

French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Editor



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The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art | French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945

Edouard Manet, *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*, ca. 1882

Artist	Edouard Manet, French, 1832–1883
Title	<i>White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase</i>
Object Date	ca. 1882
Alternate and Variant Titles	<i>Lilas blancs dans un vase de cristal</i>
Medium	Oil on canvas
Dimensions (Unframed)	22 1/8 x 13 3/4 in. (56.2 x 34.9 cm)
Credit Line	The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. Gift of Henry W. and Marion H. Bloch, 2015.13.12

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Catalogue Entry

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Edouard Manet presents a lively flower arrangement before a dark brown background. Tendrils of white, gray, and green blooms stand, stretch, and spill out of a rectilinear glass. Olive-colored leaves poke out from

behind the flowers like plumes from a hat, filling the top half of the canvas with a symmetrical bouquet. Below the blossoms, against the stark surroundings, sketchy strokes of blue, brown, white, and gold form a slender vase, fine details on the surface of the crystal, leggy stems, and refracted reflections in the water. *White Lilacs* is one of at least twenty tightly cropped still lifes that Manet painted in the last two years of his life. These works represent posies that the convalescent artist received from loved ones during an ultimately fatal bout of illness, and they comprise most of his artistic production in those final months of his life.¹ He had been suffering from complications of syphilis and died on April 30, 1883, a few days after the amputation of one of his legs. As Manet's mobility grew progressively limited throughout this period, smaller-scale subjects were more manageable. These floral gifts provided him with lightweight, portable "models" that held their pose, if only for a day or so.

Manet, typically a painter of portraits and scenes of modern life, had focused on still lifes in one previous body of work, in the 1860s. That imagery ranges from succulent fish, fruit, ham, and close-ups of glistening brioches to cut peonies lying on dark surfaces and game animals hanging by their feet.² In these earlier pictures,

he selected plush rosette forms, heavy with petals, and he splayed them out sideways and upside down on tabletops. His later floral still lifes, by contrast, feature mixed sprays set upright in their vases atop marble slabs; the dahlias, chrysanthemums, cabbage-like rosebuds, and clusters of tiny lilac blooms comprise an array of shapes and structures.³ Although some of the paintings probably represent the same arrangement, he articulated distinct boughs, hues, and textures differently in each picture, perhaps by rotating the vases and repositioning the flowers to achieve new compositions between painting sessions. In this way, he imbues each fan of flowers and their solitary vases with a sense of individuality.



Fig. 1. Edouard Manet, *Peony Stem and Pruning Shears*, 1864, oil on canvas, 22 1/4 x 18 1/8 in. (56.6 x 46 cm), Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Bequest of comte Isaac de Camondo, RF 1996

Until the 2019 exhibition *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist's Late Years*, organized by the Art Institute of Chicago and the J. Paul Getty Museum, Manet's late flower pictures mostly had been considered a sort of coda to his corpus that bears little relationship to the rest of his oeuvre.⁴ In the accompanying catalogue, the authors contextualize the floral paintings of the 1880s (including the Nelson-Atkins *White Lilacs*) in relation to Manet's abiding interest in fashion, beauty, and

modernity by firmly connecting the late 1870s and early 1880s to Manet's prior life and work. I propose that these floral offerings from family and friends are akin to live models brought to his sickbed studio.⁵ Their figural qualities—fleshy blossoms like skin, stalks and stems that resemble gesturing limbs, and containers as varied as physiques—allowed Manet to continue to center the human body in these later paintings, as he had throughout his career.

Like Manet, contemporary writers Charles Baudelaire and Stéphane Mallarmé, both friends of the artist, frequently turned to floral motifs in their poetry to convey human concerns. Baudelaire conceived of flowers as emblems for an artist's mortality and the possibility that public esteem for their work would "bloom" after their death.⁶ Flowers, both at the height of their performance and in wilting decline, are inextricable from his conception of beauty; and beauty is intimately linked to, responsible for, and characteristic of his view of death. In a meditation on the overwhelming allure of women's hair, he wrote that tree and man alike swoon in the face of long tresses.⁷ To describe an ill and haunted muse, he paired botanical modifiers—"green" and "rosy"—with fearsome nouns—"succubus" and "imp."⁸ Mallarmé also maximized the symbolic potential of floral vocabulary in his writing, although he focused more on ineffable and philosophical associations with plant life than their status as physical things—emitting smells, interacting with their environment, and fluctuating in appearance. In a sonnet on grief, Mallarmé's speaker, a recently deceased woman, describes her derelict crypt in wintry woods, empty of visitors and bouquets, as she mourns the living lover that she left behind.⁹ Manet similarly engaged with a wide range of floral qualities, from blooms at the height of their show to faded petals and dropped leaves, with rapt attention to both their peak and their expiration. His particular interest in figurative compositions for cut flowers, which begin to die as soon as they are clipped from their plant, resonates with the poets' use of botanical descriptors as dual metaphors for the beauty of the living and the effects of death.



