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Of Shadow and Substance:
Sadakichi Hartmann, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and Photo-Poetic Process

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in English

by

Andrew James John Hill

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Virginia Jackson, Chair
Professor Martin Harries
Professor Oren Izenberg

2021

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CURRICULUM VITAE

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Of Shadow and Substance:
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By

Andrew James John Hill

Doctor of Philosophy in English

University of California, Irvine, 2021

Professor Virginia Jackson, Chair

"Of Shadow and Substance" examines the relationship between ideas of photography and ideas of poetry at the turn into the twentieth century in the writing of Sadakichi Hartmann (1867-1944) and Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906). The project focuses on intermedial or what Hartmann would call "suggestive" spaces such as Dodd, Mead, and Company's photographically illustrated editions of Dunbar's poems and Hartmann's criticism and ekphrastic poetry found in the art journal, *Camera Work*. In tracing the ways in which these understudied writers limned the expressive and representative capacity of poetry and photography, the project provides a critique of the ways in which affect, intimacy, and racial identity are mediated by aesthetic form in an effort at offering new perspectives on American literary history and methodologies of poetic interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

To my knowledge, the only time Sadakichi Hartmann (1867-1944) and Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906) appear together is in the pages of a 1913 volume of *The Lantern* devoted mostly to life and writing of Edgar Allan Poe. There, Dunbar's "Life" (1893) is printed on the concluding page of Hartmann's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1905). Hartmann's tale, which I read in detail later on, describes the experience of dreamily time traveling to meet with Virginia Poe at her Fordham cottage. The narrator, who may as well be Hartmann, waxes poetically even as the moon wanes as he pays compliments to Virginia in exaggerated tropes, asks questions about Poe for literary historical posterity, and declares her Poe's eternal muse all before giving her hand a kiss. Composed of two reflective stanzas that mirror one another both in terms of form and content with a shared final line declaring, "And that is life!" Dunbar's poem attests to the existential swings of the pendulum of "Life" including the overabundance of tears, "trouble" and "moans [that] come double" in relation to all else "that love makes precious."[1] Life, to use the title of one of Dunbar's volumes of poetry, is composed of *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow* (1905).

Dunbar's poem focuses on affective contrasts, "the smile to warm and the tears to refresh us," to interpret life's moments and give meaning to experience. Hartmann's tale presents a similar ambivalent critical relation in negotiating temporalities and attachments to literary history. In claiming Virginia as Poe's "muse—his Lenore," Hartmann foregrounds a series of blurred attachments that haunt Hartmann's writing. Virginia is a character in Hartmann's tale, the beautiful, dead Lenore in Poe's "The Raven," a muse, Hartmann's interpretation of hazy

[1] *The Lantern* (1913). Box 20, Folder 5. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

biographical sketches, and possibly the real referent to whom all these other figural versions gesture toward.[2] The list, of course, goes on and may also include the origin of poetry more generally, Hartmann's mother, Osada, or to take lines from Sarah Helen Whitman's "The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion" (1839), "By whatever name the maiden/Lives within thy [Poe's/Hartmann's] mystic lore."[3] In short, Hartmann troubles readings that attempt to separate the figure from the figured as the affect surrounding both are real to him. This dissertation stays with the entangled relationships between life and literature highlighted in Hartmann's tale and interprets them through the affect of Dunbar's poem.

The editorial decision to pair Hartmann and Dunbar together in *The Lantern* is curious. On the one hand, it may simply have to do with the fact that Dunbar's poem fits in in the remaining space of the page. Dunbar is present in Hartmann's absence and vice versa. On the other hand, this pairing shows that they were once read and thought together as their writing was alive and present in the cultural imaginary—a view that may be difficult to see from the moment of my own writing. This dissertation brings these two writers together in relation to the medium of, and discourses surrounding, photography. My interest isn't so much in what Poe and Dunbar can tell us about photography or what photography can tell us about them—it turns out quite a lot. I do attend to the ideas about poetry and ideas about photography that circulate in and around their work. The focus, however, is on the ways in which Dunbar and Hartmann suggest that we read them in spaces of intermedial intimacy.

Hartmann and Dunbar have differing forms of attachment to the photographic medium. Though Dunbar wrote poems with photography, and photographic illustration more specifically, in mind, it is difficult to know how involved he was in the production of Dodd, Mead, and

[2] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," *The Lantern* (1913): 117.
[3] Sarah Helen Whitman, *Hours of Life, and Other Poems* (Providence: George H. Whitney, 1853), 69.

Company's photographically illustrated editions of his poetry. The Hampton Institute Camera Club, notably Leigh Richmond Minor, appear to have made most of the creative decisions as far as the photographs go. Comparatively, at the turn into the twentieth century Hartmann's voice was one of the most audible in debates concerning artistic photography, and art more generally, in the United States. Hartmann published in all the leading journals including Alfred Stieglitz's *Camera Work* and lectured widely on various technical, compositional, and philosophical approaches to medium. The chapters on Dunbar attend to specific relations between poetry, photography, and affect within individual poems and giftbooks. The chapters on Hartmann focus not only on his poetry, but also his tales, criticism, and philosophical writing. I devote more chapters to Hartmann to account for this this expansion.

My own critical approach to these writers follows what I term in my reading of Hartmann's tales as a creative speculation. My interest is in potentialities that come with thinking these medial forms together and wondering about the different ways in which Dunbar and Hartmann may have wanted to be read, or rather how their poems invite intermedial and affective forms of reading. I refer to this reading practice in the chapters on Dunbar as sympathetic reading and in the chapters on Hartmann as suggestive reading. My formulation of sympathetic reading is generated from two of Dunbar's poems, both called "Sympathy," and suggestivism is concept that Hartmann returned to, performed, and theorized throughout his life. Appellations aside, these ways of reading gesture towards the differing possibilities of aesthetic relation by foregrounding affect and embodiment in reading and viewing processes. They posit aesthetic imaginaries that may entail new kinds of material relation. They aid in navigating racialization in sociopolitical and cultural fields. They are ways of thinking about love and loss.

My use of the term affect, nearly interchangeably with feeling, is to address the ways in which emotion circulates between mediums including the human body. I refer to the atmospheric quality of affect that exists between persons as well as the individual's attempt at articulating the internalization of this atmosphere in photograph or poem. My reading of affect is motivated less by contemporary affect studies and more by historical accounts of emotions and the expressive capacity of the arts circulating at the time Hartmann and Dunbar were writing. Mostly, I just refer to and theorize out of Dunbar and Hartmann's writing directly. I attend to feelings that, in poetic and practical senses, overflow the boundaries of the body even as they limn the outlines of the body's material existence. In this manner, the (dis)embodied feelings of a poem corporeally realized in the aesthetic experience of being read and the affective investments and attachments to a poem that shape its reception exist in a mutually constitutive relation. Affect gestures towards this point of contact or convergence between embodied feeling (expression) and thought (interpretation). Affect names the interanimation of life in the different mediums and forms it takes and a critical relation to them. It names a relation both intracorporeal and intercorporeal. To think with a contemporary of Hartmann and Dunbar, William James (1842-1910) asserts that if "we fancy some strong emotion, and then try to abstract from our consciousness of it all the feelings of its characteristic bodily symptoms, we find we have nothing left behind, no 'mind stuff' out of which the emotion can be constituted, and that a cold and neutral state of intellectual perception is all that remains."[4] For Hartmann and Dunbar there is no neutral state of perception in poetic creation or reception as feeling is innate within these different aspects of the aesthetic relation. In claiming that "emotion disassociated from all bodily feeling is inconceivable," James lists poetry as a supporting example: "In listening to poetry…we are often surprised at the

[4] William James, "What is an Emotion?" *Mind* no. 34 (April 1884): 193.

cutaneous shiver which like a sudden wave flows over us and at the heart-swelling lachrymal effusion that unexpectedly catch us at intervals."[5] In satirizing the disembodied scientific view of emotion, or for that matter poetry, James gestures towards the seriousness of such expressions for Dunbar and Hartmann as to read without the body is an impossibility.

James' description of the emotions involved in the experience of poetry dovetails with Hans Belting's recent theorization of the concept of the image in *An Anthropology of Images* (2001). For Belting, the "distinction between image and medium is rooted in the self-experience of our body. The images of memory and imagination are generated in one's own body; the body is the living medium through which they are experienced."[6] The medium of the body generates and experiences both poetic images and their attendant affects. In emphasizing the body as a medium rather than poetry or photography, my reading foregrounds Dunbar and Hartmann's insistence on feeling over against something along the lines of a Modernist emphasis on form. Another way of thinking this relation might be to say that the body remediates the forms aesthetic expression might take—we only know and experience the medium of photograph through the medium of our own bodies. Hartmann and Dunbar underscore the representations of bodily being within their writing as well as the embodiment of their readers or viewers in the mutual presence of a poem or photograph. For James, this affective relation troubles dualistic accounts of experience and focuses our attention on the body as "the palmary instance of the ambiguous" since it can be treated or appear as "purely as part of outer nature" at the same time as it is self-possessed and internalized: "I think of it as 'mine,' I sort it with the 'me,' and then

[5] William James, "What is an Emotion?" 194 and 196.
[6] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body* (2001), trans. Thomas Dunlap (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), 11.

certain local changes and determinations in it pass for spiritual happenings."[7] What James refers to as "mind stuff," "spiritual happenings," and "intellectual perception" are inseparable for Dunbar, Hartmann, and my reading of them. Or, to rework John Stuart Mill's oft-cited account: "Poetry is [never] feeling confessing itself to itself, in moments of solitude."[8] Hartmann, for whom "true criticism" is "to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, and to realize it distinctly" performs this relation within his creative work and, of course, his criticism.[9]

With James' description of affect in mind, I turn to photography and the ways in which the body instantiated in and through light is given back to itself as image. In thinking of oneself as object or abstraction, the photograph as a medium of representation transmutes affect as light adheres to photographic emulsion. For Dunbar and Hartmann, the photograph asks us to view ourselves and others differently thereby imbuing the poetic or photographic representation not only with affect, but with an ethical imperative that may or not be realized. Georges Didi-Huberman describes the "paradox of evidence" in photography through facticity, "the double quality of that which is *in fact* (irrefutable, even if contingent) and that which is *factitious*."[10] Interpreting the facticity of the photograph is a critical imperative for Frederick Douglass in "Pictures and Progress" (1864-65), one that this dissertation aligns itself with and explores with Douglass. W.E.B. Du Bois (1868-1963), another contemporary of Dunbar and Hartmann, writes of "double-consciousness" as "a peculiar sensation…this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others," and as a feeling of "two-ness" within the body described as "two

[7] William James, "The Place of Affectional Facts in a World of Pure Experience," *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology, and Scientific Methods* 2, no. 11 (May 1905): 287.
[8] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*. Vol. 1 of *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 348.
[9] Sadakichi Hartmann [Sidney Allan], "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," *Camera Work*, no. 4 (October 1903): 23.
[10] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*, trans. Alisa Hartz (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), 61. Emphasis in original.

souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder."[11] Du Bois' formulation of the scopic relation between bodies is understood through the affect of a body whose fragile edges are continually renegotiated and redefined at the risk of "being torn asunder." Du Bois, Dunbar, and to a less directly visible extent Hartmann, foreground racialization as entangled in the affects and mediums of artistic expression as well as in the viewing and reading practices in and through which they are experienced.

In positing that Dunbar and Hartmann create intermedial intimacies, I refer to the ways in which photography and poetry relate, but also how figurative language and other discursive formations along with affect shape those relations. In fact, I do not posit anything like medium specificity or distinctions between medial forms. Rather, I attend to material and discursive instantiations of image and affect as constellated around and condensed in instances of expression felt in and by the body. Belting argues that "Intermediality is at bottom another facet of the interaction of image with media, a relation that bears on the mystery at the heart of the image; namely that of being vs. appearing."[12] Belting's anthropological account of the image locates its origins in the felt absence of incompressible loss for early humans. Images are created as, and in the face of, death. Thanatological accounts of photography before and since Barthes' *La chambre claire* (1980) mark a return to what for Belting would be a defining feature of human expression that adheres in even the newest technologies of representation. While these accounts do inform my approach, my interest in intermediality relates more directly to the expressive capacity of poetry and literary history and the ways in which this capacity is addressed by Hartmann and Dunbar through the figure of the beloved, the muse, the mother, the

[11] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Company, 1903), 3.
[12] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images*, 32.

Poetess, and particularly important in Hartmann's case, the feminine nude. The creation of these intimate experiences of reading and viewing involve figural bodies that may or may not be present along with the reader's own. Often, the construction of the (dis)embodied poetic speaker mediates the relations between figure and reader. Erotically and melancholically inflected as these representations are, they provide useful illustrations for the kinds of possible reading experiences offered as affect constellates around poems or photographs.

Both Hartmann and Dunbar return to absent presences, presences of absence, that which is at the edge of sight, and that which is on the verge of disappearance in their writing. In Belting's formulation, the image exists in relation with an embodied reader or viewer. Dunbar and Hartmann write in relation to such embodiment in ways that call attention to the appearance or disappearance of reader or viewer within the experience of their writing. For example, the reader or viewer of Dunbar's blazons is situated through direct poetic address as a participant in the shared experience of looking alongside the construction of the poem's speaker. Poems that are self-conscious of their inability to visually represent their content and photographs that in their interpretation seek to do so invite readings as forms of intermedial intimacy. In foregrounding the affective, often racializing gaze, within individual poems and within the poetic genres and literary modes through which they operate, Dunbar disassembles the position and affective gaze of the reader or viewer of his poems by laying bare the artifice involved in the making of the speaker and the beloved of the blazon in the processes of their assembly. Dunbar posits intimacies with what is and isn't there and what is and isn't visible simultaneously. Moving out of the contours of the poem, Hartmann performs his relationship to individual poems, but also to literary history more generally, through three creative speculations on the compositional origin of Poe's "The Raven" (1845): "Dreary Windblown Yellow Meads" (1896),

"A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1905), and "How Poe Wrote the Raven: Criticism Based on Chemical Affinity" from his unpublished *Aesthetic Verities* (written 1927-1933). There, Hartmann reads himself into the compositional origins of the poem thereby making his presence felt within the poem itself in ways that suggest a reconsideration of how literary history and literary criticism is done. For Hartmann, an acknowledgement of affective attachments to texts and the histories of their reception is the work of a criticism that refuses distance in its interpretive posture. This is to say that both writers are interested in the ways in which we relate to texts in unfolding present of their reading or viewing experiences as well as the ways in which they circulate and become a part of literary history.

Though this dissertation does not emphasize Dunbar's biography and the significance of his mother, Matilda, the chapters on Hartmann do pay considerable attention to Hartmann's life and *Autobiography* to think about the ways in which his mother, Osada, was part of his critical and creative work and might be a part of our own interpretive approaches. For as much as I attend to love and longing as creative energies within and beyond texts, I find it necessary to note that neither Hartmann nor Dunbar appear to have enacted the best of these relations in the lives they lived off the page. To a certain extent this dissertation wishes they were otherwise, and that Alice Ruth Moore and Lilian Bonham who, in moments loved them, may have experienced their time with Dunbar and Hartmann differently.

The construction of the dissertation does not define specific intertextual or biographical connections between Dunbar and Hartmann beyond whatever light *The Lantern* casts (though I suspect Hartmann read Dunbar), but offers instead varying perspectives on these writers and their relation to the photographic medium a way to address the blurring of affective, temporal, and even physical distances between poems and their readers—in every instance attempting to

close the distance between aesthetic expression, the artists who create them, and the readers and viewers who experience them. This movement may account for the ways in which versions of Modernism and the reading practices of modern criticism have tended to leave Dunbar and Hartmann in the past. The pair of chapters on Dunbar are a kind of diptych. The first chapter provides a theoretical account of ekphrasis and dialect as literary modes of description in an effort at troubling a history of anti-Black reading practices concerned with viewing Dunbar's work as simply antebellum plantation fantasy. The second chapter provides a sequence of readings of Dunbar's photographically illustrated blazons in relation to discussions of aesthetics, love, and Blackness within his poetry through the theorical lens created in the first chapter. The series of chapters on Hartmann follows a methodological approach that may be likened to the creation of a photographic multiple exposure. Hartmann and Poe appear together as their writings blur and blend—becoming ghostly presences or revenants in the traces of the poetic image. Such multiple exposures occur when film is left in the apparatus of the camera or when light is projected through different negatives onto the emulsion of a single surface in a series of exposures. At times it seems that "The Raven" becomes an apparatus that takes both of their likenesses. The chapters attempt to make legible the aesthetic and temporal dimensions of Hartmann's attachments to Poe and beautiful dead women as they appear within poetry, become inspirational muses, or structure relations between poets, poems, and their reading publics. In essence, if not in substance, developing the multiplicity of Hartmann's perspective is what I hope to accomplish the series. In fact, it is what I hope to accomplish in both readings of Dunbar and Hartmann.

Dunbar's "Life's Tragedy" from *Lyrics of Love and Laughter* (1903) suggests that there are "deeper griefs" than "not to sing at all" or "never to be loved." The tragedy of life is a

misinterpretation of experience rather than the experiences that make life what it is, which for Dunbar and for Hartmann, involve love and art:

> This, this it is to be accursed indeed;
> For if we mortals love, or if we sing,
> We count our joys not by the things we have,
> But by what kept us from the perfect thing.

Though Dunbar's poem doesn't define how we might reevaluate the ways in which we "count our joys"—a sentiment shared by Hartmann who claimed in his *1000 Happy Moments* (ca. 1942) that we could not count many moments of happiness in a lifetime—it does foreground the importance of affective contemplation. Reading the poem with Hartmann, for whom "Art is not reality, but a suggestion towards a finer reality," it appears that the intention in both artistic creation and criticism is to reconsider the distance between "the things we have" and "the perfect thing" without turning away from either.[13] In order to think through these relations between art and life; the "real" and the "ideal"; the photograph and the referent; feeling and thought; or any number of binaries blurred in and through Dunbar and Hartmann's writing, this dissertation argues for an affective critical practice attuned to the embodiment of poems, photographs, and those who made them.

[13] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art," 27. In *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933). Box 9. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

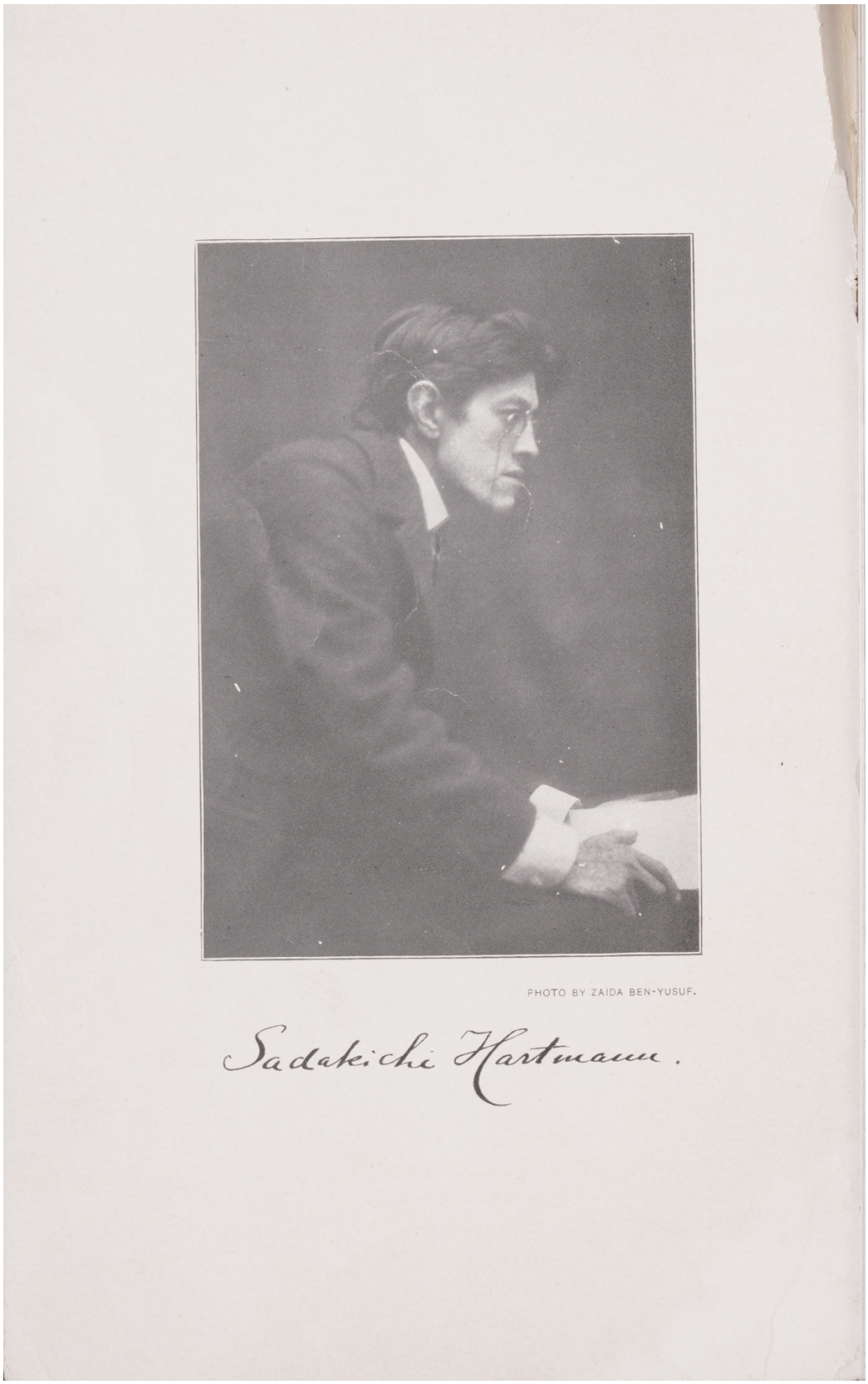
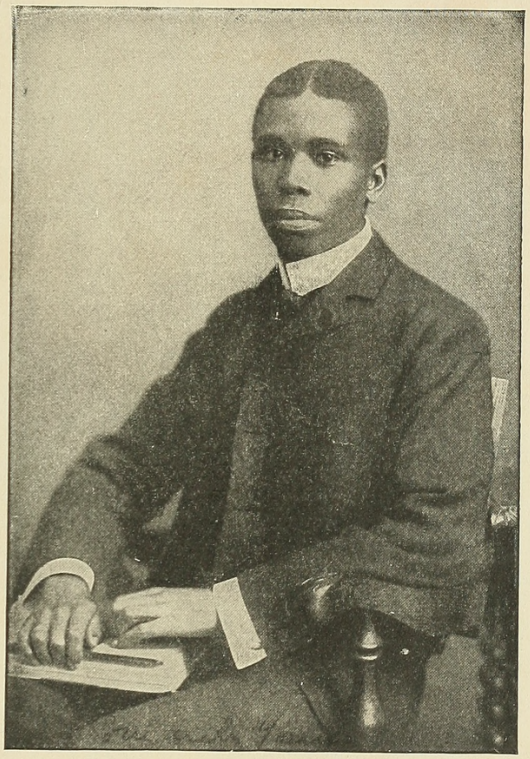


Figure 1. Frontispiece to *Schopenhauer in the Air: Seven Stories* [Author's Edition] (1899). The Library of Congress. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/schopenhauerinai00hart.



Paul Laurence Dunbar.

At the age of twenty-four.

Figure 2. Frontispiece to *The Life and Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar* (1907). Smithsonian Libraries. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/lifeworksofpaull00dunb.

CHAPTER ONE

"The hearts thou…have stirred": Paul Laurence Dunbar and Lyric Sympathy

Two photographs appear in the editorial notes of the June 1899 issue of the *Photographic Times*. The first is a half-length portrait of Paul Laurence Dunbar also included in *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899) and the second is one of Dunbar's poems written in dialect: "The Photograph," also taken from the *Hearthside* volume. The note that accompanies these photographs provides a brief overview of what the journal considers salient biographical information ("a talented young colored man, formerly an elevator boy, and the son of a slave mother," "now one of the Librarians in the National Library of Congress," who "has a growing reputation of a poet of real talent") as well as speculations concerning what it means for Dunbar to be a poet, namely that "his seems to be a real gift, a poet who was born, as of course all true poets are, not made."[14] Here, Dunbar exists both inside and outside history as he is born a "true poet" in ways that transcend race or class even as we are told, "his achievements are all the more remarkable when we consider that Mr. Dunbar had absolutely no educational or other advantages."[15] For the editorial staff of *The Photographic Times*, the matter of Dunbar's Blackness can be both material or immaterial when constructing a version of racialized exceptionalism for their predominately white readership. Yet, questions of what it means to be "real," "true," or "authentic" have characterized much of the reception and critical conversations surrounding Dunbar's life and expression from the nineteenth century to the present.[16]

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[14] "Editorial Notes," *The Photographic Times* 31, no. 6 (June 1899): 286.
[15] "Editorial Notes," 286.
[16] It is worth keeping in mind that such questions began with Phillis Wheatley's publication of *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* (1773). Included in the frontmatter is an "Announcement to the Public" assuring readers of the originality of the poems found therein as "[s]he has been examined by some of the best Judges, and is thought qualified to write them." Those judge, of course, being white slave-holding men. The circumscription of Black authenticity by whiteness becomes a problem of genre not only within Wheatley's poetry, but also for the

My interest in this chapter is not to rehearse old debates concerning poetic births, but rather to consider how Dunbar was and continues to be "made" as a poet within the history of his critical reception. Though the space devoted to Dunbar within the *Photographic Times* barely reaches one and a half columns, the tripartite division into poem, commentary, and photograph that defines Dunbar's presentation to the journal's readers is a structure that pervades much of Dunbar's reception, including my own. In looking at the relationships created in and through these different discursive registers, forms of media, and publication formats, my interest in how Dunbar theorized these relationships between media within his poetry as well as in how critical investments in nonpoetic media such as the print convention of dialect or photographic illustration have significantly shaped the conversations surrounding Dunbar's poetry. Many of these approaches contrast poems written in dialect with those written in racialized fantasy of "standard" English in order to foreground the ways in which the "speakers" of these poems are racialized, predominately in relation to chattel slavery. While Dunbar did write poems and stories that take as their subject antebellum Black life, dialect in these critical accounts becomes a poetic genre in and of itself defined in its reception by caricature, minstrel performance, and antebellum plantation fantasy. The life within the poems and the lives these poems live are determined by their mode of literary description. In reducing Black life to a simple print convention, such critics overdetermine, and thereby devalue, Dunbar's poetry. This chapter

narratives written formerly enslaved persons in the following century, particular those that made use of amanuenses. Erlene Stetson's proactive question—"when are Black slave women's narratives merely the adopted masks of white women?"—speaks to larger critical interests in the racialization of poetic genre that are applicable to Dunbar. Is dialect as a mode of literary representation authentic or inauthentic and how and what is the criteria for making such judgments? Are particular genres raced in particular ways? Yes and no—it depends on the critical investments one has in particular readings of Dunbar along with different definitions of poetic genre. This chapter traces some of those investments and proposes an alternative way of reading Dunbar. See Erlene Stetson, "Studying Slavery: Some Literary and Pedagogical Considerations on the Black Female Slave" in *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies*, ed. Gloria T. Hull, Patricia Bell Scott, and Barbara Smith (The Feminist Press, New York, 1982), 69.

offers new ways of reading Dunbar's poems that privilege interconnection, celebration, and feeling by working through many of the critical commonplaces in Dunbar scholarship such as the construction of the poetic "speaker," dialect, and historicity often instrumentalized in this devaluation for markedly different ends.

In other words, rather than tarry with a manufactured division between poems written in dialect and those that are not by critically cathecting with a print convention—a move that has characterized a history of anti-Black readings of Dunbar and his writing—I argue for an attention to the "Black spaces" crafted in between forms of media that create an affective, if not a sympathetic attunement with, Dunbar's poems. I understand the recourse to print conventions, photographic illustration, or abstractions of speakers or genres in part as form of distancing engendered by the discomfort with staying in the spaces these poems create. This chapter, however, looks at these same mediating measures as ways of creating and heightening the experience of reading Dunbar's poems as both intimate and animating. I engage with theories of the lyric and the ballad, dialect, ekphrasis, and photography to cast light on the ways in which Dunbar's poems self-consciously address the poetic genres and publication formats in which they circulate. While I attend to the photographic illustrations in Dodd, Mead, and Company's editions of Dunbar's poems in other chapters, here I am more interested in the fact that many critics of Dunbar cannot help but read his poetry in relation to these dialect albums. While this method is useful and something I also adopt, the way of reading Dunbar I am arguing for here isn't dependent on that particular publication format since the poems themselves call attention to their own scenes of reading as intermedial and intercorporeal spaces.

THE PHOTOGRAPH.

BY PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR.*

SEE dis pictyah in my han'?
Dat's my gal;
Ain't she purty? goodness lan'!
Huh name Sal.
Dat's de very way she be—
Kin' o' tickles me to see
Huh a smilin' back at me.

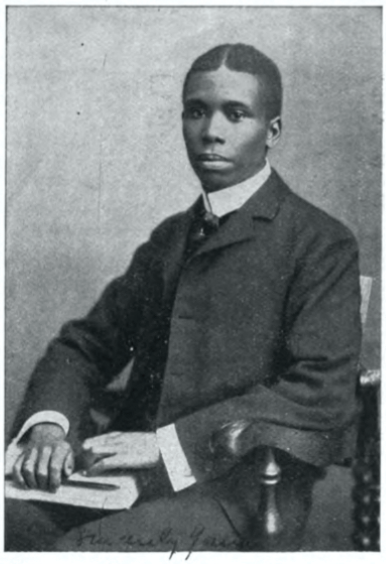
She sont me dis photygraph
Jes' las' week;
An' aldough hit made me laugh—
My black cheek
Felt somethin a-runnin' queer;
Bless yo' soul, it was a tear
Jes' f'om wishin' she was here.

Often when I's all alone
Layin' here,
I git t'inkin' 'bout my own
Sallie dear;
How she say dat I's huh beau,
An' hit tickles me to know
Dat de gal do love me so.

Some bright day I's goin' back,
Fo' de la!
An' as sho's my face is black,
Ax her pa
Fu' de blessed little miss
Who's a smilin' out o' dis
Pictyah, lak she wan'ed a kiss.

WE take pleasure in presenting to our readers, herewith, in connection with the dialect poem printed above, entitled "The Photograph," an excellent portrait of the author, who is a talented young colored man, formerly an elevator boy, and the son of a slave mother. He is now one of the Librarians in the National Library of Congress at Washington, D.C., and has a growing reputation as a poet of real talent. His achievements are all the more remarkable when we consider that Mr. Dunbar had absolutely no educational or other advantages in his boyhood or youth. His seems to be a real gift, a poet who was born, as of course all true poets are, not made.—EDITOR OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC TIMES.

* Reprinted by permission, from "Lyrics of the Hearth-Side," by Paul Laurence Dunbar. Copyrighted, 1899, by Dodd, Mead & Company.



Paul Laurence Dunbar.

WE wish to call the special attention of our readers to the important article on the Hago Screen and Plate Holder, which is fully described in the department devoted to process work in this number. Readers interested in photo-engraving will at once appreciate the great value and importance of this new screen and plate holder. It is the invention of Dr. Hannibal Goodwin, now well known as the inventor also of the continuous photographic film and various other things of great photographic value. We will mention that this new system of photo-engraving is controlled by the Scovill & Adams Co., of New York, who will be pleased to give any further information in regard to the matter to any one who is interested.

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MR. ARTHUR ALLEN DEAN, of Danielson, Connecticut, is the winner of THE PHOTOGRAPHIC TIMES silver medal in the "Illustrated Cycle Routes" competition; and his prize-winning paper, entitled "In Berkshire with Cycle and Camera," together with the illustrations accompanying it, will be printed in an early number of THE PHOTOGRAPHIC TIMES.

Figure 3. Page 286 from *The Photographic Times* (1899). Digitized by Google. Original from University of California. Digital image courtesy of HathiTrust. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.l0070371893.

Black Space

The touchstone for critics concerned with how poems written in dialect may have allowed nostalgic, white readers to indulge in a romanticization of an antebellum, planation past is the first of Dunbar's poems to be photographically interpreted by the Hampton Institute Camera Club: "The Deserted Plantation" (1895).[17] The poem either works within or against stereotypes of minstrelsy, becoming a site of acquiescence or resistance, depending on your critical perspective. Part catalogue of the abandoned house and surrounding landscape, part interrogative address asking where the plantation's past inhabitants have disappeared to, the poem foregrounds the importance of bearing witness to emptiness.[18] The interrogative mode foregrounds questions of visuality even as such visuality calls into question the premise of such address. After listing various inhabitants by name in the sixth stanza—"Uncle Mordecai an' Uncle Aaron," "Aunt Doshy, an' Kit, an' all de res,'"—the construction of the poem's speaker asks a telling question: "Couldn't one o' dem dat seed it in its glory / Stay to watch it in de hour of decay?"[19] As these imagined inhabitants have since moved on either geographically or enter

[17] "The Deserted Plantation" first appeared in *Majors and Minors* (1895) and was reprinted in *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896). The poem alludes to Irish writer, Oliver Goldsmith's, "The Deserted Village" (1770). The poem laments the fate of fictionalized "Aburn" and its residents that have left to the city or further colonies abroad and in doing so presents an incisive critique of wealth, the enclosure of common land, rural depopulation and the devaluation of poetic expression—everything that within the context of Dunbar's poem would have led to the creation of the plantation in the first place. The allusion sets Dunbar's critique of chattel slavery already within "The Deserted Plantation" into sharper relief.

[18] It is with hesitation that I include this brief reading of "The Deserted Plantation." While I wish to engage with what seems to be a favorite for Dunbar scholars, I also suggest that it may be time to leave the poem deserted.

[19] The visual and material construction of the question in dialect are important for the types of readings the poem allows. The use of "wha's" for 'where' in lines such as "Wha's de gals dat ust to sing an' dance de bes'" visually looks like 'what's' in ways that seeming equate location with being. In this way the poem suggests that the kind of violence engender by this equation found in the antebellum fantasy is directly called into question in the visuality of the poems construction. Furthermore, this self-reflexivity may also be understood in relation to the absent positions they inhabit within the poem. In other words, the poem questions its existence in ways that may reflect Dunbar's attitude toward writing it from the first. The pun on "seed" is also striking for the relationship it creates between natural growth and visuality in addition to affirming that the cause of both the plantation's "glory" and "decay" is Black life.

the afterlife, the answer is obvious, but the poem holds open a space of possibility precisely for this speaker to enter or reenter as the fiction of its construction has depended upon this voice all along. The voice answers its own question and in doing so forecloses the possibility of readers providing their own answer even if they might want to: "So I'll stay an' watch de deah ole place an' tend it." Tending, witnessing, watching with tenderness acts as a form of remembrance of the ongoingness of Black life.[20] My reading of "The Deserted Plantation" dovetails with Elizabeth Alexander's reading of another of Dunbar's poems written in dialect, "The Party." Alexander points out that the poem has a "wish to fix the beauty of black space and community."[21] What is missing from "The Deserted Plantation" is "The Party."[22]

As Alexander contends in regard to "The Party," "[d]espite the reference to plantations in the first line, I don't think he [Dunbar] thought of it as a slavery poem but rather as a 'black space' poem."[23] Unfolding in a series of rhyming couplets, the poem is framed as a conversation between its constructed speaker and an absent addressee: "Dey had a gread big pahty down to Tom's de othah night; / Was I dah? You bet! I nevah in my life see sich a sight." Again, visuality is used to attest to the singularity of the gathering as well as the importance of being present as part of it. The poem's closing couplet attests to the importance of being there: "Y'ought to been dah, fu' I tell you evahthing was rich an' prime, / An' dey ain't no use in talkin', we jes had one scrumptious time!" Even if speech fails at the end of the poem, the suggestion that the singularity of the party cannot be reproduced even by one who had seen "sich a sight" is telling for how the poem operates at the edge of experience. For the reader that occupies the space of the absent

[20] Taking the use of the syncope "deah" in this instance as one letter short of 'death' along with the content of the poem might suggest a visual misreading.
[21] Elizabeth Alexander, "Dunbar Lives" *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 397.
[22] "The Party" appeared in *Majors and Minors* (1895) and was reprinted in *Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896).
[23] Elizabeth Alexander, "Dunbar Lives," 396.

entity addressed in the poem who might have seen, might have felt, or might have been part of the party, "The Party" exists as a form of longing to be part of what Alexander calls "the beauty of black space and community."[24]

If the social life within the poems cannot be experienced in person, the illustrated gift books that make the up the majority of Dunbar's publications produced by Dodd, Mead, and Company ask if it can at least be viewed in photograph.[25] It is difficult to know what Dunbar felt about the prevalence of these volumes as there is little to no mention of them in his personal papers or correspondence with Dodd, Mead, and Company. Ray Julius Sapirstein, who has done significant archival work on these "photo-texts" and the members of the Hampton Institute Camera Club that helped to create them, notes that Dunbar did have some control over which images appeared in the publications, but concedes that the extent of Dunbar's involvement is hard to detail.[26] I write with the assumption that Dunbar found these photographs suitable to accompany his poems in these dialect volumes. Again, the question of racialization and interpretation comes to the fore. As all the photographs that appear in these volumes were taken by white members of the Hampton Institute Camera Club (Leigh Richmond Minor credited as the sole photographer of the last three volumes), it may come as no surprise that "The Party" was never photographically illustrated. In this case the photographs may be seen as a kind of violence

[24] Elizabeth Alexander, "Dunbar Lives" 397.
[25] Beginning with *Poems of Cabin and Field* (1899), nearly every publication Dodd, Mead, and Company issued of Paul Laurence Dunbar's poetry over the next fifteen years contained photographs that punctuate, illustrate, and otherwise inform the reading and reception of the poet and his work: *Candle-Lightin' Time* (1901), *When Malindy Sings* (1903), *Li'l' Gal* (1904), *Howdy, Honey, Howdy* (1905), *Joggin' Erlong* (1906), *The Life and Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar* which was "profusely illustrated" (1907), and *Speakin' O' Christmas and Other Christmas and Special Poems* (1914). Save for *The Life and Works* commemorating Dunbar's passing in 1906, the remainder of the photographically illustrated editions contain only poetry written in "negro dialect" and were often released as gift books specifically for the Christmas market.
[26] See Ray Julius Sapirstein, "Out from Behind the Mask: Paul Laurence Dunbar, The Hampton Institute Camera Club, and Photographic Performance of Identity," in *Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity*, ed. Maurice O. Wallace and Shawn Michelle Smith (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 167-203. Ray Julius Sapirstein, "Picturing Dunbar's Lyrics," *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 327-339.

done to the text by the photographic medium in pulling into full view what is necessarily absent in the poems.

Does this mean that "The Deserted Plantation" or other poems are motivated by expressions of racial violence that turn the poems into, following Saidiya Hartman, scenes of subjection? Hartman argues within forms of enjoyment and entertainment expressive of, or dependent on, chattel slavery that "the value of blackness resided in its metaphorical aptitude, whether literally understood as the fungibility of the commodity or understood as the imaginative surface upon which the master and the nation came to understand themselves."[27] The photographically illustrated editions of Dunbar's poetry exist with such aptitude if the poems, or rather the criticism on them, assumes the reader is white, indulges in post-racial fantasies, or even fantasizes that the experience of intimacy within these mediated poems may create a kind of pleasure in the form of racial drag. While I do think that Blackness within Dunbar's poetry displays a "metaphorical aptitude," I'm hesitant to relegate these poems to the category of minstrel performance like many accounts of Dunbar that view the use of the mode of dialect as an explanatory principle for their meaning. While it is absurd to think that Dunbar did not write with a knowledge, or acknowledgment of, a certain kind of white readership, these poems cannot simply be reduced to that awareness as he clearly wrote for a multiplicity of publics. In other words, the ambiguity of reading Dunbar's poetry is redoubled by the presence of the photographs, particularly when positioned alongside poems concerned with the visual dimensions of love and longing. The "Black space" that Dunbar creates is one in between forms of media.

[27] Saidiya V. Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 7.

One other photograph depicting a young, Black American appears in *The Photographic Times*, situated in the section break of an article on carbon photographic processes. Emerging from the shallow depth of field that blurs the bank and vegetation behind him, a young boy sits on the edge of a wooden dock and smiles a toothy smile. The boy and the shadowed reflection he casts on the surface of the muddied water below him are eating watermelon. The fruit is cradled in boy's lap and secured against his body by the bend in his right leg. His right hand disappears into the darkened and hollowed half-belly of the fruit and his shirt sleeve is visibly wet and stained with its juices. With his left hand, the boy holds up a slice of the watermelon that has been eaten down the rind. The white rind rhymes with the his teeth in a double smile as it creates a prosthetic or second mouth. The rind resting on his fingertips is suspended in the transitory moment between eating and exhibition and in its mediation of the relation created between our gaze and the smiling face of the young boy. It is unclear if he is moving the slice toward his mouth for another bite or if he is extending it to the photographer, or to us, to show and to share either the fruit itself or the visible results of his appetite.

The brim of the young boy's straw hat curves into the nearly fully eaten rind creating in its shape the other half of the melon that is missing from the photograph—his face fills the hollow space of the of the striped fruit's interior. Lit on the left, but shaded on the right, the boy's face both emerges and disappears into the darkness of the hat's belly. His mouth is opened into a smile while his eyes are half-closed from enjoyment, from refusal, or perhaps simply from an attempt to protect himself from the day's brightness. Half-closed they simply mark a change in the ongoing performance of the everyday that is cut or punctuated in the movement of the camera's shutter; half-open they are unable to fully participate in the fiction of the photograph's staging of the natural. The uncertainty of the boy's gaze, not quite directed at the viewer, but also

somewhat focused beyond the photographer or their apparatus, the impetus of the photograph itself, troubles our own gaze in attempting to focus on both what is, and is not, there.

His feet are shoeless. In the point where reflection, shadow, and body meet, the boy dips his left foot into the water heel first and his toes sink into and emerge from the surface of the lake or river. The boy's right leg is balanced on a rope that extends from the dock on which he sits outward beyond the border of the photograph and visually runs across the flat of the boy's right foot that is positioned toward the camera. Although its trailing stem has been cut, the watermelon is given its own prosthetic in the rope that climbs outside the frame. The rope leads our eyes into and out of the image in its visual manifestation of the gaze that ties our body to his. When Barthes speaks of the photograph's sensuousness as "an emanation of the referent…from a real body, which was there," he speaks of moment of gestation or mutual development created in and through the encounter with a photograph: "a sort of umbilical cord links the body of the photographed thing to my gaze: light, though impalpable, is here a carnal medium, a skin I share with anyone who has been photographed."[28] A second skin of light created in the touch of its indexical reflection against material bodies creates a universality in representation in that all that can, or might, be photographed may don this second skin of light and in doing so are connected to one another, but also to all that can, or might, look at the photographs in which those bodies are reproduced. So, too, does the viewer have the camera's capacity for photographic reproducibility. In reading this passage from Barthes, Elisa Marder notes that "as a mechanical maternal medium, photography has the ability to reproduce a new collective body that destabilizes the separation between past and present, subject and object" in in doing so

[28] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981) 110.

"suspend[s] the body in a perpetual never-never-land between procreation and mortification."[29] The double negation in Marder's geographic description—a place that does not exist or the nonexistence or denial of the of a place that does not exist—turns out to the be the long duration of quotidian existence, despite the photograph's ability to haunt this duration with the past and future bodies of the dead in what might be described as a temporal pull that moves thinking out of the present moment. In this way, photography is suspended in that its desire to create a utopian place of existence is what perpetually undoes such possibility. Photography cannot separate itself from the dimensions of its sociality and historicity. If the title of the image is to be believed, a central aspect of the identity of the young boy eating watermelon at least as far as the unnamed photographer and the *Photographic Times* goes, is that he is from Arkansas—a synecdoche of a state geographical, temporal, and political.

In Marder's reading of Barthes' *Camera Lucida*, the problem of photography is in its reproductive and reductive capacity to bring the photographed body out of a private sphere and into a public space of legibility: "photography objectifies, embalms, and incarcerates the contemporary subject by pinning it to a static and petrified social identity" (*The Mother,* 159). Frederick Douglass describes such risk of circulating as a photographic image in his "Pictures and Progress" lecture as the possibility of becoming a "fixed fact, public property."[30] If "the biological mother…paradoxically protects the subject from the world," then photography becomes "a prosthetic mother that usurps the maternal function by substituting identity for subjectivity."[31] The photographer of this young boy, unnamed in the monthly, participates in the

[29] Elisa Marder, *The Mother in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction: Psychoanalysis, Photography, Deconstruction* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012), 159.
[30] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," in *The Portable Frederick Douglass*, ed. John Stauffer and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York: Penguin Random House LLC, 2016), 353.
[31] Elisa Marder, *The Mother in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, 159.

fantasy of white paternalism that so often undergirds antebellum and revisionary justifications for control over bodies and their representations subject to the institution of chattel slavery and those institutions that take its place for similar ends that persist into the present. The young boy will remain forever young in photograph—a moment that redoubles his representation as minstrel caricature in an endless childhood from the perspective of the photographer—caught by the camera as the rope catches him by the toe. Yet, that reading depends on a denial of the very temporality that brings this boy into view in that it refuses to remain in time with him. For Barthes and for Marder, the umbilical cord linking bodies both inside and outside of a photographic image, like the rope in the photograph, cannot be cut, or rather that the connection cuts both ways. Barthes' *noeme* of photography, "that-has-been," may make photography a thanatological medium in its recollection of the inevitable end of life.[32] However, the persistent indexical presence of the photographed body speaks to the life of the young boy in the photograph: he-has-lived. Or, in Barthes' own qualification: "it would be better to say that Photography's inimitable feature (its *noeme*) is that someone has seen the referent (even if it is a matter of objects) *in flesh and blood*, or again *in person.*"[33] To look, again, and to keep looking is the obligation that comes with the gift of the boy's image.

[32] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 77.
[33] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 79.

THE CARBON PROCESS.

BY P. C. DUCHOCHOIS.

CHAPTER XI.

(*Continued from page 236.*)

Instead of gold and silver, bronze powders of any color may be dusted on the varnish, but the effect is far from being as brilliant.

The reader understands that we are now speaking of the picture to be seen by reflection through the glass plate, mica, or celluloid sheet, which may serve to decorate many objects, tables, ladies' desks, caskets, clocks, glass signs etc. When glass is employed, its thickness depends necessarily from the purpose to which it is intended. It must be pretty thick to be fixed on tables, which is done thus: One spreads over the table a thick layer of white lead as evenly as possible, the white lead being thickened, if necessary, with whiting, and upon this the plate is firmly pressed into contact so that it touches everywhere, then joined with a copper ring as a border. In a few days, the white lead will be dry, and the plate, forming a whole with the table, is almost unbreakable.

Carbon pellicles are also employed for applications, and, also, as diapositives in the dusting and other photo processes. A glass plate free from scratches, cleaned, talced, is coated with plain collodion at 2 per cent. then immersed—when the film is set—into cold water until greasiness has disappeared, when the impressed tissue is applied upon it and the image developed in the ordinary manner. This done, the plate is allowed to dry, then placed on a leveled stand, and coated with a solution of

Gelatine.....	1 ounce
Glycerine	80 minims
Water...	100 ounces

When dry, the pellicle is stripped off by cutting the edges with a penknife.



"A HAPPY LITTLE ARKANSAS [redacted]."

CHAPTER XII.

POLYCHROMIC PRINTING.

Proof in colors, either to be superposed for the chromophotographs obtained by Ducos du Hauron's process, or to be printed in several juxtaposited colors for ornaments, are made either by the carbon process, so called, or by imbibition or dusting. All these processes, being based on the modifications originated on colloids in presence of a chromic salt, must necessarily take place in this book, moreover one is the complement of the other, and their importance very great indeed, for it permits the amateur and the photographer, not working by mechanical means, to obtain proofs of great beauty, permanent, and reproducing the color of any object. We shall describe these processes as applied to Ducos du Hauron's chromophotographic process; they are, of course, applicable to any other one for the attainment of photographs in two or more colors.

The process of Ducos du Hauron consists to take successively three negatives from the model on plates sensitive to the least refrangible rays. The first negative is obtained

Figure 4. Page 268 from *The Photographic Times* (1899). Digitized by Google. Original from University of California. Digital image courtesy of HathiTrust. https://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.l0070371893. Image Redacted.

The Touch of the Page: Photographic Facticity and Lyric "Authenticity"

Reading Dunbar means reading in relation to facticity and participating in the ongoingness of an experience that is created through a blurred reception of reading poems and viewing photographs that appear and disappear alongside them. While this chapter is concerned with the affective potential created in and through these forms of intermedial expression, it is also the case that the presence of these photographs is both validating and troubling for any critical account of Dunbar's poetic practice. I'm arguing that in addition to relying on the abstraction of dialect into genre and the construction of the poetic "speaker," critical accounts of Dunbar—even my own— are seemingly dependent an abstraction of photographic genre into discussions of photography as a medium of expression in the form of a latent presence. These photographs tend to serve as corresponding evidence, if not risking explaining in advance, whatever reading of the poetry is argued for. Yet, turning to Georges Didi-Huberman, it seems this may be just what photographs do: "[a]nother way to describe this paradox of evidence is to say that photography is a practice of facticity. Facticity is the double quality of that which is *in fact* (irrefutable, even if contingent) and that which is *factitious*. It is a paradox of mendacious irrefutability, as it were."[34] For some readers, both then and now, the gift books may offer return to an idealized past instantiated through violence, but for others they provide a point of contact in shared light emanating from the photographs constellated around these poems as well as an occasion to reflect on the temporal, historical, and aesthetic dimensions that constitute Blackness, existence, and love. To approach the facticity of the photograph or the poem is also to leave open questions concerning the possibility or impossibility of representation and to recognize that part of what is felt when reading, viewing, or experiencing these works may

[34] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria: Charcot and the Photographic Iconography of the Salpêtrière*, trans. Alisa Hartz (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2003), 61. Emphasis in original.

depend upon that which resists interpretive posturing or explanations that seek to do away with affective complexity in their attempts to explain the world away. This world is one constantly made in and through the relationship between photo-texts and reader as well as through the structure of poetic address that is central to Dunbar's blazons that take the irreducible sociality of Black life as their subject. A Blackness that exceeds its medial representation—appearance and disappearance in photographic indexicality or textual materiality—that is framed by a desire to look at or touch what is (not) there.

To return to the 1899 *Photographic Times,* Dunbar appears in the editorial notes in a half portrait seated in a wooden chair and framed against a plain gray backdrop—the sharp black and white contrast of his clothing pull him out from the background into our gaze. Although his body directs itself towards his right and to the poem printed next to his portrait, his head is turned towards the center of the frame, and he meets the reader's gaze at the edge of the halftone with his own. Dunbar does not smile, but there is an ease with which he confronts the reader through the mediation of the photographic apparatus. The lines of his arms resting against the chair lead our eyes to the book the placed on his lap. While the book was a common prop in photographic portraiture especially for a writer, it is notable that the fingers of Dunbar's right hand are slipped into its pages while his left hand touches the cover in the book. It is as if he is lightly pushing down on the cover to secure his body beneath its boards. In splitting its pages enough for a fingertip or two, a shadow is created in the space of its opening that extends outward to the edge of the portrait. If Dunbar is present in both in shadow and substance Dunbar in these pages, what does it mean to hold Dunbar in hand? Or, to take the first line of "The Photograph"—"See dis pityah in my han'?"—what might it mean to look closely at the photographs in hand?

Considering the pose of Dunbar's photograph in relation to a "Sonnet (On an Old Book with Uncut Leaves)" that also appears in *Lyrics of the Hearthside* may help to provide an answer in that it foregrounds the importance of touch and intimacy as part of the aesthetic relation. The irregular sonnet, composed of a Petrarchan octave and a Spenserian sestet, opens with an apostrophe to the unread and untouched book:

> Emblem of blasted hope and lost desire,
> No finger ever traced thy yellow page
> Save Time's. Thou hast not wrought to noble rage
> The hearts thou wouldst have stirred. Not any fire
> Save sad flames set to light a funeral pyre
> Dost thou suggest. Nay, —impotent in age,
> Unsought, thou holdst a corner of the stage
> And ceasest even dumbly to aspire.

As a medium that may gather together writerly and readerly affect, in this case "hope" and "desire," the poem laments its frustrated potential. Reading is equated with touching and although the book has been "traced" by the personification of time's finger, it wants for human hands. The poem continues the series of comparisons in suggesting that the book has not set any human hearts on fire, but produces "sad flames set to light a funeral pyre" as a form of self-immolation. The series of nos and nots eventuate into the halting caesura of the "Nay" and the double punctuation that follow. The series of juxtapositions between the embodied/disembodied and the living/dead are held open as these metaphors are multiplied in the final lines of the octave. Working itself up by putting the unread book down, or rather never taking it up in the way it or its author may have desired, the series casts reading as a form of intimate performance. Personified and unloved, the book now "impotent in age" and later to be referred to as "some old maiden" in the closing couplet, finds itself on stage in an image that reads like John Stuart Mill's suggestion that "poetry which is printed on hot-pressed paper and sold at a bookseller's shop, is a

soliloquy in full dress, and on the stage."[35] The book, which is also an emblem, finds itself performing through the medium of theater in a tropes of triple intermediality. The pun on "holdst a corner" brings the absent reader back into the scene even though this book "ceasest even dumbly to inspire." That it may have been possible for the book to inspire without speech foregrounds the importance of the nonverbal within the reading experience and suggests that an essential aspect of the performative capacity of literature is to enfold other senses or forms of communicative media.

The sestet goes on speculate about the feelings of the unread book's author and even the readers it might have inspired before turning once more to the paper's wasted reproductive futurity:

> How different was the thought of him that writ.
> What promised he to love of ease and wealth,
> When men should read and kindle at his wit.
> But here decay eats up the book by stealth,
> While it, like some old maiden, solemnly,
> Hugs its incongruous virginity![36]

The final image is unsettling as "decay eats up" the "old maiden" whose boards hold tight and closed its uncut pages.[37] The poem's engagement with temporality provides a lesson learned in loss structured around the refusal or inability to embrace textual bodies even though both the embrace (fire) or refusal (decay) result in the consumption or consummation of the book. The

[35] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*. Vol. 1 of *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), 348.
[36] In *Representative Sonnets by American Poets* (1890), editor Charles H. Crandall remarks that the "American sonnet at its best displays a conscious inspiration, and excuse for being; it has genuine feeling and a virility which more than atone for occasional lack of repose, profound thought, or perfectly polished lines" (89).
[37] In what may be considered a companion poem to this sonnet, "The Poet and the Baby" also in *Lyrics of the Hearthside*, the capacity of a poet to produce children is elevated above the ability to write a sonnet. The poem opens with a telling question: "How's a man to write a sonnet, can you tell,—" when the "muse he must adore" is found "a-toddling on the floor" nearby. The child, also referred to as "a little sonnet in the house" and "a dainty little poem" renders other sonnets meaningless in that it "is full of love and life in every line" and "altogether so complete." Appropriately, the poem closes with the final line: "That I wonder what's the use of writing mine."

poem plays with a division between human and textual bodies in ways that seemingly privilege the immaterial thought that serves as the books' precondition for existence and desired reception, but refuses to firmly posit a division between the two perhaps because in encountering this poem in *Lyrics of the Hearthside* readers would have already had Dunbar's book in hand. The experience of reading performs the poem's lesson in the process of its unfolding to foreground intimacy in both feeling and body. The conceit of the body as book or a sensual engagement with Dunbar's text in this poem inform the process of reading both the genre of the blazon and the photographically illustrated poetry albums more generally, most notably for the kinds of affect and intimacy predicated on an impossible visuality that then "appear" alongside photographic prints. The feeling and desire to embrace absence, or an absence felt as presence, is mediated in though textual materiality, photographic indexicality, and what I will discuss later as the poetic image, but in all such cases Dunbar's poem's highlight the embodied experience of reading. Before turning to these processes of meaning-making and mediation directly within the poems and the ways textual and photographic bodies stage an encounter with reading publics, I'll spend some time with a second set of concerns that address not only the experience of reading Dunbar, but also the genres in which he wrote that make such experiences available to, or recognizable for, readers.

Aside from the gift book editions, "photo-texts," composite images, or whatever we might want to call them, the remainder of Dunbar's poetic catalog released by Dodd, Mead, and Company while Dunbar was alive—*Lyrics of Lowly Life* (1896), *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899), *Lyrics of Love and Laughter* (1903), and *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow* (1904)—gather together poems written in dialect and those that are not under the name of the lyric.[38] For Virginia

[38] *Chris'mus is A-Comin and Other Poems* (1907), though including only poetry written in dialect, is not photographically illustrated.

Jackson, the titles of these volumes and the poetry within them suggest nothing less than Dunbar's embrace of, and participation in, a renewed construction of the lyric as poetic genre: the "emerging poetic genre [of the lyric] would take the place of the ballad as the most popular and capacious version of poetry for the new century…[since] unlike the ballad, the broadly conceived lyric could be indisputably literary without also being apparently raced."[39] That the genre of the folk ballad had sublated poetry written in dialect in its own abstraction is suggestive of yet another step taken in what Jackson describes as lyricization, namely a set of mutually informing reading, interpretive, and writing practices through which "particular poetic structures with particular modes of address and particular publics (odes, epistles, elegies, georgics, poems of affairs of state, loco-descriptive poems, epitaphs, ballads, epyllions, acrostics, epigrams, sonnets, hymns) were gradually abstracted into one larger genre of poetry that came to be loosely associated with the lyric" over the course of the long nineteenth century.[40] The all-too-simple identification of dialect with ballad or the transformation of dialect into genre is symptomatic of this ongoing process of lyricization and the presence of dialect as mode of description in these poems helps catalyze it, at least in Dunbar's case. Of course, Dunbar wrote in a variety of poetic genres and in different racialized dialect modes, but as far as the history of criticism is concerned, often only one mode is privileged and is rarely read in relation to the others. The segregation of his poetry into "negro dialect" and so-called "standard English" is informed by the ways in which the abundance of different poetic structures Dunbar wrote in are lyricized is yet another example of such thrift and speaks to Jackson's point that "the process of lyricization did not descend directly from romanticism without passing through the symptomatic history of

[39] Virginia Jackson, "Specters of the Ballad," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 193.
[40] Virginia Jackson, "Specters of the Ballad," 193.

racialization."[41] For example, the tendencies of twentieth-century New Critics, from the naïve, though commonplace attempts to wrest a poem from its sociality or historicity, to the more overtly racist reading practices of the Southern Agrarians, participate in this process.

While poets writing at the turn into the twentieth century may have embraced this equation of dialect with ballad and then the subsumption of both into lyric in order to commodify an oversimplified racialization for a reading public that was "crazy for dialect literature," Dunbar worked in and through the tension between this abstraction and the complicated history of poetry and poetics he inherited.[42] In an 1898 interview given during a benefit for the Hampton Institute, Dunbar discusses the lyric in response to a reporter that, in defense of his white fragility, takes great pains to try and get Dunbar to agree that there is an ontological difference between poetry written by white and nonwhite persons. The opening question is telling: "In the poetry written by negroes, which is the quality that will most appear, something native and African and in every way different from the verse of Anglo-Saxons, or something that is not unlike what is written by white people?[43] In response to the reporter's nostalgic fantasies of racial difference as a form of literary history prevalent at the turn of the century, Dunbar draws on the idea of the lyric to dismiss the question: "the predominating power of the African race is lyric. In that I should expect the writers of my people to excel. But, broadly speaking, their poetry will not be exotic or differ much from that of the whites."[44] By invoking lyric power Dunbar refuses the binary of folk vs lyric expression and makes space for himself within the idealization of the lyric as the superlative manifestation of subjective expression. In Hegel's idealization the lyric "has to

[41] Virginia Jackson, "Specters of the Ballad," 193.
[42] Gavin Jones, *Strange Talk: The Politics of Dialect Literature in Gilded Age America* (Berkley, California: University of California Press, 1999), 1.
[43] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro in Literature," in *In his Own Voice: The Dramatic and Other Uncollected Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar*, ed. Herbert Woodward Martin and Ronald Primeau (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 206.
[44] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro in Literature," 206.

express the true contents of the human heart," the subjectivity of the poet, or even human progress.[45] Working in this tradition a bit closer to Dunbar both temporally and geographically, Francis Barton Gummere notes in his *Handbook of Poetics* (1886) that "the lyric comes from and appeals to *the feelings*" and "has its choice of a hundred forms, more may go further, and invent a new form."[46] Not only does it give form to feeling, the idea of the lyric in Gummere's summation underscores new forms and even new feelings within poetic expression. After doing away with racial and poetic difference through the invocation of the idea of the lyric, Dunbar then goes on to address the meaning of the reporter's question: "I hope you are not one of those who would hold the negro down to a certain kind of poetry—dialect and concerning only scenes on plantations in the south?"[47] As an idea of poetry produced by nineteenth- and twentieth-century readers, Dunbar points out the absurdity in racist relegations of modes of poetic expression and anticipates a strain of literary criticism that simply focuses on such scenes from the south. In other words, for a reporter whose understanding of the lyric is white, by drawing on the idea of the lyric as a universalized form of subjective poetic expression and perhaps, too, noting that dialect is simply a mode through which a lyric can be composed, Dunbar situates Black expressive culture as part of literary history over against a dismissive hermeneutics that relegates Black poetics as simply the voice of the "folk." Having felt the force of the critique, the reporter disavows: "[t]his appeared to be a sore point, and the questioner at once truthfully denied having any such desire."[48]

[45] G.W.F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, trans. T.M. Knox, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 1123.
[46] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English* (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1886), 42 and 41.
[47] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro in Literature," 206.
[48] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro in Literature," 206.

Yet, readerly desire is the entire point, and Dunbar shifts the scale of the conversation to address the creation and reception of Black art. After noting that "[t]here are a great questions in my mind regarding the form of poetry," Dunbar poses a rhetorical question that contrasts lyric and dramatic poetic forms: "Do you think it is possible now to invent a new form? Have the old ones completely exhausted the possible supply? Then, I wonder if the negro will ever reach dramatic poetry."[49] For Hegel, dramatic poetry is "the highest stage of poetry and of art generally" in part because the medium of aesthetic expression is the human body, but also because it "is the product of a completely developed and organized national life."[50] Dunbar draws on poetics to address the problem of readerly desire and the reception of Black poetic thought in the United States, but seems to qualify his earlier comments concerning the lyric. In response to the suggestion that Black people would be superlative actors, Dunbar remarks that "[t]he black man's soul is lyric, not dramatic. We may expect songs from the soul of the negro, but hardly much dramatic power, either in writing or in acting."[51] To claim that "man's soul is lyric" is to offer a tautology, but Dunbar's remarks concerning "dramatic power" though undefined, suggest that this power can be located in writing itself.[52] My reading of Dunbar

[49] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro in Literature," 206.
[50] Hegel, *Aesthetics,* 1158 and 1159.
[51] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "Negro in Literature," 206-207.
[52] In collaboration with Will Marion Cook and Jesse A. Shipp five years later, Dunbar would pen the lyrics for the Broadway musical *In Dahomey* (1903). Aside from lyrics intended for the stage, many of Dunbar's volumes of poetry contain songs or poems entitled as such. Anticipating much of the same imagery in a "Sonnet (On an Old Book with Uncut Leaves)," Dunbar's "Songs" from *Oak and Ivy* (1895) sings about the genre of the ballad in two octaves. The poem begins with a "speaker" describing its attachment to the genre and begins to outline some of its features: "I love the dear old ballads best, / That tell of love and death." The first octave focuses on the impact such ballads may have on the body, namely that these "songs the heart can feel" can "make our pulses throb." The second stanza notes that these "songs that touch the heart" are divinely inspired and cannot be compared to the expressions of those who "ply their gilded art / For fortune, fame, or fees." The "love and death" that is the content of the ballad turns out to be the precondition for artistic expression at least as far as the final lines of the poem go: "The muse that sets the songster's soul / Ablaze with lyric fire, / Holds nature up, an open scroll, / And builds art's funeral pyre." Equating the ballad with or under the heading of the lyric, the poem similarly enfolds both nature and art as part of a funeral pyre. Burning to, or as a kind of, death is the result of poetic expression that is deemed successful within the logic of the poem. While I've taken the metaphor to an absurd point, I will note that the figure of poetic fire as an overwhelming and consuming force on the body is important for my understanding of the ways in which Dunbar focuses on embodied reading practices particularly in poems that address the absence of bodies.

intends to highlight the performative, or what I would loosely call the dramatic, capacity of his poems. If dramatic poetry involves the human body as an aesthetic medium, the direct address to the reader in Dunbar's poems suggest that they, too, are part of the production of aesthetic expression. My understanding of such a performance depends upon such readerly desire as discussed above, namely the ways in which genre may determine it. Paul de Man has argued that the "lyric is not a genre but one name among several to designate the defensive motion of understanding, the possibility of a future hermeneutics. From this point of view there is no significant difference between one generic term and another: all have the same apparently intentional and temporal function."[53] My suggestion is that while the lyric, the ballad, or dialect as genres have been used to make sense of Dunbar's poetry, these conventions or labels are only a partial way of understanding how they work and how Dunbar's possibly envisioned how they worked. In short, Dunbar makes the lyric historical and into a space for Black social life.

Despite the tautology of simply stating that poets write poems that participate in the history of poetry, thinking through Dunbar's engagement with these forms and traditions in the contemporaneous moment of reconstruction is suggestive for the broader history of American poetry. Rather than an end of interpretation, Dunbar's use of dialect serves as a lens through which these numerous poetic genres and their associated publics and modes of address can be critically viewed. This means asking questions concerning the ways in which the mode of dialect

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"A Song" in *Lyrics of Sunshine and Shadow* (1905) works in similarly ways to the blazon poems that are the focus of this chapter. While this song does address the reader directly, each of the three stanzas poses of a series of three questions to an absent love object that are relevant for my reading of Dunbar's other work. Riffing off Shakespeare's eighteenth sonnet, the first stanza opens with an address to the beloved—"Thou art the soul of a summer's day"—before closing before lamenting the absence of the beloved as a change of seasons: "Where are they gone, who knows, who knows?" The second stanza addresses effect of the beloved's leaving and attempts to hold open the possibility of a return if they were to be found: "Where art thou, love, who knows, who knows?" The final stanza seemingly diminishes such possibility and concludes: Where shall we meet, who knows, who knows?"

[53] Paul de Man, "Anthropomorphism and Trope in the Lyric," in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 261–262.

mediates the experience of these poetic genres. Jackson grants that the "ongoing historical process [of lyricization] is open to interpretation and debate, but one thing that all readers seem to agree upon is that this large genre depends upon a fictional 'speaker.'"[54] For example, Wimsatt and Beardsley note that "even a short lyric poem is dramatic, the response of a speaker (no matter how abstractly conceived) to a situation (no matter how universalized). We ought to impute the thoughts and attitudes of the poem immediately to the dramatic *speaker*, and if to the author at all, only by an act of biographical inference."[55] If we are going to abstract the category of the "speaker," it is my suggestion that we ought to consider the category of the "reader" "no matter how universalized" and their part in a poem's construction.

Along similar lines as Jackson, Jan Mieszkowski notes that the "lyric asks whether it makes sense to think of anyone or anything as possessing a voice, and if so, what this means for the ways in which language can be said to perform in a social context."[56] If dialect always already presupposes a speaker or a voice of such an entity, how exactly dialect as print convention and mode of description enables its creation is unclear. What is clear, however, is that if dialecticized language is lyric in its conjuration of a speaker, many of Dunbar's poems function within a generic blur as the use of dialect as literary mode occurs within poetic genre. The giving and taking away of voices as part of the process of lyricization renders Dunbar's ballads voiced and voiceless. Dunbar's poetry written in dialect presents a problem for lyricization in that the historical dimensions or social context within which that voice finds itself persists. If the lyric, or rather an idea of the lyric, has historically helped to facilitate a turning away from the raced dimensions of poetic genre or the forms of sociality inherent in the concept

[54] Virginia Jackson, "Specters of the Ballad," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 191.
[55] W. K. Wimsatt Jr. and M. C. Beardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy," *The Sewanee Review* 54, no. 3 (1946): 470.
[56] Jan Mieszkowski, *Labors of Imagination: Aesthetics and Political Economy from Kant to Althusser* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2006), 86.

of genre, then "Picturing Dunbar's Lyrics," to borrow the title of one of Sapirstein's articles, strains the relation between Dunbar's poems in dialect that those that are not as well as American literary criticism's relation to them.[57] Is a poem from *Lyrics of the Hearthside* still a lyric when it is reprinted in *The Photographic Times* or is photographically illustrated in the fancy gift book, *Li'l' Gal*? Does it matter?

In "The Speaker, Photographed: Paul Laurence Dunbar's *Poems of Cabin and Field*," Caroline Gelmi focuses on the ways in which this volume of Dunbar's poetry "illustrates late-nineteenth century cultural reading practices that positioned Dunbar's dialect poems as representations of the speech, emotions, and thoughts of a vanishing Black folk" through an examination of the construction of the poetic speaker as "a racial and ideological formation."[58] What Gelmi terms the "speaker portrait," the photographic representation of the speaking "voice" of the poem, is essential for the ways in which readers Dunbar's poetry participate in fantasies of antebellum Black life: "[f]or this folk life to be both authentic and accessible, a persona is required to anchor the fantasy of folk speech in dialect while also making that folk speech, and the larger culture for which it stands, legible and consumable as an aesthetic object."[59] Although a substantial part of the history of criticism surrounding Dunbar would agree that this is one of the ways in which Dunbar's poems can work—namely the ongoing participation in the fantasy of an unmediated experience of, or contact with, Black life—,but in looking beyond "The Deserted Plantation" and "The Voice of the Banjo" it is clear that Dunbar's work is not limited to descriptions of antebellum black life even if a considerable amount of white readers have sought to bind these constructions of poetic speakers to this period. However,

[57] Ray Julius Sapirstein, "Picturing Dunbar's Lyrics," *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 327-339.
[58] Caroline Gelmi, "The Speaker, Photographed: Paul Laurence Dunbar's *Poems of Cabin and Field*," *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* 8, no. 1 (Spring 2020): 68 and 73.
[59] Gelmi, "The Speaker, Photographed: Paul Laurence Dunbar's *Poems of Cabin and Field,*" 82.

Gelmi importantly notes that many of these reading practices rely "on silencing and on a logic of instrumentality, on the rendering of Black people, like the fictive one dying in the poem or the real ones photographed in *Poems of Cabin and Field*, into absent objects, figures whose negation supports their aesthetic production"—a logic that is not limited to a particular time period even though so much criticism on Dunbar prefers not to address it.[60]

The "interpretive practices of professional readers" that Gelmi's article focuses on suggest that photographic referentially works to provide an experience of Black life that can be managed as an aesthetic object through absence. Yet, as I hope my readings make clear, so many of Dunbar's poems focus on absence not as a condition of negation but as possibility. This is to say that the impact of Gelmi's critique is doubly felt when it becomes clear that such interpretive practices focus on misreading the content of Dunbar's poems. In my attempts to think Dunbar and these poems differently, I propose that even if the speaker mediates an unmediated experience of Black life for readers of Dunbar's poetry as understood by its readers, the genre within which this speaker finds voice as well as the literary modes through which it is created are equally important even if they are often elided in critical accounts.[61]

Ballad Reading and the Image of the Speaker

Dunbar's engagement with the ballad genre, what Meredith McGill describes as "the literary form of nonliterary verse," is most clearly articulated in Michael Cohen's "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect" (2007):

[60] "The Speaker, Photographed: Paul Laurence Dunbar's *Poems of Cabin and Field,*"92.
[61] In addition to genre, we might consider the format of the book itself. Gelmi's reading is in part reliant on the fact that there is no photograph of Dunbar in *Poems of Cabin and Field* whereas the frontispiece is present in *Lyric of the Hearthside*.

> Naming dialect poems as "negro ballads" condensed into a single term a train of associations—from ballad to spiritual to dialect poem—that enabled printed, aesthetic poems like Dunbar's to mediate cultural fantasies about oral, pre-modern culture. Through this elision, nineteenth-century readers substituted abstractions of genre for persons and personal voices, so that certain kinds of poems came to stand for certain kinds of social experience.[62]

As an index of "certain kinds" of racialized experiences, poetry written in dialect is understood as "the expressions of racialized folk groups, no matter who actually wrote the poems" insofar as these poems were associated with this abstraction.[63] Yet, how or what exactly was expressed by these "racialized folk groups" matters as forms of individual expression but also in the publication formats in which this expression is circulated. McGill reminds us that " the ballad is not a remnant of oral culture preserved in writing, but rather a genre that flourishes with the rise of print."[64] In an expansive study of dialect in American literature in *The English Language in America* (1960), George Philip Krapp notes that "two different persons observing the speech of the same group, will base their impressions of unity upon widely differing details" since the use of dialect in a literary context is "merely the sum of the particulars which a given observer synthesizes into an impression of a homogeneous speech."[65] This observation, however, is often dependent on visual impressions and iconographic commonplaces.

Although it did not make it into his introduction to Dunbar's *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, William Dean Howells begins the 1896 *Harper's Weekly* review with a description of Dunbar's photographic portrait:

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[62] Meredith McGill, "What Is a Ballad? Reading for Genre, Format, and Medium," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 71, no. 2 (2016): 161. Michael Cohen, "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect," *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 248.
[63] Michael Cohen, "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect," 248.
[64] Meredith McGill, "What Is a Ballad? Reading for Genre, Format, and Medium," 167.
[65] George Philip Krapp, *The English Language in America,* vol. 1. (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1960): 230. I came to this study through the work of Deborah March. See Deborah March, "Reframing Blackness: The Photograph and African American Literary Modernism at the Turn of the Twentieth Century" (PhD diss., Yale University, 2012), ProQuest (3525195).

> There has come to me from the hand of a friend, very unofficially, a little book of verse, dateless, placeless, without a publisher, which has greatly interested me. Such foundlings of the press always appeal to one by their forlornness; but commonly the appeal is to one's pity only, which is moved all the more if the author of the book has innocently printed his portrait with his verse. In this present case I felt a heightened pathos in the appeal from the fact that the face of a young negro with the race traits strangely accented: the black skin, the woolly hair, the thick, outrolling lips, and the mild, soft eyes of the pure African type. One cannot be very sure, ever, about the age of those people, but I should have thought that this poet was about twenty years old; and I suppose that a generation ago he would have been worth, apart from his literary gift, twelve of fifteen hundred dollars, under the hammer. My sense of all this was intensified when I came to read the little book, and to recognize its artistic quality; but I hope that the love of dramatic contrasts has not made me overvalue it as a human event, or that I do not think unduly well of it because it is it the work of a man whose race has not hitherto made its mark in his art.[66]

In speaking of gifts, Howells' points out that Dunbar's literary talents as expressed in a "little book of verse, dateless, placeless, without publisher" find their way to him through the "hand of a friend." The value of Dunbar's poetry increases in proportion to the distance his book of verse is situated outside the literary marketplace, yet the intimate experience of opening the book and reading the poems it contained is mediated by Dunbar's photograph. In fact, a reading of the volume only serves to intensify Howell's initial impression or, as he terms it, his "sense of all this." Howells' "this" is appropriately ambiguous in a review of a book of poems that is both "dateless" and "placeless" in much the same way that the abstraction of lyric poems can seemingly exist outside time, place, and history. An individual, yet de-individualized in becoming representative of his race, Dunbar is turned into a "type" or token whose "worth" is the subject of speculation. Howells, of course, does just that in redistributing the value that the hovers near the periphery of the gift economy in his concern with Dunbar's potential selling price at auction if things were still as they were "a generation ago." Howells' "love of dramatic contrasts," namely that Dunbar's "black skin," which would have monetarily determined his

[66] William Dean Howells, Review of *Majors and Minors*, by Paul Laurence Dunbar, *Harper's Weekly* 40, no. 2062 (June 27,1896): 630.

worth in an economy dependent on chattel slavery, is transformed through postbellum poetic expression into a gift that may, problematically, keep on giving. Howells worries that he may "overvalue" the generative contrast between Dunbar's photograph and the poems in the book verse as "a human event." Dunbar's humanity flickers in and out of existence as Howells seemingly attempts to disavow the obligation that comes with receiving Dunbar and his literary talents as gift even as he attempts to ease the burden that comes with his enjoyment through the "unofficially" generated review. That the description of Dunbar's photograph is absent from Howells' introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life* is telling for the ways in which media seems to be a problem for dialect either as a mode of description or as a literary genre.[67]

Howells underscores this problem of definition in the introduction when describing poems concerned with the "moods and traits of his [Dunbar's] race:" "We call such pieces dialect pieces for want of some closer phrase, but they are really not dialect so much as delightful personal attempts and failures for the written and spoken language."[68] Dialect as generic category is used in the absence of a better term to describe "personal expression" that, for Howells, is "delightful." Or, as Cohen tells us in his reading of Howell's introduction, "Dunbar's dialect poems fell into a space between writing and speech, failing to become either medium" even though "the sounds of [Dunbar's] race were visually materialized on the page by printed dialect."[69] Rather than failure, things might seem a bit more clear if we consider how these poems operate simultaneously as, even as they are created through, different forms of media along with their associated affective pulls. In considering Dunbar against the backdrop of literary

[67] In turning the pages of *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, readers would have already encountered a photographic portrait of Dunbar before making it to Howells' introduction.
[68] William Dean Howells, Introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, Paul Laurence Dunbar (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1896), xviii.
[69] Michael Cohen, "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect," 252.

history, Howells writes, "[s]o far as I could remember, Paul Dunbar was the only man of pure African blood and of American civilization to feel the negro life aesthetically and express it lyrically."[70] That the precondition for lyric expression is the ability to feel "life aesthetically" may explain why the visuality of dialect for Howells may work against its lyric dimensions as "personal expression" and may also account for the absence of Howells' meditation on Dunbar's portrait. Yet, at the same time, Dunbar's "pure African blood" doesn't seem to matter all that much: "I held that if his black poems had been written by a white man, I should not have found them less admirable. I accepted them as evidence of the essential unity of the human race, which does not think or feel black in one and white in another, but humanly in all."[71] Although Howells has in view the utopian lyric horizon of possibility in which the mediating racialization of social and culture institutions are not felt or thought, looking at dialect on the page turns us away from Howells' colorless picture since it is there that we see race.

In an example that reads like a guide for creating a description of a photograph in the front matter of a book of poetry in dialect, Krapp details the relation between author and reader as mediated by the print convention in his description of "eye dialect:"

> This impression is often assisted by what may be termed "eye dialect," in which the convention violated is one of the eye, not of the ear. Thus a dialect writer often spells a word like *front* as *frunt*, or *face* as *fase*, or *picture* as *pictscher*, not because he intends to indicate here a genuine difference of pronunciation, but the spelling is merely a friendly nudge to the reader, a knowing look which establishes a sympathetic sense of superiority between the author and the reader as contrasted with the humble speaker of dialect.[72]

For Howells, Dunbar's achievement is in having "studied the American negro objectively, and to have presented him as he found him to be, with humor, with sympathy, and yet with what the

[70] William Dean Howells, Introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, xvi.
[71] William Dean Howells, Introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, xvii.
[72] George Philip Krapp, *The English Language in America*, 228.

reader must instinctively feel to be entire truthfulness."[73] The look of a "knowing look" or Krapp's "sympathetic nudge" manifested in the visual dimensions of dialect teases out the "sympathy" that for Howells determines along with humor, one's ability to "objectively" study a racialized group. Of course, Howells objectivity as the objectivity of patriarchal whiteness is probably "a sympathetic sense of superiority" projected onto Dunbar that, for him, feels truthful. This is to say that humor and sympathy may be present in the poems Dunbar writes in dialect, but the nudge that Dunbar gives his readers is more complicated than either Howells or Krapp might acknowledge. How do we interpret Dunbar's knowing look?

Gertrude E. Johnson's *Dialects for Oral Interpretation* (1922) posits a potential answer in foregrounding the visual and affective dimensions of dialect as a descriptive mode. Dialect, for Johnson, is a "word picture" and whereas an "artist would depict the man in his native costume, posture, coloring, etc…[an] author breathes very life into him through the medium of words."[74] Since "dialect aids the reader or hearer to picture the character who is speaking. It establishes, to some degree, a sympathetic medium of understanding."[75] Johnson seems to be describing a process wherein the "medium of words" is used to create a "word picture" that is itself a "sympathetic medium of understanding." For Johnson, "dialect is the language of the heart or emotions, and we react naturally to its appeal."[76] It is on this second order signification that the affective success or failure of a poem written in dialect depends, namely whether the artifice of the print convention that poetry written in dialect can "naturally" appeal to the "heart" of the reader despite the fact that Johnson doesn't get into how exactly the visual dimensions of the print convention work with or against the ostensible content of a poem including its

[73] William Dean Howells, Introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, xvi-xvii
[74] Gertrude E. Johnson, *Dialects for Oral Interpretation* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1922), 11-12.
[75] Gertrude E. Johnson, *Dialects for Oral Interpretation,* 12.
[76] Gertrude E. Johnson, *Dialects for Oral Interpretation,* 13.

figurative language. Despite the productive possibilities, including potentially new forms of social relations engendered by the intermediality of dialect as "word picture" as outlined by Johnson, when describing Dunbar and "negro dialect," Johnson's description seems to read a lot like Howells. Although "Ruth McEnery Stuart, F. Hopkinson Smith, Thomas Nelson Page, and Joel Chandler Harris" are authors who have "dealt humorously and sympathetically with the Dialect of the black race" for Johnson, Dunbar is "perhaps the best of these writers" since he "spoke from a still deeper understanding of the black man, for he was the prophet of his own race."[77] Johnson goes on to intensify here original position concerning dialect and sympathy in stating that "sympathetic understanding is an element absolutely essential to Dialect."[78] Not only this, but at least as far as Johnson is concerned there must also be "identification in the character situation" if the "appeal to the auditor or reader" is going to succeed regardless of whether a work is "humorous, tragic, pathetic, or tender."[79] Again, "negro dialect" is relegated to degrees of humor or sympathy despite the fact that Johnson's more general description of dialect as a form of affective intermediality might be able to consider the ways in which Dunbar's poetry exceeds such hasty generalizations as visual and verbal constructions.

