form and designed for silver-work). Furthermore, there were other sculptors working or exhibiting in Britain whose especial associations with different media and manufacturers might have also merited case studies, such as William Calder Marshall, Henry Hugh Armstead or Alfred Stevens. The 'industrial' associations of Bell, Monti and Powers are neither taken as representative of those three individuals exclusively, nor of sculptors in general during the period. They are taken rather as a solid evidential platform for the investigation at hand. Nonetheless, it is hoped that the investigation will shed light on nexuses between sculpture and industry that might offer examples or springboards for further analyses of other sculptors. Moreover, if knowledge of these sculptors is at all valuable in its own right, it is worth noting that neither Bell nor Monti have so far received the historical attention that they deserve on account of their prominence in the period—an omission that this thesis somewhat rectifies by discussing a substantial amount of new primary material relating to both.

To document and analyse the 'material' side of its case studies, this thesis draws upon extensive archives of unpublished material relating to each sculptor, alongside archives for

the administrations of 1851 and 1862 exhibitions and other sources of unpublished material. To study the response to material connections and contexts in sculptural aesthetics, the thesis studies a large swathe of contemporary published writings. To a large extent, it focuses attention on whichever articles happen to have referred to the objects or sculptors at hand, or were delivered by those sculptors themselves. This circumstantial selection rests, however, on a threefold bedrock of primary sources that provide a general context for sculpture at the early international exhibitions. Firstly, there is the official literature of the international exhibitions, including catalogues, commissioners' reports and jury reports. Then there are two major periodicals, whose content and dominance in their respective markets during the period make them almost required references for any study of art at British international exhibitions. These are the *Art-Journal*, which engaged closely with the exhibitions through articles and illustrated catalogues and was the British art world's dominant single organ of information in the period, and the *Illustrated London News*, one of Britain's bestselling periodicals at the time and perhaps the richest single source of images and commentary on early international exhibitions we have.[128] Of course, these two periodicals give neither an exhaustive nor an objective perspective on sculpture and industry at the exhibitions, and there are several other publications that would reward further research in this regard but which are not consulted at length here. High on the list, for example, would be Cassell's *Illustrated Exhibitor*, a 2d weekly published specifically to deliver reports and illustrations of the Great Exhibition. Whilst the *Art-Journal*, *ILN* and *Illustrated Exhibitor* each followed the above-mentioned *Penny Magazine* in adopting artistic engravings and popular edification as selling points, the latter was closest to the *Penny* in its price and address to an artisan readership.[129] As such, it might have provided an intriguing alternative perspective on relations between art and industry in sculptural aesthetics, being especially inclined to ennoble labour or read objects in the Exhibition in ways more relevant to those that laboured. Whilst the *Exhibitor*'s art reportage would undoubtedly repay more extensive study, the weight of primary sources this thesis does consider in depth debarred such a study here. Hopefully this study offsets this deficit by revealing the rich and complex implications of those sources, and highlighting their particular contexts or determinants where appropriate.

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[128] Leary, "A Brief History of the *Illustrated London News*"; Prasch, "The *ILN* and International Exhibitions."
[129] On the *Illustrated Exhibitor*, see Greiman, "William Ernest Henley and 'The Magazine of Art'," 53-4, and Maidment, "Entrepreneurship and the Artisans," 79-113.

Overview of the chapters

The first chapter focuses on John Bell, the British sculptor most prominently positioned at the centre of the nexus between fine art and industry during the 1850s. Whilst Bell's work as a modeller featured prolifically throughout the industrial displays at the early international exhibitions, he also curated displays of 'fine art' sculpture there and he theorised at length on the display of sculpture in relation to other arts and manufactures. His *Eagle Slayer*, meanwhile, featured in each of these engagements. The chapter shows how the international exhibitions simultaneously furnished a platform both for publicising the sculptor's work through industrial reproduction, and for asserting the autonomous principles of sculpture as a distinct and professional art. Manufacturers reproduced Bell's designs in a variegated and open-ended fashion that spread the orbit of the sculptor's name, though in ways that often departed from the ideals of pure form that Bell and sculptors cleaved to in their own art. The chapter's first section looks at the extension of Bell's designs through open-ended reproduction, whilst the second looks at how Bell tried to assert and defend the distinct norms of the sculptor's art by curating fine art displays at the 1855 Paris International Exhibition, and by engaging with the contemporary debate on colouring sculpture. The last half of the chapter details how Bell used sculptural theory during the late 1850s and 1860s to assert the autonomy and professional distinction of sculpture as crucial to the progress and mutual benefit of different arts. In one light, Bell's straddling of different practical and theoretical imperatives seems to illustrate Droth's point that the international exhibitions exposed 'a neoclassical school torn between its commitment to intellectual principles on the one hand, and a desire to take a share in emergent aesthetics and in new commercial opportunities on the other.'[130] This chapter argues, however, that Bell's defensive constructions of the 'art of form' did not just represent static or reactionary aesthetic prejudices, still less flights from the material conditions and contingencies of sculpture's position in the modern world; rather, they were responsive to this environment, and represented Bell's language for claiming and safeguarding a productive stake for sculpture within it.

The second chapter looks at Milanese expatriate sculptor Raffaele Monti (1818-1881), who became famous in Britain for veiled faces and other illusionistic devices in marble. Art historians know Monti's work primarily as a stylistic departure from Canova-esque

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[130] Droth, "The Ethics of Making," 226.

'neoclassicism' in Italian sculpture, but I argue that this gives only a reductive and partly distortive picture of Monti's work and its significance. but it also represented (and more fundamentally so) a touchstone for the difference between what the 'ideal' could and could not be, in relation to handcraft, reproduction, technical display and new audiences. The chapter's first half shows how Monti developed the veiled statues for which he became famous specifically for the culture of industrial exhibition and spectacle that the Great Exhibition inaugurated. Monti's veiled sculptures showcased new technical possibilities for marble sculpture in this context and became highly popular with exhibition crowds and commercial interests who used them as loss-leading eye-catchers. At the same time, critics and art journalists consistently cited Monti's veiled sculptures as triumphs of handwork over mind-work and mere 'mechanical dexterity', base mimesis and trickery. Like the experiments in polychromy mentioned in the first chapter, Monti's veiled sculptures represented a collapse of the barricade that divided the realm of ideal sculptural authorship and its sovereign laws from everything beyond. Just as these sculptures had been stimulated by industrial exhibition and its culture of display, I argue, so too were the criticisms. These drew on longstanding art-critical tropes for demeaning virtuosity, but were at the same time animated and inflected by professional rivalries, conditions of journalism and issues of spectacle particular to the exhibitions. References to mechanical reproduction are deployed as metaphors for stylistic decisions, whilst references to style refer metaphorically to different kinds of audience or market practice, in ways determined by an environment of competitive eye catching.

The third chapter turns to the Florentine-American sculptor Hiram Powers and his *Greek Slave*, probably the most famous of all sculptures at the international exhibitions during the period, both in its day and in art historical posterity. As with the above two sculptors, Powers had the ambivalent status of being a sculptor especially associated with various realms of commercial or technical endeavour—with popular showmanship, mechanical engineering, and imitative handwork. Like Bell, Powers's career and reputation as an ideal sculptor were built through the concatenation of physical reproductions and public displays, culminating with the Great Exhibition. The circulation and reproduction of descriptions and images in the print media was particularly important in this process. Like Monti, meanwhile, the issue of reproduction was also the content of his reputation as an ideal sculptor: Though responses to the *Greek Slave* were overwhelmingly positive, there was a significant and telling strain of negative criticism caricaturing his ideal sculpture as essentially reproductive, derivative (like

the media used to promulgate it) and thus wrongly admired. Powers's own practice and fame, his detractors contended, was built on a bubble of reproduction and rhetoric, on the opportunistic re-working of past artworks, which were then re-invested with new meaning in an open-ended or retrospective fashion. As with criticisms of Monti's, there is a crossover between technical and stylistic language, between references to reproductive casting or carving and references to derivative modelling or composition. Yet in Powers's case, the metaphorical nature of these crossovers almost disappears, in a way that reflects, as this chapter demonstrates, aspects of Powers's actual work and its promotion through other arts. In sum, the chapter tries to show how the sharp divisions of contemporary opinion on Powers's work are a reflection of how deeply intertwined and difficult to distinguish or disentangle were sculptural creativity and reproduction in the period.

CHAPTER 1

JOHN BELL, INDUSTRY AND IDEAL SCULPTURE

When we consider the interconnection of industry and industrial display with sculpture in mid-nineteenth century Britain, the name of one sculptor stands out. During the 1850s, John Bell was Britain's foremost sculptor modelling for manufacturers of earthenware and metal statuary. A prominent exhibitor and curator of sculpture displays in the international exhibitions, Bell was the chief sculptor associated with Henry Cole's design reform movement and a prolific lecturer on sculpture at learned societies such as the Society of Arts. At the same time, Bell successfully maintained a conventional sculpture workshop, producing marble and bronze statues for private collections and national monuments. At the international exhibitions, Bell's designs could be found embodied in statues in marble, plaster, Parian, cast iron and electrotyped bronze, as well as silver-plated clocks or tableware. Often the same statue design could be seen executed in a variety of different materials, surface finishes and colours, juxtaposed across the different exhibitors' stands and courts. To a great degree, Bell's engagements with various expanding fields of sculptural endeavour were interdependent and mutually sustaining, and the reflection of his designs amongst various statues at the exhibitions would have given reciprocal promotion to their manufacturers whilst amplifying Bell's name. What made, and still makes, Bell stand out amongst his peers is as much about the positioning of his work, as its innate quality.

If Bell's career epitomised interconnections and reciprocities between ideal sculpture and different industries or decorative arts in nineteenth-century Britain, did it also demonstrate divergences and tensions? Accounts of Bell's sculptural style and his relations with industry have seen these both either as aesthetically dubious, somewhat conflicted, or as an ugly duckling-like prehistory of the more attractive and fully integrated unions of sculptural design and material process seen in the New Sculpture.[131] 'His technological and commercial versatility contrasts with his stylistic conservatism', is the way Emma Hardy encapsulates his career, for example.[132] Whilst such perspectives are not without foundation, what remains strangely under-analysed are the many apparent tensions between Bell's output as a designer

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[131] Gunnis, *Dictionary of British Sculptors*, 49; Lawley, "Art and Ornament in Iron: Design and the Coalbrookdale Company," 18-22.
[132] Hardy, "John Bell".

and the various theoretical or rhetorical positions he was prominently associated with. Bell's early career and fame were bound up with a design reform movement dedicated to bringing better unions of design and execution in British manufacture, even though the most prominent feature of his works from this period is the very liberal and multifarious way manufacturers executed and exploited his designs. Likewise, scholars have so far not considered the variegated reproduction of Bell's statuary next to his very public prescriptions regarding matters like colouring sculpture, which that reproduction contravened. Bell's prominent roles as a maker of ideal sculptures, an industrial designer, an exhibition curator and an aesthetician together provide an exceptional case study in tensions as much as unions.

The following chapter considers connections and divergences between Bell's various engagements, highlighting these through the aspects of colour, finish and display. Its three main sections are broadly chronological. The first looks at how Bell's rise to fame was founded on a brief period of remarkable synergy between different art-industry collaborations. These collaborations culminated in, and were showcased by, the industrial displays at the Great Exhibition, which invested Bell's sculptures with formal variety and a host of new significances. The second section looks at how Bell curated the display of sculpture as a separate and distinct 'Fine Art' at the 1855 Paris exhibition, as well as his forays into contemporaneous, related debates about the relation between sculpture and colour. The final section examines Bell's interventions in art theory between the 1855 and 1862 exhibitions, in relation to the material institutional legacy of the Great Exhibition. In all, the chapter demonstrates how industrial exhibitions presented significant opportunities to enhance the profile and status of ideal sculpture, whilst challenging or testing its theoretical and aesthetic terms.

I. INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION

The making of Bell's career

Bell's career in fine art had a lucky start. He came from a well-off family who supported his choice of vocation, and after rising through a drawing school and the Royal Academy, he

took a studio and rapidly began to exhibit sculpture in London shows.[133] At the 1837 Royal Academy, he showed a model for the *Eagle Slayer* (also labelled the 'the Archer' or 'Eagle-Shooter'), a striking action-piece showing a shepherd straining upwards to fire an arrow at the killer of his sheep, which lolls over the statue's base (fig. 1). Two years later, he exhibited a model for *Dorothea*, representing the young girl in *Don Quixote* spied by Sancho half-dressed in boy's clothing (fig. 2), which was then commissioned in marble by the 2nd Marquis of Lansdowne. The *Eagle Slayer*, meanwhile, was re-exhibited at the Suffolk Street galleries of the Society of British Artists, though it really established Bell as a sculptor of national significance when a re-modelled version was sent to the 1844 Westminster Hall exhibition, a contest amongst British artists for commissions to produce sculptures and murals to decorate Charles Barry's new Houses of Parliament.[134] Bell's *Eagle Slayer* had already secured the commission for a marble version for the third Earl Fitzwillliam, and was judged one of the three best sculptures in the Westminster Hall competition, thereby winning Bell the commission to produce the statue of Lord Falkland for St. Stephen's Hall, which he completed ten years later. During the same year, the death of both of Bell's parents effectively consolidated the financial platform for his sculpting career, their inheritance enabling him (their eldest son), in early 1846, to marry the daughter of a wealthy artist, buy a property in Kensington, erect his own house and studio there, and take on an indentured apprentice.[135] During the next three years, Bell expanded this studio and took on two more assistants who helped him sculpt for marble, metal and porcelain, making it into what he termed, in 1849, his own 'little School of Design'.[136]

Important as were Bell's early advances as 'fine arts' sculptor, it was the intersection with new manufactures, materials and markets that underpinned his early success and lasting reputation. The *Eagle Slayer* and *Dorothea* ultimately became his most famous works, but did so not through their marble iterations, but through Parian, bronze and cast iron. Though both were conceived independently as 'ideal sculptures', through a subsequent series of interconnected reproductions and exhibitions they became national symbols of collaboration

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[133] Barnes, *John Bell*, 14-15.

[134], Bell's submission is recorded as a plaster model in "Westminster Hall. The Frescoes and Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, August 1844, 215. Bell claims he significantly re-worked the composition for the Westminster Hall exhibition, adding drapery, using life casts of hands and feet, altering 'the line and composition of the figure, especially of the lower limbs', and modelling a more muscular physiognomy, in "Letter from John Bell, Esq. to Oliver Yorke," *Fraser's Magazine*, March 1845, 378.

[135] Barnes, *John Bell*, 29-30.

[136] *Report from the Select Committee on the School of Design*, 321.

between industry and art. Pivotal links in this chain were two new bodies for promoting art-industry collaboration—the Art Union of London and Felix Summerly's Art Manufactures. Through these, Bell's work was propelled across the decade from the Royal Academy and Westminster Hall to take centre stage at the Great Exhibition.

Immediately after the Westminster Hall Exhibition closed, the *Eagle Slayer* model was re-displayed in the rooms of the Society of British Artists on Suffolk Street, Pall Mall East, amongst 253 pictures which British artists had exhibited in London shows that year.[137] This was the exhibition of the Art Union of London, an institution for encouraging wider patronage of artists, established on a German model, at the stimulus of the Select Committee for Arts and Manufactures of 1835-6.[138] It gathered yearly subscriptions of varying amounts from individuals who were then entered into a lottery, the prizes of which were sums of between £10 and £400 to spend upon artworks that the prize-winners could choose from approved London exhibitions.[139] These works were then re-exhibited for the benefit of the public, the artists and the Union itself. Shortly after it was established, the Art Union had grown successful enough to commission serial works of art, such as engravings and statuettes, which it offered to prize-winners and, on some occasions, to all subscribers of money over a certain amount. Prize-winning subscribers even chose marble sculptures to be commissioned, which were then reproduced in plaster and porcelain for further subscribers and prize-winners.[140] With the lottery and economies of scale, the Union secured patronage for expensive artworks from a large body of consumers who would not otherwise have been able to afford such artworks, as well as guaranteeing a return for producers of serial works like engravings.[141] In the 1840s, they also stimulated technological advance and opened markets for serial reduced casts of sculptures, firstly when in 1842 they began a series of annual commissions for editions of statuettes in bronze, and secondly, in 1845, when they did the same in 'parian ware' or 'statuary porcelain', starting with a reduction of Gibson's

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[137] "Varieties" *Art-Journal*, September 1844, 293; "Exhibition of the Art-Union Prizes," *Art-Journal*, October 1844, 303.

[138] *Report from the Select Committee on Arts and Their Connexion with Manufactures*, viii, 15; Aslin, "The Rise and Progress of the Art Union of London," 12-16.

[139] Subscriptions varied from 1g and under, which was the threshold for automatically getting prints after the commissioned engraving in 1838, to £21 and over, which was the threshold suggested in 1844 for the automatic receipt of bronze copies. Aslin, "The Rise and Progress of the Art Union of London," 12-16; "Exhibition of the Art-Union Prizes," *Art-Journal*, October 1844, 303.

[140] Ultimately, however, the time needed to produce new engravings or serial bronzes meant that the Union Committee had to take over selection of the works to be commissioned from prize-winners. Aslin, "The Rise and Progress of the Art Union of London," 15.

[141] For more information, see King, *The Industrialization of Taste*.

Narcissus (fig. 3).[142] The latter commission is said to have rescued the new material from commercial oblivion.[143]

On the back of its success at Westminster Hall, the *Eagle Slayer* was commissioned as the fourth of the Union's annual bronzes, along with John Henry Foley's *Youth at the Stream*; the two were released as prizes for their subscribers in 1846 and 1847 respectively (figs 4 and 5).[144] Twenty two-foot-tall copies were modelled and cast by Edward William Wyon.[145] (In 1889, a flagging Art Union commissioned a new edition of *Eagle Slayer* statuettes, this time by H.J. Hatfield). The Wyon edition was publicised, along with Foley's *Youth*, through engravings and an *Art-Journal* article of 1845, which characteristically lauded the attempt to 'further popularize Art' and praised the Union (and by extension the Royal Commission) for selecting two such 'elegant productions for bronzing', on account of their suitably 'Greek' forms.[146]

Just as the Art Union began to issue the *Eagle Slayer* and Bell was establishing his studio, he became involved with the 'Art Manufactures' project of Henry Cole. A year or so prior to meeting Bell, Cole had begun to work with the potter Herbert Minton, designing tableware for 'Art Manufactures' competitions at the Society of Arts. These competitions offered prizes for the production of quality practical wares 'for common use' before exhibiting these to the public.[147] In May 1846, Cole, Minton and the designer H.J. Townsend successfully entered a tea-set and beer jugs under Cole's pseudonym, 'Felix Summerly'. Following this, 'Felix Summerly's Art Manufactures' expanded to encompass other manufacturers, designers and Bell, who met Cole in August 1846 and was commissioned to make an inkstand for him.[148] Cole ran 'Felix Summerly's Art Manufactures' essentially as an agency, uniting different designers with manufacturers and promoting the collaborative works. Through Cole, Bell became acquainted with a host of other manufacturers who subsequently exhibited work after his designs at the Great Exhibition. During 1847, Cole's diary records that he went with Bell to Birmingham and Stoke, where they visited Jennens' papier-mâché works, Elkington's

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[142] Aslin, "The Rise and Progress of the Art Union of London," 15; Copeland, *Parian*, 18, 76-9.
[143] Copeland, *Parian*, 18, 76-9.
[144] Avery and Marsh, "The Bronze Statuettes of the Art Union of London," 331-7.
[145] "Cabinet Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, November 1845, 335. Foley produced the *Youth* reduction himself using the Cheverton machine, though Wyon did not use this. Art Union Minute Book, 17 January 1845.
[146] 'Cabinet Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, November 1845, 335.
[147] Bury, "Felix Summerly's Art Manufacturers," 28.
[148] Henry Cole Diaries, August 2, 1846. Bell's charge for the inkstand was double the 'real cost in labor'.

metal-works, Messenger's bronze foundry, and Minton's porcelain works (where they 'went over the factory entirely' with Minton) as well as the Coalbrookdale iron foundry in Shropshire.[149] Cole was also providing active communication between Bell and other manufacturers and craftsmen.[150] As a result, Felix Summerly released a series of articles after Bell's designs during 1847, including an ornamented silver fish service, an iron door weight, porcelain salt-cellars and a large 'Hours' clock by Elkington,[151] with makers having to adapt the designs and advise on fittings during the process.[152]

One of the most opportune and fruitful outcomes of Bell's dealings with 'Felix Summerly' was that he became the principal modeller of 'parian ware' statuettes for Minton, just as the new market for such statuettes was emerging. In one of their regular meetings in London, Minton, Bell and Cole contemplated the potential of Benjamin Cheverton's new patent sculpture reducing machine, which the Art Union of London had just begun employing to produce its bronze statuettes.[153] Meanwhile, the year that Cole introduced Bell to Minton was also the year that the Art Union of London published fifty or so reduced statuettes of Gibson's *Narcissus* commissioned from Minton's competitor, Copeland & Garrett (as well as Wyon's bronze *Eagle Slayer*, fig. 4). This edition buoyed Copeland's 'statuary porcelain' technology with a new market, which would, in turn, have encouraged by Felix Summerly's parallel patronage of Minton's 'parian ware' alternative.[154] In January, 1847, Bell informed Cole that Copeland & Garrett wished to reproduce both the *Dorothea* he had first exhibited in 1839 and his *Una and the Lion* composition (figs 6 and 7), following which Minton paid Bell for both designs and registered them along with Cole.[155] These were among the first Parian figures by Minton (although before this Minton had been producing statuettes in other

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[149] Henry Cole Diaries, November 28, 1847, April 11-13, 1847, September 9, 1847.
[150] Henry Cole's Diary throughout 1847 shows that Cole was regularly meeting Bell, Townsend and Redgrave on their 'Art Manufactures Committee'. Ibid.
[151] Barnes, *John Bell*, 34; Bury, "Felix Summerly's Art Manufacture," 32. The fish service was produced by Joseph Rogers & Sons, the door-weight by Stuart & Smith of Sheffield, the salt-cellars and match-holders by Wedgwood.
[152] Henry Cole Diaries, September 4, 1847, October 10, 1847, October 16, 1847.
[153] Barnes, *John Bell*, 31.
[154] Copeland, *Parian*, 18, 76-9.
[155] Henry Cole Diaries, January 30, 1847. Cole's accounts for 1847 are separated between transactions relating to 'Art Manufactures' and those relating to 'Minton & Co.' The latter involves payments of £42 to John Bell for *Una*, £26 for *Dorothea* and a separate payment of £1.1s to 'Miss Acraman for Una', and payments of £1 to register *Una* and other designs. Miss Acraman was paid the same rate of £1.1s to 'copy Bell's inkstand' and appears to have been making drawings as records for design registration. The registration of *Dorothea*, uniquely, occurs in the 'Art Manufactures' section of Cole's accounts, implying that it was first registered under Felix Summerly. *Dorothea* is recorded as Minton Shape Number 189, whilst *Una* was 184. Henry Cole Diaries, November 14, 1846 and accounts, January 1847; Atterbury and Batkin, *Dictionary of Minton*, 149.

porcelain media and also experimenting with Parian for other purposes).[156] According to a hostile witness during the same year, meanwhile, Minton's *Dorothea* was the only product of the Felix Summerly enterprise that was achieving a wide enough sale to make a profit.[157] It continued to do so after the swift demise of Felix Summerly in 1849, remaining in production for over 40 years and becoming the most successful Parian figure in Minton's history.[158]

Just as the Felix Summerly enterprise facilitated Bell's singular position with Minton, it also led him to become the leading designer for Coalbrookdale. Having almost certainly been introduced to the foundry though Cole, Bell started living nearby and working in their modelling rooms in 1850.[159] With the company's chief designer, Charles Crookes, Bell produced a set of large ornamental castings in the lead-up to the Great Exhibition (figs 8, 9, 12, 13). These castings, including two large *Eagle Slayers* in bronze and iron, enabled Coalbrookdale to mount by far the largest and most impressive display of metalwork by any exhibitor in the Great Exhibition, a monumental advertisement for the collaboration between sculpture and industry in Britain.[160]

Through continued reproduction and re-display, Bell's *Eagle Slayer* became the single most enduring emblem or totem of his collaboration with industry. Iterations of the statue in different materials, colours and scales danced around sites of industrial exhibition from 1851 onwards. At the Great Exhibition, Coalbrookdale displayed its 11'6" casts at prominent points in the Crystal Palace.[161] The chased bronze version could be found at the join of the central transept and British nave; the iron version, underneath a 46-foot-high ornamental 'bronzed' cast iron dome, dominated the middle of the British, topped with falcon finials, a weather vane statuette of "Æolus," modelled by Bell, and a great metal eagle underneath the canopy, 'transfixed by the arrow of the archer' (figs. 10-14).[162] Whilst the statue transfixing the eagle was at that point probably the largest freestanding statue ever cast in iron, it was painted creamy white, to approximate the appearance of marble. Light and dark *Eagle*

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[156] Atterbury and Batkin, *Dictionary of Minton*, 81-3, 149-51.

[157] "Correspondence. Felix Summerly's Art-Manufacture," *Art-Journal*, September 1848, 279.

[158] Atterbury and Batkin, *Dictionary of Minton,* 9.

[159] Richard Barnes records that Bell met representatives of the Coalbrookdale Company in London in 1847 and was lodging at Coalbrookdale with his family in 1850. Barnes, *John Bell*, 35, 40-1. Cole recorded that he visited Coalbrookdale's foundry on November 28, 1846 and was with Bell in London a day later. Henry Cole Diaries, November 28-29, 1846.

[160] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 658-61.

[161] Ibid., 659

[162] Ibid.

Slayers appeared at subsequent exhibitions. Coalbrookdale again showed the iron *Eagle Slayer* in the 'Goldsmith's and Silversmith's Work, Jewellery, Bronzes, &c.' section of the international exhibition of 1855, but this time painted it black or near-black (figs. 15, 16).[163] Bell, meanwhile, displayed what was probably either his white plaster original or Fitzwilliam's full-size white marble version in the fine art courts.[164] The marble version was displayed in the middle of the 1862 international exhibition, beneath a giant granite obelisk Bell designed as a memorial to the Great Exhibition, whilst the black-painted iron cast had to move across the road outside the new South Kensington Museum (figs. 17-20).[165] Also in the International Exhibition was a trophy of the Art Union of London featuring the small bronzes they had commissioned since the 1840s, probably including Wyon's *Eagle Slayer*.[166] Since 1854, a darkly painted plaster version had also been displayed in the new Crystal Palace, Sydenham (fig. 21). Meanwhile, having journeyed from Paris in 1855 to the new South Kensington Museum, the black-painted iron *Eagle Slayer* saw out the century in pride of place in front of the growing museum, 'passed by every one who enters that interesting institution' as Edmund Gosse wrote in 1883, and, from 1913, stood outside the V&A modelling school.[167] In the meantime, Coalbrookdale seem to have borrowed this cast or used the iron one as their centrepiece of the Kensington Olympia exhibition of 1887 (figs 22-23). Finally, iterations of the *Eagle Slayer* were the centrepieces of two retrospectives on Bell's career towards its end, both of which the sculptor had a hand in. There was a plaster version amongst a now-lost studio collection he donated to Kensington Town Hall in his last

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[163] *Exposition Universelle, 1855: Catalogue of the Works exhibited in the British Section of the Exhibition*, 45. Photographs from the Exhibition in the V&A collection show it, with a dark surface, in the industrial courts. V&A collection numbers 33.314 and 33.360. This black paint job could disguise the material: In 1895 *Athenaeum* reported the same object in South Kensington as 'a cast in bronze or lead'. 'Necrology', *Athenaeum*, April 6, 1895.

[164] The *Eagle Slayer* was joined by Bell's *Angelica*, *Omphale mocking Hercules*, *Dorothea* and *Armed Science*. The catalogue does not list the material of this *Eagle Slayer* but does not tend to for sculptures in the fine arts division, though it sometimes does so for bronze works. It does not list any owner other than Bell. *Exposition Universelle, 1855: Catalogue of the Works Exhibited in the British Section of the Exhibition,* 85.

[165] Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 27; International *Exhibition 1862: Official Catalogue of the Industrial Department*, 2; Bilbey and Trusted, *British Sculpture 1470-2000*, xiii, 194-6. The obelisk is visible, with the marble *Eagle Slayer* beneath it, in photographs of the nave by the London Stereoscopic Company in the Getty Archive. A further, shilling catalogue reports an apparently different obelisk in a similar position: 'a granite obelisk from Glasgow, executed by Mr. William Sim, and decorated after a novel fashion with ornaments brought out by burnished gold.' Pardon, *Routledge's Guide to the International Exhibition*, 49.

[166] One catalogue records the Art Union's stand with a near-complete set of its bronzes from the first decade, including the reductions of Flaxman's *Michael and Satan*, Foley's *Youth at a Stream* and Armstead's *Satan Dismayed.* This is a near-complete list of the first decade of the Union's annual bronzes. The *Eagle Slayer* is not named, but it would likely have been there too. Pardon, *Routledge's Guide to the International Exhibition*, 53.

[167] Gosse, "Living English Sculptors." In 1927, it was transferred to the Bethnal Green Museum, where it was photographed in 1937 with the bow sawn off. It resides there still, though in 2004 conservators removed the dark paint, returning it to the creamy-white of 1851. Bilbey and Trusted, *British Sculpture 1470-2000*, 194-5. 'Necrology', *Athenaeum*, April 6, 1895; Letter from Bell to Gosse, October 18, 1881.

years, along with his own descriptive catalogue.[168] In 1883, meanwhile, a rich wood engraving was made for an article written in communication with Bell by Gosse, entitled 'Living English Sculptors', to exemplify 'a sculptor whose work has been favourably before the public for just fifty years', showing 'pure feeling for design' (fig. 24).[169] Through a half-century long chain of iterations, the *Eagle Slayer* had become a combined touchstone of Bell's authorship, the artwork of Coalbrookdale, and the foundations of the South Kensington Museum.

The profile of Bell's ideal sculpture, then, was bound up with the interplay of exhibition and reproduction, and the adaptation of given designs to a variety of new materials and functions. The reproduction of his compositions followed their exposure, just as their exposure followed reproduction. The profile of *Eagle Slayer* and *Dorothea* at Westminster Hall and the Royal Academy was the stimulus for statuette-reductions by Minton and Art Union, who were followed by different makers who re-presented these designs in a variety of materials and settings that Bell could not have imagined when he first modelled them.

Showcasing art and industry

The reproduction of Bell's work throughout the Great Exhibition showcased and perpetuated mutually beneficial relationships between sculpture and industrial manufacture. His collaborations with different manufacturers during the previous years attached his name to objects in different exhibitors' stands throughout the British half of the Crystal Palace, giving it a uniquely extensive presence there. The different exhibit categories Bell's work featured in included 'China, Porcelain, Earthenware, &c' (Minton), 'Works in Precious Metals, Jewellery, &c.' (Elkington & Co.), 'General Hardware' (Messenger & Co. and Coalbrookdale) as well as 'Fine Art' (Bell himself). In various cases, the same sculpture was on show in different forms: For example, *Dorothea*, *Una and the Lion* and *Babes in the Wood* were all shown in Minton's display of parian statuettes in the upper galleries whilst Bell displayed his full-scale versions in the British sculpture court below. In addition to this, Bell exhibited models for statues in the Crystal Palace's main avenue, such as his *Falkland* for the

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[168] The collection was irreparably damaged in World War II. The only known copy of Bell's catalogue, recorded at Kensington Town Hall, is also missing. "Obituary," *Times*, March 28, 1895, 10. Barnes, *John Bell*, 86-7.
[169] Gosse, "Living English Sculptors," 174-5; See also Letters to Gosse, October 11, 1881-July 3, 1889.

Palace of Westminster, the commission he had won with the *Eagle Slayer.* The reflection of Bell's authorship in different media and displays would have returned publicity to the individual manufacturers involved in it, through a kind of viral effect. The Exhibition display furnished both a picture of a sculptor's career in industry and an advertisement of its productive success or further potential.

The extension, variation and impact of Bell's combination of art with industry would have been nowhere more evident than in Coalbrookdale's Great Exhibition display. The founders dominated the Crystal Palace's central transept and the 'British' half of its nave exhibiting Bell's sculptural work in various monumental forms. Along with the *Eagle Slayers* and the giant rustic dome (advertised in the Exhibition catalogue as 'adapted for glazing, as a green-house, a summer-house, a covered garden orchestra, or receptacle for a public statue in metal or marble')[170] was a bronze statue of Andromeda in chains on a Cellini-esque pedestal, an iron fountain designed by Bell with a *tazza* made of water-lilies and a spout formed by a boy wrestling a swan, and a set of bronzed iron gates for Hyde Park itself, topped by stag's-head vases and mermen 'emblematic of peace'. So imposing were Coalbrookdale's displays that the *Illustrated London News* described them as 'an exhibition in themselves'[171] and compared the rustic dome housing the *Eagle Slayer* to a miniature Crystal Palace.[172] The *ILN*'s Gulliver-like conceit alluded not only to visual effect, but also to the wider ramifications of cast iron reproduction. Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace, an innovation in pre-fabricated architecture using identical cast units combined with sheet glass, was itself the direct outgrowth of the greenhouses and large conservatories Paxton had designed for the sixth Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth. The Crystal Palace symbolised the extension of such technology for benefit of a wider public, staging a collection of furniture, ornaments and sculpture beyond even the wildest dreams of the Duke, whose conservatories adjoined one of Britain's most significant displays of marble statuary.[173] Coalbrookdale's iron display, with its greenhouse-cum-bandstand-cum-statue podium, fountain and the Hyde Park gates, reflected the Crystal Palace that housed it like a Russian doll, binding itself up with the democratic rhetoric of the Exhibition and the wider significances of civic architecture. Meanwhile, the same display offered a similarly significant conceit of enlargement, as well as miniaturisation. The monumental *Eagle Slayer* casts not only mirrored the statuettes

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[170] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 659.
[171] "The British Department," *Illustrated London News*, May 10, 1851, 397.
[172] "Ornamental Iron-Work," *Illustrated London News*, May 17, 1851, 432.
[173] For more information on Devonshire's sculpture gallery, see Yarrington, "'Under Italian skies'," 41-62.

Coalbrookdale marketed, but the way it marketed them: In later company catalogues, the *Eagle Slayer* appears as an outline engraving amongst other statuettes, grates, and park-gates,[174] advertised as being made-to-order in a variety of 'bronzed' patinas, applied to the iron through painted coloured grounds, metal dust and varnish, and listed in the catalogue as 'light statue', 'Gold', 'Green', 'Antique', (a greenish-grey ground with gold copper and green oxide), 'Moresque' (a warm ground with light gold), and 'Florentine' (a rich brown ground with copper).[175] In this circumstance, Bell's design represented a bond or echo between great and small, high and low, public and private statuary, academic art and the wider world.

Of all the new materials and technologies shown at the Great Exhibition that brought fine art sculpture into connection with modern industry, cast iron was perhaps the most significant for Britain. The nation's industrial revolution had been carried by reciprocal developments in iron founding and coal mining, as iron machines enabled the extraction and later the transport of coal, whilst coal (or, more accurately, coke) smelting enabled the production of more advanced iron machinery. The Coalbrookdale foundry held a pivotal place in this chain, having pioneered coke smelting. In a lecture on Britain's iron-making resources delivered to the Society of Arts in the wake of the Great Exhibition, S.H. Blackwell split the history of iron into the periods pre- and post-coke, whilst reckoning that the dominance Britain had taken over the international iron trade was due to its fortunately bounteous native resources of iron and coal, as well as the demand for new machinery.[176] Coke smelting and the liquidity of metal it produced allowed Coalbrookdale to produce larger, shapelier and more numerous machine castings, resulting in the first cast iron steam engine cylinders, cast iron railway wheels and the first iron bridge.[177] With the same innovations, combined with sand-casting techniques imported from the Netherlands, Coalbrookdale also started making decorative wares of a sort previously limited to wrought iron or more expensive metals like bronze.[178] By the 1840s, in tandem with new management, new middle-class markets and new towns, the company shifted its business towards ornamental castings including fireplaces, inkstands,

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[174] 1872 Coalbrookdale catalogue in the Museum of Iron library, Ironbridge.
[175] Roberts, "John Bell and the Coalbrookdale Company," 37-8.
[176] Blackwell, "The Iron-Making Resources of the United Kingdom," 147-83.
[177] Lawley, "Art and Ornament in Iron," 18-22.
[178] Lister, *Decorative Cast Ironwork in Great Britain*, 95-8.

doorknockers, coffin fittings, benches, railings, gates and fountains.[179] Cast iron comprised not only the means of industrial revolution, but the material culture that proceeded from it.

For these reasons, cast iron art held great symbolic power in Britain's contest with her neighbours at the Great Exhibition. The medium had already garnered nationalistic symbolism as an alternative to metals like bronze or gold in Prussia's war with Napoleon, partly because of its longstanding intrinsic relationship with military industry.[180] Afterwards, it was used to commemorate Prussia's liberation in the Kreuzberg monument designed by Karl Friedrich Schinkel and adorned with statues by Christian Daniel Rauch, Christian Friedrich Tieck and Ludwig Wilhelm Wichmann (fig. 25). German and British efforts to reform design in, and through, iron reproduction fed off each other from the 1820s onward.[181] By the Great Exhibition, iron statues acquired the same degree of competitive resonance as they had in Prussia, albeit without Coalbrookdale having been so intertwined with munitions. Whilst visually echoing the physical structure of the Great Exhibition, displays of cast iron would have had symbolic resonance throughout the Exhibition taxonomy, which evoked the interconnectedness of industrial civilization through stages of production: In 'Raw Materials' were displayed ore and coal, which fed and were extracted by engines in 'Machinery', whilst displays of iron fireplaces and other wares dominated the British display of 'Manufactures'. This chain of iron running through the produce of Britain and its colonies in the Crystal Palace's western nave, where the physical subdivisions still echoed the technical-productive bent of the official taxonomy, would have presented Coalbrookdale's sculptural displays as the artistic bud of Britain's industrial economy. In his lengthy essay written as chairman of the Exhibition's 'Hardware' jury, the eminent American journalist Horace Greeley narrated the pre-eminent contrast on show between the wealth of bronze- or brass-based ornamental metalwork of France and the predominantly iron-based metalwork from Britain.[182] On the one hand was the state-sponsored, workshop-based French production of luxury wares with fine materials and artistic techniques, needing to adapt to the mechanical requirements of

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[179] Lawley, "Art and Ornament in Iron," 18-22; "Illustrated Tour of the Manufacturing Districts," *Art-Journal*, August 1846, 225.

[180] Forschler-Tarrasch, *European Case Iron in the Birmingham Museum of Art*, 18-23.

[181] After visiting British ironworks on behalf of the Prussian state, Schinkel published a pattern-book for metalworkers with the remit of encouraging affordable and accessible art whilst warding against the degradation of taste by industrial methods. Irwin, "Neo-Classical Design," 296-7. As it re-directed its works towards ornamental casting, the Coalbrookdale Company also founded its own design school and library in Ironbridge, alongside those instituted following the Select Committee on Arts and Manufactures, 1835-6. A British publication of 1824 paralleling Schinkel, meanwhile, was Cottinham, *The Smith and Founder's Director*.

[182] *Reports by the Juries*, 493-500. There were also significant French exhibits in iron, such as a fountain by J. P. V. André and casts by the Aubanel foundry, both of which won Council medals.

utilitarian products and mass-production; on the other hand the British market-led mass-production of cheap utilitarian wares, needing to re-invest 'artistic' principles into its processes. [183] Though bemoaning the aesthetic hurdles of Britain's system, Greeley characterised the way it developed commercial industry for the many, before then drawing the luxury of art from this, as a more democratic, healthy and organic process than *vice versa*. This comparison of democratic commercialism with state-sponsored luxury had already become a standard trope used by British manufacturers in defence of visual contrasts between the respective quality of British and French goods in general.[184]

The objects bearing Bell's name at the Exhibition, then, had great symbolic currency as interconnections of fine art design-work with industrial reproduction and augurs of an ensuing democratisation of art. But what did their appearance say about the outcomes, limitations, or side-constraints of such interconnections in relation to sculptural aesthetics? Was ideal sculpture *just reproduced*, and if not, how did reproduction affect its appearance and terms? In response to these questions, the remainder of this section details significant visual contrasts to be found amongst Bell-designed objects shown in the Great Exhibition and following international exhibitions, beginning with the Coalbrookdale *Eagle Slayer*s. The particular formal terms I use—involving contrasts of tone and texture, colour and texture, the forcefulness of relief or silhouette, the transparency or opacity of materials, and the evocation of flesh—are those which, as we shall see more clearly in section 1.ii, occupied Bell's own aesthetics and his ideas about what ideal sculpture should look like.

The challenge and significance of different materials

Before turning to the visual effects and significances of making ideal statues in iron, we first need to attend to the technical challenges this entailed. Perhaps the most important challenges from the point of view of sculptural technique and aesthetics had to do with surface finish. The cold surfaces of bronze or marble statues could be chased or polished in ways that not only erased flaws, but could so alter the appearance of a statue as to be treated as keystones of a sculptor's entire creative process. The surfaces of iron casts were too hard to be worked in the same way. Though bronze finishers reportedly worked on iron in the period, and iron

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[183] Ibid., 495-6.

[184] See chapter 3, "Commodification and its Discontents" in Kriegel, *Grand Designs*.

foundries had 'fettling' workshops where casts were finished by grinding, acid bathing or polishing, such work could not approach the delicacy and nuance of bronze chasing or marble polishing.[185] This made the delicacy and sharpness of iron casts even more dependent upon the skill of pattern makers, mould makers and metal pourers. But the casting method itself put pressure on finishing in turn. Though, at the beginning of the century, Prussian foundries were casting iron by the lost wax method, by the mid-century the more industrial method of sand-casting had largely taken over decorative iron casting in Prussia and Britain.[186] Whereas lost wax casting theoretically enabled complex, undercut shapes to be cast whole, sand casting almost always required such shapes to be cut into sections that were retractable from one half of a two-piece sand mould, the casts of which had to be linked up again afterwards. Skilful mould-makers could reduce the number of moulds needed for complex patterns by using cutaway sections of sand in a single mould, but only to a point.[187] This piece-casting process could entail mould lines, solder marks that would be much easier to remove or conceal in bronze, whilst enforcing the need for accuracy, consistency and the ability to handle metal shrinkage during the casting process. Getting surfaces sharp on individual piece-casts was also difficult. If sand moulds were insufficiently tight and tenacious they would not retain the shape of the pattern, yet if they were insufficiently porous they would not allow gases from the molten metal to escape, causing bubbling in the mould and pitting in the cast. To deal with this problem, extremely skilful or delicate processes were developed, involving the combination of different sand types, the construction of air vents and the use of combustible materials in the mould.[188] The mutually compounding difficulties of resistant surfaces and clean casting were spun by the *Art-Journal* in 1846 as a reason to pronounce a cast statue 'a more wondrous work of mechanical art than a cast of brass or bronze, [for] there are more difficulties to be overcome in the preparation, there is more nicety in the process, and there are no earthly means of changing the result.'[189]

But iron was still far off matching traditional sculptural materials. Even a perfectly fine iron cast had a tendency to rust, damaging the appearance and fabric of the cast as copper oxide did not. Prussian foundries developed the solution of painting casts in layers of linseed oil which when volatilized produced a hard, noncorrosive film which was dark brown or black in

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[185] Forschler-Tarrasch, *European Cast Iron in the Birmingham Museum of Art*, 21-30; Lister, *Decorative Cast Ironwork in Great Britain*, 55-7.
[186] Forschler-Tarrasch, *European Cast Iron in the Birmingham Museum of Art*, 28-9.
[187] Lister, *Decorative Cast Ironwork in Great Britain*, 32-9.
[188] Ibid., 15.
[189] "Illustrated Tour of the Manufacturing Districts," *Art-Journal*, August 1846, 219.

colour, adding to the blackness endowed by coal dust in the mould[190]—a process that became known as Berlin paint (*Berliner lack*) or 'Berlin black'.[191] Alternative protections against rust were either a sturdy layer of paint, 'bronzing' (a layer of paint overlaid with metal dust, which might be varied to imitate different kinds of bronze *patina*) or electro-plating (though this technique was not applicable to iron until quite late).[192] These options entailed an important problem: The darkness of 'Berlin black' necessarily gave statues a 'silhouette' aesthetic which smothered the appearance of relief, half-tones, nuanced contours and soft outlines on a statue. Yet the lighter alternatives meant covering up the native properties of the material or, in the case of paint, delicacies of modelling. This compromise was noted by the *Art-Journal*'s Coalbrookdale report:

> And here we may notice a circumstance which is a little open to dispute. The characteristic, and what may be called the "natural" colour of those castings is a brilliant and beautiful jet black. […] There is, however, this defect; all shadow is lost on a black surface, and hence delicate tracery and minute details of form run a very obvious hazard of being overlooked. To remedy this defect many of the finer productions, and particularly figures, are bronzed over. There is thus what we hold to be a violation of the artistic proprieties, namely a disguise of the material. It is very disputable how far this may be allowed under all the circumstances; bronzing, of course, gives all the effect of light and shade; it is susceptible of some variations of colour, while perfect blackness, even accompanied by high polish, has a sombre effect, from which the wearied eye in vain seeks for the relief it finds by the introduction of colour.[193]

The same author could nonetheless find virtue in this same jet blackness in the rivalry between iron and bronze as materials for large statues, noting that it 'would give a solemn

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[190] Forschler-Tarrasch, *European Cast Iron in the Birmingham Museum of Art*, 29-30.
[191] Coalbrookdale Company, *The "Coalbrookdale" Illustrated Catalogue*, 16.
[192] The *Art-Journal* reported in 1846 that electro-plating was not yet done by Coalbrookdale but there had been successful experiments in Germany. "Illustrated Tour of the Manufacturing Districts," *Art-Journal*, August 1846, 222, 224. By 1851, Coalbrookdale was recorded producing and liberally showing off electro-gilded casts at the Great Exhibition. The *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 659. Fifty years afterwards Coalbrookdale advertised electro-bronzing as an optional finish, which tended to at least double the price of each casting. Coalbrookdale Company, *The "Coalbrookdale" Illustrated Catalogue*, 16.
[193] "Illustrated Tour of the Manufacturing Districts," *Art-Journal*, August 1846, 220.

and imposing effect to a monumental statue.'[194] The comment is an optimistic flip-side of a common contemporary view that the blackened, silhouette-like finish of much British bronze public statuary was a problem, requiring at least that sculptors model their compositions with this restriction in mind.[195] By the Great Exhibition, the dilemma of iron surfaces noted in the *Art-Journal* remained. In *The Industrial Arts of the Nineteenth Century*, Matthew Digby Wyatt gave another optimistic plug of Coalbrookdale's castings, detailing the challenges of sand-casting as reasons to give especial admiration to fine iron casts. But he had to admit that the need to paint over the material was a hurdle to its artistic future: '[A]s soon as scientific chemists shall have discovered a material which, superseding paint, shall effectively protect iron from oxidation, without destroying the perfection of its surface, or the sharpness of its angles, we have no doubt it will be largely employed in the formation of objects of the highest class of art'.[196]

Coalbrookdale's juxtaposition of the large iron and bronze *Eagle Slayer*s at the Great Exhibition can be read in light of the technical challenges above (figs. 11, 12). On the one hand, the sheer closeness of shape beneath the distinction of material and finish would have been a strident statement of casting prowess. Both large casts are taken from the same pattern, which in turn matches the shape of the marble version Bell showed in the exhibitions of 1855 and 1862, with the iron version nearby in both cases. Each large cast is composed of five or so moulded pieces bolted together to form a composition of three or four broad principal shapes. Extrapolating the nineteenth-century appearance of the extant casts is problematic, given subsequent environmental effects on both of them, and a modern restoration of the iron version.[197] Despite this, however, and especially in light of the serious rust damage sustained by the iron cast, both are really quite similar in the sharpness of their contours, though the similarity is somewhat facilitated by Bell's very broad and square modelling of the anatomy and drapery. The most important statement this monumental pairing makes is that, at least with regard to 'form', iron might be made to match bronze.[198]

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[194] Ibid.
[195] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 62-4, 67.
[196] Wyatt, *Industrial Arts of the Nineteenth Century*, commentary facing plate XIX. It is worth noting that the founders Hoole & Co., who impressed critics at the Great Exhibition with display of sharp, deliberately unfinished or unpainted fireplace castings, were also said in 1851 to have collaborated with the chemist Robert Hunt in finding a way to combine sharp casting with a pleasant surface effect intrinsic to the metal itself. Ibid.
[197] For details on the conservation of the *Eagle Slayer* for the V&A, see Rupert Harris Conservation, accessed 29 September 2014, http://www.rupertharris.com/final/sc_iron/examples/example1/example1.php.
[198] Greeley's Great Exhibition jury report said: '[t]hat [iron] is susceptible, in casting, of the most perfect and sharp impression is clearly evinced by the examples already noticed; and the successful rendering of Mr. J.

