Artistic Names in Austen's Fiction: Cameo Appearances by Prominent Painters

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The so-called "sister art" of painting is only softly invoked in Jane Austen's novels, where a glimpse of a portrait, the occasional activity of drawing, or a discussion of aesthetics can augment the author's literary project with language momentarily borrowed from contemporary painterly discourse. As Lance Bertelsen points out, Austen's quiet engagement with comparative aesthetics is not overt: "Austen does not, with Fielding, cry, 'O, *Hogarth*, had I thy Pencil!'; nor does she concern herself, à la Dickens, with the graphic illustrations to her works" (351). Still, several of Austen's heroines, particularly Elinor Dashwood and Emma Woodhouse, sketch and draw with aplomb. For some, such artistry suggests a kinship between Austen and particular protagonists.[1] Discussions of the outdoors also draw upon contemporary debates in the related sister-arts of landscaping and painting in *Sense and Sensibility*, *Northanger Abbey*, and even *Mansfield Park*, where window transparencies, unwanted family portraits, and a sketch of a ship are the artworks marooned with Fanny in her attic.[2] In *Pride and Prejudice*, the pivotal tour of Pemberley emphasizes the symbolic importance of portraiture through "Elizabeth Bennet's emotional surrender before the portrait of Darcy" (Bertelsen 354). Similarly, in *Persuasion*, a small miniature portrait of Captain Benwick solicits confidences that, when overheard by Wentworth, lead to a climactic marriage proposal.[3] All these precious sister-arts moments have generated scholarly articles or even books. In other words, the quiet presence of painting in Austen's art

would appear to have been thoroughly amplified by critics exhaustively chronicling all sister-arts references. This is not so.

Alistair M. Duckworth reckons that in sharp contrast to her contemporary fellow novelists "Jane Austen does not refer directly to painters to help readers visualize her scenes" ("Austen and Stubbs" 53). Yet Vivien Jones nonetheless identifies a "jokey allusion" to Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), the era's greatest portraitist, in the name of the Pemberley housekeeper Mrs. Reynolds (431). While Elizabeth and the Gardiners tour the estate's portrait "gallery," the name of Mrs. Reynolds supplements the housekeeper's important verbal portrait of Darcy with a reader's knowledge of the high-society elegance and realism of canvases by Reynolds (274). It would appear that Austen slyly borrows the authority of the real Reynolds for her fictional housekeeper, whose report, or portrait, of the hero must contradict and override the reigning prejudice against him. In this essay, I look more closely at this naming technique, because *Pride and Prejudice* is not the only novel in which Austen neatly invokes the sister art of painting through an allusive name. I will examine at least three *additional* examples where character names bring into play well-known contemporary painters. All such cheeky references occur when the particular form of art practiced by the named artist—whether portraiture or landscape, large canvas or miniature—plays an interpretive role in the fiction. Professional painters with national reputations, I will argue, make cameo appearances across Austen's novels.

Let me reveal up front the characters that I have in mind. While Austen's most overt reference to a contemporary artist may indeed be Mrs. Reynolds, especially since she appears "in the gallery at Pemberley" to offer the definitive portrait of Darcy, others are similarly hiding in plain view (57). For example, the name of George Morland, Catherine's little brother, in *Northanger Abbey* may be another bold sister-arts reference. George Morland (1763-1804) was a popular landscape and genre painter. His full name appears in a novel where visual aesthetics, landscape, and the picturesque are expressly discussed. In *Emma* another housekeeper, in this case the able Mrs. Hodges at Donwell, shares her name with still another famous painter of landscapes. Additional clues in this novel reinforce an allusion to William Hodges (1744-1797), a well-known painter of exotic locales who travelled with Captain Cook. Hodges's possible appearance in *Emma*, a novel frequently discussed as delineating a claustrophobic world-view, may gloss Austen's treatment of Highbury's small-town confinement with implied panoramas of far-away places. Finally, in *Persuasion* the minor character of Charles Hayter bears the

name of a well-established miniature painter, one who specialized in portraits of navy men and their families. Charles Hayter (1761-1835) was known, in other words, for precisely the type of miniature portrait featured in the novel. The appearance of these well-established artists by name in Austen's novels defies mere coincidence—especially since the art of Morland, Hodges, and Hayter neatly reflects the larger concerns of the respective novels in which their names appear. At the cost of slightly delaying the discussion of these artists, I should first establish Austen's pleasure in word-play involving names. If Austen's minor characters invoke contemporary artists through shared names, the presence of such allusions demands a certain habit of mind.

