

Burne-Jones and the Pre-Raphaelite Influence, in Paris

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Zuccarelli for Mr Kent.' Of especial charm are the William Daniel of Muscat (Fig.119) and the Michael 'Angelo' Rooker of Glastonbury (Fig.118). There are also examples of De Wint, Martin, Cotman, Callow, Cox, Holland, Roberts, Steer, Pryde and Paul Nash.

The **Hal O'Nians Gallery's** Summer Exhibition is now on view. What are of particular interest here are the examples of the less familiar Dutch and Flemish masters. Anthonie Verstralen's signed *Winter Landscape* is a case in point; and so is a most attractive *Vase of Flowers*, signed by Jan van Son. The charming *Winter Scene* by Denis van Alsloot comes from the collection of Sir Bruce Ingram, and used to be known as a Jan van Brueghel the Younger – which was obviously wrong. Also of interest are the Pellegrini *Flora and Cupid*, which probably dates from the English period, and the *Diana and her Nymphs surprised by Actaeon*, by Joseph Heinz the Elder.

Victorian photographs are so potent and so moving, as images, that it is very difficult to be entirely objective about the **Victoria and Albert Museum's** current show, 'From Today Painting is Dead', which is open until 14th May. This sets out to explore the beginnings of photography, not only in terms of the finished prints but also by displaying a wealth of early photographic equipment and by trying to make clear, in terms that the layman can understand, the subtle differences between the rival processes. While laudable, the attempt is if anything too ambitious; the exhibition is far too big (there are 914 items in the catalogue), and the general impression – of wandering through a cluttered maze – is not calculated to improve the level of concentration.

But the exhibition is genuinely stimulating, and not least in the section devoted to the relationship between painting and photography. What is particularly interesting about so many of these now famous juxtapositions is how basically irrelevant they really are. Delacroix's *Odalisque* is a characteristic late work (1854–7), for which the artist evidently used a photograph partly as a matter of convenience, since the model is said to be in a pose suggested by him. But the finished picture is in no conceivable way 'photographic', any more than is the *Atelier* of Courbet, who also used photographs in its preparation. Notwithstanding the Impressionists, I suspect that the real, fundamental influence of photography was subliminal.

It was bound to affect standards of realism – the Pre-Raphaelites were inevitably accused of trying to rival the new medium – and, at the same time, impose a new and dangerous strain on the relationship between fact and fantasy. Photography was an enemy of the middle ground. Its unstated, but subliminal influence may well have been one of the reasons, along with shifts in patronage

and the battle of styles, for the polarisation of painting, the growing distinction between an Alma Tadema, which could stand up to the test of being 'as real as a photograph', and a Whistler, which was safe as any comparison along these lines would have been patently absurd.

No wonder Luke Fildes, when painting *The Doctor* (1891; Tate), felt obliged not only to establish the pose of the doctor himself with the aid of photographs, but also to construct at one end of the Melbury Road studio a full-size replica of a humble cottage interior, complete with rafters and window (based, incidentally, on personal research among fishermen's cottages in Devon). It is probably accidental that the finished picture is designed on lines that are very similar to Rejlander's *Out of Work* of 1865 (Fig.120). Rejlander's photograph, and comparable studies by H. P. Robinson (Fig.121), show in turn that the influence of painting – or at least academic principles of design – on photography were usually unfortunate, to say the least.

The recent John Piper exhibition, at **Marlborough's**, was true to form, or, rather, to his more recent form. The large oils of architectural subjects are harsh in colour and full of a kind of desperate, tired poetry, a determination to be evocative and mysterious at all costs. The effect is both glib and depressing. Many of the architectural watercolours, on the other hand, are not only smaller but fresher and less pretentious; and they recapture some of the old, authentic magic of which Mr Piper used to be such a past master. The exhibition also offered, by way of a novelty, some attractive coloured ceramics, shaped and decorated in a loose, free style reminiscent of Picasso.

Two other modern shows have been of some interest. At the **Redfern Gallery**, David Leverett (b.1938) has been showing a series of abstracts, which consist of areas of pointillist tone (influenced by Ian Stephenson?) painted on rectangular surfaces made up of independent, geometrical segments, whose edges create, from a distance, the effect of a grid. The pictures, though they may sound complicated, are in fact both elegant and serene; the best of them would be a pleasure to own.

Lawrence Toynbee belongs to an older generation; and his allegiance to the Euston Road School is clear in a series of paintings—lately on view at the **Leicester Galleries**—of bathers in the surf, of rugger players and of the London Underground. The colour harmonies are subdued, the sense of texture strong, and there is a pleasing element of visual tension in the way Mr Toynbee pushes his subjects towards abstraction without in any way destroying their conventional identity. This is particularly obvious in the bathing scenes and in the pictures of the Underground, where the concentric circles formed by the station and tunnel

walls are a gift to any artist with a developed sense of the points where life and art may be said to coincide. I would not call Mr Toynbee an original painter; but the best pictures in this very sympathetic exhibition are unpretentious and well painted. They are, quite simply, satisfying.