But can iron do everything that bronze can? Similarities of form in the iron and bronze versions are accompanied by significant distinctions in finish. The difference may be articulated in terms of the variety in tone and texture and the general responsiveness of finish to form and native material. The pieces from which the large casts are composed—the archer's nude body, the rocky pyramidal base across which he stands, the drapery swept across his loins and the outcrop behind, and the sheep lying on the rock below him—vary a little in tone and texture in both cases, the principal contrast being that of the sheep's matted fleece with the broad angular formations of the drapery, flesh and rocky base. The tonal effects of textural contrast are respectively dampened and amplified by the surfaces of iron and bronze, however. Nonetheless, textural differences are especially muffled by the paint on the large iron cast (as they are in iron's black alternative to paint, seen in an extant statuette at Ironbridge (fig. 26)), by contrast with the bronze. In the bronze, the environmental oxidation has combined with the same textural differences to give the mineral base a neat earthiness next to the bright *verdigris* on the bodies of the figure and sheep. Though this comparison arises from time passed since the international exhibitions, it illustrates an organic responsiveness between modelling, finish and environment that was an intrinsic property of bronze, and one that sculptors could admire and anticipate in the material.[199] Iron's limited responsiveness in this respect, moreover, may even have been more apparent in 1851, when Coalbrookdale's iron statues faced the other full-size cast, 'in fine bronze and chased', not to mention the marble *Eagle Slayer* at 1855 and 1862 or the general myriad of highly polished bronze and marble surfaces displayed at each show.[200] Next to these, Coalbrookdale's range of different painted 'bronzings' could only look so good.

A copy of Wyon's *Eagle Slayer* statuette for the Art Union evinces just how far the organic relation of modelling and finishing might be pushed in bronze (figs. 4, 27, 28). Wyon remodelled the composition from scratch, and seems to have changed the shape in ways that assume a purposive relation with the cast's finish.[201] Unlike the large Coalbrookdale casts,

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BELL's statue of "The Eagle Slayer," by the COALBROOK DALE COMPANY … shows that the cost of many public monuments might be reduced by bringing into use, as a substitute for bronze, a material cheaper than zinc, and more easily procured in this country.' *Reports by the Juries*, 500.

[199] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 115.

[200] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue: Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 661. One lithograph of the Crystal Palace transept shows an almost golden-coloured bronze *Eagle Slayer* besides statues in white marble and green bronze. Absolon *et al*, *Recollections of the Great Exhibition*, no plate number.

[201] Minute-Books of the Committee of the Art Union of London, October 13, 1844, April 1, 1845, April 8, 1845.

Wyon's statuette has a highly ornate ensemble of the archer's quiver, with its leather strap slung around the back of the outcrop.[202] Furthermore, on its base, more rounded but more closely textured forms replace the large, tectonic planes of rock in the large marble and metal *Eagle Slayers* (which appear to be more direct copies after the same model by Bell). These differences in shape, combined with chasing and applied *patina*, give Wyon's *Eagle Slayer* a much bolder, differentiated balance of tones and textures and a much greater investment in the figure's accessories. Behind the figure, the sharply-cut curve and smoothly polished surface of the leather strap contrasts brightly with the dull, organic and fragmented tree-bark. The most overt contrast (the only one captured in photography) is that of polished smoothness with craggy roughness between the two broad triangles constructing the composition—that is, between the figure's body and drapery taken together on the one hand, against the base of rocky ground, tree-stump, sheep fleece and eagle-feather all taken together, on the other. The figure, as a whole, stands out against the generally coarse grain of the base, in the added breadth and sheen of his musculature. This general division is not a 'merely' textural, but bound up with an integral, chromatic contrast. Beneath its burnished and semi-translucent surface, the flesh of the archer possesses a deep, dark reddish-brown hue, whilst the more matte base remains light, grey and cold. The colour across the archer's body itself varies from a dark inky hue to reddish highlights marking bones and the divisions between muscles. However, these chromatic differences are so subtly interwoven with surface shape that it is difficult to tell by eye to what extent they result from the application of different pigments, of the same pigment to an already differentiated surface, or from subsequent burnishing.

The small corpus of *Eagle Slayer*s and their surface finishes demonstrates important features of the field of ideal sculpture reproduction on show at the international exhibitions. Firstly, it shows the variety of ways a single 'shape' or composition (or, more accurately, one attributed as such through a title and sculptor's name) could be 'brought out'. Secondly, it shows the dynamic, almost 'retrospective' effect these variations could have on the design seen in them. In their responses to metal sculpture at the Great Exhibition, both Greeley (chairman of the 'Hardware' jury and a proponent of cast iron generally) and Henry Weekes noted the way

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[202] The Coalbrookdale *statuette*, however, does have the quiver, though its base differs from Wyon's statuette. Coalbrookdale may have based their statuette, then, on Wyon's statuette rather than their full-scale bronze, or on a combination of the two. Wyon did ask the Art Union of London if he could be licensed to make casts for other customers, but the Art Union refused, and claimed exclusive rights over Wyon's model and its reproduction. Minute-Books of the Committee of the Art Union of London, June 3, 1845, June 10, 1845.

that extended divisions of labour or liberal reproduction might thus mar sculptors' designs, advising that the best surface finishing should be as light-touch, self-denying and communicative of the original model's 'intentions' as possible.[203] Then again, as the Wyon cast indicated, the union of finish and execution with a given design depended on exigencies of media and format, and might entail sympathetic re-thinking as much as mechanical transfer. In turn, however, there might be modes of re-purposing that, whilst nonetheless working purposively with properties of a statue design, looked beyond the values of ideal sculpture *qua* ideal sculpture, and any imputed intentions of the first maker. Unions might be multiple and teleological, not only singular and genealogical. The following examples of iterations after Bell's work point more strongly in this direction, and helpfully highlight those factors in terms of which Bell, as we see later, tried to articulate what ideal sculpture should and should not look like.

Alternative finishes and functions for Bell's sculptures

Next to the various iterations of his *Eagle Slayer*, a number of more stridently polychromatic manufactures demonstrate the overlap of Bell's sculptural work with various aesthetics amongst the decorative arts. The most prominent point of comparison for Coalbrookdale in the field of British metal sculpture casting at the Great Exhibition would have been the stands of Elkington Mason & Co., where several bronze electrotype statuettes, statues, groups, busts and bas-reliefs mingled with Elkington's selection of silver-plated tableware and table centrepieces with figural ornamentation.[204] Among these was a bronze electrotype half-size statuette named *Eve's Hesitation* (fig. 29). *Eve*'s shape follows the simple format of many other female nudes by Bell, the woman boldly modelled as a series of slightly bulbous hemispheres and posed against a pillar which links her to a tragic fate. More interesting than the modelling in itself is the *patina* that interacts with it. *Eve*'s flesh is a brownish, olive green and more uniformly coloured than that of Wyon's *Eagle-Slayer*, but, by the same token, it contrasts much more with the dark brown base, tree trunk and hair. Though more

[203] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 109-118; *Reports by the Juries*, 494-6.

[204] Elkington & Co. were not, however, in the 'Hardware' class with Coalbrookdale, but in 'Precious metals, Jewellery, Articles of Virtu, &c'. The only other British firm in the Hardware category making statues, though not as many as Elkington, was Messenger & Co. Elkington's stand included Cheverton's reduction to Theseus, the Medici Venus (a specimen of casting), bust of Albert, Wellington and Peel by Marochetti and others, John Evan Thomas's Tewdric group (Cardiff), J. S. Westmacott's House of Lords statue, etc. *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 671-2.

obviously the result of *applied* colour, this contrast nonetheless provides a highly effective ground against which to see variations of contour across Eve's flesh, whilst breaking up the silhouette of the bronze object as a whole to make the naked body stand out. In effect, Elkington's *Eve* accomplishes fleshiness through applied polychromy, not through 'imitative' flesh-tones but by using colour to amplify the independent effects of shape.

A comparable, though perhaps less delicate, exercise in polychromy for garden ornament was exhibited by Coalbrookdale and Bell's *Cupid and Swan* fountain (fig. 9) in the Crystal Palace transept. Though now covered in rust, Great Exhibition sources reveal that it was painted with a green-bodied putto and white spouting swan, with yellow and white water-lilies below. [205] A similar colour-combination again achieved a different kind of product in ceramics: Whilst most Minton copies of *Dorothea* took the monochrome creamy white format that gestured to statuary marble, Minton issued green-flesh and white versions that gestured toward Celadon porcelain, and, in this, formed ornamental pendant-pieces with other Bell statuettes such as *Lalage* or *Miranda* (figs. 30-33). [206] *Dorothea*, indeed, may have been seen embodying quite different artistic functions at the same time at the 1855 Paris Exhibition, where Minton's versions would have joined a half-sized bronze that helped win Elkington an award for metalwork, whilst the original marble was shown in the Palais des Beaux Arts (fig. 34). [207]

Both the manufacturers above and, in fact, Bell himself quite freely re-worked and re-coloured a composition in response to the displays and markets at the Exhibitions. Alongside their bronze *Dorothea* in 1855, Elkington exhibited a half-size statue after a model Bell had shown at the Royal Academy in 1853, entitled, *A Daughter of Eve—A Scene on the Shore of the Atlantic—to be executed in bronze*. [208] This statue depicted an enslaved African girl,

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[205] Ibid., 659; Wyatt, *Industrial Arts of the Nineteenth Century*, commentary facing plate XIX.

[206] On colouring Parian statuettes, Copeland, *Parian*, 56-83, 138, 154-5 and Atterbury and Batkin, *Dictionary of Minton*, 151.

[207] *Exposition Universelle, 1855: Catalogue of the Works Exhibited in the British Section of the Exhibition,* 85; *Exposition Universelle de 1855: Rapports du Jury Mixte International*, vol 2, 256. Photographs of the Paris exhibition in the V&A PDP collection show part of the Elkington display in the industrial courts, but without *Dorothea* or *Daughter of Eve* statues that won the award. V&A collection number 33.315. However, both of these are captured in the re-organised displays for the prize-winners' ceremony V&A collection numbers 33.519, 33.520.

[208] "The Eighty-Fifth Exhibition of the Royal Academy," *Art-Journal*, June 1853, 152; See also *Athenaeum*, June 11, 1853, 710. The cast exhibited and photographed in 1855 matches that which now resides at Cragside House, Northumberland, home of Lord Armstrong, who is thought to have bought it in 1870 from the collection of Lord Hertford, himself a juror at the 1855 exhibition, who presumably bought the cast at the exhibition or commissioned to begin with. National Trust Collection catalogue, inventory number 1228372, accessed May 10,

standing half-nude with a tasselled cloth around her waist and her hands manacled together (figs. 35-37). It seems Bell partly borrowed the composition from a now-famous wood engraving entitled *The Virginian Slave* in *Punch* in 1851, which was, in turn, a satirical response to the enormous celebrity of Hiram Powers's white marble *Greek Slave* in the American court of the Great Exhibition (fig 38). The Elkington's *Daughter of Eve* deploys contrasts amongst variegated accessories—bright silver manacles, gold earrings, a roughly textured and greyish portion of drapery—to set off and foreground the rich, smooth brownness in the bronze flesh, and in the same act draw attention to Elkington's prowess in founding and electroplating. The cast therefore represents a clever (if ethically problematic) alliance between two responses to Powers's *Slave*; the *Punch* engraving's overt depiction of contemporary black slavery on the one hand, and, on the other, Elkington's response to Powers's *Slave* as an Exhibition piece showing a luxury material crafted as flesh.

Besides this cast and Elkington's various copies,[209] Bell modelled a reduced version in 1861 for Minton, who issued it as the *American Slave* (fig. 39).[210] Meanwhile, however, Minton also issued a different statuette of Bell's called the *Abyssinian Slave*, which re-used the same model to narrate not the Atlantic, but the Arabic, slave trade (fig. 40). As extant copies show, the *Abyssinian Slave*'s claim to this new title rested on the merest alteration of accessories, substituting a rosary around the neck for the chain around the wrists, whilst the body, the base, the palm-tree support and even the drapery with its various folds, all remained the same. (Minton also released the *Abyssinian Slave* in white Parian and celadon variants, as with *Dorothea*).[211] As its name suggests, Minton's *Abyssinian Slave* parallels Elkington's *Daughter of Eve* as a response to Powers's *Greek Slave*, tapping back into the strain of popular narratives about the sexual slavery in the near East. The way it did so with a minimum of compositional re-working, meanwhile, was mirrored and encouraged not just by other statuettes, but also by several new marble sculptures in the period, some more nuanced than others (figs. 41, 42).

2014, http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/1228372; Jeremy Warren, "Richard Seymour Conway, Fourth Marquess of Hertford (1800-1870)".

[209] A number of Elkington casts of the same composition are extant, although most do not have the silver and gold accessories that the Cragside cast does. Such versions have been sold at Christies, September 20, 2012 (The Opulent Eye – 500 Years: Decorative Arts Europe – sale 5706, lot 193) at Sotheby's, London, October 5, 2000 (Sale L00520) and at Sotheby's Billingshurst, October 20, 1987.

[210] Barnes, *John Bell*, 64.

[211] Ibid., 44-5.

Re-working and re-purposing of ideal sculpture compositions did not, however, just entail reproducing or changing the physical object—at least, not just the three-dimensional object— but could also depend on changes in its immediate context of viewing, staging and comparison with other objects. These variables could have a big impact on determining whether a sculpture was to be seen as 'fine' or 'industrial' art, especially when physical, three-dimensional reproduction exchanged the same forms amongst so many different trades. After all, the great halls of manufacture that housed variants of the *Eagle Slayer* in industrial exhibitions at London and Paris were problematic viewing environments when judged in terms of contemporary fine art galleries—no matter how crowded the walls or the floors of the Royal Academy could also get. They included a huge variety of goods with different shapes, sizes, colours, varieties of surface texture and reflectivity, all competing with each other for visual attention, and usually under a flood of direct (but un-*directed*) sunlight that was un-filtered by the slim apertures and screens commonly used in the skylights of art galleries (figs. 14, 15). The effect on statues was to some extent mitigated and stabilised at the Great Exhibition by a set of red drapes making pseudo-niches behind some of the statues—recommending certain viewing angles; protecting their contours from visual interruption by objects behind; associating them with 'art' displays in galleries; sheltering yet showcasing them like pearls. A similar process—this time not just of shelter but extraction also—occurs in the official set of photographs that accompanied hugely expensive diplomatic editions of the Exhibition jury reports (figs 43-45).[212] Portable screens were used behind each object in the series, lifting those objects the juries deemed exemplary from others surrounding them in the Crystal Palace, negating any sharp sense of scale, making them legible and comparable, and inducting them into a visually consistent pantheon. Whilst showing off the capabilities of a new visual technology (photographic prints on paper), these images also partly served to restore objects to the Exhibition's production-based taxonomy, which was interrupted by geographical subdivisions of the physical display. The screens vary consistently between light and dark to contrast with the dark and light objects respectively, clarifying outline forms. This mediation, however, did not just overwrite, but could complement, particular qualities in its objects. The white screening behind the Prussian royal iron foundries' copies after antique marble vases, for instance, plays up the 'Berlin black' silhouette aesthetic and accentuates the iron's warm blackness whilst screening the bright silver vases behind (fig 43). The black drapes behind many of the marble statues in the 'fine

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[212] For more information on these photographs and their commission, see Taylor, *Impressed by Light*, 30-43.

art' category, meanwhile, sometimes remove any sense of solid surroundings as to abstract them from the material world altogether, giving the viewer leeway to read the sculptor's material as plaster, marble, flesh, perhaps even as virtual 'design' in pure light and tone (fig. 44). The white screen behind Coalbrookdale's bronze *Eagle Slayer* gives it the 'silhouette' look, losing most of the relief of modelling within a dark triangle of limbs (fig. 45). Yet in doing so, it highlights what a strong survivor this composition was, able to 'work' with alternate materials and viewing contexts: The great span of legs, for example, would have made for an impressive display of weight-bearing in its marble incarnation; was perfectly adapted to suit the tensile strength and darkness of metal; and here provides the negative space to articulate the human form in black-and-white of photography. Like works such as E.H. Baily's *Apollo Discharging his Arrows against the Greeks,* Jens Adolf Jerichau's *Hunter and Panther* or the *Borghese Gladiator*, the body's spread and the basic, physical, violent, linear nature of its action make the statue's meaning immediately legible simply through its outline (figs. 44, 45).

If the *Eagle Slayer*'s almost hyper-legible shape travelled well between different materials or pictorial media, the very same qualities were also suited to alternate functions in industrial display. From some points of view, the *Eagle Slayer* was a refinement of a compositional type Bell had already rehearsed shortly beforehand with his *David Slinging* (fig. 46). The *Eagle Slayer* is as much a pyramid as a triangle, striking straight lines from its feet to its apex when viewed at forty-five degrees from its clear 'frontal' position, and at ninety degrees, at its sides. The most forceful of these lines, forming the spine of the composition, leads up the figure's extended left leg, flank and arm, straight from toe to bow (fig. 47). Perhaps a more clever line, however, is the one orchestrated to lead up to the bow from the shin of the right bent knee, seen perpendicular to the thigh (fig. 48). The right angle between arm and bow underlines the composition's various parallelisms. (It may have been these refinements that Bell was referring to when he said that, for the Westminster Hall show, he 'altered materially the line and composition of the figure, especially of the lower limbs').[213] The severity of these lines propel the eye to the statue's apex, signal the vertical flight of the imagined arrow, which, in turn, completes a narrative of death and retribution tied up at the base below in the dead sheep and eagle feather—the former marking the beginning of the action, the latter its

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[213] "Letter from John Bell, Esq. to Oliver Yorke," *Fraser's Magazine*, March 1845, 378. Bell's remarks here should be treated with some caution, however, as he was defending himself against the charge that he had lazily re-exhibited the same work shown at the Royal Academy in 1837.

end. As a piece of narrative expression, the composition is neat, simple, almost self-contained. But the forcefulness of its lines at various angles and at long distances may also have assisted in drawing or fixing attention to Coalbrookdale's displays amidst the competitive shows of merchandise in industrial exhibitions—a function that meant *not* having it screened or niched. Photographs of the statue as a lynchpin of Coalbrokdale's stand at the Kensington Olympia in 1887 show something like this effect (figs 22, 23). The immediate visual impact of such niceties of line must remain a matter of speculation, but certainly the composition would have stuck in the memory more than most nymphs, *amorini*, or benches. In a similar vein, Coalbrookdale's frequent re-exhibition of the *Eagle Slayer* may have owed more to the expense of producing such a cast as anything else, but then again, being recycled is precisely the feature of a good company 'logo'.[214]

Bell on his industrial career

On the whole, Bell was clearly happy to design for industry and comfortable with his designs being liberally reproduced in various different ways. From the beginnings of the Felix Summerly project, Bell's standard arrangement was to sell models or reduced models to manufacturers like Coalbrookdale and Minton, which they then would register as their own designs and use as they wished.[215] He could not have predicted the outcomes of such arrangements when he modelled *Eagle Slayer* and *Dorothea*, but he was happy enough to continue supplying models to these firms into the 1860s, as well as to re-work compositions like the *American Slave* for new materials or to see them thus re-worked. Publicity may have been its own reward. In private correspondence with Gosse at the end of his career, Bell enumerated his designs for Coalbrookdale and recalled the liberality and artistic intelligence of the chief designer Crookes, with whom he worked 'most harmoniously'.[216] Regarding the quality of finished products, Bell's familiarity with practitioners and processes made him

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[214] A group of letters to the Royal Society of Arts from British manufacturers responding to plans for the 1862 international exhibition gives circumstantial evidence that producing exhibition pieces for the growing number of such shows was financially irksome, with many contending that the liberal contribution they had made to the Great Exhibition was ultimately not remunerated. Such scepticism was voiced by Abraham Derby IV, who had by this time split from the Coalbrookdale Co. to establish a rival foundry, although Coalbrookdale's Charles Crookes appears to have assented to the 1862 exhibition. See Royal Society of Arts Archive, PR.MC/108/10/4, especially letter A/RSA/15/B/25, and PR.MC/108/10/2, letter from Charles Crookes, August 4, 1860.

[215] The accounts in Henry Cole's diaries record Minton's registration of Bell's *Una*, and Minton's payment of Bell for *Una* and *Dorothea*. Barnes records that Bell was regularly sending models from his London studio to Minton in Stoke. Henry Cole Diaries, accounts, January 1847.

[216] Letters from Bell to Gosse, September 3, 1883.

well aware that adaptation and alteration were necessities of this kind of reproduction, which in turn meant trusting in the independent decisions of the right people as well as being on guard against those of others. He displayed both tendencies in relation to the *Eagle Slayer*: He let the Art Union reproduce the design on condition that Wyon would execute it, based on Wyon's reputation (which was already established through his Art Union reductions of Flaxman's *St. Michael*, a not dissimilar composition to the *Eagle Slayer*). When it came to the *Eagle Slayer*'s final reproduction in a photograph-based wood engraving for Gosse's 1883 'Living Sculptors' essay (fig. 24), however, Bell persistently communicated his dissatisfaction with the angle and lighting of the photo, pestering to rectify these by re-touching the drawing which mediated between the photo and engraver, or to have other photos arranged.[217]

At various points, however, Bell could be more ambivalent about his relations with industrial reproduction. During the Felix Summerly phase and just after the Great Exhibition, Bell confided to Cole that he 'thought Artists ought not to design for Manufact [*sic*]: apart from Art manufactures'.[218] Bell also 'complained that he had made a mistake with art manufactures' (although the substance of this mistake remains unclear).[219] His reservations may have been more economic than aesthetic. Much later, he reflected, after designing for Minton, that the costs of mass-manufacture and the limited market made it almost impossible for a sculptor to profit from statuettes.[220] He proffered aesthetic reasons nonetheless, in aid of Cole's efforts to centralise the administration of design teaching. Having been temporarily installed as the 'head master of form' at the Central School of Design in 1848, Bell gave evidence to the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Schools of Design. The Committee investigated the lack of progress in design schools established by the 1835-6 Select Committee of Arts and Manufactures, and eventually resulted in Cole's Department of Science and Art, spearheaded by Cole and Richard Redgrave. Asked to suggest improvements for teaching at the Central School, Bell urged that there should be more 'practical' teaching of manufacturing processes.[221] This was, in turn, based on the opinion

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[217] Letters to Gosse October 18, 1881 and Dec 17, 1881. Judging by the resultant engraving, neither suggestion was taken up: Bell complains particularly about the way the contours are lost in shadow, as they appear in the engraving.

[218] This was at a meeting at Cole's house attended by the other 'Felix Summerly' designers Redgrave and Townsend. Two days later Bell and Cole went to see the 'Art Manufactures' exhibition together at the Society of Arts. Henry Cole Diaries, September 27, 1847.

[219] Henry Cole Diaries, April 23, 1852.

[220] Bell, "The Patronage of Sculpture," *Building News*, August 9, 1861, 666.

[221] *Report from the Select Committee on the School of Design*, 229-235.

that different media, such as metals or ceramics, ideally called for alternative kinds of design or design-knowledge. Having worked for three years for Minton, Coalbrookdale, Elkington and others, and after witnessing both successes and failures in his own designs, he said,

> The consideration of the material in which an article is to be produced stands on the very threshold of the design. It is necessary at the outset of a design to consider how it is to be brought out eventually; nor do I think it likely that a good practical result will arise from a design, unless the material is in the first instance considered. […] I do not mean to say that all the processes need be gone into to the smallest details, but a sufficient amount of the process ought to be taught in the school […] In my own little School of Design at home, where I have kept three assistants at work for the last three years, I should say the different kinds of manufactures I have undertaken to design for are rather too many, and that it would have been better if I had confined myself to metal work, and not had anything to do with pottery; or if I had had to with pottery, and not with metals. It would be better for each master to have one group, and be responsible for that; of which he must understand the processes.[222]

Bell later made similar points about integrating design, execution and finish when contributing to public debates about colouring statues, claiming as basic 'Art-reason' that any such colour 'must not be an afterthought; but if not quite the first thought, must enter into the original conception, or the result will be a matter of chance instead of calculation.'[223] Indeed Bell took the 'conservative' position on what has been described as the most urgent issue in sculptural aesthetics in mid-nineteenth-century Britain,[224] and, throughout, tried to articulate very specific conditions on the interaction of colour with ideal sculpture *as such*, in a way that distinguished the latter from the forms of liberal reproduction that carried his own designs to a wider marketplace. Bell's ambivalence about the public status of his position straddling 'fine' and 'industrial' sculpture is voiced in one of his many letters to Gosse regarding the latter's retrospective article on him: 'The only thing in which it may seem not quite to characterise me is that it does not allude to the multitude [*sic*] of my works in various ways in which perhaps I have exceeded others, although perhaps this may not be a

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[222] Ibid., 229-31.
[223] Bell, "Colouring Statues," *Art-Journal*, August 1858, 232.
[224] Hatt, "Thoughts and Things,' 38.

circumstance on which to congratulate myself!'[225] Clearly Bell was not greatly worried about his status; after all, it was this 'multitude' of works that paved the career in 'fine art' sculpture that Gosse narrated, even if Gosse failed to mention them.[226] Yet Bell's comment suggests that he was conscious of the professional significance of his consistent engagement with alternate practices, audiences and criteria of judgment.

II. THE ART OF FORM

Displaying the art of form

The multitude of sculptural objects bearing Bell's name across various courts, stands and exhibit categories in the Great Exhibition showcased an extensive and fruitful engagement between ideal sculpture and modern industry. As the necessary concomitant of this engagement, the displays also showcased a liberal relationship between sculptural design and execution, form and finish, shape and colour, and a variety of ways in which sculptural forms could be adapted for new products or purposes. But at the same time as being British sculpture's foremost emissary to industry, Bell was one of Britain's most prominent spokesmen for British sculpture as an independent art, with its own values and requirements. Indeed, what Emma Hardy says of Bell's sculptural style—that its conservatism contrasts with his technological and commercial versatility—might equally be said of his public pronouncements on sculpture and sculptural aesthetics, at least at first glance.[227] The variegated manner in which manufacturers reproduced his designs, for instance, contrasts with the anti-polychromy position he staked in the high-profile contemporary debate about combining colour with statuary, for instance. It also provides a curious backdrop to the suggestion by Weekes, that the sculpture's special role at the Great Exhibition was to tutor English art in general, which was overdeveloped in its sympathy for colour, in the art of form.[228] The following section considers Bell's practical and theoretical engagements with this debate, and the extent to which they represented a means of distinguishing ideal sculpture

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[225] Letter from Bell to Gosse, September 3, 1883.
[226] Letter from Bell to Gosse, October 8, 1881. The *Eagle Slayer* image for Gosse's essay, incidentally, was taken from Bell's plaster original.
[227] Hardy, "John Bell".
[228] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 20-1.

as a 'fine art', and as the art of form, from the world of industry and experiment at the international exhibitions.

Bell's position on what he called the 'art of form' and its relations with other arts should be seen in light of a general shake-up of museums and galleries in the 1850s, which stimulated the interests of painting, architecture and archaeology to make new demands on sculptural display. In 1853, a Select Committee lengthily reviewed the structures of the National Gallery and British Museum and even considered a new museum combining both collections. Museum officials, antiquarians, artists and connoisseurs from across Europe proffered opinions to this committee on whether sculpture should be displayed with painting, whether the display of sculpture as 'art' was compatible with that of 'antiquities', whether galleries should be arranged chronologically, geographically, and whether sculptural artefacts like the Elgin marbles should be displayed in better correlation with their original architectural settings.[229]

Material upheavals at the British Museum also entailed the re-thinking of sculptural display. Between 1847 and 1860, whilst the freshly excavated statues of Nimrud began arriving, the Egyptian Hall and west galleries around the Elgin room were extensively redecorated and Elgin rooms themselves were extended and re-arranged.[230] Artists and art-students held an important stake in these developments, owing to the institutional connections both the British Museum and National Gallery held with the Royal Academy.[231] In 1854, meanwhile, the Crystal Palace Sydenham opened, with its dazzling display of plaster casts from historic buildings and statues, including a copy of the Parthenon frieze famously coloured by Owen Jones and Raffaele Monti (fig. 49). These displays provided a dynamic and more popular counterpoint to those at the British Museum, especially if Ian Jenkins is correct to assert that the Crystal Palace's cast displays drew Royal Academy students away from the Elgin marbles during their re-arrangement in the 1850s.[232] Discussions about the combination of sculpture with architecture, historic artefacts, paintings or *objets d'art* would also have been informed by other new galleries and temporary displays opening in the period, including the

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[229] *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery*.
[230] Ian Jenkins gives a detailed of changes in the British Museum's sculpture displays during this period and the competing interests invested in them. Jenkins, *Archaeology and Aesthetes*, 75-95.
[231] On the perceived impact of display changes for the study of sculpture, see, for example, the testimonies of Edmund Oldfield and Sir Richard Westmacott in *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery*, 588-95, 635-9.
[232] Jenkins, *Archaeology and Aesthetes*, 32-3.

Flaxman Gallery (1850), the South Kensington Museum (1856) and the Manchester Art Treasures exhibition (1857).

Protagonists in mid-century discussions about national collections and their displays considered the impact on sculpture displays of contingencies noted in relation to sculptural reproduction in the section above—namely material, visual context and colour. The impact of the latter was gauged both in terms of applied or intrinsic colour and environmental, or extrinsic, colour. On the one hand, there was the furore over Owen Jones's painting of the Parthenon casts at the Crystal Palace. The colour of walls behind the genuine artefacts also became an issue. At the British Museum, deep red walls like those in the Uffizi *Tribuna* were used for the first permanent Elgin marbles gallery in 1839, and extended behind the Egyptian sculptures during the gallery extension and Sydney Smirke's redecoration program between 1847 and 1851.[233] Throughout and following this redecoration, the keepers and museum officials debated the effect of red on the appearance of tone in the sculptures: Smirke felt deep red would offset the Elgin marbles' increasingly sooty appearance by making them appear brighter by comparison, whilst Richard Westmacott Jr. later objected to the red on grounds that dark sculptures should have light backgrounds and *vice versa* to amplify the contrast between them and the surrounding architecture (which gives some sense of how sooty he felt the marbles were).[234] Influencing this debate were developments at the National Gallery and the theories of its first Director, Charles Eastlake, who attributed great importance to the power of wall colours to anchor and accentuate the tonal and chromatic harmonies of historic paintings through contrast.[235]

Closely interrelated with the variable of wall colour were those of lighting and sculptural material.[236] Contemporary debates about lighting galleries usually revolved around the respective advantages of side-lighting or top-lighting. Although neither form gained general assent in the Parliamentary and press discussions of the 1840s and 1850s, museum officials, sculptors and students seem to have widely agreed that light falling on sculptures should clarify their forms through unidirectional shadow, rather than confuse them through crossed

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[233] Ibid., 45-8.
[234] Ibid., 47, 87.
[235] Klonk, Charlotte, "Mounting Vision," 337-8.
[236] Jenkins, *Archaeology and Aesthetes*, 82 and 88-9.

lights or reflections.[237] Clarity of form was also a principal factor in weighting the merits of plaster, with its hard and monotonous opacity, against those of marble, which gave softer and more enigmatic appearances to the same physical shapes. Sir Richard Westamacott, for example, told the 1853 National Gallery Select Committee that although the *morbidezza* of the Elgin marbles was central to the enjoyment of them, plaster versions were a better school of 'form' for art students: 'In marble it is all dark and light, and difficult to see a form; it is like looking at nature; if you do not know where to look you do not see it.'[238]

Running throughout the various discussions and disagreements above was a shared formal vocabulary. The variables of colour, light and material were analysed in terms of the way they sharpened or softened visible forms, usually through the agency of contrast. The inverse relationship between contrasts perceived about a sculpture's 'outline' and those perceived within that outline also appears to have been common currency.

The international exhibitions presented ideal platforms from which to engage with the above debates about displaying the 'art of form'. For one thing, a number of the art establishment luminaries involved in those debates took major roles in the British sculpture displays at the international exhibitions.[239] Meanwhile, as Debbie Challis notes, the commercial, popular or technological bent of these exhibitions, and of institutions such as the Crystal Palace Sydenham, made them more amenable to experiments with sculptural polychromy than the more institutional and connoisseurial context of the British Museum.[240] Archaeological and aesthetic innovations were bound up in coloured displays at the former venues. Displays such

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[237] Alongside the many opinions collated in the *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery*, contemporary remarks include: Eastlake, "The National Gallery," *Builder*, June 1845, 282-4; Wilson, "Some Remarks Upon Lighting Picture and Sculpture Galleries," *Art-Journal*, August 1851, 205-7; Robinson, "Light in Picture Galleries," *Art-Journal*, December 1851, 312; Waagen, "Thoughts on the New Building to be Erected for the National Gallery of England," *Art-Journal* 1853, 103-3, 121-5.

[238] *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery*, 638.

[239] Among these were Sir Richard Westmacott, Richard Westmacott, R. A., Edmund Oldfield, and Richard Redgrave. Sir Richard Westmacott sat on the Great Exhibition's sculpture committee alongside Charles Eastlake and appears to have taken the leading role, alongside John Bell, in negotiating the British Sculpture court display with Henry Cole. *First Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1851*, Appendix 1. Westmacott also sat on the sculpture committee for the British department of the 1855 Paris Exhibition, although this time the sculpture gallery arrangement was wholly and officially given to John Bell. The sculpture committee, charged with advising the Board of Trade on the selection of exhibits, also included Bell and William Calder Marshall. *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition,* Part 1, 74-84. Richard Westmacott Jr. was one of the sculpture jurors. Richard Westmacott Jr. also sat on the 1862 Exhibition's British sculpture committee, whilst Edmund Oldfield took charge of the arrangement and decoration of the gallery along with J. G. Crace, who had also prominently worked on Pugin's Medieval Court at the Great Exhibition and at the Manchester Art Treasures exhibition. *Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibitioners of 1862*, Appendix, 1-4.

[240] Challis, "Modern to Ancient," 183-7.

as Jones's painted Parthenon frieze and his temple housing Gibson's tinted *Venus* in the middle of the 1862 International Exhibition (fig. 50) may, in turn, be said to have collapsed certain boundaries between sculpture, painting, architecture and the decorative arts. Yet during the same period, as noticed in this thesis's introduction, there also occurred something of a physical and symbolic separation of sculpture as a 'fine art' from the strictly industrial and 'modern' displays at the international exhibitions, instanced most forcefully at the 1855 Paris Exposition Universelle, when fine artists and industrial manufacturers exhibited in two separate 'palaces' (figs. 51, 52). Moreover, just as the reproductive nature of the plaster displays at Sydenham enabled experimentation, the temporary nature of international exhibitions provided opportunities to think about optimal display conditions for paintings and sculptures, and perhaps more scope for these objects to dictate architectural form rather than adapt to it.

Bell was actively engaged with the display of sculpture at international exhibitions. He may not have been on the Great Exhibition's official sculpture committee, but he was unofficially charged with arranging the British sculpture court and advising on sculptural display.[241] He made it a condition of his involvement that he could alter the 'violent red' used behind statues throughout the Exhibition as part of Jones's overall decoration scheme using primary colours.[242] In the end it seems that Bell did not get his wish, perhaps partly owing to the opposition of Sir Richard Westmacott.[243] Bell got another chance to put his ideas into practice, however, when his links with Cole, Redgrave and the Board of Trade gave him full control over British 'fine art' sculpture displays at the 1855 Paris international exhibition.

Though Bell had full management of British sculpture displays in Paris, he again did not have a *tabula rasa* and was highly constricted by the physical galleries.[244] The French Exhibition Commissioners gave Bell, Redgrave and Cole the choice of either exhibiting British sculpture with that of France and other nations in the great sculpture hall of the Palais des Beaux Arts (fig. 51), or in a room adjacent to Britain's oil paintings gallery in a collective display of

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[241] Bell's input in 1851 is recalled in *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition*, 75; Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 425.

[242] Ibid.

[243] Cole mentions before the Great Exhibition that Bell 'wanted us to adopt his Crotchets about Sculpture Gallery arrangements' whilst Sir Richard Westmacott (who had approved red backgrounds at the British Museum the previous year) was 'wanting to be a dictator abt [*sic*] sculpture'. Henry Cole Diaries, March 5, 1851, April 10, 1851.

[244] These details are taken from the extensive appendix Bell contributed to *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition*, Part 1, 73-88.

Britain's fine arts. They chose the latter option as most sympathetic to British sculpture, despite restrictions of space and light. The paintings gallery and sculpture gallery were both long, thin halls running parallel to each other on the north side of the Palais, the sculpture gallery itself north of the paintings gallery.[245] The sculpture gallery was less than a quarter of the length of the paintings gallery, and also slightly thinner and lower. The sculpture gallery had entrances at either end to the long paintings gallery on its south side, which in turn formed two of the paintings gallery's twelve doorways. The other ten doorways were three pair of facing entrances, which made three crossroads down the middle of the paintings gallery, and four further doorways down only one side of the gallery. The paintings gallery was top-lit by a central skylight above the crossroads, whilst the sculpture gallery was side-lit by windows on its north side. The sculpture gallery's problems of lighting and space were reciprocal: The unidirectional side-lighting did not simply limit light, but placed half the gallery in a deeper shadow than the other and meant that sculptures could only be seen well on the other side, which would, in turn, have meant an intolerably crowded display in the small gallery unless some could go next door.

Bell tried to arrange statues in general schemes accommodated to the architecture, but which at the same time had in-built variations accommodating the particular requirements of individual statues. After bargaining hard with the French authorities, he compensated for the sculpture gallery's light and space by re-painting its walls a lighter colour and shifting a number of sculptures into the paintings gallery. He placed the sculpture gallery's remaining statues facing the light in two lines or bays, which were organised into waves 'to avoid the abrupt and mutually interfering effect of statues, when numerous and near together, coming at once upon the eye in a straight line.'[246] Bell placed works on differently sized pedestals and rotated them in the light depending upon their individual character. Meanwhile, the double-wave offered forward positions to sculptures favoured by a higher angle of light (which, Bell noted, tended to be upright figures) and backward positions to those favoured by a more horizontal light (recumbent figures) or which had comparatively 'frontal' compositions. In the more well-lit and spacious paintings gallery, by contrast, the sculptures were placed down the middle and at six positions between the paintings along the walls,

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[245] I have not located maps of these two galleries, but their position can be established by the fact that the sculpture gallery was side-lit on the north side with these windows facing the two doorways into the paintings gallery. The lower height of the sculpture gallery also means it could only have been side-lit from the north if it was the northerly gallery. *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition*; Part 1, 81, 87.
[246] Ibid., 87.

where they would, in both cases, receive illumination from the central skylight. The three ranks of sculptures along the centre and walls also furnished alternate angles of light for different sculptures. The statues down the centre were all carefully placed opposite the many side entrances, to command different vistas leading to the gallery. At two of the three crossways, Bell arranged groups of four sculptures, back to back, facing the four approaches. (Gibson's *Hunter*, one of the stars of the Great Exhibition, commanded the third crossroad alone). In certain cases, the statues selected for these positions announced themselves by theme, as when Bell placed Patrick Macdowell's *Concordia*, symbolising the alliance of France and England, facing the main entrance from the French galleries. Otherwise, Bell said, they were those 'which lost least by having their backs hidden' and whose forms were not confused by close proximity. The remaining sculptures at the intercolumniations of the picture gallery walls were chosen for being 'in some degree architectural, as Mr. Foley's "Hampden and Selden," which thus form a pair, one on either side of a doorway'.

Bell also intervened in the gallery colour scheme, outlining a delicate display aesthetic developed in response to on-going discussions about coloured galleries noted above. Redressing the 'sombre green' that he felt darkened the sculpture gallery, he re-painted the walls a light warm grey, which he made much lighter on the north side to compensate for the darkening effect of the side-lighting there and to re-instate an overall tone in the room.[247] The green, Bell wrote, not only darkened walls but also threw 'livid reflections on the statues, where cheering ones are more desirable'.[248] In addition, Bell took the opportunity to assert his grey as an alternative to the deep red that remained a staple of marble displays and was currently being extended through the galleries at the British Museum. His reasoning was that wall colours should do everything possible to endow the sense of living roundness and *morbidezza* to statues. A strong, dark, 'positive' pigment like the oft-used red, Bell said, 'asserts itself too much and tumbles forward' towards the eye by acquiring too powerful a contrast with the statue's colour, amplifying the statue's outer border and silhouette at the expense of its inner roundness.[249] What was needed instead was a background that corresponded with statues' mid-tones, amplifying both their shadows and highlights and fully expanding their palette of relief. The sense of softness required a background that retreated

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[247] Ibid..
[248] Ibid..
[249] Ibid..

from the statue as its relief came forward. For Bell, wall colour could strongly affect the sense of a statue's materiality:

> Too violent a contrast of shade and colour in the background of sculpture makes the statues look flat and stony, and gives to a marble figure an opaque appearance like plaster, whereas it is to be sought rather so to adjust the tints to assimilate the effect of plaster to the soft and fleshy character of marble by rounding and melting the edges into the background.[250]

Bell further explained the 'softening' function of his walls by analogy with atmospheric backgrounds and *sfumato* in paintings, with neutral, retreating and 'mixed' tints furnishing a sympathetic tonal environment from which statues and their contours could emerge, and repeat 'the effect of flesh in nature'.[251] Bell's analogy of sculpture displays with paintings has a particularly interesting relation to Eastlake's contemporary prescription for painting displays at the National Gallery. Eastlake was also arguing that a wall's colour should anchor the harmonies of a picture by offering sensitive mid-tones 'brighter than its darks and darker than its lights', which accentuated its breadth of tone and amplified its bright colours.[252] Yet Eastlake was predominantly advocating red for just this job, partly as a counterweight to gilded frames and browned varnishes. In these terms, for a statue to repeat the effect of a picture is not the same as sharing space with pictures; the arts may have the same 'ideal' but autonomous means.

Bell's further prescriptions for decorating sculpture galleries as 'picturesque' ensembles articulated ideals for displaying sculpture that were strikingly specific. In an 1861 essay on sculpture and colour given to the Society of Arts, he expanded on his efforts in Paris and on those refinements he had not been able to execute there. To complete 'the composition of colour' in a key begun by creamy white statues in front of warm grey backgrounds, he said, place 'cotton velvet of a deep bronze green' on the pedestals (this he did in Paris), lay a floor of deep red or black 'of a mosaic character, as seen in encaustic tiles' (in Paris he painted the floor after unsuccessfully applying to stain it), and render the ceiling in 'some light delicate retreating atmospheric colour, with a little yellow introduced, which were best done by light

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[250] Ibid., 86-7.
[251] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 425.
[252] Eastlake quoted in Klonk, "Mounting Vision," 337-8.

gilding' (this he did not do).[253] In Paris, meanwhile, he had matched the labels on the pedestals with the wall colour. However, because he could not change the green walls of the paintings gallery, he employed a different decorative key: red pedestals and green labels with gold lettering. In turn, he later advised that achieving the same effects with bronze statues as with marble would require a different colour key, and, by implication, a separate gallery, with a strong green colour behind statues and black pedestals to offset the native darkness of the material. For statues to be seen to their full advantage as *forms*, it seems, they needed some devoted and strictly regimented service from colour and architecture.

Bell did suggest one decorative tool allowing for some flexibility, accommodating the particular needs or exchange of sculptures within a general architectural scheme, like his waved pedestals. This was a 'cherished plan' left undone in 1855 for arranging drapery behind statues.[254] Grey woollen drapes would hang behind a row of statues, loosely spread out behind each statue but gathered in vertical bunches between them, taking the effect of columns standing proud of statuary niches. These provided a more visually soft, organic background into which sculptural contours 'melted' more easily, than flat walls or niches. But malleability was the key advantage:

> The result of this is pleasantly regular and yet gracefully varied, and is capable of the most easy adaptation to the various breadths and scales of statues or groups placed before it, and also to any changes of their places which may occur in the course of arrangement. Taking this as an example of the principle of arranging drapery as a back-ground to statues, it may be recognised as capable of practice in so many ways, in simulation of forms of architecture, as to suit it to the exhibition of any kinds or classes of sculpture.[255]

Repeating his painting analogy, Bell called this 'a semi-pictorial treatment of sculpture, inasmuch as thereby a varying artificial atmospheric background is formed and composed behind each statue as a simulation of nature's sky and clouds behind a portrait or figure in a picture, whereby the principal object is enhanced.'[256] It was especially suited to performing

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[253] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 425.
[254] *Reports on the Paris Universal Exhibition*; Part 1, 87; Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 425.
[255] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 425-6.
[256] Ibid., 426.

this task in exhibition spaces such as international exhibitions, meanwhile, where 'the placing of statues is comparatively unrehearsed' and the works themselves not expressly composed for a particular architectural situation.

Defending the art of form

Following the 1855 exhibition and prior to the 1862 London exhibition, Bell further elaborated on his preferred rules of engagement between sculpture, colour and architecture by intervening in the on-going polychromy debate. Bell submitted lengthy essays to the *Art-Journal* during 1858 and the Society of Arts in 1861, rallying to the stand Richard Westmacott Jr. was taking against painted sculpture in close contest with the interior designer John Gregory Crace and the architect and R.I.B.A. founder Thomas Leverton Donaldson.[257] The alliance made some sense with respect to Bell's display preferences: Westmacott Jr. was a longstanding opponent of red walls at the British Museum, whilst Crace and Donaldson both argued for red walls in St. Stephens Hall where Bell's *Falkland* stood, the latter having already decorated the gallery of Flaxman's plasters with red walls and gilded frames.[258] Nonetheless, the alliance between Bell and Westmacott was probably founded less on deeply shared preferences on display aesthetics than on the more contingent impulse to assert and consolidate the 'professional' authority of sculptors in such disputes.

An underlying theme observable in the allied anti-polychromy essays of Westmacott and Bell is that of safeguarding the professional and specialist 'art of form' from the corruptive influence of non-sculptors and market pressures, again intriguing in the context of Bell's can-do relationship to industrial firms. Westmacott forwarded his 1859 lecture as the duty of the professional to induct 'the non-professional, and especially the promoters and supporters of art' into its true and fixed principles.[259] The entire debate hinged around a central dilemma: Archaeology was increasingly demonstrating that the Greeks painted sculpture, yet whilst academic sculpture theory was committed to the idea that the Greeks were perfect sculptors,

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[257] Bell, "Colouring Statues"; Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together". Bell's two essays respectively followed two lectures Richard Westmacott Jr. gave to the Archaeological Institute of Great Britain in 1855 and the Society of Arts in 1859: "*Art-Journal*. "On Colouring Statues," March 1855, 81; Westmacott Jr, "On Polychromy in Sculpture".

[258] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 429.