Fig. 2. Edouard Manet, *Branch of Peonies and Pruning Shears*, 1864, oil on canvas, 11 13/16 x 18 5/16 in. (30 x 46.5 cm), Musée d'Orsay, Paris, Bequest of comte Isaac de Camondo, RF 1995

In his earlier floral still lifes of the 1860s, Manet focused his compositions on only a few flowers; typically in these works, dense clumps of impastoed strokes mimic the supple, unfurling blooms of peonies and roses. In two 1864 paintings of peonies laid on their sides (Figs. 1 and 2), corpulent petals and appendage-like leaves lend the flowers a bodied quality.¹⁰ Wilted foliage sags around them like exhausted arms, while gangly stalks extend upward at odd angles. The closely cropped compositions and absence of other objects for context aggrandize the small blooms, rendering their proportions ambiguous. Mapping the human body onto these flowers, one can imagine the discomfort of lying prostrate with one's legs and feet raised in the air behind. Similarly, the cuttings wilt further with each moment that they lack water. In strained positions, like torqued bodies gasping for air, the flowers in these early paintings evoke the body at its most vulnerable and unwell.¹¹



Fig. 3. Edouard Manet, *The Dead Toreador*, ca. 1864, oil on canvas, 29 7/8 x 60 3/8 in. (75.9 x 153.3 cm), National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Widener Collection, 1942.9.40



Fig. 4. Edouard Manet, *The Rabbit*, 1881, oil on canvas, 38 1/3 x 24 in. (97.5 x 61 cm), Amgueddfa Cymru—National Museum Wales, Cardiff. Bequest of Gwendoline Davies, 1952, NMW A 2466

Numerous paintings of figures and animals also convey Manet's interest in representing death and its effects.¹² In *The Dead Toreador* (Fig. 3), a fragment from a larger bullfight canvas that the artist divided, a gored fighter lies supine in front of a nondescript backdrop (a treatment similar to the one Manet would give *White Lilacs*).¹³ The toreador rests his right hand, dotted with blood, on his sternum, as his left hand fingers the pale pink cape lying beside him on the ground. The decontextualized setting and close cropping operate as a zone of cool color that sets off the bright white, peachy pink, and saturated black of his costume; the painting offers no answers about his final resting place. Against the woody brown background, his blood appears old and dried, while his skin glows with vibrancy and warmth.¹⁴ In a late-career work, *The Rabbit* (Fig. 4), painted a year before Manet turned his attention to

flowers, he represents a hunter's prize hung up by its hind paws on a door frame. The rabbit's slack form stretches under its body weight, contorting the corpse to resemble a wet rag drip-drying on a nail. Lively ivy vines, parallel to the suspended body, encroach upon the wall near the jamb. Manet's energetic, zigzagging marks lend a wild quality to this neighboring plant life, while the straight, short brushstrokes he uses for the rabbit's body suggest a visual foil between the growing tendrils and atrophying muscle. The rabbit's vertical form, punctuated at either end by a drooping tail and ears, recalls the upside-down cuttings in his 1860s flowers and the heavy boughs and columnar glass of *White Lilacs*. In attending to the visual properties of both animation and expiry—vigor and pallor, movement and stillness, life and death—the artist presents imagery of once-living things that function as postmortem figure paintings.¹⁵



Fig. 5. Edouard Manet, *The Lilac Bouquet*, ca. 1882, oil on canvas, 21 1/4 x 16 1/2 in. (54 x 42 cm), Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Ident.NR. A II 379

Similar to the way that Manet guided a model's pose, he seems to have restaged some of the same flower arrangements to produce multiple paintings of the same grouping, each in slightly different compositions and states of vivacity. For example, *The Lilac Bouquet* at the

Alte Nationalgalerie (Fig. 5) appears to feature the same (or very similar) cuttings as the Nelson-Atkins *White Lilacs*, placed in a different glass. Whereas perky stems reach high above the lip of the vase in the Nelson-Atkins painting, they bend over lazily in the Berlin version. Manet renders the boughs of small blooms with ethereal clouds of gray and white strokes; around the perimeter of each branch, small dots and daubs of white paint represent discrete petals. He composes the foliage mostly with muted sage-green blurs and only a few individual leaves. The voluminous bouquet spills over the edge of the vase, and, with his subdued palette, he describes cuttings that have passed their prime. Yet in the Nelson-Atkins picture, Manet details each aspect of the arrangement with bold pigments, decisive strokes, and definition from the stems to the stamens. His still lifes of these different stages in the flowers' decay are more than studies of the effects of turgor pressure—that force which gives plants their stability and the appearance of freshness. In these flowers from friends, he found new queries that he could investigate in paint, like the models that he revisited time and again.¹⁶ Given his separation from his family, friends, urban environs, studio, and props as he recuperated in the countryside, his use and re-use of the posies for his paintings casts his career-long tendency to reexamine his subjects in a distinct light. The late flower pictures evidence his painterly pragmatism and desire to continue working in those challenging years.¹⁷ In examining flowers as he would a living body, he continued to consider two of his most enduring interests—the visual qualities of death and dying and the resonances between figure painting and still life.