HABIT OF MIND

Would Austen invest the names of her minor characters with allusive importance? As Maggie Lane suggests in *Jane Austen and Names*, Austen was aware of the cultural associations invoked by even first names. John Wiltshire resists, however, countering that "[n]othing in particular attaches to a first name in Jane Austen" ("Importance" 138), because Austen's "limited palette" of first names reflects customary English practices (Lane 11). Nonetheless, even Wiltshire makes exceptions, insisting that in the case of *Mansfield Park* the name of Edmund "may have special significance" after all ("Importance" 138). Thus critics and readers oscillate between wanting to invest interpretive significance in a particular Austen name and fearing that such investment runs counter to the realism of her art. The emerging pattern I argue for here—that the full names of minor characters invoke contemporary artists—suggests that Austen's realism modestly veils a steady habit of smart cultural allusion.

Austen habitually scrutinized the names of those around her for suggestive combinations. Already, the very first letter that survives, written when Jane was 21, finds humor and significance in a name: "What a funny name Tom has got for his vessel! But he has no taste in names, as we well know, and I dare say he christened it himself" (9-10 January 1796). The ship was the *Ponsborne*, in which Cassandra's fiancé, the Reverend Tom Fowle, was about to depart for the West India campaign with his kinsman Lord Craven. In response to Cassandra's likely anxiety about the long voyage and campaign ahead (and indeed the sad news of Tom's death at St. Domingo would come in the spring of 1798), Jane resorts to characteristic humor to put her older sister at ease.[4]

Family witticisms about names occur frequently in the letters. For instance, on 22 January 1801, in a breezy letter to Cassandra, Jane muses on the expectation of promotions for their sailor-brothers Frank, awaiting transfer to

another ship, and Charles, an officer on the *Endymion*: "Eliza talks of having read in a Newspaper that all the 1st Lieut:s of the Frigates whose Captains were to be sent into Line-of-Battle ships, were to be promoted to the rank of Commander—. If it be true, Mr Valentine may afford himself a fine Valentine's knot, & Charles may perhaps become 1st of the Endymion—" (21-22 January 1801). A "Valentine's knot" is a colloquialism for a wedding, and Austen's remark plays off the idea that a promotion to Commander might enable, or inspire, the *Endymion*'s first lieutenant, a Mr. Valentine, to marry, thus leaving his post conveniently vacant for Charles. Similarly, in a subsequent letter Austen complains about the dye of several new and refurbished gowns, lashing out at a Southampton tradesman with a jibe on his name: "As for Mr Floor, he is at present rather low in our estimation; how is your blue gown?—Mine is all to peices.—I think there must have been something wrong in the dye, for in places it divided with a Touch.—There was four shillings thrown away" (7-9 October 1808). The low blow at Mr. Floor resembles the *bon mots* in "Love and Freindship," that earlier piece of absurdist comedy written at age fourteen, where, as Peter Sabor notes, she puns on the "staves" of a barrel as akin to the stays of a woman's corset with the character of "Gregory Staves a Staymaker" (*Juvenilia* 138, 443).

Name and word games were popular in the Austen household. In the correspondence, family members guess at baby names and pass the time devising "riddles" and "conundrums" for young nephews (1-2, 24-25 October 1808). Even as an adult, she continued to exchange charades and word puzzles with Cassandra. When she writes to Crosby & Co. in the spring of 1809 to complain of their not having followed through on the publication of her manuscript *Susan*, she picks the pen name "Mrs Ashton Dennis" so that she can defiantly sign the letter with the initials "MAD" (5 April 1809). Conversely, her poem "On the marriage of Mr Gell of East Bourn to Miss Gill," takes delight in marriage vows that will alter only the vowel of the bride's surname (*Later Manuscripts* 253). A genuinely clever pun makes explanation redundant. Although Jane's first surviving letter conveniently quips "what a funny name," we cannot expect all her nameplay to be as blatantly glossed. Sometimes, therefore, it is impossible to know for certain if the joke is implied or accidental: "Sweet Mr Ogle. I dare say he sees all the Panoramas for nothing" (3 November 1813).

It is revealing of Austen's habits of mind that, in two cases of self-conscious riffing on the names of those around her, she immediately shifts to writing about her own fictions, as if such name games bring to mind her own

approach as author. Take, for example, the letter in which Jane plays about with the name of Knight:

> It gives me sincere pleasure to hear of M^rs^ Knight's having had a tolerable night at last—but upon this occasion I wish she had another name, for the two *Nights* jingle very much.—We have tried to get Self-controul [Mary Brunton's 1810 novel], but in vain.—I *should* like to know what her Estimate is—but am always half afraid of finding a clever novel *too clever*—& of finding my own story & my own people all forestalled. (30 April 1811)

The pattern of thought here hints at a possible connection between the act of punning on a person's name and the looming fear that her own novels may be judged too clever. The same sequence of ideas recurs just after the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, when in writing to Cassandra of the new governess employed by their brother Edward, she follows a pun with the decision to reveal her authorship to their niece Anna:

