



## **Balzac's *Belles-Noiseuses***

Troublemaking Bodies in *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu*

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Abstract: This paper examines the female body in *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* in relation to the title of Frenhofer's painting, *La Belle-Noiseuse*, which Balzac added in 1837 but then removed from the final 1847 publication. Arguing that there is not one *Belle-Noiseuse* but two, the paper claims that this title reflects the role of women as troublemakers in the text. Their unruly, troublemaking bodies thwart Frenhofer's genius, frustrate the narrative, and provide a new theory of creativity based on conflict.

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