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A TRANSATLANTIC FRATERNITY:
AMERICAN AND GERMAN PHOTOGRAPHY, 1840 TO 1890

by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Transatlantic Fraternity: American and German Photography, 1840 to 1890

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Histories of early photography have routinely focused on France, England, and the US, seldom mentioning the region we call “Germany” today, and often discuss each country’s affairs in isolation from others. This dissertation, in contrast, explores how photographers, photographs, photographic processes, and writings about the medium have been traversing cultural borders since its invention. By understanding photography as a vehicle of cross-cultural dialogue, this dissertation investigates the specific interactions it enabled between the United States and Germany. It uncovers their exchange of photographs, technologies, and ideas about the medium between the 1840s and 1880s, a period when roughly six million Germans immigrated to America’s shores. It further suggests that networks of exchange between Germany and the US, cultivated through a large immigrant community, were pivotal to the development of photography on American soil.

Chapter One examines the work of German immigrants William and Frederick Langenheim, who operated a studio in mid-century Philadelphia. By looking at their advertisements and celebrated panorama of Niagara Falls, this chapter argues that their success was tied to their connection with their German homeland. Chapter Two analyzes the shift in photographic vision in three editions of a stereoscopic guidebook on the

White Mountains of New Hampshire produced by the Bierstadt brothers. More than simply illustrated travel guides, their aesthetics and photomechanical printing techniques functioned transculturally, much like the artists themselves. Chapter Three chronicles Dr. Hermann Vogel's position as the German correspondent to the American journal the *Philadelphia Photographer* from 1866 until 1886. It outlines how his column advanced the growing relationship between German and American photographic circles. Chapter Four examines the photographs of Alfred Stieglitz during his years of study in Berlin and compares them to his German photographic peers. Emphasizing the importance of German photographic culture to Stieglitz, beyond just noting his education, runs counter to dominant narratives about his artistic formation and can thus change future studies about him and American art photography more broadly. My dissertation uses the interactions between German and American photography in the nineteenth century to reframe the medium's historiography in transnational terms, contributing to its so-called global turn.

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INTRODUCTION

On the cover of the June 15, 1839 issue of *Die alte und neue Welt* (The Old and New World), a bi-monthly German-language newspaper published in Philadelphia, a headline reads: “*Eine neue Erfindung*” (A New Invention).¹ Too exceptional for the paper’s column dedicated to scientific and artistic affairs, the news of Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre “fixing this optical painting of the camera obscura” made the front page for all readers and passerby to see.² Unattributed, translated, and expanded on, the article is a reprint of a report published on January 8 in the French periodical *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires* (Journal of Political and Literary Debates) that chronicled François Arago’s announcement of daguerreotypy to the Academy of Sciences in Paris.³ Also modeled on this same French statement, yet with no additions, was the first notice of Daguerre’s invention in the Kingdom of Bavaria on January 16, 1839 in *Die Allgemeine Zeitung* (The General Newspaper).⁴

These reprinted reports are evidence of a close international network of periodicals and, more broadly, of the transnational discourse that this dissertation sets out to examine. That discourse took on different forms and inflections on both sides of the

¹ “Eine neue Erfindung,” *Die alte und neue Welt*, June 15, 1839, n.p.

² Ibid.

³ Untitled, *Journal des débats politiques et littéraires*, January 8, 1839, n.p.

⁴ “Daguerre’s Fixation der Bilder in der Camera obscura,” *Die Allgemeine Zeitung*, January 16, 1839, 16.

Atlantic, as it intersected with national concerns and often local conditions. Skepticism, for instance, colors the first part of the Philadelphia reporter's addendum; he had neither seen a daguerreotype nor witnessed its production, and thus for him, it was still an abstract idea encountered only through written descriptions.⁵ Gleaned from an additional, unidentified source, the journalist then declares the well-known Prussian scientist Alexander von Humboldt's particular regard for the daguerreotype. In effect, von Humboldt's inclusion in this narrative incorporates the German-speaking lands into its invention story.⁶ Von Humboldt acts as a German proxy, and since he endorses the promise of this new technology, the broader German-speaking population should too.⁷ The correspondent then concludes with a hopeful exclamation: "What a gain such a discovery would be and what exquisite moments of nature could be captured through it!" A frisson of excitement registers in his statement as he contemplates the vast possibilities of a medium he considers a "miracle."

Die alte und neue Welt was one of several hundred German-language newspapers published in the United States at the beginning of one of the largest immigration waves

⁵ On early textual descriptions of photography and how they shaped popular understanding of the medium in mid-nineteenth-century America, see Marcy J. Dinius, *The Camera and the Press: America Visual and Print Culture in the Age of the Daguerreotype* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

⁶ From the article, it does not appear that the reporter knew that von Humboldt was a member of the Academy of Sciences committee, who evaluated the merit of Daguerre's invention, in December 1838.

⁷ Kirsten Belgium has argued that many mid-nineteenth-century Americans saw von Humboldt as an American hero, who stood for culture and erudition, not necessarily Prussia or Prussian culture. Yet in this German-American press context, his Prussian heritage clearly matters since the reporter included this detail. See Kirsten Belgium, "Reading Alexander von Humboldt: Cosmopolitan Naturalist with an American Spirit," in *German Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Reception, Adaptation, Transformation*, eds. Lynne Tatlock and Matt Erlin (Rochester: Camden House, 2005), 107–128.

from the German-speaking lands.⁸ By 1840, German immigrants William (1807–1874) and Frederick (1809–1879) Langenheim, the subjects of Chapter One, would hold staff positions there—William as editor and Frederick as reporter. And while the latter point was the means by which I stumbled upon the *Die alte und neue Welt* cover story, my aim in discussing its announcement of photography is to highlight the intercultural conversations that took place around the new medium in nineteenth-century America. The camera's ability to fix indelibly such "exquisite moments of nature" interested citizens of the Old and New World, in addition to those who moved between these geographical and cultural spaces.

Scholars have traditionally framed the early history of American photography in nationalist terms, discussing its development in one country in isolation from others. In so doing, they have not taken on board historians' view of immigration as *the* social phenomenon of the nineteenth century.⁹ Nor have they fully adopted the transnational approach that has taken hold of the field of American art history in the last decade.¹⁰ In

⁸ In fact, Benjamin Franklin published the first German newspaper, *Die Philadelphische Zeitung*, in the US in 1732. By 1880, there were at least 800 German-language papers operating around the country. On the history of the German-language press in the US, see Carl Wittke, *The German-Language Press in America* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1957); Karl John Richard Arndt and May E. Olson, *The German Language Press of the Americas. Volume 3, German-American Press Research from the American Revolution to the Bicentennial* (München: K. G. Saur, 1980); and on the German press in Philadelphia and its influence, see Lesley Ann Kawaguchi, "The Making of Philadelphia's German-America: Ethnic Group and Community Development, 1830 – 1883" (PhD. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, 1983), 348–429.

⁹ See for example, Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), 3; and Arthur S. Link, *American Epoch*, 3rd ed. (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1967), 25.

¹⁰ For an overview of this approach, see Katherine E. Manthorne, "Opening the Borders of 'American Art,'" *American Art* 12, no. 1 (Spring 1998): 2–5; Manthorne, "Remapping American Art," *American Art* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2008): 112–117; and Wendy Bellion and Mónica Domínguez Torres, "Teaching across the Borders of North American Art

fact, many studying nineteenth-century American photography still regard an artist's foreign-born status as simply a parenthetical note.¹¹ This dissertation, in contrast, explores how photographers, photographic objects, and writings about the medium have been traversing cultural borders since its invention. By understanding photography as a vehicle of cross-cultural dialogue, this thesis investigates the specific interactions it enabled between the United States and Germany. It uncovers their exchange of photographs, technologies, and ideas about the medium between the 1840s and 1880s, a period when roughly six million Germans immigrated to America's shores. Through a series of case studies, each set against a backdrop of shifting American perceptions of the region we presently call "Germany," my project constructs a transnational history of photography that more fully acknowledges the impact of migration on the medium in the nineteenth century. It further suggests that networks of exchange between Germany and the US, cultivated through a large immigrant community, were pivotal to the development of photography on American soil beginning in the 1840s.

In framing the interactions of German and American photographic circles in transnational terms, I adopt American studies scholar Winfried Fluck's notion of "aesthetic transnationalism," which "wants to recover a world of cultural cross-

History," in *The Blackwell Companion to American Art*, ed. John Davis, Jennifer Greenhill, Jason LaFountain (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 193–210.

¹¹ Notable exceptions include Anthony Lee, especially *A Shoemaker's Story: Being Chiefly about French Canadian Immigrants, Enterprising Photographers, Rascal Yankees, and Chinese Cobblers in a Nineteenth-Century Factory Town* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008); and Makeda Best, who considers how Alexander Gardner's Scottish background shaped his artistic vision in "Arouse the Conscience: The Photography of Alexander Gardner" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2010). Arguing that the photograph cannot be fixed in time or place, Eduardo Cadava and Gabriela Nouzeilles examines photography's movement across temporal and geographic. See Eduardo Cadava and Gabriela Nouzeilles, *The Itinerant Languages of Photography* (Princeton: Princeton University Art Museum; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013).

fertilization that holds the promise of fuller more meaningful experiences...” According to Fluck, “aesthetic transnationalism helps us to return to that plentitude and thereby also rejuvenates an America that has lost its multicultural vigor because of a narrow-minded nationalism.”¹² Fluck’s definition, however, comes with a warning regarding the potential conclusions scholars might draw from a transnational approach. If this frame of reference becomes merely another means by which to tout American exceptionalism, “[it] comes uncomfortably close to a neoliberal celebration of free flow.”¹³ Themes of American exceptionalism and intense nationalism dominate accounts of early photography, just as they dominated histories of American art for much of the twentieth century. My dissertation attempts to correct for this rhetoric by examining the rich encounters between German and American photographic circles that emphasize what we might call the migratory character of early photography.

Applying a transnational approach to a US-German context necessitates a conceptual adjustment, since prior to 1871 the geographic area we call “Germany” today was a political and administrative multiplicity and not a nation-state. However, the idea of a German *Kulturnation*—a cultural rather than political nation—infiltrated the period under discussion. From the late eighteenth century throughout the nineteenth century, amidst political fragmentation of the German-speaking regions, prominent thinkers and writers including Goethe identified the notion of a shared German cultural identity, defined by its arts, music, and literature.¹⁴ Indeed, Germany was touted as an idea, united

¹² Winfried Fluck, “A New Beginning?: Transnationalisms” *New Literary History* 42, no. 3 (Summer 2011): 368.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 371.

¹⁴ See, for example, John David Pizer, *Imagining the Age of Goethe in German Literature, 1970–2010* (Rochester: Camden House, 2011), 113; Jan-Werner Müller,

by language, tradition, and religion, and thus culture became the currency of Germans.

This dissertation thus draws on existing methods of transnationalism, but also challenges them by asking: what does it mean to approach a topic transnationally before the country in question is constituted as a nation? Here, nation becomes a strategy for certain photographers at certain times, and as such “Germanness” may be consciously deployed when needed. My dissertation therefore acknowledges not only national developments and distinctions, but, more importantly, cultural exchanges across borders.

Yet rather than essentialize or secure a fixed meaning to the notions of “German” or “American,” my project highlights the permeability and fluidity of such categories by foregrounding individual agents of cultural transfer and the photographic objects and texts themselves, which were often on the move. A helpful model in this regard has been the writing of Lynne Tatlock, a historian of German literature, who argues that while cultural critics were asserting notions of national identity—German and American—in nineteenth-century America, these concepts were in a continual state of redefinition.¹⁵ In addition, the work of anthropologist Aihwa Ong represents another model for my investigation. In her book *Flexible Citizenship*, she explores the complexity of the displaced Chinese subject in late capitalism and the ease with which people flow across borders. But it is her understanding of class and the power it gives to these migratory communities that is particularly valuable.¹⁶ For many photographers discussed in this

Another Country: German Intellectuals, Unification and National Identity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), 82–85.

¹⁵ Lynne Tatlock, “Introduction,” in *German Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Reception, Adaptation, Transformation*, Lynne Tatlock and Matt Erlin, eds. (Rochester: Camden House, 2005), xi–xxi.

¹⁶ Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship: The Cultural Logics of Transnationality* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).

doctoral thesis, it is a class-based privilege for the image-makers to imagine a nation without a nation.

Photographic histories of Germany have generally focused on specific cities and principalities, in part because the region was composed of many independent political and administrative entities before unification; this has made a unified narrative difficult to write. The bulk of such German-language scholarship was published in Germany in the late 1970s.¹⁷ With the empirical groundwork of these localized histories laid, scholars have begun to address critical issues in photography's history in Germany, such as politics, gender, and empire.¹⁸ Outside of German-speaking countries, however, historians of photography seldom mention Germany prior to discussions of the interwar period,¹⁹ except perhaps for a passing reference to the photographer and chemist Dr. Hermann Wilhelm Vogel (1834–1898), who taught Alfred Stieglitz (1864–1946) from

¹⁷ See, for instance, William Dost and Erich Stenger, *Die Daguerreotypie in Berlin 1839–1860* (Berlin: 1922); Wilhelm Weimar, *Die Daguerreotypie in Hamburg, 1839–1860* (Hamburg: O. Meissner, 1915); Janos Frecot, *Berlinfotografisch: Fotografie in Berlin, 1860–1982* (Berlin: Berlinische Galerie: Vertrieb, Medusa, 1982). These histories of German photography are divided by region: James E. Cornwall, *Die Frühzeit der Photographie in Deutschland, 1839–1869* (Herrsching/Ammersee: Verlag für Wirtschaft und Industrie, 1979); Fritz Kempe, *Daguerreotypie in Deutschland: vom Charme d. frühen Fotograf* (Seebruck am Chiemsee: Heering, 1979); Peter Nestler, *In unnachahmlicher Treue: Photographie im 19. Jahrhundert – ihre Geschichte in den deutschsprachigen Ländern* (Köln: Das Musee, 1979).

¹⁸ See Ion Dordea, et al., *Silber und Salz: Zur Frühzeit der Photographie im deutschen Sprachraum, 1839–1860* (Köln: Edition Braus, 1989); and Ulrich Pohlmann, *Zwischen Biedermeier und Gründerzeit: Deutschland in Frühen Photographien 1840–1890 aus der Sammlung Siebert* (München: Schirmer Mosel, 2012).

¹⁹ There are a few significant exceptions to this trend. Helmut Gernsheim devotes a chapter to the introduction of the daguerreotype in German-speaking countries in *The Origins of Photography* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 1982); Naomi Rosenblum mentions the reception of photography in Germany in *A World History of Photography*, 3rd ed. (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 1997), 18–20; and Beaumont Newhall notes the lens that Bavarian Hugo Adolph Steinheil invented in 1866 in *The History of Photography, from 1839 to the Present Day*, 4th ed. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1964), 59.

approximately 1884 to 1888 at the *Königliche Technische Hochschule* (Royal Technical Academy) in Berlin. In 1997 Anne McCauley offered an explanation for this omission, noting that “Anglophone hostility to German culture (and the practical failure of many English and American writers to master the German language) resulted in the virtual exclusion of the history of German photography, particularly that of the nineteenth century, from English-language accounts.”²⁰ Another reason for the lack of English-language scholarship on this period is that in 1936, when Beaumont Newhall began working on his canonical history of photography project that would influence generations of historians to come, the political situation in Germany led to him cancelling his research trips there. This resulted in a lack of nineteenth-century German objects in Newhall’s exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, a lacuna that implied that German photographers made insubstantial contributions to the medium’s progress in those first decades.²¹

Scholars of the early history of photography have concerned themselves primarily, if not exclusively, with developments in England, France, and the United States. In recent years, however, numerous regional and national histories have appeared, addressing photographic production in the Middle East, New Zealand, Scotland, and elsewhere.²² Geoffrey Batchen has attributed this proliferation of nation-based histories

²⁰ Anne McCauley, “Writing Photography’s History before Newhall,” *History of Photography* 21, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 90.

²¹ Allison Bertrand, “Beaumont Newhall’s ‘Photography 1839–1937’: Making History,” *History of Photography* 21, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 142.

²² On this point, see the essays in Tanya Sheehan and Andrés Mario Zervigón, eds., *Photography and Its Origins* (New York and London: Routledge, 2015), especially Yi Gu, “Photography and its Chinese Origins” (157–170); and Jürg Schneider, “Looking into the Past and Present: The Origins of Photography in Africa” (171–182). More examples of this scholarship include Issam Nassar, “Familial Snapshots: Representing

to two catalysts: “the rise of regional consciousness in a post-Cold War era” and “a general recognition of the inadequacy of the existing global survey texts on photography.”²³ My dissertation emphasizes photography’s global character, bringing to light a particular set of cultural exchanges between Germany and the US and arguing for their importance, but by no means their uniqueness, in the history of the medium. Its emphasis on cross-cultural dialogue aims to erode the significance of national boundaries that today define the practice of writing photography’s history.

This dissertation also reaches outside the history of photography, contributing to a larger exploration of the borders between US and European histories of art and visual culture. Martina Sitt’s study of the Düsseldorf Academy’s influence on nineteenth-century American painters is one such exploration. Sitt demonstrates not only that American painters studied in Germany, but also that German paintings were simultaneously presented at the Düsseldorf Gallery in New York, affecting the local art scene between 1849 and 1865.²⁴ Other models for studying the visual culture of transnational exchange include Anna Pegler-Gordon’s *In Sight of America* (2009), which considers the relationship between images and US immigration policy in the late

Palestine in the Work of the First Local Photographers,” *History & Memory* 18, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2006): 139–155; Angela Wanhalla and Erika Wolf, eds., *Early New Zealand Photography: Images and Essays* (Dunedin, New Zealand: Otago University Press, 2011); and Tom Normand, *Scottish Photography: A History* (Edinburgh: Luath, 2007).

²³ Geoffrey Batchen, “Dutch Eyes,” (review of Flip Bool et al., eds., *Dutch Eyes: A Critical History of Photography in the Netherlands*) *Photography & Culture* 1, no. 1 (July 2008): 120.

²⁴ Martina Sitt, “Between Influence and Independence: The Relationship of American and German Painters in the Nineteenth Century,” in *America: The New World in 19th-Century Painting*, ed. Stephan Koja, (New York: Prestel, 1999), 226–233. See also High Museum of Art, *The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans: An Exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors* (Atlanta: High Museum of Art, 1972); and Anneliese Harding and Brucia Witthoft, *American Artists in Düsseldorf: 1840–1865* (Framingham, MA: Danforth Museum, 1982).

nineteenth and early twentieth century, and Anthony Lee's *A Shoemaker's Story* (2008), which weaves an intricate tale about Chinese and French Canadian immigrants who worked at a shoe factory in Western Massachusetts in the late nineteenth century.²⁵ Both Pegler-Gordon and Lee take photographs as their starting point, but their histories move through and beyond the medium, expanding "photographic discourse" to include an eclectic collection of objects, texts, ideas, and people traversing borders.

As Anthony Lee has argued in the journal *American Art*, histories of early American photography often depart from the traditional art-historical emphasis on masterpieces and artistic genius.²⁶ Instead they incorporate questions and methodologies from social art history as well as from American studies, cultural history, and related fields. Lee contends that the history of photography in the nineteenth century demands this approach because the objects embody "a mishmash of attentions to aesthetic, scientific, technical, and commercial interests."²⁷ Attending to various industries—such as tourism, print and periodical culture, science and technology—my dissertation showcases early photography's eclecticism. It does so by understanding the medium as a vehicle of transnational exchange that operated through exhibitions, trade journals, equipment, specific photographers, and the images they produced.

Summary of Chapters

²⁵ Anna Pegler-Gordon, *In Sight of America: Photography and the Development of U.S. Immigration Policy* (Berkeley: University of California, 2009); and Anthony Lee, *A Shoemaker's Story*, 2008.

²⁶ Anthony Lee, "American Histories of Photography," *American Art* 21, no. 3 (September 2007): 2–9.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

Chapter One examines the work of German immigrants William and Frederick Langenheim, who opened a photography studio in Philadelphia in 1842. While they were not the city's first daguerreotypists, they were certainly Philadelphia's most celebrated photographers in the mid-nineteenth century. The brothers photographed landscapes, architecture, and genre scenes, but made their living as portraitists in the 1840s and 1850s. Their clientele included leading political and cultural figures, such as former US president Andrew Jackson (1767–1845), poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892), and American landscape painter Asher B. Durand (1796–1886). Among the questions I address in this chapter are: How did these newcomers to America build a successful photographic practice? And why did their work garner acclaim at this moment of photographic development in the United States?

I argue that the Langenheim brothers' extraordinary success was tied to their connection with their German homeland, a connection that they maintained and referenced with pride throughout their careers. Period ethnic stereotypes of Germans promoted their exemplary craftsmanship as well as their sophisticated cultural and intellectual pursuits, and these notions worked in the brothers' favor. By looking at their advertising campaigns, their relationship with optician Peter Wilhelm Friedrich von Voigtländer (1812–1878), and their impressive 1845 daguerreotype panorama of Niagara Falls, I underscore the transnational dimensions of their enterprise and shed light on why Philadelphia became the ideal city for their photographic endeavors. Their Niagara project represents the heart of this chapter, and through an examination of its transnational circulation, reception, and style, I position it as an important articulation of

German-American identity formation that allows us to better understand how ideas of culture were negotiated through the making and dissemination of early photography.

Chapter Two focuses on three editions of a stereoscopic guidebook about the White Mountains of New Hampshire produced between 1862 and 1878 by German immigrants Edward (1824–1906) and Charles Bierstadt (1819–1903). While their revised travel guides varied in length, text, photographic process, and subject matter, the most significant change in each edition was the Bierstadt brothers' photographic vision. In their first volume, the landscapes followed the aesthetic of the *Kunstakademie Düsseldorf* (Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts), where their brother, painter Albert Bierstadt, had studied. Albert worked closely with Edward and Charles to compose the photographs in this edition, and the resulting stereoscopic views share several aesthetic traits with artwork from the Academy, from their theatricality to their inclusion of a contemplative figure. I expand this investigation beyond Albert's art to include landscape paintings on view at the Düsseldorf Gallery of Art in New York. The chapter thus frames their celebration of the American landscape as a transnational object that drew its meanings from American and German connections in an environment receptive to these cultural intersections.

More than a decade later, the new editions of the Bierstadt brothers' guidebooks adopted a distinct machine-made look that promoted progress—progress, that is, with respect to both the triumph of tourism in this wildly popular stretch of the Appalachian peaks and photography's use of groundbreaking German printing techniques. In Germany, crucial innovations in the newly forged photomechanical printing industry as

well as to the printing industry in general, took place at this time,²⁸ and Edward Bierstadt purchased the American rights to two collotype processes, which his colleagues believed were “the future” of book illustration and, ultimately, photography. By investigating the intersections of tourism, technology, and the fine arts, this chapter examines how conceptions of landscape traversed media, industries, and cultures, and how German art and technology, more broadly, influenced American fine arts in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Chapter Three analyzes Dr. Hermann Wilhelm Vogel’s role as the German correspondent to America’s leading photographic trade journal, the *Philadelphia Photographer*, from 1866 until 1886. A photographer, chemist, teacher, and prolific writer, Vogel boasted an international reputation as an authority on the medium across scientific and artistic circles. He was also instrumental in creating a thriving German photographic culture in Berlin through exhibitions, periodicals, and societies. Best known today for his role as Alfred Stieglitz’s photography professor and his innovations in emulsion color sensitivity, Vogel contributed over two hundred letters, thirty in-depth articles, and a number of transcribed lectures to the journal. While he initially reported on photographic novelties in the German principalities, his letters broadened in scope as he became enmeshed in the American fraternity of photographers and a passionate supporter of the art of photography. Indeed, Vogel’s column grew to discuss all matters related to

²⁸ For a discussion of how nineteenth-century German printing technologies impacted the German publishing industry and German consumers, see Matt Erlin and Lynne Tatlock, eds., *Distant Readings: Topologies of German Culture in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2014); and Lynne Tatlock, ed., *Publishing Culture and the “Reading Nation”: German Book History in the Long Nineteenth Century* (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2010).

the medium including, but not limited to, photographic chemistry, optics, exhibitions, photographic literature as well as artistic trends on German and American soil.

Through a close reading of his contributions to the *Philadelphia Photographer*, I contend that Vogel notably advanced the relationship between German and American photographers. The perspective and popularity of his column, moreover, were fostered by a strong immigrant audience in the US and paralleled a trend for German cultural products in postbellum America. Through Vogel's efforts, German photography assumed a privileged place in the journal as well as in professional photographic circles in the United States. This relationship, however, went both ways, as his opinions of American photography instilled a keen interest in US image-making in Berlin by the early 1870s.

My final chapter examines the work of celebrated art photographer, publisher, and gallery owner Alfred Stieglitz during his formative years of study under Vogel in Berlin from the mid-1880s until 1890. It was during these years that Stieglitz was introduced to the intricacies of photographic chemistry and technology as well as a collegial culture of exchange surrounding the medium. Although Stieglitz is one of the most revered photographers of the early twentieth century, his nineteenth-century pictures made in Germany are the least considered and understood in modern scholarship. Indeed, we know considerably less about Stieglitz in the context of German photographic culture of the 1880s than we do about his life and work after his return to the US in 1890. Chapter Four, then, compares Stieglitz's early photographs to those of his German peers in photography. This juxtaposition provides key insights not only into his early work and the immediate context of its creation, but also into his oeuvre before the decline of Germany's cultural cachet in the US during and after the world wars.

Born in Hoboken, New Jersey to German immigrants, Stieglitz rejected any link between his work and that of German photographers. His dismissal, however, should not preclude comparisons with photographers who worked in Berlin at precisely this time. I assert that Stieglitz was heavily influenced by Berlin photographic culture—the societies, exhibitions, and periodicals—in which he participated, and which he subsequently imported to the United States. As an active member of the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie* (The Association for the Promotion of Photography) and a founding member of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* (German Society of the Friends of Photography), Stieglitz was well informed of German photographic developments and trends, in part through his mentorship by Vogel. By attending to Stieglitz's German connections, this chapter makes a case for seeing the photographs from his time there as actually more representative of the stylistic experimentation happening in 1880s Berlin than has been previously acknowledged in the prolific scholarship on the artist. Stieglitz's German years encompassed a rich aesthetic investigation within a diverse community of photographers, who were also trying to establish their aesthetic vision as artistic photography was beginning to gain traction in the German-speaking world.

Each of the following chapters, then, focuses on a particular theme in the history of photography—the transnational circulation of photographic objects, technology, periodicals, and styles—from 1840 to 1890. They concentrate on discrete threads of cultural exchange, bringing into relief Germany's presence in and influence on American photographic discourse. This work invites larger questions about the extent to which other national and cultural actors in the early history of photography interacted with, and

acted upon, one another. It opens up new possibilities for further study of American-German photographic relations, moreover, specifically the study of the US influence on Germany.²⁹ At the same time, my dissertation uses the interactions between German and American photography in the nineteenth century to reframe the medium's historiography in transnational terms, contributing to its so-called global turn.

²⁹ On one such influence, *Americanismus*, see Lisa Jaye Young, "All Consuming: The Tiller-Effect and the Aesthetics of Americanization in Weimar Photography 1923–1933" (PhD diss., City University of New York, 2008).

CHAPTER ONE

THE CIRCULATION OF NIAGARA FALLS:
W. & F. LANGENHEIM AND GERMAN-SPEAKING PHILADELPHIA

In 1842 German immigrants Frederick and William Langenheim opened a photography studio on the third floor of the bustling Merchants' Exchange Building in Philadelphia.¹ While they were not the city's first daguerreotypists, they were certainly Philadelphia's most celebrated photographers in the mid-nineteenth century. The brothers photographed a variety of subjects, from genre scenes of card players to a solar eclipse (Figure 1.1, 1.2), but made their living as portraitists in the 1840s and 1850s.² Their clientele included leading political and artistic figures, such as former US president Andrew Jackson (1767–1845), politician Henry Clay (1777–1852), poet John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892), and American landscape painter Asher B. Durand (1796–1886) (Figure 1.3). How did these newcomers to America build a successful photographic practice, and why did their work garner acclaim at this moment of photographic development in the US?

¹ The exact month and year that the Langenheims opened their studio is unknown, and the brothers gave the years 1841 *and* 1842 as its founding moment in various ephemera. While the Metropolitan Museum of Art owns an early Langenheim daguerreotype of three card players, inscribed with the date March 1842, they likely opened their establishment in fall 1842, when they began advertising it in the *Public Ledger*.

² While the brothers still took portraits in the 1850s, they simultaneously opened the American Stereoscopic Company in 1850. The Langenheim brothers' firm was one of the earliest photographic businesses to produce them in the United States. From the late 1850s onward, stereographic views on glass and paper became their livelihood.

This chapter argues that the Langenheim brothers' extraordinary success was tied to their connection with their German homeland, a connection that they maintained and referenced throughout their careers. Period ethnic stereotypes of Germans promoted their exemplary craftsmanship as well as their sophisticated cultural and intellectual pursuits, and these notions worked in their favor.³ By examining their early advertising campaigns, their relationship with optician Peter Wilhelm Friedrich von Voigtländer (1812–1878), and their impressive 1845 daguerreotype panorama of Niagara Falls, I underscore the transnational dimensions of their enterprise and shed light on why Philadelphia was the ideal city for their photographic endeavors. In so doing, I position the Langenheim brothers' work as an important articulation of German-American identity formation that allows us to better understand how ideas of culture were negotiated through the making and dissemination of early photography.

While the eminent photography historian Beaumont Newhall recognized that “More than any other daguerreotypists in America, the Langenheims kept in touch with European developments,” they did more than serve as a passive link between Philadelphia and Western Europe.⁴ Indeed, the Langenheims stood at the forefront of the burgeoning photographic profession, actively shaping its development. Not only were the

³ On period ethnic stereotypes of Germans, see the essays in E. Allen McCormick, ed., *Germans in America: Aspects of German-American Relations in the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Social Science Monographs, Brooklyn College Press; Distributed by Columbia University Press, 1983); Lynne Tatlock and Matt Erlin, eds., *German Culture in Nineteenth-Century America: Reception, Adaptation, Transformation*, 2005; Frank Trommler and Elliott Shore, eds., *The German-American Encounter: Conflict and Cooperation between Two Cultures, 1800–2000* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001); and Colin G. Calloway, Gerd Gemünden, and Susanne Zantop, eds., *Germans and Indians: Fantasies, Encounters, Projections* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002).

⁴ Beaumont Newhall, *The Daguerreotype in America* (New York: Duell, Sloan & Pearce, 1961), 50.

brothers quick to adopt the latest photographic technologies into their daily practice, but also through their involvement in commercial, artistic, and scientific spheres they helped shape the discourse on the medium in the US by experimenting profusely with what photography could be. While their peers typically concentrated on a single photographic genre or used the same process for years, the brothers' innovativeness stemmed from the excitement with which they embraced the medium's heterogeneous possibilities with respect to technology, process, subject matter, and modes of dissemination. The Langenheims were known for their "ingenuity," and this quality allowed them to take part in negotiating the emerging boundaries of photography.⁵ Their business venture was undoubtedly self-serving and opportunistic, but it also aspired to something greater: to professionalize and legitimize the nascent medium of photography. In the multiethnic, yet strongly nationalistic city of Philadelphia, the Langenheims set out to push the medium forward—aesthetically, technologically, and professionally.

Many have considered the city of brotherly love the center of nineteenth-century American photography, both then and now, and I contend that the Langenheims helped build its reputation through their status as German immigrants.⁶ A befitting new home for

⁵ In commenting on the Langenheims' submissions to their annual exhibition, a judge noted this quality. "Franklin Institute: Proceedings of the Stated Monthly Meeting, April 19, 1849," *Journal of the Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania for the Promotion of the Mechanic Arts* 17, no. 5 (May 1849): 360.

⁶ On Philadelphia's prominent role in the development of early photography, see, for example, Hermann W. Vogel, "Photography Abroad: Photography in America," *The Photographic World* 1, no. 1 (January 1871): 5–6; Kenneth Finkel, *Nineteenth-Century Photography in Philadelphia: 250 Historic Prints from the Library Company of Philadelphia* (New York: Dover Publications; Philadelphia: Library Company of Philadelphia, 1980); Kenneth Finkel, *Legacy in Light: Photographic Treasures from Philadelphia Area Public Collections* (Philadelphia: Photography Sesquicentennial Project, 1990); and Mary Panzer, "Romantic Origins of American Realism: Photography, Arts and Letters in Philadelphia" (PhD diss., Boston University, 1990).

the brothers, Philadelphia was an industrialized city with a vibrant publishing culture and rich intellectual atmosphere that also possessed a large and incredibly active German community. They represented 12% of the city's population, approximately 30,000 people, second only to Irish immigrants.⁷ Philadelphia's Germans were largely involved in crafts and skilled trades, as opposed to the city's Irish immigrants who worked predominantly as day laborers.⁸ As German artisans faced increasingly marginal existences in continental Europe, they immigrated to the US in hopes of better business opportunities.⁹ William and Frederick Langenheims' transnational move in 1834 and 1840 respectively coincided with a period of rapid and sustained migration from German-speaking Europe to American shores that gained momentum with the *Dreissiger* movement of the 1830s. In fact, when the Langenheim brothers' business was at its height, from 1845 to 1855, over one million Germans arrived on the East Coast. The brothers' success, as this chapter chronicles, was intimately tied to this influx of kinsman.

Examining the Langenheim brothers' work through a transatlantic lens complicates arguments of American exceptionalism by underscoring the involvement of immigrants in a photographic landscape of nation building. That is, at this moment in antebellum America, the US was in the midst of constructing its own fledgling identity, and visual imagery was critical to this campaign. Immigrants were behind many of these images, and their bicultural identity is typically ignored. Histories of American photography often claim photographers such as the much-lauded Civil War photographer

⁷ George Alter, Bruce Laurie, and Theodore Hershberg, "Immigrants and Industry: The Philadelphia Experience, 1850–1880," in *Philadelphia: Work, Space, Family, and Group Experience in the Nineteenth Century, Essays Toward an Interdisciplinary History of the City* (Oxford: University Press, 1981), 107.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁹ Kawaguchi, "The Making of Philadelphia's German-America," 124.

Scotsman Alexander Gardner (1821–1882) or Timothy O’Sullivan (1840–1882), the Irish immigrant remembered for his powerful survey photographs of the American West, as their own. But scholarship is only now beginning to show how their immigrant status motivated their presumably patriotic, photographic work.¹⁰ To reconcile this gap in the literature, the discussion that follows foregrounds the Langenheim brothers’ identity as German immigrants, as individuals who straddled Europe and America. It further shows how their strong link to German-speaking Europe made their photographic practice one of the most successful in Philadelphia and in the US during photography’s first decade.

Pioneering Heliographers

Since the mid-nineteenth century, the Langenheims have been a mainstay in histories of American photography. In early accounts, they are framed as pioneers and celebrated for their contributions to the development of photography in the US. With the exception of their 1845 daguerreotype panorama of Niagara Falls, however, the actual photographs the Langenheims produced are rarely discussed. Instead, histories emphasize their role in introducing new photographic processes and technology to the American public. Many nineteenth-century histories of photography in the US, as Anthony Lee has argued, were “penned primarily by aspiring amateurs or practicing photographers with an eye toward expanding their number of patrons.”¹¹ So while we should read these self-proclaimed “histories” with this agenda in mind, the continued focus on the brothers brings into relief just how much their contemporaries respected their accomplishments.

¹⁰ Makeda Best, “Arouse the Conscience: The Photography of Alexander Gardner,” 2010.

¹¹ Lee, “American Histories of Photography,” 2.

Take, for example, the declarations of one of Philadelphia's earliest commercial daguerreotypists and photography historians, Marcus Aurelius Root, in his treatise *The Camera and The Pencil, or The Heliographic Art* (1864). Root specifically praises Frederick's efforts, as he was often the man behind the camera, while William was known to handle the business side of their firm:

These [earlier experiments with lenses] were succeeded by the achromatic object-glasses of Voigtlander [*Sic*] & Sons, of Vienna, after Professor Petzval's calculation. The latter were introduced into the United States by Langenheim, Voigtlander's brother-in-law. [Frederick Langenheim] took up the art where Cornelius left it, and for several years was the leading photographer, not only in Philadelphia, but probably in the world. And the fact should be commemorated, that he has done as much as, if not more than any other to advance this art, and render it worthy the notice of the most intelligent and cultured classes in the community. In just recognition of his liberality, skill, and artistic enthusiasm, six or seven valuable gold medals were conferred upon him by European sovereigns, on their receiving from him a large panorama of Niagara Falls. In 1848, he introduced, at great expense, the talbotype into the United States, by which he printed from paper negatives. In 1850 he also introduced the stereoscope here, and by his efforts the American Stereoscopic Company was established.¹²

Root's praise reveals the esteem with which American photography circles of the period viewed Frederick. Indeed, Root's description positions him as part of the vanguard, as a trailblazing, skilled leader. Root also makes expressly clear that the brothers' fame was more than a local phenomenon; they were an international sensation.

Philadelphia-based amateur photographer and editor of the *American Journal of Photography* from 1890 to 1897, Julius Friedrich Sachse (1842–1919), is arguably the most important scholar on the brothers. In effect, he laid the foundation for future scholarship, as he published excerpts from the Langenheims' early account books and

¹² Marcus Aurelius Root, *The Camera and the Pencil, or The Heliographic Art, its Theory and Practice in all its Various Branches; e.g. – Daguerreotypy, Photography, &c.; Together with its History in the United States and in Europe; Being at Once a Theoretical and Practical Treatise, and designed alike as a Text-Book and a Hand-book* (Philadelphia: M. A. Root, 1864), 355–6.

scrapbooks.¹³ Sachse acquired their papers and subsequently used these materials to relay the brothers' story to his magazine's readership in articles such as "The Dawn of Photography," "Philadelphia's Share in the Development of Photography," and "Early Daguerreotype Days."¹⁴ Sachse's historical fascination with and close ties to the German community in Philadelphia, in addition to his interest in the history of photography, help explain why the brothers' documents ended up in his possession. A prolific writer, Sachse published several books on topics such as Germantown, the German Pietists of Pennsylvania, and the German-language press in the US as well as numerous essays on photography and the role of the amateur photographer.¹⁵ Perhaps the combination of Sachse's own German heritage and active involvement in the Pennsylvania German

¹³ The location of the Langenheim account books and scrapbooks are now unknown. One studio invoice remains in Sachse's granddaughter (Marian Carson) collection at the Library of Congress.

¹⁴ Julius Friedrich Sachse, "Early Daguerreotype Days: An Historical Reminisce," *American Journal of Photography* 13, no. 150 (June 1892): 241–249; Julius Friedrich Sachse, "Philadelphia's Share in the Development of Photography," *Journal of the Franklin Institute of the State of Pennsylvania, for the Promotion of the Mechanical Arts* 135, no. 4 (April 1893): 271–87; Sachse, "The Dawn of Photography. Early Daguerreotype Days – IX," *American Journal of Photography* 16, no. 187 (July 1895): 306–310; and Sachse, "The Dawn of Photography," *American Journal of Photography* 18, no. 207 (March 1897): 103–108.

¹⁵ Julius Friedrich Sachse, *Germany and America, 1450–1700: Julius Friedrich Sachse's History of the German Role in the Discovery, Exploration, and Settlement of the New World* (Bowie, MD: Heritage Books, 1992); Sachse, *The German Sectarians of Pennsylvania, 1708–1800: A Critical and Legendary History of the Ephrata Cloister and the Dunkers* (Philadelphia: Printed for the Author, 1899); Sachse, *The German Pietists of Provincial Pennsylvania, 1694–1708* (New York: AMS Press, 1970); and Sachse, *The First German Newspaper Published in America* (Lancaster: German Society of Pennsylvania, 1900). For his articles on the history of photography and amateur photography, see volumes of *American Journal of Photography* from 1890–7, when he was its editor.

Society, of which the Langenheims were members, led him to these materials.¹⁶ The Sachse family was also close to many of the early daguerreotypists in Philadelphia.¹⁷ As his childhood was spent around these image-makers, Sachse grew up an insider in the field and presumably knew the brothers personally.

Sachse framed the Langenheims as “pioneering heliographers,”¹⁸ maintaining, “anyone who knows anything about the history of heliography in America has heard of the Langenheims.”¹⁹ He further claimed many “firsts” for the brothers: “the Langenheims were the first to make successfully a full-length portrait that was of equal definition without distortion;”²⁰ “the first to attempt the publication of a series of stereoscopic views of American scenery;”²¹ and the use of photographs “encased in lockets, rings, medallions, etc., an idea first utilized by the Langenheims.”²² Sachse’s articles in the 1890s, however, were published at a time when a less favorable opinion of Germany and Germans began to gain traction in the US, largely due to Germany’s increasingly bellicose rhetoric and its tense relationship with England. Considering Sachse’s German

¹⁶ His father, Johann Heinrich Friedrich Sachse, was born in Germany, where he trained as a master metalworker. He immigrated to the US in 1834, the same year as William Langenheim.

¹⁷ Sachse’s father, for example worked at the shop of Cornelius & Baker, and Cornelius opened the first photography studio in the city. On Sachse’s familial relationships with early photographers, see Marcy Silver Flynn, “Amateur Experiences: Julius Sachse and Photography,” *Pennsylvania History* 64, no. 2 (1997): 333–348. Unrelated to the Langenheims, but related to Chapter 4 of my dissertation, Flynn raises the notion that Sachse must have been acquainted with Stieglitz as he wrote for his periodical during his editorship. On page 342, she writes that “they were both aware of photographic developments in German at that time and corresponded with Josef Maria Eder and other prominent photography scientists of the day.”

¹⁸ Julius Friedrich Sachse, “A Scrap of Photographic History,” *American Journal of Photography* 16, no. 191 (November 1895): 510–5.

¹⁹ Sachse, “The Dawn of Photography: Early Daguerreotype Days,” 103.

²⁰ Sachse, “The Dawn of Photography – IX,” 310.

²¹ Sachse, “Philadelphia’s Share in the Development of Photography,” 284.

²² Sachse, “Dawn of Photography: Early Daguerreotype Days,” 104.

background, his celebration of the Langenheims was an attempt to foreground German contributions in order to counter this negative perception.

The work of Root and Sachse influenced Beaumont Newhall's history of photography in the late 1930s. In his groundbreaking exhibition on the medium at the Museum of Modern Art, Newhall included six Langenheim objects, including their panorama of Niagara Falls. In his accompanying text, he noted that the brothers were "immigrants from Germany" who "achieved international fame."²³ The work of Austrian photography historian, Josef Maria Eder, who published his first edition of *Geschichte der Photographie* (History of Photography) in 1892, also greatly impacted Newhall's history.²⁴ Eder's text is one of few early histories to discuss events happening outside of France, Britain, and the United States, covering photography in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy, among many other nations.²⁵ His publication is also one of the few German-language accounts to discuss the Langenheims. Referring to them as "German-American photographers," they enter his narrative with the introduction of the Petzval-Voigtländer lens.²⁶ "The Langenheims," he writes, "emigrated from Germany and were related to Friedrich Voigtländer."²⁷ Due to the importance of Voigtländer to Austrian histories of the medium, the Langenheim brothers' presence in his account is fitting.

²³ Beaumont Newhall, *Photography: A Short Critical History*, 2nd Edition (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1938), 30.

²⁴ Josef Maria Eder, *Geschichte der Photographie* (Halle a.S: Druck und Verlag von Wilhelm Knapp, 1891–2).

²⁵ On this point, see Anne McCauley, "Writing Photography's History before Newhall," *History of Photography* 21, no. 2 (Summer 1997): 90.

²⁶ Josef Maria Eder, *History of Photography*, trans. Edward Epstein (New York: Columbia University Press, 1945), 340.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 289.

The Braunschweigers in Philadelphia

What little modern scholarship exists on the Langenheims focuses on either their general biography or their unsuccessful efforts to promote William Henry Fox Talbot's negative-positive paper process on American soil.²⁸ In this section, I offer new details about their lives that foreground their German connections. We know that they were born in Braunschweig, Germany, William²⁹ in 1807 and Frederick in 1809. The first decades of the nineteenth century proved to be a politically tumultuous time for their birthplace. Within the course of a decade, the territory was captured by the French in the Napoleonic Wars, then annexed to the Kingdom of Westphalia, and in 1815 became its own independent Duchy. The son of a Lutheran minister, the Langenheim brothers' father was the mayor of Braunschweig for a brief period. After the Congress of Vienna in 1815, however, he lost his post. At the University of Helmstadt, their father presumably studied law because when the Duke of Braunschweig wrote to the Langenheim brothers in 1846, he referred to their father as "*Notar* Langenheim," a civil law notary, a well-respected and typically state-appointed position.³⁰ The Langenheims thus grew up in an educated and professionally ambitious household.

²⁸ See William Brey, "The Langenheims of Philadelphia," *Stereo World* 6, no. 1 (March–April 1979): 4–20; Ellen NickKenzie Lawson, "Fathers of Modern Photography: The Brothers Langenheim," *Pennsylvania Heritage* 13, no. 4 (Fall 1987): 16–23; David R. Hanlon, "Prospects of Enterprise: The Calotype Venture of the Langenheim Brothers," *History of Photography* 35, no. 4 (November 2011): 339–354; David R. Hanlon, *Illuminating Shadows: The Calotype in Nineteenth-Century America* (Nevada City, CA: Carl Mautz Publishing, 2013); and Dolores A. Kilgo, "The Alternative Aesthetic: The Langenheim Brothers and the Introduction of the Calotype in America," in *America and the Daguerreotype*, ed. John Wood (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1991), 27–57.

²⁹ William was born Ernst Wilhelm Fredrich Langenheim, but changed his name after immigrating to America.

³⁰ Letter, Duke of Brunswick to William and Frederick Langenheim, August 6, 1847, object number 2005.100.792, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. While the

Like his father, William also studied law but at the University of Göttingen. He practiced for some years in Braunschweig before immigrating to America in 1834. His educational background, year of departure, and his liberal-leaning affiliations, together suggest that he was part of the *Dreissiger* movement, or the mass migration of German liberal intellectuals to the US in the 1830s.³¹ After the July revolution of 1830 in France, ripples of unrest swept through Western Europe. According to historian David Blackbourn, Braunschweig was in fact one of the “storm centres” of the German rebellion and represented one of the “most rigid and arbitrary Restoration regimes.”³² Freedom of speech was curtailed, and as a result many educated and enterprising Germans set their sights on the US. In response to this new migration stream, guidebooks geared toward a German immigrant audience proliferated, and these texts promoted the freedoms to be found in the US. Duden, one of the more popular German travel publishers, declared in his American guide: “But one thing is unquestionably guaranteed to the immigrant: a high degree of personal liberty and assurance of comfortable living to an extent that we can not think of in Europe.”³³

The Langenheims took advantage of these civil liberties, both becoming American citizens by the mid-nineteenth century. William was naturalized circa 1837 when he enlisted in the US army. In a letter addressed to the Secretary of State in 1842

Duke writes 1847, I believe this was in error. The other letters to the Langenheims date to 1846. My transcription and translation.

³¹ For more on this German migration stream, see Walter D. Kamphoefner, “Dreissiger and Forty-Eighter: The Political Influence of Two Generations of German Political Exiles” in *Germany and America: Essays on Problems of International Relations and Immigration* (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1980), 89–102.

³² David Blackbourn, *The Long Nineteenth Century: A History of Germany, 1780–1918*, 2nd ed. (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 94.

³³ Duden cited in Moritz Tiling, *History of The German Element in Texas from 1820–1850* (Houston, TX: Moritz Tiling, 1913), 14.

that accompanied his US passport application, he referred to his years of service as proof of his American citizenship: “I am a naturalized citizen of the United States ... Regulations of the U.S. Army, [require that] [*sic*] only native or naturalized citizens of the U.S. can be enlisted in the service.”³⁴ Frederick submitted his application for US citizenship in 1844, just as their photography business was gaining momentum, and took his oath of allegiance two years later in May 1846.³⁵

While William and Frederick Langenheim both adopted new identities as American citizens, they still retained ties with their Teutonic heritage after their departure from Germany. In fact, the Langenheims remained solidly entrenched in Philadelphia’s German community both on a professional and a personal level. As the region we call “Germany” today was still not a nation-state, regional and religious differences across its provinces thwarted a unified German identity in Europe until the proclamation of the German Empire in 1871.³⁶ However, in Philadelphia, German immigrants were invested in establishing a coherent—and distinctly German—cultural identity for themselves.³⁷ They established numerous German literary and drama clubs, shooting societies, schools, and an active German-language press.

Once in the United States, the Langenheims embraced their German roots. After an unsuccessful attempt at founding a German colony in Southwestern Texas, William

³⁴ Letter, William Langenheim to US Secretary of State, May 16, 1842, US Passport Applications, 1795–1925. National Archives, Washington D.C.

³⁵ William P. Filby, ed., *Philadelphia Naturalization Records* (Detroit, MI: Gale Research Co., 1982); and Sachse, “Dawn of Photography: Early Daguerreotype Days,” 106.