[259] Westmacott Jr, "On Polychromy in Sculpture," 225.

it was also consistently hostile to polychromy.[260] Westmacott and Bell both answered this problem by trying to have their cake and eat it. On one hand, they held that evidence of past tastes could not bind the present apprehension of sculpture's laws (antiquarian facts were not 'Art-reasons', as Westmacott put it).[261] Yet they also argued this evidence was inadmissible anyway: 'the best artists' of antiquity would not *as artists* have chosen polychromy; polychromy was imposed upon them by the Pagan priesthood, foreign custom, the votive use of military spoils and the decorative demands of architects.[262] Both sculptors argued that the increasing division, specialisation and autonomy of the arts of sculpture, painting and architecture, both from extrinsic compulsions and from one another's distinct requirements, was a mark of progress in civilisation (though nonetheless in the spirit of Greek *artists* as such, if one imaginatively stripped away their unfortunate material circumstances). By contrast, the mixing of arts prompted, for Bell and Westmacott, the spectre of barbarism, idolatry and a regression to the childhood of man.[263]

As well as its obvious anti-Catholic resonances, the equation of polychrome sculpture with idolatry and regression and a false or childish freedom was also a warning about the potential of markets and commercial display to corrode rather than encourage good sculpture. Bell associated chryselephantine statues both with the spurious technical refinements of modern children's dolls that opened and shut their eyes, and with the patent crudity of cheap pottery statuettes peddled to cottagers, of which 'the form is so incomplete that the intention could hardly be recognised but for the aid of colour'.[264] Chryselephantine sculpture was a 'sham, upholstery-manufacture mode' of sculpting'.[265] This followed Westmacott's 1859 lecture, which repeatedly contrasted the world of 'waxwork exhibitions' and 'the toy-shop' with that of the true sculptor's studio. Westmacott warned that the good work made by professional sculptors might be visually undercut by those resorting to polychrome ornament 'in order to attract purchasers, by exhibiting to them either what is merely pretty or showy, or something

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[260] A letter sent by John Ruskin to the Society of Arts on April 24, 1861 in response to Bell's lecture encapsulates this dilemma, noting that whilst he had always felt colour on statues to be wrong, he had also always felt that whatever Greek artists did must have been right. Royal Society of Arts Archive, PR/GE/119/39/48.
[261] Westmacott Jr.,"On Polychromy in Sculpture," 225.
[262] Ibid., 229.
[263] "On Colouring Statues," *Art-Journal*, March 1855, 81; Westmacott Jr, "On Polychromy in Sculpture," 225-35; Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 1861, 424.
[264] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 1861, 424.
[265] Ibid.

that is calculated to excite or gratify certain feelings of mere sense', and racing to the bottom to compete in exhibitions by 'practising what might be termed trick or claptrap, as a means of inviting attention to [their] merits.'[266] The defence of colour's attractiveness was therefore 'a mere chapman's excuse; and though there may be nothing absolutely morally wrong in this, it surely places him who adopts it in a somewhat different position from the class of artists to whom we should look for maintenance of a high character for their profession.'[267] Without naming names, Bell mentioned recent French experiments in natural polychromy, and noted that whilst one or two coloured busts might not appear harmful at first, the susceptibility of art to fashion made them a serious threat: 'Fashion is often unreasonable, and if a fashion were to set in for idols instead of statues, I believe it would do for the time a great deal of mischief.'[268]

If Bell did not name the antagonists of his warnings against 'fashion' and French experiments, there were some pretty obvious targets about. Some had presented themselves in the Paris Exhibition whilst Bell was refining ways to juxtapose colour and form without blending them in his fine art court. There was Pierre-Charles Simart's colossal reconstruction of the *Athena Parthenos*, the first work of its size made in the chryselephantine or 'sham, upholstery-manufacture mode' of sculpting in the modern period, positioned in the fine arts department when many thought it should be with 'industrial products' (fig. 53).[269] Then there was Charles Cordier, whose ethnographic busts composed of different coloured marbles were prominently displayed at international exhibitions from 1855 onwards.[270] Bell's critique might seem particularly ironic here, given the formal parallels between works like Elkington's *Daughter of Eve* for 1855 and Cordier's *African Venus*, as cast slightly earlier by Eck and Durand with gold earrings (fig. 54). Yet the crux of Bell's position seems to be not so much the wealth of polychromatic statues about, including those released after Bell's designs by manufacturers he collaborated with; but rather about his scope for disavowing or discounting such products (which after all were not *his* exhibits) in a discussion of polychromatic sculpture *as fine art*. To put it another way, the anxieties Bell rehearsed regarding polychromy may have been less to do with a profusion of coloured statues or statuettes *per se* than the crossing of such practices from the decorative to fine arts, into the

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[266] Westmacott Jr, "On Polychromy in Sculpture," 227.
[267] Ibid.
[268] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 424-5.
[269] Andreas Blühm, "In living colour," 22; Margerie *et al*, *Facing the Other*, 58-63.
[270] Margerie *et al*, *Facing the Other*, 229-236.

'ideal' displays of sculptors. [271] Coloured figurative sculpture in other branches of 'manufacture' was after all well established and often highly valued.[272]

When Bell used these discussions to delineate which materials or devices a sculptor should or should not be able to deploy, he was not just expressing a set of personal aesthetic prejudices but suggesting bulwarks against unfair or counter-productive visual competition. Rhetorically at least, his was not an opposition either to naturalism or sensuous materiality *per se*, but a point about the manner and means of achieving such things. Whilst using the conventional anti-polychromy trope about dolls and waxworks, Bell actually cited the fleshy appearance and intrinsic beauty of wax or wax-like marbles as desirable media of sculptural endeavour, to be protected against the incursion of colour. (Bell seems to have been perennially attracted to wax and waxen surfaces, and not only modelled in wax but was also said to have cast and exhibited statuary in it).[273] He detailed his adoration for Parian marble in particular, as illustrated by a fragment of a Psyche's hand in the British Museum. As well as a poetic crystalline sparkle, there was 'an exquisite creamy glowworm-like look about this marble, that is most charming. It has just the degree of transparency of young flesh itself, and possesses, as it were, a native semi-lucency of its own, like that of the milky-way, or of a summer sea.'[274] Attributing such importance to such materials gave Bell the foundation of a pre-emptive defence of British sculptors in the field of competitive exhibition: During a lecture by Wyatt on the 1861 Florence Exhibition, and in anticipation that works of dazzling Italian carving there like Magni's *Reading Girl* were due to come to the 1862 London international exhibition, Bell hastened to excuse the relative lack of progress in British sculpture on grounds that Britain had not the reserves of beautiful marble which Greece and Italy had, and 'art grew where the materials to work upon existed.'[275]

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[271] See Blühm, "In living colour," 22-26.

[272] On mid-nineteenth-century resale markets for coloured ceramic statuary, see Reitlinger, *The Economics of Taste*, vol. 2, 163-73

[273] Bell, "Colouring Statues," *Art-Journal*, August 1858, 231; Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 422. Gosse claims that in one of the international exhibitions Bell exhibited a half-sized *Eve* cast in white wax in Gosse, "Living English Sculptors" 175. Bell modelled in wax for his Parian designs: V&A collections number 205-1854.

[274] ; Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 422.

[275] Wyatt, "On the Present Aspect of the Fine and Decorative Arts in Italy, with especial reference to the Recent Exhibition in Florence," 149-50. One respondent replied that British sculptors should not hide behind this lack of native materials, in a way that may have been particularly cutting for Bell: 'The remarks of Mr. Bell would equally apply to the material of iron, which was produced to a greater extent in this country that in any other in the world, and yet we were in no way celebrated for great works in that metal.' Ibid.

In a clever, if not entirely subtle, manoeuvre, Bell explained how his opposition to colouring statues was not just about safeguarding the art of form from those of colour, but in fact about securing better, less mutually imperilling or 'regressive', more lasting collaborations between the arts. Indeed, he welcomed any possibility that the eye-catching (though thought-less) delight of colour might be made to serve sculptures as a melody serves music, that is, as a sensuous 'letter of introduction' from a statue to passers-by.[276] Yet such harmony, he contended, was almost impossible to achieve by *intrinsic* relations between pigment and marble. Given the different polychromatic finishes with which Minton marketed Bell's designs for 'Parian' porcelain, his reasoning for this impossibility is fairly ironic, and perhaps signals some degree of strategic disavowal of his output via Minton. To start, he held that if colouring was permissible it should not be opaque *painting* but at most a translucent tinting that worked with, and accentuated, the native qualities of a material like Parian marble and their analogies with human flesh. In addition to this, however, the union of shape and colour scheme should be complete, organic and enduring, not one that was either retrospective or dissolvable in a way that left the marble shape incomplete in itself. The sculptor and painter would have to develop the composition together, jointly arranging draperies and tints in a 'pleasing harmony of contrast' around the 'fixed point' of the fictive flesh. Expanding on this, he said:

> [I]t will be a haphazard thing to put off the consideration of the colouring until the forming of the statue is complete, inasmuch as by that process as interarrangement of flesh and draperies might be evolved which, though very satisfactory when all is in one tint, would not be so when it became to be coloured, nor afford opportunities for completing the whole work as a composition of colour. […] Now, if at the onset of looking at a work of Art of this kind we are impressed by the colour, so at the outset of composing it, it will not do to leave this out of the question. Thus it appears that, supposing a statue to be coloured, it would be quite opposed to Art-reason to put off the consideration of the colouring till the statue, as far as form goes, is complete. The colouring in this case must not be an afterthought; but if not quite the first thought, must enter into the original conception, or the result will be a matter of chance instead of calculation. […][277]

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[276] Bell, "Colouring Statues," *Art-Journal*, August 1858, 232.
[277] Ibid.

Yet any such seamless union between marble and pigment, Bell argued, was bound to break in the fullness of time. Having dismissed the form of iron-infused wash, associated with Canova, called '*acqua di rota*' as giving only a haphazard, 'goose-flesh' appearance, Bell cited his own experiments in encaustic pigmentation which involved immersing marble in stearine, a wax-like substance which approximated the captivating appearance of Parian marble and which Italian craftsmen used to make 'fictile ivory' ornaments by coating plaster casts.[278] The problem was this treatment would not last on marble. In turn, as subsequent artists re-applied the pigments they would inevitably unravel the harmony of shapes and colours orchestrated by the first sculptor and painter. If 'colour and form are fitted to go together, they should do so till the end of the chapter', but if the pigment did not endure with the marble, then polychromy would once again allow the vagaries of temporal fashion and accident to upset the sculptor's art.

The principal work implicated by these arguments was Gibson's *Tinted Venus*, which had its public debut at the 1862 International Exhibition a year after Bell's lecture, but was already much talked about and anticipated.[279] Gibson had in fact begun with his monochrome *Venus Verticordia* and applied tints long after he first executed this, making 'the flesh like warm ivory' and using blue and gold to pick out eyes and accessories. In the framework of Bell's essays, Gibson's statue joined Simart's *Athena Parthenos*, as a misguided and pernicious conception of Greek art, based on its historical and social contingencies rather than its spirit, which urged for the progressive autonomy and self-determination of sculpture as an art.

If intrinsic and mutually agreeable unions between media were impossible, Bell already had a solution. Recalling his own scheme of extrinsic, environmental polychromy at the Paris exhibition, and explaining those refinements he had not been able to implement there, he deftly positioned this as the solution to the polychromy debate between Westmacott, Donaldson and Crace at the Society of Arts, just as the Society of Arts was arranging the next international exhibition in London. This provided, he explained, an analogy of pictorial harmony and wholeness, without totally blending colour, form and material. This allowed the arts to complement each other without surrendering their independence:

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[278] Ibid.

[279] Bell, "Coloring on Statues, Color Round Statues, and Paintings and Sculpture Arranged Together," 430.

I submit that this harmony is to be effected far better by another means, namely, by arranging such colours around the statue as require the natural, pure, creamy, semi-transparent, local tint of the marble to complete the composition of colour. And the same, *mutatis mutandis*, may be said of statues in bronze, which is indeed a quality of colour frequent in the finest paintings, as in those of Titian and Giorgione, and in the landscapes of Gaspar Poussin, and our own Wilson, Crome, and Turner. It is thus I conceive that the picture should be made up, with the statue as the eye of the composition, and that the surface of the statue itself should not be deteriorated by any colour treatment, which, if once commenced, you know not where to stop, and which, if treated up to the full colour of flesh, only make the statue look like a wax image.[280]

Even though the British fine art galleries of Bell and Redgrave at the 1855 Paris international exhibition had been well received, Bell was given no official control over the displays in 1862, perhaps because of the high volume of commissions he had in hand.[281] Nonetheless, the work in Paris had exerted some influence. The Paris displays and Bell's idea of 'picturesque' treatment were used in the *Art-Journal* in 1856 to second a plea from the Institute of British Sculptors, a fledgling professional society founded in the wake of the Great Exhibition, for sculptures at the Royal Academy exhibition to be released from their usual downstairs dungeon and into the top-lit paintings galleries.[282] In 1858, meanwhile, the South Kensington Museum opened its gallery of British sculpture with grey backgrounds behind white statuary. The South Kensington Museum joined the previous international exhibitions in overshadowing display decisions at the 1862 Exhibition, both as an institutional legacy of the Great Exhibition and through its physical proximity to the new Exhibition building on Cromwell Road.

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[280] Ibid.," 425.
[281] Bell's productions during this period included the Wellington monument, the Crimea Guards Memorial, the Woolwich Artillery Memorial, the *America* for the Albert Memorial and designs for three obelisks. Nonetheless, circumstantial evidence of attempts at indirect influence: Prior to the exhibition, Cole recorded, 'Walked home with J Bell who thanked me for getting space for Coalbrookdale.' Henry Cole Diary, December 18, 1861. Bell also speculatively wrote to the Exhibition organisers at an early stage, recommending (as did many others) ways to make it a novelty that would live up to the Great Exibition. He suggested the theme of 'education', to be supported by a series of lectures, before offering to 'submit a few suggestions' himself. Royal Society of Arts Archive, PR.MC/108/10/5.
[282] "Memorial from the Institute of British Sculptors to the Royal Academy," *Art-Journal*, February 1856, 50-1.

From an early stage it was decided to put the 'fine art' statuary in a long gallery with paintings, as in Paris (fig. 55).[283] Redgrave arranged the paintings, whilst Edmund Oldfield (who had been instrumental in developments at South Kensington and the British Museum) arranged the sculpture, and Crace did the interior decoration for the entire exhibition.[284] As in the 1855 paintings gallery, most of the sculptures in the fine art galleries were away from the walls in three ranks below the large central skylight. Various statues, many of them completed for the on-going commission at Mansion House,[285] stood in curtain-backed niches opposite each other in the walls of the galleries, as well as in the some of the corners and at the end of the gallery vista. As in 1855, statues in these positions were paired up or arranged at these points according to formal composition (as with William Theed's *Bard* and Weekes's *Sardanapalus*, which mirrored each other in pose (see fig. 55)). Unlike 1855, however, red maroon backdrops were prescribed by Crace for all the sculptures in the niches, as well as in the vestibule of British sculpture between the long fine art galleries.[286]

The reaction to Crace's display demonstrates how far, since Jones's red drapes at the Great Exhibition, the formal discourse of sculptural display that Bell deployed had become a common currency. In the middle of August, around eighty-five artists exhibiting in the British section addressed an open letter to the commissioners protesting against the drapes.[287] The sculptors included the exhibition's 'official' British sculptor Foley (though not his fellow committee member, Westmacott Jr.), several highly established sculptors such as Baily and William Calder Marshall, as well as younger artists. Bell was not among them, but their first objection echoed his points on colour:

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[283] A detailed account of the exhibition building, stressing the extent to which it offers more space than those of 1851 and 1855, is given in "Captain Phillpott's Lecture on the Construction of the Exhibition Building," *Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of 1862*, Appendix 5., 44-45.

[284] *Report of the Commissioners for the Exhibition of* 1862, Appendix 1, 1-12.

[285] For more information about this commission, see Bryant, *Magnificent Marble Statues*.

[286] The rest of the gallery wall was a combination of maroon and sage green. The commissioner's report features no detailed account of Oldfield's arrangements for sculpture, such as Bell submitted after the 1855 exhibition, but the general arrangements for sculpture are well evidenced by photographs of the London Stereoscopic Company and prints in the illustrated press. Crace, "On the Decoration of the International Exhibition Building," 340 and 343-4. Crace's colour scheme was bold, swiftly drafted and controversial, and along with Fowke's exhibition building inevitably suffered many hostile comparisons with Owen Jones's decoration of the first Crystal Palace. Crace and his supporters defended it, however, as a proper subordination of architectural decoration to the display of exhibits, whereas Jones's dazzling interior had been the opposite. The marble and bronze sculptures in the main nave were not backed by the uniform line of red drapes used by Owen Jones in 1851, but generally stood at the sides of the avenues in front of iron columns. These columns alternated between bronze green and maroon.

[287] The *Times* listed signatures from thirty British sculptors, out of just over 70 sculptors in the official catalogue. "The International Exhibition," *Times*, August 23, 1862; "The Artists in the International Exhibition." *The Standard*, August 27, 1862.

1. That drapery so dark in tone is unsuitable as a background to works in white marble or plaster, by apparently increasing their whiteness and diminishing by contrast the force and depth of their half tones and shadows, rendering these insufficient to express the intended degree of projection and relief essential to the clear interpretation of the sculptor's design.[288]

According to the letter, artists had raised the matter on first seeing the display, but were assured that it would be changed. Oldfield, who was superintendent, swiftly confirmed that Foley, Westmacott and Redgrave had agreed on an alternative display of his own, precisely in accordance with the principles of balanced tone and retreating tint that the sculptors now called for.[289] Oldfield washed his hands of the red drapes and shifted responsibility onto Crace, who had left his own favoured colour scheme in place though having agreed to alter it.[290]

The open letter objecting to the 1862 display is striking for the sheer impact its signatories felt they could attribute to coloured backgrounds, in the context of international rivalry. It held that red 'diminished or destroyed' the special characteristics of works rather than preserving or heightening them, proclaiming it 'a public duty' of professional artists to object, and saying, 'we feel that we should be open to reflections of injustice, incompetency, or indifference, especially from our Continental brethren, did we not take this step in requesting an alteration of what we all here unitedly condemn.'[291] Similar terms appeared in the press, with the *Illustrated London News* lamenting the sight of 'some of the finest works of modern time cut up by mixed backgrounds, cloth red enough to infuriate an ordinarily good-tempered bull' behind 'white marble ghosts', and the generally haphazard position of sculpture amongst miscellaneous works of decorative art.[292] Ironically however, where John Bell had raised the coloured backgrounds issue to counter contemporary experiments in colouring statues, the *ILN* reporter used the same terms to call for a more full-blooded

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[288] "The International Exhibition," *Times*, August 23, 1862.
[289] Oldfield, "Sculpture at the International Exhibition. To the Editor of the Times".
[290] Ibid.
[291] Ibid.
[292] "Sculpture in the International Exhibition," *Illustrated London News*, 565.

application of colour to statuary, deeming those who resisted this, British sculptors particularly, retrograde.

III. THE LINES CONNECTING THE ARTS

In his theoretical and practical interventions in the on-going polychromy debate, Bell articulated a sensitivity to the visual impact that factors such as material, colour, reproduction and display had upon sculptural form, alongside a determination to defend and highlight the 'art of form' amidst these factors. Both forms of engagement were prompted by the opportunities for experimental display offered within the temporary international exhibitions. The final section looks further at Bell's theoretical attempts to reconcile sculpture's demands for sovereignty and status with the opportunities presented by engagement with other arts. Whilst he was engaged in the polychromy debate from the time of the 1855 Paris exposition to the 1862 London exhibition, Bell delivered many lectures on relations between sculpture and arts beyond it to the Department of Science and Art, the Society of Arts and the Royal Institute of British Architects. These lectures were addressed to an influential and learned audience and were further circulated in the press. Though much of what Bell had to say concerned relations between sculpture and architecture in particular, they implicated, in revealing ways, the reproductive crossover of Bell's collaborations with the industrial arts.

For example, in a lecture given in 1858 to the Department of Science and Art, Bell theorised symbioses and connections between sculpture as an abstract, enduring, almost rarefied pursuit, and the fast-developing world of science and technology that surrounded it. The lecture was occasioned by the opening of the new gallery of British sculpture at the South Kensington Museum. Like the fine art courts at the previous international exhibitions of 1851 and 1855, the South Kensington gallery comprised a display of marble and plaster statues, nestling amongst a wider display of ornamental manufacture. As in 1851 and 1855, Coalbrookdale's iron *Eagle Slayer* stood just beyond the gallery, this time in its semi-permanent station at the front of the Museum. Bell's lecture was an extended attempt to justify the display of sculpture as a benefit to industrial design and manufacture generally. In turn, as Claire Jones has suggested, the lecture may be seen as the accessory of wider attempts by bodies like the new Institute of British Sculptors to solicit government assistance

for sculpture as a profession.[293] The international exhibitions of 1851 to 1855 were pivotal to this two-way address: International exchanges gave British sculptors a sense of what state support for sculpture was like in other nations, particularly France, whilst the events themselves provided the rhetoric with which sculptors could sell their art to the government as crucial to the cause of British manufacture generally.[294]

Bell sold sculpture to the field of science and industry precisely by characterising it as an 'art of form' in the most essentialist or 'ideal' terms. The 'abstraction' of the sculptor's art from properties such as colour belonging to other arts (which Bell, like various others, articulated as an abstraction from effects such as blushing cheeks and glinting eyes) kept it aloof of uneducated observers and transient sympathies, though by the same token it gave it an historical endurance beyond other arts, even architecture. Yet this abstraction from certain modes of transient experience also entailed a less abstract, more immediate relation to underlying reality. Bell emphasised that sculpture's further distinction from pictorial art was that it dealt directly with true, solid form rather than merely representing it, making it more fundamental to art and design education even than drawing. The sculptor thus conversed directly with constructive laws of nature itself: '[T]he quality of the art of representation of form by form, which we call Sculpture, is regulated by lines, which stretch deep into the very heart of Nature, and as surface treatment throughout the departments of human industry.'[295] The apprehension of such lines, Bell argued, linked the grace of ideal sculptures with the beauty of machines evolved by the pursuit of 'strict utility alone', and also with those articles of domestic utility adorned by or which exhibited 'art beauty' of their own, such as stoves and grates.[296] Bell thus urged sculptors not to be sniffy about designing for manufacturers, whilst warning that because sculpture sat at the apex of the formative arts, the quality of a nation's manufactures would rise and fall with that of its sculpture. This idea recollected the pivotal position of sculpture as fine art at the apex of the Great Exhibition taxonomy. After all, for those who wished to see it as more than a decoration of the Crystal Palace, sculpture represented fine art's envoy to industry, and a sort of 'pure' expression of design principles applicable to manufacture in general. Through his idea of abstraction and Nature's lines, Bell's narrative threaded together the ethos of industrial display at the Great Exhibition with a

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[293] See Claire Jones, chapter on the Institute of British Sculptors for "Sculptors and Modern Life, 1837-1901." My thanks to Dr. Claire Jones for letting me read a copy of her manuscript.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Bell, "On British Sculpture, in Connection with the Department of Science and Art," 9.
[296] Ibid., 8-9.

call for tranquil and uncluttered sculpture galleries giving a wide berth of space to individual artworks, and thus tacitly critiquing the Royal Academy sculpture room. The latter conditions, he insisted, were crucial to any understanding of a work's lines and the exercise of geometric perception generally.[297] Naturally, Bell's rhetorical and abstract triangulation of ideal sculpture and industry had the advantage of recalling the kind of concrete triangulations that characterised his own career. Talk of sculptural work in stoves and grates referenced his liaisons with Coalbrookdale and endorsed those of Alfred Stevens, who had been designing fireplace wares for Coalbrookdale and Hoole since the Great Exhibition. Meanwhile, the emphasis on ideal sculpture as the demonstration of purposive geometry, in kinship with the utilitarian evolution of machinery, could not help but reference the nearby iron *Eagle Slayer*, with its hyper-legible lines of motion and the general strengths of composition detailed in section 1.i above.

Bell's consistent fixation on geometry and his sense of it as the keystone bridging the different arts and sciences, were both natural thinking habits for an insider of Cole and Redgrave's design reform project in its early days. The early Department of Science and Art placed geometric knowledge and draughtsmanship at the root of all art education, a message promoted by numerous publications during the 1850s, such as David Ramsay Hay's *The geometric beauty of the human figure defined, to which is prefixed a system of aesthetic proportion applicable to architecture and the other formative arts* (1851) or *The science of beauty, as developed in nature and applied in art* (1856).[298] Bell's own two-volume manual of rudimentary geometric drawing entitled *Free-hand outline*, for example, was written to accompany Redgrave's 1852 National Course of Art Instruction, the declared purpose of which was to mitigate the gap between the designers and makers that had arisen through industrialisation.[299] Indeed, Bell's points about the fundamentality of 'representation of form by form' in his 1858 lecture to the D.S.A. echoed the progressions of simple to complex translation of shapes in Redgrave's design system.[300]

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[297] Ibid., 11-12.
[298] Hay, *The Geometric Beauty of the Human Figure defined; The Science of Beauty*. On the central significance of geometry, and the relation of Hay's writings, to design education in this period, see Robertson, "'Mere Adventurers in Drawing'".
[299] Redgrave, "An Introductory Address on the Methods Adapted by the Department of Practical Art," 68.
[300] Bell, *Free-hand outline*, vol. 1, 14; Redgrave, "An Introductory Address on the Methods Adapted by the Department of Practical Art," 52-61. On the wider social significance of drawing manuals and the notion of optical training at this point, see Denis, "An Industrial Vision," 53-78.

At the same time, Bell was able and willing to command geometric aesthetics, antiquarian discourses and the lecture format to publicise his own work. Perhaps the most striking examples of this are the papers about obelisks he delivered before R.I.B.A. and the Society of Arts between 1858 and 1860.[301] These represented the public face of Bell's bid to erect an obelisk as the memorial to the Great Exhibition (he was privately trying to exert influence through Cole and Prince Albert),[302] which became transparent when Bell broke the anonymity of his obelisk design under the guise of a professional, scholarly exchange.[303] Nonetheless, Bell's scholarly construction was impressive in itself. In a lecture entitled 'Some Remarks on the Application of Definite Proportions and the Conic Sections to Architecture, Illustrated Chiefly by the Obelisk, with Some History of that Feature of Art', Bell argued that a giant obelisk cut fresh from British granite would memorialise the Great Exhibition with a feat of engineering that would outstrip every other nation and outlast any other construction built since the ancients.[304] Perfecting the obelisk with the optical principle of *entasis*, moreover, would complete a task of scientific aesthetics left undone by the Greeks. Bell told the audience how he had accomplished just this task, with a real party-piece illustration of the unity of mathematics and artistic practice. First, Bell recalled, he had modelled a small plaster obelisk and shaved it down entirely by eye and hand, so as to replace every straight line and flat face with 'very delicate *entasis*, only compensatory […] almost imperceptible'. Based on his intuitive sense of proportion, he even made a 'hair's breadth' adjustment to the height of the pyramidion, so fine 'as to be quite unappreciable, except on close inspection; and in an obelisk of a hundred feet it would not be above an inch.'[305] Bell relayed how he had then scaled up this delicate sketch into a twenty-foot model. When he then measured the large model, he discovered a miraculous 'unexpected coincidence' between what he had 'done merely by the eye and a consistent code of definite geometric proportions.'[306] The diagonal width of the base of the pyramidion, the pyramidion's height, and the width of the shaft at the obelisk's base were all exactly equal. In turn, the diagonal width of the shaft's square base factored perfectly into the obelisk's height: 'I began', he said, 'with my compasses walking up the vertical height of my obelisk, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, when, to

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[301] "Royal Institute of British Architects," *Building News* March 26 1858; Bell, "Some Remarks on the Application of Definite Proportions and the Conic Sections to Architecture," 475-485.

[302] Sheppard, ed., *Survey of London,* vol. 38, 133-6.

[303] "Royal Institute of British Architects," *Building News*, March 26, 1858, 329.

[304] Bell, "Some Remarks on the Application of Definite Proportions and the Conic Sections to Architecture," 478-82.

[305] Ibid., 481.

[306] Ibid.

my surprise, and, perhaps you will smile when I add, to my great satisfaction, I found that I had landed with the seventh stride of the diagonal of the base exactly at the apex!'[307] The obelisk's entire system of proportions could be derived (with some basic Pythagoras) according to a single unit. The unit, Bell also noted, was directly analogous to the 'pivot' or master proportion that the architect Joseph Jopling had found in the widths of the Parthenon's columns, and which he argued had governed all of the Parthenon's other proportions.[308] With his purported testament to the unity of visual judgment, sculptural labour and mathematics, then, Bell had not only found the perfect monument to the Great Exhibition and design reform ideology, but could place himself in the shoes of Phidias and Iktinos into the bargain.

Bell's audacious account of his obelisk is perhaps tongue-in-cheek at points, but it shows how adept he was at theorising about art and how canny and comfortable he was in the forum of learned society lectures, not least when referencing his own work. Having recounted his near-miraculous production of the perfect obelisk, for example, Bell directed his audiences to some hired hands of his amongst them: 'More than one of those who assist me in my studio are here to-night, who witnessed the progress of my obelisk. They know I have not, in the least, "cooked my account." I dare say no one will suspect me of not being quite open, but it is pleasant to have proof at hand if needed.'[309]

Shortly after his lecture to the DSA, Bell elaborated on geometry as a unifier of the arts in a lecture to Royal Institute of British Architects, entitled 'The Geometric Treatment of Sculpture'. This lecture expanded on ideas Bell expressed in a parallel series of statements arguing against gothic revival architecture, on the basis that it enforced a zero-sum game between the stylistic inclinations of architects and sculptors respectively, whereas classical architecture allowed sculpture to harmonise with buildings without sacrificing its own stylistic principles. Bell's 'Geometric Treatment' lecture expanded on this theme of mutual benefit, by forwarding three geometric 'ideas' that gave pleasing forms to statues whilst befitting them to buildings in general. Each involved statues' general outline shape, the first being rough symmetry, whether of a single statue or a pair. After this were the two shapes of

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[307] Ibid.

[308] Jopling published his *A Key to the Proportions of the Parthenon* in 1855, following Francis Cramer Penrose's 1851 *Principles of Athenian Architecture*, both of which built upon John Pennethorne's 1844 pamphlet, *The elements and principles of the Greek architects and artists*, which highlighted *entasis* in the Parthenon.

[309] Bell, "Some Remarks on the Application of Definite Proportions and the Conic Sections to Architecture," 481.

the pyramid and the vase, the former seen in the *Dying Gladiator*, Baily's *Eve at the Fountain* or *Dirce and the Bull*, the latter seen in the *Farnese Hercules* and the *Medici Venus*. Vase shapes, Bell held, were particularly useful in giving balance to sculptures in-the-round from all points of view, and also in forming 'finials' for architectural compositions. Bell demonstrated his theory using a set of statuettes (at least one of which was bronze, though others may easily have been Parian or plaster), noting that these sufficiently communicated 'the general treatment of mass and line', regardless of subtle details or surface finish.[310] As exemplars of the vase- or finial-shape, he presented his audience with small copies of Debay's *First Cradle*, Michelangelo's *Lorenzo* from the Medici chapel, and the Capitoline *Cupid and Psyche* (figs. 56-58). 'Turn it which way they would,' the *Building News* lecture report said of the Cupid and Psyche, 'in each view it preserved the just balance, elegant proportions, and general mass of a tall taper vase. In this exquisite and graceful group they possessed a charming example of geometric balance and contour applied to the human form, and the perfect coincidence of the architectural, decorative, and sculptural treatment.'[311] Bell also brought together engravings after Michelangelo's Medici tombs with reductions of the statues, to show how numerous sculptures could produce a harmonious ensemble in combination—the back-to-back pairs of tomb allegories forming isosceles triangles, which were crowned and completed with the 'finial' of the vase-like seated Capitani.

In Bell's 'Geometric Treatment of Sculpture' lecture, reductions and reproductions of statues did not just *illustrate* harmonies between sculpture and architecture; they were presented as the vehicles of that harmonisation. The statuette reproductions embodied the way Bell's principle of ensemble was emphatically not about unique and carefully staged compositions, operating as total works of art in a particular scale, location or from a certain point of view. Bell's principle was rather about finding formal units or templates that maximised the potential for new harmonies with other forms, from various points of view, in different scales and in unforeseen situations—including the circumstance of being seen alone and apart from architecture altogether. As with Bell's suggestions for flexible columns of drapery to receive and accommodate different sculptures with gallery settings at the international exhibitions, his theory of sculptural geometry was about achieving unity-in-diversity-in-contingency. In this sense, the discrete endurance and independent life of certain forms was the flipside of their dynamic engagement with changing circumstances. Bell made the relation between

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[310] "Royal Institute of British Architects," *Building News*, December 17, 1858, 1251.
[311] Ibid.

independence, connectivity and reproduction explicit by accounting for the copying and dissemination of famed antiques by the ease with which they made themselves at home in new contexts: He noted that the finial- or vase-like contours of both the *Medici Venus* and *Farnese Hercules* must have been partly what obtained 'for them that great popularity which they had ever enjoyed. They were more repeated in ancient art than any other statues: one great cause of this, no doubt, being that, in consequence of their geometric arrangement, they were found so very convenient as architectural decorations. And sculptors might well keep that point in mind when they desired a wide-spread public for their efforts, and tries to work for posterity.'[312] As he re-iterated in 1860: 'It may be well for us sculptors to recollect this when designing a figure, that a geometric contour is one passport to fame.'[313]

We do not know if Bell went so far as to present his theory of geometry and sculpture with Parian or bronze statuettes of his own works, alongside reductions of Debay's *First Cradle* and Michelangelo's *Lorenzo*. Nonetheless, the theory connoted Bell's own sculptures in complementary ways. The all-important vase and pyramid shapes, for example, chimed with the most famous statues of his career, the *Dorothea* (not to mention his other ideal females multiplied by Minton, such as *Lalage* or *Miranda*) and *Eagle Slayer* respectively. (At least, the pyramid and vase shapes recalled Bell's sculptures as much as they did the other statues, such as Debay's *First Cradle*, that he produced to exemplify them). The *Eagle Slayer*, indeed, furnishes a particularly apt illustration of pyramid-like composition, given the multiple straight lines leading from base to bow that appear at its different corners, as noted in section 1.i, above. Moreover, Bell's idea of the vase and pyramid shapes as 'passports to fame' attributes artistic status to reproduced statuary *as such*. As noted above, Bell suggested that the extensive reproduction of certain antiques testified in itself to the intrinsic connectivity of their shapes in relation to architecture or different physical contexts. Whether intentionally or not, this spin on reproduction befitted a sculptor whose statue designs had been so prominently reproduced in different scales or materials, and sat simultaneously in different environments from private mantlepieces to public parks and Crystal Palaces. Of course, Bell's notion of such shapes as the currencies of dialogue between sculpture and architecture also highlights the self-justifying or partly circular nature of reproduction's aesthetic testimony: Intrinsically connective or pleasing shapes might get used and

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[312] Ibid.
[313] Bell. "The Union of Sculpture with Architecture," 250.

reproduced more, but what gets used and reproduced more also becomes the necessary unit of exchange or touchstone of imitation.

By looking at John Bell's multiple engagements as a modeller for manufacturers, a curator of sculpture displays and a theorist, we have seen how industry and industrial exhibitions provided new opportunities for enhancing the profile of sculptors and the status of ideal sculpture. Bell's rise to fame was founded in a series of interconnected engagements with industrial manufactures, which culminated in the extensive presence of his work at the Great Exhibition. In turn, Bell's profile at this event was bound up, not only by the size or number of reproductions after his statues, but also with the juxtaposition of differently made, differently sized and differently coloured products that echoed each other through Bell's designs. Meanwhile, Bell used the display of 'Fine Art' in Paris to engage with on-going debates about sculptural display beyond the international exhibition, and to experiment with ways of showcasing the 'art of form' in its relations with other arts. Lastly, the institutional and material legacy of the Great Exhibition furnished Bell with the platform and backdrop to act as spokesman for sculpture as a profession, to assert sculpture's distinct principles whilst highlighting their relevance to modernity and progress.

The new opportunities that international exhibitions presented to sculptors were accompanied by challenges to the aesthetics of ideal sculpture. The exhibitions' industrial displays foregrounded the fact that variegated execution and re-purposing of sculptural forms were concomitants of Bell's collaboration with industrial and decorative arts manufacturers. The open-ended and polychromatic nature of these industrial displays contrasted with Bell's exacting prescriptions for displaying ideal sculpture as fine art, though in clearly distinguished contexts. At the 1855 and 1862 exhibitions, however, experiments with polychromy increasingly intruded on the realm of sculptures exhibited exclusively by sculptors. Bell's numerous forays into art theory during this period spoke to such issues as well as to his own professional interests. Though he took the conservative position on polychromy, his essays and lectures in general do not just defend the 'art of form' as a static and aloof ideal; rather, they seek to articulate ways in which this art can prosper through engagement with other arts, without sacrificing self-determination. Indeed, there is something in Bell's general emphasis on mutually beneficial, non-zero-sum relations between distinct arts that echoes the free trade ideology that suffused official discourses at the Great

Exhibition. As nimble in theory as he was in his practical career, Bell showed how malleable the terms of ideal sculpture could be.

CHAPTER 2

RAFFAELE MONTI, THE IDEAL AND 'TRICKS OF THE CHISEL'

As with Bell, Raffaele Monti's work and reputation were tightly interwoven with the international exhibitions and debates about the relation of ideal sculpture to the 'mechanical' arts. Monti was born and trained in Milan, but fled to London after fighting the Austrians in 1848 and worked there till his death, after rising to prominence at the Great Exhibition. Monti's fame was inexorably associated with the use and re-use of a single motif—that of the veiled woman. His veiled sculptures had many precedents in eighteenth-century funerary monuments or chapel sculptures in Italy, as renderings of faith, modesty and other notions involving a paradoxical relation between absence and concealment on a material plane, and presence or revelation on another.[314] The motif was new to sculptural displays in Britain, however, and in the ostensibly secular, industrial context of the Great Exhibition it became a touchstone for discussions on the place of illusionism and the manipulation of materials in sculpture *per se*. Monti's veiled sculptures offered a display of what sculptors, sculptures and sculptural materials *could* do, how flexible they might be, how they could appeal to new audiences. At the same time, in writings by critics and sculptors throughout the period from the Great Exhibition till the 1862 International Exhibition and afterwards, Monti's veils became a symbol for the remit of the sculptural medium and what lay beyond it—everything it *could* not do or *should* not do. In contemporary criticism, Monti's veils represented a border—impalpable to some—separating the 'ideal' of ideal sculpture and the world outside it.

Scholars that have considered the style of Monti's sculpture place it at a temporal border between different nineteenth-century styles. The standard account is that Monti's sculptures exemplify a wider shift in the taste of Italian sculptors or their private patrons away from the stifling or conventional 'neoclassicism' of Canova, towards its presumed antithesis in 'realism', 'romanticism', the 'neo-baroque', or all three in one. This chapter argues that such stylistic descriptions of Monti's work offer little assistance in understanding contemporary

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[314] This motif had already been much deployed in eighteenth-century Italian sculpture and is perhaps most associated with the Venetian sculptor Antonio Corradini (1668-1752) and with Corradini's figure of *Modesty* or *Chastity* for a funerary monument in the Sansevero Chapel in Naples. Another famous example is the statue of *Faith* in the main chapel of Santa Maria Maddelena de' Pazzi, Florence, by Innocenzo Spinazzi (1726-1798).

responses to it, or its period significance as a touchstone for what the 'ideal' was. Monti and his peers certainly talked in terms of 'classicism', 'idealism', 'realism' and so on, but the dynamics and references of their discourse are lost to the static, dualistic and un-contextualised application of such terms by modern scholars. We can start to make more sense of the discourse, however, once we place the development and criticism of Monti's veiled sculptures in the culture of popular spectacle and competitive display at the international exhibitions and similar shows.

This chapter falls into three sections. The first shows how Monti developed his most important veiled sculptures in collaboration with the cultures of industrial exhibition, and with spectacular display environments and mass audiences in mind. It details Monti's successive uses of the veiled face motif in conjunction with different narratives and technical devices, as a bridge between ideal sculpture and new audiences. It is primarily in this popular display context, rather than that of private collecting and aristocratic taste, that we should understand the production and appearance of Monti's last, most written-about work, *The Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy*. As part of this demonstration, the chapter considers a sculpture that is perhaps the most pivotal to Monti's technical development during the period but has so far eluded scholarly attention, and reconstructs its original commission for the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art in Leicester Square. The second section considers art historical accounts of Monti's veiled sculptures and the contemporary criticism that surrounded those sculptures. The third section looks at the reception of Monti's work in the art press. Throughout the period, Monti's many detractors characterised his sculptures as instances of mere hand-skill andd mechanical dexterity, imitative facility, which, despite their great popular appeal, were below the 'ideal' realm of true sculptural creativity. From one point of view, this rhetoric echoed the way sculptors' models and their reproduction in media like Parian were sometimes distinguished in terms of creative and non-creative work, though in Monti's case an extra distinction was drawn within the realm of the ideal sculptural authorship, in terms of the sculptor's own style and decisions. The section looks at contemporary frames of reference or catalysts for this rhetoric at the international exhibitions. It also considers the development of a professional British art press in parallel with the development of Monti's sculpture. In conclusion, it argues that the contemporary discourse about 'idealism' and 'realism' surrounding the appearance of Monti's sculptures referred only in a contingent way to certain kinds of form or mimesis; its more fundamental reference was to honest *practice* in sculptural display.

I. MONTI'S VEILED SCULPTURE

The veil finds an audience

Before it acquired currency in popular displays, Monti's veiled face was first stimulated in Britain by aristocratic patronage. William Spencer Cavendish, the 6th Duke of Devonshire, commissioned the *Veiled Vestal* in 1846 when he visited Monti's studio in Milan (figs 59, 60).[315] Devonshire was one of Britain's most significant collectors of modern ideal sculpture from Italy and had an insatiable love of precious stones and marble in general.[316] At Chatsworth he had already carefully amassed an imposing gallery of 'modern antiques' by the likes of Canova, Tenerani, Thorvaldsen and Gibson. The *Veiled Vestal* did not join these at Chatsworth, however, but was first displayed at the Duke's London residence, Chiswick House.[317]

The *Veiled Vestal*, now at Chatsworth, is a life-size marble depiction of one of the virgin priestesses of Vesta who maintained the sacred fire of antique Rome. The statue shows the Vestal kneeling on a shallow, rectangular plinth, crowned by a wreath of flowers and presenting a bowl with a carved flame—the fire of Rome. Along with her veil, the Vestal is dressed in relatively abstract, 'classical' drapery and wears sandals. But whereas such drapery in ideal sculpture tended to provide a foil for the undulating poses it covered or nude flesh it did not cover, the *Vestal*'s body was more a stifled scaffold for the drapery: Not only is the body almost completely covered by marble fabric, its pose shows no obvious movement and is disposed almost completely symmetrically. The limbs line up with the square plinth, the boundaries of which almost entirely contain the shape of the body. This rigid symmetry is broken only by the diagonal sweep of drapery laid over the body, and by a slight sideways tilt of the head in the same diagonal line. The imaginary box suggested by the plinth is broken by the bowl of fire that advances across the plinth's frontal face, and which, by its shape and size, chimes with the garland of flowers dressing the head.

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[315] Chatsworth House, "Art, Library and Archive Collections: A Veiled Vestal Virgin", accessed 26 November 2012, http://www.chatsworth.org/art-and-archives/art-library-and-archive-collections/highlights/sculpture/a-veiled-vestal-virgin.

[316] On the Duke's collecting interests, see Cavendish, *Handbook of Chatsworth and Hardwick*, and Yarrington, "'Under Italian skies'," 41-62.

[317] Letters from the Duke of Devonshire to Raffale Monti, April 17, 1849, October 9 (no year), Monti papers.

Monti first publically exhibited his veiled sculptures in 1847 and 1850, at one-man shows in the rooms of the print-sellers Messrs. Colnaghi in Pall Mall. Though print-sellers' rooms had been an important factor in the growth of paintings exhibitions, one-man shows of sculpture were relatively rare in Britain and appear to have been used principally by foreign artists or those without a studio in the country they could trade out of.[318] The number of marble works Monti exhibited was fairly impressive (perhaps because he had shifted his entire stock-in-trade to Britain during the conflict with Austria), including a funerary monument and various ideal, biblical, literary and fancy subjects. He showed not only the *Veiled Vestal* (in 1847), but also an untraced statue of a veiled female embracing the cross to symbolise 'Christianity' or 'Religion' (in 1847), and one 'veiled vestal' bust in each show. Also on show was his *Eve after the Fall* (fig. 61), which British critics tended to see as the most expressive, poetic and 'ideal' of Monti's works. The veil, meanwhile, was described from the first as a piece of sculptural novelty, or an exercise in varied re-iteration, like the ideal busts by Canova. One columnist likened the *Vestal* bust to 'one of those conventional busts with which the Vatican abounds,—or those *rifaciamenti* [refashionings; rehashes] which the studios of the modern sculptor in Rome display',[319] whilst another said they had 'heard the sculptor call his Veiled Vestal "uno scherzo"—a freak [also meaning 'joke' or 'jest']; it is a cunning use of the semi-transparent marble to *suggest* the forms beneath the veil; and very prettily it is done; though the present version, more defined, is not quite so happy as another we have seen by the same hand.'[320]

A year after the Colnaghi's show, the *Veiled Vestal* was perfectly placed to attract mass popularity at the Great Exhibition. Like other Milanese sculptors, Monti exhibited under the banner of Austria, which had recently crushed the Italian insurgency in which Monti had taken part. Nevertheless, he was personally entrusted to arrange and superintend Austria's sculpture court[321] and enjoyed a 'home' advantage over other 'foreign' sculptors, who were burdened by shipping costs, so ended up dominating the display with nine of his own

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[318] See Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 80-1. There were comparable shows at printsellers' rooms in the period from Antoine Étex and Hiram Powers, but records of other sculpture shows at Colnaghi's are scant. Monti appears to have maintained a fairly close and constant association with Colnaghi's before and after the Great Exhibition. This is shown in a letter from Dominic Colnaghi, June 7 1851 and a letter from Katherine Colnaghi (n.d.), Monti papers. Meanwhile, advertisements from 1855 show that Colnaghis' acted as the box office for Monti's studio lectures, whilst he mired in bankruptcy: "Monti's Lectures on Ancient and Modern Sculpture," *Leader*, April 28, 1855, 405; "Monti's Lectures on Ancient and Modern Sculpture," *Athenaeum*, May 5, 1855, 505.
[319] "Fine-Art Gossip," *Athenaeum*, August 31, 1850, 930.
[320] "Fine Arts. Monti's Sculpture." *John Bull*, September 7, 1850, 571.
[321] Letter from C. Buschek, Austrian Commissioner, to Edgar Bowring, giving the names of attendants in the Austrian sculpture court, Royal Commission for the Great Exhibition of 1851 Archive, A/1851, 617.

works.[322] This court was uniquely set apart from other non-British sculpture in the central avenue of the Crystal Palace nave, being placed through a slim corridor under the nave's upper galleries (fig. 62). Monti's display was enveloped in red backdrops, which, as we have seen, accorded with the Exhibition's general colour scheme and contemporary practices for isolating and accentuating the forms of marble statuary. This canopy of drapes appears to have been the most ostentatious and enticing in the Exhibition, however, with luxuriously heavy pleats lapping around the great mouth of Monti's sculpture chamber. This opened from the main avenue into an ante-chamber, beyond which was an inner room featuring the *Vestal* and three further veiled statues, including Monti's *Circassian Slave* (fig. 63) and Democrito Gandolfi's *The Emigrant* or *Bashful Beggar* (fig. 64).[323]

By all accounts, the *Vestal* cut a striking appearance inside the Austrian gallery. Great Exhibition reporters described it essentially as trompe l'oeil—as a deception of the eye, demonstrating its maker's material skill through camouflaging its material, and one dependent on conditions of viewing. Several critics reported that, from the length of the Austrian court, it produced the optical illusion of a face behind a real peace of transparent fabric.[324] Commentators also said that the native translucency of marble and the way Monti handled it was crucial.[325] One of the most detailed reports suggested that Monti combined selective polishing with 'artful' modelling and modulation of the drapery folds, so as to reflect lights in a certain way and to produce the 'general effect' at certain viewing distances and angles.[326]

Whilst bearing in mind the possibilities of context-specificity, exaggeration and fabrication in such descriptions, Monti's extant work corroborates some of what they say. Two copies of his later *Sleeping Harvester*, for example, one in marble and veiled, the other in bronze and un-veiled, testify to the illusion's material-specificity (figs. 65, 66). Monti could not transfer the illusion just by transferring the statue's physical contours from one material to another, precisely because it was about more than copying contours in the first place. This is partly to do with how the respective colours or translucencies of those materials match those of veil

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[322] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 1043-44.

[323] Ibid.

[324] "Sculpture. (Fourth Notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, June 7, 1851, 524.

[325] "Sculpture by Gaetano and Raphael Monti," *Fine Arts' Journal*, June 12, 1847, 503-4; "Minor Topics of the Month: Italian Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, August 1847, 302.

[326] "Sculpture. (Fourth Notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, June 7, 1851, 524.

fabric, but also with how they cast light and shadow. (It is also worthwhile noting that Monti hardly ever exhibited in plaster, though there could be various different reasons for this). In the *Vestal*, Monti has undercut those portions of the veil in front of the Vestal's imaginary eyes very deeply, so that they form physical hollows that sit back from the boundary where the imaginary veil would presumably hang, to throw shadows representing the dark eye sockets glimpsed through it. Meanwhile, the transition from these undercut surfaces and the raised contours of the veiled face (at the nose and brow) is deftly obscured by vertical folds cascading from the forehead down either side of the nose and across the centre of both eyes. Anthony Radcliffe has suggested Monti's fragmentation of the surfaces of the veil and rose bush in the *Sleep of Sorrow* represent similar means of confusing the sense of depth in shadowed areas (fig. 97). The veil 'illusion', then, was a sculptural performance that emphatically played with the relativity of perceived form or relief to its material conditions of embodiment and observation.

