

GAVARNI: THE CARNIVAL LITHOGRAPHS



Yale University Art Gallery
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Front Cover: [*Air: Larifla! . . .*] *Nos femm' sont cou-cou!*
Impressions de Ménage, Second Series, No. 24, 1847
(cat. 43)

Opposite: *La Faction aux Bouquets*
L'École des Pierrots, No. 6, 1851
(cat. 47)

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GAVARNI: THE CARNIVAL LITHOGRAPHS

NANCY OLSON



YALE UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

In 1955, Frank Altschul, B.A. 1908, donated to the Yale University Art Gallery over 4,000 prints by the French nineteenth century artist, Guillaume-Sulpice Chevallier known as Gavarni (1804–66). This collection, representing virtually the entire graphic work of the artist, was an especially appropriate gift for a university art collection since it included numerous trial proofs and various states of each print, permitting the comparative study of the artist's graphic output. Traditionally, Gavarni's importance has been minimized by art historians who usually describe him as a follower of Daumier, witty and charming but lacking Daumier's depth or virility. However, Gavarni's work has been reappraised lately, and scrutiny of the prints has led to a new appreciation of Gavarni as a technical innovator in the field of lithography. His prints also provide us with a pictorial chronicle of high life in France in the mid-nineteenth century, since Gavarni was one of the most important interpreters of the grace and elegance of Parisian life of that period.

When Frank Altschul made his gift to Yale, he expressed the hope that "a selection of prints from the Gavarni collection would occasionally be put on display and that, above all, its existence as an extraordinary historical document bearing on the manners and customs of the nineteenth century in France be drawn to the attention of the entire university." Although the prints have been Yale's property for some twenty-five years, they have been exhibited but rarely, and consulted primarily by specialists. Thus, it gives us special pleasure to mount this charming and instructive exhibition selected by Nancy Olson, an advanced student in the Department of the History of Art, who studied the collection for over a year in preparing this show and catalogue. Because the Gavarni holdings of the Yale Art Gallery are so extensive, Ms. Olson decided to focus attention on a single genre of Gavarni's lithographs, the images of masquerade balls which were so popular in his time. Since one of the special functions of university art museums is to provide graduate students with opportunities to develop practical organizational museum skills and also to publish original research relating to the permanent collections, we are grateful to Ms. Olson for responding to the challenge by producing this fascinating and illuminating study of Gavarni as a chronicler of his time. This exhibition also puts on public view part of an important collection which has been unknown for too long.

ALAN SHESTACK

Director

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The collection of lithographs by Gavarni in the Yale University Art Gallery is almost complete and features a preponderance of proof impressions. Although the collection would readily lend itself to a survey of Gavarni's entire production, the present exhibition departs from that aim, which has structured most exhibitions of the artist's work, in an effort to present one facet of his achievement in greater depth. The chosen subject, images of the pre-Lenten masked balls and carnival in Paris from 1828 to 1853, nonetheless offers what is arguably the best introduction to Gavarni's oeuvre, its thematic character and stylistic development.

I would like to thank the following people who gave me inspiration and guidance. To Professor Eugenia Parry Janis of Wellesley College I owe my first interest in Gavarni, awakened in her seminars on Realism and the history of graphic art. At Yale, Professors Anne Coffin Hanson and Donald Crafton supervised my initial investigations of the subject with insight and encouragement. James D. Burke, Assistant Director, the St. Louis Art Museum, formerly Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at the Yale University Art Gallery, supported the idea of this exhibition and provided me with opportunities to acquire experience in museum work for which I am grateful. Further support of this nature was extended to me by the staff of the Department of Prints and Photographs at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, particularly by Weston Naef, who shared with me his longstanding admiration of Gavarni.

In preparing the exhibition and catalogue I have relied on the advice and cheerful cooperation of Jane Bayard, Assistant Curator, and Rosemary Hoffmann, Curatorial Assistant, both of the Print Room, Yale University Art Gallery. Vicky Douillet and Elise K. Kenney generously and sensitively helped me to translate Gavarni's idiomatic French. I am also very grateful to Mrs. Kenney for editing the catalogue, and to Greer Allen, University Printer, for supervising its production. Sam Guckenheimer and George Shackelford, who offered me constant encouragement, deserve special thanks.

Alan Shestack, Director of the Yale University Art Gallery, first called my attention to its collection of prints by Gavarni. His patience, support and efforts on my behalf have made this exhibition and catalogue possible. Finally, I would like to thank my advisor, Robert L. Herbert, for offering helpful criticism of the catalogue, and for sharing with me his great understanding of nineteenth century pictures.

Allons! allons! des costumes gracieux, des jolies femmes, du vin mousseux, du punch brûlant, de l'esprit si vous pouvez, de l'aplomb si vous ne pouvez pas, du bagou, une voix sonore et de l'argent plein vos poches. Roulez!

C'est le moment! c'est l'instant! Vivez, viveurs!

Voilà le carnaval! Époque de plaisir, de vie, de mouvement, de fatigue, d'ivresse, d'intrigue, de liaisons, de ruptures, de désastres conjugaux, de triomphes amoureux, de serments, de trahisons, de coquetterie, de supercherie, de filouterie et de préfecture de police!

Voilà le carnaval!

—Anonymous, *Physiologie de l'Opéra, du Carnaval, du Cancan, et de la Cachucha par un Vilain Masqué, 1842*

GAVARNI AND THE BAL MASQUÉ

How far we have strayed nowadays from the Bohème of Gavarni's days. In my opinion, at that time there was a more hearty and cheerful and lively feeling than now.

—Vincent Van Gogh¹

The lithographs of Gavarni (Guillaume-Sulpice Chevallier, 1804–66) are less well known today than those of his colleague, Honoré Daumier. In the nineteenth century, however, they were widely admired, and Gavarni was esteemed by important artists and writers such as Vincent Van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Dante-Gabriel Rossetti, Honoré de Balzac, Théophile Gautier, and Edmond and Jules de Goncourt. Van Gogh, who frequently mentions Gavarni in his correspondence, regarded both the artist and his milieu with a poignant sense of irretrievable *camaraderie* and pleasures. This exhibition explores one aspect of Gavarni's Bohème, as preserved in his work, that aroused possibly the greatest feelings of heartiness, liveliness, and cheer: the annual season of masked balls and carnival in Paris.

The celebration known as carnival takes place in Roman Catholic countries in the period before Lent. Its origins are obscure, though it may be a vestige within Christian civilization of the ancient Roman Saturnalia, to which, in Gavarni's time, it was often compared.² Throughout most of its history, Rome and Venice have been its capitals, while in Paris its observance has been a less regular matter. During the First Republic, for example, it had virtually ceased, only to resume and remain especially lively for the next half-century. In this, Gavarni's epoch, the carnival began at Epiphany (January 6) and reached its apogee during Shrovetide, the three days preceding Ash Wednesday. These days were given to loud and colorful, often impromptu festivities, during which the streets of Paris teemed with carriages, maskers, and spectators. On the *grands boulevards*, balconies were actually rented as loges from which to view the traditional *Boeuf-Gras* parade.

The merry-making depicted by Gavarni happened at night when the carnival moved indoors to costume balls held throughout the city. Although they had been a part of carnival in France since the fifteenth century, during the middle of the nineteenth century these masquerade balls enjoyed an unprecedented popularity. Their revival began in the late 1820s when aristocratic circles, led by the Duchess de Berry, began to re-create balls and fêtes in the eighteenth century manner.³ These affairs were reported in fashionable periodicals such as *La Revue de Paris*, founded by the director of the Opéra, Dr. Véron. In the wake of this publicity, artistic and literary circles began to hold costume balls themselves, as did a host of

entrepreneurs, quick to recognize that "l'argent c'est le nerf du plaisir" (*Physiologie de l'Opéra*).

So appealing and profitable was the custom that by the late 1830s, the carnival was accompanied by numerous private costume parties, semi-private balls attended by subscription, and large public galas held in dance halls and theaters. These were announced by posters which sometimes appeared as early as December. Whereas most balls were attended by the diverse crowds typical of the carnival, others catered to specific clienteles. There were balls for artists, students, shopkeepers, sailors, even rag-pickers. Gavarni and his friends favored the balls at the Palais-Royal, the Théâtre des Variétés, the Salle Valentino, the Salle de Concerts Musard, the Théâtre de la Renaissance, the Vendanges de Bourgogne, and the Opéra.

Usually, the balls began at midnight and lasted until five in the morning. Contemporaneous accounts would have it that eager revelers donned their costumes hours in advance. The costumes ranged from the traditional Harlequin, Polichinelle, and Pierrot (cats. 7, 26, 38, 43–49), or the conservative *nez-de-carton*, "cardboard nose," and Domino (a simple cloak and mask, as in cats. 36–37), to the nameless and ingenious (cats. 27 and 51). Gavarni designed a number of costumes himself, including the tremendously popular *Débardeur*, based upon the uniform of a stevedore or longshoreman (cats. 15–23).

Some enthusiasts of carnival banded together in societies of *viveurs*, "pleasure seekers," with fabricated, virtually untranslatable names: *les badouillards*, *les balochards*, *les braillards*, *les chicards*, *les flambards*. These gangs attended the festivities together.

How did they amuse themselves? With music and dancing. A good orchestra ensured the popularity of an establishment, and its conductor often became a celebrity. The most celebrated was without doubt Napoleon Musard, a former violinist and composer of dance music who had enjoyed his first success in London before returning to Paris to conduct at the Théâtre des Variétés, and later at his own Salle de Concerts, and at the Opéra.⁴ His style involved the transformation of tame familiar music into frenzied *galops*. During these ecstatic performances, he fired a pistol. His music was considered the perfect accompaniment to the cancan, which became wildly popular in the 1830s, to the consternation of the police (see cat. 10). The last cancan of an evening *chez Musard* was a furious *galop final* which gathered the dancers into a revolving swarm of bodies. They would emerge disheveled, if not trampled, leaving shoes or hats behind them in the fray.

