

Introduction

IN THE EARLY 1890S, *Le Pot-au-feu: Journal de cuisine pratique et d'économie domestique* appeared for the culinary instruction of middle-class French women. Each issue opens with a lesson from a professional male chef followed by recipes, humorous anecdotes, discussion of historical dining customs, reviews of culinary exhibitions, and illustrations. One of these illustrations from 1894 shows a woman seated before a canvas at work on a pastel still life of the flowers, bottle, and fruit on a table to her left (fig. 1). As was typical in *Le Pot-au-feu*, the drawing appears without context or caption. The depicted artist does not look toward the subject of her painting but outward in the viewer's direction. The male figure standing beside her is her cook, made identifiable by his hat, jacket, and the set of knives slung about his waist—tools comparable to those instruments required to make a painting. He points to the

canvas and leans in close to the artist to offer suggestions, a role that must derive from his expertise in the appearance as well as the material qualities of her subject matter. Readers are asked to consider whether his specialized culinary knowledge may prove useful in representing it visually, as the image poses the processes of art making and cooking as analogous. The woman's pastel is echoed in the cook's extended finger, and they wear corresponding hats and aprons.

The drawing raises gendered concepts of professionalism. While most domestic cooks in later nineteenth-century Paris were women, a particularly well-off household might employ a man, and restaurant chefs were exclusively men. In the fine arts, affluent women were encouraged to develop their skills as amateur painters, especially of still lifes, while male practitioners dominated the field of professional painting.



FIG. 1
L. Le Riverend, illustration
from *Le Pot-au-feu: Journal
de cuisine pratique et
d'économie domestique*,
May 15, 1894, 157.

This illustration of a stylish female painter in need of direction for her still life can be interpreted along these lines; a dilettante requires male assistance, even if it takes an unconventional form. And yet, she sits with her foot assertively placed on the easel stand, holds her pastel as if interrupted mid-gesture, and looks outward to engage the viewer. Perhaps she is better understood as waiting politely for her cook to return to the kitchen. Represented with a debonair moustache and an outstretched finger that comes uncomfortably close to the bosom of his employer, the male figure has taken on airs that leave the viewer dubious.

In a journal aimed at women, he becomes the target of a joke exchanged among those female readers all too used to unsolicited male advice, even if the illustrator's intention was to ridicule the aspirations of both male cook and female painter as out of place before the canvas.

Versions of these figures appear, with their roles reversed, in an earlier *Pot-au-feu* drawing by the same illustrator (fig. 2). This time it is the woman, endowed with the professional knowledge of the small cookbook or magazine on her lap, who advises the cook on his art. The two drawings are arranged similarly so that, when viewed together, the canvas in the first and the

stove in the second are located in the same position, both vehicles for artistic creation, whether through the medium of paint box and pastels or frying pan and simmering sauce. The questions posed by this juxtaposition were being hotly debated in nineteenth-century French culture: What is the relationship between the visual and culinary arts, and what are the social politics at stake?

In Paris, chefs, food critics, and dining enthusiasts relied on the example of the beaux-arts to legitimate gastronomy as a form of art in its own right. By the fin de siècle, culinary schools

were proposed that would be modeled on the Académie des beaux-arts, and haute cuisine was exhibited at elaborate culinary exhibitions, its own sort of Salon. Throughout the century, food was described in a range of print sources in the same tradition as art criticism and caricature, in specialized as well as mainstream journals.¹ Culinary historians have firmly established these links and the ways in which culinary culture drew upon the fine arts. But the converse—that is, how the culinary field inflected the beaux-arts—has been almost entirely overlooked in art-historical scholarship. Pursuing that question

FIG. 2
L. Le Riverend, illustration
from *Le Pot-au-feu*:
Journal de cuisine pratique
et d'économie domestique,
December 15, 1893, 2.



offers a new perspective on some of the most canonical works of nineteenth-century art and the writings of its most influential critics.