Whilst it is impossible to quantify how many people visited this display, many Exhibition reports from a range of different publications tell the same story, that the Milanese sculpture court continuously drew especially large crowds, making it all but impassable, and that the centre of this attention was the *Veiled Vestal*.[327] According to the *Illustrated London News*, for example, the *Vestal* excited 'the wonder of gazing thousands every day',[328] whilst *Fraser's Magazine* held it to be one of the three most visited sculptures in the Exhibition.[329]

At the same time as British journalists and critics recorded the *Veiled Vestal*'s extraordinary popularity amongst visitors, they almost universally denounced the phenomenon. All admitted the exemplary skill of the works displayed, but in a way that belittled them. A cluster of terms were used and re-used to do this: it was described as a mere 'triumph of mechanical dexterity' or 'a piece of skilful mechanism',[330] as a mere show of hand-work, a difficulty not worth the trouble of overcoming,[331] or as a mere novelty or curiosity. One frequent accusation was of trickery: A Great Exhibition reporter for the *Athenaeum*, for

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[327] "The Great Exhibition," *Caledonian Mercury, Edinburgh*, May 29, 1851; "The Great Exhibition," *Daily News*, June 12, 1851, 2; "Sculpture. (Fourth notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, June 7 1851, 524; "Walks through the Crystal Palace. No. XII," *Aberdeen Journal*, August 6, 1851, 8; S. C., "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace.—No. IV." 293; Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 76.
[328] "Sculpture. (Fourth notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, June 7 1851, 524.
[329] "Memorabilia of the Exhibition Season," *Fraser's Magazine*, August 1851, 130.
[330] "The Veiled Vestal," *Art-Journal*, May 1853, 135.
[331] "Fine Arts. The Milanese Sculpture at the Exhibition," *Daily News*, August 4, 1851, 2.

example, stated, of the *Veiled Vestal,* that 'No amount of clever manipulation … can raise the works of the chisel above the degree of *mere statuary.* The Muse of Sculpture is no trickster.' [332] Whilst belittling Monti's workmanship, critics accordingly bemoaned its popularity: 'The vulgar may wonder at it,' *Fraser's Magazine* lamented, 'but the educated grieve'.[333] The official exhibition literature echoed these sentiments. When the connoisseur Gustav Waagen wrote a supplementary report for the fine arts jury, he explained that he had done so to 'instruct the Public at large as to the principles which have guided the Jury in Class XXX […] in the award of prizes' and to compress 'in a popular and intelligible form the principles which constitute the criteria of judgements with regard to works of plastic art.'[334] In this report, Waagen singled out the *Vestal* for especial criticism (it was the only sculpture described that had won no award), and chided the public for admiring what 'true judges of art must always esteem […] a mere specimen of dextrous workmanship.'[335]

Yet the disapproval of official and unofficial critics did not stop even those invested in the edifying rhetoric of the Exhibition capitalising on the *Vestal*'s popularity. In the two years following the Exhibition, the *Art-Journal* reproduced the *Veiled Vestal* and Gandolfi's *Bashful Beggar* as part of a long-running series of fine stipple engravings, which the journal called its 'Gallery of Sculpture'.[336] The *Art-Journal*'s engravings, as Katherine Haskins has recently outlined, were central to its self-appointed position as a promoter of art in Britain, offering readers both knowledge about art and the opportunity to own art in the form of reproductive prints.[337] The journal accordingly claimed a central place for its 'Gallery of Sculpture' in the Great Exhibition's mission to elevate artistic tastes in Britain.[338] Nonetheless, despite having joined the chorus of disapproval against the *Beggar* and *Vestal* in 1851,[339] the *Journal* now explained that whilst both were not 'genuine works eliciting the lofty feelings which sculpture should call forth', their popularity at the Great Exhibition

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[332] "Sculpture for 1851," *Athenaeum*, June 28, 1851, 689.
[333] "Memorabilia of the Exhibition Season," *Fraser's Magazine*, August 1851, 130; On relationships between such accusations of vulgarity and realist techniques in nineteenth-century painting, see Marshall, "James Tissot's 'Coloured Photographs of Vulgar Society'," 201-222.
[334] Letter from Gustav Waagen to the Royal Commission of 1851, November 1, 1851, Royal Commission for the Great Exhibition of 1851 Archive, A/1851, 622.
[335] *Reports by the juries on the subjects in the thirty classes into which the Exhibition was divided*, 703.
[336] "The Bashful Beggar," *Art-Journal*, November 1852, 344; "The Veiled Vestal," *Art-Journal*, May 1853, 135.
[337] Haskins, *The* Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*, 34-47, 65-90.
[338] "Reviews. The Prize Treatise on the Fine Arts Section of the Great Exhibition of 1851," *Art-Journal*, February 1853, 67.
[339] S. C., "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace—No. IV," 293.

meant that an 'engraving from the work could not but find popular favour', and continued by mooting nuances in each sculpture that mitigated their fundamental faults.[340]

The *Vestal*'s popularity also paid off for Monti and other sculptors. A large train of veiled busts and statues commissioned, carved and displayed after the Exhibition testifies to a healthy market for such objects. Alongside a series of veiled busts, Monti produced several new veiled statues. These included: the *Sleeping Harvester* mentioned above; a copy of his *Circassian Slave* and a veiled *Indian Mother* (both commissioned 1853 but untraced);[341] *Veritas* or *Truth Unveiling Herself* (1853, figs. 76-80); an untitled floating figure in the Metropolitan Museum of Art (signed and dated 1854, figs. 84, 85); a large porcelain statue for Copeland & Co. called *Night* (1861, figs. 92, 93) and *The Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy* (1861, figs. 96, 97, 99, 100). Other sculptors joined in. The great number of extant veiled busts from the following decade or so includes those by Charles-August Fraikin, Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, Guiseppe Croff, Giovanni Battista Lombardi, Pietro Rossi and Giovanni Strazza (figs. 67, 68). Full veiled figures by other artists include John Thomas's *Night* (1853), three extant versions of Giovanni Benzoni's *Veiled Rebecca* (1864–1876, fig. 69),[342] one or two veiled *Cupids* by Antonio Rossetti, a veiled sleeping child by Giovanni Battista Lombardi and Joseph Mozier's *Undine* (c. 1886, fig. 70).

The impact of Monti's *Veiled Vestal* and its popularity is further evinced by a host of Parian variants. As early as 1851, Rose & Co. produced a pair of groups illustrating Spencer's *Faerie Queen*, each featuring a nude woman being unveiled before an armoured knight, and each exploiting the erotic potential of sculpted veils more brazenly than Monti's *Vestal* (fig. 71).[343] A closer approximation of Monti's sculpture was the *Vestal Virgin* that Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse modelled for Minton in 1856, and which may, as Philip Ward Jackson has mooted, have encouraged Copeland's subsequent use of Monti's models for its own Parian statuettes (fig. 72).[344] Parian busts by Worcester in the same period show the veil as a useful device for generating new product lines with minimal labour: These include a fairly generic,

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[340] The Bashful Beggar,".*Art-Journal*, November 1852, 344.
[341] These are recorded in a by Monti acknowledging receipt of an advance payment of £50 and promising that the *Circassian Slave* and *Indian Mother* would be produced for £200 and delivered to Liverpool by around February, 1854. Letter Monti, September 3, 1853, Monti papers. See also Emma Hardy, "Raffaelle Monti".
[342] The three extant *Veiled Rebecca*s, dated 1864, 1866 and 1876, are in the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, the Berkshire Museum, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, and the Salarjung Museum, Hyderabad, respectively.
[343] Atterbury, ed., *The Parian Phenomenon*, 243.
[344] Ibid., 55.

unveiled ideal bust of *Hope* along with a half-veiled *Hope* and a fully-veiled bust called *the Bride*, which apparently use the same head shape but with different clay veils modelled on top (figs. 73, 74).[345]

This extensive production of veiled sculptures is symptomatic of the display culture at international exhibitions. For one thing, these shows expanded the Anglo-Italian sculpture trade just as members of the so-called *Scuola Lombarda*, united by the trait of virtuoso marble carving, were coming into their prime. Perhaps the most striking example, though it built on shows since 1851 in this respect, was the 1865 Dublin Exhibition: There, Italian sculptures—Milanese especially—dominated the sculpture display and were bought in large qualities by wealthy collectors.[346] With successive exhibitions, buyers re-displayed such sculptures, whilst sculptors were spurred to out-carve previous exhibits to attract similar buyers. Guilio Bergonzoli seems to have done just this with respect to Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* at the 1862 exhibition, with his *bravura* rendition of a Thomas Moore fantasy, exhibited at the 1867 Paris exhibition (fig. 75).[347] Yet such exhibitions did not just increase the exposure of such work to sympathetic private collectors. It actively encouraged the virtuoso aesthetic as a loss-leading means to attract multiple consumers of other, cheaper goods. This is clearest in Monti's case. All his large extant veiled sculptures following the *Vestal* were either initially commissioned or swiftly bought by commercial firms, either to supplement popular shows or advertise sculptural reproductions.

Re-deploying the veil, 1851-1862

Following the Great Exhibition, Monti appears to have attempted to augment and capitalise on the popular success of his *Vestal* by taking on a hugely ambitious contract for decorative sculpture at the relocated Crystal Palace in Sydenham, along with his *Veritas*, carved in 1853 (figs. 76-80).[348] Monti's contract with the new Crystal Palace Company, a private,

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[345] Ibid., 200-6. The unveiled and half-veiled *Hope* are recorded with identical heights of 10¾" whilst the Bride is ¾" taller. This size difference seems attributable to the extra volume the *Bride's* veil adds to the top of the head. Ibid., 200.

[346] Murphy, *Nineteenth-Century Irish Sculpture*, 147-50; Bryant, "Bergonzoli's *Amori Degli Angeli*": 19-21.

[347] Bryant, "Bergonzoli's *Amori Degli Angeli*": 16-21.

[348] *Veritas* is first recorded by Anna Jameson as marble (unlike most of the sculptures in the Crystal Palace, which were plaster). Jameson, *Hand-book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 56. *Veritas* is next recorded in the late twentieth century, long after the Crystal Palace burnt down, at Crowthers of Syon Lodge, who sold it to the

commercial exhibition venture as opposed to the Royalty-backed and charitably-funded Great Exhibition of 1851, involved decorative fountains, colossal allegories of different nations, garden statues as well as casts of the Parthenon frieze. He first exhibited the *Veritas* in marble at the Royal Academy exhibition in 1853, before it was housed permanently in the Crystal Palace from 1854. It is unclear whether the Crystal Palace Company commissioned Monti's *Veritas* along with the fountains, garden sculptures and casts they ordered from him, or obligingly bought it after he was bankrupted by setbacks in this commission.[349]

Veritas deploys the veil in quite different ways to the *Veiled Vestal*, principally by setting it off in relation to the figure's nude body. This, along with the discarded theatrical mask below the figure's left leg and a huge dead snake (presumably 'falsehood') coiled up behind her right leg, illustrates the theme of Truth revealing itself (figs. 76-80). The triangular formation of mask, snake and truncated column, along with unveiling of the face on one side, invite a more fully three-dimensional viewing experience than the rigid, square *Vestal*. There is also a much more sensuous and active engagement of the body with the veil. Where the *Vestal* sits passively 'tucked in' under her veil, *Veritas*'s hand pulls at her veil to lend it a complementary sense of gravity and movement, an effect also seen in Monti's *Circassian Slave*. The up-drawn veil and down-slipping garment below frame the nude torso and suggest greater revelation to come. By comparison with the *Vestal*, then, *Veritas* plays much more heavily on the double potential of 'veiled unveiling', seen most famously in Corradini's veiled *Modesty* in Naples (fig. 82), as a way of wrapping up noble themes like 'truth' with titillation in the same motif. Whilst the *Circassian Slave* shows Monti already using the veil along erotic lines, the half-veiling of *Veritas* may also have been prompted by objects like Rose & Co.'s recent veiled Parian figures (fig. 71), or James Pradier's half-draped *Phryne*, one of the four sculptures that won the first place Council Medal at the Great Exhibition (fig. 83).

Closer analysis of *Veritas* demonstrates how intelligently he integrated the veiled face motif with new allegorical and sensual functions, using pose as its pivot. A drawing of Monti's shows an intermediate stage in composition, when the bodily gesture and accessories had

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Medeiros e Almeida museum. Early photographs of the sculpture at the Crystal Palace Sydenham show it bearing the 'Veritas' inscription and all other observable adjuncts of the Lisbon marble.

[349] Extant contracts and lists relating to the Crystal Palace work in Monti's papers do not specify any work that might have been '*Veritas*'. The CPC assisted Monti during his bankruptcy by allowing him to complete the contract. Hardy, 'Raffaelle Monti''.

already been settled in dialogue with each other, most likely in a three-dimensional *bozzetto* or full-size model, though the drapery is left undecided (fig. 81).[350] Nonetheless, the sexual aspect of the unveiling is already settled, ironically through the use of drapery to shield the genitals. Also established is the dialogue between the half-veiled face above and the half-covered mask below. In the final work, these two elements echo each other at either ends of a vertical plumb-line, discernable from most angles but clearest at the 'frontal' position designated by the inscribed title on the base, dropping downwards from the fingertips lifting the veil, through the navel and the protruding left thigh and knee. Added to this vertical polarity is a resonance between the two free limbs: Projecting outwards against the vertical framework provided by the weight-bearing right leg and weight-bearing left arm, the bent right arm and bent left leg describe two large triangles, not only providing pleasant *contrapposto* but also a rhythmic unison of action through the body (figs. 77, 80). The veiled face, mask and body are united in action. The free hand pulls upwards as the free foot crushes downwards; lifting the veil from the breathing, human face involves burying the mask. In turn, the downwards force of the foot 'points' the mask towards 'Veritas' inscription on the base, providing a clear visual pathway from one to the other (figs. 78, 79). At close range, we see the face is compressed, the mask's splaying edge resounds with the circular rim of the base, sandwiching the textured ground between the two. Meanwhile, an unravelled ribbon falls from the mask over the base, repeating the loll of the dead snake's tongue, completing the gesture towards the inscription as if it were an extension of the crushing toes itself.

Monti appears to have experimented with applying colour to *Veritas* to supplement the effect of veil and body. When the statue was shown at the Royal Academy, the *Illustrated London News* reported that 'the artist, seeking to give greater comparative whiteness to the drapery, has darkened the flesh, by means of tobacco-juice, or some such pleasant cosmetic, to a dingy brown'—a fact repeated by the *Art-Journal*.[351] An *Athenaeum* reporter, meanwhile, failed to notice coloured flesh but did observe that the drapery around the hips was 'edged with a

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[350] The drawing is a very accurate delineation of the marble statue's bodily contours, showing an almost identical pose, but a completely different display arrangement. The close correspondence of bodily form is what we would expect from a working drawing after a model, used to ruminate on the drapery arrangement. We would expect a preparatory sketch before the modelling process, on the other hand, to differ much more widely from the final sculpture, given the contingencies of the sculpting process and the oddity of a sculptor wishing to subordinate the sculpting process so faithfully to a quick two-dimensional drawing, rather than *vice versa*. Given that the drapery differs from the final statue, meanwhile, the drawing would have been taken from either a clay or plaster model, because, technically speaking, the broad arrangement of drapery would have to have been settled before carving commenced (unless, that is, Monti was applying more of a 'direct carving' process thn most of his peers).

[351] "Exhibition of the Royal Academy," *Illustrated London News*, May 7, 1853, 350.

double blue line'. [352] Critics' responses to the flesh colouring rehearsed not only contemporary positions on polychromy but those that surrounded the veiled face illusion in 1851: '[T]his is not pure art'[353] said the *Art-Journal*, whilst the *ILN* labelled 'a grievous act of heresy, which we hope he will not repeat, and in which he will find no one to imitate him'.[354] Neither form of colouring is present on the statue today or in photographs and contemporary accounts of it at Crystal Palace in 1854, though the drapery hem does retain two carved parallel lines of a kind that Monti later carved and coloured on *The Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy*.[355] Neither kinds of partial colouring were, of course, novel. Canova and other sculptors trained in Italy had long applied *acqua di rota* or other reddish, water-soluble materials like coffee to tint to the flesh portions of statues,[356] whilst Pradier had painted drapery hems since 1845 and exhibited his marble *Phryne* at the Great Exhibition with a double-red border.[357]

In spite of the stock virulence of press responses to Monti's applied colour, the discrepancies amongst different reports suggest that it was delicate and tentative, either in the sense of being visually subtle or materially friable. The fact it went unnoticed at the Crystal Palace in 1854, even when Monti was near the eye of a critical storm over polychromy there as the artist responsible for Owen Jones's painted Parthenon frieze, make it highly likely that Monti removed the tint before it got there.[358] The reason why the *Athenaeum* reporter at the Royal Academy failed to notice the tinted flesh, but looked closely enough to see the (less contentious) coloured trim, remains strange. The kind of water-based tints associated with Canova (as opposed to the more bold, encaustic treatments such as Gibson applied to his *Tinted Venus*) could be so delicate as to allow sculptors to wash them off with ease if they

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[352] "Royal Academy: Sculpture," *Athenaeum*, June 11, 1853, 709.

[353] "The eighty-fifth exhibition of the Royal Academy,", *Art Journal*, June 1853, 151.

[354] "Exhibition of the Royal Academy," *Illustrated London News*, May 7, 1853, 350.

[355] Black and white albumen prints in the London Stereoscopic Company collection, Getty Images archive (fig. 97) clearly show that the *Sleep of Sorrow*'s drapery trim bore some kind of dark pigment, even though this is not present on the much-deteriorated surface of the extant sculpture in the V&A.

[356] Cook and Norman, "'Just a tiny bit of rouge upon the lips and cheeks'," 47-52.

[357] The colour on Pradier's *Phrynne* was described as a 'red "Mæander" border' by Waagen's report. Though they gave the work one of the four first-prize Council medals, the 'Fine Art' jury felt that, 'in contrast with the colourless uniformity of the rest of the marble, such an ornament appears crude and misplaced'. *Reports by the Juries*, 700. See also See Bluhm, "In Living Colour,", 22.

[358] Though mentioning the heresy of the veil, Jameson's Crystal Palace handbook mentioned no colour on *Veritas*. A tinted *Veritas* is also unmentioned in Elizabeth Eastlake's lengthy discussion of polychromy and taste and the Crystal Palace, which otherwise approvingly noted Monti's casting of the Parthenon frieze whilst chastising the colouring applied to it. Nonetheless, some failed to report it at the Royal Academy when others saw it. Jameson, *Hand-book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 56; Eastlake, "The Crystal Palace." *Quarterly Review*, March 1855, 303-54; "The Exhibitions of Works of Art During the Year 1853," *Morning Chronicle*, July 11, 1853**.**

offended, or excuse themselves by saying that they had only applied them to take the glare off freshly cut marble, to anticipate the natural mellowing effects of time and to thereby allow the 'pure' sculptural work of modelled contour to be more easily observed.[359]

Whilst handling his huge commission for the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, Monti was executing a veiled work that surpassed his previous endeavours in ostentatious marble carving, though the context of this production has so far remained a mystery. The statue (figs. 84, 85) is signed and dated 1854, but has no provenance before 1887. It constitutes a pivotal point of technical development between the *Veiled Vestal* and *Sleep of Sorrow*, being Monti's first combination of the veiled face with a levitating body. Both devices are sustained in the single swathe of abstract drapery, the veil above becoming a trunk of folds that lift the body up, whilst connecting it with the statue's base below. The base is an oval mound of floral forms carved in low to mid relief. There is a visible hollow space between the figure's nude back and the billowing sail of drapery behind it, reducing the weight of marble and intensifying the impressions of weightlessness and virtuosity. The pose retains the *Veiled Vestal*'s stark frontal symmetry, a feature closely bound up with the presentation of suspended mass, with each flanking view underscoring the sharp cutaway through the statue's apparent centre of gravity, which is suppressed by the frontal view. The quiescence of the body, meanwhile, places the onus of movement and expression on the drapery itself, lending it a certain agency and amplifying the supernatural effect of flight. Despite its striking form, the work bears no inscribed title or manifestly determinate narrative, iconography or allegory, and is now labelled only 'Veiled Woman'.[360] Taken on its own, then, the work is enigmatic, providing little sense of what it is about, beyond audacious technical experiment. It is possible, however, to restore an original commission, title and viewing context to the statue, giving a prehistory to works like the *Sleep of Sorrow* and setting them squarely in the context of popular amusement and technical exhibitionism.

In 1854, Gandolfi's *Bashful Beggar* and a new veiled sculpture by Monti both found favour at the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art in Leicester Square (figs. 86, 87). Under the direction of the optician and instruments maker Edward Marmaduke Clarke, the Panopticon

[359] Cook and Norman, "'Just a tiny bit of rouge upon the lips and cheeks'," 48-50.
[360] Metropolitan Museum of Art, "The Veiled Woman," accessed April 8, 2014, http://www.metmuseum.org/Collections/search-the-collections/186838?rpp=20&pg=1&ao=on&ft=Monti&pos=4. It has meanwhile sustained extensive damage that keeps it from public display.

was founded to promote advances in engineering, science and art through display. Its associates included the eminent optical scientist David Brewster, the *Art-Journal* editor Samuel Carter Hall*,* and various prominent painters and sculptors.[361] Tickets for weekday mornings and evenings were sold at one shilling, the price used to attract artisans and working class visitors to the Great Exhibition.[362] This attempt to combine amusement with art and scientific instruction had many direct precedents, including the Polytechnic Institution, the National Gallery of Practical Science and the Royal Colosseum in Regent's Park, the latter of which boasted a domed 'Glyptoteca, or Museum of Sculpture' alongside immersive follies and panoramas.[363]

Leicester Square itself, meanwhile, featured a cluster of attractions generating a market for various kinds of visual delight, including a panorama, a wax-works museum and the new 'Great Globe' (a giant sphere with a three-dimensional world atlas plastered on its interior surface).[364] The Royal Panopticon was erected amongst these in a 'Moorish' or 'Saracenic' style, with four minarets and a dome 97 feet wide. Prominent exhibits included a decorative elevator, a giant electric generator and a crystal water tank for demonstrating diving apparatus.[365] In the centre of the rotunda was an enormous, illuminated fountain, surrounded by statues by British and Irish sculptors such as William Calder Marshall, William Theed and Patrick Macdowell, as well as the veiled sculptures by Monti and Gandolfi.[366] These latter were the only sculptures by foreign artists and were given pre-eminence in notices of the Panopticon.[367]

Monti and the Panopticon council appear to have recognised in each other the opportunity to exploit and perpetuate the popular successes of the Great Exhibition. The council elected him

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[361] Royal Panopticon of Science and Art. *Deed of Settlement of the Corporation*.

[362] "Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, Leicester Square," *Athenaeum*, April 1, 1854, 409. The extent to which the shilling price actually succeeded in bringing working class visitors to the Great Exhibition was a matter of contemporary debate. On this matter and related issues of 'rational recreation', see Gurney, "An Appropriated Space," 114-145.

[363] Altick, *The Shows of London*, 490-96; Royal Colosseum, *A Description of the Royal Colosseum*, 1-24.

[364] Lightman, "Spectacle in Leicester Square," 19-39.

[365] White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 16-19.

[366] "The Luminous Fountain at the Panopticon," *Illustrated London News*, November 11, 1854, 456. White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 71-78.

[367] White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 78; "Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, Leicester Square," *Athenaeum*, April 1, 1854, 409; "The Panopticon,'' *Musical World*, March 18, 1854, 176; "The Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, Leicester Square," *Musical World*, November 11, 1854, 750; "Minor Topics of the Month. The Panopticon," *Art-Journal*, July 1854, 219; "Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, Leicester Square," *Art-Journal Advertiser*, October 1855, 1.

an associate in November 1851, just one month after the Great Exhibition closed.[368] According to the Panopticon handbook, Monti quickly generated a commission for himself by visiting the Panopticon during its construction and suggesting a sculptural subject for its interior:

> The artist conceived that a more appropriate embellishment to the Fine Arts department could not be added than a statue embodying the Oriental fiction of the Houri, especially in a room so strictly Saracenic in detail. The proposition of this appendage to their gallery was readily and liberally responded to by the Council, and the result is one of the most exquisitely perfect and pleasing figures which ever graced a public collection.[369]

The *Houri* seems to have been the only sculpture commissioned especially by the institution,[370] and was reported to be the 'most novel attraction' amongst them.[371]

If Monti conceived the *Houri* especially for the Panopticon's 'Saracenic' interior, can it be identified with the 'Veiled Woman' of 1854? The term 'Saracenic' was used in the period to categorise a broad architectural 'style', distinct from those like 'Grecian' or 'Gothic', that was identifiable with Islamic rule from the seventh century onwards and which was being promulgated in such forms as Owen Jones's illustrated publications on the Alhambra.[372] Contemporary connotations of this style included those of escapist fancy and visual conceit: Edward Augustus Freeman's 1849 *History of Architecture*, for example, characterised 'Saracenic' building in terms of their 'fantastical' appearance and the 'romantic associations' they stimulated with Moorish Spain or the Arabian Nights, which made them 'seem more like fairy palaces than the creations of men like ourselves.'[373] By the same token, Freeman identified the 'Saracenic' with optical trickeries, such as stilted arches that made masses

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[368] Letter from the Council of the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art to Raffaele Monti, November 1, 1851, Monti papers. Amongst Monti's papers there is also a plan of one of the Royal Panopticon lecture rooms, which may relate to the original commission.

[369] White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 78.

[370] Ibid., pp. 71-78; "The Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, Leicester Square," *Musical World*, November 11, 1854, 750.

[371] "Opening of the Royal Panopticon," *John Bull*, March 18, 1854.

[372] See, for example, Freeman, *A History of Architecture*, 26-27, 270-295; Wornum, "The Exhibition as a Lesson in Taste", p. III***. For an in-depth case study of the dissemination and interpretation of Moorish architectural decoration during the 1840s and 1850s, see Eggleton, "Surface Deceits".

[373] Freeman, *A History of Architecture*, 210-271.

appear suspended without support, that were 'calculated to enchant at first sight' but were beyond the realm of great art.[374]

The 'Houri', meanwhile, denotes a spirit who accompanies souls in the Islamic Paradise, and would have carried associations for Monti's contemporaries involving beautiful virgins and dark eyes. Precedents establishing what a sculpture after this subject might look like are hard to find, and whilst the virginal associations fit with a veiled statue, there are no illustrations of Monti's *Houri* inside the Panopticon. Meanwhile, some advertisements gave the statue another name, the 'Peri', which corresponds to a contemporary sculptural type quite different to the 'Veiled Woman'.[375] The 'Peri' emanates from Persian mythology but appears also in 'Paradise and the Peri', a poem from Thomas Moore's *Lalla-Rookh* of 1817. Moore's Peri was a form of exiled angel who searched the world for a gift most dear to Heaven, with which to re-enter Paradise. Sculptures of this subject were produced during the 1850s by J.S. Westmacott, Thomas Crawford and Giovanni Strazza (another Milanese sculptor who exhibited with Monti at the Great Exhibition), which all show a conventional angel-like figure, clasping her hands in penitence, with feathered wings but no veil (figs. 88, 89).[376] Nonetheless, the very way in which Monti's work garnered distinct titles may have resulted from a looser, more associative connection between composition and subject. The *Art-Journal* reported Monti's sculpture as 'the "Peri" of Moore ascending from Earth', whilst *John Bull*, naming it the 'Houri', noted the 'wonderful contrivance of its floating grace' that accompanied the old 'trickery' of the veiled face.[377] This correspondence with the 'Veiled Woman' is strengthened by the fact that whilst newspaper articles and advertisements reported various displays, lectures and concerts at the Panopticon during 1853, they only mentioned Monti's *Houri* or *Peri* on or after the full opening in March 1854.[378] Moreover, the *John Bull* reporter noted that the *Houri* and 'the Bashful Beggar' were situated on

[374] Ibid., 271-9.
[375] "Royal Panopticon of Science & Art, Leicester Square," *Art-Journal Advertiser*, December 1855, 1. "Minor Topics of the Month. The Panopticon," *Art-Journal*, July 1854, 219.
[376] Gunnis, *Dictionary of British Sculptors*, 422; Atkinson, "Sculpture of the Exhibition," 313; Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, accession no. 1917.9; Jameson, *Hand-Book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 58. A photograph by P. Delamotte of shows what Strazza's *Peri* looked like at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham in 1854: Sydenham Town Forum: Statues inside the Crystal Palace, accessed September 18, 2004, http://sydenham.org.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?style=4&f=10&t=4743&start=60.
[377] "Minor Topics of the Month. The Panopticon," *Art-Journal*, July 1854, 219; "Opening of the Royal Panopticon," *John Bull*, March 18, 1854.
[378] The Panopticon was reported and advertised from 1851 to 1854 in the *Art-Journal*, *Athenaeum* and *Musical World*, among others. A detailed overview of the building's contents, without noting Monti's sculpture, is given in "The Panopticon," *Musical World*, November 11, 1853, 742-43. Monti's sculpture first appears in these periodicals in the notices listed at note 378.

opposite sides of the rotunda under rich canopies, 'sending out the whiteness of the marble into admirable prominence'.[379] This matches an undated drawing amongst Monti's papers, showing the 'Veiled Woman' composition displayed within a tent-like tasselled canopy, crowned by a 'Saracenic' crescent (fig. 90).

The arrangement in the drawing may have been inspired by the drum of tasselled drapery that uniquely accompanied Powers's *Greek Slave* at the Great Exhibition, one of the very few sculptures that rivalled Monti's *Veiled Vestal* for press attention, as we shall see (fig. 91).[380] If Monti designed the arrangement, he would seem to have combined Powers's display with elements of the canopy for his Austrian court, such as the appearance of drapes plucked upwards in gentle wave-like pleats, like theatre curtains. Powers's canopy had the advantage of allowing his statue to be shown 'in the round' with the use of a revolving pedestal, whilst at same time preventing other sculptures or people from disturbing perceptions of the sculpture's form from in front.[381] Similarly, Monti's niche-like canopy would have furnished a useful means of distancing visitors and controlling the viewpoints they had on his 'levitation' device, its centre of gravity, or the connections between the figure and the mass of drapery supporting her. In the drawing, the statue has been slightly turned so that the inclined head faces outwards and the feet glide in front of the column of drapery to which they are hinged—the angle at which the impression of them dangling without support would be most effective. The *Art-Journal* reported that the figure was 'exhibited under peculiar effects of light', which the canopy may in turn have facilitated.[382] If the canopy could enhance the sculpture's effect, its ornament could associate it with the Panopticon's interior, whilst remaining portable and alterable. Like Powers's canopy, it would have had an internal and external function, sheltering the work's forms whilst advertising it to the exhibition at large.

Alongside the sculpture's physical surroundings, the Panopticon handbook also connected the sculpture with its title and augmented visitors' experiences of it. The handbook quotes two (un-cited) lines from Byron's 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' in connection with the statue:

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[379] "Opening of the Royal Panopticon," *John Bull*, March 18, 1854.
[380] The other principle sculpture was the *Amazon* of Kiss and Geiss. The preeminent popularity of these three was observed in "Memorabilia of the Exhibition Season," *Fraser's Magazine*, August 1851, 130.
[381] On Powers's display preferences, see Reynolds, "The 'Unveiled Soul'," 410-12.
[382] "Minor Topics of the Month. The Panopticon," *Art-Journal*, July 1854, 219.

> Match me those Houris, whom ye scarce allow
>
> To taste the gale, lest love should ride the wind.[383]

The stanza from which the lines are quoted compares beauteous beings from the 'Prophet's paradise' with the 'dark-glancing daughters of Spain', in the midst of describing an ethereal Spanish heroine taking up arms during the Peninsular war.[384] To those who recognised it, the quotation would have vaguely connoted a romantic world associated with the Panopticon's architecture, though elevating an image of weightless sensations above more corporeal images of dark-eyed Spanish girls. This way of stoking romantic fantasy had a precedent at the Royal Colosseum. There, follies of ancient ruins and Eastern vistas were enhanced both by mirrors and a guidebook, which prompted visitors to be transported 'in imagination to the country of the Cid and the borders of the Xenil' before lending a long quote from 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage' to assist them.[385]

The *Houri* spectacle perfectly complemented the sensuous and performative character that the handbook emphasised as the distinguishing feature of the Panopticon's scientific displays and demonstrations. These, the handbook said, would show that that philosophy was not 'harsh and crabbed' but soft and sweet, and gratify the eye with 'every startling novelty which science and the fine arts can produce'.[386] But this sensory approach bore with it tensions between education and amusement. The author of both the Panopticon handbook and that of the 'Royal Alhambra Palace', which the Panopticon later became, was anxious to distance the building from precursors like the Polytechnic Institution and Mechanics' Institutes, which had succumbed 'to the prevailing disposition for sensational effect, a marked supremacy of illusions, phantasmagoria, and extravaganza over legitimate science' in order to attract custom.[387] The employment of Monti exemplified the conflicted rhetoric of instructive amusement. The Panopticon handbook propounded the respectability of the Panopticon's sculpture display by referring to the Great Exhibition's Fine Art jury. It claimed that the Panopticon council had adopted the jury's call for a permanent museum of art and industry in London to provide 'a guide and a beacon' for the next international exhibition', by 'placing in the rotunda various statues of unquestionable merit', even though the council had

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[383] White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 78.

[384] Byron, "Childe Harold's Pilgrimage," Canto 1, 59, *The Poetical Works of Lord Byron*, 109.

[385] Royal Colosseum. *A Description of the Royal Colosseum*, 17-19.

[386] White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 9.

[387] White, *Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Alhambra Palace*, 12.

directly contravened the jury's censure of Monti's *Veiled Vestal* in commissioning the *Houri*.[388]

The Panopticon closed after only two years, its financial demise partly precipitated by its inability to trump the spectacle of the Great Exhibition.[389] Monti himself was also bankrupted around this time, following problems with his designs for electrotyped fountain sculpture at Sydenham and the scale of the job generally. Despite this, Monti continued with new ventures and technical experiments whilst attracting commercial patrons. He began delivering articles and lectures on art.[390] He started planning a workshop for photographic printing.[391] In the 1860s, he became more involved with Elkington and electrotype casting, and in 1861 sculpted the colossal equestrian statue of the Marquis of Londonderry for Durham Market Square, said to be the largest ever electrotype cast at that point. He also designed sporting trophies for C.F. Hancock, the silversmith, as well as five large vases displayed at the 1862 International Exhibition.[392]

In addition, Monti developed and re-worked the *Houri*'s floating device in two pieces for the 1862 Exhibition. The first was the Parian *Night*, modelled for Copeland, depicting a veiled female hovering over a sleeping child (fig. 92, 93). Copeland exhibited *Night*, along with a pendant piece *Day* and a less expensive veiled bust by Monti called *the Bride*, at the 1862 Exhibition and again at the 1873 Vienna exhibition (figs. 94, 95). Secondly came *The Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy*, the most grandiose marble statue of Monti's career, featuring a veiled figure hovering in clinging drapes above her sleeping counterpart amongst a rose bush below (fig. 96). There can be little doubt that Monti produced the *Sleep of Sorrow*, like the *Houri* and *Night*, with the Exhibition and crowd pulling in mind. The *Sleep of Sorrow* was made, if not at a loss, then at least speculatively. Monti's sculpture was

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[388] White, *The Illustrated Handbook of the Royal Panopticon*, 71-2; Letter from Gustav Waagen to the Royal Commission of 1851, November 1, 1851, Royal Commission for the Great Exhibition of 1851 Archive, A/1851, 622.
[389] Altick, *The Shows of London*, 496; "Spectacle in Leicester Square," 29.
[390] In 1859 Monti engaged to write for the Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography and published a string of articles on art in Britain with the newly established *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* between 1859 and 1861. Note dated 16 May 1859, Monti papers; Hardy, "Raffaelle Monti".
[391] This is shown by lists and costings of equipment dated 1857, as well as map planning a new private studio arrangement in Camden, Monti papers. Another document (n.d.) shows that Monti attempted to pay for these new studio arrangements by raising a subscription and offering subscribers large statuettes after works by him in 'parian scagliola'.
[392] Hardy, Raffalle Monti..

already in marble when first shown at the 1862 Exhibition,[393] even though it was photographed there with a 'for sale' label (fig. 97). In the run up to the 1862 exhibition, then, Monti seems to have recalled the publicity his *Vestal* received in 1851, revisited his work for the Royal Panopticon, and gambled a large amount of marble and labour on the financial promise of technical performance. The *London Stereoscopic Company*, who had photographed the *Sleep of Sorrow* at the exhibition, subsequently bought it along with Pietro Magni's *Reading Girl*, lent it to tour for charitable events[394] and displayed it in their London shop window, where it would have served to promote their photographs.[395]

The *Night* is a quintessential piece of 'Exhibition' Parian. *Night*'s large size (28") and high prices rank it less with those Parian statuettes envisaged for middle-class mantle-pieces, than with the loss-leading showpieces like Copeland's *Return of the Vintage* or *Ino and Bacchus*, both shown at the Great Exhibition (as counterparts or simulacra of groups in marble and Sèvres biscuit ware respectively).[396] The elaboration of *Night*, meanwhile, claims something of that technical kudos of translational imitation, noticed above as Parian's tribute to the veil's *trompe l'oeil* effect. It essentially rehearses the *Houri*'s symmetrical levitating composition, including the billowing hollow through the drapery at the back. Yet there is a greater volume of material attached to the base by a comparatively slight column of drapery, at a more acute angle—an extension of the *Houri*'s feat in marble, through the lower density of porcelain. But if porcelain reduced certain difficulties in achieving the trick, it presented others, such as the great delicacy needed in piecing together and propping the soft cast so it maintained its shape in firing.[397] The gap through the folds of drapery at the back, meanwhile, suggests a highly complicated mould with many detachable pieces would have been taken from Monti's model. These kinds of difficulty make the *Night* in some ways Copeland's 1862 follow-up to *Return of the Vintage*, a seven-figure group copied from a Sèvres tablepiece owned by the Earl of Lichfield, which was ostentatiously hollow in the middle and reputedly took over fifty moulds to cast (fig. 98).[398] Besides its illustrations of *Night* and *Day,* the *Art-Journal* 1862 Exhibition catalogue reminded readers of the material-specific craft represented

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[393] *International Exhibition 1862: Official Catalogue of the Industrial Department*, 258; Atkinson, "Sculpture of the Exhibition," 315.

[394] These events included the Lancashire Diseased Operative's fund, held by the Crystal Palace Company in 1863. *Sculptors' Journal and Fine Art Magazine*, 1863, 67.

[395] Di Bello, "'Multiplying Statues by Machinery'" 419, note 55.

[396] Atterbury, ed., *The Parian Phenomenon* 140, 175.

[397] Copeland, *Parian*, 111-12.

[398] Ibid., 116.

in the statuettes, even if it remained vague on details (and perhaps a little condescending about the status of such craft), calling them 'evidences of difficulties overcome—difficulties that can be apprehended only by those who understand the processes through which such productions must pass (being moreover, of one piece) before they are "finished."'[399] Whilst being in themselves representations of manufacturing prowess, however, the statuettes' primary job would have been to bring attention to Copeland's stands in the Exhibition, and to provide stepping stones for this attention to flow from full-scale statues like *The Sleep of Sorrow* to more cheap Parian casts like Copeland's veiled *Bride*.

The *Sleep of Sorrow*, Monti's most grandiose marble work, further reworks the levitation trick and augments it with extra devices. Beneath the floating figure is a rose bush, the surface of which Monti has fragmented to obfuscate the sense of mass-in-volume beneath it, by contrast with the large, legible mass of flesh it supports.[400] Meanwhile, as H.W. Janson points out, the floating figure's drapery provides a supportive back plane like that of a high relief, coaxing and delimiting the observer's viewing angle (as the *Houri*'s canopy would have done).[401] This relief-like composition allows Monti to support the mass of the rising body from behind whilst concealing 'joins' from the viewer. From the frontal view (facing the 'dream' figure side-on, that is), the swag of drapery in front of and below the figure's knees blocks its own transition to the curtain of drapery behind and above it, and to the swirling column of drapery behind and below it. Moreover, even when seen from different angles, the transition from base to figure is obscured—by the rose bush, the floating figure's legs, and the sleeping figure behind (figs. 99, 100). Of course, the resultant effect is hardly an optical illusion in the strong sense, more a game of structural hide-and-seek. Nonetheless, the group's visual effect in the Exhibition may have been much greater than we see today. Like the Metropolitan museum's *Veiled Woman/Houri*, the V&A's *Sleep of Sorrow* has suffered substantial erosion after having been displayed in adverse atmospheric conditions over at least two decades, both outside in a north London garden and inside in a Hertfordshire winter garden. The outermost layer of stone is highly eroded, as is most evident in the 'melted' appearance of the rose bush. With this layer we have lost the finishing of Monti or his assistants, and possibly any surface tinting. (The *Sleep of Sorrow* did have a double painted line like *Veritas* and involves a similar presentation of the torso amidst drapery, though the

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[399] *The Art-Journal Illustrated Catalogue of the 1862 International Exhibition*, 169.
[400] Radcliffe, "Monti's Allegory of the Risorgimento," 16.
[401] Janson, *Nineteenth-Century Sculpture*, 160-1.

London Stereoscopic Company's contemporary photographs do not suggest this was tinted as in *Veritas*). We do not know that Monti staged the *Sleep of Sorrow* in a special manner as with the *Houri*, but he reportedly did so for the one other marble work he exhibited at the Exhibition. Reviewing the Exhibition for *Temple Bar,* Edmund Yates bemoaned the lack of improvements in sculptural taste since 1851, as shown above all in the 'tricky sculpture' shown by Monti—namely, *The Sleep of Sorrow,* and what the official catalogue labelled 'A Georgian Lady of the Harem':[402]

> Commissioners, as if to give it the greatest prominence as a warning, but probably from their own want of taste, have, in lieu of the trophies which have been swept away, raised one which surpasses all the rest. Monti's group of sculpture, strong as it is in all his extravagant conceits, and above all the veiling in which the false public taste of 1851 has fortified him, does not prepare one for the monstrous peep-show beneath. Really the Commissioners should levy a tax of twopence for the privilege of looking at the Georgian Lady. The public might then appreciate the advantage of seeing a veiled piece of wax-work in painted marble, with a coloured glass to produce effect, and think what a loss it is to our museums that they are not handed over to the scene-painters to fill them with a coloured light and perfume of the tableaux of a pantomime. The class of painted or tinted sculpture is not to be confounded with this tricky art, for it is founded upon a principle which, right or wrong, is not merely a desire to please corrupt taste.[403]

The *Sleep of Sorrow* and *Georgian Lady* were displayed right in the middle of the 1862 Exhibition, which perhaps explains why the former was the first sculpture cited in various reviews like Yates's.[404] Yates's above passage classes the sculptures with the 'trophies' of produce that various firms or national commissions erected in the Exhibition. His disparaging remarks about wax-works, peep-shows, pantomimes and theatrical scene-painting, meanwhile, refer directly to the kinds of commercial amusement, catch-penny optical illusion and shows of technical novelty which furnished London's popular alternatives to more high-brow art shows like the Royal Academy exhibition, as well as uncomfortable points of

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[402] *International Exhibition 1862. Official Catalogue of the Fine Art Department.* 258.
[403] Yates, "Taste at South Kensington," *Temple Bar*, July 1862, 478.
[404] The position of Monti's sculpture is labelled in a detailed ground plan at the British Library: *Plans, Sections and Views of the International Exhibition* (London, 1862).

comparison with purportedly respectable shows like the Royal Panopticon or the International Exhibitions themselves.

Though Monti presumably did not anticipate the London Stereoscopic Company purchasing his *Sleep of Sorrow* as an advertising tool, that purchase may well have played upon and extended the spectacular potential invested in it. Sculpture photographs were disproportionately successful among the LSC's range of prints from the 1862 Exhibition. Di Bello has argued that LSC photographs of the Copeland's veiled *Bride* instance a new kind of highly desirable art product, particular to the crossover of stereoscope photography and sculpture, as epitomised in the way that crossover accentuated the ambiguous relief and allure of the *Bride*'s veil.[405] Along similar lines, we might suggest that the *Sleep of Sorrow*'s tantalising and relief-like tableaux of fabric, flora and flesh offered an especially good platform and logo for the stereoscopic experience.

II. SCHOLARSHIP ON *THE SLEEP OF SORROW* AND MONTI'S ANTI-IDEALISM

Various art historians have cited the sculpture of Monti, the *Sleep of Sorrow* in particular, as an instance of significant shifts in mid-nineteenth-century tastes in ideal sculpture. Anthony Radcliffe, Julius Bryant and Alison Yarrington have all seen Monti's sculpture in light of the Milanese *Scuola Lombarda*, as part of a progressive embrace of naturalism, neo-baroque virtuosity and contemporary themes, which 'broke the legacy of Canova and his British admirers.'[406] Radcliffe has traced these preferences through the sculptural products of Monti and his peers, Bryant through their British patrons, Yarrington in their reception by British critics.

Both Radcliffe and Yarrington read the stylistic character of *The Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy* in terms of its political associations. Radcliffe's 1970 article established its status as an allegory of Italian unification:

> The imagery is simple. The sleeping figure represents Italy just emerged from
> Austrian domination. […] Above her the roses bloom, and a veiled figure,

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[405] Di Bello, "'Multiplying Statues by Machinery'," 419-20.
[406] Bryant, "Bergonzoli's *Amori Degli Angeli*," 16.

representing her dream of the Italy of the future, floats upward with a serene expression. There is no precise literary source for the title of the group, but the concept is a familiar one in Risorgimento literature.[407]

The perceived stylistic genealogies or associations of Monti's exuberant sculptures are central to these political readings. Focussing on technical devices in the *Sleep of Sorrow*, Radcliffe argues that Monti developed these with reference to the more overtly political work of his Milanese peers, Magni (fig. 101) and Vela, and their common inspiration, Gianlorenzo Bernini. Radcliffe claims Monti addressed a deficiency in the levitation illusion of his earlier Copeland *Night* (that the load bearing continuity of base and figure was too obvious) by marrying it with the confusing flowery forms of Vela's *Flora* (1857) and the general effect of Bernini's *Apollo and Daphne*, which also presents a female body borne up upon accessory vegetation and captured hovering amidst the pull of upward and downward forces. (fig. 102).[408] The influence of Bernini's sculpture, Radcliffe holds, is evidenced both by its status as a touchstone for all nineteenth-century attempts at such illusions, and by the way Monti seems to have quoted the exposed flank of his 'Dream' figure from that of Daphne. On the back of this association with Bernini and the sculpture's general rebuke to 'neoclassical' orthodoxy, Racliffe argues that it was one instance of wider, complementary revolutions in the aesthetic and political fields: Monti and his Milanese peers represented the last step in Italian sculpture's long march to emancipate itself from the influence of Canova and Roman classicism, and realise 'a wholly contemporary realist art rooted in social and political activity.'[409]

Like Radcliffe, Yarrington sees Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* as a 'complex allegory of the Risorgimento' besides other examples of counter-classical naturalism in works like Magni's *Reading Girl* (fig. 101). Yarrington, however, situates her reading amongst the specificities of display and reception at the 1862 Exhibition. She asks what 'made in Italy' might have meant in 'a site where national identities were performed, paraded, confused, and inevitably judged

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[407] Radcliffe, "Monti's Allegory of the Risorgimento," 15. Certainly, Monti had himself participated in this military struggle by fighting in the Milanese guard at the battle of Custoza in 1848, and he executed the sculpture in the year that the new Italian kingdom was formed. As Radcliffe points out, he was absent from the period of development at the Accademia di Brera that produced more overtly political sculptures from peers like Vela. Ibid., 3-7.

[408] Ibid.," 16.