The word 'sympathy' seems to be inseparable from discussions of dialect.[80] Even in James Weldon Johnson uses it to describe how Dunbar was "the first to feel sympathetically its [his race's] heart-wounds, its yearnings, its aspirations, and to voice them all in a purely literary

[77] Gertrude E. Johnson, *Dialects for Oral Interpretation,* 14.
[78] Gertrude E. Johnson, *Dialects for Oral Interpretation*, 14.
[79] Gertrude E. Johnson, *Dialects for Oral Interpretation,* 14.
[80] David Hume speaks of sympathy, or the communicability of affect, as a movement from ideas to impressions through the imagination in a double movement of representation: "'Tis indeed evident, that when we sympathize with the passions and sentiments of others, these movements appear at first in our mind as mere ideas, and are conceiv'd to belong to another person, as we conceive any other matter of fact. 'Tis also evident, that the ideas of the affections of others are converted into the very impressions they represent, and that the passions arise in conformity to the images we form of them." The idea of the other, or of the other's affective state, relies on the imagination or the "images we form of them." David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, eds. David Fate Norton and Mary J. Norton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2011), 208.

form."[81] Sympathy as a social formation in literary form—an affective othering of coming together in moments of shared communication. For Krapp the social situation that sympathy within a poem written in dialect helped to construct was understood as a "knowing glance" between author and reader whereas sympathy for Howells would exist as a sympathetic view towards a racialized group within that relation. Gertrude Johnson's sympathy, at least as she is describing it, does gesture towards both Howells and Krapp, but falls short of directly confronting the problem of intermediality on which these relations depend and disavowal. The affective space of sympathy is constructed and shaped by the tensions between the forms of media through which those affects are expressed. For Howells and many critics that follow, it was between written and oral speech. For Cohen, it is between genres or individual poems in relation to larger generic classifications. For Krapp, it is between two different observers, often author and reader, of the speech of a geographically determined, often racialized, group. For Johnson, however, thinking through these tensions means looking at a different one, namely the pull between different forms of media and the forms of affective relation created in and through those pulls.

Reading the tension between different forms of relation created through sympathy, namely Dunbar's "Sympathy" from *Oak and Ivy* (1893) and "Sympathy" from *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899) speaks to the type of reading practice predicated on a shared affective and intermedial experience I am arguing for. In the 1893 "Sympathy" there is no lyric "I" or speaking voice even though the focus of the poem is on bodying forth of feeling. The first of the three quatrains offers different features of the body in the fashion of a blazon:

[81] William Dean Howells, introduction to *Lyrics of Lowly Life*, by Paul Laurence Dunbar (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1896), xxxiii.

The tear another's tears bring forth,
  The sigh which answers sigh,
The pulse that beats at other's woes,
  E'en though our own be nigh,[82]

Moving from sympathy as felt and expressed through the body, the second quatrain turns toward the connection between souls created through these feelings. Sympathy becomes "The link divine from soul to soul / That makes us one in pain." Trading the medium of pain for the figure of light, sympathy in the final stanza as a "benignant ray" and "Light of the soul" becomes that which is both most human and most divine in an individual: "In it is human nature giv'n / A touch of the divine." The catalog of metaphors or forms that sympathy as connection and communication might take in this earlier poem is lyricized and, I would argue dramatized, in the 1899 "Sympathy."

The later poem is lyric in the sense that it contains a speaker who famously laments the captivity of a caged bird. The caging of the bird within the poem's content is reflected in the poem's form. Take the final stanza as an example:

I know why the caged bird sings, ah me,
  When his wing is bruised and his bosom sore,—
When he beats his bars and he would be free;
It is not a carol of joy of glee,
  But a prayer that he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings—
I know why the caged bird sings![83]

The rhyme scheme (ABAABBA) with the first and fourth lines of each stanza repeating the main argument in addition to the dashes suggests at least a partial enactment of the poem's content. Whereas the earlier poem defined sympathy through the movement of its metaphors, the form of the later poem suggests that the materiality of the aesthetic itself might occasion the very

[82] Paul Laurence Dunbar, *Oak and Ivy*, 56.
[83] Paul Laurence Dunbar, *Lyrics of the Hearthside*, 41.

acts of sympathy the 1893 poem describes. Moving through a series of epistemological claims about "what the caged bird feels," "why the caged bird beats his wing," and "why the caged bird sings," the speaking voice of the poem focuses on the self-inflicted wounds done to the bird's body as it "beats his bars," and in reading and rhyming with the poem's form readers are put in an uneasy position of sympathetic relation creating and participating in the constraints even if they, too, feel for the creature caged in its lines. Reading both poems in a chronological publication order, it seems that knowledge derives from a sympathetic relation felt in the heart and the soul even if the later poem returns to the body with such knowledge.

Perhaps what is most perverse about the lyric is that even though it is taken to be an expression of human feeling and subjectivity, it becomes less human in its abstraction and claims to universality. In Dunbar's poem it becomes a bird or an empty figure of poetic expression if not the history of poetic expression in general. The 1899 poem is often read as both a lamentation and critique of the status of being Black in the United States, but as a figure for poetry the bird combines Blackness with literary history and doing so posits a relation between types of violence done both to Black expression and to Black bodies. Another way of saying this is to attend to the pun in the second stanza: "Till its blood is red on the cruel bars." While it is tempting to read the second version of "Sympathy" as the dejection of an older Dunbar, I'm arguing that the use of these different features of the lyric are employed by Dunbar to create the conditions for the kind of sympathetic relation the first version of "Sympathy" describes. In the final stanza the song of the bird is "not a carol of joy or glee," but rather "a prayer that he sends upward from his heart's deep core" and "a plea, that upward to Heaven he flings." Reversing the direction of sympathy from the first poem—the "touch of the divine" on human form, the repetition of 'upward' clearly defines the direction and form of connection it might take. In replacing a relationship between

two humans with that between a bird and the divine, it seems that Dunbar may simply be replacing description in favor of a more straight forward poetic artifice. Yet, in doing so Dunbar problematizes the lyric's uneasy navigation between individual and universal expression through the cage of poetic form and the figure of the bird residing therein. This is to say that while Dunbar may be concerned with sympathy as a form of human relation, the poem is foremost interested in humanity created through shared reading practices. The mediation of the figure is what allows the presumed human reader to create the sympathetic relation—if there is no sympathy with the caged bird, the reader lacks the capacity.

To Speak/Write Dialect: Racialization of Literary Description

Crucial to Cohen's argument that "dialect poems…were a particular poetic genre (capacious as it might be), and were not simply inflections of other standard poetic genres" is Dunbar's 1902 interview with the *Chicago Tribune* wherein Dunbar posits that "whatever is most charming about the negro dialect is in the way of endearing words. Its genre is domestic, so to speak."[84] The equation of "negro dialect" with "genre," or what Cohen would call the condensation into the genre of the "negro ballad," is a troubling feature all too common in literary studies. Cohen avoids this problem by taking Dunbar at his word. I am, however, less inclined to do so since the assumption that dialect poetry is a genre with easily recognizable features rather than a mode of literary description that relies on a print convention tends to obscure the differences between poetic genres that happen to be written in dialect and has significantly framed accounts of Dunbar's poetry. Often, the critical position that all poems

[84] Michael Cohen, "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect," 247.
E.W.P, "The Poet Dunbar a Chicagoan," *Chicago Tribune*, September 13, 1902, quoted in Michael Cohen, "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect," *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 247.

written in dialect should be abstracted into dialect poetry as genre does a disservice to Dunbar by perpetuating a conversation that focuses on a dehiscence between poems written in dialect and those that are not. This isn't to deny the influence of such abstracting processes, but rather to recognize the ways in which they continue to shape interpretations of Dunbar's poetry from the nineteenth century to the present. As Cohen rightly points out, there is significant "cultural power inherent in naming a dialect poem a 'negro ballad.' During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries this interpretation of dialect as the authenticating oral signature of the printed folk poem enabled poems with no pretense to being oral folklore, like Dunbar's, to become a dominant mode of articulating cultural fantasies about racialized folk."[85] Such fantasies drive what Gene Jarrett describes as the "critical and commercial demand for… 'minstrel realism' in postbellum nineteenth-century American culture."[86]

The lure of cathecting with a form of racialized authenticity that motivated many reader's in Dunbar's day finds its reverse expression in today's critical impulse to find authentic forms of resistance or at least ambivalence in Dunbar's dialect poems by reading them, following Gates, as a "linguistic masking."[87] As Jarrett points out in the "debates over where or not Dunbar sold out to inherently racist mainstream literary and publishing tastes" the "most popular scholarly argument on this subject emphasizes Dunbar's disenchantment with Howells and American literary criticism, and shows that the poet was more polemical than his mainstream readers might have realized…that Dunbar's dialect poems were protesting against minstrel realism all along, even as they seemed to be perpetuating it."[88] For such critics, Dunbar could "draw on the folk

[85] Michael Cohen, "Paul Laurence Dunbar and the Genres of Dialect," 251.
[86] Gene Jarett, "'Entirely *Black* Verse from Him Would Succeed': Minstrel Realism and William Dean Howells," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 59, no. 4 (2005): 498.
[87] Henry Louis Gates, *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism* (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1988), 75.
[88] Henry Louis Gates, *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism*, 500 and 500-501.

tradition of masking to assert subversive ideas for black audiences while providing white audiences with seemingly innocuous surface meanings."[89] The oft-anthologized, non-dialect poem "We Wear the Mask" (1895) becomes the central critical lens through which Dunbar's poetry written in dialect is viewed as critiques of double consciousness, forms of (authentic) subversion, or performances of signifying (speaking simultaneously to different publics of white and black readers)—habitually all three.[90] The first half of the rondeau's opening line, "We wear the mask that grins and lies," serves as the poem's *rentrement* and in the final line—swapping the period for an exclamation point—is forcefully articulated: "We wear the mask!" For James Smethurst, the poem is "the most influential literary expression of…[African American] dualism after *The Souls of Black Folk* (and insofar as poetry is concerned, perhaps the most influential, period)."[91]

Such interpretations of Dunbar commonly have recourse to James Weldon Johnson's preface to *The Book of American Negro Poetry* (1922), particularly the "bit of reminiscence" that Johnson begs the reader's pardon for:

> He talked to me a great deal about his hopes and ambitions. In these talks he revealed that he had reached a realization of the possibilities of poetry in the dialect, together with a recognition of the fact that it offered the surest way by which he could get a hearing. Often he said to me: "I've got to write dialect poetry; it's the only way I can get them to listen to me."[92]

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[89] Craig Werner, "Early Twentieth Century," in *The Concise Oxford Companion to African American Literature*, eds. William L. Andrews, Frances Smith Foster, and Trudier Harris (New York, N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 2001), 466.

[90] Examples include: Ray Sapirstein, "Out from Behind the Mask: Paul Laurence Dunbar, The Hampton Institute Camera Club, and Photographic Performance of Identity," in *Pictures and Progress*, ed. Maurice O. Wallace and Shawn Michelle Smith (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 167-203. Daniel P. Black, "Literary Subterfuge: Early African American Writing and the Trope of the Mask," *CLA Journal* 48, no.4 (2005): 387-403. John Keeling, "Paul Dunbar and the Mask of Dialect," *Southern Literary Journal* 25, no. 2 (1993): 24-38. Steven A. Nardi, "The 'Colder Artifice': Paul Laurence Dunbar, Countee Cullen, and the Mask of Blackness" in *Behind the Masks of Modernism: Global and Transnational Perspectives*, ed. Andrew Reynolds and Bonnie Roos (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2015), 115-134.

[91] James Smethurst, Paul Laurence Dunbar and Turn-into-the-20th-Century African American Dualism," African *American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 380.

[92] James Weldon Johnson, preface to *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, ed. James Weldon Johnson (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1922), xxxiv.

Yet, Johnson recognizes that "Dunbar's fame rests chiefly on his poems in Negro dialect" and that "Dunbar was the first to use it as a medium for the true interpretation of Negro character and psychology."[93] Johnson's acknowledgement that dialect serves as a medium of interpretation helps to push back against the abstraction of dialect into a genre in its attention to "character" and "psychology." Of the "possibilities" that poetry written in dialect affords, Dunbar's work wears the division between artifice and authenticity, or rather foregrounds the need to read such artifice as authentic in ways that move beyond interpretations that relegate Dunbar's poetry written in dialect as protest or failure. The latter interpretation finds its most explicit expression in Henry Louis Gates' *The Signifying Monkey* (1988). Although Dunbar "signified upon the received white racist textual tradition and posited instead a black poetic diction," ultimately Dunbar's failure "to register his authentic black voice in the tradition of Western poetry" is evidenced by Dunbar "employing the mastery of white forms to become white."[94] Although Gates's claims rest on readings of Dunbar's non-dialect poetry, the force of such a critique is felt if we consider that dialect poetry as genre or idea can be often be considered a "white" literary form to stick with Gates a bit. To think with Gates, then, the construction of an "authentic" expression of a racialized folk to please the taste of white literary reception necessarily stifles Dunbar's "authentic black voice" in that that "mask" tends to obscure rather than clarify speech.

Along similar, though more positive lines, Barbara Johnson notes that James Weldon Johnson's preface can be read as containing "covert strategies of protest" since "through his use of ellipsis, understatement, unspecified agency, and non-binarity, [James Weldon] Johnson is thus attempting to bring about a change in the status of the Negro without explicitly

[93] James Weldon Johnson, preface to *The Book of American Negro Poetry*, xxxiii.
[94] Henry Louis Gates, *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of Afro-American Literary Criticism*, 190, 125, and 127.

acknowledging or processing conflict and dispossession."[95] For Johnson, the problem of in/authentic expression for African American literature is inaugurated in the im/possibility of reading Phillis Wheatley. Johnson's example of the schoolbook exercise is telling: "By simply repeating the ideology she has learned, Wheatley exposes a glaring contradiction. She presents us with something like the schoolbook exercise: "What's wrong with this picture?"[96] (104). This chapter works in Johnson's critical tradition, by sticking with the picture and asking this and other questions.

The false binary between "authentic" and "masked" expression runs the risk of becoming a critical end in and of itself. As Valerie Wheat posits, even if "Dunbar expresses only quiet, subtle statements against the wrongs of slavery in his dialect poems, which caused some criticism from later generations of black poets and scholar," ultimately Dunbar's "use of dialect was an homage to the black man, an effort to celebrate the beauty of the black culture and affirm its worth in the face of bigotry and prejudice."[97] For Wheat, Dunbar is one poet amongst many since "traditionally African American poetry has represented a tension between oral and literary forms, with the black poet trying to develop a persona that blends the two forms into one genuine cultural voice."[98] Not only oral and literary forms, but as far as Alexander is concerned, "Dunbar's dialect poems are shaped by literary sensibilities, his literary poems are enlivened by vernacular energy and a rhythmic mastery that also emanates from that same source."[99] If we are reading for binaries, we'll find them, but such readings are limiting for the ways they seem to tire

[95] Barbara Johnson, "Euphemism, Understatement, and the Passive Voice" in *The Barbara Johnson Reader: The Surprise of Otherness*, eds. Melissa Feuerstein, Bill Johnson González, Lili Porten, and Keja L. Valens (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 103.
[96] Barbara Johnson, "Euphemism, Understatement, and the Passive Voice," 104.
[97] Valerie Wheat, "Nineteenth Century Black Dialect Poetry and Racial Pride: Candelario Obeso's *Cantos populares de mi tierra* and Paul Laurence Dunbar's *Lyrics of Lowly Life*," *Afro-Hispanic Review* 15, no. 2 (1996): 31.
[98] Valerie Wheat, "Nineteenth Century Black Dialect Poetry and Racial Pride," 28.
[99] Elizabeth Alexander, "Dunbar Lives!" *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 397.

Dunbar's poems out. Although critics seem to be comfortable highlighting Dunbar's awareness of masked expression or other problems of authenticity, it is odd that a substantial portion of critical thought on Dunbar's poems is concerned with how well the mask seems to cover or not cover his face. Further, if dialect as mask is one of the most important features of Dunbar's work to attend to, it begs the question why such little attention is given to the aesthetics of the mask. Although close reading risks distancing us from the poem's time and from its history, it can also return us to the sociocultural situation in which it a poem is embedded. To attend to the aesthetic dimensions of the mask is to attend to the reading and viewing practices through which it comes into critical visibility.

In approaching the problem of authenticity in Dunbar's poetry written in dialect through the genre of the "epistolary dialect poem," Nadia Nurhussein pays attention to reading practices and argues that "the incompatibility of using a literate form to express speech in a dialect letter invokes the parallel larger-scale incompatibility of using a literate form to express speech in dialect poetry generally."[100] In attending to the generic features of the verse epistle, Nurhussein's criticism models a reading of Dunbar's poetry written in dialect that resists the abstracting tendency to flatten the expressive capacity of such poems in consigning them merely as representatives of a racialized idea of poetic genre. For Nurhussein, one of the ways "Dunbar was pushing his poetry in the direction of inauthenticity" was in "his attempt to view dialect's perceived orality through the lens of literacy."[101] Dunbar turns "the speakers of his epistolary dialect poems into dialect poets themselves" and in doing so makes a "choice to represent his character's writing not as illiterate but as simultaneously dialect *and* highly literate resists the

[100] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," *African American Review* 41, no. 2 (2007): 234.
[101] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," 233.

association of dialect-speaking with illiteracy fundamental to so much contemporaneous dialect poetry."[102] By focusing on the ways in which speech is materially transcribed in letters, Nurhussein reads transcription as a form of interpretation:

> The reading experience Dunbar directs his readers to have, then, is a conflicted one: readers cannot recite the epistolary dialect poem as a dramatic monologue because, simply put, no one can be speaking. Letters, as private communication, are usually written and read silently, in the absence of the addressee and writer respectively. Dunbar's choice of the letter as a model for these poems highlights a tension between a traditional dialect poetry that is performatory and an emerging dialect poetry of silent literacy.[103]

Dunbar, at least in Nurhussein's account, uses the genre of the verse epistle to circumvent the problem of the speaker in considerations of poetry written in dialect as forms of dramatic monologue. It is unclear, however, if a poetry "of silent literacy" is not performative in the very same ways if the fictional construction of the speaker is replaced by the "writer." Reading the intimate space of the letter's circulation creates a tension between public and private that may speak to part of the public's desire to enter a racialized intimate sphere. The structure of the epistolary poem is one of a fiction of intrusion even if such intrusion is disavowed. Readers of these poems are not addressed in that the genre of the verse epistle mediates the forms of address that are possible. It may also be the case that a portion of Dunbar's contemporaneous white readership did not want to be addressed directly, preferring instead the structuring relation of Mill's fantasy of lyric overhearing which I will attend to shortly. Does a willful avoidance of the address partially account for the abstraction of poetry written in dialect into dialect as genre or the authentic expression of a racialized folk? The fictional construction of the poetic speaker replaced by the poetic "writer" inverts, yet seems to perpetuate, a definition of poetry associated

[102] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," 234. Nurhussein's emphasis.
[103] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," 234.

with John Stuart Mill that has been a central text in the ongoing debates about the lyric as poetic genre, as part of a critical vocabulary that seeks to mask the racialization of poetic forms sometimes known as literary criticism's construction and participation in America's history of racism, and as a generic term that dismisses even as it explicitly invites the consideration of an emotional and affective approach to the creation and reception of poetry.[104]

Lyric/Ekphrastic Feeling

In "Thoughts and Poetry and its Varieties" (1833), Mill makes the distinction between poetry (private speech) and eloquence (public speech): "eloquence is heard, poetry is overheard. Eloquence supposes an audience; the peculiarity of poetry appears to lie in the poet's utter unconsciousness of a listener."[105] For Nurhussein, the epistolary dialect poem cannot be "overheard" since the genre of the letter as private speech creates an atmosphere of silence and presents something more along the lines of reading over someone's shoulder. Dunbar's verse epistles foreground the tension between direct and indirect address in that the letter forces the recognition in a reader that it was not meant for them. Or, perhaps the success of the poem is in that it allows that reader to participate in the fantasy of private circulation in a more public sphere. Either way, this problem of address is a problem of authenticity. The situation of navigating the public/private, direct/indirect, and authentic/inauthentic is what Nurhussein describes as a form of impossibility: "Dunbar's often subtle orthographic experimentation, the means by which he manipulates readers into enacting contradictions and impossibilities, works

[104] For example see the following: The "New Lyric Studies" section of *PMLA* 123, no. 1 (January 2008). Virginia Jackson and Yopie Prins, eds., *The Lyric Theory Reader* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014). Jonathan Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2015).
[105] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties" in *Autobiography and Literary Essays*. Vol. 1 of *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. John M. Robson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981): 348.

to refute the possibility of authentic expression in any poetic mode."[106] Mill would likely agree with Nurhussein since even he was unable to find a lyric poet amongst the Romantics that conformed to the specifics of his definition. Both the "authentic" and "inauthentic" expression depend upon the artifice through which poetry is made. If the fantasy of writing lyric poetry means writing without regard for an audience, then the fantasy of the verse epistle undoes Mills' formulation in the very fact of intended reception. Yet, Mill's description of the lyric, or at least its mediating metaphors, gestures towards the material dimensions of a poem's circulation in ways that might get at what the lyric might mean in conversations surrounding Dunbar.

Mill continues his discussion of poetry's materiality and its mediation in print with a performance:

> All poetry is of the nature of soliloquy. It may be said that poetry which is printed on hot-pressed paper and sold at a bookseller's shop, is a soliloquy in full dress, and on the stage. It is so; but there is nothing absurd in the idea of such a mode of soliloquizing. What we have said to ourselves, we may tell to others afterwards; what we have said or done in solitude, we may voluntarily reproduce when we know that other eyes are upon us. But no trace of consciousness that any eyes are upon us must be visible in the work itself. The actor knows that there is an audience present; but if he acts as though he knew it, he acts ill.[107]

No wonder it is common for critics to associate the genre of the lyric with a speaker since Mill's anthropomorphization of the poem as a person of paper is dressed up and placed on stage through the material format that allows for its circulation. Although Mill suggests here that the origin of lyric expression is in moments of solitude, in keeping with his other famous assertion that "poetry is feeling confessing itself to itself, in moments of solitude" which I will discuss shortly, he begins with the poem's public display.[108] The giving and taking away of voices associated with the genre of the lyric is interrelated with a giving and taking away of bodies—all

[106] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," 233-234.
[107] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," 349.
[108] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," 348.

feeling and no body, the poem takes its form in print. If a lyric poem happens when no one (and everyone) is looking, the print convention of dialect frustrates the critic's ability to participate in Mill's fantasy since the visuality of the convention as a form of ekphrasis always seeks to create a picture of the speaker, if not the author, at least in Dunbar's case.

If "no trace of consciousness that any eyes are upon us must be visible in the work itself" and if Dunbar is "gifted with second-sight in this American world," in Dubois' formulation, "a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" can any of Dunbar's poems claim to be lyrics including those not written in dialect?[109] Does Dunbar's race or the racialization of his dialect speakers mediate the performative conditions of lyric's possibility? If poetry is contrasted with eloquence in keeping with Mill's definition, it turns out that poetry written in dialect is less poetry and more eloquence:

> Poetry is feeling confessing itself to itself in moments of solitude, and embodying itself in symbols which are the nearest possible representations of the feeling in the exact shape in which it exists in the poet's mind. Eloquence is feeling pouring itself out to other minds, courting their sympathy, or endeavoring to influence their belief, or move them to passion or to action.[110]

Whereas the tautology of feeling's self-expression finds a body in the symbolic form of self-representation, eloquence tries to do away the mediation of the symbol between different minds in favor of direct contact within the medium of affect. The language of sympathy that colors many critical accounts of Dunbar's poetry and the descriptive mode of dialect more generally, is suggestive of at least two productive misreadings. Within Mill's formulation, critics would be reading eloquence for poetry in a disavowal of the racialization of feelings embodied in the symbolic form of the material text on the page. Or, rather it recognizes that poetry and eloquence

[109] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg and Company, 1903), 3.
[110] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," 348.

are not mutually exclusive properties of any one poem, since the latter often depends upon the former at least as far as interpretations of Dunbar commonly go. Within Dunbar's poetry written in dialect another misreading occurs in that the symbols of the "poet's mind" are often associated with the "speaker's mind." The dialect albums court this type of misreading since Dunbar's photograph is consistently left out of the front matter. In the first of these albums, *Poems of Cabin and Field* (1899), a photograph of an older man, the image of a "folk speaker," appears in the space of Dunbar's absence. To recognize, misrecognize, or ignore the mediation of dialect is a way of measuring the distance between other minds. Attention to a medium of expression and the forms of affective relation that it helps to produce modulates forms of relationality within the social field of "other minds."

Although Mill might disagree, he does continue his explanation of the division between poetry and eloquence by turning to visual mediums:

> Whatever in painting or sculpture expresses human feeling…be called, according to circumstances, the poetry, or the eloquence, of the painter's or the sculptor's art: the poetry, if the feeling declares itself by such signs as escape from us when we are unconscious of being seen; the oratory, if the signs are those we use for the purpose of voluntary communication.[111]

Poetry in Mill's account then, is both an affective and transmedial property of artistic mediums of expression insofar as it is a form of involuntary communication or at least a form of communication that believes in the fantasy of its own isolation. So, for Mill, we have minds and eyes, but it isn't clear if other parts of the body exist or might complicate, and thereby alter, the structure of this fantasy. Mill anticipates a strain of art criticism associated with Clement Greenberg and the dream of medium specificity. The negation of the beholder's presence is what leads to abstraction—what we might call lyricization—in Modernist painting. Dunbar's poetry in

[111] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," 352.

dialect gives us a voice and a body (sometimes) photographically reproduced. Another way of putting it would be to say that Dunbar recognizes and sticks with the anthropomorphized abstractions that Mill's formulation of poetry relies on, yet fails to acknowledge. Even if whatever poetry is according to Mill is written without regard for the reader, that reader remains in the shared presence of the poem's unfolding, and it is that participation that Dunbar emphasizes in the performance of the dialect "speaker." The visual text of the poem as well as its content work ekphrastically to create the conditions of possibility for this performance.

James Heffernan's influential definition of ekphrasis as "the verbal representation of visual representation," particularly the focus on the capacity for representation in an ekphrastic mode of description to create a series of mediations is suited for discussions of Dunbar.[112] Poetry written in dialect is the visual and material representation of a form of verbal (oral) representation that depends upon, following Stuart Hall, "racialized regimes of representation" of black life in its reception and interpretation. The visual dimensions of dialect as a print convention work ekphrastically by creating a racialized image of the poetic "speaker." In other words, dialect poetry presupposes the voice of a speaker or poetic "other" that is always already racialized and the mediation of the affectively charged construction that occurs in and through the visuality of its print convention. If "voice assumes mouth, eye, and finally face, a chain that is manifest in the etymology of the trope's name, *prosopon poien*, to confer a mask or a face (*prosopon*)" reading dialect participates in "the fiction of an apostrophe to an absent, deceased, or voiceless entity, which posits the possibility of the latter's reply and confers upon it the power of speech."[113] The visual materiality of Dunbar's poems written in dialect foregrounds the

[112] James Heffernan, *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004), 93.
[113] Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-Facement," in *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 76.

inherent capacity of language to generate fictions. Perhaps, then, I've been too quick to dismiss "We Wear the Mask" as a heuristic since in the poetry written in dialect, Dunbar continually draws attention to the poem's own artifice and interrogates the ways in which an investment in that fiction is understood.

W.J.T. Mitchell, who draws on Heffernan's definition of ekphrasis as "the verbal representation of visual representation," describes the "problem of ekphrasis" as a "fascination" in three parts: ekphrastic indifference, ekphrastic hope, and ekphrastic fear.[114] Ekphrasis names a desire for an encounter with whatever exists beyond the boundaries of the verbal medium and in the case of dialect poetry, what lies beyond the page is an encounter with a speaker circumscribed by racialized iconography. What Mitchell relies on is an affective structure of attachment that forms through intermedial encounters. Not only do affective attachments create the desire for whatever "other" is beyond a medium of expression, but it is also the case that affective attachments to the social constructions of different types of media themselves inflect such desires. Mitchell relies on the language of desire and of affect to theorize ekphrastic description. Desire, affect, or emotion are often admitted into discussions of individual poems or to theorizations of poetic description more generally, under the guise of media or genre theory. The subjective feels cast out of a pseudo-objective critical discourse return in an attention to media and the formations. Mitchell begins to get at this in formulation of the affective states of ekphrastic experience, but I'd like to go a bit further by attending to the language of Mitchell's own formulation. This is to say that the ideas of what criticism, oral poetry, the print convention of dialect, and photographs are, including the affective attachments we might have to those ideas, are as important as the content expressed in and through their mediums. The reliance on

[114] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 152.

interpretive categories of "speaker" or "image" when discussing poetry is made possible by the affective dimensions of this intermedial encounter even if such interpretations often do not consider the conditions of their own possibility. My interest is in the categories through which dialect poetry has been and could be interpreted by building on Mitchell's insight that encounters in and between media are expressions of a "full range of possible social relations" and are telling of the feelings such relations might engender.[115]

Although ekphrastic indifference names the "commonsense perception that ekphrasis is impossible," such a moment gives way to ekphrastic hope wherein "the impossibility of ekphrasis is overcome in imagination or metaphor."[116] In ekphrastic poetry, "texts encounter their semiotic 'others,' those rival, alien modes of representation called the visual, graphic, plastic, or 'spatial' arts" and the "central goal of ekphrastic hope" according to Mitchell concerns itself with the "'overcoming of otherness.'"[117] It is in the state of ekphrastic hope that we recognize that "ekphrasis ceases to be a special or exceptional moment in verbal or oral representation and begins to seem paradigmatic of a fundamental tendency in all linguistic expression."[118] This encounter, at least for Mitchell, does not occur since ekphrastic fear, a "moment of resistance or counterdesire that occurs when we sense that the difference between the verbal and visual representation might collapse and the figurative, imaginary desire of ekphrasis might be realized literally and actually," manifests itself as a "moment in aesthetics when the difference between verbal and visual mediation becomes a moral, aesthetic imperative rather than…a natural fact that can be relied on."[119] As a "fundamental tendency in all linguistic

[115] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 162.
[116] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 152.
[117] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 156.
[118] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 153.
[119] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 154.

expression" the relations created through ekphrasis are necessarily subject to the "moral, aesthetic imperative[s]" of the linguistic communities out of which such expressions arise. Questions of morality and aesthetics are intertwined in Mitchell's description of ekphrastic fear in part due to the structure of an ekphrastic encounter wherein social relations are masked by relations between different mediums. Anthropomorphizing, Mitchell notes that "ekphrastic fear perceives this reciprocity as dangerous promiscuity and tries to regulate the borders with firm distinctions between the senses, modes of representation, and the objects proper to each."[120] Social relations are experienced in and through the mediums of their expression and tracing the boundaries between those mediums necessarily limit their resultant possibilities.

It turns out, then, that there is a lot at stake in frustrating the initial intermedial desire in an ekphrastic encounter:

> All the utopian aspirations of ekphrasis—that the mute image be endowed with a voice, or made dynamic and active, or actually come into view, or (conversely) that poetic language might be "stilled," made iconic, or "frozen" into a static, spatial array—all these aspirations begin to look idolatrous and fetishistic.[121]

Yet, in poetry written in dialect, if not all "lyric" poetry in a certain critical tradition, a "mute image [can] be endowed with a voice" and "poetic language" can be "stilled, made iconic, or frozen into a static, spatial array." The photographically illustrated editions of Dunbar's poetry seek to make visible the ekphrastic dimensions of the mode of dialect precisely because they have "idolatrous and fetishistic" aspirations. Mitchell's language is telling since such aspirations "begin to look" like something, but it is unclear who is interpreting that look beyond Mitchell himself. This is to say that the language of Mitchell's description, or rather the affective

[120] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 155.
[121] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 156.

categories he posits, begin to have a look or that the interrelationship between mediality, visibility, and affect persists even the attempt to theorize it.

The shifting of affective states within an ekphrastic encounter works to "produce a pervasive sense of ambivalence"[122] that Mitchell, again, maps on to forms of social relation:

> The ambivalence about ekphrasis, then, is grounded in our ambivalence about other people, regarded as subjects and objects in the field of verbal and visual representation. Ekphrastic hope and fear express our anxieties about merging with others. Ekphrastic indifference maintains itself in the face of disquieting signs that ekphrasis may be far from trivial and that, if it is only a sham or illusion, it is one which, like ideology itself, must be worked through.[123]

What does it mean to merge with others? At least one way this occurs is through the ekphrastic encounter, a rhetorical, or what Mitchell calls an "ekphrastic triangle," that creates "the relation of the speaker and the audience or addressee of the ekphrasis."[124] This moment of address is situated between two forms of otherness for Mitchell, namely "the conversion of the visual representation into a verbal representation" and "the reconversion of the verbal representation back into the visual object in the reception of the reader."[125] The address within the mode of ekphrasis is the origin of the mode's sociality as well as its verbal and visual blurring between expressive mediums. Mitchell's sustained formulation continues to foreground the intimacy of such relation, perhaps even to an uncomfortably voyeuristic extent: "its social structure cannot be grasped fully as a phenomenological encounter of subject and object, but must be pictured as a *ménage à trois* in which the relations of self and other, text and image, are triply inscribed."[126] The structure of the ekphrastic experience is only partially explained through phenomenology,

[122] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 156.
[123] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 163.
[124] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 164.
[125] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 164.
[126] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 164.

but rather relies on an erotized aesthetics that may return the experience to itself through the mediation of the encounter as a picture.

This encounter often happens as a gift. As Mitchell puts is, "if ekphrasis typically expresses a desire for a visual object (whether to possess or praise), it is also typically an offering of this expression as a gift to the reader."[127] The language of the gift is present in Dunbar's poetry and short stories, in the way dialect albums were produced and marketed, and in the way that Dunbar is spoken about.[128] "Wherever there is time, wherever time predominates or

[127] W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 164.

[128] "The Colonel's Awakening" in *Folks From Dixie* (1898) provides the clearest theorization of the concept of the gift in Dunbar's thinking. In a scathing critique of those addled with southern nostalgia for an antebellum past, the short story recounts the final days of Colonel Robert Estridge for whom "time had not passed and conditions had not changed for a generation" (71). The opening of the story reads almost exactly like "The Deserted Planation" in its focus on the relationship between the house and surrounding landscape: "a great rambling old Virginia house, which in its time had been one of the proudest in the county. But it had been in the path of the hurricane of war, and had been shorn of its glory as a tree is stripped of its foliage" (69). Ike and Lize, the last of the colonel's domestic workers, indulge in the performance of the colonel's antebellum fantasy despite the fact that it has been over twenty years since the war ended taking with it the lives of his two sons. Spanning Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the action of the story hinges on the gift of a pair of gloves that the colonel receives each year from Miss Clarinda Randolph. Long since dead, it has been Lize's task to manufacture this present each year for the colonel, the recounts her decision to forego the tradition having "'made him diffunt dis yeah'" (76). Though Lize tells Ike that it her decision was made in part under the assumption that the colonel wouldn't notice, it does seem that she has grown tired of playing her part in the colonel's fantasy. Ultimately, Lize's refusal kills the colonel as he unable to live without the fantasy. Ike finds his him dead "on his knees before an old oak chest" with "pair on pair of home-knit gloves" scattered on the floor around him. In his "stiffening hand was clenched a pair of gloves, the last Miss Randolph had ever really knit for him" (79). Looking at the scene with Lize, Ike exclaims, "'Mas' Bob's in glory. Dis is Virginia's Christmas gif' to Gawd!'" (79).

"Chrismus on the Plantation" in *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899) also concerns the giving and taking of gifts. The poem's speaker recounts a Christmas Eve morning where the formerly enslaved workers at a plantation are told to leave for there was no longer money to pay for their services. The sense of crisis is created through caricature: "Fu' a da'ky's allus happy when de holidays is neah. / But we was n't, fu' dat mo'nin' Mastah 'd tol' us we mus' go, / He'd been payin' us sence freedom, but he could n't pay no mo'." In an attempt to stifle the tears of "All de women [who] was a-cryin', an' de men, too, on de sly," the poem turns to the speech of "ol' Ben" who discourses on the values of loyalty and kindness as justifications for all those who had once been enslaved to "wo'k dis ol' plantation fu' whatevah we kin git" rather than leave behind its owner. The poem turns on reversals of freedom, memory, and choice. Ben upbraids the owner: "'Er in othah wo'ds, you wants us to fu'git dat you's been kin'"—the pun on kin/d foregrounding both poetic artifice and the manufacturing of a false choice even as it heightens the nausea experienced when reading it. Ben performs his choice on the national stage: "'Well, ef dat 's de way dis freedom ac's on people, white er black, / You kin jes' tell Misatah Lincum fu' to tek his freedom back.'" The idea of freedom as a gift to be given or taken away undergirds the horrors of slavery and much of American nationalistic fantasy. Appropriately, the poem ends with those in renewed bonds of loyalty praising God " 'from whom all blessin's flow!'."

conditions experience in general, Derrida claims, "the gift is impossible."[129] Though impossible for Derrida, the gift is "not the unameable or the unthinkable" and exists in the "gap between the impossible and thinkable."[130] Though not quite the idealized conception of the gift in Derrida's conception, Dunbar's poem's gesture toward and make meaning in the gap between the unthinkable, the unnameable, and the unrepresentable. Reciprocity, exchange, and connection are encouraged and the poem's work to place their readers in these forms of affective relation—the feelings and changes that arise from and return to the readerly bodies. While impossibilities are assuredly on display in the dialect albums especially for readers concerned with a romanticization of an antebellum past, this past is always given in word and in image. Not quite the atemopral space constructed by the lyric, but rather the present of reading that calls attention to the ethical dimensions of the exchange between poetic "speakers" and the readers who are directly addressed—exchanges between temporalities and between the reader and the "speaker." In other words, though the lyric, or the history attributing ideas of poetry to that label, may be suggestive of turning away from history in the form of an idealized atemporality, Dunbar's poetic expressions and their engagement with other forms of media highlight the importance of the temporal relation of the perennial now created through the reading process. In other words, the mediation of Blackness in aesthetic form is understood as a form of love precisely through im/possible temporal and spatial relations—a form of potentiality.

The distinction that Hans Belting theorizes between image and medium—"the image always has a mental quality, the medium always a material one, even if they both form a single entity in our perception"—helps to detail the ways in which dialect and ekphrasis operate as

[129] Jacques Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money,* trans. Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 9.
[130] Jacques Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money,* 11. Emphasis in original.

modes of description in Dunbar's poems and casts some light on the critical metaphors commonly used in discussions of poetry.[131] The appearance or emergence of an image, the "presence of an absence" for Belting, depends upon the visibility or materiality of the medium through which this image appears. The image is "present in its medium" in that it continually "refers to the absence of that entity of which it is a representation."[132] The visual dimensions of "eye dialect" always already presume a racialized speaker, but whatever image is created by the pictorial dimensions of the text exists is entangled in, and created through, its relation to other images in an ongoing process of supplementarity. A reader might have Dunbar's appearance or a poem's photographic illustration in mind, if not actually in hand, when reading, but a reader's experience of whatever images a poem creates might be inflected by the iconographic dimensions of a sociocultural imaginary that traffics in minstrel caricature, the sentimentality of documentary photography, ideas of photography as either art or scientific document, or portraits of racial uplift to name only a few possibilities. This is what it means for Belting to say an image "is more than a product of perception" in that it is created through the interarticulation of personal and collective knowledges: "we live with images, we comprehend the world in images. And this living repertory of our internal images connects with the physical production of external pictures that we stage in the social realm."[133] Vilém Flusser pushes this point further by arguing that images "come between the world and human beings…Instead of representing the world, they obscure it until human beings' lives finally become a function of the images they create."[134] It is in images that we live, and move, and have our being. That being, however, is an embodied

[131] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images,* 20.
[132] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images,* 20.
[133] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images*, 9.
[134] Vilém Flusser, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, trans. Anthony Mathews (London: Reaktion Books, 2000), 10.

one for Belting since the "distinction between image and medium is rooted in the self-experience of our body. The images of memory and imagination are generated in one's own body; the body is the living medium through which they are experienced."[135]

While the lyric speaker of the poem's body, the photograph's body in light and trace, or the reader's body may mediate personal and collective images there is always an affective dimension of the experience that I am arguing for as a kind of excess of the image's possibility to be contained in any one material iteration of its expression. To posit a lyric speaker in Dunbar's poems is to recognize the embodiment of images within a poem as generated in the experience of it by a "reader" or "self" however abstract the articulation. The image "neither equates with living bodies nor with the lifeless object" since "images are exchanged between us and a pictorial medium in the double act of transmission and perception."[136] The encounter with a poem or photograph, as the interanimation of two bodies in and through the exchange of images, is in my account an affective one since feelings, like images, are intercorporeal—"The link divine from soul to soul / That makes us one in pain" in the 1893 "Sympathy." Dunbar stages the possibility of creating impossible images within his poems and in doing so foregrounds the affective attachments readers may have to media and the representative processes in and through which "images" are produced.

In a direct address to the reader in "The End of the Chapter" from *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899), the speaker laments the ending of their shared reading practice:

> Ah, yes, the chapter ends to-day;
> We even lay the book away;
> But oh, how sweet the moments sped
> Before the final page was read!

[135] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images,* 11.
[136] Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images*, 11 and 36.

The movement of the poem's figures equates the book with life itself, but the blur created in the poem's language asks the reader to remain in or with the poem and, as I've argued for in this chapter, to reflect on what it means to read Dunbar. While the attempt to "…read between the lines / The Author's deep-concealed designs" provides "scant reward," the experience itself allows for a form of mutual recognition: "You saw my heart and I saw yours." Reading, as "The End of the Chapter" suggests, is a negotiation of affective temporalities: "We read together and forgot / The world around us. Time was not. / Unheeded and unfelt, it fled." The world of the book replaces the world surrounding and the personification of time cannot hope to touch us if it even exists within the experience of our shared reading—reading that doesn't feel like reading since "We read and hardly knew we read." This atemporal reading, however, does not necessarily speak to our ability to comprehend the text since the realization or sense of the ending, "know[ing] the book was done," makes us "startled." The dialectic of time, history, and change brings forth the meaning of the book and our experience of reading it. When "It dawned upon us what was writ," we heard the speech of the book itself: "'Behold your souls!'" The performative proclamation of the book splits the address of the speaker as it directs itself both to the book and those reading it:

> I do, I do. I cannot look
> Into your eyes: so close the book.
> But brought it grief or brought it bliss,
> No other page shall read like this!

Whether it be the eyes of the book that looks back, the eyes of the reader that move in parallel with the speaker's lines on the page, or perhaps something less material and more divine, the poem exalts the affective and interpretive possibilities of reading. Yet, when we close the book it becomes a mirror in which we must look into our own eyes—a look that will inevitably bring "grief" or "bliss."

CHAPTER TWO

Looking at "Love's Pictures": Paul Laurence Dunbar, Photography, and the Blazon

In an address to the beloved, the speaker in Dunbar's "Love-Song" worries the question of its inevitable demise: "Oh, tell me, loved one, would my memory stay, / And would my image in your heart abide?"[137] Worried that the image will not remain, the speaker considers another possibility: "Or should I be as some forgotten dream, / That lives its little space, then fades entire?" As this form of lyric address is always also made to the reader, the poem asks after its own afterlife in wondering if time lived in its own space simply fades or if the "image in…[our] heart abide." The intercorporeal exchange of feeling, image, and memory as the interanimation of two bodies that describes the experience of reading Dunbar's love poetry is also what the speaker of "Love-Song" ultimately wishes for even after it passes: "'T would give my spirit stronger wings to know / That you remembered still and wept for me." What is known in spirit and expressed through body in the poem is in my account another version of the way in which Dunbar may be read. This chapter looks at Dunbar's love poetry, particularly the genre of the blazon, for the ways in which it, as in "Love-Song," draws attention to images abiding in hearts and the bodily manifestation of their affect.[138] In the last chapter I argued that in drawing on the ideas of the lyric and the ballad circulating at the time, Dunbar engages in the creation of what Elizabeth Alexander refers to as "Black spaces," namely poems that resist generic classification

[137] "Love-Song" appears in *Lyrics of Love and Laughter* (1903).

[138] It may also be the case that the blazon is a genre that Dunbar used to reimagine, if not rewrite, his earlier poetry that was not written in dialect into verse that was knowing that these poems would appear alongside their photograph counterparts in Dodd, Mead, and Company's gift books, in particular the transformation of "Love's Pictures" from *Oak and Ivy* (1893) into "A Planation Portrait" that appears in *Lyrics of Love and Laughter* (1903) and the photographically-illustrated *When Malindy Sings* (1903) and the shift in address from the beloved in the first poem to an address to the reader or observer in the latter.

that by virtue of their sympathetic lyric address create an intimate reading experience. Here, the mediation of a poetic speaker and its direct address to the reader in poems concerned with the media in and through which the representations of beloveds are depicted and felt is central to this chapter's interpretation of how Dunbar understands the operations of the blazon.

Most often through cataloguing description of different parts of the beloved's body, the blazon does the work of dismantling bodily forms through figurative language. Blazons don't intend to provide a totality of the beloved in their figures, but as they are written in the mode of ekphrasis, ask their readers to complete the image of the beloved they begin representing. In other words, it is a genre that foregrounds poetic process. Bodies of both the beloved and the reader become mediums in and through which poetic expression is felt. Historically, the beloved within the genre is either defined through a misogynistic gaze or is seen as devalued in relation to the rhetorical flourish of its figures and the poet responsible for them. The construction of a poetic speaker whose direct address mediates the reader's relationship to the women these poems describe is central to how Dunbar approaches the visual and affective dimensions of love and longing in the blazon in ways that move beyond crude description towards affective connection. This mode of address in the poems written in dialect toward a reader or viewer is almost always framed as a shared experience of gazing. In foregrounding the affective, though perhaps sometimes racializing gaze, within individual poems and within the poetic genres and literary modes through which they operate, Dunbar disassembles the position and affective gaze of the reader or viewer of his poems by laying bare the artifice involved in the making of the speaker and the beloved of the blazon in the process of their assembly in order to direct the reader's attention to their own participation in these processes. How this gaze operates within the poems, however, is less clear and is complicated by their photographic illustrations. On the one hand,

these photographs may be viewed as the natural result of poems concerned with commenting on and sharing the visual dimensions of love or a beloved's body. On the other hand, the performativity of these poems depends upon the limitations of the linguistic medium to never body forth these images, but rather to create the conditions for their existence in an affective circuit created between readers through their language.

Turning to Fred Moten may help in unpacking part of this complicated relation:

> The relation between image and thing, given in the relation between image and viewer, is taken away, as it were, by what the viewer must recognize as the material thingliness of the image. Strangely, this rematerialization of the image, even in artworks that purport to be interested in and to instantiate the dematerialization of the object, is shut down when the viewer fails to recognize his thingly materiality in all the fragility of its figuration. This is to say that the problem, again, isn't so much the interplay of reflection and representation; it is, rather the displacement and suppression of an imaginary and temporary relation between things (viewer and artwork) by an imaginary and endless nonrelation, masquerading as relation, between images. This is what arises when the viewer thinks of himself as form rather than as substance.[139]

We might consider the dematerialization of the object as the lyricization of art—a kind of becoming poetry of intellect and pure feeling over against the materiality of expressive mediums. Dunbar's love poetry, and I would suggest the genre of the blazon more generally, performs the kinds of processes of materialization and dematerialization that Moten outlines. For Moten and also for the conversations concerning conceptual art that his words inflect, part of this dematerialization is a form of commodification in the way that the poems and photographs within these dialect albums become exchangeable as part of Dodd, Mead, and Company's publishing run. This is to read the move to dematerialize the art object in an effort to reject fetishism, the market, and exchange against itself in an effort to suggest that in both turning to, or away from, the market results in the emptying of sociality, feeling, and connection that Dunbar's art might depend upon. Such dematerialization also speaks to the attempt of Dunbar's critics to

[139] Fred Moten, *Black and Blur* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2017), 205.

detach what we might term "poetic" or "lyric" value from photographic indexicality or history. My efforts in this chapter to think through the "imaginary and temporary relation between things (viewer and artwork)" is to consider the reader as a "substance" or substantial presence within the reading process. As in the previous chapter, I look to recover the dramatic aspects of an idea of lyric poetry, the experience of reading Dunbar's poetry might be what Moten would call a "surplus lyricism" or performance: "black performance has always been the ongoing improvisation of a kind of lyricism of the surplus—invagination, rupture, collision, augmentation."[140] This is to say that Dunbar's blazons call attention to what it feels like to be present as part of the poem's unfolding. Even if absence and presence are the conditions of each other's possibility, the experience of watching oneself reading and participating in the construction of an image that is/n't there that these poems provide is meant to return readers to their "thingly materiality in all the fragility of its figuration." While the photographic illustrations may look like they trouble this relation, they only serve to multiply it by offering more opportunities for connection. In limning the effect and affect of visuality within the experiential structure of his poems, Dunbar returns readers to the corporeality of the eye and the touch of sight in both material and metaphor.

In fact, the very question of what it means to participate in the shared experience of viewing a photograph serves as the opening to Dunbar's "The Photograph":

> See dis pictyah in my han'?
> Dat's my gal;
> Ain't she purty? Goodness lan'!
> Huh name is Sal.
> Dat's de very way she be—
> Kin' o tickles me to see
> Huh a smilin' back at me.

[140] Fred Moten, *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 26.

The circuit of spectatorial possibilities inaugurated by the poem's opening interrogative imperative to look at a photograph in the hand of the speaker is intimate in its focus on the keepsake, but also in the way this keepsake is both held and shared. Although the speaker runs the risk of exhibiting a private portrait in an expression of loving pride, the poem addresses the desire of participating in the representations of the speaker's, and therefore Black life without necessarily evaluating the motive behind such a desire. The racialization of the speaker's body, made explicit in references to their face ("My black cheek" and "An' as sho's my face is black") later in the poem exists here only as the print convention of "negro dialect" even though the exact type of dialect the poem is written in cannot be clearly gleaned from the opening line alone, but depends upon the editorial note, Dunbar's portrait, or perhaps just his name. This is to say that the possibility of seeing the photograph of Sal is contingent on the reader's image of the speaking voice attached to the speaker's hand and thereby to the hand of the poet. Yet, the relation is complicated since readers of this poem as it appeared in *The Photographic Times* would have had Dunbar in hand and would have seen his face on the periphery of the poem's text: Dunbar's face is in each stanza, each line, each word. Is Dunbar pretty in the way Sal is? Do we smile at his image that refuses to smile back? If poetry written in dialect depends upon forms of oral expression and literacy, particularly in the improvisatory possibilities engendered in the space between speech and print, it also depends upon, following Nurhussein, visual literacy even if such forms of literacy wears the division between the circumscribing tendency of minstrel caricature and the (im)possible authenticity in representations of Black life.

What we get in the remainder of the poem is not a straightforward ekphrastic description of Sal in a conservative sense of the descriptive mode, but rather the speaker's relationship to that photograph and its referent in a self-conscious attempt at sharing that experience in the form

of its poetic address. The weight of the image rests less on the capacity of photography to accurately represent whatever presents itself in front of the camera's lens, but rather on the accuracy with which the speaker can recall and kindle his affection for Sal. Sal is "smiling" back, reflecting the own speaker's smile, in a way that shifts the motivation for the image and perhaps, too, the speaker's affection.[141] The speaker's fantasy of motivating Sal's stilled smile recalls a version of Benjamin's description of the aura as both a mode of perception and the structure of experiencing the world: "to experience the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look back at us."[142] Rather than exclusively a lyric "feeling confessing itself to itself" in the vein of Mill, the auratic relation in this poem refuses the fantasy of bodily disappearance in its description of love even if the body of the speaker is only seen in the mediation of its construction as a print convention. What happens when we give the lyric the ability to look back at us? If, as Barthes' writes, "a photograph's *punctum* is that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)," then is this tickle just another version of the photograph's ability to touch?[143] Does "The Photograph" tickle and does that touch bruise? The distance between the real and the representation is what the poem interrogates and, as it turns out, how photography is experienced. The rhyme of the closing triplet in this first stanza, in its sonic enfolding of "be," "see," and "me," both enacts the visual mediation of an ontological understanding of the self in its simple materiality of words on the page, but listening to the poem blurs the boundaries between these divisions in the elongation of an intermedial "e."

[141] Dunbar's work contains a lot a of smiles, most famously in "We Wear the Mask:" With torn and bleeding hearts we smile" (ln. 4) and "We smile, but O great Christ, our cries" (ln.10). Reading "The Photograph" within *The Photographic Times* may inflect Sal's smile and shape its reading.
[142] Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," trans. Harry Zohn in *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire* ed. Michael William Jennings (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 204.
[143] See Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1981).

The details concerning the exchange of Sal's photograph, the movement from her hand to his, holding and not holding hands through the image, is addressed in the second stanza along with the feelings that the speaker has for her and her representation:

> She sont me dis photygraph
> Jes' las' week;
> An' aldough hit made me laugh—
> My black cheek
> Felt something a-runnin' queer;
> Bless yo' soul, it was a tear
> Jes' f'om wishin' she was here.

"The Photograph" and its near refusal to provide an ekphrastic description of Sal's photograph works alongside the ekphrastic dimensions of dialect. We don't need to see Sal since we already know what she looks like, or rather that she will exceed the descriptive possibilities offered in this form and yet her likeness as a gift, given to the speaker and the reader, creates an obligation to look and, in doing so, to feel. The dialectization of the third line turns the "it" of the photograph and Sal's image contained therein into the "hit" of the image. In feeling the blow the body becomes the medium through which the speaker ascertains their affective response. One of the few non-dialecticized lines in the poem, "my black cheek" is the surface on which this speaker feels a tear "a-runnin' queer" in its outward manifestation of his inner state. Queer in that it is only through the body or the feeling of the tear in its descent that the speaker comes to a recognition of the ambivalence created by Sal's photograph. The contrast between two indexes of affect and race, the tear and the black cheek, is suggestive of the speaker becoming photograph, namely a wet plate on which Sal's image and his lingering attachment to the smile that radiates over the distance between their bodies, once closed, now open, is affixed.

Yet, even that recognition is mediated by the reader. The line break and semicolon serve to separate "something a-runnin' queer" from the understanding of what that something is.

Although a common colloquialism, the phrase "Bless yo' soul" brings the reader back into the poem's present through its address. The precarious use of language as, or giving, self-representation famously concerns de Man in his discussion of prosopopoeia[144]—"the fiction of an apostrophe to an absent, deceased, or voiceless entity, which posits the possibility of the latter's reply and confers upon it the power of speech"—namely that "by making the dead speak, the symmetrical structure of the trope implies, by the same token, that the living are struck dumb, frozen in their own death."[145] Although the rhetorical structure of the question may stifle the possibility of reply, the speaker of "The Photograph" apostrophizes the reader in the poem's first stanza thereby anticipating the reader's response and inviting them to look at Sal's image. In this second stanza, the reader is revived in the blessing and recollection of their own soul. Often an expression of sympathy, although sometimes uttered tongue-in-cheek, "Bless yo' soul" softens the blow, the hit that that produces both laughter and tears, that the speaker is feeling by handling Sal's image emotionally and physically. If the reader is resurrected through the emotions of the speaker or at least through the fiction of address, then this blessing draws attention to how they are handling the experience of the poem itself. It calls attention to, and thereby seeks to undo, the fantasy of detachment in the genre of the lyric, but in doing strives to create a form of intimacy that depending on who is reading this poem may or may not want to participate in. Further, ekphrastic description is often a problem for the lyric since by calling attention to the representation it demands attention to the attachments that we have to our own representations in much the way photographs do. The wish in the final line of this stanza speaks to this relation. The photograph recalls the absence of the beloved—the absent presence of the image helps to generate the wish for physical proximity. The desire for the real rather than the representation

[144] From the Greek *prospon poien*: to give a mask or a face.
[145] Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-Facement," 78.

while still having an attachment to that representation may account for the deferral of understanding with the tear—the swing of emotion from laughter to crying or the co-presence of the two—in the shadow of an affective ambivalence. Or, to disingenuously return the hermeneutics of "We Wear the Mask," it is only "with torn and bleeding hearts we smile."

In the dilation of the longing that the speaker has for Sal amid his loneliness in the third stanza, the tickle returns to describe the knowledge this speaker has of Sal's love for him rather than the affect associated with seeing her smile:

> Often when I's all alone
> Layin' here,
> I git t'inkin' bout my own
> Sallie dear;
> How she say dat I's huh beau,
> An' hit tickles me to know
> Dat de gal do love me so.

In moments of solitude, the speaker turns away from the photograph to the affective dimensions of his body and skin, to the inner life of thought. The tickle returns to describe the knowledge of Sal's love rather than the affect associated with seeing her image—the sixth line of the septet finally joining the "tickle" and "hit" from the first and second stanzas. To know Sal's love is to know "hit tickles." An occasion to reflect on two epistemologies, the repetition of the "tickles me to know" and the "tickles me to see" in the first and third stanzas constructs an equivalence between Sal's smile and the knowledge of her love. Although the reader is not directly acknowledged in in this stanza, the deixis in "Layin' here" refers to the poem that laying there on the page, but in doing so heightens the already intimate relation constructed by positing an ambiguous space occupied by the reader and the speaker between the covers of the magazine. The opening line of the stanza continues to call attention to the fantasy of overheard speech associated with Mill's lyric is revised through the deictic gesture.

The final stanza closes the distance between "here" and "there" in the form of a possible return to Sal's side:

> Some bright day I's goin back,
> Fo' de la!
> An as sho's my face is black,
> Ax her pa
> Fu' de blessed little miss
> Who's a smilin' out o' dis
> Pictyah, lak she wan'ed a kiss.

The speaker's face, whose "black cheek" has already become the medium through which he experiences his attachment to Sal, also becomes an index for a marriage that has yet to come. The poem gestures towards such consummation in the kiss that serves as the final word. The interpretation of Sal's smile over the course of the poem culminates in the desire for an act that would remove the distance between their bodies in the touch of mouth work. The smile exceeds the boundary of the photograph or rather Sal's desire as interpreted by the speaker and cannot be contained in the mediation of the photographic medium. Dunbar's choice in dialectizing her desire, works against this very desire through the visual elision in "wan'ed" (which importantly sounds like the self-conscious, poetic archaism in Dunbar's other poems). In contrast to the "bright day" that begins the stanza, the final line closes, literally waning, in the dimming kiss that might be a diminishment of the speaker's possibilities—it gestures towards the precarious possibility that the distance between Sal's photograph and her referent can never be overcome. The poem ends with the problem of living with images, those that can be touched, those that can be read, and those that are imagined. Dunbar doesn't exclude the prospect of the kiss, but foregrounds precariousness that comes with affective attachment to the images that circulate inside and outside the mediums of their expression including the hearts and minds of those viewing and reading them. "The Photograph" dramatizes the process through which a poetic

"image" is created in the relation between the abstractions of speaker and reader in ways that privilege the affective dimensions of the encounter between them. Sal's smile, taken to represent her feelings as interpreted by the "speaker," becomes the cause for the radiation of feeling produced both for him and for the reader.

Sal appears in, or writes, "A Love Letter" in Dunbar's *Lyrics of Sunshine and Sunshine and Shadow* (1905) and the photographically illustrated in *Howdy Honey Howdy* (1905).[146] While it may not be the same Sal, or even the same speaker (it is tempting to read all of Dunbar's poetry as engaged in the creation of distinct personas), the conceit of the poem is much the same as "A Photograph," namely the speaker's account of receiving tidings of love from Sal and the decision to return to her side:

> Oh, I des received a letter f'om de sweetest little gal;
> Oh, my; oh, my.
> She's my lovely little sweetheart an' her name is Sal:
> Oh, my; oh, my.

The refrain—"Oh, my; oh, my"—marks shifts in the pendulum swings of the speaker's emotions both in this stanza and throughout the poem. While the speaker cannot help but share his excitement at receiving the letter, he also must share it since his experience of the letter is necessarily mediated by another reader: "I got a man to read it an' he read it fine." Though assured of Sal's love, the speaker is "in such a awful plight" in not being able to reply in his own

[146] Three of Leigh Richmond Minor's photographs for the poem appear in *Howdy Honey Howdy* (1905). In the first photograph, the model appears on porch with a wide smile holding the letter in his left hand and the envelope in his right. Neither looking at the paper in his hands nor turning his head to face the camera, the model stares out toward the right edge of the frame squinting against the sunlight falling on his face. The second photograph is taken at a distance where the modeled speaker and another man, likely the man who "read it fine," are captured their entirety. The speaker leans against an ox cart listening intently while he watches the other man read his love letter. Positioned near the left edge of the image the two men take up less space in the illustration than the two oxen in an overdetermined signifier of class. The doubling of the pairs suggesting that both the human and nonhuman pairs work together. The model is returned to the porch in the third photograph, but is positioned standing and ready to leave for Sal. The model is placing the letter which has been returned to its envelope into the inner pocket of his jacket where it will remain against his heart.

hand: “I t’ink of huh at mornin’ an’ I dream of huh at night; / But how’s I gwine to cou’t huh w’en I do’ know how to write?” While the speaker goes on to address how he “do’ know,” the eye dialect suggests that might know. Or rather, that it isn’t a matter of knowing, but rather one of feeling that moves the poem along in addition to problematizing the fantasy the poem’s speaker and whoever put these words on page are one and the same. With a “heath...bubblin’ ovah” with all he might tell Sal, the speaker’s apprehension in courting her is determined by his illiteracy: “But dey’s t’ings dat I’s a–t’inkin’ dat is only fu’ huh ears.” In drawing attention to what can and cannot be shared, represented, or mediated, as a companion to “The Photograph,” “A Love Letter” highlights the epistolary nature of photography. The speaker in “The Photograph” was interested in what it carried and how Sal was “smilin’ out” of the print in much the same way that Sal’s letter speaks of the silent performance occurring between its lines. With words and photographs meant to touch and be touched, Dunbar’s intermedial poetry offers a reading practice of shared intimacy. Cutting through the blend of nervous eroticism and heartfelt enthusiasm, the poem ends with the speaker’s decision to approach in person: “So to go down daih an’ tell huh is de only way, it ’pears.”[147] In ending with appearance, the speaker’s own in front of Sal in order to avoid the peering eyes of the “lots of folks” he could pay to “copy” his thoughts and perhaps also eyes looking for kinds of readerly pleasure, the poem contrasts the difference between the real and its representation, but suggests that the difference isn’t stark as it may seem since words on a page carry with them the possibility to reach “huh ears” just the same. Although “A Love Letter” speaks of a hesitancy in the sharing of amorous affect, “The Photograph,” seems to delight in the performance of its mediation for the experience it may

[147] In *Howdy Honey Howdy* (1905) the dialect is changed to “’peahs” to rhyme with other changes in the poem: “ears” to “eahs” and “years” to “yeahs.” While these changes may work in a productive motion with the “Oh my” of the refrain in becoming a series of *oh’s* and *ah’s*, it remains an overdetermined editorial decision by Dodd, Mead, and Company.

provide reader—an experience that Dunbar cultivates through the intermediary speaker and its direct address to the reader.[148]

Holding "The Photograph" in Hand

If "The Photograph" is interested in exploring the dimensions of relationality inherent in a "lyric" reading practice through an ekphrasis of feeling that approximates Mills' "feeling confessing itself to itself," yet always distances itself from such a formulation through the emphasis on its medial embodiment, "The Photograph" seems either an obvious choice for illustration or a poor one due to the difficulty of providing a body for an image that exists in a scene of intimate understanding between a reader and speaker—picturing what is not (supposed to be) there. Leigh Richmond Minor's interpretation of the poem for *Li'l' Gal* (1904) exists in an uneasy relation to the original poem, but partially avoids this problem by staging a performance of viewing the photograph in the poem as opposed to attempting to reproduce the photograph of Sal herself. Printed above the opening stanza so that the reader will encounter a photograph before reading "The Photograph," the first illustration contains a young, well-dressed man sitting on the edge of his seat and resting his elbows on the small table in front him. The layout of the text invites readers to consider the possibility that the following poem may be about this photograph rather than an illustrative drama thereof. This possibility however, is not a misreading, as the poem is about this photographs, about all the photographs in the dialect albums, and photography in general. It speaks to sensuous of the photograph and the images it

[148] Dunbar was introduced to Alice Moore in the April 1895 issue of the Boston *Monthly Review*. The combination of her writing and likeness that was reproduced alongside it moved Dunbar's hand as the opening paragraph of the letter reads: "You will pardon my boldness in addressing you, I hope, and let my interest in your work be my excuse. I sometimes wonder if in the rare world of art, earthly conventions need always be heeded. I am drawn to write you because we are working along the same lines and a sketch of yours in the Monthly Review so interested me that I was anxious to know more of you and your work." Dunbar to Alice Moore, April 17, 1895, in *Letters from Black America*, ed. Pamela Newkirk (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2009), 270.

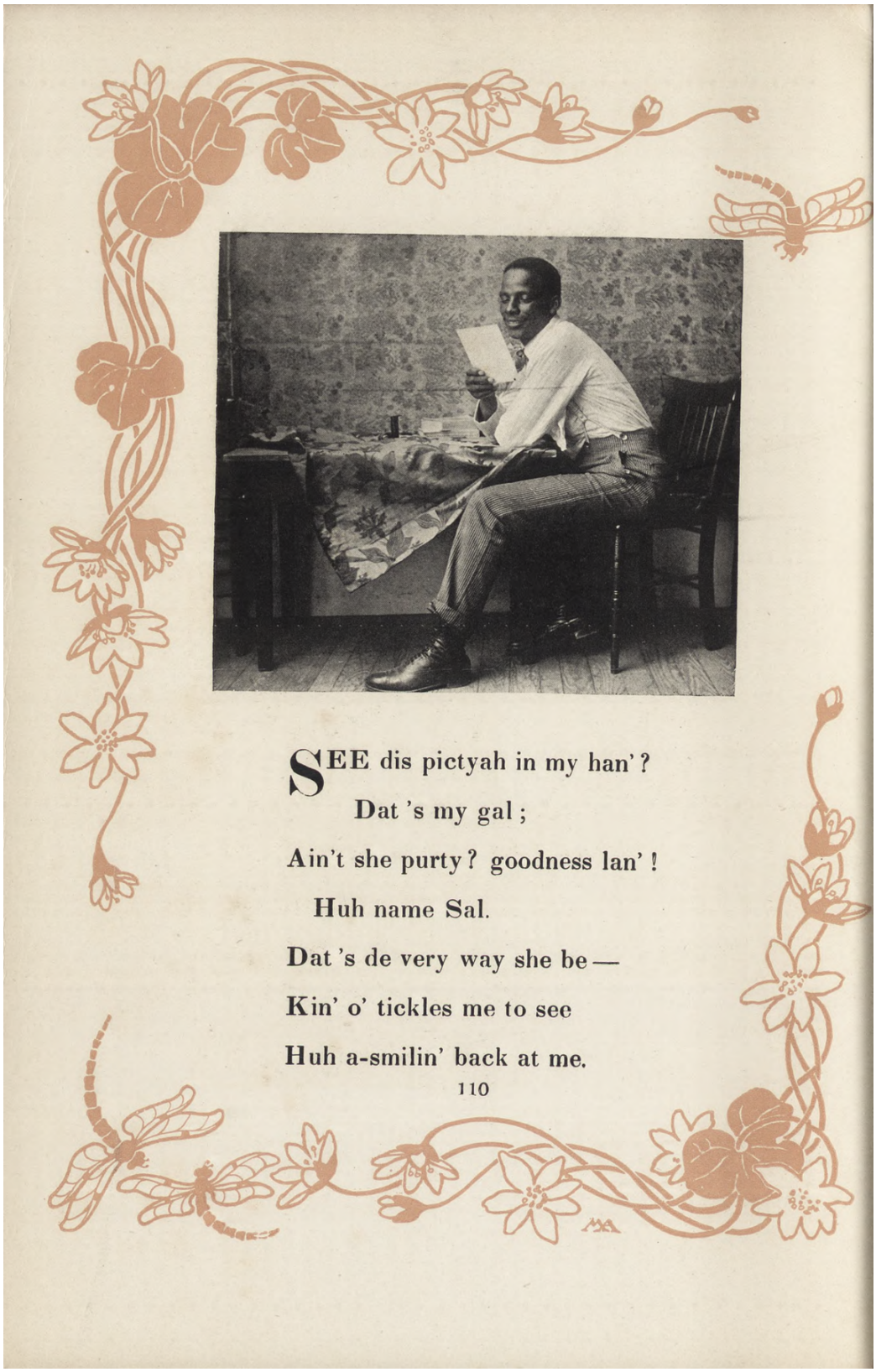
creates. As Ray Sapirstein points out, "the model, an individual who looks as if he could walk through the door today, is seemingly a stand-in for Dunbar, a misconception the photographers may have welcomed, if not cultivated for the benefit of Hampton Institute."[149] For Sapirstein, since the "The Photograph" is a poem that "melds love, photographic fetishism, and black emotionalism, hardly the dignified description of African American characters that appear in most of his [Dunbar's] books," it exists in a tenuous relation with the photographic illustrations—one between "thoroughly modern comportment and down-home diction, a nuanced vision presciently reconciling twentieth-century progress and the African American vernacular."[150] In departing from Sapirstein, my interest is in the intimate scene of reading rather than the creation and kinds of consumptive practices we might associate with different intimate publics buying Dunbar's books. I also wish to take seriously the form of expression, however commodified or instrumentalized, that appears on the page. In claiming that these poems and photo-texts make claims about knowing, thinking, and reading differently predicated on an attention to affect, body, and sense, I'm also trying not to determine in advance or overdetermine Blackness or understandings of thereof in the way critics and other readers have previously interpreted these poems. Rather, working in the wake of Elizabeth Alexander, I view these poems as "Black spaces" wherein different forms of connection, affect, and sense are made possible. Dunbar's focus on invisibility and construction attests to an understanding of Blackness that exceeds, even if it manifests itself in, medial representation—a kind of photographic ontology that makes visible what is and isn't there. As these poems, and even the photographic illustrations of Minor and the other member of the Hampton Institute Camera Club, concern

[149] Ray Sapirstein, "Out from Behind the Mask: Paul Laurence Dunbar, The Hampton Institute Camera Club, and Photographic Performance of Identity," in *Pictures and Progress*, ed. Maurice O. Wallace and Shawn Michelle Smith (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 177.
[150] Ray Sapirstein, "Out from Behind the Mask," 176 and 177.

themselves with feeling through the presence and absence of love in its mediations, their focus is on making tangible or at least visible the felt connection between persons. Even this chapter's focus on the discursive registers in and through which photography and poetry create meaning for readings of Dunbar ends up leading us back to feeling. In what follows, I attempt to feel my way through two different performances that occur when reading *Li'l' Gal* (1904) and *When Malindy Sings* (1903).

To return to the first photograph illustrating "The Photograph" in *Lil'' Gal*, the model's body seemingly balances on the edge of the chair on which he sits (or nearly stands) in an arrested motion while his left foot, highlighted in the reflection off his shoe, extends into the center of the picture plane as he straddles one of the table legs. The line of his leg meets with that of the edge of the tablecloth at his knee and both extend upward along the edge of his shirt sleeve which blends almost seamlessly with edge of the tablecloth. The empty spaces created in the triangle formed by his torso, arm and leg are reflected in another triangular space created by his leg, the tablecloth, and the floor—in the image of an hourglass his body is keeping time. He smiles into the photograph held with his right hand a short distance from his face in remembrance of the woman who is there in image only. There is no gesture of inclusion, of sharing the image, as in the poem since the face of the photograph remains solely for the young man to behold. The exposure has turned the back of the photograph into a white space or surface of invisibility that contrasts with the tonal range of the floral wallpaper that blends into a tablecloth that hangs off the edge of the furniture. The designs of the wallpaper turned tablecloth seem to overflow the image with their flowers and vines as they multiply in the designs of Margaret Armstrong that circle the halftone. Or, perhaps those flowers have bloomed in an inward movement from the white space of the page into the photographic image. Even so, the

man and the photograph he holds are doubly enframed in floral, yet there is no natural quality to his pose. Multiple disjunctions are created between the visible appearance of the model and the supposed sound of the poem in dialect on the page, between Armstrong's floral frame and the sharp shapes of the photograph and printed text, and between the images they create. The image calls attention to itself as a surface of projection, but as those surfaces begin to blend this page asks the reader to question their own relation to the boundaries of the words and text that appear in the book they hold in hand.



SEE dis pictyah in my han'?
Dat 's my gal;
Ain't she purty? goodness lan'!
Huh name Sal.
Dat 's de very way she be—
Kin' o' tickles me to see
Huh a-smilin' back at me.

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Figure 5. Page 110 from *Li'l' Gal* (1904). Photograph by Leigh Richmond Minor. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/gri_33125001396577.

The pose in which the model holds the photograph close to his face and chest will be repeated in the third and final illustration for the poem, but it also interprets in advance the kiss in the poem's final line. While the poem's speaker suggest that it is Sal's smile that brings the possibility of a kiss to mind, Minor's illustration makes visible an intertwined desire that finds its impetus not in Sal's representation, but a desire on the part of the viewer to kiss, or kiss through, the photograph. Dunbar treats the photograph's kiss, or the desire to kiss a photograph, directly in an undated song, "I Been Kissin' Yo' Picture." The lyrics outline the longing of a couple for one another after a divisive "quarrel." Now in separate states, both the "lady an' huh lovah" sit down to write one another of their desire to be physically present together and the resulting letters consist of the song's chorus:

> I been kissin' yo' picture, honey,
> I been thinkin' o' you.
> Yes, I'll come home, ef you'll send de money,
> I'll come back to you.
> Yes, I know dat I's been scan'lous,
> But I'll evah be true,
> But don't you know it might-a-been wusser,
> I'll come back to you.[151]

The setting of the song recalls Nadia Nurhussein's discussion of the genre of the "epistolary dialect poem" I outlined in the previous chapter, particularly her suggestion that "using a literate form to express speech in a dialect letter invokes the parallel larger-scale incompatibility of using a literate form to express speech in dialect poetry generally."[152] While the "tension between a traditional dialect poetry that is performatory and an emerging dialect poetry of silent literacy" that Nurhussein claims is created through the epistolary form may not quite capture the

[151] Paul Laurence Dunbar, "I Been Kissin' Yo' Picture" in *In his Own Voice: The Dramatic and Other Uncollected Works of Paul Laurence Dunbar*, ed. Herbert Woodward Martin and Ronald Primeau (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2002), 304.
[152] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," 234.

performance of letters that were always meant to be heard in song, it is nevertheless present.[153] To this I'd like to add the interrelated tensions created between media, namely photograph, text, and body. The performance of reading Dunbar's poetry calls attention to these tensions and in experiencing, or feeling one's way through them. While this is tantamount to returning to a commonplace assumption in aesthetics in saying that the art object only exist in and through its reception, I do feel that the constructions of Dunbar's poetry and even the interpretive practice of the photographic illustrations and gift books that Dunbar had varying degrees of control over, call attention to the mutual constitution of poem and reader within this relation. Just like in the "The Photograph" where the speaker gestures towards the future and a possible marriage with Sal—"I Some bright day I's goin back"—the chorus is about the closing of a distance and a return to intimacy. The kiss of the photograph becomes the occasion for reflection through multiple temporalities that end up returning the listener to the performative present. The acknowledgement of past "scan'lous" behavior, a promise to "evah be true," and the hope for a future meeting—"I'll come back to you"—found in the chorus are occasioned by the meeting between bodies mediated by a photograph.

The second photographic illustration for "The Photograph" appears immediately after the first stanza and is given its own page within *Li'l' Gal*'s layout. The model stands sideways in the half portrait against a blank background as if he has stepped out of the poem, or even the illustrations, for a second. Or, perhaps he has entered he poem, the photograph becoming its own stanza and the model existing in the white background or nonspace of lyric poetry—an atemporal or ahistorical space—that the poem and illustrations ultimately work against. In this photograph reader nearly see Sal, but the photograph in the model's right hand remains out of focus. While

[153] Nadia Nurhussein, "Paul Laurence Dunbar's Performances and the Epistolary Dialect Poem," 234.

the poem is gendered, it difficult to read any expressions of gender in the photograph. The tight cropping of hair may suggest a someone that may identify as male (my wish is that it is an image of Dunbar). The exaggerated angles in the model's pose and facial expression lead readers back to the poem on the facing page. It is a photograph that does not want to be looked at as our eyes continually move out of the picture plane in following the direction of his eyes, smile lines, or elbow. As if giving readers a key to seeing the picture he holds in his hand, the model returns them to the poem where Sal may exist for them. What exists at the edge of image? A Reader? Yet, the return to poem means returning us to Sal's smile in the final line which, according to the speaker looks "lak she wan'ed a kiss." The model's coy smile rhymes with that of Sal's and begs the question: do we as readers also want a kiss? In other words, these photographs become the "The Photograph" not in accurately illustrating the poem, but rather because they create the same affective relation and possibilities for intimate expression that the poem both performs and takes as its subject.

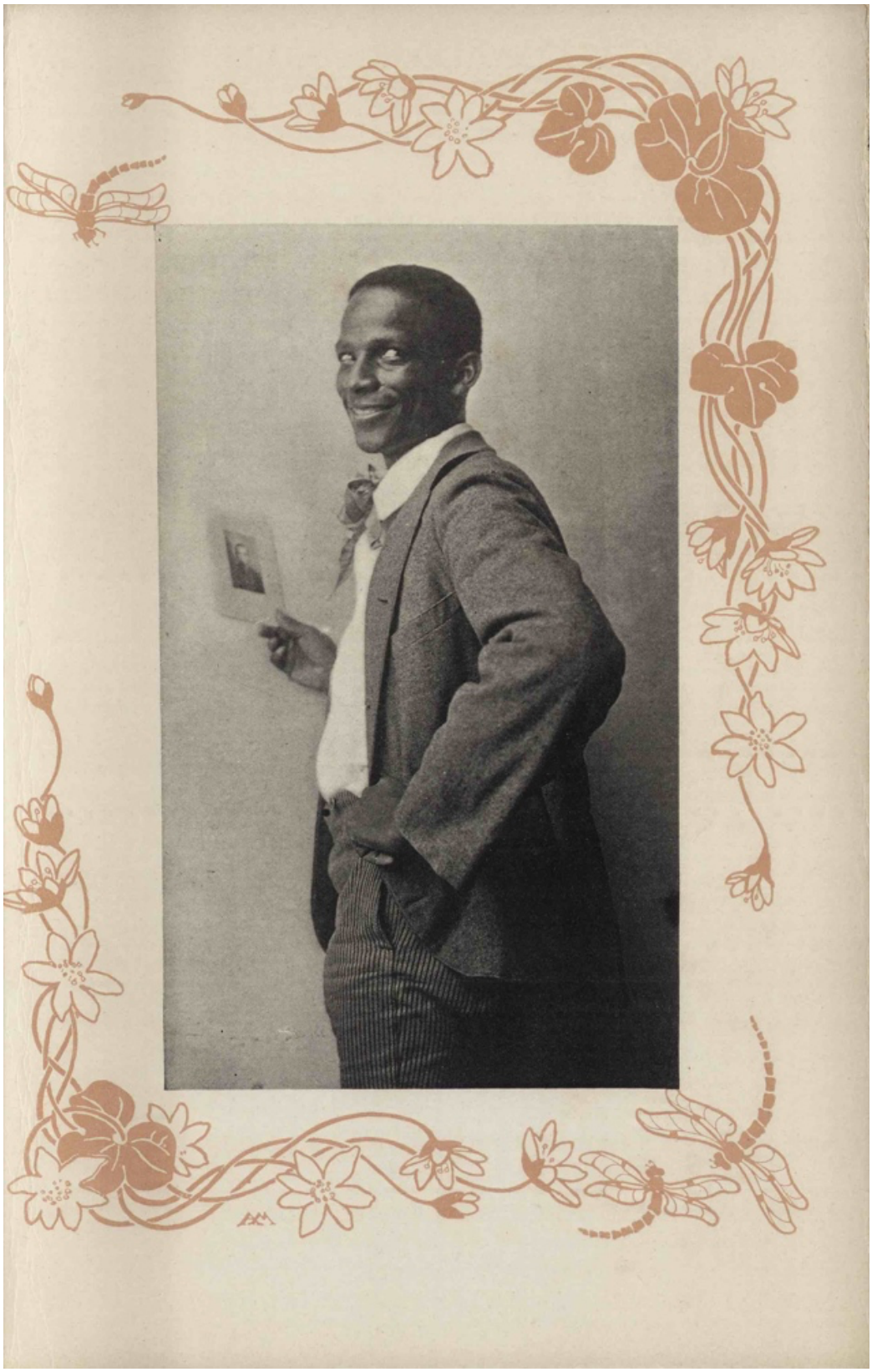


Figure 6. Page 111 from *Li'l' Gal* (1904). Photograph by Leigh Richmond Minor. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/gri_33125001396577.

Whereas in the first two illustrations the model was standing or sitting sideways, the remaining photograph is notable for depicting him straight on as he sits with legs crossed directly in front of the camera. The height of the camera suggests a point-of-view from a chair—it is as if we are sitting with him in the wallpapered room. The proximal intimacy of the photographic apparatus is paralleled in both the model's pose as he looks down into a photograph as well as in the insertion of this illustration into the final stanza of the poem. The final three lines of the poem are set off through the inclusion:

> Fu' de blessed little miss
> Who's a smilin' out o' dis
> Pictyah, lak she wan'ed a kiss.