Mary Frances Ivey
June 2021

Notes

1. For more on Manet's late work, including his watercolors, see Carol Armstrong's essay, "Manet's Little Nothings," in Scott Allan, Emily A. Beeny, and Gloria Groom, eds., *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist's Late Years*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2019), 113–28.
2. Marni Reva Kessler examined representations of food in the work of Manet—as well as Gustave Caillebotte (1819–1877) and Edgar Degas (1834–1917)—in Kessler, *Discomfort Food: The Culinary*

Imagination in Late Nineteenth-Century French Art (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2021).

3. Manet had an enthusiastic buyer for the 1880s flower paintings in Eugène Pertuiset (1833–1909), a contemporary society figure and lion hunter, who acquired more than a dozen of Manet’s food and flower still lifes, including *White Lilacs*. See Pertuiset, *Les aventures d’un chasseur de lions* (Paris: M. Dreyfous, 1878), and “Catalogue of the Exhibition,” in Allan et al., *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist’s Late Years*, 305.
4. Many Manet scholars mention the late flower pictures but seldom in relation to his figure paintings. For more on the 1880s flower pictures as a group, see Armstrong, “Manet’s Little Nothings,” and Bridget Alsdorf, “Manet’s *Fleurs du mal*,” in *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist’s Late Years*, 113–28, 129–146; Richard R. Brettell and Joachim Pissarro, *Manet to Matisse: Impressionist Masters from the Marion and Henry Bloch Collection*, exh. cat. (Kansas City, MO: Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2007), 34–37; Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge, *The Last Flowers of Manet*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986); Stéphane Guégan, ed., *Manet: The Man Who Invented Modernity* (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 2011), 239–40; and George L. Mauner, *Manet: The Still-Life Paintings* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2000), 144–51.
5. Manet resided outside of Paris (in Bellevue and in Rueil) off and on between 1880 and 1883 to seek medical treatment, sunshine, and fresh air during this period of serious illness.
6. Alsdorf discussed Manet’s familiarity with the ways that the two poets (particularly Baudelaire) explored “negative aesthetics” in their interconnected conceptions of beauty, death, and floral imagery in “Manet’s *Fleurs du mal*,” 129.
7. Baudelaire, *66 Translations from Charles Baudelaire’s Les Fleurs du Mal*, trans. James McGowan (Peoria, IL: Spoon River Poetry Press, 1985), 30–31.
8. Baudelaire, *66 Translations*, 12–13.
9. Mallarmé, “Sur les bois oubliés,” cited in James H. Rubin, *Manet’s Silence and the Poetics of Bouquets* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 159.
10. Both paintings feature pruning shears, the instrument of the flowers’ demise, in vulnerable positions that echo the flowers’ poses. Next to the red and pink peonies, the blades and handles are spread-eagled; by the white peonies, the oval form of the closed blades resembles a head lying on the ground. For more on the affinities between dead animals and cut flowers in Manet’s still lifes, see Linda Nochlin, “More Beautiful than a Beautiful Thing: The Body, Old Age, Ruin, and Death,” *Bathers, Bodies, Beauty: The Visceral Eye* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006): 253–92.
11. Manet rendered dead human and animal bodies in positions similar to the 1860s peonies multiple times, as, for example, in *The Suicide* (1877) and *Dead Eagle Owl* (1881; both in the Foundation E.G. Bührle Collection) and in *Dead Christ with the Angels* (1864; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York).
12. Other works that feature death and the postmortem figure include *The Dead Christ with the Angels* (1864), *The Funeral* (ca. 1867), and *Civil War* (1871–1873; all in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art); *The Suicide* (1877); *The Execution of Emperor Maximilian* (ca. 1867–1868; National Gallery, London); and, according to many contemporary critics, *Olympia* (1864; Musée d’Orsay, Paris). Rubin has related several of these works to Second Empire politics and paintings of dead heroes by Honoré Daumier (1808–1879), Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863), and Francisco de Goya (Spanish, 1746–1828). See Rubin’s essay, “Manet’s Heroic Corpses and the Politics of Their Time,” in Therese Dolan, ed., *Perspectives on Manet* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 119–38.

