

# Georges Méliès: Anti-Boulangist Caricature and the Incohérent Movement

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Throughout his entire life, Georges Méliès (1861–1938) was a “compulsive draughtsman,” as both Paul Hammond and Paolo Cherchi Usai put it.<sup>1</sup> As a schoolboy, Méliès recalled being possessed by the “demon of drawing,” an “artistic passion” that distracted him from his studies of the written word.<sup>2</sup> This passion for drawing would continue throughout his life, encompassing his overlapping careers as an illusionist, a caricaturist, and a cinematographer.<sup>3</sup> During the first three decades of the twentieth century, Méliès published caricatures in French magic magazines like *L'Illusionniste* and *Passez Muscade* and drew countless pre-production sketches for the mise-en-scène of his films, as well as countless ex post facto drawings of specific film tableaux—some hand-colored—done from memory many years after the films themselves. Quite a few of Méliès’ previously unpublished drawings have been published in recent years with the renewed critical attention given to his entire *oeuvre*,<sup>4</sup> but discussion of Méliès’ graphic output in its own right is still largely nonexistent.

Many of Méliès’ drawings were unpublished during his lifetime, but this was not the case for the caricatures published under the pseudonym “Geo. Smile” on the oversized color covers of the anti-Boulangist weekly *La Griffie* from August 8, 1889 to January 30, 1890.<sup>5</sup> The lack of attention given to Méliès’ caricatures for *La Griffie* is not solely due to the scarcity of surviving copies of the journal, but is also explained by the fact that many of these politicized images are not easy to reconcile with the conception of Méliès as a whimsical, lighthearted trickster—the so-called “magician of Montreuil,” a persona that was effectively invented during the late 1920s and 1930s by the journalists, critics, and amateur film historians who

“rediscovered” Méliès selling toys in a Paris train station.<sup>6</sup> Through interviews and articles during this period, Méliès participated in their selective re-reading of his work. In his memoirs, written near the end of his life and published posthumously, Méliès glossed over his work with *La Griffé* in only three sentences, recalling that this “was his only foray into politics, which interested him infinitely less than artistic creations and inventions.”<sup>7</sup> These creations and inventions, his memoirs go on to emphasize, centered on magic theater and, not long after that, the cinematograph.

Thus, Méliès dichotomizes art and politics, while disavowing the ways in which his drawings for *La Griffé* were not only political images but also “artistic creations” of a very particular and historically specific kind. While the “myth of Méliès” (which Méliès himself helped create) has largely determined our understanding of his creative work and his legacy, this mythology effectively suppresses both the manifestly satirical content of much of his work and its resonance with the historical avant-garde. In this essay, I argue that Méliès’ work in the graphic arts—inasmuch as it cuts across caricature and cinema while invoking recognizable tropes of the Incohérent movement—implicated political discourse, along with elements of avant-garde aesthetics, in modern mass-mediated visual culture.

In his memoirs, written some forty years after the Boulanger affair, Méliès reduced Boulangism to its namesake, the former general Georges Boulanger, claiming that Boulanger had tried to overthrow the Republic and put a dictatorship in its place.<sup>8</sup> More or less similar interpretations of the Boulanger affair continue to have great appeal,<sup>9</sup> but revisionist historians have provided a far more nuanced and complicated account of the crisis the Boulanger affair constituted by stressing the economic and political factors that conspired to position Boulangism as a viable (if relatively short-lived) coalition that brought together elements of the left and the right to threaten the French Third Republic during the late 1880s and early 1890s.<sup>10</sup>

Since the early nineteenth century, Paris had been the center of a vibrant culture of political caricature. *La Griffé* was edited by Georges Méliès’ cousin Adolphe Méliès—one of the journal’s few contributors to do so non-pseudonymously.<sup>11</sup> *La Griffé* seems to have been the last of several Paris-based caricature journals that began publication in response to the rise of Boulangism, after *Le Boulangiste*, *Le Barnum*, *Le Troupier*, and *Le Grincheux*.<sup>12</sup> Méliès’ involvement with *La Griffé* would have likely linked him not only to its other contributors, most of whom were pseudonymous (and many of whom likely wrote under multiple pseudonyms), but also to a small network of people associated with other Paris caricature journals that had an anti-Boulangist orientation. According to his biographer, Madeleine Malthête-Méliès, he knew contributors to *Le Don Quichotte* and *Le Grelot* through Adolphe Méliès.<sup>13</sup> Both of these journals

predated the Boulangier affair but took a consistently anti-Boulangist stance during this period. *La Griffé* appears to also have been loosely affiliated with *Les Hommes d'aujourd'hui*, which was edited by Léon Vanier and published colored caricatures and biographical sketches of various celebrities, politicians, scientists, and men of letters. The seventh volume of *Les Hommes d'aujourd'hui* was advertised in *La Griffé*, and Charles Pitou, a contributor to *La Griffé*, also wrote several biographical articles for *Les Hommes d'aujourd'hui*, including one on Charles Gilbert-Martin, the editor of *Le Grelot*.<sup>14</sup>

The second half of the 1880s was undoubtedly a watershed period in Georges Méliès' personal and professional life.<sup>15</sup> Méliès spent most of 1884 in London, where he worked in a clothing store and a shoe shop (and learned English), ostensibly preparing to enter his father's successful bootmaking business.<sup>16</sup> After returning to Paris, he tried his hand at various artistic pursuits, including painting, photography, piano, and sculpture, and married Eugénie Génin in 1885. The following year, he sold his share of the family business to his brothers Henri and Gaston.<sup>17</sup> In 1888, he used the money to purchase exhibition rights to the preeminent magic theater in Paris, the Théâtre Robert-Houdin, thus beginning a long career as the designer, author, and presenter of stage illusions and magic sketches. One year later, he undertook what would turn out to be a much shorter—though rather portentous—parallel career as a professional caricaturist.

Méliès' return to Paris in 1885 coincided not only with the very beginnings of Boulangism but also with the peak years of the Incohérent movement, a multimedia avant-garde that spanned performance, writing, and the graphic arts, while anticipating certain key strategies of the later Surrealist and Dada movements. In a revealing passage, Méliès writes in his memoirs that after returning to Paris (but prior to purchasing the Théâtre Robert-Houdin) he gave his earliest conjuring performances in a theater located within the galerie Vivienne. In the very next sentence, Méliès references the furor in Paris at the time for the humorous monologues of Félix Galipaux and Coquelin *cadet*, which he says inspired him to add comedy to his repertoire.<sup>18</sup> The galerie Vivienne was the site of the 1883 and 1884 Incohérent exhibitions; both Galipaux and Coquelin *cadet* moved in Incohérent circles. A number of other Incohérents also had ties to the realms of theater and popular spectacle. They include not only Henri Toulouse-Lautrec and Jules Chéret, but also—and perhaps even more to the point here—Paul Ginisty and Georges Moynet, Incohérents who authored turn-of-the-century French books, respectively, about the theatrical *féerie* and stage effects.<sup>19</sup>

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to establish with certainty whether or not Méliès had direct involvement in any of the Incohérent expositions or balls. Many contributors to the Incohérent expositions are listed in the catalogs under pseudonyms, while nearly all of the works themselves, such as they were, have

long ceased to exist. Méliès clearly had a longstanding affinity for made-up names involving wordplay (as one can immediately discern from character names like “Barbenfouillis” and “Mabouloff,” which recur in his later magic sketches and films), and thus one wonders if perhaps the aspiring young artist Georges Méliès was behind at least one of the many ridiculous pseudonyms found in the *Incohérent* catalogs. Even if he was not directly involved in any of the movement’s activities, Méliès was doubtlessly familiar with *Incohérence* as an artistic and popular phenomenon in Paris during the 1880s.

