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To cite this article: Madeleine S. J. Page (2022) Numbering *The Ladies Waldegrave*: Questions of Status and Display, *History of Photography*, 46:1, 9-19, DOI: [10.1080/03087298.2022.2102287](https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2022.2102287)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03087298.2022.2102287>



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Published online: 30 Aug 2022.



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Numbering *The Ladies Waldegrave*: Questions of Status and Display

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Much of the research presented here was conducted as part of my MLitt dissertation at the University of St Andrews in 2019 under the supervision of José Ramon Marcaida Lopez, to whom I am very grateful. I would also like to thank my current PhD supervisors at the University of Leeds: Robin Le Poidevin, Julian Dodd, and especially Liz Stainforth for her comments on an earlier draft which I presented in July 2021 at *Photographic Art Reproductions, from 1839 to the Present*, a conference co-organised by the University of St Andrews and the Centre André Chastel. I would like to thank the organisers, especially Sofya Dmitrieva, and the attendees. Finally, thank you to the anonymous reviewers for their useful feedback.

At first glance, it appears as though Sir Joshua Reynolds's *The Ladies Waldegrave* (1780) is in two places at once: Strawberry Hill House and the National Gallery, Edinburgh. Despite their visual indistinguishability, however, the former is a copy of the latter created by Factum Foundation in 2018. In this article, I discuss the ontological relation between paintings and their visually indistinguishable facsimiles, along with certain consequences that relation has for display practices. Traditionally, paintings are understood to be ontologically singular; no copy, however faithful, can ever stand in as the work itself. Using *The Ladies Waldegrave*, I defend ontological singularity while maintaining that these visually indistinguishable facsimiles can be used to promote engagement with, and a better understanding of, originals. Drawing on the philosophical idea that objects have temporal parts, I suggest that what I call suitable facsimiles – copies that are visually indistinguishable from originals – are representations of particular temporal parts of those originals. My proposal allows paintings to maintain their singularity while acknowledging that some copies share a special relationship with the originals such that the former can stand in for the latter. I conclude by considering issues concerning the display of both originals and suitable facsimiles.

Keywords: *Factum Foundation, The Ladies Waldegrave (1780), visually indistinguishable copy, display, original, facsimile*

Upon entering the Great Parlour, the formal dining room of Strawberry Hill House, in 2019, one is greeted by thirteen portraits. One of these works is a copy. Its identity as such, however, cannot be determined by merely looking, as each work has the characteristic features of a painting: visible textured brushstrokes, oil paint sheen, traces of the materiality of the support and so on. The viewer may recall seeing one of the portraits, Sir Joshua Reynolds's *The Ladies Waldegrave* (1780), displayed in the Scottish National Gallery, Edinburgh. However, the original is not currently on loan: *The Ladies Waldegrave* displayed in Strawberry Hill was created in 2018 by Factum Foundation. While it looks like an oil painting, it is actually a three-dimensional print of a non-contact scan that is visually indistinguishable from the original in terms of both colour and surface detail.

The case at Strawberry Hill is just one example of how visually indistinguishable copies are being integrated into traditional museum displays. As three-dimensional scanning and printing technologies develop and become more accessible, the question arises as to how the relation between the original work and these kinds of copies should be understood. The most influential account of the original–copy relationship was put forth by Walter Benjamin and more recently challenged by Bruno Latour and Adam





Figure 1. Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Ladies Waldegrave*, 1780. Oil on canvas, 143 × 168.3 cm. National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh. Purchased with the aid of The Cowan Smith Bequest and the Art Fund 1952.

Lowe. Here, I propose that visually indistinguishable copies, like Factum's *The Ladies Waldegrave*, should be understood as representations of particular temporal parts of the original works as they appeared at the time of scanning. I will refer to copies that meet the visual indistinguishability criteria as 'suitable facsimiles'. My proposal allows these facsimiles to stand in for originals without compromising their singular ontology. I will also use my proposal to evaluate the current displays of both the original and suitable facsimile of *The Ladies Waldegrave*. The original painting (figure 1), commissioned by Horace Walpole, depicts his grandnieces. It is a work of particular interest as it has a rich history of having been copied, including Factum's 2018 three-dimensional scan (figure 2), which was produced as part of the ongoing project to return the house to its appearance in the 1790s at the time of Walpole's death.¹ I will briefly discuss a second copy, a mezzotint, contemporaneous to the original, created and published by Valentine Green in 1781 (figure 3). While Green's mezzotint is highly celebrated in its own right, I show that it does not stand in the same relation to the original as Factum's copy.

