Selling pictures: the illustrated auction catalogue

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Although the text of auction catalogues has garnered the attention of scholars examining the evolving use of descriptive language and connoisseurial expertise, the inclusion of illustrations – the types of reproductions used and under what circumstances these illustrations appear – has attracted surprisingly little analysis.¹ Emile Dacier’s early article on ‘Les Catalogues de Ventes Illustres au XVIIIe Siècle’ considers French catalogues of the eighteenth century exclusively.² Krzysztof Pomian likewise centers his analysis on the same period of French catalogues; engravings from these catalogues, however, do not inform his conclusions.³ Anthony Hamber has briefly introduced the subject of photographs in auction catalogues in his essay on ‘Facsimile, Scholarship, and Commerce: Aspects of the Photographically Illustrated Art Book (1839-1880)’, but he does not consider these

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² Emile Dacier, ‘Les Catalogues de Ventes Illustres au XVIIIe Siècle’, *Le Portique*, 3, 1946, 104-120, includes a useful bibliographic listing of almost sixty catalogues that included frontispieces and/or illustrated title pages, portraits, or plates between 1736 and 1789.
³ While Wall considers the social positioning of Samuel Baker and James Christie in eighteenth-century London, Krzysztof Pomian employs the evolving language of French catalogues from the period to examine the rising influence of the dealer, the new emphasis the dealer placed on attribution and the relationship of these phenomena to the changing taste associated with the collecting of Dutch and Flemish painting rather than Italian. Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500-1800*, trans. Elizabeth Wiles-Portier, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990, 139-168.
We know, however, that these illustrations were significant additions to the catalogues at the time they appeared, both for their immediate function as visual evidence where verbal descriptions were inherently insufficient, as well as for their durational purpose of recording a collection that would no longer exist after its sale. Examining the role of these illustrations, therefore, sheds light on how auctions functioned; it was not just the works of art that were traded, but knowledge about those works of art became currency to be exchanged. A study of the status of reproductions, therefore, becomes an investigation into the evolving understanding of art knowledge, both aesthetic and economic, and the interdependence of the market and connoisseurship.

A survey of reproductions in auction catalogues – from their first appearance in the early eighteenth century until their more consistent use in the second decade of the twentieth century – reveals several notable themes. Firstly, while public sales were regularly held in London, Paris, Amsterdam, Antwerp, Brussels, and other cities on the Continent, innovation in the use of reproductions in auctions catalogues was primarily a French and British phenomenon. Secondly, the quantity of objects in a sale, combined with the expense and effort of supplying illustrations, necessarily meant that only a select number of catalogues included illustrations, from the first occurrence of a reproduction in 1734 until the first quarter of the twentieth century, and only a selection of works within those sales were depicted. The completely illustrated auction catalogue is, in fact, a product of the 1980s.

Therefore, answering the question of which objects were reproduced and why offers insight into the marketing of paintings, drawings, sculpture, and decorative arts during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries and the level of value ascribed to specific works of art.

It is this aspect of auction catalogues – that is, the quality and quantity of the reproductions – that sets them apart from the collection catalogue or illustrated art book. As Francis Haskell, Thomas W. Gaehtgens, and Louis Marchesano have shown, the production expense of completely illustrated catalogues of collections associated with royal or noble families places them squarely as objects in the luxury

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5 Engravings and subsequently photographs did appear in catalogues for auctions held in Edinburgh, Ghent, and Amsterdam, but these examples are intermittent and rare. See, for example, Catalogue of the Extensive, Genuine, and Highly Valuable Collection of Pictures, late the property of The Hon. John Clerk of Eldin…, Edinburgh: Thomas Winstanley (of Liverpool), 14-29 March 1833, or Catalogue d’une Très Belle Collection de Tableaux…Délaissés par M. Jacques Rottier, Ghent: De Porre, 13 October 1834.

6 The sparseness of illustrations in auction catalogues contrasts with heavily illustrated catalogues of private collections.
goods market, rather than as tools within that market. Recently, Malcolm Baker has identified three nineteenth-century sales in which more fully illustrated auction catalogues played an important role in transforming an ‘ephemeral’ publication into a documentation of a dispersed collection, and one, therefore, of ‘greater historical weight and poignancy’. Significantly, however, two of these catalogues were published independently of the auction house (Christie’s) that conducted the sales.

A third theme emerges: the means with which these works were reproduced demonstrates the close relationship between auction catalogues and changing reproductive technologies. A corollary to the adoption of innovative reproductive techniques (and the variable quality of the images achieved by those technologies) is the placement of illustrations within the catalogue and the ensuing relationship between text and image. Notably, even if not always sufficient, then, text remained the primary conveyor of information; that is, while the majority of catalogues did not include illustrations, there is no example of a catalogue composed entirely of reproductions without any text. If, as has been argued, auction catalogue texts are an index of evolving theories of connoisseurship and expertise, then the framing question of this essay is: how does the inclusion of reproductions amplify or undermine those theories? Should a connoisseur rely upon the work of art for clues

7 The production of the Recueil Crozat is the subject of Francis Haskell’s examination of the difficulties in producing a richly illustrated collection catalogue in early eighteenth-century France. Haskell, The Painful Birth of the Art Book, New York: Thames and Hudson, 1987. Thomas Gaehhtgens and Louis Marchesano have detailed the evolution of the Düsseldorf Gallery, the princely collection of the Electors Palatine, beginning from the early eighteenth century when Johann Wilhelm II (1658-1716) constructed his art gallery next to the palace. After his brother’s death, Carl Philipp (1662-1742) took the next step, commissioning the court artist Gerhard Joseph Karsch to write a catalogue. Under Karsch’s successor, Lambert Krahe, and Carl Theodor a more elaborate catalogue was planned. Called Galeriewerk, it was modelled on the example of the Dresden Gallery’s Galeriewerk. The extreme expense of producing high quality engravings after the paintings in the Elector’s collection led to the project’s ultimate failure. See Gaehtgens and Marchesano, Display and Art History: The Düsseldorf Gallery and Its Catalogue, Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2011.


9 The journalist Henry Rumsey Forster was responsible for the ‘post-sale’ Stowe catalogue; the Hamilton Palace example was a collaborative effort of Remington & Co. and Librairie de l’Art (Baker in Panzanelli and Preti-Hamard, Circulation, 201, 206). Well-prepared for the idea that collections could be dispersed, Walpole himself had written a guide to Strawberry Hill, first published in 1784, recognizing the possibility of a future sale. FARL’s copy of the Strawberry Hill sale (conducted by George Robins) is bound with a parodic version of the sale in which the contents of Gooseberry Hall, the seat of Sir Hildebrod Gooseberry, are to be auctioned.
to its authenticity and quality; or, do the documentary record (including the potentially illustrated catalogue) and the opinion of experts take precedence? Three themes – location of the sale, selection of works of art, and technological advances – are, therefore, critical clues to the employment of images. In the absence of correspondence or internal memoranda from the auctioneers or sellers, our primary sources of evidence must be the catalogues themselves. In so doing, we see that these engravings and photographs function on multiple levels; they are aids for memory, tools for connoisseurship, and valuable in and of themselves.

