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A Par/ergon For Poe: Arthur Rackham And The Fin De Siècle Illustrators

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A *PAR/ERGON* FOR POE: ARTHUR RACKHAM AND THE FIN DE SIÈCLE
ILLUSTRATORS

A Thesis Presented

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ABSTRACT

       This project began in Dr. Anthony Magistrale's graduate seminar focused on the works of Edgar Allan Poe. It is the result of our common interests in Poe's textual canon, and furthermore in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century illustrative works that were inspired by it. After performing significant research, the conclusion was reached that despite the extensive collection of visual works, catalogued by Burton Pollin, little work had been done that actually explored the relationship between these works and the text. I found myself asking what *role* this canon of illustrations played in shaping the public understanding of and reception towards the Poe tales that are so widely known today.

       "A *Par/ergon* for Poe: Arthur Rackham and the Fin de Siècle Illustrators" is intended as an introduction for further study on the extent of influence that nineteenth- and twentieth- century artists had in promoting and supplementing Poe's work. Given that the earliest prominent illustrator of the canon, Édouard Manet, began illustrating "The Raven" at the request of Charles Baudelaire, Poe's first translator and the man who communicated Poe's work to the world, the fin de siècle illustrations were produced concurrently to Poe's burgeoning popularity. In the first chapter, I engage in a literary history of the fin de siècle artistic movements and major figures and their exposure to Poe, including Manet, Gustave Dore, and the Symbolists, Aubrey Beardsley, Harry Clarke, and the Decadents, and finally, Arthur Rackham and the Modernists. I track Poe's influence after his death, exploring the question of why such prominent artists were interested in representing Poe's work, specifically, in the first place. Subsequently, this thesis also discovers what elements of their work and aesthetics could be seen as representative of Poe's. Then, using Jacques Derrida's ekphrastic theory of the *parergon/ergon* supplementary relationship, I deconstruct the textual "lack" in Poe's tales as that which sets up an availability to the illustration. Through this "lack," the supplemental illustration can insert itself and exert its own power, altering the way the text is received based on the style and time of its reception.

       My second chapter turns to Poe's tales and the subsequent illustrations by Rackham. I place particular emphasis on texts and images of "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Fall of the House of Usher," with supplementary references to "Hop-Frog," "Ligeia," "The Domain of Arnheim," and "Landor's Cottage." I use textual analysis and visual case studies to demonstrate the way in which the illustrations fill the "lack" present in their respective texts, and build out precisely where this lack can be seen. I explore the way the images both mimic and change the reader's relationship with the tales and characters, altering the reader's response and thus, the overarching canonical interpretation. By doing this, my project demonstrates how strong of an impact Arthur Rackham and the fin de siècle illustrators made on the public perception of and reception to the tales of Edgar Allan Poe.

DEDICATION

For Helen, my grandmother, for showing me just how strong an educated woman can be.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION
Why Poe?

You're asked if you've ever read anything written by or written about Edgar

Allan Poe, or if you've even heard of him. Chances are, regardless of who you are, where

you come from, and how many books you've read, you say yes. Poe, though dead for

well over a century, has achieved and retained international fame as one of the most

widely read authors who has ever lived, as well as a master of the Gothic genre. He's

acclaimed within the literary world, and has also obtained this same reputation culturally

and historically—one does not need to have read Poe's work to know his name. Because

of this, an enormous number of nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty first-century artists

have translated his writing into visual works of art. So many have done this that he is

considered the most popular modern author ever to be illustrated (Pollin 1). However,

there has been minimal academic work specifically analyzing these illustrations in

relation to his collection of texts, or canon. Again, you're asked if you've ever read

anything about or are able to name any of the artists working with Poe's subject material.

Have you even seen these visual works, or more importantly, ever considered whether

these illustrations played a role in creating Poe's reputation? Chances are, unless you're a

Poe-scholar, or otherwise a Poe-enthusiast, you'll say no.

One example of a text that begins to wrestle with these questions is Barbara

Cantalupo's *Poe and the Visual Arts,* published in 2014. It chronicles the way in which

Poe, and thus his work, were influenced by visual art during and before his lifetime, but

does not move past the mid nineteenth-century, stopping right around the time of his

death. It therefore neither focuses on the visual art that was influenced posthumously by

Poe's poetry and short stories, nor does it consider the subsequent influence that the

visual canon had on the popularization and general understanding and reaction to Poe's

texts themselves. Jeff Menges's *Poe Illustrated: Art by Doré, Dulac, Rackham and*

Others displays a number of illustrations and paintings done on Poe's work, but stops

there—it is solely a visual collection[1]. On the other hand, Burton Pollin's *Images of Poe's*

Work, written in 1989, includes a rich description of Poe's status as a source of

inspiration for visual artists. His introduction gives an overview of the creation of the

images in relation to Poe's work in a brief, 30-page introduction but is otherwise solely a

catalog of these images and their artists, dates, and countries of origin. The introduction

provides an excellent starting point for locating and exploring the visual world that Poe's

artist-successors left behind, but stops short of investigating the connection between the

poetry, short stories, and artworks themselves. Pollin's text also does not provide a

detailed analysis of any of the visual works. Without this, none of the aforementioned

texts have the means through which to explore the greater significance that the visual art

may have had on the stories and poetry they represent.

In the following pages, I take Cantalupo's and Pollin's earlier works as my

jumping off point, because both deal in some way with the relationship between Edgar

Allan Poe and visual art. They establish themselves as the current experts in the highly

unappreciated and underdeveloped field into which my project joins. In the first chapter, I

provide a brief but intensive literary history of the time period between Poe's death and

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[1] It was, however, from Menges's collection that I was first introduced to the world of Poe's illustrators, particularly to Arthur Rackham and his work on "The Fall of the House of Usher."

the Modernist era, which demonstrates the way Poe's works used visual influence to move out of obscurity and into renown. To do this, I explore a selection of visual artists and the movements they were a part of, connecting the people, time, and works with Poe. It is here that I ask and wrestle with the question—why Poe? What was it about Poe and his texts that appealed to artists and the public across various cultural moments? These artworks, created during and across the European fin de siècle, helpfully catapult Poe's work and world from the American Romantic era, through the French Symbolist and British Decadent movements, and into international Modernism. The visual appeal of his texts positioned Poe as a figure who left a profound mark not only on the literature of other writers influenced by pieces of his Gothic style, but also on the artistry of painters and illustrators who were likewise inspired by him.

I use my first chapter to look backwards in time to connect Poe with the Modernist world during which his international reputation was finally solidified, as well as to establish a theoretical basis for the work that my second chapter does. I build a supplementary foundation for ekphrastic interchange with help from Jacques Derrida's *Truth in Painting,* published in 1978. My second chapter, however, moves past the literary history and uses British Modernist illustrator Arthur Rackham as a case study for Poe's graphicality. Cantalupo explains Poe's creation and use of this term as one which draws attention to authorial choices as "adumbrations," or textual sketches. These stylistic moments open up a significant amount of space for *visual* sketches given their purpose as extra, as scene setting, as part of a signature (5). They establish an art as belonging to a given author and can be altered or switched out to suit another's purposes. The notion of graphicality serves as a foundational concept for this project, particularly

given Poe's own role in theorizing the term. By picking out the moments in which these *literary* adumbrations present themselves, my second chapter deconstructs their roles in the texts, and the way in which the paintings utilize and become representative of them.

Rackham's and others' Poe illustrations bring new meaning to and complicate the relationships that readers may already have with Poe's texts, particularly given that these works are also works of art on their own. While Poe may have inspired them, they would also eventually become part of the illustrator's visual canon. I use ekphrastic and Derridian supplementary theories to *frame* the visual works that my thesis picks up, essentially exploring the way in which they become part of Poe's texts, capable of both interpreting and revising texts and characters as readers are familiar with them. I use texts—both verbal and visual—created by and about Arthur Rackham and the fin de siècle illustrators, and demonstrate the way in which they were responsible for transporting Poe's work across the European fin de siècle, from the period of his death into international modernity.

I argue that Arthur Rackham (1867-1939) embodies the culmination of Poe's international, modern reputation. Rackham's status as an established illustrator, and his place in time as an early Modernist artist alive at the same time as and directly influenced by major Symbolist and Decadent artists who worked with Poe placed him into a position of power, which he used to bring Poe, his tales, and his most recognizable characters— such as Montresor and Fortunato, Hop-Frog, the Ushers—into the reputation that modern audiences know him by today. Though he had been actively working as an illustrator and painter during the final years of the nineteenth-century, for example his 1884 painting of "North Shore, Sydney" (Hamilton 29), Rackham would complete an impressive

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illustrated version of Poe's *Tales of Mystery of Imagination* in 1935, one of the last major

works before his death. In total, he published well over 3,300 individual images, not

including the massive number of magazine and other miscellaneous illustrative work

(Hamilton 10).

While a great number of talented artists illustrated Poe's works before Rackham

got around to it, those whom my thesis highlights include Édouard Manet, Gustave Dore,

Aubrey Beardsley, and Harry Clarke. Rackham's work is perhaps the best example of an

illustrative canon influencing a textual canon, in part due to the fact that his work is an

extensive, patchwork collection of an already established visual Poe. His portrayal of

Poe's work as that created by an established literary figure rather than by a less famous

author is important. Manet, for example, only had Baudelaire's recommendation and his

own response to "The Raven" to inspire his illustrations; conversely, Rackham was able

to work from a widely translated canon and variety of artistic responses—including

Manet's, Dore's, Beardsley's, and Clarke's—to Poe's work. The previous fin de siècle

work allowed him to see the difference between Poe as writer/artist, Baudelaire's

nineteenth-century Poe, and the Poe that was increasingly entertaining to the public,

gaining popularity beginning in the early twentieth-century.

Additionally, time plays a significant role in establishing a sufficient, relevant

connection between Poe and Rackham's work. Given that Rackham was an illustrator of

iconic literary texts over the course of his life, including works such as Sir Thomas

Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* and Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, his choice

to work with Poe near the end of a life that was deeply entrenched in the Modernist era

resulted in popularizing Poe's works and world. It furthermore detailed the connection

that can occur when a written text finds an illustrator whose skills rival those of the

literary author, thereby bringing a new dimension to the written text. To exemplify

Rackham's awareness of the context in which he discovered Poe, Hamilton writes,

"Perhaps caught by the mood of national anxiety and tragedy of wartime, Rackham

voluntarily softened his interpretation of Dickens's story (1915) in a way he might not

have done eight or ten years earlier – or indeed twenty years later with Poe's *Tales*"

(109). Rackham, clearly capable of infusing his illustrations with his will and needs of

those around him, altered his illustrative style as a way of both mirroring the cultural and

temporal anxieties that characterized the time in which he was adapting a particular tale,

as well as communicating with his own specific audience through his work. Thus, his

choice to work on Poe as a Modernist illustrator was an intentional one, and one that

would ultimately draw together the various visual takes on Poe that the fin de siècle

artists began, catapulting Poe into modern relevancy and solidifying the place of many of

his stories and characters into literary and cultural history[2].

I trace the artistic evolution Poe's illustrators participated in with relation to their

stylistic and thematic portrayals of his short stories and poetry, arriving at a

comprehensive study of Arthur Rackham's 1935 edition of *Tales of Mystery and*

Imagination in relation to the tales themselves. I argue that Rackham's individual

illustrations of Poe's work are not simply standalone works of art, but are rather

deconstructive *parerga* for the written work, if defined as an *ergon*—Jacques Derrida

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[2] Rackham might also have been drawn to Poe's work by other Modernists, such as Hart Crane with his poem "The Bridge" and T.S. Eliot's love for Baudelaire.

describes the *parergon* as a frame which augments the pleasure of a piece, contributing to intrinsic aesthetic representation as it intervenes by its form (64). Though a supplemental entity, it isn't simply a surplus but is rather an outside item that utilizes a lack within the *ergon*, or work, to attach itself to the internal structure of the work (42). In proving that these illustrations do in fact meet Derrida's definition, I argue that Rackham creates a canon of *parerga* to accompany Poe's published, written canon, and by nature of entering into an ekphrastic relationship, prove that they are indeed irremovable pieces to the written work. The illustrative *parerga* become capable of capturing and popularizing characters who have become representative of the Poe canon, ultimately altering the public's perception of and taste for Poe's work, despite remaining outside of the texts. Over the years, Rackham and Poe's other illustrators contributed as much to Poe's overall reputation and to the public's identification with favorite stories and characters as the literary critics who brought Poe out of the darkness of his posthumous obscurity.

CHAPTER ONE
From Obscurity to Notoriety: Theorizing Poe's Intertextual Movement from American
Romanticism to Rackham's European Modernism

In 1849, Edgar Allan Poe died mysteriously, destitute, and all but forgotten.

Despite his 40-year output of poetry, prose, essays, and reviews, resulting in a massive

quantity of work, he simply never received the prestige or monetary compensation that he

believed his work deserved. If not for the French, his name and works may have faded

into obscurity in the years following Poe's death. Today, however, he is one of the most

widely read and studied American authors. He is also one of the most widely *illustrated*

American authors. Considering the mediocrity of his reception in his home country

during his life, one can't help but question what exactly happened to transport Poe into a

place of modern relevancy, inspiring established nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists

to create visual renditions of his work. But, why was it that they chose *him*? How is it that

a struggling artist whose last breath signaled his passing into obscurity inspired prolific

Modernist painter Arthur Rackham to illustrate his short stories in 1935, nearly a century

after he died? How did he move into a place where anyone still cared about his work, and

even more so enough to work off of it?

Enter Charles Baudelaire and the nineteenth-century French Symbolists. While

Poe's posthumous reputation languished at home on American soil, Baudelaire and his

friends and followers elevated Poe to the status of a literary demigod. It is well worth

exploring the reasons why this group of writers and artists, beginning with Baudelaire

and the Symbolists writers and their contemporaries, iconic painters Édouard Manet and

Gustave Dore, chose to fixate on Poe. That they chose him instead of another American

that had achieved actual international fame—one thinks, for example, of Longfellow—meant that their translations and visual renditions legitimized his work for successive European artistic movements.