Dead animals also appear in Manet’s *The Rabbit* (1866; Angladon Museum—Collection Jacques Doucet, Avignon, France); *Dead Eagle Owl* (1881) and *Mr. Eugène Pertuiset, the Lion Hunter* (1881; both Museu de Arte de São Paulo Assis Chateaubriand); *The Ham* (ca. 1875–1878; The Burrell Collection, Glasgow); and *Oysters* (1862; National Gallery, London).
13. Theodore Reff contextualizes Manet’s *Dead Toreador* with the other fragments from *Episode from a Bullfight* and the artist’s interest in Spanish art and culture, including the work of Diego Velázquez (1599–1660) and Goya. Reff, *Manet’s*

Incident in a Bullfight (New York: Frick Collection, 2005).

14. Beeny probes Manet's interest in representing corpses and corpse-like bodies by relating his submissions to the Salon of 1864 to the city morgue, which opened to the public that same year, in Beeny, "Christ and the Angels: Manet, the Morgue, and the Death of History Painting?," *Representations* 122, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 51–82.
15. That Goya, one of the artists who fascinated Manet most, also represented death throughout his career is no coincidence. Manet's *Execution of Emperor Maximilian* is one prime example of his familiarity with and interest in Goya's imagery of death and dying. See John J. Ciofalo, "Unveiling Goya's Rape of Galatea," *Art History* 18, no. 4 (December 1995): 477–98; and John J. Ciofalo, *The Self-Portraits of Francisco Goya* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011).
16. Manet worked with his loved ones and favorite models repeatedly, including, among others, Jeanne Demarsy, Méry Laurent, Léon Leenhoff, Suzanne Manet, Victorine Meurent, and Berthe Morisot. For more, see *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist's Late Years*; Armstrong, *Manet Manette* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002); Tamar Garb, "Framing Femininity in Manet's *Portrait of Mlle E.G.*," in *The Painted Face: Portraits of Women in France 1814–1914* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 58–99, 255–259; Kessler, "Unmasking Manet's Morisot, or Veiling Subjectivity," *Sheer Presence: The Veil in Manet's Paris* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), 62–93, 161–165; and Susan Sidlauskas, "The Spectacle of the Face: Manet's *Portrait of Victorine Meurent*," in Therese Dolan, ed., *Perspectives on Manet* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012), 29–48.
17. The artist described his loneliness, his longing for the sights and sounds of Paris, and his desire to work at his usual rhythm in several letters from the countryside. He wrote to Méry Laurent: "I make the most of sunny spells by walking in the garden, but to distract myself and even to feel really well, I'd have to be working." Cited in Samuel Rodary's essay, "Édouard Manet: A Selection of Letters, 1878–83," in *Manet and Modern Beauty: The Artist's Late Years*, 180.

Technical Entry

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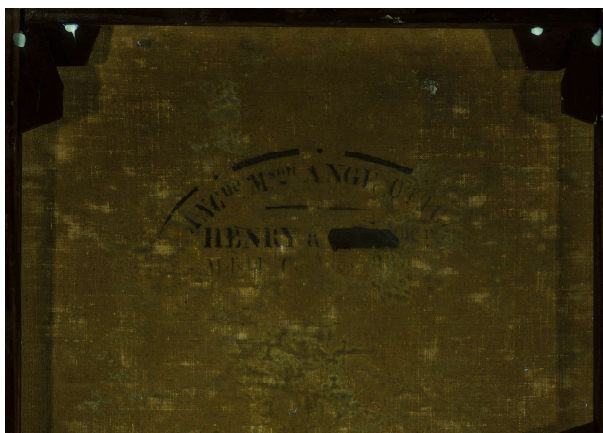


Fig. 6. Detail of Ange Ottoz canvas stamp in ultraviolet-induced visible fluorescence on the verso of *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882)

One of the final paintings in Manet's career, *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* embodies many of the painting techniques that the artist employed throughout his life. The painting was completed on a fine, plain-weave canvas, estimated to be linen, and its reverse reveals a canvas stamp for Ange Ottoz (Fig. 6). While not entirely legible, it is possible to read "ANC^{ne} M^{son} ANGE OTTOZ / HENRY & [blacked-out word]" with a blacked-out word indicating the canvas was sold after the company had changed names from "Henry & Cré."^{1,2} The stretcher appears to be original, and cusping is found on all four tacking margins, indicating that the dimensions are original and unaltered. It is likely that these canvases were custom

made for Manet with these floral still-lives in mind. While the format of this painting is not a standard size, it is a similar size and format to other paintings by Manet during this period.³ At the end of his life, Manet was confined to his bed, only able to produce small-scale images and even considered reducing this working size further to that of miniature paintings.⁴

