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**THE EARLY WORK OF EVERETT SHINN (1897-1911):
ART AT THE CROSSROADS OF A NEW CENTURY**

by

JANAY JADINE WONG

Volume I

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Art History in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York**

2002

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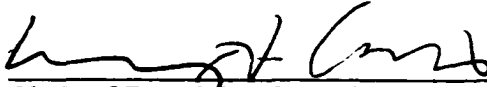
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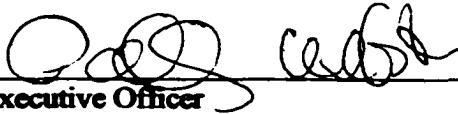
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This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Art History in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy.

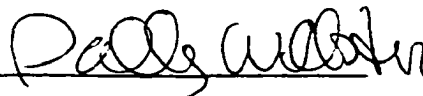
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INTRODUCTION

From the first his facility and resourcefulness were evident, and in his best work these were brought to the services of a lively fancy and curiosity readily moved by the spectacle of town life, especially in its more whimsical and less known phases. The artist in him was stirred by the spectacle of the busy shopping crowds, the dismal gayety of the music halls excited his imagination, the sordid cheer of remoter dives, the bustle of the docks by day and the haggard faces of the streets at night. Of such material he made good use of the exercise of his talent...

-- "Everett Shinn's Exhibition," *New York Sun*, March 11, 1903¹

Most artists can be said to be observers of their surroundings, but Shinn was the observer *extraordinaire*. For more than fifty years, in oil paint, pastel, red chalk, gouache, and watercolor, Shinn captured the spectacle of modern life. Shinn's keen ability to record the most salient aspects of modern city culture was recognized by the critic Henri Pène du Bois who observed, "It is necessary to say often -- it can not be said too often -- that Everett Shinn's art is the most naively expressive of the activity of our time. It tells the streets, the crowds, the plays of lights, with an impetuous sincerity. His art of drawing is so natural, so full of ideas, so human, that it gives the impression of the antique that all artists admire."² Although today Shinn is remembered primarily for his membership in the artists' group, The Eight, his contribution to American art in the early years of the 20th century was much more varied and far-reaching. At the time of The Eight's exhibition at Macbeth Galleries in 1908, Shinn had already been exhibiting his art for nine years. Shinn's coming together with The Eight was an extremely important chapter of the artist's career, but as this dissertation will demonstrate, it was only one of his several artistic associations and alignments.

Given the significance of The Eight within the history of American Art, it is surprising that more scholarship has not been devoted to an examination of the work of Everett Shinn. While dealers and collectors have long admired Shinn, he has been under-appreciated by art

historians. Art historian Linda S. Ferber has noted that scholars have long acknowledged that Shinn was different from The Eight. He was the youngest among his colleagues, the first to become famous, and the one with the least attachment to the group. Enormously talented, he quickly mastered one style and then rapidly absorbed another, adopting new influences and techniques without abandoning previous inspirations or subjects. His work is extremely diverse, ranging from delicate drawings in red chalk of dancers and women dressing to a large Ashcan mural of workers engaged in arduous labor. His early low-toned, sketchily rendered pastels of New York's City's streets brought him to the attention of prominent individuals such as Elsie de Wolfe and Stanford White and after his first one-person exhibition in 1900, his career was launched. Working as a decorator in private homes, he created murals, over-mantels, and screens in the spirit of the French 18th century. His theater pictures evidenced the popularity of Edgar Degas while also reflecting Shinn's keen ability to translate Degas's compositional format into an idiom suited to the American theater. Yet, despite the range of his oeuvre, he was not an artist in search of an identity. The various styles in which he worked and the different subjects that commanded his attention pointed not only to the multiple facets of an intensely creative personality, but perhaps more importantly, to an artist who could recognize, absorb, and render the diverse influences, trends, and crosscurrents which were profoundly affecting life at the turn of the century.

To date the only published book on the artist is *Everett Shinn 1876-1953: A Figure in His Time*, a monograph by Edith DeShazo. While this book is helpful in providing a framework of Shinn's life, DeShazo was not an academically trained art historian and perhaps as a result, the book lacks scholarly rigor. Moreover, DeShazo's study was written in 1974 and is therefore out of date in terms of artworks and information that have surfaced since the book's publication. Also following the monographic approach is the dissertation, *The Art of Everett Shinn* by Barbara Rand completed in 1992 at the University of California at Santa Barbara. Rand's dissertation offers a useful overview on the life of Shinn. Tackling Shinn's entire oeuvre, including his later

paintings and his work for the motion picture industry. Rand's dissertation devotes much attention to topics outside the parameters of my discussion.

Other authors have tended to focus on one aspect of Shinn's work, for example, his illustrations, which are thoroughly treated in the dissertation *The Illustrations of Everett Shinn and George Luks* by Nina Kasanof completed for the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1992. Shinn's theater scenes and his city scenes have both received attention in two separate articles of note. The first is an extremely informative essay by Linda S. Ferber, titled "Stagestuck: The Theater Subjects of Everett Shinn," published in *American Art Around 1900: Lectures in Memory of Daniel Fraad* in 1990. The second is an article by Sylvia Yount "Consuming Drama: Everett Shinn and the Spectacular City," published in *American Art* in 1992.³

Despite the notable contributions of the scholars mentioned above, Shinn's early career has never been comprehensively mapped. For many artists their early career is considered a prologue, a necessary, but often awkward, period on the way to their mature work. This was not the case for Shinn, for whom the early work is not only technically highly accomplished, but also explores all of the important themes that would continue to occupy him for the rest of his career. Indeed, Shinn's early work is in many ways his strongest accomplishment in the sense that it shows the artist at his most original and when he is most engaged with the crosscurrents of New York City. For the purposes of this dissertation, the parameters of Shinn's early career have been designated as 1897 to 1911. The year 1897 marks the beginning of his artistic career in New York City; while 1911 is the year when he completed the historically important mural for the City Hall in Trenton, New Jersey. The year 1911 is also when Shinn first showed with "The Pastellists" (a group that exhibited works by artists such as Mary Cassatt, Thomas Wilmer Dewing, and George Bellows) at New York City's Folsom Galleries, and the year can be viewed as the culmination of his early period. Though Shinn continued to be a productive and frequently brilliant artist, after 1911 a wide range of competing interests diluted his talents. Later in his

career, he was involved with the theater and the movie industry, interests that absorbed his time and likely detracted from his painting and drawing. Although Shinn remained a prolific artist, by about 1915, one starts to see the beginnings of a general loosening of quality and a repetition of themes executed without the conviction that made his earlier work so full of verve and originality. However, during the fourteen-year period explored in this dissertation, Shinn produced a rich body of work that is directly engaged with the dynamism and diversity of New York City.

By interweaving aspects of both biographical and socio-historical models, this dissertation situates Shinn's early work within the complex social, economic, and political matrix that defined New York City at the beginning of the twentieth-century. During the early nineteenth hundreds, the United States was a country in the midst of dramatic social, technological and architectural changes that were transforming the landscape of Manhattan. New York City in particular was a center of immigration and industrialization providing an arena where men and women from various races, classes, and social backgrounds could mingle, and, in so doing, absorb an urban identity becoming what historian Gunter Barth has defined as "city people."⁴ New York was then, and largely still is, a city composed of microcosms of cultures. To both the native New Yorker and the new arrival, New York at the turn of the century must have been perceived as a confusing polyglot of nationalities and classes. As people from different social classes and ethnic backgrounds encountered each other, tensions rose, friendships formed, and traditional assumptions, beliefs, and mores were challenged. During this period, many artists such as the Boston Impressionists Joseph Rodefer DeCamp, Frank Benson, and Edmund Tarbell retreated from the rapid changes occurring on the city streets to hermetic environments where, in their depictions of orderly interiors, well-dressed women gave no indication of social transformations occurring beyond the paintings' beautiful rooms. Other artists, such as Robert Reid or Thomas Wilmer Dewing, isolated women in gardens or verdant landscapes away from the hustle and bustle of urban life. Shinn and the artists of the Ashcan School, by contrast, directly confronted the dynamism and contradictions of the changing metropolitan landscape.

While some scholars may choose to focus on the social and political ramifications of Shinn's Ashcan pictures (i.e., the way the work can be interpreted as reflecting the artist's own political beliefs or ameliorative intentions), this dissertation covers a broader scope, exploring the striking way that the artist's early images of Manhattan capture the city's vast range of people as they encountered unusual sites, dined in new restaurants, stared at each other in parks, and generally made their way through the unpredictable spectacle of New York City. Within this context, Shinn's pictures helped people to decode the strange sights they witnessed. While the works did satisfy a human curiosity, which occasionally borders on the voyeuristic, in general Shinn's pastels are sympathetic, or, as he would claim, unbiased accounts of the world around him. Part of what may have made Shinn's art so successful and appealing to his audience was its ability to convey these disparate facets of the city in a manner that was non-threatening. Like the contemporary newspaper articles and illustrations, they gave an armchair-audience a chance to visit parts of the city to which they may never venture on their own.

In addition to exploring Shinn's work within the context of his time, this dissertation contributes to existing scholarship by providing material from primary documents, including letters and other autobiographical papers written by Shinn, which have not been previously published. By examining this material, it is possible to gain a better understanding of aspects of Shinn's work that heretofore may have gone unrecognized. Particularly enlightening are Shinn's comments on Washington Square, an area where he and his wife lived from 1902 to 1912. The square's monumental arch, historical Greek Revival buildings, and diverse denizens were favorite subjects for the artist, appearing in paintings and pastels throughout his career. By interweaving Shinn's previously unpublished notations on Washington Square with his depictions of the area, one may achieve a greater appreciation for his fascination with the subject and his desire to represent it. The extensive primary documents, upon which much of this dissertation is based, are located primarily in the Shinn papers at the Archives of American Art and the Helen Farr Sloan Library at the Delaware Art Museum. The Archives of American Art is the repository of the

majority of the Shinn papers including letters to and from Shinn; scrapbooks, 1898-1952, containing assorted newspaper and magazine clippings about Shinn and his work and two very useful record books filled with invaluable information regarding his work between 1899 and 1911. The first record book lists pastels, oil paintings, and decorative works sent to exhibitions and frequently includes information such as medium, price and purchaser of pictures, but unfortunately gives neither dimensions nor dates. The second record book lists illustrations submitted both by him and his wife, Florence (Flossie), to various periodicals as well as some works sent to exhibitions. The Helen Farr Sloan Library also houses a wealth of Shinn papers including Shinn's notes on artwork, people, correspondence, portions of an unpublished autobiography, and many photographs.

The dissertation is divided into eight chapters that examine Shinn's early work both thematically and chronologically. Chapter One, entitled "Beginnings: Early Childhood Through the Pennsylvania Academy" provides basic biographical information reviewing his formative years growing up in Woodstown, New Jersey. This chapter draws heavily on Shinn's unpublished biography in which he recounts his memories of family members and his early inclinations towards drawing and the theater. The chapter includes his primary education at local Quaker schools and follows his move to Philadelphia where he enrolled at the Pennsylvania Academy and worked as an illustrator for several newspapers. The years spent as a reporter in Philadelphia were critical for Shinn as it was as an illustrator that he trained his hand, eye, and memory and developed the rapid technique with which he concisely recorded the most salient aspects of a subject. Also discussed in this section are Shinn's emerging friendships with the artists George Luks, Robert Henri, John Sloan, and William Glackens.

Chapter Two, entitled "Arrival in New York City: Beginnings in Newspaper and Magazine Illustration and Work in Pastel," examines Shinn's debut in New York. The chapter traces the start of the artist's career, first as an illustrator for local newspapers and periodicals such as the *New York World*, *Ainslee's Magazine*, and *Harper's Weekly*, and later, as recorder of

urban life in dramatic pastels. Displaying a precociousness that would be evident through the early years of his career, Shinn quickly established himself in the competitive field of magazine illustration. By 1900, he was offered a job as art director for *Ainslee's Magazine*, a position which afforded the opportunity to meet influential writers such as Theodore Dreiser and to help his friends Glackens, William Buckland, and his recent bride Florence obtain work. An examination of several of Shinn's early illustrations allows one to trace the progress of his style from a looser, sketchier treatment of line to an increasing ability to handle perspective convincingly. Like many of his illustrations, Shinn's early pastels portray the excitement and confusion of New York as people from disparate backgrounds, sharing public spaces, attempted to make sense of the quickly changing city.

Chapter two also examines Shinn's pastels, considering their technique, subject matter, and reception within the context of the larger pastel revival in the United States. By comparing his work with other American practitioners of the medium, it is possible to discern how Shinn's technique and subject matter departs from traditionally established forms and rapidly evolves into a mastery of the medium. Also discussed in this chapter is Shinn's affinity for portraying the city in inclement weather and the pastels created for a book on New York after dark titled "New York by Night."

Chapter Three, entitled "Picturing New York Neighborhoods: The Interpretation of Public Space," groups Shinn's early pastels by neighborhoods, highlighting both the breadth of his subject matter and his attention to the various details and perspectives that define a particular locale. Although Shinn's renderings of New York streets are commonly associated with gritty, run-down neighborhoods, and he was indeed a master of this genre, his portrayals of the city also included many examples of Gotham's more glamorous locales. Beginning with Gramercy Park and Madison Square and proceeding downtown to the waterfront and lower Manhattan, this chapter examines the way Shinn's work captures the most vibrant sections of the city. Within these dynamic urban arenas, he records both permanent landmarks, for example the second

version of the Washington Square Arch, and more temporal aspects of the city such as the short-lived Dewey Arch or the fashion of ladies' dresses. Frequently, he employs a recognizable city landmark, such as the Dewey Arch, to anchor the picture within a specific time and space. The landmark itself, however, generally plays a subsidiary role to the people in the pastels whose actions and expressions are the real subjects the works.

Chapter Four, entitled "Early Exhibitions and European Travel," focuses on the first exhibitions of Shinn's work in New York City and his visit with his wife to London and Paris, his inspiring but singular trip abroad. Both personally and professionally, this was an important period for Shinn. Beginning in 1899, he established friendships with Elsie de Wolfe, Stanford White, and Clyde Fitch, individuals who would play a crucial role in helping to launch his career. The early exhibitions are examined with attention to which works are included, what was purchased and by whom, and perhaps most importantly from the viewpoint of the critics whose commentary serves to evaluate his work within the context of the time. Following Shinn's successful debut in 1900 at Boussod, Valadon & Co., the Shinn's traveled to Europe and a significant portion of this chapter is apportioned to examining what the artist saw or might have seen and the impact it may have had upon subsequent work. Particular attention is paid to Edgar Degas and James McNeill Whistler, two artists whom Shinn admired and whose influence is undoubtedly reflected in his theatrical compositions and nocturnal impressions of the city.

Chapter Five, entitled "From Cornish to Washington Square," examines Shinn's life and art during the period following his European travel. After 1901, his artistic reputation was firmly established, critics lauded his work and the spoils of his commercial success provided for the purchase of land in Cornish, New Hampshire, upon which he soon built a house. Income generated from the sale of artwork and illustrations also allowed for a move into a comfortable brownstone just off the north side of Washington Square. The beginning of this chapter is concerned with one of the least examined aspects of Shinn's career, the period spent amongst the Cornish colony. By examining the diaries of Cornish residents Lydia and Stephen Parrish and

Lucia Fuller, it is possible to construct an outline of Shinn's activities while he was living amongst many artists associated with the American Renaissance movement, thereby providing yet another example of Shinn's ability to associate with and absorb the varied crosscurrents of turn-of-the-century culture. This chapter also addresses the new subject matter and new media that the Shinn's' trip to Europe most likely inspired. These include the use of oil paint and red chalk, materials that would become primary media for much subsequent work. Other changes examined are the increasing emphasis on the figure, whose articulation becomes less sketchy and more solidly drawn, as well as a new interest in nocturnal representations of New York. The artist's attention to the parks of New York City, especially Washington Square Park, comprises the final part of this chapter.

Chapter Six, is entitled "The Spectacle of Life: Representations of Urban Amusements and Theater Scenes." The chapter considers Shinn's appreciation for performances of the ballet and vaudeville as well as the impromptu diversions occurring on the city streets that attracted crowds of spectators and created an outdoor drama in which the city life itself provided the spectacle. This chapter addresses how Shinn's depictions of urban disasters like fires as well as colorful traditions such as the Easter Parade provided city dwellers with a reason to stop and stare at the events unfolding before them. While these were not amusements *per se*, they did contribute to the notion of the city as a shifting visual kaleidoscope that constantly offered a fascinating array of things to look at and consider. The period also witnessed the introduction of matinees and dining out as leisure activities that lifted people out of the humdrum sphere of everyday life and transported them into a world of glamour that suggested infinite possibilities. In pastels like *Delmonico's Fifth Avenue* (fig. 1) and *Mouquin's* (fig. 2), Shinn portrays the well-known restaurants that helped to usher in an era of increasingly public life.

This chapter also examines Shinn's renditions of the theater tracing their origins as dark almost monochromatic pastels to bright oil paintings of dancers on stage. Providing some of his most visually spectacular and sociologically complex pictures, Shinn's portrayals of the theater

reveal his life-long fascination with the stage and, more importantly, suggest the way that the theater environment itself exerted a socializing force upon the audience. Comparisons between Shinn's work and that of European artists, for example Edouard Manet, Edgar Degas, and Walter Sickert, suggest the influence that works by these artists had on Shinn, while at the same time revealing the many ways that his art differed from that of the European examples. Scholarship on American vaudeville, particularly Robert Snyder's excellent book, *The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York* (1989), also informs the discussion of Shinn's theater pictures, helping to explain Shinn's interest in the subject and the public's response to it.

Chapter Seven, "Decoration: The Belasco Theater, The Trenton Mural, and Private Homes," considers an aspect of Shinn's oeuvre that departs significantly from his portrayals of bustling New York or dramatically lit stage scenes. Beginning around 1904, Shinn, under the guidance of Elsie de Wolfe, began to decorate panels, screens, ceilings and other pieces of furniture in the style of neo-French Rococo. He interpreted the style broadly, adopting the period's designs and motifs, but not adhering strictly to historical boundaries. Thus, although in general he emulated the style of the French 18th century, he often referred to the decoration as Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI. Such decoration was regarded as the embodiment of some of the most up to date examples of style and taste and reveals yet another way in which Shinn's art represented the diverse artistic strains that characterized the cultural environment of New York around the turn of the century. In addition to the neo-Rococo designs that he created for private homes, this chapter also examines the series of murals showing allegorical figures that Shinn executed for the Stuyvesant theater. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the revolutionary Ashcan style mural that Shinn conceived for the Council Chamber of Trenton's City Hall. The mural, portraying workers in the city's pottery kilns and steel mills, is executed in a bold, realistic manner that breaks dramatically with the style of the then dominant American Renaissance Movement and looks forward to the social realism of Thomas Hart Benton or the Mexican muralists.

The final chapter, "Major Exhibitions and Reviews: 1902 – 1911," examines the works shown by Shinn and their critical reception during the nine year period of his early, but already distinguished career. Within this time frame, Shinn was extraordinarily active, holding one-person exhibitions as well as sending numerous paintings and pastels to shows around the country. In general, the critics responded positively to his work and it was frequently featured in articles and reviews by some of the most prominent critics such as Guy Pène du Bois, A. E. Gallatin, and Mariana Griswold van Rensselaer. By examining the works Shinn chose to exhibit and the critics' response to them, one can gauge the cultural climate of the time and understand the way that Shinn responded to current tastes while at the same time demonstrating a fierce independence that prevented him from simply following dominant artistic trends. When critics reacted favorably to his increasing use of color, his palette brightened. However, although reviewers continually voiced complaints regarding his dependence on Degas, he ignored them; he could be encouraged in a direction, but not dissuaded from pursuing a style he felt he had made his own.

Shinn's participation in the landmark exhibition of *The Eight* and his contributions to the first two exhibitions of the Pastellists comprise a significant portion of the final chapter. On the occasion of *The Eight* show in 1908, Shinn and his work were already so well known that a reviewer could refer to a few of his works as "old friends." When a group of his pastels were shown in the exhibition of the Pastellists in 1911, he was distinguished as a master pastellist. However, the road to success was not always smooth. As is true today, one's failures and weaknesses as well as one's triumphs are documented in the press and Shinn was no exception. By examining the artist's exhibitions and reviews, one gains a better understanding of Shinn's work and his status in the art world of the early 1900s.

¹ This article was originally discovered in a scrapbook in the Everett Shinn Collection at the Archives of American Art [hereafter referred to as AAA], Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. The collection, an invaluable resource for research on Shinn, includes correspondence, photographs, sketchbooks, illustrations, record books, and scrapbooks. There are six scrapbooks arranged by year on two rolls of microfilm. Scrapbook 1898-1906, Scrapbook 1910-1911, Scrapbook 1934-1924, Scrapbook 1934, and Scrapbook 1898-1952 comprise roll D179. There are also two undated scrapbooks on roll 952, frames 250-322. The scrapbooks contain clippings from newspapers and magazines labeled by Shinn with the source's title and date, but often missing the author and page number. For the above article see Scrapbook 1898-1906, roll D179, frame 46.

² Henri Pène du Bois, "Art Notes of Studios, Shops and Galleries," *New York American* (no date, probably March 1904), p. 34. Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 55.

³ Ferber's study examines Shinn's theater paintings in relation to his early career, but in so doing, she situates Shinn as a progressive painter of modern life and raises issues that have previously gone almost untouched by scholars. These issues include Shinn's connection with artists of the American Renaissance movement and the years he spent as a member of the art colony at Cornish, New Hampshire. These alliances will be addressed in my dissertation. Linda Ferber, "Stagestruck: The Theater Subjects of Everett Shinn," *American Art Around 1900: lectures in memory of Daniel Fraad*. Edited by Doreen Bolger and Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1990). Yount's article examines Shinn's city scenes as spectacle within the context of the expanding commercial marketplace. Sylvia Yount "Consuming Drama: Everett Shinn and the Spectacular City," *American Art* 6 (Fall 1992): 87-109. The most frequently addressed aspect of Shinn's career is undoubtedly his relationship with The Eight, which is well chronicled in any survey of the group. Some of the basic texts on the Eight include: William Innes Homer, *Robert Henri and His Circle* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1969), Bennard Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight* (Westport, CT.: North Light Publishers, 1979; repr., New York: Dover Publications, 1988), Mahonri Sharp Young, *The Realist Revolt in American Painting. The Eight* (New York: Watson-Guption, 1973), and Judith Zilczer, "The Eight on Tour, 1908-1909," *American Art Journal* 16 (Summer 1984): 20-48. More recently two museum exhibitions and accompanying catalogues have sought to broaden the definition of The Eight: Elizabeth Milroy, *Painters of a New Century, The Eight* (Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Milwaukee Art Museum, 1991) and Rebecca Zurier, Robert W. Snyder, Virginia M. Mecklenburg, *Metropolitan Lives: The Ashcan Artists and Their New York* (Washington, D.C.: National Museum of American Art; Norton, 1995).

⁴ Gunter Barth, *City People: The Rise of Modern City Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980).

CHAPTER I

BEGINNINGS: EARLY CHILDHOOD THROUGH THE PENNSYLVANIA ACADEMY

Childhood in Woodstown

Everett Shinn was born on November 6, 1876 in Pilesgrove Township, a few miles from Woodstown, New Jersey.¹ Woodstown, a residential borough situated in the northern part of Salem County, was then surrounded by rich farmland. By Shinn's own account he spent a happy childhood growing up in a fairly typical small town. He was the second of three sons born to Isaiah Conklin Shinn and Josephine Ransley Shinn, who were both Quakers. Shinn's older brother Warren was born on February 23, 1875 and his younger brother Harold was born December 2, 1883.² Isaiah Shinn, a great admirer of the author Edward Everett Hale, named his middle child "Everett" in honor of the writer. Shinn later became close friends with Hale's son, Edward Everett Hale, Jr. and illustrated Hale, Jr.'s book, *A Man Without a Country*.³

Shinn recalls his mother as "a sweet even tempered woman" with a vivid imagination. She was a gentle and devoted full-time mother, but Shinn felt that if she had lived in a more progressive time, she would have been an actress. She was very theatrical and in the course of relating a story would assume the characters being described, using a variety of hats, shawls, and accessories. A natural flare for the dramatic was a characteristic Josephine may have inspired in her second son, Everett, who as an adult would not only paint theater scenes, but also write, direct, and star in his own amateur productions. Throughout her life, she was very independent. While Shinn was living in New York, Josephine often took the train to visit him. After her husband died, she made trips alone to visit her sons.

Shinn's father, Isaiah Shinn, was a quiet, hard-working man, born on a farm in Pilesgrove Township to Quaker parents. While it is unclear to what degree Isaiah raised his children as

observant Quakers, Harold later recalled that the household environment was quite conservative.⁴ Isaiah never drank and his general behavior was decorous and emotionally restrained. Referring to his father Shinn wrote, "He adored my Mother.. yet a sense of embarrassment allowed him little show of affection in the family circle."⁵ Though he received little formal education, Isaiah taught himself mathematics, algebra, and geometry in between his chores on the farm. As a young man, he would rise early and walk the few miles from Piles Grove into Woodstown where he worked at Riley's grocery store. Later he found employment as a bank teller at the First National Bank in Woodstown, a job he held for 50 years. He was a well-respected member of the community and in 1914 was appointed Postmaster of Woodstown.⁶ Hoping that his sons would follow him in his profession, he was disappointed when one after another chose other lines of work. Warren, who had been interested in plant growth as a child, became a horticulturist. Harold worked for magazines and was employed by The International Magazine Company from 1906-1931.⁷ Shinn, who showed no signs of interest in banking, was permitted to continue with his drawing, leading to his career as an artist.⁸

In 1887, the Shinn family moved the few miles from Piles Grove to Woodstown into a new house on East Avenue.⁹ Woodstown, and the area surrounding it, supported a large Quaker community. As a child, Shinn attended Quaker schools, first the Macalitioner Sisters' Kindergarten and later the Bacon Academy.¹⁰ As a four-year-old, Shinn expressed neither an interest in art, nor a predilection for the constraints of formal education. He recalled that on the first day of kindergarten his mother dressed him in a gingham pinafore and pushed him forward toward one of the Misses Macalitioners:

Miss Macalitioner was delighted and leaned forward to coo words of confidence at the golden curls. Golden curls backed away from the loathsome cooing and threatened to be less of a Quaker than his mother.... The teacher gave him a piece of clay to work on...I wish I could tell you at this point that the piece of clay electrified the little boy with its creative possibilities and that was the beginning, the awakening of a great American artist.¹¹

However, this was not what transpired. After an unruly performance during which Shinn climbed an iron column, straddled a cross bar and refused to come down, his mother withdrew him from the Misses Macaltioner kindergarten and placed him in the Bacon Academy, a Quaker school founded by David Bacon in 1844.¹²

The incident with the iron column was just one of many of Shinn's acrobatic stunts. An extremely active child, he was drawn to the circus and was constantly attempting to imitate the astounding feats he had witnessed. His antics ranged from practicing his ability to balance on a wire strung between two apple trees to attempting to ride his bicycle around the gutter edge of his family's Mansard roof. Once, while trying to impress a little girl who lived next door, Shinn performed an aerial flip that ended badly. He recalled, "I skipped out of our side door and ran down the path, glided into the air like a bird and came down with the precision of a directed spade, buried my face in the grass and slid along my forehead slowly losing consciousness."¹³ It is interesting to note that even at this early stage, Shinn had already developed a fascination with acrobats and theatrical performers, subjects that would later become primary themes in this art.

The world of circus personalities also fed his lively imagination. The medicine men of the Big Top joined Shinn's cast of fictitious characters gleaned from dime store novels, which he hid in his coat sleeves or in schoolbook covers. With his boyhood companions, Shinn turned the area surrounding Woodstown into a fantastic landscape in which the Shinn and his friends became General Custer's scouts. As Shinn later wrote:

Circuses were always the most wonderful thing in the world to me, and when a medicine man finally rolled into Woodstown on a single wagon my imagination was waiting for him, eager to be kindled. Dime store novels had laid the groundwork, like Indian scouts they had gone ahead of the circus and paved the way with scalps, feathers, bowie knives, tomohawks [sic], fringed leggings, squirty cut plug, savage yells, hairbreath escapes, clowns and lurid greasepaint.¹⁴

As a child, Shinn liked to draw but was hesitant to display his talent in public for fear of mockery by the neighborhood children. He recalled:

Had I dared carry a pencil and sketchpad among the boys with whom I played whose sneering contempt marked any lad who collected stamps, I would have equally shared his besmirchment of character and dirty odium. A ring of puckering faces of marked disgust would have glared down on my amateurish efforts. Fear of ridicule and flaunting the tools of an artist prevented me from starting earlier to record on paper such scenes as then held my fancy.¹⁵

To avoid the jeers of his friends, Shinn developed an unusual mnemonic device whereby he would trace the subject of a future drawing with his tongue on the roof of his mouth. Realizing that this exercise served a dual purpose, Shinn noted that, "This necessity in avoiding criticism did more than hide my weakness for art from my friends [:] it stimulated an already absorbing blotter-like memory that has forever served me more adequately than any form of direct translation where 'out of sight out of mind' is the stumbling block of so many artists."¹⁶ Shinn's prodigious memory would prove useful in his future employment on the Philadelphia and New York newspapers, and in his career as an artist.

Despite his early inclination towards drawing, Shinn firmly contends that he never intended to become an artist. He writes, "If I stated that my earliest wish was to be an artist [then] by a later day evidence of a sizable output of pictures it could be inferred that my endeavors were only the natural expression on a inborn feeling for making pictures Yet I can remember no time when I would not have traded all my brushes and paints for a lathe and the tools to work it." He further notes, "Mechanical devices and the labor of making them had keenly interested me long before I had the slightest interest in making a drawing of anything other than gear wheel and prodding pistons. Steam was the motive power in my youth and all imaginings were based on steam expansion."¹⁷

Shinn's first effort at mechanical design occurred after reading an article in *Scientific America* on the first submarine designed by Holland. Shinn decided to build a version of his own. An entire summer was spent designing and constructing the model from tin scavenged from a waste heap, and finally the finished product was launched in the Shinn's kitchen sink. The small submarine actually worked and the success encouraged Shinn to construct a larger model

that was designed to hold two boys. Fortunately for Shinn, the larger submarine could not fit through the barn door; thus Shinn was spared a possible drowning in the millpond.¹⁸

Prompted by a continuing interest in mechanical devices, when Shinn left Woodstown at the age of fourteen, he enrolled not at an art school, but instead at the Spring Garden Institute, a technical school in Philadelphia. Founded in 1851 as a response to the demand created by the Industrial Revolution for technically trained workers, the Spring Garden Institute specialized in mechanical drawing and architecture.¹⁹ Unbeknownst to Shinn, he was studying at the same school as John Sloan, one of the artists with whom he would later exhibit as *The Eight*. However, a difference in schedules prevented their meeting. Sloan registered for the Institute's free-hand drawing classes at night, his days being occupied with drawings, designs, and etchings for A. E. Newton, a shop that sold "fancy goods" such as stationary, calendars, and cards.²⁰ Shinn was enrolled in the Institute's day classes: his curriculum consisting of mechanical drawing in the morning and work in the machine shop the afternoon. Shinn's instruction at Spring Garden seems to have been largely technical, a typical assignment involving the rendering of a Maltese Cross set at a sixty-two degree angle upon which the sun cast a ninety degree shadow.²¹

After two years, Shinn left the Spring Garden Institute for a job as a draftsman at Thackery Gas Fixtures Works. Shinn was assigned to the drafting room where he made detailed drawings of chandeliers. Bored by the monotony of constantly repeating the same subject, Shinn, to amuse himself, began rendering his own creations in the drafting sheet's margins. The exacting details of lighting fixtures were temporarily relieved by lively depictions of scenes from Broad Street replete with hansom cabs and scurrying pedestrians. Shinn was in the midst of creating one such image when the illicit drawing was spotted by his infuriated boss who promptly fired him. However, before dismissing him his superior requested a word with Shinn in his office. The exchange that followed set Shinn on the path to a new career. In his unpublished autobiography, Shinn recounted the incident in this way:

I was marched into his private office and given a sound lecture on my offence. “Your [sic] fired .” He growled. Thoroughly convinced of my dismissal I turned to go. “Just a minute, young man, I am letting you go for your own good .. Look in the draughting [sic] room .. look at old tired out Benson. He’s been here for over twenty years and now earns twenty dollars a week .. If you stay here, at the age of fifty you will earn no more than that.. The drawing you made and got fired for shows you don’t belong here .. None of us could have drawn it .. Get out and do the thing you do best .. Newspaper, magazine, I would suggest, but, promice [sic] me that you will report to me from time to time about your progress.”²²

Thus, Shinn was launched on the path to his new career.

Though he lacked newspaper experience, Shinn’s skill as a draftsman helped to secure him employment as an illustrator for the *Philadelphia Press*, which he joined in 1893. When he first presented himself to the art editor of the *Press*, he was not immediately given an assignment, but the older staff members were friendly and encouraged him to stay as an opportunity might arise. The wait proved worthwhile and Shinn was given an assignment for a two-column want ad. Although he was warned that it was only a trial, he enthusiastically went to work on his assignment, a depiction of an old lady sitting in a chair with a cat on her lap, reading the *Press*. Shinn finished the drawing and watched it go to the engraving department. He waited nervously until the photo engraver told him it was going through. He recalled:

Then came an all night wait for the first run off the presses .. Only one light burning in the art department. I sat alone waiting .. waiting. At last I got a copy from the head press man and spread it out on the floor.. page by page, expectant and fearsome until at last there it was smaller, of course .. but I had made it .. and my name .. What a thrill .. I was given a dozen copies and spread them all out on the floor. More of the same picture on the same page.. At dawn I took them to my boarding house room and spread them all over my bed and floor and fell asleep looking at them. I was now on the staff, but with all the excitement of murder trials, fires, strikes, and other pictorial news nothing ever equaled that all night look at my first drawing.²³

It may have been Shinn’s intention to enroll in art school while working on the *Press*, but poor timing appears to have prevented him from doing so. It seems likely that his job for Thackery’s was terminated either between the Pennsylvania Academy’s spring and fall terms or past the deadline for spring enrollment. Fortunately, a worthwhile alternative presented itself in

the form of the Charcoal Club, a short-lived organization, which lasted from early spring to early autumn of 1893. Dissatisfied with the teaching methods and restricted environment of the Pennsylvania Academy, John Sloan and Joseph Laub organized the Club as an alternative space in which to work. The Charcoal Club met for three nightly sessions a week during which the members, local Philadelphia newspapermen and former students of the Pennsylvania Academy, sketched and painted from the nude model. On Monday evenings Sloan and Robert Henri would provide critiques of the members' work. Membership dues were two dollars a month, half what was charged at the Pennsylvania Academy. The attractive price and the stimulating environment added to the club's success.

At the height of its popularity, the group counted 38 members including Shinn, Joe Laub, Glackens, Edward Davis (father of the artist Stuart Davis) and Frederic Gruger. Shinn may have learned about the Charcoal Club while working at the *Press* where Glackens and Davis were on staff. Glackens had recently joined the *Press* after spending a year at the *Philadelphia Record*, and Davis was the paper's art director.²⁴ For Shinn, the Charcoal Club afforded both art training and, perhaps more importantly, an introduction to some of the artists with whom he would later exhibit as *The Eight*. Art historian Mahonri Sharp Young colorfully expressed the significance of the Charcoal Club, stating "The Club only ran through the summer, but the great Philadelphia gang was formed at this time, with Henri at the head, Sloan at the shoulder, and Glackens, Luks, and Shinn right behind. This was the start of the Eight."²⁵ Despite the enthusiasm of the members, by the summer months attendance for the Charcoal Club began to dwindle. The heat combined with the depression of 1893 resulted in the demise of the Club in mid-September. In the fall, former students returned to the Academy accompanied by one of its newest members, Everett Shinn, whose name first appears in the *School Register* on October 13, 1893. His address is given as 222 N. 13th Street and he is listed as enrolled in the Antique class for which he paid thirteen dollars for tuition.²⁶

The Pennsylvania Academy

Founded in 1805, the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts is the nation's oldest museum and art school. At the time that Shinn attended the Academy, the school was housed in its third home. The first Academy, built in the Federal style in 1806 from the designs of John Dorsey, was seriously damaged in a fire in 1845. Rebuilt by Richard Gilpin, the second Academy building, which also followed a classical model, housed the school until the 1870s when it was felt that the school needed more space. The third building, the one that Shinn attended and the one which is currently in operation today, was designed by the firm of Furness and Hewitt, and opened on April 22, 1876 in time for the Centennial Exhibition.²⁷ The Furness building is a bold mixture of styles combining English and French architecture with Gothic arches and Byzantine tiles. The art school occupied three-quarters of the first floor and was composed of a lecture hall and seven painting and sculpture studios.

The curriculum at the Pennsylvania Academy during Shinn's tenure was rigidly academic. Gone were the great days of Thomas Eakins, whose progressive teaching practices made the Academy unique amongst American art schools. In Eakins's classes students were taught dissection and anatomy. Rejecting the study of the antique cast, Eakins instructed students to draw from the live model, both clothed and nude. Drawing from the nude was considered highly unconventional at the time and an incident arose in 1886 when Eakins removed the loincloth from a male model during a women's life class.²⁸ Traditionally this is the reason given for Eakins's dismissal, but actually he had been at odds with the Committee on Instruction for some time. The Academy's directors felt that Eakins's teaching philosophy, which emphasized direct observation of nature, was not in line with the aims and functions of the school. After Eakins' dismissal, the Academy returned to a traditional curriculum.²⁹ Beginning students started with the Antique Class, and only after lengthy sessions of drawing from the antique cast, did he or she progress to the "Life" Class; there was no drawing from the nude.

Although Shinn may have been disappointed with the tedium of drawing from the antique, the Academy did afford him the opportunity to study with some the nation's most talented teachers, most notably Thomas Anshutz. Anshutz, who from 1875 to 1880 had been a student of Eakins, took over many of his former teacher's classes after Eakins's dismissal. He carried out many of Eakins's precepts and though he never taught from the nude, he continued Eakins's emphasis on the human figure. Anshutz's impact on his students, particularly those of the future "Eight," is stressed by his biographer Randall Griffin, who notes that "probably Anshutz's greatest legacy was in conveying Eakins's teaching to the artists who later formed the core of the Ashcan School."³⁰ John Sloan, on hearing of Anshutz's death, recalled respectfully that Anshutz was "the teacher of us all – Henri, Glackens, Shinn and all the rest – Schofield, Redfield."³¹

When Shinn encountered Anshutz, the instructor had just returned from Paris where he had spent a year studying at the Academie Julian. Anshutz was supervising the Academy's cast-drawing classes. Not surprisingly, some of Shinn's early paintings reflect Anshutz's teaching and suggest that Shinn was influenced by Anshutz's pictures. One such painting, *Ironworkers: Noontime* (1880), a non-idealized depiction of workers in an industrial setting, looks forward to the work of the Ashcan School; and is of particular relevance, to Shinn's Trenton Mural of 1911.³²

In addition to subject matter, Shinn may also have been influenced by Anshutz's skill in different mediums, in particular, his adept use of watercolor. Anshutz, an enthusiastic proponent of watercolor, produced a large body of work in this medium during and immediately following his recent trip abroad. According to Randall Griffin, "From 1894 to about 1900, he [Anshutz] produced numerous small watercolors and photographs of life near the shore, including scenes of women, fishermen, children, and landscapes."³³ Although these pictures were never shown during his lifetime, another group, dating from the summer of 1894 and depicting young boys on

the coast of Holly Beach, New Jersey, were shown at the Pennsylvania Academy (where Shinn most likely would have seen them), the Boston Art Club, and the Art Institute of Chicago.³⁴

Though Shinn may have experimented with watercolor at the Pennsylvania Academy, he did not seriously begin to utilize the medium until 1899, around the same time that he became active with pastels. *The Fight* and *Chinese Restaurant*, both of which date from that 1899, are early, but typical examples of his treatment of watercolor. As in these works, Shinn usually combined watercolor with other mediums, for example, with ink, charcoal, or pastel. He seems to have appreciated the background effect created by the watercolor wash and the way that the medium effectively conveyed a sense of the elements, such as the melting of snow or the puddling of rain. Similarly, his use of gouache produced the effect of glistening snow, creating highlights and enlivening the pictures.

Shinn divided his time working the graveyard shift at the *Press* and attending the Pennsylvania Academy during the day. At the time of his enrollment, Sloan and Glackens had been attending the Academy for two years. Both men first registered in the Academy's antique class in October 1891 and by April of 1892, had graduated to the life class. Also studying at the Academy was Florence Scovel, a talented young artist, who like Shinn was from New Jersey.³⁵ Scovel first enrolled at the Academy in October 1890 and by October 1892 she had not only advanced to the life class, but also had sufficiently impressed the Instruction Committee to have been awarded a scholarship. Shinn began a courtship with Florence Scovel, or "Flossie" as friends knew her, and the two were married in 1898.

For about six months, Shinn lived by himself at 222 North 13th Street. Any loneliness he may have experienced was dispelled in early 1894 when Shinn met the exuberant George Luks. Luks was ten years older than Shinn and in many ways more worldly. He had just concluded ten peripatetic years abroad during which he traveled to and from Europe, stopping in several cities to study art and visit museums. Upon returning to Philadelphia, Luks joined the art department of the *Press*, where he began his friendship with Shinn.³⁶ Soon the solitary environment of the

apartment on North 13th Street was replaced by the convivial atmosphere of a small flat on Girard Avenue, shared by Shinn and Luks.

In addition to his talent as a fine artist, Luks was also a natural entertainer. In 1882 George Luks and his brother, Will, began their own vaudeville act under the stage name of "Buzzey & Anstock," that toured Pennsylvania and New Jersey.³⁷ Luks's prodigious energy and his constant desire to perform caused Shinn to remark, "A super activity possessed him. Sleep was an interlude that was filled in by necessity. It was not for the want of a needful rest that he closed his eyes, but accepted begrudgingly and only because he lacked an audience."³⁸ Indeed, Shinn found that he often played the audience to Luks's early morning theatrics. A usual day began with Luks transforming the bathroom into a performance hall. There, amidst running water, Luks would invent a sea drama with several characters for whom he played all the parts.³⁹

Luks was a heavy drinker, which made for an unlikely friendship with Shinn, who was a teetotaler. Suspicious of his friend's abstinence, Luks would chide Shinn, taunting "Shinn, you've got a hell of a lot of promise, but you'll never make the grade. And why won't you? You don't drink. That's sad. Licker does it, licker and nothing else..."⁴⁰ Like his exuberant personality, Luks's sartorial display was equally unforgettable. Shinn described Luks's clothing as "Shadow plaids of huge dimension, the latest in suburban reality maps."⁴¹ Shinn did admit, however, that, "In those days at the Philadelphia Press art department, Luks clothes were no more blatantly loud in their revolt against the mode than those of most of his associates." In fact, Shinn himself was thought to have been quite a dandy of a dresser. Sloan recalled that, "He [Shinn] seemed to spend his entire income on clothes and yet never conformed to fashion."⁴²

Shinn, Glackens, and Sloan found the academic teaching style of the Academy stifling, but Henri encouraged them to continue their studies. Shinn, however, believed that he learned very little at the Academy and later claimed:

All the time spent at the Academy was only as a club house and with no interest in the institution itself. Other people worked and went to class but we never did. Most of our time was spent in the "Dissecting Room" discussing everything but art with a bottle lowered out of the window on a rope so we could bring in beer.⁴³

At the Pennsylvania Academy friendships forged amongst members of the Charcoal Club were strengthened. The Club's spirit experienced an afterlife in the form of weekly open-house meetings in Henri's studio at 806 Walnut Street. The gatherings initially took place on Thursday evenings, but the day was later changed to Tuesdays. During these sessions Henri led the group of Academy students and young illustrators in a range of discussions. Sloan was a devoted member of the Tuesday night sessions; other regulars included Charles Grafly, James Preston, F. R. Gruger, Edward Redfield, and Hugh Breckenridge. Shinn and Luks often attended, although the hard-drinking Luks tended to find Henri's discourses a bit too long-winded.⁴⁴ A natural speaker, Henri provided impassioned discourses on painting, music, and literature. The newspapermen were encouraged to study the work of Edouard Manet, Francisco Goya, Diego Velasquez, Edgar Degas, and to read *W. M. Hunt's Talks on Art* by William Morris Hunt and *Modern Painting* by George Moore. In her doctoral dissertation on the illustrations of Shinn and Luks, Nina Kasanof notes that the artists at Henri's studio gatherings admired and were influenced by the graphic artists Honoré Daumier, Gavarni (Sulpice Guillaume Chevalier), Théophile Steinlen, Jean-Louis Forain, Walter Crane, John Leech, Charles Keene, and George du Maurier.⁴⁵ Shinn recalled that the group would "haunt the art galleries and study the work of current illustrators."⁴⁶ Glackens introduced them to the work of Keene and Du Maurier, and taught them to appreciate the style of Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer.⁴⁷ Henri inspired his listeners and urged them to paint the life with which they had become so familiar as newspaper illustrators. As Sloan recalled, "It was Robert Henri who set me to painting seriously; without his inspiring friendship and guidance I probably might never have thought of it at all."⁴⁸

In addition to providing a nucleus for theoretical discussions, 806 Walnut also afforded a gathering place for the group's social life. In a letter to Henri, Sloan described a typical night at

806 Walnut. In attendance were Sloan, Preston, Shinn, Luks, Davis, and Redfield. The evening began with a game of poker, but the highlight of the night was Luks's preparation of Welsh rarebit cooked over the gas chandelier while standing on a ladder. Luks called out number combinations like a football captain until the hungry men descended on him and the greasy mess of Welsh rarebit was splashed everywhere. Whiskey was then passed around and the "orchestra" began. Orchestra members included Luks who played the conch shell bass horn and Shinn who used two tin plates to play the cymbals.⁴⁹

The group loved amateur performances and almost everyone was involved in a variety of parody-theatricals. Productions included *The Poison-Gum Drop*, *The Apple-Woman's Revenge*, and *The Widow Cloonan's Curse*. Shinn made his acting debut in the best known of the group's performances, *Twilbe*, a satire based on George du Maurier's best selling novel, *Trilby*. Henri played Svengali and Shinn was cast in the role of the American expatriate James McNails Whiskers, but it was John Sloan who was responsible for the play's most memorable moment. Playing the female part of Twilbe, Sloan was costumed in a wig, make-up, a dress and false busts. At one point in the play he jumps on a table after seeing a mouse. Sloan remembers: "This violent action caused my busts to fall out. Henri, who played Svengali, kicked them into the wings with a serene and magnificent gesture I shall never forget."⁵⁰

In many ways it seems that Henri's gatherings provided a more satisfying education than that offered at the Pennsylvania Academy. Despite the school's prestigious faculty and the benefits of formal instruction, Shinn's tenure at the Academy was of short duration. According to the Academy's register books, Shinn only enrolled for four terms, the first beginning on October 13th, 1893, the second on January 31, 1894, the third October 13, 1894 and the last January 31, 1895. By the 1895-1896 term, his name is no longer on the register.⁵¹ The brevity of Shinn's attendance may be partially attributed to his temperament and his impatience with formal education. Another contributing factor may have been Shinn's financial situation, which despite the income from his job on the *Press*, was far from stable. At the beginning of his second term at

the Academy, Shinn applied for a special [reduced] rate of tuition but was refused. On January 31, 1894, The Committee on Instruction stated that, "The application of Everett Shinn for special rates of tuition was not granted, as no sufficient reason for such concession was presented."⁵²

Shinn was not the only newspaper illustrator for whom financial concerns were beginning to exert pressure. In September 1894, eight members from the illustration departments of the Philadelphia newspapers filed a petition with the Academy requesting a reduction of one-half tuition, citing their inability to attend in the afternoons and evenings. On October 31, 1894, the Committee on Instruction replied, "In reference to the petition from members of the illustrating Department of the Philadelphia newspapers, desiring half rates of tuition on account of being able only to attend in the morning, it was reported by the Managing Director that the number of names had been increased from seven to twelve; and upon consideration it was decided to grant the half rate desired."⁵³ It is uncertain whether Shinn benefited from the half-rate tuition as he was attending the Academy all day, not just in the morning. Nevertheless, as Shinn found his job on the *Press* more rewarding and educational than the classes he was attending, the rejection of his petition for a reduced tuition was probably a catalyst affecting his decision to leave the Academy.

Illustration for the Philadelphia Newspapers

Newspaper illustration helped provide Shinn with a sound artistic foundation and it would continue to remain a vital resource, providing both income and ideas for future paintings. Although his style was to go through various transformations, much of his most original work reflects the urban subject matter that he first began to depict as an artist reporter. Shinn's ability to portray the prismatic effects of the city, its streets, parks, waterfront, and back alleys, as well as the diversity of its population was a skill he honed as an illustrator. His days on the newspaper also taught him to compose pictures in a manner that included all the critical details and captured the viewers' interest. Shinn's early illustrations overlap with the pastels and drawings he created independently of newspaper or magazine commissions and it is frequently difficult to separate the

two categories, a situation made more complicated by the fact that Shinn often exhibited his illustrations, sometimes after reworking them.

Shinn felt that illustration provided an invaluable education for a young artist. In his later writings and interviews he frequently expressed his regret that photography had replaced the newspaper illustrator, thereby depriving young artists of an unparalleled learning opportunity. In the early 1890s, before the wide-spread availability of photography and the half-tone process necessary to reproduce it, the artist was an essential part of the news staff. Recalling his experiences on the *Press* Shinn stated: "In the Art Department of the Philadelphia Press on wobbling, ink stained drawing boards William Glackens, George Luks, Everett Shinn and John Sloan went to School, a school now lamentably extinct ... a school that trained memory and quick perception."⁵⁴ The need for speed encouraged the artists to develop a type of short hand. Shinn wrote:

Sketches, if any, made on the scene, were: usually mere markings with numerals shot off at tangents. If a fire was to be covered then a marginal notation ... eighteen stories and seven across, representing windows. A quick note of some detail of a cornice or architectural peculiarity was drawn in more carefully. More crosses where fire blazed in windows. Marks indicated fire engines, scaling ladders, hydrants, hose and other apparatus ... At the drawing room these would metamorphize into a scene of action.⁵⁵

The great speed demanded by the newspapers often resulted in the men leaving the office carrying nothing but envelopes, menu cards, laundry checks and other bits of paper on which to record shorthand notes of the assignment. In his observations recorded in "Life on the Press," Shinn described an assignment to cover an accident in a mining shaft in Pennsylvania. Shinn, always the dapper dresser, did not wish to spoil the outline of his suit with the bulge of a sketch pad and therefore relied on the accompanying reporter to supply him with paper. When he arrived at the scene, however, he found the reporter passed out drunk. Using considerable resourcefulness, Shinn noticed that the reporter was wearing a new straw hat and in a matter of minutes the hat's white satin lining became the surface on which Shinn recorded his assignment.

At times the pace on the newspapers seemed positively frenetic. On a typical day or night in the art department, the editor would enter the room where the illustrators were working and shout, "Who's loafing? [...] Got to have somebody fast... strike breakers riot ... burning freight cars ..." ⁵⁶ The illustrators were pulled from their drafting boards to focus on the sudden "breaking story." Shinn described one occasion when March, the City Editor, came in with assignments for Luks, Glackens, and Sloan. Not satisfied March demanded, "What about Shinn, there, is he working for the Press or a New York magazine? ... March leaned heavily over Shinn's shoulder and looked down on a half-page drawing of a litter of twisted beams and pulverized brick, billowing smoke and toppling chimneys, and a stretch of buildings illuminated in a ghastly flare. 'What's that, Shinn?' March asked. Shinn did not stop drawing but pushed over another chimney. "Delicatessen store up seventh Street and a jewelry store blown across the street by a very inconsiderate suicide who lit a match in his gas soaked kitchen for a last drag at a cigarette." "Drop it ... I want somebody go to ..." His appeal was general but he gripped Shinn's shoulder ... Old man Wilson the librarian on Spruce Street was found murdered ... blood stains on a chess board and an empty hypodermic needle on the floor ... work of a human gorilla ... Come on, Shinn." ⁵⁷

Although it is uncertain whether Shinn, Luks, Glackens, and Sloan were ever simultaneously employed on the *Press*, the paper's fifth floor art department became their favorite place to meet. ⁵⁸ As John Sloan fondly remembered:

It is hard not to recall the *Press* "art department": a dusty room with windows on Chestnut and Seventh Streets — walls plastered with caricatures of our friends and ourselves, a worn board floor, old chairs and tables close together, 'no smoking' signs and a heavy odor of tobacco, and democrats (as the roaches were called in this Republican stronghold) crawling everywhere. ⁵⁹

By May 1895, Shinn had been hired away from the *Press* by the *Inquirer* for an increase in salary. At the *Inquirer* Shinn joined John Sloan, who had already been on the paper's staff a year or two before Shinn's arrival. Over the next few years, newspaper hopping would become

standard practice for Shinn, Luks, and Glackens, all of whom would jump between the *Press*, the *Ledger*, and the *Inquirer*, each time receiving a small raise. By the time Shinn left the Philadelphia papers for the New York *World*, his salary had reached \$17 a week. The exception to the job hoppers was Sloan, who possessed neither the temperament nor the drawing speed required for on-the-spot assignments. Sloan preferred the stability of the *Inquirer* where he made a name for himself as the principal artist for the Sunday Supplement and the creator of a strikingly elegant poster style.⁶⁰ Sloan did switch papers in 1895, from the *Inquirer* to the *Press*, where he remained until his departure for New York in 1904.

The Philadelphia journals in the early 1880s and 1890s took their cues largely from the New York *World*. Modeling themselves on the formula that had created the *World's* success, the Philadelphia papers expanded advertising and “created” news. They also caught the reader’s eye with banner headlines and, significantly, illustrations. The Philadelphia papers, however, shared neither the *World's* democratic viewpoint, nor its sympathy for the underclass.⁶¹ The *Press*, the *Inquirer* and the *Public Ledger* maintained a conservative tone upholding propriety and decorum. Unlike the New York *World*, they did not promote activism on the part of the urban poor. Rather, the content of the Philadelphia papers was more likely to feature trolley accidents, fires, dedications of public buildings, society pages, balls, trials and human interest stories.

Until the half-tone technique was perfected in the mid-1890s, the artists’ drawings were schematic and linear, lacking tonal effects and atmosphere. The newspapers used a process of zinc-engraving whereby the artist’s drawings were transferred photographically onto a zinc plate. The plate was then placed in an acid bath that “bit” the areas around the lines, resulting in the raised area of the drawing, which could then be printed. The process, however, had certain limitations: the illustrators were required to restrict the amount of detail, as too many lines would cause the plates to clog with ink. In addition to freehand drawings, the artists also used photographs to assist with their illustrations. John Sloan in his Notes recounts:

We used photographs, before the half tone, as source material. Sometimes we worked right over a photograph. A silverprint was made of the photo. We drew on this with pen, then the photo impression was washed out with bichloride of mercury. In rush jobs a photograph might be cut into two or more pieces and several artists would work on the drawings which would be pasted together.⁶²

Usually drawings were simply identified as “From a sketch by a press artist,” or if the illustration was based on a photograph, “From his latest photograph.”

Shinn’s drawings from his first years as an illustrator for *Press* and other newspapers are often difficult to distinguish from those of Luks, Glackens and other artists. As Rebecca Zurier has pointed out in her excellent dissertation, “Picturing the City: New York in the Press and the Art of the Ashcan School, 1890-1917,” editors of the Philadelphia papers followed the New York *World’s* lead by printing unsigned diagram-like illustrations.⁶³ Artists were instructed to follow a standardized format, as editors wanted the illustrations to be interchangeable. Occasionally Luks, Glackens, Sloan, and Shinn would be sent to cover the same story, each man being assigned a different aspect of the event. If a crowd was featured, that portion usually was given to Glackens, “for none of us,” as Shinn recalled, “could do a crowd quite like Glackens. The editors considered it his specialty.”⁶⁴

This first illustration that bears Shinn’s signature appeared on May 19, 1895 in the Philadelphia *Inquirer*. “Struck by the Trolley Car,” (fig. 3) illustrated a front-page article that began “The Ninety Sixth Victim – Six-year-old Willie Snodgrass loses his life under trolley-car wheels playing in the street with his little brother, the car runs him down. The spectators are horrified.”⁶⁵ Trolley accidents were an all too familiar occurrence: Willie Snodgrass’s death brought the number of people killed by trolleys to ninety-six that year. It seems that trolleys lacked many safety precautions and could not brake suddenly in the event of an emergency. Shinn’s illustration is quite graphic, depicting a little boy being hit by the front of the trolley. Though relatively small in scale and executed with a limited number of pen strokes, the drawing manages to convey the suddenness of the accident. Shinn’s use of orthogonals serves to propel

the trolley car, which looms large and ominously, forward into the viewer's space. The little boy is a mere squiggle pushed by the trolley almost out of the right hand frame of the picture. The pedestrian in the foreground, who raises his hands in alarm, is the viewers' surrogate and acts as our entry into the scene. Shinn's signature is placed discreetly at the bottom of the picture and reads simply "Shinn." Unlike the evenly blocked capital letters that were soon to comprise the artist's typical signature, the lettering in this illustration is cursive and flowery.⁶⁶

On May 22, 1895, Shinn is again represented by an illustration on the front page of the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. This time the image is much larger and, importantly, above the fold. The caption for the drawing is "Building the Altar," (fig. 4) and accompanies an article, which begins "The Temple Dedicated, Beautiful Ceremony Performed in the Handsome Edifice by Prominent Odd Fellows."⁶⁷ Here, Shinn portrays several regally dressed men on a stage before rows of women who sit in the audience.

Public ceremonies and stories on topics such as society and leisure were common fare for Shinn. Perhaps nothing could be further from his future depictions of the tenements of New York City than his illustrations for a segment on "Leading Resorts" that appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on July 14, 1895.⁶⁸ Shinn's two illustrations for the article both portray fashionable children and adults enjoying the fresh air of the seashore. The caption for the first drawing reads "The Children's Paradise" (fig. 5) and focuses on two well-dressed children, a boy and a girl, strolling on a crowded beach. Behind the two protagonists are equally finely attired children who play in the sand. The only hint of an interloper among the society crowd is a heavy-set girl who sits alone on the beach on the right side on the picture. That she is of a different social class is indicated by her plain clothes, which are so unlike the fancy frocks of the other little girls. Also, and perhaps mostly tellingly in terms of social differentiation, she is hatless. As the two children advance toward the viewer, the little boy pauses to glance at the hatless girl, thus bringing her to our attention. It is unclear what Shinn intended by introducing her in the scene. Perhaps her simplicity served as a foil, making the other children appear all the more elegant. Interestingly,

Shinn's signature appears under the hatless girl, an indication possibly that Shinn, as a relatively novice artist/reporter, identified with girl, both of them being strangers to the society set.

Shinn's second illustration, "Where They Get Pure Air," (fig. 6) depicts a woman and her two male companions standing on a hilltop.⁶⁹ The trio gazes serenely down at the valley below. The billowing of the woman's dress and the fluttering of the man's coattails indicate a gentle breeze. Below them, two figures ascend the incline to join the others. Compositionally the drawing, which incorporates a broad landscape and several figures, is more sophisticated than many of Shinn's previous illustrations and may evidence his study of the work of Winslow Homer.

Other projects for the *Inquirer* included illustrations for "The Inquirer's Great Prize Novel of Mystery" and for an assignment entitled "A Night on Penn's Hat, The Queer Vigil Kept by an Inquirer Reporter and an Artist."⁷⁰ For "The Novel of Mystery," Shinn created a drawing for each chapter of a mystery novel, which the paper ran over a series of days (fig. 7). A prize of \$500 was offered to the girl or woman who could provide the correct solution to the mystery. Such contests were obviously meant to encourage newspaper readers to purchase the paper everyday.

"A Night on Penn's Hat" was an unusual human-interest story dreamt up by the *Inquirer's* city editor, Joe Robinson. Seeking to compete with the sensational stories that appeared in William Randolph Hearst's *Journal*, Robinson sought out unprecedented events that would capture the public's imagination. The idea of a news reporter and an artist spending the night on the hat of the monumental bronze figure of William Penn that adorned the top of City Hall, offered just the type of novelty Robinson craved. Shinn and the reporter George Woolsey Symonds were given the assignment of recording their experiences during this sensational adventure. Shinn's companion Symonds was a fearless type who frequently reported from the roughest parts of town. Their guide on their tour through the interior of William Penn and up to the brim of his hat was an iron worker who had worked on the construction of the figure.

Carrying their provisions for the night, the guide led them on their ascent up the circular platform that had been built for the iron workers.

After a treacherous climb, the trio reached the opening to the interior of the figure. Following the guide, they each squeezed through the narrow aperture that led into the dark interior of William Penn. The guide then left them to find their way to the brim of the hat. With only plumbers' candles and a few matches to light the way, they scaled the jutting seams and bolts until they reached the glass covered porthole in the crown of the hat. Throwing open the glass porthole they stepped out. Of the moment Shinn recalled, "At last we sprawled over the crown with its exact three feet of width and three feet of rim I was thankful that William Penn had been a Quaker instead of Robin Hood with his peaked hat and spiking feather."⁷¹

Symonds, who was the first out on the brim, called to Shinn, "If you can stand the shock of disappointment, get up here All you see is a vast spread of nothing. It's like a dirty ragged carpet down there." Shinn recalled, "Far into the night we sat and planned what we would serve up to our newspaper out of a smeary map of rooftops." The artist and reporter were forced to rely on their imagination to provide details that would capture the public's attention. The result was an ingenious two-part article. Part I, "What William Penn might have seen," consisted of an imaginary tale of the bronze figure coming to life for one evening. Unlike the artist and reporter, the animated eyes of William Penn could see the scurrying pedestrians and had the ability to peer into people's houses. At the end of the night after assuring himself that human nature had not changed in two hundred years, the bronze figure lapsed back into his frozen motionlessness. Part II, "What Two Inquirer Representatives Really Saw," was an approximation of Shinn's and Symonds's adventure albeit with great drama and hyperbole. Shinn knew that Symonds's submission was far-fetched, noting, "Yet his story to [sic] fantastic to be believed ran in the Sunday edition with numerous drawings that I had invented."⁷²

Shinn produced five illustrations for "A Night on Penn's Hat." The first, "Luncheon on Penn's Hat," (fig. 8) shows the trio cavalierly standing on the brim of Penn's hat eating

sandwiches. Other illustrations included: “Exploring the Founder’s Arm,” (fig. 9) which depicts either Shinn or Symonds peering out of the aperture of the arm; “Signaling from the Tower,” (fig. 10) which shows the artist and reporter with binoculars and a signal light; “Warming Their Chilled Blood,” (fig. 11) which portrays the two men running laps around the brim of Penn’s hat; and “Watching the Sun Rise,” which depicts the duo peering out at the city of Philadelphia through the glass portholes of the bronze figure of William Penn.

Articles that provided readers with the vicarious experience of accompanying an artist and reporter on an unusual adventure were popular with the public. In an article titled “A Summer Night with the Poor – How Those Who Work in Sweat Shops Succeed in Securing Needed Sleep. Famous Carberry Court,” Shinn and an *Inquirer* reporter, accompanied by a police officer, spend a night observing the activities of the notorious Carberry Court.⁷³ Considered one of the city’s worst slums, the area was home to immigrants primarily from Russia, Poland and, Italy. The oppressive heat of the summer months caused the residents to leave their crowded tenements for the relative relief of the area’s streets. As the *Inquirer* party continue their nocturnal adventure, the reporter describes the scene: “The party were on Bainbridge Street at Third, and both sidewalks of the former thoroughfare as far west as Ninth were crowded with men, women and little children.”⁷⁴ Shinn illustrated this scene with the drawing “In Carberry Court” (fig. 12) which shows closely packed people sleeping in a narrow alley. Young men, the elderly, and mothers cradling babies are similarly compressed in the crowded sleeping space. Some of the fortunate have pillows and blankets, while others simply sit on steps leaning against doorframes. Shinn employs strong orthogonal lines which quickly carry the viewer’s eye to the end of the alley where two men, presumably the artist and reporter, stand surveying the scene.

Shinn also completed two small illustrations for the article. In “Tied Himself On,” (fig. 13) he portrays a daring sleeper who has tied himself to a shelf that projects twelve or fifteen feet above the street. In “A Slum Sneak Thief,” (fig. 14) a shady looking man glances suspiciously at

an unsuspecting woman. The illustration highlights the dangers experienced by those forced to sleep outside for whom nighttime robberies were a constant threat. The illustrations and the general tone of the article itself are not meant to garner sympathy and support for the destitute individuals. Rather the tenor is that of distanced observation. The reporter and artist have brought the newspaper reader face to face with a type of person that can be considered “other.” The distinction is underscored by the author’s assessment that, “They will never, with their old world prejudices, amalgamate with our people, or become an integral part of the body politic.”⁷⁵ Shinn’s illustrations for Carberry Court are fascinating harbingers of the type of urban scenes he would later produce as an “Ashcan” painter. Like many of his most powerful pictures, these drawings expose the horrendous living conditions of the city’s poor to an audience who, though fascinated by the images, would almost never venture personally to witness such scenes.

Of the subjects Shinn covered for the newspapers, one of the most common events was a city fire. Fires were a constant threat to cities, where densely packed buildings, flammable materials, and lack of safety precautions provided apt conditions for conflagrations. “The Fire at Jefferson and Mascher Streets,” (fig. 15) which appeared in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on July 26, 1895 is Shinn’s first signed depiction of a fire. Placed prominently on the front page, the illustration grabs the public’s attention with its sense of spontaneity. In the right foreground stands a firefighter surveying the scene. To his right, a fire engine billows smoke. The one-point perspective leads the viewer’s eye into the distance, past a tangle of serpentine hoses and piles of debris. In the background, tiny figures stand on buildings waiting to be rescued. Shinn’s use of an agitated line and counterposed diagonals energize the scene and lend it a sense of immediacy.

Fires provided dramatic urban spectacles that turned the casual pedestrians into crowds of curious onlookers. It is in his early illustrations of fire scenes that Shinn developed his skill at presenting city scenes as a kind of urban theater. For example in the illustration “Scene of the Destructive Fire” (fig. 16), which appeared in the *Inquirer* on September 25, 1895, firemen combat a blaze in a wool warehouse while three well-dressed men stand casually observing the

spectacle. A week later, Shinn illustrated “Scene of the Fire at Broad and Willow Streets,” (fig. 17) in which Shinn’s skill at using the audience to heighten the drama of the scene is more pronounced. The illustration for the front page of the *Inquirer* on October 2, 1895 depicts a building engulfed in flames. Swirls of lines indicate smoke billowing from the building while areas where the paper is left white are “read” as the disastrous flames of the fire. In the middle ground, or proscenium of the stage-like space, tiny firefighters battle the flames. In the lower left hand corner is the “audience” consisting of approximately seven men lined up watching the event. The composition of the illustration looks forward to the types of arrangements Shinn will later employ in theater scenes. By cropping the picture and enlarging the size of the crowd relative to the scale of the firefighters, Shinn makes the crowd feel denser and presses the viewer up to the edge of the picture. Thus, the paper’s readers were afforded the vicarious experience of actually being at the scene of the fire.

Despite his success at the Philadelphia papers, Shinn was ambitious and soon set his sights on magazine illustration. Recognizing that photography was slowly invading the territory that had once been the province of the illustrator, he approached magazines such as *Gil Blas* and *Truth*. In November 1895, Shinn’s first magazine illustrations appeared in *Gil Blas*. The article was entitled “The Mummied Head,” and was written by George Wolsey Symonds, the same reporter with whom Shinn had worked on the piece “A Night On Pen’s Hat.” Other illustrations for *Gil Blas* included pictures for “A Story Told,” which appeared on November 9, 1895 and “Only a Picture,” in the same issue.

By the beginning of 1897, Shinn may have already been contemplating a move to New York. George Luks and William Glackens had left Philadelphia for New York in 1896 and their success in the bigger city may have prompted Shinn to consider the transition. Perhaps to test the market in New York, Shinn submitted his illustrations to the New York-based magazine, *Truth*. Recalling this experience he writes, “[Theodore] Dreiser’s mention of the periodical *Truth* fits the time I came over from Philadelphia [to New York], monthly visits, and sold several drawings to

Mr. MacArthur, the art editor, who gasped at my nerve in showing them, but nevertheless bought them because he said, 'They are so damned different.'"⁷⁶ Between January and May 1897, Shinn illustrated three articles for *Truth*.⁷⁷ His work was then absent from the periodical for over a year and a half before reappearing in August 1898 when he resumed contributions until January 3, 1899. By this time, however, he had moved to New York and his career not only as an illustrator, but as an artist was well underway.

¹ Birth certificate of Everett Shinn, reproduced on stationery of The State of New Jersey, State Library, Archives and History Bureau with the notation: "The following has been correctly copied from a record of Birth formerly in the Division of Vital Statistics and Administration, now on file at the Bureau of Archives and History." A copy of this document is located in the Shinn papers, Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum.

² The author is indebted to Harold Shinn's stepdaughter (who wishes to remain anonymous) for supplying biographical information about Harold Shinn.

³ In the 1940s, Shinn began to write an autobiography that was never completed or published. Edith DeShazo, author of *Everett Shinn, 1876-1953, A Figure in His Time* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1974), deposited most of Shinn's autobiographical material with the Everett Shinn papers at the Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, Delaware. The Shinn Autobiographical Material will hereafter be referred to as SAM in accordance with the abbreviation given to it by DeShazo.

⁴ Harold Shinn's stepdaughter recalls that her father was anxious to escape the conservative religious environment of the Shinn household. Responding to a question about religion in the Shinn household, she noted that, "Harold complained about not being able to eat things and do certain things. [The household] was probably restrictive." Interview by author, August 14, 1999.

⁵ SAM.

⁶ See clipping in Room Edition, *Salem Sunbeam* (Salem, NJ), p. 24.

⁷ Harold Shinn's employment at The International Magazine Co. is recorded on a plaque in the possession of his stepdaughter.

⁸ Shinn stated, "It can be relied on that I had no wish to follow in my Father's foot steps and become a cashier in a bank. I had a quality that could only be interested in dream problems or such fancies that afforded an opportunity to create." SAM.

⁹ Letter of Vivien Shinn Thomas, New Jersey, to Edith DeShazo, New Jersey, November 25, 1973, SAM.

¹⁰ DeShazo, *Everett Shinn, 1876-1953*, pp. 7, 9.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

¹² Manuscript of Minutes Yearly Meeting Woodstown Town Meeting 1844. Woodstown Public Library, Woodstown, N. J. As cited in DeShazo, *Everett Shinn, 1876-1953*, p. 9.

¹³ SAM.

¹⁴ SAM.

¹⁵ SAM.

¹⁶ SAM.

¹⁷ SAM.

¹⁸ *The Eight*, exh. cat. (Brooklyn: Brooklyn Museum, 1943), p. 14.

¹⁹ There is some confusion surrounding the year of Shinn's enrollment. In his autobiography, Shinn claims that he entered the Spring Garden Institute at the age of seventeen. This would make the year

of his enrollment 1893; an unlikely date as Shinn is known to have enrolled at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1893. A more plausible date would be the end of 1890 or the beginning of 1891. This is based on the fact that Shinn spent two years at the Spring Garden Institute. One also must account for the period he spent as an employee of Thackery Gas Fixture Works, making 1890 a plausible year for Shinn's enrollment. Bennard Perlman also notes that Shinn and John Sloan attended the Spring Garden Institute at the same time. John Loughery, Sloan's most recent biographer, cites autumn of 1890 as the date of Sloan's enrollment at the Spring Garden Institute, which would place Shinn there at approximately the same time. Unfortunately, it is not possible to check a student register at the Spring Garden Institute for the dates of Shinn's enrollment. After the Spring Garden Institute (later called the Spring Garden College) closed in 1992, the school's archives were lost or destroyed. Information on the Spring Garden Institute is based on correspondence between the author and Ted Taylor, author of *Spring Garden History*, (Philadelphia: Spring Garden College, 1975), on July 2, 1999 and July 9, 1999. Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight*, p. 50; and John Loughery, *John Sloan* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, Inc., 1995), p. 14

²⁰ Recalling his experience at the Spring Garden Institute John Sloan noted: "I had very little formal training in art. A few night classes in free-hand drawing at the Spring Garden Institute and a little charcoal drawing from the antique under Thomas Anshutz at the Pennsylvania Academy." As cited in: *American Art Nouveau: The Poster Period of John Sloan; a selection of hitherto unpublished prints and autobiographical recollections by the artist, collected by Helen Farr Sloan* (Lock Haven, PA: Hammermill Paper Co., Lock Haven Division, 1967), n.p.

²¹ For Shinn's experience at the Spring Garden Institute, see Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: Immortal Eight*, p. 50-51.

²² SAM.

²³ SAM.

²⁴ For Glackens's employment on the *Philadelphia Press* and his involvement with the Charcoal Club, see William H. Gerds, *William Glackens* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1996), p. 12.

²⁵ Young, *The Eight*, pp. 20-21.

²⁶ Shinn papers, AAA, roll P62, frame 3998.

²⁷ The history of the three buildings is described in Hyman Myers, "The Three Buildings of the Pennsylvania Academy," *The Magazine Antiques* 121 (March 1982): 679-689.

²⁸ Darrel Sewell, *Thomas Eakins, Artist of Philadelphia*, exhibition cat., (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1982, p. xiv.

²⁹ See, *In this Academy, Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, 1805-1976: a special bicentennial exhibition organized by the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts* (Philadelphia: The Academy, 1976), p. 178.

³⁰ Randall Griffin, *Thomas Anshutz, Artist and Teacher* (Seattle: Heckscher Museum in association with the Univ. of Washington Press, 1994), p. 95.

³¹ Bruce St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene: from the diaries, notes and correspondence, 1906-1913* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), p. 621.

³² Griffin, *Thomas Anshutz, Artist and Teacher*, p. 61.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ "These Two Young Artists are Married, Happy and Proud of It," *News* (Baltimore, Maryland), undated clipping in Shinn papers, AAA, roll 953, frame 195.