³⁶ Kawaguchi, “The Making of Philadelphia’s German-America,” 83–149.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 150–239.

fought in the Texas War of Independence.³⁸ One of his fellow soldiers remembered his role: “A Brunswickian called Langenheim was in charge of our artillery piece when its projectiles demolished part of the church dome.”³⁹ By 1840, William had moved to Philadelphia, randomly finding his brother there, or so the story goes. Little is known about Frederick before his 1840 summer arrival in the Port of New York, except that upon entry into the country he declared his occupation to be “farmer.”⁴⁰ From 1840 to 1842, they both worked at Philadelphia’s German-language newspaper, *Die alte und neue Welt*, which covered political and cultural events in the US and Europe, chiefly the German territories. Characterized by one scholar as “the voice of German liberals of the 1830s,” it advocated for unity among Germans in America and supported aspirations of a unified Germany.⁴¹ William was an editor,⁴² and Frederick was a reporter, although it is difficult to discern which articles he wrote since bylines were not commonly given in the paper.⁴³ William also wrote for another, more political German-language newspaper: the *Philadelphia Demokrat*. At the same time, he was the secretary of a club called “The Germans of the City and County of Philadelphia” that held meetings about liberal

³⁸ He tried to found Powers Colony in San Antonio Texas. On the history of Germans in Texas that specifically mention William Langenheim, see Moritz Tiling, *History of The German Element in Texas from 1820–1850* (Houston, TX: Moritz Tiling, 1913); and Ferdinand Roemer, *Texas with Particular Reference to German Immigration and The Physical Appearance of the Country*, trans. Oswald Mueller (San Antonio: Standard Printing Company, 1935).

³⁹ Herman Ehrenberg, *With Milam and Fannin: Adventures of a German Boy in Texas’ Revolution* (Dallas: Tardy Publishing Company, 1935), 84.

⁴⁰ Brey, “The Langenheims of Philadelphia,” 4.

⁴¹ Kawaguchi, “The Making of Philadelphia’s German-America,” 369.

⁴² In the previously cited letter, William Langenheim to US Secretary of State, May 16, 1842, he signs the missive: “Editor of the German Paper, *Die alte und neue Welt*.”

⁴³ Except for the substantial weekly cover story, the majority of articles had no byline. If there was a byline given, it was often the name of the newspaper from which the editors had appropriated the article.

German issues.⁴⁴ Thus, in their first years in Philadelphia, the brothers immersed themselves in the city's German life.

In their business dealings, the brothers tended to partner professionally with German immigrants, which speaks to their strong ties with the community. Perhaps in the workplace they felt more comfortable speaking in their native tongue, as their accounts books show both German and English entries.⁴⁵ Shared language may also have led them to collaborate early on in their photographic business with George Francis Schreiber (1803–1892), who was born in Frankfurt am Main and immigrated to the United States in 1834. Trained as a printer, he helped establish and manage *Die alte und neue Welt*. At some point in their short journalistic careers, the Langenheims boarded with Schreiber at 85 Dillwyn Street.⁴⁶ Early on, when the brothers were still experimenting with daguerreotypy, they joined forces with him to open their studio, the “Philadelphia Daguerreotype Establishment of W. & F. Langenheim,” in the Exchange Building.⁴⁷ Schreiber's role in the business remains unclear; maybe he was a silent partner or handled darkroom operations.⁴⁸ Regardless, what we do know is that Schreiber was still in contact

⁴⁴ An advertisement in *Die alte und neue Welt* from January 23, 1841, notes William Langenheim's role in the club.

⁴⁵ Sachse, “Dawn of Photography: Early Daguerreotype Days,” 106.

⁴⁶ Brey, “The Langenheims of Philadelphia,” 4.

⁴⁷ Their first notice in the *Public Ledger* ran on November 23, 1842.

⁴⁸ An unsigned panegyric about Schreiber is inconsistent with the Langenheims' account of this period. The reporter basically claims all of the Langenheims' achievements for Schreiber, a claim that scholars have dismissed both then and now. Anonymous Reporter, “A Veteran Philadelphia Photographer,” *American Journal of Photography* 13, no. 137 (March 1892): 127–128. Over the course of multiple issues of *The Photographic Times*, Professor Charles Ehrmann, photographer, photography instructor at the Chautauqua School of Photography, and associate editor of the periodical as well as a slightly younger contemporary of the brothers, addressed these assertions, correcting the obituary's statements. Charles Ehrmann, “George Francis Schreiber: A Reminisce,” *The*

with the brothers in 1850 and that he acted as a witness for Frederick Langenheim's patent for "improvement in photographic pictures on glass."⁴⁹

Schreiber was only one of many German immigrants with whom the Langenheims collaborated. German-born Alexander Beckers (ca.1810–1905) arrived in Philadelphia in 1836. By 1843, he worked as a camera operator at the brothers' portrait establishment. In the fall of 1844, he and the Langenheims opened a franchise in New York called "Langenheim & Beckers." Located at 201 Broadway Street, Beckers managed the space until 1849.⁵⁰ This "Daguerrian Atelier," as their advertisements in *The New York Herald* maintained, was also licensed to sell Voigtländer cameras.⁵¹ By launching a franchise in mid-century New York, the brothers managed to remain within a German community. New York boasted a large German immigrant enclave called *Kleindeutschland* (Little Germany) in the lower East Side.⁵²

Another German immigrant by the name of Eduard Robyn (1820–1862), who was born in Westphalia, worked for the Langenheim brothers' Philadelphia studio as a colorist. Accounts of these nineteenth-century studio employees are scarce. However,

Photographic Times 540 (January 22, 1892): 40; Charles Ehrmann, "George Francis Schreiber: A Reminiscence," *The Photographic Times* 541 (January 29, 1892): 56–57.

⁴⁹ While the obituary argued that all of the technological developments were Schreiber's, his role as a witness supports the Langenheims' version of events. Frederick Langenheim, "Improvement in Photographic Pictures on Glass," US Patent 7784A, November 19, 1850.

⁵⁰ After 1849, Beckers partnered with French immigrant photographer, Victor Piard. Beckers would go on to design and patent a revolving table-top stereographic viewer in 1857. For more on Beckers, see John S. Craig, *Craig's Daguerreian Registry*, rev. ed., vol. 1 (Torrington: J. S. Craig, 2003), 30–31.

⁵¹ Alexander Beckers, "My Daguerreotype Experience," *Anthony's Photographic Bulletin* (New York) 20, no. 7 (13 April 1889): 209–11.

⁵² On the large German immigrant community in New York in the mid-nineteenth century, see Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845–80* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990).

Robyn's story is known because he amassed and preserved an extremely rare collection of 152 Langenheim salted paper prints.⁵³ Made in the summer of 1850, these photographs depict traditional studio portraits of important American figures, such as former US senator Henry Clay and artist Asher B. Durand. Yet the bulk of the album illustrates landscapes and architectural studies and appears to be part of a larger project entitled *Views of North America*, as their inscriptions imply. The calotype in Figure 1.4, for instance, pictures the United States Capitol building. A frontal view accentuates the geometric edifice, and trees guide the beholder's eye directly to its august structure. Photography historian Dolores Kilgo describes this set of photographs as the "only collection that records this major experiment in the history of American photography," referring to their project as the first American photographically illustrated gift book.⁵⁴ An artist-lithographer, Robyn supplemented his earnings at the Langenheims' studio.⁵⁵ They likely hired him in 1849 in conjunction with their introduction of the calotype to the American public. For hand-colored images, they charged customers an additional fifty cents per print. Understanding the importance of his work, the Langenheims even rented a separate room for Robyn in the Exchange Building.⁵⁶ Schreiber, Beckers, and Robyn are the known German immigrants who worked at the brothers' studio, but there were

⁵³ Robyn's album of Langenheims' early calotypes is in the collection of the Missouri History Museum, St. Louis. For a more focused discussion on this album, see Dolores Kilgo, "The Robyn Collection of Langenheim Calotypes: An Unexplored Chapter in the History of American Photography" *Gateway Heritage* 6, no. 2 (Fall 1985): 29–37.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁵⁵ It should be noted that there were large numbers of German immigrants in Philadelphia practicing in lithographic trades, so many that the constitutional bylaws of the Lithographic Printers Trade Union of Philadelphia were in both German and English. See Erika Piola, ed., *Philadelphia on Stone: Commercial Lithography in Philadelphia 1820–1878* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 15–18.

⁵⁶ Hanlon, *Illuminating Shadows*, 77.

presumably more about whom we do not know. In light of prevailing stereotypes of outstanding German craftsmanship, the brothers, I believe, wanted their business and its German employees to be identified with this image.⁵⁷

The Langenheim brothers' connections to the German community went beyond commercial collaborations and influenced their choices of home and business locations. According to census records, they lived in Philadelphia's 14th Ward, which was part of the Northern Liberties neighborhood.⁵⁸ Situated on the Northern border of Center City, this location in fact placed them in the area in Philadelphia with the highest concentration of German immigrants.⁵⁹ In a historiographical study on the 1850 ethnic subdivisions of Philadelphia County, Lesley Ann Kawguchi examined the population of males over the age of eighteen in Philadelphia and asserts that Northern Liberties boasted the largest German immigrant population in the county, representing 31.2% of the neighborhood's inhabitants. The German Society of Pennsylvania, German parishes, and many German artisans were all situated in this geographic area, thus placing the Langenheims in the

⁵⁷ In his text, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before the First World War*, Frederic Schwartz brings to light the technological and design achievements in early twentieth-century Germany and the self-conscious conversations around them, particularly in relation to Gropius and the *Werkbund*. In so doing, he establishes Germany's industrial modernity a decade before other historians situate it. My dissertation recognizes the period before unification as another time when Germans were noted for their technological as well as scientific contributions. Frederic Schwartz, *The Werkbund: Design Theory and Mass Culture before the First World War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996).

⁵⁸ *Septennial Census Returns, 1779–1863*. Box 1026. Records of the House of Representatives. Records of the General Assembly. Record Group 7. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, P.A.

⁵⁹ While they were not residents of Germantown or the Germantown Township, areas which were incorporated into the city limits of Philadelphia in 1854, located six miles northwest of Philadelphia proper, it is important to understand these particular regions did not become industrialized until the end of the nineteenth century. The Langenheims' interests aligned with the amenities of urban life.

heart of the German community.⁶⁰ Similarly, the Merchants' Exchange Building stood in Center City, or the "Walnut Ward" as it was called in the mid-nineteenth century, and this district possessed a German population of 21.8%, second only to Northern Liberties.⁶¹

The Langenheims also actively took part in the city's German clubs and organizations. They joined a German-American rifle club, called the *Philadelphia Schuetzen-Verein* (Philadelphia Shooting Association), founded in 1846. In a group portrait of the club from 1869, the dapper brothers pose front and center, nonchalantly holding rifles (Figure 1.5). An adjacent man tips his hat to them. This gesture and their prominent placement in the composition suggest the brothers' significant roles in the shooting club, likely leadership positions. This lithograph was made from multiple photographs; it appears that the figures posed separately before a camera and the lithographic artists, C. P. & A. J. Tholey, worked from each photograph to make a composite portrait of two hundred or so members. With their distinguished roles in photography, the Langenheims likely handled the image-making component of this group portrait.

Their membership in German organizations did not end with the *Philadelphia Schuetzen-Verein*. They both joined the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Pennsylvanien* (German Society of Pennsylvania) in 1863. Its primary mission was to help German immigrants get their bearings in Philadelphia and to provide a community for German-Americans. The organization thrived in the mid-nineteenth century due to the large influx

⁶⁰ On the history of Northern Liberties and its German inhabitants, see Harry Kyriakodis, *Northern Liberties: The Story of a Philadelphia River Ward* (Charleston, SC: The History Press, 2012).

⁶¹ Kawaguchi, "The Making of Philadelphia's German-America," 191.

of German settlers. It also supported the notion of a unified German republic.⁶² In the mid-1860s through the early 1870s, the Langenheims held elected positions at the German Society of Pennsylvania, which speaks to both their strong ties to the German community and their identification as Germans.⁶³ As their wealth of activities indicates, the brothers were gregarious individuals, who actively fostered a German-American community in Philadelphia.

Spyglass Cameras and the German System

I am not the first to ask how the Langenheims built such a successful photographic practice. Indeed, one contemporary of the brothers, daguerreotypist Montgomery P. Simons, had a similar query, but for personal ends.⁶⁴ In a published letter to the editor of *Anthony's Photographic Bulletin*, Simons reminisced about the early years of daguerreotypy in Philadelphia.⁶⁵ Soon after he opened his studio, he visited the Langenheim brothers' establishment to see if he could discern why Frederick was "getting ahead of me fast, much faster than suited my youthful aspirations."⁶⁶ Simons surveyed the premises "to ascertain if possible the cause of his great success, for up to that time, I must admit, I was not aware of their being any difference whatever in the quality of lenses."⁶⁷ On this reconnaissance mission, Simons experimented with their

⁶² Ibid., 256–7.

⁶³ Brey, "The Langenheims of Philadelphia," 16.

⁶⁴ While Simons' birth and death dates are unknown, we do know that he opened a photography studio in 1842 and was listed in the city directory as a daguerreotypist by 1843. On his photographic career, see Craig, *Craig's Daguerrian Registry*, 344.

⁶⁵ M.P. Simons, "The Early Days of Daguerreotyping," *Anthony's Photographic Bulletin* 5 (1874): 309–10.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 309.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 310.

Voigtländer camera, declaring it “a perfect beauty from head to foot, and I fell dead in love with it at first sight. No child ever looked with more covetous eyes at toys in the shop windows than I did at this unique, brass-clad camera... I left the [E]xchange that day with a heavy heart, though with a fixed determination to have without delay a Voigtländer lens.”⁶⁸ The Langenheims were the sole agents of Voigtländer equipment in the United States, and as Simons concluded, this role “gave to Mr. L[angenheim] quite a start and a decided advantage over his contemporaries.”⁶⁹ The Voigtländer moniker became synonymous with high-quality lenses and cameras.⁷⁰ Therefore, the Langenheim brothers’ capacity as Voigtländer agents—a well-regarded role, as Simons’ letter reveals—positioned them ahead of other studios.

The Langenheim brothers’ familial relationships, specifically those of their two sisters, Louisa and Anna,⁷¹ led them directly into the hands of the influential Austrian optician and lens manufacturer himself, Peter Wilhelm Friedrich von Voigtländer. In fact, one could argue that the marriages of both sisters actually influenced the brothers’ career paths. Before Frederick Langenheim’s move to America in June 1840, Louisa married Johann Bernhard Schneider, a professor at the *Technische Universität Carolo-Wilhelmina* in Braunschweig. Photographed by William during his 1842 travels in Germany, a small daguerreotype portrait of Schneider reveals a bespectacled young man, who engages

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 309.

⁷⁰ On the history of Voigtländer’s company, see Carsten Grabenhorst, *Voigtländer & Sohn: Die Firmengeschichte von 1756 bis 1914* (Braunschweig: Appelhaus Verlag, 2002); and Sabine Müller and Matthias Puhle, *Voigtländer in Braunschweig, 1849–1972* (Braunschweig: Städtisches Museum Braunschweig, 1989).

⁷¹ Anna was also called Nancy and Nannie.

directly with the image-maker (Figure 1.6).⁷² Schneider was a former school colleague of Voigtländer, and their friendship and shared interest in technology kept them in contact despite their distance. At the time, Voigtländer lived in Vienna, and Schneider in Braunschweig. In May 1840 Voigtländer sent Schneider one of three cameras he had manufactured with a double Petzval achromatic lens. He mailed the other two cameras to Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1810–1893), the French inventor of the daguerreotype. By January 1841, Voigtländer had manufactured close to 70 of these metal cameras fitted with a Petzval lens, and the following year he produced roughly 600 of them.⁷³

After experimenting with the camera, Schneider quickly passed it on to the Langenheims in the New World, presumably feeling that his brothers-in-law would benefit more from this technology than he would. His package arrived in Philadelphia likely in early 1841, when the brothers were employed at *Die alte und neue Welt*.⁷⁴ The Langenheims received the camera enthusiastically, shifting their professional focus from textual to visual representation within a year. In his recollections about this camera at the Langenheim brothers' studio, Beckers described it as a “spyglass-like camera” that “rested on a candlestick-like tripod.”⁷⁵ The apparatus made circular daguerreotypes and possessed the first lens developed specifically for a camera (Figure 1.7). Its extraordinariness revolved around its wide aperture of $f/3.6$, which let in a significant amount of light, thus decreasing exposure times to one or two minutes. This specification

⁷² Schneider's portrait was part of the Langenheim family's private collection before it entered the Gilman collection and then the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York in 2005.

⁷³ Rudolf Kingslake, *A History of the Photographic Lens* (San Diego: Academic Press, 2004), 37.

⁷⁴ Ellen NicKenzie Lawson suspects that the Langenheims received the camera by fall 1840, but I believe it was slightly later than that.

⁷⁵ Beckers, “My Daguerreotype Experience,” 510.

was in reaction to the low sensitivity of photographic chemicals. Charles Chevalier made the only other available lens at the time, and its aperture was extremely high in comparison: f/15. Chevalier's lens required long exposure times of up to 30 minutes in the bright sunlight.⁷⁶ In effect, with its speed, the Petzval-Voigtländer camera newly allowed for photographic portraiture, and thus the portrait photography studio was born.⁷⁷

When the brothers opened their own portrait studio in 1842, they simultaneously introduced their roles as dealers of Voigtländer equipment as well. They advertised that at their establishment "the apparatus is for sale, warranted to be equal to those used by the undersigned."⁷⁸ Earlier that year, as previously noted, William traveled to Germany to meet with Voigtländer and discuss the possibility of selling his photographic equipment at their fledgling establishment. Soon thereafter, the Langenheims and Voigtländer became more intimately linked. At some point between 1840 and 1842, Voigtländer traveled to Braunschweig, Germany, and presumably through Schneider met the Langenheim brothers' sister Anna. They married, and, by 1849, Voigtländer opened a factory in Braunschweig. Moving outside of the Austrian Empire and into the German provinces freed Voigtländer from fiscal restrictions on Petzval's patent.⁷⁹ In addition, by appointing the Langenheims as his US representatives, Voigtländer managed to circumvent patent constraints. Regarding this collaboration, Sachse remarked: "By virtue of their German connections, the Langenheims foresaw a business opportunity whereby

⁷⁶ Kingslake, *A History of the Photographic Lens*, 33.

⁷⁷ By today's standards, this lens was far from perfect. Only the middle portion of the image was in focus, everything around that point fell out of focus. This feature did add to the daguerreotype's painterly quality.

⁷⁸ W. & F. Langenheim, [Advertisement], *Public Ledger*, November 23, 1842, 3.

⁷⁹ Petzval felt that Voigtländer did not compensate him adequately for his design, and by the mid-1840s, they were not on speaking terms. For a discussion of this quarrel, see Kingslake, *A History of the Photographic Lens*, 36–38

both they, as well as their foreign connections, would be benefited, by establishing an agency here for the sale of the Voigtlander [*sic*] objectives, which were then superior to any other lenses in the world, together with a general stock of daguerreotype supplies.”⁸⁰ Their galleries became an all-in-one shop, with Voigtländer apparatuses for sale and in use. People wanting to become respected portrait photographers came to them for the technical means to do so.

Public perception of Voigtländer equipment was entangled with stereotypes of exceptional German craftsmanship. Even though Voigtländer’s family was from Vienna and Petzval was Hungarian, which were both part of the Austrian Empire, the American public deemed the technology for all intents and purposes German. In fact, in the United States and in France, Voigtländer cameras, if not called by his name, became known as the “German camera”⁸¹ or the “Système Allemand.”⁸² When his technology was widely copied, the design was referred to as the German system.⁸³

In a biography of Voigtländer, attributed to William Langenheim, he further links his brother-in-law to Germany.⁸⁴ In this text, which was transcribed by Sachse, Langenheim reframes photography’s origins, or at least the origins of portrait photography, in Teutonic terms. Given the Langenheim brothers’ German roots, this is

⁸⁰ Sachse, “The Dawn of Photography – IX,” 309.

⁸¹ Ibid., 306.

⁸² Grabenhorst, *Voigtländer & Sohn: Die Firmengeschichte von 1756 bis 1914*, 39.

⁸³ M. Susan Barger and William B. White, *The Daguerreotype: Nineteenth-Century Technology and Modern Science* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 30.

⁸⁴ Sachse, “A Scrap of Photographic History,” 510–515. In making this attribution, Sachse writes that he finds “an old yellowed manuscript filed away among our photographic records. It is in the handwriting of William Langenheim... this scrap of personal history will prove of general interest to the photographic field at large, more especially as it was originally written by one of America’s pioneer photographers.”

unsurprising and positions their own accomplishments in a lineage of greatness.

According to this “old yellowed manuscript,” Langenheim contends that “the Voigtländer family presents a line of German opticians” whose contributions to the history of photography cannot be overestimated, especially “the first perfect portrait objective according to the calculations of Prof. Petzval.”⁸⁵ Langenheim asserts that it is Voigtländer who is responsible for the expansion and proliferation of photography. Langenheim boldly makes his case:

Upon the construction of this original photographic objective rests the entire structure of photography of the present time... Optics then had to surmount the difficulties which were caused by the lack of sensitiveness of the materials employed, and the intermediate steps to the sensitive collodion would have been impossible. What use would the triplets, periscopes, globulars, and others have been at the time, when it was barely possible to take picture”⁸⁶

This interpretation of Germany’s contributions to photography’s early days indirectly implicates the Langenheim brothers’ own contributions to the medium’s development. In effect, without Voigtländer, he argues, this entire branch of photography would not have been possible. As agents of Voigtländer equipment and the first to use a Voigtländer camera in the New World, the brothers had a hand in making portrait photography feasible in the United States. The biography conveys William’s pride in his German heritage, indeed in his own family’s heritage, as Voigtländer’s brother-in-law. At the same time, it bolsters his position and that of Germany in the early literature on photography.

“The Old and Far-Famed Establishment of W. & F. Langenheim”

⁸⁵ Ibid., 510.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 512.

The Langenheims' first advertising campaign for the studio went to print in November 1842 in the *Public Ledger*, then Philadelphia's most popular newspaper. They were among the earliest to use city papers to promote the business of studio portraiture, presumably due to their previous experience working at a journal. Less than a handful of photographers advertised in Philadelphia papers in 1842; typically, papers ran between one and three daguerreotype advertisements per day, and these notices were often brief and trumpeted affordability. In the Langenheim brothers' first notice, they did neither. Instead, they positioned their studio at the technological forefront of photography: "the undersigned, having recently procured [an] apparatus of the latest improvements, beg leave to inform the Ladies and Gentlemen of Philadelphia, that they are now enabled to take likenesses in more than double the size of Daguerreotype Portraits as heretofore taken."⁸⁷ They then proceed to market a range of daguerreotype portrait sizes "from a small breastpin to plates eight inches in diameter" and promote their ability to photograph large groups "from two to fifteen persons on the same plate... in all weather."⁸⁸ Finally, they conclude this long advert by telling their potential customer base that photographic equipment and chemicals can also be purchased from their galleries in the Exchange Building, declaring these accouterments "being of their own importation."⁸⁹ Right from the start, therefore, they implied their connections abroad to their two target audiences: portrait customers and fellow photographers.

By 1844, they were advertising more widely in Philadelphia and New York periodicals, purchasing advertising space in the *Public Ledger*, *The Pennsylvania*

⁸⁷ W. & F. Langenheim, [Advertisement], *Public Ledger*, November 23, 1842, 3. Same advertisement printed on December 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 21, and 22, 1842.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

Inquirer, *The North American*, *U.S. Gazette*, and *The New York Herald*. Concurrent with this increase in print ads, they began signing their advertisements with: “the old and far-famed establishment of W. & F. Langenheim.” This branding approach reveals how they wanted to be perceived. By employing the adjective “old” when their studio had opened its doors only two years prior, the Langenheims attempted to position themselves as established photographers, a strategic move given the instability and uncertainty of a career in photography. Age would give them authority. In the same vein, the term “far-famed” served to stress their studio’s renown beyond the city’s limits, implying their European popularity and thus their cultural affiliations and prestige.

In other ads, the Langenheims explicitly stressed their connections with Europe and other parts of the world. In an advertisement printed in October 1844, they declared: “The subscribers beg leave to inform the Daguerreotype artists, that they have considerably enlarged their connections throughout the Union, the West Indies, South America, and Europe...”⁹⁰ Wanting to be seen as both national and international practitioners, they suggested that their customers would be linked, through them, to a larger, more global photography network. In this way, the brothers fashioned a transnational identity for themselves, their customers, and photography itself.

As the Voigtländer name acquired international recognition, the Langenheims used it as a critical selling point in their advertising. Indeed, one would be hard pressed to find one of their advertisements that did not make use of the Voigtländer moniker in the mid-1840s, as they variously boasted “a large supply of Voigtländer’s celebrated

⁹⁰ W. & F. Langenheim, [Advertisement], *The New York Herald*, October 24, 1844.

Cameras,”⁹¹ “Voigtländer’s Daguerreotype Apparatus,” or “Arrangements recently made with their brother-in-law, Mr. Voigtländer.”⁹² As this last excerpt highlights, the brothers even exploited their personal connection with Voigtländer, communicating to customers that theirs was an enduring association. The brothers felt that their personal connection to a major European player in photography would elevate their status. Many manufacturers copied the Voigtländer design, and the Langenheims assured their patrons that their products were “not a worthless imitated article,” but the real thing.⁹³

The advertising tactics of the Langenheims represented a far cry from their competitors’ strategies, revealing their extraordinary business acumen, expert showmanship, and impressive foresight. From the beginning, their print notices were lengthy and descriptive, underscoring at once the breadth of their studio’s offerings and their latest equipment. Unlike their competitors, such as, for example, a “Mr. Jones” whose 1842 advertisements boasted “daguerreotype likenesses are now taken at the extremely low price of \$3.00,” the brothers were not trying to sell the cheapest products.⁹⁴ Rather, they wanted to fashion an ambience of quality around their studio. Sachse believed that the brothers’ print campaigns were so persuasive that they “convinced the intelligent public that it was really a necessity to have their pictures taken by this new process.”⁹⁵ Indeed, Sachse was convinced that the Langenheims’ studio advertisements were innovative in their sophistication. Compelling, nuanced, and always scripted with striking confidence, the their notices targeted the middle and upper echelons

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² W. & F. Langenheim, [Advertisement], *The New York Herald*, April 11, 1845.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Mr. Jones, [Advertisement], *Public Ledger*, April 30, 1842, 3.

⁹⁵ Sachse, “The Dawn of Daguerreotype: The Early Days,” 104.

of society, “the ladies and gentlemen of Philadelphia.”⁹⁶ Their advertisements engendered not only an elite aura around their studio and products, but also a discursive language around the medium. As their advertisements evolved and the Langenheims found their footing in the emerging industry, they told their audiences how to use the new medium, allowing the public to envision what photography might be and become.

Within a few years, their advertisements became more nuanced and began situating daguerreotypes within the context of departure and memory. What follows are excerpts from their various ads printed in the mid-1840s in Philadelphia newspapers:

Many are preparing to leave the city to enjoy for some weeks or months the country air or to visit their friends or relatives at a distance. What could they leave behind that would please their families at home better than one or more of those well-finished, beautiful daguerreotypes that are taken at the above establishment?

Nothing can be more affecting and exciting to the feelings of our hearts than to take to hand an excellent daguerreotype portrait of a parent, a brother or sister, a child, a friend, or any one else we love, after they are far away or dead. No limner’s brush, no engraver’s steel, no lithographer’s ink is able to produce a likeness so striking-pleasing and lifelike as the dag, which is not done by the hand of an artist, but by the pencil of nature. Every one knows that in this process, the artist has merely to follow nature’s unchangeable laws in preparing the plates, and that light, the created element, draws the picture. It is true, that not every operator knows how to apply these laws, and in consequence not every picture is what it ought to be; but if you want to procure one good in every respect go to the old reliable establishment of Langenheim.

How many a one is asking himself, what can I give those I leave behind me to remember my absence? We answer, go to Lang’s Daguerreotype Establishment, and have your likeness taken in their best style. Nothing is so appropriate and nowhere can you get a better one.⁹⁷

The brothers’ rhetoric focuses on how photography could act as a proxy in one’s absence, a notion that was germane to their own trajectory as immigrants, as people who traversed

⁹⁶ W. & F. Langenheim, [Advertisement], *The Pennsylvania Inquirer and National Gazette*, April 21, 1843.

⁹⁷ Sachse, “The Dawn of Daguerreotype: The Early Days,” 104–5.

cultural boundaries. With their focus on travel, moreover, these ads exploited the increasing mobility of modern life in order to elevate and legitimize the new medium.

In nineteenth-century Philadelphia, photographers were in the process of defining the medium and profession of photography, and relied on a creative use of language to help do so. In *Doctored: The Medicine of Photography in Nineteenth-Century America*, Tanya Sheehan reveals, for instance, “how the language and idea of “medicine” worked to strengthen the professional legitimacy of the [city’s] commercial photographic community at a time when it was not well established.”⁹⁸ Between the 1850s and 1890, the model of medicine gave the medium one discursive language and important model to imitate. While the Langenheim brothers’ practice predates this use of medical metaphors, the idea of crafting legitimacy through language holds ground. In their advertisements that drew attention to people “far away” and “[left] behind,” the Langenheims forged an identity for photography by applying the discourse of mobility and migration to the medium. They effectively merged their immigrant experience of traversing cultural borders with photography.

The North American Falls through German Eyes

In July 1845, Frederick Langenheim hauled his studio’s cumbersome photographic equipment from Philadelphia to Niagara Falls to record the majestic cataracts from the Canadian side (Figure 1.8). The majority of antebellum depictions of Niagara, illustrated by distinguished American artists such as John Trumbull (1756–1843), represented the falls from this bank as the US side possessed less tourist

⁹⁸ Tanya Sheehan, *Doctored: The Medicine of Photography in Nineteenth-Century America* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011), 2–3.

infrastructure (Figure 1.9).⁹⁹ During Frederick's excursion, he produced eight almost identical panoramas, each consisting of five vertical sixth-plate daguerreotypes. Through an ingeniously fashioned trompe l'oeil mat that mimes a colonnaded terrace, he captured American Falls and Horseshoe Falls in all their grandeur. Retaining one set for themselves, the brothers sent the others as gifts to a roster of illustrious individuals: the kings of Prussia, Württemberg, and Saxony, the Duke of Braunschweig, Queen Victoria, US President Polk, and Daguerre.¹⁰⁰ For a number of political and cultural reasons, this gesture of sending gifts to multiple heads of state was commonplace in circles of inventors. In effect, it laid claim to a project and associated a name with an object. Daguerre himself, for example, did exactly that with the daguerreotype, sending specimens to the crowned heads of Belgium and Russia in addition to Prussia, Bavaria, and Austria.¹⁰¹ In the Langenheim brothers' case, their gifts were strategic, made in hopes of attracting business and acquiring fame nationally and internationally.

The daguerreotype panoramas were made under the studio name of W. & F. Langenheim, and their conception and mounting were most likely a joint venture. Although scholars have claimed that William and Frederick were both present at the falls that July, ship manifests show that William was in the German-speaking territories on studio business at that time, most likely making arrangements with the Swiss

⁹⁹ Jeremy Elwell Adamson, "Nature's Grandest Scene in Art," in *Niagara: Two Centuries of Changing Attitudes, 1697–1901* (Washington, D.C.: The Corcoran Gallery of Art, 1985), 29–30.

¹⁰⁰ Only one panorama, the Langenheim brothers' set, remains from the group of eight. There is a Langenheim daguerreotype of Niagara Falls in a private collection in Braunschweig, but it does not resemble the view of the 1845 panorama and could have possibly been made later in 1853.

¹⁰¹ Stephen C. Pinson, *Speculating Daguerre: Art and Enterprise in the Work of L.J.M. Daguerre* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2012), 202.

photographer Johann Baptist Isenring to purchase the US rights to a Swiss-German patent for hand-coloring daguerreotypes.¹⁰² He sailed back to the United States on the *Argonaut*, arriving in the Port of Philadelphia on August 4, 1845.¹⁰³ That summer, it seems, Frederick alone recorded the rushing cataracts on those silver-coated copper plates.

The Langenheim brothers' panorama was a *tour de force*, unlike anything most people had seen in the mid-1840s. While the honor of being the first to photograph Niagara Falls goes to British photographer Hugh Lee Pattinson (1796–1858) in 1840 (Figure 1.10), the Langenheims were the first to make a photographic panorama of the scenic site in addition to the first multi-plate daguerreotype panorama on North American soil.¹⁰⁴ The brothers and their contemporaries proudly referred to this venture over the years as one of their finest achievements. Writing of their panorama much later, Sachse commented: “the Messrs. Langenheim made some excellent instantaneous views of America’s great natural wonder, Niagara Falls; specimens which for beauty of finish and execution have never been surpassed.”¹⁰⁵ Modern discussions about this panorama are brief, occasionally including a transcription of either Daguerre’s response to it, or Lord

¹⁰² In January 1846, Frederick Langenheim filed a claim with the US Patent Office to purchase the American rights to Isenring’s technique. Frederick Langenheim, “Improvement in coloring daguerreotype-plates,” US Patent 4369A, January 30, 1846. On Isenring’s process, see Heinz K. Henisch and Bridget Ann Henisch, *The Painted Photograph 1839–1914: Origins, Techniques, Aspirations* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 21–23; Sara H. Ferguson, “In Living Color: Process and Materials of the Hand Colored Daguerreotype,” in *The Daguerreian Annual 2008* (Eureka, CA: The Society, 2008), 12–18; and Professor Dr. Erich Stenger, *Der Daguerreotypist J. B. Isenring: seine Verdienste um Einführung und Ausgestaltung der Daguerreotypie 1839–1842* (Berlin: Selbstverlag des Verfassers, 1931).

¹⁰³ Selected Passenger and Crew Lists and Manifests. The National Archives at Washington, D.C.

¹⁰⁴ Pattinson recorded the falls for Noël Paymal Lerebours’s publication *Excursions daguerriennes. Vues et monuments les plus remarquables du globe* (Paris: Rittner et Goupil, 1841).

¹⁰⁵ Sachse, “Philadelphia’s Share in the Development of Photography,” 282–3.

Aberdeen's, who wrote on behalf of Queen Victoria, while the German responses are entirely ignored.

By calling attention to the German dimensions of this project, I read the artwork as an important articulation of German-American identity formation, one that underscores the transnational nature of their photographic practice. Thus, rather than representing the ultimate Yankee enterprise, I want to suggest that their photograph articulates a space between Old and New Worlds, Germany and the United States, and therefore highlights the permeability of these national designations. Indeed, their Niagara Falls project embodies a site where three trajectories of identity formation intersect: that of the young American nation, that of photography as fine art, and that of two German immigrants. Significantly, at the moment this photograph was made, Frederick Langenheim was in the process of becoming an American citizen, and thus the falls were about to become a part of his own patrimony.

While most US photographers in the 1840s avoided travelling with their bulky and heavy equipment, Frederick Langenheim ventured outdoors, joining a lineage of great American artists—Samuel Morse (1791–1872), Thomas Cole (1801–1848), and John Trumbull—in depicting what was then known as the largest cataract in the world (Figure 1.11, 1.12).¹⁰⁶ In the first half of the nineteenth century, the US was in the midst of constructing its fledgling identity as a nation, and portrayals of the American landscape were key to this process.¹⁰⁷ Niagara Falls was *the* American icon of the period,

¹⁰⁶ By 1855, David Livingstone, an explorer who was searching for the source of the Nile discovered a waterfall twice the height and width of Niagara Falls, thus usurping the North American icon for the title as the largest cataract in the world.

¹⁰⁷ On American nation building and the role of art in this crusade, see Barbara Novak, “Influences and Affinities: The Interplay between America and Europe in Landscape

a symbol of the country's raw, untamed power. Niagara attained a similar status as a symbol of young America across the Atlantic in Europe. In nineteenth-century Germany, writings by figures like Goethe and Humboldt cast landscape as an embodiment of national character,¹⁰⁸ and the unbridled power of Niagara Falls—its sheer enormity, beauty, and sublimity—was understood as a reflection of the young country's disposition.

While the Langenheims drew from aesthetic tropes of earlier romantic paintings of Niagara Falls in using a horizontal orientation, a raised vantage point, spellbound beholders, and a narrow foreground, the brothers also departed from such tropes by re-orienting the landmark as a site of leisure (Figure 1.13). Men and women of fashion, children, and horse-drawn carriages replace the explorers, Native Americans, and hunters of earlier images. In the 1830s and 40s, tourism at the falls rapidly expanded,¹⁰⁹ and the brothers' image parallels contemporary illustrations of the cataracts in travel guides and gift books. In this burgeoning market of Niagara ephemera, imagery of tourists and creature comforts supersede the romantic motif of the pensive, lone figure set in an expansive landscape.¹¹⁰ Nathaniel Parker Willis' popular gift book *American Scenery; or Land, Lake, and River: Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature*, published in London in 1840 and illustrated by William Henry Bartlett, represents a key example of this new

Painting before 1860," in *The Shaping of Art and Architecture in Nineteenth-century America* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1972), 27–41; and Andrew Wilton and Tim Barringer, *American Sublime: Landscape Painting in the United States 1820–1880* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).

¹⁰⁸ Elizabeth McKinsey, *Niagara Falls: Icon of the American Sublime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 109.

¹⁰⁹ On the history of tourism at Niagara Falls, see McKinsey, *Niagara Falls*, 1985; and Linda Revie, *The Niagara Companion: Explorers, Artists, and Writers at the Falls, from Discovery through the Twentieth Century* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003).

¹¹⁰ Interestingly, Pattinson's daguerreotype of Niagara Falls follows in the footsteps of the romantics, illustrating a lone figure standing at the edge of the bank.

approach to Niagara Falls, juxtaposing the sublime with tourism.¹¹¹ In Bartlett's engraving *Niagara Falls from Near the Clifton House*, which is one of seven images of the cataracts in this British publication, he pictures several upper-class vacationers winding their way toward small boats in the foreground (Figure 1.14). While the cataracts dominate the composition, the presence of multiple, well-dressed visitors and boats are new additions to the scene. In the Langenheim brothers' panorama, a man seated in a carriage and a family pose at the edge of the prospect, like bookends of the pentaptych's proscenium. Similar to Bartlett's picture, the brothers' photograph conveys the idea that the falls are not just for the adventurous explorer anymore; their magnificence is meant for the greater public, or more specifically a white upper-class public.

Along these lines, while the photograph's mounting serves as a clever device to conceal the seams between the individual plates, creating an illusion of continuity, its design also functions as a reference to tourism. The mat's text gives the beholder a clue as to its whereabouts: the Clifton House. A popular luxury hotel that burned down at the end of the nineteenth century, the Clifton House possessed an elegant columned veranda and a low fence along its exterior (Figure 1.15). As a reporter from *The New York Times* wrote at mid-century, it was "a favorite resort of visitors to Niagara [*sic*]," and possessed a "full view of the great Horseshoe Fall."¹¹² Many national and international guidebooks

¹¹¹ Nathan Parker Willis, *American Scenery; or Land, Lake, and River: Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840). This book was one of the most popular gift books about America, published in Germany in 1843. In the German edition, the translated title changed to *The Painterly and Romantic North America*.

¹¹² "The Clifton House, Niagara Falls," *The New York Times*, June 15, 1865, <http://www.nytimes.com/1865/06/15/news/the-clifton-house-niagara-falls.html>

of the falls mentioned the Clifton House and its striking prospect.¹¹³ In the Langenheim brothers' panorama, the hand-drawn architectural framing contains the wilderness, creating an elite viewing experience of the cataracts.

These columns perform yet another role: they allow the scene to hover between the Old and New World. On the one hand, the brothers insert *the* quintessential American icon into Old World scaffolding—a nod, if you will, to the antiquity to which Europeans laid claim. On the other hand, that same gesture was distinctively America, as the US at this moment witnessed a movement of Greek revival architecture.¹¹⁴ This was part of America's effort to create a past for itself, as part of a larger enterprise of nation building and mythmaking. The Langenheims were well aware of this architectural trend; they photographed Girard College, a prime example of this style, in addition to the family of its architect, Thomas Ustick Walter (1804–1887) (Figure 1.16, 1.17). In addition, their studio was located in the Merchants' Exchange Building, another structure designed in the period neoclassical style.

By using the miniature panorama format, the brothers also reference German popular culture. While large-scale panoramas were all the rage throughout most of Europe and the US, a miniature painted panorama craze took hold of the German territories in the 1820s. German artists who exhibited at public fairs were responding to a lack of infrastructure between the provinces, which made transporting a large panorama

¹¹³ A contemporary German gift book, for example, discusses it: E. Schweizerbart, ed., *Welt-Gemälde-Galerie; oder, Geschichte und Beschreibung aller Länder und Völker* (Stuttgart, 1836), 423.

¹¹⁴ See Talbot Hamlin, *Greek Revival Architecture in America: Being an Account of Important Trends in American Architecture and American Life Prior to the War Between the States* (London: Oxford University Press, 1944); and Robert Kent Sutton, *Americans Interpret the Parthenon: the Progression of Greek Revival Architecture from the East Coast to Oregon, 1800–1860* (Niwot: University Press of Colorado, 1992).

difficult.¹¹⁵ The Suhr brothers of Hamburg, for instance, were famous for their small scrolling panoramas.¹¹⁶ In the example in Figure 1.18 illustrating an outdoor festival, the panorama measures 3.25 by 183 inches in length. Looking at these images required a viewing box with a lens and an operator, who would manually scroll through the scene. One scholar has described them as “a hybrid out of the panorama and the typical fair peep show”¹¹⁷ and referred to their popularity in German-speaking Europe as “a virtual plague, swarming to even the smallest and most obscure country fair.”¹¹⁸ It is safe to assume that the Langenheims had seen one of these miniature panoramas before immigrating to the US. In effect, the brothers re-envisioned its form photographically in their 1845 project, using multiple plates to obtain the wide-angled view.

Perhaps influenced by the miniature panorama craze, another German by the name of Friedrich von Martens (1809–1875) was developing a daguerreotype panorama in Paris at precisely the same time that the Langenheims were in the US.¹¹⁹ Rather than using multiple plates, von Martens designed a single long, curved plate in a camera using a swing lens. He showed his *Megaskop-Kamera* to the French Academy of Sciences on July 21, 1845 as noted in *Compte Rendu des Séances de l’académie des sciences* (Report of the sessions of the Academy of Sciences) (Figure 1.19). News of its invention reached Philadelphia quickly and by July 24, 1845, the *Public Ledger* reported on this “*Extensive*

¹¹⁵ Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 221–9.

¹¹⁶ Barbara Maria Stafford and Frances Terpak, *Devices of Wonder: From the World in a Box to Images on a Screen* (Los Angeles: The Getty Research Institute, 2002), 319–21.

¹¹⁷ Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 223.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 229.

¹¹⁹ For more on Friedrich von Martens, see the Friedrich von Martens Collection in The National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C., which includes a patent document for his Megaskop Panoramic Camera, mechanical drawings, personal correspondence, and photographs.

Daguerreotype.”¹²⁰ Only a few of von Martens’ early daguerreotype panoramas, dating from 1844–46, survive, including a stunning cityscape of Paris (Figure 1.20). While both the Langenheim brothers’ and von Martens’ panoramas were much wider relative to the common sixth-plate daguerreotype (2.75 x 3.25 inches), they did not possess that same immersive quality as large-scale panoramas. Nevertheless, the artists’ shared German upbringing and close ages might explain their gravitation toward the miniature panorama as a form to emulate in photography.

In matting and mounting their view of Niagara Falls, the brothers adopted the European style of daguerreotype presentation in terms of framing and matting the object and, in so doing, positioned their photograph in the realm of fine art. The German responses to the Langenheims picked up on this point. Wilhelm, the Duke of Braunschweig, for example, designated the brothers *Künstler* (artists) when he could have called them makers, creators, producers, or operators. In fact, the Duke applauded both their German heritage and their artistic talent. He wrote that his pleasure “is even more heightened by the fact that the artists of this very successful daguerreotype representation are Braunschweigers.”¹²¹ In his missive, moreover, Friedrich August II, the King of Saxony declares how their panorama “engages [his] interest to a high degree—not only in regard to the pictured great natural object but also as an artistic achievement.”¹²² Before 1871, it was common practice for German monarchs to bestow

¹²⁰ “*Extensive Daguerreotype*,” *Public Ledger*, July 24, 1845, 3.

¹²¹ Letter, Duke of Brunswick to William and Frederick Langenheim, August 6, 1847, object number 2005.100.792, Metropolitan Museum of Art. This letter was catalogued incorrectly until 2013 when I translated and transcribed it. Before then, it was attributed to the King of Württemberg.

¹²² Letter, King of Saxony to William and Frederick Langenheim, March 5, 1846, object number 2005.100.790, Metropolitan Museum of Art. My transcription and translation.

medals upon individuals for an accomplishment or as a token of gratitude. To honor the Langenheim brothers' gift, the Prussian King, Friedrich Wilhelm IV, awarded them the medal designated specifically for art. On its recto, four personifications of art representing music, architecture, painting, and sculpture surround an embossed profile portrait of the king. On the medallion's verso, Apollo, the Greek sun god, stands in his chariot atop Berlin's Altes Museum, shining light on Prussian culture.

Never ones to shy away from self-promotion, the Langenheims cleverly used the replies to their advantage. They made a daguerreotype set for themselves to show local audiences this extraordinary view and presumably to also serve as a point of reference for the favorable acknowledgements they expected to receive from abroad. Indeed, this may have been their plan all along, given the well-regarded status of Germans in the US in the mid-nineteenth century. In the summer of 1846, the King of Prussia's response received its own three-paragraph story in the *Public Ledger*, titled "A Royal Compliment."¹²³ The reporter translated the letter, described the accompanying "rich and beautiful medal," and then devoted the majority of the article to analyzing the king's "bold and strong" handwriting. At the time, a significant market existed for German royal memorabilia and ephemera, such as autographs, letters, and medals, and these items were particularly popular with Germans living abroad.¹²⁴ The journalist's intense focus on the quality of the King's signature points to this trend in consumer culture in Philadelphia.

That same summer the *Public Ledger* reported on a now lost letter from Wilhelm I, King of Württemberg, to the Langenheims, under the heading "Valuable Present,"

¹²³ "A Royal Compliment," *Public Ledger*, June 4, 1846, 3.

¹²⁴ On this collecting phenomenon, see Eva Giloi, *Monarchy, Myth, and Material Culture in Germany 1750–1950* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

referring to the worth of the gold medal that accompanied his note. While the letter expresses the ruler's gratitude for their "extraordinary productions in their art," the news feature focuses primarily on the "handsome medal."¹²⁵ These stories printed in the "Local Happenings" section read like modern-day press releases, which suggest that the Langenheims fed them to the newspaper. The media-savvy brothers, as we know, understood their Philadelphia audience. Both the German immigrant community of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia elite would have admired these letters and medals, further increasing the aura of the Langenheims' enterprise, an enterprise which was expanding into other industries.

Privy to the business potential of their Niagara Falls panorama, the brothers had it made into a lithograph, suitable for mass reproduction. In 1846, it began circulating in a guidebook and as an individual print. J. de Tivoli affixed the folded lithograph to the inside flap of his publication *A Guide to the Falls of Niagara* (Figure 1.21).¹²⁶ Published in New York, this 1846 travel guide was meant for an American tourist audience. While practical travelling information such as railroad ticket prices and nearby attractions comprise most of the publication, the rhetoric of American exceptionalism pervades the introduction. "Nowhere," Tivoli eulogizes, "has nature so lavished her bounties or spread abroad with greater profusion the beautiful and wonderful as upon the American continent."¹²⁷ For him, Niagara Falls positioned America a step above other countries: "Here she has disclosed to the view of wondering nations, as the grandest of her works,

¹²⁵ "Valuable present," *Public Ledger*, May 7, 1846, 3.

¹²⁶ J. de Tivoli, *A Guide to the Falls of Niagara by J. de Tivoli, with a splendid Lithographic View, by A. Vaudricourt, from a Daguerreotype of F. Langheneim* [sic] (New York: Burgess, Stringer and Co., 1846).

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

the mighty Cataract of Niagara!”¹²⁸ Since the use of a photograph as source material was still novel, Tivoli’s justified his decision:

In offering to the public the annexed lithographic view of the Falls of Niagara, we can only present a faint copy of the sublime scene, yet one as true to nature in the *tout ensemble*, and as accurate in its details as can possibly be. The body is there, but the soul has fled. For, although to render the work perfect the publishers have availed themselves of the admirable art of Daguerreotype, which, in the hands of a skilful [*sic*] operator cannot be surpassed in copying the beauties of nature, yet the animation which pervades the whole scene must necessarily be lost. We dare affirm, however, that all that could possibly be done has been done; and as a guide to the visitor, and the memory of those who have once visited the falls, the annexed lithograph will prove invaluable.¹²⁹

While simultaneously apologizing to his audience for the image’s lack of motion, Tivoli promotes the daguerreotype as a medium of precision and veracity.