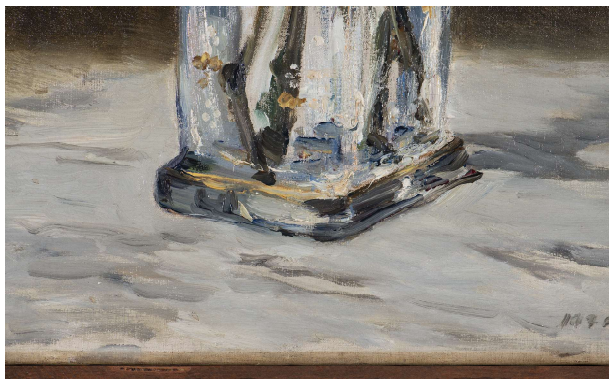


Fig. 7. Detail of the lower edge on *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882), illustrating the exposed ground at bottom with white paint above



Fig. 8. Photomicrograph of paint extending over the exposed ground on the lower edge of *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882)

A slightly off-white, commercial ground layer was evenly and thinly applied, extending to the edges of the tacking margins.⁵ A thin and fluid second ground layer, likely applied by Manet, is also visible to the naked eye along the lower edge, falling just shy of the turnover edge (Fig. 7).⁶ From this it may seem that the original picture plane dimension related to the abrupt delineation between the off-white commercial ground and brighter white second ground. Instead, a gray paint stroke bridging the two ground layers reveals that the current bottom edge was not adjusted (Fig. 8). Additionally, while the second ground layer does not quite reach the turnover edge

along the bottom, this is not unique to the Nelson-Atkins painting and can be seen on several others from this period.⁷



Fig. 9. Transmitted light image of *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882), illustrating the extent of unpainted ground

It is possible that the commercially applied ground layer did not provide adequate luminosity within the composition for Manet, prompting him to apply the brighter second layer.⁸ The choice of a brighter layer is especially important when considering that exposed ground is widely used as an integral component throughout this composition, particularly within the vase and flowers. When the painting is examined with transmitted light, the widespread use of exposed ground becomes even more apparent (Fig. 9). In his rendering of the vase, for example, Manet worked efficiently, utilizing the ground layer to represent the transparency of the glass and water surface. He used just a few strokes of

paint and left the remainder exposed ground (Fig. 10). This is in comparison to the water within the vase, which is more fully realized.



Fig. 10. Detail of the vase in *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882), revealing the use of exposed ground and minimal paint in the top portion of the vase

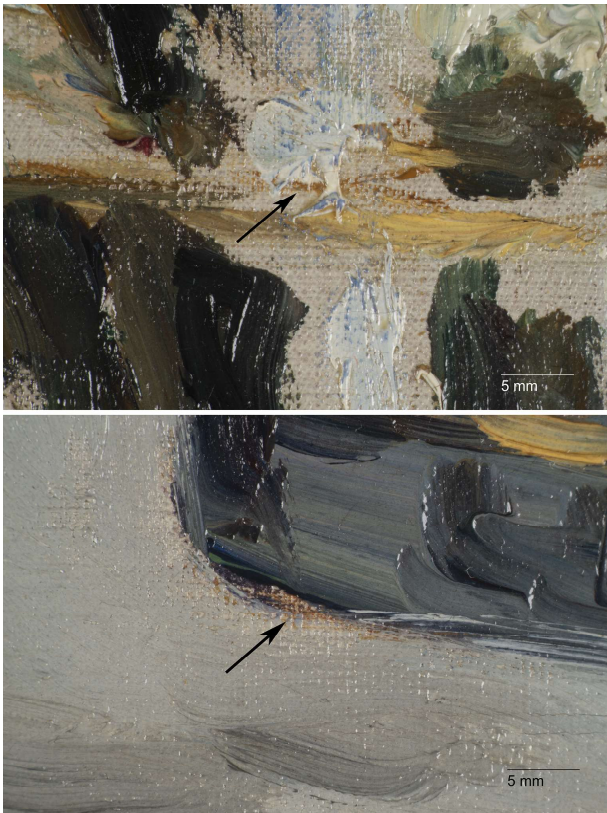


Fig. 11. Photomicrographs of underpainting found in *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882), with the top image being the upper lip of the vase and the bottom image being the lower edge of the vase. Black arrows point to the brown outlines.

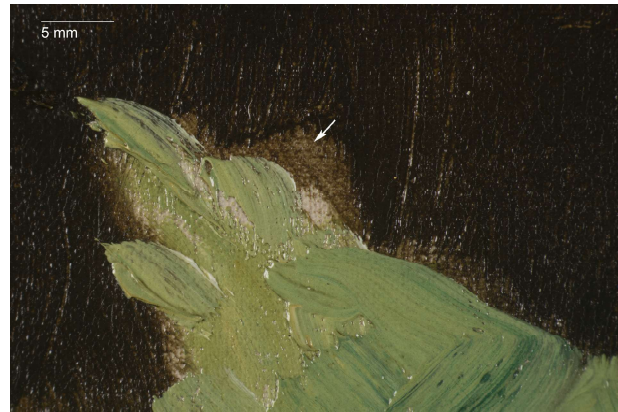


Fig. 12. Photomicrograph of the lower brown paint layer extending beneath a leaf, *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882)