³⁶ For Luks's travels, see Judith O'Toole, *George Luks, Expressionist Master of Color, The Watercolors Rediscovered* (Canton, Ohio: Canton Museum of Art, 1994), p. 55.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

³⁸ Everett Shinn, "Everett Shinn on George Luks: An Unpublished Memoir," *Archives of American Art* 6 no. 2 (April 1966): 6.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 9.

⁴⁰ As cited in Ormonde De Kay, "Shinn," *American Heritage* 30 (December 1985): 69-70.

⁴¹ Shinn, "Everett Shinn on George Luks: An Unpublished Memoir," p. 5.

⁴² Sloan, "Artist's of the Philadelphia Press," p. 8.

⁴³ SAM. Although Shinn himself was a teetotaler, he seems to have tolerated situations of social drinking among his friends.

⁴⁴ Loughery, *John Sloan*, p. 32.

⁴⁵ Nina Kasanof, "The Illustrations of Everett Shinn and George Luks," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1992), p. 23.

⁴⁶ Everett Shinn, "William Glackens as an Illustrator," *American Artist* 9 (November 1945): 22-23.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ John Sloan, *The Gist of Art* (New York: American Artists Group, Inc., 1939), p. 3.

⁴⁹ John Sloan, "Notes," pp. 203, 245

⁵⁰ John Sloan, "Notes," p. 327.

⁵¹ Student Register, 1894-1904, The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, AAA, roll P62, frames 391, 402, 735.

⁵² See Records of the Pennsylvania Academy, AAA, roll 47, frame 804.

⁵³ AAA, roll 47, frames 808-809.

⁵⁴ Everett Shinn, 'Life on the Press,' in "Artists of the Philadelphia Press," *Philadelphia Museum Bulletin* 41 (November 1945): p. 9.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 12.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 10.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 11.

⁵⁸ On October 16, 1945, Carl Zigrosser, curator of Prints at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, wrote to Shinn asking whether Sloan, Luks, Glackens and Shinn had been employed on the *Press* at the same time. On October 25, 1945, Shinn responded, "About Sloans [sic] article where he says that 'Glackens had just stepped out of the Press when I came over from the Inquirer.' That could be an all covering truth .. yet .. I still believe that all four of us at one time sat together at the Press .. Glackens I know went down to the Ledger and perhaps that is when Sloan came over to the Press ... Perhaps I am wrong for I strongly believed that Glackens came back to the Press .. The confusion is in me after all as I shifted from paper to paper and was after a few months on my rounds of the Press, Times and Inquirer." Carl Zigrosser Papers, University of Pennsylvania, Special Collections Department, Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center.

⁵⁹ John Sloan. *Artists of the Press*, p. 7.

⁶⁰ For Sloan's work on the *Inquirer*, see Loughery *John Sloan*, pp. 30-32.

⁶¹ For a thorough discussion of the founding of the *World*, see Rebecca Zurier, "Picturing the City: New York in the Press and the Art of the Ashcan School, 1890-1917," (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1988), pp. 100-120.

⁶² See, Sloan, "Notes," pp. 20, 135, and 324-325, as cited in Kasanof, p. 43.

⁶³ Zurier, "Picturing the City," p. 135.

⁶⁴ Everett Shinn, "William Glackens as an Illustrator," p. 23.

⁶⁵ "Struck by the Trolley Car." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (May 19, 1895), p. 1.

⁶⁶ Zurier has noted that Shinn may have adopted the signature of capital letters followed by a slash with the date beneath it from the cartoonist Phil May. May's drawings were printed in *Punch* in the 1890s and occasionally reprinted in the *Philadelphia Press*. Zurier, "Picturing the City," p. 163, note 52.

⁶⁷ "Building the Altar." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (May 22, 1895), p. 1.

⁶⁸ "Leading Resorts." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 14, 1895), p. 15. Unfortunately, the article does not specify which of the resorts, if any, Shinn's illustrations depict.

⁶⁹ "Leading Resorts." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 14, 1895), p. 16.

⁷⁰ "The Inquirer's Great Prize Novel of Mystery." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 15, 1895), p. 4. "A Night on Penn's Hat – The Queer Vigil Kept by an Inquirer Reporter and an Artist." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 15, 1895), pp. 1, 4.

⁷¹ SAM.

⁷² For details and quotes from Shinn's adventure on Penn's Hat, see his unpublished autobiography, SAM.

⁷³ "A Summer Night with the Poor – How those who work in Sweat Shops succeed in Securing Needed Sleep. – Famous Carberry Court." *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 14, 1895), p. 29.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Theodore Dreiser was author of *The Genius*, a book in which the protagonist is partially modeled on Everett Shinn. Joseph J. Kwiat, "Dreiser's 'The Genius' and Everett Shinn the 'Ashcan Painter.'" *Journal, Publications of Modern Languages Association of America* 67 (March 1952): 17.

⁷⁷ The titles of these articles are: "I Beg Your Pardon" *Truth* 16 (January 21, 1897): 7, "After the Play," *Truth* 16 (January 28, 1897): 4, and "Why Don't You Like the Stories" *Truth* 16 (May 6, 1897).

CHAPTER II

ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK CITY: BEGINNINGS IN NEWSPAPER AND MAGAZINE ILLUSTRATION AND WORK IN PASTEL

Life as a New York City Illustrator

At the end 1897, Shinn was lured away from the Philadelphia newspapers by an offer to work as an illustrator at the New York *World* for a two-dollar pay increase. Luks had been the first of the group to move to New York after his return from Cuba. In April of 1896, Luks, who had begun work at the New York *World*, encouraged his friends to follow suit. By the end of the year Glackens had joined Luks in New York where he worked briefly at the *World* before accepting an offer from its archrival, the New York *Herald*. When Shinn arrived in New York, Luks and Glackens were already rooming together so Shinn took a flat alone.¹ Other illustrators including Alden March and Edward Davis also left Philadelphia for New York newspapers. Of the group, Sloan was the last to leave; though he made a tentative effort to relocate in 1898, he returned to Philadelphia a few months later and did not permanently settle in New York until 1904.

New York at the time of Shinn's arrival was a city in the process of a great transition. During the 19th century the Old Dutch City had metamorphasized into the country's largest city. In 1898, when the five boroughs combined to form Greater New York, the city's population nearly doubled. Beginning downtown at the tip of Manhattan, the city's northern boundaries were constantly redefined as building and development expanded rapidly uptown. Newly constructed plazas, parks, theaters, restaurants and other public buildings transformed the landscape. During the last quarter of the century the city witnessed the creation of elaborate and eclectic private mansions modeled on English castles and Renaissance palazzos.

This was the bustling, constantly changing kaleidoscope of a city in which Shinn hoped to establish himself. Despite his years in Philadelphia, he was still a relatively inexperienced young man from the small town of Woodstown, New Jersey, and the city's magnitude must have been a little overwhelming. Shinn recalled his hesitancy as he approached New York City from the Hoboken Ferry: "An awareness of some trap I had set for myself brought panic and despair.... Above me glittered a frozen storm of stars, an incandescent glow from the cities [sic] towers hung from the sky.... Could anyone live in peace under that blazing canopy? Could I concentrate in its muffled roar? Would my hand be steady for my work? I had come to try."²

Shinn found his experience at *The New York World* very different from that of the Philadelphia papers. Joseph Pulitzer had purchased the *World* in 1883 from Jay Gould with the intention of creating an inexpensive and democratic publication. Assuming a fairly radical stance, he supported the right of workers to unionize and advocated the imposition of inheritance and income taxes. He sought to appeal to immigrants and workers and drew them in with eye-catching headlines and sensational stories. The pace of the *World* was much faster than that of the Philadelphia papers, causing Shinn to reflect, "From the drowsy gait of Philadelphia I must jump from a slow freight to an express to catch the tempo of the cities [sic] speed." As in Philadelphia, Shinn illustrated many grisly homicides. In fact, his first assignment was to cover a ghastly murder in Brooklyn in which a woman had smothered her stepdaughter. However, this experience proved to be more the exception than the rule. More typical of Shinn's illustrations for the *World* were depictions of social gatherings, celebrations and theater and sporting events.

From New York, Shinn continued to court Florence Scovel (Flossie), who still resided in Philadelphia. Flossie was a member of the Biddle family, a prominent Philadelphia clan, and she feared that her aunts would not approve of their niece marrying an artist. Although the particular branch to which she belonged was no longer affluent, they nevertheless retained their sense of social privilege. Years after they were married, Shinn recalled with amusement his initial meeting with the Biddle aunts. Flossie had warned, "My aunts.. Kate, Hanna and Lizzie Biddle

are quite deaf. All have ear trumpets .. Do your best .. they wont [sic] hear you anyway.” When Shinn and Flossie entered the house on Rittenhouse Square, they found the aunts sitting side by side on a Victorian sofa with their ear trumpets raised just as Flossie had described. A bishop was on hand to lend moral support to the aunts. Shinn and Flossie spent a tedious session answering questions along the lines of, “What does he do?” Afterwards they both laughed about the awkward introduction and the artist Wallace Morgan commemorated the event with a drawing depicting Shinn, Scovel, the aunts and the bishop over the caption, “Everett Shinn meets his future wife’s Philadelphia relatives. An artist! But what do you *do*, Mr. Shinn?”³

On January 26, 1898 Shinn and Flossie were married in Philadelphia.⁴ After the wedding Flossie joined Shinn in New York, moving into his residence at 145 East 21st Street, located right off New York’s fashionable Gramercy Park. The park, which was bordered by 18th Street on the South, 23rd Street on the North and 3rd and 4th Avenues to the East and West, epitomized exclusivity.⁵ Planned in 1831 by Samuel B. Ruggles, it was and remains privately owned. Park admittance is granted only to owners and tenants in possession of carefully guarded keys. Shinn’s neighbors included Stanford White and his wife Bessie Smith White, who lived nearby at 121 East 21st Street. Although Shinn would not meet White until the fall of 1899, he was most likely aware of his prominent neighbor. Other members of the Philadelphia group, who had recently moved to New York, were living at considerably more modest addresses. In 1899, Glackens moved to a studio at 13 West 30th Street. Upon Henri’s return from Europe in August 1900, he took a house at 512 East 58th Street, an area he described in a letter to William Macbeth as “not the most fashionable quarter.”⁶

In New York, Flossie established herself as a witty and talented illustrator whose work appeared in periodicals such as *Life*, *Truth*, *Ainslee’s Magazine* and *Century*. Even after her marriage, she continued to sign her drawings “Florence Scovel” to maintain a separation between the art identities of herself and her husband. By the middle of 1900, she was sufficiently well known to be included in Regina Armstrong’s article “Representative American Women

Illustrators.”⁷ In 1903, a critic for the *Lamp* wrote a glowing review of her work stating, “The fact is that Mrs. Shinn, more than any other present day illustrator, has little need of technical cleverness. It is the sincerity of her work – the direct putting down of what she knows (just as Cruikshank, Leech, and Kean, with no strivings for the ideal, put down what they knew), and the frankness with which she states her very faults, which makes her place unique.”⁸ Scovel’s success as an illustrator made a significant impact on the household income, and while they were married Shinn was able to limit substantially his illustration work. He did continue to work for a few periodicals and in 1906, he contributed 20 drawings for the novel *Frederique* by Charles Paul de Kock, a project he shared with Glackens, Luks, Sloan, James Preston, and Frederick R. Gruger.⁹ In 1913, following his divorce from Flossie, Shinn would resume accepting numerous illustration commissions.

Once settled in New York, Shinn sought to move beyond newspaper illustration and began to focus his attention on the more glamorous and independent life of the magazines. At the end of the century, newspapers were turning to photo-reproduction and many artist-reporters felt that their profession was threatened by the new technology. Although it would still be about twenty years before photography replaced illustration, newspaper artists were looking for ways to diversify. Magazines welcomed the illustrator and afforded a more relaxed environment in which to work. *Century Magazine*, *Scribner’s Magazine*, and *Harper’s Weekly* were considered genteel journals that catered to a middle-class audience who appreciated fiction and other types of “subjective” writing that were still the domain of illustrators.

By the summer of 1898, in addition to continuing his work for *Truth*, Shinn had begun illustrating for *McClure’s* magazine and *The Illustrated American*. In July 1898, *The Illustrated American* printed an article entitled “Artist Shinn: His Summer Girls and Some Others,” which included five illustrations by Shinn: “Some of Shinn’s Summer Characters at Long Branch,” (fig. 18) “The Man Who Never Learned to Dance,” “A Recluse,” “Down at Coney Island and French Café Scene.”¹⁰ The illustrations accompanied one of his earliest reviews:

Everett Shinn is a young artist whose work has been quietly watched by the magazine for some time past with approval, and those specimens of it that appear in this issue of *The Illustrated American* and that have appeared in *McClure's Magazine* and other publications show signs of talent that will make something like a solid reputation for him His girls are graceful and altogether in drawing, and his men – the stumbling block of many an older more experienced artist – are outlined and drawn with obvious facility.¹¹

In January 1899, Shinn left the art department of the New York *World*, accepting a job as art editor for *Ainslee's Magazine*, a position that proved very advantageous. During his tenure with the journal he illustrated numerous articles and assisted his friends Sloan, Glackens, William Buckland and James Preston to secure work with the magazine. Flossie was also an active contributor, whose illustrations were included in almost every issue of *Ainslee's Magazine* during 1899.

Shinn's first assignment for *Ainslee's*, "What One Man Saw," (fig. 19) was a narrative on the Spanish-American war and was meant to give the reader the impression of actually going along with a reporter.¹² The sense of a first hand account was a popular journalistic device and recalls Shinn's previous experience of spending a night on Penn's hat. However, unlike Glackens, who covered the Spanish-American war first-hand, it is unlikely that Shinn ever made the trip. More likely, he based his illustrations on photographs and on oral and written descriptions of the war and its injuries.¹³ Like his previous work, Shinn uses strong diagonals to add dynamism and move the viewer's eye back in space. The drawings also evidence Shinn's increasing ability to handle perspective.

For the most part, Shinn's work for *Ainslee's* consisted of very competent illustrations of fictional stories or poems. Shinn's style varies according to the subject matter, but in general, his illustrations for the magazine demonstrate an increasing mastery of anatomy. For example, Shinn's illustration for the poem "On an Old Battleground" (fig. 20) by Arthur J. Stringer depicts two well-drawn, unidealized women harvesting grapes.¹⁴ In the left hand foreground, a sturdy peasant woman sorts grapes while her companion stoops to glean the vines' remaining fruit. The

figures have a weightiness and three-dimensionality to them, which is unlike Shinn's previous work for the Philadelphia papers.

Pastoral scenes such as that of "On an Old Battleground" are atypical in Shinn's oeuvre. More characteristic of the direction he would pursue were illustrations for a short story titled "The Short Way" (fig. 21) for which Shinn depicted an unfortunate young man who was temporarily forced to become a "sandwich man," a walking human advertisement who wears boards proclaiming a sale, a new shop etc.¹⁵ Perhaps one of the assignments for *Ainslee's* closest to Shinn's heart was a chance to illustrate "The Coming of the Circus" (fig. 22).¹⁶ Shinn, who had loved the circus since his childhood in Woodstown, must have been thrilled to study the performers. For the story, he produced three detailed drawings: two of the show people setting up and one of the tent city departing.

Occasionally his magazine assignments afforded him the opportunity to experiment with dramatic lighting effects, which would later become a distinctive characteristic of his theater and street scenes. For example, "Three at Table" tells the story of an individual who finds himself in the mysterious home of a man whose son has been badly disfigured in a fire.¹⁷ For the story, Shinn created a drawing of the protagonist standing in a room dramatically lit by a raking firelight. Another illustration portrays the terrible inferno of the burning apartment building, which led to the son's scars (fig. 23).

Fictional accounts, such as "Three at Table," would have resonated with readers for whom fires presented an all too common occurrence. In New York in particular, densely packed populations and rapid building created hazardous conditions that increasingly taxed the ability of fire departments. In an article in *Ainslee's* titled "Modern Fire Fighting," (fig. 24) and illustrated by Shinn, New York City Fire Chief Hugh Bonner described the added pressures placed on the fire department by the height of skyscrapers.¹⁸ Steel cage construction resulted in the ability to erect buildings over 300 feet. The conventional fire engines and their corresponding equipment

were not designed to combat fires under such conditions. Firemen needed longer lines of hose and an increased capacity for pumping water to reach a height greater than one hundred feet.

Fire Chief Bonner argued for an underground water system as an alternative to the contemporary steam fire engine that could carry only a limited supply of water. The difficulty of transporting water increased in the winter when heavy snowfall further hindered the horses' ability to haul the heavy engines. To demonstrate this point Shinn provided an illustration of a steam fire engine being pulled thorough the snow. The caption underneath the illustration reads: "In answering an alarm during the blizzard of 1899, the driver of a fire-engine, finding the streets impassable, drove his horses through Union Square Park, New York, galloping over walks and lawns pell-mell." For the article Shinn also contributed drawings titled: "A Driver," "The Oldest Man in the Service," "The Sliding Pole," and "A Rescue." By 1899, newspapers and magazines could reproduce photographs, and several photographs of burned buildings, children practicing fire drills, and portraits are interspersed with Shinn's illustrations.

Through *Ainslee's*, Shinn became acquainted with Theodore Dreiser, who was also on the magazine's staff.¹⁹ Dreiser, the author of several novels, perhaps the best known of which is *Sister Carrie*, was especially interested in the Ashcan artists. In 1915, he published the book *The Genius*, in which the leading protagonist, an artist named Eugene Witla, was loosely based on Everett Shinn. Dreiser also added aspects from his own autobiography to the creation of Witla's character and incorporated a few descriptions of pictures by John Sloan when discussing Witla's work. While Dreiser employed Sloan's paintings in the novel, he evidently thought the artist himself lacked sufficient "artistic color." Sloan later recounted that Dreiser had come to visit his studio when he was working on *The Genius* but left disappointed when he saw that Sloan's studio lacked the fishnets and other studio props he expected of an artist. In Shinn, however, Dreiser found a painter whose work he admired and whose life provided a colorful model from which to embark on a fanciful tale. Regarding his relationship with Dreiser and his role as a model for the character, Eugene Witla, Shinn later recalled:

I made illustrations for Dreiser when he was the editor of *Hampton's Magazine*. We were friends and talked much about ourselves.... I see myself in many places and feel that as I was alone in interpreting New York as he describes it ... and with no wish to claim Witla as being something of me I nevertheless feel that Dreiser looked at my work and the magazines I worked for as fitting material for his character, the artist, Witla. Beyond the actual art expression I am in no way related to Witla the artist in Dreiser's book *The "Genius."* His emotional side is far and away from mine. That side of Witla's character is presumably the emotional unrest of Dreiser himself.²⁰

Though he was making a name for himself as art editor for *Ainslee's* and as a contributor to several other periodicals, the assignment Shinn most coveted was the center spread of *Harper's Weekly*. This was considered the prize assignment of the illustration world and was the domain of revered artists such as Edwin Austin Abbey, Charles Dana Gibson, and Frederic Remington. By 1898, Shinn had begun using pastel in his illustrations and he was determined to obtain the vaunted placement in *Harper's* for one of his works. Early in 1899, he began his assaults on *Harper's* offices. Every Friday on his day off Shinn would arrive at the magazine's offices on Franklin Square and attempt to show his portfolio of city drawings to the art editor. For fifty-one weeks Shinn was met with the response, "Art editor's not interested."²¹ Finally, on the fifty-second week, Shinn was shocked when the assistant said, "Come right in, Mr. Shinn.... Colonel Harvey, the editor in chief, wants to see you." When Shinn was seated inside his office, the colonel inquired, "I was just wondering if you have in your 'collection,' a picture of Broadway on a snowy night, with people coming out of the Metropolitan Opera House and stepping into the waiting hansom cabs – in color." Although Shinn had no such picture, he quickly bluffed and agreed to have the pastel to Colonel Harvey at 10:00 a.m. the next morning. Leaving *Harper's* offices, he purchased a box of fifty-cent pastels and hurried to the opera house. There he took a good look at the buildings, the traffic, and the elegant people in their evening clothes, made some sketches and rushed home to create the picture. Shinn worked all night and the next morning, pale and exhausted, he presented his drawing to Colonel Harvey. According to an interview with Shinn, the following events transpired:

The editor was looking at the picture. He put it in the light and said nothing. "I wonder if you have in your 'collection' a picture of St. Patrick's cathedral on an Easter afternoon, with all the women in their finery, parasols, the gentlemen in their morning suits."

"Yes, Colonel Harvey," Shinn said.

"You little liar," the Colonel roared. "I knew you didn't have this one. Believe me, if you can do this overnight" – he pointed at Shinn's picture – "you're going to do center pages in Harper's for a long time."²²

"A Winter's Night on Broadway," (fig. 25) appeared in *Harper's Weekly* on February 17, 1900, where it was the magazine's first double-page feature in color. Although many admired it, it was immediately criticized by the *New York Times*, which noted that the scene did not resemble any weather condition witnessed that year. Referring to the almanac, the paper pointed out that there had been neither snow, nor any prospect of it that year. However, writers for the *New York Times* had hastily based their criticism on a Friday issue of *Harper's* that was intended for Saturday publication. Fortuitously for Shinn, before Saturday the city was hit with a severe snowstorm. Thus, the *New York Times* was forced to print an apology: "So, after all, the man who drew and the men who published 'A Winter's Night on Broadway,' were not betrayed by the almanac, they really were prophets of remarkable accuracy, and our remarks about the weather prospects for the rest of the season must be numbered among the things it were better to have left unsaid."²³

In all likelihood, Shinn would have received additional commissions from *Harper's*, but from May to October of 1900 Shinn was in Europe, sent there by the New York gallery Boussod, Valadon & Co. The artist was probably referring to "A Winter's Night on Broadway," when years later he wrote to his friend Charles Henry, "The drawings for *Harper's Weekly* you saw last night are dated 1900. I made those before I went to Paris."²⁴ It seems that Shinn had hoped to create illustrations of Europe for *Harper's* but was prevented from doing so by his dealer. He recalled, "I had promised to send something from Paris to *Harper's* but my dealer Boussod, Valadon & Co. would not permit me doing anything that could be called an illustration."²⁵

Shinn's drawings for *Harper's* do not resume until the end of 1900 when he is represented by "City Hall Park on Election Night," (November 10, 1900) (fig. 26); "Nora Stopped in the Doorway," (November 22, 1900, Christmas Supplement); and "Easter Sunday on Fifth Avenue" (December 22, 1900).

Picturing New York City: Early Pastels (1898-1900)

Although Shinn would eventually become as equally well known for his theater pictures as for his city scenes, from 1898 until his trip to Europe in 1900, the metropolitan streets were his primary subjects. In selecting this theme he was joining a host of other artists, past and present, who pictured New York City. Beginning in the 19th century, Manhattan had captured the imagination of many artists, who were preoccupied with the city's modernity and uniqueness.²⁶ The floods of people that poured into the city from foreign countries and rural parts of the United States necessitated the creation of city infrastructure – new buildings were constructed, parks laid out and transportation systems developed. As residents marveled at the construction of new edifices, the city's rapid changes became the topic of scores of articles, which both lauded and scorned the rapid developments. Like the writers of essays on New York City, photographers and painters who rendered the metropolis both celebrated the changes as progress and lamented the disappearance of old New York.

The American Impressionists were the first group of painters to focus so intensely on New York City. In paintings influenced by French artists such as Claude Monet and Camille Pissarro, the American Impressionists presented a positive view of New York's fashionable avenues, gleaming bridges, and verdant parks. It was the city itself, not its denizens that attracted the attention of these artists. As William H. Gerdts notes in his book *Impressionist New York*, the inhabitants of the city "were relatively incidental to the American Impressionists proper."²⁷ The artists often employed a high vantage point, as in Colin Campbell Cooper's *Columbus Circle* (fig. 27). Here the pedestrians are barely visible, having been reduced to tiny dabs of paint. The

picture's subject is not the city's inhabitants, but the magnificent panoramic view of Columbus Circle.

When New Yorkers do make appearances, they are generally representative of the patrician class and are pictured in decorous environments. The image of Central Park presented in William Merritt Chase's *Lake for Miniature Sailboats, Central Park* (fig. 28) is a clean, garden-like space where well-behaved upper-middle-class children play with sailboats. Fashionable avenues are represented in Childe Hassam's paintings, *Fifth Avenue and Madison Square* (fig. 29) and *Spring Morning*, (fig. 30), which bespeak the elegance of turn-of-the-century New York. In these pictures, fashionably dressed women stroll down clean well-kept streets or step into waiting carriages. Although Hassam did occasionally paint the working class, for the most part his interpretations of the city are positive, avoiding any sense of suffering or urban squalor.

Like the American Impressionists, the work of the Ashcan artists also has antecedents in the work of the French Impressionists. The group would have been familiar with the work of Edouard Manet, Auguste Renoir, and Edgar Degas through prints, visits to galleries, and Henri's Tuesday night lectures. Although the Ashcan artists have traditionally been considered the antithesis of Impressionism, Gerdtz has argued that the Ashcan School may be seen as a continuation of the figurative Impressionists.²⁸ In the United States during the last quarter of the 19th century, Impressionism came to be associated with Monet and characterized by landscapes. The grittier side of Impressionism, that which dealt with the tougher side of modern life such as workers, commerce, and industrialization, was rejected by critics and patrons. In 1886, when Durand-Ruel Galleries sent the first major exhibition of French Impressionist work to New York, a reviewer stated:

The complex problems of human life which make the figurative subjects so terrible in their pessimism and seem to fill the air with cries of uneasy souls, have no part in the landscapes. These are wholly lovely with the loveliness of repose and the tenderness of charity. They are full of heavenly calm.²⁹

It is not surprising that Shinn, Luks, Glackens and Sloan became chroniclers of the urban scene. During their student days in Philadelphia, Henri had encouraged the newspaper artists to portray the metropolitan themes they knew so well from illustration and from everyday life.³⁰ In contrast to the American Impressionists' genteel treatment of the city, Shinn and his fellow Ashcan artists focused on a broader perspective of city life. Rather than the look of the city itself – e.g., its buildings and bridges—they were concerned with New York's inhabitants. Immigrants, newsboys, and shop girls were depicted at street level. The city's public spaces became a kind of stage where one's behaviors were observed, studied, and recorded. For example, John Sloan's *Recruiting Station, Union Square* (fig. 31) reveals a variety of vignettes. In the center of the compositions stand a pair of recruiters, each representing a different branch of the military. Beside them two young children study the recruiters' sign while in the background a group of women can be seen chatting. Actions and behaviors that could be observed in the city's parks, squares, and theaters helped those newly arrived in the city assimilate and absorb expected codes of behavior. As Rebecca Zurier has noted in regard to the Ashcan artists, "All six artists were newcomers to the city, and their work reveals experiences common to most New Yorkers at the time: The challenge of making sense out of encounters with strangers in a city of unprecedented scale and growth."³¹

Taking Zurier's statement as a point of departure, I would argue that part of the significance of Shinn's early work and the reason that it was so successful so early in his career was that it offered examples of city life that helped people clarify their own roles in the burgeoning culture of New York City. By portraying recognizable New York landmarks and establishments -- the Washington Arch, the Dewey Arch, Gramercy Park, and Delmonico's -- Shinn presented the city in a format that the 19th century audience would have immediately recognized -- that of being on a city tour. The structure was a stock convention at the time and used in the numerous books on the city (see, for example, *Impressions and Experiences* by

William Dean Howells). However, as has been discussed above, the Ashcan artists were not merely interested in the appearance of the city but primarily in the people who occupied it. In Shinn's pictures the recognizable landmark is often shown off to the side or obliquely; the real subject of the work is the people who occupy the space surrounding the structure. Significantly, the figures in Shinn's pictures are often shown trudging through snow or making their way down crowded city streets. Sometimes the people seem to struggle with their situation presenting conditions with which New Yorkers could empathize. Thus, pictures may have also served to help a diverse population form bonds through common experience.

In *City People: The Rise of Modern City Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (1980), historian Gunter Barth describes the formation of an urban identity as it occurred in the United States during late 19th century. He writes:

Most people accepted the heterogeneity of their world as an integral component of their lives.... To give and take of daily chores, the mingling of people in crowded streets, in parks and theaters, shops and factories, exposed them to a multitude of different influences. Over the years these encounters eroded old loyalties. From the chaos emerged the experience of living with the various elements of a new, diverse culture. This awareness of others produced an urban identity that stamped members of heterogeneous groups generally as city people. The process led to the development of more comprehensive social values. Slowly, something like a common frame of mind emerged out of the actions of thousands of people, as amid conflicting attitudes and diverse modes of living and working the residents of the modern city came to share certain perceptions and behaviors.³²

Barth argues that the new social and economic institutions of the apartment house, the metropolitan press, the department store, the baseball park, and the vaudeville stage facilitated the forging of a collective experience by affording a means to a modern urban identity. This thesis is relevant to an understanding of the work of Shinn both in the context of his city scenes and specifically, as we will see, in his pictures of the vaudeville stage. Shinn selected urban spaces where people likely would have recognized themselves as active spectators in an on-going dialogue between themselves and the metropolitan environment. In this context Shinn's works were not only commercially successful, they were sociologically meaningful.

Though all the Ashcan artists focused on the urban space during the early years of the century, perhaps none depicted it as consistently as Shinn. He was drawn to both the patrician establishments and the seamier corners of the city. After the turn of the century, the combination of high and low life would become a frequent subject of the Ashcan artists. Between 1898 and 1900, however, Shinn may have been the first to depict such a vast range of city views.³³ Street scenes of both uptown and downtown, public squares, and river views comprise Shinn's earliest themes and provide a precocious starting point to an illustrious career.

Moreover, through Shinn's pastels the viewer experienced the excitement of the city. Unlike the Impressionist painters who shunned the densely packed city streets in favor of calm landscapes or beautiful women in hermetic interiors, Shinn's congested accounts of the urban environment pulsate with activity. Set in parks, streets, and city squares, figures in Shinn's works are shown responding to a given person or event (e.g., a fire or eviction), which in turn often elicits a response from the viewer. Among the themes that interested him were immigrants and the urban poor, the glamour of Fifth Avenue, the diversity of people who converged on the streets and in parks, the thrill of electric lighting, the hustle and bustle of mass transportation, and vaudeville stage.

A Modern Master of Pastel

Shinn is a master of pastel; he knows thoroughly both the possibilities and the limitations of his medium. The material is never strained in endeavoring to get too much out of it; and if technically his pastels are great achievements, pictorially they are also.

-- A. E. Gallatin, "Studio Talk," *International Studio* 30 (November 1906): 86.

The year 1899 marks the beginning of Shinn's great productivity as a pastel painter. Until 1901, he worked almost exclusively in pastel and even after he began to experiment with oil, pastel remained a favorite medium. He may have become familiar with pastels while at the Pennsylvania Academy where Thomas P. Anshutz and Hugh Breckenridge, both well-known pastelists, were teaching. Though Shinn was generally a meticulous artist, he would occasionally

use cheap paint stating, “That will be black in 20 years,” but he was always very careful with his pastels.³⁴ In his concern for his pastels, Shinn went so far as to affix labels to the back of his work, which read:

Attention: If, for any reason it is necessary to remove this drawing be extremely careful not to touch the surface of the drawing as the drawing is a pastel and drawn with *DRY CHALK* – That’s why it is easily damaged.

Handle: Only on ends, without touching surface. A pastel is more durable than an oil painting – and holds its color permanently – while an oil darkens. So long as the pastel is under glass, it is above oil and other pigments in picture making – the most lasting.³⁵

By the late 1890s, pastel had experienced a general revival and American taste for the medium had broadened.³⁶ Factors contributing to the revival of pastel include the exhibition of 289 works by European Impressionists, which opened at the American Art Galleries in New York on April 9, 1886. Sent by the French gallery Durand-Ruel, the exhibition, which included 73 pastels and watercolors, did much to elevate the status of pastel.

Moreover, the success of James McNeill Whistler did much to raise the reputation of pastel. Whistler’s influence on the medium’s revival stems from his visit to Venice in 1879 when he produced a body of exceptional pastels. These works exerted a strong influence on Robert Blum and John Twatchman who were in Venice at that time. By the late 1880s, Whistler was well known by Americans, who were flocking to London to meet him, study with him and buy his work. In 1889, Whistler’s first major exhibition in America was met with great acclaim and the pastels were widely admired.³⁷

Finally, a series of exhibitions organized by the Society of Painters in Pastel starting in 1884 contributed to a renewed interest in the medium. The group, which consisted of Carroll Beckwith, Edwin Blashfield, Robert Blum (who was president), Charles Ulrich, William Merritt Chase, Francis Millet, and Bolton Jones, held their first exhibition in 1884 at W. P. Moore’s Gallery in New York. Subsequent exhibitions held in 1888, 1889, and the last in 1890, did much to bring the medium to the public’s attention.

Thus by the late 1890s, when Shinn pastels debuted before the public, Americans had become familiar with pastels. What people were not accustomed to, however, was Shinn's unusual use of the medium.³⁸ Works in pastel as treated by practitioners such as Whistler or Thomas Wilmer Dewing were delicate, emphasizing soft color harmonies and understated elegance. The subjects portrayed, for example, gentle landscapes, lovely women and vases of flowers, followed the tastes of genteel society. Shinn's pastels were another thing entirely. Two of his earliest pastels, *Fire Scene* (fig. 32) and *Woman at the Chicken Coop* (fig. 33), demonstrate not only a departure in subject matter from the conventional use of pastel, but also a radically different technique. In *Fire Scene* the medium is used to render dilapidated buildings with grimy façades and broken shutters articulated in rapid, vigorously applied strokes of pastel. *Woman at the Chicken Coop*, unusual for Shinn as it departs from his typical urban subject matter, portrays a woman working in a farmyard rather than posed in an elegant setting. The emphasis on black and white with the addition of a few bright colors is characteristic of Shinn's early pastels.

Shinn's images of modern life, which required a sense of immediacy and spontaneity, lent themselves well to rendering in pastel.³⁹ He may also have appreciated the way pastel was compatible with other mediums. Although he produced many pure pastels, several works combined pastel with watercolor and gouache, and occasionally, pastel over a monotype print (for example, *Circus* [fig. 34]). His experimentation with pastels resulted in a technique that allowed him to transform the soft hues and feathery strokes of the chalks into bold colors and an impasto surface. In an interview in 1945, he described his technique to the reviewer Norman Kent who recounted it as such:

He takes a heavily mounted paper, soaks it completely in a tub of water, and with his hand, or a sponge, removes the water. Then, with the final composition in color completely realized *in his mind*, he begins laying-on patches of color. But when they strike the wet ground they turn immediately to a dark tone, losing their original coloration. Working swiftly, Shinn continues building up the design until he has completed the whole surface. As his picture dries, the original color returns, but unlike the usual pastel with its delicate dust-like surface the evaporation of the water causes the pigment to dry hard, producing a brilliant color with the added sharpness of tempera.⁴⁰

Stormy Weather

Many of Shinn's most original pastels of New York are distinguished by the skillful way they portray the city in inclement weather. Throughout his career, Shinn was to exploit the aesthetic possibilities of rain and snow, feeling that individuals straining against the elements added pictorial interest to what might otherwise become static urban views. Frequently he would depict the same scene, for example Washington Square, under varying weather conditions and at different times of day. Perhaps his earliest examples of this treatment of the weather are the three renditions of an image now referred to as *East Side Apartment Buildings, New York*, 1898 (fig. 35). The pastel, rendered in a restricted palette of whites, tans and ochre, provides a view of apartment houses as seen from a nearby window. Atypical is the unpopulated urban view, which in future works is generally presented inhabited by figures. The rather geometric and impersonal depiction of the apartment buildings is greatly enlivened by two laundry lines upon which fluttering white sheets or clothing relieve the bleakness of the scene. *East Side Apartment Buildings, New York* was originally called *House-tops (Rainy Day)* and is part of a triumvirate with *House-tops (Snow Storm)* and *House-tops (Moonlight)*.⁴¹ The three pictures differ only in the atmospheric conditions to which they are subjected. In this sense, they recall Monet's series of the Rouen Cathedral in which Monet depicted the cathedral under particular weather conditions and at specific times of day. Shinn's series, however, lacks Monet's exactitude and it seems likely that they were an experiment for the artist. Shinn's later works in which a subject is repeated, lack the rigidity of the House-top pictures, which seem to be more a variation on a theme than a series.

Of the possible seasonal conditions under which to portray the city, Shinn's favorite was New York veiled in snow. The snowstorm was particularly appropriate for New York City, which in 1888 and 1899 had experienced crippling blizzards. As Ellen Moers, in her discussion of imagery in Theodore Drieser's writing has pointed out, "the blizzard came to mean to New York what fog had long meant to London – the city's unique sign."⁴² In addition to the numerous

pictures Shinn painted of actual snowstorms, he also would introduce snow into scenes where none had previously existed. In his autobiography Shinn recounted an incident when his wife was ill. He recalled, "She asked me to make a city street packed with snow. I made one of Gramercy Park from our window. It was placed at the foot of her bed. It made her feel cool. Previously I made snow scenes in summer and sticky hot streets in winter."⁴³

A similar circumstance occurred when Shinn was commissioned by an art dealer to paint a picture of the home of a wealthy client. The artist was instructed to create "a thing of beauty," but when he visited the residence, he found that he was completely uninspired. Shinn recalled, "The street, the sidewalk to the massive iron grill that rimmed the moat held little of human touch For picture purposes the aspect was dull." What was missing Shinn felt was the pictorial interest generated by the elements, "there was no rain to dazzle the surface with reflections. No snow to track down and weave with traffic lanes." In order to enliven the scene, Shinn added snow to the picture, liberally applying layers of white to the mansion's roof, windowsills, and chimneys. In the streets, people plodded through snowdrifts and horses struggled to gain their footing. Although Shinn felt that he had transformed what would have been a dry architectural rendering into "a thing of beauty," the dealer disagreed telling Shinn, "The damn thing is buried in snow. ruts .. snow .. slush. I can't show it to him .. He'd never recognize it as his home."⁴⁴ The dealer cancelled the commission, but Shinn kept the picture (and later sold it to another gentleman) and continued undaunted in his depictions of rain and snow.

New York by Night

Many of Shinn's early pastels were conceived as illustrations for a book he began preparing around 1899 called "New York by Night."⁴⁵ According to Shinn, the book was to be composed of "a set of colored pictures.... The book opened on the close of any day of toil in the city, following every activity of the night until it finished its cycle of comedy and drama on Park Row and its line of newspaper buildings where trucks spread out to stands and stations the news

in another dawn.”⁴⁶ Not only was the book to illustrate nightlife in New York, but the format would underscore the city’s extreme contrasts. Shinn described the book as: “75 pages of alternative gaiety and drabness – a Bowery restaurant – hunger inside and out ... The opposite page, old Delmonico’s blazing facade – carriages, hansoms. No need to picture the interior... champagne, truffles.”⁴⁷

“New York by Night” was part of a continuing tradition of illustrated articles, lectures and books on the city.⁴⁸ The best known of the genre was the exposé *How The Other Half Lives*, 1890, by the Danish-American Jacob Riis.⁴⁹ The book, which was crucial in stimulating social reform and helping to eliminate the horrendous living conditions on the Lower East Side, also fed the public’s curiosity about life in the tenements. Even before Riis’s publication, the public was familiar with books that described the diversity of city life, particularly those that divided New York into distinct halves. The Reverend Matthew Hale Smith’s *Sunshine and Shadow in New York* and James D. McCabe’s *Lights and Shadows of New York Life* exaggerate the polarities between high life and low life – splendor is contrasted with wretchedness, the palaces of merchant princes with dens of infamy and crime.⁵⁰

Such literature evidences a structure of binaries – dark versus light, rich versus poor, “our half” versus “the other half.” Although today such divisions seem simplistic, excluding the complexities and nuances that exist between the polarities, in the 1890s contrasts between people were some of their most salient characteristics. In this diverse environment, which Henry James referred to as *a pot au feu*, individuals wondered and speculated about one another.⁵¹ When they could, they stared at each other in the street. Some more adventurous souls followed the guidebooks into the “foreign” territory of the Lower East Side. Most people, however, relied upon essays by realist writers such as William Dean Howells or pictures by artists such as Shinn to provide them with a way to see and make sense of the diverse city.

It was Shinn’s intention that his images for “New York by Night” be accompanied by text about the city. Perhaps at a loss for the most suitable author, Shinn relied on the advice of

Colonel Henry Harper, the editor-in-chief at *Harper's*, who suggested that he approach the realist writer, William Dean Howells. Howells was a logical choice as his books pertained to many of the same subjects addressed by Shinn. For example, in *A Hazard of New Fortunes*, 1890, set against the backdrop of New York City, the protagonist Basil March provides a verbal tour of the more sordid parts of the city. Howells describes his character's peregrinations: "he descended the station stairs at Chatham Square, with a sense of the neglected opportunities of painters in that locality."⁵² The author continues by describing the railroad tracks, the streets and the local people. He even contemplates finding an artist to illustrate his writing much the way Shinn sought an author to provide a text for his images of "New York by Night."

Shinn was probably also familiar with *Impressions and Experiences*, a collection of writings published by Howells in 1896.⁵³ Like "New York by Night," the book invites the reader on a tour of the city to observe its variety and contrasts. In one essay, "An East Side Ramble," the tradition of social calling among the elite is compared with a social worker's visits to the residents of the Lower East Side tenements. Howells's contrast of the social elite with the tenement dweller was typical of the genre, which generally emphasized the disparities between the rich and the poor and focused on the city at night.

Shinn and Howells first met on March 5, 1900 when Jeannette Gilder, editor of *The Critic*, sent the artist to draw the author for the magazine. Howells was impressed by Shinn and wrote to his daughter, "Mama says I must tell you of the young artist, Everett Shinn, who came this morning to make an appointment to pastel me.... He is the most unaffected, charming boy I've seen in a long time; [and] has an exhibition at Bussod and Voladen's [sic]"⁵⁴ From this initial encounter, the two men formed a friendship and Howells became a great admirer of Shinn's work.⁵⁵ When Shinn went to enlist Howells's interest in "New York by Night," the author was enthusiastic and offered to write a running commentary through the pages.⁵⁶ Unfortunately, if the commentary was ever written, it is now unlocated.

William Dean Howells was Shinn's first choice to write the text for "New York by Night," but a close second could have been Stephen Crane whose observations of urban life are similar to Shinn's. Crane was a precocious young writer who, like Shinn, worked for the Philadelphia and New York newspapers. He became well known for his "real fiction" in which his acute descriptions of people's behavior, their speech patterns and their suffering in cruel environments distinguished him as one of the most extreme of the American realist writers. Although it is unknown if Shinn and Crane knew each other personally, Shinn would have been aware of Crane's work because it had been published in the Philadelphia *Press* while Shinn was working for the Philadelphia papers.⁵⁷ Moreover, it seems likely that the Philadelphia crowd would have kept abreast of the current publications in New York.

On April 22, 1894, the New York *Press* printed Crane's essay, "An Experiment in Misery," which was followed the next week by its counterpart "An Experiment in Luxury." Crane referred to both of these essays as "sketches," a form of writing popular amongst writers such as Crane, Theodore Dreiser, and George Ade. As Ellen Moers, a biographer of Dreiser, has described it, a sketch was: "an evocative piece of description of city life which could read like a prose poem or a vaudeville skit – anything but a dry summary of events. Light on fact, these apprentice sketches were strong on effects of color and light, or odd turns of city speech or behavior."⁵⁸ Crane's "Experiments in Misery and Luxury" were part of the "Midnight Sketches," a group of writings on the city at night that Crane hoped to publish as a book, much the way Shinn hoped to publish "New York by Night."

For each of the "experiments" Crane employed a form of sociological participant observation. In order to prepare for "An Experiment in Misery" he dressed in rags and went out without an overcoat wearing shoes with holes in them. When friends expressed concern about Crane's inattention to his health, the writer responded, "How would I know how those poor devils felt if I was warm myself?" In his tattered clothes, he wandered down Park Row where children hurled insults at him. He entered a saloon, drank beer and ate a free meal consisting of "little

floating suggestions of chicken” before spending the night in a flophouse. In “An Experiment in Luxury,” Crane visits the house of a friend whose father is referred to as “the famous millionaire.” At their mansion he dines in sumptuous splendor with people physically and culturally isolated from the outside world.

Shinn never adopted Crane’s extreme methods of research, preferring to draw people outside on the streets rather than following them into mansions or flophouses. Moreover, Shinn’s pastels lack the social bite of Crane’s sketches. Nevertheless, by contrasting two experiences of the city after dark – one high, one low - “An Experiment in Misery” and “An Experiment in Luxury,” afford provocative antecedents for “New York by Night,” particularly in works such as *Fleishman’s Breadline* (fig. 36). When Shinn executed *Fleishman’s Breadline*, breadlines were a common site and were pictured in the work of other artists including John Sloan. “Fleishman’s” was Fleischmann Yeast Company, a business created in 1868 by two brothers from Vienna, Charles and Maximillian Fleischmann. The company’s showcase outlet was a bakery and café on Broadway at 10th Street, which during the day was a fashionable stop along the ladies’ mile.⁵⁹ At night Fleishman’s performed the charitable service of giving away stale bread to anyone appearing at the door after a given hour. An hour or more before the allotted time, a line of hungry men would form. Shinn’s pastel features a group of men huddled together in the snow to await the free bread handouts. The composition of *Fleishman’s Breadline* and the work’s attention to men who found themselves enduring the plight of their reduced circumstances is comparable to another work by Shinn, *Out of a Job – News of the Unemployed* (fig. 37). Created as an illustration for *Collier’s* in April 1908, the work features three lines of men who gather at the breadline at 10th and Broadway (most likely also Fleishman’s Breadline).⁶⁰ Shinn’s illustration was completed for an article with same title by Arthur Ruhl, which discussed the effects the economic downturn that forced hundreds of men and women into poverty and placed them at the mercy of breadlines such the one described in this depiction.

Shinn's renderings of the breadlines depict a bleak view of poverty and bear a striking resemblance to a sketch called "The Men in the Storm" by Crane. Like Shinn's pastel, Crane's essay describes a mass of men waiting in front of the doors of charity during a blizzard. Crane writes:

The sidewalk soon became completely blocked by the bodies of the men. They pressed close to one another like sheep in a winter's gale, keeping one another warm by the heat of their bodies. The snow came upon this compressed group of men until, directly from above, it might have appeared like a heap of snow-covered merchandise, if it were not for the fact the crowd swayed gently with a unanimous rhythmical motion. It was wonderful to see the snow lay upon the heads of these men, in little ridges an inch thick perhaps in places, the flakes steadily adding drop and drop, precisely as they fall upon the unresisting grass of the fields.⁶¹

In another example, Crane's essay "When a Man Falls a Crowd Gathers [Street Scene in New York]" is remarkably similar to Shinn's work. *Ambulance Call* (fig. 38), a dramatic representation of a nighttime street accident, which was also intended for "New York by Night." The essay opens with a man collapsing on the sidewalk. "Instantly people from all directions turned their gaze upon that figure prone upon the sidewalk."⁶² Confusion occurs until a policeman appears. He disperses the crowd and goes to place an ambulance call. The work is similar to a picture entitled *Night Life – Accident* (fig. 39),⁶³ which portrays a wounded man lying in the street. As a policeman kneels to inspect the injured man, a curious crowd of spectators looks on. In his notes regarding this work, Shinn provides the following description on the *Ambulance Call*:

Crowds, like fruit flies suddenly appear from nowhere and into empty streets to form in packed hungry morbidity about a morsel of human incumbent pain. Devouring the sight of a human being that had suddenly gone horizontal. The policeman bent over the ashen face, gagged and looked up at us....Move along, folks. We straggled away as the clang of the ambulance bell grew louder.⁶⁴

The parallels between Crane's essays and Shinn's images are so striking one wonders why Crane was not asked to write the commentary throughout "New York by Night." In fact, he may have been considered, but his premature death of tuberculosis in 1900 precluded the possibility.

Also intended as part of "New York by Night" were *Madison Square* (fig. 40) and *Tenements at Hester Street* (fig. 41). *Madison Square* was most likely conceived as the book's cover or title page as it bears "Night York by Night" across its top margin. The work is characteristic of Shinn's interest in busy city squares. Madison Square is shown at night and in the glow of the lamplight, one sees pedestrians hastening through the snow-covered streets past horse-drawn carriages and a man wearing a sandwich board. Throughout his career, Shinn would continually experiment with the effects of light, particularly artificial light on his subjects.

In *Tenements at Hester Street* Shinn combines watercolor and gouache articulated with loose, sketchy brushwork to portray a hot night on the Lower East Side. In order to escape the oppressive heat of overcrowded and poorly ventilated apartments, residents have camped out on roofs. The tenement dwellers seem to have become de-humanized by their situation. One individual hangs his head and arms limply out the window; another is shown in his undershirt indecorously sprawled on the fire escape. Although Shinn continually professed that he had no interest in social reform, his pictures nevertheless managed to serve a social good. Referring to *Tenements at Hester Street* Shinn later wrote:

Several years ago – over forty at any rate, I was showing Mrs. J. Pierpont Morgan and her secretary an elaborate new book I was preparing for Harper's [sic] Brothers entitled 'New York by Night' One particular drawing gave Mrs. Morgan much concern: Squalid tenements, children huddled in rags on fire-escapes, families side by side on a caved-in roof.... Mrs. Morgan questioned my drawing as representing the truth. Truth, but understated – as odor could not be given unless I dropped my drawing in refuse. A week later, Mrs. Morgan's secretary told me that Mrs. Morgan had opened a haven for those unfortunate souls on the lower East Side. I had no intention or hope for this happening – it so happened that one who could help saw the drawings. That drawing is now in the Philips Memorial.⁵

*Café*⁶⁶ (fig. 42) and either *Delmonico's, Fifth Avenue* (fig. 1) or *Café Martin, Formerly Delmonico's* (fig. 65) are most likely the two works to which Shinn refers when he describes "New York by Night" as featuring "a Bowery restaurant – hunger inside and out ... The opposite page, old Delmonico's blazing facade – carriages, hansoms." The glittering world of Delmonico's, one of the most famous and expensive restaurants at the time, was to be juxtaposed with a pastel of a Bowery restaurant, perhaps *Café*, which portrays a down-and-out man who stares longingly into the window of a café where more fortunate individuals are eating. The falling snow that forces him to thrust his hands in his pockets and turn down the brim of his hat worsens the man's plight. Although Howells never wrote the promised commentary for "New York by Night," his book *Impressions and Experiences* provides many passages that are suitable for Shinn's pictures. For example, his chapter "New York Streets" includes a contrast between the hungry individual and the sumptuous eateries that seems to parallel Shinn's pictures. Howells writes:

New York is very open: her virtues and her vices, her luxury and her misery, are in plain sight; and a famishing man must suffer peculiarly here from the spectacle of people everywhere at sumptuous tables. Many of the finest hotels, if not most of them have their dining-rooms on the level of the street, and the windows, whether curtained or uncurtained, reveal the continual riot within. I confess that the effect upon some hungry passer is always present to my imagination...⁶⁷

As late as 1959, most of the pastels for "New York by Night" were still together. From February 1 to 28, 1958, the New York gallery, James Graham & Sons, held an exhibition entitled *Everett Shinn*, which showed six works from "New York by Night": *News Paper Row*, 1900; *Fleischman Bread-Line*, 1900; *Delmonico's, Fifth Avenue*, 1904; *Lunch Wagon Madison Square*, 1900; *6th Avenue El. After Midnight*, 1899; *Ambulance Call, Winter Night*, 1908. The following year, thirty-five of the pastels were shown at The Henry Clay Frick Fine-Arts Department of University of Pittsburgh in a show titled, *Everett Shinn, 1876-1953, An Exhibition of His Work*.⁶⁸ Organized by Virginia E. Lewis, the exhibition included a portfolio of pastels of night scenes

planned for “New York by Night.” The works were lent by his friend Charles T. Henry and housed in a wooden box made by Shinn. Lewis lists five works by title: *Madison Square Cab Stand*, 1899; *Newspaper Row*, 1899-ca. 1908; *The Fleischman Breadline*, 1900; *All-Night Café*, 1899-ca. 1908; and *Broadway Theater, Julia Marlowe in Barbara Frietchie*, 1899-c.1908. Subsequently, the pictures were separated, making it almost impossible to reassemble the book.

The pastels created for “Night York by Night” provide an excellent example of Shinn’s fascination, even at this early date, with vastly divergent types of public spaces that distinguished turn-of-the-century Manhattan. Shinn continued to work on the project after his return from Europe in the fall of 1900. The post-1900 pictures are distinguished by their portrayal of dramatic effects of light resulting from fireworks and fires. In all, Shinn completed 36 pastels for the project and tried to publish the book several times, even registering for a copyright at the Library of Congress on February 12, 1900. However, the book never came to fruition and Shinn eventually exhibited the works at galleries, greatly contributing to the body of his early work.⁶⁹

¹ Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight*, p. 66. According to Shinn's marriage license, dated January 26, 1898, at the beginning of 1898, Shinn was residing at 145 East 21st Street. Marriage License of Everett Shinn, Philadelphia City Archives, Roll 1898 M 100020.

² Everett Shinn, "I Remember New York." SAM.

³ Dorothy Seiberling collection, in the Everett Shinn papers at the Archives of American Art, roll 794, frame 670.

⁴ The Shinn's marriage certificate is on file at the Philadelphia City Archives, roll 1898 M 100020.

⁵ For Gramercy Park, see *The WPA Guide to New York City* (New York: The Guilds Committee for Federal Writer's Publications, Inc., 1939; repr., New York: Random House, 1982), pp. 191-198.

⁶ Bennard Perlman, *Robert Henri: His Life and Art* (New York: Dover Publications Inc., 1991), p. 45.

⁷ See Regina Armstrong, "Representative American Women Illustrators." *The Critic* 36 (May 5, 1900): 417-430.

⁸ Anonymous author, "The Rambler." *The Lamp* 27 (September 1903): 148.

⁹ Frederick J. Quinby of Boston published *Frederique* in two volumes in 1907. Shinn was paid \$700 for his 20 illustrations. The illustrations are listed in Record Book 1, pp. 70-71. Between 1899 and 1911, Shinn kept two record books, which provide invaluable information on the work of the artist. The first record book lists pastels, oil paintings, and decorative works sent to exhibitions and frequently includes information such as medium, price, and purchaser of pictures, but unfortunately gives neither dimensions nor dates. The second record book lists illustrations submitted by both him and his wife, Flossie, to various periodicals as well as some works sent to exhibitions. The record books, available on microfilm at the Archives on American Art, microfilm rolls 952-953, will hereafter be referred to as Record Book, no. 1 and Record Book, no. 2.

¹⁰ J. Warner Pemberton, "Artist Shinn: His Summer Girls and Some Others." *The Illustrated American* 24 (July 22, 1898): 53-54.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² H. Irving Hancock, "What One Man Saw. Personal Impressions of a War-Correspondent." *Ainslee's Magazine* 2 (January 1899): 668-675.

¹³ He also may have obtained first-hand information about the war from his brother Harold, who during this time was planning to go to Cuba. In a letter dated February 24, 1898 Shinn wrote to Harold, "We enjoyed your two letters very much....I suppose you have organized a segment to Cuba - cut the dirty Spaniards throats." Everett Shinn, New York, to Harold Shinn. Interview of author with Shinn's sister-in-law on February 24, 1998. I am indebted to Harold Shinn's step daughter for kindly allowing me to see this letter.

¹⁴ Arthur J. Stringer, "Unanointed Altars." *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (June 1899): 596-597.

¹⁵ Sir Walter Besant, "The Short Way." *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (March 1899): 136-142.

¹⁶ Eugene Wood, "The Coming of the Circus." *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (July 1899): 661-672.

¹⁷ W. W. Jacobs, "Three at Table." *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (April 1899): 294-298.

¹⁸ Hugh Bonner, "Modern Fire Fighting," *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (June 1899): 520-530.

¹⁹ Shinn to Joseph J. Kwiat, September 7, 1948, as cited in Joseph J. Kwiat, "Dreiser's 'The Genius' and Everett Shinn, The 'Ash-Can' Painter," *Journal, Publications of Modern Languages Association of America* 67 (March 1952): 17.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 18.

²¹ This account and the following quotations are taken from "Meet Me in Greenwich Village," An interview with Everett Shinn, by Matthews [no first name given], no date, Radio Station WLIB Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn N.Y., pp 2-5. Everett Shinn papers. Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

²³ *New York Times*, February 17, 1900 and February 19, 1900, from microfilm copy in the Shinn papers at the Archives of American Art. *A Winter's Night on Broadway* was exhibited less than one month later at an exhibition of pastels at the National Arts Club, where it was considered one of the few first class pieces in the show. See "Art News," *New York Evening Post*, April 7, 1900, p. 19.

²⁴ Undated letter from Shinn to Charles Henry. Letter is written on the back of a calendar page dated May 25, 1949, perhaps giving an approximate date to the letter. Shinn papers. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ There are many books and articles on this topic. Amongst the most helpful are Wanda Corn, "The New New York," *Art in America* 61 (July/August 1973): 59-65; Randall Blackshaw, "The New New York," *Century Magazine* 64 (August 1902): 493-513; and William H. Gerdts, *Impressionist New York* (New York, London, Paris: Abbeville Press, 1994).

²⁷ Gerdts, *Impressionist New York*, p. 8.

²⁸ In *Impressionist New York* (p. 34) Gerdts argues, "The Eight should be seen as an *extension* of the figurative Impressionists – not so radical as the modernists but ready to reinvestigate the tougher, more ugly, sometimes more pessimistic themes of the figurative French Impressionism that had been so emphatically rejected in New York in 1886."

²⁹ "The Impressionists," *Art Age* 3 (April 1886): 165-166, quoted in Gerdts, *Impressionist New York*, p. 34.

³⁰ On this topic, John Sloan recalled that Henri had recently returned from an extended stay in Europe. "He was full of enthusiasms for the work of Manet, and started to talk about the need for painting the everyday world in America just as had been done in France." Sloan is quoted in *American Art Nouveau: The Poster Period of John Sloan*, n.p.

³¹ Zurier et al., *Metropolitan Lives*, p. 14.

³² Barth, *City People*, p. 3.

³³ For example, Glackens painted areas outside of New York in pictures such as *Outside the Guttenberg Race Track (New Jersey)*, 1897, and *Fruit Stand, Coney*, c. 1898, but does not seem to have tackled the streets of Manhattan until after 1900 in pictures such as *Park on the River*, c. 1902. Henri did not begin his New York street scenes until after his return from Europe in 1900. Sloan did not move from Philadelphia until 1904; and Prendergast's joyous views of New York date from the turn of the century.

³⁴ Mrs. Carr, Interview by Edith DeShazo (New York, August 29, 1972). In the Shinn Papers at the Delaware Art Museum.

³⁵ From label on the back of *Boudoir Scene* (1907; Private Collection).

³⁶ For the revival of pastels, see Doreen Bolger, Mary Wayne Fritzsche, Jacqueline Hazzi, Gail Stavitsky, Mary L. Sullivan, Marc Vincent, Elizabeth Wylie, "American Pastels, 1880-1930: Revival & Revitalization," in Doreen Bolger, Mary Wayne Fritzsche, Jacqueline Hazzi, Marjorie Shelley, Gail Stavitsky, Mary L. Sullivan, Marc Vincent, Elizabeth Wylie, *American Pastels in the Metropolitan Museum of Art* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1989), pp. 1-32; and Dianne H. Pilgrim, "The Revival of Pastels in Nineteenth-Century America: The Society of Painters in Pastel," *American Art Journal* 10 (November 1978): 43-62.

³⁷ See Richard Dormont and Margaret F. MacDonald, *James McNeill Whistler* (London: Tate Gallery Publications, 1994), p. 37. Pilgrim, "The Revival of Pastels in Nineteenth-Century America," p. 47.

³⁸ For Shinn's treatment of pastels, see Theodore Stebbins, Jr., *American Master Drawings and Watercolors* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), p. 278; and Patricia Hills, *Turn-of-the-Century America* (New York: Whitney Museum of Art, 1977), p. 147.

³⁹ In *American Master Drawings and Watercolors*, (p. 278) Stebbins notes Shinn's possibly ironic use of pastel to render Ashcan subjects. Shinn was not the only Ashcan artist to work in pastel. William Glackens also produced striking works in this medium. See, for example, *Shop Girls* (before 1901: The Metropolitan Museum of Art).

⁴⁰ Norman Kent, "The Versatile Art of Everett Shinn," *American Artist* 9 (October 1945): 36.

⁴¹ *House-tops (Rainy Day)* was exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy from January 16 to February 25, 1899. From February 26 to April 4, 1900, Boussod, Valadon & Co. showed *House-tops (Rainy Day)*, *House-tops (Snow Storm)*. All three housetop pastels were exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Art beginning April 9, 1900. In December 1902, *House-tops (Snow Storm)* was featured as the cover illustration for the Christmas issue of *The Critic*. See Shinn's Record Book I, pp. 1, 5, 9, 10, 36. *House-tops (Moonlight)* is unlocated.

⁴² Ellen Moers, *Two Driesers* (New York: The Viking Press, 1969), p. 13.

⁴³ SAM.

⁴⁴ SAM.

⁴⁵ See John Edgar Bullard III, "John Sloan and the Philadelphia Realists as Illustrators, 1890-1940," (M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1968), p. 66. According to Bullard, the project caused Shinn to give up his job at *Ainslee's Magazine*.

⁴⁶ SAM.

⁴⁷ The quote is taken from an excerpt of a letter written by Everett Shinn. The excerpt, which provides neither the date of the letter nor the identity of its recipient, is in the Shinn file. James Graham & Sons, New York.

⁴⁸ For a discussion of the books and articles available to Shinn and the other Ashcan artists, see the chapter "The Other Half," in Marianne Doezema, *George Bellows and Urban America* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 123-199; and William R. Taylor, *In Pursuit of Gotham: Culture and Commerce in New York* (New York: Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 78-81.

⁴⁹ Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890; repr., New York: Dover Publications, 1971).

⁵⁰ Matthew Hale Smith, *Sunshine and Shadow in New York* (Hartford, Conn.: J. B. Burr, 1869). Helen Campbell, *Darkness and Daylight in New York* (Hartford, Conn.: The Hartford Publishing Co., 1897).

⁵¹ As cited in Ellen Moers, *Two Dreisers*, p. 16; full citation for James is not given.

⁵² William Dean Howells, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1889; repr., New York, The New American Library, 1965), p. 160.

⁵³ William Dean Howells, *Impressions and Experiences* (New York: Harper, 1896; repr., Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1972).

⁵⁴ Mildred Howells, ed., *Life in Letters of William Dean Howells*, vol. 2 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Doran & Co. Inc., 1928), pp. 126-27

⁵⁵ Van Wyck Brooks, *Howells, His Life and World* (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1959), p. 194.

⁵⁶ SAM.

⁵⁷ See for example "A Grey Sleeve" which was published in the *Philadelphia Press*, August 1 and 2, 1895.

⁵⁸ Moers, *Two Dreisers*, pp. 18-19.

⁵⁹ Kenneth T. Jackson, ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York* (New Haven: Yale University Press; New York: New-York Historical Society, 1995), p. 418.

⁶⁰ For a more complete discussion of this work, see Jane Ayers and Jane Myers, *American Paintings, Watercolors, and Drawings from the Collection of Rita and Daniel Fraad* (Texas: Amon Carter Museum, 1985), pp. 84-85.

⁶¹ Stephen Crane, "The Men in the Storm," *The Arena* 10 (October 1894): 662-667. Reprinted in: Thomas A. Gullson, ed., *The Complete Short Stories of Stephen Crane* (New York: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1963), p. 178.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 202.

⁶³ A work titled *The Ambulance Call*, dated 1915, is in the collection of the Philadelphia Art Museum (given by Meyer and Vivian Potamkin). Given the date, it is unlikely that this was the picture to be included in *New York by Night*, but rather a later version of the theme.

⁶⁴ The Dorothy Seiberling Collection, Everett Shinn Material, AAA, roll 794, frame 663.

⁶⁵ Letter written by Shinn, Shinn file, James Graham and Sons, see footnote 48.

⁶⁶ This picture is signed (*Hungry*) *Restaurant on the Broadway* on the verso.

⁶⁷ Howells, *Impressions and Experiences*, p. 272.

⁶⁸ Everett Shinn, 1876-1953, *An Exhibition of His Work*, The Henry Clay Frick Fine-Arts Department, University of Pittsburgh, February 25 to March 28, 1959.

⁶⁹ A copy of the Library of Congress document is in the Shinn papers at the Delaware Art Museum. Shinn sent a dummy of "New York by Night" to *Harper's* on February 1900, to Brown-Merrell & Co, in Indianapolis in October 1902, and to Grignard Lithographic Co., N.Y. in November 1902; all were returned. Record Book 1, pp. 7, 38. Although "New York by Night" was not published, Shinn never gave up on the idea. In 1950, he revived the concept and was at work on a book chronicling the city that was to include a work titled *The Washington Irving House* (1950; Private Collection). Regarding the picture, he noted "this drawing to be used in Everett Shinn's book, *New York from 1900 to 1950* (book in publication)." Shinn file, James Graham & Sons.

CHAPTER III

PICTURING NEW YORK NEIGHBORHOODS: THE INTERPRETATION OF PUBLIC SPACE

Shinn's fascination with the spectacle of modern life is apparent in his earliest renderings of the public spaces of New York, which portray an array of subjects often contrasting genteel New York with its rougher "other half." The rendering of the elegant figures in pastels such as *Park Scene* (fig. 43) might seem to come from another world when placed side by side on a gallery wall with a picture of Lower Manhattan shown in *Park Row, Fruit Vendors* (fig. 44). However, both images represent the public space, emphasizing not just the subject's location in New York, but how it functioned as a site of cultural exchange. At a time when wealth was being consolidated and the city's elite were able to withdraw into the private spaces of clubs and mansions, the urban spaces of the streets, parks, and squares provided points of interclass contact.¹ Shinn wandered the city streets as an urban *flâneur* observing and recording a multifaceted vision of New York. His record book lists locations such as Union Square, Washington Square, Madison Square, Broadway and 23rd Street, the docks, and Park Row. The mixing of people in public spaces was a salient issue during the last decades of the 19th century. As historian William Taylor explains:

The spatial organization of New York reflected the growing diversity and complexity of its commercial, social, and recreational activities. The most intense cultural commerce took place in and around the major axes or squares of the city, and the central focus made its way north along Broadway from City Hall Park in the 1840s and 1850s to Times Square by about 1910. By the 1890s, Madison Square had become the focus of the city's life, serving briefly as its public center.²

Among Shinn's earliest documents of the public spaces of New York are renderings of his Gramercy Park neighborhood and nearby Madison Square Park. The Shinns' residence at 145

East 21st Street provided the artist with an abundance of visual material which he recorded in the pastel, *Winter on Twenty-first Street, N.Y.* (fig. 45). The street's colorful activity and combination of storefronts and residences provided lively subject matter, presenting a slice of life glance at what was likely a common view for Shinn. In the foreground a man, still wearing his white shop apron and carrying two baskets laden with goods, has just passed a fashionably dressed lady in swirling skirts. Behind them horses strain to pull heavy cart loaded with boxes and crates.

Also dating from the same year, *Gramercy Park* (fig. 46) is one of Shinn's most intriguing park scenes. Ironically, Gramercy Park's gated private space provides the backdrop for one of Shinn's most forceful examples of public spectatorship. On the sidewalk that fronts the park, a well-dressed woman strolls alone. Unbeknownst to her, she is the object of the gaze of a male street sweeper who has stopped to turn to look at her. Street sweepers were familiar sights in New York City where their individual efforts, as opposed to their prior assignment in groups, created personal pride in the cleanliness of the particular street that they maintained. Although the sweepers are rarely encountered in Shinn's work, they do make frequent appearances in the paintings of his colleague, Childe Hassam, for example *Washington Arch, Spring* (c.1893; fig. 47). Of the street sweeper in *Washington Arch, Spring*, Gerdtz has noted, "...he takes his place as part of a system of support for a traditionally elegant way of life, along with the liveried carriage drivers and the nurse with her pram. The concern with order, the denial and deletion of squalor, are characteristic of Hassam's assessment of New York ..." ³ Like Hassam's sweeper, whose appearance upholds order, Shinn's sweeper also attests to the refinement of the neighborhood. However, Shinn also disrupts the sense of order by showing the sweeper staring at the elegantly dressed woman rather than diligently applying his trade as the sweeper in Hassam painting does. The man's stance does not appear immediately threatening, nor does it seem friendly. Perhaps Shinn intended the pastel to highlight social and class differences. While many of Shinn's park scenes portray different types of people coming together, this work shows them moving apart. The woman with her fine coat and ermine muff is literally walking away from the commonly

dressed street sweeper. Her head is turned away from both the male spectator and the picture's viewer toward the rarified realm of the park, underscoring her alignment with an exclusive space even within the public arena. The man in the background would no more be admitted into the world of the elegant lady than the commoner would be allowed into the restricted area of the gated park. He can, however, observe the spectacle provided by the passing lady in her elegant garb. Pictures such as this one highlight Shinn's outstanding ability to record spectatorship and human interaction in a manner that helped his audience understand the urban dynamics of turn-of-the-century New York.

In February 1901, *Gramercy Park* was included in a selection of illustrations by Shinn in the mid-winter fiction number of *Century Magazine*.⁴ Entitled "Four Midwinter Scenes in New York. From Pastels by Everett Shinn," the group consists of *Gramercy Park* (fig. 46), *Broadway, Late Afternoon* (fig. 48), *Cabs on the Fifth Avenue Side of Madison Square* (fig. 49), and *Street Scene at a Fire* (fig. 32).⁵ The illustrations do not accompany a text and seem to have been selected for their ability to represent different locales of New York under winter conditions. Shinn's illustrations received laudatory notices in various newspapers one of which noted, "In the February number of the *Century Magazine* he has 'Four Midwinter Scenes in New York' taken from pastels. The drawings show genius and bid fair to further spread the young man's fame."⁶

At the same time that the midwinter number of *Century Magazine* was on the newsstands, the pastels used for the illustrations were on display at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery in Boston. There they were recognized by a reviewer who, though he confused the magazine source, observed, "I believe these sketches were originally made as illustrations. Indeed, I have seen some of them in the current *Scribner's*. This explains the sparing use of color."⁷ *Gramercy Park*, in particular, caught the critic's eye. Shinn's skillful handling of the female figure and the provocative glance she elicits from the male street sweeper caused the reviewer to comment, "Another very cleverly suggested figure is that of the girl in *Gramercy Park* (No. 1). The

movement is peculiarly complicated, but is caught, understood, and rendered with great cleverness. Clever too is the figure of the crossing sweeper behind.”⁸

The spectacle of the well-dressed lady walking unaccompanied in the city was clearly cause for some men and women to stop and stare without shame. The phenomenon of people looking at other people drew the attention of not only Shinn, but also many photographers and painters. For example, the Byron Company, whose thousands of photographs of New York document almost every aspect of city life, created images such as *The Fifth Avenue Hotel* (fig. 50), and *Stage Door of the Criterion Theater, West 44th Street* (fig. 51).⁹ Both of these photographs show men or young boys openly staring at elegantly dressed ladies as they make their way along the city streets. In painting, representations of urban spectatorship are found in Childe Hassam’s depiction *Rainy Late Afternoon, Union Square* (fig. 52) and John Sloan’s *Sunday Afternoon in Union Square* (fig. 53). The pictures, however, differ in the nature of the interaction between the man/men and woman/women. In Hassam’s painting, *Rainy Late Afternoon, Union Square*, the male viewer appears more aggressively voyeuristic rather than merely curious as in Shinn’s picture. Moreover, the female being observed in the painting seems more vulnerable. She glances downward and takes mincing steps in contrast to the assuredness with which the woman in Shinn’s Gramercy Park picture conducts herself. In contrast to the timidity of the woman in Hassam’s painting, in John Sloan’s *Sunday Afternoon in Union Square* two women stride confidently toward the viewer. Behind them two men can be seen staring at them in a manner that suggests appraisal. Males, however are not the only ones caught looking. Two young girls seated on the bench turn their heads and giggle at the slightly garish outfit of a lady in purple. The two young girls are, in turn, are watched by the old man seated next to them on the bench.

Madison Square Park

The Shinn’s residence was located only a few blocks from Madison Square Park, which in the late 1890s was one of the city’s busiest and most glamorous squares. It was also one of the

city's newest squares; the city acquired the land in 1837 and developed the area a few years later. The square's position as an elite district was secured in 1853 when the Presbyterian Church was constructed at Madison Avenue and East 24th Street. The construction of the church was followed by the building of several luxury hotels and fashionable residences, which immediately transported a sense of architectural majesty and social elegance to the area. In the 1870s, the square also became a site of urban entertainment. P. T. Barnum's Great Roman Hippodrome opened in 1873 at Madison and 26th Street on the site that had once been the old New York and Harlem Rail Road shed. William Kissam Vanderbilt, who leased the building to Barnum, controlled the site. In 1879, Vanderbilt re-appropriated the old terminus and turned the structure into the first Madison Square Garden.¹⁰ In June of 1890, the original Madison Square Garden, a "patched-up, grimy, drafty, combustible old shell,"¹¹ was replaced by a second version, a spectacular building designed by Stanford White. Built at a cost of \$3,000,000, it was the largest building in the United States devoted solely to amusements. Inside Madison Square Garden one could indulge in horse and dog shows, circuses, and sports events. During the summer months the roof garden was devoted to vaudeville performances. The exterior of the building was finished in buff brick and tile and rising up into the air was the building's spectacular tower crowned by Saint-Gaudens's gilded figure of Diana. Other notable sites of the square included Café Martin located on the corner of 26th and Fifth Avenue, which until 1897 had been the site of the glamorous dining establishment Delmonico's.¹²

Not only did the square offer an impressive confluence of hostelrys, private residences, religious institutions, and sites of elite entertainment, but the area was also literally at the crossroads of the city's two major arteries, Broadway and Fifth Avenue. The intersection is represented in the pastel *A Rainy Day in Madison Square* (fig. 54), which features a bustling array of carriages, streetcars and pedestrians.¹³ The square was referred to as New York's equivalent to the Place de la Concorde.¹⁴ As one writer admiringly described the location:

In the very heart of the metropolis of the New World is Madison Square; and in all New York there is no other one place so completely identified with the growth of the city as this beautiful pleasance. Even more than this may be said, for it is doubtful if there is any place in the world where the *fin de siècle* civilization in the fullest development can be seen to greater advantage than in this very Madison Square. It has all the gayety and brightness of the famous Place de la Concorde in Paris, without its sad reminiscences. Like Trafalgar Square in London, it has a memorial to a nation's naval hero.... The history of Madison Square is indeed the history of New York city itself.¹⁵

For Shinn, Madison Square afforded a spectacle of visual material from which he created several dazzling pastels. This was genteel New York and Shinn took advantage of the location to depict the square's fashionably dressed men and women and the fine establishments. The area's prominence is reaffirmed by an 1899 Baedeker's guide, which advises, "one should obtain good accommodation in the best neighborhood (e.g. near Madison Sq.)."¹⁶ While he occasionally depicted other squares, for example Washington Square, between 1898 and 1901 Madison Square was the square he most frequently represented. The square is shown from different angles, under various weather conditions, and despite its glamorous location, as a locus for different classes and types of people.