After all this activity, refreshments were necessary, and many balls featured catered buffets. The menu varied with the locality, from cham-

Gavarni and Jules Janin, 1863
cat. 1



pagne and truffles at the Opéra to chestnuts and cider on the Left Bank. Generally, an unaccompanied woman contrived to find an escort, even a stranger, to pay for her supper which, if not taken at the buffet, might be served in the *cabinet particulier*, “private dining room” of a restaurant (cat. 29).

Dancing and supping at a *bal masqué* were but vehicles, however, to the main amusement . . . *l'intrigue*, the search for clandestine, amorous liaisons. The atmosphere and accouterments of the carnival (above all masks and disguises) added mystery to the excitement of this pursuit.

Only the hopeful *séducteurs* and *séductrices* were impatient to have the ball come to an end at dawn. Others wandered home in their bedraggled costumes to a harsher reality. Descriptions from the period admit to the disastrous financial consequences of attending too many masked balls: the empty larder, the need to borrow money, the dreaded advent of one’s creditors, the sacrifice of a treasured costume to the merchant of used clothing. But most devotees came back the following year, their appetites possibly whetted by Gavarni’s carnival lithographs.

Like his colleagues, Honoré Daumier and Constantin Guys, Gavarni specialized in the sketch of manners: images of Paris life and Parisian types in which his contemporaries found a pictorial complement to Balzac’s *Comédie Humaine*. His mature lithographs were made over two decades, in four intervals of productivity: 1837–43, 1846–47, 1851–53, and 1857–58. The carnival, especially its costume balls, figured prominently in his work in all periods save the last.

How did this subject become Gavarni’s special province? It might be said that his career before 1837 followed a course touching upon, and finally converging with, the rising fortune of the *bal masqué*. During this period Gavarni became a recognized presence at the balls, and moreover, involved himself with their planning. His initial relationship to the masquerades recalls earlier artists, such as Jacques Callot, who made prints depicting the festivals they helped to design.

Gavarni’s earliest, informal education predisposed him to such a role. Under the guidance of his maternal uncle, the painter, engraver, and actor, Guillaume Thiémet, Gavarni as a child discovered his talent for drawing and acquired a passionate interest in theater and costume. But his equally evident aptitude for mathematics steered him away from a course of training in the fine arts. In his teens he was apprenticed first to an architect, then to a manufacturer of precision instruments. From there he went to the *École Polymathique* before enrolling, in 1818, in the *Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers* where he studied mechanical drawing.

During Gavarni’s years of apprenticeship and study, lithography—the

medium Baudelaire found so well-suited to the sketch of manners—was established in Paris as a full-fledged profession. Although it had been invented in 1798 by a Bavarian, Aloys Senefelder, only in 1816, with the foundation in Paris of the lithographic press directed by Godefroy Engelmann, did lithography become readily available to French artists. Engelmann proselytized for the medium and pioneered its technical improvement and refinement. By 1820, his was probably the leading press, and Paris the lithographic capital of Europe.⁵

How Gavarni learned to make lithographs is not clear. He might have read Senefelder's treatise, translated into French as *L'Art de la Lithographie* in 1819. Engelmann's own *Manuel du Dessinateur Lithographe* appeared in 1822. Of course, without reading anything about the medium, Gavarni might have learned how to make drawings with a greasy crayon on the Bavarian limestone, to be printed by a professional. In any case, sometime after entering the Conservatoire, he approached the publisher and vendor of lithographs, Caroline Naudet. She encouraged his efforts and introduced him to another editor, M. Blaisot, but did not publish his work until 1824.

By that time unhappily apprenticed to an intaglio printmaker, Gavarni left Paris shortly thereafter for Bordeaux, where he had a commission to make etchings of a newly-constructed bridge. What began as a business trip turned into three years of travel in southwestern France, during which he sketched the landscape and regional costumes. His notebooks from the journey reveal that by this time he was preoccupied with the recipes and secrets of lithography, including techniques employing crayon, pen, needle, and scraper.⁶ A notebook of future projects begun in 1826 even contains a projected essay on the history and beginnings of lithography in France. Other pictorial ideas recorded in this notebook foretell his later work, including the *Carnaval de Venise*, the *Spectacle du Grand Opéra*, and the bal masqué. Gavarni began to dream of refreshing the *travestissements* of the carnival by diluting the ubiquitous trio of Harlequin, Polichinelle, and Pierrot with Spanish, Basque, and old French costumes. And he started to make drawings of these for envoy to Paris, after receiving through the editor, Blaisot, a commission from the publisher of fashion plates, La Mesangère.

Upon returning to Paris in June 1828, Gavarni began a new journal, inscribed *Deuxième Époque* in commemoration of a new phase in his life. For the next year, he explored the metropolis as avidly as he had done the Pyrenees. Rapidly readjusting to the city's greater level and variety of stimulation, he learned to perceive and savor the fugitive episodes and impressions that composed the Parisian landscape. In short, he became a *flâneur*, the urban spectator eulogized by Baudelaire in "The Painter of

Modern Life" of 1863, an essay inspired by Gavarni's friend, Constantin Guys. Anticipating Guys who professed to despise any man capable of being "bored in the heart of the multitude," Gavarni discovered how to "se renouveler dans la foule" and wrote in his journal "qu'il faut être vide ou usé pour s'ennuyer près d'une agglomération d'hommes!"⁷ The artist, who had grown to cherish the solitude he had known in the Pyrenees, found a substitute for that privacy in the anonymity of the city dweller lost in a crowd of strangers, which Baudelaire would describe with such eloquence:

For the perfect flâneur, for the passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to feel oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet to remain hidden from the world—such are a few of the slightest pleasures of those independent, passionate, impartial natures which the tongue can but clumsily define. The spectator is a *prince* who everywhere rejoices in his incognito.⁸

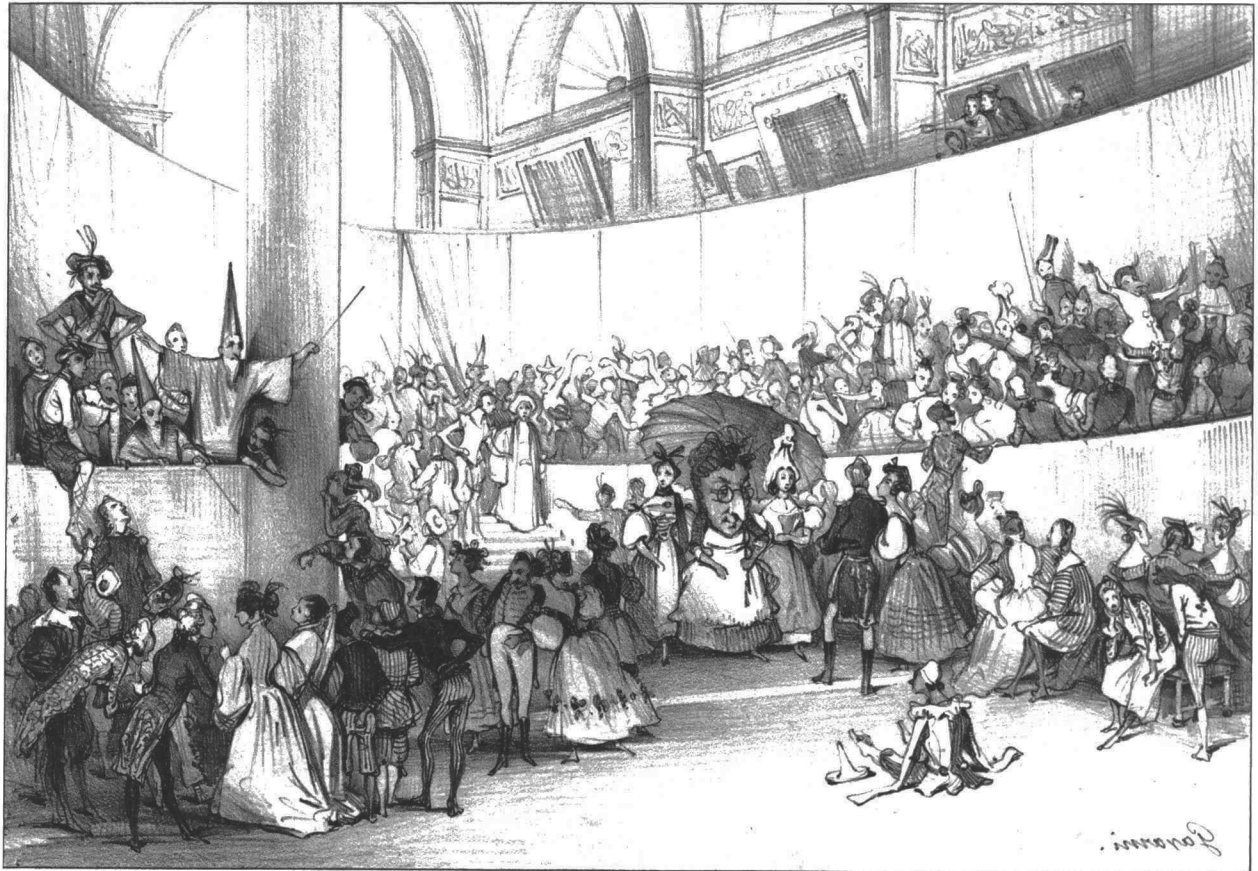
There could be no better evocation of Gavarni at the bal masqué. Such a passionate lover of crowds, incognitos, and costume was to find the masquerade a natural habitat.

During this period of *flânerie*, Gavarni began an intensive program of drawing, making hundreds of studies after nature. In April 1830, after almost a year of this self-instruction, he had the good fortune to be introduced to Émile de Girardin. Girardin was on the way to becoming a magnate of the French periodical press. Shortly before meeting Gavarni, he had launched three modest journals. One, *La Mode*, was a society review designed to rival Dr. Véron's *La Revue de Paris*. At this date still a relative novice to publishing, Girardin nonetheless proved himself responsive to, if not solely responsible for, an innovation that would revitalize French journalism and assure the careers of Gavarni, Daumier, and others. He knew that pictures would sell papers. In accord with the tastes of his readership, Girardin hired Gavarni to grace *La Mode* with little genre scenes of *la vie élégante* in the tradition of Moreau le Jeune's *Monument de Costume* (ca. 1780).