Likely painted within a day or two, rapid brushwork is found throughout this composition.⁹ Manet began by loosely marking the shape of the top and bottom of the vase with thin brown painted lines (Fig. 11).¹⁰ With these marks in place, a thin brown layer of paint was laid in for the background and an off-white or gray layer for the tabletop, similar to the lower layers found in *Portrait of Lise Campineanu* (1878; The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art). It is evident that a reserve was left for the foliage since the exposed ground is clearly visible below the leaves and the thin initial brown background falls just beneath the edges of the leaves' final placement (Fig. 12). During this stage of the painting, the central muted green color may also have been applied within the bouquet to block in the flowers, while a cool green is found as the lowest layer of the leaves on the right side (Fig. 13).

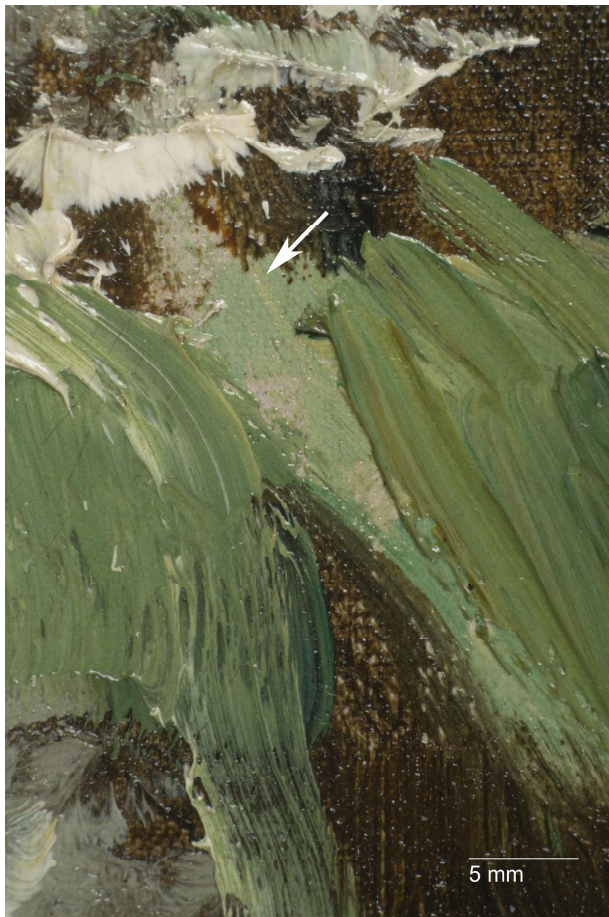


Fig. 13. Photomicrograph within the leaves of *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882). In the center of this image, a white arrow points to the cooler light green paint, which may relate to the original placement of the leaves.

Manet worked quickly back and forth between the flowers and vase. Overwhelmingly, the painting exhibits wet-over-wet and wet-into-wet paint application, further indicating that the painting was likely completed in one or two sittings. The flowers were rendered with quick, slightly curving dabs of paint, merely hints of blossoms (Fig. 14), while the leaves were formed with seemingly simple turns of the wrist. Indeed, these effortless motions are reminiscent of brushwork in earlier paintings by Manet, such as the flowers in *Olympia* (1863; Musée d'Orsay, Paris). In both works, variations of the *tache* are utilized to represent the foliage.¹¹ While these painterly flowers are not the focal point in *Olympia*, this similar technique became Manet's focus in *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*. In this later painting, Manet's use of the *tache* has evolved so that these simplified shapes and brushstrokes become the primary formation of the composition.



Fig. 14. Detail of the dabs of paint used to form the blossoms on the left side of *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882)

Much of the floral arrangement, especially along the edges, appears to have been painted in unison with a second brown background layer used to darken the space. Where the flowers and this background meet, wet-over-wet paint blending is present. In most of the larger areas, such as to either side of the vase, the background layer was applied with vertical strokes. Within the tighter spaces around the foliage, this layer assisted in shaping the leaves, pulling the paint with it. Final dabs of white paint were added around the edges of each bundle to complete the shape of the bouquet (Fig. 15).

This unlined painting is in excellent condition. Before entering the Nelson-Atkins collection, the painting's edges were strip lined to support the weakened tacking margins. A synthetic varnish is present and is in good condition. A minimal amount of retouching was identified along the edges of the picture plane.



Fig. 15. Detail of the right side of *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase* (ca. 1882). The upper layer of brown paint has been used to help shape the leaves (yellow arrow), while wet-over wet paint application is found where this layer and the blossoms meet (blue arrow). Dabs of white paint created the final blossoms (red arrow).