Recognition that auction catalogues and their illustrations are important tools for art historical research took tangible form in the compendia of sales information offered first by Georges Duplessis and Louis Soullié’s successive volumes *Les ventes de tableaux, dessins et objets d’art* of the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries published in 1874 and 1896 respectively. Soullié, in fact, made a living selling earlier sales catalogues. Frits Lugt followed their efforts with his own *Répertoire des catalogues de ventes publiques*, the first volume of which was published in 1938. Both projects noted when a catalogue included illustrations. Neither of them, however, included the sale of the collection of Sir James Thornhill, conducted by Christopher Cock over two days in February 1734, and the subject of the first in a series of articles in the *Burlington Magazine* that reproduced important and rare sales catalogues. Centered on the title page of the sale of the court painter to George I and father-in-law to William Hogarth is an engraving of the figural group of lot ninety-nine on the second day: ‘The Graces unveiling Nature, by Sir P. P. Rubens, the Fruit and Ornaments of the Velvet Brughel’. No mention, however, is made in the article of the significance of the reproduction in the context of the development of auction catalogues.

The skeletal descriptions of the works in the Thornhill sale are characteristic of English catalogues of the eighteenth century. The present challenge of

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10 Christie’s Archives does not hold the internal memorandum that might shed light on the decision-making process; nor are such records part of the archives of the commissaire-priseurs held at the Archives de la Ville de Paris.

11 *A Catalogue of the Intire Collection belonging to Sir James Thornhill…*, London: Mr. Cock’s, 24-25 February 1734. This catalogue is reproduced in ‘Sir James Thornhill’s Collection’, *Burlington Magazine*, 83: 483, June 1943, 133-7. I have located one further example of a single reproduction included on the title page of an auction catalogue: *A Catalogue of the Genuine and Valuable Collection of Pictures of James Mendez, Esq….*, London: Mr. Langford’s, 25-26 February 1756. FARL’s Xerox copy of this very rare catalogue, absent from Lugt, poorly reproduces this title page image; however, it is possible to determine that it is the same engraving as appears on the Thornhill catalogue.

12 Dacier makes a similar observation of French catalogues of the period. Dacier, ‘Les Catalogues de Ventes’, 105. Bénédicte Miyamoto has usefully compared French and British auction catalogues of the second half of the eighteenth century, pointing to the different manner in which the auctions themselves were conducted in these two centers of the period’s art market. Nevertheless, she does not address the question of engravings and their use in auctions catalogues of both countries. Bénédicte Miyamoto, “Making Pictures
identifying a work of art sold at auction at this time is clear from a typical catalogue entry, such as ‘Teniers – 39 A Conversation’ or ‘Berghem – 74 A Landscape’ from a sale held in 1765.\textsuperscript{13} The author of the sale catalogue of Antoine Sydervelt’s collection in Amsterdam the following year supplied valuable additional information: for example, dimensions, medium and support, and a two-sentence description of Ludolph Backhuysen’s sea piece. However, even with these facts, it is impossible to connect this work of ‘An East India Company Yacht, a warship, and in the distance other vessels’ to the known work of the seventeenth-century Dutch marine painter.\textsuperscript{14} The very inadequacy of these descriptions points to the character of eighteenth-century auctions and the role the catalogue played in the sale and acquisition of works of art. An expansive entry would have been redundant for a buyer able to examine the work prior to the sale and to be present at the auction.\textsuperscript{15} In the case of English auctions, the performance of the auctioneer supplemented the otherwise spare catalogue and contributed to the appeal of on-site attendance at the event.\textsuperscript{16} Indeed, the well-known case of Gabriel de Saint-Aubin’s sketches of paintings he viewed at public auctions, as well as at the Salon, records the impulse to provide visual accompaniments for verbal descriptions. Furthermore, Saint-Aubin’s activities draw attention to the importance such public events held for art enthusiasts who, before the opening of the Louvre to the public as a museum, had limited opportunities to access works of art and increase their knowledge.\textsuperscript{17}

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\textsuperscript{13} Catalogue of the genuine and valuable collection of Pictures belonging to a Gentleman, London: Prestage, 24-25 January 1765.

\textsuperscript{14} Catalogue du beau & précieux Cabinet de Tableaux…de feu Monsieur Antoine Sydervelt, Amsterdam, 23 April 1766, lot 24. ‘A gauche…on voit un Yacht de la Compagnie des Indes Orientales, un Vaisseau de guerre, & plus loin des Vaisseaux à trois mats & d’autres Vaisseaux; sur le devant des figures sur une digue, dans les unes sont assises & les autres debout.’ The work was painted on canvas and measured 32 ½ pouces high and 45 pouces wide. The catalogue was published in both Dutch and French, a not unusual occurrence, capitalizing on the demand for Dutch paintings in France at the time.

\textsuperscript{15} Pomian cites the example of Gault de Saint-Germain as indicative of the view that public auctions were valuable venues for learning. Pomian, Collectors and Curiosities, 161.

\textsuperscript{16} For James Christie’s oratorical skills, see Wall, ‘The English Auction’, 3, 6-10, and Miyamoto, ‘Making Pictures Marketable’, 125.

Frontispieces and engravings within the text

While the engravings that appeared subsequent to that from the Thornhill sale did not represent individual works of art to be sold, the frontispieces that preface several eighteenth-century French catalogues represent the ideal space for viewing these works prior to their sale. The catalogue for the sale of the collection of Baron Heineken is embellished with a frontispiece of Augustin de Saint-Aubin’s engraving dated 1757 of a group of connoisseurs in a large vaulted room admiring a pastoral scene set on an easel, as well as other amateurs examining a drawing, a scene reminiscent of Watteau’s famous shop sign for the dealer Edme-François Gersaint or indeed the frontispieces included in Gersaint’s catalogues (Fig. 1). 18 As Andrew McClellan has shown, Gersaint’s innovation of holding sales on the premises of his shop on the Pont Notre-Dame was adopted by other Parisian picture dealers of the

18 The first of these engraved frontispieces appears in the catalogue of Gersaint’s sale of 2 December 1737. For a detailed history of Gersaint’s use of frontispieces, see Dacier, ‘Les Catalogues de Ventes’, 107. The same Saint-Aubin etching appears as a frontispiece of Catalogue d’une collection de tableaux de tres bons maistres, Paris: P. Remy, 16 January 1764. According to Lugt (sale number 1342), the collection was possibly that of Hennin.
eighteenth century. Daniela Bleichmar carries McClellan’s analysis further and cites these depictions of spaces associated with the sale of paintings and prints as connecting the fields of art and science in their common privileging of ‘visual expertise’. Although a significant number of works sold at French auctions in the eighteenth century were destined for the English market, representations such as Watteau’s painting or Saint-Aubin’s engraving underscore the importance of on-site examination, and, by extension, the purchaser’s command of the techniques of connoisseurship.

