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Christopher Parsons and Martha Ward

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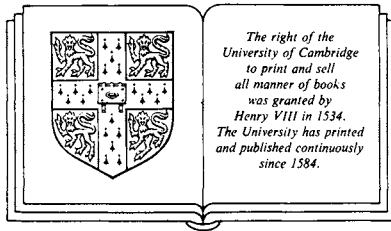
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# A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SALON CRITICISM IN SECOND EMPIRE PARIS

CHRISTOPHER PARSONS

and

MARTHA WARD



CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Cambridge University Press

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore,  
São Paulo, Delhi, Dubai, Tokyo, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521154949](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521154949)

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First published 1986

First paperback edition 2010

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication Data*

Parsons, Christopher, 1952-

A Bibliography of Salon Criticism in Second  
Empire Paris.

(Cambridge studies in the history of art)

Bibliography of works consulted; p.

Includes indexes.

1. Salon (Exhibition) - Bibliography. 2. Art  
criticism - France - History - 19th century - Bibliography.

I. Ward, Martha, 1951-. II. Title. III. Series.

Z5961.F7P37 1986 [N5066] 016.1'011180944 85-19468

ISBN 978-0-521-32149-5 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-15494-9 Paperback

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## PREFACE

The Paris Salons of the Second Empire (1852–1870) mark the zenith of the state-sponsored exhibition of contemporary art in France. Since its inception in the early eighteenth century, the Salon increasingly attracted attention as the principal forum for the display and evaluation of new work. Yet just as the ever mounting number of exhibitors, critics and visitors enhanced its prominence, so the attendant diversity of tastes, values and expectations threatened the exhibition's coherence. Remarkably, the Salon managed by and large to contain the multifarious and often conflicting concerns of its swelled ranks during the Second Empire; not until the Third Republic would a plethora of small independent shows seriously erode the institution's prestige and disperse critical attention. Indeed, a representative collection of Second Empire commentaries offers an unparalleled view of French art and its social ramifications precisely because of this situation: widely disparate groups and interests converged on the point of a single exhibition, each compelled to come to terms with it as the most significant artistic event of the year.

Scholars have already approached Salon criticism from various angles. Art historians, for example, often consult sections of reviews to document histories and provenances, to assess more fully a particular work's cultural or social connotations, or to track an artist's critical reception, frequently doing so in order to interpret its impact on subsequent production. While writers of monographs have tended to examine in depth those critics whose personal familiarity with an artist or movement promises special insight, some of the renowned Second Empire *salonniers*, including Baudelaire, Zola, Gautier, Thoré and Astruc, have been studied as critics in their own right. In addition, several synthetic accounts of the period have drawn from a broader range of reviews to reconstruct positions around such issues as realism, eclecticism or *japonisme*, and in the process have broached the question of how these polemics could be manifested in artistic forms or motivated by social and political concerns. Correspondingly, historians have begun to probe the language of criticism itself. By studying the application of artistic categories and evaluative

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terms, for example, they have detected ways in which contemporary perceptions of art and its function differed substantially from our own. Most recently, close readings of related passages from different reviews have focused on the ideological boundaries of critical discourse, revealing hidden assumptions about representation and its social connotations which subtend the position adopted by contemporary commentators.

These and other lines of research alerted us to the need for an updated guide to Salon criticism. It is now recognised that the well-rehearsed repertoire of Second Empire Salon references provided by Maurice Tourneux's seminal *Salons et expositions d'art à Paris 1801–1879* (Paris, 1919) is limited both by inconsistent presentation from year to year and a restricted range of sample publications. The other major resource, Radiguer's methodical index of writings on art that appeared in selected mid-century journals, remains relatively inaccessible as an unpublished manuscript in the Bibliothèque d'art et archéologie in Paris. Our initial plan to modify this situation was modest: to correct and amplify Tourneux's work, make Radiguer's research available and incorporate any subsequent references from other sources.