In the years shortly after Poe's death, Baudelaire took an academic and personal interest in Poe—as man, fictional character and, most importantly, as the creator of art he deeply admired. In *Poe Abroad,* Lois Davis Vines writes that Baudelaire "most likely discovered Poe through Meurnier's translations and Forgues's article. Baudelaire's 'singular shock' when he first read Poe has become legend in literary history. He discovered in Poe's family history uncanny parallels with his own life and in Poe's work ideas he had already considered" (Vines 10). Baudelaire would go on to translate Poe's short stories into French; his followers, Mallarmé and Valéry, would translate his poetry and essays, respectively. Baudelaire was so enthusiastic about Poe that he would become known as the man responsible for all the ways in which Poe's posthumous prestige began to grow, his European reputation began to spread, and his ultimate cultural longevity; the translations were the vehicle through which Baudelaire's real discovery of Poe took place. He spent 20 years translating Poe's work, and through doing so, gained the deep appreciation of Poe that would eventually expand and produce Poe's popularity. However, the Poe that Baudelaire became entranced by was not necessarily Poe in reality. Despite his admiration, Baudelaire never actually met Poe and thus only had his work, limited work *about* him, and word of mouth from other contemporaries to create an image of him. This resulted in an exaggeration of the man as embodying the generic image of the tortured artist, rather than what would have been a more accurate portrait, depicting his destitution and inability to feed his young wife and mother-in-law.

Baudelaire created and came to fall in love with this idea of Poe due precisely to that which stunted his artistic prowess in the first place: his *Americanness.* In Lois and Francis Hyslop's introduction to *Baudelaire on Poe,* which contains Baudelaire's famous 1852 essay "Edgar Allan Poe, His Life and Works," they write, "Poe, as an American, writing in English, appealed to Baudelaire's love of the exotic, a taste which Baudelaire shared with other French writers and artists of the nineteenth century…" (Hyslop, Hyslop 13). Here, one sees an emerging core difference between the French and the Americans. At this point, the French inhabit a highly evolved artistic culture, whereas the Americans, firmly set in the end of the Romantic period, have just been called to the task of creating a national literature by Emerson, who designated Whitman with the task of creating it. Baudelaire, however, actually attributes the American disinterest to even more than just the desire for a national literature. In his essay, he writes "Americans are practical people, proud of their industrial strength, and a little jealous of the old world. They do not have time to feel sorry for a poet who could be driven insane by grief and loneliness… Forward they say, forward, and let us forget the dead" (Baudelaire 40). His statement is key to understanding Baudelaire's conception of Poe, who fit Baudelaire's conception of the scorned artist and misunderstood, orphaned child laboring to create beauty in a bourgeois world of profit and loss. Later, in "New Notes on Edgar Poe: 1857," he continues his meditation, writing, "What a French mind, even the most democratic, understands by a State, would find no place in an American mind" (Baudelaire 131). By noting this, he implies that the American mind was simply not ready for Poe's work at the time in which he was working, pointing out the cultural gap between the French and Americans. By alluding to the fact that the Americans were not ready to handle Poe's

thematic material, Baudelaire speaks more towards the state of the American mind than he does to either the political or economic state of America, or its literary tastes.

In the early to middle nineteenth-century, at the heart of the Romantic era, American writers were more concerned with creating a national image, a national literature, and ultimately producing a great text that would become *the* national text. For example, Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* was an attempt to use poetry to mirror the differentiation between America and all other nations, thus hoping to prove that the new country was an international contender (Bora 34). Bryant, meanwhile, wrote poetry glorifying the beautiful American landscape over all others as he does, for example, in "Sonnet—to an American Painter Departing for Europe." Where these artists and others, such as Longfellow, may have been writing epic poetry promoting high Romanticism and reflecting "American" values and experiences, Poe was writing about the darker side of life, mental illness, and the supernatural. None of his material would have been suitable for his American audience living in a newly established country seeking to define itself in the eyes of the developed world. The American vein of Romanticism, at least that side composed of the Transcendentalists, was interested in constructing the "new American man," and Poe was just a constant reminder of what the European artists already knew: that man was just a man. Rather than establish themselves as ordinary, degenerates, weak, or wild, the country wanted to present itself as a world power. The "French mind," conversely, belonged to an established power in the world, consisting of people who believed there was no superior culture to theirs. France provided a more pliable outlook towards literature and art that was hailed as "great" by one of their finest. Poe's world fit

in with this developed sense of place more successfully than it did with a fledgling culture.

Given Baudelaire's status as a non-American and as one of the founders of the Symbolist movement, he was removed completely from the American context within which the majority of Poe's work was conceived. The image of Poe that Baudelaire maintained was not the most accurate, and yet Poe's earliest international fame is fully dependent on his European popularity growth in the late nineteenth-century. This suggests his European illustrators and translators contributed much to his European reputation. Although there may have been some truth to Baudelaire's tortured version of Poe, he fails to integrate Poe's self-destructivity, alcoholism and familial struggle into the equation. In reality, Poe was a mix of the two versions; unlike Melville as a poet and merchant marine, or Whitman as a poet, carpenter and newspaper man, Poe had only his own literature to fall back on. His desire to edit an east coast magazine and his need to publish constantly signify the extent of his devotion to his art, and refusal to engage in any other occupation. With that said, this is the only version of Poe that Baudelaire was interested in; his status as a destitute husband and provider didn't interest Baudelaire— Baudelaire romanticizes Poe's substance abuse and dark genius in a way that allows that part of him to eclipse the more dangerous, practical parts, stripping away the man and inserting the beautifully tortured image.

Despite the questionable veracity of his self-reflective portrait, Baudelaire's Poe was embraced by the Symbolists, passed on to and carried across the fin de siècle by the Decadents, through World War I and into Modernism. In fact, once this version of Poe transitioned into a canon that appealed to the Modernist imagination, literary critics such

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as T.S. Eliot picked up the work. The increase in critical work surrounding his text and character added to the exponential growth of Poe's international reputation regardless of Eliot's personal distaste for the material, thereby complicating the "tortured genius Poe" that Baudelaire presented to the world years before. Eliot writes, "the impression we get of the influence of Poe is the more impressive, because of the fact that Mallarmé, and Valéry in turn, did not merely derive from Poe through Baudelaire: each of them subjected himself to that influence directly, and has left convincing evidence of the value which he attached to the theory and practice of Poe himself" (Eliot 328). Eliot frames his distaste through legitimate scholarship, given the fact that his literary predecessors did the same for Poe. Frames such as Baudelaire's and Eliot's altered the way the public would come to *view* Poe, but it was Baudelaire's attentive and accurate translations of Poe's work that formed the gateway through which the text was to be seen by the world.

Again, however, we return to ask, "why Poe?" What was it about the *work* that inspired Baudelaire to pick it up in the first place? Hyslop and Hyslop state that he was deeply attracted to Poe's morbidity (13). Baudelaire's own work, *Les Fleurs du Mal* for example, showed a similar interest in and appreciation for explorations into death and dying. For example, one of the later poems in the collection is called "The Metamorphoses of the Vampire," and after depicting a graphic sex scene, reads:

> When she had sucked the pith from my bones / And, drooping, I turned towards her / To give her the kiss of love, I saw only / An old leather bottle with sticky sides and full of pus! / I shut both eyes in cold dismay / And when I opened them both to clear reality, / By my side, instead of that powerful puppet / Which

seemed to have taken some lease of blood, / There shook vaguely the remains of a

skeleton, / Which itself gave the cry of a weathercock / Or of a sign-board, at the

end of a rod of iron, / Which the wind swings in winter nights (Baudelaire 121).

Here, Baudelaire presents the reader with a disturbing scene that invokes the Gothic

world on a multitude of levels, calling attention to themes that interested Poe. The

vampire, an icon of feminine power and sexuality, subverts traditional Victorian norms

and thus uses the Gothic to break away from the time period in which Baudelaire and Poe

were writing (Karschay 4). Furthermore, the imagery of the poem—for example, "There

shook vaguely the remains of a skeleton"—is horrifying to imagine or think about,

forcing the reader to confront his or her own degenerative habits and awareness of human

death and decay—and furthermore places the setting in a bleak, abandoned location to

mirror the tone, a trademark setting of the Gothic.

Finally, most resembling Poe and foreshadowing Symbolist interests,

Baudelaire's poem engages the supernatural. He does so most strongly when he states

"Which seemed to have taken some lease of blood." This line refers to the earlier

moments of the poem in which the powerful female figure has sex with the narrator, and

demonstrates the narrator's seeming lack of awareness of her true skeletal form during

the act itself. It calls into question the narrator's reliability: whether or not he's

experiencing the world through an intoxicant, and whether there are supernatural forces

at work. It's a powerful reimagining and evocation of major female figures in Poe's texts,

such as Ligeia and Madeline Usher. Both women overpower their male counterparts, the

narrator and Roderick Usher respectively, through implied sex and a resulting death.

Ligeia, the wife of the narrator, returns from the dead through the body of the narrator's

new wife, calling into question whether she's alive, dead, or somewhere in between; and Madeline, questionably in an incestuous relationship with her brother, comes back from the brink of death and a premature burial, killing her brother with just her final touch. Both of these women serve as models for the powerful female figure in Baudelaire's poem, who emerges from some deadly haunt to coerce the narrator into having sex with her.

Even more so, however, Baudelaire was attracted to the "rationality and conscious method which were essential features of Poe's literary doctrine" (Hyslop, Hyslop 13). Poe was immensely conscious of his own process and writing style, as shown by his detective tales—"Murder in the Rue Morgue," "The Purloined Letter," "The Mystery of Marie Roget,"— and his widely read essay "Philosophy of Composition," where he brings his reader through the calculated and even mathematical procedure followed in order to write "The Raven." For example, Poe writes, "My next thought concerned the choice of an impression, or effect, to be conveyed: and here I may as well observe that, throughout the construction, I kept steadily in view the design of rendering the work *universally* appreciable" (Poe 1376). Poe illustrates his rational consciousness on a few different levels. He's deeply engaged with and aware of his own process, leaving nothing up to chance and adding nothing but that which serves a specific purpose that he's already decided upon. He's also aware of his audience, consciously working with a desired effect on those he writes for in mind. Furthermore, that audience is not specific, but rather formed to be "universally appreciable," meaning that he's so conscious of "The Raven" that he's working to predict the effect the work will have on *all* audiences. Appropriately, "The Raven" was the only work that was well known and popular with the

public in his lifetime. The consciousness of the poet as creator of imaginary worlds is present in all of Poe's work, and Baudelaire found it both alluring and impressive.

The consciousness that drew Baudelaire to Poe's work also came from the Symbolist interest in the Gothic genre, of which both writers' work clearly was a part, and which would become a thread through which subsequent aesthetic movements were able to identify with for their own purposes. The interest in the science of consciousness and conscious creation returned the fin de siècle artists—both Symbolists and Decadents—to the Gothic laboratory. The fin de siècle scientist, or psychologist, made an intentional turn inward, using the self as laboratory in the same way that the Poe characters do (Taylor 17); if not already set within the mind, many of his tales include a separate, brain-like space which the character inhabits, seemingly all his own, from which he is safe to experiment on the world and tell his story. Whether the mental prison of the narrator's own making in "The Tell-Tale Heart," the room from which the narrator works in "The Purloined Letter," or Hop-Frog's empirical knowledge with which he creates combustible orangutan costumes to be used as murder tools, the characters in Poe's tales tend to allow the narrator or protagonist a space away from the world within which their work is done, whether that space be physical or mental. For the Symbolists, the turn inward towards conscious choice allowed the Gothic to appeal to them, with its use of the self as laboratory, and the short story as an external manifestation of internal experimentation (17).

Because of Baudelaire's translation of Poe's short stories into French, his work became accessible to nineteenth-century literary Europe; additionally, Baudelaire and his followers were founders of the Symbolist movement, a short but brilliant period of art

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and writing. In *The Symbolists,* Jullian explains that of all Baudelaire's work, the poetry was particularly well received by the group due to the fact that his poems were deeply rooted in all things both morbid and macabre, elements central to the movement (15). These characteristics were shared by both Baudelaire and Poe, helping Poe's poetry to appeal to the group as well. Through similarities such as this, as well as through Baudelaire's enthusiasm for Poe, other Symbolists would take up working with Poe's subject material, essentially moving one man's interest in Poe to a more widespread affectation. After Baudelaire translated the tales, Stéphane Mallarmé translated the poetry, most famously "The Raven," and Paul Valéry translated the essays. Poe's work was primed to be accepted by and intriguing to the Symbolists, and defining characteristics of the Symbolist movement embraced Poe's work.

The Symbolists loved and respected Baudelaire's admiration for Poe and interest in the supernatural, which was a prevalent theme in their own art and writing (Jullian 15). In *Poe Abroad,* Vines also addressed this attraction—she explains that the Symbolists, like Baudelaire, "admired the Poe of ordered thought, the master of artistic calculation" (12). Mallarmé most admired him for his emphasis on calculated language selection, which appropriately is seen through "The Raven" and "Philosophy of Composition," as well as the narrator's clear processes by which he acts in the three aforementioned detective tales. Despite Poe's often cloudy, unreliable narrators in both poems and short stories, he never lets the reader forget that all he writes is intentional, and builds towards his own conception of to the overall *effect* or *impression* conveyed. The writers and artists of the Symbolist movement are responsible for moving Poe first out of obscurity and second into the visual world. They found companionship in his aesthetic, noticed

how well it corresponded with their own and thus elevated his overlooked and underappreciated tales into a place of literary grandeur.

