Anthony Portulese
Department of Art History & Communication Studies
McGill University, Montreal
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The Phenomenology of Display

Monet's *Water Lilies* of the Orangerie
and the
History of Proto-Installation Art

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Abstract

Since May 17, 1927, the Musée de l'Orangerie exhibited a series of eight monumental *Water Lilies* murals that Claude Monet painted over the final decade of his life and artistic career. Several scholars have argued that these paintings are "precursors of abstraction in modern art," or have critiqued them in relation to Monet's biography. This thesis moves beyond such analyzes by focusing on the unique way the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* have been exhibited at the Orangerie. The space the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* employ and their arrangement within that space merit an art historical interpretation tantamount to the analysis of the murals themselves. As the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* murals remain *in situ* and envelop the museum's visitors, this thesis argues that the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* offer visitors an experience based in corporeal stimulation, as the museum's internal architecture is intricately connected with the paintings. Moreover, it argues that Monet's artworks in the Orangerie gallery fit into the larger history of proto-installation art by exploring their relationship to historical examples, such as the painted panoramas popular in Europe throughout the nineteenth century and mid-to-late twentieth-century installation art. By examining the *Water Lilies* gallery in light of theories of the "phenomenology of display" – ie. the manner in which art and the space it inhabits work in unison to convey meaning through sensorial experience – this thesis links the Orangerie's *Nymphéas* gallery to historical cases and considers it a precursor of installation artworks that continue to immerse visitors to this day.

Résumé

Depuis le 17 mai 1927, le Musée de l'Orangerie expose une série de huit peintures murales monumentales, peintes par Claude Monet au cours de la dernière décennie de sa vie et de sa carrière artistique. Plusieurs rechercheurs soutient que ces peintures sont des «précurseurs de l'abstraction dans l'art moderne» ou les ont analysées en relation avec la biographie de Monet. Cette thèse va au-delà de ces analyses en se concentrant sur la manière unique dont les *Nymphéas* de l'Orangerie ont été exposés à l'Orangerie. Ces oeuvres, dans leur version finale, peuvent-elles être discutées en un tout unifié? L'espace occupée par les *Nymphéas* de l'Orangerie et leur disposition dans cet espace méritent une interprétation antérieurement consacrée à l'analyse des peintures murales elles-mêmes. Comme ces peintures murales sont des oeuvres *in situ* et puisqu'elles enveloppent les visiteurs du musée, cette thèse soutient que les *Nymphéas* de l'Orangerie offrent aux visiteurs une expérience basée sur la stimulation corporelle, puisque l'architecture interne du musée est intimement liée aux peintures. De plus, elle soutient que les œuvres monumentales de Monet dans l'Orangerie s'inscrivent dans l'histoire de l'art de la proto-installation, en explorant leur relation avec des exemples historiques, tels que les panoramas populaires en Europe au dix-neuvième siècle, et les practiques d'installation au milieu du vingtième siècle. En examinant la galerie des *Nymphéas* dans la lumière de la théorie de la «phénoménologie de l'éxposition» – la manière dont l'art et l'espace qu'il habite travaillent à l'unisson pour transmettre une expérience sensorielle – cette thèse relie les *Nymphéas* de l'Orangerie à des cas historiques et considère le cycle comme un précurseur des oeuvres d'installations qui continuent aujourd'hui d'employer des espaces d'immersion pour les spectateurs.

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Introduction

The Musée de l'Orangerie is a museum of late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century art nestled along the right bank of Paris's river Seine, just off Place de la Concorde. Showcasing an extensive collection of paintings by Paul Cézanne, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse,[1] amongst others, the museum is primarily known as the permanent residence of eight monumental *Nymphéas* – or *Water Lilies* – murals by French artist Claude Monet.[2] They were donated to the state at the persistent suggestion of the artist's long-time friend and supporter, statesman Georges Clemenceau (figs. 1-6).[3] Rather than regular easel paintings that hang upon flat walls, one of the unique traits of Monet's colossal canvases at the Orangerie is that they are glued to the curved walls of a gallery. The technique of affixing a canvas directly to a wall, with glue, cement or plaster, is known as marouflage; this is the precise term art critic Louis Paillard used to describe the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* installation in an article published in *Le Petit Journal* on the day of their unveiling on May 17, 1927.[4] Despite its current title, however, the Musée de l'Orangerie had not been a museum at the time of the *Water Lilies*' inauguration.

Originally constructed in 1852 by architect Firmin Bourgeois, the building was constructed as a greenhouse to shelter the citrus trees of the Tuileries Gardens.[5] One vast, open, rectilinear space void of interior partitions or rooms, the Orangerie des Tuileries also housed various sporting, musical and cultural events during the second half of the nineteenth century, as well as serving as lodging for soldiers and a largescale storage unit. In 1921, the Administration des Beaux-Arts amassed two buildings along Place de la Concorde: the Jeu de Paume and the Orangerie des Tuileries. Disapproved with unanimity by the Administration members for its elongated

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[1] Laurence Madeline, *Musée de l'Orangerie: La collection Walter-Guillaume et les Nymphéas de Monet* (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Scala, 2017), 22, 36, 62, 76, 92.

[2] For the purpose of this thesis, the term "monumental" means of immense size and scale, referring to those *Water Lilies* paintings that are so large they often cover entire walls, produced by Monet as diptychs, triptychs (such as the panels at the Museum of Modern Art in New York), or polyptychs (such as some of the murals at the Musée de l'Orangerie in Paris). Furthermore, Monet's largescale *Water Lilies* paintings shall be classified as either "panels" or "murals." While "mural" characterizes the image as a whole (such as diptychs, triptychs or polyptychs), "panel" refers to the divisible segments of an overall mural. Furthermore, the Orangerie *Water Lilies* will also be called "murals" because by the term's definition, they have been permanently glued to their gallery walls.

[3] Michel Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Les Nymphéas de Claude Monet* (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 2006), 43; Carla Rachman, *Monet*, (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 1997), 300.

[4] Paillard, "Un musée Claude Monet est installé aux Tuileries," 2. "[…] les toiles ont été collées – «marouflées», en terme du métier – dans deux salles oblongues […]."

[5] Pierre Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie* (Paris: Gallimard – Réunion des musées nationaux, 2006), [n.p.].

dimensions and uncertain what to do with the space, the Orangerie remained vacant for over a year.[6] The fate of the building was sealed on April 12, 1922, when Monet signed a deed of gift with the Direction des Musées Nationaux (an affiliate branch of the Administration des Beaux-Arts), in which the artist agreed to donate eight murals which would be installed in two elliptical, custom-built rooms inside the converted Orangerie.[7] Per Monet's demands, the accepted contractual obligations stipulated that no other artwork – be it painting or sculpture – could be added to the *Nymphéas* gallery, that no modification of the arrangement of the panels could ever be authorized, and that the canvases could never be sold.[8] Funds for the project were made available on August 17, 1922, construction began in October and was completed the following year.[9] However, undergoing three surgeries in 1923 to alleviate the symptoms of his cataracts, Monet struggled to finish the canvases over the subsequent three years.[10] The murals were not installed until months after Monet's death on December 5, 1926, as he refused to relinquish the panels he deemed incomplete. On January 31, 1927, the Laurent-Fournier company agreed to mount the panels and they were in place within the Orangerie's newly-built gallery by March 26 of that year.[11]

The *Nymphéas* cycle of the Orangerie has long been discussed as the pinnacle of the entire painted series produced throughout Monet's later career, comprising over two-hundred-and-fifty paintings over twenty-five years.[12] These final *Water Lilies* murals stand out from the hundreds of others painted before them in terms of their size and reception. Whether those of the late 1920s or today, visitors enter the first room of the *Water Lilies* gallery – shaped as an ellipse measuring 20.65 metres in length (from east to west) and 12.40 metres across (from north to south) – and immediately encounter four monumental murals displayed upon its curving, white walls.[13] On the westward wall between the two passageways linking to the vestibule is *Soleil couchant*, along the

[6] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 41.
[7] Ibid., 43-44.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid., 46.
[10] George H. Hamilton, "The Dying of the Light: The Late Works of Degas, Monet, and Cézanne," in *Aspects of Monet: A Symposium on the Artist's Life and Times*, eds. John Rewald & Frances Weitzenhoffer (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, Inc., 1984), 228; also see Monique Dittrière, "Comment Monet recouvra la vue après l'opération de la cataracts," *Sandorama* 32 (January – February 1973): 26-32.
[11] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 53.
[12] Ibid., 19.
[13] Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism: Catalogue Raisonné – Volume IV* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag, 1996), 970.

northern wall is *Les Nuages*, the eastern wall shows *Reflets verts*, and along the southern wall is *Matin* (figs. 7-10). Wandering through a second pair of passageways flanking the eastern mural, visitors encounter a second room housing another four gargantuan murals: *Reflets d'arbres* on the western wall, *Le Matin aux saules* along the northern wall, *Deux saules* along the eastern wall, and *Le Matin clair aux saules* along the southern wall (figs. 11-14). While both rooms share the same width of 12.40 metres between the north and south gallery walls, the second room is significantly larger than the first in length, measuring 23.30 metres along its central axis.[14] Each of the eight murals depict Monet's water garden at his country estate in Giverny, under shifting conditions of light and atmosphere.[15] In these artworks, painted clusters of lily pads caress the pondwater's rippling surface and iridescent lily blossoms speckle the waterscape. Moreover, in three of the second room's murals (*Le Matin aux saules*, *Deux saules* and *Le Matin clair aux saules*), the trunks of willow trees are represented as robust yet twisting vertical shafts. Their bases and branches stretch past the ends of the canvas and are not painted, as their fronds drape downward at varied lengths from these unseen branches and appear to billow in a gentle wind. The sheer size and scale of these canvases, unlike smaller paintings of the *Water Lilies* series produced in previous decades, enabled Monet to explore a more lateral area of his Giverny pond and provide a greater breadth of cloud and sky reflected in its crystalline water.[16]

How did the earliest visitors of the *Water Lilies* gallery respond to this unique artistic site? Answers to this question begin to emerge when one navigates the literature released at the time of the gallery's inauguration in May 1927. One such account penned by art historian Louis Gillet – who had visited Monet's water garden at Giverny back in 1907[17] – described the Orangerie's *Nymphéas* installation in his book *Trois variations sur Claude Monet*.[18] Published shortly after the gallery's unveiling, Gillet writes:

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Charles W. Millard, "The Later Monet," *The Hudson Review* 31, no. 4 (Winter 1978–1979): 643; also see Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 55-74.

[16] Joel Isaacson, *Observation and Reflection: Claude Monet* (Oxford: Phaidon Press Limited, 1978), 45.

[17] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 17.

[18] Gillet's book and Georges Clemenceau's *Claude Monet: Les Nymphéas* of 1928 were the only two texts produced at the time of the Orangerie's unveiling of Monet's installation. While the main objective of Gillet's text sought to push the *Water Lilies* panels away from Western logocentrism towards Eastern mysticism, this passing description of the gallery space invites a more detailed conversation about the display practice of the Orangerie's *Water Lilies*. See Romy Golan, "Oceanic Sensations: Monet's *Grandes Décorations* and Mural Painting in France from 1927 to 1952," in *Monet in the 20th Century*, eds. Paul Hayes Tucker, George T. M. Shackelford & MaryAnne Stevens (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1998), 90.

> Two large ovular rooms, running in the direction of the Seine, two lakes, two rings ingeniously chained to each other, precede a vestibule, ovular as well, but smaller and of different orientation; nothing but curves, ellipses which the floor pavement repeats in a muted manner; bare surfaces, almost without moldings, made only to support the aquatic décor [...]: all this has an air of liquid movement, elongated fluidity that miraculously lends itself to this slow belt, to this zone of floating, flowing reveries.[19]

Gillet's description emphasizes the layout of the murals more than the murals themselves, commenting on the "affect" of the gallery space as symbiotic with the "effect" of the *Water Lilies* murals.[20] His words describe an "experience" of these paintings in the distinct space they occupy, rather than solely the visual reception of them. Advancing this notion of the experience of the Orangerie *Water Lilies*, critic François Monod wrote a review for the journal *L'Art et les Artistes* in June 1927, a month after the Orangerie's unveiling of *Nymphéas*, wherein he describes Monet's paintings within the site's immersive, "enveloping" display:

> In each of the two rooms of the Orangerie, a foggy morning effect and twilight effect occupy the ends of the ellipse, on the long sides shine effects of full light, during the hours of midday. The only concrete elements of the spectacle are the floating petals of the water-lilies, flames of purple and gold, which, on the large sides, frame the long plunging views, two thin trunks of weeping willows, and a few twigs of their foliage trembling in the breeze. The spectator is enveloped in a bath of aerial quivering, damp *moirure*, and flickers of clarity.[21]

Monod's words do not identify and differentiate the specific murals of the gallery space, but instead suggest how they relate to one another to form a singular perceptual phenomenon. Based on these contemporary reviews of the exhibition, it is evident that the Orangerie gallery space itself merits a thorough analysis, where the aim is not only to identify what the experience of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* is, but also *how* the experience develops through the union of

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[19] Louis Gillet, *Trois variations sur Claude Monet* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1927), 100-101. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Deux grands salons ovales, courant dans le sens de la Seine, deux lacs, deux anneaux ingénieusement enchaînés l'un à l'autre et que précède un vestibule, ovale aussi, mais plus petit et d'orientation différente; rien que des courbes, des ellipses que répète en sourdine le dessin de pavage; des surfaces nues, presque sans moulures, faites seulement pour supporter l'aquatine décor [...]: tout cela a un air de mouvement liquide, de fluidité allongée qui se prête à miracle à cette lente ceinture, à cette zone de rêveries flottantes qui s'écoulent." All translations from French are done by the author of this thesis, unless stated otherwise.

[20] Golan, "Oceanic Sensations," 92.

[21] Here, *moirure* denotes the rippling effect of the painted water, and the perception of its waviness. See François Monod, "L'Actualité et la curiosité: Les «Nymphéas» de Monet à l'Orangerie des Tuileries," *L'Art et les Artistes* 15, no. 78 (June 1927): 317. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Dans chacune des deux salles de l'Orangerie, un effet de matin brumeux et effet de crépuscule occupent les extrémités de l'ellipse, sur les côtés longs brillent des effets de pleine lumière, pendant les heures du milieu du jour. Les seuls élements solides du spectacle sont les corolles flottantes des nymphéas, flammes de pourpre et d'or, et, sur les grands côtés, encadrent les longues vues plongeantes, deux minces troncs de saules pleureurs, et quelques ramilles de leur chevelure tremblant dans les souffles de l'air. Le spectateur est enveloppé d'un bain de frémissements aériens, de moirures humides, de scintillements de clarité."

painting and architecture. Monet's murals were not regarded as separate, individual paintings. Rather, they were perceived as a unified arrangement, each part brought together through a customized architectural configuration. The gallery raises questions about the experience of space and of time through the formalist attributes of the *Water Lilies* cycle and the architecture within which they cohabit. But how was this symbiotic relationship between the *Water Lilies* murals and their specific display understood at the time of the gallery's opening?

During the final decades of his life, Monet called the largescale *Nymphéas* canvases his *grandes décorations*. Grace Seiberling explains that within a late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century context, a *décoration* – or "decoration" – referred to a type of painting, large in its dimensions, that was free of academic demands for realistic illusionism, and "usually destined for a specific architectural setting."[22] In an article printed by *L'Ermitage* in 1891, the French art historian Alphonse Germain states that decoration painting derives its effect not in illusion, but rather in expression:

> The decorative landscape can no longer […] recall scenography; it must, as often as possible, correspond to a state of mind and always synthesize, through an expressive dominance of lines and affective colorations, the various effects of the seasons, the months, the hours of the day, the atmosphere as the multi-form aspects of nature; the wood, the plain, the mountain, the valley, the sea, the river, the lake, etc.[23]

Although not specifically about Monet, this characterization of decorative painting bears significance in relation to the aesthetic of Monet's *Water Lilies* murals at the Orangerie, particularly with regard to their homage to vast colour schemes and "multi-form aspects of nature" such as their ethereal motifs of water, vegetation, cloud, air and sky. However, it is the final portion of Seiberling's definition of decorative painting – that which pertains to their "specific architectural setting" – that will be the undercurrent of this thesis. In the following pages, this thesis will explore the key role of architecture and space in shaping the experience of viewing

[22] Grace Seiberling, *Monet's Series* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1981), 221; Robert L. Herbert, "The Decorative and the Natural in Monet's Cathedrals," in *Aspects of Monet: A Symposium on the Artist's Life and Times*, eds. John Rewald & Frances Weitzenhoffer (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, Inc., 1984), 174.

[23] Alphonse Germain, "Le Paysage décoratif," *L'Ermitage* (November 1891): 644. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Le paysage décoratif ne peut plus réprésenter un coin découpé n'importe où qu'une invraisemblable fiction, il ne faut pas davantage qu'il rappelle la scènographie; il doit, le plus souvent possible, correspondre à un état d'âme et synthétiser toujours par une dominante expressive des lignes et de colorations affectives (gaies ou mélancholiques, sevères ou rieuses, selon la destination de la pièce) – et synthétiser aussi bien les effets variés des saisons, des mois, des heures de la journée, de l'atmosphère que les aspects multi-formes de la nature; le bois, la plaine, le mont, le val, la mer, le fleuve, le lac, etc."

Monet's artwork at the Orangerie. It will consider how the architectural setting of art can be considered crucial to the art itself. Ultimately, this thesis will do so by demonstrating how the *Water Lilies* gallery at the Orangerie can be considered an early form of what is known today as installation art.

The term "installation art," which first appeared in 1960s in relation to art produced in and for a museum of gallery setting, generally encompasses the types of art which a visitor can physically enter, where art and architecture blend together. It constitutes the space, the materials, and the arrangement of those materials in said space, all in the pursuit of the visitor's bodily awareness and experiential response to the artwork.[24] Notable examples of installation art include Olafur Eliasson's *The Weather Project* at the Tate Modern in 2003, Random International's 2013 *Rain Room* at New York's Museum of Modern Art, and Yayoi Kusama's *Infinity Mirrors*, a travelling installation artwork currently exhibited at the Art Gallery of Ontario (figs. 15-17). Installation art differs from other, more singular media such as painting, sculpture or photography, in that it addresses the visitor directly as a bodily presence but also as a crucial constituent of its space.[25] Art historian Christine Ross argues that installation art "adopts […] a phenomenological reading of objects in relation to the architectural dimensions of the gallery, where space is transformed into a perceptual field."[26] It may not be entirely accurate to call the *Nymphéas* gallery at the Orangerie installation art, as the term only first appeared in the mid-twentieth century. What is more, contemporary installation art is not always necessarily immersive, nor is it always made for a specific space, though it often alters the space in which it is shown. However, this does not suggest that the gallery space of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* does not make use of material, spatial and sensorial tactics akin to those employed by several contemporary installation artists.

The central argument of this thesis thus has two components. Firstly, the *Water Lilies* gallery at the Musée de l'Orangerie can be considered a precursor to installation art through its "phenomenology of display": the manner in which the *Water Lilies* murals and the tailored

[24] Claire Bishop, *Installation Art: A Critical History* (London: Tate Publishing, 2005), 6. The deliberate decision to include viewers of installation art as "visitors" aims to encapsulate the roles of the spectator, the participant and the interpreter. The visitor spectates the installation as well as participating in the installation art through his or her active role of interpretation.
[25] Ibid.
[26] Christine Ross, "The Projective Shift Between Installation Art and New Media Art: From Distantiation to Connectivity," in *Screen/Space: The Projected Image in Contemporary Art*, ed. Tamara Trodd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2011), 184.

architectural space they inhabit operate in unison to convey meaning through sensorial experience. The Orangerie's *Water Lilies* gallery is a forerunner to installation art because it is an environment wherein the visitor and his or her experience occupy an intermediate realm between the material environment of the physical gallery space and the perceptual field of the *Water Lilies* as afforded by the visitor's sensorium. Secondly, this thesis will argue that Monet's Orangerie is a case study that fits into a larger history of proto-installation art. A scholarly term of the author's own invention, "proto-installation art" refers to an earlier form of installation art, avoiding any chronological inaccuracy that would arise from a direct linkage between the *Water Lilies* gallery and the mid-twentieth century idea of installation art. Proto-installation art embraces a phenomenological comprehension of space and includes a network of immersive artforms that span several centuries, many of which fuse traditional media such as painting with newer media techniques like lighting installments and architectural setups. The Orangerie's *Water Lilies* gallery ultimately demands a nuanced investigation, as it reassesses spatial interpretations of the display of its murals.[27] It incorporates canvas painting with conditioned lighting and an tailored architectural configuration and space design.

This thesis will use a phenomenological approach to study the *Water Lilies* gallery of the Orangerie and will be structured into three sections. In the first chapter, this thesis will historically situate the immersive strategies of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* by relating them to the panorama rotundas of the nineteenth century (especially those which emerged in France), particularly their emphasis on bodily, multisensory experience as paramount to their meaning. The second chapter will provide a focused account of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* gallery and its emphasis on experience through the merger of the murals and their tailored display. A critique will be conducted of the murals' aesthetic properties – framing, colour, texture, its relation to nature – and their relation to one another. Lastly, the third and final chapter focuses on the restructuration to the Orangerie's layout and the *Water Lilies* gallery over the last nine decades, with particular concentration on the major remodelling project that took place from 2000 until 2006. This section concludes with an analysis of how other museum spaces across the globe have emulated the Orangerie's immersive tactics when exhibiting their own *Water Lilies* panels, including the

[27] Faye Ran, *A History of Installation Art and the Development of New Art Forms: Technology and the Hermeneutics of Time and Space in Modern and Postmodern Art from Cubism to Installation* (New York: Peter Lang, 2006), 61.

triptych at MoMA in New York, a temporary reunion of a triptych's three separated panels at the Nelson-Atkins in Kansas City back in 2011, and the ChiChu Art Museum in Noashima, Japan.

In order to explore early twentieth-century visitors' experiences of these *Water Lilies* panels and the spaces they have occupied, this thesis will interpret the testimony of eyewitnesses, available in contemporary press reports, journal essays and newspaper articles. By investigating the significance of visitor experience in the meaning-making process, this thesis will argue for the *Water Lilies*' place within the history of proto-installation art.

Phenomenology, Installation Art and Monet's Orangerie

Phenomenology is the philosophical study of experience, or of matters as experienced. As an art historical method, phenomenology seeks to move the meaning of art away from historicization towards what one experiences.[28] Amanda Boetzkes places the phenomenological meaning of an artwork – the experience – in its "interrogative mode": the act of interpreting a work of art by a spectator, situating one another in a shared network of sensation.[29] It functions on an understanding of the artwork's meaning as coextensive with the spatial, temporal and material conditions it shares with the spectator.[30] Sean Cubitt explains that the experience of art arises from the human sensorium *projected* upon the physical, architectural space both the spectator and the artwork mutually occupy.[31] A phenomenological approach to writing art history thus entails an analysis of *how* an artwork's meaning manifests through the spectator's sensing body, his or her perceptual relationship to the work of art, and the consequential experience thereof.

Some phenomenological approaches counter art historical analyses that seek to explain the meaning of an artwork through dependence upon its sociohistorical context.[32] But how do past and current contexts of an artwork influence one's experience of it? The ways one observes, interacts with, and thereby experiences a sculpture centered in a room, or a painting hung upon a wall, are quite unique.[33] The provenance and cultural biographies of works of art all converge at the museum

[28] Joel Smith, *Experiencing Phenomenology: An Introduction* (London & New York: Routledge, 2016), 1.
[29] Amanda Boetzkes, "Phenomenology and Interpretation Beyond the Flesh," *Journal of Art History* 32, no. 4 (September 2009): 690, 694.
[30] Ibid., 690.
[31] Sean Cubitt, *The Practice of Light: A Genealogy of Visual Technologies from Prints to Pixels* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2014), 112.
[32] Boetzkes, "Phenomenology and Interpretation Beyond the Flesh," 690.
[33] Walter Biemel, "Art in the Light of Phenomenology," *Human Studies* 18, no. 4 (October 1995): 344.

as they become "art objects." These objects will always cast a shadow on their contextualization, dictated by their status in the changing environments in which they reside. However, as art critic Brian O'Doherty has asked in his text *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space*, how is a work of art experienced when its context – the space and time of which it is a part – is the work of art itself?[34] What happens if the art object in question originates from a museum, when it *is* the museum?

Art historian Claire Bishop argues that the impulse to move around and through a work of installation art, in order to experience it, activates the visitor's corporeality, in contrast to art that merely requires optical contemplation, which may be construed as passive and detached.[35] However, French theorist Jacques Rancière argues that a passive spectator does not exist, and to claim so would hierarchize vision to a lesser rank than other senses that may be engaged in art interpretation, such as touch or proprioception. Rancière claims that art "emancipates" its spectatorship, when there is a "blurring of the boundary between those who act and those who look."[36] In installation art, the visitor's entire sensorium can be engaged, where vision may work alongside the other senses in equal measure. Rather than conceiving of the visitor as a pair of "disembodied" eyes that survey the work of art from a distance, installation art demands an "embodied" visitor, whose senses of touch, smell and sound could all be demanded as much as his or her sense of vision.[37] As Julie Reiss infers, it is the presence of the visitor, or in her terms, the "participant," that serves "an integral [role] to the contemplation of the installation artwork" and in the elucidation of its meaning.[38] One does not merely view installation art; one *participates* in installation art.