As indicated by the repeated use of these and other frontispieces, images of viewing art are closely connected with the dealer who held the auction. Such images recall the longstanding practice of a printed portrait of an author serving as a frontispiece in printed books. Similarly, in the case of the first plate of the sale of the extensive collection of Pierre-Jean Mariette, auctioned by Pierre-François Basan between 15 November 1775 and 30 January 1776, the identity of the seller (in the form of the bust at far right) is paramount (Fig. 2). This plate is printed together with a one-page explication of the ‘Allegory Designed by M. Cochin & Engraved by M. Choffard’, which expands upon the engraving’s caption ‘History, the Genius of Drawing, the God of Taste and Study, assembled at the feet of the bust of M. Mariette’. According to the text, each element of the design – the torch, the book, the pencil holder, the cock – contributes to the identification of Mariette as the preeminent connoisseur of drawings and engravings. In effect, the engraving acts as a pictorial guarantee of the quality of the objects included in the sale. Although this frontispiece merited a verbal explanation, the preface does not mention the fact that

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22 We know, however, that a frontispiece associated with one dealer-auctioneer could be continued to be used after his death by another. Such was the case of the frontispiece designed by P.-A. Baudouin for Gersaint, which appears for sales held by P.-C.-A. Helle and Jean-Baptiste Glomy. Dacier, ‘Les Catalogues de Ventes’, 108.

four engravings, etched by Mariette himself, are also included in the catalogue.\textsuperscript{24} These etchings were not included in the sale, but were instead inserted to accompany the description of lot 1,284 of drawings by Mariette ‘to give a better idea of the dexterity of his pen and burin’.\textsuperscript{25}

The first inclusion of multiple engravings of works offered for sale, also under the auspices of Basan, was that of a collection sold under the name of Nijman in Paris between 8 and 11 July 1776. The title page of this sale of the Amsterdam-based collector-dealer, whose full name was Jan Danser Nijman (alternatively spelled Nyman or Neyman), announces that it is ‘ornamented with a frontispiece, by Choffard, as well as fourteen etchings, by Weïbrood, &c., after the capital drawings of Adrien van Velde, Ruysdaël, Potter, Ostade, K. du Jardin, &c., which compose part of this celebrated collection’.\textsuperscript{26} These etchings, illustrating a very small

\textsuperscript{24} These are: two Guercino landscapes, a Ludovico Carracci study of heads, and a Perino del Vaga portrait of Pope Adrian VI and four cardinals.

\textsuperscript{25} ‘pour donner une idée plus juste du maniement facile de sa plume & de sa pointe, je join ici quelques pieces de gravure qu’il a pareillement execute’, Catalogue raisonné, 195.

\textsuperscript{26} ‘Le présent Catalogue est orné d’un frontispice, par le sieur Choffard, & de quatorze estampes gravées à l’eau-forte, par Weïbrood, &c. d’après des dessins capitaux d’Adrien van Velde, Ruysdaël, Potter, Ostade, Dusart, K. du Jardin, &c., faisant partie de ce célèbre
sampling of a sale that was composed of 1,551 paintings, prints, drawings, and books, are printed on individual plates inserted opposite the page on which the lot is listed. Each plate is numbered with that of the lot which it illustrates and includes the name of the artist of the original drawing. This layout enables easy comparison of the textual description with the visual record of the composition. For example, the fold-out engraving of Guercino’s ‘mountainous landscape’ (lot 321) shows the ‘two figures in the foreground, close to two nearly leafless trees’ described by the catalogue author. But the image exceeds this ekphrasis as it includes two figures in the middle ground and two in the background approaching two small structures; aerial perspective is achieved by the gradual reduction of shading to indicate foreground, middle and background.\textsuperscript{27} Given that the textual description could be applied to any number of Guercino landscape drawings, even a relatively simple line engraving suggests that the accompanying reproduction is significant for the historical record of this drawing and its auction history.\textsuperscript{28}

Conforming to the prototype of the Mariette frontispiece, the elaborate example for the Nijman sale is captioned ‘Diverse types of drawings brought together by Artistic Taste’ (Fig. 3). Pierre-Philippe Choffard (1731-1809) engraved the frontispieces to both the Mariette and Nijman catalogues. In the latter, he incorporates brush-wielding, flower-arranging and torch-bearing putti, along with several partially-visible drawings or engravings, including one half-unfurled sheet displaying the signature ‘N. Berchem’.\textsuperscript{29} Although there were twenty-three lots in the catalogue attributed to this popular seventeenth-century landscape painter, none was illustrated.\textsuperscript{30} Nevertheless, the entry for lot 61, ‘another superb subject’ by the Dutch painter known for his depictions of animals in the landscape, provides another means to confirm the authenticity of the painting. The reader is informed that the depiction of a ‘donkey laden with baskets’ among other animals also existed as ‘an engraving of the same size’.\textsuperscript{31} In total, forty-eight lots were identified as having known engravings executed after the drawings and one was even sold with such an engraving. These references function not only as confirmation of the importance of the drawing itself – its quality attested to by the fact that the

\textsuperscript{27} ‘Un paysage montagneux, avec deux figures sure le devant, près de deux arbres presque sans feuilles’, \textit{Catalogue d’une Belle Collection}. 48.

\textsuperscript{28} Even with the existence of this engraving, however, I have not been able to connect the lot with a documented Guercino landscape drawing.

\textsuperscript{29} ‘Divers genres de Dessins réunis par le Goût des Arts’, \textit{Catalogue d’une Belle Collection}.

\textsuperscript{30} The catalogue is organized alphabetically, with lots 43-65 the work of Berchem.

\textsuperscript{31} ‘Autre superbe sujet, d’une forme plus grande, & connu par l’estampe de même grandeur; on y voit divers animaux, entre autres un âne chargé de ses panniers, dans lesquels sont des moutons: 14 pouces sur 10 & demi.’ \textit{Catalogue d’une Belle Collection}, lot 61. This drawing fetched over 1,679 francs. FARL’s copy of the Neyman sale is annotated with prices in ink.
composition merited reproduction – but also as indications that the sale catalogue guided the purchaser to further research.

As this account suggests thus far, with the innovation of including reproductions of art works came the new dilemma of which works to illustrate. Even if a reproduction of a work was not included in the catalogue, alerting the potential buyer to the existence of prints after the work compensated for that lack and, furthermore, confirmed the authenticity of the object for sale. Moreover, this type of reference provided the user with the tools to research the work of art beyond the auction room, implying that knowledge about works of art was not intuitive but acquired. In the case of the Nijman sale, the reasoning behind the choice of drawings to be illustrated is unknown; nor is it possible to determine from the prices achieved for those lots that the reproduced drawings were anticipated to fetch the highest prices. The Guercino drawing of a landscape, for example, was purchased for fifty-four francs, whereas an unillustrated still life by Jan Van Huysum was the most expensive work to be sold, achieving 2,701 francs.\(^{32}\) When

\(^{32}\) Van Huysum’s still life of autumn fruit, grapes, peaches and plums is described as ‘Un plus beaux tableaux’, *Catalogue d’une Belle Collection*, lot 990.
Nijman assembled a second sale in Amsterdam eleven years later, the catalogue did not include any engravings.\textsuperscript{33} Was the inclusion of illustrations for the earlier sale related to the fact that the sale took place in a city not native to the seller? It is impossible to determine. It is clear, however, that the prints were included to enhance the value of the collection as a whole, as well as the catalogue itself.\textsuperscript{34}

The inclusion of reproductions also introduces the question of the composition of the catalogue. Where should the illustrations be inserted? The catalogue of the collection of the architect Léon Dufourny, compiled by Hippolyte Delaroche for the commissaire-priseur François Martin Petit-Cunot in Paris on 22 November 1819, offers a new feature: the inclusion of plates at the end of the catalogue. That this addition was worthy of particular note is made clear in the advertisement at the beginning of this sale catalogue, which announces where to find the engravings of those works the collector had chosen to illustrate.\textsuperscript{35} The arrangement facilitated the production of two catalogues, one without plates costing one franc; the other with plates at double the price. With this additional franc, one acquired sixty-two line engravings, executed by the engraver Etienne Devilliers, representing about one third of the works in the sale. Furthermore, the production of two types of catalogue for an ephemeral event demonstrates the varied audiences involved in auctions and the recognition that there was a ready market for the documents that allowed the contents of the sale to remain accessible in some form long after the objects themselves had changed hands.