The burgeoning genre of gastronomic literature comprised a wide range of materials, including restaurant reviews, instructive magazines, advice pamphlets, and philosophical treatises on dining that established eating and drinking as objects of a discourse that attracted contributions by journalism's elite, including art critics and caricaturists. Culinary journals such as *La Salle à manger*, with the considerable subtitle *Chronique de la table: Revue anecdotique, recettes culinaires, menus de saison, approvisionnement, par des gourmets littéraires et des maîtres de bouche*, included the writings of Charles Blanc, Arsène Houssaye, Théophile Gautier, and Jules Claretie in the 1860s, all of whom are better known to art historians for their publications about painting in the period's major newspapers and art journals. These and many other authors applied their skills to describing and assessing culinary culture, writing to order for the daily and weekly presses and producing a shared language around consumption. For their part, artists designed menus, place cards, and banquet invitations as supplemental sources of income or for amusement and camaraderie. These ephemera might be destined for private use, the mass market, or reproduction in the press.² And, as has long been noted but not systematically investigated in art history, dinner clubs, restaurant spaces, and their proprietors were paramount in the formation of artistic communities and trends. This point was of significant interest to contemporaries. One reviewer of the 1877 Impressionist Exhibition

chose not to discuss any of the paintings displayed at 6 rue Le Peletier but instead to reprint the full menu from a dinner that the exhibiting painters had shared with Émile Zola at the Café Riche, an upscale haunt for that company.³ The food seemed more noteworthy than the painting, and for the author it offered better insight into the social positions and personalities of the artists. The anonymous critic cites their refined meal and shared appreciation of modern French cooking as testimony that the painters were not the madmen their canvases might indicate. Their dinner was the best evidence that Impressionism might not be so fanatical after all. In many other reviews of the Impressionist Exhibitions and the Salons, painting, in turn, was described in culinary terms.

This trend toward comparing painting and cooking, viewing and consumption, is the focus of this book. With rapid developments in the culinary sphere in French culture and urban life, the vocabulary of taste and appetite entered art criticism in force by the middle of the nineteenth century. Critics posed viewing as analogous to ingestion and used food comparisons to characterize the appearance of paint, to describe the painter's process, and to report on represented figures. "Imagine that the Salon is an immense artistic ragout that is served to us every year," proposes Zola in opening his series of reviews of the 1866 Salon, complaining that the jury "always managed, whatever might be the temperaments or the age, to serve the same dish to the public." In a subsequent article from the series, Zola would defend Édouard Manet's painting as "raw meat" amid the nauseating "sweets of the fashionable artistic confectioners,

sugar-candy trees and pastry houses, gingerbread gentlemen and ladies made of vanilla cream.” Manet’s paintings are bitter in comparison to “the sickening sweetness” surrounding them.⁴ Zola’s art criticism is at the heart of this book, but his criticism is just the start.

My inquiry begins with Zola in the mid-1860s because this is when modern-life painting began to be consistently described through culinary metaphors. I contend that these metaphors have particular significance when used in relation to work by Manet and the Impressionists. To date, Frédérique Desbuissons is the only art historian to have considered culinary language in art’s reception in depth, concentrating on Salon criticism and caricature. In her survey of this material, Desbuissons argues that, for the most part, comparisons to cuisine emerged out of the perceived distinction between the culinary and fine arts, and they were intended to denigrate painting by comparing it to a trade perceived as lower in a hierarchy of value.⁵ In the four chapters of this book, I argue that more was at stake than a mode of dismissal when critics described paintings by Manet and the Impressionists, works that have been consistently characterized by art historians of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in “purely optical” terms, to introduce Clement Greenberg’s influential formulation.⁶ The migrating language of food and consumption draws attention to the visceral effects of the material, facture, and technique of specific artworks, and it appears in some of the best-known critical texts of the period. When Louis Leroy suggests in his review of the first Impressionist Exhibition in 1874 that the figures in Claude Monet’s *Boulevard des Capucines*

resemble “tongue lickings,” he relied on a wider connection between the qualities of paint and alimentary matter, its application and oral sensation, that was well established by that time and would be sustained in the reception of Monet’s work through the next decade (fig. 3).⁷ In 1882, Gaston Pérodeaud ridicules Monet for having “painted some cliffs made out of raspberry and currant ice cream, whose realistic melting is thoroughly impressive. You want to take a spoon to them.”⁸ Such metaphors call for an embodied viewer who might experience a combination of desire and appetite, nausea and disgust, through the visual.