Through Girardin, Gavarni encountered his Bohème, a sociable coterie of writers who were self-styled advocates of dandyism, a philosophy of elegance and significance in clothing and demeanor introduced to France from England with the Bourbon Restoration in 1815.⁹ On French soil, dandy, flâneur, and lithographer could be one and the same, as Gavarni discovered. Among the dandy-journalists who befriended him were the critics Jules Janin and Théophile Gautier, and the novelists Eugène Sue and Honoré de Balzac, who, still unknown in 1830, supported themselves by writing articles on fashions and manners for Girardin's publications.

By the standards of the day *La Mode* was successful, but its finances

Mascarade, 1832
cat. 5



suffered, along with those of its subscribers, during the Revolution of July 1830. By the end of 1831, Gavarni had moved with Balzac to another magazine, *L'Artiste*. His lithographs for this journal include several depictions of costume balls and related events, more often than not inspired by Gavarni's own *sorties* (cat. 5). His connections with other enthusiasts of masquerade were established during this period, when he became friendly with Alexandre Dumas, Alfred de Musset, Nestor Roqueplan, and the so-called *petit cénacle* consisting of writers Gautier, Camille Rogier, Gérard de Nerval, and Arsène Houssaye. Passionate about the eighteenth century, this group arranged costumed fêtes and entertainments in emulation of the *ancien régime*.¹⁰

Influenced by his predominantly literary milieu, Gavarni fancied himself a writer as well as an artist. In 1832–33 he composed various short prose pieces and, against the better judgment of more experienced colleagues, nurtured plans for a magazine of his own. *Le Journal des Gens du Monde* appeared in October 1833 and failed in July 1834, despite the literary contributions of Gavarni's friends and his own facility with crayon and pen (concealed under various pseudonyms). Upon leaving a masquerade one morning in March 1835, he was finally seized by his creditors and taken to the debtors' prison on the rue de Clichy, where he was detained for about a month (see cat. 26).

Despite his financial misfortune, Gavarni resumed an active social life in which the carnival and masquerades became increasingly prominent. The transformation of the *bal de l'Opéra* in 1837 was symptomatic of what the brothers Goncourt called the *fièvre du carnaval* afflicting the artist, and much of Paris, during the late 1830s. Founded in 1715, by nineteenth century standards this ball had become a staid and boring institution which its directors had tried to enliven with various schemes designed to attract the public. Their efforts were unprofitable until permission was obtained to hold a costume ball, with the orchestra conducted by no less than Napoleon Musard. This event was a great success, and the Opéra ball, thereafter held every Saturday during the carnival season, became the leading masquerade in Paris.

During this period, Gavarni focused his social and creative energies upon the bals masqués. According to the Goncourt brothers, his apartment became "vraiment comme l'atelier, le magasin, la buvette et l'antichambre du carnaval."¹¹ Friends came to this headquarters in search of good ideas for costumes, and gathered there before making a spectacular entrance at one of the balls. Welcome and present at all the most fashionable balls, Gavarni became a consultant of sorts on matters of dancing, entertainment, and especially costumes. As a result of his participation, he began to portray the carnival in lithographs.

—Une Tombola
Souvenirs du Carnaval, No. 2, 1837
cat. 7



Gavarni was encouraged in this last endeavor when, in 1837, he was approached by Daumier's publisher, Charles Philipon. Gavarni had been an occasional contributor to his weekly journal, *La Caricature* (which ceased publication after the censorship laws of September 1835), and to the daily *Le Charivari*, where Daumier had been working since 1832. In 1837, Philipon invited Gavarni to create a female counterpart to the protagonist of Daumier's popular series, *Robert-Macaire*. The swindler, Macaire, had been the inspiration of a gifted actor, Frédérick-Lemaître, who created the role in 1823. By the late 1830s, Macaire had become a recognized *type parisien* and a popular disguise worn at the masked balls, as Gavarni acknowledged (cat. 12). Gavarni's response to Philipon was not a Mme. Macaire, but a series exploring the adulterous prevarications of bourgeois women entitled *Fourberies de Femmes en Matière de Sentiment*. His *re-début* at *Le Charivari*, inaugurated by this series, began a collaboration lasting until 1844. During this period the journal published almost nine hundred lithographs by Gavarni, including the series *Les Artistes*, *La Boîte aux Lettres*, *Clichy*, *Les Coulisses*, *Les Enfants Terribles*, *Impressions de Ménage*, and *La Vie de Jeune Homme*, among others.

The greatest number of Gavarni's carnival lithographs, more than 150 prints devoted to the masked ball, were published by Philipon during this first interval of productivity. Most belonged to four series: *Le Carnaval* (1838–39), *Souvenirs du Bal Chicard* (1839–43), *Les Débardeurs* (1840–43), and *Le Carnaval à Paris* (1841–43). Gavarni's contract with *Le Charivari* expired in 1844. After negotiations, a new agreement was reached, and in 1846 he began working on his *Oeuvres Nouvelles*, 150 lithographs in eleven series, which included a set of fifty prints entitled *Carnaval* (1846–47). Subsequently, Gavarni moved to London for a period of three years during which he made very few lithographs. After his return to Paris in 1851, he embarked on a course of intense productivity, developing 329 lithographs in eighteen series known collectively as *Masques et Visages*. A new daily literary journal, *Paris*, edited by Count de Villedeuil, the cousin of Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, published this work between 1852–53. Included were two series of ten prints each, *L'École des Pierrots* (1851–53), and *La Foire aux Amours* (1852–53), which show the carnival and bals masqués revisited.¹²

Although Gavarni's lithographs corroborate surviving descriptions of the bals masqués, his intention was not primarily reportage, but rather, the exercise and expression of his powers as an analyst and a dramatist of human character and behavior. Most of the carnival lithographs depict small groups of figures, isolated from the crowd, in little scenes of social interaction accompanied by conversational captions.¹³ In them Gavarni

—Vous ignoriez que cette danse fût défendue . . .
Le Carnaval, No. 2, 1838
cat. 10



demonstrates a sensitivity to the dynamics of social behavior that has been called quasi-scientific in its acuity. Gustave Geffroy, for example, equates Gavarni's pictorial interest in "les combinaisons sociales" with his lifelong avocation, mathematics, describing his work as "une oeuvre de mathématiques appliquées à l'homme."¹⁴

Perhaps more revealing of Gavarni's approach and of his interest in the bal masqué specifically, is the extent to which his pictorial record of human behavior anticipates the findings of modern sociology.¹⁵ As a student of behavior in public places the flâneur, like the sociologist, is attracted to situations the latter calls open regions, where social engagements among unacquainted persons are permissible, or even obligatory. The carnival and its masked balls were tacitly recognized as open regions by Gavarni's contemporaries:

Supper [at a masked ball] is like time spent in a stage coach; it commits no one to social relations after the banquet, and just as the fellow traveler who has showered you with attentions from Paris to Bayonne scarcely greets you after your arrival, so do host and guest at carnival festivities meet during Lent and pass indifferently like two beings totally unknown to one another.¹⁶

At the bal masqué, the social freedom peculiar to open regions was further extended by masks and disguises. Incognito, the characters in Gavarni's carnival lithographs are out of [normal] role, and enjoy a measure of social license unknown to their everyday lives. (As a foil to their behavior, Gavarni created the figure of Coquardeau [cats. 23, 25, and 30] who personifies resistance to the spirit of the occasion.) This liberty did have its boundaries, enforced by the *commissaires de police* who served as guardians of public behavior, as in cat. 10, where a couple has been apprehended for dancing too wildly. Even among the revelers, a certain standard of deportment and degree of limb discipline was expected; in cat. 21, for example, a man chastises his partner for riding piggyback with a stranger.

Despite his avowed love of the crowd, Gavarni rarely makes it the subject of his pictures. Rather, the carnival lithographs reflect his greater interest in the tendency of individuals to drift away from the gathering at large. This was a consequence and a condition of the romantic liaisons that preoccupied guests at a masked ball, Gavarni not the least. Often, these encounters would unfold behind designated involvement shelters, such as loges and cabinets particuliers. Or they might be complicated with by-plays when, for example, one party covertly signals to someone outside the encounter, by winking, or passing a note (cat. 48).

Many of the carnival lithographs portray activities akin to Gavarni's own flânerie. He probably found it appropriate that the masked balls were so often held in theaters. If on these occasions actors and audience were

—Ah! mon Dieu! . . . c'est mon mari . . .
Le Carnaval, No. 5, 1838
cat. 11



one and the same, seeing and being seen remained a part—if sometimes an unplanned part—of the evening’s program (as in the moments of recognition in cats. 11, 39, and 49). In many compositions, Gavarni exploits the props of spectating, such as lorgnons, which serve as boosting devices to amplify the senses, or fans and masks, which create involvement shields that enable the user to stare without being recognized.