Méliès’ 1888 purchase of the Theatre Robert-Houdin needs to be understood in terms of *Incohérence*. Méliès’ decision to buy a theater of magic after a relatively short time in the profession was a quintessential *Incohérent* move. Méliès’ decision and persona resonate with the description of L’*Incohérent* published one year earlier on the cover of the March 15, 1887 issue of the *Revue Illustrée* alongside a drawing of a painting by *Incohérent* Jan van Beers<sup>20</sup> (that shows an African-American Pierrot figure holding his own decapitated head):

He belongs to all the crafts that draw near to art: a typographer can be *Incohérent*, a zinc worker, never! So the *Incohérent* is a painter or a bookseller, a poet or a bureaucrat, or a sculptor, but what distinguishes him is the fact that the moment he surrenders to his incoherence he prefers to pass for what he is not: the bookseller becomes a tenor, the painter writes verses, the architect discusses free trade, all with exuberance.<sup>21</sup>

Thus the shoemaker made magic and opposed spiritualism with great exuberance as he threw himself into an entirely new profession and surrendered himself to his incoherence. Indeed, we should consider Méliès’ first major magic sketch, “Le Décapité Récalcitrant; ou, American Spiritualistic Mediums,” as the work of an *Incohérent* illusionist. The magic sketch performs a mocking caricature of spiritualism that can also be found in caricature journals like *Le Grelot*.<sup>22</sup> The iconography of “Le Décapité Récalcitrant” bears some resemblance to van Beers’ *Incohérent* painting, and the magic sketch also ended with a comic monologue, an *Incohérent* genre as performed by Coquelin *cadet* and others.<sup>23</sup> *Incohérence* was motivated by irreverence for artistic tradition in the name of laughter—just what Méliès brought to the stage of the Théâtre Robert-Houdin.<sup>24</sup> The radical differences between Méliès’ illusions and those of his theater’s late namesake are epitomized by the indignant response of the theater’s longtime mechanic, Eugène Calmels, to these new illusions: “Monsieur Robert-Houdin would never have done that!”<sup>25</sup>

Yet, it is the striking series of caricatures Méliès drew for *La Griffie* that links him most clearly to the *Incohérent* movement. Scholars have struggled to

extrapolate a set of common characteristics from the many diverse works shown at the various *Incohérent* exhibitions—held periodically in Paris from 1882 to 1893—much less to specify exactly who was part of these exhibitions, given that most of the contributors to these shows did so pseudonymously. Writer and publisher Jules Lévy was most responsible for organizing and publicizing the movement, which was ostensibly defined by the negation of norms of artistic practice in favor of the liberating and potentially anarchic force of pure laughter. *Incohérence* initially garnered widespread attention with a well-attended 1883 show held in Lévy's home of "drawings made by people who don't know how to draw."<sup>26</sup> This phrase should be read as a provocation to existing artistic hierarchies (and conventions of academic drawing technique), for as the movement developed, professional caricaturists like Émile Cohl, Caran d'Ache, and Alfred Le Petit would be central to its emergence. In one of the few catalogs devoted to the subject, Luce Abélès contends that the *Incohérent* movement only found *coherence*, if you will, through regular contributions by graphic artists—and in particular through the active participation of a number of caricaturists who formed the core of the movement.<sup>27</sup> In general, *Incohérent* art shares caricature's tendency toward immediate topicality and its natural preference for highly specific allusions to contemporaneous phenomena. Like the caricatures that appeared in many weekly publications, much *Incohérent* art was highly ephemeral—little of it survives apart from black-and-white engravings published in the *Incohérent* catalogs.

Many of the caricatures identified as the work of *Incohérent* artists were, of course, political. In her book on the movement, Catherine Charpin gestures toward the movement's political valence by pointing out that many *Incohérents* became increasingly concerned with political satire and caricature between 1889 and 1893 when a number took up the mantle of anti-Boulangism.<sup>28</sup> Most scholarship on the *Incohérents* tends to discuss their attempts to shock bourgeois artistic sensibilities through techniques such as monochromatic canvases, introducing real objects into the space of representation, and the use of unconventional formats and materials; but many in the movement were also involved in the business of making political images that tried to create a different kind of effect.<sup>29</sup> The movement overlapped substantially with explicitly political forms of image-making and writing, as is indicated by the fact that Lévy published not only the work of *Incohérents*, but also "anti-Boulangist propaganda."<sup>30</sup> Caricature journals like *Le Grelot* printed journalism that was harshly critical of Boulangism along with favorable accounts of the 1889 *Incohérent* exhibition.<sup>31</sup> It is precisely within the historical overlap between art and politics in *fin-de-siècle* Paris that this essay situates the young Georges Méliès.

Boulangism harnessed popular discontent with Republican administrations of the 1880s that seemed unable to effectively deal with what Jacques Néré

has identified as “a sustained economic crisis in France which . . . led to high unemployment, low wages, and economic misery for the popular classes.”<sup>32</sup> Republicans themselves were deeply divided between Opportunist and Radical factions. Dissatisfaction with a stagnant economy and seemingly inactive political leadership, especially among the working classes, garnered a considerable number of opposition votes from across the political spectrum for Boulanger and the Boulangists. In 1888, Boulanger was elected to the Chamber of Deputies on a platform of constitutional revision. He resigned after only a few months in office, but was quickly re-elected to the chamber after simultaneous victories in three departmental by-elections held on August 19, 1888 to replace resigned and deceased deputies—multiple candidacies intended as a plebiscite. As James R. Lehning notes, “The plebiscite through by-election that Boulanger and his supporters organized in 1888 and 1889 raised the issue of the relationship between the crowd and politics and suggested that the institutions of the parliamentary republic could not effectively channel participation in politics.”<sup>33</sup> With the support of a sizable segment of the disaffected French urban working class, Boulanger achieved a stunning landslide election victory in Paris, the purported seat of Republican power, on January 27, 1889.

It is often claimed that Boulanger was poised to make a *coup d'état* with the full support of the crowd on the night of his election, but hesitated and lost the opportunity. Historian Frederic H. Seager has effectively disproven this often-repeated story, noting that Boulanger remained at least nominally committed to Republican values throughout his career and had every reason to believe that he would assume greater power through the ballot.<sup>34</sup> Nor should we conflate Boulanger with Boulangism. As Patrick H. Hutton writes, “consideration of the Boulangist movement in its relationship to the precipitous rise and fall of General Boulanger provides interpretive coherence, but at the price of underestimating the movement’s importance.”<sup>35</sup>

While politicized to varying degrees, the Incohérent movement was, ideologically speaking, quite incoherent; it names a loose configuration of individuals who sometimes espoused seemingly antithetical political views. Indeed, though a number of artists who have been identified with Incohérence were caricaturists, the caricaturists grouped under this label did not share a consistent political program—nor is it clear to what extent their personal politics were represented in caricatures they were paid to draw. For example, a number of the caricatures drawn by Incohérents made a mockery of Boulangism, while others lionized Boulanger.<sup>36</sup> Still other Incohérent caricatures, like those drawn by Cohl, were not entirely or unambiguously aligned with either anti-Boulangism or Boulangism.<sup>37</sup>