1 – Strawberry Hill House & Garden, 'Restoration', (<http://www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/the-house/history/restoration/>).

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly (Reproduction)

Walter Benjamin's 1935 essay, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', remains one of the most influential accounts of the relationship



Figure 2. Facsimile of Joshua Reynolds's *The Ladies Waldegrave*, 1780. The painting was recorded in 2018 by Factum Foundation inside the collection of the National Galleries of Scotland, and rematerialised with its frame as part of a collaboration with Strawberry Hill House. The project aimed at restoring Horace Walpole's collection to its original location, through the creation of facsimiles. Photograph: © Oak Taylor-Smith for Factum Foundation.

between original works of art and mechanically produced copies. The crux of Benjamin's argument is that mechanical reproduction fundamentally changed the relationship between original artworks and copies. What is 'special' about original artworks – that is, what Benjamin called its 'aura' or cult value – derives from the unique cultural context or history of the work. He states:

Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence. This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years as well as the various changes in its ownership.²

The act of mechanical reproduction, Benjamin maintains, removes the work from the 'domain of tradition', thus rendering multiple what was once singular and unique.³ Through this process, the work is made more publicly accessible. It gains a new 'exhibition value', thus becoming 'a creation with entirely new functions'.⁴ In other words, the mechanically produced copy takes on a life of its own. The history of Green's *The Ladies Waldegrave* is a clear example of Benjamin's claim. The

2 – Walter Benjamin, 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt, trans. by Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 3, 1–26. (<https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/benjamin.pdf>).

3 – Ibid., 4

4 – Ibid., 7.



Figure 3. Valentine Green, *Portrait of The Ladies Waldegrave*, 1781. Mezzotint on paper, 54.5 × 62 cm. The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg. Photograph © The State Hermitage Museum. Photograph by Nikitina S.V.

mezzotint was presented as the centrepiece of Green's well-known series *Beauties of the Present Age*, published in London in 1779. The popularity of Green's work is confirmed by the mezzotint's sale history: one version sold for 560 guineas while Walpole only paid Reynolds 300 guineas for the original painting.⁵ Green's mezzotint was not just a copy of Reynolds's painting, but a valued work in itself.

Benjamin's argument is based on the traditional assumption that visual artworks are ontologically singular. A reproduction of the *Mona Lisa*, no matter how faithfully executed, will never be more than a mere copy of da Vinci's panel. In contrast, mechanical reproductions are multiple. Green's copy of *The Ladies Waldegrave*, for instance, was produced from a metal printing plate. The printing process enables multiple identical impressions to be produced from a single plate, thus rendering the resulting prints ontologically multiple. This ontological difference explains Benjamin's reasoning that the singular original and the multiple reproductions cannot possess the same value-kinds.

Benjamin's conclusion that cult (*aura*) and exhibition value cannot be shared by the original and its mechanical reproductions is challenged by French sociologist Bruno Latour and Adam Lowe, the founder of Factum Arte,⁶ in their paper 'The Migration of the Aura'. Unlike Benjamin, who applies his argument to 'even the most perfect' reproductions, Latour and Lowe distinguish between good and bad

5 – Evelyn Marie Stuart, 'The Graceful Art of Mezzotint', *Fine Arts Journal*, 34, no. 10 (November 1916), 555; and Carole Tucker, 'Strawberry Hill Spotlights: The Ladies Waldegrave', *Strawberry Hill House Blog*, September 2018, 551–5. (<https://strawberryhillhouseblog.wordpress.com/2018/09/03/strawberry-hill-spotlightsthe-ladies-waldegraves/>).

