

WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY IN THE UNITED STATES

NEWSLETTER

July 2011



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On the cover: Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Jane Morris*, pencil, 1870 (Mark Samuels Lasner Collection, on loan to the University of Delaware Library).

This newsletter is published by the William Morris Society in the United States, P.O. Box 53263, Washington, DC 20009. *Editorial committee:* Florence S. Boos, Fran Durako, Mark Samuels Lasner, B.J. Robinson, and Kathleen O'Neill Sims. Please submit articles and items of interest to us@morrissociety.org.

Website: www.morrissociety.org.

Blog: <http://morrissociety.blogspot.com>.

A LETTER TO MEMBERS

I am happy to report that after a sharp decline in our number of members in 2010, we have increased our membership numbers during the first half of this year. This increase may be attributable to several factors, including the great success of last October's "Useful & Beautiful" conference in Delaware, and the efforts by our governing committee to encourage like-minded individuals to join us. Regardless of the factors that led to this increase, we are pleased that new members have joined, and several members whose membership had lapsed have returned.

WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY WEBSITE

Through much dedication and hard work Florence Boos and an expert web designer, Karla Tonella, have produced—at last—the greatly needed overhaul of the Society's website. To say that the website has been redesigned and updated is an understatement. We now

have a site that not only meets the needs and interests of both our members and non-members who want to know more about William Morris and the activities of our organization but one that is up to date in terms of navigation and graphics. As stated in our last newsletter, the goal was to have a website that provides informational and educational materials on all aspects of Morris's life and works, and to do so with clarity and relevance. The new site, which was officially launched last month, more than meets those goals. If you will excuse the use of Morris's famous admonition, our new website is both useful and beautiful! Please visit the site on a regular basis for ongoing updates to news and events; the content of the various sections will be augmented on a regular basis. Any suggestions and contributions from our members are encouraged. Again, we owe many thanks to Florence for her efforts to remake our website, and our congratulations on her success.

GOVERNING COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

Our governing committee spent many hours during the first half of this year in teleconferences and in-person meetings addressing various matters regarding the Society. Several developments occurred as a result. First, a sub-committee reviewed our governance structure and recommended a number of alterations to the by-laws. These changes, which deal primarily with the election and tenure of committee members and the clarification of the duties of officers, were approved in March. The revised by-laws are available on our website.

The committee was fully involved in the basic design and contents of the new website. We also took steps to increase our efforts to provide current information and commentary through our News from Anywhere blog and Facebook page, which are managed by Adrienne Sharpe.

We also began to focus on finding new members to join the committee and, potentially, serve as officers in anticipation of the departures of Fran Durako, Margaretta S. Frederick, and Frank Sharp, whose terms end at the beginning of the new year. Recommendations of people who may be interested in serving on the governing committee are welcome (and you may nominate yourself).

PAST AND FUTURE EVENTS

On 15 January a group of about 15 members and friends met at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC for a special tour of the exhibition, *The Pre-Raphaelite Lens: British Photography and Painting, 1848–1875*, with the curator, Diane Waggoner. *The Pre-Raphaelite Lens* was the first survey of British art photography focusing on the 1850s and 1860s. With 100 photographs and 20 paintings and drawings, the show examined the roles

SAVE THE DATE!
William Morris Society Event
Saturday, 22 October 2011 • Washington, DC
Visit to the collection of Nancy Miller and Walter Robanek
Details will be posted on the Society's website

that photography and Pre-Raphaelite art played in changing concepts of the representation of vision and truth. It was a fascinating exhibition, and our experience was greatly enhanced by Ms. Waggoner's information and insights. Following the tour, the participants had lunch in the National Gallery's café.

There is already one event planned for this fall, which we hope that many of you will be able to attend. On Saturday, 22 October 2011, members Nancy Miller and Walter Robanek have invited a group to visit their home in northwest Washington, DC to see their extensive collection of framed autographs and Pre-Raphaelite prints. We will have the privilege of seeing a remarkable personal collection. Although the details have not been finalized, we expect to gather first to have lunch at one of the many restaurants near their home. After the visit, everyone interested is invited to walk to the National Cathedral a couple of blocks away to view the Medieval gardens. Please check the Society's website and blog for more information about this event as we get closer to the date.

Looking farther ahead, I want to bring to your attention two fabulous major exhibitions which take place next year at opposite ends of the country. From February through May 2013 *The Pre-Raphaelites: Victorian Avant-Garde*, from Tate Britain, will be on view at the National Gallery in Washington. Simultaneously, for the same months, *The Cult of Beauty: The Aesthetic Movement, 1860–1900*, a huge hit currently on view at the Victoria and Albert Museum, is coming to the Palace of the Legion of Honor in San Francisco. The Society is in contact with the US organizers and we're likely to have some related events and, possibly, even help put together a satellite exhibition of Kelmscott books and Pre-Raphaelite manuscripts in the Bay Area.

In fellowship, Fran Durako

SOCIETY ANNOUNCEMENTS

New By-Laws and New Members of the Governing Committee

After several telephonic committee meetings to discuss details, we've updated our by-laws, now on the Society website at www.morrissociety.org/about/purpose.html or www.morrissociety.org/by-laws.pdf. In addition to altering this years-old document to reflect current practice, the new changes mandate the rotation of officers and committee members, permit more flexible voting by the membership, and provide for prior notification of proposed changes and amendments.

The governing committee recently filled two vacancies with new members. Elizabeth C. Miller and Kathleen O'Neill Sims. Liz Miller is associate professor of English at the University of California-Davis. She is the author of *Framed: The New Woman Criminal in British Culture at the Fin de Siècle* (2008), and has published articles on Morris and members of the Rossetti circle, among them "Sustainable Socialism: William Morris on Waste" (*Journal of Modern Craft*, March 2011); "William Morris, Print Culture, and the Politics of Aestheticism" (*Modernism/Modernity*, September 2008); and "Body, Spirit, Print: The Radical Autobiographies of Annie Besant and Helen and Olivia Rossetti" (*Feminist Studies*, Summer 2009). She was the 2007 recipient of the Joseph R. Dunlap Memorial Fellowship, and is now completing a manuscript, *Slow Print: Literary Radicalism and Late-Victorian Print Culture*. Kathleen O'Neill Sims holds a bachelor's degree in philosophy and a PhD in English literature from the University of Virginia with a dissertation on the artwork of Edward Burne-Jones. She is the author of several articles and editor of a forthcoming book on the stained glass of Edward Burne-Jones, and has given talks at William Morris Society sessions in Toronto, Philadelphia and most recently, Newark, DE. This coming fall she will be a visiting instructor

at Dartmouth College. She is currently editing Morris's *The Wood Beyond the World* for the Morris Online Edition. In her free time she rides Friesian horses—like William Morris in Iceland!

Don't Throw It Out! Donate to the William Morris Society Archive

The University of Delaware Library, Newark, DE has agreed to house the archive of the William Morris Society in the United States in conjunction with the Mark Samuels Lasner Collection at the library. Gathering together all records since our inception, the materials will include correspondence, leaflets, financial records, and a complete set of publications and newsletters. We owe thanks to Mark for the skillful negotiations which made this possible.

Barbara Dunlap has already donated the papers of her husband, our founder Joseph R. Dunlap—including the many handwritten letters in which the Society's business was then conducted—but we need others to round out the picture of more than a half-century's activities. As you are sorting old papers, please don't forget to save any from past or current members, and any other Morris-related memorabilia which you think might have sentimental or historical value. Most items are welcome, but we want to avoid duplication, so before sending anything large please contact Mark Samuels Lasner, (302) 831-3250, marksl@udel.edu.

Book Sale to Benefit the William Morris Society in the United States

Life member Gary L. Aho, professor emeritus of English at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, has generously given us a portion of his library, with the wish that the books be sold to benefit the Society. A list of titles (which range from first editions to recent scholarly works about Morris) is available through the home page of the website, www.morrissociety.org. The books are offered through the Kelmscott Bookshop, 34 West 25th Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, (410) 235-6810, info@kelmscottbookshop.com. To order contact the bookshop directly and cite the author, title, and inventory number. You will be informed of availability and told the cost of shipping.

Payment may then be made via check or credit card. Please do not send orders or payment to the William Morris Society.

Website

The Society's website has now been restructured and redesigned. Since the UK William Morris Society now has its own site (www.williammorrissociety.org), ours has been altered to emphasize events and matters relevant to the United States. We still house the *Journal of William Morris Studies* and information regarding Morris's life, art, writings and socialism. A Chinese lan-

guage page has been added to the Worldwide Morris section of the site, courtesy of Jessica Dou. It is easier than ever to join the Society and there is now an option to make donations online. In addition, the site features high-resolution images of many of Morris's works. Please come visit! And also send corrections and suggestions for what you would like included or altered to Florence Boos, florence-boos@uiowa.edu.

Facebook

With thanks to governing committee member Adrienne Sharpe, the William Morris Society has joined the world on Facebook. Please "befriend" the wms, and more importantly, post announcements, comments and brief Morris-related news and thoughts to Facebook.

News from Anywhere Blog

Along with the website and Facebook page we also maintain the News from Anywhere blog. Again, announcements and commentary can be found here—go to <http://morrissociety.blogspot.com>. However we need more contributions from members; please send items to Adrienne Sharpe, adriennesharpe@hotmail.com.

NEW BOOKS BY MEMBERS

The Collected Letters of Jane Morris, edited by Jan Marsh and Frank Sharp

Jane Morris (1839–1914) was a famous Pre-Raphaelite model, the wife of William Morris, and one of the Victorian age's most enigmatic figures. Although from a background of poverty and deprivation, after her marriage she used her keen intelligence to transform herself into a cultured member of the art world, a close friend of Burne-Jones, Swinburne, Holman Hunt, Madox Brown, George and Rosalind Howard, William and Evelyn De Morgan and others. Her long affair with Dante Gabriel Rossetti has become the stuff of legend. She also had a romantic relationship with the adventurer Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, while maintaining contentious interaction with George Bernard Shaw. The greater fame of husband and lovers caused her to be overlooked, but she has always aroused historical interest and partisan debate. Like other women in history her emergence from mute image into speaking subject has come about through feminist scholarship, but is of wide appeal.

The editors of this volume have discovered over 500 letters from Jane to many and diverse correspondents which radically revise the popular view of her as a silent, discontented invalid and reveal the range of her interests and opinions. The majority of the let-

ters are unpublished, and are fully annotated. They reveal Jane's involvement in many of Morris's endeavours and offer new insights into the life of the Morris family. An independent thinker, Jane was politically engaged although voteless, and her letters are informed by the turbulent events of the 1880s. She did not follow Morris into socialism, but retained Liberal allegiances and became an ardent supporter of Irish Home Rule. Jane Morris's letters complement those of her husband William Morris and her lover Dante Gabriel Rossetti. The book includes a selection of the portraits and paintings through which Jane became a Pre-Raphaelite icon and archetypal femme fatale.