The 1889 Incohérent exposition, which took place from May to October in Paris, took a number of swipes at Boulanger that are consistent with the



movement's topicality as well as its growing politicization. Denied a place in the massive Universal Exposition itself, the Universal Exposition of Incohérent Art offered a living political caricature as its centerpiece: The anteroom to the Incohérent exhibition contained a living horse that had been painted blue, white, and red like the flag of the Republic, with a white beard and blue eyeglasses adorned with red carnations.<sup>38</sup> This bizarre bit of equestrian performance art adopted the techniques of political caricature, metonymically substituting the steed on which Boulanger was so frequently depicted for the politician himself and decorating the animal with recognized signifiers of Boulanger and Boulangism, including his signature facial hair, red carnations, and blue eyeglasses, and overlaying the whole with a sharply contrasting Republican tricolor. The exhibition catalog was filled with visual and verbal jokes that ridiculed Boulanger's cult of celebrity and poked fun at public fascination with the former military man. A certain "Mr. Bézodis," for example, was included for a "*Drawing* made from a photograph of one of my friends who knows very well a man whose brother has a caretaker whose nephew shook General Boulanger's hand."<sup>39</sup> Nearly all of the artists in the exhibition catalog were named "Ernest," an extended Incohérent joke that invoked Boulanger's middle name (which was often used in the satirical press to ridicule him).<sup>40</sup>

As the Incohérent exhibition closed, the Boulangists were busy preparing for the upcoming elections, putting forward candidates in several hundred districts and investing millions of francs in publicity. Boulanger himself had been in exile since March; he had fled to Brussels (and later to London and then to Jersey), concerned that the Republican government would arrest him. Boulanger's exile undoubtedly deprived the movement of considerable momentum (as did the opening of the Universal Exposition), but Boulangism was far from moribund in his absence, largely due to the royalist interests that had unmoored Boulangism from its roots in Radical Republicanism and transformed it into a reactionary movement. William D. Irvine argues, "The elections of 1889 were not, as most accounts suggest, an anticlimactic epilogue to the Boulanger affair. On the contrary, they were its culminating point, the end to which the royalists' assiduous cultivation of Boulangism had always been directed."<sup>41</sup> Given Boulanger's surprising success in the January elections, the fall 1889 elections seemed to present Boulangists and their monarchist allies with the possibility of together winning control of a decisive number of seats, a voting bloc that would perhaps lead to constitutional revision or even dissolution of the Republic.

*La Griffes* began publication during the second week of August 1889, but a short time before the September-October elections and the October closing of the Incohérent exhibition. Méliès drew caricatures for each of its twenty-six covers during the journal's fairly brief six-month run. Méliès described himself as

the “regular illustrator,” as well as a “journalist” for the “satirical journal,” suggesting that he may have authored some of the many pseudonymous articles—and perhaps some of the poems, songs, and word puzzles—published in *La Griffé*.<sup>42</sup> Méliès signed his caricatures with the pseudonym “Geo. Smile,” a translinguistic anagram for his last name. Anagrams and other word games were a favorite of the Incohérents, and the pages of *La Griffé* always included one or more such verbal and visual puzzles by Emile Duval. In the editorial message of its first issue, the journal clearly stated, “we are Republicans without epithet”—that is, neither Radical nor Opportunist. Moreover, the editorial claimed (after Adolphe Thiers), “the Republic is the government that divides us least,” vowing to fight the deceptions of the Republic’s “implacable opponents” by “exposing their bad faith and their hypocrisy.”<sup>43</sup> A focus on exposure was a recurring tactic used by the anti-Boulangists. Contributors to *La Griffé* emphasized that Boulangists, in spite of their Republican pretensions and attempts to appeal to working-class voters through rhetoric about universal suffrage, were actually closely connected with royalists and conservatives. This alignment was incontrovertibly confirmed the following year with the publication of Boulangist deputy Gabriel Terrail’s pseudonymous tell-all, *Les Coulisses du Boulangisme*, part of which had been serialized earlier in the year in *Le Figaro*; it detailed royalist funding for the movement and the deals Boulanger’s inner circle had brokered with reactionaries.<sup>44</sup>

The pressure royalists brought to bear on the Boulangist movement is part of Méliès’ caricature for the cover of the first issue of *La Griffé*, “Trop de pression!” (August 8, 1889). The drawing shows Boulanger as a giant balloon bursting from over-inflation, so full of hot air that he has been rendered entirely immobile, unable to move his misshapen limbs. An umbilical hose tethers him to his clerical and royalist supporters, who are inflating him with their breath. Henri Rochefort, Paul Déroulède, and Alfred Naquet, architects of the Boulangist movement, are strenuously applying full-bodied effort to a large bellows labeled “electoral pressure.” (Each would be caricatured in subsequent issues of *La Griffé*.) Unlike some other anti-Boulangist caricatures that focus on Boulanger alone, mocking his vanity, military regalia, and excessive concern with managing his appearance, Méliès’ caricature encompasses the larger Boulangist movement, with its key proponents and constituents. Indeed, a long line of people is helping to inflate the absurd simulacrum of Boulanger that hovers over all of them.

Pépin’s caricature “Le Général se vide” (*Le Grelot*, June 10, 1888), in which a deflating balloon-Boulanger depicts an earlier decline in Boulanger’s popularity, predates Méliès’ caricature by more than a year. Inflation/deflation motifs—which would appear in such later films as *The Man with the Rubber Head* (Méliès, FR, 1901) and *An Adventurous Automobile Trip* (Méliès, FR, 1905)—were hardly specific to Méliès’ caricatures, but in fact were a part of the larger visual repertoire