6 – On Factum Arte, see (<https://www.factum-arte.com>).

7 – Bruno Latour and Adam Lowe, 'The Migration of the Aura or How to Explore the Original Through its Facsimiles', in *Switching Codes: Thinking Through Digital Technology in the Humanities and the Arts*, ed. by Thomas Bartscherer and Roderick Coover (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 1–18 (<http://www.bruno-latour.fr/sites/default/files/108-ADAM-FACSIMILES-GB.pdf>).

8 – On this concept, see for example Richard Wollheim, *Art and its Objects*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Linda Wetzel, 'Types and Tokens', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward N. Zalta (Fall 2018) (<https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/types-tokens/>).

9 – Latour and Lowe, 'Migration of the Aura', 11–13.

copies. 'Good' reproductions, along with the original work, can possess both cult and exhibition value in virtue of all belonging to the same *trajectory*.⁷ Lowe and Latour explain their concept of *trajectory* by appeal to performances. We do not distinguish one performance of *King Lear* as the original and all others as copies. Rather, *King Lear* consists of all its performances, none of which has a privileged status – apart from temporal priority – of being the original. Likewise, a printed story can be instantiated numerous times, as both an ordinary paperback version of *War and Peace* and Tolstoy's original manuscript are instances of the same work. This is often referred to as the type-token distinction where all copies of *War and Peace* are tokens of the story-type.⁸ Latour and Lowe attempt to apply this reasoning to paintings: a work of art is a trajectory, which consists of the original and all of its 'good' reproductions.

Latour and Lowe's conception of what counts as a 'good' reproduction is not immediately clear as they define it through three features: being displayed in the intended location of the original painting; being available and accessible, especially when compared to the original); and sharing the same surface features of the original work.⁹ I will return to the first two requirements later. The third is the most important as it excludes almost all reproductions. In the case of *The Ladies Waldegrave*, neither Green's mezzotint nor a photograph of the original – whether taken on an iPhone or a high-quality camera – count as 'good' reproductions because they all lack the three-dimensional surface quality of a painted canvas. Additionally, even a painter's copy could not be considered a 'good' reproduction under this requirement as the pigments would not occupy the exact same place as on the original canvas. Only visually indistinguishable copies, such as Factum's suitable facsimiles, can be considered 'good' according to Latour and Lowe's third requirement. I refer to copies that meet this visual indistinguishability requirement as 'suitable facsimiles'.

The Ontology of Originals and Copies

Latour and Lowe conceive of both originals and mechanical reproductions as ontologically multiple works as they can be multiply instantiated with no single instance having the status of being *the* artwork. However, the way in which they reach this conclusion is problematic. To overturn the traditional ontological position that, after all, is deeply embedded in how we commonly think of visual artworks, an argument must be extremely convincing. Yet Latour and Lowe's argument begs the question. They claim that paintings are ontologically multiple by using examples of kinds of art objects such as prints that are traditionally accepted as multiple to then simply identify paintings as the same. It may be possible, however, to reach their conclusion through different reasoning. Philosopher Gregory Currie does this using what he calls the 'instance multiplicity hypothesis'.¹⁰ Currie is not alone in maintaining this conclusion, but his argument is the most well known.¹¹ For him, an artwork reproduction counts as an instance rather than a mere copy of the work if it can be substituted for the original without any change in visual appreciation. In other words, visual indistinguishability is all that is required for ontological multiplicity. In this case, both Reynolds's original and Factum's *The Ladies Waldegrave* should therefore be considered instances of the same work. Currie's argument highlights the importance of visual indistinguishability. By definition, suitable facsimiles provide the exact same visual experience as the original at the time of scanning. If we follow the traditional assumption that only visually perceptible features contribute to the aesthetic experience of the work, then suitable facsimiles act as aesthetic vehicles in the same way as the originals. The usually uncontroversial assumption,

10 – Gregory Currie, *An Ontology of Art* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 1989), 121.