[409] Ibid., 3.

one against the other'.[410] This entails focussing on the contingent nature in which visitors found such identities in the styles of single objects, which were themselves thoroughly international in their production but staged in terms of national divisions by the Exhibition courts and text commentaries. The division between Italian court and that of the Papal states, for example, instantiated a current military struggle that clothed the sculptures therein with 'specific, current political affiliation'. Yarrington traces these perceived divisions and affiliations through reports of sculpture critics like Francis Turner Palgrave and Joseph Beavington Atkinson. Atkinson's reports, for example, characterised the modern sculpture of Italy and Rome, with the Venetian-Roman Canova as its fountainhead, as an ancient and languid beauty, imperilled by ossification, decay and corruption though luscious in its death-throes, 'both blessed and cursed by its resistance to the present and its adherence to a tradition that can be traced back to the ancient classical past.'[411] Atkinson's readers, Yarrington contends, would have discerned in his metaphors images of a timeworn, sinking Venice still under the yoke of Austria-Hungary, as well as an ossified Papal Rome, racked by malaria and resisting Garibaldi's enterprise to complete the new Italian nation.[412] Yet Atkinson also discerned a fresh return to nature in sculptures by Monti and Magni in the adjacent Italian courts, which, like the nationalist project itself, was associated with Rome but also presented an antidote for its maladies.[413] As Yarrington says:

> In his summary of the national schools of sculpture on show, he also makes much of the pernicious effects of Canova's legacy upon contemporary Italian sculpture […] There was, however, evidence that this pervasive Italian tendency that 'corrupts the ancient Greek and emasculates the vigour of the old Roman style', was in the process of being cured, the *Reading Girl* and the *Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy* undoubtedly indicated the efficacy of a 'simple return to nature'.[414]

This 'simple return to nature', meanwhile, also associated Monti's work with English sculptors like Thomas Woolner and with the Pre-Raphaelites.[415] Monti's residency in Britain, Yarrington notes, conveniently allowed Atkinson to frame the *Sleep of Sorrow* in accordance with domestic biases, and in contrast with Canova.

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[410] Yarrington, "'Made in Italy'," 75-97.
[411] Ibid., 79.
[412] Ibid., 78-80.
[413] Ibid., 92-95.
[414] Yarrington, "Made in Italy," 95.
[415] Atkinson, "International Exhibition, 1862. No. VI.—Sculpture:—Foreign Schools," 214.

Despite the many valuable insights of the above accounts, it is all too easy to re-frame or re-contextualise Monti's sculpture in ways that undermine their fundamental premise, that his sculpture represented a stylistic reaction against Canova or 'neoclassical' idealism. Whilst being free of politically-specific accessory details like the *Reading Girl*'s Garibaldi medallion, the *Sleep of Sorrow* exhibits a different order of verisimilitude: both have multi-faceted compositions that seem to invite a close-range inspection of sculpted surfaces, but Monti does not render contemporary accessories like Magni's torn rush chair, and his relief-like composition is more about obfuscating perception and asking the viewer to play along with a general optical effect, to step back and squint as well as step in and scrutinise. Moreover, the forms are open to other associations that contradict the stylistic provenance drawn by Radcliffe. As shown above, *Night* and the formal features that link it to the *Sleep of Sorrow* have a direct ancestor, overlooked in the Monti scholarship, in the 1854 *Houri.* The *Houri* even shares a feature that the *Dream of Joy* does not, namely that exposure of right flank that was Radcliffe's evidence that drew the floating illusion from Bernini. Does, then, the *Houri* represent an earlier adaptation of Bernini's work? A work like Canova's *Hebe* might provide just as strong a candidate for 'influence'. *Hebe* tip-toes forward almost on thin air, her heels lifted from the statue's base and her centre of gravity completely undercut, with long and luxuriant s-shaped swathes of 'muslin' drapery wafting behind, like those in the *Houri* (figs. 103, 104). Why is Canova not as plausible a forebear of Monti's ideal sculpture, especially given Monti produced his *Vestal* for the Duke of Devonshire, Canova's most significant patron in Britain? Why, for that matter, the fair number of half-weightless female figures produced in this period, such as Fraikin's *Venus and Cupid* for instance (fig. 105), which have as much association with so-called 'neoclassicism' and fantasy as with 'realism' or nature? On this point, we should also note the awkwardness of Bryant's contention that British collectors of Italian virtuoso 'illusionism' of the *Sleep of Sorrow* variety were buying into some dissatisfaction with the 'chaste neoclassicism' of Canova, Gibson or R.J. Wyatt, before naming some of the most important sponsors of such 'neoclassical' artists, such as Devonshire or Joseph Neeld.[416] My point here is not to forward some alternative chain of influence for works like Monti's, but to ask why we feel obliged to posit some necessary visual conflict with Canova or 'neoclassicism' in the first place. We could narrate many different genealogical histories for the *Sleep of Sorrow,* based only on how we think it 'looks

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[416] Bryant, "Bergonzoli's *Amori Degli Angeli*," 19-21.

like' other sculptures, all of which will be fatally contingent on our frames of visual reference.

Of course, it is part and parcel of Yarrington's account that the sense of conflict between Monti's sculpture and that of Canova was contingent on narrative and exhibitionary frames of reference. The wider corpus of Atkinson's contemporary writings does bear out the reading Yarrington takes from his *Art-Journal* essay on sculpture at the 1862 Exhibition to some extent. Throughout his many essays on art and culture for the *Art-Journal* and *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* between 1858 and 1862, Atkinson appealed to 'truth' and 'nature' as touchstones for artistic excellence, and presumed these to be strongly connected with national civilisation.[417] He consistently used the terms of violence, revolution and military conflict to frame shows at the Royal Academy and International Exhibition as battlefields for hostile schools seeking command over the field of nature, whilst preaching 'extermination by the sword against those enemies of all that is lovely in art'.[418] He also constantly characterised Italy, by contrast with England and Northern Europe, as a romantic, 'picturesque', often diseased and degenerate, realm, where sculpture succumbed to 'waxen' degeneracy and where people lived and thought under the 'bewitching' spell of fancy, imagination and dreams of an antiquarian past or inexistent future, as opposed to the sobering realities of practical utility and the empirical present. He freely re-deployed these different aspects and contrasts as occasion demanded and encouraged exhibition visitors to do the same.[419]

Looking more closely at Atkinson's art criticism, its references, and the 1862 Exhibition context, however, we find that the narrative about Monti's politically-infused naturalism begins to break down. Atkinson's essays explicitly invoked caricatures of Italy as a languid realm bewitched by its own beauty and the weight of antiquity to comment on both the *Risorgimento* and the relation of Rome to British art, but in ways that drastically complicate Yarrington's reading of him: He cited this caricature on the one hand to argue that Italy was

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[417] This presumed connection is most palpable in an article on the historical fortunes of art in Italy, where Atkinson ties himself in knots to solve the 'paradox' that Christian culture in its pure and pre-Papal state also produced rude art—a solution he finds in the decadence of the later Roman empire. Atkinson, "Italy—of the Arts the Cradle and the Grave," 603-20.
[418] Atkinson, "London Exhibitions—Conflict of the Schools," 128. See also Atkinson, "The International Exhibition: Its Purpose and Prospects," 472-88.
[419] One article in the *Art-Journal* (not individually ascribed to Atkinson but in a series amongst others he signed and betraying several judgments characteristic of his writing) gives a primer for visitors to the 1862 exhibition by suggesting alternative lines of contrast—of religion, climate etc.—which they could use to make sense of the art displayed by different nations. "International Exhibition, 1862: Pictures and Statues, British and Foreign," *Art-Journal*, May 1862, 113-6.

incapable of self-government and poured scorn on the revolutionary ambitions of Mazzini, Louis Napoleon and the *Risorgimento*,[420] and on the other hand to second Gibson's call for a pensioned British academy in Rome, arguing that the city's 'imaginative' spell might redeem the harshness of English 'literal art'.[421] Indeed, throughout his essays Atkinson expressed a longstanding and unmitigated loathing of the Pre-Raphaelites and what he deemed to be their faulty conception of naturalism.[422] Atkinson's references to sculpture in the 1862 Exhibition also quite forcefully debar any simple dichotomies between old Rome and new Italy, or 'idealism' and 'realism'. For a start, though Italy and Rome had separate courts in the 1862 Exhibition, all three of Canova's statues that were exhibited were in the former, not the latter.[423] Atkinson begins his *Art-Journal* essay on the Exhibition's sculpture, meanwhile, by immediately proclaiming it necessary 'to show how Phidias was at once the most truthful yet imaginative, the most naturalistic yet ideal of sculptors, and thus, if possible, to free our galleries from those transcripts of common nature, those reproductions of vulgar incidents which have proved the degradation not only of individual artists, but of national schools.'[424] Following this, Atkinson discusses the modern Italian school and Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow and the Dream of Joy* (his first mention of any individual sculpture). This passage presents two important points on Canova's relation to Monti: firstly, that the malady of Canova's has nothing to do with any straightforward lack of naturalism *per se* and secondly that Monti's work actually *shares* this malady, and does not represent its cure:

> Canova, in common with the other great sculptors of his school and country, was, in style it is true, essentially classic, but the chastity of the ancient Greek was in his hand corrupted, and the vigour of the old Roman emasculated. Exquisite indeed is the softness which Canova gave, and that many modern Italians still give, to flesh, and admirable the delicacy they have thrown into gossamer drapery, so that the marble seems almost to breathe and blush with life, and swoon to softest sentiment. Yet these graces, in themselves so winning, wanting the charm of simple nature, show themselves prone to degenerate into direct affectation. It was said of Canova that his

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[420] Atkinson, "Italy—of the Arts the Cradle and the Grave," 603-20; "Italy: her Nationality or Dependence," 350-65.
[421] Atkinson, "The Art-Student in Rome," 381-94.
[422] Atkinson, "The Art-Student in Rome," 385-9; Aktinson, "London Exhibitions—Conflict of the Schools," 136.
[423] The statues were the Hope *Venus* and busts of Napoleon and Madame Letizia lent by the Duke of Devonshire. *International Exhibition 1862: Official Catalogue of the Fine Art Department*, 258.
[424] Atkinson, "The Sculpture of the Exhibition," 313-4.

women seldom looked modest, and his men never manly.[425] It must be confessed that his figures have the air of a dancing-master, and seem as if draped by the hand of the milliner, and so the school of Canova, which now reigns throughout Italy, forsaking the severity of the antique, is surrendered to the soft fascination of romance. The old Roman has given place to the young Italian, Hercules has been transformed into Endymion or Adonis, and Mars languishes for the embrace of Venus. Yet if Italian Art has lost virility, it has scarcely lessened in fecundity. Each, indeed, of our International Exhibitions has witnessed to the fertility of Italian imagination, and shown the ready facility with which marble can yield to the sculptor's touch a surface sensitive to emotion. Of works this tenderly impresses with sentiment, Monti's 'Sleep of Sorrow and Dream of Joy' is the consummated type. Like to the 'Swooning Psyche,' by Tenerani [seen next to Magni's *Reading Girl* in the Italian court] the very stone seems to utter romance, and to sigh forth a desolate tale of ill-requited love. Like to the plaintive and passionate tones of a lyre, these lines cut in marble, delicious in their harmony, bring tears to the eye; like to the luscious odours shed from the orange groves of Italy, the sweetness of these forms bathes in surfeit the senses. Such is the school of Italian romance which holds the multitude captive.[426]

On the basis of this section, it is difficult to see how Monti's sculpture can, as Yarrington says, have 'undoubtedly indicated the efficacy of a 'simple return to nature', when it was in fact declared 'the consummated type' of a school 'wanting the charm of simple nature'. Here and elsewhere, Atkinson describes alternate forms of naturalism or illusion in modern sculpture, which are usually gendered, none of them necessarily hitting upon the ideal truth of the Greeks. The 'naturalistic' schools he names, offering 'literal' and 'photographic' correctives to Canova's 'romantic' spell of blushing life, represent merely one or other, very particular though perhaps more masculine, forms of sculptural nature, with their own attendant pitfalls (those of rudeness and artlessness).

Though perhaps minor in themselves, the above complications in scholarly accounts point, I suggest, to a more general problem. Invaluable efforts to contextualise Monti's sculptures and

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[425] This 'seldom modest, never manly' phrase is a direct quotation from Jameson, *Hand-book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 48. Atkinson cited the *Hand-Book* elsewhere, though criticisms of Canova's sculpture as 'effeminate', and comparisons to this effect with that of Thorvaldsen, were thoroughly conventional by this point.
[426] Atkinson, "The Sculpture of the Exhibition," 315.

the contemporary significance of their style are hindered or thrown off course by insufficiently contextualised and static conceptions of sculptural style or formal appearance itself. One such hindrance is the assumption that any kind of realism, naturalism or illusionism identified in the sculptures at hand, whether by the historian or the sculptors' contemporary critics, must, almost by definition, have been in conflict or tension with 'neoclassicism' and its associates (chief among these being Canova). Yet the stylistic categories that period critics used were not only shot through with social and political ideologies, but were also intrinsically malleable and context-relative. Even where artists and critics did use dualistic contrasts between 'idealism' and 'realism' (the term 'neoclassicism' was never used), the way these terms referred to, framed, grouped or divided particular sculptures was contingent on the writer, their selection of examples, or the *aspects* of 'reality' or 'ideality' they chose to highlight in artworks. Monti's veiled sculptures, nonetheless, offer the historian an anchor in this shifting realm of critical favour. Throughout their time in the spotlight, critics in Britain held Monti's veiled sculptures to represent the opposite of what ideal sculpture should be, or do. Having examined the development of Monti's veiled sculptures in relation to international exhibitions and commercial display in its first half, the rest of this chapter examines their critical reception in light of the same context. In doing so, it suggests that descriptions of Monti's realism or illusionism are best understood, less as references to form or optical conceit *per se*, than to honesty and professional ethics.

III. THE VEIL IN THE PRESS

As noted above in the discussion of the *Veiled Vestal* at the Great Exhibition, the popularity of Monti's veiled sculpture met with sustained, virulent criticism in the art press. Just as the veiled sculptures in marble and porcelain had been a platform or pivot for demonstrating what sculptural media *could* do, and the appeals they might make to a wide audience, they also became, as I have already briefly indicated, the critics' touchstone for articulating what sculpture *could* or *should* not do, for delimiting the medium's proper borders. Whilst representing a permeable boundary between marble, porcelain, fabric and flesh, the veil came to represent the barrier between true sculpture and false sculpture. From the Great Exhibition onwards into the 1860s, the 'veiled face trick' hardened into a byword for meretricious novelty in art, a means of calling to mind the problems with the popularisation of sculpture and sculpture display. This wealth of virulent sculpture criticism foregrounds tensions within

the culture of 'rational recreation' embodied by the Great Exhibition and between the rhetorical imperatives of different parties with a stake in it—between sculptors, journalists, exhibition officials, commercial manufacturers and showmen. By the same token, it demonstrates how discussions of 'idealism' and 'realism' in contemporary sculpture were not simply formal concerns transplanted from academic discourse into the realm of industrial exhibition, but were informed by the melee of competitive display and art writing in that realm.

An argument over Monti's 1847 show at Colnaghi's gallery presaged the rhetoric that attached to his veils four years later at the Great Exhibition. The show's centrepiece was a monument to Barbara, Lady de Mauley by Raffaele and his late father, Gaetano Monti, commissioned by Lord de Mauley for an expensive gothic mortuary chapel (fig. 106).[427] The monument featured a recumbent marble effigy flanked by two kneeling angels on separate plinths, in lamentation and prayer. The angels were lightly draped, whilst Lady de Mauley's body was encased in a stiff beaded corset, her hands crossed against it holding a rosary and crucifix, themselves decorated by a ring and bracelet.[428] This monument, along with Monti's *Veiled Vestal*, drew a disgusted tirade from a *Morning Post* correspondent, who deemed the attention shown to costume by the Montii and their patrons offensive and un-Christian:

> This fashion of decorating a corpse in the trappings of living vanity has in our eyes nothing poetical or picturesque, and does not harmonise with the sentiments that characterise this country. The awfulness, the sublimity, nay, the very beauty of death, is by the obtrusion of the milliner destroyed. It is true the marble lessens the repulsiveness of the contrast; but as the mental vision recognises the intention of author, we turn from the image in disgust. Prettiness and sorrow do not harmonise, and grief look like hypocrisy when it has such leisure to study the latest fashions of the gay. Frivolity and sadness—the lady's maid and the undertaker—the mantua-maker and the sexton—the gaudiness of the day and the form that should speak immortality—grate against each other. […] A sinful and an abhorrent voluptuousness, from which the heart recoils, is by the worst custom of a foreign land exposed; and we

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[427] The chapel is in St. Nicholas' church, Hatherop, Gloucester.

[428] In his dying year of 1855 (whilst he was put upon by Monti's bankruptcy), Lord de Mauley described the monument as 'a work of considerable importance, much to my satisfaction.' Handwritten transcript of a letter from Lord de Mauley to another guarantor of Monti, January 29, 1855, Monti papers.

have no sympathy with the person who could afford to admire the filthy usage that is lamely defended by the assumption that the deceased is a spiritual bride.[429]

The passage's virulence and xenophobia suggest it was fired by anti-papal sentiments. The article, meanwhile, draws upon a longstanding academic debate on the benefits of abstract or Grecian drapery in sculpture over elaborate or historic costume accessories. The feature of the article most significant to the present chapter, however, is the way religious and formal objections are interwoven through an idea of the sculptors' trade ethics. Instead of using their craft to give expression to the eternal rest of the deceased, the Montis were using the deceased as the scaffold for a temporal, vain display of their own craft. A sense of shirked responsibility permeates the critic's objection to materialism in Monti's veiled sculptures, and in the optical effect of 'sleep' in Lady de Mauley's eyes (an effect that another critic attributed to the deliberate extension of shadows under the eyelids), which they felt a petty substitute for the idea of 'more than living repose' the sculptors should have aimed at.[430] Because they were *artifices* without genuine pious sentiment, meanwhile, the veil and sleeping eyes were ultimately *easy*: 'We here perceive no second thought or blending of opposite ideas. No difficulty is mastered.'[431] The repetition of the veil motif further signified that Monti was using his subjects as podia for a detached show of executive skill, blasphemously so when he swapped it between a female allegory of 'Christianity' and a pagan vestal. Along with the critic's description of Monti's superficial, flashy-but-easy technical display, meanwhile, went the concession that it had, or would have, temporary purchase on other observers and 'charm the uneducated', even if eternity would end up taking the sheen off Monti's accomplishments.

An immediate rebuke of the *Morning Post* article from the short-lived *Fine Art Journal* hints at the kind of vested interests and wider concerns driving such criticism. The rebuke itself was the second sally of an on-going spat between the two (anonymous) journalists. In it, the

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[429] "Fine Arts," *The Morning Post*, June 5, 1847, 5.

[430] The critic also says here that 'the features are of an everlasting type, and what beauty they possess is certainly not recommended by originality', suggesting that generic facial features had been substituted for a true portrait. The effect of sleep, rather than death, was also reported and given a pseudo-technical explanation in the *Art-Journal*: 'The features are most carefully and beautifully executed, and, for the sake of gathering shadow and giving effect, the artist has had recourse to the license of overshooting the upper lid of the eye to preserve this effect, which is rather that of life than of death.' "Minor Topics of the Month: Italian Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, August 1847, 302.

[431] "Fine Arts," *Morning Post*, June 5 1847, 5.

Fine Arts Journal correspondent accused the *Morning Post* writer of having deliberately overlooked qualities in Monti's sculptures as foreign imports, in a craven attempt to curry favour with British artists whom its writer had previously offended.[432] In response, the *Fine Arts Journal* reporter asserted the goodness of international free trade in art, and the right of British aristocrats to patronise 'works of fancy' to suit their private tastes, heedless of critics' prescriptions. These issues of competition and advocacy amongst journalists and sculptors offer a small taste of those that continued to surround Monti's sculpture at the international exhibitions.

Ideals and tricks at the Great Exhibition

Whilst the anti-virtuosity rhetoric in the *Morning Post* article had a long pedigree in British art criticism, the Great Exhibition provided a great platform and stimulant for it.[433] Beyond the *Morning Post* tirade and the riposte of a rival journalist in the *Fine Arts Journal*, however, other notices of both Monti's shows at Colnaghi's in 1847 and 1850 were hospitable. The *Athenaeum* lightly censured Monti's veiled busts as '*rifaciamenti*', but the *Art-Journal* and *ILN* praised their charm and delicacy.[434] This contrasts with the lengths that all these publications went during the Great Exhibition to denounce Monti's *Veiled Vestal* and its popularity. This is partly a matter of the format and urgency of the reviews: Though they donned a veneer of connoisseurship ('…nothing of the school of Canova, but here and there an approach to the modern German school…'),[435] reviews of sculpture at dealerships like Colnaghi's were usually little more than expanded advertisements, found amongst pages for minor notices of the London art scene.[436] The investment that periodicals had in the Great Exhibition, however, led to lengthier, more vociferous and rancorous criticisms of the manufactures and sculptures there.

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[432] "Sculpture by Gaetano and Raphael Monti." *Fine Arts' Journal*, June 12, 1847, 503.
[433] See Gombrich, *Preference for the Primitive*: 1-144.
[434] "Minor Topics of the Month: Italian Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, August 1847, 302; "Minor Topics of the Month: Italian Sculpture," *Art Journal*, September 1850, 299. "Fine Arts: Fine Art Gossip," *Athenaeum*, August 31, 1850, 930; "Fine Arts: Monti's Sculpture," *John Bull*, September 7, 1850, 571; "New Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, September 14, 1850, 231.
[435] "Minor Topics of the Month: Italian Sculpture," *Art-Journal*, August 1847, 302.
[436] See, for example, "Minor Topics of the Month: Sculpture" *Art-Journal*, May 1847, 183; "Fine Arts: Statue, by Mr. H. Powers," *Daily News*, March 3, 1847; "Exhibition of the Sculpture and Paintings of M. Antoine Etex," *Art-Journal*, June 1849, 197.

On the back of its position as Britain's premier fine and decorative arts periodical, the *Art-Journal*, for example, claimed a central role as an organ of the Great Exhibition and the design reform project it represented, hyping and commemorating the event with regular in-depth articles on exhibits and its own lavishly engraved illustrated catalogue. Likewise, the *Illustrated London News* (also unrivalled in its own market), having already successfully promoted Paxton's Crystal Palace design, cashed in on the Exhibition with no less than twenty-five special supplements covering it.[437] These included six of the longest and most detailed articles on sculpture in the show, which began by announcing that the solemnity and significance of a comparative display of art from around the world licensed a particularly rigorous criticism of sculpture, 'with more reference to fundamental principles than is thought convenient or agreeable in ordinary newspaper criticism.'[438] The need to exploit and eke out interest in the event by generating as much copy as possible probably fuelled the criticism as much as did ideology, aesthetic sensibilities or artistic allegiances. Nonetheless, international rivalries and the chance to air domestic debates about sculpture, design reform and the art market on a giant new stage greatly contributed to the periodical discourse on sculpture.

The extent and consistency of critical spleen directed at Monti's *Veiled Vestal* by the Great Exhibition art press and sculpture jury marked it as the most deplorable work of sculpture in the show. With its concomitant popularity amongst the Exhibition visitors, however, it represented something of a knot in official narratives of the show. As noted in this chapter's first section, all commentators conceded Monti's exemplary skill, but with terms that belittled it and distinguished it from the 'ideal'. They labelled it a mere 'triumph of mechanical dexterity', 'a piece of skilful mechanism',[439] a show of handwork without thought or sentiment, a 'difficulty not worth the trouble of overcoming',[440] a 'novelty', 'curiosity', and above all a 'trick'.[441] Terms such as 'mechanical' implied that Monti had overstepped the taxonomic barrier between the fine art' and 'industry' in the Crystal Palace; that he had falsely exhibited as the product of sculptural authorship something that rightly belonged with sculptural displays designed to show 'reproductive' prowess only, such as Brucciani's faux marble cast of the Apollo Belvedere, the 'Theseus' carved by Cheverton's reduction machine,

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[437] See Leary, "A Brief History of the *Illustrated London News*" and Prasch, "The *ILN* and International Exhibitions."

[438] "Sculpture. (Second Notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, May 10, 1851, 401.

[439] "The Veiled Vestal," *Art-Journal*, May 1853, 135.

[440] "Fine Arts. The Milanese Sculpture at the Exhibition," *Daily News*, August 4, 1851, 2.

[441] "Sculpture for 1851," *Athenaeum*, June 28, 1851, 698-700.

or the gothic altar screen produced by Thomas Jordan's patent wood carving lathe. On the other hand, terms like 'novelty' and 'curiosity' gave the object a social status, as a product made for popular amusement or frivolous aristocratic patronage. In either case, critics' lamentations about the *Vestal*'s popularity may be read as tacit admissions that, in this case at least, the Great Exhibition had failed in its anticipated function as a giant school of design, dispelling vulgarities and failures in the market for art and manufacture with the light of international comparison.

The characterisations of 'ideal' sculpture within which critics framed Monti's *Vestal* were informed by international rivalry and national partisanship. Throughout the Exhibition, the *Art-Journal*'s discussion of issues like nudity in sculpture or the decisions of the juries was marked by a partisan advocacy of British artists in general.[442] When the *Art-Journal* dismissed the entire 'Austro-Italian' gallery as heap of trivial exercises in carving, this was part of a serial essay narrating Continental decorative art in general as totems to wasted labour and extravagant patronage, whilst defending British design by contrast as nobly utilitarian and democratic.[443] Nationalised characterisations of sculpture technique gained purchase from a broad distinction in the materiality of British and non-British sculpture displays, meanwhile. Whilst the sculptures on the non-British side of the Crystal Palace, and in the Austrian court especially, were 'finished' works in marble or other expensive materials, those in the British sculpture court were predominantly plaster originals.[444] The *Athenaeum* framed its sculpture report around a contest between British and non-British sculpture, and championed the former by distinguishing between the transcendental 'spiritualities' and 'technical qualities' in a way that played upon the widely repeated distinction between modelling or composition and carving as acts of mind and hand respectively:[445]

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[442] "The Nude in Statuary," *Art-Journal*, September 1851, 227; "The Juries of the Great Exhibition," *Art-Journal*, September 1851, 238; "Lord Canning's Report of the Awards of the Juries," *Art-Journal*, November 1851, 294-5; "The Awards of the Juries," *Art-Journal* November 1851, 295-7.

[443] S. C., "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace," *Art-Journal*, June 1851, 180-1; July 1851, 197-8; September 1851, 230-1; November 1851, 293-4.

[444] The Austrian gallery was generally recognized as one of the most showy and heavy displays of expensive handcraft in the Exhibition, the other commonly reported exhibit beyond the Milanese sculpture being a giant draped zebra wood bed with statuettes in niches carved all round it.

[445] Among the favoured British exhibits were the two hunter-and-dog sculptures by Baily and Gibson – one pensive and poetic, the other active and severe - both conjuring different aspects of the antique. As in other reviews like those in the *ILN*, sculptures representing the same subject are discussed together and the appropriateness of their respective modes of formal treatment contrasted. "Sculpture for 1851," *Athenaeum*, June 28, 1851, 698-700.

Very clever manipulation—consummate tricks of the chisel—more than one of our neighbours exhibit […]. In all that relates to the sound canon of Sculpture we feel that the English school shows to great advantage among this gathering of schools. The inspiration which has shaped many a remarkable foreign work here is an inspiration of the hand, if we may speak,—not of the heart. No amount of clever manipulation can raise the works of the chisel above the level of mere statuary. The Muse of Sculpture is no trickster.[446]

Monti's *Vestal*, in turn, provided the author's flagship example of foreign 'manipulation': a piece of 'dexterity with the chisel' only; 'a difficulty not worth the trouble of encountering ingeniously overcome'; 'an ingenuity which we have no desire to see at home'.[447] On the other side of the coin, the *ILN* sculpture reporter was 'struck with the contrast' between foreign marbles and British plasters, but read this as a sign of high motives in the former and base motives in the latter. (They still admonished the *Vestal*, however.) Whilst foreign artists had sacrificed expensive materials 'in good faith' to join in sporting competition of art, the British looked like they were meanly using the event to ply their trade, 'the actual display being limited to some score or two of rough plaster models, many of which have been drawn from a long seclusion in the darker recesses of the studio, to be thrust forth to take their chance of "a commission" in the general *melee*'.[448] In this way, national divisions in the Exhibition displays prompted the question of what kind of material practice defined the truly ideal sculptor and set them above the world of mere commerce.

Readers of such criticisms might have associated Monti's illusion with various different, more or less 'creative' aspects of sculpture production, depending on their knowledge of such production. The association that the term 'mechanical' connotes with the reproductive work of assistant carvers, casters, or even sculptural machinery, would be partly metaphorical: Monti would have deployed all this work in his practice, but as we have seen in section 2.i above, what his veil precisely did *not* do was replicate the three-dimensional volume of something from one material to the next. What Monti *did* do was arrange shapes and finish surfaces to orchestrate a visual effect—just those aspects of the craft that many artists clung to as touchstones of creative authorship amidst sculptural reproduction. Nevertheless,

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[446] "Sculpture for 1851," *Athenaeum*, June 28, 1851, 689.
[447] Ibid.
[448] "Sculpture. (Fourth Notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, June 7, 1851, 524.

assistants' work was also associated not just with replicating models but with modelling (and carving) certain accessory objects, or even parts of drapery and costume, that were downstream from the master's attention to flesh.

Contemporary definitions of the 'ideal' in terms of costume accessories or proper objects of representation acquired heightened currency by the composition of the Crystal Palace crowd. The Great Exhibition was not just a place where people of different classes and nationalities mingled, but a huge forum for observing the behaviour of others, especially behaviours of observation itself. But it remained the common response of art correspondents to bemoan the way sections of the crowd gravitated to sculptures presenting essentially 'trivial' subjects or feats of naturalism. A common target was Eugène Simonis' pair of sculptures symbolising 'Happiness' and 'Misery', depicting an infant playing contentedly with a puppet and another crying after having torn a toy-drum (figs. 107, 108).[449] 'The *Boy and the Broken Drum*', said the *Athenaeum*, 'is a piece of every-day nature truthfully rendered, and which everybody can and does understand. […] The true Muse of Sculpture has no knowledge of themes like this.'[450] The attractions exerted by the *Veiled Vestal* often features alongside those of the 'Boy and Drum' and similar prosaic subjects, as a work of fashion and popularism. This context stimulated some quite idiosyncratic visual associations in a *Daily News* report, which twinned Monti's veil and ribbon around her waist with the bonnet of Magni's (nearby) *First Steps* (fig. 109), the ringlets of Canova's ideal heads, and the fluttering headscarf in Cabanel's painting *La Chiaruccia*, as an instance of popular material charm inappropriate to sculpture proper.[451] In a similar way, the *Athenaeum* associated Monti's veil with old controversies surrounding Sir Richard Westmacott's *Distressed Mother* monument to Mary Warren:

> The sackcloth on the knees of Sir Richard Westmacott's sweet female figure in Westminster Abbey finds more admirers than the touching beauty of the face and form. The guides direct especial attention to its true sack-cloth character,—and they at least know the taste of the many. The Veil of M. Monti has in the same way more

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[449] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue: Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations.* 1166-7.
[450] "Sculpture for 1851," *Athenaeum*, June 28, 1851, 689.
[451] "Fine Arts. The Milanese Sculpture at the Exhibition," *Daily News*, August 4, 1851, 2.

admirers than the delicate limbs and sweet face of his mother of mankind [*Eve after the Fall*].[452]

The preferences of the 'the mob' (as the writer called admirers of Monti's veil) are here reduced to an affinity with everyday textiles and a blindness to the sculptor's ideal of expressive flesh. Moreover, the implicit association of Monti with Westminster Abbey guidebook writers suggests the sculptor's conniving awareness of these blind spots in his audience.

Distinctions between viewing habits or sympathies with 'the ideal' could be trade-based, and interlaced at the Exhibition with contemporary debates about design reform and visual education. As Kreigel outlines, some advocates of British manufacture were compelled to re-invest the appearance of articles at the Exhibition with narratives of economic production or 'wasted labour', after the ban on selling within the Crystal Palace eliminated price as a tool for comparing different goods.[453] This issue came together with contemporary interests in visual 'training' in the *Art-Journal*'s serial essay, 'Wanderings in the Crystal Palace'. Throughout these dispatches, the author defended British exhibitors by exalting mechanical prowess and general utility over luxury goods.[454] The journalist, meanwhile, applauded the 'technical' interests, values and viewing habits of shilling-day visitors and artisans who closely inspected exhibits of their own trade in a rigorous and 'dissecting' kind of way. These visitors had preserved the earnest viewing culture inside the Crystal Palace from the pleasure-seeking of the idle rich and non-artisanal working class. The author encouraged readers to 'dissect' and de-sanctify the beautiful appearances of handcrafted wares and to identify the cruelly wasted labour underneath. A piece of Indian muslin, for example, was thought so bewitching that the 'eye rests upon it as upon the exquisite skin of an infant—the petals of the most delicate flower—the lightest plumage of a bird—the down of a white moth's wing'[455] Yet when the eye was informed that this patch of cotton probably 'absorbed the life of a man', it saw in the beauty of 'this exquisite floating cloud' only the testimony of

[452] "Sculpture for 1851," *Athenaeum*, June 28, 1851, 689.
[453] See Kriegel, chapter 3, "Commodification and its discontents," in *Grand Designs.*
[454] S. C., "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace," *Art-Journal* June 1851, 180-1; July 1851, 197-8; September 1851, 230-1; November 1851, 293-4.
[455] S. C., "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace," *Art-Journal*, September 1851, 231.

barbarism.[456] When it came to the pointless handwork in Monti's marble fabric and the Milanese court generally, the visual training and habits of many remained inadequate:

> The only quality that seems to strike them is, generally, the exact representation of some trivial accessory—a veil, the coil of a rope, or the curl of a wig. The truth is, their education and pursuits naturally lead them to a lively sympathy with the industry that conquers technical difficulties; and not at all with the genius that embodies a poetical Idea. There is, however, a vast deal of this preference of the curious over the beautiful, in the rich vulgar as well as the poor; as the admiration of the Veiled Lady abundantly proves.
>
> As to the good to result to the Art of Sculpture, it would be absurd to hope much, from the display of works, many of which are more calculated to mislead, than to form, taste; unless indeed—which is possible—it be necessary to educate the wholly untaught eye, through imperfect models, up to perfect. The appreciation of the products of the great age of Greek Art (which England has the inestimable privilege of possessing) being the test, how much of Art education must be passed through before that is arrived at! Those who *have* arrived at it are counted by tens, if not by units.[457]

In this passage, opposition to the Milanese sculptures leads the critic to upturn their stance on the crowd somewhat. Having applauded the technical self-education of 'Shilling day' visitors, the writer asserts a point of view above and beyond the narrow limits of their 'technical' education, pursuits and sympathies, placing the realm of the 'ideal' beyond their horizons.[458]

Emphasising unequal faculties of perception and judgment amongst the Great Exhibition crowd, or attacking sculptors for exploiting such inequalities, was a means not only to assert social distinction ('The vulgar may wonder at it,' said *Fraser's Magazine* of the *Vestal*, 'but

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[456] Ibid.

[457] S. C., "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace.—No. IV," *Art Journal*, November 1851, 293.

[458] This kind of mixed social message might also be observed in earlier articles in which 'S.A.' heaps praise upon the progressively utilitarian and mechanical beauty of Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace, whilst then fearing that, 'the effect of the introduction of statues is rather to degrade sculpture to a level with the mechanical arts. And this is so true, that one cannot think of seeing the god-like works of the best age of Greek sculpture in such a place, without a sort of shudder, as at an act of impiety.' "Wanderings in the Crystal Palace," *Art-Journal*, June 1851, 180.

the educated grieve'), but also to claim professional authority.[459] With its emphasis on technology, industry and education, its competitive edge, and the various essay competitions it prompted, the Great Exhibition encouraged claims to expertise, whether of the critic *qua* critic or sculptor *qua* sculptor. Henry Weekes's *Treatise on Fine Art at the Great Exhibition*, which won the Society of Arts prize for essays on the Exhibition, put great emphasis on the sculptor's practical knowledge over connoisseurial theorisation.[460] Weekes did so partly to champion the cause of contemporary British sculptors against British collectors' purported preference for antiques or foreign works.[461] Whilst giving British statues in the Exhibition an easy ride, he tried to un-veil visual malpractice in Monti's Austrian sculpture department, claiming this was deliberately darkened to conceal faults of execution in the statues—faults that Weekes claimed to see, where the lazy 'eye of the public' could not. A similar attack came in the *ILN* sculpture reports, which were suspected of being written by a London sculptor writing behind a screen of anonymity.[462] Having noted that Monti conjured the appearance of real lace on a marble figure 'from the distance of the breadth of the room', the *ILN* critic proceeded 'to a nearer examination of Signor Monti's performance' to give a quasi-technical deconstruction of its effect:

> Artfully disposing of the folds of the veil, and making them generally very broad on the outer parts, and very narrow, nay, almost vanishing, on the inner parts, he further roughs the surface of the intermediate spaces, as if the flesh were actually covered with a veil; and these surfaces seen at a distance, take the lights in such manner, that, blending with those on the outer surfaces of the veil, they produce the general effect intended, the form of the face being dimly and indistinctly seen as through a veil. In reality, portions of it only are seen at one and the same time, and in one direction, and the effect so produced is not a genuine effect *quasi*, but a delusion; not a matter

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[459] "Memorabilia of the Exhibition Season," *Fraser's Magazine*, August 1851, 130.

[460] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, iii-viii.

[461] Weekes's second chapter is framed around the history of British sculpture and the impediments of its patronage. He concludes by saying 'It may be thought that in pointing out the drawbacks which English art has had to content with, we are endeavouring to make excuses for a pre-supposed inferiority to Foreign art. So far from this, however, we trust to show that it is in many respects more worthy of attention than the English public, who are too apt to be caught with what is foreign, are disposed to admit; and even were it inferior, the fault could not be justly placed to the want of ability in the English artist. It would lie rather at the door of those who should have fostered its powers.' Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 29.

[462] In a letter to Edmund Everett about the same critic's treatment of his *Greek Slave,* Hiram Powers wrote, 'I read the ill natured remarks about my statue in the Illustrated London News, but it gave me no pain … The article was written I have been told by a sculptor in London, of whose works the paper spoke most highly.' Letter from Powers to Edmund Everett, November 9, 1851, Powers papers.

brought to the mind's eye by means of the sense of sight, but a trick played off upon the too credulous fancy at the expense of the organ of vision.[463]

This multi-angled angled analysis on the *trompe l'oeil* presents Monti's display as like a forced-perspective theatre stage or panorama illusion and the writer as a knowing stagehand.

In light of the contexts laid out above, demeaning Monti's *Veiled Vestal* as a 'trick' worked on two levels. First, it equated Monti's performance in formal terms with popular attractions, such as waxworks shows and panoramas, based on *trompe l'oeil* and petty optical tricks concerning material objects: 'At first sight, one is inclined to think that the veil is not of marble,— that it is a real veil:—in other words, that it is an inferior trick to that which it is', said the *Athenaeum*. Alongside their transience and tawdriness, the experience of such tricks is associated with a fundamentally materialistic intentionality, most clearly highlighted in the *ILN* report:

> [A]t a distance of the breadth of the room, the face—the marble face—actually looks as if it were covered with a real piece of lace. This is a triumph of mechanical dexterity certainly, but upon the value and merit of which we may have some misgiving, seeing that it achieves a greater verisimilitude of the worthless rag of a veil—being to the eye reality—than of the poor face, which remains still, pale, cold stone.[464]

Notice the idea that the 'face' behind the veil, despite being a projection of the mind co-dependent with the veil illusion, was nonetheless said to be 'still, pale, cold, stone' instead of flesh, as if the mind was not free to imagine either material filling up the imaginary shape. The gist is that that illusion was not that of a woman under fabric, but that of fabric simply left on a marble statue, perhaps by some careless exhibition attendant—a more easy deception to pull off in the dark bustle of the Austrian gallery, because less challenging to viewers' senses or expectations. Monti's highest achievement is the simple sensory misapprehension of an inanimate object, a momentary knot in the Great Exhibition's buzzing chain of material reality. The second, related sense of 'trickery' belittled Monti's admirers by suggesting that, however knowingly they participated with his illusion, they remained under a

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[463] "Sculpture. (Fourth Notice.)," *Illustrated London News*, June 7, 1851, 524.
[464] Ibid.

higher-order spell, that is, the *delusion* that his feat was a benchmark of real sculptural skill. 'Trick' designated a kind of market failure.

It is worth pausing with the *ILN* critic (or sculptor-critic) to demonstrate how theorisations of ideal sculpture were able to sustain accusations of 'market failure' in the competitive displays of sculpture. Whilst admonishing acts of vulgar mimesis in the Austrian court, the critic (taking full advantage of their anonymity) also detailed similar problems in the British sculpture court. Most British sculptors were nothing but tradesmen and charlatans: They constantly bleated for more patronage, to be showered with gold like Danaë, whilst skirting their own medium's highest challenge of rendering ideal flesh, instead soliciting false popularity by imitating facile accessories, 'content to atone for the lamentable short-fallings of the living part of their subject by slavish copying of a button-hole, or a leather strap, or worsted hose.' In doing so, the critic lengthily quoted from an 1844 essay Charles Eastlake wrote defending the 'conventionalisation', 'idealisation' or omission of costume accessories or nature generally in sculpture and painting.[465] Whilst being a conservative defence of academic norms laid down by Reynolds, Eastlake's essay and its terms were extremely adroit: Eastlake did not simply oppose imitative details, historic costume or naturalistic flourishes with static formal conventions and schematic proportions lifted from antiques, but with a notion of the 'ideal' as a material-specific challenge of illusionistic skill. Seconding Reynolds, Eastlake declared that 'sculpture has but one style', which was determined by the medium's physical limitations of representation.[466] The theory is difficult to summarise, but its gist was that the imitation of flesh in marble was the acme of sculptural skill, because of the way flesh greatly contrasted with marble's hardness, stasis and whiteness. By the same token, however, it was much easier to make marble look like other, non-living and inanimate objects like hard rocks, gems, white drapery, and so on. Meanwhile, in aiming at these easier feats of illusionism and seeking specious credit by them, sculptors exploited or played up those facets of their medium that contrasted with living flesh, undermining what should have been their principal object. In Eastlake's words, 'Imitation is complete when we forget that the marble is white, lifeless, and inflexible. But if we are compelled to remember this by the

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[465] Eastlake produced the essay in 1844 as the Secretary to the Fine Arts Commission on decorations for the new Houses of Parliament, the context from which the *Illustrated London News* correspondent cites it. Eastlake, "The Same Subject Considered with Reference to the Nature and Various Styles of the Formative Arts," 31-44. It was thereafter published in Eastlake, *Contributions to the Literature on the Fine Arts*, 61-94, and the section on sculpture in the *Bulletin of the American Art-Union*, August 1849, 13-26.
[466] Eastlake, "The Same Subject Considered with Reference to the Nature and Various Styles of the Formative Arts"; Reynolds, *Discourses*, 155.

introduction of qualities common to nature and to the marble (mere substance being already common), the first principle of art, as such, is violated.'[467] This idea allowed the *ILN* critic to dismiss British sculptors' efforts not just as vulgar feats of anti-classical naturalism *per se*, but rather as false naturalisms, illusions of illusion, presenting only a veneer of genuine artifice.

The *ILN* correspondent's extensive use of Eastlake's 1844 essay for the Fine Arts Commission is noteworthy for a number of reasons. If the rumour that the correspondent was a London sculptor is true, it may have been a partly tactical means of influencing new commissions or the sculpture jury's decisions (though the reporter's discrediting of British sculptors in general might, by the same token, seem tactically dangerous). The citation of the essay was timely, for Eastlake had only recently been knighted and elected President of the Royal Academy and was fast becoming perhaps the most important figure in the British art establishment. He had chaired a dinner for foreign sculptors exhibiting in the Great Exhibition and had been closely involved with the production of Waagen's supplementary report for the sculpture jury, which in turn cited principles of 'style', 'Idealism' and 'Realism' strongly echoing those of Eastlake's essay.[468] No other jury released such a supplementary report (though Redgrave wrote a supplementary report on 'design' in general), and Waagen had written it to 'instruct the Public at large as to the principles which have guided the Jury' in the midst of constant lobbying and cajoling in the press regarding rumours of bias for or against British exhibitors.[469] Eastlake's 'laws' of 'style' were apparently insufficient to salve the bad feeling surrounding the jury awards (Pradier's *Phryne* was one controversial 'winner'), which in turn contributed to the later decision to omit fine art juries at the 1862 exhibition. In any case, these applications of Eastlake's essay show ideal sculptural aesthetics animated as a tool of competition in the international exhibition.

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[467] Eastlake, "The Same Subject Considered with Reference to the Nature and Various Styles of the Formative Arts," 38-43.

[468] "Entertainment to Foreign Sculptors," *Times*, May 13, 1851, 5; Letter dated 1 November from Gustav Waagen to the Commissioners: London, Royal Commission for the Great Exhibition of 1851 Archive, A/1851, 622; *Reports by the juries on the subjects in the thirty classes into which the Exhibition was divided*, 692.

[469] Letter dated 1 November from Gustav Waagen to the Commissioners: London, Royal Commission for the Great Exhibition of 1851 Archive, A/1851, 622. The *Art-Journal*, for example, campaigned for British-friendly decisions by warning its readership before the reports were published to see the lack of these as evidence of the jury's corruption and bias. See *Art-Journal*, "The Juries of the Great Exhibition," September 1851, 238; "Lord Canning's Report of the Awards of the Juries," November 1851, 294-5; *Art-Journal*. "The Awards of the Juries," November 1851, 295-7. Among those who took the opposite position was Hiram Powers, who handed back the Prize Medal for his *Greek Slave* after failing to win the more prestigious Council Medal, accusing John Gibson of having unfairly weighted the jury towards British sculptors. Letter from Powers to Edward Everett, 9 November 1851, Powers papers.

New ideals and old tricks

Descriptions of Monti's new spin on the veil in *Veritas* (discussed in section 2.i above) give a modest but useful example of contingency in contemporary art criticism. When *Veritas* was shown at the Royal Academy in 1853, an *Athenaeum* reporter anticipated it was 'likely to be the popular feature of the Exhibition […] though not for the soundest of reasons' and responded with the rhetoric of two years previous concerning the 'meretricious' nature of the device and its un-sculptural 'tawdriness'.[470] At the same time, the critic praised the executive delicacy and sensuousness of the half-draped body ('charming in its rich proportions—to which the attitude gives large expression; and the garment that covers all the lower limbs […] sweeps round them in masses of a material so fine and transparent as lets the limbs be seen through') and favourably compared Monti's re-use of the veil with a further nearby re-use of it by John Thomas:

> [T]he title and subject of the work take away in this particular instance the direct sense of artifice, and render the treatment seemingly appropriate. […] There is another work of this class in the Exhibition—a statuette in marble by Mr. J. Thomas, called *Night* (1308):—in which we suppose the subject has been chosen with a view to legitimating the treatment—but with far less success. The veiled face, with the single star upon the brow—and the whole figure mantled in the loose full folds of drapery—are we suppose intended to symbolise Nature under the coverture of night. But here, the artifice is of a strained and exaggerated kind:—and on every ground, the work is too near to Monti's for its prosperity.[471]

When both the *Veritas* and Thomas's *Night* moved to the Crystal Palace Sydenham the next year, Anna Jameson's official *Handbook to the Courts of Modern Sculpture at the Crystal Palace* gave an opposite account of the former. The work's sensual allure and tawdry repetition—both in the sense of mimesis and the rehashing of a motif—were all the more offensive for being allied with the theme of 'truth':

> In the first place, the conception has an ambiguity which does not well express the singleness, the simplicity, and purity of abstract truth. Truth thus coquettishly

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[470] "Royal Academy: Sculpture," *Athenaeum*, June 11, 1853, 709.
[471] Ibid.

unveiling herself, half-arrayed, half disarrayed, comes near to falsehood. It is vain to say that to mortals truth is never wholly – only partially revealed, dimly descried, and so forth; a statue conceived with reference to such a witty and fanciful significance, may have the merit of a *concetto*, but wants the higher merit of a grand and poetical idea. Secondly, the dexterity and elegance with which the effect of transparency is worked in the solid marble, might be captivating and surprising, as a novelty, but will not bear repetition, for all attempts at mere literal, illusive imitation, is [*sic*] beneath the dignity of sculpture. Here the imitation of transparent white muslin has the same effect to the eye of a person of taste and feeling, that a pun would have in a passage of serious poetry; it amuses where we ought not to be amused.[472]

Jameson's objection to Monti's *Veritas* touches a nerve at the heart of her *Handbook's* didactic message. Like Eastlake, Jameson was concerned to defend (what we might call) 'neoclassical' abstractions of subject, form and drapery in sculpture against the attractions of literalism or trivial mimesis, declaring that, 'A fact taken from the accidents of common life is not a truth of universal import, claiming to be worked out by head and hand with years of labour, fixed before us in enduring marble.'[473] As this quotation suggests, however, Jameson also echoed Eastlake in forwarding her aesthetics as a defence of *truth* against regression, not *vice versa*—of truth according to the natural conditions of the medium. Throughout her *Handbook,* she equated the 'literal imitation of common nature' with 'picturesque' sculptures, which borrowed the devices of painting for effect but hindered genuine expression and communication in sculpture by doing so. The primary reason Monti's *Veritas* (which Jameson did not directly label 'picturesque' though, in the context of her *Handbook,* it clearly exemplified this category)[474] was anathema to her aesthetic was not just that Monti redeployed a novel or 'illusionistic' device, but that he brazenly made an irony of sculptural 'truth' by doing so, undercutting truth whilst allegorising it. Monti's combination of veil and title stretched beyond a joke or *concetto* to a mischievous lie, a sculptural kind of bad faith.