> Miss Clewes seems the very Governess they have been looking for these ten years;—longer coming than J. Bond's last Shock of Corn.—If she will but only keep Good & Amiable & Perfect!—Clewes & is better than Clowes.—And is not it a name for Edward to pun on?—is not a Clew a Nail?[5]—Yes, I beleive I *shall* tell Anna—& if you see her, & donot dislike the commission, you may tell her for me. (9 February 1813)

Even if the gap between the governess's name and her own anonymity is not bridged by punning, the fact that Austen scrutinized even ordinary names for linguistic quirks and associations, a family habit apparently shared by Edward, cannot be doubted.

Often, too, when Jane Austen writes about other people's fictions, she comments on their invented names. For instance, her exchange with Cassandra about Hannah More's novel *Coelebs in Search of a Wife* (1809) delineates her own preference for the unpretentious name:

> I am not at all ashamed about the name of the Novel, having been guilty of no insult towards your handwriting; the Dipthong I always saw, but knowing how fond you were of adding a vowel wherever you could, I attributed it to that alone—& the knowledge of the truth does the book no service;—the only merit it could have, was in the name of Caleb, which has an honest, unpretending sound; but in Coelebs, there is pedantry & affectation.—Is it written only to Classical Scholars? (30 January 1809)

Typically again, after reviewing and annotating Anna Austen's literary manuscript, she comments on the author's choice of names and their implications. "Lesley *is* a noble name . . .—but the name of Rachael is as much as I can bear" (9-18 September 1814).[6] She combines praise with critique: "the more you can find in your heart to curtail between Dawlish & Newton Priors, the better I think it will be.—One does not care for girls till they are grown up.—Your Aunt C. quite enters into the exquisiteness of that name. Newton Priors is really a Nonpareil.—Milton w^{d} have given his eyes to have thought of it.—" (9-18 September 1814). Austen extravagantly seizes upon this name again in a subsequent letter: "The name of Newton-Priors is really invaluable!—I never met with anything superior to it.—It is delightful.—One could live upon the name of Newton-Priors for a twelvemonth.—Indeed, I *do* think you get on very fast" (30 November 1814). She even dismisses the criticism of others about Anna's work as insensitivity to the choice of names and what they signal: "We have no great right to wonder at his not valueing the name of Progillian. *That* is a source of delight which he hardly ever can be quite competent to—" (28 September 1814). Even though Jane Austen's true opinion of Anna's literary efforts remains obscured by irony, in reading work by others she scans the names of characters for creativity, meaning, and "delight." If this is her habit, might she not hope that her readers will do the same?

MORLAND

In the context of *Northanger Abbey*'s explicit discussion of landscape and the picturesque, the name of Morland may conjure up actual landscape canvases and prints by George Morland (1763-1804), the painter of rural life so popular during the years that Austen composed this novel, then called *Susan.* Catherine Morland's younger brother George, essentially a character in name only, may offer us an unadulterated George Morland so as to reinforce the painter's symbolic presence in this story. Endorsing Cassandra's estimate that most of *Susan* was composed in 1798 and 1799, scholars generally agree that *Northanger Abbey* is, as Marilyn Butler puts it, "essentially a work of the late 1790s" (xiv). These same years saw George Morland at the height of his fame for a unique rustic romanticism and animal-filled scenes of country life praised for their quintessential Englishness. The son of portrait painter and visual impresario Henry Morland, George was a child protégé, exhibiting his work in stylish venues before he was ten. By the time that Austen herself reached her teens, George Morland was already garnering attention with sentimental genre scenes in the manner of the so-called "fancy pictures" of Gainsborough.

Susannah Fullerton speculates that "visits to art galleries familiarized Jane Austen with the work of the contemporary artist Henry Morland" (114). While Fullerton points to the older portraitist, Henry Morland, I believe his son George, the landscape prodigy, is a more likely referent for the Morland name in *Northanger Abbey*. In any case, Austen's presumed knowledge of the father surely increases her probable familiarity with the more famous son.