11 – For similar views see P. F. Strawson, 'Aesthetic Appraisal and Works of Art' (1974), in *Aesthetics and the Philosophy of Art*, ed. by Peter Lamarque and Stein Haugom Olsen (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 237–42; P. F. Strawson, *Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics* (London & New York: Routledge, 1959), 231, n.1; and Eddie Zemach, 'The Ontological Status of Art Objects', *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 25, no. 2 (1966), 145–53.

here, is that visually perceptible properties contribute to aesthetic value such that when two works are visually indistinguishable, they have the same aesthetic value. There is another more technical point to be made here. Suitability should be established according to the limits of perceptual experience within the framework of intended use. That is, the resolution requirements for colour and surface information are determined by human perceptual limitations and are therefore not fixed *a priori*. According to software engineer Tim Zaman, the minimum spatial resolution that can be perceived by the average healthy human eye is 298 dpi at 75 centimetres from the object, the standard viewing perspective in museums.¹² The establishment of such standards is important to avoid confusion about the scanned data themselves and how they can be used. For instance, after the April 2019 fire, one journalist claimed that art historian Andrew Tallon's three-dimensional map of Notre Dame was an 'exact digital replica' of the Cathedral, even though it is only positionally accurate within five millimetres.¹³ This also implies, however, that while the aesthetic value of original and suitable facsimile might be the same, other values, such as the scientific, might not be the same as their difference would be perceivable by, for example, an X-ray machine.

While Currie's argument in favour of the instance multiplicity hypothesis is more convincing than Latour and Lowe's, it is still subject to criticism. Currie supports his conclusion by supposing that because so many distinct art kinds are multiple, we must desire ontological uniformity.¹⁴ Therefore, he continues, singular exceptions should only be allowed with good reason. However, as philosopher Christopher Shields notes, the wide variety of multiple art kinds reveals our desire for differentiation, not uniformity.¹⁵ I agree with Shields that the burden of proof falls to supporters of the instance multiplicity hypothesis. Unless they provide good reason as to why paintings and sculptures are multiple, there is not sufficient reason to reject the traditional division. More importantly, as philosopher Stephen Davies notes, while a copy may reflect the same material appearance as the original, this does not entail that it is a correct instance of that same work.¹⁶ If two artists separately painted visually indistinguishable paintings – visually indistinguishable red fields, for example – it does not follow that their creations are instances of the same work. The traditional ontological division, Davies continues, is central to our current art practices and identification and evaluation of art.¹⁷ This importance is one good reason why the traditional ontological division between singular and multiple art kinds should remain intact. Without support from Currie's argument, I reject Latour and Lowe's claim that original paintings and their suitable facsimiles are ontologically multiple in favour of the traditional ontological division.

Benjamin's conception of the relationship between originals and mechanical reproductions has remained influential for a reason. He captures the important ontological distinction between originals and mechanical reproductions and the resulting differences in their value-kinds. However, Latour and Lowe also introduce an important idea: certain mechanical reproductions appear to stand in a special relationship to originals. This relationship allows the reproductions to possess the aura of the original. This is evident by the display of Factum's *The Ladies Waldegrave* at Strawberry Hill. As a suitable facsimile, it provides direct access to the aura of the original. However, as an aesthetic vehicle, it also allows the original to take on a new exhibition value, depending on the context in which it is displayed.

To retain the benefits of both Benjamin's and Latour and Lowe's insights, I propose an account of temporal parts that can explain the privileged position of suitable facsimiles while maintaining the traditional position that paintings are ontologically singular. Temporal parts are used by metaphysicians to explain how

12 – Tim Zaman, 'Development of a Topographic Imaging Device: For the Near-Planar Surfaces of Paintings' (unpublished master's thesis, Delft University of Technology, February 2013), 41.

13 – James Pero, 'Detailed 3D laser scans of Notre Dame Cathedral captured by late historian could be used to save the building', *Mail Online*, 16 April 2019, available at <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-6928363/3D-laser-scans-Notre-Dame-Cathedral-captured-late-historian-used-save-building.html>

14 – Currie, *Ontology of Art*, 85.

15 – Christopher Shields, 'Critical Notice', *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 73, no. 2 (June 1995), 293–300.