TROP DE PRESSION!!! par GEO. SMILE

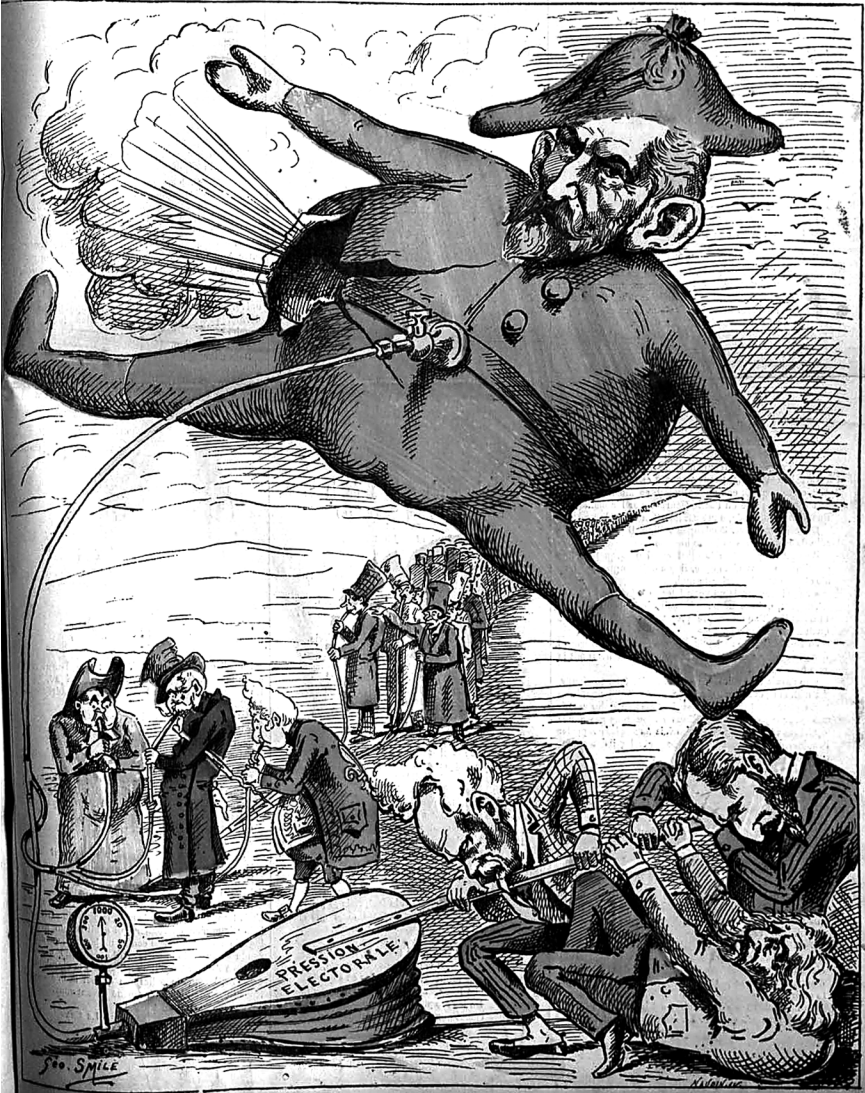


Figure 1. Geo. Smile [pseud., Méliès], "Trop de pression!" *La Griffe*, no. 1 (August 8, 1889)

of nineteenth-century caricature, a repertoire that was certainly well known to caricaturists like Méliès and likely familiar to the general public, who saw caricature journals posted in newsstands and in publisher's windows.

In his caricature for the cover of the second issue of *La Griffe*, "Robert

Macaire et Bertrand” (August 15, 1889), Méliès drew two of the most recognizable characters in nineteenth-century French caricature history. Borrowing these two confidence men from a popular melodrama, Honoré Daumier in the 1830s had made a long series of caricatures showing Robert Macaire and Bertrand to critique various aspects of French society. More than fifty years later, French caricaturists were still regularly deploying these two familiar figures to satirize contemporary politicians. Méliès’ version equates Boulanger and Rochefort, respectively, with Robert Macaire and Bertrand, showing them absconding with 30,000 francs from the war ministry’s reserve funds, an embezzlement that purportedly took place while Boulanger was Minister of War. Méliès would return to this financial malfeasance in several subsequent caricatures, but the later film *Robert Macaire and Bertrand* (Méliès, FR, 1906) transforms the two eponymous confidence men from a vehicle for political criticism to simple bank robbers, whose crime initiates a wild chase sequence, thus fully evacuating the motif of its otherwise nearly unavoidable political resonance.

Boulanger’s January 1889 Paris election had provoked a strong response from the Republican government, first under the Radical prime minister Charles Floquet and then even more forcefully under his successor, the Opportunist prime minister Pierre Tirard. This included changes to the electoral system that prohibited candidates from seeking office in more than one district and from entering by-elections while still in office.<sup>45</sup> It also involved bringing Boulanger to trial, along with Rochefort and Count Arthur Dillon, on charges of having plotted against the state. The first issue of *La Griffé* came out on the first day of the trial, conducted *in absentia* by the Senate High Court; less than a week later, all three had been found guilty.

Méliès’ caricature for the cover of the third issue of *La Griffé*, “Le Martyre de Saint-Sebastien: Le dictateur après le verdict de la Haute Cour” (August 22, 1889), shows Boulanger martyred like Saint Sebastian, with arrows piercing his body. The judge appointed by the High Court, Jules Quesnay de Beaurepaire, holds his emaciated body out by the neck with a set of tongs. Boulanger is wearing a military kepi, wooden sword by his side. A belt fastened with a buckle bearing an Orleanist fleur-de-lis ironically holds up Boulanger’s tricolor undershorts (presumably Republican). On his shoulders are epaulettes labeled “Dupuis” [*sic*], which Boulanger was accused of requisitioning for the army from Dupuy in exchange for a kickback on the sales commission. One of his dead hands cradles a sack containing the missing army reserve funds; the other holds a box of coffee tablets, another product Boulanger purportedly bought for the army in exchange for a bribe. Dangling from a string wrapped around his fingers is a stack of color images of himself: the chromolithographs he was accused of obtaining in large numbers—from a German supplier no less—to distribute for publicity. These





Figure 2. Geo. Smile [pseud., Méliès], "Le Martyre de Saint-Sébastien," *La Griffe*, no. 3 (August 22, 1889)

details each allude to specific charges leveled against Boulanger in the recently concluded High Court trial.<sup>46</sup>

Méliès depicts the martyred Boulanger ringed by an angelic halo despite the offenses represented below. This ironic portrayal of Boulanger as a martyr implicitly responds to the recuperation of Boulanger that Boulangists attempted after his High Court conviction. For example, in J. Blass' caricature "Le Triomphe

de Bismarck" (*Le Pilon*, August 11, 1889), Boulanger is shown as a latter-day Joan of Arc being tied to a stake labeled "High Court" by Quesnay de Beaurepaire as the German Chancellor Otto von Bismarck looks on approvingly. At his feet, about to be set ablaze with him, are the pages of Boulanger's point-by-point response to the High Court's charges ("Au Peuple, Mon Seul Juge!"), a text that was then circulating as a printed broadside. Méliès' caricatures, and the rhetoric of *La Griffé* more generally, were but one current in a veritable torrent of reproducible images and texts that flowed from various entities and different political orientations in rapid succession during the Boulanger affair.

The Boulanger affair ushered France into a modern age of mass-mediated politics. Boulanger's widespread popularity was often attributed to an adept use of publicity. In a telling move, he had created a press office for the war ministry just after being appointed to the position in 1886. After entering politics, Boulanger's election campaigns were coordinated by Dillon, who—in Floquet's words—"Americanized" Boulangist electioneering through his use of "American" advertising.<sup>47</sup> These methods involved circulating mass-produced images, many in color. As Irvine notes, "One of the most notable features of Boulangist propaganda was the distribution of . . . colored portraits. The technique itself was not an innovation. . . . But Boulangists did so on an unprecedented scale."<sup>48</sup> Posters, flyers, brochures, broadsides, illustrated Boulanger biographies, Boulangist song-sheets, and an array of products and paraphernalia bearing Boulanger's image, ranging from scarfpins to soap, supplemented these images.<sup>49</sup>

The role of the visual media in propping up the Boulangist movement appears again in Méliès' caricature for the cover of the fifth issue of *La Griffé*, "Le Mannequin: Ernest rédigeant un nouveau manifeste" (September 5, 1889). The caricature suggests that Boulanger is but a mere mannequin and that Naquet and Rochefort are among those responsible for constructing his public and for writing the steady stream of manifestos issuing forth under Boulanger's signature in exile. Naquet and Rochefort are flanked on one side by a mannequin-Boulanger that is only complete from the neck up—since so many representations of him show only this much—and on the other side by a bust of Boulanger (just such a representation). Next to the bust is an advertisement for soap, which alludes to the Boulangists' use of advertising and reduces the sculpture of a purportedly exalted military hero to being yet another crass means of self-promotion for a man who is essentially a thief (as the pickpocket warning reminds us).