Again, the layout of the publication highlights the smile and the kiss—the mouthwork of the poem and the photograph—and creates an oscillation between these last three lines and the illustration. The arrested motion of the photograph suggests that the model is either pulling it toward himself in contemplation of a kiss or, is moving the photograph away having already shared with image what he would have liked to have shared with body. Although we may have glimpsed Sal on the previous page, the pose of the model in this last photograph again frustrates attempts on the reader's part to see the content of what he is holding. The blank, white, backside of the photograph that in the first illustration was a space of possibility or potential exposure is placed over the model's heart—the placement nearly literalizing the metaphor. The contrast of the illustration as well as the angle with which the model holds the photograph suggests a further dimension of intimacy as the photograph seems to both appear and disappear into his white shirt. As the photograph remains in the center of the frame, the composition emphasizes the model's hands. The veins in the model's right hand are visible and his grip with both hands differs from the first illustration where his fingers spread out against the back of the photograph. Here, they

close onto one another holding tight the print between index and thumb. After viewing the second illustration of the half portrait, the diminished size of this illustration within the stanza makes the models pose feel even more constricted. While the crossing of legs may be gesturing towards the crossing of bodies—the bunching of his trousers suggestive of where a kiss might lead—it is as if the model's pose does not belie his desire to embrace Sal. This photograph details how Dunbar might be read in the ways I've argued for in this chapter. Forgetting the theatricality of the illustration for a moment, the illustration is suggestive of the conscious or unconscious movements of the body as it is pressed against the medium of the poem or photograph and the feelings such movements entail.

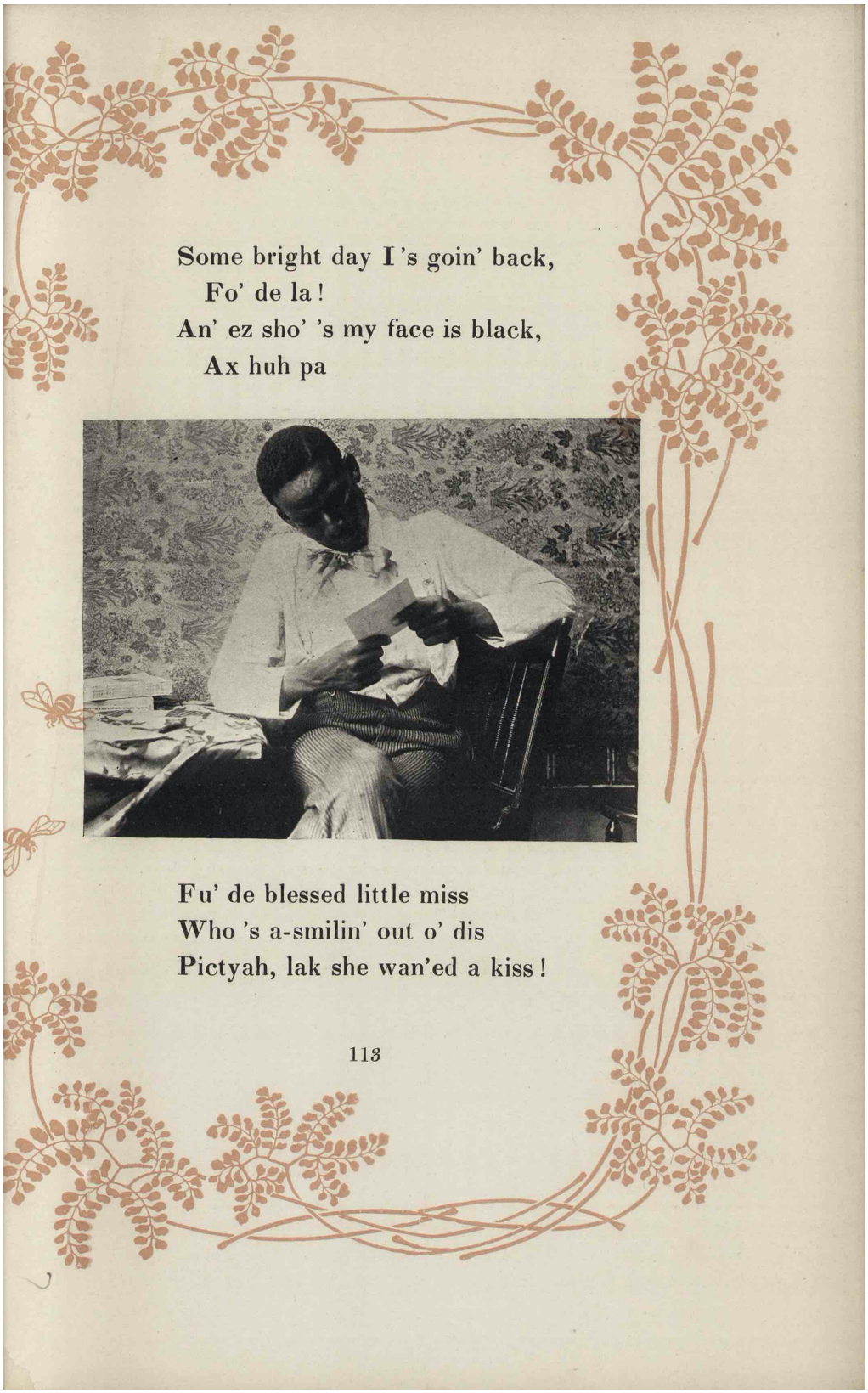


Figure 7. Page 113 from *Li'l' Gal* (1904). Photograph by Leigh Richmond Minor. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/gri_33125001396577.

The editors of Dodd, Mead, and Company seem to have been aware of the imbrication of desire and touch in "The Photograph" and made use of it in the layout decisions for the poem aptly entitled "Parted" that immediately follows.[154] Though some of the poems in *Li'l' Gal* contain a title page followed by either poetry or photographic illustration, the first photograph for "Parted" appears in advance of its title. This is not unusual in the volume, but the choice to include "Parted" and its associated series of photographs after the "The Photograph" suggests that editors wanted to play with the desires of different readers for either optimistic or disturbing ends. At first glance it appears that the illustration might depict the reunion of Sal with the embodied speaker of "The Photograph" due to the similarity in dress between the two models. Possibly providing a happy ending to the poem, the young couple are seen standing together against a riverscape, The white sails and white shirts of the couple rhyme with one another across the top half of the picture plane. The woman looks down with her right hand at her chin perhaps pondering the proposal alluded to in the poem. The illustration does not invite the kind of intimacy with viewers like those for "The Photograph" did. Readers would have needed to reorient the book within their hands or perhaps their own bodies in order to view the illustration from the intended perspective. Again, the decorative floral border enters and exits the image with the wild growth spread across the bottom of the illustration. The position of the couple in front of the part of the landscape where the plant life is most abundant gestures towards an obscurity ultimately violated by the reader's gaze—a hint of privacy over against voyeuristic fantasy engendered by camera lens. Yet, such a fantasy may end up being quite tame as we may be simply curious as to whether the reunion has gone well and perhaps, too, are also slightly obscured ourselves in hiding behind leaves.

[154] Parted originally appeared in *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899).



Figure 8. Page 114 from *Li'l' Gal* (1904). Photograph by Leigh Richmond Minor. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/gri_33125001396577.

The illustration, however, belongs to the series for "Parted," a poem that explicitly engages with chattel slavery and, for some readers, may motivate fantasies of enslavement over black bodies. Framed as an address to his beloved rather than the reader, the poem's speaker attempts to comfort himself and his lover in the face of immensurable trauma: "Ole Mas' done sol' me down de stream." The mood in, and created by, the illustration quickly turns from heartache to a much deeper pain. In casting her face downward, the model that represents the poem's Jane is no longer navigating a matrimonial choice, but rather confronts an existential question concerning what it means to be Black in the antebellum United States. The illustration quickly becomes thanatological in keeping with Barthes' phenomenology of photography, namely his understanding of what he terms the *noeme* of photography: "that-has-been."[155] As potential last images of the speaker and Jane, but reminders of their deaths regardless, the boatman dressed in black that kneels in the middle ground of the illustration becomes a figure for death. The dark clothing and condensation in the posture of his crouched body contrasts with the shine of sunlight against the water and the white clothes of the poem's lovers.

It may be the case that the editors of the volume needed to reframe, or part, the love in "The Photograph" by racializing it in relation to chattel slavery. This change in mood is created in part by the shift in address. Whereas readers experience a direct hailing into the poem in "The Photograph," here they read/overhear a speaker talking to his beloved. We are not asked to feel in the immediacy of this moment, but rather encouraged to bear witness to its tragedy. The poem performs many of the themes in "I Been Kissin' Yo' Picture" including a focus on the constancy or truth that the speaker and Jane have for one another as well as the promise that they will be

[155] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography,* 77.

find themselves together again: “O’ co’se I knows dat you’ll be true, / I know you’ll wait twell I come back.”

This conceit unfolds over three septets and a final octave that all make use of a refrain—“my lady, my lady”—repeated three times within each stanza in ways that either soften or amplify the horror of the poem’s content. If the repetition of this refrain keeps the poem together as the speaker tries to reconcile his continued existence as a something exchangeable, it renders the attempts of the speaker to make sense of this parting all the more unsettling. In the first stanza, the speaker struggles to soften the blow—Dey tell me’t ain’t so bad’s hit seem”—before conceding in the second stanza that their parting was inevitable: “I knowed some day we’d have to pa’t, / But den hit put’ nigh breaks my hea’t.” The eye dialect emphasizes corporeal impact with the repetition of “hit” for ‘it’ and the breaking of hearts. Gathering strength in the third stanza, the speaker articulates what he knows is likely impossible: “I'll stan’ de ship, I'll stan’ de chain, / But I'll come back, my darlin’ Jane.” The closing stanza suggests the only possibility of a reunion is in death:

> Jes’ wait, jes’ b’lieve in whut I say,
> My lady, my lady;
> D’ ain’t nothin’ dat kin keep me ’way,
> My lady, my lady.
> A man’s a man, an’ love is love;
> God knows ouah he’ats, my little dove;
> He’ll he’p us f’om his th’one above,
> My lady, my lady.

The repetition of tautology in defining “man” and “love” appropriately gives way to “God” and redoubles the speaker’s insistence in the stanza’s first line for Jane to “b’lieve” in what he is telling her. The speaker calling Jane “my little dove” recalls the “caged bird” of the 1899 “Sympathy” and the triple rhyme of “love” “dove” and “above” foregrounds their interdependence as abstractions. Love, the poem suggests, cannot exist without becoming a

figure. Rather than existing in and through bodies that can be bought or sold, the only recourse that the speaker has is to turn to the nonhuman—the divine, the animal, poetry—in a last effort at consolation. Yet, this move enfolds on itself particularly through the use of the refrain as the figures and form of the poem are made substantive in ways that underscore the affect of the situation the speaker is in. What would otherwise read as poetic apparatus or commonplace poetic trappings—"My lady, my lady"—become forms of resistance in the face of racial violence. This is to say that Dunbar's knowledge of the history of poetic forms as well as ideas associated with the category of the lyric are made to acknowledge a love and Blackness that such a tradition could not, or would not, think. Though the repetition of "My lady, my lady" looks like and sounds like "poetry" and even risks turning into the pure sound of solfège syllables, it doesn't ring hollow. Or, perhaps it reads or sounds more like whatever a ballad is?

Reading "Love-Lyrics"

In his entry on "Ballad Poetry" for *Johnson's New Universal Cyclopedia: A Scientific and Popular Treasury of Useful Knowledge* (1875), Harvard's first Professor of English, Francis James Child, describes the ballad as "a narrative song, a short tale in lyric verse," or a "dance-song" whose "essence [is] an expression of our common human nature."[156] The distillation of the ballad's essence more often than not was understood by Child and many nineteenth- and twentieth-century readers as an expression of American whiteness via an appeal to Anglo-Saxon ancestry and poetic traditions. Child goes on to write that, "[t]he fundamental characteristic of

[156] Francis James Child, ''Ballad Poetry'' in *Johnson's New Universal Cyclopedia: A Scientific and Popular Treasury of Useful Knowledge* volume 1 ed. Frederick Barnard and Arnold Guyot (New York: A.J. Johnson and Son, 1875), 365. See also Child's collections of ballads. Originally published by Little, Brown, and Company in 1860 as an eight-volume collection, *English and Scottish Ballads*, Child's collection of ballads was expanded and renamed *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads* and published between 1882 and 1898 in ten volumes by Houghton, Mifflin, and Company. The volumes contain 305 songs and their variants.

popular ballads is therefore the absence of subjectivity and of self-consciousness."[157] Francis Barton Gummere makes a similar claim in his *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English* (1886): "Both names, ballad and folk-song, are suggestive: *ballad* means a song to which one may dance; *folk-song* is something made by the whole people, not by individual poets."[158] Rehearsing the usual tensions between expressions of self and expressions of species, race, or nation that dialectically inflect those very forms of self-expression, these definitions provided by Child and Gummere pose a problem for "Parted" in their fantasies surrounding a preliterate form of national expression.[159] Denied subjectivity both through enslavement and in the history of poetic form, the ballad may seem an odd invocation on Dunbar's part for a poem describing love during chattel slavery.

Yet, as I've been arguing, Dunbar's poetry is resistant to simple generic classification as Dunbar uses forms, tropes, and motifs from both ideas of the lyric and the ballad circulating at the time not simply as ways to critique them, but to use them, to invoke Elizabeth Alexander yet again, in the creation of "Black spaces." It does, to put it bluntly, the impossible and works against an empty romanticization or form of control the editors of *Li'l' Gal* may have sought to create in placing this poem after "The Photograph." Dunbar's poetry is not reducible to dialect, Blackness is not reducible to dialect, and Blackness is not reducible. Meredith McGill notes that "a structuring opposition between ballad narrative and lyric time has long been a mainstay of definitions of the ballad" and points out that ballads often "index or foreground the scene of their

[157] Francis James Child, ''Ballad Poetry,'' 365.
[158] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English*, 35. Emphasis in original.
[159] Fay Foster set Dunbar's "Parted" to music: "Sol' Me Down de Stream" (1912). The sheet music incorrectly uses "Sol' Me Down de Stream" as the title for Dunbar's "Parted," a potentially telling misreading typical of those more interested in the practice of slavery rather than the lives and loves of those who had been enslaved however abstract the engagement (Dunbar's name is also misspelled as "Paul Lawrence Dunbar"). The sheet music notes that part for voice is to be "sung slowly, with extreme sadness."

transmission, whereas lyrics are said to repress it."[160] In lyricizing the ballad Dunbar removes this opposition and blurs distinctions between ballad (folk) and lyric categories. In the remediation of the ballad and the lyric in the dialect albums, I'm suggesting, too, that the format emphasizes calls already within the poetry to consider the scene in and through which they are read. Furthermore, the multiple temporalities that these poems and photographs both exist in and work to create troubles the temporal dimensions of lyric/ballad and antebellum/postbellum within the iterative singularity of reading a Dunbar poem. It is my hope that a portion of Dunbar's readers both then and now wouldn't delight in aestheticization of human suffering, but would acknowledge their own powerlessness in the face of a past they cannot change—Sal and Jane remain forever parted from their "speakers." Looking back, feeling through, and staying with becomes a form of ethics insofar as readers acknowledge themselves in the ongoingness of history. Although this poem may read as a form of suspended capacity, these poems, and the volumes in which they appear, ask their readers to consider the forms relation lived in and out of poetry as potentiality. The final illustration for "Parted" shows Jane against the dock's railing holding a cloth up to her face in a scene of presumed weeping. A steamboat appears on the water in the distance slightly blurred by the depth of field, but its immense size still renders it in proportions similar to Jane's as they both take up nearly the same amount of compositional space within the illustration. Jane doesn't look off into the distance, but rather casts her eyes down into the water even if the view is mediated through tears or a cloth that intends to wipe them away. If the refrain "my lady, my lady" leads reader's back to Jane, so too do the lines of the railing and their shadows on the boards below in their movement toward her figure situated in the corner of

[160] Meredith McGill, "What Is a Ballad? Reading for Genre, Format, and Medium," 160 and 161.

the dock. In lines of sunshine and shadow, her embodiment in the photograph or the reality of her abstraction becomes the reason to reflect on the conditions of our own possibility as readers.

Jes' wait, jes' b'lieve in whut I say,
My lady, my lady ;
D' ain t nothin' dat kin keep me 'way,
My lady, my lady.



A man 's a man, an' love is love ;
God knows ouah hea'ts, my little dove ;
He 'll he'p us f'om his th'one above,
My lady, my lady.

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Figure 9. Page 117 from *Li'l' Gal* (1904). Photograph by Leigh Richmond Minor. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/gri_33125001396577.

While the model turns her head downward, I do not think it is a matter of whether or not she can "stan' de ship" as her gaze falls on the reflective surface of the water in a motion of contemplation. The position of the illustration within the fourth stanza sets off the poem's final four lines in ways that, though unintentional, guide readers to question their position within the poem's figural economy:

> A man's a man, an' love is love;
> God knows ouah he'ats, my little dove;
> He'll he'p us f'om his th'one above,
> My lady, my lady.

Earlier I argued for reading these lines as a gesture toward death as a form of futurity, but the decision on the part of the Dodd, Mead, and Company editors to split the stanza in this way also unintentionally directs readers to reconsider the subject and affect of the poem in ways occasioned by its position. Whereas the poem provides a hint toward the kind of affective reception and interpretation it might receive in the presence divine omniscience, which I would argue always calls attention to the scene of the text's reading, by hailing the reader on their "th'one above" looking down on its pages, the layout places Jane in the "above" of the stanza and makes of the final lines a caption for the photograph that appears directly above them. Again, the emphasis is on abstraction through tautology that may begin to feel personal. The first of these lines reads like the abolitionist slogan "Am I Not a Man and a Brother?" and likewise asks readers to consider the forms of love and selfhood constituted through a shared understanding and participation in abstract universalities despite the inherent risk in such generalizing turns of phrase. As a kind of caption, it also asks the question: what is wrong with this photograph? The answer, of course, is that the speaker is not there. While this visible absence may hold open the possibility for readers to imaginatively enter into the image created by the interarticulation of poem and photograph, the constitutive emptiness of the illustration

taken with these final lines becomes a question of care. If the speaker is gone, then what is to be done to redress inequity and pain? However much this idea is occasioned by a proliferation of print formats within a culture of mass media, the idea of the ballad circulating at the time is predominately defined as a concern with the authenticity of (preliterate) folk expression no longer accessible. The valences of this idea of poetry within this particular love poem make use of a readerly association with authenticity in order to argue for what may be accessible in the now of their reading, namely a form of shared ethics occasioned by, and accessible through, the affective dimensions of the poem's subject and publication format.

The processes of affective self-making in and through poetic form, genre, and even publication format as kinds of creative constraint become a way for Dunbar to address Blackness within a history of racialized poetics. My reading of Dunbar's interest in a return to the scene of reading has foregrounded different ideas of poetry and poetic devices that by virtue of their abstract relation to this scene of reading turn out to be aspects of these poems that offer readers forms of connection. In other words, the figures in Dunbar's poetry are *felt*. I turn now to the blazon, most generally a poem of praise or blame, that has long been associated with love, addresses to beloved subjects/objects, and cataloging description. While feminist poetics has long since outlined the blazon a form of construction and control over gendered representation, I argue that Dunbar's blazon, "A Plantation Portrait" draws attention to its own construction through the use of a direct address as in "The Photograph" thereby drawing attention to the reader's presence as part of that construction. I also turn to the blazon for its recognizability as a poetic genre even though it has long been subsumed under the category of lyric. I focus on the blazon for the ways in which it makes visible issues concerning the racialization of poetic form, genre, and modes of literary description. The blazon is a problematic genre, if we agree to use

that term to name a form of recognition of the ways it may create meaning, for scholars interested in reading poetry written in dialect as a genre rather than as an ekphrastic mode of literary description. In other words, though these poems are written in dialect, they are most recognizable as blazons. While other genres would also suffice, the blazon also foregrounds the importance of understanding poetry written in dialect and poetry not written in dialect as forms of artifice. This flattening of description may trouble those invested in the authenticity of folk expression, preliterate cultures, or other fallacies occasioned by ballad fantasies, but my point remains that we need to take seriously Dunbar's poetry written in dialect rather than continually reread in order to rehearse the argument that it is simply a form of minstrelsy, racial caricature, or antebellum plantation pastoral. As I've been arguing for the ways in which Dunbar's poetry exceeds generic classifications, it should come as no surprise that his poetry exceeds these otherwise marginalizing attempts at reading it. Love, it turns out, troubles all sorts of boundaries.

In his description of "Love-Lyrics" in *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English* (1886) Gummere turns to George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) and quotes at length from "In what form of poesy the amorous affections and allurements were uttered" (only the italicized appears in Gummere's *Handbook*):

> And because love is of all other human affections the most puissant and passionate, and most general to all sorts and ages of men and women, so as whether it be of the young or old, or wise or holy, or high estate or low, none ever could truly brag of any exemption in that case, it requireth a form of poesy variable, inconstant, affected, curious, and most witty of any others, whereof the joys were to be uttered in one sort, the sorrows in another, and by the many forms of poesy, *the many moods and pangs of lovers throughly to be discovered; the poor souls sometimes praying, beseeching; sometime honoring, advancing, praising; another while railing, reviling, and cursing; then sorrowing, weeping, lamenting; in the end laughing, rejoicing, and solacing the beloved again, with a thousand delicate devices, odes, songs, elegies, ballads, sonnets, and other ditties, moving one way and another to great compassion*.[161]

[161] George Puttenham, *The Art of English Poesy*, ed. Frank Whigham and Wayne A. Rebhornn (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2007), 134. Emphasis on what is quoted in Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English*, 44-45.

While Gummere through Puttenham foregrounds the affective and emotional range expressed in and through a multiplicity of poetic forms and with "a thousand delicate devices," Gummere leaves out Puttenham's definition of love as meaningful "to all sorts and ages of men and women" without "any exemption." Including such sentiment might have troubled Gummere's understanding of the lyric as exhibiting "a later stage of culture" within the cultural hierarchy his writing participates in.[162] "These are the lyrics *par excellence*" writes Gummere out the outset of classification.[163] Since Gummere "ask[s]…of the lyric that it be a real expression, an adequate, harmonious, and imaginative expression of real feeling," his declaration of the superiority of love poetry within the category of the lyric makes a strong argument for feeling and the affective dimensions of love as the most lyric form of expression.[164] It seems, however, that both a "real expression" and an "imaginative expression of real feeling" are equated in Gummere's understanding. While Gummere's definition does not quite get to Mills' "feeling confessing itself to itself," it foregrounds a similar movement of mind in its attempts to distance feeling from whoever or what body is doing the feeling. Despite the long list of gerunds that Gummere quotes from Puttenham naming affective states, it isn't clear what criteria Gummere might apply to them within poetic form in order to glean the authenticity of their expression. For Dunbar, certain critics might just ask if the poem was written in dialect. Though Gummere identifies "two prevailing modes—hope and despair—" in the love-lyric, he concedes that "[i]t is folly to attempt any minute classification of love-lyrics: each good one should make a class for itself."[165] Love, to use the words of Puttenham, requires "a form of poesy variable." What is most lyric is

[162] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English,* 40.
[163] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English,* 44.
[164] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English,* 40.
[165] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English,* 45 and 46.

least classifiable, yet most recognizable as love becomes the affective force driving human relation and poetic classification. Within Gummere's genre system and others similarly Hegelian inflected, the category of the lyric depends upon an abstract understanding of feeling, but fails to account for what is felt despite critical and philosophical attempts to do so. While this may amount to saying that thinkers such as Gummere run into trouble when trying to systematize, classify, or otherwise arrange the complexity of human experience into a poetics invested in constructions of historical progress, cultural superiority, or other forms of violence, it is worth remembering that who gets to feel and how those feelings are expressed is never a simple matter. While it may seem odd on my part to turn to love as another kind of abstraction, my interest is on how Dunbar's poems are focused on the constructions of a loving relation and the creation of the abstraction that makes such affects recognizable in the category of love.

Parting with Dunbar: Will Marion Cook's "My Lady"

If theories of lyric poetry, or the subcategory of love poetry within ideas of poetic expression, often valorize "real" or "imaginative" feeling, it is unclear if this is simply another fantasy of control over human affect and its condensation into emotion or if readers are meant to be affected by these feelings in poetic form through the reading process. As a genre recognizable as form of love poetry by virtue of containing a description of a beloved's (likely physical) attributes, the blazon limns the line between fullness and emptiness of such feeling.[166] "[O]nce

[166] The genre takes its name from *blazon* (shield) and refers to emblematic or formal descriptions of a coat of arms in the French heraldry. Unfolding as a catalogue the term is most often associated with the bodily description of women as in Clémont Marot's contrasting blazons of beautiful and ugly breasts: "Blason du beau Tetin" (1535) and "Blason du laid Tetin" (1538). In addition to the *blason anatomique* or the *blason du corps féminin*, the genre of the *blason populaire* which seems to have originated in Alfred Canel's *Blason Populaire de la Normandie* (1859) extends these intertwined processes of praise and blame to the cultures or ethnicities. As the genre of the blazon is often enfolded into the category of the lyric and the lyric is often viewed with poetics systems of progress such as Gummere's as a form of civilizational progress, the extension of the genre to comment specifically on what it is supposed to represent as part of this progression is not surprising that this move returns the genre to heraldic origins

reassembled, in order to *utter* itself," writes Barthes, "the total body must revert to the dust of words, to the listing of details, to a monotonous inventory of parts, to crumbling."[167] For Barthes the blazon is structured like language and the grammar of its performance in descriptive cataloging becomes a form of failed expression. In seeking to represent some *thing*, it ends up representing *nothing*:

> As a genre, the blazon expresses the belief that a *complete* inventory can reproduce a *total* body, as if the extremity of enumeration could devise a new category, that of totality: description is then subject to a kind of enumerative erethism: it accumulates in order to totalize, multiplies fetishes in order to obtain a total, defetishised body; thereby, description *represents* no beauty at all…[168]

Though Barthes supposes that the genre "expresses a belief" or perhaps that a genre might have beliefs, such totalizing phrasing belies Dunbar's turn to the blazon precisely for its performance of the impossible without an attempt at totalization. In naming genre, or in the moment of its recognizability, Derrida would argue that "degenerescence has begun."[169] Derrida describes the constitutive absence within a set of genre characteristics that makes any given genre recognizable as that which "cuts a strange figure; a formless form, it remains nearly invisible, it neither sees the light of day nor brings itself to light."[170] While it seems that the constitutive impossibility of genre looks a lot like the impossible form of a blazon's beloved, Derrida's figural language of epistemic visuality foregrounds the edges of a genre's or text's representative capacity. In Dunbar's poetry this im/possibility or performative excess of genre is itself another name for Blackness. As I would argue that moments of generic recognizability may simultaneously depend upon affective investments in the categories of these performances as

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of its namesake. The genre, however, transcends geographical and linguistic borders despite its attempts to name the boundaries of the subjects it describes.

[167] Roland Barthes, *S/Z,* trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974), 113. Emphasis in original.

[168] Roland Barthes, *S/Z,* 114. Emphasis in original.

[169] Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," trans. Avital Ronell, *Critical Inquiry* 7, no. 1 (Autumn 1980): 66.

[170] Jacques Derrida, "The Law of Genre," 65.

well as the mediums in which they exist, we might consider that which marks genre from the outside is the presence of an embodied reader—a dynamic that Dunbar foregrounds through direct address in "The Photograph." The photographic illustrations' indexicality as the "light of day" that gives a "formless form" not only troubles the blazon's representation, but also its classification as genre in the persistence of their materiality. On the one hand, embodied Blackness in photograph or in the impossibility of its textual representation as that which exists within the whiteness of American poetry is brought to the fore in Dunbar's rewriting "Love's Pictures" into "A Plantation Portrait." Knowing that the poem would likely be photographically illustrated, Dunbar utilized both forms of media as a celebration of Blackness. On the other hand, Dunbar makes use of the intertwined affective and epistemic modes of recognizability within generic classification to constitute Blackness as always already in excess of any iteration of its representation. In other words, in writing about beauty of Mandy Lou's natural hair at the turn into the twentieth century through the genre of the blazon, Dunbar enfolds the history of poetic expression on itself making space for love and Blackness that exists beyond such enfolding. Before I address these poems at length, I want to return to "Parted" and a blazon that exists as an antithesis for the kinds of process of meaning making that I am arguing occur in Dunbar's own.

In 1914 Will Marion Cook set "Parted" to music. With verses to be sung "[s]adly—[i]n moderate time" and with a new refrain penned by Cook to be performed "[b]righter, but tenderly," Cook choose "My Lady" for the title of his composition.[171] I'm writing with the assumption that in addition to providing the refrain, Cook took other liberties in setting Dunbar's poem to music. It may, however, be possible that Cook is simply returning to the poem what had been potentially excised by Dunbar considering that "Parted" appeared in *Lyrics of the*

[171] Will Marion Cook, "My Lady," New York: G. Schirmer, 1914. My thanks to Virginia Jackson for bringing this song to my attention.

Hearthside (1899) only a year after their collaboration on *Clorindy, or The Origin of the Cake Walk* (1898). The ubiquity of cultural expressions circulating at the time that take the buying, selling, and parting of enslaved persons as their subject complicates settling on either option, but as the changes don't read like Dunbar's, I'll continue with that assumption. In addition to providing the refrain, in turning the "literary form of nonliterary verse" back into verse, Cook altered the construction of dialect seemingly in an effort to draw forth the poem's potential to exist almost entirely as minstrel caricature for a vaudeville stage (i.e. "O'" becomes "Ob"). Cook also removes "Jane" from the poem so that the "lady" may remain entirely as an abstraction. Most notably, Cook inserts lines into the second and third stanzas of Dunbar's poem.

Cook's alterations to these stanzas along with his new refrain offer listeners a sentimentality saturated with eroticism or what amounts to a perversion of "Parted." In reassessing the poem's concern with the distance between bodies, Cook's song opts to close that distance in fantasy through the description of a desire impotent in its articulation. Following "I knowed some day we'd have to part, / But den it put' nigh breaks my heart" in the second stanza, Cook includes "I jes' can't sing 'cause tears will start." While the pathos of this line is violated in its very performance and its logic is out of touch with the heartbreak in the lines that precede it, it also calls to mind the chorus of Stephen Foster's "My Old Kentucky Home, Good-night!" in questioning whether or not the buying and selling of persons is an occasion for song:

> Weep no more, my lady,
> Oh! weep no more today!
> We will sing one song
> For the old Kentucky Home,
> For the old Kentucky Home, far away.[172]

[172] Stephen C. Foster, "My old Kentucky home, good-night!" Firth, Pond, and Company, New York, 1853.

Originally written in response to Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) as "Poor Uncle Tom, Good Night," the specter of Foster's song of happy consolation haunts Cook's revision of "Parted."[173] If Foster's song laments the end of chattel slavery, that "the time has come when the darkies have to part," Cook's song sustains the plantation fantasy in trying to re-member a time that two were once intimately joined. Cook makes of Dunbar's poem what a significant portion of Dunbar critics have associated with all poetry written in dialect, namely empty caricatures of racialized expression. Again, this isn't to say that Dunbar didn't write such forms of minstrel fantasy, but that we cannot simply assume that such kinds of expression determine the ways in which these poems work. In the third stanza between "I'll stan' the ship, I'll stan' the chain," and "But I'll come back to you again, / My Lady, my Lady!" Cook inserts "I'll stan' the sunshine same as de rain" in an uncomfortable equation of enslavement and weather as natural conditions or uncontrollable phenomena. In seeking to diffuse the violence humans enact on one another, Cook's turn to the landscape sets up his newly penned refrain.

Cook's refrain consists of a blazon and the usual catalogue of hair, lips, and eyes:

> Lady, lady wid de hair ob brown,
> Curlin' roun', fallin' down,
> Lips as red as ruby lips kin be,
> Je' seems to be a sayin',
> Come on, honey, tas'e ob me!
> Eyes as black as any blue-black coal,
> Seem to draw my very heart an' soul;
> Will you miss me when I'm far away,
> O my Lady, my Lady, my Lady?[174]

In fleshing "my lady" out, Cook's focus on the eroticized body or the frustrated possibility of one last one for the road, the refrain focuses on the hypothetical speech from the "lips as red as

[173] See Stephen C. Foster's Sketchbook, CAM.SCF.MSBook.2019, Foster Hall Collection, University of Pittsburgh Library System.
[174] Will Marion Cook, "My Lady," New York: G. Schirmer, 1914.

ruby lips kin be" that "seems to be a sayin', / Come on, honey tas'e ob me!" This is not the kiss of "The Photograph," but rather an expression of a different kind of longing as the sweetness of the lips become another name for the speaker which is already another name for the poem. Tasting honey, stifling tears, the liquescence of Cook's additions in mingling human (tears, saliva, if not other fluids) and natural (rain and honey) secretions work towards an hollow eroticization of Black pain and bodily pleasures. We are stuck in the honey-like, saccharine viscosity of the poem's refrain. The addition of a third "my Lady" to the refrain as a form of escalation reads as a moment too quickly spent and of partings previous. Yet, for all Cook's refrain does to body forth this lady, the blazon suggests the figures used to describe this person's embodiment in refrain simply trade one emptiness for another. The pun on "draw my very heart an' soul" suggestive of the constitutive emptiness of the speaker and the loving relation albeit as a kind of coloring book. What better way to discuss parting and absence than through absent figures that part the singularity of love from its aesthetic description? Cook's selection of "coal" and "ruby" as the materials for his figures recalls the "rain" and "sunshine" of his additions. The comparisons are simple, but the utility of, and described in, the figures foregrounds the luxurious uselessness of the diamond over against the value of coal's consumption—a reading of use and exchange value that belies the horrors of chattel slavery and racial capitalism that are the impetus for both the poem and its song. The mute speech of a women's body.

In Mill's division of poetry and eloquence the former is described as "feeling confessing itself to itself in moments of solitude" whereas "eloquence is feeling pouring itself out to other minds."[175] Do we feel drenched? The end of the refrain as the end of the song ends with troubling question: "Will you miss me when I'm far away[?]" In its very utterance the

[175] John Stuart Mill, "Thoughts on Poetry and Its Varieties," 348.

connection between the speaker and the lady devalued—this is a question that need not be asked. However, such a question also directs itself to the minds of a sizable portion of the song's listeners with an obvious answer. Yes, they will miss you as they are already missing you, antebellum fantasies of enslavement, and a firmer grasp on Black bodies. Though Dunbar wrote for Broadway and most certainly understood that some of his work trafficked beyond even the minstrel stereotypes he ambivalently wrote in, I've endeavored to show that much of Dunbar's poetry written in dialect is not simply plantation fantasy and that even poems that directly engage with enslavement create spaces for Black life. Cook's rewriting and refrain, however, refuses to hold open that space however short its duration. As the genre of the plantation fantasy is asking the same question over and over with the expectation of the same answer, Cook's blazon is immediately recognizable in its performance even without its final line.

Part of that recognizability, as some critics would say, depends upon its being written in dialect. What happens when you hear, or overhear in Mill's sense of poetry, poems written in dialect that present the fiction of speech in the materiality of their descriptive mode? In reading the poem or in singing out loud, does the reader/singer become their own audience—creating a kind of out of body experience or readerly division where such readers are alienated from the verbal articulation of their own expression? As there is no "standard" dialect, watching and listening to those trying to read this poetry out loud suggests that the experience of these poems as something in between the materiality of text on the page and the breathy manifestation of its phonemes. Through an ekphrastic mode of literary description, poetry written in dialect does more to create images than it does to draw out sound, but the two are always intertwined.

In writing of Mamie Till Mobley's decision to exhibit and circulate photographs of young Emmett Till, Fred Moten brings to the fore the sensuous materiality of the photograph and

the "piercing historicality, that resingularizes and reconstructs his broken body, [that] emerges from love, from a love of the world, from a specific political intention."[176] While I do not wish to claim a parallelism between the fragmentation the beloved in the blazon and the wounding of Emmett's body that continues to be mourned or an equation of the violence of poetic form and that of the human hand, I turn to Moten for another way of thinking about the space that Dunbar creates in his poetry and that the photographic illustrations and volumes cannot help but create as a kind of improvisatory potentiality since for Moten the "meaning of a photograph is cut and augmented by a sound or noise that surrounds it and pierces its frame."[177] Positioned against Barthes' thanatological reading of the photograph and death as its *noeme*, Moten notes that the "music and theater of a black photograph is erotic: the drama of life in the photograph of the dead."[178] As I've tried to show, the illustrations that accompany Dunbar's poetry cannot and do not "illustrate" the poems despite the desires of Dodd, Mead, and Company or The Hampton Institute Camera Club to create what amounts to, if the problematic temporal division between ante- and postbellum existence as seen through the camera lens is considered, photographs of the dead. The sound that surrounds the photograph, the generosity of its intermedial expression, this "aural aesthetic—this phonographic rewriting of/in the photograph" Moten writes, "are crucial and powerful then, because they mark something general about the nature of a photograph and a performance—the ongoing universality of their absolute singularity […] most clearly and generously given in [B]lack photography and [B]lack performance."[179] "The Photograph" and "A Plantation Portrait" theorize photography and performance in much the same way that Moten does, but do so by using the form of direct address to their readers in relation to idea of poetry as

[176] Fred Moten, *In the Break*, 209-210.
[177] Fred Moten, *In the Break*, 205.
[178] Fred Moten, *In the Break*, 205.
[179] Fred Moten, *In the Break*, 202.

lyric, as feeling, as universal. Dunbar's originality, if we want to call it that, consists in part of the ways in which he makes use of this idea of poetry and its history always already racialized to create spaces for Black expression. As I've argued earlier, Dunbar turns the lyric on itself—he makes the lyric dramatic. Now, I finally draw the curtain on Dunbar's blazons the dismembering of the beloved as part of the poem's performance with an attention to hearing and seeing what is (not) there.

Love for the Absent Body: "Love's Pictures" and "A Plantation Portrait"

Viewing "Love's Pictures," which appears in Dunbar's first volume of poetry, *Oak and Ivy* (1893), and "A Plantation Portrait" published a decade later in *Lyrics of Love and Laughter* (1903) and the photographically illustrated *When Malindy Sings* (1903) together provide a way of thinking about Dunbar's blazons as both mediated and revised by photography. Dunbar certainly would have known that whatever poetry written in dialect he produced would have a chance to be illustrated. Although there is no evidence to substantiate a claim that Dunbar wrote "A Plantation Portrait" knowing full well it would photographically interpreted by Leigh Richmond Minor, it is likely that this version of the blazon would likely appeal to Minor and other photographers of the Hampton Institute Camera Club. This is to say that while it appears that Dunbar is writing for the literary marketplace, the choices he makes in the construction of the blazon speak to Dunbar's deft navigation through poetic forms, genre, and even publication format cannot be reduced to readerly taste. In rewriting a poem not written in dialect, "Love's Pictures," into, or at least returning to the genre of the blazon in, "A Planation Portrait," Dunbar appears to racialize the beloved differently, but such a claim is a tenuous one and runs the risk of assuming that the first blazon not written in dialect is addressed to a general—synonym for

white—beloved. What assumptions did readers make about "a face so pure and fair" and how have those assumptions changed? Does the comparison between the two poems emphasize the Blackness of the "Portrait" to an extent that it is difficult to read the beloved in "Pictures" as anything but Black? While not determined by such an assumption, the readings that follow are inflected by an understanding of these poems as deliberately racialized by Dunbar in different ways, but as the focus of my argument is on "A Plantation Portrait," the race of the beloved in the earlier poem is less important to my understanding of how Dunbar's shift in address and figurative constructions work towards a celebration of love and natural hair.

Both "Love's Pictures" and "A Plantation Portrait" catalog the beloved's cheeks, eyes, voice, hair, complexion, and form, but the latter poem also includes teeth, hands, and feet. There is simply more to Mandy Lou's "Portrait" than there is to the "Pictures" of an unnamed beloved, a difference exhibited in a comparison of the poems' titles: the fullness of a portrait rather than a series of pictures. If the blazon presents an experience of an inaccessible totality, that there is simply more body in the latter poem may account for the heightened sense of loss we might feel when reading. As Mandy Lou's descriptions are given context and include a focus on her movements, the image the poem creates of her appears more "lifelike". As a form of ekphrasis, the blazon tarries with the line between (figurative) visual and verbal expression in ways that rehearse commonplaces in aesthetic theory, namely the static quality of visual art over against the temporal unfolding of poetry as motion. The beloved of "Love's Pictures" rendered static in the figural intimacy of its direct address. "A Planation Portrait," however, foregrounds the movements of Mandy Lou's body within a setting—"Walkin' roun' f'om fiel' to street"—rather than existing in the nonplace of the lyric despite the comparisons against the landscape and stars within each poem's catalogue.

One the one hand, this action of turning word into image may be result of taking mimesis as metaphor or rhetoric for the real. For example, the frontispiece to John Davies' translation of Charles Sorel's *The Extravagant Shepard* (1654) satirizes the figurative construction of the blazon in ways that critique such aspects of readerly desire by illustrating the beloved's figure with figures—roses for cheeks, pearls for teeth, globes for breasts. As often the case with parody in helping to foreground generic conventions, this illustration or even one of the many counter blazons such as Shakespeare's "Sonnet 130") in the genre's history suggest that the blazon may simply be the expression of desire—that the beloved is never meant to be seen, but continually deferred in figure in a perpetual catalog.[180] On the other hand, if the appearance/disappearance binary that blazons depend upon for their figurative coherence does not quite explain how Dunbar's poems work to create meaning, then perhaps the image as that which exists between poem and reader is the space in which Dunbar intends to view the im/possibility of Mandy Lou. As the history of the genre of the blazon carries with it classist, racist, and sexist discourses concerning love, Dunbar's use of the genre in and of itself may be viewed as a vehicle for critique. The mediating voice of the speaker that directly addresses the reader within "Portrait" foregrounding such a critique even as it celebrates Mandy Lou.

"A Plantation Portrait" begins with a version of the interrogative address found in "The Photograph:" "Hain't you see my Mandy Lou, / Is it true?" Playing off the fact the reader has not and cannot hope to see her, the astonished speaker follows his initial question with a second that forces the reader to orient themselves both inside the poem's dramatic fiction and outside the poem in their respective scene of reading: "Whaih you been f'om day to day, / Whaih, I say?" While it may be a failing on the reader's part to not be in a position to see her, if one hand *When*

[180] Dunbar may have had the line "My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground" in mind.

Malindy Sings (1903) in hand, they would have already encountered a photograph of a model standing in for her image on the poem's title page. Leaving the illustrations aside for a moment, the "Hain't" in the opening line of "Portrait" makes clear the poem's construction of absence as a haint, haunt, or what we might call the specter of the image, is conjured.[181] The question, "Is it true?—asks readers to consider the truth of their seeing, the truth of the representation, and the validity of themselves as part of this existential epistemology. It is unclear when the answer might be yes, and when it might be no—it depends upon the publication that format and not a suspension of disbelief, but rather a belief in the representative capacity of media or what is dramatic in the lyric.

The first line of "Love's Pictures," however, opens with a simile—"Like the blush upon the rose"—that is concluded in the last line of the stanza: "are thy cheeks." While the intermediary lines flesh out the comparison with a "wooing south wind," the order of the simile's construction seemingly privileges the simile rather than the unnamed "thy" to whom this

[181] The eye dialect immediately calls to mind a haint—a haunt—in African American folklore traditions, particular those of the Gullah Geechee. While this may be unintentional on Dunbar's part, I find this reading, misreading, or misviewing, productive for the ways in which it casts light on the processes of meaning making with the poem. The range of spirits, specters, phantoms, witches, humans that the category of the haint may apply to varies, but it may refer to anything from a restless spirit that cannot pass on, a trickster that delights in playing with the living, or a malevolent apparition that intends harm or death. An account of the difference between two kinds of hags, a kind of haint, appears in an interview collected in Harry Middleton Hyatt's *Hoodoo – Conjuration - Witchcraft – Rootwork* (1970): "De hag is a ha'nt, a spirt. Dere's two of 'um (two kinds of hags). One of 'um is comin' so you can't sleep in de night—dat's ha'nts, dat's a ha'nt (spirit of a dead person). An' anoher one is a hag—a hag is a living person; dey've becomes a hag, dey deals with de devil" (135). In marking the border between the living and the dead, the term works with the dialect of Dunbar's line—to have not, to have not seen, to have not seen (yet)—in foregrounding impossible temporal and spatial relations the reader has, or does not have, with Mandy Lou. As an *hantologie* in Derrida's sense, or rather a haintology, the paradoxical temporality of the poem, or the ghost of chattel slavery in Dunbar's poetry and the dialect albums of Dodd, Mead, and Company, calls for, at least in my reading, an attention to the affect of the present and the presence of what remains in the duration of the poem's iterative singularity. In her description of the Bahaman hag in "Hoodoo in America" (1931), Zora Neale Hurston notes that "[t]hey abuse sleepers—sometimes kill them. They come to your bedside and tell you bad things. When you wake up, you think you had a bad dream. They send you to do evil. When they go hagging they slip out of their skins and fold them up. Then they can change to anything" (321). Hurston's account foregrounds the performative dimension of the haint's speech. While I am not claiming that the speaker in "A Planation Portrait" functions in exactly this way, the presence of its disembodied voice in seeking to change or alter the behavior of the living reader is something that Dunbar crafted into the poem.

comparison is addressed and takes as its subject. "Pictures" refuses even the fiction of truth in found in "Portrait," but both poems do call attention to the means of their own construction. The difference, however, between a dialogue with the reader and the structure of a simile, however, is felt. In "Pictures" the reader recedes or comfortably remains at a distance to, following Mill, "overhear" the address to the beloved and act as voyeur when it comes to the construction of her image. If the genre of the blazon, or love poetry more generally addressed to a "beloved" can read like a kind of script—the reader identifying with speaker—Dunbar troubles that relation through the mediation of his "speakers'" direct address to the reader. Rather than seeking to identify with particular poetic personages, the reader is asked to consider their relation to the poem, the construction of its figures, and their readerly practice in ways that create a near distancing effect (*Verfremdungseffekt*), but redirects the emotions seemingly dismissed in a Brechtian analysis back to the poem by foregrounding affective attachments to form, media, figure, genre, and an idea of poetry that its beloved's exist in and through. Benjamin describes the "aura" of an art object as a "strange tissue of space and time: the unique apparition of a distance, however near it may be."[182] The translation hinting at the ghostly dimension of this distancing is telling since "to experience the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look back at us."[183] Reversing the order of auratic expression, Dunbar's intermedial love poetry, creates that distance and invests readers with the ability to look back at what was always already facing them.

[182] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Technological Reproducibility: Second Version" (1936), trans. Edmund Jephcott and Harry Zohn in *The Work of Art in the Age of its Technological Reproducibility and Other Writings on Media*, ed. Michael William Jennings, Brigid Doherty, Thomas Y. Levin (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), 23. Emphasis in original. My invocation of Benjamin may be a misstep. If the aura retains something like a "cult-value" held over from premodern religious experience, it may simply be another version of ballad reading.
[183] Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," 204.

The figures for the beloveds' figures are worth comparing to track the ways in which Dunbar constructs contrasting spectatorial positions for his readers:

> Like a fair but fragile vase,
> Triumph of the carver's art,
> Graceful formed and slender,—
> Thus thou art.

> Slendah ez a saplin' tree;
> Sems to me
> W'en de win' blow f'om de bay
> She jes' sway
> Lak de reg'lar saplin' do
> Ef hit's grew
> Straight an' graceful, 'dout a limb,
> Sweet an' slim.

The unnamed beloved in "Pictures" is "like a fair but fragile vase, / Triumph of the carver's art." In foregrounding the presence of the agency of the artist in crafting a feminine form, Dunbar simultaneously creates a comparison between the processes of carving and the construction of the blazon through the language of the poem —the pun and exact rhyme in the concluding stanza underscore the beloved's determination as "art." Mandy Lou is also slim, but the static impression in "Love's Picture" is set in motion in the description of her "sway." The extended comparison or growth of the figure becomes an etiology of Mandy Lou, yet at the same time suggests that the movements of the natural world are understood through her own. The near equation of tree and body in being "Slendah ez," the "sway" as occasioned by the blowing wind, and the reflection on the growth of a "reg'lar saplin'" suggest that although the aesthetics of natural world might even be called "reg'lar," they only serve to heighten the singular beauty of Mandy Lou. In short: the unnamed beloved is carved and Mandy Lou is grown. At least that's what it "seems to" the poem's "speaker." The insertion of this voice, a kind of second order mediation, speaks to the independence of Many Lou as existing beyond the control of the poem

or the reader however fictionalized this relation is understood to be. In one sense, both Mandy Lou and the reader occupy the same position as the reader in relation to the poem. No longer subject to the conditions of lyric, the mediation of speaker becomes the point of connection between her and the reader. We get a sense of Mandy Lou because these figures fail in natural quality of their artifice, and the fiction of being addressed directly itself becomes a form of sincerity. As Mandy Lou's non/existence in and beyond the poem and its figures are secondary to the poem's meaning, the point, it seems, is in the telling and not in what is being told. However, it is the figures and the poem's construction that make such an argument.

Though in Barthes' thinking the blazon aims at an impossible totality, "Love's Pictures" however, is content to leave the body of the unnamed beloved in pieces. Dunbar begins each stanza with a 'like' that initiates the figure before concluding with a declaration concerning the object of comparison. The final lines of the first four stanzas read: "Are thy cheeks," "Are thine eyes," "Is thy voice," and "Is thy hair." As the line divisions and grammar within each stanza foreground the making of the simile, so too do does the form of the poem by separating the unnamed beloved's parts of her figure from one another. In de Man's description of prosopopeia he notes that "voice assumes mouth, eye, and finally face, a chain that is manifest in the etymology of the trope's name, *prosopon poien*, to confer a mask or a face (*prosopon*)," but in starting with the face and eyes in "Pictures" there is seemingly no voice that follows.[184] The only other speech act aside from the address of the speaker appears in the first stanza through the description of the beloved's cheeks:

> Like the blush upon the rose
> When the wooing south wind speaks,
> Kissing soft its petals,
> Are thy cheeks.

[184] Paul de Man, "Autobiography as De-Facement," 76.

In the beginning moments of resuscitation, the stanza attempts to breathe life into the rose which are her cheeks with the "wooing south wind" that "speaks" in parallel address with the poem's own. The "win'" in "Portrait" and the "wind" in "Pictures" appear to act in similar ways on the beloveds' bodies, but the action is confined to the figure in the earlier poem whereas Mandy Lou's "sway" becomes the occasion for the comparison in the later. The simile belies its purpose in equating speaking with kissing or positing a causal relation between the two. Letting figures do what bodies can't, the poem turns to her eyes in the second stanza with the usual comparison to astral bodies, before returning to her voice. "Like the song of happy birds, / When the woods with spring rejoice, / In their blithe awak'ning," her voice is understood through the personified emotions of "happy birds" and "woods" that "rejoice." As it isn't clear what such a voice might sound like in its cheerful overdetermination, it only serves to support the speaker and the emptiness of the poem's figures.

In "A Plantation Portrait" Mandy Lou's complexion and voice are intertwined through the poem's figuration:

> Browner den de frush's wing,
> An' she sing
> Lak he mek his wa'ble ring
> In de spring;
> But she sholy beat de frush,
> Hyeah me, hush:
> W'en she sing, huh teef kin show
> White ez snow.

The stanza is interested in the performative body, however birdlike, of Many Lou as the comparison moves between her and the thrush. From skin to wing and from voice to warble, Mandy Lou "beat[s] de frush" at least in the estimation of the "speaker." In other words, she exceeds the figure of comparison to the extent that readers are told to "hush" if a possible

objection might arise.[185] Unable to hear Mandy Lou, the poem isolates, and thereby emphasizes, the "speakers" imperative: "Hyeah me." This excess accounts for changing of the seasons in the comparison of her teeth. The racialization of her voice is celebrated through the comparison with a thrush that cannot quite compare to her. If we concede that any mention of birds within poetic expression can easily become a figure for poetic expression itself, then the final image is either an exaltation of Black poetry or a resignation of having a mouth full of expression "White ez snow." I continue to argue the former against voices in literary criticism that would champion the latter in part due to the significance of Dunbar's choice of the thrush. In Dunbar's poetic aviary, the thrush is set against the whippoorwill. In the first stanza of "The Deserted Plantation" (1895) the bird sings of the passing of time and with it, the plantation: "While de whippo'will's a wailin' lak a mou'nah / When his stubbo'n hawt is tryin' ha'd to yiel'." The whippoorwill's song, specifically the onomatopoeia of the bird's name, can only signal pain. As the whippoorwill's song haunts the plantation, Dunbar troubles the construction of a romantic, plantation fantasy from the second line of the poem. In "Whip-poor-Will and Katy-did" (1903), the bird's song sounds "moughty dreary, Solemn-lak an' skeery" as it resounds over a "lonesome hill." The speaker of the poem laments its call and wishes it wasn't "Sayin' fu' to 'whip po' Will'" since "Dey's enough of whippin' / 'Dout a bird a'visin' any man." Dunba may also have had Whitman's "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed" in mind and the thrush' "Song of the bleeding throat, / Death's outlet song of life." While the thrush is represented as a mourner in "Lilacs," the parenthetical addressed to the bird that immediately follows these lines—"(fore well dear brother I know, / If thou wast not granted to sing thou would'st surely die.)—might as well be addressed to any number of poetic "speakers" or personages in Dunbar's oeuvre.

[185] If the poem was being read out loud, caesura of the "hush" followed by the colon performs in life what it means in text.

The difference in each poem's catalog is felt most strongly in the description hair:

Like soft threads of clustered silk
O'er thy face so pure and fair,
Sweet in its profusion,
Is thy hair.

…
An' huh haih a wooly skein,
Black an' plain.
Hol's you wid a natchul twis'
Close to bliss.

While the speaker of "Portrait" had mentioned the affect that Mandy Lou has on him, the choice of "you" in recalling the "natchul twis'" of her hair is significant for the ways in which we are held by the figure. As this is the only such an address occurs with the catalogue of her features and since the mediation of the speaker becomes a heuristic for understanding the poem's figures, I argue that her hair becomes the focal point of the poem. Mandy Lou's hair is not the subject to kinds of comparison that occur in excess of themselves in "Portrait" or the confining figures in "Pictures." Being "Black an' plain" and "natchul" is enough to bring one "close to bliss." Dunbar's blazon of the black body not only critiques the racialization of poetic form through its celebration of Blackness, but it also works against generic conventions of the blazon that work to control the image of the beloved within its lines through the mediation of its "speakers" and its emphasis on readerly affect. To be held in the poem or through its modes of literary description means appreciating Blackness of form and figure.

The sense of the endings of each poem serve to emphasize the difference in Dunbar's approach to each blazon. In re-membering in "Love's Pictures" the poem finally swtiches from cataloging description to the affect the beloved has on the "speaker," something that was foregrounded in "Portrait." In making her, the speaker makes himself:

Ah, thy cheek, thine eyes, thy voice,
And thy hair's delightful wave
Make me, I'll confess it,
Thy poor slave!

The most striking possessive of the poem, "Thy poor slave!" as the final line, stands out not only in its exclamation, but in its inward turn to the "speaker," yet the force of the ending is seemingly undercut by the series of "thy" and "thine" that opens the stanza in a second cataloging of the different aspects of the beloved that have been treated in the poem. The composite affect of the enumeration of the beloved's parts prompts a confession on the part of the speaker that seemingly equates his existence as yet another part of the incomplete whole that is the beloved. From the outset the poem's concern is not with the forms of recognizability of its beloved, but veers toward a narcissism that makes the self-image the images of the beloved other as form of figural emptiness. In a nod to Hegelian master-slave relation the recognition of the beloved is a recognition of the self. The involuntary voluntary form of love's enslavement is read against the past as a condition forced upon the body with all the force of the blazon's heraldry and dismemberment. It may be tempting for some critics to read this poem as race play—Dunbar critiquing the whiteness of poetic genre through the emptiness of its performance—but readings that depend on silken hair and a fair visage are likewise critiqued by the poem's structure as determinate forms of emptiness. Yet, if the lessons in Gummere's handbook read true, it's just about Dunbar since "[l]yric poetry tends to exalt the poet himself, to make his personality far more to us than the events which occasion his poem. Whether it be Horace or Robin Herrick who is singing, it is the poet who interests us, not the Mæcenas or Corinna to whom he sings, nor yet the villa or the May day which he takes as subject."[186] Where is Dunbar's personality? What does this poem exalt? Dunbar, or understandings of his Blackness? It turns out that at least as far

[186] Francis Barton Gummere, *A Handbook of Poetics for Students of English*, 41.

as Dunbar goes, Gummere is wrong as we do care about the subject of his song. The mediation of Dunbar's "speakers" refuse to conform to a simple binary: the fiction of the "poetic" speaker as an inflection of the history of poetic expression—a version of white universality—or that which is always already racialized in relation to print conventions in poems written in dialect—becoming a ballad or folk "speaker." Dunbar wants his readers to attend to the meticulous constructions of his poems in all their affect and artifice and to find ourselves in relation to them as part of their making. In asking what the figures make of us, the final stanza of "Pictures" becomes an occasion for Dunbar's return to the blazon, if not the intentional rewriting of this poem, in "A Plantation Portrait." I would also go as far as to say that this poem is intentionally written with the understanding it would be photographically illustrated. After 1899 any poem written in dialect on Dunbar's part could have possibly been chosen for one of Dodd, Mead, and Company's dialect albums—this poem was published in both *Lyrics of Love and Laughter* (1903) and *When Malindy Sings* (1903). Dunbar's focus on forms of affective media and mediation in "Portrait" suggest that Dunbar was thinking about how readers might experience the intimacy of this particular poem.

The final stanza of "Portrait" focuses on how this experience is handled by the reader:

> Tendah han's dat mek yo' own
> Feel lak stone;
> Easy steppin', blessid feet,
> Small an' sweet.
> Hain't you seen my Mandy Lou,
> Is it true?
> Look at huh befo' she's gone,
> Den pass on!

The speaker suggests that Mandy Lou's hands are so "Tendah" that they would make reader's hands "Feel lak stone" and in doing so turns readers into a kind of "fair but fragile vase, /

Triumph of the carver's art" as was the unnamed beloved in "Pictures."[187] The reader becomes the material worked on by the poem's artifice. In following Mandy Lou's "Easy steppin', blessed feet" the poem appropriately ends on what gives her movement into and out of the poem's figures. The repetition of the poem's opening interrogative—"Hain't you seen my Mandy Lou, / Is it true?"—calls attention to the success or failure of these figures. The poem creates the conditions for answering either *yes* or *no*. Have you seen her in her impossibility? Have you felt her through the figures? The truth of her expression is better understood in feeling rather than form. An affective knowing that cannot be articulated in much the same way that the totality of the blazon's beloved will never reveal itself to readers. The injunction to "Look at huh befo' she's gone, Den pass on!" discloses Mandy Lou's impossibility and reads like the opening of "The Photogaph:" "See dis pictyah in my han'?" In ending itself the poem ushers readers away from the experience of Mandy Lou even as it humorously calls the conditions of that experience's possibility into question.[188]

If passing on means turning the page, it is easy to do so, but harder perhaps, if the photographic illustrations are present as part of the reading experience. In the first illustration, a three-quarters portrait, the sideways facing model in a gingham dress and a white shawl looks out past the edge of the picture plane. The model's pose seems to emphasize different parts of the poem's catalog. Her lips are parted so that we may see her white teeth. In facing sideways the length, texture, and color of her hair is emphasized in comparison with the white shawl. The lines of her hair and the lines of the shawl meet and create an angle parallel to her jawline that

[187] Writing on Shelley's "On the Medusa of Leonardo Da Vinci in the Florentine Gallery" (1819), W.J.T. Mitchell claims that "[i]f ekphrastic poetry has a 'primal scene,' this is it" (*Picture Theory,* 172). Mitchell's reading cuts across fantasies of voyeurism and exhibitionism inherent in ekphrastic poetry in reading Medusa as an emblem of Jacobin politics. Perhaps this gives a sense of the revolutionary aspect of Dunbar's poems.
[188] The reader "pass[ing] on," or becoming "gone" like Mandy Lou recalls the haunting or the specter of the haint.

sets off her cheeks. The empty backdrop, as empty as the figural space of "Love's Pictures," seems an odd choice particularly as there is no reference to a plantation, but it does set up the natural growth mirrored on the page's verso. At this point in the reading process, however, it looks as if the illustrations are attempting to map the logic of the blazon in "Love's Pictures" onto "A Plantation Portrait." The decorations below the illustration become another version of this rewriting. From the crafted vase the growth of vines frames the image on both sides with flowers blooming perpendicular to the model's face. The vase, the "Triumph of the carver's art" becomes the origin for the growth of the decorative border on the page and the figures in the poem.

The second illustration, though slightly larger, becomes a mirror or reverse portrait of the model in its position on the page's verso. The page becomes a kind of thaumatrope—the turns of page back and forth allow us to see Mandy Lou as "saplin'" and vice versa.[189] The persistence of our vision, or as Dunbar's poems would have it, also our feelings, is what animates the figure(s) of Mandy Lou. In other words, in touching and turning the page the simile is made visible for the reader. The vase is no longer present in the decorations. In its place a burgeoning plant extends its flowering vines upward over the page fully enclosing the illustration. The growth of plant cannot be contained by the "fair but fragile vase" in much the same fashion that Mandy Lou's remains beyond, or in excess of, the figures in and through which she is represented. The model, of course, shines outward from the photograph in the singularity of her self and its expression.

[189] A definition from Champlin and Bostwick's *The Young Folks' Cyclopædia of Games and Sports* (1890): "A toy consisting of a square or round disk of pasteboard having pictures on both sides. The disk is fitted with strings…by which it can be twirled about so rapidly that the eye can see the pictures on both sides at once" (720). The fullness of the image depends upon the fingers holding the string. A popular thaumatrope was "Bird in the Cage:" the bird was depicted free against a blank background on one side of the disk while the other side contained an empty cage.



A PLANTATION PORTRAIT

71

Figure 10. Page 71 from *When Malindy Sings* (1903). Photograph by The Hampton Institute Camera Club. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/whenmalindysings00dunb_0.



Figure 11. Page 72 from *When Malindy Sings* (1903). Photograph by The Hampton Institute Camera Club. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/whenmalindysings00dunb_0.

The third illustration is a full portrait set near the outside of a dwelling. The model remains sideways, but in this photograph she turns her head towards the camera. In directly facing its lens and us as readers, her hair blends into the growth her as her eyes stare directly into our own. Both of her hands are engaged—her right holds the knot that ties her shawl to itself, and her left holds a woven basket down at her side close to leg. The contrast of the photograph foregrounds the model bathed in sunlight. Light also appears in its nonappearance in the absent space created by the covered arch that allows the viewer see the window of the dwelling. Not quite able to peer in, the doubling of visibly absent spaces may appear as the deferral of a desire to know more of Mandy Lou despite being told to "pass on." Yet, the question—"Hain't you seen my Mandy Lou, / Is it true?"—remains. If Mandy Lou exists in the image between the body of the model, the text of the poem and its print conventions, the poem's figures, and the embodied reader, where is her truth? Asking the question, or rather asking the question through the mediation of the "speaker," is what Dunbar is after from the start. In feeling around the truths of these expressions entails an consideration of the distance between the words and illustrations on the pages of these dialect albums and the hands that hold them. Absence, parting, and the spaces between hearts are mediated in these poems in an effort to bring forth the feelings that would return them once more. To open the album, to cut its leaves, to trace its pages with our fingers, to allow ourselves to be kindled is what Dunbar asks for.

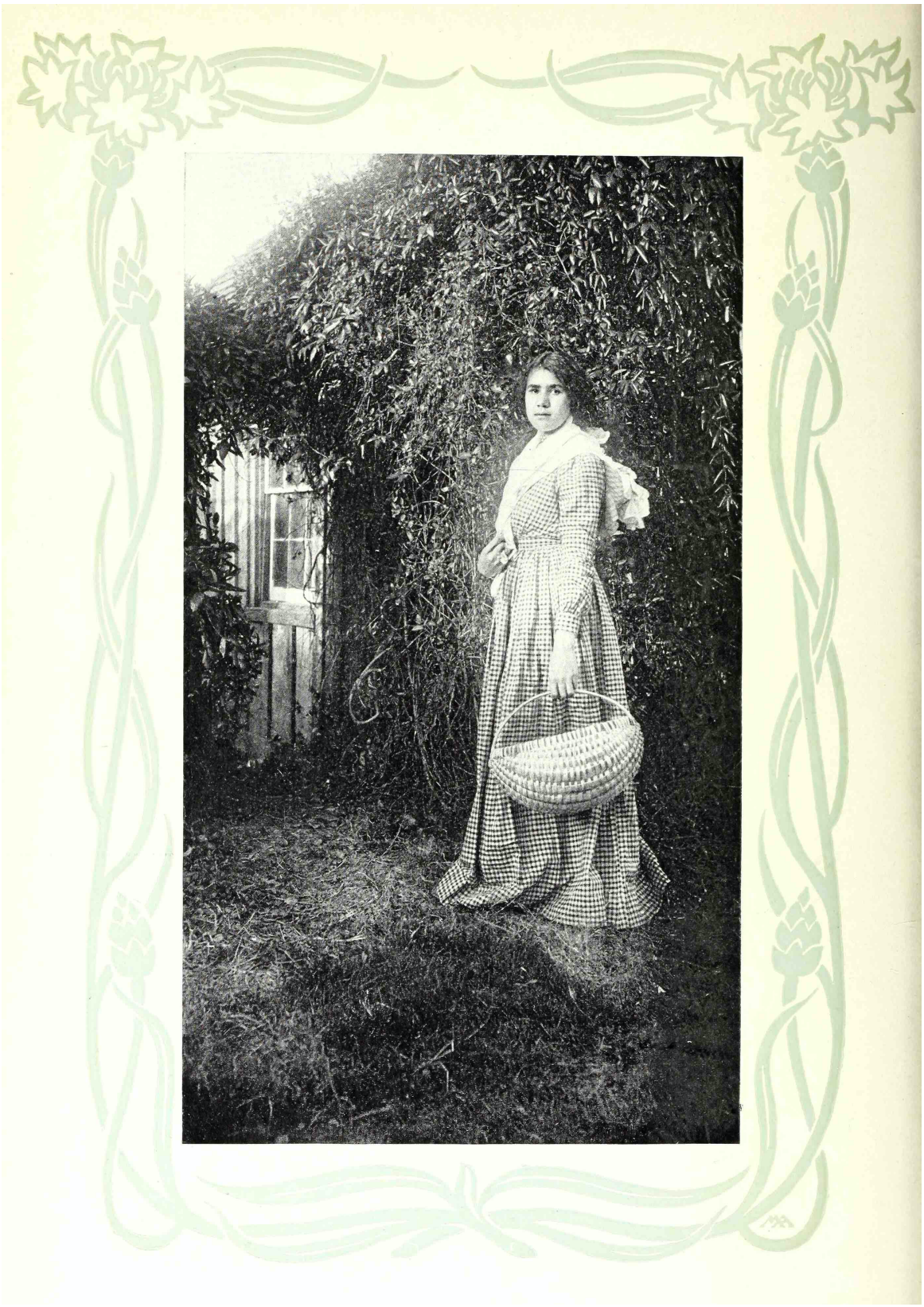


Figure 12. Page 74 from *When Malindy Sings* (1903). Photograph by The Hampton Institute Camera Club. Decorations by Margaret Armstrong. Published by Dodd, Mead, and Company. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. The Internet Archive. https://archive.org/details/whenmalindysings00dunb_0.

Sitting with Dunbar

"Absence" from *Lyrics of the Hearthside* (1899) opens with the following lines: "Good-night, my love, for I have dreamed of thee / In waking dreams, until my soul is lost— / Is lost in passion's wide and shoreless sea." Passion becomes a heart becomes a bird ("like a frightened bird, my heart doth cry") that travels a "wide and shoreless sea." Against "The threatening sky and the relentless wave" the figure of the bird, a petrel, has a "single hope," namely to see the poems addressed "face to face." The grammar of the final stanza, however, marks a shift in address that allows for two possible readings of the poem. The stanza begins, "Fly home, far bird, unto thy waiting nest" and continues to encourage the bird to "Beat the grim breeze with thy unruffled breast / Until though sittest wing to wing with me." On the one hand it appears the poem has perhaps made a figure of the beloved's heart, but the lines read more truthful as the speaker imploring his own heart to return. When the figurative heart as bird returns to the body past and present are reconciled in song:

> Then, let the past bring up its tales of wrong;
> We shall chant low our sweet connubial song,
> Till storm and doubt and past no more shall be!

While it is tempting to read these lines as making sense of poetry written both in, and not in, dialect; Dunbar's feelings about writing in either mode of literary description; the temporal disjunction between ante- and postbellum Black life; Dunbar's courtship and marriage with Alice Nelson; or any number of critical issues, what remains most valuable both in his time and in our own is that Dunbar's poetry returns our hearts to us as we chant along with him "our sweet connubial song."

CHAPTER THREE

"My love hang over all the world": Sadakichi and Osada

Hartmann begins his *Autobiography* mourning the loss of his mother, Osada: "As my mother died shortly after my birth from some pulmonary trouble, her existence has remained a mystery. It is a book that, no matter how eager I might be to peruse it's no doubt passion- and tear-stained pages, will remain closed forever."[190] Though Hartmann figures his mother's existence, or the nonexistence of his mother in his own life, into a book that cannot be read let alone opened, Hartmann is still able to know the affective dimensions of the life that may have been lived within its "passion- and tear-stained pages." The indexes of affect create an identity between Hartmann and his mother as the figure of the book may be stained by either or both of their expressions. That Osada will never read Hartmann's *Autobiography,* presumably stained with its own passion and tears, creates a similitude between mother and son as authors of one another's lives in moments of lost contact. As difference is both blurred and preserved in the figure of the book, Hartmann offers a theory of suggestive reading occasioned by thinking with, or being with, his mother if only in a book that cannot be read even as it is felt. Hartmann expands this kind of reading as detached intimacy through an attention to photographs of Osada. Hartmann's identity as an artist, or just an individual self, as he understands it is arranged in and through these forms of attachment.

Written in 1898 and revised in 1935, Hartmann's "Preface for Autobiography," which he notes may "not necessarily be included" in its intended publication format, outlines the intentions for the manuscript with an attention to valences of truth:

[190] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 1.

> The aim of this book is to describe my life honestly as it has happened, preferably to those who have read my books—without fear or vanity but with an anxious care to express approximately verity about trivialities and sublimities alike—to record contact with a personality as far as it can be managed in words.[191]

Though Hartmann admits a preference for readers familiar with his thought—a prescient remark as this manuscript currently remains in an archive—he foregrounds a kind of "contact with personality" that structures both the writing, and I would suggest, the reading of autobiography. Intimacy as a form of "anxious care" becomes a way to manage this contact in words as well as in feeling in addition to becoming the criteria for any kind of truth claims one may have concerning own's past as contact with another life. In other words, to write an autobiography entails not just an attention to the possibilities of receptive reading, but to write in way that recalls Barthes theorization of "writerly" and "readerly" texts. If the "(ideological) goal of this technique [readerly] is to naturalize meaning and thus to give credence to the reality of the story," it depends upon a temporal logic with defined durations and limitations for its coherence.[192] In contrast, Barthes contends that "to rewrite the writerly text would consist only in disseminating it, in dispersing it within the field of infinite difference."[193] As "a perpetual present, upon which no *consequent* language (which would inevitably make it past) can be superimposed" the writerly text offers an indefinite opportunity to participate in a mutually constitutive meaning as well as a set of differing forms of affective relation.[194] Since the "the writerly text is *ourselves writing*, before the infinite play of the world (the world as a function) is traversed, intersected, stopped, plasticized, by some singular system" it troubles temporality in its invocation of a fiction of existence in the "before" of the reading present.[195] Can poem either

[191] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, i.
[192] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, 23.
[193] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, 5.
[194] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, 5.
[195] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, 5.

in style, self-erasure, or by structuring the affective presence of its unfolding while read adhere to Barthes' writerly conditions of "poetry without the poem" or at least approximate them?[196] The truth of the representation lies not in the representation itself but in an affective relation with the prior conditions of its existence or what Hartmann would examine as origin or inspiration explicitly in the composition process of "The Raven." A tension between productive and receptive temporalities is found in Hartmann's writing on the poem, the poem itself, and in Hartmann. In this way, the autobiography begins to provide a way of thinking about suggestivism as Hartmann theorizes and applies it as a form of self-relation or even of mourning.

In order to write an "auto-biography" that approximates the truth of its subject in accordance with Hartmann's intention, he notes that "it is not necessary that the author has led an exceptional life or unusual experiences…nor to have specially strong individuality, or to represent a mixtures of races which in individual appearance and mechanism of personal existence itself is an amusing conundrum."[197] Throughout his life Hartmann acquired a variety of names to mark not only the breadth of his critical and creative output, but also his mixedness. Many of these names Hartmann embraced at different moments in life if only to cultivate a notoriety that would drive ticket sales and article commissions. On the backside of a program for "A Course of Three Popular Dramatic Readings" Hartmann gave in New York, Hartmann included a list of select quotations "as seen by some of his contemporaries" that include: "A Japanese *primitive* with the soul of Schopenhauer," "The King of Bohemia," "the most mysterious personality in American letters," who "goes Poe several times better especially as a Salome dancer and a dervish in the arts" and "likes nothing better than to have is picture taken

[196] Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, 5.
[197] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, i and i-ii.

and to lecture on 'Poets I have met.'"[198] Or, as contemporary critics often point out, Pound states in his *Guide to Kulchur* that Hartmann "has so lived that if one hadn't been oneself it would have been worth while to have been Sadakichi."[199] It is difficult to take Hartmann at his word, but his remarks in this preface suggest a distancing from this public persona as well as an ambivalence towards his discursive racialization. Being mixed remains an "amusing conundrum" that Hartmann never quite solves, but as he mentions elsewhere, learning Japanese or traveling to Japan may have provided some hints if only he would have been able to. As "mechanism," Hartmann's "mixtures of races" becomes a structuring aspect of the multiplicity of his identity. Yet, all that is unnecessary if genre of the autobiography is written honestly. In the end, the litotic dimension of Hartmann's description only serves to underscore the significance and singularity of his life.

However, what is necessary according to Hartmann is "to have impartiality of judgment; the ability to rise in astral consciousness as it were above one's Self, and to look down upon the same from various angles, to have the courage and world contempt to describe the realization of one's Self, with its nuances that make human beings what they are."[200] How "astral consciousness" rises above the self in order to become an observer of its own nuance isn't clear. The ambiguity in becoming a representation for oneself in order to then engage in self-representation recalls the ambiguity in the spatial position of Poe's speaker in "The Raven." If the speaker's soul remains in the "shadow that lies floating on the floor," where is the body? Is the poem narrated from within that shadow, or has the speaker lost his soul in watching it

[198] Announcement for "A Course of Three Popular Dramatic Readings" in Atma D. Hartmann-Gilliland's Scrapbook. Box 24. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside. Emphasis in original.
[199] Ezra Pound, *Guide to Kulchur* (New York: New Directions, 1970), 310.
[200] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, ii.

flattened into representation in the raven's shadow? Hartmann suggests that an understanding of the self is a result of this representational process. What seems horrific to the speaker of Poe's poem is that perhaps self may only come into being through this becoming shadowy representation. Keeping open the question of whether the self has a prior referent to its determinations in aesthetic form nevermore, Poe insists on indeterminacy if not emptiness. Hartmann, however, takes this aestheticization of understanding to be a true representation of the self or, at the very least, the way to tell its history.

Hartmann aligns this "astral consciousness" with a combination of "courage and world contempt" he finds essential for recounting the story of one's life. Hartmann's critical dissatisfaction recalls what José Esteban Muñoz's terms disidentification:

> Disidentification is the third mode of dealing with dominant ideology, one that neither opts to assimilate within such a structure nor strictly opposes it; rather, disidentification is a strategy that works on and against dominant ideology. Instead of buckling under the pressures of dominant ideology (identification, assimilation) or attempting to break free of its inescapable sphere (counteridentification, utopianism), this "working on and against" is a strategy that tries to transform a cultural logic from within, always laboring to enact permanent structural change while at the same time valuing the importance of local or everyday struggles of resistance.[201]

Hartmann's critical project if not his very existence speaks to the ways in which he attempts to "transform a cultural logic from within," particularly through an emphasis on Japanese aesthetics within his idea of world literature present in his lectures and writings. For Hartmann, being mixed was a way to mediate, and thereby transform, forms of cultural expression. In the role of the critic as cultivating and mediating taste through, and as a form of, social relations, Hartmann excelled. Hartmann's critical aliases, nicknames, and roles become part of Hartmann's struggle even if that struggle was conducted most often in the pages of magazines. It is necessary to

[201] José Esteban Muñoz, *Disidentifications: Queers of Color and the Performance of Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 11-12.

qualify my understanding as in significant ways Hartmann did identify with ideological structures that often did not serve his interests such as instances found in the precarious definition of the "we" or "we Occidentals" throughout his work. Though "pressures of dominant ideology" for Muñoz or the "readerly" for Barthes may have been unevenly navigated or melancholically experienced by Hartmann, strains against the often-frustrated hope that it might "do some good every day to somebody, no matter who."[202]

In Hartmann's last unpublished work, *1000 Happy Moments in a Lifetime, Where and How!: New World Orders Analysed* (ca. 1942)—a sprawling composition containing thinking on aesthetics, politics, and philosophy, and science—he notes that in order to address inequity and inequality world over, "there is only one improvement possible: to make the living conditions of the large bulk of humanity considerable better than it is now."[203] To address the material conditions of lived experience in ways that might make the world more livable, Hartmann questions the function of poetry as part of the poetics of worldmaking. In asking the question, "Can Poet's Help?" Hartmann longs for a possible future where "the poetical ideals of the age should once for a change get a directing hold over society."[204] Though Hartmann asserts that "poetry, unlike liquor is not an essential commodity, and you can't bootleg odes and sonnets," he leaves open the potential for change even as he laments the possibility of its foreclosure.[205] "When only material progress is at stake" writes Hartmann, "poetry does not function, " but is present nevertheless if only written or appreciated by few.[206]

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[202] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments in a Lifetime, Where and How!: New World Orders Analysed* (ca. 1942), 12-13. Box 7. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[203] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 226.
[204] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 239.
[205] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 232.
[206] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 231.

At the outset of *1000 Happy Moments*, Hartmann explains the difficulties we might face in attempting to identify one thousand moments of happiness we may have experienced in our lives. The significance of that attempt is made clear later in the manuscript in a startling address to the reader: "You know as well as I do that nine out of ten things we cherish most, we have not the slightest chance to get—on account of lack of leisure, lack of equality of opportunity and education towards the appreciation of the futility of things."[207] As we do not yet live in a world of what Hartmann calls "experimental deliverance," it is necessary to reflect on the kinds of experiences one might call happy, a melancholic kind of happiness that entails the "appreciation of the futility of things."[208] Though the creation of such moments are difficult to come by in life, Hartmann retroactively claims that his writing is generated by these moments and also tries to approximate the feeling of them for his readers:

> Words at times are so chilly and unpliable—in fact all my stories try to seize a rare fleeting moment worth holding as a memory possession, trying technically (as a writer) to make the plot of a story hinge on and project from the special environment of a moment. To meet a man or a woman whose mere presence without touching them, gives you such deep gratification, such rare delight, that you could scream. People do not believe in such things until they themselves experience something like it.[209]

Physical and textual bodies are conflated in writing to make words "less chilly and unpliable" so that they may hold moments in memory. The touch of words is contrasted with the "deep gratification" if not *jouissance* that one may experience in the "mere presence" of another "without touching them." The figurative language attempts to make words tangible even as such writing seeks the removal of contact to offer an intimacy of a moment without touch—to be together in "the special environment of a moment." The scream that may or may not occur becomes the result of an indeterminate affect that is nonetheless gratifying though rarely

[207] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 234.
[208] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 137 and 234.
[209] Sadakichi Hartmann, *1000 Happy Moments*, 13.

experienced. For Hartmann, this becomes a question of belief. If Hartmann's stories attempt to "seize" these moments as a photograph might, do they offer such experiences for their readers? In writing of his mother does Hartmann attempt to create the "special environment of a moment" where the two may exist if only in feeling? Loss becomes meaningful for the ways in which it perpetuates the feeling of a moment that seems hard to believe in. As I will outline in more detail as this chapter unfolds, suggestivism becomes one way of naming the feeling of an absent present that brings bodies together within and across temporalities. Though there is much more to say about Hartmann's thought about the function of poetry and aesthetics more generally within or as a political project, my turn to *1000 Happy Moments* attempts to begin thinking about such engagement from the deeply personal. Now, I'd like to look at Osada's photographs as "memory possession[s]."

"Osada" names the opening chapter of Hartmann's *Autobiography*. After noting that Osada died shortly after his birth, Hartmann turns to a photograph to begin his recollections of her:

> All I have is a vague idea of her appearance and looks. I own a photograph which shows her sad-eyed, with strangely symmetrical though strictly Oriental features, of that type that is sympathetic, if not handsome, to our standard of beauty.[210]

Hartmann modifies Osada's eyes with the affect of his own and is seemingly absorbed in her photograph as a mirrored reflection. As Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok claim in their formulation of melancholy, "Being a melancholic, I stage and let everyone else see the full extent of my love object's grief over having lost me"[211] The ambivalence towards the loss of his mother in Abraham and Torok's terms stage a kind of melancholic time travel in order return to a

[210] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 1.
[211] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel: Renewals of Psychoanalysis*, ed. and trans. Nicholas T. Rand (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 136.

psychical relation to the subject of loss. Sadakichi and Osada mourn the loss of one another. Since Hartmann never knew his mother, the time prior to the establishment of such an ambivalent relation does not exist except in fantasy. "The melancholic's complaints translate a fantasy" according to Abraham and Torok, that "only serves to mask the real suffering, this one unavowed, caused by a wound the subject does not know how to heal."[212] Barthes' *punctum*, "that accident which pricks me (but also bruises me, is poignant to me)" in the photograph is also its relation to temporality—time's embodiment is what hurts, demands attention, and restructures our understanding of self.[213] The photograph of Osada becomes an occasion to leave open the wound or to bear bruise of temporal distance. Hartmann's turn to beauty heightens the sense of loss. In "The Philosophy of Composition" Poe posits a division between truth, passion, and beauty: "Truth, in fact, demands a precision, and Passion, a *homeliness* (the truly passionate will comprehend me) which are absolutely antagonistic to that Beauty which, I maintain, is the excitement, or pleasurable elevation, of the soul."[214] Poe's division may account for why Hartmann describes the book of his mother's life as containing "passion- and tear-stained pages," but it points more directly to the ways in which Hartmann reads the photograph as engendering all three of Poe's aesthetic prescriptions. In mediating the relationship between "the intellect" and "the heart" beauty exists as "the province of the poem" as it affects the soul.[215] The contrast between the elevation of Lenore's soul and the descension of the speaker's soul into the shadow on the floor in "The Raven" is part of the reason why it might be beautiful for a reader as, Poe notes, "Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones."[216] The vague quality of

[212] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*, 142.
[213] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 27.
[214] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.
[215] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.
[216] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.