Around the turn of the century, Shinn was possibly the artist who most frequently chronicled Madison Square, but he was hardly alone in his attraction to the area. Although Madison Square never received the enormous attention that artists lavished on Washington Square, it captured the imagination of a variety of painters ranging from William Glackens to Paul Cornoyer. Though Shinn portrayed Madison Square from various perspectives, one of his favorite vantage points was the view of the park from the southwest side looking across the broad expanse of the junction of Broadway and Fifth Avenue. The perspective of the park from this angle was the most popular vantage point for early chroniclers of the square. Artists, ranging from the anonymous photographer who created *Junction Broadway and Fifth Avenue* (fig. 55) to painters such as Joseph Oppenheimer who employed this perspective in the painting *Madison Square* (fig. 56), situated themselves on the south side of the square where they could best take advantage of the intersection's picturesque visual array of vehicles and pedestrians. According to

the authors of *Painting the Town: Cityscapes of New York*, the view of the square from the south side of the park was at its height prior to 1902. After 1902, the presence of the Flatiron Building encouraged artists to position themselves on the north side so that they could include the Flatiron's unusual architecture in their representations.¹⁷ Though they became rarer, views from the south side of the square did not disappear and one of most lively interpretations of the area from this perspective is Glackens's *Christmas Shoppers, Madison Square* (fig. 57) in which the artist presents a chaotic view of the square where package-laden Christmas shoppers, loaded buses and carts, pick-pockets, and sellers of holiday wreaths all crowd the busy intersection of 23rd and Broadway. The park itself is reduced to a small sliver at the upper right. Glackens's attention to individual details such as the lettering on the building and the teeming masses of well-delineated people is very different from Shinn's more sketchily rendered, atmospheric interpretations of the area.

Of the artists who rendered Madison Square, Childe Hassam was probably the one whose interpretations share the greatest affinity with those of Shinn. For example in Hassam's *Madison Square – Snowstorm* (fig. 58), the square is seen through a veil of snow. The atmospheric scrim, familiar in the work of both Hassam and Shinn, blurs details and ameliorates the hardness of city life. The row of hansom cabs waiting for fares on the Fifth Avenue side of Madison Square featured, in Hassam's painting *Cab Stand at Night, Madison Square, New York* (fig. 59), was an aspect of the square which also attracted Shinn and possibly influenced Shinn's rendering of the subject.

The line of cabs on the Fifth Avenue side of the park appears in two of Shinn's early pastels: *Hansom Cabs in Snow* (fig. 60) and *Cabs on the Fifth Avenue Side of Madison Square* (fig. 49). Unlike Hassam's portrayal of *Cab Stand at Night, Madison Square, New York* which features the row of cabs from the perspective of standing inside the park looking towards the west side of the square, Shinn most often showed the cabs from the opposite vantage point. In *Hansom Cabs in Snow*, the viewer is positioned on the west side of the square looking across

Fifth Avenue towards Madison Square Park.¹⁸ In the middle-ground two figures make their way across the street in the direction of the line of hansom cabs that front the park. In the background, the park itself is veiled in an atmospheric haze.¹⁹ The palette is limited to white and varying shades of chocolate browns highlighted by dabs of yellow to express the shimmering light emanating from the windows on the far side of the square.

A New York audience would have immediately recognized the view of Madison Square presented in *Hansom Cabs in Snow* by the identifiable landmarks. In the background to the left one can make out the spire of the Madison Square Presbyterian Church at the corner of Madison Avenue and 24th Street. The large building to the right of it was the first Metropolitan Life Insurance building on 23rd Street and Madison Avenue. Also, while not unique to Madison Square, the picturesque line of hansom cabs was associated with the park, featured in the work of other artists, and mentioned in articles about the area. In "Up-Town in New York," the author Jesse Lynch Williams observes, "But when Madison Square is reached you have come to one of the Places of New York. It is the picture that so many confirmed New Yorkers see when homesick ... a soft purple light under the branches in the park, a long decorative row of cabs waiting for 'fares;' over toward the statue of Farragut, and lithe New York women wearing clothes as they alone know how to wear them, crossing Fifth Avenue at Twenty-third street."²⁰ When the pastel was shown in the exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. in 1900, it was singled out by a reviewer as being "Among the best of the street scenes."²¹

Hansom Cabs in Snow relates to a similar picture, *Looking up Fifth Avenue*.²² Again, the street is shown covered in snow and pedestrians are bundled in winter garb while in the background a picturesque row of hansom cabs is visible. Across from the park, although out of the picture frame, would have been the famous Fifth Avenue Hotel. The hotel, an enormous structure with 1000 rooms, was considered one of the most modern and luxurious in the city. At the center left, is a figure whose head is hidden by large black umbrella, a familiar image frequently included by Shinn in his rain and snow scenes. When the pastel was exhibited at J.

Eastman Chase's Gallery in February 1901, it was already known to many people as it had appeared that month in *Century Magazine* with the caption "Cabs on the Fifth Avenue Side of Madison Square." Expressing a sentiment voiced by other writers, a critic remarked that Shinn's staccato treatment of pastel in *Looking up Fifth Avenue* nevertheless managed to convey something essential about the subject being represented. He observed, "Particularly good is the understanding and rendering of the cabs across the street. They are apparently roughly indicated but the cab character is there all the same."²³

In *A Rainy Day in Madison Square* (fig. 54), the vantage point is also from the southwest side of the square looking, but here the view is northeast across the broad expanse of Fifth Avenue. At the right in the background are the buildings lining 23rd Street while in the background at the left one can clearly make out the Presbyterian Church and the Metropolitan Life Insurance building. The cursory manner of pastel treatment suggests Shinn's rapid technique and effectively captures the profusion of vehicles and pedestrians that vied for space at one of the city's busiest crossroads. In addition to the hansom cabs shown traveling both up and down Fifth Avenue, Shinn has included the Fifth Avenue horse drawn bus, which not only adds a picturesque detail, but also emphasizes the variety of visual display afforded by the square.²⁴

It is worth noting that all three of the above mentioned pastels are characterized by a large empty foreground plane that separates the viewer from the subject, creating a great expanse between the observer and the scene observed. The use of this compositional device was not unprecedented, and in fact, may suggest a debt to Hassam whose works such as *Rainy Day, Boston* (fig. 61) and *Boston Common at Twilight*, 1885-86 reveal a comparable use of deep linear perspective and great breath of foreground.²⁵ However, it is equally possible that the artists of the *juste milieu*, in particular, Jean Béraud and Giuseppe De Nittis, influenced both Hassam and Shinn. Shinn's unusual perspective in *Cabs on the Fifth Avenue Side of Madison Square* is strikingly similar to De Nittis's *Waterloo Bridge*, 1876, and *Piccadilly*, 1875.²⁶ The high horizon line produced by this perspective, serves to flatten the forms while the slightly tilted plane and

compression of the action into the upper half of the picture plane emphasizes the street level perspective focusing our attention on the pedestrians and carriages rather than the background elements.

Other views by Shinn of Madison Square feature the commercial establishments that had sprung up on the streets bordering the park. *23rd St. and Broadway, N.Y.*, (fig. 62) which depicts the southwest corner of Madison Square, is particularly interesting as it shows the corner before it became home to the Flatiron Building.²⁷ Typical of Shinn's compositions is the horizontal format of the pastel, which was suitable for his broad view of street life and buildings. From a perspective of 50 years, Shinn compared a New York street view of the past with a contemporary one, stating "And you didn't have to throw your head back to look up at a building. You could hold it all in your eye."²⁸ Prior to the beginning of construction on the Flatiron Building, the low level Erie railroad office occupied the very tip of the wedge shaped site.²⁹ In Shinn's pastel, one can make out the word "express" advertising the railway's services. The low-lying building is partially obscured by the well-dressed men and women, some standing, others striding purposefully carrying bobbing umbrellas. At a time when construction was rapidly changing the face of the city, Shinn's ability to record images of old New York was admired by contemporary critics. When the pastel was shown in 1901 one writer remarked:

Many of the landmarks of America's metropolis have been secured by this clever young artist just in time. For example, the low old buildings that for so many years stood on the triangle at Twenty-third street, Broadway and Fifth avenue, from the tops of which election reports have been told on a transparency for so many years, the old buildings now razed to the ground to make room for a fine modern structure.³⁰

Shinn did not share the enthusiasm that many of his colleagues expressed for the Flatiron Building.³¹ Though Robert Henri admired the Flatiron Building, calling it "a sheer work of art," Shinn maintained a negative attitude about the structure and towards skyscrapers in general.³² After the building was completed in 1902, Shinn publicly denounced it, stating "The Flatiron is a single atrocity... From Twenty-third street the tremendous height and weight of it appear to be

held up by two very slim panes of glass. That is ridiculous.”³³ Despite his condemnation of the building, Shinn did include the structure in a pastel titled *Fifth Avenue* (fig. 63). The focus, however, is at street level, emphasizing two pedestrians as they head south on Fifth Avenue in the rain. The Flatiron Building is reduced to a hazy background structure in the distance. When Shinn depicted the site in 1952, he eliminated the Flatiron Building, representing the corner as it had looked at the time he created *23rd St. and Broadway, N.Y.* In this work, titled *Before the Flatiron was Built* (fig. 64), Shinn has turned back the clock and returned to the corner the low level buildings that he preferred.

Café Martin, Formerly Delmonico's (fig. 65) features the type of low level building that Shinn favored. Delmonico's, a fashionable and expensive restaurant, had been located on Fifth Avenue on the northwest side of Madison Square at 26th Street. When the older establishment moved uptown in 1897, the space was taken over by Café Martin. The restaurant became the subject of Shinn's pastel *Café Martin, Formerly Delmonico's*, one of his most visually arresting early pastels. The work is rendered in a low-keyed palette restricted mainly to black charcoal and gouache heightened with white and making use of the tan color of the paper underneath. Bright dashes of orange pastel offset the neutral tones, contributing a sense of liveliness and giving dimension to the work. This reductive palette was a logical transition for Shinn who was grappling with a way to transform the limited vocabulary of black and white illustration into a medium more suitable for his artwork. Like *Cabs on the Fifth Avenue Side of Madison Square*, the pastel *Café Martin, Formerly Delmonico's* makes use of a wide-angle perspective and a large empty foreground plane. The effect is very theatrical: the reflections of lights of the foreground plane acting like footlights illuminating the pedestrians and silhouetting them against the backdrop of the notable Madison Square establishment.

Although Delmonico's had moved uptown to Fifth Avenue and 44th Street in 1897, the location retained its fashionable allure. That the old Delmonico's facade would be instantly

recognizable to the contemporary viewer is attested to by an 1894 essay on the square, which states:

Diagonally opposite facing Fifth Avenue, is Delmonico's restaurant. It needs mention, but hardly description. A recent writer speaks of it as "the most famous restaurant in the United States"; but is there a place in the world where civilized man eats in a civilized fashion that has not heard of Delmonico's? It followed the fashionable world up town a score of years ago, and became at once "the place," for public social functions. What memories are conjured up at the simple mention of "Delmonico's"!³⁴

Shinn not only depicts the square from its bordering streets, but he also takes the viewer into the park in works such as *Park Scene* (fig. 43), arguably his most gracious depiction of a city park. In the work, which is most likely the pastel referred to in Shinn's record book as *Madison Square (Thaw)*, the viewer is led into the picture by a broad sweep of pavement. The pastel's color harmonies are limited to a palette of blacks, grays, and whites with touches of red. Walking toward the viewer, on a path shiny with melted snow, is an elegantly dressed couple -- he in a top hat and long black evening coat and she in a smart looking dress with a fur collar and muff. Perhaps they have just come from one of the fine restaurants or hotels on the square and are now taking a stroll through the park. In any event, a contemporary viewer would likely have viewed them as a spectacle of uptown elegance, to be looked upon as an example of the latest in fashionable clothing and respectable deportment.

That Shinn showed *Madison Square (Thaw)* many times in exhibitions critical to the launching of his career suggests the high regard he had for the work. It was among a group of pastels Shinn submitted (unsuccessfully) to the Society of American Artists for exhibition from March 25 to April 29, 1899.³⁵ The pastel made its public debut at the Association of Allied Artists from April 10 to 15, 1899. It was among the five paintings exhibited from November 7 to 17, 1899 at 122 East 17th Street, the home of Elsie de Wolfe, where it caught the eye of Stanford White. Subsequently, it was shown in Shinn's first large one-man show at Boussod, Valadon & Co., on view from February 26 to April 4, 1900. The work then traveled to the Pennsylvania

Academy where it was included in an exhibition that opened to the Philadelphia public on April 9, 1900. In January 1901, *Madison Square (Thaw)* and *Madison Square Cabs* were lent to a Miss Rhett who resided at 122 East 34th Street. Purchased by J.P. Morgan for Miss Rhett, the picture was then lent by its new owner to Shinn's exhibition at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery³⁶ where it drew encomiums from a critic:

Madison Square (Thaw) ... is good, too, representing a gray black asphalt walk dark and shining from the snow which has newly melted away. There is dingy whitey gray snow, to each side of the walk. In the middle distance one can catch sight of furtive little figures away and beyond the trees. Farther yet are typical sky scrapers, while down the walk come two quite "swell" figures done with very considerable skill and dash.³⁷

Some of Shinn's most dynamic and interesting views of Madison Square are the ones that include the Dewey Arch. To celebrate Admiral George Dewey's victory over the Spanish forces at Manila Bay on May 1, 1898 during the Spanish American War, the City of New York threw a gala reception. The festivities continued from September 27th to the 30th and included troop maneuvers, two parades (one on water and one on land), and the dedication of the triumphal Dewey Arch, which was completed on September 29, 1899, just one day before the land parade on the 30th.³⁸ Although only a temporary structure built in two months of staff (plaster reinforced with hay or burlap), the arch was considered a *tour de force* of architectural and sculptural achievement. Designed by the architect Charles R. Lamb, it was modeled on the Arch of Titus in Rome. The abundant sculptural decoration was overseen by the sculptor Frederic Wellington Ruckstuhl. Sculptors employed included well-known names such as Daniel Chester French, Karl Bitter, Charles Niehaus, J. Q. A. Ward, Isidore Konti, George Bissel and Herbert Adams.³⁹

The location of the arch at the junction of Fifth Avenue and Broadway at Madison Square is a testament to the importance of the square. As a contemporary writer noted:

Even before the route of the parade was determined, it was evident that it would pass this point [Madison Square]; it was a spot so nearly central in the life of the busy city as to be for all practical purposes the real center; and it afforded a larger open area than could elsewhere be had without considerably diminishing the accessibility to the arch.

Moreover, the junction of the two principal thoroughfares of the metropolis formed here a focal point of special importance. All things considered, therefore, Madison Square seemed not only the most suitable place for the arch, but really the only one available.⁴⁰

The arch's placement on Fifth Avenue aligned it with the Washington Square Arch thus establishing a triumphal corridor.

Unfortunately, Admiral Dewey himself never passed through the arch. On September 30, as the celebratory parade headed south on Fifth Avenue, Dewey stopped at his reviewing stand on the North side of the arch, leaving his procession to continue through the arch without him. Despite comments from the crowd, one of whom remarked, "What's the use of building a \$40,000 arch, if they didn't take Dewey through it?"⁴¹ the arch was considered a success and efforts were begun to build a permanent structure. The plan was abandoned, however, when Dewey (his popularity was eclipsed by Theodore Roosevelt) failed to gain the Democratic presidential nomination.

The Dewey Arch was dismantled in December 1900, but testaments to its splendor remain in photographs and paintings. Both Childe Hassam and the French artist Jean-François Raffaëlli created views of the arch from similar perspectives looking north up Fifth Avenue. In these depictions the arch, prominently featured, gleaming white and parallel to the picture plane, is clearly the center of attention.⁴²

Shinn portrayed the Dewey Arch at least three times in *Madison Square and the Dewey Arch: Cross Streets of New York* (fig. 66), *Madison Square, Dewey Arch* (fig. 67), and *The Dewey Arch, Madison Square* (fig. 68). In contrast to Hassam's and Raffaëlli's more conventional views of the arch, Shinn's depictions of the subject depart significantly from the typical viewpoint. In Shinn's representations, the arch, though clearly recognizable, is shown as a background element rather than the main subject. Emphasis is placed instead on the weather conditions and the people in the park.

Of the three pictures, *Madison Square and the Dewey Arch: Cross Streets of New York* (fig. 66) is probably the earliest. It is the only picture in which the leaves remain on the trees, indicating that it was most likely completed in the fall, not long after the celebration. The vertical format is unusual for Shinn. Here he seems to wish to underscore the verticality of the arch, which is shown from the side, emphasizing its height rather than width. The upright thrust of the work is further accentuated by the tree at the right that continues from the bottom to the top of the picture joining the various portions of the work together. Taking advantage of the paths that crisscrossed the park, Shinn depicts the variety of people who frequented the park. In the present work, attention is focused on a well-dressed woman who drags two reluctant children through the park. Behind them, the diverse group of people who occupy the benches boarding the path forms a serpentine curve.

In *Madison Square, Dewey Arch* (fig. 67) the viewer is led into the park by a broad sweeping path. In contrast to the well-dressed figures that appear in *Park Scene*, here the leading protagonists are a group of working-class men. With their bowler hats, simple brown coats, and lunch pails, they form a stark contrast to the elaborate arch in the background. The pastel is unusual as it shows men who are workers, but who are not currently engaged in work, wandering through what was generally considered one of the city's more refined public spaces. It was not that workers did not also share places like Madison Square, but rarely were they made the focal point in representations of them. By highlighting these men, Shinn seems to be emphasizing the ability of the public square to function as a democratic space open to all social and economic classes and affording the possibility of encounters between them.

Of the three works, *The Dewey Arch, Madison Square* (fig. 68) features the arch most prominently. The view is from the corner of 23rd Street and Broadway and a significant portion of the composition is devoted to the grandeur of the arch and colonnades. Nevertheless, even in this example the arch's centrality is displaced by the excitement of Fifth Avenue buses, hansom cabs and pedestrians as they struggle to make their way through a snowstorm. This was probably

one of Shinn's last depictions of the arch as it is unlikely that the staff construction would have weathered the storm. A critic was most likely referring to this picture when he admiringly wrote: "Mr. Shinn has happily made the Dewey Arch the rallying point of interest in one of his larger pastels, thus immortalizing that superb architectural work which is no more.... It storms furiously, the moving mass of humanity on the busy avenue viewed through the sleet and mist – a capital work and one of the best in the group."⁴³

Workers and the Waterfront

Madison Square, with its Fifth Avenue location, was at the center of New York's most desirable area. Fifth Avenue formed the affluent spine of the city running north from Washington Square to the Harlem River. To the east and west of Fifth Avenue the neighborhoods became gradually less fashionable until one arrived at the waterfront. Generally considered one of the least desirable places to live, the area surrounding the docks was comprised of some of the most dangerous and vice-ridden streets in the city.⁴⁴ Home to numerous boardinghouses and saloons, the docks were frequented by many unsavory characters. Shinn generally ignored the filth of the waterfront, focusing instead on either picturesque views of New York harbor and the East River or on representations of dock workers.

Shinn may have been attracted to the waterfront as another arena in which to observe the city's bustling activity. At the turn of the century, New York was the nation's leading port. Standing on the waterfront one could witness a harbor crowded with an astounding variety of sailing vessels. On the Hudson River there were the great Atlantic liners that took passengers across to Europe as well as the local ferryboats that whisked people across the river. While the Hudson River catered to European liners, the East River Harbor was frequented by what were perceived as truly foreign fleets. Ships from "exotic" locales such as Brazil, Cape Town, India and China commingled with native ferryboats, barges, launches, and towboats.⁴⁵ Contemporary writers emphasized the East River's ability to provide greater visual interest than the Hudson. As

one commentator observed, “But over on the east edge of town there is more to look at and more variety. All the way from the Bridge and the big white battle-ships squatting in the Navy Yard across the River; up past Kip’s Bay with its dapper steam-yachts waiting to take their owners home from business...”⁴⁶ Like the city’s streets and squares, the riverfront was a public space where divergent elements came together, affording a fantastic array of visual detail.

Shinn recorded dramatic views of the New York waterfront at least three times beginning in 1898 with *Barges on the East River* (fig. 69)⁴⁷ Executed in the restricted palette that is characteristic of Shinn’s early work, *Barges on the East River* displays the eclectic collection of vessels that converged on the East River. In the far distance, set against a backdrop of city buildings, are square-rigged sailing ships. In the middle distance, a ferry passes a tugboat, which pulls behind it a string of barges. What captures the viewer’s attention, however, is the freight lighter or barge in the lower foreground. Stacked with its cargo of barrels, the lighter bespeaks its role in the waterfront’s commerce, but a colorful line of laundry and chairs on the deck reveal the vessel’s dual usage as a living quarter. Five figures sit on deck perched on barrels in lieu of chairs. One member of the group plays a musical instrument emphasizing the barge’s domestic as well as commercial usage. To the right of the barge, one, possibly two, figures indulge in an afternoon swim. That such displays of family life on the water were common sites is underscored by the following contemporary description of New York harbor:

Some lighters are topped with a large shed, evidently intended for the protection of the cargo from rain or the splash of river water. Such seem to have need of a watchman; and so, built on one end is a little cabin, wherein, as on the canallers, you get a glimpse of family life...(T)he wife with maybe a woman friend, is there, the pair of them gossiping in the shade of the after-end of the house, rocking comfortably, a line of clothes hanging out to dry, and an eye to a couple of children, tied for safety sometimes, but more often allowed to crawl unchecked around the limited bit of deck.⁴⁸

In 1903 Shinn exhibited the work under its the original title, *Barges on the East River*, at M. Knoedler & Co. A critic who reviewed the Knoedler exhibition lauded the river views stating:

Commendable and impressive are two descriptions of the East River, one by night, the other by sunset.... Less poetic but equally notable is the river at sunset, which is stunning in color. An orange-red light lingers in the sky – the light mirrored in the blackish stream, and saucy tugs puffing black smoke, dart in and out and around schooners, their yellow sails loosened for furling. In the foreground is a packet boat the figures of several musicians on its deck dimly outlined. It is a flotilla of merchandise, a scene familiar to all who live a large city where marine pursuits are important.⁴⁹

Also included in the exhibition was another river scene titled *East River Night* (Location Unknown), which received the following glowing commentary:

The night effect is a nocturne in blue and gold, the study evidently made from the deck of a boat. The deep, dull blue water rises and falls in choppy waves, and craft of all kinds move on its surface, their lights flickering like fireflies. In the distance the mellow lights in the tall buildings blossom like stars in the heavens and an outline shafts, pinnacles, minarets and domes seem too transient, too effluent to be the result of man's handiwork.⁵⁰

The pastels were recorded in the catalogue as no. 1 and no. 2 respectively, for which Shinn was asking \$500 a piece. The relatively high price attests to Shinn's own high assessment of the pictures. Only one other work in the show was priced higher, *Washington Square during Snow Storm*, which was listed for \$600.

New York Harbor (fig. 70) also presents a similar view across the waterway. The picture once bore the more descriptive title *View of East River*⁵¹ and compositionally it is closely related to *Barges on the East River*. Both pictures present a panoply of sailing vessels, and while *New York Harbor* lacks the house-barge in the lower foreground, it includes a stunning view of the Brooklyn Bridge. The Brooklyn Bridge, which opened on May 24, 1883, was a feat of modern engineering. Shinn was likely drawn to it for the same reasons that drew him to monuments such as the Washington Arch or the Dewey Arch; it provided a recognizable New York City landmark, thereby anchoring the picture in a specific place.

Related to Shinn's panoramic views across New York's rivers are his depictions of the dock workers and longshoremen. In *Spoiling for a Fight, New York Docks* (fig. 71) and *The Docks, New York City*, (fig. 72) the action has been brought ashore and attention is given to the

docks as an area of work, socializing, and confrontation. The figures are considerably larger than those in *Barges on the East River* and reveal a more adept command of anatomy and a greater concern for the individual's facial expressions. Early pastels such as these represent some of Shinn's most sympathetic depictions of men engaged in manual labor, a subject in which Shinn later lost interest, and is rarely found in his later work. In *The Dock, New York City* Shinn describes the workers' backbreaking toil as they struggle to maneuver heavy cargo. The pastel recalls Shinn's earlier illustrations of the circus for *Ainslee's Magazine* in which men are shown in very similar positions lifting heavy crates.⁵² However, the pastel also reveals a sense of the camaraderie formed between workers. At the far right, the man holding a cigarette is smiling, perhaps amused by a story recounted by his colleague opposite him.

The conflicts that often arose amongst the men who worked in the rough and vice-ridden area along the waterfront provided Shinn with dramatic subject matter which he translated in works such as *Spoiling for a Fight, New York Docks*. In *Spoiling for a Fight, New York Docks*, tensions between two men have erupted to the point of an almost certain altercation. As one man removes his coat and rolls up his sleeves in preparation for a fight, the other stands poised to strike with a vicious sharp hook partially hidden from his opponent's view. The event has become a kind of urban spectacle that was sure to draw a crowd of curious onlookers. Such confrontations were not uncommon in the area surrounding the docks where fights frequently broke out between strikebreakers and longshoremen, and amongst men who fought each other for jobs.

In contrast to the tension and excitement conveyed in *Spoiling for a Fight, New York Docks*, the pastel, *The Docks* (fig. 73) offers a quieter interpretation of the waterfront. While *Spoiling for a Fight, New York Docks* shows the harbor during the late morning or afternoon in the midst of activity, *The Docks* portrays a waterfront at dawn as the workday is just commencing. The area is almost certainly the South Street Piers. The bowsprits and masts of the ships shown on the left become an abstract tangle of dark lines. At the right of the picture, the

viewer's eye is led into the distance, passing a variety of buildings, which are probably warehouses and the businesses of ship builders and sail-makers. A solitary figure trudges toward the forest of ships in the distance. Other pictures by Shinn of the docks include *Unloading at the Docks* (c.1900; Location Unknown), which was shown by Shinn in 1900 at Boussod, Valadon & Co. and at the Pennsylvania Academy.

The empathy for the working class expressed in Shinn's attention to the strenuous labor and long hours of the dock workers, is also evident in a pastel reproduced in *The Bookman* as *Street Scene*, but which may have originally been entitled *Excavation near Elevated Road* (fig. 74).⁵³ For an audience trained to expect pictures more along the lines of the genteel tradition, unidealized workers at an excavation site presented an unusual subject. Men are shown engaged in the arduous task of removing dirt and stones by hand. With their shirtsleeves rolled up, they struggle to pry rocks loose and heave them into waiting horse-carts. As the city embarked on a massive building campaign, contemporary New Yorkers had become accustomed to gaping holes in the ground at excavations. What they were not used to, however, was an excavation as a subject for a work of art.

Although George Bellows would later represent the subject in his well-known series of four pictures of the Pennsylvania excavation site dating from 1907 to 1909, these paintings were at least six years away. Moreover, Bellows's excavation pictures emphasize the majestic canyons of the sites rather than the human labor that was necessary to produce them.⁵⁴ Closer in sensibility to Shinn's pastel are the New York waterfront pictures of John Twachtman, for example, *Dredging in the East River*, (c. 1879; Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Elie Hirschfeld), which focuses on industrial activity with machinery in full operation and workers in attendance. When Shinn's pictures of workers were shown in his exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. in 1900, they were found "far from common place." As one reviewer noted, "With a grim humor akin to that of Daumier he tells the tale of toll along the river front; in the suburbs where gangs of men dig ditches and cut streets through hills, or singly ply their grim trade of rag-picking."⁵⁵

Moving through the City: Transportation

The inhabitants of New York City were also brought together by the Manhattan's public transportation system. The city's extraordinary population growth -- 3,437,000 people by 1900⁵⁶ - resulted in densely packed city streets teeming with buses, trolleys, horse carts and pedestrians. For Shinn, the city's thoroughfares provided a constant stream of picturesque activity - people are frequently depicted walking or trudging through snow while a metropolitan bus or El train passes by. Shinn's pictures of New York's complex network of transportation, in a manner of speaking, move the viewer through the city.

Of the various modes of transportation available, one that frequently inspired Shinn was the elevated railroad, or the "El" as it was commonly called. *Sixth Avenue Elevated* (fig. 75) captures a late night view of the inside of a train car where one's attention is drawn to the two down-and-out men who are most likely using the train as free shelter for the night. The Third and Sixth Avenue trains ran all night affording both late night transportation and refuge for those who may not have had anywhere else to go. At the left, a conductor surveys the men, but it is difficult to tell whether he is expressing sympathy or considering waking the passengers who doze with no apparent destination. The work invites comparison with Honoré Daumier's *Third-Class Carriage* (c. 1862-64, fig. 76), a painting that also captures the plight of the poor as they travel in a railroad car. Shinn would have been familiar with Daumier's work from his student days in Philadelphia where Robert Henri encouraged Shinn, Sloan, Luks and Glackens to study lithographs by the French artist.⁵⁷ However, in place of the traditional railroad car, Shinn depicts the interior of a New York El train, thereby anchoring the work in what was then contemporary Manhattan.

At the turn of the century, the El was considered the modern way to travel. Established in 1867, the El was an immediate success and by 1899 was utilized by two hundred million passengers annually.⁵⁸ Not only was it almost twice as fast as private hackney cabs and hansom carriages, but at five cents a ride it was substantially cheaper than the hackney carriages which charged one dollar just for the first mile.⁵⁹ For Shinn the great appeal of the El was most likely

the way it brought together such a diverse range of people. To a greater degree than even the city streets, the El concentrated different social classes, ethnic types and age groups in a compact space. Unlike American and European trains, which separated passengers into different classes depending on the price of the ticket, the El had no such divisions.⁶⁰ The co-mingling of rich and poor that occurred on the El was frequently noted by English visitors and writers such as William Dean Howells, who offered the following appraisal of the El through the eyes of the character Basil March:

He found the variety of people in the car as unfailingly entertaining as ever. He rather preferred the East Side to the West Side lines, because they offered more nationalities, characters and conditions for inspection. They draw not only from the uptown American region, but from all the vast hive of populations swarming between them and the East River.⁶¹

Like the fictional Basil March, Shinn was likely drawn to the El because it was so democratic. For five cents one could not only travel from South Ferry to 155th Street, but could also witness a spectacular mix of the city's population along the way.

Historian William R. Taylor has observed that the El, traveling through both uptown and working class neighborhoods, exposed passengers to parts of the city they might not otherwise have seen.⁶² From the height of a third story building, the El provided both a wondrous view of the city streets and a peek into people's windows. The trains quickly became a tourist attraction and the most picturesque stations were printed on postcards, thus ensuring the public's familiarity with the views shown in Shinn's pastels. One of Shinn's most elegant portrayals of the El, *Herald Square* (fig. 77) features the raised station at 33rd Street.⁶³ Raised stations such as this one, with their peaked roofs and sometimes including Victorian tracery, were thought to resemble Swiss chalet architecture. The picture's restricted palette of limited hues and sophisticated composition of interlocking triangles make *Herald Square* one of Shinn's most successful early pastels. In the foreground are Shinn's figures huddled under umbrellas making their way through a snow-covered street.

The artistic possibilities of the EI were recognized by other artists of the period, several of whom emphasized the speed of the train as it rushed along the elevated tracks. For example, in *The Bowery at Night* by William Louis Sonntag, Jr. (fig. 78) and *Six O'Clock, Winter* by John Sloan (fig. 79), both artists employ strong diagonals to heighten the sense of motion propelling the train forward in space. By contrast, Shinn was less interested in the speed of the trains and more attracted to the people that congregated beneath the tracks and at the stations. *Under the Elevated* (fig. 80) and *Cooper Square*, (fig. 81) feature the ubiquitous tracks that ran along Second and Third Avenues on the East Side and along Sixth and Ninth Avenues on the West Side.⁶⁴ In both pictures, the tracks are silhouetted against the city buildings, forming a barrier between the background structures and the pedestrians in the foreground. *Under the Elevated* is especially noteworthy for its sympathetic depiction of the working class family at the far right of the picture. The family emerges unperturbed by the congestion occurring beneath the tracks where several loaded horse wagons jockey for space.

In *Cooper Square* the EI is shown in the background acting as a barrier dividing the buildings on the east side of Third Avenue from Cooper Square, the open space formed by the intersection of Third and Fourth Avenues with Seventh Street. Emphasizing the wide range of people who gathered near EI stops, the pastel features a large foreground plane upon which several vignettes are being played out. In the background, a horse cart lumbers through the snow while at the right two boys are playing. The points of greatest interest, however, are the three couples that form points of a triangle. The viewer's eye first moves back in space to the couple in the background center whose forward movement pulls us back toward the edge of the picture plane. Here two couples, one on the right and one on the left, struggle to negotiate the treacherous puddles formed by melting snow. The couple on the left is more fashionably dressed than the modestly garbed pair on the right, underscoring the mix of social classes that intersected in the square. Crossroads such as these provided the opportunity for observing others unlike oneself. Indeed the man on the left has turned to stare at the other couple whose fine clothing and

perhaps upper-class demeanor provided its own urban spectacle. *Cooper Square* is related to a pastel titled *A Rainy Day at Cooper Square* (fig. 82), which features the same location but with different foreground figures.

Despite the El's popularity, the elevated railroad did draw criticism. The raised tracks that Shinn found a picturesque part of the urban landscape were viewed by many as offensive structures that blocked out light and decreased the property values of the areas contiguous to the overhead lines. By 1890, the trains were already overcrowded, but space limitations prevented expansion and the building of new tracks. In addition, the trains were too slow to encourage movement of residents from the densely populated downtown areas to open spaces of northern Manhattan. Mounting pressures eventually lead to the building of the New York subway, which commenced construction in 1900 and was completed in 1904. Like the Brooklyn Bridge, the subway was a marvel of modern technology. Reaching speeds of forty-miles per hour, the subway was the world's fastest mode of urban transportation.⁶⁵ Shinn never depicted the completed subway, but he did record its construction in four illustrations for *Harper's Weekly* in November of 1900.⁶⁶ The article was titled "Progress of the Work on the Underground Railroad," for which Shinn provided the following illustrations *A Deep Excavation at 23rd Street and 4th Avenue*, *Working at 21st Street and 4th Avenue*, *At 28th Street and 4th Avenue*, and *At 34th Street and 4th Avenue – The Big Derrick*.

To the degree that Shinn's pictures of the El were considered images of modern transportation, his depictions of the metropolitan omnibuses were recognized as looking back to an old-fashioned mode of travel. The omnibuses were actually horse-pulled stagecoaches, painted red, white and blue, and popular all over downtown. Displaced by the introduction of the streetcar, the buses were relegated first to Broadway, then to Fifth Avenue where by the 1890s they had become both quaint symbols of elegant old New York and tourist attractions.⁶⁷ Shinn depicted the metropolitan bus at least three times in *Fifth Avenue Coach, Winter* (fig. 83), *Horsedrawn Bus* (fig. 84) and *Fifth Avenue* (fig. 85).⁶⁸ All three pastels portray the stage in the

midst of a violent snowstorm. The vivid imagery was most likely inspired by an actual storm that began on February 11, 1899 and paralyzed the city for four days. On February 14, 1899 the *New York Times* reported:

One of the severest snowstorms that have ever visited New York struck the city Sunday night and raged all day yesterday. Except for the memorable blizzard of 1888, no combination of the elements within recent memory has wrought such mischief. Traffic in the city and in all directions was brought almost to a standstill.... The price of coal went up. One-tenth of the city's population had no gas for fuel or lighting because of frozen pipes.⁶⁹

The intensity of the storm is made manifest in *Fifth Avenue Coach, Winter* in which the background buildings are obscured by the sheets of snow being blown by a fierce wind. Using rapid vigorous strokes of pastel, Shinn effectively conveys the vigor of the storm. Straining horses struggle to pull the bus through the snow packed street, while in the foreground a pedestrian covers his ears against the freezing wind. The pastel provides a visual corollary to the *New York Times* account, "The snow was coming down in clouds. The snow was not of the comfortable everyday variety, but it swirled along in minute particles like crushed sand, prepared to bite and sting and find its way down a man's coat collar and into his ears."⁷⁰

The composition and palette of *Horsedrawn Bus* are very close to that of *Fifth Avenue Coach, Winter*. Both portray a coach headed west, fronted by a large foreground plane empty but for its coating of snow. In the present pastel, the horse-drawn bus has stopped to allow passengers on and off. At the far right, a female who has just disembarked can be seen struggling with her umbrella. Behind her, another passenger emerges from the back of the bus. Rendered in a restrained palette of whites and blacks, the pastel is enlivened by effectively placed passages of red and blue on the bus and highlights of yellow pastel indicating the welcoming lights of an apartment building. Shinn's rapid application of dense pastel in the wide foreground plane effectively conveys the sense of a snow-rutted street, while in the background the more feathery treatment of the medium creates the sensation of buildings obscured by falling snow.

The bus is shown again in *Fifth Avenue*, a bustling street scene portraying the vehicle at an oblique angle as it moves through traffic. The placement of the bus and the vertical format may have been modeled on Alfred Stieglitz's famous 1893 photograph, *Winter on Fifth Avenue*, which features a horse-drawn stage in inclement weather. Shinn would likely have known the photo as it was widely exhibited and subsequently published in 1897 in a volume of Stieglitz's New York scenes entitled *Picturesque Bits of New York*.⁷¹

In 1900, *Fifth Avenue* and *Fifth Avenue Stage Coach* (which is likely the original title of *Fifth Avenue Coach, Winter*) were exhibited in Shinn's first one-man show at Boussod, Valadon & Co., which later traveled to the Pennsylvania Academy.⁷² The pictures elicited the praise of a reviewer who commented on the stages' anachronistic character noting, "New York's Fifth avenue, for example, never has been so sympathetically interpreted pictorially as in certain of Mr. Shinn's drawings. It is the Fifth avenue known to us all, with the busy crowds of scurrying people, the pompous policeman and the rickety old coaches, relics of an earlier civilization...."⁷³ Another writer commented, "In such a sketch as his 'Fifth Avenue Stage Coach' ... with one of its horses half-prostrate on the snowy pavement, Mr. Shinn has caught the spirit and the atmosphere of the time and place and incident...."⁷⁴ The old coach in a snowstorm remained a favored motif of Shinn. In 1914, Shinn returned to the theme in his pastel, *Fifth Avenue Bus*, 23rd Street and Broadway (fig. 86).

Lower Manhattan

In this phase as champion of the oppressed, he dreamed of forming a lever, alloyed and strengthened with his sympathy for the under dog that would some day rest on the flinty fulcrum of the backs of the rich and swerve the whole social muck and barren places around to the sunny fields of the deserving plenty.

-- Everett Shinn, SAM, Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington

As has been mentioned above in the section "New York by Night," the turn-of-the-century public was accustomed to explorations into the lives of "the other half." Books such as

How the Other Half Lives, *Lights and Shadows of New York Life* and *Sunshine and Shadow in New York* introduced readers to descriptions of urban poverty. In addition, the mass circulation press contributed an enormous volume of articles and images that dealt with the social problem of poverty on the Lower East Side. As Doezeema has noted, Luks, Glackens, Sloan, and Shinn, trained as newspaper illustrators, were conversant with pictorial codes that emerged as a way of recording the poverty of the tenement neighborhoods. Moreover, they themselves were accustomed to representing sensational events as well as the spectacle of the slum for the papers. When they turned from newspaper illustration to painting, they portrayed many of the same subjects of street life, however, without the pressure of a commission they may not have felt the need to create representations that were as sensational as their illustrations.

The pictures by the Ashcan artists of ethnic groups and the Lower East Side have drawn a variety of responses from scholars. Some have perceived the Ashcan artists' treatment of their subjects as euphemizing or distancing, always keeping the immigrant as a marked "other," separate from middle-class life.⁷⁵ Rebecca Zurier has addressed the question of how "real" was the depiction of New York immigrant life in the works of the Ashcan School. She notes that stereotypes did exist in the work of the Ashcan School, but no more so than in popular music and contemporary theater.⁷⁶ She continues by pointing out that even the so-called "objective" photography of the social reformer Jacob Riis has been shown in recent scholarship to sensationalize the lives of the urban poor.⁷⁷ Moreover, Riis's photographs were not "objective." Riis hoped to improve the living conditions of his subjects and therefore created photographs that showed them under the worst possible conditions as a means of stimulating public sympathy and urban reform. Zurier also examines the more neutral photographs of the Byron Company, which produced stock photography to be sold to magazine editors and private clients. She points out that the Byron Company images actually present a more chaotic and confusing image of the Lower East Side than those that appeared in the work of the Ashcan artists. Zurier concludes, "This brief survey might tempt one to conclude that there was no objective representation of the

Lower East Side, or perhaps no ‘real’ Lower East Side at all. We would argue instead that there were many true versions of the place. Each of these representations reveals aspects of historical reality – the neighborhood’s appearance as well as the artists’ experience of it.”⁷⁸

What was Shinn’s experience of the Lower East Side? Unlike artists such as Abastenia St. Leger Eberle, Shinn never lived in the immigrant neighborhoods amongst the ethnic communities he depicted. At the time that he was portraying the Lower East Side he was residing at 145 East 21st Street, a comfortable distance from the tenement area. As he became more critically and commercially successful, he moved to a brownstone off Washington Square and began summering at his second home in Plainfield, New Hampshire. In many ways Shinn’s goals were more aligned with upper-class society, and this was the social group he sought to emulate. In 1911, when asked about his perception of himself, Shinn replied, “Personally I conform to decent, accepted standards of living and conduct, and a Bohemian is the last thing I consider myself, or should want any one else to consider me.”⁷⁹ And yet despite his own physical, social, and economic distance from the inhabitants of the Lower East Side, Shinn managed to create some of the Ashcan School’s most sympathetic renderings of the area.

The subjects of much of Shinn’s most original work are the “crossroads” of New York where people from very divergent backgrounds shared a physical space. During the second half of the 19th century, New York City experienced an enormous influx of immigrants. Arriving from countries such as Germany, Italy, Poland, Ireland, the Ukraine, and China, they established their own ethnic enclaves. Luc Sante, who has written authoritatively on this topic, notes that after the revolution of 1848, Germans became the dominant population of the Lower East Side above Houston Street. Nearby were the Hungarians who occupied the areas east and south of the German neighborhood. The Jewish area radiated outward from the intersection of Canal, Essex and East Broadway. The Irish inhabited the region between Cherry Hill and Corlears Hook. Chinatown began in the 1870s on Mott and Pell Streets and radiated in four directions. Little Italy lay to the north of Chinatown.⁸⁰ Neighborhood boundaries, however, were not distinctly

fixed and did not necessarily keep people separate. Rather, neighborhoods were in a constant state of flux. As soon as one group attained a level of prosperity it would move to a wealthier quarter. In turn, the vacated neighborhood would become home to a new wave of immigrants, who were likely to be poorer. In the overcrowded tenements, residents found themselves encountering others whose customs and way of life were unlike their own.

Immigrants were not the only ones who were observing and studying people different from themselves. Sightseers' interest in the immigrant neighborhoods may have helped to generate a market for Shinn's Lower East Side subjects. As scholars have shown, during the late 19th century slumming had become a popular leisure activity. Middle-class residents of Manhattan and out-of-town tourists sought adventure and exoticism in the slums of the Lower East Side. As one writer described the experience, "To slink down an ill-lighted, sinister alley full of Chinese and American tramps, to hurry by solitary policemen as if you were engaged in some criminal enterprise, to enter the abode of them that never wash ... ah! What joys for adventurous souls."⁸¹

Chinatown was thought particularly mysterious and its inhabitants provoked much speculation and curiosity. By 1890, there were said to be between 12,000 and 13,000 Chinese in New York City, but the population remained largely cut off from other immigrants by language and culture. That their language was sharp and dissonant to Western ears and their choice of food seemed strange and exotic, served to isolate them further. The fact that they operated gambling establishments and were involved in opium sales also contributed to stereotypes.⁸² Even Jacob Riis, the crusader and social reformer, viewed the Chinese with suspicion.⁸³ By the late 1890s, the public's perception of Chinatown had been shaped by the press and tourism. Newspaper stories told of the "horrors of Chinatown." As Sante remarks, "These reports were largely fictitious, drawing on the sexual fantasies of the white middle classes, and using a certain propensity of the early Chinese settlers for marrying Irish women, as a loose basis for involved

tales of white slavery and the forcibly induced drug addiction of white girls."⁸⁴ The stories nevertheless help create myths about the dangers of Chinatown.

As the century drew to a close, areas of "danger" became sites of leisure. It became increasingly popular to take sight-seeing excursions to poorer sections of the city such as Mulberry Street and Chinatown. By the 1890s, Chinatown, like the Italian district, had become a tourist attraction. In 1899, an author for Baedeker's noted in a discussion of the Five points area: "Perhaps the most interesting parts of the district are the Italian quarter and in Chinatown.... The swinging lanterns and the banners of Chinatown give a curiously oriental air to this part of the city."⁸⁵ The guide's recommendations included visits to "(in the company of a detective)" the Joss House at No. 16 and the Chinese Restaurant at No. 18.

Shinn was well aware of the attraction that Chinatown held for tourists. Indeed, in at least one work, *Chinese Restaurant* (fig. 87) he makes sight-sighting amongst the Chinese the subject of the work.⁸⁶ It is unknown whether *Chinese Restaurant* represents an authentic local establishment or the tourist destination at No. 18. However, given the combined difficulties of infiltrating the Chinese culture and of representing people who did not wish to be depicted, it seems likely that *Chinese Restaurant* was created from Shinn's experience at a tourist establishment such as the one recommended by Baedeker's. This notion is supported by the number of Caucasians – a couple seated to the far right and a woman seen from the back at the far left – that are present in the restaurant. Moreover, the Caucasians are not eating; rather they are sitting at empty tables watching the actions of the Chinese. The restaurant has, in effect, become a kind of theater. The dining room itself forms a theatrical setting with colorful elements such as brightly colored Chinese lanterns, yellow and red banners with Chinese writing, and fans displayed on a shelf. Shinn's Chinese restaurant fed the public's curiosity about the Chinese. But, if the pastel became a type of visual tourism, at least the representation was a positive one.

Chinese Restaurant is not the only time Shinn depicted the Chinese. In his unpublished autobiography, Shinn recalled an experience when a newspaper assignment had taken him to

Chinatown. What is evident in Shinn's writing is that he found it difficult to depict the Chinese who disliked having their images recorded. He recalled that he was about to pull his sketchpad from his pocket when an ex-reporter cautioned him against it. The man said "If you had made your drawing in there, you might have offended one of their many Gods .. To them your pencil lines might have tied their friends spirit to earth and perpetual misery." Shinn drew his illustration from a coffee stand under the Brooklyn Bridge.⁸⁷

It was unusual for Shinn to feature the inside of a Lower East Side establishment as he did in the work, *Chinese Restaurant*. In general, he focused on the activities occurring on the city streets for his observations of the less fortunate members of the city's population. For example, *Cross Streets of New York* (fig. 88) and *Park Row, Fruit Venders* (fig. 89) are prime examples of Shinn's depictions of urban interaction and life on the streets of lower Manhattan. For Shinn the crowded downtown streets counterbalanced his pictures of uptown locales and were essential for a complete vision of contemporary New York. In his unpublished autobiography he remarked:

You have asked me why I like to paint streets, and particularly cluttered ones .. why, snow packed and slushed, and why the scattered and littered dams in gutters. Why the lamp posts and hydrants base that catch the drifts of wind blown litter. If all I wished to paint should lie in arias, park walks, alley ways, ashe [sic] cans and garbage pails I would pass it bye [sic] holding my nose and kick the scattering disfigurement as I go for all of that is only half of it .. Just half of the measure of all humanity. Just half of a picture of any city street.⁸⁸

In *Cross Streets of New York* (fig. 88), the snow-covered street is rutted with tracks from wagons and pushcarts. On the left and right sides of the street are dilapidated buildings with unsteady looking fire escapes and shutters coming loose from their hinges. Clothing is displayed on outside racks indicating that the area is commercial as well as residential. In the center foreground, an ash barrel is prominently displayed. Behind the barrel a man and woman are engaged in either a dispute or a very animated discussion. On the left, a man struggles to negotiate a pushcart through the snowy street. Like the ash barrel, the pushcart was an indicator that one had entered a less desirable section of the city. During the last quarter of the 19th

century, the pushcart became a prominent feature of urban commerce. Selling everything from fruit to old shoes, pushcarts were extremely popular in immigrant neighborhoods where the population was familiar with the European street markets. Although pushcarts had previously existed in other areas of the city, their association with immigrants caused them to be shunned by residents of wealthier neighborhoods. As historian Daniel Bluestone states, "Once middle- and upper-class urban residents identified pushcarts as central to immigrant and working-class life, they often viewed the arrival of a pushcart market in a neighborhood as tangible evidence of undesirable demographic and social change."⁸⁹

Pushcarts feature prominently in *Park Row, Fruit Venders* (fig. 89), one of Shinn's most fascinating images of lower Manhattan.⁹⁰ According to Metropolitan historian Christopher Gray, the site is probably City Hall Park looking north along the east side of Park Row. In the background to the right is the iron streetcar terminal that leads off to the Brooklyn Bridge while the large building in the center with the triangular pediment is the Old Hall of Records, which was the oldest civic building in New York until demolished c. 1905.⁹¹ In the foreground at the right, a male figure with his back turned to the viewer strides into the congestion. He acts as the viewer's surrogate leading into the picture. A lady wearing a long blue coat and carrying an umbrella walks in front of him. The couple appears better dressed than the other figures, suggesting that they are not residents of the neighborhood, but simply passing through perhaps on their way to the streetcar terminal in the background.

In the center of the picture, fruit is displayed on rickety pushcarts.⁹² The bright yellow bananas and other fruit (possibly oranges) immediately attract the viewer's attention as well as that of the figures in the pastel. At the center right, a well-dressed man gleefully reaches for his wallet to make a purchase from the cart. Bananas and oranges were expensive items and the delighted consumer is contrasted with less fortunate trio of a father with his two small children on the left who cannot afford such luxuries.⁹³ Although Shinn claimed that his pictures were not meant to induce urban reform, the pastel nevertheless generates sympathy for the city's poor.

In addition to contrasting rich and poor, *Park Row, Fruit Vendors* is notable for the inclusion of children, a relatively rare subject in Shinn's oeuvre. Unlike Bellows, Glackens, Sloan, Luks, and Henri, who included children in some of their best-known works, Shinn expressed little interest in Ashcan kids.⁹⁴ In an unusual departure for Shinn, he not only includes children in the work but also, through the use of red and pink pastel, draws the viewer's attention to them. Significantly, the children do not conform to the stereotype of the slum-child, which Doezema describes as: "Their figures are squat; their broad heads are adorned with tattered hats or a thin crop of scraggly hair; they stand either slightly hunched over, or ... with stomachs protruding; and they appear dull-witted and slow-moving."⁹⁵ Nor are they like the rowdy kids in *Street Fight* (fig. 90) by George Bellows or the disheveled, mischievous children who appear in his work, *On the East Side* (fig. 91). Rather, the boy and girl in *Park Row, Fruit Vendors* stand quietly at their father's side. They are humbly, but neatly dressed and peer curiously out at the viewer. Their good behavior contrasts both with contemporary interpretations of slum children, and quite humorously, with another of Shinn's representations of children, those featured in *Madison Square and the Dewey Arch* (fig. 66). In the latter pastel, a well dressed, clearly upper-class little girl is seen struggling and protesting as her mother attempts to walk with her through the park. Although Shinn may not have intended the pastels to be read as such, they can be interpreted as subverting stereotypical notions that social class defined good or bad behavior.

Salvation Army (fig. 92) evinces, if not Shinn's active interest in, at least his attention to organizations that attempted to ameliorate the debased living conditions of the poor. The work features a crowd of people who have stopped to observe a group of Salvation Army workers. The Salvation Army workers wave flags and banners, drawing attention to themselves and providing an optimistic note in the battle for social reform.

Evictions were another Lower East Side subject that caught Shinn's attention. His descriptions of the sad and tumultuous events are some of his most powerful representations of the difficulties experienced by the urban poor. *Eviction* (fig. 93), in the collection of the

Smithsonian American Art Museum, is arguably one Shinn's most compelling accounts of disaster striking a family, who after failing to pay their rent, are turned out on the street. The work evidences Shinn's immense skill at rendering the extreme pathos displayed by the destitute group of evicted tenants who sit slumped and hunched over at the street curb as their belongings are hoisted from the building and scattered carelessly on the sidewalk beside them. The fact that the curbside party is composed of old men, and a mother with her children makes the encounter even more distressing. On the right side of the work, separated from the evicted group by a barricade of trunks and chairs, stand a crowd of people watching the eviction progress. Shinn has left them faceless so it is impossible to tell if they are expressing sympathy or merely voyeuristic curiosity. Although it is not certain whether or not the evicted are immigrants, the numerous trunks and cases and the broken pushcart suggest that they are new arrivals, who, at least temporarily, have failed to find in New York the "American Dream."

The Smithsonian American Art Museum's *Eviction* is related to a pastel by the same title in the collection of The Saint Louis Art Museum (fig. 94). Compositionally, the work is very similar to the Smithsonian American Art Museum's picture, the major difference being the location of the event. Here the scene appears to be occurring in a Chinese neighborhood. The people being turned out of their home, as well as policeman who restrains the inquisitive crowd of onlookers, have Asian features. Again, Shinn emphasizes the pathos of the event by showing a mother with her child sprawled lifelessly before her. Here the mother assumes a pose reminiscent of the pietá evoking not only the difficulties endured by new immigrants, but also the self-sacrifice and tragedy they often experienced.

Sites of evictions struck a personal chord with Shinn and his accounts of people turned out on the street went beyond the role of passive observer. Written from a distance of about 40 years, Shinn's recollections provide interesting, if not always completely accurate, explanations of some of his works. Of *Eviction*, he recalled the following encounter that he said resulted in a picture intended for the book "New York by Night:"

I had talked to the old man. He had been a musician in Austria, having migrated to this country as a youth where he waited for recognition until his beard became a mattress for his weary head. He had never worked, not even at music. Nothing to show but a stringless violin. With rancorous hate he detested his adopted country that gave him only tickets of eviction instead of subsidy. Eeking out his days in idleness until he had almost forgotten his grievance. Living, only in his exalted dream that brought his family and himself among the curb glutted pile of his possessions.⁹⁶

As young artist starting out in New York, Shinn identified with the immigrants and empathized with their precarious economic conditions. Describing the work *Eviction on Hester Street*

(possibly the original title of *Eviction* at the Smithsonian American Art Museum), he wrote:

“This, I saw, and felt, for I was then two months in arrears with my own rent. I saw the man as he might be seeing me sunk in a clutter of canvases waiting to be flushed along to the city dump.”⁹⁷

Of the variety of Lower East Side subjects that Shinn chose to portray, the ragpicker is the theme to which he returned most often. The artist first exhibited a pastel of a ragpicker in 1900 at Boussod, Valadon & Co. Titled *Rag Picker*, this may have been the same pastel that was reproduced in May 1900 in *The Bookman* as *The Ragpicker* (fig. 95).⁹⁸ In the illustration, a man is stooped over an ash barrel sifting through the waste. Behind him, the snow-covered ground is littered with broken shutters, indicating that the location is a poor tenement neighborhood. The following year, 1901, he created another version of the subject, *Early Morning Paris* (fig. 96). Compositionally, the pastel is close to the version in *The Bookman* only here he has included a cat in the scene. As late as 1909, Shinn continued to depict the motif in *The Ragpicker* (fig. 97). According to Sante, ragpicking was considered the lowest level of commerce.⁹⁹ Ragpickers combed through ash barrels or solicited door to door for items that had been discarded. A typical ragman’s abode is described as housing “bones, broken dishes, rags, bits of furniture, cinders, old tin, useless lamps, decaying vegetables, ribbons, cloths, legless chairs, and carrion, all mixed together and heaped up nearly to the ceiling, leaving barely enough room for a bed on the floor.”¹⁰⁰ These items were generally repaired if possible and sold on the streets from pushcarts,

or occasionally from stores. Perhaps it was the extreme pathos of the ragpicker – his lonely plight and dire circumstances – that attracted Shinn. When Shinn depicted him, the chiffonier was a stock urban figure. Shinn's inspiration may have come from several examples, one of which was Raffaëlli (although Shinn later claimed to dislike Raffaëlli's work). In 1899, Raffaëlli's exhibition at Durand-Ruel Galleries in New York included two pictures of ragpickers.

Shinn's pictures of ragpickers received considerable attention by reviewers who admired the subject's gutsy treatment and originality. In February 1901, when Shinn exhibited *The Rag Picker* at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery in Boston, reviewers marveled at the artist's ability to portray a squalid urban subject in a manner that was not only not offensive but which also exhibited "charm" and "quaintness." Upon seeing *The Rag Picker* one writer responded:

The Rag Picker is a curious, gloomy little composition full of a strange charm, none the less. One would hate to be there; but, my dear sir, what has that got to do with it? The picture is delightful in the quaintness of the crazy, broken shutters and the hideous hodge podge of staved-in barrels.

And amid the abomination of desolations stands an old prophet of a chiffonier and poker among the "debris." The thing is full of character and energy – the darks are, perhaps, a trifle blackish – the fierceness of the handling, perhaps, creates a rather scratchy effect; but none the less it makes a very distinct impression on one.¹⁰¹

Another reviewer compared Shinn's "ugly" themes to the work of great writers noting:

It has been Mr. Shinn's usual preference to deal with what might be called the seamy side of its [New York's] scenery. One remembers a typical picture among his score of pastels which is something like this: A rag-picker at work in the tenement-house district, bending over a decrepit barrel, one of a heap of half-broken and ruined barrels piled up just outside a forlorn brick building, which might be regarded as a study in battered shutters; a place of peculiar and hopeless ugliness and poverty, of pathetic neglectedness and filthiness. Out of such materials Mr. Shinn constructs a picture of distinct interest, working as sympathetically over its details as Balzac or Dickens worked over the details of their descriptive passages about some greasy, musty, hideous corners of Paris and London.¹⁰²

It has been suggested that Shinn maintained a safe distance from his Lower East Side subjects and that he used snow to aestheticize his views of urban poverty.¹⁰³ To some extent this is true. Indeed, the response of the critic to *The Ragpicker* quoted above in which he states, "One

would hate to be there; but, my dear sir, what has that go to do with it?" does imply a distancing from the subject. However, when one compares Shinn's pastels of the Lower East Side with those of uptown life around Madison Square it is difficult to see how snow is used to a greater ameliorative effect in the pictures of poverty. If anything, it is the more glamorous sites for example, Madison Square Park (as represented in pictures such as *Hansom Cabs in Snow*) in which the park is viewed through an atmospheric veil of haze and falling snow, that make greater use of the element's aestheticizing qualities. By contrast, the snow in *Cross Streets of Manhattan* has already formed into ruts on the ground and is beginning to turn black. Moreover, works such as *New York Fruit Vendors* and the different versions of *The Ragpicker* present the urban poor in a compressed space in which the subject(s) is/are prominently shown near the foremost edge of the picture plane. They are practically in the viewer's space. By contrast, *Madison Square Cabs* and *Horsedrawn Bus* (a Fifth Avenue scene) adopt a wide-angle perspective in which the subject is seen from a greater distance across a large, empty plane. Thus, the compositional strategy of the uptown pastels seems to distance the viewer more than the downtown scenes.

Shinn himself commented on the different aesthetic demands created by pictures of uptown versus downtown. While he admired certain aspects of uptown life, he felt that subjects needed to be judiciously selected and even then, "the scene must be bathed in a sheen of moonlight, or obscured by a swirling snow-storm, or somehow thrust in the background.... It's all too new."¹⁰⁴ The crowded districts on the Lower East Side, however, were a different story. "There the rows of tumbled houses really do express something.... People do not stand off in places of isolated prominence there as they do on Fifth Avenue. Their suffering brings them together and, with shoulders that are habitually stooped and rounded from the burdens they are forced to bear, they collect in little knots." Shinn continued, "With the buildings in these sections it is precisely the same. The people and the buildings are complementary, and you cannot understand the one without the other, or the city without them both."¹⁰⁵

Often Shinn's portrayals of the Lower East Side focused on a dramatic event, like a fight or a fire. *Fire Scene* (fig. 32)¹⁰⁶ returns to a subject that he began depicting in 1895 as an artist reporter for the Philadelphia newspapers. The great number of fires Shinn covered caused him to comment, "After a while you got to know without thinking about it just how many men there were on a fire engine, what the equipment looked like."¹⁰⁷ The dilapidated buildings with grimy facades and broken shutters suggest that the fire is occurring in one of the city's poorer neighbors. Unlike like Shinn's previous depictions of conflagrations and urban tragedies, *Fire Scene* is relatively understated. The most prominent figures are the firemen who nobly perform their arduous task. In the background, on the far right, a line of spectators stands behind a police gate. The crowd is so unobtrusive as to almost blend in with the building. The fire itself is barely visible and one catches only a glimpse of it as a sliver of red/orange pastel through the buildings in the background. The palette is primarily restricted to white, gray and black with highlights of blue in the fireman's jacket, green of the engine and the red reflective glow of the fire. This pastel was first exhibited at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery in Boston beginning February 4, 1901 where it caught the eye of a reviewer:

Again he makes a picture of a "Downtown Fire"... Numerous pictures of fires have been drawn, which by trying to compass too much, perhaps have failed to give just the impression most desired; but here we have suggestiveness carried to an extreme, for there is but the least little spot where we catch a glimpse of the flames, some distance in the background, and yet we do not remember a picture which seems to convey such a vivid idea of an actual fire.¹⁰⁸

Although it was already somewhat outdated, for Shinn, the steam fire engine was an object of great pictorial interest. In addition to its appearance in *Fire Scene*, the motif appears in at least two other of the artist's works. Shinn prominently depicts it in an illustration for an article titled "Modern Fire Fighting," in which the vehicle is shown being pulled through Union Square Park (fig. 24).¹⁰⁹ Although the backdrops for the fires are vastly different, the details of the fire engines and their placement in the compositions are almost identical, demonstrating

Shinn's willingness to reuse images in different contexts. A similar fire engine also appears in the pastel *Fire on Mott Street*, (fig. 98) in a composition that is closely related to *Fire Scene*. Both pictures feature dilapidated buildings with grimy façades and broken shutters suggesting that the fires are occurring in one of the city's poorer neighborhoods. However, despite the similarity of the subject matter, the works elicit very different responses. In *Fire Scene* the calm sinuous lines of the fire hoses and the somber palette restricted primarily to white, gray and black with highlights of blue and red creates an impression of elegance and restraint. By contrast, the agitated line and intense yellows and reds in *Fire on Mott Street* convey a sense of urgency, evincing the artist's skill at conveying the immediacy of the disaster.

Like fires, fights were always sure to draw a crowd. Shinn, who was attentive to the dramatic possibilities of New York street life found in fights the elements of suspense, action, and violence that made the subject fitting for pictures of urban spectacle. In *The Fight* (fig. 99), an altercation has broken out in front of a saloon. One man has just given his opponent a solid punch in the jaw. The wounded man reaches out with his hand perhaps in an attempt to regain his balance, but he appears about to tumble backwards. A spectator who attempts to pull the fist-wielding pugilist in the other direction heightens the push-pull effect. At the right, a group of men has gathered, forming an audience eager to watch the event. Rather than attempting to prevent the violence, the crowd merely looks on, one man even smiling gleefully as if he were rooting for his team at a sporting event. Indeed, *The Fight* looks forward to the boxing pictures of George Bellows and may have appealed to a similar audience. As Doezenia notes in regard to Bellows's boxing pictures, "These ferociously expressive paintings represented, among other things, the intensity of 'real life' and the liberal challenge to middle-class social conventions, as well as heroicized masculine hardness."¹¹⁰

Shinn produced several pictures of the fight subject starting with a pastel titled *Fight*, which was on view from January 15 to February 24, 1900 at the Pennsylvania Academy before being shown at Boussod, Valadon & Co. beginning on March 20, 1900. In 1901, a work entitled

Street Fight was included in the annual exhibition of the Watercolor Club at the Boston Art Club where it drew enthusiastic reviews. “Mr. Everett Shinn has studied his Forain and his Steinlen to good advantage as his ‘Street Fight’ shows,” wrote one reviewer.¹¹¹ A critic for the *Boston Transcript* provided a description of the work that appears to identify *Street Fight* as the same picture as *The Fight*. The writer notes, “Here is a fight between two toughs in the street, witnessed with keen interest by a lot of ruffians... . Good work, well observed and independently painted.”¹¹² Moreover, watercolors are relatively rare in Shinn’s work at this time, making it unlikely that other works in this medium would have fit the description of *Street Fight*. Shinn pursued the subject of men fighting in *Spoiling for a Fight, New York Docks* (fig. 71), and *Street Fight* (1910; Location Unknown), and even took up the theme of sport fighting in *The Wrestlers* (c. 1900; Location Unknown) and *Prize Fighters* (c. 1904; Location Unknown).¹¹³

¹ Taylor, *In Pursuit of Gotham*, pp. 69-74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 71.

³ Gerdt, *Impressionist New York*, p. 69. I am indebted to Gerdt's discussion of the street sweeper for my assessment of the significance of this occupation.

⁴ "Four Midwinter Scenes in New York, from pastels by Everett Shinn." *The Century Magazine* 61, no. 4 (February 1901): 521- 525.

⁵ *Street Scene at a Fire* is in the collection of the Yale Art Gallery where it is known as *Fire Scene*.

⁶ "A Salem County Artist." *National Standard* (Salem, NJ), January 30, 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 29.

⁷ "Pastels by Everett Shinn." *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 30. In the reviewer's defense, it should be noted that the *Century Magazine* was originally *Scribner's Monthly*.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Joseph Byron, *New York Life at the Turn of the Century in Photographs* (New York: Dover Publications, 1985), no. 13 and no. 25, n.p.

¹⁰ Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham: A History of New York City to 1898* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 1147.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² For Madison Square, see Benjamin Marcus, *A Historical Sketch of Madison Square* (New York: Meridan Monographs, no. 1, 1894).

¹³ I am grateful to Abigail Booth Gerdt for bringing this work to my attention.

¹⁴ Bayard Still, *Mirror for Gotham* (New York: New York University Press, 1956), p. 22.

¹⁵ Marcus, *A Historical Sketch of Madison Square*, p. 5.

¹⁶ Karl Baedeker, ed., *Baedeker's United States* (Leipsic: Karl Baedeker, 1899), p. 9.

¹⁷ Jan Seidler Ramirez, ed., *Painting the Town: Cityscapes of New York* (New York: The City Museum of New York, 2000), p. 182.

¹⁸ This work is likely the one listed in Shinn's Record Book 1, p. 15 as *Madison Square Cabs*.

¹⁹ Wanda Corn has noted that elements such as snow and haze were common devices employed by 19th century artists to soften the perceived harshness of the New York City. See, Corn "The New New York," 60.

²⁰ Jesse Lynch Williams, "The Walk Up-Town in New York," *Scribner's Magazine* 27 (January 1900): 53.

²¹ "Art Notes," *New York Evening Sun*, February 24, 1900, p. 4.

²² The work was reproduced in *Century Magazine* 61 (February 1901): 524.

²³ "Pastels by Everett Shinn," *Boston Daily Advertiser* (February 7, 1901), Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 30.

²⁴ According to Shinn's record book, this pastel was originally titled *Fifth Avenue*. The work was once owned by Jeannette Gilder of *The Critic* to whom it may have been given by the artist. Gilder lent it to Shinn's exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. where Charles Allis purchased it. In November of 1900, Shinn gave Gilder a pastel titled *A Rainy Night* possibly in thanks for parting with *Fifth Avenue*. See, Record Book 1, pp. 6, 14.

²⁵ For Hassam's use of space, see Warren Adelson, "Childe Hassam: Cosmopolitan and Patriot," in *Childe Hassam, Impressionist*, Warren Adelson, Jay Cantor, William H. Gerds (New York: Abbeville Press, 1999), p. 14-15. See also Jennifer A. Martin Bienenstock, "Childe Hassam's Early Boston Cityscapes," *Arts Magazine* 55 (November 1980): 168-71.

²⁶ Art historian, Jennifer A. Martin Bienenstock, has pointed out: "Numerous paintings by Beraud and De Nittis [were] owned by collectors in New York, Philadelphia and Chicago, [and] were recorded in Earl Shinn's *Art Treasures of America* In addition, engravings after cityscapes by Beraud, De Nittis, and Grandjean appeared in contemporary publications.... De Nittis' work may have been further popularized by the appearance of lengthy articles on him in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* in 1881 and 1884. More significant for Hassam [and possibly for Shinn], perhaps was the publication in Boston in 1883 of Henry Bacon's *Parisian Art and Artists*, which devoted an entire chapter to a discussion of Beraud, Loir, Grandjean, and De Nittis." Bienenstock, "Childe Hassam's Early Boston Cityscapes," 169.

²⁷ For a fascinating study on the depictions of the Flatiron Building, see Bruce Weber, *The Prowed Tower: Early Images of the Flatiron Building* (New York: Berry-Hill Galleries Inc., 1991).

²⁸ Aline B. Louchheim, "Last of 'The Eight' Looks Back," *New York Times*, November 2, 1952, sec. 2, p. 9.

²⁹ Mary Black, *Old New York in Early Photographs, 1853-1901* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), p. 133.

³⁰ *Sunday Record Herald*, Chicago, (June 9, 1901) AAA, roll D179, frame 37.

³¹ The 20-story building, designed by the eminent Chicago architect Daniel H. Burnham, inspired paintings and photographs by numerous artists including Edward Steichen, Paul Cornoyer, Ernest Lawson, John Sloan and Guy Wiggins.

³² "What Is the Most Beautiful Spot in New York?" *New York Times*, June 18, 1911, magazine section, pt 5, p. 4.

³³ "Flatiron is our 'Worst Atrocity,'" *New York American*, March 31, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 95. The Flatiron was depicted by other members of The Eight, see for example, Ernest Lawson's *Flat Iron Building*, c. 1906-7 and John Sloan's *Dust Storm, Fifth Avenue*, 1906.

³⁴ Marcus, *A Historical Sketch of Madison Square*, p. 46.

³⁵ Shinn Record Book 1, p. 1.

³⁶ Shinn Record Book 1, pp. 15, 21.

³⁷ "Pastels by Everett Shinn," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 7, 1901, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 30.

³⁸ David Brody. "Celebrating Empire on the Home Front: New York City's Welcome Home Party for Admiral Dewey." *Prospects: An Annual of American Cultural Studies* 25, ed. Jack Salzman, Cambridge University Press.

³⁹ "The Dewey Arch." *The American Architect and Building News* 67 Part 1 (January 13 1900): 11-12; "The Dewey Arch." *Architects' and Builders' Magazine* 1 (October 1899): 1-8; *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed., Kenneth T. Jackson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 331.

⁴⁰ "The Dewey Arch." *The American Architect and Building News*, p. 12.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁴² See, for example, Raffaelli's *Dewey's Arch, New York* (1899; Private Collection) and Hassam's, *Dewey's Arch* (1900; Private Collection). Both works are illustrated in Gerds, *Impressionist New York*, p. 83.

⁴³ *Chicago Record-Herald*, March 22, 1903. Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 48.

⁴⁴ Luc Sante, *Low Life: Lures and Snares of Old New York* (New York: Farrar, Straus, & Giroux, Inc., 1991), pp. 49-50

⁴⁵ For a good description of New York Harbor, see James B. Connolly, "New York Harbor." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 3 (July 1905): 228-236.

⁴⁶ Jesse Lynch Williams, "The Water-Front of New York." *Scribner's Magazine* 26 (October 1899): 399.

⁴⁷ *Barges on the East River* was once titled *East River, Sunset*, see Kwiat, "Dreiser's 'The 'Genius'." Shinn the "Ash-Can" Painter," unnumbered page between pages 22 and 23. A work titled *Sunset, East River* was sent by Shinn to the Fellowship Sketch Exhibition at The Pennsylvania Academy from March 31 to April 19, 1902. Shinn Record Book 1, page 34

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 230.

⁴⁹ *Chicago Record-Herald*, March 22, 1903. Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 48.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁵¹ A file card from Macbeth Galleries lists the work by the name *View of East River*. The author has corresponded with Marilyn Masler, associate registrar at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, who responded that, "(T)here is no material in the file to explain why the name was changed to *New York Harbor*." Letter from museum August 20, 1998.

⁵² Eugene Wood, "The Coming of the Circus." *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (July 1899): 664.

⁵³ In May 1900, this pastel was reproduced with the title *Street Scene*. See: Regina Armstrong, "New Leaders in American Illustration. The Typists: McCarter, Yohn, Glackens, Shinn and Luks." *The Bookman* 2 (May 1900): 248. Shinn's record book does not list a pastel titled *Street Scene*.

⁵⁴ For a discussion of Bellow's excavation scenes see: Marianne Doezema, *George Bellows and Urban America* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), pp. 9-65.

⁵⁵ *New York Evening Post*, February 24, 1900, AAA, roll D179, frame 7.

⁵⁶ Clifton Hood, "Subways, Transit Politics and Metropolitan Spatial Expansion," in David Ward and Oliver Zunz, eds., *The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City, 1900 - 1940* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992), p. 192.

⁵⁷ Sloan recalled, "It was Robert Henri who brought me some Daumier lithographs and also a set of Goya's aquatints." John Sloan, *Gist of Art* (New York: American Artists Group, Inc, 1939), p. 1. In *The Art Spirit* Henri recommends, "It will do well for you to look at Daumier's lithographs." Robert Henri, *The Art Spirit* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1923; repr., Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), p. 183.