Jan Marsh is the author of *Jane and May Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Painter and Poet*, and other books on the Pre-Raphaelites and former president of the William Morris Society-UK. A member of the governing committee of the William Morris Society in the United States, Frank C. Sharp is an independent scholar and the author of numerous articles on William Morris and his circle. (Boydell and Brewer, October 2011, ISBN 9781843836766, \$185).

Socialist Aesthetics and "The Shadows of Amiens": Kelmscott Lecture for 2007, by Florence S. Boos

William Morris' first published essay was "The Churches of North France: The Shadows of Amiens," written when he was 21 for the February 1856 issue of *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*. The political implications of Morris's principles and vision of the unity of artistic expression and its economic underpinnings are so "radical" in the original sense of the word that it is natural to search for antecedents of them in his early life and environs. Can one discern anticipatory versions of these social and aesthetic views in his earliest poems, his friends' memories of his youthful opinions, or his criticism and other writings for *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*?

In an attempt to answer these questions, this essay considers the likely appearance of the cathedral when he saw it in 1855, outlines his early views of contemporary architecture and "restoration," and retraces some of the ethical and artistic convictions which animated his ideal of "fellowship"—that the past is a repository of collective memory; that love of nature is a wellspring of "useful work;" and that "the lesser arts" express ideals of sororal and fraternal solidarity.

Delivered as a Kelmscott Lecture in 2007, this talk has been expertly typeset by David Gorman for the William Morris Society and is illustrated with photographs of Amiens Cathedral. (William Morris Society, May 2011, \$20: copies may be ordered from Kelmscott Bookshop, 34 West 25th Street, Baltimore, MD 21218, (410) 235-6810, info@kelmscottbookshop.com).

The Kelmscott Chaucer: A Census, by William S. Peterson and Sylvia Holton Peterson

When William Morris founded the Kelmscott Press, his celebrated private press, in 1891, one of the books he intended to print was an edition of the writings of Geoffrey Chaucer. Because of its size and complexity, *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* did not emerge until 1896, shortly before Morris's death. Even at the time of publication, there was almost universal recognition that it was the most ambitious and remarkable book produced in the nineteenth century. Morris himself designed the type, initials, and borders. His old friend Edward Burne-Jones created the 87 wood-engraved illustrations, and the book was printed on a hand-press with ink, paper, and vellum made to Morris' exact specifications.

According to Sydney Cockerell, Morris printed 425 copies of the *Chaucer* on paper and 13 on vellum. This census locates and describes as many of those books (which are now scattered all over the world) as possible and reconstructs their complicated history of ownership, supplying a narrative of the fortunes of each known copy. New information about unlocated copies, copies that have been sold by book dealers and auction houses, and the binders who have subsequently rebound many of the copies is also included. Three substantial appendices record the copies sold by Bernard Quaritch (the London bookseller closely associated with the production of the *Chaucer*), the mailing list of the Kelmscott Press, and other unpublished contemporary documents.

William S. Peterson, Professor of English Emeritus, University of Maryland, has written extensively about the Kelmscott Press and other aspects of fine printing in Britain and America. He is currently the editor of *Printing History*, the journal of the American Printing History Association. Sylvia Holton Peterson, Professor of English Emerita, University of the District of Columbia, is a medievalist and the co-author (with Jackson Campbell Boswell) of *Chaucer's Fame in England: STC Chauceriana, 1475-1540* (2004). (Oak Knoll Press, May 2011, ISBN 9781584562894, \$95: see advertisement circulated with this newsletter for details).

EXHIBITIONS

Pre-Raphaelites in Print

Delaware Art Museum, Wilmington, DE, through 17 September 2011. *Pre-Raphaelites in Print: The Age of Photomechanical Reproduction*, features 35 stunning photomechanical facsimiles drawn exclusively from the museum's Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft collection of British Pre-Raphaelite art.

This exhibition displays images of Pre-Raphaelite art created by individual photographers, including Frederick Hollyer and Valentine Prinsep, as well as those produced by commercial firms, such as the Autotype Company. Selected works highlight the diverse production processes employed during the early stages of photographic reproduction.

Today, reproductions of famous works of art are relatively inexpensive and widely available. But before photography, works of art could only be viewed as originals, or in limited print editions. When the invention of photography in the mid-19th century opened new possibilities for fine art reproduction, numerous experimental processes combining printmaking and photography called “photomechanical reproduction” were explored.

In 1892 when Samuel Bancroft first exhibited his collection of Pre-Raphaelite art, the display included 72 photomechanical facsimiles along with 35 original works. This concept of exhibiting copy and original side by side—as if both were of equal aesthetic merit—would not have been considered unusual. During the 1900s, however, the status of the “copy” shifted as inexpensive methods and mass circulation became possible. Today a facsimile bears very little value in relation to the original work.

Samuel Bancroft prized his collection of over 400 reproductions. This encyclopedic visual archive allowed him to reference images which were geographically out of reach and to develop his expertise in Pre-Raphaelite art, just as a book—or an internet search—might today. But for Bancroft, the collection was more than just a study tool. He was fascinated with the emerging technology and often purchased multiple images of the same subject, each representing a different method of production. *Pre-Raphaelites in Print* highlights Bancroft’s unique collection, and reflects both developments in print technology as well as cultural shifts in the valuation of the original versus the reproduction. More information: www.delart.org.

Pre-Raphaelites and Their Followers: British and American Drawings from The Huntington’s Collections

The Huntington, San Marion, CA, through 25 September 2011. Although better known for its library—home of one of the major collections of Morris books and manuscripts in the United States—the Huntington also has significant holdings of drawings by the Pre-Raphaelites. This exhibition, in the Virginia Steele Scott Galleries of American Art, Susan and Stephen Chandler Wing, includes nearly 40 works by some of the best-known British artists of the period, such as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Ruskin, William Holman Hunt, and John Everett Millais, along with Amer-

ican followers of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, such as William Trost Richards and John Henry Hill. More info: www.huntington.org.

ON TO SEATTLE: MLA 2012

At the 2012 Modern Language Association annual convention, to be held in Seattle, WA, 5–8 January 2012, the Society will sponsor two panels:

“Morris’s Artistic Descendants: Women Writers, Artists, and Designers,” the first session, will feature talks by Lynn R. Wilkinson, University of Texas-Austin, “Staging Morris: Anne Charlotte Leffler’s *How to Do Good* and William Morris’s Critique of Philanthropy”; Heidi Pierce, University of Delaware, “Politicizing the Arts and Crafts Movement: Mary De Morgan’s ‘Bread of Discontent’”; and Christine Elaine Ericsson, University of Southampton, “Symmetry and Symbolism in the Embroidery Designs of May Morris.”

For the second panel, “Pre-Raphaelite Audiences: Artists, Critics, Readers” (co-sponsored by SHARP, the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing), the speakers will be Linda Peterson, Yale University, “Oscar Wilde as Pre-Raphaelite Reader”; Julie Codell, Arizona State University, “Inventing Rossetti: Biographies as Reception”; Yuri Cowan, University of Ghent, “The Authorial Presence of William Morris in Victorian Periodical Culture”; and Anne van Buul, University of Groningen, “Pre-Raphaelite Audiences on the Continent—the Dutch Case.”

The January 2013 convention will be held in Boston, and the Society will organize a visit to Boston-area Arts and Crafts sights. Proposals are sought for a panel on “Morris on the East Coast,” a topic which might encompass literary, political, and personal connections as well as art, design, bookmaking, and architecture. These should be sent by 15 March 2012 to Florence Boos, florence-boos@uiowa.edu.

Please watch our website for details of date, place and time for the Seattle activities. For those who are not members of the MLA and wish a guest pass, please write Florence Boos at florence-boos@uiowa.edu.

BOOK SALE to benefit the William Morris Society in the United States. For a list and details visit the Society’s website www.morrissociety.org.

MLA 2011 ANNUAL CONVENTION
WILLIAM MORRIS SOCIETY
ACTIVITIES

After many years of holding its annual meetings in December, the Modern Language Association met 6–9 January 2011 in Los Angeles. The William Morris Society sponsored one session independently and a second in conjunction with the Arthurian Society of America.

Our first session, on “William Morris and the Arts: Architecture, Crafts, Design,” was held on Thursday, 6 January in the San Francisco J. W. Marriott hotel, with Kathleen O’Neill Sims presiding. The talks, summarized below, were: “Morris’s Hands,” Sue A. Zemka, University of Colorado, Boulder; “William Morris and the SPAB: From the Nineteenth Century to the Present,” Andrea Donovan, Minot State University; and “William Morris and the Art of the Kelmscott *Chaucer*,” Stephanie A. Amsel, University of Texas, San Antonio.

Our second session, “The Pre-Raphaelites and the Medieval Past,” organized in collaboration with the Arthurian Society of America, took place on the same day. Florence S. Boos, University of Iowa, presided and the presentations were: “Rossetti’s Rose: Elizabeth Siddal and *The Romance of the Rose*,” Kathleen R. Slaughter-Sanford, University of Delaware; “Among the Cursed Jues’: Edward Burne-Jones and “The Prioress’s Tale,” Rachael Zeleny, University of Delaware; and “Translating Medieval Images in Beardsley’s *Le Morte Darthur*,” William Nelles, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth.

The three talks were illustrated; the slides of Beardsley’s *Le More Darthur* evoked great amusement, and a lively discussion ensued over, among other topics, the nature of Burne-Jones’s portrayal of Jewish figures in the Kelmscott *Chaucer* “Prioress’s Tale.” We convened again in the evening for a friendly dinner at the nearby Zucca restaurant.

William Morris and the Arts: Architecture, Crafts, Design

Stephanie A. Amsel, University of Texas, San Antonio, “William Morris and the Art of the Kelmscott *Chaucer*”

This talk discusses the 1896 Kelmscott Press edition of Geoffrey Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* by William Morris. In particular, I have researched the Kelmscott *Chaucer* edition housed at the Bridwell Library at Southern Methodist University. This manuscript reveals much about Morris’s aesthetic and design style and emphasizes the important role that literature and the classics played in the artistic style and interests of

Morris. For example, Morris was keen to use a fifteenth-century binding reminiscent of Chaucer’s time. My research of this text also explores the provenance of the text and the relationship between the Pre-Raphaelite artist, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, who illustrated the Kelmscott *Chaucer*, and William Morris. The manual binding techniques, illustrations, and the high quality type-set and printing, all combine in this manuscript to demonstrate the high level of craftsmanship associated with the Morris studio. The Kelmscott Press was just one of the many artistic enterprises that established Morris’s influence on the Arts and Crafts movement of the nineteenth century.

Sue Zemka, University of Colorado, Boulder, “Morris’s Hands”

The hand is a second self. An appendage composed of several organs (skin, muscle, nerves, and bones), the hand is more than its physiological components; it extends human subjectivity. The hand is the body’s instrument of material signification (in gesture, in writing, in making), and, insofar as each hand is as unique as each face, it is a nodal point of identity. In the age of chirography, a person’s handwriting conveys her identity in a triple sense—as a vehicle of linguistic communication (what one says), as a inscription with a legal status (one’s signature, or simply one’s mark), and as a script unique to each individual (hence paleography, and later handwriting analysis). Handwriting thus conveys messages and instantiates the writer’s identity at the same time.