Osada's life and appearance for Hartmann engenders a productive ambivalence. To cathect or not with the photograph becomes a form of sympathetic relation in the guise of an aesthetic judgment. Together, the intellect of Hartmann's criticism and the passion of his writing elevate Osada's beauty if only in Poe's terms.

Hartmann's attempts to identify with is mother, however, remain partially mediated by his association with his European father and "our [western] standard of beauty." The vague idea of her appearance and existence becomes the occasion for Orientalist fantasy:

> So mother is to me little more than a nebulous vision. Of her ancestry I know nothing, whether she was a princess as arduous reporters would have it, the daughter of a samurai or ronin as I liked to make myself believe, or merely a mousmee [sic], a Madame Chrysanthemum or Butterfly, which lived submissively with my venerable father during his stay in Japan.[217]

Recalling Pierre Loti's *Madame Chrysanthème* (1887), John Luther Long's "Madame Butterfly" (1898), or any number of adaptations of their work, Hartmann allows his vision to be influenced by these literary and operatic representations. Though these fictions are less desirable than others for Hartmann, in casting his mother as Madame Butterfly he allows himself to imagine an alternative existence separated from his father and remaining in Japan with his mother. Long's story ends with the interruption of "Cho-Cho-San's" ritualized suicide when her "maid softly put the baby into the room" and pinches a cry out of him.[218] The cry of the child stops "Cho-Cho-San" from inserting a sword further into her chest at a critical moment of mourning for herself and the relationship she had with the absent father of her child: "she now first knew that it was sad to die. He had come, and substituted himself for everything; he had gone, and left her nothing."[219] Her child becomes the aggregate of everything and a substitute for the lost

[217] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 1.
[218] John Luther Long, "Madame Butterfly," *The Century Magazine* 55, no. 3 (January 1898): 392.
[219] John Luther Long, "Madame Butterfly," 392.

relationship when the story ends in a moment of embrace: "The baby crept cooing into her lap. The little maid came in and bound up the wound."[220] Hartmann's birth becomes a self-inflicted wound that Osada might have recovered from. As Freud surmises, "in mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself."[221] The exaggerated dynamics of everything and nothing become for Hartmann ways of proportioning influence by his parents as felt in, and expressed by, his own life. Hartmann's vision of Osada's appearance offers the outlines of his own ego made into image.

The self-conscious orientalism on Hartmann's part as a form of make believe is cut by the sarcasm with which he describes Osada's relationship with his father. As Hartmann clarifies, "From the little I have heard, I understand that my mother regretted of having entered upon the union with a foreigner."[222] Hartmann also recalls moments later the substantial effect of thoughtless racism exhibited by his father: "a casual remark in regard to my half Japanese parentage opened up a chasm which steadily widened until it became impossible to overbridge it in this life."[223] The broken surface of their relationship is put into further relief in the kinds of influence his parents may have had on his personality: "coming on my father's side from a lineage strictly commercial in tendency, I concluded that my poetic strain must have come to me from over the seas."[224] Though the fantasy of making his mother a Madame was a way for "arduous reporters" and their reading publics to create a legible backstory for Hartmann that did end up helping with his commercial prospects, the orientalist inflection of his mother marks one way that Hartmann desires to feel Osada's loss more deeply—to be distanced from the caricature

[220] John Luther Long, "Madame Butterfly," 392.
[221] Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" in *On the History of the Pscyho-Analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology, and Other Works*. Vol. 14 of *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. John Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1955), 246.
[222] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 2.
[223] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 7.
[224] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 3.

that he constructs in her absence. It also becomes a production that may, despite the emptiness of the representation, become a possible form of connection between them though I would not go as far as arguing for a shared embrace of stereotype as a way of creating these connections.

Hartmann describes himself in equally "nebulous" terms as he does his mother: "I always felt as if I owe much to my mother. I mean the dreamy, mystic elements in my make up. And there are many traits in my character that I myself cannot explain, something that seems curious and strange to me and comes unbidden, and helps to shape my destiny."[225] Hartmann's reflection on his destiny invites a temporal ambiguity in defining what has or will happen for him—a demand that always occasions a reflection on the circumstances of the present. In writing the *Autobiography*, Hartmann's use of the genre is to keep open these two possible relations the present may have to either the past or the future. Hartmann "owes much" to the past and his mother but finds himself with "something" that "comes unbidden" pushing him through life. The felt absence of Osada becomes a nonexistent future that reverberates backwards through time and outlines, if only vaguely, the Hartmann's self and destiny. Throughout the *Autobiography*, Hartmann continues to rely on discourses concerning visuality in order to think through the importance of his mother: "During childhood the vision of my mother did not often appear to me. Many years later, I realized the romance and the mystery and strange fascination that was woven around my birth."[226] Crafting his own origin in "romance," "mystery," and "strange fascination" Hartmann makes his mother the author of both his literal and figurative existence.

The blur of Hartmann's vision, or the image of himself and his mother in vague outline, becomes a mode of relationality. The becoming image or what might be termed Hartmann's focus on an aestheticization of life, including psychic life, is one way for him to engage with a

[225] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 3.
[226] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 16.

world wherein an inability to value art becomes part of the reason why life and the lived experience of others is devalued. Failure as the irreducible distance between the real and representation is the occasion to continue making art, to generate a progressive critical practice, or to simply continue existing. Aesthetics gives way to ethics in an ongoing tension in feeling as a deep sadness. The aestheticization of his own racialized identity created through an interartistic comparison with literature and photography suggests that melancholy may indeed be "the most legitimate of all the poetical tones" as Poe suggests because it offers a way of world making that might lead to more of the happy moments Hartmann describes.[227] Hartmann's thinking on the image productively aligns with remarks made by Frederick Douglass on photography I'll return to in a later chapter, namely that "It is the picture of life contrasted with the fact of life, the ideal contrasted with the real, which makes criticism possible."[228] In necessarily attending to the aesthetic dimension of lived experience Hartmann offers an ethics by way of suggestion that attends to the ambiguity of affect and the importance of care in acts of relation across time and media. In addition to suggestion, repetition, mystery, and blur are privileged concepts for parsing the kinds of experiences art and life offer each other.

Hartmann's contributions to *Camera Work* provide useful insight into the varied definitions of this concepts Hartmann both used in his criticism and applied to his own self-understanding. "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects" (1904) provides an account of mystery that expands on what Hartmann writes concerning himself and his mother in the *Autobiography*. The piece opens with a reflection on the words of landscape painter, D.W. Tyron. In Hartmann's recollection, Tyron claims that "mystery is a sort of attenuation…and the painter who is in pursuit of it has to sacrifice a good deal of color and form and other qualities

[227] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.
[228] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 356-357.

before he will find himself able to run the mystery down."[229] Tyron's formulation clarifies the need to sacrifice distinctions of form and saturations of color within a painting to create mystery, but in suggesting that one might be "able to run the mystery down" even Tyron mistakes a reaction for a cause in offering the paradox of creating mystery. In subtracting from the painting, the mystery of the exhibited version of the image offers more than the initial image could possibly represent. In the attempt to create mystery, then, a painter might need to alienate themselves from the object of their own creation. Hartmann describes the actual technique involved in this process as follows: "[The] process of attenuation is largely a glazing with pure color…it is a breaking up of the fundamental colors by the juxtaposition and superposition of others, the conquest of gray, the color of modern life, by an invasion of all the half-tints and minor gradations of the spectrum."[230] The creation of mystery becomes an existential question as the grays "modern life" color both the image and the mood of the painting even as it is evocative of a kind of whitewashing of experience. The creation of mystery becomes not quite the aestheticization of modern life, but rather result of an aesthetics of.

Hartmann turns to literature in expanding his definition of mystery and, unsurprisingly, uses Poe as an example that begins to bridge medial divides. "Unhappy, fantastic Poe," writes Hartmann "who saw ghosts even in broad daylight and to whom the world appeared, at all times, as if steeped in some phosphorescent gloom, produced the desired effect by alternate repetition of long and open or short and obtuse vowel sounds."[231] Hartmann's use of "phosphorescent gloom" combines the variations on the word 'gloom' used by Rufus Griswold in his obituary of Poe with photographic luminosity in order to offer another way of thinking about an aesthetic

[229] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," *Camera Work*, no. 7 (July 1904): 24.
[230] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," 24.
[231] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," 25.

response to modern life. In writing of the refrain consisting of these sounds Hartmann gestures towards, a "key-note in the construction of the poem," Poe explains that the "universality of its employment sufficed to assure me of its intrinsic value."[232] For Poe the use of a refrain is justified through the universality of its application. Hartmann is making a similar argument for the value of artistic repetition in addressing living whatever a modern life is. Hartmann continually stressed that innovation in art in and of itself served no purpose, but that deliberate reflection through a progressive repetition of aesthetic forms offered more for thought and feeling than an unabashed enthusiasm or destructive adherence to the new could. In literature, Hartmann claims, "mystery seems to consist largely of a concealment of actualities, of depriving the words to a certain extent of their literary significance or of investing them with pictorial and musical qualities."[233] Though it is unclear if Hartmann may have wanted to go as far as claiming a synesthetic experience in Poe's refrain—the materiality of language becoming the affect of an image of loss—Hartmann does concede that "words are less evasive than colors. Their vocation is to attain to logical directness. Only in poetical effusions may they become enigmatical."[234] Hartmann's contrast between the literary and the pictorial casts the creation of poetic mystery as intermedial from the start. It is my suggestion that intermediality as the space between media becomes an important heuristic for Hartmann in understanding not only artistic expression, but also himself as creation. The ambiguity of the affect between media offers a way of approaching photography, poetry, and though less explicit but always present for Hartmann, race.

This approach most often occurs in feeling rather than thought. For Hartmann, "mystery dredges deeper than any other emotional suggestion; that it represents to our mind an everlasting

[232] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.
[233] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," 25.
[234] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," 25.

enigma which no human thought can solve."[235] It is uncertain if Hartmann opens up the possibilities provided by "emotional suggestion" or if this definition serves to delimit the kinds of understanding that mystery allows. Either way, Hartmann claims that mystery cannot be solved by thought alone, but rather through feeling. It also offers an articulation of a critical methodology or what I am tentatively calling suggestive reading as thought that does not solve, but nevertheless serves a purpose as, or an occasion for, "emotional suggestion." Dallett Fuguet, photographer and associate editor of *Camera Work*, writing of mystery in 1906, uses similar language to describe the concept:

> Mystery in art is as hard to define as it is easy to exemplify. It is not mysticism. It is not reserve, nor selection, but includes them all in its service. Begotten of man's spiritual needs and melancholy possibilities, suggestion is its handmaid. Death is its brother. And its essence is as its name—mystery![236]

Though here and in much of Fuguet's work, the seriousness of the expression is unclear, but what may matter is Fuguet's diction. The multiple personifications offer a birth scene wherein the artist's "spiritual needs and melancholy possibilities" engender a mystery attended by the seemingly devalued suggestion as a sibling to death. The muddled genealogy by way of tautology may potentially indicate that death is similarly born from melancholia, reversing the usual order of melancholy following death, or it may simply amount to a statement concerning the necessity of artistic creation as existential reflection—an idea Hartmann would be amendable to in practice, but perhaps not quite in Fuguet's terms. As mystery for Hartmann is both origin and ending that exist without explanation, but not without cause.

[235] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," 26.
[236] Dallett Fuguet, "Mystery," *Camera Work*, no. 14 (April 1906): 49.

If Hartmann's first reading of Osada in photograph in the *Autobiography* provides a way of thinking about suggestion and mystery, Hartmann's return to photographic representations a bit later offers possible approaches to repetition and variation:

> Pictures of our mother were scarce. We had one photograph not larger than a stamp of a seated figure in a checkered Japanese gown, with cross cut décolleté, and large boxwood pins in her hair. Later on in life, we came across a larger copy of the same picture, also a large full-face bust portrait, and one of a group of women, which showed that our mother was almost a head taller than the average Japanese women. Her face in these photographs looked extremely pale, and flat, almost like an outline drawing of peculiar linear beauty and there was something wistful, sad, suffering, helpless in her face.[237]

Hartmann was known for his looming figure and a detail he may have been happy to associate with his mother. The flatness of his mother's face shifts the medium in which she is represented from photograph to drawing. Osada's outline demarcates an inability if not unwillingness for Hartmann to presence her into the image. The list of possible expressions in Osada's face escalates in degrees of melancholy nearly becoming Poe's poetic ideal. Osada is helpless before the camera as Hartmann is helpless before her image. As emotions shift, media blurs, and Hartmann is left with an outline of his own relation to the photograph. Hartmann may also have had in mind *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints or paintings, an association I'll attend to in a later section.

Rather than stay with the affect, Hartmann proposes a possible explanation for the sadness of the image by setting up a contrast between Osada and his father. In turning to Osada's material body, Hartmann moves from photograph, to drawing, and back to life. Hartmann relies on accounts of his father by his grandmother: "Grandmother told us repeatedly that our father had not treated her rightly, that somebody had told her that in a quarrel he had struck her."[238] The photograph that feels like a hit and the face and body that may have borne the brunt of violence become for Hartmann a way of moving between mediums to describe his mother. It is also

[237] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 15.
[238] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 15-16.

telling that Hartmann turns to domestic violence since Lillian Bonham, Hartmann's second wife, recounts in her diaries instances of physical, sexual, and mental abuse.[239] Early in their relationship, Hartmann wrote to Lillian to encourage her artistic aspirations: "Life, you know, is not made up of big events but of minor acts, thoughts and sentiments. Why don't you try and write your future diary to me!"[240] Though this instance makes a minor act of a big event, it may be one moment of acknowledgement by Hartmann of how awful he could be in sharing with the main antagonist of his *Autobiography* a penchant for abuse. Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter to offer an account of Hartmann's and Lillian Bonham's relationship, particularly the early loving stages of it as mediated by the writing of Walt Whitman, Bonham's presence becomes increasingly important for the ways in which he understands the figure of the feminine muse as Bonham becomes Hartmann's "Tramp Madonna" and "dream" for part of his life. Here, however, my interest is in the flattening of the photograph into drawing—a process that recalls the flattening of the soul in the raven's shadow in Poe's poem as well as the more prominent aesthetic dimensions of Japanese art—as present in Hartmann's relationship to his mother.

To use Hartmann's language, his reading of Osada's photographs and his return to Poe's "The Raven" throughout his life exhibits "repetition, with slight variation," an aesthetic approach that Hartmann theorizes through his criticism on Japanese landscape painting. "The question, 'What is the leading characteristic of Japanese painting?' has often been put to me," writes Hartmann using the pseudonym Sidney Allan, "and I have invariably answered, 'Repetition, with slight variation.'"[241] For Hartmann (Allan), the "two principal elements of pictorial art," namely

[239] See the Lillian Bonham Hartmann Papers (MS012). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[240] Sadakichi Hartmann to Lilian Bonham, August 28, 1907. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068), Box 11e, Folder 1. Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[241] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," *Camera Work*, no. 1 (January 1903): 30.

that it "is decorative and yet true to life" are found in artistic compositions that that blur distinctions between real and representation in order to engender new ways of thinking, feeling, or making the world differently: "its object is not to execute a perfect imitation of reality (only bad works of art do that) or a poetic resemblance of life (as our best painters produce), but merely a commentary on some pictorial vision, which sets the mind to think and dream."[242] The movement from imitation to resemblance to commentary as a way to measure successful compositions moves from the real towards an abstraction to the point where the commentary is only possible when a "pictorial vision" is barred from being represented within the actual composition. This reads quite a bit like Hartmann's concept of suggestion, but commentary does well to foreground the alignment Hartmann makes with criticism and art, if not art as criticism and vice versa. Hartmann's criteria for aesthetic judgment highlights an art object's ability to both draw a viewer in as well as push them away into the scenery of their own mind.

Though artistic photography has not made any successful attempts at "repetition with slight variation," at least according to Hartmann, European and American landscape paintings have adequately made use of the technique. As in "Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," D.W. Tyron becomes a privileged example and a detail from *Springtime* (1892) is included as an illustration to the article. Exhibited by Society of American Artists in 1896 and commissioned as a panel painting for the home of Charles Lang Freer, collector of Asian art, the painting depicts an early New England springtime. Hartmann claims that the "idea of vastness and level expansion" is produced through a "horizontal monotony of lines" whose "parallelism is accentuated and elaborately worked out (balanced by vertical-line work and oval shapes)."[243] In a landscape that reads like the description of a poem, Hartmann foregrounds a kind of horizontal

[242] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 30.
[243] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 33.

flattening that along with the lack of depth makes the landscape into an abstraction. Though a horizon line is made visible by a break in the line of trees in the middle of the back third of the painting, there is a lack of depth in the picture plane as the repetition of tree forms overlap. The black trunk and branches of the trees in the midground appear almost without depth as they grow out of the blur of the grassy landscape. The focus isn't on the growth of the trees in spring—the potentiality offered in the bare yet blooming branches—, but rather on the vastness of the canvas as the eye leaves the image. The oval shapes of the trees in the background are contrasted with those in midground whose branches reach up to the edge of the canvas. Rather than defining spatial boundaries, the horizontal vastness of the painting extends into an imagined panorama even if the tree grouping in the painting's left may delimit such a view. However, the shadows cast by the tall, bare trees in the midground from the absent sun positioned to the painting's left direct our gaze to this horizontal expanse.



Figure 13. D.W. Tyron, *Springtime*, 1892, photogravure. In *Camera Work* No. 1 (January 1903). *The Modernist Journals Project, Brown and Tulsa Universities, ongoing. www.modjourn.org*.

Writing to Freer about its display, Tyron comments that the painting "seems in the exhibition a curious and undefinable mingling of the real and ideal" and "in some ways reminds me of some of the very old Japanese work in colors and abstraction."[244] In Hartmann's reading the horizontal flattening would align with the intentions of populating one of Freer's rooms with other paintings depicting the seasons. Whether or not Hartmann was aware of the design, the movement out of the painting horizontally becomes a seasonal change. Writing of the early days of his life before Osada died, Hartmann muses that "when she carried me under her heart, she made daily pilgrimages to the O'Suwa [sic] temple."[245] In describing these pilgrimages Hartmann reflects on the seasons during which they may have taken place: "Whether it was Spring when the red blossomed plum makes one think longingly of the past or Autumn when the red apple leaves make us dream wistfully of the present, I am at a loss to tell."[246] In a commentary on his early poetry, Hartmann is continually concerned about Osada's relationship to landscape in death. Hartmann speculates that "she was cremated on some by-way near Kobe, and her ashes then and there were scattered to the winds, to whiten some sinuous mountain path to this very day."[247] Though it is a New England landscape, Tyron's painting becomes the kind of scenery that Osada may have seen—a view that she now has by looking through Hartmann's eyes.

For Hartmann, "the composition of Japanese artists is guided by the law of repetition, but also their inventive power," noting that though artists "have painted a crow sitting on a snow-covered fir-branch, with the full moon behind, a thousand times…every painter who has handled

[244] D.W. Tyron to Charles Lang Freer, June 12, 1892. In Linda Merrill, *An Ideal Country: Paintings by Dwight William Tyron in the Freer Gallery of Art* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1990), 112.
[245] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 2.
[246] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 2.
[247] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.

the subject has tried to lend it a new individuality. Only the subject remains the same, treatment and conception are invariably charged with the personality of the artist."[248] Hartmann's description of the importance of the personality of the artist is found in terms in a passage from his *Autobiography* describing the ways in which "an author gathers materials."[249] Hartmann claims that "an impression that stays in his mind and expands with other associations, so virile that he can draw upon it at any moment."[250] Hartmann's first creative speculation on the origin of Poe's "The Raven," "Dreary Windblown Meads," stages this process of artistic creation as expansive association as the poem is revealed to Poe while he is in nature. Hartmann likewise applies this methodology to himself and aligns it with Japanese aesthetic traditions. Hartmann continues, "No doubt, my talent of appreciating such visions asserted itself at an early stage; to draw an impression in words even as a Japanese might draw a swallow in full flight with a few strokes of the brush."[251]

In "Repetition, with Slight Variation," Hartmann uses the example of a crane in flight to describe the ways in which an individual artist might differentiate themselves while working with the subject matter with, and of, history. Within the depiction of flight, Hartmann argues that "the first form introduces us to the subject, its appearance and action; the second accentuates the same impression and heightens the feeling of reality by the slight variation in the appearance and action, and every following form resembling, at the first glance, a silhouette is simply a commentary upon the preceding one; and all together represent, so to say, a multiplication of the original idea."[252] If Poe introduces the form of the subject, then Hartmann's rewriting of "The

[248] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 31.
[249] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 145.
[250] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 145.
[251] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 145.
[252] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 30.

Raven," or more to the point "The Philosophy of Composition" as its own rewriting of the original poem, then Hartmann can multiply Poe's original idea through creative commentary. Birds are privileged figures for Hartmann in thinking through these artistic approaches. Hartmann reads "The Raven" as if it were a bird within his own landscape painting. Poe's raven, as an empty figure of poetic expression heralding the possibility of turning the poetic speaker into an equally empty representation within the flattened shadow of the raven on the floor, becomes through Hartmann's repetition with slight variation an intervention in the history of poetic expression. The manufactured horror of Poe's poem becomes iterative possibility. This is one way that Hartmann's suggestive criticism offers a form of suggestive reading and writing that foregrounds his biracial identity in and through transmedial and interartistic comparison. The result is that Hartmann is able to rewrite American literary history through the mediation of himself and his relationship to Osada.

Though speaking for "We Occidentals," Hartmann (Allan) admonishes "the craze for originality is really the curse of our art, as it leads nearly always to conventionalism and mannerism" preferring instead the notion that "that a beautiful idea always remains a beautiful idea, and that it takes as much creative power to lend a new charm to an old theme as to produce and execute an apparently new one, which, after all, may prove an old one."[253] After insisting that "originality does not consist of something that has never been done before, but rather in new ways of expression," Hartmann notes that "Thousands of mother-and-child pictures have been painted by the old masters, but artists like De Forest Brush, Abbott Thayer, Tompkins, and Mary Cassatt have understood how to lend the time-worn subject a new note of interest."[254] That a subject shows the effects of temporality is important for Hartmann's aesthetics, and it comes as

[253] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 31.
[254] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 31.

no surprise that a salient example of this approach is evidenced in mother-and-child paintings. Hartmann, of course, had no such portrait, but could stare into Osada's photograph as it blurred mediums and temporalities. Hartmann could only write what he felt and in doing so makes Osada an unacknowledged muse of American literature. Hartmann writes to remember.

In August of 1942, nearing the end of his life Hartmann wrote of his interactions with the Sheriff of Riverside County and an investigator from Alien Enemy Control division of the FBI that took place earlier that spring. The anxiety of the initial conversation with these officials without any further contact in the subsequent months heightened the anxiety with which Hartmann reflected on his identity near the end of his life. Hartmann determined that he was likely not "classified as a Japanese or alien enemy" due to the fact that he was not a Japanese citizen, never visited the country, and couldn't speak the language, but more importantly, because he arrived in the United States when he was thirteen.[255] Hartmann also emphasizes that he "wrote the first generally accepted History of American Art" and that he spent his career "plead[ing] for the encouragement of American Art, and made every effort to convince European nations that also the U.S.A. has a national art worth while—after all a patriotic endeavor of educational value!"[256] Hartmann's role as critic becomes the point of contact in a transnational conversation on aesthetic expression that the United States could not, or would not, understand by denying the impact of his teaching—a lesson yet to be learned.

Though Hartmann takes aim at the unpatriotic actions of local and federal law enforcement by questioning the value that they have for the country, he hedges against further inquiries by the state in questioning his Japanese heritage. The photograph of his mother, Osada,

[255] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Statement on FBI Investigation," 1942. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068), Box 29. Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[256] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Statement on FBI Investigation."

that once contained mystery and suggestive possibility, becomes evidence of Hartmann's disavowal of his Japanese identity when facing state-sponsored racial violence. Hartmann writes, "I also entertain doubts whether my mother was really Japanese" and produces as evidence the "group photograph (either of attendants of a teahouse or a theatrical troupe) that depicted my mother a foot taller than her companions."[257] Hartmann's reading of the photograph, in keeping with intertwined discourses of scientific racism and an investment in the truth of photographic indexicality, offers an alternative story of his origins in which his mother might have been "a Korean (dancer?)," but as Hartmann notes, "I could not verify this as my father destroyed the birth certificate in my presence when I was too young to realize its significance."[258] Though Hartmann mentions his mother's height both here and in the *Autobiography*, Osada's face is no longer present or meaningful in the ways it once was as the outline of her expression may have now disappeared completely in a movement from body, to photography, to drawing, into nothingness. The "something wistful, sad, suffering, helpless" in Osada face was expressed by Hartmann instead.[259] In claiming that a "halfbreed had no chance in Japan during the last century" Hartmann simultaneously laments his treatment by the government of his own country along with his unacknowledged influence in the history of American letters.[260] Yet, the photographs of Osada remain privileged in the ways Hartmann accounts for himself.

Writing of the infamous Winter Garden photograph of his mother in *La chambre clair* (*Camera Lucida*) (1980), Barthes finds in photograph a moment of recognition at the edge, or end, of language: "I do much more than recognize her: sudden awakening, outside of 'likeness,' a *satori* in which words fail, the rare, perhaps unique evidence of the 'So, yes, so much and no

[257] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Statement on FBI Investigation."
[258] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Statement on FBI Investigation."
[259] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 15.
[260] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Statement on FBI Investigation."

more.'"[261] In Barthes understanding of the concept satori, the state is understood as an emptiness of loss of meaning. Whereas for Barthes the enlightened emptiness of photographic "truth" renders language incapable of expression, Hartmann writes out of the emptiness to arrive at a different kind of affective connection. For Barthes, "[t]his brings the Photograph (certain photographs) close to the Haiku. For the notion of a haiku, too, is undevelopable: everything is given, without provoking the desire for or even the possibility of a rhetorical expansion."[262] Although both photograph and haiku engender quite a bit of prose from Barthes, the aesthetic relation of these objects, or at least certain ones, work against discursive unfolding in their attempts to halt meaning in ways that move beyond a western conception of signification. This means that "neither the Haiku nor the Photograph makes us 'dream.'"[263] Barthes' phenomenology of the poem contrasts with Hartmann as in "The Japanese Conception of Poetry," the later remarks that tanka and haiku are "vague and dreamy" and of a "suggestive style."[264]

What is vague or dreamy in both poetry and photography for Hartmann is for Barthes an inability or affective stillness created by temporality as piercing the epistemological dimension of experience:

> The photograph justifies this desire, even if it does not satisfy it: I can have the fond hope of discovering truth only because Photograph's *noeme* is precisely *that-has-been*, and because I live in the illusion that it suffices to clean the surface of the image in order to accede to *what is behind*: to scrutinize means to turn the photograph over, to enter into the paper's depth, to reach its other side (what is hidden is for us Westerners more "true" than what is visible).[265]

[261] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 109.
[262] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 49.
[263] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 49.
[264] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Japanese Conception of Poetry," *The Reader* 3, no. 4 (January 1904): 186.
[265] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 99-100. Emphasis in original.

The East/West binary set up by Barthes as a heuristic for understanding both photography and the loss of his mother is exactly that which Hartmann deconstructs throughout his criticism despite also making use of it himself. Barthes would likely view Hartmann's critical aesthetic as determined by an orientalism that a more "neutral" engagement with art and culture would render insufficient. The search for the truth in what is not visible or materially instantiated becomes an illusion that Hartmann would embrace. In fact, that is how Hartmann understands the "truth" of suggestivism in privileging affect over discourse as a heuristic for understanding and experiencing aesthetic objects. Barthes and Hartmann approach one another in their analyses, but it appears that Barthes attempts to negate himself along with that which exists within his gaze. Hartmann claims that a "Japanese reader agrees with us [westerners] that emotion is the true basis of all poetic expression, but he wants merely a suggestion to convey to the sketchy outlines of the poet's conception his own poetic imagination, and the emotions that are stirred within his own breast."[266] Barthes wants to escape from himself into the nonexistent image. Hartmann desires an image in thought and in feeling as a form of return to the self and to Osada. For both Barthes and Hartmann Japan is a "fictive nation" and the form of the haiku is created through misreading hokku from a western perspective.[267] However, it is in and through the signs of this fiction that they return to their mothers.

For Barthes a haiku is "scarcely a few words, an image, a sentiment—where our literature ordinarily requires a poem."[268] The difference between haiku and western conceptions of poetry would be a generative contradiction for Hartmann and one that he wholeheartedly would

[266] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Japanese Conception of Poetry," 189.
[267] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 3.
[268] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), 70.

embrace especially as "image" and "sentiment" are the main heuristics in Hartmann's reading practice. Barthes, in turn, compares the haiku to a photograph that does not exist:

> …the haiku's flash illumines, reveals nothing; it is the flash of a photograph one takes very carefully (in the Japanese manner) but having neglected to load the camera with film. Or again: haiku reproduces the designating gesture of the child pointing at whatever it is (the haiku shows no partiality for the subject), merely saying: *that!* with a movement so immediate (so stripped of any mediation: that of knowledge, of nomination, or even of possession) that what is designated is the very inanity of any classification of the object: *nothing special* says the haiku, in accordance with the spirit of Zen: the event is not nameable according to any species, its specialty short circuits: like a decorative loop, the haiku coils back on itself, the wake of the sign which seems to have been traced is erased: nothing has been acquired, the word's stone has been cast for nothing: neither waves nor flow of meaning.[269]

The haiku as "a kind of faint gash inscribed upon time" prefigures Barthes theorization of the photographic punctum in that both gesture towards a 'that' is and has been.[270] Both Barthes and Hartmann are children pointing with the hope that the "that" which is gestured towards exists for them in the ways they want it to. Within Barthes exoscopic view Zen and the haiku are practices designed to suspend language through flattening which aligns with Hartmann's understanding of haiku poetry: "The leading characteristic of the Japanese poet seems to be his fertile fancy for pictorial minuteness. Nature is always the leading *motif*."[271] Barthes' emphasis on a process of image creation that does not result in one, forecloses criticism whereas Hartmann views that absence as necessarily generative and perhaps the location where the image is found. In short, Barthes and Hartmann disagree about what happens when you read.

Yet, reading is for Barthes is self-referential and "coils back on itself" in the same way he reads the haiku. The photographic flash, the flash of language, is the flash of lighting in one of Basho's haiku that Barthes reproduces:

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[269] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, 83-84.
[270] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, 82.
[271] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Japanese Conception of Poetry," 187. Emphasis in original.

How admirable he is
Who does not think "Life is ephemeral"
when he sees a flash of lightning![272]

Neither Barthes nor Hartmann pretend to a meaning that transcends, closes, or coils back on itself, but Hartmann always adds himself into the moment, or rather adds the moment into himself. Barthes' turn to the photographic metaphor troubles the potential registers in and through which meaning might be produced. At the risk of cliché, the process is more important than the result. The ambiguity of someone who may or may not have attained a kind of enlightenment though it would be difficult to know if they did not talk about it—an epistemology that extinguishes itself—already in the Basho troubles Barthes' attempt to write a book that cannot be written, but the metaphor begs the question if it can be photographed. For Barthes this impossible intermediality is a way to navigate around a totalization of meaning as well as a way of mourning for his mother in photographs that are not reproducible.

Hartmann likewise turns to discursive intermediality in the development of his suggestive practice. In the *Diamond Sutra*, a possible source for the Basho, this viewing practice addresses many of Hartmann's preferred metaphors:

Because all conditioned dharmas
are like dreams, phantoms, bubbles, shadows,
like dew, or again like lightning—
in this way should you view them.[273]

Both cosmological order and self-understanding within that order are to be viewed as transient dreams and shadows. "The Japanese always remains an observer," writes Hartmann, "He never becomes one with nature. He does not possess the faculty of endowing inanimate objects with life."[274] Despite the (self-)denigrating remarks concerning prosopopoeia that posit a kind of

[272] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, 72.
[273] "The Diamond Sutra," trans. by Burton Watson, *The Eastern Buddhist* 41, vol. 1 (2010): 96.
[274] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Japanese Conception of Poetry," 188.

social death, Hartmann considers himself an observer. Barthes laments the inability of photography to provide a way to see himself as both and not himself: "if only Photography could give me a neutral, anatomic body, a body which signifies nothing! Alas, I am doomed by (well-meaning) Photography always to have an expression: by body never finds its zero degree, no one can give it to me (perhaps only my mother?"[275] Of course mother, or perhaps the photograph of the mother, is able to do that. Barthes may have read Hartmann's mixedness as approximating that neutral body that he cannot be given—maybe by a different mother? Alternatively, perhaps Hartmann's body is all signifier as in Barbara Johnson's reading of "The Raven," but one that for Barthes would signify nothing, but for Johnson would require added meaning. Either way, Barthes wants to forget himself in remaining an observer, but not quite in Hartmann's terms. If photography may work to blur ontological distinctions and develop new kinds of critical perspectives, the relation created between the Barthes' observer and their own body given in photograph is severed by the temporal and ontological cut of the photograph—a stasis during which one might or might not exist, and where the self and the photograph is both everything and nothing in the absent moment of the image. Barthes offers fantasy of photography as technology and not as a medium even though he can't believe in it. The photographic body for Barthes is like Hartmann and Tyron's formulation of mystery or the attenuation of the image in being glazed with light whose composition is fundamental broken by life. As the photograph cannot precede its reference, it is it is difficult to refuse an interpretive perspective in advance of the object that appears before a critical gaze. Hartmann always lived the relation and made it part of his criticism. In remaining an observer, Hartmann positions himself, rather than the object, outside of discourse as a precondition for an affective critical engagement. At times it appears

[275] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida*, 12.

that Barthes and Hartmann want the same kinds of things that photography cannot give. At least Barthes knew his mother.

Hartmann's experimentation with Japanese verse forms were collected as *Japanese Rhythms: Tanka and Haiki* and published in multiple formats including a script edition beginning as early as 1916. The first of the haikai in the collection expresses a common interrogative trope for Hartmann, namely the question concerning the dream of existence:

> White petals afloat
> On a winding woodland stream—
> What else is life's dream![276]

Although Barthes posits a western syllogistic logic in the attempt to read the lines of a haiku in order, the absence of the question mark to punctuate the direction of the interrogative allows Hartmann's to be read both backwards and forwards. The stream provides a fluid connection between the petals and the dream that is simultaneously the medium of their expression. Although it is tempting to read a kind of resignation in the directionless float of the petals, the non(flow) of the stream connects past to present as the petals become the self on the surface of time and understanding. For Barthes, "the West moistens everything with meaning" and yet the photograph and the haiku are "undevelopable."[277] For Barthes, this haiku would be the dream that cannot be dreamed, and Hartmann's poem would be failed haiku. For Hartmann, it amounts to a form of existential longing. The petals floating recall a scene of development, the self as photograph in fluid to image forth and fixed. To ask what might appear amongst the petals is perhaps not the right question, but at least for Hartmann it is one that demands a reconsideration of the self and the dream of existence. The petals cast against the surface of the water may be the

[276] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Rhythms* [Mimeographed Edition], 1926. Box 10. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[277] Roland Barthes, *Empire of Signs*, 70; Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*, 49.

hypothetical ashes of Osada "scattered to the winds, to whiten some sinuous mountain path to this very day."[278] They may be like the soul of "The Raven's" speaker that "lies floating" in perpetual mourning.[279] They may be like photographs whose presence of emptiness asks us how they should be viewed. Perhaps we "gaze with melancholy eyes" as Hartmann imagined his mother might have done.[280]

Hartmann's Early Poetry

The influence of Poe is felt Hartmann's early poetry. If the idealization of the dead white woman becomes muse and origin of American literary expression as least as far as Poe is concerned in "The Philosophy of Composition," Hartmann exists in an ambivalent relation to Poe's philosophical formulation and at times alters the racialization of the American muse by constructing, or perhaps entombing, his mother into that figure. In *Early Poems* (1886-1891) and *Naked Ghosts* (1887-1892), many of Hartmann's speakers, often interchangeable with Hartmann or one of his personas in my reading, recounts his interactions with an oftentimes a sleeping or deceased woman. The encounters are set during twilight or night and take place within an expansive desolate landscape or occur after the speaker has traversed such a landscape. These poems are not locodescriptive as they rely on sparse details to set the scene. The speaker's description focuses on the bodies of these women, notably their smiles, and its own affective state. A kiss between speaker and (newly) beloved serves as the main action around which the poem is constructed. Although the kiss mediates love and death, or love in or as death, these

[278] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.
[279] Though this chapter has and will continue to use the language of melancholy and loss, the Buddhist of no self, anatman, is useful to bear in mind especially in that the self within this cosmology still bears the traces of the past that persist between rebirths.
[280] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 2.

poems end without sustained reflection or, to use the words of M.H. Abrahams in his description of the "Greater Romantic Lyric," "an altered mood and deepened understanding which is the result of the intervening meditation."[281] They are suggestions in Hartmann's sense and repeat with slight variation an encounter that structures the modulation of one's affect through the body of another. Hartmann mourns himself and his mother into, and as, the literature that makes up history.

Appropriately, Hartmann's *Early Poems* opens with an address to Osada. The stanzas of "To My Mother" (1887) follow a chronological movement consisting of a reflection on Osada's death, an apostrophe to her enjoining her to rest in the present, and a future projection wherein Hartmann will be able to visit Japan and speak to her via the mediation of the landscape as tomb. The first stanza attempts to wrest a logic of love and mourning from the fact of her death:

> A woman's death created me, must therefore not
> My love hang over all the world!—poor mo-
> ther, my life shall expiate thy premature demise.[282]

In claiming that "death created" him, Hartmann offers a second birth, a birth in and through another's death, that becomes almost more important to his origin on this earth. The significance of which demands that both Hartmann and the world must atone for his mother's early death and Hartmann's love that "hang[s] over all the world" creates a community of mourners. Love as the remainder and as that which survives the loss makes a picture gallery of the world that exhibits his relationship to Osada in the (in)tangibility of art—the poem consisting of one of these pieces. In attempting to "expiate thy [Osada's] premature demise" Hartmann confronts his unwarranted

[281] M.H. Abrahams, "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*, eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 528.
[282] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems* (1886-1922), 1. Box 6. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

guilt in playing a part in his mother's death, but also seems to imply that in order to experience the full extent of her loss, he must continue to love as/and suffer until he, too, dies. If death created him, then his death may, in turn, create her.

The second stanza turns to the poem's present in its reflection on how Osada may exist within the ongoing moment of her death:

> Rest with my thanks, rest softly under the hills
> Of Kobe, under the hills of thy native land!
> May nature's gifts exult to beautify thy grave,
> While winds and birds sing everlasting funeral
> Rites to thee, my mother dear.[283]

The apostrophic address implores his mother to "rest with my [Hartmann's] thanks" and is quickly modified in telling her to "rest softly." The interruptive apostrophe posits a response from Osada or an adjustment to Hartmann's desire in terms of affect that the body's materiality already answers and accedes to. To rest within the poem, however, is indicative of a poetic restoration. Here, as in the recurrence of "under the hills," Hartmann seems to rely on the comforts of repetition in an elegy of commonplace sentiments. Osada as a joyous growth emerges from "under the hills" to "beautify," but also to expand the spatial dimensions of the grave as plant life pushes past the topsoil to experience wind and birdsong. The poem equates itself with the "winds and birds [that] sing everlasting funeral/Rites" in an act of perpetual mourning wherein the repetition serves as a ceremony, or in the case of the poem, a prelude to a kiss.

The imagined embrace between Hartmann and Osada occurs in the poem's final stanza in a future where Hartmann travel's back to Japan to properly mourn her. The landscape that has mourned Osada in Hartmann's absence becomes the site of an embrace long deferred:

[283] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 1.

The day will come when I shall kiss that sacred soil,
And to the floweriness that from thy ashes rose,
Each kiss shall tell the secret of my life: "To
Thee I owe what I may give of Beauty to this world."[284]

Osada is the secret of Hartmann's life and aesthetic expression as told by Hartmann through all the kisses he never felt that are now projected into the landscape by way of communing with the dead. In a manuscript draft of the poem from 1890, Hartmann provides a different ending: "each kiss shall tell the lesson most supreme of my/life: thy son is loved and loves again!"[285] In this version, Osada isn't the secret of Hartmann's life but a mother that is able to listen to him as he tells her what he has learned in living without her, namely that he has found love and is able to share his love with others. Hartmann tells her he is okay even if the existence of the poem may suggest otherwise. Regardless, if the elegy reveals the "secret" of Hartmann's aesthetic expression, what he "may give of Beauty to this world," it worth taking Hartmann at his early word.

Reflecting on the poem thirty-five years later in 1922, Hartmann notes that it is "a trifle early-ripe, touched as it were by German middle-class sentimentality," but that "it has at least the merit of genuineness…an honest overflow of sentiment."[286] While sentimentality may be an issue for the poem, the honesty of the creative affect in producing that sentiment is recognized as genuine. Though Hartmann would not likely have been as generous with others work as he is himself in this moment, it is important to him that becomes the criteria to evaluate the experiential impact of a poem rather than something akin to taste. Hartmann goes on to describe how the "material in this instance was unfortunately chosen" since his mother was "refused

[284] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 1.
[285] Sadakichi Hartmann, "To My Mother" (1890). Box 8. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[286] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.

burial in that beautiful hill cemetery at Nagasaki, where one might want to sleep forever, if one occasionally could peep out of the earth and glance over the glorious bay and harbor scene," due to fact that she was "a Buddhist and had associated with a foreigner."[287] Hartmann surmises that "she was cremated on some by-way near Kobe, and her ashes then and there were scattered to the winds, to whiten some sinuous mountain path to this very day."[288] Hartmann replays the apostrophic fantasy of temporary resurrection—to "peep out of the earth"—and in doing so laments both the circumstances surrounding his mother's burial as well as his inability to provide a resting place in poem however honest the sentiment that inspired the attempt. Hartmann's criticism attempts to rewrite the poem. This act of imaginative criticism is a suggestive form of reading and one that Hartmann explicitly returns to in his creative speculations on Poe's "The Raven."

What upsets Hartmann most in this critical reflection is that he was unable to visit the land of his birth to get a better sense of his mother and himself: "[t]he saddest of all this matter is that I have never been able to greet the land of my birth except in waking dreams and excursions into Japanese poetry."[289] Here Hartmann indicates two important strands of his practice of suggestive poetics. The first is the "waking dream" or the relationship between reality and imagination and the suggestive or affective dimension of waking life that is shaped or altered by the dreamworld of aesthetics. The second is Hartmann's relationship to his idea of Japanese poetry. This idea becomes a way of relating to his mother, of understanding his mixed identity, and set of aesthetic approaches that privilege imagination and affect over overdetermined representation. I'll attend more to this in a later section. Hartmann ends his reflection worrying

[287] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.
[288] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.
[289] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.

that he would forever remain separate from Japan: "Will my fate be like that of the author of 'Wilhelm Tell,' Never to see the country which he most longed to visit?"[290] Unfortunately for Hartmann, his fate did not allow for such a visit.

While "To My Mother" may not be the archetype for much of Hartmann's early poetry, the poem does include many of Hartmann's privileged subjects and tropes that he returns to especially at during the late nineteenth and turn into the twentieth century. It is a poetry of contact between the living and the dead that always ask questions concerning the place and value of aesthetic expression in mediating these moments. In his early poetry, this melancholic eroticism becomes for Hartmann a way of constellating relationships between love and aesthetics around the absent presence of Osada and of addressing Poe's infamous claim in "The Philosophy of Composition" that "'[w]hen it most closely allies itself to *Beauty*: the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover.'"[291] Hartmann and Hartmann's speakers have lips best suited.

In "Suggestions" (1887) Hartmann intertwines relations between three sets of amorous pairings. In the first stanza of the poem, we learn from the speech of an undertaker that the girl in the "wooden and black" coffin mourned by the speaker committed suicide after being abandoned by a lover, suggesting to the speaker and reader that, "'you know the rest.'"[292] Taking the place of the absent lover (or perhaps the absent lover returned), the speaker looks down at the girl's body and muses over her fate:

[290] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.
[291] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.
[292] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 9.

I stood at the coffin for a long time.
I looked at the painful smile on her lips,
and bending over her rigid marble limbs
once so full of life, I murmured:
"It is better so," and kissed the pale
cold forehead of murdered innocence.[293]

Making over her body into marble that might be formed by an artist's hand, the aestheticization of the corpse necessitates in Hartmann's melancholic eroticism a kiss. The kiss confirms the speaker's own desires and views on love in a perverse act of mourning for girl—the choice of forehead over the smiling lips confirming in body what was only present in the speaker's thought in a moment of attempted transference. The final pair of lovers appear "under the elder tree" as the speaker leaves the cottage. The speaker, having "stood at the coffin for a long time" gazing at the body "once so full of life" compares this duration of love with the pair under the tree, noting that "they still were/there in the balmy light of the moon" later that evening.[294] A tale of that doesn't so much contrast innocence and experience, but rather focuses on the pain of loss over against love's ongoing duration and expression.

The title of the poem, "Suggestions," link its content to the use of the theorization of the concept of suggestiveness in Hartmann's art writing. The condescension of the critic can be read into the judgment that the speaker passes in reading the "painful smile" of the dead. This kind of interpretive act creating contact between living viewer and dead (material) art describes a central aspect of the undefined term, namely the point of contact both actual and fantasized within the aesthetic experience. As the poem is not one suggestion, but rather an undetermined number of suggestions, it offers a multiplicity of possible points of relation between its content and its readers. While that may simply be what art does, Hartmann here is self-conscious of the risk over

[293] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 9.
[294] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 9.

overdetermination in privileging the mutual constitution of the experience between art and reader/viewer. As a participatory aesthetic that is willing to kiss the dead, it asks of its reader and viewers to consider their own affect and embodiment within the experience of a poem, painting, or photograph.

Hartmann's "Once I met an Innocent Girl" (1887) rehearses these same suggestive themes but focuses more on the affect of the relation in the fantasy of the embodied speaker. The poem may allude to Poe's "The Sleeper" (1841) as the "poor child of sin," Irene, in Poe's poem is found by Hartmann's speaker as "an innocent girl slumbering under an/oak tree's shade."[295] As Eliza Richards points out in her reading of "The Sleeper, "by calling Irene 'child of sin,' [Poe] inverts the title of Elizabeth Oakes Smith's *The Sinless Child*, reversing Eva's purity and summoning the specter of American female literary competition."[296] In reversing Poe's reversal, Hartmann aligns himself with the sentimentality of the Poetess in order to transmit his feelings of love and loss into the abstraction of poetic discourse—a question asked and answered earlier in "To My Mother": "A woman's death created me, must therefore not/My love hang over all the world!"[297] In this way Hartmann's early poetry doesn't aspire to poetic mastery, but rather undoes through his engagement with Poe a kind of genius or the category thereof that Hartmann can only peripherally inhabit due to his racialization within the whiteness of American poetics even if this is not explicitly stated by Hartmann himself. This claim is speculative, but it does appear that Hartmann writes in an ambivalent relation to Poe in consistently drawing on these tropes.

[295] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 8.
[296] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 47.
[297] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 1.

The poem follows the formula of what I am calling Hartmann's melancholic eroticism. In the second stanza, the speaker approaches the lady "dreaming a dream of innocence at the bank/of the murmuring brook" and kisses her:

> I softly knelt down and gazed at her angel-like limbs,
> while two little birds were twittering a carol of hope
> and of bliss; holding my breath, I pressed a kiss
> on her half-opened lips and felt as dead, in paradise.

In Richards' reading of Poe's "The Sleeper," "killing the lady would remove the course of the speaker's inspiration; reviving her would remove the purpose of the poem and reintroduce the competition that he evades. He therefore seeks to maintain a state of suspended animation, a 'conscious slumber.'"[298] For Hartmann, however, the lady is always already dead as Osada is, and the speaker here seeks its own literary death as a kind of paradise preconditioned by the holding of breath. Of course, the speaker can only revive itself in the act creative act of giving life to the corpse of the beloved. Although the poetic speaker lives to tell the tale, it is only a moment of breathless contact that offers a connection between the speaker and the innocent. As Richards argues, Poe's speaker "who ominously begins the poem by drugging the world in preparation for an act of violence, only commits his crime in a self-consciously literary landscape; he violates not a woman's privacy or her corpse, but the convention of the sleeping or dead woman."[299] Hartmann restores, cathects, and ultimately kisses the convention through his speaker at least as far as is possible through his poetry, figured in the poem as the "two little birds…twittering a carol of hope/and bliss" that provide an accompaniment to the kiss. Writing poetry, or writing himself into the poem, becomes a way for Hartmann to feel his mother's presence in the poetic present of death.

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[298] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 46.
[299] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 45.

However, both Hartmann and speaker cannot remain in the imagined space of literary death even for one more poetic line. “Suddenly I looked at my garments, and reality rough/and cold had seized me again” opens the poem’s final stanza. Hartmann will often return to the experience of shock, dream of disillusionment as both he and his speakers enter and return from poetic fantasy. In this case, the speaker reflects on a tear, the material index of emotion, that links himself with the fantasy: “I hastily rose while/a tear fell gently upon her breast.” The gentle tear will have little effect on the sleeping woman not only because she is dead, but also because she wouldn’t feel it even if she were alive: “her hair still bedewed with/The glittering wet.” The tear ends the poem. In this way the speaker adds to what is already there even if such an addition will barely be perceptible. Hartmann traces the edge of perceptibility time and again in his writing as suggestion.

In “Night of Love” (1891), Hartmann focuses on sense perception within the model of melancholic eroticism and introduces one of his key figures in the lonesome, and sometimes not so lonesome, wanderer. In three stanzas, the speaker imbues the love it shares with a “brown-eyed maiden” who waits for “her lover’s wild embrace” into an empty nighttime landscape.[300] The poem focuses first on the figure of the lone rider before turning to the beloved. The first stanza focuses on visuality:

> I gallop along a deserted road
> To the right side lies the beach
> To the left are barren fields
> As far as the eye can reach.[301]

[300] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 7.
[301] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 7.

The speaker situates itself against land and seascapes as two versions of natural infinity as they become the edges of the visible horizon. The second stanza continues to mediate the natural world through the position of the speaker and the introduce on aurality:

> Above me the sparkling heaven
> Around me the silence of night
> My horse and I dash forwards
> To a distant flickering light.

The speaker fills out the emptiness of the landscape in all directions by adding a description of a celestial landscape to those of the previous stanza. The turn to the night's silence provides another way of isolating and surrounding the speaker, namely giving depth through another sense of the vastness of and peripheral edge of the speaker's vision. Due to the stanza break, the rider on the dashing horse may appear to move in the direction of a point in "the sparkling heaven," but the third stanza suggest that it may be lamplight in the distance that guides the way:

> There waits a brown-eyed maiden
> For her lover's wild embrace
> She stands at the door and listens
> To the sounds that travel through space.[302]

Heaven and the maiden's embrace are equated through the "flickering light" which in the poem is always at the liminal edge of what "the eye can reach." The maiden, in listening to "the sounds that travel through space" focuses on a different register. While the maiden may be able to hear the distance between her and her lover, the speaker can only hear hoofbeats that blur into the empty distance. However, in hearing the sounds of her lover's horse, she listens at the edge of the rider's experience of them. The "wild embrace" becomes the result of two versions of sensuous acts of interpretation as anticipation. In this way the poem invites its reader to identify with both the speaker and the maiden. The galloping rhythm of the poem asks to be read and to

[302] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 7.

be the sound that travels. In short, the materiality of the poem performs the actions of its subject. The poem as words on the printed page exists at the edge of aurality if only it was to be read aloud.

Hartmann returns to this image in the opening piece of the July 1904 issue of *Camera Work*, "The Solitary Horseman." Hartmann uses a Theodore and Oscar Hofmeister photograph of the same name as an illustration of what he takes be an artist, particularly one whose work is in keeping with the ideals of the Secessionists who "ride along, trilling their strange little song of a new art."[303] In "trilling" the song of new art, the work, or perhaps more importantly the discourse surrounding their artistic productions, becomes a form of birdsong that is at once both natural as seemingly a part of the landscape through which these artists traverse and also "strange" in that such a song is new and perhaps cannot be located or associated with a particular source. It is the continual navigation of the usual tension in aesthetic thought between the artist/subject and tradition/innovation that Hartmann explores through the Hofmeisters' *The Solitary Horseman*. In a landscape that consists predominately of swirling cloud forms that blend into the soft shapes of the hills bellow them, a horse and rider are positioned on the horizon line near the bottom of the photograph at approximately one sixth of the way upwards. The blur of the skyscape is punctuated by five trees that are positioned along with the rider on this horizon line. The tree nearest the right edge of the photograph appears as a mass of leaves whose form rhymes with the clouds against which it is juxtaposed. Two others with more visible trunks and branches frame the horse and rider in being positioned nearly equidistant at each side. The dark, parallel lines of the final two tree forms extend downward towards across the length of the photograph and nearly touch a set of parallel white lines or traces of the road on which this rider

[303] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Solitary Horseman," *Camera Work*, no. 7 (July 1904): 17.

has been traveling that cut diagonally from the bottom right of the image. Leading the eye as a form of continual return to the rider on the horizon line—at the edge of disappearance and legibility—the photograph returns to the rider even as the landscape that surrounds nearly disappears them into itself.



Figure 14 Theodor and Oscar Hofmeister, *The Solitary Horseman*, 1904, photogravure (reproduced from original gum print), 12.2 x 17.8 cm. In *Camera Work* No. 7 (July 1904). *The Modernist Journals Project, Brown and Tulsa Universities, ongoing. www.modjourn.org*.

For Hartmann, this rider is an artist "who seeks and might well stand for a symbol of the Secessionists, that class of eager workers who restlessly search for new pictorial possibilities."[304] The search for such possibilities involves a double movement both inward into oneself and outside of the city:

[304] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Solitary Horseman," 17.

> The artist, whose gaze is at all times turned inward, seems to be the true personification of the solitary horseman. He is always ready to saddle his horse and leave behind him the great, curious city with its many superstitions, its grotesque rivalries of castes and classes and set out on another journey along a highway swept by wintry rains or burned by the summer sun.[305]

In what reads as an accumulation of tropes well-traveled concerning the relationship between the interiority of the artist and their external environment as well as the need to escape life in a city, Hartmann uses the composition of "The Solitary Horseman," namely the ways in which the photograph returns our eye to the rider even as it attempts to render the figure a more organic part of the landscape, to justify his own criticism of it in a near tautology. From our perspective we watch the horseman ride away, but Hartmann's piece images the distant point that this rider moves towards. In this way the rider brings not only a loving embrace from the early poem, but a new way of thinking about and making art. The artist as the "true personification of the solitary horsemen" reverses the agency of the figure as it seems to create the artist itself. That the phrase also recalls the title of the Hofmeisters' photograph underscores this material embodiment as Hartmann draws on the indexical and aesthetic aspect of the photograph a way of viewing all art production in the manner of mutual constitution through acts of intimate creation. We listen as the maiden does for the sound of the solitary horseman so that we might embrace new artistic potentialities.

Hartmann's second collection of early poetry, *Naked Ghosts* (1887-1892) contains more explicit, though darker meditations, on love and eroticism, but remains focused on the shared embrace of the aesthetic experience. It is beyond the scope of this section to attend to them here, but I want to end this section with "White Lady of my Desires" (1892). The short poem returns to and condenses the earlier Hartmann's earlier focus on the dead beloved in ways that gesture

[305] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Solitary Horseman," 17.

towards the ekphrastic poetry he will write a little over a decade later. Hartmann's eponymously titled poem for Edward Steichen's photograph of a feminine nude, *Dawn Flowers* (1903), that appears in *Camera Work* will return to the concept of the naked ghost from this collections title viewing the photograph as the naked ghost of the material referent of the model (I attend to this poem in a later section). As a study in tone, the grammar of the single-sentence poem shifts the referent of "white" from the lady of the speaker's desire, to the "dawn-flowers," and then to the nighttime landscape:

> Sleep on and smile thy radiant smile amid
> dawn-flowers, frail and white, while naked
> ghosts kiss thy body's soul as they pass in
> their magic flight, and I stand lone and
> shivering in the white and withering night.[306]

The lady's whiteness is pervasive and colors through its absence the entire scene of the poem. It is unclear if both the speaker and the lady are in the same landscape as the temporal shift marked by the flowers and the "withering night" troubles the poem's geography. The apostrophe performs the intertwined desires of Poe and Hartmann in encouraging the absent beloved of the address to "[s]leep on." Is the speaker standing over her corpse? Though in the end it may simply be a description of an imagined afterlife, the speaker expresses its love through the "naked ghosts" that are able to embrace and kiss what it cannot. Rather than a distinction between soul and body, Hartmann's phrasing allows for the body to possess the soul in reversal of typical accounts of agency or suggests that the body itself has a soul. The concept of the naked ghost returns to the soul, or the immaterial expression of the lady, a sensuous form even if the taking off the clothes of the body would render the soul naked anyway. The feeling of immateriality is suggestive in Hartmann's sense and provides a way of thinking about the aesthetic experience

[306] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Naked Ghosts* (1887-1892), 6. Box 6. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

modeled here on melancholic attachments to loss. The speaker removes itself from the embrace in the poem's focus on a kiss occurring between ghost and soul. I take this as a critical gesture and the precondition for the apostrophic address. In telling the dead beloved to "sleep on" in the same manner Hartmann tells his mother to "rest softly" both Hartmann and his poetic speakers pretend to a knowledge of what might be experienced after death if only because the memorialization in the poem is one such embrace.

CHAPTER FOUR

Melancholy Suggestivisms

As Eliza Richards observes, "reiterating Poe's own absorption of the poetess, Poe studies depend upon women, even as they convert women into a figure of Woman that dwells within Poe's mind."[307] In suggestive blurring of figure and fact, my interest is in Hartmann's fascination with Poe as way to navigate his lost relationship to his mother, Osada, who is both the woman and figure of the Woman. In writing in relation to Poe—poems in the mood or style of as well as speculations on the origins of Poe's poetry—Hartmann enacts or becomes Poe as Poetess in Richards' formulation. For Richards, "the uncanny affinity between poetesses and lyric media marked them as vehicles of cultural transmission," namely through the ways in which they "grounded their 'fictions of form' in ephemerality, self-dissolution, and ventriloquy."[308] In becoming figures, vehicles, or genres to represent or transmit other people's feelings, the poetess "forges social networks and transmits cultural and formal understandings of value within and through time" via practices of "lyric mimicry" and repetition Richards associates with nineteenth-century women's poetry.[309] However, according to Richards, since the "privileged vehicle for female poetic expression, lyric was also a natural extension of womanhood, so by definition [it] was not art."[310] In a later chapter, I will attend to the ways in which Hartmann's ekphrastic lyrics on feminine nudes in Stieglitz's *Camera Work* seek to affirm the status of the photographic medium as art. For now, I want to continue thinking about the structures of feeling that Hartmann creates within his work as well as those that inform his life and writing.

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[307] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 30.
[308] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 3.
[309] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 25.
[310] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 38.

Melancholia works as a similar transmission of feeling Richards claims for the poetess. Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok define the melancholic's endocryptic identification as a "mechanism [that] consists of exchanging one's own identity for a fantasmic identification with the "life"—beyond the grave—of an object of love, lost as a result of some of some metapsychological traumatism."[311] Throughout Hartmann's poetry, tales, and criticism there is a persistent restaging of a moment of contact and loss between a lover and beloved. Many of these moments are likened to processes of artistic creation or help Hartmann to conceptualize aesthetic ideals or advance a critical project. For Hartmann, who attributed his creative talents to his mother, each story becomes another iteration of love and loss for a woman whose death represented foreclosed possibilities for a relationship with her as well as his idea of Japan. In Abraham and Torok's formulation, the "melancholic's complaints translate a fantasy—the imaginary sufferings of the endocryptic object—a fantasy that only serves to mask the real suffering, this one unavowed, caused by a wound the subject does not know how to heal."[312] While I don't want to go so far as to say that Hartmann has encrypted Osada within him at least as far as this theory may lead since Hartmann was aware of the significance of her loss for his life and potentiality (even though it is plausible that he encrypted different kinds of cathexes concerning their relationship into himself). Rather, I want to suggest reading Hartmann's work as transmissions of feeling in relation to the figure of Poe, often as Poetess, and the figure of the melancholic. Hartmann's writing is both a form of mourning for the loss of his mother as well as an attempt to become a "vehicle of cultural transmission" if only in his criticism. Hartmann's insistence on suggestiveness becomes a way for him to make claims for the importance of himself, his mother, and his Japanese identity as imperative to American literature and culture.

[311] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel* 142.
[312] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel,* 142.

As both the "sign of rejection and as a psychic strategy in response to that rejection," Anne Cheng's formulation of racial melancholia outlines an affective structure in and through which racialized subjectivity may be felt and understood—it exists as "the internalization of discipline and rejection—*and* the installation of a scripted context of perception."[313] In drawing on "*melancholy* in the vernacular sense of affect…and *melancholia* in the sense of a structural, identificatory formation predicated on—while being an active negotiation of—the loss of self as legitimacy," Cheng foregrounds the deep sense of lived sadness Hartmann may have experienced as well as the significance of his creative and critical praxis.[314] "I have never been able to greet the land of my birth" laments Hartmann in 1922, "except in waking dreams and excursions into Japanese poetry."[315] Furthermore, as Hartmann's engagement with his idea of Japan in waking dream and reading practice was inflected by nineteenth-century orientalism, my interest is not so much in the accuracy of Hartmann's understanding, but rather the significance of his feeling and expression. "Although orientalism seeks to consolidate the coherence of the West as a subject precisely through the representation of 'oriental' objects as homogenous, fixed, and stable," writes Lisa Lowe, "contradictions in the production of Asians an in the noncorrespondence between the orientalist object and the Asian American subject ultimately express the limits of such fictions."[316] Though Lowe is writing here of the "heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity" of Asian American culture more generally, Lowe's definitions of these terms are useful for approaching Hartmann's life and work.[317] Lowe defines heterogeneity "the existence of differences and differential relationships within a bounded category," hybridity as the "formation

[313] Anne Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race: Psychoanalysis, Assimilation and Hidden Grief* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 18 and 17.
[314] Anne Cheng, *The Melancholy of Race*, 18. Emphasis in original.
[315] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems* (1886-1922), 2. Box 6. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[316] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1996), 67.
[317] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, *67.*

of cultural objects and practices…produced by the histories of uneven and unsynthetic power relations," and multiplicity as the ways in which "subjects located within social relations are determined by several different axes of power, are multiply determined by the contradictions of capitalism, patriarchy, and race relations."[318] For Hartmann, suggestiveness as both an aesthetic of subject formation and a critical practice becomes a way for him to navigate the "heterogeneity, hybridity, and multiplicity" of his identity at the turn into the twentieth century. Hartmann's relationship to Poe is one way of exploring both the use of the concept as well as his work more generally. Hartmann offers a suggestive version of American literary history by including himself, and by virtue of his writing as a practice of mourning, his mother Osada. Though American literature has always considered itself as the fantasy of world literature, Hartmann's life in his own theorization becomes an enactment of a kind of thinking and writing that would bridge temporalities and national divides.

Building of the work of Cheng, Audrey Wu Clark reads Hartmann as "self-consciously embracing stereotypes of Asian male effeminacy" within poems as "performances of heteronormative desire."[319] In reading Hartmann's *My Rubaiyat* (1913) as modernist haiku, Clark contends that, "the repetitious poetic subject was the ideal white male poet whose subordinate image was an object of nature or a feminine (Japanese American) object."[320] Clark reads the ways in which "affective oscillations dialectically map out…visions for racially inclusive utopias" in Hartmann's work, noting that in *My Rubaiyat* Hartmann's "poetic voice alternates between racial mania and melancholia" and his "personae continually alternate[s]

[318] Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts*, *67.*
[319] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*: *Universalist Aspirations in Modernist Art and Literature* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2015), 65-66 and 66.
[320] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 74.

between emotional withdrawal and exuberant self-assertion."[321] Though Clark is referring to Hartmann's love of Walt Whitman and the democratizing potential Hartmann read, and I would argue also tried to live, in and through his poetry, Clark's position raises important considerations for Hartmann's relation to Poe as well. For Richards, "poetesses—in connection with Poe and other male poets—*constituted* a lyric public sphere through exchanges in which gendered poetic convention is distinct from the author's gender."[322] Thinking with Clark, it looks like Poe becomes the ideal against which Hartmann is othered—the adoption of the pseudonym and other forms of internalized relation with Poe become for Hartmann performances of a shaky masculinity to negotiate his Japanese identity. Hartmann may have been more deliberate. Ultimately, Hartmann in Clark's reading "negotiated a homosocial space of belonging…in elite, cosmopolitan literary circles" through a haiku poetry that "ambivalently 'modernized'" him.[323]

More to the point, Clark insists that Hartmann's "practices of the modernist haiku within elite literary circles were acts of political resistance against late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century populism that led to Japanese exclusion" and "critical responses to…racialization within [these] modernist circles."[324] I slightly part ways with Clark since I am more interested in how Hartmann remains indebted and engaged with nineteenth-century poetics even as I agree with the suggestion of Hartmann's resistance. As Hartmann sought to rewrite himself into the history of American literature in ways that provide a continuity and connection between "modernist" forms and older poetic traditions, I'm hesitant to ascribe a mania to Hartmann even as I am using melancholia as a structure to think through Hartmann's relation to American literature. Regardless, my argument is that all such feelings become transmittable for Hartmann through his

[321] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 76, 81, and 76.
[322] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 6.
[323] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 65.
[324] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 62.

creative and critical works in ways that necessarily demand a reconsideration ideas and investments we might have in versions of American literature. In Cheng's formulation, racial melancholy becomes the negative identification of canon formation—the versions of American literature that are not included in it as such—that Hartmann nevertheless writes himself into and in doing so alters their melancholic structure in part due to his insistence on a kind of suggestivism that blurs both medial and racial identity.

The "Instead of a Preface" to third edition of *My Rubaiyat* (1916), consisting of a letter to William Marion Reedy of the *St. Louis Mirror*, reads like Poe's "Philosophy of Composition," Hartmann claiming therein that he "will drop the mask and tell you the secret of [his] verses."[325] A rubáiyát, to use FitzGerald's definition that Hartmann would have been familiar with, is composed of "independent stanzas, consisting each of four lines of equal, though varied, prosody; sometimes all rhyming, but oftener…the third line a blank."[326] Hartmann's versification, however, consists of an "eight syllable stanza on account of its terseness of expression" and because it "is least pliable to any rush and swing of rhythm, but most conducive to the conveyance of fragmentary moods and thoughts."[327] From the start, Hartmann is interested in the creation of mood and thought in similar ways to Poe who begins with a consideration of effect in. For both Hartmann and Poe effect and affect blur within their poetry. Hartmann notes that the "alliteration of Japanese poets is much subtler…than the word music of our Laniers and Whitmans, although it isn't ever conducted with the elaborate precision of a Poe or Swinburne."[328] Though seemingly distancing himself from a Japanese poetic tradition in

[325] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (San Francisco, 1916), 5.
[326] Edward FitzGerald, "Omar Khayyám, the Astronomer-Poet of Persia" in *The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám* (London: Piccadilly, 1859), xii.
[327] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 5.
[328] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.

claiming Whitman and Poe in the "our," Hartmann aligns himself with it in asserting his sense of alliterative composition: "No doubt my sense of sound alliteration is foreign, unconsciously Oriental."[329] That Hartmann finds himself between Whitman and Poe in lines of unrhymed tetrameter is not surprising, but in casting himself as less precise and more suggestive than Poe, Hartmann embraces pictorial, or rather intermedial, possibilities within his poetry that while present in Poe's work are almost always framed negatively.

The preface to the Author's edition of 1913 is more explicit about Hartmann's attempts to bridge his understanding of Japanese and American verse forms. Noting that "[t]he rhythm may appear strange at times," Hartmann insists that "[t]o fully appreciate it, it would be necessary to hear the author read the poem."[330] To appreciate the strangeness means being in Hartmann's presence—hearing, and I would argue seeing, him read. Hartmann foregrounds the ephemeral quality of such performances through a blurring of his understanding of Japanese and American poetic rhythms: "[t]he metre is a combination of Whitman's free rhymeless rhythm, the *vers libre* which changes with every subject and mood, and the vague alliteration of sound in quarter tones, characteristic of Japanese poetry."[331] Poetic materiality, the "vague alliteration of sound" in expression with its meter, is for Hartmann a way to respond to subject, mood, and affect of the poem even as it works to create the fiction of Hartmann reading if only through his absence. In a Whitmanian yearning of circulation wherein an identity between Hartmann's body and poetic texts become a point of contact with readers and listeners, Hartmann makes a claim for the value of poetry, but to a greater extent, himself as poet. It is likely for these reasons that Hartmann opens the preface with statement underscoring the unfinished quality of the work: "[o]f a poem

[329] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 5.
[330] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (St. Louis, 1913), frontmatter.
[331] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), frontmatter. Emphasis in original.

of this scope and character, it can never be said that it is complete and finished. No doubt, it will be revised many times, but the poem has crystallized sufficiently in thought and versification to be offered to the public."[332]

Since Hartmann could not be physically present within the intimate reading experience offered by his verses, Hartmann focuses on their "pictorial" quality in the "Instead of a Preface" of third edition of *My Rubaiyat* (1916) to mediate, and thereby close, the distance between himself and the readers of his poems. Hartmann emphasizes that this pictorial "quality" is often unacknowledged, if not outright dismissed, by readers and critics:

> Yet they have one quality which is generally over looked. They possess pictorial harmony. My long and persistent association with art makes me not only see but think things in pictures. Pictures abound throughout "My Rubaiyat" for all who have the mental pictorial vision to see them. Lines like "turn phantoms with the colder morn" and "in a hilltown among roses" are as concentrated as any image that can be found in a tanka (i.e. Japanese short poem).[333]

The concentration of images may have reminded readers of Hulme or Pound, but in claiming "not only [to] see but think things in picture," Hartmann offers his readers a way of connecting with him. Despite the suggestive potentiality that adheres in the poetic image for readers to associate in and out of the poem, Hartmann outlines a model of mind that would trouble individual difference through an aesthetic experience mediated by his "pictorial vision." In other words, we are meant to look at the world as Hartmann does, and at least in this instance Hartmann suggests that such vision occurs as if one was reading tanka or haiku.

Hartmann anticipates that many will be unsympathetic to the poem, its style, and its aims:

[332] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), frontmatter.
[333] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.

> Critics may contend that pictorial suggestion per se, as the main characteristic of a poem, does not conform to the accepted forms of poetry. This objection is meaningless to me. Without the spirit of innovation there would have been no incentive to write the poem. Like the composers of the day I believe in the old ideals but in new methods of expression.[334]

Not so much Poe's insistence what he takes to be universally appreciable scenarios such as the death of a beautiful woman, but rather the presentation of a picture or "pictorial suggestion" that might likewise reach a wide readership: "My ambition was to write a simple poem which would appeal to all; to chambermaids as well as cognoscenti, ordinary business men as well as solitary artistic souls."[335] Hartmann's spirit, guided by ideals of Whitmanian democratization and a generative contrast between "old ideals" and "new methods of expression," upsets arguments about poetic genre, medium specificity, the role of the critic and the reader in producing meaning within an aesthetic experience, and history. More importantly, it foregrounds the experiential relation created by art as the way to change minds. If we are able "to think things in pictures," we might be able to develop an ethics of emotional understanding established through shared affective connection.[336] The intimacy of sharing transient moments in the exchange of images may allow readers to develop the "mental pictorial vision" that Hartmann insists on.[337] "Who will decide whether I have succeeded or failed?" asks Hartmann in order to arrive at the following answer: "Only the public at large. The poem, no doubt, is too didactic for fragile aesthetics who glorify naught but evanescent words, but it is surely no short coming to try to express thought."[338] Though it may seem contradictory for Hartmann to criticize those fond of "evanescent words" within my reading of suggestivism as privileging the transitory moment,

[334] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.
[335] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.
[336] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.
[337] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.
[338] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.

Hartmann seems more interested in the affective impact the experience has in shaping its readers rather than in readers who shape poems to their own experience (an aesthetics of privilege likely draped in appeals to taste). Despite the lamenting refrain, "art is by the few for the few," Hartmann was known for, he is nevertheless invested in changing the material conditions of experience through aesthetic engagement. He wants poetry as poiesis. To think with Clark, Hartmann's poem may offer a way of producing new sensibilities or models of mind even if the psychosocial structure of racial melancholy shapes aspects of its understanding. As a community of mourners, perhaps then we might find through Hartmann's mediations a different kind of democracy than Whitman wrote of in *Leaves of Grass*. For Clark, the "world that Hartmann envisions in this poem is one of racial and gender equality for which both men and women have revolted."[339] If so, then Hartmann writes of a revolution to come borne out of intermediality and an obligation to think in picture rather than in pigment.

The pendulum swings of melancholy and mania in Clark's reading of *My Rubaiyat* (1913) result in moments where the poetic persona manifests an "inability to act as self-transcending" or attempts to transform itself into a "Whitmanian god."[340] The poem's first two lines, "What should we dream, what should we say,/On this drear day, in this sad clime!" present the poem as its own answer and through the "we" include the reader as part of its creation and, in the end, ethical position by way of common poetic tropes and the injunction of the *carpe diem*.[341] The poem's final stanza encourages its readers to "wrest beauty form all there is" and to "hail and bless each moment/Before it fades into the dark."[342] In Clark's formulation the final stanza

[339] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 84. Both Hartmann's and Whitman's democratic vistas are still limited by white patriarchal structures despite moments of what Clark reads as revolution.
[340] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 85. Clark is working with the Third Revised Edition of *My Rubaiyat* published in 1916. I'll also be referring to this edition as well as the Author's Edition from 1913.
[341] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 7.
[342] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 21.

may offer a manic attempt to "wrest beauty" from moments destined to darkness. The poem's opening question also enjoins its readers to reflect on their understanding of what a different kind of life would be. The poem offers the possibility to dream of a world otherwise, but it ultimately offers an answer in a melancholic reflection of the present. While I wouldn't go as far as saying that *My Rubaiyat* creates and dismisses a utopian fantasy of an equitable society, the poem does suggest that a turn inward and what would ultimately become a politics of the personal may be the only option available especially to Hartmann.

For Cheng and for Clark this result may be yet another response to the affective structure of racial melancholia. The second stanza appears to indicate the impossibility of finding any joy:

> II.
>
> Would joy prove a more steady guest,
> In palm-girt sunnier Southern lands,
> Some lambient [sic] world of green and gold
> Fanned by the charm of Orient lay!
> 'Tis vain delusion thus to think
> That life will change with change of scene.[343]

Clark argues that this stanza "mocks the illusion of Japanese American self-determination" and reads as "an explicit indictment against Westerners for their fetishism of the Orient (and, by extension, him [Hartmann])" as the last two lines suggest that Orientalism provides no escape from "the redundancy of life."[344] Of course, in writing the poem Hartmann participates in the Orientalist fantasy that this stanza ostensibly critiques, but more importantly, the contrast between the "sad clime" describing the conditions of the present in the poem's first stanza and the lands "fanned by the charm of Orient lay" in this second stanza suggest that the scene itself needs to be changed from within rather than relying on attempts to view oneself against a

[343] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 7.
[344] Audrey Wu Clark, *The Asian American Avant-Garde*, 82.

different background on the world's stage. The "lambent world" of surfaces suffused with licks of light sets itself on fire with an "Oriental lay" that fans the flames of the fantasy even as in lapping body and landscape recalls a photographic present. This is to say that all surface without substance inevitably burns itself up. Though it seems that this might be a moment where Hartmann works against himself by displaying an ambivalence to the poetic project he's outlined in the preface, it appears that the critique is not of the aesthetic in general, but rather of the ways in which such fantasies appear without the embodied presence of the dreamer since, after all, the demand of the poem is for its readers to dream and say differently.

The version of this stanza from 1913 remains the same except for the first two lines: "Would life be saner in the South,/On some palm-girt sunnier beach."[345] These initial lines may offer additional support to Clark's mania/melancholy reading, but they also suggest that for Hartmann a soundness of mind means a soundness of emotion. However, if Hartmann relies on the fantasy in order to be sane, the turn to orientalism does nothing more than point out the structuring fantasies that create and support the self. The orientalist turn makes visible the emptiness in whatever is being turned away from. Laplanche and Pontalis write of fantasy as staging desire, namely "phantasies are…scripts (*scénarios*) of organized scenes which are capable of dramatization—usually in a visual form" and that the "subject is invariably present in these scenes." [346] Life will not change with change of scene as life does the staging. As such, this section may have offered Hartmann a way of reflecting on his own use of orientalist representations including the discursive understanding of the form of the rubaiyat itself.

[345] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), 6.
[346] Jean Laplanche and J.B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psycho-Analysis*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (London: Hogarth Press, 1973), 317.

While I find Clark's reading of *My Rubaiyat* persuasive, I'd like to offer a complementary one focusing on interpersonal moments of happiness despite, or within, the structuring fantasies of the poem as life persists for Hartmann in strange and beautiful ways. The definition of that life is not simply determined by a teleology of happiness or other forms of affective futurity, but rather an insistence on sadness as constitutive of the full experiential condition of existence. The latter stanzas offer a sustained mediation on melancholy that Hartmann takes to be essential to life lived both in and outside of *My Rubaiyat*. The joy that was not a "steady guest,/In palm-girt sunnier Southern lands," though welcome, is not the only thing wanted:

> LXI.
>
> Sunshine we want but also shadows,
> Each joy demands its note of pain,
> Each cheek must know the fall of tears
> That many dream-swept hopes were vain.
> Sorrow digs up unknown treasures
> Within the caverns of the mind.[347]

The common trope of the often photographically inflected contrast of "sunshine" and "shadow" is immediately perceptible, but it begs the question of what exactly is or could be casting such a shadow. The lines that follow the opening expression of desire suggest that it is the body itself. The anaphora that creates a relationship between "joy" and "cheek" foregrounds Hartmann's insistence on bodily affect. In other words, to be a body in pain is part of what it means to have a body—joy and pain being both physical demands by the body. Wouldn't it be nice to hear him read? The stanzas focus on the surface of the cheek upon which tears are inscribed is emphasized in the modification of "dream-swept" hopes that speak of duration, surface, and fantasy.

[347] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 19.

Hartmann seemingly resurrects the fantasy from the earlier stanza to dismiss and mourn its absence as necessary.

Alternatively, it is through a critical relation to that fantasy that one may come to a different answer to the poem's opening question: "What should we dream, what should we say,/On this drear day, in this sad clime!"[348] Perhaps a drear day is not so terrible. In fact, it is in "Dreary Windblown Meads" that Hartmann offers his first creative speculation on Poe's composition. As the "sad clime" refers less to external rather than internal geography, it turns out that what he might begin to dream and talk about are moments of intimacy and interpersonal connection that offer for Hartmann one of those rare happy moments even if it is the language of melancholy or loss used to describe them. To take this stanza and the second together, "vain" describes both "dream-swept hopes" and the "delusion…/That life will change with change of scene."[349] Though Hartmann isn't foregrounding the negativity, if not suffering, that comes with the attachment to a fantasy of a better life inscribed within an empty orientalism and, if adjectival use means anything, he appears to be sounding a more serious note about self-constitution as always already melancholic in staging the fantasy of their desires. In other words, affective knowledge felt on and through the surface of skin enfolds wants, demands, and kinds of knowing within this stanza. Furthermore, the surface of the dream and even the cheek is contrasted with personification of sorrow in digging up "unknown treasures/Within the caverns of the mind." Sorrow becomes a creative, if not a positive, presence in activating the mind.

The poem continues with an address to the reader reflect on their own forms of loss:

[348] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 7.
[349] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 19.

LXII.

Have you ever lost a treasure
More precious far than gold or health!
Trailed a white hearse with faltering steps
That bore your dearest dream away,
Sat at the deathbed of your mother,
Or closed a friend's dull staring eyes![350]

If sorrow works to uncover "treasures/Within the caverns of the mind," this sestet makes interpersonal relationships and people into such treasures lost in death if not created through loss—the memories of those we care for naturally crystalize in the mind. And, if sorrow probes the depths of mind/mine, it returns to consciousness pieces of crystallized memory and shapes them into the gemstones that adorn existence. In the 1913 preface, Hartmann uses this figuration to claim that "the poem has crystallized sufficiently in thought and versification to be offered to the public."[351] As crystals depend upon environmental factors to form muddled molecules or atoms into a repetitive structure or ordered cluster, sorrow defines the process of poetic creation even though it is only poetry that can personify sorrow. Hartmann's poems are formed out of loss. The geological tropes create a continuity between the "caverns of the mind," the structure of the poem, and the world that exists outside them both. That such reading publics may encounter the poem, Hartmann's mind, and the structuring losses suggest that they, too, may end up as part of this crystalline structure. The poem offers an opportunity to be clustered together in a community of reader or mourners that live life structured by loss felt in the body, in the mind, and on the page.