Consulting catalogues of the contemporary press, however, we increasingly questioned the limited range of periodicals that art historians had already explored: had the explosion in publishing during the Second Empire somehow not triggered a comparable increase and diversification of critical activity? We decided to make a systematic sweep of the press based on the *Catalogue collectif des périodiques* and other indexes of the Bibliothèque nationale, which is by far the most complete collection of sources available. Excluding the potentially interesting body of provincial and foreign criticism, whose investigation was not feasible, we focused on the Paris press and compiled a file of nearly two thousand journals active during the period. In choosing those to be surveyed, we included the most important Second Empire newspapers, magazines and journals as well as other periodicals known to have published articles on the fine arts; we also added titles to represent various discernible types of magazines and papers in our larger file. Of the one thousand separate serials we examined, more than four hundred carried Salon reviews. We supplemented the references gleaned from these with research on *comptes rendus* that first appeared as books or pamphlets, a category which previous bibliographies had more thoroughly documented. Finally, we traced reprints from one form of publication to another. Although the resulting bibliography is by no means exhaustive, it does comprehensively catalogue the reviews of numerous individual *salonniers* throughout the period, while at the same time offering, year by year, an illustrative cross-section of the entire critical enterprise in Paris.



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This greatly expanded field of Salon reviews shows just how little is actually known about the composition and functioning of the critical milieu and calls for new approaches to the study of the subject. In offering access to a range of primary material of unprecedented breadth, it will, for example, allow researchers to form a comprehensive picture of the languages, ideas and assumptions current in nineteenth-century critical discourse. The greater range of reviews made available by this bibliography should provide an opportunity not only to re-assess the validity of certain assumptions about critical response to specific issues – all too often premised on a restricted analysis of contemporary commentary and asserted through the repetition of familiar quotations – but also to move beyond traditional pre-occupations with the professional acumen of individual critics. By expanding out from the limited hierarchy of writers that has resulted from this emphasis upon literary style and personal connexions with artists and movements, it may be possible to arrive at a fuller, more informed picture of the values, composition and function of mid-nineteenth-century criticism. Using this greater range of material, it will be possible to assemble a network of texts to address these issues and more general questions about the way in which the structure and language of criticism can be understood in relation to broader areas of discourse operating during the period.

At the same time a much broader analysis of criticism as a journalistic activity can now be undertaken. This expanded sample enables us to establish a clearer picture of the profession of criticism and to categorize its members in wider social terms by identifying many more individual allegiances, stances and career aspirations. This and other biographical data can thus inform investigation of the ideological and commercial interests at stake in the endorsement of critical positions. In conjunction with other sources, for example, it can facilitate an examination of whether the contents of reviews and other writings about art were influenced by the matrix of connexions between dealers, critics and collectors and their resultant financial implications. It provides supporting evidence for a comparison between writings by Salon critics on broader social and political subjects and their attitudes towards visual representation. It also opens up the central issue of criticism's relationship to the structure, history and ownership of the press. We can now, for example, more effectively ask questions raised in other periods about what sort of political and social correlation (if any) existed between the orientation of a journal and the reviews it published.

Both the general and specialized press grew apace in the prosperous years of the Second Empire, creating new avenues through which writers and editors

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could address potentially different publics and with which readers themselves could correspondingly identify. Consider, for example, that appropriately thematic reviews annually appeared on the pages of popular fashion and education chronicles, proselytizing Catholic papers, professional diplomatic and military service publications and even amateur hunting and field sports magazines. By analysing the appeal of publications that typically did or did not carry articles on the Salon, and by interpreting in this context reviewers' different evaluative criteria, we can more clearly isolate contemporary estimations of readers' concerns. Similarly, assumptions about social allegiances are accessible through critics' modes of addressing their audiences, and more generally through the cultural codes reviewers enlisted to sell simultaneously the exhibition and their articles about it. Investigation of all these matters should help to account for the proliferation and diversity of Second Empire criticism that this bibliography documents.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book results from a group project to index Parisian Salon criticism from the mid-eighteenth century to 1870 and we want above all to thank our associates, Neil McWilliam, Vera Schuster and Richard Wrigley, who took time from their own work on earlier periods to assist our research. They checked references when it proved impossible for the authors to do so, helped ease the perennial problem of Parisian accommodation and put in many patient hours of listening both inside and outside the Bibliothèque nationale.

We received financial assistance for our work from a British Academy Research Award and the Twenty-Seven Foundation. The California Institute of Technology was unstintingly generous in providing travel funds, computer facilities and secretarial help. At Caltech, we are very grateful to Carl J. Lydick for his perseverance in developing the programs which ultimately made it possible to assemble a final text. Mildred Martinolich typed many of the initial references and the balance of this task fell to Rosy Meiron, whose scrutiny of the manuscript and recommendations have also been of enormous benefit.

Many institutions made their resources available to us. Our research was based upon the collections of the Bibliothèque nationale and we would like to thank Mme Colomb and M. Bossuat of the Département des imprimés as well as M. Jean Watelet of the Département des périodiques who went to great lengths to resolve queries and track down elusive items for us. We received similar help in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal and the Bibliothèque d'art et archéologie. The library of the Department of the History of Art at Oxford University provided a substantial amount of information and the Taylor Institution also enabled us to consult a number of sources.