⁵⁸ Baedeker, *Baedeker's United States*, p. 11.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 11-13.

⁶⁰ In the 1870s, American trains separated people economically, socially, and racially. The railroads of the period conducted a very profitable business transporting new immigrants from the East to the West Coast. "Immigrant cars" maintained the lowest possible standards, and many new arrivals were shepherded directly into these coaches. People with money could purchase better accommodations in sleeping cars, but often it seems tickets agents were arbiters of a passengers worth and sold tickets accordingly. As George H. Douglas notes in *All Aboard! The Railroad in American Life*, "English author Robert Louis Stevenson, who came to America in 1879 and made the entire transcontinental trip, was sometimes taken to be an immigrant and sometimes found to be a person of 'worth,' in which instance he was sold a better ticket." On the train taken by Stevenson, women and children occupied the first car and were thus separated from men traveling by themselves, who made up the second car. However, Douglas points out some mingling between the passengers did occur. The one racial group for whom no flexibility existed was the Chinese who were isolated in the third car. George H. Douglas, *All Aboard! The Railroad in American Life* (New York: Paragon House, 1992), pp. 179-183.

⁶¹ William Dean Howells, *A Hazard of New Fortunes* (New York: Harper & Bros. 1899), pp. 158-59.

⁶² Taylor, *In Pursuit of Gotham*, p. 73.

⁶³ Shinn's record book does not list a pastel titled *Herald Square*. However, in 1899, Shinn exhibited *Elevated Station 33rd Street*, at the Pennsylvania Academy. Most likely, this was the original title of *Herald Square*.

⁶⁴ In 1936, Shinn returned to this subject in *A Rainy Day at Cooper Square*. This work is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art given by Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Fraad.

⁶⁵ For information on the building of the New York subway see: Clifton Hood, "Subways, Transit Politics and Metropolitan Spatial Expansion," *Landscape of Modernity, Essays of New York City 1900-1940* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992), pp. 191-195.

⁶⁶ "Progress of the Work on the Underground Railroad," *Harper's Weekly* 44 (November 17, 1900): 1084.

⁶⁷ Sante, *Low Life*, p. 50.

⁶⁸ *Fifth Avenue Stage, Winter* was reproduced in *The Craftsman* with the title *Fifth Avenue Bus in a Snow Storm*. See A. E. Gallatin, "The Pastellists," *The Craftsman* (January 1912): 142-144, AAA, roll 953, frame 234.

⁶⁹ "The Storm King Holds Full Sway," *New York Times* (February 14, 1899), p. 1.

⁷⁰ "The Blizzard Reinforced," *New York Times* (February 13, 1899), p. 3.

⁷¹ For a discussion of the Stieglitz photograph, see Moers, *Two Dreisers*, p. 12.

⁷² Record Book 1, pp. 5-6.

⁷³ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 8, 1900, p. 8.

⁷⁴ *New York Mail & Express*, February 28, 1900, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 8.

⁷⁵ See, for example, the interpretation of George Luks's painting *Hester Street* in *American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885-1915*. The authors interpret the painting as a toned down representation of the poverty and chaos of the Lower East Side. They note, "It is a measure of the editing and euphemism of Luks's painting that the extraordinary clutter of Lower East Side pushcarts... is reduced to this single cart." H. Barbara Weinberg, Doreen Bolger, and David Park Curry, *American Impressionism and Realism: The Painting of Modern Life, 1885-1915* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Harry N. Abrams, 1994), p. 192.

⁷⁶ Zurier and Snyder, *Metropolitan Lives*, pp. 20-27.

⁷⁷ See Maren Stange, *Symbols of Ideal Life: Social Documentary Photography in America, 1890-1950* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1989), chap. 1, as cited in Zurier and Snyder, *Metropolitan Lives*, p. 21.

⁷⁸ Zurier and Snyder, *Metropolitan Lives*, p. 26.

⁷⁹ Louis Baury, "The Message of Bohemia," *The Bookman* 34 (November 1911): 256-266.

⁸⁰ Sante, *Low Life*, pp. 15-16.

⁸¹ "The Fabulous East Side," *New York Sun*, May 8, 1910, p. 16. As quoted in Doezenia, *George Bellows and Urban America*, p. 161.

⁸² Sante, *Low Life*, pp. 143-44.

⁸³ Referring to the Chinese, Riis wrote, "[T]hey are a constant and terrible menace to society, wholly regardless of their influence upon the industrial problems which their presence confuses. The severest official scrutiny, the harshest repressive measures are justifiable in Chinatown..." See Jacob Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1890; repr., New York: Dover Publications, 1971), p. 83.

⁸⁴ Sante, *Low Life*, p. 144.

⁸⁵ Baedeker, *Baedeker's United States*, p. 31.

⁸⁶ Ten years later, in 1909, John Sloan represented the same subject in the work, *Chinese Restaurant* (University of Rochester, New York).

⁸⁷ Everett Shinn, "I Remember New York," Shinn papers, Everett Shinn Material, Dorothy Seiberling Collection, AAA, roll 794, frame 661.

⁸⁸ SAM: The double period configuration, "...", is quoted as written in Shinn's text.

⁸⁹ Daniel Bluestone, "The Pushcart Evil," in Ward and Zunz, *The Landscape of Modernity*, p. 298.

⁹⁰ This may be the pastel titled *Park Row* exhibited by Shinn in 1900 at Boussod, Valadon & Co. *Park Row* was noticed by a reviewer who commented, "Mr. Shinn has a well-educated eye for color values, and his *House Tops (rainy day)* (2), *Unloading at the Docks* (16), *Cooper Union Fountain* (22), and *Park Row* (35) show glimpses of brick and building stones seen through a New York winter haze...." *Studio* (New York City) April 1900. Scrapbook. 1898-1906. AAA. roll D179. frame 9. Though *Park Row* was sold during the Boussod, Valadon & Co. exhibition, it traveled with show to the Pennsylvania Academy.

⁹¹ The author is indebted to Mr. Christopher Gray for kindly sharing his insight on the location represented in this pastel.

⁹² The pastel, with its densely packed crowd and attention to pushcart commerce, invites comparison with Luks's painting *Hester Street*. However, unlike *Hester Street* in which couples are engaged in friendly conversation and children are entertained by a peddler demonstrating a toy, *Park Row, Fruit Vendors* offers perhaps a more complex view and the urban scene.

⁹³ David Nasaw, *Children of the City: At Work and At Play* (New York: Anchor Press. 1985), pp. 14-15.

⁹⁴ For a through discussion of this topic, see Bruce Weber, *Ashcan Kids: Children in the Art of Henri, Luks, Glackens, Bellows & Sloan* (New York: Berry-Hill Galleries, 1999).

⁹⁵ Doezenia, *George Bellows*, pp. 154, 159.

⁹⁶ Everett Shinn, "The Eviction," Everett Shinn Material, Dorothy Seiberling Collection. AAA. roll 794, frame 668.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ *Rag Picker* is listed in Shinn's Record Book I, p. 6. *Ragpicker* is illustrated in Armstrong, "The New Leaders in American Illustration," p. 249.

⁹⁹ Sante, *Low Life*, p. 65.

¹⁰⁰ Charles Loring Brace, *The Dangerous Classes of New York* (1872), pp. 152-153. quoted in Sante, *Low Life*, p. 66.

¹⁰¹ "Pastels by Everett Shinn," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 7, 1901. Scrapbook. 1898-1906. AAA. roll D179. frame 30.

¹⁰² "Exhibition of Mr. Shinn's Pastels at Chase's Gallery," *Boston Evening Transcript*, February 6, 1901, p. 17.

¹⁰³ Yount, "Consuming Drama. Everett Shinn and the Spectacular City," p. 100.

¹⁰⁴ Louis Baury, "The Message of Manhattan," *The Bookman* 33 (August 1911): 592-93.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 593-94.

¹⁰⁶ This pastel is in the collection of the Yale University Art Gallery where it is titled *Fire Scene*. However, an unidentified review of the picture at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery in Boston beginning February 4, 1901 reveals that the original title was *Downtown Fire*. See Record Book I, p. 20.

¹⁰⁷ Everett Shinn. Interview by Matthews (no first name given), no date. Radio Station WLIB Flatbush Avenue, Brooklyn N.Y. Manuscript located in Shinn papers. Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum.

¹⁰⁸ "Exhibition of Mr. Shinn's Pastels at Chase's Gallery," *Boston Evening Transcript*, February 6, 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 30. After the exhibition at J. Eastman Chase, the work was then shown at Boussod-Valadon & Co. from November 11 to 31, 1901 as *Down Town Fire* with an asking price of \$200. In 1903, from February 20 to March 22 the work was exhibited at the Art Club of Erie, PA as *Downtown Fire*, #2, for which Shinn was now asking \$300. The work was reproduced in *Century Magazine* in February 1904 under the heading "Four Winter Scenes in New York - From Pastels by Everett Shinn." The pastel was reproduced using the half tone process and the caption reads simply "Street Scene at a Fire." See *Century Magazine* 61 (February 1901): 521-525.

¹⁰⁹ Hugh Bonner, "Modern Fire Fighting," *Ainslee's Magazine* 3 (June 1899): 520-530.

¹¹⁰ Doezeema, *George Bellows and Urban America*, p. 113.

¹¹¹ "Water Color Club," *Advertiser* Boston, March 8, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 32.

¹¹² "Fourteenth Annual Exhibition of the Watercolor Club," *Transcript* Boston, March 2, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 32.

¹¹³ *The Wrestlers and Prize Fighters* are listed in Record Book 1, pp. 14, 49.

CHAPTER IV

EARLY EXHIBITIONS AND EUROPEAN TRAVEL

Both from a personal and professional standpoint 1899 proved to be an extremely important year for Shinn. It was the year that he first began to show his work professionally and the beginning of important connections with people such as Elsie de Wolfe, Stanford White, Clyde Fitch, and Julia Marlowe. De Wolfe is remembered today as a legend in American interior design, responsible for sweeping away Victorian clutter and replacing heavy curtains and red velvet with English chintz and French toiles.¹ Shinn met de Wolfe shortly after she had triumphantly restyled the Irving Place house she shared with her companion Elisabeth "Bessie" Marbury. Though her reputation as a decorator was growing, at the time Shinn met de Wolfe she was focused on her career as an actress. Throughout the 1890s de Wolfe appeared in a succession of roles under Charles Frohman's management at the Empire Theater and it is possible that Shinn met the actress at one of these performances.²

The same year that Shinn befriended Marbury and de Wolfe, he also showed for the first time in a museum exhibition. In January of 1899, five of Shinn's pastels were included in the Pennsylvania Academy's annual exhibition. According to Shinn's record book he showed *Elevated Station, Fifth Avenue, The Docks, Housetops-Rainy Day, and Street Scene*. The pastels received considerable praise in the press. On January 15, 1899, the *Philadelphia Press* noted:

There is a row of black and white studies of New York streets by Mr. Everett Shinn in the corridor which reveal a new artist on the walls, a man who only has to go forward to fill the full measure of success in the work of making the life of the day and the pavement interpret and express the emotion and observation of all time.³

On January 27, 1899, the *Monitor Register* of Woodstown announced that the Academy exhibition included "Several excellent drawings in watercolors by Mr. Everett Shinn."⁴ Shinn's

youth combined with the fact that he had just recently been a student at the Academy, made his accomplishment all the more impressive.

Shinn sold his first picture, a pastel titled *Street Scene*, from the exhibition to the well-known artist, William Merritt Chase. Shinn was so honored to have his picture admired by Chase that when he learned of Chase's interest in the pastel, he offered to give it to him. Shinn recalled Chase's response to the potential gift, "Lifting his quizzical [sic] one eyebrow when I wanted to give it to him he said 'No.. young man.. we can all give pictures away.. there is always someone that will accept them .. but to give up money for our pictures is a gesture from a public we must not ignore .. thank you just the same .. I now own a Shinn and it cost me money.'"⁵

Shinn's subsequent attempts to exhibit work met with a mixed response. His nine submissions to the Society of American Artists were all rejected as were the four pastels sent to the National Academy of Design. He did succeed in exhibiting several works at the Association of Allied Arts at the Berkeley Lyceum (New York) from April 10 to 15, 1899; one work at the Kit-Kat Club (New York) from April 8 to 15, 1899, which was purchased from the exhibition;⁶ and two pastels at the St. Louis Exposition from September 11 to October 14, 1899.⁷ His greatest opportunities however resulted from his friendship with Elsie de Wolfe.

Elsie de Wolfe was socially well connected and her home served as a meeting place for performers, artists, and writers. From November 7 to 17, 1899, de Wolfe's salon became a temporary art gallery hosting a small Shinn exhibition. The five pastels shown were: *Scene - Julia Marlowe*, *Wharf Fight*, *Madison Square Thaw*, *Fourteenth Street Theater*, and *Interior Keith's*. Not only did the show provide exposure for Shinn's work, but it also resulted in two sales. A private collector purchased *Wharf Fight*, and *Scene - Julia Marlowe* was sold to the playwright Clyde Fitch.

Scene - Julia Marlowe is most likely the pastel now known as *Broadway Theater: Julia Marlowe in Barbara Frietchie* (fig. 178). In 1899, Marlowe, who was well known for her renditions of Shakespeare, departed from her usual roles to star in Clyde Fitch's Civil War drama,

Barbara Frietchie.⁸ Based on the Whittier ballad, the successful four-act play opened in Philadelphia on October 10, 1899 at the Broad Street Theater. A fortnight later, the play opened in New York where it enjoyed a long run. *Broadway Theater: Julia Marlowe in Barbara Frietchie* depicts the stage from a distance, reflecting the fact that Shinn did not know Marlowe at the time of play's opening and therefore based his pastel on his perspective as an anonymous audience member. The relationship between Marlowe and Shinn quickly changed after Fitch purchased the pastel of the actress. Fitch immediately became an enthusiastic supporter of the Shinn's work and was responsible for the artist's introduction to many famous and influential people one the first of whom was Julia Marlowe. In letter dated November 17 [1899] Fitch wrote, "I am so glad to own your picture. Won't you come and have lunch with me on Monday at 1:30 & see ... [what] you think of 'yrs' in my house?"⁹ After inviting Shinn to his home, the playwright provided Shinn with a calling card that read, "Door Keeper of Criterion Theater ... Kindly let the bearer of a note to Miss Marlowe from me enter at once...Clyde Fitch"¹⁰ The first meeting evidently went well and the actress agreed to pose formally for the artist.

Shinn portrayed the actress again in 1900 when Life Publishing produced a book of the performance of Barbara Frietchie, which included text, photographs and the artist's color portrait of Marlowe.¹¹ The portrait gained further publicity when it was also enlarged and used as an advertisement for the play. Marlowe's sittings took place at her hotel on 27th Street,¹² but Shinn spent many nights backstage watching her perform. He recalled one evening when "Miss Marlowe passed me on an entrance cue complaining that she felt ill and feared she could not get through the act. At a very tense moment when she had evaded the advances of a drunken Yankee seargent [sic], she passed at the table where I stood.... Then I realized she was on the point of fainting."¹³ Shinn stepped out onto the stage extending his arms should she fall. Marlowe simply smiled and forgave the intrusion.¹⁴

Fitch maintained a lively interest in Shinn's portraits of Marlowe. In an undated letter he wrote to Shinn inquiring, "Have you done anything about the Marlowe picture yet? I am anxious

to see it if you have done it.”¹⁵ Although it is unknown to which Marlowe picture he refers, it is clear that he was eagerly awaiting its completion. By February 1900, Shinn had completed three pastel portraits of Marlowe, one of her in black velvet, one as Barbara Freitchie, and one in the role of Viola. All three were shown in Shinn’s exhibition in 1900 at Boussod, Valadon & Co.

When Clyde Fitch saw one of the Marlowe portraits (probably the one of her as Barbara Freitchie) he wrote to Shinn, “Y[ou]r picture of Miss Marlowe is a BEAUTY! My heartiest congratulations. I am very envious of it. I like it ever so much.”¹⁶ The following month, perhaps in response to Fitch’s enthusiasm and support, Shinn asked the playwright to sit for a portrait (1900, Museum of the City of New York). Fitch was clearly honored by the request and on January 14, [1900] wrote to Shinn, “If you really wish to paste(l) me! And feel like coming up on Wednesday at eleven or twelve do so...”¹⁷ Shinn completed the portrait that month in time to include it in the Boussod, Valadon & Co. exhibition. After the close of the show, Shinn offered to give Fitch the portrait. The playwright was thrilled by the offer and on Good Friday 1900 responded, “I shall be delighted to have the portrait. Thank you very much indeed.”¹⁸ Around the same time that he was completing Fitch’s portrait he was also at work on a portrait of Elsie de Wolfe, which like Fitch’s portrait, was included in the Shinn’s first major exhibition.

The architect Stanford White had a chance to examine Shinn’s pastels when they were shown at de Wolfe’s. White was impressed with the work and the next afternoon summoned the artist to his office where he questioned him about his exhibition plans. Shinn recalled the encounter:

[White began] “When do you want your exhibition, young man? ...
 “I am ready now.” Shinn replied with the confidence of enthusiastic youth.
 “Time to print a catalogue notify the newspapers.. say two weeks.” White muttered ...
 He then named a date and to Shinn’s surprise named one of the most important galleries in the city who’s [sic] manager had curtly turned Shinn down a week before when Shinn had shown him tow [sic] of his best pictures .. Shinn hastened to tell White of that particular dealers disinterest in his work to which White made no comment but ran his fingers through his fiery red hair.
 “How many pictures have you ready to show? White asked.
 [Shinn] “Thirty perhaps.”
 [White] “Make more .. twenty more and you will have the biggest gallery he’s got.”

“But, Mr. White..” Shinn stammered He doesn’t like my work.”
 [White] “I do .. now get busy .. your show opens there and what’s more you will sell some pictures.”¹⁹

White arranged for Boussod, Valadon & Co. to offer Shinn his first major one-man exhibition, which opened on February 26, 1900.²⁰ The show was composed of forty-four pastels, of which thirty-five represented city scenes, four portrayed theater subjects and five were portraits (three of Julia Marlowe, one of Elsie de Wolfe, and one of Clyde Fitch). The pastels were shown against red walls and, though the frames were thought crude, the work itself was deemed by one reviewer “fit to hang on the Milky Way.”²¹ Overall the exhibition was judged an immense critical and commercial success. Stanford White and Elsie de Wolfe marshaled their considerable influence and encouraged friends and patrons to purchase works.²² Of the 44 pastels exhibited, 30 were sold.²³ According to Shinn, New York socialites including Mrs. Jay Gould, Mrs. John Jacob Astor, and Mrs. Vanderbilt purchased 22 of the pictures.²⁴ Shinn mused, “I don’t know if they liked ‘em, but they’d do anything White – that red-headed wild man – told ‘em to do.”²⁵ For the next six years, until his death in 1906, White would continue to be a great supporter of Shinn’s work.²⁶ Upon seeing the exhibition, Clyde Fitch wrote to Shinn, “It IS a ripping show! I can’t tell you how heartily I congratulate you and I was by no means a little proud to be amongst the portraits.”²⁷ Like de Wolfe and White, Fitch sent people to the exhibition and concluded a letter by noting, “I am going to see Miss Nethersole tomorrow, and I shall beg her to see the exhibition...”²⁸ Miss Nethersole was Olga Nethersole, the actress who was currently starring in Fitch’s play *Sapho*. The play, which opened on February 5, 1900, caused a scandal as it had dared to feature an unmarried sexually active woman. Nethersole was put on trial for violating public decency and the court proceedings were the cause of much excitement and were avidly followed by the press.²⁹

Critics immediately noted Shinn’s sudden rise to fame. One reviewer expressing her surprise at Shinn’s startling debut on the New York art scene commented:

Everett Shinn may have had the usual difficulties and preparation that seem to be part of the schooling of the artist, but in New York, at least, he had simply “arrived” before he had been heard of to any extent. His recent exhibition at the gallery Boussod, Valadon and Company, where he exposed a number of pastels representing mainly street scenes of the metropolis, was one of the most attractive exhibits of the season, and as an individual showing, it stood comparison with like exhibits of several years past.³⁰

Although his draftsmanship was considered shaky by some commentators, in general he was deemed full of promise. One reviewer proclaimed that the exhibition was “far from commonplace...revealing a little known worker who must now, unless all signs fail, emerge from obscurity.”³¹ In addition, writers commented on his personal style, which was called “spirited” and “quite refreshing.” However, more than any other aspect of his work, critics discussed Shinn’s choice of subject matter, which promptly identified him as a chronicler of the New York city streets. One critic remarked, “There was not, however, anything in that early work to foretell the keen appreciation and insight into the very essence of city life which have made Mr. Shinn’s New York street scenes so immediately appreciated.”³² As another writer poetically phrased it:

The work returns to us like music. The life is caught up and runs out in strokes like memory that dreams. Madison Square is there in all its night beauty, with the white arch shining like a woman’s flesh and shouldering out the gloom; red housetops; in snow, and cleared by rain, lean hard against each other; Broadway and Twenty-third Street is vivisected down to the very core, and the art evades us; the docks, a foundry, the music halls, Park Row, Union Square, are put on paper with a few lines of pastel in a way that wipes out all of this kind that has gone before. The whole history of the Fifth Avenue Stage Line is written clear. What the Cooper Union Fountain does is told. The ragpicker rises like a wraith and records his benumbing days. Hester Street look sullenly towards Fifth Avenue. A down-town shop gives out the whole history of the neighborhood.³³

Moreover, the reviewer recognized Shinn’s pastels as a means for helping people to make sense of the city. At the exhibition, people could glimpse the diversity of Manhattan. Images of ragpickers from the Lower East Side, dock workers from the waterfront, and well dressed ladies from Madison Square were all brought together and placed side by side on the gallery walls. Although viewers may have been able to identify with only a few of the people in the pastels, as a

whole they would have recognized the disparate elements as forming a picture of greater New York. The critic noted, "Street-scene after street scene takes you into lives the existence of which you had guessed faintly; and through it all the time of day, the million mutations of beauty we call weather, the lime-light, gaslight, sunlight, slush, cold, drip, wind, sleet, and life of this great city flashes and recedes and comes again."³⁴

Shinn's treatment of pastel also elicited comment. His technique of rapidly applied pastel strokes aptly translated the bustle and movement of the city. On close inspection, his figures are often hastily sketched outlines with spots of color, but viewed from a distance they emerge as convincingly readable forms. While the works' lack of finish was startling and offensive to some writers, one perceptive critic praised Shinn for finding a new vocabulary with which to interpret the speed of modern life. He noted, "There are those who often complain that the modern advanced spirits of the time have ideas, but not the technique to interpret them. This cannot be said of Everett Shinn."³⁵ Not only does his technique effectively capture the congestion of a busy street corner, but it also, on a larger scale, records an era of New York history that was rapidly fading. It is as if in his quick sketchy lines, Shinn wanted to arrest a moment of history before it disappeared entirely. When compared to the revolutionary treatment of movement in the work of the Futurists and Cubists, Shinn's aesthetic does not look very progressive. However, in 1900, the work's spontaneity and freedom of execution was seen as an affront to prescribed canons of finish and an effort to depict the "modern."

Inevitably Shinn's work was compared with that of other artists. His depictions of the city in inclement weather drew laudatory remarks, one critic noting, "Even Childe Hassam has not given as good an idea and impression of the streets as of New York in Winter as does Mr. Shinn in the present display."³⁶ Others saw the European influences of Honoré Daumier,³⁷ but more often Shinn was called the "American Raffaëlli." The association was underscored by an article that claimed Raffaëlli had come to see Shinn's Boussod, Valadon & Co. exhibition and acknowledged his influence on the younger artist remarking, "Very, very good. He is a *leetle* bit

my son.”³⁸ Years later Shinn rebuffed any influence of Raffaëlli stating, “I resented the implication of parentage as I had always heartily disliked his work.”³⁹

While critics greatly admired Shinn’s observations of New York’s streets and squares, they were ambivalent about his five portraits. As one reporter commented, “A group of five portraits is interesting pictorially, and in nearly every other way, save as to likeness. As such they are surely failures, since they bear scarcely any resemblance to the originals.”⁴⁰ Although Shinn would continue to paint portraits of close friends, the tepid critical response, combined with the fact that Shinn claimed to dislike portrait commissions, resulted in a general shift away from this form of expression.⁴¹

The exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. was scheduled to close on March 10, 1900, after which it was to travel to Philadelphia and Cincinnati. However, due to the show’s popularity with the public and the positive critical response, the exhibition was extended to April 4. On April 9, a reconfigured version of the show opened at the Pennsylvania Academy. The number of works was increased to sixty-five and included a group of fourteen small pastel sketches, which were in the show, but not listed in the catalogue. Just the previous year, when Shinn exhibited five works at the Philadelphia Academy, the pastels were hung ignominiously in the corridor. Following his success in New York, Shinn’s pictures were given a considerably better position in one of the Academy’s small galleries. As in New York they caught the attention of several critics who noted the artist’s skill at portraying the urban environment.

Boussod, Valadon & Co., realizing that they had “discovered” a promising young artist, offered to send Everett and Flossie to Europe. During their sojourn the Shinns would visit Paris and London where Everett was expected to develop ideas for an exhibition to be held at Boussod, Valadon & Co. in 1901. The gallery would cover expenses and in return their firm would handle all resultant work. Shortly after the close of Shinn’s show at the Pennsylvania Academy, Everett and Flossie spent a week in Woodstown with his family. On May 18th, George Luks sent the Shinns a charming illustrated letter (fig. 100) wishing them “Bon Voyage,” noting

“what a pity that you must put up in Hoboken for the night,” and wishing Shinn “serious success.”⁴² On May 19th they sailed for Europe and Shinn embarked on a new phase of his career.⁴³

London and Paris

The Shinns’ stay in Europe lasted about six months, from about the last week of May through October 6, 1900.⁴⁴ Unlike so many American artists who went to Europe at the end of the 19th century, Shinn did not study at the Académie Julian or the Ecole des Beaux Arts and attempted no private instruction while abroad. Unfortunately, there is very little written documentation of the trip. If Shinn wrote any letters to friends at home, they are not located. His unpublished autobiography provides some information, but many details remain unknown. The best records of what Shinn saw during his sojourn are the dozens of sketches of Paris and London. Some of these small drawings, most measuring 5 x 7 inches, are complete works of art in themselves; others provided the preliminary material for finished pictures.

London was the Shinns’ first port of call; there Everett worked briefly before heading to Paris, a city in which he was much more inspired. In his 1901 exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co., where Shinn exhibited the results of his trip to Europe, he showed only six pictures that can be identified as English subjects, compared with more than 40 French subjects.⁴⁵ His attention to London’s major intersections and squares is evidenced in two of his sketches, which depict Trafalgar Square. While in London, Shinn also took time to wander through the museums, carefully studying the pictures and, in at least one instance, copying a painting. Shinn’s *Robert Le Diable* (fig. 101) is a copy of *The Ballet Scene from Meyerbeer’s Opera “Robert le Diable,”* painted by Edgar Degas in 1876 (fig. 102). The picture had just been given to the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1900, making it the first painting by Degas to enter the collection of an English museum.⁴⁶ News reports of the important gift may have drawn Shinn’s attention to the painting, which in subject matter would have struck a note with his passion for the theater. In Degas,

Shinn found an artist who not only shared his concerns for performers on stage, but did so in a way that was radically unconventional. Degas's cropped composition, use of oblique angles, and attention to the audience underscored the picture's sense of immediacy, making it seem daringly modern. Shinn would subsequently adopt these devices in his own work earning him another title: the "American Degas."

About mid-June,⁴⁷ the Shinn family left London for Paris where Everett found a studio in the Latin Quarter on the Rue Notre Dame des Champs.⁴⁸ The Montparnasse area had long been a favorite site for artists and on the Rue Notre Dame des Champs one could find more studios than on any other Parisian street. Artists who once had studios on the street included Carolus-Duran at No. 58, Rosa Bonheur at No. 61, and Adolphe-William Bougereau at No. 75.⁴⁹ The low cost of studio space and the camaraderie of neighboring artists probably helped attract Shinn to the district. Although Shinn himself did not leave a written description of his studio, he told the scholar Joseph Kwiat that his studio in Paris was very similar to the one used by Eugene Witla, Theodore Dreiser's fictional character in *The Genius* whose life was said to be based on Shinn. Regarding Witla's studio Dreiser writes: "It was in the back of the house, looking out on a little garden, and because of a westward slope of the ground from this direction and an accidental breach in the building line, commanded a wide sweep of the city of Paris, the twin towers of Notre Dame, the sheer rise of the Eiffel tower."⁵⁰

From his studio window Shinn claimed to have seen Edgar Degas, "when the tall old gentleman would venture out of his house across from my studio."⁵¹ Having just studied and copied *Robert Le Diable* in London, Shinn must have been thrilled to see the artist himself. He referred to Degas as "the greatest painter France has ever turned out" and may have been inspired by the Frenchman's mastery of the figure to improve his own articulation of the human form.⁵² Models were easily hired at a model's market that took place every Monday at the corner of the Rue de la Grande Chaumière and the Boulevard Montparnasse, very close to the Rue Notre Dame des Champs. Perhaps in an effort to improve his draftsmanship and to emulate the French master,

Shinn hired the same woman who had posed for Degas; he later told a group of art students that the woman who posed as the elegant lady in an opera box in one of his pictures was Degas's model.⁵³ In addition to professional models, Shinn invited dancers to his studio, but instead of posing them in a conventional fashion, he asked them to perform. As they leapt and twirled, Shinn made many small sketches that he later used to develop larger paintings.⁵⁴

James McNeill Whistler was also a familiar figure in the area and it is possible that Shinn moved to the area to be close to Whistler's studio. In 1888, Whistler had settled into a house on the Rue du Bac, and between the years 1892 and 1901 he maintained a studio on the Rue Notre Dame des Champs at No. 86.⁵⁵ Whistler by then was immensely well known and respected in France. In 1891 the Louvre had purchased his famous painting *Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter's Mother*, making it the first painting by an American artist to enter the museum. Americans flocked to his studio to buy things, have their portraits painted, or to study with him. Nearby was the Académie Carmen opened by the model Carmen Rossi, where Whistler taught intermittently and which became a magnet for an international group of students. Although there is no evidence that Shinn ever met Whistler, the artist's teachings were very much a part of the artistic climate of the time and therefore would have been familiar to Shinn.

Shinn would also have had ample opportunity to view the work of Whistler at the Exposition Universelle et Internationale de Paris. Everett and Flossie arrived in the middle of the Exposition (open from April 15 to November 12, 1900), and spent time wandering through the exhibits while Shinn recorded vignettes for future pictures.⁵⁶ In the U. S. galleries in the Grand Palais, Whistler and John Singer Sargent were celebrated as the figures most representative of the artistic identity of the United States. Whistler was represented by three works: *Brown and Gold*, c. 1895-1900; *Mother of Pearl and Silver: The Andalusian*, c. 1894; and *The Little White Girl: Symphony in White*, No. II, 1864.⁵⁷ Not far away, at the Musée du Luxembourg, Shinn would have been able to see Whistler's best-known painting, *Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter's Mother*, 1871, which had been particularly admired by Robert Henri:

About the portrait Whistler painted of his mother I have always had a great feeling of beauty. She is old. But there is something in her face and gesture that tells of the integrity of her life.... There she sits, and in her poise one reads the history of a splendid personality. She is at once so gentle, so experienced, and so womanly strong.⁵⁸

Picturing Paris

All of the oil paintings and many of the pastels Shinn created of Parisian subjects were executed after his return to the United States. In Europe he made numerous sketches that provided the raw material for more than a decade of work depicting the French capital. The pastels and paintings of Paris he produced over the next several years reveal hours spent wandering the streets carefully observing the local environment. Prior to Shinn's visit, the city had undergone a building program that made it one of the most modern and well laid out urban spaces in the world. Parks had been built and new avenues constructed creating a pleasant atmosphere for strolling and people watching. In works titled *Paris Breadline*, *News-Stand Paris*, *Paris Rooftops*, *Paris Street: Building under Construction*, and *Paris Market*, he continued many of the themes that had interested him in New York.

The pictures of French neighborhoods with their old buildings and winding streets are keyed to a different energy level than his representations of Broadway or Fifth Avenue. In contrast to his bustling, crowded representations of New York City, these works are surprisingly tranquil. For example, the two oil paintings, *Paris Street Scene #1* (fig. 103) and *Paris Street Scene #2* (fig. 104), are characterized by a quietude unusual for the artist. In New York, Shinn was attracted to the city's busiest crossroads; however in Paris he preferred the quaint old neighborhoods usually shown in the early morning before the streets were crowded with people. In *Paris Street Scene #1* a single figure makes his way down an empty street. The closed shutters and minimal footprints in the newly fallen snow suggest that we are seeing the city at dawn. *Paris Street Scene #1* and *Paris Street Scene #2* are possibly Shinn's first city scenes to be painted in oil, a medium with which he began to experiment shortly after his return from Europe.

The paint is applied in thick broad strokes that effectively convey the impression of layers of snow. The paintings' intimate scale and restrained palette belie Shinn's confident handling of the oil paint.

Frequently Shinn preferred the narrow streets in the Latin Quarter to the city's grand boulevards. For example, the pastel *Rue de l'Ecole Médecine* (fig. 105) features the quiet street behind the elegant Boulevard St. Germain des Près. Similarly, in a pastel that must have had personal associations for the artist, *Rue Notre Dame Des Champs* (fig. 106) represents the windy street lined with mansard-roofed buildings that served as his temporary home during his stay in Paris. As in his New York pictures, Shinn was drawn to the spectacle of a horse straining to pull a vehicle through the snow. The motif of the horse-drawn vehicle appears in *Rue Notre Dame Des Champs* and again in the form of a fancier carriage in *Empty Fiacre, Paris* (fig. 107) Like the majority of his depictions of Paris, these pictures show the city under a veil of snow, an artistic conceit that Shinn could not resist employing despite the fact that he visited Paris in the summer. However, unlike his New York scenes in which snow and wind contribute to the picture's dynamism, blowing off hats and causing general disruption, the use of snow in his French pictures underscores the tranquility of the French neighborhoods.

Shinn first exhibited the pastels of Parisian street scenes in January and February of 1901 at Boussod, Valadon & Co. where critics, who noted the pictures' change in tone, admired them. A reviewer for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* observed, "He has his serious moments, as shown in bits of picturesque old French streets or quaint corners not to be selected by the unartistic eye."⁵⁹ In March of 1903 Shinn showed a small group of pastels of Parisian scenes at M. Knoedler & Co. Again, the work's serenity was recognized by reviewers, one of whom seemed to breathe a sigh of relief upon finding a quiet moment in Shinn's work. Comparing the Parisian pictures to those of New York she opines:

In all of these, [the New York City scenes] as in the river scenes, where impatient tugboats steam and jostle larger vessels bent on hurried errands, the restless spirit

pervades. Mr. Shinn strikes his first note of peace in the Paris street scenes, his most recent works, and in so striking gains inconceivably in art and loses nothing in character and the absolute sense of locality which is his strongest gift.

Of these handsome, low-toned and quiet canvases there are five or six examples, the most notable being "Late Afternoon, Paris," "Paris Rooftops" and "Winter Night, Paris." In all of these Mr. Shinn makes his strongest claim to his place already won in contemporary art.⁶⁰

The critic's approbatory response to Shinn's views of Parisian streets likely encouraged his continuing interest in the subject. In 1910, he created two of his most elegant pastels of the subject, *Winter Street Scene, Paris* (fig. 108) and *Paris Street Scene, Winter* (fig. 109). The sinuous curves of Paris's crooked streets offered a stark contrast to Manhattan's rigid grid, a difference that seems to have inspired Shinn. In pictures such as the two examples above, as well as the earlier *Rue de L'Ecole de Médecine*, he frequently depicted pedestrians turning street corners or about to disappear around bends in the road. *Winter Street Scene, Paris* shows the city veiled in an atmospheric haze. In the middle ground a fashionably dressed lady crosses the road while in the background a horse-drawn stage is seen approaching. The same tranquility is expressed in *Paris Street Scene, Winter* in which a broad, open foreground leads the viewer down a gently curving street. The pinks, grays and yellows of the apartment buildings harmonize with the violet of the sky. The area is almost deserted except for a figure standing at the left and two pedestrians headed down the windy street about to disappear around the corner. Despite the wintry weather, the people in these pastels are not shown struggling against the elements as they are in Shinn's New York pictures (see, for example, *Horsedrawn Bus* [fig. 84]). Rather, the figures move gracefully with an ease that belies the inclement day.

In the same way that Shinn generally ignored the large Parisian boulevards in his representations of the city, he also avoided the city's well-known tourist monuments. He never represented the Eiffel Tower which, built in 1899, was still a new addition to the city. Perhaps he thought the tower too much like the modern skyscrapers in New York that he disliked for replacing the low-lying buildings that he preferred. Given the numerous representations Shinn

made of the Washington Square Arch and the Dewey Arch, it is surprising that he seems only to have rendered the Arc de Triomphe once, when his peregrinations led him to the chic area of the Avenue Bois-de-Boulogne. Then, as today, the district was frequented by Paris society who rode up the grand Avenue in elegant horse-drawn carriages. Shinn recorded the Avenue in a vivid sketch, *The Bois, Paris* (fig. 110). The work depicts the Avenue Bois-de-Boulogne leading up to the Arc de Triomphe. In the background are stately buildings with mansard roofs buffered from the street by green puffs indicating the ample foliage of the trees. Sketchily defined carriages are visible on the Avenue, and in the foreground, are the faint outlines of figures. Rendered in rapidly drawn black chalk lines and dashing laid down watercolor, the picture evinces both a sense of immediacy and solid drawing.⁶¹

Shinn's sympathy for the down-and-out, so evident in his renderings of the lower East Side, is much less pronounced in his Parisian scenes. However, interspersed with his more glamorous pictures of French locales are examples of Shinn's return to the ragpicker motif. A pastel titled *Early Morning Paris* (fig. 96) features a street scavenger in a composition that is very similar to the *Ragpicker* pastel illustrated in *The Bookman* (May 1900). The main difference between the two pictures is that in *Early Morning Paris* the ragpicker has encountered a cat menacingly arching its back. *Early Morning Paris* is almost certainly the same work that was shown at Durand-Ruel in 1904 under the title *The Tired City*. A reproduction of the pastel, featured in the Philadelphia *Inquirer* (fig. 111), reveals that *The Tired City* looks identical to *Early Morning Paris*. A reporter discussing both this pastel and a work called *When Paris Sleeps* opined that they were "...perhaps the most finished pictures in the exhibition. Different as these are in character, each has the unfailing touch of human interest. Mr. Shinn's work is essentially human and has instinctively to do with men and things."⁶² Regarding these works a reporter for the *New York Times* wrote:

Snow scenes like "The Tired City" and "When Paris Sleeps" are painted with far greater vigorousness, as the subject demands. The snow of the foregrounds is created as if the

vehicle were oils rather than pastel. Here are the sullen house-fronts, the only living things are cats and sparrows, or the rag-picker who gazes at a starving cat with an intentness that may argue commiseration or the sinister reflection that cat flesh is not untoothsome to those for whom there are no such taboos as to food as affect the ordinary citizen.⁶³

The appellation “Ashcan School” may have originated with *Early Morning Paris* or *The Tired City*, which, as mentioned above, are probably the same painting. In his writings on Shinn, the art historian Mahonri Young recorded the last time he saw the artist. The setting was an exhibition in Greenwich Village where Shinn was asked to say a few words. Young recalls: “He spoke of The Ash Can School and how it came about. How a reviewer in referring to one of his pictures of a cat, in a dreary, snow covered street, near an ash can, as belonging to the Ash Can School and how it caught on and took.”⁶⁴

Shinn returned to the motif of the ragpicker in the watercolor *Street Corner in Paris* (fig. 112) and in *The Ragpicker* (fig. 97). *The Ragpicker*, despite the fact that it was completed in 1909, four years after the 1905 date of *Street Corner, Paris*, is the closer of the two in sensibility and style to Shinn’s earlier interpretations of the ragpicker theme. By contrast, the watercolor and pastel, *Street Corner, Paris* is unlike his previous depictions of chiffoniers. The indigent man in *Street Corner, Paris* is no longer the central attraction and the neighborhood is no longer run-down. Rather, the setting of this watercolor is a well-tended street corner with immaculate sidewalks and carefully preserved buildings. The subject of the picture emphasizes the quotidian activities of Parisian life. As the figure at the far left sifts through an ash barrel, the man at the right, who is probably opening his shop for the day, removes a protective board from the window. Indeed, *Street Corner, Paris* may be the same watercolor Shinn showed in 1935 in an exhibition at the Morton Galleries, New York as *Opening Shop ... Paris*.⁶⁵ The work, in which pastel and ink are combined with areas of wash, reveals Shinn’s skill at handling the watercolor medium.

Among Shinn’s favorite spots to record in Paris were the banks and bridges of the Seine. Like the Washington Arch, the Dewey Arch and the tracks of the El, Shinn may have appreciated

the way the bridges provided structures that were both architecturally interesting and anchoring devices. The pastel *Alexander Bridge, Paris* (fig. 113), a prime example of this subject, features the Alexander Bridge as a picturesque locale before which are gathered numerous figures some very elegant, others less so. Years later, when W. G. Constable, then Curator of Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston asked about his inspiration for the work, Shinn replied:

I wish I could tell you more of the impulse that made the picture you have. Blame it on Paris and give full due to its many influences. It's [sic] more than staggering bounty in opportunities in rivers, parks, people streets .. it's [sic] color and adventures steeped in tragic and sublime past events. Everything was in Paris when I was there. It almost seemed that there had been arranged a fore gathering of beauty to whirl the brain of a youth from America.⁶⁶

Built for the Paris Exposition of 1900, the Alexander Bridge quickly became an immensely popular site. It was featured on postcards of the Exposition and garnered praise from contemporary critics who called it "by far the handsomest of all the bridges that cross the river Seine."⁶⁷ Shinn sketched the bridge several times and produced at least two finished pictures of it, of which *Alexander Bridge, Paris* was his favorite.⁶⁸ Seen from a distance across the Seine, the bridge's pristine white structure forms a graceful sweep across the water, connecting the two sides of the Exposition. In the foreground, a number of people have gathered. At the left, a fashionably attired couple, probably on their way to board a pleasure boat, passes less well-heeled men and women who lounge against the railing. Even in France, Shinn was conscious of encounters of different classes within the public sphere. Here, the social contrasts of the people are given as much importance as the majestic Alexander Bridge, which, like the Dewey Arch in some of Shinn's pastels of Madison Square, becomes a dramatic background element.

In 1903, Shinn created at least three other portrayals of the Seine. Of these, the pastel *Seine Embankment* (fig. 114) is most closely related to his pictures of the Lower East Side. It is another rare example by Shinn of poverty in Paris and surpasses even the ragpicker pictures in its expression of pathos. Bodies of men and women are sprawled across the cobblestones lining the

banks of the Seine. In the left foreground, a man lies in a supine position, his head and bare feet exposed to the elements. Beside him women sit, their bodies slumped over in dejection. Even for Shinn, the scene is shocking, such abject poverty being portrayed in only a few other works, for example, *The Eviction* (fig. 93), *Bums Asleep on Steps of Sub-Treasury Building* (fig. 115) and *Tenements at Hester Street* (fig. 41). In contrast to the representation of the plight of Paris's poor in *Seine Embankment*, other examples of the subject from that year, the pastel *Bridge Over the Seine, Autumn* (fig. 116) and the oil *Bridge over the Seine, Winter*⁶⁹ (fig. 117) present panoramic views across the Seine. Possibly derived from the same sketch or sketches, both pictures show a similar vantage point with a bridge on the right and houses with mansard roofs lining the opposite bank.

In 1905 and 1906 the image of the Seine reappears in three works: the oil *The Seine, Right Bank* (fig. 118), the gouache *Seine Right Bank, Paris* (fig. 119),⁷⁰ and the oil *Dock Workers, Paris* (fig. 120). More than Shinn's previous accounts of this subject, these pictures emphasize the banks of the Seine as sites of work and maritime activity. For example, in *Dock Workers, Paris*, workers are engaged in the backbreaking labor of loading and unloading barges. Stooped over under the weight of their loaded sacks, they walk across boards under the supervision of the foreman who stands with his back to the viewer. To the right is a derrick used to hoist the cargo on and off the barges. The action occurs before a bridge, which packed with people and pedestrians, also serves as a divider between the realm of industrious labor occurring in the foreground and the elegant mansard-roofed building in the background. At the right, curious onlookers peer over the wall to observe the spectacle. The work recalls Shinn's earlier depictions of New York dockworkers as well as his illustrations, "Progress of the Work on the Underground Railroad," published in *Harper's Weekly* on November 17, 1900. In the New York illustrations, workers are shown in similar positions bent over by their heavy loads (fig. 121).⁷¹

Other small sketches record views of Parisian sites of leisure and entertainment. In the genteel environment of the Luxembourg Gardens, Shinn created several serene views of women

seated singly and in pairs. *Luxembourg Garden, Paris* (fig. 122) and *Luxembourg Garden, Paris* (fig. 123) are characteristic examples of the mixed media (here, watercolor, gouache, and charcoal) pictures that Shinn most likely executed while in Luxembourg Gardens. When Shinn returned to New York, he utilized these sketches to complete larger pastels of the park. Even in the refined space of the Luxembourg Gardens, Shinn could not resist introducing the dramatic possibilities of inclement weather. It is probably a work titled *A Sudden Shower (Luxembourg Gardens)* that caught a critic's eye when it was shown in Shinn's 1901 exhibition. The pastel caused the critic to remark, "He carries us to the gardens of the Luxembourg, where a sudden squall is driving everyone to shelter."⁷² In 1902, Shinn created another version of the Luxembourg Gardens during a shower in the work *Spring Shower in Luxembourg Park, Paris* (fig. 124). The lushly colored pastel, with its bright red chairs set off against the variegated greens of the trees and grass, reveals Shinn's increasing ability as a colorist. Instead of depicting a more conventional park scene in which people are shown quietly seated or walking leisurely on paths, Shinn has selected a dramatic moment loaded with energy. People are shown dashing for cover, over turning chairs in their haste to find shelter from the storm, revealing once again Shinn's flair for the dramatic spectacle.

Though Shinn's output in Paris consisted primarily of sketches, he did complete some finished works. On July 3, 1900 Goupil's in Paris, an affiliation of Bosssod, Valadon & Co. in New York, showed four new pastels by Shinn: *The Wrestlers*, *Merry-Go-Round*, *Monkey Cart* and *Luxembourg Garden – Punch & Judy Show*.⁷³

Little is known of the Shinns' social activities -- upon whom they called and visited -- while they were in Europe. At some point, Shinn's father, Isaiah, met the couple in Paris, but Shinn's mother, Josephine, who did not like ocean travel, remained in New Jersey.⁷⁴ The Shinns did take the opportunity to visit their friend Elsie de Wolfe and her companion Elisabeth Marbury who were in France at their summer home. In 1899, de Wolfe and Marbury had taken a three-year lease on an elegant pavilion at Versailles, where during the summers they entertained a

small, cultivated circle that included Henry Adams and the American painter, Walter Gay.⁷⁵

When the Shinns arrived, they found themselves in the company of Mr. Joseph Hunt, M. Jean Richepin (the French playwright), his wife Mme. Jean Richepin, Miss Marie Tempest, Mr. David Belasco, and Mr. Cosmo Lennox.⁷⁶ The occasion provided Shinn's first introduction to Belasco, the American playwright, who six years later would commission a large mural project from Shinn for his New York theater, The Stuyvesant.

The Shinns departed for New York on October 6, 1900, sailing from Cherbourg on the S. S. Minnehaha. While waiting to embark, Shinn spied Mark Twain boarding the ship. Prior to his trip abroad, Shinn had illustrated the frontispiece of the March 1900 issue of *The Critic* with a portrait of Twain (fig. 125). The double-page color portrait was considered a follow-up to the success of "Winter's Night on Broadway," which had appeared the month before in *Harper's Weekly*. Twain did not sit for the portrait and Shinn based his representation on photographs of the author's head and his own perception of the man's grand stature. The result was a very tall Twain, yet most critics failed to notice the discrepancy between the actual height of the author and Shinn's attenuated interpretation of him. In fact, the portrait was praised for its veracity, one writer noting, "[T]he Critic presents a striking and lifelike portrait of the great humorist from a pastel drawn by Everett Shinn."⁷⁷

Embarrassed by his drawing, which he felt was an affront to the august author, Shinn spent the return voyage attempting to avoid Twain. When the two did meet on shipboard, Shinn refrained from mentioning that he was the artist responsible for Twain's portrayal in *The Critic*. Only after returning to New York, and at the insistence of *The Critic's* editor, Jeannette Gilder, did Shinn pay a visit to Twain's West 10th Street residence to apologize for the exaggerated image. To Shinn's surprise, the author was gracious about the drawing, finding it humorous rather than offensive. Shinn recalled:

Mark Twain began to rummage about in a drawer of litter resembling the contents of his desk, until he held up my drawing in triumph and said, "I've got it." [Presumably, given Twain's treatment of the drawing, Shinn is referring to *The Critic's* reproduction of the drawing, rather than the actual artwork.] He brought the drawing over to his desk, cleared a space for it, and spread it out....

He held my drawing at arm's length and his eyes twinkled. Then he placed it flat on the desk and folded it up from the bottom, turning back enough of the legs to bring the feet to the knees. "That's more normal, but less inspiring. My parents would have liked me like that." Again he folded back the legs keeping the feet always in view. With every fold he made some amusing comment. At last the feet were directly under his chin and stuck out like the ends of a bow tie. "Now, that's final. That's the way my wife sees me."⁷⁸

Shinn asked Twain's permission to make another drawing of him to which the author responded, "Come any morning 10:30 or 11:00. I am always on deck then in my den which has a good light."⁷⁹ Over several weeks Shinn visited Twain's residence to work on the portrait, later admitting that he took as long as possible to complete it. Of the final product he wrote, "When I had finished I felt (and still feel) that it was the best drawing I had ever made of him."⁸⁰ While this work is not located, the Detroit Institute of Arts owns a portrait of Twain in his study dated 1951, which is probably based on the sketches Shinn made in late 1900 (fig. 126).

When the Shinn family returned to New York on October 15, 1900, they re-settled at 122 East 19th Street. Everett had exactly three months to prepare for his second exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co., which opened January 15 and was on view through February 23, 1901. Entitled "Paris Types" (the name was likely a reference to an exhibition by Raffaelli called "Les Types de Paris"), it consisted of 46 pastels, plus 33 uncatalogued works, and six additional works, which he listed as "extra ballet girls." The grouping was predominantly Parisian subjects, but also included several scenes of London and four views of New York. London parks were represented in *Green Park, London* and *Afternoon, Hyde Park*. He also showed a busy London intersection in *Trafalgar Square* and a stately English home in *Old London House*. Paris parks were depicted in pictures such as the *Milliner's Girl, Luxembourg Gardens; Punch and Judy, Luxembourg; Gardens;* and *Merry Go Round, Luxembourg Gardens*. He also showed specific Paris streets in *Paris Street, Rue de Fleurs* and *Rue de l'Abbaye*.

The exhibition was reviewed in many papers, but the critics were strangely divided about the show's merits. Some felt that Shinn's draughtsmanship had improved and commended his ability to record the salient aspects of everyday Parisian life.⁸¹ A reviewer who distinguished Shinn's unconventional use of pastel from the more traditional treatment of the medium opined, "They are not like the pastels known to a former generation of picture lovers, those smooth views of river trees and distant mountains, with soft edges and pasty reflections, and no character anywhere. Perhaps the works of Mr. Shinn go a little too far in the opposite direction in the way of dash, sparkle and contrast."⁸² Others felt that the exhibition was technically weaker than that of the previous year, complaining that the artist whom they had deemed full of promise, had disappointed them with sloppy execution.⁸³ Compositions were judged facile and ideas partially realized. Moreover, one critic felt that the European works did not look distinctly different from those depicting American subject matter, noting a "family resemblance" amongst the works depicting New York and those of Paris and London.⁸⁴ Works that elicited comment included a view of Notre Dame which caused a reviewer to remark, "[Notre Dame] rises majestically in the far background over the great city, while in the foreground is the Seine and a bridge stretching across from one side of the river to the other. In vivid contrast to the far away cathedral are a busy commercial scene on the banks of the stream, while across the bridge buses, pedestrians, and conveyances of all sorts are tolling on."⁸⁵ Overall, the show was commercially successful. Shinn sold several pastels including five works to his Chicago patron, Mrs. Chauncey Blair, and two to Mrs. J. P. Morgan.

During the following months, Shinn was busy sending his work to exhibitions around the country. In March, two of his works, *Street Fight* and *Riverfront* were included in the Boston watercolor exhibition. As *Riverfront* is not currently located, it is difficult to know if is a pure watercolor, or a work in mixed media -- a technique Shinn frequently employed -- combining watercolor with other mediums such as gouache, pastel, charcoal, and ink. *Street Fight* (probably the work now known as *The Fight* [fig. 99]) combines watercolor with gouache and ink.) In

April of 1901, several works from the Boussod, Valadon & Co exhibition of earlier that year were included in the Fellowship Exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy, a show composed of 219 works by 79 artists. That Shinn showed 15 works, many more than most other participants, attests to his growing popularity and the respect he was garnering amongst the art establishment. Shinn's generous treatment by the Academy was noticed by one critic who wrote approvingly, "Everett Shinn has been given nearly a whole wall for his dozen sketches in pastel of Paris and London. These comprise some of the best work by Mr. Shinn shown here, and as usual are full of life, served up with wonderful vigor."⁸⁶

The following month the same group of pictures traveled to Cincinnati where they were included in an exhibition at the Cincinnati Museum Association. Cincinnati critics were enthusiastic and lauded the work of Shinn, William Merritt Chase, and other artists included in the exhibition. Regarding Shinn's works a critic stated:

One of the most unique and interesting men in the exhibition is Everett Shinn. With a few swiftly made and apparently reckless lines and tones in charcoal and a few touches of purely local color he gives the character and places and people, and invests them with a sentiment generally quaint and whimsical, but occasionally quite dignified and serious, that is very rare. There are about 13 of these drawings, pictures or whatever one chooses to call them, and every one has an interest peculiar to itself. Perhaps the cleverest and most amusing is the "Capuchin Priest," and the finest most serious in its sentiment is "An Old London House."⁸⁷

From November 6 to 31, 1901, Shinn held his second major exhibition that year at Boussod, Valadon & Co. The large showing included 53 works of primarily American subjects. The perhaps chauvinistic critics were delighted by his return to themes of Gotham. One remarked, "[he] once more and wisely, returns to New York and its neighborhood for his subjects."⁸⁸

Shinn had clearly "arrived." With three successful New York exhibitions and European travel under his belt, he was ready to enter the established art community. In the fall of 1901 he became one of the chief instructors at the New York School of Art, teaching a class on

illustration, which met for an hour every afternoon.⁸⁹ Shinn may have been attracted to The New York School of Art by the presence of its founder, William Merritt Chase, but it is unclear who hired him to teach there. In 1898, Chase had relinquished his administrative duties though he actively taught at the school until 1907.⁹⁰ Although Shinn's teaching position was ultimately short lived (Henri took over the class in 1902), during his brief tenure there he was an active member of the school. In addition to teaching, he participated in the school's Arts and Crafts Club and served on its exhibition committee.⁹¹

Shinn's prosperity was growing, as was his social standing. In July 1901, the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* reported that Shinn was spending a few days at Sea Cliff, a popular summer resort in Nassau County.⁹² After his return from Europe, though he continued to paint gritty New York, he focused increasingly on the glamour of uptown life. Indeed, as Shinn stated in a 1952 interview, "Actually because I wasn't as interested as the others in people sleeping under bridges... I was often accused then of being a social snob. Not at all – it's just that the uptown life with all its glitter was more good-looking. The people made pictures."⁹³

¹ For Elsie de Wolfe, see Jane S. Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe: A Life in the High Style* (New York: Athenaeum, 1982); Elsie de Wolfe, *After All* (New York: Harper, 1935; repr., New York: Arno Press, 1975); and David Park Curry, "Never Complain, Never Explain: Elsie de Wolfe and the Art of Social Change," in *Cultural Leadership in America Art Matronage and Patronage, Fenway Court 27* (Boston: Trustees of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, 1994): 52-78.

² Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, p. 54.

³ "The Academy Exhibition. Sixty-Eighth Annual Display the Best in Recent Years." Philadelphia Press, January 15, 1899, p. 6.

⁴ *Monitor Register* (Woodstown), January 27-28, 1899. Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 3.

⁵ SAM. This quote is copied verbatim including the series of two dots.

⁶ The Berkeley Lyceum was located at 19 West 41st Street until 1890 when it moved to 23 West 44th Street where it was a neighbor to the Harvard Club. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, The Berkeley Lyceum offered space to the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society until 1896 when the Lyceum purchased its own building, a four-story brownstone at 23 West 44th Street. In 1899, the Kit-Kat Club is listed the New York City Register as located at 12 East 15th Street. See, *Trow Directory* (New York: Bookbinding Company, 1899), p. 37. According to Nym Crinkle, in an article about the club, "The first meeting of the Kit Kat Cats ... must have been in Sarony's rooms in 1881 – somewhere in the early spring of that year." Nym Crinkle, "Round About the Kit Kat," *The Quarterly Illustrator* 2 (October – December 1894): 361-371. The club was still going strong in 1914 when an invitation was sent out to the "33rd Annual Skelter of the Kit Kats." The announcement invited people to "Come in pagan costumes and lend yourself to the joy of the occasion, and for the evening mingle with Painters, Sculptors, Art Students, and the like, on the broad plane of the ballroom floor. Here the Academician, Insurgent and Commercial Art mix in glad harmony..." Walt Kuhn papers, AAA, roll D240, frame 730.

⁷ Shinn Record Book 1, pp. 1-3.

⁸ E. H. Sothern, *Julia Marlowe's Story* (New York: Rinehart & Co., 1954), pp. 154 -155.

⁹ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, 17 November [1899], AAA, roll 952, frame 26.

¹⁰ Calling card of Clyde Fitch, no date, Shinn Papers, AAA, roll 952, frame 56.

¹¹ For the opening of Barbara Frietchie, see Montrose J. Moses and Virginia Gerson, *Clyde Fitch and His Letters* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1924), pp. 155-156, and Bettina Welsh, "Books and Writers," *Herald* (Saint Joseph, MO) (April 8, 1900), AAA, roll D179, frame 9.

¹² Undated letter from Julia Marlowe to Everett Shinn. AAA, roll 952, frames 990-91.

¹³ The Dorothy Seiberling Collection, Everett Shinn Material, AAA, roll 794, frame 667.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frame 33.

¹⁶ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, December 1, 1899, AAA, roll 952, frame 25.

¹⁷ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, January 14, [1900], AAA, roll 952, frame 49.

¹⁸ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, Good Friday 1900, AAA, roll 952, frame 35.

¹⁹ Everett Shinn, "Writings by Shinn 'Treatment II,'" p. 14. William Innes Homer papers, AAA, Washington Storage Facility.

²⁰ For exhibition dates see, "Art Notes," *New York Mail & Express*, February 24, 1900, p. 8.

²¹ "The Heart of the Town," unidentified news clipping, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 10.

²² Elsie De Wolfe wrote to Shinn, "I saw your show and I think it admirable and I have sent several people – I hope it brings you luck." Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frame 12.

²³ SAM.

²⁴ Although Shinn does not specify which of the Mrs. Vanderbilts purchased his work, it was most likely Alice Vanderbilt, wife of Cornelius Vanderbilt II. Cornelius's brother, William K. Vanderbilt, married Alva in 1875, but the couple divorced in 1895. The following year, 1896, Alva married Oliver Hazard Perry Belmont, thus Alva was not the "Mrs. Vanderbilt" who purchased Shinn's work in 1900.

²⁵ Aline B. Louchheim, "The Last of the Eight Looks Back," *New York Times*, November 2, 1952, sec 2, p. 9.

²⁶ A letter from White to Shinn dated September 17, 1903 reveals that the architect would try to sell Shinn's pastels to people he knew. In return for this kind gesture Shinn offered to give White a picture. White responded, "I am sorry to send back the three pastels, but I hoped to get Col. Payne to take them. I never, however could induce him to give me a definitive answer; but I may be able to do so when he returns. I should buy one myself, if I could afford it, but as for giving me one, you must not think of doing so." Stanford White, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, September 17, 1903, Stanford White Collection, Vol. 29, p. 256, Avery Library, Columbia University, New York. In a letter to Royal Cortissoz, Shinn wrote of his admiration for and indebtedness to White, "to this day he [White] is rather of a hero to me as he brought about my first exhibition and was my sponsor. As busy a man as he was, he always had time for me, an unknown artist." Everett Shinn, New York, to Royal Cortissoz, New York, January 8 (no year given), Cortissoz Correspondence, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

²⁷ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frame 48. Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, Good Friday 1900, AAA, roll 952, frame 35

²⁸ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date [1900], AAA, roll 952, frame 47.

²⁹ Alfred Allan Lewis, *Ladies and Not-So-Gentle Women* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), p. 196. For an example of the type of notoriety the scandal generated in press, see "Dr. Hillis Names 'Sapho,' Attacks the Stage and Warns Plymouth People," *New York Times*, February 12, 1900, p. 3.

³⁰ Armstrong, "The New Leaders in American Illustration," pp. 248-249.

³¹ *New York Evening Post*, February 24, 1900, p. 7.

³² "The World of Art. The Shinn Pastels Come to the Academy," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 25, 1900, p. 8.

³³ "The Heart of the Town," unidentified news clipping, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 10.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ *Chicago Record-Herald*, June 9, 1901. Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 37.

³⁶ "The Week in Art," *New York Times*, March 3, 1900, p. 139.

³⁷ "Art News," *New York Evening Post*, February 24, 1900, p. 7.

³⁸ "The Heart of the Town," unidentified news clipping, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 10.

³⁹ SAM.

⁴⁰ *Commercial Advertiser* (New York), February 16, 1900, AAA, roll D179, frame 7.

⁴¹ A contemporary review notes, "Mr. Shinn says he does not care particularly to paint portraits, even small ones in pastel." "Notes on Art," March 16, 1900, AAA, roll D179, frame 10.

⁴² George Luks to Everett Shinn, May 18, 1900, AAA, roll 3472, frame 1280.

⁴³ For Shinn's impending trip to Europe, see "Art & Artists," *Philadelphia Press*, March 29, 1900, p. 4; "The World of Art. The Shinn Pastels to Come to the Academy," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 25, 1900, p. 8; and "Art Notes," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, May 6, 1900, sec. 3, p. 2.

⁴⁴ There has been some confusion about when Shinn was in Paris. In 1952 a reviewer mistakenly wrote of Shinn's European trip: "He liked it but he never went back; he paints Paris and London today as he saw them in 1903." James Fitzsimmons, "Everett Shinn: Lone Survivor of 'The Ashcan School,'" *The Art Digest* 27 (November 15, 1952): 10. Shinn, however, was definitely in Paris in 1900 as he wrote to his friend Charles T. Henry, "I was in Paris during the Exposition and the date of the Ex – was 1900 – as I made that drawing during my stay there the date would be 1900. Or, else the date of the exposition would have to be changed and only the French Government could do that." Everett Shinn to Charles T. Henry, undated letter. Shinn Archives, Box 1, letters. Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.

⁴⁵ The English subjects exhibited at Boussod, Valadon & Co. from January 15 to February 23, 1901 were: *Green Park London, London Street Chelsea, Afternoon Hyde Park, Trafalgar Square, Near the Strand London, and Old London House*. Record Book 1, pp. 16-19.

⁴⁶ *Impressionism: Paintings Collected by European Museums*. (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1998), p. 132.

⁴⁷ This date is based on the presumption that Shinn would have needed at least two weeks to get settled in Paris and paint before his small exhibition at the Paris gallery Goupil's at the beginning of July 1900.

⁴⁸ Shinn later depicted the street where he once lived in the pastel *Rue Notre Dame Des Champs* (1903; Worcester Art Museum).

⁴⁹ For artists' studios on Rue Notre Dame des Champs, see John Milner, *The Studios of Paris* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 211-218.

⁵⁰ Theodore Dreiser, *The "Genius"* (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1915), p. 243. According to Kwait "...Witla's [Dreiser based the character of Witla on Shinn] travels to London and Paris not only parallel Shinn's own European experiences, but the painter recalls that his Parisian studio was very similar to the one described in the novel." Joseph J. Kwait, Dreiser's "The 'Genius'," Shinn the "Ash-Can Painter, MLA Publications, p. 20.

⁵¹ SAM. This statement is somewhat problematic as Degas was then living at 37 Rue Victor Massé. It is possible that Shinn had at one time lived on Rue Victor Masse, or perhaps he simply misremembered Degas as his neighbor.

⁵² SAM.

⁵³ Unidentified news clipping, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 58.

⁵⁴ Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight*, p. 82.

⁵⁵ John Milner, *The Studios of Paris*, pp. 211- 216.

⁵⁶ In 1901, Shinn exhibited a pastel titled *Rue de Paris Exposition* at Boussod, Valadon & Co. Shinn Record Book I, p. 16.

⁵⁷ For an excellent discussion of American Art at the 1900 Paris Exposition, see Diane P. Fisher, ed., *Paris 1900: "The American School" at the Universal Exposition* (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press, 1999).

⁵⁸ Robert Henri, *The Art Spirit* (New York: J. B. Lippincott, 1923; repr., Colorado: Westview Press, 1984), p. 123.

⁵⁹ "Pastels by Everett Shinn," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 7, 1901, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 30.

⁶⁰ Helen H. Henderson, "Philadelphia Artists Exhibiting in New York," *Philadelphia North American* March 11, 1903, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 45.

⁶¹ *The Bois, Paris* is composed of four juxtaposed sheets of paper. Measuring 6 7/8 x 11 1/16 inches, the sketch, larger than Shinn's typical 5 x 7 inch format, is mostly likely the result of a sudden improvisation. Lacking larger paper, Shinn arranged his available 5 x 7 inch sheets to suit his size requirements.

⁶² "Life is Depicted in Shinn's Pastels," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, March 14, 1904, p. 3.

⁶³ "Some Pastels by Shinn," *New York Times*, March 12, 1904, p. 9.

⁶⁴ Mahonri Young papers. These documents consist of thirty-three handwritten pages of notes on Shinn. I am indebted to Mahonri Young for making these papers available to me. The first published reference to the Ash Can School occurred in 1934 in Holger Cahill and Alfred Barr, Jr., *Art in America in Modern Times* (New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1934), p. 31.

⁶⁵ "Everett Shinn Pictures," was held at the Morton Galleries, New York, from February 25 - March 9, 1935. *Opening Shop ... Paris* is listed as no. 3 under the heading "watercolor."

⁶⁶ Everett Shinn, New York, to W. G. Constable, Curator of Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 11 May, 1943, Everett Shinn file, Department of American Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

⁶⁷ *Paris Exposition Reproduced from the Official Photographs* (New York, Akron, Chicago: the R. S. Peale Company, 1900). n.p.

⁶⁸ In 1901, Shinn exhibited a work titled *Resting – Alexander Bridge*, but it was presumably not Boston's picture as Shinn claims to have never exhibited it. *Alexander Bridge, Paris* was one of the artist's personal favorites; he explained, "I never exhibited it for fear that someone would buy it. I mean for a private collection and then it would never be seen. That it has gone to a public institution pleases me in losing it for myself." Everett Shinn, New York, to W. G. Constable, Curator of Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 11 May, 1943, Everett Shinn file, Department of American Paintings, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

⁶⁹ *Bridge over the Seine, Winter* is a title that I have assigned to the work.

⁷⁰ This work is signed and dated twice. After Shinn painted it he signed it "E. Shinn, 1905" and kept it in his own collection. In 1943, when he was made a member of the National Academy of Design he signed and dated the painting a second time to mark the important event. The signature reads: "Everett Shinn, N. A. 1943."

⁷¹ "Progress of the Work on the Underground Railroad." *Harper's Weekly* 44 (November 17, 1900): 1084.

⁷² "Shinn's Work at Boussod & Valadon's." *New York Sun*, January 15, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 32.

⁷³ Record book, p. 13.

⁷⁴ For Isaiah Shinn's visit to Paris, see "Writings by Shinn 'Treatment II.'" p. 4. William Innes Homer papers, Archives of American Art, Washington Storage Facility. I am grateful to Vivien Thomas for sharing her knowledge of Shinn's parents. Vivien Thomas, New Jersey, to author, New York, 7 September 2000.

⁷⁵ Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe, A Life in the High Style*, pp. 74-75.

⁷⁶ This group (including the Shinn's) was featured in a photo taken at the De Wolfe/Marbury residence at Versailles. The photo, which is dated (verso) in pencil 1900, is now in the Shinn papers at the Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum. In 1903, the photo was used in an article in *The Critic* on the Paris salon of Marbury and De Wolfe. The date of the publication has led to misguided speculation that the Shinn's may have returned to France in 1903. However, in 1902 de Wolfe and Marbury moved from their small French villa to an English "cottage," which was larger and more suitable for entertaining. By contrast, the residence featured in *The Critic* is described as a French villa where dinner parties are small "owing to the size of the dining room." This evidence suggests that, though published in 1903, the article is based on an earlier visit. Moreover, according to Mary Ellen Kelly, an independent scholar who is researching Belasco (included in the photo), the playwright was not in France in 1903, but was there in 1900 having arrived in Paris within a few days of the closing of his play *Zaza* on July 28, 1900. Belasco returned to the U.S. in August thereby dating the photo to sometime between the end of July and the end of August 1900. In late 1900, Shinn gave De Wolfe a portrait, presumably to thank her for her hospitality in France. *The Critic* 43 (October 1903): 291-296. Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, p. 85. Telephone conversation between Mary Ellen Kelly and the author, September 17, 2000. For Belasco's trip to Europe in 1900, see also Craig Timberlake, *The Life and Work of David Belasco, the Bishop of Broadway* (New York: Library Publishers, 1954), pp. 199-203. For De Wolfe's portrait, see Record Book 1, p. 13.

⁷⁷ *New York Herald*, March 17, 1900, AAA, roll D179, frame 10.

⁷⁸ SAM, Everett Shinn, Chapter on Mark Twain.

⁷⁹ Samuel Clemens New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date [c. 1900], Shinn file, Kennedy Galley, NY.

⁸⁰ SAM, Everett Shinn, Chapter on Mark Twain.

⁸¹ "Art Notes," *The Evening Post* (New York), July 16, 1901, p. 4.

⁸² *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 19, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 28.

⁸³ *Evening Sun* (New York), November 16, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 39.

⁸⁴ Riter Fitzgerald, "Item," Philadelphia, November 19, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 39.

⁸⁵ "Everett Shinn's Pastels," *Brooklyn Eagle*, January 16, 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 28.

⁸⁶ "Academy Fellowship Show," Philadelphia *Ledger*, April 1, 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 33.

⁸⁷ "America's Best Artists," *Inquirer* (Cincinnati, Ohio), May 20, 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 36.

⁸⁸ Unidentified clipping, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 39.

⁸⁹ "Art Notes," *Evening Post* (New York), October 19, 1901, p. 5.

⁹⁰ For Chase's teaching, see Barbara Dayer Gallati, *William Merritt Chase* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1995), p. 26.

⁹¹ *New York Commercial Advertiser*, November 19, 1901, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 39.

⁹² *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, July 1901, p. 5.

⁹³ Aline B. Louchheim, "The Last of the Eight Looks Back," *New York Times*, p. 9.

CHAPTER V

FROM CORNISH TO WASHINGTON SQUARE

With the sale of several works and good prospects for future exhibitions, Shinn was feeling comfortable enough financially to invest in a home in Plainfield, in southwestern New Hampshire. From 1902 to 1907, the couple summered there and took part in the art colony that flourished in the adjacent town of Cornish, just north of Plainfield.¹ Composed of over a hundred fine artists, architects, writers and musicians, the Cornish Colony was primarily associated with the American Renaissance movement. Settlement of the area by artists began when Augustus Saint-Gaudens had come to Cornish in 1885. He was soon joined by Kenyon Cox, Stephen Parrish and his son Maxfield, and Thomas Wilmer Dewing. Other artists who visited the colony included Daniel Chester French, Paul Manship and John White Alexander. Nearby was the Dublin art colony whose august residents included Abbott Thayer and Frank Benson.²

The introduction of the Shinns into this rather conservative crowd comes as somewhat of a surprise and provides yet another interesting facet to the artist's diverse career. Nothing it seems could be further from ashcan subject matter than the aesthetic refinement of Cornish. Indeed, Shinn's affiliation with the colony seems to have had little to do with New York realism, and may stem instead from his emerging interest in the decorative arts. Shinn may have been encouraged to visit Cornish by Stanford White, whose close friends Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Thomas Wilmer Dewing were among the colony's charter members. The Shinns' trip in 1900 to Elsie de Wolfe and Elisabeth Marbury's summer home at Versailles, where they had enjoyed the company of other artists, may have provided additional incentive. Moreover, the sale of numerous paintings from his two successful exhibitions in 1901 at Boussod, Valadon & Co.

placed Shinn in a position of financial security, making it possible to purchase land and build a country home.