Yet, the panoramic lithograph, a visual “guide” and “memory” of the site, is not an exact reproduction of their panorama. Changes have been executed that I want to suggest are due to a shift in the class and culture of the lithograph’s targeted audience. Most significantly, the colonnaded, Old World-like scaffolding has been removed. Its absence underscores that the terrain has “scarcely yet [been] marked by human footsteps” as Tivoli describes the scene.¹³⁰ Moreover, its exclusion removes the safe ground upon which the beholder imaginatively stands, reducing the distance between the spectator and the Falls. While the Langenheim brothers’ panoramic daguerreotype promotes a nature/culture dichotomy, the lithograph furthers a view about the exceptionalism of the natural wonder. The lithographer has also portrayed the figures in a more subordinate role. Their numbers have been reduced and inhabit only one side of the

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 5.

¹³⁰ Only if the reader finds the small entry on the Clifton House toward the end of the publication will he or she learn that the Langenheims recorded the view from there.

foreground. The carriages are missing, and the children have been excised from the scene. These changes reflect a shift in audience: from one of European monarchs to a general American audience. In the lithograph, the removal of the fencing and columns allows the beholder to immediately confront the rugged landscape, a proud symbol of the American national heritage. The daguerreotype view, in contrast, is admired from a secure, contained distance in refined surroundings; nature is seen and experienced through the lens of European culture. The Langenheim brothers' Niagara Falls project and its profound reach represented the pinnacle of their early career; it was evidence of what they could and would do.

The Particularities Between Them

Contemporary ethnic associations of Germans promoted their supposedly higher cultural pursuits, and the brothers concluded that it was their duty to advance the medium of photography in their adopted nation. In the late winter of 1849, they posted a letter across the Atlantic to William Henry Fox Talbot (1800–1877), the British inventor of the negative-positive photographic process that speaks to this idea. In a verbose missive, the Langenheims attempted to convince Talbot to appoint them agents of his calotype patent in the US, a proposition to which he would ultimately agree. Their first justification discusses their Niagara Falls panorama:

We keep one of the oldest Daguerreotype Establishments in the United States, and our exertions have met with success. In the course of our [career] and by a previous long residence here, we have had plenty of opportunity to become acquainted with the particularities of the character of Americans and with all the levers which must be set in motion with them in order to awaken their interest and even enthusiasm for anything that is great or good. Our name is, we dare say, favorably known throughout the United States, as keeping one of the best Establishments of the kind. As a proof of what we can do, we refer to an extensive

Daguerreotype View of the Falls of Niagara...¹³¹

With this divisive language of “them” versus “us,” the Langenheims distance themselves from Americans, underscoring how “foreign” they felt at times in the US. Using a condescending tone, the Langenheims speak patronizingly of Americans, as if only Europeans can provide these philistines with cultural direction. Although the brothers were both American citizens at this point in time, their aim of impressing Talbot with their European background speaks to their oscillation between cultural identities: Americans, German-Americans, and Germans.

The point of this chapter is not that we should cease to think of the Langenheims as American photographers and now classify them as German photographers. Instead I am proposing the instability of such categories in antebellum America, and particularly in the multiethnic city of Philadelphia. Against this backdrop of intercultural identity formation, the Langenheims built a photographic enterprise that changed the landscape of photography on a local and international level. Their work exceeded and traversed national and cultural borders and thereby allows us to better understand how ideas of culture were negotiated through the making and dissemination of early photography. The Langenheims cultivated their German connections through their family, workplace, advertising campaigns, association memberships, and, most importantly, their photographs. In so doing, their firm actively created a German-American network that included photographers, opticians, chemists, and even darkroom employees.

¹³¹ Letter, W. & F. Langenheim Co. to William Henry Fox, February 5, 1849, document number 06210. Document numbers refer to the numbering convention established by the *Talbot Correspondence Project*, available online through De Montfort University and the University of Glasgow: <http://foxtalbot.dmu.ac.uk/project/project.html>.

The brothers' panorama of 1845 defines their work at a moment of reconception—that is, of themselves as German immigrants, of the nascent medium of photography as fine art, and of the young nation as a major presence on the international playing field of photography. Niagara Falls loomed large in the Euro-American cultural imagination, and in their treatment of the cataracts, the Langenheims enacted a dynamic play between nature and culture, commercial enterprise and art, and most significantly, the Old and New Worlds. As such, their daguerreotype panorama—its transnational circulation, reception, and style—was in many ways “proof” of what they could do, proof of the kind of recognition and acclaim that they were capable of garnering, proof of their “ingenuity,” and proof of their significant role in forging the emerging boundaries of photography. While the Langenheims were pioneers in the developing terrain of photography in nineteenth-century Philadelphia, literally touching almost every facet of the new medium in the US, they ultimately set the stage for the success of the Bierstadt brothers, the subjects of the following chapter, who pushed the aesthetic and technological boundaries of photography's role in tourism and book illustration in their breathtaking views of the White Mountains of New Hampshire in the 1860s and 1870s.

CHAPTER TWO

THE BIERSTADT BROTHERS' TRANSNATIONAL VIEW OF THE WHITE MOUNTAINS

Between 1862 and 1878, German immigrants Edward and Charles Bierstadt produced three editions of a stereoscopic guidebook on the White Mountains of New Hampshire, a destination that became wildly popular with middle-class American tourists in the mid- to late nineteenth century.¹ Teeming with luscious landscape photographs, the brothers' revised travel guides varied in length, text, photographic process, and subject matter. The most significant change in each edition was the Bierstadt brothers' photographic vision. In 1862, their guidebook, composed of forty-eight salted paper prints,² adhered closely to the aesthetic of the German Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts. Over a decade later, however, machines and progress dominated their images—progress, that is, with respect to both the triumph of tourism in this rugged stretch of the Appalachian peaks and the medium of photography itself through the use of groundbreaking German photomechanical printing techniques. Understood in their social-historical context, the Bierstadt brothers' three publications represent an untapped resource from which to investigate the evolving intersections of tourism, photography,

¹ On the history of the White Mountains in guidebooks, see Donald D. Keyes, *The White Mountains: Place and Perceptions* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1980).

² I am tremendously grateful to photograph conservator Jessica Keister at the New York Public Library for taking the time to examine this book and share her findings with me. In the past, scholars have misidentified their 1862 photographs as albumen silver prints.

German culture, and shifting perceptions of landscape in mid-nineteenth century America.

In 1857, their brother, esteemed painter Albert Bierstadt (1830–1902), returned from Düsseldorf, Germany, where he had been an active member of the fine arts student community since 1853.³ His time abroad proved to be a formative experience for the young artist, who arrived in the middle of what some scholars term the “Golden Age of the Düsseldorf Academy.”⁴ During the early 1860s, the heyday of his professional career,⁵ Albert worked closely with his brothers to compose the photographs in the first edition of their travel guide, published in 1862. These stereoscopic views share many aesthetic traits with artwork from the Düsseldorf Academy, including theatricality, dramatic lighting, discernable planes of depth, and the placement of the posed, contemplative figure. While some art historians have studied these photographs, their focus has remained on how stereoscopic photography influenced Albert Bierstadt.⁶ I propose to both shift the spotlight to the brothers’ early guidebook and open the

³ For more on Albert Bierstadt’s life, studies, and career trajectory, see Nancy K. Anderson, Linda S. Ferber, and Helena E. Wright, *Albert Bierstadt: Art and Enterprise* (New York: Brooklyn Museum/Hudson Hills, 1990); and Nancy K. Anderson, “The European Roots of Albert Bierstadt’s Views of the American West,” *The Magazine Antiques* 139 (1991): 220–33.

⁴ Wend von Kalnein, “The Düsseldorf Academy,” in *The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans: An exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors* (Atlanta, GA: High Museum of Art, 1972), 17.

⁵ See Linda S. Ferber’s essay, “Albert Bierstadt: The History of a Reputation,” in *Albert Bierstadt: Art and Enterprise* for a discussion of his meteor-like rise to fame in the 1860s, specifically pages 24–27.

⁶ Elizabeth Linquist-Cock, “Stereoscopic Photography and the Western Paintings of Albert Bierstadt,” *Art Quarterly* 33 (1970): 361–378; Nancy Siegel, “‘I never had so difficult a picture to paint’: Albert Bierstadt’s White Mountain Scenery and *The Emerald Pool*,” in *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide* 3 (2005), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/autumn05index>; and Kirsten M. Jensen, “Seeing in Stereo: Albert Bierstadt and the Stereographic Landscape,” in *Nineteenth-century Art World Wide* 12 (Autumn 2013), <http://www.19thc-artworldwide.org/index.php/autumn13/>

discussion to include other Düsseldorf school artists exhibiting in New York at that moment to demonstrate how and to what ends the brothers' photographs shared affinities with the German School. Significantly, the Bierstadt brothers published *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (hereafter *View among the Hills*) at the height of American interest in the Düsseldorf School of painters.⁷ We must therefore approach their 1862 travel guide as more than a photographically illustrated guidebook touting the virtues of the American landscape, but as a transnational object that drew its meanings from American and German connections in an environment receptive to these cultural intersections.

The admiration of the Düsseldorf School artists was strong in the United States due to its New York gallery presence and its alumni. Not only did several American artists of repute train there, but many also returned to New York and rented studio space in the Tenth Street Studio building in Lower Manhattan.⁸ In the early 1860s, Albert Bierstadt, Emanuel Leutze (1816–1868), William Stanley Haseltine (1835–1900), and Thomas Worthington Whittredge (1820–1910), who lived in Düsseldorf together in the

⁷ Bierstadt Brothers, *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862).

⁸ For scholarship on Americans studying in Düsseldorf in the nineteenth century, see *The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans: An Exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors* (Atlanta, GA: High Museum of Art, 1972); Anneliese Harding and Brucia Witthoft, *American Artists in Düsseldorf: 1840–1865* (Framingham, MA: Danforth Museum, 1982); Martina Sitt, "Between Influence and Independence: The Relationship of American and German Painters in the Nineteenth Century," in *America: The New World in 19th-Century Painting*, ed. Stephan Koja, (New York: Prestel, 1999), 226–233; Ekkehard Mai, "The Impact of the Art Academy at Düsseldorf on the Evolution of American Art," in *American Artists in Munich: Artistic Migration and Cultural Exchange Processes*, eds. Christian Fuhrmeister and Veerle Thielemans (Berlin: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2009); and Bettina Baumgärtel, ed., *The Düsseldorf School of Painting and its International Influence, 1819–1918* (Düsseldorf: Museum Kunstpalast, 2011).

1850s, leased space in this now demolished Manhattan edifice.⁹ The Düsseldorf Gallery of Fine Arts was a twenty-minute walk from their studios. In 1849, the Gallery opened its doors in Lower Manhattan to great fanfare that continued through the mid-1860s.¹⁰ Open six days a week until 10 pm, it allowed middle-class Americans unprecedented access to contemporary German art year round.

This high regard for the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts in the United States contributed to strengthening the American ideal of German culture, which in turn elevated the status of the Bierstadt brothers' endeavors. The influx of German immigrants in the 1860s and 70s played a large part in promoting a greater appreciation of German cultural affairs. Indeed, New York at this moment was a veritable center of German-American activity. Between 1855 and 1880, according to historian Stanley Nadel, New York City possessed the third largest German-speaking population after Vienna and Berlin.¹¹ Lower Manhattan contained half of the city's German population, and this strong immigrant presence was most pronounced on the Lower East Side, where one neighborhood was dubbed *Kleindeutschland*, or "Little Germany."

The Bierstadt brothers' second and third editions of their guidebook, both titled *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White*

⁹ See Annette Blaugrund's research on this building and its tenants, "The Tenth Street Studio Building: A Roster: 1857–1895," *The American Art Journal* 14, no. 2 (Spring 1982): 64–71; and "Tenth Street Studios: Roster Update," *The American Art Journal* 17, no. 1 (Winter 1985): 84–86. On the atmosphere of the studios, see Garnett McCoy, "Visits, Parties, and Cats in the Hall: The Tenth Street Studio Building and Its Inmates in the Nineteenth Century," *Archives of American Art Journal* 6, no. 1 (January 1966): 1–8.

¹⁰ For a history of the Gallery in New York, see R. L. Stehle, "The Dusseldorf Gallery of New York," *New York Historical Society Quarterly* (October 1974): 304–314; and William H. Gerds, "'Good Tidings' to the Lovers of the Beautiful: New York's Düsseldorf Gallery, 1849–1862," *The American Art Journal* 30, no. 1/2 (1999): 50–81.

¹¹ Stanley Nadel, *Little Germany: Ethnicity, Religion, and Class in New York City, 1845–80* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 1.

Mountains (hereafter called *Gems of American Scenery*) were released in the 1870s, a decade that marked the peak of German-American relations.¹² In fact, after German Unification in 1871, most Americans, as historian Jörg Nagler has argued, believed “Germany [to be] a world leader in cultural pursuits, a land of poets, musicians, writers, philosophers, and scholars.”¹³ Ethnic stereotypes of Germans were routinely associated with skilled crafts, particularly the printing trade. Since the fifteenth century when Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press, Germans had been linked with the printing industry. By the 1870s, almost 25% of lithographers in America were of German descent.¹⁴ Advancements in Germany, moreover, helped expand the printing trade to include photomechanical printing. The brothers’ guidebooks published in 1875 and 1878 employed cutting-edge German collotype processes (printing from a gelatin surface in a lithographic manner), which many at the time deemed the future of photography and publishing. Edward Bierstadt positioned himself at the forefront of this budding industry, securing the American patent rights to both collotype processes. For the 1875 guidebook, the stereographic views were printed with Bavarian photographer Joseph Albert’s (1825–

¹² Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White Mountains* (Niagara Falls: Charles Bierstadt; New York City: Edward Bierstadt, 1875); and *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878).

¹³ Jörg Nagler, “From Culture to Kultur: Changing American Perceptions of Imperial Germany, 1870–1914,” in *Transatlantic Images and Perceptions: Germany and America Since 1776*, David E. Barclay and Elisabeth Glaser-Schmidt, eds., (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute; Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 132.

¹⁴ Erika Piola and Jennifer Ambrose, “The First Fifty Years of Commercial Lithography in Philadelphia: An Overview of the Trade, 1828 – 1878,” in *Philadelphia on Stone: Commercial Lithography in Philadelphia, 1828–1878*, ed. Erika Piola (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press in association with the Library Company of Philadelphia, 2012), 15. For more on Germans and the American printing trade, see Oswald Seidensticker, *The First Century of German Printing in America 1728–1830* (Philadelphia: Schaefer & Koradi, 1893); and Robert E. Cazden, *A Social History of the German Book Trade in America to the Civil War* (Columbia, SC: Camden House, 1984).

1886) process, the albertype. By 1878, the artotype surpassed the albertype in cost effectiveness, speed, and quality, and so the third edition of their book used this process, invented in Munich by Johann Baptist Obernetter (1840–1887), to illustrate the scenery of the White Mountains.

Our conception of the natural world is historically, geographically, and culturally specific, and the production of the brothers' travel guides, which picture at once the changing landscape of this New Hampshire region and perceptions of it, needs to be read within the context of a period in which landscape was understood as an expression of collective national identity.¹⁵ American art historian Angela Miller notes that landscape painting between the 1820s and 1870s “spoke not only to the nation’s cultural progress in the arts but also to its deepest ambitions as a republic.”¹⁶ The Bierstadt brothers’ first edition was published during the peak of landscape paintings’ popularity and was tied to the rhetoric of exceptionalism. Miller describes this phenomenon as people being convinced that “America was different than Europe because of its nature, a place apart, an unpeopled wilderness where history, born in nature rather than in corrupt institutions could begin again.”¹⁷ Yet while notions of landscape were intertwined with ideas of national identity and a crucial source of pride, the 1870s, when their later editions were

¹⁵ On shifting notions of American wilderness and the landscape in the nineteenth century, see Michael Lewis, ed., *America Wilderness: A New History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); William Cronon, ed., *Uncommon Ground: Rethinking the Human Place in Nature* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996); Denis E. Cosgrove, *Social Formation and Symbolic Landscape* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998); and Angela Miller, *The Empire of the Eye: Landscape Representations and American Cultural Politics, 1825–1875* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993).

¹⁶ Angela Miller, “The Fate of Wilderness in American Landscape Art: The Dilemmas of ‘Nature’s Nation,’” in *America Wilderness: A New History*, ed. Michael Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 92.

¹⁷ Ibid.

published, were years in which the US was transforming the landscape into raw material for budding industries with the rise of industrial America. Indeed by the mid-1870s, the taste for wilderness had given way to a penchant for resorts and middle-class comforts, and their books reflect and promote this shift in preference.

More than simply photographically illustrated travel guides of a New England tourist destination, their aesthetics and techniques functioned transculturally, much like the artists themselves. Attending to this aspect of their publications changes how we think about their work, from objects solely invested in promoting America and its unique terrain to articulations of German-American exchange. My aim in adopting this approach is to examine how the Bierstadt brothers' helped transform the public's view of the natural and national environment in the second half of the nineteenth century, and thus relocate within this discourse of American theories of progress what we call "Germany" today.

The Albert-centric Narrative and the Ascendancy of the Stereographic View

The scant literature on Charles and Edward Bierstadt begins and largely ends with interest in the significance of stereography to Albert Bierstadt's working methods. While the first article on Albert and photography was published in 1959,¹⁸ there was no mention

¹⁸ In the late 1950s, the Kansas State Historical Society acquired five Albert Bierstadt photographs of the mid-West from 1859. To complement this acquisition, the institution published an article in their quarterly reproducing the images along with a short essay by Joseph Snell, in which he elaborates on the scenes taken on the Lander expedition. This was not an argument-driven article; rather, it was more of an empirical report about how Albert also dabbled in the medium of photography. There was no mention of his brothers in this text. Joseph W. Snell, "Some Rare Western Photographs by Albert Bierstadt Now in the Historical Society Collections," *The Kansas Historical Quarterly* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1958): 1–5.

of his brothers or their stereographic imagery until 1970, in Elizabeth Lindquist-Cock's article "Stereoscopic Photography and the Western Paintings of Albert Bierstadt."¹⁹ Lindquist-Cock argues that Albert used stereographic views not only as a mnemonic device, but also as an aesthetic guide for his Western landscapes. In so doing, she attributes his compositions, wide tonal range, and deep sense of space to stereoscopic photography. She fiercely works against the idea that the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Art was his primary source of influence: "So firmly has his German experience been established as prime cause that Bierstadt's lifelong involvement in panoramic photography and the stereo has almost been entirely neglected."²⁰ Studies of Bierstadt's painting routinely credited his artistic approach to the Academy alone, so to bring the influence of American photography to the forefront of this discussion was her way of laying full claim to Albert Bierstadt for the history of American art. Her discussion of Bierstadt's brothers, however, is relegated to an endnote. There, she notes how they were "firmly established in the photographic business by the beginning of the Civil War" and that their studio was "known the world over for stereoscopic views."²¹ Their involvement with photography served to bolster her assertion that Albert was familiar with the medium.

Four years later, Richard H. Goldman, an MA student at Kent State University, wrote his thesis on the work of Charles Bierstadt, laying out the empirical groundwork of

¹⁹ Linquist-Cock, "Stereoscopic Photography and the Western Paintings of Albert Bierstadt," 361–378.

²⁰ Ibid., 361.

²¹ Linquist-Cock, "Stereoscopic Photography and the Western Paintings of Albert Bierstadt," 377.

his life; it was the first and only study to date on this talented landscape photographer.²²

In 1974, Goldman's focus on a commercial photographer rather than an "art" photographer motivated by aesthetic ambitions went against the grain in photography studies. While Goldman relays the specific sites that Charles Bierstadt photographed in the White Mountains and quotes a press release for the 1862 publication,²³ he otherwise devotes his attention to Bierstadt's photographs of Niagara Falls.²⁴

In the early 1980s, Catherine Campbell made a case for the import of Albert Bierstadt's portrayals of the White Mountains.²⁵ Campbell maintains that "the White Mountains played a greater part in the formation of Bierstadt's art than is generally assumed,"²⁶ and systematically reviews his many trips to this New Hampshire region and the paintings that transpired from them. In this discussion, she introduces his brothers, discusses *Views among the Hills*, and even reproduces some of its illustrations. She further attributes Albert Bierstadt's interest in photography to his brothers, asserting "it would seem that his lifelong interest in the use of the photograph as an adjunct to painting was animated by his early work with his brothers, Charles and Edward, after his summer in the West."²⁷ While this statement begins to acknowledge the brothers as influential to Albert's practice, it ultimately positions them in a subordinate position to the painter.

Nancy Siegel took this conversation a step further in 2005, using Bierstadt's painting of the Emerald Pool to construct an argument about how Albert used

²² Richard H. Goldman, "Charles Bierstadt, 1819–1903: American Stereograph Photographer" (M.A. Thesis, Kent State University Graduate College, 1974).

²³ Ibid., 41–42.

²⁴ Ibid., 45–69.

²⁵ Catherine Campbell, "Albert Bierstadt and the White Mountains," *Archives of American Art Journal* 21, no. 3 (1981): 14–23.

²⁶ Ibid., 14.

²⁷ Ibid., 18.

stereoscopic views to illustrate an “Edenic landscape,” or a landscape that is at once idealized and factual.²⁸ To support this thesis, she draws from the Bierstadt brothers’ early 1860 *Catalogue of Photographs*, which declares that their New Hampshire views will be “valuable for Artists[’] Studies” to make a case for the brothers’ mutual assistance. Albert assists his brothers in framing the landscapes for their photographs in order to make them both aesthetically pleasing and useful as artistic studies for his own paintings. Siegel is the first scholar to write of the brothers’ photographs in any depth, but still for the specific purpose of showing how these “would have assisted Albert while composing the structure of his painting.”²⁹ Albert Bierstadt and his working method are the principal players in Siegel’s discussion, in other words, not his brothers’ photography. She nevertheless praises their work, remarking that “Albert, Edward, and Charles had similar visions of the landscape and shared their experience through different media.”³⁰

The stereographic work of the Bierstadt brothers plays a larger role in Kirsten M. Jensen’s study, published a decade later, in which she asserts that Albert used stereographic imagery to “enhance the *process of looking* at and *experiencing* a painting.”³¹ By looking closely at the collaboration between the brothers and the pictures in the White Mountains book of 1862, Jensen teases out how Albert’s paintings of the region differ from his other landscape subjects, and locates his “painter’s eye” in the photographs. Unlike her predecessors, moreover, she attributes Albert’s sense of aesthetic to the Hudson River School rather than the Düsseldorf Academy, situating him even

²⁸ Siegel, “I never had so difficult a picture to paint,” *Nineteenth-Century Art Worldwide*

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Jensen, “Seeing in Stereo,” *Nineteenth-century Art World Wide*, n.p. [Jensen’s emphasis].

more firmly within a canonical narrative of American art history.

Curator Helena Wright is the only scholar thus far who has discussed Edward Bierstadt's pioneering involvement with the photomechanical printing industry, and she does so in the context of a history of this field in nineteenth-century America.³² Interested in the conflation of art, photography, and printmaking, Wright sees the innovations in photomechanical printing as the means by which the iconography of the American landscape attained its largest audience and, in turn, became an important commodity. With their primary focus on landscapes, the Bierstadt brothers were among the earliest firms to appear in her account, and Wright contends that "Edward was a pioneer in the research and development of the collotype in America."³³ She also brings to light how revolutionary photomechanical printing was to the wider distribution and circulation of photography. And yet we learn little about the intercultural nature of the Bierstadt brothers' endeavors. Their products, which appear on the surface as paeans to America's distinctive topography, point to a more complicated and nuanced story about the transnational nature of early photography on this side of the Atlantic. It is to this story that I now turn.

³² Helena E. Wright, "Partners in the Business of Art: Producing, Packaging, and Publishing Images of the American Landscapes 1850–1900," in *Pioneers of Photography: Their Achievements in Science and Technology*, ed. Eugene Ostroff (Springfield, VA: SPSE, Society for Imaging Science and Technology, 1987), 274–284; and Helena E. Wright, "Photography in the Printing Press: The Photomechanical Revolution," in *Presenting Pictures*, Bernard Finn, ed., (London: Science Museum, 2004), 21–42.

³³ Wright, "Partners in the Business of Art," 277.

From Solingen, Prussia to New Bedford, Massachusetts

Originally from Solingen, Prussia, the Bierstadt family immigrated to the United States in 1832. Albert was two, Edward was eight, and Charles was thirteen when they moved to the harbor town of New Bedford, Massachusetts. While in his early twenties, Albert became involved with New Bedford's arts community. He offered classes in monochromatic painting, promoted magic lantern shows picturing the atmospheric landscapes by English-born painter George Harvey, and partnered with a local daguerreotypist for a short period as well.³⁴ In 1853, with the help of local patrons, he sailed to Europe with the intention to study under his maternal uncle, the famous genre scene painter and professor at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts, Johann Peter Hasenclaver.³⁵ At the time, it was common for German émigrés or those of German descent living in America to return to German-speaking lands for artistic training. From 1853 to 1857, Albert Bierstadt honed his artistic skills in Düsseldorf, yet never as an enrolled student at the institution.³⁶ Instead, Emanuel Leutze, Worthington Whittredge, and other German-Americans and German artists he met through the *Malkasten*, an artistic social club, adopted Bierstadt into their community and guided him artistically. He shared a studio with Whittredge and traveled with him, Haseltine, and others to Switzerland, making *plein-air* studies for later artworks. As a result of his connections,

³⁴ While Gordon Hendricks maintains that Bierstadt worked with local daguerreotypist Peter Fales of New Bedford, the only name I have come across in the *New Bedford Directory* of 1849 is a Charles Fales who listed himself as a daguerreotype artist. Gordon Hendricks, *Albert Bierstadt and the West* (New York: Henry N. Abrams Inc., 1974), 17.

³⁵ Von Kalnein states that Hasenclever was Bierstadt's mother's cousin, yet Brucia Witthoft argues that Hasenclever was his uncle. See Brucia Witthoft, *American Artists in Düsseldorf*, 17.

³⁶ For a discussion of proposed reasons as to why Albert was not an enrolled student, see Anderson, "The European Roots of Albert Bierstadt's Views of the American West," 224.

Albert switched to landscape painting, which emerged as the dominant department at the Academy by the 1850s.³⁷

His experience in Düsseldorf shaped the direction and perception of his art so much that upon his return he and his paintings were often identified as German. For example, American writer and critic, Henry Tuckerman (1813–1871), who also rented space at the Tenth Street Studios in the 1860s and thus knew Bierstadt well, discussed his life and career in his *Book of the Artists: American Artist Life* (1867).³⁸ Tuckerman introduces Albert as a “German emigrant,” who was “a true representative of the Düsseldorf School in landscape, as is Leutze in historical painting.”³⁹ His remarks demonstrate that Bierstadt was very much associated with his homeland and the German School of painting even a decade after his return to the US.

In the 1840s and 1850s, Charles and Edward pursued various jobs in the skilled craft sector in New Bedford, specifically in the woodworking trade. In 1841, Charles was listed as a wood-turner in the *New Bedford Directory*, and Edward was registered as an apprentice to John M. Taber, a plane maker. By 1852, Edward established his own plane-making business. Four years later, he identified himself as a wood-turner in the local business directory, and Charles soon joined him as a partner in a “plain and fancy turning

³⁷ On the popularity of landscape at the Academy, see Donelson F. Hoopes, “The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans” in *The Düsseldorf Academy and the Americans: An exhibition of Drawings and Watercolors* (Atlanta, GA: High Museum of Art, 1972), 19–25.

³⁸ Henry Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists: American Artist Life Comprising Biographical and Critical Sketches of American Artists: Preceded by an Historical Account of the Rise and Progress of Art in America* (New York: G. P. Putnam & Son; London: Sampson Low & Co., 1867), 397.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 392.

and sawing” shop.⁴⁰ A fire destroyed their woodworking shop in 1859, however, which perhaps prompted a change of profession.

For their new joint business venture, they decided on the medium of photography, and their firm was incorporated in 1860. The brothers’ partnership would last until 1866. During this period, they produced catalogues of stereographic views for public sale. These brochures boasted landscape views that included the Midwestern terrain photographed on the 1859 F. W. Lander expedition, which included Albert and most likely one if not both of his brothers. They also advertised over two hundred stereo cards of the White Mountains. As stereoscopy historian William Darrah maintains, in the US between 1860 and 1880, landscapes represented the most popular genre of stereographic views, and within this category, this New England tourist destination was second only to Niagara Falls.⁴¹

In 1861, with the onslaught of the American Civil War, the brothers branched out into portraiture through an itinerant photographic business, and traveled to Georgetown, Virginia to photograph Union Troops.⁴² In 1862, they returned to New Bedford and opened up a portrait studio, advertising “Cartes-De-Visite, Photographs, From the smallest to the size of life and finished in pastel, oil, or water colors, ambrotypes, Albums in great variety, frames of all kinds.”⁴³ At this time, their photographic practice had two specialties: portraiture and stereographic views. Yet it is in the latter field that the brothers pushed the boundaries of the medium, tapping into a burgeoning stereographic

⁴⁰ *New Bedford Directory*, 1859, ed.

⁴¹ William C. Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Gettysburg, PA: Darrah, 1977), 71.

⁴² For more on this itinerant portraiture business, see Goldman, “Charles Bierstadt, 1819–1903,” 27.

⁴³ *Evening Standard*, July 8, 1862, 4.

industry that would capture the imagination of the American public for decades to come. Stereoscopic pictures seen through a viewing device replicate binocular vision by using two photographs created 2.5 inches apart; the brain fuses these images together to create an illusion of a single image with pictorial depth. For Oliver Wendell Holmes, a Boston-based physician by vocation and poet by avocation, stereoscopic photographs heralded in 1859 “a new epoch in the history of human progress.”⁴⁴ Whether or not Holmes was correct about stereoscopy ushering in an era of so-called advancement, he did accurately foresee the profound and long impact that stereoscopy would have on the US.⁴⁵ The Bierstadt brothers played a central role in creating that impact, producing the first photographically illustrated publication with a stereographic viewing apparatus and stereographic views of the White Mountains.

The First Edition: Düsseldorf in the White Mountains

Views among the Hills includes forty-eight salted paper prints without a discernable coating. The images are printed right on the surface of the paper, and have a lovely, soft matte appearance, giving them a painterly quality. The photographs’ primary support is the entire leaf within the booklet. They are not printed individually and pasted into the volume. Here, their choice of photographic process—salted paper prints from

⁴⁴ Oliver Wendell Holmes, “The Stereoscope and the Stereograph,” in *Photography in Print*, ed. Vicki Goldberg (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico, 1988), 107. Originally published in *Atlantic Monthly* (June 1859): 114.

⁴⁵ On stereoscopy in America, see Edward W. Earle, ed., *Points of View: The Stereograph in America: A Cultural History* (Rochester, NY: The Visual Studies Workshop Press, 1979); William Darrah, *The World of Stereographs* (Gettysburg, PA: Darrah, 1977); Judith Babbitts, “Stereographs and the Construction of a Visual Culture in the United States,” in *Memory Bytes: History, Technology, and Digital Culture*, eds. Lauren Rabinovitz and Abraham Geil (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004), 126–149.

glass negatives rather than albumen silver prints—is significant as the date of the volume makes the latter a more viable, cheaper, and quicker option. Albumen paper was available commercially in the mid-1850s, and the wet collodion process was the most popular photographic printing technique of the nineteenth-century. Their selection was thus based on the aesthetic of the process. A salted paper print image is embedded within the paper fibers and characterized by a flatter tonal range and a velvety, matte surface. While this process was more popular in Europe in the 1850s, it was less common in the US.

The volume also came with a half-page preface and a stereoscopic viewer. The viewing device is affixed to the front inside cover of the pocket-sized book and contains glass prisms spaced eye-width apart (Figure 2.1). When used with stereoscopic pictures in the accompanying publication, it engendered an illusion of depth.⁴⁶ Its design shares affinities with J. F. Mascher’s stereoscopic daguerreotype case, which included a built-in, collapsible stereoscopic viewer, patented in 1853 (Figure 2.2).⁴⁷ Bierstadt’s construction, in contrast, employed paper stereographic views, and Edward created it specifically for a book format. Their target audience consisted of the mobile individual, the tourist, and so the book was less than a centimeter thick, easy to carry into the landscape. As they wrote in their preface, comparing a regular, solid stereoscope with the ingenious, collapsible one Edward developed, “the instruments for viewing such pictures are generally too cumbrous for transportation without extra trouble, and the pictures themselves are not in

⁴⁶ Edward Bierstadt would not patent the design until 1875, with the second edition of the volume. The design would also be much improved compared to the 1862 version. Edward applied for patent on November 17, 1875, and given US Patent No. 174,893 on March 21, 1876, under the heading: Improvement in Stereoscope. See Google Patents for patent report.

⁴⁷ Mascher received a Letter’s Patent No. 9611, issued on March 8, 1853.

a form suited to the wants of the tourist.”⁴⁸ Apart from titles, no descriptive text accompanied the pictures; this was a publication geared toward visual transport. It cost five dollars, a hefty sum in the early 1860s, and upon its release, the brothers’ local newspaper, the *New Bedford Evening Standard*, published a short review:

Among the applications of the photographic art, none, perhaps, affords a more agreeable entertainment than the stereographic representation of scenes in nature. By this process greater fidelity is obtained and a more vivid impression given by any other. Bierstadt Brothers, of this city, have made the happiest application of this process in a little volume just published by them, combining a stereoscope with a series of views in the White Mountains, which these artists have made to some extent, a specialty. The views are forty-eight in number, and present all the striking points about the White and Franconia Mountains, including not only those familiar to the traveling public, but many witness only by those who extent their researches into the depths of the mountains.⁴⁹

This write-up gives us a glimpse of not only contemporary perceptions of stereographic imagery and their novelty, but also what prospective buyers should expect to find in the brothers’ volume. The reporter emphasized their connection with the White Mountains and noted that many of the views went beyond the common footpath of the tourist.

Indeed, the majority of the photographs illustrate unspoiled landscape scenery, scenes portraying rushing waterfalls, densely wooded regions, and rocky, natural terrain. Neither threatening nor menacing, the appearance of sites that look untouched by man occurs in more than two thirds of their four-dozen photographs, and the brothers chose specific vantage points that emphasize this quality. While the photographs sometimes portray a contemplative viewer, who mediates between the beholder and the depicted site, they generally remain unpopulated.

⁴⁸ Bierstadt Brothers, *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire*, n.p.

⁴⁹ *New Bedford Evening Standard*, July 7, 1862, 2.

With that said, there are two concentrated spots in the publication in which obvious signs of tourism are conspicuous: its beginning and end. The strategic placement of these images echoes the vacationer's experience of traveling from the manmade to the wild and back again. The first stereographic view in the publication depicts a domesticated landscape: a scene of Plymouth, New Hampshire, taken from the Pemigewassett House, a popular hotel adjacent to a railroad connecting Boston to Plymouth (Figure 2.3).⁵⁰ This site makes sense as a visual starting point as many would have begun their journey into the White Mountains, seen in the distance, from this locale. The Bierstadt brothers' camera looks down on the populated town. As in many stereoscopic views, the scene is divided into a clearly discernable fore-, middle-, and background. Enclosed by a white rail fence, short grasses and blurred trees bending in the foreground constitute an inviting promontory, providing the beholder with a means to stand mentally in the scene. A village occupies the middle area; farmhouses, smaller homes, and other edifices with gabled roofs populate the frame. Not too crowded, but by no means desolate, Plymouth appears to be an idyllic place of community. The town sits before a stunning, almost painterly backdrop of the White Mountains, whose rolling hills contrast starkly with the sky above them. With this photograph, the Bierstadts invite us to experience the full tourist adventure.

Soon after in the publication, nature at its most dynamic dominates the subject matter. Waterfalls and fallen trees are especially prevalent, and their erratic forms create a visual playground for the eye. In *Near the Flume, Franconia Mts., N. H.*, a discombobulated lateral arrangement of rocks and a fallen tree trunk line the

⁵⁰ The Pemigewassett House burned down in 1862. Most extant stereographs picturing the hotel were taken after it was rebuilt into a four-story hotel.

photograph's immediate foreground (Figure 2.4). Their perilous positioning gives the viewer no stable proscenium, bringing into relief the wildness of the surroundings—the coarse vegetation, idyllic watering hole, and craggy rocks. Dark boulders, leaning trees, and the white rushing water of the Flume overtake the middle ground. The contrasts between these natural elements—movement and sedentariness, lightness and darkness—evoke a back and forth vitality that privileges nature in dialogue. The tree trunks angle inward as do the boulders, framing the short cascade as the focal point of the image. A backdrop of leaves, branches, and textured, rough-hewn rock serves to emphasize the area's untouched character. The light enters through the trees on the right to produce a plethora of shades of gray, breathing an ethereal quality into the image.

This stereographic view's theatrical quality, conspicuous division of planes, and stark contrast in tonal range mirror the aesthetic character of the landscape paintings then emerging from the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts. This was not an accident, considering who was involved in the project, an individual that caught the attention of national arts periodicals such as *The Crayon*. As the editor of this “journal devoted to the graphic arts, and the literature related to them” wrote in 1861:

We call the attention of admirers of photographs to a series of views and studies taken in the White Mountains, published by Bierstadt Brothers of New Bedford, Mass. The plates are of large size and are remarkably effective. The artistic taste of Mr. Albert Bierstadt, who selected the points of view, is apparent in them. No better photographs have been published in this country.⁵¹

This passage heaps praise on *Views among the Hills* and reveals something very significant about this project: Albert Bierstadt's guidance. As a consequence of his participation in his brothers' enterprise, prospective buyers could assume that these

⁵¹ “Sketchings,” *The Crayon* 8, no. 1 (January 1861): 22.

stereographs were composed by and seen through Albert's artistic eye. Highlighting the inclusion of one of the most popular Düsseldorf artists in the United States at once shifts the audience of the book to the fine arts community and places it at a crossroads of industries and cultures: tourism and the arts; Germany and America. That this little volume is even reviewed in a prominent American arts journal is a sign that its aesthetic qualities exceeded that of a run-of-the-mill guidebook. In addition, their choice of using salted paper prints aligned the photographs more with painting.

To better understand their aesthetic similarities, let's compare one of Albert Bierstadt's early paintings with a stereographic view from this book. In his painting *Mountain Brook* (1863) of the White Mountains, Albert portrays an unadulterated view of nature (Figure 2.5) much like that of his brothers' photograph, *Near the Flume, Franconia Mts., N. H.* He pictures a quiet scene of a small cascade flowing into a pool, around which are staggered moss-covered rocks, large boulders, ferns, and trees—some upright, some fallen. In the foreground, the pool's rocky bottom is visible, and the reflection of the white water flowing over the rocks above it provides a pale linear highlight that draws a clear path to the background of the image where the waterfall continues. Sunlight penetrates the view, catching the boulder and the fallen tree trunk with a blue bird atop it. This painting presents the beholder with an Edenic glimpse of the White Mountains. As opposed to some of his more grandiose landscapes, such as *Wetterhorn* (Figure 2.6), this artwork goes inside the landscape for a less majestic, but no less enchanting view of the inviting wilderness of New Hampshire. Juxtaposed with the above-discussed stereographic view, *Near the Flume, Franconia Mts., N. H.*, there is a

quiet grandeur that pervades both pictures, and it is accentuated by the use of dramatic light and division of planes, both qualities of the Düsseldorf School.

In mid-century, the German Academy's popularity in the US was largely due to the Düsseldorf Gallery of New York.⁵² Between 1849 and 1865, hundreds of paintings of all genres filtered through its installations in the large room over the hall of the Church of Divine Unity on Broadway between Spring Street and Prince Street. It offered American audiences the opportunity to examine in person what many believed to be the exemplar of contemporary artistic achievement.⁵³ The press adored the gallery, and its laudatory reviews coupled with extended opening times attracted a broad, middle-class audience—a new art-viewing public. A critic for the *New York Tribune* wrote about the paintings on view in 1849: “They are worthy of the attention they will receive, not only as specimens of the best schools of German artists but for their own excellence.”⁵⁴ Another New York critic declared that year that “[The Gallery] does not contain a single picture which has not decided merit.”⁵⁵ In 1860, the excitement and interest around the Düsseldorf Gallery still held true, as evident in a review printed in *The New York Times*:

Of the many places in this City which intellectual loungers patronize, none is pleasanter for their purpose than the Düsseldorf Gallery, in Broadway. What delightful lounges one may take here! The pure [æ]sthetic pleasures of a refined lounge can only be felt when the lounge is surrounded, as here, with the poetry of Art, shedding its light and warmth around him.⁵⁶

⁵² Mai, “The Impact of the Art Academy at Düsseldorf on the Evolution of American Art,” 63.

⁵³ In the early 1860s, due to a shift in ownership, the Düsseldorf Gallery moved to 625 Broadway at the Institute of Fine Arts in New York.

⁵⁴ *Tribune*, April 18, 1849. In R. L. Stehle, “The Dusseldorf Gallery of New York,” 305.

⁵⁵ *The New York Weekly Evening Post*, May 3, 1849. Printed in the *Bulletin of the American Art Union*, June 1849.

⁵⁶ “The Dusseldorf Gallery,” *The New York Times*, March 13, 1860, <http://www.nytimes.com/1860/03/13/news/the-dusseldorf-gallery.html>.

As such criticism reveals, the style, paintings, and artists of the Düsseldorf Academy were not confined to the German-speaking world or even the European continent. Rather, the New York art scene welcomed contemporary German artists, admiring their skills, draftsmen abilities, and attention to light and detail.⁵⁷ These characteristics were not just American perceptions of the School, moreover. In the Gallery's self-published annual catalogs, a brief historical sketch accompanied the volume, stating these traits, as if to lay claim to them:

The characteristics of the School are, perfect fidelity to nature, in form, color, and expression; minuteness in detail, delicacy of finish, and perfectness in rendering the *language* of every subject. All this implies the most exclusive study; for the licenses and extravagances of genius once discarded nothing except the power of truthfulness is left. But though their ordinances are so severe, no formality, nor coldness, nor barrenness can attach to the School.⁵⁸

This was the self-proclaimed style of the artists of the Düsseldorf School, then, which the Düsseldorf Gallery believed “formed an era in American art.”

The exhibited paintings that truly caught the attention of American audiences were the landscapes. Unsurprisingly, this interest coincided with the emergence of landscape painting as the dominant course at the Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts in the 1850s and 1860s. When Albert Bierstadt was in Düsseldorf in 1854, Norwegian artist Hans Fredrik Gude (1825–1903), whose work was admired there and abroad, ran the landscape course.⁵⁹ Art historian Bettina Baumgärtel explains how Gude and his students

⁵⁷ See Tuckerman, *Book of the Artists*, 392 for his discussion of some of the traits he found in many of the artists who studied in Düsseldorf.

⁵⁸ “Historical Sketch of the Düsseldorf School of Art,” in *Gems from the ‘Düsseldorf Gallery,’ Photographed from the Original Pictures by A. A. Turner and Reproduced (for the first time) Under the Superintendence of B. Frodsham* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1862), 2.

⁵⁹ As an interesting side note, Baumgärtel contends that prominent Düsseldorf artists Schirmer, Gude, and A. Achenbach were the first to make use of photography in their

ushered in a new direction of landscape, one more geared toward “seminaturalism.”⁶⁰

Through Gude’s guidance, paintings of the natural terrain were more focused on detail, the division of planes, and modulated light.

In the Düsseldorf Gallery’s annual catalogues, sold for 12.5 cents each, about half of the works received descriptive texts, and often these were the popular landscape paintings. From the descriptions, we can piece together how the Gallery wanted visitors to understand certain paintings on view. Generally what we see is a focus on commending the artist for his close observations, which often involves comparison to the medium of photography. In the 1860 *Descriptive Catalogue of the Paintings*, for instance, an explanatory text about an oil painting by Arnold Schulten (1809–1874) reads: “This scene is Morning in the Tyrolese Mountains and makes up an imposing picture. The artist paints with freedom yet with precision—water, rocks, and trees are most truthfully daguerreotyped. Everything is, literally, true to nature.”⁶¹ While the daguerreotype had been surpassed by wet collodion photography by the 1860s, it retained its connotations of truthfulness because of its exceptional clarity and precise details. Schulten’s comparison of landscape painting to this early photographic process blurs the aesthetic lines between the two.

As one of the leading professors of landscape painting at the German School, Gude was applauded in the gallery’s annual catalogues, and his work presents us with an

own work. Baumgärtel, ed., *The Dusseldorf School of Painting and its International Influence, 1819–1918*, 45.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 44–5.

⁶¹ “No. 185. Landscape ... Schulten,” in *Descriptive Catalogue of the Paintings Now on Exhibition at the Institute of Fine Arts 625 Broadway, Comprising the Celebrated Pictures of the Well-Known Düsseldorf Gallery, with Several Interesting Additions and the Unique Jarves Collection of Old Masters* (New York: Joseph Russell, 1860), 43–4.

excellent counterpoint to the first edition of the Bierstadt brothers' volume on the White Mountains. Gude's painting *Landscape–Norwegian Scenery*, which is apparently the same artwork photographically reproduced in the 1862 catalog *Gems from the Düsseldorf Gallery*, renders a vertical scene of fir trees and steep, rocky mountains, split by a rushing torrent (Figure 2.7). It is a scene of wilderness, drama, and breathtaking beauty. It is not idyllic in the sense of symmetry or balance; instead it looks raw and untouched with its uneven patches of moss on the bulging rocks in the foreground, the fallen, bare trees in the middle ground, and the ghostly mountains in the far distance. In an earlier catalogue, the descriptive text reads: "This is a painting which at once arrests attention and challenges criticism. By connoisseurs, it is pronounced one of the best landscapes in this country. The *Albion* remarked 'the treatment is masterly.'"⁶² Gude's painting represents the pinnacle of landscape painting at the Academy, and it was shown in the United States before and after the brothers' volume was released. While I am not suggesting that the brothers based their stereographic aesthetic on Gude or this painting, I single it out as the epitome of the Düsseldorf landscape style itself to show that *View among the Hills* was influenced not only by Albert Bierstadt's particular approach to painting, but by that of landscape painting more broadly coming out of the German school.

The Bierstadt brothers' photograph *Rapids and Cascades, Franconia Notch, N.H.* presents a somewhat analogous subject to Gude's painting as it shares a similar vision of the rugged landscape that invites beholders into the scene (Figure 2.8). Both works

⁶² "No. 188. Landscape–Norwegian Scenery ... Gude," in *Descriptive Catalogue of the Paintings Now on Exhibition at the Institute of Fine Arts 625 Broadway, Comprising the Celebrated Pictures of the Well-Known Düsseldorf Gallery, with Several Interesting Additions and the Unique Jarves Collection of Old Masters* (New York: Joseph Russell, 1860), 44.

possess a rocky proscenium from which to enjoy a rushing brook. These are pictured from a low vantage point that ennobles the view. Rocks of all shapes, textures, and sizes guide and flank the cascade, and the water in each portrayal flows, better rushes, into pools of water at the lower edge of the pictures. In both the photograph and the painting, the waters' movement in the middle and background is marked by a misty whiteness, and this effervescence signals an auditory sensation of rushing water. The cascades are not straight in either image, but meandering and off center. Indeed, uniformity or symmetry of the natural landscape is not the aim of either artist; rather, the irregular quality of nature is celebrated. While the Northern brisk sky frames snow-capped mountains in Gude's painting, illustrating a vastly deep, recessed landscape with almost four planes of vision, the Bierstadt brothers' scene is more enclosed, more intimate. In their picture, the background glimmers, almost undulates as the sunlight lightly grazes the leaves, where the cascade enters the frame. The photographers have captured the sunlight as it highlights the large rocks in the middle ground that flank the cascade, sharing affinities with the sunlight accentuating the rocks in the middle ground of Gude's landscape. These patches of sunlight in both the painting and photograph invite the viewer to travel through the pictured landscape.

The motif of the fallen branch or tree trunk occurs in the majority of photographs in *View among the Hills* and is frequently present in paintings of Düsseldorf school artists as a signifier of unspoiled landscape. After the first few plates devoted to tourist amenities, the brothers print a sequence of roughly a dozen photographs of the Flume, a natural chasm in the White Mountains. Fallen trees and branches claim prominent roles in these compositions. Beginning with *Foot of Cascades below the Flume, Franconia Mts.*

N.H., scores of variously sized boughs inhabit the foreground (Figure 2.9). With stereoscopic vision, the disembodied tree parts aim straight for the beholder. A hefty tree trunk has fallen across the water, creating a natural barrier between pictorial planes, separating the viewer from the distant woods. Eliminating a firm vantage point for the viewer, the brothers' camera seems to stand mid-stream. The next image in the sequence, *Cascades below the Flume, Franconia Mountains, N. H.*, follows in this aesthetic vein, albeit in a subtler manner (Figure 2.10). In the dense arboreal mass, a tree has plunged to the other bank, but has yet to fall fully and thus injects the image with a sense of dynamism. Wilderness triumphs in their next photograph, *On the Way to the Flume*, in which fallen tree trunks puncture the entire composition (Figure 2.11). Their rough, visceral texture creates a nice counterpoint to the softly lit trees above. Finally, *Near the Flume*, discussed earlier, completes this particular series of photographs of the wild prevailing (Figure 2.4), a theme to which I will return.