What, then, is the difference between an "art installation" and "installation art," and how significant is this difference? The latter term came into use in the 1960s, where until then "installation" referred to the specific arrangement of works of art in a given space, such as the hanging of paintings on a wall.[39] For example, an article written in the French newspaper *Le Petit*

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[34] Brian O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube: The Ideology of the Gallery Space* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 7. Also see Cathrine Veikos, "To Enter the Work: Ambient Art," *Journal of Architectural Education (1984)* 59, no. 4 (May 2006): 73-74.
[35] Bishop, *Installation Art*, 11.
[36] Jacques Rancière, *The Emancipated Spectator*, trans. Gregory Elliott (London: Verso, 2009), 19.
[37] Boetzkes, "Phenomenology and Interpretation Beyond the Flesh," 693.
[38] Julie H. Reiss, *From Margin to Center: The Spaces of Installation Art* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1999), xiii.
[39] Bishop, *Installation Art*, 6

Journal on the day of the *Water Lilies* gallery's inauguration documents Monet's "immense canvases [being] installed at the Orangerie."[40] Another arts column from *L'Intransigeant*, printed in 1940 in commemoration of Monet's one-hundredth birthday, mentions "the rooms of the Orangerie where Georges Clemenceau had the *Nymphéas* installed."[41] Almost a century later, Monet historians such as Ann Temkin, Nora Lawrence and John House would characterize the *Water Lilies* murals of the Orangerie as "[art] installations."[42] As Bishop details, in an art installation, the space of display is secondary in relevance to the individual artworks it contains, but "in a work of installation art, the space, and the ensemble of elements within it, are regarded in their entirety as a singular entity."[43] In an art installation, the art is of greater importance than the space in which it is displayed; in installation art, the art and the space it inhabits are one.

Since the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* were painted and assembled between 1914 and 1926,[44] four decades prior to the coinage of "installation art," scholars have not utilized this term to describe the gallery. As this thesis will argue, this proves problematic when one considers the site's custom design, whereupon it becomes clear Monet's murals were not displayed in this enveloping manner due solely to their monumentality. Rather, the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* were painted to be displayed in this specific fashion. As early as March of 1898, Monet had expressed his desire to tackle a *grande décoration* project in an interview with journalist Maurice Guillemot (who had visited the artist at Giverny the previous year) for *La Revue illustrée*. "Imagine a circular room," he told Guillemot, "in which the walls above the baseboard would be covered with [paintings of] water, dotted with these plants […], the waters calm and silence reflecting the opened blossoms. The tones are vague, lovingly nuanced, as delicate as a dream."[45] Although not identical to the

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[40] Louis Paillard, "Un musée Claude Monet est installé aux Tuileries," *Le Petit Journal* (Paris, France), May 17, 1927, 2. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "C'est à l'Orangerie que viennent d'être installées les toiles immenses que Claude Monet, gloire de l'école impressioniste, a offertes à l'État dans les derniers temps de sa vie, sous le nom de *Nymphéas*, constituent un large poème des eaux, des reflets du ciel et des nuages qui passent sur l'étang de Giverny où, multicolores, les nymphéas […] font flotter leur floraison mystérieuse."

[41] Georges Charensol, "Le Centenaire de Claude Monet," *L'Intransigeant* (Paris, France), Feb. 3, 1940, 2. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Mais, quelles que soient les recherches auxquelles il se laisse entraîner, Monet reste un grand enchanteur et dans les salles de l'Orangerie où Georges Clemenceau fit installer les Nymphéas règne toujours une atmosphère de la plus intense, de la plus prenante poésie."

[42] John House, *Monet: Nature into Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), 216; Ann Temkin & Nora Lawrence, *Claude Monet: Water Lilies* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2008), 9, 13.

[43] Bishop, *Installation Art*, 6.

[44] See Steven Z. Levine, "The Nymphéas decoration, 1914-1926" in *Monet and His Critics* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1976), 360-418.

[45] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 22. "Qu'on se figure une *pièce circulaire* dont la cimaise, *en-dessous* de la plinthe d'appui, serait entièrement occupée par un horizon d'eau, taché de ses végétations, des parois d'une transperance tour

finished product at the Orangerie in 1927, this initial idea bears great resemblance to the aesthetics of the *Water Lilies* cycle and their display.

Despite Monet's advanced age (he was seventy-four when he began working on the monumental *Water Lilies* murals in 1914) and efforts to complete the project in a timely fashion, finding a home for his public donation proved strenuous. An initial rotunda plan for the gardens of Hôtel Biron (today the Rodin Museum) – drafted by Parisian architect Louis Bonnier – called for a single circular room, 18.5 metres in diameter, into which visitors would enter and exit through two thin doors on either side of a vestibule (fig. 18).[46] Once inside, they would be surrounded by twelve panels which, as described by journalist Arsène Alexandre, would "dovetail to form a spectacle of uninterrupted water, reflected sky, and vegetation."[47] Due to prohibitive costs, Bonnier's plan was rejected by the Conseil Général des Bâtiments Civils on December 23, 1920. Faced with pressures from Clemenceau, Monet reluctantly accepted Louvre architect Camille Lefèvre's proposal to house the paintings in the Orangerie des Tuileries within a gallery of custom design, despite his regret over the narrowness of the building.[48] The single, circular rotunda was reconfigured into two interconnected elliptical rooms which combined would display eight long murals comprising twenty-two panels. Floorplans drawn by Lefèvre in January and March of 1922 show the continuous alterations made to the dimensions of the rooms, and the positioning of the passageways between them (figs. 19-21).[49] Moreover, plans published in art dealer and historian Daniel Wildenstein's *catalogue raisonné* of Monet's work show how the arrangement of the *Water Lilies* canvases changed between January 1920 and May 1927 (fig. 22).[50]

These changes evince Monet's involvement in the design of the Orangerie's gallery space, as well as the amount of additional work taken up by the artist to realize the project he had envisioned. Not only did Monet have to paint additional *Water Lilies* canvases, he also had to

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à tour verdie et mauvée, le calme et le silence de l'eau morte reflétant des floraisons étalées." Translated by Paul Hayes Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 198.

[46] Tucker, *Claude Monet*, 216-217.

[47] Arsène Alexandre, "L'Épopée des Nymphéas," *Le Figaro* (Paris, France), Oct. 21, 1920, 1. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Imaginez que chacun des chants de ce poème ou des mouvements de cette symphonie – je suis obligé de me servir de ces équivalents pour expliquer à peu près à l'esprit ce qui doit s'adresser uniquement aux yeux – se compose de deux, trois, quatre ou six grandes toiles qui se suivent et forment un spectacle ininterrompu d'eau, de ciel reflété et de végétation."

[48] Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism: Catalogue Raisonné – Volume IV*, 947, 969.

[49] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 43-47.

[50] Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism: Catalogue Raisonné – Volume IV*, 969-971.

rethink the relationships between the twelve original panels and the way the new groupings would relate to one another and those in the adjoining room.[51] The partnership between Monet and Lefèvre – between artist and architect – shows that the Orangerie project was a labour of painting and of creative interior design in equal measure. It is this mutual dependency the *Water Lilies* gallery's art and architecture have upon each other, and their experience as an adjoined entity, that enables this thesis to consider these two elliptical rooms as early forms of installation art.

Chapter One

The History of Proto-Installation Art

In his book *Phenomenology of Perception*, French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty introduces the concept of "motor intentionality," where the manner in which one physically interacts with an object indicates how one perceives it and thus comprehends it. In his description of the phenomenon he writes: "a movement is learned when the body has understood it, when [the body] has incorporated [the movement] into its 'world,' and to move one's body is to aim at things through it."[52] If one were to consider this "world" to be the gallery space, then this "movement" would be equated to the visitor's physical (and perceptual) response which was evoked through his or her interaction with and comprehension of the *Water Lilies* in its gallery space. Merleau-Ponty further emphasizes that "the body [is not] *in* space and time, it inhabits [them]."[53] Applied to this thesis, if the body *inhabits* space and time, and the body's movement is within spatial and temporal parameters, then (proto-)installation art *is* space and time. The meaning – the experience – of (proto-)installation art is therefore not *in* space and time, it is *of* space and time. Instead of *representing* colour, texture, space and light, (proto-)installation art *is* the sum of these elements for the visitor to experience. For example, in Eliasson's *The Weather Project*, visitors retreated from the frigid English winter and found themselves bathed in a thick orange light and hazy mist spewing from visible fog machines, basking under an enormous, circular yellow orb, creating the illusion of a warm and humid microclimate within the Tate Modern's walls (fig. 15). Eliasson's

[51] Tucker, *Claude Monet*, 218.
[52] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. Donald A. Landes (Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1945), 140; Stephan Käufer & Anthony Chemero, *Phenomenology: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 115.
[53] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 140; Käufer & Chemero, *Phenomenology*, 100.

work of installation art uses light, air and the museum space in unison to challenge the visitor's preconceived notions about his or her experience of nature within London's urbanized landscape. This installation artwork acts as an immersive space in that it does not merely engage the visitor's sense of sight. The visitor finds his or her entire body painted in the same orange light and covered in the same mist that caresses the gallery space, and his or her tactile and proprioceptive faculties are stimulated as much as his or her vision.

Pinpointing a single time or place whence proto-installation art emerged proves tricky, as civilizations throughout human history have employed immersive strategies to blur distinctions between real space and pictorial space. However, it can be argued that the history of proto-installation art unfolded as early as antiquity. Late Roman Second Style wall paintings in the *Villa dei Misteri* (or Villa of the Mysteries) at Pompeii, constructed in the first century BCE, present frescoes of figures and architectural features that envelop the observer and dominate his or her field of vision.[54] In one room, figures engage in ecstatic dance and parade from wall to wall in a procession for Dionysus, evoking sensations of visual and corporeal movement, while in another, an arcuate Corinthian colonnade is painted on the walls, with stark orthogonal lines, expanding the perceived dimensions of the room (figs. 23-24).[55] The artists employed techniques of realism, such as hyper-detailing and convergent perspective, upon flat walls to evoke a projected depth and render the perceptual space larger than the physical space. This makes the room appear larger than it really is, and triggers a more liberated sense of bodily movement, creating the illusion of being *in the picture*, as the barrier between the two-dimensional image space and three-dimensional chamber space dissolves. Another example comes from the Papal Palace at Avignon, where frescoes painted in its *Chambre du Cerf* (or the Chamber of the Stag) in 1343 by Matteo Giovanetti portray feudal outdoor activities such as fish farming and the hunt (fig. 25).[56] The painted sky runs around the entire room, alongside the fluid distribution of birds in the treetops and the hunting scenes on differing levels of the fresco, and suggests depth as well as the aesthetic impression of the panorama.[57] Jean-Pierre Blanc argues that the papal chamber "constitutes a true panorama in

[54] Philip Stinson, "Perspective Systems in Roman Second Style Wall Painting," *American Journal of Archaeology* 115, no. 3 (July 2011): 403, 408-411. Within archaeological scholarship, Roman Second Style (or Architectural Style) wall painting is classified, in comparison with earlier and later developments in wall decoration, for its architectural imagery and inclusion of human or animal figures therein. Its chronology ranges from 100 BCE to around 20 BCE.
[55] Ibid., 408.
[56] Oliver Grau, *Virtual Art: From Illusion to Immersion*, trans. Gloria Custance (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2003), 33.
[57] Ibid., 34

the sense that the eighteenth century ascribed to the word in coining it: a vast encircling tableau, here in the form of a rectangle, with the spectator located at its center."[58]

While these ancient and medieval frescoes demonstrate some of the earliest unions of painting and architecture to create immersive environments, they outlie the history of proto-installation art for two reasons. Firstly, many chambers with illusory wall paintings, such as those described above, held both domestic and religious functions. The bodily experience of these wall decorations would therefore not be purely informed by the art of the walls, but also by any furnishings and the assigned role of the space within the larger household or ritualistic context. Secondly, the friezes' ambient effect may be limited in part by the shape of these spaces. As Blanc describes, panoramas *encircle* their observers. Yet, many of these rooms and chambers are rectangular in their shape. Based on Merleau-Ponty's concept of motor intentionality, the perceptual field radiates from the body onto a space. As artist John Boone's schematic diagram represents, one's own body is hence located at the center of its perceptual field (fig. 26).[59] A head, for instance, turns in circular motion to observe and perceive a space;[60] Joel Smith writes "as with fields of perception, so with spatial orientation."[61] Therefore, proto-installation art began utilizing customized architectural settings, built to echo the body's centrifugal perceptual field.[62] The creation of the panorama rotunda – a whole building designed to display a singular, circular landscape painting – would not only maximize that space's effect of immersion, but also revolutionize the strategies of ambient, all-surrounding art. With the emergence of panorama rotundas, art and architecture forged an inextricable bond that not only emphasized meaning in corporeal experience, but formed the historical epicentre of proto-installation art. Unlike ancient and medieval illusionistic rooms, which were *painted* to be immersive, the panorama rotunda was *painted and constructed* to be immersive.[63]

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[58] Jean-Pierre Blanc et al., *Avignon, ville d'art* (Avignon: Barthélemy, 1991), 47.
[59] Smith, *Experiencing Phenomenology*, 150.
[60] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 140.
[61] Smith, *Experiencing Phenomenology*, 168.
[62] Karen Wonders, *Habitat Dioramas: Illusions of Wilderness in Museums of Natural History* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1993), 207.
[63] It is here that a potential paradox must be addressed and clarified. A pioneer of panorama scholarship, Stephan Oettermann writes: "As any new invention has its precursors, forms of art bearing some apparent relation to the panorama existed earlier, but in this case, they played no direct role in the panorama's development." To support his argument, Oettermann cites the changed visual habits of the observer, from a "construction in strict central perspective" as used in Baroque court theatres, to a "gradual 'democratization' of the audience's point of view." Scholars such as Oliver Grau have since refuted Oettermann's exceptionalism of panoramic painting, contending it is

The Panorama Rotunda

Light falling vertically on the prison cell wall of Robert Barker, a Scottish painter incarcerated by his creditors in the 1780s, is rumoured to have inspired the first panorama.[64] He patented a process called *la nature à coup d'oeil*, or "nature at a glance,"[65] by which a landscape or topographical vista was depicted upon a 360˚ circular canvas in precise perspective, developing a system of curves on a concave surface so that the image, when viewed from an elevated platform, appeared authentic and undistorted.[66] Through heightened strategies of immersive realism, the panorama rotunda sought to bring the illusion of reality as close as possible to the experience of reality. After experimenting with this new artform in Edinburgh, Barker brought his novel illusory technique to London, where the first permanent panorama rotunda was erected and unveiled in Leicester Square on May 14, 1793. He collaborated with architect Robert Mitchell on the project, who designed the rotunda as a two-storied hall in which two panoramic paintings could be simultaneously exhibited, one above the other.[67]

Building on the mechanisms of ancient and medieval spaces of illusionistic landscape painting, the Leicester Square panorama ignited a new presentation apparatus that secluded the outside world and made the image absolute, by fusing the rotunda's cylindrical dimensions with the visitor's panoramic perceptual field.[68] A cross-sectional aquatint from Mitchell's plans, published in 1801, conveys the rotunda's function in relation to its unique design (fig. 27). Via the staircase in the lower right corner, the visitor passed through the entranceway and reached the viewing platform, which was surrounded by a balustrade. The balustrade served the double purpose of preventing visitors from getting too close to the image and positioning them where the

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the most sophisticated form of immersive space produced within a larger history of traditional painting. This thesis mitigates both sides of the debate, by arguing that the panorama as a medium was influenced by previous practices of illusionistic visual culture, but uniquely enhanced the immersive experience through the painting's ambient display. It is the union of art and customized architecture that makes the panorama rotunda unique, not its illusory visual tactics. See Stephan Oettermann, *The Panorama: History of a Mass Medium*, trans. Deborah Lucas Schneider (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 5, 23-24; Grau, *Virtual Art*, 60, 62.

[64] Vanessa R. Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities: Early Mass Culture in Fin-de-siècle Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 150. The neologism "panorama" is a composite term of two Greek words: *pan*, meaning "all," and *horama*, which means "view."

[65] Stephen Parcell, "The Momentary Modern Magic of the Panorama," in *Chora 1: Intervals in the Philosophy of Architecture*, eds. Alberto Pérez-Gómez & Stephen Parcell (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 172.

[66] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 56.

[67] Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 103.

[68] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 59.

upper and lower limits of the panoramic painting could not be distinguished.[69] At this spot, the visitor would be surrounded by the illusionistic painting that hung along the circular walls of the building. The second circular room, reached via the stairwell on the left, was exhibited on the upper floor. The roof rested on the outer walls and the smaller, upper panorama was suspended from rafters inside the larger, lower one. A thick central pillar gave mechanical support for both the roof and upper painting.[70] A double set of skylights illuminated both panoramic paintings housed in the rotunda, but visitors often remarked on an awkward shadow cast on the larger painting, caused by the walkway to the upper-level panorama.[71] This unusual feature was rendered extinct in subsequent rotunda designs as the panorama grew in marketability. Panoramists moreover sought to exchange their paintings and display them in numerous locations to keep the attraction new and exciting for visitors. As a result, building dimensions were institutionalized so panoramic paintings could be rolled up and travel to be shown at various venues.[72]

Within a few decades, the panorama, as Barker had conceived it, captured public intrigue across European and American cities. Since its early success was based on what Vanessa R. Schwarz calls "the project of verisimilitude" (the immersive realism of its circular point of view),[73] later panoramists modified Barker's material and spatial techniques in order to achieve greater realism. Such was the case when the panorama rotunda arrived in Paris, as a mode for leisure entertainment and political education. The French aim of panoramas sought to bring visitors "perceptually closer," if not physically, to the action represented in the panoramic paintings.[74] In 1831, military painter Jean-Charles Langlois (a former officer of Napoleon and student of artist Horace Vernet) opened an enormous rotunda, the largest in Paris at the time – 38 metres in diameter and 15 metres in height – at 14 rue des Marais-du-Temple, behind the present Place de la République.[75] It was inaugurated with a panoramic painting of *The Battle of Navarino* (in which the combined French, English and Russian fleets defeated the Turkish navy in support of Greek independence in 1827).[76] Insofar as pictorial layout, Langlois catered to traditional conventions of

[69] Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 103.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 68.
[73] Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 154.
[74] Ibid., 153-154.
[75] Bernard Comment, *The Panorama*, trans. Anne-Marie Glasheen (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), 47.
[76] Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 154.

realism to depict the battle imagery, complete with receding ships as they approached the water's horizon, smoke, cannon fire and vessels aflame under a clear blue sky. However, one of his greatest innovations was the architectural, spatial and material modifications he made to the standard panorama display through his implementation of *faux terrain*.[77] As Dolf Sternberger states:

> In the painted panorama, however, Nature was preponderant. An enclosing artificial Nature, whose relentless illusionistic unity forbade even the faintest hint of a frame and required negating the pictorial character in any way whatsoever […] So it seems quite consistent for the painted surface to have things added to it, sculptural components in the foreground or actual pieces of nature transported there, stones, bushes, even tools.[78]

Langlois replaced the typical observation platform at the panorama's center with the poop deck of a frigate that had truly taken part in the naval battle: the *Scipion*, known to the French public for its feat of arms.[79] What is more, for the panorama of *The Battle of Navarino*, Langlois led visitors up to the "deck" through a series of "cabins" and passageways, rife with nautical tools and equipment. This process enabled the visitor to adjust his or her eyes to the dim light in the rotunda and to create an immersive "naval" aesthetic before he or she reached the platform.[80] Langlois further reinforced the panorama's illusion of reality by using gas lighting to simulate fire and ventilation to feign a sea breeze. Whenever currents of air made gas flames flicker, the effect made the painted fire appear so lifelike that some visitors took fright.[81] Germain Bapst's 1889 text *Essai sur l'histoire des panoramas et dioramas* remarks on the heightened illusory realism of Langlois' panorama, and argued that he "transported the spectator to the center of the action, while his predecessors had left the visitor isolated and removed from the spectacle represented as the crow flies."[82] Furthermore, Bapst explains how Langlois replaced the ordinary glass of the roof skylight with frosted glass to negate any shadows that may otherwise fall upon the canvas.[83] It was

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[77] François Robichon, "Le panorama, spectacle de l'histoire," *Le Mouvement social* no. 131 (April – June 1985): 83.
[78] Dolf Sternberger, "Panorama of the 19th Century," trans. Joachim Neugroschel, *October* 4 (Autumn 1977): 5.
[79] Comment, *The Panorama*, 47.
[80] Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 159.
[81] Ibid., 160.
[82] Germain Bapst, *Essai sur l'histoire des panoramas et dioramas* (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1889), 23. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Puis il [Langlois] transporta le spectateur au centre de l'action, tandis que ses prédécesseurs l'avaient laissé isolé et éloigné du spectacle qui était représenté à vol d'oiseau." Langlois' panorama *The Battle of Navarino* remained on display at the Panorama of the Grand Carré (at the north end of the Champs-Elysées) until the siege of Paris in 1871. It is highly plausible that Bapst (born in 1853 and a lifelong Parisian) would have seen Langlois' panorama there firsthand, and his own experiential thoughts would have contributed to his written commentary on the subject. See Comment, *The Panorama*, 50; Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 154.
[83] Bapst, *Essai sur l'histoire des panoramas et dioramas*, 23. "Le colonel remplaça les vitrages simples de la zone lumineuse par des verres dépolis; il supprimait ainsi les effets d'ombre sur la toile."

ultimately the manner in which the *Battle of Navarino* painting was displayed – alongside visual, haptic and auditory stimulation – that maximized the corporeal sense of immersion and emphasized the panorama as a bodily experience. It was the architectural insularity of the panorama that eliminated any visual or proprioceptive referent to the world beyond that represented in the circular painting, which optimized the illusory effectiveness of the visitor's multisensory experience.

The Franco-Prussian War (1870-71) breathed new life into panoramic painting when it was used for propaganda purposes, and by the 1880s, Paris had become consumed by *panoramania*.[84] Funded by industrial companies and more accessible to the middle class, panorama rotundas proliferated throughout the city and became an integral part of Paris's entertainment culture.[85] One example was M. Revel's Panorama de la Place d'Austerlitz, which opened in 1881 with *Storm over the Bastille* by Théophile Polipot and Stephen Jacob (fig. 28).[86] This massive rotunda construction featured upgrades that included waxworks on the ground between the platform and the canvas, and the removal of the central pillar in favour of a canopy, which refracted the daylight onto the painting. This heightened the sense of immersion by doing away with the pillar that fragmented the visitor's visual field.[87] A second rotunda that integrated these additions was the panorama at 5 rue de Berri, between the Champs-Elysées and Boulevard Haussmann. It opened on May 6, 1882 with *The Battle of Champigny* by Édouard Detaille and Alphonse de Neuville. The painters took advantage of the rapidly developing realist technologies of the day, using photographic studies of the terrain for hyperdetailed sketches, and then projecting them onto the canvas and transcribing the image in paint.[88] As quoted in an 1893 edition of *Meyers Konversationslexikon*, one German visitor admonished the romanticized French patriotism in the image, yet claimed that "the relation between the painting and the actual objects has been handled with much finesse […], so much so that the optical illusion works wonderfully well."[89] This panorama inspired such awe among Parisians that it was satirized in *La Caricature* (fig. 29).

[84] Comment, *The Panorama*, 66-67; Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 157. The term *panoramania* comes from an article printed on January 3, 1881 in *Le Voltaire*, in response to the unveiling of a third panorama within a year's time. See François Robichon, "Les panoramas en France au XIX^{e} siècle," (Doctoral dissertation, Paris Nanterre University, 1982), 216.
[85] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 71.
[86] Comment, *The Panorama*, 68; Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 167.
[87] Schwartz, *Spectacular Realities*, 160.
[88] Oettermann, *The Panorama*, 170.
[89] Comment, *The Panorama*, 68.

Moved by the immersive experience, visitors are illustrated with weapons in hand about to join the battle, which has leapt across the picture plane to engulf the observation platform.[90]

It is without a doubt that the panorama rotunda continued to possess incredible mass appeal in Paris in the late nineteenth century, and it would have been nearly impossible for any denizen to not encounter them, either in literature or in the flesh. Monet was in his early forties when the *Battle of Champigny* and *Storm over the Bastille* panoramas were unveiled to the public. He most certainly encountered the panorama rotundas in newsprint, magazines, commercial advertisements or in person. What is more, history shows that Monet was at the very least personally acquainted with "repurposed" panorama rotunda architecture, as the seventh Exhibition of Independent Artists – which opened on March 1, 1882 and in which Monet showcased thirty-five artworks – was held at 251 rue Saint-Honoré, in the palace built for the panorama *The Battle of Reichschoffen*, designed by esteemed panorama architect Charles Garnier.[91] Although there is no extant proof that he visited any panoramas during his many years in and around Paris, it is entirely plausible that Monet would have been inclined to experience the panorama craze that was taking the French capital by storm. While his conception for a *Water Lilies* installation – described as a "circular room" to Maurice Guillemot in 1898 – was radically different from the usual historical or geographical subject matter of panoramic painting, it may have been the panorama rotunda's scale and enveloping illusionism, specially lit and removed from the context of the home or museum, that inspired Monet.[92] This rapprochement is further confirmed in 1927 by critic François Thiébault-Sisson, who attests that Monet "dreamt of a vast rotunda wherein his canvases could be housed in the style of a panorama."[93]

By the Great Exhibition of Paris in 1900, early forms of animation and cinema, as well as developments in photography, meant that the novelty of the panorama had waned and enthusiasm for the artform slowly dwindled.[94] The twentieth century marked the end of panoramic painting in the quest for illusionistic reality. However, within the subsequent decades, Monet would revive some conventions of the panorama rotunda, such as its customized architectural design and its

[90] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 108.
[91] Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism* (Köln: Taschen, 2014), 176.
[92] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 22; Tucker, *Claude Monet*, 198; Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 225.
[93] François Thiébault-Sisson, "Un nouveau musée Parisien: Les Nymphéas de Claude Monet à l'Orangerie des Tuileries," *La revue de l'art ancien et moderne* 52, no. 287 (June 1927): 52. "Il [Monet] avait rêvé d'une vaste rotonde où ses toiles se logeraient à la façon d'un panorama."
[94] Comment, *The Panorama*, 73.

exclusive, all-surrounding imagery. Liberated from the constraints of painterly realism that bound panoramists, Monet grouped monumental polyptychs of his water garden under bespoke conditions of lighting and architecture, akin but not identical to the tradition of the French panorama rotundas. Unveiled almost thirty years after the apogee of public panoramas, Monet's *Water Lilies* gallery at the Musée de l'Orangerie repurposed the spatial, material and proprioceptive tactics of the panorama rotunda as intended by Barker, Langlois, Detaille and their architect partners, and ushered in a new epoch in the history of proto-installation art.