Visually speaking, George Morland's unassuming style and humble rural subjects nicely match the impression given by the fictional Catherine Morland, whose charm derives from her sincerity and lack of pretention. Enormously prolix in output, with "as many as 4,000 paintings and drawings," Morland's reputation was further augmented by a lively print trade in reproductions of his works during Austen's lifetime—with hundreds of individual engravings by well-known artists (Barrell 89).[7] In the context of *Northanger Abbey*, then, Morland's name may serve as a visual antidote of sorts to the Gothic. Like Gainsborough, Morland was celebrated for a number of "Cottage Door" pictures, domestic scenes of sentiment-laden homecoming and departure acted out on the thresholds of rural domiciles.[8] (See Figure 1.) Suggestively, we first learn of the existence of Catherine's brother, little George Morland, when the heroine returns to the bosom of her family in their cottage at Fullerton. We meet George Morland, as it were, at the cottage door: "Her father, mother, Sarah, George, and Harriet, all assembled at the door, to welcome her with affectionate eagerness" (241). As with the invention of a Mrs. Reynolds in a scene involving a portrait gallery, Austen inserts a George Morland into precisely that moment in *Northanger Abbey* where the name might be read as a clue to a larger visual context—one that augments her imaginary Wiltshire village with a visual paratext of depictions of wholesome country life.

For those familiar with George Morland's personal reputation for profligacy, a knowing and sustained reference to his art in a contemporary fiction by a clergyman's daughter may seem odd—especially if that author's fame as a proto-Victorian story-teller has narrowed the allusive potential of her art. True, Morland's career was clouded by reckless self-indulgence and debt. Upon his death at forty-one in October of 1804, multiple high-profile biographies followed quickly, each of them capitalizing on his artwork's popularity as well as the personal controversy that had fueled his fame: William Collins's *Memoirs of a Picture* (1805), F. W. Blagdon's *Authentic Memoires of the Late George Morland* (1806), and George Dawe's *The Life of George Morland* (1807). While these biographies do relate Morland's manic existence, one that alternated inexplicably between rakish self-abandon and intensely focused produc-

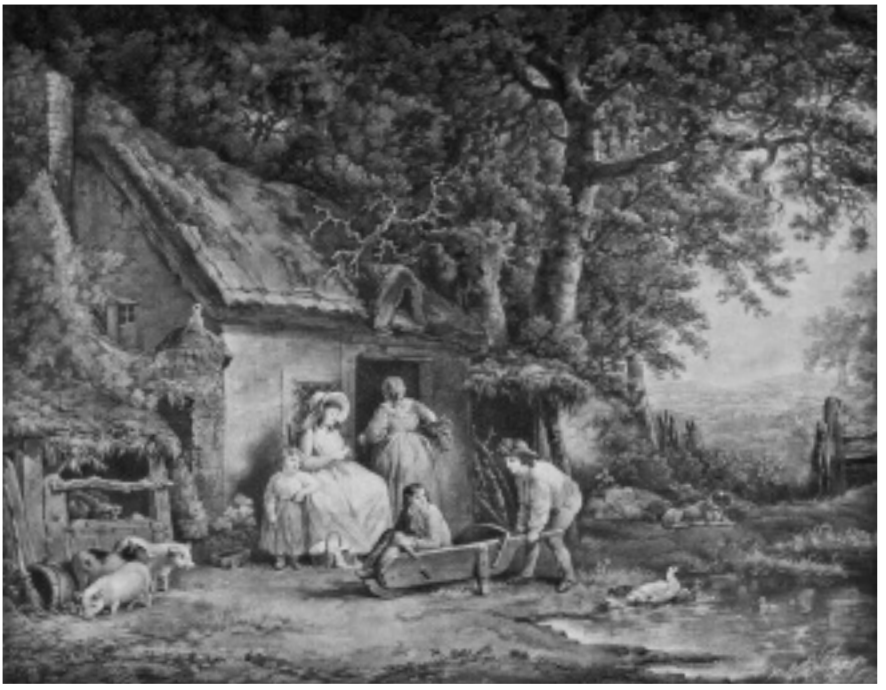

Figure 1: The Happy Cottagers, *a mezzotint engraved by Joseph Grozar after the painting by George Morland (London, 1793). Philadelphia Museum of Art.*

tivity, these all appeared after the sale of *Susan* in 1803. Most Austen scholars agree that *Northanger Abbey* remains, but for a change in title, unrevised. The author's own disclaimer at the front, penned in 1816 or 1817, after her brother bought back the unpublished manuscript from Crosby & Co., excuses "those parts of the work which thirteen years have made comparatively obsolete" (1). Austen's final illness virtually precludes a late-date revision, despite her hesitations about the built-in obsolescence of topical satire. Since the tales of Morland's recklessness only surfaced in earnest after his death in 1804, a dismissal of George Morland's name as unfit for a conscious sister-art reference by Austen seems, therefore, anachronistic. And even if Austen did hear *some* of the rumors circulating in the late '90s about Morland's debt-riddled life during the height of his fame, might this truly have made a visual reference to this hugely popular artist impossible? After all, the allusion occurs in a story featuring at least three rakes and charting the dangerous fault-line between fact and fiction, reality and rumor.