These images simultaneously nod to the untamed beauty of the landscape and to the prevalent concepts of the transcendentalists with their spiritual references to trees and rebirth. In the early to mid-nineteenth century, there was a strong belief in the wilderness as a site of communion with god, a concept advanced by the transcendentalists. Ralph Waldo Emerson's watershed tract *Nature* from 1836 represents a quasi-manifesto for this movement. Emerson memorably writes: "In the woods, we return to reason and faith... Standing on the bare ground, — my head bathed by the blithe air and uplifted into infinite space,—all egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me."⁶³ Indeed, these years represented a

⁶³ Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Nature* (Boston: James Munroe & Company, 1849), 8.

time when the White Mountains were being admired for their sublime qualities. As one environmental historian noted, “with nature poetry on their shelves and wild landscapes on their walls, tourists who sought out inspiring wilderness sites for communion with the Almighty also brought guidebooks along, such as Thomas Starr King’s popular guide to New England’s White Mountains.”⁶⁴ The same year, English-born American landscape artist Thomas Cole (1801–1848) published his treatise on the wilderness, which spoke to the importance of nature.⁶⁵ Another way to interpret the natural splendor in these views is that man has not completely infiltrated the White Mountains; in its wild topography, he can still connect with untouched nature.

Albert Bierstadt and many other Düsseldorf landscape artists and those associated with the Hudson River School, especially Thomas Cole, adopted this motif of the fallen tree. In Bierstadt’s painting *Mountain Brook*, a toppled tree trunk juts out from behind an enormous boulder, casting a crisp shadow onto the rock face. Several other fallen, rough branches sit on the other side of the stone. While this leitmotif appears often in Albert’s mountainous landscapes, they are particularly noticeable in his White Mountain paintings. In *White Mountains, New Hampshire* of 1863, Bierstadt portrays another secluded, quiet inlet of the Appalachian range in which a fallen tree represents the most prominent aspect of the image due to its central placement and his use of sunlight (Figure 2.12). In these works, the tree could signify renewal or regeneration of nature, the cycle of life, nature’s sublimity, the potentially negative effects of man upon the landscape, or alternatively could be seen a means to emphasize pictorial depth. Another Düsseldorf

⁶⁴ Mark Stoll, “Religion ‘Irradiates’ the Wilderness,” in *American Wilderness: A New History*, ed. Michael Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 44.

⁶⁵ Thomas Cole “Essay on American Scenery,” *American Monthly Magazine* 1 (January 1836): 1–12.

artist who routinely placed fallen trees or branches throughout his compositions is Johann Wilhelm Schirmer (1807 – 1863). In his painting *Autumnal Storm*, shown at the Düsseldorf Gallery in New York and reproduced in its 1862 catalog, a fallen tree covers the entire foreground (Figure 2.13). Perhaps in the tempest the tree has been uprooted or fallen, its branches and trunk in pieces. A small, yet significant aspect of Schirmer's painting is the tiny male figure, whose silhouette is outlined by the luminous sky behind him.

In Charles's and Edward's pictures, the tourist-in-nature trope is found in eight of the views. Together with the photographs of "pure" wilderness, this juxtaposition frames the White Mountains as a site at once uncultivated and hospitable. It further shows the beholder how to connect spiritually and interact with the landscape before them. In *Down the Stream below the Flume, Franconia Mts., N.H.*, a large fallen tree in the foreground has created a frame within a frame, surrounding the middle plane bathed in sunlight (Figure 2.14). The stereographic medium accentuates this visual recession into the scene as the viewer quickly moves past the tree to find a hatted man holding a fishing pole; he walks over the rocks and is captured midstride. Enveloped in the sun, his figure pops out at the viewer. His presence demonstrates to onlookers that he too belongs there—not to alter the landscape irrevocably, but to revel in it. Trout fishing was a popular pastime in the cold waters of New Hampshire, and even Thomas Starr King's 1860 guidebook to the region notes this figure's presence. "Now and then," he writes, "an angler (not man with a 'fishpole' hooking trout, but a hearty admirer of nature and her clear brooks, who

catches his dinner for his soul's health as well as his body's) followed the streams."⁶⁶ The man pictured in the Bierstadt brothers' photograph blends into the scene; he becomes a part of it, but does not control it. Similar to Thomas Cole, but perhaps not as distrustful of social progress at the expense of nature, the Bierstadt brothers foreground man's quiet use of the land and, by extension, his respect for it.

Yet not all of the brothers' stereographic views with tourists present them actively partaking in an activity such as boating or angling; quiet contemplation is also critical to the experience. In plate thirty-three *Glen Ellis Falls, White Mountains, N. H.*, for instance, four individuals—a man, a boy, and an older and younger woman—are evenly spaced out, indeed formulaically, before a dramatic waterfall (Figure 2.15). The cascade, while in the background, is still the obvious focal point of the image. Flanked by dark, steep rock walls, the white gushing cascade pours over the edge into a pool igniting the body of water below. A boy stands at the water's edge, captivated by the strength of the cataract before him, and the others are seated gazing at the natural scenery. Each of them stares at a different point in the landscape surrounding them. This act shows the stereographic viewer that there is something of interest to be seen all around the tourist. As in a tableau vivant, their stiff arrangement gives this image a theatrical quality. During the Golden Age of the Düsseldorf Academy, many artists were in fact connected with the theater, and their paintings often contained a shallow foreground where the action took place.⁶⁷ This photograph clearly speaks to that aesthetic.

⁶⁶ Thomas Starr King, *The White Hills: Their Legends, Landscape, and Poetry* (Boston: Crosby, Nichols, and Company, 1860), 45.

⁶⁷ On the connection between the theater and Düsseldorf artists, see Von Kalnein, "The Düsseldorf Academy," 17.

Between Guidebooks

Four years after *View among the Hills* was published, Charles and Edward dissolved their partnership for unknown reasons, yet both still worked in the photographic industry. While Albert's reputation was on the decline after the 1860s, that of his brothers grew. Indeed, Charles was known as a talented, award-winning landscape photographer, who would go on to win medals abroad for his images, while Edward was a pioneering photomechanical printer always on top of the latest technology. Drawing from the untapped resources of the *Philadelphia Photographer*, a clearer picture of their successes in the late 1860s and 1870s comes to light, demonstrating their pivotal and cross-cultural ties in the photographic industry. They submitted work for exhibitions in the US and Europe, entered international photographic competitions, and were active members of American photographic organizations and clubs. In point of fact, they each had an impact on the development of American photography in their own right.

In the mid- to late 1860s, the impressive quality of their photographs was frequently a topic of discussion in the *Philadelphia Photographer*. In 1866, for example, before they officially dissolved their partnership, the Bierstadt brothers won a bronze medal for their stereoscopic views at the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association in Boston. Describing their entry as "first-class outdoor work," the reporter gave his readers a sense of how the brothers fit into the broader category of landscape photography in the US, noting that in the early sixties, they were among only a few American landscape photographers, such as John Carbutt (1832–1905) and John Moran

(1831–1903), doing “excellent work.”⁶⁸ This gives us insight into just how well respected and well known they were for their views of the United States. That same year, an article entitled “Bierstadt’s Gems of Photography”⁶⁹ describes an impressive group of 120 photographs that the brothers sent to the journal. Included in this care package were fifty views of the White Mountains of which the writer asks: “How shall we describe them? We are unequal to the task. They must be seen. They are of all the places whose names are familiar to our readers and which are well known to travellers.”⁷⁰ Their White Mountain photographs were indeed their specialty.

In 1867, Edward moved to New York City to pursue a career in the printing and publishing business, and Charles moved to Niagara Falls to set up his own photography studio. Charles began to make a name for himself as a landscape photographer by sending his images to trade journals and photographic societies. The *Philadelphia Photographer* applauded his moonlit photographs of the falls, declaring that “no views of Niagara in the world excel those made by Mr. Bierstadt,” and so did the Photographic Society of Philadelphia.⁷¹ In 1869, he submitted a selection of what the *Philadelphia Photographer* called “a most exquisite collection of stereographic views of Niagara” to the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association exhibition and received a diploma of merit (one level below a bronze medal) for them.⁷² Over the years, he expanded his landscape repertoire and traveled to the West Coast, visiting Yosemite Valley and San

⁶⁸ “New Stereoscope Pictures,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 33 (September 1866): 266.

⁶⁹ “Bierstadt’s Gems of Photography,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 35 (November 1866): 350.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ “Editor’s Table,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 5, no. 49 (January 1868): 35.

⁷² “Exhibitions of the Massachusetts Charitable Mechanic Association, and of the American Institute,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 6, no. 70 (October 1869): 332.

Francisco, “all which he has stereographed to perfection,” according to the editor of the *Philadelphia Photographer*.⁷³ He presented these images at the National Photographic Association’s exhibition in Cleveland, where a reporter asserted that they were “decidedly the largest and the best.”⁷⁴

Charles Bierstadt’s self-promotional tactics crossed cultural borders to include the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography, headed by the reputable Dr. Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, the subject of the following chapter. In one of Vogel’s monthly German correspondence columns from 1871 in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, he commended a “splendid collection of stereos sent by Bierstadt of Niagara and which not only by the subject which they represent ‘the giant rocks and giant trees of the Yosemite Valley’ but also by their masterly execution, excited the admiration of our photographic society.”⁷⁵ As we will see, the early years of the 1870s were a particularly close period for German and American photographic relations, and Vogel’s high opinion could catapult one’s reputation forward in both German and American circles. The Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography possessed strong connections with the National Photographic Association and the *Philadelphia Photographer*, so to make direct contact with Vogel was a tactical move that could bolster Charles Bierstadt and his family’s careers, especially given their German backgrounds and language skills.⁷⁶ Charles sent images of the White Mountains, California, and Niagara Falls to Vogel

⁷³ “Photographic Exhibitions,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 83 (November 1870): 383.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 8, no. 85 (January 1871): 84.

⁷⁶ Business at Edward Bierstadt’s print shop was primarily conducted in German, as noted by a correspondent for a British journal of photography. See “Our American Letter,” *The Amateur Photographer* 4 (August 27, 1886): 101–102.

many times in the early 1870s, and these images were discussed with praise at their society's meetings, as their published notes in *Photographische Mittheilungen* (Photographic Reports) reveal.⁷⁷ Charles was also extremely successful on the international exhibition circuit, winning medals in Vienna and Brussels, which he would later use in his advertisements as evidence of his first-rate photographic practice (Figure 2.16).

This transnational outreach was not unique to Charles alone; it happened at the same time that Edward was courting his German connections in photomechanical reproduction. Since the 1850s, photographers and those in the publishing industry became very interested in developing a photomechanical printing process that could produce non-fading multiples for book illustration without the need for sunlight or chemical action. This concern became a personal project of Edward Bierstadt after the publication of *View among the Hills* since he saw the book as expensive and the quality of the images was "poor."⁷⁸ Widely used before the invention of the halftone process, the collotype is a screenless photomechanical process that allows print to be made from photographic negatives.⁷⁹ In 1868, Munich photographer Joseph Albert made some

⁷⁷ At the end of 1870, Vogel's photographic society, Verein zur Förderung der Photographie, discussed Charles Bierstadt's photographs multiple times. They did so in October and November of 1870 and January of 1871. See the meeting notes for these months, all published in volume 7 of *Photographische Mittheilungen*, 186, 216, & 269. Also see Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, "Photographie in Amerika," *Photographische Mittheilungen* 8 (April 1871): 39.

⁷⁸ Charles and Edward Bierstadt, "Preface," *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White Mountains* (1875); and Edward Bierstadt, "Introduction," *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (1878).

⁷⁹ For a more detailed technical description of the collotype process and its history, see the Getty Conservation Institute's publication: Dusan C. Stulik & Art Kaplan, *The Atlas*

important improvements on the collotype process invented by Frenchman Alphonse-Louis Poitevin (1819–1882) that helped solve problems with the adhesion of gelatin to the substrate. In so doing, Albert made the collotype a commercially viable reality in 1868 and applied for an American patent in 1869, calling his process the albertype. This German-American alliance was most likely initially forged by Albert Bierstadt during two-year sojourn in Europe from 1867 to 1869.⁸⁰ But it is also important to note that Joseph Albert himself distributed samples to photographic trade journals to advertise his new process. The frontispiece of the September 24, 1869 issue of *The Photographic News*, for example, was a portrait printed with the albertype process (Figure 2.17), which the editors state is “a new method of photo-mechanical printing, invented by Joseph Albert, Munich.”⁸¹

Joseph Albert sold Edward Bierstadt the US rights to his printing process within the year and, with this exciting prospect, Edward’s career gained traction as he put himself and the albertype—a non-fading, high quality medium for book illustration—on the frontlines. He began exhibiting sample albertypes at high-profile venues such as the Photographic Section of the American Institute as well as the National Photographic Association Exhibition in Cleveland and later Philadelphia. Reviewers of the exhibitions

of Analytical Signatures of Photography: Collotype (Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute, 2013).

⁸⁰ Wright, “Partners in the Business of Art,” 277–79. In fact, as Wright’s notes, extant correspondence exists between Albert Bierstadt influential government officials such as Nathaniel Banks and Joseph Henry to try to obtain government printing contracts for the Albertype process, which shows Albert trying to make government officials aware of this photographic process.

⁸¹ “Albertype,” *The Photographic News* 13, no. 577 (September 24th, 1869): n.p.

deemed his submissions “superb.”⁸² While Charles and Edward both contributed photographs to the NPA’s exhibition in 1871, they did so in different sections. Edward’s submission—“a great variety of large and small Albertypes”—was located with the foreign presenters because of his relationship with Albert, and Charles’s with local photographers for stereoscopic views of American landscapes. This shows that the brothers were not yoked together and highlights that their work could move easily between national camps. By securing rights to a German process, his business took on transnational undertones. In the early and mid-1870s, Edward also began publishing articles such as “The Use of Graphite in the Negative Process,” which conveyed that he was not just a passive spokesman for this new photomechanical processes, but also actively improving these processes.⁸³ Indeed when he would later become the proprietor of Obernetter’s process, the artotype, Edward would refine it. He sent Vogel, for example, a revised formula that the doctor said “works splendidly” and better than the inventor’s original process.⁸⁴

Unsurprisingly, American photographic journals became interested in advancements in the photomechanical printing world as these brought more possibilities for the industry as a whole. Edward wrote a two-part article about the albertype in *The Photographic Times*, and the demand for the piece was so high that it had to be reprinted in full as a supplement.⁸⁵ The notion of “progress” specifically became bound up with the

⁸² “New York Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 73 (January 1870): 18.

⁸³ Edward Bierstadt, “The Use of Graphite in the Negative Process,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 11, no. 130 (October 1874): 304–7.

⁸⁴ Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 11, no. 131 (November 1874): 334.

⁸⁵ “Our Supplement: Paper on Photo-Mechanical Printing,” *The Photographic Times and*

albertype and later the German artotype process. In a speech about the albertype and its advantages, held at the NPA's annual exhibition in 1872, the speaker maintained that "it is the last great and decided proof of progress in photography."⁸⁶ The artotype also gained a reputation, as one reporter for the *Philadelphia Photographer* called it, for being "the picture of the future" due to "its beauty, indestructibility adaptability to all kinds of work, rapidity, and cheapness of the production."⁸⁷ Charles Bierstadt believed that photomechanical printing was the way of the future: "In my opinion printing ink will sooner or later drive silver photographs out of use... if I could begin business anew I would certainly adopt the artotype process."⁸⁸ While he could have been saying this to help his brother's growing printing enterprise and their joint publications, there is something heartfelt and honest about his tone that suggests he believed this was the way forward. Tapping into American postbellum discourse as the country underwent a series of radical transformations and advancements in terms of industry and technology, this tone of progress underscored the Bierstadt brothers' later editions of the White Mountains books with the use of the albertype in its 1875 edition and the artotype in 1878.

American Landscape Collotyped

In 1875, thirteen years after they released their first White Mountains publication, the Bierstadt brothers came together again to produce the second edition, *Gems of*

American Photographer 54 (June 1875).

⁸⁶ "Proceedings of the National Photographic Association of the United States: Albertype," *Philadelphia Photographer* 9, no. 102 (June 1872): 204–8.

⁸⁷ W.J. Baker, "The Artotype from an Inside View," *Philadelphia Photographer* 16, no. 182 (February 1879): 39.

⁸⁸ Charles Bierstadt, "Correction," *Philadelphia Photographer* 16, no. 186 (June 1879): 190.

American Scenery. One difference that should be noted from the onset is that while the 1862 title page reads “Photographed // by // Bierstadt Brothers,” a general blanket attribution which could include all three brothers, the second edition’s opening page confirms to whom the project and its aesthetic vision belonged: “Photographed by // Charles Bierstadt // Niagara Falls, N.Y. // and // Edward Bierstadt // New York.” This new book projected an updated, sleeker look, and a newly patented stereoscopic viewing device by Bierstadt accompanied it (Figure 2.18). The presentation of the stereographic images is more elegant and ordered than it was in *View among the Hills*. The photographs are now arched at the top and framed by light brown rectilinear borders. The printed area of the image, moreover, is visible on the cream-colored page, a product of the new printing process; a slightly darker beige hue extends a few millimeters past the brown border, creating almost a second frame (Figure 2.19). This updated design accompanied all new photographs of the White Mountains, pictures that emphasize the landscape’s cultivation, not its wilderness as it had before.

Gems of American Scenery was geared toward the middle-class tourist and all the amenities that he or she could desire, a reflection of Americans’ changing relationship with their land. Whether found in the pictures or not, the notion of the tourist is ever present in this (and the later) edition through signs of established tourism (buildings, bridges, railroads, boats, roads, etc.), and these symbols drive its content and design. Rather than the forty-eight photographs present in the first edition, the number of stereoscopic views has decreased to twenty-four. One image, as opposed to multiple photographs, represents each site. This tighter edit speaks to the speed with which the busy tourist moves through his or her itinerary, an indication of the modern world and its

fast pace. The second edition also bears a considerable amount more text—a longer preface, a descriptive paragraph accompanying each stereographic view, a list of illustrations, and a map of the region. The higher quality printing allowed information about the vacationer's experience to be delivered to audiences at a lower cost.

In this quintessential albertype from *Gems of American Scenery*, titled *Mount Washington from the Glen House*, the photographers depict a massive hotel in the midst of a wooded, mountainous landscape (Figure 2.20). Out of the twenty-four stereographic views, seven portray a similar scene, in which a large building, generally a resort, stands proudly in the center of the image with a mountain hovering behind it. In the immediate foreground of this view, the rounded edge of a rock peaks out into the scene, giving the viewer the impression that he is standing on some sort of lookout point. One majestic, bare tree protrudes upward into the scene, at once dividing it in half and giving the image more depth. The tree's great height, foreground placement, and statuesque form belie the image's principal figure, that of the resort, which spans the entire lateral length of the photograph. Its massive white structure stands out in a sea of gray as the moody mountains in the background fade into the distance. The albertype is framed by a simple rectilinear border, which echoes the manmade shape of the resort. This is the celebration of a landscape controlled and shaped by man.

The text opposite the image underscores the tourist's experience as well. The narrator sets the scene: "Visitors often sit on the piazza of the Glen House and watch the clouds as they sweep over the summit of the mountains, often settling until they envelop and hide the peaks from the eye. The carriage ride up Mt. Washington begins at the door

of the house...⁸⁹ Neither about Mount Washington nor its grandeur, this entry addresses the ease with which tourists may gaze at the landscape from a veranda or take a coach to the mountain's summit. The glory of Mount Washington, the highest peak in the Northeastern United States, is thus tied only to the tourist's experience of it. In the three stereographic views in *Gems of American Scenery* that portray this peak, their titles point to the vacationer's journey: *Mount Washington Railway*; *Glen from Mount Washington Carriage Road*; and *Mount Washington from the Glen House*. These headings, like the image compositions, give equal billing to the mountain and a tourist amenity: trains, hotels, and roads. The Bierstadt brothers' new conceptual and visual focus speaks to a tremendous shift in their audience and its expectations since the early 1860s, in terms of the medium of photography and the White Mountains. More significantly, it speaks to their new relationship to the landscape in what appears to be a decidedly post-Cole moment. This book was made in the Grand Hotel Era of this region, and its images advertise the domesticated wilderness of the area. Signs of civilization populate the stereographic view and advance a positive vision of the White Mountains as a site of leisure accessible to the white, urban middle class.

In the preface of the 1875 *Gems of American Scenery*, Edward Bierstadt asserts that their first book failed for two reasons: a high price and a faulty viewing device. According to him, these problems have been fixed in the new edition. He designed and patented a new stereographic viewing apparatus with better prismatic lenses that attach to the cover of the book. It was difficult to achieve the stereographic effect in the earlier edition, he notes, and this improved apparatus allowed viewers to attain stereoscopic

⁸⁹ Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery* (1875), n.p.

vision. This book was in fact the example that he submitted to secure his patent, filed in November 1875. In so doing, he hoped to create a new kind of book niche with stereographic viewing devices.

The other big difference for the Bierstadt brothers was that the cost of the book dropped to \$2.50 from the previously hefty price tag of \$5.00. In his preface, Edward attributes this decrease to “the Albertype Process, by means of which we not only produce pictures at less cost, but fully equal to ordinary photographs in brilliancy, with the advantage of permanency. Instead of the unstable salts of silver, our illustrations are printed in permanent pigments and will retain their brilliancy.”⁹⁰ That he discusses the process at length in the preface elevates its importance in the *Gems of American Scenery* narrative and promotes his new rights as patent owner. The albertype allowed him to print stable images cheaply and at all times of the day. The 1875 publication has held up very well to the test of time compared to the 1862 edition in which most, if not all, of the photographs are in some state of disintegration (discoloration or fading). With the albertype, the second edition could employ design elements that were not possible beforehand, including arched reproductions, clean borders, and printed titles below the image in the same color. In the 1862 edition, there are no printed borders, and titles were typed unevenly underneath the photographs, sometimes on top of them, sometimes at a diagonal. Overall, the look of the 1862 version is inconsistent and handmade, especially with regards to the use of salt prints, while the publications from the 1870s offer a more uniform, machine-made aesthetic.

⁹⁰ Charles and Edward Bierstadt, “Preface,” in *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (1875), n.p.

In their third and final edition of 1878, also titled *Gems of American Scenery*, Edward Bierstadt produced an even more cleaned-up, mass-produced look, with photomechanical improvements taking center stage. Using the new artotype process, Edward reprinted the majority of the images from the second edition. However, the inclusion of Charles in the actual making of this last edition, apart from his 1875 images, is questionable, as the 1878 title page asserts that the publication is a product of Gilbert K. Harroun & E. Bierstadt of New York. Rather than simple, brown, straight lines around the stereographic view, in this incarnation light red borders appear on every page, including the title page, “Introduction,” “Index,” and descriptive texts. These outlines possess decorative corners in the shape of a cross pattée. From a photomechanical standpoint, there is no distinction between where the photomechanical reproduction begins and the paper ends. It is clean, consistent, and simple, a sign of its mass-production. The text is further laid out with a keen eye to design that highlights the extensive abilities of the new German artotype process: there is a dropped initial capital letter at the beginning of each descriptive plate and in the introduction. For the first time, moreover, there are printed page numbers⁹¹ and a paginated index. This increase in text speaks to what the Bierstadt brothers’ growing audience expected from guidebooks: a short history of the region and more informational text about hotels, nature walks, and touristic amenities.

In the book’s “Introduction,” which now extends across three pages, Edward traces the history of the White Mountains. He begins with the indigenous peoples whose

⁹¹ Page numbers only begin with the plates and do not include the introduction.

“savage minds were early impressed by the wilderness and grandeur of the scene.”⁹²

Here, he constructs a racialized perspective in which even the so-called “primitive,” who in his model comes from the wilderness, is impressed with the natural surroundings. His story then proceeds to the year 1792, when the first (white) man, Abel Crawford, settled in the region, bringing a small wave of tourism with him. To normalize and celebrate the established tourism now present in the region is a crucial goal of this element of the story. After a discussion of the growing tourist industry that coincides with the arrival of the railroad in 1851, Bierstadt concludes his tale:

Altogether, the White Mountains form one of the finest places of summer resort on our continent. The sea shore [*sic*] perhaps exerts more powerful attractions for some, but mountain scenery certainly engages the affections of the larger number, and while this is the case Americans will not cease to come and praise “the Switzerland of America.”⁹³

This last phrase, referring to “The Switzerland of America,” suggests a transnational comparison between America and Europe, one that affords value to the White Mountains. Edward did not conceive of this analogy. Scholars date it, in fact, to 1816 and believe that the American Secretary of State, Philip Carrigain, was the first to make the comparison in writing on a map of New Hampshire.⁹⁴ “The natural scenery of mountains,” Carrigain writes, “of greater elevation than any others in the United States; of lakes, of cataracts, of vallies [*sic*] furnishes a profusion of the sublime and beautiful. It may be called the Switzerland of America.”⁹⁵ This appellation subsequently gained traction, and since the early decades of the nineteenth century, guidebooks and even artists, including Hudson

⁹² Bierstadt, “Introduction,” in *Gems of American Scenery* (1878), n.p.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Randall H. Bennett, *The White Mountains: Alps of New England* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2003), 53–54.

⁹⁵ Quoted in Bennett, 54.

River School painter Thomas Cole, had been applying it to the mountainous scenery of New Hampshire.⁹⁶

European guidebooks also adopted the phrase when describing the White Mountains. British illustrator William Henry Bartlett (1809–1854) ventured to this area in 1836. His drawings provided the illustrations for *American Scenery; or, Land, Lake, and River: Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (1840), which historian Randall Bennett describes as “the most widely distributed and influential collection of American landscape views published in the nineteenth century.”⁹⁷ In a section discussing the White Hills, as they were alternatively called at the time, the author of *American Scenery*, Nathaniel Park Willis (1806–1867), who also wrote one of the first significant texts on the medium of photography after its public announcement,⁹⁸ discusses the similarity of settings between the regions: “There is evidently the appearance of three zones—the woods, the bald, mossy part, and the part above the vegetation. The same appearance has been observed on the Alps.”⁹⁹ Even Thomas Starr King used the comparison in his popular travel guide when applying a William Wordsworth poem about the Swiss Alps to the Berlin Falls¹⁰⁰ of the White Mountains: “It was a cataract in Switzerland for which

⁹⁶ Cole, “Essay on American Scenery,” 5.

⁹⁷ Bennett, *The White Mountains*, 68.

⁹⁸ N.P. Willis, “The Pencil of Nature—A New Discover,” *Corsair: A Gazette of Literature, Art, Dramatic Criticism, Fashion and Novelty* (April 13, 1839): 70–72.

⁹⁹ Nathaniel Park Willis, *American Scenery; or, Land, Lake, and River: Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature, Vol. 1* (London: George Virtue, 1840), 102.

¹⁰⁰ To clarify, Berlin Falls is located in Berlin, New Hampshire, which, according to histories of the state, acquired its name from a small town in Worcester County, Massachusetts. This town most likely got its name from the German city of Berlin. On the history of this town in northern New Hampshire, see, for example, Elmer Munson Hunt, *New Hampshire Towns and Whence They Came* (Peterborough: Noone House, 1971), 200–201.

Wordsworth wrote the following sonnet; but how could it be more appropriate if it had been written as a description of the torrent in whose praise we quote it?”¹⁰¹

In *Gems of American Scenery*, this European juxtaposition reveals the way in which the young nation of the United States used a transnational comparison to bolster its tourist industry. It also provided the European public, many of whom had not ventured across the Atlantic, with a readymade mental image that was already part of its collective consciousness. To conclude his introduction with the phrase “The Switzerland of America,” then, Edward Bierstadt at once alluded to notions of the sublime and elevated the White Mountains to the status of European landmarks. This rhetorical move underlines the notion that Americans were in a position to compete with Europe in terms of tourism. Furthermore, the way in which Bierstadt declares the White Mountains to be the best resorting spot for “our continent” implies that elsewhere (i.e. Europe) boasts better options. Yet, he does not mean to belittle his adopted nation; rather, he wants to promote it in the eyes of his readers, in terms they were most likely to understand.

With respect to design, text, and image quality, Edward pulled out all the stops, catering to his target audience of middle-class vacationers who wanted to feel as if they were purchasing a high caliber object. Indeed, the printing quality is remarkable. A later advertisement by Edward speaks to his belief in the astounding abilities of his photomechanical printing techniques: “we combine the camera and printing press so closely that our pictures equal the finest photographs.”¹⁰² The images in the 1878 edition look like photographs and are in no way less pleasing than those made with silver salts. But their consistency and stability give them an edge over earlier photographic processes.

¹⁰¹ King, *The White Hills*, 266.

¹⁰² [Bierstadt Advertisement], *The Printer and Bookmaker* 26 (1898): 263.

They look machine-made, pristine, and expensive, and they are uniformly of high quality. More importantly, the images in this later edition are sharper and illustrate a broader range of tones, which gives the viewer more detail to explore in each image. In this 1875 versus 1878 comparison of the same image, *The Basin*, more detail is visible in the darker areas of the later artotype, particularly in the texture of the rock face, and there is more tonal variety in the stone surface (Figure 2.21, 2.22). The hand of man is made to appear absent in the production of the 1878 book.

Photography historian Joel Snyder provides valuable insight into an emerging machine aesthetic found in many American landscape photographs of this period that sheds light on the shift in appearance of the Bierstadt brothers' White Mountains publications from the 1870s.¹⁰³ Snyder argues that what unites most postbellum photographers in the United States is a keen desire to create images that showcase a high level of technological development, particularly one that values automated production. Notions of masculinity were also tied to ideas of progress and the machine as America transitioned into an industrial nation.¹⁰⁴ Snyder notes that this machine-look was not solely due to technological advancements, as artists deliberately chose to make their photographs appear machine-made. While developments in photographic technology, and in the Bierstadt brothers' case a viable means of photomechanical printing emerged, photographers were eager to accept the notion of photography as mechanical due to their growing middle-class audience. "The profession," Snyder writes, "served a community that was itself primarily middle class and that allied itself with the culture of

¹⁰³ Joel Snyder, "Territorial Photography," in *Landscape and Power*, ed. W. J. T. Mitchell (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 175–202.

¹⁰⁴ Ryan Dearing, *The Filth of Progress: Immigrants, Americans, and the Building of Canals and Railroads in the West* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016), 14.

technological progress.”¹⁰⁵ The photomechanical printing technology that made this aesthetic feasible and affordable were largely due to German innovations in collotype printing in the 1870s that would make it commercially viable.¹⁰⁶

Through his German background and connections, Edward Bierstadt became a crucial link to introducing and marketing German printing techniques to American audiences. With the albertype and the artotype, photomechanical prints could provide a cheaper way for more people to come into contact with photographs. As a result, his photomechanical printing company would become a key player in the book illustration trade in the US through the end of the nineteenth century, employing primarily German immigrants or people of German descent. Upon visiting Edward Bierstadt’s print shop to conduct a viewing of artotypes, which he described as “first-class prints,” a correspondent for the British journal *The Amateur Photographer* took note of the striking Teutonic presence around him:

The workmen in this establishment we found to be nearly all Germans few of whom could talk English. One of whom we asked a question replied I talk no English in that mechanical way that one learns a sentence in a foreign tongue to serve all purposes and evade all need of any further use of the language. The Germans are undoubtedly very useful and intelligent workmen.¹⁰⁷

This journal’s correspondent brings to light the dominance of Germans in American print shops. Edward Bierstadt’s firm was not an anomaly by any means. Indeed, as historian Erika Piola maintains, immigrants in the lithographic trade in the 1870s were “overwhelmingly German... far greater than their proportional representation in the

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 176.

¹⁰⁶ Joseph Albert continued to make improvements on this process, inventing a three-color collotype process in 1874.

¹⁰⁷ “Our American Letter,” *The Amateur Photographer* 4 (August 27, 1886): 101.

general population.”¹⁰⁸ During this period, Germans were associated with quality printing, and Edward Bierstadt was a leader within this milieu.

Technology was not just important in regards to producing the publications, but an increased presence of technology and the machine in the landscape made the wilderness more accessible for the casual visitor. The White Mountains’ growing ease of accessibility runs like a red thread through the photographs of *Gems of American Scenery*, which underscore the subjugation of the wild by so-called civilized man. The brothers cease to picture nature as raw and untouched, as some of the Hudson River School painters had once imagined it, and instead produce views that emphasize convenience and access. *View from the Gate of the Notch*, for example, leaves the viewer with no doubts as to the area’s proximity to transport (Figure 2.23). The photographers position their camera where a railroad and a footpath meet, leading the viewer’s eye directly to a shimmering building, like a mirage, in the background. Craggy rocks act like a conventional *repoussoir* device, flanking the edges of the photograph, to guide the viewer’s focus toward symbols of tourism—namely, the railroad and the Crawford House, where excursions to other destinations in the region often began. The accompanying passage acknowledges the changes in the landscape through the advent of major tourism: “Following in the footsteps of man, the railroad has penetrated this quiet place, and broken the solitude of the scene. Travelers to and from North Conway can now

¹⁰⁸ Piola & Ambrose, “The First Fifty Years of Commercial Lithography in Philadelphia,” 15. While many studies of the nineteenth-century printing trade come to this conclusion of German dominance in the field, it should be noted that this research tends to focus on Philadelphia as a case study, which scholars agree was the center of the illustrated press in mid-nineteenth-century America.

pass through the Notion by rail.”¹⁰⁹ From the text alone, one might think that the author is dispirited by this loss of seclusion, but read in light of the photograph’s melodramatic lighting and composition, the narrative adopts a more positive tenor.

The railroad and people depicted in their stereographic view, *Mt. Washington Railway and Summit*, represent the absolute triumph of man in the region and celebrates industrial progress (Figure 2.24). The camera gazes upward at a still locomotive engine parked on a rocky, precarious slope of the mountain. Men in dark suits and hats stand before, behind, and around it; they control this machine. Like hunters standing triumphantly around captured prey, the men’s confident poses project a sense of achievement and pride. These men are not *Rückenfiguren*, like many figures portrayed in the 1862 volume who mediate between the viewers’ experience and those pictured. A tribute to notions of masculinity and progress, this group directly engages with the camera, and in so doing they display their ability to tame the landscape. An accomplishment of modernity, the train’s tracks curve up the stony summit toward the building atop its peak. The adjacent text draws attention to the railroad, “this wonderful piece of engineering,” as it is called, and discusses its strength, precision, and speed.¹¹⁰ The narrator, presumably Edward Bierstadt, does not discuss the view from the peak’s summit except to mention that it is possible to see the Atlantic Ocean on a clear day. His interests revolve around modern luxuries to be found atop the mountain and its proximity to hotels in the region. This goes along with contemporary notions of landscape that moved from celebrating the sublime qualities of nature to appreciating its accessibility to the middle-class tourist.

¹⁰⁹ Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery* (1878), 43.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 63.

While many photographs are a veritable celebration of man's conquest of the natural terrain, some stereographic views incorporate these symbols in a more discreet manner that merges tourism and nature more seamlessly. In their artotype of *Upper Falls of Ammonoosuc*, for example, the brothers portray a site that combines a cleaned-up vision of nature, a manmade structure, and a tourist making use of it (Figure 2.25). Like a natural, low barricade, a row of arranged rocks defines a tourist zone in the foreground. As a stereographic view, this distinct edge steadies the beholder in space. Across the still pond, an unpainted wooden bridge stretches across a short waterfall. Here, the distinction between man and nature blurs as the varied tones of the bridge mirrors those in the enormous boulders it connects. Difficult to discern, a white genteel woman poses on this fabricated structure meant to make the region more amenable to tourists (Figure 2.26). Again, as in the aforementioned photograph of the men surrounding the locomotive, she faces the viewer, inviting him to join her in this picturesque landscape.

The notion of the picturesque is a trait that arises in the 1878 incarnation of *Gems of American Scenery*, particularly in its final choice of a scenic waterscape view. In their 1875 edition, the Bierstadt brothers end the publication with a gorgeous photograph depicting a waterfall, *Gibb's Cascades* (Figure 2.27). This photograph leaves the audience with one last memory of nature, its beauty, and its bounty. In the 1878 edition, this same image, retitled *Beecher's Cascades* (as the name of the waterfall changed) has been placed toward the front of the volume (Figure 2.28). Now *Centre Harbor* ends the edition, depicting a tranquil lake view in which calm waters comprise half of the photograph (Figure 2.29). A large raised rock emerges from Lake Winnepisaukee providing the bottom portion of the view with movement rather than a continuous light

gray tone. The upper portion of the photograph portrays a sleepy town lined with piers and rolling hills. As Bierstadt writes about this image, “nature has done her work in a gentler mood, and the prevailing type of landscape seems to be picturesqueness rather than grandeur.”¹¹¹ This photograph thus ends on a note of the picturesque, but it is not nature alone portrayed. The white building pictured at the left edge of the photograph is the lakes region’s most popular hotel—the Senter House—and Bierstadt yet again comments on the quality of its lodgings, which is known “for the pleasant accommodations it affords.”¹¹² He describes the harbor area as “a favorite resort of mountain travelers” due to its proximity to several natural excursions and to towns such as Plymouth and North Conway.¹¹³ To conclude the publication on this image, as opposed to a denouement of nature, is significant as it suggests the importance of man in the landscape, of man’s triumph over the landscape. Man and his achievements in nature and with technology are central to the guidebook’s success.

Gems of the Bierstadt Brothers

A testament to the evolving cultural climate and a shaper of that environment, the brothers’ guidebooks present a valuable case study from which to examine a broader change in American attitudes toward the wilderness. More importantly, they stand for crucial examples of the transnational character of early photography. While made by German-Americans, these publications also exhibit cross-cultural exchange in their sense of aesthetic, texts, and photographic processes. In their first edition, the brothers aimed

¹¹¹ Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery* (1878), 99.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid.

for a “faithful representation” of the White Mountains,¹¹⁴ yet one influenced by the aesthetic of the Düsseldorf Academy. In the 1870s, the representation of the terrain consequently shifted from emphasizing distanced admiration to promoting its socially specific consumption. Via the photomechanically illustrated guidebook, made possible through developments in German printing technology, a new generation of middle-class tourists, whether in the comfort of their parlors or out on the trails, was afforded the ability to access the White Mountains of New Hampshire.

Herein lies the distinctive value of examining *View among the Hills and Gems of American Scenery* from a transatlantic perspective: it reveals a critical historiographical problem and an important opportunity as it examines the same artists photographing the same location over time. In their work, the Bierstadt brothers were inspired by German art movements and innovations in printing technology, yet they were also drawing upon American artistic practice and in this specific instance we can see how these developments influenced photographic portrayals of the White Mountains during this period. It is through objects such as those by the Bierstadt brothers that we can begin to understand and parse out Germany’s active presence in the photographic conversations that occurred between Europe and America. Immigration, technology, travel, and the international art market complicate this narrative, and the Bierstadt brothers’ publications on the White Mountains offer a particular way of forging and accessing photography’s transnational character in the 1860s and 1870s. Indeed, the brothers’ connections to Germany and those in the German-American community in New York shaped the vision of their stereoscopic guidebooks. Their endeavors further show us that medium even at

¹¹⁴ Bierstadt Brothers, “Preface,” in *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (1862), n.p.

this early point engaged with a range of disciplines, demonstrating that the history of the medium is also a history of technology, tourism, and mass media.

CHAPTER THREE

“YOURS, VERY TRULY, DR. H. VOGEL”:
BERLIN PHOTOGRAPHS AND THE *PHILADELPHIA PHOTOGRAPHER*

Histories of photography generally discuss Prussian-born, Berlin-based photographer, chemist, and professor Dr. Hermann Wilhelm Vogel in two contexts: photochemistry and pedagogy.¹ While his contributions to these fields are monumental, such accounts disregard that Vogel was instrumental in uniting the American and German fraternity of professional photographers during the twenty years prior to his later and much acclaimed achievements. In the 1860s and 1870s, Vogel was pivotal in building a thriving German photographic culture through exhibitions, periodicals, and societies, and while he was considered *the* representative voice of German photography, his purview and audience went well beyond his own cultural borders. Indeed, he boasted an international reputation as an authority on the medium across scientific and artistic circles in the mid- to late nineteenth century.

Focusing on his early career, this chapter brings to light Vogel’s profound influence outside of Europe, specifically in his role as the monthly German correspondent to the leading American trade journal, the *Philadelphia Photographer*. Between 1866 and 1886, he was the most prominent, frequent, and long-standing contributor to this

¹ See, for example, Beaumont Newhall, *The History of Photography from 1839 to the Present Day* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1949), 116, 126; Mary Warner Marien, *Photography: A Cultural History, Second Edition* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson, 2006), 181–2; and Naomi Rosenblum, *A World History of Photography* (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2007), 333.

periodical, which has been described as “America’s premier journal of its kind.”²

Understudied are his voluminous contributions to this magazine, which comprised over two hundred letters, thirty in-depth articles, and at least a dozen transcribed lectures.³

While he initially reported on photographic novelties in the German principalities, Vogel’s interests broadened both conceptually and geographically over time. His column grew to encompass all matters related to the medium on German *and* American soil, including, but not limited to, photochemistry, optics, lighting, exhibitions, photographic literature, artists, as well as photographic trends and styles.

Through a close reading of his contributions to the *Philadelphia Photographer*, this chapter argues that Vogel actively encouraged and notably advanced the relationship between German and American photographic circles in the late 1860s and early 1870s. Through his efforts in this period, German photography assumed a privileged place in the journal and thus in professional photographic circles in the United States. The following pages look specifically at the first ten years of Vogel’s column, when German and American photography and their intersection were one of its primary focuses.⁴ This chapter thus asks: Why did Vogel become such a beloved figure in American circles? Studying the *Philadelphia Photographer*’s employment of a German pundit as its only long-established foreign correspondent, moreover, will ultimately question the dominant

² Sheehan, *Doctored*, 151.

³ On the rare occasion, modern scholars reference his column. See, for example, Philip Brookman, “Helios: Eadweard Muybridge in a Time of Change,” in *Eadweard Muybridge* (London: Tate Publishing, 2010), 62.

⁴ After this period, his letters concentrate more exclusively on his experiments in dye sensitivity, for which he is now known, and later the state of amateur photography in Germany. Vogel’s discussions of amateur photography in Germany begin around 1872 in his column, but the topic becomes more prevalent in his correspondence in 1880 onward. See, for example, Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 17, no. 196 (April 1880): 126–8.

historiographical focus on the photographic achievements of France and England and their influences on photography in the US.

Aside from his extensive knowledge of photography, his congenial manner, and his extraordinary ability to simplify difficult concepts, Vogel's popularity in America was bound to the large and active German immigrant population in the United States, a fact reflected in the German-oriented content of the *Philadelphia Photographer*. The impact of almost six million migrants of German descent arriving on American shores established a fertile climate for a German correspondent and, in turn, a culture of German-American photographic exchange. Period ethnic stereotypes of Germans boasted their talents in the arts and sciences, which further cemented Vogel's authority. The popularity of his column brings into relief the burgeoning relationship that German and American professional practitioners forged, a topic generally overlooked in early histories of the medium, which tend to discuss photography's development in strictly nationalist terms in isolation from others. From the early nineteenth century onward, the United States often associated itself with "Yankee ingenuity," but in terms of the progress of photography it is a product of cultural exchange, as this case study suggests. This specific case of Vogel and Edward Wilson (1838–1903), the editor of the *Philadelphia Photographer*, breaks down these national categorizations, bringing to light that the notion of national photographs needs to be renegotiated.

The *Philadelphia Photographer*, Vogel's chief means of communicating with the American photographic community, was an engine of change.⁵ It reflected the current

⁵ In 1867, *Humphrey's Journal of Photography and the Allied Arts and Sciences* asserted that Vogel was also their correspondent, but the Doctor vehemently denied this claim in a

state of photography in the US while also essentially shaping it. This periodical presents us with a prehistory of mass illustrated photography journals, a case where photography and print exchange is a huge factor before the illustrated press emerges with the technological improvements of half-tone printing. Even though the *Philadelphia Photographer* did not possess the wide circulation of early and mid-twentieth-century illustrated periodicals, it did have a strong national audience and a substantial, international readership. The *Philadelphia Photographer* examined a range of practical, aesthetic, and conceptual issues that connected the medium to other fields, such as science and religion, and often to the practice of painting. Yet during the late 1860s and early 1870s, what becomes evident in perusing its pages is that a German and American fraternity of photographers began to converse about these issues, and Vogel was at the center of this very interchange.

This chapter begins with a brief survey of the largely German-language scholarship on Vogel.⁶ It then provides an overview of the *Philadelphia Photographer* to demonstrate how Vogel both fit into and proceeded to transform the journal's topography with the debut of his column in 1866. His column changed in tone and perspective after his first visit to America in 1870 as an honored guest of the second National Photographic Association Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. After a three-month North American excursion that led him across the Midwest, the Northeast, and Canada, Vogel—and by extension German photography—assumed an even more esteemed position in the *Philadelphia Photographer*. By approaching his published missives not as

letter to the *Philadelphia Photographer*. See Hermann W. Vogel, "Letter from Dr. Vogel," *Philadelphia Photographer* 4, no. 39 (March 1867): 84.

⁶ For texts written about Vogel before 1984, see the list compiled by Friedrich Herneck in *Hermann Wilhelm Vogel* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1984), 117–8.

autonomous entities but as part of a larger issue of the journal, we can read his texts in dialogue with its articles, columns, advertisements, and tipped-in photograph.⁷ The chapter ends with Vogel's second trip to the United States in 1876, which coincides with a shift in his focus away from American photography. In essence, Vogel was an influential figure in the development of American photography and its recognition abroad. It was due to the large immigrant readership of the *Philadelphia Photographer*, Vogel's framing within that periodical, and historical events on both sides of the Atlantic that led him to gain secure footing in the newly minted terrain of early photography in the US.

Chemist, Teacher, Artist

Modern scholarship on Vogel is scant, gravitating toward his findings in photochemistry and his role as teacher of the American modernist photographer Alfred Stieglitz. During his lifetime, however, Vogel's projects peaked the interest of the international photographic community beginning in 1863, when he earned his doctorate in chemistry and wrote his dissertation on the light-sensitivity of chloride, bromide, and silver iodide and their relation to the new modern medium of photography.⁸ His innovative experiments were discussed in American and European photography periodicals, and by 1864 the name "Vogel" was familiar to those in the field on both sides of the Atlantic. As Edward Wilson wrote that year in his new periodical: "Dr. Vogel

⁷ On the relatively new field of periodical studies, in which this chapter participates, see Sean Latham and Robert Scholes, "The Rise of Periodical Studies," *Modern Language Association* 121, no. 2 (March 2006): 517–531.

⁸ Hermann W. Vogel, "Über das Verhalten des Chlorsilbers, Bromsilbers und Iodsilbers im Licht und die Theorie der Photographie" (PhD diss., Universität Göttingen, 1863).

is especially known for his laborious investigation of the action of light upon the silver haloids, an investigation which has interested chemists as well as photographers, and has been republished in many chemical and photographic Journals.”⁹ Over the next three decades, Vogel experimented in all areas of photography; his studies ranged from the effects of Baryta on the negative bath to changes in camera exposure using magnesium light.

Many photography historians argue that his most groundbreaking contribution to the medium was his discovery of emulsion sensitivity; indeed, scholars Heinz and Bridget Henisch refer to him as “a pioneer in dye sensitization.”¹⁰ Until the early 1870s, photographic emulsions were overly sensitive to blue and violet light, causing the sky to be overexposed in photographs. Emulsions were somewhat sensitive to green light and only marginally reactive to the rest of the colors in the spectrum. Due to this uneven sensitivity, the tonality of a black-and-white photograph was far from a perfect copy of what stood before the camera. In 1873, Vogel discovered that by adding small quantities of aniline dyes to photographic emulsions he could increase their sensitivity to other colors in the spectrum besides blue and violet, essentially paving the way to orthochromatic photography, which was a revolutionary finding that had international ramifications for photographers. A decade later, in 1884, he produced an emulsion which was sensitive up to reddish-orange light in the spectrum, which allowed for the invention

⁹ Edward Wilson, “Editor’s Table,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 1, no. 10 (October 1864): 159.

¹⁰ Heinz K. Henisch and Bridget A. Henisch, *The Painted Photograph, 1830–1914: Origins, Techniques, Aspirations* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996), 50.

of Isochromatic, or what he preferred to call them “color-sensitive” plates, again astounding the international professional and scientific photographic community.¹¹

That same year Vogel took on an American pupil—Alfred Stieglitz—studying in Germany at the *Königliche Technische Hochschule*, now the *Technische Universität* Berlin. This new student would arguably become one of the most influential American photographic artists of the twentieth century, and his importance to the dissemination, institutionalization, and historical understanding of photography in the United States cannot be overstated. While Vogel had been a professor of photography since 1873 and taught many students before and after him, his role as the man who formally introduced and trained Alfred Stieglitz in the art of photography routinely outshines Vogel’s other contributions to the medium. Given this focus on his relationship to Stieglitz, it is surprising that scholars have not fully acknowledged that Vogel’s understanding of the medium far exceeded a comprehension of photochemistry and included a deep interest in the medium’s artistic evolution. In 1870, for instance, Vogel maintained that “without a due regard for artistic principles the best chemicals and papers will fail to produce a beautiful picture.”¹² In other words, while he considered the latest technical and chemical developments in the rapidly changing medium to be significant, he also felt that aesthetic approaches photographers adopted were equally important to the medium’s progress.