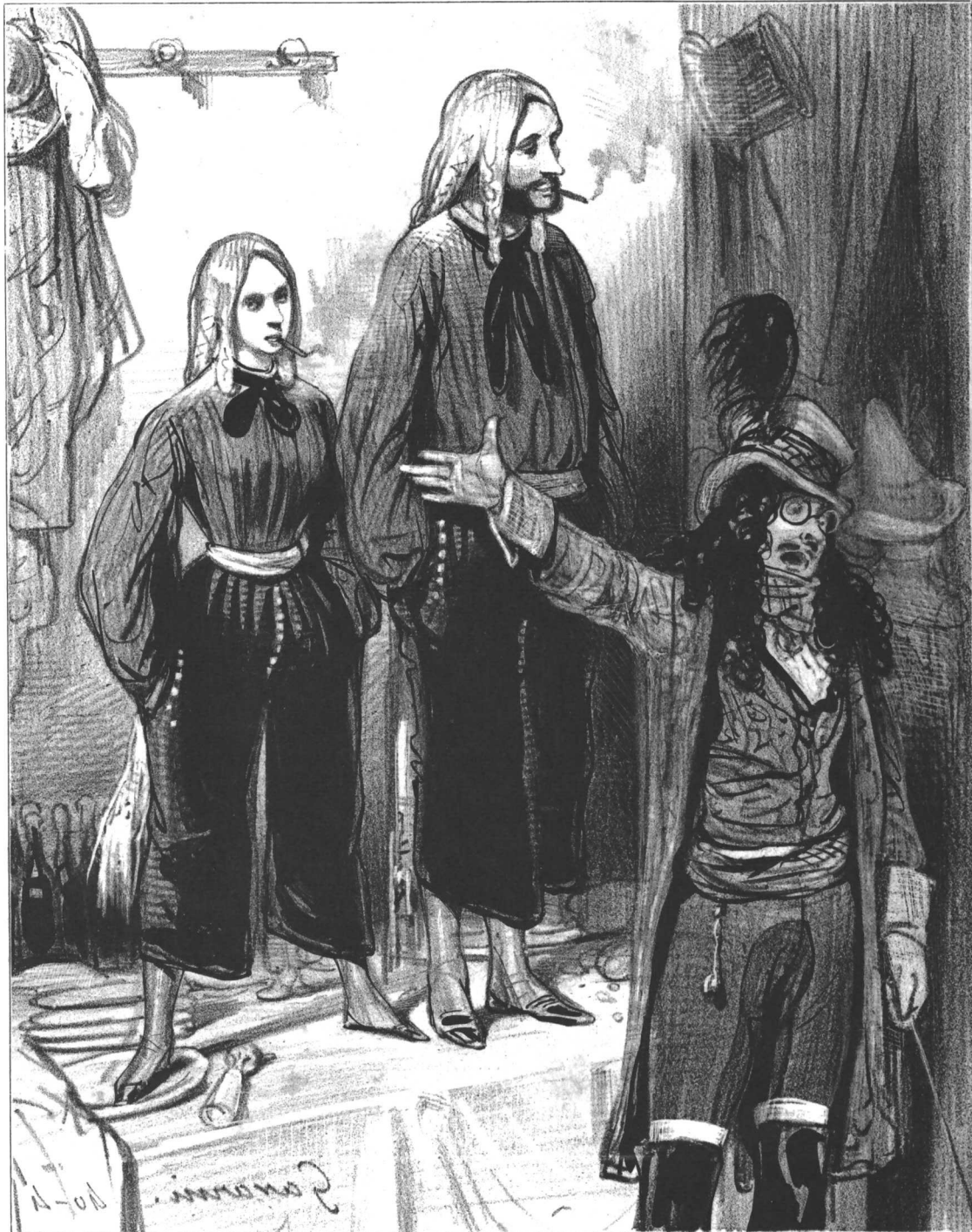
Gavarni confers his own position as a flâneur, or sometimes even a voyeur, upon the viewer of his lithographs through a pictorial *mise en scène*. To focus on a moment of privacy in a public setting, he isolates his protagonists in a secluded foreground, often indicating the rest of the gathering, say, through an open doorway. Leaving what he can to the viewer’s imagination, he develops the ability to conceal facial features and expressions, thereby enhancing the intrigue of a situation (cat. 34). Related to this device is his propensity for omitting part of a subject so that the focus of attention “within” a scene lies outside the boundaries of the composition (cat. 18). In some compositions, the meaning of the situation depends on a single visual clue (cats. 11 and 48).

The *dramatis personae* of the carnival lithographs are led by three figures: Débardeur, Lorette, and Pierrot. The Débardeur was based on the most popular of the costumes Gavarni designed in the late 1830s. It originated as a counterpart to the *Patron de Bateau* he created for himself in 1836, a costume consisting of full, black velvet trousers fastened with brass buttons, a shirt worn open at the neckline, a short vest in either red or white, a powdered wig, and a large hat trimmed with gold piping and a willow branch. The similar Débardeur was based upon the uniform worn by the stevedores who unloaded the barges that were floated down the Seine to Paris. Their garb was admired for its nonconformity to modern dress:

In our day, when the philosophic spirit cuts all suits from the same cloth and tailors them to the same measure, the Débardeur is one of the social classifications which, with the greatest valor, defends its costume against the usurpations of the frock coat and trousers.¹⁷

Gavarni’s original Débardeur combined the wig, shirt, and trousers of the *Patron de Bateau* with a fringed sash, a policeman’s hat, and a black mask. The costume was stylish and comfortable, and remained neat and elegant through the worst agitations of the cancan. It attained celebrity in 1840, when a popular actress, Mlle. Déjazet, appeared *en Débardeur* for her role in *Indiana et Charlemagne* at the Palais-Royal. Subsequently, the Débardeur came to represent the most ardent and irreverent devotees of the carnival (cat. 15). As such it was featured as a *type parisien* in one of the little guides known as *physiologies*, and provided the theme for Gavarni’s largest series of carnival lithographs, *Les Débardeurs*.

The Débardeur was the preferred uniform of Gavarni’s second carnival



persona, the Lorette. Although his series, *Les Lorettes*, is represented by only one print in this exhibition, the Lorette appears in most of the carnival lithographs. As a type parisien she flourished in the decade 1840–50, during which Gavarni was her acknowledged spokesman. In his essay on Gavarni of 1857, Théophile Gautier described the Lorette as:

a special product of our busy ways, the casual mistress of an age which has not time to fall in love and which is greatly bored at home. In her house, you may smoke, stand on your head, stick your feet on the mantelpiece, say whatever comes to mind, even coarse pleasantries. . . . [Lorettes] have all been, more or less, supernumeraries, actresses, piano teachers; they know the slang of sport, of the studio, of backstage; they dance splendidly, play a waltz, sing a bit, and roll cigarettes like a Spanish smuggler—some are even able to spell! . . . [They are fashion setters] and know how to wear everything, watered silk and velvet, and feathers in their bonnets, and caps of Chantilly lace, and boots which fit the foot. . . .¹⁸

Gavarni's apartment near the church Notre Dame de Lorette was in a veritable colony of these young women. Rents in this district were low because the houses were new and poorly finished. Most Lorettes, who avoided working, could afford no better. They depended on the financial support of various lovers, moving from one relationship to the next in a "butterfly arrangement of mercenary love."¹⁹

With a predilection for secrecy necessary to the management of her affairs, the Lorette often went by a pseudonym. Carnival was her element. For the six weeks preceding Lent she was busy attending as many balls as possible. Often she was able, if by chicanery, to make a little money by offering a masked ball herself, selling the tickets for an exorbitant price. She was almost certain to make new and profitable liaisons, for the bal masqué was known to be "la bourse des femmes galantes" (*Physiologie de l'Opéra*).

The Débardeur and the Lorette were social types peculiar to the July Monarchy, and as such, short-lived. The last member of Gavarni's carnival troika, Pierrot, had a much longer lineage, extending back to the Comédie Italienne of the seventeenth century. It may seem ironic that Gavarni, who in 1826 had planned to "faire sortir de costume des bals masqués de la trinité banale et hiératique de ces trois types consacrés: l'éternel Pierrot, l'éternel Polichinelle, l'éternel Arlequin,"²⁰ would give Pierrot increasing prominence in his lithographs, culminating in the series, *L'École des Pierrots*, begun in 1851. Yet in that interval of twenty years the art of pantomime and the characters of the Comédie Italienne had acquired a new critical following in Paris, similar in spirit and membership to the developing audience for caricature. In fact, Gavarni's Pierrot lithographs belong to the vanguard of what one art historian has called a decade of "sad clown" pictures.²¹

Centered on the figure of Pierrot, this revival of interest can be traced to the auspicious combination of an actor, a theater, and a critic. The actor, Jean-Gaspard Deburau (1796–1846), was one of a family of acrobats who settled in Paris in 1811. His success came in the late 1820s when he began to play the Pierrot named Gilles at the Théâtre des Funambules. His unorthodox interpretation of the role, renowned for eccentric dances based on the more audacious steps of the cancan, attracted the attention of artists and journalists. Among them was Gavarni's friend, Jules Janin (cat. 1) whose *Deburau—Histoire de Théâtre à Quatre Sous* was published in 1832. The success of this book launched a cult of pantomime which gained momentum over the next two decades.

In 1846 Deburau was succeeded by his son, Charles, and by a pupil, Paul Legrand. Legrand toured London in 1848, where Gavarni might have seen his performances. During his residence in London, Gavarni began to make watercolors, dramatically heightened with white gouache, of Pierrots, and to plan a series of Pierrot lithographs with the working title *Ours Blancs*, "Polar Bears." This earlier title reflects Gavarni's tendency to depict Pierrot as an aging and socially inept figure (cats. 48–49). This portrayal, possibly tinged with self-recognition, betrays a nostalgia not to be found in Gavarni's earlier, youthful *Débardeurs* and *Lorettes*. It is a mood in keeping with other series from *Masques et Visages*, such as *Les Invalides du Sentiment* and *Les Lorettes Vieillies*, which take an ironic view of aging seducteurs and seductrices.²²

Although Gavarni's stay in London (1847–51), during which he largely withdrew from fashionable society to study and sketch the urban poor, influenced the more sober tone of his subsequent work, the irony and nostalgia in these late carnival lithographs have other, earlier roots. Gradually during the 1840s Gavarni had ceased attending the masquerades which, as they became more popular, sacrificed their original elegance to a vulgarity he found distasteful.