KEITH ROBERTS

Burne-Jones and the Pre-Raphaelite Influence, in Paris

At the end of the last century Burne-Jones was more celebrated on the Continent than any other contemporary English artist. He had exhibited in Paris since 1878. Péladan tried to flatter Khnopff when he wrote to him in 1893: '*Je vous tiens pour l'égal de Gustave Moreau, de Burne-Jones, de Chavannes et de Rops*' (Quoted from *Le Symbolisme en Belgique* by F.-C. Legrand, 1971, p.229). Richard Muther reproduced one of his paintings in the third volume of his *Geschichte der Malerei im 19. Jahrhundert* which came out in 1894. When Burne-Jones died, in 1898, *Ver Sacrum* published an obituary in which he was called 'One of the noblest artists of our time,' and the writer continued: 'His art was faithful and pure, therefore it will remain true. He was genuine, therefore it will last.' *The Magazine of Art*, on the same occasion, published 'a tribute from France' which said: 'We already find reproductions of Burne-Jones's pictures in the possession of most Paris amateurs and writers.' And Jean Lorrain wrote in his novel *Monsieur de Phocas* (1899): '*Il n'y a que trois peintres au monde qui peignent les yeux que vous cherchez: lui [Toorop], Burne-Jones et le grand Knopff [sic].*' A change of taste came, of course, at the time of the war of 1914. It found expression in an article published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* of 1st April 1925, and quoted by Charles Chassé in *Le mouvement symboliste dans l'art du XIXe siècle* (1947), p.94. In this Henri de Régnier describes a visit to the Tate Gallery in the following words: '*Je cours aux préraphaélites . . . Quelle désillusion! Certes, leur art est intelligent, noble et subtil, plein d'intentions et de finesse secrètes; il a une rare qualité imaginative, mais que ses réalisations sont donc décevantes! Quelle froideur et quelle pauvreté! Quelle misère ou quelle prétention dans la couleur! Quel bric-à-brac que toute cette littérature picturale . . .*' etc. But even he adds: '*Burne-Jones, lui, est pourtant supérieur, car on reconnaît au moins dans sa peinture la main d'un dessinateur adroitement élégant*'.

It is unlikely that any French writer would be so critical of the Pre-Raphaelites today, for the pendulum has swung back. It would be exaggerated to say that the 'anglomanie' of the fin-de-siècle is repeating itself, but there is no doubt that the English (and American) influence upon the cultural life of France has become as noticeable and important as the French influence was in eighteenth-century Europe. Apart from the pervasion

122.



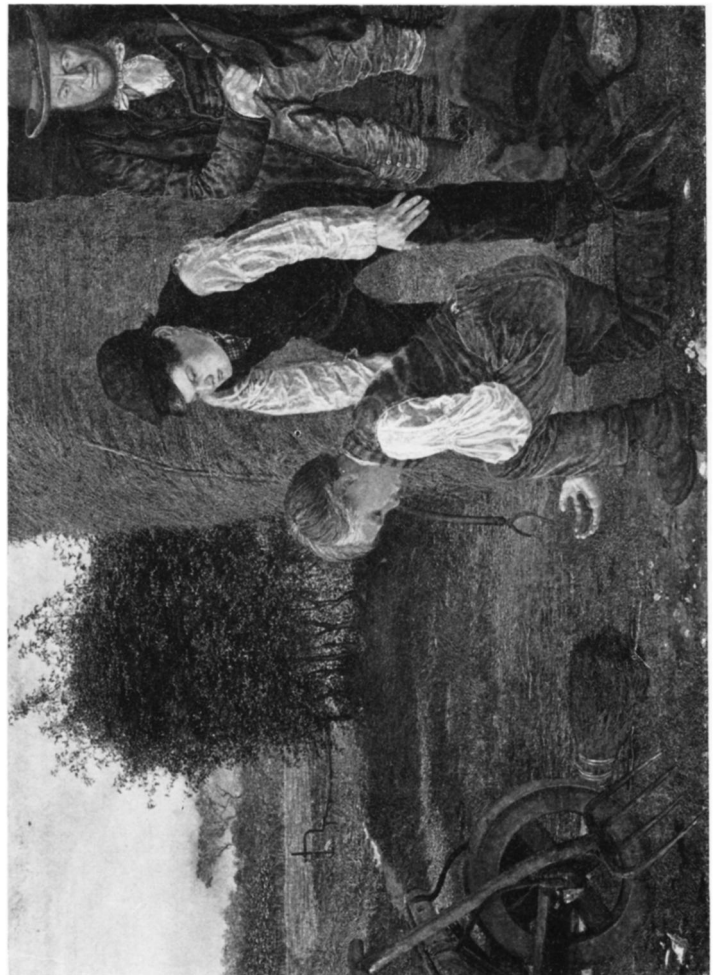
122. *The Wilderness of Gizeh*, by William Holman Hunt. Signed in monogram and dated 1855/1866. Water-colour heightened with white, 25 by 70 cm. (Exh. Galerie du Luxembourg, Paris.)