Chapter Two

Water Lilies for an Orangery

What happens when an artwork is displayed in neither a museum, a salon, nor a domestic setting? In other words, what occurs when a work of art is its own context? The panorama rotunda addressed these questions, since they were designed with the sole function of displaying panoramic paintings in service of a 360˚ illusion.[95] They were not historicized as art objects within a larger museum framework, but experienced as a singular entirety, much like the *Nymphéas* gallery and later forms of installation art. However, unlike panoramic paintings and installation art, art historian Félicie Faizand de Maupeou writes that the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* murals "are not *in situ* because they were not created for this space."[96] Indeed, these monumental canvases were not painted for the Orangerie or any other place because Monet began working on these images in 1914, without any expositional destination in mind. It was only six years later that he sought an architect, knowing that their colossal size would make it difficult to insert them within a traditional museum setting.[97] The murals demanded a large, open space, and that requirement alone left few options in the dense urban sprawl of early twentieth-century Paris. When discussions began in 1920 about where these paintings could be housed, it became clear that a space would have to be constructed to fit the paintings, rather than the conventional method of paintings conforming to

[95] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 57.
[96] Félicie Faizand de Maupeou, "De peintre à l'architecte. La mise en exposition des *Nymphéas* de Monet à l'Orangerie des Tuileries," *In Situ* 32 (July 2017): 1. "Il n'est pas non plus tout à fait un musée, puisqu'il s'agit d'y présenter une seule œuvre d'un seul artiste, sans qu'elle soit pour autant une œuvre *in situ* puisque les Nymphéas n'ont pas été créés à l'origine pour ce lieu." Also see Félicie Faizand de Maupeou, "Un geste artistique inédit: la mise en exposition des *Nymphéas* de Monet à l'Orangerie des Tuileries," *exPosition* no. 3 (September 2017): [n.p.].
[97] Faizand de Maupeou, "Un geste artistique inédit," [n.p.].

the space of a museum. In his memoir, Paul Léon, director of the Administration des Beaux-Arts at the time of Monet's Orangerie project, wrote in reference to the *Water Lilies* cycle:

> The work was of a difficult presentation. It required an oval room of specific dimensions, to place the panels side by side in the order that [Monet] conceived. The container would have to be built for the contained.[98]

Since the custom-built space in which the *Water Lilies* are displayed would be meaningless without the paintings for which it was created, it can be said that these murals are very much *in situ*, for they reside in permanence at the Orangerie gallery, plastered to the walls rather than hung. The Orangerie, as an converted architectural setting, is and has been the murals' original and only context. On the day of the *Water Lilies* gallery's opening, the Orangerie's sole intention was to display Monet's *grandes décorations*, just as the sole purpose of the panorama rotunda was to display its illusory landscape within. The space of exhibitions often historicizes the artworks, through the art institution's longer history of housing cultural objects and fashioning their histories. In the case of the Orangerie, however, whose internal gallery and the *Nymphéas* paintings share a common history, the artwork and its space contextualize each other.

The *Nymphéas* Gallery as Proto-Installation Art

Over the past ninety years, visitors to the Orangerie's *Nymphéas* gallery have walked from the building's main entrance all the way down to the posterior half of the building. They cross the gallery's entranceway and enter a small windowless vestibule, elliptical in its shape, with, as Bonnier aspired, "intentionally reduced proportions and lighting."[99] Lefèvre's early floorplans from January and March 1922 show the conspicuously curving walls of the vestibule, similar to those which would hold Monet's murals.[100] The vestibule's white walls are bare and smooth, the only source of light from a paned oculus in the ceiling (fig. 30). This intermediary area serves as a perceptual transition for the visitor, to permit his or her senses of sight and proprioception to adjust to the controlled, alternate conditions of light and space located beyond. As earlier

[98] Paul Léon, *Du palais royal au Palais Bourbon* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1947), 195. "L'oeuvre était d'une présentation difficile. Il fallait une salle ovale, de dimensions déterminées pour y placer côte à côte la série des panneaux selon l'ordre qu'il [Monet] concevait. Le contenant devait être construit pour le contenu." Also see Faizand de Maupeou, "De peintre à l'architecte," 2.

[99] Although Bonnier's draft for the *Water Lilies* rotunda at the Hôtel Biron never came to fruition, his description of his vestibule carried over to the Orangerie project through Monet, further demonstrating the painter's influence in the architectural presentation of this artwork. See Faizand de Maupeou, "De peintre à l'architecte," 4.

[100] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 43-45.

discussed, this technique is not dissimilar to the nineteenth-century rotunda corridors that led to the panoramic paintings, oftentimes rather long and plunged in darkness, before emerging in the center of a monumental panorama display.[101] This introductory architectural feature in both cases plays the same role of transition between exterior and interior space and light, eases these perceptual changes and heightens the immersive effects of the artworks they precede.

Visitors then stroll through either one of two curving passageways to the left and right of the vestibule; two other passageways connect the first and second rooms of the gallery as well. While the floorplan from March 7, 1922 shows Lefèvre elected to build a single doorway connecting both rooms along the gallery's central axis, photographs taken of the gallery in 1927 show that this plan was changed to include the coupled passages mirroring those between the vestibule and first room (figs. 1-2).[102] There are pragmatic and perceptual reasons Lefèvre and Monet would have designed two pairs of curving passageways rather than linear ones. Firstly, it optimizes the negative floorspace between the elliptical walls of the *Water Lilies* gallery rooms and vestibule and the linear exterior walls of the Orangerie. Secondly, it maximizes the amount of gallery wall space needed to display to *Nymphéas* cycle. Thirdly, having the visitor move through these curved tunnels hints at the impending curving directionality of his or her bodily movement once they enter the gallery rooms. Lastly, once inside the gallery rooms, these curved passages obstruct all visual reference to the outside world (fig. 31).[103] Any space exterior to the gallery space is impossible to see once the visitor has entered the first room, magnifying the insularity of the space and the gallery's other immersive strategies.

As mentioned earlier, the visitors enter the two elliptical rooms of the *Water Lilies* gallery and encounter eight monumental murals displayed upon its curving, white walls.[104] Like those in the vestibule, these walls are smooth and unpresumptuous, with simple moldings running above the murals and along the ground, removing the sharp right angle between the walls and the floor, and accentuating the overall curvature of the rooms. The ceilings are comprised of a large vellum sheet that canopy both rooms, which filters the sunlight passing through the Orangerie's double-paned skylight and into the gallery (fig. 32). The building was constructed along Paris's historic

[101] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p.]; Faizand de Maupeou, "Un geste artistique inédit," [n.p.].
[102] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 46-47.
[103] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 141.
[104] Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism: Catalogue Raisonné – Volume IV*, 970.

axis – an urban alignment of public institutions and monuments – and runs parallel with the trajectory of the sun, ensuring that the greenhouse would receive the maximum amount of sunlight possible.[105] This would prove advantageous for Monet, whose painterly style was committed to sensory recordings of nature in relation to natural light.[106] The diffused, scattered luminesce thus ensures that the room is imbued with just enough daylight to draw out the potent vibrancy of the colours of the *Water Lilies* murals, without casting any unwanted shadow upon them. This circumvents any "photobleaching" of the *Water Lilies*' colours, which would diminish the intricacies of their hue and value if exposed to a direct light source.[107] Like nineteenth-century panorama rotunda architecture, the Orangerie's vellum canopy resembles in its functionality Langlois' frosted glass skylight for his display of *The Battle of Navarino*, to eliminate shadows that fall upon the canvas of his panorama painting.[108] It is likely that Monet and Lefèvre took influence from this panoramist lighting strategy to heighten the immersive effect of their work.

However, as Dolf Sternberger stresses, the panorama rotunda's commitment to realistic illusionism was dependent upon, in part, the removal of any visual evidence of a frame that could remind the visitor of the image's flatness and pictoriality.[109] With Monet's *Water Lilies* cycle at the Orangerie, there is no denial of the image's painterly aesthetic. What is more, each mural is adorned by a thin golden frame (fig. 33).[110] The frames secure the paintings' edges to the wall and prevent the corners from peeling over time. Aside from this pragmatic function, as late as the nineteenth century, frames were meant to connote the limits of the image space. They moreover dictated how artists composed the arrangement of figures and objects within their images. The painted subject matter was encased by the edges of the canvas, and accentuated by the frame

[105] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p.]. The historic axis of Paris runs along the Champs Élysées, connecting the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile, the Arc de Triomphe du Caroussel, the obelisk at the centre of Place de la Concorde, the Tuileries Gardens, the Louvre, and the Grande Arche de la Défense.

[106] According to John House, Monet's practice was inspired by "his own experience of working from nature, and his exploration of the ways in which his experiences of nature could be transformed into paint." His outdoor, *en plein air* approach to easel painting enabled him to capture the sensations of colour and form he experienced outside amidst his subject matter, before retreating to his studio where he would take his outdoor painting sketches and complete his work. See Joel Isaacson, "Constable, Duranty, Mallarmé, Impressionism, Plein Air, and Forgetting," *The Art Bulletin* 76, no. 3 (September 1994): 427-450.

[107] Hue refers to the gradience or tint of a colour (such as various blues, reds, or greens), while value refers to its level of luminosity, as in its level of brightness or darkness (such as light blue, dark blue, navy blue, etc.). See Luigina De Grandis, *Theory and Use of Color*, trans. John Gilbert (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, Inc., 1984), 32-41.

[108] Bapst, *Essai sur l'histoire des panoramas et dioramas*, 23.

[109] Sternberger, "Panorama of the 19th Century," 5.

[110] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p.]; Faizand de Maupeou, "Un geste artistique inédit," [n.p.].

itself.[111] Monet challenges the finality of the painting's edges by illustrating objects and figures incompletely, as if the whole image extends beyond what is illustrated in paint. This defiance towards the painting's edges is evident in Monet's *Water Lilies* murals, which omit the depiction of a shoreline at the bottom or a line of horizon at the top.[112] Likening Monet's later works to contemporary practices in photography, Brian O'Doherty expounds on late nineteenth century's "weakened absolutism" of the canvas' edges:

> A signature of Impressionism is the way the casually chosen subject softens the edge's structural role at a time when the edge is under pressure from the increasing shallowness of the space. This doubled and somewhat opposing stress on the edge is the prelude to the definition of painting as a self-sufficient object […] which sets us on the high road to some stirring esthetic climaxes.[113]

The thin, gold framing is a subtle reminder of an older artistic tradition within which Monet was educated at the dawn of his career. Yet, considering the *Nymphéas* murals' primary subject matter – the surface of a pond – this "softening of edges" grants a more fluid coalescence between the paintings and the walls upon which they are displayed.

Monet's Murals at the Orangerie

In her book *Colour in the Age of Impressionism*, Laura Anne Kalba argues that the "nature" which Monet sought to represent in his work through colour (under differing light, atmosphere and weather conditions) was mediated by the artificial, urban environment of Paris.[114] She argues that Paris's booming fashion industry and the emergence of synthetic dyes altered the artist's expectations regarding the vibrancy and variety of colours, including those found in nature.[115] She references Nicholas Green's book *The Spectacle of Nature*, which examines the urban expansion of Paris; Green writes "there was a *continuum* between the ways the city was consumed and the

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[111] O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube*, 18-19.
[112] In the leftmost panel of the mural *Le Matin aux saules* (fig. 12, left detail), the willow's base is visible along the pond's grassy bank, angled at a triangular formation with the bottom left corner of the painting. Given it is the only segment of a mural in which land is depicted, and seeing that the panel shows no pinkish cloud reflections as in the rest of the mural, it is likely that this was a separate *Water Lilies* painting (independent of the Orangerie group), painted earlier in the series. This is possible given the presence of other paintings with the same willow on a cornered pond bank, such as two other panels of *Saule pleureur et bassin aux nymphèas* (fig. 34). Monet likely decided to add this panel to the mural towards to end of the project, likely to mimic the length of the mural along the southern wall. See Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism: Catalogue Raisonné – Volume IV*, 976-977, 979.
[113] O'Doherty, *Inside the White Cube*, 22.
[114] Laura Anne Kalba, *Colour in the Age of Impressionism: Commerce, Technology and Art* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2017), 107.
[115] Ibid., 107-108.

countryside inhabited."[116] With his large family needing more domestic space, Monet had retreated to the valley of the river Epte in Normandy, and settled in Giverny in April of 1883,[117] but as Kalba suggests, his urbanized colour perception, influenced by the urban environment in which he was educated, could not escape him. The *Water Lilies* murals evince elements of this "artificial nature" of the urban landscape as described by Green. From 1893 until 1904, Monet expanded the size and contours of his pond and stocked its waters with an assortment of exotic-looking flora (fig. 35).[118] He cultivated both the plants of his garden and the images of it he wished to paint. This is most evident in the variety of hybrid flowers Monet depicts in the murals, none of which could grow in France's temperate climate. In truth, the waterlilies that floated in Monet's pond could never even grow organically because they were artificial hybrids, white waterlilies from northern climes cross-bred with vivid tropical varieties from Africa and the Gulf of Mexico. These waterlilies were cultivated by Joseph Bory Latour-Marliac, a French botanist, and were the first viable multicoloured waterlilies in Europe. In both life and in paint, these aquatic flowers were created at the hands of human beings, a botanist and an artist respectively.

A painter and an avid gardener, Monet carried his urban influence onto Giverny and imposed it upon his estate's outdoor property by preening bushes, planting neat rows of flowers, and building a Japanese footbridge over his pond.[119] Before he took photographic records and commenced sketch studies, Monet had individual waterlily blossoms and leaves sorted into predetermined setups, much like the paintings at the Orangerie gallery itself. The garden became Monet's palette, a means of aesthetically appropriating nature.[120] Dubbed "decorative" by early critics for being devoid of representations of tangible reality,[121] his *Nymphéas* series can instead

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[116] Nicholas Green, *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-Century France* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 66.
[117] Claire Joyes, *Claude Monet: Life at Giverny* (New York: Vendome Press, 1985), 20.
[118] Gabrielle van Zuylen, "The Eye of the Gardener… Claude Monet," in *Monet's Garden in Giverny: Inventing the Landscape*. Edited by Marina Ferreti Bocquillon (Giverny: Musée des Impressionismes, 2009), 39-47.
[119] Marina Ferreti Bocquillon, "Monet's Garden in Giverny," in *Monet's Garden in Giverny: Inventing the Landscape*, ed. Marina Ferreti Bocquillon (Giverny: Musée des Impressionismes, 2009), 16-17. In February of 1893, Monet purchased a plot of land beside the Epte on the other side of the railway line and his estate. He was keen to dig out a pond, irrigating a diversion from the Epte called the Ru, or "communal arm," and duly wrote to the Prefect of Eure to sanction the landscaping project (figs. 36-38). Although met with some initial resistance, he was eventually given authorization to commence the project.
[120] Karin Sagner-Düchting, "Monet's Late Work from the Vantage Point of Modernism," in *Claude Monet… up to Digital Impressionism*, ed. Delia Ciuha et al., trans. Paul Aston & Christopher Jenkin-Jones (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2002), 33.
[121] Kalba, *Colour in the Age of Impressionism*, 112. Four times the size of earlier Water Lilies easel paintings, the enveloping quality of the canvases of the Orangerie ventured beyond the limited understandings of the effects of

be likened to a representation of a representation of nature, one in which the vibrant colours the artist used connote an experience of a manicured greenspace. All the garden's elements – the exotic floral colours, the landscaping and horticulture – echo the "artificial nature" of urbanity: a notion of humanity's control over and ability to mold nature and to mimic ordered society. This "urban experience of nature," through colour and subject matter, would have resonated undoubtedly with visitors to the Orangerie in the late 1920s, many of whom would have encountered "artificial nature" either in city parks, suburban developments in the Parisian countryside, or boating and bathing resorts along the river Seine.

Since 1927, visitors have been given the opportunity to examine the *Water Lilies* murals at close range. This type of examination contrasts starkly with their observation from afar, for despite the paintings' ethereal imagery and delicate colour schemes, Monet's application of paint is rigorous, forceful and tactile. For instance, in any given region of these paintings, a visitor will notice an extensive complex of coats of paint, colourations or brushstroke orientations (fig. 39). The visitor may gaze upon the most unassuming spot and find a plethora of pastel shades: warm yellows, soft pinks, and rich blues, greens and violets. The canvases are covered by a lusciously pigmented incrustation of several layers of paint atop one another.[122] According to Charles M. Mount's biography of the artist, Monet often used blotting paper to absorb the oil from the paints for his late *Nymphéas* canvases, and did not thin his paints with turpentine.[123] The resultant low binder concentration left an incredibly dense, pasty paint that was elastic and more difficult to spread and manipulate. This led to shorter, wider strokes, as highly viscous paint cannot be fluidly dragged across great lengths of canvas (fig. 40). The individual coloured textures overlay and pass through each other in a myriad of juxtapositions, many of which convey a gentle hatching effect

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decorative landscapes. Also see Stephen Z. Levine, "Décor / Decorative / Decoration in Monet's Art," *Arts Magazine* 51 (February 1977): 138. "The category of the decorative was at the center of the dispute over the success or failure of Monet's enterprise; some critics suggested that his transformation of the natural *décor* into highly formal […] organization of colour-shapes had endowed the Impressionist painting with the visionary resonance of the greatest art of the past, whereas others alternatively contended that it was precisely in the 'swallowing up [of painting] by the decorative arts' that Monet's art lost all human meaning."

[122] Hajo Düchting, "On Monet's Painting Technique in Late Works, based on the Basel 'Water-Lily' Picture," in *Claude Monet… up to Digital Impressionism*, ed. Delia Ciuha et al., trans. Paul Aston & Christopher Jenkin-Jones (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2002), 86. Although this chapter essay concerns itself with the Water Lilies triptych at the Fondation Beyer in Basel, Switzerland, it examines a painting that Monet had intended to be included in the Orangerie collection. The aesethetic qualities shared between the Basel triptych and the polyptychs of the Orangerie share strong similarities, as both were intended for the same final project.

[123] Charles M. Mount, *Monet: A Biography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1966), 382-384. Also see Gaston Bernheim de Villers, *Little Tales of Great Artists*, trans. & ed. Denys Sutton (Paris: Quatre Chemins Editart, 1950), 79.

and *flochetage*, whereby adjacent colours interplay and enhance one another's vibrancy.[124] The paintings run through a broad palette of colour contrasts, with which Monet played in many modulations, such as light-dark in many of the second room murals, warm-cold and complementary colours, ranging from orange-pink (and yellow) and blue-green (and turquoise).[125] Coarse areas of texture alternate with dabbing, modelled hatchings and mixed brushwork (two or more colours can oftentimes be seen within a single brushstroke). Monet's rubbing of pasty paints on top of dried, pastose surfaces produces a broken, rough structure, with streaks of paint so granulose that subsequent swift, thinner strokes would not cover its ridges or penetrate its crevices.[126] The final result is a surface of heavy impasto and saturated pigmentations. Moreover, incrustations of paint, layer atop layer, texture upon texture, and colour over colour, connects Monet's very physical painterly process with the visitor's sensation of tactility (fig. 41). This raw surface vibrates with dulcet vitality, and gives rise to formless reflections of gentle light that almost constitutes a "natural" shimmer on the painted surface of the pond.[127]

Merleau-Ponty writes that comprehension of one's tactile experience is inextricably informed by one's visual experience and vice versa. He argues that the experience of tactility is in its establishment of a proximity between the "here" that is *feeling* and the "there" that is *felt*, or *thought*, through the body's exploratory movements.[128] Furthermore, philosopher Sue L. Cataldi states that "tactile experience is corporeal experience […] we cannot deceive ourselves about the extent to which our bodily flesh is embedded and engrossed in the flesh of the world or about the extent to which the flesh of the world is engrossed and embedded in us."[129] Her dialectic takes provenance from Merleau-Ponty's concept of *the flesh*: an phenomenological meshing of the physical body and the perceptible world, in which the lived body (the sum of its senses like sight and touch) exists as "a system of possible actions or movements."[130] Upon meticulous visual examination, the *Water Lilies* murals' topography of paint appears rough and ragged, a patchwork of colours and dissolved forms. Yet as the visitor steps back from the canvas, this sensation is

[124] Düchting, "On Monet's Painting Technique in Late Works," 86-87.
[125] Ibid., 87.
[126] John Rewald, "The Impressionist Brush," *MoMA*, no. 7 (Spring 1991): 53.
[127] Düchting, "On Monet's Painting Technique in Late Works," 87.
[128] Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 114, 339.
[129] Sue L. Cataldi, *Emotion, Depth, and Flesh: A Study of Sensitive Space – Reflections on Merleau-Ponty's Philosophy of Embodiment* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), 119.
[130] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The Philosopher and His Shadow," in *Signs* (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 166-167.

reversed, as these mellifluous colours form distinct features – trees, foliage, blossoms and lily pads, and reflections of clouds and sky – into the aqueous, aerated subject that was Monet's point of departure.[131] This conflict of tactility – *feeling* the physical, rough texture of the paint against the *thought* perceptual, diaphanous fluidity of the paintings' subject matter – invites a strong awareness of corporeality, echoing Merleau-Ponty's thoughts: "tactile experience adheres to the surface of [the] body […] space itself is known through [the] body."[132]

Through a "scumbling" technique, Monet made use of a stiff, dry brush to smear paint across the inlaid layers and then break into separate, thinner streaks. Colours show through the porous surface of the upper layers, with areas of long, short and looping strokes, with no consistent pattern or directionality of brushwork present anywhere on the canvas. Art historian James Elkins claims that it was the artist's motivation to produce layered "textured strokes" atop one another in infinitesimal varieties of shapes, sizes, directions and "thicknesses" in order to create a strong sense of balance and tranquil stillness, stopping visitors from deciphering which portions of the image were painted before others.[133] He aims to debunk Cézanne's notion of Monet as "just an eye" by explaining that while many lay viewers assume the Monet's style of painting can be recreated by spontaneously smearing daubs of paint over a canvas surface, the task is far easier said than done.[134] The careful, calculated manner in which Monet played with the viscosity and texture of his paints and the gestures he utilized in their application emphasizes the technical prowess and patience required to paint in layers and work against the hand's natural tendency to apply paint with a paralleling directionality.[135] For Elkins, this aesthetic of spontaneity in *Water Lilies* was part of Monet's "method: a layered technique that required planning and patience in the manner of the Old Masters of the Renaissance."[136] The effort to convey effortlessness was a consistent trend in Monet's artistic *modus operandi*. This is corroborated by the fact that Monet obsessed and laboured over the *Water Lilies* panels in his studio for years (fig. 42).[137] Clemenceau,

[131] Rewald, "The Impressionist Brush," 53.
[132] Merleau-Ponty, "The Philosopher and His Shadow," 166-7; Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, 316.
[133] James Elkins, *What Painting Is: How to Think about Oil Painting Using the Language of Alchemy* (New York: Psychology Press, 1999), 12.
[134] Ibid., 9
[135] Ibid., 13-15.
[136] Ibid., 12.
[137] Bocquillon, "Monet's Garden in Giverny," 22-25.

who saw the panels at differing stages of progress, describes their transformation in his commemorative book on the artist's later oeuvre:

> Inevitably, it sometimes happened that a sought effect did not seem completely obtained […] From one visit to another, I observed, however, that laborious efforts in which the brush persisted had been wonderfully "aerated" […] But, he did not stop reconsidering, correcting, refining his subject from his own background.[138]

The re-painting eliminated clumpy water, heavy clouds and unbalanced lighting effects, but Monet's frustration with the *Nymphéas* cycle was exacerbated by his failing eyesight between 1917 and 1922. As historians like John House and Carla Rachman concur, Monet's cataracts and possible astigmatism caused distortions to his colour perception and led to constantly reworking the canvas surfaces, scraping off paint that did not meet his artistic standards and reapplying layers.[139] The physiology of a painter's vision should be considered in relation to their work.[140] In Monet's case, it is clear that the artist's knowledge of his deficiency led to efforts to compensate for it. Much of the evidence that directly links his late painterly style – blurred and dissolved – to his visual ailments, however, are either anecdotal or contradictory. For instance, records claim that Monet underwent three surgeries to remove his cataracts, which almost fully eradicated his symptoms until the final months of his life.[141] However, Evan Charteris, a contemporary acquaintance of Monet, reported that when the artist was presented with glasses, he threw them aside and declared "if the world really looks like that I will paint no more!"[142]

Despite the troubles with his eyesight, when one compares the Orangerie murals to earlier artworks in the series (before Monet began to have serious optical issues) – such as the DMA's

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[138] Georges Clemenceau, *Claude Monet: Les Nymphéas* (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1928), 29-30. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "Inévitablement, il arriva parfois qu'un effet cherché ne parut pas complètement obtenu […] D'une visite à l'autre, j'observais néanmoins que des efforts laborieux où le pinceau s'obstinait, s'était merveilleusement «aérés» […] Mais, il ne cessait pas reconsidérer, de corriger, d'affiner son texte de son propre fond." Clemenceau wrote this book out of friendship and didactic duty. Disillusioned that no exhibition catalogue would be printed to accompany the unveiling of Monet's *Grandes Décorations* at the Orangerie, he wanted to secure the legacy of the artwork for whose donation he had been largely responsible. Also see Golan, "Oceanic Sensations," 90; Paul Hayes Tucker, "Monet: Public and Private," in *Claude Monet: Late Work*, eds. Ealan Wingate & Emily Florido (New York: Gagossian Gallery, 2010), 16-40.