The Dufourny example also stands as evidence of how these sales catalogues were used. Although the text does not refer to the engravings, each plate is numbered according to the corresponding lot number, implying that while the text could stand alone, the engravings were dependent upon the text. Furthermore, because individual lot entries include references to the writings of Bellori, Landon, and Félibien, as well as occasional details of provenance, the text implies that further research is desirable and necessary.\textsuperscript{36} In addition, as the prefatory note relates, the ‘three days allotted to public exhibition’ presented an opportunity for

\textsuperscript{33} Catalogus Van een uitmuntend Kabinet Kunstige Schilderyen..., Amsterdam, 16-17 August 1797.

\textsuperscript{34} The Parisian catalogue is made even more substantial by virtue of its higher quality paper, contrasting with that printed in Amsterdam.

\textsuperscript{35} ‘Avertissement’, Catalogue de Tableaux, Dessins, Estampes...M. Léon Dufourny, Paris: H. Delaroche, 22 November 1819, 5. Thirty plates of simple line engravings were appended to the sale of decorative arts from the collection of the duc d’Aumont in 1782; however, there is no evidence of a different price structure for this catalogue. The majority of these engravings represent works of marble that had been cut and polished for the collector; the three other engravings represent two tables and a chandelier. Catalogue des Vases, Colonnes, Tables de Marbres rares...qui composent le Cabinet de Feu M. le Duc d’Aumont, Paris: P. F. Juilliot fils and A. J. Paillet, 12-21 December 1782.

\textsuperscript{36} See, for example, the entry for Sebastien Bourdon’s ‘La peste de Milan’, lot 14 or Annibale Carracci’s ‘St. Antoine’, lot 32.
connoisseurs ‘to judge for themselves’. The bibliographic references, together with the illustrations, positioned the catalogue as not only essential to the interested buyer in the lead-up to and during the auction, but also having continued utility; the textual facts of the illustrated works were connected in perpetuity to a visual record.

Nevertheless, the paucity of such extensively illustrated catalogues in the years following the Dufourny sale is striking. That Dufourny, an architect best known for the botanical gardens in Palermo, himself was instrumental in the selection and inclusion of the reproductions is clear from the catalogue’s advertisement. The lack of further examples from the following decades reinforces the conclusion that auctioneers were reluctant to devote resources to this aspect of the sales catalogue. Further evidence of the ad-hoc nature of catalogue illustrations is found in the notice introducing the Tardieu collection sale held in Paris on 4 February 1851. Having touted the extensive verbal descriptions of the old master paintings as being ‘as useful for the provincial amateur and foreigner … as for those of the capital who can judge for themselves’ during the preview days, the ‘Avertissement’ concedes that the illustrations had not gone according to plan. Although M. Ridel, the commissaire-priseur in charge of this sale, had intended to have lithographs made of the entire collection, ‘unforeseen circumstances’ resulted in the inclusion of only those six ready at the time of printing the catalogue. These

37 ‘M. Dufourny travaillait de son vivant à la redaction d’un catalogue raisonné de ses tableaux; il en avait fait un état détaillé qu’on a cru devoir suivre à la lettre dans les différentes attributions comme dans les renseignemens précieux qu’il contient sur l’origine de plusieurs d’entr’eux.’ ‘Avertissement’, 4-5.
40 ‘Les descriptions d’ailleurs sont plutôt utiles pour les amateurs de province et de l’étranger qui recevront notre catalogue, que pour ceux de la capitale, appelés à voir et à juger par eux-mêmes dans les deux jours d’exposition qui précéderont la vente.’ Catalogue d’une Riche Collection de Tableaux des Écoles Flamande, Hollande et Française, Paris: M. Ridel, 4 February 1851, 2.
41 ‘La propriétaire avait l’intention de faire lithographier sa collection; mais des circonstances imprévues l’ont arrêté au début, de sorte qu’il n’y a eu que six lithographies de terminées au moment de faire imprimer le catalogue.’ Catalogue d’une Riche Collection, 2.
lithographs, all the work of Paul Dupont, illustrated six paintings that proved to be among the best sellers of the auction, including the highest lot, Paulus Potter’s *Landscape and Animals at Rest*, which sold for 17,000 francs.\(^{42}\) The paragraph-long description of the composition of the painting is taken from ‘the work of M. Schmit’; this reference points back to the original source of information, indicating that the compiler aspired to a position of impartiality, achieved by reprinting ‘the descriptions contained in the catalogues of the collections from where the paintings had come’.\(^ {43}\)

**New technologies: photographs and heliotypes**

The renewed interest in the provision of illustrations in the 1850s must be understood, in part, as a response to the availability of lower-cost reproductive methods. These technological advances led to the proliferation of illustrated weeklies and other low-priced publications that appealed to a growing audience for the fine arts. Yet, given this development, the insertion of reproductions in auction catalogues remained exceptional with fewer than twenty examples in that decade. Significantly, it is in this decade that illustrations at the service of the decorative arts came to dominate the English scene.\(^ {44}\) These catalogues and the varying quality of their reproductions underscore the fact that the practice was still experimental. In fact, the poor quality of many of these reproductions leads to questions concerning

\(^{42}\) ‘Potter (Paulus). *Paysage et repos d’animaux.*’ *Catalogue d’une Riche Collection*, lot 13. Berchem’s *Landscape* (lot 1) sold for 7,600 francs; Greuze’s *Young Woman in a Storm* (lot 8) sold for 5,000 francs; at 9,500 francs, Teniers’s *Village Cabaret* (lot 23) achieved the second highest price, closely followed by Adrien Van de Velde’s *Pastoral Landscape* (lot 24) at 9,200 francs; Wouwerman’s *Halt of the Cavaliers* (lot 28) sold for 6,500 francs. FARL’s copy of the catalogue is annotated in pencil.

\(^{43}\) ‘Tout en voulant nous abstenir de tout éloge, nous avons cru devoir reproduire pour la plupart des tableaux les descriptions contenues aux catalogues des collections d’où ces tableaux provenaient’, *Catalogue d’une Riche Collection*, 1-2. In the case of the Potter, the work had been in the Lormier and Radstock collections.