123. *The Gentle Music of a Bygone Age*, by John Melhuish Strudwick. Exh. 1890. Canvas, 79 by 61 cm. (Private Collection, Paris; Exh. Galerie du Luxembourg, Paris.)

124. *The Idlers*, by John E. Newton. Signed in monogram and dated 1860. Canvas, 75 by 92 cm. (Exh. Galerie du Luxembourg, Paris.)

125. *Portrait of Francis Jékil*, by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. Inscribed 'EB-J to AJ', and dated 1894. Pastel, 56 by 43 cm. (Exh. Galerie du Luxembourg, Paris.)

124.



123.



125.



of the French language by 'franglais', the appearance of 'Pubs' in French cities, the echo of the Beatles and other pop singers, the success of Anglo-Saxon films and plays – the new performance of *Richard III* by the Comédie Française has been received like no other theatrical event in many years – there was the Bacon exhibition at the Grand Palais which caused a sensation, and after that the British Romantic exhibition which, due to its scope and general appeal, was probably the artistic event of the year. The present exhibition of 'Burne-Jones and the Pre-Raphaelite Influence' (98, Rue St Denis, until 15th May), which comes in its wake, is only small but equally symptomatic.

Organized in collaboration with Messrs. Hartnoll & Eyre of Duke Street, St James's, London, it consists mainly of works brought over from England, although its two most representative pieces, Rossetti's pastel *Penelope* (1869) and J. M. Strudwick's *The Gentle Music of a Bygone Age* (Fig.123), belong to Paris collectors. Some of the pictures on view have recently been seen in England: the Rossetti and Solomon's water-colour and gouache painting *Judith going to the Assyrian Camp* (1863) at Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1968, Burne-Jones's *Venus rising from the Sea* in Sheffield in 1971 and Hunt's red chalk drawing *Peace* at the Victoria and Albert Museum and in Liverpool in 1969. As there are altogether 82 items (apart from eleven books which include W. M. Rossetti's facsimile reprint of *The Germ*, the Moxon Tennyson, volumes illustrated by Crane, etc.) this means that there is a lot of unknown or little known and unpublished material, some of it of high quality.

The earliest work in the exhibition is Millais's title page for an album, a colourful and charming drawing in ink and water-colour which is dated 1848. The catalogue note suggests that the artist's technique here was inspired by Flaxman, but although there are a few small angels reminiscent of Blake, the whole character of the composition with its mixture of crowded figures of various sizes, animals and arabesques, all neatly modelled and arranged to form a frame around the title and full of restless movement, is much closer to that of Neureuther and other German Romantics and thus finally derived from medieval book ornamentation. It should be said at the same time that the catalogue, for which Mr Julian Hartnoll has written a very instructive introduction, contains a lot of information, is well illustrated and followed by a useful bibliography.

Second in age and perhaps the most exquisite among the works here assembled is Hunt's water-colour *The Wilderness of Gizeh* (Fig.122) which is dated 1855/66, probably because it was finished years after the artist's stay in Egypt. This shows the same kind of rocky landscape as *The Scapegoat* and is painted in the

same reddish colours with blue shadows. As a pure landscape it is perhaps superior to the larger and more famous painting. The deer in the foreground are, in contrast to the unfortunate goat, in proportion with the landscape, the stony ground and the quarry-like rock formations are rendered with feeling for their strange, bare beauty, and the artist has succeeded in suggesting the vastness of the desert in a small format. The picture has not been exhibited since 1911, but is reproduced in Hunt's *Pre-Raphaelitism*.

Equally interesting is John Newton's oil painting of 1860, *The Idlers* (Fig.124) which has apparently not been shown since the year of its origin. The three figures, a man and two boys, in the foreground of a landscape are, with their everyday clothes and their contrasting poses – one frontal, one in profile and one just between the two – very close to Ford Madox Brown. The minute details of flowers and grass are truly Pre-Raphaelite. In a room full of works which aim at a kind of beauty almost too noble or ethereal, these two paintings, the Hunt and the Newton, introduce a note of realism which is a relief.