[139] Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 252.

[140] Art historian Louis Hautecoeur briefly discusses the ambiguous relation between anomalies in vision and painting. As for faulty colour perception due to changes in the eye or body chemistry, he lists various possibilities, none of which fully correspond to Monet's affliction, and does not draw any definitive conclusions. See Louis Hautecoeur, "L'Artiste et son oeuvre: essai sur la création artistique. Tome I: L'Artiste et son milieu," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 6, no. 79 (1972): 276.

[141] George H. Hamilton, "The Dying of the Light: The Late Works of Degas, Monet, and Cézanne," 228.

[142] Evan Charteris, *John Sargent* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), 132.

1908 *Water Lilies*, the National Museum of Western Art's *Water Lilies* of 1916, and the Metropolitan's 1919 *Water Lilies Pond* (figs. 43-45) – certain compositional features persist throughout Monet's decades-long work on the *Nymhéas* series. Perhaps the most substantial feature is the juxtaposition of the horizontally-shaped clusters of lily pads and the arabesque verticality of the reflections of trees, clouds and sky in the pond's rustling water, recognizable in both Monet's painting and photography of his Giveryn pond (figs. 46-48).[143] When one observes the interaction between these two compositional elements in the *Water Lilies* cycle, the consistency of Monet's image structure throughout the *Water Lilies* series becomes apparent. The foreshortened ovals of the lily pads are aggregated into floating isles and organized into horizontal strata parallel to the top and bottom of the painting. They seem smaller and more angular as the visitor's vision moves upwards along the canvas, alluding to the receding surface of the water and conveying a lateral depth.[144] Within this format, a counter-system of large, amorphous shapes – hovering and less distinct – represent the reflections of trees, foliage, clouds and sky beneath the water's surface. These shapes convey depth, and yet the verticality of their reflective nature, coupled with their flowing, intertwining brushwork, affirm the flatness of the picture plane and the wall upon which it rests.[145] In a 1982 article, Rosalind Krauss provides insightful albeit brief mention of the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* and their manner of display, which she dubs their "exhibitionality":

> The synonymy of landscape and wall – the one as representation of the other – of Monet's *Water Lilies* is thus an advanced moment in a series of operations in which aesthetic discourse resolves itself around a representation of the very space that grounds it institutionally. The constitution of the work of art as a representation of its own space of exhibition, is in fact what we know as the history of modernism.[146]

Krauss singles out Monet's monumental *Water Lilies* murals as a culminative transformation of landscape painting into an expanded space, adhering to the curvature of the walls. This synthesis of which she writes, between the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* and their exhibition space, builds from Clement Greenberg's argument that the history of modern art

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[143] Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 229, 239. One can observe from a photograph of Monet's pond that although the artist's eyesight was diminishing, he managed to transcribe the horizontal clusters of lily pads and the vertical reflections of trees and sky in the water into the painted image. This shows that while his painting style was distinctly blurry and tilting towards abstraction, his imagery remained loyal reality capturable by photography.
[144] Isaacson, *Observation and Reflection*, 45.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Rosalind Krauss, "Photography's Discursive Spaces: Landscape/View," *Art Journal* 42, no. 4 (Winter 1982): 312-313.

chronicles the transition away from visual representation towards pictorial flatness, where painting increasingly expresses its own two-dimensionality through gestural applications of form and colour.[147] Greenberg specifically applies this claim to Monet's Orangerie murals in his 1957 essay "The Later Monet," in which he writes "atmosphere gave much in terms of colour but took away even more in terms of three-dimensional form […] The broken, prismatic color tended to make the balance between the illusion [of] depth and the design on the surface precarious."[148] This interpretation stems from Greenberg's bias towards the New York school of Abstract Expressionism, particularly what he saw as its focus on pictorial flatness, and his desire to fit the later Monet within the artistic movement's early history.[149]

The perspectival foreshortening of the clusters of lily pads in *Water Lilies* makes the picture plane of the murals appear to project outwards.[150] Monet used foreshortening to perceptually expand the physical limits of the murals and to suggest their participation in the spatial and temporal flow of the Orangerie ensemble. He established a perception of the canvases as oriented not only vertically – as they are plastered on the walls – but also, as if they themselves are foreshortened, tilting away at the precise angle of the receding plane of the water.[151] Installed according to his design, both rooms attempt to recapture the setting and experience of the Giverny water garden, but with one difference. Monet circled the pond in order to visually record and study it from vantage points along its periphery, whereas in the rooms of the Orangerie, the pond encircles the visitor, as though he or she levitates above it.[152] In presenting these murals in a panoramic configuration, the convergent perspective of traditional and "Impressionistic"

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[147] Golan, "Oceanic Sensations," 88.
[148] Clement Greenberg, "The Later Monet," in *Arts and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 38, 43. Also see Sagner-Düchting, "Monet's Late Work from the Vantage Point of Modernism," 28.
[149] Artistic and scholarly interest in the *Water Lilies* series was revived in 1952, when French surrealist André Masson's short essay "Monet le fondateur" asserts that the *Nymphéas* are Monet's crowning artistic achievement, dubbing to Orangerie's gallery the "Sistine Chapel of Impressionism." Masson had spent the interwar years in New York and had become acquainted with young American artists like Willem de Kooning and Jackson Pollock, who looked to Monet's late *Water Lilies* as a forerunner to their school of abstraction. As Robert L. Herbert explains, "By 'abstract,' writers and painters of the [1890s] meant to draw away from nature, in the sense of disdaining imitation in order to concentrate upon the distillation of essential shapes and movements. These distilled forms were superior to nature because they partook of *idea*, and represented the dominance of the artist over the mere stuff of nature." This dialectic would frame discussions of figurative abstraction and expression some sixty years later with American artists in New York. See Robert L. Herbert, *Neo-Impressionism* (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, 1968), 23; André Masson, "Monet le fondateur," *Verve* 7, nos. 27-28 (December 1952): 68; Romy Golan, "L'Éternel Décoratif: French Art in the 1950s," *Yale French Studies* 98 (2000): 104.
[150] Isaacson, *Observation and Reflection*, 46.
[151] Ibid., 47.
[152] Ibid.; Grau, *Virtual Art*, 142-143.

landscape painting was drastically inverted. While such images employed receding diagonal lines, all of which converge at the single vanishing point, Monet's *Water Lilies* at the Orangerie lack structural diagonals and do not have a vanishing point, and yet the subtle pictorial illusion of visual recession is preserved. Visitors are forced out of a secure inner distance by the multifaceted vantage points, colours and forms displayed in and by the *Water Lilies*. The heightened bodily awareness when viewing these artworks – stimulated by the gentle tension of the physical boundary of the paintings' flatness and the perceptual depth of their expanding waterscapes – blurs "near and far" conventions of traditional perspectival forms. Furthermore, it challenges how visual experience is constructed and highlights its inescapable connection to proprioception.[153] As with proto-installation and installation art, the murals entangle the material and the perceptual, the "real" and the "imaginary." They serve as an interface between the material environment of the gallery space and the perceptual field of the *Water Lilies* as afforded by the visitor's sensorium.

Monet could no longer fully trust the evidence offered by his failing eyes, but paradoxically, it was the visual world that he could no longer perfectly see that he remained committed to painting, as he had done throughout his entire artistic career.[154] Lilla Cabot Perry, an American artist who spent ten summers at Giverny between 1889 and 1909, recorded conversations with her neighbour and friend Monet, one in which he imparted advice about his own artistic approach:

> When you go out to paint, try to forget what objects you have before you, a tree, a house, a field or whatever. Merely think, here is a little square of blue, here an oblong of pink, hear a streak of yellow, and paint it just as it looks to you, the exact color and shape, until it gives your naïve impression of the scene before you.[155]

These remarks accord with Monet's longstanding goal to base his art wholly on his instinctive response to raw visual sensations. Turning his back on academic conventions, he advocated for unschooled art based on one's own impressions.[156] Monet's pictures are about *how* one sees as much as about *what* one sees.[157] But with his visual faculties compromised in his

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[153] Grau, *Virtual Art*, 142.
[154] Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 247.
[155] Lilla Cabot Perry, "Reminiscences of Claude Monet from 1889 to 1909," *The American Magazine of Art* 18, no. 3 (March 1927): 120.
[156] Charles F. Stuckey, "Monet's Art and the Act of Vision," in *Aspects of Monet: A Symposium on the Artist's Life and Times*, eds. John Rewald & Frances Weitzenhoffer (New York: Harry N. Abrams Publishers, Inc., 1984), 108, 111-112.
[157] In 1894, Paul Cézanne visited Monet at his Giverny studio. At the time, Monet owned several paintings by his contemporary. Much of Cézanne's oeuvre was what Merleau-Ponty calls a "lived perspective" that registers how the

elderly age, Monet shifted slightly from painting *en plein air* (directly from nature) and retreated into his studio, working from *ébauches* – sketched studies – to conjure his monumental *Water Lilies*.[158] He had previously wished to discard memory and paint directly from pure visual stimuli, but in his later years began to rely on his memories and experiences of his water garden.[159] In the Orangerie's *Nymphéas*, he represented the experience of looking at and strolling around the pond, through "recalled" sensations mimicked in the display practice of the entire ensemble. His point of departure was no longer an imitation of nature but a perception of colour arrangements.[160]

Although Monet painted over sixty smaller *Water Lilies* studies over the subsequent decades, he commenced his *grandes décorations* program in 1914 within a vast studio built specifically to hold panels of immense size and scale. Photographs taken by Monet's dealer, Paul Durand-Ruel, and his son Joseph, in November of 1917 document the artist's work during the previous three years (figs. 50-53). In the photographs, twelve large panels are visible, approximately 2 metres high and 4.25 metres long, mounted onto casters, upon which Monet worked simultaneously.[161] These rolling easels made it possible for Monet to shift the position of paintings in relation to one another before deciding which were to adjoin each other in an exhibition locale.[162] The artist did not conceive these artworks as independent canvases, but as complementary views of his pond, as part of a unified decorative ensemble.[163] Monet intended these panels to occupy some form of curving space, and the enveloping manner in which he wished to display these artworks echoes the ambient method in which he painted them. The studio and gallery environments in which Monet's *Water Lilies* program were created and received

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experience of objects unfolds for the perceiving subject. In the case of Cézanne's artistic practice, "lived perspective" materializes in paint and the visual representation of the relation between *what* one sees and *how* one sees it. Such a notion aims to explain why many of Cézanne's paintings – like the Courtauld's watery landscape *Le Lac d'Annecy* (fig. 49) – raise conscious awareness of the flatness of the shapes and facets of colour on the canvas, but in relation to one another, create a sense of depth and perspectival space. This relation is recognizable in Monet's monumental *Water Lilies* canvases, including those at the Orangerie. The revived interest in Monet's panels by the artists of abstraction paved the way for discussions as to how to later Monet's style was conceivably mediated, in part, by Cézanne's painterly practice. See Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Cézanne's Doubt," in *The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting*, ed. Galen A. Johnson, trans. Michael B. Smith (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 64-65; Paul Smith, "Cézanne's 'Primitive' Perspective, or the 'View from Everywhere'," *The Art Bulletin*, 95, no. 1 (March 2013): 103; Ernst Beyeler, "Forward," in *Claude Monet… up to Digital Impressionism*, ed. Delia Ciuha et al., trans. Paul Aston & Christopher Jenkin-Jones (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 2002), 10.

[158] Düchting, "On Monet's Painting Technique in Late Works," 86.

[159] Isaacson, "Constable, Duranty, Mallarmé, Impressionism, Plein Air, and Forgetting," 436-437.

[160] Sagner-Düchting, "Monet's Late Work from the Vantage Point of Modernism," 26.

[161] Tucker, *Claude Monet*, 208-209.

[162] Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 251.

[163] Tucker, *Claude Monet*, 214.

respectively are both customized architectural settings, with blind walls and fenestrated ceilings.[164] It is interesting that Monet's place of exposition for these panels ultimately mimics his place of painterly production.

All the murals in the *Nymphéas* gallery rooms are two metres in height and installed approximately 60 centimetres off the floor.[165] Their low placement in relation to the visitor's body, coupled with the fact that the murals surpass most people in height, heightens the sensation of immersion, whereby the visitor feels he or she may tumble in the vast imagery and plunge into the water garden's iridescent pond (fig. 54). Taking in all parts of the monumental cycle proves difficult even from a distanced viewpoint. This entices the visitor to register the different sections of the murals in succession, as if paying homage to the signature effect of Monet's series of paintings of the Cathedral of Rouen, Wheat Stacks, and Saint-Lazare Station.[166] Monet told a visitor to his *Wheat Stacks* exhibition on May 4, 1891, that the paintings "only acquire their full value by the comparison and the succession of the whole series," suggesting that the artist meant these artworks to be viewed together to observe a gradient of colours and shades that convey the changing times of day.[167] While these easel paintings were dispersed and the series fragmented, the Orangerie's *Water Lilies* remained intact.

Working in series was predicated upon a conscious decision to depict a single motif or closely related motifs, and to employ a limited number of vantage points and formats. The holistic conception of the various series produced always took top priority for Monet, who oftentimes painted the pictures next to each other in his studio in order to amplify their interaction. In a subtle manner, the reflections on water also connote a repetition of the same motif with variations of form and colour.[168] But how do these variations function in the case of the Orangerie's *Water Lilies*, where their presentation mimics the mode of their production? In his book *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, German art theorist Rudolf Arnheim states: "All gradients have the power to create depth, and gradients of brightness are among the most efficient.

[164] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 22; Tucker, *Claude Monet*, 198.
[164] Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 237.
[165] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p.].
[166] Düchting, "On Monet's Painting Technique in Late Works," 86.
[167] House, *Monet*, 213.
[168] Sagner-Düchting, "Monet's Late Work from the Vantage Point of Modernism," 29.

This is true for spatial settings, such as interiors and landscapes, but also for single objects."[169] The Orangerie's *Water Lilies* gallery qualifies on all these criteria, as an interior space depicting a 360˚ waterscape, as well as a display of large murals. The gallery murals are physically interlinked by the gallery space they share, both geometrically through their shared height and position on the gallery walls, and by specific colour relationships. These colour relations, the "gradient of brightness" Arnheim characterizes, materialize in the specific arrangement of the *Nymphéas* cycle in both rooms of the Orangerie gallery. When the murals' architectural interaction with one another is observed, the resulting effect is a "spectral belt of colour value": an optical gradient of relative brightness and darkness of colour that allows the visitor's gaze to flow around the unified artwork, stimulating bodily movement and his or her sense of immersion within Monet's art environment.[170]

In the first room of the gallery, the colour values at the ends of the murals enable the visitor's eyes to drift along from one painting to the next without any perceptual interruption. Because of the murals' proximity to one another through their spatial configuration, their ends abut one another and permit the visitor's attention to flow from mural to mural without any effort or damage to their visual experience. For example, along the northern wall of the first room, *Les Nuages*' left and right registers are distinctively darker (with deep greens and violets) than the center register (with lighter blues and pinks). These darker ends of *Les Nuages* adjoin the right side of *Soleil couchant* to the west and the left side of *Reflets verts* to the east, both of which are dominated by dark, deep shades of green, blue and violet. The same is apparent in the second room of the gallery. Along the eastern wall, *Deux saules* possesses a principal colour schema of light pinks, blues, and shades of lilac, while on the opposing, western side, *Reflets d'arbres* is enriched with deep blues and purples. The murals along the northern and southern walls of this room act of colour value intermediaries, with their lighter shades of blues and pinks in the watery reflections juxtaposed with the darker greens, ochres, and reds of the willow tree's bark. This phenomenon demonstrates the existence of a continuous, spectral belt of colour value that compels the visitor's gaze around the rooms continuously without a definitive beginning or ending spot (fig. 55). This

[169] Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye – The New Version* (Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), 311.
[170] Refer to page 33, footnote 108 to recall the definition of colour value as described in De Grandis, *Theory and Use of Color*, 32-41.

sensation prompts a strong experience of liquescent, physical movement and perceptual disorientation, the apex of the gallery's strategies of immersion.

In an article published in 1909 by the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, Roger Marx writes that in the *Water Lilies* series, Monet "finds his pleasure in the enjoyment experienced, throughout the day, in the viewing of a single site."[171] When read in the context of the Orangerie, this statement encapsulates the fused temporal and spatial parameters of the *Nymphéas* gallery experience. The seriality of the murals offers the visitor a showcase of sequential temporality. It acts on an altered perception of time, because when viewing the Orangerie murals together, the visitor receives the sense that different moments in time (such as morning, noon, dusk, and back to morning) merge into a simultaneous continuum, which – thanks to a negation of linear consecutiveness through the gallery's architectural display practice – makes the experience of time graspable in terms of the experience of space.[172] In the panorama rotunda, and in proto-installation art such as this gallery at the Orangerie, the art object and the architecture it inhabits mesh into one inseparable entity. For the visitor, more is revealed about the nature of perception than about the elements perceived, surrounded by interior walls, and yet perceive exterior tranquility.

Chapter Three

Site-Specific Enhancements for the *Nymphéas* Gallery

Aside from the praise from select groups of artists and critics, the *Water Lilies* cycle was met with disinterest during the interwar years. Lefèvre's floorplans for Monet's gallery failed to show that these rooms were the posterior chambers of the Orangerie building, with a front space of equal length that housed temporary exhibitions, and without any indication of the *Water Lilies* exhibited deeper within, much to Clemenceau's chagrin.[173] Waning public interest and the consequential shortage of funds led to curatorial neglect. Water leakage rotted the vellum canopy

[171] Roger Marx, "Les «Nymphéas» de M. Claude Monet," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 4, no. 1 (June 1909): 523. Bibliothèque nationale de France. "M. Claude Monet n'a souci que de se satisfaire; il dépense sa peine et trouve son plaisir à différencier les jouissances éprouvées, le long du jour, au regard d'un même site." Translated in Steven Z. Levine, "Monet, Lumière, and Cinematic Time," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 36, no. 4 (Summer 1978): 446-447.
[172] Sagner-Düchting, "Monet's Late Work from the Vantage Point of Modernism," 29.
[173] Golan, "Oceanic Sensations," 86.

and Allied bombing during the Liberation of Paris in 1944 almost irreversibly damaged some of the murals (fig. 56).[174] Not until 1952, a quarter of a century after its installation (and interestingly around the same time as Masson's publication in praise of Monet's *Water Lilies* series),[175] did the French government begin to restore to gallery. Bits of wartime shrapnel, still embedded in the paint, were removed, and in 1978 the murals were presented to the public completely cleaned and restored.[176] However, in 1958, Jean Walter, the widow of French art dealer Paul Guillaume, donated an extensive assortment of modern artworks to the Musée de l'Orangerie. Containing paintings by Paul Cézanne and Pierre-Auguste Renoir to name a few, the acquisition of the Walter-Guillaume collection led to a massive restructuration of the museum's layout, much to the detriment of Monet's donation. Architects Olivier Lahalle and Raymond Subes were commissioned in 1960 to built exhibition halls for the art the museum had received.[177] A second floor was constructed atop the *Nymphéas* gallery, cutting off its source of natural light. The vellum canopy was replaced by a surface of checkered-paned mirrors and artificial lighting was installed (fig. 57). Moreover, to make way for an opulent bifurcated staircase to connect the ground floor to the collection, the *Water Lilies* gallery's vestibule was demolished (fig. 58). The entranceway to see the *Water Lilies* cycle became so small compared to the massive stairwell that crowned it that visitors oftentimes passed it by without a second glance.[178] When the Walter-Guillaume collection was unveiled to the Parisian public in 1965, the architectural dominance of the new space had almost pushed the *Nymphéas* gallery into complete obscurity.

This changed in 2000, when the Musée de l'Orangerie closed it doors to the public for six years in order to undergo a radical restructuration, all in efforts to both recapture Monet's intended ambiance for the cycle, and also push the *Water Lilies* gallery space closer to contemporary practices of some kinds of installation art. One sees evidence for this push towards installation art in a public press report released by the Direction des musées de France on the reopening of Orangerie on May 17, 2006 (the seventy-ninth anniversary of the *Water Lilies* gallery's

[174] Hoog, *Musée de l'Orangerie*, 54.
[175] Masson, "Monet le fondateur," 68.
[176] Temkin & Lawrence, *Claude Monet*, 20.
[177] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p].
[178] Golan, "Oceanic Sensations," 86.

inauguration), which describes at great length the modifications that the museum underwent.[179] Under the joint delegation of head architect Olivier Brochet and Orangerie curator Pierre Georgel, the large staircase and second floor were torn down, while a new exhibition space was built beneath the museum to house the Walter-Guillaume collection (fig. 59).[180] Once the second floor was cleared and removed, inverted T-shaped beams were installed to support the weight of the glass ceiling, which had been upheld by the walls of the second-floor exhibition hall between 1965 and 2000.[181] The mirror panes were removed from the *Nymphéas* gallery's ceiling and the concrete dismantled, exposing the murals to natural daylight after forty-one years. A vellum canopy was spread again over the gallery, only this time an opened, conic structure was built atop it, the interior surface of which is clad in reflective panels (figs. 60-62).[182] The result was a light-catching chamber between the vellum canopy and the double-paned skylight that held the natural daylight and would bathe the gallery's rooms in a soft albeit dense glow. Finally, the vestibule was rebuilt to serve its transitory function as discussed earlier, and a large, stone façade was erected to mark the entrance into the *Water Lilies* gallery, with a bridge to the passageway that hangs over the stairwell leading to the museum's subterranean art collection (figs. 63-65).[183]

This six-year project sought to re-establish and improve the conditions through which Monet and his architectural partner wanted the *Water Lilies* gallery to be experienced. The museum's reinstatement of the original features of the space, from the vestibule to the natural lighting, prioritized the display of these monumental murals as an equal partner to the paintings themselves, in order to achieve the ambiance Monet had intended for the gallery's visitors. These efforts to restructure and restore the *Water Lilies* gallery space to how it had been originally conceived in the 1920s, re-equipped with a transitory vestibule, skylights and vellum-canopied ceilings, demonstrates the museum's return to the immersive tactics that made the gallery an early form of installation art.

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[179] While Brochet was the leaser of the entire Orangerie project, Michel Goutal was Chief Architect for the restoration of the *Water Lilies* gallery. See Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Ministère de la culture et des communications, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Réouverture au public le mercredi 17 mai, 2006 (Dossier de presse)*, 2006, 12. http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/actualites/dossiers-presse/orangerie/DP_Orangerie.pdf

[180] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p].

[181] Donnedieu de Vabres, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Réouverture au public le mercredi 17 mai, 2006 (Dossier de presse)*, 12.

[182] Ibid.

[183] Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie*, [n.p].

The Display of *Water Lilies* beyond Paris

As public enthusiasm for Monet's monumental *Water Lilies* cycle increased in the mid-1950s, wealthy American art collectors travelled to Giverny to purchase the other enormous panels that had remained in Monet's studio, hitherto unsold and unseen for almost thirty years.[184] These panels – with similar compositional arrangements and painterly techniques as the Orangerie cycle – had been fashioned by Monet as prospective contributors to the Parisian gallery, but for whatever reason were rejected for the final installment. Ultimately, the *Nymphéas* gallery became a site of artistic pilgrimage, and as this thesis argues, museum curators sought to emulate the immersive tactics of the Musée de l'Orangerie with the auxiliary panels they purchased from the late artist's estate.

The first and most well documented acquisition is the *Water Lilies* triptych displayed in the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in New York. In 1955, Alfred H. Barr Jr. – MoMA's Director of Museum Collections and founding director – had a panel purchased directly from Monet's son, Michel.[185] A massive fire just three years later would tragically destroy this panel, as it was one of the few artworks that was too large and heavy to move.[186] As a silver lining, Barr had bought a second *Water Lilies* work shortly after the fire, a monumental triptych measuring two metres in height and each of the three panels over four metres in length (fig. 66). After months of major conservation efforts, the *Water Lilies* triptych was presented to New York's art community in 1960.[187] Clouds painted in pink, orange and shades of mauve fill its central panel; the amorphous forms are punctuated by small blossoms on the surface of the water, itself a medley a turquoise and aquatic green.[188] In the two adjoining side panels the palette shifts to a darker scheme of deep blues and greens, and violets denoting the shaded water, scribbles of green lily pads and dollops of flora.

Attached to linear wooden braces from which the canvases were too fragile to unbind, the display of the triptych's panels could never hope to mimic the curvature of the Orangerie's elliptical walls. However, a photograph from the MoMA's inauguration of the *Water Lilies* triptych

[184] Leja, "The Monet Revivial and New York School Abstraction," 100.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Temkin & Lawrence, *Claude Monet*, 32.
[187] Ibid. MoMA also acquired two other *Water Lilies* panels to be showcased in the same room as the triptych.
[188] Ibid., 38.

shows that the side panels were inclined upon a trapezoidal-shaped wall. The angles between both side panels and the central panel are the same, and this spatial configuration, although altered on occasion, is used even today (figs. 67-68). Although not a direct tribute to the Orangerie, the angled walls move the triptych's side panels forward, off the central panel's picture plane and into the gallery space, shared with the visitor. This effect brings textured, lateral surfaces closer into the visitor's perceptual space and stimulates a sense of subtle immersion (although nowhere near the level of the Orangerie gallery). In both 1960 and the present, the dimensions of the triptych and the gallery space that houses it complement one another and dwarf the visitor, leaving him or her with a cozy, nestled sensation, heightening his or her sense of bodily awareness. Although not identical to the Orangerie, the MoMA triptych pays tribute to Monet's gallery, as its architecture was customized to work with the triptych to convey meaning through proprioceptive experience.