If, progressively, Gavarni depicted the carnival not as it was, but as he conceived it, his powers of narration and characterization did not suffer as a result. Nor did his draftsmanship. Viewed in chronological sequence, the carnival lithographs reveal Gavarni's mastery of lithographic technique and figure composition. *Une Tombola* (cat. 7) from the early series, *Souvenirs du Carnaval* (1837), already reflects a marked advance beyond the timid, diminutive scale of the *Mascarade* (cat. 5) of 1832. But Gavarni still uses a hard, fine crayon, and his hatching remains almost too painstaking—in representing fabrics, for example, he tends to reweave the stripes and plaids with his crayon. During this period he begins to employ subtractive techniques involving removal of the applied lithographic crayon by scratching with a sharp tool to create white lines in the finished print. But

the resulting nuances of tone are neither as subtle, nor the contrasts as brilliant, as those he would later obtain.

In his early work for *Le Charivari*, typified by *Le Carnaval* (cats. 9–13), Gavarni endeavors to break with his initial conception of lithographic draftsmanship—one still prevalent in this period—as *un travail de précision*. His drawing becomes looser and freer, the hatching broader, the crayon softer and blunter and touched to the stone with a greater range of pressure. Scratching is used more frequently, though not yet boldly. The overall impression is of greater tonal range, despite the absence of true blacks or delicate grays.

Gavarni's command of velvety blacks marks the next phase of his development, evident in the series, *Les Débardeurs* (cats. 15–23) and *Le Carnaval à Paris* (cats. 24–32). During this period he begins to employ tusche (a greasy ink used along with crayon to draw on the lithographic stone) from which he scratches with a sharp implement to create sparkling and subtle contrasts of black and white (cat. 20). At the same time, he surrounds his figures with a greater sense of space and atmosphere. The compositions are clarified as the figures are reduced in number and positioned in a delimited foreground. Their postures and gestures are more expressive and tend to dominate the compositions (cat. 21). In these series, Gavarni also develops a more dynamic pictorial space, strengthening the visual and narrative interaction between foreground and background through pose and gesture, and the use of light and shadow (cat. 20). In *Le Carnaval à Paris*, moreover, he experiments with an atmospheric perspective that prefigures his later work (cat. 30).

With his *Oeuvres Nouvelles* (cats. 34–43), Gavarni masters a soft and delicate gray, probably based on a dilute tusche wash. This gray often serves rather like a toned ground in painting to unify the compositions. At the same time, it evokes the heat, noise, and unfocused frenzy of the crowd. In these prints both the crowds in the background and the protagonists in the foreground are imbued with new energy. The figures' gestures are more exaggerated and more expressive of motion (cat. 43). Their distinctive silhouettes, coupled with the expanded tonal range of Gavarni's draftsmanship, give the compositions greater impact as formal designs (cat. 34).

Gavarni's carnival lithographs from *Masques et Visages* (cats. 44–52) exhibit further tonal refinements and a new largesse of scale and handling. No longer cultivating deep black tones, he draws freely with a soft crayon, exploiting the white of the paper as never before. Many of the compositions depend on the interrelationship of three values: voluminous whites, pearly grays, and small but distinctive accents of black (cat. 45). Often now, the figures are shown in half-length, from a closer vantage



point more revealing of their gestures and expressions.

After *Masques et Visages*, Gavarni lived in semi-retirement. He made his last lithographs, five series containing a total of 174 prints, in 1857–58. Most were single figure studies of types parisiens; only a few represented the carnival. Gavarni did continue to make occasional watercolors of Pierrot. And the Goncourt brothers, who saw him regularly, observed that he kept a Patron de Bateau as a souvenir of “la jeunesse de son plaisir, du carnaval, dont il parlait toujours avec un retour d’émotion.”²³ In February 1860, they took him back to the Opéra ball. No longer a prince rejoicing in his incognito, Gavarni was disheartened by the experience.

The costume balls, though still in session, already belonged to a *temps perdu*. As Paul de Saint-Victor, in his preface to an edition of Gavarni’s late lithographs, *D’Après Nature* (1858), opined, “le bal de l’Opéra n’est plus à l’Opéra, il est dans l’oeuvre de Gavarni.”²⁴ The longing of Gavarni’s own contemporaries for the heyday of the carnival and its masquerades underlies Van Gogh’s regret, “how far we have strayed from the Bohème of Gavarni’s days,” and testifies to the pleasure of viewing Gavarni’s carnival lithographs.

—Ton Alfred est un gueux . . .
Les Débardeurs, No. 46, 1840
cat. 20



NOTES

- 1 Vincent Van Gogh, *The Complete Letters of Vincent Van Gogh* (Boston, 1978), vol. 1, p. 468. Letter 237, addressed to Theo Van Gogh from The Hague, n.d. (ca. 1881–83).
- 2 See, for example, the *Physiologie de l'Opéra*, p. 7, and the article on the *carnaval* in Larousse, *Grand Dictionnaire*, vol. 3, p. 422.
- 3 Duncan, *Pursuit*, p. 57.
- 4 Sigfried Kracauer discusses Musard, the carnival, and the musical community in Paris in *Orpheus in Paris: Offenbach and the Paris of His Time*, trans. Gwenda David and Erich Mosbacher (New York, 1938).
- 5 The best account of this development remains Michael Twyman, *Lithography 1800–1850* (London, 1970).
- 6 This and the following citations from Gavarni's Pyrenees notebooks are found in Goncourt, *Gavarni*, pp. 25–26.
- 7 Goncourt, *Gavarni*, p. 37.
- 8 Baudelaire, "The Painter of Modern Life," in *Painter*, p. 9. Duncan, *Pursuit*, p. 103, notes the striking similarities between this essay and Théophile Gautier's article, "Gavarni," first published in *L'Artiste*, 1857, then reprinted in *Portraits*, 1874. It is interesting to note that Adhémar, *Gavarni*, p. 77, quotes a letter from Baudelaire to Gavarni of 4 February 1864, in which he mentions his recently published article on Guys and alludes to what he had earlier written on Gavarni (presumably in "Some French Caricaturists," 1855) as being "bien inférieur à ce que je pense."
- 9 Ellen Moers discusses Girardin and his associates in *The Dandy, Brummell to Beerbohm* (New York, 1960), Chapter 6.
- 10 Duncan, *Pursuit*, pp. 36–37 and 72, notes that the earliest costume balls of the July Monarchy were given by aristocrats such as de Berry, and by artists of the Dumas-Gautier circle.
- 11 Goncourt, *Gavarni*, p. 83.
- 12 In addition to the major series mentioned in this paragraph, Gavarni devoted several smaller series, and many single lithographs, to the *bal masqué*. Outstanding examples occur as well in series devoted primarily to other themes (cat. 43).
- 13 This combination of word and image extended Gavarni's descriptive and dramatic resources, as did his habit of working in thematic series. Although he did not conceive or arrange his prints in narrative sequences, the serial format enabled him to treat subjects and characters in an episodic fashion.
- 14 Gustave Geffroy, in his Preface to Goncourt, *Gavarni*, p. ix. In a similar spirit Gavarni referred to the carnival as his *bibliothèque* (Lemoisne I, p. 115).
- 15 See particularly Erving Goffman, *Behavior in Public Places* (New York, 1960). I am grateful to Robert L. Herbert for introducing me to this book.
- 16 Alhoy, *Débardeur*, p. 76. (My translation)
- 17 Alhoy, *Débardeur*, p. 8. (My translation)

- 18 Gautier, "Gavarni," in *Portraits*, pp. 331–32. (My translation)
- 19 See Sidney D. Braun, *The "Courtisane" in the French Theatre from Hugo to Becque (1831–1885)*, (Baltimore, 1947), p. 13 and Chapter 3, where he discusses the Lorette as a figure in French drama of Gavarni's period.
- 20 Goncourt, *Gavarni*, p. 32.
- 21 See Frances Haskell, "The Sad Clown: Some Notes on a Nineteenth-Century Myth," in Ulrich Finke, ed., *French Nineteenth-Century Painting and Literature* (Manchester, 1972), pp. 2–16.
- 22 A. & B. 1338–67; and 1368–86 and 1776–86, respectively.
It is interesting to note that in 1854–55 the journalist, caricaturist, aeronaut, and photographer, Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon, 1820–1910), in collaboration with his brother, Adrien, made a series of photographs of Deburau's son, Charles, as Pierrot. These pictures received a gold medal at the Exposition Universelle of 1855. Nadar and Gavarni were friends and shared interests in Pierrot and in balloons. Nadar was a frequent visitor to the offices of the journal, *Paris*, and perhaps was inspired to make his Pierrot photographs by Gavarni's *L'École des Pierrots*, which he undoubtedly saw when it appeared in 1852–53.
- 23 Goncourt, *Gavarni*, p. 83.
- 24 Paul de Saint-Victor, in Gavarni, *D'Après Nature*, Part II, p. 12.

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- Physiologie de l'Opéra Anonymous, *Physiologie de l'Opéra, du Carnaval, du Cancan et de la Cachucha, par un Vilain Masqué*. Illustrated by Henry Emi, Paris, 1842.
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- Robert Wickenden, "Gavarni." *Print Collector's Quarterly*, V, February 1915, pp. 59–83.

—Monter à cheval sur le cou d'un homme . . .
Les Débardeurs, No. 54, 1841
cat. 21



The works in this exhibition were given to the Yale University Art Gallery by Frank Altschul, B.A. 1908. With four exceptions noted in the catalogue, all are lithographs. The prints are listed under the series to which they belong. The caption of each is given in the original French, followed by the author's English translation in parentheses. Measurements are taken from the borders of the composition, unless otherwise indicated. The A. & B. numbers refer to Armelhault and Bocher's catalogue raisonné of the lithographs (see Bibliography). All impressions are on wove paper, except where specified. Objects reproduced in this catalogue are marked with an asterisk.

