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Therese Dolan, *Manet, Wagner, and the Musical Culture of Their Time*. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2013. xii + 271pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography and index. £65.00 (cl). ISBN 978-1-4094-4670-5 and Gurminder Kaur Bhogal, *Details of Consequence, Ornament, Music and Art in Paris*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2013. x + 357 pp. Figures, notes, bibliography and index. \$65.00 U.S. (cl). ISBN 978-0-19-979505-5.

Review by Charlotte De Mille.

Traditionally, research into the visual and aural arts has been restricted to theoretical questions surrounding form, historical fact or anecdotal detail. Despite a handful of early authors (Lockspeiser) and the pioneering work of Peter Vergo, it is only recently that scholars have re-engaged with the topic (Morton and Schmunk, 2000, Shaw-Miller, 2002, 2007 and 2013, Daniels, 2011, de Mille, 2011, Shephard and Leonard, 2013, Rubin and Mattis, 2014). The comparison and juxtaposition of both arts can shed light on key historical questions for both academic disciplines: not only central topics such as patronage and reception, but also current debate concerning the relevance of the material qualities of visual art and music. *Manet, Wagner, and the Musical Culture of Their Time* and *Details of Consequence, Ornament, Music and Art in Paris* are welcome additions to this growing area of research, particularly since despite considerable overlap in subject, art, and music in late nineteenth-century France, their arguments and evidence are wholly contrasting: what a rich field indeed.

Dolan's book is elegantly structured, focussing on key figures represented in Manet's *Music in the Tuileries* (1862) and placing them in a detailed historical context according to their respective views of Wagner's music. In effect the book articulates a dialogue between these protagonists, lively, animated, and not always in agreement. Dolan demonstrates persuasively that the "music" of *Music in the Tuileries* is Wagner's. Writing on Manet, Emile Zola spoke of the need to "dissect a being"—i.e., a painting—in order to bring the artist to life through his work. Dolan's dissection of *Music in the Tuileries* demands that we reassess Manet's engagement with music; however, its force is much greater than this. As she writes concisely, the book "demonstrate[s] how the dissent surrounding Wagner's ideas and music focalized and politicized the cultural climate of Paris at a crucial point in Manet's career and shows how his *Music in the Tuileries* catalyzes these tensions in the creation of modernist painting" (p. 15).

Drawing from copiously researched contemporaneous sources, Dolan does not need to engage in detailed analysis of Wagner's scores to cement her thesis. Her style is quietly suggestive, allowing the accumulation of her evidence to mount in support of her argument. In her modesty she does herself a discredit as to the originality, flair, and significance of her reading of this "father" of modernism. The book is a joy and a revelation. If Manet's project in *Music in the Tuileries* was so firmly cross-disciplinary and culturally apposite, what interpretations of his other work await? And if this father of modernism was so entrenched in music, can we identify similar visual strategies at play with other of his contemporaries or descendents?

As both authors make clear, the second half of the nineteenth century was characterised by fundamental changes in the subjects and priorities of art, literature and music; each turned away from mimesis to critique the nature of the act of narrative representation. But whereas according to Dolan's evidence, this reflected a wider cultural preoccupation with consciousness, the expression of emotion, and interiority, Bhogal contends that through prioritising ornament, artists and composers demonstrated a fascination with surface. For Bhogal, ornamental abstraction highlighted an

inherent lack, an inability to represent truth; for Dolan, Manet's freedom of line and colour is expressive of physical sensation, the emotion aroused, and the "veracity and materiality of paint" (p. 138).