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[472] Jameson, *Hand-Book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 56.
[473] Ibid., 7.
[474] She did apply the term to Monti himself, 'a sculptor of eminent talent, with that tendency towards the romantic and picturesque in style, which distinguishes the modern Milanese school of Sculpture.' Monti would have been the most famous of Milanese sculptors for most of Jameson's readers, and Jameson drew attention to Monti's 'Veritas' above any of his other sculptures on show by giving it by far the longest description. The way she declared the veil of *Veritas* to be an 'attempt at mere literal, illusive imitation […] beneath the dignity of sculpture', chimes with the works shown by Strazza, which are collectively described as being 'in the picturesque style, and distinguished by a too close and literal imitation of common nature in form and expression to rank high as sculpture.' Jameson, *Hand-Book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 56-58.

By stridently emphasising the proper boundaries of the sculptural medium, it seems that Jameson's *Handbook* was written to educate visitors to the Crystal Palace cast courts in sculptural taste and thereby combat the threat that sculpture might be vulgarised through popularisation. The way in which Jameson outlines defining conditions of sculpture in her *Handbook* very closely follows a similar discussion in two articles she wrote for the *Art Journal* in 1849 entitled 'Thoughts of Art, Addressed to the Uninitiated'. These essays she forwarded as a response to the dissemination of sculptural forms to a wider market and populace, through reproductive technologies like Parian ware. She argued that such reproduction was not intrinsically dangerous to sculptural taste, and indeed might salvage it from the irreverent and capricious dominion of connoisseurs, but only if the perception of new consumers and the public at large was educated at the same time.[475] Individuals had to sharpen their faculties of discrimination through guided experience, if a sculptural truth was not to be sacrificed to the caprices of fashion and unthinking convention. The laws of the sculptural medium stood above these caprices besides the laws of nature, and, as Jameson said in her *Handbook*, 'being founded upon natural laws [they] could not be infringed with impunity'.[476] Jameson refrained from detailing these laws in both her *Art-Journal* essays and her Crystal Palace *Handbook*, emphasising that they were at points incommunicable and reached only through individual self-teaching and the continuous exercise of comparative judgment. But she did give her readers some pointers, in both cases asking them to consider crucial variables such as the material, size, locality or situation, form, grouping, colour and expression in a work of art.

The remainder of this chapter considers critical discussions of 'realism' and 'idealism' surrounding sculptures like the *Sleep of Sorrow* at the 1862 International Exhibition, and argues that the primarily ethical or behavioural sense of 'truth' outlined above—truth as *honesty* in sculptural practice—was more fundamental to those discussions than formal specificities like mimetic detail in themselves. It does so by considering continuities and contrasts between the art criticism we have already witnessed and a new brand of art criticism emerging around 1862. One thing that changed between the Great Exhibition and the second London international exhibition was the extent of the corpus of statues from different countries and historic periods that critics and the general public could compare and contrast,

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[475] Jameson, "Some Thoughts on Art, Addressed to the Uninitiated," 69.
[476] Ibid., 70; Jameson. *Hand-Book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 4.

both through pictorial and three-dimensional reproductions of sculpture in the first show, and at venues like the Crystal Palace Sydenham. What had not yet changed was critics' adherence to the 'ideal' or Greek sculpture as a language for articulating the difference between good and bad sculpture. Neither did critics cease to demean sculptors they felt were exploiting exhibition-goers' ignorance about the 'ideal' and earning dubious applause for essentially superficial or reproductive work. What we see in criticism, however, is that sculptors previously regarded as 'ideal', such as John Gibson, suddenly find themselves in the company of Monti, who remains a touchstone of the non-ideal. Perhaps in part due to the extended corpus noted above, reproductivity starts to stand out in supposedly 'classicist' sculpture next to the novelty and illusionism of Monti's veils, in joint contrast to new heroes of earnest expression like John Henry Foley. What changes, that is, is less the fundamental categories of criticism than the sense of their applicability to certain artists.

The 1862 International Exhibition marks a pivotal stage in British sculpture criticism, in which the critical categories used by Jameson and earlier journalists were maintained but established preferences for particular artists, such as Gibson, were destabilized. The principle critics who commented on Monti at this time—writers such as Palgrave, Atkinson, Yates, William Michael Rossetti, and Joseph Beavington Atkinson—represented the increasingly professional role and character of art critics in Britain.[477] In general, their articles were longer, more nuanced and less often anonymous than those around the time of the Great Exhibition. Whilst the *Art-Journal* was involved in this shift, such critics challenged its dominance, its middle-brow brand of art writing and support of the academic art establishment through titles like the *Fine Art Quarterly Review, Athenaeum* and *Fraser's Magazine*. The critics named above represent the mainstream of sculpture criticism in and around the 1862 Exhibition. Palgrave, for example, wrote the official handbook to the fine art

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[477] All these critics were involved in the seminal *Fine Arts Quarterly Review* established in 1863, and were listed among the contributors to its first issue alongside such luminaries as Henry Cole, Richard Redgrave, Gustav Waagen, Ralph Nicholson Wornum and Frederick George Stephens. The *FAQ* was the first British periodical explicitly devoted to the burgeoning discipline of art history. Founded by the Royal Librarian, it represented a high-brow, scholarly alternative to the *Art Journal*, whose own success from the 1840s had been grounded in being the venture of journalists, rather than artists or art-enthusiasts. As Julie Codell details, the *FAQ* adopted concertedly critical stances towards the mainstream British art market, and although it ran for only four years it extended aesthetic debates simply by being the only committed art periodical to seriously challenge the *Art Journal* between 1840 and 1878. Katherine Haskins points out that the very features which contributed to the *Art Journal*'s success were those which have led modern historians to dismiss it as philistine, overly-commercial, aesthetically conservative and preservative of the Victorian art establishment. Codell, "The *Fine Arts Quarterly Review* and Artpolitics in the 1860s," 91-7; Haskins, *The* Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*, 65-90. On these relations and the professionalisation of British art critics, see also Burton, "Nineteenth-Century Periodicals," 7; Greiman, "William Ernest Henley and 'The Magazine of Art," 53; Prettejohn, "Aesthetic Value and the Professionalization of Victorian Art Criticism," 71-94.

displays, though it was so caustic that appeals from prominent sculptors caused it to be recalled two weeks after publication. Nonetheless, Palgrave's views found another outlet in the *Athenaeum*'s reviews of the Exhibition's fine art displays. Rossetti was one of the period's most prolific writers on art in general and his sculpture criticism was closely associated with that of Palgrave, either on account of connections to Palgrave via the *Athenaeum* and its art editor F.G. Stephens, or via his Pre-Raphaelite 'brother', Woolner, who was living with Palgrave in 1862 and probably supplied his *Handbook* with much of its more technical-sounding rhetoric.[478] Atkinson, meanwhile, authored almost all of the *Art-Journal*'s essays on fine art at the Exhibition and their special report on sculpture there. Atkinson's articles share many central tropes of those by Palgrave, Rossetti and Yates, but, as they have been discussed above, I shall limit the discussion below to the latter.

The critics mentioned have been identified with an 'anti-classicist' trend in Victorian sculpture criticism and a fresh suspicion of Hellenic subjects and the imitation of antiques.[479] Palgrave's criticism is particularly marked by scorn for what he called 'pseudo-classicists' such as Thorvaldsen and Gibson—probably the two most vaunted heroes of Jameson's 1854 *Handbook*. Rossetti shared much of Palgrave's critical terminology and preferences, and echoed (as did Yates) his disparagements of various sculptors with terms like 'pseudo-classical',[480] 'false antique', 'the conventional classical style'[481] and so on. Whilst still venerating Greek sculpture, they argued that modern sculptors who imitated the Greek sculpture's themes and forms too closely missed its vital spirit for its dead letter, lapsing into limp and irrelevant conventionalism.[482] In fact, they argued that to be honestly and authentically 'Greek' meant using modern narratives and Christian themes instead of pagan mythologies, and modern dress instead of Grecian drapery, given that the Greeks themselves had sculpted their own gods in the spirit of honest religious devotion and observational naturalism, unmixed with antiquarianism. In a radical new construal of what 'Simple Earnestness' looked like in sculpture, Rossetti and Palgrave argued that to use 'dead mythology' to express human passions or virtues was self-deceptive, where Jameson had

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[478] "Withdrawal of the Fine Art Handbook," *Times*, May 19, 1962; Megan Nelson Otton, "Francis Turner Palgrave," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* online edition, accessed December 18, 2012. *www.oxforddnb.com*. Rossetti also gave a very sympathetic review to Palgrave's *Essays on Art* in the *FAQ*, though he lightly admonished Palgrave's denunciation of Marochetti's work. Rossetti, "Essays on Art," 302-11.

[479] Greenwood, "Victorian Ideal Sculpture," 111-26.

[480] Rossetti, "British Sculpture, Its Condition and Prospects," 500.

[481] Palgrave, *Handbook*, 101.

[482] Rossetti, "British Sculpture, Its Condition and Prospects," 500-2; Palgrave, *Handbook to the fine art collections in the International Exhibition of 1862*. 85-90.

previously levelled this same accusation at those who carved figures of 'Love' without recognising them as Venus or Cupid.[483] Palgrave's 1862 *Handbook,* meanwhile, belittled Gibson's statues as idols to artificial finish and masterpieces of 'lifeless labour and careful coldness', and described the life of Thorvaldsen as 'one long indefatigable anachronism'.[484] Both Atkinson and Yates shared with varying degrees of force Palgrave's antipathy to 'literal' Hellenism and the 'too general imitation of the art of a different age, and of an alien and dead belief'.[485] This iconoclastic mood, meanwhile, extended in 1862 to publications like the *ILN*, where the insolence of Palgrave and his familiars was otherwise disavowed.[486]

But despite these particular repudiations of old rules and artists, the major critics still largely upheld Jameson's terminologies and categories of taste, along with old ideas about 'style' and Hellenic sculpture. Palgrave, Rossetti and Yates upheld Phidias and the Greeks as the touchstones of excellence in sculpture, emphasised the intrinsic boundaries of the sculptural medium, warded against its corruption by 'picturesque' treatments, pictorial methods and painful or violent action instead of dignified repose, and forwarded truth and nature as sculpture's antidotes to arbitrary fashion and caprice.[487] Both also railed against the 'picturesque' forms of treatment and sculpted accessory that sculptors used to compete with painters and to catch the favours of an ignorant, sentimental and easily-seduced public eye. In addition, both Palgrave and Rossetti complained that these principles were often broken to feed a vulgar market of spectators and patrons who did not perceive them, having eyes only for mechanical skill, fashionable novelties or artificial conventions. As Palgrave lamented on the first page of his handbook's sculpture section:

> If Sculpture appeals at all to popular sympathies, they are the sympathies of ignorance
>
> for mechanical trick or mechanical grandeur, for sensual polish or spasmodic

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[483] Palgrave, *Handbook*, 91-2; Rossetti, "British Sculpture, Its Condition and Prospects," 500-2; Jameson, *Hand-Book to the Courts of Modern Sculpture*, 7.

[484] Palgrave, *Handbook*, 90. Palgrave's review of Thiele's biography of Thorvaldsen was a wholesale character assassination of the sculptor, not just as an anachronistic sculptor, but also (and in a way that was connected with his sculpting) as a swindler and miser. "Thorvaldsen's Life," in Palgrave, *Essays on Art*, 226-36.

[485] Yates, "Taste at South Kensington," 478-9.

[486] "Sculpture in the International Exhibition," *Illustrated London News*, May 31, 1862, 565-6; . "Sculpture in the International Exhibition." *Illustrated London News*, June 7, 1862, 587-588; "Fine-Art Handbook to the International Exhibition," *Illustrated London News*, June 7, 1862, 588-9.

[487] Rossetti, "British Sculpture, Its Condition and Prospects," 494-5; Palgrave, *Handbook*, 1862, 86-7 and 98-9, "International Exhibition," *Athenaeum*, June 21, 1862, 825; Yates, "Taste at South Kensington," 478. For more on Palgrave's categories of sculpture, see Read, *Victorian Sculpture*, 18-23.

distortion, for 'picturesque' sculpture, or the facetious, or 'sweetly pretty' style,— everything, in short, which the Art should shun[…].[488]

Both Palgrave and Rossetti aligned or 'triangulated' this orthodox proscription of the picturesque with a disavowal of 'pseudo-classicism' through ideas about the 'tradesman' and the 'quack'—terms that closely paralleled Jameson's characterisations of 'convention' and 'fashion' as forces arrayed against the dissemination of true taste amongst the British public. (It might be noted that much of Atkinson's criticism, discussed above, lifted phrases and ideas directly from Jameson's *Handbook*.) The term 'quack' described the deceptive appearance of great sculptural accomplishment, achieved by displays of *bravura* handling and clever tricks, whilst 'tradesman' designated dullness, ineptitude or marketable conventionality. Both roles could result in work that might be described as 'mechanical' in different ways, and both were elevated over truly great sculptors by the reigning culture of patronage, production and discrimination.[489] Moreover, echoing Jameson's notions of 'convention' and 'novelty', Palgrave and Rossetti held 'tradesmanlike' and 'quack' sculpture to be symbiotic and mutually sustaining: The more shackled people's eyes became to the unthinking conventions of the tradesman, the more easily surprised and delighted they were by the quack's calculated novelty, and the more blinded to the true vitality of nature and great sculpture. As a prime example of the kind of sculpture encouraged by such forces, both critics echoed those of 1851, recalling Simonis' 'Misery'—'the squalling infant that has broken his drum—that cherished memory of the Great Exhibition'.[490]

Amidst this rehearsal of existing tropes and touchstones, Monti remained an exemplar of 'quackery'. In section 2.i above, we have already quoted Yates's article on taste at the 1862 International Exhibition, which cited Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* and *Georgian Lady* as the first examples of 'corrupt taste', likening them to peep-shows and waxworks displays. Monti's veiled sculptures likewise furnished the first example of the malaise in British sculptural taste in Rossetti's 1861 essay, 'British Sculpture and Its Prospects'. For Rossetti, Monti instanced that way that artists often chafed against the limits of their own medium to stand out amidst their fellows, whilst concealing their inadequacies in that medium:

[488] Palgrave, *Handbook*, 85.
[489] Rossetti, "British Sculpture, Its Condition and Prospects," 497-500. Both authors contend that the easily-seduced public eye is maintained by the conditions of sculpture production, in which sculptors' demands for up-front commissions and reliance upon assistant carvers makes informed discriminations between the work of different artists almost impossible for patrons.
[490] Rossetti, "British Sculpture, Its Condition and Prospects," 502; Palgrave, *Handbook*, 93.

To take the instances from our immediate subject—sculpture. When Monti carves a veiled face, or when the sculptor of a Belgian church-monument elaborates the lace and trimmings of his episcopal effigy, the vulgar exclaim, 'How wonderful a difficulty overcome!' But the adept in art smiles, knowing full well that this is a difficulty trivial indeed in comparison with the one which ought to have been grappled with, and is thus superseded or left unconquered. The blotchy contour of a face under a veil, or the mechanical imitation of lace and mercery, is no difficulty at all in comparison with the thorough rendering of a human face. It is *that* which the sculptor was called upon to do, and has not done; and his complacency is as misplaced as it is petty.[491]

Palgrave's *Handbook* repeated these sentiments on veils.[492] At the time the *Handbook* was written, however, *The Sleep of Sorrow* was not installed in the 1862 exhibition, and Palgrave was referring only to 'the veiled face' without naming Monti himself, calling thereby upon the notoriety of the device *in itself*. Nevertheless, Palgrave did speak of Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* in 1865 as an epitome of 'Sensational Art' and 'mere effectism'—a form of superficial vigour realised though physical incident and startling forms in place of vital characterisation.[493] Vying with Monti for Palgrave's award of arch-quack was Marochetti, one of the Great Exhibition's Council Medallists, whose work Palgrave consistently and almost pathologically abused throughout his art criticism. Palgrave reflected on the slow decay of Italian sculpture from true vigour to sham vigour, through Michelangelo to 'the Italian school of sculpture into which the degeneracy to which the International Exhibition bore such conspicuous proof', at the end of which line stood the pathetic contortions Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* with Marochetti's 'Angel of Victory' (exhibited outside Apsley House as a design for Wellington's memorial) as 'startling examples how far Sculpture must fall, when it has once admitted any taint of the sensational.'[494] The 'sensational' label had already attached to Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* in the short-lived *Sculptors' Journal and Fine Art Magazine* of 1863.[495] At just this time, the term also acquired currency in relation to a rash of popular

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[491] Rossetti, "British Sculpture: Its Conditions and Prospects," 493-505, 493-4.
[492] Palgrave, *Handbook*, 1862, 92-3.
[493] "Sensational Art," in Palgrave, *Essays on Art*, 193-201.
[494] Ibid., 200-1.
[495] This was a cheap title presented as a seminal publication written by and for sculptors, though in fact largely a patchwork of content from the 1862 Exhibition literature. The *Sculptors' Journal* admitted this derivative quality and excused itself as a pioneering attempt to collect and diffuse sculptural knowledge in an affordable

novels offering violent or racy melodrama and theatre productions that supplemented these thrills with ever more elaborated special effects.[496] Dividing sculptural styles between 'the classical, the sensational and the natural' (flexibly tripartite taxonomies were a mainstay of the sculpture criticism discussed in this section), *Sculptor's Journal* described the 'sensational' sculpture as 'an effort to overdo, or heighten to the extreme the effect of the situation.'[497] In this category belonged Tenerani's *Swooning Psyche*, E. Rancati's *Cleopatra* and Magni's *L'Angelica dell'Ariosto*, alongside the 'stagey effect' of Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* and *Georgian Lady* at the 1862 Exhibition.[498]

But in contrast with many critical accounts of sculpture around the time of the Great Exhibition, classicists such as Gibson, Thorvaldsen and Powers were arrayed besides the 'quacks' as impediments to vital, natural sculpture, on account of their excessively refined, insipid and conventional working methods. Where Jameson had salvaged Gibson and Thorvaldsen from the corruptive reputation of Canova, Palgrave folded both of them back in with it, caricaturing his refinement of the *Tinted Venus* as misdirected labour involving the futile effort to 'stain into life the faces to which even his refined taste and practised hands could give to vitality'.[499] Powers's own refinement of marble was, meanwhile, associated with more vulgar sculptural media, having carried his 'conventional modelling and execution to a point perilously near wax-work: the rough cutting of the old Lombard sculptors is art of better quality than the false and heartless finish of his *Proserpine* and *California*'.[500] These methods might have transcended those of the worst 'tradesmen' or 'quacks', but they echoed both by trapping the eyes of artists and patrons amongst pedantries of executive finish and unnatural forms. As with Jameson's equivalence of 'convention' with 'fashion', the aloof fancies made for galleries to feed the private tastes of aristocratic collectors could be equated with those of the sculptural trivialities encouraged by more vulgar markets. Like Jameson, Palgrave traced the corruption back to the Renaissance, after which sculptural taste became increasingly 'privatised'.[501] 'No longer tested by Truth and Nature', sculpture then failed 'from the conventional classical style, bringing with it feebleness in modelling and tameness

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medium, declaring that, 'To collect information over a wide extent, within a small compass, if it has not the merit of originality always, has at least the advantage of being useful.' *Sculptors' Journal*, January 1863, 1.
[496] Sweet, *Inventing the Victorians*, 4-20.
[497] "Recollections of the International Exhibition," *Sculptors' Journal and Fine Art Magazine*, February 1863, 46-9.
[498] Ibid., 47.
[499] Palgrave, *Handbook*, 90.
[500] Ibid., 95-6.
[501] Ibid., 91.

in outline,—from meretricious trick, or shallow artifice,—from vacuousness and slovenly execution!'[502] Because the 'classical' work of Canova, Gibson and Thorvaldsen was not driven by living religion under the eye of the public (like that of Phidias) but instead made for palaces and saloons, was seen alongside Marochetti's as an empty husk of style, 'defended by all those idle ingenious theories on the Picturesque style, the Idealized style, and the like'.[503] Palgrave classed a series of British sculptures in the Exhibition bearing 'the name of Ideal Art'—'Baily's *Nymph*, Macdowell's *Psyche*, Marshall's *Sabrina*, Westmacott's *Peri*—with their hundred foreign sisters' alongside Monti's veils and Simonis' boy and drum, as feeble, common-place repetitions of given sculptural models justified by fresh titles, which could thereby be seen as stone versions of the popular 'Book of Beauty'. By narrating sculptural features like finish or imitation (whether of other sculptures or of other things like fabric or bird's nests) in ethical terms—as technical performances that one might rehearse without emotional or mental investment to please certain patrons or audiences—critics like Palgrave offered ways to see someone like Gibson as less like Phidias than like Monti, just a few years after Jameson had contrasted Gibson and Monti utterly.

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[502] Ibid., 91-101.
[503] Ibid., 90-1.

CHAPTER 3

HIRAM POWERS, REPRODUCTION AND FAME

The career of Hiram Powers (1805-1873) represents a bridge between ideal sculpture and the swiftly developing field of mechanical invention, popular exhibition and mass audiences that permeated the mid-nineteenth-century art market. His career began in New England through an enterprising combination of mechanical engineering, waxwork modelling and showmanship. Having made the jump to marble sculpture, he achieved international fame with the *Greek Slave*. This statue, which stimulated reams of commentary and became probably the most talked about statue at the Great Exhibition, has since been described as 'by far the most famous sculpture produced by an American in the nineteenth century',[504] and even as the most famous piece of contemporary sculpture in the world in its own time.[505] But Powers did not entirely leave the world of mechanical enterprise behind: Throughout his career, he continued to apply his skill in engineering and invention to sculpture production, whilst his contemporaries consistently associated his work with exemplary technical skill.

Powers's career provides an invaluable case study in relations between 'ideal' sculpture, reproduction and reputation in the mid-nineteenth century. Powers's contemporaries produced an enormous amount of commentary on his work, the *Greek Slave* in particular, many of them seeing in it a ground-breaking investment of thought and feeling in marble. Yet the fame of Powers, like that of Bell, was predicated not only on the intrinsic formal properties of his ideal statues but also on the reproduction and re-display of his statues by Powers himself and by others (even if Powers, unlike Bell, did not work directly with industrial manufacturers). This kind of reproduction (again, as we have seen in Bell's case) was very much 'above board', and accepted insofar as it was felt to refer back to work by the sculptor that was itself not *merely* reproductive, but partook of the ideal. However, there were many who criticised Powers in terms similar to those we have seen in relation to Raffaele Monti, arguing that Powers's own supposedly 'ideal' work *was* itself merely reproductive, and that his reputation was built on a bubble of ill-informed hype and rhetoric. Yet these accusations of mechanical or reproductive production were far less metaphorical in Powers's case than in Monti's. At several points, Powers was more or less accused of re-working pre-

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[504] Gerdts, *American Neo-Classic Sculpture*, 52.
[505] Gerdts and Robertson, "The Greek Slave," 1.

existing artworks, which were then re-invested with new meaning in an open-ended or retrospective fashion. This chapter details some of these arguments, and then considers the production and promotion of Powers's statues in light of them. The last two sections respectively look at Powers's own modelling practice and the graphic media that sustained the fame and currency of his *Greek Slave*. Both practices, it shows, may be read in terms of the opportunistic and partly clandestine reproduction, combination and re-narration of pre-existing forms. The point, however, is not so much to assert or deny the claims of Powers's critics. It is rather to suggest that the fine line between assertion and metaphor in their accusations of reproductivity reflects the way in which reproduction and creativity were so deeply intertwined in the art of sculpture and the other arts that promoted it during this period.

I. INTRODUCTION TO POWERS'S WORK

Powers's rise to fame

Several historians have already detailed Powers's early career and the success of his *Greek Slave*, but it is worth sketching these here, before considering their significance to subsequent historians and Powers's contemporaries. Powers's path towards ideal sculpture began with mechanics and popular showmanship. He started work at Luman Watson's Cincinnati clock and organ factory, where he swiftly demonstrated an aptitude for various kinds of skilled manufacture, such as engineering clock-making machinery and modelling wax figures for automatic organs.[506] He then began making full-size waxworks for Joseph Dorfeuille's Western Museum, a Cincinnati museum of curiosities, where he became the museum's 'inventor, wax-figure maker, and general mechanical contriver'.[507] There Powers acquired his first taste of fame, when, in 1828, he contrived the 'Infernal Regions', a macabre and extraordinarily popular tableau inspired by Dante's *Inferno* and filled with waxworks, automata and special effects. Whilst at Watson's and the Western, he received tutoring in

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[506] Atlee, "Hiram Powers," 569; Bellows, "Seven Sittings," 402-4; Lockett, "Hiram Powers: Clockmaker's Apprentice," 286-8; Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, x-xi. Powers began as a bill collector in 1823 but afterwards moved into the factory. Lockett suggests that Powers would have been an indentured apprentice, but conjectures that the apprenticeship could have been informally settled though his brother Benjamin. Lockett, "Hiram Powers: Clockmaker's Apprentice," 286-8.

[507] Atlee, "Hiram Powers," 569. On the Western Museum, see J. Orosz, *Curators and Culture: The Museum Movement in America, 1740-1870* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1990), 127-31.

drawing and sculpture by Frederick Eckstein,[508] a resident German sculptor who had trained under J.G. Schadow, and Powers began exhibiting wax busts along with his 'Infernal Regions' at the Western Museum.[509]

Powers, it should be noted, did not disavow his early engagements in trades like clock-making or vulgar waxwork shows, as other ideal sculptors could do.[510] He was fact quite public and nostalgic about this period of his life, giving contemporary biographers colourful and boastful anecdotes about how his minutely detailed wax faces could trick the eye from a foot away, how he ingeniously spliced up fragments of old waxworks to create his menagerie of moving beasts in the 'Infernal Regions', even how he rigged up electric generators to deliver electric shocks to the 'Infernal Regions' visitors, his tricks all 'carefully calculated to work on the easily-excited mind of a Western audience, as the West then was.'[511] Indeed, his recollections were often geared to prefigure later aspects of his marble sculpture practice for which he became famed, such as his empirical naturalism and attention to surface finish. The fact that Powers supplied several public accounts of his own 'mechanical' past is significant in the context of this chapter, for just as it was a means to publicise his sculptures, it also provided Powers's peers with the ammunition to belittle his work as that of a 'mechanic.'[512]

On the back of his reputation for waxworks at the Western Museum, Powers obtained his first commissions for marble busts and the sponsorship to leave Cincinnati to sculpt the great and good in Washington in 1834.[513] There he gained various high-profile commissions, including a portrait of President Andrew Jackson, and gained the friendship and sponsorship of influential men like the Congressman (and later governor of Massachusetts and Minister to

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[508] Atlee, "Hiram Powers," 569; Bellows, "Seven Sittings," 342.

[509] Powers said he used instead of clay to bypass the need to keep his medium from drying out or freezing. Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and His Ideal Sculpture*, x-xi. Bellows, , "Seven Sittings," 403-4; Lockett, "Hiram Powers: Clockmaker's Apprentice," 291; Voelker, "Cincinnati's Infernal Regions Exhibit," 225; Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 44-7.

[510] Compare,Elizabeth Eastlake's biography of Gibson, which valorizes the sculptor's talent using a similar anecdotal history of his early career, but distances his ideal sculptural practice from this latter much more forcefully. Eastlake, *Life of John Gibson*, 22-30.

[511] Bellows, "Seven Sittings," 404. Powers tended to repudiate one aspect of his early wax-working career, this being coloured sculpture, and especially when discussing Gibson's tinted *Venus*. For Powers's waxwork in general, see Atlee, "Hiram Powers," 569-70; Bellows, "Seven Sittings," 402-4; Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 292, 336-7.

[512] The principle acocunts of Powers's life published in his lifetime, most based on interviews with him, were: Edward Lester, "The Artist, The Merchant, and the Statesman of the Age of the Medici, and of our Own Times" (1845); Atlee, "Hiram Powers, the Sculptor,"; Bellows, "Seven Sittings with Powers the Sculptor"; Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 278-493. For an account of Powers's contemporary biographers, see Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 22-4, 145.

[513] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, 1, 55-67.

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Great Britain) Edward Everett. The support of Washington benefactors enabled Powers to leave in 1837 to pursue a sculptor's career in Florence. There he met with Horatio Greenough and Lorenzo Bartolini, set up his own workshop immediately, and continued to make ideal statues and busts for the rest of his life. His mechanical proclivities continued to inform his practice, however. Throughout his time in Florence he invented several new tools and processes for sculpting, including an improved pointing machine and new devices for finishing marble and modelling in plaster. Powers's career arc, from a technical trade through the assistance of part time art training and wealthy benefactors, to the realm of the 'ideal' in Italy, was relatively common amongst sculptors from Britain and elsewhere in Europe. Yet he was among the first generation of sculptors from America to make this transition and to join the international ranks of ideal sculptors in Italy.[514] The especial combination of ideal sculpture with technical and entrepreneurial know-how that Powers exhibited has been seen as a defining feature of this first generation, hailing predominantly from New England and exemplified by Powers, whom Albert TenEyck Gardner pronounced the 'most consummate Yankee of them all, and the best mechanic too'. [515]

From his early career founded on mechanical engineering, waxworking and popular entertainment, Powers went on to produce perhaps the most highly publicised and widely acclaimed ideal sculpture by any artist of his generation. The *Greek Slave* (fig. 110), Powers's second ideal statue begun c. 1841, depicts a young woman, stripped naked and chained to a post, representing a modern Greek taken captive during the wars of independence and displayed in a Turkish slave market. She looks outwards and downwards, presumably at unseen slavers or punters in the market who are looking back at her in turn, whilst leaning away from them onto the post at her right. Between this post and her hands is a cluster of accessories that speak of her identity and faith, her happier past and the act of enslavement: a decorative cap, cross and locket, as well as a tasselled drape and her chains.

The *Greek Slave* was first commissioned by John Grant, a British army captain who was familiar with the sculpture market in Florence and Rome. As soon as he received it in London in 1845, Grant had it displayed at Graves & Co. printsellers, Pall Mall, where it drew attention and praise from various luminaries of the British art world, such as Sir Richard

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[514] See Wayne Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 100-144.
[515] Gardner, *Yankee Stonecutters*, 21; See also Stephanie Taylor, "Sculpture, Science, and Society," 1-4, 14-19.

Westmacott and Prince Albert.[516] During the following two decades, various marble copies for different patrons (Powers completed six in total, five between 1843 and 1849 alone)[517] went on tours around America and appeared in international exhibitions, its most famous outing being the Great Exhibition. By all contemporary standards, the attention the *Greek Slave* garnered was phenomenal. On its first tour from New York to New Orleans between 1847 and 1849, over 100,000 people bought tickets to see the statue.[518] An album of press clippings from this tour in Powers's archive contains several hundred articles written about it.[519] At the Great Exhibition, meanwhile, the *Slave* was one of the two or three most written-about and illustrated sculptures (amongst Kiss's *Amazon* and Monti's *Veiled Vestal*). In addition, during the first decade or so of its existence, the *Greek Slave* was not only plentifully reproduced in Parian, plaster and printed illustration, but was the subject of pamphlets, a great number of poems,[520] and at least one waltz.[521]

Modern Scholarship on Powers

The extraordinary fame acquired by the *Greek Slave* has led to (and to an extent been perpetuated by) a great deal of art historical literature on Powers. At the beginning of this modern literature stands Gardner's *Yankee Stonecutters*, already noticed in the introduction to this thesis. According to Gardner, Powers's mechanical processes of reproduction and finishing represented cogs in a wider machine of sculptural patronage, production and reception. In Gardner's account, the first generation of 'professional' American sculptors were aesthetically ignorant but highly resourceful, and were bankrolled by rich philistines to train in Italy and 'move like automata' towards fame, then feeding back '"machines" of marble' that were calibrated to elicit sentimental responses from 'art lovers conditioned to react in a certain way to a compound of white marble and classical mythology'.[522] Powers, for Gardner, was the best mechanic of all, and his approach to art thoroughly instrumental.[523] The *Greek Slave* was a perfect 'machine for generating a sentimental daze'; its chains

[516] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 215.
[517] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 157-66.
[518] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 242.
[519] Powers papers Series 7, Box 14, folder 3.
[520] A selection of these poems is published in Gerdts and Robertson, "The Greek Slave," 17-19.
[521] Wunder, vol. 1, 248.
[522] Gardner, *Yankee Stonecutters*, 20, 52-6.
[523] Ibid., 21.

symbolised not only American slavery, but also American sculptors' 'bondage to materialism'.[524]

For Gardner, Powers's instrumental practice meant sundering the intrinsic connection between thoughts and individual sculptural objects. In this way, he characterised *California*, whose pose Powers first developed and then tried combining with various different accessories and titles as he searched for patronage amongst different potential buyers (figs. 125, 126). At the same time, however, the equivocality and open-ended connectivity of the pose exemplified a broader market strategy, which privileged conventional and limp statues as clotheshorses for interpretation:

> The California as completed […] shares the general Italianate characteristics of its sisters, the Greek Slave, Eve Disconsolate, America, Il Penseroso, and Eve. In all these one finds the neoclassic virtues tiresomely overworked into vices, the relentless insistence on mechanical detail, the commonplace symbolic accessories, a bland sort of empty-glove anatomy based on the Venus de' Medici, vacuous and cameo-like faces. The whole structure was an inert effigy which the romantic observer could enliven in his (sic) imagination to almost any sort of mood or meaning.[525]

Powers's 'mechanical' stimulation of his apparently lobotomised admirers is here seen less as a process of precision engineering, and more one of rehashing and re-combining certain 'one size fits all' forms for an anonymous audience. Powers hedged his bets by not investing particular thoughts in particular forms, so that others could impute their own.[526]

Some historians since Gardner have, however, told a quite different story of Powers's mechanical and technical development of ideal sculpture, one that attributes the success of works like the *Greek Slave* to his especial *investment* of thought in material. For Donald Martin Reynolds, Powers was a formal innovator, whose particular combination of Yankee engineering and Florentine naturalism generated statues that answered both to Powers's

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[524] Ibid., *Yankee Stonecutters*, 21, 52.
[525] Gardner, "A Relic of the California Gold Rush,'' 120-1.
[526] Gardner relishes the aptness of *California* as an allegorisation of gold-digging to Power's own aquisitve and opportunistic practice (a parallel that Powers pre-empted by speaking speaking of his search for a patron for *California* as his own search for gold). Powers, Gardner concludes, spent his lifetime 'digging for gold in the borrasca [a phrase that meant fruitlessly mining in barren rock] of neo-classical Carrara.',Ibid., 121.

personal feelings and to wider debates on ideal sculpture.[527] Powers's ideal sculptures, Reynolds relates, were characterised by a rigorously empirical approach to the human body, in which Powers (as Powers himself related) spurned academic 'ideal' proportions and measured, copied and memorised actual forms until he could construct new bodies, whose beauty was drawn exclusively from the underlying purposes of nature and thereby expressed God's will.[528] Powers's corporeal nudes not only reflected his Swedenborgian belief in the unity of soul and body—the 'unveiled soul'—but also addressed contemporary debates about the compatibility of idealism with realism, or antique forms with Christian sentiments, in sculpture: 'It was into the ancient model of the nude figure,' Reynolds argues, 'that Hiram Powers infused "sense and soul" (as the Greeks had done before, in Antiquity) that had relevance to the English-speaking world of his era'.[529] This project, for Reynolds, underpinned Powers's technical means of amplifying the corporeality of his nudes, including his fastidiousness in selecting marbles or in using special pumice stones to polish his statues whilst retaining the pores that made his marble look like skin.[530] Reynolds also asserts that by patenting files and file-punching machines for modelling plaster, Powers relinquished clay modelling and brought the process of making full-size models into closer relationship with the white marble medium they were modelled for.[531] Powers's 'mechanical' propensities are thus framed as catalysts for more intrinsic unions of thought and material. Others have echoed this distinct alternative to Gardner's view of Powers's mechanical skill. Stephanie Taylor, for example, also highlights Powers's development of a 'rocker' (a tool like those mezzotint engravers use to give a rich, monotonous grain to printing plates) for bringing up the pores in marble and endowing sensuous illusionism to his statues' surfaces.[532] This illusionism, Taylor argues, gave his statues greater emotional and sentimental charge, and in this way underpinned the two principal kinds of contemporary response to his *Greek Slave*, that is, the praise for its verisimilitude and the raft of emotive literary narratives it evoked.[533] In these analyses, Powers's relation to his audience through marble was closer to communion than to the kind of commodification suggested by Gardner.

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[527] Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and His Ideal Sculpture*, 1-14; Reynolds, "The "Unveiled Soul," 394-414.
[528] Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and His Ideal Sculpture*, 223-31.
[529] Ibid., 223-4.
[530] Ibid., 236-45.
[531] Ibid., 245-51.
[532] Taylor, "Sculpture, Science, and Society," 25, 32.
[533] Ibid., 32-4.

The concerns of the above historians—about relations between idea and object, 'idealism' and 'realism', reproduction and conception—echo the terms in which Powers's contemporaries judged his work. At the same time (and indeed, almost by the same token) their use of those terms is insufficiently critical, in a way that compromises the narratives they offer about Powers's practice and its relation to his fame. As seen in the last chapter, the kind of mechanistic descriptions Gardner gave of Powers's practice have antecedents in period commentaries, not only on Powers but also on quite different sculptors like Monti; their references are highly malleable and usually say more about the writer's position than about the sculptor they write about. On the other side of the coin, the more sympathetic authors tend to cite positive descriptions of Powers's work as straightforward evidence for its distinguishing qualities, without sufficient attention to the wider context and thoroughly reproductive nature of such descriptions. Reynolds, for example, cites Powers's own account of deriving 'ideals' from nature (in relation to the myth of Zeuxis's composite painting of Helen) to make an exception of Powers, without acknowledging this rhetoric as a mode of self-fashioning, similarly rehearsed by many other sculptors in the period. The raft of effusive *Greek Slave* narratives that Taylor reads as effects of Powers's naturalistic manipulation of marble are similarly problematic. The album of clippings recording the *Slave*'s first U.S. tour, for example, contains a great amount of plagiarised content, the descriptions of the statue often being transcribed verbatim.[534] This strongly suggests that much of the coverage was not based on first-hand experience of the physical statue, and could not therefore have been prompted primarily by delicate formal aspects of it such as the texture of its surface. Much of the publicity, that is, was self-sustaining or at least driven by imperatives extrinsic to the physical artwork.

Since the late 1970s, an alternative strand of scholarship on Powers has turned more directly to the reception of works like the *Greek Slave*, whilst largely eschewing questions of style and technique and concentrating instead on their ideological functions. The founding text here was perhaps Lynda Hyman's 1976 essay on the wider popular significance of the *Greek Slave*, on the one hand to pro- and anti-slavery campaigns, and on the other as a means of re-enforcing 'overt' gender norms and for entertaining 'covert' sexual desires.[535] Concentrating in particular on the latter theme, Hyman both identifies ostensibly erotic language in

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[534] Powers papers Series 7, Box 14, folder 3.
[535] Hyman, "*The Greek Slave* by Hiram Powers," 216-223. Hyman argues that whilst the *Slave* furnished an embodiment of 'the ideal Victorian woman'—pious, pure and passive—men also projected sadomasochistic fantasies onto her whilst women narcissistically identified with her as a sex object. Ibid., 220-1.

published accounts of the statue, and at the same time locates 'covert' desires in what she deems rhetorical 'inconsistencies', such as in the way one poem describes the 'cold, pallid statue' as something that 'Glows and sighs, and trembles with the electric / Fire that flashes through each violet vein'.[536] Hyman's interpretation of contemporary rhetoric is, however, subject to some of the difficulties considered above. The intrinsic nature of such 'covert' experiences of the statue entails that they cannot be straightforwardly imputed to the quoted text in itself. But placed in the context of contemporary sculpture criticism, both the 'inconsistency' between lifeless marble and warm flesh and the spirited reports of palpitating veins are well-worn tropes for applauding conceit in ideal sculptures, and not only female nudes. Of course, repetition does not debar reference, contextual significance, or the affective synergy of a given trope in combination with the object described. High or 'ideal' rhetoric certainly did work in tandem with the *Greek Slave*'s sexual charge, as its moral narrative furnished one of the first fully naked female forms that much of the American public could gaze at in public with impunity.[537] In this context, the sculptural rhetoric of breathing flesh etc. would have assumed a sexual colour (which was perhaps even its 'natural' or 'local' colour) in front of it.

Since Hyman, various historians have analysed the production and publicity of the *Greek Slave* and Powers's later sculptures like *America* in terms of their symbolic or ideological currency in relation to wide-ranging contemporary political concerns, in particular those of slavery in America and revolutionary movements in Europe. The work of Vivien Green Fryd, Jean Fagan Yellin and Charmaine Nelson stands out in these respects.[538] Whilst drawing on many of the findings of such scholarship, I wish to re-focus on more sculpture-specific questions of form, expression, sentiment, technique and reproduction. This chapter, that is to say, concentrates on the primary mode of discourse that attached to these sculptures in their own time, especially in the context of international exhibitions, notwithstanding the extra-sculptural concerns that doubtless accompanied or underpinned much of this sculptural discourse. Yet this is not so much about ignoring wider significances of the art objects, than about concentrating on relations between object and significance. Published period criticisms

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[536] The remarks are quoted from W. H. Coyle but are not referenced. Hyman, "*The Greek Slave* by Hiram Powers," 220. Hyman's idea of 'covert' culture and rhetorical inconsistency is taken from Bernard Bowron, Leo Marx, and Arnold Rose, "Literature and Covert Culture," in *The American Experience*, ed. Hennig Cohen, (Boston: 1968), 381-391.
[537] Gerdts, *American Neo-Classic Sculpture*, 52-4.
[538] Fryd, "Hiram Powers's 'America'," 54-75; Green, "Hiram Powers's 'Greek Slave'," 31-9; Nelson, "Hiram Powers's America," 167-183; Yellin, "Caps and Chains," 798-826.

of Powers's work and its relation to the 'ideal' revolved around such relations, with various commentators both investing meaning in Powers's statues and questioning the appropriateness of that investment.

II. CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM OF POWERS'S SCULPTURE

Contemporary descriptions of Powers's work provide telling examples of how fine and contested the line between 'ideal' or 'original' sculpture and non-'ideal' or 'merely reproductive' sculpture could be. Commentaries on Powers were starkly divided over which side of this line his work fell. The great majority upheld the *Greek Slave* in particular as a superlative investment of thought and feeling in marble. A significant minority, however, persistently forwarded a diametrically opposite view, involving the same kind of accusations that were levelled at the *Veiled Vestal* and Monti during the same period. They said that the *Greek Slave,* and Powers's sculptures in general, were without any investment of thought; that they were little more than examples of handwork or reproductive skill; and that the acclaim they garnered represented more a kind of delusory populism than any intrinsic quality in the objects themselves.

Positive criticism of Powers's *Greek Slave*, which ran to hundreds of contributions to British and American periodicals from 1845 onward, praised the statue in one or both of the following ways. Many described the extraordinary physical lifelikeness of the statue or Powers's exquisite execution of living flesh in marble. On the other hand, there was an extraordinary wave of literary *ekphrasis* concentrating on the statue's subject matter, its emotional effects and moral lessons, including a bevy of poems re-narrating and supplementing the story it depicted. One of the most oft-quoted and famously effusive examples of *Greek Slave* adulation was the poet Estelle Anna Lewis's recollection of first seeing it in New York, in 1847:

> A halo of beauty encircled not only the brow, but the entire figure. The breast heaved, the lips moved, the muscles breathed, and gently as the mists disappear before the sun, the cold marble mortality vanished, and it stood before us a living, thinking, speaking soul.

The history of her fallen country, her Greek home, her Greek lover, her Greek friends, her capture, her exposure in the public market place; the freezing of every drop of her young blood beneath the libidinous gaze of shameless traffickers in beauty; the breaking up of the deep waters of her heart; then their calm settling down over its hopeless ruins, flowed noiseless into the rapt ear of our mind. Voices from a group near aroused us from our stupor, when we found we had been in this spell five hours.[539]

Perhaps the most notable feature of this passage is the manner in which it applauds Powers by departing from the material object he produced, using a variety of paradoxical metaphors (the 'marble mortality' is supplanted by a living and breathing soul; the slave's tragic tale flows 'noiseless' over the 'rapt ear' of the mind) to evoke a higher plane of holistic sensory experience.

Whilst writers corroborated the *Greek Slave*'s claim on the ideal by narrating thoughts and feelings beyond the physical object, there remained the notion that the object had to be an efficient cause of those thoughts and feelings, and worthy of the words that clothed it. Both presumptions of criticism are demonstrated in this passage from Edward Concanen's *Gems of Art from the Great Exhibition*, which in turn quotes the reaction of Swedish writer and early feminist Frederika Bremer to Powers's work:

The talented Frederika Bremer has pronounced upon the excellency of this piece of statuary. "The so-called Greek Slave, this captive woman, with her fettered hands, I had seen many times on the other side of the Atlantic, in copies of the original, cold weak copies of that original which I saw here for the first time. The copies had left a cold impression on my mind. The original seized upon me with unusual power, as no other statue in marble had done. The noble woman, with her bound-down hands, who so quietly turned her head with its unspeakably-deep expression of sorrow and indignation against the power which bound her; that lip which is silent, but which seems to quiver with a tumult of wounded feeling, with the throbbing of her heart; I wonder whether Power [*sic*] himself comprehended the whole of its significance!" (?) [*sic*] a strange wonder truly, and not very complimentary to the talented Hiram. All

[539] Estelle Anna Lewis, "Hiram Powers: Art and Artists of America," *Graham's Magazine* (November 1855): 398-402, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 221.

we saw expressed was more wonderful still if it was accidental effect, as the painters'
[*sic*] say.[540]

By contrasting the *Greek Slave* with its many copies, Bremer attributes its power over her directly to the sculptor's physical product, by contrast with copies after it, though her testament to this power swiftly transcends these physical products. The narrator of *Gems of Art*, meanwhile, follows his or her quizzical reaction to Bremer by suggesting that the statue was 'deficient in the very points so lauded' by her.[541] The fame of the *Greek Slave* at this point almost obliged critics to have an opinion on it. Juxtaposing the work with others' opinions on it was, meanwhile, a common way of doing so.

