White, Stanford (1853-1906) Encyclopedia Article

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On July 25, 1906, Harry Thaw walked into the fashionable cabaret restaurant—the Roof Garden at Madison Square Garden—and shot and killed the architect Stanford White, who was dining with his lover, Mrs. Evelyn Nesbit Thaw. Thaw claimed that he had been driven to the murder by the knowledge that White had "ruined" his wife, a 22-year-old "Floradora" girl who had been involved in a sexual relationship with White since she was 16. After two sensational trials, Thaw (an heir to old Pittsburgh railroad money as well as a wife-beater) was acquitted by a jury who agreed that the cuckolded husband's murderous jealousy was justified. The sensational story of the fatal Nesbit/White/Thaw triangle was dramatized in a 1955 movie entitled *The Girl in the Red Velvet Swing.* White kept the infamous swing in his studio to use in his well-orchestrated and numerous seductions. According to his family, it was White who coined and popularized the sexual-innuendo-laden invitation "come up and see my etchings."

Further Reading:

Lessard, Suzannah. *The Architect of Desire: Beauty and Danger in the Stanford White Family.* New York, Dial Press, 1996.

Mooney, Michael Macdonald. *Evelyn Nesbit and Stanford White: Love and Death in the Gilded Age.* New York, William Morrow and Company, 1976.