The stanza stages two different scenes in response to the loss of such treasures. Replacing "Have you followed a white hearse" from the 1913 with "Trailed a white hearse with faltering

[350] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 19.
[351] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), frontmatter.

steps" Hartmann emphasizes the body's response to loss in keeping with the tears that trail the cheeks in the previous stanza.[352] In each case, however, it is the hearse that bears the dream away. Though the use of dream may be problematic considering that dreams are associated with vanity and delusion within the poem, Hartmann underscores cathexis, attachment, and the presence of others in this scene of self-mourning. In the seventeenth stanza we learn that the figure of love as a plant "sheds rarest unknown delights/To those few that worship the dream," and that "love squanders all its treasures."[353] Love as a precondition for loss and a love that asks nothing in return answers the poem's opening question, if not imperative, concerning "What [we] should dream" even as the figure blurs.[354] The answer, once again in tautological fashion, is love and a life with others. Though the later stanza emphasizes bodily affect, the scopic dimensions of loss are more apparent in the earlier version: "Watched the deathbed of your mother,/Or closed a friend's dull staring eyes![355] The lines emphasize duration in their contrast between watching a maternal deathbed and closing the dead eyes of a friend that stare back into one's own. To think of Hartmann imagining himself sitting at the deathbed of his mother is painful. Though Osada was present in Hartmann's life through his writing, in penning this deathbed scene did Hartmann envision his mother advanced in age after having spent years of their lives together? Or was Hartmann thinking about the circumstances surrounding Osada's death shortly after his birth? The poem crystallizes around this deathbed scene that becomes, to use the words of the non-preface of 1916, "concentrated as any image."[356] Hartmann's *My Rubaiyat* offers a strange dynamic where thinking in pictures is a way to think in and through

[352] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), 66; Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 19.
[353] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 10.
[354] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 7.
[355] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), 66.
[356] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 6.

loss. If suggestivism allows readers and viewers to picture what is not present in, yet suggested, by a photograph, a painting, or a poem, then thinking in pictures is the first step in an aesthetics that informs both ethics and ontology for Hartmann. We make pictures because we can't help it. We make pictures because we are lost or dealing with loss. We make pictures because they are the treasures in the mind that structure our desires that make life worth living.

The versions from 1913 and 1916 offer different images to picture forth this lesson in *My Rubaiyat's* final stanza which, on the surface, is simply in keeping with traditions of *carpe diem* poetry and its associated tropes as both versions open with the lines, "Let us wrest beauty from all there is,/Each and all in their own poor way" and enjoin their readers to "hail and bless each moment."[357] The conclusion of the 1913 presents life modeled on the figure of a flower whereas the 1916 doesn't offer a figure in as concrete terms. In the 1913, "gaily life will blossom forth" before "it droops into the dark."[358] In a downward bend into darkness in accordance with planetary movements that pattern temporality, life is moved by forces both natural and uncontrollable. The best we can do, the poem claims, is to strain against the experience of loss in creating beautiful moments. In the 1916, "blithely onward life will flow…Before it fades into the dark."[359] The revision towards visuality provides Hartmann with an image entwined with the deathbed scenes as well as with the presumably dark caverns of the mind. The consecration of beauty or of happy moments is a process of recovery and excavation. The tropic crystallization throughout the poem of which I've barely explored or spelunked, present a poetics of process or a poetics of speleogenesis. If caverns are natural voids, then maybe Barthes would read *My Rubaiyat* in a way Hartmann would have appreciated, namely seeing in the mind emptiness as

[357] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), 79; Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 21.
[358] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1913), 79.
[359] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 21.

understanding in ways that approximates what he wanted from the concept of satori. Hartmann, rather than turn inward, intends to project his voice outward toward his readers. If only we could hear Hartmann reading.

Stephen Best offers a way of thinking about Black Studies as melancholy historicism, "a kind of crime scene investigation in which the forensic imagination is directed *toward the recovery of a 'we' at the point of our violent origin* [chattel slavery]."[360] If "melancholy historicism provides the view that history consists in the *taking possession* of such grievous experience and archival loss," it foregrounds an intimacy, however real though mostly fantasized, with that which has been lost as constitutive for the identity of Black Studies.[361] Best offers an alternative by attending to "an *aesthetics of the intransmissible*" and thereby posits a kind of thought that is free "from constraining conceptions of blackness as authenticity, tradition, and legitimacy; of history as inheritance, memory, and social reproduction; of diaspora as kinship, belonging, and dissemination."[362] Though I do not link my reading of Hartmann directly to conversations within Black Studies, this chapter is informed by Best's insights. In a later chapter, I read Poe's "The Raven" considering currents in Poe criticism that insist on Poe's engagement with race and the potential racialization of the figure of the raven within the poem. Though Hartman did not explicitly address the presence of race within Poe's work, I suggest that the use of the pseudonym Sidney Allan and the significant presence of Poe throughout his criticism speaks to a possible attitude Hartmann may have had towards Poe in relation to himself. I do not wish, however, to claim an identity of experience between Hartmann and those violently enslaved by the United States in the service of racial capitalism at the time of Poe's writing. My

[360] Stephen Best, *None Like Us: Blackness, Belonging, Aesthetic Life* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2018), 20. Emphasis in original.
[361] Stephen Best, *None Like Us,* 15. Emphasis in original.
[362] Stephen Best, *None Like Us,* 21 and 21-22. Emphasis in original.

interest, however, is in productive alignments of thought and ways of describing Hartmann's continued engagement with Poe. Moving away from melancholy historicism, Best turns toward "aesthetic values and sensibilities" in works that foreground "disappearance," "disintegrative impulse[s]," and "histor[ies] of discontinuity."[363] Best associates this project with what Brent Hayes Edwards describes as "something like *a queer practice of the archive*" or an "approach to the material preservation of the past that deliberately aims to retain what is elusive, what is hard to pin down, what can't quite be explained or filed away according to the usual categories."[364] Though this chapter enacts the kinds of melancholic relations to the archive that Best would critique, it does so with the understanding of alternative possibilities, unexpected findings, or elusive relations within and to the archive. To continue deploying, and thus complicating, Hartmann's unfolding use of the term "suggestive," my relation to Hartmann's archive and Hartmann's relation to Poe may be suggestive in ways that allow for us to remain in states of undecidability. In fact, such a melancholic relation to representations is the concern of Poe's tales, namely how one relates to or orientates oneself to the past through aesthetic representation at the risk of becoming that very representation. This is to say that both Poe, Hartmann, and myself continually navigate our desires around that which we know is likely lost even if we might write of recovery against objectification, anonymity, and absence in and of the archive. To use the words of Best, in this way I try, though maybe fail, to accept "the past's turning away as an ethical condition of my desire for it."[365]

[363] Stephen Best, *None Like Us,* 22, 23, 23, and 24.
[364] Brent Hayes Edwards, "The Taste of the Archive," *Callaloo* 35, no. 4 (Fall 2012): 970.
[365] Stephen Best, *None Like Us,* 20.

Suggestivisms

It is an impossible task to provide a comprehensive definition of what suggestivism is, or might have meant for Hartmann, since it is difficult to track the ways in which the term or any number of its variants are used within his writing to describe how particular poems or art objects make meaning through the suggestive. To paint with broad and equally suggestive strokes, suggestivism is a form of indexicality, gesturing towards even as it is an approximation of, the intangible, the invisible, or the unintelligible. If an image is that which exists either transmedially or is created in the space between physical bodies and the materiality of artistic expression, suggestion is the occasion for, or the condition of possibility of, the image.[366] In many ways it attempts to name the affect in and through which an encounter with an aesthetic object in any medium of expression continues its existence in its relationship with a reader, an observer, or a critic. For Hartmann suggestion describes the intensity of a personal or individualized aesthetic experience even as it expands to include histories of expression and influence as forms of transnational circulation and exchange.

In functioning for Hartmann as a theory of history and influence, it names the ongoingness of expression in traditions and mediums that overlap, intersect, and create in and through one another. As a suggestable critic, Hartmann positions himself as someone that can make intelligible and tangible that which is at the edge of the experiential whether it be expressed or gestured towards within an individual work of art or within the context of literary history. While such a designation risks the overvaluation of the critic over against makers of, and publics for, artistic expression, Hartmann's critical position ultimately aims at the creation of

[366] The "distinction between image and medium," writes Hans Belting, "is rooted in the self-experience of our body. The images of memory and imagination are generated in one's own body; the body is the living medium through which they are experienced." Hans Belting, *An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2014), 11.

connection. While Hartmann often claimed that "art is by the few for the few" in certain contexts throughout his life, he also spoke of the democratizing potential of artistic expression and its existential value.[367] "Instinctively," writes Hartmann, "the origin of art concerns all of us it is one of our simplest will-possessions, a yearning to obtain some deeper contents for moods of leisure, to be transported to some state of subtler serener sensations that glide pleasantly through our senses into consciousness."[368] The suggestive relationship between sensory experience and consciousness, or what may be better termed affect, becomes for Hartmann a way of thinking, seeing, or orienting oneself—a relation between the personal mediation of art as an experience of observable phenomenon and the potentiality of that experience to create new forms of thinking and being with a recognition of suggestion as an affective dimension of that experience.[369]

As Hartmann is interested in the unfolding of the artwork across time, space, personal experience, and social fields, suggestiveness can usefully name a set of features within particular artworks, but it is also is a way of relating to such artworks that may or may not eventuate into interpretation. A suggestive hermeneutics or suggestivism as an alternate form of critical practice in focusing on affective potentiality is not necessarily concerned with that which is recognizable in disciplinary modes of reading or viewing. As a theory of reading, it runs the risk of being both too close and too far from the text in tending toward the speculative or recognizing the elastic conditions of a fantasy of critical distance. While suggestion may tarry with iconography and

[367] Hartmann lectured and wrote widely about the status of photography as a medium of artistic expression and while he may have extolled the works of Stieglitz's photographic Secession in *Camera Work* and verged on a near elitism, he also gave "bread and butter" talks concerning the labor conditions of working photographers.
[368] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933), 29. Box 9. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[369] To borrow a phrase from Weaver, here I'm edging closer to Deleuzian terminology, namely the "perception-image," "action-image," and "affection-image," than I am comfortable with. While Hartmann is concerned with these dimensions of relationality and likely would also be interested in the "thought-image" or relation as perceptible, these terms, though suggestive, may ultimately serve to complicate my own approach to Hartmann as a creator and critic.

figurative language, or concern itself with compositional relation, it also leaves open the possibility for suggestions to not lead up to a kind of understanding or to simply revise what counts as understanding or interpretation as such. As Jack Halberstam writes in *The Queer Art of Failure,* "we may, ultimately, want more undisciplined knowledge, more questions and fewer answers."[370] In writing on Hartmann, it is my intention to ask more questions rather than provide answers in navigating the ways in which suggestion both within Hartmann's work and suggestion as a method of engaging with his work particularly as suggestiveness may be helpful in approaching Hartmann's thought on racialization, affect, and media.

In the introduction to a collection of Hartmann's writing on art, *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist* (1991), Jane Calhoun Weaver offers a useful overview of the suggestive as a style:

> The suggestive style was one of poetic mysticism and psychological intensity; Hartmann characterized it as embodying the poetic idea, imaginative subject matter, delicate colors, and sketchy form; above all, he emphasized that the art of suggestiveness rested on canons of ancient oriental art that called for repetition of both subject and image painted with 'slight variations,' as opposed to the Western classical tradition which resulted in a "craze for originality."[371]

Weaver's summation of a "suggestive style" addresses the complexity, or perhaps lack of systematic thought, in Hartmann's approach by foregrounding the tension between affect and cognition in experience, but the opposition Weaver focuses on between Eastern and Western traditions defined by "repetition with slight variation" or a "craze for originality" risks creating a binary opposition whereas Hartmann saw more of a continuum both in terms of artistic process and global, aesthetic traditions even though he often created such distinctions when writing as Sidney Allan at least for rhetorical effect. While Hartmann often spoke out of both sides of his

[370] Jack Halberstam, *The Queer Art of Failure* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2011), 10.
[371] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist: Collected Art Writings*, ed. Jane Calhoun Weaver (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991), 27.

mouth and enjoyed arguing against himself within a critical debate, it was through processes of repetition and variation that marked for him key moments in the history of art.

In a draft for the opening chapter, "The Origin of Art," for his unpublished *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933), Hartmann marks the slow time of humanity's artistic efforts:

> These slow processes mean to me the origin of art—bare lines, unmixed colors, single sounds, simple word sequences, endlessly repeated and combined through centuries slowly developing into coherency through the introduction of the third stop in the pipe, the third color in a decoration, the third perhaps unnecessary scrawl or flourish in a design being invariably the first move towards the exploitation of esthetic purposes.[372]

As Weaver underscores, Hartmann did critique the fallacy of the new as adopted in various aesthetic discourses at the turn into the twentieth century, but the deep time of artistic creation suggests there is a risk in making too much of this binary. In other words, and perhaps at cross purposes to my own reading in this chapter, Hartmann typically avoids making too much of any one influence in aesthetic creation. Either deliberate or contingent artistic creation as a central feature to humans continues to move forward. For these reasons Hartmann argues that "[t]he work itself alone counts, whether it is good, indifferent or bad—whether it can lift you out of the ruts of ordinary existence—sway you with finer feeling, moods and thoughts more readily than anything else."[373] Since traditions interweave and influence matters less than the result, the affective quality of art within the intimacy of its reception becomes the defining relationship for understanding art. Art's suggestiveness is what matters most.

In addition to suggestivism as a style, Weaver also provides a more general or associative definition of the term:

[372] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Esthetic Verities*, 20.
[373] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Esthetic Verities*, 28.

> Suggestivism carried more general implications as well: metaphor was necessarily present, for the "poetic idea," the subject matter, had to be presented in an ethereal or dreamlike setting in order to represent the imaginative reference point from which it emerged, and figures (especially) had to be painted with a light palette and/or softly diffused form.[374]

Though I disagree with the language of imperatives in Weaver's description, I find this list of implications useful and will examine the ways in which they are present in Hartmann's writing. Aside from the final item concerning palette on this list, these terms are general enough to apply to any number of forms of artistic expression at the turn of the century. Suggestivism as a principle of critical thrift is attractive for the ways in which it may explain any number of movements, styles, or individual artworks. While I do attend to these qualities in Hartmann's work, my interest is more in forms of relation, reading, and reception created in and through his writing, namely what in Weaver's unpacking of the term would be something like a second order suggestivism. Importantly. Weaver notes that as far as much of Hartmann's suggestive aesthetic investments and attachments went, "the American poet-hero of this segment of the American ideal of the beautiful was not Whitman but Edgar Allan Poe, poet of the sublime" who existed as "Hartmann's alterhero to Whitman."[375] Again, while Weaver does identify the importance of Whitman and Poe for Hartmann, I don't agree with what appears to be a stark contrast developed in Weaver's argument. Though it is beyond the scope of this chapter to address Hartmann's relationship to Whitman as influencing suggestivism (Whitman had his own theories about this term), I also take seriously the connection between Poe and suggestivism as articulate by Hartmann. I turn Poe in the chapters that follow. Here, I want to stick with Weaver's argument a bit longer.

[374] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist*, 30.
[375] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist*, 30.

Weaver strikingly claims that, "at most, Hartmann's criticism offers a view of indigenous modernist origins which tends to be ignored today because of the aesthetic of the style is little understood and generally denigrated for its sentimentality."[376] If suggestivism is that which must be denied in accounts of modernism on both aesthetic and affective grounds, for Weaver it also ends up being what is most modernist about Hartmann: "*Suggestive* implies both idea and process; ambiguity of intention and image is the immediate message. In addition to calling up an associated idea or image by means of a first idea, suggestive art may also (or instead) be an art that is more than it seems or possibly an art that is *not* what it seems. Hartmann edged closer to modernist terminology here than he probably intended or, indeed, would have been comfortable with."[377] Yet, for Hartmann suggestivism might be better understood as the condition of art to be or not to be what it seems by seeing, in the words of José Muñoz, "potentiality imbued within an object, the ways it might represent a mode of being and feeling that was then not quite there but nonetheless an opening."[378]

The ambivalence towards sentimentality that Weaver describes is perhaps better understood as marking an affective dimension of aesthetic, in addition to what might be termed sentimental, poetic content. There might be for Weaver too much of the nineteenth century in Hartmann or what I refer to later in this chapter, via Eliza Richards' reading of Poe, of Hartmann as poetess. In that suggestivism mediates the collective, or at least collective feeling, through individual, personal expression, Hartmann's claim to collective experience is an intensely political act occasioned, as I am arguing, by the loss of his mother and reflections on his racialization. Weaver claims that "Hartmann reached his highest plateau of modernist

[376] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist*, 33.
[377] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist*, 29. Emphasis in original.
[378] José Esteban Muñoz. *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 9.

understanding through writing about photography; that is to say, he reached an acceptable accommodation to modernist tenets through photography writing."[379] Though it is my intention to continue reading Hartmann's creative and critical speculations on the origin of Poe's "The Raven" in relation to his writing on photography, I wouldn't go so far as Weaver does in claiming anything like a "modernist understanding" as I don't know that that is.

If the category of "modernist understanding" might approximate a concern with aesthetic expression and the capacities of photography to exist as, to use the language of "An Apology" in the first issue of *Camera Work* (January 1903), "a *medium of individual expression*," then Hartmann is certainly positioned in his writing as a mediator of taste, tradition, and technology particularly as these discursive understandings pertained to the affordances of photography to reflect the conditions of modern life.[380] The persistent references to Poe and Whitman present in Hartmann's criticism may also indicate that what is most modernist about Hartmann's writing on photography as they, along with his writing, embody an expansive view of literary history and periodization if not a critical approach that is deeply critical of aesthetic traditions as it returns to them. In this way perhaps Hartmann embodies those contradictions within modernist writers and within academic use of the term. Hartmann's interest in intermedial aesthetics, politics, and affect is also in keeping with current considerations in modernist studies. Though Hartmann's writing may appear to align with modernist tenants as defined in academic discourse, I'd rather not attempt to situate Hartmann in relation to abstractions of modernism. At the same time, however, I do recognize that Hartmann is useful for troubling these ideas even if that is not the explicit purpose of this chapter.

[379] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist*, 34.
[380] Alfred Stieglitz, "An Apology," *Camera Work*, no. 1 (January 1903), 15.

In "Weak Theory, Weak Modernism" (2018), Paul Saint-Amour offers two potentially contrasting accounts of weakness as, and in relation to, theory through the work of Gianni Vattimo where "weak thought is the sequel to Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud" and Eve Sedgwick for whom "weak theory is an alternative to the strong theory she sees exemplified by their work."[381] As Sedgwick points out, however, "the history of literary criticism can also be viewed as a repertoire of alternative models for allowing strong and weak theory to interdigitate."[382] As I prefer the image of holding hands across time and theoretical divides, my turn to Saint-Amour, Vattimo, and Sedgwick is to provide an complementary account of the kind of suggestive approach that Hartmann takes in his critical and creative works as well as in his life more generally. In doing so, I'm not making a case for Hartmann as a proto-/post- or strong/weak modernist, but rather allowing myself to trace suggestive moments in his life and work without the pressure to totalize or drive toward the meaning of whatever modernism is.

In what Sedgwick calls a "hermeneutics of suspicion and exposure," the thought of "Nietzsche (through the genealogy of morals), Marx (through the theory of ideology), and Freud (through the theory of ideals and illusions)" becomes the occasion for a critical tradition predicated on an uneasy relation to, and investment in, the knowledge and revelation of hidden truths or, as Vattimo puts it, "[w]ith Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud, we are led to doubt all that appears to us the most obvious."[383] In Weaver's reading of Hartmann outlined above, this describes the "modernist terminology" that in its focus on how art "is *not* what it seems" risks

[381] Paul K. Saint-Amour, "Weak Theory, Weak Modernism," *Modernism/modernity* 25, no. 3 (2018): 444.
[382] Eve Kosofky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading, or, You're So Paranoid, You Probably Think This Essay Is About You," in *Touching Feeling*: *Affect, Pedagogy, Performativity* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2013), 145.
[383] Eve Kosofky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading," 140; Gianni Vattimo and Santiago Zabala, "'WEAK Thought' And the Reduction of Violence: A Dialogue with Gianni Vattimo," trans. Yaakov Mascetti, *Common Knowledge* 8, no. 3 (2002): 453.

the oversimplification artistic expression and an overvaluation of the critic.[384] For Vattimo, a "strong theory of weakness" sees the "world viewed as the product of a history of interpretation throughout the history of human cultures" and "focus[es] on interpretation as a process of weakening, a process in which the weight of objective structures is reduced."[385] In turning away from "knowledge of the external" as either "universal structures of being" or "universal structures of *episteme*," Vattimo describes the potentiality of such an approach to alter what Sedgwick describes as the overdetermined failure to avoid weakness as negative affect in the expansive and overgeneralizing paranoia of "strong" theory.[386] As Sedgwick deftly puts it: "only paranoid knowledge that has so thorough a practice of disavowing its affective motive and force and masquerading as the very stuff of truth."[387]

In constructing a critical position that, on the one hand, depends upon fantasy of critical detachment for its coherence and, on the other hand, an intimate proximity or knowledge of that which it distances itself from, the paranoia of a critical practice bent on disclosure or determination would seemingly align with my recourse to melancholy and psychoanalytic frameworks. However, my use of melancholy as a heuristic is not so much to provide a decisive explanatory mechanism for reading Hartmann's work, but rather to allow it serve as way of gathering together different aspects of his thought without strictly adhering to the kinds of melancholia/mania binaries offered by Cheng and Clark. Hartmann's suggestivism opens itself to generative contradiction, affective pulls, and critical and poetic performances that may contribute to the ongoing conversation that focuses on the plurality of kinds of modernisms, or they might not. Following Agamben, Muñoz notes that, "unlike a possibility, a thing that simply might

[384] Jane Calhoun Weaver, Introduction to *Sadakichi Hartmann: Critical Modernist*, 29. Emphasis in Original.
[385] Gianni Vattimo and Santiago Zabala, "'WEAK Thought,'" 453.
[386] Gianni Vattimo and Santiago Zabala, "'WEAK Thought,'" 453.
[387] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading," 138.

happen, a potentiality is a certain mode of nonbeing that is eminent, a thing that is present but not actually existing in the present tense."[388] In this way, my reading of Hartmann's reading practices approximates a reparative reading in Sedgwick's sense. "What we can best learn from such practices" Sedgwick offers, "are, perhaps, the many ways selves and communities succeed in extracting sustenance from the objects of a culture—even of a culture whose avowed desire has often been not to sustain them."[389] Hartmann's reading of Poe and the importance of Poe for his life and the life of his lost mother is sustaining. While I'd rather not claim suggestive reading as a form of "weak theory," I would align Hartmann's and my own critical practice with Sedgwick as "a mode of *selective* scanning and amplification."[390]

As far as Hartmann's theorization and application of suggestivism goes, there are any number of sources worth amplifying. To turn away, or maybe to, from what might be modernist or not modernist depending on periodization, innovation, or whatever else, Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition" (1846) may have been something Hartmann was thinking with. In outlining the narrative design of the poem or the "mode of bringing together the lover and the Raven" in all but its final stanza, Poe notes that "so far there has been no overstepping of the limits of the real."[391] The word 'raven' is always capitalized in "The Philosophy of Composition" unless it appears in a quoted portion from the poem. This is to say that even in this explanation of the poem the figure of the raven and the poem itself become increasingly conflated in much the same way that the poem and the "Philosophy of Composition" become inseparable, particularly in the way that both the poem and explanation end with a final stanza.

[388] José Esteban Muñoz. *Cruising Utopia*, 9.
[389] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading," 150-151.
[390] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading," 135. Emphasis in Original.
[391] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," *Graham's Magazine* 28, no. 4 (April 1846) 166 and 167.

Poe offers a theory of suggestiveness to explain the ending of the poem and, in my account, the end of the "Philosophy of Composition" as well:

> But in subjects so handled, however skilfully, or with however vivid an array of incident, there is always a certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye. Two things are invariably required—first, some amount of complexity, or more properly, adaptation; and, secondly, some amount of suggestiveness—some under current, however indefinite of meaning. It is this latter, in especial, which imparts to a work of art so much of that *richness* (to borrow from colloquy a forcible term) which we are too fond of confounding with *the ideal.* It is the *excess* of the suggested meaning—it is the rendering this the upper instead of the under current of the theme—which turns into prose (and that of the very flattest kind) the so called poetry of the so called transcendentalists.[392]

Poe frames the experience of reading the poem through the figurative language of visuality in claiming that "the limits of the real" may appear with a "certain hardness or nakedness" to the "artistical eye." To invite the kind of reading or viewing that Poe desires, he notes that "adaptation" may add an "amount of complexity" in ways that gesture toward the adaptation of soul being trapped in the shadow of the raven in the poem's final stanza. In bringing together the soul of the speaker and the raven together in shadow, Poe allows the poem to reflect his ideas about the composition process—another instance where the humorous paradox of the "Philosophy of Composition," namely the question of which came first, is highlighted. In this way, the most significant act of composition in the poem is created through the lamplight and body of the raven in that it invites not only the eye, but also the soul to remain in what it has been created. Poe then offers "suggestiveness—some under current, however, indefinite of meaning" as the second thing that is required for a creation that might appeal this "artistical eye." Poe makes clear that this amount of suggestiveness is not to be confused with an overevaluation of the ideal in contrast with the real. In claiming that the relationship between poetry and reality is necessarily grounded in the real, Poe stages a confrontation with Emerson most obviously

[392] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 167. Emphasis in original.

through the doubled use of the modifier of "so called" to describe both those associated with Transcendentalism, but also in his discussion of currents of meaning.

Here, I turn to Emerson, in particular "Idealism" in *Nature* (1836), to turn back to Poe and his raven in an effort at outlining the possible meanings behind suggestiveness that may have appealed to Hartmann as a reader of both. In addressing the question of the existence of nature beyond the subjective experience and sensation of the individual, Emerson notes that an answer makes little difference:

> In my utter impotence to test the authenticity of the report of my senses, to know whether the impressions they make on me correspond with outlying objects, what difference does it make, whether Orion is up there in heaven, or some god paints the image in the firmament of the soul?[393]

Emerson flattens the soul into a kind of canvas and in doing so figures all of creation, or for Emerson the capacity of poetic creation, in the aesthetic expression of "some god." In other words, in becoming art one might then create art in much in the same way that Christian eschatology relies on the construction of human life in the "image" of its godhead. For Emerson the primacy of this second creative force or the ability to create poetry is more important than the initial painting onto the soul: "whether nature enjoy a substantial existence without, or is only in the apocalypse of the mind, it is alike useful and alike venerable to me."[394] For Poe, however, the potential for the soul to become the canvas is seen as an unnatural if not a violent occurrence as this confusion between the real and the representation seemingly unimportant for Emerson becomes an expression of psychosis for many of his narrators. Drawing on the language of visuality, Emerson traces the development of poetic understanding beginning with "man and nature indissolubly joined" by the senses.[395] After claiming that "to the senses and the

[393] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1836), 59-60.
[394] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 60.
[395] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 62.

unrenewed understanding, belongs a sort of instinctive belief in the absolute existence of nature," Emerson offers two contrasting forms of vision to detail the growth of the poet's mind.[396] The first form of vision is "the animal eye [which] sees, with wonderful accuracy, sharp outlines and colored surfaces."[397] Recalling the "certain hardness or nakedness, which repels the artistical eye" that Poe mentions in outlining the need for suggestiveness in "The Raven," there is a need for what Hartmann would call mystery in both artistic creation and in an idealist conception of existence. If Poe is deliberately contrasting the artistical eye with Emerson's animal eye, then the gaze of the raven might be understood as creating the conditions of experience that Emerson would incorrectly, at least for Poe, embrace. Though Poe and Emerson would disagree on the purpose and effect of suggestiveness, its value for poetic creation is claimed by both. Poe's undercurrents of suggestive meaning read similarly to the second form of vision that Emerson outlines: "when the eye of Reason opens, to outline and surface are at once added, grace and expression."[398] Emerson finds cause for these additions in a combination of "imagination and affection."[399] Although Emerson might take this as a starting point for philosophy in general rather than that of composition, what is most striking here is the combination of affect and imagination that Hartmann will term suggestive much later. Furthermore, "if the Reason be stimulated to more earnest vision," Emerson argues, "outlines and surfaces become transparent, and are no longer seen; causes and spirits are seen through them."[400] If the soul of the poem's speaker in "The Raven" is to remain indefinitely in the shadow of the raven that lies "floating on the floor" then perhaps Poe's poem has a happy ending at least from an Emersonian perspective.

[396] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 61-62.
[397] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 62.
[398] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 62.
[399] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 62.
[400] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 62.

While I do not wish to claim that Poe's "The Raven" stages a debate between kinds of idealism and kinds of empiricism or materialism even though it might do just that, I am mainly interested in pictorial and spectatorial positions occupied by the figure of the poet or artist and created by aesthetic objects. In addressing the "effects of culture" for poetic understanding, Emerson remarks on "mechanical changes" that engender a way of seeing that views the self as separate from nature.[401] The camera obscura, portraiture, or even "looking at the landscape through your legs" leads Emerson to conclude that "the least change in our point of view, gives the whole world a pictorial air."[402] The accomplished poet can take this further through the act of aesthetic creation. The poet "unfixes the land and the sea, makes them revolve around the axis of his primary thought, and disposes them anew."[403] Or, as put most forcefully by Emerson, "the sensual man conforms thoughts to things; the poet conforms things to his thoughts"[404] Going further still, Hartmann's critic, conforms both thoughts and things to their own. For Emerson, the "transfiguration which all material objects undergo through the passion of the poet,—this power which he exerts, at any moment, to magnify the small, to micrify the great," is most obvious in Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1610-1611) and aside of Prospero:

> …Their understanding
> Begins to swell, and the approaching tide
> Will shortly fill the reasonable shore
> That now lies foul and muddy. (5.1.79-82)[405]

The watery metaphors may be a point of convergence between Poe, Emerson, and even Shakespeare in describing suggestive currents of meaning, but they diverge in how they read the tides. Hartmann, who published a series of scathing articles critiquing Alfred Stieglitz and the

[401] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 63.
[402] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 63 and 64.
[403] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 64-65.
[404] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 65.
[405] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 69.

Photo-Secession early in the twentieth century under the pseudonym Caliban, was skeptical of those believe that "they alone know what true art is."[406] The relationship between the "passion of the poet" and the understanding suggests that the perspective that poetry represents allows for a renewed understanding of the world, or rather the real that might appear through the world in the mediation of the poet's creative act. However, the ebbing of the tide may muddy the shores of the mind once again. Hartmann, though invested in poetic passion and the transformative gaze of the poet nevertheless holds open the question of reason and understanding, namely a concern with who gets to make such a judgment. Emerson writes that "[t]he perception of real affinities between events, (that is to say, of *ideal* affinities, for those only are real,) enables the poet thus to make free with the most imposing forms and phenomena of the world, and to assert the predominance of the soul."[407] In finding affinities between abstractions of spirituality and idealism in or through material phenomena, Emerson's phrasing cannot leave behind the material trace on the way to the real qua ideal in formulating that transcendent vision of the poet. If the forms of the world are the medium through which the poet creates in an assertion of soul, Poe's raven attests to the potential horror within such affinity, namely that the phenomena of the world and its nonhuman avatar may arrest that soul in their material, though shadowy, forms. In other words, Poe's tale suggests that there is always the possibility of mistaking the photograph for its referent, but Emerson might claim that this referent is itself a representation of the real if everything including the senses are part of a poetry of perception. It is difficult to tell if Poe and Emerson's poetic visions line up or not, but they both gesture towards an uneasy navigation of materiality reality and sensations within poetic creation. Modulating both Emerson and Poe, Hartmann's suggestivism will embrace these affinities not to give primacy to either term in the

[406] Sadakichi Hartmann [Caliban], "The Inquisitorial System," *The Photo-Beacon* (November l904): 346.
[407] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 68. Emphasis in original.

relation, but to think through the ways in which both the material and the ideal within the aesthetic experience are mutually constituting for the individual poet or reader. In this way, the critic, who is aware of these processes, may end up being the better poet in Emerson's sense. Yet, again, Hartmann continues to ask the questions concerning who and why regarding the evaluation of taste imprimaturs and philosophers alike.

The answer to such questions is posited by Emerson through discourses concerning visuality. Emerson's idealism presents the world and those living in it as an effect of representation creating both history and that which transcends it. Emerson personifies idealism in order to describe this view: "Idealism sees the world in God….as one vast picture, which God paints on the instant eternity, for the contemplation of the soul."[408] A formulation that reads similarly to Emerson's earlier figure for the possibility of "some god paint[ing] the image in the firmament of the soul."[409] The divine's painterly practice becomes a form of aesthetic reproducibility if the inside of a god or gods contains the original, though perhaps mutually constituting, found in the individual soul. Created in and through a pictorial or imaged existence, life is understood and lived through Emerson's scopic figures: "a watcher more than doer, and doer, only that may the better watch."[410] Hartmann, of course, would hear the undercurrent of Emerson in Poe. In an early prose poem, "Idealism" (1886), Hartmann stages a series of encounters between "a young poet…pondering on the destiny of man" and personifications of Time, the Future, and the Goddess of Truth.[411] The young poet shouts "into the darkness of the world" a hope for an ethical change in humans: "'May be heretofore not much good has been

[408] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 74.
[409] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1836), 59-60.
[410] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature*, 75.
[411] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems* (1886-1922), 5. Box 6. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

done, but the time will come, the time will surely come, when man will do good just for the sake of doing it!'"[412] The young poet's insistence on a positive outcome of human destiny is spurned in turn by each of the anthropomorphized abstractions. As the poem relates, "Time stopped a moment in her furious run and grimly smiling inquired, 'When?'"[413] "Turn[ing] over the leaves in the Book of the Universe," The Future discounts such a change at least for another millennium.[414] At last, the Goddess of Truth "imperiously rose and thundered forth, 'Never!'" in response to the young poet and the albeit grim potential acknowledged in his words by Time and the Future.[415] The young poet, who "had listened to every word," smiles and repeats his initial claim and the poem ends with the echo of his address.[416] If Emerson suggests that we become better watchers of nature, Hartmann claims that the young poet must do more with that vision. Though I don't wish to claim that Hartmann is directly engaging with Emerson's "Idealism," I do want to point out a useful contrast between the two. At least at this point in his life, Hartmann has faith in the ability of the young poet to contend with temporality, futurity, and truth and Poe will increasingly come to stand for the value of artistic expression that can compete with these abstractions. This faith will be strengthened through Hartmann's criticism where the critic, rather than the poet, confronts the relationship between metaphysical abstractions and the material conditions of existence. At least Poe and Hartmann seem to agree with Emerson's assertion that the "beautiful rests on the foundations of the necessary" and that a "beauty not explicable, is dearer than a beauty which we can see to the end of."[417] In other words, Hartmann's

[412] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 5.
[413] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 5.
[414] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 5.
[415] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 5.
[416] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 5.
[417] Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays: Second Series* (Boston: James Munroe and Company, 1844), 15 and 17.

suggestivism refuses the temptation of definition that both Poe and Emerson provide by beginning and ending with the affect of the individual.

Another aspect of Sedgwick's "mode of *selective* scanning and amplification," or what I might call critical meandering, this chapter addresses is the ways in which Hartmann expresses his thoughts about being racialized in various ways.[418] I am not interested in making a case for Hartmann beyond whatever others might see in the act of writing this chapter itself, and though I may be attempting to weaken the "strong" theory of psychoanalysis in the service of an expansive (mis)understanding of modernisms, I don't find the ambiguity of this binary all that useful. Rather, I want to bring together moments where Hartmann is explicitly or likely implicitly talking about himself through conceptualizations and enactments of suggestivism and melancholy. Intermediality, or the movements between, across media as well as the affective space prior to their material instantiation present such moments to begin thinking about the ways in which Hartmann talks about his relationship to his mother and what being Japanese meant to him. If suggestivism may describe a way of existing, or at the very least thinking, in an intermedial blur, then it may index an ambivalent attitude or experiential structure akin to Dubois' formulation of double consciousness. Dubois, who was born a year after Hartmann in 1868, writes in *Souls of Black Folk* (1903) that, "a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others" is a gift of "second-sight in this American world."[419] The visual mediation of consciousness, the positioning of oneself as both viewer and viewed, and Dubois' use of sense and sensation in mediating self-knowledge are useful ways of thinking about suggestivism when it comes to Hartmann. Though Hartmann did not write publicly all that often about race and was sometimes limited by his own perspective, he

[418] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, "Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading," 135. Emphasis in Original.
[419] W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 3.

may have found himself in greater agreement with Dubois than he would have expected to. Suggestivism as a theory of interpersonal relations contends that the self is the result of mutually constitutive gazes and that those sets of relation may be present in a poem or photograph. The experience of an artwork insists on inward reflection and outward projection through suggestive association. In short, for Hartmann and seemingly for Dubois the "American world" would be better off if those in it developed a better sense of what it means to look at others.

Since suggestivism may help to detail an aspect of that scopic relation, I turn here to Hartmann's use of the concept in his writing on Japanese forms of cultural expression. In "On Japanese Landscape Painting" (1899), Hartmann writes that "the fluid suggestive touch of the Japanese artists is almost a racial trait"[420] A few years later in in *Japanese Art* (1904), Hartmann repeats the claim even if he drops its fluidity: "the suggestive touch has almost become a racial trait"[421] Though I am relying on a critical suggestiveness in claiming that Hartmann saw himself as a Japanese artist in the way he wrote about and theorized different movements, pieces, and people, I think it is valuable nevertheless to consider the possibility. In both formulations suggestivism is *almost* a racial trait rather than a form of determination. Hartmann chooses a Katsukawa Shunshō print for the frontispiece which he describes as a "Typical Woman of the Ukio-ye School." The genre of the print is recognizable as *bijin-ga*, or pictures of beautiful people (often femininized) within *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints or paintings—translated as pictures of the floating, fleeting, or sorrowful world in relation to Buddhist conceptions of the transient quality of life inflected by urban cultures of eighteenth-century Japan and class stratification under the Tokugawa shogunate. Since Hartmann envisions the book as "the first history of Japanese Art which attempts to popularize the subject," directly stating that it "is not so much a

[420] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On Japanese Landscape Painting," *The Art Collector* 9, no. 5 (January 1899): 70.
[421] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Art* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1904), 173.

book for experts and connoisseurs…but for those persons who would like to become more intimately acquainted with Japanese Art, but have been deterred from doing so by the want of a book which would accomplish this" it is not surprising that he chooses a popular art form.[422] As seen in *My Rubaiyat*, Hartmann had such hope for his creative work as well.

In "On Japanese Landscape Painting" (1899), Hartmann addresses what he terms a "peculiar mania for a new cult of style," noting that "nearly all the modern masters—especially those most modern in feeling, as Whistler, Manet, Menzel—have sounded the note of the far East."[423] In this way, the binary that Weaver sets up works against itself even if the driving impulse is towards styles of the new in keeping with typical Orientalist expressions of European and American artists. Here, Hartmann's conception "modern in feeling" may respond to Weaver's "modernist understanding." Perhaps we need to think the two together to figure out whatever modernism is. After working against commonplaces of Euro-Americancentrism by turning these masters into followers of a "new cult of style" at the outset of his article, Hartmann goes on to create a near equivalence between these two approaches to landscape painting through stylistic affinities: "the impressionistic quality of Japanese painting, which is as true a style of impressionism—perhaps more so—than Monet's mosaic of open-air tones, which endeavors to supplant line composition."[424] The comparison not only proposes that others might come to similar conclusions in the viewing practices, it affirms Hartmann's role as exegetical critic or perhaps priest of this "new cult of style." Hartmann provides a definition of suggestion by keeping open this contrast. According to Hartmann, "[i]f a Japanese wishes to give the impression of an orchard in spring, he does not paint the scene as a Western painter would do,

[422] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Art*, v.
[423] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On Japanese Landscape Painting," 70.
[424] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On Japanese Landscape Painting," 70.

but simply suggests by a twig in delicate bloom, and idealizes it perhaps by drawing the graceful lines of a waning moon behind it."[425] Though they likely did not unfold in succession when viewing an art piece, at least in within compositional practice, suggestion precedes idealization, though it is not clear where impression occurs. The focus on delicate lines within the composition as detailing to suggest and not determine form heightens the affect of the pieces. Though Hartmann's criticism ends up reproducing the suggestive quality of the art talked about within his own critical approach, the focus is on the creation of an art piece that is ongoing or seemingly unfinished. To suggest, rather than to represent, offers an opportunity to contemplate ideals within the viewing experience rather than turn to material comparisons.

For Hartmann, looking at Japanese painting become a point of contact with larger traditions and even worldviews. Though overdetermined for his own critical ends, Hartmann insists that "[i]n Japanese painting everything depends on construction, and these laws of construction are…based on geometrical figures that evolved from their mythological beliefs, and have influenced their literature, stage craft, landscape gardening and the arrangement of their flowers and their women's hair.[426] Rather than an explanatory principle for the design of landscape paintings, Hartmann's desire to find "laws of construction" that shape form, belief, feeling, creative expression, and bodily being is telling for how he imagines a kind of world where aesthetic self-making and self-understanding would lead to a different kind of existence—one where the meaning "large boxwood pins in her [Osada's] hair" would resonate into and out of the photograph Hartmann kept of her.[427] That the world to come isn't here yet is perhaps why

[425] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On Japanese Landscape Painting," 70.
[426] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On Japanese Landscape Painting," 70.
[427] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 15.

the final paragraph of the article offers a stinging critique of those that may find themselves with a "peculiar mania" for Japanese style:

> As adopting their style as the ideal of our Western art, seems to me hopelessly illogical, as only a talented native, who sees things as the Japanese see them, and to whom the fluid suggestive touch of the Japanese artist is almost a racial trait, could still create something original; a foreigner, no matter how catholic his mind and how dexterous his hand might be, could never surpass the rather worthless production of an excellent imitation; he might adopt certain qualities to the advantage of his art if he is fond of eccentricity, but he will waste his faculties in trying to adopt it, for adaptation is utterly impossible.[428]

Hartmann's castigation makes clear that imitation, adoption, and adaptation are not possible for a "foreigner" or least one like a manic cultist. Hartmann reproduces this passage at the end of his chapter on "The Influence of Japanese Art" in *Japanese Art* but softens the blows throughout the chapter. There, Hartmann insists that "the sooner our painters get rid of the Japanese craze, the better for them, and they would get rid of it if they would study Japanese art a little more conscientiously, and under the surface."[429] Hartmann's exasperation is the motor for the cutting remarks in both the book and article.[430] The craze of the new often conflated with an addiction to originality creates the conditions for orientalist consumption, the construction of stereotypes, and violent racism. Holding out the hope that serious study will create the potential for real contact and influence here, Hartmann turns to James Abbott McNeill Whistler as a possible starting point.

In *Japanese Art*, Hartmann admonishes Whistler, saying "I prefer, at any time, an Okyo marine to Whistler's 'The Ocean,' or a Hiroshige bridge scene to the 'Fragment of Old Battersea Bridge,'…They are perfect translations, but, after all, mere translations," but goes on to state that

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[428] Sadakichi Hartmann, "On Japanese Landscape Painting," 70.
[429] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Art*, 172.
[430] For another instance of this type of critique see Sadakichi Hartmann, "Through Semi-Japanese Eyes," *Camera Notes* 4, no. 1 (July 1900): 46-47. There, Hartmann rebukes Joseph T. Keiley, a founding member of the Photo-Secession: "I cannot pass in silence the signs of Japomania, recently very obstinate and contagious disease among artists, which can trace in all of Mr. Keiley's prints that interest me—do not consider photographic reproductions of romantic actors with false beards and Arabian bric-a-brac peddlers represented as noblemen, works of art" (47).

"Whistler's yellow buskin ladies, which have something of the true spirit of the 'living tradition' of Japanese art, are to be preferred at any time."[431] Considering that Hartmann claimed that "Japanese artists see in woman a glorification of all beautiful things," the figure of the feminine muse allows for an appreciation that blends aesthetic traditions as Hartmann traverses the globe.[432] In seeing a living tradition in the figure of the beautiful woman, Hartmann in the fashion of Poe makes the figure of the dead woman as muse into the im/material form of living tradition. Six years later in *The Whistler Book* (1910), Hartmann will describe Whistler as "the apostle of Japanese simplicity, of suggestion rather than realization" and argue that the "mysterious atmosphere of some of his canvases (from which solid forms emerge or recede into), is a poetic translation of Japanese suggestiveness— which does not care to create an illusion, but rather suggests it."[433] It is difficult to sort out the terms of Hartmann's analysis. Suggestiveness, as that which does not create illusion through the materiality of the medium, is poetically translated in a way that creates a mysterious atmosphere on a canvas that serves as the point of contact and appearance between painted forms that emerge from or recede into its surface. Suggestion, here, then offers a way for Hartmann to describe a moment prior to representation. Whistler's canvases then always refer to the precondition of their emergence in paint as well as to the possibility that they exist merely to offer the mind of the viewer their own opportunity to create illusions. For Hartmann, this would be both the origin and result of artistic creation enfolded onto one another in a single contemplative moment.

As this poetic translation does a form of intercultural work, Hartmann foregrounds the importance of attuning oneself the circumstance of artistic creation through the art object itself.

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[431] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Art*, 172.
[432] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Art*, 1
[433] Sadakichi Hartmann, *The Whistler Book* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1910), 102 and 142.

Perhaps an instance of Hartmann containing multitudes and contradicting himself, Hartmann concludes *The Whistler Book* with a vision of the future wherein Japanese aesthetics has fundamentally changed artistic expression the world over:

> The Western mind still rebels that this resurrection should come from the East, through another race. Even the most ardent disciples of Whistler make little of the Japanese influence. It is still a question of conquest. In my mind, as in that of many of our foremost artists, there is not the slightest doubt that the Eastern idea will win out and that a new era, as important as that of Greek influence, will set in. The meaning of the old symbols has faded and it is the artist's duty to create new ones.[434]

Hartmann presents racism as a problem of mind and sets his own against the rebellious "Western mind" that cannot acknowledge what is already present. Suggestivism in its greatest capacity *suggests* alternative potentialities. In returning to origins, moments prior to artistic creation, and the affect of composition, Hartmann challenges us to take seriously ourselves as the result of our experiences with aesthetic representations. While this may read as just another form of ideology critique or an investment in an always already empty utopianism, suggestivism is determined neither by despair nor hope (but it can be if you want to it to be). Rather, it holds open the potential for the self and its world to remade and reimagined in and through art that blurs boundaries between time as well as people. Illusion may be better thought of along the lines of entanglement. Hartmann is always interested in the self-reflective—to imagine oneself viewing a painting in the moment of experiencing it—as part of this sustaining force. Hartmann, through suggestivism, offers a model of his mind that, like the artists he champions, works to create meaning in new, and for, a new era.

By way of ending this section, I want spend time with two portraits. The first is Whistler's *Arrangement in Black (The Lady in the Yellow Buskin)* (1883). In claiming the

[434] Sadakichi Hartmann, *The Whistler Book*, 250.

singularity of Whistler's representation, Hartmann addresses his readers so that we may look with him as if we were at his side or in his mind:

> Could you imagine his "Yellow Buskin Lady" in any other way than buttoning her gloves, and glancing back, for a last time, over her shoulder, as she is walking away from you into grey distances! That peculiar turn of her body reveals the quintessence of her beauty. And that is the reason why Whistler has painted her in that attitude. Thus every object has its moment of supreme beauty.[435]

Hartmann's description, which gestures forward in time to Walter Benjamin's love at last sight, alludes to the "Fugitive beauté" of Baudelaire's "To a Passer-by," Orpheus' last moment with Eurydice, and so many other allusions and intertexts that Hartmann may have had in mind. Hartmann was a prolific reader, and this chapter only begins to gesture towards that. Hartmann claims that "everybody who has seen it will realize, or feel, at least, that the figure is represented as if actually moving in space."[436] Realization and feeling are not mutually exclusive, but they do point to two ways of experiencing the truth, or Hartmann's truth, of the painting. The representation of Lady Archibald Campbell is there so that Hartmann may continually experience the affect of her disappearance reappearance into the arrangement of black gradations through a repetition that itself nears becoming stasis. Hartmann astutely remarks that Whistler "cared more for black and grey gradations and the yellow note of the buskin than for the fair sitter. The figure is, so to speak, invented in the character of the colour arrangement."[437] Hartmann's conclusions about beauty may be taken in at least two ways. As a dismemberment of the feminine form, the first way suggests that viewers take the form apart through their gaze to appreciate each part of as object supreme in its own beauty. In the turn of head and in the buttoning of gloves, the figure only offers instances of the form covered and surrounding in

[435] Sadakichi Hartmann, *The Whistler Book*, 4.
[436] Sadakichi Hartmann, *The Whistler Book*, 128.
[437] Sadakichi Hartmann, *The Whistler Book*, 5.

muted blacks and browns. Though Hartmann had an intense interest in nudes within his categorization of the beautiful, a feature of his thinking that I will attend briefly to elsewhere, he indulges here in bodily forms at the edge of absence. To glimpse the figure in its vanishment requires a focus on its constitutive parts. The second offers a more generalizable understanding of "supreme beauty" created by the experience of the canvas in the affect of its totality—a beauty that would extend beyond the borders of painting to the larger world encouraging like the end of Hartmann's *My Rubaiyat* to "wrest beauty form all there is" and to "hail and bless each moment/Before it fades into the dark."[438] Hartmann likely gestures to both as the first option would appeal to his critical sensibilities if not other desires and the second, as it turns out, would be the result of the first. The ambiguity in Hartmann's conclusions suggest a double reading in parallel with the double viewing that would occur in Hartmann's experience of the painting.

[438] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Rubaiyat* (1916), 21.



Figure 15. James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *Arrangement in Black (The Lady in the Yellow Buskin)*, 1883, oil on canvas, 218.4 × 110.5 cm (86 × 43 1/2 in.), Philadelphia Museum of Art. Purchased with the W. P. Wilstach Fund, 1895, W1895-1-11. https://www.philamuseum.org/collection/object/104367.

If "Whistler's yellow buskin ladies, which have something of the true spirit of the 'living tradition' of Japanese art, are to be preferred at any time," then Hartmann's choice of what he describes as a "Typical Woman of the Ukio-ye School" by Katsukawa Shunshō may be another portrait Hartmann prefers.[439] Though I risk making too much of Hartmann's publication choices, the dedication that appears a few pages after the woodblock reads: "To the Memory of My Mother."[440] Dressed in rich reds and blues, this woman, perhaps a courtesan, observes the exchange of gazes between a cat that peers out of her kimono and a sitting dog whose curiosity is on the verge of begging. The collars encircling the necks of both the dog and cat are of the same red that hangs loosely from the figure's body. Looking downward at the exchange between a dog and a cat resting near her heart, we encounter a figure whose gaze is mediated by the exchange of the two nonhuman animals. Though neither dog nor cat are a Poe-like raven, the print may also suggest that we construct our relation to the figure through the nonhuman gaze as we do in Poe's poem. At times, it appears that the figure looks on with interest in this quotidian scene, but without overdetermined investment. That the figure's gaze as well as the cat's that is sheltered in her garments are directed downward in a convergent meeting with the dog's may suggest an identity between figure and cat—sheltering its small body from the eyes of the dog. In this way the viewer's gaze may align with the dogs' in returning to the woman's loose kimono with a concern over what may hiding beneath the fabric in a suggestiveness of a different degree. In the intimacy of its depiction, the print presents a multiplicity of readings that must confront the scopic play of relations between human and nonhuman alike even as it asks its viewer to reflect on the conditions of figure's beauty. Recalling the photographs of his mother, Hartmann writes,

[439] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Japanese Art*, 172.
[440] It is worth noting that George de Forest Brush, *Mother and Child* (1895) appears in the first volume of *A History of American Art* (1901).

"[h]er [Osada's] face in these photographs looked extremely pale, and flat, almost like an outline drawing of peculiar linear beauty and there was something wistful, sad, suffering, helpless in her face."[441]



Figure 16. Frontispiece to *Japanese Art* (1904). Katsukawa Shunshō, "Woman with Cat and Dog," 18th century, color woodblock print. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. https://archive.org/details/japaneseart00hart_0.

[441] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 15.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Substance of Poe's Shadows: Daguerreotyping "The Raven"

As Toni Morrison's argues in *Playing in the Dark*, "the Africanist presence informs in compelling and inescapable ways the texture of American literature. It is a dark and abiding presence, there for the literary imagination as both a visible and an invisible mediating force. Even, and especially, when American texts are not 'about' Africanist presences or characters or narrative or idiom, the shadow hovers in implication, in sign, in line of demarcation."[442] In suggesting that "no early American writer is more important to the concept of American Africanism than Poe," Morrison catalyzes a distinct movement in Poe scholarship towards his Southern heritage and the presence of racialization and racism within his work, most notably the important anthology, *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race* (2001).[443] To use the words of Betsy Erkkila to outline some of the contours of the critical conversation:

> Poe's poetry and tales of the 1830s and 1840s…[are]…spooked by the terrifying logic of progressive history, the fear of black emancipation, the specter of blood violence, the ongoing attack on the institution of slavery, an apocalyptic vision of the triumph of "blackness," and a flight away from history into fantasies of whiteness and purity: pure white woman, pure white beauty, pure white art, pure white poetics.[444]

For Richard Godden, that "Poe's 'beautiful woman' must be also dead and therefore available for melancholy…is a measure of the need to preserve her intact as his own strength; internalized and entombed she is safe as his property in perpetuity."[445] Drawing on Abraham and Torok's psychoanalytic theory of the encryption and the cryptonym—the unacknowledged referent that

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[442] Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 46-47.
[443] Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, 32.
[444] Betsy Erkkila, "The Poetics of Whiteness: Poe and the Racial Imaginary," in *Romancing the Shadow: Poe and Race*, eds. J. Gerald Kenney and Lillian Weissberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 57.
[445] Richard Godden, "Poe and the Poetics of Opacity: Or, Another Way of Looking at That Black Bird," *ELH* 67, no. 4 (2000): 1005.

lies within the language of the subject experiencing trauma or loss—Richard Godden moves through "The Raven's" "exceptional feet towards an anthology of subsemantic whispering."[446] Godden's reading of Poe's versification renders the "raven as a dislocated expression of the trauma of miscegenation" and the poem as a primal "scene of Southern slave labor."[447] Ultimately, what Godden hears in the poem's whispers is "*Le noir,*" claiming "that encrypted inside Lenore (as in her name) lies a black man, who, since the poem's narrator has incorporated his mistress, resides also in that narrator."[448] Expanding the kinds of threats to, or obsessions managed by, Poe in the construction of his identity and poetics, Erkkila reads the raven as "the expelled other of American national destiny—the dark, the corporeal, the sexual, the female, the animal, the mortal—[that] returns as an obsessive set of fantasies about subversion, amalgamation, and dark apocalypse."[449] The "visible and an invisible mediating force" Morrison describes is both internal and external, or rather the internalized expulsion of Blackness—what Anne Cheng defines as the structure of racial melancholy—in the Poe's poetics of self-making and the history of American literature more generally.

A similar argument for the navigation of Poe's fantasies around race, or Poe as an expression of America's structural racism, is made through a telling editorial decision, presumably by Rufus Wilmot Griswold, for *Graham's Magazine* in 1846. As if in response to the threat of Blackness that cannot be contained in Poe's attempts to explain the poem's origin in verse, effect, or the transcendental category of the beautiful, Emma Wood's "To the American Eagle" is appended to the final page of "The Philosophy of Composition" as support, as another crypt, or as the bird that might prey upon the raven or those with "craven heart." In this ode to

[446] Richard Godden, "Poe and the Poetics of Opacity," 1003.
[447] Richard Godden, "Poe and the Poetics of Opacity," 1005 and 1006.
[448] Richard Godden, "Poe and the Poetics of Opacity," 1007.
[449] Betsy Erkkila, "The Poetics of Whiteness: Poe and the Racial Imaginary," 62.

America's nonhuman signifier, Wood focuses on the bird's eyes as well the affective dimensions of its shadow in relation to patriotism. The eagle, having witnessed the triumph of the revolution and the birth of the nation, is asked to pass judgment on the American spirit of those living beneath its wings:

> Turn, turn thy piercing eye
> From its burning glance above,
> And search if the spirits beneath thee now
> Still burn with a patriot's love
> Search well that no craven heart
> Is beneath thy shadowy wing,
> Whose dastard fear would a veil of shame
> O'er the land of Freedom fling.
> Are the links of that chain still firm,
> Which hath bound them all as one?[450]

In a poem concerned with the preservation of a union that in its inception and structure depended upon on settler colonialism and chattel slavery, the image of citizens and states chained both in heart and in spirit who occupy and consist of "the home of the 'blood-bought free'" is an appropriate national fantasy.[451] The question concerning the strength of the chain that binds is nothing more than a veiled threat or the threat of the "veil of shame"—"Oh beware! If that chain be broken"—that might cover the eagle and the citizenry thereby resulting in a fall from flight and grace: "Thou must be the tyrant's minion,/Or borne out to the wild beast's lair." No longer soaring free in the American skies, the tyranny engendered by the breaking of chains makes of the eagle into a "wild beast." The racist overtones ring loudly much like the sound of the presumed freedom the eagle does not wish to lose. This threat might result in nothing less that the fall of the nation: "Shall oblivion veil thy story,/And its shadows o'er thee fling?"

[450] Emma Wood, "To the American Eagle," *Graham's Magazine* 28, no. 4 (April 1846): 167.
[451] Appropriately, the poem incorporates William Cowper's hymn, "Praise for the Fountain Opened" (1772) in its concern, to quote more from Cowper, for Americans to "lose all their guilty stain" through the washing away of sin in a Christian nationalist ablution.

The personification of oblivion as veiling the story of the eagle is in keeping with the ways in which the country depends upon a self-obfuscation of its origins including a selective forgetting that helps to construct a story allowing its patriotic readers to remain free from worry or care. In this way, the poem presents as a threat that which it ultimately exalts and in doing so becomes a performance of a hypothetical scenario it can't believe in, despite using this scenario as the occasion of the poem's fiction. The double shadow of eagle and oblivion offers patriotic readers a false choice between two kinds of veiled Blackness.[452] The first would be a choice to examine what lies in the shadow of the nonhuman American signifier—a confrontation and exploration with the contrast that generates its national fantasy. The second shadow of oblivion seemingly offers a freedom from first shadow. In other words, the poem, much like the country, needs the threat of loss so that it may continue to forget itself and what it might lose in perpetuity. Both the eagle's shadow and oblivion's shadow combine in their contrast from whatever light is present rendering them visible. Shadow is shadow—does the tautology beg the question of gradation or difference depending on what casts the shadow or what kind of light source is present? The poem suggests that there is a politicized difference, but the doubling of shadow and the uneasy construction of tropes is the result of the poem's confrontation with Blackness as excess, as origin, and as necessary for the construction of a contrastive identity for Wood's version of the nation. The "soul from out that shadow that lies flowing on the floor" that may never be lifted, "nevermore," occasioned by the piercing beak and glance of Poe's raven returns as a threat to the eagle and the country it represents.

The flexibility of potential definitions of Blackness in the poem's confrontation with race via my reading of the ways in which Poe's poem has been argued to engage with race is

[452] Blackness in Wood's poem is also aligned with Native American peoples.

speculative, but the figurative dimensions of shadow as they pertained to discourses surrounding the emergent technology of photography and chattel slavery intertwine during the nineteenth century. In *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth* (1850), Truth describes "inward and spiritual life" as a landscape of contrasts:

> We see, as knowledge dawns upon it, truth and error strangely commingled; here, a bright spot illuminated by truth—and there, one darkened and distorted by error; and the state of such a soul may be compared to a landscape at early dawn, where the sun is seen superbly gilding some objects, and causing others to send forth their lengthened, distorted, and sometimes hideous shadows.[453]

Truth's inner spiritual life becomes a figure for the life of the nation—the "state of such a soul" existing as a state of the union—in ways that do not refuse the "hideous shadows" or painful contradictions and violence that Truth persisted and lived through. The light of truth that combines objectivity with the subjectivity of her personal experience likewise blurs the boundary between the contrasts of the landscape, her spiritual life, and the country as a whole. In other words, Truth confronts what Wood's poem refuses. Truth's control over her own representation extended beyond the written word or the lecture circuit as the self-fashioning of herself as a figure in photograph ensured support not only of her abolitionist efforts, but also herself and image long after her death. In a reading of Truth's favorite *carte de visite* from 1864, Nell Irvin Painter points out that "the props—knitting, a book, and a vase full of flowers on a table—are simplified into tokens of leisure and feminine gentility."[454] In addressing not only the economic necessity, but perhaps also the potential economic power, of the photograph, "I Sell the Shadow to Support the Substance" appears underneath the portrait of Truth knitting. Truth's inclusion reworked common advertising slogans of commercial photographers to "secure" or "keep" the

[453] Sojourner Truth, *The Narrative of Sojourner Truth (Boston: The Author, 1850), 59.*
[454] Nell Irvin Painter, "Representing Truth: Sojourner Truth's Knowing and Being Known," *Journal of American History* 81, no. 2 (September 1994): 483.

shadow "ere the substance fade." For example, in "American Characteristics No. V—The Daguerreotypist" (1849) that appeared in *Godey's Lady's Book*, T.S. Arthur notes that "there is scarcely a county in any state that has not one or more of these industrious individuals busy at work in catching 'the shadow' ere the 'substance fade.'"[455] Pose, props, and phrase all contribute to the ways in which Truth creates meaning for herself in advance of her circulation.



Figure 17. "I Sell the Shadow to Support the Substance. SOJOURNER TRUTH," 1864, *Carte de visite* (albumen silver print from glass negative), 8.5 × 5.4 cm (3 3/8 × 2 1/8 in.), New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Purchase, Alfred Stieglitz Society Gifts, 2013. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/301989.

[455] T.S. Arthur, "American Characteristics No. V—The Daguerreotypist," *Godey's Lady's Book* (May 1849): 352.

The path of the yarn works to create such meaning for Truth, but also for those that might view the *carte de visite*. The yarn that extends from the unfinished garment passes over the table to her shawl and is then grasped by Truth's right hand. After passing through her hand, the yarn moves against her black dress and then crosses and disappears into her shawl a second time. From there, the yarn moves downward and changes direction in an approach to her lap where it sits in an intentional, though somewhat messy, spiral before running downward and looping at the edge of her dress. The yarn disappears behind Truth and at the edge of the *carte de visite*. The blur of Truth's left hand holding the knitting needles makes legible the substance becoming shadow as the needles and fingers become part of the unfinished creation. The blur is particularly noticeable in its contrast against the clarity of Truth's expression. In keeping with "the conventions of the genre of celebrity portraiture," Painter notes that Truth "looks past the camera, which lends an air of weighty seriousness."[456] Although Truth's right eye might suggest otherwise, in looking the past the camera Truth knowingly confronts the human viewer that might be positioned behind the apparatus or could be holding the photograph in hand. Linking Truth's hands to our own in both light and word, the open book laying on the table is reflected in the knitting that Truth grasps in its shape and contrast as her knitting needles nearly rest against the corner of its pages. The chains from Wood's poem that were inflexible, unyielding, and violent are refashioned into stiches that clothe, support, and create connections that can be remade or refashioned as time passes. As yarn, text, body, and light become photograph, Truth knits the viewer into her own image and invites them to reflect on substance of their own being.

To return to Wood's poem as a version of the United States that I'm suggesting Truth continues to exist in opposition to, at the very least in photograph, the eagle's authority and a

[456] Nell Irvin Painter, "Representing Truth: Sojourner Truth's Knowing and Being Known," 485.

version of American greatness is reasserted despite potential threats to the nation. Though the phrasing of "patriotic sires" recalls the problems of monarchy in establishing a version of American patrilineal patriotism, and begins to blend the human into the nonhuman in creating sons of the eagle, the poem ultimately underscores the importance of a version of a different collective engagement in keeping the nation alive:

> God forbid! there are lofty spirits,
> There are sons of patriot sires,
> Who the glorious trust inherit,
> And will guard its altar fires.
> They will labor to shield the Union
> From the mad fanatic's hand,
> Or aught that would aim to ruin
> The harmony of their land.

In doing so, the poem's rhyme-making argument rehearses its investments in the imagined precarity of the country (Union/ruin); longevity and lineage (spirits/inherit); geographic and bodily being (hand/land); and generative creation (sires/fires). However, the rhyme of "sires" and "fires" carries what I've been calling a threat from Poe's poem, of a raven "whose fiery eye" burns into the speaker's "bosom's core" or sets the soul of the speaker on fire, into Wood's own. Those accustomed to life living in the land of the free, domesticated much like Poe's raven (i.e., not "beast[s]"), may engender disaster if they do not guard the "altar fires." Surveillance, sacrifice, and devotion are necessary to maintain the "land of Freedom" and the undergirding paradox of being free in being chained or ruled of its political economy.

The poem's performance of preservation enacts the kind of protection it calls for by heeding that very call. In other words, the apostrophe as a split address includes the abstraction of the eagle, the reader, as well as the poem itself:

> Soar on! thou mayst well be fearless,
> For thine is no borrowed might;
> Thou dost guard a birthright peerless,
> Long, long be thy pathway bright.

The "pathway bright" of the country figured as the bird's flight is presumably what casts the eagle's shadow at the poem's beginning. The nation's progress through history is figured as a future that makes both past and present possible for the poem and the country. The ongoing dialectic between the bright path of history and the shadow the eagle casts below for those that live beneath its wings offers readers a pleasing alternative to Poe's poem as least as far as remaining in shadows goes. In other words, the poem's speaker and the nation more generally wish to remain indefinitely in the shadow cast by the eagle. Both Wood and Poe offer bird poems of shadowed inscription as a condition of an imprisoned freedom. To be bound forever in loss either real or imagined links the heart of the lover with that of the patriot. As Freud makes clear in "Mourning in Melancholia" (1917), "mourning is regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved person, or to the loss of some abstraction which has taken the place of one, such as one's country, liberty, an ideal, and so on."[457] Freud's "and so on" gestures towards an emptied linguistic structure that connects the lost object with country, liberty, ideal, as well as the social and material forces that make language possible or at least these two poems readable in *Graham's* pages. In redoubling the loss by linking Poe's poem to Woods, *Graham's Magazine* offers the abstraction of the country as an alternative to the beautiful ideal of Lenore, as that which might become a better object for cathecting with and therefore introjecting the original loss in Poe's poem. As Abraham and Torok theorize in their reading of Freud, the ability to address loss through language, introjection, is contrasted with melancholia, or incorporation, wherein the mouth is unable to do the work of mourning as it is rendered unable articulate the loss of object: "when *words* fail to fill the subject's void and hence an imaginary thing is inserted

[457] Sigmund Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia" 243.

into the mouth in their place."[458] A loss that cannot be acknowledged is swallowed along with the trauma associated with the loss and encrypted in the psychic topography of the subject, or in my reading the magazine.[459] Melancholia occurs when the crypt cannot completely contain the loss. This failure of encryption manifests in the behavior of the melancholic: "when libidinal fulfillments have their way, the ghost of the crypt comes back to haunt the cemetery guard, giving him strange and incomprehensible signals, making him perform bizarre acts, or subjecting him to unexpected sensations" perhaps like those associated with having one's soul trapped in the shadow of bird.[460] This is all to say that since Poe can only end the "Philosophy of Composition" with the final stanza from "The Raven" may have colored the reading and interpretation of Wood's poem for *Graham's* readers as it does mine.

Is it possible to apply Poe's method in "The Philosophy of Composition" to Emma Wood's "To the American Eagle" as a form of suggestive reading or to explain the kinds of loss that this editorial decision may be trying to address? Wood's poem can "be read at one sitting" and for American readers, the "the design of rendering the work [may have been] *universally* appreciable."[461] If "beauty is the sole legitimate province of the poem," a beauty "intense and pure elevation of *soul—not* of intellect, or of heart—," what could be more beautiful than the soaring eagle as a figure for the soul of the nation?[462] If "melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones," then Wood's poem about the precarious life of the nation would seem to be in keeping with Poe's poetic prescription.[463] Though Wood's poem does not contain a refrain, the opening and closing apostrophe to the eagle to "soar" rhymes with Poe's own

[458] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*, 129.
[459] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*, 130.
[460] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*, 130.
[461] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 163 and 164. Emphasis in original.
[462] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.
[463] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 164.

"nevermore" and by virtue of their placement in *Graham's*, Poe's poem and the "Philosophy of Composition" become the refrain of "To the American Eagle" much like Poe as writer critic acts as a refrain in American literary history at least as far as Hartmann might be concerned. The imperative is for the eagle to soar, to take the flight that the raven refuses in the final stanza of Poe's poem and "The Philosophy of Composition":

> And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
> On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
> And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,
> And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
> And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
> Shall be lifted—nevermore!

Wood's eagle is soaring, still soaring, over the "shadow that lies floating on the floor" and everything else that might remain beneath its own "shadowy wing" at least in *Graham's Magazine*. In Abraham and Torok's formulation of melancholic loss, "since language acts and makes up for absence by representing, by *giving figurative shape* to presence, it can only be *comprehended* or *shared* in a 'community of empty mouths.'"[464] In addressing the "*character* of the word" that would serve as the refrain of "The Raven," Poe insists that "to have force, [it] must be sonorous and susceptible to protracted emphasis."[465] While it may be foolish to argue for protraction of Poe's "nevermore" into Wood's "Soar" in much the same way we might not take Poe at his word when he claims that "nevermore" was the "very first [word] which presented itself"[466] It is not only in figuration, but in its sonic materiality that Poe addresses the absence as the constitutive heart of his poem as "long *o* as the most sonorous vowel, in connection with the long *r* as the most producible consonant" end up creating a community amongst poems and

[464] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*, 128. Emphasis in original.
[465] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165. Emphasis in original.
[466] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.

Graham's readers.[467] For Wood's poem, the soaring is the condition of shadow and American life is lived "beneath" its "shadowy wing." In sustaining the fantasy of a United States that is always already lost or on the verge thereof, the shadow of the eagle and the poem that attempts to contain it, "To the American Eagle," makes the country legible in making visible the invisible in its attempt to present that which is absent and that which is hyper-visible simultaneously. In other words, there is no substance without shadow. Yet, Wood's poem is unclear as the figures suggest that it might be the reverse or that there is a contradiction that sustains both the poetic and national fantasy. For Poe and Poe criticism it becomes a question of race understood through the figure of the shadow as a mediating, if not generative force, between human relations.

Poe's "The Raven"

As G.W. Peck remarks of "The Raven" in his review of Poe, "[p]robably there is not, in all poetry or prose, an instance where language is made to present a more vivid *picture* to the fancy than in this poem."[468] Peck also claims Poe a "poet of singular genius" because he "wrote poems addressed to the feelings, wherein the meaning is designedly vague and subordinate," something Peck proposes had never occurred before.[469] Equating both the pictorial the affective, Peck observes "The Raven's" lines as "the product of a pure vividness of fancy, and a sustained intense feeling."[470] The relationship between feeling and picture is what Hartmann terms suggestiveness. Within the poem, the speaker or lover/scholar must come to terms with suggestiveness as a form of melancholic loss. To recognize the self in the shadow of the raven is

[467] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.
[468] G.W. Peck, "The Works of Edgar A. Poe," *The American Review: A Whig Journal* no. 27 (March 1850): 309-310. Emphasis in original.
[469] G.W. Peck, "The Works of Edgar A. Poe," 312.
[470] G.W. Peck, "The Works of Edgar A. Poe," 310.

to participate in a process of self-objectification theorized in Frederick Douglass' photographic theory. That Poe may not have wanted to become the object viewed in his own critical gaze may seem odd as he manifested a persistent concern with how his poems were to be read and circulated. However, if "The Raven" does indeed index anxieties over racialization and the violence of chattel slavery as *Graham's* editorial decision or the developing critical consensus concerning the presence of race within "The Raven" suggest, then perhaps Hartmann's multiple exposure of the poem through the readings of its origins alters the image of the poem in ways that move toward the capacity of an intermedial poetics capable of representing his mixed identity. Admittedly, this claim is suggestive and risks retrospective projection, but at the very least Hartmann does position himself in relation to Poe in ways that are important for rethinking literary history and the place of these two writers within it. More specifically, beyond offering this potential interpretation, I also want to foreground the ways in which intermediality works within the poem by reading Poe's "The Raven" (1845) and Douglass' "Pictures and Progress" (1864-65) in relation to the daguerreotype process and photography more generally. Poe claimed of the daguerreotype that the "instrument itself must undoubtedly be regarded as the most important, and perhaps the most extraordinary triumph of modern science."[471] Here, I use it to argue for a suggestive, or affective criticism modeled on melancholic loss.

Barbara Johnson argues Poe's "The Raven" is "a highly artificial poem that describes the signifier as an artifice that somehow captures the genuine" and that "the bird [therein] is a figure for mechanical poetic repetition."[472] If the refrain of the poem repeats itself until it becomes a set of sounds and their associated affects, it is curious that that this sonic abstraction is coupled with

[471] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," *Alexander's Weekly Messenger* 4, no. 3 (January 5, 1840): 2.
[472] Barbara Johnson, "Strange Fits: Poe and Wordsworth on the Nature of Poetic Language" in *The Barbara Johnson Reader: The Surprise of Otherness*, eds. Melissa Feuerstein, Bill Johnson González, Lili Porten, and Keja L. Valens (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 54 and 52.

the perpetual capturing of a soul within a shadow. Working alongside Johnson and taking the visual and sonic substance of the poem together, it is my contention that this bird or the fearful affect associated with its appearance at the "chamber door" is also a figure of photographic reproducibility. The poem's unfolding reads as a photographic exposure and the bird an apparatus that creates with lamplight "that shadow that lies floating on the floor" from which the "soul" of the poem's speaker "Shall be lifted—nevermore!" What appears as an approximation of post-mortem photography, the prospect of existence within shadow is unsettling precisely because it reverses what in "The Philosophy of Composition" (1846) Poe takes as a figure for pure poetic or aesthetic experience that is free from a kind of didacticism that he would criticize in Longfellow: "'[w]hen it most closely allies itself to *Beauty*: the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover.'"[473] Poe's concern with "lips best suited" in an imagined conversation with himself uncannily underscores the importance of address within "The Raven," or rather the ways in which the poem reverses common tropes of Romantic address including those found in bird odes. Whereas Shelley's skylark or Keats' nightingale might serve as signifiers for poetic expression, Poe's raven speaks the name of, rather than exists as, an unrealized poetic ideal despite Poe's attempts through refrain of "The Raven" to render human speech into what Johnson calls "a poetry of the pure signifier."[474] The precondition for the speech acts within the poem is the adjustment of the speaker's body to the gaze and refrain of the raven. For Johnson, "[t]he plot of 'The Raven' can be read as the story of what happens when the signifier encounters a reader," noting that "[w]hat began as a signifier empty of subjectivity has become a container for the whole of the reader's soul" in much the

[473] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.
[474] Barbara Johnson, "Strange Fits," 54.

same way I'm suggesting that the "the shadow that lies floating on the floor" presents a similar kind of ambivalent encounter.[475]

Both Eliza Richards and Johnson write of emptiness in and of "The Raven." The poem for Johnson is a "plea for the poeticity of the mechanical, the empty, and the hollow" which for Richards is an "evacuative aesthetic" wherein "feminine convention," the figure of the woman as muse, inspiration, and I would suggest the feminine body are managed by Poe's poetic performances.[476] The absence in "The Raven" in Richards' reading is the origin of the poem itself:

> The poem takes as its subject a symbiotic—or, with the presence of the scavenger bird, an explicitly parasitic—process of poetic composition. Aligned with the raven, the lyric speaker replaces the female inspiration by drawing from it. Whereas the beautiful woman inspires the poem, her evacuation is a prerequisite to its existence.[477]

Richards' description of Poe's logic aligns with what Carol Adams refers to as the absent referent, namely the ways in which individuals disappear or are absented in literal death as well as in discourse and in metaphor.[478] Though the Johnson ultimately argues that such an emptiness must be filled, the violence of these fantasies as Richards and Adams call attention to are worth staying with. Though Adams is referring to the ways in which nonhuman animals are subjected to this logic to become available for personal and cultural consumption, the impulse to objectify for one's own pleasure or meaning is precisely what Richards argues Poe is up to in his writing, and more to the point, the kind of pleasure that is experienced by the lover/scholar throughout the poem wherein the beating of the heart punctuates and indexes affect for the lover/scholar even as it pulses with the reader's own. The speaker in the third stanza recounts the kinds of

[475] Barbara Johnson, "Strange Fits," 53 and 54.
[476] Barbara Johnson, "Strange Fits," 50.
[477] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 50.
[478] Carol Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Eating Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (New York and London: Continuum, 2010), 66-67.

experiences offered his bodily being in the uncertainty of the rapping on the chamber door: "And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain/Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before." The poem's emphasis on stilling the beating of the heart which occurs first in the line that immediately follows—becoming image or dead in the way Lenore is—allows Poe to substitute this speaker for its own utterance. It appears that one possible reading would be that this substitution occurs through the intermedial as an approximation of photographic process.

Furthermore, as Richards points out, "[f]or Poe and his contemporaries…female verse inextricably linked the personal and the poetic, and the physical body and poetic form: Poe averred on more than once occasion that a 'woman and her book are identical'"[479] Reading "The Raven" presents this problem of overlapping identities, attachments, and projections in rhymes that blur their boundaries. The raven becomes a figure for "The Raven," "The Philosophy of Composition," the poet, or Poe; the lover/scholar a figure for the reader, the poet, or Poe; the shadow an identity that seemingly takes in all the relations. In other words, reading the raven is difficult because it presents a problem of reference—one cannot be sure who or what is being referred to—even within Poe criticism. The poem also invites us to consider the absent body of Lenore felt through her presence on the cushion as well as the fate of the speaker's body if the soul is separated from it as it floats on the floor. If, as readers, we cannot be sure where the body is, the poem may present a similar invitation to uncertainty about our own bodies and souls. Do we remain with the shadow of the "The Raven" or the bird therein? More importantly, is Hartmann's choice to return and rewrite the poem's origins having lived in the literary shadow of Poe. Though the shadow may offer a way of delimiting the chains of signification in the

[479] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 38.

enclosure or becoming photograph of the soul, the poem replays this processes ad infinitum. "The seamless performance, the very difficulty in distinguishing the artist from the production, or the woman from her role as artists," Richards underscores, "was the sign of the poetess."[480] In Richards' reading of the discourses of the period, "women possessed an uncanny ability to imbue their poems with an emotional presence that was often emphatically not their own" and "[if] women and poems were equally sources of beauty, then the woman poet displayed artlessly artful emotions."[481] If, as Abraham and Torok theorize, in "[b]eing a melancholic, I stage and let everyone else see the full extent of my love object's grief over having lost me," then Poe's speaker performs the loss of Lenore, Poe's poem the Poetess, and Hartmann both a combination of the figure of Poe and the secondhand memories of his mother.[482] This is to say that to a certain extent the poem mourns the loss of its reader within the experience of reading, but this effect is mostly constructed through Poe's criticism and Hartmann's reception. The poem is one of attachment, but perhaps the most significant form of attachment is the one critics, scholars, or bereaved lovers of Poe as Hartmann was, have to the poem. In opting for his mother as muse, however, Hartmann seeks to alter the forms of cultural transmission done by the poem by casting himself and his mother in the drama it performs. Here however, the feeling of loss experienced in the fantasy of pure signification or critically as the overdetermined figure of poetic meaning that is always already experienced affectively. The oxymoronic "nevermore" perpetually filling and emptying itself of our feelings and critical investments as we continue to ventriloquize the lover/scholar, if not the raven.

[480] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 39.
[481] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 39.
[482] Nicholas Abraham and Maria Torok, *The Shell and the Kernel*, 136.

Though I disagree with the equation of the mechanical with the empty or the hollow in the list cited above, Johnson arrives at the conclusion that poem qua poem in being read cannot avoid the absence of meaning:

> Sense has been made through the absorption of the subject by the signifier. The poem has sealed, without healing, the trauma of loss. What began as a signifier empty of subjectivity has become a container for the whole of the reader's soul. A poetry of the pure signifier is just as impossible to maintain as a poetry of the pure signified. Repetition engenders its own compulsion-to-sense. Poetry works *because* the signifier cannot remain empty—because, not in spite, of the mechanical nature of its artifice.[483]

The reader of the "The Raven" and the shadow of the reader in the figure of the young lover/scholar risks becoming as much a "figure for mechanical poetic repetition"[484] as the raven is in Johnson's reading. As sealing or encrypting the "trauma of loss" the poem becomes melancholic in Freud's or Abraham and Torok's sense, and what is lost names an attachment to an impossible reading practice predicated on refusal of relation. The lover/scholar no longer wants to read in relation to Lenore, indicating in the first stanza a substitution of that loss in turning to "many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore" and lamenting the impossibility in the second stanza that a "surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore" cannot be found in "my books." To read without Lenore, to read without a relation to the text, and to read without loss is the fantasy that "The Raven" refuses as the speaker is turned into the image-text of the shadowed "nevermore." In the *Aesthetics*, Hegel differentiates between a "mere sign with such an indifference between meaning and expression" and the symbol in art that consists in "the kinship, relation, and concrete interpenetration of meaning and shape."[485] If, as for Johnson, the "signifier cannot remain empty" as art and artifice, it welcomes this "interpenetration of meaning

[483] Barbara Johnson, "Strange Fits," 54. Emphasis in original.
[484] Barbara Johnson, "Strange Fits," 52.
[485] Hegel, *Aesthetics*, 304.

and shape" as poetry, or in my reading, as image—we might easily substitute photography for poetry in Johnson's sentence quoted above.