The hypothesis of this talk is that the largely overlooked topic of Victorian literary chirography offers us access into certain deeply embedded assumptions in nineteenth-century culture. It does so because literary chirography places the embodied writing process in an ambivalent relationship with an industrialized print industry. In a society that traded in insults such as “a stereotype,” “a cliché” (both terms borrowed from printing methods) and a “manufactured man,” the writer’s use of her hands distanced her from mechanical reproduction and connected her with craftsmanship. Moreover, it kept her in the loop of the organic and embodied circulation of affects and sensibilities that pervaded Victorian ideas of reading and the arts.

The ambivalence towards mass production is strongly expressed by William Morris’s Arts and Crafts movement, with its romance of the human hand and its attempt to shore up handicrafts against all forms of mass production. The textual focus of the talk is on Morris’s writings on the hand. It glosses these writings with references to the twentieth-century debate between Heidegger and Derrida over the essentiality of the hand and handwriting to Dasein, the ontologically conceived human species. My talk traces connec-



Left to right: Rachael Zeleny, Kate Slough-Sanford, and William Nelles
Below: Florence Boos



tions among these philosophical debates on the human hand in its relationship with mass-production techniques and with Morris's own efforts at fine printing. My larger intention is to find in Morris's writings and book arts a nineteenth-century understanding of the hand as an extension of human subjectivity—an instrument of material signification (in gesture, in writing, in making), and a nodal point of identity.

The Pre-Raphaelites and the Medieval Past

William Nelles, University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, "Translating Medieval Images: Beardsley's *Le Morte Darthur*"

Scholarly study of Aubrey Beardsley's work as an illustrator has become a flourishing critical industry: we even have a recent book titled *The Beardsley Industry*. But critics of Beardsley remain lukewarm toward his first great achievement, the largest project he would ever undertake: illustrating J.M. Dent's edition of Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*. Many are particularly hard on his version of medievalism: "Burne-Jonesesque medievalism was all Beardsley knew," but "the medievalism which was supposed to pervade his *Morte* sometimes emerged only by accident, for his imagination was a fever of incongruous and unschooled influences." Critic after critic disparages the work by noting that "Beardsley's Camelot bears no resemblance to Malory's; "So great is the discrepancy between the text and its illustrations that one wonders whether Beardsley had even bothered to read any more than the opening books." This scholarly discontent with Beardsley's illustrations, I argue, derives not from his historical knowledge or artistic competence, but from his irreverent attitude to the material, which challenged the standard Victorian view of medievalism represented by Edward Burne-Jones and William Morris, for whom "the *Morte d'Arthur* was little short of a sacred book." A list of the key terms and phrases used by critics is revealing: his drawings are "incongruous" and "cynical," they "parody," "ignore," and "create distance" from the text. In a word, "his attitude toward chivalric life is the antithesis of Malory's."

This idea of the sanctity and sobriety of Malory's work, and of medieval literature generally, seems to have influenced the judgment of many modern critics of these nineteenth-century versions codified by the Pre-Raphaelites and Morris's Kelmscott Press. For Morris, "the most beautiful printed books were the fifteenth-century productions of Schoffer at Mainz, Mentelin at Strasbourg, and Caxton in London because all the visual elements . . . were harmonized into an aesthetically satisfying unity." Most Beardsley scholars appear to uncritically accept this Pre-Raphaelite model of book design. But as a medievalist, I have always been struck by how non-medieval the Kelmscott work

looks, and how very medieval Beardsley's work looks. Recall that the Arthurian legends themselves, narrative words and illustrative images alike, are created in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. And while the Pre-Raphaelite vision of illustration does adhere to the models of illustration adopted for Caxton's Malory of 1498, Beardsley's vision is very close to that of the artists who painted such thirteenth-century manuscripts as Yale 229. I argue that Beardsley's could be considered the more authentic medievalism, the truest to the real principles and even methods of production of medieval book illumination. A slide show compares the Kelmscott and Beardsley decorations with thirteenth-century manuscript marginalia, and demonstrates the genuine accuracy and authenticity of Beardsley's "translation" of medieval images.

Kathleen R. Slaugh-Sanford University of Delaware, "Among the cursed Jues': Edward Burne-Jones and Chaucer's 'The Prioress's Tale'"

Recent scholarship on Geoffrey Chaucer's "The Prioress's Tale" demonstrates the predicament of critics who try to reconcile their own attitudes toward the notion of "difference" with attitudes found in English culture of the Middle Ages. What, these critics ask, should we do with this tale's harsh treatment of Jews and Jewish communities? However, a more interesting, and perhaps less polarizing, approach is to ask what artists in subsequent centuries have done with the tale and how their cultures have informed adaptations at different historical moments. This talk examines visual interpretations of "The Prioress's Tale" created by Edward Burne-Jones over a nearly forty-year span, from the mid to the late Victorian period. The works discussed include a decorated wardrobe painted with an image inspired by the tale, dating from 1858; a gouache on paper titled *The Prioress's Tale*, which was begun in 1865 and finished in 1898; and the two illustrations of the tale published in the Kelmscott Press edition of *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* in 1896. These works will be used to consider how Burne-Jones, as a member of the Pre-Raphaelite movement, filtered Victorian notions of Jewishness through his art.

The era of "racial science" in which Burne-Jones created these works produced a marked shift in views about Jews. In the age of Chaucer, Jews were demonized because they were not Christians, and the differences between these two groups occurred largely from their divergent readings of the Hebrew Bible. However, during the nineteenth century, Jews were increasingly labeled as a distinct racial group. So, while Chaucer's tale divides Jews from Christians based on religious differences, Burne-Jones's images instead position the Jewish characters as racially separate from the Christian figures. Such a move enabled Burne-Jones's audi-

ence to “see” difference between the Jewish and Christian characters and allowed Burne-Jones to map his culture’s ideas about Jews onto those of Chaucer, even as he aestheticized them.

Rachael Zeleny, University of Delaware, “Rossetti’s Rose: Elizabeth Siddal and *The Romance of the Rose*”

Jean de Meun and Guillaume de Lorris’s *The Romance of the Rose* maps the journey of a young man who must learn the art of Love before he is allowed physical proximity to his beloved “rose.” The aesthetic and dream-like quality of this allegorical text lends to a multiplicity of interpretations ranging from a “celebration of courtly love” to “an erudite philosophical work” to a “satirical representation of social and sexual follies.” Regardless of the reading, the *Rose* provides a rich site for negotiating, adapting and reworking ideas of love, gender and sexual power.

Most scholars do not think of *The Romance of the Rose* when thinking of the Pre-Raphaelite painter, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882). Some might vaguely consider what Helene Roberts calls the “other-worldly mood” associated with Rossetti’s work that is induced by the “use of medieval costumes” and “archaic settings.” And no one can doubt that Rossetti enjoyed “the paraphernalia of the Middle Ages” such as “armor, rich drapery, intricate designs and symbolism.” However, most will point to the adaptations of *Vita Nuova* written by Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) when considering Rossetti’s relationship with the medieval world. This connection is the convenient one to emphasize for their distinctive similarities: the shared name (emphasized when Rossetti changed his name from Gabriel Dante to Dante Gabriel), a long period of courtship, and the tragic loss of their young beloveds.

With this emotionally charged connection at the forefront, it becomes easy to overlook Rossetti’s affinity for other medieval texts. In actuality, Rossetti’s relationship with *The Romance of the Rose* began early in his career and extended well into his later work. This talk will trace that which is commonly discussed, Rossetti’s obsessive reworking of the medieval Dante and Beatrice romance, in order to create a framework for examining what is typically overlooked, Rossetti’s engagement with *The Romance of the Rose*. In Rossetti’s early work, both narratives allow Rossetti to immortalize his first meeting with Elizabeth Siddal. In his later work, each story provides a medium for grieving the loss of his beautiful, red-haired wife. Ultimately, however, I evaluate how Rossetti’s engagement with *The Romance of the Rose* is unique by referring to Rossetti’s select translations of *The Romance of the Rose*, examining Rossetti’s intended but unused drawing for *The Early Italian Poets* and considering subsequent artwork that draws the medieval narrative. This talk shows that un-

like the unconsummated love of Dante and Beatrice, *The Romance of the Rose* provides an outlet for Rossetti that is suitably respectful and sensual to comment on the love and loss of his wife, Elizabeth Siddal.

REPORTS FROM FELLOWSHIP RECIPIENTS



Clara Finlay, the recipient of the 2011 William Morris Society Award, writes:

With the generous help of the William Morris Society, I’m writing a brief and accessible biography of Morris. Each chapter of the book will begin with an image of one of the gorgeous objects he designed or created. Whether a chair, textile, or book, each image will provide a loose theme for the chapter that follows it. Through the visual attractions of Morris’s art, I hope to draw casual readers into the story of his life.

The idea for the book came from the way in which I first “met” Morris, years ago in a small college library. While browsing, I spotted a beautifully patterned spine. The title meant nothing to me: *William Morris: His Life, Work and Friends*. I began to read, and found myself drawn into the world of this intense Victorian who dreamed himself into the thirteenth century.

At that time my friend and I had an art print hung on our wall: a painting of a woman, sensual and glowing, with a pomegranate in her hand. My friend had bought it at a garage sale; we had no idea who had painted it. As I sat, flipping through the library book, my eyes fell upon a photograph of a woman with a tall tuft of hair and a strong neck. This was unmistakably the woman from the painting. It gave me an eerie thrill to see its model come to life on the page, and to learn her name: Jane Morris.

Now that I know more, I know that Jane Morris herself, in my position, might have considered attending a séance, to find out what the woman in the painting wanted from her. However, I’m not nearly as imaginative as she was. I thought instead of all the flowers and Victoriana in modern advertising, and how they guided

my hand to select Morris's book, just as they drove my friend to pick Rossetti's painting of Jane.

We have all been bitten by the Victorian bug. It's the perfect time for this kind of project. Once drawn in, readers will find Morris's personal relationships at the heart of the book, and they will witness his lifelong battle against ugliness of all kinds. His poetry, design, handicrafts, socialism, and activism will be cast as different attempts at the same goal: to beautify a society he saw as polluted, unjust and lacking in art.

I'm very grateful to the William Morris Society for this award. It will contribute much to the success of this project, by helping me to visit archives and galleries in England.



From Andreea Marder, recipient of the 2010 Joseph R. Dunlap Fellowship, about her work on “The Translation of *News from Nowhere* into Romanian”:

While searching for a possible dissertation subject for my Master's degree in Translation Studies, I was naturally drawn to William Morris, an author for whom I have always had a great admiration. Much to my surprise, only one of his books has been translated into Romanian. This is why I decided to embark on an ambitious and audacious project, i.e. the translation of *News from Nowhere*.

In his review of Bellamy's novel, Morris writes that “The only safe way of reading a Utopia is to consider it as the expression of the temperament of its author.” Morris's own utopian romance, *News from Nowhere*, contains many different threads in his life, tightly interwoven to form the substance of an engaged literary work. Moreover, it is a book incredibly rich in substance and irony, sometimes self-directed. It is a vision, as its author declares, of a different kind of existence.