The Shinns first visited Cornish in 1902 on their way back from a trip to Lake Champlain. After exploring the countryside, they selected a plot of land on a summit in Plainsfield. The New York architect, Harri T. Lindeberg, drew up the plans for the house. In November 1903, as payment, Shinn gave him the pastel and gouache, *Washington Square and Fifth Avenue* (fig. 159), a work he had exhibited earlier that year at Knoedler's.³ Shinn himself was involved in the design of the colonial revival style house, which featured a pillared portico, eleven fireplaces, antique mantels, and a large 30 square foot entrance hall with 39 ft. ceilings where he sometimes set up his easel. Dubbed "Knebolo Hill" after the Indian word for "rocky ribs," the house was situated on a rocky ledge and screened from outsiders by six huge maple trees.⁴ The Shinns summered in New Hampshire until 1907 when they sold Knebolo Hill to Mary Trueblood Paine, wife of the sculptor Robert Treat Paine.⁵

Although Shinn most likely found the bucolic atmosphere an ideal environment in which to paint, surprisingly few pictures record his experiences in Cornish. The local scenery is depicted in just three known examples: a red crayon drawing titled *Farmer and Horse, Cornish N.H.* (1903, Location Unknown, was with James Graham & Sons [1960]); an oil titled for Cornish's revered mountain, *Mt Scutney* (c. 1906, Location Unknown); and a pastel titled *Christmas Eve, Windsor Vermont* (fig. 127), which shows a crowded square in Windsor, a town located directly across the Connecticut River and connected to Cornish by the country's longest covered bridge. Portraying a dramatically lit, snow covered square *Christmas Eve, Windsor Vermont*, bears some similarity to the artist's depictions of Washington Square. The theatrically of the scene was recognized by Shinn who recalled:

As I stood on the embankment, there came to me the tinkle of sleigh bells, spreading and fading into far echoes. It was too joyous to shut out, so in spite of the biting cold, I drew my muffler high above my ears. The snow wiped embankment looked like a vast gallery

empty of audience and seats. The country folk had become actors. All were on the stage, playing their parts in a scene many centuries replayed.⁶

Given the paucity of works depicting the local environment, it appears that while in Cornish Shinn painted pictures based on sketches made while in New York or in Europe. Indeed, it is quite possible that many of Shinn's depictions of Paris or London were executed at Knebolo Hill. Shinn also painted at least one portrait at his summer residence. A photograph reproduced in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* shows Shinn at work on a portrait of the actor John Blair in the character of Malvolio (fig. 128). The setting is the spacious entrance hall of Knebolo.⁷ Other artistic pursuits included assisting his friend Henry Fuller in the completion of his canvas *The Triumph of Truth over Error* (1907; Principia College, Elsa, Ill.). Although it is unclear to what extent Shinn was involved with the mural project, a description provided by Cornish historians, Virginia Reed Colby and James B. Atkinson, suggests that Shinn may have actually painted parts of the work. Colby and Atkinson note: "He [Fuller] credited two artists associated with the Cornish Colony: Everett Shinn for help in its execution and Augustus Saint-Gaudens for 'advice and encouragement concerning the whole question of a new religious art.'"⁸ Inspired by the Christian Science writings of Mary Baker Eddy, the allegorical painting won the Carnegie Prize at the winter exhibition of the National Academy of Design in 1908. In 1915, Fuller won a silver medal for the painting when it was shown at the Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco. Fifteen years later, the work was sold to California collectors who donated it to Principia College, where it remains today. Measuring 10 x 8 ft., the large canvas looks forward to Shinn's later involvement with mural painting.

Flossie kept busy in Cornish working on 30 drawings for the novel *Coniston*, written by their neighbor, Winston Churchill. The book was completed in 1906, the same year that she exhibited a group of portraits at Kraushaar Gallery in New York. The show included depictions of many of the couples' friends and associates, for example, Elsie de Wolfe, Mrs. J. Ben Ali

Haggin, Mr. Ben Ali Haggin, Mrs. Glackens, Mr. Glackens, and two neighbors from the Cornish colony, Miss Frances Davidge, and Miss Smoot.⁹

The Shinns actively participated in the colony's social life. They were close to Clara Potter Davidge and Lydia and Stephen Parrish, the latter of whom kept a diary documenting their friendship. On June 27, 1903 Stephen Parrish noted "To supper at Mrs. Davidge's – The Shinns there." On August 3, 1904, Lydia Parrish wrote in her diary, "Had the Shinns & Helen Henderson [Henderson wrote an article on the Cornish Colony for the *Lamp*] to dinner – glorious day & a marvelous evening glow in the East."¹⁰ Shinn was also a familiar figure on the tennis court of Lucia and Henry Fuller, where he often turned up to play sets with John Blair, Joseph DeCamp, and the editor, Herbert Croley.¹¹ Lucia Fuller's diary is sprinkled with references to Shinn. An entry of July 3, 1903 reads, "Tennis with children. After they had gone to their lessons Louis Croley, & Pitts Duffield, Shinn and John Blair turned up to play..." Three days later she recorded, "Mr. Shinn here in the morning, & Blair..."¹²

Even in New Hampshire the theater occupied Shinn's attention. The residents of the colony often staged theatrical productions of which one of the most famous was "A Masque of Ours', the Gods and the Golden Bowl." Produced by the colony members as a tribute to the twentieth anniversary of the Saint-Gaudens' presence in Cornish, the performance featured young women clad in Greek robes and various gods, nymphs, fauns and satyrs, all played by Cornish residents. It is not known what part the Shinns played in the festivities, but their involvement is recorded on a bronze relief *Cornish Celebration Presentation Plaque* (1905-6), created by Saint-Gaudens to commemorate the event (fig. 129). The names of the ninety participants are listed on the relief, which was cast and silvered by Tiffany & Co. and given to each member. A model for the plaque is in the collection of the Saint-Gaudens Historical Site.

In 1903, William Glackens visited the Shinns on his way to Newfoundland. He was disappointed by the landscape, writing to his wife, "I am in a dismal spot. We have a burial ground to the right and fifth-rate mountain to the left and it has been raining ever since I arrived.

I have to take the mountain on faith as it is wiped out with rain clouds.” Glackens was even less impressed by the colonists, remarking:

There is a devil of an artistic set here, it would make you weep. The Davidge and the Shinn factions are sort of outcasts. Mrs. D. [Clara Potter Davidge] says she is afraid they are too tough for the elite Nothing but serious minded aesthetes permitted here. Pleasant jocularities not allowed.

As far as I can make out everyone passes the time running the other one down ... Shinn’s house looks very well and is quite a size....¹³

Shinn seems to have been most active in colony life in 1903, but during the following years his enthusiasm waned. Years later a newspaper article recorded his disappointment with the colony: “Some years ago he bought a place in Cornish New Hampshire in order to be one of a colony of artists. Mr. Shinn established himself in Cornish, prepared to enjoy the benefits of common interests. He left New Hampshire utterly disillusioned and disgusted with artists colonies.”¹⁴

Nocturnes and New Media: An Expansion of Style, Subject and Technique

The works produced in Cornish and New York following the Shinns’ six-month sojourn in Europe reveal the significant effect the experience has on the artist’s oeuvre. Although ultimately Shinn would remain committed to modern-life subject matter, the experience in Paris not only broadened his artistic horizons but also encouraged him to pursue new subject matter and new media. Immediately following his return from Europe, he began a small group of pastels that feature dramatic pyrotechnics and dazzling lighting effects. Completed between 1900 and 1905 these “nocturnes” are most likely informed by the work of James McNeill Whistler -- specifically the painting *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket* (fig. 130). Shinn had been aware of Whistler’s work since his student days at the Pennsylvania Academy, but it may have taken the famous pastel *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket* to catalyze his admiration for the artist. The picture was internationally known due to the lawsuit that resulted

when John Ruskin, in reference to this picture, accused Whistler of “flinging a pot of paint in the public’s face.” Whistler sued Ruskin for libel and the resulting trial became a media event.

Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket was exhibited from January 15 to February 24, 1900 at The Sixty-ninth Annual Exhibition of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts where Shinn would have had the opportunity to see it. Moreover, Shinn’s recent trip to Paris where he would have seen the work of Whistler at the Exposition must have further served to incite his interest in the “nocturnes.”

Whistler’s influence is seen primarily in Shinn’s city scenes; however, the impact of *Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter’s Mother* is evident in a few figurative works, for example, a pastel titled “*Whistler’s Mother*” (c. 1901; Location Unknown). Included in his exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co in 1901, the pastel portrays a seated ballet dancer and seems to have been inspired by both Whistler and Degas, employing a compositional design adopted from Whistler and the ballet subject matter from Degas.¹⁵

In addition to the obvious influence of *Arrangement in Grey and Black: Portrait of the Painter’s Mother*, Whistler’s most pronounced effect upon Shinn’s work is revealed in the selection of dramatically illuminated night scenes or “nocturnes” of subjects ranging from election nights to fire scenes. Although it is difficult to confirm, it seems probable that Shinn conceived these pictures for his book “*New York by Night*,” upon which he continued to work after his return from Europe. A reporter who visited Shinn in 1901 recalled seeing “the remarkable book ‘*New York by Night*’ lying about his studio on 19th street.”¹⁶

The earliest of the “nocturnes” is an illustration for *Harper’s Weekly* entitled *City Hall Park on Election Night* (fig. 26). Depicting a night scene illuminated by celebratory fireworks, the pastel recalls the rocket explosions in Whistler’s *Nocturne in Black and Gold: The Falling Rocket*. Related to the City Hall illustration are two pastels, *Nocturne, Gramercy Park* (fig. 131), one of the first park scenes Shinn completed after his return from Europe, and *Election Banner, Madison Square* (fig. 132). Both pictures are exceptional examples of Shinn’s ability to evoke

dramatic nighttime scenes. The high vantage point Shinn employs in *Nocturne, Gramercy Park* is rare in his work as he generally represented his subjects at street level, increasing the dynamism between the subject and the viewer. Here he adopts a bird's eye perspective like that of the French Impressionists (for example Camille Pissarro, whose work he would have recently seen in France). Shinn probably created the pastel from the upper story window of an apartment building on Gramercy Park. The view, hemmed in on both sides by the dark mass of a building on the left and the red brick structure on the right, looks out upon a nighttime political rally or parade. Indeed, Shinn's record books list a pastel titled *Street Parade, Gramercy Park*, which may be the original title of this work. The marching figures carry candles, which form a dazzling line of yellow lights, while above them exploding fireworks or Roman candles illuminate the night.

Nocturne, Gramercy Park is closely related to a pastel entitled *Election Banner, Madison Square* (fig. 132). The work features a large billowing flag upon which are displayed the portraits of political candidates. The flag, however, is overshadowed by the stunning display of fireworks exploding into luminous cascades of showering light. Shinn's use of strokes of bright, almost iridescent pastel is extremely effective in evoking the shimmer of incandescent light as it illuminates the nocturnal scene. Dazzling reflections are created on the street below, where pedestrians become mere silhouettes, anonymous observers of the dramatic scene.

Shinn's interest in the dramatic possibilities of pyrotechnics also included European scenes. The pastel *Bastille Day* (fig. 133), affords not only a striking view of exploding rockets, but perhaps more interestingly, a view into the window of a Parisian apartment. Through the upstairs window the viewer is privy to a woman at her toilette, while downstairs, at ground level, an open café illuminates the street with artificial light. Two women who pass by stare into the café window and they in turn are stared at by the group of figures who lounge at an outdoor table observing the spectacle of life. The pastel's unusual combination of dramatic lighting effects and human interest caught the eye of a reviewer who noted:

An interesting pastel is called 'The Skyrocket – Paris.' This is sketch made on the 14th of July and the picture is quite black, except for the light from the window of the café on the ground floor, through which a number of persons may be seen drinking and in the top story of the house one of the shutters has been left open, and a woman may be seen at her mirror, in the glare of the gaslight. Up in the sky a rocket is shooting heavenward, and the effect of those three different kinds of yellow light is of more than usual interest.¹⁷

The allure of peering into illuminated windows where people's domestic tasks provided theatrical vignettes for passing pedestrians was an urban phenomena that intrigued Shinn and his Ashcan colleagues. Indeed, the spectacle afforded by the woman in the upstairs window and the activities inside the café on the ground floor shown in *Bastille Day* invites comparison with paintings by Sloan such as *Haymarket* (fig. 134) and *Hairdresser's Window* (fig. 135) in which a small crowd has stopped to watch the intricacies of hair dying. Sloan expressed the artistic attraction of such urban scenes when on June 5, 1907, he wrote of *Hairdresser's Window*: "Walked up to Henri's studio. On the way saw a humorous sight of interest. A window, low, second story, bleached blond hairdresser bleaching the hair of a client. A small interested crowd about." The following day he recorded, "Walked out to take another look at the Hair Restorer's Window. Came back and started to paint it."¹⁸

Figure and Fantasy

Following Shinn's trip to Europe, the human figure begins to play a more prominent role in his art. Dancers and theater imagery start to compete with city scenes, eventually becoming the subjects with which Shinn is most often associated. In 1901, he exhibited his first oil, a theater subject titled *The Ballet Dancer*, c. 1901, at Kraushaar Gallery.¹⁹ Although he would not have a major exhibition of oils until 1905, the introduction of oil paint and the focus on the dancer are indicative of the future direction of Shinn's oeuvre.

In a departure from his typical engagement with the public space, beginning around 1902 Shinn began to represent the figure in the intimate domestic sphere. Pastels of women bathing,

created in 1903, strongly suggest the influence of Degas. The pastel *Girl in Bathtub* (fig. 136) recalls the pastels of female bathers that obsessed Degas during the final decades of his career (fig. 137).²⁰ In an article in the *International Studio*, A. E. Gallatin commented on the influence of Degas on Shinn:

Everett Shinn ... has been greatly influenced by the art of Degas. But Shinn has only gone to Degas for inspiration, for ideas, not slavishly to copy him.... And Shinn has learnt another thing from Degas; he has learnt to draw. Look over his many portfolios of studies and sketches made from the nude ... and you will see drawings powerful in their draughtsmanship, studies entirely free from all taint of the academic, drawings that proclaim him to be an artist possessing really great gifts.²¹

Girl in the Bathtub reveals Shinn's increasing skill in rendering anatomy. Not only is the figure confidently drawn, but Shinn also manages to make her appear poised despite the somewhat awkward position of getting in (or out) of the bathtub. The elegant, restrained palette so typical of Shinn's early pastels is again evident here.

In addition to the work of Degas, another artistic lineage inspired Shinn -- that of the French 18th century. Elsie de Wolfe, an ardent admirer of French painting and antiques, most likely introduced Shinn to the work of artists such as Jean-Antoine Watteau, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, and François Boucher. The impact of French Rococo is first reflected in dozens of red chalk drawings depicting women at their toilette or dressing, created shortly after Shinn's return from Europe. Several examples of these drawings, which feature the same woman either in bed or grooming herself before a mirror, are in the collection of The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden (figs. 138 and 139). Measuring approximately 12 ½ x 17 1/2 inches, many of these works show the same furniture -- mirror, bureau (upon which are arranged a picture frame and two round objects, possibly vases), and stand that supports a water jug. Related works, also portraying a woman at her toilet surrounded by the same objects are in the collections of the Orlando Museum of Art (*Girl Arranging her Hair in Front of Mirror*; c. 1904, fig 140) and the Frye Museum (*Woman in Bedroom*; 1904, fig. 141) as well as in private hands.

By 1903, he had produced enough work in red chalk to send a book of drawings to M. Knoedler & Co.²² and to lend a selection of work, including one red chalk drawing and a book of nudes (presumably these were also red chalk drawings), to Stanford White.²³ Shinn continued to exhibit his red chalk drawings of nudes at New York galleries where they were well received. Henri Pène du Bois called him the “Fragonard of the Present Time” remarking, “None ever used it [red chalk] so aptly than Everett Shinn in figures of women, nude or draped, at the bath or in the dressing-room, in sketches of familiar scenes indoors or out of doors.”²⁴ In April 1906, Sloan called on the Shinns at their Waverly Place residence where he was privy to some of Shinn’s racier interpretations of nudes. He wrote in his diary, “Shinn showed me a lot of his red chalk drawings ... many of them quite erotic in nature.”²⁵

Beginning around 1907, Shinn created a small group of boudoir scenes. Among this selection *Boudoir Scene* (1907, fig. 142), *Woman in Her Boudoir* (1910, fig. 144), and *Young Woman at Her Boudoir* (1912, fig. 143), are unusual as they are executed in pastel rather than red chalk. Although the three pastels of boudoir scenes were completed over a span of five years, they are remarkably similar. Each portrays a woman in a state of dishabille and reveals the influence of the French 18th century, particularly the work of Fragonard, for example, *Young Girl Playing with a Dog on Her Bed* (fig. 145).²⁶ Though the boudoir scenes are ostensibly glimpses of domestic life, each includes elements of theatricality. The blue draperies are drawn back like theater curtains, revealing the bawdy charm of a female coquette who strikes a pose as if she were aware of being watched. It is possible that Shinn had in mind pictures such as *Young Woman on a Sofa* by Nicolas Lancret (fig. 146) in which a woman sits on a divan, breasts exposed, aware that lurking in the darkness a man watches from behind a curtain. Shinn’s boudoir pastels thus becomes a kind of keyhole spectacle linked perhaps to the erotic intrigue of more anecdotal French 18th century pictures.

New York City Scenes After 1900

Mr. Shinn's New York street scenes and glimpses of the environs of the city are among the best things of the kind yet painted by an American artist.

-- Chicago *Record-Herald*, June 9, 1901²⁷

Prior to 1900, Shinn's depictions of New York City focused predominantly on views of the urban arena as seen by the casual passerby. Back in Manhattan, Shinn continued this strategy, but expanded his repertoire, reflecting changes in his life and that of the city. He maintained his interest in the working class and the plight of the urban poor, but also began to focus attention on commercial and leisure activities such as shopping and theater going. Occasionally he depicted a panoramic view as in the pastel *The East River at Night* (fig. 147), but more often he gave precedence to human activities. He also started to concentrate on different areas of the city, for example, Washington Square and Central Park.

Central Park, Washington Square & Green Park

All the parks, planned and laid out for the public good, have subtly yielded to monopoly. They have become the property of two men -- William M. Chase and Everett Shinn.

-- Jeanette Barbour Perry, "A Fallacy about Landscape Artists," *The Critic* (December 1902): 542.

Shinn was one of the great interpreters of New York City's parks and squares. During his first years in New York, he had depicted Union Square Park, Madison Square Park, and Gramercy Park. However, after 1900 his attention was increasingly focused first on Central Park and then, after 1902, on Washington Square Park, resulting in some of his most striking accounts of the city's crossroads.

From the fall of 1900, Shinn turned his attention to Central Park and in 1901 he exhibited four Central Park pictures: *Children -- Central Park*, *A Bypath, Central Park*, *Thaw - Central Park*, and *Bridle Path Central Park* at Boussod, Valadon & Co. Prior to his trip abroad, he depicted Central Park only once in a now unlocated pastel shown in his Pennsylvania Academy

exhibition of 1900. It seems that during his first years in New York, Shinn had little interest in Central Park. Not only was the park relatively far away from where he lived, but also its segregated environment was anathema to the urban dynamism he was fond of depicting.²⁸

While Madison Square, situated at the crossroads of two of New York's major streets, was very much of the city, Central Park was insulated from the bustle of metropolitan life. Designed by Frederick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux in 1858, the park was initially envisioned as a pastoral retreat. By blocking out the city and avoiding central allées, the park's architects sought to create a rural landscape setting modeled after the rambling English garden rather than its more structured French counterpart. The result was that Central Park lacked a focal point. For Shinn, who preferred the city's crossroads where social and economic diversity were concentrated in a limited space, Central Park may have been difficult to capture in salient imagery.

Shinn certainly would have known the pictures of Central Park by other artists, particularly those by William Merritt Chase, the first artist to become identified with the park.²⁹ When Chase first painted Central Park in 1889, it was in the process of becoming more democratic. During its first thirteen years, the park had been enjoyed primarily by the city's richest five percent. Working-class people were present in the park, but due to their six-day-a-week work schedule, tended to use the park on different days than the upper classes.³⁰ By the 1890s the park's demographics were shifting toward greater diversity, but Chase, in pictures such as *Lake for Miniature Sailboats, Central Park* (fig. 148) and *In the Park a By-Path* (fig. 149) still portrayed it as a decorous landscape frequented by women and well-behaved children. Ten years later, when Shinn's colleagues Ernest Lawson, Maurice Prendergast, and William Glackens portrayed the park, they represented a broader spectrum of the city's social classes and racial groups. Glackens, in particular in pictures such as *The Drive, Central Park* (fig. 150), showed the mixture of classes that enjoyed Central Park.

Though he was aware of the renditions of the park by other artists, Shinn's interest in Central Park was most likely inspired by his experience and delight in the Luxembourg Gardens

of Paris where he had spent hours recording the genteel environment. In New York he utilized these notations to complete larger pastels of the Luxembourg Gardens and in 1901 he showed *Merry-Go-Round (Luxembourg Gardens)*, *Punch and Judy Show (Luxembourg Gardens)*, *The Milliner's Girl (Luxembourg Gardens)*, *Sunset (Luxembourg Gardens)*, *Storm in Luxembourg Gardens*, and *A Sudden Shower (Luxembourg Gardens)*. It is likely that Shinn's experience in the Luxembourg gardens acquainted him with the artistic possibilities of such leisure spaces and when he returned to New York, he approached Central Park with a broadened sense of compositional strategies.

In pastels such as *Bridle Path in Central Park* (fig. 151)³¹ and *Untitled (Park Scene)* (fig. 152) Shinn focuses on the spectacle of the modern park. In *Bridle Path in Central Park* a group of riders is shown galloping through a secluded area of the park. During the mid- 19th century, equestrian sports were extremely popular across all classes, harness racing ranking as the leading spectator sport in America.³² The procession of the well-dressed riders on Central Park's bridle trails was described in a contemporary review. The writer observed, "Early in the morning, in spring or autumn, these byways are alive with equestrians. Now a young woman, with a groom following dashes by you as you watch from the walk, or a party from a riding school charges down upon you like a troop of cavalry and disappears around a turn, into the woods; occasionally a mounted policeman rides slowly by, man and mount alike alert for the not infrequent runaway."³³

Upper class dominance of the park gradually gave way to a more socially diverse population. By 1907, the park's demographics had changed such that Henry James could write,

I recall ... during a couple of hours spent in the mingled medium, the variety of accents with which the air swarmed seemed to make it a question whether the Park itself or its visitors were most polyglot. The condensed geographical range, the number of kinds of scenery in a given space, competed with the number of languages heard, and the whole impression was of one's having had but to turn from the plaza to make, in the most agreeable manner possible, the tour of the little globe.³⁴

Central Park's appeal to a wider audience is reflected in *Untitled (Park Scene)*.³⁵ The picture is composed of zigzagging diagonal paths. In the foreground, a uniformed nurse wheels her charge in a perambulator past two fashionably dressed ladies who are out for an afternoon stroll. Other pedestrians contribute to the parade, which is observed by the equally mixed crowd of spectators seated on a bench. The scene is very close to that described by a writer for *Harper's Magazine* who made the following observations regarding those who frequented Central Park: "It is a democratic crowd, made up of all classes and conditions of life. Elegant men and women, jaunty collegians, nurse-maids with their restless charges, German fathers of families, with wife, babies, and grandmother all together in a crowd, young sweethearts arm in arm, forgetting that they are not alone in the world – all are there; fighting their way through the mass of people..."³⁶

By selecting certain aspects of park life, Shinn found a way to make Central Park suitable material for his depictions of modern life. After 1901, however, his attention turned to Washington Square Park close to 112 Waverly Place, where the Shinns moved in 1902.³⁷

Washington Square Park

Of the many picturesque locales in New York, none received the attention that Shinn lavished upon the park at Washington Square. He depicted it no fewer than 20 times from several angles and under various weather conditions, though he was certainly not alone in his admiration for the square. The park was popular with numerous artists, many of whom, like Shinn, lived on or near Washington Square.³⁸ Those who rendered the locale's rich visual history included Ernest Lawson, Edward Hopper, Paul Cornoyer, Guy Wiggins, and Childe Hassam. Interestingly, the two early twentieth century artists who created the greatest number of paintings and drawings of the square were Shinn and his close friend Glackens, who moved to a studio at 3 Washington Square North in 1904.³⁹

Washington Square, which marks the beginning of Fifth Avenue, had once been a large Potter's Field. Officially opened as a public park on July 4, 1828, the area was soon surrounded

by exclusive private houses, the most notable of which was a row of townhouses on the north side of the Square. Built in the early 1830s, this attractive line of Greek revival houses was much admired by Shinn who viewed it as an elegant reminder of an earlier era.⁴⁰ He observed, “There is nothing like it. The architecture of the row of houses is of the best – it is the only mark to be found in New York of a fine old city.”⁴¹

The most prominent feature of Washington Square was the monumental arch built to commemorate the centennial of George Washington’s inauguration as president. The arch featured in Shinn’s work is the second version of the arch. The first arch, built by Stanford White in 1889, was a temporary wood and plaster structure, which proved so popular that White was enlisted to build a permanent version. Structurally completed in April 1892, White’s dazzling marble arch recalled majestic Roman arches and immediately became a source of civic pride and an inspiration to many painters.⁴²

Representations of Washington Square bracket Shinn’s career, providing the subject for one of his earliest as well as one of his last pictures.⁴³ Though Shinn depicted Washington Square as early as 1899, his interest in the park was strongest after his move to the neighborhood in 1902. By 1903, he had portrayed the Square several times including the pastel *Washington Arch, After the Rain* (fig. 158), the pastel and gouache *Washington Square and Fifth Avenue* (fig. 159), and the pastel *Washington Arch during Snowstorm* (fig. 160).

The Shinns’ move to 112 Waverly Place, located on the north side of Washington Square, was noted in *House Beautiful*, which featured their new home in the December 1902 Christmas issue. In an amply illustrated article, Charlotte Moffitt wrote approvingly:

Mr. Everett Shinn, a clever artist of the brush and crayon, and Mrs. Shinn, with her precious heritage of Biddle furniture, pictures, and silver, have sought out this little setting in Waverly Place and made everything so harmonious that once inside, with the door closed upon the noise and bustle of town, one is transported to the days of the fair women and doughty heros whose faces look down upon one from the walls.⁴⁴

The house itself (which is still extant) is a quaint four-story brick structure with colonial doorposts and Doric cornices. The furnishings in the well-appointed home included a mahogany table and two gold chairs given to Shinn by Clyde Fitch. Sunlight filtered through Indian shawls draped at windows onto the walls adorned with Shinn's paintings. Shinn's studio was on the top floor, although he would later build a much bigger workspace behind the house.

When the Shinn's moved to the neighborhood prominent residents occupied the north side of the square, while the south side of the square was home to an Italian immigrant community. Here on well-shaded paths ladies and gentlemen could promenade, young people could gather, and lower classes could find respite in a pleasant environment. The park itself was a border effectively described by Mariana Griswold van Rensselaer who observed:

A couple of miles up-town is Washington Square, where ... there are many tramps, ... a sprinkling of baby wagons and white-capped nurses; for this is the boundary-line between very poor and crowded and very well-to-do and roomy streets of homes – South Fifth Avenue, with its teeming French, German, Irish, and Negro population, ending against one of its sides, and the true Fifth Avenue starting from another.⁴⁵

The variety of people who frequented the Square appealed to Shinn and he was attentive to their interactions and to the demographic changes that occurred in the area over the years. In his notes on Washington Square he recalled:

For over fifty years I breathed the changes in Washington Square. Lifted to exulted [sic] enthusiasm with some and gagged on others. Close at hand to where I lived it drew my interest, day and night to sketch, to look, or rest.

In 1900, the north side exuded a perfumed exclusiveness. A bastion, lined in unity against the uneasy bohemian spirit where the transient [sic] dwellers of "genius row", thumbs to nose, gestured their disdain [sic] for those who wrote their names for fame on checks for Opera boxes. Liveried coachmen held their reins over the glossy flanks of thoroughbreds at the curb before the stately pillared doorways that marked societies [sic] line of defence [sic].

Precise [sic] in dress, men attended the mincing steps of wives or daughters in strolls through the park's paths to doff silk hats in recognition of their kind swathed in veils and tilting sunshades...

Slowly the southside edged its way, moving north like moths toward the gleam of crystal [sic] chandeliers. Then the benches lost their ghost like sachet fragrance to the stronger scent of tramps...⁴⁶

Never tiring of its artistic possibilities, Shinn always returned to it as a source of inspiration. He recalled:

It was after one o'clock when I left my door at 112 Waverly Place, scarce two hundred feet from the west side of Washington Square where I had hoped to find more material for sketches that would serve for factual data for larger paintings ... Diversified material was always there. I had drawn it from every angle, in snow, rain, sun and moonlight, yet even the older and more selective spots seemed to come into freshening interest by the alchemy of changing seasons.⁴⁷

In 1911 when the *New York Times* asked twelve artists "What is the Most Beautiful Spot in New York?" Shinn praised Washington Square. He explained:

Yes, when I want to be sure to find beauty I go to Washington Square. Of course there are plenty of other fine spots in New York. But – when you want to be reasonably sure of getting a good meal, you prefer to go to your favorite restaurant, don't you? Well the same sort of thing happens to me with Washington Square. No matter what the conditions may be under which I see it – no matter what my mood may be – I feel almost sure that it will appeal to me as beautiful.⁴⁸

In Shinn's accounts of the square, the arch is almost always featured, most likely as a way for the artist to anchor the scene with a recognizable landmark. As art historian and Washington Square expert Bruce Weber has noted, the use of the arch as a focal point was more typical of the earlier generation of artists, latter chroniclers being more likely to ignore the arch in favor of other subjects in the park.⁴⁹ Moreover, it is worth noting that Shinn was rarely concerned with the greenery of the park, preferring to emphasize instead the arch's relationship to the urban environment. As a result, Shinn's interpretations of Washington Square look quite different from examples by artists such as Paul Cornoyer whose *Washington Square, New York* (fig. 155) highlights the park's landscape elements, showing the arch viewed through a foreground of trees and shrubs.

Also characteristic of Shinn's depictions of Washington Square is the rendering of the arch from street level. The ground-view perspective is in marked contrast to the bird's eye perspectives of the park shown for example in Carlton Moore-Park's *Washington Square, Looking*

North (fig. 156) and John Sloan's *Wet Night, Washington Square* (fig. 157). The elevated view, looking north from the south side of the square became popular after 1910 when many artists took studios on Washington Square South in studio buildings or in the celebrated "House of Genius," which was home to several painters as well as other creative individuals. However, by the time the elevated view from the south side of park had become popular, Shinn had moved from his Waverly Place residence. Though he created pictures of the square after his departure from the area, he continued to depict the park as he had remembered it between 1902 and 1911.

Not surprisingly, amongst the artists' interpretations of the square, it is Glackens's pictures that are the closest to Shinn's. Like Shinn, Glackens focused on the people in the square in paintings such as *Mother and Baby, Washington Square* (fig. 153) and *Winter, Washington Square Park* (fig. 154). Glackens, however, was attracted to aspects of the square that held no interest for Shinn, for example parades, which are not found in Shinn's work, but are colorfully recounted by Glackens in examples such as *Parade, Washington Square* (c. 1909; Whitney Museum of American Art).⁵⁰

Shinn's preference for the street-level perspective and his appreciation for the way the beauty of the arch was transformed by different weather conditions are evident in the works *Washington Arch, After the Rain* (fig. 158), *Washington Square and Fifth Avenue* (fig. 159), *Washington Arch during Snowstorm* (fig. 160). *Washington Arch, After the Rain* most likely shows the square in late autumn as all but a few reddish leaves have fallen from the trees. The viewpoint is from the south side of the arch looking north toward the elegant line of Greek revival buildings that Shinn so admired. Evincing Shinn's remarkable skill at depicting weather conditions, the pastel effectively conveys the blusteriness of the day. Above, the rain clouds are lifting to reveal a bit of blue sky. The pavement, still wet from the rain, glistens with the dazzling reflections of the red buildings, trees, arch, and carriage. The three accounts of the square were included in Shinn's exhibition at M. Knoedler & Co. in New York on view from March 9 to 21,

1903. A reviewer offered the following laudatory remarks regarding *Washington Arch, After the Rain*:

[T]here are as well quiet tones of gray in sketches of this city seen under lowering skies, the sad and dreamy aspect of the poorer quarter, or perhaps such a corner as North Washington Square, with the art keyed low, upon a rainy afternoon. This last is an ambitious composition, excellent in its architectural drawing and effective in the contrasts between the red brick houses and the white of the marble arch, reflections being everywhere and by reason of the rain...⁵¹

Also included in the exhibition was *Washington Square and Fifth Avenue*, which presents the arch from the Fifth Avenue, where, placed in the middle ground, it acts as a dignified portal to another section of the city. In the background, at the right, is the tower of Stanford White's Judson Memorial Church and to the left is an elegant town house marking the beginning of the stately row of houses on the north side of the Square. The restrained palette of ochre, green, and russet brown highlighted with white gouache is fitting for Shinn's dignified treatment of the patrician setting north of Washington Square.

A portion of the M. Knoedler & Co. exhibition was scheduled to travel to Chicago. In anticipation of the event, a Chicago critic reviewed the exhibition for his home audience. The article was accompanied by an illustration of *Washington Arch during Snowstorm*, which shows the similarity of this picture to *Washington Arch, After the Rain*. Both works portray the south side of the arch looking towards Washington Square North. However, in *Washington Arch during Snowstorm* Shinn zooms in more closely on the arch, cropping the view on either side, so that the arch fills majority of the composition. The critic remarked:

Admirable and delightful are several views of New York streets. Among them are three or more of the stately Washington Arch under varied atmospheric conditions. As in the view reproduced [*Washington Arch during a Snowstorm*], for example, the beautiful structure set against a leaden sky, the snow blowing in all directions, blinding the eyes of the cabmen and horses, the people that are struggling to cross the square – the picture [is] mostly in black and white, the row of red houses in the distance enlivening the scene.⁵²

The reviewer continues by noting that *Washington Arch, After the Rain* presents the arch “again, almost from the same viewpoint as described at the end of a misty day the sunlight illuminating the brilliant red façades, the wetness of the street, the arch and trees rendered with much skill.”⁵³ And of *Washington Square and Fifth Avenue* he remarks, “Here, too, is a view of the same subject from Fifth Avenue on a rainy spring day, a picturesque old-fashioned house covered with green vines forming an important feature of the composition.”⁵⁴

Occasionally, Shinn would create two or more versions of a work, perhaps to replace a picture that had been sold or to experiment with a slight variation on the original composition. Two almost identical works are the pastel *Washington Square* (1910; fig. 161) and the watercolor and gouache *Stormy Night in Washington Square* (c. 1910; fig. 162). Both demonstrate Shinn’s command of outdoor night scenes. In each picture the arch is set back in the composition and shown obliquely from the northeast side of the square. In the foreground, pedestrians huddle under an umbrella attempting to shield themselves against the wintry weather while a bicyclist struggles to navigate the snow-rutted paths. In the background, the electrically illuminated cross of the Judson Memorial Church is visible. The scene is bathed in both artificial illumination and natural moonlight, which not only unifies the composition, but also imparts an aura of mystery to the scene.

The two versions of Washington Square during a stormy night are not identical. For example, the *Stormy Night in Washington Square* is cropped at the left and right and along the bottom edge. Also dissimilar are the number of foreground figures and the slight alteration in the positioning of figures that appear in both pictures. *Stormy Night in Washington Square* is undated and it is therefore difficult to know which version came first. *Washington Square* was illustrated in the *New York Times* article “What is the Most Beautiful Spot in New York,” and it is possible that the image’s popularity inspired similar pictures. Indeed, in addition to the resemblance between *Stormy Night in Washington Square* and *Washington Square*, the composition is also related to *Washington Square, Stormy Night* (1951; Location Unknown, formerly in the collection

of the University Club), which shows the arch from the same angle and repeats some of the same motifs included in the two depictions of the arch discussed above.⁵⁵

In 1912, Everett and Flossie divorced and Shinn left his beloved Waverly Place residence. Washington Square, however, continued to occupy his attention. Even during the 1920s, when Shinn's creative energies were primarily spent on portrayals of the theater and illustrations, he produced at least one picture of Washington Square. *The Arch, Washington Square*, a work in watercolor and pastel, (1929; fig. 163) represents Shinn's only located Washington Square picture from this period. The composition is typical of Shinn's portrayal of the square, showing it as a center of bustling activity. Horse-drawn buses, hansom cabs and pushcarts all share the public arena. In the foreground, lively figures are rendered in a few well-chosen lines and a bit of wash, attesting to the Shinn's great artistic skill.

Green Park

Following his return from Europe, Shinn showed seven European park scenes in his exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. Of these, Luxembourg Garden images out-numbered London parks, which were represented by only two pictures -- *Green Park, London* and *Afternoon, Hyde Park*. The subject of Green Park reappears seven years later in two pastels, both titled *Green Park, London*, and each dated 1908 (figs. 164 and 165). In both pictures, the intimate scale of the works belies their powerful depictions of urban poverty. Representing Shinn's continuing interest in society's less fortunate individuals, the pastels showcase the city's poor and dispossessed. The larger of the works (fig. 164) features a man in rumpled clothes with a peg leg, who, seated on a bench under a tree, creates the focal point of the composition. He is surrounded by a woman slumped forward like a rag doll and two other figures who lie asleep or unconscious against the tree. The harshness of the subject matter is echoed in Shinn's almost brutal treatment of the pastel chalk, which is applied in quick, jagged strokes. The other version of the subject (fig. 165) shows a broader view of the park. Using pastel and gouache Shinn has

created a luminous nocturnal scene in which darkness is rendered in an overall blue tonality offset by passages of green and red and yellow. At the left, a row of men line a park bench. The positions of their bodies suggest that they are dozing or loitering perhaps as a result of having nowhere else to go. The two versions of *Green Park, London* demonstrate that even in 1908, the year Shinn was showing his spectacular paintings of theater scenes in the exhibition of *The Eight*, he remained committed to representing the broad spectrum of urban life including the lives of less fortunate individuals.⁵⁶

¹ For the Cornish Colony, see *A Circle of Friends: Art Colonies of Cornish and Dublin* (New Hampshire: University Art Galleries, University of New Hampshire, 1985) and Virginia Reed Colby and James B. Atkinson, *Footprints of the Past: Images of Cornish, New Hampshire & The Cornish Colony* (Concord, New Hampshire: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1996).

² James B. Atkinson, "Introduction to the Cornish Colony," in *Footprints of the Past*, pp. 113-119. Although many of the colonists lived in Plainfield (including Shinn), they referred to themselves as members of the Cornish Colony.

³ Record book 1, p. 46. *Washington Square and Fifth Avenue* was shown at Knoedler's from March 9 to 21, 1903.

⁴ Helen W. Henderson, "An Impression of Cornish," *The Lamp* 37 (October 1903): 186-196. Details regarding the Shinn's house in Plainfield are also recorded in a classified advertisement for the sale of the property. Unidentified news clipping courtesy of Mr. and Mrs. John McNellis, Plainfield, NH. Information on Shinn's house is also drawn from "Notes" for the Cornish Colony House Tour, June 21, 1985, prepared by John McNellis. McNellis counts nine fireplaces, but Shinn's advertisement states that there are eleven so perhaps two were removed at some point in the house's history.

⁵ Colby and Atkinson, *Footprints of the Past*, p. 491, n. 4.

⁶ AAA, roll D179, frame 238.

⁷ *Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 11, 1904. AAA roll 953, frame, 219.

⁸ *The Century Magazine* 75 (April 1908): 957. As cited in Colby and Atkinson, *Footprints of the Past*, p. 210.

⁹ Brochure for "Exhibition of Portraits by Florence Scovel Shinn," C. W. Kraushaar Art Galleries, New York, March 12 to April 2, 1906. Colby files, Cornish Historical Society.

¹⁰ Stephen Parrish's diary, Baker Library, Dartmouth College. As cited by Virginia Colby, Colby files, Cornish Historical Society.

¹¹ Colby and Atkinson, *Footprints of the Past*, p. 385.

¹² Lucia Fairchild Fuller diary 1903, Cornish Historical Society. As cited by Virginia Colby, Colby files, Cornish Historical Society.

¹³ Ira Glackens, *William Glackens and the Ashcan Group* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1957), p. 44.

¹⁴ "Shinn Likes Movies but Hates Artistic Colonies," undated newspaper clipping from a Bridgeport, CT. newspaper, AAA, roll D179, frame 98.

¹⁵ In Shinn's Record Book, he lists *Ballet Girl Seated (Whistler's Mother)* as purchased by Miss Edith Dimock (the future wife of William Glackens) for \$40. The work was exhibited in Shinn's Boussod, Valadon & Co. exhibition, January 15 to February 23, 1901.

¹⁶ The Expert, "Passing Up A Few Facts, Everett Shinn's Original Pastels," *Town Topics*, undated clipping [January - February 1901] Scrapbook 1898-1952, AAA, roll D179, frame 29.

¹⁷ *Philadelphia Ledger*, March 15 1903. AAA, roll D179, frame 45.

¹⁸ St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, pp. 133-34.

¹⁹ Shinn Record Book I, p. 32. This is possibly *The Ballet Dancer* (1901; Georgia Museum of Art).

²⁰ For Degas's women bathing, see Richard Kendall, *Degas Beyond Impressionism* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1996), pp. 230-231.

²¹ A. E. Gallatin "Studio Talk," *International Studio* 30 (November 1906): 84, 86.

²² Record Book I, p. 42.

²³ Record Book I, p. 44.

²⁴ Henri Pène du Bois, "A Fragonard of the Present Time," *New York American*, February 22, 1905, p. 14.

²⁵ St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, p. 32.

²⁶ Reproduced in Jean-Pierre Cuzin, *Jean-Honoré Fragonard, Life and Work* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1988), p. 183.

²⁷ Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 37.

²⁸ For a detailed study of Central Park, see Roy Rosenzweig and Elizabeth Blackmar, *The Park and the People: A History of Central Park* (Ithaca, N. Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1992).

²⁹ For the most current research on Chase's pictures of Central Park, see Barbara Dayer Gallati, *William Merritt Chase: Modern American Landscapes, 1886-1890* (New York: Brooklyn Museum of Art, 1999).

³⁰ Rosenzweig and Blackmar, *The Park and the People*, p. 232.

³¹ The Cheekwood Museum of Art dates this work c. 1920s. However, due to the restrained palette, handling of the conté crayon, and subject matter, the pastel seems more consistent with an earlier date of c. 1900. A work titled *Bridle Path Central Park*, which most likely is the Cheekwood Museum's picture, was exhibited at Boussod, Valadon & Co. in November 1901, a factor that supports an earlier dating. Record Book I, p. 30.

³² Rosenzweig and Blackmar, *The Park and the People*, p. 244.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Henry James, *The American Scene* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1907; repr., New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1987), p. 127.

³⁵ Though the Gibbes Art Museum titles this work *Untitled (Park Scene)* the information museum personnel provided the author refers to it as a "Central Park scene." As Shinn produced several Central Park pictures it is difficult to determine the original title of this pastel. It is possibly *Central Park, N.Y.* exhibited at Boussod, Valadon & Co. January 15 to February 23, 1901 or *A By-Path Central Park* exhibited at the same gallery from November 6 to 31, 1901. Record Book I, pp. 18, 29.

³⁶ "A Ramble in Central Park," *Harper's Magazine* 59 (October 1879): 697.

³⁷ Shinn returned to the subject of Central Park in at least four later pictures. In 1903, he exhibited *Central Park, Winter Afternoon* (Location Unknown) at M. Knoedler & Co. *Central Park* (1915; Fogg Art Museum) is a small work on paper depicting a snow-covered view of the entrance to the park at 73rd Street

and Central Park West. Later, in the 1920s, Shinn painted a joyful picture, *May Day Central Park* (Private Collection). In 1949, he completed the watercolor *Central Park Wall, Fifth Avenue* (Private Collection) perhaps his last picture of the park.

³⁸ For an excellent discussion of the artists who depicted Washington Square, see Bruce Weber's exhibition and catalogue, *Homage to the Square: Picturing Washington Square, 1890-1965* (New York: Berry-Hill Galleries, 2001).

³⁹ Glackens's letters to his wife, Edith, attest to the desirability of a studio on the Washington Square. He writes, "It would be possible to spend most of the time up in Hartford but I wished to do some painting this summer and I can't take the studio with me. I think it would be a good plan not to stay away entirely from Washington Square. Somebody might swipe it." As quoted in Ira Glackens, *William Glackens and the Ashcan Group*, p. 61.

⁴⁰ For the development of Washington Square, see Jerry E. Patterson, *Fifth Avenue: The Best Address* (New York, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 1998), pp. 14-18; and *The WPA Guide to New York* (New York: Random House, 1939; repr., New York: Random House, 1982), pp. 131-135.

⁴¹ "What is the Most Beautiful Spot in New York?" *New York Times*, June 18, 1911, magazine sec., pt 5 p. 10.

⁴² For the building of the arch, see Patterson, *Fifth Avenue: The Best Address*, p. 36.

⁴³ The pastel *Washington Square Park with Two Figures* (c. 1899; Location Unknown) is probably Shinn's earliest portrayal of the subject. In 1953, he completed a pen and ink drawing titled *Washington Square Park* (Location Unknown). He died in May of that year.

⁴⁴ Charlotte Moffitt, "An Artist's House in New York," *House Beautiful* (December 1902): 18-22.

⁴⁵ Mariana Griswold van Rensselaer, "Picturesque New York," *Century Magazine* 45 (December 1892): 172

⁴⁶ Everett Shinn, "Washington Square." Dorothy Seiberling Collection, AAA, roll 794, frame 664.

⁴⁷ SAM.

⁴⁸ "What is the Most Beautiful Spot in New York?" *New York Times*, pp. 4, 10.

⁴⁹ I am greatly indebted to Bruce Weber for sharing his immense knowledge of Washington Square in several conversations between fall of 2000 and spring of 2001.

⁵⁰ For an informative discussion on Glackens's depictions of the Columbus Day parade, see Margaret Stenz, "The Spaces of American: William Glackens' Paintings of Columbus Day, Washington Square," class paper. The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, May 28, 1996.

⁵¹ "Art and Artists," *The Commercial Advertiser*, March 11, 1903, p. 9.

⁵² *Chicago Record-Herald*, March 22, 1903, Scrapbook 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 48.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ According to a newspaper clipping dated August 23, 1912, the Shinns were divorced on August 22, 1912. See clipping in Everett Shinn, Box 2 Sketches Clippings, Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum.

⁵⁶ In 1934, Shinn returned to the theme in a pastel titled *Falling Leaves* (1934; Location Unknown). Like *Green Park, London*, the work features down-and-out figures slumped against each other under a tree.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPECTACLE OF LIFE:
REPRESENTATIONS OF URBAN AMUSEMENTS AND THEATER SCENES

In addition to the enjoyment of New York parks, Shinn's early pastels record the spectacle and excitement that occurred on the city's streets. As Sylvia Yount has noted, Shinn had a special flair for drama. She writes, "his [Shinn's] contribution to the Ash Can group lies in his portrayal of the city as "dramatic spectacle."¹ Shinn himself recognized the way in which disaster was transformed in dramatic spectacle. He remarked, "Crowds, like fruit flies suddenly appear from nowhere and into empty streets to form in packed hungry morbidity about a morsal [sic] of human incumbant [sic] pain. Devouring the sight of a human being that had suddenly gone horizontal."² In his depictions of fires, street accidents, and fights, Shinn provided viewers with the vicarious experience of having witnessed the thrilling scenes featured in his pastels. The open spaces in the composition make space for the viewer, inviting him or her to participate in the event. Such works presented the public with the drama and diversity of city life and as such helped them to make sense of the complex, heterogeneous world in which they found themselves.

Fire on Mott Street (pastel, watercolor, and ink on paper, fig. 166) is one of Shinn's most spectacular depictions of an urban conflagration. The work portrays a fire in an immigrant neighborhood that has drawn a crowd of spectators who gather to watch the brutal effects of the fire and to observe the heroic efforts of the firemen. In the right foreground, the prominent figure of a fireman turns his body diagonally, aiming his fire-hose toward the burning building. In so doing, he leads the viewer into the center of the battle where at least two fire engines are silhouetted against the red flames of fire. The cascade of sparks that fall like fireworks on the people and objects below highlights the drama of the scene. Shinn himself acknowledged the

theater-like effect of the event writing: “Fire on Mott Street. The shriek of the fire engine always drew me from remote places. I was there when the fireman coupled the hose exempt from the huddled spectators by the grace of a reporters police badge I squeezed beyond the line privileged to feel the shower of sparks.”³

Fire on Mott Street is one of two of depictions of fire scenes dating from 1902. The second account, *Fire on Twenty-Fourth Street* (pastel on paper, fig. 167),⁴ first appeared as an illustration in *McClure's* magazine in November 1902 for an article called “A Change of Profession.” The story recounts the experience of two firemen who are caught on the top of a burning building while trying to extinguish a fire in a skyscraper. This was one of the two illustrations Shinn provided for the article. The second drawing portrays the two firefighters, who in an attempt to save themselves from the advancing flames, have lowered themselves into a water tank. For the article, the illustration of the fire is captioned simply “The Fire” but the subject matter and context most likely encouraged Shinn to later give the work the more specific title, *Fire in a Skyscraper*, when he began to exhibit it.⁵

Fire in a Skyscraper is one of Shinn's most complex fire scenes and underscores the distance he has come since his Philadelphia fire illustrations of seven years before. While it is unlikely that the work documents an actual conflagration, the picture does convey many realistic details of the modern fire. At first glance it does not appear that the fire is located in the skyscraper, but in the smaller building at the right. Indeed, fires in skyscrapers would often start in older adjacent buildings and then extend through the windows, igniting their much taller neighbors. In Shinn's pastel, one sees the flames from the smaller building lapping at the side of the skyscraper. The yellow of the fire leads the eye upward where the fire in the skyscraper is clearly evidenced by the flames spewing from the top story windows. The number of fire engines present and the vast numbers of spectators who have crowded below to observe the event reinforce the enormity of the conflagration.⁶

Urban disasters such as fires were just one aspect of Shinn's representations of the spectacle of New York street life. The grand thoroughfares of Broadway and Fifth Avenue afforded numerous urban amusements and provided many opportunities for public spectatorship. Shinn's pastels record his observations and interpretations of activities including window-shopping, matinee attendance, and dining out in restaurants that had recently emerged as new forms of leisure entertainment. Like the city's streets and squares, the entertainment sites were public spaces where people could absorb the new ideas. Scholars of Metropolitan architecture and urbanism have described the period from 1890-1915 as "The Composite Era," a time characterized by economic expansion and consolidation.⁷ The era witnessed a proliferation of building and a new sense of public life succinctly described by a writer for *Scribner's* as: "the growth in New York of the spirit of society ... that instinct whose manifestations distinguish a great capital from a great centre of population merely, and are to be observed less in drawing rooms than out-of-doors."⁸

Restaurants and Pool Halls

During this period, many restaurants were founded to meet the demands of an increasingly social New York public. Restaurants such as Mouquin's opened in the theater district and establishments like Delmonico's relocated to even more splendid quarters following the move of fashionable society uptown. During the late 19th century, Delmonico's was considered one the most expensive and aristocratic restaurants in the United States. Originating as a wine and pastry shop, the establishment was purchased in 1848 by Lorenzo Delmonico. Under his guidance, the staff learned to provide efficient service and the food reflected the epicurean splendor of the finest European restaurants. The dining room was transformed into an elegant public space where civilized manners reigned and the ballroom became the choice place to hold receptions.⁹ Originally located at Fifth Avenue and 14th Street, Delmonico's moved twice. In 1876, the restaurant relocated to Fifth Avenue at 26th Street, the site of Shinn's pastel

Café Martin Formerly Delmonico's (fig. 65), where it remained until 1897. It then moved to Fifth Avenue at 44th Street, the site of the pastel *Delmonico's Fifth Avenue* (fig. 1).

Delmonico's Fifth Avenue features the restaurant's majestic new building seen through an atmospheric haze from across Fifth Avenue. On the opposite side of 44th Street the distinctive squat building with the rounded roof was a meat market owned by Henry H. Tyson. To the right of the meat market at 527 Fifth Avenue was Ye Olde Willow Cottage that sold "ye olde demon rum."¹⁰ In the foreground several hansom cabs can be seen moving jauntily along Fifth Avenue. The restrained palette, highlighted with touches of white and light blue, and the soft feathery treatment of the pastel relates to another work from the same year, *Towards the El* (fig. 168). The two pastels feature radically different sections of the city. In contrast to the glamour of Fifth Avenue, *Towards the El* portrays a narrow street lined with brownstones. In the background, the inclusion of the El indicates that we have moved from the city's most fashionable avenues. Both works with their limited tonalities and subtle treatment of the pastel may relate to the works of Whistler.

Downtown in the theater district, a much different type of restaurant could be found. The pastel *Mouquin's* (fig. 2) shows the exterior of the well-known restaurant at 28th Street and Sixth Avenue that was popular with theater-goers.¹¹ In contrast to the refined establishments of Delmonico's or Sherry's, which sought to emulate the expensive interiors of their patrons' own dining rooms, Mouquin's was an example of the new Broadway restaurant that provided middle class diners with a splendid setting that they could not find at home.¹² Mouquin's together with the Café Francis were popular meeting places for many of the artists who later formed The Eight. Ira Glackens noted that, "The Prestons, Robert Henri and his wife, all their friends, were often to be found at one or the other."¹³ Indeed, Shinn himself confirmed that "it was at Mouquin's that the crowd really became intimate."¹⁴ Glackens celebrated the establishment in his now familiar painting *Chez Mouquin* (fig. 169), in which James Moore, the proprietor of the Café Francis, is shown with a female companion. Shinn's pastel, *Mouquin's*, which predates Glackens's *Chez*

Mouquin by one year, shows the outside of the restaurant framed by the tracks of the Sixth Avenue El.¹⁵ The exterior view is typical for Shinn, who, with the exception of his theater scenes, was almost always more concerned with the street-life going on outside a noted establishment, than with the activities within.

An exception to Shinn's characteristic rendering of the outside of an establishment is the pastel *Pool Room* (or *The Pool Players* as the work was originally titled, fig. 170), which takes the viewer inside the all male locale. As Kathy Peiss explains, poolrooms were a popular form of leisure for working class men. The space provided not only amusement, but also a place for male camaraderie and job seeking.¹⁶ The darkened atmosphere of *Pool Room* forms a theater like space where a line of summarily drawn spectators perches on stools. Under the artificial light of the lamp, the pool players become performers, acting out the drama of their competition. The trapezoid swath of green felt becomes like a stage bathed in artificial light, which in turn illuminates the players. Shinn created two versions of this subject. One was sold to his Chicago patron, Mrs. John Blair; the other was exhibited in the artist's show at Durand-Ruel in 1904 as *Pool Players (2)*.

The Promenade

Broadway is the one idling showplace. Neither the Strand nor the Boulevard des Capucines can replace it. Fifth Avenue is all that it should be – the one really perfect show street in the world.

-- Theodore Dreiser, *A Traveler at Forty* (New York: The Century Co., 1915), p. 512.

At the turn of the century, Broadway and Fifth Avenue provided a kaleidoscope of visual display. People marveled at the new theaters, hotels, and restaurants that marked the changing urban landscape. Of particular interest to Shinn was the parade of people and carriages that crowded the city's major thoroughfares. The transformation of Fifth Avenue into an urban spectacle is aptly described by a writer for *The Architectural Record* who remarked:

Among the many radical changes which have been brought about during the past six years in New York City, the most radical and the most significant are those which have taken place on 5th Avenue.... It has been transformed in terms of [the]human spectacle it presents by a great increase in the number of pedestrians. From being a comparatively quiet avenue It has become a bustling thoroughfare, jammed with carriages and motors, crowded with shoppers and passers by, and redolent with the fumes of wealth and business.¹⁷

As the rich promenaded on foot or contributed to the elaborate processions of carriages, the middle class also took to the streets. As Mariana Griswold van Rensselaer observed of the public life of the middle class:

These people, and many others with small incomes who do not have homes of their own (but most often in cramped, inhospitable flats), find their amusement in theaters and restaurants, and the motley pageants on the streets, or, if more soberly minded, in concert- and lecture-rooms and at church entertainments.¹⁸

Without purchasing a theater ticket or a meal, one could be well entertained on Fifth Avenue or Broadway. The streets provided free amusement in the form of window displays, cock fights, outdoor stalls, parades, and processions of well-turned-out shoppers and theater attendees. At the turn of the century, a Fifth Avenue event that was always sure to draw crowds of onlookers was the Easter Parade. On Easter Sunday men, women, and children dressed up in their Easter finery and paraded up Fifth Avenue on their way home from church. In addition to the numbers of people who participated, many more came to observe the spectacle. By 1905, the number of spectators had grown to such proportions that a writer for *Harper's Weekly* commented, "The truth is that the tradition has pretty well wrecked the show. On upper Fifth Avenue it is somewhat too dense now either for beauty or comfort. Such a vast number of people come on Easter to see the Fifth Avenue churchgoers walk home from church that the Avenue in the fifties begins to look and feel like Park Row at five o'clock when the Brooklynites begin to feel for the bridge entrance." The writer emphasized the theatrical nature of the parade observing:

When the audience flocks onto the stage in such masses as to impede the actors, it is bound to impede the performance, and something like that has happened to the Fifth

Avenue Easter Parade. The obstreperous population of Manhattan, plain people and pretty, pious people and folks quite disinterested in piety as about raiment, gravitating out of enormous superabundance towards a much heralded free spectacle, have captured the Avenue and swamped the show.¹⁹

The pageantry of the Easter Parade appealed to Shinn and he pictured it several times, in illustrations that appeared in *Harper's Weekly* and *Scribner's Magazine* and in the intimate work, *Easter Sunday, Saint Patrick's Cathedral* (watercolor, gouache and pencil on paper, fig. 171).²⁰ In *Easter Sunday, Saint Patrick's Cathedral* the viewer's attention is drawn to the elegant carriage in the foreground with its two upright coachmen and finely dressed female passengers. The actual parade participants have been reduced to a colorful line of background figures rendered in quickly drawn lines of pastel and dabs of gouache. The entire spectacle is presented before the dramatic backdrop of Saint Patrick's Cathedral. On the verso of the pastel, in Shinn's writing, an inscription confirms that the pastel is a sketch for a center page illustration published in *Harper's Weekly* on December 22, 1900.

Just Looking: Shinn's Shop Windows

Shopping was another aspect of the modern experience that captured Shinn's imagination. As Alan Trachtenberg has stated in his seminal work, *The Incorporation of America*, during the late 19th century urban industrialization led to the expansion of the marketplace. Mass production created a surplus of goods for which desire needed to be generated. Advances in technology and industries changed a woman's role from one who makes things to one who shops for things. Trachtenberg notes that by the 1890s, the word consumption had been redefined from its previous meaning of destruction to "all those desirable things which directly satisfy human needs and desires."²¹ Trachtenberg locates the major site of consumption in the department store, which altered the urban space by attracting women downtown. The newly developed shopping district began on Eighth Street and followed Broadway to 34th Street. At 14th and at 23rd Street it turned west until it reached Sixth Avenue and included the stretch of

Sixth Avenue between these two intersections. At the point where Broadway crosses Fifth Avenue the shopping district ran up Fifth Avenue until 47th Street.²²

In Shinn's several pictures of female shoppers, the women are either shown out on the street amongst bustling crowds as in *Sixth Avenue Shoppers* (pastel and watercolor on board, fig. 172) or staring into shop windows as in *The Shop Window* (pastel on paper, fig. 173).²³ Unlike Glackens who in *The Shoppers* (oil on canvas, fig. 174) portrayed his wife Edith, her friend Lillian Travis, and Shinn's wife Flossie inside a store being attended by a clerk, Shinn did not generally venture inside establishments to depict his subjects. It is a curious and most likely unintended phenomenon that Shinn tended to depict the exteriors of restaurants such as Mouquin's or shops such as those featured in *The Shop Window*, while his close friend Glackens painted the interiors of the same or similar establishments.

The colorful parade of female shoppers in *Sixth Avenue Shoppers* conveys the variety of urban entertainment offered in the shopping district. The section of Sixth Avenue shown in Shinn's pastel may be the district below Madison Square, which is described in a 1901 article "On Shopping in New York" as "always crowded." The author continues, "There is no part of the day from eight in the morning until six at night when the stores are not full, and when you don't have to elbow your way, especially on certain side streets, through throngs of people, men and women, and children, old and young, rich and poor; past venders of flowers, of plaster casts, of children's toys, and of tiny puppies and household pets."²⁴ In *Sixth Avenue Shoppers* smartly dressed women carry packages or examine goods sold from street stalls on the left side of the pastel, while at the right, a group of men watch a cock fight. Though the picture's space is divided principally by gender, Shinn has made a point of interspersing a male shopper amongst the package-laden ladies and at least one lady, possibly two, watches the cock fight. In so doing, Shinn expresses his attentiveness to the increasing fluidity of gender roles in the modern city.

Window Shopping (fig. 175) and *The Shop Window* (fig. 173) are two of Shinn's earliest works to focus on the activity of window shopping, a theme to which he would return later in his

career.²⁵ Shinn may have appreciated the way shop windows, like the vaudeville stage, created a fantasy space that functioned also as a site of cultural exchange. Moreover, he may have been drawn to the “modernity” of the shop window, which had only recently come into being, the result of new technologies that made possible the production of plate glass, colored glass, and electric light.²⁶ The new materials reconfigured the domain of the theater and shop window by producing dazzling visual effects. Items for sale were showcased and dramatically lit, attracting customers as if to a Broadway stage.²⁷

Prior to 1890, the idea of the shop window display did not exist. Windows were used to light shop interiors and if goods were placed in them, they were generally pushed together in unappealing piles. The person who did the most to revolutionize window display was L. Frank Baum, who was not only the author of *The Wizard of Oz*, but also a fan of technology, particularly electricity, as well as the manager of a chain of theaters. In 1897, he brought his creative interests to bear on the new field of window design with the founding of the magazine *Show Window*. As William Leach has noted in his excellent essay on this topic, “Baum raised the status of the show window to the first place among advertising strategies. He advised retailers to have larger windows and to deepen them, to install wooden scenic backgrounds, and to stretch out the glass surface as far as it would go.... Baum advocated spectacular windows. Architectural displays, and devices intended not so much to display goods as to attract attention.”²⁸

Shinn was probably impressed by the way shop windows “opened up” public space. Prior to window displays, goods were “hidden” within the depths of intimidating shops. The window display solved this problem as it allowed “men and women, preys to that timidity which poverty in great cities brings, who are afraid to go inside and look at that which, seen from the outside, becomes an education to them.”²⁹ Shinn likely recognized the seductive power of the shop window not only to sell goods, but also to serve a pedagogical function by educating a disparate public as to the type of clothing popular with New Yorkers and how it was to be worn. When Dreiser’s *Sister Carrie* arrives in Chicago, she is acutely aware that her clothes mark her as

different from the other women. Studying the shop girls she observes, “Their clothes were neat, in many instances fine, and whenever she encountered the eye of one, it was only to recognize in it a keen analysis of her own position – her individual shortcomings of dress and that shadow of *manner* which she thought must hang about her and make clear to all who and what she was.”³⁰ Like Carrie, many new arrivals to the city wanted desperately to conform to their image of the well-dressed woman. Display windows introduced inexperienced shoppers to fashionable clothing while at the same time they allowed women to avoid potentially embarrassing encounters with shop clerks to whom their unfamiliarity with the situation might be revealed.

The pastel *Window Shopping* portrays a night scene in which the rain-soaked street is illuminated by the bright artificial light of the window display. The window has caught the attention of an elegantly dressed lady who has stopped to gaze at the fashionably clad mannequins in the window. Mannequins were a new feature of turn-of-the-century advertising. Early mannequins were primitively made, many without heads and arms, but by 1900 they had become authentic-looking replicas of human beings.³¹ Shinn’s picture presents a humorous encounter in which the mannequins in their magical display window seem to have come to life. Mimicking an encounter between actual pedestrians on the street, the mannequins are seemingly startled by the intrusion of an outsider into their space. The mannequin in the brown dress appears to scowl while her companion seems to stop in mid-stride to stare with curiosity at the window shopper.

Window Shopping is clearly one of Shinn’s most theatrical street scenes. Positioned like actresses on stage, the mannequins stand bathed in incandescent light. Their elevated window box has become a mini-stage, recalling the words of a contemporary writer who observed, “The shop-windows, with their elaborate displays, their free exhibitions of the fashionable and the beautiful, are never without their crowds about them.”³² Like the vaudeville theater, the shop window provided a space where the spectator could encounter new ideas and “typical” American customs. The process of acculturation was facilitated by the introduction of mannequins, which

exerted a powerful influence on public perception because people could identify with them. As Leach writes, "Female mannequins were perhaps the most radical display fixtures ever to appear in the store window. They helped transform the character of the public female image."³³

The encounter of a female pedestrian with an enticing display window is also the subject of the pastel *Shop Window*. The exhibition of colorful stockings on mannequin legs is echoed in the gesture of the window shopper herself who lifts her skirt to expose a bit of light blue stocking. As fashion historian Valerie Steele points out, even before the turn of the century when luxurious lingerie became fashionable, colorful embroidered stockings were a provocative, but acceptable complement to street clothing.³⁴ Shinn has either cleverly created his own imaginary window display of stockings or emulated an actual one that appealed to him. Again the presentation of the window is stage-like. The stockings are shown on mannequin legs that are provocatively featured as if they were being thrust out from under a rising curtain. The colorful bolts of cloth to the left and right of the stocking-clad legs act as curtains being drawn back for the performance. Below, the swath of yellow entablature emulates the bright footlights of Shinn's theater pictures. As in the theater, the onlooker is invited to enter the realm of luxury (here in the form of silk stockings), of infinite possibility. Indeed, as one retail promoter advised, "Sell them their dreams, visions of what might happen if only.... After all, people don't buy things, they buy hope."³⁵

The show window is also the subject of the pastel *Fifth Avenue at 34th Street* (fig. 176). The work presents a view looking north up Fifth Avenue and includes the distinctive church steeple of the Brick Presbyterian Church at 37th Street and a view into the window of the art gallery M. Knoedler & Co. where Shinn was currently holding a large exhibition of his work. Regarding this picture Shinn recalled:

The show window used to be on the corner of 34th and fifth Avenue across the street from the old A. T. Stewart mansion. About to be demolished it then held great expansive posters of Clyde Fitch's play, "Captain Jinks," with the beautiful young Ethel Barrymore as the star. As I was holding an exhibition beyond the show window I was interested to include another one of mine in the window ³⁶

That it is a man who looks through the plate glass into Knoedler's gallery, may indicate Shinn's acknowledgement of the division of purchasing power between men and women: Men more often bought the art, women more often the clothing. However, the windows of Knoedler's, though prominent, are not the center of attention. Rather, the artist was equally concerned with the spectacle of well-dressed women on Fifth Avenue, a type whom he later recalled in the following statement: "Women of that day, moved with something of a strained effort against their layers of underskirts, veils, stoles, muffs and high buttoned gaiters, but they were attractive or I would have only drawn ash cans."³⁷

Like shopping, matinee theater attendance became an acceptable activity that a woman could indulge in without a male escort. Enterprising theater owners capitalized on the advent of the female shopper by building their establishments on the main shopping streets where they could appeal to women who had come to visit the stores.³⁸ By 1899, the area was packed with theaters. Daly's Theater, the Broadway Theater, Wallack's Theater, the Casino, Manhattan Theater, and Bijou Theater were just some of the performance houses situated on Broadway. The crowd of people who gathered on the street before and after the matinee provided yet another opportunity to look and be looked at. As Dreiser's Carrie remarked, "The walk down Broadway, then as now, was one of the remarkable features of the city. There foregathered, before the matinee and afterwards, not only all the pretty women who love a showy parade, but the men who love to gaze upon and admire them."³⁹

Shinn first depicted the subject of a matinee crowd on Broadway in 1899 in the work, *Broadway, Late in the Afternoon, After the Matinee* (pastel, charcoal, gouache, and watercolor on artistsboard, fig. 48). The picture displays Shinn's skill at rendering the frenetic activity on one of New York's busiest and most important thoroughfares. Hansom cabs and pedestrians seem near to colliding as other figures jostle each other for space. On the left-hand side of the pastel a woman wearing a white fur collar and long bustling skirts makes her way across the busy street. On the other side of the street men turn their heads to stare and one leans forward perhaps to

catch a glimpse of the lady whose face is obscured by the snow-covered umbrella. The lady with a white fur collar and billowing white skirt, who has probably just been to the matinee, strides purposefully down Broadway, unaware that she has caught the eye of a male spectator.

The pastel is an excellent example of Shinn's unique sense of composition and drama. Both in terms of style and subject the work relates to one of Shinn's other great interpretations of Broadway, *A Winter's Night on Broadway* (fig. 25), which appeared as the first color center-spread for *Harper's Weekly* on February 17, 1900. The pastel depicted the bustling crowds on Broadway and was instrumental in helping the artist to break into the world of magazine illustration. To an even greater degree than *A Winter's Night on Broadway*, the pastel *Late Afternoon Broadway, After the Matinee* effectively renders the vitality of the city. Utilizing a rushing perspective in which the orthogonals sharply converge, Shinn creates a dynamic push-pull effect. The viewer's gaze, which is carried rapidly back in space by the strong diagonals, is then pulled toward the foreground by the forward moment of the carriages and pedestrians. Overall, the pastel is a tour-de-force of public spectatorship capturing the parade of urban display that transpired on the city's streets as well as the curious stares and glances that it provoked.

Broadway, Late in the Afternoon, After the Matinee received considerable attention when it was exhibited in 1901 at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery in Boston. One critic noted, "After the Matinee ... with its stream of people pouring out of the theater doors into Broadway – suggests with marvelous and dramatic force the swarming life of the street, its movement and tumult."⁴⁰ Another reviewer noted the lady's independence in the public sphere. He recorded, "*After the Matinee* is a bewildering mass of carriages, horses, etc., in a snow storm. Out of all this turmoil emerges calm and collected the inevitable Gibson Christie Shinn girl, mistress of the situation as usual. Bus drivers curse and swear at each other, the elements howl above them all, but Miss Christie Johnstone prances along oblivious to all of them."⁴¹

The writer's reference to the "Gibson Christie Shinn girl" is worth commenting upon as it aligns Shinn, at a very early date, 1901, with two of the best-known illustrators of the day,

Charles Dana Gibson (1867-1944) and Howard Chandler Christy (1873-1952). These men contributed to the leading periodicals of the time and became famous for their illustrations of the Gibson Girl and the Christy Girl, wholesome, enticing females who charmed the nation. As a reporter for the *New York Times* commented, “Although these girls wore no make-up and rarely displayed an ankle, their hearts beat violently behind their armor of whalebone. They were beginning to demand their rights The way Christy drew the Christy Girl she was popular with the males because of her charm, while the young women liked her because she embodied their dreams of emancipation.”⁴² Perhaps most importantly, the Gibson Girl and the Christy Girl were very up-to-date. As one writer phrased it, “Christy was credited with turning the demure Victorian girl into an athletic modern woman in the early 1900s.”⁴³ That such modernity was associated with Shinn’s women as well is a tribute to his acute perception of the mechanisms of contemporary culture and his ability to convey successfully recent societal changes, in particular, women’s increasing independence in the public sphere.

In 1904, Shinn returned to the subject in *Matinee Crowd, Broadway, New York* (fig. 177). Offering a vibrant account of the shopping district filled with crowds that had come for a matinee, the pastel captures the rush of theatergoers as they hurry to waiting carriages. A. E. Gallatin, who once owned the pastel, referred to it as “a characteristic example of the artist’s work. What movement there is in this drawing. How the people are scurrying along in the face of the snow and wintry blast. How the snow sweeps and swirls up the icy avenue.”⁴⁴

Depictions of The Theater, The Café Concert, and The Circus

Shinn’s portrayals of the theater provide some of his most visually spectacular and sociologically complex pictures and reveal his life-long fascination with the stage.⁴⁵ Moreover, the theater scenes can be interpreted as representing Shinn’s understanding of the way new forms of theater (i.e., the cleaned up version of Vaudeville that became popular at the turn of the century) provided a socializing effect on the city’s incredibly diverse population. In his

depictions of the French café concert, the English music hall, and the American vaudeville stage, Shinn explores the interaction between the performers and the audience and examines the way the performances united disparate crowds of people through humor and by providing a common sense of awe and wonder. By focusing on the reaction of the spectators as they are confronted with the new, unusual, and modern Shinn created images in which people could recognize themselves in their encounters with the complexities of the modern city.

Shinn's involvement with the theater went beyond the role of mere observer. He was an active participant in his own productions and was on friendly terms with several actors and actresses including Julia Marlowe whom he depicted in one of his earliest theater pictures, *Julia Marlowe in Barbara Frietchie*, (watercolor and pastel on paper, fig. 178). In 1901, he was sufficiently close to Marlowe to be invited to a lavish dinner she gave following her performance as Mary Tudor. The dinner was held on the stage of the Criterion Theater and Shinn was among the select guests whose names appeared in the papers as having attended the event.⁴⁶

Around 1910, after receiving a commission to paint a 22 x 45 foot mural for Trenton City Hall, Shinn built a large studio behind his Waverly Place residence.⁴⁷ The studio also doubled as a theater that included crimson curtains, a proscenium, and a perfectly equipped miniature stage. Home to "The Waverly Street Players," an amateur theater group, which included the Shinn's, the Glackenses, Jimmy Preston, and David Belasco's assistant, Wilfred Buckland, the theater had the character of a private club for friends. The theater could seat 55 people, but admission was by invitation only.⁴⁸ Shinn declared, "Any friend lacking the plays [sic] spirit was excluded."⁴⁹ For the performances, Shinn wrote three four act melodramas: *The Prune Hatter's Daughter*, *More Sinned Against than Usual*, and *Wronged from the Start*. On March 21, 1912, *The Prune Hatter's Daughter* was reviewed in the *New York Times*, where the critic noted:

After picking your way through the vine hung and mysterious area which passes for a backyard in Waverly Place, you would have landed at last in Mr. Shinn's studio and there have joined the chosen few that witnessed the first performance on any stage in this

country or in Europe, the dress rehearsal, of Mr. Shinn's twelve act drama in four acts, "Lucy Moore, or the Prune Hatter's Daughter."⁵⁰

The productions were later adapted for the vaudeville stage and produced by Arthur Hopkins. According to Shinn, they had a professional run of ten years during which they played around the world and were translated into four languages.⁵¹

Representations of the theater were first exhibited in 1899 when Shinn showed *Scene - Julia Marlowe, Fourteenth Street Theater, and Interior Keith's* at the home of Elsie de Wolfe. Although Shinn is not considered a portraitist, he created a small group of depictions of theater personalities. Shinn's record book reveals that on November 18, 1899, he completed a double portrait sketch of de Wolfe together with Marbury. Shortly thereafter, he recorded two pastel portraits of Julia Marlowe, first in the role of Barbara Freitchie, and another presumably as herself in black velvet. He also continued to depict Elsie de Wolfe, executing a portrait of her in February 1900 and again in 1901 in a pastel titled *Symphony in Grey*. The latter picture, an obvious homage to Whistler, is a full-length portrait of his friend in the long, gray chiffon gown she wore in the play "The Way of the World."⁵²

The following year he exhibited five portraits of theater personalities: one of de Wolfe, three of Julia Marlowe and one of Clyde Fitch and four theater scenes: *The Theater, Fourteenth Street Theater, The Lime Light, and During the Biograph* in his large exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. One of these pictures caught the eye of a reviewer who commented, "...in a very dramatic way, he depicts a solitary figure on stage, with a vast empty background, and a darkened house, whose only illumination is the footlights."⁵³ *At the Hippodrome* (fig. 179) with its monochromatic palette and view of a distant, lone performer in a darkened interior is in keeping with these early accounts of Shinn's theater scenes. Indeed, *At the Hippodrome* may be one of Shinn's earliest located representations of this subject. Presenting a dramatic view of the theater's sweeping balconies, the work conveys the grandeur of the stage setting and the curiosity of the foreground spectators who lean forward over the railing to view the performance.