Fittingly, Jane Austen's own sister confirms her knowledge of Morland's

sister art. Three of Cassandra's amateur watercolors provide a definitive biographical link. In 1804 Morland's growing reputation for profligacy did not prevent Cassandra from copying in watercolor two contemporary prints by R. S. Syer of Morland's works: *The Alehouse Door* and *The Alehouse Kitchen* (Bradney-Smith, *Sensibilities* 12). These two watercolors by Cassandra, copies of 1801 prints of Morland's paintings, were sold in 1972 at Sotheby's London, and their current location in private hands is unknown. Adrienne Bradney-Smith judges that "George Morland must have been a favorite artist of Cassandra's" since an even later watercolor by her exists, dated 1808, that copies yet a third Morland print, engraved by James Fittler this time, of the painting *Pedlars* (*Reports* 135; Gilson). It too is privately owned. Morland's art, when sold as prints, was by all accounts vastly popular in Austen's day. In 1804 Cassandra copied several in the wake of her sister's sale of *Susan*. Did she do so as a retort to the manuscript's allusions to Morland? Is the watercolor art of the sister a response to Jane's own?

During the scene on Beechen Cliff, the Tilneys and not the Morlands are described as the true visual aficionados. Given the real-world association with the heroine's family name, this scene's treatment of landscape painting may be as fierce as the later passages mocking Radcliffe's style:

> They were viewing the country with the eyes of persons accustomed to drawing, and decided on its capability of being formed into pictures, with all the eagerness of real taste. Here Catherine was quite lost. She knew nothing of drawing—nothing of taste:—and she listened to them with an attention which brought her little profit, for they talked in phrases which conveyed scarcely any idea to her. (111-12)

Henry Tilney's ensuing "lecture on the picturesque" addressed to a young Morland unschooled in landscape theory is surely ironic (112). Catherine's reaction enhances, in the context of the associations conjured up by her family name, not only Austen's characteristic comedy, but even the faint suggestion that Morland's work might similarly benefit from such a cliff-top lesson. Is Austen deriding as false not merely Radcliffe's baroque gothicism but also its opposite, namely the idealization of rural life perpetuated in the saccharine mezzotints of Morland's work?[9] Perhaps Austen aims in *Northanger Abbey* at a more various array of targets in popular culture than we have yet acknowledged. Whether fan or critic, Austen places George Morland's art into closer proximity with her novel by including a character who shares his name. As a result, she enlarges the potential for irony in every scene that, like the one on Beechen Cliff, touches upon the sister-art of painting.

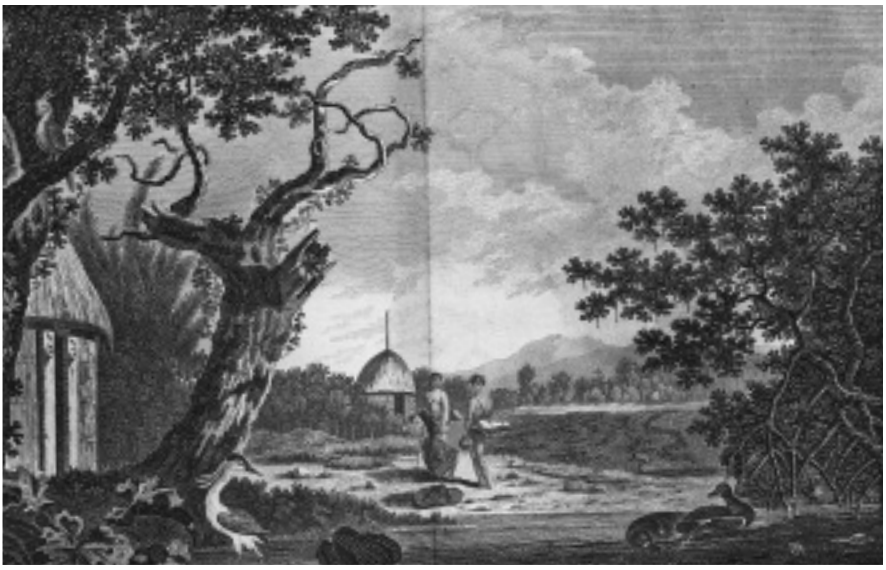

Figure 2: *From James Cook's* A Voyage towards the South Pole, and round the World. Performed in His Majesty's ships the Resolution and Adventure, in the Years, 1772, 1773, 1774, and 1775, *2 vols. (London, 1777). The book's illustrations include views and portraits "drawn during the voyage by Mr. Hodges." Harry Ransom Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.*

HODGES

William Hodges (1744–1797) accompanied Captain James Cook as a draughtsman on the second voyage to the South Pacific in the early 1770s. His sketches and paintings of the islands and native peoples circulated as prints in various media, including books about Cook's voyage.[10] (See Figure 2.) After exhibiting large canvases at the Royal Academy, Hodges travelled to India in 1779 "where he came under the patronage of Warren Hastings," governor-general of Bengal (Cust). He remained in India for six years, recording its landscapes and architectural landmarks in published images that shaped understandings of India's cultural past.[11] For example, the German naturalist and explorer Alexander von Humboldt credited Hodges's views of India as *the* inducement that led him to travel (Cust).