Morris believed that human nature was inherently good, and that it had only become perverted by unfavorable circumstances. The world in which William Guest wakes up is supposed to be a paradise for the living, but it is by no means a perfect world. Morris proposes one solution, a cure for the passivity with which we accept what makes our lives miserable. The author's intention is first of all to encourage us to dream of a better world and then to do our best to transform that dream into reality. In an industrialized society which does not know where it is heading, this message might be more appealing than ever. Due to this fact, it is my belief that *News from Nowhere* would be of great interest to the Romanian reader.

The book is highly embedded in its source culture, containing thousands of references which were familiar to its first British and American readers, but difficult to understand and even cryptic to present-day readers. Things can be even more problematic when it comes to understanding, interpreting, and translating them for a foreign audience. Because of this fact, extensive research has to be conducted first in order to understand the information contained in the source text, with all its presuppositions and implications, and then to render it in an accessible form to the Romanian reader. The illustrated edition of *News from Nowhere* has proved thus to be an extremely valuable resource for me.

The Joseph R. Dunlap Memorial Fellowship could prevent the Romanian translation of *News from Nowhere* from remaining only an academic project, known to an extremely limited number of people. The fellowship could help me find a publishing house interested in my manuscript and, perhaps, it might even cover some of the expenses for the printing of the book.

It is my hope that my translation project will promote the literary work of William Morris to Romanian readers.

WILLIAM MORRIS'S IMPACT IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA, 1864-1910 *Leslie Freudenheim*

William Morris's central role in the art world was recognized in America not only on the East coast, but also in California—as early as 1864—the year Joseph Worcester moved there from Massachusetts at age 28. For those unfamiliar with Worcester, he was more than a minister of the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church (a National Historic Landmark and an icon of the American Arts and Crafts movement).¹ Worcester seemed to pattern his life after Morris, who (in the words of a reviewer of Mackail's biography) “betook himself to the task of remaking Society . . . the rea-

sons being always the same—namely, that somebody must.”² He agreed with Morris that “Everything . . . may be affected, if not determined, by individual effort.”³ Both men revered Ruskin for his ideas on art and social justice⁴ and regarded architecture as the most central of the arts.⁵ Worcester had studied drawing, loved architecture, and practiced it as an amateur. He not only inspired the design of the church; he influenced residential architecture as well.

Starting as early as 1876 Worcester interpreted Ruskin and Morris’s architectural ideas in ways that were suitable to the Bay Region. If he did not actually meet Ruskin or Morris—and he may well have—he certainly absorbed their philosophies.⁶ He didn’t just talk, he demonstrated—with seven buildings he designed—how other architects could apply the ideas Ruskin and Morris promoted in England to housing in the Bay Area. Most importantly, he had a major impact.⁷ According to Charles Keeler, author of *The Simple Home* (1904), “[Worcester’s] word was law in the select group of connoisseurs of which he was the center.”⁸ (His influence was probably similar to that of William Morris in the London Arts and Crafts movement.)

Worcester’s family were Swedenborgians, a Christian group inspired by the eighteenth century Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg (1688–1772) who lived part of his life in England,⁹ and who had been the subject of a 35-page chapter in Ralph Waldo Emerson’s 1850 *Representative Men*. Worcester, like Swedenborg and the Transcendentalists, found God in nature.

INFLUENTIAL VERNACULAR ARCHITECTURE

Morris admired simple buildings, as he remarked in a lecture on “The Influence of Building Materials on Architecture,” “I am perfectly certain that a vast number of very beautiful buildings . . . never had an architect at all, and . . . grew up simply without any intermediary between the mind and the hands of the people who actually built them.”¹⁰ Worcester’s interest in vernacular architecture may have begun upon encountering log cabins in Yosemite in 1864 which he could easily have described as Morris describes the beauty of a Cotswold cottage built by an ordinary laborer in the past, as “this simple harmless beauty that . . . added to the beauty of the earth instead of marring it.”¹¹ He and John Muir boarded at Hutchings Hotel, which featured the “Big Tree Room” with a gigantic Sequoia in the middle of it. And he would have seen the cabin Muir described as having “a stream entering at one end and flowing out the other with just current enough to allow it to sing and warble in low, sweet tones, delightful at night while I [Muir] lay in bed.”¹²

Worcester and Morris also agreed in their concern for building materials, and in Worcester’s view, there

was nothing more beautiful than a beautiful wooden house.¹³ Worcester also believed natural wood would bring something spiritually uplifting into his buildings. Between 1876 and 1878 he designed and probably helped build his first house atop a hillside in Piedmont, across the bay from San Francisco.¹⁴ This may well be the first American bungalow. He took painstaking care with this very simple house: “The house is not yet begun. . . . I have given Theodore much trouble about it, considering that it is to cost so little, but its position is very conspicuous and for my own satisfaction in it I wanted it should be right.”¹⁵ Jack London penned what is probably his best-known book, *The Call of the Wild*, while renting Worcester’s house (1901 to 1903). London often referred to it as a “bungalow with a capital B.” and applauded the design:

Am beautifully located in new house. We have a big living room, every inch of it, floor and ceiling, finished in redwood. We could put the floor space of almost four cottages into this one living room alone. . . . The rest of the house is finished in redwood too, and is very, very comfortable. . . . A most famous porch. . . magnificent pines. . . flowers galore. . . our nearest neighbor is a block away (and there isn’t a vacant lot within a mile) our view commands all of San Francisco Bay for a sweep of thirty or forty miles. . .¹⁶

In an 1882 lecture series on “The Role of Art in Life”¹⁷ Worcester castigated the aesthetes’ “art for art’s sake” and espoused principles established by Morris and the Pre-Raphaelites, asserting that art should be useful, uplifting, spiritual, and derive from nature. The same year Morris admonished Englishmen: “Have nothing in your houses that you do not know to be useful or believe to be beautiful,” Worcester urged his listeners to “cultivate the kind of art that is mindful and useful to a full & complete . . . life.”¹⁸

LONDON, METROPOLIS OF THE MODERN WORLD

Worcester admired the ideas emanating from Britain, and in one of his lectures he refers to London as

the metropolis of the modern world. If we were to pull up stakes . . . judging you by myself, [we] should gravitate . . . towards London—the metropolis of the modern world, [where] I believe we should find. . . an exaltation of the simple beauties . . . of this everyday world [nature]. We should find a freedom from pretence & affectation, an absence of vulgarity.¹⁹

Worcester praised the Pre-Raphaelites and cited William Michael Rossetti’s early sonnet in *The Germ* which had laid out their principles.²⁰ Although he disliked what he felt was the saccharine sensibility of some of their work, he admired their collaboration and dedication to art that sprang from truth, sincerity, and na-



Sanctuary, Swedenborgian Church, San Francisco
with first Mission style chairs tree supports, and William Keith mural paintings

ture. He advocated a “new Brotherhood [in the Bay Area] for the maintenance of the principles . . . the Pre-Raphaelites had established thirty years before.”²¹

MORRIS’S HUMBLE COTTAGE AND WORCESTER’S SIMPLE HOME

Since the movement wasn’t named until 1888, Worcester never uses the term Arts and Crafts. However, as we have seen, he and his friends were well acquainted with its emphasis on nature, its call for a return to the countryside, and for things handmade rather than machine made. Between 1887 and 1889 he designed four Arts and Crafts houses atop Russian Hill, possibly with the help of his close friend, Daniel Hudson Burnham.²² They were shingled outside with unpainted redwood inside; two are still standing. These intentionally simple homes differed radically from San Francisco’s ornate Victorian houses.

HOUSING FOR THE WORKING MAN

Worcester’s friend Willis Polk attacked California’s materialism in his short-lived magazine, *Architectural News* (1890–91), advocating that architects should be “respectable socialists . . . and remember that we are all laborers.”²³ In “The Poor Man’s House of Today: An

Improvement Suggested” Polk stressed the value of simplicity: “A dwelling-house should express, without affectation, the simplest object of its being . . . furnishing a comfortable shelter to the home-life, avoiding everything tending to display. . . . [This] is the real basis for . . . an ideal home of moderate cost.”²⁴ Just as the work of British Arts and Crafts architects marked a shift in emphasis “from the English manor to the cottage with its middleclass connotations,”²⁵ so the work of this California group signaled a move away from elaborate Italianate or Queen Anne houses to “simple” Arts and Crafts homes for the middle class which, it could be argued, spawned the less expensive bungalow.

In early 1873 Worcester suggested that his nephew “take hold of carpentering or cabinet making . . . the best handiwork to carry along with a profession. . . . I think a facility with tools is a fine basis to build character upon.”²⁶ Worcester’s close friend, Charles Keeler, not only wrote for *The Craftsman* magazine, but also started a Ruskin Club (1895) and a Handicraft Guild (1898), both in Berkeley. Another associate, Bernard Maybeck, had studied in Europe and worked for Carrere and Hastings before coming under Worcester’s spell in 1889.²⁷ According to Keeler,

Maybeck proposed to restore the handcrafts to their proper place in life and art. . . . No doubt Mr. Maybeck had learned much from William Morris, but he was by no means a slavish imitator of anyone. He was interested in the simple life, which is naturally expressive and consequently beautiful. He believed in handmade things and that all ornament should be designed to fit the place and the need. He did not mind how crude it was, provided it was sincere and expressed something personal.²⁸

MORRIS, RUSKIN, AND WORCESTER VS. THE AESTHETES:

Worcester's 1882 lectures reveal that he disdained the Aesthetic movement not only because Wilde, Whistler, and its other adherents advocated "art for art's sake" but also because, in his view, it denied that art could have any moral value, a concept the Arts and Crafts movement championed. Ten years later, when planning the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church, Worcester still disliked the Aesthetes: "I hope our plan will not be too aesthetic... a pretty church I do not think I could stand."²⁹ He concurred with Morris in his view that "A work of architecture is a harmonious, co-operative work of art, inclusive of all the serious arts, all those which are not engaged in the production of . . . ephemeral prettinesses."³⁰ Instead of a "pretty" church Worcester insisted "the building must teach its lessons."³¹

COLLABORATION PRODUCES A COMBINATION OF CHURCH AND HOME

Inspired by Morris and by H.H. Richardson's collaborations at Trinity Church, Boston, Worcester set out to make the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church "a harmonious, co-operative work of art."³² Bruce Porter designed the round stained glass window, Maybeck worked as draughtsman for the architect of record A. Page Brown, William Keith provided landscape paintings, and his architect friends Willis Polk and Ernest Coxhead undoubtedly provided suggestions.³³ No matter how many friends contributed ideas, there is no doubt of Worcester's personal involvement in both planning and constructing the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church. A visitor from the East wrote: "The whole thing is Worcester's personal expression of himself, each shrub and flower put there with distinct choice and meaning."³⁴ Contemporaries were quick to recognize in it "a new note . . . a combination of church and home, an intimate, subdued, aesthetic something that with all its simplicity set it apart from anything that had been built before in the West."³⁵ Two details seem to have had no precedent in church architecture: 1) the huge fireplace intentionally placed off center at the opposite end of the sanctuary from the altar; and