In arguing that works by Manet and the Impressionists—specifically Monet, Gustave Caillebotte, and Camille Pissarro—were principally understood through the bodily responses they effected in their earliest audiences, my approach runs against the grain of most twentieth-century histories of modernism that have privileged the visual in the production and reception of these paintings. The clearest proponent of this view was Clement Greenberg, whose modernist trajectory begins with Manet and the Impressionists precisely because of what Greenberg saw as their focus on opticality. In his influential “Modernist Painting,” he explains,

With Manet and the Impressionists the question stopped being defined as one of color versus drawing, and became one of purely optical experience against optical experience as revised or modified by tactile associations. It was in the name of the purely and literally optical, not in the name of color, that the Impressionists set themselves to undermining shading and modeling and everything else in painting that seemed to connote the



FIG. 3

Claude Monet, *Boulevard des Capucines*, 1873.
Oil on canvas, 61 × 80 cm.

sculptural. . . . The latest abstract painting tries to fulfill the Impressionist insistence on the optical as the only sense that a completely and quintessentially pictorial art can invoke. Realizing this, one begins also to realize that the Impressionists, or at least the Neo-Impressionists, were not altogether misguided when they flirted with science. . . . That visual art should confine itself exclusively to what is given in visual experience, and make no reference to anything given in any other order of experience, is a notion whose only justification

lies in scientific consistency. Scientific method alone asks, or might ask, that a situation be resolved in exactly the same terms as that in which it is presented.⁹

The idea that Impressionism isolated and elevated “purely optical experience” did not originate with Greenberg, but it gained particular traction in his writings and their subsequent interpretation. It has since become one of art history’s most enduring orthodoxies that Impressionism’s practitioners, its most sensitive supporters, and its most virulent critics understood the painting as being dedicated to

the visual to the point of repressing other forms of sensory engagement. While Greenberg's privileging of opticality has come under intense scrutiny by scholars who contest its usefulness as a framework for considering twentieth-century modernism and contemporary art, the relevance of that framework for understanding painting by Manet and the Impressionists is rarely questioned but is commonly and casually reinforced.¹⁰ Impressionist practice is overwhelmingly framed as an attempt to capture the appearance of specific optical effects rather than a range of somatic experience. Even a scholar like Michael Fried, deeply committed to matters of embodiment in nineteenth-century art and to questions of how paintings affect and involve their beholders, argues that "the notion of opticality, of a mode of painting addressed exclusively to the sense of sight" is appropriate in relation to Impressionism—and only in relation to Impressionism. Fried agrees with Greenberg that "as a generalization about Impressionism or rather about the contemporary response to the work of the landscape Impressionists Claude Monet, Camille Pissarro, and Alfred Sisley, this is incontestable."¹¹ Characterizing Impressionism in this way allows Fried to distinguish Manet's work in the 1860s from Impressionism in the 1870s and 1880s, and it is part of Fried's larger proposition that Manet was implicated in the shift from what he terms the "bodily realism" of Gustave Courbet to the "ocular realism" of Impressionism, and that "the transition from a corporeal to an ocular realism that has been brought to light constitutes a new framework within which Manet's art will need to be rethought."¹² My investiga-

tion of the language of bodily consumption used by so many of Manet's critics allows me to take up such a claim for the centrality of the corporeal in interpreting the painter's work and its reception. However, I also demonstrate how this language and its associated models of viewing continue into descriptions of Impressionism, challenging any assertion of a paradigm shift from the corporeal to the ocular and insisting on the relationship between them.