Although the work of Hodges may have passed into Jane Austen's line of sight through the naval interests and books of her sailor brothers, there is one additional reason to think his name familiar to her: Hodges's patron, Warren Hastings, had "several connections of enduring friendship with the Austens"

(*Letters* 534). First, Hastings virtually grew up with Jane Austen's mother as neighbor of the Leigh family in Gloucestershire. On the strength of this connection, he had placed his own young son under the care of the Austens at Deane, as "foster-child and pupil," during his time in India (*Letters* 534). Among several additional links to the Austens is the fact that he was godfather to Eliza de Feuillide, the cousin whom Henry Austen married. So, not only might Jane Austen have known the name of Hodges for his own sake—for reasons of relative fame and subject matter—but she had personal reasons to acquaint herself with the artist who for so many years had been under the patronage of this long-term family friend.

By means of yet another name in *Emma*, Clive Caplan has already located an allusion to Warren Hastings in this novel. Caplan argues that the character of Mr. Knightley's bailiff, William Larkins, is based upon Hastings's steward during his time in India, who was "none other than—William Larkins!" The presence of this other name in Mr. Knightley's household, thus makes a possible reference to William Hodges in the surname of the housekeeper increasingly likely. If, as Caplan convincingly demonstrates, the name of the bailiff is already a tribute to the "faithful and trusty servant" who stood by Hastings during a seven-year trial concerning his financial dealings in Bengal (a London trial closely followed by the Austens), an allusion to Hodges, who was also part of Hastings's circle in India, seems nearer to hand. Irrespective of any knowledge of Warren Hastings, however, the trick performed in *Pride and Prejudice*, where the name of that hero's housekeeper invokes the work of a great painter, simply repeats in *Emma*. In both cases, the dominant sister-arts clue lies embedded in a telling surname.

Unlike the apt appearance of a Mrs. Reynolds in a fictional portrait gallery, however, the name of Hodges conjures up images—of New Zealand, Pacific Islands, the Antarctic, and India—that seem decidedly incongruous with the "confined society in Surry" that serves as *Emma*'s setting (156). In truth, Austen could not have picked a painter who seems more out of place in small-town Highbury. That may be part of her point. John Wiltshire observes that "a distinctive feature of *Emma* is the way it embeds its action convincingly in the small, circumscribed, but nevertheless detailed Highbury world" ("Health"169). Although Park Honan describes this imagined small-town setting as "snug and consoling" (364), Fiona Stafford locates in *Emma* an acute claustrophobia—a constant dread of feeling boxed in or trapped (xiii). From the metaphorical significance of the aptly-chosen setting of Box Hill and Emma's time as a snow-bound "prisoner" on Boxing Day (150) to Mr. Wood-

house's incessant worrying about keeping doors and windows closed against drafts, *Emma* is shot through with references to physical confinement and spatial enclosure that can be mapped onto the psychology of the novel's characters—either as a comfort or a dread.[12] I wonder if the possible reference to far-away locales through the name of Hodges is a stealthy reminder of that colonial omnipresence detected by Edward Said and works much like the small but poignant references to Antigua in *Mansfield Park*. If so, this sister-art reference in *Emma* (in tandem with the name of Hastings's steward) expands the world of Highbury and Donwell, possibly suggesting the involvement of even Mr. Knightley in the politics of empire. Emma's admission that, unlike her nieces and nephews, she has never seen the ocean ("'I must beg you not to talk of the sea. It makes me envious and miserable;—I who have never seen it!'" [108]) contrasts ironically with the images of ocean travel invoked by the names of her future household staff at Donwell.