\(^{44}\) Several late eighteenth-century French auctions devoted to decorative arts include a small number of engravings. In addition to the duc d’Aumont sale mentioned above, Dacier notes the antiquities sale of Charles Picard (17-25 January 1780), the sculpture collection of the marquis de Ménars et de Marigny (4 May 1785), the cameos of the duc d’Orléans (7 October 1786), and the coins of Michelet d’Ennery (April 1788). Dacier, ‘Les Catalogues de Ventes’, 113. I have located one German catalogue of a decorative arts collection that includes illustrations dating a year earlier than the first British catalogue: *Catalogue de la Collection des Antiquités et d’Objets de Haute Curiosité qui composent le cabinet de feu Mr. Pierre Leven*, Cologne: J. M. Heberlé, 4 October 1853. For this sale there was both an illustrated and unillustrated version of the catalogue. The illustrated version (costing 6 Sgr.) included one fold-out frontispiece reproducing five objects and seven plates at the end of the catalogue reproducing thirty-two objects of a sale that was composed of 1297 lots. The engravings are all simple line engravings.
their purpose while also pointing to the descriptive limitations of the decorative arts, a market that typically had to take into account far greater volume than that of paintings or drawings. An early, admittedly tentative, attempt to provide visual evidence as part of a catalogue entry appears with nine engravings reproduced in the catalogue of an unnamed, but ‘important’, collection of ‘Ancient, Mediaeval, and Modern Art’.45

Held over the course of four days in April 1854, the 636-lot sale brought just over £2405.46 The nine engravings executed in bold hatching are each placed beneath the corresponding entry, a significant advantage associated with this form of printing. The lots chosen for illustration are each described with laudatory adjectives, such as ‘remarkable and unique’ for the bronze vase in the shape of a harpy (lot 40), or ‘singular’ for the vase in the shape of a lion (lot 130), which carries an additional note, type set in capital letters, that ‘It is presumed that no similar specimen exists in any European cabinet in point of form or design, so that another opportunity of possessing so singular and important an example may not again present itself’. By including the reproduction, even in its schematic form, the compiler of the catalogue provided visual evidence of these vases’ unique features and underscores their significance. Both of these lots were among the objects that fetched higher prices – the former £28 and the latter £15; more typically works in this sale were given a simple description and brought a pound or two if not a few shillings.

The modest nature of the contents of this sale is apparent when compared with those in Ralph Bernal’s important collection offered over thirty-two days in March and April 1855. However, while more works were illustrated in the Bernal sale, the quality of the engravings and the manner in which they are deployed once again confirm that auction catalogues functioned quite differently from illustrated art books. The one-page introduction to the catalogue by scholar and playwright J. R. Planché testifies to Bernal’s acknowledged position as a highly-regarded collector of antiquities and objets d’art. Interspersed throughout the extensive catalogue of 4,294 lots are thirty plates (typically positioned at the beginning of each day of the sale); the majority of these plates are simple engravings of multiple objects belonging to the same category. The fifth plate, for example, includes two Sèvres vases, each representative of a pair.47 From the printed price list appended to the catalogue, we know that Sir Alfred de Rothschild purchased the ‘Pair of Vases and Covers’ (lot 600) for £900 and the Marquis of Bath purchased the ‘Pair of Oviform

46 The FARL copy of the catalogue is annotated with prices and buyers’ names.
47 Illustrated Catalogue of the Distinguished Collection of Art and Vertù…Collected by the late Ralph Bernal, Esq., London: Christie and Manson, 5 March-30 April 1855, opp. 42. The University of Wisconsin’s copy of the catalogue has been digitized and is accessible through Google Books.
Vases and Covers’ (lot 601) for £590. The tenth plate, inserted opposite page 108 on which the entry for the illustrated silver monstrance (lot 1328) appears, also includes engravings of two keys (lots 3557 and 3568), sold on the twenty-seventh day of the sale. This intermixing of reproductions of lots sold on different days of the extensive sale creates a haphazard effect. Although the Bernal sale was clearly of greater significance than that of the unidentified collection of the previous year as signified by the acquisition of dozens of objects by the British Museum, the small size and low quality of the engravings have more in common with that earlier catalogue than the richly illustrated art books that were appearing at this time, such as J. B. Waring’s *Art Treasures of the United Kingdom* (1858).

Waring’s volume, which, taking advantage of the innovations of chromolithography, recorded some of the thousands of examples of the decorative arts that were exhibited in Manchester in 1857. In the same year that *Art Treasures of the United Kingdom* was published, David Falcke, the purchaser of the first of the two keys illustrated in the Bernal sale, brought his New Bond Street store’s stock to auction. Three of the twenty-seven plates produced by the printer Alexander Durlacher are in colour. The illustrations follow the familiar format of several objects to each plate, with the exception of the frontispiece devoted to a single work: ‘A Beautiful Cinque-Cento Dish’ embellished with enamel, gilding, and jewels. ‘A Very Fine and Rare Figure of a Peacock’ of blue Venetian glass and copper gilt (lot 2,980), along with ‘A Very Fine Hexagonal-Shaped Vase and Cover, of Urbino ware’ (lot 2,879), were also appropriately illustrated in colour, as were a gold watch (lot 974), a gold pendant (lot 1,191), and an enameled gold and diamond-encrusted etui (lot 3,106). Thus, while the grouping of multiple objects on a single plate typical of sales devoted to the decorative arts continued, the logic behind the selection of objects shifts to accommodate new reproductive techniques.

If Falcke’s catalogue registers how new technology was adopted, then the catalogue of the sale of ‘The Vienna Museum’ by the Löwenstein Brothers at Christie’s provides additional evidence that those actively involved in the selling of

48 ‘Names of Purchasers and Prices to the Illustrated Sale Catalogue of the Choice Collections of Art and Vertù, formed by the late Ralph Bernal, Esq.’, 12.
49 In the FARL copy of the Bernal catalogue, the plate is inserted opposite page 108 though the entry for lot 1328 instructs the reader to ‘see illustration – 27th day’. In the Bodleian’s copy of the catalogue, the plate appears opposite page 287, two pages before the entries for lots 3557 and 3568. Marlborough House bought the monstrance for £16 and the second key for £4 4s; David Falcke purchased the first key for £2 10s.
50 Whereas the organizers of this path-breaking exhibition published catalogues for the other departments, the sheer number of objects made the publication of a catalogue for this section, called the Museum of Ornamental Art, impracticable. See Elizabeth A. Pergam, *The Manchester Art Treasure Exhibition of 1857: Entrepreneurs, Connoisseurs and the Public*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2011.
51 *Catalogue of the Magnificent Collection of Works of Art and Vertu, formed by Mr. David Falcke*, London: Christie & Manson, 19 April-12 May 1858, lot 2,580. The Bodleian’s copy of the catalogue has been digitized and is available through Google Books.
art recognized the potential of using reproductions. The art dealers, based in Frankfurt-am-Main, brought the valuable collection of decorative arts first assembled by Emperor Maximilian I in the sixteenth century to London in 1860. In addition to five prints, the catalogue included photographs, the first to do so. Tipped-in after every two pages of text, the photographs, often of several objects, deploy compositional formats similar to engraved or lithographic reproductions for illustrated catalogues of decorative arts. In total there are thirty-six salt print photographs, four chromolithographs, and a frontispiece of an engraved portrait of Rudolph II. The photographed items are numbered from one to eighty-six and a ‘List of Plates’ printed in the front matter of the catalogue provides a concordance of these numbers with the lot numbers. Under the corresponding lot is the instruction to ‘See Photograph’ or ‘See Lithograph’. Each print includes a caption identifying the photographer as H. Emden of Frankfort and the source as the Löwenstein Brothers, demonstrating that the photographs had been taken prior to the collection’s arrival in London. It is highly likely, then, that the decision to illustrate the catalogue with photographs came not from the auction house but from the sellers.