2) the use of trees as pillars. Other unusual features included individual rush-bottomed chairs rather than pews, paintings lacking any direct Christian reference but which served as windows onto nature, and foliage brought in from the hills rather than formal flowers. Morris and Worcester both loved natural beauty and insisted that structures should be built in such a way that "every part of it is well cared for: 'tis in fact beautiful, a work of art and a piece of nature."³⁶

Worcester designed the church so that visitors cannot enter it without first passing through a garden; and against Brown's advice Worcester decided to support the church's sanctuary roof with Madrone trees with their bark left on.³⁷

Charles Keeler applauded the new church: "The spirit of the [Swedenborgian] church... has reached his mark, and here and there through city and town, homes have been reared in the same simple fashion—plain, straightforward, genuine homes, covered with unpainted shingles, or built of rough brick, with much natural redwood inside, in broad unvarnished panels. . . . To find this spirit, which would have been a delight to William Morris, so strongly rooted as to assume almost the aspect of a cult, is . . . one of the most remarkable features of a civilization so new as that of modern San Francisco."³⁸

MORRIS FURNITURE INSPIRES THE FIRST MISSION STYLE CHAIR

Worcester and his collaborative circle also designed the first Mission Style chair in America. It was handmade without nails for the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church in 1894. This simple, unadorned furniture was inspired by the California missions and by furniture made by William Morris, M.H. Baillie Scott, and A.H. Mackmurdo in England. After 1897, Joseph P. McHugh, Michigan Chair Company, and Gustav Stickley all copied the church chair. Its simple straight lines and rush seat launched the wildly popular Mission Style.³⁹

HILLSIDE CLUB PROMOTES ARTS AND CRAFTS IDEALS

Morris believed "it is good for a man . . . to speak out whatever really burns inside him."⁴⁰ Similarly, Worcester and his circle did not just talk about Arts and Crafts ideals; they actually proselytized. In 1898 his friends formed the Hillside Club and published pamphlets with phrases such as: "Architecture is landscape gardening around a few rooms for use in case of rain," and "A house should not stand out in a landscape but fit in with it."⁴¹ The club stressed that houses should be built of local materials just as Morris advocated; and it urged owners not to paint, inside or out.

CROSS-FERTILIZATION

English architects eagerly sought information on the latest American trends in domestic architecture, just as American architects looked to England for inspiration.⁴² Three years before the Chicago and Boston Arts and Crafts Societies were founded in 1897 San Franciscans saw the first American Guild of Arts & Crafts (1894).⁴³ Its members not only fostered the decorative arts, but they intended: “to control the design of private homes as well as public buildings,” something to which Morris’s artist friends undoubtedly aspired.⁴⁴

ASHBEE CONFIRMS CALIFORNIA’S IMPORTANCE

Worcester and his circle justified California Shingle and Mission Style houses using arguments grounded in the Arts and Crafts philosophy: such buildings were rooted in local traditions, did not spoil the landscape, reflected honest work and handcraft, uplifted the soul, and inspired the mind—all goals expressed by Ruskin, Morris, and their many European followers.⁴⁵ In 1909 C.R. Ashbee acknowledged their success and accomplishments. He visited both Northern and Southern California and wrote: “California speaks. . . . Here things are really alive—and the Arts and crafts that all the others were screaming about are here actually being produced . . . on the Pacific Coast.”⁴⁶

Leslie M. Freudenheim is the author of Building with Nature: Inspiration for the Arts & Crafts Home (2005) and several articles on the Mission Style and Arts and Crafts movement. She is an adjunct scholar at the Swedenborgian House of Studies, Berkeley, CA.

1. For much more on Joseph Worcester and the wide circle he influenced, see Leslie Freudenheim, *Building with Nature: Inspiration for the Arts & Crafts Home* (Salt Lake City: Gibbs Smith, 2005), (hereafter BWN).
2. E. R., rev. J. W. Mackail, *The Life of William Morris, Architectural Review* (London) 8 (July–December 1900), 39.
3. Ibid.
4. William Morris, “The Revival of Architecture,” *The Collected Works of William Morris*, ed. May Morris (London: Longmans, Green, 1910–15), (hereafter CW), vol. 22, 323. Worcester may have studied Ruskin at Harvard or seen his ideas acclaimed in a review of “The True and the Beautiful in Nature, Art and Religion: Selected from the Writings of John Ruskin” by Mrs. L. C. Tuthill, *The Swedenborgian*, July 1859.
5. William Morris, “The Prospects of Architecture in Civilization,” CW, vol. 22, 119.
6. One of Worcester’s brothers lived in Italy, and his lectures and letters suggest knowledge of European cities.
7. Stratton house, 67 Canyon Road, Berkeley, CA. *The House Beautiful*, May 1916, published a picture of his largest house, and quoted the Strattons’ reference to Worcester as “a local architect of uncommon taste.”
8. Charles Keeler, *San Francisco and Thereabout* (San Francisco: California Promotion Committee, 1902), 6.
9. The American Swedenborgians included Edgar Allan Poe, Henry James (father of the novelist), and John Chapman—better known as Johnny Appleseed.
10. William Morris, “The Influence of Building Materials upon Architecture, *Architecture, Industry and Wealth* (London: Longmans, Green, 1902), 264.
11. Morris, “The Prospects of Architecture in Civilization,” CW, vol. 22, 128.

12. BWN, 17.
13. Morris, “The Influence of Building Materials upon Architecture,” CW, vol. 22, 392: “Stone is definitely the most noble material . . . ; wood is the next, and brick a makeshift.” Worcester’s advocacy of wood houses is further documented in BWN.
14. BWN, 132ff.
15. Joseph Worcester to Alfred Worcester, 21 October 1876, in “Rev. Joseph Worcester: A Memoir and Extracts from His Letters to His Nephew, Alfred Worcester,” Swedenborgian Library and Archives, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA.
16. BWN, 10ff.
17. Box of Sermons, Joseph Worcester Archives, Swedenborgian House of Studies Library, Berkeley, CA. (Hereafter BS).
18. Ibid., 15 September 1882, and William Morris, “The Beauty of Life,” CW, vol. 22, 77.
19. Ibid., BS.
20. William Michael Rossetti, “Sonnet,” *The Germ*, 1850.
21. Ibid., BS.
22. Burnham wrote his wife on 17 September 1888: “Uncle Joe is blooming out as an architect” and is “to have entire charge” of the four houses on Russian Hill, and “I am to help him.” Burnham papers, Daniel Hudson Burnham Library, Art Institute of Chicago, 1943.1, Box FF, Box 25, Folder 25.3.
23. *Architectural News* 1 (December 1890), 11.
24. Ibid.
25. James Kornwolf, *M.H. Baillie Scott and the Arts & Crafts Movement*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), 11–15.
26. Joseph Worcester to Alfred Worcester, Swedenborgian House of Studies Library, Berkeley, CA.
27. BWN, 20; Charles Keeler, “Friends Bearing Torches,” Unpub. MS, Bancroft Library, University of California-Berkeley, 226.
28. Ibid., 51 or Keeler, “Friends Bring Touches,” 228–29.
29. BWN, 35.
30. William Morris, *Gothic Architecture: A Lecture for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society* (Hammersmith: Kelmscott Press, 1893).
31. “A House that Teaches,” *San Francisco Examiner*, 30 September, 1895.
32. Worcester pasted numerous articles on Richardson in his scrapbooks, BWN, 5.
33. For more on influential California architects at this period see Richard Longstreth, *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998).
34. Dr. Richard C. Cabot to Mrs. Arthur Lyman, 24 July 1901, Tobisch Archive, Swedenborgian Library and Archives, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, CA.
35. Ibid.
36. Morris, “The Prospects of Architecture in Civilization,” CW, vol. 22, 127.
37. For the story of Worcester picking each tree see Mabel Craft, “A Sermon,” *House Beautiful*, February 1901, 126, 131.
38. Charles Keeler, *San Francisco and Thereabout*, 41–2.
39. For more on the chair see BWN, 62–8.
40. William Morris, “Art of the People,” CW, vol. 22, 49.
41. For more on the Hillside Club and its influence see BWN, 121ff.
42. Ibid., Kornwolf, 11 ff. and David Gebhard, “C.F.A. Voysey—to and from America,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 30 (December 1971), 304–12, point out the influence of American architects on British architecture.
43. Characterizing their organization not as a society but as a “guild” indicates they wanted to emphasize its roots in medieval guilds and in the British Arts and Crafts movement.
44. BWN, 69–71. Architect members included Bernard Maybeck, A. Page Brown (who worked on the San Francisco Swedenborgian Church), Ernest Coxhead, and Willis Polk, Joseph Worcester’s neighbor and close friend.
45. Morris wrote: “The working man cannot afford to live in anything that an architect could design.” Worcester’s circle designed principally for the professional classes (professors, writers, doctors).
46. BWN, 140, from Richard Guy Wilson, “Divine Excellence: The Arts and Crafts Life in California,” in Kenneth R. Trapp, *The Arts and Crafts Life in California*, (Oakland: Abbeville Press and the Oakland Museum, 1993), 13.

"THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND THE DUTCH

Anne van Buul

INTRODUCTION

At the heyday of the Pre-Raphaelite movement in England, in the 1850s and 1860s, the Dutch were still in total ignorance of this new school of art. It was not until 1868, when the Dutch painter and art critic Tobias van Westrheene visited the *National Exhibition of Works of Art* at Leeds, that a Dutchman had the opportunity to see a collection of Pre-Raphaelite artworks. As far as I know, he was the first who mentioned the Pre-Raphaelite school of art in a Dutch periodical. In his review of the exhibition in Leeds, Van Westrheene states that although the English art of the last decennia was completely new and confusing to him, these works seemed to be already generally accepted in England. He himself seemed to have more difficulties with appreciating Pre-Raphaelite art immediately. The bright colors of the Pre-Raphaelite paintings were a pain to his eyes, and he found it very hard to appreciate their melancholy and theatrical themes. He could not imagine that Dutch artists could ever fully appreciate the modern English school of art. In his opinion, they would at best learn to understand this new art by way of comparison and critical study.¹

Van Westrheene could not have known that by the end of the nineteenth century, Pre-Raphaelite art and literature would become extremely popular in The Netherlands, and come to serve as a great example for Dutch artists and writers. During the fin de siècle, the styles, themes and ideas of the Pre-Raphaelites found a very fertile breeding ground in The Netherlands. Not only were the works and principles of the initial members of The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood widely received and ranged under the term 'Pre-Raphaelite,' but also works of John Ruskin and of later English artists and writers who worked in the tradition of the Brotherhood, such as William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, Algernon Charles Swinburne, and Walter Crane are for Dutch collective memory categorized as "Pre-Raphaelite."

Many aspects of Pre-Raphaelite art and thoughts were a source of inspiration for Dutch artists and writers; for example their utopianism, their ideas about the unity and purity of book designs, their symbolism and recreation of medieval elements, and their socialist ideals. All these aspects were most of the time highly praised by Dutch critics, but now and then, they also had some negative comments. Whether their critical judgment was positive or negative depended largely on the critics' cultural and educational background and their cultural interests. Sometimes, however, Dutch

and patriotic sentiments predominated in the reception of Pre-Raphaelite art and thoughts. In some cases, Pre-Raphaelitism was mentioned to strengthen the ideals of Dutch national identity. In others, the Dutch felt compelled to reject Pre-Raphaelite points of view to defend the integrity of their own heritage.