Shinn's fascination with the theater was encouraged by his trip to Europe in 1900. In Paris and London he had the opportunity to examine the theater pictures of Degas firsthand. He also would have experienced the excitement of the café-concerts and the music halls as is evident in his subsequent depictions of such locales. Although he only visited Europe once, the deep impressions of the trip and the dozens of sketches he made of café-concerts and theater performances provided material for many subsequent pictures of the European stage.

The impact of Shinn's European trip is immediately manifest in the 1901 spring exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. One is struck by the new emphasis on theater scenes. Indeed, a critic reviewing the exhibition remarked, "Two of the best studies that he showed last year represented the interior of theaters; there are many more of the same kind here."⁵⁴ The large number of stage scenes included in his 1901 show reveals an artist who is clearly "stagestruck."⁵⁵ Of the 46 catalogued works, 12 were theater scenes. Shinn's record book also lists 39 works that were included in the show but not catalogued of which 17 represent theater imagery. Parisian music halls, theaters, and café-concerts are recorded in numerous pastels such as *Back Row*, *Folies Bergères*, *Grand Ballet*, *The Bal Bullier*, *Ballet Dance (Orchestra)*, and *Gaieté Montparnasse*.

Of the theater subjects shown in the 1901 exhibition, ballet dancers, which appear in fifteen works, are the type of performer most often represented. While Shinn would return to the motif of the ballet dancer throughout his career, he depicted her most often in his early pastels when the direct influence of Degas was at its strongest. The exhibition at Boussod, Valadon & Co. included several depictions of solo ballet girls who are identified by their dress or their stance, for example, *Ballet Girl*, *Black Dress*, *Ballet Girl back Turned*, *Ballet Girl Before Mirror*, etc. Like Degas, who made studies of the dancers' legs or the ribbons in their hair, Shinn also created pastels that focused on perfecting an understanding of a specific detail of the dancer. For example, the pastel *Ballet Slipper* (fig. 180) is a study of a dancer's delicate ankle sheathed in a pink, satin ballet slipper.

The 1901 Boussod, Valadon & Co. exhibition was well reviewed with several critics remarking upon the merits of the Shinn's ballet dancers. A reviewer for the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* wrote enthusiastically:

Ballet dancers and scenes in the ballet should be especially noted for their suggested motion. Public shows of all sorts, such as punch and judy shows, wrestlers and dancers on platforms above the heads of the assembled crowd, are favorite topics. These are portrayed graphically in night scenes, with electric lights shining on the performers, while the people's dark forms in front make an effective foreground and setting for the principal figures.⁵⁶

Degas's influence was also noted:

The ballet girl has in Degas no keener and more interested observer than Everett Shinn. He manages to draw her with a little more mercy than Degas, as a fleeting form, which is not angles, splay feet, and stiff petticoats, but suggests the curves of the reasonably youthful human figure. It is in the scenes of café and cabaret and other public life, especially at night, that Shinn has caught best the impression Paris leaves on unjaded eyes.⁵⁷

Shinn's most ambitious treatment of the ballet subject is represented in two oil paintings which date from about the same time: *The White Ballet* (1904; fig. 181) and *Rehearsal of the Ballet* (c. 1905-1906; fig. 182). *The White Ballet*, was originally titled *The Ballet*. The painting assumed its more descriptive title in 1907 when Shinn noted in his record book that he considered sending the work to the Carnegie Institute, identifying it as *The White Ballet*. In *The White Ballet* Shinn adopts Degas's compositional strategy of showing the stage at an oblique angle with a view into the orchestra pit. This view, which became a favorite of Shinn's, is repeated in many of his theater pictures. Another device that reoccurs in Shinn's renditions of the stage is the brilliant strip of footlighting that divides the stage from the orchestra pit. In the present painting, the stage is shown from the perspective of an expensive box seat, a vantage point that affords the viewer the vicarious experience of feeling that he or she is seated behind the elegant couple joining them in their box seat. On stage, several ballet dancers perform in white tutus against a landscape backdrop. The position of the dancers' arms with one arm outstretched and the other raised

overhead provides a series of wonderful curves that is repeated in the roundness of the ballet costumes. These in turn are echoed in the voluminous arc of the female spectator's dress, the roundness of her shoulders, and the curve of her fan.

In 1905, *The White Ballet* was shown at E. Gimpel & Wildenstein in Shinn's first exhibition of oil paintings where it caught the eye of the reviewer Henri Pène du Bois who stated: "Everett Shinn is fond of the playhouse because of its lines and lights. He shows their captivating deformation in 'The Ballet,' where the dancers with arms curved above their heads are similar to baskets of flowers and the air which is around them is green and glazed like a Persian vase."⁵⁸ The painting's grand scale, number of dancers, and daring composition was unlike anything Shinn had thus far achieved. That Shinn thought highly of the work is evinced by its \$500 asking price, making it, along with a comparably priced work titled *Decoration* (fig. 183), the most expensive in the show. For the next few years, Shinn exhibited the work in major exhibitions where it was widely reproduced and reviewed. When Shinn showed the work at the Art Institute of Chicago from October 20 to November 26, 1905, the price was increased to \$600. A few months later, when he showed the work at the Pennsylvania Academy from January 22 to March 3, 1906, he was still asking \$600. Then, from January 4 to February 2, 1907, he exhibited the painting at the Boston Art Club with another price increase, this time to \$700. When *The Ballet* was exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy in the winter of 1906, Albert E. Gallatin observed: "The painting exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts last winter which Shinn named *The Ballet*, is an excellent example of this happy medium between the art of the realist and the art of the idealist."⁵⁹ Shinn himself recognized the significance of the work by selecting it as one of the works to represent him in the exhibition of *The Eight*.

The success of the picture *The White Ballet* may have been encouraged Shinn to create *Rehearsal of the Ballet* (fig. 182). However, despite their obvious similarities, *Rehearsal of the Ballet* is compositionally very different from *The White Ballet*. Unlike *The White Ballet*, which presents an array of ballerinas in similar poses from the point of view of an expensive box seat,

Rehearsal of the Ballet offers an informal portrayal of the dancers from the viewpoint of being on stage with the performers. One's attention is immediately captivated by the ballerina who poses *en pointe* with one leg raised and crossed against the other, creating a sense of dynamism and motion. In the background, several ballerinas dance, stretch, and converse while to the left three members of the orchestra play. Behind them stands a darkly clad woman who is possibly a "stage mother." The painting is notable for the way Shinn succeeded in giving variety to the dancers (each assumes a different position) and the manner in which he has individualized the faces of the musicians and the primary ballerina. The cropped composition brings the viewer right up to the stage, eliminating the intervening audience that one typically finds in Shinn's theater compositions (but then, this is a dress rehearsal and there would have been no audience). Although Shinn would continue to depict ballet dancers throughout his career, the more boisterous and colorful dancers of the music halls and vaudeville stage later surpassed his initial attraction to graceful ballerinas.⁶⁰

Rehearsal of the Ballet was created around 1905/1906, a period during which Shinn produced some of his most original and exuberant renditions of dancers on stage. Shinn first tackled the subject of a ballet rehearsal around 1903 when he exhibited a work entitled *Rehearsal of the Ballet* at the Boston Water Color Club in April of that year. In 1905, he showed a painting called the *Rehearsal* at an exhibition at E. Gimpel & Wildenstein, his first exhibition to include a major selection of oils. The first mention of a work titled *Ballet Rehearsal*, which is possibly the same picture as *Rehearsal of the Ballet*, occurs in 1906 when Shinn showed *Ballet Rehearsal* at the Society of American Artists from March 17 to April 22, 1906. Subsequently, he sent *Ballet Rehearsal* to the American Fine Arts Society in May of 1906 and to the Art Club in Philadelphia from November 19 to December 16, 1906.

The composition and subject matter of *Rehearsal of the Ballet* reveal Shinn's admiration for Degas who painted more pictures of rehearsals than actual performances. Indeed, it is possible that Shinn adopted the title, *Rehearsal of the Ballet*, from Degas's pastel of the same

name (fig. 184). Purchased by Louisine Elder (later Havemeyer), on the advice of Mary Cassatt, the work was the first work by Degas to be publicly exhibited in the United States. In 1878, the Degas pastel was shown at the Eleventh Annual Exhibition of the American Watercolor Society where an anonymous critic noticed it, observing:

It gave us the opportunity of seeing the work of one of the strongest members of the French Impressionist School, so called: though light and in parts vague in touch, this is the assured work of a man who can, if he wishes, draw with the sharpness and firmness of Holbein.⁶¹

It is likely that Shinn had the Havemeyer pastel or one of Degas's other rehearsal pictures in mind (e.g., *Rehearsal of the Ballet on the Stage* [probably 1874, The Metropolitan Museum of Art]) when he conceived of *Rehearsal of the Ballet*. The composition is especially ambitious as it includes a large number of dancers, a rare occurrence in Shinn's oeuvre. Indeed, the only comparable examples in terms of the profusion of performers are *The Gingerbread Man* and *The White Ballet*, both of which were included in the exhibition of the Eight.

In February of 1908, *Rehearsal of the Ballet* was included in the landmark exhibition of The Eight held at Macbeth Galleries, 450 Fifth Avenue. The critics treated *Rehearsal of the Ballet* quite favorably. A reviewer for *The Brooklyn Daily Eagle* wrote enthusiastically: "Everett Shinn takes to the stage in his eight pictures and bright, lively canvases they are.... Graphic also are 'Rehearsal of the Ballet' and 'Leader of the Orchestra.' The artist is not a copyist of the dazzling realism of the stage; he brings in audiences as a part of his scheme and he is careful to individualize every ballet girl, giving or suggesting motion admirably."⁶² More generally, another reviewer remarked, "Everett Shinn applies a strong feeling for light and shade and a remarkable power of placing figures in the right perspective to the task of giving verity to persons on the stage – actors and actresses, ballet girls at rehearsal and under the footlights, orchestras at work, and auditors in the first chairs."⁶³ When the exhibition traveled to Philadelphia, *Rehearsal of the Ballet* was selected as one of the paintings to illustrate an article discussing the event in the

Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, a choice that underscored the prominence and importance accorded to the painting by the critics.⁶⁴

As was the case with ballet motif, themes drawn from Shinn's experience in English and Paris theaters continued to exert an influence on the artist's oeuvre long after his first and only trip abroad. Indeed, some of his most important depictions of trapeze artists and dancers are shown performing in locales identified by their titles as representing European theaters or outdoor cafes. Shinn stayed much longer in Paris than in London and as a result, we have many more examples of Parisian theaters and music halls. In Paris, Shinn sought out the simpler more commonplace forms of entertainment, preferring their informality to the fancier productions like the opera. Reviewing the 1904 exhibition that Shinn held at Durand-Ruel a reviewer observed, "he is especially fond of the open air theater and various of his subjects are chosen from that cheap and showy place of entertainment.... He paints the clowns and the acrobats and singers and dancers with something that is almost sympathy, at any rate, an understanding of their pictorial value."⁶⁵

Possibly one of the pastels the critic had in mind when writing the above review was *Matinee, Outdoor Stage, Paris* (fig. 185), a scene in which fashionable men and women sit at tables drinking wine while others stand engaged in conversation. The setting of the gathering is uncertain and in fact, the pastel may not represent a specific location, but rather may draw on the artist's sketches of various locales as well as previous illustration work.⁶⁶ Franklin Kelly, in his essay on the pastel, has suggested that the pastel depicts the Café des Ambassadeurs, a favorite summer meeting place frequented by both Parisians and foreign visitors.⁶⁷ The café provided a wide variety of entertainments ranging from clown acts to operettas. The fact the Café des Ambassadeurs could boast a reputation as one of the oldest café-concerts as well as being a favorite rendezvous spot for Degas, further added to the establishment's allure.⁶⁸

Another possibility is that Shinn's picture derives from Pierre-Auguste Renoir's representation of a dance in the garden next to the Moulin de la Galette in Montmartre. Indeed,

Shinn's pastel bears a striking resemblance to Renoir's painting, *Bal du Moulin de la Galette, Montmartre* (fig. 186). Both pictures capture the rowdy, but joyful atmosphere of the café-concert where locals have gathered to socialize and to be entertained. Compositionally the works are quite similar. Each depicts a table at the far right fronted by a seated man, who, with his back turned, is positioned nearest to the viewer. Across from him are seated two companions who thoughtfully survey the activities of the crowd. Behind the group are large trees whose branches of green foliage arch over the audience, becoming intertwined with globes of the gas lamps, which were common features of the café concerts. The seated guests are surrounded by other patrons who gather in pairs, dancing in Renoir's painting and engaging in conversation in Shinn's pastel. Behind them, the crowd becomes an anonymous group of figures and in the background, on the left side of both pictures, is a stage upon which performers entertain. The audience, however, appears as amused with each other as anything occurring on the dais.

Shinn's record book lists titles of pastels such as *Back Row, Folies-Bergère, Café Lelas* and most specifically *Montmartre* that further evidence his interest in this theme. At the time of Renoir's representation of Montmartre the area was still frequented primarily by locals and had yet to be discovered by crowds of foreign visitors. In the following two decades the neighborhood character of the area changed rapidly and by the time Shinn encountered the district, it had become a central hub of urban entertainment.⁶⁹ Shinn likely would have been aware of Renoir's well-known picture of the *Bal du Moulin de la Galette, Montmartre*, which had garnered favorable criticism when it was shown in the third Impressionist exhibition in 1877. Widely regarded as one of the most ambitious of Renoir's canvases from the 1870s, the painting was acquired by Gustave Caillebotte who bequeathed it to the Louvre in 1894. The Caillebotte Bequest, which in addition to *Bal du Moulin de la Galette, Montmartre*, included fine examples of Manet, Sisley, Pissaro and Monet, had been on view at the Palais du Luxembourg since 1896 and therefore would have been readily accessible to Shinn.

Shinn treated the subject of the French outdoor stage in oil in *Outdoor Theater* (fig. 187). Unlike *Matinee. Outdoor Stage, Paris*, where the performer is in the far background, this work positions the viewer up close to the stage behind the orchestra pit. In the left foreground, a woman turns to leave, indicating the informality of the outdoor theater where the audience came and went at will. The picture's restrained palette and eerie lighting lends a mysterious quality to the work. On stage, the dancer lifts her arm, her hand forming a claw-like gesture, and looks in the direction of the departing audience member. The scenario is perhaps a pun in the spirit of Degas, who would occasionally create lightly mocking dialogues between the performer and an audience member.⁷⁰ The dancer's possible wrath at the woman's departure displays a sense of humor, which is rare in Shinn's theater scenes.

Almost all of Shinn's portrayals of dancers reveal some influence of Degas. The oils *Outdoor Theater: A French Music Hall* (fig. 188) and *Theater Box* (originally known as *Gaieté, Montparnasse*; fig. 189) all adopt Degas's unconventional angle in which the stage is shown obliquely from the position of the audience. By the early 1900s, Degas was immensely well known.⁷¹ His works had been widely exhibited in Europe and significant pictures had been exhibited across the United States largely through the promotion of Durand-Ruel. Degas's paintings and pastels had entered public and private collections throughout Europe and the United States, where they were prized by eminent patrons such as Mr. and Mrs. Havemeyer and Mrs. Potter Palmer. Shinn's first-hand knowledge of the artist was fortuitously recapped when in 1901 Durand-Ruel in New York organized an exhibition of Degas's pastels and oils at their Fifth Avenue Galleries.⁷²

While in Paris, Shinn also frequented the local music halls where he delighted in watching the dancers. The oil, *A French Music Hall* (fig. 188) is an outstanding example of Shinn's treatment of dancers on stage, a subject that reached maturity by 1905-1906, the period around which some of the best depictions of dancers date. In the painting, Shinn presents two gaily-dressed female dancers on stage who turn to greet the crowd. Through the use of color,

Shinn artfully plays the two women against each other. The blond wears a white dress, the brunette a dark blue gown, a juxtaposition that echoes the sharp tonal contrasts produced by the glare of the footlights. The work also derives its strength from the rendering of the prominent finely dressed foreground figures and the dramatic view into the orchestra pit.

In *A French Music Hall* the viewer is positioned as if seated in the loge behind the group of ladies at the lower left, a vantage point that clearly shows Shinn's debt to Degas. As the art historian Robert Herbert has noted of similar views by Degas:

This makes us into a spectator twice over. We look at the stage, but also at another operagoer... a complication of the viewer's role avoided by Cassatt and Renoir. In their pictures we are the traditional "fly on the wall," the viewer without a strong fictional presence, therefore we do not share with their figures the sight of the stage. The audience alone constitutes our spectacle. In Degas's loge views, we cannot disregard our imaginary presence.⁷³

Our presence is further emphasized by the gaze of the lady in the audience who stares directly out at us.

In an early article on Shinn, A. E. Gallatin, an admirer and collector of the artist's work, illustrated *A French Music Hall*, noting the work's compositional relationship to the work of Degas. "But," he remarked, "Shinn has only gone to Degas for ideas, not to slavishly copy him. He has learnt to see things from Degas' point of view; he too now sees the artistic possibilities of the gaslighted music hall."⁷⁴ Referring to *A French Music Hall* Gallatin observes, "He has grasped and preserved the very spirit of these scenes for our edification. Very real they are: we might almost be looking in upon an actual scene."⁷⁵

Linda S. Ferber in her article on Shinn's theater pictures has noted that the evolution of *A French Music Hall* can be traced to an early pastel, *At the Performance* (fig. 191).⁷⁶ Displaying a vivid palette of blue, green, yellow, and white, the work represents one of the finest examples of Shinn's early theater pastels. Like *A French Music Hall*, *At the Performance* affords a view of the interior of music hall. To the left we glimpse a fashionably dressed couple seated in an

expensive box, but the viewpoint is from higher up rather than almost directly behind the theatergoers as in *A French Music Hall*. On stage, a dancer in a white dress stands before the yellow swath of footlighting. The architecture of the stage is similar to that of *A French Music Hall*, as is the view into the orchestra pit. Both pictures also display a backdrop painted with a landscape, balustrade and urn, which became a characteristic feature of Shinn's stage scenes. The major compositional difference is the inclusion of a second dancer in *A French Music Hall*. The addition of another female performer adds greater complexity and dynamism to the composition and may reflect Shinn's increased confidence in dealing with multiple figures on stage.

Theater Box, originally titled *Gaieté, Montparnasse* when shown in exhibition of The Eight (fig. 189), is one of Shinn's most original compositions in oil. Indeed, there is nothing comparable to it in the theater pictures of Renoir, Manet, Degas or Cassatt. Here Shinn takes us directly into the expensive loge box and situates the viewer behind the elegantly dressed lady who sits forward, as was the custom if her companion was a male, in the box. That we are witnessing an evening performance is suggested by the lady's fine gown and carefully coifed hair. Her bare shoulders and the highlighting of her neck might hint at sensuality, but her stiff, upright posture bespeaks a certain primness and inapproachability.

The most unusual feature of the painting is the reaction of the female performer on stage who does not dance, but stands startled and wide-eyed, staring directly into the loge box. It is unclear if she is surprised by the appearance of the female audience member in the box or if something else has alarmed her. At the center right of the composition a group of audience members glances in various directions but a few look directly at viewer. Their gaze, coupled with that of the performer, has the curious effect of reversing the viewer/object relationship. Shinn, in an ingenious twist on his interest in the theater as arena where people could study each other and learn from one another, has made the viewer the object of the audience's and the performer's gaze, thus making us a vicarious part of the spectacle.

Other French music hall performers whose acts inspired works by Shinn included trapeze artists and aerialists whose amazing stunts were recorded in pastels such as *A Trapeze Artiste in a Paris Music Hall* (fig. 190). A. E. Gallatin especially admired this work, which features a young girl standing on a trapeze swinging before a crowded balcony audience. In 1906, Gallatin illustrated the picture in an article for the *International Studio* where he commended the dynamism of the work exclaiming, “... what movement there is in the pastel of the girl on the trapeze. She is fairly swinging through the air.”⁷⁷ However, not all critics responded favorably to Shinn’s depictions of music hall performers. When a work titled *The “Trapeze Artist”* (most likely the same work as *A Trapeze Artiste in a Paris Music Hall*) was shown in 1904 at Durand-Ruel, a critic opined, “Then there are the Japanese and other equilibrists, acrobats and slack-wire walkers, performers on the trapeze which look like memoranda for pictures, and for the most part lack the precious quality that makes some of this collection works of art.”⁷⁸

Interestingly, some of Shinn’s earliest accounts of theaters in Paris and London, focus not upon the stage performer, but on the audience seated in the galleries and loges, for example, *The Hippodrome, London* – one of Shinn’s earliest large oils (fig. 192). First opened as a circus in January 15, 1900, the Hippodrome eventually became a music hall.⁷⁹ Shinn would have had the opportunity to visit the establishment during his trip to London in the summer of 1900. There, amongst other audience members, he likely made many sketches for the finished painting. The work’s sure paint handling and visual force represent a startlingly rapid proficiency in the media. Here the primary colors employed are blacks, whites, and reds with occasional flourishes of blue and yellow. By lushly applying oil paint in broad, confident strokes, Shinn not only creates a sense of spontaneity, but also suggests the wonderful textures of the women’s wraps and dresses. The importance of the picture to Shinn is evidenced by the fact that he chose it as one of the pictures to represent him in the famous exhibition of The Eight at Macbeth’s Gallery in 1908. In 1911, Shinn showed the picture at an exhibition at the Carnegie Library where a critic

proclaimed, “Everett Shinn has probably never done better work than his. ‘The Hippodrome, London.’ All the action seen in real hippodromes is felt in this small canvas.”⁸⁰

In *The Hippodrome, London*, Shinn again reverses the traditional vantage point -- one looks not at the stage, but at the audience. In pictures like this one, Shinn demands the viewer’s complicity. The viewer is positioned as if seated in an adjacent balcony peering at the mass of spectators across the way. At the upper right, the trapeze performer, dressed in a red bodice and white tights, swings daringly close to the spectators.⁸¹ Although the ostensible subject of the painting is an aerialist, she is no match for the spectacle of the audience, which immediately captures the viewer’s attention. Here as never before and seldom after, Shinn focuses on the clothing, movements, and gestures of the mass theater crowd. Forming a triangular composition, the crowd seems to surge forward, fanning out until finally restrained by the diagonal barrier of the balcony railing. Only one member of the audience leans back to marvel at the act, while the others lean over the balcony to observe the audience below. One young lady sitting right of center stares provocatively outward, linking the viewer with the scene.

The Hippodrome, London is likely informed by the work of the French Impressionists as well as perhaps by the English artist, Walter Sickert. For example, Shinn’s painting bears a resemblance to Manet’s *A Bar at the Folies Bergère* (fig. 193), which also includes a trapeze artist performing before a distracted crowd. Shinn may have also adopted from the Impressionist the use of the background mirror, which reflects the trapeze artist and adds pictorial interest to the scene. *The Hippodrome, London* also recalls the circus performance pictures of Degas, most notably his two studies for *Miss Lala at the Cirque Fernando*, (fig. 194). Both pictures highlight the daring feats performed by female aerialist. However, unlike Shinn’s picture, the viewpoint in the *Miss Lala* is from below so that the performer, rather than the audience, is the focus of the viewer’s attention.

Shinn continued to explore the composition of the audience seated in the balcony in the work *In the Loge* (pastel and oil on canvas laid down on board, fig. 195), a breathtaking example

of Shinn's interest in spectators in what is most likely an elegant French theater. In contrast to the breadth of the audience shown in *The Hippodrome, London*, *In the Loge* presents a close-up view of a few female spectators whose attention is completely absorbed by events not visible to the viewer. The work is one of the few examples in which Shinn focuses entirely on the audience, making its members the leading protagonists of the picture. Also remarkable is the way Shinn has delicately rendered the faces of the ladies, translating their youth and beauty into one of the most captivating pastels in the artist's oeuvre.

The audience represented in *In the Loge* is markedly dissimilar to the crowd in a related pastel, *Balcony of a London Theater* (fig. 196). Picturing a disheveled and much less refined audience, the motley assortment of people in *Balcony of a London Theater*, afforded Shinn an opportunity to show spectators of varying social backgrounds, and likely, different nationalities. Although the harsh artificial light casts a somewhat garish glow on the "gallery gods," Shinn's portrayal of them is not unsympathetic. In fact, the pastel represents one of Shinn's few attempts to show the psychological states of the audience members. For example, the woman who sits alone in the back row staring blankly out at the viewer provides one of the most beguiling figures in the artist's oeuvre. The forcefully expressed physiognomy of the man on the far left is an unusual attempt by Shinn to tell us something about the personality of the sitter and his station in life. The group stares down over the rail, but the object of its attention is hidden from our view.

Both *In the Loge* and *Balcony of a London Theater* may have been owned by the same collector, Mrs. Chauncey Blair. In his record book Shinn notes that a work titled *Balcony, Paris Theater* (probably the same picture as *In the Loge*) was sent to Mrs. C. J. Blair on May 29, 1903 and paid for in full by October 14 of that year.⁸² A few months earlier, Shinn had sent Blair a work titled *London Gallery* (probably the same picture as *Balcony of a London Theater*), which she purchased for \$200,⁸³ but later returned to the artist. Of the incident Shinn recalled:

I sold several pictures to Mrs. Chauncey Blair One, the companion in degradation to "Microbe Alley" was of a top gallery in a London music hall, the rail lined with toothless

leering hags, bedraggled clothes, and drooping rain-matted feathers. Mrs. Blair liked this picture. Soon after its delivery in Chicago, I received her check and a letter begging me to allow her to exchange the *London Gallery* for another picture more agreeable for her walls. In her letter she had written, "I like it but my husband will not tolerate it on the wall in the sight of our daughter." She trusted me and I sent in exchange a French flower stand alive with bloom in a pouring rain.⁸⁴

Blair's purchase a few months later of *Balcony, Paris Theater* may have been intended to make up for the absence of *London Gallery* with a more decorous theater picture.

Depictions of the audience in balconies, such as those discussed above, are much less common in Shinn's oeuvre than works that portray spectators on the main floor of the theater silhouetted against the bright lights of the stage. The oil *Girl in Red on Stage* (fig. 197) is a prime example of this type of composition. Here a singer is shown before a colorful, freely painted backdrop, which in itself is remarkable for its abstractness. The view of the stage, however, is obstructed by the two fashionably attired female spectators whose silhouettes, made all the more prominent by their large elaborate hats, fill about two-thirds of the composition. Turning her head slightly, the woman on the left shows the viewer a glimpse of her sensitively rendered face illuminated by the glow of the stage lighting. *Girl in Red on Stage* may have originally been called *The Song – French Stage*, shown in 1905 in Shinn's first exhibition of oils.⁸⁵ The picture's design, in which a prominent female spectator competes with the performer for the viewer's attention, is comparable to that of *Gaieté Montparnasse* (fig. 189).

American Vaudeville and Variety Theater

While Shinn's depictions of London and Paris theaters demonstrate some degree of interaction amongst different classes, it is in his representations of American vaudeville that one finds the greatest mixture people, a phenomenon that paralleled the encounters experienced on the New York City streets.⁸⁶ What was remarkable about this form of theater was its ability to create a sense of community amongst its disparate audience. Shinn recognized the ability of vaudeville's glamour and aspects of make-believe to draw people out of the world of their

everyday experience into a realm where anything could happen and where they were encouraged to dream of infinite possibilities. Unlike the more elite forms of entertainment such as the opera or the ballet, vaudeville provided an arena where people from extremely diverse backgrounds could come together to enjoy a common form of entertainment.

The audience plays a prominent role in the majority of Shinn's theater pictures, but those who frequented vaudeville theater provided the artist with a particularly lively heterogeneous crowd whom he depicted from various angles and perspectives. Theatergoers are shown in expensive boxes, in the stalls, from the stage wings, and directly in front of the stage silhouetted against the footlights. Fascinated by people caught in the act of looking, Shinn features the audience members not only watching the performance, but also observing each other. It was precisely the interaction between the performer and the audience and the audience with itself that intrigued Shinn and provided the material for his most original depictions of the theater.

The primacy Shinn afforded the audience, his attention to its poses and gestures, was by no means exclusive to him. As H. Barbara Weinberg has pointed out, "The American painters of modern life focused on the audience more often than they did the performer when recording urban entertainments."⁸⁷ What is unique, however, is the attention Shinn pays to the vaudeville theater as a democratic space akin to that of New York's public squares.⁸⁸ Acting as a microcosm of the modern city, vaudeville houses allowed people to mingle with, study, and imitate others whose social and economic backgrounds were very unlike their own. By gently enforcing rules, vaudeville managers "Americanized" people. Recent arrivals to Manhattan absorbed the social etiquette that was expected in New York City to become what Gunter Barth has called "City People."⁸⁹ Although other forms of performance, for example the opera and the ballet, also brought diverse groups of people together, they could not surpass vaudeville's ability to appeal to such a broad audience, and not surprisingly, it was the vaudeville theater that Shinn represented most frequently.

By 1900 vaudeville was America's unrivaled leader of entertainment.⁹⁰ Popular in the sense that it was "of the people," vaudeville struck a blow to the Victorian strictures that divided individuals by race, class, and gender. Vaudeville's success derived from its ability to offer something for everyone. As Robert Snyder, author of *The Voice of the City: Vaudeville and Popular Culture in New York* explains:

The genius of such shows lay in their ability to speak to a complex and infinitely varied audience. By the 1890s, immigration and industrialization had made New Yorkers a people of divergent nationalities, religions, races, and classes – all of them wrestling, it seemed, with the definition of the proper roles for men and women.⁹¹

Thus, the vaudeville theater provided a forum where diverse people could encounter new ways of thinking, speaking, and acting and thereby learn from one another. It was a remarkable context, which both celebrated ethnic identities and managed to unite people by encouraging the formation of common bonds and providing a sense of how to be a New Yorker.

The origin of the term "vaudeville" has received a number of interpretations. Douglas Gilbert, one of vaudeville's earliest historians, offers that "The word derives from the French Val de Vire (sometimes Vau de Vire), the valley of the Vire River in Normandy, where quaint and sprightly songs were sung."⁹² Robert Snyder elaborates on Gilbert's definition:

"Vaudeville" was originally a French term, referring to either pastoral ballads from the valley of the River Vire or urban folksongs: *voix de ville*, or "voice of the city." By the eighteenth century, 'vaudeville' meant entertainments of music and comedy. But vaudeville, as turn-of-the-century Americans understood it, was variety theater that entrepreneurs made tasteful for middleclass women and men and their families by removing the smoky, boozy, licentious male atmosphere.⁹³

Shinn portrayed Vaudeville's roots in more boisterous forms of entertainment in *The Bowery Music Hall* (fig. 198). Rendered with quick strokes of watercolor and gouache, the account conveys the raucous environment of a downtown music hall. The work may have been at least partially inspired by the café-concert pictures of Manet and Degas that Shinn would have seen while in Paris and London. For example, Manet's *Corner in a Café-Concert* (fig. 199), like *The*

Bowery Music Hall, portrays an urban amusement spot where alcohol is served in an environment of informal entertainment. Both pictures present a prominent foreground figure, behind whom stands a server carrying mugs of beer. However, *The Bowery Music Hall* includes elements that define it as distinctly American, for example the banjo. The banjo is thought to have been invented by a native of Virginia, who based it similar types of African instruments. The instrument played an integral role in the early days of variety theater due to its staccato rhythm and its portability. Shinn's inclusion of the instrument anchors the picture firmly in the realm of early American musical entertainment.⁹⁴

It is unclear whether *The Bowery Music Hall* represents an actual establishment or if it is a composite of the numerous boisterous music halls that attracted working-class visitors. The licentious nature of such popular entertainment spots and the fact that they served large quantities of alcohol probably discouraged Shinn from frequent attendance. However, as an arena of commercial culture, the bowery music hall impressed Shinn with its festiveness. He later recalled:

A Bowery Dance Hall - An expectant spot in entertainment was the close harmony of "singing waiters." "Sweet Adeline" would come from shapeless orifuses [sic.] under the waxed span of "handle bar" mustaches. While on the packed floor to the tin pan thump of a tuneless piano bodies gripped close and whirled away in a determined gauntlet run of sharp elbows and buffeting cushioned hips... The "singing waiters" silent now moved among the patrons, breezing their rumpled stained aprons, bare armed with fists barnacled with frothy beer mugs. Bring your own instrument of musical torture, it will be welcomed or splintered over your head. The fraternal instinct is spontaneous here.⁹⁵

Aspects of the Bowery music hall's interactive relationship with its patrons are evident in the vaudeville theater, where the active participation of the audience could set the tone of the show. Vaudeville lacked the formality of more legitimate theater and the audience, often untrained as to proper theater etiquette, was unpredictable. Frequently they would wander around during the performances, entering and leaving while an act was still in progress (see for example *Concert Stage*, 1905, oil on canvas, fig. 200). Certain segments of the audience openly and

loudly expressed their disdain or enthusiasm toward an act. In the early days of vaudeville, audiences seated in the gallery (referred to as “gallery gods”) were known to throw things at performers of whom they disapproved. One act, The Cherry Sisters, advertised as America’s worst act, performed behind a net, which protected them when the audience threw eggs and vegetables.⁹⁶ Shinn never depicted such raucous and uncouth behavior as that which occurred during the Cherry Sisters’ act, however, in works such as the oil *The Balcony* (fig. 201) he did occasionally focus on the less refined audience members who occupied the gallery seats.

One of the primary forces on the vaudeville circuit was Tony Pastor, who is credited with transforming vaudeville from its pedestrian origins in dance halls, saloons, and grogshops into a form of entertainment suitable for women and children. He issued specific rules that banned alcohol, sexually suggestive double-entendres and profanity. The pastel *The Box Seat* (fig. 202) reflects the recent changes that had occurred after Tony Pastor had “cleaned up” vaudeville thereby making it an acceptable place for middle and working class women.⁹⁷ Pastor’s efforts combined with the growth of cultural consumption, which oriented public entertainment around the female shopper and contributed to the re-gendering of the theater. Pastor established his theater in Union Square, an astute move that placed him in close proximity to the best shopping and other emerging forms of entertainment.

The Box Seat focuses on two women who are most likely attending a matinee. To their left, two other female audience members can be discerned in the darkened theater. It is useful to compare Shinn’s portrayal of the female audience with those represented in Mary Cassatt’s *The Loge* (fig. 203) and Renoir’s *The First Outing* (fig. 204). Unlike the extremely decorous female figures who sit rigidly upright in Cassatt’s painting or the tentative, shy demeanor of the young girl in Renoir’s picture, the matinee ladies in *The Box Seat* appear casual and relaxed in the theater setting. Leaning forward against the railing of the box, one of the women glances coyly out at the viewer as if he or she were seated in the box opposite. Her companion rests her head on her propped up arm, looking resigned or even bored. Typical of the distracted audience that

frequented the performances, the women do not look in the direction of the stage, but rather peer out at the other members of the audience. Shinn's depiction of the relaxed nature of the ladies in *The Box Seat* emphasizes contemporary women's increasing ease in the public sphere.

In general, Shinn did not provide specific names of vaudeville house in the titles of his pictures. However, a few of his most well-known oils such as *Keith's Union Square* (fig. 205) and *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theater*, (fig. 206) do identify the locations of the performances. Keith's Union Square was owned by B. F. Keith who vied for the title of "Father of American Vaudeville" with Tony Pastor.⁹⁸ In September 1893, Keith opened his Union Square house in a refurbished theater. In the spirit of Tony Pastor, Keith and his partner, E. F. Albee, sought to refine vaudeville. The theaters became known as the "Sunday School Circuit." Keith encouraged proper conduct within his theater by placing a sign on the wall that read: "Such words as liar, slob, son-of-a-gun, devil, sucker, damn and all other words unfit for the ears of ladies and children, also any reference to questionable streets, resorts, localities, and bar-rooms are prohibited under fine of instant discharge."⁹⁹ It was not only the performers to whom Keith gave instructions on proper behavior. The audience too was taught the rules of theater etiquette. Patrons in one of Keith's theaters received cards printed with the following requests:

Gentlemen will kindly avoid the stamping of feet and pounding of canes on the floor, and greatly oblige the management. All applause is best shown by the clapping of hands.

Please don't talk during the acts, as it annoys those about you, and prevents a perfect hearing of the entertainment.¹⁰⁰

Thus, Keith's theaters provided instruction in proper behavior to the middle and working classes.

Keith's chief rival was F. F. Proctor who founded a chain of theaters beginning with *Levantine's Theater* in Albany in 1880. Six years later he opened the *Novelty Theater* in Brooklyn and shortly thereafter the *Criterion Theater*, also in Brooklyn. In 1889, he built his first New York theater, the 23rd Street Theater, between Sixth and Seventh Avenues. Proctor's name

became synonymous with continuous vaudeville, a concept he introduced in 1892 with the catchy jingle: “After Breakfast go to Proctor’s, after Proctor’s go to bed”¹⁰¹

Proctor’s provided the setting for one of Shinn’s best known oil paintings of vaudeville, *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor’s Fifth Avenue Theater* (fig. 206). The strong similarity of Shinn’s painting to the theater pictures of Degas, has been noted by H. Barbara Weinberg who, in her analysis of *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor’s Fifth Avenue Theater*, has persuasively compared it to Degas’s *The Orchestra of the Opéra* (fig. 207). She notes that in each painting, a brass rail or a parapet serves to divide the viewer from the musicians and that the edge of the stage provides a powerful design element. Differences, however, are equally pronounced. She observes:

But Degas’s picture was an early attempt to modernize portraiture, while Shinn had no such intention. Degas presents individual portraits of orchestra members, which he contrasts with the anonymous corps de ballet dancers’ faces, diminishes our concentration on the orchestra pit and its dominant occupant. The lighting effects that link stage and orchestra pit have none of the sexual suggestiveness of the double bass neck that pops up between male musician and female dancer in Degas’s work.¹⁰²

The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor’s Fifth Avenue Theater is also strikingly close in compositional design to Degas’s *Musicians in the Orchestra* (fig. 208). Shinn’s painting utilizes the same unconventional angles and severe cropping of the image. Presenting comparable views of the stage from the low vantage point of the orchestra pit, both pictures are remarkable for the prominence afforded the musicians, whose heads and shoulders, seen from behind, are dominant features of the composition. Also similar is the placement of the dancers on stage. *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor’s Fifth Avenue Theater* and *Musicians in the Orchestra* both feature a female performer on the right side of the stage who turns in the direction of the audience while her companions at the left look on. Shinn would have had ample opportunity to see and study Degas’s painting as it was included in Durand-Ruel’s exhibition of Degas’s work at their gallery at their Fifth Avenue in 1901. In *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor’s Fifth Avenue Theater* Shinn

has translated Degas's compositional format into a vehicle for the interpretation of American vaudeville. In place of the ethereal ballet dancers, Shinn's painting features a lively trio of female performers who sport colorful red dresses and flowers in their hair. The placard on the left side of the stage displays the number "7," indicating that the dancers are the headline act. Curiously, despite the act's star status, the performers are relegated to a narrow wedge at the top of the composition. The dancer on the right leans forward perhaps to bow, but also it seems, to keep from being cropped out of the composition. Shinn's real emphasis here, as the title of the painting suggests, is on the musicians in the majestic orchestra pit.

The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theater is related to the pastel *The Orchestra Pit* (fig. 209). In October 1945, the pastel was reproduced in *American Artist* where it was described as "depicting a scene in old Proctor's Theater, New York City."¹⁰³ Again, the viewpoint is from directly behind the orchestra pit. The same brass rail and red curtain divides the viewer from the orchestra, while the performer, confined to a wedge of the composition bends forward to remain within the picture frame. Given the almost identical nature of the bottom portion of the two pictures, it seems like that both pictures derive from the same study (or studies) that Shinn made while attending a performance at Proctor's.

A typical vaudeville bill consisted of eight acts. Generally a placard with a number would be displayed indicating the act's position on the bill. Shinn occasionally included these numbers in his vaudeville scenes, for example, *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor's Fifth Avenue Theater*, which displays the number 7. The first act was referred to as a "dumb act" as it did not involve talking and therefore was less likely to be interrupted by the arrival of latecomers. Dumb acts included performances by jugglers, acrobats, and animals. The second act was meant to prepare the audience for the show and could be anything, for example, a man and woman performing as in the delightful watercolor *Theater Scene* (fig. 210). The third act "was to wake up the audience" and often consisted of a comedy team or magician.¹⁰⁴ A big name filled the number four position, while number five, which came right before intermission, was another big

name meant to keep the audience excited about the show. The sixth act had to regain momentum but not overshadow the seventh and eighth acts. The seventh act was the most important. This was the “top” or “star” spot, the most coveted position on the vaudeville bill. The final act was meant to keep the audience talking about what a good show they had seen.

Frequently the final act was a dazzling performance by trapeze artists, which was sure to send the audience home titillated. Like their Parisian and English counterparts, American trapeze artists were performers to which Shinn was particularly drawn and he rendered aerialists on numerous occasions. One of his earliest oil paintings of these performers, *Trapeze Winter Garden, New York* (fig. 211) is also one of his best. In 1903, the year the painting was completed, no New York theater existed with the name Winter Garden. It is possible that the title derives from the glassed in roof garden of the Olympia Theater, located on Broadway between 44th and 45th Streets, which was heated in the winter thus creating a “winter garden.”¹⁰⁵ Like *The Hippodrome, London*, the painting *Trapeze Winter Garden, New York* is a tour de force of movement and technical showmanship. In contrast to *The Hippodrome, London* where the emphasis is placed on the audience, here the viewer’s attention is focused on the stunning display of the performers. The action is shown from the position of the theater wings and from this perspective one marvels at the dynamic configuration of the aerialists who form an arabesque curve as they sail through space. Visual interest is also heightened by the performers’ costumes, each of which is different. A harlequin-like outfit of black and white diagonals is contrasted with a body suit of solid red, but the most splendid costume is clearly that of the lady seated on the swing who is enveloped in an elaborate dress of pleats and folds which is playfully echoed by the pleats of her large white fan.

Although it does not date from Shinn’s early period, the stunning pastel, *Trapeze Artists (Proctor’s Theater)* (fig. 212) is worth noting as it is based on sketches from around 1900.¹⁰⁶ Shinn was a regular visitor to Proctor’s first New York City theater, the 23rd Street Theater, located at 141 West 23rd Street. This was the site where Proctor introduced continuous vaudeville

with acts running from 11:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Completed in 1940, *Trapeze Artists (Proctor's Theater)* is a tribute to Shinn's involvement with the early days of vaudeville. Shinn described the work as, "... a trapeze act over the audience. Proctor's 23rd Street Vaudeville house. From my sketchbook from the early 1900's. The blindfolded man standing there is about to do a dangerous turn."¹⁰⁷ The pastel features the dramatically lit interior of Proctor's where a trapeze performer, having swung across the audience, appears momentarily frozen in the air before gravity sends him swinging back in the opposite direction. The summarily drawn crowd below looks up, mouths agape in awe, heads tilted back in wonderment. *Trapeze Artists (Proctor's Theater)* is closely related to the pastel *Over the Audience* (fig. 213) and the oil *The Tightrope Walker* (fig. 214). Completed the same year as *Trapeze Artists*, *Over the Audience* presents a female performer swinging on rings in a setting very similar to that of *Trapeze Artists*, suggesting the possibility that both works were based on sketches of Proctor's Theater around 1900. *The Tightrope Walker* adopts the same format and focuses the viewer's attention on a performer clad in a tight-fitting phosphorescent costume high above the audience. Aerialists continued to fascinate Shinn throughout his career and he returned to the subject in other works such as *Trapeze Artists* (fig. 215). While the majority of Shinn's depictions of performers emphasized their amazing feats, on at least one occasion Shinn shows disaster striking in the oil *Acrobat Falling* (fig. 216), a terrifying account in which a broken rope causes a man to plunge head first into the orchestra pit.

Another staple of the vaudeville and variety stage was the tightrope walker, who awed the audience with incredible feats of balance and agility. Like the performances by trapeze artists, the stunts by the tightrope walkers were known as "dumb acts" that united a breathless audience in daring feats made even more impressive by the dramatically lit interior. Not only did tightrope artists provide an exhilarating example of dramatic spectacle, but also, because the acts did not rely on verbal communication, they appealed to an immigrant audience not yet proficient in English. Shinn first exhibited depictions of tightrope walkers in 1904 at Durand-Ruel when he

showed *Tight Rope – Balancing Act* and *Slack-wire Walker*.¹⁰⁸ *Tight Rope – Balancing Act* is possibly the pastel now known as *Tightrope Walker* (fig. 217), which features a young girl standing on a high wire over a sweep of the balcony. The performer not only walks across the wire, but she also balances a chair on her chin while holding while spinning two brightly colored umbrellas. Below, audience members crane their necks for a better view of the performance.

Tightrope Walker invites comparison with *Hammerstein's Roof Garden* (fig. 218) by William Glackens. Like Shinn, Glackens was drawn to the New York's theatrical entertainments and began to investigate the theme as early as 1899.¹⁰⁹ As in *Tightrope Walker*, the palette in the Glackens picture is reduced to a few tonalities punctuated by a judicious use of brighter colors; here the red parasol and the blue costume of tight-rope walker, which immediately command our attention. The viewer is made to feel a part of the audience. It is as if we were seated amongst the well-dressed ladies and gentleman at the café tables. Shinn would certainly have known *Hammerstein's Roof Garden*, but is unlikely that he used the Glackens picture as a model for *Tightrope Walker*. The two artists' interpretations are quite different in their compositions and their settings (Glackens's locale being much more elegant). Rather the comparison demonstrates that while both artists were exploring similar themes, but Shinn goes further in his investigation of the audience as a homogenous mix of city dwellers making them also the subject of the painting.

Like trapeze artists and tightrope walkers, magicians performed acts that were not dependent on language to be enjoyable. Because their performances could appeal to a wide range of audiences, magicians were staples of vaudeville circuit. The most famous magician to emerge from the vaudeville stage was Harry Houdini whose astounding illusions amazed audiences. More modest tricks also appealed to the crowds, for example, the stunt shown in Shinn's red chalk drawing *The Magician* (fig. 219). Here Shinn presents a conjurer performing the classic trick of pulling a rabbit out of a hat. The viewpoint is from the stage looking out at the audience, affording us a chance to judge its reactions.

In any type of performance the audience is paramount, but in vaudeville the audience is made a part of the show. Interaction between the performers and the audience was an essential part of the theater's attraction and actors would tailor their performances to the responses of the evening's particular group of spectators. One of the mainstays of vaudeville was the monologist whose topical jokes and gags related to current events and local news.¹¹⁰ Shinn's pastel, *The Monologist* (fig. 220) features a rotund man with the typical props including umbrella, top hat, and chair, attempting to establish a rapport with the audience. As is characteristic of many of Shinn's theater scenes, the viewer's perspective is from the wings. Shinn's appreciation for such acts was probably strengthened by his close friendship with Chic Sale, a well-known monologist of the vaudeville stage. Sale's humor was comprised of wisecracks and down-to-earth skits in which he frequently played country characters.¹¹¹ In addition to attending Sale's performances at the Palace Theater, Shinn enjoyed watching his friend practice his routines in the more informal setting of the Shinn home. Years later Shinn, in his description of Sale, wrote. "He used to rehearse in my kitchen everyday what should have been the funniest vaudeville act I ever saw. — His liver act (lecture on the liver). He would work it over and over. He was a master of pantomime."¹¹²

Shinn's representations of vaudeville comedians, which seem to have little precedent in American art, capture the phenomenon of humor uniting people of disparate backgrounds. They record a type of social interaction described by Constance Rourke who contends that through humor, "the unconscious objective of a disunited people has seemed to be that of creating fresh bonds, a new unity, the semblance of a society and the rounded completion of an American type."¹¹³ In works such as the pastel *The Orchestra Pit* (fig. 209), the oil *London Music Hall* (fig. 221), and in the pastel *The Vaudevillian* (fig. 222) Shinn depicts the vaudeville comedian's ability to form a sense of community amongst the theater audience. In each picture, a comedian, dressed in a long coat and a top hat, stands at the edge of the stage and communicates directly with the members of the audience and/or orchestra. Often an exchange that appeared as a spontaneous

dialogue between a performer and the orchestra leader was actually a well-rehearsed act. Mary Cass Canfield, writing for the *New Republic* in 1922, described the spiel of the vaudeville comedian:

He is ... an apparent, if not always an actual improviser. He jokes with the orchestra leader, he tells ... fabricated confidential tales about the management, the other actors, the whole entrancing world behind the scenes: he addresses planted confederates in the third row, or the gallery and proceeds to make fools of them to the joy of all present. He beseeches his genial, gum-chewing listeners to join in the chorus of his song; they obey with a zestful roar. The audience becomes a part of the show and enjoys it. And there is community art for you...¹¹⁴

Shinn's depictions of funny men draw on his experiences in the American vaudeville theater as well as time spent in Europe watching English and French comedians perform. Though *The Orchestra Pit*, *London Music Hall*, and *The Vaudevillian* were created several years after his return from Europe, they suggest the influence of the "Lion Comique," a type of funny man who, dressed up in top hat and tails, entertained the theater audience with a combination of song and comedy.¹¹⁵ The oblique angle of the composition, the dramatic footlighting, and the view into the orchestra pit employed in each of these works, all recall Degas, although the male comic was not a subject that interested him. Shinn may have seen prototypes for funny men in the work of Walter Sickert, who, by 1888, had established a solid reputation as the painter of music halls. Indeed, the three representations of funny men mentioned above are close in feeling to Sickert's *The Lion Comique* (fig. 223), which like Shinn's accounts, features a nattily dressed "swell" before an orchestra pit. While it is unlikely that Shinn saw Sickert's painting, he may have studied a reproduction of it that appeared in *The Yellow Book* in October 1894.¹¹⁶

The Dancers

Of the variety of vaudeville performers depicted by Shinn, the female dancer was his favorite. Like Degas, Shinn frequently depicted the dancer from the wings of the theater or from backstage. The choice of unconventional vantage points was noted by a critic who remarked,

“Mr. Shinn has the knack for making the most expressive backs, and his figures, seen from the wings and facing obliquely the audience are full of suggestive possibilities.”¹¹⁷ Shinn may have adopted the view from the wings to give variety to his numerous pictures of dancers and he may have appreciated the way the unusual angle afforded the opportunity to describe the audience’s reaction to the performance.

In general, Shinn did not identify the dancers or performers who appear in his representations of the stage, particular identity being subsumed to the overall spectacle of the theater. Shinn’s thoughts on the identity of individual performers are revealed in his comments to R. H. Norton regarding his oil painting, *Concert Stage* (fig. 200). Upon purchasing the oil in 1940, Mr. Norton wrote to Shinn inquiring as to the identity of the performer. Shinn responded: “The picture you have is one of our Vaudeville theaters in those days of smothering skirts. She has no particular identity. However, without fixing her on a known personality, she is, or the picture in its entirety is, my personality plus the forgotten vaudeville performer which inspired it.”¹¹⁸ The dancer whose identity is sought is an attractive brunette woman in a long black gown. The work emphasizes the sensuality of the dancer, while remaining clearly within the confines of acceptable decorum. Typical of Shinn is the attention given to the audience members. In the left foreground, a well-dressed couple in the process of leaving, face the viewer. Their presence and behavior point to the complexity of vaudeville. On the one hand, his tuxedo and her fur wrap reveal vaudeville’s ability to attract an upscale clientele. However, the fact that the couple is leaving in the middle of a performance suggests the relaxed, informal environment of the theater.

Typically, Shinn preferred generic titles that identified the painting or pastel by the color or style of the dancer’s dress. Thus, several accounts of performers bear titles similar to the two oils, *Girl in White on Stage* (fig. 224) and *Dancer in White Before the Footlights* (fig. 225). One of the most breathtaking examples of Shinn’s portrayals of dancers is the oil painting that is now entitled *Revue* (fig. 226). The work was originally called *Girl in Blue*, a title that presents minor confusion as the dancer’s shimmering dress is both blue and white, perhaps the result of a blue

light shining on white satin. The dancer, whose delicate features are illuminated by the footlights, is one of the artist's finest treatments of the subject. Shinn included the painting in the exhibition of *The Eight* from which the illustrious patron, Mrs. Harry Paine Whitney, purchased it for \$300. On February 20, 1908, John Sloan wrote in his diary, "All the sales in the exhibition (7) were to three buyers, Mrs. Harry Paine Whitney the rich sculptress – at least she has a fine studio for this purpose – bought four..."¹¹⁹

Girl in Yellow on Stage (c. 1906; Private Collection) is another spectacular example of Shinn's stage scenes. The large oil features a shapely dancer in a luxurious yellow gown. A fan or wind machine placed out of sight has produced a gust of air that causes the dancer's dress to billow to the right and lifts the yellow ribbons of her costume high in the air. In an effective counterpoint to the rightward movement of the dress, the dancer thrusts her arms to the left. The performer's finely detailed face is serene; she seems completely absorbed in her dance, taking no notice of the audience below. In the left foreground are two figures whose faces are unusual for their portrait-like quality. The present owner of the picture has suggested that the male figure is Robert Henri and the indeed, the man's features do bear a striking resemblance to Shinn's mentor.

The most characteristic costumes for Shinn's dancers are long white or yellow dresses with ruffles along the skirt and puffy or ruffled sleeves like those represented in *Girl in Yellow on Stage*, the pastel *Paris Stage* (fig. 227) and the stunning early oil painting *The Singer* (fig. 228). Typically, the dancer lifts her dress slightly with one or two hands in a lively fluid motion, exposing a seductive bit of ankle. The motif of the dancer in white reached its peak in 1910 when Shinn created numerous variations on the theme. Works such as the three oils *Dancer in White Before the Footlights* (fig. 225), *Woman on a Stage* (fig. 229) and *Dancer on Stage* (fig. 230) all feature the artist's characteristic dancer in white shown from an oblique angle.

An exception to the anonymous dancers are the portraits Shinn executed of the actresses Elsie de Wolfe and Julia Marlowe and two depictions of a female performer named Julie Bonbon.

The pastel of *Julie Bonbon* (fig. 231) is perhaps of one Shinn's finest renderings of a performer in this medium, revealing Shinn's mastery of the technique in the sure handling of the pastel and the wonderful impasto-like surface of pink and yellow that forms the dancer's dress. Standing at the edge of the stage almost in the footlight, Julie Bonbon lifts her dress, showing her leg exposed to the knee and glancing coyly at the audience. Shinn rendered his dancers primarily in either oil or pastel; however around 1906 he created at least two stunning accounts of female performers in red chalk. As has been already noted, Shinn was a strong advocate of red chalk, utilizing it in many drawings of nudes and women dressing. About the same year that Shinn created the pastel *Julie Bonbon*, he rendered the same model in red chalk. The red chalk drawing, *Julie Bonbon* (fig. 232), features the shapely performer in a close-fitting gown and is stylistically related to the red chalk drawing, *Girl on Stage* (fig. 233). The latter drawing, which may also portray Julie Bonbon, displays a dancer shown poised and confident from a low vantage point as if we are seeing her from a seat in the orchestra pit. In both red chalk drawings the medium is utilized with sureness and conviction, attesting to Shinn's great skill in handling the medium.

As he did with other subjects, for example *Washington Square* and *The Ragpicker*, Shinn occasionally created variations on the same theatrical scene. For example, the oils *The Vaudeville Act*, (fig. 234), *The Leader of the Orchestra* (possibly fig. 235), and *Curtain Call* (fig. 236) can be considered variants of each other. Each features similarly dressed figures against comparable background scenery, which is painted with a verdant wooded landscape recalling the imagery of Watteau or Fragonard. The palette is jewel-like, consisting of crimson red, emerald green, gleaming white.

The Vaudeville Act is one of the artist's most complex renderings of the vaudeville stage. The combination of prominent, well-rendered performers with a detailed view of the musicians in the orchestra pit results in a theatrical tour de force. On stage, a male figure wearing a top hat, tails, and bright red pants accompanies a slender female performer clad entirely in white and holding a white umbrella. The pairing of a male and female dancer is unusual for Shinn, who

usually preferred female dancers. Here he seems to appreciate the juxtaposition of opposites – male next to female and dark against light. Separating the dancers from the orchestra pit is a bright yellow swath of footlighting. Unlike *The Orchestra Pit, Old Proctor's Theater*, in which a musician's head is shown as overlapping the dancers' space, thereby uniting the two realms, in *The Vaudeville Act* none of the musicians invade the dancers' area. Rather, Shinn skillfully employs color by layering reds, greens, whites and blacks in a manner that not only creates a staccato rhythm, but also unites the two portions of the painting.

The Vaudeville Act is most likely a slightly later version of a painting included by Shinn in the exhibition of The Eight entitled *The Leader of the Orchestra*. The picture is illustrated in the 1908 Macbeth Galleries catalogue for the exhibition of The Eight, but without a title to identify it. As has been mentioned, it is often difficult to determine the original titles of Shinn's paintings as they changed, depending on the exhibition or the review. However, as seven of the eight works shown in The Eight show have been identified, this painting would have to be almost certainly the remaining eighth work, *The Leader of the Orchestra*.¹²⁰ That said, the issue of the original title is further confused by an illustration that appeared in *The World Magazine* in February of 1908, which identifies the work as "'The Duet' by Everett Shinn."¹²¹ The title *The Duet* is used again in a review that illustrates the painting and discusses the Macbeth Galleries exhibition. The reviewer notes:

[A group?]. . . in the art world have been holding a little exhibition of their own at the Macbeth Gallery. There were some good paintings in this exhibition – pictures worthy of any academy; on the other hand, there were some that were a little too eccentric for academic favor. . . I can see nothing eccentric in Mr. Shinn's "The Duet" or in Mr. Henri's "Laughing Child." Any member of the National Academy might be proud to have painted either of these pictures. This exhibition was invited to Philadelphia, and accepted the invitation.¹²²

Despite its use by the two reviewers, *The Duet* is not a title included in the listing of Shinn's paintings in The Eight catalogue, nor is it used by Shinn in his record books to describe any of the works he sent to the Macbeth Galleries exhibition. Furthermore, other writers, in their

discussions of the exhibition, do not refer to a work called *The Duet*. The *New York Times* critic provided the following account of Shinn's works shown at Macbeth: "Everett Shinn is here represented by eight paintings variously called 'Gaieté Montparnassi' [sic], 'Rehearsal of the Ballet,' 'The White Ballet,' 'Leader of the Orchestra,' 'The Gingerbread Man,' 'The Orchestra Pit,' 'Girl in Blue,' 'The Hippodrome, London.'"¹²³ Thus, it would seem *The Duet* was a name given to the work by reviewers and that the original title used by Shinn was *The Leader of the Orchestra*.

The Leader of the Orchestra (fig. 235) contains almost all the same elements – performers, musicians, footlighting etc. – as *The Vaudeville Act*, but some of the details have been changed. For example, the figure in the bottom left hand corner of *The Vaudeville Act*, who turns toward the viewer, turns in the opposite direction in *The Leader of the Orchestra*. Rather than coming face-to-face with the man's portrait-like features, in *The Leader of the Orchestra* the viewer is confronted with the back of the man's head, a treatment that recalls *The Orchestra Pit*, *Old Proctor's Theater*. Other changes include the addition of a little rope supported by small poles at the edge of the stage in *The Vaudeville Act*, which is absent in *The Leader of the Orchestra*. Moreover, the dancers although placed in the same positions have different physiques and are wearing slightly altered costumes in the two paintings. In *The Vaudeville Act* the dancers are thinner, their bodies more elongated. The man's pant legs are narrower rather than the baggier version in *The Leader of the Orchestra* and the lady's dress is shorter and her hat is in a different position. While it is hard to know with absolute certainty which version of the pictures is earlier, the long dress and slightly more rounded, stockier figures such as those in *The Leader of the Orchestra* are characteristic of Shinn's earlier work. As Shinn's career progressed, his figures became thinner and more elongated and their costumes became more revealing like those that appear in *The Vaudeville Act*.¹²⁴

In the 1920s, Shinn continued to create lively representations of the theater, a striking example of which is *Curtain Call* (fig. 236). The origin of the painting can be traced to *The*

Vaudeville Act, revealing the artist's continuing interest in the pairing of male and female dancers. The palette of rich reds, greens, black, and white recalls *The Vaudeville Act* and *The Leader of the Orchestra*, as does positioning of the dancers on stage before a green painted backdrop. Again, the male dancer is attired in red trousers and his female partner is clad in a white dress, but here her costume has been transformed into a delicate tutu, revealing the dancer's long tapering legs. The pairs' dance has also become livelier, evoking the spirit of the roaring twenties. The female performer continues to hold a parasol as a prop, but now she extends her arms gracefully to the left and right, criss-crossing with those of her partner to form an undulating rhythmic line. Unlike his earlier more rounded figures, the dancers featured here are slender with long limbs, typical of Shinn's style at this time. Contemporary fashion favored tall, thin figures, a trend that is reflected in the illustrations that Shinn resumed following his divorce from Flossie in 1912 and continuing through his later work, including this painting. The most marked difference between *Curtain Call* and *The Vaudeville Act* and *The Leader of the Orchestra* is absence of the orchestra. Beginning around 1910, Shinn started occasionally to crop the compositions of his theater pictures, eliminating the audience and orchestra pit in favor of a close-up view of the performers on stage.

Shinn also depicted Spanish dancers in the oils, *Spanish Music Hall* (fig. 237) and *Keith's Union Square* (fig. 205), two of his most stunning representations of the subject. Around the turn of the century, Spanish dancers were enjoying great success in New York. One of the most famous, Carmencita, infatuated John Singer Sargent who threw parties for her in New York. In 1890, he painted the scintillating portrait of her now in the collection of the Musée d'Orsay. Carmencita's popularity with artists is also evident in pictures of her by William Merritt Chase and the display of her dancing slippers in the back parlor of the Tenderloin Club, a New York meeting place for artists and writers¹²⁵ The rage for things Spanish was still a force in the early twentieth century. The opera *Carmen* was immensely successful and played repeatedly throughout the early years of the century. Mlle. Otero, a well-known Spanish dancer who was

currently sharing the New York spotlight with Carmencita, caused a huge sensation when she arrived unannounced at the Tenderloin Club. A writer recalled:

She wore her dancing-gown and over her head a filmy white lace Spanish scarf that emphasized her rich brunette beauty. Had she been evolved from the smoke itself the Tenderloiners would not have been more surprised. A space was cleared for her in the centre of the room, and she whirled in to the music of the band, performed one of the dances which were the rage at that time, and whirled out again. Before the spectators realized that the dance was over they heard from the street below the slam of her carriage-door, and the first woman guest of the club had gone. Mlle. Otero at that time commanded a higher price for a private performance than a grand-opera star.¹²⁶

Shinn never visited Spain, but his enthusiasm for Spanish dancers may have been stimulated by Henri's descriptions of his trips to the Iberian continent that he began in 1900. Back in New York, Henri set about creating pictures of Spanish dancers using studio models.¹²⁷ Unlike Henri, Shinn probably based his Spanish dancers on performers that he witnessed in New York and Paris theaters. In addition to the general popularity of Spanish subjects, Shinn may have been attracted to the theme by the work of Manet whose Hispanicizing themes he would have recently seen in Paris. Paintings by Manet such as *The Spanish Ballet* (fig. 238), *Lola de Valance* (fig. 239), and *The Tragic Actor* (fig. 240) evoke a sultry exoticism and drama that Shinn would later translate into his own depictions of dancers and performers on stage.¹²⁸

In *The Spanish Music Hall* (fig. 237) a Spanish dancer dressed in a brilliant yellow costume is shown performing an energetic routine. She is one of the most spirited examples of Shinn's dancers, the torque of her body and the kicking up of one leg creating a remarkable dynamism. In the background sits a guitar player whose hat, boots, and stance recall the Catalonian guitar player in Manet's *The Spanish Ballet*. The bravura brushwork and the thick, juicy handling of the oil paint is characteristic of Shinn's treatment of the medium from this point forward.

Keith's Union Square (fig. 205) features a striking brunette dancer wearing a flowing white dress and a red flower in her hair. Linda S. Ferber refers to *Keith's Union Square* as "one

of several 'Spanish' song-and-dance motifs."¹²⁹ Shinn may have appreciated the Spanish dance for the rapport it invited between the dancer and the audience, who would become a part of the spectacle, clapping their hands, stamping their feet and crying out "Olé!"¹³⁰ Although in reality the Spanish dance could be quite racy, involving short skirts and provocative gestures, the dancers in Shinn's paintings, despite their lively movements, maintain a sense of decorum required of the cleaned-up vaudeville stage. Shinn may also have been drawn to the dancers' impressive costumes. Such presentations of fancy dresses were popular with female shoppers who frequented the area around Union Square. Many women came to Keith's to see the costumes, which like the dresses shown in the shop windows, provided a wondrous spectacle of display.¹³¹

Shinn first exhibited a picture of a Spanish dancer in March 1904 when he showed the pastel *The Spanish Song* (Location Unknown) at Durand-Ruel Galleries.¹³² Given his own appreciation of Spanish themes, it is not surprising that Henri was particularly enthusiastic about this work. In a letter to Shinn dated March 1904, he wrote: "We have seen your show and think it Bully. Think of awarding the prize to the 'Spanish Song' and like a lot of the others about as much."¹³³ In June of the same year Shinn exhibited a pastel titled *French Theater, Spanish Song* (Location Unknown) at M. Knoedler & Co. In 1905, in his large exhibition at E. Gimpel & Wildenstein, were two oils of Spanish subjects, *The Spanish Dance* (possibly the original title of *Spanish Music Hall* or *Keith's Union Square*) and *Carmen*.¹³⁴ *The Spanish Dance* was shown again at McClees Galleries in Philadelphia in 1907 and in 1908, Shinn exhibited *Spanish Dance, Music Hall* (possibly the original title of *Spanish Music Hall* or *Keith's Union Square*) at the National Arts Club in New York.

Occasionally Shinn would portray a group of dancers onstage as in *Theater Scene* (fig. 241), one of his most spectacular oils. The work is comparable to another of Shinn's masterful representations of the stage, *The White Ballet* (fig. 181), which also features a stage packed with performers. As is typical of Shinn's stage pictures, *Theater Scene* clearly manifests the adoption

of Degas's compositional strategies. The stage is shown from the point of view of a spectator seated in approximately the fifth row of the audience. The oblique angle and slightly raised position of the viewer afford a glance into the orchestra pit and across to the stage where a fantastic array of dancers perform in the glare of the footlights. Particularly remarkable is the painting's brilliant enamel-like color demonstrating the change in Shinn's palette from his earlier, more somber work.

Theater Scene may have originally been called *Chorus in the Ginger Bread Man*.

Written by Frederic Ranken with music by A. Baldwin Sloane, the *Gingerbread Man* played at the Liberty Theater in New York in 1905 and 1906. The musical was an elaborate production with a large cast that included courtiers, court ladies, chocolate éclairs, peasant girls, fairies and a chorus (fig. 242). In 1906, Shinn exhibited an oil painting entitled *Chorus in the Ginger Bread Man* at the Society of American Artists. The price for the work was \$500 (the same amount that Shinn was asking for *The Hippodrome, London*) indicating that the picture was most likely large and considered important by Shinn.¹³⁵ The reference to a "chorus" seems appropriate for the large number of performers in *Theater Scene* whose disparate characteristics and costumes do not appear to comprise a single act. Moreover, the fact that Shinn's oeuvre does not include many multi-figure stage scenes further suggests *Chorus in the Ginger Bread Man* as the original title of the work. In 1908, *The Ginger Bread Man* was included in the exhibition of *The Eight*.

Shinn's interest in the theater culminated in 1908 when he joined Henri, Sloan, Luks, Glackens, Prendergast, Ernest Lawson, and Arthur B. Davies in the landmark exhibition of *The Eight* at Macbeth Galleries.¹³⁶ As the exhibition and the criticism that it generated will be covered in depth in Chapter VIII, it suffices for now to say that the high esteem in which Shinn regarded his theater pictures is demonstrated by the fact that all eight of the paintings Shinn selected to represent him in the important exhibition were stage scenes. The group was composed of: *Gaieté Montparnasse*; *Rehearsal of the Ballet*; *The White Ballet*; *Leader of the Orchestra*; *The Gingerbread Man*; *The Orchestra Pit*; *Girl in Blue*; and *The Hippodrome, London*.

The Circus

The circus had always been a major attraction for Shinn. His autobiography records his boyhood delight when the circus came to his home in Woodstown, New Jersey. As Shinn later recalled:

Circuses were always the most wonderful thing in the world to me, and when a medicine man finally rolled into Woodstown on a single wagon my imagination was waiting for him, eager to be kindled. Dime store novels had laid the groundwork, like Indian scouts they had gone ahead of the circus and paved the way with scalps, feathers, bowie knives, tomohawks [sic], fringed leggings, squirty cut plug, savage yells, hairbreath escapes, clowns and lurid greasepaint.¹³⁷

In New York, he continued to visit the circus in Madison Square Garden and followed the big top when it traveled to Brooklyn.

Shinn first exhibited pastels of the circus at Boussod, Valadon & Co. in November 1901, showing *In Green Room Circus* and *The Circus*. In 1904, he showed an oil painting, *The Circus* (Location Unknown) at The Carnegie Institute and in 1906, he rendered circus performers in the monotype *Circus* (fig. 34). However, after creating a small number of early examples, his interest in the circus as a subject for paintings and pastels waned and did not significantly reappear until the 1930s and 1940s when it resumed with vigor in his accounts of aerialists and clowns. The oil *The Clown, (No Laughs)* (fig. 243) is an example of the amusing performers that attracted Shinn's attention during this period. In the 1940s, Shinn found a ready market in California for his pictures of the circus, particularly clowns. From February 16 to March 20, 1947, he held an exhibition of circus and theater pictures at James Vigeveno Galleries in Los Angeles in which at least twelve of the pictures featured were of clowns.

The circus continued to fascinate him for the rest of his life. Shortly before his death in 1953, he took trips to Florida where he spent hours watching the Ringling Brothers Circus.

making sketches for future paintings. In a letter to Mrs. Mildred Holzhauer at the Newark

Museum Shinn wrote:

I had a wonderful time and made several sketches of circus life at the Ringling Circus headquarters and at the Ringling Hotel where the perfected acts were put on three nights a week for the hotel patrons. It's a great privilege to sit all directly under and very close to these performers ... especially the man that balances himself on one finger. It does not seem like a trick."¹³⁸

¹ Yount, "Consuming Drama: Everett Shinn and the Spectacular City," p. 88.

² Everett Shinn's notes on *The Ambulance Call*. Dorothy Seiberling Collection, AAA, roll 794, frame 663.

³ Written on a label on the back of *Fire on Mott Street* in Shinn's hand.

⁴ This work has traditionally been dated 1907. However, the image was created in May 1902 as an illustration for reproduction in *McClure's Magazine*. See, Harvey J. O'Higgins, "A Change of Profession," *McClure's Magazine* 20 (November 1902): 92-98.

⁵ The work was first exhibited in 1903 when it was lent to the City Club from January 26-28. Listed as #3 of the three works sent, it was priced at \$200.

⁶ Provenance of *Fire in a Skyscraper*: Cincinnati Museum Association, May 23 to July 6, 1903, no. 2.; Durand-Ruel, March 2 to 16, 1904, no. 15; Pennsylvania Academy, "Philadelphia Watercolor Exhibition," March 28 to April 16, 1904, no. 6 Art Institute of Chicago, "Watercolors and pastels," April 28- June 5, 1904.

⁷ Robert A. M. Stern, Gregory Gilmartin, and John Montague Massengale, *New York 1900: Metropolitan Architecture and Urbanism, 1890-1915* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, 1983).

⁸ Anonymous writer, *Scribner's*, quoted in Robert A. M. Stern et al., *New York 1900*, p. 20.

⁹ Lewis A. Erenberg, *Steppin' Out, New York Nightlife and the Transformation of American Culture, 1890-1930* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1981), pp. 9-11.

¹⁰ Mary Black, *Old New York in Early Photographs* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1973), p. 164.

¹¹ During this period, there were two restaurants named Mouquin's. The locale depicted by Shinn was located at Sixth Avenue and 28th Street. The second Mouquin's was further downtown on Fulton Street.

¹² Stern et al., *New York 1900*, p. 224.

¹³ Glackens, *William Glackens*, p. 57.

¹⁴ Everett Shinn, as quoted in Perlman, *Robert Henri*, p. 51.

¹⁵ Shinn had previously used the tracks of the El as a framing device in *Under the Elevated* (c. 1899; Whitney Museum of American Art). However, the appeal of the El tracks was not unique to Shinn. For example, the structure appears in the painting *Blue Morning* by George Bellows (1919; National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.).

¹⁶ Kathy Peiss, *Cheap Amusements Working Women and Leisure in Turn-Of-The-Century New York* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), pp. 17-18.

¹⁷ "The New Fifth Avenue," *The Architectural Record* 22 (July 1907): 1.

¹⁸ Mariana Griswold van Rensselaer, "People in New York," *Century Magazine* 49 (February 1895): 545.

¹⁹ E. S. Martin, "New York's Easter Parade," *Harper's Weekly* 49 (April 22, 1905): 566-567.

²⁰ For Shinn's illustrations of the Easter Parade, see "Easter Sunday on Fifth Avenue," *Harper's Weekly* 44 (December 22, 1900): 1240-1241; "In Front of Saint Patrick's Cathedral on Easter Sunday," *Harper's Weekly* 58 (April 11, 1914): 16-17; and "How Easter Comes in the City," *Scribner's Magazine* 31 (April 1902): 450-451, 2 illus.