Surely there were other contemporary artists working with similar topics and using similar processes, so perhaps the most important thing that the Symbolists did for Poe was simply to *choose* to acknowledge his importance, despite the fact that he had been dead for years by this point. They chose him over other, more contemporary writers, and thus broke him out of posthumous obscurity, moving him beyond the interests of just Baudelaire. Additionally, they chose to focus on Poe rather than extending outwards towards more successful, better known American artists, such as Longfellow or Whitman. The ability to make this choice has much to do with the movement itself, as well as the fin de siècle time period through which the Symbolists lived. They existed in a time that simply wanted to *be* artistic (Jullian 8)—there was a common desire to be an artist, a writer. Gail Marshall writes that the fin de siècle glorified "dead young men" as the best poets, a designation to which Poe certainly qualified (2). More importantly, it was a time that deeply feared the coming end of the century. Fear turned into a pervasive psychological anxiety that would manifest through a Gothic revival in literature and visual art, and further helped Poe appeal to a wider audience, given his status as a post-apocalyptic writer. The fin de siècle broke down Victorian certainties through irrational disturbance, and thought was both reactionary and advanced (Kaye 55-57). The Symbolists were "by nature anxious for a return to the past…" (Jullian 25), and therefore turned backwards in time for inspiration. Additionally, underscoring their aesthetic was a dark romanticism that linked them to the Gothic, to Keats, Byron, and of course Poe. In

their art, they aimed to recapture the nostalgia of the past and add dreamy, surrealist undertones.

Furthermore, one of the foundational characteristics of the Symbolists was their preference for the imaginary over the real, and their engagement in a common revolt against naturalism and realism. They believed that art completed what nature began, and rejected nature altogether for the pursuit of "the idea," thus clearly demarcating the movement as one that chose the human over the natural world. This was deeply anti-romantic, and although Poe was technically working within the Romantic period, the works of his that glorified the natural world, such as "The Domain of Arnheim" and "Landor's Cottage," were and still are less frequently read. They are thus not nearly as strongly associated with Poe's name, due to the strength and thematic unification of his more popular work. The Symbolists did not take inspiration from writers such as Emerson and Thoreau given the emphasis both place on the natural world as the source of all things sublime. They also were not interested in poets like Longfellow and Whitman for the same reason. In fact, despite their desire to live as if they were *imitating* poets, the time period itself gave way to modern capitalism and the urban middle classes, thus stripping away the romantic, pastoral lifestyle emulated in other Romantic poetry and writing. Like Poe, Baudelaire worked and lived in the urbanscape, helping to influence his own conception of the "flaneur" in *The Painter of Modern Life.* Baudelaire conceived of this figure as an upper-class male populating the French urban landscape in the nineteenth-century, and specifically refers to Poe's short story, "The Man of the Crowd" as the perfect example of the flaneur (7). Both Baudelaire and Poe were men of the crowd, and while Poe was closer in status to the urban middle class than Baudelaire was,

the Symbolist conception of the *flaneur* became a way of reconciling his urban

background with their idea of the romanticized life of a poet.

Despite the Symbolists' admiration for Baudelaire and his opinions on Poe, they

abhorred his admiration for and friendship with Édouard Manet, who they believed was

more interested in Decadence than Symbolism (Jullian 15. Manet, however, became one

of the earliest influential artists to illustrate Poe's work in 1875, and once again, this was

due to Baudelaire's involvement. Because of the friendship between the Symbolist and

the painter, Baudelaire brought Poe directly into the visual world by asking Manet to

illustrate Mallarmé's translation of "The Raven" (Pollin 13). In Manet, a unifying force

amongst the great artists of the time, Baudelaire sensed an understanding of the division

between the dying and the picturesque, romanticism and realism, taking its place by

reaction of mental distaste (Valéry 107), which made him a prime candidate to translate

Poe's language not from English into French, but rather from written into visual. In 1884,

a few years after Manet illustrated "The Raven," Gustave Doré created his own, larger

collection of illustrations for the poem. Doré's "Raven" is stripped of all picturesque

qualities and is thus the last of the Romantics and the first of the Symbolists (Jullian 13).

Though Manet works on Poe by a Symbolist request, he was not actually considered a

part of the movement, thus making Dore a more appealing representative to the members

of the movement. Although it's unclear how exactly Dore came to discover Poe's work,

the close proximity in time between his and Manet's versions, Manet's reputation, and

Dore's prominent position within Symbolists make his interest understandable. The 24

Poe prints constituted his last work, and were published posthumously. They "are highly

representative of the academic art of the period and are strikingly different from the lithographs, published only eight years earlier, by Manet" (Gimbel 59).

The Symbolists gave way to the Decadents at the very end of the nineteenth-century, and they, too, revered Poe, further advancing his transition out of obscurity. Rather than working with the Poe that interested the Symbolists—those who looked to him out of a desire for a nostalgic return to the past, and respected his calculated, artistic thought—the Decadents began work on him taking inspiration from "the horror, mystery, dreams, and explorations of the disordered mind, what Andre Breton later called the 'convulsive beauty'" found within the work (Vines 12). Poe's transition from Symbolism to Decadence was grounded in his place within the Gothic genre, and furthermore his use of the grotesque. Wolfgang Kayser explains that the grotesque occurs when the supernatural and absurd mix together, creating a caricature that arouses contradictory feelings. That which is grotesque allows the reader or viewer to both smile and be appalled by the deformation of the world as it breaks apart (31)—the appeal to the Decadents here comes in the form of the opposition between contradictory effects. Normative binaries are skewed as the reader/viewer experiences two conflicting reactions. Additionally, the Gothic genre was a particularly fertile site for degeneration theory, which focused on the underbelly of urban society (Karschay 3), and furthermore mirrors the scientific debate about what it means to be "normal," particularly doing so through narrative and visual representation of monstrous forms of transgression (Karschay 5). Poe's work, as an entity imbued with the grotesque, appealed to the Decadents given the grotesque's emphasis on the "portrayal of restricted segments of

society, allowing readers to gain distance from events and thus win the freedom of self-assurance without actually getting uncomfortable" (Kayser 114).

Given that the Decadent era crossed the fin de siècle, beginning before and ending after, it's deeply defined by the anxieties of the end of the century, many of which were reflected in Poe's work fifty years earlier. For example, in the *Decadent Reader,* Asti Hustvedt writes that at the very end of the century, death and dying become central to pop culture, as metaphors between life and death became more prevalent. Disease and decline were defining characteristics of the Decadent movement, and degeneration theory was born. This theory, fundamental to the Decadents and criticized by Max Nordau in his 1892 text *Degeneration,* worked alongside people botched by nature, stating that people were no longer made in the image of God (Hustvedt 10).

Furthermore, deviations and perversities were seen not just as the way of the world, but were instead termed heroic, for those people who had them were living against nature (Hustvedt 18). This was once again a movement away from Naturalism and the Romantic reverence for the natural, idyllic, pastoral world, and moving towards the interest in degeneration as seen through the Gothic genre and grotesqueness. In fact, one of the most representative texts of the movement, by Joris-Karl Huysmans, titled *Against Nature,* catalogues the daily life of a Decadent. In her essay on teeth in Huysmans as inspired by Poe's "Berenice," Goulett states "That is the tension, too—between aestheticized intellectualism and corporeal suffering—that draws Jean des Esseintes, the bibliophilic protagonist of Huysmans's *À rebours*, to the works of writers like Poe and Baudelaire," (198) suggesting the presence of not just the Symbolists' Poe, but a direct link to Poe's impact on the Decadents themselves. Additionally, the movement owes its

preoccupation with degeneration to the naturalist view of human difference, and its imaginary, supernatural qualities to the Symbolists (13), both of which also appear in Poe's work. Poe presents mentally and physically "botched" people, such as Roderick and Madeline Usher, and Hop-Frog and Trippetta. He also certainly works with the world of the supernatural and imaginary, with characters such as the Red Death in "Masque of the Red Death," Ligeia, and Morella.

A great number of Poe's tales and poetry deal with life before and after death, but he almost always deconstructs the boundaries in place between the two. Deconstruction became a prominent theme in Decadent work, concerned deeply with the dissolution of binaries particularly around degeneration theory. For example, Stephen Karschay states "…deviant individuals could be excluded from society's normative field, while the potential invisibility of degenerative processes threated to dissolve the very boundaries established to contain them so that degeneration was perceived as the ubiquitous condition of a diseased society" (213). Through the deconstruction of binaries—normal/botched, for example—deviance is removed from the realm of the other. Poe's work also deconstructs the binaries between sane and insane, good and evil, normal and abnormal. In both Poe's work and in the Decadent movement, birth and growth are not necessarily positive, and death and decay are no longer necessarily negative. Rather, with stigmatized boundaries removed, all become part of one indivisible package which instead inspires contemplation (Denisoff 32).

British Decadent Aubrey Beardsley picked up Poe's tales before the turn of the century and Irish Decadent Harry Clarke began his work on the tales after World War I. Beardsley, one of the major figures in the Decadent movement, incorporated elements of

humor and used an intricate handling of lines, and took up Poe's work out of respect for his imagination. All of his illustrations are done in black and white. His work emphasized the sexuality inherent, but not always explicit, in many of the tales. For example, in "The Black Cat," Beardsley's work helps the reader realize that the tale is not just about animal cruelty, murder, and alcoholism, but also impotence. Doing so also called attention to the link between sex and death, blurring the lines between boundaries separating the two and returning to Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal*. For example, his illustration of "The Fall of the House of Usher" appears to depict neither Roderick nor Madeline, but rather both of them through one, androgynous entity. He was self-parodic (Denisoff 31), and imparted styles of the old masters, signaling another turn backwards in time, while fashioning iconoclastic art mocking Victorian life (Stokes 178). Beardsley also supplied the growing canon of illustrations of Poe's work with a highly stylized, neo-rococo orientation, signaling a stylistic transition from Dore and Manet. He managed to capture the essence of the somnambulistic ennui in his illustration of Madeline/Roderick from his "Usher" illustration, which contrasts with the high freneticism of Rackham's Modernist works. Much of Clarke's work, stylistically similar to Beardsley's, hails from Beardsley's cynical treatment of pleasure. Like Beardsley, he utilizes frantic line work, but with less interest in large, flat planes and more in the use of intricate arabesque line. He uses this technique to capture the essence of the woman in his version of "Ligeia," as she towers over the narrator, eclipsing him and forcing him very nearly into a worshipping position. Given the fin de siècle's impact into the twentieth-century, he combined that with post-war disillusionment, cruelty, violence, torture, orientalism of color and arabesque line (Pollin 8-9).

Because of the Symbolists and Decadents, Poe's gothic world was integrated into European culture as it moved from 1899 to 1900, officially entering the 20th century. The public's anxiety about degeneration and the turn of the century itself circulated into the larger sphere of cultural discourse, up to the start of the First World War. The art produced from 1875-1910 gave voice to those fears through displaced shapes, and horrific images of psychological and physical decay (Karschay 20-21). Stephen Karschay states that the Gothic genre's "inherent potential to speak to a culture's collective anxieties accounts for the genre's remarkable durability. '[T]he longevity and power of Gothic fiction unquestionably stem from the way it helps us address and disguise some of the most important desires, quandaries, and sources of anxiety, from internal and mental to widely social and cultural," (Karschay 20-21). Thus, the commonalities between the Decadents, late fin de siècle and Poe's gothic world allowed for the texts to be read with an emphasis on degenerate culture anxiety; conversely, the Symbolists, early fin de siècle, and Poe's rational, creative world emphasized the idea, the self as laboratory, and the supernatural creation process. Once the world was firmly into the 20th century and leaving the fin de siècle behind, attention began to shift towards Modernist tendencies, particularly those that resulted from World War I.

The aftermath of WWI found many veterans turning to the arts to reckon not with what the world was experiencing, but with that which they had experienced directly, placing horror, death, and a sobering reality at the forefront of the artistic interest. Otto Dix was one such veteran, and his paintings deal directly with thematic elements relating to war. His famous triptych, "Der Kreig," uses each of its three successive panels to represent the before, during, and aftermath of mechanized war. The brutally graphic piece

shows not a romanticized version of jingoistic patriotism, as had been the generally accepted view of war up to this point, but instead its true hideousness, it's truly grotesque nature. The hopeful boys that enter the war in the first panel end as bloody corpses with skeletons underneath their feet (Tatar 43). War becomes recognized as a complete annihilation of all sides, to the point where the mutual carnage displaces all distinctions between opponents. The portrayal of these events must have been, to some extent, a "coming to terms" with or a way of directly facing the demons that left the war with each surviving soldier, perhaps expunging them from the artist's head and bringing them to life so that the artist may then be given closure. Rackham's version of Poe occurred after the introduction of artistic violence such as Dix's, which resulted in an emphasis on the reality of the grotesque and mental illness, the true horror of death and torture, and the futility and meaninglessness of human life. Rackham lived in the modern world in which ideological realism as represented through alternative avenues—surrealism, cubism, Dadaism—was valued. His work emphasized the violence in Poe over the phantasmagorical environmental atmospheres, which helps to reconcile his work alongside that of other Modernist artists, such as Dix.

Another aspect of the Modernist movement that might have drawn artists and readers to Poe was its need to break from tradition, not only in terms of representation. Much of this sentiment likely came from the insufficiency of traditional, "behind closed doors" style of mourning that pervaded Victorian and Romantic societies. Salvatore Pappalardo writes, "In a time when traditional forms of public grieving were being abandoned, Modernist writing came to approximate a mourning ritual that, in contrast to Freud's optimistic completeness of his Trauerarbeit, refused to function as a curative

remedy" (197). Although he specifically refers to writing, it also applies to painting and other forms of Modernist artistic expression given the all-inclusive reach of the movement. Anticipating the Modernist aesthetic, but writing in the eighteenth-century, Edmund Burke argues, "When danger or pain press too nearly, they are incapable of giving any delight, and are simply terrible; but at certain distances, and with certain modifications, they may be, and they are, delightful, as we every day experience" (35). The physical portrayal of grotesque events became a therapeutic confrontation grounded in aesthetics and style, and while the Modernists did pursue alternate stylistic choices, such as surrealism and cartooning, they did so to access the truth.