The MoMA triptych's display tactic gained significant traction with other museums that house monumental *Water Lilies* panels. First in 1978 at the Saint Louis Art Museum and then in August of 2011, the three separated panels of the *Agapanthus* triptych, each residing in different museums across the American Midwest, were temporarily reunited at the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in Kansas City, Missouri.[189] It was a rare instance to witness another monumental artwork brought together in the manner Monet had painted them and intended them to be experienced.[190] In both exhibitions, photographic documentation recorded the reassembled triptych, and in both instances, the *Agapanthus* triptych was presented in the exact same manner as the MoMA triptych, with inclined side panels on a makeshift wall (figs. 69-70). In rooms that could easily display the panels side-by-side, parallel against a wall, the museum curators in both instances elected to present the triptych in trapezoidal angularity. Motivations can only be speculative, yet the comparisons are uncanny.

Finally, another permanent *Water Lilies* exhibition can be found off the coast of the city of Okayama on the island of Naoshima in the Inland Sea of Japan. The island hosts a subterranean art institution called the ChiChu Art Museum (fig. 71). Designed by renowned Japanese architect

[189] The Nelson-Atkins museum of art owns the right panel, while the centre and left panels are owned by the Saint Louis Museum of Art and the Cleveland Museum of Art respectively. In 1978 the reassembled Agapanthus triptych also traveled to New York, where it was also on temporary display. See Daniel Wildenstein, "Monet's Giverny," in *Monet's Years at Giverny: Beyond Impressionism* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1978), 15-40.
[190] Simon Kelly, "Monet's Water Lilies: The *Agapanthus* Triptych," in *Monet's Water Lilies: The* Agapanthus *Triptych* (Saint Louis: The Saint Louis Art Museum, 2011), 44-46.

Tadao Ando in collaboration with the museum director Yuji Akimoto, the museum houses largescale installations of only three artists, whose work share a focus on the interplay of light and space and the relationship between the body and nature: James Turrell, Walter de Maria, and Claude Monet. Their artworks reside within affixed, permanent spatial arrangements and architectural settings; Monet's work is situated within a singular, cubic room in which five *Water Lilies* paintings are displayed, including a large diptych along the wall opposite the entrance (figs. 72-73). The placement of Monet's artworks alongside those of two contemporary installation artists demonstrates the Japanese art community's admiration for Monet's later oeuvre.[191] This also places Monet's artworks within an early history of installation art, as critical attention was paid by the museum architects and designers to the architectural environment in which the ChiChu's *Water Lilies* paintings would exist. In his book chronicling Ando's architectural projects, Masao Furuyama writes about the ChiChu Art Museum and the *Water Lilies* collection's place within it:

> In the Monet room, plastered walls with rounded corners and a floor paved with marble create the impression that we are encountering the water lilies of Monet somewhere in [outdoor] space. In other art museums, artworks are things to be looked at; in this museum, however, artworks are things to be experienced with our entire bodies. Naturally, it would not be possible to experience the works in this way without the help of the architectural space […] using an underground environment. We are cut off from the outside world; our perceptions are made [palpable], we are able to concentrate solely on […] the artworks. This is a bold concept.[192]

Much like the "bold concept" of the Orangerie gallery, the ChiChu Art Museum's display of *Water Lilies* paintings is as meaningful as the paintings themselves. Furuyama emphasizes the importance of the visitor's perception and experience of these artworks, seeing it as directly linked to the custom-designed architectural space. He describes the ChiChu's Monet room as an art environment in which visitors may physically enter, linking its meaning to bodily experience in the same way as installation art.

The ChiChu *Water Lilies* installation brings these immersive tactics to another level, figuratively and literally, as it is located deep beneath the ground. The lacquered, white cubic room

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[191] Scholars have argued about the influence of Japanese screen painting in Monet's Water Lilies series. The French painter had expressed admiration for Japanese visual culture and owned a small collection of ukiyo-e prints. These East Asian artforms emphasized colour and surface over linear perspective, and comparisons have been made to the *Water Lilies* to advocate their influence on Monet practice. See Akiko Mabuchi, "Monet and Japanese Screen Painting," in *Monet & Japan*, ed. Pauline Green (Canberra: National Gallery of Australia, 2001), 186-194.
[192] Masao Furayama, *Ando: The Geometry of Human Space* (Köln, Taschen, 2006), 83.

has a ceiling with glass panels that let sunlight seep through a screen like the vellum canopy at the Orangerie. What is more, the floor is made of over 700 000 hand-carved, two-centimetre marble cubes, polished to possess the same sheen and smoothness as river stones (fig. 74).[193] Interestingly, visitors that wish to enter the room must do so barefoot (fig. 75).[194] If such is the case, with the cool marble floor beneath his or her feet, the gallery plays on the visitor's sense of touch as much as sight. This instills a sense of not only bodily immersion, given the knowledge that the visitor stands in a bunker beneath the ground, but also of submersion. As Monet told Marx with respect to his gallery in Paris, he wanted to create a place where one could experience "the asylum of peaceful meditation within a flowered aquarium."[195] Whether the ChiChu's architect and curator knew of this statement or not, they may have unconsciously taken it to heart during the Monet room's construction.

Closing Remarks

The Orangerie's *Water Lilies* cycle cannot be appreciated to its full capacity without ample consideration of the ambient architectural setting that contains it. It is a monumental work of art, one in which its separate members lose their and individuality and independence, perceptually interacting through their phenomenology of display, and working together in a large continuum of shapes and colours.[196] This thesis has argued that the *Water Lilies* gallery at the Musée de l'Orangerie can be considered a precursor to installation art. It historically situated the enveloping architectural strategies of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* by comparing it to panorama rotundas of nineteenth-century Paris; it interpreted the Orangerie *Water Lilies* gallery through an investigation of its emphasis on experience through the merger of the murals and their tailored display; and it analyzed the renovation of the *Water Lilies* gallery to argue for its status as a unique environment with ties to the sensorial strategies of installation art.

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[193] Philip Jodidio, *Tadao Ando at Naoshima: Art, Architecture, Nature* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2009), 141.
[194] Ibid. 32.
[195] Marx, "Les «Nymphéas» de M. Claude Monet," 529. "Un moment la tentation m'est venue d'employer à la décoration d'un salon ce thème de nymphéas […] et, à qui l'eût habitée, cette pièce aurait offert l'asile d'une méditation paisible au centre d'un aquarium fleuri."
[196] Seiberling, *Monet's Series*, 258.

As museums across the globe have sought to emulate the immersive tactics of Monet's gallery at the Orangerie, with critical attention paid to the display of these enormous murals as much as to the murals themselves, the *Water Lilies* panels in other museums also merit a phenomenological consideration as they too are art environments meant to be entered and sensed, rather than only beheld and appreciated for the visual delights. Undoubtedly, the Musée de l'Orangerie and other largescale *Nymphéas* installations engage sight, touch, and proprioception, connecting them through their shared emphasis on experience. Installation art was not recognized as an distinct artistic genre until decades after Monet installed his canvases at the Orangerie. However, the relationship between his massive paintings and their unique display invites the same questions about the perception of space, time, and the importance of experience in art reception, as the three-dimensional artworks twenty-first century visitors encounter in the contemporary age.

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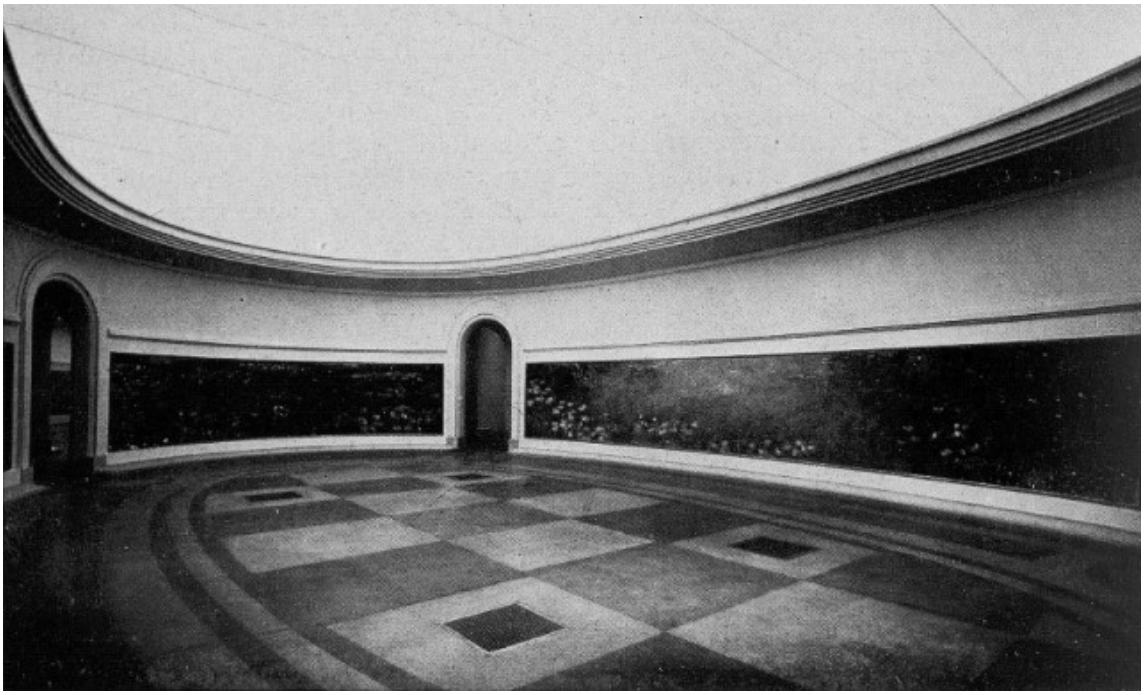

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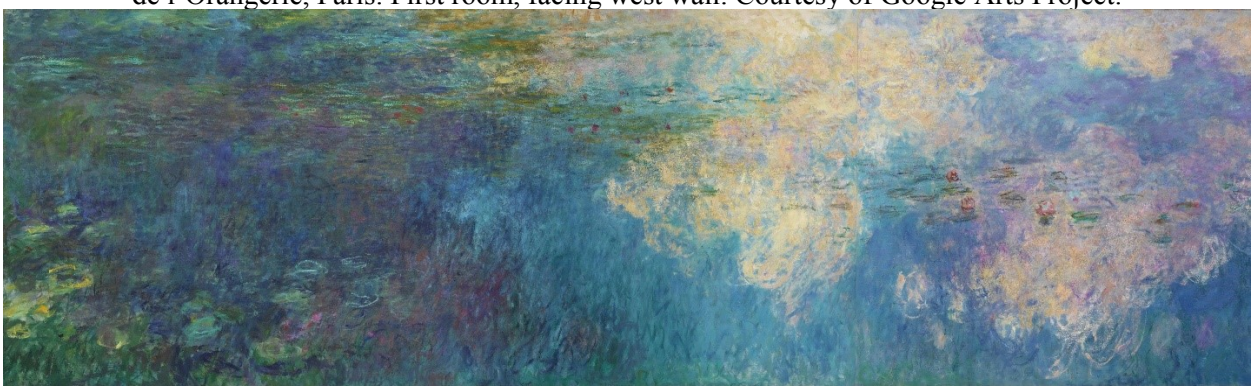

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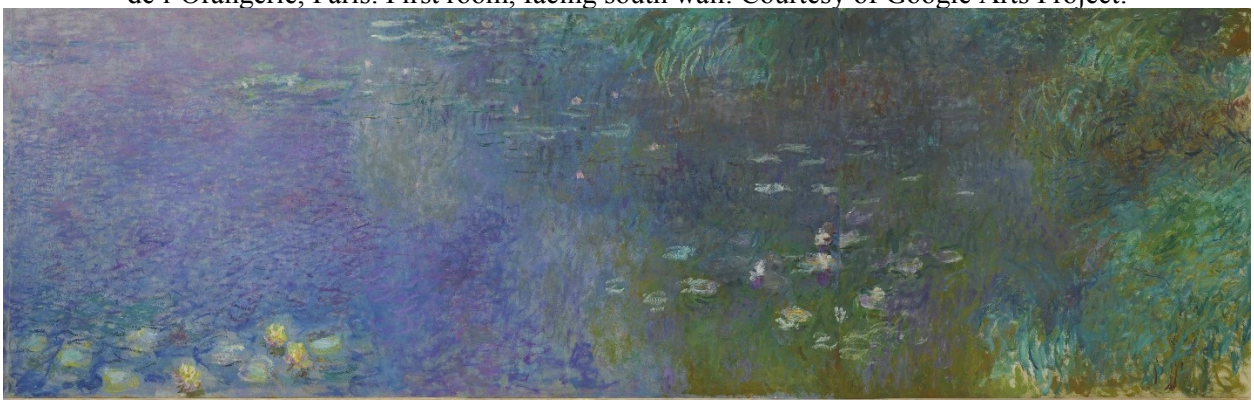

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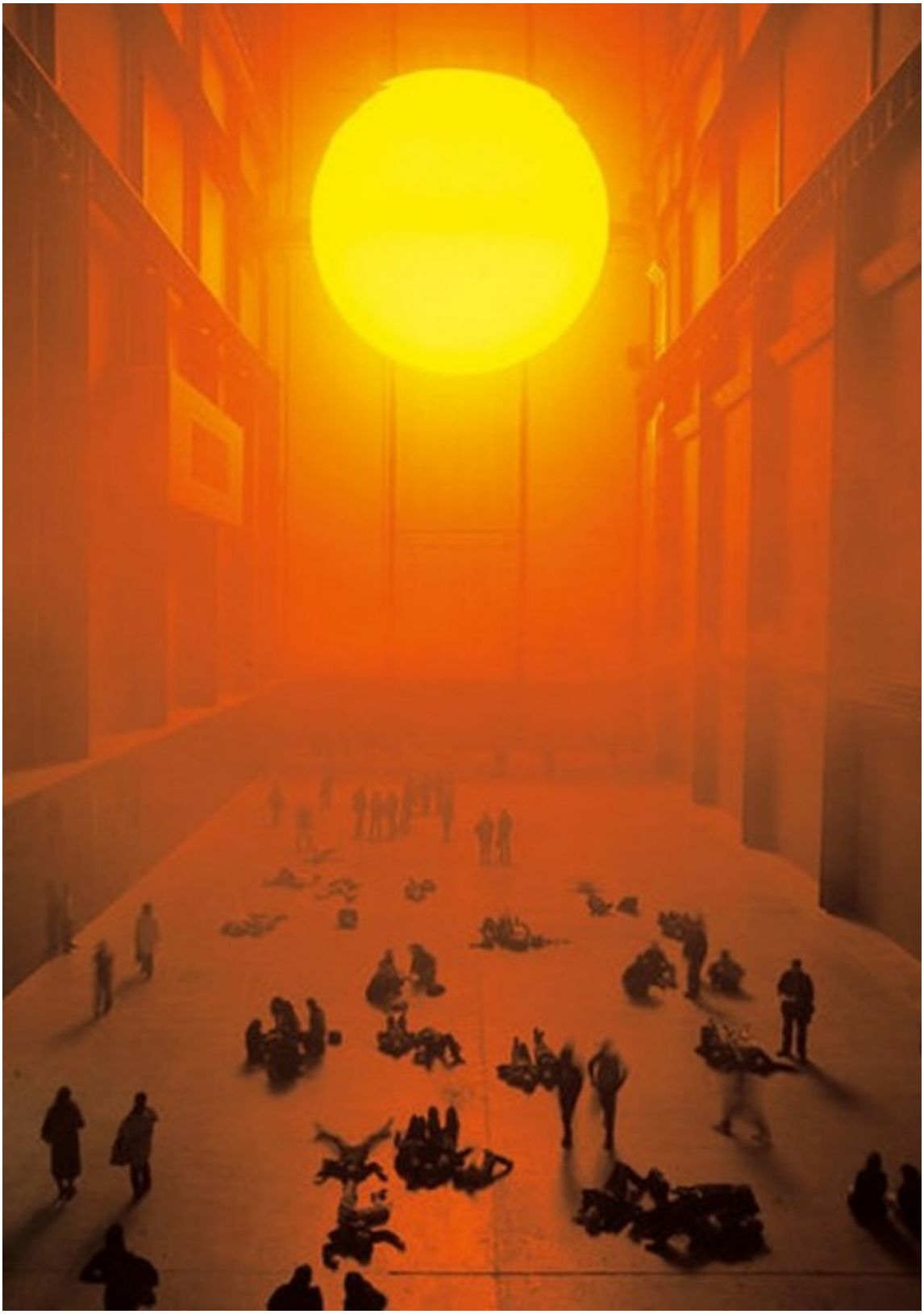

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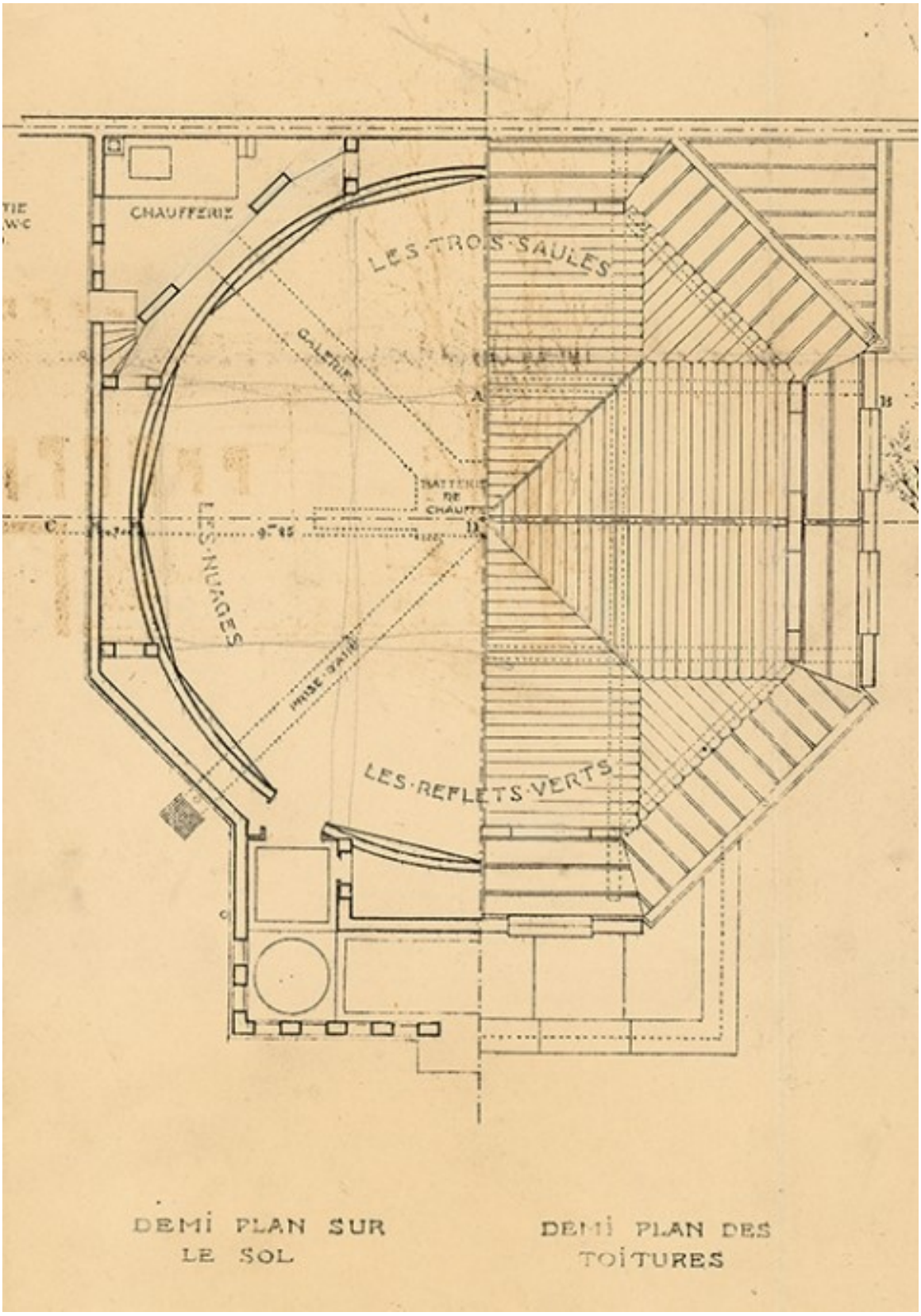

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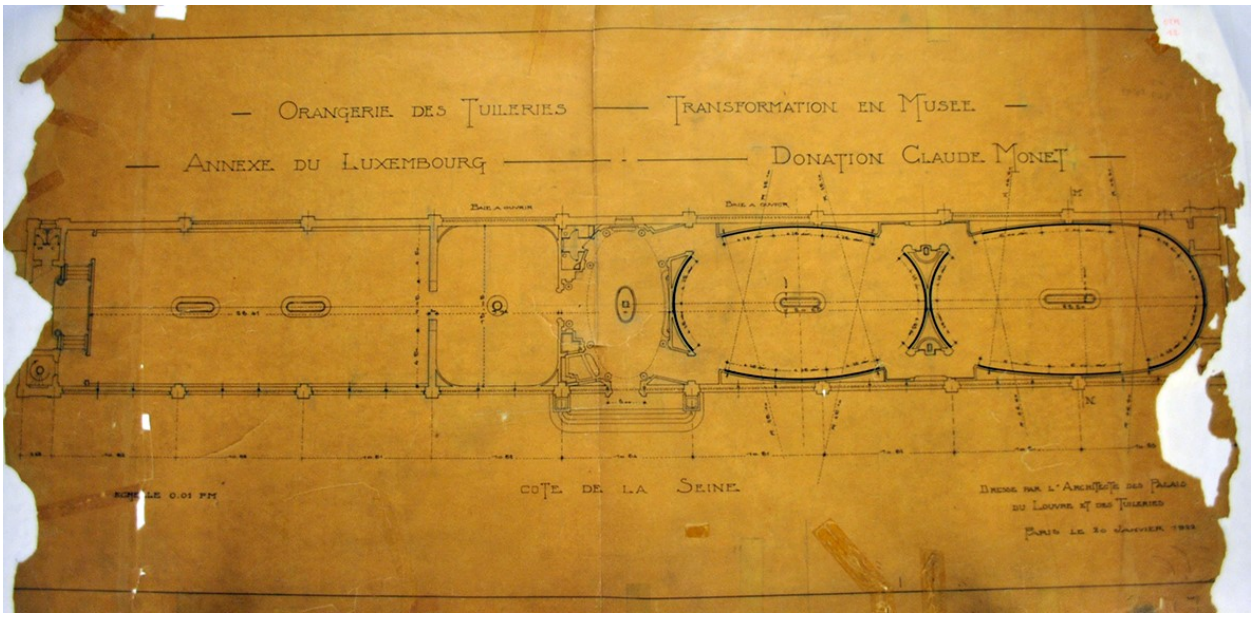

Figure 19. Camille Lefèvre, *Nymphéas* gallery floorplan, January 20, 1922, © Archives des musées nationaux, Paris [CP 64AJ 593].

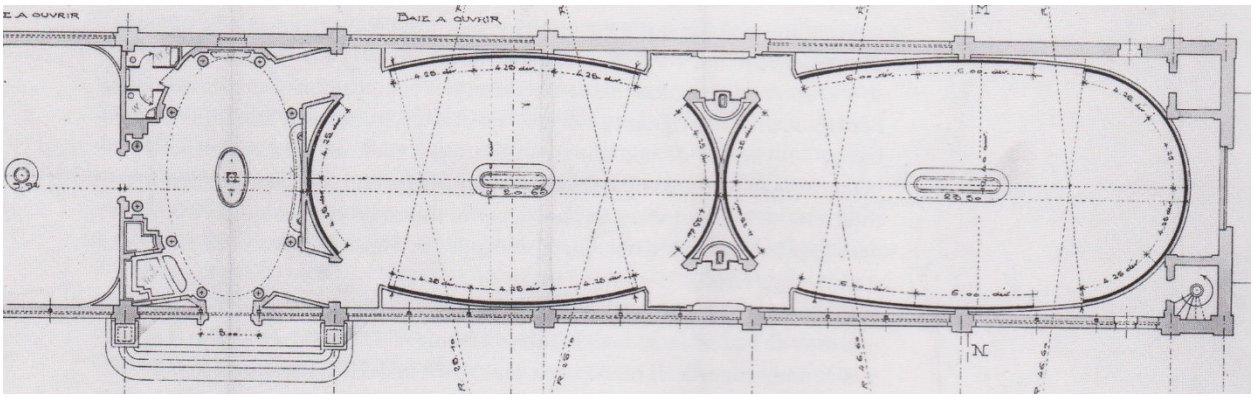

Figure 20. Camille Lefèvre, *Nymphéas* gallery floorplan, January 20, 1922, © Archives du Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris.

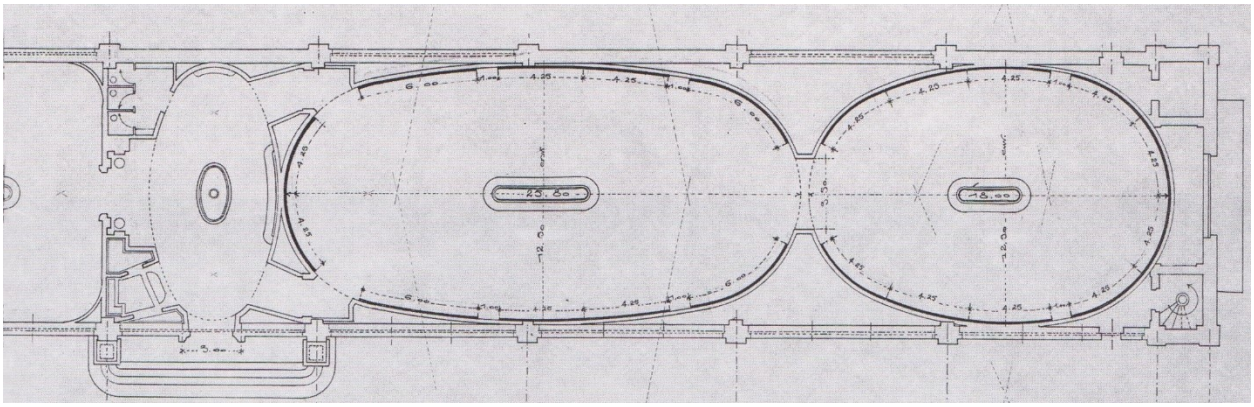

Figure 21. Camille Lefèvre, *Nymphéas* gallery floorplan, March 7, 1922. Michel Hoog, © Archives du Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris.