16 – Stephen Davies, 'Ontology of Art', in *Oxford Handbook of Aesthetics*, ed. Jerrold Levinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 155–181.

17 – *Ibid.*, 157.

18 – Temporal parts are especially useful for explaining how the same object can have different properties at these different times; for a thorough introduction and overview of this debate see Katherine Hawley, ‘Temporal Parts’, *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Edward Zalta (Summer 2020), available at <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/temporal-parts/>

19 – This claim, that suitable facsimiles are representations of particular temporal parts of original paintings, is the focus of my PhD research. As expressed here, it should be understood as a placeholder to account for the special relationship between suitable facsimiles and original artworks. This is something that I intend to develop in future philosophical research.

20 – Latour and Lowe, ‘Migration of the Aura’, 11.

21 – *Ibid.*, 2–3.

physical objects persist through time.¹⁸ They are most easily understood when compared to their spatial counterparts. My body extends through space because its different parts occupy different locations: my feet are on the ground while my head is in the air. Likewise, I extend through time by having different temporal parts at each moment of my existence. This is a general account of four-dimensionalism, according to which persisting objects are four-dimensional as they extend through both space and time.

I hold that temporal parts best characterise the relationship between suitable facsimiles and originals. Four-dimensionalism entails that objects are not wholly present at each moment of their existence. On this view, Reynolds’s *The Ladies Waldegrave* is a (currently) 242-year-long, four-dimensional object. While for Latour and Lowe, an artwork’s trajectory includes both the original and all of its ontologically distinct suitable facsimiles, here it refers to the original artwork’s temporal parts. While suitable facsimiles and original paintings each have their own temporal parts, I suggest that *suitable facsimiles are representations of particular temporal parts of the originals*.¹⁹ Thus, even if the original’s appearance changes in the future, the suitable facsimile produced before the change allows access to the original’s past appearance. I propose that using temporal parts to characterise this special relationship between an original and its suitable facsimiles allows the latter to possess both the aura of the former as well as their own exhibition value. A further benefit of my view is that the suitable facsimile and the original share the same exhibition and cult value, while allowing the original to retain its ontological singularity. This opens up an important discussion about display that I consider in the next section.

Displaying Originals and Suitable Facsimiles

Suitable facsimiles are already exhibited in place of originals in a number of different ways. Latour and Lowe argue that suitable facsimiles gain authenticity by being displayed in the original location of the original work.²⁰ They cite the example of Paolo Veronese’s *The Wedding Feast at Cana* (1536), which was not only commissioned to occupy a particular location, the refectory of the San Giorgio Monastery in Venice, but painted to complement its features. Featuring a lavish depiction of the feast at which Jesus turned water into wine, the work appears to be an extension of the dining room itself due to the perspective created by Veronese. Additionally, Latour and Lowe note that, at certain times, the perspective of light in the painting aligns with the sun coming through the refectory’s window, thus enforcing the view of the painting as an extension of its original physical setting.²¹ This perspective is lost in its current location – stolen by Napoleon’s army in 1797, Veronese’s painting now hangs in the Louvre in Paris, in the same room as the *Mona Lisa*. Factum produced a suitable facsimile of *The Wedding Feast at Cana* which now hangs in the location for which the original was commissioned. Latour and Lowe correctly point out that the visual experiences of the suitable facsimile and of the original it is from are much different due to their respective locations. It does seem that the experience of the suitable facsimile has an authenticity that the original, due to its current location, lacks. From this, Latour and Lowe derive their conclusion that displaying a suitable facsimile in the original’s intended location gives the former an extra layer of authenticity. In the case of *The Wedding Feast at Cana*, their conclusion seems plausible. When separated, both the refectory and painting are missing a crucial part of their identities. However, I think this is the exception, rather than the rule. Consider *The Ladies Waldegrave*. While Walpole commissioned the painting with the intention it be displayed in Strawberry Hill House, Reynolds did not paint

it with this setting in mind. The painting is displayed in the house, rather than conforming to its architectural features. It could have been hung on a different wall in a different room with not much change in visual appreciation.