The works that the Modernists created from their own experiences eventually made their way into the public canon, illuminating ways in which non-veterans, other artists, and the general public could mourn their own losses. Readers of Poe might have taken his work for the catharsis it was able to provide them, both experiencing and mourning what those they lost had while still remaining at arm's length. Certainly, the subject matter and its narrative rendering found a sympathetic cord in readership now capable of appreciating its essential terrors. Poe's work, like Dix's painting and Rackham's violent illustrations, engages in a sort of mourning. In Poe's case, mourning was usually performed over the death of a beautiful woman, given his own misfortune when it came to the women in his life dying tragic deaths. In "Philosophy of Composition," he writes, "the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world" (Poe 1379), which thus demonstrates his use of mourning as a way of confronting mental trauma, as well as a way of making art. Appropriately, Poe was the first artist to make mental illness the subject of his art. The

grotesque would have been helpful in representing this as well, as it shows the reality of the madness of life, ultimately revealing a very human heart (Kayser 63).

Following the tragedy of the First World War, visual art became a way to embody and announce new national identities, which further encouraged Rackham to pick out moments within Poe's text that allowed him to comment on the post-war atmosphere (Facos and Hirsch 1). The pre-war fin de siècle world carried the interest in the Gothic across the nineteenth-century, and then the wounds left by the war maintained a sort of need for cathartic engagement with horror. Poe's canon had already been working with themes that engaged with cathartic horror simply by existing and dealing with the variety of dark, behind-the-curtain topics. It finally became thematically appropriate, as opposed to its creation in the early nineteenth-century where themes such as mental illness and social decay were inappropriate topics for art or literature. Now, internationally, the world was ready to accept the darkness of *Poe's* world.

Once across the fin de siècle and through World War I, the Modernist era inherits Poe from the Decadents. No longer an American failure, Symbolist and Decadent work on Poe broadens the audience for his work and visual representations of it. Harry Clarke passes the metaphorical torch on to Rackham, who drew upon Clarke as inspiration for his own illustrations, and due to the dark subject matter, uses less whimsy than was typical for his work (Pollin 10). Rackham is the culmination of the four major artists working with Poe before him; Manet initiated the illustrations, and worked with the same material as Symbolist Dore, but was considered an early Decadent. This connected him with Beardsley, who directly influenced Clarke, who directly influenced Rackham. Rackham's 1935 version of Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* is one of the most

well-known collections of illustrations on Poe's work. This particular edition allows for analysis using the artistic characteristics gained over the passage of time from early fin de siècle to modernity. This cultural movement establishes that these illustrations, while removable from the writing itself, become integral counterparts to the Poe canon that shape the public's reception of and relationship with the tales.

The fin de siècle movements carried Poe's work out of obscurity, and simultaneous introduced the illustrative accompaniment to the tales and poetry. These illustrations, given that their creation was concurrent to Poe's development and popularization, are elevated to a place that endows them with more power than what would be given to a visually pleasing accompaniment. What happens between the illustrations and writing subvert the boundaries that separate mediums, and engage in a reversal of James Heffernan's definition of ekphrasis, where the visual is influenced by the verbal, rather than the other way around. He writes, "I propose a definition simple in form but complex in its implications: ekphrasis is the verbal representation of visual representation" (3). As a Greek term, ekphrasis is used more generally as a concept that relates two different artistic mediums through one's attempt to engage with the essence or form of the other, thus making the term more widely useful. However, the illustrations are not simply ekphrastic, meaning they do not simply reconfigure the material from verbal text into a visual representation of that same textual matter; they move one step forward and engage in Derrida's supplementary theory, found within *The Truth in Painting.* Rackham's work, as an amalgamation of all the visual works created before his time, builds upon the Gothic tendencies of the fin de siècle and post-war disillusionment, and thus becomes a collection of *parerga* for the *ergon* that is Poe's text.

In order for a given work to function as a *parergon* for another given *ergon*, in this case Rackham's illustrations for Poe's text, there must be something *lacking* in the *ergon* that calls out to and interacts with the *parergon*. According to Derrida, the lack is what opens up space for the supplement and forms the frame, which ultimately becomes the *parergon* (42). Thus, in order to prove that Rackham creates something that functions not solely as a representation but as a *parergon*, the lack in Poe's written work must first be established. Derrida writes,

> "The *parergon* inscribes something which comes as an extra, exterior to the
> proper field…but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, abut onto, brush
> against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside only to the
> extent that the inside is lacking. It is lacking in something and it is lacking from
> itself" (56).

Both Poe's poetry and short stories are visually descriptive; what he achieves with language is so similar to a work of visual art that one could argue that illustrations really aren't even necessary. So, where is the lack that's necessary to establish the work as an *ergon* in need of a *parergon*?

Burton Pollin goes so far as to acknowledge the fact that verbal text is quite capable of creating visual imagery and writes, "There is, surely, an apparent contradiction in the idea of a useful graphic representation of details in a narrative passage, such as the appearance of the character or actions related to the plot, in so far as the words, if well chosen, are intended to convey everything necessary for imagining the episode" (2). Here, he explains that it may seem repetitive to include a visual representation if the text itself does a sufficient job of creating one, which Poe's work most certainly does. If the

text already provides enough detail for an image to be created for each reader in his or her own mind, thus deeming a visual representation potentially unnecessary, it's unclear why an illustration might be needed in the first place, if not simply for pleasure. However, the "episode," in the case of visual representation, is less about the text as a whole, than it is about one specific moment, whether that be the climax, the highest moment of violence, or most grotesque character from the tale. Yet, one still needs to ask what lack the illustration itself addresses in order to become a meaningful *parergon* to the *ergon* to Poe's text.

In more than one way, it's Poe himself who answers these questions. He coins the term "graphicality" first in reference to works by Margaret Fuller. Pollin catalogs the advent of the term, stating that Poe felt there were certain passages in her work "unrivalled for *graphicality* (why is there not such a word?), for the force with which they convey the true by the novel or unexpected, by the introduction of touches which other artists would be sure to omit as irrelevant to the subject. This faculty too, springs from her subjectiveness, which leads her to paint a scene less by its features than by its effects" (Pollin 1-2). Thus, the graphicality of a piece refers to its ability to convey truth, perhaps referring to the *etymon*, as described in *The Truth in Painting.* The *etymon*, a truth that is one and naked reaches the signified, signifier, and referent by the *opposition* occurring between its presence and its representation (Derrida 20). The difference between the *etymon* (its presence) and the avenue through which it is told (its representation), meaning written text, establishes cracks in the texts where other avenues of representation, such as illustration, may take hold. Thus, Derrida states that "one makes of art in general an object in which one claims to distinguish an inner meaning,

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the invariant, and a multiplicity of external variations through which, as through so many veils, one would try to see or restore the true, full, originary meaning: one, naked" (22). Here, then, Poe's art—his text, and the *graphicality* it exudes—is *his* attempt to convey the naked truth through touches unique to the author or artist who employs them. These are the "adumbrations," or textual sketches that Cantalupo describes in her work (5). Readers and viewers work towards accessing the *etymon* by searching for its presence in the representations that are experienced.

Poe's own opinion of "extras" with or within a given text is particularly important given his expectations in literary and poetic creation, as shown by his fastidiousness for an intentional creative process, in the "Philosophy of Composition." Poe states that despite Poe's many criticisms of "distracting, [any] irrelevant, [any] non-contributory elements," he never refers specifically to illustration—even in his 100+ reviews of illustrated texts—but instead elevates it as equal with the text (Pollin 2). Pollin includes a statement from Poe, in which Poe admits that the illustration *is* disruptive given that it is not always in accordance with the reader/viewer's understanding of the text; he continues that it is a major distraction, which is perhaps an argument against illustrative additions, but that the pleasure gained by the addition far outweighs the minor measure in which the intrusion is disturbing (Pollin 2-3). Poe, fond of removing all things extraneous (of which, to him, there were many), believed in the power of illustration as a worthwhile addition. The inclusion of the image allows the reader/viewer to compare and contrast comprehension of the text with an artist's rendition, and heightens the sense of pleasure gained from puzzling out the author's intent, given that it adds *another* element to puzzle out, both alone visually and visually in conjunction with the text. The inclusion of active

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puzzling increases the reader/viewer's ability to reckon with not just the text, but rather the truth that the text is working to describe.

Although Poe's short stories and poetry stand alone as finished works, their true complexity is *less* without the addition of the illustration, as the illustration, according to and *sanctified* by Poe himself, affords a more pleasurable puzzle to the reader-sleuth. It merits mention that Poe himself was fond of puzzles, cryptograms, and the posing and solving of mysteries, which can be seen through his own attempt at puzzling out of the universe in his long prose poem, "Eureka." It gives the reader more representational clues through which to work with an eye towards the *etymon*, and does so by way of visual and verbal authorial "touches," which complicate the view of the work simply by their inclusion. With more representations of the work, the reader-sleuth has more ability to edge towards the presence of the *etymon*, and thus is able to appreciate the *ergon* more fully. Thus, Poe's *written* version of the work he conceives, while deeply independent and verbally graphic, is *always* lacking, as it is but one version of the full truth. Rackham's visual take—like those of the other illustrators that worked with Poe before him—increases the artistic avenues through which the reader/viewer can interact with Poe's tales, as does the time in which he was working. Because of the fact that these avenues are established *alongside* the establishment of the tales as culturally worthwhile pieces, they're just as deeply involved with the *etymon*/truth of the piece as the texts themselves are. Rackham's work is a uniquely modern, post-war, twentieth-century reimagining of Poe's work, thus adding not only a visual framework, but a twentieth-century context as well. His art is clearly distinguished from the nineteenth-century art made by his predecessors—their art has a distinctly Victorian aesthetic when compared to

Rackham's. For example, the static quality inherent in Beardsley and Clarke contrasts significantly with Rackham's illustrative dynamism.

Lorraine Janzen Kooistra expands on the power an image can provide to a text in *The Artist as Critic.* She explains that the illustrator actually has more control over the text than the original author does (3), given that his or her visual interpretation directs the reader/viewer's interpretation. The eye naturally takes in the picture first, then moves to the lines to read. Because it's seen first, illustration makes an immediate impact and influence, and serves to mediate between text and image as the reader/viewer continues to move through the lines. After reading, the image is looked at once more to be reviewed for accuracy and stylistic choices. Thus, the image creates a more active participant and works towards the true meaning (*etymon*) and wholeness that can never actually happen (Kooistra 12-13). The image therefore, while still in a secondary, *parergonal* position, reflects one textual reality, and thus becomes a lesser but more subversive repetition of the text (9). A reader of Rackham's illustrated version of *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* would interact with the text and imagery as outlined above, moving from a quick survey of Rackham's work into a reading of Poe's writing, and back to Rackham's picture for a comparison. The illustrative addition forces the reader to consider the importance of the *moment* being illustrated, either in terms of plot, context, or atmospheric effects. It adds time spent with the pages, but also gives the reader/viewer a comparative tool through which to complicate his or her own meaning taken from the text. Perhaps he or she noticed a moment in which the artist took liberty with the text, or rather a piece of the text that the artist chose not to touch; these artistic *choices* serve to

elaborate on, emphasize, or otherwise call attention to moments in text, which the reader/viewer is then left to ponder.

Given that Arthur Rackham was a Modernist author, that which his illustrative *parerga* seeks to fill in within the lines of Poe's stories is inherently Modernist. Just as Doré viewed the text through the eyes of a Symbolist, and Beardsley through the eyes of a Decadent, Rackham's time period and cultural experience at least partly determined what elements of Poe's work he chose to emphasize and work with, and furthermore, the styles he used to do so. Thus, before jumping into the stories, it's important to figure out what it was about them that Rackham may have noticed, that called out to a Modernist interpretation in the same way that there were certain elements that first appealed to Baudelaire. In the late nineteenth-century, Baudelaire began by commenting that Poe's work was ahead of his time, meaning that the American people were not ready to appreciate it fully. So, part of the Modernist interest in Poe's work may have occurred due to the new state of the audience he was interested in working with, and furthermore given that his audience, and the majority of his early illustrators, was now fully international. However, it also may have come from the Modernist ideal that rejected American parochialism, and a desire for a return to European high culture. So, the idea that Poe was rejected by his own countrymen even as he was being embraced by Baudelaire, and thus Europeans, was reason enough for Modernists to reevaluate Poe's contributions.

The time period through which Rackham lived primed him to experience fully the social and psychological moves that would accompany fin de siècle move into Modernism. Fred Gettings writes,

This Arthur Rackham was born into a Dickensian world. It was a world which

showed some outward signs of disquiet and unrest, as social stratas slipped under

magmatic tensions, but it was essentially complacent in outlook, fearing little for

the future and seeking an identity through a gradual and reluctant amelioration of

social conditions directed towards some gradual and undefined conception of

social evolution (9).

World War I shattered conceived complacency, and without warning dropped the world

into that impending, but until then unrealized, disquiet and unrest. The "Dickensian"

world was no more, and through trauma emerged the modern era. Rackham thus found

himself painting during the ideological shift over the fin de siècle, and happened to

picked up Poe right at the rise and height of the Modernist movement. His work is thus

inherently, powerfully Modernist, and imbues onto Poe's text a *parergon* that brings the

work into a frame of interest for those living in and affected by the same world that

Rackham is. No longer does he emphasize the supernatural elements of Poe's work, but

rather the reality of human terror and potential to destroy; no longer does he work to

simply break boundaries, he asks the reader/viewer to question why they existed in the

first place; no longer does he emphasize the romantic and melancholic nature of death,

but rather emphasizes the bleakness caused by its wake.