The trauma of this loss is not exceptional or inexpressible but is simply part of the reading process as it unfolds and is redoubled by "The Philosophy of Composition" as a question between repetition and originality. For Hartmann, the answer is in the "slight variation" inseparable from the individuality of the artist or the viewer. The binary between repetition and originality is exposed as false. The only way not to resolve, but to continue adjusting oneself to, the trauma of the past, is in the ongoing present of reading. In this way, what is exceptional is not the loss itself, but rather the significance of bearing it. What would be an ahistorical exception is grounded in histories of reading that suggest such healing may not even be wanted. The reader adjusts themselves to "The Raven" even as the lover/scholar positions itself to better view and critically respond to the bird as a figure of the poem. The poem's intermediality or the becoming photograph of the speaker suggests that the space between medial forms offers a way of approximating the affect of experience before their determinations in language or in photograph. In other words, by introducing an additional form of representation as a kind of self-critical commentary on its own medial conditions, "The Raven" creates the conditions in and through which another medium may offer a critique of the poem itself if not the conditions that created it—Hartmann's near obsession. As Georges Didi-Huberman proposes, "[a]n image often appears where a word seems to fail; a word often appears where the imagination seems to fail."[486] The shadow appears on the floor in the final utterance of "nevermore." The poem is a story of interpretive failures and the story of the poem's interpretive failures an invitation for Hartmann to write himself in the moments prior to its existence. While I address those tales and essays later

[486] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Images in Spite of All: Four Photographs of Auschwitz*, trans. Shane B. Lillis (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 26.

in depth, Hartmann's rewritings make use of photographic discourse and the language of visuality. While I cannot claim that Hartmann saw the daguerreotype process in the poem, in what follows I offer a speculative reading inspired by Hartmann.

Poe writes about the daguerreotype in *Alexander's Weekly Messenger* (1840) in glowing terms, praising the medium's representational capacities, and gesturing towards its unknown possibilities: "[t]he results of the invention cannot, even remotely, be seen—but all experience, in matters of philosophical discovery, teaches us that, in such discovery, it is the unforeseen upon which we must calculate most largely."[487] The scopic language of Poe's writing dovetails with the philosophical consequences of the invention in suggesting a new vision, and perhaps application of such a vision in similar ways that for Douglass photography is a matter of philosophy. The medium necessitates the reconsideration of representation from a new perspective of truth. "All language," Poe insists, "must fall short of conveying any just idea of the truth, and this will not appear so wonderful when we reflect that the source of vision itself has been, in this instance, the designer."[488] Poe's rhetoric plays with the truth of technology and the truths the daguerreotype may offer:

> Perhaps, if we imagine the distinctness with which an object is reflected in a positively perfect mirror, we come as near the reality as by any other means. For, in truth, the Daguerreotyped plate is *infinitely* (we use the term advisedly) is infinitely more accurate in its representation than any painting by human hands. If we examine a work of ordinary art, by means of a powerful microscope, all traces of resemblance to nature will disappear—but the closest scrutiny of the photogenic drawing discloses only a more absolute truth, a more perfect identity of aspect with the thing represented. The variations of shade, and the gradations of both linear and ærial perspective are those of truth itself in the supremeness of its perfection.[489]

[487] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," 2.
[488] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," 2.
[489] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," 2.

Appropriately, Poe turns to another prosthetic eye in the microscope to further explicate the infinite accuracy of the likeness that appears on the plate. Implied in the comparison between the human hand and the touch of light is that an examination of the daguerreotype would remain itself in terms of resemblance to the visible nature represented on the plate in a medium specificity that creates and receives the image. The comparison between the plate and a painting, however, seems to indicate Poe valued the aesthetic expression of the medium even if much of the small piece is focused on other uses. The implication also creates the odd suggestion wherein both photographic apparatus and microscope mediate the gaze between human persons even as such an examination offers truth. Though the photograph attests to the truthfulness the likeness on the plate in being created by the light that allows the human eye to see, such truth depends upon mechanical mediation. At the microscopic level, truth is a matter of tone. In multiplying the types of viewing experiences allowed for in the medium, performs even as he describes the potentiality of the medium and the multiple uses of truth within Poe's rhetoric gestures towards the disruption of an episteme or marks its development. Poe ends the piece by turning to the moon and expresses his enthusiasm for the "drawing of a correct lunar chart…[since] the rays of this luminary are found to be appreciated by the plate."[490] Though likely mentioned to highlight the possible uses of the invention, the inclusion is telling for the ways in which the moon is reflective mediation, a possible photograph of the sun, or the source of poetic inspiration such as in Poe's "Fairyland." The melting, if not melancholic moon, that shapes our vision in the way that photography does.

In addition to describing the possible uses of the medium as well as philosophizing about it. Poe details the daguerreotype process for readers of *Alexander's Weekly Messenger*. The

[490] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," 2.

brevity with which Poe claims for his description indicates the intricacies of the technical process:

> We may say in brief, however, that a plate of silver upon copper is prepared, presenting a surface for the action of the light, of the most delicate texture conceivable. A high polish being given this plate by means of a steatitic calcareous stone (called Daguerreolite) and containing equal parts of steatite and carbonate of lime, the fine surface is then iodized by being placed over a vessel containing iodine, until the whole assumes a tint of pale yellow. The plate is then deposited in a camera obscura, and the lens of this instrument directed to the object which it is required to paint. The action of the light does the rest. The length of time requisite for the operation varies according to the hour of the day, and the state of the weather—the general period being from ten to thirty minutes—experience alone suggesting the proper moment of removal. When taken out, the plate does not at first appear to have received a definite impression—some short processes, however, develope it in the most miraculous beauty.[491]

At the risk of reproducing what Poe has already outlined, the creation of a daguerreotype is a direct process wherein a silver-coated copper plate is polished to be as highly reflective as a mirror; exposed to iodine and bromine fumes to create a light sensitive surface; loaded into a camera and exposed, which at the time of Poe's sitting for the "Annie" daguerreotype in 1849 would have been well under a minute depending on the size of the plate; developed in a fuming box where mercury vapor combines with silver salts to produce an image on its surface; fixed in a bath of hyposulphate of soda (sodium thiosulphate) to stabilize the image; and washed before finally being mounted in a frame underneath a sheet of protective glass most often in a velvet-lined leather case. The process is as sensitive as it is labor intensive. At each moment in its creation the likeness depends upon a series of chemical reactions and, more importantly, the discerning eye and adept hand of the daguerreotypist. Poe's emphasis on the process foreshadows his concern in "The Philosophy of Composition" with creation of "The Raven" in what I would argue are similar steps. The essay takes a likeness of the poem with photographic precision and contingency and thereby attempts to fix the image of the poem in the context of its

[491] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Daguerreotype," 2.

circulation. In the case of the poem, however, it exists as both likeness and referent in its mediation by Poe's critical language—it becomes impossible to think of the poem as separate from the essay after reading it. The poem itself describes the process through which the likeness of the speaker is taken by the raven resulting in the speaker's soul trapped in the bird's shadow for as long as it lasts. The poem's concern with the affect of becoming image is redoubled in the poem's emphasis on impression and touch.



Figure 18: Unknown, "Daguerreotype Plate with no Image," ca. 1850, daguerreotype plate, 8.2 × 6.9 cm (3 1/4 × 2 11/16 in.), Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/49651.

Interacting with a daguerreotype highlights the tangible qualities of the image if only in the materials of its construction. As I and as so many other scholars continue to point out, the polished plate on which the laterally reversed likeness appears becomes a mirror wherein you might see yourself in the image as ghostlike presence living in the absent light of the referent. The tonal range of the daguerreotype allowed for both positive and negative images to appear when held at different angles or looked at in varying lighting conditions. At the bottom of the "Annie" daguerreotype of Poe, the age of the plate shows this possibility of positive/negative dynamics in the shirt sleeve and hand. This is to say that the likeness had to be held in place not just on the surface of the plate, but also in the viewer's possession. Hartmann describes this quality of the daguerreotype as a "strange effect, this silvery glimmer and mirror-like sheen" that gives life and death to the photograph: the high-lights grow darker than the shadows, and the image of some gentleman in a stock or some lady in bonnet and puffed sleeves appears like a ghostlike vision. Yet as soon as it is moved away from the light and contemplated from a certain angle, the image reappears, the mere shadow of a countenance comes to life again."[492] It also asks viewers to think about the daguerreotype portrait as well as themselves in this duality. For example, Marcy Dinius posits that this dual quality of the daguerreotype may have been a way for Douglass to address his "dual racial identity."[493] Easily held, a whole plate daguerreotype measures 6.5 x 8.5 inches. The tactile quality of the case invites an intimacy conducted using nonhuman skin—a shadow of the nonhuman animal much like the raven's own—in the service of the fantastic desire to touch the referent. Encased for protection, daguerreotypes were fragile and easily damaged. The phenomenological experience of the daguerreotype according to

[492] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Daguerreotype," *Photo-Era: The American Journal of Photography* 29, no. 3 (September 1912): 101.
[493] Marcy Dinius, *The Camera and the Press: American Visual and Print Culture in the Age of the Daguerreotype* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 215.

Hartmann is one of intimacy, namely that "we cannot resist the temptation to open and glance at it."[494]



Figure 19: Unknown, *Portrait of Edgar Allan Poe* (the "Annie" daguerreotype), 1849, cased plate daguerreotype, 12.2 × 8.9 cm (4 13/16 × 3 1/2 in.), Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/33002.

[494] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Daguerreotype," 101.

Poe gazes into the camera in the "Annie" daguerreotype with a look of uncertainty. The clarity of the plate allows for the apparatus to be reflected in his eyes—the mark of which occurring as vertical black line in each eye that intersects with the pupil most visible here in Poe's left eye. In making the apparatus part of Poe's body, his eyes seem something more nonhuman or animal like than human.[495] Though the artifice of Poe's vertically elongated pupils may have been the result of reflection or simply the deterioration of the likeness in the frame (both common occurrences on daguerreotype plates), Poe's eyes stare with depth and in the direction of the viewer's own. The oval portraiture reflecting in tone and in nearly in shape the poet's eyes to create an uncanny *mise en abyme* that engenders a self-consciousness about the spectatorial positions of both Poe as sitter and viewer as holder of the framed plate. Daguerreotypes continually pose questions concerning how to look and how to feel in both emotional and bodily registers.

In a letter to biographer, John Ingram, whose collection of Poe materials is now found in University of Virginia's library, Anne L. Richmond complains about the likeness in the daguerreotype of Poe that takes her name. Richmond's complaints echo commonplace sentiments concerning the inaccuracy of photographic representation to produce likenesses that accurately capture whether in feeling or in fact those that appear before the camera's lens:

> Mr. Poe's does not do him justice indeed, I have never seen a picture that did-his face was thin, & in the one I send, he looks very stout, & his features heavy, which makes it seem almost like a caricature—yet, he certainly sat for it, & the artist (if he deserves the title) is still living here, who had the privilege of taking it.[496]

[495] As both birds and humans share round pupils, I can't quite suggest that Poe is becoming raven in this daguerreotype. The vertical pupil shape, however, recalls cats such as Poe's feline, Catterina.
[496] Annie Richmond to John Ingram, October 3, 1876. In John Carl Miller, *Building Poe Biography* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 153.

Hartmann writes in the early decades of the twentieth century with a similar complaint: "I lost my likeness, or in plainer words I was photographed so often and so inadequately as far as likeness is concerned, that I was not sure any longer about my looks."[497] Whether it was the pose itself, having to the pose for the duration of the exposure, or the contingency that marks every photographic image, Richmond is not satisfied by this likeness nor any picture she has seen. Poe becomes a caricature, and the aesthetic value of the daguerreotype is questioned. Yet, the sarcasm in the letter foregrounds the indexicality of the daguerreotype and the process of its creation in ways that privilege a material truth over against the feeling of accuracy. What Richmond refers to as "the privilege of taking" is also expressed in reverse as a privilege of giving. Richmond was upset about Ingram publishing her letters in full, writing in 1880:

> I did not dream of seeing them appear word for word as they were written! The shock was indeed a terrible one to me—it seemed *sacrilege* truly—I felt condemned, that I had allowed them to pass out of my hands. But it is useless to discuss the matter now. You evidently did not understand my feelings about them, or you would never have put them in print.[498]

For Richmond, there is something more striking at the appearance of words on the page rather than bodies and faces on sensitized plates. As a form of public display that desecrates the matter and memory of Poe and her relationship to him in an intimacy laid bare before readers, Ingram's publication evinces a lack of understanding regarding the feelings of someone other than his own. The letters were to serve as inspiration, the matter for selective quotation, but reproduction in full gives too much away. In uttering the name of the loved one lost, the mechanism of the

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[497] Sadakichi Hartmann, "In Search of My Likeness" (undated, after 1910), 1. Box 6. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside. Hartmann finds his likeness in a photograph by William Shewell Ellis who was famous for advertising photographs including the "Kodak Girl" campaign. In the short essay Hartmann complains that his likeness was completely lost after the circulation of one of his photographs wherein he appeared more feminine than he desired. To be, but not appear as, a Poetess.

[498] Annie Richmond to John Ingram, July 9, 1880. In John Carl Miller, *Building Poe Biography* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 191.

raven posits a similar scenario, namely how it might feel to see the affection of your expression spoken, published, or performed by another such as a raven or a Poe scholar. Ingram turns to forgotten, or rather unknown, lore, in seeking out the intimate possessions of Poe's acquaintances in the construction of his own archive after Poe's death. The provenance of the daguerreotype and Richmond's letters foreground the kinds of attachments and investments that the process of "The Raven" attempts to trouble in uneasy relationships between image, text, and affect. The question of what might adhere to, or appear in the reflection of, the silvered plate containing Poe's likeness has many possible answers. For Hartmann, he saw himself in, and sometimes as, Poe in his writing and potentially in his feelings for his lost mother. For Richmond, it was a *memento mori* that prompted recollections of her Poe that did not appear on the plate. For Ingram, it was for the creation of *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe* (1874-1875) and the canonization of the poet within American literary history. Reading the soul within the "shadow that lies floating on the floor" in "The Raven" presents comparable interpretive questions. As it has become difficult to separate the poem from "The Philosophy of Composition" and the history of its reception, looking at the shadow may help us look at the multiple iterations of its image as mechanically and affectively reproduced even if the answers wanted may be in the question stated.

To use one of Hartmann's phrases, Poe's eyes appear in the "Annie" daguerreotype "as if steeped in some phosphorescent gloom" in a gaze that moves past and through the viewer. Beneath the furrowed brow they have a look almost fearful, yet also confrontational. The dark line where Poe's lips meet marks their closure in a flatness of frustrated speech. The likeness would not be as like if Poe were able to articulate his thought as the movements of his mouth and jaw that would become blurred on the plate's surface. Poe's right hand disappears into his coat

perhaps to "still the beating of…[his] heart," the very place where the speaker of "The Raven" locates the puncturing pain of the bird's speech. To be still for a moment, to still oneself in the moment of being photographed, necessitates an attunement to lens of the apparatus and the duration of the capture. To think of one's afterlife in images calls forth common critical accounts of photography that collapse signifier and signified, but also trouble the feeling of the experience. Questions of reference, representation, and signification are felt through poetry that may enliven or deaden the image. The photograph modifies ideas of life and death. To see oneself as apparition is to apprehend to possibility of a different existence. In "Dreary Windblown Meads," Hartmann describes the moment that "The Raven" came into being, at least in his projection into Poe's mind, in a landscape where "Substances became shadowy, and shadows grew substantial."[499] In the fluid relation between shadow and substance, the photograph and its referent may change places. For Douglass, this relation is what allows for a criticism that inspires progress in acts of comparative and mutually informing viewing. Poe's speaker turns away from those possibilities and is forever stilled in the shadow of the raven.

Poe's "The Raven" ends with this shadow. A poetic image surely, but also that of the speaker's soul "floating" within the shadowy form of the raven. The repetition of the stanza's first lines to describe the bird as "never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting" recall the arrested motion of the photograph in capturing time's movement even as the repetition of the phrase within the poetic line plays with the linear progression of reading. The poem is one of process, or continuous exposure, if the raven remains sitting on the bust of Athena as the speaker's soul remains in its shadow. It becomes a daguerreotype stilled in the moment of taking even if the reader is given the full image of the shadow as poem:

[499] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air: Seven Stories* (New York, 1899), 13.

> And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting
> On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
> And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon that is dreaming,
> And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor;
> And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
> Shall be lifted—nevermore![500]

The flattening of the speaker's soul in "The Raven" happens in measured increments over the course of eighteen stanzas with consistent meter and rhyme. At various moments the speaker remarks on the state of its soul as affected by the raven. In the fourth stanza, its "soul grew stronger" to confront the tapping at its chamber door. The sixth stanza finds the speaker "into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning" after looking into the darkness. The speaker describes itself as a "soul with sorrow laden" in the sixteenth stanza. In "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe claims that the "suggestiveness" of the poem's two concluding stanzas is "made to pervade all the narrative which has preceded them."[501] In the movements towards image the suggestiveness or indefiniteness of meaning creates an atmosphere in which the poem is to be interpreted. Poe continues, noting that in "the very last line of the very last stanza, that the intention of making him [the raven] emblematical of *Mournful and Never-ending Remembrance* is permitted distinctly to be seen."[502] Poe's description of how the raven might be "seen" is important for the ways in which the poem offers at least two images. The raven as emblem is contrasted with its own shadow that contains the soul of the speaker. The poem itself may also appear as an image inscribed within an illustrated scene where the lover/scholar appears with its "tome[s] of forgotten lore."

[500] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven," *The American Review: A Whig* Journal 1, no.2 (February 1845): 145.
[501] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 167.
[502] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 167. Emphasis in original.

In making the raven or "The Raven" into an emblem, Poe directs readers of "The Philosophy" of composition to read as if they were viewing. William E. Engel proposes an affinity between Poe and Francis Quarles through Poe's use of the pseudonym in the attribution of "The Raven," "By—Quarles," in *The American Review*, and in the fact that Poe reviewed Samuel Carter Hall's *The Book of Gems: From the Poets and Artists of Great Britain* for the *Southern Literary Messenger* in 1836 that contained some of Quarles' poetry. Arguing that "[f]or both Quarles and Poe, their involved poetic conceits bear out that life indeed lies most open in a closed eye, and paradoxically, that it is by means of such highly mannered formulations that we are able to see it for what it really is," Engel foregrounds the ways in which the emblem functions as a mnemonic allegory of spiritual truth or what Poe refers to in the "Philosophy of Composition" as Ideality.[503] Defined by Quarles in a "to the Reader" of his *Emblems* (1635) as "a silent parable," the combinatory power of its image-text may lead to a greater spiritual understanding while serving as the kind of *memento mori* that Poe's speaker refuses in token of the raven's wing. If "The Raven" is to be read as an emblem, it desires a reader that beholds and posits a relationship between the physical and what Douglass would refer to as the "eye of the spirit." The speaker's concerns with the raven's eyes motivate the action of turning its soul into shadow as in the preceding stanzas, the lover/scholar positions itself always in the bird's view. Here in the final stanza, the speaker once again reflects on the raven's eyes, decrying that they "have all the seeming of a demon that is dreaming," both to forestall and confront that it won't be with Lenore in "distant Aidenn." In contrasting the waking life of mourning with the otherworldly slumber of a demon via the eyes of the raven, the poem begs the question of

[503] William E. Engel, "Poe's Resonance with Francis Quarles: Emblems, Melancholy, and the Art of Memory," in *Deciphering Poe: Subtexts, Contexts, Subversive Meanings*, ed. Aleksandra Pavlovna Urakova (Bethlehem, P.A.: Lehigh University Press, 2013), 4.

whether there is spiritual salvation for the speaker's soul in the shadow of the raven. Though that question merely echoes the speaker's own, it importantly gestures towards the intermedial aspects of Poe's emblem. Whereas Douglass might view progress and revelation Poe's speaker, if not Poe, finds ambivalence and stillness. Rather than Christian eschatology, Poe worries over the fate of the self in its reproducibility. If the daguerreotype is read in the manner of an emblem, then it becomes didactic in keeping with both Douglass and Hartmann. Perhaps the "volume[s] of forgotten lore" are not replaced by the raven or the image of the shadow but serve as supplement to the becoming photograph of the poem's speaker. To take one's likeness assumes that there is a likeness to take. The very constitution of the self and its representation depend upon a series of interconnected representational practices that either offer life and progress for Douglass or death in "The Raven." Hartmann, of course, combines both approaches. Furthermore, depending on the edition of Quarles' *Emblems*, the entries contain engraving, poem, and a moral commentary, but in later years may also include epigrams, Biblical quotations, and exegetical commentary from various scholars and church authorities. This is to say that "The Raven" has become emblem in the circulation of its reception.

Looking directly at the poem, the process of taking the likeness of the speaker or of making the raven into emblem occurs through the gaze of the raven, beginning most explicitly in the twelfth stanza:

> But the raven still beguiling all my sad soul into smiling,
> Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird, and bust, and door;
> Then upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
> Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore —
> What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
> Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

The raven's presence in "beguiling" a smile from the "sad soul" of the lover/scholar indicates an ambivalent pleasure in diverting attention from, only to return to, the painful loss of Lenore. At

the same time, the soul is anthropomorphized or given a face with which it may indicate the affect with which the lover/scholar experiences the raven's visit. The soul as the imaged double of the speaker smiles as the body positions itself in alignment with the gaze of the bird. In relation to the alignment of "bird, and bust, and door," the speaker moves itself into the position of a sitter having their likeness taken. Sinking into the velvet cushion in front of the raven allows the speaker to link "[f]ancy unto fancy" to "explore" the "mystery" of the raven's utterance—the posture and pose is the first step in interpreting the croak of "Nevermore." Thinking with Johnson, this is moment where at least the speaker refuses the pure signifier even if the reader might try to.

After the speaker has positioned itself in front of the apparatus of the raven, the thirteenth stanza that follows takes the likeness of the lover/scholar during a contemplative moment concerning the lost Lenore:

> This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
> To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
> This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
> On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamplight gloated o'er,
> But whose velvet violet lining with the lamplight gloating o'er,
> *She* shall press, ah, nevermore!

Language is rendered inexpressible as the speaker is "engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing" sunken into the cushion that once held the body of Lenore. As Richards notes "Not only does Lenore's absence inspire the poet to link 'fancy unto fancy,' but he literally occupies her vacant space while composing his poetic tribute."[504] To experience loss in putting body onto the surface and into the space that once held Lenore—the press upon the impressions left upon the velvet cushion—is at once pleasurable and productive for the speaker's attempts to divine the presence of the raven. The speaker's "head at ease reclining" becoming a description of mental

[504] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 50.

and physical states. The cushion's lining recalls the chamber's curtains both in their color and material that invites touch. The curtains also mark the start of the affective description of the speaker: "And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain/Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before." The gaze of the raven's "fiery eyes" burning into the speaker's "bosom's core" become an act of picture taking as the "lamplight gloating o'er" the speaker and the cushion into which it sinks in the duration of an exposure that follows a structure of repetition present in the fourth and fifth lines of each stanza. In the sixth stanza the speaker describes its turn back into the chamber noting its affect as "all my soul within me burning." The "gloating" of the lamplight covers the speaker's body in the personification of its passionate, if not amorous, gaze under which the speaker's soul burns with desire for Lenore and her absence. Through the raven's eyes the fiction of the speaker becomes both more and less than a person with a body that embraces and rejects its materiality. The becoming photograph in the tenth stanza has the speaker claim that the raven's "eyes have all the seeming of a demon that is dreaming" and noticing that "the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor." The sentimental touch on the corporeal trace of an existence available only to memory and imagination connects the living speaker with the dead Lenore. The imaged and imagine surface that turns the soul of the speaker into a photographic likeness turns the page on which the poem is printed into another surface of projection. Though it may be crass to say to read "The Raven" is to look at it, but the point is to read with the affect of looking as expressed in the poem. The look is what creates speech for speaker, for raven, for Poe, and for Hartmann.

The first seven stanzas of the poem end in "nothing more" whereas the remaining eleven stanzas end with either the Raven's utterance of "Nevermore" or the speaker's use of the word. The only two times that the speaker does not ventriloquize the raven or refer to the bird's speech

using the word 'nevermore' occur here in the thirteenth stanza to describe the absence of Lenore felt on the surface of the cushion on which she once pressed and the final stanza of the poem where the speaker's soul within the shadow of the raven is to be lifted "nevermore." The flattening of the speaker's soul is equated through the modifier nevermore to Lenore's absence. The projection onto, and into, surfaces, in becoming image constitutes the affective core of the poem. If the raven's speech is simply an occasion for the speaker, and for critics, to project meaning onto the mechanism of the poem, then the speech of the lover/scholar in mimicking, but importantly deviating from, the raven's use of the word indicates such a projection creates a connection that cannot be ignored. The word becomes the point of contact between the souls of bird and speaker as in the tenth stanza the lover/scholar remarks that "…the raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only/That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour." In the tenth stanza the speaker refers to the refrain as "the lie thy soul hath spoken" in its address to the raven. The inner dialogue that Poe has with himself reproduced on the pages of "The Philosophy of Composition" notoriously describes the death of a beautiful woman as "the most poetical topic in the world," but he also asserts that "equally it is beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such a topic are those of a bereaved lover.'"[505] To take Poe here perhaps a bit too seriously even while ignoring the absent logic in his formulation, the lips of the lover that the words that pass between their fiction become for Poe principle way to express this poetic ideal. As the poem consist of a serious of interpretive questions without direct answer, the poem may then hinge on the onomatopoetic "ah" that interrupts the "press" of "nevermore" and brings together the text, speaker, and reader what Abraham and Torok would call a "community of

[505] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.

empty mouths." In a moment of pleasure and understanding in realizing the affect of losing Lenore and itself, the speaker sounds its body in becoming photograph.

After a series these inquiries on the part of the speaker in an atmosphere where "the air grew denser," the refrain of the raven unsettles the lover/scholar as its speech indicates that its "soul with sorrow laden" will not "clasp" Lenore "within the distant Aidenn." The penultimate stanza finds the speaker reinterpreting the bird's speech as sign of their own potential parting:

> "Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked, upstarting—
> "Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
> Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
> Leave my loneliness unbroken! — quit the bust above my door!
> Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"
> Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

As the speaker "shrieked, upstarting" the emphasis is on the duration of the raven's presence in relation to bodily affect of the lover/scholar. Imploring the raven to "[t]ake thy beak from out my heart" and to "[l]eave no black plume as a token that the lie thy soul hath spoken" the speaker worries over the impossibility of being reunited with Lenore of which the bird's feather would be a superfluous reminder even as the speaker attempts to cast it out of its mind and chamber. Again, the emphasis is on the "upstarting" of the body which will exist in an eventual tension with its soul on the floor. As Poe explains in "The Philosophy of Composition" the line about removing the beak of the raven from the speaker's heart is "the first metaphorical expression of the poem" and the moment where suggestiveness is foregrounded, namely where the "under-current of meaning is rendered first apparent."[506] The melancholic metaphor or image of the raven's beak in the heart of the speaker becomes a force of suggestiveness that either marks a privation or excess of meaning. It is curious that Poe doesn't remark on the next image, namely that of the speaker's soul in the shadow of the raven. To a certain extent, both images are the

[506] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 167.

same as lover/scholar and raven interpenetrate one another in the shadowy heart of the metaphor uttering "Lenore" and "Nevermore" in a reflective echo. More importantly, however, is that the focus on the lover/scholar's bodily affect indicates an important aspect of the soul shadow image that concludes the poem as it results from the speaker's positioning itself in the gaze of the raven. What is most suggestive or metaphorical in the poem is the result of a drama of image making that redoubles the figurative language of the metaphor in the narrative. If the poem is to be read and beheld, then the space between the real and its representation, between speaker and raven, between poem and reader, is traversed via bodily affect that either makes substance of shadows or refuses the possibility. Hartmann's embrace of Poe through his persistent rewriting of the poem and "The Philosophy of Composition" becomes an act of care that transforms himself, his mother, and their relation to aesthetics. For Douglass, this space is one of personal reflection that may transform the social sphere.

Douglass' lecture on photography was first delivered at the Tremont Temple in Boston on December 3, 1861—a few years before Sojourner Truth would begin circulating her copyrighted *carte de visite* images—and delivered a final time in 1865. Douglass affirms that "Daguerre, by simple but all abounding sunlight has converted the planet into a picture gallery."[507] Though Douglass notes that, "Daguerreotypes, Ambrotypes, Photographs and Electrotypes, good and bad, now adorn or disfigure all our dwellings," Douglass privileges Daguerre within the speech in part to continually gesture towards the revelation inherent in his invention regarding a new metaphysical understanding—photographically the human dwells.[508] As Shawn Michelle Smith puts it, in these lectures that mark the duration of the Civil War, "Douglass sought to underscore and also direct the social force and temporal disruption of the

[507] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 349.
[508] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 349.

photograph, to harness its provocative power for social transformation."[509] For Smith, the temporal dimension of the photograph in overlapping experiences of past and future in viewing present are important for the ways in which Douglass conceives of the photographic transformation at the individual, societal, and species level where the daguerreotype becomes a "unique emblem of both photographic fixity and fugitivity, and in this way provided a compelling representation of slavery's contradictions."[510] Smith turns to Walter Benjamin's "Little History of Photography" to outline these nonlinear temporal dynamics:

> No matter how artful the photographer, no matter how carefully posed his subject, the beholder feels an irresistible urge to search such a picture for the tiny spark of contingency, of the here and now, with which reality has (so to speak) seared the subject, to find the inconspicuous spot where in the immediacy of that long-forgotten moment the future nests so eloquently that we, looking back, may rediscover it.[511]

For Smith, Benjamin's "spark of contingency" may become, or rather was, a revolutionary spark for Douglass that transforms the future through the mediation of the photograph in the here and now of its viewing. Almost immediately following this passage, Benjamin offers the famous formulation of the "optical unconscious" in revealing the secrets of embodied life in motion through the stilling of the photographic image. To add to Smith's reading and to turn to Poe via Benjamin, the "magical value" of the daguerreotype in its capacity to alter temporality and "the secret" revealed by the optical unconscious of the camera as they pertain to the world and its inhabitants align with Douglass' conception of photographic viewing as part of the species-being of the human.[512] Though I may be making too much of Benjamin's transitions, I would argue that the relationship between temporality and a reconsideration of one's embodiment are

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[509] Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photographic Returns: Racial Justice and the Time of Photography* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2020), 17.
[510] Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photographic Returns*, 23.
[511] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," in *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings*, vol. 2, part 2, 1931–1934, ed. Michael W. Jennings, Howard Eiland, and Gary Smith, trans. Rodney Livingstone et al. (Cambridge, MA: Belknap of Harvard University Press, 1999), 510.
[512] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," 510.

inseparable within Douglass's thinking. Furthermore, if these dynamics are mutually constitutive, they offer a continual renegotiation of the sense of self in relation to time within the contemplative moment of photographic viewing. In other words, it is a version of what Hartmann might call suggestivism.

In a reading of Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym of Nantucket* (1838), Cindy Weinstein proposes "Poe-time," or "tempo(e)reality, [that] runs according to a logic that continually invokes the conventional passage of time and simultaneously undercuts the reader's ability to follow its passage."[513] The experience of Poe's writing, as well as the subjects depicted therein, trouble attempts to mark time, duration, and temporal boundaries. In *Pym*, this concept destabilizes a "logic of slavery" where the colonial violence towards, and attempted subjection of, non-white peoples is aligned with conceptions of whiteness as futurity, progress, or manifest destiny over against the past-ness of Blackness that Poe tries to set up.[514] Though issues of racial violence are less apparent in "The Raven," the poem performs a similar temporal disruption within itself and in the history of its reception. Beginning with "once upon a midnight dreary" and ending with "the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting" and the speaker's soul "that lies floating on the floor/Shall be lifed—nevermore!" the poem creates various temporal relations within itself an in the reading experience that are mediated through the shadow on the floor. If the bird does represent Blackness as a threat, then the shadow on the floor in temporally and spatially stilling the speaker suggests the poem does not undercut itself in the way that *Pym* might. Alternatively, perhaps the poem recognizes the problems of temporality in disrupting a racist agenda—the poem becoming a warning like Emma Wood's "To the American Eagle." The

[513] Cindy Weinstein, *Time, Tense, and American Literature: When is Now?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 45.
[514] Cindy Weinstein, *Time, Tense, and American Literature*, 62.

photograph's disruption of temporality disrupts racist discourses that depend in part upon narratives of linear time. Smith argues that the "persistence of the photograph enables such looks across time" and that Douglass himself "recognized the photograph's durability and its status as an heirloom as preserving forces in the wake of slavery's social death."[515] Again, while this reading of the poem is uncertain, the dynamics surrounding loss are worth keeping in mind. In rehearsing the loss of Lenore, the speaker looks to the past in the unfolding of the poem's present to reflect on an earlier moment. Yet, the presence of the raven's shadow offers a projected futurity where the speaker remains with a backward glance. Does the poem's speech emerge from the shadow on the floor? Photographic temporality matters in the constitution of the self and the soul.

The self in, or as, image is one of the ways that Douglass describes the multiple dimensions of human existence within the lecture. It is through the photograph that humanity can recognize within a generous vision that is open to "linking/Fancy unto fancy" in its contemplative moments:

> Man, however, is a many-sided being, and the subject I have chosen treats of his best and most interesting side; it is his dreamy, clairvoyant, poetic, intellectual, and shadowy side; the side of religion, music, mystery and passion, wherein illusions take the form of solid reality and *shadows get themselves recognized as substance*: the side which is better pleased with feeling than reason, with fancies than with facts, with things as they seem, than things as they are, with contemplation rather than action, with thought rather than work.[516]

Of the sides of being expressed by humans, it is significant that Douglass privileges what Hartmann describes as "the dreamy, mystic elements" or "curious and strange" aspects of himself that, for Hartmann, define his "destiny."[517] Douglass likewise does not separate the

[515] Shawn Michelle Smith, *Photographic Returns*, 21.
[516] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," in *The Portable Frederick Douglass*, ed. John Stauffer and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. (New York: Penguin Random House LLC, 2016), 351. Emphasis added.
[517] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 3.

intellect from the poetic even as he goes on to list a series of provocative contrasts that take as their criteria pleasure over anything else. To describe illusion as taking "the form of solid reality" is a prescient critique of Ideology through the gesture towards the indexical quality of the photograph. The material world, like the illusory, can be remade through reimaging the how it might look otherwise. Commonplace phrases to describe photography such as those encouraging potential sitters to "secure" or "keep" the shadow "ere the substance fade" are reevaluated in Douglass' phrasing to advertise for a new way of being. Douglass goes on to qualify his earlier statement later in the talk by claiming that "feeling and mystery are not the only elements of successful painting, whether of the voice, pen, or brush. Truth is the soul of art, as of all things else."[518] In Douglass' aesthetics both "feeling and mystery" are important criteria in artistic success whereas truth seems to be somewhat secondary. The distinction that Douglass makes between mystery and truth is a generative paradox, their coexistence entails a critical demand that Douglass would claim leads us to truths beyond the canvas. Douglass affirms that his "discourse has more to do with the philosophy of art than with art itself, with its source, range and influence than with its facts and perfections—with the soul, rather than the body, with the silence of music, rather than sound, and with the ideal forms of excellence floating before the eye of the spirit, rather than with those displayed upon dull canvass."[519] The inexpressible within the expressed, the soul rather than the body, or that which might appear "floating before the eye of the spirit" is an argument for the doubling of viewing capacities within the human. The spiritual form relies on material sensuousness for its constitution but must be viewed through the affective fantasy of the spirit. Though the soul inscribed in the "shadow that lies floating on the floor" in Poe's poem may not be what Douglass would refer to as excellence, Poe's poem asks its readers

[518] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 357.
[519] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.

to view the soul of the speaker in Douglass' terms. Though in the end it might just amount to feeling in the guise of metaphysics, the scopic dimensions of the ways in which selves are constituted within, across, and outside of media is important to both thinkers.



Figure 20: Unknown, *Portrait of Frederick Douglass*, ca. 1855, cased daguerreotype, 8.3 × 7 cm (3 1/4 × 2 3/4 in.), New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art. The Rubel Collection, Gift of William Rubel, 2001. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/282066.

For Ginger Hill, the importance of Douglass' lectures on pictures is the insistence that "scrutinizing habits of looking" can change "socially habituated visual perception," in part due to Douglass' suggestion that "the perpetual constitution of interiority," namely self-understanding or self-perspective, is "formed via sensorial engagement with phenomena" and "the exchanges between human imagination and habit."[520] In short, the self is made through pictures and Frederick Douglass' photographic portraits are part of that process. As Hill points out, "[i]n addition to challenging the idea that Africans were somehow closer to brute creation than intellectual Europeans, Douglass's lectures also demythologized the romanticization of Europeans as lofty, disembodied minds and spirits."[521] Douglass offers a kind of photographic chain of being wherein "Man is the only picture-making animal in the world. He alone of all the inhabitants of earth has the capacity and passion for pictures."[522] The abstraction of reason in the service of degrading and devaluing the lives of humans in structures of colonial violence, enslavement, and attitudes of racism rely on reason, most often in addition to speech, understood as constituting a division between the human and the nonhuman. As Douglass puts it, "[d]ogs and elephants are said to possess it. Ingenious arguments have been framed in support of this claim for the brutes. But no such claim, I believe, has been set up for imagination, this sublime, prophetic, and all-creative power."[523] Drawing on these kinds of discourses, the inclusion of the raven in Poe's poem becomes the "pretext" for the refrain of "nevermore" and the plausible reason for its continuous repetition.[524] To "reconc[ile]…monotony with the exercise of reason on the part of the creature repeating the word," Poe claims that "the idea of a *non*-reasoning creature

[520] Ginger Hill, "'Rightly Viewed': Theorizations of Self in Frederick Douglass's Lectures on Pictures," in Pictures and Progress: Early Photography and the Making of African American Identity, ed. Maurice O. Wallace and Shawn Michelle Smith (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 42, 42, 42, 43, and 44.
[521] Ginger Hill, "'Rightly Viewed'," 55.
[522] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.
[523] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.
[524] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.

capable of speech" would suit his purposes.[525] The speech of the lover/scholar that opens the fifteenth and sixteenth stanzas expresses the anxiety that such categorical divisions are fragile in their construction. The bird may have prophetic imagination in Douglass' sense at least in the mania of the poem's speaker: "'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!" The problem is that the raven becomes a picture making animal, a photographic operator commanding light and shadow, that troubles the boundaries of the speaker's self and of poetic self-making along species divides if such divisions are made with a view toward a "capacity and passion for pictures."

Douglass underscores his critique using the same tropes. Though "Reason, is exalted and called Godlike, and sometimes accorded the highest place among human faculties" as a "grand and wonderful…attribute of our species, still more grand and wonderful are the resources and achievements of that power out of which come our pictures and other creations of art."[526] For Douglass artistic creation and reception are processes of self-making that differentiate the human self from other species at least within the limits of his historical understanding.

> For man, and for man alone, all nature is richly studded with the material of art. Not only the outside world, but the inside soul may be described as a picture gallery, a magnificent panorama in which things of time and things of eternity are silently portrayed.[527]

If all the world is a picture gallery, then the capacity to create and appreciate artistic creation, as photography is important from both scientific and aesthetic perspectives for Douglass, makes interpretation a way of being. To think critically about representation entails a self-understanding that, while it may differentiate humans from nonhuman animals, imbues the human with a divine sense of mediation. As Douglass affirms in a section crossed out in the manuscript of "Pictures

[525] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.
[526] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.
[527] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.

and Progress:" "I have said that man is a picture making and a picture appreciating animal."[528] The self frames pictures in the external world and the internal—becoming a photographic apparatus or camera obscura in the process. The capacity to be in pictures is an existential condition, or a characteristic of the human species, that cannot be denied by appeals to reason, pigment, or any other forms of rhetorical artifice in the service of racist violence.

Douglass does note, however, that "[t]his picture-making faculty is flung out into the world like all others, capable of being harnessed to the car of truth or error: It is a vast power to whatever cause it is coupled."[529] The potentiality of the photographic medium to create the conditions for better self-understanding and therefore a better world is exalted over against those that may attempt to harness it for error. It is "under the somewhat indefinite title of pictures and by means of pictures," Douglass affirms, "[that] we may be led to the contemplation of great truths."[530] Douglass recognizes the facticity of the photograph to both accurately and inaccurately represent. As an approximation of truth, or perhaps as lesser truths, it is through pictures that allow for the adoption of a contemplative posture that at once merges discourses of aesthetics, ethics, and metaphysics. To turn to Georges Didi-Huberman once again, this facticity is the heart of photographic representation: "[a]nother way to describe this paradox of evidence is to say that photography is a practice of facticity. Facticity is the double quality of that which is *in fact* (irrefutable, even if contingent) and that which is *factitious*. It is a paradox of mendacious irrefutability, as it were."[531] Criticism becomes the way to approach the duality of photography as well as the conditions of human existence.

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[528] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress" [Manuscript], 18. Frederick Douglass Papers at the Library of Congress: Speech, Article, and Book File. American Memory, Library of Congress Manuscript Division.
[529] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 357.
[530] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 347
[531] Georges Didi-Huberman, *Invention of Hysteria:* 61. Emphasis in original.

Douglass outlines his version of criticism and social progress through photographic representation in the most famous moment from the talk:

> The process by which man is able to posit his own subjective nature outside of himself, giving it form, color, space, and all the attributes of distinct personality, so that it becomes the subject of distinct observation and contemplation, is at [the] bottom of all effort and the germinating principles of all reform and all progress. But for this, the history of the beast of the field would be the history of man. It is the picture of life contrasted with the fact of life, the ideal contrasted with the real, which makes criticism possible. Where there is no criticism there is no progress, for the want of progress is not felt where such want is not made visible by criticism. It is by looking upon this picture and upon that which enables us to point out the defects of the one and the perfections of the other."[532]

Douglass returns to the language of his earlier claim, namely that his "discourse has more to do with the philosophy of art than with art itself, with its source, range and influence than with its facts and perfection" to describe the dynamic between "picture" and "fact" within a critical impetus that creates the desire for social change through an expansive, and deeply self-reflective, engagement with the picture gallery of the world.[533] For Douglass, it is the "ideal forms of excellence floating before the eye of the spirit, rather than with those displayed upon dull canvass" or what Douglass refers to as the "real" here.[534] Douglass insists on a double vision, of a continuous comparison within the viewing practice of progress. The generative contrast between "picture" and "fact" is likely felt within a single image, but it is the comparison "by looking upon this picture and upon that" that becomes the motor for criticism that develops as "want of progress," but it is worth remembering that it is likely the "eye of the spirit" that does the looking. Again, Douglass privileges feeling over fact, but does not turn away from the indexicality of the photograph in representing material truths reflected on its surface, but rather foregrounds the process in and through which such "truths" appear including all that might be

[532] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 356-357.
[533] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.
[534] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 352.

left out beyond the edge of the image. Douglass underscores this relationship between vision and feeling in claiming that "the want of progress" must be "made visible by criticism" to be "felt." At the very least Douglass encourages his listeners to see the world differently by imagining how it might look to the "eye of the spirit." The becoming photograph or object of one's own critical gaze is not objectifying in the sense that the spiritual element is imbued within the image and inseparable from one's own critical position.

The soul of the speaker in the shadow of "The Raven" offers a version of this critical position that Poe seemingly disavows. In other words, to become the object of own's own critical gaze is frustrating for Poe and a welcome occurrence for Douglass and for Hartmann. To remain with the substance of the shadow, Douglass affirms, so that "we may be led to the contemplation of great truths."[535]

[535] Frederick Douglass, "Pictures and Progress," 347

CHAPTER SIX

"My soul from out that shadow": Sadakichi Hartmann, Edgar Allan Poe, and Suggestive Reading

At 8 o'clock on Sunday, January 5th, 1928, Sadakichi Hartmann (1867-1944) held "A Poe Evening" in the West Hollywood home of architect, R.M. Schindler. An announcement for the gathering indicated that "the whole evening will be devoted to Poe's writings" and that Hartmann's reading of "A Tell-Tale Heart," "The Raven," "Ulalume," and "Annabel Lee" would be featured "provided he does not change his mind."[536] More importantly, as underlined in the announcement, "[a]t this reading Mr. Hartmann will endeavor to look like Edgar Allen [sic] Poe."[537] Since Hartmann as a critic, dramatist, poet, and actor spent a substantial portion of his life in front of crowds across the United States and parts of Europe, we might begin to imagine the intensity of Hartmann's performance of, and as, Poe, who along with beloved Walt Whitman, was a significant part of his life.[538] From stage to page, discussions of Poe can be found throughout Hartmann's criticism on visual art including pieces written under the pseudonym, Sidney Allan.

Hartmann's adoption of the of the pseudonym as an immigrant of mixed heritage may indicate a separate or "Occidental" critical personae aligned with kinds of whiteness, but it is

[536] "Announcement for 'A Poe Evening,'" 1928. Box 28, Folder 19. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[537] Announcement for "'A Poe Evening.'" Other evenings hosted at Schindler's residence focused on Whitman (May 31st) and what now are taken to be canonical figures of a version of modernism. In the announcement for May 8, 1929, Hartmann was slated to "interpret the Spirit of the hyper-ultra Modern School and read from the works of Gertrude Stein, Joyce, Ezra Pound, Gordon Craig, Marinetti, de Gaultier, young Cummings, etc., also one or two scenes from the plays of LENORMAND, the very latest in dramatic art just translated into English" and noted that, "IF YOU WANT A GOOD LAUGH DON"T MISS THIS" (Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068), Box 28, Folder 20).
[538] Hartmann spent much of his life lecturing and touring across the United States. The topics on which he spoke ranged widely and included visual art, literature, cinema, fashion, politics, psychology, affect, (pseudo)science, and even cremation.

also the case that Hartmann's use of the Poe-inflected name wasn't something Hartmann tried to hide as journals such as *Camera Work* often included pieces by Hartmann and Sidney Allan in the same issue and advertisements for some of Hartmann's books included both names.[539] If the adoption of the pseudonym is part of a larger performance and negotiation of Hartmann's identity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries it is, however, not attributable solely to navigations Hartmann often made around the commonplace racism of certain publications or their reading publics in a country that continues to exhibit anti-Asian sentiment and violence.[540] Poe was such an influential part of Hartmann's identity that he named one of his children Edgar Allan Hartmann, creating through the appellation a genealogy wherein Poe becomes Hartmann's son, or perhaps in a moment of queer reproduction, has a child with Poe. This is to say that Hartmann's intimate identification with Poe is important for the ways in which Hartmann understood the production and reception of artistic expression as well as his own self and mediated subjectivity through representational practices. Over the course of his life Hartmann returned to Poe's "The Raven" (1845) though three creative speculations on the compositional origin of the poem: "Dreary Windblown Yellow Meads" (1896), "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1905), and "How Poe Wrote 'The Raven': Criticism Based on Chemical Affinity" from his unpublished *Esthetic Verities* (written 1927-1933). Each piece posits a different, through overlapping relation to reading Poe and the spaces "The Raven" generates. Hartmann images landscapes and intimate cottage rooms as scenes of interpretation and aesthetic reception.

[539] See Stacy Nojima, "Mixed Race Capital: Cultural Producers and Asian American Mixed Race Identity from the Late Nineteenth Century to Twentieth Century" PhD dissertation, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 2018.
[540] With the amplification of Anti-Asian policy surrounding WWII, Hartmann was investigated by the FBI while living on the Morongo Reservation in Banning, California. Though agents were interested in Hartmann's travel abroad, his aliases including Sidney Allan, his nine children, as well as his writing career, reports from 1943 note that the case was closed as "no indication of any un-Americanism or subversive activity on the part of the subject" was found ("Carl Sadakichi Hartmann," FBI Report. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068), Box 28, Folder 19).

Hartmann's "Dreary Windblown Meads"

The first of Hartmann's creative speculations on the origin of Poe's "The Raven" (1845), "Dreary Windblown Yellow Meads" (1896) published in *Schopenhauer in the Air: Seven Stories* (1899), was dedicated to landscape painter, D.W. Tyron. Tyron's formulation of mystery as "a sort of attenuation" requiring the "sacrifice a good deal of color and form and other qualities before he [the painter] will find himself able to run the mystery down" will become important for Hartmann's understanding of the concept as he expresses it nearly a decade later in *Camera Work*, but the action of attenuation is relevant to Hartmann's early tale.[541] In running the mystery of Poe's "The Raven" down, Hartmann focuses on the imaginative revisioning of a natural landscape that, via the mediation of the poet, moves between medial forms in becoming poetry, painting, and photograph "his [Poe's] vision grew more and more unconscious of the outside world; it reflected the voluptuous luminousness of a dream. Substances became shadowy, and shadows grew substantial."[542] If, to draw on even more of Hartmann's later criticism, "figures are introduced in landscapes either as technical embellishments or to express some sentiment that has nothing to do with the technique of the picture," becoming "good vehicles of accentuation…as they appeal directly to our mind," Poe is there both for Hartmann's sake and his own.[543] The tale plays with the dialectic between attenuation and accentuation in using Poe as the figure of the Poet and Poetess to imaginatively revision the painterly landscape of the setting into a creative composition of mind attuned with the natural world. The composition process Hartmann depicts is difficult and Poe is pained by his relation to an unappreciative world and the swings of affect in creation more generally. Even as the dialectic describes the generation of

[541] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," *Camera Work*, no. 7 (July 1904): 24.
[542] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air: Seven Stories* (New York, 1899), 13.
[543] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Landscape and Figure Composition* (New York: The Baker & Taylor Company, 1910), 57.

poetry, the conditions of artistic reception, as well as the relationship between mediums such expressions take, it highlights the tale's didacticism. To appreciate Poe in the way that Hartmann does becomes a way of seeing the world, at the very least literary history, differently. To use Hartmann's language in the piece, this dialectic is driven by a "mechanism of despair." The focus on loss as the origin of poetry, but also the ways in which the loss of form, color, or shape through attenuation in painting or in poetry is its self-generating force. In short, Hartmann draws on the discourse of suggestiveness in presenting potential ways in which both art and self are attenuated and accentuated through intermedial blurring within poems, within aesthetic experience, and within literary history.

Rather than an encounter in a lover/scholar's chamber in the "midnight dreary" of a "bleak December," the opening sentence of Hartmann's tale locates both the origin of, and encounter with, "The Raven" in a springtime landscape described as if it was one of Tyron's paintings:

> The light of an April afternoon sifted through the wind-torn edges of dark clouds, surging across a muddy sky, and etched large arabesques on the straw-colored, breeze-stirred, tufts of sedge, densely covering the shore. The tumult of civilization lay far behind this wide and level landscape, where only on the horizon an outline rose, blotchy and confused, indicating village life. The smell of the brine was wafted across the scanty plains, but the sea itself was merely a silvery stretch in the distance. And on this peaceful long-drawn afternoon this barren unfavored stretch of land lay in silent dread of the travails of spring, when everything in nature is reborn, good and bad alike.[544]

Light, and soon Poe, seem to be the only entities that exhibit visible movement within the landscape of the tale. Hartmann's usual use of compound adjectives to indicate arrested movement in his rich description that moves from the tonal composition of the meadow situated between shoreline and village already foregrounds the effect of processes of both of nature and of the imagination on the landscape itself. Though the sea is reduced to a color in the

[544] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air: Seven Stories* (New York, 1899), 12.

composition, its scent as tone provides adds compositional depth to the picture through the olfactory and works to create a deeper intimacy with the shore than with the village likewise distanced from the scene.[545] The horizon line, "nearly always the most important feature of a picture" according to Hartmann, becomes a site of "blotchy and confused" representations of life at a distance and will provide an apt description for those unable or unwilling to recognize the importance of Poe later on in the tale.[546] In focusing on the landscape's affect, Hartmann touches on the inevitability of creation, but as this scene will be mediated and modified through Poe rather than the cycles of seasons, Hartmann equates the poet's art, or more specifically the mind, with forces of temporality and seasonal change in both shaping and stilling nature in accordance with art. Hartmann's ekphrastic description of a Tyron painting that does not exist but is nevertheless the setting of the tale as it dovetails with the language of photograph suggests that neither poetry nor landscape are limited by presumed boundaries of medium specificity and more importantly, that the intermedial becomes the generation of both art and affect with the tale. In Hartmann's intermedial description the atmosphere becomes a photographic enlarger through which sunlight develops and thereby reproduces cloud patterns on the surface of the earth.[547] These arabesques, in a nod to Poe's *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840), begin to blur surface distinctions between natural and artificial forms.[548] With clouds above and their

[545] See Sadakichi Hartmann, "In Perfume Land," *The Forum* 1 (1913): 217-228. In this article, Hartmann reflects on his ill-fated 1902 performance of *A Trip to Japan in Sixteen Minutes* at that the New York Theatre wherein he "endeavored to suggest the journey by a recitation accompanied by eight perfumes" (224). In Hartmann's thinking, the "function of the art of odor would be to produce vague mental pictures or visions rather than emotions" (226).
[546] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Landscape and Figure Composition,* 14.
[547] Early photographic enlargers that utilized direct sunlight were commonly referred to as "solar cameras."
[548] For an overview of the ways in which "grotesque" and "arabesque" were defined and debated in the years surrounding the appearance of Poe's collection see Patricia C. Smith, "Poe's Arabesque," *Poe Studies*, December 1974, Vol. VII, No. 2, 7:42-45. In Smith's survey, that the terms can seemingly account for the relationship between a variety of different forms— physical and imaginative, natural and unnatural, and floral and animal/human—was likely agreeable for Poe and assuredly for Hartmann. In locating "The Raven" or at least its origin in the outdoors, contrasts his story with the poem and "The Origin of Composition," but likely also "The Philosophy of Furniture" wherein the carpet, or "soul of the apartment," according to Poe, "should be rigidly Arabesque." (*Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. VI, no. 5, May 1840, pp. 243-245). Though perhaps a bit more serious in his own

representations below, Hartmann's Poe, though nameless in the story as a "dark figure of a lonesome wanderer," is situated between real and representation "amidst these pale yellow reeds, dreaming into this scene of desolation."[549]

In the transformative dream of Poe as a lonesome wanderer that enters this dreary scene, Hartmann casts the poet in within the drama of R.W. Griswold's obituary. Griswold describes Poe as flickering into and out of the dreams as he haunts the world that receives his writing in the form of the walking dead:

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criticism on interior design, interior spaces were particularly important for Hartmann's understanding of Japanese aesthetics in artistic photography. In "The Influence of Artistic Photography on Interior Design," Hartmann outlines this as follows: "[t]he artistic photographers try to be like the Japanese in this respect. They endeavor to make their prints bits of interior decoration. A Kasebier print, a dark silhouette on green wall-paper in a greenish frame, or a Steichen print mounted in cool browns and grays, cannot be hung on any ordinary wall. They are too individual; the rest of the average room would jar with their subtle color-notes. They need special wall-paper and special furniture to reveal their true significance" (32).

Furthermore, Hartmann may also have been acknowledging "Shadow. A Fable" which reads like an alternative version of "The Raven." In the first of two de Manian reverse apostrophes the parable's "speaker" acknowledges the reader: "Ye who read are still among the living; but I who write shall have long since gone my way into the region of shadows" (762). In its fictional life, this voice was part of a drinking party of eight seventh-century (according to the story) Greeks including the deceased, Zoilus, interrupted by the appearance of a "vague, and formless, and indefinite" on their chamber door (763). In the second apostrophic address the shadow answers the party and identifies itself as such: "I am SHADOW, and my dwelling is near to the Catacombs of Ptolemais, and hard by those dim plains of Helusion which border upon the foul Charonian canal" (763). Though it is unclear whether or not this speech was understood by the parables speaker either in life or death, what is clear is that the shadow's speech is terrifying since the "tones in the voice of the shadow were not the tones of any one being, but of a multitude of beings, and, varying in their cadences from syllable to syllable fell duskly upon our ears in the well-remembered and familiar accents of many thousand departed friend" (763). As empty, yet as affectively charged as the raven's "Lenore" both the shadow and the raven's speech both call into and thereby blur in doing so the boundaries between existence and nonexistence as a form of living death. That the corpse of Zoilus, whose reputation as a critic, of Homer, may be casting this shadow—"And the door whereupon the shadow rested was…over against the feet of the young Zoilus enshrouded"—is suggestive of a simplistic relationship between artistic creation and critic, namely either in helping to kindle or extinguish such work. Yet, in the mutual determination and existence of Poe's "Raven" in and as "The Philosophy" of composition as well as Hartmann's critical and creative engagements with both throughout his life is worth noting.

[549] Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 12.

> He was at all times a dreamer—dwelling in ideal realms—in heaven or hell—peopled with creatures and the accidents of his brain. He walked the streets, in madness or melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayers, (never for himself, for he felt, or professed to feel, that he was already damned), but for their happiness who at the moment were objects of his idolatry—or, with his glances introverted to a heart gnawed with anguish, and with a face shrouded in gloom, he would brave the wildest storms; and all night, with drenched garments and arms wildly beating the winds and rains, he would speak as if to spirits that at such times only could be evoked by him from the Aidenn close by whose portals his disturbed soul sought to forget the ills to which his constitution subjugated him—close by that Aidenn where were those he loved—the Aidenn which he might never see, but in fitful glimpses, as its gates opened to receive the less fiery and more happy natures whose destiny to sin did not involve the doom of death.[550]

Hartmann's tale embraces the negativity of Griswold's description making it into the substance of his own creative expression even as he defends Poe and his work. In the absence of Griswold's mourning, Hartmann offers his tale as part of a never-ending remembrance of Poe's work both for himself and for American literary history more generally. The brief tale ends with a confrontation with its readers, who are perhaps as ungenerous as Griswold is. Poe's "moments of ecstasy and pain" that for Hartmann align with his compositional practice and creative process more generally, are "ever barred to you, Philistines, and which are worth a whole lost life."[551] Hartmann will continue this defense of Poe in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" (1905) where he replaces Poe in the landscape and dreamily drifts into a meeting with Virginia Poe at her cottage home. Here, however, Hartmann is content to mount a defense of Poe against those that may be "blotchy and confused" about Poe's work. Within the tale, Poe has an "attitude [that] revealed an estrangement from the ordinary clan of humanity" and is described by Hartmann as "so world-forlorn and world-weary, and yet so world-defiant as if he were one of the martyrs of humanity in whom are concentrated all the esthetic aspirations of a generation which hates him, because he

[550] R. W. Griswold, "Death of Edgar A. Poe," *New-York Daily Tribune* 9, no. 156 (October 9, 1849), 4.
[551] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.

is thus nobly endowed."[552] Hartmann usual over modification of affect by making the world its adjective repeatedly echoes the social antagonism that that Hartmann describes. Within the fantasy, Poe's "esthetic aspiration" are set against the concentration of hatred towards a poet whose genius is both recognized and resisted.[553]

Moreover, Hartmann reworks the wetness of Griswold's description where Poe is found contesting with violent storms. Hartmann keeps the focus but shifts the agency in having Poe walk into the natural landscape rather than being acted by it: "the water of the marshes was running through his broken shoes and the cold drew together his lean and shivering figure."[554] That the narrator immediately interjects, "[a]nd not a tree nearby to huddle close to for warmth!" begins to model the kind of response that Hartmann wants from his readers in developing an attachment to Poe, but it also belies the compositional practice of Poe and Hartmann that focus on dead, sleeping, or nearly dead figures.[555] The shivering motions of Poe's body in the meads approximate death in the smallest motions of a still body compelled to move against its inevitability. Hartmann not only describes the origin of "The Raven," but turns Poe into his own muse. Writing on the feminine conventions that Poe as Poetess embraces, Eliza Richards explains that since "Poe cannot dismantle, reject, or deny the source since he must refer to it in order to stake his claim: instead he embeds it within his poems."[556] In his literary returns to the "The Raven" Hartmann envisions his tales as similar vehicles of sentiment written expressly to shift cultural attitudes towards his predecessor. Hartmann's imitation is a form of flattery, but more importantly it expresses his own imagination and argues for the cultivation of similar kind

[552] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13.
[553] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13.
[554] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13-14.
[555] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.
[556] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 48.

of imaginative viewing in his readers in keeping with the tale's focus on the creative acts of self that mediate internal and external vision. Richards curiously draws on the language of Poe's poem in an alignment with Hartmann's own to describe the imitative process of Poe's poetry: "[t]hrough imitating the imitative, Poe asserts a curious brand of primacy that temporarily inverts the status of shadow and form."[557] Though in Richards' formulation both shadow and form are poems that reflect and imitate one another in subject and style, it appears that Hartmann goes further by attempting to establish what I would refer to as an intermedial aesthetic he would associate with poetry more generally. Griswold emphasizes the relationship between Poe and his poem within the obituary: "[t]he remarkable poem of *The Raven* was probably much more nearly than has been supposed, even by those who were very intimate with him, a reflexion [sic] and an echo of his own history."[558] Griswold follows Poe in "The Philosophy of Composition" of using the text of the "The Raven" in ways enact an expansion of the poem across its critical reception, going on to claim that Poe was the bird's "unhappy master." Critical iteration and citational of the poem create affinities between poem and poet as well as between poem and reader in the form of a collage. Hartmann's layering of allusions adopts a similar method and actively works to shape the experience of the poem to the extent that it is difficult to read the "The Raven" without the critical, and now with Hartmann, creative commentary. This chapter, of course, adopts a similar method. Hartmann would agree with Griswold's phrasing and in the form of its construction, but not in the way that Griswold would expect.

The transformation of the landscape that will alter Poe's reception and outline Hartmann's creativity as composing with, or as Poe, about Poe's compositional practice is

[557] Eliza Richards, *Gender and the Poetics of Reception in Poe's Circle*, 48.
[558] R. W. Griswold, "Death of Edgar A. Poe," 4.

focused on matters of the eye as mediating the internal and external world in addition to being the site of bodily affect:

> His thoughts roved aimless. Reminiscences rose ghostlike within him, while he stared at the shifting patches of glowing light, determining in rhythmic motion the outline of shadows, tempered by lorn caresses of the wind, until his eyes began to burn, and the picture before him grew more indistinct. He searched in himself. There shimmered something bright and luring. Could he but grasp it! Alas, it proved too fleeting. When he began to realize it, it seemed to be an illusion. Ah, if he could garner it as his own, bestow it upon future generations, not with common words in the common way as common rhymsters absolve their duties. A new style! Vibrating luminous aromatic sounds, strangely fascinating in their fanatic beauty and mechanism of despair.[559]

The aimless roving of thoughts that contrasts with Poe's deliberate method set out in "The Philosophy of Composition," are focused on light and shadow or the images etched onto the landscape that Poe will, in turn, seek to picture differently. The contrast between the light within himself and the light that appears before his eyes results the in the burning of Poe's eyes as part of the process. Here, Hartmann foregrounds composition and reception as embodied experiences. Hartmann models a mode of viewing as having the potential to transform a "blotchy and confused" world even if artistic creation depends upon itself from it and Hartmann cannot help but write of futurity against all that is "common" in poetic expression. Poe's style, one where the materiality of poetic language is recognizable and felt by nearly of the senses, relies on both "fanatic beauty" and "mechanism of despair." The burning eyes of the poet given over to the affect of creation in inventing a new style are now able to see the result of the depressive composition as the landscape is transformed: "[a] garden of fairyland lay before him in the magical flush of night, where white jeweled-chaliced flowers glowed in flavorous [sic] floresence [sic], and large fantastic fireflies, never beheld by earthly eyes, fluttered around colored lanterns, strung beneath the foliage arches of luminant trees."[560] The natural light of the

[559] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13.
[560] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13.

sun's etching onto the landscape is replaced with the moon, but rather with lanterns whose light sources are not visible as the scene shifts from day to night. The insect life in the landscape aid in the imaginative illumination of the poet are visible, but not to "earthly eyes." However, this dreamland of the imagination risks losing the contact with the original picture of the earthy landscape out which the poetic epiphany first began.

In re-visioning the landscape, and "in the midst of all this glimmering mystic gayety," Poe and Hartmann are confronted with the figure of the beautiful dead woman as muse and inspiration.[561] Hartmann describes her as "the pale phantom of a woman lithe and childlike, with lips tremulous with weeping; her black hair flooding in dark waves the diaphanous veils—girt loosely around her hips—in the soft nuances of dying flowers. On her brow a soft wreath of stars shone, cold and sad.[562] The figure becomes a mirror for the shivering Poe that dreams into the scene and the "mechanism of despair" that motives the new style occasioned by her ineffable presence in the dreamland of the poet's mind. Poetry persists in the description of this woman and draws on figures from the natural world to describe the ways in which her hair and clothing become part of the landscape of her body. Poe attempts to "animate this spectacle with more radiating color…[b]ut however ardently he groped amid the treasuries of his fancy and viscerated [sic] each evanescent emotion of his soul, he could not find a more luminous diadem, or a smile for her pallid face."[563] In attempting to give life to the phantom woman, the poet is described by Hartmann as empty if not nearly dead if both imaginative fancy and emotion of the soul are empty in the face what in "The Poetic Principle" Poe will describe as "supernal beauty"—a beauty removed both from the blotched confusion of the real world, but also the

[561] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13.
[562] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 13-14.
[563] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.

world of Poe's poetry at least in Hartmann's tale. In this way, even as Hartmann exalts Poe for this new style, the attempts at a kind of poetic mastery or the inversion of shadow for form that Richards describes, likewise fall short. Hartmann hold's Poe to a standard that neither can keep to but makes the failure over into a kind of loss part of the experiential content of the poem.

Beauty opens the soul even as it empties it of emotion. Hartmann writes of art that renders you dead and brings you back to life through the attenuation and accentuation of the soul's emptying within aesthetic experience. The earlier description of the figure dressed in the language of the language is apprehended as more fundamental part of the scene as the Poe experience's the failure of his own imagination: "[a]mid these vain endeavors the features of the dreamland scene and his beloved one became more and more blurred; the lyrical weirdness and the sentiments of loneliness and awe around him, touched his soul with faint indefinable accords."[564] The loss of the beloved into the landscape occasions the return of sentiment to the soul as the "touch" of "lyrical weirdness." The double quality of the "weirdness" of Hartmann's phrase to describe that which can touch the soul is suggestive in exactly the way Hartmann wants. On the one had it indicates strangeness, mystery, and the indeterminacy of affect. On the other hand, the phrase invokes the potential to know or control one's fate through poetry. Hartmann's, likely Hegelian, lyric in allowing the immaterial materiality of subjective poetic expression to reverberate through society or human history is weird. Hartmann's rewritings of "The Raven" are weird. They are meant to be. It is at this point that a third view of the landscape appears, one that combines qualities from the original painterly description and the dreamland of the imagination:

[564] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.

> It was as if his eyes opened for the first time upon that struggling light and shade, upon those dreary windblown yellow meads with the acrid smell of the sea-washed soil, and the stillness of the distance under the far-stretching roof of the darkening heaven; a picture in which nature was not dead, but seemed to hold her breath, calling forth in his soul faint tremors, ethereal shimmering sounds that floated upwards—then a vibrant pause—a silence of suspension, of the faint-hearted heaviness preceding creation.[565]

Eyes that were once burning are now used for the first time to take in the landscape and the shadowy arabesques on its surface. According to Hartmann, "[f]igures should always look as if they were one with the background, and not like silhouettes pasted on the background" when it comes to landscape paintings.[566] here, the phantom woman completely disappears into the meads in a way that adds substance to the personification of nature within a painting or photographic representation: "a picture in which nature was not dead, but seemed to hold her breath." It is unclear if the personification occurs through the picture or if it exists prior to its discursive mediality. Though the answer is that such anthropomorphizing gestures occur within the language of our description, Hartmann's story works to trouble, even if it cannot reverse, the order of representational practices that would give nature life in poetry and, more importantly, give poetry life. The picture of the living landscape that appears as if it was dead becomes a creative force to the extent that within the story the precondition for poetry is the becoming picture of the landscape.

The epiphanic moment finally occurs for Poe after he has learned to view the landscape as composed both of his imaginative projection and the natural world in creative balance that does not negate the embodied presence of the poet. This third view, however, is only possible due to the disappearance of the beautiful woman into the landscape. To experience the desire for

[565] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.
[566] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Landscape and Figure Composition*, 83.

her presence as a form of loss becomes a recognition of the embodied imagination's ability to create. This disappearance also occasions the entrance of the raven:

> Abruptly the stillness was broken, the mighty flapping of wings cut the air, and a raven, like a sinister warning from some supermundane realm, a ghost from the Walpurgis night, ploughed through the dim senescent atmosphere, slowly winged its way over the straw-colored desolation and dominated the whole scene.[567]

The raven enters the landscape as if entering the chamber door of the lover/scholar after the death, or rather the second death, of the phantom that might be called Lenore. In the poem, the speaker is "[s]tartled at the stillness broken" of the bird's utterance and, in the final stanza, laments that "the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting" thereby keeping its soul "floating on the floor." Whereas the temporality of Poe's poem offers an indefinite stasis, Hartmann describes an aging atmosphere where the movements of the otherworldly bird become the prophecy of "The Raven" without the creature having to utter a word "nevermore." In Hartmann's philosophy of composition, the raven dominates the scene. To revisit Hartmann's remarks about the depiction of birds in flight: "the first form introduces us to the subject, its appearance and action; the second accentuates the same impression and heightens the feeling of reality by the slight variation in the appearance and action, and every following form resembling, at the first glance, a silhouette is simply a commentary upon the preceding one; and all together represent, so to say, a multiplication of the original idea."[568] Having described the landscape in detail early on in the tale, Hartmann assumes his readers are imagining the flight of the raven in movements captured in light and shadow with the hope that they might feel the concentrated impression of the raven's flight through the repeated movements of its wings. Hartmann's application of what he terms "repetition with slight variation" in Japanese landscape painting and

[567] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.
[568] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Repetition with Slight Variation," 30.

what Poe refers to as the "effect of the *variation of application*" when describing the speech of the raven's refrain in "The Philosophy of Composition" dovetail with one another.[569] In taking speech away from the bird, Hartmann foregrounds the importance of watching its flight. The inversion of shadow and substance that photographically describes Poe's presence in the landscape suggest that we read Poe's poem differently by trying to view it.

The motion of the raven cuts across the landscape to become the focus of the poet's and the reader's gaze:

> And the poet gazed after the apparition until it was lost like a dark spot on the horizon and the sound of its wingbeat had died away, and the misery of his existence and the self-sacrifice of womanhood as the fiery undercurrents of his mind, he conceived in one of those moments of ecstacy and pain—ever barred to you, Philistines, and which are worth a whole lost life—the idea which gave to the world "The Raven."[570]

We follow the raven to the horizon line as it becomes another color within the painterly landscape despite having just "dominated the whole scene." The raven vanishes into the canvas's horizon line, perhaps against the "blotchy and confused" outline of life described in the first iteration of the view. In this way the bird gives itself to the world within the landscape in parallel wingbeats to Poe's publication of the poem. In "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe refers to suggestiveness as undercurrents of indefinite meaning. Here, Hartmann gives a reading of Poe's use of the term even as he expands it in his own application. In describing these undercurrents as fiery Hartmann alludes to the "fowl whose fiery eyes burned into my [the speaker's] bosom's core." The adjective also recalls the burning of Poe's own eyes in straining to create the second picture of the landscape in the middle of the tale. To see as the raven does would be something that Poe would not be comfortable with, even more so if the raven is racialized as Poe scholars would have it, but Hartmann offers the possibility of such a viewing experiment. To see the

[569] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.
[570] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Schopenhauer in the Air*, 14.

world otherwise is what poets do. The mediation of the bird as apparition suggests that to approximate such a vision one must lose themselves in the experience losing others—the inhuman, the dead, or stillness is desired to create. However, the misogynistic framing of the "self-sacrifice of womanhood" is a bit much even within Hartmann's construction of a melancholic mind. As Hartmann's tale ends as Poe's poem begins, namely with the title, the affective experience of the figure of the tragic poet is presented valuable whose gifts of mind should be appreciated by the world.

As a work of criticism, Hartmann's tale is assured in its estimation of Poe and his poetry, but the confrontation with its own readers at the end of the piece is unsettling. A significant amount of Hartmann's writing as I see it, works to shift the ways in which his readers see the world and their place in it through a developed sense of aesthetic engagement—a hope even if at times half-heartedly in artistic expression changing lives and the conditions of experience for artist and reader/viewer alike throughout the world. Hartmann's insult may reflect Hartmann's attachment to Poe and the poem and an estimation that the reception of the well-known, reprinted, and popularized "The Raven" did change the world as it did him. It also presents a challenge if not an advertisement for the poem to be read again—the experience the repetition of its reading now in relation to Hartmann's composition. To read "The Raven" again is to read with Hartmann in mind and to experience the "lyrical weirdness" of doing so.

The arc of Hartmann's tale resembles M.H. Abrams' formulation of "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric" (1965). The locodescriptive, meditative, and ultimately self-indulgent poetics Abrams' outlines is useful to think with as Hartmann alters the mediating effect of the romantic lyric in the "lyrical weirdness" that he reads in Poe's compositional practice. That Romantic lyrics offered their readers the opportunity to experience the same insights and

resolutions described within the poem through the reading experience that Hartmann desires even if the insult of the tale's close may suggest otherwise. Abrams' description is generatively vague, but foregrounds the actions between poet and landscape that Hartmann would have also had in mind:

> Some of the poems are called odes, while the others approach the ode in having lyric magnitude and a serious subject, feeling fully meditated. They present a determinate speaker in a particularized, and usually a localized, outdoor setting, whom we overhear as he carries on, in a fluent vernacular which rises easily to a more formal speech, a sustained colloquy, sometimes with himself or with the outer scene, but more frequently with a silent human auditor, present or absent. The speaker begins with a description of the landscape; an aspect or change of aspect in the landscape evokes a varied but integral process of memory, thought, anticipation, and feeling which remains closely intervolved with the outer scene. In the course of this meditation the lyric speaker achieves an insight, faces up to a tragic loss, comes to a moral decision, or resolves an emotional problem. Often the poem rounds upon itself to end where it began, at the outer scene, but with an altered mood and deepened understanding which is the result of the intervening meditation.[571]

It appears that Hartmann sees Poe through the lens of Abrams' romantic lyric even as "Dreary Windblown Meads" works with the same formula but replaces the lyric speaker with the lyric narrator. Poe in the story becomes both the poet as well as the "silent human auditor" of Hartmann's tale. Or maybe it is the case that in both Romantic poetry and Hartmann's tale, the reader is the unacknowledged auditor, if not legislator, of the poem. The metapoetic commentary of Hartmann's tale develops "lyrical weirdness" as a creative process and reading practice. Hartmann's tale seems to be hospitable to any theory of the lyric including, though expressly not limited to Mills' description of the lyric as the fantasy of overhead speech, the subjective expression that moves history forward in Hegel, and Adorno's social antagonism within the Romantic model of genius. Though this is claim may be tantamount to a critical elision on my

[571] M.H. Abrams, "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric," in *From Sensibility to Romanticism: Essays Presented to Frederick A. Pottle*, eds. Frederick W. Hilles and Harold Bloom (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965), 527-528.

part, Hartmann's extensive reading practice may support this reading. Intermediality, and to a certain extent melancholic loss, are usually present in Hartmann's writing, but through allusion, citation, and collaging of texts and ideas he always appears to be trying to find a way to mediate all that he has read within and through his experience. It is for these reasons that I argue for the importance of Hartmann's understanding of himself in literary history. We should read to engage with the lyrical weirdness.

Sadakichi Hartmann's "A Midsummer-Night's Dream"

While "Dreary Windblown Meads" focuses on Poe as a lonesome wanderer and figure of poetic genius, in "A Midsummer-Night's Dream" Hartmann casts himself in the role as he travels back in time to visit Mrs. Poe at "no other than the well-known Poe Cottage in Fordham."[572] Hartmann visits as both a wandering, flirtatious time traveler and a critic in seeking to ask questions about Poe, establish Poe as genius, and defend his character even as Hartmann himself uses the opportunity to exhibit his own imagination. Hartmann mediates his encouragement and conversation with Poe through the figure of their mutual muse and in doing so performs an intervention in fantasies of literary history. In this tale as well as his other engagements with "The Raven" Hartmann's performances present an interpretive as well as ethical choice between two approaches to literary history, namely one that seeks to reinvent and another that would find itself as part of. Hartmann chooses the later and in doing ends up influencing the former at least in attempt. Within the story the aesthetic dimensions of dream outline the contours of the potential or the liminal edge of the possible. Part of that possibility involves creating a narrative of his own identity in conversation with Mrs. Poe about her husband's writing, reputation, and habits. In this way Hartmann's self-projection into the past

[572] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," *The Papyrus* (June-July 1905): 6.

and into the origin of the poem indexes anxieties of his own as being both Sadakichi Hartmann and Sidney Allan.

As Hartmann notes in *Shakespeare in Art* (1901)—a critical catalogue of representations of Shakespeare and his plays in visual art—in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* "Shakespeare dealt with the imaginative side of love, it's fantastic and illusive phases."[573] Hartmann's choice of title, redoubling the impetus of his engagement's with "The Raven," opens a debate between himself and Poe regarding imagination and the function of poetry. Poe's allusion to Theseus' description of "the lunatic, the lover, the madman all compact"—a caricature used to describe both Poe and Hartmann—in "The Philosophy of Composition" is underscored in the comparison he constructs between compositional practices and the use of the imagination as it differs between writers and within an individual writer's public and private personae: "[m]ost writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy."[574] Though Theseus is dismissive of the Athenian lovers' experience in the woods and their recollections upon waking from that night, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* suggests that he is accurate in his description of poetry's world-making potentiality in that it "gives to airy nothing/A local habitation and a name" if only because that is what theater does.[575]

Poe is comparably dismissive in "The Philosophy of Composition," but through his admonition exhibits a kind of poetic excess and exaggeration that Hartmann will adopt in the language of his interaction with Mrs. Poe in his own dream. As the rude mechanicals in *A*

[573] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Shakespeare in Art* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1901), 250.
[574] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1596), eds. Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 5.1.7; Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 163.
[575] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.16-17.

Midsummer Night's Dream foreground the metatheatrical, Poe offers a metapoetic description using the language of theater with dashes that perform the process he describes:

> Most writers—poets in especial—prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy—an ecstatic intuition—and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes, at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought—at the true purposes seized only at the last moment—at the innumerable glimpses of idea that arrived not at the maturity of full view—at the fully matured fancies discarded in despair as unmanageable—at the cautious selections and rejections—at the painful erasures and interpolations—in a word, at the wheels and pinions—the tackle for scene-shifting—the stepladders and demon-traps—the cock's feathers, the red paint and the black patches, which, in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, constitute the properties of the literary *historio*.[576]

Does Poe appear as a lunatic, a lover, or a poet here? Poe's *historio* suggests that we might model literary history on the compositional practice of poets whose experience with the contingency involved in the creation of individual expression may be applicable to expressive traditions and critical discourse. That Hartmann "take[s] a peep behind the scenes" and writes about what he sees there is affirming. By rewriting "The Philosophy of Composition" Hartmann intervenes in this process and encourages his readers to think otherwise, namely, to posit a different relation to literary history that, importantly, includes himself or even themselves. Hartmann is not interested in consolidation, but rather expansiveness in his critical thinking even if he does appear at times to adhere to the category of genius and invests himself in modes of aesthetic elitism. Hartmann may get the joke in Poe's escalation of metaphor to the point of absurdity. Yet, in trying to explain the humor, we are confronted with a seriousness that demands attention much like comic atmosphere surrounding the role of Bottom that Hartmann plays in his encounter with the Titania that is Mrs. Poe. Recounting his first visit to Walt Whitman in November 1884, Hartmann writes that, "[a]t that time I was stage-struck, and of course mentioned my intention to devote myself to the histrionic art; I contemplated a special study of

[576] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 163.

Shakespeare's fools."[577] In this tale of critical foolishness, Hartmann's love for Poe transforms the different attachments we might have as readers to poetry so that we might view literary history in new, more generous, ways.

In turning to Mrs. Poe, the muse, Hartmann finds in his midsummer dream the explanatory principle behind the generation of Poe's poetry and the workings of the imagination more generally. Eliza Richards would see this as a confrontation with the muse of nineteenth-century poetry, but whereas Poe displaces the figures of these women as both muse and Poetess explicitly to occupy their positions as mediators of collective affect in aesthetics, Hartmann remains at a near distance through his flirtation with Mrs. Poe in the story. In other words, Poe is the object of his own desire whereas Hartmann remains interested in feminine muses in both body and figure. In doing so Hartmann intervenes within the debate concerning the imagination within the play in the service of his own ideas concerning aesthetics. As a rejoinder to Theseus' dismissal of the lovers outlined above, Hippolyta focuses on the importance of the dream in the new reality that they've awakened to:

> And all their minds transfigured so together,
> More witnesseth than fancy's images,
> And grows to something of great constancy;
> But howsoever, strange and admirable.[578]

The minds of the Athenian lovers have "transfigured" both individually and collectively, and as Hippolyta points out, their experiences amount to something more than "fancy's images." The presence of the imagination to exceed its presumed boundaries is recognized as making the world over in its image in the creation of a "great constancy" that is more truthful, at the very least in terms of love for the Athenian couples, than unyielding desires and inflated senses of

[577] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Conversations with Walt Whitman* (New York: E.P. Coby & Co., 1895), 8.
[578] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.23-27.

self-importance. This constancy is "strange and admirable" because it appears after having left the sociopolitical realm of Athens for the realm overseen by fairy sovereigns and indicates a relation that isn't necessarily discursively delimited even if metaphor seems to the best way for the lovers to describe it.[579] Hippolyta is directly responding to the lovers' attempts to find figurative language to picture their new understandings of love. Hermia in particular claims, "I see these things with parted eye,/When everything seems double."[580] What Hartmann would refer to as the suggestive quality of her image allows for a doubling that is more truthful. In staging his own excursion into what in *Shakespeare in Art*, he describes the forest as "a land of dreams" of "elfin bowers and grassy rings," Hartmann aims to create a "strange and admirable" relation between himself and Poe as a figure of American literature in a story that pushes allusion to the point where it becomes an entangled knot of tropes—the labyrinthine forest of fairies where partner's swap and love chases pursue new forms of feeling and knowledge.[581]

Rather than return to his "suburban home," Hartmann as narrator "stroll[s] away into the moonlit summer night" late one evening, a self-admittedly "a queer time to take a constitutional."[582] In flagging the temporality at the outset of the story, Hartmann foreshadows the time travel that will bring him to Poe's cottage. "With curious awe whither the road was leading," Hartmann speaks of the sensations experienced in this journey through the night,

[579] One wonders if the relationship between Theseus and Hippolyta offered Hartmann an opportunity to reflect on what may have been the dynamic between his parents considering that he writes of Osada's potential regret "of having entered upon the union with a foreigner [his father]" (*Autobiography*, 2). The politics and violence of love that marks the exchange between Theseus and Hippolyta that opens the play provides the backdrop for this very conversation concerning the imagination later in the play. "Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword,/And won thy love doing thee injuries" exclaims Theseus even though claims to want to "wed thee [her] in another key—/With pomp, with triumph, and with reveling" (1.1.16-17 and 1.1.18-19). That other key, it turns out, is influenced by the realm of the fairies and the imagination Theseus cannot quite sound. Despite a tradition of casting the same actor for both roles, Hippolyta will never be Titania (muse) for Theseus as he is no poet.
[580] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 4.1.647-648.
[581] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Shakespeare in Art*, 147.
[582] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 6.

remarking that, "[t]his sense of isolation and my ignorance of where I was, filled me with a feeling, not exactly of dread but rather of wonder and expectancy."[583] Hartmann puts himself into a suggestive mood where both "isolation" and "ignorance" better thought of as individual experience and affective knowledge become for him the ways in which he might begin to experience "wonder." In short, Hartmann's journey can also be read as the process of reading or viewing—an encounter with an aesthetic object wherein affective knowledge takes precedence within the experience. The medium of that voyage occurs in a landscape that Hartmann describes as a painting: "[t]here was not a flake of cloud in the sky, and the whole country, bathed in a soft, silver, grayish light, looked to me like some fairy landscape by Corot" where the "dark line of the tree trunks, the glimmer of the light through the foliage and the silence of night, all seemed mysterious and supernatural."[584]

[583] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 6.
[584] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 6.