The 1889 elections produced fairly lopsided results, with the Republicans winning some 350 seats, as compared to 168 for the monarchists and conservatives and 42 for the Boulangists.<sup>50</sup> But, the Republican margin of victory was a lot closer than the differences in the sheer number of seats would suggest; as Bruce Fulton points out: "The coalition of monarchists and Boulangists had received nearly



Figure 3. Geo. Smile [pseud., Méliès], “Un Enterrement de première classe,” *La Griffe*, no. 10 (October 10, 1889)

as many votes as their republican opponents. . . . The difference between the two groupings was only 1.97 percent of the total vote. . . . A total of 144 republicans had defeated their monarchist or Boulangist adversaries by less than 1500 votes.”<sup>51</sup>

Méliès’ caricature for the cover of the ninth issue of *La Griffe*, “Boulangisme! Moi je m’assieds dessus!!!” (October 3, 1889), celebrated the elections as a victory for the French working class, represented by a burly, tattooed laborer sitting on Boulanger’s back and gazing at a factory in the distance. In its next issue, the tenth, *La Griffe* included a caricature by Méliès, “Un Enterrement de première classe” (October 10, 1889), that spanned two full pages. It shows a funeral procession led by several leading Boulangists; Naquet and Rochefort are pallbearers for a casket out of which Boulanger’s enormous ears protrude, unable to fit inside. The casket is marked “Still-Born Emperor Barbenzigue I” and is topped by Boulanger’s recognizable kepi on top of which a crown is perched. (“Barbenzigue” [“Zinc-Beard”] was a derisive nickname for Boulanger that appeared in the pages of *La Griffe*, *Le Grelot*, and elsewhere.) While the caricature makes a mockery



of the nominal head of the Republican National Committee, who is portrayed as a would-be Napoleon, it also makes a point of showing the larger Boulangist movement (the same line of people seen on the cover of the first issue of *La Griffe*—now sobbing mourners) and some of its principal figures. The caricature also reflexively highlights the role of the media in the Boulanger affair. On the edge of the image, we see a copy of *La Lanterne*, the official Boulangist paper,<sup>52</sup> which shows a color picture of an oversized toy-soldier Boulanger being saluted. Draped over this bit of pro-Boulangist media, however, are copies of *Le Figaro* and *Le Rappel*, two newspapers that could be quite critical of Boulangism.<sup>53</sup>

Nineteenth-century French caricature and Incohérent art were both highly topical visual practices that emphasized contemporary allusions and familiar cultural and political references. Both also involved visual and verbal signification. Caricature relies heavily on the symbolic potential of images, since each and every visual element in the frame can be freighted with significance. Many caricature images are what Peter Wollen (after C. S. Pierce) would describe as signs that are at once iconic and symbolic—that is, based not only on a resemblance between signifier and signified but also on a culturally acquired connection between signifier and signified.<sup>54</sup> Consistent with the underlying premise that the images of a caricature must be “read” is the frequent placement of text within the frame (which is often just as important as the captions lying outside of the image field). The meanings of a caricature thus often emerge relationally from the juxtaposition of pictures and words, both of which signify, albeit in different ways.

Incohérent art relished manipulating (or sometimes exchanging) the respective functions of the iconic visual sign and the symbolic verbal sign. This is manifest in the Incohérents’ love of wordplay and word games and their use of letters as viable graphic elements in their own right, techniques that treat words less as a form of language than as graphic images that can be playfully divided up, rearranged, and altered for the purposes of a composition. Similarly, the Incohérents were interested in exploiting the unexpected and typically absurd imagistic possibilities inherent in language by depicting idiomatic expressions in visual terms. One example is Cohl’s “Un Général hors cadre,” part of the 1886 Incohérent exposition, in which a picture of a military man (not to be confused with Boulanger) is skewed out of frame, a literal representation of the phrase “hors cadre”—“away from the regiment” in military parlance.<sup>55</sup> The Incohérent expositions of the 1880s are rife with such images.

Méliès transposed French idioms visually in similar Incohérent fashion, as in his caricature for the cover of the fourth issue of *La Griffe*, “Adam et Eve” (August 29, 1889), which was published before the election while Boulanger was in exile. The caricature shows Boulanger cast out of the Garden of Eden by a giant looming “Q” topped by a judge’s hat; the accusatory hand of Quesnay de Beaurepaire



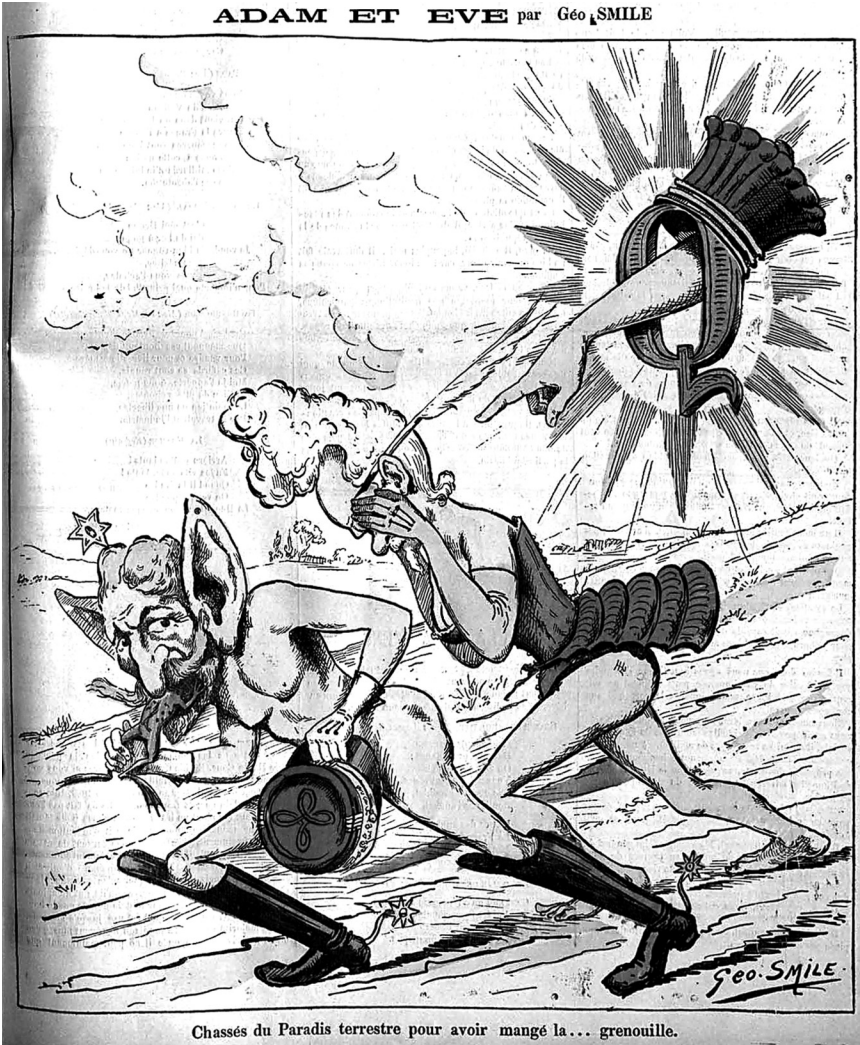


Figure 4. Geo. Smile [pseud., Méliès], "Adam et Eve," *La Griffe*, no. 4 (August 29, 1889)

thrusts out of the "Q." Following Boulanger is Rochefort, absurdly travestied as Eve. Nearly naked except for his riding boots, with only his cap to shield his genitals from view, Boulanger has been exiled for the original sin of "eating the frog" (*mange la grenouille*), which is shown grotesquely in the caricature. This is a literal depiction of the idiomatic expression "mange la grenouille"—French argot for purloining something that does not belong to you, another reference to Boulanger's rumored theft of army reserve funds.