Accounts like Greenberg's—but especially Fried's and those of the many other scholars cited in these chapters who emphasize the visual in the production and reception of early modernism—make frequent use of nineteenth-century sources, many of which this book revisits. Their arguments are informed by a specific and selective reading of the most vocal critics and champions of Manet and the Impressionists, who sometimes described their art as primarily addressed to the eye. Among the best-known nineteenth-century advocates of this position is Jules Laforgue, the poet who claimed in his 1883 essay "L'Impressionnisme" that the Impressionist eye was a scientific instrument that had liberated itself from its connection to all other sensory modes. For Laforgue, "the Impressionist painter is a modernist painter endowed with an uncommon sensibility of the eye" who is able to move beyond a type of vision that relies on the sense of touch and attain what Laforgue calls the "natural eye": "So a natural eye—or a refined eye, for this organ, before moving ahead, must first become primitive again by ridding itself of tactile illusions—a natural eye forgets tactile illusions and their convenient dead language of outlines, and

acts only in its faculty of prismatic sensibility. It reaches a point where it can see reality in the living atmosphere of forms, decomposed, refracted, reflected by beings and things, in incessant variations. Such is this first characteristic of the Impressionist eye.”¹³ Significant though Laforgue’s essay is, it was not published until 1902, and despite the author’s insistence on optical science and the turn away from tactility in terms very similar to those Greenberg would reprise, Laforgue goes on to describe how the viewer’s eye might be exasperated and exhausted by the impressions recorded by the painter in the “first sensory intoxication” experienced before the motif. That sensory intoxication would then be shared by a viewer destabilized by the impassioned painting. Laforgue considered these effects as a “new seasoning,” much more alive than the “sad and unchanging recipes for academic color.”¹⁴ The importance of the visual in Impressionist painting and its reception did not come at the expense of the rest of the body, and, as this book will argue, recourse to the optical was a strategy for mollifying critics who complained that Impressionism appealed excessively to the body and was in fact utterly resistant to the eye. When nineteenth-century texts are read outside the retrospective framework of pure opticality that has largely determined our understanding of them, we find critics who reveled in the visceral, multisensory effects of modern-life painting and who believed that the artists they described were so invested in their contemporary reality that they wanted to capture not just its sights but its very flavors. For every Laforgue, Zola, or Louis-Edmond Duranty who elevated modern painting to

a form of optical science, dozens of critics recounted quite the opposite situation. Even the texts by Laforgue, Zola, and Duranty require reinterpretation.

The four chapters of this book trace culinary language as it was used to defend work by Manet and the Impressionists against “academic recipes,” or, equally, to express unease with their art through reference to the body and the sense of taste. I explore the possibilities opened up by a set of questions that are not dominated by the customary privileging of visuality, but are instead guided by firsthand accounts of painting’s multisensoriality. I argue that the scope of nineteenth-century claims for the Impressionist celebration of the exclusively visual have been overestimated in retrospect by art historians from the mid-twentieth century through to today. This overestimation is inseparable from the fact that, as Tamar Garb and Norma Broude have shown, Impressionism was feminized in the 1890s and that, in order to resist that interpretation in the twentieth century, critics and art historians promoted a link between Impressionism and optical science.¹⁵

The feminization of Impressionism, a major subject in what follows, brings me to the central claim and organizing force of this book. The metaphorical languages followed in these chapters were deeply gendered, and studying them expands our understanding of the sexual politics of nineteenth-century aesthetic discourse. To start, gender was the base upon which comparisons to the culinary were elaborated. The foods chosen as analogues for paintings as objects, as well as for depicted figures, were aligned with specific female types. These

connections remain familiar, and chapters 2, 3, and 4 are organized around them: sexualized, commercialized female flesh and red meat, the subject of chapter 2; fashionably dressed, made-up bodies and confectioned sweets, explored in chapter 3; and robust female peasants and hearty vegetables, the focus of chapter 4. This book historicizes these tropes that, in addition to offering an alternative framework through which to examine painting, provide insight into the fabrication of the feminine in the nineteenth century in ways that remain relevant in the twenty-first.