HAYTER

In *Persuasion*, the minor character of Charles Hayter is described as "the eldest of all the cousins, and a very amiable, pleasing young man," who has obtained a curacy, loves Henrietta, and comes "to think Captain Wentworth very much in the way" (80, 79). The real Charles Hayter (1761–1835), trained in his father's profession of architect and builder, entered the Royal Academy Schools in 1786 after showing aptitude for small pencil portraits. Thereafter he practiced as a miniature painter, "earning a considerable reputation from his portraits in watercolour on ivory and in crayon on vellum, and exhibiting at the Royal Academy between 1786 and 1832," where he showed upwards of 100 miniatures over the years (O'Donoghue).[13] Hayter's work, like that of Reynolds, Morland, and Hodges, additionally circulated in the form of prints, although to a lesser degree than these other artists.[14] He taught drawing to the young Princess of Wales, and in 1813 he authored his first lesson book aimed at children, *An Introduction to Perspective, Adapted to the Capacities of Youth, in a Series of Pleasing and Familiar Dialogues*. Hayter's two sons and daughter also established themselves as artists: by 1815, Sir George Hayter (1792-1871) became, in his turn, the "Miniature Painter to the Princess Charlotte" and was knighted in 1842; John Hayter (1800-1895) exhibited portraits between 1815 and 1879 at the Royal Academy; and Anne Hayter (*fl.* 1814-1830), working from her younger brother's address, also painted miniature portraits. When Austen wrote *Persuasion*, the genuine "young Hayters" were up-and-coming artists (80).

Art historians describe the market for miniatures during Austen's time as peaking significantly in both quality and volume. After lamenting the first decades of the eighteenth century as a relative "low point" in the art form, they speak of a "great flourishing of English miniature painting in the last quarter of the century" and describe leading innovations in style and technique as "one of the outstanding accomplishments in the history of English painting" (Murdoch et al 164, 192, 180). London saw an influx of foreign miniaturists infuse the art with new technical skills while a vogue for personal adornments increased demand. Advances in "controlling the effects of watercolour on ivory emboldened artists," growing the average size to 3 inches (Murdoch et al 180). Charles Hayter, with his royal appointment, publications, and scores of miniature portraits on ivory exhibited at the Royal Academy, was a leading contributor to this blossoming genre during Austen's time. Newspaper reviews of works exhibited by several of the Hayters in December of 1816 give a sense of just how "current" Austen's sister-arts allusion in *Persuasion* may be—making it resemble more closely the topically allusive *Northanger Abbey*.[15]

Although my research has not yet uncovered any Austen family portraits by any of the Hayters that might confirm the author's personal knowledge of the artist, the proof of Charles Hayter's general reputation and naval clientele may eliminate the need for those biographical particulars that occasionally limit our interpretation of Austen to private family references. Extant works by Hayter exemplify the genre of the "small miniature painting" that is being reset for Louisa Musgrove (252). The uncharacteristic redundancy of Austen's phrase "small miniature" unequivocally points to the portraits on ivory in which Hayter specialized, rather than to those on diminutive canvases. While the mention of "'a clever young German artist at the Cape'" who supposedly drew Captain Benwick may, as Jocelyn Harris discovered, be an inside-joke about an actual German artist who painted Frank Austen, the larger presence of a Charles Hayter in the story points, for a reader of the published work, to another portraitist—one who was widely known (252).[16]

Knowledge of Hayter's art form and particular style may raise the idea of a second and missing portrait. Charles Hayter specialized in miniature watercolor portraits on ivory of officers and their families, creating pictures of loved ones that might be easily carried during a tour of duty. Convention also allowed the frame to be inscribed with a personal message or include a woven lock of hair. In *Persuasion*, Captain Harville has the "'commission'" to have the portrait of Captain Benwick "'properly set'" for Louisa (252). The need for a new setting hints at a possible inscription or enclosure meant for Fanny,

Figure 3: *A pair of miniature portraits in watercolor on ivory by Charles Hayter (1800). Victoria and Albert Museum.*

adding to the poignancy of the scene. A surprising number of Hayter's portraits survive in pairs that were exchanged between the sitters, sometimes with one portrait referencing the other in a telling detail. (See Figure 3.) For example, in portraits evidently exchanged between couples, Hayter appears to have been in the habit of painting the woman as wearing a tiny copy of the portrait of her beloved, deftly adorning her dress with a miniature-within-a-miniature. Although Hayter was not unique in employing this tactic (a portrait by his daughter Anne may copy the trick), it does emerge as a memorable hallmark of his work. If the existence of a Charles Hayter in the story conjures up a specific brand of miniature art, it begs the question of whether a similar portrait of Fanny Harville, perhaps wearing Benwick's likeness, survives still among the captain's things—a hidden off-page memento of his past devotion.

AN IRONIC BIT OF IVORY?