After Vogel’s death, several trade journals ran obituaries that highlighted his extensive involvement with the German photographic community, including scientists,

¹¹ On the history of spectrum analysis, see Klaus Hentschel, *Mapping the Spectrum: Techniques of Visual Representation in Research and Teaching* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

¹² Hermann W. Vogel, “Some Remarks on the Cleveland Exhibition,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 79 (July 1870): 261.

artists, and professional photographers.¹³ Given that Vogel founded and edited the leading German photographic trade journal, *Photographische Mittheilungen*, from 1864 until a few years before his death in 1898, its eulogy was the most substantial.¹⁴ Written by Dr. Johann Carl Kaiserling, a specialist in microphotography, and accompanied by a regal portrait of the Doctor, the ten-page obituary frames Vogel as a man who devoted his life to the medium and its advancement (Figure 3.1).¹⁵ He described the “Doctor” as an unparalleled beacon of light, who believed whole-heartedly in photography’s unique power of expression.¹⁶ To demonstrate Vogel’s wide reach, Kaiserling emphasized his many roles: leader of the German photographic community and the long-standing president of the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography, photography juror at several international exhibitions, founder of the very periodical in which the obituary was published, the first photography professor in the world, a renowned photo-chemist, and lastly a prolific writer. Kaiserling, however, ignores Vogel’s twenty-year position as the German correspondent for the *Philadelphia Photographer*.

It is unsurprising that the 1930s saw a small wave of German-language literature on Vogel, considering the politics at play in Germany at the time.¹⁷ The National

¹³ See, for instance, “The Death of Dr. Hermann W. Vogel,” *American Journal of Photography* 217 (January 1899): 43–44; and “Obituary: Dr. Vogel,” *Anthony’s Photographic Bulletin* (January 1899): 4.

¹⁴ This chapter will use the old German spelling of this periodical (*Photographische Mittheilungen*), which the magazine employed throughout its run. Libraries now catalogue the journal under the new German spelling in which the “h” in the second word, is removed: *Photographische Mitteilungen*.

¹⁵ Carl Kaiserling, “H.W. Vogel (Nachruf),” *Photographische Mittheilungen* 36 (1899): 25–34.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁷ Eduard Röhl, *Hermann Wilhelm Vogel: ein Lebensbild* (Borna: R. Noske, 1939); Paul Hanneke, “Zu H. W. Vogels Wirken” *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Photographie, Photophysik und Photochemie* 34 (1935): 9–14; and Erich Stenger, “Hermann Wilhelm

Socialist Party was in power, and their modus operandi was to bring German achievements in all industries to the fore in order to build a strong sense of national pride and gain support for its cause. It was in this context, in 1939, that Eduard Röhl published the first book-length biography on Vogel. Hagiographic in approach, his account chronicles Vogel's life and contributions to photography, beginning with Vogel's humble upbringing in a small German village and ending with his experiments in dye sensitivity. For its sources, Röhl's book relies heavily on Vogel's published materials, primarily his articles in German periodicals as well as the meeting notes from the Berlin Society for Advancement of Photography, which were published in *Photographische Mittheilungen*. As in Vogel's German obituaries, the *Philadelphia Photographer* plays no part in this biography. Röhl focuses instead on what Vogel did for German photography.

His role with the periodical was first noted, albeit briefly, in Robert Taft's influential 1938 book, *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839–1889*.¹⁸ Taft charted photography's first fifty years in America, not through the perspective of technological development, but through the medium's effect on American social history and the effect of social life on the progress of photography. While he employs the term social history, it is not quite as scholars would define it today. Indeed he organizes his history primarily by specific forms of photographs (e.g. the ambrotype, the tintype, the photographic album), "each of which in its day has had its turn as the reigning favorite."¹⁹ By focusing on the most popular technology of the day, he was able

Vogel. Zu seinemhundertsten Geburtstag," *Naturwissenschaften* 22, no. 12 (March 1934): 177–181.

¹⁸ Robert Taft, *Photography and the American Scene: A Social History, 1839–1889* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1938).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, viii.

to address the American scene. In his view, it was logical to turn to nineteenth-century periodicals as his primary sources, as he believed them to be carriers of “reliable source material,” and thus he routinely marshaled material from the *Philadelphia Photographer*. In so doing, Taft acknowledged Vogel’s involvement in US photography and, by extension, a sincere American interest in German photography. Calling Vogel “the German authority on photography,”²⁰ Taft suggested his transatlantic interests: “The letters kept the readers informed of progress abroad and are also interesting for Vogel’s comments on American life as seen by a foreigner.”²¹

In the 1980s, two more publications on Vogel appeared: another traditional, book-length biography in German and a short article in *Aperture*, a quarterly American periodical devoted to photographic artists.²² Regarding the latter, contemporary photographer John Gossage (b. 1946) provided the magazine with Vogel’s photographs for their issue on “presenting photographers past.”²³ He had purchased an album of Vogel’s images, entitled *Nach Ägypten entsendete archäologische Expedition* (Archaeological Expedition Sent to Egypt), at a bookstore in Baltimore, and only after its acquisition “did he realize it was a rare ‘missing link’ of photographic history.”²⁴ The editors of *Aperture* had selected Vogel for their 1983 issue dedicated to artists who “have been lost or forgotten” and “that seemed to expand our appreciation of photography’s

²⁰ Ibid., 164.

²¹ Ibid., 499.

²² Friedrich Herneck, *Hermann Wilhelm Vogel* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1984); and “Photographers without Photographs,” *Aperture* 90 (1983): 40–7.

²³ John Gossage organized an exhibition, titled “Empire,” of his own and Vogel’s photographs at the Canadian Centre for Architecture in Montreal in 2000. The exhibition catalogue is comprised of primarily images, with excerpts from Vogel’s letters to England. John R. Gossage, *Empire* (Tucson: Nazraeli Press, 2000).

²⁴ Carole Kismaric, ed., “Presenting Photographers Past: An Editorial,” *Aperture* 90 (1983): 2.

past.”²⁵ They recognized, according to these parameters, that Vogel as a photographer had been consigned to oblivion. *Aperture* reproduced nine of his photographs from 1868 depicting archeological sites in Egypt along with excerpts from his letters to London and a short biography. This article was the first publication from the twentieth century to frame Vogel explicitly as an artist.²⁶ “The photographs,” the editors wrote, “reveal not just his technical virtuosity; they show his exacting attention to composition and the feeling of light.”²⁷ In his photograph *Saqqara* (1868), for example, he portrays a tomb-like entrance with a massive stone sarcophagus at its center, its top pushed partially to the side catching the soft light (Figure 3.2). As opposed to being a photograph made simply for informational use, this picture speaks to the beauty and mystery of the past. The article’s importance lay in its recognition of Vogel’s role behind the camera; the Prussian government commissioned him to photograph overseas sites several times, including this project in Egypt and the solar eclipse in Aden; this latter undertaking was discussed not only in European journals, but also in the middle-class American periodical *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper* (Figure 3.3).²⁸

The existing literature on Vogel has much less to say on his relationship with American photographers, apart from his teaching of Alfred Stieglitz. But what might we say of his early career and his complex relationship with US audiences? A critical examination of a decade of correspondence with the *Philadelphia Photographer* will

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ulrich Pohlmann also reproduced one of Vogel’s photographs in his compendium on nineteenth-century German photography. See Ulrich Pohlmann, *Zwischen Biedermeier und Gründerzeit: Deutschland in Frühen Photographien 1840–1890 aus der Sammlung Sievert* (München: Schirmer Mosel, 2012), 296.

²⁷ Kismaric, ed., “Presenting Photographers Past,” 2.

²⁸ “Photographing the Great Eclipse of 1868 at Aden,” *Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper*, April 10, 1869, 60–1.

begin to account for Vogel's palpable presence in mid-nineteenth-century American photography and reveal how he managed to transform German-American relations through his transatlantic exchanges.

Following the Teutonic Thread

In January 1864, when the United States was still ensconced in the Civil War, the *Philadelphia Photographer* made its debut with editor Edward Wilson at the helm.

Addressing the magazine's patrons, he asserted that the journal's primary concern was "photography and its advancement."²⁹ Cognizant of the competition among periodicals, Wilson attempted to distinguish the content of his journal from that of others:

There are none published similar to our own, and we propose to be different from the rest in many ways. While we invite contributions, bearing specifically upon Photography, from all interested in the art; while we invite queries from all desiring information; while our pages shall ever be impartially open for discussions on all topics of interest pertaining to the art we advocate, we also hope to intersperse such matter in our columns as will be useful, instructive, and entertaining to the general reader, and make our new Magazine one that will be gladly welcomed as an ornament to the centre-table. Besides this, in each part we promise our patrons a fine specimen photograph, worth at least as much as we charge for the number.³⁰

While the journal was geared toward a professional audience of photographers, or those for whom photography was their primary source of income, it also spoke to a broader readership of amateurs with a keen interest in the medium. In its first issue, it contained features that would become regular sections such as Coleman Sellers's "Letters to an Engineer," a column on photography's relationship with engineering, as well as the

²⁹ Edward Wilson, "A Word to Our Patrons," *Philadelphia Photographer* 1, no. 1 (January 1864): 13.

³⁰ Ibid.

meeting notes of the Philadelphia Photographic Society (PPS), an organization which welcomed professionals as well as serious amateurs.³¹

Published monthly in its eponymous city,³² the *Philadelphia Photographer* began as the organ of the PPS, and in 1868 became the official publication of the National Photographic Association (NPA), an organization of professional photographers in the United States.³³ Many American photographic societies followed suit, and the journal became the favored platform from which to publish meeting notes for several like-minded clubs.³⁴ Established in March 1868, the German Photographic Society of New York (GPSNY) was founded as a branch of the German Photographic Society in Berlin. “Greeted with an affectionate welcome by Dr. Vogel,” the GPSNY’s objectives were to forge “a closer connection among the German photographers of New York; for the mutual furtherance of the interests of the photographic art, and for the theoretical and practical assistance of the members among themselves.”³⁵ In their first meeting they voted to have their monthly proceedings printed in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, making the GPSNY the only immigrant-based photographic society in the US that

³¹ Coleman Sellers was also the American correspondent for the *British Journal of Photography*. On his early career and interest in photography, see Robert Wall Eskin, “The Amateur Photographic Exchange Club (1861–1863): The Profits of Association,” (M.A. Thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1982).

³² The last two years (1887–8) of the *Philadelphia Photographer* were produced in New York. The journal became bimonthly in 1886 and ceased publication in 1888.

³³ On this decision, see “A Chat about Ourselves,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 6, no. 61 (January 1869): 21. Tanya Sheehan provides an overview of photographic periodicals published during this period in her book *Doctored*, 151–53.

³⁴ Apart from the Philadelphia Photographic Society, other American photographic clubs published their notes in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, including, but not limited to, the New England Photographic Association, The Pennsylvania Photographic Association, and the Northwestern Photographic Society, the Photographic Association of Western Illinois, and the Photographic Association of the District of Columbia.

³⁵ “The German Photographic Society of New York,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 5, no. 60 (December 1868): 428.

published regularly in the journal. In *Photographische Mittheilungen*, Vogel announced the club's organization on the first page of his April 1868 issue, Vogel exclaimed: "It brings us much pleasure to be able to notify our readers about the founding of a new district society in New York."³⁶ This connection with their countrymen living abroad excited those in Berlin. Shortly thereafter, the GPSNY's meeting notes began to be published in *Photographische Mittheilungen* as well.

In the *Philadelphia Photographer*'s first five years, the magazine's content reflected a profound interest in photographic developments in Europe, and German achievements were often at the top of the agenda. In the May 1864 issue, for instance, a new column appeared entitled "Photography Abroad."³⁷ Philadelphia-born chemist, Matthew Carey Lea (1823–1897) presided over this section, which functioned like an annotated bibliography.³⁸ In each issue, Lea summarized the latest news from European photographic journals, such as the *Bulletin Belge*, *Photographisches Archiv*, and *Photographic Notes*. He grouped the column's content by nation, which offered his audience a clear image of which nation's photographers were actively experimenting with the medium and sharing their findings. Routinely, Germany, France, and England were the countries that Lea featured, and often Germany came first in his lineup. Representing his column's scope, in July 1864, Lea wrote about a new mode of vignetting in Germany, new developments in French photolithography, Swan's Carbon

³⁶ "Founding of the Fourth District Society of German Photographers in New York," *Photographische Mittheilungen* 5, no. 49 (April 1868): 29.

³⁷ M. Carey Lea, "Photography Abroad," *Philadelphia Photographer* 1, no. 5 (May 1864): 67–72.

³⁸ Lea published articles frequently in the *Philadelphia Photographer* and in the *British Journal of Photography*. He also published a manual on the medium in 1871. For more on Lea, see David Whitcomb, "Mathew Carey Lea: Chemist, Photographic Scientist," *Chemical Heritage News Magazine* 24, no. 4 (Winter 2006–2007): 11–13, 19.

process in England, and coloring positives in Belgium.³⁹ The following year, the column's name changed to "Photographic Summary," and with this title modification Lea revised its aims: "It is intended in future that they should not refer exclusively to foreign novelties but that they shall also include notices of what is new and original in American Photography also."⁴⁰ Lea thus reframed his column to now include American achievements, asserting that practitioners in the US had something to add to the medium's advancement in Europe.

Apart from "Photographic Summary" and Vogel's column, which began in 1866, the periodical regularly published news on German photography more so than any other culture. In the April 1864 issue, for example, Lea wrote an article titled "Photography in Germany," in which he discussed the current state of the medium in the principalities.⁴¹ He provided an overview of Vogel's experiments on traces of the iodide of potassium and introduced a new photomechanical printing process by John Baptist Obernetter of Munich. German photographic culture was ever present in the journal's pages, and Vogel's name in particular could be found throughout its articles. One topic Vogel touched on regularly was international exhibitors at photography fairs and conventions.

In the *Philadelphia Photographer*, calls for contributions to overseas exhibitions began to be advertised as early as February 1865. Wilson wrote in his "Editor's Table" about a Prussian photographic exhibition, urging his readers to submit their latest work to the show:

³⁹ M. Carey Lea, "Photography Abroad," *Philadelphia Photographer* 1, no. 7 (July 1864): 101–4.

⁴⁰ M. Carey Lea, "Photography Summary," *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 13 (January 1865): 8–11.

⁴¹ M. Carey Lea, "Photography in Germany," *Philadelphia Photographer* 1, no. 4 (April 1864): 54–55.

Our esteemed contemporary, Dr. Herman Vogel, ... writes us that an exhibition of Photographs is to be held in Berlin, in May 1865. All American Photographers are cordially invited to contribute. It is the desire of the managers to include all branches of applied photography, especially of American, so little known in Germany.... We trust there will be a hearty response to this invitation, and that our German friends will have substantial evidence of the beautiful work made on this side of the water.⁴²

Of interest here is the implication that American photographs are rarely seen across the Atlantic. Both Wilson and Vogel responded to this view by calling for a stronger American photographic presence abroad. In the following issue of the journal, Lea echoed that appeal, specifying what kinds of photographic subjects were best sent across the Atlantic: "What is most desired from America is, that which is characteristic and special. First of all, portraits of American generals and statesmen, Lincoln, Grant, Sherman and others. Also views of American scenery and buildings, California views, battle scenes, and generally whatever is especially connected with the country."⁴³ In effect, he wanted Americans to send photographs imbued with a sense of their own national culture, or what Americans saw as "American" in the context of the Civil War, when the very idea of the nation was called into question.

Also in early 1865, during the remaining months of the American Civil War, Vogel struck up a photographic postal exchange with Edward Wilson. In the first of many such deliveries, Vogel mailed Wilson a selection of *carte de visites* by the Berlin partnership Paul Loescher & Max Petsch (Loescher & Petsch, active 1860s to 1890s). In the *Philadelphia Photographer's* March 1865 issue, the PSP's meeting notes relayed the first of these exchanges: "Mr. Wilson exhibited some very fine cartes, by Petsch of

⁴² Edward Wilson, "Editor's Table," *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 14 (February 1865): 31–32.

⁴³ M. Carey Lea, "Photographic Summary," *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 15 (March 1865): 44.

Berlin, sent to him by Dr. Vogel.”⁴⁴ Seeing these photographs would prove to be a formative experience, one that American photographers would look back on as a watershed moment in the development of American photography. Unfortunately, the original photographs that were exchanged are no longer extant, but some bust-length studio photographs from the same period by the Berlin partnership Loescher & Petsch suggest their particular aesthetic: soft lighting of a subject seated at an angle, often shown in profile with a close-up of the sitter’s face (Figure 3.4). Still a topic of conversation in August, the editor again wrote of Loescher & Petsch’s “fine German photographs,” remarking that “as specimens of artistic taste applied to photography, and of photographic manipulation they are very rarely excelled or equaled... Every photographer should have a few of them to show him what can be done, and to give him something to aspire to.”⁴⁵ This rich encounter between the American Wilson and the Prussian Vogel exemplifies a specific aspect of photography’s early history, the way it was embedded in transatlantic exchange. Considered exemplary, the photographs of this Berlin duo gained a following in the US, and over the next decade Loescher & Petsch’s images graced the frontispiece of the *Philadelphia Photographer* more than any other foreign photographer.

Since 1863, Vogel had been intimately working with Loescher & Petsch. They would meet at the photographers’ studio every Saturday, “a day” Vogel described as

⁴⁴ “Photographic Society of Philadelphia,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 15 (March 1865): 45–6.

⁴⁵ Edward Wilson, “Editor’s Table,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 20 (August 1865): 138.

“devoted to artistic studies and experiments.”⁴⁶ These early years of collaboration shaped the participants, helping each of them acquire extensive, hands-on knowledge of the medium. Experimental and exploratory, this experience allowed Loescher & Petsch the space to develop their aesthetic vision and provided Vogel with the extended time to investigate the art of photography, specifically looking at how light, pose, and even studio arrangement influenced the final product.

In June 1865, their collaboration resulted in Vogel’s first article in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, which demonstrated not only his interest in aesthetics, but also his keen understanding of the medium’s artistic possibilities.⁴⁷ Illustrated with photographs by Loescher & Petsch, whom he called “our best operators,” Vogel’s “On Posing and Lighting the Sitter” was a groundbreaking text in many respects (Figure 3.5). First, the article was printed in several photographic journals in Germany, England, and the US, including *Photographische Mittheilungen* and the *Photographic News* of London.⁴⁸ While reprints were common on a national scale in photography trade journals, they were not as typical on an international scale in these early years. Second, this was the first time that the *Philadelphia Photographer* had ever published a portrait as its frontispiece, rather than a landscape or a reproduction of an engraving. Each issue opened with a tipped-in albumen silver print, and the editor routinely explained its specifics in

⁴⁶ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 10, no. 110 (February 1873): 58.

⁴⁷ Hermann W. Vogel, “On Posing and Lighting the Sitter,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 18 (June 1865): 87–93.

⁴⁸ *The Photographic News* published the article over two issues: Hermann W. Vogel, “On Lighting and Pose in Photographic Portraiture,” *The Photographic News* 54, no. 344 (February 3, 1865): 54–55 and no. 335 (April 7, 1865): 161–163. He also published it in his journal. See Hermann W. Vogel, “Ueber Stellung und Beleuchtung,” *Photographische Mittheilungen* 1, no. 6 (September 1864): 71–4.

the column “Our Picture.” It was not until the 1870s that it became more commonplace for the journal to link a feature article with the photograph. In these early years, frontispieces generally depicted the magnificent, varied terrain of the United States or an American genre scene rife with moral lessons from a photographed engraving. Publishing these Loescher & Petsch portraits thus directed attention away from its typical American-oriented subjects to a German countenance, and the regular section “Our Picture” in the case was unnecessary. Third, this was also the first time a German photographer produced the frontispiece. The honor of publishing the journal’s initial portrait gave further weight to Loescher & Petsch’s talent in capturing photographic likenesses as compared to American photographers. Fourth, this was the first time that the journal had published more than one photograph as its frontispiece. The four portraits of a model in different lighting conditions were tipped into the journal’s frontispiece, a very time-consuming and expensive undertaking and a vanguard move for the journal. The article printed in *Photographische Mittheilungen* had interspersed the photographs throughout the essay (Figure 3.6), and *Photographic News* used woodcut illustrations of the images.

Opposite the grid of four photographs stood the magazine’s masthead, and immediately below it was Vogel’s first full-length article in a place of significance, addressing how light and pose could produce artistic results. This conflation of art and studio photography had rarely been explored in such detail, nor had the mission of the photographic artist been defined as follows:

To obtain claims to esteem and success, the photographic artist has no less need than the painter and sculptor of a profound study and of the faculty of observation. In the same manner that these latter, to produce a work full of life and beauty, must study the minutest details, the flow of draperies, and the most evanescent expression, so the photographer is compelled to a study, no less minute, of his original: he must dwell upon its tournure, its clothing, its pose....

his whole task is, therefore, limited to posing and lighting the model in the most advantageous manner, then to animate it, and then, but till then, commence his mechanical operation of exposure.⁴⁹

By framing studio portraiture in the rhetoric of fine arts, Vogel positioned himself in line with other significant American photographic figures such as Marcus Aurelius Root, who published *The Camera and the Pencil* in 1864.⁵⁰

The June 1866 issue included another headlining article by Vogel about the light in photographic glass houses, and the frontispiece—which sat opposite the feature—was created by American photographers Henszey & Co., who Wilson noted worked in the style of Loescher & Petsch (Figure 3.7). The aim of Vogel’s article was to teach Americans how to light their subjects like the famous Berlin photographers did: “this lighting from behind is practiced in Germany, we believe, and is one of the secrets of the success of those beautiful Berlin cartes.”⁵¹ Here, he references the popularity of the *cartes* he first sent in the spring of 1865. According to Vogel, their atelier configuration provided the best lighting situation possible, and it should be copied by Americans as a result. He further stressed the importance of lighting, noting that “there is more art in lighting the model than most are willing to concede.”⁵² Articles about American cameras, photography at the US Capitol, and the revenue tax on photography filled this issue, which came at the end of the American Civil War. Thus at a moment when the political

⁴⁹ Vogel, “On Posing and Lighting the Sitter,” 87–8.

⁵⁰ Marcus Aurelius Root, *The Camera and the Pencil, or The Heliographic Art, its Theory and Practice in all its Various Branches; e.g. – Daguerreotypy, Photography, &c.; Together with its History in the United States and in Europe; Being at Once a Theoretical and Practical Treatise, and designed alike as a Text-Book and a Hand-book* (Philadelphia: M. A. Root, 1864).

⁵¹ Hermann W. Vogel, “The Glass-House,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 30 (June 1866): 163.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 163.

focus shifted to rebuilding the nation, German photography comes to the fore, held up as a paradigm of artistic excellence.

Vogel's US Debut

Vogel's regular column first appeared in the *Philadelphia Photographer* in July 1866, under the title "Photographic Novelties of Germany," and with it German photographic accomplishments assumed an even more prominent role in the periodical. The column's debut led Wilson to pronounce "that we have been privileged to add Dr. Hermann Vogel, editor of the *Photo. Mittheilungen*, at Berlin, Prussia (from which excellent Journal we so often have to quote), to our already staunch staff of contributors. ... the fraternity throughout the world is much indebted."⁵³ Indeed, Vogel's CV was impressive: doctorate in photochemistry; President of the Berlin Photographic Society; editor of the *Photographische Mittheilungen*; and organizer of the first comprehensive photography exhibition in Germany in 1865. Launching into his first missive, Vogel explained to his new American audience that a good photographer was one who "brings to bear upon [the medium] a genuine artistic feeling."⁵⁴ Accordingly, to be a photographer for him meant more than learning "mechanical manipulations," and he deemed Prussian photography to be at the forefront of this movement; in other words, he staked his claim for Prussian superiority in the field of art photography. "Berlin stands," he declared, "at the head of all German cities in the cultivation of this aesthetical side of photography... There are some few, such as Loescher & Petsch, Wigand, Milster, H.

⁵³ Edward L. Wilson, "Editor's Table," *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866): 223.

⁵⁴ Hermann W. Vogel, "Photographic Novelties of Germany," *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866): 205.

Graf, &c, who stand creditably prominent in this respect.”⁵⁵ All of these photographers would be featured in the frontispiece of the *Philadelphia Photographer* in the next ten years. Oriented around German innovation, yet also demonstrating his broad interests, his column further discussed the magic photographs of Wilhelm Gröne and the latest wide-angle lenses of Steinheil, before signing off with what would become his signature tagline until 1870: “yours, very truly, Dr. H. Vogel.” His first letter showed how broad his interests were—fine arts, studio photography, optics—and like all of his letters to come, it was written in the warm, trustworthy voice of a benevolent authority.

In this issue, Berlin photographic culture took center stage, likely in celebration of the journal’s new correspondent, and the *Philadelphia Photographer* presented Vogel and Loescher & Petsch as models toward which American practitioners should strive. Opening the issue, for instance, is a Loescher & Petsch frontispiece titled *The Gleaners* (Figure 3.8). In this genre scene staged in their studio, a suited bystander follows two girls, dressed in traditional German dirndls, one with a rake leaning on her shoulder and the other holding straw in her folded apron. Wilson later noted his readers’ responses to this image: “Our Berlin picture seems to have given great satisfaction. One says ‘it is as good a picture anybody need ever wish to make;’ another that ‘it is worth the price of a year’s subscription.’”⁵⁶ These comments need to be situated in the broader context of fine art: American genre painting was popular in the mid-nineteenth century, particularly around the Civil War, a time of great change.⁵⁷ Genre scenes were fashionable among

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Edward Wilson, “Editor’s Table,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 32 (August 1866): 255.

⁵⁷ On the popularity of genre scenes in American painting, see, for example, Elizabeth Johns, *American Genre Painting: The Painting of Everyday Life* (New Haven: Yale

Berlin photographers as well in this period of upheaval as war and unification loomed on the horizon. This was the first such photograph to appear in the *Philadelphia Photographer*.

The July issue presented more German-oriented content than a frontispiece and Vogel's novelties column; indeed, Wilson transformed the July issue into a microcosm of German photographic culture. Opposite the Loescher & Petsch *Gleaners* photograph stood the issue's feature story written by Vogel about a new printing process.⁵⁸ This juxtaposition of Germans—Vogel and Loescher & Petsch—is no accident. Wilson has strategically inundated his readers in this issue—which contains Vogel's first appearance as a staff contributor—with content that celebrates Prussian photography, both from a technological and an aesthetic standpoint. The inclusion of Vogel and Loescher & Petsch helps elevate the still nascent trade journal, the *Philadelphia Photographer*. Vogel and his experiments are further highlighted in another article by Lea about the effects of iodide and bromide in collodion.⁵⁹ A few pages later, Loescher & Petsch are upheld as exemplars in the field of child portraiture. The author writes:

Although we have nearly three hundred pictures of babies and children in a box by themselves in all sorts of beautifully graceful and lovely attitudes, we have none more charming than a series recently received from Messrs. Loescher & Petsch, of Berlin. They are charming in the extreme... These gentlemen, who are doubtless born artists, as will be seen by the picture in the present number, have given titles to these pictures... each of which is a perfect joy and gem.⁶⁰

University Press, 1991) and David Lubin, *Picturing a Nation: Art and Social Change in Nineteenth-Century America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

⁵⁸ Hermann W. Vogel, "Experiments with Aniline Printing Process," *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866): 193–5.

⁵⁹ M. Carey Lea, "On the Influence of Iodide and Bromide in Collodion," *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866): 201.

⁶⁰ "Photographing Children," *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866): 196–7.

The reverent way in which the author described their work is extraordinary. In portraying them as “doubtless born artists,” the reporter shields them from any criticism. It is not their technological prowess that makes them *sui generis*, which relates to Vogel’s statement in the same issue about photography being more than “mechanical manipulations”; rather, it is the duo’s ability to create “charming” and “handsome” photographs that make them virtuosos. Sincerely admired, their photographs are discussed once more in an article about skylights immediately following Vogel’s debut column: “We have so frequently spoken of the charming pictures sent to us by Messrs. Loescher & Petsch, of Berlin, Prussia, and they have been so much admired on account of the very superior manner in which the models are lighted, we concluded that we could not go amiss in publishing a drawing of their atelier, and one of their pictures with this issue of our journal.”⁶¹ Here, the author has not only complimented the artists, but also given readers the ability to mimic their studio and lighting configuration. Berlin photographic culture, in effect, eclipsed all other cultural content in the July 1866 issue of the *Philadelphia Photographer*.

The Late 1860s: Vogel Finds His Voice

Over the next few years, Vogel’s column changed not only in name, but also in content and perspective. Over the months in which the journal published his correspondence, his column’s title was altered a handful of times, a change which could be attributed to either Wilson or Vogel. Given Vogel’s close monitoring of his translated

⁶¹ “More about skylights,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866): 207.

texts, it is more likely that Vogel changed the name of his monthly column.⁶² The shift in language from “Photographic Novelties of Germany,” (July, November) “Photography in Germany” (August, October) and by January 1867 “German Correspondence” indicates his oscillating conception of the column’s aim. In using the term “novelty,” his first title suggests that its content would revolve around German innovation, the unfamiliar; yet, the word also implies a trivial or amusing piece of news. Indeed, his initial discussion of magic photographs and photographic images printed on chocolates points to this connotation.⁶³ His second title, “Photography in Germany,” restricted his content geographically, which was problematic given that Vogel’s discussions tended to move beyond German cultural borders, even in the column’s initial years. This became especially true when he began to jury international photographic exhibitions and fairs. The title “German Correspondence,” which he adopted for the next twenty years, conveyed the idea that he was writing from Germany or from a German perspective, but did not necessarily bind him to German topics alone.

From 1867 to 1869, Vogel treated a wide variety of subjects in his letters. Often he reported on four to eight disparate issues, and beginning in 1867, each column commenced with a short synopsis of the diverse topics covered (Figure 3.9). Some subjects were German-focused, such as his discussion of the new photographic fads he observed. *Cartes de visite* of flowers and photographs of oil paintings, for example, were

⁶² Vogel would send his letters to the *Philadelphia Photographer* in German, and a Philadelphia-based German-American photographer would translate them for publication. Vogel would then read over the finished translations in the printed issue and would at times comment on the translations in the following issue if he felt that they did not properly express his intended meaning. See, for example, Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 21, no. 303 (November 1884): 328–9.

⁶³ Vogel, “Photographic Novelties of Germany,” 205.

two new branches of photography he felt gained clout in the German principalities in the late 1860s.⁶⁴ Other areas of discussion were of interest only to serious practitioners with a passion for photochemistry, and these topics ranged from chronicling his own experiments with iodide of silver to thinking about the results of others' scientific studies. Optics was another area that he addressed often, and he always reported on new lenses by Zentmayer, Dallmeyer, and Steinheil. In addition, he discussed photographers who caught his attention, such as Adolph Braun (1812–1877), Adam Salomon (1818–1881), and Loescher & Petsch, introducing the work of these renowned European photographers to his American audience.

In the fall of 1869, Vogel explained in his column that “it is not my province to report on American, but German photography,” yet in practice this simply was not the case.⁶⁵ It indeed started that way in 1866; however, during his stint as photography juror at the Paris International Exhibition of 1867, his scope widened considerably, with Vogel reporting on German, French, Russian, Austrian, and English photography. American photography, however, was poorly represented at the exhibition with only nineteen exhibitors, as he and others noted, compared to 175 French exhibitors, 121 English exhibitors, 61 Austrians, and 53 Prussians, etc.⁶⁶ Regardless, he discussed what little there was with high praise, touting the photographs of Lewis Morris Rutherford (1816–1892), Carleton Watkins (1829–1916), Alexander Gardner, Frederick Gutekunst (1831–1917), and Charles and Edward Bierstadt. The latter three image-makers, all of German

⁶⁴ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 4, no. 37 (January 1867): 25.

⁶⁵ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 6, no. 69 (September 1869): 303.

⁶⁶ George Wharton Simpson, “Photography at the International Exhibition at Paris,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 4, no. 43 (July 1867): 199.

descent, captured his eye especially, and it is not far-fetched to imagine that their status as German immigrants led Vogel to report on “American” contributions. Yet, it was also the novel subject matter that interested Vogel. The impressive landscape work of Carleton Watkins, for instance, fascinated him: “America is still to us a new world, and anything which gives us such a true representation as a photograph, is sure to be looked upon with wondering eyes.”⁶⁷ While his comment specifically addressed Watkins’s mammoth landscape photographs of the American West, it also spoke to a larger point that Vogel made repeatedly: America—its photographers, photographs, and landscape—was unfamiliar to European eyes, and he wanted this to change.

Wilson shared this opinion and kept up the tradition of sending parcels of photographs overseas to provide Vogel and his colleagues with American photographic specimens. In 1867, another shipment of photographs from Wilson arrived, and Vogel spoke about them with zeal in the *Philadelphia Photographer*:

Rarely have I experienced so much pleasure as was given me by the receipt of our parcel containing American photographs... I obtained by it a more thorough, perfect, and favorable impression of the capabilities of American photographers, than I had formed at the Paris Exposition, where the few American pictures exhibited seemed lost among the thousand and one other things and part of them were hung unfavorably... Your specimens will travel all over Germany.⁶⁸

After a lengthy discussion of photographers like Lewis Rutherford and the Rochester-based portraitist John Howe Kent (1827–1910), Vogel exclaimed: “all impress upon my mind the great achievements and rapid progress of your countrymen.”⁶⁹ His column’s

⁶⁷ Watkins sent thirty of his mammoth prints to the exhibition in Paris, where he was awarded a medal. Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 4, no. 42 (June 1867): 173.

⁶⁸ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 4, no. 46 (October 1867): 327.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 328.

discussions of the photographs conveyed his excitement at the quality of American photographs, but it also revealed surprise—surprise that uncovers to the readers of the *Philadelphia Photographer* Vogel's low expectations of the state of photography in the United States. In terms of an unspoken national photographic hierarchy, American photographers were not considered high ranking. These presumptions of the quality of American photography stemmed from US photographers not actively participating and competing in European exhibitions. Ultimately, Vogel sensed that American photographers were isolated from the European fraternity of photographers and so he urged North American practitioners to compete in international exhibitions and to send more pictures abroad.

However, Vogel did not simply want American photographers to be known in Europe; he wanted an exchange of photographs between the two cultures, an alliance, and more importantly to see what would emerge in such an exchange. After seeing more photographs, Vogel believed that image-makers in the United States had something to add to the progress of the art of photography, and progress—whether it be technological or stylistic—was always one of his primary objectives. At stake for Vogel and others in this cultural interchange would thus be a passing back and forth of ideas that would allow both photographic cultures—German and American—to flourish. This relationship therefore went both ways. Subjects, techniques, style, technology, and even national idioms at a time of uncertainty, these were the currency of this bicultural conversation, a conversation that would show how the notion of national groupings of photography could be as quickly dismantled as they could be constructed.

After receipt of Wilson's package, Vogel responded by sending more German photographs to him. In January 1868, Wilson wrote an article outlining the contents of Vogel's next parcel, which included work by Vogel himself of the Berlin Zoological Garden (Figure 3.10). Vogel's ethereal sense of light designates illumination as the true protagonist of this photograph. The light shimmers, instilling a palpable sense of air in the image. Wilson described Vogel's photographs in admiring terms: "They are peculiarly excellent in every way... the majority of them are in wooded groves often by the clear reflecting water and very hard to get are such views but Dr. Vogel has secured full exposure and excellent results... It grows more and more beautiful as one becomes acquainted with it."⁷⁰ In sending his own images, Vogel revealed that his knowledge of the medium came not only from his experiments, but also from being behind the camera. The photographs thus cemented his authority on another level.

Soon Vogel's readers would be able to put a name to a face. Vogel traversed the Atlantic in 1870 as an invited guest of the second NPA's exhibition, and this event would bring interactions between German and American photographic circles to another level. This experience would strengthen his already favorable opinion of American photography and intensify his interest in it. From this point onwards, Vogel's province became anything and everything related to photography, particularly as it existed on American shores.

⁷⁰ Edward Wilson, "German Photographs," *Philadelphia Photographer* 5, no. 49 (January 1868): 15.

The Guest of Honor

Through the concerted efforts of New York and Philadelphia photographers, the NPA was established on December 1, 1868 in Philadelphia.⁷¹ The association's president was Abraham Bogardus (1822–1908) from New York, and Edward Wilson of the *Philadelphia Photographer* was its secretary. At the height of its activities in the 1870s, the NPA, which photography historian Keith Davis has described as “the field's first broadly successful professional organization,”⁷² boasted well over a thousand members. Its conventions—annual exhibitions with a heavy programming schedule including roundtable discussions, lectures, demonstrations, and lively parties—attracted huge crowds.⁷³

In 1869, the NPA presented Vogel with their first honorary membership, a distinction they would afford to only a few foreign figures over the years, such as British correspondent George Wharton Simpson (1824–1880).⁷⁴ This privilege conveyed how highly the NPA respected and admired Vogel. To be on the German pundit's radar, a man so deeply woven into the nineteenth-century fabric of the photography world, would be an asset to any photographic organization, especially a newly founded one that was

⁷¹ In 1880, the National Photographic Association was revived under the name of the Photographic Association of America.

⁷² Keith F. Davis, *The Origins of American Photography: From Daguerreotype to Dry-Plate, 1839–1885* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 244.

⁷³ Taft, *Photography and the American Scene*, 325.

⁷⁴ The editor of *Photographic News* in London, Simpson, became the *Philadelphia Photographer*'s British correspondent in June 1868, but his column, titled “Practical Notes on Various Photographic Subjects,” lasted only a few years, ending in the early 1870s.

attempting to establish its professional identity.⁷⁵ In his column in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, Vogel relayed his pleasure upon receiving the honor:

I was surprised by the glad tidings that the National Photographic Association of the US has made me one of its honorary members. The acknowledgment of my humble services, coming back from the united photographers of the free United States is more prized by me than any title or decoration which a prince could bestow upon me, and it shall encourage and stimulate me to continue in my efforts and to devote all my energies to prove worthy of the honor.⁷⁶

Vogel frames his response through the lens of surprise, but his tone nevertheless communicates his own confidence in his status to his readers. He is aware of the respect he garners within the global photographic landscape, and that he could have an impact on the NPA's status. His appointment as an honorary member would not only benefit the NPA, but also him. Vogel has become a modern day board member, giving him the power to shape a new institution's reputation. As a member, he would also be privy to all new American discoveries and ideas, which could greatly benefit Vogel. He would be one of few Europeans to be so well connected to American photographers. One year after becoming an honorary member, the NPA officially invited him to attend the Cleveland exhibition as their guest with all expenses paid, and he gladly accepted. This would be the first of three trips he made to North America. This particular voyage would be foundational in shaping his experience and opinion of American photography, which he found to possess a culture of enterprise, friendship, and high artistic quality.

His acceptance of this invitation spawned a host of articles in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, which used his forthcoming visit to acknowledge that his presence could

⁷⁵ On the NPA's efforts to establish its professional identity, also see the first chapter of Sheehan, *Doctored*, 28–38.

⁷⁶ Hermann W. Vogel, "German Correspondence," *Philadelphia Photographer* 6, no. 62 (February 1869): 45–6.

be a turning point in how the world perceived the young nation's photographers. Yet, these articles also revealed an underlying uncertainty. For example, Wilson wrote: "Let us be there and give him a warm welcome so that he may take home with him a good report of American photography and American photographers."⁷⁷ Wilson's statement points to an overarching anxiety present—that Vogel could return to European audiences with a poor report of what he found overseas. This disquietude or rather insecurity stems from European photographers routinely disparaging photographic work from the United States. With American image-makers' meager showings on the international exhibition circuit, photographers from the US were not taken very seriously as equals in photographic circles across the Atlantic. While they were generally deemed pragmatic and even enterprising, American photographers were seldom discussed in terms of possessing an artistic eye or greatness, even though this is how they wanted to be seen, as this dialogue suggests.

To win over Vogel, to gain his respect and admiration for American photography, appears to have been the primary reason for inviting him to the convention. Given the broad reach of Vogel's opinions, he had the potential to ennoble whatever and whomever he prized, whether a photographer, a photographic style, a printing process, or the perceived state of a nation's photographic culture. Because he was so well connected and corresponded frequently with international photographic leaders, Vogel's expedition across the Atlantic could potentially put American photography on the map—that is, on Western Europe's purview—and the writers at the *Philadelphia Photographer*

⁷⁷ Edward Wilson, "Editor's Table," *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 77 (May 1870): 182–3.

acknowledged this possibility. One reporter, for example, saw his visit as ushering forth a new epoch of progress in American photography:

The most distinguished guest will be our esteemed friend, Dr. Herman Vogel of Berlin Prussia. Those who have been in the habit of reading Dr. Vogel's contribution to our pages have not failed long since to see that he is one of the most earnest and enthusiastic friends of photography in the world; in fact we are free to say there are none more so... We should all feel highly favored at his coming among us. You are all aware that the work of European photographers receives much and deserved praise and notice in this country for many thousands of our people go to Europe annually and we doubt if one ever returns without some specimens of foreign photography; yet on the other hand we and our work are but little known on the other side, for we have no representation there. This fact is not because our work is inferior to that made abroad—the contrary is the fact—but because most travellers get their pictures made abroad while there and bring them home with them while comparatively few of our pictures reach the Old World. We may hope then that Dr. Vogel's visit among us will work a change in this direction and when he goes home so let the exhibition be that he can speak well of us... We look forth to his coming as a new era in American photography.⁷⁸

A palpable sense of both excitement and anxiety runs through this text. In suggesting that Americans should “feel highly favored,” the reporter reveals a desire for a much needed confidence boost that Vogel's visit presents. This article, among several others printed in the months before the convention, exposed a pronounced inferiority complex, one that American photographers hoped to overcome with the arrival of a fatherly figure that would hopefully give them his blessing. The intensity of the reporter's rhetoric further speaks to how much is riding on Vogel's visit. There is a sense of urgency—as if to say our moment is now, but also a deep insecurity—that invites the question: is this really our time to perform on the world stage as a key player in the photographic arts or will this be our end?

⁷⁸ “Dr. Vogel,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 78 (June 1870): 185–6.

While American photographers thought highly of Vogel, almost in saintly terms, he was, in fact, honored to be invited. As he crossed the Atlantic, he wrote in his monthly correspondence: “Many a time have I cast a longing glance to those shores but I never dared to think that a kind of Providence would vouchsafe me the happiness of placing my foot upon your shores. Now the dream of my youth becomes reality, a flattering invitation of my co-laborers calls me to the United States. I follow it with a heart full of joy and gratitude.”⁷⁹ His choice of words—“a flattering invitation of my co-laborers”—is crucial to understanding Vogel’s perception of his journey. From what he has seen of American photography, he hopes to consider photographers in the United States his colleagues, not his subordinates. Yet, he also acknowledges that American photographers look up to him.

Chaired by James F. Ryder and held at the Cleveland Central Skating Rink in June 1870, the NPA’s convention was a success on multiple levels.⁸⁰ Vogel’s experience of US photography was extremely positive, and he returned to Europe with favorable reports of what he found. More importantly, his visit also intimately linked American and German photographic circles. At the time it opened, it was the largest exhibition of photography on the continent, representing 188 exhibitors, thirty-four of whom were

⁷⁹ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 79 (July 1870): 256.

⁸⁰ Ryder was a vocal supporter of Vogel and German photographic culture. In his autobiography, Ryder wrote about the influence of seeing the Berlin photographs that Vogel had sent to Wilson in the 1860s, especially with regard to the issue of retouching, which was not discussed very much in America at this time. He wrote: “the pleasure [he] found in these little portraits which got their smooth, soft, and delicate finish from the retouched plate was most gratifying.” On his experience of German retouching, see James F. Ryder, *Voightländer and I: In Pursuit of Shadow Catching* (Cleveland: The Cleveland Printing & Publishing Co, & The Imperial Press, 1902), 232.

foreign.⁸¹ Several German photographers displayed work, including Vogel, Loescher & Petsch, Ernst Milster, and Grasshoff. In terms of American representation, photographers from twelve states showed their photographs, giving the exhibition “a distinctive national rather than just local representation,” photography exhibition historian Julie Brown has noted.⁸² Although the event was open to the public for twenty-five cents a person, the rate typically charged to the bourgeois urban public for viewing touring artworks, the exhibition was aimed primarily at professional photographers. According to Brown, attendance at the convention could not compete with audiences at industrial fairs, which were in the tens of thousands, but the 1870 convention did attract well over 1000 visitors.⁸³

Vogel’s experience at the NPA convention and the attendees’ introduction to him were described in the press only in positive terms. While Vogel lectured on various topics, such as successful group arrangements and focal length distances, his overarching impressions of photography in the New World came in his farewell address, when it was clear that he was a staunch supporter of American photography. Summarized by a reporter for the *Philadelphia Photographer*, the author remarked that Vogel

express[ed] his great surprise at the extent of this country, at the extent of photography, and its resources here; of the extent of the friendliness and generosity of the photographers of America and of thanks for favors shown him, promising that they should all be remembered by him forever in the fatherland; which was received with great applause.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Julie K. Brown, *Making Culture Visible: The Public Display of Photography at Fairs, Expositions and Exhibitions in the United States, 1847–1900* (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 2001), 53.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid., 47.

⁸⁴ “Proceedings of the National Photographic Association of the United States,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 79 (July 1870): 249–50.

In other words, before his arrival, Vogel's expectations of American photography and of the United States in general were particularly low. This quote simultaneously affirms American photographers' low self-image and serves to boost their self-confidence given Vogel's newly-minted stamp of approval. The idea that he was "surprised" by what he found on American soil is thus both a backhanded insult and a compliment. It situates American photographers needing the endorsement of a photographic pundit in order to feel confident about their work.

A more in-depth article, penned by Vogel, appeared in the same issue of the journal, outlining his thoughts on the US exhibition, as compared to the Berlin exhibition of 1865 and the Paris Exposition of 1867. "The latter two exhibitions," he wrote, "may have excelled yours in quantities... but hardly in the quality of the work." He was "surprised at the brilliant success" of American artists, and his astonishment came from their lack of presence abroad: "I regret that American artists have contributed little to European exhibitions or the opinions in Europe of American photography would be quite different. Of how much importance exhibitions are for the progress of photography has been demonstrated in Cleveland in the most striking manner."⁸⁵ He further leveled the playing field: "Without any desire to flatter I can make the assertion that you have as good artists in America as we in Europe."⁸⁶ While his rhetoric is still framed in the language of surprise, the NPA has definitely convinced Vogel that the quality of image making in the United States was high. Yet another way to look at his language here is that Vogel has clearly adopted the fatherly figurehead persona that American photographers

⁸⁵ Hermann W. Vogel, "Some Remarks on the Cleveland Exhibition," *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 79 (July 1870): 259.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 260.

seemed to crave. In proclaiming that the United States possesses as good of photographers as Europe, Vogel has given them his blessing.

After the Cleveland exhibition, Vogel spent the next two months touring North America—Chicago, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Montreal, New Hampshire, Boston, Philadelphia, and New York, and the *Philadelphia Photographer* reported on his grand tour. In each city, he conducted studio visits and met with local members of photographic associations in some official fashion. He learned of their photographic interests and often lectured; his speeches were routinely published in the photographic press. This in-depth coverage on Vogel's journey emphasized at once the thoroughness of his visit, which gave Americans the sense that this authority figure was giving them his undivided attention and his extraordinarily positive reception. When Vogel was in St. Louis meeting with the local photographic society, for example, one such oratory exchange at a grand reception held in his honor made it into the *Philadelphia Photographer*, and he spoke on the medium's development on American shores.

America is the country on which we in Germany have been looking with admiration these many long years. Yes, this admiration grew into enthusiasm when we witnessed a struggle that threatened to divide this great republic; and it affords me a great deal of satisfaction to say that all my German country men here as well as over the ocean took a lively interest in that combat. We sympathized heartily with you, gentlemen, and not only in war, but in time of peace, literature and arts have you always engaged our undivided attention and sympathy. When I came over here, I expected to see a great deal and I take great pleasure in saying that my highest expectations have been by far surpassed.... Unfortunately we are but too frequently led to form wrong opinions concerning America and the Americans by superficial news articles, which are proven to be fallacious upon closer personal acquaintance. The practical turn of mind of the Americans developed the treasures of science, and many inventions were put into practical use by them. A result of this practical tendency is the present state of photography in America. Energy and a free and unimpeded pursuit of art has not failed to tell on the development of photography here as well as in Europe, and in Germany in particular. An intimate and cordial intercourse has sprung up of late between America and Germany much to the benefit of our art and its followers; and I shall

feel amply rewarded if my professional brethren think that my endeavors to contribute, little though it may be, to a firmer union between the countries and material advancement of our art, have not been quite devoid of success.⁸⁷

In this speech, Vogel employs an “us versus them” dynamic. Indeed, he is adamant about his identity and thus difference as a German. Motivating this stark distinction for him is perhaps both his pride in the state of German photography and his belief that an exchange is something that takes place between two national groups. As such, it is out of a partnership of cultures that progress in photography is made. Moreover, Vogel again reminds his American audience of their low ranking in European photographic circles by mentioning the “fallacious” opinions of photographic work made across the Atlantic that have now at least for him been reversed.