- *1 Gavarni and Jules Janin, 1863
Photograph, albumen print, 212 x 179 mm.
Annotated, in pencil, beneath image: *Gavarni & Jules Janin | d'après nature. | 1863.*
1955.15.20

This photograph served as the model for a lithographic portrait of Gavarni by Lafosse, which appeared in the *Panthéon des Illustrations Françaises au XIX^e Siècle* (Paris, 1865; see A. & B. p. ix, no. v). At the time of this picture Jules Janin (1804–74), the journalist and drama critic, was Gavarni's neighbor in the Auteuil district of Paris. His book of 1832 on Jean-Gaspard Debureau had fostered a cult of pantomime which outlasted the July Monarchy (see essay, p. 21). Along with Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, Edmond Texier and Paul de Saint-Victor, Janin also wrote the text for a published edition of Gavarni's late lithographs entitled *D'Après Nature*.

- 2 Self-Portrait, also known as *L'Homme à la Cigarette*, 1842
224 x 155 mm.
A. & B. 34; second state of five, chine collé
1955.15.21

A self-styled man of the world, Gavarni holds a cigarette rather than a brush or crayon. An arbiter of fashion who took great care with his appearance, he projects the "elegant, but unbuttoned" mien to which French dandies aspired.

Early Work (1828–37)

GROTESQUE DISGUISES

Twelve lithographs done in pen, published simultaneously in London and Paris, 1829.

- 3 Study for *Lie Cage—Cage à Mensonges*, ca. 1828
Pencil, pen, and brown and black inks with gray wash and brown, yellow, and pink watercolors
322 x 246 mm. (sheet)
1974.90.5

This fanciful costume bespeaks an imagination which would find its appropriate expression, both sartorial and pictorial, through carnival and the attendant masked balls. The drawing is a study for A. & B. 2714 (cat. 4).

- 4 No. 12. *Lie Cage—Cage à Mensonges*, 1829
213 x 185 mm. (irregular)
A. & B. 2714; only state, hand-colored with pink, blue, purple, brown, gray, and green watercolors
1974.90.4

- *5 *Mascarade*, 1832
129 x 185 mm.
A. & B. 158; first state of three
1955.15.22

One of seventy-five lithographs by Gavarni published in *L'Artiste, Journal de la Littérature et des Beaux-Arts*, where he began working in autumn 1831. The subject is an artists' ball given by Alexandre Dumas (Lemoisne I, p. 47). Compositions such as this one, which encompass a large space and numerous tiny figures viewed from a distance, are infrequent in Gavarni's work. By the end of the decade he abandoned this small scale, which prompted the brothers Goncourt to describe another similar image as *un bal d'insectes*.

SOUVENIRS DU CARNAVAL

Six lithographs with cover, itself featuring a lithographed design. Lemoisne dates them 1837. Numbers 1–4 and 6 also published in *La Caricature*, 1840, along with three additional prints.



- 6 *Souvenirs de [sic] Carnaval par Gavarni*
Album cover, with lithograph in crayon and tusche
48 x 63 mm. (image)
A. & B. 2016; only state
1955.15.23

Many of Gavarni's lithographs which appeared serially in journals were also published collectively as albums, in the form of loose sheets with a cover folder. As was true of the Japanese woodblock print in the seventeenth century, the publication of these albums was a commercial venture catering to a new, middle-class patronage. The enterprise involved artist-lithographer, printer, publisher, and distributor.

- *7 No. 2. —UNE TOMBOLA. *Le n° 43 a gagné . . . une chandelle*
(—A Lottery. Number 43 has won . . . a candle)
233 x 193 mm.
A. & B. 2018; first state of three, proof before letters
1955.15.24

Lotteries for prizes and supper tickets were a popular entertainment at the masked balls. It is revealing of Gavarni's artistic development to compare these cautiously drawn, rather wooden Pierrots to his later conception and treatment of the figure (cats. 43–49).

- 8 No. 4. LE CORRIDOR DES LOGES à minuit
(The Corridor of Loges at Midnight)
233 x 191 mm.
A. & B. 2020; first state of three, proof before letters
1955.15.25

Work for Le Charivari (1838–43)

LE CARNAVAL

Twenty-seven lithographs, all but four (nos. 6, 22, 26, and 27) published in *Le Charivari*, 1838–39.

- 9 No. 1. —*Un cavalier et une dame . . . —Quinze sous.*
(*On consomme la moitié en rafraichissemens [sic]*),
1838
(—A gentleman and a lady . . . —Fifteen sous.
[They'll consume half of that in drinks])
200 x 158 mm.
A. & B. 375; proof before letters
1955.15.26

Tickets to the balls were obtained at the door, or at theatrical costumers where disguises were rented and sold. Men frequently dressed as women, and vice versa.

- *10 No. 2. —*Vous ignoriez que cette danse fût défendue par l'autorité? ce n'est pas probable . . . dites vos noms et qualités.* —Benjamin Leger, employé aux Menus-Plaisirs. —Félicité Beaupertuis, rentière, 1838
(—You were unaware that this dance was prohibited by the authorities? Unlikely . . . give me your names and occupations. —Benjamin Leger, employed at Menus-Plaisirs. —Félicité Beaupertuis, of independent means)
199 x 157 mm.
A. & B. 376; proof before letters
1955.15.27

The commissaires de police who chaperoned the balls enforced restrictions placed on certain dances, including the Débardeurs' beloved cancan. Another lithograph by Gavarni (A. & B. 491) bears the caption: —*On va pincer son petit cancan, mais bien en douceur. . . . Faut pas désobliger le gouvernement!*

Marks made upon the lithographic stone are not easily removed. Here one can see the traces of Gavarni's first sketch of the commissaire's legs to the left of their final position in the composition.

- *11 No. 5. —*Ah! mon Dieu! . . . c'est mon mari, ma petite, mon vrai mari, le gueux!* —*Voyons! ne va pas le réveiller, bête! allons, allons ailleurs,* 1838
(—Oh! my God! . . . it's my husband, my dear, my very own husband, the scamp! —Let's see! Don't go waking him, stupid! Let's go, let's go somewhere else)
199 x 160 mm.
A. & B. 379; first state of two, proof before letters
1955.15.28

Despite precautions taken by both parties, intriguing husbands and wives frequently surprised one another at the masked balls. The small bouquet on the banquette beside this gentleman intimates the involvement of another woman.



- 12 No. 6. —*Prête un peu ta voleuse, vieux, pour un léger galop!* 1838
 (—Lend me your chick for a bit, old chap, for a light gallop!)
 199 x 158 mm.
 A. & B. 250; first state of three, proof before letters 1955.15.29

The speaker is dressed as the swindler, Robert-Macaire, protagonist of a contemporaneous series of lithographs by Honoré Daumier.

- 13 No. 25—*C'est comme ça que t'es prête, toi? . . . —Ne m'en parle pas! c'est ce nom de nom de marlan-là qui n'en finit jamais,* 1839
 (—Is this your idea of being ready? . . . —Don't tell me about it! It's this son-of-a-gun barber here who never finishes)
 200 x 161 mm.
 A. & B. 397; first state of two, proof before letters 1955.15.30

SOUVENIRS DU BAL CHICARD

Twenty lithographs, published in *Le Charivari*, 1839–43.

- 14 No. 1. CHICARD, 1839
 272 x 188 mm. (irregular)
 A. & B. 2272; first state of two 1955.15.31

Chicard was the pseudonym of a prosperous businessman, Alexandre Lévêque, who became a celebrity of the carnival season. Gavarni was one of the few artists and writers admitted to the Bal Chicard, which was exclusive, expensive (fifteen francs for admission and supper), and more licentious than most. Chicard himself was less elegant than Gavarni. His entourage specialized in comical outfits assembled from household items such as featherdusters, casseroles, and brooms.

LES DÉBARDEURS

Sixty-six lithographs, of which nine appeared in other journals prior to the publication of the entire series in *Le Charivari*, 1840–43.

- *15 No. 1. —*Le Débardeur, mâle et femelle . . . vivants! . . . rapportés d'un voyage autour du monde! par Monsieur Chicard, célèbre naturaliste, avec la permission des autorités! . . . Le Débardeur est carnivore, fumivore, hydrophobe [sic] et nocturne! se repait de gibier, de volaille et de poissons! . . . Il mange de l'huître, de la sole au gratin, de la mayonnaise de homard! Il mange de tout . . . on dit même qu'il mange ses petits . . . ça fait de la peine,* 1840

(—The Débardeur, male and female . . . alive! brought back from a trip around the world by Monsieur Chicard, celebrated naturalist, with the permission of the authorities! . . . The Débardeur is a carnivore, a smoker, is rabid and nocturnal. It eats game, poultry and fish! . . . It eats oysters, sole au gratin, and lobster mayonnaise! It eats anything . . . it is even said that it eats its little ones . . . that's distressing)

199 x 156 mm.

A. & B. 486; first state of three, proof before letters 1955.15.32

Monsieur Chicard is a reference to Gavarni's friend, Alexandre Lévêque (cat. 14).

- *16 No. 32. —*Tais-toi, moutard, faut laisser jaser l'autorité! Je trouve que mosieu cause agréablement,* 1841
 (—Shut up, kid, gotta let the authority jabber! I find that monsieur chats pleasantly)
 197 x 157 mm.
 A. & B. 261; first state of four, proof before letters 1955.15.33

Alhoy, *Débardeur*, p. 66, recommends humoring the commissaires, as these figures do.