By focusing on two central themes in the critical reception of Pre-Raphaelitism in The Netherlands, I will explain how Dutch value judgments about Pre-Raphaelitism changed depending on how Pre-Raphaelite ideas and tastes accorded with Dutch opinions about their own culture and cultural heritage. First, I will discuss Dutch reactions to the opinions of the Pre-Raphaelites about the Dutch school of art. Secondly, I will focus on Dutch reactions to Pre-Raphaelite opinions about the Boer Wars in South-Africa, and to their creative interpretations of this political event.

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES ON THE FLEMISH PRIMITIVES AND REMBRANDT

The Primitives

At the time of the introduction of the Pre-Raphaelite school of art in The Netherlands, the term "Pre-Raphaelite" still needed further explanation. Most critics therefore pointed to the medieval sources of inspiration for this school: medieval Italian art, that is art before, or "pre-" Raphael, and old Dutch and Flemish art. From a patriotic point of view, it was an interesting fact for Dutch recipients that the Pre-Raphaelites based themselves on early Dutch examples. Therefore, the Pre-Raphaelite preoccupation with and statements about Dutch art history got considerable attention in the press, in comparison to other characteristics of Pre-Raphaelite art. The Dutch were obviously proud that the famous and popular Pre-Raphaelites got inspiration from their cultural heritage, from Memling, Van Eyck and the Flemish Primitives. In most cases, critics were not reluctant to overemphasize and exaggerate this relationship. In 1902, a critic wrote that "The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood . . . owed its existence in large part to the influence of our Memling."²

According to this critic, Dante Gabriel Rossetti must have been so impressed by the work of this great master, which he had seen in Bruges in 1849, that it moved him to turn his attention to other Primitives as well; Italian as well as Flemish. The critic implies that Rossetti's introduction to Memling made him turn to medieval art in general. Of course we now know that things occurred differently—Rossetti was first inspired by Italian frescos before he turned to Dutch and Flemish art—but obviously it was not the goal of the critics to be completely truthful; by exaggerating a bit, they were able to reappraise their own cultural heritage, and therefore strengthen their own patriotic feelings.

They presented the ‘fact’ that the Pre-Raphaelites chose Memling as their main source of inspiration as something of which to be proud.

Rembrandt

When the Dutch found any negative utterance about Dutch art in Pre-Raphaelite works, however, they tried their best to refute these arguments. Ruskin was a special target, because he wrote several times about Dutch art in a negative way. In 1910, the architect Jan Stuyt cited a translated passage from *Modern Painters* in which Ruskin writes that “Most pictures of the Dutch school . . . excepting always those of Rubens, Vandyke, and Rembrandt, are ostentatious exhibitions of the artist’s power of speech, the clear and vigorous elocution of useless and senseless words.”³ In general, Ruskin found Dutch art immoral and unspiritual in nature, and its representations cold, incorrect and too detailed. For Dutch art lovers, it must have been extremely painful to read these negative comments on Dutch art expressed by such an important art critic. Although Ruskin had written a few positive things about “our” Rembrandt, and treated him in most of his publications as the positive exception, the view arose that Ruskin did not appreciate any aspect of Dutch seventeenth-century art, and that he detested Rembrandt in particular. The widespread idea that Ruskin was strongly critical of Dutch art could have been strengthened even more by James McNeill Whistler, when he wrote in *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (1890) that Ruskin found Rembrandt “coarse.”⁴ However it may be, the fact that Ruskin was not fully positive about Holland’s greatest painter, and failed to give him the honor he deserved, touched the Dutch most. They even accused Ruskin of making all English painters after him ignore Dutch art.⁵ According to Dutch critics, this was a sign that Ruskin’s opinions had a bad influence on his successors.

In 1899, the important Dutch art critic Hermine Marius published an extensive study on Ruskin.⁶ In this book, Marius mentions Ruskin’s opinion of Dutch art several times. For example, she cites Ruskin’s remark in the first volume of *Modern Painters* that the greatest benefit a Maecenas could do, was to collect all the old Dutch masters in a gallery and burn them all together (Part II, section 1, chapter 7). Marius could not explain Ruskin’s dislike of the Dutch school of art, neither could she explain the inconsistencies in his opinion about Rembrandt. She found his misinterpretation of Dutch art especially odd, because Ruskin’s aesthetics was in line with the truth in other aspects. But Marius did not only accuse Ruskin; she couldn’t accept the neglect of Rembrandt in other Pre-Raphaelite documents either. Therefore, Marius reproved Walter Crane as well, because he had not mentioned Rembrandt in his 1892 es-



Top: Hermine Marius
Bottom: *Kunsten Samenleving* (1894); Dutch rendering of Walter Crane, *The Claims of Decorative Art* (1892), by Jan Veth

say collection, *The Claims of Decorative Art*. According to Marius, Crane had wrongly ignored Rembrandt just because the Dutchman had not created any form of communal art, or worked in a decorative way.⁷

Critics tried to find explanations for Ruskin's misunderstanding of Dutch art. According to several critics, Ruskin always attached more importance to the image than to the technique of the artist, the way in which the image was represented.⁸ Indeed, in the second chapter of *Modern Painters I*, Ruskin writes that "the picture which has the nobler and more numerous ideas, however awkwardly expressed, is a greater and a better picture than that which has the less noble and less numerous ideas, however beautifully expressed."⁹ Thus, the argument of the Dutch critics came to be that as Rembrandt is appreciated most because of his technique, Ruskin could not see the quality of Rembrandt's art. Another critic added to this line of thought that Ruskin did not appreciate Dutch art because he could not understand it and because he was biased by the art of Turner.¹⁰ Hermine Marius was able to find an explanation for William Blake's dislike of Dutch art: according to her, Blake's opinion about Dutch art resulted from his attempt to dismiss his predecessors Reynolds and Gainsborough, who took Dutch art as their example. For Ruskin's opinion, however, Marius had no other explanation than the fact that Ruskin was still very young when he wrote *Modern Painters*, the work which contains the most overt critique of Dutch art. Whatever the cause of Ruskin's opinion may have been, it is clear that all Dutch critics agreed that Ruskin was completely wrong in this case. At other points, they agreed with him and even called him a prophet, but they felt it their duty to stand up for the Dutch cultural heritage, especially where Rembrandt was at stake.

THE PRE-RAPHAELITES AND THE BOER WARS

Another incident (in which also some Pre-Raphaelites were involved) that strengthened Dutch patriotic sentiments at the same time, was the Boer Wars in South Africa. In the nineteenth century, the South African "Transvaal" was founded by the Boers, descendants of the Dutch colonists who were still connected to the Dutch by language and religion. However, the area soon came under British administration. In 1880, the Boers began a protest against British oppression which led to the First Boer War (in Afrikaner: "Vryheidsoorlog"). The British recognized the sovereignty of the Transvaal in August 1881, but in the years afterwards, they kept trying to regain their power, not the least because gold was found. In 1899, this struggle for land and minerals led to the Second Boer War, which was won with difficulty by the British in 1902.

As the Dutch supported the Boers and identified themselves with them, they detested the general ag-

gressive, jingoistic tone of the British government and people during this period. Although the Dutch had viewed England with increasing friendliness during the nineteenth century, they now viewed the country with dismay. In 1900, a Dutch critic wrote, obviously disappointed: "These are sad times for those who once adored England and often felt that they would like to be British if they had not been Dutch. The England that was loved by so many, is no longer!"¹¹ Another commented: "Our national sense is raised by the behavior of our magnificent brethren in the South African Republics no less than by hatred against England. Against that England, that acts so horribly and shamefully against the people that share our language and our roots."¹²

Swinburne, the foe

As the citations above show, the Dutch were disappointed in the British attitude towards the Boers. As a consequence, the Pre-Raphaelite writers who supported the military campaign in South-Africa also fell in Dutch esteem. The reputation of Algernon Charles Swinburne, once extremely popular in Holland for his melodic verse about love, freedom, and the sea, declined immediately when he started to publish war poems. The poet, Geerten Gossaert, who wrote a concise Dutch biography of Swinburne, noted in 1911 that among the poems Swinburne had written against all imaginable kinds of tyrants and enemies of freedom, the poems against the Boers were most shocking and bore witness of Swinburne's complete ignorance of the actual situation in South Africa.¹³

One poem in particular by Swinburne provoked a flow of angry reactions from the supporters of the Boers, the sonnet "The Transvaal," published in *The Times* on 11 October 1899 at the outbreak of the Second Boer War:

Patience, long sick to death, is dead. Too long
 Have sloth and doubt and treason bidden us be
 What Cromwell's England was not, when the sea
 To him bore witness given of Blake how strong
 She stood, a commonweal that brooked no wrong
 From foes less vile than men like wolves set free
 Whose war is waged where none may fight or flee--
 With women and with weanlings. Speech and song
 Lack utterance now for loathing. Scarce we hear
 Foul tongues that blacken God's dishonoured name
 With prayers turned curses and with praise found
 shame
 Defy the truth whose witness now draws near
 To scourge these dogs, agape with jaws afoam,
 Down out of life. Strike, England, and strike home.

This sonnet is extremely patriotic and the tone is abnormally combative in comparison to other English war poetry of this period. Swinburne sees the Boer War as a good way to express the moral power of a nation,

and argues that a nation will grow even more by sub-jecting other, “minor” people. He proudly mentions England’s military history—Cromwell’s seventeenth-century commonwealth—and he makes an appeal to the English army to gain victory over the Boers.

On 25 February 1900, Swinburne’s sonnet was also published in a Dutch newspaper, *De Amsterdammer*, accompanied by a Dutch poem in response, written by Edward B. Koster. This Dutch poet and critic was born in England and he felt therefore strongly connected to this country. Swinburne was one of his favorite authors. In 1908, he wrote an extensive article about Swinburne in which he praised highly Swinburne’s early poetry, especially *Songs before Sunrise* (1871).¹⁴ In this article, Koster referred to the moment in 1900 when he read Swinburne’s “The Transvaal” for the first time. At that time, he felt the urge to express his feelings of anger and disappointment about Swinburne’s political turn. His poem is addressed “To Algernon Charles Swinburne” and starts with the question, “Why hast thou done this thing?”—a question Swinburne himself had asked in the poem “Quia multum amavit” in *Songs before Sunrise*. In its new context, as a motto of Koster’s poem, the question could best be understood as a question about what to Koster was the reprehensible point of view that Swinburne had expressed in his sonnet. Why was he pushing people to rob and murder, and why was he singing a requiem for freedom instead of singing in favor of freedom as he had done in his early work? From his earlier experiences with Swinburne’s work, Koster had expected more reasonableness in this great poet. Now, in his poem, he found that Swinburne’s soul is captured by greed, hatred and envy, and these feelings overrule his desire for freedom and his sensitivity to what is morally right.