The European stereotype of the ill-equipped and inexperienced American photographer is traded for another more widespread convention regarding the American populace: practicality. At stake for Vogel then in concentrating on this so-called American trait is that he is able to keep creativity for German photographers. That is to say, rather than promote or focus on the artistry of American photographs, Vogel focuses on US photographer’s pragmatic nature, their Yankee know-how rather than the artistic eye of the German. Accordingly, this keeps the two cultural groups on different levels, with Germans ranking higher, and again this is happening before German unification. Lastly, when Vogel discusses this new bicultural “intercourse,” which could mean communication or exchange, he employs the telling word “our” that signifies that he is starting to create a slippage between American and German audiences. Vogel trip had thus impacted his conception of American photography, which had shifted dramatically

⁸⁷ “Proceedings of the National Photographic Association of the United States,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 79 (July 1870): 275–6.

from previous years from substandard to sensible, practical, and industrious. While there was a new confidence and respect in his statements about American photographers and a serious desire to partner with them emerged, he still kept American photographers at arms reach from the aesthetic side of photography. In addition, Vogel's has assumed a sense of responsibility for cultivating a stronger relationship between German and American photographic circles. The increase in German photographic material in the *Philadelphia Photographer* alone attested to this fact. After Vogel's North American tour, it grew even more.

German Gems

Thus, from 1870 until 1874, German photographs, photographers, and photographic culture took even more precedent in the journal, and Vogel, Loescher & Petsch, and the happenings of the Berlin Society of Photographic Advancement became topics of serious interest to readers. Vogel's visit bonded the American and German photographic circles as almost equals and at the very least friendly rivals, which are not the same thing and are at times even in conflict. An underlying competition could be gleaned, especially by 1873 and 1874. Simultaneously, American photography came into its own as a respected profession, as it was in Europe, while its practitioners developed more self-assurance, in part through their interactions with Vogel.

Examining three frontispieces from the early 1870s against the backdrop of accompanying articles, this section explores the *Philadelphia Photographer's* photographs and texts that surfaced during the upswing in German and American photographic relations and how these images pointed to a new era in transatlantic

alliance. Published shortly after Vogel's departure, the October 1870 issue presents a grid of forty-eight photographs by Loescher & Petsch, drawn from their sought after American stereographic series *Gems of German Life* (Figure 3.11, 3.12). The sentimental—some might say kitschy—genre scenes depicts figures in dirndls and lederhosen posed to appear engaged in everyday domestic activities. The subjects read books quietly, longingly peer out windows, and gaze at themselves in handheld mirrors.

These images package a stereotypical conception of German life, capitalizing on the popularity of German culture in America at the peak of German immigration to the US. With their English titles and subtitles, these cards were made specifically for an English-speaking audience, not a German-speaking one. Thus while they depict “German” scenes, they are meant to be consumed by another culture. Significantly, the photographers’ notion of a so-called cohesive “German life” emerged during a time of social and political uncertainty, in a period of war between cultures and before a unified German nation. Yet as historian Lesley Ann Kawaguchi has noted in her study of German-America in mid- to late nineteenth-century Philadelphia, a common German ethnic identity existed in America well before German unification; indeed, German immigrants from different principalities developed it there.⁸⁸ In the 1870s, these scenes of pleasant domestic life invoked the Old World and German ethnic stereotypes became highly marketable objects to Americans and German-Americans.

Moreover, the fact that these were genre scenes is significant as the medium is taking its cue from painting. Indeed, genre painting flourished after the American Civil War. Infused with an aura of nostalgia, genre scenes often pictured gender stereotypes to

⁸⁸ Kawaguchi, “The Making of Philadelphia’s German-America,” 150–239.

affirm hierarchy at a time of change. *Gems of German Life* function similarly; they focus on the everyday activities of women at a time of cultural, societal, and political transformation in both Germany and the United States. Wilson saw genre scenes as a branch of the photographic arts that was lacking in the United States. He hoped that his readers would be inspired to make more pictures in this style, a style at once maudlin and cliché. In explaining his choice to include several Loescher & Petsch *Gems of German Life* images in the publication, he wrote that he wanted his readers to “see as many of them as possible and have the excellent opportunity of studying them...the variety of pose and design must at once struck the observer as well as their excellence as photographs and works of art.”⁸⁹ The series was extremely popular in the US, so popular in fact that “the first order Loescher & Petsch took from their American agents for these pictures from their negatives was for one thousand dozen and the order has several times been duplicated.”⁹⁰ The stereographic views had already been in circulation for two years and thus the images would be recognizable to the readership.

In this same issue, the *Philadelphia Photographer*, on behalf of the NPA, published an official message to the Berlin Society that again speaks to the admiration that American photographers possessed for German photography, German influence on American photography, and their underlying need for affirmation from Prussian image makers. Titled “Address of the National Photographic Association to The Society for the Advancement of Photography in Berlin,” the short article addressed the ties between German and American practitioners.

⁸⁹ “Our Picture,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 82 (October 1870): 338.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 338–9.

The work of several of the eminent members of your [Berlin] Society has been the admiration of many here for several years, and “Berlin photographs” is almost a by-word among us. They have been purchased, studied and imitated, a fact, which may be easily guessed on examining the work of our best artists. We are free to confess this, because we believe that no photographer comprises his pride or his skill in accepting or following all that will tend to improve his work. We are glad to be assured by you that our influence upon you has been similar, and we hope that the visit to us of your believed and worthy President, Dr. Vogel, will tend to render our intimacy in future greater and warmer... We solicit from you an interchange of ideas, and offer you such as we have in return.⁹¹

The open letter begins by declaring how much German photography has influenced American professional image making. Indeed, the NPA wants to make this fact explicitly clear to its readers and to the Berlin Society. Reading between the lines, it seems that the NPA is responding to a compliment that they received from the Berlin Society about American photography. By acknowledging their models through flattering remarks, the NPA wants to make sure that the relationship remains strong after Vogel’s departure. The way in which the NPA acknowledges the compliment from the Berlin Society—“We are glad to be assured by you that our influence upon you has been similar”—implies that the NPA still needs to be assured by the Berlin Society of their photographic abilities, which again underlines a lack of self-esteem. Yet this was a tactical move by Wilson that showed his readers that the Berlin Society had applauded American photography and likely their improved style. In publishing this response to the unprinted Berlin Society letter, he could further raise the self-confidence of American practitioners by showing them that Berlin photographers thought highly of their work now. Moreover, he made this dialogue between societies in order to make their bicultural relationship public and to

⁹¹ “Address of the National Photographic Association to The Society for the Advancement of Photography in Berlin,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 82 (October 1870): 345.

further reinforce it. The NPA did not have this type of camaraderie with any other foreign photographic association. A sincere, mutual respect now flourished between these two organizations.

The November 1871 issue expressed this relationship in visual terms. Another photographic grid of German origins lay claim to the *Philadelphia Photographer's* frontispiece, yet this time rather than peopled by anonymous actors, the matrix of headshots depicts thirty-three members of the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography taken by Berlin photographer Johannes Grasshoff (Figure 3.13). Never before had the *Philadelphia Photographer's* frontispiece pictured members of a photographic association, and, with this unprecedented move, the NPA affirmed their close relationship with the Berlin Society. As "Our Picture" explains, this collection of portraits was a gift from the Berlin Society to the German Photographic Society in New York. However, it was more than a portrait of another photographic club. Indeed it represented, according to the writer, the impetus for American photography to improve; it stood for American admiration of German photography, its evolution, and the intimate bond between the two societies. His text deserves to be quoted at length as it covered many of these issues.

Several years ago one of our dealers imported a lot of cartes from Messrs. Loescher & Petsch, ... Their fame began to grow and the demand was great for Berlin cards. They were unlike, and superior in some respects, to any made in this country, and the heads were much larger than anything here. Through them Berlin work became popular and soon had many imitators, and we think we do not err when we say that to these Berlin cards is mainly due the great improvement which many have made in their work here during the last three years. We have heard photographers say over and over again that "those Berlin cards aroused my ambition and I worked and worked until I could equal them. I am thankful that I ever saw them." Soon after introduction we secured Dr. Vogel as one of our regular staff of contributors, and since then there has been a fraternal feeling existing among German and American photographers, which, although it has not

ripened into personal acquaintance, except in few cases, has been productive of more good than can be told. The German artists we are free to confess have on the average more real artistic *feeling* for their profession than we “to the manor born” have, and we care not how much that feeling is imbibed by our own rising generation of photographers. The more we have of such men as Kurtz, Scholten, Rocher, Merz, Benecke, as well as other good German co-workers, the better it will be for American Photography. Many thanks, then, to our good German brethren for what they have taught us.⁹²

Not only does this extract describe the trajectory of German-American photographic relations and the significance of German photography to American professional photographers, it also points to the role of immigration in this exchange. This collection of portraits was a gift to the GSPNY, the only immigrant-based photographic society in the United States that published frequently in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, and the writer mentioned practitioners like William Kurtz (1833–1904) and Henry Rocher (1826–1887), all of whom were German immigrants. These individuals were heavily involved with their respective photographic societies. The article further highlighted an us / them dynamic again, German versus American. Germans were once more credited with bringing more artistry to the profession, yet German immigrants could now bring this talent to the American photographic landscape. In addition, Wilson’s words seem to strategically balance the respect for one’s foreign mentors with a growing sense of confidence and pride in US-based practitioners. This citation further underlined Vogel’s role in this exchange. His column literally symbolized the fraternal connection between the two photographic cultures

While a variety of photographs embellish issues from 1872, including works by Rocher, George Francis Schreiber (another German immigrant in Philadelphia discussed

⁹² “Our Picture: Members of the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 8, no. 95 (November 1871): 373.

in Chapter One), and a photolithograph by Johann Obernetter of Munich (discussed in Chapter Two), the *Philadelphia Photographer*'s January 1873 frontispiece represents another tour de force of German-American photographic relations, that is, another key moment in their transatlantic exchange as friends and friendly rivals in addition to their earlier relationship of mentor/mentee. In a photograph by Loescher & Petsch, Dr. Vogel himself greets the journal's viewers (Figure 3.14). This was only the third time in its nine years that the periodical had published a named portrait.⁹³ Housed in an ornate, oval paper matte, the frontispiece depicts Vogel in profile seated at a table holding a framed photograph and looking at the viewer. Dressed in pinstriped pants, a long coat, vest, and dark bow tie, Vogel looks dignified seated in a carved wooden chair. Behind him a drapery hangs elegantly off to the side, providing a lovely contrast to the chair and backdrop. Underneath the image lies a reproduction of his script that reads: "your old friend, H. Vogel." A reproduced handwritten signature had only been employed with a portrait of Borgardus, and then it was his name alone. Vogel's message was of a different character; he dropped his title of doctor and employed the word "friend," connoting a familiarity between him and his readers. In effect, this new personal sign off, which is given prominence through its placement beneath the photograph, gives American photographers confidence. Vogel, a photographic authority, considers them his friends, not subordinates; they are equals now. Indeed, after his 1870 trip he often abandoned "Dr." in his sign off, thus highlighting a new bond between Vogel and American

⁹³ At this point in its history, there were only two instances when a named portrait claimed the frontispiece of the *Philadelphia Photographer*: Abraham Bogardus (1822–1908) of New York, who was the President of the NPA, was the frontispiece for the October 1871 issue, and the above-mentioned members of the Berlin Society members represented the only other instance.

photographers. This in and of itself is a compliment to American photographers.

Following the exhibition and his tours through dozens of American photography studios, Vogel gained a new-found respect for American photography, and his relationship with American photographers changed in a way that he could call them friends.

A four-page biography accompanied Vogel's cabinet portrait.⁹⁴ Responding to repeated requests by readers to picture individuals of consequence in the profession, the editor conceded and chose Vogel as the revered sitter, whom Wilson felt "shall excite no ire or no jealous feelings."⁹⁵ To American audiences, Vogel had become a figure who could do or say no wrong, and more importantly, he felt close to American photographers. Wilson introduced him as "a gentlemen whom many of you know personally and value as a friend with whose writings and faithful devotion to our art you are very familiar, a gentleman who is universally esteemed by you, a gentleman whose picture you will all be glad to see, and towards whom no one indulges anything but the kindest feeling."⁹⁶ The editor could not have provided a nicer, more welcoming preamble to the visual and textual sketch of Vogel. Yet there is also something almost obsequious about this preamble, as if Wilson were trying to gain Vogel's attention or perhaps not lose his attention. Wilson, the writers of the *Philadelphia Photographer*, and the NPA are constantly fawning over Vogel. As this example shows, underneath this sycophantic language percolates insecurity, insecurity that they will lose his respect,

⁹⁴ To put this in perspective, the biography of Bogardus was less than half the length of Vogel's, which speaks to their respective perceived importance to the readers of the *Philadelphia Photographer*.

⁹⁵ "Our Picture," *Philadelphia Photographer* 10, no. 109 (January 1873): 28.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

insecurity that he will forge a relationship with another foreign society. They want to stay on Vogel's radar.

The biography provided another avenue by which the *Philadelphia Photographer* readers could relate to Vogel. The inclusion of an extended biography was "to show how one may rise from the humblest sort of a home to great eminence in our art and in the world if he be studious, industrious, and deserving and desirous himself of doing well."⁹⁷ A common archetype in nineteenth-century postbellum American literature, this rags-to-riches narrative would have resonated with many readers of the journal, particularly immigrants who had come to the US hoping to find professional opportunities beyond the social class into which they were born.⁹⁸

Vogel's life story, as related by the biography, paralleled that of many American photographers who had decided to take separate career paths from their parents—including Kurtz and Rocher. In a small village south of Berlin, Vogel's father ran a grocery store; as Wilson noted, "at the time it was usual in Germany that the son should follow the occupation of the father."⁹⁹ Vogel initially conformed to this model and completed a four-year commercial apprenticeship, but soon thereafter his father allowed Vogel to attend college where his interest in engineering and chemistry could be fulfilled. There he shined and came to the field of photography, where he excelled beyond anyone's hopes. The article's writer was careful to convey the extent of Vogel's hard work during his apprenticeship, school years, and in his subsequent photographic career. It also foregrounded his recent trip to the US, quoting Vogel as declaring that "they were

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Irvin G. Wyllie, *The Self-Made Man in America: The Myth of Rags to Riches* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1954).

⁹⁹ "Our Picture," *Philadelphia Photographer* 10, no. 109 (January 1873): 28.

the happiest days of my life.”¹⁰⁰ In effect, by adopting a classic rags-to-riches narrative and concluding with Vogel’s intimate connection with the US, the writer framed him as a model for the “good” immigrant, who finds happiness on American soil. To this end, the biography ended in the most exalting terms: he is “one of [photography’s] highest lights, but he will live to see greater things in our art than any of us have any conception of, for photography is yet only an infant.”¹⁰¹ Little did they know that he had just discovered the aniline dye process, and thus in technical and chemical terms fundamentally changed the medium.

Shifting Focus

As Vogel’s interest in American photography began to plateau in the mid-1870s, Edward Wilson engaged in a published correspondence project on the pages of his journal that assumed Vogel’s mantle as leader of German-American relations. At the end of 1873, Wilson went on a European photographic tour, similar to Vogel’s American journey, visiting photographers’ studios, meeting with local photographic clubs, and giving lectures. He wrote monthly letters to the *Philadelphia Photographer*, detailing his adventures, and these missives attested to the close friendship between German and American photographic circles. Moreover, his letters looked retrospectively at the relationship between the two cultures as if the climax had already passed. His correspondence covering the German leg of his trip was printed over the winter and spring of 1874, and a large part of his news focused on Berlin photographic culture and

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 30.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 31.

Vogel. He described Berlin as a “Mecca” for photography and a city that greatly influenced American practitioners.

It was from Berlin, many of you will remember, that a few years ago, a few cartes-de-visite were sent to America, of very peculiar style and of excellent quality. They were shown to several photographers, who were ravished by them, and then in large lots they were imported and sold all over the country as “Berlin cards.” From that time and on account of those pictures, many of you will agree with me, that American photography was “awakened out of sleep” and *took a fresh start*. A new era was begun then and most rapid strides were made, each annual exhibition of the National Photographic Association showing (and still showing) that there were more and more in our own country who could not only equal, but excel the famous Berlin cards. And now, strange to say, the Berlin photographers are quite as much ravished over some of the work which goes to them from America. Thus we are working together for the advancement of our art, a state of affairs which is very cheering indeed to those who strive to bring forth such effort by means of the literature which is published to that end.¹⁰²

In effect, the relationship between German and American photographers had changed, from one of mentorship and ardent admiration to one of mutual respect and even the possibility that Berlin photographers are enamored with American photography. Wilson frames this as something odd—“strange to say”—this notion that German photographers are excited about American work. The Americans are thus still acclimating to their new sense of confidence.

Yet, as this citation from one of Wilson’s letters elucidates, this shift in dynamics also prompted a keen desire to reflect on what their earlier rapport had been. The Berlin Society held a special meeting in Wilson’s honor, and he gave a brief speech there in which he remarked that “American photography owed much, very much [to the Germans], and that we rejoiced over the good feeling and the generous rivalry existing

¹⁰² Edward Wilson, “Editorial Correspondence II,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 10, no. 119 (November 1873): 517.

among us.”¹⁰³ His comment is strategic. By commenting on the “generous rivalry” between the two cultures, Wilson effectively elevates American photography to the same level as German photography. While he acknowledges German influence on photography in the United States, he does so in the past tense, thus distinguishing and ennobling American photography by situating it in present competition with German photographers. In March 1874, while Wilson was still abroad, he again reconsidered German-American photographic relations. “We worked up to the ‘Berlin Cartes,’” he proudly writes, “and even excelled them, until the Berliners had to look after their laurels, and we were recognized as their rivals. Now an exchange exists.”¹⁰⁴ Once more, Wilson tactically sets up this dynamic of past and present, in which American photographers formerly attempted to emulate the Berlin style, and presently have surpassed them to the point in which American photographers are desired contributors in this exchange; indeed, the relationship goes both ways. His statement accompanied a woodcut of Wilson and Vogel’s greeting, reinforcing again the close bond between them, but also their rivalry (Figure 3.15). Vogel’s bearded figure is seen embracing Wilson, and their statures are quite distinct. Wilson is taller, thinner, and even overall much larger than Vogel, which suggests American might, power, and new prestige. Indeed Wilson represents the brawn and energy of American photography in his manly posture and dominant size. Vogel’s hat lies behind him; it has fallen off in the hug, while Wilson still retains his, which speaks once more to the competition, which the United States seems to be winning in this remarkable woodcut.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 518.

¹⁰⁴ Edward Wilson, “Views Abroad and Across III,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 11, no. 123 (March 1874): 87.

This high regard for American photography is also demonstrated in an official compliment made by the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography. In an unprecedented action, they elected Edward Wilson to be an honorary member of their society, an honor given to only two other individuals in ten years.¹⁰⁵ This gesture demonstrated the respect that they had for Wilson and more generally American photographers. It also signals an attempt on the German side to keep up the exchange with photographers in the United States. They were now courting American photographers in this official act. Wilson chose to publish the Berlin Society's letter in the *Philadelphia Photographer*, and also his response to it, which was calculated. He wanted to exhibit this milestone of success to his readers and show how far American photography has come:

We acknowledge our appreciation of this graceful compliment, and prize it the more because it comes from the city to which we have so long looked for example and advice as American photographers, and whose work gave us such a thorough stirring up a few years ago. German photographers and especially our friends in Berlin shall never be forgotten in America.¹⁰⁶

There is a distinct tone of confidence pervading Wilson's response. In dating the influence of German photographic culture to "a few years ago," Wilson further distances the impact of German photography on American photography, allowing photography in the United States to stand alone with pride.

In the following years, Vogel remained a dedicated correspondent with Wilson, but his intimate involvement with and passionate interest in American photography began

¹⁰⁵ Dr. E. Horning of Vienna and Max Petsch, who later resigned from the partnership Loescher & Petsch to devote himself to painting, are the two other honorary members of the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography.

¹⁰⁶ Edward Wilson, "Editor's Table," *Philadelphia Photographer* 11, no. 128 (August 1874): 254.

to decline in the mid-1870s. Part of the reason for this decrease were his aforementioned findings in dye sensitivity and the experiments they prompted. An additional cause can be ascribed to his new position as a full-fledged professor of photography at the Berlin *Königliche Technische Hochschule* in the newly established photography department, a first in the world for the medium. He was also in the midst of writing his first comprehensive publication, entitled *The Chemistry of Light and Photography*, which would come out in 1874 and be translated into five languages (English first, then French, Italian, Russian, and Japanese) soon thereafter.¹⁰⁷ He was, in addition, a photography juror at the 1873 *Weltausstellung* (World Exhibition) in Vienna. This exhibition marked a turning point for American participation in European exhibitions, and as Vogel happily or even proudly noted, “I must confess that your country has never before been represented so well in a European exhibition. Only now the European public has had an opportunity of forming an idea of what beautiful pictures are made and can be made in America.”¹⁰⁸ His repeated calls for American participation in overseas exhibitions had finally succeeded.

While Vogel would travel to the United States two more times during his lifetime, his second trip as a juror for the Centennial Exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 left a bad taste in his mouth, particularly due to the aftermath of his duties. He enjoyed his time there immensely, and his presence was so welcome that he was in fact included in the commencement proceedings. “The [NPA] Convention opened up with singing the Star-spangled Banner, which was led at the piano by our good friend Dr. Vogel; thus Germany

¹⁰⁷ Hermann W. Vogel, *The Chemistry of Light and Photography* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1875).

¹⁰⁸ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 10, no. 117 (September 1873): 469.

and America united in photographic convention in giving *tone* to our patriotic national song. It was a thrilling moment and one long to be remembered by those present.”¹⁰⁹

Vogel is the piano accompanist to the national anthem, not the fatherly figure in the eyes of American photographers. He is seen as their equal and as their staunch advocate. He “led” *the* song of the United States, and in leading this patriotic paean, he pledges his support of American photography and its future as a key world power in the field of photography. The fanfare, however, surrounding his visit could not compete with that of his first US trip when he was undeniably the unstated focal point of the entire exhibition. In addition, problems with how the jury’s selections were tallied left him feeling defensive and somewhat frustrated with the process as suggested by the tone of his missives. Multiple times, he felt the need to explain how his choices were misrepresented and what had happened and even wrote separate letters to the journal to this regard. After this incident, but perhaps not directly related to the episode, his reporting about American photography declined, and his interest in his experiments increased, becoming the primary material for his column.

While these represent practical explanations on why Vogel’s reporting on American photography decreased, a more critical interpretation of this decline in interest may be attributed to America’s rise in status on the global photographic stage. Photographers in the United States simply did not need Vogel to affirm their skill or art any more. Indeed, they finally possessed confidence in their abilities and could stand alone without the support and endorsement of their colleagues across the Atlantic. For German photographers, American image-makers represented competition now, so by not

¹⁰⁹ “The N.P.A. Convention,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 13, no. 153 (September 1876): 257.

discussing American photography in his column, Vogel indirectly provides US photographers with more authority than they already had.

The German Correspondent Elsewhere

While German photographic culture captivated American readers of the *Philadelphia Photographer* from the mid-1860s to the 1870s, attraction to German cultural products during the postbellum period went beyond just photographic circles. As periodical studies scholar Martin Haertel has maintained, there was a “growing interest in the German language and literature,” especially from 1868 until 1880. He attributed this increase in interest to the powerful influence and strong public presence of German immigrant culture in the US and the sympathy Americans felt toward Germany during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870. Haertel has closely examined this phenomenon in American literary magazines and concluded “German literature had become of such importance that journals maintained regular correspondents, who kept the readers informed from month to month concerning the book trade of Germany.”¹¹⁰

In this light, the *Philadelphia Photographer*’s gesture of enlisting Vogel as their German correspondent thus needs to be seen in this larger context of German-American relations, which in the 1870s were at their most intimate. Indeed, this period represents the height of German immigration to the US “This cordial feeling,” Haertel writes, “necessarily had its reflex in the attitude towards all that was German, including its literature.”¹¹¹ The same parallels can be made in the field of American photography

¹¹⁰ Martin Henry Haertel, “German Literature in American Magazines, 1846 to 1880,” *Bulletin of the University of Wisconsin* 263 (1908): 299.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 300–1.

during this era. Playing out across a decade of the *Philadelphia Photographer*, this climax in German-American photographic relations evolved parallel to the German territories' progress to nationhood. A strong kinship unfolded between the two cultures as the US, too, had just fought the Civil War and unified the nation. Vogel's column and its influence thus illuminate the cultural context from which it emerged, in its typicality. Without denying Vogel's column its uniqueness or individuality, it's important to underscore its exemplarity for the period, a time when German culture influenced not only photography, but also the arts, literature, and sciences.

CHAPTER FOUR

Alfred Stieglitz and German Photography

Celebrated American art photographer, publisher, and gallery owner Alfred Stieglitz would become Dr. Hermann Wilhelm Vogel's most internationally renowned student at the *Königliche Technische Hochschule* in Berlin. Born in Hoboken, New Jersey to German immigrants, Stieglitz lived and studied in Germany from 1881 to 1890.¹ It was during these formative years that he was introduced to the intricacies of photographic chemistry and technology as well as a collegial culture of exchange surrounding the medium. Amidst a vast body of scholarship on Stieglitz only a handful of art historians have studied his years in Germany in some depth, taking note of Vogel's teachings and Stieglitz's engagement with German painting.² As a result, we know much about the influence of nineteenth-century British photographer Peter Henry Emerson

¹ The exact date of when Stieglitz made his first photograph is unclear as his story changed with different interviewers. As a non-degree seeking student, the records from the *Königliche Technische Hochschule* were not kept. For a more thorough discussion around this uncertainty, see footnote 29 in Sarah Greenough, *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set, The Alfred Stieglitz Collection of Photographs, Volume One, 1886–1922* (Washington: National Gallery of Art; New York: Abrams, 2002), LI.

² Doris Bry, *Alfred Stieglitz: Photographer* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Bulfinch Press/Little Brown, 1996); Sarah Greenough, "The Published Writings of Alfred Stieglitz" (M.A. Thesis, The University of New Mexico, 1976); Sarah Greenough, *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set*, 2002; Katherine Hoffman, *Stieglitz: A Beginning Light* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004); and Geraldine Wojno Kiefer, *Alfred Stieglitz: Scientist, Photographer, and Avatar of Modernism, 1880–1913* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1991).

(1856–1936) on his work, and considerably less about Stieglitz in the context of German photographic culture of the 1880s.

Comparing Stieglitz's photographs with those of his contemporary German photographic peers is, however, crucial to understanding his oeuvre before the decline of Germany's cultural cachet in the US during and after the world wars. Later on in his career, Stieglitz rejected any link between his early work and that of German photographers, asserting that he was the only amateur photographer working in Germany at that time.³ Whether or not this claim was true or false, Stieglitz was invested in making it as it both distanced him from German image-makers who were characterized as more interested in the scientific aspects of the medium and framed his as artistic inclinations as innate. Yet several talented and successful photographers, including Friedrich Albert Schwartz (1836–1906) and Hermann Rückwardt (1845–1919), are known to have worked in Berlin and published in German-language photographic periodicals at the time. As an active member of the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie* (The Association for the Promotion of Photography) and a founding member of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* (German Society of the Friends of Photography), an amateur photography club, Stieglitz was well informed of German photographic developments and trends, in part through his mentorship by Vogel. Indeed, he was a frequent contributor to both the *Photographische Mittheilungen* and *Der Amateur-Photograph* during this period. By attending to Stieglitz's German photographic connections, this chapter makes a case for seeing the photographs from his time there as actually more representative of the stylistic experimentation happening in 1880s Berlin than has been

³ Alfred Stieglitz, "From Notes Made by Stieglitz, 1938," *Twice a Year* I (Fall–Winter 1938): 178.

previously acknowledged in the prolific scholarship on the artist. Stieglitz's German years encompassed a rich aesthetic investigation within a diverse community of photographers, who were also trying to establish their aesthetic vision as artistic photography was beginning to gain traction in the German-speaking world.

Also critical to understanding the first eight years of Stieglitz's career, from 1882 to 1890,⁴ the period in which he developed an approach to photography for which he has been praised and criticized, is a close examination of the changing terrain of the medium in the 1880s, including the rise of amateur photography and its particularities in Germany. While the introduction of the Kodak camera in 1888 shifted the history of photography in the Western world irreversibly, the early and mid-eighties represent a significant moment of broader conceptual and technological change.⁵ Since the medium's first decade there had always been a smattering of enthusiastic amateur photographers. Indeed they were among its inventors, a fact Vogel repeatedly noted in the early 1880s.⁶ But with the introduction of the dry-plate process, a new upper-class population of image-makers was borne and with it the shifting of the meaning of the word *amateur*.⁷ Before this,

⁴ Stieglitz spent his first year in Karlsruhe; he moved to Berlin in 1882.

⁵ On the introduction of the Kodak camera and how it changed the history of photography, see Sarah Greenough, et al. *The Art of the American Snapshot, 1888–1978* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Douglas Nickel, *Snapshots: The Photography of Everyday Life, 1888 to the Present* (San Francisco: SF MoMA, 1998); Brian Coe and Paul Gates, *The Snapshot Photograph: The Rise of Popular Photography, 1888–1939* (London: Ash & Grant, 1977); and Elizabeth W. Easton, ed., *Snapshot: Painters and Photography, Bonnard to Vuillard* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

⁶ See, for example, "Address of Dr. Vogel," *Philadelphia Photographer* 20, no. 237 (September 1883): 283.

⁷ On the shift in meaning of the term amateur in the French language, see Clément Chéroux, "A Sense of Context: Amateur Photography in the Late Nineteenth Century," in *Snapshot: Painters and Photography, Bonnard to Vuillard*, ed. Elizabeth W. Easton (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 37–45.

photography was dominated by the wet-collodion process, which the layman generally viewed as cumbersome, expensive, and messy. While dry-plate technology was invented in 1871, it only began to be professionally manufactured in bulk beginning in 1879. Therefore, the 1880s was the decade of public marketing for dry-plate technology in America and Europe, making the medium more appealing to a larger, albeit still elite portion of these populations.⁸

In conjunction with this new technology, the application of photography evolved, opening the doors to amateur photography at a larger scale.⁹ In fact, the first periodical devoted to this niche, *The Amateur Photographer*, came on the market in October of 1884 in London. In its inaugural issue, the editor wrote of how this technological development “may be pronounced as little less than a revolution—a change which has placed photography in the first rank as a study and an amusement.”¹⁰ Amateur photographic clubs began to form, and they catered to a new audience who saw themselves as distinct from the professional photographer.¹¹ After the invention of the Kodak camera, when photography became a popular pastime, another division transpired:

⁸ For its impact in Germany, see Josef Maria Eder, *Modern Dry Plates: Or, Emulsion Photography, The American Edition* (NY: E. & H.T. Anthony & Co., 1881); Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, *Die Fortschritte der Photographie seit dem Jahre 1879* (Berlin: R. Oppenheim, 1883). On its impact in the United States, see Keith Davis, *The Origins of American Photography: From Daguerreotype to Dry-Plate, 1839–1885: The Hallmark Photographic collection at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 267–270.

⁹ On the presence of early amateur photographers in Britain, see Grace Seiberling, *Amateurs, Photography, and the Mid-Victorian Imagination* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).

¹⁰ “Photography for Amateurs,” *The Amateur Photographer: An Illustrated Popular Journal Devoted to the Interests of Photography and Kindred Arts and Sciences* 1, no. 1 (October 1884): 10.

¹¹ On the rise of amateur photography and its club in the United States, see Paul Spencer Sternberger, *Between Amateur and Aesthete: The Legitimization of Photography as art in America, 1880–1900* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001).

the serious photographic artist dedicated to promoting photography as a fine art emerged as opposed to the hobby photographer or commercial image-maker. Stieglitz would later stand at the helm of this group of Pictorialist photographers in the United States with the founding of the Photo-Secession in 1902.¹²

Prior to the Kodak camera's impact, the term "amateur" in the mid-1880s did not possess a clear definition or ideological belief system. When Stieglitz first experimented with the medium in Germany, its meaning was in flux. Indeed, the term—its definition and by extension its possible effects on the greater photographic community—was debated across photographic periodicals in Europe and the United States.¹³ When *The Amateur Photographer* first went to print, it was not conspicuously different from other photographic trade journals. Discussions of new and old chemical processes and recent technology still represented the bulk of the content. The same holds true with the content of *Der Amateur-Photograph*, which published its first issue on January 1, 1887. Only one to two out of a dozen articles would be devoted to hobby photographers or those interested in picturesque scenes. Julius Schnauss, one of its editors, attempted to answer the question of what an amateur photographer was in its first issue, giving his readers options: they are either individuals "who in reality belong to their professions and enjoy their hobby in their free time" or "the happy minority of men who have nothing else to do but live on a private income and [who] can devote all their energy *con amore* to our

¹² For the most thoughtful discussion of the Photo-Secession's founding, see William Innes Homer, *Alfred Stieglitz and the Photo-Secession* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1983).

¹³ See, for example, regarding amateur photography in Vienna: "Wer is ein Amateurphotograph?," *Photographische Correspondenz* no. 312 (September 1886): 446–448; or the amateur photographer in Germany: V.C. Abney, "Photographische Amateure," *Photographische Mittheilungen* 20, no. 266 (February 1884): 290–291; or the amateur photographer in the US: "The Growth and Outgrowth of Amateur Photography," *Philadelphia Photographer* 19, no. 228 (December 1882): 371–372.

art.”¹⁴ The designation of “amateur” was furthermore a serious point of contention in Berlin since there was a push to unite photographers for the greater good of the medium’s progress there.¹⁵ Stieglitz would later attempt to position himself as one of the only artistic amateur photographers during this period, yet his interests and photographs from the 1880s were absolutely typical of his peers in Germany.

This final chapter contends that, despite his claims to the contrary, Alfred Stieglitz was greatly influenced by photography produced in Germany in the 1880s. Furthermore, the photographic culture—including the societies and periodicals—in which he participated while in Berlin heavily impacted the direction of his early photographs and photographic philosophy. A regular attendant at club meetings, Stieglitz was an active member in these photographic organizations, which brought him into contact with other German photographers. Moreover, as his mentor and advisor, Vogel represented the crux of German photography in the late nineteenth century. An international authority on the medium, he was apprised of all happenings and publications related to photography in the Western world. As noted in the Chapter Three of this dissertation, Vogel established multiple photographic societies, including the first amateur photography club in Germany, edited *Photographische Mittheilungen*, and founded the first photography department at a German University. Stieglitz’s connection with Vogel allowed him to become a part of a larger photographic community from the onset of his early photographic career.

¹⁴ Julius Schnauss, “Ein Wort über Amateur-Photographie,” *Der Amateur-Photograph* 1, no. 1 (January 1887): 1.

¹⁵ Enno Kaufold, *Bilder des Übergangs: zur Mediengeschichte von Fotografie und Malerei in Deutschland um 1900* (Marburg: Jonas Verlag, 1986); and Rolf Sachsse, “Der modern Fotograf hat Angst vor sich selbst. Anmerkungen zur Geschichte amateurfotografischer Makro-Organisationen in Deutschland,” *Fotogeschichte* 3 (1983): 41–52.

Therefore, it is under these fertile conditions of access—access to knowledge, technology, and support—that Stieglitz engaged with the medium. Through a close examination of Stieglitz’s work from this period, his collection of personal portraits, German photography periodicals, and a study of photographers active in Berlin in the 1880s, this chapter reveals how Stieglitz’s early images were more typical of this period in Germany image-making than scholars have acknowledged.

Biography, Germany, and Artistic Influence

The life and photographs of Alfred Stieglitz have been the subject of myriad interpretations, which have examined a range of issues from his art collecting practices to his extraordinary pictures.¹⁶ This intense scrutiny on Stieglitz is due to the very critical position he occupied in the development of artistic photography and the introduction of modern art to the United States, and specifically New York. The majority of scholarly attention revolves around his life, relationships, and photographs from the first half of the twentieth century. The only real exception to this trend are the years around the turn of the century, when Stieglitz returned to the US in 1890 and became involved with the periodical *Camera Notes* (1897–1903).¹⁷ The myth of the great photographer—that is, the one he created for himself and the one that scholars have fashioned for him—thus focuses on his influence on American art rather than on what influenced him before he settled in New York City. His voice and vision are approached as if innate, fully forged the

¹⁶ See, for example, Weston J. Naef, *The Collection of Alfred Stieglitz: Fifty Pioneers of Modern Photography* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978); and Rosalind Krauss, “Stieglitz / Equivalents,” *October* 11 (Winter 1979): 129–140.

¹⁷ Christian A. Peterson, ed., *Alfred Stieglitz's Camera Notes* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993).

moment he arrived on American soil in his mid-twenties, problematically ignoring his prior intercultural experiences.

The majority of texts on Stieglitz are biographically driven, and the most well-known of these are written by Sue Davidson Lowe (Stieglitz's grandniece), Dorothy Norman (a former lover of Stieglitz), and Richard Whelan.¹⁸ These authors devoted a section of their respective texts to his early years, but the bulk of their attention is spent on his time in the United States from 1890 onward. For example, in *Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography*, Whelan devotes chapters three to eight on his life after his return from Germany.¹⁹ In effect, his Berlin years are framed as a less momentous time in his career and a prelude to the success that was to come. Sections on Stieglitz's early years generally begin with his parents' emigration stories around the revolutions of 1848–9, moving quickly to his early childhood in Hoboken, to a precocious adolescence rich in cultural influences in New York City; this is followed by his stay in Germany as a young adult where he obtained the technical knowledge necessary to become the “artist, prophet, pathfinder” of photography, as the American art critic Charles Caffin would later describe him.²⁰ Indeed, the literature is very clear about the divide between his Berlin years and what follows. Accordingly, Stieglitz's time in Europe provided him with no more than a strong technical and chemical foundation in photography, the building blocks to achieve great artistic greatness in the United States.

¹⁸ Sue Davidson Lowe, *Stieglitz: A Memoir/Biography* (New York: Farrar Straus Giroux, 1983); Dorothy Norman, *Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer* (New York: Aperture, 1973); and Richard Whelan, *Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1995).

¹⁹ Whelan, *Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography*, 135–574.

²⁰ Charles Henry Caffin, *Photography as a Fine Art: The Achievements and Possibilities of Photographic Art in America* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1901), 24.

The first and only study to date regarding the Berlin photographic scene in relation to Stieglitz was a short online essay, less than two pages in length, written by German art historian Miriam Paeslack in conjunction with the National Gallery of Art's (NGA) Stieglitz Project in 2002.²¹ Drawn from Paeslack's dissertation research about photography in Berlin from 1871–1914, this essay was commissioned by the NGA to give Stieglitz's work from this period context.²² It was not about Stieglitz per se but about Berlin photography, particularly how “the city had established a strong reputation for scientific and technical photographic research and had become an important center for the development and production of photographic equipment.”²³ Besides chronicling the various photography clubs in Berlin and some famous technical developments that occurred in the city, the bulk of Paeslack's article focuses on Vogel and his accomplishments. She does not discuss other photographers apart from him who were active in Berlin during this period.

In her book *Alfred Stieglitz: Scientist, Photographer, and Avatar of Modernism, 1880–1913*, Geraldine Wojno Kiefer assesses mid- and late nineteenth-century scientific and philosophic trends in Germany, and argues that Stieglitz's exposure to them—through his German university education—shaped how he engaged with art. Kiefer is the first to look closely at Stieglitz's relationship to science and the fact that he was deeply entrenched in the scientific culture of Berlin as he sat in on lectures by the chemist

²¹ Miriam Paeslack, “The Berlin Photographic Scene of the 1880s,” National Gallery of Art, 2002. Her essay is not accessible via the NGA website anymore. The author sent it to me via email on June 27, 2014.

²² Miriam Paeslack, “Fotografie Berlin, 1871–1914: eine Untersuchung zum Darstellungswandel, den Medieneigenschaften, den Akteuren und Rezipienten von Stadtfotografie im Prozess der Grosstadtbildung” (PhD diss., Albert Ludwig University of Freiberg, 2002).

²³ Paeslack, “The Berlin Photographic Scene of the 1880s,” n.p.

August Wilhelm von Hofmann, physiologist Emil du Bois Reymond, and physicist Hermann von Helmholtz.²⁴ She also brings to the fore how deeply Stieglitz was influenced by German idealist and romantic philosophies, which, she argues, “led him to consider photography a spiritual and intensely personal calling.”²⁵ In terms of his relationship with photography in the nineteenth century, Kiefer goes into great depth on P. H. Emerson’s understandings of Helmholtz’s theory of optics and photography as taught by Vogel. But outside the lecture halls, the medium plays a subordinate part in her account of Stieglitz’s years abroad. Photographs take a more central role in her discussion of the time immediately before and after the Photo-Secession period from 1894 to 1910.²⁶

The few scholars who have looked for the early aesthetic influences on Stieglitz, including Katherine Hoffman and Sarah Greenough, have examined his pictures from the 1880s through the lens of contemporary German painting. Hoffman’s 2004 book *Stieglitz: A Beginning Light* is a thoroughly researched biography that takes into account Stieglitz’s shifting cultural context. According to Hoffman, her text is “not a straight biography, nor a technical to photographic experiments of the last century. Rather it is an attempt to understand the early Stieglitz in the context of his times and to explore more fully his life and work as they were intertwined during those early years, both years in the United States and Europe.”²⁷ Her discussion of nineteenth-century German painting and their influence on Stieglitz during his Berlin years is the most thorough account to date of

²⁴ Interestingly, Kiefer does not note that von Helmholtz and du Bois Reymond were both members of the Berlin amateur photography club, *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie*, at the same time as Stieglitz.

²⁵ Kiefer, *Alfred Stieglitz: Scientist, Photographer, and Avatar of Modernism*, 4.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 223–354.

²⁷ Katherine Hoffman, *Stieglitz: A Beginning Light* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), xii.

this subject, and yet it does not make specific comparisons between Stieglitz's photographs and German artists. For example, the connections Hoffman makes between Stieglitz and the painter Adolf Menzel (1815–1905) remains general without particular examples or reproductions of Menzel's art to support those links.²⁸ In her astute, yet brief comparisons of Stieglitz's pictures with that of German painters, Sarah Greenough provides the reader with only two specific examples: an image by Munich-based painter Eduard Grützner and another painting by Ludwig Passini.²⁹ She then makes the broad claim that "Stieglitz imitated not only the titles and subject matter but also the manner of academic European painting."³⁰ Her statement leaves the reader wanting more—more examples, more in-depth analysis and comparisons, and more discussion about this period as this section was simply too brief.

Coursework as Character Study

As scholars have recounted Stieglitz's time in Germany, they have relied on the same four to five anecdotes from his student days at the *Königliche Technische Hochschule*, and these have been told in remarkably similar rhetoric.³¹ For example, the purposefully endearing stories of him cleaning glass plates and photographing a cast of the *Apollo Belvedere* against black velvet have obtained mythological status in the scholarship on Stieglitz. As I will go on to show, they aim (consciously or not) to paint an

²⁸ Ibid., 25–26.

²⁹ Sarah Greenough, *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set, The Alfred Stieglitz Collection of Photographs, Volume One 1886–1922* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, Harry N. Abrams Inc., 2002), XV–XVI.

³⁰ Ibid., XVI.

³¹ While Stieglitz was fluent in the German language conversationally before his move abroad, he did not have full fluency in terms of technical and scientific jargon until perhaps 1884.

image of Stieglitz as a stickler for perfection, a go-getter who could never accept the status quo. Stieglitz himself perpetuated the spread of these anecdotes through his own interviews and writings. On a superficial level, these tales give us a glimpse at the kinds of assignments he was given by Vogel. But on a deeper level, Stieglitz's reactions to these tasks give us insight into his artistic values and what he believed would lend him more authority in photographic circles. The narratives promote the idea of a young man who had always had a penchant for challenging convention, not to mention an almost instinctive sense of pushing the limits of the photographic medium.

Here, from an article Stieglitz wrote in 1938, is the first story commonly relayed about his time in Vogel's photography seminar. Stieglitz tells readers about his introductory assignment of cleaning glass plates to be used for the wet-collodion process:

For some weeks I was polishing glass and seemed unable to get what I considered a chemically clean plate. The job seemed hopeless but I stuck at it. One day Professor Vogel walked over to me and said, "Are you still cleaning glass? What's the matter?" I told him what I had been trying to do. He chuckled and said, "Man, what you have been trying to do is impossible. Let me see the glass you're cleaning." He looked at it and said: "why, that's perfectly clean." I looked at him amazed and said, "But I don't think it's clean in the sense I understood you to say it had to be clean." Then he said, "Why, you'd have to live in a hermetically sealed room which would have to be chemically clean in order to accomplish what you're after. You have taken me too literally."³²

This anecdote provides readers with a complex image of how Stieglitz wanted to be viewed: as naïve initially, open to instruction, but overall a persevering, hardworking perfectionist and honest young man who believes nothing is impossible. That his choice of words and tone is tinged with an air of superiority is evident in the first sentence, when he writes about "what I considered" a clean plate. In framing his statement this way,

³² Alfred Stieglitz, "Writings and Conversations of Alfred Stieglitz," *Twice A Year I* (Fall–Winter 1938), published in Richard Whelan, ed., *Stieglitz on Photography: His Selected Essays and Notes* (New York: Aperture, 2000), 4.

Stieglitz set his benchmark for “clean” higher than that of even “the father of scientific photography,”³³ which he dubs Vogel in the same article. Through this choice of wording, Stieglitz encouraged a self-image of thinking outside the box and of possessing sharper standards than his professor. Stieglitz portrays himself as someone who questions the limits of the medium from his initial engagement with the camera, and works to learn everything he can about the craft of photography in his early years. Such an image would cement his irrefutable artistic authority in the twentieth century.

In his anecdote about that “damned plaster cast” of the *Apollo Belvedere*,³⁴ Stieglitz was supposed to photograph it in different lighting conditions against a black velvet background in order learn how to obtain detail in either the cast or in the velvet. His misinterpretation of the assignment, a detail common to these tales, implies his fresh-eyed approach to new topics. Stieglitz hoped to secure a detailed negative in *both* the dark and light areas of the negative and worked toward this goal for weeks, unsuccessfully. Finally, Vogel asked him about his progress, and after Stieglitz relayed what he was trying to do, Vogel replied: “My God, man, don’t you know what you are trying to do can’t be done—that photographing is a compromise?”³⁵ For Stieglitz, this notion was unheard of, as he explained to his audience: “I do not think I had heard the word compromise before in my whole life.”³⁶ This incident brings to light once more an impression of the young Stieglitz as a man unwilling to lower his standards when it comes to his beloved medium of photography. It further presents us with a man who was the medium’s most devoted advocate and who ultimately had its best interests at heart.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid., 5.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

For his biographers, these oft repeated tales conveniently bolster the myth of Stieglitz as an artistic visionary against the backdrop of conventional German photography. That is, he brings a sense of Yankee ingenuity to his otherwise tedious photographic education in Berlin. For instance, Whelan interprets the *Apollo* anecdote to reveal Stieglitz's perseverance and vanguard nature: "This is the precisely the kind of technical tour de force in which the young Alfred Stieglitz delighted... It was the challenge of breaking down barriers through intensive striving that held Alfred."³⁷ To emphasize these traits at an early point in his career was a tactical move for Stieglitz as it gave his colleagues reason to trust his judgment in all matters photographic.

The Culture of Amateur Photography

In October 1884, *The Amateur Photographer* went to print, and like others that later appeared, it was critical to the newly forming discourse on amateur photography. As Sarah Greenough has argued, American amateurs really took up the idea of art photography through periodicals, photography clubs, and exhibitions and the same can be argued for photographers in the German-speaking countries.³⁸ But the meaning of *amateur*, even in the eponymous journal *The Amateur Photographer*, remained hotly debated in the mid-1880s.

³⁷ Whelan, *Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography*, 75–76.

³⁸ Sarah Greenough, "Of Charming Glens, Graceful Clades, and Frowning Cliffs: The Economic Incentives, Social Inducements, and Aesthetic Issues of American Pictorial Photography, 1880–1902," in *Photography in Nineteenth-Century America*, ed. Martha A. Sandweiss (Fort Worth: Amon Carter Museum; New York: H.N. Abrams, 1991), 259–281; Carl Srna, "Über das aufstrebende Amateurwesen in Österreich und Deutschland auf dem Gebiete der Photographie und dessen Rückwirkung auf die ausübende Praxis," *Photographische Correspondenz* no. 309 (June 1886): 313–319; and Oscar Krifka, "Wer ist ein Amateurphotograph?" *Photographische Correspondenz* no. 312 (September 1886): 446–448.