Beyond the significance of particular foods and the figurations of femininity tied to them, the gendering of the metaphors explored here also had major consequences for constructions of masculinity. Cultural values were encoded in the language of the senses, which operated in a hierarchy established long before the 1800s. The legacy of that hierarchy extends into our day and is inseparable from the privileged place of the visual in art history. As is well known, the sense of sight, freighted with associations of detached reflection, has historically been masculinized. Taste and smell, considered baser senses inextricably bound to the body with its unruly desires and aversions, have been feminized, associated with female bodies and their capricious, seductive, sensual pleasures and dangers.¹⁶ A so-called “sensory turn” in the humanities and the expansion of the field of sensory studies have focused attention in recent years on the socially constructed nature of human perception.¹⁷ This book relies on that scholarship in tandem with the feminist critique of ocularcentrism that has its roots in phenom-

enology.¹⁸ To insist in the nineteenth century that paintings stimulated all the senses, even and especially the sense of taste, undermined the elevated status of the critic or artist as a dispassionate analyst, as Zola was fond of describing himself and those artists whom he admired. The result is that critics (including Zola), often despite their intentions, admitted to the contingencies of their embodiment and painting’s threat to their position and practice. As viewing was posed as a form of ingestion with concomitant effects on audiences, and painting compared to cooking with all the sensory pleasures and risks of eating, the fiction of aesthetic detachment on the part of artist or critic broke down along with the models of masculine authority premised upon them.

Chief among those constructions of male authority is the flâneur, a figure that has functioned as an avatar for the modern artist in nineteenth-century studies. The flâneur signified on a plurality of levels in nineteenth-century Paris, but in art-historical literature has come to stand for optical connoisseurship par excellence as a male figure equipped with a dispassionate eye, keenly observing the city from a critical distance. The importance of this version of the flâneur for art history both evinces and contributes to the ways in which French modern-life painting has in retrospect been chiefly associated with optical experience and its representation, and how the nineteenth-century city has been predominantly conceived as a visual spectacle.¹⁹ The flâneur is most often tied to a specific reading of Charles Baudelaire’s now canonical essay “The Painter of Modern Life,” published in *Le Figaro* in 1863. In that essay Baudelaire

describes the self-consciously modern artist as the “perfect flâneur” equipped with an “eagle eye.”²⁰ Because this figure is capable of disappearing into his urban surroundings (making Baudelaire’s flâneur, as feminists have long established, decisively male), in art-historical literature he has been characterized above all by a disembodied gaze. Flânerie has overwhelmingly been configured in visual terms, even among the many critics of this construction who aim to complicate assumptions about the flâneur’s purported mastery.²¹ What this approach neglects is how, for Baudelaire, the flâneur’s vision was thoroughly embodied. In a text that is at odds with an understanding of vision as detached, Baudelaire describes the flâneur as “*drunk*” and “insatiable” for his surroundings, so immersed in his milieu that he imbibes sights and becomes fervently attached to specific figures and objects in the crowd.²² Ten years later, when Zola would narrate the flânerie of aspiring modern artist Claude Lantier and his friends in the novel *Le Ventre de Paris*, scent directs the party, not vision: “They inhaled the odors of Paris, noses in the air. They could have recognized every corner with closed eyes, just by the scent of alcohol leaving the wine merchants, the warm breath of bakeries and patisseries, or the bland impression of fruit stands.”²³ Despite continuing descriptions of the flâneur-artist’s eye as being somehow severed from the body, nineteenth-century writers consistently figured the artist’s or critic’s vision as ocular ingestion. In these accounts, the act of viewing a painting or the city did not unfold as a form of impartial witness or commanding oversight. Instead, vision was framed in the most physical of terms.