The Boulangists continued to be the object of Méliès' caricatures for *La Griffé* during the months after the election. These included allusions to the party's lack of funds ("Plus le sou!!!" [October 17, 1889]; "Réduit à la mendicité" [October 31, 1889]), the invalidations of Boulangist candidates ("Le Coup de balai des invalidations" [November 7, 1889]), and the Boulangist caucus in Jersey with the exiled Boulanger ("Les Députés Boulangistes en route pour Jersey" [November 14, 1889]). In "Pauvre Exilé sur la terre étrangère!!!" (October 24, 1889), a hobbled Boulanger is shown picking his nose on the Jersey Shore as he stares at a leaflet for the Universal Exposition, which was just about to close. By the end of November, the once-Brodingnagian Boulangist threat was reduced to Lilliputian proportions in Méliès' caricature "Char de l'État" (November 28, 1889): President Sadi Carnot and Floquet, President of the Chamber of Deputies, are balanced atop a high-wheel bicycle, but several tiny Boulangists, including Naquet and Déroulède, who are pulling them backward with strings, can do little to prevent them from riding purposefully forward. The caricatures Méliès drew for December issues of *La Griffé* turned to other topics such as mounting international tensions ("Tous en uniforme" [December 19, 1889]) and the influenza epidemic ("L'Influenza" [December 26, 1889]). By 1890, "satirical journals were not occupied with Boulanger except indirectly,"<sup>56</sup> and *La Griffé* was generally no exception, although the cover of its twenty-sixth and final issue did caricature the recent expulsion of several Boulangists from the Chamber of Deputies ("Les Expulsions au Palais Bourbon" [January 30, 1890]).<sup>57</sup>

Six years later, Méliès returned to the graphic arts with several "lightning sketch" films from 1896 that are currently considered lost, in which Méliès presumably made the chalk drawings himself—as he does in such later films as *The Mysterious Knight* (FR, 1899), *A Trip to the Moon* (FR, 1902), and *The Untamable Whiskers* (FR, 1904). All four quick-sketch films were of political leaders (Thiers, Chamberlain, Queen Victoria, Von Bismarck), suggesting a fairly direct transposition of caricature to the new medium of cinema.<sup>58</sup> Several of Méliès' subsequent films also offer certain iconographic resonances with Incohérent Art and caricature. In *A Trip to the Moon*, as the travelers nap after arriving on the moon's surface, a vision of the Big Dipper appears; each point in the constellation takes the form of a woman peering out of a star-shaped cutout—a motif that is identical to a detail of Raymond Carrier de Joncreuil's visual allegory of theater stardom and satire on celebrity, "Le Tambour d'une étoile," which was shown at the 1884 Incohérent exposition.<sup>59</sup> The final scene of the film shows a group dancing around a statue represented in the mise-en-scène by a large, two-dimensional caricature of the expedition's leader, Barbenfouillis.<sup>60</sup> Barbenfouillis is himself part of a line of hirsute, beard-named buffoons that traverse Méliès' work in theater ("Le Décapité Récalcitrant") and film, but perhaps began with his political caricatures of Barbenzigue.

In his study of Cohl, Donald Crafton makes a point of avoiding what he terms “the *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* reasoning that the form and content of his films were merely determined by his earlier work.”<sup>61</sup> We should do the same in considering Méliès’ political caricatures in relation to his later film work. There are certainly motifs that recur across Méliès’ graphic and cinematic outputs. Yet, such motifs are not always specific to Méliès’ work. Also, as Crafton emphasizes, cinema’s movement and temporality make it fundamentally different from the stasis of the graphic arts. But perhaps even more importantly for my purposes, such intermedial connections tend to cut off both the caricatures and the films from their respective (and often highly particular) political, social, and historical contexts.

Méliès’ affinity for cutaway views and split screens suggests one example of how the design principles of caricature could be employed cinematically, but it is in Méliès’ distinctive approach to set design for films that one can see most clearly the cinematic legacy of caricature and Incohérent art. Méliès’ approach to set design was not only a natural corollary to his studio-based mode of filmmaking, but also a fundamental feature of his overall aesthetic. In enumerating the arts employed by the extraordinary profession of the cinematograph, Méliès placed drawing just after the dramatic arts at the head of the list.<sup>62</sup> In order to prepare scenes for the cinematograph, he added, one must be an author, director, and draftsman [*dessinateur*], not to mention frequently an actor. Méliès’ use of the term *dessinateur*, translated by Stuart Liebman as “designer” and recently amended to “set designer” by Timothy Barnard,<sup>63</sup> points to the way drawing underpinned his entire conception of scene construction. According to his son André, Méliès traced all of the backdrops used in his films himself onto fabric from his own drawings; this often involved Méliès perched on a ladder holding a long stick with charcoal on the end since he preferred to make these drawings with the cloth suspended vertically.<sup>64</sup> He and several artists then painted the backdrop in black and shades of gray. Just as in the publication of caricatures, color was applied at the very end of the process, after individual copies had been printed. What Méliès termed *décors*—a term that can designate setting, scenery, and/or the painted backdrops themselves—were effectively life-sized drawings before which actors could perform. These *décors* were crucial elements, as evidenced by the care with which they were prepared, by Méliès’ assertion in his catalogs that these films were his “personal creations” in part since he “painted the backgrounds” himself,<sup>65</sup> and by the extent to which they were documented photographically in what are among the first production stills, a selection of which can be found in the collections of the Library of Congress, the George Eastman House, and the Cinémathèque française.<sup>66</sup>

Méliès deplored theatrical sets as wholly inadequate to the work of the filmmaker. Instead, he likened his meticulously detailed backdrops to those used by

photographers.<sup>67</sup> The style of these backdrops, however, is more caricature than trompe l'oeil, aiming less for quasi-photographic representational verisimilitude than for a highly legible—if often somewhat schematic—background image. The films thus have a kind of reverse *Roger Rabbit*-effect, as living people moving in three-dimensional space are juxtaposed quite incongruously with explicitly two-dimensional drawings. (In Méliès' films, objects and setting elements in the foreground and middleground are typically flat drawings too, rendering cinematographic space as a series of receding planes like in a stereoscope viewer.) Some of what has been characterized as “theatrical” in Méliès' films might therefore more aptly be described in terms of the ways that nineteenth-century still photographs were staged for the camera, noting how Méliès, like several of his contemporaries, including Nadar and Cohl, made photographs and drew caricatures.

Elaborately choreographed theatrical action performed in front of resolutely motionless drawn backdrops creates an odd effect. Indeed, it is a bit like those *Incohérent* canvases in which a real, three-dimensional object protruded out of the image from within the frame, a theme Méliès took up in countless films in which representations become reality. These backdrops—like caricatures and much *Incohérent* art—are images that must be read. The backdrops of Méliès' films are crowded with signifiers—some iconic, others symbolic, and many both—that ask to be read by the spectator. Often, they are festooned with text, with names, signs, and toponyms of all types, often in multiple languages. Méliès generally avoided the use of intertitles and instead embedded words in the background of the diegesis.