Although Koster was positive about Swinburne’s early poetry, he simply had no choice but to reject the Transvaal sonnet. He was ashamed that one of the poets he admired the most had in his view fallen so deeply politically and morally. Other Dutch writers agreed that Swinburne had placed himself in an embarrassing position. As one anonymous critic wrote in 1907: “The English love to scold like the heroes of Homer. How did they show this at the beginning of the Boer War! How horribly Swinburne scolded! I recently read this poem over again! How ashamed the man will be now!”¹⁵

Crane, the friend

In the eyes of the Dutch, some associates of the Pre-Raphaelites had a more appropriate attitude towards the Boer Wars than Swinburne. The Dutch praised English artists who criticized the war and expressed their dissatisfaction with its conduct in lectures, articles, and cartoons. The Dutch hoped that these art-

ists would be able to change the minds of the British people. Although William Morris never expressed his opinion about the political situation in South Africa—he had already died by the time of the second Boer War—his political views were strongly anti-militarist. He would probably not have supported a war. After Morris’ death, Walter Crane followed in his footsteps, not only as an artist, but also as pacifist and socialist.

Crane had become famous in The Netherlands for his picture books and for the lectures published in *The Claims of Decorative Art*, which had been translated into Dutch. When the Dutch were informed that Crane was a member of the “Pacification Committee,” he gained even more respect and authority. Therefore, Crane seemed the right person to consult regarding the British attitude towards the Boers. The Dutch critic and connoisseur A.C. Loffelt did so. In Loffelt’s opinion, Crane was a teacher for his people, “a politician like Jesus had been,” an idealistic socialist “in the manner of his predecessors and sympathizers William Morris, Ruskin and some of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.” In this position, Loffelt thought, Crane would be able to protest against the war in a visible way. In an attempt to incite Crane to action, Loffelt wrote him a letter in which he expressed his concerns about the way in which the British people in South Africa treated the Boers. He also asked Crane for his opinion in this case, and suggested that Crane draw a cartoon to influence the British people.¹⁶

On 25 February 1900, Loffelt received an answer from Crane. This lengthy document indicates that Crane felt the same unhappiness about the British policy in the Transvaal. “It is sad to feel that one’s own country is so terribly in the wrong and what you say is only too well justified by the course of events in this deplorable, unjust, and unnecessary war,” Crane writes. He goes on to say that “it is a terrible time for all those who care for justice and good-faith, and straight forward dealing— especially in public affairs—to say nothing of humanity.” Agreeing with Loffelt’s indignation over the members of Parliament who first declared themselves against the war, but are now supporting the government, Crane characterizes their views sarcastically: “Yes, we agree with you, the war was quite wrong, but, we must see it through now,—as if continuance or persistence in wrong made it right!” In response to Loffelt’s concern about the seeming lack of protest against the second Boer War in England, Crane tries to reassure him with two arguments. First, he notes that “happily there are . . . a few of us who are not blinded, and who are striving to spread a knowledge of the facts among our people at large. Some of our greatest thinkers and poets are among them.” Crane emphasizes that he does not stand alone in his opposition: a large group of influential people had joined the Pacification Com-

mittee. Secondly, he brings Loffelt the good news that he has already finished a cartoon called *Stop the War*, which is not out yet, but which would soon be published by W.T. Stead, who would also make a large poster of it.

To share this relatively good news with the Dutch people, Loffelt published an article, "A great English artist about the war," in the periodical *De Nederlandsche Spectator*, in which he cites extensively from Crane's letter.¹⁷ He presents Crane as one of the few English people who have a sense of justice regarding the Boer Wars. Although many people would say that one artist could not change the mind of a people, Loffelt seemed convinced that one influential person could be able to turn the tide. He had the hope that Crane's cartoon would be the first step towards a change of mind, which would eventually lead to the end of the second Boer War, and to the victory of the Boers.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have tried to shed light on two subjects that form a common thread of the reception of various forms of Pre-Raphaelitism in The Netherlands: the Pre-Raphaelite connections with, and opinions about, the Dutch and Flemish school of art, and Pre-Raphaelite preoccupations with the Boer Wars in South Africa. Both subjects are closely related to Dutch patriotic sentiments. Whether the opinions of the Dutch about Pre-Raphaelite art and thoughts were positive or negative, depended strongly on the extent to which they believed their art and thoughts were in accordance with Dutch patriotic feelings. It never occurred to the Dutch to ask whether Ruskin might have been right in his critique of Rembrandt and the Dutch school of art: from their patriotic point of view it was simply not an option to agree with Ruskin. And although Swinburne might have written a very good poem about the Boer War in South Africa, it could never be fully appreciated by the Dutch because it clashed with their patriotic and moral standpoint as a people.

Tobias van Westrheene, the critic mentioned in the introduction, who was one of the first Dutchmen to become aware of Pre-Raphaelite art, was wrong when he predicted that the Dutch would never learn to appreciate the Pre-Raphaelites. Especially in the 1880s and 1890s, Swinburne's poems, Rossetti's images of women, Crane's decorative art, and Morris's Kelmscott editions and socialist lectures became very popular in The Netherlands and a source of inspiration for Dutch artists and writers. However, the national differences between England and Holland, the differences in political viewpoints, and patriotic sentiments concerning their own cultural heritage, stood in the way of a full appreciation of the Pre-Raphaelite movement during this period and into the early twentieth century.

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1. T. van Westrheene Wz., "Van den Overkant," *De Nederlandsche Spectator* (1868), 195-7.
2. A.W.S.v.L., rev. of H. C. Marillier, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti, an Illustrated Memorial of his Art and Life*, *Onze Kunst* (1902), 70-3.
3. John Ruskin, *Modern Painters I* (1843), section I, chapter II, paragraph 7, p. 12. Translated by G. H. Marius, 1899, qtd. by Jan Stuyt in "John Ruskin," *Sint-Lucas*, 28 February 1910, 225-9.
4. James McNeill Whistler, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies* (London: William Heinemann, 1890), 31.
5. W. M., "Boeken en Tijdschriften," rev. of E. T. Cook, *A Popular Handbook to the National Gallery*, *Onze kunst* (1902), 26-8.
6. G. H. Marius, *John Ruskin. Een inleiding tot zijn werken* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1899).
7. G., "Over Kunst," *De Nederlandsche Spectator* (1894), 9-11.
8. See, for example, Tanio, "Nieuwe Kunst," *De Amsterdammer*, 14 April 1901, 3-4.
9. Ruskin, *Modern Painters I*, part I, section I, chapter II, paragraph 7, p. 12.
10. D. B., "Vrijheid der Kunst X. (slot)," *De Kroniek* (1902), 393.
11. A. C. Loffelt, "Een groot Engelsch kunstenaar over den oorlog" (Walter Crane), *De Nederlandsche Spectator* (1900), 108-110. P. 108: "Het zijn treurige tijden voor hen, die eenmaal met Engeland dweepten en dikwijls . . . gevoelden, dat zij Brit zouden willen zijn, als ze niet Hollander waren. . . . Het Engeland, door zoo velen vereerd en bemind, is niet meet!"
12. D. C. Nijhoff, "Nederland en Engeland. Historische herinneringen," Deel 1, *Nederland* (1900), 357-91. P. 357: "Door het schitterend gedrag van onze stamverwante broeders in de Zuid-Afrikaansche Republieken levendig opgewekt, is die nationale zin niet minder geprikkeld door haat tegen Engeland. Tegen dat Engeland, dat, zulk een afschuwelijke en schandelijke rol tegen onze taal- en stamgenooten bezig is te vervullen."
13. Geerten Gossaert, *Algernon Charles Swinburne: Mannen en vrouwen van Beteekenis in onze dagen* (Haarlem: Tjeenk Willink, 1911). Gossaert mentions Swinburne's war poetry on p. 208.
14. Edward B. Koster, "Hedendaagsche Engelsche Dichters. I. Algernon Charles Swinburne," *De Gids* (1908), 97-146.
15. "Nu houden de Engelschen, als ze strijdvaardig zijn, er van even ontzettend te schelden als de helden van Homerus. (Hoe toonden ze dit in het begin van den Boerenoorlog! Hoe gruwelijk schold o.a. hun dichter Swinburne! Ik las dit gedicht onlangs nog eens over! Wat moet die man zich nu schamen!)," *Algemeen Handelsblad*, 10 August 1907.
16. The letters from Crane to A. C. Loffelt are in the municipal archives of The Hague, The Netherlands.
17. A. C. Loffelt, "Een groot Engelsch kunstenaar over den oorlog," *De Nederlandsche Spectator*, April 1900, 108-110.

PRE-RAPHAELITE AESTHETICS AND THE DEMANDS OF READING

Todd O. Williams

I find Pre-Raphaelite poetry useful for enabling general education students who are resistant to poetry to see how poetry can be relevant to them. Many of my students dislike poetry because their experience with it mainly involves their reading a poem, not understanding what it means, then having an instructor explain the poem's meaning to them. This not only discourages students from exploring poetry because they perceive it to be beyond their comprehension, but it also causes

them to miss out on the unique experiences that poetry offers. One of the things that poetry offers is validation and deeper awareness of emotional experience. The attentiveness to visceral/emotional experience that the Pre-Raphaelites demand makes their poetry ideal for engaging students in poems on a personal level. In the classroom, I focus on the resistance to meaning, or the ambiguity, of Pre-Raphaelite texts that demand from readers a concentration instead on senses, emotions, and the body. These poems are not so much interpreted as they are experienced. But this experience does not occur without analysis or rigor. What Pre-Raphaelite poetry demands is a concentrated attention to the visceral experiences presented in the text, but also those experienced in the engaged reader.

Here, I want to present readings of two Pre-Raphaelite poems in order to illustrate the way I approach them in the classroom. These poems, Christina Rossetti's "May" ("I cannot tell you how it was") and William Morris's "Spell-bound," show how the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic demands a different approach to reading. The kinds of questions we ask about these poems do not refer to ideas or meaning. Instead, we consider questions like, where are the ambiguities? How are they created? What emotional tone is set in the poem? What kinds of physical sensations does one experience when reading it?

The opening stanza of "May" ("I cannot tell you how it was") begins with the secrecy that we often see in Christina Rossetti's poetry. "I cannot tell you how it was,/ But this I know: it came to pass" (1-2). Readers want to know what "it" is, but the speaker cannot, or will not, tell us. Pre-Raphaelites frequently use ambiguous pronouns to obscure meaning. If one were insisting on finding specific meaning in this poem, this could be a source of frustration. However, if we learn to read for emotional experience we can find much here to relate to. The poem continues with an image that brings up positive feelings and positive associations with the month of May. "Upon a bright and sunny day/ When May was young; ah, pleasant May!" (3-4). The poem continues with a series of images showing potential and fertility in the natural world. "As yet the poppies were not born/ Between the blades of tender corn;/ The last egg had not hatched as yet,/ Nor any bird foregone its mate" (5-8). At this point in the poem, the reader is still responding positively to the natural images. These images, for Rossetti, become types or symbols of potential in general. They, of course, have a literal existence in the natural world but also serve as general, non-specific symbols for any type of potential.