Diana M. Jaskierny
May 2021

Notes

1. Pascal Labreuche, *Guide Labreuche: Guide historique des fournisseurs de matériel pour Artistes à Paris, 1790–1960*, 2018, <https://www.guide-labreuche.com/en/collection/businesses/henry-et-cre>. See also Stéphanie Constantin, “The Barbizon Painters: A Guide to Their Suppliers,” *Studies in Conservation* 46, no. 1 (2001): 57–58.
2. This same stamp was found on the reverse of *Jeanne (Spring)*, (1881; The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles); however, on this painting, the stamp was transcribed as “Henry & Cie.” Devi Ormond and Catherine Schmidt Patterson with Douglas MacLennan and Nathan Daly, “The Making of a *Parisienne*: Manet’s Methods and Materials,” in *Manet and Modern Beauty*, ed. Scott Allan, Emily A.

Beeny, and Gloria Groom (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2019), 158.

3. One example of a nearly identically sized painting from this period is *Oeillets et Clematites dans un Vase de Cristal* (ca. 1882; Musée d’Orsay, Paris). For other examples, see Robert Gordon and Andrew Forge, *The Last Flowers of Manet*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1986).
4. Gordon and Forge, *The Last Flowers of Manet*, 10.
5. The tacking margins were trimmed at some point during the painting’s history, likely during the strip-lining process. However, the ground layer extends to the edges of the remaining tacking margins.
6. This second ground layer was found along the top right corner at the turnover edge, confirming that it is a layer which extends across the entire picture plane.
7. Examples of this are visible in the high-resolution images provided for Allan, Beeny, and Groom, eds., *Manet and Modern Beauty*, 264, 270.
8. From early in his career, Manet preferred painting over white grounds, using the bright lower layer within the composition and as an aid to luminosity under dark scumbles. Anthea Callen, *The Art of Impressionism: Painting Techniques and the Making of Modernity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 64.
9. It is believed that most of these flower paintings were completed within one or two sessions as flowers were brought to Manet’s bedside. Gordon and Forge, *The Last Flowers of Manet*, 13. See also Bridget Alsdorf, “Manet’s *Fleurs du mal*,” in *Manet and Modern Beauty*, 141–44.
10. Apart from these few marks, no other underdrawing was found using microscopy or detected using infrared reflectography.
11. Øystein Sjøstad, *A Theory of the Tache in Nineteenth-Century Painting* (Surrey, England: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2014), 66.

Documentation

Citation

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Mary Frances Ivey, "Edouard Manet, *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*, ca. 1882," documentation in *French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945: The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, ed. Aimee Marcereau DeGalan (Kansas City: The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.37764/78973.5.526.4033>.

MLA:

Ivey, Mary Frances. "Edouard Manet, *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*, ca. 1882," documentation. *French Paintings and Pastels, 1600–1945: The Collections of The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art*, edited by Aimee Marcereau DeGalan, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, 2021. doi: 10.37764/78973.5.526.4033.

Provenance

Purchased from the artist by Eugène Pertuiset (ca. 1831–1909), Paris, by April 30, 1883—at least 1889 [1];

Victor Guillaume Chocquet (1821–1891), Paris, no later than April 7, 1891;

Inherited by his wife, Augustine Marie Caroline Chocquet (née Buisson, 1837–1899), Paris, 1891–March 24, 1899;

Purchased at her posthumous sale, *Tableaux Modernes par Cézanne, Courbet, Delacroix, Manet, Monet, Renoir, Sisley, Tassaert: Aquarelles et Dessins, Objets d'Art et d'Ameublement Anciennes Porcelaines Tendres de Sèvres; Porcelaines et Faïences diverses, Orfèvrerie; Pendules et Bronzes du XVIIIe Siècle; Sièges et Meubles des Époques Louis XV et Louis XVI*, Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, July 1, 1899, lot 68, as *Fleurs*, through Georges Petit, Paris, by Martine-Marie-Pol, comtesse de Béarn (née de Béhague, 1870–1939), 1899–January 29, 1939 [2];

By descent to her nephew, Octave Marie Hubert, 7th marquis de Ganay (1888–1974), Paris, 1939—at least 1958 [3];

Probably by descent to his son, comte André de Ganay (b. 1924), Paris, by 1975–1986 [4];

Purchased from de Ganay by Alex Reid and Lefèvre Ltd., London, 1986–1987 [5];

Purchased from Alex Reid and Lefèvre Ltd. through Susan L. Brody Associates, New York, by Marion (née Helzberg, 1931–2013) and Henry (1922–2019) Bloch, Shawnee Mission, KS, August 20, 1987–June 15, 2015;

Given by Henry and Marion Bloch to The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, 2015.

Notes

[1] See Léon Leenhoff, "Manet [ensemble de notes et de documents sur le peintre; recueillis et transcrits par Léon Leenhoff]," 1900–1910, Bibliothèque nationale de France, département Estampes et photographie, RESERVE 8-YB3-2401, p. 82, as *Lilas*. The painting appears under "1882," but it is unclear when Manet actually sold the work to Pertuiset. The painting appeared in the April 27, 1888 sale, *Œuvres de Pertuiset et de Manet Formant la Collection Particulière de M. Pertuiset*, at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris, but appears to have been bought in by Pertuiset.