CHAPTER TWO
An Illustrated Companion, a Visual Champion: Rackham's Supplemental Power to Fill,
Alter, and Promote Poe's Text

As shown over the course of my first chapter, many years and a parade of

established visual artists form the bridge that connects Arthur Rackham to Poe. Despite

creating his illustrations for *Tales of Mystery and Imagination* well after the Symbolist

and Decadent trends had been displaced by Modernism, Rackham's work falls into a

natural progression of stylistic influence alongside the major visual contributors of the

movements before. Thus, the visual Poe that Rackham found himself working with was

significantly more established and respected by the public than the Poe first illustrated by

Manet, Dore, Beardsley, and Clarke. As a successor of the aforementioned greats,

Rackham brings Poe into Modernity. His illustrations move away from emphasizing the

distinctive tastes found in Symbolist and Decadent renditions of Poe, instead representing

Modernist aesthetic. Symbolism and Decadence were both seen as essential predecessors

of Modernism, just as the four preceding artists are essential predecessors of Rackham

(Jullian 10). In fact, Rackham even goes so far as to credit Beardsley with changing the

course of the illustrated book in the western world (Whitaker 19), demonstrating his

awareness of Beardsley as an artist and linking himself to the other Poe artists who

preceded him. This chapter examines Rackham's works not just from their role as

representations of Poe's writing, but as representations of the art that came before and the

time period that arguably did the most to popularize Poe's work, establishing the

illustrations as the *parerga* that fill the lacks in the written work that identify it as an

ergon.

By the time Rackham was working with the material in the twentieth-century, the international perception of Poe, though still tracing back to Baudelaire, was built on a wider variety of interests and public and critical interpretations. More artists had worked with the texts, more critics and writers had written on them, and more translators made the tales more universally accessible. No longer was Poe in need of exposure by the time Rackham began working; rather Poe's work and reputation had reached a point that allowed for more artistic freedom and creative liberty, given that it was established already as being worthy. Furthermore, his particular artistic style and placement in time designate him as an ideal candidate for the study of the visual Poe. While Rackham was born in the same century as Poe, he spent an almost equal time living in the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries, which shaped his response to Poe. Passing through the fin de siècle—which, as we have seen, propelled Poe as a figure of interest for the visual artists, most notably for the Symbolists and Decadents—Rackham was able to pursue efforts at visualizing Poe from mid-life to the end of his career.

Furthermore, one could even say that Arthur Rackham was, in some ways, a Modernist artistic counterpart to Poe's Romantic literary roots. Biographer James Hamilton writes, "Rackham's illustrations to [Poe] show him at his most imaginative and observant of human nature" (11). Although for much of his career he worked with fantasy and whimsy, the imaginative and cartoonish realism he applied to Poe emphasizes an interest in and understanding of human nature at its most visceral, just as Poe's texts do. While often masked underneath supernatural occurrences and shocking horror, Poe's tales attempt to show a version of reality that was not often contemplated during the Romantic and Victorian eras, much less documented through literary art. His

texts use gothic features and supernatural overtones to discuss the real banality of human relationships, the very real social and emotional implications of mental illness, and the dark fantasies that civilizations suppress, all building towards a representation of the darker side of human nature. Hamilton continues, "…In dealing with issues of good and evil, pleasure and pain, comfort and misery, the beautiful and the grotesque, Rackham expressed in graphic form, and at their most elemental, feelings and qualities that every human has experienced, and probably always will" (9). In many ways, Rackham and Poe use the same thematic avenues to portray the human experience, and as a Modernist, Rackham lent Poe's extraordinary supernatural works a degree of ideological realism that helped to ground Poe's romantic hysteria and thereby make his work more relevant to the post-WWI era public.

In order to be capable of remaining relevant for decades and inspiring ekphrastic discourse, Poe's texts must prove themselves rich enough for people from a variety of human, artistic and literary movements to interact with them. With that said, the text must also lack something, opening up a space through which readers, artists, and other writers could add their own meaning and contribution, shifting the text alongside the times it exists in and keeping the original piece in circulation. The *parergon* cannot simply be tacked on to the whole, completed text. A place as an afterthought would restrict the *parergon* from working both alongside and within the text, which alters the way that it interacts with readers. If the text is complete, it cannot accept change and new interpretation in the same way as it can if there is something missing from it. Without the lack, a supplement is only an addition. The interchangeable, transformative *parergon* fills the cracks in a narrative that the author leaves there, either purposefully, as a

representation of his or her times, or without intent. It's through these cracks in the language that illustrators, such as Rackham, were able to imbue the text with that which mattered during *their* time periods. They shifted the tales and poetry from a work created during the Romantic era, to one revered and built on in the Symbolist era, to a subject through which the Decadents could construct their parodic re-imaginations, to a Modernist aesthetic.

The lack present in an *ergon* allows it to display a sort of chameleon quality, taking on whatever meant most to the audience of a given time period, allowing it to survive through temporal and cultural shifts. Poe's text, while remaining inherently closed and complete as an entity over centuries, uses the cracks left within it to appeal to illustrators, who utilize the moments in which information is left out, adding in their own and adapting his stories to their needs. In the following pages, I illuminate the spaces in which Poe's text uses its own lack to call out to illustrators, particularly to Rackham, and the way in which the resulting illustration fills in the lack. This moves the text one hundred years into the future and cultivated a fresh reaction to characters and tales.

Poe's language is insidious, brimming with darkness and melancholy, and deeply descriptive. Each short story devotes significant time to painting the atmospheric mood in which it takes place. Every spatial element is aptly described, and they lend themselves to transporting the reader to experience whatever the narrator dictates. It seems appropriate for painters, inherently interested in conveying visual experiences and atmospheres, to find an appeal in Poe's graphically Gothic work. However, I argue that it's more than that—Poe's work is grotesque, but it's also heavily set in the supernatural, and the

imaginary. The short stories always involve some sort of fantastical element, something that doesn't quite exist within the real world, or some mystery that feels otherworldly, yet also comment on something unmistakably *human*. By illustrating such works, artists are able to confront the psychological trauma of the times, and yet again remove themselves from it and create closure by acknowledging the strange, imaginary ghostliness that each text contains.

The Symbolists and Decadents were interested in elevating the supernatural over the real as a way of representing evil (Jullian 49), which imbued their illustrations of Poe with a fantastical imagery and iconography, carrying his supernatural subtext across the fin de siècle. However, once brought into the modern world, the emphasis shifted back towards representing reality, using Poe's constructions of the grotesque and supernatural to make statements about the real world. In fact, the illustrations move away from the supernatural and towards the grotesque, a middle ground between fantasy and our world, alienating awareness of the familiar under the impact of abysmal forces (Kayser 37). A gothic effect is created despite moving away from actual supernatural events—realistic oddities become a departure point from the world, penetrating the soul and glimpsing the real world underneath social norms (40), ultimately representing a world in the process of dissolution and estrangement (43). Of all Poe's illustrators, Rackham's status as a Modernist allowed him to best translate Poe's own understanding of the terror in his work not as originating solely from the German gothic shocker tale, but rather from the human soul.

Before bringing in any of the texts that Rackham illustrated, one must

acknowledge the fact that Poe actually grapples with visual/verbal ekphrastic discourse in

his own texts, particularly in his lesser-known tales, such as "The Domain of Arnheim"

and "Landor's Cottage." Neither of these stories are illustrated[3], but instead make

commentaries on visual art, both natural and man-made. In "The Domain of Arnheim,"

Poe writes about a landscape artist named Ellison, "While the component parts may defy,

individually, the highest skill of the artist, the arrangement of these parts will always be

susceptible of improvement" (860). Here, he admits that while the "component parts,"

meant here as the natural landscape but seen here as the *author's* text, cannot be

improved by the artist, the "*arrangement*" is always susceptible of improvement. The

arrangement—the material, the viewpoint, the perspective—is movable. This concept

returns to Poe's conception of the place illustration holds in literature; the illustration is

part of the arrangement, and it can thus be moved alongside the text. While the artist may

not be able to reproduce the text exactly, they can add something to it by way of its

rearrangement and re-imagination. Here, Poe also points out the occasional weakness of

narrative telling compared to visual showing. He writes, "I despair of conveying to the

reader any distinct conception of the marvels which my friend did actually accomplish. I

wish to describe, but am disheartened by the difficulty of description, and hesitate

between detail and generality" (864). And yet, the narrator still verbalizes his wish to

restrain from doing so, heightening—in its own way—the effect that visual art has. The

reader, unable to actually see the sight that the narrator sees, is further impressed by what

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[3] Rene Magritte does have a *painting* titled "The Domain of Arnheim," but it appears to be more of a standalone piece inspired by Poe rather than an illustration meant as a direct accompaniment to the story.

he does describe, because he or she now knows that even the graphic description that he or she reads is insufficient in describing the picture. His or her imagination will do, but is enhanced when supplemented by a physical manifestation of a second imagination, set out on paper, with which the reader may compare with his or her own.

Rackham's place in time as a Modernist defines his approach to illustration, and it's his specific ability to fill Poe's lack with Modernist values that helped thrust the texts into widespread recognition. The Modernists used non-traditional avenues of representation to depict realist imagery and ideology, such as violence. After the termination of World War I, graphic violence began to pervade art even if not always depicted
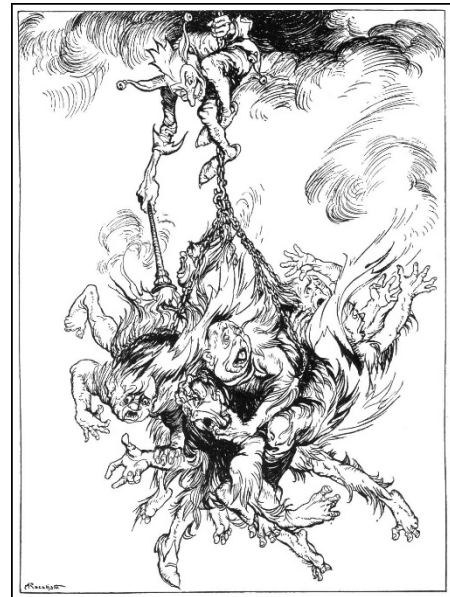

Figure 1: "Hop Frog." Arthur Rackham (1935)

realistically. From their beginnings with Manet, illustrations of Poe's work became increasingly violent, with a greater emphasis on complex facial expression and less on atmosphere—it was Poe's texts that allowed the illustrators to project their sensibilities onto themselves. Rackham's work participates in this, but employs cartoonish imagery to depict realism. Although commentaries on the real human violence and terror present in Poe's tales, Rackham's illustrations maintain separation from the realistic *gore* of violence by turning the characters into cartoons. For example, he completes two illustrations of the climactic moment in "Hop Frog," (fig. 1) where the freakish, mistreated dwarf Hop Frog strings up the king and his advisors and sets them on fire. It's a deeply dark and disturbing piece that chooses to draw attention away from the

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grotesqueness of Hop Frog's figure, instead emphasizing the violence that a mistreated individual is capable of doing to others.

However, despite the content, Rackham's illustration is almost silly—the faces are bulbous, simplistic, and fairly flat. They certainly are neither accurate depictions of the human face, nor are they melting as they would be if truly set on fire. By depicting this scene in a cartoonish way, Rackham is able to comment on a violent scene that emphasizes not the horror of the gore, but the *terror* of the act itself. Burke defines terror and horror as being of the mind, and of the body, respectively. He writes, "The ideas of pain, sickness, and death, fill the mind with strong emotions of horror" (35). Rackham's illustrations would emphasize horror if they were interested in gore and bodily decay— however, because he refrains from using gore, he instead plays on terror, which Burke defines as "No passion so effectually robs the mind of all its powers of acting and reasoning as *fear*" (Burke 49). Rackham moves violence from the physical, corporeal realm to a psychological one. He does not soften the imagery—as Hamilton describes, Rackham was conscious of his own cultural moment and thus emphasizes violence (109). However, he instead presents the truth through an alternate avenue that maintains the terror while simultaneously commenting on the ideological reality of human violence.

Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" is picked up by both Clarke, a Decadent, and Rackham. The text itself is, as far as Poe's canon goes, fairly light in its uses of the supernatural—instead, he explores substance abuse, revenge, trickery, and live burial. It's an intensely *human* text that uses the relationship between Fortunato and Montresor to illuminate the atrocities that humans are able to commit against one another. While

Figure 2: "The Cask of Amontillado," Harry Clarke (1919). Inset of Montresor

Clarke's version presents the evil character of Montresor with some element of the supernatural, Rackham's version uses grotesque facial expressions to hone in on the exchange between the two men. This comparison calls on the Modernist aesthetic of Rackham's illustrations. While Rackham's "Cask," (fig. 3) emphasizes the facial expressions and confrontation between the two characters, Clarke's (fig. 2) depicts Montresor looking down onto Fortunato. He's effeminate, robotic, and almost elvish in feature. His body is posed awkwardly, which increases his otherworldliness. He isn't engaged directly with Fortunato, but rather hovers above him and in the background, demonstrating an attention to atmospheric creepiness rather than Rackham's interest in chronicling the human intent and character within the act.

As a short story, "The Cask of Amontillado," has a lack through which Clarke's illustration engages with it—Rackham also engages with the same lack. The morbid entombment of the living Fortunato occurs within an initially whimsical, carnivalesque setting that becomes ever more dank and putrid as the narrative moves farther into the enclosed space of Montresor's family crypt. The two, while always moving downward, move deeper into the damp, nitre-covered walls of the space in which Montresor has doomed Fortunato to die. Poe writes,

I passed down a long and winding staircase, requesting him to be cautious as he

followed. We came at length to the foot of the descent, and stood together on the

damp ground of the catacombs of the Montresors. The gait of my friend was unsteady, and the bells upon his cap jingled as he strode.

"The pipe," said he.

"It is farther on," said I; but observe the white web-work which gleams from these cavern walls." He turned towards me, and looked into my eyes with two filmy orbs that distilled the rheum of intoxication.

"Nitre?" he asked, at length.

"Nitre," I replied. "How long have you had that cough?"

"Ugh! ugh! ugh! – ugh! ugh! ugh! – ugh! ugh! ugh! – ugh! ugh! ugh! – ugh! ugh! ugh!" My poor friend found it impossible to reply for many minutes (Poe 850).