- 17 No. 34. —*Et si Cornélie ne trouvait pas de voiture? —Nous irions à pied! —Merci! je serai canaille tant qu'on voudra, mais mauvais genre, jamais!* 1841
 (—And if Cornélie didn't find a carriage? —We'd go on foot! —No thanks! I'll be as vulgar as you like, but in bad form, never!)
 199 x 155 mm.
 A. & B. 515; first state of two, proof before letters 1955.15.34

- 18 No. 39. —*V'là qu'elles ont des mots! . . . fameux! Angéline s'aligne . . . touché! . . . bien joué . . . Amanda ramasse ses quilles,* 1841
 (—Look, they're having words! marvelous! Angé-

—Tu as bien tort, va, Coquardeau . . .
Le Carnaval à Paris, No. 30, 1843
cat. 30



- lina's getting ready for a fight . . . touché! . . . well-played . . . Amanda is gathering her pins) 199 x 156 mm.
A. & B. 520; first state of two, proof before letters 1955.15.35
- 19 No. 44. —*Pus que ça de bouillon! merci*, 1840
(—Is this all the rain there is? Thank goodness) 201 x 156 mm.
A. & B. 259; first state of four, proof before letters 1955.15.36
Gavarni's lithographic draftsmanship advantageously employs both additive and subtractive techniques. Here, for example, he hatches with a fine crayon and a scraper to suggest the torrent of rain.
- *20 No. 46. —*Ton Alfred est un gueux: il est ici avec l'autre . . . calme-toi!* 1840
(—Your Alfred is a scamp; he's here with the other one . . . calm down!) 203 x 155 mm.
A. & B. 526; first state of two, proof before letters 1955.15.37
Simultaneously, Gavarni discovers the rich blackness possible with tusche and realizes the visual potential of the subtractive technique (contrast the brilliant white stripes on the trousers of the Débardeur with the timid scratching in cat. 7).
- *21 No. 54. —*Monter à cheval sur le cou d'un homme qu'on ne connaît pas, t'appelle [sic] ça plaisanter, toi!* 1841
(—Riding piggyback on the neck of a man nobody knows—you call that funny, do you?) 196 x 156 mm.
A. & B. 262; first state of two, proof before letters 1955.15.38
The body language of the two figures is psychologically expressive and visually striking. Eugenia P. Janis has noted that Degas, who owned more than two thousand lithographs by Gavarni, seems to have admired this ability to compose through the suggestive juxtaposition of figures (see E. P. Janis, "The Role of the Monotype in the Working Method of Edgar Degas, Part I," *Burlington Magazine*, January 1967, p. 22, note 14).
- 22 A Bad Joke
Pencil, 305 x 232 mm. (sheet)
Inscribed in pencil, recto, lower right: *une mauvaise farce*
1955.15.3
A study for A. & B. 263 (cat. 23).
- 23 No. 59. —*Tu danseras, Coquardeau! . . . tu danseras, Coquardeau! . . . tu danseras, Coquardeau! . . . deau! . . . deau!* 1841
(—You will dance, Coquardeau! . . . you will dance, Coquardeau! . . . you will dance, Coquardeau! . . . deau! . . . deau! . . . deau!)
199 x 158 mm.
A. & B. 263; first state of four, proof before letters 1955.15.39
The figure of Coquardeau appears thrice in this exhibition (see cats. 25 and 30). As his name suggests, he represents the cuckold, the flouted lover, victimized by his wife or mistress, or possibly by both. Bourgeois and middle-aged, he is at once suspicious and naive, and hopelessly out of mood with the prevailing high spirits of carnival. At the masked balls he is tricked, teased, and offered tongue-in-cheek advice.
- LE CARNAVAL À PARIS
Forty lithographs published in *Le Charivari*, 1841–43, with certain ones also appearing in other journals.
- 24 No. 11. —*Les rats couchés, nous sommes venus. —Et vos petits voisins de l'entresol . . . vous ne les avez pas débauchés? —Eux? des poules comme ça? ça se couche à minuit en carnaval, et puis ça vient vous dire que le carnaval est triste. —Epiciers!* 1841
(—The rats asleep, we have arrived. —And . . . your little neighbors on the mezzanine . . . you didn't entice them? —Them? Hens like that? Their kind goes to bed at midnight during carnival, and then comes to tell you that the carnival is dreary. —Philistines!)
204 x 157 mm.
A. & B. 403; first state of two, proof before letters 1955.15.40
In his compositions, Gavarni frequently arranges figures and furniture in a pattern of opposing diagonals (compare cats. 11 and 47).

—Une Conquête
Carnaval, No. 1, 1846
cat. 34



- 25 No. 15. —*C'est un diplomate. . . . C'est un épicier. —Non! c'est un mari d'une femme agréable. —Non! Cabochet, mon ami, vous avez donc bu . . . que vous ne voyez pas que mosieu est un jeune homme farceur comme tout, déguisé en un qui s'embête à mort . . . le roué masque!* 1841
 (—It's a diplomat. . . . It's a grocer. —No, it's the husband of an attractive woman. —No! Cabochet, pal, you've been drinking, therefore you don't see that this young man is as much a joker as can be, disguised as someone bored to death . . . the cunning mask!)
 198 x 157 mm.
 A. & B. 255; first state of three, proof before letters 1955.15.41
 Again, Coquardeau is being ridiculed (compare cats. 23 and 30).
- 26 No. 22. SIX HEURES DU MATIN. —*Le soleil est levé depuis vingt-cinq minutes, monsieur le Baron!*, 1839
 (Six in the morning. —The sun has been up for twenty-five minutes, monsieur le Baron!)
 200 x 156 mm.
 A. & B. 306, fourth state of five 1955.15.42
 Stylistically, this print is closer to the series, *Le Carnaval*, also of 1829. Armelhault and Bocher note that the print was intended for another series, to be titled *Journée d'un Viver*, which Gavarni never completed. The proposed subject, based on Gavarni's own life in 1835, was the story of a young man, arrested upon leaving a masked ball and taken to debtors' prison. Gavarni did record his impressions of the prison in a series of twenty-one lithographs, entitled *Clichy* of 1840 (A. & B. 258 and 429–48).
- *27 No. 23. —*P'us qu'ça d'lorgnon! et du pain? . . . Bo'jour, Madame*, 1840
 (—Is that all the lorgnon? and some bread? . . . H'lo ma'am)
 197 x 155 mm.
 A. & B. 916; first state of four, proof before letters 1955.15.43
 The speaker is one of Gavarni's funniest creatures. Armelhault and Bocher describe him as *en costume de militaire grotesque*. As he greets the Domino, his shadow appears to sniff her bouquet.
- 28 No. 27. —*Dis donc! . . . je crois qu'Amédée c'est plus haut, ici c'est chez la vieille demoiselle si mauvaise, qui a ce chien! . . . entends-tu l'infâme toutou? —Qu'est-ce que ça fait?* 1842
 (—Say now . . . I believe Amédée is higher up, this place belongs to the wretched old spinster who keeps that dog! . . . do you hear the terrible fido? —So what?)
 201 x 158 mm.
 A. & B. 411; first state of three, proof before letters 1955.15.44
- *29 No. 28. —*Fichtember! —Hé? —Et les affaires? —Demain! —Demain, c'est aujourd'hui. —Quelle heure est il? —Grand jour . . . le déjeuner est servi*, 1842
 (—Fichtember! —What? —And business? —Tomorrow! —Tomorrow, that's today. —What time is it? —Broad daylight . . . lunch is being served)
 217 x 158 mm.
 A. & B. 412; first state of three, proof before letters 1955.15.45
 Four Débardeurs awaken after a ball as daylight enters the private dining room of a restaurant. Their disarray recalls the aftermath of Mlle. Rosanette Bacou's costume ball in Flaubert's *L'Éducation Sentimentale*:
 The daylight streamed in, together with the cool morning air. There was an exclamation of astonishment, then silence. The yellow flames flickered, cracking a drip-glass every now and then; the floor was strewn with ribbons, flowers, and pearls; sticky patches of punch and syrup stained the tables; the chair covers were dirty, the guests' costumes crumpled and smeared with powder: the women's hair hung down over their shoulders; and their paint, running with their sweat, revealed livid faces with red, blinking eyelids.
 (See Gustave Flaubert, *Sentimental Education*, translated by Robert Baldick, London, 1964, p. 132.) Other details from the novel may be inspired by Gavarni's prints which Flaubert apparently studied. Adhémar, *Gavarni*, p. 77, suggests that Émile Zola was thinking of Gavarni's Lorettes and carnival lithographs when he wrote of Flaubert, "Il allait consulter des estampes à la Bibliothèque pour *L'Éducation Sentimentale* (1864–9), il a feuilleté toute la collection du *Charivari*."

—*Le Jeu de Dominos. 1.*
Carnaval, No. 9, 1846
cat. 37



- *30 No. 30. —*Tu as bien tort, va, Coquardeau, de toujours porter ce nez-là! tu sais pourtant comme ça déplaît à Madame*, 1843
 (—You're quite wrong, Coquardeau, to always wear that nose! And you know how it displeases Madame)
 198 x 156 mm.
 A. & B. 414; first state of three, proof before letters
 Inscribed in stone, lower left: *papa*, by Gavarni's son, Jean
 1955.15.46

- 31 No. 38. —*Une supposition qu'un m'sieu, tout ce qu'il y a de plus comme il faut, se propose de t'honorer de sa compagnie vers la cinquième heure du jour, qu'est-ce que tu dirais? —J'y dirais zut!* 1843
 (—Suppose that a gentleman, of the most proper sort, offered to honor you with his company at the fifth hour of the day, what would you say? —I'd say get lost!)
 204 x 157 mm.
 A. & B. 420; first state of three, proof before letters
 1955.15.47

- 32 [unnumbered] *Va, enfant, va te livrer aux naïfs plaisirs de ton âge*, 1843
 (Go on, child, abandon yourself to the naive pleasures of your age)
 199 x 159 mm.
 A. & B. 312; first state of four, proof before letters
 1955.15.48

LES LORETTES

Seventy-nine lithographs, published in *Le Charivari*, 1841–43.

- 33 No. 53. —*Quoi fich' ce soir? . . . n'y a pas d'Opéra. —Viens à la barrière!*, 1843
 (—What's up tonight? . . . no Opéra. —Come to the barrier!)
 200 x 157 mm.
 A. & B. 815; first state of two, proof before letters, chine collé
 1955.15.49

Like cat. 20, this is a beautiful example of Gavarni's use of tusche and selective scraping to suggest the privacy, even mystery, of a nocturnal interior. The technique also enables him to create evocative and

varied textures, such as the quilted upholstery on the chair and the soft, heavy robe of velours worn by the standing Lorette. The outline of her right arm and the cord belting her robe are delineated entirely with scratching.