In 1885, advertisements for an amateur photography exhibition sparked a long thread of conversations in the “Letters to the Editor” section regarding who could participate in the show. The editor attempted to define the term amateur through a comparison to the professional: “the distinction between an Amateur and a Professional is that the latter lives by his art and the former does not. The payment of expenses is a side question, which concerns the amateur’s purse not his *locus standi*.”³⁹ For the editor, money was not the issue. Yet his definition can be read as a strategic way to not alienate a significant portion of his readership, as many commercial photographers were subscribers. The following week, a reader requested a clearer interpretation of the word, asserting that it “should be authoritatively and definitely settled.” He offered his own description of an amateur photographer as “... one who works exclusively for love and does not sell his productions.” According to the reader, financial gain crosses the line between the amateur and the professional, and it would be “an injustice to our avowed professional brethren and in my opinion against the interests of amateur art.”⁴⁰ This discussion went on for months.

The *Amateur Photographer* even brought discussions from the American periodical *The Photographic Times*, into the conversation. In 1885, their writers added another layer to the designation *amateur*: he is “presumably a man of more cultured education and greater leisure than the professional photographer and may reasonably be expected to have a keener sense of the aesthetic principle and a more educated knowledge

³⁹ “Our Views,” *The Amateur Photographer* 1, no. 23 (March 13, 1885): 357.

⁴⁰ W. Asbury Greene, “Letters to the Editor” in *The Amateur Photographer* 1, no. 24 (March 20, 1885): 379.

of history and science of art than his professional brother.”⁴¹ Thus class and access to education were explicitly brought into the discussion of amateur photography. The elite, or those who did not need to work in order to live a comfortable life were said to possess a better sense of aesthetics than those working on commission.

The conversations in the US and Britain about the meaning and connotations of amateur photography are important for our discussion of Stieglitz as he enters photography precisely when amateur photography as a movement was new and not yet fully delineated. Berlin, moreover, was a special case when it came to the development and meanings of amateur photography, and specifically when it came to the separation between amateur and professional photographers.

Vogel was likely an early subscriber to *The Amateur Photographer*, as his experiments were often discussed in its pages; he was also presumably the individual to introduce Stieglitz to this magazine. In its first issue from October 10, 1884, the editors reprinted an article by Vogel from the *Journal of the Chemical Society* about rendering film sensitive to green, yellow, and red rays.⁴² Founded in 1863 for anyone interested in photography, Berlin’s *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie*, which Stieglitz would officially join in February 1885, discussed the periodical’s release with great interest in its meeting on November 7, 1884. Those present deemed it “a sign ... that amateur activities has achieved an unprecedented level, and [it] is not only of interest for amateurs,

⁴¹ *Photographic Times* cited from their March 6, 1885 issue, “Our views,” *The Amateur Photographer* 1, no. 25 (March 27, 1885): 397.

⁴² Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, “Expedients for Rendering Photographic Film Sensitive to Green, Yellow, and Red Rays,” *The Amateur Photographer* 1, no. 1 (October 10, 1884): 14.

but also for professional photographers.”⁴³ In other words, the Berlin photographers framed the journal’s distribution as a boon for both amateurs and professionals—not as a way to separate the groups, but as a way for them to both benefit from its content.

In hindsight, the club’s response to the journal speaks to the reasons behind the late establishment of a Berlin amateur photography club in 1887—late, that is, compared to the 1884 and 1885 founding of amateur photography clubs in Britain and the United States, respectively. On June 25, 1887, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* (German Society of the Friends of Photography) in Berlin was founded for amateur photographers. Stieglitz, one of its founders, was one of twenty-eight constituents present at the first meeting. Vogel was elected its president, and the *Photographische Mittheilungen* was designated the club’s official organ. The periodical published its meeting notes as well as the notes of another popular German photography club, *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie*, led by Vogel. According to the summary of the June 25, 1887 meeting, “the desire to form such a club [had] often been expressed” and “given the steadily rising number of amateur photographers,” the need for a separate club for this group could not be ignored.⁴⁴ Previously there had been a profound hesitation in instituting an amateur photography club in Berlin. Many felt that professional and amateur image-makers should work together toward the common good of photography and a separation between the groups would ultimately impede the progress of the medium. As Christian Joschke asserts in his comparison of amateur photography clubs in Berlin and Vienna in the late nineteenth century, Berlin

⁴³ “*Verein zur Förderung der Photographie in Berlin, Sitzung vom 7 November 1884*,” *Photographische Mittheilungen* 21, no. 285 (November 1884): 197.

⁴⁴ “*Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie*,” *Photographische Mittheilungen* 24, no. 346 (June 1887): 93.

photographers wanted “to build a shared culture, mixing science with art and transcending the divisions between the two domains.”⁴⁵ In other words, there was a strong push toward uniting rather than dividing photographers in Berlin to bring together scientific, commercial, and amateur photographers to work toward a common cause. The amateur drive, however, was ultimately too strong. “We could no longer close ourselves off from the weightiness of these reasons [the differences between the amateur and professional],” the founding members of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* explained, “and emanating from the conviction that we can only serve the thing, i.e. photography as such, by bringing together and uniting its followers, we gladly lent a hand in the formation of such an amateur club.”

Yet, the word *amateur* was still a divisive point for this organization. One topic of critical importance discussed during the Berlin amateur club’s first meeting was the debate over its name. “The liveliest discussion was aroused by the name Amateur,” the secretary writes. “Finally, the term’s omission and the current name of the club was decided upon with 16 votes against 12.”⁴⁶ Even though the aim of the club was to support the needs of amateur photographers, to label the club as such, they felt, would deter some from joining likely due to the term’s associations with elitism and exclusion. Joschke puts this in perspective, arguing that the Vienna amateur photography club “cultivated worldliness and aristocratic patronage, partially neglecting the culture of debate and the exchange of ideas. In the Berlin circles by contrast amateurism stood for the productive

⁴⁵ Christian Joschke, “Amateurism and Cultural Change: Photography in Germany and Austria” in *Impressionist Camera: Pictorial Photography in Europe, 1888–1918*, ed. Phillip Prodger (London; New York: Merrell in association with Saint Louis Art Museum, 2006), 110.

⁴⁶ “Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie in Berlin” *Photographische Mittheilungen* 24, no. 346 (June 1887): 106.

interaction between an elite and its public and the hope of seeing the participation of all in the development of a common culture.”⁴⁷ Thus rather than divide the photographers of Berlin, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* voted to make the club more inclusive, at least in its title.

Stieglitz on Amateur Photography in Germany

With his own best interests in mind, Stieglitz made a very different case for the presence of amateur photography in Germany. Only a few months before the founding of the first amateur photo club in Berlin, Stieglitz published an article entitled “A Word or Two about Amateur Photography in Germany” in *The Amateur Photographer*. While the piece concentrates on the new “model photo-chemical laboratory” at his school and its future influence on photography in Germany, it opens by offering: “It is rather odd to write about amateur photography in Germany when such a thing hardly exists; and still I venture to say a few words about its future, as it is most certain that Berlin, Germany has given it an impetus.”⁴⁸ Here, Stieglitz asserts that amateur photography played no role in 1887 in German photography, yet implies that he himself is an amateur photographer. In his first article in *The Amateur Photographer*, he wanted to present himself as unique, to place himself above his German peers, some of whom did not support a separate amateur photographic culture. By framing himself as the solitary amateur photographer in a deluge of professionals, he elevated his name, new to the pages of the journal. So began a narrative of Stieglitz’s difference that he would perpetuate for years.

⁴⁷ Joschke, “Amateurism and Cultural Change,” 111.

⁴⁸ Alfred Stieglitz, “A Word or Two about Amateur Photography in Germany,” *Amateur Photographer* 5 (February 25, 1887): 96.

But, of course, the historical record shows that amateurism was alive and well in German photography as early as 1879, when Vogel discussed it in his “German Correspondence” column in the *Philadelphia Photographer*.⁴⁹ In response to commercial photographers’ fear of the steady increase of amateurs, Vogel frequently asserted that the activities of amateurs would actually improve photography and its reputation in the eyes of the broader German public. He compared amateur photographers to amateur musicians and how the latter’s rise in popularity made professional musicians more beloved and respected.⁵⁰ He believed amateur photography would push professional photography further into the limelight and, more importantly, felt that photographic innovation and progress resulted from amateur experimentation. Amateurs such as Daguerre, Talbot, Archer, among many others, were the driving force behind all substantial photographic inventions, he argued.⁵¹ As the dry plate came into use in the early 1880s, Vogel again raised the topic of the amateur photographer. For example, in 1884, when Stieglitz and Vogel began to work together, Vogel writes about amateur landscape photography: “Everybody is out of town and landscape photography blooms in all its glory. To be sure the amateurs are wide awake, besieging hill and forest, meadow and plain, swamps and

⁴⁹ Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 16, no. 187 (July 1879): 210.

⁵⁰ Vogel made this analogy on multiple occasions, and as amateur photography grew in popularity, the frequency with which he applied the analogy increased. See, for example, Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Photographic World* 2, no. 24 (December 1872): 367; Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 17, no. 196 (April 1880): 127; Vogel, “Address of Dr. Vogel,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 20, no. 237 (September 1883): 283.

⁵¹ Hermann W. Vogel, “Address of Dr. Vogel,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 20, no. 237 (September 1883): 283.

mountains.”⁵² Given Vogel’s profound respect for amateur photographers and his belief in the possibilities they could bring to the medium, it is thus not surprising that Stieglitz chose to see himself as an amateur.

Looking back at his career in 1938, Stieglitz asserted that “there was virtually no such thing [as amateur photography] in Germany. I might say that I was the first amateur photographer in Germany.”⁵³ At stake for Stieglitz in claiming he was the first amateur photographer in Germany were prestige, foresight, and authority; but this statement also severed his close ties to Germany in the late 1930s when World War II was on the horizon. In fact, Germany’s role in World War I had already had a devastating effect on American perceptions of Germany, and, by extension, German-Americans. Many even attempted to cut ties with their homeland.⁵⁴ As one historian described this shift in relations during World War I: “German ancestry became a liability.”⁵⁵ In December 1914, less than six months after declarations of war were announced, Stieglitz responded to this phenomenon in a letter to his German friend and colleague at Bruckmann Verlag in Munich, Fritz Goertz, who had printed the plates in *Camera Work*. His correspondence, defensive in tone, highlights where he stood on the issue of Germany at this point in time and speaks to the divisive, charged atmosphere around German-American relations.

⁵² Hermann W. Vogel, “German Correspondence,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 21, no. 249 (September 1884): 284.

⁵³ Stieglitz, “From Notes Made by Stieglitz, 1938,” 178.

⁵⁴ For an in-depth discussion of German-American relations during World War I, see Katja Wüstenbecker, *Deutsch-Amerikaner im Ersten Weltkrieg: US-Politik und nationale Identitäten in Mittleren Westen* (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2007).

⁵⁵ Katja Wüstenbecker, “German-Americans during World War I,” in *Immigrant Entrepreneurship: German-American Business Biographies, 1720 to the Present*, vol. 3, ed. Giles R. Hoyt (German Historical Institute). Last modified September 25, 2014. <http://www.immigrantentrepreneurship.org/entry.php?rec=214>

The attitude of Americans toward Germany is easily understood if one understands Americans. Americans are hysterical, sentimental, and hypocrites. Of course there are exceptions... the war has hurt the pocketbooks of the American, and the American looks for the cause of his hurt. He sees the cause in the war... To me, Germany has for years been the nation which I have admired most... In my own opinion England, if any country can be held responsible for this War, is responsible. Personally, I do not hold any country responsible... Germany is doing what it must... Of course whenever the occasion presents itself I state the case as I see it. For that reason, I am called pro-German. I am pro-nothing. I don't believe in governments as governments exist today... But changes in the right direction, to be more or less permanent, come about slowly and surely. And so I tell people if they insist that I be for one nation or another, that I am for Germany.⁵⁶

While Stieglitz explicitly sides with Germany in this instance, the stakes were very different in the late 1930s. In terms of his article published in 1938, Stieglitz attempts to distance himself from Germany or more specifically German photography on the eve of World War II. At this time he devoted his attention to his gallery, An American Place, which had opened in 1929. His focus was American artists and in stating that he possessed a different mindset than other Germans, he effectively acknowledged and implicitly responded to popular anti-German sentiment in the late 1930s. In addition, he was exploiting what he knew already to be their unsavory reactions.

Stieglitz as Sitter

The many images of Stieglitz housed in the Stieglitz/O'Keeffe archive in the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale University reveal just how familiar he was with professional photographers, in Germany and the US. While scholarship tends to paint Stieglitz as a man who was only introduced to the medium through his university

⁵⁶ Letter, Alfred Stieglitz to Fritz Goertz, December 23, 1914, Alfred Stieglitz/Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

education, this trove of portraits allows a different story to unfold. Early Ivorytypes, tintypes taken in and out of the studio, and scores of *cartes de visite* reveal that the young Stieglitz was quite adept at being the subject of the camera's gaze (Figure 4.1, 4.2). Behind the lenses stood German, American, and German-American photographers, a fact that evinces his family's proclivity toward German image-makers.

The earliest photograph of Stieglitz in his private collection was taken in Germany. In the mid-1860s, when he and his family were visiting Berlin, C. Schwartz, "*Hof Photographen*" (royal court photographers), photographed Stieglitz as a toddler (Figure 4.3). In this small *carte*, Stieglitz sits, legs crossed, in an elegant studio chair; its thick, opulent arms are carved with lions and floral decoration lines the back of the chair. What appears to be a photograph is tied to his chest, a harbinger perhaps of his future intimacy with the medium. His family's choice to use a royal court photographer points to their commitment to high standards of quality in their photographs—something that we will see across Stieglitz's early portraits. This choice demonstrates their own knowledge of professional photography circles in the United States and across the Atlantic. Thus, before Stieglitz even immersed himself in the medium, he was familiar with the work of those considered the best in the field.

While still an adolescent stateside, Stieglitz was photographed by two extremely well-known New York-based studio photographers, who both actively participated in photographic clubs and contributed to the top trade periodicals: Abraham Bogardus and German immigrant William Kurtz, both of whom I discussed briefly in Chapter Three. While Stieglitz was still a teenager, for example, Bogardus captured the boy's likeness at least four times. When the portrait in Figure 4.4 was made, Bogardus was the founding

president of the National Photographic Association of the United States, the largest American organization of professional photographers in the nineteenth century.⁵⁷

Successful financially, Bogardus was able to open several branches of his studio in both New York and New Jersey.⁵⁸ In conversation with biographer Dorothy Norman, Stieglitz distinctly remembered an early experience from 1872 at the fashionable New York studio of Bogardus: “As Mr. Bogardus was about to go into his darkroom, I asked if could I accompany him. He replied that if I would be very quiet I might watch him as he worked.”⁵⁹ By relaying this anecdote, Stieglitz conveyed that, even at a young age, he showed a keen interest in the medium.

German-American photographer William Kurtz, who held many leadership positions in the German Photographic Society of New York, photographed Stieglitz before his departure to Germany. In a vignetted *carte*, Stieglitz sits for the camera, clean-shaven and coiffed (Figure 4.5). He looks confident, handsome, and proud. In photographic circles, Kurtz was known as always being ahead of his competition in terms of technology. For instance, he was the first photographer in New York to use electric lighting in his studio, an act that he advertised whenever he had the opportunity. This made his studio very popular and busy as it extended the hours of his business. Kurtz was also extremely close with Dr. Vogel, who used a photograph by Kurtz as the frontispiece for his book *The Progress of Photography Since Year 1879*.⁶⁰ From the late 1860s onward, Vogel often discussed Kurtz’s photography as an example of the amazing

⁵⁷ He was the president of the NPA from 1868 until 1873.

⁵⁸ For a biography on Bogardus, see “Our Picture: Abraham Bogardus,” *Philadelphia Photographer* 8, no. 94 (October 1871), 314.

⁵⁹ Norman, *Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer*, 21.

⁶⁰ Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, *The Progress of Photography Since Year 1879* (Philadelphia: E. L. Wilson, 1883).

achievements of American photographers.⁶¹ Kurtz was a frequent contributor to photography exhibitions in Europe, particularly in the German-speaking countries.

In the 1880s, several German photographers captured Stieglitz's likeness, including Erdmann (nickname Ernst) Encke (1843–1896), a friend of the Stieglitz family. They were to become good friends in the early 1880s. Stieglitz's father, Edward, supported Erdmann's younger brother, Fedor Encke (1851–1936), a young German portrait and genre painter. Fedor even lived with the Stieglitz family in their New York home for most of 1877. When he moved to Berlin in 1882, after a year in Karlsruhe, Stieglitz stayed with Ernst for a month, and they remained close friends afterward. A graduate of the *Königlich Preußische Akademie der Künste* (Royal Prussian Academy of Arts) in Berlin, Ernst was a successful academic artist and was appointed a professor at this institution in recognition of his work in neoclassical sculpture. He had art publicly displayed in Berlin's Thiergarten and elsewhere throughout the city that Stieglitz would later photograph in 1886 (Figure 4.6). As a professor of art, Encke encouraged Stieglitz to explore the city's artistic holdings. Stieglitz recalled in an interview from 1908 that Ernst sent him out "every day to look at the statues and the old Madonnas, and gradually things began to happen to me."⁶² Yet that is not the only way that Encke influenced Stieglitz artistically.

Like his brother, Ernst was also an artist. While plaster and bronze were Ernst materials inside his classroom, light-sensitive chemicals, glass-plate negatives, and large-format cameras were his professional tools outside of the Academy. Ernst ran a

⁶¹ See, for example, Vogel's discussion of Kurtz in "Photography in Germany," *Philadelphia Photographer* 6, no. 65 (May 1869): 157.

⁶² Agnes Ernst, "New School of the Camera," *The Sun* (April 26, 1908), 3.

professional photography studio on *Potsdamer Straße* in Berlin in the 1880s. Soon after moving to Berlin, Stieglitz began visiting Ernst's atelier to pose before the camera as evidenced by the many *cartes* of himself taken at the studio from the early 1880s (c. 1882–4). In Stieglitz's first years in Berlin, Encke photographed him in various guises at least eleven times. In this mounted portrait, for example, Stieglitz is electric; his presence before the camera is striking (Figure 4.7). Through his graphic pose, he emanates confidence. He stands in profile, which accentuates his overgrown mustache and thick, tousled head of hair that flies in all directions. His eyes slightly in shadow, Stieglitz stares boldly away from the camera. He wears a thick shaggy white coat over layers of clothing; a white unbuttoned shirt is underneath the overcoat. The collar of his shirt stands up, drawing attention to the shadows on his neck. So many textures make the image's tactility mesmerizing and carnal, and Stieglitz's self-assured pose combined with his bohemian clothing offers an image of sensuality. This photograph feels like an artistic collaboration between the two men in the way that Stieglitz holds himself; his stance and attire are so affected, so dramatic. He poses as another.

Encke took traditional photographs of Stieglitz as well, classic bust portraits in which he dressed in more conventional upper-middle-class attire, not in such free-spirited clothing (Figure 4.8). In this *carte*, for instance, Ernst captures a buttoned-up Stieglitz. The electricity in the aforementioned portrait cannot be felt here; the sitter is calm and poised. We do not know the details behind these Encke images in which Stieglitz assumed various identities. However, we can surmise that Stieglitz's close friendship with Erdmann Encke familiarized him with the peculiar artistic capabilities of photography—namely, its ability to create personas through the adjustment of lighting,

different clothing, and shifts in pose. The fact alone that he kept these portraits is important as he was so particular about how he would be seen by posterity. His legacy and by extension the legacy of the American art photography was everything to him.

As is commonly known, Stieglitz heavily edited his own photographs, particularly pictures from his early career. He left only a condensed group of images as his visual legacy from the 1880s. Greenough asserts that this task began after the 1910s “when he became a modernist—and wanted it to reflect and embody his new and lately won understanding of photography as a modern art.”⁶³ His photographs made prior to his modernist period, that is, before the turn of the century, were filtered the most given that they did not fit neatly into the ideal image of himself that he wanted to leave behind.

“One of the first Pictures”

Encke’s *cartes*, in fact, would become the foundational materials for one of Stieglitz’s first photographs (Figure 4.9). As Stieglitz himself recalled, “one of the first pictures I made was of a series of portraits pinned to a drawing board that Ernst Encke, a Berlin photographer, had made of me.”⁶⁴ This photograph of photographs has rarely been discussed at length, let alone reproduced, perhaps due to the complex questions of authorship it raises as the images depicted were made by Encke.⁶⁵ In addition, its collage-like construction sets it distinctly apart from all of Stieglitz’s photographic work to come, an outlier in his oeuvre. Yet this constructed photograph of eleven *cartes*

⁶³ Greenough, *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set*, xii.

⁶⁴ Norman, *Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer*, 25.

⁶⁵ Whelan is the only person that briefly discusses this photograph, describing it as possessing an “oddly cubistic feel.” He notes that it “presents an unformed personality searching for a self-image.” Whelan, *Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography*, 77.

by Encke, re-photographed and symmetrically arranged by Stieglitz, is significant for its composite-like nature of Stieglitz's own likenesses at a time when he stood at the precipice of a new obsession: photography. Indeed, this was the moment when his role switched from standing before the camera to standing behind it, from being the model to acting as the artist. Through the image's dynamic construction, Stieglitz's kaleidoscopic identity, not yet rarified, comes into view. It was Encke, a German photographer, who provided Stieglitz with the conceptual and artistic space to explore his own identity as an emerging artist.

In describing his first months working with the medium, Stieglitz noted that "it fascinated me, first as a passion, then as an obsession,"⁶⁶ and this passion is manifest in Figure 4.9. While somewhat unsophisticated in its symmetric composition, an air of excitement pervades this image of images. The creator is clearly excited about the possibilities of the medium before him, and the paths that he may take: the artist, the professional, the outsider (with his orientalist nod in using the hooded costume). Stieglitz places three photographs in the top and bottom rows, four in the middle row, and a single, smaller image in the center. All the images portray Stieglitz looking away from the camera, yet the direction of his gaze, as he has laid out the artwork, is directed toward the center, toward him, never the viewer. This avoidance of eye contact surrounds Stieglitz in an aura of mystery, as if we will never know his "true" self. While it is clunky in its delivery of the message, overall the constructed work reveals Stieglitz at a crossroads. Each path—each row—presents him with options for who he might become. To find out which option will rise to the top, he just needs to search inward.

⁶⁶ Doris Bry, *Alfred Stieglitz: Photographer* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1965), 91.

In the top row, *cartes* of Stieglitz in profile cloaked in a striped hooded shawl flank a more conventional portrait of him. The backgrounds in the cloaked images are darker, creating a strong contrast with his costume, thus emphasizing his clothing. Underneath the cloak, Stieglitz wears a solid colored cloth over his head and forehead, turban-like. His Orientalist costume bespeaks the strong allure of the Orient in nineteenth-century Europe, particularly in Germany, which had a strong orientalist tradition.⁶⁷ In using Near Eastern attire, Stieglitz aligns photography with mystery, magic, and allusion, connotations that surrounded both the medium and the Near East during this period. These photographs are also printed slightly darker, perhaps in the service of giving him darker skin. The contrast of a dark background in the cloaked images draws the viewer's eye toward the lighter, more conventional bust portrait that sits between them, where Stieglitz poses in a buttoned up suit before a more modeled backdrop.

In the middle row, he again uses the bordering images to present himself in costume, but this time in the previously mentioned bohemian-style, shaggy overcoat, over a white-collared shirt of which the first buttons are undone. This disheveled Stieglitz conveys the idea of an impassioned, free-spirited artist. This is a tactical move by Stieglitz; he wants his viewers to see him as an individual who lives only for his art. Once more, two somewhat conventional studio portraits stand in the center, and he appears in profile, which sets them apart from more traditional studio portraits of the period in

⁶⁷ On the German Orientalist tradition, see Suzanne L. Marchand, *German Orientalism in the Age of Empire: Religion, Race, and Scholarship* (Washington, D.C.: German Historical Institute; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Ursula Woköck, *German Orientalism: The Study of the Middle East and Islam from 1800 to 1945* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

which the sitter's face was generally in a three-quarter position. On the right, the background is dark; Stieglitz looks younger and has no mustache. On the left, he sits before a light backdrop and now has facial hair. A period of time has lapsed between the two images, between all of them really, and this is made apparent through noticeable hair growth. The effect is deliberate; he wanted the beholder to notice time pass so as to imply that he has evolved. This, in turn, brings to light how the raw materials of one his first photographs were made over a long period of time. Stieglitz had been visiting Encke's photography studio for years, and these *cartes* show the changing Stieglitz as he becomes a "true" artist with unruly hair. Slightly below and between these two profile portraits in conservative attire is a smaller photograph of Stieglitz, slightly overexposed. Its brightness differentiates it from the other images, serving to act as the central lynch pin, guiding the flow of the other photographs in a circular motion.

The bottom row of photographs mirrors the top row of images in Stieglitz's collage with a similar number of photographs in which he wears a comparable, but not the same, sequence of costumes. Distinguishing these two rows is layering, pose, and lighting, all of which shroud the anchoring line of portraits with mystery. Stieglitz again wears the striped cloak in the flanking photographs. While these images were most likely taken during the same studio visit as the photographs on the top row, Stieglitz's head is positioned differently. He tucks his chin into his chest, casting his gaze downward, at once leaving his face less defined and more oracular. These two *cartes* are positioned on top of the middle portrait and dip toward it. Their physical presence in the foreground—that is, how he layered them—emphasizes the photograph that sits between the two images and draws attention to a darker image of Stieglitz. He sits affectedly in this

middle photograph, looking downward, his hand clasping a dark shawl in front of his torso. He strives to appear enigmatic, unknown.

While Stieglitz reveals a fractured self in this image, it is not one tainted with angst or desolation. Rather, it is a portrait of a man preoccupied with a new form of visual expression that allows him to communicate more than what is physically pictured. In other words, his picture of pictures conveys a narrative of emotions and ideas. Given that he heavily edited his early photographs, it is at once revealing and strategic that he saved this particular image. It tells a story about Stieglitz, the man who from its beginnings used photography to show his inner world, his emotions, and his path to the medium.

Thus in this photographic collage, or rather photomontage as it is a rephotographed collage, we witness a moment when Stieglitz attempts to show himself in different lighting conditions, before different backgrounds, in different costumes.⁶⁸ By compiling these portraits into one image, Stieglitz captures not a single distinguishing likeness, but endless variations characterized by expressive gesture, lighting, and simple costumes. He demonstrates in his selection of portraits that, through photography, anyone can become anybody, it seemed. He also addresses the complexity of time in photography, and specifically the medium's ability to collapse discrete moments of time through the technique of collage. Besides the narrative on identity and the changing self, this artwork brings to the fore the omnipresent commercial photography studio, indeed the seemingly ubiquitous portraiture atelier of the nineteenth century. He does this by

⁶⁸ On the use of photomontage in nineteenth-century photography, see Mia Fineman, *Faking It: Manipulated Photography Before Photoshop* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

choosing to layer the images so as to make their *carte-de-visite* form visible. Stieglitz does not crop E. Encke's mount, which states the photographer's name and studio location. Indeed, its bold placement across the image several times reveals how close Encke and Stieglitz were and how often Stieglitz visited his studio. This picture, accordingly, conveys how significant Encke's influence on Stieglitz's embracement of the medium in his early years must have been. Photography and the interior of the studio were not unknown to Stieglitz before he began his classes with Vogel, and while the portraits of Stieglitz throughout his youth confirm this fact, his time in Encke's atelier affirm that he had an even more intimate relationship to the medium than scholars have previously acknowledged. This collaged image thus portrays Stieglitz as a young man growing up before the camera. That Stieglitz went on this self-identification journey with Encke, I would argue, made this image important enough for him to keep.

Encke stayed involved with the Berlin photographic community, and his work was well respected. In 1889, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* together with the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie* organized the *Photographische Jubiläums Ausstellung zu Berlin* (Berlin Jubilee Photographic Exhibition), an event Stieglitz described as "a perfect success in every way."⁶⁹ Stieglitz and Encke were both jurors of the exhibition, but not in the roles one would expect. Stieglitz judged apparatuses and chemicals, while "Professor Encke" was on the panel for portraits, landscapes, and genre.⁷⁰ In other words, Encke, and not Stieglitz, was judging amateur

⁶⁹ Alfred Stieglitz, "Photographic Exhibition, Berlin," *The Amateur Photographer* 10 (September 6, 1889): 154.

⁷⁰ The exhibition was comprised of four areas. The juries for these divisions were as follows: Division 1 for portraits, landscapes, genre, etc. Professor Encke, Professor Jacobsthal, E. Milster (Painter), E. Kömer (Painter), H. Graf (Royal Photographer), H.

photography in 1889, which suggested that Encke's peers considered his photographic skills to be of the highest quality.

In Costume

While studying with Vogel, Stieglitz became involved in the photographic culture of Germany—specifically the clubs and periodicals—around him such as the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie*.⁷¹ After becoming a member in early 1885, he contributed to the meetings, reporting on various topics, such as his experience using certain kinds of papers.⁷² Throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, this was the leading professional photography club in Germany. As a founding member of the amateur club *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie* in Berlin, the meeting notes confirm that he often presented his photographs at the gatherings, as did others.⁷³ Stieglitz's involvement with these clubs and his drive to publish in *Photographische Mittheilungen*, the organ of both societies, and *Der Amateur-Photograph* confirms his knowledge of German photographic trends. This becomes apparent in his photographic

Hartmann (painter), Lahde (painter), and Professor Schirm; Division 2 for photo-mechanical work Professor Roese (Reichsdruckeri), Professor Jacobi, Franz Schroeder (Director of the Photographische Gesellschaft); Division 3 for scientific Photography. Dr. Jeserich, Dr. Zumner, Dr. Miethe, Dr. Sieben, Professor Dr. Tobold, Dr. Zenker, Dr. Pfeiffer, Professor Dr. Vogel; Division 4 for apparatus and chemicals, etc. Schulz-Hencke, Alfred Stieglitz, Captain von Westernhagen, Halwas (Royal Photographer), O. Linder, Mr. Trene, Dr. Witt, and Kirchner (mechanical engineer).

⁷¹ Stieglitz's admission into the society read as such: "Als neues Mitglied wird durch den Vorsitzenden angemeldet: Herr Stieglitz, Studierender aus New-York, z. A. in Berlin." This statement was printed in the meeting notes: "Verein zur Förderung der Photographie in Berlin Sitzung vom 20 Februar 1885," *Photographische Mittheilungen* 21, no. 294 (March 1885): 301.

⁷² "Verein zur Förderung der Photographie in Berlin Sitzung vom 23 Juni 1885," *Photographische Mittheilungen* 22, no. 301 (June 1885): 77.

⁷³ "Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie in Berlin Sitzung vom 30 Dezember 1887," *Photographische Mittheilungen* 24, no. 357 (December 1887): 261.

work from the 1880s, in which he deals with common themes of German photographers and image-makers.

In the early part of his career, for example, Stieglitz took Renaissance-inspired photographs, genre scenes in which subjects appeared in period costume. In 1886, he visited his childhood friend and painter New Yorker Frank Simone (Sime) Herrmann (1866–1942) in Munich.⁷⁴ Stieglitz took his camera with him on this trip and staged a few Renaissance-themed pictures, with Stieglitz and Herrmann posing as Renaissance characters. While Stieglitz claimed that this image was an impromptu shot made at a costume party, the existence of variations of the photograph in which he switched cards for dice and changed the position of the camera affirm that they were staged and thus challenge the spontaneity with which he had hoped to infuse them. His later wish for his work to not be associated with orchestrated imagery, which would have connected him with English photographer Henry Peach Robinson, a forerunner in the advocacy of photography as a fine art, as opposed to Emerson, is behind this anti-staged claim.⁷⁵

In the version he reproduced in the new German periodical *Der Amateur-Photograph* and the British *Amateur Photographer*, he portrays three figures dressed in Renaissance attire as they play dice around a table (Figure 4.10). Their pyramidal configuration emulates a popular compositional device in Renaissance paintings. Leisurely sprawled out in a wooden chair, Stieglitz sits on the left, tilting a cylindrical period drum toward the beholder. His pose emphasizes his laced-up pants and dagger at

⁷⁴ Peter Hastings Falk wrote an excellent text on Herrmann that discusses his relationship with Stieglitz: *Frank S. Herrmann 1866–1942: A Separate Reality* (Madison, CT: Sound View Press, 1988).

⁷⁵ See Chapter 13 of Whelan, *Alfred Stieglitz: A Biography* for a longer discussion of Stieglitz's dislike of Robinson.

his side. He stares at Herrmann, who has just cast the dice, a nod to the title of the photograph: *Die Würfelspieler* (the dice players). Herrmann's striped pants echo the stripes in his headwear, and their stark black and white pattern draw the viewer's eye to him. The unidentified man in the middle looks on in a jovial manner as he stands perched over the table—the peak of the pyramid composition. A floral tapestry hangs behind them, and a solid colored cloth hangs on the wall behind Stieglitz. The action, costumes, composition, and props—the table, metal cups, chairs, and drum—all speak to a fascination with the Renaissance.

A second version of the photograph exists in which the three players are engaged in a game of cards (Figure 4.11). All three players sit in this image, and the tapestries are flipped. In her brief discussion of this photograph, Sarah Greenough makes the case that Herrmann helped Stieglitz stage this photograph to emulate Eduard Grützner's "hackneyed study of the subject" from his painting *The Card Players* from 1883 (Figure 4.12).⁷⁶ Apart from people surrounding a wooden table playing cards, however, Stieglitz's photograph is very different from Grützner's painting. More people participate in Grützner's card game, the poses are dissimilar, the props differ, and more importantly, the clothing is from a different time period.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the German public became increasingly fascinated with the Renaissance as it emphasized the period as an audacious new beginning in European history. In historian Martin Ruehl's discussion of German veneration of the Renaissance in the nineteenth century, he asserts that it "served as a

⁷⁶ Greenough, *Alfred Stieglitz: The Key Set*, xv.

genealogy and legitimization of their own emancipatory efforts.”⁷⁷ The Renaissance appeal comes at the heels of Romanticism, which also looked back in time to this period with nostalgia. Moreover, an interest in this era coincided with the standardization of the Renaissance as a unified period to study that encompassed specific cultural and historical traits.⁷⁸ In terms of the new modern medium photography, the Renaissance was considered “the preferred stylistic period of historic taste,” as German photographic historian Ursula Peters argues in her book *Stylistic History of Photography in Germany 1839–1900*.⁷⁹ Interest in this epoch manifested itself in Renaissance-esque parades and costume balls, paintings, in addition to photographs of costumed figures and theater-like staged scenes.

While Stieglitz’s desire to have his work compared with contemporary painting strategically elevated and legitimized his medium of choice to the level of fine art at a time when the medium’s role as art was still disputed, his photographs—their composition, tenor, subject matter—need to be seen in relation to other German photographs from this period. The famous Munich-based photo-chemist and photographer Johann Baptist Obernetter, whom I discussed in Chapter Two for his innovations in photomechanical printing, made a photograph in 1881 that is close to Stieglitz’s dice image in mood and character (Figure 4.13). The actors in Obernetter’s tableau vivant are all young men, much like those portrayed in *Die Würfelspieler*.

Standing in front of the side of a nondescript building set against a background of trees,

⁷⁷ Martin A. Ruehl, *The Italian Renaissance in the German Historical Imagination, 1860–1930* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015). 4.

⁷⁸ Lynne Walhout Hinojosa, *The Renaissance, English Cultural Nationalism, and Modernism, 1860–1920* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 45.

⁷⁹ Ursula Peters, *Stilgeschichte der Fotografie in Deutschland 1839–1900* (Köln: DuMont, 1979), 218–228.

the protagonists dress in full Renaissance period costume. Like in Stieglitz's image, they are arranged in a pyramid formation. The men on the ends wear dark ensembles that draw attention to the action of the man in the center, who sports lighter toned attire. Poised to fire his crossbow, he tracks a target above him, and the man beside him follows the prey closely with his gaze. While two men focus on the sky, the man on the right—dapper in clothing and confident in stance—stares at the camera suspiciously. His attention is on the grounds that surround the men; his body language is tense as if waiting for an attack.

Obernetter titles the photograph "*Landsknechtsgruppe*," which refers to a class of mercenary soldiers in the German and continental armies from the 15th through the 17th century. A more general definition of the word *Landsknecht* is a servant of the land. It is also a variant of the word lansquenet, a German Renaissance card game. In addition, the word is used to describe a lansquenet drum, which was used by *Landsknecht* soldiers on the battlefield. Stieglitz in fact depicts this type of drum prominently in his genre scene of men playing dice by tilting it toward the viewer. In the alternate version, in which his sitters play cards, the lansquenet drum sits in the corner, only its edge visible.

In comparing Stieglitz's and Obernetter's photographs, my aim is not to suggest that Stieglitz studied Obernetter's photograph and in turn made a photograph of similar spirit. Rather, I want to propose that the subject matter that engaged with German cultural history was of interest to painters and to photographic practitioners as well. Indeed, Stieglitz was not alone in photographing this type of subject matter. Rather, historically oriented imagery that related to Renaissance painting was just as prevalent in German photography as it was in other media. It is very possible, of course, that Stieglitz had seen Obernetter's work. Obernetter was very involved in German photographic circles, and he

and Vogel were in constant contact as Obernetter was the printer of the majority of photographs published in *Photographische Mittheilungen*. Obernetter's images were also beloved in American circles. The Photographic Society of Philadelphia, for example, voted to purchase a set of his photographs in 1880.⁸⁰ From the mid-1860s until his death, Obernetter also invented a new photogravure process and his firm manufactured photographic chemicals dry plates. Vogel always discussed Obernetter's innovations in his published correspondence in the *Philadelphia Photographer* and in the meeting notes of the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie* in Berlin.⁸¹

In the Moment

During the 1880s, spontaneity became an important quality for photographers to portray, especially those working in Germany. It was an attribute that Stieglitz wanted to inform his early work as well. When Emerson awarded Stieglitz first prize in the 1887 Holiday Work competition of London's *Amateur Photographer* journal, specifically for his photograph *A Good Joke* (Figure 4.14), he said it was the only spontaneous work in the collection. The photograph depicts a group of children smiling, talking, and laughing as they gather around a woman who appears to be getting water. A man stands in the arcades in the background, looking at the happy scene before him. The focus of this image is the children, specifically the little boy, who has turned around mid-laugh to look at Stieglitz behind the camera. It is his energy that gives this photograph a sense of

⁸⁰ "Society Gossip," *Philadelphia Photographer* 17, no. 195 (March 1880): 98.

⁸¹ See, for example, Vogel's discussion about Obernetter's dry plates, which Vogel claims "has facilitated very much the possibility of making instantaneous pictures." Herman Wilhelm Vogel, "German Correspondence," *Philadelphia Photographer* 19, no. 221 (May 1882): 156.

spontaneity. While Stieglitz was likely very proud of this award at the time, much later, he told Dorothy Norman: “Winning the prize is tangible proof for [my father] that my time is not being wasted. As for myself all I can think of is how bad my competitors must be.”⁸² Here, he again wants to set himself apart from others to position himself in the vanguard as the only one producing photographs that were fresh, alive, and spontaneous. He also presented this photograph and others from this trip at a meeting of the *Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie*, an indication that he was happy and proud of this body of work. It received “the most vivid reception” and was “notably distinguished by a particularly happy detection of the given moment.”⁸³

Concurrently, several photographers in Germany worked in such a willfully spontaneous manner, and many of these photographers were members of the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie* and published their work in the same periodicals and publications Stieglitz was publishing in and reading. Oscar Suck, a court photographer in Karlsruhe and a member of the society, who often sent work by post, for instance, was known for his “*Momentphotographie*” (instantaneous photography). He frequently contributed photographs to *Photographische Mittheilungen* and other German-language periodicals in the 1880s and routinely photographed large groups outdoors (Figure 4.15). In this Suck photograph from 1887, published in Joseph Maria Eder’s *Jahrbuch für Photographie und Reproduktionstechnik für das Jahr 1887* (Yearbook of Photography and Reproduction Technology for the Year 1887), a book in Stieglitz’s personal library, Suck captures a group of children engaged in a game akin to “Duck, Duck, Goose,”

⁸² Norman, *Alfred Stieglitz: An American Seer*, 33.

⁸³ “Deutsche Gesellschaft von Freunden der Photographie in Berlin Ordentliche Versammlung vom 30 December 1887,” *Photographische Mittheilungen* 24, no. 357 (December 1887): 261.

perhaps the German equivalent named “*Plumpsack*.” The children sit in a circle on the ground in the bright sun with only a small patch of shade on the right. One child skips around the group, and her foot is caught in mid stride with her hands on her waist, her back to the camera. A text by Suck accompanies this photograph, discussing the freshness of the scene and the reasons behind his choice of subject matter. “The Fröbel’scher Kindergarten, in which traditional children’s games are played,” he writes, “is very suited for pictures of children. This is a lovely thing and at the same time this place is the best for capturing children as unselfconscious as possible.”⁸⁴ One of the most important things to gather from his statement is that Suck wanted to capture the children unaware of the camera so that they seem “*unbefangen*” (unselfconscious); he aims for an air of spontaneity. While Suck’s image does not have the same anecdotal feel, I would argue that it feels more spontaneous and less staged than Stieglitz’s image.

Photographs capturing children playing or engaging in some activity was a common theme for photographers in Germany, especially in the 1880s when this subject matter highlighted the new abilities of faster films and technology. The detective camera or hidden camera became a popular avenue for technological creation with the arrival of dry plates as it allowed photographers to travel without a darkroom. This in turn enabled the photographer to capture people unaware and in more spontaneous gatherings. Picturing children, who were thought to be difficult to photograph due to their quick movements and difficulties in standing still, was a way to demonstrate a technology’s speed as well as one’s own mastery in capturing decisive moments.

⁸⁴ Oscar Suck, “Ueber Moment-Aufnahmen,” in *Jahrbuch für Photographie, Kinematographie und Reproduktionsverfahren, Band 1 1887*, ed. Josef Maria Eder (Halle: Wilhelm Knapp, 1888): 227.

Take for example these photographs (one the size of the actual negative and the other an enlargement) by Stengel & Markert from Dresden, published in *Photographische Mittheilungen* from 1886 (Figure 4.16). As the description of these photographs state, Stengel & Markert took this image with a newly patented secret camera (1886) by Robert Gray, the rights of which were bought by Berlin-based C.P. Stirn. Using round film plates, the camera was marketed as a concealed vest camera. Stengel & Markert portray five upper-class girls outdoors before a stately building and its grounds. Apart from one child, they wear white aprons over dark colored dresses, white stockings peek out in between the frock's edge and their lace-up boots. Three of them lean against a low, curved wrought-iron fence, another girl perches atop the enclosure and stares directly at the photographer, and another schoolgirl faces them. The photographers have orchestrated a scene of diagonals—the fence, the path, the rooftops—that keep the eye flowing around the image. On the left, the girl leans over to pick up a ball in mid-bounce, its shadow is visible to the discerning viewer, a sign of the technology's speed. It is a genre scene of unidentified children playing ball, a picture of an everyday activity, very much like Stieglitz's photograph *A Good Joke*, taken the same year.

Bridge, Boats, and Goethe

Stieglitz described the making of his photograph *On the Bridge, Chioggia* from 1887 as spontaneous, yet the picturesque nature of the scene and its formal elements connect it to photography happening in Berlin (Figure 4.17). After he won third place for

this picture in *The Amateur Photographer's Prize Tour Competition* in 1889, he published an accompanying statement about its creation:

As we approached a bridge to cross it, we noticed a crowd of people who seemed unusually excited. Imagine our surprise to see our Munich friend [Herrmann] in the midst of the crowd, vociferously gesticulating unmistakable signs of anxiety. We thought he had gotten into trouble with the people, and hastened to his assistance... he tried to cover his embarrassment by assuring us that his object was simply to offer us a good opportunity to photograph the bridge after the style of Passini [an Austrian artist living in Venice, Ludwig Passini]. We had a good laugh at him, but took the picture, the idea being an excellent one.⁸⁵

While the artist Passini often painted genre scenes, in which the people were the primary focus of the painting, such as in this busy artwork of a Venetian canal (Figure 4.18), Stieglitz's picture is about the smooth arch of the bridge, the shadow it creates in the shimmery water, and the highlight and dark contours of the boats in the foreground. The small gathering of people on the bridge is secondary to the picturesqueness of the scene, its flow of light and shade, line and curves. Like many of Stieglitz's photographs, there was another version of this photograph that reveals its staged nature (Figure 4.19). In the variation, all of the people standing on the bridge look down into the water, their heads and hands cast shadows on the bridge's edge. This conspicuous change in the people's positioning speaks yet again to the carefulness with which Stieglitz staged the scene before him.

While his description of *On the Bridge, Chioggia* connects it explicitly with contemporary painting, Stieglitz's photographs share an interest in architectural geometry and light with the work of Hermann Rückwardt, a Berlin court photographer who

⁸⁵ Alfred Stieglitz, "A Day in Chioggia," *Amateur Photographer Prize Tour Issue* (June 1889): 9.

published many portfolios of local and continental sites.⁸⁶ Opening a successful photography studio in 1868, Rückwardt simultaneously became a member of the *Verein zur Förderung der Photographie*. Known beyond Prussian borders, he was a contributor to international exhibitions such as the Centennial International Exhibition of 1876 in Philadelphia. In the 1870s, Rückwardt opened a photographic art and publishing company, which produced several portfolios picturing Berlin organized by theme, including the Berlin City Palace, Museum Island, Berlin bridges and railway structures, and he worked with art historians to produce these works. Along with many awards, his success was cemented when he was appointed the Royal Prussian court photographer Wilhelm II in 1876 and later the Royal Bavarian court photographer of Ludwig II in 1885. Rückwardt trained his large format camera on the exteriors and interiors of building. His pictures were at once atmospheric and calm, and he paid close attention to light.

Pictures from Rückwardt's series *Berlin und seine Umgebung in Architektur, Landschaft und Plastik* (Berlin and its Surroundings in Architecture, Landscape and Sculpture) made between 1879 and 1882 tap into a similar romantic aesthetic as Stieglitz's photograph of the bridge in Chioggia. In *Blick von Königl. Schloss nach der Kurfürstenbrücke* (View from Royal Castle by the Elector Bridge), Rückwardt depicts an august arched bridge with people scattered across its center (Figure 4.20). Those milling about are not grouped as closely as those in Stieglitz's image but their presence is still felt. The water under the bridge flows smoothly, with not a ripple in a sight. The shadows beneath the bridge provide a stark contrast to the sky above it. This image is about the

⁸⁶ On Rückwardt, see Michael Neumann, *Berlin: zwischen Residenz und Metropole: Photographien von Hermann Rückwardt 1871–1916* (Berlin: Nicolaische Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1994); and Hans Schiller, *Das kaiserliche Berlin: 53 Photographien aus d. Jahre 1886* (Dortmund: Harenberg, 1981).

light that graces the curves of the bridge and enlivens the buildings around it. Like Stieglitz's photograph, it is also about the geometry created through its interaction with illumination and atmosphere. Both photographers stand to the side, allowing the slightly angled contour of the bridge to shepherd the beholder through the photograph. The clouds in Rückwardt's scene imbue the image with a romantic atmosphere. The lines of his photograph are cleaner than Stieglitz's, which is achieved through his more distanced viewpoint, giving the image more breathing room overall, as does its horizontal orientation. Moreover, by foregrounding the fishing boats, Stieglitz fills the space with more dark lines and curvilinear forms.

In another photograph by Rückwardt from 1882, *Blick v. Monbijou-Garten (Stadtbahn) n.d. Nat.-Gal u. Börse* (View from the Monbijou Garden (Light Rail) National Gallery) fishing boats with their jumble of bends and curves dominate over a bridge in the far distance (Figure 4.21). Rückwardt likely stood on another bridge when he captured this scene. Similar to Stieglitz's picture of the bridge in Chioggia, the viewer is barely given any ground on which to stand. Given Rückwardt's popularity in Berlin, his membership in the *Verein*, his prominent position with royal families, and the fact that Vogel was apprised with everything happening photographically in Berlin, it is likely that his portfolio would have been a part of Vogel's, if not the club's, library.

Rückwardt and Stieglitz even photographed the same subject matter from similar vantage points at least once in their respective careers. In 1880, Rückwardt portrayed the brand new sculpture of Goethe by German sculptor Fritz Schaper, which had recently been installed in the Berlin Tiergarten (Figure 4.22). In this marble sculpture of Goethe, he stands proud and tall on a plinth, and sitting below him is a personification of music

next to a cupid figure, among others. A black wrought iron fence encircles the statue, guarding it from passerby. A thick layer of trees appears behind it, emphasizing the majestic sculpture. Two men stand behind the statue, perhaps taking a walk on a lovely spring day. Stieglitz captured the same Goethe sculpture some years later from a slightly different angle so as to position Goethe more in profile (Figure 4.23). He cropped out the ground before the fence, making this image about a stark contrast in tones: the milky color of the marble and the rich shadows of the trees. Hoffman has asserted that Stieglitz's pictures of sculptures from the 1880s can be attributed to an assignment by Vogel. She claims Vogel believed that "it was nearly impossible to take a photograph of an outdoor sculpture in which the work of art and the background environment could be equally sharp. Alfred rose to the challenge."⁸⁷ Hoffman thus frames the image in terms of Stieglitz overcoming a perceived technical obstacle in the medium, but both Rückwardt and Stieglitz produced a photograph in which the statue and the foliage are in focus. They also managed to obtain excellent detail in the sculpture and the greenery.