Figure 21. Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, *Orpheus Leading Eurydice from the Underworld*, 1861, oil on canvas, 112.7 × 137.2 × 1.9 cm (44 3/8 × 54 × 3/4 in.), Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts. Museum purchase funded by the Agnes Cullen Arnold Endowment Fund, 87.190. https://emuseum.mfah.org/objects/11407.

In referencing Corot's paintings, perhaps *Orpheus Leading Eurydice from the Underworld* (1861) specifically, Hartmann likens himself to Orpheus though without a clear destination as a poet in search in of a muse, but at this point in the story we don't know this is Mrs. Poe cast as Eurydice. In the Corot, shades of the once living on the bank of the river and beyond receded into the background and blur into the landscape through soft, impressionistic brushstrokes. The atmospheric haze is suggestive in Hartmann's theorizing and creates a sense of mourning where affect, shade, and landscape correspond with one another. In the foreground Orpheus appears with lyre leading the way and mediating, if not protecting, his vision, while

grasping Eurydice's wrist with his other hand. As Hartmann is interested in this point of contact—the touch felt on the skin either in action or in mind between the living and the dead—by grasping Eurydice at the wrist, Orpheus prevents her from holding his own hand as a form of control. Though Mrs. Poe will give Hartman her hand in a mannered motion in the tale, Hartmann, like Orpheus, determines and directs the body of the muse or beloved. The couple moves between a threshold created by the presence of the most clearly defined tree forms in the painting. The placement of the trees in creating this portal plays with the boundaries of the narrative as it appears that the couple is either entering or exiting the forest landscape—a fate the parts the couple forever or keeps them from doing so. In *Landscape and Figure Composition* (1910), Hartmann writes of Corot's success in creating mystery in his canvases, noting that "[t]he losing of form by some blurring process is one of the safest media in suggesting mystery."[585] Hartmann applies these techniques to his story to blur temporality as well as the boundaries between life and death. The foreground and background are connected and blurred together on the surface of the water that reflects both landscape and figure. Writing on the use of the "elongated ellipse" as the key compositional component in landscapes, Hartmann argues that "Corot, the greatest master and innovator of landscape composition, was particularly fond of it. He invented a typical arrangement for all lake and woodland pool painters that followed him."[586] Hartmann associates the shape with the ways in which "the eye involuntarily glides around the elongated shape" to the extent that the compositional arrangement of the other figures in the landscape or figures are secondary to the motion of the eye in tracing the ellipse.[587] Though not as pronounced in *Orpheus Leading Eurydice*, the flattened ellipse of the water in the landscape

[585] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects," 25.
[586] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Landscape and Figure Composition*, 19.
[587] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Landscape and Figure Composition*, 19.

directs the viewer's eye to and away from the couple as the leftmost edge of the ellipse that appears between the two figures and underneath the space where they make contact.

There, Eurydice appears in white, likely the wedding attire worn on the day of her death by snakebite as she was surrounded by her naiad attendants—a snake, not a raven, making a shadow of her forevermore. In holding both Eurydice and the lyre tightly, Orpheus' body mediates the relationship between his love and loss. The pose outlines their journey as Orpheus' right arm is lowered to meet Eurydice's whereas his left arm positions the lyre above them in a parallel motion to their doomed ascension which will become the precondition for his continued poetic creation. Though Hartmann isn't interested in taking Virginia back into the present with him, he doesn't need to because he is able to satisfy his critical and creative curiosity regarding Poe—she is to forever to remain a shade. At the end of the story Hartmann performs the double death of Orpheus' loss: "[a]t the turn of the road I looked back. The little house had vanished, but I still felt the pressure of her hand in mine, as a confirmation that I had actually been calling on Mrs. Poe."[588] The sensation of absence gestures towards Bottom's synesthesia in the Shakespeare, but here Hartmann is more content to view the sensation as a pleasurable accomplishment in aligning both himself and Poe with Orpheus. As Orpheus is a poet that makes music out of loss, but also one that is able to tame nonhuman life with his song—"So with his singing Orpheus drew the trees,/The beasts, the stones, to follow"—there is no better figure for Hartmann to identify with as he attempts to master, or perhaps re-tame, Poe's "The Raven."[589]

As in "Dreary Windblown Meads" Hartmann focuses on multiple pictorial visions. While the earlier tale focused on landscape, in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" Hartmann is interested

[588] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 12.
[589] Ovid, *Metamorphoses: The New, Annotated Edition*, trans. by Rolfe Humphries, annotations by Joseph D. Reed (Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 2018), XI.1-2.

in the setting of Poe's home. In addition to his conversation with Mrs. Poe wherein Hartmann as narrator exhibits his eloquence and imagination, a significant portion of the narration focuses on different readings of the room. The series of observations, however, does not indicate a growing poetic vision, but rather becomes a space for Hartmann to fill with literary allusions to Poe, Shakespeare, Hoffmann, and likely many others and to perform his knowledge. It is through these associations and what I would call becoming Bottom that Hartmann stages his relationship with his poetic predecessor. The appearance or apparition of Mrs. Poe within the home as the phantom woman in "Dreary Windblown Meads" remains the point of connection between poet and world, or put differently, is that which makes a connection between poet and world possible. Hartmann describes his entrance into the room and encounter with Mrs. Poe in the first view as follows:

> To my great astonishment the room was not dark, as I had expected. A lamp, standing on a table covered with books, shed a mild light on its immediate vicinity, leaving the corners in a weird twilight atmosphere in which objects appeared indistinct and distorted. And just opposite me, on the edge of a bed, sat, an elf on the banks of some moonlit lake, a female apparition, gazing curiously at me with her large dark eyes. It sent a thrill down my back. I had always wished that it had been possible for me to have known Mrs. Poe. I had not imagined her so beautiful. Her beauty was like the radiant vision of an opium dream, her hair black as the wing of a crow, her complexion like ivory, while her eyes had that peculiar charm which Bacon has lauded—they were the black, morbid, gazelle-like eyes of a consumptive. I could have brooded the whole summer-night over their expression, which seemed to contain the riddle of existence.[590]

Hartmann uses the terms fairy and elf interchangeably in his writing and uses the later term here to describe Mrs. Poe. The lamplight and literature recall the lover/scholar's chamber in "The Raven" and Hartmann seemingly appears to disturb Mrs. Poe as uninvited guest not unlike a bird "wandering in from the Nightly shore." As Mrs. Poe's beauty was more than could be imagined without finding himself in her presence, Hartmann relies on his critical expertise and position as

[590] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 7.

an imprimatur of taste to describe her elfin beauty. The atmosphere of the room, or rather Hartmann's figurative language that brings the fairy landscape into the room, turns the bed into a riverbank. Disturbing the intimacies in both the cottage and the natural world, the scene draws on the language of "Dreary Windblown Meads," where "the features of the dreamland scene and his beloved one became more and more blurred" in Poe's creative epiphany, to characterize Hartmann's relationship to Mrs. Poe here.[591] Mrs. Poe is equated to the "apparition" of "Dreary Windblown Meads" and Hartmann's description emphasizes the fantastic creatural aspect of her form through comparisons with gazelles and crows as well as the limits of embodied human existence reached in drug use, illness, and death. The choice to compare Mrs. Poe's hair to a crow rather than a raven is curious in a tale as overdetermined by allusion as this one. Hartmann may have had *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints or paintings in mind in constructing the comparison with the crow, but it difficult to tell. Not quite the bust of Athena alighted on by the black form of the raven though nearly just as dead, Mrs. Poe becomes the scholar to Poe's absent or dead woman, and Hartmann's raven. As in "Dreary Windblown Meads," Hartmann underscores the importance of eyes as Mrs. Poe's "seemed to contain the riddle of existence" if not the riddle of "The Raven."

The conversation that takes place is one of consolation after Mrs. Poe confides in Hartmann about Poe's wellbeing: "'I have been very much troubled about him of late. He does not feel well. He has used up all his strength in editing the Broadway Journal. It was too much for him.'"[592] Hartmann embeds a reference to Poe's "The Man that was Used Up" (1839) within her worries.[593] While it may be difficult ascertain the significance of Hartmann's allusions, Poe's

[591] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Dreary Windblown Meads," 14.
[592] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 8.
[593] Poe's "The Man that was Used Up" also appeared in *The Broadway Journal* (August 1845).

tale develops as a series of fragments to be pieced together as the narrative unfolds. As such, reading Hartmann becomes a process of working with fragments and allusions to approximate the possible picture that Hartmann creates. In Poe's tale, the narrator's obsession with the mystery surrounding the identity and celebrity of Brevet Brigadier General John A. B. C. Smith in the satire unfolds through series of questions posed at church, the theater, and card tables before finally being answered after calling upon the general's home. There narrator confronts the general as a "bundle" of body parts and prosthetics that depends upon the actions of an enslaved person to be put together. A figure of the man in a Jacksonian manifest destiny, the general's captivity during what the tale takes as its subtitle, "the Late Bugaboo and Kickapoo Campaign," has resulted in his dismemberment. The fiction of the man self-made depends upon racial capital and the violence of colonial occupation to put the general together even as it dismembers him. The contrast between the body in parts and the tale's opening description of the general as a model of aesthetic beauty, notably comparing a bust of the man to a marble of Apollo, accounts for part of the humor of the story, but as the tale itself unfolds, the narration foregrounds the problems associated with modeling a life on aesthetic representation. Whereas Poe repeatedly writes of such anxieties, notably the speaker becoming shadow in the "The Raven," Hartmann is simultaneously more and less trusting of the aesthetic. Hartmann might embrace such representations without caring about their referent or simply find the pile of body parts on the floor unsurprising. More directly, however, in playing the narrator of Poe's tale, Hartmann may critique even as he praises the figure of Poe that was meaningful for him. If Poe is the man that is used up, then does Hartmann put him together? In putting Poe together, would we find Hartmann a part of him?

At the theater, the answers of Misses Arabella and Miranda Cognoscenti to the inquiries of the narrator in "The Man that was Used Up" blend into a performance of *Othello* wherein the "fine tragedian, Climax…was doing Iago to a very crowded house."[594] Arabella offers a picture of American innovation over against racial violence in rambling thoughts about the general and his exploits: "great wretches, those Bugaboos—savage and so on—but we live in a wonderfully inventive age."[595] Arabella refers to the general as a "great man" and "the man" before being cut off by Climax's Iago and the utterance of the word 'mandragora'. The mandragora as narcotic recalls Mrs. Poe as opium dream as well as the fantasy constructed around the celebrity representation of the general. As man, mandragora, and the man that was used up in a *Gentleman's Magazine* the sequence is comical, but the reference to Iago's racism within one of Poe's more explicit engagements with race in his tales is disturbing:

> ——"mandragora,
> Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world,
> Shall ever medicine thee to that sweet sleep
> Which thou owd'st yesterday!"[596]

Iago, whose name recalls Santiago the patron and conquering saint of Spain also known as "the moor killer," with Desdemona's handkerchief in hand and poisonous words rolling off his tongue is the tragic inverse of Puck in working to destroy, rather than encourage, marriage within the play. The waking, jealous dreams of Othello occasioned by Iago are contrasted with the flower "purple with love's wound" whose juice is responsible for the couplings in the woods of the *Dream*.[597] Hartmann, of course, needed no such potion for his visit to Poe cottage. More to the point, the general, having performed the violent deeds of Iago's namesake on occupied lands,

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[594] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man that was Used Up," *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* 5, no. 2 (August 1839): 68. Poe's "Fairyland" is reprinted immediately following the tale.
[595] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man that was Used Up," 68.
[596] William Shakespeare, *Othello* (ca. 1603) qtd. in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Man that was Used Up," 10.
[597] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.167.

channels Iago's racism and would certainly not have been pleased by the thought of Hartmann's presence in Mrs. Poe's bedchamber despite whatever manners the time traveler may have exhibited. While the caricature of the general may be read as critique of Jacksonian politics and his dependence on the help of an enslaved person to be put together, an indictment of chattel slavery, Poe's choice of Iago's handkerchief soliloquy within a satire that depends upon racial violence for its humor only emphasizes the sharpness of the cutting edge. Poe's contrast between two acclaimed generals, Othello and John A. B. C. Smith, appears to be important for Hartmann's intertextual reading. If Poe's general depends upon aesthetic fantasy to give form and function to his person in body and discourse as a kind of whiteness both expansive and empty, Othello is character that, despite the tragedy of play and Iago's cruelty, exhibits a strength and courage that is only undone by his own hand. Though the humor may suggest otherwise, Hartmann's tale is partially motivated by the desire to uphold Poe's reputation and to dismiss spurious claims concerning Poe's demeanor and the conditions of life at Poe cottage. However, through these intertextual moments, Hartmann appears to be commenting on relationships between racialization and aesthetic form. Hartmann and Poe both critique cults of celebrity, but Hartmann needs Poe to be a better version of himself through attachments that perform the very object of their critique. However, through his persistent rewritings of Poe, Hartmann writes of different possibilities, revisions, or alterations, in the stories we tell about these writers as well as the stories themselves. If literary criticism is modeled on a kind of gossip, at worst or at best, then Hartmann suggests that who we talk to matters especially if its him.

The aesthetic description of the general also provide a model of diction for Hartmann in addition to serving as citational material within his ambivalent return to Poe. Within the

laudatory catalogue of bodily features the general is supposed to have, Poe's narrator in a near blazon attends to the eyes:

> In the matter of eyes, my acquaintance was, also, preeminently endowed. Either one of such a pair was worth a couple of the ordinary ocular organs. They were of a deep hazel, exceedingly large and lustrous: and there was perceptible about them, ever and anon, just that amount of interesting obliquity which gives force to the pregnant observation of Francis Bacon — that "there is no exquisite beauty existing in the world without a certain degree of strangeness in the expression."[598]

In describing Mrs. Poe's eyes through the same reference to Bacon, Hartmann fashions himself as the narrator in attempting to run the mystery of Poe down as well as highlights the strange beauty of her eyes. The strangeness of the general's body in pieces is a usual poetic trope in blazon's of the feminine form. Though Poe appears to distance himself from beauty—a case where the satirical aspect of the tale and "The Philosophy of Composition" align—Hartmann embraces that strangeness or what he might call "lyrical weirdness" or suggestion. That Hartmann is not interested in Poe, but rather the source of his poetic inspiration in Mrs. Poe as muse and figure of the beautiful dead woman, becomes its own interpretation of the earlier tale. For example, Hartmann adopts similar diction in his response to Mrs. Poe's worries:

> "What has a fanatic worshipper of beauty like Poe to do among green-grocers, on the market place of utilitarianism?—it's like water and oil, like a Grecian vase among modern earthen ware, like Berlioz's dance of the sylphs, deadened, by the noise of ten thousand money bags." I became quite eloquent.[599]

Hartmann, or Hartmann's narrator, will continually reflect on his own eloquence, imagination, and cleverness throughout the tale. On the one hand, Hartmann claims that merely being in the presence of Mrs. Poe inspires utterances that body forth seemingly without agency on Hartmann's part. On the other hand, Hartmann performs his own critical acumen and expressive ease. As a "worshipper of beauty" Poe offers a form of aesthetic pleasure that cannot be

[598] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Man that was Used Up," 66.
[599] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 8.

determined or evaluated through economic forces including those of the literary marketplace. The contrasts escalate in moving from chemical properties to the deadening sound of money over against the instrumentation of Berlioz's *The Damnation of Faust* (1845) composed the year "The Raven" was published. Having described Mrs. Poe as a sylph, Hartmann's reference to the opera is suggestive. To outline the arc as it pertains to Hartmann's own tale, the first part of the opera finds the aging scholar, Faust, in the plains of Hungary contemplating the natural world and the renewals that come with seasonal change. In the second part, the demon, Méphistophélès, appears to Faust in his study with promises of knowledge, youth, and other forms of wish fulfilment. In speech much like that of the lover/scholar of "The Raven" in addressing the burning glance of the raven and the beak within its heart: "Qui donc es-tu, toi dont l'ardent regard/Pénètre ainsi que l'éclat d'un poignard."[600] Faust goes on to describe the penetrating gaze of Méphistophélès that pierces like a dagger as a flame that burns and devours his soul: "Et qui, comme la flamme,/Brûle et dévore l'âme."[601] Following Méphistophélès to a copse near the banks of the Elbe, Faust sees the beautiful Marguerite within a dream vision and the proceeds with demon in tow to sneak into her actual room in the similar movements as Hartmann appears before Mrs. Poe. Though Méphistophélès enchantments have encouraged Marguerite's affection, the two human lovers admit having dreamed of one another. Departing her room at the risk of scandal, Faust leaves Marguerite to await the return of her lover that will never come to pass. Learning from Méphistophélès from that Maguerite is in prisoner for having accidentally killed her mother with an excessive dose of a sleeping drug (yet another potion), Faust offers his soul to save her. Together, Faust and Méphistophélès ride on black horses through a landscape that leads

[600] Hector Berlioz, *The Damnation of Faust: A Dramatic Legend in Four Parts*. Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1898), 5.
[601] Hector Berlioz, *The Damnation of Faust*, 5.

not to Maguerite's salvation, but to Faust's damnation in hell. Hartmann appears to strike a variety of bargains as he appears in Mrs. Poe's chamber. Cast as Faust who meets the Mrs. Poe as Marguerite through his dreamy vision, Hartmann also plays the role of Méphistophélès in enchanting and encouraging her affections for Poe as his lover and muse. In playing both parts, Hartmann is able to perform his ambivalent relation to Poe even if he continues to keep to an aesthetic that privileges the beautiful woman and the elevation of the poet above her through a feigned supplication or what Hartmann might describe as manners.

Hartmann notes this affect in the second view of the room. Though Hartmann feels "a vague fear of something uncanny rising," he is able reassure himself within the "quite and peaceful" atmosphere of the room as well as through his criticism. Adopting the posture of an historian or scholar, Hartmann's description of the room focuses on quotidian features even though appears in stark contrast with the exorbitant list describing Poe as a "fanatic worshipper of beauty" a few moments earlier:

> She nodded and gazed with a sphynxlike [sic] look into the dark corners of the room. This was indeed a most peculiar interview. I felt a vague fear of something uncanny rising, but everything was so quiet and peaceful around me that I soon reassured myself. A room so humbly and yet so cosily [sic] furnished I had seldom seen before. It was the epitome of frugality. The floor was covered with mats. Four chairs, one table and a bookcase made up the whole furniture. Of the bed of straw, of which the biographers have talked so much, I saw no trace. The bed could even boast of an elegant shape, and the mattress was, as far as I could judge, of excellent quality. I also entertain doubts as to the often repeated story of the cat, which was supposed to have served Mrs. Poe, on cold days, as blanket. People are very fond of exaggerating, particularly in regard to celebrities with whom they have accidentally come into contact.[602]

Hartmann's reference to Mary Grove Nichols' "Reminiscences of Edgar Poe" (1863) serves as a comic inclusion reflecting the exaggerated style of the tale and the critique of celebrity from "The Man that was Used Up," but it is not without an earnestness. Hartmann's literary time

[602] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 8.

travel becomes a way of redeeming Poe and himself through this conversation. The movement between poetic and critical registers performed by Hartmann within the tale—a blur that also creates "A Midsummer Night's Dream"—becomes almost didactic. Hartmann's stories continually redescribe their settings in new ways or in this case, new critical approaches in asking their readers to view differently or in the manner that Hartmann might. The comfort afforded Hartmann in this position, allows him to being criticizing Poe. Hartmann both admonishes Poe for leaving his sick wife and modulates his nervous affect by searching for another presence in the room: "'But he shouldn't have left you all alone up here,' I began again, looking about as if searching for somebody."[603]

Rather than a Raven, Hartmann discovers, or rather returns to, the "big black tom-cat who slept peacefully on a chair, and who did not exactly look as though he would let himself be used as a bed-cover without serious objection."[604] The cat becomes the nonhuman mediator between Mrs. Poe and Hartman without the stilling gaze of the raven. Hartman, here, can position the feline, and imagine the positions it might take, in controlling the narrative.

Hartmann makes himself at home in Poe cottage as this sense of control and literary mastery begins to pervade the tale. Though Mrs. Poe offers a rejoinder to Hartmann—"Do you believe that I only feel loneseome when he isn't here?"—Hartmann has Mrs. Poe ventriloquize strains of Poe criticism that Hartmann aligns himself with as she describes the singularity of Poe as poet:

> The peculiarity of Poe is that not only his faculties, thoughts, and sensibilities are more acute than those of other men, but that this acuteness has become abnormal. His dreams are so intense as to take bodily shape and to become hallucinations. He is constantly lost in another world, in the fairyland of his imagination, and often does not talk to me for days.[605]

[603] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 8.
[604] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 8.
[605] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 8 and 8-9.

Hartmann, who is lost in his own fairyland, does talk to her. Whereas Poe invokes his muse to subsequently dismiss her and take her place, Hartmann focuses on the point of contact or connection with the figurative and material body as evident in the kisses described in his early poetry—a kiss he will give to Mrs. Poe as he departs. Hartmann responds with a combination of self-deprecation and understanding as his tumultuous relationships with artists, notably that with Alfred Stieglitz, hurt Hartmann and often occurred with some form of financial loss: "I hardly knew what to answer, knowing from experience what eccentric and selfish creatures authors generally are. They have no consideration for anybody and act as if they were alone in the world."[606] Though Hartmann immediately thinks of leaving as he did not want to bother the ill Mrs. Poe, he exhibits the very kind of eccentricity and selfishness he had just admonished. It turns out, that critics, too, are aptly described in this way.

The dreamy conversation with Mrs. Poe becomes a case of wish fulfillment for Hartmann in that he is able to ask two nagging questions about Poe: "[f]or years I had hoped to meet somebody who was capable of answering them. Now the opportunity presented itself at last."[607] The first question concerns Poe's knowledge of, or possible acquaintance with, E.T.A. Hoffmann which is answered by Mrs. Poe pointing to Hoffmann's works on their bookcase. In channeling Hoffmann, Hartmann alludes to "The Sandman" (1816) and the terror of an eyeless muse to heighten the effect of his description of Mrs. Poe's eyes later in the tale.[608] The second question relates to Poe's alcoholism and Hartmann explains to Mrs. Poe that the impetus for the question is a matter of historical and critical value: "'[b]elieve me, I do not ask out of impertinent

[606] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 9.
[607] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 9.
[608] Hartmann may also be playing with associations between Olimpia as automaton and Poe's general in "The Man that was Used Up" as a bundle of prosthetic parts.

curiosity—I would like to know for certain psychological reasons. I may some day have the opportunity to explain this delicate matter to posterity.'"[609] Mrs. Poe divulges that "The Raven" was written under such influence, but admits that Poe drinks not for enjoyment considering that he doesn't have much money for it, but "to banish painful recollections, to get rid of an unbearable feeling of anxiety and loneliness, to escape the thought of a coming disaster which continually haunts him"[610] Hartmann has his Mrs. Poe ventriloquize once again a version of Poe that courts sympathy for the figure of the tragic poet, but parodies himself in becoming one of those biographers he discounts a few paragraphs earlier. Hartmann repeats almost word for word his description of Poe in "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects" (1904) after learning of Poe's drinking habits: "But a man who sees ghosts in broad daylight and to whom the world appears at all times as if steeped in some phosphorescent gloom, is surely not in need of stimulants."[611] The world as light, but also without heat, provides an apt though paradoxical photographic metaphor for a writer seemingly more concerned with shadow than with substance. Drink becomes that which may aid in artistic creation or offer relief for those too poetically endowed. In this way alcohol is seemingly equated with the love juice in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, resulting from one of Cupid's arrows that missed its mark, in its ability to both figure and disfigure the imagination, love, and loving couplings by affecting vision. In this way, Hartmann doesn't pass judgment on Poe, but rather leaves open both possible readings of Poe's character and the role of substance use within the creative process as earlier Hartmann remarks that Mrs. Poe's "beauty was like the radiant vision of an opium dream."[612] This is to say that

[609] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 9.
[610] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 10.
[611] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 10. In "The Technique of Mystery and Blurred Effects" the description reads: "Unhappy, fantastic Poe, who saw ghosts even in broad daylight and to whom the world appeared, at all times, as if steeped in some phosphorescent gloom" (25).
[612] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 7.

Hartmann insists on a double vision in looking at Poe—one that is both critical and imaginative without privileging one over the other.

The exchange between Hartmann and Mrs. Poe concerning the interdependence between Poe's drinking and writing, or rather the affordances of a multiplicity of ways of looking at, and thereby being in, the world, is the culmination of the narrative. It allows Hartmann to compose in the absent presence of Poe's muse, which is always already an empty figure that Hartmann invests with recollections of his mother and his studies of literature, telling the reader, "I was very poetical that night—who could help becoming poetical in the presence of that woman?"[613] The tropological movement of the monologue moves through the vision of Mrs. Poe to nature, and then to human artistic creations:

> "You alone are his muse—his Lenore. How could it be otherwise? you, dreamlike as the rising mist on the meadows on a moonlit night, are his inspiration. He merely has to look at you and all nature is transformed. Flowers blow on trees that were flowerless before, the grass turns a darker velvety green than hitherto, strange beautiful birds fill the air, and the brook plays a melody, sweeter than any sound except your voice. And wherever his thoughts and eyes turn, he sees your eyes; they fill the universe. He sees them in the scandent vine, in the spiral flight of the dragon fly, in the flowing water. He feels their influence in the ocean, in the treetops, in a falling meteor, in every star of the nocturnal heavens. He receives from them the same impression as from certain chords of a string instrument or certain passages of his favorite books."[614]

Hartmann begins with a series of equivalences between Mrs. Poe, Lenore, and the figure of the muse suggesting that both he and Poe remain bereaved lovers and scholars in the absent presence of the muses' significance. Hartmann imagines Poe's eye "in a fine frenzy rolling" over a landscape in exaggerated poetic tropes of topographical excess where, after a blazonlike transition from figure to voice, the eyes of Mrs. Poe make the universe over with their expression. Both Poe's "thoughts and eyes" exist within this scopic relation to the extent that one

[613] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 10.
[614] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 10.

can feel "their influence." Shifting the registers of the metaphor, Hartmann claims that feeling the influence of the muse's eyes is both a condition of aesthetic creation and an existential state. Hartmann, of course, is describing his own relation to Mrs. Poe as the figure of the muse. The turn to the "impression" that is made by music or literature at the end of the series puts them in relation to the universe as Hartmann refuses to isolate heaven and earth from music and print. Though this conceit likely does not paint an accurate picture of what Hartmann may have felt upon reading "The Raven," it does appear to potentially describe his affect in thinking about the poem's origins. Hartmann's movement through the landscape replays his earlier tale "Dreary Windblown Meads," in a different key. Hartmann seems enjoy the speculative affect of poetic creation rather than individual poems. If these returns to the origins of poetic creation are modeled after his own birth, they become part of the generative performances of Hartmann's mourning even as they beg the question concerning the result of Hartmann's mediation. Hartmann cannot help himself in this near parody of love language and indulges by "giving full vent to [his] imagination" in paying "compliments, such as a Southern woman would naturally expect."[615] Hartmann, of course, verges on impropriety in making Mrs. Poe his muse and worries a Faustian fate. In reframing his own desire through this projection onto Mrs. Poe's natural expectations, Hartmann's compliments seek out a relationship with Poe himself in the form of a queer attachment even if they are mediated by Mrs. Poe. Hartmann's critical speculation is meant to change how we might read Poe through in, or through, Hartmann's presence.

With questions answered, and after having exhausted his imagination, Hartmann departs the cottage after a give a farewell kiss to Mrs. Poe: "She gave me her hand absent-mindedly, whispering a faint good-bye. I felt the pressure of her long, narrow-hand—surely this was

[615] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 10.

reality!—and, as it might have been still the fashion in 1847 among gallant people, I touched her ghost-like fingers with my lips"[616] Though Hartmann refers to social mores to explain the gesture, Hartmann performs the kiss of his early poetry. The kiss of contact between the living and the dead is for Hartmann a model of literary history. To think of Poe's influence on his body and the fantasy of touching Mrs. Poe's is part of Hartmann's interpretive practice. The tale ends with Hartmann looking back towards cottage to find that his dream has concluded: "The little house had vanished, but I still felt the pressure of her hand in mine, as a confirmation that I had actually been calling on Mrs. Poe."[617] The lingering feeling of Mrs. Poe's hand in Hartmann's own indexes the suggestive as affective understanding. Within the tale, Hartmann takes a similar approach to the use of literary allusion, namely the feeling of a painting, poem, or play that seems to be present within his own moment of writing.

In "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Hartmann casts himself as Bottom the weaver who will play any and all parts extempore. In weaving himself into these canonical literary texts, Hartmann performs the artistic practice of weaving together allusion and reference in producing this form of imaginative criticism. As he emerges from the forest, Bottom returns as player that brings his role into being: "When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer."[618] That such a return is occasioned by heeding the parts of others redoubles the play's insistence on community in the creation of identity. Bottom's fluid identity, literalized in his translation into a hybrid creature, allows him to fully interact with the fairies to the extent that he is loved by their queen. In his attunement to the fairies and the natural world wherein using one's senses, even though they may become out of sorts in synesthesia, allows Bottom to better understand an imaginative

[616] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 12.
[617] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 12.
[618] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1596), eds. Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 4.1.655.

structure of reality that is often felt, but often goes unrecognized as such. In other words, Bottom's suggestive attunement is for Hartmann is that which motivates both aesthetic reception and creation. The present, though absence or obscured visually, act as suggestive forces in the play. For example, when Robin Goodfellow (hereafter referred to as Puck), "that merry wanderer of the night" is introduced to the audience, the fairy describes "neighing in the likeness of a filly foal" as trick, lurk[ing] in a gossip's bowl/In very likeness of a roasted crab[apple]" to spill her drink, or becoming a "three-foot stool" that slips out from under a "wisest aunt telling the saddest tale."[619] Though unseen, or sometimes not seen in the guise of a more truthful form, Puck's alterations in human reality create connections and a sense of community as his humor, jest, and trickery allow nonfairies to "waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear/A merrier hour was never wasted" because the forms of embodied and given shape are due to a fairy's mediation of their time together.[620]

Both Bottom and Puck mediate the experiences of their plays for their respective audiences as Hartmann does. Bottom cannot help but address Theseus' comments while playing Pyramus. Bottom as Pyramus laments the fact he cannot Thisbe though its chink on the night of their promised meeting: "O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss,/Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me."[621] As the wall played by Snout had introduced himself earlier in the play, Theseus remarks that "The wall methinks, being sensible, should curse again."[622] Though the relationship between sensation and consciousness allows for a comedic effect of imbuing agency into the partition, this barb of Theseus points to the ways in which the audience commentary seemingly undoes the lessons learned in the forest at least as far as the Athenian lovers go.

[619] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.43, 46, 47-48, 52, and 51.
[620] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.56-57.
[621] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.177-178.
[622] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.179.

Bottom, however, rebukes Theseus for the interruption, but I would argue also for mocking the agency of nonhuman world: "No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is/Thisbe's cue. She is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall./You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you."[623] Granted the wall is a produce of human construction, yet it relies on materials gathered from nature dialectically dividing humans from nature even as it exists as a collaboration between the two. More to the point and more directly, Theseus has trouble with permeable boundaries between the real and the imagination. Bottom simply reminds him to pay attention to the story as the art of the play may provide him with a different kind of understanding that the one on which his humor relies. Perhaps Theseus is the one who has been deceived. Bottom's relationship with fairy sovereign, Titania, helps to point out that Theseus' claims to authority or interpretation aren't absolute and in doing so gestures towards the political dimension of self-making acts of poesis that Hartmann champions centuries later.

Puck's apology at the end of the play does similar work for an audience potentially dissatisfied by the production or the approach of the actors/shadows therein:

> If we shadows have offended,
> Think but this, and all is mended:
> That you have but slumbered here,
> While these visions did appear;
> And this weak and idle theme,
> No more yielding but a dream.[624]

Puck offers the possibility of disidentifying with the play. Like Theseus, you don't have to believe if you don't want to. However, if like Hippolyta surmises, there might be something "strange and admirable" in these visions.[625] Bottom takes this opportunity seriously and wonders what such dreams may yield. The Athenian lovers will live with the aftereffects of their time

[623] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.180-182.
[624] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.2.53-58.
[625] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 5.1.27.

spent with fairies in the form of happy couplings with marriage beds blessed, but Bottom alone is aware of the significance of his time being embowered with the fairy queen. Though Bottom's translation is both partial and singular, he experiences an aspect of fairy becoming that characterizes Puck and decides on performing a similar community or affective world-making after his translation ends and he emerges from the fairy forest.

In doing so, Bottom turns to poetic description to recollect his thoughts and himself as he moves towards a new understanding of the imagination, or the dreamworld of the forest, as interwoven in and as his own experiential reality. Poetry becomes a way to remember, to cope, or to mourn as the creation of the self in the face of loss:

> When my cue comes, call me, and I will answer. My next is
> 'most fair Pyramus'. Heigh-ho. Peter Quince? Flute the bellows-mender?
> Snout the tinker? Starveling? God's my life! Stol'n hence, and left me
> asleep?—I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream past the wit
> of man to say what dream it was. Man is but an ass if he go about
> t'expound this dream. Methought I was—there is no man can tell what.
> Methought I was, and methought I had—but man is but a patched fool
> if he will offer to say what methought I had. The eye of man hath not
> heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste,
> his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report what my dream was. I
> will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream. It shall be called
> 'Bottom's Dream', because it hath no bottom, and I will sing it in the
> latter end of a play, before the Duke. Peradventure, to make it the more
> gracious, I shall sing it at her death.[626]

Though Bottom wishes for Peter Quince to "write the ballad of this dream"—another act of communal creation— he also takes seriously the placement of the poem as dream as part of their production, ultimately settling on the death of Thisbe as the most impactful moment because it would "make it the more gracious."[627] The ballad is to be sung as an elegy for the tragic lovers and a love that takes life away. If the Athenian couples must come to terms with the inconstancy

[626] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* 4.1.655-668.
[627] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 4.1.665 and 667-668.

of love, its "fantastic and illusive phases" in Hartmann's words, and seek to rebuild their relationships with a renewed understanding of the contingency of desire, Bottom's elegiac ballad suggests that they must also acknowledge death and even incorporate mourning as part of their growth as individuals and as couples.[628] In Ovid's etiology of dark colors of the mulberry, Thisbe turns the tree into a mourner in an apostrophic address: "And you, O tree, now shading/The body of one, and very soon to shadow/The bodies of two, keep in remembrance always."[629] The forest from which Bottom and the lovers emerge is also one of mourning—they could have easily died in bush and perhaps by bear—and the play serves as an important reminder of that fact during the celebration of their nuptials (lest we forget the threat of death under Athenian law concerning marriage choice). Bottom must also mourn this parting from Titania and her fairy consort—a loss that the synesthetic description suggests is too overwhelming to bear.

Bottom's description alludes to and rewrites Pauline synesthesia in the First Epistle to the Corinthians. There, that which cannot be sensed or given through the body becomes a lesson in religious piety about the ineffable and sensuously unknowable, divine:

> But as it is writte, The things which
> eye hathe not sene, nether eare hathe
> heard, nether came into mans heart,
> *are*, which God hathe prepared for the
> that loue him.[630]

Bottom's weaving of his senses together in the desired creation of a ballad that can do the work of, if not replace, the divine is striking. Discovering the failures of our senses does not entail a turning away from them, but rather a reevaluation of their use within overlapping forms of

[628] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Shakespeare in Art* (Boston: L.C. Page and Company, 1901), 250.
[629] Ovid, *Metamorphoses: The New, Annotated Edition*, trans. by Rolfe Humphries, annotations by Joseph D. Reed (Bloomington, Indiana, USA: Indiana University Press, 2018), IV.159-161.
[630] The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians 2:9 (Geneva Bible).

multiplicity that mark the affective intermediality that Hartmann describes as suggestiveness. Upon the cottage's appearance, Hartmann writes of "his desire to open the door and enter" and muses that he might "play a toccata of Bach, so softly that the accords would hardly become audible" on a spinet that might be in the room.[631] Hartmann is always concerned with the edges of artistic experience in moments where senses, medial forms, and understanding blur into one another. Bottom suggests that we might resolve the synesthetic experience of the ballad that is able to body forth the time he has spent in the fairy forest even if he cannot write it. However, the mediation of poetry is just that as the ballad may become or inspire dreams that muddle sensuous experience. The ballad, or for Hartmann art in general, creates in this double movement. Hartmann's attention to affect through intermedial suggestiveness becomes a way of acknowledging this process and holding open the potential for new understanding—to read or view as Bottom does.

Suggestive reading attends to the intermedial aspects of aesthetic creation in a refusal of medium specificity even if it might also evince a deep knowledge different medial form and aesthetic traditions. "Perhaps the best illustration of the play," claims Hartmann, "is from the brush…[of] Edwin Landseer, the animal painter."[632] Landseer's painting paints the scene of Bottom's interaction with Titania's fairy attendants under her loving gaze. It may picture Bottom's line, "Give me your neaf, Monsieur Mustardseed. Pray you, leave/your courtesy, good monsieur."[633] Hartmann's positive estimation of Landseer is not surprising considering that the fairies are hybrid creatures that embody nonhuman animalities and natural ecologies. Though Landseer's painting focuses on the human features of the fairies, especially the figure of Titania,

[631] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," 7.
[632] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Shakespeare in Art*, 147-148.
[633] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 4.1.477-478.

the wings of the fairies become a point of connection between their humanlike bodies and the natural background of the scene. For example, the fairy to Bottom's left appears with the largest set of wings in the painting, but at first glance appears simply as a half nude form. The motion of the wings blur into the dark foliage of the forest, but their translucence is illuminated by the partially obscured moon that shines out from the corner of the image in the small window of distant landscape that presumably leads our eyes back to Athens.



Figure 22. Edwin Landseer, *Scene from A Midsummer Night's Dream. Titania and Bottom*, 1848-1851, oil on canvas, 82.0 × 133.0 cm, Melbourne, The National Gallery of Victoria. Felton Bequest, 1932. Photo: National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/explore/collection/work/4118.

A review of Landseer's painting as displayed in The Royal Academy's Eighty-Third Exhibition (1851) describes the scene as follows:

> Titania is fondling his [Bottom's] head on which is the coronal of flowers, with which she has consecrated him monarch of her affections: immediately before him stands Mustard-seed, a perking yellow miniature of the human form; on the right is Pease-blossom riding on a supernatural white rabbit, and cobweb is literally a filmy conception. There is nothing very striking in the ideas, but they derive from beautiful colour and charming execution. It is clear that Bottom's head is only a temporary "fixing," it is put on to come off again; be that as it may, the painting and character of this head give it a pronunciation more emphatic than that of any other part of the picture.[634]

Naming the fairies in the painting becomes a kind of game as there are too many fairies present than given name by Shakespeare and since the reviewer, much like the play, doesn't address Mote's presence. Though the reviewer claims that the translation of Bottom's head into that of an ass the more pronounced aspect of the painting, the short piece doesn't devote any more words towards its description. Rather than translation, the painting via its rhyming of forms and economy of gazes focuses on the relationships between Bottom and the fairies and rabbits in this illuminated bower. If, as *The Art Journal* reviewer notes, the head of Bottom is the most emphatic part of the painting, what might be most striking within this emphasis is Bottom's eyes. As donkeys are given a wide field of vision due to the placement of their eyes at the sides of their heads and have both monocular and binocular vision, Bottom necessarily sees the fairy world of the forest differently in ways that might account for the synesthesia regarding the ballad of his dream. The coloration of both the eye and eyelid in Landseer's painting offer the possibility that Bottom's eyes may be closed. Though Bottom's hand and body are position in from of Mustardseed, the viewer cannot be sure where Bottom is looking. As the relationship between the eye and the bodily is emphasized by Landseer, the painting invites its viewers to imagine the roving gaze of Bottom amongst the fairies as it is paralleled in Landseer's composition. Bottom becomes the nodal point connecting the looks both inside and outside of the painting in animal eyes that may either refuse or invite the sense of identification.

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[634] "The Royal Academy. The Eighty-Third Exhibition–1851," *The Art Journal* (June 1851): 155.

The play of gazes as a movement between forms creates comparisons between the bodies of the fairies and Bottom's own hybrid form. The physiognomy of Puck is reflected in the unknown rabbit rider and Titania's form is mirrored in Peaseblossom who appears closest to the viewer as well as the fairy, perhaps Mote, with the large translucent wings. The nude masculine form of Mustardseed stands before Bottom who reaches towards the fairy with outstretched hand. Mustardseed's small figure is the only one among the fairies depicted as self-conscious of his pose in addressing Bottom. Though Bottom's dream hath no bottom, the toned buttocks of Mustardseed only serves to highlight the musculature of Bottom's calves as they appear with bulging veins. The triangle created by the parting of Mustardseed's legs rhymes with the opening of the topmost layer of Bottom's clothing slightly parted to reveal some of the tools of Bottom's craft. In exaggerating the human forms of the fairies, Landseer attempts to highlight the significance of Bottom's translation. If the fairy realm provides knowledge of the human and offers the possibility of moving outside the category, in Landseer's painting it is through the sensuousness of the human form and the emphasis on vision that provokes this reading of Shakespeare's *Dream*.

My reading of the painting cannot, however, account for the curious fairy that appears phantomlike between the rabbit riders and the translucent winged fairy at Bottom's left. The reviewer from 1851 casts this figure as Cobweb, but it may just as likely be Mote. The figure of this fairy is barely formed as only the hands and a half, maybe bearded, face appear out of the dark background. Whereas we might be able to trace invisible outline of Puck's figure based on its coupling with one of the rabbit riders, we cannot be sure what the rest of this creature looks like. Its hand appears to emerge from the other fairy's lower torso and is blended into the feminine form of her body in the same grey brushstrokes that compose what appears to be its

beard or a cloud of dust. It is also the only figure depicted that does not look at Bottom. Half-formed and perhaps looking in the wrong direction, this figure is suggestive in is transitional state between bodies and glances. This Mote becomes a moment where the painting reflects on its composition if not its materiality as blurred specks of paint as well as a way for the viewer to enter the scene not as participant, but as critic—the absent presence that changes the way art is interpreted.

Hartmann is cutting when addressing Bottom in his description of the painting, which in his words "depicts the grotesque incident when the fairy queen is lavishing her favours on the transformed lout."[635] Hartmann maintains the contrast between Bottom and Titania, arguing that "exquisite is the painting of Titania's semi-diaphanous robe starred with gold; in her face, however, there is no passion Oberon need have troubled himself about."[636] Hartmann reads the play against itself if Puck, who appears behind the couple with flower in hand and intent eye on the scene, doesn't quite succeed in raising Titania's affections even if the love juice does allow Oberon to remove the young boy from her care to become a "knight of his train."[637] Puck describes the child in relation to Titania's affections for him as "[a] lovely boy stol'n from an Indian king./She never had so sweet a changeling."[638] Born of a votress of Titania's order, the fairy queen promises to raise the child in place of his deceased mother: "But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;/And for her sake do I rear up her boy;/And for her sake I will not part with him."[639] Through overlapping literary allusions Hartmann works into his own dream as a play of substitutions, Hartmann replaces Bottom who replaces the changeling boy who is denied

[635] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Shakespeare in Art*, 148.
[636] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Shakespeare in Art*, 148.
[637] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.25.
[638] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.22-23.
[639] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.135-137.

maternal care from the one who gave him life and the other who would look after him as fairy muse and queen. Notably, the boy never appears onstage even though the conflict between Oberon and Titania, whose resolution deferred by Shakespeare as the fairies gather to bless the marriage beds of the three couples, shapes the worlds of both human and fairy alike—another version of Hartmann's melancholic eroticism. Combining both maternal fantasy and imperialist trade, in detailing her relation to the boy's mother Titania draws a metaphorical equivalence between the growing belly of her votress as she "sail[s] upon the land" and ships pregnant with wind moving across the ocean.[640] Titania's metaphor is unsettling if love is modeled on the form of an economic exchange designed by Oberon to take the boy from her. It is worth noting that in his *Autobiography* Hartmann refers to his "father's side" as a "lineage strictly commercial in tendency" and attributes the "dreamy, mystic elements in my [Hartmann's] make up" to his mother.[641] Though the boy is never present onstage and despite his exchangeability within the fairy court, his existence alters the fate of the Athenian couples and the play's representation of love more generally. Hartmann's absent presence, in Shakespeare, in Poe, and in literary history alters its fate and our understanding of what it means to read with an attention to the suggestive, affective, or dreamy elements that are part of an aesthetic experience.

Though Bottom's translation and hybridity as substitution for the changeling boy do not approximate Hartmann's feelings and understanding of mixed identity as part of, and mediated by, literary history, as this reading might propose, it remains suggestive and deeply speculative. What is more important is how Hartmann's intertextual weaving produces a different picture of literary history as changed through the complexity of his reception. Imagining Hartmann as present in these scenes changes how we read them.

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[640] William Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 2.1.132.
[641] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 3.

Hartmann's "How Poe Wrote 'The Raven': Criticism Based on Chemical Affinity"

In an 1899 lecture delivered to New York's Manhattan Liberal Club, Hartmann refers to Poe's process in "The Philosophy of Composition" as a "cold-blooded dissection of every detail of construction" of "The Raven" that "is largely irony, and yet contains a great deal of truth. The greater a work of art is, the more thought and mathematical calculation will the artist employ in its construction."[642] For Hartmann, Poe proceeds as if he were dissecting a living creature—a search to uncover the processes that sustain life by looking to the bodies of the dead for answers—in explaining the "effect" that the body of "The Raven" is constituted by and works toward. In the twentieth century, Hartmann became increasingly interested in physiological and biochemical explanations as they related to thought processes, psychological states, and creative production. Hartmann's *My Theory of Soul Atoms* (1910) is one early attempt to approach mental processes as the result of physiological change and was influenced by Max Nordeau and Walt Whitman amongst many others. There, Hartmann admits that he "merely a layman in science" and his "knowledge is necessarily eclectic," but also claims that "All the originality [he] can bring into play is imagination."[643] Hartmann goes on to intwine to science and poetry to explain his method and make a claim for its validity: "Science, the combination of the individual gathering of facts and intuitive speculation upon those acquired facts, only too often touches the domain of fancy."[644] In his *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933), Hartmann intuitively speculates about Poe's "The Raven," explaining in a letter to the Poe scholar, Thomas Ollive Mabbott, that he "wrote it carrying out my theory that all mental processes are electromagnetic or based on

[642] Sadakichi Hartmann qtd. in Richard Tuerk, "Sadakichi Hartmann's 'How Poe Wrote the Raven': A Biochemical Explanation," *The Markham Review* 3, no. 5 (February 1973): 81.
[643] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms* (New York: The Stylus Publishing Co., 1910), 6.
[644] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 6.

chemical affinity."[645] I read Hartmann's theories as a way of making sense of embodied affect and aesthetics. Hartmann's bodily processes of choice relate to sexual reproduction. The "memory flash of a 'rare and radiant maiden' during Baltimore honey-moon days" that Poe may have experience occurs in Hartmann's pseudoscience "simply by rotation, by unilateral pressure, or by uneven fanlike divergence of vibration—hormones suddenly released from nerve cells in violent agitation."[646] Hartmann as accoucheuse aids in Poe's queer birth of "The Raven."

Hartmann's essay asks two central questions—"How did the idea of "The Raven" develop in Poe's mind?" and "What is the mechanism of creative thought!"—in order to answer them using the method of intuitive speculation that draws heavily on quotations from Poe's works.[647] Hartmann insists that Poe's explanation in "The Philosophy of Composition" only "plays upon the externals of literary production, half truths about technical peculiarities and preferences, and touches in no manner psychologically upon inspirational processes."[648] Instead, Hartmann claims that the "theme of "The Raven" is vaguely but valiantly in his [Poe's] mind—at all times—day and night—and has been so for years" as it is "soaked with the subject matter."[649] The universality of the poem's expression that Poe claims in "The Philosophy of Composition" is made into the singularity of his experience through Hartmann. The obviousness of the subject and selection in Poe's essay though comic is truthful to Poe as an artist. Hartmann posits possible sources of inspiration including a "Callot etching, Villon and the ravens around the gibbets of Montfaucon" or "the recollection of a raven flying over salt marshes under

[645] Sadakichi Hartmann to Thomas Ollive Mabbott, October 18, 1930. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068), Box 12. Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[646] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven: A Criticism Based on 'Chemical Affinity,'" 3. In *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933). Box 9. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[647] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 1 and 2.
[648] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 1.
[649] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 2.

peculiar atmospheric conditions, as I [Hartmann] imagined in one of my short stories."[650] Hartmann flags his own creative speculation in part to foreshadow the ways in which it replays itself in the essay. At the very least, it seems that Hartmann wants people to read it and to have the story in mind. The tale he tells of the poem's origins that follows returns to and combines both "Dreary Windblown Meads" and "A Midsummer Night's Dream" as the poet proceeds through a twilight landscape, muses over a mansion, has a drink at a tavern, and finally experiences the moment of poetic creation.

Throughout the narrative Hartmann makes continuous use of quotation from Poe's works, but also alludes to other works of aesthetic expression to cultivate a multiplicity of possible inspirational sources for the poem that, according to theory of soul atoms, leave a trace in the mind and body of the poet. As Hartmann describes Poe's potential affect throughout the journey, these inspirational sources combine with allusion to form the heart of Hartmann's approach to aesthetics. Hartmann paints the scene of the poet's hike as follows:

> A twilight when "the atmosphere grows denser," some majestic melancholy like that of Vergil's Aeneid pervading the landscape, sable, silent, stealing away the hue of reality from squatter houses, the uneven road and vista of Westchester Heights, and associating them with the sad incidents in the life of man: worry, grief, pale disease, never-ending want, morose old age, stern ruthless death, Divina Commedia![651]

Hartmann either misquotes or reinterprets "The Raven" in claiming that the atmosphere rather than "the air grew denser." Nevertheless, Hartmann's list perform the associative processes happening in the psychochemical processes in Poe's brain.

The more literary aspects of Hartmann's explanation are entangled with the criticism of chemical affinity. The affect mentioned at the outset of the tale as the "sad incidents in the life of man" are given specificity through biographical speculation on Hartmann's part:

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[650] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 2.
[651] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 3-4

> Haunting images chase each other of irate landlords, unfinished manuscripts, starving cats in empty lots, things that need mending, his child wife coughing in a badly heated room; while irritating sensations—warmly personal, vaguely resembling fecundation (seminal tubules moving towards a more definite development) of Virginia's premature departure stealthily approaching—the creep of mist over the Hudson river —a feeling of sunset oppression, intensify all organic action to an abnormal degree —for a creative thought is the birth of a new chemical substance![652]

The contrast between Poe's dying wife, always already dead as muse for Hartmann and for Poe, and the sensation "vaguely resembling fecundation" is certainly "irritating," but is unsurprising in Hartmann's thought continued return via Poe and in his own writing the figure of the absent muse. That "creative thought is the birth of a new chemical substance" is born in this instance from melancholic arousal. The poem is thus the product of a reproductive act that occurs in Virginia's absence. In this act of creative conception "thought embryos line up in order and march in dance motion towards the formation of word sequences" and "thought fluids" are found "carrying diverse interests of raven, bust, armchair, volumes of forgotten lore, curtain rustle, door ajar, shutter fling, dim spooky atmosphere, repeated tapping, flutter of wings, 'making a leg in true Colonial fashion.'"[653] Hartmann dissects the poem at the level of grammar and content so that these "kaleidoscopical enchantments" may "change, settle, disintegrate, telescope into new visual angles where word combinations eddy and rise to the surface of consciousness, spiritual spume coagulating into denser matter."[654] Though in appearance a masturbatory poetics, Hartmann's attempt to map the poem and the body onto one another is useful for the affective experience of aesthetic reception that Hartmann tries to cultivate—another version of the kiss in Hartmann's earlier poetry. In other words, Hartmann wants poems he can touch and art that

[652] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 4-5.
[653] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 5.
[654] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 5.

leaves its material trace in the bodies of those it makes contact with. The "new visual angles" and the kaleidoscopic conceit suggests that one way that occurs is through intermedial spaces.

Literary and chemical affinities combine in the birth of "The Raven" that Poe had been carrying all along. Hartmann equates the speaker of "The Raven" with Poe himself as both souls shall be trapped in the shadow of the creature in Hartmann's speculation. The emphasis is on Poe's training in order to make sense of out of what rises to the forefront of his mind. This attention to craft will be important for Hartmann's discussions of photography and the figure of the artist as fair amount of technical training is necessary to represent these kinds of moments even though it may be argued that such training is what produces them in the first. Regardless, the raven appears along with the ghostlike presence of the muse as in "Dreary Windblown Meads":

> …a sudden whirr of wings, the tinkle of unseen footfalls, a ghostly sweep of wind. And thus Lenore—angel-like apparition of some Botticelli's canvas slightly mixed with the features of a New England poetess—enters the composition-idea as a plot and climax factor; the raven becomes the oracle of destiny in a sanctuary which one feels rather than sees. The poet, trained in the use of melopoeia and alliteration, automatically produces some of the rhymes and line-motifs. There is no hope for Virginia! a cry of despair unuttered—and passing through the last long shadow of some distant shack, he tremblingly realizes that "his spirit shall be lifted nevermore!"[655]

No longer a "prophet" or "thing of evil," the bird in Hartmann's account "becomes the oracle of destiny in a sanctuary which one feels rather than sees." While this feeling may return Hartmann to the chemical processes in the brain, it more readily gestures towards undetermined affect. The affective drama of the passage climaxes in the dual cries of "[t]here is no hope for Virginia!" and "his sprit shall be lifted nevermore!" that perform the work of infinite substitution between the poet and the absent muse. The muse, in this case is a striking combination of Lenore as "an angel-like apparition of some Botticelli's canvas slightly mixed with the features of a New

[655] Sadakichi Hartmann, "How Poe Wrote the Raven," 5-6.

England poetess." Richard Tuerk notes that Hartmann may be referring to a specific poetess, namely Sarah Helen Whitman whose courtship with Poe involved a poem of her own crafting also titled "The Raven."



Figure 23. Cephas Giovanni Thompson, *Sarah Helen Whitman*, 1838, oil on canvas, 24 x 19.5 in., The Providence Athenæum. Donated by William F. Channing. http://digital.provath.org/items/show/17.

Whitman's poem follows the flight of the raven as it appears with many different women from Poe's writing in a performance of intimate and loving reading. The poem ends with a reference to "The Conversation of Eiros and Charmion" (1839) that suggests that her and Poe might begin and end their lives in conversation with one another:

> Trusting, though with sorrow laden,
> That when life's dark dream is o'er,
> By whatever name the maiden
> Lives within thy mystic lore,
> Eiros, in that distant Aidenn,
> Shall his Charmion meet once more.[656]

As both flirtation and considered critique, Whitman's reference to "whatever name the maiden" foregrounds the pattern in Poe's poetics that, as Eliza Richards argues, draws on the figure of Poetess in writing such as Whitman's. Though Hartmann may not be referencing Whitman's version of "The Raven" this critical speculation exhibits the same kinds of attachments and longing for connection as her poem does in addition to adopting the method of poetic citation. Combing Whitman's existence, if not her poem, together with the additional reference to Botticelli, Hartmann creates an intermedial muse.

[656] Sarah Helen Whitman, *Hours of Life, and Other Poems* (Providence: George H. Whitney, 1853), 69.

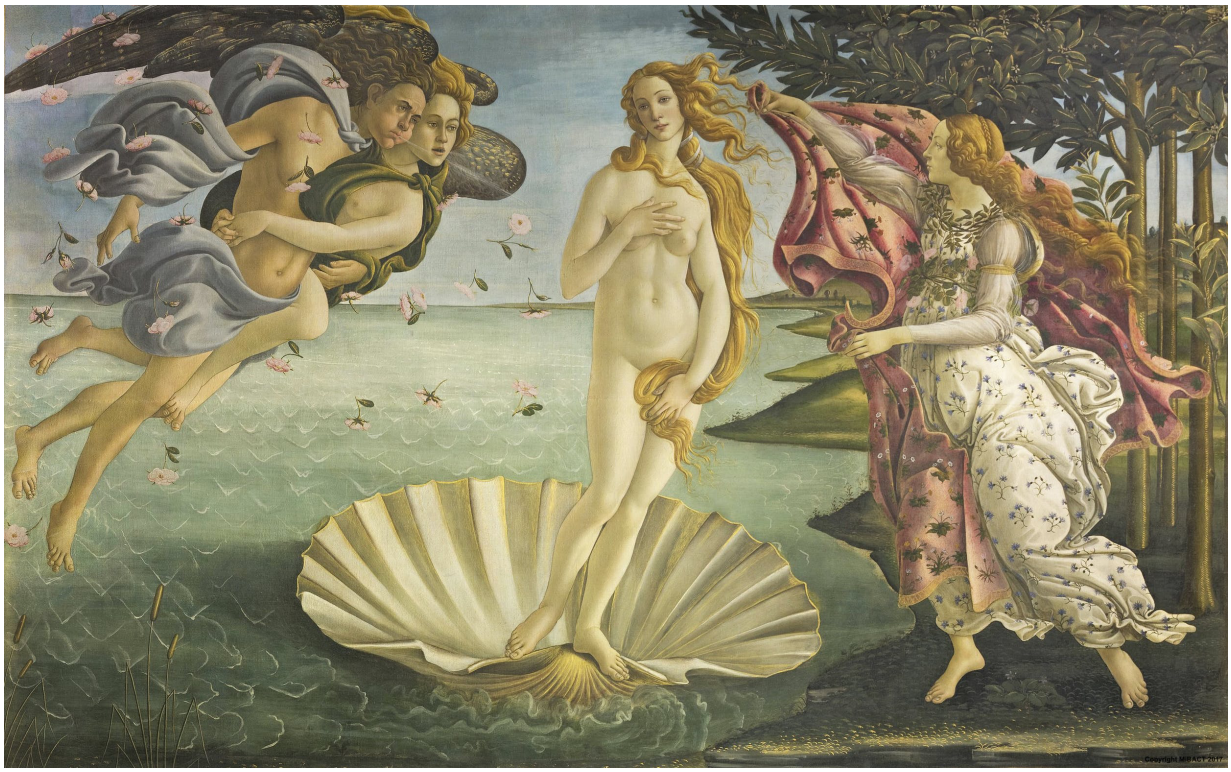


Figure 24. Sandro Botticelli, *Birth of Venus*, ca. 1485, tempera on canvas, 172.5 x 278.5 cm, The Uffizi. https://www.uffizi.it/en/artworks/birth-of-venus.

In Botticelli's canvas, the figures rest flattened on the same picture plane to the extent that the flowers blown by Zephyrus entwined with Chloris on Venus' right appear to pattern Hora's dress on her left. Hartmann's love of nude was well known, having lectured and written on the topic, so it is likely that he had Venus in mind when making the reference. The full nude in slight modesty would have appealed to Hartmann's investment in both the spiritual and immaterial aspects of art even as he championed their sensuous, if not erotic, embodiment. In "Eroticism in Art" Hartmann asks what he considers a provocative question: "Who would not like to sleep with Tintoretto's Venus, with Goya's La maya nude or clothed, or David's Madame de Bellegarde in his Rape of Sabine women?"[657] Hartmann's essay predominately takes aim at

[657] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art" 24a. In *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933). Box 9. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

hypocritical social norms that stifle artistic creation and appreciation, but it also insists that the nude remains within a contemplative relation with its viewer since "Art is not reality, but a suggestion towards a finer reality."[658] If art is the result of the chemical affinities as the essay claims, then the materiality of all bodies resemble Venus that emerges from the sea foam. Hartmann's iterative poetics in moods of melancholy eroticism creates intimacy out of loss in crafting connections between the material and spiritual aspects of mediums of expression including the human itself.

In the letter to Mabbott that describes the design for this criticism based on chemical affinity, Hartmann compares himself to Poe and the essay to Poe's "The Raven" in expressing his frustration at H.L. Mencken's rejection of it:

> I am enclosing another contribution on Poe–carte blanche–which means you can do with it as you like (I have another copy as it really belongs to my Esthetica, the chapter "Reflections and Reactions"). I sent it to Mencken, not so very long ago, but he made some excuse, that he was tempted, still did not quite see that his readers, etc.–just the same dope that Graham projected when Poe offered The Raven.[659]

In Hartmann's letter to Mencken, he calls the piece "a suggestion, an example of the new esthetic criticism (technological esthetics)" and proposes it may be of interest since "[a]t least ten per cent of our venerable population have heard about The Raven."[660] Mencken and Mabbott don't do anything with essay, and it remains unpublished until Richard Tuerk intervenes in 1973. As Hartmann's "intuitive speculation," like all his other engagements with Poe, its stay in the archive may come as no surprise. One wonders what the kind of conversation Hartmann imagined occurring because of this piece. For my part, I believe that the significance of what Hartmann is up to is to affirm an affective and imaginative critical relation with aesthetic

[658] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art," 27.
[659] Sadakichi Hartmann to Thomas Ollive Mabbott, October 1930.
[660] Sadakichi Hartmann to H. L. Mencken, October 29, 1929. In Richard Tuerk, "Sadakichi Hartmann's 'How Poe Wrote the Raven': A Biochemical Explanation," *The Markham Review* 3, no. 5 (February 1973).

expression. For Hartman this might mean confronting the experience of literary history and the figure of the muse as mixed individual. It may mean mourning for his mother and grieving over other losses. Hartmann's intuitive speculation or what I've been calling creative speculations on the poem's origins exhibit a reading that some might say is too close and evinces a deep personal attachment to the poem. I would argue that Hartmann becomes part of the poem even as he allows it to be part of his life. Ultimately, it is my suggestion that if you've heard about "The Raven" you should hear about Sadakichi Hartmann.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Sadakichi Hartmann's *Camera Work*

In response to requests for clarity regarding the critical vocabulary in *The American Amateur Photographer and Camera and Dark Room*, editor J.P. Chalmers presents a glossary of terms that are "constantly in use" in the January 1907 issue of the magazine. In the "endeavor to provide metal [sic] food for all grades of photographers," Chalmers' glossary details working definitions of terms that are ill-defined, yet frequently found in the pages of the monthly since its contributors, "highly educated men and artists of the bush who, in expressing their thoughts, naturally drift into studio talk."[661] Amongst the forty-four terms briefly outlined in the glossary, Chalmers offers a lengthy definition of suggestiveness: "The quality in a picture which makes us imagine things that are not actually represented in the picture. It is often produced by vagueness of form. The so-called fuzzytype has generally the merit of being suggestive (if only of better things)."[662] Suggestiveness may not only account for a lack of technical prowess and perhaps bad taste, but also the ways in which a photograph's sensuous visibility reveals the invisible as imagination, affect, or to use another term not defined in Chalmers' glossary, but present in the contemporaneous discourse on photography: poetry. The enfolding of mediums of aesthetic expression into poetry or rather poiesis as making is nothing new in aesthetic discourse and I don't intend to intervene in any philosophical debate. Rather, my interest is in how these terms circulate within Alfred Stieglitz's journal, *Camera Work*, and Hartmann's relation to them as exhibited the criticism and poetry he wrote in response to the work of painter and photographer,

[661] J.P. Chalmers, "Art Terms Explained: Definitions of Words and Phrases used by Picture Critics and Writers on Art Subjects," *The American Amateur Photographer and Camera and Dark Room* 19, no. 1 (January 1907): 11.
[662] J.P. Chalmers, "Art Terms Explained," 14.

Eduard Steichen. Here, I argue that Hartmann's ekphrastic poetry intervenes in contemporaneous debates concerning the status of photography as art and performs a suggestive intermedial relation between photograph, poem, and reader/viewer, thereby highlighting the importance of an affective epistemology in both the creation and reception of photographic images. Hartmann's reading of the "The Raven" as well as his creative speculations on the poem's origin create the conditions in and through which another medium may offer a critique of a poem itself if not the conditions that created it—Hartmann's near obsession. Bringing together the discourses of photography, his writing on Poe, and the love for his mother, Hartmann's ekphrastic poetry "suggested by" Steichen's photographs performs suggestive reading as poetic making.

Hartmann's thinking about photography and poetry occurs through an exchange with Maurice Maeterlinck in the pages of *Camera Work*. The second volume of the journal (April 1903) was meant to contain a short note from Maeterlinck concerning Steichen's work, but arrived late and was included in third volume (July 1903) instead. Hartmann responds to Maeterlinck in both his essays and poems over the course of *Camera Work*'s second through fourth volumes. Hartmann's poetry draws on common tropological registers in photographic discourse even as it simultaneously seeks to abstract itself as an aesthetic category that may pass critical judgment on long-standing debates concerning the capacities of the photographic medium for artistic expression. In doing so, the divide between photography and poetry is continually renegotiated to the extent that the latter not only justifies the former's artistic status, but also increasingly seems to resemble it. The division between poet and critic likewise blurs as Hartmann aligns his work with Steichen's through the compositional form and performative dimension of the line. Central to Hartmann's critical and creative concerns or use of this line is the status of the feminine nude whose absent presence, in keeping with commonplace

thanatological accounts of photography before and after Barthes, occasions a deep melancholic sadness in his poetic speakers. Hartmann lays bare his affect in the photographic skin of these human forms. These relations near Joshua Scodel's remarks concerning how "ekphrastic objects are normally treated as compensatory substitutes for the unfulfilled desire for a female Other…the ekphrastic object registers both the woman that the poet cannot capture in poetry and the possibility of another, beneficent relationship between a poet and his male audience."[663] The homosocial community created around, and concerned with the creation of, the feminine nude is more complicated in *Camera Work.* Steichen has "captured" something through the mechanism of photography and the results do appear as photogravures, but Hartmann's poetry doesn't try to image or body forth what is already present in the illustrated volume. As his response is "suggested" by them, the poems offer an ekphrasis of feeling consisting of Hartmann's affective response to Steichen's nudes. In rendering his subjective experience of the nudes, Hartmann's poetry, what Chalmers would call "fuzzytypes," creates and blurs a series of aesthetic relations between artist, critic, model, and viewer in Hartmann's melancholy affect. In what follows I trace the critical exchange between Hartmann, Steichen, and Maeterlinck, before turning to Hartmann's ekphrastic responses.

The exchange focuses on the argument that artists should embrace the technological and aesthetic potential in the medium of photographic creation. In his note, Maeterlinck focuses on the permanence, a kind of "immortality," associated with the photography in his remarks and elevates the photographer as an individual artist capable of controlling a medium that seemingly produces objects that outlast time in becoming fragments thereof:

[663] Joshua Scodel qtd. in W.J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 165.

> It is already many years since the sun revealed to us its power to portray objects and beings more quickly and more accurately than can pencil or crayon. It seemed to work only its own way and at its own pleasure. At first man was restricted to making permanent that which the impersonal and unsympathetic light had registered. He had not yet been permitted to imbue it with thought. But to-day it seems that thought has found a fissure through which to penetrate the mystery of this anonymous force, invade it, subjugate it, animate it, and compel it to say such things as have not yet been said in all the realm of chiaroscuro, of grace, of beauty and of truth.[664]

Although drawing on the language of light common in photographic discourse, Maeterlinck goes further in highlighting the power of the individual artist by creating a history in which the work of a personified sun is taken over by the photographer. Following Maeterlinck's origin story for the medium, it seems that photographers—in many ways offspring of the sun by inheriting the star's creative will—likely approach their artistic projects with enough passionate light and heat equal to the sun's own photosphere. Maeterlinck asserts human dominance over nature through the camera in an incredibly violent manner over a feminized personification of light. In other words, light is given a body to be penetrated and subjugated by the camera and the photographic, always artistic, will. Maeterlinck's misogynistic anthropocentrism is unsettling, and claims such as "Man, to-day, is on the point of realizing that everything around him begs to be allowed to come to his assistance and is ever ready to work with him and for him, if he will but make his wishes understood" push the figure of the masculine poet past the point of absurdity in unsettling ways.[665] For Maeterlinck, the artist must listen to the "modern voice" particularly as "[t]his glad message is daily spreading more widely through all the domains of human intelligence."[666] The intertwining concerns of the aesthetic and the epistemic appropriately close Maeterlinck's comments and, again, assert the fragile duality of the photograph as both art object and indexical

[664] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled" [For the Steichen Number of *Camera Work*], *Camera Work*, no. 3 (July 1903): special insert.
[665] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."
[666] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."

document even as they cast the artist as a figure capable of mediating these realms through its creative wish fulfillment in the modernity of Maeterlinck's writing.

Maeterlinck's emphasis on writing instruments is in keeping with common reference points in the history of photographic discourse, recalling specifically the first photographically illustrated book, William Henry Fox Talbot's *The Pencil of Nature* (1844), and the tradition of relying on the etymology photography as drawing with light to either critique the medium or to justify its artistic value through appeals to the natural world.[667] In his introduction, Talbot notes that the "plates of this work have been obtained by the mere action of Light upon sensitive paper" having been "impressed by Nature's hand."[668] Talbot focuses on creating the conditions for nature to impress its anthropomorphized hand—joining hands as it were with the photographer—in the creation of photographic images. In Talbot's "Brief Historical Sketch of the Invention of the Art," he describes the "inimitable beauty of the pictures of nature's painting" when outlining scenery using a camera obscura as "fairy pictures, creations of a moment, and destined to rapidly fade away" as a motivating force behind his experimentations to fix the image.[669] Using a vocabulary that would have pleased Hartmann, Talbot foregrounds a relationship created through the photogenic drawing in attempting to reach toward the fairylike aspects of the natural world in stark contrast to Maeterlinck's insistence that the world appears in front of the photographer to be used. Maeterlinck, in comparing the inadequate pencils and crayons of artists against the "impersonal and unsympathetic light" of a personified nature, foregrounds the domineering capacity of the photographer that is able to use the camera as writing instrument in a way to be able to narrativize the world—to "compel it [light] to say."[670]

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[667] Talbot also referred to the process of photogenic drawing as skiagraphy or shadow drawing in his notebook *M*.
[668] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature* (London: Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1844), 2.
[669] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature*, 7 and 8.
[670] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."

Maeterlinck's shift from the visual to the verbal within photographic creation is in part due to the inherent anthropomorphization in language that cannot help but attribute agency in the grammar of its articulation. As it personalizes light in unsympathetic ways, Maeterlinck's language also marks the way in which a photographer's affect may be imbued in the image as the medium is impersonal if not neutral. Maeterlinck's shift in bodily registers foregrounds the critical conversation that his note is determined to intervene in—accuracy is a matter, or the matter, of saying.

For Talbot, the photograph also speaks, or rather attests to its presence in a mutual indexical relation—the proof of a shared experience. Talbot aligns viewing and reading practices in the eighth plate from *The Pencil of Nature*, *A Scene in a Library*, and its accompanying text that describes one of "the many novel ideas which the discovery of Photography has suggested…[a] rather curious experiment or speculation."[671] In the speculation, Talbot is interested in the portion of the electromagnetic spectrum that remains invisible to the human eye, the "certain *invisible rays* which lie beyond the violet, and beyond the limits of the spectrum, and whose existence is only revealed to us" when "thrown upon a sheet of sensitive paper."[672] Talbot envisions an apartment as camera obscura wherein only this invisible light touches whoever might be present in the dark room:

> Now, I would propose to separate these invisible rays from the rest, by suffering them to pass into an adjoining apartment through an aperture in a wall or screen of partition. This apartment would thus become filled (we must not call it *illuminated*) with invisible rays, which might be scattered in all directions by a convex lens placed behind the aperture. If there were a number of persons in the room, no one would see the other: and yet nevertheless if a *camera* were so placed as to point in the direction in which any one were standing, it would take his portrait, and reveal his actions.[673]

[671] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature.*
[672] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature.*
[673] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature.* Emphasis in original.

As Talbot explains in reference to the trope of the optical unconscious, "[f]or, to use a metaphor we have already employed, the eye of the camera would see plainly where the human eye would find nothing but darkness."[674] Talbot imagines this scene, perhaps in or out of a library, as literary, but laments that it may be too difficult to read: "Alas! that this speculation is somewhat too refined to be introduced with effect into a modern novel or romance; for what a *dénouement* we should have, if we could suppose the secrets of the darkened chamber to be revealed by the testimony of the imprinted paper."[675] What does Talbot imagine happening in that dark room? Talbot's speculation creates a series of analogous relationships wherein the room is both camera and stage and people become negatives in a photographic process as well as referents of images created in a separate relation of light and surface. As a scene of reading, or reading a scene of photographing, in relation to literary forms of romance and mystery, what seems to be revealed most clearly in the "testimony of the imprinted paper" are the relations amongst those in the dark room affectively charged if not also physically enacted. As my reading is as speculative as Talbot's experiment, it only serves to highlight the ways in which the metaphor or the prosthetic of the camera's eye can reveal not only the material motions of existence, but also their attendant emotions by making visible the unseen but nevertheless felt. The salted paper print, less crisp in its granulation and without the same detail of a daguerreotype, depicts lined shelves in staged production of "library" in the outdoor courtyard of Talbot's home, Lacock Abbey. In what is commonly interpreted as a self-portrait, the shelves contain volumes of *The Philosophical Magazine*, Lanzi's *La Storia Pittorica dell'Italia*, Thomas Gainsford's *Poetæ Minores Græci*, Wilkinson's *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*, *Philological Essays*, *Miscellanies of Science*, and *Botanische Schriften*, but do not include Talbot's first book, *Legendary Tales, in*

[674] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature.*
[675] William Henry Fox Talbot, *The Pencil of Nature.*

Verse and Prose (1829).[676] The books emerge from a dark background on floating shelves and have been arranged with care, but with a demonstrated ease, as some lean over in want of support. The texture of their spines is visible including the fraying of the volume in the center of the second shelf. This is to say that either a book, a person, or both are made visible through Talbot's photographic experimentations. Talbot imagines a book that has not yet been written, but that may have a place on the shelves that appear within his own experimental text. The photograph makes space, creates a new kind of library, for literature to come even as these new literary creations will contain photographic exploits and experimentations as the subject matter of their generic performances. My digression into Talbot's book is meant to return to the exchange in *Camera Work* using the lens of imprinted testimony both in the photograph and on the body.

[676] See André Jammes, "A Scene in a Library," *Photographie*, no. 1 (Spring 1983).

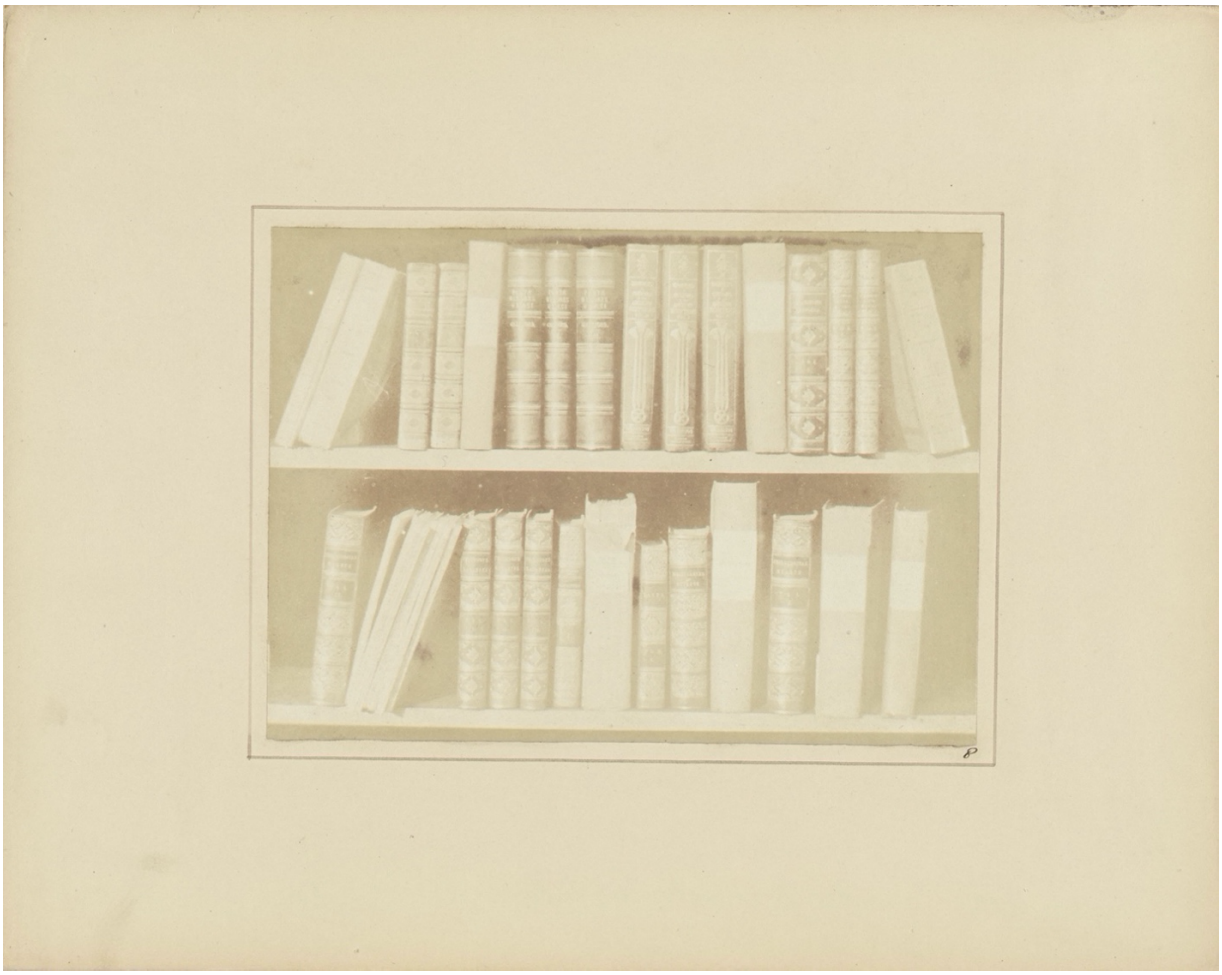


Figure 25. William Henry Fox Talbot, *A Scene in a Library*, plate VII from *The Pencil of Nature* (1844-1846), salted paper print from paper negative, 12.9 × 17.8 cm (5 1/16 × 7 in.), Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum. Digital image courtesy of the Getty's Open Content Program. https://www.getty.edu/art/collection/objects/101566.

Maeterlinck's insistence on giving voice through photographic form aligns with his writing on poetry that does not appear in *Camera Work* The poet, much like the photographer, exhibits a profound understanding of the material world as they move through, and take from it, in the process of creation:

> Great poetry, if we observe it closely, is made up of three principal elements: first, verbal beauty; then the contemplation and passionate portrayal [la peinture passionnées] of what actually exists about us and within us, that is to say, nature and our sentiments; and, finally, enveloping the whole work and creating the atmosphere proper to it, the idea which the poet forms of the unknown in which float about the beings and things which he evokes, the mystery which dominates them, judges them, and presides over their destinies.[677]

Maeterlinck's three principal elements escalate in their complication, but it is not clear how Maeterlinck views their arrangement. The materiality of language as "verbal beauty" both maintains and grounds the relationship between the other elements. The second element as a conjunction of both "contemplation and passionate portrayal" begins to create a relation if not equivalence between inner life and outer expression since Maeterlinck does not see them as separated in this poetic schema. The enveloping atmosphere of the idea of the unknown becomes a medium wherein "beings and things" evoked in poetry "float" in a way that allows the poet to arrange them into their destined compositions. What Hartmann might refer to as the suggestive atmosphere created by the poet's idea of "the unknown" is oddly subjugating in what seems like Maeterlinck's usual stylistic overcompensation. Yet, the judgement it casts in a reverberative motion on the "beings and things" within the atmosphere of its own creation, may provide a point of contact between poet and reader in a shared interpretive act based on feeling. The shift in pronouns, notably in the 'us', blurs the movement that Maeterlinck appears to create between the poet and the reader or critic in outlining these elements. Agency is only directly attributed to the poet in the formation of the unknown idea. In passing judgement on great poetry, it is unclear if Maeterlinck is writing as a poet or a critic. Maeterlinck's description of poetry reads like the passage from Hartmann's *Autobiography* describing his relationship to his mother: "I always felt as if I owe much to my mother. I mean the dreamy, mystic elements in my make up. And there

[677] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Préface—Théâtre I," in *European Theories of the Drama*, ed. and trans. Barrett H. Clark (Cincinnati: Steward & Kidd Company, 1918), 414.

are many traits in my character that I myself cannot explain, something that seems curious and strange to me and comes unbidden, and helps to shape my destiny."[678] In shaping the destiny of poems or lives, Maeterlinck turns away from explanation in favor of action and feeling. As an expressive act of cutting and selection, Maeterlinck's description of the compositional aspects of poetry also reads as if he was writing about photography:

> One may even affirm that a poem draws the nearer to beauty and loftier truth in the measure that it eliminates words that merely explain the action, and substitutes for them others that reveal, not the so-called "soul-state," but I know not what intangible and unceasing striving of the soul towards its own *beauty and truth*. And so much the nearer, also, does it draw to the true life.[679]

In the soul's striving towards its own realization of beauty and truth, the double movement of the poem escalates as it reaches towards ideals even as it returns to itself or to "the true life." The provisional "soul-state," or what we might call affect, provides a space for self-reflection within the poem. As single words may alter the course of the soul's striving or self-revelation, the inseparability of Maeterlinck's poetic elements is emphasized. If this is what a poem or photograph consist of, how do you read it? Or, more importantly for Hartman, how you write about it? It turns out that these same poetic elements describe criticism as well.