²¹ Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), p. 130.

²² Lillie Hamilton French, "Shopping in New York," *Century Magazine* 61, (March 1901): 649.

²³ Other representations of shopping by Shinn include: *Christmas Eve in the Shopping District*, *Harper's Weekly* 22 (December 1900): 1240-1241; *She was Hovering before the Fatal Window*. Illustration for Owen Johnson, *The Salamander* (Indianapolis, 1914) reproduced in McClure's, 1913-1914; *Shop Window*, *Harper's Weekly* 58 (February 14, 1914): 16-17; and *Slushy Night* (1945; Location Unknown).

²⁴ French, "Shopping in New York," p. 651.

²⁵ The original titles of these pictures may be *Show Window Rainy Night* and *Shop Window*, respectively. *Show Window* was shown in Shinn's exhibition at Durand-Ruel Galleries, March 2-16, 1904. Shinn sent a work titled *Shop Window* to the Rochester Art Club on November 5, 1904.

²⁶ William Leach, "The Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," in Simon J. Bronner, ed., *Consuming Visions: Accumulation and Display of Goods in America, 1880-1920* (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989), p. 103.

²⁷ As Wolfgang Schivelbusch, a scholar of the industrialization of light in the 19th century, commented on the changing landscape of the metropolis, "The illuminated window as stage, the street as theater and the passers-by as audience – this is the scene of big city life." Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *Disenchanted Night: The Industrialization of Light in the Nineteenth Century*, Angela Davis, trans. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 142, 148, quoted in David Nasaw, "Cities of Light. Landscapes of Pleasure," in Ward and Zunz, *The Landscape of Modernity*, p. 275.

²⁸ Leach, "The Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," p. 110.

²⁹ French, "Shopping in New York," p. 651.

³⁰ Theodore Dreiser, *Sister Carrie* (New York: Doubleday, Page and Co., 1900; repr., New York: Penguin Books, 1981), p. 23.

³¹ Leach, "The Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," pp. 111-113.

³² French, "Shopping in New York," p. 651.

³³ Leach, "The Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," p. 113.

³⁴ Valerie Steele, "Clothing and Sexuality," in *Men and Women: Dressing the Part*, eds. Claudia Brush Kidwell and Valerie Steele (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1989), pp. 50-51.

³⁵ *Retail Ledger*, June 6, 1923, p. 6. *Display World* 49, (August 1946): 90, quoted in Leach, "The Strategists of Display and the Production of Desire," p. 118.

³⁶ SAM.

³⁷ SAM.

³⁸ Kathy Peiss, "Commercial Leisure and the 'Woman Question,'" in *For Fun and Profit: The*

Transformation of Leisure into Consumption, ed. Richard Butsch (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), p. 112.

³⁹ Dreiser, *Sister Carrie*, p. 323.

⁴⁰ "Exhibition of Mr. Shinn's Pastels at Chase's Gallery," *Boston Evening Transcript*, February 6, 1901, p. 17.

⁴¹ "Pastels by Everett Shinn," *Boston Daily Advertiser*, February 7, 1901, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 30. While the pastel was on view at J. Eastman Chase's Gallery it also appeared as an illustration in: "Four Midwinter Scenes in New York - From Pastels by Everett Shinn," *Century Magazine* 61 (February 1901): 521-525. The work was reproduced with the caption: *Broadway, Late in the Afternoon*.

⁴² S. J. Woolf, *New York Times*, January 18, 1914, as cited in Norris F. Schneider, *Howard Chandler Christy* (Zanesville, Ohio: N. F. Schneider, 1975), p. 10.

⁴³ Allentown Art Museum, *Howard Chandler Christy: Artist/Illustrator of Style* (Kutztown, PA: Kutztown Publishing, 1977), n.p.

⁴⁴ A.[lbert] E. G.[allatin], *Whistler: Notes and Footnotes and other Memoranda* (New York: The Collector and Art Critic Co., 1907), p. 81.

⁴⁵ For an excellent account of Shinn's theater subjects, see Linda Ferber, "Stagestruck: The Theater Subjects of Everett Shinn," *American Art Around 1900: lectures in memory of Daniel Fraad*. Edited by Doreen Bolger and Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr. (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1990). Ferber points out Shinn's attention to the interaction between the audience and the performer.

⁴⁶ "Stage Dinner Given by Miss Marlowe," *New York Journal*, March 26, 1901, AAA, roll D179, frame 33.

⁴⁷ "Everett Shinn, Artist, Stagelover," *Monitor Register*, March 21, 1935, in which the author states: "It was about 1910 that Shinn converted his Waverly place studio into a little theater and founded the Waverly Place Players." Clipping located in Folder "1935," Everett Shinn, Box 2, Sketches Clippings, Helen Farr Sloan Library, Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington.

⁴⁸ Edith DeShazo, *Everett Shinn*, p. 71.

⁴⁹ "The Backyards," Dorothy Sieberling Collection, AAA, roll 794, frame 662.

⁵⁰ Glackens, *William Glackens*, p. 141.

⁵¹ "The Backyards," Dorothy Sieberling Collection, AAA, roll 794, frame 662.

⁵² *Republican* (Springfield, MA), January 5, 1902, AAA, roll D179, frame 40.

⁵³ "Art News," *New York Evening Post*, February, 24, 1900, p. 7.

⁵⁴ "Mr. Shinn's Work at Boussod & Valadon's," *New York Evening Sun*, January 15, 1901, p. 4.

⁵⁵ The apt description "stagestruck" is taken from the title of Ferber's article: "Stagestruck: The Theater Subjects of Everett Shinn."

⁵⁶ "Everett Shinn's Pastels," *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, January 16, 1901, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 28.

⁵⁷ "Notes on Matters of the Fine Arts." *New York Times*, January 26, 1901, p. 9.

⁵⁸ Du Bois, "A Fragonard of the Present Time," p. 14.

⁵⁹ A [Ibert] E. G. [allatin], "Everett Shinn's Decorative Paintings," *The Scrip* 1 (August 1906): 359.

⁶⁰ Shinn would continue to depict the ballet throughout his career. See for example *The Green Ballet*, 1943, oil on canvas, The Westmoreland Country Museum of Art.

⁶¹ *Scribner's Monthly* 15 (April 1878), pp. 888-89, cited in Francis Weitzenhoffer, *The Havemeyers: Impressionism Comes to America* (New York: Abrams, 1986), p. 26. As cited in Ann Dumas, "Degas in America," in *Degas and America: the early collectors*, Ann Dumas and David A. Brenneman (High Museum of Art: Atlanta, 2000), p. 14.

⁶² *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, undated news clipping in Shinn papers, AAA, roll 952, frame 315.

⁶³ "Eight-Man Show at Macbeth's," *New York Evening Post*, February 7, 1908, p. 5.

⁶⁴ "Paintings on View at the Academy of the Fine Arts," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, March 8, 1908, p. 16.

⁶⁵ "Fine Arts," *Brooklyn Eagle*, March 8, 1904, AAA, roll D179, frame 55.

⁶⁶ Barbara Rand, "The Art of Everett Shinn," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 1992), p. 175. Rand has noted the relationship between *Matinee, Outdoor Stage, Paris* and Shinn's illustration "Revenge Enough," published in *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 97 (September 1898): 661.

⁶⁷ Nicolai Cikovsky, Jr. et al., *American Impressionism and Realism, The Margaret and Raymond Horowitz Collection* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1999), p. 135.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the Café Concert, see Robert L. Herbert, *Impressionism: Art Leisure, and Parisian Society* (New Haven and London, 1988), pp. 76-91.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 133. See also the catalogue entry for *Bal du Moulin de la Galette, Montmartre* in Laurence Madeline, *Musee d'Orsay: 100 Impressionist Masterpieces* (Paris: Editions Scala, 1999), p. 90.

⁷⁰ For a discussion of Degas's puns between the stage and loge, see Herbert *Impressionism: Art Leisure, and Parisian Society*, p. 103.

⁷¹ For the American response to Degas, see Ann Dumas and David A. Brenneman, *Degas and America: The Early Collectors* (The High Museum: Atlanta, 2000).

⁷² For Degas and the marketplace, see Kendall, *Degas beyond Impressionism*, p. 45.

⁷³ Herbert *Impressionism: Art Leisure, and Parisian Society*, p. 103.

⁷⁴ A. E. Gallatin, "Studio-Talk," *International Studio* 30 (November 1906): 84-87.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ferber, "Stagestruck: The Theater Subjects of Everett Shinn," p. 59.

⁷⁷ A. E. Gallatin, "Studio-Talk," *International Studio* 30 (November 1906): 86.

⁷⁸ "Some Pastels by Shinn," *New York Times*, March 12, 1904, p. 9.

⁷⁹ Phyllis Hartnoll, ed., *The Oxford Companion to the Theater* (London: Oxford University Press, 1967), p. 444.

⁸⁰ Chloris Clark, "Some Impressions of the Work of the Independents," *News* (Columbus, Ohio), January 28, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 105.

⁸¹ In order to capture difficult angles, Shinn would often position himself as close as possible to the performers. Although there is no record of Shinn discussing his execution of *The Hippodrome, London*, he did record his experiences years later when he portrayed the Ringling Circus. In a letter to Mrs. Mildred Holzhauer at the Newark Museum, in which he referred to his recent trip to the circus' headquarters, Shinn wrote: "I had a wonderful time and made several sketches of circus life at the Ringling Circus headquarters and at Ringling Hotel where the perfected acts were put on three nights a week for the hotel patrons. It's a great privilege to sit directly under and very close to the performers...." Everett Shinn, New York, to Mrs. Mildred Holzhauer, New Jersey, April 8, 1949, Object File, The Newark Museum, Newark. The author would like to thank Dr. Holly Pyne Conner, Consulting Curator American Art, The Newark Museum, for making this letter available.

⁸² Record Book 1, p. 45.

⁸³ Record Book 1, p. 42.

⁸⁴ "Mrs. Blair," SAM.

⁸⁵ Record Book 1, p. 57.

⁸⁶ See, Yount, "Consuming Drama, Everett Shinn and the Spectacular City," pp. 87- 109.

⁸⁷ Weinberg et al. *American Impressionism and Realism*, p. 201.

⁸⁸ Yount, "Consuming Drama, Everett Shinn and the Spectacular City," pp. 87- 109.

⁸⁹ Barth, *City People*, pp. 3-5.

⁹⁰ John E. DiMeglio, *Vaudeville U.S.A.* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1973), p. 11.

⁹¹ Snyder, *Voice of the City*, xv.

⁹² Douglas Gilbert, *American Vaudeville: Its Life and Times* (New York: Whittlesley House, 1940), p. 4.

⁹³ Snyder, *Voice of the City*, p. 12.

⁹⁴ For use of the banjo in vaudeville, see Gilbert, *American Vaudeville, Its Life and Times*, pp. 45-46.

⁹⁵ Everett Shinn, "A Bowery Dance Hall," Everett Shinn Material, Dorothy Seiberling Collection, AAA, roll 794, frame 667.

⁹⁶ Snyder, *The Voice of the City*, p. 90.

⁹⁷ For women audiences in the vaudeville theater, see: Richard Butsch "Bowery B'hoys and Matinee Ladies: The Re-gendering of the Nineteenth-Century American Theater Audience," *American*

Quarterly 46 (Sept. 1994): 374-405; Snyder, *The Voice of the City*, pp. 32-33; Erenberg, *Steppin' Out*, pp. 66-67; and Barth, *City People*, p. 213.

⁹⁸ Anthony Slide, *The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), p. 278.

⁹⁹ Snyder, *Voice of the City*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

¹⁰¹ For Proctor's, see Snyder, *The Voice of the City*, p. 85; and Slide, *The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville*, p. 406.

¹⁰² Weinberg et al., *American Impressionism and Realism*, p. 217.

¹⁰³ Kent, "The Versatile Art of Everett Shinn," p. 12.

¹⁰⁴ DiMeglio, *Vaudeville U.S.A.*, p. 35.

¹⁰⁵ For the Olympia Theater, see Nicholas Van Hoogstraten, *Lost Broadway Theaters* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1991), p. 37.

¹⁰⁶ This work was illustrated with the caption: "In Mid-Air." See Kent, "The Versatile Art of Everett," p. 13.

¹⁰⁷ Personal note written by Everett Shinn dated 1943 and affixed to the back of the pastel.

¹⁰⁸ Two years later, Shinn returned to the motif of the tightrope walker in the monotype, *The Circus* (1906; The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

¹⁰⁹ Gerdt, *William Glackens*, p. 50.

¹¹⁰ Slide, *The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville*, p. 352.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 447-449.

¹¹² "Chic Sales" in Notes of People folder in the Shinn papers at the Delaware Art Museum.

¹¹³ Slide, *The Encyclopedia of Vaudeville*, p. 44.

¹¹⁴ Mary Cass Canfield, "The Great American Art," *New Republic* 32 (November 22, 1922): 335, quoted in Snyder, p. 105, footnote 1.

¹¹⁵ The original title for the painting may be "*The Funny Man*," *A London Music Hall Study*. It was reproduced with this title in Louis H. Frohman, "Everett Shinn, the Versatile," *International Studio* 78 (October 1923): 89. For the definition of "Lion Comique" see Wendy Baron and Richard Stone, eds., *Sickert Paintings* (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1992), p. 64.

¹¹⁶ Baron and Stone, *Sickert Paintings*, p. 64.

¹¹⁷ "Art and Artists," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, March 15 1903, p. 10.

¹¹⁸ Letter from Everett Shinn, New York, to Ralph H. Norton, Chicago, February 14, 1940. Curatorial file, Norton Museum of Art, West Palm Beach. I would like to thank Bruce Weber for bring this letter to my attention.

¹¹⁹ Excerpt from John Sloan's diary. As cited in piece file, Whitney Museum of American Art.

¹²⁰ For the purposes of this dissertation, I will refer to the painting of the male and female dancers on stage as *The Leader of the Orchestra*.

¹²¹ "New York's Art War and the Eight 'Rebels,'" *The World Magazine* (February 2, 1908), AAA, roll 952, frame 316.

¹²² Unidentified review. Courtesy of Mr. Mahonri Young.

¹²³ *New York Times*, February 6, 1908, AAA, roll 952, frame 318.

¹²⁴ See for example, *The Revue*, 1929, oil on canvas, Sotheby's, Dec. 1, 1994, lot 70 and *Vaudeville*, 1949, oil on canvas, collection of Marion and Samuel Lawrence. Later in life Shinn mused about his depictions of thin men and women commenting, "How did I happen to concentrate on tall slim people for models?" He twinkled, "Well maybe it was a subconscious yearning to be one of them myself." *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, March 25, 1949, p. 4.

¹²⁵ George Barry Mallon "The Hunt for Bohemia," *Everybody's Magazine* 12 (February 1905): 195.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 195.

¹²⁷ For American artists in Spain, see M. Elizabeth Boone, *Espana, American Artists and the Spanish Experience* (New York: Hollis Taggart Galleries, 1999). Boone notes that when Henri's pictures of Spanish dancers were exhibited, critics linked them to Sargent's *El Jaleo*.

¹²⁸ For Manet's treatment of Spanish performers, see Herbert, *Impressionism, Art, Leisure, & Parisian Society*, pp. 94-96.

¹²⁹ Ferber, *Stagestruck: The Theater Subjects of Everett Shinn*, p. 59. Shinn maintained his interest in Spanish themes as is evident in *Carmen* (1938; Private Collection).

¹³⁰ For Spanish dancing, see J. E. Crawford Fitch, *Modern Dancing and Dancers* (Philadelphia: L. B. Lippincott Co., 1912), pp. 189-199.

¹³¹ As Robert Snyder notes, "Some acts were recognized for their ability to draw women. Among them was Ethel Levey, who in her 'gorgeous' costume was apparently the big attraction that drew a crowd 'composed principally of women' to a Harlem Opera House matinee in 1907..." Snyder, *Voice of the City*, p. 33, footnote 35.

¹³² *A Spanish Song* was exhibited at Durand-Ruel Galleries in March 1904. Shinn Record Book 1, p. 48.

¹³³ Robert Henri, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, March 10, 1904, AAA, roll 952, frame 920.

¹³⁴ Shinn Record Book 1, p. 57.

¹³⁵ Shinn Record Book 1, p. 66.

¹³⁶ The exhibition of *The Eight* has been extensively covered in art history literature and does not require repeating here. For bibliographic sources on *The Eight*, see Introduction, p. 12, endnote 3.

¹³⁷ SAM.

¹³⁸ Everett Shinn, New York, to Mrs. Mildred Holzhauer, New Jersey, 8 April 1949, Object File.
The Newark Museum, Newark.

CHAPTER VII

DECORATION: THE BELASCO THEATER, THE TRENTON MURAL, AND PRIVATE HOMES

Beginning about 1904, Shinn embarked on a career in the decorative arts that paralleled his position as an interpreter of modern life.¹ For the next forty years, Shinn's artistic repertoire would include murals for a theater, a bar, and numerous private homes as well as painted screens, over-door lunettes, painted panels and even a commercial sign for the architectural firm Walker & Gillette. Most of these projects were executed in the style of the French 18th century, inspired by the work of Jean-Antoine Watteau, François Boucher, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, and Jean-Baptiste Pater. Initially, Shinn's adoption of neo-French Rococo and his interest in interior design might be interpreted as an escape from modern life and a retreat into the past. However, before making this judgment, two points must be considered. First, Shinn viewed his commissions for private homes as being of a different nature from work that was meant for the public space. According to Shinn, the private sphere required a separate aesthetic, which for him was the French 18th century. As he explained to an interviewer, "I felt that the intimate artist for Louis XVI home decoration was Fragonard."² Second, a brief examination of the decorating trends in the United States at the turn of the century reveals that revivalist French decoration inspired by the styles of Louis XIV, Louis XV, and Louis XVI was considered amongst the most *au courant* of the time. Edith Wharton and Ogden Codman, Jr. had recently published their taste-making book *The Decoration of Houses* (1897) in which they summed up the correct interior elements and design appropriate for specific rooms and residences. The authors looked to Italy, France, and England for styles suitable for contemporary living. They explain, "The styles especially suited to modern life have already been roughly indicated as those prevailing in Italy

since 1500, in France from the time of Louis XIV, and in England since the introduction of the Italian manner of Inigo Jones; and as the French and English styles are perhaps more familiar to the general reader, the examples given will usually be drawn from these.”³ Moreover, Shinn’s friend and later employer, Elsie de Wolfe, was an adamant Francophile and admirer of the neo-Rococo aesthetic. She promoted the style of the French 18th century (although not to the exclusion of other styles) by utilizing it in houses she decorated. She also featured it in her book *The House in Good Taste* (1913) and in the many articles she wrote describing her projects that appeared in *Good House Keeping* and the *Delineator*. Seen from this perspective, Shinn’s murals and other decorative work in the neo-French Rococo manner may be interpreted as another example of the artist’s ability to participate in and successfully express an aesthetic trend that represented an important cross-current of turn-of-the-century culture.

Elsie de Wolfe was probably the person most responsible for Shinn’s introduction to the field of interior decoration. It is difficult to determine the full extent of Shinn’s collaboration with de Wolfe as the Shinn Papers contain only her letters to him (none from Shinn to de Wolfe), and of these, most are not dated and do not include the names of the clients. De Wolfe, in some of the letters in which she discusses her plans for decorative collaborations with Shinn, requests that the artist meet her at the theater where she was performing. According to de Wolfe’s biographer, Jane Smith, de Wolfe gave her last professional performance in 1904; thus one can assume that Shinn’s business association with her began by or before 1904 while she was still acting and may have continued through 1911.⁴

By the spring of 1905, de Wolfe had decided to embark on a career as a decorator. As soon as people learned that she was making her decorating services available, she was flooded with commissions from clients searching for the right chandelier, needing help selecting fabrics, and wishing guidance on matters of taste.⁵ An important opportunity to establish herself on a prestigious and more public level occurred that year when she received the commission to decorate the Colony Club, a new clubhouse to be used exclusively by women. Stanford White

designed the new red brick building, and he was instrumental in helping her to secure the project. When the Board of Governors expressed doubt about giving such an important job to a woman whom they felt lacked experience, White intervened demanding, "Give it to Elsie and let the girl alone! She knows more than any of us."⁶

The Colony Club has since moved uptown to 564 Park Avenue, but the original red brick building is still extant at 122 Madison Avenue and is now home to the American Academy of Dramatic Arts. De Wolfe spent two years designing and decorating the club, during which time she traveled to Europe to buy materials for the project and employed a number of artists and craftsmen to help her execute her ideas. Shinn may have been one of the artists who worked on the commission with de Wolfe. During the time that de Wolfe was engaged with the project, Shinn had just begun to work in the decorative arts under her guidance; thus it is reasonable to postulate that she may have included his work in the commission.⁷ When the Club opened in 1907, it was described as being "colonial from swimming pool to roof garden."⁸ The one exception, however, was the small private dining room on the fourth floor, which was the only room decorated in the style of the French 18th century. Of the dining room de Wolfe recalled, "The small French dining-room was the most difficult to manage, as there was no real window – only two little ones placed high at one end of the room, and a skylight. I have paneled the walls in delicious yellowy tan, with inset gray paper painted in tans and pinky yellows and browns. The carpet has the same rose-petal tone, and the skylight is shaded with silk curtains of the color."⁹ The original painted designs that were set into the panel frames are no longer *in situ* and have presumably been lost.¹⁰ Fortunately, a photograph of the room was reproduced in de Wolfe's book *The House in Good Taste* and from this image one can make out four panels of what may have been a larger suite of murals (fig. 244).¹¹ The design of swirling acanthus vines, graceful swags of perhaps fruit or flowers and fluttering birds, is repeated in each panel. Although thus far no documents have surfaced that definitively link these paintings with Shinn,

the works are consistent with his decorative style and bear a remarkable resemblance to his other commissions for private homes (e.g., fig. 245)¹²

De Wolfe's letters to Shinn reveal that in addition to employing him on projects, she played the role of a mentor advising him on examples of furniture to see and providing him with books to read. She sent him to the Cooper Institute to study a carved and painted Louis XV decoration, but stressed that the piece was "not for copy – only a suggestion."¹³ She wrote to Shinn inquiring, "Did you go to the Cooper Union and look at the Pergolesi and Vigée le Brun drawings such as were used on the 18th century furniture...?"¹⁴ As part of his education, she arranged for him to copy a panel at the Hewitts (presumably the sisters Sarah and Eleanor Hewitt with whom she was close friends), but cautioned that he must finish his own work first.¹⁵ At times, she was demanding, urging him to finish a mantle and three new drawers "as quickly as possible, as soon as they reach you." And she preferred to oversee his work writing, "it would be wiser to let me see the design you propose putting on the doors."¹⁶

When de Wolfe worked with Shinn on a project, she attended to all the details from travel arrangements to payments. For a commission in Westbury, which included a side table, panels, as well as other pieces, she made sure a trap was waiting for him at the station and even advised him to "take a sandwich in your pocket" to eat on the train.¹⁷ In March 1906, when they worked together on a project for a Mrs. Travers, she wrote to Shinn: "There is a most excellent train at 9:50. Will you please telephone me if this is convenient for you so I may make my arrangements with them down there. Please tell me how much the extra painting is to be and I will send you a check at once."¹⁸ Not all the correspondence is as business-like in tone; some is quite friendly -- for instance a letter from de Wolfe to Shinn inviting him and Flossie to come see herself and Miss Marbury in their costumes for a ball "if it would amuse you."¹⁹ They seem to have remained friendly throughout the years, and in 1947, when he exhibited in California at James Vigeveno Galleries, the papers reported that purchasers included Lady Mendl (Elsie de Wolfe). Shinn is

quoted as saying, “Lady Mendl and I are old friends, in New York and Paris. She discovered me.”²⁰

In 1905, Shinn received his first large-scale decorative commission to create work for a new house being built by Clyde Fitch, the American playwright who in 1899 had purchased *Scene – Julia Marlowe* when it was shown at de Wolfe’s. When Fitch approached Shinn, the playwright was already well known, having written several notable works such as *Nathan Hale* (1898), *Barbara Frietchie* (1899), *The Climbers* (1901), and *The Girl with the Green Eyes* (1902). Nevertheless, Fitch felt that he had little money to spend and entered into an unusual bargain with Shinn who agreed to do the work without payment on the condition that the playwright cover the costs of the materials and the installation.²¹ In return, Fitch assured him that the house would serve as a showcase for his work and that it would be seen by the city’s leading art patrons and other prominent citizens. As Shinn recalled, “I gave all I had to the work.”²² By October 1905, he had completed two ceilings, double doors with three painted panels in each, and a decorated Steinway piano showing a group of actors at Fontainebleau listening to Molière recite one of his plays. All the works were executed in spirit of revivalist French decoration, a style upon which he commented in an article in 1905:

When you speak the words Louis XIV, you have visions of ribbons and laces, of garlands, of theatrical fêtes under spreading trees with tapestries stretched from branch to branch, of beribboned walking sticks and powdered wigs, of frivolity in life and its counterpart in art. I believe I have caught that evanescent charm – at least I have made the effort.²³

Of the various decorations, the piano attracted the most attention.²⁴ A reporter for *The Sun* in an article entitled “The Transformed Piano” traced the inspiration behind Shinn’s piano to the musical instruments in the Cluny Museum in Paris where “Mr. Shinn spent months studying their decorations and absorbing the secrets of their colors and glazes...”²⁵ Shinn explained to *The Sun* reporter that a piano, because it is a piece of furniture that cannot easily be hidden from sight, should therefore be made to conform to the canons of good taste. In order to achieve this, he first

filled in all the pores of the wood, creating a smooth surface. Then he patiently gilded and lacquered the piano before covering the entire instrument with wreaths, ribbons, and floral offerings. On the lid, he painted a Watteau-like dancing group, and finally he coated the work in a special glaze that gave the piano an antique-look, which visually appeared to add years to its age.

Although *The Sun* praised the piano, Fitch was not completely satisfied and wrote to the artist requesting that alterations be made to the figures on the interior of piano lid. Shinn was still at work on the revisions to the piano in April of 1906 when Fitch sent further suggestions from the Hotel Dominici in Paris. Fitch advised, "Just a word about the piano. Please decorate the sides as much as possible too, for they show so very plainly."²⁶ The piano, finally finished in January of 1907, was placed in the playwright's elegant apartment. The residence featured a room decorated in the style of the 18th century with tapestries, a fireplace, and various pieces of period looking furniture. Fitch was very specific about the placement of his piano writing to Shinn, "I want it placed on the right hand side of the room exactly opposite the fireplace the side against the big tapestry panel with the keys toward the window."²⁷ The Museum of the City New York owns a watercolor by Shinn titled, *Study for Clyde Fitch Room* showing the piano within this interior (fig. 246).

Fitch's piano was such a success that the artist was immediately commissioned to provide a similar piano for Mrs. William Tevis of San Francisco. In October 1905, *The Sun* reported that Shinn, who was to have free reign over the creative scheme for the piano, was contemplating a plan which was "to be done on a white background in red, the painting simulating the red chalk drawings which Mr. Shinn uses a great deal in his illustrating work If this design is carried out it will display a set of medallion portraits enwreathed with roses and the lid will show some ballroom scene or theatrical representation."²⁸ Shinn envisioned the instrument as part of a larger design plan in which he was to have total control over the project. *The Sun* stressed that, "The piano is to be placed in a period room where every detail is to be carried out under Mr. Shinn's

supervision.”²⁹ When Fitch learned about the Tevis piano, he expressed his typical generous enthusiasm. In a letter to Shinn he added, “I am delighted to hear about the other piano! Hurrah!”³⁰

True to his word, Fitch made certain that notable people saw Shinn’s work. According to the artist, when Thomas Hastings, of the firm Carrière and Hastings, viewed the ceilings he mistook them for European decorations and remarked to Fitch, “Clyde, you didn’t bring back any cheap stuff when you got that ceiling.”³¹ Fitch wrote to Shinn, “Hastings is enthusiastic about y[ou]r work! Piano, ceilings, doors. He was here today and I showed it all to him and he looked at it very seriously. I hope I have pulled off something really good and worth while for you. We spoke of the theater [the commission for the producer David Belasco’s Stuyvesant theater that Fitch was hoping Shinn would receive].” In the letter Fitch urged Shinn to meet with Hastings and sent along a card of introduction telling Shinn to “strike while the iron is hot.”³² Fitch also invited Shinn to his house to meet the Hewitts [the well-known Hewitt sisters] and expressed delight when Shinn wrote with a request to bring A. E. Gallatin over to see the painted piano and other decorations.³³ In his unpublished autobiography, Shinn discusses the Fitch project in some detail and is clearly grateful to the playwright for taking a chance on him when he was a young artist, who at that point had little experience in the field of decorative arts. He writes, “I record this incident for one purpose .. That of not denying an opportunity .. of not refusing to give because you have not received .. to hide in a studio and expect the FBI art agent to travel roofs and peek in on you and accuse you of ability ... You have none until you prove it.”³⁴ When de Wolfe saw the result of Shinn’s work for Fitch she wrote to him: “I have seen Clyde Fitch’s and am delighted with it.”³⁵

Though only a select group of people were invited to view Shinn’s work at Clyde Fitch’s home, the public was given a chance to examine the results of the artist’s decorative commissions when, from February 4 to 24, 1906, thirteen frames containing sketches and photos of his doors, ceilings, piano, and other items were exhibited at the Architectural League.³⁶ The sketches and

photos were subsequently lent to Albert E. Gallatin, perhaps for consideration for future commissions of decorative arts. In August of 1906, Gallatin reproduced an over-door created for the music room of Emil Stehle in his article "Everett Shinn's Decorative Paintings."³⁷ The subject portrayed on the Stehle over-door – a man and woman in French 18th century costumes in a garden setting – is typical of Shinn's decorative work. Gallatin was an enthusiastic supporter of Shinn's work. He, more than any other critic, appreciated Shinn's ability to balance reality and fantasy in his work. Noting the artist's increasing interest in decorative work painted in a neo-Rococo manner he remarked:

And now with growing frequency the artist lays aside his intensely modern aspect of life, his vivid visions so comparatively free of illusions, and gives us in their stead pictures reflecting the artifice of about the most unreal age in which art has ever flourished – the eighteenth century. Shinn has schooled himself well in the tradition of this epoch.... He has also studied intelligently the perfect reflectors of the age – I mean Watteau and his pupils, Lancret and Pater, and his followers, Boucher and Fragonard.³⁸

Gallatin was not alone in his praise of Shinn's neo-Rococo style. C. Matlock Price shared Gallatin's enthusiasm for the grace and charm of the artist's renditions of the *bal masque* and the *fête champêtre*. In an article on the revival of eighteenth century French art he wrote: "Of all painters in this country Mr. Everett Shinn stands alone as one who has seemed to relive in his mind the spirit of Watteau and of Boucher – who seems able to visualize in graphic terms the gardens, the fetes, the animated life of that brief and wholly vanished phase of French history."³⁹

The Fitch commission was instrumental in helping Shinn garner other assignments, including the monumental task of decorating David Belasco's new theater, The Stuyvesant, which was being built by the architect George Keister at 111 West 44th Street.⁴⁰ Equipped with the most sophisticated lighting system of the day, as well as a large elevator stage and a special studio where scenic and lighting effects were developed, the theater incorporated some of the most innovative technology of the day. Wilfred Buckland, responsible for the general decorative scheme for The Stuyvesant, oversaw the massive project for which Shinn created 18 murals. Not

only did the large-scale commission pay enough to cover both the Fitch project and his work on The Stuyvesant, it also provided the first public debut of his decorative work.

Shinn first met David Belasco in Paris in 1900 at Elsie de Wolfe's and Elizabeth Marbury's summer home at Versailles. He remembered Belasco as "a colossal faker" whose affectations permeated all aspects of his personality from his clothes to his mannerisms.⁴¹ Shinn had not seen Belasco since their encounter abroad, but at Fitch's urging called on him to pitch his ideas for the decoration of The Stuyvesant. Every evening during the 1905 theater season, Shinn left his card at Belasco's office, but the producer refused to see him until Wilfred Buckland, an old acquaintance, intervened. As art editor of *Ainslee's Magazine*, Shinn had given Buckland a much-needed job. In his new role as Belasco's scenic designer Buckland repaid the favor by personally escorting Shinn to Belasco's office.

Recalling the producer's taste for melodrama, Shinn knew that he could not simply present a straightforward proposal for the mural project. He noted, "The murals would have to be rampant with emotions, and I would have to be strenuously emotional in describing them. I would have to modulate my voice, tear my hair, and fling myself about the room in order to convince Belasco that I was a competent artist. A man who could not act was nothing else to Belasco." Shinn described his plan to Belasco as: "Each panel must tell a story of an elemental emotion I thought of calling one, 'Following the World' the central figure a woman mercilessly thrusting aside her infant child, discarding her husband, tripping after a lute player who dances on the brink of destruction. Another panel would be called 'Blind Love', and the central figure would be a woman blindfolded, her arms tied behind her back as she wades in the sorrowful slough of broken hearts she has crushed, on and on, following the love that possessed her."⁴²

After listening to Shinn's description for the project, Belasco responded that he had to give the matter more thought and told the artist to come back the following week. When Shinn returned, Belasco acted as if he had thought of the theme for the murals himself. Shinn recalled,

“In utter amazement I sat there and heard the echo of my own sales talk almost word for word.”⁴³ Nevertheless, he managed to keep silent as Belasco repeated his plan for allegorical figures and received the commission for the project for which he asked \$20,000. The producer agreed to the fee with the unusual arrangement that Shinn would be put on the payroll as an actor receiving \$350 a week until the sum was paid. The exhaustive undertaking occupied much of Shinn’s time throughout 1906 and into 1907. Toward the end of the project, Shinn became tired and bored with the mural commission and spoke of his fatigue to his friend the artist, Ben Ali Haggin. Haggin suggested that Shinn bring in the young artist George Bellows to help with the work on the back wall over the balcony. Years later, Shinn became outraged when he read a column in the *New York Evening Journal* which gave undue credit to Bellows, stating that he had painted the murals over the proscenium.⁴⁴ Shinn promptly wrote to the column’s author John Anderson explaining:

The figure panels over the boxes and the proscenium arch were completed and in place, and the scaffolding removed several weeks before I had the pleasure of meeting George Bellows. I had completed every atom of every surface of every panel in the theater unaided until I got to the back of the wall of the balcony which contained several panels between the windows that looked out on 44th street....

Bellows ... confined his even then remarkable ability to the enlargement of four panels from sketches prepared by me.

In these panels there were no figures when Bellows stopped work on them, but in these panels I painted two small figures perhaps 20 inches high in each of two panels. Bellows was at no time within 50 feet of the panels that your editorial credits him with having painted, for to reach these panels he would have had to have a brush 50 feet long to span the space from the balcony or gallery to the paneled surface over the boxes and proscenium arch. George Bellows was a strong and magnificent painter and takes his place very securely under his own identity.⁴⁵

On May 7, 1931, Anderson responded to Shinn’s complaint and printed a correction that declared, “Mr. Bellows did not paint the murals over the proscenium” followed by an excerpt from Shinn’s letter. He diffused the situation by concluding his article: “With curtsies and

salaams on all sides, obeisances, apologies, and salutes, I can only say with Groucho Marx, that I'm sorry the matter ever came up."⁴⁶

During the summer of 1907, William Glackens ran into an over-worked looking Shinn and wrote to his wife Edith: "I met Flossie and Everett on the elevated last evening. He was going up to the theater [Belasco Theater, then called the Stuyvesant] to work on his decoration. He looked pretty well fagged out."⁴⁷ To make matters worse, Belasco's payments were not always dependable and the Shinnss occasionally had to endure long periods without the expected check. In 1908, the Shinnss had hoped to visit the Glackenses at a place they were renting in Cape Cod, but money was short and they cancelled their trip. Flossie wrote to Edith, "It's all D. Belasco's fault. We expected to be lolling about in the lap of luxury this summer, only the bad year affected the theater crops so no more payments came in after April 1st and won't until after October. This was a sad blow for we had not looked ahead..."⁴⁸ Shinn never did receive the full amount for the Belasco commission.⁴⁹

Over the proscenium arch Shinn executed a large mural displaying twenty-nine nude and semi-nude figures shown dancing and cavorting mostly in pairs (figs. 247, 248, and 249). Each pair was meant to express an elemental emotion such as love, sin, shame, or devotion. The program for the opening night of the theater, *The First Night in David Belasco's Stuyvesant Theater*, offers the following description of the mural over the proscenium arch:

Beginning at the left, the two figures suggest the general idea of Intrigue, Treason, and Calumny. The right-hand figure, evidently repelled at the suggestion of the semi-demon, has scarcely the moral decision to repulse him utterly. The next two figures, representing a man forcibly holding a woman's hands behind her back suggest Slavery – not merely the common physical bondage of the purchased slave, but the more subtle forms of intellectual and moral slavery.⁵⁰

The program continues: "The decoration over the boxes or either side of the proscenium arch are allied in character, forming, in a way, parts of one composition. The panels treat the emotion of love in its more physical and profane aspect: the lunettes depict its domestic and better

phases.” The mural on the right, which includes a figure representing Blind Love, is placed above a lunette portraying a mother attempting to shield her child from the enticements of the world, which are symbolized by a man playing a lute (fig. 250). The pendant work on the opposite wall shows Feminine Fascination in the form of a self-absorbed woman, who ignoring her circle of admirers, scatters flowers upon jewels and money placed at her feet. Her carelessness and vanity are contrasted with the lunette beneath which “symbolizes domestic Felicity and Harmony. It is the apotheosis of all right-living; the ‘happy endings’ of all the sweetest and best acts in the great drama called life.”

Painted in russet tones of browns and reds against a blue background, the frolicking nudes in an allegorical setting more closely resemble the work of Arthur B. Davies than any of Shinn’s previous work. Indeed, although the figures bear some resemblance to the red chalk drawings that Shinn adopted from the French Rococo, they are more elongated and much less delicate. The mask-like faces of the men and women and the contorted, exaggerated treatment of the figures’ bodies seem to have been a style Shinn developed specifically for the theater commission. The style appears again only in other theatrical work such as playbills for David Belasco’s comedy *The Boomerang* (1915) and his first musical success, *Hit the Deck* (1927) (figs. 251 and 252).

The Stuyvestant Theater opened on October 16, 1907 and was immediately well-received, critics proclaiming it the “most beautiful theater in the world.” Conceived as a “living-room in a high sense of the word,” Buckland’s intention was to create a “room wrapped in the atmospheric intimacy of which the spectator whether in an orchestra stall or in the last seat in the balcony, would feel not so much that he was in a public place as in a private house to which he had been personally invited.”⁵¹ The small, shallow playhouse was deemed a perfect fit for the naturalistic acting of David Warfield who starred in the opening night performance, “A Grand Army Man.” The wood and marble interior was furnished with items that had once belonged to Stanford White. Tiffany, who created the favrile glass that was embroidered into the stage

curtain, also designed all of the glass lamps. The color scheme was carried out in rich autumn tones, which harmonized with the hues of Shinn's murals as well as the shade of the lighting.⁵² The attention to details and the installation of Shinn's paintings and Tiffany glass caused one writer to state: "The Stuyvesant Theater needs but a glance to show that in its public conveniences, dramatic paraphernalia and decorative scheme it is the most complete and beautiful playhouse in New York. Others are more elaborate, but not one is in such good taste."⁵³ Shinn was recognized as "the distinguished artist" who had covered the walls with mural paintings, which were admired for the way they fit harmoniously with the rest of the decorative scheme.⁵⁴

Critics remarked on the democratic placement of the Shinn's murals, which were as visible to the people in the cheaper seats as to the holders of higher priced tickets. An amusing drawing in a contemporary review shows the audience craning their necks to see Shinn's murals. The caption under the cartoon reads:

"It's just as I told 'em," said Mr. Bimberg, the man who built the beautiful new Stuyvesant Theater. "Look at 'em, the people in the \$2 seats, breaking their necks to see the pictures that Everett Shinn has painted away up over the proscenium, while the guys in the gallery can see 'em without stretching their heads out o' shape.... I'd have had more pictures down on the first floor and gilded the top of the place if I'd had my way!"⁵⁵

However, the writer then assumes a more serious tone to conclude: "The mural paintings over the proscenium and boxes in the new Stuyvesant are the finest work of their kind in any playhouse in the country. They are by Everett Shinn, and have made him famous in a night."⁵⁶ In addition to the decoration on the interior of the theater, Shinn also depicted the outside of the Stuyvesant in a pastel showing pedestrians in snow before the theater's majestic façade (fig. 253).⁵⁷

Though the murals suffered damage throughout the years, a definite casualty occurred in 1975 when renovations were made to the theater in preparation for the production of the Rocky Horror Show. Shinn's panel "Music" was destroyed when workmen, in order to access the antiquated wiring in the wall behind the work, broke through the panel. According to an article written about the theater in 1975, only six panels remained of the original group and of these, two

were partially destroyed to make room for air-conditioning ducts.⁵⁸ Although today the theater no longer retains its original state of splendor, large panels of the murals can still be seen above the proscenium arch, over the boxes, above the wainscoting along the stairway as well as smaller examples placed above doorways and on the back wall of the theater (see, for example, figs 254, 255, and 256).

Despite the enormous amount of work required for the Styuvesant, Shinn found time in July 1906 to work on the house of Mr. Henry Markle, a coal king who resided at Fifth Avenue and 57th Street. For the drawing room, Shinn was commissioned to paint over the doors, an over mantel, and a ceiling. A photograph in the Shinn papers at the Archives of American Art shows the artist at work on the large ceiling mural (fig. 257).⁵⁹ Measuring 15 x 15 ft., the ceiling was decorated with a circle of putti who appear to be floating in space while holding a garland wreath. Surrounding the central figures, acanthus vines and ribbons form swirling decorative motifs. Through Shinn's correspondence with his friend the portrait painter Ben Ali Haggin, it is possible to follow the progress of Shinn's work on the Markle ceiling. On July 22, Shinn wrote to Haggin, "I am working every morning on the big ceiling. I will finish it by next Saturday."⁶⁰ By the following weekend, the work still was not complete, but Shinn sent Haggin a letter that read, "My dear Ben, It's coming."⁶¹ The illustrated letter shows Shinn, with palette and brushes in hand, painting a corner of the ceiling panel, as exhausted workers lie supine around him (fig. 258). At the feet of one of the collapsed bodies Shinn has written, "Tired Out Helpers."

As the ceiling was nearing completion, Shinn had an amusing encounter with Mrs. Markle over the color of the figures' eyes. In his unpublished autobiography he recorded:

One afternoon, when the work had been finished and I was glazing on the hard dry surface of the paint, she [Mrs. Markle] entered swathed in fur and animosity. I heard the scurrying of workmens' feet while I felt secure beyond the floor of the scaffolding. Yet this time she spied me and rasped out command to be attended.
Is it finished?
All done just a little more glazing."
Glazing? She asked in surprise. I thought I was going to get an oil painting.
You are but I am glazing it. The picture is really done.

Mrs. Markle then complained that the eyes of the figures were all the same color, telling Shinn that she insisted on seeing different colored eyes. To appease her, Shinn repainted the eyes in brilliant shades of garish colors that met with a chorus of approval from Mrs. Markle and her group of friends. However, once they left, Shinn removed the changes for “below those vulgar and discordant eyes the lady had requested was a hard impenetrable coat of varnish.” The revision went unnoticed by Mrs. Markle, who the following day said to Shinn: “Oh I am so glad I came in time, yesterday. It’s perfect, it’s perfect.”⁶² Finally, on September 1, 1906 Shinn listed the ceiling in his record book as finished, noting that he received \$500 for the work, which was paid in three installments.⁶³

As Shinn’s reputation in the decorative arts grew, private and public patrons increasingly sought his talents. Between 1910 and 1911, he was engaged in at least four large-scale commissions, three for the homes of some of the country’s richest and most prominent families and one for the Council Chamber of the City Hall of Trenton, N.J. It is interesting to note that several of Shinn’s decorative projects for private homes were related to music. Perhaps he and his clients felt that his characteristic decorative subject matter of frolicking costumed girls and dancing couples was well suited to a room devoted to melodies and harmonies. In addition to the pianos painted for Clyde Fitch and Mrs. William Tevis, he also adorned music rooms for Emil Stehle (mentioned above), Mr. and Mrs. Warren Salisbury, and Mr. and Mrs. Charles Thruston Ballard.

The most elaborate music room Shinn decorated was for the great hall of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Salisbury designed by Walker & Gillette in Pittsfield, Massachusetts. The work occupied Shinn’s time during the fall of 1910, resulting in two series of panels. The first group, large Rococo-inspired scenes, was executed primarily in gray. The second set, created to surround an organ screen, was smaller, and painted in bright colors. In 1915, the artist and author Guy Pène du Bois offered the following extensive commentary on the panels:

In the main hall of that imposing gray stone structure [the Georgian house of Mr. and Mrs. Warren Salisbury] he has painted eight panels, ten feet high and eight feet broad. Architecturally their design is similar – a stone wall terminated at each end by a pedestal, supporting a conventional urn from which bursts forth up and over a shower of flowers and leaves. The variants to this design occur between the pedestals – a figure seated gracefully in accidental posture with the nonchalance of the period and something of the enquiring boldness upon the wall, or a fountain with Boucher's or Fragonard's or Watteau's cupids in an attitude they liked. Beyond one catches a glimpse of a landscape, like that of Versailles, formal with now and then to break the monotony of too much foliage, a classic colonnade or a wide expanse of sky, crowded with gay clouds. The spirit of this art is in the flowers. They are the models, the inspiration. They are there in obvious form and in the expression of the figures that they accompany...

For the keyboard of the Salisbury pipe organ, one of the most expensive in this country – if that is interesting – Shinn painted a panel, the spirit of music exemplified in the dance.⁶⁴

Shinn's efforts were well appreciated by the Salisburys who continued to enjoy the murals throughout the years. On November 30, 1928, Mrs. Salisbury wrote to Shinn, "The hall paintings have always been the greatest joy."⁶⁵ Unfortunately, in 1948 the Salisbury House, which was then known as Tor Court, was sold to the Hillcrest Hospital and the contents of the residence were put up at auction. Though the present location of the panels is not known, it is possible to obtain a sense of the style and subject matter of the commission from two images of the works reproduced in a contemporary article by C. Matlock Price. (figs. 259 and 260)⁶⁶ One image, described as a "panel over the keyboard in the pipe organ," shows a group of women outdoors, some of whom are seated while others dance with joyful abandon. The other work, simply described as a "panel in grey, 10 x 7 ft" portrays a gentleman in 18th century garb seated between two garden urns. In an article "A Revival of Eighteenth century French Art," Price refers to the panels as "The latest and perhaps, the most striking success achieved by Mr. Shinn." He continues, "Here are a succession of vistas through repeated pairs of garden urns, where, in a foreground half buried in a lavish profusion of flowers, sit ideal figures, gay and laughing, filled with a youthful abandon that surely echoes the 'enchanted epoch' of their birth."⁶⁷

The following year, 1911, proved to be a very busy time for Shinn. Not only was he occupied with the large mural for Trenton City Hall, but he was also at work on two decorative

commissions for private houses. During the summer of 1911, Shinn received a commission to decorate the music room of the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Thruston Ballard in Louisville, Kentucky. Colonel Charles Ballard, descended from Bland Ballard, an early Kentucky pioneer, was a member of one of the most prominent families in Louisville. After studying at the Sheffield Scientific School of Yale University, Ballard co-founded the Ballard & Ballard Milling Company in 1880, that owned several flour mills in Louisville and St. Louis, and Missouri.⁶⁸ In 1911, Ballard, together with his brothers S. Thruston Ballard and Roger Clark Ballard Thruston gave thirteen and a half acres of land to the city for the establishment of Churchill Park, a public park and playground.⁶⁹ Between 1910-11, Ballard enlisted the architect E. T. Hutchings and his father, John Bacon Hutchings to build a stately neo-Georgian mansion in Glenview, near Louisville. Shinn, whose reputation was by this time well established, was asked to provide a tasteful interior for the music room. For the project, Shinn painted a ten-panel screen and seven lunettes. The panels of the screen are decorated with flower-filled vases above which parrots perch on garlands and above these are small profile-portraits in cameo-like formats hanging from *trompe-l'oeil* blue ribbons (fig. 261). For the lunettes, Shinn used red chalk on paper to render scenes of shepards and shepardesses, dressed in Rococo-period clothing and placed in a pastoral setting (figs. 262, 263, 264, and 265). News of the commission reached the New York papers and on June 27, 1911 a writer for the New York *Herald* reported on the progress of the room, emphasizing Shinn's control of the entire decorative scheme:

Decorations in red chalk, in the eighteenth century style of France, have just been completed for the music room in the new home of Mr. Charles Ballard in Louisville, Ky., as the outcome of an interesting experiment in color schemes. The first of these drawings in sanguine, which have been made by Mr. Everett Shinn, was sent to Paris, where fabrics were made to harmonize with its various shades. The seven lunettes, which are to be placed over two doors and five windows are drawn in the red medium on yellowish manila paper. The curtains which are to go beneath them are in varying shades of reddish brown, the design being in the deepest form of the color. The wall hangings are of a café-au-lait shade, which harmonize with the backgrounds of the pictures. The entire scheme of decoration was worked out from the drawings, which is a departure from prevailing methods, which usually make the work of the artist conform to what has been planned by the decorator.⁷⁰

Unfortunately, Ballard only enjoyed the house a short time before his death in May of 1918. The house was then sold to Judge Robert Worth Bingham, publisher of the *Courier-Journal* and the *Louisville Times*. Today the house, known as Melcombe, has been designated a historical landmark and is still owned by the Bingham family. The Shinn decorations, however, were not purchased with the house and remained in the Ballard family. The ten-panel painted screen was divided amongst family members: three panels were given to Ballard's daughter, Fanny Thruston; two panels to his daughter Mina Breaux Chambers, and the remaining five to a family member whose name remains unknown. Fanny Horner and her sister Mina Breaux Chambers also inherited some of the lunettes. As Ms. Horner did not have room for hers, she carefully wrapped and stored them, but Ms. Chambers installed hers in her Georgian dining room where according to her sister, "they suited perfectly."⁷¹ In 1946, Fanny Horner wrote to Shinn regarding the commission: "In 1910 or 1911 you executed for the residence of my parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Ballard, a set of seven 'sanguines'. They were different sizes as they were meant to go over doors, French windows etc."⁷² She explained that, as she no longer had a use for the lunettes, she wished to sell them and hoped that Shinn could give her advice on how to sell them and for what price. Shinn responded that although he had just completed the murals for the new bar at the Plaza Hotel, he was not currently involved with private house commissions noting, "Decorations unless for public buildings seem to be things that were desired when people had large houses. Now everything is small..."⁷³ The Horners did not succeed in selling the lunettes and in 1955, Fanny and her husband Charles gave the five lunettes and the three panels of the painted screen to the Speed Art Museum in Louisville. Of the remaining panels, four are in the collection of the University of Louisville and the remaining three, as of 1971, were still owned by a family member.

The lunettes in the collection of the Speed Art Museum measure: 28 1/8 x 42 1/2" (fig. 262), 28 1/2 x 42 3/8" (fig. 263), 28 1/8 x 54 5/8" (fig. 264), and 30 x 84 3/4" (fig. 265). By using

these dimensions, it is possible to figure out where most of the lunettes would have been originally installed. According to the current owner of the Charles Ballard House, the music room is an oblong space with French windows and glass double doors and sliding pocket doors. The glass double doors, which join the hall to the music room, are 8 or 9 feet wide and the largest lunette, 30 x 84 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches, would likely have been placed above this set of glass doors. As one enters the room, on the right hand side are three evenly spaced French doors above which were installed the lunettes measuring approximately 28 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 54 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches. Facing the large double doors is a fireplace to the left and right of which are French doors. These are not as wide as the three doors on the right side of the room and therefore almost certainly would have accommodated the narrower lunettes, 28 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches and 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 42 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches. Opposite the three French doors is a large pair of pocket doors, 8 or 9 feet wide, leading into another part of the house. Although currently unlocated, a lunette similar to the 30 x 84 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch example in the Speed Museum would have been placed above these doors.⁷⁴ Overall, the room would have provided an excellent example of Shinn's decorative work integrated into an environment in which the color scheme and other furnishings were chosen to harmonize with Shinn's lunettes.

In contrast to the available information on the Ballard House, very little is known about Shinn's work on the Newbold Morris House in Tuxedo Park, New York. The only evidence of the commission is a reproduction in the Shinn papers of a 7 x 5 foot red chalk mural that Shinn created for the house (fig. 266). Stylistically, the design is similar to that of the lunettes for the Ballard house. The scene portrays three ladies in an eighteenth century gardenlike setting. The mural is signed Everett Shinn/1911 thus one assumes that the commission dated from about this time.

While he was working on the Ballard House (and possibly the Morris House), Shinn caused a stir in the art world and the press by painting a sign for the architectural firm of Walker & Gillette (fig. 267).⁷⁵ According to an article in the *Morning Telegraph*, Shinn took offense at a statement made by the artist George de Forest Brush to the Federation of Art in Washington, in

which he declared that commercialism was ruining art. For Shinn, an artist who had proudly decorated pianos, such a statement was the antithesis of his belief that, "Art belong[s] to everything in life ... I am tired of this nonsense about art for art alone."⁷⁶ To protest Brush's statement, Shinn first approached Walker and Gillette with the idea of painting a house. Mr. Walker was not in need of a house painter, but offered "Might give you a chance to make a sign for us."⁷⁷

The resulting sign was an extraordinary work showing a neo-French Rococo scene painted in oil on two sheets of brass. From a perspective of 35 years the critic Matlack Price commented, "I think I am safe in saying that the finest sign ever painted in this country is the one that Everett Shinn painted for the architects, Walker & Gillette..."⁷⁸ A writer who observed the sign's progress noted, "The nearly completed section shows a marquis in the garb of the Louis XVI period, coat of crimson silk, yellow silk stockings and lace trimmed sleeves, inspecting a large sheet of plans which is held up by an architect in somewhat plainer attire. Near the nobleman and looking over his shoulder is a beautiful woman in ornate costume."⁷⁹ On the reverse side of the sign Shinn portrayed the couple gazing upon the completed project, a chateau set in formal gardens. Although the sign was to be hung outside Walker & Gillette's establishment at 40th Street in Manhattan, the artist framed the work as if it were a painting to be hung in a drawing room. Regarding the sign's presentation, Shinn remarked, "It will have a carved frame with flowers at the bottom and garlands of toned down fruits spun all around it, and on the top one of those pediments things with a T-square in a cartouche. There will be grill work and it will be on a standard so that the effect can be seen coming and going."⁸⁰

Shinn reported that his clients were pleased with the sign and he commented, "I hope it will be the most artistic sign in New York."⁸¹ Perceiving the sign as evidence that commercialism could co-exist happily with fine art he declared, "Commercialism supports art, and art ought to adorn and decorate commerce."⁸² And, to assuage any lingering doubts, he pointed out that there were plenty of precedents for such projects. He reminded people that

Watteau painted a sign, Boucher created designs for Gobel tapestries, and Fragonard decorated fans. Since none of these artists found their careers diminished by this work, Shinn felt justified in painting his sign.⁸³ When the work was completed, Shinn intended to hold a private viewing to which he planned to invite George de Forest Brush.

The most historically important of Shinn's early decorative commissions that is still extant is the mural he painted in 1911 for the Council Chamber in the City Hall of Trenton, New Jersey. At the beginning of the century, New Jersey, like many states across the nation, was undergoing a building program with the intent of beautifying the state capitol and municipal buildings in the manner of Europe. In the spirit of the American Renaissance, the city of Trenton sought to build a new city hall that would reflect the nationalistic pride of America and situate the city as an immediate successor to European capitols in the march of civilization. Designed by the architect Spencer Roberts, at a cost of a million dollars, the building was planned as one of the showplaces of Trenton. The building's status as a source of civic pride is underscored by New Jersey's Governor, John Franklin Fort, who proudly extolled the magnificence of the new city hall:

As governor of the State, I want to congratulate the City of Trenton upon its beautiful City Hall. It certainly is a great improvement in the city. The first thing we seek in trips abroad is to see the beautiful buildings which are erected in the European cities. Every city is judged more or less by the architecture within it and the buildings usually give point to the enterprise and public spirit of the citizenship.... Trenton has made a splendid beginning in its City Hall and I have no doubt that it will be considered for years to come as the chief pride of the city in connection with the Capitol of the State.⁸⁴

Interestingly, what is particularly notable about Shinn's mural for City Hall is the fact that, though it expresses the American Renaissance's tenets of civic pride, it does so in a manner that departs significantly from the dreamy allegories and classical subjects that characterize the movement. As previous writers on the Trenton mural have pointed out, rather than looking back to Renaissance symbolism, Shinn's mural presciently anticipates the social realism of the 1930s.⁸⁵

To secure the commission, Shinn was required to submit a proposal to Jonathan M. Blackwell and Ferdinand W. Roebling, two of the three commissioners in charge of overseeing the building and decorating of the City Hall. Though he was not required to portray a predetermined subject, it was most likely expected that the mural would in some way commemorate the history of Trenton. The most obvious event for Shinn to depict would have been Washington crossing the Delaware, triumphantly landing in Trenton. Shinn, however, rejected subjects from the glory of Trenton's past in favor of the celebration of its present accomplishments. As Trenton derived much of its livelihood from its industries, Shinn chose to represent two of the city's important factories, the Roebling Steel Mills and the Harry Mattock Pottery Kilns. In an interview in the *Craftsman* in 1911, he explained to the author: "What the Council Chamber should laud in an American city hall and should commemorate ... is not past glories but present ones. The towns that look ever toward their past are lost towns."⁸⁶ In Shinn's opinion, allegorical figures of blind justices had become such ubiquitous figures on the walls of city halls as to have become meaningless. Instead, he offered, "...I think the thing to picture in the City Hall is the grand and glorious work that makes the city and the City Hall possible. Keep that before the men that sit in the Council Chamber and you keep the interests of the city ever before them."⁸⁷

In order to prepare for his presentation before the Council, Shinn spent days studying the layout of the council chamber.⁸⁸ Though the building was still incomplete, he was able to assess the way sunlight would affect the colors of the mural and thereby gauge his palette accordingly. He also worked closely with the architect and by listening to the latter's ideas, conceptualized a plan that would harmonize with the proposed building. Once he felt he had an understanding of the structure of the room, he used the architect's blueprints to build an eight-foot long model of the Council Chamber. He enlisted the help of Hans Helm, an expert cabinetmaker, and together they constructed a model replete with thirty plaster columns, an elaborate ceiling, and two lines of desks for the council members. Outside the windows, Shinn painted scenes that corresponded to

views from the actual room. Due to an elaborate lighting system, the towers of the pottery factories, the roofs of the Roebling Steel Mills, and local houses, saloons, and warehouses could be viewed in both moonlight and sunlight by flipping an electrical switch.

Shinn recalled that he spent almost two hundred dollars building the model, but the impact that the miniature Council Chamber had on the commissioners, who were responsible for approving the plan, was enormously positive; thus the initial outlay proved to be money well spent. The men were thrilled by the model, especially the views through the windows in which they recognized some of their own properties. As the men were marveling at the reconstruction of parts of their city, Shinn, who was a master at creating dramatic effects, switched the illumination from sunlight to moonlight. Inside the miniature council chamber, the mural showing the local industries of Trenton was revealed before its judges. After examining the mural and the way it related to the surrounding environment, Roebling and Black left and Roberts, the architect, came over to shake Shinn's hand and congratulate him on winning the commission. According to a financial statement dated August 1, 1911, Shinn received the remarkably high fee of \$5000 for the project.⁸⁹

On January 8, 1911, the Philadelphia *Inquirer* reported that Shinn had recently been awarded the City Hall commission. For the project, he created a mural program that departed significantly from his previous style for murals (i.e., neo-Rococo), adopting instead vigorous Ashcan realism. Unlike the murals that Shinn painted for private homes, which drew on the examples of the French 18th century and the artist's own imagination, for the Trenton project Shinn desired realism and strove to be as accurate as possible. He spent six months at the two factories studying the movements of the workers and making sketches of their positions. In order to make the figures as realistic as possible, Shinn invited the workmen from the Roebling Steel Mills and the Mattock Kilns to his studio to pose. On Saturday afternoons, the studio at 112 Waverly Place was occupied by the artist and his models from the factories who brought with them their work clothes as well as tools and other implements of their trade.⁹⁰ Shinn befriended

three of them -- Willie Clegg, Ben Cruger, and a man whose name is given only as Stevens -- who can be recognized by their portraits on the Roebling side of the Trenton mural. These men critiqued his work, advised him on the accuracy of his portrayal of the machinery and made certain that the correct worker was performing the appropriate task. When Shinn placed a leather apron on the wrong worker, Clegg pointed out the error and the mistake was rectified.⁹¹

The resultant mural, 22 x 45 ft, is a tour de force of dynamism and activity, a paean to the hard working men who valiantly labored in the factories creating products important to the city's economy and livelihood (fig. 268). On the left side, men are shown working at the Roebling Steel Mills amidst a tangle of vats and valves releasing clouds of hot steam into what already appears as a furnace-like environment (fig. 269). On the right side, pottery workers at the Mattock Kilns labor before a hot kiln, lifting pots in and out and maintaining the fires (fig. 280). In both of these sweltering environments, men are represented stripped to the waist revealing, well-defined muscles in what is undoubtedly Shinn's most skilled rendering of male anatomy. A false door in the form of a marble slab with surrounding pilasters and an entablature separates the mural's two realms, uniting the modernity of Trenton's contemporary industries with the enduring legacy of classicism. Today the mural is still in place in the council chamber of Trenton's city hall.

Newspaper reporters, recording the progress made in the construction of the municipal building, also kept the public updated on the state of completion of Shinn's mural. "Under unusual and interesting circumstances Mr. Everett Shinn has nearly completed his large decoration for the municipal building in Trenton, N.J., which will represent the artisans of the city which have made it famous," recorded a writer for the *New York Herald*. The writer continued, "The result is one of the most realistic paintings of the kind which has been seen for many a day. The figures are life size and so effectively presented are the surroundings that the illusion is given that the spectators are looking into the mysteries of forge and hearth."⁹² A local newspaper reviewer praised Shinn for choosing subjects that celebrated Trenton's industries. He remarked,

“A wonderfully comprehensive conception of Trenton’s industrial supremacy is strikingly portrayed by Mr. Shinn, who before proceeding with the execution of his commission must have made an exhaustive study of the leading local industries. There is life and action in the painting – a living, moving throbbing reproduction of scenes about the famous kilns and furnaces that now supply the markets of every quarter of the world with two of the first necessities of civilization – pottery and iron In fact the cities [sic] growth and development are delightfully depicted.”⁹³ Critics remarked upon Shinn’s radical approach to mural painting that was so unlike the typical allegorical or historical programs that adorned public buildings. As one writer noted, “Once in a while there is a departure, like Everett Shinn’s last year, when he found picturesque and suitable for a decoration the big men and blazing heat of New Jersey’s iron industry.”⁹⁴

While the realism and attention to unidealized subject matter derives from Shinn’s earlier Ashcan works, the particular choice of industrial workers as the theme of the mural is less easy to trace. One intriguing possibility is that Shinn may have been aware of the decorative scheme executed by the British artist Frank Brangwyn for the British section of Venice’s International Exposition. These works, which portrayed several of Britain’s industries, were discussed and illustrated in *The International Studio* in May 1905, where Shinn would have had the opportunity to see and read about them. In 1907, the murals were described again when the City Art Gallery of Leeds purchased them. A writer for the *International Studio* noted, “Bearing in mind that the subjects treated in these panels have wholly to do with various British industries, it seems especially fitting that a great manufacturing city like Leeds should be the possessor of them.”⁹⁵ The subjects represented were, *Workers in Steel* (reproduced in the magazine), *Excavating*, *Pottery Making*, *The Smiths* and *The Spinners* (fig. 271). In a statement that Shinn would later echo in regard to the Trenton mural, the writer for *The International Studio* said of the Leeds panels “[They] prove, as the finest examples of the artist prove, that the artist is best found treating his own life, and his own time.”⁹⁶ Like Shinn’s mural, the Leeds panels present contemporary workers as burly men toiling at various industries. Also, like Shinn’s project is the

fact that the artist, Brangwyn, was responsible for not only the murals, but also for the design scheme the entire room including woodwork and furniture.

Thomas C. Folk, in his analyses of Shinn's mural for Trenton, notes that Shinn's attention to anatomy and realism recalls his education at the Pennsylvania Academy, particularly the instruction of Thomas Anshutz. He compares the workers in the Trenton mural to Anshutz's figures in *Ironworkers' Noontime* (fig. 272), but ultimately concludes, "Like Shinn's workers, many are stripped to the waist. However, none of the poses of Anshutz's figures relate to Shinn's. *Ironworkers'* is apparently, Anshutz's only attempt at depicting laborers or a modern industrial scene. Shinn's mural and Anshutz's painting are both ultimately indebted to the art of Thomas Eakins, who had been a teacher at the Pennsylvania Academy but had left before Shinn's enrollment."⁹⁷ While the realism of Eakins and Anshutz may have been the initial source of Shinn's commitment to realism, it should also be recognized that his adeptness in this type of iconography was honed by his prior representation of similar subjects. For example, the workers who appear in the Trenton mural are related to the dock workers and stevedores shown the pastel *The Docks* (fig. 73) as well as the construction workers portrayed in the four illustrations he created for *Harper's Weekly* showing the building of the subway.⁹⁸ Nevertheless, Folk's argument is compelling, particularly its focus on anatomy, which had never until this point been treated so realistically or emphatically by Shinn.

Folk also points out the importance of the Trenton mural within the artist's oeuvre. He explains, "Despite his decorative works, the Trenton Mural displays the artist's most serious intentions in its depiction of a socially relevant theme. This mural of labor represented a new tendency in mural painting Most importantly, Shinn's mural is the first instance of the use of contemporary, regional, and working class subjects in mural painting in the United States, and thus breaks with the dominant use of historical and allegorical themes."⁹⁹ It should be noted, however, that Shinn's Trenton mural was not completely without an American precedent. Two artists, John White Alexander and Fred Dana Marsh, provided significant antecedents to Shinn's

articulation of contemporary, industrial subject matter.¹⁰⁰ In June 1905, Alexander was commissioned by the President and Trustees of the Carnegie Institute to furnish murals for the eastern wing of their new building.¹⁰¹ Although the commission remained incomplete at the time of Alexander's death in 1915, the finished portion of the project resulted in 48 murals. Of these, 39 murals broke with the established tradition of allegorical wall designs to show instead realistic representations of half-naked ironworkers toiling amid steel beams and cranes. The tri-level mural scheme, entitled "The Crowning of Labor," celebrated the men who worked in the city's industries, generating the economic foundations upon which the arts (intended for the third level of murals, but left unfinished) could be nurtured and flourish. As a writer for the *Carnegie Magazine* explained in 1933:

For the first time a mural painter did not turn to a glorified and indefinite past or to imaginative symbols far removed from common experience. Instead, he looked about the city of Pittsburgh – which he knew so well as a boy ... he saw ... the smoke of the belching mills, the steam of throbbing engines Art inspired by industrial scenes is not unfamiliar to us today, but twenty-five years ago it was nothing short of startling.¹⁰²

Nevertheless, Alexander's murals did not mark an unconditional departure from tradition. On the second level, the central panel, and the focal point of the scheme, "The Apotheosis of Pittsburgh," returns to an allegorical personification; here Pittsburgh as a man clad in armor. Surrounding the mailed figure are winged figures symbolizing Peace, Prosperity, Luxuries and Education.¹⁰³ As Sarah J. Moore, in her dissertation "John White Alexander (1865-1915): In Search of the Decorative," succinctly states, "Alexander ... devised an elaborate iconographic scheme that would blend elements of realism and allegory. More important, the confluence of Alexander's decorative style, which had been articulated in a decidedly international context, with modern American subject matter and a new interest in realism characterized the vast mural cycle ..."¹⁰⁴

Fred Dana Marsh took Alexander's revolutionary introduction of realistically portrayed industrial subject matter one step further by eliminating all traces of allegory in his series of

murals, for example, "Cycles of Labor" for which he began cartoons as early as 1906.¹⁰⁵

Representing figures such as engineers, riveters, derrick riggers, and builders, Marsh's decorations show burley men toiling in unidealized settings, blackened with the soot of a furnace, lugging huge heavy chains, and straddling cross-beams. He emphasizes the physical arduousness of the labor, the strength it requires, and the sweat that it produces. In this sense, when compared to Alexander, Marsh is a closer predecessor of Shinn, who, like Marsh eschewed any reference to the allegorical in favor of gritty, realistic representations.

Prior to the murals by Alexander, Marsh, and Shinn, projects created for public buildings followed the model of the American Renaissance. Artists such as Edwin Austin Abbey, Edwin Blashfield, John La Farge, William Morris Hunt, Elihu Vedder, and Kenyon Cox completed elaborate mural schemes of symbolic and allegorical figures. In one of the most important of these projects, The Library of Congress, the murals represented the arts, themes from Homer and modern poetry, and the morality of the government. *History* by Frederick Dielman, one of the many artists who worked on the Library of Congress, exemplifies the movement's preference for allegorical figures, which symbolized general principals or abstract concepts (fig. 273).

If the mural commission referred to a subject from local history, the event was usually treated broadly or idealized. As Richard Murray explains in his discussion of painting and sculpture during the American Renaissance, "State capitol buildings, in particular, were often given rich mural decorations, and the subjects of the murals are indicative of artists' and architects' attempts to place local history into a larger, more general history."¹⁰⁶ Shinn, by contrast, took a slice of contemporary life in Trenton and made it very specific rather than more general. Nevertheless, despite the revolutionary aspects of Shinn's Trenton mural in relation to murals by most other artists, particularly those associated with the American Renaissance movement, the project did not receive much artistic recognition. An oft-quoted passage by the art historian Milton Brown sums up both the mural's strong points and its failures. Referring to the two sides of the mural he concludes:

They are not world-shaking. They did not, unfortunately, inaugurate an era of mural painting. That had to wait until the thirties, for Thomas Hart Benton and the Mexicans, Rivera and Orozco. The murals were important, however, in that they treated a contemporary industrial subject rather than an historical or allegorical scene. In the realm of American mural decoration, Shinn's Trenton murals are among the first instances of the use of such a contemporary subject painted in a realistic manner and as such they should have been a milestone in American art.... However, Shinn's murals never received much attention. Either Trenton was too far from New York or Shinn was not a recognized member of the mural painters' clique.¹⁰⁷

Brown further observed that part of the reason the mural has been overlooked by most art historians has to do with the composition and style of the panels themselves:

The panels themselves exhibited the limitations of Ashcan realism as used by Shinn. It was not a monumental mural art. The attempt of Shinn to enlarge the scenes to heroic proportions merely laid bare his deficiencies in composition and form. What in a small picture might have been a spirited brushstroke became in a mural painting a large, empty, and meaningless area. Then the composition itself was a little too ambitious for Shinn's ability. The figures never entirely found themselves in relation to each other or the whole. There are even unhappy passages of clumsy drawing.¹⁰⁸

Brown's opinion is shared by Gerdts, who, in his book *Painting and Sculpture in New Jersey*, observes, "Shinn was not able to imbue the works with monumentality which such a project deserved and which the mural art required, but they were the one major example in mural painting of the use of contemporary subject matter realistically treated."¹⁰⁹

It seems fitting to end this chapter with the Trenton mural, which ties in so well with Shinn's earlier Ashcan work while also serving as a bridge between the mural tradition of the American Renaissance and that of 1930s social realism. It should be noted, however, that the Trenton mural was exceptional in Shinn's decorative work. After its completion, he returned almost exclusively to a neo-Rococo style for his future decorative projects.¹¹⁰ In 1915, just a few years after the Trenton commission, Shinn completed the design and decoration of a teahouse for Mai Rogers Coe, the wife of William Robertson Coe, for their house in Oyster Bay, Long Island. Inside the teahouse the walls are covered with blue trellis work into which are set two fan shaped

murals by Shinn (figs. 274 and 275). In contrast to the gritty realism and specificity of the workers in the Trenton mural, the Coe murals portray garland-festooned ladies cavorting with exotic birds and holding baskets of flowers. In the teahouse decorations, Shinn returns to the otherworldly realm of the French 18th century, a style with which he would continue to succeed throughout the years.¹¹¹

¹ In 1898, Shinn reportedly painted a ceiling for Stanford White's house at 12 East Twenty-first Street after the firm of Allard & Sons destroyed the ceiling White had brought back for the space from Venice. It should be noted, however, that 1898 would have been an unlikely date for Shinn's decorative work. Shinn had only just recently moved to New York and was not working in oils or on any other decorative projects at this time. Moreover, there is no record that he had met White before 1899. A more likely date for the ceiling murals would be around 1904-1906 when Shinn was actively engaged in decorative commissions. See Paul R. Baker, *Stanny: The Gilded Life of Stanford White* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), pp. 263-264 and David Garrard Lowe, *Stanford White's New York* (New York: Watson-Guption Publications, 1999), pp. 195, 198.

² Bennard Perlman, "Meeting Shinn," *Art & Antiques* 15 (February 1993): 80.

³ Edith Wharton & Ogden Codman, Jr., *The Decoration of Houses* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1897), p. 16.

⁴ Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, p. 90. In an undated letter to Shinn, de Wolfe wrote, "...I've been away and I'm rehearsing - Could I come to see y[ou]r doors tomorrow at 12." Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frames 998-999.

⁵ For the start of de Wolfe's career as a decorator, see Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, pp. 100-112. For mention of Shinn, see p. 107.

⁶ As cited in Smith, *Elsie de Wolfe*, p. 104.

⁷ I would like to thank Penny Sparke, Dean, Kingston University, who in her lecture "Gender Class and the Domestic Interior: the Example of Elsie de Wolfe," mentioned that Shinn painted the murals in the Colony Club's dining room. Lecture at Columbia University, October 30, 2000.

⁸ "Women's New Club the Colony, Opened," *New York Times*, March 12, 1907, p. 9.

⁹ "The Home in its Making - The Story of the Colony Club," undated news clipping from the Annual Club Record of the Colony Club, New York. I most grateful to Ms. Eleanor Southworth for making this and other documents regarding the history of the Colony Club available to me.

¹⁰ According the office of the Director of Development for the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, the murals are no longer installed in the building. Telephone conversation on April 9, 2001.