Here, Poe is depicting literal movements downward and underground, mirroring the experience of a burial. However, he takes the sentiment further by depicting the experience one would have if he were to wade directly down into the earth, as would occur in a *live* burial. Poe's attention to space allows the reader to experience the encroaching darkness, dampness, and eventual suffocation of being buried alive. The so-called "friends" descend downward into the burial ground of the fallen Montresors, a familial tomb. The air is damp, like freshly dug earth and the walls are covered with a substance that expands into massive, crustaceous growths that naturally block any cracks viable for escape. Fortunato splutters out a cough that sounds more like a choke, more suffocation than a cold. He's in the process of being buried alive before Montresor even shackles and walls him in.

Montresor and Fortunato moving downwards into the crypt is an example of a textual sketch in Poe's text that Rackham chooses to focus on, supplementing the cracks with his illustrated take. It's a moment in which the lack that Derrida discusses presents itself, opening up the text for a *parergon* which nods to its own time. As the reader moves across the passage, he or she walks alongside Montresor and Fortunato as they descend into the catacombs. This is aided by the fact that the tale is told in a first-person confessional, bonding the reader closely to the interaction. Poe works to illustrate the atmospheric change that occurs as they make this movement through space—he includes the white, filmy web of nitre, and shows that it increases with their movement by pointing to Fortunato's intoxication while they are farther up, and later shows Fortunato coughing as they reach the bottom. Poe's inclusion of not just a few instances of "ugh!" but rather fifteen of them, forces the reader to pay attention to the rapid change in Fortunato's constitution, brought on by the depth to which they've travelled. He's no longer simply drunk, but also declining in overall health.

Poe's sketch—the specific way through which he chooses to illustrate Montresor and Fortunato's downward burial—opens up space in the tale for a *parergon*. The atmosphere and action that Poe creates through word choice amounts to the audience *feeling* something, rather than just reading a scene. While Poe's verbal image is fully complete, the fact that the reader is left feeling some aspect of what the characters would have felt demonstrates the complexity of the moment, and invokes the possibility of different audiences experiencing different emotional reactions towards the scene. One reader might use the atmospheric sickness and downward claustrophobia to reach a state of terror, and another might feel a sense of intrigue. Given the ambiguity of Fortunato's

crime, one may empathize with the wronged Montresor taking the law into his own hands, or instead feel for the unfortunate Fortunato as he meets an unimaginably grisly end. Poe's intentional ambiguity allows for the empathy to shift between these two characters, depending on the tastes and understanding of any individual reader. Either way, Poe's attention towards the effect that can be created by textual sketching demonstrates the problem of the *etymon*, and the reason that we're interested in utilizing the *parergon* in the first place. Here, the addition of an illustration would provide a supplementary avenue through which textual meaning could be made, meaning that the illustration would gain the power to either recreate this same feeling through a different medium, or instead choose to emphasize another sketch found within the scene. The illustration would provide another piece of the narrative *etymon* through which the reader/viewer could insert him or herself into the ultimate exploration.

This moment, as an authorial touch and moment where the limitations of the text become clear, also proves itself as something that engages specifically with the Modernist time period in which Rackham—or, any artist—is working, adding the Modernist, post-war period into our understanding of what lacks, and what the *parergon* fills. Here, one sees Poe's authorial touch by way of his own historical preoccupation with his own fear of a live burial. The active movement of two living men downwards into an underground tomb demonstrates their willingness, whether sober or intoxicated, to participate in something that puts both of their lives in danger, or at least makes them face their own mortality. Poe shows the active, downward motion as a way to capture the intentionality of the move, rather than simply placing them into the below-ground position. In the post-war era, the intentionality of men entering a situation where they too

may end up below the ground, either willingly or not, was something that the world was still reeling from. Trench warfare gave way to a feeling of live burial as well, or at least underground claustrophobia. The ideological realism that the Modernist era was in part defined by made this moment of live burial appropriate for Rackham to take interest in, given its clear investigation into the darkened depths of the human psyche.

Rackham's illustration of "The Cask of Amontillado" (fig. 3) reflects the damp, living burial so powerfully due to the chaotic, encroaching nature of the pictorial elements as well as the line work and coloration. The illustration contains only black, white, and barely-there pale pink, leaving an incomplete feeling around the work. The dominant, eye catching nitre at the top of the page is shown as a creeping, incongruous mass, thus demonstrating the importance of the atmosphere in foreshadowing Fortunato's death. The line work on the walls and floor serves to add dimension to the piece, but also heightens the level of chaos that so pervades this moment in the text, and gives the architecture a "mundanely substantial" feeling (Whitaker 20). The eye, though initially drawn to the nitre, cannot focus on one moment over the next due to the multitude of lines in

Figure 3: "The Cask of Amontillado," Arthur Rackham (1935)

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background work. Here, chaos contributes to the spatial anxiety found so often in Poe's work, because the viewer cannot possibly ignore the claustrophobic space that is heightened by the use of short, flat lines. Frantic line work does not create depth, but instead shrinks the space and makes it feel smaller than it already is. It also heightens the psychological anxiety because it induces panic by way of disorder. Additionally, there is some mortar overlapping onto the bricks that have already been lain. Its presence creates a sense of the wall as a work in progress, intensifying Fortunato's terror by virtue of his own awareness that the concrete is slowly hardening into place. Perhaps he is even able to smell the substance as it slowly turns from something pliable and liquid to something hard and immovable, part of the bricks themselves.

After the initial shock that accompanies the dark, suffocating nitre, perhaps the most entrancing and noticeable qualities in the illustration are the facial expressions. Atzmon writes,

"The best Rackham illustrations are conceptually suggestive—facial expressions, gestures, and compositions are "loaded" with symbolism and with hidden and obvious implications. Rackham brings this about by using exaggerated facial characteristics phrenologists (and physiognomists) attribute to negative behavior such as brutish sexuality and violence" (Atzmon 67).

If the background lines create spatial and psychological distress, the facial expressions of Montresor and Fortunato only elevate this capability. The sharp, jagged lines of their faces endow a depth unto the characters that's so obviously missing from the rectangular space itself—Montresor threatens with his challenging, unblinking eyes and cocky,

unapologetic grin. He inserts his upper body into the cubicle, affronting Fortunato and literally intruding ironically into what will soon become Fortunato's end of life living space. However, Rackham maintains Poe's empathetic apathy, aligning the two heads and pairs of hands at precisely the same horizontal level; neither rises above the other, and power is signified solely by the chains around Fortunato's hands, and a rapier and trowel in Montresor's. As Montresor leans into the space to confront his enemy, his movement suggests a foreshadowing of his own compulsion to confess his tale.

Fortunato's fear is shown in his pleading eyes, but even more so by his stance. He at once positions his twisting torso forwards towards the opening as he struggles against the chain, and simultaneously pushes his lower body towards the wall as he cowers from Montresor. His uncertainly evokes the feeling of encroaching, claustrophobic hysteria which is so clearly occurring within the text, but also pervades Poe's canon as a major thematic element. He is chained, but in a way that still allows some movement, particularly in his legs. The freedom given unto his legs almost suggests that he has the ability to escape, but the presence of the chains and the rapidly drying mortar reminds us that no matter how much movement he may try to make, he is still doomed. It's a brutal psychological trick, and one last laugh for Montresor—the sense of possible motion allows Fortunato to retain a glimmer of hope, which Montresor watches slowly extinguish with each lain brick. The fear here is intensely human—there are no supernatural inclusions, instead leaving the reader/viewer to confront the terror one is capable of feeling, strictly at the hands of another human being.

Here, Rackham grapples with the scene during which Fortunato and Montresor descend into the catacombs, moving downward through space and time, and becoming a *parergon* that answers the lack in the short story as *ergon*. The short story pursues one avenue of the description of the downward movement, and the illustration, though working with a slightly later scene, answers it and supplements it as an alternate way of experiencing the sensation of the tale. Because it's a single illustration, Rackham cannot actually show movement occurring, and furthermore cannot describe it happening as an ongoing process. Instead, he chooses to focus on exactly what Poe uses to quantify the movement downwards as something filled with dread and sickness: the nitre-covered walls and ceiling. The claustrophobia surrounding Fortunato that Rackham creates using the nitre on the walls mirrors that which Poe creates with his words, but enhances the way the reader/viewer can access it. Poe's text shows us the gradual sickness that comes with moving into a subterranean, evil place that will be Fortunato's undoing, and Rackham's image shows sickness encroaching directly onto Fortunato as Montresor looks on, achieving a similar sense of intentionality and murder, but through a vastly different lens.

Instead of watching the two men descend and the one fated to die become gradually more ill, one sees the cause of the illness descend upon the victim, isolating him and almost acting according to the aggressor's will. The nitre hanging down from the ceiling emphasizes the downward motion, too, as it exists as the starting source of what has moved down to Fortunato; its movement threatens his space, and establishes itself as a second living thing in the room. The ceiling appears to be alive with a sponge-like nitre that threatens to overtake Fortunato from above, as Montresor encloses him from all

sides, leaving him with only downward space, theoretically, into which to move. The ceiling nitre limits Fortunato's physical space even further, and reminds the viewer that sometime in the future, the nitre will cover Fortunato himself, encasing him within its black tentacles. The victim's anguish is experienced more directly than it would be through the text, as the way our eyes take in the scene allow us to feel the same claustrophobia that he does, as the walls are closed up and the sickness takes over.

Furthermore, the choice that Rackham makes to illustrate this one, specific scene is important in our understanding of the illustration as *parergon*, because before deciding to illustrate a text, particularly a collection featuring several short stories, an artist must select which text, and then which scene to work with. While the image may be able to comment on much more than just that one scene, the artist is fact limited to illustrating one momentary section of text, a single snapshot to represent the entire tale. Thus, the image must be recognizable enough to stand in as a response to a particular tale, and must work with a moment in which essential knowledge of the *etymon* is provided. For "The Cask of Amontillado," Rackham chooses a scene in which the reader/viewer is able to access the reality of both Fortunato and Montresor, as well as a moment in which the utter horror of the tale is revealed, which remains disguised up until this moment; here, Montresor finally dumps all pretenses of being Fortunato's "friend," and the disposition of the Amontillado as well.

Additionally, Rackham chooses a moment that engages in an attack on the reader's senses, by proxy of the attack on Fortunato's. Fortunato's visual awareness of exactly where he is before being put into total darkness allows the reader to imagine the

movement from light to sensory annihilation alongside Fortunato. His awareness of touch and smell as the nitre surrounds him in the soon to be total darkness emphasizes the most terrorizing elements of the room-tomb. Here, Rackham depends and expands Poe's already graphic description of claustrophobia by showing the reader the actual space that Fortunato will inhabit for eternity. He includes allusions to moments that came before; for example, the suffocating, almost moving nitre shows the passage downward into the underground prison. Thus, the reader/viewer is aware of the spatial location of the scene, and thus the text, which allows him or her to more fully interact with the psychological terror that Fortunato experiences. Rackham's choice emphasizes a single moment of the story that both complicates and wraps up the text, leaving the reader with the fear Fortunato experiences in his final moments, allowing us to be present for the last glimpse of Fortunato that any living person will ever see.

While Rackham's illustrations certainly prove themselves to be engaged in a *parergonal* relationship with Poe's texts, they go farther than this, too. Given the unique circumstances surrounding Baudelaire's discovery of Poe, and Baudelaire's status as an esteemed artist with many famous friends, illustrations of the texts began appearing even before the represented tale or Poe had attained fame, or even recognition. One such example of this would be Manet's four illustrations of "The Raven," completed by the artist simply due to Baudelaire's personal request. French audiences would have been able to access Manet's illustrations of "The Raven," given their publication alongside Mallarmé's 1875 translation. Its publication was noted in an 1875 edition of British literary magazine "Athenaeum," alluding to both illustration and text achieving some amount of publicity. ("Édouard Manet as an Illustrator" 215). The growing popularity of

Poe's poetry and tales was occurring concurrently with the growing number of artists producing illustrations of the work, meaning that the public exposed to Poe's tales in the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century was simultaneously being exposed to illustrations by Manet, Dore, Beardsley, Clarke, and Rackham. This concurrent relationship suggests that the illustrations of Poe's work played a role in popularizing not only his role as an author, but more specifically, certain tales the artists felt themselves more drawn to, and furthermore, certain characters that audiences particularly enjoyed seeing in print.

Lois Vines alludes to the illustrative power to promote texts, stating that Poe became particularly appealing starting in fin de siècle British culture because he focused attention on figures not often set in the spotlight (57), meaning his work emphasized the reality of the urban underbelly rather than working with the melodramatic Victorian and Romantic archetypes. His characters, then, as vivid, mysterious and horrific as they are, would have taken center stage in terms of the public's interest in the texts. Manet and Dore, entrenched staunchly in the Symbolist-era nineteenth-century, only illustrated "The Raven," perhaps because of the fact that it was Poe's most well-known and moderately successful work at the time of his death. However, beginning with Beardsley, Clarke and continuing afterwards through Rackham, the short stories were the only texts being illustrated, perhaps because of the plethora of characters they offered. Illustrators did not focus on the pleasantly poetic, more aesthetically pleasing tales such as "Landor's "Cottage" and Domain of Arnheim," but rather the gruesome, violent ones. Though limited in scope due to Beardsley only publishing illustrations from four of Poe's tales, three of these four selections (Usher, Murder in the Rue Morgue and Masque of the Red

Death) were also chosen by Clarke and Rackham. Beardsley's final choice, "The Black Cat," was taken up by Clarke, but Rackham stayed away, perhaps because of the tale's overtly supernatural qualities, which were no longer interesting to the Modernists. Although they worked on their illustrations of Poe's tales two decades apart from one another, Clarke's version includes eight colored plates and 24 black and white ones. Rackham produced and published 12 colored plates and 17 black and white ones; the increase in illustrative production demonstrates a growing interest in not just the most well-known tales, but in a variety of tales, which ultimately called out for wider illustration.