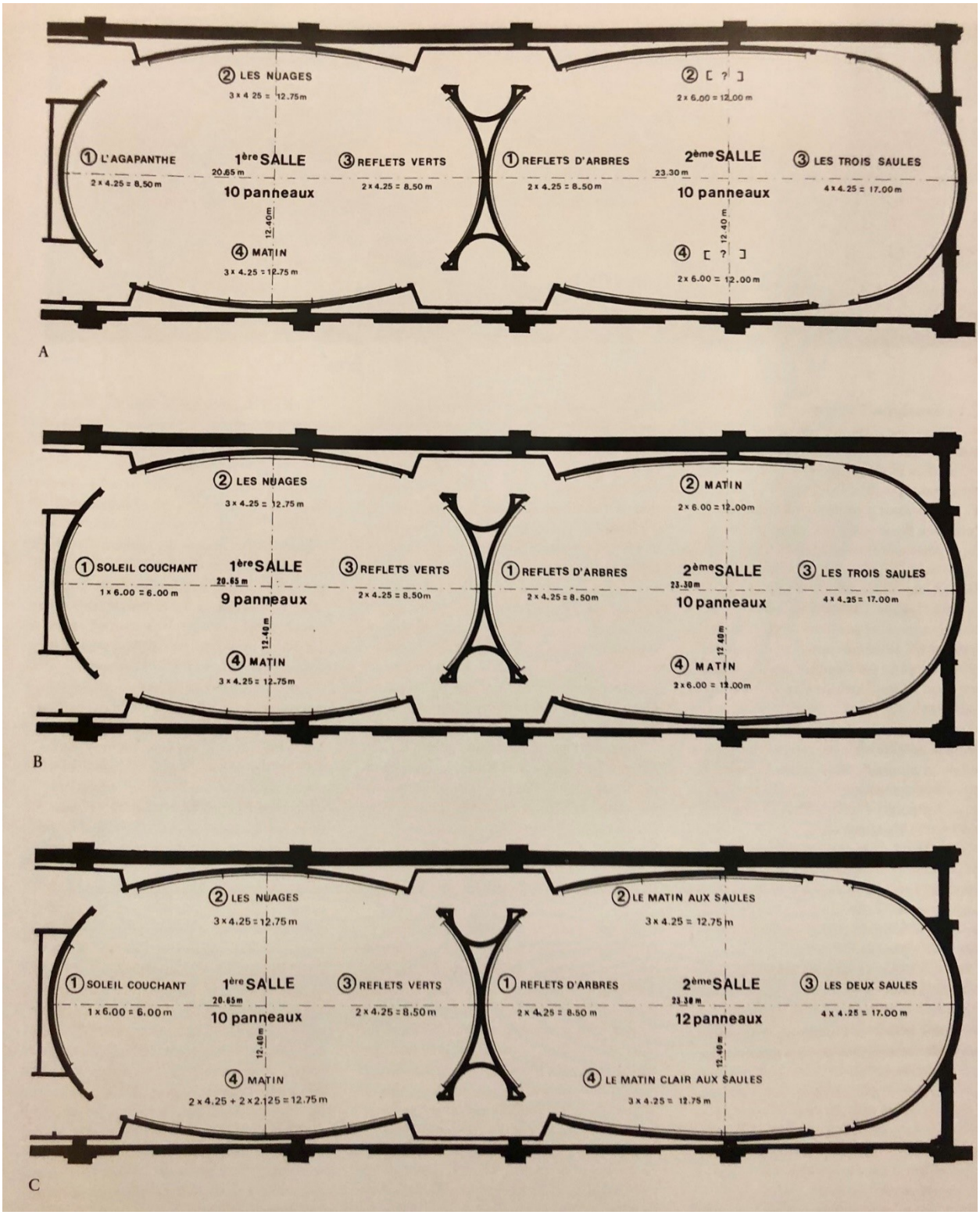

Figure 22. Camille Lefèvre, *Nymphéas* gallery floorplan with arrangement of *Water Lilies* murals. Upper plan: January 20, 1922, Middle plan: April 12, 1922, Lower plan: May 17, 1927. Daniel Wildenstein, *Monet, or the Triumph of Impressionism: Catalogue Raisonné – Volume IV* (Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag, 1996), p. 970.

Figure 23. Ville dei Misteri (Villa of the Mysteries), Room 5, c. 60 BCE, © Soprintendenza Archeologia di Roma.

Figure 24. Ville dei Misteri (Villa of the Mysteries), Room 16, c. 60 BCE. Computer reconstruction showing state of wall paintings with restored ceiling, couches and lighting conditions. UCLA Cultural VR Lab © Regents of the University of California, 1999; all rights reserved.

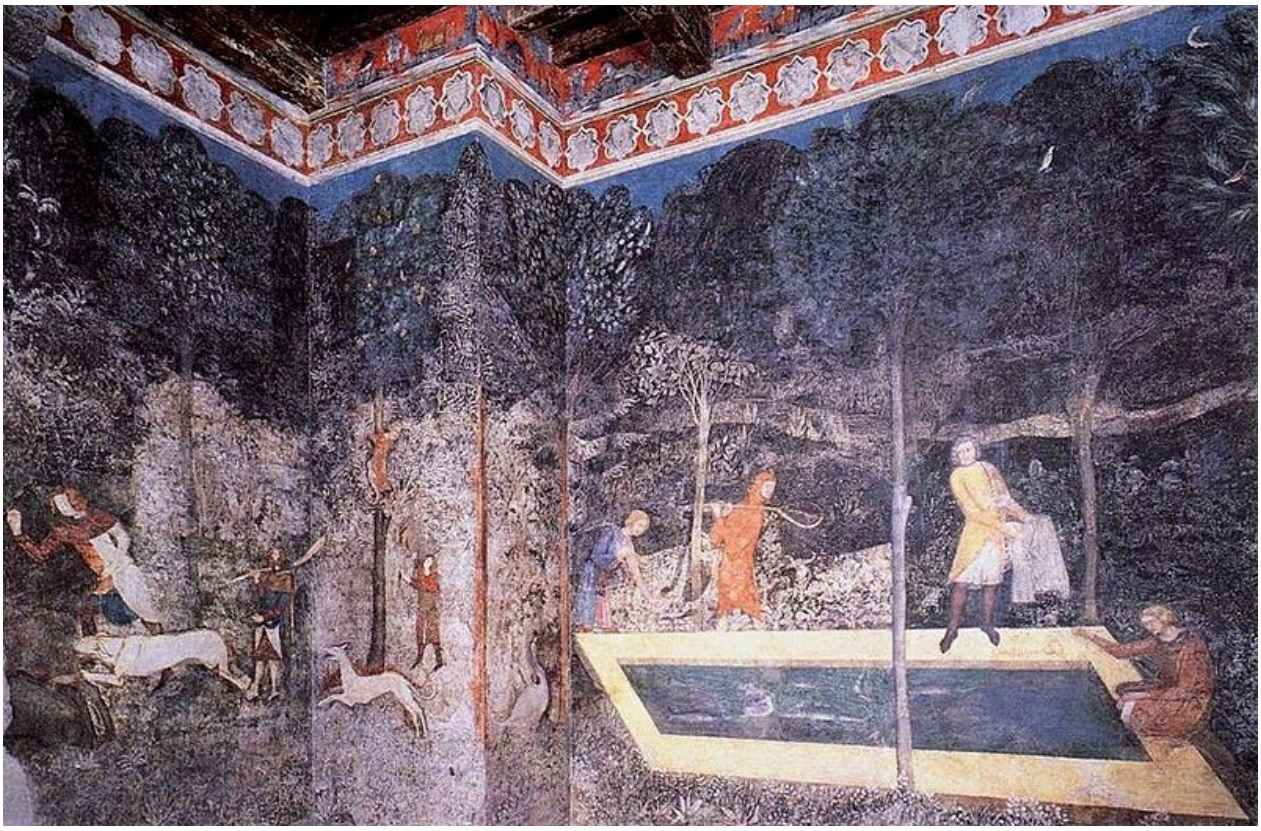

Figure 25. Matteo Giovanetti, *Chambre du Cerf (Chamber of the Stag)*, 1343, fresco, Tour de la Garde-Robe, Papal palace at Avignon, view of the north wall. Photograph courtesy of the Google Arts Project.

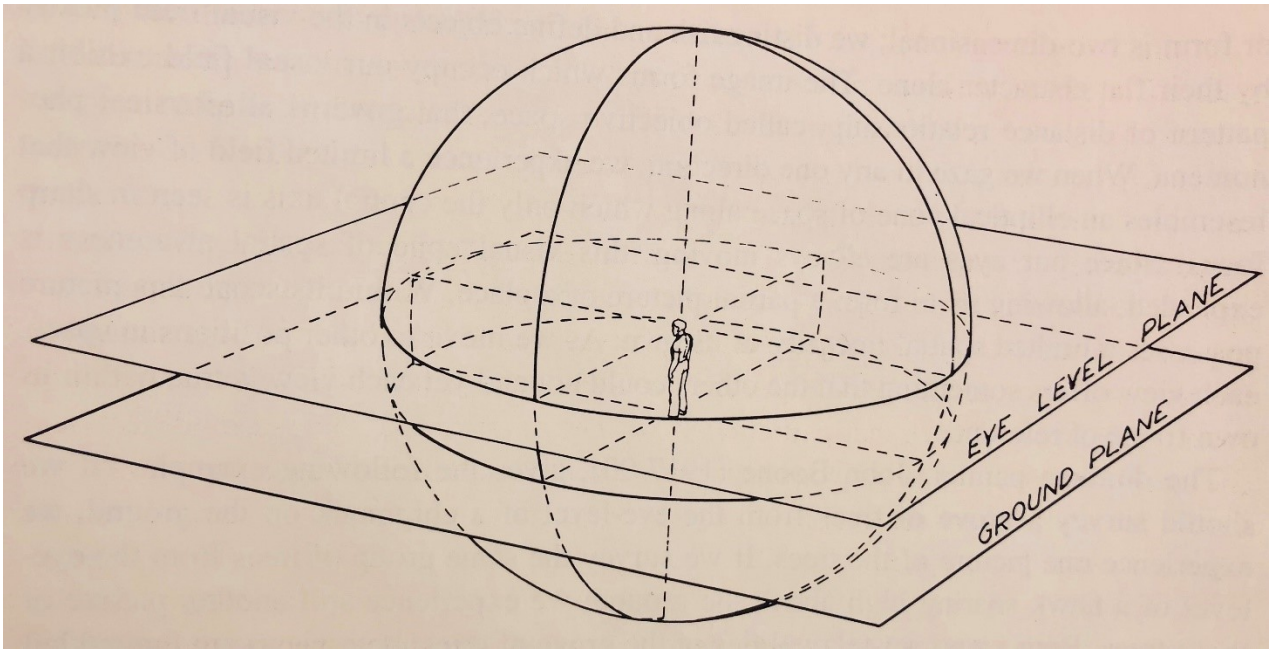

Figure 26. Spherical Field of Vision. Drawing by John Boone. Karen Wonders, *Illusions of Wilderness in Museums of Natural History,* p. 207.

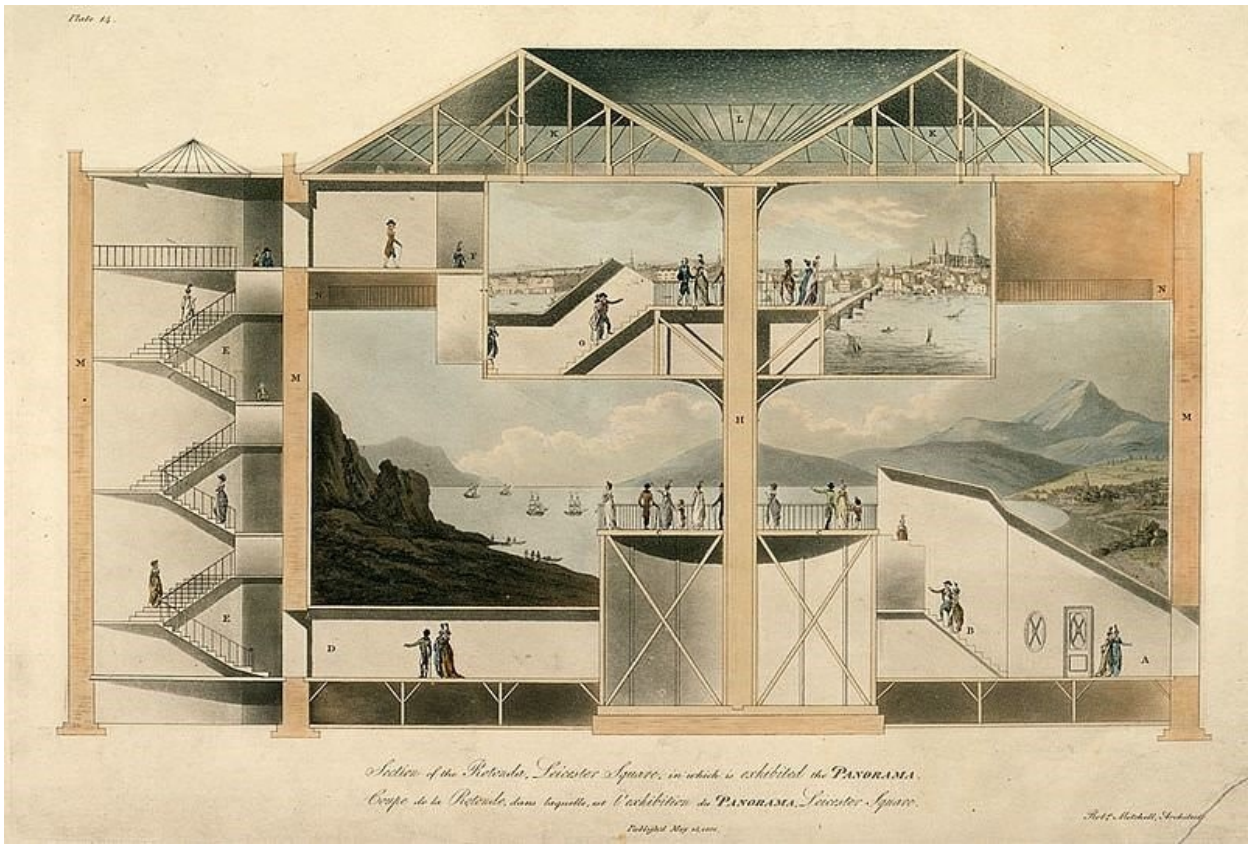

Figure 27. Robert Mitchell, cross-section of Robert Barker's two-level panorama rotunda, c. 1801, aquatint, Leicester Square, London. British Library, London.

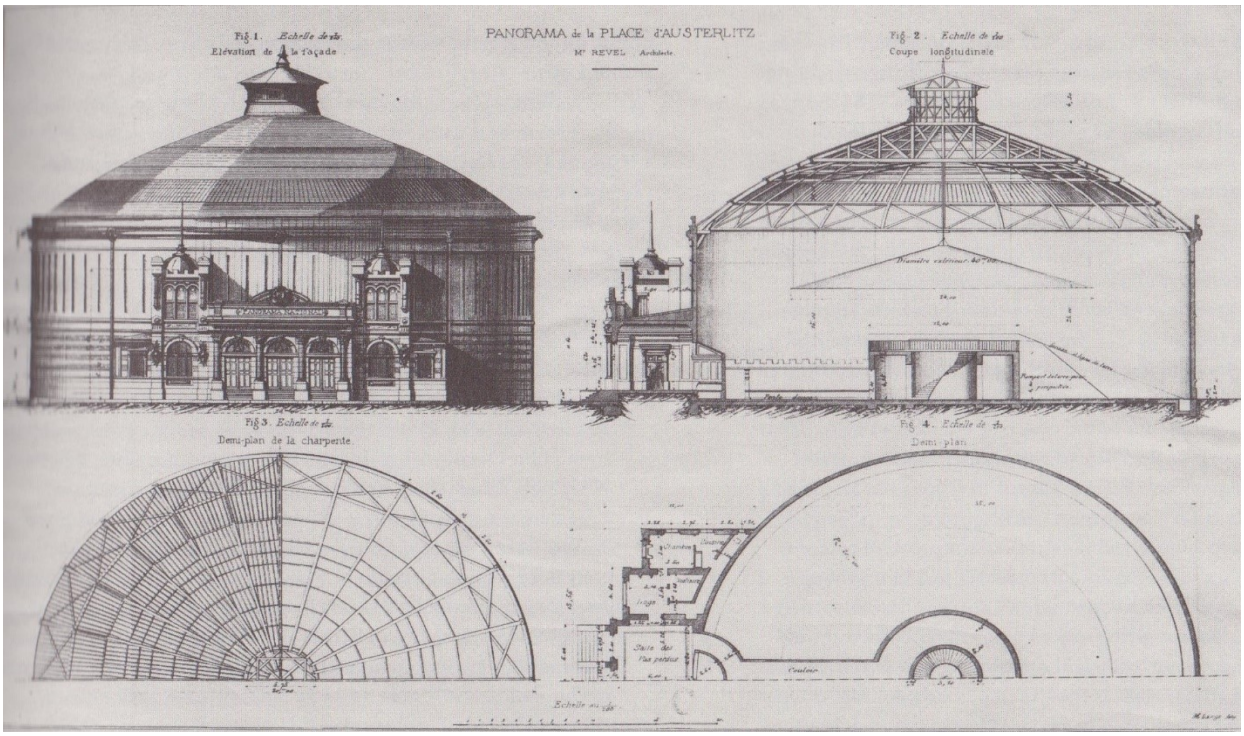

Figure 28. M. Revel, cross-section, elevation and plan of the Panorama de la Place d'Austerlitiz*,* 1881. Bernard Comment, *The Panorama* (London: Reaktion Books, 1999), p. 102.

Figure 29. A. Robida Cartoon on *The Battle of Champigny* panorama, in *La Caricature*, July 15, 1882. Bibliothèque nationale de France.

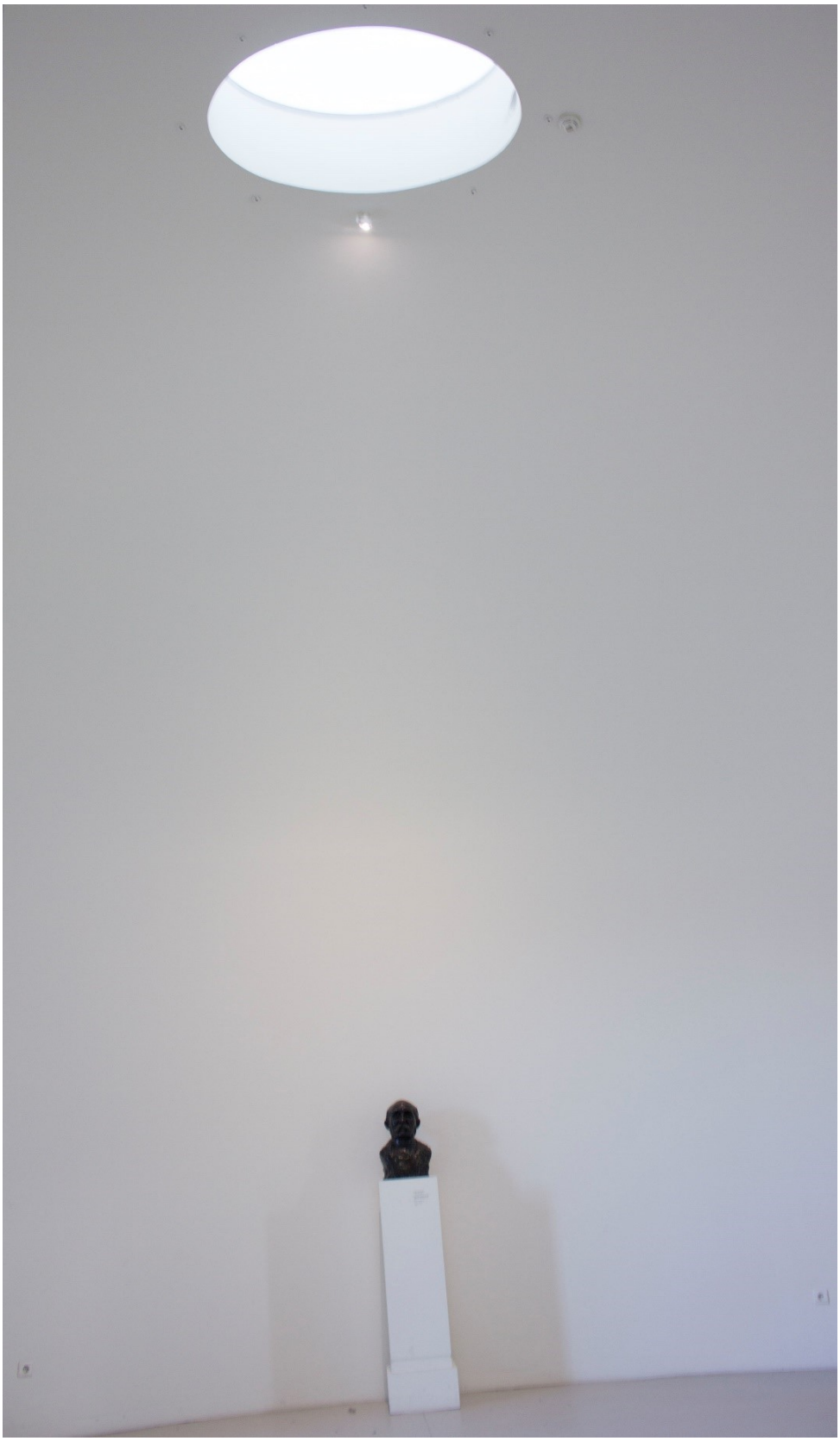

Figure 30. Vestibule of the *Water Lilies* gallery with a bust of Georges Clemenceau, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph courtesy of © Amrita Kalsi 2017.

Figure 31. Curved passageway between the two rooms of the *Nymphéas* gallery, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph courtesy of Google Images.

Figure 32. Vellum canopy over the *Nymphéas* gallery, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph courtesy of © Amrita Kalsi 2017.

Figure 33. Detail. Thin, golden frame. Claude Monet, *Le Matin aux saules* (*Morning with Willows*). Second room, northern wall, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph courtesy of © Amrita Kalsi 2017.

Figure 34. Claude Monet, *Saule pleureur et bassin aux nymphéas (Weeping Willow and Water Lilies Pond)*, c. 1916-19, oil on canvas, 200 x 180 cm. Left panel: Musée Marmottan-Monet. Right panel: private collection.

Figure 35. Jacques-Ernest Bulloz. *Claude Monet beside his Water-Lily Pond at Giverny*, summer 1905, gelatin silver print, 17.7 x 12.8 cm. Musée Municipal A.-G. Poulain, Vernon.

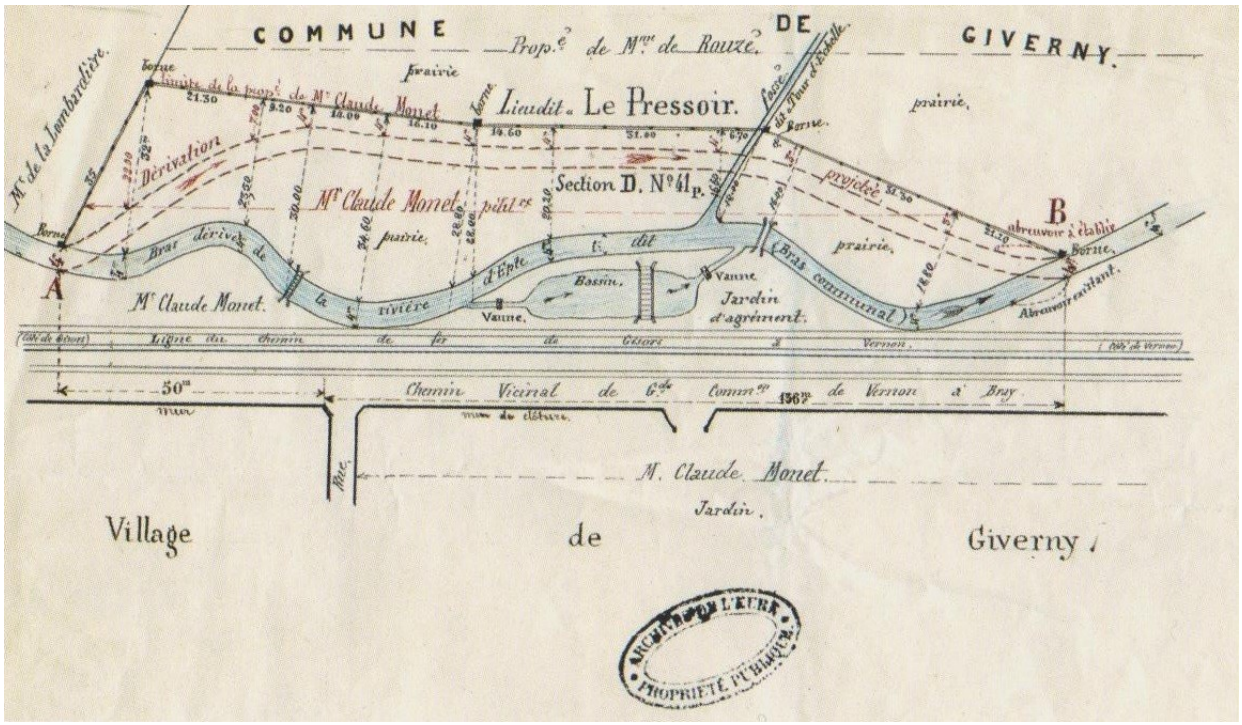

Figure 36. Plan of Monet's first pond project at Giverny, by the engineer of the Ponts et Chausées (Civil Engineering Department) of the Department of the Eure, June 22, 1893. © Archives départementales de l'Eure, Évreux [18 S 25].