The necessity of reading words and images off the screen dovetails with Méliès' preference for a relatively slow camera speed—from 12 to 18 frames per second, though his camera operators often tended to the slower side—and for long shots and long takes. Screening Méliès' films at a speed that approaches thirteen frames per second (as suggested by the running times listed in his catalogs) renders foreground action more comprehensible instead of appearing as a frenetic blur. This slower speed also allows the viewer to scan the background and truly read the image in a way that is very nearly impossible given the consistently over-cranked versions of Méliès' films that have been made commercially available in various formats for the past forty years right up to the present day.<sup>68</sup>

The rediscovery of Méliès that began in France during the late 1920s and early 1930s continues to determine our understanding of his place in film history. Operating a concession in the Gare Montparnasse, Méliès was quick to remind journalists that he was a pioneer of the French film industry, which was struggling and wanted very much to look back on its proud past. Méliès and Lumière were subsequently made to embody that past together, with Méliès also taking a place opposite Pathé and Gaumont as an artisan and an auteur *avant le lettre* apart from

both industrialization and the division of labor—the path that led to Hollywood and the concomitant marginalization of French cinema in the international marketplace. While Méliès' career in magic was readily enlisted to support his place in the Lumière/Méliès binary, the critics and filmmakers who initially helped to create the myth of Méliès knew precious little about just what kind of magic had actually been performed on the stage of the Théâtre Robert-Houdin. They were also unconcerned with—or unaware of—Méliès' political caricatures or his affinities with the Incohérent movement.

By looking beyond the medium of film while simultaneously looking more closely at the films themselves, we recognize the extent to which Méliès' film practice was rooted not only in the performing arts, but also in the graphic arts. Indeed, for Méliès, drawing provided the fundamental substrate for his uses of the cinematographic medium. As such, Méliès' mise-en-scène suggests the nineteenth-century beginnings of compositing while revealing the cinema's largely untapped Incohérent potential to put its indexical ontology into constant play with both iconic and symbolic representation simultaneously.

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## NOTES

1. See Paul Hammond, *Marvellous Méliès* (London: Gordon Fraser, 1974), 30; and Paolo Cherchi Usai, "A Trip to the Movies: Georges Méliès, Filmmaker and Magician (1861–1938)," in *Fantastic Voyages of the Cinematic Imagination: Georges Méliès's Trip to the Moon*, ed. Matthew Solomon (Albany: SUNY Press, 2011), 26.
2. Georges Méliès, "Mes Mémoires," in Maurice Bessy and [Giuseppe Maria] Lo Duca, *Georges Méliès, Mage* (Paris: Prisma, 1945), 162; all translations from French are mine unless otherwise noted. Méliès' memoirs were first published in Italian translation as "Un documento eccezionale: Le memorie di Georges Méliès," 5 parts, *Cinema* [Milan], nos. 40–44 (1938).
3. I borrow the term "cinematographist" from André Gaudreault, who uses it to differentiate the ways Méliès and his contemporaries used the cinematograph from the practices of later filmmakers who operated within more institutionalized, and specifically "cinematic," frameworks. Gaudreault, *Film and Attraction: From Kinematography to Cinema*, trans.



- Timothy Barnard (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 76–77.
4. See especially *L'Œuvre de Georges Méliès*, ed. Laurent Mannoni and Jacques Malthête (Paris: Éditions de la Martinière, Cinémathèque française, 2008); and *Méliès, magie et cinéma*, ed. Malthête and Mannoni (Paris: Paris-Musées, 2002).
  5. *La Griffé*, nos. 1–26 (August 8, 1889–January 30, 1890).
  6. See Roland Cosandey, “Georges Méliès as *L’Inescamotable Escamoteur*: A Study in Recognition,” in *A Trip to the Movies: Georges Méliès, Filmmaker and Magician (1861–1938)/Lo schermo incantato: Georges Méliès (1861–1938)*, ed. Paolo Cherchi Usai (Rochester: International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House; Pordenone: Edizioni Biblioteca dell’Immagine, Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, 1991), 57–111; and Roland Cosandey, “L’inescamotable escamoteur ou Méliès en ses figures,” in *Georges Méliès, l’illusionniste fin de siècle?*, ed. Jacques Malthête and Michel Marie (Paris: Presses de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1997), 45–95. See also Christophe Gauthier, “L’invention des «primitifs» à l’orée du parlant: le cas Méliès,” *Cahiers parisiens* 2 (2006): 148–75.
  7. Méliès, “Mes Mémoires,” 164.
  8. *Ibid.*
  9. See, for instance, Paul Krugman, “Man on Horseback,” *New York Times*, May 6, 2003.
  10. See especially Frederic H. Seager, *The Boulanger Affair: Political Crossroad of France, 1886–1889* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1969); William D. Irvine, *The Boulanger Affair Reconsidered: Royalism, Boulangism, and the Origins of the Radical Right in France* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989); and Michael Burns, *Rural Society and French Politics: Boulangism and the Dreyfus Affair, 1886–1890* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984).
  11. The mailing address listed on the masthead for most issues of *La Griffé* was 9, place des Vosges, but the last four issues of 1890 were edited from an address at 16, rue de Verneuil. Single issues of *La Griffé* were priced at 15 centimes; a six-month subscription cost 5 francs, and a yearly subscription cost 10 francs.
  12. See Robert Justin Goldstein, *Censorship of Political Caricature in Nineteenth-Century France* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 1989), 239–40; and *Histoire générale de la presse française*, eds. Claude Bellanger, Jacques Godechot, Pierre Guiral, and Fernand Terrou, vol. 3 (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1972), 386.
  13. Madeleine Malthête-Méliès, *Georges Méliès, L’Enchanteur* (Grandvilliers: La Tour Verte, 2011), 91.
  14. See advertisements in *La Griffé*, nos. 3–5 (August 22, 1889–September 5, 1889); and Charles Pitou, “Charles Gilbert-Martin,” *Les Hommes d’aujourd’hui*, no. 312.
  15. These years were clearly foundational, although this period is not very well represented in the large trove of archival material acquired from the Méliès family in 2004 and currently split between the collections of the Bibliothèque du film and the Cinémathèque française in Paris. Laurent Mannoni, “Acquisition par l’État de la collection Méliès,” *1895*, no. 45 (2005): 106–15.