Simeon Solomon's *Judith going to the Assyrian Camp* illustrates the more romantic tendencies of Pre-Raphaelitism. The hair, mouth and hands of this statuesque heroine are like those of Rossetti's women, the landscape in the background is added without any feeling. Solomon's *Beatrice* (1860), a gouache painting, has a certain poetic quality reminiscent of Böcklin, perhaps only because of the manner in which the young woman is set between flowering trees.

Burne-Jones is represented by fourteen works. One of them, a triptych entitled *The Sirens*, is of large proportions (over 2 m wide), two are oil paintings and the rest are drawings, water-colours or mixed media. His work is the focus of the exhibition and the link between its earlier and later part. The triptych, unfinished and in parts very shadowy, is the study for a painting in the Ringling Museum, Sarasota. The *Venus rising from the Sea* is an example of the artist's early style. Some of the drawings are connected with the *Perseus* series and very fine, others are studies for *The Sirens*. The *Portrait of Francis Jekill* (1894), a pastel of great perfection (Fig.125), demonstrates to what degree an artist's hall-mark – in this case the shape of the lips, the modelling of the eyes – can be imposed upon a model without interfering with the likeness of the picture.

Strudwick, Burne-Jones's studio assistant, was extremely close to his master in taste and style, but firmer in execution, and all the details of *The Gentle Music of a Bygone Age* (Fig.123) – the painted and carved scenes from the life of St Cecilia on the organ, the decoration of the furniture and the notes in the open music book – are rendered with the patience of an Old Master. Neither the attention given to

these *minutiae* nor the similarity of the three heads detracts from the poetic unity of this painting which, at the end of the century, still followed the Pre-Raphaelite doctrine most faithfully.

After 1900 the Pre-Raphaelite style was, of course, only adhered to by a few elderly artists, and such works as Frederick Sandys's portrait of his daughter which is entitled 'Wondertime', or J. W. Waterhouse's *Gather ye Rosebuds while ye may* now have, in spite of all their craftsman-like qualities and noble intentions, a slightly comic incongruity: in the age of the Fauves neither the innocent expression nor the symbolic flowers look convincing. Only in the field of book illustration, and particularly in children's books, was the taste for prettiness still acceptable. Annie French, who lived from 1873–1965, was a successful perpetuator of a style which was partly based on Kate Greenaway and partly on late Beardsley, and her water-colours from the beginning of the new century are charming in spite of a certain sweetness. Maxwell Ashley Armfield's illustrations to *The Life and Death of Jason* by Morris show a mixture of Greek, Japanese and Pre-Raphaelite influences, while Thomas Mackenzie's water-colours of the early 1920s revive the style of Bakst and Benoit. The last works shown in the exhibition – by Armfield – were done only thirty years ago.

EDITH HOFFMANN

Recent Museum Acquisitions

The **Virginia Museum** has lately acquired three paintings, which are discussed in some detail in a recent issue of *Arts in Virginia*, the museum's bulletin (Vol.12, No.2; Winter 1972). They are Goya's *Portrait of Nicholas Goye*, painted in or about 1810, and coming from the collection of Mrs Marshall Field (Gassier & Wilson, No.883); Courbet's latish *Landscape with Figure*, which is signed at the lower left; and Monet's *Iris by the Pond*, a large painting from the early 1920s and of precisely the same format and style as the *Iris*es acquired by the National Gallery in London in 1967 (No.6383).

Two important new acquisitions made by the **Cleveland Museum of Art** are also featured in recent *Bulletins*. Gainsborough's full-length portrait of *George Pitt, First Lord Rivers* was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1769 and is both catalogued (No.577) and illustrated (Plate 110) in Waterhouse's 1958 monograph. It is discussed in detail, in an article by William S. Talbot, in the *Cleveland Bulletin* for November 1971. The December *Bulletin* features Guido Reni's *Adoration of the Magi*, a large, late, unfinished altar-piece, which comes – via Colnaghi's – from the Barberini Collection in Rome. Prior to Sherman Lee's article in the *Bulletin*, where Dr Marilyn Aronberg Lavin's discovery of a receipt for payment is cited, the picture had only been published once before, by Andrea Emiliani, *Arte Antica e Moderna*, I (1958), pp.53–57, Fig.26b, with an unconvincing attribution to Gessi.

Publications Received

Art of the Near and Far East

Snuff Bottles of China. By Hugh M. Moss. 158 pp. + 409 bottles reproduced in colour on 40 plates. (Bibelot Publishers Ltd., London), £14. A limited, leather-bound edition is also available at £20.

A very well-produced new study with excellent colour illustrations. There is a long introduction, covering the history and origins of the snuff bottle, and describing the various types – glass, porcelain,