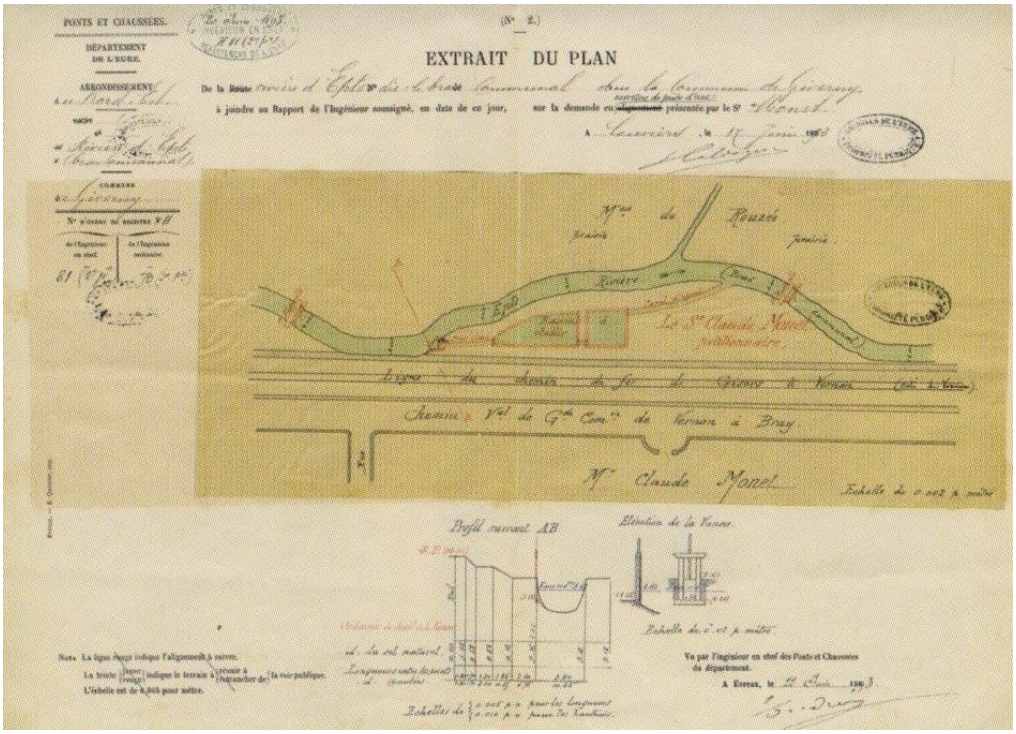

Figure 37. Plan of Monet's pond with diversion project at Giverny, from the arm of the Epte River called the Ru, or "communal arm," report of the sub-divisional foreman, October 8, 1901. © Archives départementales de l'Eure, Évreux [18 S 25].

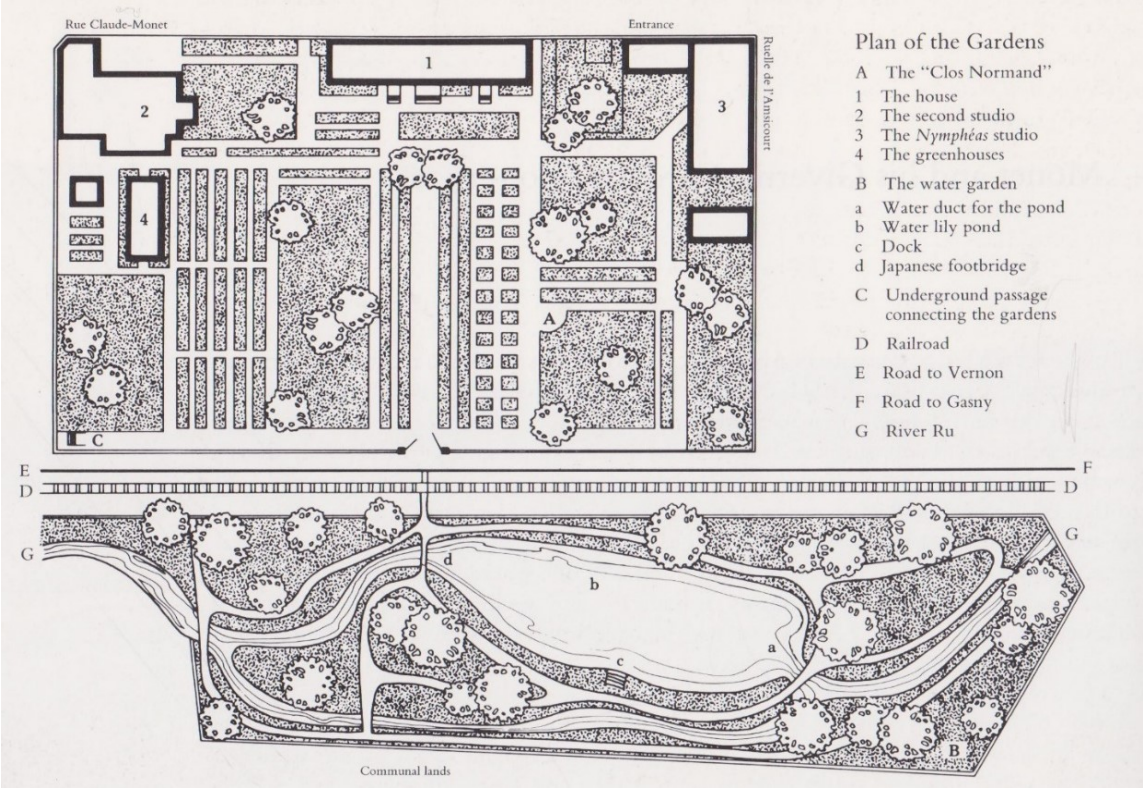

Figure 38. Plan of Monet's property at Giverny including the gardens, waterlily pond and *Nymphéas* studio, c. 1920. Paul Hayes Tucker, *Claude Monet: Life and Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), p. 176.

Figure 39. Detail. Claude Monet, *Matin (Morning)*, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. First room, facing south wall. Photograph courtesy of © Amrita Kalsi 2017.

Figure 40. Detail. Claude Monet, *Le Matin clair aux saules (Clear Morning with Willows)*, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Second room, facing south wall. Photograph courtesy of © Amrita Kalsi 2017.

Figure 41. Detail. Claude Monet, *Deux saules (Two Willows)*, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Second room, facing east wall. Photograph courtesy of © Amrita Kalsi 2017.

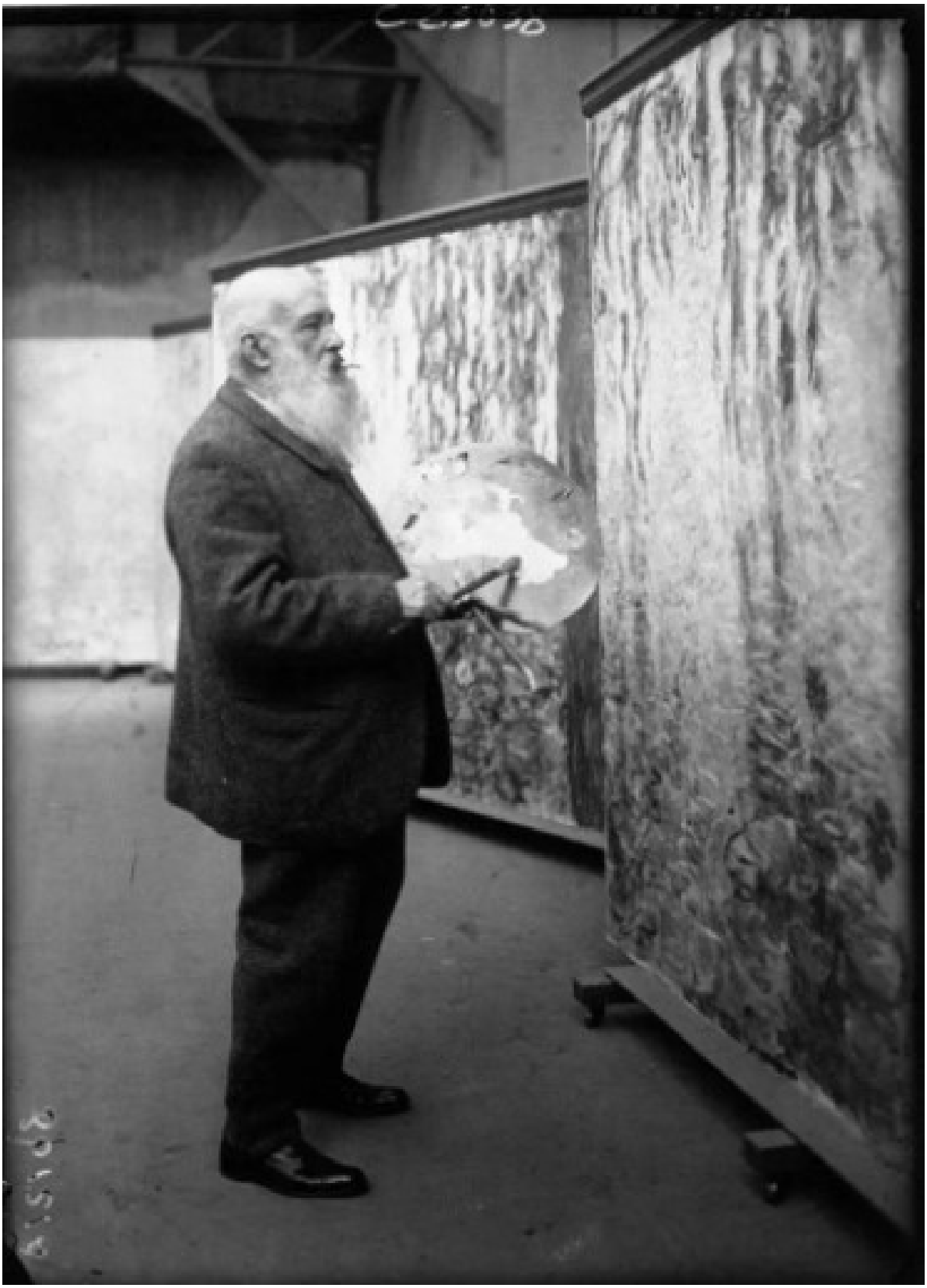

Figure 42. Claude Monet at work on the *Water Lilies* murals in his studio at Giverny, 1926. Press photograph, Agence de presse Meurisse. Bibliothèque nationale de France.

Figure 43. Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1908, oil on canvas, diameter 81 cm. Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas, TX.

Figure 44. Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, 1916, oil on canvas, 200.5 x 201 cm. National Museum of Western Art, Tokyo. Gift of the Matsukata Collection.

Figure 45. Claude Monet, *Water Lilies Pond*, 1919, oil on canvas, 101 x 200 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY. Courtesy of the Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg Collection, Gift of Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg, 1998, Bequest of Walter H. Annenberg, 2002.

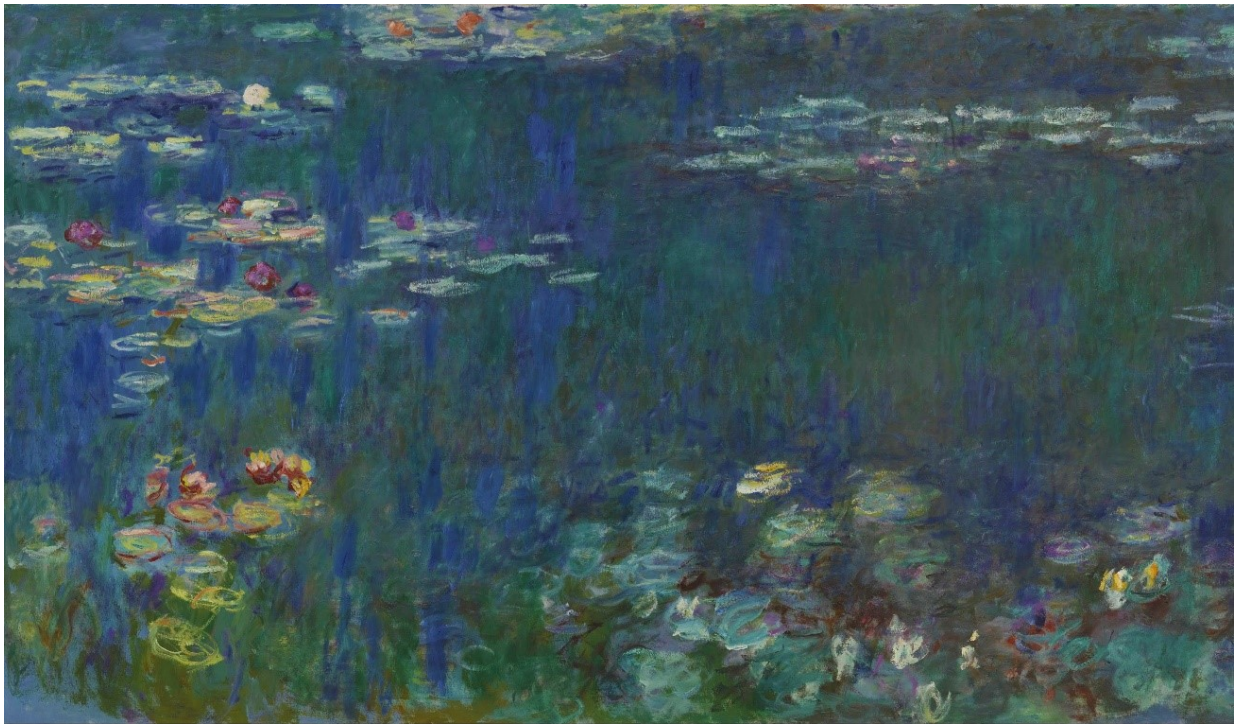

Figure 46. Detail. Horizontal strata of lily pads juxtaposed with vertical, elongated reflections in the water. Claude Monet, *Reflets verts (Green Reflections)*, c. 1914-26, oil on canvas, 200 x 850 cm. Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. First room, facing east wall. Courtesy of Google Arts Project.

Figure 47. Detail. Horizontal strata of lily pads juxtaposed with vertical, elongated reflections in the water. Claude Monet, *Deux saules (Two Willows)*, c. 1914-26, oil on canvas, 200 x 1700 cm. Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Second room, facing east wall. Courtesy of Google Arts Project.

Figure 48. Monet's Water-Lily Pond at Giverny, showing clusters of lily pads and reflections in the water, 1933. Collection of *Country Life* magazine, London.

Figure 49. Paul Cézanne, *The Lac d'Annecy*, 1896, oil on canvas, 65 x 81 cm. Courtauld Institute of Art, London. Courtesy of the Samuel Courtauld Trust.

Figure 50. Claude Monet's Giverny Studio, c. 1917. Photograph by © Paul Durand-Ruel 1917.

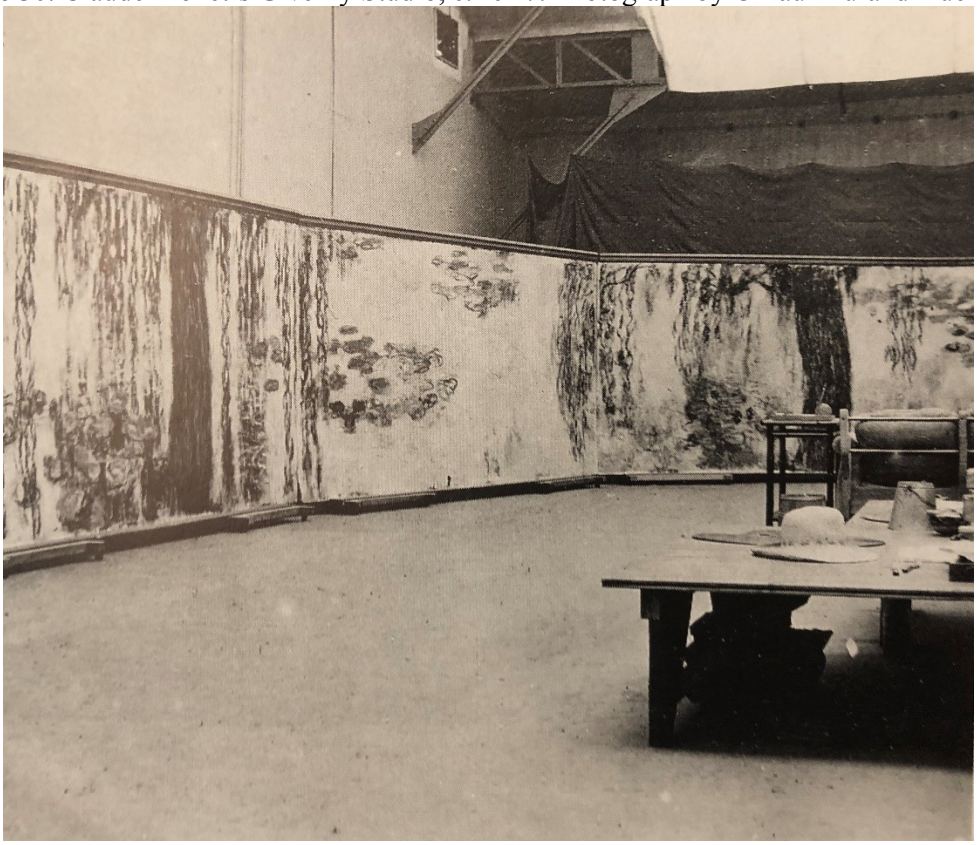

Figure 51. Claude Monet's Giverny Studio, c. 1917. Photograph by © Paul Durand-Ruel 1917.

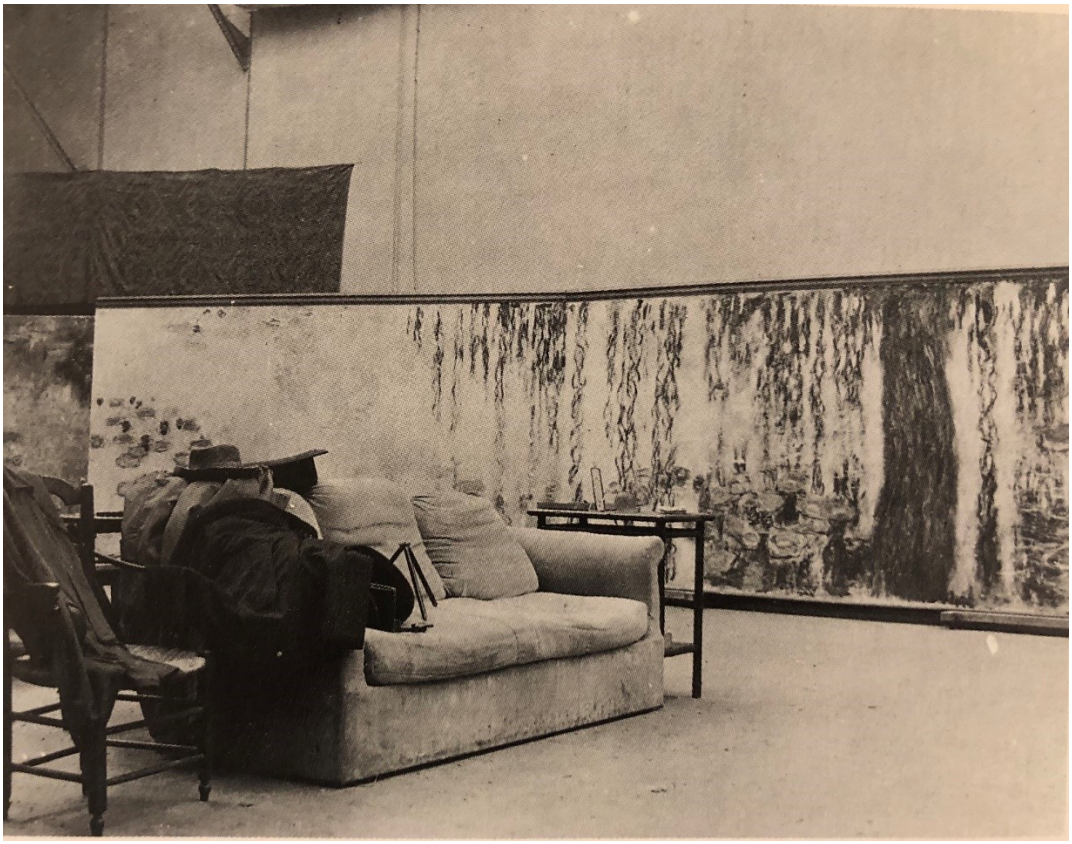

Figure 52. Claude Monet's Giverny Studio, c. 1917. Photograph by © Paul Durand-Ruel 1917.

Figure 53. Claude Monet's Giverny Studio, c. 1917. Photograph by © Paul Durand-Ruel 1917.

Figure 54. Height of the *Water Lilies* murals in relation to a visitor's height. Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. First room, facing east wall. Photograph courtesy of © Jenujah Vadivel 2017.

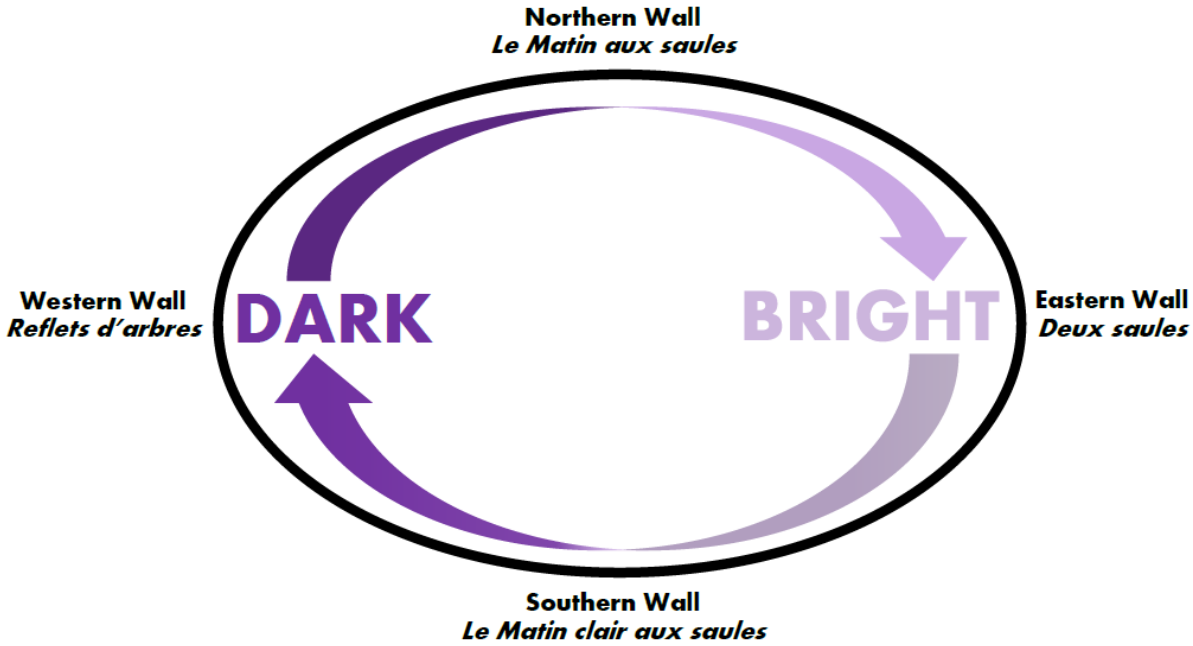

Figure 55. Diagram of Spectral Belt of Colour Value (Gradient of Brightness and Darkness) in the Second Room murals of the *Water Lilies* gallery, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Courtesy of the author.

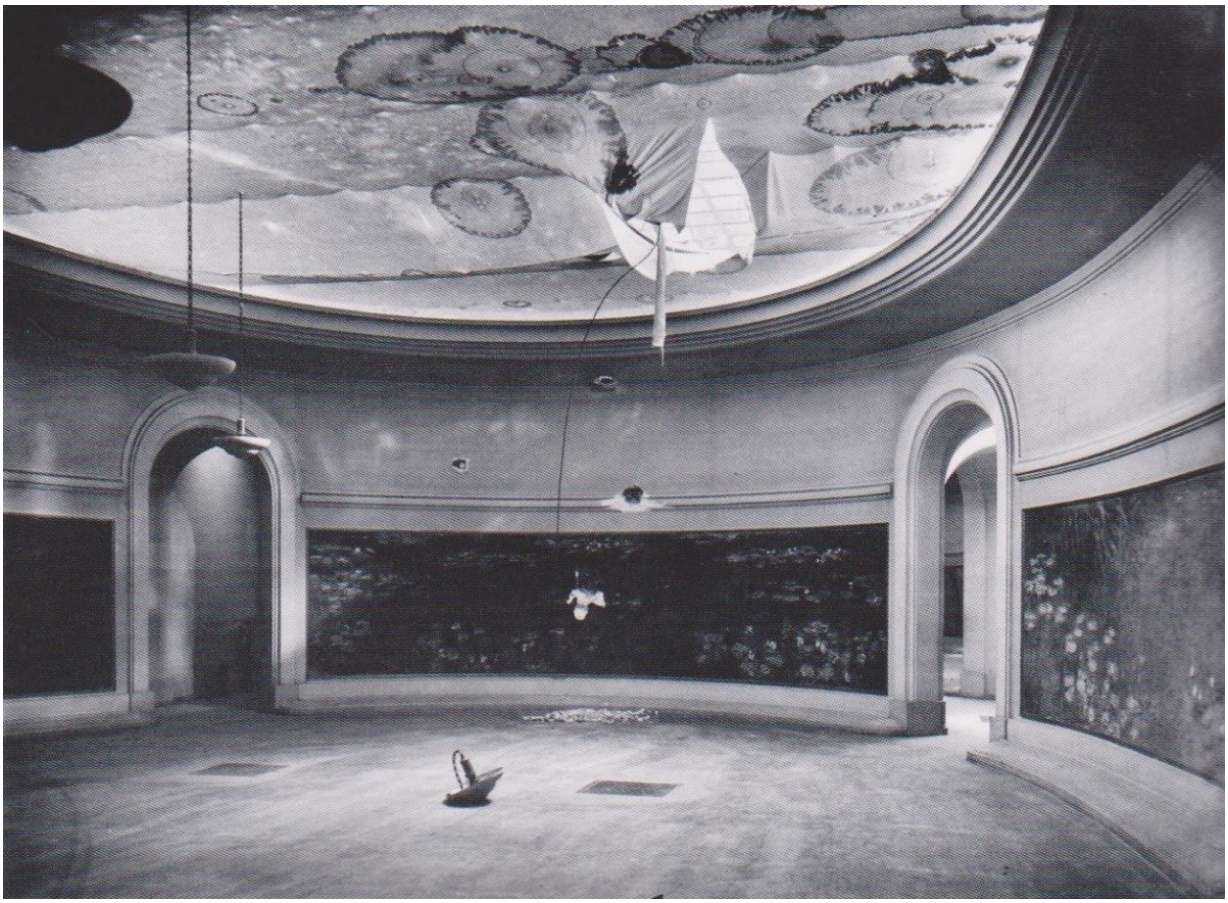

Figure 56. Damage to the *Water Lilies* gallery at the Orangerie after the Allied bombing, Paris, c. 1944, © Archives du Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris.