Hartmann identifies with and adopts Maeterlinck's language in both his critical pieces on photography and in his poetry. The extent to which Hartmann relies on Maeterlinck as an interlocutor becomes clear by glancing at Hartmann's unpublished manuscript *Pictorial Photography in America: A Collection of Essays and Appreciations* (1903). In an intended chapter, "Is Photography an Art? (A Much Disputed Question)," Hartmann chooses to begin with Maeterlinck's and his response as a definitive answer to this longstanding nineteenth-

[678] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Autobiography*, 3.
[679] Maurice Maeterlinck, "The Tragical in Daily Life" in *The Treasure of the Humble*, trans. Alfred Sutro (New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1897), 112. Emphasis added.

century debate. Hartmann's response to Maeterlinck in *Camera Work*, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," takes its title from Whitman's "Roaming in Thought (*After reading* HEGEL)" that first appears in the 1881-1882 *Leaves of Grass*:

> Roaming in thought over the Universe, I saw the little that is
> Good steadily hastening towards immortality,
> And the vast all that is call'd Evil I saw hastening to merge itself
> and become lost and dead.[680]

In the short poem Whitman's spirit, if we want to call it that, in movements of scopic thinking wanders the universe and watches the sublation of "all that is call'd Evil" lose itself and die in the immortality of becoming. Whitman, of course, is there at the beginning and end of time. To become dead in immortality reflects the generative contradiction or internal self-differentiation that hastens this emergence into being. The existence of the photograph as being and nothing whose essence is to appear in its relationality may have been on Hartmann's mind when choosing this title. Oppositions fall to the ground (*geht zugrunde*)—perhaps like the soul of the speaker in "The Raven" that remains floating upon the floor—as sublation does not do away with difference, but rather like the essence of Whitman's universe, is a unity of identity and difference. In *Esthetic Verities,* Hartmann claims that Hegel, "with a big heart gave ample consideration to the arts," and "got as near as anyone to the solution of esthetics by saying: 'the beautiful shows itself through a sensuous medium representing the external world in spiritual animation.'"[681] In writing for *Camera Work*, Hartmann becomes this animating force. In framing his response in this way, Hartmann casts himself as a poet in the fashion of Whitman and, as a philosopher critic, associates Maeterlinck's writing on poetry and photography with a Hegelian notions of art. There is also the implication that Hartmann enacts Whitman's poem, separating

[680] Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1881-1882), 216.
[681] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Thought-Builders," 27. In *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933). Box 9. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.

"the little that is/Good" from what, to use the language of Hartmann's response, appears "lifeless and can never express sentiment."[682] Like Whitman, Hartmann refuses the easy binary and focuses instead on a different kind of relationality, one that is motivated by the individual of the critic capable of recognizing beautiful expressions regardless of their medial form.

In his response, Hartmann agrees with Maeterlinck and likewise encourages artists to make use of "the natural forces which all other professions utilize to their utmost capacity" and, even though "Maeterlinck's answer is a little bit elusive," declares that the poet's "sympathy is entirely with the artistic photographer."[683] Hartmann acknowledges that much of what Maeterlinck says, or for that matter what he says about photography, add little to what has already been said about the medium since its inception. Hartmann, in fact, performs this gesture by quoting from his first article on artistic photography from 1895 to validate his claims. Both in the earlier article and in this later response, Hartmann positions himself against artists rather than other critics in debates over the medium: "Artists are apt to argue that photographs are lifeless and can never express sentiment. I beg to differ. It depends entirely on whether the photographer is poetically endowed or not."[684] As poetry becomes the criteria by and through which a photograph and even a photographer is judged to create life and sentiment in art, the nude becomes a defining example in Hartmann's turn away from the medium specificity in a movement towards poetic affect:

[682] Sadakichi Hartmann [Sidney Allan], "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," *Camera Work*, no. 4 (October 1903): 21.
[683] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 21.
[684] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 21.

> Everybody knows how difficult it is to draw a nude. The camera does it in a few moments. And to render it artistic, as for instance Steichen does, only the same faculties which the painter employs in painting his painting have to be put into action. The conception, the pose, the study of light and shade, the arrangement of the accessories are, after all, the essentials, in comparison to which the actual drawing is also only a mechanical process.[685]

The medium matters less for Hartmann than the "conception" and staging of the nude. In other words, it is the photographer's relation to the nude that is represented in the photograph rather than the nude itself—an obviousness still worth pointing out as it matters for Hartmann's take. In privileging the artistic "faculties" that are "put into action" in art making, Hartmann creates an equivalence between the "mechanical process[es]" of photography and drawing as secondary within the creative act. Rather than anthropomorphize nature or the light thereof in the manner of Talbot or Maeterlinck, Hartmann performs the reverse in making the body into a creative apparatus that mechanically reproduces. Though Hartmann will return to the tropes that give body and agency to absent, inanimate, and unrealized constructions in his other responses to Steichen's work, Hartmann's willingness to equate the work of the camera to the movements of the body may work against many of his own critical commonplaces in creating a dualism between conception and embodied creation, but in describing the human body like a camera the comparison ends up tending, however paradoxically, toward naturalizing ends. The body mechanical that represents seems different from the nude body that is represented. What is most difficult in drawing a nude is not explained by Hartmann since "everybody knows" why that is, but the employment of artistic faculties that he catalogues are too general to apply to the specificities of nude portraiture.[686] I imagine that Hartmann does indeed mean everybody. The

[685] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 23.
[686] Hartmann outlines some of what might account for these difficulties through his own development of aesthetic appreciation in "Learning the Language of Sense Perception": "Although in an offhand way a student of artistic anatomy I knew too little of the nude, particularly of the naked body in action, to realize the full beauty of arrested movements, attitudes of calm, and the play of muscles underneath the surface. I had no idea even of the correct

expectations and understandings of the nude as genre are well known and thus create a point of contact and connection through shared knowledge even as the attempt at representing a nude becomes a way for an artist to differentiate themselves from the crowd. Steichen's photographs, and perhaps Hartmann's own poetry, perform this poetic endowment. How should the nude be viewed?

Hartmann outlines the perspective through which he views Steichen's photographs and all instances of artistic expression in relation to aesthetic pleasure. Hartmann elides hierarchical questions about mediums by underscoring the entwinement of pleasure and knowledge, what Maeterlinck refers to as truth and beauty, in aesthetic reception:

> That a photographic print can be a work of art has been proven in rare instances, at least to my satisfaction. If a picture affects me with a special and unique impression of pleasure, I care little whether it is a chromo-lithograph or a painting, a photographic print or an etching. What is this Craig Annan or Demachy print to *me*? What effect does it really produce on me? Does it give me an esthetic pleasure? And if so, what sort or degree of pleasure? Does it satisfy me as much as a Meryon etching or a Shannon lithograph? The answers to these questions are the aim of all true criticism; to know one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, and to realize it distinctly. It is at such moments absolutely futile to trouble oneself with the abstract question whether a photographic print can be a work of art, or what the exact relation of photography is to other art-expressions.[687]

There is a hint of exasperation in Hartmann's swift dismissal of the "futile" question. If affect connection is the defining feature of aesthetic judgment, then the debates over photography's status as a medium of expression not only miss the kinds of impact and connection the medium offers, but moreover, attest to a misunderstanding of aesthetics more generally. Asking the question marks for Hartmann a lack of affective and critical attunement to art and to life as such questions are predicated on separation and distancing within an aesthetic encounter and in the

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position of nipples on the female breast, and did not know that it is the small muscle under the gluteus maximus which makes the latter's curve look so gracefully bold in a woman's back (28).

[687] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 23-24. Emphasis in original.

world in which this encounter might take place. To recognize photography as art becomes a way of recognizing different possible forms of relation—the purpose of art for Hartmann. The relationships created in and through photographic expression appear first in Hartmann's visit to Steichen's studio.

Visiting Steichen's Studio

Hartmann frames "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," written under the pseudonym, Sidney Allan, through descriptions of inclement weather. The image and attendant mood return in the first of his ekphrastic poems on Steichen's photographs, "Dawn-Flowers," which appears on the page immediately following the narrative of his visit. The lines of the rain blur the cityscape as they saturate New York: "A dark, chilly December afternoon. The rain falls in thin, straight lines on the streets of New York, and the lighted shop-windows are reflected, like some blurred and golden dream, on the slushy pavement."[688] Hartmann will refer to this "blurred and golden dream" as the "golden dreams that poets dream" at the end of the piece after he traces theses lines into and out of Steichen's compositions.[689] New York is a city developed through photographic process as the rain coats its surfaces for reflective inscription. The projection into, and onto, the cityscape of critical affect and the narrative of the visit described reflect Hartmann's approach in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," as the intimacy of "a visit" is a way for Hartmann to outline his critical project. For Hartmann, "every effort, no matter in what medium, may become a work of art provided it manifests with utmost sincerity and intensity the

[688] Sadakichi Hartmann [Sidney Allan], "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," *Camera Work* no. 2 (April 1903): 25.
[689] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.

emotions of a man face to face with nature and life."[690] Artistic creation and reception becomes a series of face-to-face encounters.

In detailing the importance of such visits Hartmann notes, "I remember of having visited at least four hundred and fifty American studios for a similar purpose—as I have convinced myself that it is the only way to get at a man's individuality."[691] The individuality of the artist and the critic expressed in a moment of shared contact mediated by aesthetic expression defines Hartmann's critical perspective. If living, and if possible, Hartmann seeks artists out. Hartmann insists that "art criticism is to me nothing but a peculiar mania for searching in every expression of art, and life as well, for its most individual, perhaps innermost, essence."[692] The clause that includes life within this "mania for searching" is telling for the ways in which Hartmann moves between self-reflection, Steichen's art, and the cityscape. Life, as defined through this searching as a critical existential condition makes everyone into a critic, and Hartmann's model of mind a way of being in, or at least viewing, the world. Hartmann's search for "essence" in the visit coupled with the Hegelian reference through Whitman in his response to Maeterlinck offers a generative contradiction. As the rain falls to the ground, essence appears, or rather the essence of artistic expression appears for Hartmann as it must. As this essence, which is not opposed to its appearance, flickers in its coming to be and ceasing to be, it maintains in a critical relation captured in a moment like a photograph. Though the critic brings their subjective, importantly suggestive responses, to art, neither the subjectivity of the critic nor the "essence" of art is privileged. The dynamic of their relationality is what matters most if, indeed, Hartmann is gesturing to Hegel in this moment of his visit. Suggestivism does not view artistic expression

[690] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 27.
[691] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 25.
[692] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 25.

merely for what is not there as Chalmers' definition indicates, but necessarily attends to the appearance of art in mediums of expression as a point of contact. It is for these reasons that Hartmann draws a connective line between life, his poetry, Steichen's compositions, and his criticism.

Hartmann clarifies what he means by life and his investments in that category in moving away from biography: "Biographical data do not interest me. What is the difference where a man is born, how old he is, where he studied, and where he was medaled? His art must speak—that is all I care for."[693] Like Maeterlinck who enjoins photographers to compel nature to speak, Hartmann wants art to talk to him. In his response to Maeterlinck, Hartmann refers to this art as "a picture [that] affects me with a special and unique impression of pleasure."[694] The pleasure of personification outlines relationship between critic and artistic expression that consists of a shared viewing experience. Perhaps this is a fantasy of an art piece looking at, and talking about, itself along with a critic. Or it might simply be a way of imagining being in the artist's studio engaged in conversation like Hartmann often was: "He [Steichen] showed me his paintings, sketches, and photographs in rapid succession, which is one of those ordeals the art critic has to go through if he wants to become acquainted with a new man."[695] Hartmann insists on the intimacy of looking together.

Though rather an undercurrent of meaning in the piece, Hartmann offers a societal critique by way of contrasting the intimate moments he privileges over against the intrusions of modern life. Hartmann claims that "the 'artistic photograph' answers better than any other graphic art to the special necessities of a democratic and leveling age like ours" and muses that

[693] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 25.
[694] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 23.
[695] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 25.

"besides some technical charms like the solidity of dark tones and the facility with which forms can be lost in shadows, is the principal reason why Steichen has chosen it as one of his mediums of expression."[696] The democratizing potential of the photograph has been well spoken for by artists and critics since its nineteenth-century emergence. As both a part, and reflection, of life, the photograph offers new ways of thinking about representation scaling from the individual to the global. Here, however, it is curious that Hartmann singles out this medium of expression amongst others considering that the criteria by which he normally judges aesthetic experience is through pleasure. The visit ends with Hartmann with a broken intimacy that nevertheless retains the contemplative attitude that Hartmann advocates for: "I seize my umbrella and say 'Good night' indifferently, as I might say it to any stranger, and he answers absent-mindedly 'Come again!' He is thinking of his soul, and I am thinking of mine. What a foolish occupation is this busy, practical world of ours!"[697] Hartmann often plays the fool if it helps him to motivate a serious critique. Though Hartmann speaks despairingly of the "busy, practical world," the visit still ends with both artist and critic thinking about their souls. Unsurprisingly, it turns out that the "peculiar mania" in which Hartmann searches "every expression of art, and life as well for its most individual, perhaps innermost, essence" eventuates into these moments of self-reflection that are only made possible through generative contact and connection between himself and art that returns his gaze.[698]

The conditions that create this opportunity for connection and reflection are described by Hartmann in relation to poetry. In the response to Maeterlinck, Hartmann claims that for a

[696] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 27.
[697] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[698] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 25.

photograph to express life and sentiment it "depends entirely on whether the photographer is poetically endowed or not."[699] Steichen, of course, is such a photographer-poet:

> To me Steichen is a poet of rare depth and significance, who expresses his dreams, as does Maeterlinck, by surface decoration, and with the simplest of images—for instance, a vague vista of some nocturnal landscape seen through various clusters of branches, or a group of beech- and birch-trees, whose bark forms a quaint mosaic of horizontal color suggestions—can add something to our consciousness of life. His lines, blurred and indistinct as they generally are, are surprisingly eloquent and rhythmical. They become with him as suggestive as the dividing-line of some sad woman's lips, as fragile as some tremulous flower-branch writing strange hieroglyphics on the pale-blue sky, or as mystic as the visionary forms which rise in our mind's eye, as we peer through the prison-bars of modern life into some nocturnal landscape or twilight atmosphere.[700]

Through and on the surface, Steichen resembles Maeterlinck, a "man who is modern to his finger-tips" according to Hartmann.[701] In adding to the "consciousness of life," it appears that the expression of dreams via simple landscape imagery provides a way to "peer through the prison-bars of modern life." In Hartmann's suggestive reading, Steichen's "lines, blurred and indistinct" can speak in the way that Hartmann wants. They are "surprisingly eloquent and rhythmical" as if they were found in a poem. In defining suggestiveness as "the dividing-line of some sad woman's lips" Hartmann returns to the feminine muse and the potentiality of speech in the representation of a closed mouth in melancholic mood. Though the speaker of Hartmann's poems often speaks for these figures, it appears here that the landscape may be compelled to articulate itself as Maeterlinck claims. As the "sad woman's lips" remain closed, the reflective agency of the artist through processes of prosopopoeia may be the only way this landscape can talk back. Yet, the landscape appears to write of its own accord. The movement from speech to writing occurs through a return to a landscape depicting a "flower-branch writing strange hieroglyphics on the pale-blue sky." As nature not only speaks in Maeterlinck's sense, but also

[699] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 21.
[700] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.
[701] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 21.

writes in Hartmann's, the medial transformation, or what I term the creation of an intermedial intimacy, allows this suggestivism to include the "mystic," "visionary forms which rise in our mind's eye." The dreams of the photographer appear to the mind's eye through these landscapes. These are, after all, Hartmann's associations to describe the suggestive and the elements of Hartmann's description follow the same double movement inward and outward that Maeterlinck defines as great poetry. As hieroglyphics of a new speech or new way of seeing, Steichen's landscapes are created by, and aid in creating, an affective critical consciousness. In "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception" from his much later, and unpublished, *Esthetic Verities*, Hartmann equates the development of sense perception and artistic appreciation to learning a language. Hartmann insists on training, on learning to read the hieroglyphics of the landscape, "to be able to see things and note sensations and record in one's memory what one has seen and felt, to appreciate, to remember at will, and to classify these impressions as possessions in a way that is personal and peculiar to oneself."[702] It is only then that one is able to use "this medium of expression like a poet in individual selection."[703] To create, but also to view and appreciate artistic expression, entails for Hartmann the development of a poetic sensibility wherein the body becomes a medium through which suggestive impressions are recognized and recorded.

Curiously, Hartmann notes that the "only fault that I find with his landscapes, as with the majority of his pictures, is that they are not finished pictures. They are sketches. A mere suggestion suffices him. It is left to the imagination of the spectator to carry them out to their full mental realization."[704] This apparent ambivalence in Hartmann's assessment foregrounds the

[702] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 1. In *Esthetic Verities* (1927-1933). Box 9. Sadakichi Hartmann Papers (MS068). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside.
[703] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 13.
[704] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.

difficulty of using suggestiveness as a heuristic. More importantly, even though Hartmann describes Steichen's satisfaction with "mere suggestion" as a kind of fault, the criticism sounds a bit hollow after the poetic effusion. In finishing the picture along with Steichen, Hartmann's spectator develops an emotional and imaginative connection to the photographer in keeping with a new consciousness of their own dreamlike expression. The fault or failure is generative and might be what Hartmann most prefers in Steichen's photographs. The kinds of connections or points of contact occur with the most depth in Steichen's landscapes and nudes.

In Steichen's landscapes, Hartmann highlights the creative capacity of the photographer as a form of poetic world-making even as the objects composing this world can be traced back in their indexicality to the phenomenal world in front of the camera's lens:

> In his landscapes he reveals himself much more clearly. He has created a world of his own, but one based on actual things, translated into dreams. The rain still falls in thin, straight lines upon the blurred symphony of black and gold that glistens and glimmers on the wet pavements of Fifth Avenue, and there seems to be something analogous in the vertical lines of Steichen's landscapes and the gray lines of the rain outside. Nobody has carried the composition of lines further than Mr. Steichen. All his pictures are composed in vertical, diagonal, and outer-twisting line-work, but the lines are not as distinct and scientific as in Chavannes' or Tryon's pictures. They are not outlines, they only serve as accentuation. He endows each line with a mystic quality, and they run like some strange rune through his tonal composition.[705]

The translation of "things" into "dreams" in a photograph or a poem is the defining feature of artistic expression in Hartmann's sense. Hartmann immediately enacts this translation by turning once more to the rain outside of the studio in the creation of his analogy. Yet, in even within that gesture Hartmann references Whistler's *Nocturne in Black and Gold, the Falling Rocket* (1875) to sustain the equivalence the piece creates between landscapes and cityscapes as surfaces of inscription. As Steichen's lines do not outline, but rather accent, the composition of the photograph is always on the verge of its own disappearance as these lines don't define

[705] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.

compositional forms, but rather indicate where they may or may not appear in much the same way Whistler's painting of a firework show over London's Cremorne Gardens captures light in the moments it becomes and ceases to be visible in golden flecks. In the center of the canvas above the smoke that rises, a constellation of these lights appears speckled against the bluish black tones of the sky. There, visible brushstrokes leave faint white streaks in a parallel falling motion creating lines that Hartmann's eye may have followed through the rainy cityscape and into and out of Steichen's photographs. As the embers fall and fade like the rain outside of Steichen's studio, mysticism returns in Hartmann's description as these lines as "strange runes" contain a "mystic quality." In the "runes" Hartmann combines alphabets, flows of blood and water, movements of bodies and celestial objects, and poetic composition and performance, and lamentation. Are these runes the same "visionary forms which rise in our mind's eye" in the most suggestive of senses? [706]

[706] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.



Figure 26. James Abbott McNeill Whistler, *Nocturne in Black and Gold, the Falling Rocket*, 1875, oil on panel, 60.3 × 46.7 cm (23 3/4 × 18 3/8 in), Detroit Institute of Arts. Gift of Dexter M. Ferry, Jr. https://www.dia.org/art/collection/object/nocturne-black-and-gold-falling-rocket-6493.



Figure 27: Eduard Steichen, *The Pool*, 1903, photomechanical print (photogravure) on Japanese paper, Stanford, Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University; Gift of Dr. and Mrs. R. Joseph Monsen, 1977.104. https://cantorcollection.stanford.edu/objects-1/info/12265.
© 2021 The Estate of Edward Steichen/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Of the two Steichen landscapes included in *Camera Work*, Hartmann is likely referencing the "vertical lines" of *The Pool*. "In fact, a picture of just a puddle of water with mud clots protruding" according to Steichen, *The Pool* taken in Milwaukee, Wisconsin depicts trees in a small clearing that cast both their leaves and their shadows across the surface of water.[707] In capturing or reflecting an image of reflection, *The Pool* foregrounds the beauty of the forest landscape through a formal composition that naturalizes the photographic medium in the process. The blurred lines of trees in the right stretch into the ground and over the surface of the water in touching the topmost and bottommost edges of the photogravure extending, as Hartmann reads them, in connection with the viewer. In the foreground they intersect with emerging mud and foliage strewn diagonally across the picture plane like the gold specks of Whistler's *Nocturne* or lights reflected in the pavement outside of Steichen's studio. The shallow depth of field blurs the lines of the wood. As these trees lose the individuality of their natural forms as they are abstracted into the background, they become a mass resembling a mountain range traced against the gray sky. Steichen remarks that in making the photograph, "the technical problem was solved by setting the focus on the flat foreground and regulating the resulting diffusion in the woods by opening or closing the diaphragm of the lens."[708] The suggestive diffusion of flatness creates the experience of two kinds of distance in the wooded landscape. Although this loss of form is not complete, the shapes of the trees are more "in focus" as reflections on the surface of the forest pool in a way that appropriately recalls the medium of their representation—the surface water becomes a photographic emulsion. The water not only reflects the wooded landscape, but also Steichen's affect.

[707] Edward Steichen, *A Life in Photography* (New York: Doubleday, 1963).
[708] Edward Steichen, *A Life in Photography.*

Steichen describes these woods as "particularly appealing on gray or misty days, or very late in the afternoon and at twilight" as "under those conditions, the woods had moods, and the moods aroused emotional reactions that I tried to render in photographs."[709] As for Hartmann, these twilight atmospheres are privileged for the ways in which they appear to convey affect more readily through diffusive light and formal blurring. As Steichen writes, "[t]he haunting, elusive quality of twilight excited in me an emotion that I felt compelled to evoke in the images I was making. Emotional reaction to the qualities of places, things, and people became the principal goal in my photography."[710] Hartmann's ekphrastic poetry suggested by Steichen as well as his critical pieces present his emotional reaction to Steichen's own as mediated by the visual representation of the landscape. Hartmann's assessment that in "landscapes he [Steichen] reveals himself much more clearly" evinces an attunement to this kind of artistic approach.[711] In an earlier short essay, "The American School" (1902), which originally in London's *The Photogram* and reprinted in *Camera Notes* amongst many other photographic journals, Steichen also speaks of the importance of this emotional reaction as feeling: "What a beautiful hour of the day is that of the twilight when things disappear and seem to melt into each other, and a great beautiful feeling of peace overshadows all. Why not, if we feel this, have this feeling reflect itself in our work?"[712] To be *overshadowed* with a feeling of peace as forms melt into one another within the twilight atmosphere provides its own resounding answer to the rhetorical question. On the other end of the aesthetic relation, Hartmann advocates for a similar reflection of feeling in critical work.

[709] Edward Steichen, *A Life in Photography.*
[710] Edward Steichen, *A Life in Photography.*
[711] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.
[712] Edward J. Steichen, "The American School," *Camera Notes* 6, no. 1 (July 1902): 23.

Such affective critical investments are not unusual, but Hartmann perhaps a bit more than his contemporaries performs the drama of such relations. Charles H. Caffin, whose "Eduard J. Steichen's Work. —An Appreciation" appears before Hartmann's "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," also spends time visiting Steichen's *The Pool* with a similar critical approach.[713] For Caffin, the photograph "involves more than dignity of composition and sensitive apprehension of the subtle differences in tone" as it becomes "the expression of grave, large, tender imagination."[714] Caffin, like Hartmann, also follows the elements of poetry laid out by Maeterlinck in moving from the materiality of the image and its composition toward the unknown affective idea that envelops the print in what for Caffin, appears as a tender atmosphere. From here, Caffin sticks with his subjective response to the print: "while I can recall no photographic landscape more sweetly impressive, it fascinates me most because I feel that it puts me in touch with a creative spirit, fresh, enchanting and invigorating."[715] In approximating a baptism in *The Pool*'s muddy waters, Caffin exhibits the kind of aesthetic sensibility that Hartmann encourages everyone to develop. To translate and transport his feelings to the reader, Caffin asks his readers to consider the feeling of a landscape that is not at all like the one depicted in Steichen's print: "Have you ever happened upon a spring in your summerings among the mountains? High up in the rarified air, clear, limpid, pure; bubbling, dancing in the sunlight, refreshment to the sense."[716] Although class distinction is apparent in the interrogative, Caffin attempts to link his experience of *The Pool* to a more universally shared experiential understanding while at the same time underscoring the importance of the imagination or creative

[713] Caffin more than Hartmann was decidedly loyal member of Stieglitz's Photo-Secession. Caffin was an established art critic and published extensively including his *Photography as a Fine Art* (1901).
[714] Charles H. Caffin, "Eduard J. Steichen's Work. —An Appreciation," *Camera Work* no. 2 (April 1903): 24.
[715] Charles H. Caffin, "Eduard J. Steichen's Work. —An Appreciation," 24.
[716] Charles H. Caffin, "Eduard J. Steichen's Work. —An Appreciation," 24.

will of the photographer and critic. In describing the aura in the "Little History of Photography" (1931), Benjamin similarly invites his readers to recall their own experiences of being in a landscape through the rhetorical dimensions of the interrogative:

> What is aura, actually? A strange web of space and time: the unique appearance or semblance of a distance, no matter how close it may be. While at rest on a summer's noon, to trace a range of mountains on the horizon, or a branch that throws its shadow on the observer, until the moment or the hour become part of their appearance—this is what it means to breathe the aura of those mountains, that branch.[717]

Benjamin describes a play of surfaces and outlines in the perception of a landscape composed in the manner of Steichen's *The Pool* where even the observer becomes a surface for "a branch that throws its shadow." Tracing the outlines of the mountains in the distance while being simultaneously traced by the landscape in an intimate proximity the observer experiences two kinds of relationality at once. The body of the observer is drawn into the landscape even as they take the image of the scene into themselves in the manner of camera. The experiential moment or movement of the eye across the landscape that the observer nevertheless remains a part of, is refigured as breathe that in sustaining life also keeps time. The affect of temporality in being felt and seen differently through the auratic experience that condenses and extends its duration, the "moment or the hour," becomes part of the landscape's appearance. Photographs, of course, are time made visible. Miriam Hansen argues that the aura "is a medium that envelops and physically connects—and thus blurs the boundaries between—subject and object, suggesting a sensory, embodied mode of perception."[718] Both Hartmann and Caffin argue for the kind of embodied perception that Hansen views in Benjamin. Yet, this seemingly blurred experience of perception relies on a "unique appearance of distance" between the viewer and what is being viewed that allows for an exchange of reciprocal gazes. The landscape is a useful example as in

[717] Walter Benjamin, "Little History of Photography," 518-519.
[718] Miriam Bratu Hansen, "Benjamin's Aura," *Critical Inquiry* 34, no. 2 (Winter 2008), 351.

both Caffin's and Benjamin's thought experiments, the observer both looks at the landscape and yet is part of it so that they might view it in the first. To observe then, is to participate in the fantasy of absorption that structures the experiential reality of viewing. In "Some Motifs on Baudelaire," Benjamin remarks, "to experience the aura of an object we look at means to invest it with the ability to look back at us."[719] To feel the gaze of landscape is akin to experiencing the act of perception as a kind of "breath," a mode of perception and the structure of experiencing the world. As the aesthetic experience is both life affirming and life sustaining—figured as water for Caffin and air for Benjamin—the experience Steichen's photograph an affective and aesthetic understanding of being. At the very least, the being of the critic.

The genre of the nude, more explicitly than the landscape, becomes for Hartmann a point of contact between himself and Steichen that results in both his critical essays and ekphrastic poetry. Though Benjamin's sense of the aura describes an investment into the photograph qua photograph, the nude multiplies that relation in the absent presence of a body that already could look back even if they aren't facing the camera as in Steichen's prints. The nude both compositionally and affectively asks its viewers to reflect on distance in the intimacy of their exhibitions in relations from invitation to voyeurism. Negotiating these distances, Hartmann ends the piece and his visit with a discussion of nude photography. Hartmann introduces the subject through a conversation punctuated by rain drops equally concerned about Steichen's photographs: "'These nudes nobody seems to understand,' Mr. Steichen remarks. 'Do they mean anything to you?' It has grown dark and the rain is still tapping, curiously and faintly, at the window-panes."[720] Hartmann, of course, understands and will go on to perform this understanding in the critical pieces and ekphrastic poetry that appear across the early volumes of

[719] Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," 204.
[720] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.

Camera Work. Hartmann indicates his affinities with Steichen's portraits through his own embodied affect, which may or may not be as suggestive as "some sad woman's lips" referred to earlier in the piece or the smiling figures of his early poetry: "My answer is a smile. He does not know that my whole life has been a fight for the nude, for liberty of thought in literature and art, and how I silently rejoice when I meet a man with convictions similar to mine."[721] As cringy as the statement is, Hartmann lectured and often wrote on the genre and figure of the nude in visual art and literature.

"Eroticism in Art" from *Esthetic Verities* opens with the following question: "Does the fascination of nude statues linger in a suppressed mentalized eroticism?"[722] Although Hartmann doesn't define "mentalized eroticism" or accounts of its suppression, the phrase is apt to describe his own affective critical approach to nude sculpture. "To be able to talk of a statue as of a human being," writes Hartmann, "is about as far as any sensuous interest in anything inanimate may go, *nicht wahr*!"[723] Hartmann's claims regarding anthropomorphization and personification as "sensuous interest" may equally apply to the exchange between himself and Maeterlinck concerning the photographic medium as both continually make use of the figures to the point where it seems that everything is imbued with life. Perhaps due to the indexicality of the medium, talking about photographs as well as the photographic medium becomes an attempt to give life through figurative language. The distinctions between life and art, better understood as differences between mediums blur even in Hartmann's half-hearted attempts to maintain their distinctions. The nude, in particular, troubles these divisions through forms of ambivalent affect. Hartmann claims that "art has no concern with morality. Reactions may be as they happen. And I

[721] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[722] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art" 24a.
[723] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art" 24b.

believe that there is nothing in nature or life which can not be represented."[724] Though Hartmann appears to contradict himself, he does believe in a pluralism of aesthetic expression. As "reactions may be as they happen" the moral dimension of the aesthetic experience rests on the viewer rather than the art itself. Since "reactions may be as they happen" Hartmann insists on affective potentiality. Hartmann vacillated between hopeful aspirations for the role of art in society and a dejected resignation expressed in his common refrain that "art is by the few for the few."[725] Such distinctions rest on usual comparisons between the individual and masses. For Hartmann, Steichen's photographic nudes "contain perhaps the best and noblest aspirations of his artistic nature" and "are absolutely incomprehensible to the crowd."[726] For Hartmann the artist and those capable of aesthetic appreciation exist differently, or rather they allow art to alter their existence in striking and positive ways. "Appreciation is an individual growth," writes Hartmann, "like art itself."[727] If "the aim of all true criticism" consists of knowing "one's own impression as it really is, to discriminate it, and to realize it distinctly" the affective eroticism of the nude becomes for Hartmann a way to address the entwinement of Maeterlinck's truth and beauty within his subjective response.[728]

Hartmann returns to nude sculpture in *Esthetic Verities*' "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception." In describing a form of Venus important to the development of his embodied criticism, Hartmann recalls that the sculpture "expressed to me a sort of passionless sex attraction, I could not imagine a woman more chaste and graceful of limb—she gave me no shivers and transports—she made me dream and forget everything else—the whole universe

[724] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art" 24b.
[725] Sadakichi Hartmann, "That Toulouse-Lautrec Print!" *Camera* Work no. 29 (January 1910): 37.
[726] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[727] Sadakichi Hartmann, "That Toulouse-Lautrec Print!" 37.
[728] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 23-24.

seemed to become lyrical through her. Her body gave me peace and contentment with a tinge of sadness that such creatures do not exist on earth"[729] Nudes make Hartmann sad. This description that simultaneously moves away and back toward Hartmann's own body echoes his encomium of Mrs. Poe in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and approximates Steichen's peace and Caffin's fascination possible in an aesthetic experience. It is difficult to take Hartmann seriously as in the chapter on eroticism he asks questions such as, "Who would not like to sleep with Tintoretto's Venus?"[730] Hartmann reflects on choosing a demure Venus of all the possible options amongst the sculptures of the goddess and cannot help but compare his affective response of the sculpture with that concerning his relationships to living persons: "I fell in love with her at first sight, although enamored in strictly Platonic fashion with a living beauty, a young prima ballerina of the Opera House."[731] Feeling like "a veritable pasha possessing three houris in my mind, one in marble and the others in evening décolleté or ballet skirts," Hartmann and the harem of his mind exhibit troubling affect where recognizable emotions within the response are translated into expressions of possessive wish fulfillment.[732] Though Hartmann concedes that personifying language "is about as far as any sensuous interest in anything inanimate may go," Hartmann takes things further in allowing the sculpture to become part of his love life.[733] In Hartmann's critical approach, art is never an object outside himself. The expression is alive as he is in becoming part of him even, at worst, in fantasies nearing on debasement. As the photographic nude does consist of the real person if only as an indexical skin of light, Hartmann effectively

[729] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 15.
[730] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art" 24a.
[731] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 15.
[732] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 15.
[733] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Eroticism in Art" 24b.

works to reverse this account of nude sculpture by objectifying, though perhaps only for show, the photographic representation of the human form.

Steichen's nudes exist as liminal figures within Hartmann's "mentalized eroticism." The flesh made into light in these photographic representations are "strange" and cannot be as easily read or viewed as Steichen's landscapes:

> To him the naked body, as to any true lover of the nude, contains the ideals, both of mysticism and beauty. Their bodies are no paeans of the flesh nor do they proclaim absolutely the purity of nudity. Steichen's nudes are a strange procession of female forms, naïve, non-moral, almost sexless, with shy, furtive movements, groping with their arms mysteriously into the air or assuming attitudes commonplace enough, but imbued with some mystic meaning, with the light concentrated upon their thighs, their arms, or the back, while the rest of the body is drowned in darkness.[734]

To draw on the language of Maeterlinck's response, Hartmann's thought is unable "to penetrate the mystery of this anonymous force, invade it, subjugate it, animate it, and compel it to say such things as have not yet been said in all the realm of chiaroscuro, of grace, of beauty and of truth.[735] Despite Hartmann's erotic attachments to bodies of marble and flesh conflated in and through his critical affect, he parts ways with Maeterlinck by replacing truth in the truth and beauty pairing with mysticism as the new ideal. For Hartman, the indeterminacy is the point. Hartmann's mysticism is not so much a transcendental knowing that moves outside and beyond the self, but rather the kind of self-reflection of knowing "one's own impression as it really is" he describes as the aim of criticism.[736] Anticipating possible objections from his readers, Hartmann foregrounds the failure of his critical language even as he insists that it captures his affective response to the nudes. Hartmann's rhetorical question enjoins his readers to construct meaning differently: "What does all this mean? Futile question. Can you explain the melancholy beauty of

[734] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[735] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."
[736] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 23.

the falling rain, or tell why the slushy pavements, reflecting the glaring lights of Fifth Avenue stores, remind us of the golden dreams the poets dream?[737] As "futile" as "the abstract question whether a photographic print can be a work of art, or what the exact relation of photography is to other art-expressions," Hartmann claims that intermediality is affectively understood.[738] To exist in a critical relation with art is itself a form of intermediality as the images and affects of photographs are inscribed on the medium of the critics body. In drawing on poetic tropes of ineffability to stress the affective dimension of creation and interpretation, Hartmann finally lets the rain in even as his suggestive associations extend over the New York cityscape towards Steichen's woods. Another image of surface projection, the light on wet pavement invokes the photographic medium and the dreams of poets such as Maeterlinck. In traversing the "slushy pavements" as he leaves the studio, Hartmann will enter the photographs, paintings, and poetic dreams he reads on the surface of the city and may even feel the wetness of its emulsion through his toes. By punctuating his visit with the recurrent description of the rainy weather Hartmann attempts to dissolve the boundaries between mediums of expression and between art and life. In "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception" Hartmann exhibits the development of his critical capacity through a catalogue of aesthetic expressions that left a lasting impression in his mind and body. Hartmann encourages his readers to engage this curatorial activity as through this selection as a form of confession, one might better know who they are:

> If you are honest in your confession (a difficult proposition indeed!) it will clearly reveal traits of your character, as for instance in my case—an abnormal eclecticism, and a stubborn leaning towards erotic and literary treatment—always on one condition however that contents and form (idea and technique) meet on fairly equal terms."[739]

[737] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[738] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 23-24.
[739] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 23.

As if Hartmann's description of poetic scenes were not a sufficient reply to the question, "What does all this mean?" the second volume of *Camera Work* includes two ekphrastic poems by Hartmann (attributed to S.H. and not Sidney Allan) that were "suggested" by Steichen's nudes.

"Dawn-Flowers"/*Dawn-Flowers*

The faceless nude in Steichen's *Dawn-Flowers* sits with her back turned toward the camera. With arms outstretched and figures spread, she moves our gaze towards the edge of the image through her pose. The dark lines of flower stems extending out of the vase and barely visible against the dark background weave themselves through her fingers. The pose of arrested action either stills the figure in straining to contain the flowers overflowing the vase or finds her encouraging, if not conjuring, the growth of these flowers. The figure is "drowned in darkness" as Hartmann notes, in part due to the flattening of the foreground and background through blurred black tones.[740] The light source for the highlights on the surface of the vase on the figure's skin is obscured in the dark atmosphere but appears to be located behind the figure as her shoulder blades are illuminated in strong contrast. Her figure rests between light and the flower remnants of the natural world mediating with her body the very process that brings her image to viewers of the photogravure. The form of the vase with its soft edges resembles the figure's thighs more so as her legs are not visible from the knees downward. The pose of her lower body reflects the vase while her upper body stretches itself like the flower stems. Are they both dawn flowers? An editorial note to the volume outlines Steichen's techniques in relation to the aims of the journal. *Dawn-Flowers, Dolor,* and *The Pool* are noted to be "photogravures made directly from the original unmanipulated and untouched negatives."[741] As Steichen did

[740] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[741] Alfred Stieglitz et. al., "Our Pictures," *Camera Work* no. 2 (April 1903): 54.

engage in various forms of negative and darkroom manipulation, the note claims that such "details are given because it must be a matter of interest to our readers to know that much of Mr. Steichen's work is the straightest kind of straight photography, but applied with a liberal admixture of brain, feeling and a wonderful mastery of technique."[742] The exaggerated championing of Steichen for the cause of straight photography aside, the journal outlines the three main talking points for any conversation about photography at the turn of the century. The note goes on provide a brief critical note figured as its own disavowal: "Nothing further can be said in explanation of these pictures, as each will, no doubt, impress the individual temperament of the beholder variously. Mr. Steichen's art speaks most eloquently in its own behalf, and thereby in behalf of the cause of pictorial photography."[743] The figure's head disappears through the threshold of her arms into the darkness. The lack of any facial features may allow her to embody Hartmann's ideals of mysticism and beauty more easily. Do Hartmann's poems give face to, or speak for, these nudes? What does Hartmann hear in Steichen's art?

[742] Alfred Stieglitz et. al., "Our Pictures," 54.
[743] Alfred Stieglitz et. al., "Our Pictures," 54.



Figure 28: Eduard Steichen, *Dawn Flowers*, 1903, photomechanical print (photogravure) on Japanese paper, Stanford, Iris & B. Gerald Cantor Center for Visual Arts at Stanford University; Gift of Graham Nash, 1978.234.26. https://cantorcollection.stanford.edu/objects-1/info/4971.
© 2021 The Estate of Edward Steichen/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

As an ekphrasis of feeling, the poem presents Hartmann's affective response to the photogravure and his visit to Steichen's studio; his reading of Maeterlinck and Poe; his "fight for the nude"; his "mentalized eroticism"; and his mourning for Osada. Though the list of possible suggestions may be indefinitely extended, a footnote to the title, "Lines suggested by Mr. Steichen's print 'Dawn-Flowers,'" and a parenthetical that follows, "(To Maurice Maeterlinck)," frames our reading of the poem through the conversation that occurs across the pages of *Camera Work*.[744] Throughout the poem, Hartmann relies upon compound constructions to evoke a linguistic softness or blurring effect in keeping with atmosphere of Steichen's prints. In his

[744] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Dawn-Flowers," *Camera Work* no. 2 (April 1903): 29.

discussion of haiku in "The Japanese Conception of Poetry" (1904), Hartmann notes that "a certain compound adjective, the 'pillow-word,' is used, a survival from the archaic states of the language," as a "vehicle for concise expression."[745] These *makurakotoba* (枕詞), along the lines of an epithet, are used by Hartmann in processes of modification as condensation to emphasize the materiality of language, Maeterlinck's "verbal beauty," as well as facilitate the suggestive construction of imagery. The poem is saturated with references to light. The insistent repetition of "dawn" as modifier ("Dawn-Flowers;" "dawn-wind;" "morn-rays") invokes light in reference to the mechanics of photography as light writing, a shift in epistemological or cognitive awareness in the first glimmerings of perception, and potentially the newness of photographic technology as, or for the creation of, fine art. The intermedial blur of Steichen's print, Hartmann's poem, and the affect of the aesthetic experience approximates a multiple exposure or layered reading where the readers/viewers of *Dawn-Flowers* are woven into the image created in the rendering Hartmann's subjective experience of the nude.

The form of the poem is loosely modeled on the early French ballade and does include an envoy (addressed to Maeterlinck) along with rhetorical questions expected in the genre even if it departs from the fixed rhyme scheme, refrain, and other rules governing repetition. Furthermore, Hartmann alludes to John Payne's "Double Ballade of the Singers of the Time" (1887), quoting directly the ballade's refrain, "Songs and singers are out of date," in his third stanza. The ballade in other words, is a useful form for poetic criticism. Payne's double ballade in disillusionment with modern life opens with a nautical language that Hartmann will draw on in crafting the melancholic tone of his own poem: "Why are our songs like the moan of the main,/When the wild winds buffet it to and fro."[746] Payne's poem asks for songs of "Faith without stain," "loves

[745] Sadakichi Hartmann, "The Japanese Conception of Poetry," 188.
[746] John Payne, *New Poems* (London: Newman and Co., 1880), 127.

unsullied," and "eyes that show/the fair white soul in the deeps below" that feel out of time and out of touch with the moment of the poem's writing. It turns out that the reason why "Songs and singers are out of date" is that "Men are weary of hope" and have become too concerned with selfish desires and accumulative strivings—what Hartmann would refer to as "the prison-bars of modern life." Of the kinds of critique present, Payne contrasts the "meadow and lane" with "acres of brick in the pitiless rain" that resemble the saturated city of Hartmann's "A Visit to Steichen's Studio." The final stanza of the ballade pronounces it: "Faith and beauty are dead, I trow/ Nothing is left but fear and fate." Partially aligned with Maeterlinck's ideals of "beauty and of truth" and Hartmann's "of mysticism and beauty," the ballade ends as a lamentation for songs unsung.[747] Hartmann is more ambivalent about this potentiality as his poem exists simultaneously as one of these songs and as a lamentation for its own loss. A song that cannot bring the other songs into being but might bring other medial forms into being through affective affinities. In Hartmann's case, this may simply be another way he channels Poe as the moment of loss is often the most generative time for the creation of poetry and an adored subject in such expressions.

Poe creates these poetic conditions through the death, absence, or sleep of a beloved or feminine muse. In Hartmann's "Dawn-Flowers," Steichen's nude is doubly absent in its presence as the suggestive origin of the poem. "Her body gave me peace and contentment with a tinge of sadness that such creatures do not exist on earth," writes Hartmann a nude statue of Venus.[748] Despite the fact that living model appears in Steichen's print, Hartmann foregrounds the indexical absence of the photograph as redoubled in an ekphrastic poem whose representation of the visual dimensions of the photogravure is secondary to the conveyance of affect. There is no

[747] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."
[748] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Learning the Language of Sense-Perception," 15.

bodily description or attempt to verbally trace the figure despite, or precisely because, she is the poem's muse. In privileging feeling over iconography, the figure seemingly disappears further into the dark tones of the print. Yet, Hartmann's intimate response to the print brings the figure back into the experience of reading to the extent a presence might be felt—being together in the poem's present. In other words, the reader's own body and affective response is a better index of the real persisting in the photograph or poem than the visuality of its representation. At the same time, the reader can simply turn the page to view Steichen's photogravure while reading Hartmann's poem. In either case, the reader's embodiment becomes the medium for the relations between photograph, poem, and persons. Yet, in "Dawn-Flowers" the relations are more clearly defined as the feeling of being together is not with the form of the nude or any number of beloveds, but with Maeterlinck. As the envoy explains: "Though in this life we ne'er may meet,/I'll linger where thy muse meanders/To strew these dawn-flowers at her feet." Hartmann and Maeterlinck become "songs and singers…out of date," and out of time, but not out of touch. In the absence of one another, Hartmann offers his poem to their mutual muse. Would Maeterlinck have considered Hartmann's offering great poetry [*la haute poésie*]?

As an offering to Maeterlinck and an answer to question of song in Payne's ballade, Hartmann leads his readers to "the land of shadows"—the thanatologically-inflected medium of photography and Steichen's nudes more specifically—to address the poverty of expression in modern life. To embrace, or embrace in, the land of shadows constitutes the poem's desire and is expressed in intermedial blurring from its first stanza:

> WEIRD PHANTOMS rise in the dawn-wind's blow,
> In the land of shadows the dawn-flowers grow;
> The night-worn moon yields her weary glow
> To the morn-rays that over the dream-waste flow.

This short stanza alone contains Hartmann's "pillow-word" constructions of "dawn-wind," "dawn-flowers," "night-worn," "morn-rays" and "dream-waste" in a quadruple rhyme. Hartmann's emphasis on over-modifying obscures linguistic meaning in favor of creating this intermedial blurring. For instance, "dawn-wind's blow" as grammatical construction combines a time of day known for its diffuse light (dawn) with the invisible natural force (wind) to create a new type of wind, which is subsequently imbued with agency through its possession of a verb-turned-noun (blow). In its reversal of noun/verb roles, particularly the noun-ing of "blow," the phrase "dawn-wind's blow" at once suggests stagnancy and action, much the same way the photograph captures movement in and out of time. The personification of the "dawn-wind" may be compelled to blow—the inciting event of the poem that prefigures Barthes' *punctum*—if not to "say such things as have not yet been said in the realm of chiaroscuro, of grace, of beauty and of truth" as Maeterlinck envisions.[749] Hartmann's word-blending recalls the soft focus of Steichen's print, a nude form hazily "rise[s]" from a "land of shadows," a "weird phantom," engendered by the blow and blur of the "dawn-wind." The "dawn-wind's blow" sets the O-sound of the first stanzas monorhyme as a type of sonic monochrome in motion will repeat itself throughout the remainder of the poem. As Simon Jarvis casts it in his discussion of Hegel and prosody, "rhyme, through the return of similar sounds, does not merely lead us back to those sounds. It leads us back to ourselves."[750] Here, it also leads us back to Hartmann's self and criticism, to Steichen's photogravure, and to Maeterlinck. The sonic materiality also leads back to Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition," specifically the "long *o* as the most sonorous vowel" evidently suitable for the poem's refrain.[751] For Poe, the "lips best suited" to address the "the

[749] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."
[750] Simon Jarvis, "Musical Thinking: Hegel and the Phenomenology of Prosody," *Paragraph* 28, no. 2 (July 2005): 64.
[751] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.

post poetical topic in the world," the death of a beautiful woman."[752] The light of the "dawn-wind" is given a mouth, a voice, in the form of Hartmann's ekphrasis. Light and the speaker entwine through their interarticulation of the "the land of shadows." For Jarvis, the movements of consciousness as "excursion and return" felt in rhyme engenders a "'primordial fact of affectivity" that relates to self-knowledge: "feeling which I—*am*."[753] Assonance and rhyme bring the poem back to the "dawn-winds blow" and to Hartmann's experience of the Steichen's *Dawn-Flowers* as the "aim of all true criticism," after all, is "to know one's own impression as it really is."[754] Through homophonic play the "morn-rays" echo 'mourn-rays' in the creation of the melancholic and elegiac atmosphere of the poem as both the sound of loss and affective potentiality.

The "dawn-winds blow" becomes a murmured prayer to "ashen moons" in the second stanza as the speaker wishes it might be able know the content of the landscape's speech. The phonemic 'o' of the landscape becomes part of the speaker's articulation of melancholic desire and the presencing action of elegy and apostrophe is conflated with this epistemological striving:

> OH, to know what the dawn-wind murmurs
> In chapel of pines to the ashen moons;
> What the forest-well whispers to dale and dell
> With her singular, reticent runes!
> To know the plaint of each falling leaf
> As it whirls across the autumnal plain;
> To know the dreams of the desolate shore
> As sails, like ghosts, pass o'er the dawn-lit main!
> To know, oh, to know
> Why all life's strains have the same refrain
> As of rain
> Beating sadly against the window-pane!

[752] Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," 165.
[753] Simon Jarvis, "Musical Thinking," 64 and 69.
[754] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought," 23.

The repetitive longing "to know" visually and sonically marks the speaker's struggle to define itself both in and against a natural landscape that will not conform to its desires. In his description of Steichen's landscapes, "a world of his own, but one based on actual things, translated into dreams," Hartmann claims that Steichen "endows each line with a mystic quality, and they run like some strange rune through his tonal composition."[755] Here, the speaker wishes they might translate the dreams of the landscape in a poem whose tonal composition might succeed in doing so. The poem speculates that longing and loss may provide other forms of knowledge even if the "the dreams of the desolate shore" may remain untranslatable. Furthermore, through the anthropomorphization of the landscape that talks and dreams, the substance of photographic creation is imbued with dreamy affect in ways that trouble our ability to define what "actual things" consist of. Or, more likely, the poem's tropes end up making the nude figure in the photogravure into a landscape to be traversed in poetic thought. Hartmann's suggestive mysticism complicates the question of epistemology as such and wonders at the forms of knowledge gained or lost through differing medial embodiments. For Hartmann, Steichen's lines "are not outlines, [as] they only serve as accentuation".[756] In the poem's lines, themselves accentuated by the sonic materiality of their rhyme and their deliberate composition on the printed page, serve to accentuate forms of relationality rather than outline exactly how they appear.

These blurry relationships return in the stanza's closing image of "rain/Beating sadly against the window-pane!" approximating the speaker's own affect. In "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," Hartmann introduces the topic of nude photography through the refrain of the rain. In making the refrain of the critical piece into a near-refrain within the poem to lament life's

[755] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.
[756] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 26.

refrains in the image of rainfall blurs image, reference, and affect. Curious raindrops punctuate Hartmann's answer and mediate the relationship between meaning and expressions of embodied knowledge: "'These nudes nobody seems to understand,' Mr. Steichen remarks. 'Do they mean anything to you?' It has grown dark and the rain is still tapping, curiously and faintly, at the window-panes. My answer is a smile."[757] If "Dawn-Flowers" is another answer, can we associate this poem with a knowing smile? In "A Visit to Steichen's studio," the image is used in refusal of meaning: "Can you explain the melancholy beauty of the falling rain, or tell why the slushy pavements, reflecting the glaring lights of Fifth Avenue stores, remind us of the golden dreams the poets dream?"[758] The refusal of explanation in the critical piece is expressed as longing for meaning in the poem and the poem itself is one of Hartmann's "golden dreams." The desire to know, for thought to find, as Maeterlinck puts it, "a fissure through which to penetrate the mystery of this anonymous force [light], invade it, subjugate it, animate it, and compel it to say such things as have not yet been said in all the realm of chiaroscuro, of grace, of beauty and of truth" results in an affective epistemology that at least for Maeterlinck embraces the carnal connotations of knowing.[759] This relationship between knowledge and visual perception underscores the power of the photographic medium in Maeterlinck's sense to control light and to reproduce through selection—cutting and capturing reality—as expressive technologies for the artist. Hartmann does not go as far as Maeterlinck does in ascribing agency to the artist in this way, perhaps because the poem is written for the "dawn-poet" himself. While Maeterlinck insists on thought as a form of control, Hartmann's suggestivism hints at an always already deferred comprehension as knowing becomes a process rather than a result of poetic or photographic

[757] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[758] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.
[759] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."

engagement. As Hartmann's poem as ballade is preoccupied with knowing, to "imbue it [light] with thought" also means imbuing it with the poet's affect.[760]

The lamentation of the third stanza addresses the limits of knowledge over against the idealization of epistemic longing expressed in the second:

> WE do not know and we can not know,
> And all that is left for us here below
> (Since "songs and singers are out of date"
> And the muses have met with a similar fate)
> Is to flee to the land of shadows and dreams
> Where the dawn-flowers grow
> In the dawn-wind's blow,
> As morn-rays over life's dream-waste flow
> To drown the moon in their ambient glow.

The failure to know engenders the necessity of art at the means of knowing oneself, one another, and the natural world, even if such aesthetic striving is insufficient. Hartmann posits an affective knowledge, that which is at the edge of being articulated in being felt. The photographer and poet both "flee to the land of shadows and dreams" where "dawn-flowers" as a form of artistic creation are brought forth out of the landscape by the "dawn-wind's blow" and the artists presence as observer. The contrast between the "ambient glow" of the "morn-rays" in this third stanza and the moon's "weary glow" in the first—the celestial 'O' replacing the lunar 'O'—suggests that the "dream-waste" qua dreams in the unconscious sleeping life are inferior artistic creations to those that have been created through the deliberate movements of thought imprinted upon the landscape—the true or "golden dream." The return of the rhyme series also marks the result of the moon "yielding her weary glow" in the first stanza. However, as this dream is also "blurred," the "land of shadows" is created through the confluence of these two aspects of the same light. The moon, as it takes in and reflects the sun's rays exists only as a photograph. In this

[760] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."

way the photographer might deliberateness can control the sun's rays to make images that the moon can only reflect. The "morn-rays over life's dream-waste flow/To drown the moon in their ambient glow" in the same way that Steichen's nudes are "imbued with some mystic meaning, with the light concentrated upon their thighs, their arms, or the back, while the rest of the body is drowned in darkness."[761] The feminized moon in the poem functions like the back of the figure in Steichen's print. Drowned in either sunshine and shadow, both the nude and moon remain shrouded and distant, yet also reflective. The nude's pose may be read as "yielding" like Hartmann's moon while at the same time overshadowing the visual field. This second stanza in refusing to resolve questions of aesthetics and epistemology returns the reader to the poem's beginning, not the least because the ear returns to the original rhymes. The "land of shadows" appears once more, and the poem seemingly restarts itself if only in an approximation of photographic stilling.

However, the parenthetical, with its moonlike curves, interrupts the speaker's irresolution and through its visual grammar redirects the reader's attention back toward the dedication to Maeterlinck. In extending Payne's refrain within the parenthetical, Hartmann not only questions artists and their expression, but also the origin of creation itself: (Since 'songs and singers are out of date'/And the muses have met with a similar fate)." If the muse is also out of date, the poem as piece of criticism asks its readers to redefine the conditions by and through which art is made. While it may seem that photography can help in addressing outmoded forms of expression, as we must "flee to the land of shadows and dreams" as a result, the photograph itself is always out of date, or rather cut out of time. Hartmann's muse, or a version of Poe's nineteenth-century muse Hartmann writes in relation to, may indeed feel out of date in the early years of the twentieth

[761] Sadakichi Hartmann, "A Visit to Steichen's Studio," 28.

century particularly from perspective of later criticism. Does Maeterlinck, a "man who is modern to his finger-tips" according to Hartmann, become the new muse?[762] Through Payne's ballade, Hartmann brings together the temporal dimensions of aesthetic expression with temporality as a category of critical judgement. The photograph, like the poem, poses questions of what it is like to be in time. In fleeing to the "the land of shadows," the poem returns to the epistemic uncertainty of its second stanza and the desire to hear the voice of the landscape. Hartmann's poem, like the photograph, belongs to, but does not coincide with, time. In blurring temporalities of aesthetic creation and reception in theory and in poetic content, it appears that the knowledge longed for never arrives in the way, or in the order, wanted. Yet, "the land of shadows" may offer alternative ways of knowing, creating, or being. The affective spaces created in intermedial blurring may be one way to begin thinking, if not feeling our way through, the poem's questions. More importantly, though Hartmann criticizes his contemporary moment, it is unclear if the allusion to Payne's ballade and its "out of date" poetic form is meant as a return to the old songs as Payne might have wanted or as the adoption of a foreword glancing position that sees the poetry of the future dawning on the horizon. Hartmann, naturally, wants it both ways.

The poem's closing envoy, Hartmann returns to the figure of the muse in directly addressing Maeterlinck:

> ENVOY.
> Oh, gray dawn-poet of Flanders
> Though in this life we ne'er may meet,
> I'll linger where thy muse meanders
> To strew these dawn-flowers at her feet.

For Hartmann, Maeterlinck is a "dawn-poet" like the "dawn-wind" and "dawn-flowers" found in the "land of shadows." In modifying Maeterlinck in relation to the natural phenomenon of this

[762] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought (After Reading Maeterlinck's Letter)," 21.

land, the poem may suggest that as "dawn-poet" Maeterlinck resembles the photographer he images in his note, namely an artist able to narrativize the world—to "compel it [light] to say such things as have not yet been said in all the realm…of beauty and of truth."[763] The poetic agency, however, is on Hartmann as he "linger[s]" in "the land of shadows" where Maeterlinck's "muse meanders." Through a generalized apostrophic voice in the first three stanzas, notably with their lack of an indexical 'I', Hartmann seemingly expresses the creative desires and uncertainty of artists in general in immersing his readers in the affect of "the land of shadows." As criticism is about self-knowledge for Hartmann, the insertion of the 'I' insists on Hartmann as the referent. Hartmann elevates himself to the status of "dawn-poet" in that both he and Maeterlinck share the same muse and his poems, "as dawn-flowers," are equal offerings. The muse, like so many of Hartmann's feminine figures, is necessarily absent in her presence so that she might bring Maeterlinck and Hartmann together in "the land of shadows and dreams" since they "ne'er may meet otherwise." At this point in the poem, Steichen's print has all but disappeared (there are no feet visible in the photogravure). Yet, figure's interaction with the flowers now appears as an offering and the positions of her arms reach out with hope for connection tinged with a kind of worship. The poem performs the action of the print, though Hartmann might it uncomfortable to be the nude in this analogy. As these "dawn-flowers" are strewn at the at the feet of the muse, they are cut as part of their creation. While I risk making too much of the figured, if these flowers are plucked from the landscape, then it appears possible to offer the flowers of others just as Hartmann offers through the poem the Steichen print. In a perambulation through his and others' "land of shadows and dreams" within this poem, and within his writing in general, the flowers Hartmann offers appear in the soft, suggestive focus of

[763] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Untitled."

an intermedial and interartistic blur. If Maeterlinck's "principal elements" of great poetry—"verbal beauty"; "the contemplation and passionate portrayal of what actually exists about us and within us"; and the idea of the unknown "enveloping the whole work and creating the atmosphere proper to it"—are sought after in Hartmann's poem can they be found?[764] Does the poem feel like the Steichen print? Does it feel like a Hartmann poem? Would Hartmann think these are futile questions? The "blurred and golden dream" as the "golden dreams that poets dream" for Hartmann entails dreaming, and feeling with, others.

Hartmann's "Dawn-Flowers" is composed of the affect fragmented moments—the visit to Steichen, the experience of the print, the poetry of Maeterlinck, the rain-slicked pavement of the city. The poem is also part of the larger critical conversation and creative exchange between Hartmann, Steichen, and Maeterlinck on and off the pages of *Camera Work*. The second of Hartmann's ekphrastic contributions, "Dolor" is "suggested by" Steichen's print, but the lamentation of the poem is more personal in ways that balance the conversation concerning criticism and creation in the first with a pervading sadness. Though Hartmann did not include "Dolor" in his *Drifting Flowers of the Sea* (1904), it is my view that the poems should be paired.[765]

[764] Maurice Maeterlinck, "Préface—Théâtre I," in *European Theories of the Drama*, ed. and trans. Barrett H. Clark (Cincinnati: Steward & Kidd Company, 1918), 414.
[765] In *Drifting Flowers of the Sea* (1904), Hartmann drops the note describing the poem as "suggested by" Steichen's print likely due to a personal falling out.

"Dolor"/*Dolor*

Knees bent, sitting on her barely visible feet with back towards the camera, the figure's arms reach behind her head to gather falling strands of hair. The ambivalence of the figure's pose invites melancholic readings in keeping with the title of the print, as the nude appears clutching her head in throws of sadness, yet there is a tinge of near seduction in the pose if the bunching of her hair is meant to reveal more of her back. Some strands have not been gathered and lay in contrast with her back as their lines disappear in the shadow of her shoulder blade. A curved, white line appearing against the flat background near the left of the figure reverses the tonal contrast of hair upon skin and mirrors in its motion the strands she did not gather. It provides a false sense of depth to the scene as even as it reaches out toward the figure, its edges are drowned in the dark tones of the print. It is unclear if this line reflects part of the ground on which the figure sits or is the result of darkroom processes that have left intended or otherwise. This tonal darkness envelopes the nude and obscures her head entirely. The visibly absent shape of the figure's head is made present through the positioning of her hands. These hands, however, much like her limbs blend into the atmospheric darkness of the print. The most prominent light source in the image falls on the figures back to illuminate and bring into focus her spine and shoulder blades. We see her as headless and faceless, nearly dismembered by the darkness of the staging and the print becoming a statue out of time with the photograph, yet captured in its medium as a false anachronism. We, along with Hartmann, see her as headless and faceless. Maeterlinck might view *Dolor* as representative of the power of the photographic medium in its near dismemberment of the feminine nude—tantamount to denying the figure the expressive capacity of body—as another form of masculinized control over feminized constructions. In "Dolor," however, it is the poet that risks losing the ability to create.



Figure 27: Eduard Steichen, *Dolor*, 1903, Photomechanical print (photogravure) on Japanese paper. *The Modernist Journals Project*. Brown and Tulsa Universities, ongoing. http://www.modjourn.org.
© 2021 The Estate of Edward Steichen/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

Hartmann's poem takes as its subject the sadness, "Dolor," of experiencing loss. In two searching and reflective stanzas, the poem muses on the kinds of sorrows possible within a relation of lost love. I read the speaker's 'I' in reference to Hartmann via "Dawn-Flowers" and find the poem meaningful for the ways in which Hartmann since his earliest of poems writes out of loss. Divided into two parts, the first stanza lament's the loss of love in descriptions of melancholic affect. The second stanza responds to the first by arguing that forgetting a lost love is in fact the "deepest sorrow/That man may ever know."[766] The poem elegizes melancholy. To forget the pain of loss entails the subsequent forgetting of the initial happiness the lost beloved was part of. The sustaining conceit of the poem is the speaker's eyes and the varying perspectives through which one might look at sorrow even if they may, at times, be obscured by tears. These "visions of regret" as the poem describes them are understood through the speaker's affect. To forget entails a forgetting of the body and a near death of perception as affect is flattened and "eyes are drained of tears." As sorrow is meaningful and way of meaning-making for Hartmann, the consequences of forgetting would mean losing himself along with the beloved as his relation to the nude, the muse, the Poetess, and his mother Osada, is one that sustains melancholy. Hartmann's love does not forget.

The first stanza opens with a perceptual contrast between photogravure and poem as "Dolor" is described as a "deep-red sorrow." Hartmann wants the blood and poetic cliché in a red sorrow that recalls the love of lost bodies. Many of Hartmann's early poems are experiments in tonal composition, likely after Whistler. "A Strain in Red" (1892) from *Naked Ghosts* offers a useful exhibition of the ways in which Hartmann thought of, and composed with, reds:

[766] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Dolor," *Camera Work* no. 2 (April 1903): 35.

> An eager tongue between parted lips, a garnet
> glow with argent hips, the blood of roses
> whose thorns pierce my heart, as I sip love's
> wine over the senescent embers of art, where
> ruffians scoff the hierophant's robe in fire
> sunsets of dying globes.[767]

This short poem may serve as all the explanation needed to understand either "Dawn-Flowers" or "Dolor." The silver-hipped figure in Steichen's print may have lips of a "garnet glow," but the pose prevents us from ever knowing. In another scene perhaps from the "land of shadows and dreams" Hartmann, as hierophant and critic, sips "love's wine" in afterglow of aesthetic expression that may once more burn as "fire sunsets" or maybe die out. Presumably, only Hartmann knows. The melancholy eroticism of this early poem stains "Dolor" that follows a little over a decade later.

The two stanzas composing "Dolor" are each split into two moments. The first half of each stanza describes the speaker's affect in relation to love and loss whereas the second half of each stanza offers an interpretation of the affective experience to conceptualize sadness. The tense shift from the past in the first stanza into the present of the second stanza doubly enframes the experience of loss and reflects the speaker's attempts to manage the temporalities of loss. The first stanza focuses on the immediate moments of losing love and the despair that such pain might felt nevermore:

[767] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Naked Ghosts*, 6.

I had a deep-red sorrow
That stained my face with tears;
There loomed no bright to-morrow
Through all the serried years.
What most I loved had vanished
And love itself seemed slain;
The wine of life was banished
For the bitter lees of pain.
I thought this was the sorrow,
As deep as man may know,
For which there is no morrow
When life regains its glow;
That time could not dismember
Grim visions of regret,
That love would still remember,
That love could not forget.

The opening image of the speaker's absent face stained in tearful reds colors the speaker's perspective on sorrow. The "serried years" condense and compact the speaker's feeling of time in melancholic loss by giving the experience the affect of a perpetual present or ongoingness in the manner of a photograph. The movement of abstraction from the loss of what was loved into the loss of a personified love "seemed slain" gives body to the feelings the speaker's body is overwhelmed by in a return to the staining overflow of tears that opens the poem. The fluidity of affect is consumable as "the wine of life" is "banished/For the bitter lees of pain." As the sediment of dead yeast in the fermenting process, lees are normally removed from, but in the poem, they are all that remains. Yet, as homophonic pun, these "lees of pain" are protective of the loss the speaker experiences by sheltering the beloved's memory in regrets that may be difficult to swallow.

The interpretive half of the first stanza draws on the language of "Dawn-Flowers" to address the affect of sadness. As in "Dawn-Flowers," the rhyme of "know"/"glow" intertwines perception, aesthetic form, and epistemology whereas the 'o' quadruple monorhyme more generally links together sorrow, knowledge, light, and temporality. Time as dismembering agent

in the poem prefigures Barthes' well-known description of the photograph's temporality in *Camera Lucida*: "time, the lacerating emphasis [*l'emphase déchirante*] of the *noeme ("that-has-been"),* its pure representation."[768] For Barthes, the heartbreaking emphasis of the past in the viewing present contrasts with the speaker's hope in Hartmann's poem that time will "dismember/Grim visions of regret." The consolation of forgetting in and through temporal distancing wished for in the poem is punctuated by Steichen's photograph which, for Barthes, would entail a heartrending experience of this distance in the affect of the present. The photograph cannot forget as it is a part of what it perpetually mourns in Barthes's thanatology. The photograph's temporality dismembers bodies and the idea of, or relation to, bodies as such for Hartmann and Barthes alike. The dismembering of vision brings to mind Steichen's print and the disappearance of nude's hands, feet, and head into the atmosphere of darkness in which she sits. The violence of dismemberment as an unwanted change of perspective may have slain love and produced the bloodlike red tears that have stained the face of the poem. As sorrow ostensibly results from the fact that "time could not dismember" what "love would still remember"—equating the potentiality of both love and time to affect the body through the rhyme—the tonal contrast in Steichen's print plays out this desire over the figure in negative fashion. Knowledge and remembrance are equated with darkness whereas forgetting and disappearance is a figure of tomorrow where "life regains its glow." In this way Steichen's print appears as the hopeful desire to forget since remembering would only push the figure deeper into the dark depths of its tones. As the dialectic of love's remembering and forgetting occurs in the personification of love that "seemed slain," the poem suggest that temporality must first be affectively experienced through

[768] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 96.

the body to arrive at near a comprehension of the concept as abstraction. The photograph traces the corporeality of an intangible memory.

The dramatic shift in attitude towards loss that occurs over the stanza break is ambiguously rendered through an 'and' that at the same as it creates continuity between the experiences of loss in each stanza, it leaves open questions concerning their duration. The stanza describes a process of disintegration and despair associated with the forgetting mind:

> And now I brood in silence,
> My eyes are drained of tears;
> My dreams, like futile islands,
> Drift on a sea of fears.
> Were ashes by some dismal hand
> Whirled o'er memory's plain,
> And sorrow tossed to the silent land
> Which knows not love nor pain!
> This is the deepest sorrow
> That man may ever know:
> There is a bright to-morrow
> For every human woe;
> That time can well dismember
> All visions of regret,
> That love can not remember,
> That love will soon forget.

At the end of tears, empty eyes look inward to mental processes figured as land and seascapes. Dreams are turned into tracts of land drifting in a sea of fearful affect. Dreams, memories, or regrets depending on how the subjective of this second sentence is read, are given a cremated body and "whirled 'er memory's plain." As the speaker "brood[s] in silence" and "sorrow [is] tossed to the silent land/Which knows not love nor pain," forgetting becomes a silencing of the mind and of the heart. As in Hartmann's *My Rubaiyat*, both love and pain are essential and sustaining for the creative life. In "Dawn-Flowers," the landscape, if only through the personification of the poet, speaks and the attempt of the speaker to listen, to know "what the dawn-wind murmurs," is equated with poetic creation. As the landscape remains silent in

"Dolor," the loss of love is understood as an aesthetic failure. Parallel to the despair highlighted at the beginning of the stanza is the shift in the poem's language in the second half moves away from a specific, located first person to the universal or impersonal at the end in describing "human woe" or "All visions of regret"—a movement in direct opposition to that of "Dawn-Flowers." The poet-critic loses itself in forgetting the loss that sustains artistic creation. As "time can well dismember/All visions of regret" and that "love can not remember," the argument of the first stanza is reversed in mirrored diction and grammar. The self-effacement of the poem in ending with "forget" gestures towards its own absence and becomes the cause of a sorrow that is not generative.

The lamentation in "Dawn-Flowers"—"To know, oh, to know/Why all life's strains have the same refrain"—finds its answer in the somewhat disingenuous ending of "Dolor." As ekphrasis, or at the least as a poem "suggested by Mr. Steichen's print," it is unlikely that the closing line will come to pass if another glance at the photogravure is the condition of the poem's affective possibility. Although Steichen's photograph may not "suggest" the lost love directly, it does provide the poetic argument through which such love is remembered. "What the Photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the Photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially," writes Barthes.[769] Does photograph or the poem hold open the possibility for infinite suggestions? Can the affect of the image be repeated existentially? The photograph and the poem have the capacity to both dis- and re-member in and through their intermedial relation. Total loss as forgetting is curbed in a compensatory intermediality that allows the wound of loss as expressed in regret, dreams, and memory to remain open. Creation remains a possibility.

[769] Roland Barthes, *Camera Lucida,* 4.

What remains most striking to me about this second stanza is the image of dreams, regrets, and memories as ashes: "Were ashes by some dismal hand/Whirled o'er memory's plain." Ashes seem to make the loss permanent as there are no remains, but only memory, that as "Dolor" laments, may forget. There is no grave to visit except for the "silent land" of "memory's plain." The ashes recall the "dawn-flowers" strewn at the feet of a meandering muse, but to whom does the "dismal hand" belong? Hartmann? Though I've been reading the poem and the photograph along the lines of dis- and re-membering, Steichen's print, and perhaps Hartmann's view of it, might be better grasped through its fuzziness as a form of atomization. While a body in pieces dismembered still holds out the possibility to be re-membered once again, ashes cannot be gathered in a way that allows the body to appear whole again. The grain of figure's arms loses its definition in the black background of an obliterative darkness. Hartmann may have viewed the white curvature of the line on the figure's left, its whirl, as ashes strewn.

Hartmann presumes that his mother, Osada, "was cremated on some by-way near Kobe, and her ashes then and there were scattered to the winds, to whiten some sinuous mountain path to this very day."[770] In "To My Mother" (1887), written when he thought Osada had been buried, Hartmann imagines visiting her grave and embracing her through a landscape that, in her death, she has helped to create:

> The day will come when I shall kiss that sacred soil,
> And to the floweriness that from thy ashes rose,
> Each kiss shall tell the secret of my life: "To
> Thee I owe what I may give of Beauty to this world."[771]

[770] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 2.
[771] Sadakichi Hartmann, *Early Poems*, 1.

Though ashes in each instance, the poem imagines the possibility of finding Osada in the "floweriness" and telling her all that he might have if she were alive. Hartmann's love does not forget. Yet, ashes do not return to you, and Hartmann was never able to return to where his mother rests. In being localizable in this early poem, Osada's ashes do not disappear into the landscape as those of the lost love in "Dolor," but the dynamics of such losses experienced through the absent body are similar. I recognize that my reading is conflating mental and physical plains through the blur of poetry, photography, and biographical speculation, but I wonder if the nude of Steichen's print is the body that Osada doesn't have. Moreover, is the photographic body a body of ashes? Is Osada or love preserved in their annihilation? The atomization of love, Osada, the nude of "Dolor," is preserved in Hartmann's poem. The ashes as atoms are imbued with creative potentiality as outlined in Hartmann's *My Theory of Soul-Atoms* (1910).

Written between 1899 and 1908, Hartmann's *My Theory of Soul-Atoms* opens with a reflection on mortality. Hartmann offers a remembrance from his childhood concerning his affective experience of existential dread: "In my childhood the riddle of death had an absolute terror for me, and as a ten year old boy I often lay awake for hours, bathed in perspiration, trying to solve the enigma of non-existence with childish paralogisms."[772] In approaching the riddle or enigma of "non-existence," Hartmann moves in dialectical fashion to what he casts as the more quotidian mystery of life, notably his affective existence. To understand, or more likely to come to terms with the fact of death, Hartmann posits a theory of affect that will become his theory of soul atoms:

[772] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 5.

> Yet it was my undeveloped sex feeling in those days, being a literary disciple of eroticism by force of imagination and self education and a Malthusian by supersensitiveness and undigested Tolstoyan ideas of asceticism, that made me pause again and again in wonder and curiosity over the most commonplace mystery of all, by which we are surrounded, whose manifestations occur daily and hourly, and seem to penetrate all nature; the mystery of our sympathies and antipathies, of attraction and repulsion, the source of all our mental, emotional and physical relations to each other and the universe.[773]

Hartmann gathers together different strands of his melancholy eroticism and aesthetic attunement to think through a structure of feeling wherein we might locate the self in entangled relations with everything else in the universe. Hartmann turns to his individual affect in order to theorize out of his own experience a possible world or at least the possibility of describing the one he lives in. Hartmann portrays these "sympathies and antipathies" as both overwhelming and sometimes disappointing in asking, "Why do I love certain woman and like certain men at first sight, my sympathy becoming so strong as to become unreasonable and dangerous, while others who have shown me unmistakable signs of friendship for years cannot awaken more than a superficial feeling of sympathy within me."[774] Hartmann wants to know why he feels what he feels.

Soul-atoms become a possible explanation. In a mixture of pseudoscience, poetry, and feeling, Hartmann describes soul atoms as affective relations in the world of experience as worlds in themselves in part because they carry with them life changing potentiality:

> A soul-atom is a world in itself, a miniature soul and, if you choose, like our earth *en miniature* (for what is our globe but a big living organism with the tide motion as respiration), none exactly like the other, exposed to continual changes and capable of multiplication by subdivision. The subtlety of a soul-atom can only be realized when one tries to imagine that every vibration, if it were possible to fix its quadrillions of tremors per second, carries with it a reminisces of some latent force, a vague consciousness, an expression of color, sound, smell, taste, or touch, and who knows how many other faculties.[775]

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[773] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 5.
[774] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 6.
[775] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 13.

To imagine a soul-atom is to imagine a way of being in the world that is attentive to the "latent force" or "vague consciousness" of affective relationality. Soul-atoms compose individual's feelings as well as form the relationships the self has to its own body, the bodies of others, and the world in which they inhabit. They affect us in and through kinds of experience we do not yet have names for. These soul-atoms are likewise physically embodied if only in the figurative language Hartmann uses to describe them. As the body is composed of soul-atoms, the soul-atoms of others may enter into our own and alter our composition. To take love as an example, Hartmann writes that, "The irritating and corroding pain one feels when one is in love, before one is sure of reciprocation is that state of a disorded [sic] system. Soul-atoms of another person have strayed into you, and your system has not yet been able to appropriate them."[776] A useful description of indeterminate affect, Hartmann relies on the concept of the soul-atom to foreground the material embodiment of a state of being in. This state of being in applies not only to love, but also to the aesthetic relations created in and through art.

Hartmann is acutely aware that his theory is speculative and deeply personal. Hartmann emphasizes that this theory may only satisfy himself, but as "the aim of all true criticism; to know one's own impression as it really is" guides Hartmann's speculations, he doesn't mind.[777] The definition of soul-atoms exists somewhere between metaphysics, poetry, and Sadakichi Hartmann:

> I know that such speculations as I advance will be considered largely the rhapsodies of a poet in *medias res*; I am perfectly aware that they do not furnish a metaphysical explanation of existence (I dislike dogmaticism in any form), they solve however certain problems satisfactorily *to me*, and possibly may serve as finger post for new experimental, strictly scientific investigations.[778]

[776] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 43.
[777] Sadakichi Hartmann, "Roaming in Thought," 23-24.
[778] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 6. Emphasis in original.

Though Hartmann insists on his writing as a "finger post" for "strictly scientific investigations," *My Theory of Soul-Atoms* is at its best a theory of affect in terms of history, influence, and inspiration. A felt sense of proximity to bodies alive and those long dead. Life is in *medias res*, it is a state of being in, that Hartmann understands as an ongoingness—the temporality of soul-atoms. For Hartmann, "soul-atoms that have been scatted in human life before, dim fragments, imperfect qualities of struggling existences, are ever desirous to meet once more convergent in the faculties of man, of a single individual as well as that of a community, a nation or mankind at large."[779] In other words, soul-atoms name a form of affective relationality and way of describing the "invisible rhythms" of existence that bring past life into the present and future.[780]

They are forms of personal understanding and creative mourning. Hartmann imagines the ways in which he has been affected by the soul atoms of Osada: "The soul-vibrations of my mother, praying in the temples of Japan may suddenly rush toward me and make me dream of those islands of the East, bathed in the rising sun, of which I have no personal recollection."[781] In Hartmann's affective speculation, Japan becomes the "land of shadows and dreams" from "Dawn-Flowers" that he is only able to visit in poetry and imagined memory. Soul-atoms are way of connecting with those who are absent and distanced in space, time, and memory. They are the photograph of the body of ashes.

In another of what Hartmann calls his "strange speculations," he finds cause in soul-atoms for the lived history of artistic creation and, I would argue, criticism: "I imagine that fragments of vibratory accumulations which once formed the soul of a Phidias, a Dante, or a Wagner, my roam through our thoroughfares and suddenly enter the studio of some sculptor, the

[779] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 14.
[780] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 14.
[781] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 14.

study of a writer, or some musician bent over his instrument to influence his work."[782] Soul-atoms roam as Hartmann roams in thought with Steichen, Maeterlinck, Hegel, and Whitman, hearing the poet's "Song of Myself"—"For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you"—in their vibrative motions.[783] Breathing in the "thoughts…in the air," I wonder how many of Hartmann's soul-atoms adhere to my own.

[782] Sadakichi Hartmann, *My Theory of Soul-Atoms*, 14.
[783] Hartmann writes of soul atoms first in his *Conversations with Walt Whitman*: "When the report of his death reached me, I was in New York. I felt very much like running over o Camden and speaking a few words at the funeral, but as my means were very limited ats the time, and as my presence was really unnecessary where so many had to pay their tribute and condolence, I went into Central Park instead, and held a silent communion with the *soul atoms* of the good gray poet, of which a few seemed to have wafted to me on the mild March winds" (49).

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