The second stanza begins with a variation on the first two lines of the opening stanza. "I cannot tell you what it was,/ But this I know: it did but pass" (9-10). "How" is now replaced with "what," but we still cannot

be told what exactly "it" refers to. We do learn here, however, that "it" passed. This, the attentive reader will notice, begins an abrupt and significant shift in the emotional tone of the poem. All of the potentials in nature that we saw in the previous stanza are now unrealized—at best, temporary. "It passed away with sunny May,/ Like all sweet things it passed away" (11-12). "It" remains ambiguous here. In this case the ambiguous does not become more specific, but, rather, more universal. Readers are now forced to consider their own associations with "things" passing away, along with the emotional experience that goes with them. The poem ends with a negative image of decay and sadness, completing the shift in the poem's emotional tone. "And left me old, and cold, and gray" (13). This is not a poem of ideas or meanings, of course. It does not tell a story, rather, it captures a mood—an emotional state to which readers can relate.

William Morris's longer dramatic monologue, "Spell-bound," captures emotions similar to Rossetti's lyric, while using some similar strategies. While Morris's poem presents a more developed narrative, it remains highly ambiguous. "Spell-bound" also presents the theme of unrealized potential through narrative and through nature imagery. What we get much more of in Morris's poem is a focus on the body. Morris not only includes many physical descriptions, but he also engages all of the senses to give readers a visceral experience of the poem.

"Spell-bound" begins, "How weary is it none can tell" (1). Again, we begin with a pronoun "it" that lacks a specific referent. And, already, the speaker states that the poem's subject matter is beyond expression. Of course, he continues by finding expression through emotions and senses. "How dimly the days go by!/ I hear the tinkling of the bell,/ I see the cross against the sky" (2-4). Sound and vision are evoked here to offer a more vivid image of the surroundings, while offering no details about the situation. "The year wears round to Autumn-tide,/ Yet comes no reaper to the corn;" (5-6). Again we are given an image of unrealized potential in nature. The landscape comes to reflect the speaker's inner state. Morris goes into an extended metaphor relating the land to a forlorn bride, another image of fertility that will go unrealized:

The golden land is like a bride
When first she knows herself forlorn;

She sits and weeps with all her hair
Laid downward over tender hands;
For stained silk she hath no care,
No care for broken ivory wands;

The silver cups beside her stand;
The golden stars on the blue roof

Yet glitter, though against her hand
His cold sword presses for a proof (7–16)

The weeping bride evokes the reader's physical response through empathy. Morris offers a number of concrete visuals, including colors, which, as Elizabeth Helsinger has recently shown, Morris often uses to add to the vividness of character's memories. Beyond the visual, Morris describes the sword as cold to create a broader sensory experience. The attentive reader's sensory imagination is now highly engaged in the imagery without knowing any details of the story.

This is followed by the most remarkable moment of the poem where Morris's metaphor of a forlorn bride suddenly moves from a purely figurative presence to a part of the actual story.

He is not dead, but gone away.
How many hours did she wait
For me, I wonder? Till the day
Had faded wholly, and the gate

Clanged to behind returning knights?
I wonder did she raise her head
And go away, fleeing the lights;
And lay the samite on her bed, (17–24)

Through the speaker's associative logic, the land as a figurative bride becomes a literal forlorn bride—presumably, his own. The third person pronoun "he" soon becomes the first person "I." Still, as readers, we are not absolutely certain at this point if these are real circumstances or images of the speaker's overactive imagination.

In the following passage the imagery and sensory details become even more vivid and specific.

The wedding samite strewn with pearls:
Then sit with hands laid on her knees,
Shuddering at half-heard sound of girls
That chatter outside in the breeze?

I wonder did her poor heart throb
At distant tramp of coming knight?
How often did the choking sob
Raise up her head and lips? The light,

Did it come on her unawares,
And drag her sternly down before
People who loved her not? in prayers
Did she say one name and no more? (25–36)

Morris's focus on the body here gives the readers a physical experience of the bride. In the speaker's imagination, she sits in a specific position and raises her head; her heart throbs; she shudders, listens, sobs, reacts to light, perhaps speaks sparingly. We are presented with an array of physical experiences that evoke similar experiences in our imagination.

The poem then transitions into a song, a lyric within the poem, that pulls us further into visceral and sensory experience:

And once, all songs they ever sung,
All tales they ever told to me,
This only burden through them rung:
O golden love that waitest me!

The days pass on, pass on apace,
Sometimes I have a little rest
In fairest dreams, when on thy face
My lips lie, or thy hands are prest

About my forehead, and thy lips
Draw near and nearer to mine own;
But when the vision from me slips
In colourless dawn I lie and moan,

And wander forth with fever'd blood,
That makes me start at little things,
The blackbird screaming from the wood,
The sudden whirr of pheasants' wings.
O dearest, scarcely seen by me! (37–53)

From what we know of the speaker's situation at this point, the song offers a parallel, or even a reiteration. Again, this follows associative logic where the speaker's emotional and physical state reminds him of this song. The song itself evokes the dream state, which occurs often in Morris's poetry as a means of psychological revelation. In the dream within the song (within the poem), the focus on the body reaches its highest level of intensity. Two bodies are joined by lips kissing lips and face, and hands touching forehead. The imagery here becomes erotic and physically stimulating to the reader.

But the ambiguity continues. This song is sung by "they," but who are they? They cannot be the two lovers, the referent from the previous stanza, if our speaker is the bridegroom; the song was sung to him by "they." We find ourselves lost temporally for a moment here, but the following lines imply that this must have been a song that "they" sang to him during a past stage in his life. "But when that wild time had gone by,/ And in these arms I folded thee,/ Who ever thought those days could die?" (54–56). Now we are fairly certain that the speaker is concerned with a real relationship, and that he is now, for whatever reason, separated from his love. Here he shifts to the second person and addresses his love directly:

Yet now I wait, and you wait too,
For what perchance may never come;
You think I have forgotten you,
That I grew tired and went home.

But what if some day as I stood
Against the wall with strained hands,

And turn'd my face toward the wood,
Away from all the golden lands;

And saw you come with tired feet,
And pale face thin and wan with care,
And stained raiment no more neat,
The white dust lying on your hair: (57–68)

The speaker now presents a “what if” scenario moving from the remembered past to the vividly imagined future. We are given physical descriptions of strained hands, a turned face, tired feet. In this imagined reunion, both he and his female love are imagined physically and visually through specific details. But we still know nothing of their separation and its causes, or what might bring about a reunion.

The speaker then says, “Then I should say, I could not come;” (69). So this reunion is only a near reunion. It cannot completely occur even in his imagined scenario. We then learn some details.

This land was my wide prison, dear;
I could not choose but go; at home
There is a wizard whom I fear:

He bound me round with silken chains
I could not break; he set me here
Above the golden-waving plains,
Where never reaper cometh near. (70–76)

Here he returns to the image of the un-reaped land from the second stanza where he is a prisoner, seemingly a literal prisoner. Apparently a wizard imprisoned him, though we never learn why or how.

The speaker, presumably, returns to the reunion fantasy, unless we are to understand that his love has actually returned to him. Again he directly addresses her. (Perhaps, the entire poem is addressed to her as an implied listener, but this is not immediately and is never absolutely clear.) “And you have brought me my good sword,/ Wherewith in happy days of old/ I won you well from knight and lord;/ My heart upswells and I grow bold” (77–80). Here we see an emotional shift in the poem. Instead of simply pining for his beloved, the speaker now feels a sense of courage. But this courage, in the end, remains contingent upon the health and survival of his love. “But I shall die unless you stand,/ Half lying now, you are so weak,/ Within my arms, unless your hand/ Pass to and fro across my cheek” (81–84).

The poem ends with her in an emaciated state. Morris leaves us, again, with a focus on the body, on the physical connection that the speaker yearns for from his beloved. Ultimately, we don't know if the lover is there or if this is simply a fantasy. We don't know if she is the one listening to the monologue, or if the reader is the only audience. We know very few of the details of the lovers' story or the speaker's imprisonment. But, again,

the specifics of the story are unimportant. We understand that there is a love and a separation. At the end, we see some possibility of triumph and reunion. What this basic narrative structure, along with the rich sensual and emotional description conveys to readers is a feeling of longing. Like Rossetti's “May,” “Spell-bound” creates an emotional experience for readers who relate to the feelings associated with unrealized potential and loss. In “Spell-bound,” this longing is specifically related to a love relationship, but one that we know almost nothing about. It is not the characters that we find engaging, but the feeling and the desire for love that enables Morris to draw us in through descriptions of emotions, and descriptions of the physical connection that goes with love—something that we also yearn for. In all of their ambiguity, these poems present universal experiences of desire and regret, and offer readers an opportunity to reflect on their own experiences.

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WILLIAM MORRIS ON THE AMERICANS *Sandi Wisenberg*

They speak the same language
but they do not understand
mine. They comprehend
only what they can touch
or buy.
In Chicago
they hang their anarchists and all our voices
raised across an ocean
do nothing.
They turn and drape my heavy wools
over their windows. Bird and Vine / Medway /
they repeat to callers, pointing. Or they smother
my fabrics with gauzy curtains, fearing sunlight,
warning
children not to muss these exotic plants
that never die. Some take joy,
I suppose, in the live
swarmings down the stems,
the subtle songs of lilies / the soft careful edges
of my tendrils, named for now-blackened streams
that feed
the great River Thames. Others leave them
to Irish immigrant girls with no last names, no full
days off,
to dust.

I furnish the swinish castles of Albion
 and pocket my silver
 and yet I scorn
 the tastes of the vast democracy. I should take pride
 that my life flows
 into newly-appointed parlors, that I blossom
 like a great good god. Yet
 I feel a deadness, a farmer
 watching his crop perish
 in mid-summer.

The orders come: Ship no more silks
 to Mammon. And I do send them, in impenetrably
 dark
 boxes, knowing the Americans
 do not care that I fastened the slipknot, are not
 attuned
 to the banter of free men and women
 who weave a new language.

For remedy
 I roam the meadows
 open-armed
 and when I return
 I press the greens and fill the tubs
 with dyes gently bargained
 from the earth. I create in
 the new raw scent of mignonettes
 dancing / sweet /
 and once again
 that is all that matters.

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THE LAST WORD

For . . . you cannot fail to have noted the frequency, persistency and bare-faced cynicism of these wars of exploitation of barbarous countries amongst all European nations these last few years; and next as far as we are concerned we are not merely contented with safe little wars against savage tribes with whom no one but ourselves wanted to meddle, but will even risk wars which may or indeed must in the long run embroil us with nations who have huge armies, who no more lack the resources of civilization than ourselves

For once again I tell you that our present system is not so much a confusion in spite of its inequality and injustice, as a tyranny: one and all of us in some way or other we are drilled to the service of Commercial War; if our individual aspirations or capacities do not fit in with it, so much the worse for them; the iron service of the capitalist will not bear the loss, the individual must: everything must give way to this; nothing can be done if a profit cannot be made of it.

—William Morris, "Commercial War," [printed for the first time in its entirety], *Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies* 19 (Fall 2010): 61, 63.