An awareness of ivory miniatures is implied in the sister-arts metaphor that Austen selected for her own style in that much-quoted letter: "the little bit (two Inches wide) of Ivory on which I work with so fine a Brush" (16-17

December 1816). This metaphor, in turn, dominates our discussions of Austen.[17] Indeed, critics often wield it to insist upon the narrow range of Austen's allusions—upon the pretty smallness of her art. Perhaps Austen's descriptive self-portrait as a miniaturist is, like another self-critique that R. W. Chapman questions, guilty of "what Darcy calls the indirect boast; she has been punished for being taken at her own valuation" (Chapman 35). Even Chapman, who deemed explanatory glosses of allusions unnecessary, allows for the possibility that Austen spikes modesty with irony. In light of the multiple occasions when she folds the artworks of nationally-known painters into her own broad canvas of artistic allusion, her choice of this sister-arts metaphor seems decidedly knowing and ironic. Tellingly, her letter was written in December of 1816, just a few months after completing *Persuasion*. With that recent manuscript's references to miniature painting still running in her mind, Austen mischievously teases that her own literary project is but minute. In truth, her playful and confident painterly allusions to the wide-ranging artistic styles of Sir Joshua Reynolds, George Morland, William Hodges, and Charles Hayter prove otherwise.

NOTES

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1. Gilbert and Gubar concluded that as "[a] player of word games, a painter of portraits and a spinner of tales, Emma is clearly an avatar of Austen the artist" (158).

2. For examples, see Duckworth (*Improvement)* and Knox-Shaw, especially Ch. 2, called "*Pride and Prejudice*, a Politics of the Picturesque."

3. For a fuller discussion of paintings in *Persuasion*, see Sabor.

4. The source of Austen's amusement is unclear. The ship's full name seems a variant spelling of Ponsbourne, a district in London that derives its name from the Hertfordshire manor that once belonged to Thomas Seymour and Catherine Parr (widow of Henry VIII). Many ships were named for their point of origin, and the *Ponsborne* indeed sounds as if it were born of a *pond*—a peculiar nomenclature for a serious sea-bound vessel. Ships with difficult names often received, like people, nicknames from those closest to them. The best-known example from this period may be the famous frigate the *Bellerophon* (she would eventually be captained by Austen's brother Charles), which was dubbed "The Billy Ruffian" by her crew. For that ship's story, see Cordingly.

5. Austen's guess is wrong. A *clew* can refer to various knots and ball-shaped yarns (it is even a nautical term concerning the knotting of sails) but, according to the *OED*, does not refer to a nail.

6. Austen had, of course, already used the family name of Lesley herself in the juvenilia fragment "Lesley Castle."

7. Gilbey and Cumming provide a list of the hundreds of engravings, sketches, etchings, and known reproductions of Morland's work, the bulk of which were published before the sale of *Susan* in 1803. Austen probably encountered Morland's art through the vehicle of prints, rather than canvases.

8. For a discussion of "The Cottage Door" and similar subjects by Gainsborough, see Wark. For images of pictures by Morland that went by the same title of "The Cottage Door," see *Masterpieces of Morland* (42-43) and Gilbey and Cumming (174).

9. Barrell points out that a "tendency to take the engravings as a substitute for the paintings" yields a faulty impression of Morland's dark art and complex social vision (92). Barrell, too, derides the prints as popular confection for the eye, claiming that the original canvases, by contrast, offer an "uncomfortable actuality" and "images of idleness" that challenged contemporary critics (101, 92). Austen's implied critique may be ahead of her time.

10. Hodges himself supervised the engraving of his illustrations for Cook's official account.

11. Between 1785 and 1788 he published *Select Views in India in the Years 1780-1783*, which included a series of forty-eight aquatints adapted from sketches drawn on the spot. His *Travels in India, 1780-1783*, illustrated with fifteen plates, was published in 1793. In addition, his Indian scenes, engraved by Thomas Morris, appeared in the *European Magazine* and *London Review*.

12. For further discussion of the small but ubiquitous references to confinement in *Emma*, see also Barchas.

13. See Bertelsen (356-60) for a discussion of miniatures in an Exhibition of the Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours held in Spring Gardens in 1813 and attended by Austen. George Hayter was a member of this Society in 1812. In Austen's letter reporting on seeing the miniatures there, she also records her visits to a large Reynolds retrospective and a Royal Academy Exhibit (24 May 1813).

14. One popular example is a print by Walker and Boutall of "Miss Millbanke," which bears the caption, "from a miniature by Charles Hayter, painted in 1812." Anna Isabella Milbanke (1792-1860), incidentally a great fan of *Pride and Prejudice*, married Lord Byron in 1815 and separated less than a year later. Since *Persuasion* makes so much of Benwick's reading of Byron, knowledge of this contemporary print (or miniature) may link Charles Hayter's name with Byron's disastrous marriage.

15. One such review may be found in *The Examiner* for Sunday, 15 December 1816.

16. Harris, who acknowledges that Alfred Gordon-Brown first identified Jacob Frieman or Fruman as the likely Cape artist, suspects Frieman of painting "that Byronic, bright-eyed image of Francis Austen" [circa 1806], currently in possession of the Jane Austen Memorial Trust (Harris 84 and notes).

17. See, for example, in order of publication, Brown, Vipont, and Jenkyns.

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