The varying quality of the images is a measure of photography’s early stage of development. Although it is well established that the reflective surfaces of paintings posed a problem for a medium dependent on filtering light, the prints in the Löwenstein catalogue exemplify inconsistent results of photographing three-dimensional objects. The very first plate depicting four marble statues (lots 629-632) in the style of François Du Quesnoy, identified in the catalogue as ‘Fiamingo’, for example, is overexposed, rendering the details of the small sculptures illegible and giving little indication of the ‘exquisite’ work noted in the entry. More successful is the print of a boxwood carving of St. Michael Expelling the Fallen Angels (lot 788), which sets in relief the writhing figures of this intricate eleven-figure group,

52 Catalogue of the Celebrated Collection of Works of Art and Vertu, known as ‘The Vienna Museum’, the property of Messrs. Löwenstein, Brothers, London: Christie, Manson & Woods, 12 March-23 March 1860. The University of California at Berkeley’s copy of the catalogue has been digitized and is accessible through Google Books.


54 The print of a silver-gilt ‘Bust of St. Ursula’ (lot 505; after page fourteen; now in the Museum für Geschichte, Basel) is coloured to indicate the blue, red, and green gems that decorate the reliquary.

55 For example, the ‘Silver Tankards’ and ‘Gothic Chalice’, reproduced in the seventh plate as numbers thirteen through fifteen, are identified as lots 114, 214, and 1,204.
attributed in the catalogue to Michelangelo. For the most part, however, these photographs are more notable for their existence rather than for what they tell us about the objects they depict. Just as the collection under the hammer consisted of objects that would compose a princely Wunderkammer – silver-mounted cocoa-nuts (lot 115) or an astronomical instrument said to have belonged to Tycho Brahe (lot 1179) – the inclusion of examples of the new medium is of a piece with this fascination for technology.

The shortcomings of early photography in reproducing the variety of surfaces of works of art can be seen in the catalogue of the estate of John Watkins Brett (1805-1863) sold at Christie’s in 1864. This sale combined works of both two and three dimensions, and the catalogue illustrated all media, many of which challenged the supposed accuracy of photographic reproduction. The shininess of oil painting made this medium notoriously difficult to photograph in the 1850s; the plates in this catalogue prove that silver and highly carved objects were also a challenge to capture in their detail. As in the catalogue of the Vienna Museum, the prints represent a range of success. The plate that illustrates Rembrandt’s ink drawing of The Presentation in the Temple (lot 541) captures the varying levels of weight applied to the pen to achieve the complex composition. In contrast, the objects in the background of Greuze’s ‘Threading the Needle’ (lot 734) are illegible. The metallic surface of the ‘silver tea kettle’ by Paul de Lamerie (lot 331) causes a reflection that obscures its elaborate repoussé ornamentation of ‘bold flowers and scrolls’. Another example of the challenges presented by different media is found in the reproduction of the white of the ivory bas-reliefs of Elizabeth I, Sir Francis Drake, Sir William Cecil, and Sir Francis Walsingham (lot 1,996). In this case, the ivory’s lack of colour and the shallowness of the highly detailed carving prove insurmountable obstacles to a medium that best reproduced works of definitive linearity and high contrast.

Evidence suggests that these photographs were likely included as an improvisatory gesture; that is, as a bonus feature that supplemented rather than substituted for textual information. Unlike the catalogue of The Vienna Museum sale, the text of the entries omits any reference to the illustrations. On the plates themselves, lot numbers are handwritten. Furthermore, different copies of the

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56 The Illustrated Catalogue of the Valuable Collection of Pictures and other Works of Art of the Egyptian, Greek, Roman, and Mediaeval Periods; also, a choice collection of coins and medals, of that eminent Connoisseur, John Watkins Brett, Esq., of Hanover Square, Deceased, London: Christie, Manson & Woods, 5-18 April 1864. Oxford University’s copy of the catalogue has been digitized and is accessible online.

57 From the time of its invention, the accuracy of photography has been debated. While he was experimenting with photomechanical processes in the 1830s, William Henry Fox Talbot advocated the use of photography for creating inventories. See Larry J. Schaaf, Out of the Shadows: Herschel, Talbot, & the Invention of Photography, New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1992, 65, and Michael North, Camera Works: Photography and the Twentieth-Century Word, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, 4.
catalogues reveal noticeable discrepancies. For example, in the copy held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Thomas J. Watson Library, the plate that illustrates six small antique sculptures incorrectly numbers the statuette on the far right; thus, the annotation leads the reader to the entry for lot 1,089 – ‘A small copy of the crouching Venus’ – rather than the correct identification of ‘An antique figure of Cleopatra’ (lot 1,039). The copies held at the New York Public Library and the Metropolitan differ also in that the latter includes a reproduction of Ostade’s drawing of an ‘Exterior of a cottage’ (lot 557). Differences also exist between the photographs included in these two copies and Christie’s auctioneer’s catalogue, held in their Archives, which contains just thirty-seven plates; other copies include reproductions of additional objects in the sale.

The catalogue of the Brett sale also documents the spectrum of success achievable with the relatively new medium of photography, if the photograph of the painting catalogued as Christ Bearing his Cross (lot 859) by Raphael is compared with an earlier photograph of the painting taken seven years previously on the occasion of its inclusion in the Gallery of Ancient Masters at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition (1857). As one of one hundred ‘Gems’ of the Old Master paintings photographed by Caldesi and Montecchi for the luxurious elephant folio co-published by the art dealers Agnew’s and Colnaghi’s, the albumen print of Brett’s so-called Raphael measures 16.5 x 23.5 cm. and is mounted on a sheet measuring 54 x 34.5 cm. The elegantly printed caption to the plate identifying Brett as the owner of the painting imparts a seemingly everlasting status to his stewardship. In contrast, the print in the sale catalogue is half the size and placed in an auction catalogue of typical dimensions. It is reduced not only in scale but also in sharpness. Without a caption and inscribed by hand with the painting’s lot number, the bare-bones presentation of the photograph in this sales catalogue marks the distance between an illustrated art book of the second-half of the nineteenth century and a publication produced to guide potential buyers. From a different perspective, however, these two prints also chart the rapid adoption of the medium for divergent commercial endeavours. The Agnew-Colnaghi-published album cost £40; the auction catalogue cost just five shillings. While the albumen print of 1857 was part of a project to memorialize a temporary exhibition, open to the public for just five months, Christie’s catalogue was compiled with the primary aim to disperse a collection with as great a profit as possible. Indeed, at £670, Brett’s Raphael fetched the highest price of the sale.