16. See Malthête-Méliès, 63–67; and David Robinson, *Georges Méliès: Father of Film Fantasy* (London: Museum of the Moving Image, 1993), 5–7.
17. See Malthête-Méliès, 98–101; and *Archives commerciales de la France* (August 25, 1886): 1062.
18. Méliès, “Mes Mémoires,” 163–64. Galipaux later appeared in a number of Méliès’ films, including *An Adventurous Automobile Trip* (1905).
19. See Paul Ginisty, *La Féerie* (Paris: Michaud, 1910); and Georges Moynet, *La Machinerie théâtrale: Trucs et décors, explication raisonnée de tous les moyens employés pour produire les illusions théâtrales* (Paris: Librairie Illustrée, 1893). Ginisty had been director of the Théâtre de l’Odéon and appears on the cover of *Les Hommes d’aujourd’hui*, no. 286, in a caricature by Cohl.
20. J. A. H., “M. L’Incohérent,” *Oxford Magazine* (March 4, 1885): 136–37.
21. *La Revue Illustrée*, March 15, 1887, translated in Phillip Dennis Cate, “The Spirit of Montmartre,” in *The Spirit of Montmartre: Cabaret, Humor, and the Avant-Garde, 1875–1905*, ed. Cate and Mary Shaw (New Brunswick, NJ: Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, 1996), 40. Cate attributes this text to Émile Goudeau.
22. See, for example, Douville, “Feuilles au vent,” *Le Grelot*, no. 964 (September 29, 1889).
23. Méliès provides the fullest account of this magic sketch in “Le Décapité Récalcitrant,” 2 parts, *Passez Muscade*, no. 47 (1928): 542–46; no. 48 (1928): 550–54. On the monologue, see especially Mary Gluck, *Popular Bohemia: Modernism and Urban Culture in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 128–30. See also Coquelin cadet [Ernest Coquelin], *Le Monologue moderne* (Paris: Paul Ollendorff, 1881).
24. I discuss this in rather different terms in *Disappearing Tricks: Silent Film, Houdini, and the New Magic of the Twentieth Century* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 40–44.
25. André Méliès, “Mémoires d’André Méliès,” ed. Marie-Hélène Leherissey-Méliès, part 5, *Cinémathèque Méliès*, no. 18 (1991): 42.
26. Jules Lévy, “L’Incohérence—son origine—son histoire—son avenir,” *Le Courrier français*, March 12, 1885, translated in Cate, “The Spirit of Montmartre,” 1.
27. Luce Abélès, “Les Incohérents,” in *Arts incohérents, académie du derisoire*, Les Dossiers du Musée d’Orsay, no. 46 (Paris: Éditions de la Réunion des musées nationaux, 1992), 42.
28. Catherine Charpin, *Les Arts Incohérents (1882–1893)* (Paris: Éditions Syros Alternatives, 1990), 43–44.
29. One important exception that is keenly attuned to the contradictory cultural politics of the Incohérents in relation to the Zutistes, the Hydropathes, and the Chat noiristes, is Jorgelina Orfila, “Blague, Nationalism, and Incohérence,” in *Nationalism and French Visual Culture, 1870–1914*, eds. June Hargrove and Neil McWilliam, *Studies in the History of Art*, vol. 68 (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), 172–93.
30. Advertisement, *Le Grelot*, no. 894 (May 27, 1888). Lévy also published the satirical journal *Les Chambres comiques*, subtitled *Revue satirique des débats parlementaires* (for which Cohl drew caricatures), and he advertised *Les Chambres comiques* on the back cover of the catalog of

- the 1886 Incohérent exhibition. *Catalogue de l'Exposition des Arts Incohérents* (Paris: Georges Chamerot, 1886).
31. See, for example, "Les Incohérences de la semaine," *Le Grelot*, no. 945 (May 19, 1889); and Montretout, "Gazette de Montretout," *Le Grelot*, no. 979 (January 12, 1890).
  32. Irvine, 7, citing Jacques Néré, "La Crise industrielle de 1882 et le mouvement boulangiste" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Université de Paris, 1959).
  33. James R. Lehning, *To Be a Citizen: The Political Culture of the Early French Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 11.
  34. Seager, 108, 203–10.
  35. Patrick H. Hutton, "Popular Boulangism and the Advent of Mass Politics in France, 1886–1890," *Journal of Contemporary History* 11, no. 1 (1976): 86.
  36. See, for example, Alfred Le Petit's caricature, "Souvenir du 14 juillet," *La Charge* (July 14, 1888).
  37. In Cohl's caricature, "Nos Souhais pour 1890: Ni l'un, ni l'autre," *Le Grelot* (December 28, 1889), a citizen afflicted with a painful toothache wants neither an ineffective treatment from Opportunist Republican Jules Ferry nor a painful extraction by Boulanger.
  38. Charpin, 41.
  39. *Catalogue illustré de l'Exposition Universelle des Arts Incohérents* (Paris: Imprimerie Chaix, 1889).
  40. Ibid. Of the catalogue for the 1889 Incohérent exhibition, Crafton notes, "everyone was cited as 'Ernest,' another *blague*" (50).
  41. Irvine, 125.
  42. Méliès, "Mes Mémoires," 164.
  43. "A Nos Lecteurs," *La Griffé*, no. 1 (August 8, 1889).
  44. X... du *Figaro* [pseud., Gabriel Terrail], *Les Coulisses du Boulangisme* (Paris: Chez Léopold Cerf, 1890). See also Irvine, 158–60.
  45. Peter Campbell, *French Electoral Systems, 1789–1957* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958), 79–80.
  46. *Le Procès du G'al Boulanger, Rochefort-Dillon devant la Haute-Cour du Justice* (Paris: Libraire Française, 1889), 72–74, 210–13, 218.
  47. Seager, 27, 78, 123.
  48. Irvine, 108–9.
  49. See Bertrand Tillier, *La RépubliCature: La caricature politique en France, 1870–1914* (Paris: CNRS Éditions, 1997), 48; and Seager, 77.
  50. Campbell, 81.
  51. Bruce Fulton, "The Boulanger Affair Revisited: The Preservation of the Third Republic, 1889," *French Historical Studies* 17, no. 2 (1991): 327.
  52. Seager, 144.
  53. On newspapers and the Boulanger affair, see especially Jacques Néré, *Le Boulangisme et la presse* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1964).

54. Peter Wollen, *Signs and Meaning in the Cinema*, exp. ed. (1969; London: British Film Institute Publishing, 1998), 82–85.
55. Crafton, 294.
56. René Kerviler, et al., *Répertoire général de bio-bibliographie bretonne*, vol. 5 (Rennes: Librairie Générale de J. Plihon et L. Hervé, 1891), 318.
57. Boulangism would continue to be a political presence, however reduced, for the next few years, even after Boulanger's 1891 suicide. See C. Stewart Doty, "Parliamentary Boulangism After 1889," *Historian* 32, no. 2 (1970): 250–69.
58. *Complete Catalogue of Genuine and Original "Star" Films (Moving Pictures)* (New York: Geo. Méliès, 1903), 10.
59. *Catalogue Illustré de l'Exposition des Arts Incohérents* (Paris: E. Bernard et Cie, 1884), 101.
60. See my introduction to *Fantastic Voyages of the Cinematic Imagination*, 9–12.
61. Donald Crafton, *Emile Cohl, Caricature, and Film* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990), 301–2.
62. Georges Méliès, "Kinematographic Views" (1907), trans. Stuart Liebman and Timothy Barnard, in Gaudreault, *Film and Attraction*, 141.
63. See Geo. Méliès, "Les Vues Cinématographiques," *Annuaire général et international de la Photographie* 16, ed. Roger Aubry (Paris: Plon, 1907), 376; Méliès, "Cinematographic Views," trans. Stuart Liebman, in *French Film Theory and Criticism: A History/Anthology*, ed. Richard Abel, vol. 1 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 41; and Méliès, "Kinematographic Views," 143.
64. André Méliès, "Mémoires d'André Méliès," part 4, *Cinémathèque Méliès*, no. 17 (1990): 18.
65. *Complete Catalogue of Genuine and Original "Star" Films*, 2.
66. See Paolo Cherchi Usai, "The Institute of Incoherent Cinematography: An Introduction," in *A Trip to the Movies*, 25; and *L'Œuvre de Georges Méliès*.
67. Méliès, "Les Vues Cinématographiques," 364, 376–77.
68. For more on this, see my DVD reviews in *The Moving Image* 12, no. 2 (2012, in press).

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