In parallel with the positive criticisms, a train of detractors argued that Powers's statues were peculiarly wanting in imagination, expression or creativity, and characterised them as mere exercises in imitating or reproducing material form. Some complained that he reproduced the antique too closely, others that he imitated nature too closely. In each case, his works did not transcend reproductivity, and were therefore not ideal. The *ILN*'s Great Exhibition sculpture reporter, for example, disavowed the attention given to the *Greek Slave* by 'king mob' and, using a label elsewhere applied to Monti's veiled statues, called it 'a poor *refaciamento*, [*sic*] with alteration, but without improvement, of the "Venus di Medicis," with a story added to give it relish.'[542] Taking a different spin on Powers's reproductivity but to the same effect, the bookbinder Henry Noel Humpreys described the *Greek Slave* as 'merely the exquisite reflex of a very interesting individual model, in which certain personal defects are inevitable'.[543] For Humphreys, the *Greek Slave* exemplified the faulty practice of departing from 'idealism' and sculpting 'individual' rather than 'collective nature', and he claimed that, by doing so, Powers prompted the painful impression of a real woman enslaved instead of illustrating the *idea* of slavery in universal and moral terms. Like Humphreys, Henry Weekes held that sculpture's purpose was to subordinate the imitation and presentation of form to the communication of moral ideas and feelings. Throughout his *Treatise on the Fine Arts Section of the Great Exhibition*, Weekes emphasised that 'the Fine Arts are an intellectual pursuit, and not a mechanical employment',[544] and he constantly belittled works of mere 'talent' or

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[540] "The Greek Slave" in Concanen, *Gems of Art from the Great Exhibition*.
[541] Ibid.
[542] "The Great Exhibition: Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, August 23, 1851, 241.
[543] Humphreys, *Ten Centuries of Art*, 49.
[544] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 84, 98.

formal beauty. Chief among these was the *Greek Slave*, which Weekes described as a piece of 'workmanship' or 'talent' in producing 'what has been put forth before under other names […] to exhibit taste in the manipulation of form'. [545] Catalogues of the New York International Exhibition also cited Powers's statues as examples of superlative 'manipulative skill' in imitating flesh surfaces, as well as Powers's chronic deficiency in the 'imaginative or creative faculty'. [546] Greeley's *Art and Industry as represented at the Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, New York 1853-4*, for example, said: 'In what we may call the *execution* of a statue, we cannot too much admire this conscientious and nature-loving worker. Give him nature to put into marble, and he is peerless. […] He cannot create; his imagination is not of that power and temper which we call original genius; and where he undertakes the ideal he lamentably fails.'[547]

As with criticisms of Monti, criticisms of reproduction in Powers's work were underpinned not simply by aesthetic preferences, but by artistic rivalries and notions of honest practice. Some of the severest criticisms came from fellow American artists or sculptors acquainted with Powers and his studio thrashing out personal vendettas with him in the press.[548] Whilst in Florence, for example, Hawthorne recorded various accusations of 'mechanical' practice tossed between Powers, his antagonists and other sculptors, to demonstrate 'how invariably every sculptor uses his chisel and mallet to smash and deface the marble-work of every other.'[549] Among the ways in which other artists tried to undermine Powers's reputation was by connecting the external forms of statues with metaphorical notions of sincerity, understood in terms of the 'internal' and 'external' facets of living humans. Weekes's *Treatise* generally emphasised that the sculptor's skill in imitation or creating beautiful forms should be judged as a means of communication rather than as ends in themselves, and that the shapes or poses of statues should be judged in terms of the feelings or situations they conveyed.[550] Key to his complex taxonomy of evaluative terms like 'grace', 'affectation' or 'theatricality' was the question of whether a statue's external form and pose seemed to register the effect of an inner feeling or motivation in a direct, spontaneous, unselfconscious way (Weekes's 'ideal type' of 'grace' was the 'perfectly unrestrained' behavior of all animals). Yet if, for example, some 'extraneous impulse' of conscious constraint interrupted

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[545] Ibid., 84.
[546] Silliman and Goodrich, eds., *The World of Science, Art, and Industry*, 197.
[547] Horace Greeley, ed., *Art and Industry*, 57-9.
[548] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 17, 153-5, 258, 309-12, 316-7, 322-3.
[549] Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 492.
[550] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 38-44.

the link between bodily shape and the 'involuntary effect of the heart', this gave the impression of 'affectation' or 'false grace', like that of someone dancing to display their figure rather than as a natural effect of joy or mirth.[551] Conscious exaggeration of pose, on the other hand, resulted in 'theatricality'. Of course, the only *real* heart, motives or actions that marble bodies *actually* spoke of were those of the sculptors who posed them. 'Affectation', accordingly, was closely related in Weekes's *Treatise* with the vanity of sculptors who exhibited fine workmanship, talent or taste in form merely for their own sake and not to communicate, as in Powers's *Greek Slave*. This reverse anthropomorphism, whereby the 'superficiality' of a marble body is imputed to its living maker, was explicitly developed in a later essay on Powers's fame by the American sculptor Benjamin Paul Akers. Akers framed his essay around the 'Art impulse' that he claimed distinguished truly great artists from temporary celebrities.[552] This was characterised by earnestness; the production of artworks according to an inner sense of truth, heedless of academic conventions or any fear of making non-beautiful things. On the other side of the coin, Akers equated these latter, superficial concerns with an over-pre-occupation with studying the 'externals' of both nature and sculpture:

> [T]hat which lifts the true artist above externals, the externals of his own being, crushes the false […] Fame must come to him of that vision that can pierce the external of his work and penetrate to the presence of his very soul. His action must be traced to its finest ideal motive,—as the chemist-philosophers pursue the steps of analysis until opaque matter is resolved to pure, ethereal elements.[553]

Akers professed to evaluate the true merit of Powers's statues by clearing away the false claims with which his enemies and flatterers had enveloped them, and argued that they had not, ultimately, demonstrated the 'finest ideal motive'. Though undoubtedly mighty in his abilities, he had subsisted on largely technical or calculable work of limited significance, possibly for pecuniary advantage, and sustained an 'inverted pyramid' of acclaim and publicity built on top of it.[554]

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[551] Ibid., 51-2.
[552] Akers, "Our Artists in Italy," 1-4.
[553] Ibid.," 3.
[554] Ibid., 4.

The irony of both Akers's and Weekes's commentaries was they suggested an inverse correlation between the communication of feeling in sculptures' external forms and the extent to which the general public were captivated by or attracted to those forms. Akers emphasised the great distinction between temporary reputation and the lasting fame that posterity awarded to the 'Art impulse'. Weekes, meanwhile, attempted to highlight the genius of Antoine Etex's *Cain* at the Great Exhibition (fig. 111), noting how its forceful image of desolation and moral 'lesson' was not only unheeded by the multitude, but almost fated to be so:

> [I]s not the scene of sullen abandonment and utter loneliness positively appalling, its effect increased by being viewed from the midst of a crowd, who, as if in fulfillment of the sentence passed on the murderer himself, scarcely deign more than a glance at the truthful representation of his sufferings? […] Attraction is scarcely aimed at; in fact, we are not quite certain that it would not weaken its power[…].[555]

This was in direct contrast to the crowd's attraction to Powers's *Slave*, which Weekes attributed to the fact that 'where there is one person who can appreciate originality of conception, there are hundreds who can admire cleverness of hand.'[556]

Contemporary commentaries on Powers, whether positive or negative, constantly played on visual comparisons between his *Greek Slave* and *Fisher Boy* (exhibited together several times in London and New York) and the Medici Venus and Uffizi Apollino respectively (figs. 112-115).[557] Having described Powers as the only modern sculptor who could match the Greeks in imitating flesh, Greeley's *Art and Industry* said of Powers's nude female statues:

> They are rather re-productions of the antique than new works, and we cannot behold either Eve or the Greek Slave without feeling that the Venus de Medicis has not only been thoroughly studied by their author, but that its suggestions were never absent

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[555] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 72.
[556] Ibid., 84.
[557] See, for example: "Mr. Power's 'Greek Slave'," *Times*, May 28, 1845; "Fine Arts," *Examiner*, May 31, 1845; "Mr. Powers' Greek Slave," *Littell's Living Age*, July 5, 1845, 60; Calvert, "The Process of Sculpture," 168-70; "Minor Topics of the Month: Sculpture," *Art-Journal* May 1847, 183; "The Great Exhibition: Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, August 23, 1851; Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 1852, 83-4; Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 492.

from his mind while modelling them. So, also, the Fisher Boy is a derivative of the Young Apollo.[558]

Modern histories have continued to assert that Powers based the *Greek Slave* on the Medici Venus (changing little in the posture but the position of right arm),[559] an assertion that gains sustenance from reports that Powers's studio contained two casts of the Venus, alongside dozens of life casts after body parts.[560] In fact, Powers indulged studio visitors with extensive, minute analyses of the Medici Venus's anatomical faults (to Hawthorne in 1858, for example), asserting the superior naturalism of his own work by extension.[561]

But a touchstone of comparison could cut both ways. Ironically, knowledge of Powers's familiarity with the sculpture seems only to have bolstered the notion that he had imitated it.[562] In 1860, Akers noted that '[n]o man can talk more justly of that exquisite line of the Venus de' Medici's temple and cheek,' having begun his article on Powers by claiming antique sculpture as the ultimate yardstick for measuring modern art and 'testing the genuineness of the Art-impulse.'[563] Yet the overriding message of Akers's article, used to cut Powers's reputation down to size, was that the difference between the 'Art-impulse' of a 'Genius' and mere instrumental 'Talent' was that the true artist apprehended the truth that antique art held 'for his soul instead of his hands'—that following 'rules' and imitating 'externals' was the death of art.[564] This belittling of 'externals' as mere 'talent' echoed earlier criticisms of Powers's *Greek Slave* at the Great Exhibition. Whilst the treatises of Weekes and Humphreys diminished Powers's sculpture in slightly different ways, as a rehash of past art and a replica of individual nature respectively, both treatises agreed in casting the imitation of concrete form *per se* as mere technicality and servility, by contrast with expression and the ideal.[565]

A recurrent theme in criticisms of Powers as a peddler or reproducer of 'externals' was the idea of fabricating 'new' compositions from readymade forms or unrelated body parts. This

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[558] Greeley, ed., *Art and Industry*, 58.
[559] See for example Craven, *Sculpture in America*, 116.
[560] Hawthorne, *The French and Italian Notebooks*, 310.
[561] Ibid., 310-14.
[562] Ibid., 492.
[563] Akers, "Our Artists in Italy," 1-6.
[564] Ibid., 6.
[565] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 38-46, 70; Humphreys, *Ten Centuries of Art*, 48-52.

was a kind of trope applied elsewhere to attribute lazy opportunism to compositions, especially in the case of high-profile public commissions like equestrian monuments.[566] It featured prominently in the essay on sculpture for the New York Crystal Palace in Greeley's *Art and Industry*, which deployed the language of medical pathology, bodily deformity or disproportion, and Frankenstein-like body splicing to castigate the ugliness and lack of vitality in Clark Mill's mounted *Jackson* and Marochetti's mounted *Washington*.[567] The horse under Marochetti's *Washington*, for example, was accused of being a re-cast of the horse under his *Richard Coeur de Lion*, and described as a 'colossal abortion' whose legs were mismatched in their respective actions as no living horse's legs could be.[568] The writer used similar terms of combination and dismemberment to describe the lack of creativity in Powers's ideal statues, their heads being reproductions of antiques though their bodies were reproductions of living flesh:

> Here are four heads, and every one of them is flat, barren, soulless, senseless. The statues, if the heads were knocked off, would command universal applause; but the eyes which can see meaning in either of these four faces, must be greatly aided by the fancy of their possessor.[569]

The idea that Powers had crafted incoherent or disproportioned bodies by copying parts of antique statues or imperfect living bodies had already attached itself to his *Greek Slave*. At the *Slave*'s first exhibition in London, the *Examiner* devalued the work by rhetorically taking it apart. The writer praised the shape of the figure when turned around, but pronounced it 'difficult to believe that its front and back had been modelled by the same hand'.[570] They meanwhile contended that 'the left, or standing leg of the figure, is an exact copy of the same limb in the Venus de Medicis', but then also complained that 'the figure from the hips [was] decidedly short' and suggested a too-faithful copying of a living model, as opposed to 'ideal treatment'.[571] In a similar fashion, the *ILN*'s Great Exhibition sculpture correspondent narrated divisions of proportion and purpose across vertical and horizontal axes: The *Slave* was 'a lengthy, leggy figure below; square and high-shouldered in the upper part'; her

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[566] For more on Marochetti's equestrian statues and debates surrounding them, see Jackson, "Maintaining Distinction in the International Sculpture Market," 174-90.
[567] Greeley, ed., *Art and Industry*, 55-64.
[568] Ibid., 55.
[569] Ibid., 58.
[570] "Fine Arts," *Examiner* May 31, 1845.
[571] Ibid.

attitude was 'constrained and inelegant', lacking in both 'repose' and 'unity of purpose' because her pose was awkwardly weighted toward her right and the post she leant on, whilst her head was snapped in the opposite direction; her motion was demonstrated by the curvature of her back but not at all in her right arm and shoulder.[572] The various discreet portions of her body had stiff, ungraceful outlines, even if the whole represented 'a poor *refaciamento* [*sic*] with alteration, but without improvement' of the Medici Venus.[573] Each of these writers imputed an absence of unifying, animating thought in Powers's modelling by writing *as if* Powers had sloppily cobbled together casts after the antique or life. When Mozier cattily described Powers's practice to Hawthorne in 1858, however, the 'as if' became almost an assertion:

> Mr. Mozier, the sculptor, called to see us, the other evening, and quite paid Powers off for all his trenchant criticisms on his brother-artists. He will not allow Powers to be an artist at all, or to know anything of the laws of art, although acknowledging him to be a great bust-maker, and to have put together the Greek Slave and the Fisher Boy very ingeniously. The latter, however, is copied from the Apollino in the Tribune of the Uffizi; and the former is made up of beauties that had no reference to one another; and he affirms that Powers is ready to sell, and has actually sold, the Greek Slave, limb by limb, dismembering it by reversing the process of putting it together—a head to one purchaser, an arm or a foot to another, a hand to a third. Powers knows nothing scientifically of the human frame, and only succeeds in representing it (the illustration was my own, and adopted by Mr. Mozier) as a natural bone-doctor succeeds in setting a dislocated limb, by a happy accident or special Providence. Yet Mr. Mozier seemed to acknowledge that he did succeed.[574]

Here Mozier claims that Powers was not merely imitating reality or antiquity through modelling and composition, but effectively casting and re-composing. Also significant, however, is Mozier's claim that Powers *succeeded*; that Powers's *rifaciamenti* could and did pass as original compositions. The idea of lucky success gives convenient ambiguity to what is otherwise an extremely bold claim about Powers's practice and fame: it suggests, on the one hand, that Mozier is acquainted with a reproductivity in Powers's work his admirers have

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[572] "The Great Exhibition. Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, August 23, 1851, 241.
[573] Ibid.
[574] Hawthorne, *French and Italian Notebooks*, 492.

missed, though Mozier keeps the equivalence of imitation and direct reproduction in the realm of metaphor.

In this field of criticism, identifying original thought, copyism or the imitation of antiquity in a statue was largely about endowing or withholding narrative. According to Weekes's 1851 *Treatise*, sculpture owed its power and 'proper purpose' to 'association'. Its 'real value', he said, 'setting aside the beauties of workmanship, depends on the train of thought it suggests'.[575] When he described the *Greek Slave* as mere 'cleverness of hand' without 'originality of conception' and as 'little else than what has been put forth before under other names', he contrasted it directly with Peter Stephenson's *Wounded Indian* (fig. 117), shown near to the *Slave* in the Great Exhibition's American section:

> How different is the other American sculptor; he carves out new thoughts on the marble, stamps it with new impressions, give us in his "Wounded Indian," a representation never before attempted in Art—the dying chief of a race itself fast dying away from the face of the earth. Mr. Stephenson evidently feels, and feels rightly, that the power of his Art lies in association. We could almost envy him the opportunity of producing a work so original, so true to nature, so national, so suggestive, so powerful in its appeal.[576]

Weekes continued with a lengthy flight of *ekphrasis* on the Indian's demise as a tragic embodiment of Manifest Destiny, making little reference to the statue's physical features except as a truthful rendering of the supposedly bold anatomy of Native Americans. Pre-empting the rejoinder that his description had little connection with the statue, he claimed merely to be channelling the natural associations of Stephenson's subject and the 'efficient' way he had worked them out.[577] Yet Weekes was also rehearsing the kind of 'train of thought' he thought appropriate to great sculpture, which he had earlier illustrated by quoting three stanzas of Byron's poem after the Dying Gaul (fig. 117).[578] Indeed, Weekes's *ekphrastic* testimony to Stephenson's originality echoes the themes of the Byron passage—those of a dying warrior bearing witness to the destruction of his home and tribe in the wake of a more 'advanced' civilisation—as much as the composition of Stephenson's *Wounded*

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[575] Weekes, *Prize Treatise*, 44.
[576] Ibid., 84.
[577] Ibid., 85.
[578] Ibid., 40-1.

Indian recalls the Dying Gaul. On the basis of Weekes's criticism, the 'original' character of Stephenson's statue resided less in a complete departure from the antique ideal than in a creative act analogous to those performed by the Greeks, and therefore deserving a similar rhetorical response. Another commentator might just as easily have diminished the *Wounded Indian* as a *rifaciamento* of the Dying Gaul with a modern theme tacked on, and Weekes's description as a rhetorical imposition.

The way Weekes turned the dominant form of *Greek Slave* appraisal on its head highlights an irony in that associative mode of criticism.[579] Demonstrating that a sculpture was 'ideal' meant showing it was more than just an object or work of the hand, by reaching beyond it for an essentially literary tribute to it. It implied a loose and open-ended connection between thought and thing. Yet by the same token, this left open the question of whether there was an intrinsic connection at all, whether the sculpture was just a material article of handwork or unthinking reproduction, 'clothed all over in sentiment' (to use a phrase famously deployed to promote the *Greek Slave* on its first American tour).[580] Then again, contesting the rhetorical inflation of certain sculptures usually meant deploying the same forms of literary exegesis, especially when marketing the moral, didactic, and public functions of sculpture to a wider audience, as Weekes' *Treatise* tried to do. Even amongst the 'professionals', nonetheless, distinctions between the 'ideal' and reproductive work could be just as severe and malleable. Using the same terms that Mozier had used against him, for example, Powers later described Canova as having merely re-iterated both the Medici Venus and Apollo Belvedere, and sneered at Schwanthaler's prodigious generation of busts and statues as 'pure manufacturing' and 'mechanical productiveness'.[581]

III. REPRODUCTION AND RE-NARRATION IN POWERS'S PRACTICE

This section considers elements of reproductivity in Power's sculpting practice, in light of the negative attacks on him as a mere reproducer. In particular, it examines implications of the

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[579] On the 'associationist' character of British art criticism in the early- to mid-nineteenth century, see Roberts, "'Trains of Fascinating and of Endless Imagery'," 91-105.
[580] The words are those of the New York pastor, Reverend Orwell Dewey, who wrote a pamphlet in defense of the *Slave*'s nudity and generally helped promote it during the first American tour. See Wunder, *Hiram Powers* 1, 213-21.
[581] Bellows, "Seven Sittings," 470, 597.

plaster modelling tools that Powers invented and swiftly made public, and which featured prominently in Akers's diminution of him:

> Often a place has been demanded for his name in the history of Art, and the first place too, … because he himself chooses to rasp and scrape plaster, rather than model in plastic clay,—because he tinkered up the "infernal regions" of the Cincinnati Museum years ago, or spends his time now in making perforating-machines and perforated files; in fine, for *any* reason rather than for the right legitimate one of artistic merit...[582]

Power's plaster tools, I argue, can be seen as symptomatic of sculptural practice in which the piecemeal reproduction, re-working, combination and re-narration of pre-existing artworks— as suggested by some of Powers's detractors, above—played an important part. Yet the main point is not to second such detractors, or even to distinguish Powers's practice in such ways from that of his peers. Rather, it is to demonstrate how easily such conceptions could stick to Powers's work, and how fugitive the distinctions between creation and reproduction could be.

By his own account, Powers had, by at least the end of 1851, perfected two new tools for the process, both of which he eventually patented: an open file punched with holes that allowed plaster to be rasped without it clogging up the tool as it did regular files, and a punching machine for making these files.[583] He made the general process public through a letter published in *Putnam's Monthly Magazine of American Literature, Science, and Art* in 1853, partly to quash the suggestion published a month previously that it was the joint invention of himself and Greenough.[584] Powers described the process as follows. Instead of using a full metal armature used to support clay models, he built his plaster models on only two iron 'legs' for a figure, their bottom ends bent and fixed in a base of poured plaster. He then poured liquid plaster onto a flat surface, scored it, and when it was dry broke it up 'like short-cake', to make 'bricks'. These bricks were built up around the iron legs with a 'mortar' of wet plaster to flesh out the legs. The torso and head were built on top like a house, hollow in the middle. Powers then added each arm using two long bricks for the upper arm and

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[582] Akers, "Our Artists in Italy," 4.
[583] Letter from Hiram Powers to Edward Everett, December 30, 1851, Powers papers.
[584] "Letter from Hiram Powers: The new method of modelling in plaster for sculpture," *Putnam's Monthly* August 1853, 154-5. The suggestion that Greenough had been involved appeared in "Greenough, the Sculptor," *Putnam's Monthly*, 1, 317-21.

forearm, simply stuck together and onto each shoulder.[585] A coat of wet plaster was applied all over to complete the rough shape and prevent the bricks disturbing 'the harmony of the surface, before Powers finely finished this surface using the open files, adding plaster with trowels and brushes where necessary. 'If an alteration be desired in the position of the head, the arms, or even the body,' Powers wrote, 'it can be made by sawing the parts in two, and then reuniting them by forcing fluid plaster into the fissures. The arms can be taken off and finished separately, putting them on from time to time to see the effect.'[586] The surfaces of any additions had to be cleaned and roughened to ensure adherence. Thus, a plaster original, ready to be transferred into marble by pointing and carving, could be made from scratch through a combination of construction, modelling and carving. Powers advertised the benefits of this process over the conventional tripartite clay-plaster-marble process:

> The plastering is unchangeable; it neither shrinks nor swells, and it does not require wetting and covering with cloths or oil-cloths, to keep it intact or in order.
>
> No moulding is necessary to transfer the form from clay to plaster. The model for the marble is not a cast; but the plaster figure, as it came from the artist's hands, is itself the model.
>
> The process is less tedious than clay-modelling, for by means of the *open files* more can be done with plaster in a day than with clay in several days.
>
> A clay model cannot be changed materially after it has once been commenced; for the iron skeleton which sustains every part of it is a fixture. But in the plaster-model, the iron frame-work is only in the legs, all the rest can be cut apart, and varied from the original design in accordance with any afterthought of the artist; and this is a very great advantage. [587]

Powers acknowledged that modelling statues in plaster was not new, but that what made his process novel were the tools and machine he had developed for finishing the material: 'The

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[585] Powers's technical account here departs from that of Samuel A. Roberson, who suggests that Powers hung strips of plaster onto a skeleton and built plaster in between these. Roberson seems to have had in mind a common practice (being used at the time Roberson was writing by Henry Moore, for instance) of dipping strips of muslin or a similar textile into wet plaster and draping or scrunching this onto a skeleton, before using solid plaster for the model's surface. This method would have represented an alternative way of combining both strength and lightness in the plaster model, but would have been inconsistent with Powers's assertion that it was possible to rearrange every part of his model excluding the legs, because the muslin method would have required a full skeletal armature. "Note on the Technical Creation of the Greek Slave" in Gerdts and Roberson, "The Greek Slave," 31-2.

[586] "Letter from Hiram Powers," *Putnam's Monthly*, August 1853, 155.

[587] Ibid.

difficulty always has been to *finish* a plaster-model. By my method, and with my instruments, the highest finish can be obtained with ease'.[588]

Scholars such as Reynolds and Taylor have focused on Power's plaster modelling process as an exemplary part of his broader end of investing more naturalism, personal hand-work and initial conceptions into finished marble statues.[589] Reynolds, for example, made much of the technique as a means of uniting thought and thing: 'Original plaster and finished marble had never been more closely aligned; neither had an artist's idea and its embodiment in marble.'[590] By contrast with these analyses, I want to highlight the other benefit Powers ascribed to his technique, that is, the 'very great advantage' in allowing him to chop and change a plaster design piecemeal, 'in accordance with any afterthought of the artist'. Powers's description of plaster modelling was a public statement written to advertise the tools in the hope of securing a lucrative patent.[591] It does not straightforwardly or exclusively reflect the functions Powers put them to, or thought they could be put to. Indeed, in the private letter that accompanied the statement, Powers emphasised that his invention of holed files 'would not be worth a patent for plaster work only, but it applies to a thousand other purposes as well',[592] and elsewhere expounded such purposes, including copper smithing, plumbing, woodwork, cutting corns and grating cheese, chocolate or nutmeg.[593] Powers was also aware that profiteering from such enterprises had a dubious status in relation to his public role as an ideal sculptor, ironically musing with Everett, 'think too of the illustrious name I should have, "Powers cheese graters!" "Powers Corn files" for they cut corns better than a razor. Do not fear from all this that I am disposed to become a manufacturer. If anything can be done with this matter it will be done by others, for me, not by me.'[594] This opportunistic and multifunctional application of sculptural tools also characterized other contemporary 'Yankee mechanics' like Thomas Blanchard, whose innovative sculpture-reproducing lathe, as Taylor points out, only made money by reproducing gun-stocks and asymmetrical hardware parts, not busts and statues.[595] I wish here to think though the wider,

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[588] Ibid.
[589] Reynolds, "Hiram Powers' Technique," 146-7.
[590] Reynolds, "'The Unveiled Soul'", 409.
[591] Letter from Hiram Powers to George H. Calvert, May 25, 1853, Powers papers.
[592] Letter from Powers to George Peabody, November 7, 1851, Powers papers.
[593] Letter from Powers to Edward Everett, December 30, 1851, Powers papers. Powers also conceived of taking his file-punching machine back to America and into business with machine makers and ironmongers. Lockett, "Hiram Powers: Clockmaker's Apprentice," 283.
[594] Letter from Powers to Edward Everett, December 30, 1851, Powers papers.
[595] Taylor, "Sculpture, Science and Society," 5-13.

unstated practical implications of Powers's development of the plaster modelling, particularly the efficacy of this technique for re-working compositions or altering them piecemeal. Seen in this light, Powers's general application of mechanics to sculpture begins to look less like a means of unifying sculptural ideas and their physical embodiments, than a way of actually loosening the tie between them.

One implication Powers's use of plaster would have had, however, is that of bridging the supposedly 'creative' and 'reproductive' acts of modelling and casting. This division is relatively clear when modelling with clay, which is a singular, short-term process that is finished when a model is cast or dries, such that future work usually entails building a new model from scratch. But when modelling in plaster, modelling and re-modelling a given object could continue for an indefinitely long time after it was begun or set down. Meanwhile, casts taken at different stages could effectively multiply the model, be added to, and allow modelling to take alternate, parallel paths. Plaster modelling would have enabled Powers not only to model his plaster originals directly, but also to use works in plaster, including casts, as the platforms or materials for further modelling.

Though modelled before Powers developed his plaster tools, *Eve Tempted*, his first ideal statue, provides a modest example of his use of plaster for piecemeal compositional decisions. He began modelling it in clay in 1839 and cast the full-size plaster model in 1842.[596] By the time *Eve* was partly blocked out in marble in 1853, however, Powers had decided to alter its composition.[597] There are two extant works showing this change, a late marble carved after his first-modelled version (fig. 118), and a plaster model from c. 1843 constituting the second version (fig 119). Each *Eve* holds an apple in both hands but whilst the marble *Eve* extends her right hand to look at the apple in it, the plaster *Eve* places the apple to her breast and looks over and beyond it. Barring the position of the right arm, the pose and design are identical in both cases. Powers's studio collection contains a severed plaster arm with a metal fixing rod, matching the arm of the marble *Eve* with its apple and open wrist, which was almost certainly sawn off the extant plaster model and replaced by the tucked-in one (fig. 120).[598]

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[596] Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, 133-54.
[597] Ibid., 150.
[598] Donald M. Reynolds inferred that Powers simply produced a new clay model for the new *Eve*, rather than re-using the plaster one with a new arm. Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, 150. Wunder, however, maintains that Powers repositioned the arm of one model, and records no second full-size plaster *Eve* in his

Reynolds suggests that Powers changed the composition in tandem with a change of narrative conception, whilst Wunder holds that he did so primarily to protect the work from breakages in transportation.[599] Either way, Powers himself re-narrated *Eve*'s expression in light of the physical change, from a more fleeting state of inquisition and temptation—which originally was to incorporate 'a lizard watching a fly, to show that temptation was felt at the same moment throughout the animal kingdom'[600]—to a more swollen moment of contemplation, which looked backwards and forwards at once: 'She has broken the commandment already by having taken the forbidden fruit, but she has not consummated the act – she has not yet eaten of it. She hesitates and the serpent [?] that she is already overcome.'[601]

Like *Eve*, the *Greek Slave* also involved piecemeal alteration and re-narration. As we have seen, Powers made six full-size versions of it for different private patrons, five in succession during 1843 and 1849, and a final one in 1866. In addition, two plaster 'originals' are extant, one including the long manacles of the post-Civil War version, which contrast with the chains given to the first five (fig. 121).[602] The principal motive for swapping chains for manacles was the last patron's desire for a distinct piece that would close the *Greek Slave* 'edition'. (As a condition of the commission, Powers agreed never to carve another *Slave*. The first patron had made a similar request, urging that 'a fac-smile in works of art is not desirable' and asking Powers to omit or change the chains on subsequent versions to preserve the uniqueness of the first. On this occasion, Powers ignored the request.)[603] The simplification of the shackles also had the advantage of preserving time and labour in Powers's workshop. Though a modest alteration in formal terms, Powers nonetheless imbued it with symbolic weight and more explicit reference to slavery in America, describing it as 'a decided

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catalogue of Powers's extant works. Wunder *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 141-4. None of the surviving images in the Smithsonian archive showing Powers's studio or collection prior to the present show more than one plaster *Eve*. The extant plaster *Eve* has a clear line between different pieces of plaster (and not simply a mould line on a continuous piece of plaster) on the upper arm, corresponding with the truncation of the dislocated plaster arm in the studio collection. (Compare photograph in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 141 and. fig. 120)

[599] Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, 150-1; Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 142.

[600] Carving reptiles on statue bases was a conventional means, not only of telling the story of the Fall, but also for incorporating variety or displaying imitative or generally delicate carving technique. The most famous antique precedent was the Apollo Sauroktonos and significant examples contemporary with Powers included John Gibson's *Sleeping Shepherd Boy* and Hosmer's *Sleeping Faun*.

[601] Powers quoted in Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, 134-51.

[602] Another cast of the full size statue was recorded, but presumed destroyed, which was allocated to Ellen Elizabeth Powers Lemmi in the 1891 list of Powers's studio contents. It subsequently went to the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio, but is untraced since 1921. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 157-68.

[603] Captain Grant to Powers, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, 2, 213.

advantage, since it distinguishes [the last *Greek Slave*] from all the others, and is really more to the purpose.'[604]

By adding or subtracting devices like chains from his sculptures, Powers not only adapted serial sculptures to patrons' desires for unique pieces, but also associated single works with different themes in a more speculative fashion. Various scholars, such as Fryd, Yellin and Nelson have analysed how such devices allowed the *Greek Slave* and Powers's next ideal sculpture, *America,* to speak to a variety of different political narratives and sympathies, some complementary and some countervailing.[605] In the case of *America* (fig. 122), for example, Powers modelled and began carving the statue's pose between 1848 and 1855 without a firm commission, and vacillated on its allegorical accessories whilst looking for different patrons. In the midst of European revolutions in 1848, Powers initially envisaged the figure holding a Phrygian bonnet and crushing a crown and sceptre underfoot, devices which spoke to strong revolutionary and republican sentiments in both Italy and the United States.[606] But as the revolutions faltered, he removed these symbols, cannily re-triangulating his statue towards potential patrons both in Congress (where the bonnet was too evocative of abolitionism for some) and in Britain (where the anti-monarchical symbolism of the crushed crown was a put-off).[607] Powers eventually exchanged the sceptre for broken chains, themselves a sensitive device for the American nation amidst debates about American slavery leading up to the Civil War.[608] Nonetheless, Powers attempted to manage the way they were received by re-interpreting them according to changing audiences and circumstances, referring them at some points to American slavery, and at others to European 'despotism' or to symbols of liberty used by southern states.[609] As his sculpture's first public defendant, Powers was obliged to find ways of having this iconographic cake and eating it.

Deploying motifs or forms with a degree of symbolic pliancy or currency for different interpretation could be a double-edged sword, however. Whilst they kept Powers's thematic options open, they were also open to hostile or unlooked-for re-interpretation. For example, Nelson has contended that Powers trod a fine line between determinacy and ambiguity in

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[604] Powers to E. M. Stoughton, quoted in Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, 209.
[605] Fryd, "Hiram Powers's 'America'," 54-75; Green, "Hiram Powers's 'Greek Slave'," 31-9; Nelson, "Hiram Powers's America," 167-83; Yellin, "Caps and chains" 798-826.
[606] Fryd, "Hiram Powers's 'America'," 60-4; Yellin, "Caps and chains," 804-15.
[607] Fryd, "Hiram Powers's 'America'," 55-67; Yellin, "Caps and chains," 805-6.
[608] Yellin, "Caps and chains," 813.
[609] Ibid.," 815.

applying chains to the *Greek Slave*, allowing others to refer his work to the issue of contemporary black slavery in America whilst retaining the ability to disavow this connection.[610] In any case, the *Slave* and *America* instantiate Powers's thought process less by embodying singular and prior compositional ideas, and more as the outcomes of complex negotiations between personal, commercial and political demands in an often fast-changing international environment. Powers's sculptural intelligence resides partly in his sense of the currency of various motifs or forms, or as Nelson describes it, his 'keen awareness of the competing visual requirements and symbolic limits of his international audience and patrons'.[611]

Whilst marble allowed only a composition's small accessories to remain undecided for long, plaster offered infinitely more scope for piecemeal compositional thinking. Two plaster models of *America* are known, one (untraced but recorded in a photograph – see fig. 123) naked and without any accessories save the starred diadem on her head, the other with *America*'s full final complement of diadem, drapery, column of fasces topped by a laurel wreath, sandals and manacles trodden underfoot (fig. 122). The latter was probably cast from the former, naked model or from the same piece moulds, such that the drapery has been added onto the nude body below it rather than modelled from scratch with it, whether in clay or plaster.[612] Later, Powers re-applied a different drapery to the same head and chest in order to condense the combination of half-nudity and pseudo-antique robing into the ideal bust format, whilst re-orientating the up-thrust left shoulder (fig. 124).[613] These transitions illustrate how making and assembling different plaster casts was an integral part of making finished models, whether or not Powers had yet perfected his tools for finishing their surfaces (though he was doing so whilst modelling *America*).

The possibilities of plaster mean that the shape and symbolism of *America* may have been more flexible or open-ended than historians have realized. Powers's *California* model was begun directly after *America* was, and produced in parallel with *America* between 1850 and 1855.[614] Like the nude *America*, the original plaster version of *California* is not extant, but the two can be seen besides each other in the photograph taken when they resided at the

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[610] Nelson, "Hiram Powers's America," 173-9.
[611] Ibid., 177.
[612] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 118-9.
[613] Ibid., 121-2.
[614] Ibid., 124-6.

Toledo Museum, Ohio (fig. 123). Besides the position of the arms, the tilt of the head and neck and a slight elevation of *America*'s leading foot, they share almost exactly the same pose. There is a match between the placement of the feet, the axes of the hips and shoulders, and the outlines, correspondences that may be further seen between the existing (draped) plaster *America* and the existing marble *California* (figs. 122, 125). Powers may have first modelled both these bodies from scratch, whether in clay or plaster, though with neither extant it is impossible to be certain. Based on the visual correspondences, however, it is highly plausible that he directly re-cast the nude model of *America* to at least make the foundation of the first plaster *California*, before finessing the model and adding new accessories. (The similarity between the two works is amplified in the ideal bust format, where *America*'s shoulders were re-orientated more or less in line with those of *California*.)

As with *America*, Powers's deliberations over *California*'s accessories show him testing the flexibility of given forms to sustain alternative functions or interpretations. Powers initially planned a far more scintillating array of accessories than now exist on either statue. Writing to his brother, he said he was composing as 'an Indian figure crowned with pearls and precious stones' with a feathered kirtle around her waist, 'ornamented with Indian embroidery'.[615] Powers would add real gold trappings all around her, 'represented, of course, by colour as well as form'—golden tracings on the kirtle, golden sandal strings, and 'lumps and grains of native gold' issuing at her feet from an inverted cornucopia. To symbolise the inscrutable path of fortune for those drawn to California by the gold rush, the figure would point the golden cornucopia with a divining rod in her left hand, whilst holding a cluster of thorns behind her in the right. According to Powers, this theme also explained the 'undecided' character of her posture, 'making it doubtful whether she intends to advance or retire', and enigmatic (or 'mystical' as Powers put it) facial expression. Eventually, *California* lost all the 'Indian' trappings referring specifically to the American west, retaining only the thorns and divining rod, the latter of which points quite loosely to a huge lump of quartz accompanying the thorns behind her. In a sense, the nudeness had similar advantages of open-ness or thematic pliancy in the finished marble as it did in the studio model. Whilst trying to solicit patronage for the statue, Powers was able to pivot its gold-rush narrative towards British buyers by offering to re-title it *Australia*. The non-specificity of *California*'s form was a key example of Powers's essentially acquisitive attitude to art for Gardner, who

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[615] Letter from Powers to his brother, quoted in Gardner, "A Relic of the California Gold Rush," 117-8.

suggested that Powers had retained the divining rod without the coloured gold it was originally to point towards, simply because he 'was too lazy to change the gesture.'[616] Whether or not this is true, once *California*'s kirtle was discarded Powers narrated the hand and divining rod as an arrangement that tied the theme together with the need for modesty, as the chain that pulled the left hand of the *Greek Slave* across her genitals had done.[617]

The importance to Powers's practice of being able to break and re-make physical and interpretative associations between different forms is most clearly shown in the sculptures his workshop marketed as cheaper alternatives to his full-size ideal statues. Whether or not Powers ingeniously 'put together' the *Greek Slave* as Mozier says he did, he certainly did 'dismember' it, using the same piece moulds and casts to produce various different casts of its head, ideal busts of different lengths and styles of truncation, and other gifts or souvenirs generated from *Greek Slave* body parts.[618] He supplied casts of the hands and torso, for example, to fellow artists and friends, and he also sold *Greek Slave* busts and feet in marble.[619] Alongside the six-piece edition of full-length, full size marble *Greek Slave*s, the workshop also continued to produce two-thirds-size marble versions of the full-size statues and busts.[620] Such productions traded on different kinds of physical or imaginative connection with Powers, the *Greek Slave* and the *Greek Slave*'s narrative: A two-thirds–size statue, for example, presented the whole composition in miniature but was probably entirely executed by assistants, whilst a full-size marble foot might offer a closer, perhaps even indexical, material connection with 'the' full-size *Greek Slave*, even if it appeared indistinct from the foot of any other statue and had to be supplemented by its buyer's imagination or memory.

Appealing to a customer's imagination to fill in blanks, clothe an object with thought or use it as the stimulant or fresh connections was also intrinsic to the ideal bust format, which

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[616] Gardner, "A Relic of the California Gold Rush," 121.

[617] Reynolds, *Hiram Powers and his Ideal Sculpture*, 192.

[618] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 168-77. He sold the ideal busts from 1846 onwards. Typically they were truncated below the breasts and included shoulders and forearms, though this varied. Powers usually included a decorative border at the truncation of a nude figure, which was usually plain, beaded or foliate, in the manner of the antique *Clytie*. On the basis of mould lines, the two full-size statue casts and a series of extant half-length bust casts and head casts from Powers's studio were largely taken from the same piece-moulds. See, for example, Smithsonian nos. 1968.155.1, 1968.155.45, 1968.155.59 and 1968.155.83. No. 1968.155.101 seems to involve an alternate configuration of mould-lines.

[619] There is record of Powers selling a marble *Slave* foot for £30 in 1853. The foot is not extant. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 167.

[620] Ibid., 167-8.

jettisoned pose as a medium for instantiating a work's specific title or subject. Ideal busts after the *Greek Slave* and other statues were the loadstone of Powers's financial success. Following the first *Greek Slave*'s show, he fairly consistently made more money per year by reproducing ideal busts than he did either by making portrait busts or ideal statues, and this despite charging much less for single ideal busts than portrait busts.[621] His two most successful, the *Slave* and *Proserpine*, each sold in the hundreds. As Richard Wunder notes, meanwhile, Powers's ideal busts epitomise that loose connection of form with theme or association that has prompted accusations of vapidity in his work from Powers's own time onwards.[622] Half his ideal busts were sculpted after casts from his statues, whilst the rest—named *Ginevra*, *Clytie*, *Diana* and so on—are serenely expressionless, and are distinguished most by the decorative borders added to the truncations (figs. 127, 128). Indeed, Powers is known to have decided on their themes or titles after the marble busts were produced.[623] In a way, Powers's ideal busts chime with the criticism of his full-length nudes quoted above, that 'if the heads were knocked off, [they] would command universal applause; but the eyes which can see meaning in either of these four faces, must be greatly aided by the fancy of their possessor'.[624] Yet the transferability of imaginative association could also be a playful selling point: In at least two cases, Powers agreed portrait busts with clients that used the leafy truncation of *Proserpine*, distinguishing the portrait bust from others whilst allowing the sitter to appear 'as' the goddess (figs 128, 129).[625]

IV. REPRODUCTION IN DISPLAY AND DISSEMINATION

If reproduction and re-narration can be seen as features of Powers's sculptural practice, they were certainly intrinsic to the promotion of Powers's work, as this last section of the chapter shows. The production of artworks reproducing the *Greek Slave* in varying forms and for different markets was central to the display, reception and reputation of the statue. This is not simply a matter of one, given and self-sufficient product (Powers's marble statue) being disseminated and re-presented at an ever-greater remove through cheaper, more mobile and

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[621] In 1852 Powers was charging £75 for a *Greek Slave* ideal bust: Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 373. The year beforehand, he had upped his price for portrait busts to £150: Letter from Powers to Sidney Brookes, January 1, 1851; Letter from Powers to Edward Everett, March 25, 1851.
[622] Wunder, *Hiram Powers* 1, 15-16.
[623] Ibid., 16.
[624] Ibid., 58.
[625] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, 2, 89, 106.

mass-produced kinds of product. The connection of distinct makers and markets through reproductive association with the *Greek Slave* allowed those makers to promote each other's work and other products. In these instances, the *Greek Slave* functioned not only as the embodiment of Powers's craft in marble, but as a comparative touchstone for the craft of others. This process of mutual promotion elevated and maintained the *currency* of the *Greek Slave*. The process was, meanwhile, dependent on international exhibitions and, in a couple of instances, may even have stimulated the reproduction and further re-display of Powers's *Greek Slave* in marble.

The widespread and continual exhibition of the *Greek Slave* was central to its profile and status. In 1845, the Slave's first buyer, Captain Grant, set it up in the rooms of London print-sellers Graves & Co.[626] This exhibition, supervised by Grant and Edward Everett (at this point the United States ambassador to Britain who accompanied visitors on Graves's 'private days'), brought the *Slave* to the attention of 'all the higher class of people and patrons of art' (as Grant put it) including the Queen, Prince Albert and Sir Richard Westmacott.[627] Between 1847 and 1849, Powers himself sent a second *Greek Slave* on tour through academy rooms and exhibition halls in New York, Washington, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston, under the management of his painter friend, Miner Kellogg. In June 1848, the patron of this second *Slave* became impatient for his copy and seized it whilst it was touring. Robb then began exhibiting this *Slave* himself in New Orleans till March 1849, though Powers simply supplied a further *Greek Slave* copy to continue his own tour in parallel till December 1849.[628] In 1850, Powers handed this third Slave over to an in-law for another American tour, this time to tap interest in small towns where the statue remained a novelty.[629] Overlapping these tours, one copy or other of the *Greek Slave* was sent to each of the major international exhibitions over the next decade. The *Slave* appeared with Powers's *Fisher Boy* at the Great Exhibition (figs. 91, 130, 132), with another *Fisher Boy* and *Eve Tempted* in the New York International Exhibition in 1853, and also at the 1853 Dublin Industrial Exhibition,[630] in a special individual show arranged by Grant in Paris alongside the 1855 *Exposition Universelle*, at the 1857 Manchester Art Treasures exhibition, and at the 1862 London

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[626] Letters from John Grant to Hiram Powers, August 6, 1844 and May 8, 1845, Powers papers.

[627] Letter from John Grant to Powers, May 8, 1845, Powers papers. See also Wunder, *Hiram Powers* vol. 1, 141, 214-7.

[628] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 161-4.

[629] Letter from Powers to Henry J. Adams, April 9, 1850, Powers papers. Wunder notes that the last tour was very lucrative for Adams and netted $4000 for Powers. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 252.

[630] Sproule, John*,* ed., *The Irish Industrial Exhibition of 1853*, 430.

International Exhibition (fig. 131).[631] Art union lotteries also provided an important forum for keeping the *Slave* before the public. After its display in New Orleans, Robb's *Slave* was sold in 1850 to the Western Art Union in Cincinnati, exhibited, won by lottery in 1851 and re-sold to the Washington banker and collector William Wilson Corcoran, who displayed it in his house from December 1851.[632] A similar process of speculative purchasing and exhibiting attended the third *Greek Slave* copy after it returned from the New York Crystal Palace. This was bought for the Ohio New Cosmopolitan Art and Literary Association, displayed in New York, raffled in 1855, auctioned in 1857, re-purchased for the Association, re-raffled, displayed in their new 'Düsseldorf gallery', and won by the merchant collector Alexander T. Stewart, who finally placed it on permanent display in his New York gallery.[633] Through this entire chain of tours and re-exhibitions, then, the *Greek Slave* was continually circulated in temporary exhibitions for the best part of two decades.

Rolling, mutually encouraging exhibitions of the *Slave* were part of Powers's own career strategy and facilitated by his swift reproduction of the statue (five marble copies were made within six years). Though he had received his first four *Greek Slave* commissions before its first exhibition,[634] Powers had, before this, already planned to make copies expressly for an American tour.[635] Following a precedent that Greenough and others had set for tours of individual statues, Powers capitalised on his other ideal statues through ticketed shows and tours,[636] and, through his first American tour of the *Greek Slave,* generated roughly as much income in ticket receipts as he made in a year through sculpting busts and statues.[637]

The physical viewing conditions of the *Greek Slave,* their effect and associations, were a central concern of Powers and others who mounted the above exhibitions. Powers's own frequent advice to patrons and agents about the ideal display conditions for his statues

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[631] The *Slave* appears in a London Stereoscopic Company photograph of the American court at the 1862 Exhibition, reproduced in Tongue, *3D Expo 1862*, 43. It is not recorded, however, in the official catalogue, which mentions a 'Statue of America' by E. Kuntze as the only sculpture in the United States section: *International Exhibition 1862: Official Catalogue of the Fine Art Department*, 278. We do know, however, that Powers did send his *California* to the Exhibition, after first considering sending *America*: Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 126. The *Greek Slave* shown in the photograph would most likely have been either the first marble version, bought from Grant by this point by Henry Vane, the second Duke of Cleveland, or the plaster cast taken under Grant's auspices by Domenico Brucciani in 1852. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 158.
[632] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 244-5.
[633] Ibid., 254.
[634] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 157-66.
[635] Ibid., 163.
[636] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 225-7, 242-4.
[637] Ibid., 382-3.

complemented his prescriptions regarding the surface quality of marble, and were just as exacting.[638] He consistently specified, for example, that marble statues had the best 'effect' or 'expression' under soft but unidirectional light, falling at forty five degrees on the statue so that it cast a shadow from the nose, but not one long enough to break across the upper lip.[639] Red backgrounds and revolving pedestals were also constant preferences. During the first five years it was being exhibited, the *Greek Slave* was chaperoned on both sides of the Atlantic by an imposing display construction, fitting Powers's requirements. Arranging the first show in Pall Mall, Grant reported to Powers, in 1845, that he had set up the statue with rich maroon cloth that covered the pedestal and floor and was to be hung around the *Slave* as an 18 foot high circular screen, along with a protective iron railing and 'beautiful light'.[640] The red drum and railing display was repeated in the Great Exhibition (figs, 91, 130), and also for the beginning of the first American tour in New York, where Powers's agent reported that he had sourced 'truly Turkish' drapes from Constantinople to go behind the statue and 'brussels carpet with a truly Persian pattern' to go beneath it, adding also a revolving pedestal, a red-topped railing with a gas burner and red damask screen to give gentle illumination.[641] During and after the tour, public museums offered similarly special displays to the *Slave*. The newly established Smithsonian Institution offered to house it permanently in its own specially-built tower or 'Tribune', that is, a space connoting the red-walled octagonal Tribuna gallery in the Uffizi.[642] Ultimately, the Smithsonian display never happened, but the *Greek Slave* did eventually get a permanent 'Tribune' when bought by William Corcoran, who first displayed it in his house from 1851 in a semi-circular recess, with crimson velvet behind it and a railing around, and, later, in an octagonal gallery at the Corcoran gallery he was building.[643]

Besides offering particular ways to complement the forms of Powers's statue in its own right, the display constructions that accompanied the *Slave* represented devices for making or

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[638] Letters between John Grant and Hiram Powers, August 6, 1844 - October 9, 1845, Powers papers.

[639] See, for example, Letters from Powers to Henry J Adams, April 9, 1850 and June 23, 1850. See also Reynolds, "The 'Unveiled Soul'," 410-2.