Just as an engraving of a work of art for sale was introduced first into an English auction catalogue but more widely employed by the French, so too was the

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58 Illustrated Catalogue, opp. p. 78.
59 Lugt lists the total number of plates as forty-four. In both the Metropolitan and the New York Public Library copies there are forty-two plates.
60 The auctioneer’s copy of the sale preserved at Christie’s Archives gives the name of the buyer as ‘Edwards’.
photograph. Thus, while the Löwenstein and Brett catalogues must be credited as the first illustrating decorative arts and paintings with photographic prints, Paris auctions of the late 1860s and 1870s employ the medium on a more regular basis and in new ways. The first instance of a catalogue of a sale in Paris to include photographs was that of the unusual auction in April 1868 of just two paintings owned by A. Schaffhausen of Cologne. This pair of fête galantes by Jean-Baptiste Pater had, as the introduction to the catalogue explains, been victims of the French Revolution and brought to Germany in the late eighteenth century. Pleading for the pendants to remain together, the catalogue’s introduction emphasizes the compositional relationship between the Concert champêtre and the Délassements de la

Figure 4 Photograph of Jean-Baptiste Pater, Concert champêtre, lot 1 of Deux Tableaux par Pater provenant de la Collection A. Schaffhausen de Cologne, Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 20 April 1868. The Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, California (85-P2299)

61 Not surprisingly, the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-1 caused a noticeable reduction in the number of auctions held in Paris at the time; however, by 1872 activity at the Hôtel Drouot resumed at a more typical pace.
campagne. The agreement between the consignor and the commissaire-priseur, Charles Pillet, stipulated that the sale had to be widely publicized with posters, articles in journals and a catalogue. However, no mention is made of the inclusion of the prints in the catalogues, which are mounted on cardstock and interleaved between the two entries (Fig. 4). The catalogue’s text included a two-page introduction and an extensive exegesis of each painting, verifiable by the prints, but also including extensive colour notes, expanding upon the information provided by the black and white photographs.

One month after the Schaffhausen sale, fifteen paintings by the Barbizon school artist Narcisse Diaz de la Peña (1807-1876) came up for auction. Eight plates with mounted photographs of each of the paintings follows the ‘Désignation’, a one-page list of the titles of the paintings. These are the first photographs illustrating the work of a living artist to appear in an auction catalogue. In the words of Elizabeth McCauley, photography of works by contemporary painters was ‘the most striking contribution of the new technology’. The precedent for the complete illustration of the sale of the work of a living artist can be found in the 1860 auction of Jules Achille Noël, in which all thirty lots were accompanied by a line engraving. Diaz had introduced the practice of including engravings as part of his concerted effort to take advantage of the selling opportunities provided by the auction system. While there are no such examples in Britain, the practice would become more common in France. Thus, for the auctions of the work of the sculptors August Clésinger (1814-

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63 ‘…la vente a recue une grande publicité, par des affiches, imprimées & timbrées … & des articles dans les journaux d’usages, & par des catalogues…’ Charles Pillet Auctioneer’s Register, No. 5497, Archives de la Ville de Paris, D48E3/59.

64 The Marquis Maison bought the pair (through M. Aarons) for 87,500 francs, only to sell them at auction two months later, with Pillet once again acting as commissaire-priseur. Catalogue de Tableaux…Après décès de M. le M° Maison, Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 20-12 June 1869, lots 1 and 2. The catalogue does not include any illustrations. M. E. Hamoir, who purchased the pair for 100,000 francs at the 10 June 1869 sale, donated them to the musée des Beaux-Arts Valenciennes. Florence Ingersoll-Smouse, Pater, Paris: Les Beaux-Arts, 1928, catalogue nos. 20 and 29.


66 The FARL copy of this catalogue is annotated on the front page in pencil ‘très Rare’.


69 Simon Kelly, ‘‘This dangerous game’: Rousseau, Diaz and the uses of the auction in the marketing of landscapes’ in Francis Fowle and Richard Thomson, eds, Soil and Stone: Impressionism, urbanism, environment, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003, 41.
1883) and Antonio Giovanni Lanzirotti (1839-1921) that followed in the next few years, the majority of lots were illustrated with a photograph.\textsuperscript{70}

Even as photographic plates were slowly introduced into auction catalogues, etchings and engravings continued to appear. In the case of the sale of drawings from the collection of Jules Boilly, the son of the genre painter Louis-Léopold Boilly supplied ten etchings of works by Holbein, Murillo, Poussin, Géricault, and others.\textsuperscript{71} Each etching is clearly inscribed with the name of the artist of the drawing and ‘Jul. Boilly Sc’. Although an unsigned introduction to the catalogue makes special note of the development of the collection as ‘formed by its possessor with taste and perseverance’, the etchings are not mentioned, seemingly unremarkable.\textsuperscript{72}

Throughout the 1870s, in fact, etchings and engravings feature more regularly in French auction catalogues than photographs, regardless of whether the contents of the sale were modern paintings or Old Masters, drawings, or furniture.\textsuperscript{73}

Those catalogues that included photographic reproductions were all for sales of paintings, primarily Old Master paintings. For example, three paintings in the 225-lot sale of the Count Carlo Castelbarco of Milan were illustrated with photographs. These three paintings – Bellini’s \textit{Circumcision} (lot 1), Francia’s \textit{Portrait of Cesare Borgia} (lot 14), and the tentatively attributed Raphael’s \textit{Portrait of Lorenzo de’Medici} (lot 31) – represented the highest prices of the sale at 8,100, 11,000, 11,100 francs respectively.\textsuperscript{74}

Following the precedent set by the Schaffhausen sale of the Pater pendants, two auctions just months apart in 1874 were devoted to either a single painting or small group of related works and took advantage of the restricted nature of the sale to include photographs. The catalogue of the sale of three paintings by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo from the Palazzo Barbaro included two essays on the Venetian family and three photographs.\textsuperscript{75} Representing \textit{The Apotheosis of Francesco Barbaro} (lot 1) is a photograph of a print after the painting, while the photographs of the oval


\textsuperscript{72} ‘La collection…a été formée par son possesseur avec gout & perseverance…’ Catalogue de Dessins Anciens, 5.

\textsuperscript{73} Examples include the Catalogue de Tableaux, Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 6 April 1875, of works by ten contemporary artists and Catalogue de Tableaux et Dessins formant la collection de feu M. Camille Marcille, Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 6-7 March 1876 of Old Master paintings and drawings.

\textsuperscript{74} Catalogue des Tableaux Anciens de Maîtres Italiens et Flamands composant la Galerie de M. le Comte Carlo Castelbarco de Milan, Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 2, 5-6 May 1870. Now considered a workshop production, \textit{The Circumcision} is at The Metropolitan Museum of Art (17.190.9). Neither the artist nor the subject of Castelbarco’s Francia have been retained; given to the Metropolitan in 1958, the museum sold the painting at Christie’s in 2012 where it was attributed to the Lombard painter Giovanni Agostino da Lodi.