My line of inquiry therefore contributes to critiques of the flâneur and his mastering male gaze by returning to him a body vulnerable to desire and disgust. I rely on the insights of feminist art history and film theory that looking is never neutral, that it is always embodied as a result of being embedded in an erotic economy, and that it is constitutive of power structures. The concept of the gaze has been paramount in explaining these dynamics and politics.²⁴ When Griselda Pollock writes that the flâneur “embodies the gaze of modernity which is both covetous and erotic” in her foundational account of the gendered structure underlying the mythology and practice of flânerie, she establishes that the visual is inseparable from the body and its appetites.²⁵ But however bound the gaze might be to the body and the psyche, its theorization has been part of the same emphasis on the visual that has characterized the modernist narrative that feminists like Pollock seek to dismantle, as well as impeded the robust development of the role of the other senses in a sexually differentiated experience of modernity. Feminist critique of the flâneur is ongoing, fracturing any sense of a unified male subject that might stand for him, broadening the understanding of women’s participation in city space, and, of special relevance here, challenging the alignment of the flâneur with pure opticality.²⁶ My arguments build on that work and do not contest the importance of vision and visuality in nineteenth-century Paris, especially when the subject is painting. This book complements existing scholarship on the history and politics of vision, particularly the profound changes in how vision was understood, experienced, and valued in nineteenth-century

France.²⁷ I write, however, from the premise that the key debates about the optical that have dominated art-historical thinking about this place and period have marginalized both other registers of experience and the complex ways that vision interacts with other sensory modes. This marginalization has hindered our ability to examine the intertwining of visual and visceral and to interrogate the gender politics of the sensory hierarchy operative in nineteenth-century France.

The four chapters of this book are loosely chronological, opening around 1865, when self-consciously modern painting began to be consistently described in culinary terms. The chapters go on to follow evolving debates about Impressionism through the 1870s and 1880s, concluding around 1890, before the heyday of Symbolism. It is well known that the concept of synesthesia was of major interest in Symbolist circles, but it is less well known that the emphasis on the multisensorial at the end of the century had strong roots in earlier art and criticism. This lapse is in fact partially due to the Symbolist critique of Impressionism as merely science-based optical realism, a highly motivated argument intended to denigrate Impressionists as nothing more than passive transcribers of visual sensations who neglected the arena of the mind, the emotions, and the imagination. As Norma Broude has shown, that reading of Impressionism as optical realism was largely accepted rather than interrogated in the twentieth century, when the connection between Impressionism and the purely optical was reclaimed as positive and progressive, the foundation of modernism.²⁸ My focus on Impressionism fills a gap in a growing

literature challenging art history's privileging of the visual, but which has centered on art from Symbolism onward.²⁹ It is especially striking that Impressionism has yet to be studied within existing critiques of the ocularcentrism of histories of modernism because Impressionism functions as the origin point of those histories. This book returns to the art upon which the modernist narrative depends, but which has escaped revision in these terms.

Chapter 1 addresses the ways that culinary culture permeated artistic and literary circles and, as a result, how taste and sight could be allied in 1860s art criticism. I argue that the ability of paint to migrate between categories of the aesthetic and alimentary was especially pronounced in relation to Manet. Zola's series of articles defending Manet in 1866 and 1867 provide the central case study. Zola's culinary metaphors have received little attention in art history, but they deserve sustained scrutiny because they run counter to how Zola has typically been cast.³⁰ Zola's position is particularly significant because his view not only of Manet in particular but also of the Impressionists has been authoritative into the present. Because Zola championed the purportedly analytic gaze of the artist and critic, art historians have widely used his articles as evidence of a link between the painting that he promoted and the visual. To be sure, Zola wrote frequently and forcefully about the artist's empirical eye, extending the terms of the positivism with which he identified to the painters that he admired. But to take such passages in relative isolation results in a partial perspective and obscures the fact that Zola established a model of spectatorship in which

viewing painting was profoundly embodied. The chapter ends by exploring how the concept of vision as consumption enriches our interpretation of Manet's painting, concentrating on his still life.