The majority of Rackham's and Clarke's plates are consistent with the British interest in the *figure*, each one depicting one or more figures that the artist considers integral to his interpretation of filling the "lack" established by the text/*ergon* (Vines 57). "The Fall of the House of Usher" is a particularly strong example of this. Beardsley's edition depicts an flat, androgynous Madeline/Roderick figure, Clarke's black and white plate depicts solely an arabesque Madeline, and finally Rackham's colored piece depicts the narrator and the house, which is arguably one and the same as Roderick, and furthermore a living figure itself. The emphasis on the figure aids in that figure's character development, increases the avenues from which the reader/viewer may interact with that character. He or she becomes more real, inhabiting both the visual and textual worlds, and thus the reader's understanding of and relationship with the character represented is complicated, and changes. However, before working specifically with the figural representations in "The Fall of the House of Usher," arguably Poe's most famous tale, it's worthwhile to note that it is another example that may be used in order to

establish what it is that lacks in the text, given that Beardsley, Clarke, and Rackham all work with it. That all three major fin de siècle and Modernist artists chose to work with "Usher" meant to audiences that it was an important representation in Poe's canon—when picking up an illustrated version of an collection of stories, the individual tales that happen to be accompanied by illustrations are bound to stand out to a reader before one without, allowing the illustrator to control not just particular scenes and characters, but whole texts.

Rackham's illustration of "The Fall of the House of Usher," while clearly retaining distinctive elements of his painting, is very different from his illustration of "The Cask of Amontillado," but it engages with the written work as a *parergon* to its *ergon* just the same. It's painted in mainly blues and blacks, and does not contain the expressive figures that many of Rackham's other illustrations do. The illustration clearly draws attention from the figure barely visible in the bottom of the frame, and places it onto the vastness of the space surrounding him, finally focusing in on the house. Poe often transforms physical spaces into living, breathing entities, which is particularly true in "The Fall of the House of Usher." To mirror this, Rackham subverts his typical attention to figural detail and instead focuses that same attention on the house. Poe's house, and furthermore the rooms, are personified and interact with human characters just as vividly as they do with one another in the tale, and thus Rackham captures this by personifying his portrayal of the house. As Muriel Whitaker states, "The supernatural is made plausible by combining it with the real," (Whitaker 19) and the house exemplifies the ghostly juxtaposition of itself as a physical entity with the supernatural phenomena it holds.

In "The Fall of the House of Usher," the house that Poe creates is classically gothic. It's huge and dark, covered in mysterious fungi, and appears to leech life from the secrets of its inhabitants. Roderick and Madeline Usher, the last of their line, live in the house surrounded by ailment and secrecy that dominate their existence. They seem small and ghostlike, translucent in the darkness of the house as it slowly swallows them. Madeline apparently dies upon the arrival of the narrator, yet her entombment is postponed by Roderick for questionable reasons. She, like Fortunato, is buried alive and in a weakened state. Her coffin is nailed down and the crypt is locked, and she must literally claw her way out. The house tries to keep her captive by implanting various anxieties in her brother's mind, and her escape ends with the death of both siblings and the implosion and sinking of the house. Poe writes,

> As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell—the huge antique pannels to which the speaker pointed, threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws…While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened—there came a fierce breathe of the whirlwind—the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight—my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder—there was a long tumultuous shouting sounds like the voice of a thousand waters—and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the '*House of Usher*' (Poe 336).

The house implodes at Madeline's return from the dead, kills the siblings, and moves downwards into the fissure in the earth that the narrator notices upon his arrival, and it's

precisely the supernatural *personification* of the house that Rackham chooses to interact with in his painting of the work.

The focal point of Rackham's painting of this tale (fig. 4) is clearly the white-washed house, first due to the fact that it inhabits the most center position of the canvas, and second because Rackham intentionally paints it as the only subject to contrast with the dark outer portions. Unlike Poe's house, it's anything but classically gothic, which is precisely what helps to establish the work as a Modernist *parergon*. It also is free of line work, which he employs so vividly in his rendition of "The Cask of Amontillado." The

blankness serves to draw it outward towards the viewer even more powerfully than the contrasting colors and central positioning already does. Its blankness contrasts deeply with the trees, lake, and other landscape elements due to the fact that they do employ chaotic line work, and meld back into a conjunctive mass with one another. The brightness of

Figure 4: "The Fall of the House of Usher." Arthur Rackham (1935)
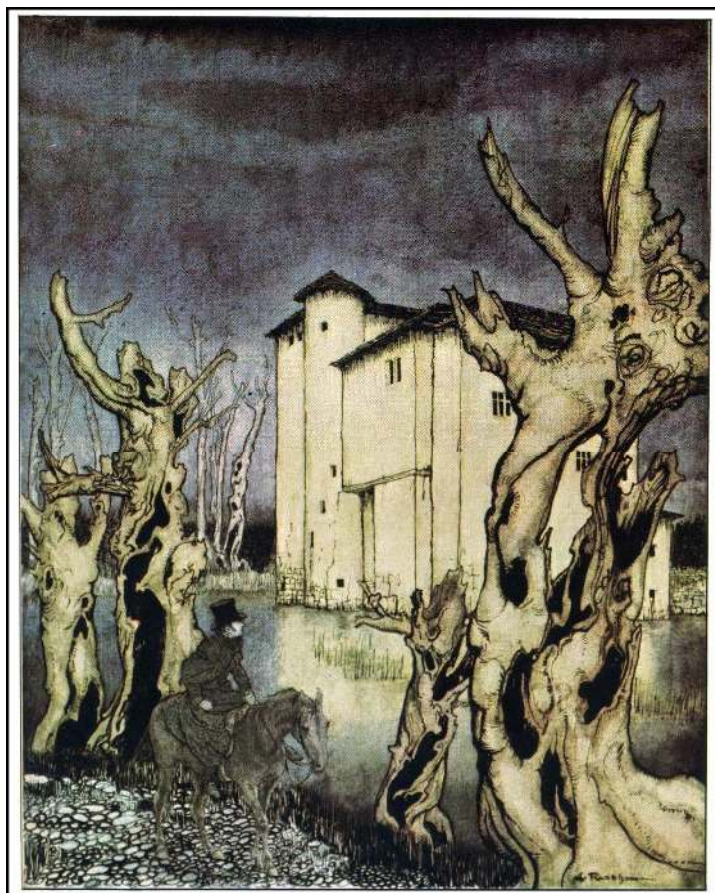
the house brings it forward, spatially, in terms of its relationship with the viewer. The dark exterior moves backward, regardless of the spatial positioning of the individual

elements. The blasted trees, some of which exist in front of the house from a linear perspective, serve to frame the house and to elevate its importance. It's a horrifically strange building with a blank face and no apparent fissure running the length of the façade, which constitutes the departure from Poe's gothic description. Instead, it appears to be a portrait of a twentieth-century haunted house, more representative of a factory, grain elevator, or abandoned building than a traditional gothic space. Rackham inserts his own Modernist time into the space that is left by Poe's text, establishing the work as a *parergon,* standing neither outside nor inside of the text, but altering the reader/viewer's conception of the *etymon* in the tale. It depicts the house more like a prison than a classic haunted house, which suggests that Rackham chooses to use his art to emphasize what he believed to be the true force confining the Ushers to their home and grave. Presenting the house in two different ways complicates the reader/viewer's perception of the role of the house in pursuit of the *etymon*.

The figure in the bottom left of the piece is, at best, barely noticeable. This is, of course, the narrator and his horse as he first rides up to the house and casts his eyes upon it for the first time. At this moment, he has not yet realized the horrors and secrecy that are hidden behind the walls of the house, and to him it thus remains pure, white and unblemished. That's not to say he isn't immediately met with some reservation. The viewer has his or her first experience with the house at the same time as the narrator does via first-person narration, and it's immediately apparent in Rackham's work that there's something amiss with or within the house. First, he or she notices that the house is anything but a classic haunted house—the Usher mansion resembles more of a grain elevator or prison, with but a few, small windows only on the top floors, with blank,

white, wall faces constituting ¾ of the surface area. It's less intended to convey a sense of supernatural mystery to any who enter, and instead emphasizes the sense of keeping something inside. It isn't exactly threatening to outsides, but certainly dissuades them from joining the insiders, serving mainly as the boundary that separates its inhabitants from the rest of the world. Poe writes,

> I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain—upon the bleak walls—upon the vacant eye-like windows—upon a few rank sedges—and upon a few white trunks of decaying trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveller upon opium—the bitter lapse into everyday life—the hideous dropping off of the veil (Poe 317).

Rackham employs a translucent glow around the house to cast it into a ghostly in-between, and uses this effect to reflect Poe's writing. He translates incredibly rich description of place into a visual effect that gives the viewer a way to interpret the scene. In turn, he reflects the psychological interest in spatial boundaries that pervade Poe's structures that Rackham would have also felt attracted to due to his interest in other realities and fantasy worlds. Atzmon articulates this presence, "Victorian psychologists were fascinated by the boundaries between the normal and abnormal, which they compared to the border between the conscious, rational mind and the unconscious mind" (66). In the text, not only does the house act as a border between the Ushers and normalcy, hoarding and protecting the secrets they live, but it's also a space that

cultivates their anxieties. The house itself is just as much to blame, and played just as active of a role in their destruction as they did.

The narrator and his horse are almost completely black, and therefore do not stand out against the black, stony ground or the deep blue lake. The single eye catching aspect of the narrator is his face, as it is pale white (the same as the house) against the black backdrop. Although Rackham does not paint an expression on his face as he does so wonderfully in many of his other paintings, he does ensure that the face and therefore the facial positioning are noticed through contrast. The narrator, then, as he does in the text, serves to frame the house and represents the normalcy that enters it and disrupts the centric dark, parasitic energy. His lack of expression reflects his role in the story—Rackham's illustration focuses on the Usher house just as the narrator focuses on Roderick. In this way, the house and Roderick become one in the same, merging the two into a symbiotically destructive relationship. He views the house in both fear, told by his inability to stand out in the landscape, and in defiance, as he looks directly upon in. He is both a bystander and a participant in its destruction.

In addition to helping to establish the lack in Poe's work into which an illustrator may insert visual work, "The Fall of the House of Usher" functions as an example of the artists of Poe's written work emphasizing tales and characters, catapulting certain pieces of the canon into international popularity. Rackham's illustration of "Usher" focuses almost solely on the house itself, personifying and emphasizing the house as figure. It's a living, breathing entity that physically restrains all of the secrets of the Usher family, as well as the members themselves. However, he also includes a nearly imperceptible

illustration of the narrator of the tale, thus shifting the focus from the internal world of the Ushers to the external world that goes on around them. The narrator gazes upon the house as he arrives at the beckoning of his old friend Roderick—his face is the same sickly white color as the house, and almost appears to be colored by its reflection off of the tarn. Thus, the narrator becomes the reflective force through which the tale of the Ushers can permeate through the guard-house and be told through the world. Here, Rackham emphasizes the role that story-telling plays in each character's persona. Roderick and Madeline are not seen, because they have not alerted the external world to their plight; thus, the house, and obvious focal point, becomes proxy for the two, as it is an extension of themselves and remains their only interaction with the outside. Madeline and Usher as figures are less important than the tale that the house shelters from the world. The narrator serves to tell the world the house's story, and thus exists diminutively and off to the side, neither separate nor a part of what happens.

Clarke chooses to depict Madeline, the character who is actually seen by others the least in the text. By making her the sole subject in their works, they give her the voice she simply does not have in the text. Clarke's illustration depicts her returned from the dead in her burial wrappings, phantasmagorical and full of motion. It employs neo-rococo, arabesque lines to demonstrate the chaos of the moment, and shows Madeline exiting a sliver of white background onto a flat plane of black. Her "burial" dressings drape over her body, falling off hither and thither, her mouth is covered in black, and her face and frame are skeletal, and appears to accompany the following passage: "There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and from

upon the threshold—then, with a low moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother…" (Poe 335). Clarke's work emphasizes the "reeling to and from upon the threshold" as an essential moment in her short life—she moves back and forth from light to the dark, caught somewhere in between life and death. Given the reader's lack of exposure to Madeline in the text, Clarke's illustration affords her some empathy, allowing the reader to interact with her on a deeper level, enhancing her memorability and making her more indicative of the Poe canon.

Beardsley's figure is bit more difficult to read—it appears androgynous, both Madeline and Roderick. It has long, flowing hair but a neckerchief, a flat black plane that could be breasts but could also just be a chest or protruding jacket, a stern, masculine face, but what looks to be a dress. This rendition not only fits in with Beardsley's interest in breaking down binaries and the parodic destruction of boundaries, but also seems to explore the incestuous, forbidden familial relationship between the two. The feminine parts of Beardsley's character are shown in black, and the masculine in white—they are separate but together, different people but united with impossible, sinful bonds. In the text, only Roderick speaks, and when he does, he speaks of the dangerous apathy and settled sickness of their house; about Madeline, Poe writes "The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis (323). Beardsley's illustration appears to catalog this "diagnosis" for Madeline, and furthermore, its effect on Roderick, showing the both of them expressionless, motionless, rigid, but inseparable. They perches amidst a wide, flat, white backdrop, enclosed on each side by planes of flat black. She cannot move, but

the apathy resulting from her condition makes it so she does not care to. Madeline has lost to death, and is thus shown in black, but Roderick still half-heartedly clings to life, shown in white, but their mutual apathy and interdependence makes it so that neither can live while the other dies.

One image focuses on the siblings' life, the other on their death, but both speak of the tale through a visual presentation of the figures touched by the action. They emphasize that Poe's tales aren't simply horrific ghost stories from a bygone era, but that they are about people, about the dark side of human life. The illustrative works appeal the characters to wider audiences, complicating the public's relationship with them and increase the empathetic and relational avenues through which it's possible to engage with Poe's characters. Beardsley demonstrates the extent of the Usher's relationship, which is only hinted at in the text; Clarke show's us Madeline's final moment alive, really demonstrating the true extent of her misery and making her into more of a victim figure; and finally, Rackham emphasizes the house as a figure just as relevant to the text as that which it contains. Compared to the characters who remain only in the textual realm, such as those in "The Domain of Arnheim," illustrated characters help the textual ones gain new life, which increases the audience's pathos for them, and promotes their plight and increases their popularity.