\textsuperscript{75} Notice d’un très beau plafond et pendentifs par G.-B. Tiepolo, Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 9 Feb. 1874.
pendants (lots 2 and 3) were taken from the paintings themselves. These sales (and their catalogues) clearly represent special cases and not the run-of-the-mill, bread-and-butter auctions that made up the majority of the public sales activities at this time. Rather, they exemplify a distinct marketing trend that allowed the auctioneer to emphasize the quality of the small number of works for sale both through text and illustration with the resulting catalogue borrowing from the model of the scholarly monograph. Although I have not been able to find accounts or documentation of the cost of photographing paintings for these catalogues or how much the inclusion of photographs would have added to the production costs of sales catalogues, it is evident that both sellers and auction houses weighed the cost of production and the quality of the image against their efficacy.

Interestingly, while Boussod, Valadon & Cie., the successor to the family company, produced the vast majority of the reproductions included in the sale catalogue, Ingres’s portrait drawing of Mlle de Montgolfier (lot 336) (Fig. 5) is represented by a heliotype originally printed by the company A. Clément for the Gazette des Beaux-Arts (July 1885). Such recycling points to the expense of producing these reproductions, even for a firm that had built its fortune on the dissemination of reproductive prints after works by contemporary artists. The fact that only twenty-four of the 617 lots brought to auction in the Goupil sale only are reproduced is further evidence that reproducing the contents of the entire sale was impracticable at this date. Even as photographs become more common in auction catalogues of the first decades of the twentieth century, a completely illustrated catalogue is a much more recent feature.

76 All three works were acquired by the Comte de Camondo for a total of 40,000 francs; The Apotheosis is now at The Metropolitan Museum (23.128). The Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen, identifies the oval in its collection as Latinus Offering His Daughter Lavinia to Aeneas in Matrimony (4201); the second oval, Scene from Ancient History, is now at the National Gallery of Art, Washington (1939.1.365). For both this sale, as well as the single lot sale of Murillo’s Le Petit Pasteur, Charles Pillet acted as the commissaire-priseur. Tableau Oeuvre Remarquable de Murillo El Pastorcito (Le Petit Pasteur), Paris: Hôtel Drouot, 1 May 1874. Although considered a copy today, the painting was catalogued as an authentic work by the Spanish master when it was sold from the collection of the former prime minister François Guizot for 120,000 francs. The register for this sale names Delières as the purchaser. Charles Pillet Auctioneer’s Register, No. 6533, Archives de la Ville de Paris, D48E3/64. A handwritten note on the FARL copy of the sale catalogue identifies M. de Greffulhe as the purchaser with the added statement that he had purchased the work only to return it to Guizot (‘Quelqu’un de bien informé affirmait que M. de Greffulhe n’avait acheté ce tableau que pour le restituer à son propriétaire’). The work is not included in Enrique Valdivieso, Murillo: catalogo razonado de pinturas, Madrid: Ediciones el Viso, 2010. Nor was it sold as part of the Comte Greffulhe collection, London: Sotheby’s, 22 July 1937. Diego Angulo Iñiguez lists it under No. 204 as a copy of an original in the church of San Isidro in Seville and now in the collection of the Hispanic Society of America (A81). Murillo, Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1981, II: 189.

77 Goupil Gravure was, in fact, a proprietary photogravure method.
While the salt or albumen print process produced a photograph that could be mounted and tipped into the auction catalogue, the collotype (also known as a heliotype) and photogravure processes allowed reproductions to be printed in a more integral way with the text of the catalogue. Two catalogues from sales held in Paris in April 1888 exemplify these processes. For the catalogue of the sale of the estate of Baron Héron de Villefosse, albumen prints of paintings by Dumont, Nattier, and de Troy were mounted on thick paper and inserted opposite the catalogue entries. As to be expected with such prints, the tonalities of the paintings are difficult to capture and the resulting images have a rather ghostly quality. In contrast, the photogravures and heliotype employed in the larger format catalogue of the collection of Albert Goupil, a member of the art dealing family, are rich in detail.

Conclusions

The Goupil sale reflects the fact that even at this late date those involved in the art trade – Nijman, the Löwenstein brothers, Falcke, among others – were among the first to recognise the allure of illustrations and to take advantage of the possibilities of technological advances in achieving reproductions. That is, the impetus to use illustrations must be seen to derive less from the auctioneers than from the sellers themselves. While Gersaint’s innovations in the first half of the eighteenth century certainly transformed the role of the art dealer in shaping taste, the ideal model of leisurely, informed viewing that he promoted through both Watteau’s painting and the frontispiece to his catalogue was antithetical to the experience of acquiring a work of art through the auction process where the pressure of time determines the result. The inclusion of reproductions can be seen as a way of extending time to contemplate the works under the hammer. Even in the form of a simple line engraving or a blurred salt-print photograph, reproductions introduced an element of permanence into an otherwise fleeting event in addition to attracting the attention of potential buyers when circulated in advance.

The notion of a cover lot – the illustration of the star lot of a sale on the front cover of the auction catalogue – did not yet exist in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; however, a clear correlation between the monetary value of the objects chosen to be reproduced and the prices they achieved emerges over time. In the instances where the auction is limited to a single painting or group of related paintings, such as the Palazzo Barbaro Tiepolos or the Guizot sale of his Murillo, the presence of photographs reinforces the importance of these works. Moreover, the illustrations in themselves were valuable. That auction catalogues were enhanced by the inclusion of reproductions, whether etchings, engravings, lithographs, or photographs, is evident from the production of both illustrated and unillustrated versions of the catalogue, with the former sold at a premium. The physical position of the reproductions within the catalogue contributed to their utility. If placed next to the entry for the lot, the reproduction allowed for an immediate comparison of text and image. If, as so often the case with the decorative arts, a single image contained a number of lots, the ability to compare the forms and details of these objects compensated for the inconvenience of placing the image at a distance from the lot entry. Nonetheless, we must recognize that the range of quality offered by these reproductions indicates their sometimes-limited efficacy as accurate representations of objects. Yet, tantalizing evidence suggests that an illustration could stimulate a sale: Mary Levkoff has observed that for William Randolph Hearst the existence of an illustration in a catalogue was sufficient for him to

\[80\text{ Although more quantitative analysis remains to be done, my comparison of the prices achieved for those objects accompanied by illustrations and those not illustrated strongly suggests a correlation. Whether, however, those prices were achieved solely on the basis of the existence of an illustration or because the works chosen to be illustrated were inherently more desirable will be difficult to establish.}\]
commission his agent to bid on Greek vases sold at the sale of Sir George Holford in 1927.\textsuperscript{81}

In the preface to Soullié’s compilation of the titles and contents of sales held between 1800 and 1895, Duplessis captured the existential conundrum sales catalogues presented: ‘These leaflets distributed in large numbers to alert the public about the paintings, drawings, curiosities, medals or prints brought to auction, seem to become completely useless the day they are scattered around the world’.\textsuperscript{82}

Although Duplessis does not mention the role of reproductions could play in extending a catalogue’s ‘usefulness’, there can be no doubt that the inclusion of illustrations was crucial to the transformation of these ‘leaflets’ into essential components of art historical discourses.

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\textsuperscript{81} Mary Levkoff, ‘Hearst and the Antique’, \textit{Apollo}, October 2008, 55.