¹¹ Elsie de Wolfe, *The House in Good Taste* (New York: The Century Co., 1913), p. 189.

¹² A thorough search of archives of the Colony Club on March 8, 2001 unfortunately failed to yield any conclusive evidence regarding the authorship of the dining room panels.

¹³ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, 952, frames 996-997.

¹⁴ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, 952, frame 000. This letter probably dates from 1905 as de Wolfe mentions posing for Flossie, who exhibited a portrait of de Wolfe at Kraushaar's from March 12 to April 20, 1906. Record book 2, n.p.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, March 3, 1906, AAA, roll 952, frame 921.

¹⁷ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frames 994-995.

¹⁸ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, March 23, 1906, AAA, roll 952, frame 923.

¹⁹ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frame 13.

²⁰ Litti Paulding, "Town Chatter," *News-Press* Society Section, March 2, 1947, AAA, roll 952, frame 186.

²¹ In an undated letter Fitch wrote to Shinn: "I haven't any money but love yr. Illustrations as you know." Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frames 36-37.

²² "Fitch," SAM.

²³ "The Transformed Piano," *The Sun*, October 15, 1905, p. 5.

²⁴ After Fitch's death, his effects were sold at Clarke's in New York. Of the objects offered, the piano that Shinn painted for Fitch fetched the highest price, selling for \$1450. *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, April 2, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 99.

²⁵ "The Transformed Piano," *The Sun*, October 15, 1905, p. 5.

²⁶ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, April 13 [1906], AAA, roll 952, frame 59. Although the letter is not dated, it is written on stationery from the Hotel Dominici in Paris where Fitch was staying in April of 1906. See, correspondence in: Montrose J. Moses and Virginia Gerson, *Clyde Fitch and His Letters* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1924), pp. 309-310.

²⁷ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frame 44.

²⁸ "The Transformed Piano," *The Sun*, October 15, 1905, p. 5

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frame 53.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frames 51-52.

³³ Clyde Fitch, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frames 24, 27.

³⁴ "Fitch," SAM.

³⁵ Elsie de Wolfe, New York, to Everett Shinn, New York, no date, AAA, roll 952, frames 14-15.

³⁶ Shinn Record Book 1, p. 64.

³⁷ A. [Ibert] E. G. [allatin], "Everett Shinn's Decorative Paintings," *The Scrip* 1 (August 1906): 358-360.

³⁸ A. [Ibert] E. G. [allatin], *Whistler: Notes and Footnotes and other Memoranda* (New York: The Collector and Art Critic Co., 1907), 80.

³⁹ C. Matlack Price, "A Revival of Eighteenth-Century French Art," *International Studio* 51 (January 1914): 168-170.

⁴⁰ The theater was renamed The Belasco in 1910 after Belasco relinquished Hammerstein's Republic Theater, which he had named for himself.

⁴¹ Everett Shinn, "David Belasco," SAM.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ John Anderson, "2 George Bellows 'Found' In the Belasco," *New York Evening Journal*, March 28, 1931, "Notes on People," George Bellows file, Delaware Art Museum.

⁴⁵ Everett Shinn, New York to John Anderson, New York, May 5, 1931, "Notes on People," George Bellows file, Delaware Art Museum.

⁴⁶ John Anderson, clipping from *New York Evening Journal*, May 7, 1931, "Notes on People," George Bellows file, Delaware Art Museum.

⁴⁷ Glackens, *William Glackens and the Ashcan Group*, p. 82.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 112.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ *The First Night in David Belasco's Stuyvesant Theater* MCMVII, (program for opening of the Belasco Theater).

⁵¹ *Town Topics*, October 17, 1907, AAA, roll 952, frame 296.

⁵² For a discussion of the interior decoration of the Stuyvestant Theater see, "Stuyvesant Theater Opens," *The Sun* (New York) October 17, 1907, p. 7, "New York's Newest Theatre," *Harper's Weekly* (October 9, 1907): 1662, and *The Inquirer* (Philadelphia) October 13, 1907, AAA, roll 952, frame 298.

⁵³ "Most Beautiful Theater in the World," *Examiner* (Chicago, IL) October 20, 1907, AAA, roll 952, frame 299.

⁵⁴ "Stuyvesant Theater Opens," *New York Evening Sun*, October 17, 1907, AAA, roll 952, frame 299.

⁵⁵ "Looking up at the Pictures on the Stuyvesant Theater Walls," undated news clipping, AAA, roll 952, frame 302.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ Although the pastel of the exterior of the Stuyvesant is currently unlocated, the work was reproduced in a contemporary article about the theater. Undated news clipping in Shinn papers, AAA, roll 952, frame 302.

⁵⁸ Paul L. Montgomery, "Aging Belasco Prepares for a New Theatrical Life," *New York Times*, January 27, 1975, p. 27.

⁵⁹ Shinn papers, AAA, roll 2917, frame 58.

⁶⁰ Letter of Everett Shinn, New York, to Ben Ali Haggin, July, 22, 1906, AAA, roll NY65-1, frame unnumbered.

⁶¹ Letter of Everett Shinn, New York, to Ben Ali Haggin, July 30, 1906, AAA, roll NY65-1, frame unnumbered.

⁶² "The Coal Baron." SAM.

⁶³ Shinn Record Book 1, p. 72.

⁶⁴ Guy Pène du Bois, "An Eighteenth Century Revival: The Work of Everett Shinn, Revivalist," *Arts and Decoration* 6 (December 1915): 80.

⁶⁵ Mrs. Warren M. Salisbury, Chicago, to Everett Shinn New York, 30 November 1928, AAA, roll 952, frame 949.

⁶⁶ C. Matlack Price, "A Revival of Eighteenth-Century French Art," *International Studio* 51 (January 1914): 168-170.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 170.

⁶⁸ Letter of Robin L. Wallace, Reference Specialist, The Filson Club Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky to Zachary Ross, New York, November 11, 1999. I am indebted to Zachary Ross for generously making this letter available to me.

⁶⁹ "To Give Family Burying Ground for Park Use, Ballards to Donate Ground to the City," *The Courier-Journal* (Louisville), March 19, 1911, from the files of The Filson Club, Historical Society, Louisville, Kentucky.

⁷⁰ "Notes of the Art World," *New York Herald*, June 27, 1911, p. 9.

⁷¹ Fanny Horner, Louisville, to Everett Shinn, New York, 21 November 1946, Object File, The J. B. Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky. Everett Shinn, to Charles Horner, Louisville.

⁷² Charles Horner, Louisville, KY, to Everett Shinn, New York, November 21, 1946, Object File, The J. B. Speed Museum, Louisville, Kentucky.

⁷³ Charles Horner, Louisville, to Everett Shinn, New York, November 21, 1946, Object File, The Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky. Everett Shinn, to Charles Horner, Louisville, no date (possibly 29 November 29, 1946), Object File, The Speed Art Museum, Louisville, Kentucky.

⁷⁴ I am indebted to Mrs. Barry Bingham for kindly providing me with a diagram showing the configuration of the music room.

⁷⁵ Walker & Gillette was a well-known architectural firm of the period. Shinn had worked with them as early as July 1909 when he provided red chalk drawings for a yacht project being handled by the firm.

⁷⁶ "Artist Paints Sign Just to Prove That His Brush Knows No Brother," *Morning Telegraph*, May 25, 1910, AAA, Scrapbook 1910-11, roll D179, frame 72.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Matlack Price, "Let's Paint Signs," *American Artist* 9 (October 1945): 17.

⁷⁹ "Artist Paints Sign Just to Prove That His Brush Knows No Brother," *Morning Telegraph*, May 25, 1910, AAA Scrapbook 1910-11, roll D179, frame 72.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Price, "Let's Paint Signs," p. 17.

⁸³ "Art's Utility Not Harmful," the *Globe*, June 9, 1901, p. 1.

⁸⁴ Governor John Franklin Fort, "Governor Fort Says," *Trenton Evening Times*, p. 17. AAA, roll D179, frame 78.

⁸⁵ See for example, the work of Thomas Hart Benton, *Politics, Farming and Law in Missouri*, mural for the Missouri State Capital in Jefferson City, 1936, or the murals by Carl Peters *Life of Contemplation and Life of Action*, n.d. Madison High School, Rochester, NY. Park, Marlene Park and Gerald E. Markowitz, *New Deal for Art*. Hamilton (New York: Gallery Association of New York State, Inc., 1977), p. 45. Writers who have noted the Trenton mural's anticipation of social realism include: Thomas C. Folk, "Everett Shinn's Trenton Mural Revisited," in *Public Art in New Jersey During the Period of the American Renaissance* (Wayne, New Jersey: Museums Council of New Jersey, 1990), p. 68; Milton Brown, *American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), p. 25; and William H. Gerdts, *Painting and Sculpture in New Jersey* (New Jersey: D. Van Nostrand Co., Inc., 1964), p. 204.

⁸⁶ "Everett Shinn's Painting's of Labor in the New City Hall at Trenton, N.J.," *Craftsman* 21 (January 1912): 384.

⁸⁷ Ibid., pp. 384-385.

⁸⁸ Shinn's recollection of the Trenton mural commission is recorded in the essay "Trenton," SAM.

⁸⁹ Thomas C. Folk, "Everett Shinn's Trenton Mural Revisited," p. 70.

⁹⁰ "Item," Philadelphia, June 23, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 102.

⁹¹ "Everett Shinn's Painting's of Labor in the New City Hall at Trenton, N.J.," *Craftsman* 21 (January 1912): 383.

⁹² "Workmen Pose For Great Painting, New York *Herald*, June 19, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 101.

⁹³ "City Hall's Mural is Here," *Times* (Trenton, N.J.) June 1, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 101.

⁹⁴ "Passing in the Art World: A Substitute for Allegory in Mural Decoration," AAA, roll D179, frame 97.

⁹⁵ A. S. Covey, "The Brangwyn Room at the City Art Gallery, Leeds" *International Studio* 31 (March 1907): 182.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Thomas C. Folk, "Everett Shinn's Trenton Mural Revisited," p. 71.

⁹⁸ Shinn's illustrations *A Deep Excavation at 23rd Street and 4th Avenue, Working at 21st Street and 4th Avenue, At 28th Street and 4th Avenue, and At 34th Street and 4th Avenue - The Big Derrick* appeared in "Progress of the Work on the Underground Railroad," *Harper's Weekly* 44 (November 17, 1900): 1084.

⁹⁹ Thomas C. Folk, "Everett Shinn's Trenton Mural Revisited," p. 70.

¹⁰⁰ I am indebted to Dr. William Gerds for suggesting these precedents.

¹⁰¹ For a discussion of Alexander's murals at the Carnegie Institute, see William Laurel Harris, "John White Alexander: His Influence on American Art and Industry," *Good Furniture* 5 (August 1915): 63-73; Emily R. Alter, "The Alexander Murals," *Carnegie Magazine* 7, no. 4 (September 1933): 103-108; and William Walton, "Alexander's Decorations in the Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh," *Scribner's Magazine* 45 (January 1909): 45-57.

¹⁰² Alter, "The Alexander Murals," p. 104.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁴ Sarah J. Moore, "John White Alexander (1865-1915): In Search of the Decorative." (Ph.D. dissertation, The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, 1992), pp. 312-313.

¹⁰⁵ For Marsh, see Arthur Hoeber, "Frederic Dana Marsh, Painter of Our Later-Day Industry," *International Studio* 28 (May 1906): lxxvii-lxxii.

¹⁰⁶ Richard N. Murray, "Painting and Sculpture," in *The American Renaissance, 1876-1917*, Richard Guy Wilson, Dianne H. Pilgrim, and Richard N. Murray (Brooklyn: The Brooklyn Museum, 1979), p. 186.

¹⁰⁷ Brown, *American Painting from the Armory Show to the Depression*, pp. 25-26.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁹ Gerds, *Painting and Sculpture in New Jersey*, p. 204.

¹¹⁰ The murals Shinn completed in 1945 for the Oak Bar at the Plaza Hotel, New York, are another exception to the neo-Rococo style that typically characterizes the artist's decorative work. For these murals, Shinn painted scenes of the area around the hotel as it had appeared around 1900.

¹¹¹ I would like to express my extreme gratitude to Ellen Cone-Busch, curator of Coe Hall at Planting Fields State Historic Park, for kindly allowing me to photograph the murals, examine letters documenting the work, and generously sharing her insights on the Coes and Shinn. For the Coe teahouse, see Guy Pène du Bois, "An Eighteenth Century Revival. The Work of Everett Shinn. Revivalist," *Arts and Decoration* (December 1915): pp. 78-79.

CHAPTER VIII

MAJOR EXHIBITIONS AND REVIEWS (1902-1911)

After the flurry of exhibition activity in 1901, the following year, 1902, was surprisingly calm. While Shinn continued to send work to group exhibitions, beginning with the Pennsylvania Academy show from January 20 to March 1, 1902, he deferred holding another large one-man exhibition until 1903. Perhaps he was heeding the advice of several critics who felt he was exhibiting too much too quickly, resulting in work that was not up to what they considered his usual high standard. Moreover, during the summer of 1902, the Shinns purchased a large plot of land in Plainfield, New Hampshire and shortly thereafter began construction on their home. The undertaking absorbed much of Everett's time and likely contributed to his postponement of a major exhibition that year. Notable group exhibitions in which he participated included the Boston Art Club where, from April 4 to 26, 1902, he showed *Madison Square Gardener's House*, *Bridle Path Central Park* and *Milliner's Shop Paris*. A reviewer of the Boston exhibition, acknowledged Shinn's reputation by categorizing him with other well-known artists such as Winslow Homer as "Among the most important exhibitors..."¹ The praise was particularly rewarding given that the exhibition was viewed by many critics as the finest in years. As one writer declared, "It is many years since such a remarkably good showing of water colors has been seen in Boston..."² The same author included an illustration of Shinn's work *Madison Square Gardener's House* observing, "Everett Shinn's black and white picture of 'Madison Square New York' is exceedingly clever. The local feeling is well suggested, and the moving figures look as if they could walk along at a smart pace."³

In February of 1903, Shinn was in negotiations with M. Knoedler & Co. regarding his forthcoming exhibition scheduled for March 9 to 21 of that year. Evidently, Shinn was anxious

about the placement of his work in the gallery, worried that he might be obligated to hang his work amidst other artists' pictures. He wrote to Roland Knoedler, the director of the gallery, to express his concern. Knoedler responded, "I hasten to say that you can have either the lower Gallery, or the first upper one for your exhibition The lower gallery is what we call our water color room, and if you had it there would be nothing else in it but your works. The prints that you saw yesterday happened to form an unusually fine collection of old English Mezzotints and are only temporarily in that Gallery."⁴ Shinn chose Knoedler's upstairs gallery where on March 9, 1903 his exhibition "Paris and New York Types" opened. The cover of the exhibition catalogue, which he designed, displays a lovely female performer wearing a long gown with her hair elegantly swept up (fig. 276). She stands attentively on stage as if awaiting her cue. The model was a favorite of Shinn's and she appears in at least two other pastels: *Bal Tabarin* (fig. 277) and *Brella* (fig. 278).

Divided almost equally between theater and city scenes, the thirty-nine pastels in the Knoedler exhibition were deemed by many writers as an improvement on his previous works. The brighter palette and increased use of color were applauded, one observer commenting: "This year's display marks a decided departure and advance in the artist's work. He has now gone into color, while formerly his work was entirely in black and white."⁵ Critics detected a personal style that they identified as "ultra modern in his seeking for the characteristic, the essential of whatever he depicts."⁶ His command of the pastel medium was also recognized. "That Mr. Shinn has exploited its [pastel] usage with excellent results, that he employs the point not only with authority but with much grace, expression: is adequately seen in the present showing," opined a reviewer.⁷

The city scenes were particularly well received by critics who found them "admirable and delightful." One critic summed up Shinn's command of urban subject matter noting "...[T]he gifted artist finds the subject matter for his pictures in the environs of large cities, along the wharfs and water fronts, the busy thoroughfares, the boulevards, public parks both by day and

night with weary and forlorn people resting, sleeping in them – these and like subjects have served him as material for his talent.”⁸ Washington Square, the area to which Shinn had moved the year before, was well represented by four pastels of Washington Square Park. These found favor with the critics, as did his portrayal of the Dewey Arch. His two pictures of the East River – *East River Night* and *East River Sunset* – for which he was asking \$500 each, commanded the top prices (only Washington Square during Snow Storm [\$600] was more). Contemporary reviews suggest that the expense reflected the high quality of the work. One critic, who was evidently conversant with Whistler’s nocturnes, described Shinn’s East River pastels in terms that recall Whistler’s *Falling Rocket* pictures:

Commendable and impressive are two descriptions of the East River, one by night, the other at sunset. The night effect is a nocturne in blue and gold, the study evidently made from the deck of a boat. The deep, dull, blue water rises and falls in choppy waves, and craft of all kinds move on its surface, their lights flickering like fireflies. In the distance the mellow lights in the tall building blossom like stars in the heavens and outline shafts, pinnacles and minarets and domes that seem too transient, too effluent to be the result of man’s handiwork.”⁹

Shinn’s theater pictures generated as much, if not more, enthusiasm from the critics as his New York City scenes. As one reviewer exclaimed, “... [I]t is in depicting the allure and excitement of the café and concert hall, of theater and exposition, that the artist is most successful.”¹⁰ Helen Henderson writing in the *Philadelphia North American* declared him “a modern of moderns.” In particular, she stressed the unusual viewpoint from which Shinn approached theater scenes, commenting that he portrayed “the artificial life of the folk at the cheaper theaters and concert halls, viewed always from behind the scenes.” The prominent role played by the audience drew her attention and she remarked, “Of this novel view of [the] stage in its relation to the audience Mr. Shinn has made a special study.”¹¹ In particular she cited the works: *The Red Curtain*, *The Curtain Call*, *The Bell-Ringers*, *Paris Music Hall*, *Rehearsal of the Ballet*, *La Raconteur*, *The Singer in Yellow*, *The Stage Wings*.

As might be expected, not all reviews were positive. A writer for *Town Topics* summed up his opinion of the show in a single vitriolic sentence: "Everett Shinn has an exhibition of pastels which, for want of a better name, I must characterize as artistic slop."¹² Another critic compared Shinn's articulation of the red Greek revival buildings on the north side of Washington Square as resembling "creations in confectionery at the end of a long-drawn-out dinner party." In regard to *East River Sunset*, he felt that the artist's use of "chaotic" color in "might well be called the end of the world."¹³ Such remarks, however, were exceptions to the more typical laudatory reviews that praised the artist and his work.

Following his exhibition at Knoedler's Shinn showed four works from April 4 to 9, 1903 at the Fellowship Exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy: *East River Night*, *Late Afternoon Paris*, *Paris Rooftops*, and *Winter Night Paris*. At the close of the Fellowship Exhibition, the four pictures were sent directly to an exhibition in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania where they were on view from May 9 to 16, 1903.¹⁴ Shinn's reputation was drawing interest across the country and from April 23 to June 7, 1903, he showed nine works including *Washington Arch During Snow Storm* (fig. 160) at the Art Institute of Chicago in the Annual Exhibition of Watercolors, Pastels, and Miniatures by American Artists. The Chicago audience was receptive to the artist's work. Indeed, several local collectors already owned Shinn's work, the most active of whom, Mrs. C. J. Blair, had recently purchased *London Gallery* and *Girl Kneeling on a Bed*.¹⁵

By 1904, Shinn's exhibitions, though they were rarely held at the same gallery twice in a row, were annual events. As one critic observed, "Every year Mr. Shinn holds an exhibition of drawings in crayon and pastel at one of the galleries on Fifth Avenue: this year he has three-score and ten of large and small pastels at the Durand-Ruel Galleries..."¹⁶ From March 2 to 16 Durand-Ruel Galleries showed about sixty of Shinn's works. Composed of almost entirely new pastels, the large exhibition attests to a highly productive period for the artist, and included many stunning accounts of New York. Selections such as *Election Banner -- 23rd Street and Broadway* (fig. 132), *Matinee Crowd Broadway* (fig. 177), and *Fire in a Skyscraper* (fig. 167) demonstrate

Shinn's skill at rendering the urban environment under dramatic weather conditions or bathed in incandescent light. Representations of urban amusements like billiards and window shopping are exhibited for the first time in the examples of *The Pool Room* (fig. 170) and *Show Window Rainy Night*. Also included are pictures evidencing Shinn's excursions outside central Manhattan. For example, *Follow the Leader, Jersey Meadows*; *Sailing Boats, Long Island*; and *Skating – near Palisades* all portray outdoor sports and games not typically associated with Shinn's oeuvre.

Among the group were several Parisian scenes described by one reviewer as:

"Canal La Villette" and "Paris, Early Morning," show the old staggering houses, uneven in their upright as well as horizontal lines. In "Bridge Over the Seine, Autumn," the corner house painted blue is reflected in the river; In "Bridge Over the Seine, Winter," the lack of plumb in the house is exaggerated, but in both the turbid water is well rendered. There are scenes from the Neuilly Fair, views of groups dining at night at a café chantant under the trees, washerwomen on the canal, street fights, illuminated windows of millinery shops, the Seine frozen over, and a Paris street during a fête.¹⁷

After noting the display of city scenes the reviewer concludes, "His great haunt, however, is the café chantant, or the small Parisian theater. Here he finds the exaggerated poses of singers and comedy men good material, using the footlights for strong contrasts on the faces and figures of performers and the shadowy parquet for the heads and busts of audiences and orchestra in the foreground."¹⁸ The critic was one of many who noted Shinn's increasing attention to singers, funny men, and dancers rendered in shadowy spaces illuminated by dramatic stage lighting. Shinn himself emphasized his theater scenes by decorating the cover of the catalogue with a drawing of two figures on stage below which is shown a view of the audience and the orchestra pit.

Shinn's ability to produce work at an amazingly rapid rate drew reproach from some critics who felt that his unedited approach to creating pictures resulted in facile, sloppy dabs rather than carefully thought out, well-executed works. While most reviewers agreed that Shinn possessed talent, several were disturbed by what they perceived of as his lack of selection when

choosing subjects and his squandering of ability in too many directions. As one writer, whose observations would be echoed by reviewers of Shinn's work throughout his career, opined:

We sometimes wish that he was a clumsier man. If he had less facility, less cleverness, he might find it necessary to weigh his ideas more carefully, to follow out his first thoughts with more pains and to better purposes than he does in many instances. Like a ready talker, he is too apt to fall in love with his method, and to ignore the value of what he utters. His work is always brilliant, striking, *spirituelle*; what it lacks at times is substance and truth Mr. Shinn has shown so much real ability that we suspect a certain laziness in his make-up, with a consequent dissipation of his talents. If he came by his effects less easily he would perhaps do better on occasions.¹⁹

The exertion of time and energy necessary to prepare for the large exhibition at Durand-Ruel may have been the reason that Shinn did not participate in the group exhibition organized by that year by Henri of his work and that of Sloan, Luks, Glackens, Davies, and Prendergast. Held at the National Arts Club from January 19 to 31, 1904, the gathering was a precursor to the organization of The Eight.

After the close of the Durand-Ruel exhibition Shinn was extremely busy sending work to exhibitions around the country. From March 26 to May 1, 1904, *Girl in Yellow* was on view at the Society of American Artists in New York. In Philadelphia, at roughly the same time (March 28 to April 16), Shinn showed six works in the Philadelphia Water Color Exhibition: *Mouquin's Old Restaurant*, *Rue Notre Dame des Champs* (fig. 106), *Canal La Vilette*, *Bridge over Seine – Autumn* (fig. 116), *The Ballet*, and *Fire in a Skyscraper*. The Philadelphia papers were generous to their former employee – *Bridge Over the Seine* was reproduced in *The Inquirer*, *Mouquin's Old Restaurant* was pictured in *The American* and *Canal, La Vilette* was reproduced in *The Public Ledger*, accompanied by positive commentary.²⁰ From Philadelphia, four of the works (*The Ballet* and *Rue Notre Dame des Champs* were absent from the group) were sent to the Art Institute of Chicago where they were on view from April 28 to June 5. From May 21 to July 11, he exhibited four works at the Cincinnati Museum Association. And in June, M. Knoedler & Co.

held a small exhibition of Shinn's work composed of fifteen pictures of city scenes, stage scenes and one nude.

The following year, 1905, marked a significant transition in his career as it was during this year that he held his first exhibition of oil paintings at E. Gimpel and Wildenstein. The debut of works in oil was well noted and favorably received by the critics one of whom opined, "Mr. Everett Shinn's present exhibition at Messrs. Gimple & Wildernstein's differs from those of former years in being made up largely of paintings in oils. The change is good to see..."²¹ Henri Pène du Bois, a loyal and enthusiastic supporter of Shinn's work, declared that the exhibition marked a new phase in the artist's career. Not only did he note Shinn's adoption of a new medium, oil paint, but he also remarked upon the inclusion of eight red chalk drawings, which he praised for their affinity with the work of Fragonard. Moreover, he pointed out that, like Fragonard, Shinn's red chalk drawing appealed to women and could be found in the collections of the most modern women art collectors.²²

Underscoring the artist's increasing attention to theater subjects and decorative work, the exhibition at E. Gimpel and Wildenstein included an example of a decoration and several representations of performers on stage. Accounting for half the oils in the show, theater subjects such as *The Ballet*, *Carmen*, *The Funny Man* and *Poster Curtain* all met with positive critical response. It is worth noting that, as Shinn's career progressed, he created far more oils of the theater than of city scenes, a decision which may reflect his response to the accolades of the reviewers as well as the artist's own ambitions to align himself with glamorous subjects executed in the lush and "significant" medium of oil paint. Shinn's oil of two woman in a park-like setting, entitled *Decoration*, caught the eye of a critic for the *Evening Sun*, who though he had few kind words for the rest of the pictures in the show, found the decorative work intriguing. Unaware that Shinn had already embarked on a successful career as a decorator for private homes, the reporter remarked, "It is astonishing that no enterprising householder has yet captured Mr. Shinn and given him free hand in the decoration of his walls."²³

Unlike the previous years, Shinn did not exhibit as often in 1906 and 1907. Although he showed small selections of work at the usual venues (e.g., The Pennsylvania Academy, The Art Club of Philadelphia, The Boston Art Club, The Society of American Artists, and The Art Institute of Chicago), 1906 was primarily devoted to his work on the Styuvesant Theater and his contribution of 20 illustrations for the novel *Frederique* by Paul de Kock (see for example figs. 279, 280, and 281). At the end of the year, from December 1 to 30th, he exhibited a group of works related to his decorative commissions at the T. Square Club of the Pennsylvania Academy. The items shown indicate the range of his decorative commissions. They included: a ceiling – Louis XIV, a sketch for a Theater Curtain, a Sketch for a ballroom, a panel for an over-door, and a sketch for an over-mantel. Also, in December of 1906, Shinn showed fifteen works at the New York School of Art. Many of these works, however, were familiar to the public from previous exhibitions and do not seem to have attracted critical notice. At the beginning of 1907, he held a large exhibition at McClees Galleries in Philadelphia.

In regard to exhibitions, probably one of the most significant events of 1907 occurred when Shinn submitted two paintings to the National Academy of Design. According to the artist's record book, at the end of February he sent *A Glimpse of the Stage* and *In the Orchestra* to the National Academy's spring exhibition only to have the works rejected by the committee.²⁴ The slight was worsened by the fact that Shinn was a regular contributor to the exhibitions at the Society of American Artists, a group formed in 1877 by artists dissatisfied with the way their art had been treated by the Hanging Committee of the National Academy of Design. In 1906, The Society of American Artists was subsumed by the National Academy of Design, thereby eliminating an important exhibition venue, which despite its growing conservatism, regularly showed Shinn's work. Its amalgamation with its former rival affected Shinn's and other artists' options for showing their work.

At first, the merger between the National Academy of Design and the Society of American Artists did not seem threatening. Henri who, as a member of the Society of American

Artists since 1903 now became a member of the National Academy, had supported the consolidation. Elected to the Jury of Selection, Henri was one of thirty jurors who could vote on the work that would be included in the Academy's 1907 spring exhibition. As the jury sat on long wooden benches, paintings were presented to the jury for consideration. Works were judged on a scale of 1-3, which was indicated by a showing of raised hands. A work rated "1" was a sign of unanimous acceptance; a number "2" indicated that the majority approved of the work; and a number "3" denoted approval by at least one member of the jury. If more than two-thirds of the jury disapproved of the painting, it was given an "R" for "Rejected."

Henri became upset when the paintings of Luks, Shinn, Carl Springhorn, Kent and Glackens suffered during the voting. Exercising his privilege as a juror, he requested that the works in question be brought before the jury for reconsideration. In addition, Henri asked that the paintings called back for review be judged in a different room instead of the usual procedure by which the recalled paintings were placed back on the same easel. Henri's wish was granted, but he was disappointed when none of the jurors made an effort to see the works amid their different surroundings. Moreover, when the pictures were reviewed again, Henri suffered the affront of having one of his paintings, *Asiego*, a matador, reduced from a No. 1 to No. 2. In protest, he withdrew his paintings of *Asiego* and *Spanish Gypsy Woman and her Baby*.²⁵ To add insult to injury, Henri discovered that the Hanging Committee had removed two paintings, to which he had awarded a No. 2, because they disturbed the "mural effect" of the wall. Furious, he told a reporter for the *Sun*, "I don't care for the wall. I only care for the men." To which the reporter responded, "... We venture to say that Mr. Henri is right: it is the man who counts, not the wall."²⁶

The National Academy of Design continued to exercise its conservative policies when, on April 10 1907, it rejected 33 of the 36 painters nominated for associate membership. Among those rejected were future participants in The Eight exhibition, Arthur B. Davies and Ernest Lawson. Henri, always one to stand behind his men, publicly expressed outrage and ardently

espoused his belief in the need for alternative exhibition spaces. To a reporter for *The Evening Mail* he declared, "This action of last night shows that the academy is hopelessly against what is real and vital in American art. What the outsiders must do is to hold small or large group exhibitions, so that the public may see what the artists who have something important to say are doing."²⁷ Henri's words were a harbinger of the exhibition of The Eight, which was to occur within less than a year.

By 1906, Shinn, drawn to the world of the theater and the wealthy clients he met through his decorative commissions, had drifted away from the Philadelphia gang. Though he remained close with the Glackenses, he saw other members from the group of Philadelphia illustrators infrequently. In February of that year, John Sloan commented in his diary about changes he perceived in Shinn: "We seldom meet, but when we do I always warm to him tho' he's mighty different from the scalawag that worked with me ten years ago on the *Inquirer* and *Press* of Philadelphia. He left me saying that he had an engagement with a ten millionaire up town."²⁸

On April 4, 1907 Sloan made one of the first mentions of the preparations for what was to become the landmark show of The Eight. In his diary he recorded that he, Henri, Luks, Davies, Glackens, and Lawson met at Henri's to discuss "a possible exhibition of the 'crowd's' work."²⁹ Sloan noted that he would handle the money and Henri, the correspondence. Shinn's absence from the initial meeting was most likely due to his reputation as an established artist who was perhaps less affected by the slight by the Academy. In his account of The Eight, Shinn gave the following third-person account of his situation: "Shinn had held 3 one-man shows before these other men ever showed their heads, thanks to White. But he joined the 8. They came to him and were his friends..."³⁰ By April 15, Shinn was on board, participating in a meeting at Sloan's studio where he suggested Silo Auction Company as a possible exhibition site. Sloan, who had not seen Shinn for sometime, remarked on the change that had transformed his fellow colleague from the days on the *Press*. Of Shinn's visit Sloan recorded, "Shinn had a bucket of cold water for Henri's and my childish enthusiasm and gave us a fatherly speech on getting on in the world,

etc. Very funny when I think of the days when Shinn's underclothes were unspeakable, when he lived weeks in advance of his salary borrowing – and yet he has got on and will get on.”³¹

Plans for the exhibition were soon underway and as other artists pledged participation, excitement mounted. Lawson was the next to join the group and Luks followed shortly thereafter. By May, “the crowd” secured Galleries as the location for their exhibition to be held in February of the following year. Largely through the help of Arthur B. Davies, William Macbeth agreed to let the group show in his galleries for a guarantee of \$500 and 25% of the profits from sales.³² Sloan shouldered much of the responsibility for gathering the money and assembling the material for the catalogue. On December 30, 1907, even after Macbeth had generously agreed to reduce the guarantee to \$400, Shinn had still not paid his fifty-dollar portion and a somewhat irritated Sloan had to write to remind him. In addition to his other duties, Sloan also photographed one work from each of the eight artists for the catalogue and took pictures of works to be used for publicity in the newspapers.

The two rooms of Macbeth Galleries were divided into eight equal sections and each artist was given about 20 feet of wall space upon which to hang whatever he chose. The number of works hung by each member varied substantially, ranging from Prendergast's 17 pictures to Lawson's selection of only four works. In terms of subject matter, the artists' selections also ranged widely from Prendergast's depictions of joyful beach scenes to Luks's choice of a painting of pigs.³³ Demonstrating the high esteem in which Shinn regarded his theater pictures, all eight of the paintings he selected to represent him in the important exhibition were stage scenes: *Gaieté Montparnasse* (fig. 189), *Rehearsal of the Ballet* (fig. 182), *The White Ballet* (fig. 181), *Leader of the Orchestra* (possibly fig. 235), *The Gingerbread Man* (possibly fig. 241), *The Orchestra Pit* (fig. 206), *Girl in Blue (Revue)* (fig. 226), and *The Hippodrome, London* (fig. 192).

The exhibition of The Eight opened on February 3, 1908. John Sloan did not attend opening day as he felt his clothes were too shabby for the grand affair, noting in his diary, “The appearance of poverty is the worst possible advertising these days.”³⁴ When Sloan made it to the

gallery on February 5, he was pleased to see the crowded rooms and thought that the pictures looked well on the walls. The show was considered a phenomenal success and was widely featured in the press. On February 9, 1908, the *New York Press* remarked on “the crowds that have thronged the Macbeth Galleries during the past week to see the exhibition of paintings by the ‘Eight.’”³⁵ The exhibition drew a line of people outside the door and the *Press* commented that: “The dusky elevator man has worn a harassed expression owing to the frequency of the trips he has had to make. And Mr. Macbeth himself has looked dazed – not at the pictures – but at the jam in his beautiful rooms and at the manner in which his supply of catalogues has been consumed by the spectators.”³⁶ On one especially crowded day, the exhibition drew 300 people an hour with 85 people constantly present in Macbeth’s Galleries.³⁷

In general the critics wrote favorably of the work, the most perceptive among them remarking on the unidealized nature of the pictures. Of Henri’s nine contributions a writer opined, “They are not revolutionary, but they make the average figure study we see in our exhibitions seem pale reflections of humanity.”³⁸ A reviewer for the *New York American* was more out-spoken in his praise, lauding *The Eight* for creating a “renaissance in the American painting of to-day.” He continued, “Here was nothing idealistic, no golden haired and white-skinned goddesses, no landscapes from fairyland, but the real objects, the real people and the real happenings of our everyday life.... ‘The Eight’ have awakened an interest in painting that is admirable.”³⁹ Lawson’s landscapes were particularly well liked by the critics, perhaps because impressionistic style and conventional subject matter was considered the least offensive to the art establishment.

Perhaps one of the most interesting issues that the exhibition of *The Eight* brought to the fore was the question of nationalism in American art. The debate is well described by a critic for *Current Literature*, who in an article titled “Growing Pains of American Art,” outlines the key issues and protagonists surrounding the issue of “Americanness” as represented in the work of *The Eight*. The anonymous writer begins by describing the response of a writer for the *Independent*,

who, after visiting the 1907 winter exhibition at the National Academy of Design, felt that none of the works “bore internal evidence of having been painted in America in the twentieth century.”⁴⁰ The *New York Times* critic, Mr. J. Nilsen Laurvik, offered a more optimistic report of the same exhibition. Laurvik saw promise for American painting in the work of artists such as Leonard Ochtman, Ernest Lawson and Paul Dougherty, but felt that much more needed to be done to encourage indigenous American art. Within this cultural climate, the reviewer for *Current Literature* viewed the exhibition of The Eight as a significant step toward an identifiably nationalistic art. Of the group’s participants, the writer opined, “All eight of these painters are dominantly concerned with the portrayal of American life here and now.”⁴¹

As the writer for *Current Literature* points out, one of the most enthusiastic (and perhaps one of the most perceptive) reviewers of The Eight exhibition was Giles Edgerton (Mary Fanton Roberts). Edgerton contended that to date little effort had been made by American artists to produce a national art, artists relying instead on disingenuous copies after Corot or Velasquez. For her “The art that is worth recognizing as a phase of national life is as insular as the type of people, as the language, as the ways of life; it shows equally the conditions of city and country.”⁴² These qualities Edgerton found in the work of The Eight whose canvases she interpreted as homegrown and out of our soil. She saw nationalism in the examples of The Eight, noting that Luks “splashes it on canvas, beauty that glows out of shadows, as all beauty in the East Side must.”⁴³ Prendergast she felt “will give them a lesson on how painting children out of doors with such beauty and atmosphere, with such gaiety, with such relation of sunlight to laughter, that they will recognize him as a teacher not to be found in the Latin Quarter.”⁴⁴ Despite her enthusiastic identification of nationalism in work of The Eight, she rightly noted that the artists themselves probably did not see themselves as consciously trying to create a national art. Nevertheless, she concluded, “They are every one of them ... doing the kind of work that is essentially creative and absolutely typical of our racial characteristics, our social conditions and our widely diversified country.”⁴⁵

Not all writers, however, were equally convinced that the exhibition of *The Eight* represented “a new departure in American art.” A New York *Press* reviewer called interpretations such as Edgerton’s a “fractious guise” that had “been most sedulously cultivated by the injudicious friends of the painters.” He continues, “We went to the exhibition only to be struck with the feeling that it was the most Frenchified show of paintings that we had seen in New York in recent years.”⁴⁶ While the artists must have been disheartened to read the review, it was the exception rather than the rule. Furthermore, the writer’s claim that the work by Shinn, Glackens, Lawson and Sloan was more French than works by artists who were currently showing at the National Academy of Design seems misguided, especially in light of the fact that many of the works in the exhibition portrayed contemporary American subject matter.

Shinn’s selections, which ranged from his early well-known painting *The Hippodrome, London* and the perhaps even more famous *White Ballet* to the stunning and very recent picture, *Girl in Blue*, were for the most part well received by the critics who delighted in recognizing “old friends” as well as viewing the artist’s latest accomplishments. The few writers who expressed negative criticism voiced the same complaints that were familiar from previous reviews, namely that Shinn borrowed too heavily from Degas and Forain, underscoring yet again the critics’ demand for an original American voice. “A man of such ability ought surely be able to do fresher and finer things,” wrote a reviewer for the New York *Tribune*.⁴⁷ An author writing under the name “The Gilder” for the gossipy publication *Town Topics* penned some of the most vitriolic criticism of *The Eight*. “The Gilder” had only harsh words for the exhibition, proclaiming, “As for Prendergast, his work is unadulterated artistic slop, and Shinn’s is only several degrees better.”⁴⁸

More typical of the tone of criticism was the article in the *Globe and Commercial Advertiser* in which the writer observed, “Of Everett Shinn’s interesting efforts with theater interiors and curious effects of light and shade, of audiences and actors, of orchestra and stage lighting, we have before written favorable and much. Some of the remembered favorites are here,

and they are capital, as a rule, showing a delicious sense of color and of contrast.”⁴⁹ Critics admired Shinn’s draftsmanship, which was particularly evident in the skillful rendering of the backs of heads in the *Orchestra Pit* and the glamour of youth in his ballet dancers. His forceful and vigorous treatment of oil paint was remarked upon by a reviewer for the *Transcript* who commented, “Mr. Shinn shows eight of his characteristic theater subjects, racy glimpses of stage life, pungently wrought and not without a forcible, vivid expressiveness.”⁵⁰

Favorites amongst the reviewers included Shinn’s ballet pictures and his painting *The Hippodrome, London* which was described as portraying “the Hippodrome gallery, London with people almost as faithfully presented as though they had been photographed, gazing at a well poised, well modeled woman on the ‘flying trapeze.’”⁵¹ Another writer noted, “Everett Shinn’s ballet and hippodrome pictures are all in the same sentiment – ‘clever sketches’ of an alluring phase of art, full of dash and movement. ‘Girl in Blue’ is particularly good. ‘The Hippodrome’ exceedingly clever. ‘The White Ballet’ is a saucy, smart sketch.”⁵² *Girl in Blue* was purchased from the exhibition by the illustrious patron Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney for \$300.⁵³ The positive critical and commercial response to the exhibition is recorded in Sloan’s diary. On February 17th he wrote, “We’ve made a success – Davies says an *epoch*. The sales at the exhibition amount to near \$4000... Macbeth is as ‘pleased as punch.’ It’s fine. Had this been a normal financial year, he says there would have been a landslide our way.”⁵⁴

As Judith Zilczer has pointed out in her article *The Eight on Tour, 1908-1909*, although the exhibition of *The Eight* was not originally organized as a touring show, the advanced publicity generated early interest in the idea.⁵⁵ Even before the *Macbeth* exhibition opened, Robert Henri received an offer to take the show from Rowland Galleries in Boston. The artists, however, would be required to cover all expenses and insurance, making the offer much less appealing. While the proposal from the Rowland Galleries was still under consideration, John F. D. Trask of the Pennsylvania Academy expressed interest in show. His offer to pay expenses one way was readily accepted by the group, and negotiations with Rowland were later terminated.

Sloan was delighted to be able to evoke the exhibition's commercial success in New York. Writing in his diary about the forthcoming traveling show he remarked, "What a joy to say that pictures sold will make substitutions necessary."⁵⁶

When the show traveled to the Pennsylvania Academy, Shinn, among the fortunate artists for whom substitution was necessary, replaced *Girl in Blue* with two works, *La Première Danseuse* and *A Trapeze Artist*. Although the exhibition did not generate the level of publicity in Philadelphia that it had in New York, Shinn received favorable notice in the *Public Ledger*. In an article that featured an image of *Rehearsal of the Ballet* a critic observed, "Everett Shinn delights in motion, the swift flight of the aerialist acrobat upon a trapeze, the lightly poised grace of the ballet girl, treated gaily, vivaciously. In all of these pictures there is something of the fascination of the theater."⁵⁷

Following the exhibition at the Pennsylvania Academy, the show traveled to Chicago, Toledo, Detroit, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh, Indianapolis, Bridgeport, and Newark. For this portion on the tour, Shinn changed almost all of his selections, showing *The Song*, *The Dance Step*, *In the Orchestra Pit*, *Man with Umbrella*, *Ballet Girl Trying Slipper*, *Ballet Girl Resting*, and *The Last Song*. Only *In the Orchestra Pit* remained from the original Macbeth exhibition. Shinn withdrew *The Leader of the Orchestra* from the tour to send to the Corcoran Gallery where he was now asking \$1000 for the painting. The substantial increase in price, up \$600 from the \$400 Shinn asked when the picture was shown in Philadelphia, most likely reflects the positive impact of the exhibition on the value of works seen in the show. In Chicago, *In the Orchestra Pit* along with Shinn's six substitutions found favor with a critic for the *Chicago Evening Post* who remarked, "Shinn has seven charmingly painted studies of chorus girls and the stage. His color is delightful and his modeling good. Especially pleasing is his 'The Dance Step,' where the spirit of the blue-green wood is expressed in the quaint figure."⁵⁸

Although none of the artists sold work from the traveling exhibition, Zilczer notes, "The success of the tour by The Eight was no less influential than their exhibition at Macbeth's. It is

significant that in the following decade several of the independently organized modern art exhibitions traveled to major American cities.”⁵⁹ The exhibition of *The Eight* also had a serious impact on the National Academy of Design, which was forced to reassess its exhibition policies. Changes were made within the institution, perhaps one of the most dramatic being the abolition of the traditional Hanging Committee, which was replaced by a one-man appointment who was responsible for the forthcoming exhibition. Equally surprising was an invitation extended by the National Academy of Design to the members of *The Eight* as well as to other Henri students to exhibit their work in one of the Academy’s galleries. Lawson and Bellows were even awarded prizes and both were elected to associate membership at the Academy, an honor for which Shinn would have to wait another 35 years.⁶⁰

In May of 1908, while *The Eight* exhibition was still on tour, Shinn, feeling himself in a financial pinch due to a temporary cessation of payments from Belasco for the Styvesant Theater, hit upon the idea of capitalizing upon the current political question of whether or not Teddy Roosevelt would break precedent and run for a third term. Shinn invented a political puzzle comprised of the face of Roosevelt under a celluloid cover with BB shots that rolled around in the box. The objective was to land the BB shots in Roosevelt’s eyes thus answering the question: “Can he see a third term?” As part of the publicity for the endeavor, he enlisted the help of his friends in *The Eight*. On May 9, 1908, William Glackens wrote to his wife Edith, “Shinn is up in the air about his puzzle.... We are all going to be interviewed about our views on Teddy as a third term. I think that is what he intends. He has a press agent camping out in his studio turning out ideas to advertise the puzzle. One would think it was the circus coming to town.”⁶¹ At first, none of the members of *The Eight* took Shinn seriously, but shortly thereafter articles appeared in the New York papers recording the artists’ alleged commitment to the Theodore III Club, an organization formed to support the president. The news reports sparked protest amongst *The Eight* who claimed that they had not consented to be part of the club. The dissension was embarrassingly recorded in the press, one reporter noting, “Seven-eighths of the

octette [sic] of tradition defying artists who appear to have either withdrawn their support from the president or gone fishing."⁶² On May 14, Glackens, who was indeed on a fishing trip, wrote to his wife, "Shinn's puzzle is out and the stories published in the papers about it make first class idiots of the whole lot of us. Everett has certainly taken advantage of his friends for advertising purposes."⁶³ Frederick James Gregg of the *Evening Sun* interviewed Lawson who was the most incensed about the political implications of Shinn's venture. The resulting article claimed that, with the exception of Shinn, the members of The Eight denied any knowledge of the Theodore Club. It was implied that Shinn had used their names without their permission. Shinn was furious with Lawson and threatened to sue the *Evening Sun*. Of the group, Sloan took the situation the most lightheartedly observing, "It's all very amusing, Shinn making hay out of his associates in the Exhibition."⁶⁴ In the end, it was William Howard Taft who accepted the nomination rather than Teddy Roosevelt. Shinn immediately created two new puzzles, one of William Howard Taft and another of William Jennings Bryan, to replace the Roosevelt puzzle.

Shinn exhibited very little in 1909. The exhibition of The Eight continued to travel until May of that year, making the group's work known to a broader audience. From January 5 to 21, 1909, Shinn held a large exhibition of 57 works at the MacDowell Club Art Rooms in the Metropolitan Opera Building in New York. The show was unusual as it not only included oil paintings, watercolors and pastels, but also photographs of completed works such as the piano he painted for Clyde Fitch and the decorations for the Styuvesant Theater. *Leader of the Orchestra*, which had recently been shown at the Corcoran Gallery of Art, was sent in April to the Buffalo Museum where it remained until August 5, 1909. From there, it was sent to St. Louis for six months.

In 1910, Shinn participated in the Exhibition of Independent Artists held from April 1 to 27, at 29-31 West 35th Street. Henri, Sloan, Rockwell Kent, Walt Kuhn, and Stuart Davis organized the show and participants ranged from well-known members of The Eight to less familiar names such as Platt Hubbard, Allen Gilbert, and Putnam Brinley. In all, 103 artists

exhibited 260 paintings, 219 drawings, and 20 sculptures.⁶⁵ Works were hung alphabetically in a show that promoted freedom from juries and awards as well as an American agenda. Like the exhibition of the Eight, The Exhibition of Independent Artists drew large crowds and much press. Shinn exhibited six works: four stage pictures – *The Stage Yellow Dress: The Stage, Talking to the Leader*, *The Stage, 1865 Costume*; and *The Stage Blue Background* – and two drawings of decorations for boudoirs.

The same year, he also showed six works in the exhibition of the American Watercolor Society in New York. Hung by Henry Reuterdaahl, the show captured the attention of an anonymous critic for *The Craftsman* who praised the presentation as displaying: “little water-color sketches, etchings, illustrations in wash and pen and ink, done by such vital people as Glackens, Shinn, Sloan, Myers, Preston, Raleigh, and E. Dimock, -- fairly bristling with life.” After lauding Glackens’s rendering of New York’s lower East Side, the writer continued, “Everett Shinn’s ‘Dancer’ is a fragment of life equally convincing. Again, you see the back of the sketch the man who *knows*, who sees life clearly and luminously.”⁶⁶

Of the exhibitions that Shinn participated in that year, probably his most important alliance that year was as a charter member with a newly formed group of pastel painters. Known as “The Pastellists” the organization held its inaugural exhibition in January 1910 at the Folsom Galleries located at 596 Fifth Avenue. With the demise of the Society of Painters in Pastel in 1890, pastel painters lost a crucial means of promotion and exhibition. It should be noted, however, that pastels did not disappear from public view with the loss of the Society. Indeed, during the 1890s and into the first years of the 20th century, pastels were increasingly shown in exhibitions dedicated to watercolors. The mediums were frequently linked in people’s minds and critics noted that many artists blended pastels with watercolor, making it difficult to discern the medium. Though artists could include their pastels in displays of other mediums, with the organization of the Pastellists, pastel artists gained a venue, which at least during its first exhibitions, was devoted exclusively to their medium.⁶⁷ Under the leadership of Leon Dabo, who

was president, and Elmer MacRae, who was secretary-treasurer, the group held four exhibitions between 1910 and 1914. These well-selected displays significantly increased awareness of the medium amongst collectors and younger artists. The press was supportive of the organization, noting that it fulfilled a much-needed role and provided a sense of camaraderie amongst the artists. As one writer aptly summarized the situation: "A few meager specimens are smuggled into the water color exhibitions, and occasionally a work of that pleasing enthusiast, the late J. Wells Champney turns up at a sale, but these are not sufficient to give the general public any conception of the charm and possibilities of the soft colored crayons. Now we have at last a self-confessed working organization of pastellists..."⁶⁸

The Pastellists' first exhibition, on view from January 10 to 25, 1910 generated enthusiastic comment from the critics, one of whom called it "one of the finest exhibitions New York has seen, a collection of small masterpieces."⁶⁹ According to an article in *The Craftsman*, the club intended to limit its membership to twenty artists.⁷⁰ George Bellows, the youngest exhibitor, showed three works, as did Jerome Meyers. Jonas Lie was represented by two "virile studies," Leon Dabo by "three poetic and charming pictures," and Glackens by several works including "one or two ... of his customary subject, Washington Square."⁷¹ It was noted that some of the artists, for example Ernest Lawson, had never worked in pastel before, while others such as Colin Campbell Cooper had used it for drawings but had not considered that such works would be exhibited.⁷² Mary Cassatt's pastel, *Mother and Child*, was afforded a place of honor and described by a writer as showing "her consummate control over the pastel medium."⁷³

Shinn's work in particular was singled out for praise in the papers. Recognized as a veteran practitioner of the medium, he was described as one of the artists who "have long been known as incurable pastellists."⁷⁴ He sent four works to the exhibition: *Fifth Avenue Bus in a Snow Storm*, a pair of red chalk drawings listed in the catalogue as "period Louis XIV" and shown in antique gold frames, and one oval red chalk drawing. *Fifth Avenue Bus in a Snow Storm* is probably one of his early pastels dating from c. 1899 (e.g., fig. 89). Indeed, the critic

described the work as “Fifth Avenue Bus in Snow Storm – an old picture dating from a time when the buses were dragged by horses, which has now gained an historic value outside of its value as a strong work well drawn...”⁷⁵ Another writer, addressing the work of Glackens and Shinn, emphasized the realism of the pastels. He observed, “‘Fifth Avenue Bus in a Snow Storm’ show[s] a very wholesome reaction against the vogue the artificial attained until such men as these began to overturn it with the force of their genius.”⁷⁶ The catalogue’s description of Shinn’s sanguines indicates that they were very much in sync with the style of his decorative work. One of the drawings was a nude, which is mentioned in a review as seated on rocks before a pool of water. Another, illustrated in the *New York Tribune*, portrays a man and a woman attired in the garb of the French 18th century seated in a pastoral setting.⁷⁷ On January 25, after the close of the exhibition, MacRae assembled the club’s officers and the Board of Control, which consisted of Juliet Thompson, Myers, and Shinn. Membership dues were initiated and a second meeting was scheduled for February 15. At the second meeting, the articles of incorporation were decided.⁷⁸

The Pastellists’s second exhibition, also held at the Folsom Galleries, was on view from December 9 to 30, 1911. The response of the critics is exemplified by one reviewer who declared that the show “surpasses in interest its predecessor, which certainly was sufficiently charming.”⁷⁹ The pastels were hung in a room with soft lighting that was thought by one writer to enhance the atmospheric effect of the pastels.⁸⁰ Overall, the effect of the exhibition seemed to offer respite from the bustle outside the gallery doors. “[T]his group of artists are simply a delight to the eye, a solace to the nerves. They are intimate, not noisy,” observed one reviewer. Shinn was represented by three works: *Paris Street Scene – No. 1*, *Paris Street Scene – No. 2*, and *Sketch from Music Hall*, although only Paris scenes are mentioned in the reviews. One writer referred to them as “strong studies” while another called them “telling street scenes in Paris.”⁸¹ Although outside the scope of this dissertation, it is worth noting that Shinn did not exhibit in the remaining exhibitions of Pastellists, the third held in 1912 and the fourth held in 1914.⁸²

In 1911, *The Craftsman* reported that Harry W. Watrous, chairman of the Art Committee at the Union League Club, was organizing an exhibition of the work of the American “insurgents” that would include Glackens, Shinn, Lawson, Luks, Henri, and Bellows. The writer commended the Club for “departing from its old policy of such disastrous and meaningless exhibitions as the ‘Portraits of Actresses,’ which closed its exhibition season last year with a thud.”⁸³ The exhibition at the Union League Club opened on April 11, 1911 to sarcastic remarks from the club’s members. “Well, if this is art I guess I’m not up to it,” commented one member.⁸⁴ Watrous, more amused than disturbed by the Club’s reaction, was pleased to have had an opportunity to exhibit the “independents” in one of the Club’s monthly shows. He must have been gratified as well by the support he received in the press, which lauded his efforts and called him “the bravest man in New York city to-day” for mounting the exhibition.⁸⁵ Shinn’s two pastels, one of a dancer and another of a singer were hardly revolutionary and drew favorable comment from the critics one of whom remarked, “Everett Shinn’s “Dancer” and “Singer” are pastel studies from the vaudeville stage and are extremely clever and telling.”⁸⁶

The invitation from the august Union League Club to a group of artists who had, as recently as 1908, been considered insurgents and radicals and whose work was rejected by the National Academy of Design reveals how quickly aesthetic perceptions had changed. Although work by artists who portrayed unconventional subject matter -- representations of life free from the veils of allegory or that which was not typically beautiful -- was still not universally accepted (and likely never will be), significant inroads had been made. In two years time, in 1913, the Armory Show would up the ante considerably. Work by the Ashcan artists, which due to its representations of gritty subjects had seemed so disturbing to some just five years ago, now appeared relatively tame when compared to the breaking down of form, abstraction, and disruption of space observed in the work of avant-garde Europeans such as Marcel Duchamp and Wassily Kandinsky. Indeed, the Armory Show had an enormous impact on American Art, changing historical attitudes to Shinn and other progressive artists, practically overnight. It

marked a turning point, introducing many artists and a portion of the American public, to new artistic challenges. Though Shinn was most likely asked to contribute to the Armory Show exhibition, he either declined or simply ignored the invitation. In a way, his absence from the exhibition says as much about the current and future direction of his work as the presence of others artists who were included in the show. Modernism, abstraction, and the fracturing of space were not challenges that interested Shinn. While he continued to exhibit for many more years, critics never again hailed him as a member of the avant-garde. However, during the early period of his career, he produced much aesthetically brilliant work that not only exemplified his skill in certain mediums, particularly pastel, but also captured the multifaceted and wonderfully diverse combination of styles, classes, and ethnicities that converged in New York at turn of the 19th century.

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- ¹ "New England Notes," *Review* (St. Louis, MO) May 1902, AAA, roll D179, frame 44.
- ² "Watercolors Worth Seeing," *Boston Herald*, April 6, 1902, AAA, roll D179, frame 43.
- ³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴ Letter from Roland Knoedler, New York to Everett Shinn, New York, February 19, 1903. Domestic letter book January 9 to March 24th 1903, Knoedler Gallery, New York.
- ⁵ *New York Herald*, March 15, 1903, untitled, news clipping, AAA, roll D179, frame 46.
- ⁶ "Pastels by Everett Shinn at the Knoedler Galleries – Work of a Man of Talent," *New York Mail & Express*, March 17, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 46.
- ⁷ "Art Notes," *Record-Herald* (Chicago), March 22, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 47.
- ⁸ "Art Notes," *Record-Herald* (Chicago), March 22, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 47.
- ⁹ "Art Notes," *Record-Herald* (Chicago), March 22, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 47. Although this work is not currently located, in 1906 Shinn created another pastel of the subject. Titled: *The East River at Night*, the work seems to match the reviewer's account suggesting that the artist made two versions of the critically successful pastel.
- ¹⁰ "Art and The Artists," *Commercial Advertiser*, March 11, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 45.
- ¹¹ Helen W. Henderson, "Philadelphia Artists Exhibiting in New York," *Philadelphia North American*, March 11, 1903, Scrapbook, 1898-1906, AAA, roll D179, frame 45.
- ¹² *Town Topics*, March 19, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 46.
- ¹³ Unidentified news clipping, (March/April 1903), AAA, roll D179, frame 46.
- ¹⁴ Efforts to determine more information regarding the exhibition of Shinn's work in Bethlehem, PA, have failed to provide any significant results. A discussion with Barbara Schafer, collections manager at Historic Bethlehem, the organization that oversees the area's museums, revealed that there were no museums extant in 1903. Schafer suggested the following possible locations for the exhibition of Shinn's work: Moravian College, The Women's Club, The Bethlehem Club, and The Fine Arts Club.
- ¹⁵ *Record-Herald* Sunday (Chicago) April 19, 1903, AAA, roll D179, frame 45. For Mrs. C. J. Blair's purchases, see Shinn Record Book 1 p. 42.
- ¹⁶ "Everett Shinn's Work," *New York Times*, March 12, 1904, p. 9.
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁹ "Art Exhibitions at Various Galleries," unidentified news clipping, AAA, roll D179, frame 58.
- ²⁰ *The American* (Philadelphia), March 27, 1904; "Watercolors at the Academy," *Public Ledger* (Philadelphia), March 27, 1904, p. 11; and "Some Exhibits in the Philadelphia Water Color Show," *The Inquirer*, (Philadelphia), March 27, 1904, p. 3.
- ²¹ "Art Exhibitions of the Week," *Evening Sun* (New York), February 25, 1905, p. 4.

²² Henri Pène du Bois, "A Fragonard of the Present Time," *New York American*, February 22, 1905, p. 14.

²³ "Art Exhibitions of the Week," *Evening Sun* (New York), February 25, 1905, p. 4.

²⁴ Although Shinn's record book does not provide the medium for either *A Glimpse of the Stage* or *In the Orchestra*, the amount he was asking for each work, \$500, suggests that they were most likely oils. \$500 was a high asking price for Shinn and ranks the pictures' values as comparable to his most expensive oils. As a point of comparison, two years later when he showed eight works in the exhibition of *The Eight*, the most expensive work, *Hippodrome, London*, was priced at \$500.

²⁵ "The 'Thirty' Men and Mr. Henri," *The Evening Post* (New York) March 13, 1907, front page.

²⁶ "That Tragic Wall," *The Sun* (New York) March 16, 1907, p. 8.

²⁷ "Academy Bars Noted Artists," *The Evening Mail*, (New York) April 11, 1907, p. 3.

²⁸ St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, p. 14.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

³⁰ "The Eight," Everett Shinn papers, Delaware Art Museum.

³¹ Bruce St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, p. 122.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 126.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

³⁵ "Art Notes of the Week," *The New York Press*, February 9, 1908, p. 6.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Bruce St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, p. 194.

³⁸ "Art Notes of the Week," *The New York Press*, February 9, 1908, p. 6.

³⁹ "The Eight Exhibit: New Art Realism," *New York American*, February 4, 1908, p. 10.

⁴⁰ "Growing Pains of American Art," *Current Literature* 44 (April 1908): 393.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 393-394.

⁴² Giles Edgerton (Mary Fanton Roberts), "The Younger American Painters: Are They Creating a National Art?" *The Craftsman* (February 1908): 521.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 523.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 531.

⁴⁶ "Art Notes of the Week," *The New York Press*, February 9, 1908, p. 6.

⁴⁷ "Art Exhibitions: New Pictures by American Artists, and Some Old Prints," *New-York Daily Tribune*, February 5, 1908, p. 7.

⁴⁸ "The Gilder," *Town Topics*, February 6, 1908, p. 6.

⁴⁹ "Art and Artists," *Globe and Commercial Advertiser*, February 5, 1908, p. 9.

⁵⁰ "Exhibition of the Eight," *Transcript Boston*, February 4, 1908, AAA, roll 952, frame 315.

⁵¹ *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, AAA, roll 952, frame 315.

⁵² *Evening Mail*, February 4, 1908, p. 6.

⁵³ Record Book 1, p. 83. In all, Whitney purchased four works from the exhibition for a total of \$2,225. In addition to *Girl in Blue*, these included *Laughing Child* by Henri, *Winter on the River* by Lawson and *Woman with Goose*, by George Luks. Avis Berman, *Rebels on Eight Street* (New York: Atheneum, 1990), pp. 91-92. Two months later on May 4, 1908, Whitney purchased five additional works from Shinn: four red chalk drawings and one monotype. Record book 1, p. 84.

⁵⁴ St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, pp. 197-98. In addition to the paintings purchased by Whitney, the other paintings sold were: *Coast of Maine* by Henri, *Redwoods*, *Autumn River* and another painting for which the title has apparently been lost by Arthur B. Davies.

⁵⁵ Zilczer, "The Eight on Tour, 1908-1909," p. 21.

⁵⁶ St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, p. 198.

⁵⁷ "Paintings on View at Academy of the Fine Arts," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, March 8, 1908, p. 16.

⁵⁸ "Eight Exhibition," *The Chicago Evening Post*, September 12, 1908.

⁵⁹ Zilczer, "The Eight on Tour, 1908-1909," p. 43.

⁶⁰ For the impact of The Eight show on the National Academy of Design, see Perlman, *Painters of the Ashcan School: The Immortal Eight*, p. 182.

⁶¹ Glackens, *William Glackens*, p. 106.

⁶² "Theodore III Club Rends The 'Eight,'" untitled news clipping, AAA, roll 952, frame 213.

⁶³ Glackens, *William Glackens*, p. 107.

⁶⁴ John Sloan diary entry May 29, 1908, St. John, ed., *John Sloan's New York Scene*, p. 222.

⁶⁵ For information of the Exhibition of Independent Artists, see *The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Exhibition of Independent Artists in 1910*, exh. cat. (Wilmington, Delaware: Delaware Art Center, 1960).

⁶⁶ Anonymous, "The Value of Watercolor Painting and the Spring Exhibition in New York," *The Craftsman* 20 (July 1911): 355-356.

⁶⁷ The Pastellists fourth exhibition in 1914 included watercolors in addition to pastels. See Doreen Burke's contribution, "The Pastellists 1910-1915," part the essay "American Pastels, 1880-1930: Revival & Revitalization" in *American Pastels in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, p. 21.

⁶⁸ Henry Tyrrell, "Up and Down Picture Lane," *Evening World*, January 4, 1911, roll D179, frame 81.

⁶⁹ "The Pastellists: A New Art Society," *The Craftsman* 19, (March 1911): 639.

⁷⁰ An article in *The Craftsman* lists the charter members of the Pastellists as: "George W. Bellows, Marion Beckett, Mary Cassatt, Colin Campbell Cooper, Mary Helen Carlisle, Paul Cornoyer, Thomas W. Dewing, Leon Dabo, William J. Glackens, Edward A Kramer, Jonas Lie, Ernest Lawson, Elmer Livingston MacRae, Jerome Myers, Henry Reuterdaahl, Albert Sterner, Everett Shinn, Juliet Thompson, Henry C. White and J. Alden Weir," "The Pastellists: A New Art Society," p. 639.

⁷¹ Florence B. Ruthrauff, "Folsom Galleries has an Exhibition of the Pastellists," *Morning Telegraph*, January 31, 1910, AAA, roll D179, frame 81.

⁷² "Drawings by Pastellists," *New York Evening Post*, January 13, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 81.

⁷³ "The Pastellists: A New Art Society," p. 639.

⁷⁴ Henry Tyrrell, "Up and Down Picture Lane," *New York Evening World*, January 4, 1911, roll D179, frame 81. Other artists recognized as established in the medium were MacRae, Meyers, and Reuterdaahl.

⁷⁵ "Drawings by Pastellists," *New York Evening Post*, January 13, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 81.

⁷⁶ "The Pastellists: A New Art Society," p. 639.

⁷⁷ For the illustration of Shinn's red chalk drawing, see "Art News from New York," *New York Tribune*, January 22, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 90.

⁷⁸ Burke, *American Pastels in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, p. 21.

⁷⁹ "The Pastellists," *New York Times*, December 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 95.

⁸⁰ "Annual Offering by Pastellists," *Brooklyn Eagle*, December 24, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 102.

⁸¹ "The Pastellists," *New York Times*, December 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 95.

⁸² The third exhibition of the Pastellists was most likely the show held at Powell Art Gallery, New York, from February 19 to March 19, 1912. Although the name "Pastellists" is not included on the cover of the catalogue, many of the same artists participated. The fourth exhibition of the Pastellists was held from February 5 to February 21, 1914 at the National Arts Club, New York.

⁸³ "New Exhibitions for the Union League Club, New York," *The Craftsman* 20 (April 1911): 115.

⁸⁴ "Rap 'Independents' Art Works: Union League Club Members Make Sarcastic Remarks," *New York Press*, AAA, roll D179, frame 96.

⁸⁵ "Around the Galleries," *New York Sun* 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 96.

⁸⁶ "Independents Exhibit Work at Union League," *New York Evening Mail*, April 15, 1911, AAA, roll D179, frame 98.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this dissertation has been to situate the early work of Everett Shinn within the complex matrix of ideas, influences, and changes affecting the urban areas, primarily New York City at the turn of the 19th century. It specifically addresses the way that Shinn's work, from 1897 to 1911, expresses many of the most salient cross-currents of contemporary New York society. Socially, these include issues related to immigration, industrialization, and women's greater freedom within the public sphere. Artistically, they include Shinn's innovative use of pastel and his contribution to the pastel revival, his participation in *The Eight*, his gutsy and original treatment of New York City street life, and his synthesis of the work of European artists, particularly Degas, whose compositional design Shinn borrowed but, translated into a vehicle for an American idiom – the American vaudeville theater.

Shinn has been most often associated with *The Eight* or considered as a member of the Ashcan School, and indeed many of his most original and well-known works can be traced to these alliances. Seeking to understand Shinn's pictures within the context of their time, this dissertation has drawn from disciplines other than art history. Social and cultural history have informed much of my discussion of Shinn, helping the reader and the viewer to understand why the artist's work might have appealed to the New York audience of the early 1900s. The advent of large-scale immigration and the shift of populations from rural areas of the United States to New York created a situation whereby many people, unaccustomed to established customs and mores were thrust into unfamiliar environments. Their arrival coincided with the building of elaborate new mansions in the Italian Renaissance style as well as churches and clubs where the rich and established families of New York could enjoy their privilege and wealth away from the eyes of the less fortunate. However, at the same time that the private spaces were being

constructed, other structures were being built to accommodate an increasing public New York population. The establishment of restaurants, like Delmonico's, Sherry's, and Mouquin's, the formation of the ladies' mile and the cleaning up of vaudeville theater, all contributed to the rise of an increasingly "public" city where individuals were encouraged to mingle with one another. Such locales fascinated Shinn, and in his renditions of the vaudeville stage or his urban street scenes, he showed people exploring their environment where they were provided with an opportunity to begin to see themselves as part of a community. Throughout much of Shinn's early career he was concerned with the representation of public space as an arena where urban dwellers, mostly inhabitants of New York, but including denizens of Paris and London, could interact and in so doing form an urban identity.

Shinn launched his career with low-toned pastels of urban themes and even after his trip to Europe in 1900, when his palette brightened and he was increasingly drawn to theatrical subjects, he maintained his interest in the urban spectacle as a site of public interaction. Shinn's works can function as a lens through which one can experience the wonderment and fascination that early New Yorkers experienced as they tried to make sense of the diverse and constantly shifting turn-of-the-century environment. Shinn's subjects are remarkably different, ranging from spirited pastels of downtown street scenes such as *Park Row*, *Fruit Venders* to large oils of dancers on stage such as *Theater Scene*. At the same time that he was creating oil paintings and pastels, he also produced a large body of decorative work, which departed from his representations of the city and stage. Shinn's painted panels, screens, ceilings, doors, and pianos, executed in the style of the French 18th century, contributed another thread to the aesthetic fabric of the era. The subjects that appear in Shinn's decorative works -- cupids and ladies frolicking in gardens -- were promoted by leading tastemakers such as Elsie de Wolfe and underscore his engagement with the diverse aesthetic crosscurrents prevalent at the turn of the 19th century. In general, however, Shinn's contribution to American art lies in his interpretation of the urban

sphere as a spectacle of modern life, and it is this aspect of Shinn's career that has been the focus of this dissertation.

Everett Shinn died May 1, 1953 in New York Hospital of lung cancer. His obituary in the *New York Times* read: "A handsome and debonair man of many talents; Mr. Shinn will be remembered chiefly for his contributions to modern American art and for his role as one of the 'Eight Men of Rebellion,' of which he was the last survivor. He was an artist, sign painter, draftsman, engineer, designer, writer, composer, actor, teacher, carpenter, mechanic and theater impresario. In each role he sought the startling, the new and 'the natural.'"¹ Ironically, Shinn, who at the height of his artistic powers helped introduce America to daringly modern subjects executed in a spirited non-traditional technique, did not adapt to the changes in modern art. Although he showed in The Exhibition of Independent Artists in 1910, he ignored an invitation to contribute to the important Armory Show exhibition in 1913 and subsequently spoke derisively about modern art calling it "sneaking and malicious ... [art in which] Incompetence works to inflict slow death to healthy painting."²

Following his divorce from Flossie, he was married three more times to -- Corrine Baldwin in 1913 (with whom he had two children, Janet born in 1915 and David born in 1916), Gertrude McManus Chase in 1924, and Paula Downing in 1933, each union ending in divorce. After 1913 his time was increasingly divided amongst various projects. He resumed his illustration career and accepted many decorative commissions for private homes and restaurants, such as the Oak Bar at the Plaza Hotel, for which he painted murals showing the area around the Plaza as it looked in 1900. Between 1917 and 1923 he worked as an art director for the motion picture industry where he was responsible for the movie sets of *Polly of the Circus* and *The Bright Shawl*. In 1943, he was made an Academician of the National Academy of Design, and in 1951 he was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

In his late work Shinn had largely drifted away from the verve and originality that characterized his early New York City scenes, and by the early 1950s when he died, his work had

generally fallen out of favor. His continuing treatment of performers and urban street life in the spirit of the 1900s, executed in the representational style that he faithfully defended, looked out of date and retrograde when compared with the contemporary trends in the art world. By the mid-century, forces set in motion by the 1913 Armory Show had reached a crescendo of sorts, completely changing the terms by which many evaluated art. Indeed, in many ways Shinn's work, which is representational rather than abstract, intimate rather than grand, temporal rather than universal, is the antithesis of the paintings of the Abstract Expressionists, who dominated the art world of the 1950s. Though Shinn was extremely adept at the artistic mediums he employed, they were never ends unto themselves. Rather his use of red chalk, oil, or pastel was a means to communicate ideas frequently pertaining to a specific place and time to a diverse audience. The renowned critic Clement Greenberg, champion of the Abstract Expressionists, would likely have derided Shinn's work as kitsch, a term he defined as: "popular, commercial art and literature with their chromotypes, magazine covers, illustrations, ads, slick and pulp fiction, comics, Tin Pan Alley music, tap dancing, Hollywood movies, etc., etc...."³

Today the terms by which we evaluate art have shifted again. According to Greenberg's definition, Shinn's work is still kitsch. What has changed is our valuation of what kitsch exemplifies. Today's postmodern or pluralistic art world not only accommodates, but also welcomes the popular and recognizable bits of contemporary life excerpted from the world around us. In his recent exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the photographer Andreas Gursky presented the viewer with mural size photos of Prada windows, the exterior of a high rise commercial bank in Hong Kong, and the floor of the New York stock exchange. Most are reasonably recognizable images, altered somewhat by the artist, that offer touchstones of modern civilization and underscore the viewer's place within a landscape that is intriguing because it is both familiar and foreign. This not to say that Gursky is a modern Shinn, only that representation of similar types of subjects has gained currency in today's art world.

Shinn's renewed popularity first germinated in the 1960s when pioneers in the field of American Art collecting – Margaret and Raymond Horowitz, the Daniel and Rita Fraad, and Arthur Altschul – selected works by Shinn to include amongst other masters. Slowly interest spread, but it has not been until recent years that Shinn has resumed a position of prominence in American art. In addition to the revival of realist painting, Shinn's art is also appreciated today for its ability capture the spirit of the first and second decades of the twentieth century, a period for which many people now feel a sense of nostalgia (witness the number and popularity of exhibitions that deal with this period, e.g., 1900 "Art at the Crossroads" held at the Royal Academy in London and then at the Guggenheim in New York from January 16 – September 10, 2000). Shinn's best work exemplifies the excitement, tension, drama, and sense of infinite possibility that characterized the era. And so it seems particularly appropriate, as we enter a new century, to look back at an artist whose work though temporal, manages to transcend the limitations of time and location to appear constantly compelling in its ability to address issues that continue to engage us today.

¹ "Everett Shinn, 79. Noted Artist. Dies." *New York Times*, May 3, 1953, p. 89.

² "Notes on Various Subjects." SAM.

³ Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" in *Art and Culture, Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), p. 9.

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**THE EARLY WORK OF EVERETT SHINN (1897-1911):
ART AT THE CROSSROADS OF A NEW CENTURY**

by

JANAY JADINE WONG

Volume II

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