A *bal de barrière* was a low establishment containing a dance floor separated from the tables by a partition or barrier. Such places were at the bottom of the scale surmounted by the Opéra ball. Gavarni is suggesting that these Lorettes are not very discriminating.

Oeuvres Nouvelles (1846–47)

CARNAVAL

Fifty lithographs, forty-five published in *Le Charivari*, 1846–48, then all fifty together as an album.

- *34 No. 1. *Une Conquête*, 1846
 (A Conquest)
 193 x 163 mm.
 A. & B. 1024; first state of three, proof before letters
 1955.15.50

This clandestine tête-à-tête offers a perfect vehicle for Gavarni's inclination to conceal the identities of figures through masks and *profils perdus*. The figure composition recalls the Débardeurs in cat. 17. Like that couple, this man and woman, although not dressed alike, have similar silhouettes—pinched waists, elbows bent. The second and third states carry beneath the title a facsimile of the Domino's carte d'adresse, which reads: *Madame Alcibiade / modèle / pose l'ensemble*.

- 35 No. 6. *Une Présentation*, 1846
 (An Introduction)
 212 x 164 mm.
 A. & B. 1029; first state of three, proof before letters, chine collé
 1955.15.51

- 36 No. 8. —LE JEU DE DOMINOS. 2. —*Double-six*, 1846
 (—The Game of Dominoes. 2. —Double Six)
 192 x 165 mm.
 A. & B. 1031; first state of three, proof before letters, chine collé
 1955.15.52



- *37 No. 9. —LE JEU DE DOMINOS. 1. —*Je boude*, 1846
(—The Game of Dominoes. 1. —I Pass)
199 x 164 mm.
A. & B. 1032; first state of three, proof before letters
1955.15.53

Lemoisne notes that the man depicted is Gavarni's friend, Louis Leroy. Gavarni anticipates Degas and Manet in the use of friends as models for *tableaux de genre*. *Je boude*, from the verb *bouder*, meaning "to sulk," also means "to pass" or "to go" when playing dominoes. Here it implies that the speaker does not recognize the woman who wears the costume called Domino—a hooded cloak and a mask which covers the upper part of the face.

- *38 No. 11. —*Pour boire à la santé des malheureux qui meurent de soif, s'il vous plaît!* 1846
(—To drink to the health of the unfortunate who are dying of thirst, if you please!)
199 x 163 mm.
A. & B. 1034; first state of two, proof before letters, chine collé
1955.15.54

This handsome composition is unusual for this series in being a half-length view. Like Harlequin and Pierrot, Polichinelle (here on the left) was a popular costume at the masked balls. Manet would feature a Polichinelle in the foreground of his painting of 1873, *Le Bal de l'Opéra* (Washington, National Gallery of Art).

- *39 No. 16. —*Ciel! Anatole!* 1846
(—Heavens! Anatole!)
197 x 165 mm.
A. & B. 1039; first state of two, proof before letters, chine collé
1955.15.55

Hand in hand with his penchant for disguised and concealed physiognomies, Gavarni enjoyed depicting moments of discovery and the loss of incognito (compare cats. 11 and 49). The young man being recognized by the Domino wears what Armelhault and Bocher call a *costume grotesque de nourrice*. The crowd in the background, dancing, cavorting, hanging over the balconies, conveys the frenzy of carnival with particular success.

- 40 No. 19. —*Votre très-humble, ma'ame! —Mosieu, j'ai l'honneur d'être!* 1847
(—Your humble servant, ma'am! —Sir, I'm honored to be!)
200 x 167 mm.
A. & B. 1042; first state of two, proof before letters, chine collé
1955.15.56

- 41 No. 23. —*Qu'est-ce que tu peux venir chercher par ici, philosophe? —Je ramasse toutes vos vieilles blagues d'amour, mes colombes: on en refait du neuf,* 1847
(—What might you have come here to look for, philosopher? —I am gathering all your old escapades of love, my turtledoves: to be used again)
193 x 167 mm.
A. & B. 1046; first state of two, proof before letters
1955.15.57

Gavarni would retrieve and develop this beggar-philosopher figure in a series called *Les Propos de Thomas Vireloque* of 1851–53 (A. & B. 1494–1509 and 1796–99).

- 42 No. 30. —*Oh hé! v'là le jour! Oh hé! bonsoir la foire aux amours!* 1847
(—Oh hey! It's getting light! Oh hey! Goodnight to love's bash!)
206 x 166 mm.
A. & B. 1053; first state of two, proof before letters, chine collé
1955.15.58

IMPRESSIONS DE MÉNAGE, Second Series
Forty lithographs, thirty-nine published in *Le Charivari*, 1846–47.

- *43 No. 24. [*Air: Larifla! . . .*] —*Nos femm' sont cou-cou! —Nos femm' sont ché's-ché's —Nos femm' sont cou ché's!* 1847
([*Air: Larifla! . . .*] —Our wives are cou-cou! —Our wives are ché's ché's —Our wives are cou ché's!)
199 x 170 mm.
A. & B. 1114; first state of two, proof before letters, chine collé
1955.15.59

—Ciel! Anatole!
Carnaval, No. 16, 1846
cat. 39



Masques et Visages (1851–53)

L'ÉCOLE DES PIERROTS

Ten lithographs, four published in *Paris*, 1852, then all together as an album.

44 *L'École des Pierrots*, 1853

Album cover, printed: *Publication du Journal / Paris / Oeuvres Nouvelles / de / Gavarni / Masques et Visages / L'École des Pierrots / Dizaïn / Prix: 5 fr. / Paris / Aux Bureaux du Journal Paris / 1, rue Laffitte (Maison Dorée) / et chez tous les marchands de gravures / 1853*

1955.15.60

*45 No. 2. —*Arthur! voilà le moment de montrer que t'es un homme*, 1851

(—Arthur! Now is the time to show that you are a man)

191 x 160 mm.

A. & B. 1278; first state of two, proof before letters
1955.15.61

Alhoy, *Lorette*, p. 38, notes that most men who intrigue a Lorette under a pseudonym choose the prénom, Arthur. Probably they were emulating the dandy-hero of Eugene Sue's popular novel, *Arthur*, of 1837. Here, Gavarni uses the name to explicate his characterization of Pierrot as an aging Arthur (compare cats. 48 and 49).

When the character called Pierrot joined the French theater in the seventeenth century, his costume was adapted from the older Italian figure, Pulcinella (in French, Polichinelle). It is interesting to note that the small black mask with a protruberant nose, which offsets the soft grays and voluminous whites of these compositions, is the proper attribute, not of Pierrot, but of Polichinelle.

46 No. 5. —*Y aurait-il quelque indiscretion à demander à ces messieurs leur avis sur la composition du nouveau ministère?* 1851

(—Would it be indiscreet to ask these gentlemen their opinion about the composition of the new ministry?)

191 x 160 mm.

A. & B. 1768; first state of two, proof before letters
1955.15.62

A pen and wash drawing in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore (37.1488), depicts the left and center

figures of this trio. It bears a different caption. This more topical caption was probably added after the coup d'état of Napoleon III in December 1851.

*47 No. 6. *La Faction aux Bouquets*, 1851

(The Sentry of Bouquets)

191 x 161 mm.

A. & B. 1280; first state of two, proof before letters
1955.15.63

Lemoisne ascribes the new largesse of Gavarni's draftsmanship, visible in this lithograph, to the watercolor and gouache drawings the artist had begun to make while in London. He reproduces such a drawing, *Pierrot Assis à la Porte d'une Loge*, which he dates 1851, presumably on the basis of its similarity to this print (Lemoisne I, facing page 192).

48 No. 7. *Le Sommeil de l'Innocence*, 1851

(The Sleep of Innocence)

190 x 160 mm.

A. & B. 1769; first state of two, proof before letters
1955.15.64

This sleepy, bespectacled Pierrot is no match for his young female companion. As is often true of Gavarni's compositions, the meaning of the situation resides in a single, strategic detail—in this case, the note being passed to the woman by a masculine hand.

49 No. 10.—*"Le masque tombe, l'homme reste, et" le pierrot "s'évanouit"* 1851

(—"The mask falls, the man remains, and" the pierrot "vanishes")

191 x 162 mm.

A. & B. 1771; between first and second states

Autographed note, recto, in pencil: *veuillez refaire ces guillemets*

1955.15.65

Gavarni's concern about the *tirage* of his lithographs extended even to the letters: "il s'établissait sur les épreuves d'essai toute une correspondance avec son imprimeur" (Lemoisne I, p. 155).

LA FOIRE AUX AMOURS

Ten lithographs published in *Paris*, 1852–53.



- 50 No. 4. —*Et si mademoiselle daignait accepter l'hommage et le souper d'un gentilhomme. . . . —As-tu fini!*
1852
(—And if mademoiselle would deign to accept the homage and the supper of a gentleman. . . .
—Have you finished!)
192 x 162 mm.
A. & B. 1295; first state of three, proof before letters,
chine collé
1955.15.66
- *51 No. 5. —*Mon cher, avec une mise décente et des gants, on est reçu partout, 1852*
(—My dear, with proper attire and gloves, one is received everywhere)
203 x 163 mm.
A. & B. 1296; first state of three, proof before letters,
chine collé
1955.15.67
- 52 No. 10. —*Moi, mon pierrot, n'y a pas de danger . . . il est attaché à l'ambassade. . . . —Il est bien attaché?*
1853
(—As for me, my pierrot, no danger . . . he's connected with the embassy. . . . —He's well connected?)
194 x 164 mm.
A. & B. 1301; first state of three, proof before letters,
chine collé
1955.15.68

—*Mon cher, avec une mise décente . . .*
La Foire aux Amours, No. 5, 1852
cat. 51



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