[640] Letter from Grant to Powers, May 8, 1845, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 214.

[641] Letter from Miner Kellogg to Powers, August 29, 1847, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 219. The revolving pedestal is mentioned by Estelle Anna Lewis, and also by Grant as an accompaniment to the first *Slave*. Correspondence between Powers and patrons about setting up other works consistently includes turning pedestals. Lewis quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 221; Letter from Grant to Powers, April 25, 1844, Powers papers.

[642] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 225-7, 242-3. Kellogg or another of Powers's agents was to arrange the Smithsonian's 'Tribuna', whilst the Smithsonian paid for the *Greek Slave* by charging entrance fees to the room over a number of years.

[643] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 225-7; 242-5.

breaking associations with other statues or themes, especially in the highly competitive viewing environments of the great expositions. For example, the red drum at the Great Exhibition, set in the centre of the sculpture-light American court at the very end of the Crystal Palace nave, presented the *Slave* as the first among all the other statues there, several of which had red backdrops but none with a full semicircle or canopy. It also stood in line with the procession of huge 'trophies' of manufacture and raw produce down the nave, connecting the imaginary Turkish slave market that surrounded the depicted slave with the actual so-called 'bazaar' of international merchandise and gazing crowds that surrounded the marble statue. The tassels on the drum, meanwhile, offered a material bridge from the marble statue to its imagined setting and themes, orbiting and echoing the carved tasselled cloth swirling around the *Slave*'s supporting post. Whilst gesturing one way at the statue's modern and Christian narrative, the red displays also gestured to that eminent antique object, the Medici Venus, as the centrepiece of the red-walled Uffizi Tribuna. (The Uffizi Tribuna could also have associated the Apollino with *Fisher Boy*, both antique associations being noted in negative criticisms of Powers's two statues at Graves and the Great Exhibition, as we have seen). The wish to erect 'Tribunas' at the new Smithsonian and Corcoran galleries again affiliated these institutions with perhaps the most illustrious single vessel of collected historic artworks in the old world.[644] Putting the *Greek Slave* in these new rooms, in turn, implicated it as a transatlantic reflection of Europe's most prized image of ideal feminine beauty, as well as the cornerstone of a novel tradition in the new world.

Among those invested in the *Greek Slave* displays, alongside Powers and his patrons, were publishers of print media and graphic reproductions. As is noted above, hundreds of articles about the *Slave* accompanied its first American tour, suggesting a peculiarly close and fruitful reciprocity between the press coverage and ticketed shows. During the exhibition at Graves, the printseller counted over 40,000 people visiting his rooms in six months just to see the *Slave,* and in response offered to exhibit Powers's *Eve* and sell it for a commission.[645] At the Great Exhibition, Grant submitted a description of the *Slave* for the catalogue, which probably matched the large handbill tacked to the back of the canopy (fig. 132), advertising a new engraving of the statue 'by Thomson' published by Graves.[646] This was almost certainly

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[644] *Report from the Select Committee on the National Gallery,* 755.

[645] Letter from John Grant to Powers, October 9, 1845, Powers papers; Everett to Powers, May 23, 1845, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 215-6.

[646] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 1466.

identical to, or the basis of, the *Art-Journal*'s 'Gallery of Sculpture' steel engraving of the *Slave*, which, in turn, presaged the great wealth of *Greek Slave* prints that circulated around the international exhibitions (fig. 133).[647] Graphic reproduction and text coverage were also implicated in the flagrant chain of lotteries held by the Cosmopolitan Art Association. The actuary of the Association and two-times buyer of the *Slave* was also editor of the *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, and besides holding a $100 competition for poems after the *Greek Slave* to publicise its raffle (200 poems were submitted)[648] also published numerous puff pieces on Powers's work, along with engravings after *Eve*, *America*, and the *Greek Slave* at the Düsseldorf gallery (fig. 134).[649]

As in the cases of Bell and Monti, three-dimensional reproductions also fed into the general publicity of the *Greek Slave*. American and British porcelain firms started producing *Greek Slave* statuettes from at least 1848, and the *Slave* appeared on Minton's stand at the Great Exhibition.[650] A year after the Exhibition, Grant informed Powers about the great circulation of unlicensed and frequently poor plaster copies in Britain.[651] He also said he had consented to have a 'first rate artist' (Domenico Brucciani) take a plaster cast, to be reduced by Copeland for third-size Parian statuettes.[652] When releasing its Parian copies (fig. 135), Copeland displayed Brucciani's cast in their Bond-street showroom to advertise.[653] The

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[647] "The Greek Slave. From the statue in marble by Hiram Powers," *Art-Journal*, February, 1850, 56. Wunder lists the steel engraving by J. Thomson for Graves & Co. separately from the engraving published in the *Art-Journal* the same year, and attributed there to W. Roffe. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 160. A contemporary notice of the *Art-Journal*'s *Greek Slave* engraving in the *Standard*, however, says it was drawn by Roffe and engraved by Thomson. "Fine Arts," *Standard*, July 17, 1850. James Thomson (1788-1850) was a stipple engraver who engraved many plates after British sculpture and ancient works in the British Museum, and was employed by Samuel Carter Hall (to engrave statues in the *Book of Gems*, 1848-1853, for example). The *Art-Journal* text accompanying the W. Roffe engraving refers its reader back to the Graves & Co. exhibition.

[648] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 254.

[649] "The 'America' of Hiram Powers," *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, November 1856, 54-6; "Greek Slave Re-Purchased," *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, September 1857, 162; "The Greek Slave," *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, December 1857, 40; L. E., "To Powers' "Greek Slave," *Cosmopolitan Art Journal*, March-June 1858, 68. Contemporary images of the *Greek Slave* amongst other sculptures in A. T. Stewart's gallery, where this *Slave* eventually found a permanent home, are reproduced and discussed in Kasson, *Marble Queens and Captives*, 26-27.

[650] Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 168; "New Art Manufactures, "*Athenaeum*, November 24, 1848; "Latest Novelties," *Athenaeum*, December 16, 1848; "Porcelain, Earthenware, &c.," *Illustrated London News*, July 26, 1851, 126. A further account of the *Greek Slave* in Parian form is given in Dickinson, "An Analysis of the Success and Cultural Significance of Parian Ware Sculpture in Victorian England," 265-79.

[651] John Grant to Powers, 28 April 1852, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 250.

[652] Either Brucciani or Copeland had told Grant that the process of copying would be expensive, but an ample return was expected. John Grant to Powers, 28 April 1852, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 250. Felix Summerly had already charged £3½ for each *Greek Slave* Parian statuettes (by Minton & Co) in 1848. "Latest Novelties," *Athenaeum*, December 16, 1848.

[653] "Fine Arts: Cast of Powers's Greek Slave," *John Bull*, March 20, 1852, 187; "Copeland's Statuettes, &c., in Parian," *Lady's Newspaper*, 1852; "Fine Arts," *Illustrated London News*, May 1, 1852; Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 2, 168.

indexical connections between marble, plaster and Parian were well reported (Copeland was noted to be using the Cheverton machine),[654] allowing Brucciani's one object to promote at once three different makers (himself, Powers and Copeland).

Just as the Medici Venus supplied a touchstone for the artistry or reproductivity of the *Greek Slave*, the connection with Powers's work provided a touchstone for that of Brucciani and Copeland. On one hand, the ubiquity of rival copies would, in tandem with Powers's *Slave* or its cast, have supplied both publicity and useful points of contrast for Copeland's workmanship. Whilst applauding statuette reproductions as a vehicle for disseminating taste and moral lessons, notices of the Brucciani display also cited the 'excessive inaccuracy'[655] of current copies, and hailed the accurate version promised by Copeland as all 'the more desirable, as inferior copies of this beautiful statue have of late been multiplied to a fearful extent'.[656] There certainly seem to have been a number of quite inaccurate *Slave* statuettes in circulation, judged in terms of three-dimensional proportions (figs. 136, 137). Such inaccuracy, as seen in the forward-leaning, crumpled and slightly melted appearance of the statuette in fig. 136,[657] could result from any of one of the many stages of statuette reduction. Using a proportionate reduction machine was only the first and most expendable of these. After this, the model had to be hand-finished and refined, a piece-mould taken delicately and intelligently to facilitate good casting, the piece-cast made and fixed together so the whole shrank proportionately and pieces did not break apart or distort at the seams whilst drying, and then propped in the kiln in a way that prevented collapsing, sagging or cracking. As noted above in relation to Monti's *Night*, the *Art-Journal* of 1849 outlined all these technical difficulties met by Copeland's firm, in semi-heroic terms, amplifying the statement of comparative skill that accurate reproduction made.[658]

Besides accuracy of proportions, notices of the Brucciani-Copeland *Slave* also highlighted surface qualities. Compared to Powers's *Slave*, one said, Brucciani's cast had 'an appearance

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[654] Copeland, *Parian*, 145.

[655] "Fine Arts: Cast of Powers's Greek Slave," *John Bull*, March 20, 1852, 187.

[656] "Copeland's Statuettes, &c., in Parian," *Lady's Newspaper*, 1852.

[657] "Greek Slave Figurine," Collection of Historic New England, accession no. 1931.70. www.historicnewengland.org/collections-archives-exhibitions/collections-access/collection-object/capobject?gusn=GUSN-33806, accessed September 19, 2014. This has been attributed to Copeland but possibly incorrectly. The online catalogue makes no reference to a maker's mark. Extant Copeland *Greek Slave*s tend to feature armbands (most likely to disguise the connection of piece-casts).

[658] Hunt, "On the Applications of Science to the Fine and Useful Arts. Artificial Stone—Statuary Porcelain", 17-18.

of equally laboured finish, resembling, in its smooth and warm-tinted surface, the beautiful cast of the Belvedere Apollo,'[659] (the cast that Brucciani had sent to the Great Exhibition to demonstrate his ability to imitate marble).[660] It is doubtful that Brucciani's cast would have imitated the specificities of Powers's marble finishing *in particular*, or that many would have recognised this if he could. Nevertheless, Powers's *Slave* would still have given Brucciani and Copeland an appropriate rhetorical touchstone for the imitation of marble *per se*, given his contemporary association with 'laboured finish'. It is worthwhile noting here that the surface of the *Greek Slave* exhibited in the Great Exhibition (fig. 110) is indeed so fine-grained, consistent and fault-less that, even at a close distance, it is strikingly similar to porcelain.

The promotional association between Copeland, Brucciani and Powers differed somewhat from that between Powers's *Greek Slave* and the Medici Venus in being avowedly reproductive, not merely imitative: the skills employed by Copeland were publicised above for producing the closest copies of, or references to, Powers's work possible. Nonetheless, distinctions between reproductive and 'creative' skill (or what contemporaries would have called 'Art' skill) in these kinds of three-dimensional copy remained ambiguous and contested.[661] It was especially so in graphic media. Prior to photomechanical printing, as Beegan, Fawcett, Gretton and others have demonstrated, the multi-layered and essentially translational nature of graphic mediation allowed engravers to simultaneously reproduce fine art and assert themselves as fine artists in doing so.[662] Notices of the *Greek Slave* engraving published by Graves and the *Art-Journal* are similar to those of the Brucciani-Copeland *Greek Slave*: One notice in the *Standard*, for example, named the primary authors interposed between Powers's sculpture and the final print: the draughtsman W. Roffe—'an artist who has had long experience in drawing from the antique, and who stands high in this difficult line of art'—and the engraver J. Thompson.[663] The *Standard* also applauded their work as an accurate rendering of the sculpture's outline, and an agreeable presentation of 'all the softness and delicacy of the original figure, […] a quality not always presented in engravings from

[659] "Fine Arts: Cast of Powers's Greek Slave," *John Bull*, March 20, 1852, 187. See also "Fine Arts," *Illustrated London News*, May 1, 1852, 358.

[660] *Official Descriptive and Illustrative Catalogue*: *Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations*, 847

[661] See Shedd. "A Mania for Statuettes," 44-7.

[662] Fawcett, "Graphic Versus Photographic in Nineteenth-Century Reproduction," 188-95; Gretton, "Industrialised Graphic Technologies in Symbiosis with the World of Art".

[663] "Fine Arts," *Standard*, July 17, 1850.

sculpted figures.'[664] Another, less sympathetic reviewer, however, attacked the engraving in terms of its outline as a 'total failure', contending that the 'straight and lanky female' depicted departed from Powers's original.[665] This is not entirely unfounded, though it results partly from the way the viewing angle foreshortens the figure's frontal width and occludes negative spaces between limbs that would otherwise break up the long, dark vertical.[666]

During the period, the softness of tone and texture seen here and throughout the *Art-Journal*'s 'Gallery of Sculpture' was held to be one especial attraction of fine stipple engravings.[667] It held this attraction, meanwhile, partly as a nexus between printing plates, marble surfaces and flesh. The stippled contours of the *Greek Slave* engraving can easily been 'seen as' either marble or flesh, depending on the viewer's inclinations and the wider viewing context (fig. 133). The way the engraving's tonal balance 'cuts out' the figure with its base, and frames them together within a niche-shaped outline, tentatively prompts the 'marble sculpture' reading. At the same time, the 'niche' remains spidery and shadow-less, there is no depicted gallery context as in other prints, the flat white absence around the warmly stippled body shape is more a projection screen than a background 'setting' of any kind, and the figure's eyes have been given faint pupils. In effect, the engraver's burin may be seen as re-sculpting a fictile human body as much as depicting a sculpture of it—as imitating not only the sculpture but the conceit of fleshiness that many saw was the acme of sculptural skill.

The intermediate or even indeterminate status of sculptural reproductions, as *reproductions*, may itself have been useful in publicising Powers's *Slave*. Grant kept Powers well informed about two- and three-dimensional copies of the *Greek Slave* in Britain, their correspondence making various references to their reproductive quality. Powers, for example, noted that an engraving Grant had sent him (possibly the Roffe-Thomson print) was the best representation he had seen,[668] whilst Grant afterward detailed a forthcoming one, which he expected would be 'worthy of the original' given 'the acknowledged talent of the artist employed.'[669] Grant also told Powers about what was probably Copeland's *Slave*, noting the beautiful effect of

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[664] Ibid.
[665] "Fine Arts. The National Gallery and the Royal Academy," *Morning Post*, February 13, 1850.
[666] The slight over-modelling of the abdominal musculature may have also made it look 'straight' in the sense of having insufficiently rounded and feminine contours.
[667] Silliman, and Goodrich, eds., *The World of Science, Art, and Industry*, 182, which claimed fleshy stipple engraving to be a particular forte of British engravers; John Burnet on stipple engraving, quoted in Fawcett, "Graphic versus Photographic," 186.
[668] Powers to John Grant, May 24, 1852, Powers papers.
[669] John Grant to Powers, November 20, 1853, Powers papers.

Parian in imitating marble, though adding that it was 'merely a representation and as such it may satisfy the public, but it lacked every thing that constituted the beauty and refinement of the original.[670] At the same time, however, insofar as sculptor or patron were interested in reproductions, quality was probably a concern secondary to that of sheer publicity.[671] 'She has been copied and libelled in every shape but the right one,' Grant said to Powers, 'but bad as the representations are the sale of the little plaster casts has been immense throughout Britain.'[672] Such an attitude contrasts with the way Powers destroyed a copy of *America* that he had got Odoardo Fantacciotti to model in plaster for the Crystal Palace Sydenham, because he found, on close inspection, that Fantacchiotti had translated its proportions incorrectly.[673] On another occasion, Powers sent photographs of the *America* to Edmund Everett so that Everett could distribute them to congressmen who might secure its commission, but keenly stressed the ways in which the statue lost its 'effect' in the new medium. Both these translations of *America*, after all, were sent across the sea as direct emissaries of Powers's name and workshop. As this was not the case with plaster or Parian reproductions, they presumably had the dual benefit of publicising Powers's name whilst being well understood as artworks of another, not him.

At the time of Powers's fame, reproductive connections between distinct arts enabled exchanges of status, but also acquired an intrinsic status for doing so. As seen with regard to iron in chapter 1, imitating the especial qualities of one medium in another was a technical feat symbolising the forward march of industrial progress, but which also looked backwards to illustrious histories of art and technology in antiquity. For example, Hunt's 1849 *Art-Journal* article on Copeland Parian folded together the history of the ceramic art—'perhaps, next to that of the agriculturist, the most ancient of all'—with sculpture, the perfection of which was 'the realisation of the highest powers of the creative faculty […] the most sublime

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[670] Ibid. In the same letter, Grant queried the news that Powers had made three marble copies of the *Slave* and gently disapproved of 'repetition in works of this class' and counselled Powers to instead make a new work to maintain his fame, such as '"The Graces" upon the model of the "Slave"'.

[671] Powers had at one point tried to restrict *Greek Slave* copies by patenting the design, though Wunder argues he was probably more motivated by protecting the exclusivity and price of his marble work than by the quality of statuettes down the market. Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 240-1.

[672] John Grant to Powers, April 28, 1852, quoted in Wunder, *Hiram Powers*, vol. 1, 250.

[673] Powers said that he found Fantacchiotti's enlargement was 'organically' flawed in all its measurements once he looked closely, whereas beforehand he had regarded the faults as merely a matter of finish. He said it could be rectified but would take him two months he was unwilling to spare. Owen Jones to Powers, October 10, 1853; Powers to J. L. Maquay, November 14, 1853; Owen Jones and Matthew Digby Wyatt to Hiram Powers, forwarded by J. L. Maquay, November 24, 1853; Powers to J. L. Maquay, 13 February 1856, 12 August 1856; Powers papers.

of human attainments'.[674] Hunt's passage also imbues the reproductive connection between distinct arts and markets with British industrial pride, democracy, education and consumer aspiration, with mankind's 'siege upon ignorance and superstition' and the emancipation of 'isolated specimens of human power in the halls of wealth':

> The painter speaks to a world through the medium of the engraver; why may not the sculptor teach as eloquently through the agency of his elder brother the potter? [… . T]he well-known industry of the British labourer in any Art—the restless desire to excel, which distinguishes the manufacturers of Great Britain—will, we are certain, before any prolonged period, achieve that correctness which will at once place in *vraisemblance* the works of the best artists in the hands of an appreciating public.[675]

Whilst the ideal of *vraisemblance* evokes an ever-closer union of Parian with marble sculpture, Hunt and others narrated the benefits of the union not just in terms of spreading the sculptor's art through the potter's, but as a complementary and mutually glorifying extension of both arts.[676] The analogy between Parian manufacturers and engravers, meanwhile, rehearsed the perennial claims that the *Art-Journal* made for its own reproductive prints as disseminators of taste. For example, the *Art-Journal* used its review of Weekes's Great Exhibition *Prize Treatise* to assert the benefits its 'Gallery of Sculpture' engravings had conferred on British sculptors, by dissolving prevailing prejudices against nudity in art and spreading sculptors' names across the world.[677] Such was the impact of its engravings on sculpture's fortunes, the *Art-Journal* grumbled, that it was 'not very gracious' of Weekes not to reciprocate by mentioning them at all.[678]

At the Great Exhibition and afterwards, then, the exchange of publicity between statues and graphic reproductions maintained and boosted the currency of the *Greek Slave*, as an object

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[674] Hunt, "On the Applications of Science to the Fine and Useful Arts. Artificial Stone—Statuary Porcelain," 17-18. One Great Exhibition correspondent framed Parian ware as the latest chapter in a history of earthenware stretching back to ancient Nineveh: "Porcelain, Earthenware, &c.," *Illustrated London News*, July 26, 1851, 126.

[675] Hunt, "On the Applications of Science to the Fine and Useful Arts. Artificial Stone—Statuary Porcelain," 18.

[676] Horace Greeley's *Art and Industry*, commenting on Copeland's display in the New York International Exhibition, held the key features of good Parian to be the proportionate reduction of statues and the intrinsic beauty of the clay body. *Art and Industry* also predicted here that Parian would do what electrotyping had done in metalwork to extend art and elevate public taste. Greeley, ed., *Art and Industry*, 199.

[677] "Reviews. The Prize Treatise on the Fine Arts Section of the Great Exhibition of 1851," *Art-Journal*, February 1853, 67.

[678] *Ibid.*

of narration, association and criticism. Central to this process was the translational and semi-opaque relationship between prints and the statues they depicted, and bilateral or multi-lateral conditions of artistic authorship. As we are about to see, graphic illustrations of the *Slave* proliferated by re-using or re-fashioning other two-dimensional work, covering their tracks, and re-investing these *rifaciamenti* with references to, and ideas about, Powers's statue. This process complemented the chain of marble reproductions and re-exhibitions of the *Greek Slave* that inflated and sustained its international profile.

A number of graphic media and different forms of illustrated publication took a stake in the Exhibition, greatly expanding and varying the corpus of images after sculpture in circulation. The most prolific illustrations were the wood engravings that packed illustrated catalogues or periodicals like the *Illustrated London News* and *Illustrated Exhibitor*. Unlike metal plate engravings (such as the Roffe-Thompson *Greek Slave*), wood engravings were cheap and quick to produce, and could be printed along with type, perfectly suiting them to visual reportage and illustration of the on-going event. Nonetheless, the demand for commemorative or souvenir publications also meant that sculptures appeared in a panoply of more expensive, luxurious or experimental media, such as steel engraving, chromolithography, daguerreotype, and Baxter prints.

But printed illustrations of objects in the early international exhibitions were very rarely made after the physical, three-dimensional objects they illustrated. Those who executed the actual printing plates primarily referenced other two-dimensional images such as drawings or photographs. Whilst various publications advertised their use of new photographic technologies, this use was motivated in this period more by efficiency than notions of visual accuracy or 'transparency'. In order to be printed *en masse* in periodicals, photographs had to be translated into what William Ivins termed the 'syntax'[679] of line engraving by a draughtsman, who would often creatively alter the photograph's contents in their drawing, before this drawing was followed by one or more actual engravers.[680] At the very least, the final print was an engraved copy of a hand-drawn interpretation of a photograph of an exhibited object. Moreover, the economic pressures of a rapidly expanding illustrated press in the 1840s and 50s increasingly divided labour and attenuated communication between wood

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[679] Ivins., *Prints and Visual Communication*, 113-34.
[680] Beegan, "The Mechanization of the Image," 257-74.

engravers and the artists who supplied the images they engraved.[681] It seems that the demand for swift pictorial coverage of events like the Great Exhibition further catalysed the *ad hoc* use of two-dimensional sources other than photographs or drawings taken directly from three-dimensional exhibits, entailing more degrees of mediation between a print and the object it depicted. Over half of the 1,500 or so wood engravings for the *Art-Journal Illustrated Catalogue* (fig. 138 for example) were executed by the Dalziel brothers' firm, where they are recorded to have been copied from a variety of sources including other engravings or 'tracings'.[682] Some printmakers may well have referred directly to exhibits like the statues. Where there is any doubt, however, it is safest to assume they did not.

As the example of Dalziel brothers' miscellaneous sourcing suggests, the re-working of imagery occurred not only within different publications, but also between them. Often, already-published prints were re-drafted onto new plates or blocks and published without acknowledgment of their extraction. This is identifiable in sculpture prints where two separate plates, featuring different hatchings or marks for rendering tone or texture, or even different pictorial elements, nonetheless match in the outline of a depicted sculpture and sometimes also in the general distribution of shadow across it. Based on such correlations, for example, we can see that the *Art-Journal Illustrated Catalogue* and *Illustrated Exhibitor* drew on each other for sculpture engravings, or from a common source (figs. 138, 139).[683] By the same token, the *ILN*'s sculpture engravings were the source for a large proportion of sculpture engravings in the *Illustrated Exhibitor*, and for almost all the lithographs in E. Concanen's commemorative text, *Gems of Art from the Great Exhibition: Being a Series of Drawings of the Most Interesting Statuary, Including an Account of Each Subject* (figs. 141-144). Such examples suggest that the Great Exhibition stimulated the reproduction, refashioning and circulation of images not only through demand, but also through supply, as the confluence of publications reporting the event generated a corpus of printed material with which new publications could be quickly stitched together.

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[681] The primary features of this process, as Beegan describes, were: the employment of specialist draughtsmen simply to transfer pre-existing drawings onto woodblocks, to be then cut by a separate engraver; the segmentation of blocks so that separate engravers could work on the same image at one time; the specialization of pictorial skills (the ability to render costume, flesh, landscape, etc.) amongst engravers; the copying of photographs and the development of techniques to fix photographic images directly upon woodblocks. Ibid.

[682] Ibid.," 266.

[683] Some *Illustrated Exhibitor* engravings can be traced back, via refurbished plates in the *Art-Journal*, to metal-plate stipple engravings published in T. K Hervey's *Illustrations of Modern Sculpture*, 1832. See, for example, Pistrucci and Holl's plate illustrating "Prometheus. A model, in plaster; by Manning," in Hervey, *Illustrations of Modern Sculpture* (unpaginated); "Prometheus. Manning," *Art-Journal*, August 1847, 284; "Prometheus Bound.—S, Manning, Sculpture Court," *Illustrated Exhibitor*, 1851, 328.

The recycling of prints carried delineations of sculpture across entirely different graphic media, kinds of publication and text-image relations. Both the outline of the Roffe-Thompson *Greek Slave* print and much of the descriptive text it was published with in the *Art-Journal* before the Exhibition, for example, were lifted and re-published in the *Illustrated Exhibitor* once the Exhibition began (figs. 133, 140).[684] Passing from stipple engraving to the cheaper medium of wood engraving, the statue image looses its fleshy tonality, though it may now be juxtaposed and framed with text. *Concanen's Gems of Art* shows this situation in reverse, lifting its *Greek Slave* outline from one of two wood-engravings of the statue printed with typed commentary in the *ILN* (fig. 141, 142) and placing it in a coloured lithograph alongside Pietro Magni's *First Steps*, which is decorously mirrored by a separate page of text describing each work. Published after the Exhibition, the *Gems of Art* reworks what in the *ILN* is ostensibly a contemporaneous visual report as part of a commemorative gift-book, its format palely echoing more up-market and sumptuous collections of separate chromolithographs like Matthew Digby Wyatt's *Masterpieces of Industrial Art*. Having paraphrased sculpture outlines from the *ILN*'s pictures of sculpture, *Gems of Art* then paired these up, sometimes on the basis of the sculptures' shared themes or makers, but often on happenstance but apt parallels in composition, which were more contingent on available relations between two-dimensional sources than on three-dimensional statues (fig. 143-145).[685] The lithographs also re-shape the sculptures seen in the *ILN* to sit congruously besides each other inside fictive niches, twisting their bases or 'correcting' their perspectival treatment (figs. 143-145). Background forms and figures at the Crystal of Palace in the *ILN* images are erased, whilst the various rusticated or quasi-Gothic tracery of the fictive niches evokes the wider architecture of a new, take-home fantasy sculpture gallery. This new two-dimensional gallery also narrates itself as autonomous and finite. The book's introduction says the purpose of the text is that of a 'cicerone' who enlivens a visit to galleries of sculpture and exalts the sightseer into an intellectual connoisseur' by elucidating pertinent myths and

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[684] "The Greek Slave," *The Illustrated Exhibitor* June 14, 1851, 37.

[685] For example, two engravings after Debay's *First Cradle* and Bell's *Andromeda* juxtaposed in *Illustrated London News*, Oct 11, 1851, 465, are copied and un-coupled in Concanen, *Gems of Art from the Great Exhibition*, to be re-juxtaposed with engravings after J. R. Kirk's *Origin of the Dimple* from *Illustrated London News*, September 20, 1851, 354 and Bell's *Dorothea* from *Illustrated London News*, May 3, 1851, 362, respectively.

narratives.[686] As the new gallery closes on the last page, the text says the cicerone's task is accomplished.[687]

The reproduction of sculpture images shadowed the reproduction or re-display of sculptures in new exhibitions. This occurred as new publications were constructed on formats developed in 1851,[688] as prints or even plates were transferred between publishers in different countries, and the depicted sculptures themselves re-appeared from exhibition to exhibition. Both the Crystal Palaces of London in 1851 and New York in 1853, for example, featured a pair of marble copies of the *Greek Slave* and *Fisher Boy*, owned by British and American patrons respectively. To illustrate this repeat display of the two statues, *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, an illustrated weekly news magazine from Boston that ran from 1851 and imitated the *ILN*'s appearance up to its panoramic masthead (figs. 141, 146), reproduced the *Greek Slave* engraving from the *ILN*'s Great Exhibition supplements, alongside a non-identical copy of a *Fisher Boy* engraving from the *Art-Journal*'s Great Exhibition catalogue.[689] The reproduction of sculptures in different materials and scales also supported the re-use of prints. This happened as the formal and indexical ambiguities of prints—their absent or weak reference to colour, size and material, for example—permitted a statuette engraving to be swapped for a statue engraving, or *vice versa*. Such swapping is witnessed in 1853 illustrations of Kiss's *Amazon*, re-exhibited in New York as a colossal bronze, a zinc reduction and a silver reduction.[690] Meanwhile, like *Gleason's Pictorial*, the *World of Art and Industry Illustrated from Examples in the New-York Exhibition* printed a double-page spread

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[686] "Introduction," in Concanen, *Gems of Art from the Great Exhibition*.

[687] "H. R. H. Prince Albert," in Concanen, *Gems of Art from the Great Exhibition*.

[688] The same wood engraving of William Calder Marshall's *Sabrina* by T. Bolton, for example, appears in the *Illustrated Exhibitor*, 1851, 55, in an article on the New York Crystal Palace in the *Exhibitor*'s sequel, *The Illustrated Magazine of Art*, 1853, 264, and also in the New York Exhibition catalogue, Silliman and Goodrich, eds. *The World of Science, Art, and Industry*, 19. Several other statue engravings took this journey.

[689] 'The Greek Slave. By Hiram Power.', *Illustrated London News*, August 9, 1851, 185; "Hiram Powers, the Sculptor," *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, April 15, 1854, 228-9. Beegan notes that *ILN* wood blocks and proofs were sent to the United States in this period. Beegan, "The Mechanization of the Image," 260.

[690] The various *Amazon* iterations are recorded in Richards, ed., *A Day in the New York Crystal Palace, and How to Make the Most of It*, 12, 19, 132; *Official Catalogue of the New-York Exhibition of the Industry of All Nations*, 134. In its notice of the silver *Amazon*, *A Day in the New York Crystal Palace* says, 'The popularity of this great work is well attested by the variety of its reproductions,—of which there are, at least, three other examples in the Exhibition.' The facing page then illustrates the silver reduction with an imitation of an engraving from the 1851 *Art-Journal* catalogue that illustrated the colossal zinc cast. Ibid.,132. Another catalogue meanwhile, illustrated the colossal zinc cast with what is more likely an engraving after one of the reductions. This engraving, signed J. W. Orr, shows the group on a round base and pedestal, which many extant reductions have, by contrast with the rectangular base of the colossal zinc cast the engraving was purporting to depict. The shape of the tail and length of the spear also differ with the colossal versions as some reductions do, though these differences could easily be contingencies of draftsmanship also. Silliman and Goodrich, eds., *The World of Science, Art, and Industry*, 14.

of wood engravings after Powers's marble sculptures with surrounding commentary (fig. 147). It is plausible that the *Greek Slave* engraving was sourced from a photograph published by the fledgling London Stereoscopic Company (fig. 148), which used a mirror to give a quadruple image of the *Slave*. In the later image, the *Slave*'s front and back can be viewed in stereovision, in front of a dark decorative drape that echoes that tasselled canopy at the Great Exhibition, which in turn echoed the draped post she was chained to.[691] This photograph, however, was not after any of the marble *Slaves* but after a Parian version (the armbands, typical of the Copeland's versions, give this away). But the most significant feature of the *World of Art* engraving is less what its source actually is than its intrinsic opacity to this source—an opacity that is ironically foregrounded by the text accompanying the engraving, which explains that '[n]o modern artist has succeeded so perfectly [as Powers] in giving to his statues the peculiar look of flesh, equally removed from the roughness of stone and the glossy polish of porcelain.'[692] Seen in isolation, the engraving's inscrutability might appear a merely negative feature—an absence or short-circuiting of pictorial reference. Seen in a wider exhibition context, however, the mutability of such engravings represents a connectivity amongst two- and three-dimensional media that greased the wheels of reciprocal promotion.

This pictorial recycling is not best understood not just as an ever-greater departure from a single 'original' work or event. Stalking a statue from exhibition to exhibition, for example, could entail re-forging representational contacts with a statue's circumstances, even though executed independently of the statue. As noted above, both the outline and surrounding text of the *Illustrated Exhibitor*'s 1851 *Greek Slave* engraving was lifted from the *Art-Journal* of 1850, the first third of the text paraphrased, the rest copied *verbatim* (figs. 133, 140).[693] Ironically, the way the *Exhibitor* image obscures its own graphic provenance actually reverses an earlier erasure in its source: To present itself as if occasioned by the Great Exhibition, the *Exhibitor* engraving inserts the cloth drum arrangement that was itself re-used from the 1845 Graves & Co. show, but left out of the intermediate Thompson-Roffe engraving. The *Exhibitor* does not just reconstruct the canopy setting to make reference to *Greek Slave* display in the Great Exhibition; it also recreates the *effect* of that display on its own pages. The added canopy, pedestal and guardrail fix the statue within depth (note the

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[691] Leiden print room, Rijksmuseum, accession no. MM.13045.

[692] Silliman and Goodrich, eds., *The World of Science, Art, and Industry*, 197.

[693] "The Greek Slave," *Art-Journal*, February 1850, 56; "The Greek Slave," *The Illustrated Exhibitor* June 14, 1851, 37.

sharp perspectival recession of the floor and railings). Moreover, this pictorial presentation contrasts with most of the other sculpture engravings in the Exhibitor (which as a whole constitute a disproportionate number of the *Exhibitor*'s images of Great Exhibition objects), which are usually only lightly modelled outlines.[694] If one flicks through the *Exhibitor*, the *Greek Slave*'s presentation is akin to that of other sculptures, but it stands out amongst them as the top of the pack.

Common to all the *Exhibitor* sculpture engravings, but exemplified in the *Greek Slave* engraving, is the way the page layout claims aesthetic attention both for the statue and the print itself. The sculpture engravings tend to occupy horizontally symmetrical positions on each page, often framed by flanks of text either side. This contrasts with many vignette-type illustrations that depict labour in factory or workshop settings, which tend to be placed asymmetrically. Tom Gretton reads symmetrical image distribution in such periodicals as an index of the 'relative autonomy of images under the general governance of words':[695] those displayed symmetrically are to be understood more as attractions in their own right, whilst asymmetry suggests that pictures were inserted where text dictated, because 'conceived simply as illustrations'.[696] Whilst being symmetrically positioned, the *Greek Slave* image also extends to the page border, forcing the text to constellate around it in three separate blocks.[697] The blocks comprise a continuous narrative of the statue, but one broken mid-sentence, forcing the reader's eye to jump from the left column, then jump upwards and across the image to the right column, then down and leftwards to the vestigial two-columned bar below. With no reliable convention in the *Exhibitor* at this point for whether columns continued vertically or horizontally across breaks, the reader must break their stride to continue reading. The text serves more to illustrate the image than *vice versa.* According to Brian Maidment, the visual assertiveness of such *Exhibitor* prints claimed some equivalence in artistic status between cheap wood engravings and steel engravings like those in the *Art-Journal*, as part of the magazine's general re-appropriation of the Great Exhibition spectacle for its artisan audience.[698]

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[694] The contents gives a list of illustrations loosely divided by exhibit class, with 'sculpture' getting the largest number of illustrations besides 'machinery'. "List of Illustrations," *Illustrated Exhibitor*, 1851, xlii-xliv.
[695] Gretton, "The Pragmatics of Page design," 689.
[696] Ibid., 692.
[697] My reading of this image is partially indebted to Maidment, "Entrepreneurship and the Artisans," 88-90.
[698] Ibid.

The way that the *Exhibitor* analogised and extended the aesthetic impact of the *Slave* at the Exhibition occurs also in the *ILN*'s wood engraving, though in far more luxurious and sophisticated fashion (fig. 141). In its richness and quality, it gives perhaps the best approximation available to the *ILN* of the standalone artistry represented in the Thompson-Roffe stipple engraving used in the *Art-Journal*. Like the *Exhibitor*'s engraving, the *ILN*'s *Greek Slave* found a place within the title's oeuvre as the first or most out-standing of its sculpture images. Most of these were positioned according to two-dimensional aesthetics, with various sculptures brought together to strike symmetries of outline or to find apt parallels in theme across the page. The largest, most richly modelled or arresting sculpture engravings usually went on the *ILN*'s Great Exhibition supplement front pages. The *Greek Slave* engraving had the largest image-to-text ratio of any of these front pages, taking up almost the entirety of the August 9 supplement title page. Meanwhile, the *ILN* printed two simultaneous views of the sculpture, a privilege it accorded to no other sculpture in the Exhibition. The double-view privilege, pre-empting the London Stereoscopic Company photograph, was also given to the *Slave* in the stipple engravings of *Tallis's History and Description of the Crystal Palace*, even though these had no reproductive relation to the *ILN* engraving (fig. 149). Whilst elevating the *Greek Slave*'s claim to attention amidst the *ILN* corpus, the double-view, with its large oval voids of shadow (atypical for the *ILN* engravings), also recalls the canopy display. It echoes the potential of the tasselled drum, in combination with the rotating pedestal, for allowing a stationary viewer to see the *Slave* 'in the round', whilst also keeping her shape 'niched' at all times.

The simultaneous illustration of the *Slave*'s bare front and back also inescapably caters for sexual interest in her shape. The print combines two options for erotic viewing that are usual features of sculpted and pictorial nudes respectively, but which, as such, would usually be incompatible: It allows the reader to look around the body and more or less see each part of it, whilst at the same time it more or less abstracts away the distinction between cold, hard, static marble and living flesh in its matrix of white-on-black lines. Of course the inked paper constitutes a material medium of its own in place of flesh, though one with certain advantages over, or means of complementing, the marble sculpture. On one hand, the picture could be taken home and viewed in private. Furthermore, whilst the print and text refer to the statue as such, the image again gives enough scope to see the print as a picture of a woman (tied to a column, on a pedestal) rather than a picture of a statue (on a pedestal) of a woman (tied to a column). The commodified human Powers depicted is bound up with the marble product he

exhibited, in a print product that offers a sense of both. Like the Roffe-Thompson print, the *ILN* engraving depicts or refers to the sculptor's mediation of flesh in marble, but at the same time offers a parallel, perhaps even enhanced, performance of the same mediatory feat.

The *ILN*'s publication of the *Greek Slave* engraving, however, presents an ironic tension between the visual statement made by the print and its accompanying critical description. For example, the caption beneath the image accounts for the engraving as a concession to public taste, stating that the 'Greek Slave, by Power [*sic*], has attracted so much attention, and received so much eulogy from the multitude, that we are induced to give a representation of it from two points of view.'[699] It goes on to sharply disavow the opinions of the 'multitude' by saying that whilst possessing 'considerable merit of execution', the statue is 'ill-studied', 'constrained' and 'inelegant', and moreover a potentially indecent presentation of nudity, given how its narrative of 'a modest female forcibly exposed in a slave market, and keenly sensitive of the humiliating indignity to which she is subject, deprives it of that charm which attaches to the nude figures of ancient art, wherein an obvious innocent unconsciousness of *dishabille* prevents all compunctions on the score of propriety.'[700] The caption is cut short here with the promise of a more extended exegesis in the next week's episode of the on-going sculpture essay. This was the lengthy article noted above (which Powers had been told was written anonymously by a London sculptor),[701] lambasting the *Slave* as 'a poor *refaciamento*, with alteration, but without improvement, of the "Venus di Medicis," with a story added to give it a relish', and deeming it a work of disingenuous eroticism.[702] The author presents the print as a supplicatory offering to popular sentiment whilst disavowing its aesthetics and alleged enticements. The print's presentation of the statue thus sits awkwardly with its role in illustrating critic's points about that artwork, ironically because it so effectively mirrors the representational qualities the critic observes. It is arguable that the print worked in tandem with accompanying text to stimulate anticipation of this later review, or that the *ILN* here offered readers the stimulant of aesthetic debate and criticism *as such*, or that those readers would have been inured to such cracks in the magazine's collective voice. In any case, the *ILN* ended up not only supplying its readers with the kind of visual experience its text was complaining about, but also furnishing other publications with the materials to do similarly:

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[699] "The Greek Slave. By Hiram Power," *Illustrated London News*, August 9, 1851, 185.
[700] Ibid.
[701] Letter from Edward Everett to Hiram Powers, September 15, 1851; Letter from Powers to Everett, November 9, 1851, Powers papers.
[702] "The Great Exhibition, Sculpture," *Illustrated London News*, 23 August 1851, 241.

As noted above, the *ILN* print was replicated in its Boston imitator, *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing-Room Companion*, to illustrate the statue at the New York Crystal Palace. Here it was framed amidst a generic and congratulatory biography of Powers himself, and miscellaneous stories about modern Syrian labourers and jugglers at the court of a Moghul emperor, offering the same brand of orientalist narrative that added 'relish' to the *Slave*. Via the reproductive circuits of the burgeoning 'Great Exhibition' culture, any publicity could become good publicity.

CONCLUSION

'The Exhibition', Droth has claimed, 'reveals a neoclassical school torn between its commitment to intellectual principles on the one hand, and a desire to take a share in emergent aesthetics and in new commercial opportunities on the other.'[703] Based on the case studies we have looked at, is this the case? If so, what was the nature of ideal sculpture's intellectual tensions or conflicts with industrial modernity at the time of the first international exhibitions? How did the discourse of ideal sculpture engage or not with the display of materials, technology and labour for which these exhibitions are remembered?

New media such as iron, porcelain and print certainly played a pivotal role in the careers of Bell, Monti and Powers. This is not to say that these three received much direct monetary return from these engagements: By the 1860s Bell had become sceptical of Parian statuettes as a means of profit for sculptors, asking 'where is the market for them?'[704] He claimed to have received little remuneration for his Parian models and that even Herbert Minton saw Parian statuettes only as loss-leading 'advertisements' for his other wares.[705] Monti, meanwhile, died in penury after dabbling with electrotypes, photography and silversmiths.[706] Hiram Powers had no direct contracts with manufacturers reproducing ideal sculptures, even if some accused him of being one himself. Nonetheless, new media sustained the publicity and profile of each sculptor, feeding off the exhibition of their work and re-displaying it, or encouraging its re-display, in turn.

We have seen how the reproduction or imitation of statues across distinct media could provide a particularly dynamic engine of publicity for these artists, especially where these media echoed each other across the shared space of the international exhibitions. Before the London Stereoscopic Company bought Monti's *Sleep of Sorrow* to advertise their stereoscope cards, for example, they had been publishing new slides during the whole show, meaning (as Britt Salveson notes) that they could respond to the attention certain statues got in the Exhibition.[707] The significance of this reproductive connection in the context of this thesis is that it would have entailed a degree of self-sustaining exposure for a work like Monti's *Sleep*

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[703] Droth, "The Ethics of Making," 226.
[704] Bell, "The Patronage of Sculpture," *Building News*, August 9, 1861, 666.
[705] Ibid.
[706] Hardy, "Raffaelle Monti"..
[707] Salveson, "'The Most Magnificent, Useful, and Interesting Souvenir'," 15.

of Sorrow, and in turn that the presence in the same Exhibition of a work like Copeland's spectacular *Night* might have augmented this process through cross-reference. We have seen such a process at work in the way the *Greek Slave*'s image was passed between marble, plaster, parian, photography and print, each iteration referring its audience back to the marble work or to other iterations. Cases like this present an important caveat to the reading of objects and their popular appeal in the exhibitions, one which even art historians focussing on such crossovers of media can underplay: Whatever the aesthetic nuances, material specificities or sensual charge of individual statues or reproductions of statues, considered in themselves, the attention they received was likely to have had as much to do with the sheer currency that the crossovers as such gave them during international exhibitions.

To some extent, the above situation could be framed as a 'commodification' of sculpture, especially where information on the reality, opacity and artistry of reproductive processes was withheld or overwritten, in order to offer a widening market the chance of buying into the creativity of ideal sculptors and its cultural status. At the same time, we have seen that the mutual distinction and specificities of overlapping media were central to the exchange of status across them. As we have seen, the publicity of iron *Eagle Slayers* and Parian *Slaves*, for example, revolved around the technical difficulties and potentialities of translation as such. Even in such cases where imitating the look of one material in another was conceivable or aimed at, there was a built-in incentive to show what an achievement this was, especially in order to differentiate a manufacturer from their commercial rivals, whether up or down the market. In cases where such imitation was inconceivable, as in two-dimensional graphic reproductions of statuary, for instance, the aesthetic claims of translation were clearer. One contention of this thesis is that an argument which various scholars have been recently making about graphic reproduction prior to photography—that distinctions between industrialised reproductive techniques and artistic authorship were far less clear in the mid-nineteenth-century than they seem to us in the twenty-first—should also be applied to objects like Parian statuettes.[708]

But whilst reproduction and creativity were thoroughly imbricated across different media, the distinction between the two was continually and vigorously rehearsed in the writings of sculptors and critics. As the accusations that dogged the work of both Monti and Powers

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[708] Gretton, "Industrialised Graphic Technologies in Symbiosis with the World of Art"; Haskins, *The* Art-Journal *and Fine Art Publishing*, 1-29.

show, the ideal sculptor was still expected to draw upon and provide his or her audience with something beyond concrete and contingent matter, or the work, however dextrous, of those *scarpellini* who helped embody their conceptions or of the wood engravers and manufacturers who re-embodied them. As we saw in chapter 3, even the primary reproductive labour of many printmakers was clandestine, something to be overlaid with the suggestion of a more respectable and less incestuous act of reproduction, which reached beyond the printmaker's medium to converse with that of the sculptor.

The critical debates and disagreements that this thesis has detailed show that whilst exhibition and reproduction furnished platforms for elevating the profile of sculptors or the claims for sculpture as a professional discipline, they also presented challenges to the art and its norms. We have seen how the 1855 International Exhibition, for example, allowed Bell to stage his own ideals for displaying sculpture on sculpture's own terms, whilst at the same time promoting alternative experiments in combining form with colour that Bell cited his own coloured displays to combat. Meanwhile, the dynamics of an expanded audience for sculpture and sculptural reproduction at the international exhibitions presented a challenge and foil for assertions of professional authority by sculptors and critics. We have seen, for example, how writings by Westmacott Jr., Weekes, or the many antagonists of Hiram Powers repeatedly voice the anxiety (whether honest or not) that the wrong kind of sculptor was acquiring fame and attention, because sculpture's new public were insufficiently attuned to sculpture's rules, and the line between the ideal and the 'mechanical' or reproductive. Such rhetoric had a history prior to the international exhibitions, especially in relation to rococo design, and especially where the public function of art was most at stake.[709] Much of the criticism we have seen was also shot through with issues surrounding class and labour that this thesis has barely been able to touch upon. Nonetheless, as I hope to have demonstrated, the particular character and vehemence of the discourse also points strongly towards inter-sculptor competition within a form of exhibition that was shot through by national rivalries and unprecedented in both its scope and the variety of ways or means to interpret it.

Does, therefore, the use of ideal sculpture rhetoric to belittle coloured statues, veiled faces or chained nudes as the produce of charlatans, chapmen and mechanics signal a clash between established norms of 'neoclassical' idealism and the sculpture's new conditions and

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[709] See Gombrich, *Preference for the Primitive*, 1-144.

possibilities? Certainly the language of ideal sculpture was challenged to respond to the situation. However, the lectures of Bell and contemporary commentaries on both Monti and Powers have underlined two interrelated points, crucial to understanding these tensions. On the one hand, references to the ideal and its relation with, or distinction from, reproduction or mechanics were surprisingly malleable and contingent. Secondly, accusations of chapmanship were not a unidirectional flow from one 'neoclassical' school of sculptors to another; they were flung between sculptors, at the conventionality of ostensibly 'neoclassical' art as much as at sculptural novelties like Monti's veiled figures. These accusations competed with each other, changing their reference between different sculptures or sculptural styles, both from a synchronic and a diachronic perspective. This competitiveness gave the discourse an internal motor. Where we do see distinct, broad temporal shifts in critics' preferences (away from the Anglo-Roman school of Gibson and Wyatt between 1851 and 1862, for example), this does not represent a rejection of the 'ideal' discourse or the example of Greek sculpture, so much as a set of new perceptions or arguments about what 'Greekness' in sculpture should mean, or what the ideal looks like. Surviving texts from throughout the period strongly insist on the line between ideal sculpture and other, or lesser, arts and practices, but this line was constantly shifting.