Friends and colleagues provided invaluable help. Jon and Linda Whiteley, Régine Page, Stephen Duffy and Anne Matejka all undertook the often frustrating task of searching out material. We are particularly indebted to Professor Francis Haskell who has supported the project from its earliest days and whose encouragement has been a major factor in its successful completion. Finally, James and Mary Parsons and Neil Saccamano underwrote our commitment to the bibliography in a variety of ways; we wish to thank them especially for their patience and reassurance.

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## GUIDE TO USAGE

### CRITERIA FOR INCLUSION

This bibliography is a guide to criticism that appeared in the Parisian press between 1852 and 1870 concerning art at the Salon. We have omitted articles and caricatures that do not specifically address any of the exhibited works but describe instead other aspects of the Salon such as opening festivities, admission procedures, or audience reactions. An exception to this rule has been made, however, for articles that form an integral part of a critic's sequentially published *compte rendu*; these reviews have been catalogued in their entirety, regardless of the content of individual sections.

The Salons of 1855 and 1867, held simultaneously in Paris with the Expositions universelles, had each to be treated differently. In 1855, though most critics rightly regarded the contribution of the French school to the Exposition universelle as the equivalent of the Salon, they frequently reviewed it in the context of extensive, somewhat unwieldy accounts of the exhibition as a whole. We decided in the interest of both consistency and practicality to admit only articles dealing with the French school, which unfortunately meant excluding reviews devoted to foreign art entries. In 1867, on the other hand, when critics clearly distinguished between the Salon and the Exposition universelle, we have only recorded reviews of the former. Again for reasons of consistency, we decided not to include articles devoted exclusively to the private exhibitions mounted by Courbet in 1855 and by Courbet and Manet in 1867, unless these formed part of a larger *compte rendu*.

### TRANSCRIPTION

Authors' names, article and journal titles, issue numbers and dates have been transcribed as they appear in the publications, except that capitalization has been standardized and dates have been abbreviated. Information that we have supplied to supplement or correct the original publication is enclosed in square brackets.

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### PSEUDONYMS

Authors are listed under the name or initials with which they signed their reviews. We have placed in square brackets the names of those authors whose pseudonyms or initials could be identified and inserted a question mark to signal a tentative attribution. As a further aid, authors' full names, when known, are provided in the Index of Authors.

### CALL NUMBERS

Unless otherwise specified, the call number listed beneath the dates of each entry is that used in the Département des imprimés or the Département des périodiques of the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris. This information should allow easy cross reference with widely accessible guides such as the *Catalogue collectif des périodiques* and the *Catalogue général des livres imprimés de la Bibliothèque nationale*. Call numbers from other library collections, or other departments of the Bibliothèque nationale, are offered only when the Département des imprimés or Département des périodiques do not possess a copy of the publication or their copy lacks issues that may contain reviews.

### VARIANTS AND REPRINTS

Wherever possible, full and partial reprints of Salon articles that appeared during the nineteenth century have been appended to references. We have used the term *réimpression* only when certain that a subsequent text was completely faithful to the original; otherwise, reprints have been categorized as items for comparison.

### UNVERIFIABLE REFERENCES

If a review provided by Radiguer or Tourneux (see Bibliography of Works Consulted) could not be located, their references have been cited and annotated accordingly.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

## GENERAL

ANON.	anonyme	anonymous
col.	colonne	column
fol.	folio	folio
gr.fol.	grand folio	large folio
mf.	microfilm	microfilm
n <sup>o</sup>	numéro	number
n.s.	nouvelle série	new series
p.	page	page
pér.	période	period
s.	série	series
s.d.	sans date	no date of publication
s.l.	sans lieu	no place of publication
t.	tome	tome
vol.	volume	volume

## MONTHS

janv.	janvier	January
févr.	février	February
avr.	avril	April
juil.	juillet	July
sept.	septembre	September
oct.	octobre	October
nov.	novembre	November
déc.	décembre	December

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	Dépt. des cartes et plans
	Dépt. des estampes
	Dépt. des imprimés
	Dépt. de la musique
	Dépt. des périodiques
Bibl. d'art et arch.	Bibliothèque d'art et archéologie
Musée du Louvre	Bibliothèque centrale du Louvre et des Musées nationaux
Opéra	Bibliothèque – Musée de l'Opéra (sous les auspices de la Bibliothèque nationale)