The next three chapters turn to specific culinary metaphors and their implications for gender. Each raises the interplay between alimentary and sexual consumption, and the relationship of both of these to vision. Chapter 2 considers the link between red meat, the figure of the female sex worker, and the "flesh" of the paint surface, in and beyond Zola's criticism. Manet was accused by supporters and detractors alike of painting raw flesh, paradigmatically in relation to the figure of Olympia, which was repeatedly described as well-aged meat. These accusations related to his subject matter, sexualized female flesh, as well as to his technique. Whatever the subject, Manet's art was widely experienced as crude, direct, and harsh, with brushstrokes reminiscent of a butcher's bloody cuts across the canvas. The analogies that critics posed between bodies in the Morgue, female figures, meat, and the fleshy material of paint became central modes of denigrating Impressionist paintings of women in the ensuing decades. In this context, I interpret Gustave Caillebotte's *Veal in a Butcher's Shop* (c. 1882), depicting anthropomorphized, gendered, and sexualized meat, as enacting the critical responses to Impressionist figures as animalized flesh (see fig. 25). Caillebotte's painting foregrounds the violent operations through which bodies might be reduced to meat, whether literal or metaphorical. In their comparisons to rotting flesh, nineteenth-century critics expressed a

visceral reaction to works of art that *Veal in a Butcher's Shop* demands.

Chapter 3 examines the connection between pastries, the figure of the chic Parisienne, and the crusted surface of the "licked" canvas. Critics mocked fashionable painters by calling them confectioners of cakes and creams to be desired by Parisiennes, figures culturally conceived in similar terms as lightweight and appetizing. The process of these artists was not perceived to be like the butcher, breaking down subjects with strokes, but instead was seen as being akin to a pastry chef building up thin layers and shining surfaces. It comes as a surprise, then, to learn that critics also used pastry and confectionery metaphors to describe the materiality of Impressionist canvases. Connected to the feminizing of Impressionism as a movement, these accounts betrayed the sensual appeal or disgust provoked by coagulating swirls of creamy color. Analyzing still lifes by Caillebotte and Monet, I explore how the parallels between artist and chef, paint and food, were figured in paint by artists themselves, operating outside of explicit critical attention to undermine the boundaries upon which the typically derogatory painter-confectioner metaphor was built.

The final chapter considers the correlation between fresh vegetables, the figure of the *paysanne*, and colors described as sandy, raw, and bitter. Camille Pissarro earned the nickname "cabbage painter" despite the fact that cabbages rarely appeared in his exhibited works. Instead, commentators exploited a perceived affinity between the humble vegetable, Pissarro's paintings as objects, and his favored subject, female agricultural workers. The paintings

and the figures in them were described as akin to the vegetables those figures harvested and sold. According to his supporters, looking at the works conferred good health just as eating a garden-fresh meal did. Malcontents instead described the paintings as meager and weak, as insubstantial as a dinner of salad, and claimed that they induced indigestion. To many critics, approving or not, Pissarro's technique connoted the laboriousness of farm labor, and his paint coloration and materiality suggested soil and plant life. Comparisons between the materials of art and those of agricultural landscapes, and between the shared gestures of painter and

peasant, provide insight into how Pissarro's works were understood to challenge vision and require other modes of sensory engagement to be comprehensible.

The works discussed in these pages were not described in purely visual terms. Critics considered them products of the artist's embodied encounter with the world, which in turn produced powerful reactions in viewers—an inadequate term in this context. This book explores how paintings addressed themselves to entire bodies. In the process, it reframes the interpretation of this art within a broader understanding of the experiences that it offers.