For Clement Greenberg, Manet was the alpha of Modernism, or as Carol Armstrong has quipped, for Greenberg, and in much subsequent art history, "Manet in short meant painting since Manet." Dolan stretches this periodization, tracing the shift in media toward an engagement with interiority to Eugène Delacroix's essay "Réalisme et idéalisme," where he contended that "an impression results from the arrangement of colours, lights, shadows, etc. This is what one calls the music of a painting. Even before knowing what the painting represents...this emotion appeals to the most intimate part of the soul" (p. 13). It makes interesting reading alongside Bhogal's quotation of Maurice Denis, only relatively few years later bemoaning "soulless arabesques" (p. 75), or Claude Debussy delighting in ornament precisely for its "uselessness" (p. 29). Bhogal notes the "highly contradictory" discourse surrounding ornamentation at the end of the nineteenth and turn of the twentieth century, with the aim to demonstrate "how deeply entrenched the issue of ornament became in the widespread search for a new aesthetic and national identity" (p. 28)--an identity based on "grace, elegance, logic, and purity" (p. 48). She argues ornament was perceived as both "everything and nothing," ambiguous, suggestive and contradictory, and she provides a wealth of contemporary discussion from which to tease out these oppositions. Set beside Dolan's equally well-supported analysis, the contradictory nature of opinion is even greater than these authors map out in relation to their own particular subjects of enquiry. The books complement one another by their difference, and together provide an exhaustive study of art, music and the discourses surrounding each media in fin de siècle Paris.

Both books engage in the wider debates surrounding cultural theory and socio-political history. Dolan reminds us that it was largely through art and art criticism that any subversion or critique of Napoleon III's France could be articulated, thereby transforming what might otherwise appear today merely exclusively aesthetic debates surrounding particular works into subtle questioning of governance and freedom of speech. For Bhogal, exploration of current interests in femininity, eroticism, exoticism and mystery was driven through the stylistic motifs of "ornamental excess" (p. 8). Bhogal therefore concentrates attention on technique and language, regarding ornament as a "cognitive tool" that can stimulate reflection in the mind of the listener (p. 31). Where she quotes contemporary notice of the technical and formal correspondences between line, colour, or rhythm between music and painting such as d'Udine's *De la corrélation des sons et des couleurs en art* (1897) she offers further evidence for the perception of the close interrelation of these arts at the end of the nineteenth century.

The scope of Bhogal's *Details of Consequence* is enormous, tracing the role of a variety of ornamental motifs across two art forms and across key interests for both: antiquity, "primitivism" and the move into early Dada and Surrealism. Given this ambitious framework, it is not surprising that from an art historical perspective she has had to rely at times on generalised reference, for instance the "empiricism" of Impressionism as "suspended time" (pp. 84, 88); underplaying Matisse's pivotal role in Fauvism (p. 91); or at times conflating discussion of line in general and its endless possibilities with arabesque, which is itself only one form (pp. 67, 91). Moreover, by viewing the socio-political and cultural temper of late nineteenth-century Paris through the microcosm of ornament, its influence may at times appear distorted. For example, in reference to the philosophical, psychological and scientific revisions in understanding temporality spearheaded by Bergson's *Time and Free Will* (1889) and Einstein's *Special Theory of Relativity* (1905), Bhogal is perhaps too quick to regard "the arabesque [as] a key participant of these discourses" (p. 66), rather than perhaps a method of expressing a generalised or popularised understanding of them. *Details of Consequence* comes into its own where Bhogal returns to her own discipline, offering insightful and fruitful analyses of French music, particularly in tracing Debussy's use of arabesque back beyond *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1891-94) to his Prix de Rome cantata *L'Enfant Prodigue* (1884). These close readings set the pace for the detailed analyses of piano music by Debussy and Ravel, which builds on the work of Roy Howat in *The Art of French Piano Music* (2011) and *Debussy in Proportion* (1986).

Overall, Bhogal's book is a comprehensive, impeccably and thoroughly researched study that will transform scholarly appreciation of the significance of ornament for French art and music between 1890-1920, three decades of immense change and innovation. Taken together with Dolan's *Manet*-masterpiece, scholars need no longer prevaricate over the potential difficulties of cross-disciplinary art-music study in these years of ferment, but should draw inspiration and confidence to follow these authors in further research.

Charlotte De Mille

Charlotte.Demille@courtauld.ac.uk

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