All of the artists, Beardsley, Clarke, and Rackham, emphasize the sickness that pervades the text. Whether done from a mental health perspective or a supernatural one— Beardsley and Rackham's images seem to draw attention to the sickly, incestuous nature of the Usher line and the siblings' intertwined fate, while Clarke seems to present

Madeline as a mummy just back from the dead—these artists present the Usher world as a world that's sick. Readers in the fin de siècle, a time deeply obsessed with degeneracy and the sick underbelly of society, and readers in the post-WWI era, a time concerned with mortality and the presentation of truth through abstract avenues would have found this text and the *parergonal* presentation of the imagistic sickness both fascinating and relevant. The artists' warping of a single tale to fit the interests of a given time allows it to take on a pervasive popularity—Usher is one of the most frequently studied and written about text of all of Poe's tales, and these artists' choice to work with it began its ascent into renowned popularity.

As tales, both "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Fall of the House of Usher" contain highly developed characters, with complex emotions and motivations. Arthur Rackham's illustrations of the tales, both of which fixate on the figures, strive not only to fill the lack left by Poe's hand—thus making the texts relevant and intriguing to an audience with modern values—but also complicate the audience's relationship with the characters. His visual depiction of the power struggle between Montresor and Fortunato, and his depiction of the Usher house as an imprisoning *character*, one in the same with Roderick, increases the amount of contemplation a given reader might lend to each character's plight. By doing this, the illustration, as *parergonal* supplement, brings the *ergon*/text to life in a way that increases the reader's ability to interact with the text, puzzle out the *etymon*, and most importantly, promote Poe's texts and characters to the rest of the world.

CONCLUSION
Rackham and Beyond

Ultimately, my work lays the foundation for the much larger academic exploration that this field deserves. Arthur Rackham and the fin de siècle illustrators played the same role for Poe—they helped to supply the groundwork for Poe's texts to become as well known and widely appreciated as they are today. In the previous two chapters, the construction of a comprehensive analysis of solely two illustrations, both by the same artist and both representative of the tales, was all that was possible due to the complexity of the works and level of illustrative detail. I recognize that this represents only a fraction of the extent of visual work that was completed around Poe's canon, and additionally constitutes work done by only one of his many illustrators. What my project has sought to do, however, is to make visible an insufficiently studied "frame," or *parergon*, through which a reader might understand or interact with illustrators associated with Poe's body of work. The visual frame helps Poe's tales adapt to varying cultural moments across time, through its exploitation and adaptation of textual cracks in the tales. This frame helped to shape the reputation and representation of both the tales and specific characters in literary and visual culture.

Arthur Rackham died in 1939, merely ten years short of an entire century after Poe's death. His work, as a deeply Modernist collection of illustrations, also owes a debt to Poe's fin de siècle artists and illustrations that came before him, connected through their use of the Gothic genre and grotesque intonation. Baudelaire's interest in Poe convinced the Symbolists to return to Poe's nearly forgotten poetry due to the calculated

nature through which Poe constructed "The Raven" and detective tales. Additionally, he rightly assumed they would be even more interested in the gothic supernaturalism that pervaded the canon. The Decadents were intrigued by Poe's emphasis on the darker side of life, the degeneration and mental illness of his characters, and his incorporation of the parodic grotesque. Fin de siècle visual artistic takes on Poe's work culminated with the Modernists, who worked with the version of the canon that had become widely known, thanks to the promotion by the aesthetic movements that came before. The Modernists, of whom Arthur Rackham was one, had been through World War I, and thus were no longer interested in romanticized imagery or heavy stylization—both of which were employed by the Symbolists and Decadents—turned to Poe for his interest in representing the visceral reality of human nature. They turn away from the phantasmagoria and ghostly atmosphere of the tales, clearly present in earlier fin de siècle illustrations, and instead increase the violence quotient. Rackham's works aren't gory, but emphasize the psychological terror and disturbing physicality of the human experience

All of these illustrations, whether Dore's spectral series depicting "The Raven," Beardsley's boundary defying, sexually androgynous "The Fall of the House of Usher," or Rackham's realistically violent and whimsical "Cask," are supplementary *parergons* for Poe's canon of works. Additionally, they have affected the way in which the tales are understood and interacted with today. Derrida's *parergon* exists neither outside nor inside the work itself, or the *ergon*—the texts, all completed and published before any illustrator was working with them, were inherently finished, essentially closed, and thus, the illustrations cannot be a part of them. However, the illustrators *did* have access to the texts and they are representational pieces of art, meaning that they cannot be completely

separate from the texts. They inhabit the "lack" that Poe's texts leave behind—this lack is constituted the cracks that are left in every piece of art, as a result of the inclusion of textual sketches and authorial signatures. These moments, by their existence, naturally leave spaces that allow for reader or artist insertion, through which he or she can include or allude to another artwork, style, or time period. Poe's fin de siècle illustrators each insert their own aesthetic—the Symbolist ethereal and supernatural, Decadent line stylization, and Modernist realism represented through alternate avenue—into his work, shifting the text, or *ergon*, from its nineteenth-century American Romanticist roots to a place in which it may become representative of the artists' own current cultural anxieties and inquiries.

Today, Rackham's work still has an impact on the visual world. In fact, it received critical attention as recently as the late twentieth- and twenty first-centuries. Fred Gettings published a biography and visual collection of Rackham's various illustrations in 1976. James Hamilton did the same in 1990, and furthermore published another supplementary edition in 2011. Rackham's illustrations—both centered on Poe's work and the many other literary texts he visualized—are extremely powerful fin de siècle works due to their level of whimsical detail, emphasis on timeless human violence and facial expression, and additionally, due to the sheer amount that he produced. Furthermore, as a not so distant Modernist, Rackham's work on Poe still resonates in contemporary culture. His emphasis on the violence of the human spirit is something humanity is still concerned with contemplating today, as is understanding and destigmatizing mental illness.

However, what's more important in terms of the scope of this project is the fact that the legacy of Arthur Rackham's illustrations demonstrates the extent of the impact that illustrations had on the legacy of Poe's reputational influence. Furthermore, it shows how rich the field of Poe's influence on visual art is in terms of complicating the relationship between reader/viewer and tale. Both Gettings and Hamilton include images of the work that Rackham did on Poe's tales, removing the plates from the 1935 edition of Poe's *Tales of Mystery and Imagination*, and translating them into a biographical anthology of Rackham's most memorable works. Thus, the images succeed in cutting ties with the texts they represent, moving outside of their relationship with the written work, and into a place in which they are able to be studied as completed, standalone works of art, rather than as supplementary, referential pieces created to accompany a separate text. That Rackham's work on Poe is still studied and admired today, and more importantly is still seen in relation to the original text as well as something separate from it, proves that the ekphrastic energy of the texts is alive and still exerting its power on contemporary artists and illustrators. They have become more than simple illustrations meant to decorate a text, just as Poe's tales have become more than a set of scary stories with which to frighten and entertain. Instead, they are visual representations of Poe's art, neither inside nor outside of the original texts, but rather to the side, accomplishments in their own right and *parergonal* champions of the *etymon* of the tales. Illustrations like Rackham's, as persistently and timelessly appreciated pieces of visual art, demonstrate the power of the illustrator, and thus the power of the tales to call out to such renowned artists in the first place.

Lynn Barnes, a contemporary artist hailing appropriately from Baltimore and now based in Florida, is a painter to whom Poe's work called out to, and ultimately represents Poe's full-circle return to America. Her work functions as an example of the visual power that the tales still hold in the twenty first-century, as she takes the power of the Poe illustrations and converts them into a full scale painting. She created a piece titled "Poe's Last Supper," (fig. 5) the latest update to which was done in June, 2017. Her piece, described on her website as

Figure 5: "Poe's Last Supper." Lynn Barnes (2017)

a living document that she returns to now and again to build on, change, and refresh, depicts Poe on his deathbed surrounded by many of his beloved characters. The inclusion of so many of his characters all in the same frame makes this an extremely unique occurrence. In the piece, Barnes actively demonstrates the temporal transformativity of the tales and characters. She also reflects their status as living, changeable entities, as she explains that she returns again and again to the same painting that she began in 1991.

As time passes, she alters her painting to better fit in with her own evolving relationship with the texts. For example, a 1999 edition of the painting included muted coloration, a standing bottle of absinthe, and a white tablecloth. By 2017, the painting is significantly more vibrant, shows the absinthe levitating, and includes words from Poe's text on the blue tablecloth. Her 26-year painting process covers a comparable number of

years as those which passed between Manet's conception of Poe, Dore's, and Beardsley's, or between Beardsley's, Clarke's, and Rackham's. It's curious to consider how one painting, created over a similar amount of time as the Symbolist to Decadent transition, or Decadent to Modernist transition, might represent temporal stylistic alterations and choices. For example, she states on her website that an early accident resulted in a drip of Prussian Blue paint down Poe's cheek, as if a teardrop—though she did cover the drip up, she explains that she now always knows it is there, as a secret, irrevocable part of the art. With this as a part of the story of the early additions, and as a forgotten notation in the later ones, the teardrop comes to signify the passage of time, and the realistic change through which a figure goes through. At one time, the teardrop was not on Poe's face, at another, it was visible, and one last time, it remained covered with layers of paint. Given the living nature of the painting, perhaps the teardrop would have stayed visible if only it had occurred earlier or later than the moment that it did; however, the fact remains that the time in which it was painted resulted in a decision, and lives inside the complete story of the visual piece. Though the time between fin de siècle movements did not produce living documents such as Barnes's due to the difference in aesthetic taste, it remains to be noted that the visual art reflects the time period, or periods, during which it was created.

Barnes's work, while created wholly in contemporary culture, clearly traverses time, which demonstrates the perpetual relevancy of Poe's work and its relationship with audience and visual art. It also works to prove that it was in fact visual art that helped to transport Poe's texts from the nineteenth-century into contemporaneity. Barnes began working on "Poe's Last Supper" 55 years after Rackham published his version of the

Tales, meaning that visual work on the texts did not cease after Rackham's editions, nor did they decrease even after the end of Modernism. That "Poe's Last Supper" begins in the 1990s and remains a living document as recently as 2017 means that Barnes carried the canon of visual takes on Poe's written work across the millennium. By doing this, she and other contemporary artists thus assert that Poe and his tales retain a place in the twenty-first century, rather than letting them all slip slowly into history. Though he and his nineteenth- and early twentieth-century illustrators are long gone, representations of Poe's work are still entering the artistic world, therefore proving that the originals are still relevant. Although there is certainly still a great deal of literary criticism written about Poe's written work, the *parergon* of visual art maintains the integrity of the texts and characters in a different way. Unlike literary criticism, which does add to the Poe canon, grapples with the texts, and may even alter the way the texts are read, visual art can actually *recreate* the stories and characters themselves, even after their creator's death and the publication of the written works. The tales are complete, and thus cannot be rewritten or added to; similarly, critical work remains strictly outside of the texts. Illustration, however, concerned so deeply with some form of *paralleled* representation, breathes new life into the completed works and moves them past their own timelines, allowing them to reprogram themselves alongside a changing culture.

In fact, Barnes's piece not only showcases a selection of the most beloved Poe tales and characters, but goes so far as to comment on the role of visual art in terms of giving new life to old text. In her piece, the viewer sees Poe in his death bed, hence the title "Poe's Last Supper." He is surrounded by a variety of characters and object-signifiers from his tales, from "The Black Cat" to "The Bells," and everyone has arrived

to see their creator off into his own death. Poe himself sits at a table with his absinthe prepared and a cask of amontillado, seemingly partaking in a melancholic reunion, but in reality is propped up by pillows in a hospital bed, alluding to his waning days spent at Baltimore's Washington College Hospital. His characters, however, surround him. They encroach upon him, neither joining him *in* bed nor staying away. Their closeness implies that they've sprung from the depths of Poe's mind and owe their existence to him. They have become so real due to the twenty-first century popularity of the tales, the critical work performed on them, and lastly, the illustrative recreations that helped to configure them into complex characters. And yet, their distance implies their awareness of the fact that they will live past him. He lies in wait to join the many he had loved and lost in life, but his tales and characters will live on.

Barnes's emphasis on the characters, who are transformed into human or semi-human entities as real as Poe himself, alludes to their ability to come to life for the reader through text and painting. One is able to recognize the man from "The Tell Tale Heart," Montresor and Fortunato, Pym and his salvatory turtle, the Raven, and even Annabelle Lee's lighthouse, all as players that the painting, just like illustrations before it, have brought to life. Though Barnes's versions have switched characters in and out over the course of its creation, the executioner and grand inquisitor from "The Pit and the Pendulum" remain steadfast throughout them all, if anything only increasing in vibrancy. These two characters, representative of death and judgment and thus appropriate characters to be nearest to Poe's hospital bed, are faceless in the text itself. They're as masked in mystery and darkness as the narrator's crime itself, and yet here, Barnes

clarifies them and lets the viewer see their faces, complicating the relationship with which he or she already has with them.

"Poe's Last Supper," like the illustrations of Manet, Dore, Beardsley, Clarke, and Rackham, emphasize the tales and characters through which we may find ourselves, through which we may be comforted or terrified. Like the earlier illustrations, Barnes's painting makes the characters real, and promotes Poe's texts as stages for these characters—she proves that the illustrations may be stages too, similarly to the texts. Illustrations tell stories and describe characters, but do so through alternate means, which only increases the avenues through which the truth of the text may be accessed. While the earlier illustrations were produced concurrently to Poe's texts gaining popularity, and thus played a role in establishing which characters and tales would become most recognizable, Barnes's piece helps the viewer confront the multitude of characters that pervade the Poe canon, and, after so many years, have become most beloved and integral pieces of the international literary and visual canon. Her piece helps to solidify the fact that Poe's texts did—and still do—hold power over the visual arts, and the way in which their renditions of the texts moved the tales from obscurity into international and timeless recognition.

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