In the case of Strawberry Hill, the exhibition as a whole gains authenticity from the inclusion of a suitable facsimile rather than the reverse. This conclusion is supported by the aim of the Strawberry Hill restoration: to restore the house to its original appearance. A mere photographic reproduction of *The Ladies Waldegrave* would not lend the exhibition authenticity in the same way as the suitable facsimile. The exhibition would be equally authentic if Reynolds's original was displayed rather than the suitable facsimile.

If the exhibition at Strawberry Hill retains the same level of authenticity regardless of whether the original or suitable facsimile was displayed, how should correct display be determined? As philosopher Constantine Sandis rightly points out, there is no standard as to whether a facsimile or original should be displayed. Rather, it depends entirely on the purpose of the museum or exhibition in question.²² I will show that the display of original versus suitable facsimile is entirely case dependent by considering certain key aspects of how traditional museum displays are evaluated.

Museums, as defined by the UK Museum Association, 'enable people to explore collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment. They are institutions that collect, safeguard and make accessible artefacts and specimens, which they hold in trust for society'.²³ The concept of authenticity – where authenticity refers to the creative output of the particular artist – is the grounding ethos of art museums in particular; visitors to the Scottish National Gallery, for instance, expect to see original paintings, not copies. Art museums that do not display original works may seem 'inauthentic' in comparison to their more established counterparts. Western art practice is now predominately on the side of displaying originals, rather than suitable facsimiles, in art museums. However, this was not always the case. Many sculpture museums were established in the nineteenth century by using casts, at a time when distinctions between them and 'original' statues was not so valued or even tenable.²⁴ The Cast Courts at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London displays plaster casts of notable art and archaeological artefacts from around the world – in some cases, alongside original works. Much like the restoration of Strawberry Hill House, the Cast Courts have been recently renovated to match their appearance from 1873 as closely as possible. Even if the plaster casts are viewed today as 'surrogates' for the originals, the display as a whole has been turned into a piece of history. Both the artefacts and the space in which they are housed are objects of appreciation. This is not really the same as displaying suitable facsimiles among originals in the traditional museum context. It does not follow, however, that this obsession with the original should always have priority. Whether or not an original or suitable facsimile should be displayed can be determined by examining two types of factors: quantitative measures related to viewer experience and the context of the work itself.

To determine the success of an exhibition, sociologists Dirk vom Lehn and Christian Heath introduce three quantitative measures related to viewer experience: stopping power; dwell time; and communication power. A successful exhibition has a high level of all three factors. Stopping power refers to the average number of viewers who stop at an exhibit while dwell time is the average amount of time a viewer spends with a work.²⁵ The dwell time of a particular exhibit must be higher than the average for it to be deemed successful. According to a 2001 study conducted by Jeffrey Smith at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City,

22 – Constantine Sandis, 'An Honest Display of Fakery: Replicas and the Role of Museums', *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement*, 79 (2016), 241–59.

23 – Museum Association, 'FAQs', (<https://www.museumsassociation.org/about/frequently-asked-questions>).

24 – See Patrizia Di Bello, *Sculptural Photographs from the Calotype to Digital Technologies* (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2018).

25 – Dirk vom Lehn and Christian Heath, 'Accounting for New Technology in Museum Exhibitions', *International Journal of Arts Management*, 7, no. 3 (2005), 11–21.

26 – Jeffrey Smith, 'Spending Time on Art', *Empirical Studies of the Arts*, 19, no. 2 (2001), 229–36.

27 – Amelia Gentlemen, 'Smile Please', *Guardian*, 19 October 2004, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2004/oct/19/art.france>

28 – Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions, 'Scottish visitor attractions record an increase in visitor numbers for the fifth year in a row', 5 March 2019, (<https://asva.co.uk/app/uploads/2021/02/ASVA-Annual-Visitor-Trends-Report-2019.pdf>).

29 – Latour and Lowe, 'Migration of the Aura', 11.

30 – Paul Stock, 'Lost Treasures of Strawberry Hill: Masterpieces from Horace Walpole's Collection', *Criticks: the Reviews Website of British Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, (<https://www.bsecs.org.uk/criticks-reviews/lost-treasures-strawberry-hill-masterpieces-horace-walpoles-collection/>).