Photographers of Light and Leaves

Given Vogel's prominent role in Stieglitz's early career, it is also imperative to examine his photographic aesthetic in relation to that of Stieglitz's. On a basic level, Vogel believed that photography could be art and that good photography was much more than a technological and chemical feat. He felt that the eye of an artist was needed to make photography excellent. For him, it was a combination of atmosphere, composition, and, most importantly, light. While the 1880s were a very busy period for Vogel with his

⁸⁷ Hoffman, *Stieglitz: A Beginning Light*, 53.

experiments in the expansion of the color sensitivity range of film, he was still a practicing photographer in the late 1860s and 1870. His photographs were published in portfolio albums and *Photographische Mittheilungen*.

Vogel's extraordinary understanding of light is particularly evident in his arboreal studies. As briefly discussed in the Chapter Three of this dissertation in the context of how impressed the editor of the *Philadelphia Photographer* was with these photographs, the forest view from Vogel's *Tiergarten-Album* transforms backlit trees into a conduit of the sublime (Figure 3.10). Rays of light are palpable in this image as they stream over and through the branches. On the right, Vogel captures a well-trodden but deserted carriage path, the traces of countless wheels mark the ground, their ridges highlighted in the raking light. A footpath lies on the left, its edges marked by a small fence, and a lamp post rises up to meet the sun, its glass casing illuminated with sunlight, the true protagonist of this photograph. Vogel's view of the gardens is a work of art, as he defined one, in which the extreme darks and lights create an ethereal portrait of garden.

Published in *Die Photographische Rundschau* in 1889, Stieglitz's photograph *On Lake Thun, Switzerland* from 1886 exhibits a similar attention to the ethereal quality of light (Figure 4.24). The lake in the foreground takes up the bottom third of the photograph, and the light above it accentuates the shallow rhythmical ripples in the water. Layers of mountains line the background, and their many shades of gray bespeak their varied distance. The sunshine streams through the clouds, at once accentuating their mottled texture and filling them with discernable weight. In both photographs, backlit subjects preside, creating images in which light itself is on stage. The actual subjects pictured—the garden path with shaded trees and a shimmering lake and mountains—are

peripheral to the light streaming through the clouds or the branches. Although separated by twenty years, both Vogel and Stieglitz's photographs move beyond the depicted subject to something more atmospheric that captures the spirit of the moment.

Court photographer to Prince Carl of Prussia, Berlin photographer Friedrich Ferdinand Albert Schwartz, also known as F. Albert Schwartz, possessed an equally astute attention to light in his photographs. Atelier and photographic publishing house owner since 1867, Schwartz was well known for his architectural photography, particularly of historic buildings. As opposed to Rückwardt who generally photographed the new landscape of the city, Schwartz recorded the quickly vanishing Berlin edifices in the face of increased industry. However, in this image by Schwartz titled *Die Kuppel des Ausstellungspalastes in der Abenddämmerung* (The Dome of the Exhibition Palace at Dusk) from circa 1885, he represents a newly constructed building of iron and glass over forty-five meters tall (Figure 4.25).⁸⁸ Taken in the evening light, this building can only be discerned by its outline: its translucent cupola breaks up the Berlin skyline. Architecture plays only a minor part in this photograph, as light and atmosphere are again at the helm. A layer of clouds converges overhead, backlit as in Stieglitz's photograph of Lake Thun. They seem to be moving toward one central cloud where the light is brightest. The brilliant glare of the sun attracts the beholder, and dark clouds gather quickly around it, as if they too are attracted to the sun. The radiant light contrasts with the outlines of the cityscape below, its flags, rooftops, and trees backlit, now fleeting shadows of the city. The fading evening light is reflected in a small portion of the Spree before Schwartz. Its

⁸⁸ For a longer discussion of Schwartz and this building in particular, see *Camera Berolinensis: das berliner Album des Fotografen F. Albert Schwarz, 1836–1906* (Berlin: Nicolai, 2006), 82–83.

tiny waves echo the texture of the clouds above it, an impressionistic view of light and dark tones. Majestic, striking, and ethereal, this photograph projects a similar tenor to Stieglitz's image. Both photographers produce an artistic hymn to the clouds and power of the sun.

A talented landscape photographer, Vogel was a master at capturing lush, vegetal scenes that drew out, rather than suppressed, the diverse tonal range of the greenery around him. Another photograph from his *Tiergarten-Album* underscores this strength (Figure 4.26). On an overcast day, Vogel photographs a different part of the park. With fallen leaves floating on its surface, a pond sits in the foreground, reflecting the tree's trunks and thick, loaded branches. The water's reflection, here, becomes another means of representing foliage. An arched stone bridge slightly off center breaks up this woodland scene with the addition of a solid, light tone that contrasts with its dark shadow and curved reflection. A woman dressed in white stands on the bridge. Covered by a circular pale hat, her head tilts down toward the water. The beholder's eye gravitates to her as her attire breaks the feathery texture of the leaves swirling around her person. She contemplates nature around her.

In July 1888, Stieglitz returned to the United States briefly to attend the wedding of his sister Flora and photographed his mother at their family home on Lake George. Although the identity of the pictured individual in Stieglitz's image is known, it is not a portrait per se. Rather it is a symphony of tones and leafy textures, much like Vogel's image (Figure 4.27). Stieglitz captures a similar scene but on a sunny day, and thus shadows and highlights abound. Yet their attention to texture, tonal range, and mood is comparable. Both photographs are not about the people portrayed but about solitary

contemplation in nature and its abundance. Stieglitz's mother stands in white attire at the center of the photograph, back turned to the camera. The swaying trees dwarf her small figure. While the women in both photographs are small in comparison to what surrounds them, their presence grounds each image. Nature circles around them. In Stieglitz's photograph, a narrow path and a tree's shadow lead from the image-maker to Hedwig, and from there the eye follows the slope of the tree trunks toward the small patch of open sky and back around to his mother. In Vogel's photograph, the bridge and the circle forged by its shadow and reflection also cause a homologous circular motion in which the female figure is the anchor.

A New Story of American Photography

The 1880s were an exciting time for photography in Germany, as fruitful dialogue and exchange took shape between distinct realms of the medium. Unlike in Vienna, London, or even New York, Berlin was a place where photographers, especially Vogel, Stieglitz's mentor, worked toward the advancement of photography as a whole; in their view, it was the medium that presided, not the various groups that led the charge.

Stieglitz was an active member of Germany's photographic community, a culture that attempted to be inclusive and that consisted of scientists, professionals, and amateurs. It was in that climate that he learned how to be a photographer, attaining not only sophisticated technical skills, but perhaps more importantly, learning how to engage in photographic discourse, establish clubs, organize exhibitions, and make photographs that moved beyond mere documentation. In the nine years he spent in Germany, Stieglitz experimented widely with photographic styles as he found his photographic vision. While

European painting and English photography certainly inspired him, German photography was just as powerful an influence on the young Stieglitz. Contrary to his own claims, which attempted to frame him as the solitary amateur image-maker, German photographic culture was not the wasteland that Stieglitz described, but was thriving and blossoming all around—and indeed within—him. In denying or underplaying that influence Stieglitz wanted to elevate the homegrown narrative about the origins of American art photography and the spearheading role he played in it. To acknowledge the German influence on him and his work would adulterate the strength of this new movement.

Emphasizing the importance of German photographic culture to Alfred Stieglitz, beyond just noting his education, runs counter to dominant narratives about his artistic formation and can profoundly change future studies about him and American art photography more broadly. Indeed, as the impact of German photography upon his own pictures far exceeded technical and chemical sufficiency, we must account for this in the story of American art photography. Stieglitz and his strong belief in the medium's capacity for artistic expression have always been considered the origin of this movement, and the rhetoric of American exceptionalism underscores this tenet. Yet if we understand Stieglitz's photographs to be representative of German photographic culture of the 1880s, the birth of American art photography is, by extension, not a self-contained phenomenon, but rather the product of a rich cultural exchange.

We think of photographs, such as the Langenheim brothers' panoramic view of Niagara Falls, as predisposed to exchange, but photography and its dissemination moves beyond physical objects into the realm of ideas, people, and technology. In the case of the

Bierstadt brothers, a specific style and photographic processes are the vehicles of exchange in their multiple books on the White Mountains of New Hampshire. For Vogel, as the German correspondent, the written word is the main means of exchange at the height of German-American relations. A decade later, Stieglitz himself traverses the Atlantic, participating in the dynamic photographic culture around him to then come back to the US and establish an American art photography movement. We often think about nineteenth-century photographers in national groupings, but as all my case studies demonstrate, these ideas could as easily be dismantled as quickly as they were constructed. The transnational fraternity of American and German photographers, encouraged by a strong immigrant community, gave rise to many technical and aesthetic achievements, and this fraternity was at the heart of the development of photography on American soil.

ILLUSTRATIONS



Figure 1.1, W. & F. Langenheim, *Three Men Playing Cards*, March 1842. Daguerreotype. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

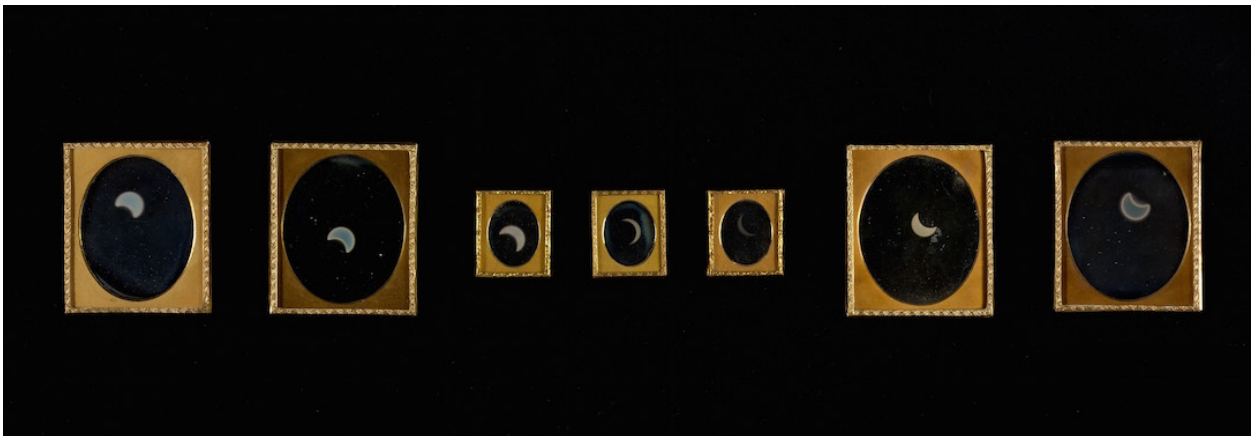


Figure 1.2, W. & F. Langenheim, *Eclipse of the Sun*, 1854. Daguerreotypes. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

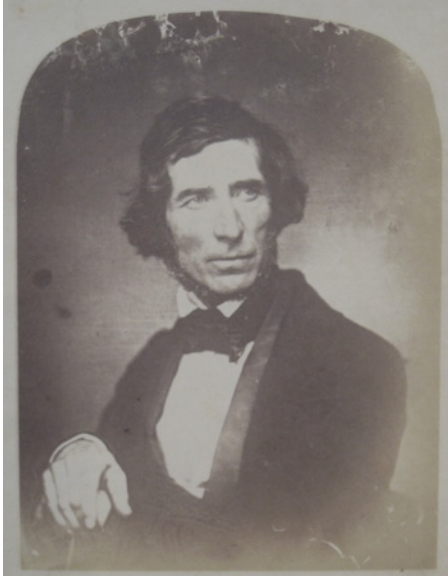


Figure 1.3, W. & F. Langenheim, *Asher B. Durand*, 1849. Salted paper print from paper negative. Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis.

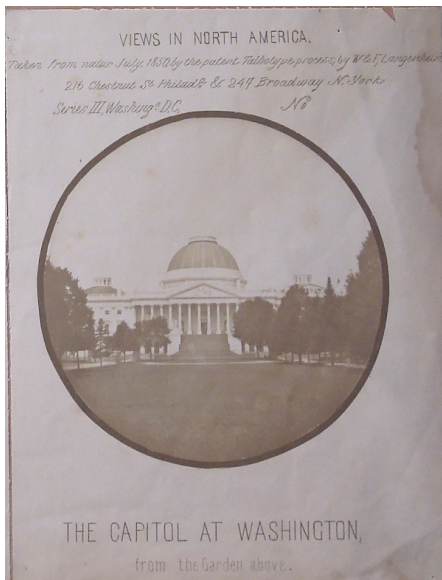


Figure 1.4, W. & F. Langenheim, *The Capitol at Washington*, 1849. Salted paper print from paper negative. Missouri History Museum, Saint Louis.



Figure 1.5, C. P. & A. J. Tholey, *Philadelphia Schuetzen-Verein*, 1869. Lithograph. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.



Figure 1.6, William Langenheim, *Johann Bernhard Schneider*, ca. 1842. Daguerreotype. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 1.7, Voigtländer Portrait Camera, 1841. National Media Museum, Bradford, England.



Figure 1.8, W. & F. Langenheim, *Panorama of the Falls of Niagara*, 1845. Sixth-plate Daguerreotypes. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 1.9, John Trumbull, *Niagara Falls from Under Table Rock*, 1808. Oil on canvas. New York Historical Society, New York.



Figure 1.10, Hugh Lee Pattinson, *Horseshoe Falls*, April 1840. Daguerreotype. Newcastle University Library, UK.



Figure 1.11, Samuel Finley Breese Morse, *Niagara Falls from Table Rock*, 1835. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts Boston, M.A.



Figure 1.12, Thomas Cole, *Distant View of Niagara Falls*, 1830. Oil on panel. Art Institute of Chicago, I.L.



Figure 1.13, W. & F. Langenheim, Details of *Panorama of the Falls of Niagara*, 1845. Sixth-Plate Daguerreotypes. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 1.14, William Henry Bartlett, *Niagara Falls from Near the Clifton House*, ca. 1837. Engraving. From N. P. Willis, *American Scenery; or Land, Lake, and River: Illustrations of Transatlantic Nature* (London: George Virtue, 1840), 45.

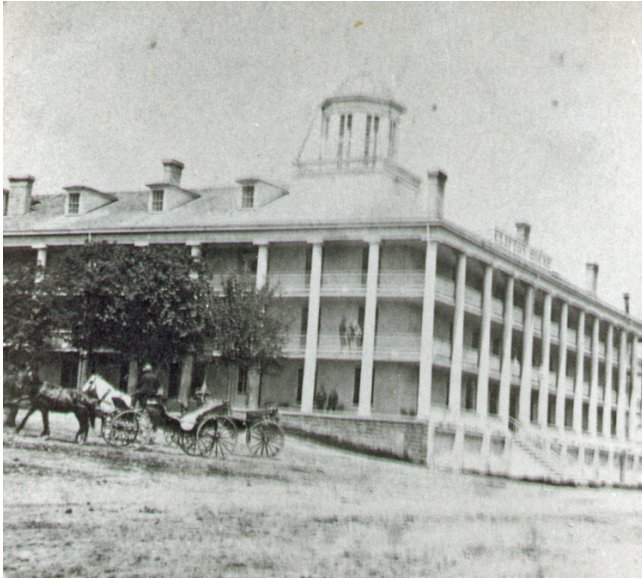


Figure 1.15, George Barker, *Clifton House, Niagara Falls*, ca. 1869. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Niagara Falls Heritage Foundation Collection.



Figure 1.16, W. & F. Langenheim, *Girard College, Philadelphia*, ca. 1860. Albumen silver print from glass negative, with applied color. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.



Figure 1.17, W. & F. Langenheim, [*Mrs. Thomas Ustick Walter and Her Deceased Child*], ca. 1846. Daguerreotype. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

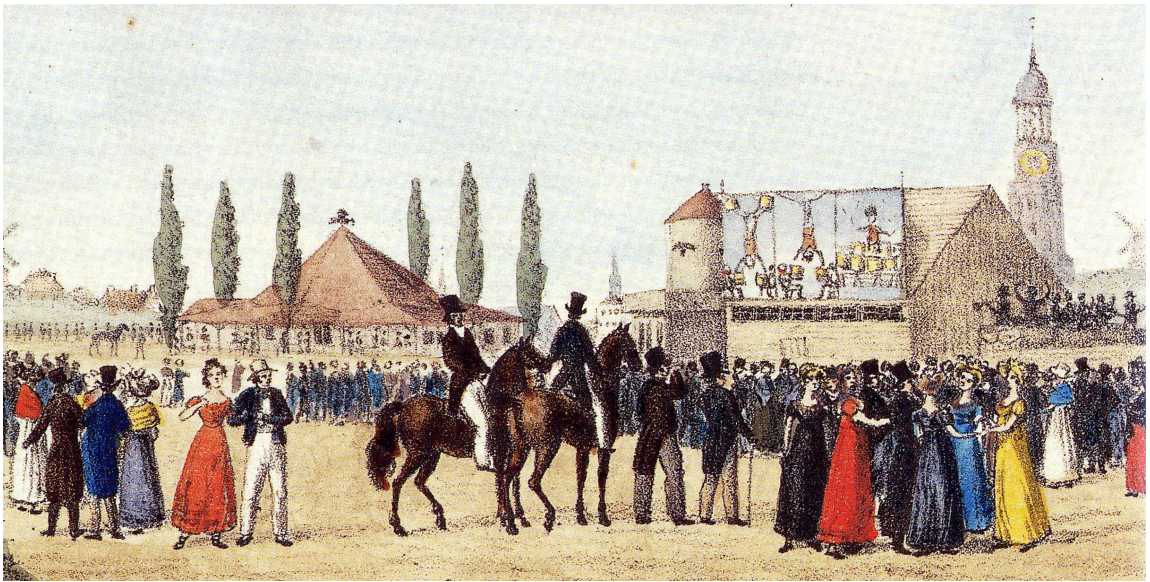


Figure 1.18, Peter Suhr, *Panorama einer Reise von Hamburg nach Altona und zurück* (DETAIL), 1823. Lithograph and watercolor. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, C.A.

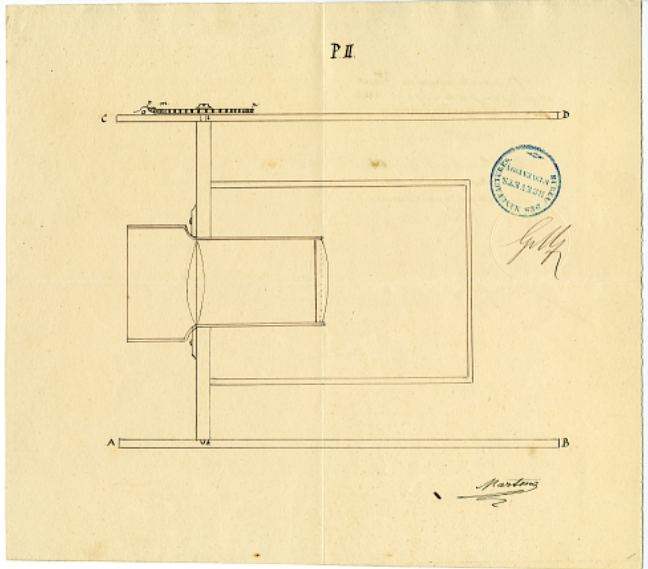


Figure 1.19, Friedrich von Martens, *Drawing of Megaskop Camera*, ca. 1844. National Museum of American History, Kenneth E. Behring Center, Washington, D.C.



Figure 1.20, Friedrich von Martens, *Quais de la Seine pris de la terrasse du Louvre, au toit du "Salon carré,"* ca. 1845. Daguerreotype, George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film, Rochester, N.Y.



Figure 1.21, A. Vaudricourt, *Panorama View of Niagara Falls*, 1846. Lithograph. From J. De Tivoli's *A Guide to the Falls of Niagara*, by L. De Tivoli, with a *Splendid Lithographic View*, by A. Vaudricourt, from a *Daguerreotype* of F. Langenheim (New York: Burgess, Stringer and Co., 1846).



Figure 2.1, Cover and interior flap with viewing device. From Bierstadt Brothers, *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862). Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University, N.Y.

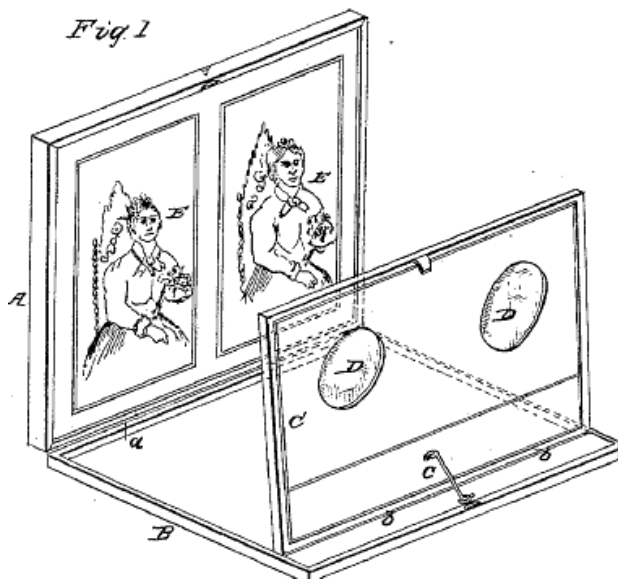


Figure 2.2, J. F. Mascher's drawing of his "Stereoscopic Daguerreotype-Case," included in his patent application, March 8, 1853.



Figure 2.3, Bierstadt Brothers, *View from the Pemigewassett House, Plymouth N.H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 1. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.

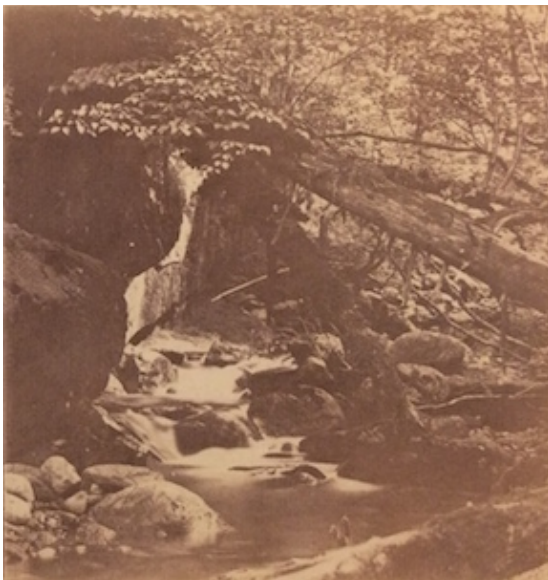


Figure 2.4, Bierstadt Brothers, *Near the Flume, Franconia Mts., N. H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 8. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.



Figure 2.5, Albert Bierstadt, *Mountain Brook*, 1863. Oil on canvas. Art Institute of Chicago, I.L.



Figure 2.6, Albert Bierstadt, *The Wetterhorn*, 1857. Oil on canvas. Private collection.



Figure 2.7, Hans Fredrik Gude, “Landscape – Norwegian Scenery,” ca. 1855. From *Gems from the ‘Düsseldorf Gallery,’ Photographed from the Original Pictures by A. A. Turner and Reproduced (for the first time) Under the Superintendence of B. Frodsham* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1862): n.p. The Library Company of Philadelphia.

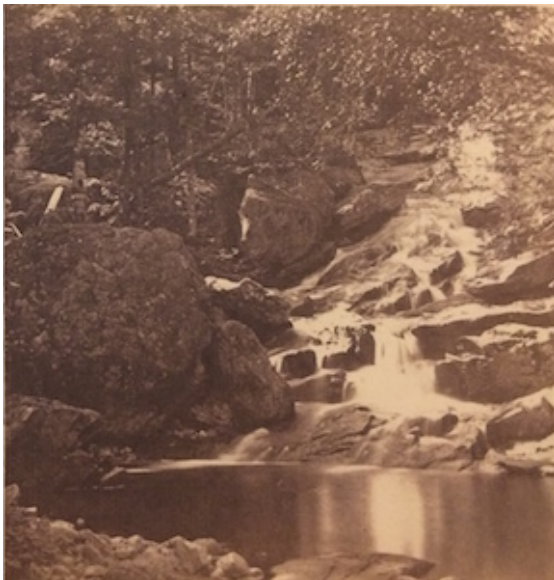


Figure 2.8, Bierstadt Brothers, *Rapids and Cascades, Franconia Notch, N.H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 25. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.



Figure 2.9, Bierstadt Brothers, *Foot of Cascades below the Flume, Franconia Mts. N.H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 5. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.

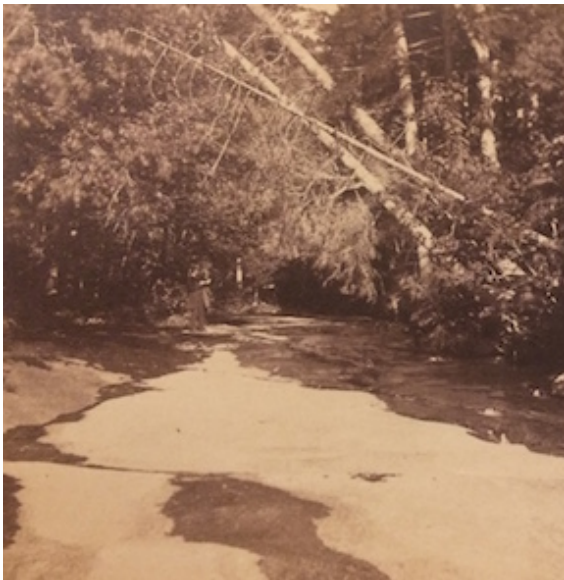


Figure 2.10, Bierstadt Brothers, *Cascades below the Flume, Franconia Mountains, N.H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 6. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.

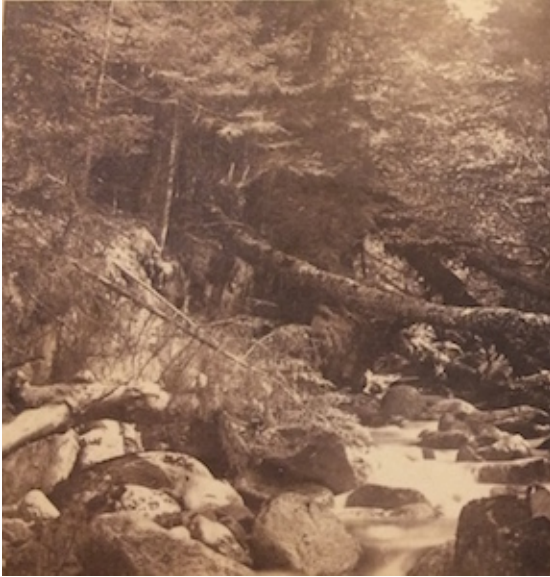


Figure 2.11, Bierstadt Brothers, *On the Way to the Flume*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 7. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.



Figure 2.12, Albert Bierstadt, *White Mountains, New Hampshire*, 1863. Oil on board. Private collection.



Figure 2.13, Johann Wilhelm Schirmer, *Autumnal Storm*, ca. 1855. From *Gems from the 'Düsseldorf Gallery,' Photographed from the Original Pictures by A. A. Turner and Reproduced (for the first time) Under the Superintendence of B. Frodsham* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1862): n.p. The Library Company of Philadelphia.




Figure 2.14, Bierstadt Brothers, *Down the Stream below the Flume, Franconia Mts., N.H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 18. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.



Figure 2.15, Bierstadt Brothers, *Glen Ellis Falls, White Mountains, N. H.*, ca. 1860. Salted paper print. From *Stereoscopic Views among the Hills of New Hampshire* (New Bedford, MA: [Publisher not identified], 1862), plate 33. Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.

CHARLES BIERSTADT
Photographer
 NIAGARA FALLS,
 New York.




VIENNA MEDAL OF MERIT.


An Extensive Assortment of
Views of

Niagara Falls,	Washington,
Hudson River,	California,
Saratoga,	Yosemite Valley,
Portage, N. Y.,	Egypt,
Watkins' Glen,	Palestine,
Havana Glen,	Africa,

AND
MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS.



SILVER MEDAL.






Figure 2.16, Advertisement for Charles Bierstadt, 1874. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 11, no. 129 (January 1874): n.p.

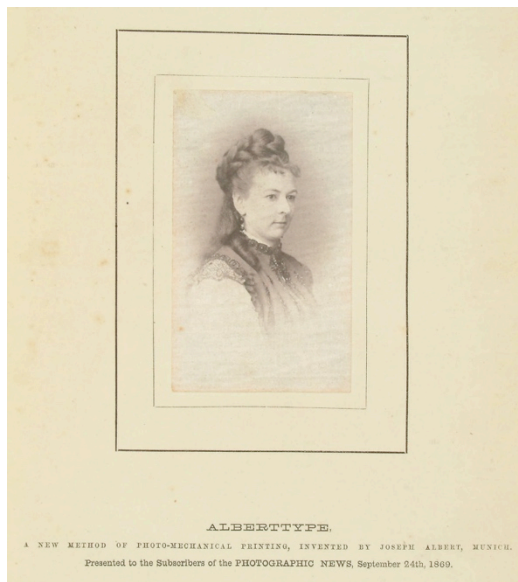


Figure 2.17, Joseph Albert, [*Portrait of a Woman*], 1869. Albertype. From *The Photographic News* 11 (September 24th, 1869).

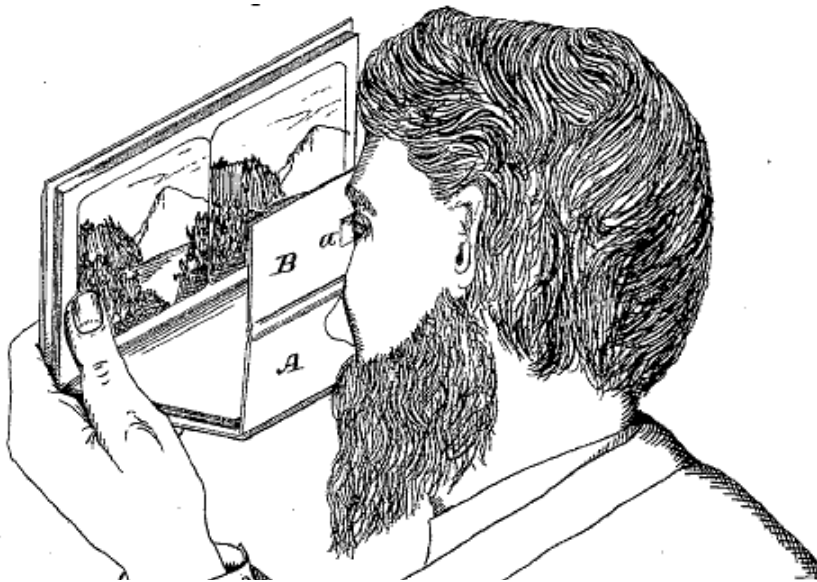


Figure 2.18, Edward Bierstadt's drawing of his stereoscopic viewing device included in his patent application in November 1875.



Figure 2.19, Detail of an albertype, 1875. From Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White Mountains* (Niagara Falls: Charles Bierstadt; New York City: Edward Bierstadt, 1875), plate 11. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, M.A.

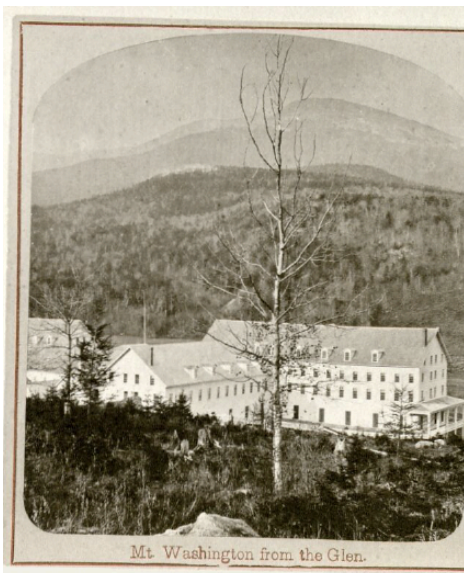


Figure 2.20, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Mount Washington from the Glen House*, 1875. Albertype. From Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White Mountains* (Niagara Falls: Charles Bierstadt; New York City: Edward Bierstadt, 1875), plate 11. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, M.A.

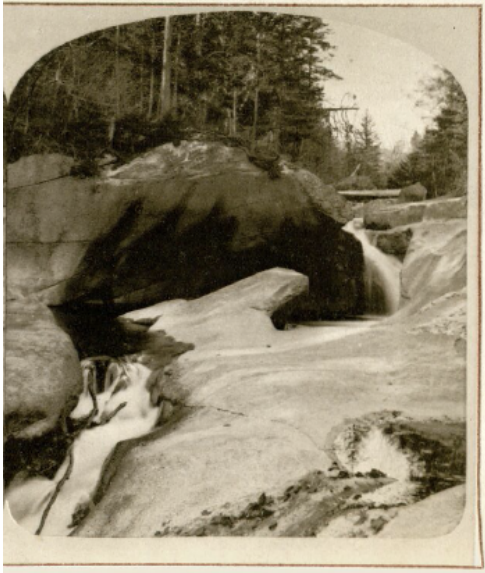


Figure 2.21, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *The Basin, Franconia Mts*, 1875. Albertype. From Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White Mountains* (Niagara Falls: Charles Bierstadt; New York City: Edward Bierstadt, 1875), plate 4. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, M.A.



Figure 2.22, Edward and Charles Bierstadt, *The Basin*, negative, 1875, printed 1878. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 19. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 2.23, Edward and Charles Bierstadt, *View from the Gate of the Notch*, negative 1875, printed 1878. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 10. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 2.24, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Mount Washington Railway and Summit*, 1878. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 63. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 2.25, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Upper Falls of Ammonoosuc*, negative 1875, printed 1878. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 59. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 2.26, Detail from 2.25, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Upper Falls of Ammonoosuc*, negative 1875, printed 1878. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 59. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 2.27, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Gibb's Cascades*, 1875. Albertype. From Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views among the White Mountains* (Niagara Falls: Charles Bierstadt; New York City: Edward Bierstadt, 1875), plate 22. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.



Figure 2.28, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Beecher's Cascades*, negative 1875, printed 1878. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 35. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

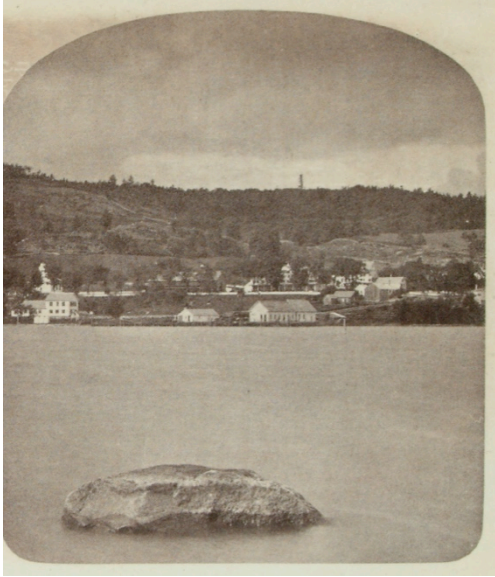


Figure 2.29, Charles and Edward Bierstadt, *Centre Harbor N.H.*, 1875. Artotype. From *Gems of American Scenery, Consisting of Stereoscopic Views Among the White Mountains* (NY: Harroun & Bierstadt, 1878), 99. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

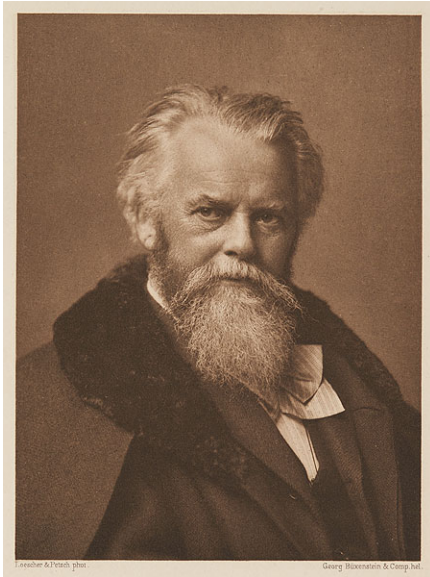


Figure 3.1, Loescher & Petsch, *H. W. Vogel*, 1880s. Photogravure. From *Photographische Mitteilungen* 36 (1899).

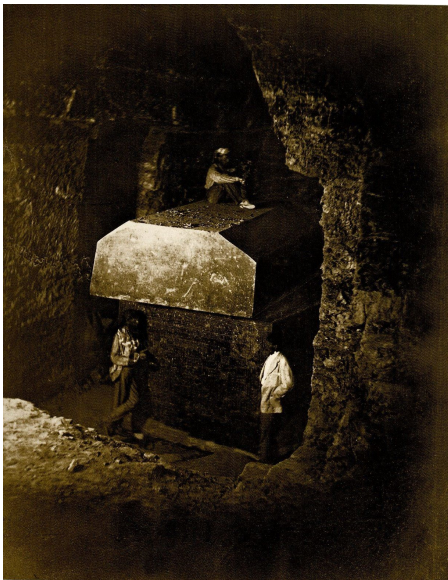
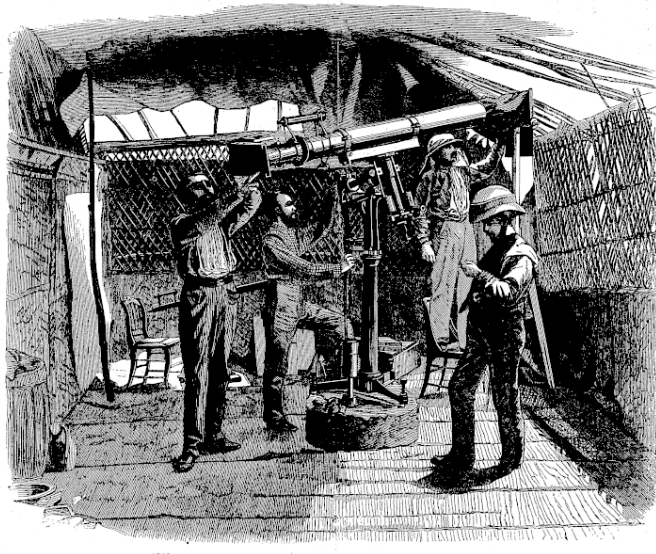
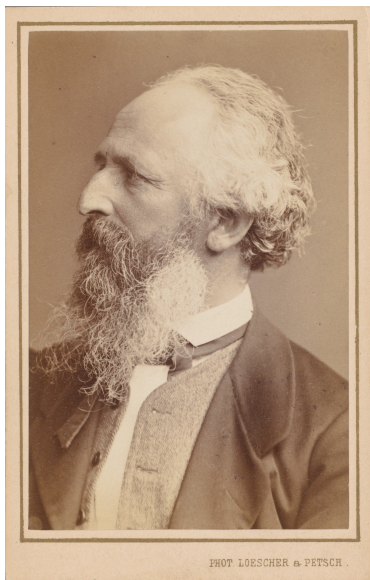


Figure 3.2, Herman W. Vogel, *Saqqara*, 1868, Albumen silver print from glass negative. Collection of John Gossage.



SOLAR ECLIPSE OF 1868—THE MEMBERS OF THE NORTH GERMAN EXPEDITION FOR OBSERVING THE ECLIPSE, WITH THE PHOTOGRAPHICAL TELESCOPE, ADEN, ARABIA.

Figure 3.3, Hermann W. Vogel, *Solar Eclipse of 1868—The Members of the North German Expedition for Observing the Eclipse, with the Photographic Telescope, Aden, Arabia*, 1868, Wood engraving after an albumen silver print from glass negative. From *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* (April 10, 1869).



PHOT. LOESCHER & PETSCH.

Figure 3.4, Loescher & Petsch, [Karl Hefbeck], c. 1865. Albumen silver print from glass negative on *carte de visite* mount. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

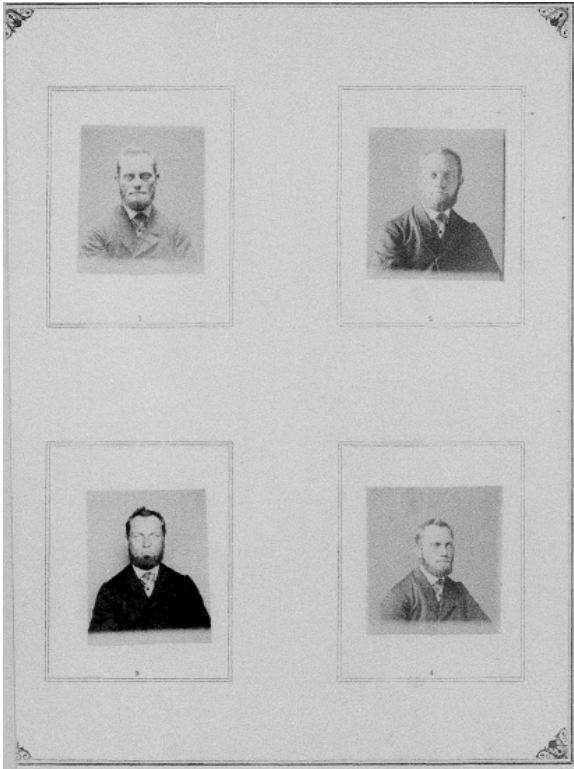


Figure 3.5, Loescher & Petsch, “On Posing and Lighting the Sitter,” 1864. Albumen silver prints from glass negatives. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 2, no. 18 (June 1865).



Figure 3.6, Loescher & Petsch, “Ueber Stellung und Beleuchtung,” 1864. Albumen silver prints from glass negatives. From *Photographische Mittheilungen* 1, no. 6 (September 1864). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 3.7, Henszey & Co., [*Children in the style of Loescher & Petsch*], 1866. Albumen silver print from glass negative. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 30 (June 1866). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 3.8, Loescher & Petsch, *Persuasion* [Alternate title: *The Gleaners*], 1866. Albumen silver print from glass negative. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 3, no. 31 (July 1866). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENCE.

American Photographs—Osborne's Process—Zentmayer's Lens—The German Photographic Society—Photographs in Colors—Consumption of Silver and Collodion in the Negative Process—Prevention of the Reflection of the Sun in the Atelier—Collodion Experiments—Action of Bromide.

Figure 3.9, Hermann W. Vogel, "German Correspondence." From *Philadelphia Photographer* 4, no. 46 (October 1867), 327.



Figure 3.10, Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, *Sonnenblick, Tiergarten, Berlin*, 1866. Carbon print. Sammlung Dietmar Siegert.



Figure 3.11, 3.12, Loesch & Petsch, *Genre Pictures: Gems of German Life*, late 1860s. Albumen silver print from glass negative. From *The Philadelphia Photographer* 7, no. 82 (October 1870). The Library Company of Philadelphia.



Figure 3.13, Johannes Grasshoff, *Members of the Berlin Society for the Advancement of Photography*, 1871. Albumen silver print from glass negative. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 8, no. 95 (November 1871). Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.



Figure 3.14, Loescher & Petsch, *Hermann W. Vogel*, 1872. Albumen silver print. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 10, no. 109 (January 1873). Courtesy of the New York Public Library, New York.

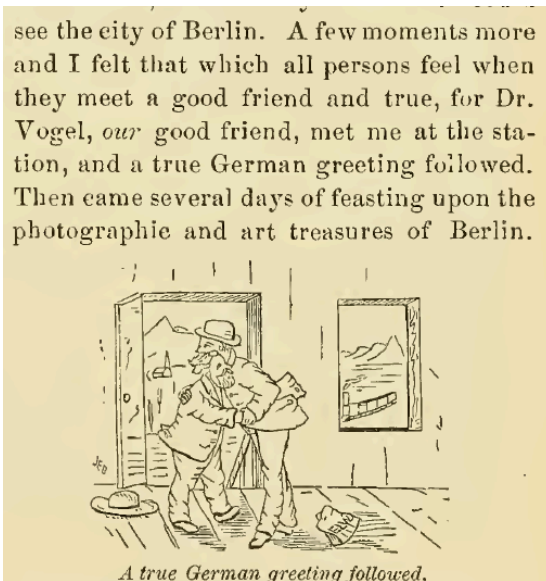


Figure 3.15, *A True German Greeting Followed* [Wilson and Vogel Meet in Berlin], 1874. Wood engraving. From *Philadelphia Photographer* 11, no. 123 (March 1874): 85.



Figure 4.1, Abraham Bogardus, *Flora and Alfred Stieglitz*, c. 1868. Ivorytype. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.2, Unknown American photographer, *Alfred Stieglitz and His Father*, 1875. Tintype with applied color. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.3, C. Schwartz, *Alfred Stieglitz*, c. 1867. Albumen silver print from glass negative on *carte de visite* mount. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.4, Abraham Bogardus, *Alfred Stieglitz*, c. 1876. Albumen silver print from glass negative on *carte de visite* mount. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.5, William Kurtz, *Alfred Stieglitz*, c. 1880. Albumen silver print from glass negative on *carte de visite* mount. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.6, Alfred Stieglitz, *Relief of Queen Louise*, negative 1886, printed 1895/1896. Platinum print. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

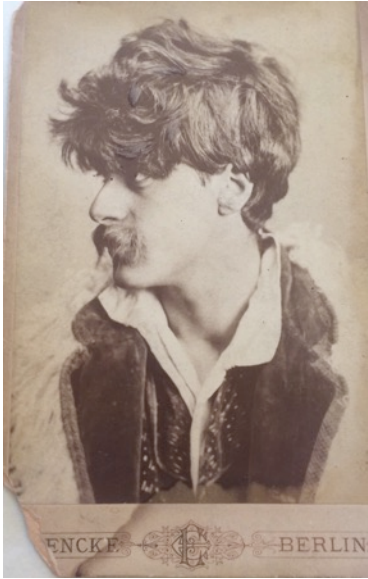


Figure 4.7, Erdmann Encke, *Alfred Stieglitz*, c. 1883. Albumen silver print from glass negative on *carte de visite* mount. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.8, Erdmann Encke, *Alfred Stieglitz*, c. 1883. Albumen silver print from glass negative on *carte de visite* mount. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.9, Alfred Stieglitz, [Copy Print of Alfred Stieglitz Portrait Collage], negative 1884, print date unknown. Alfred Stieglitz / Georgia O'Keeffe Archive, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Figure 4.10, Alfred Stieglitz, *Die Würfelspieler*, 1886. From *Der Amateur Photograph*, Supplement, 1887. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 4.11, Alfred Stieglitz, *The Card Players*, 1886. Platinum print. Private collection.



Figure 4.12, Eduard von Grützner, *The Card Players*, 1883. Oil on canvas. Milwaukee Art Museum, W.I.



Figure 4.13, Johann Baptist Obernetter, *Landsknechtsgruppe*, 1881. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Münchner Stadtmuseum, Germany.



Figure 4.14, Alfred Stieglitz, *A Good Joke, Bellagio*, 1887. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Museum of Modern Art, New York.



Figure 4.15, Oscar Suck, *Momentphotographie*, 1887. From Josef Maria Eder, *Jahrbuch für Photographie und Reproduktionstechnik für das Jahr 1887* (Halle: Wilhelm Knapp, 1888), 226. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 4.16, Stengel & Markert, [Untitled], 1886. Albumen silver prints. From *Photographische Mittheilungen* 345 (1886). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Figure 4.17, Alfred Stieglitz, *On the Bridge, Chioggia*, negative 1887, printed 1897. Platinum print. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Figure 4.18, Ludwig Passini, *Figures on a Venetian Canal*, 1893. Watercolor. Private collection.



Figure 4.19, Alfred Stieglitz, *On the Bridge, Chioggia*, 1887. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Philadelphia Museum of Art, P.A.



Figure 4.20, Hermann Rückwardt, *Blick von Königl. Schloss nach der Kurfürstenbrücke*, 1882. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Berlinsche Galerie, Berlin, Germany.



Figure 4.21, Hermann Rückwardt, *Blick v. Monbijou-Garten (Stadtbahn) n.d. Nat.-Gal u. Börse*, 1882. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Berlinsche Galerie, Berlin, Germany.



Figure 4.22, Hermann Rückwardt, *Goethe-Denkmal im Tiergarten*, 1880. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Berlinsche Galerie, Berlin, Germany.



Figure 4.23, Alfred Stieglitz, *Goethe, Berlin*, negative c. 1886/1887, printed 1895/1896. Platinum print. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Figure 4.24, Alfred Stieglitz, *On Lake Thun, Switzerland*, negative 1886, printed 1920s/1930s. Gelatin silver print. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.



Figure 4.25, F. Albert Schwartz, *Die Kuppel des Ausstellungspalastes in der Abenddämmerung*, c. 1885. Albumen silver print from glass negative. Stiftung Stadtmuseum, Berlin, Germany.



Figure 4.26, Hermann Wilhelm Vogel, *Tiergarten, Berlin*, 1866. From *Photographische Mittheilungen* 110 (1866).



Figure 4.27, Alfred Stieglitz, "*Hedwigweg*" II, *Lake George*, negative 1888, printed 1895/1896. Platinum print. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

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