[2] See annotated copy of the auction catalogue at the Art Institute of Chicago; see also A[dolphe] Tabarant, *Manet et ses Œuvres* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), 462.

[3] See letter from Armand Losengard Gérant, Maison Duveen Brothers, Paris, to Duveen Brothers, New York, February 3, 1939, in which he writes, "We have been informed that she left her collection to her favorite nephew, Hubert de Ganay." "Files regarding works of art: Behagle [sic], Comtesse de, Galerie Georges Petit Sale; ca. 1927–1939," Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, Duveen Brothers records, 1876-1981 (bulk 1909-1964), Series II, Correspondence and papers, Series II.A. Files regarding works of art.

[4] The first publication to cite comte André de Ganay as owner of *White Lilacs* is Denis Rouart and Daniel Wildenstein, *Edouard Manet: Catalogue raisonné*, vol. 1, *Peintures* (Lausanne: Bibliothèque des Arts, 1975), 302.

[5] A reference number in the photograph stock album (86/1/89) suggests that Reid and Lefèvre acquired this work in 1986. It was purchased from André de Ganay. Tate Archive, London, Lefevre Gallery, London records, TGA 200211, photograph stock album. See correspondence from Darragh O'Donoghue, Tate Library and Archive, London, to Glynnis Stevenson, NAMA, October 30, 2018, and correspondence from Alexander Corcoran, Lefevre Fine Art, to MacKenzie Mallon, NAMA, March 18, 2019, NAMA curatorial files.

Acquavella Galleries, New York, may have bought the painting in half-shares with Reid and Lefèvre. See a reproduction of the painting in "A Selection of Sold Paintings, Drawings, and Sculpture," *Acquavella: The First Ninety Years* (New York: Acquavella Galleries, 2012), 294.

Related Work

Edouard Manet, *The Lilac Bouquet*, ca. 1882, oil on canvas, 21 1/4 x 16 1/2 in. (54 x 42 cm), Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin.

Exhibitions

Exposition des Œuvres de Édouard Manet, École Nationale des Beaux-Arts, Paris, January 6–28, 1884, no. 101, as *Lilas blancs*.

The Exhibition of the Paintings of Mr. Pertuiset, The Lion Slayer, Gainsborough Gallery, London, 1889, no. 43, as *Les lilas*.

Manet, 1832–1883, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris, June 16–October 9, 1932, no. 83, as *Lilas dans un Vase de Cristal*.

Honderd jaar Fransche kunst tentoonstelling / Un siècle de peinture française, Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, July 2–September 25, 1938, no. 163, as *Lilas dans un vase de cristal*.

La Pintura Francesa de David a nuestros días: Oleos, Dibujos, y Acuarelas, Salón Nacional de Bellas Artes, Montevideo, Uruguay, September 1939, no. 15; Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes, Buenos Aires, October–December 1939, no. 88, as *Lilas en un Vaso de Cristal*.

The Painting of France Since the French Revolution, M. H. De Young Memorial Museum, San Francisco, December 1940–January 1941, and November 1941–January 1942, no. 68, as *Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*.

French Painting from David to Toulouse-Lautrec: Loans from French and American Museums and Collections, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, February 6–March 26, 1941, no. 83, as *Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*.

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Natures Mortes Françaises du XVIIe Siècle à nos Jours, Galerie Charpentier, Paris, December 1951, no. 106, as *Les lilas*.

Vier Eeuwen Stilleven in Frankrijk, Museum Boymans, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, July 10–September 20, 1954, no. 90, as *Seringen in een kristallen vaas / Lilas dans une vase de cristal*.

Peinture et Impressionnisme de Géricault à Monet, Galerie Alfred Daber, Paris, June 7–July 7, 1956, no. 16, as *Lilas dans un vase de cristal*.

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November 9, 1958, no. 145, as *Kristallvas med Syrener / Lilas dans un vase de cristal*.

Manet to Matisse: Impressionist Masters from the Marion and Henry Bloch Collection, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, June 9–September 9, 2007, no. 2, as *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase (Lilas blancs dans un vase de cristal)*.

Manet and Modern Beauty, Art Institute of Chicago, May 26–September 7, 2019; J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, October 1, 2019–January 5, 2020, no. 86, as *White Lilacs in a Crystal Vase*.

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Fernand Lochard, "Reproductions d'Œuvres d'Edouard Manet (peintures, tableaux de 1880 à 1883)," ed. Léon Leenhoff, 1883–1884, photograph album with annotations, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, département Estampes et photographie, 4-DC-300 (G, 4), no. 386, (repro.).

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