31 – vom Lehn and Heath, 'Accounting for New Technology', 12.

32 – While these display labels provide a useful introduction to the context in which the work was created, it is not guaranteed that visitors will read or use them.

33 – Sandis, 'Honest Display', 254.

viewers spend an average of 27.2 seconds with each work.²⁶ At the Louvre, the average dwell time is fifteen seconds, even when looking at the *Mona Lisa*, arguably the most famous painting in Western art.²⁷

A number of factors decrease the likelihood of a viewer stopping at or dwelling upon the original *The Ladies Waldegrave* in the Scottish National Gallery. First, the gallery in which it is displayed is near the building's main entrance and connects two larger exhibition rooms. The Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions reported that more than one million people visited the Scottish National Gallery in 2018.²⁸ Open seven days a week, that averages to 2,740 visitors per day in 2018. As a result, there is an almost constant flow of people moving throughout, many of whom simply pass by *The Ladies Waldegrave*, one of sixteen paintings displayed in room thirteen. It is also dwarfed by Thomas Gainsborough's *The Honourable Mrs Graham* (1777), which hangs to its left. The number of artworks and visitors in the room drastically reduces the likelihood that a viewer will directly engage with the work. This phenomenon is mentioned by Latour and Lowe, who state that in some cases the display of a suitable facsimile may allow for closer inspection of the work than the display of the original if the latter is displayed in a congested museum.²⁹ Their point is supported by the display of Factum's *The Ladies Waldegrave* at Strawberry Hill, which is a much more niche attraction than the National Gallery. Open four days a week from 1 April to 31 December, one guide estimated that in 2018 the museum averaged between 190 and 250 visitors per day.³⁰ Therefore, other visitors are less likely to prevent engagement with the works. Out of the fourteen paintings hanging in the Great Parlour of Strawberry Hill House, Factum's *The Ladies Waldegrave* is the most dominant. With these factors in mind, in the case of *The Ladies Waldegrave*, the display of the suitable facsimile rather than the original appears more likely to increase the stopping power and dwell time of the work itself.

The third quantitative measure of an exhibition's success is its communicative power.³¹ As purely visual entities, artworks cannot directly convey the artistic or historical context in which they were created. This information, which typically contextualises the work in some way, must therefore be provided through some supplemental device – although this may not be true for contemporary artworks which may contain contextual information about their creation. Standard physical displays typically provide contextual information through accompanying labels and descriptions. At the Scottish National Gallery, works in 'Painting as Spectacle: 1785–1870', the room in which the original *The Ladies Waldegrave* is displayed, are described by the primary display label as 'private commissions on a very grand scale which presented family history as national propaganda'. A secondary relation among the artists' works displayed in the room is also established through the label of the painting hanging above *The Honourable Mrs Graham* and George Romney's *Mrs Wilbraham Bootle* (1781). The label of this work describes the artistic rivalry between Romney and his 'older contemporary', Reynolds.³² While this contextual information contributes to the original's aura, it can also be applied to the suitable facsimile.

Furthermore, as Sandis notes, an object gains new significance in each context in which it is displayed while each display is changed by the inclusion or exclusion of that object.³³ The displays in the Scottish National Gallery and Strawberry Hill convey variant information differently. In the National Gallery, *The Ladies Waldegrave* is presented as part of a specific art historical context where Reynolds's artistic position is established through related portraiture. Its display in Strawberry Hill makes available a history of the work, the identities of the sitters and their relation to Walpole and his family lineage. The contextual information provided by

both displays is important individually and together present a more complete picture of the painting.

Unlike the current display of the original, the suitable facsimile is not accompanied by any label or description. The inclusion of descriptions or labels would violate the aim of the restoration to present the house as it appeared to Walpole. Strawberry Hill instead offers a much more immersive experience than the Scottish National Gallery as the contextual information is provided by guides stationed in each room. This method suggests that viewers are less likely to pass by paintings with a mere glance in the way that is almost guaranteed by the Edinburgh display. Guides provide the social interaction which vom Lehn and Heath identified as critical for viewer experience. The benefit is that, in context, the suitable facsimile gives a more authentic, hence satisfactory, experience of the original, thereby meeting the exhibition goals.