Figure 57. First room of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* gallery after the addition of the Walter-Guillaume collection, c. 1965, ©RMN.

Figure 58. The bifurcated staircase leading up to the Walter-Guilaume Collection, 1970, Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph by © Martine Frank in Pierre Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie,* [n.p.].

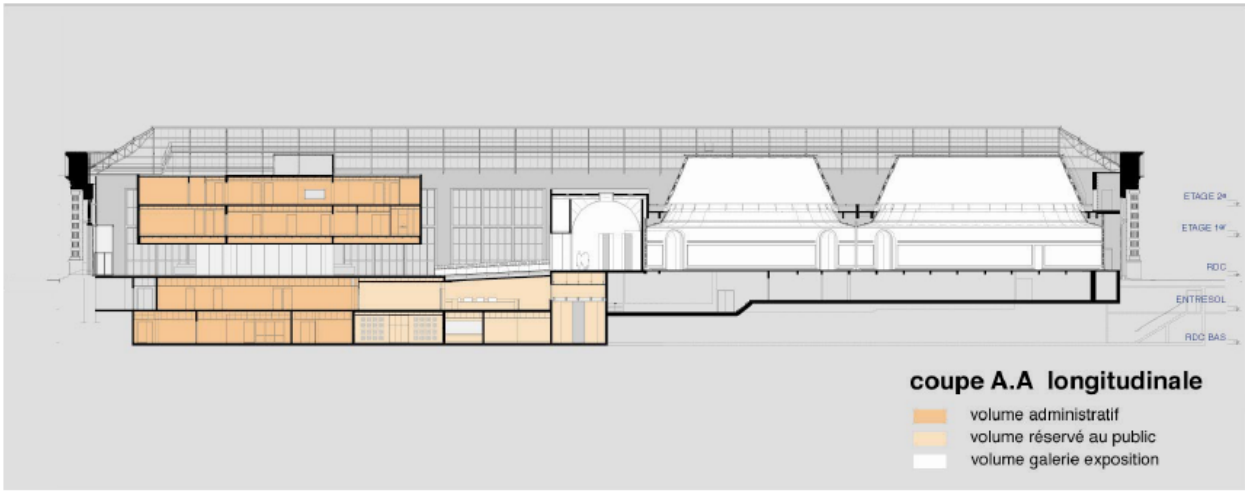

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Figure 59. Longitudinal cross-section of the Orangerie restructuration project 2000-2006. Diagram by © Agence Brochet/Lajus/Pueyo in Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Ministère de la culture et des communications, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Réouverture au public le mercredi 17 mai, 2006 (Dossier de presse)*, 2006, p. 9.

Figure 60. Transverse cross-section of gallery room and skylight for the Orangerie restructuration project 2000-2006. Image by © Agence Brochet/Lajus/Pueyo in Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Ministère de la culture et des communications, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Réouverture au public le mercredi 17 mai, 2006 (Dossier de presse)*, 2006, p. 10.

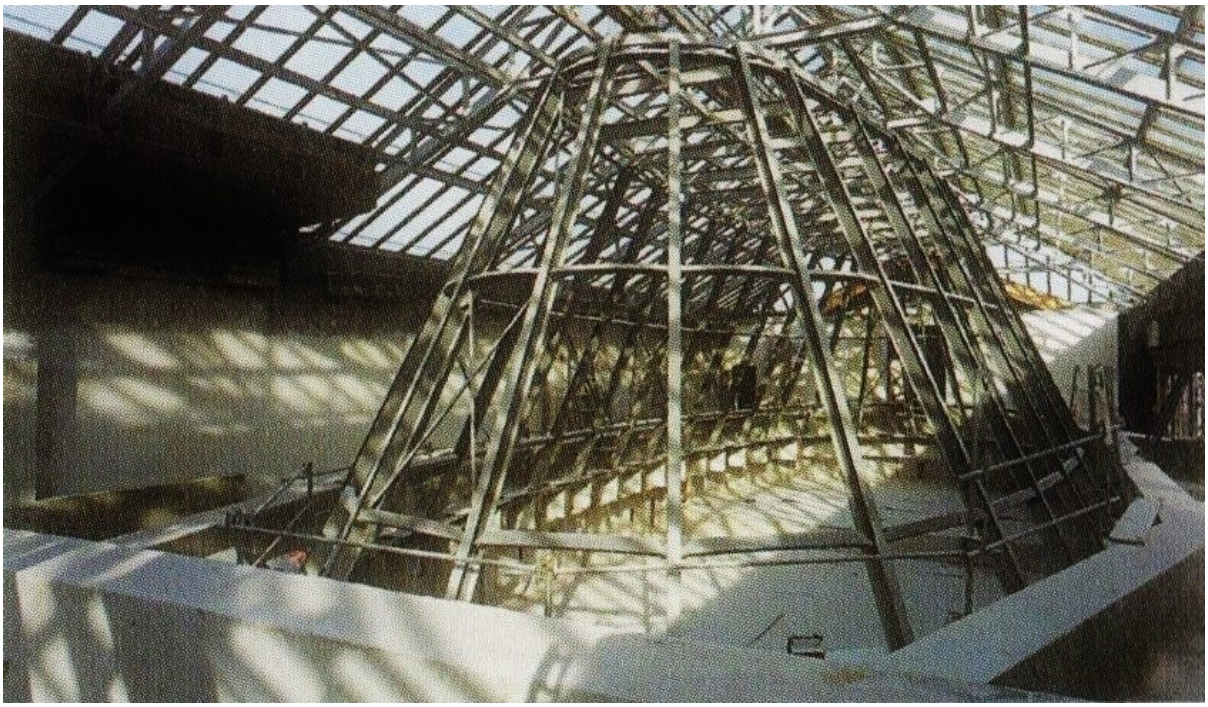

Figure 61. Skeletal support of conic structure built atop the rooms of the Orangerie *Water Lilies* gallery, 2000-06. Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph by © Agence Brochet/Lajus/Pueyo in Pierre Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie* (Paris: Gallimard – Réunion des musées nationaux, 2006), [n.p.].

Figure 62. Interior face of conic structure atop the Orangerie *Water Lilies*, 2000-06. Paris. Musée de l'Orangerie, Paris. Photograph by © Agence Brochet/Lajus/Pueyo in Pierre Georgel, *Le Musée de l'Orangerie* (Paris: Gallimard – Réunion des musées nationaux, 2006), [n.p.].

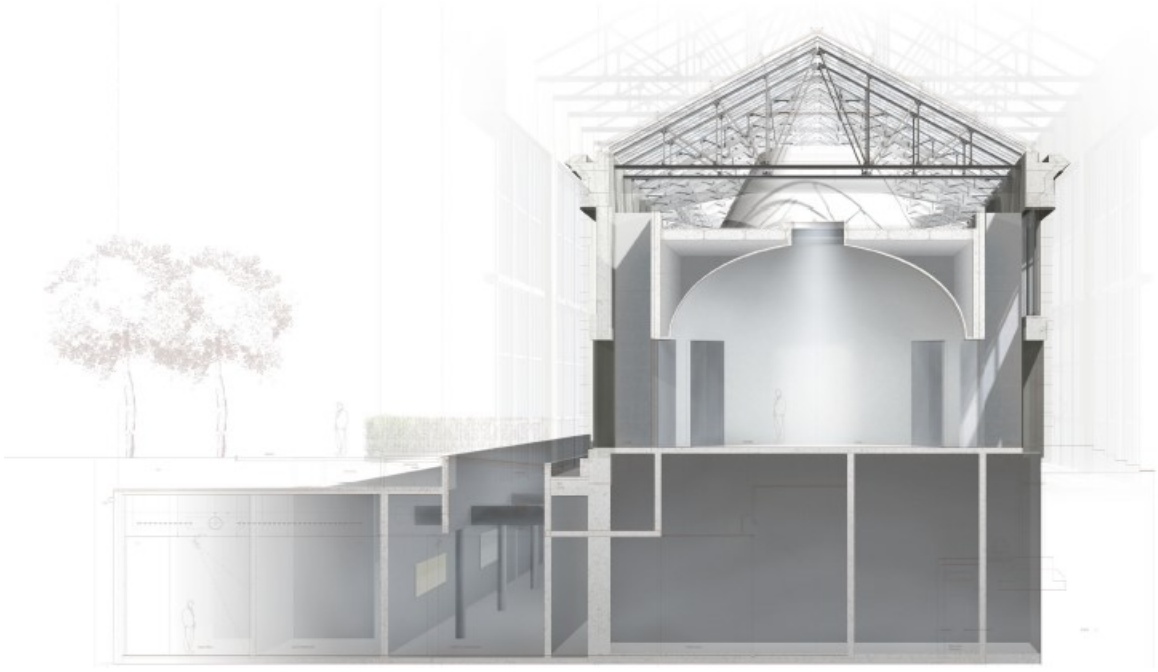

Figure 63. Transverse cross section of vestibule and oculus for the Orangerie restructuration project 2000-2006. Image by © Agence Brochet/Lajus/Pueyo in Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Ministère de la culture et des communications, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Réouverture au public le mercredi 17 mai, 2006 (Dossier de presse)*, 2006, p. 10.

Figure 64. Transverse cross section of entranceway and façade to the Water Lilies gallery for the Orangerie restructuration project 2000-2006. Image by © Agence Brochet/Lajus/Pueyo in Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, Ministère de la culture et des communications, *Musée de l'Orangerie: Réouverture au public le mercredi 17 mai, 2006 (Dossier de presse)*, 2006, p. 9.

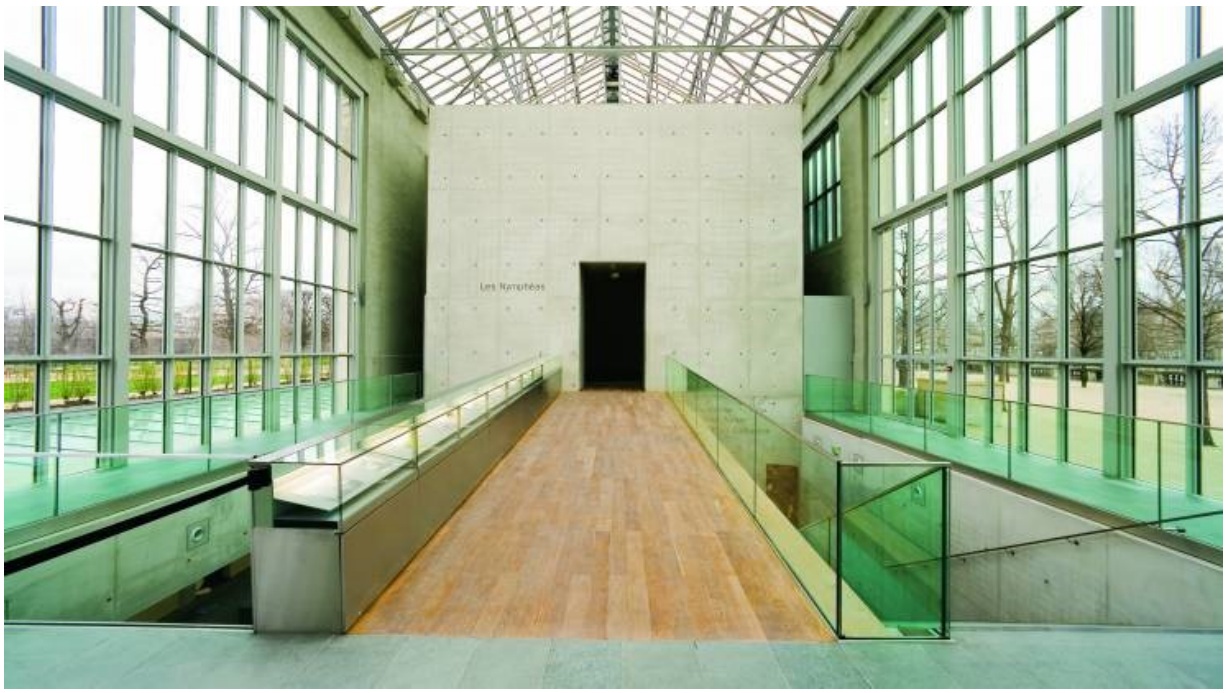

Figure 65. View of façade and entranceway to the *Nymphéas* gallery after the Orangerie restructuration project 2000-2006. A stairwell to the right leads to the underground Walter-Guillaume collection. Photograph courtesy of Google Maps: Street View.

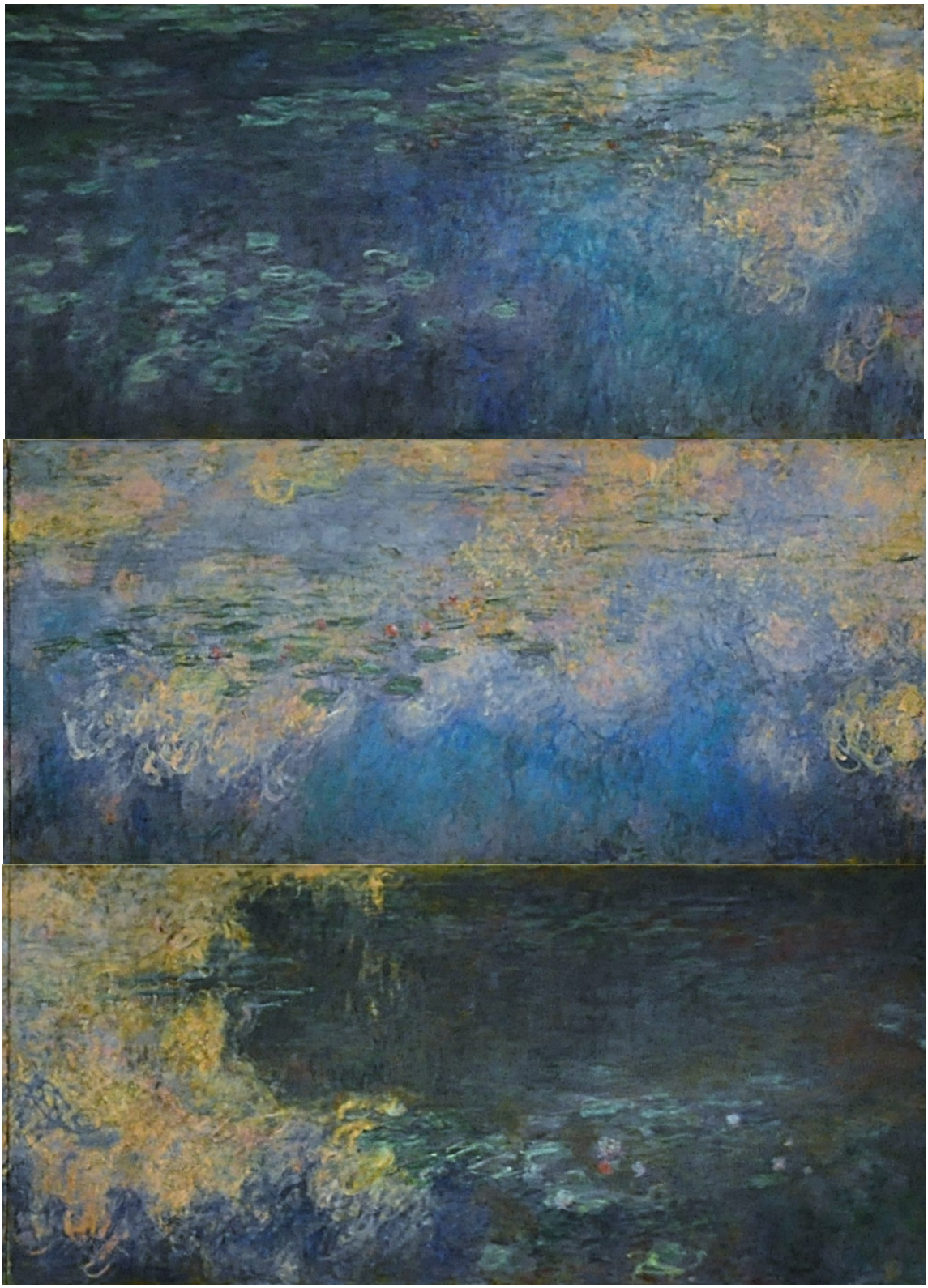

Figure 66. Left panel (above), Center Panel (middle), right panel (below). Claude Monet, *Water Lilies*, c. 1914-26, oil on canvas, 200 x 1275 cm. Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Courtesy of the Google Arts Project.

Figure 67. *Water Lilies* triptych, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY, c. 1960, © MoMA Archives.

Figure 68. Monet's *Water Lilies* triptych, December 2017, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Photograph courtesy of the author.

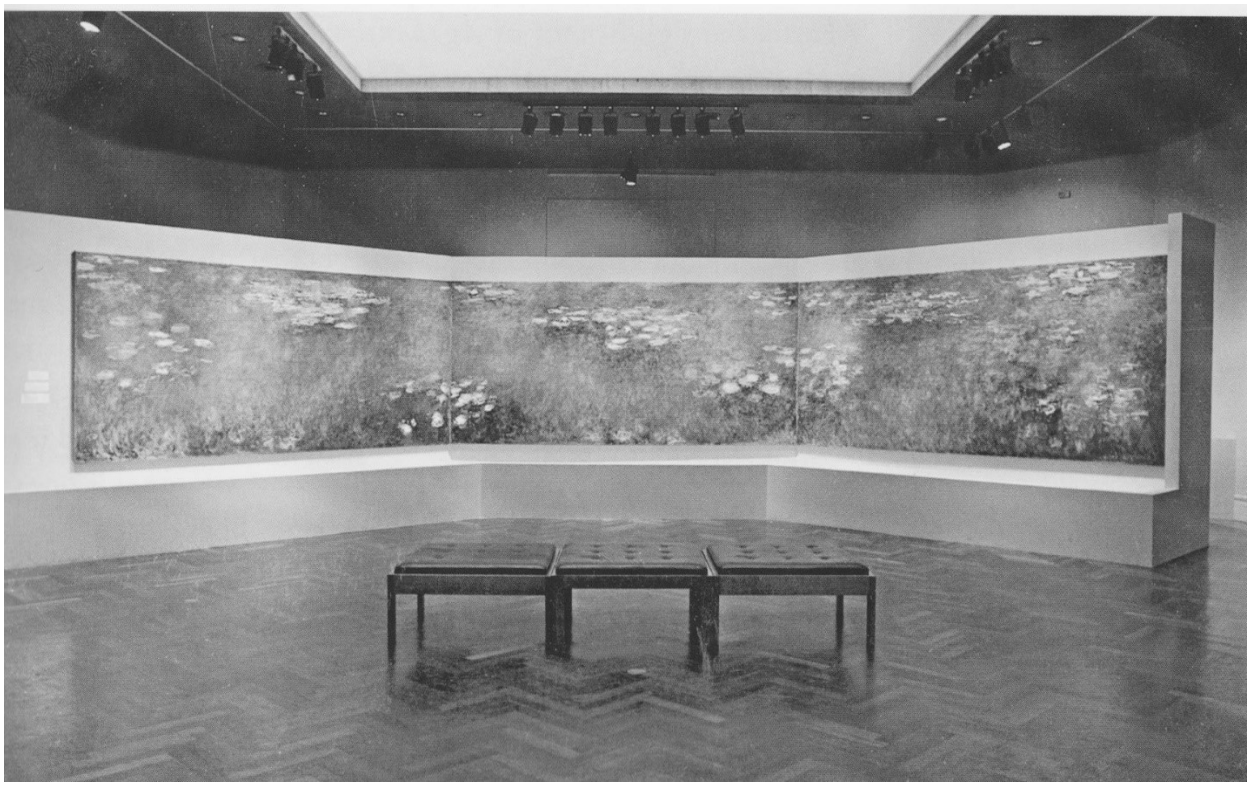

Figure 69. *Agapanthus* triptych, Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, MO, for the exhibition "Monet's Years at Giverny: Beyond Impressionism," 1978, © Saint Louis Art Museum Archives.

Figure 70. *Agapanthus* triptych, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, April 9 – August 7, 2011, © Nelson-Atkins Archives.

Figure 71. Aerial view of the subterranean ChiChu Art Museum, Naoshima. Photograph courtesy of Google Images.

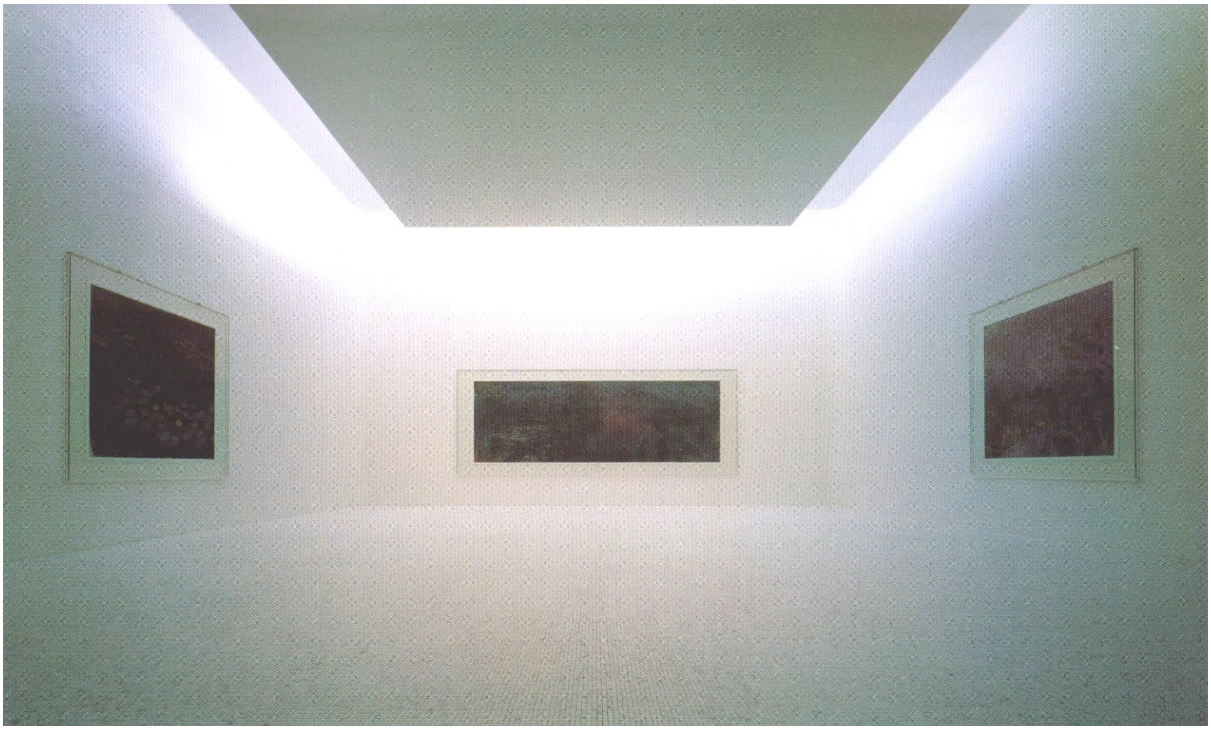

Figure 72. Through the doorway of the Monet Room of the ChiChu Art Museum, with a *Water Lilies* diptych on the opposing wall, c. 1914-26, oil on canvas, 200 x 850 cm. Photograph taken by Mitsuo Matsuoka. In Philip Jodidio, *Tadao Ando: Art, Architecture, Nature* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2009), p. 38.

Figure 73. Claude Monet, *Le Bassin aux nymphéas (Waterlily Pond)*, 1915-26, oil on canvas, 200 x 850 cm. Chichu Art Museum, Naoshima. Photograph taken by Noboru Morikawa. In Philip Jodidio, *Tadao Ando: Art, Architecture, Nature* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2009), p. 31.

Figure 74. Detail. Monet room floor, made of cubic, hand-carved marble stones. Chichu Art Museum, Naoshima. Photograph taken by Mitsuo Matsuoka. In Philip Jodidio, *Tadao Ando: Art, Architecture, Nature* (New York: Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., 2009), p. 141.

Figure 75. Visitors to the Monet room at the ChiChu Art Museum, barefooted on the marble floor. Naoshima, Japan. Photograph courtesy of Google Images.