There are some potential issues with displaying works as at Strawberry Hill without physical contextual information. When it is busy not every viewer will be able to engage with each guide. In these cases, not only will the visitor be unable to engage in discussion, but they will lack the context necessary to understand fully the intention behind Walpole's display. This problem is mitigated by ticket sale restrictions. The daily opening hours are divided into seven half-hour time slots. Ticket sales for each slot are limited to a certain number to ensure that the house does not become overcrowded. This method will only work, however, in places such as Strawberry Hill where the number of visitors can be restricted easily.

One might conclude that the original work of art should be displayed in the place where visitors are most likely to engage with it in the most meaningful way. Given my analysis, it would seem to follow that Reynolds's painting should be sent to Strawberry Hill while the Scottish National Gallery receives Factum's suitable facsimile. However, this is not necessarily the case as there are other factors which determine suitability of display. Most notably, *The Ladies Waldegrave* was purchased and sold legitimately.³⁴ Therefore, there is no legal or ethical reason why the original should be returned to Strawberry Hill. It is also critical to consider the aims of each exhibition. As noted, for better or worse, viewers expect to see original artworks on display at traditional art museums. Strawberry Hill is not constrained by the same assumption.

In its display in Strawberry Hill, *The Ladies Waldegrave* is not distinguished as a suitable facsimile from the other works in the room, all of which, with the exception of Michael Dahl's *Portrait of Sir Robert Walpole*, are original to Walpole's house.³⁵ The inclusion and lack of distinction between originals and suitable facsimiles shows that the creation of each work is irrelevant to the viewer's experience. To ensure authenticity in line with Walpole's experience, the works of art must appear as they would have to him.³⁶ Since Walpole looked at paintings with particular surfaces, photographic reproductions would be insufficient replacements of works no longer in the collection. The restoration aims can be met by the display of either the suitable facsimile or the original. In the same way that displaying original artworks is expected of traditional museums, there is a case to be made for the display of suitable facsimiles in places like Strawberry Hill. Furthermore, Walpole loved reproductions and integrated many within the design of his house. One of the chimney pieces, for instance, was based on Edward the Confessor's Shrine at Westminster Abbey.³⁷ Therefore, it seems likely that he would approve of the display of suitable facsimiles, which in turn support the restoration goals.

34 – This is often not the case. As mentioned earlier, Veronese's *The Wedding Feast at Cana* was stolen from its original location. In such circumstances, there may be a strong case for returning originals to the location from which they were taken. Although this is an important and timely debate, I will not consider the ethical implications further here.

35 – The facsimile of *Portrait of Sir Robert Walpole* was not present when I visited Strawberry Hill on 22 May 2019.

36 – It is likely that many of the works have been restored since Walpole's death. However, the restored appearances conform more closely to Walpole's vision than photographic reproductions.

37 – Luisa Calè, 'Historic Doubts, Conjectures, and the Wanderings of a Principal Curiosity: Henry VII in the Fabric of Strawberry Hill', *Word & Image*, 33, no. 3 (2017), 279–91.

Conclusion

Using temporal parts to account for the special relationship between suitable facsimiles and original paintings allows us to retain the traditional ontological singularity of paintings, a concept strongly embedded in our current and historical Western art practices. The multiplicity view pushed by Currie and by Latour and Lowe would therefore require significant revision to our concept of art. Yet I agree with Latour and Lowe's point that certain copies stand in a special relationship of 'sharing in the aura' of the original. Furthermore, the temporal parts relationship enables both originals and suitable facsimiles to possess the same exhibition value. While the case of *The Ladies Waldegrave* upholds the traditional practice of displaying original paintings in art museums, this should not be accepted as the standard. Rather, when determining whether to display an original or a suitable facsimile, the resulting quantitative factors and context of both the work and the exhibition should be carefully considered. However, no matter the determination, there is only one *The Ladies Waldegrave*.